

Statement on Contributions to Decision-making Processes by Māori

Introduction

Council provides a wide range of services which make important contributions to the many communities in Marlborough. People should have the opportunity to participate in decisions about those services that affect them.

Context

Council recognises the uniqueness accorded to Māori as tangata whenua.

There are a wide range of Māori, iwi, hapū, business and community organisations in the Marlborough District as well as social and cultural organisations.

Māori make up more than 13% of the population of the Marlborough region (2018 Census), of which a significant number are mana whenua. Iwi authorities are an increasingly significant component of the Marlborough economy, following Te Taihū Tiriti settlements.

There are eight iwi groups within Marlborough, who have completed Te Tiriti settlements. Most of these iwi have interests across Te Taihū —

- Ngāti Kuia, Rangitāne o Wairau, and Ngāti Apa ki te Rā Tō (*Kurahaupō waka*)
- Ngāti Koata, Ngāti Rārua and Ngāti Toa Rangatira (*Tainui waka*)
- Te Ātiawa o Te Waka-a-Māui, (*Tokomaru waka*)
- Ngāi Tahu (*Uruao waka*)

Council recognises and respects the Crown's responsibility to take appropriate account of the principles of Te Tiriti, and to maintain and improve opportunities for Māori to contribute to local government decision-making processes.

Contributions to decision-making

Council is charged with the responsibility to promote opportunities for Māori and tauīwi (other members of the public) to contribute to its decision-making processes.

These obligations apply to all Māori in the district. Council acknowledges that Māori other than tangata whenua may be resident in the area.

Council engages with the iwi authorities that have settled, for day-to-day business operations.

Statement on contributions to decision-making processes by Māori

A number of key themes emerge from the various pieces of legislation including,

- (a) in Council decision-making processes:
 - i. to consider Te Tiriti o Waitangi principles;
 - ii. facilitating iwi participation;
 - iii. recognising and understanding Māori cultural values and perspectives including mātauranga Māori (Māori knowledge), tikanga Māori (Māori principles and protocols); and kaitiakitanga (Māori guardianship).
- (b) Council's duty to contribute to Māori capacity and to enable and promote Māori well-being as part of a comprehensive and effective long-term strategy of the Council; and
- (c) the Māori contribution to the social, economic, environmental, and cultural well-being of Marlborough.

Council has identified three main areas on which it needs to focus:

- (a) Assist Māori to build capacity to engage with Council;
- (b) Developing contributions to decision-making processes by iwi; and
- (c) Building Council capacity.

Assist iwi to build capacity

Council needs to find out how it can help with resourcing so that iwi can better engage in Council processes and decision-making.

To do this, Council needs to understand from iwi:

- What are their aspirations
- What are their expectations of Council

Council has historically provided assistance to iwi through their Tiriti settlement negotiation processes. Council provides information to iwi on infrastructure provision and various economic development opportunities. However, post-settlement there may be more that Council can do.

Together we can assess what iwi need to be able to fully participate in Council decision-making processes.

Council decision-making

There is a need for iwi to be involved in Council decision-making which requires us to develop relationships of mutual respect, co-operation and goodwill.

Council will engage with iwi to ensure that its decision-making processes provide opportunities for iwi to take part.

Strong on-going personal relationships and structural arrangements can assist with this.

Regular relationship meetings with key iwi stakeholders allow Council and iwi at governance and management levels to focus on long-term strategic engagement, understanding each others goals and aspirations.

Council will also review how iwi can have influence at the governance level.

In particular, Council continues to:

- (a) invite iwi authorities to take part in its annual and three-yearly strategic planning to develop the Annual Plan and the Long-Term Plan;
- (b) have a Māori Ward established from the 2022 Local Government elections (but this may require a confirmation referendum in 2025);
- (c) have positions available for iwi on Council's main standing committees;
- (d) consult on new and revised bylaws and other regulatory or planning instruments; and
- (e) engage with iwi over Policy statements and Plans under the RMA.

“Kia Kotahi Te Taihu – A Partnership Agreement for a Stronger Te Taihu”

This agreement provides a platform for a stronger Te Taihu by affirming a strong partnership between Ngā Iwi o Te Taihu (the “iwi”) and Ngā Kaunihera o Te Taihu (the “councils”) - to enhance the wellbeing of Te Taihu now and in to the future.

The Agreement follows and enhances this statement. It will be reviewed annually through a partnership Wānanga where priority outcomes will be aligned.

The agreement can be found on Council's website:

https://www.marlborough.govt.nz/repository/libraries/id:2ifzri1o01cxbymxkvwz/hierarchy/documents/your-council/Te_Taihu-iwi_2023/Together%20Te%20Taihu%20Partnership%20Agreement%20-%20B%26W.pdf

Proposed Marlborough Environment Plan (PMEP)

The Proposed Marlborough Environment Plan (PMEP) includes Volume 1 Chapter 3. “Marlborough's Tangata Whenua iwi” developed with Marlborough iwi to determine resource management issues of significance to them. It is a comprehensive chapter providing objectives and policies to address the identified issues. The PMEP can be found on Council's website.

Build Council capacity

Council needs to have a good understanding of Māori in our community, their aspirations and expectations. Knowing about and respecting tikanga, kawa, tē reo, tē Ao Māori will aid in developing relationships for effective engagement.

Council can do some basic things that will make staff and Councillors more at ease in moving in a Māori world.

Council will:

- employ a Kahautū – Māori Partnership Manager;
- promote appreciation and understanding of tē Ao Māori;
- develop resources and provide training for Councillors and staff to better engage with iwi and Māori and provide opportunities to understand Council's obligations; and
- Facilitate the securing and application of government funds to assist iwi capacity to engage in Council decision making processes.