The Potential Influence of Local Government Strategies on Regional Business Networks

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Abstract

For a variety of reasons some Australian local governments are seeking to encourage targeted types of business activity within their governance area, often in conjunction with adjacent local governments. This creates networks supportive of some, but not all business activities in the region that is additional to pre-existing business and market networks. The questions considered in this paper are – what kinds of strategies can be adopted by Local Government that will result in the desired outcomes, and what capabilities does local government need. The paper is presented from the viewpoint of one particular Local Government Authority (which we have called LCC), and presents examples of initiatives it is taking

It is argued that the intention of LCC is to enhance regional economic capital, knowledge capital and social capital to enable its resident businesses to compete more comprehensively. In comparing the current LCC position with the experiences of other similar regional initiatives reported in the literature, it is suggested that LCC is at the start of a journey, that it will need to have well communicated measures of progress, encourage the emergence of community leadership, and perhaps move towards a different network governance model.

Introduction.

For a variety of reasons some Australian local governments are seeking to encourage targeted types of business activity within their governance area, often in conjunction with adjacent local governments. Target businesses may be attracted based on some direct economic activity of relevance to them, by unique knowledge and skills available, or by some social infrastructure supportive of their direct activities or target markets. This kind of intervention creates a network supportive of some, but not all business activities in the region that is additional to pre-existing business and market networks. The question considered in this paper is – what kinds of strategies can be adopted by Local Government that will result in the desired outcomes, and what kindsof capabilities does Local Government need to enact them. The paper is presented from the viewpoint of one particular Local Government authority, the Liverpool City Council, (which we will call LCC), and draws on case examples illustrating a number of parallel intervention strategies being pursued. The research is part of an ongoing program, and at this stage, seeks to inform LCC of significant issues to be managed.

The Research Approach

Data was collected via direct participation in a number of LCC events, discussions with participants and interviews with some LCC staff over a two-year period. In 2002 and 2003, the LCC hosted national conferences related to regional development, and early in 2003 the LCC established an Economic Development Committee (EDC) of invited participants to advise it on industry sector needs in the region. In 2002 LCC established an internal function: Manager, Economic Development & Employment associated with the Town Planning Department to act as the Champion for the intervention. In broad terms, these initiatives started with a focus on planning infrastructure to support industry clusters, but the national conferences highlighted the need to build a much broader social capital base. In addition the region needed to be proactively marketed, building on its percieved strengths, and networking amongst industries resident in the area was to be stimulated to enhance the growth of economic capital. In this paper data accessed via participation in conference and EDC activities has been considered both in the context of some literature from town planning academicsources, and from academic sources concerned with market collaboration stimulated by local governments.

Some LCC Background

LCC has a governance zone of about 400 square kilometres and a population of about 160,000, which is concentrated towards its eastern boundary. It is on the western edge of a city of more than 4 million people. An ocean limits the growth of the city in an easterly direction, and other geographic factors restrict growth to the north and south. Consequently LCC has seen significant growth in residential land use, and a local population growth of about 6%pa in recent times. 38% of LCC's current population was born overseas, with residents coming from more than 50 countries, whilst about 50% of recent residents were born overseas, making LCC a multicultural region. This is expected to continue. Unlike other regions of Australia, where the population is ageing, LCC has a young population that will impact the labour market progressively over the next 20 years irrespective of any population increase. However employment growth in the region has been less than 3% per annum, and some attributes of that employment are of concern to LCC. For example, LCC has a major freeway passing through its eastern boundary, it is located less than 30 minutes from a sea freight terminal and an international airport, and this has resulted in the establishment of some logistics centres in the area. These logistics centres occupy considerable employment land space, employ relatively few people, and these people are not highly paid, resulting in a very low economic benefit to the region. At the same time, over the past 15 years globalisation has had a negative impact on the region, with some major corporations moving offshore or downsizing. Currently the main employment sectors in the LCC areas are wholesale and retail trade (21%), educational and health services (20%) and manufacturing (20%). LCC is concerned that the high population

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growth rate will increase demands for community services and regional infrastructure that cannot be supported by regional income and wealth creation. Consequently, LCC, in conjunction with some of the adjacent local governments is pursuing an intervention strategy to balance employment and residential land use better, and to encourage industries that will bring more "knowledge workers" to the region.

