

# Development of Māori Capacity to Contribute to Decision Making

As a Council, we recognise the special position of Tangata Whenua within this District and the important role Māori have to play in Council's decision-making processes. Schedule 10 of the Local Government Act (LGA) 2002 requires Council to include in its Long Term Plan (LTP) any steps that it intends to take, having considered ways in which it might foster the development of Māori capacity to contribute to the decision making processes of the Council over the next 20 years.

The LGA (Parts 2 and 6) provides principles and requirements for local authorities that are intended to facilitate participation by Māori in their decision making processes. In accordance with section 81 of the LGA the Council must:

1. Establish and maintain processes to provide opportunities for Māori to contribute to the decision making processes of the local authority;
2. Consider ways in which it may foster the development of Māori capacity to contribute to the decision making processes of the local authority; and
3. Provide relevant information to Māori for the purposes of (1) and (2) above.

Through its decision making processes Council recognises the principles of the Treaty of Waitangi and kaitiakitanga. Council's Significance and Engagement Policy sets out what the Community including Māori can expect from Horowhenua District Council regarding consultation and ways they can influence and participate in Council's decision making processes. The Council endeavours to provide for the relationship of Māori and their traditions with their ancestral lands, water sites, waahi tapu and other taonga, when it is considering a significant decision (as per Council's Significance and Engagement Policy, July 2017) in relation to land or a body of water and this is consistent with the requirements of section 77 of the LGA.

Council acknowledge the value of positive and enduring relationships that exemplify Iwi led engagement. With significant growth and development set-out in the 20 year Long Term Plan Council will be seeking to find ways to collaborate on matters of mutual interest in the region and develop more effective engagement with Iwi to manage the volume of activity by investing and lifting the collective capacity and capability.

Currently Council is working to transform their relationship with Muaūpoko Tribal Authority, Ngāti Raukawa kit e Tonga, and Rangitaane O Manawatu by developing agreements to set the vision and direction for future initiatives that advance strategic outcomes of each organisation. These agreements also seek to ensure each party collaborates in the scoping, planning, and investment to coproduce social, economic, and environmental outcomes.

Council acknowledges that effective partnership models with Muaūpoko Tribal Authority, Ngāti Raukawa kit e Tonga, and Rangitaane O Manawatu must be designed and implemented in a way that each partner have the resources to be involved at a governance, design, implantation and operational level for Council led activities.

Council is also developing and entering into Memorandums of Partnership to help facilitate Māori involvement in local decision making processes. Memorandums of Partnership are enabling documents which have already provided significant benefit to the respective parties and their ongoing communication on a number of matters of mutual interest. These documents are becoming increasingly important as Council seeks closer and meaningful working relationships with the Māori community, to achieve effective consultation and engagement on a wide range of issues affecting the Horowhenua District.

Council currently has formalised memorandums of partnership with the following Iwi:

- Muaūpoko Tribal Authority
- Ngāti Tukorehe
- Ngāti Raukawa ki te Tonga
- Rangitāne O Manawatū
- Te Kotahitanga o Te Iwi o Ngāti Wehi Wehi

Through the Horowhenua District Plan, Council identifies the following initiatives to develop the Māori capacity to contribute to decision making:

- Council will support representatives from local Iwi becoming accredited Commissioners.
- Council will consider using independent accredited Māori Commissioners to sit on the Council Hearing Committee for notified consent applications or plan change hearings.

Māori see people and the environment as closely interrelated and share with Council a strong interest in maintaining and protecting the environment as well as developing the economic future of the area. The Council is committed over the period covered by this LTP and beyond to continuing the process of consultation and engagement with local Māori.