WHANGANUI
DISTRICT COUNCIL
Te Kaunihera a Rohe o Whanganui

Proposed Significance and Engagement Policy 2017

Te Kaupapa Here Mō Ngā Take Hirahira Me Ōna Tikanga Whakapāpā

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Whanganui District Council Proposed Significance and Engagement Policy 2017

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Council

Date approved:

TBC

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This policy will be reviewed within three years of adoption

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Executive Summary

The Significance and Engagement Policy outlines Whanganui District Council's approach to determining the significance of decisions, and outlines the criteria and procedures that Council will follow to assess the level of significance, and the associated engagement with the community.

Determining Significance

Does the issue, proposal or matter involve one or more of the criteria in this policy? (Section 3)

- The potential effect on delivering Council's strategic aspirations
- How the decision aligns with historical Council decisions
- The likely impact of the decision on present and future interests of the community
- Recognising iwi cultural values and their relationship to land and water
- The level of community interest in the decision and whether community views on the issue are already known
- The possible financial and non-financial costs of the decision (or of reversing the decision) with regard to the Council's capacity to perform its role
- The transfer of ownership, control or affect a decision has on a strategic asset

Yes

The issue, proposal or matter is considered significant in terms of this policy.

All requirements within this policy for issues, proposals and matters determined significant must be carried out. Procedures outlined in section 4.1-4.2 of this policy.

No

The issue, proposal or matter is considered not significant in terms of this policy.

Council will still consider the views and preferences of the community in the decision making process and will at a minimum inform. Procedures outlined in section 4.3 of this policy.

Introduction

Why we need a policy

The Significance and Engagement Policy ("policy") has been developed in response to the requirements set out in the Local Government Act 2002 ("the Act"). The Act requires every local authority to have a policy on significance and engagement.

The purpose of this policy is to ensure council takes a consistent and transparent approach in determining the significance of a decision and the appropriate level of engagement is carried out.

Who it is prepared for

This policy is prepared for the Whanganui community so they can understand how Council will determine the significance of issues, matters and proposals, and when they can expect to be engaged with.

It is also to assist Whanganui District Council staff when assessing degrees of significance, and to inform the general public about what level of engagement they can expect from Council.

Scope of policy

Within this policy the Council aims to identify the approach it will take in performing its functions under the Act in relation to significance and engagement.

Definitions

Community	A group of people living in the same place or having a particular characteristic in common. Includes interested parties, affected people and key stakeholders.
Core Service	As defined in Section 11A of the Local Government Act 2002. (Attachment 1)
Decisions	Refers to the decisions of the Council by formal resolution at Council and Council Committee meetings. Decisions include deliberations on any issue, proposal or other matter.
Engagement	Is a term used to describe the process of seeking information from the community to inform and assist decision-making. There is a continuum of community involvement.
Mana Whenua Iwi partners	Whanganui District Council's two Mana Whenua iwi partners: Te Runanga O Tamaupoko Link and Te Runanga O Tupoho.
Iwi	Means an extended Māori kinship group, tribe, nation, people, nationality, race - often refers to a collective of related hapū, descended from a common ancestor and associated with a distinct territory.

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Māori	As defined by the Māori Community Act 1962 and Electoral Act 1993. (Attachment 1)
Other matters	Refers to issues, proposals or matters that do meet the criteria in determining significance but are of interest to communities.
Significance and Significant[1]	As defined in Section 5 of the Local Government Act 2002. (Attachment 1)
Significant Activity	Is an activity (or group of activities) as listed below: Water supply Stormwater drainage Flood protection and river control Sewage disposal Roads and footpaths Parks and Recreation Community and cultural Economic development Community facilities and services Transportation
Special Consultative Procedure	As defined in section 83 of the Local Government Act 2002. (Attachment 1)
Strategic asset	As defined in section 5 of the Local Government Act 2002. (Attachment 1)
Taonga	means all things that are considered to be treasures and of great value, and includes things that are intangible.