An economic development statement has been drafted incorporating the following vision: *A healthy, innovative and adaptable economy will underpin a prosperous community. The city offers opportunities for employment, development, innovation, learning whilst enhancing social cohesion and the natural environment. LCC will be a national leader in skills development and learning. The city will be integrated into metropolitan and global economies with infrastructure supporting the flow of ideas, people and products*

Notions of regional networks and clusters

As indicated earlier, notions of regional networks and clusters are at the forefront of LCC thinking. The LCC has shared its concerns and ideas with adjacent local governments, and two of these have agreed to collaborate where appropriate.

Blakely (2003) has been concerned with strategic regional planning in the USA and Australia for many years, and observes "Global demographic forces are transforming the urban landscape into new mega-urban multi-centred systems of communities", and that "These forces are stronger than traditional locational variables like transport and finance. New centres are emerging with little influence from the old forces of physical agglomeration, increasingly driven instead by a new system of human social agglomerations". Blakely suggests six principles:

1.   Build infrastructure for a creative economy – "the creative class are those people between 20 and 40 with high education – typically doctors and masters degrees in specialised fields, a high science orientation or mathematical and computing orientations – who want to reside in a high-quality locality because it is the most effective place to create"

2.   Design "Magnet Infrastructure" that is world class to attract people who are best in their fields, which need not necessarily be technology focussed.

3.   Create a venue amenity package – develop a regional brand that emphasises the lifestyle and recreational attributes of the area.

4.   Build diversity that reduces cultural and social divisions – mix up the demographics, do not create ghettos that isolate people economically or ethnically

5.   Develop global social capital – "almost too much has been made of local social capital formation. While it is important that local people know

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and work together, too much of this so-called "bonding capital" turns a community inward. Today's communities need "capturing" and outward looking networks".

6. Designing governance and measurement systems – do we have the means to cut across the panoply of government mechanisms which already exist, and how do we measure the performance of a community or groups of communities/

On that last principle, Baburoglo et al (1999) reported the views of a European round table of management researchers suggesting that evaluation should be an organising principle integrated into collaboration. They argue that collaboration is a complicated process and without reinforcing expectations and measures participants can burn out and drop out They saw six factors as important in ensuring sustainability and success: First, delineate the context/environment that gave rise to the collaboration and educate everyone involved on the value of evaluation in relation to the purpose of the collaboration. Second, define the problem correctly so the necessary level of intensity of the effort is known by everyone. Third, establish measures that are meaningful for everyone involved. Fourth, measure process and product on a continuum from what the collaboration is doing and producing to how it will be sustained and successful. Fifth,
Recognise that the problem/need will change over time and that the processes and measures must change accordingly. And finally, Prevent rigidity from over-institutionalisation

Clusters Asia-Pacific (www.capinc.com.au) is a research and consulting network that is concerned with the practical implementation of cluster initiatives. They observe that the notion of clusters is sold as a panacea by some consultants without recognising that such agendas may take many years to mature This in turn leads to under-resourced governance capacity to ensure ongoing stakeholder engagement. In addition, the special people skills, organisational and networking skills, and an ability to synthesise people's ideas may not be recognised as important in establishing a cluster group. Their advice is – start with a small network program and graduate to clusters, get some kind of commercial result and get it early, and leverage off champions and local stakeholder, having enough resources to sustain activities for at least three years.

