

Statement on the Development of Māori Capacity to Contribute to Decision Making Processes

Under the Local Government Act 2002, a local authority must establish and maintain processes to provide opportunities for Māori and foster Māori capacity to contribute to the decision-making processes of the local authority

This statement sets out the processes in place to develop Māori capacity to contribute to decision-making processes of the Hawke's Bay Regional Council (HBRC).

Regional Planning Committee

Treaty Settlements with Hawke's Bay claimant groups are significant for HBRC where they relate to natural resource management and cultural redress.

HBRC and the Treaty claimant groups worked collectively to establish the Regional Planning Committee. This was formally adopted by HBRC in September 2011 and the first Regional Planning Committee meeting was held in April 2012.

The Hawke's Bay Regional Planning Committee Act came into effect in August 2015. This Act formalises the statutory existence of the Committee. The purpose of this Act is to improve tāngata whenua involvement in the development and review of documents prepared in accordance with Resource Management Act 1991 for the Hawke's Bay region. The RPC comprises equal numbers of elected members and Treaty settlement claimant representatives. All committee members have full speaking and voting rights.

When the committee has prepared a plan or policy statement or a change to either of these it recommends the document to HBRC for formal adoption and public notification. HBRC cannot then make amendments before notification but must refer the document back to the committee for its further consideration should it not agree with the Committee's recommendation.

Māori Committee

HBRC has had a representative group of Ngati Kahungunu tāngata whenua as its Māori committee since 1991, one of the first councils in New Zealand to do so.

The committee consists of 12 Māori members, three from each of the four Taiwhenua within HBRC boundaries plus three councillors.

The committee meets every third month and considers various relevant issues and provides the Council with recommendations taking into account tāngata whenua views, expectations and aspirations.

The Charter

In 1994 a charter was developed which set out the way in which the Māori committee and HBRC would engage. The Charter was last reviewed in October 2017 and includes HBRC's responsiveness to its statutory obligations including policies aligning to the Te Tiriti O Waitangi, resource consents consultation, and communication and engagement. Consultation policies will be developed as part of the Māori Committee's 2018/19 work programme specifically defining how it will be involved in decision-making processes.

Giving effect to co-governance

In summary, capacity building processes for tāngata whenua include:

- Nine treaty settlement claimant group members sit alongside nine elected members on the Regional Planning Committee
- The Chair of the Māori Committee sits in HBRC meetings as a non-voting participating member
- A tāngata whenua member from each of the RPC and Māori committees sits on the following Council committees:
 - Regional Transport Committee
 - Corporate and Strategic Committee
 - Environment and Services Committee
 - Hearings Committee

Giving effect to co-management

HBRC is committed to building the cultural competency of all its staff to ensure effective co-management of the region's natural resources. HBRC is developing a cultural competency framework to enable staff to understand te reo (Māori language), tikanga (protocols) and te taiao (environment through a Māori lens). This will provide staff with the knowledge and tools for engaging appropriately with tāngata whenua.

HBRC recognises Mātauranga Māori and Kaitiakitanga is an emerging field in council business therefore formal engagement of this capability is sought when needed. A new position of Tumuaki is proposed to strengthen our knowledge of Mātauranga Māori and enhance relationships with tāngata whenua of our region.

HBRC recognises the treaty settlements are accelerating change and as such provide council with both challenges and opportunities. HBRC will work to incorporate legislative requirements of post-Treaty settlement arrangements and tāngata whenua engagement into our day-to-day business processes, aiming for Māori partnerships to become business as usual.

Strengthening relationships

A fundamental partnership exists between HBRC and the Treaty Settlement Groups. While this is tangibly demonstrated through the Regional Planning Committee HBRC is committed to meeting with the Post settlement governance entities on a regular basis to discuss matters of concern beyond the remit of the Regional Planning Committee.

HBRC has continued to forge strong relationships with individual marae communities and hapu groups as well as important relationships with the Treaty claimant groups in the region both inside the Regional Planning Committee and outside of that committee.

HBRC staff and councillors attend hui throughout the region involving particular marae communities to listen to particular issues that those communities have and to assess where Council can best help. Some of those strong relationships have seen Council and marae work in tandem on issues affecting that particular community. These relationships have been particularly positive in assisting marae communities to enhance waterways and develop initiatives that affect broader marae communities.