Policy context

Under the Act, there are clearly defined principles for making decisions, determining significance and engaging with communities. These include:

- identification and assessment of options
- quantification of benefits and costs
- the amount of detail
- evidence of compliance with the significance and engagement policy
- providing processes to encourage and engage with Māori

[1] **Note:** The Local Government Act 2002 uses the term significant and significance in a number of contexts. Unless it is inappropriate in the context, the criteria set out in this policy and in the statutory definitions will apply.

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Section 10 of the Act defines the purpose of local government as:

- enabling democratic local decision-making and action by, and on behalf of, communities; and
- meeting the current and future needs of communities for good-quality local infrastructure, local public services, and performance of regulatory functions in a way that is most cost-effective for households and businesses.

Section 14 of the Act sets out the principles relating to local authorities, including:

- conducting its business in an open, transparent and democratically accountable manner
- making itself aware of, and having regard to, the views of all of its communities
- when making a decision, taking account of: the diversity of the community and the community's interests within its district or region; the interests of future as well as current communities; and the likely impact of any decision on the interests
- providing opportunities for Māori to contribute to its decision making processes.

The policy supports Whanganui District Council's Leading Edge Strategy by:

- demonstrating strong, positive and empowering leadership to support unity and drive our district forward;
- working with our distinct communities of interest to ensure everyone has a voice; and
- strengthen partnerships and ways of working collaboratively to weave our aspirations together

Background and issues

Council first adopted a Significance and Engagement Policy in 2014 which was a new requirement for all councils under Part 6 of the Act with this policy marking its first review.

The Act requires Council to adopt a policy setting out -

a) that local authority's general approach to determining the significance of proposals and decisions in relation to issues, assets, and other matters; and
b) any criteria or procedures that are to be used by the local authority in assessing the extent to which issues, proposals, assets, decisions, or activities are significant or may have significant consequences; and

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c) how the local authority will respond to community preferences about engagement on decisions relating to specific issues, assets, or other matters, including the form of consultation that may be desirable; and

d) how the local authority will engage with communities on other matters

Once a decision is determined as significant according to the approach, criteria and procedures of this policy, or by council resolution, the decision-making and associated engagement provisions contained in section 76(1) of the Act will be observed.

As part of the review of the Significant and Engagement Policy 2014 and development of this policy, engagement with key internal and external stakeholders was undertaken, including Council's Mana Whenua iwi partners Te Runanga O Tamaupoko Link and Te Runanga O Tupoho, to ensure Council's approach to determining significance and engagement methods reflected community preferences. The Whanganui District Council Youth Committee was also engaged with to ensure the policy captures the best methods to engage with youth in the community.

Feedback received from the public through pre-engagement generally supported how the Council determines significance and engagement methods deployed. Community feedback also identified room for improvement which has been incorporated into this policy.

Goal

Vision statement

To provide clarity around the decision-making process of Council and to support our communities to engage in this process.

Objectives

The objectives of this policy are to:

1. Enable the Council and its communities to identify the degree of significance attached to particular issues, proposals, assets, decisions and activities
2. Provide clarity about how and when communities can expect to be engaged in decisions made by Council
3. Inform the Council from the beginning of a decision-making process about the extent, form and type of engagement required.

Policies

1. General

1.1. Council will consider the significance of every issue requiring a decision and the level of engagement on a case by case basis. Significance and engagement will be considered in the early stages of a proposal before

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decision-making occurs and, if necessary, reconsidered as the proposal develops.

1.2. When Council makes a decision that is inconsistent with this policy, the steps identified in Section 80 of the Local Government Act 2002 will be undertaken.

2. General approach to assessing significance

2.1. In considering the degree of significance of every issue, matter or proposal requiring a decision, Council will be guided by the following:

- The potential effect on delivering Council's strategic aspirations
- How the decision aligns with historical Council decisions
- The likely impact of the decision on present and future interests of the community
- Recognising iwi cultural values and their relationship to land and water
- The level of community interest in the decision and whether community views on the issue are already known
- The possible financial and non-financial costs of the decision (or of reversing the decision) with regard to the Council's capacity to perform its role
- The transfer of ownership, control or affect a decision has on a strategic asset

2.2. The Council will also take into account views already expressed in the community and the level of support for those views, when determining the significance of a decision.