MacRae and Huxham (2001) describe the circumstances of a local government similar to LCC (Dumbartonshire, UK) in that it is located adjacent to a large city and formulated a collaborative intervention strategy involving interaction with a number of regional participants, with a vision similar to that of LCC. Enactment of the strategy was very slow initially, as the way the action was flowed from strategy was disjointed. The experience highlighted the need for capable leadership to overcome

unexpected roadblocks. Winer (2002) has an even stronger view: that collaboration or partnership is not the key to effective community and economic development - it is leadership that makes things happen. From a study of the evolution of Tupelo, Mississippi and the surrounding Lee County, that "rose from the depths of poverty and hardship to become a model for community development over the past half century", it was observed that a focus on results came first. That after the effort has been initiated by a champion, collaboration or partnership plays a role, but the key throughout is the champion, not the collaboration. That a shared vision is needed but it cannot be created by a group sitting around a table: it must emerge out of incremental, demonstrable successes that prove a return on investment each stage of the way. That collaborations or partnerships that do not emerge must be organized yet linked to meet the needs of specific populations or regions; one group cannot serve multiple interests. That some 'body' to follow-up and follow-through is essential; persistence is a fundamental requirement. That specific, measurable outcomes are essential, including baseline data and mechanisms for accumulating, processing and relaying data over time all the time. Winer (2002) concludes "People connect with community development when they understand how it affects them and their families".

Some Intervention Strategies Available to Local Government

What leverage can a local government apply in the context of industrial marketing and procurement to develop regional employment and develop enhanced B2B regional capability and capacity? LCC has limitied economic and constitutional power itself, so must work in conjunction with others. Here we explore some possibilities available in the context of some major actors – the LCC itself, the local community, the State Government and the National government.

Directly available levers

LCC has responsibilities for the management of land and land use zoning, for the construction and maintenance of some roads, for the establishment and maintenance of some community facilities such as parks, sporting facilities, libraries and pre-school child-care facilities, and provides some community services such as garbage collection. LCC has some economic power in that it has the budget of a medium-sized company. LCC also sponsors a range of community events, and has established a local historical centre and a regional art centre. These responsibilities and initiatives give LCC a degree of control over some aspects of town planning and opportunities to utilize linkages with a number of networks.

In conjunction with the local community

There are a number of voluntary community networks in the LCC region, and some business networks. Many community networks seek strong ties with local government who can facilitate their

operations by, for example, providing access to LCC facilities for meetings etc.. These linkages are of considerable value in enhancing regional social capital. Linkages with business networks are currently only strongly developed in relation to some local retail activities and building services, where LCC regulatory functions may have a direct impact on daily business activities. The benefits to a firm that operates on a broader regional or global scale of linking with local government and its community in some significant way are not clear at this time. LCC has developed a partnership with a national industry group (www.australianbusiness.com.au) that has a broad industry membership base, with the intention of persuading more local firms to grow their business by working together, particularly in regard to exporting.

In conjunction with the State Government

LCC operates under State Government legislation, which defines LCC's powers and responsibilities. The State Government has responsibility for some aspects of land use, building and construction regulation, road building and maintenance, health and education, transport and police services and maintains linkages with the National Government. The State Government undertakes some strategic planning functions, has a number of industry support functions, and supports the arts and a range of cultural and sporting events. Some adjacent local governments host business enterprise centres in conjunction with the State Department of State and Regional Development There are opportunities for LCC to facilitate engagement of its community with some of these functions to stimulate economic, knowledge and social capital growth.

In conjunction with the National Government

LCC has little direct interaction with the National Government, except where that Government owns land or provides national highways through the region. It can however support its community in accessing national initiatives and sources of funding, for example to stimulate innovation and export trade. LCC has facilitated local institutions winning research grants to study regional knowledge networks and to facilitate B2B innovation networks.

Linkages, complementarities and conflicts

Whilst some stakeholders have interests complementary to those of LCC, there may be conflict with others, for example due to differing views on land re-zoning initiatives. This is explored in table 1 below. The implication is that as the extent of interventions expand, so does the potential for conflicting interests that have to be managed.

Network Partner	Linkage with Local	Potential conflict

	Government	
Local community	Establishing place and space for community activities, supporting desired norms, Provision of a range of social services, Seed funding for community initiatives	Dissatisfaction of groups perceived to be excluded, Different understandings of who is responsible for what actions amongst community partners (MacRae and Huxham, 2001)
Regional Industry	Land use and building regulation, Support for local business networks	Market opportunities in a non-preferred sector versus local strategic and community requirements that may restrict access to these opportunities
State Government	Land use, health, education, the arts, and potentially, facilitating State Government industry support initiatives	Conflict between different local government regions for State Government support. Potentially differing views of local governance protocols in the context of State legislation - issues of power and control (Newman, 2001)
National Government	Access to National government facilities located in the LCC region. Joint access with community partners seeking funding in support of national initiatives	Targeted National government support programs to regions or market sectors that would effectively exclude LCC from access

Table 1 Potential partner complementarities and conflicts

The perceived LCC Economic Development Committee role is generally one of supporting regional adaptability, capability development and change. Gossling (2001) suggests metaphor for an adaptable, agile organisation of the orchestra playing at a succession of concerts, and the author of this paper has heard the same expression used by a Vice-President of the Nokia to describe the way that Company plans to blend its internal activities and supply chain partners as markets change. It is suggested that this orchestration view is emerging in LCC, although it might not be described this way. But an orchestra plays to a score, promotes excellence in each of its instrument sections, and has a conductor

co-ordinating them. Parallels to these issues will come up in later discussion.

What is happening in the LCC region?

Here we examine current regional initiatives in the context of three scenarios; one where local government may support broader business initiatives linked to the community (business push), another where local government stimulates the establishment of SME networks (local government push), and a third (inter-government collaboration) where three tiers of government combine to create new economic spaces.

Supporting "business push" regional initiatives

Within a particular region, individual firms or groups of firms may wish to influence local government to pursue their own initiatives. Local government may welcome these initiatives and facilitate them if they are perceived to be in the interests of the community. Being proactive in this way may enable the enactment of local government strategies with minimal cost or effort. Two examples of such initiatives potentially impacting the LCC region are described below.

Austool (www.austool.com.au) is a not-for profit enterprise established in concept in the late 1990's to address a number of market weaknesses in a regional toolmaking environment. Globalisation was leading to more local competition from larger overseas companies, and at the same time larger local firms were tending to outsource their toolmaking function, which impacted the flow of apprentices entering the profession. In addition, apprentices were not learning their trade on the latest equipment. At the same time it was appreciated that Australian toolmaking companies were relatively small and needed to collaborate in a number of ways – to access technology and to take on larger projects. The concept of a technology diffusion centre located in a business park for small toolmaking companies was born, and the State Government undertook to establish this infrastructure. Austool was established as a company aiming to be an "Australian Centre for Toolmaking Innovation" with operations to focus in three areas: knowledge sharing, technical support and education. The Australian Government provided a grant for a large technology diffusion project in 2002, and the technology diffusion centre opened in early 2004. This Centre is being established as a kind of permanent trade show where high technology equipment can be both demonstrated and used, and where small companies can come to access specialised capabilities they could not afford on their own. The local

business community has enthusiastically embraced the concept, as they see it will not only support regional growth, but may provide a good business model for other industries. The initiative is seen as innovative in a number of ways – in terms of the concept, in terms of the projects being established and in terms the way the organisation has engaged with three levels of government. Whilst there is substantial government support for Austool, there have been massive regional voluntary in-kind contributions from a significant number of individuals, and the company remains industry-driven. This is an example of linking government assets to build economic and knowledge capital via SME's