3. Criteria used for determining significance

3.1. In determining the degree of significance of any issue, proposal or matter the Council will apply the criteria presented in Table 1.

Table 1: Criteria used for determining significance

Criteria	Measure
The degree to which the issue impacts on individuals, groups and organisations within our communities.	The decision may cause: • high levels of public interest and potential to generate controversy • large divisions in views amongst the community • large impact on a moderate number of people in the community • moderate impact on a large portion of the community

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The degree to which the issue affects the level of service of a significant activity	The decision may alter the level of service provided by Council
The degree to which the issue has a financial impact on Council or the rating levels of its communities	The decision will have a substantial financial impact
The degree to which the decision is inconsistent or largely inconsistent with existing documented policies and plans	The decision is inconsistent with other policies and strategies
The degree to which the decision impacts on the environment, culture or people of Whanganui, now and into the future	The decision may impact the community's sustainability and resilience
The degree to which the decision may alter Council's relationship with iwi	The impact of the decision may have a detrimental effect on relationships with iwi
The degree to which the decision will affect a strategic asset	The impact of the decision may have on a strategic asset

3.2. If an issue, proposal or matter meets one or more of the criteria above, it will be determined significant.

4. Procedures in relation to significance

4.1. When any issue, matter or proposal is determined as a significant decision:

- The issue will be considered by the Council
- The report to Council will include an officer assessment of significance of the issue, the degree of engagement proposed, the engagement and communication plan proposed (attachment 5) and an officer recommendation.

4.2. The Council will not make a decision or proceed with a proposal which it considers to be significant, unless it is first satisfied that Sections 77 (Requirements in relation to decisions), 78 (Community views in relation to decisions), 81 (Contributions to decision-making by Māori) and 82 (Principles of Consultation) of the Act have been appropriately observed.

4.3. When any issue, matter or proposal is determined as not significant:

- The Council must still consider views and preferences in the course of the decision making process of an issue
- The report to Council will include an officer assessment of significance

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5. General approach to engagement

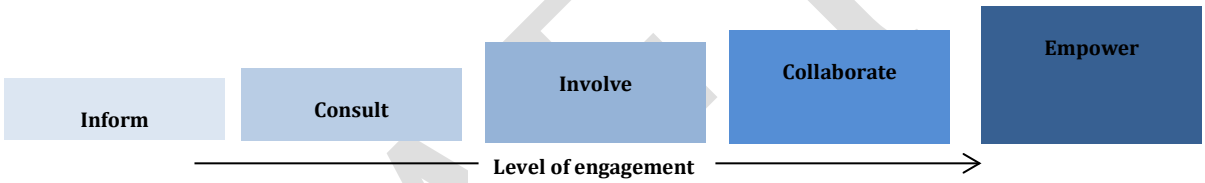
5.1. The Whanganui District Council is committed to engaging with its communities and has developed a toolbox (attachment 4) so people can participate in the decision-making process, and contribute to the development of their District.

5.2. Community engagement:

- is a process
- involves the public
- is focussed on decision making or problem-solving
- is beneficial – builds relationships

5.3. Community engagement will occur across a spectrum at differing levels. These levels will range from informing the public with information through to empowering – in which the decision making is in the hands of the public.

Figure 1: Engagement spectrum



5.4. Effective engagement is important to build trust between the Council and its communities, and to allow the Council to respond to the changing needs of its communities. The Significance and Engagement Policy aims to ensure that elected members are well informed of the public and stakeholder views when making their decisions.

5.5. Alongside this, the Council seeks to increase the level of involvement, and resident satisfaction, with the information provision and understanding of council processes.

5.6. Council will actively pursue opportunities to partner and collaborate with the community. Such partnerships will predominantly be at the 'involve' and 'collaborate' level of the engagement spectrum. Where each partnership opportunity sits on the engagement spectrum will be assessed on a case by case basis, and clearly outlined to all parties.

5.7. The Council acknowledges that "communities" may be communities of place or communities of issue and will use appropriate tools and techniques to make meaningful and timely connections that elicit feedback.