Delfin Lend Lease (www.delfin.com.au) is a large building and construction company that specialises in the development of new communities of around 20,000 residents. Delfin see integration of education facilities as an important component of town planning and have been developing these ideas over a number of years via a process of research and community consultation. Workshops involving various levels of government, educationalists, and community interest groups have been held between 1997 and 2003. The 2003 workshop was held in connection with the planning of a new community adjacent to the LCC governance zone, and discussion groups considered matters of access demand, capacity building, eco-development, infrastructure, governance and partnerships. More than 60 community leaders participated. The Delfin objective is to develop a community, not just buildings. Two themes that emerged were the notion of lifetime community learning, and convergence: breaking down silos to provide integrated community education services covering both formal education and informal education through community common interest networks. Advantages for local government include the provision of advanced infrastructure at little cost and a place that encourages knowledge workers. The advantage for the developer is that wealthier clients tend to be attracted to the property being developed. This is an example of developing community assets to build social and knowledge capital

Stimulating local government push initiatives

A scan of current larger enterprises in the LCC governance region showed a number of technological clusters of activity. The LCC Economic Development Committee decided that strengthening of these existing clusters by establishing formal networks might be a

good way to stimulate economic activity in the region. Three examples reflecting initial steps are shown below

> There are a number of building product manufacturers in the LCC region and a number of large residential building companies. Construction currently provides about 7% of the jobs in the LCC region. As it is anticipated that residential construction will continue to grow in the region for at least two decades, it was decided to facilitate interaction between these kinds of companies to try and maximise employment in the region. A not-for-profit organisation experienced in collaboration and technology transfer (www.amc-atp.com) was engaged to facilitate the development of local networking activities. Initial meetings have lead to the view that a number of innovative products are being developed locally, and the concept of establishing a local building innovation centre is emerging.

> The LCC governance region has a large commercial centre near its eastern boundary where there are a number of educational institutions and a teaching hospital surrounded by specialist medical premises. Language teaching is strongly represented, as the LCC region has a large number of different ethnic populations. Education, health and community services account for 20% of the jobs in the LCC region. LCC is currently supporting the enhancement of bio-medical research in conjunction with related State Government initiatives, and is promoting the construction of a health and education complex to property developers and candidate tenants

> The LCC and adjacent regions are heavily populated with SME's, many of whom are very innovative. But this is not necessarily recognised as a collective regional strength. The LCC has established a regional art gallery that is developing an interest in multi-media art forms using some of the same technologies used in industrial design. So a series of collaborations between technologists and artists is to be explored, and a series of celebratory events recognising excellence in industrial design is being planned as an aspect of art gallery operations to enhance the industrial "brand" of the region

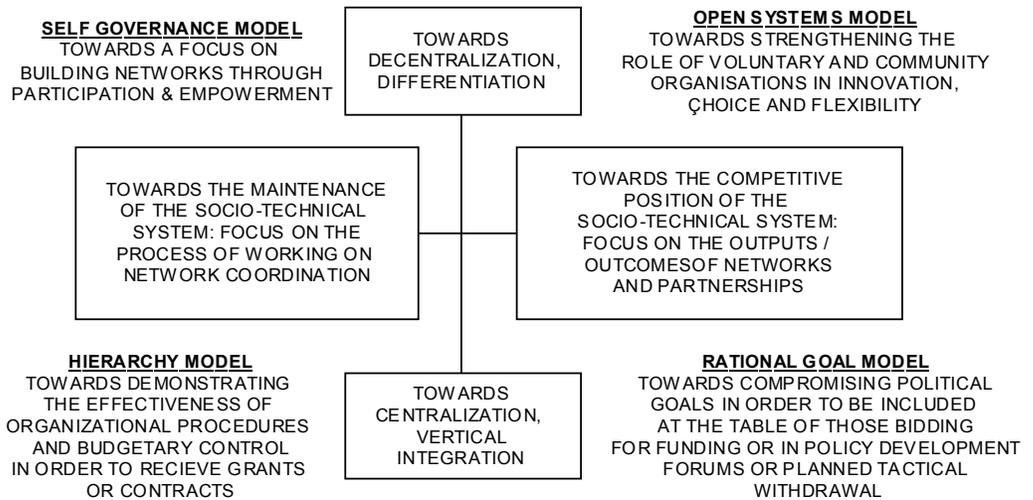**Establishing inter-government collaboration initiatives**

The State and the National Government own some land in the LCC region, and the LCC has been negotiating joint development agreements with them. Two examples are given below.

The CBD is located by a river, but there is a railway line and land owned by the State Government between the business centre and the river. LCC is seeking a partnership with the State Government and the private sector to build on the space above the railway station and bus interchange complex to open up access to the river from the CBD. The objective is to create new employment spaces oriented towards education and health services, and an improved amenity for the city

Negotiations have been completed leading to the establishment of a large technology park precinct involving the Department of Defence (the historical land owner), the State Premiers Department (State strategic planning) and the LCC. The objective is to attract high technology companies, improve research and education infrastructure and expanded lifestyle and housing opportunities

Discussion

There are multiple examples around the world of government sector-private sector partnerships, and examples of government-community partnerships. Some observations from the United Kingdom (Newman, 2001, Purdue, 2001), where Area-Based Initiatives are a significant strategy for delivering a range of government services suggest that multi-sector collaborations can be difficult to sustain. Purdue (2001) sees opportunities are created that did not exist before, but potential fragmentation of effort between communities, and some drivers of these initiatives, such as professional networks in health and education do not mesh well with community participation. He also notes that the extra time taken for participation can be an imposition on some community leaders. Newman (2001) sees dilemmas in terms of competing governance models, the dynamics of power, the social relations of leadership and trust, and the patterns of inclusion and exclusion. Her view of some different governance models from the perspective of community and volunteer participants is shown in figure 1 below.

SELF GOVERNANCE MODEL
TOWARDS A FOCUS ON BUILDING NETWORKS THROUGH PARTICIPATION & EMPOWERMENT

TOWARDS DECENTRALIZATION, DIFFERENTIATION

OPEN SYSTEMS MODEL
TOWARDS STRENGTHENING THE ROLE OF VOLUNTARY AND COMMUNITY ORGANISATIONS IN INNOVATION, CHOICE AND FLEXIBILITY

TOWARDS THE MAINTENANCE OF THE SOCIO-TECHNICAL SYSTEM: FOCUS ON THE PROCESS OF WORKING ON NETWORK COORDINATION

TOWARDS THE COMPETITIVE POSITION OF THE SOCIO-TECHNICAL SYSTEM: FOCUS ON THE OUTPUTS / OUTCOMESOF NETWORKS AND PARTNERSHIPS

HIERARCHY MODEL
TOWARDS DEMONSTRATING THE EFFECTIVENESS OF ORGANIZATIONAL PROCEDURES AND BUDGETARY CONTROL IN ORDER TO RECIEVE GRANTS OR CONTRACTS

TOWARDS CENTRALIZATION, VERTICAL INTEGRATION

RATIONAL GOAL MODEL
TOWARDS COMPROMISING POLITICAL GOALS IN ORDER TO BE INCLUDED AT THE TABLE OF THOSE BIDDING FOR FUNDING OR IN POLICY DEVELOPMENT FORUMS OR PLANNED TACTICAL WITHDRAWAL

DILEMMAS FOR COMMUNITY AND VOLUTARY SECTOR PARTNERS
FROM NEWMAN, 2001, P96 IN "COLLABORATIVE STRATEGIES AND MULTI-ORGANISATIONAL PARTNERSHIPS

Figure 1 Drivers of Some Community Network Governance Models (Newman, 2001)

In this context, it is suggested that the LCC is pursuing a self-governance model at the moment, with the drivers being a need for it and its industry sectors to differentiate themselves in the global market place, and the development of processes for building network coordination. Reflecting on the importance of measuring outcomes referred to other literature reported here, there is a need for LCC to move towards an open systems model in its next stage of evolution. According to Newman (2001), this model is oriented towards flexibility, adapting to changing conditions and expansion, with strengths in regional innovation.