5.8. When selecting techniques for community engagement Council will give consideration to the following:

- who is affected, interested in or likely to have a view on the issue
- the significance of the matter
- the community preferences for engagement
- what information already exists
- the circumstances in which the issue arose

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- what key messages need to be shared

5.9. It is important to note that even in situations where there is plenty of opportunity to gain community input, it may not be possible to have significant control over what is done with the results. It is important to ascertain how results will be used before beginning an engagement process to ensure that as many of those ultimately responsible for decision-making are included in the process with the community, and have made a commitment to respecting the outcomes. This also gives greater confidence to the community that their input is being listened to.

6. Determining engagement

6.1. Council will select the most appropriate level of engagement for any particular issue (unless the special consultative procedure is required by legislation). This applies to issues with a high degree of significance as well as those that are not.

6.2. Differing levels of engagement may be required during the varying phases of decision-making on an issue, however in general, the more significant an issue is, the greater the need for community engagement.

6.3. The actual location on the Engagement Spectrum will be made on a case-by-case basis. This decision will guide the selection of appropriate engagement tools and techniques to be used.

6.4. The level to which Council will engage will align with the significance of the decision to be made and will be at one of the levels in attachment 3.

6.5. Attachment 3, Level of Engagement, also provides examples of the differing types of tools associated with each level and the timing generally associated with these types of decisions/levels of engagement, to which the public can expect to be involved.

7. Engagement framework and procedures

7.1. There are a range of situations where engagement is necessary or desirable and a wide range of engagement techniques to choose from for any given situation. Each situation, therefore, needs to be assessed according to both the issue and the phase of decision-making and the individual circumstances it presents.

7.2. It will not always be appropriate or practicable to conduct processes at the participatory end of the consultation continuum. Many minor issues will not warrant a participatory approach, and will sit at the 'inform' level. Constraints of time and money will also limit what is possible on some occasions.

7.3. Council will use a Community Engagement Toolbox (Attachment 4) as a guide for engagement planning. This resource provides a consistent but flexible process to guide Council on how and when to engage communities in decision-making. The table is not a definitive list. Techniques not listed here may be used in addition to those listed.

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7.4. The community engagement process generally follows five phases:

(i) Planning – crucial to sustainable decision making

(ii) Strategy development – bringing together all of the planning elements, the road-map

(iii) Implementation of the strategy – action planning and implementation

(iv) Reporting – providing feedback to stakeholders and reporting to the council

(v) Final evaluation – how well was the objective achieved?

7.5. In developing engagement plans (attatchment 5) for each issue requiring a decision, the following things should be considered

- engagement objectives – the feedback that is sought from communities
- timeframe and completion date
- communities to be engaged with
- engagement tools and techniques to be used
- community preferences regarding engagement techniques
- resources needed to complete the engagement
- communication planning needed
- basis of assessment and feedback to the communities involved

7.6. For decisions classified as high significance, engagement tools and techniques beyond "inform" must be used and all decisions must be informed as a minimum.

7.7. The Council will use online engagement channels whenever possible and appropriate.

7.8. When engaging with the wider public the Council will utilise existing forums such as Safer Whanganui (which includes community service providers), The Multicultural Forum and the Positive Ageing Forum.

7.9. Consideration will also be given to appropriate levels of engagement for other matters, while of community interest, do not meet the criteria above and will mean that as a minimum the community is informed of the decision.

8. Engagement with Iwi and Māori

8.1. Joint Management Agreements, Memorandum of Understanding or any other similar high level agreements will be considered as a starting point when engaging with iwi and the community in general.

8.2. When engaging with Māori in the community the Council will use a range of techniques from the Engagement Toolbox (attachment 4), and with guidance from iwi within our district including our Mana Whenua iwi partners to ensure that Māori views are fairly represented throughout the decision-making process.

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8.3. The Council will commit to providing relevant information to improve access for Māori in the community to contribute to engagement and decision-making processes.

8.4. If an issue involves a significant decision in relation to land or a body of water, the Council will engage directly with affected iwi in a manner and at a time mutually agreed to ensure that the relationship of Māori and their culture and traditions with their ancestral land, water, sites, waahi tapu, valued flora and fauna, and other taonga are provided for.

8.5. When engaging with Iwi, their stories and information will be looked after as taonga. This includes the sharing of this information with other parties.

9. Engagement with Youth

9.1. When engaging with youth the Council will use an array of methods from the Engagement Toolbox and consult with the Youth Committee about the most effective techniques to engage with youth in the District. The Council will use the Youth Committee as advocates for the views of youth by providing information to enable youth to be involved in the decision-making process.

10. Rural Community Engagement

10.1. When engaging with rural communities the Council will use an array of methods from the Engagement Toolbox and consult with the Rural Community Board about the most effective techniques to engage with the rural communities in the District. The Council will use the Rural Community Board as advocates for the views of rural communities

11. Statutory Consultation

11.1. Council is required to undertake a special consultative procedure as set out in section 83 of the Local Government Act 2002 on certain matters (regardless of whether they are considered significant as part of this policy).

11.2. The following matters are listed in the Local Government Act 2002 as requiring statutory consultation via a Special Consultative Procedure:[2]

- establishing a council-controlled organisation (section 56)
- making, amending or revoking a bylaw (section 86)
- adopting a long term plan (section 93(2)) - this must be through the consultation document specified in section 93A-G.
- altering a long term plan (section 93(5)) - this must be through the consultation document specified in section 93A-G.
- certain decisions that can only be taken if provided for in the long term plan (section 97).

[2] Note: Not all of these matters would be determined significant under Council's Significance and Engagement Policy. Other Acts of Parliament may require a Special Consultative Procedure

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- a decision to alter significantly the intended level of service provision for any significant activity undertaken by or on behalf of the local authority, including a decision to commence or cease any such activity (Section 97)
- a decision to transfer the ownership or control of a strategic asset to or from the local authority entering into a partnership or joint venture to provide water services (section 137).
- a decision to transfer the ownership or control of a strategic asset to or from the local authority (Section 97)

12. Strategic assets

12.1. Section 76AA(5) of the Local Government Act requires the following to be listed in this Policy:

a) any asset or group of assets listed in accordance with section 76AA(3) by the local authority; and

b) any land or building owned by the local authority and required to maintain the local authority's capacity to provide affordable housing as part of its social policy; and

c) any equity securities held by the local authority in—

(i) a port company within the meaning of the Port Companies Act 1988

(ii) an airport company within the meaning of the Airport Authorities Act 1966

12.2. Attachment 2 lists assets or group of assets that the council needs to retain if it is to maintain its capacity to achieve or promote any outcome that it determines to be important to the current or future well-being of the community.

Monitoring and evaluation

The Significance and Engagement Policy will be monitored by the level of participation in decision-making from the community.

The Council will review the Significance and Engagement Policy every three years. The review process will involve community engagement and will enquire from people in the district their engagement preferences and will review those preferences each triennial term.

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Appendices

Attachment 1: Definitions

These definitions are subject to an amendments.

Core Service: Section 11A Local Government Act 2002

In performing its role, a local authority must have particular regard to the contribution that the following core services make to its communities:

(a) network infrastructure:

(b) public transport services:

(c) solid waste collection and disposal:

(d) the avoidance or mitigation of natural hazards:

(e) libraries, museums, reserves, and other recreational facilities and community amenities.

Māori: Māori Community Act 1962 and Electoral Act 1993

Means a person of the Maori race of New Zealand; and includes any descendant of such a person

Significance: Section 5 Local Government Act 2002

In relation to any issue, proposal, decision, or other matter that concerns or is before a local authority, means the degree of importance of the issue, proposal, decision, or matter, as assessed by the local authority, in terms of its likely impact on, and likely consequences for,—

(a) the district or region:

(b) any persons who are likely to be particularly affected by, or interested in, the issue, proposal, decision, or matter:

(c) the capacity of the local authority to perform its role, and the financial and other costs of doing so

Significant: Section 5 Local Government Act 2002

In relation to any issue, proposal, decision, or other matter, means that the issue, proposal, decision, or other matter has a high degree of significance.