The current focus of many of the LCC initiatives relate in some way to adoption of a network strategy. Gadde, Huemer and Hakansson (2003) have considered industrial network participation from the viewpoint of an individual firm as offering opportunities for expansion of resource dimensions. Holmen and Pedersen (2003) see such participation as expanding the horizons of participants. These may be the perspectives that have to be "sold" to business as a benefit of collaborating with local government. In an earlier part of this paper, three kinds of initiative were discussed: supporting business initiatives, local government push in network development, and inter-government integration in resource development. The observations relating to clusters presented earlier is consistent with the LCC vision in that it is seen that strong regions need to build economic, knowledge and social capital to be sustainable. In Table 2 below we illustrate how the development of these factors is enhanced by inititatives in the LCC region. But more is needed. LCC is seeking

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collaboration with industry to support its needs. The initiatives being pursued require industry to put in significant time, and in an SME environment, this is a precious commodity. As has been pointed out by other researchers, some quick wins for the participants are needed to maintain the momentum. At the time of writing there was no system for measuring progress in collaboration establishment, nor for recording beneficial outcomes for the participants. It is suggested that this shortcoming needs to be rectified, and transactions that may have some economic value, knowledge value, or social value be mapped, as previous research from the perspective of the individual firm suggests these are major influence in sustaining collaborations (Beckett, Hyland and Sloan, 2003).

Intervention Strategy	Outcomes / Objectives		
	Build Economic Capital	Build Knowledge Capital	Build Social Capital
Support and facilitate industry initiatives	Influence on B2B networks: linking SME's with common technology and market interests Example: Austool	Influence on B2B networks: Sharing technological knowledge and supporting lifelong learning Examples: Delfin, Austool	Influence on B2B networks: Establishing community norms of collaboration and resource sharing Example: Delfin
Promote network formation and operation	Influence on B2B networks: draws out local innovation capacity Example: Construction network	Influence on B2B networks: Creates an engine for growth in a growing community Example: Health and Education Network	Influence on B2B networks: Creating a regional excellence brand Example: Art centre / Industrial design collaboration
Integrate resources of multiple tiers of government	Influence on B2B networks: Opportunity to attract larger, global companies with attendant supply chain opportunities Example: International Technology Park development	Influence on B2B networks: provides a focus on opportunities for learning as a business Example: Riverside Precinct development	Influence on B2B networks: Provides shared assets to attract people to the precinct Example: Riverside precinct development

Table 2: Building Resources for enhancing regional B2B networks

In an earlier part of this paper the issue of leadership was raised. Within the LCC, the long-serving Mayor has recently been replaced. The economic development agenda is being driven through a recently established internal function: Manager, Economic development & Employment, that is currently acting as the Champion for the initiative. It is not clear who the community champion(s) is/are in the LCC case or who the vision is being "sold" to. If the experiences in some other parts of the world translate to the LCC environment, then it would seem essential to identify emergent champions.

Concluding remarks

Management researchers studying industrial marketing and procurement have found it convenient for some time now to consider the observed behaviours in relation to intersecting business networks. More recently, the scope of these studies has widened to consider complex networks within which these businesses operate. As Blakely (2003:48) points out, "the very fabric of globalisation involves reconfiguration of the firm so that it has no headquarters, but instead a network of interactive nodes."--- Such a firm can announce its headquarters in any one of these locations, depending on taxes, wages and political needs". In this context regions that wish to remain economically sustainable must have some natural advantages in terms of economics and competencies, and both of these factors can be linked to the social fabric of the region. It is in this context that we have considered the issue of the potential influence of a local government on B2B networks.

It is suggested here that the linkage is through people and through economic, knowledge and social infrastructure that delivers value via economic, knowledge or social transactions between collaboration partners. It is further suggested that these transactions must be mapped and measured to demonstrate the value of collaboration.
Compared with some regions of the world, the local government considerd in this study, LCC, is just beginning to engage with the business community at a local level. This is seen as an appropriate way to build collaboration skills and provide evidence of progress to the local community. It is suggested here however, that in the near term, a more global view will need to emerge to ensure regional competitiveness.

Acknowledgement

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