Special Consultative Procedure

(1) Where this Act or any other enactment requires a local authority to use or adopt the special consultative procedure, that local authority must—

(a) prepare and adopt—

(i) a statement of proposal; and

(ii) if the local authority considers on reasonable grounds that it is necessary to enable public understanding of the proposal, a summary of the information contained in the statement of proposal (which summary must comply with section 83AA); and

(b) ensure that the following is publicly available:

(i) the statement of proposal; and

(ii) a description of how the local authority will provide persons interested in the proposal with an opportunity to present their views to the local authority in accordance with section 82(1)(d); and

(iii) a statement of the period within which views on the proposal may be provided to the local authority (the period being not less than 1 month from the date the statement is issued); and

(c) make the summary of the information contained in the statement of proposal prepared in accordance with paragraph (a)(ii) (or the statement of proposal, if a summary is not prepared) as widely available as is reasonably practicable as a basis for consultation; and

(d) provide an opportunity for persons to present their views to the local authority in a manner that enables spoken (or New Zealand sign language) interaction between the person and the local authority, or any representatives to whom an appropriate delegation has been made in accordance with Schedule 7; and

(e) ensure that any person who wishes to present his or her views to the local authority or its representatives as described in paragraph (d)—

(i) is given a reasonable opportunity to do so; and

(ii) is informed about how and when he or she may take up that opportunity.

(2) For the purpose of, but without limiting, subsection (1)(d), a local authority may allow any person to present his or her views to the local authority by way of audio link or audio visual link.

(3) This section does not prevent a local authority from requesting or considering, before making a decision, comment or advice from an officer of the local authority or any other person in respect of the proposal or any views on the proposal, or both

Strategic Asset: Section 5 Local Government Act 2002

In relation to the assets held by a local authority, means an asset or group of assets that the local authority needs to retain if the local authority is to maintain the local authority's capacity to achieve or promote any outcome that the local authority determines to be important to the current or future well-being of the community; and includes—

(a) any asset or group of assets listed in accordance with section 76AA(3) by the local authority; and

(b) any land or building owned by the local authority and required to maintain the local authority's capacity to provide affordable housing as part of its social policy; and

(c) any equity securities held by the local authority in—

(i) a port company within the meaning of the Port Companies Act 1988:

(ii) an airport company within the meaning of the Airport Authorities Act 1966

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Attachment 2: Strategic Assets

Activity/Group of Activities	Asset	Strategic importance
Community facilities	• All cemeteries • All public toilets • Portfolio of reserves and land used for parks, gardens, sports fields and recreational areas as a whole • Network of street trees but no individual tree • Portfolio of community recreational and leisure facilities as a whole • Portfolio of Council owned venues as a whole	To deliver on outcomes linked to: A safe and healthy community Active and culturally rich community
Cultural facilities	• Community and Council information archive collections and records as a whole • Sarjeant Gallery and collections as a whole • Libraries and library collections as a whole	To value and support our active and culturally rich community
Corporate	• Council information archive collections and records as a whole	For the delivery of all outcomes and community wellbeing
Pensioner housing	• The portfolio of pensioner housing but not specific units or complexes	A safe and healthy community
Ports Group	• The Whanganui airport encompassing an asphalt runway and terminal building • The Whanganui Port	Economic prosperity listed under section 5 of the Act

Investments	• The Council's 100% shareholding in Whanganui District Council Holdings Limited which in turn holds 100% of the shares in GasNet Limited • City Endowment portfolio – but not one specific building • Harbour Endowment portfolio – but not one specific building • City Freehold portfolio – but not one specific building	Listed under section 5 of the Act
Roading	• Roading network as a whole but not any specific part of the network	For the delivery of all outcomes and community wellbeing - A safe and healthy community - Environmental sustainability
Sewage disposal services	• The sewage collection, treatment and disposal system, including the sewer network, pump stations and treatment works •	
Stormwater drainage services	• Stormwater network as a whole but not any specific part of the network	
Water supply	• Water supply system as a whole but not any specific part of the network	
Water reticulation system	• Water reticulation system as a whole but not any specific part of the network	

Attachment 3: Level of Engagement

	Inform	Consult	Involve	Collaborate	Empower
Goal	To provide the public with balanced and objective information to assist them in understanding the problems, alternatives, opportunities and/or solutions.	To obtain public feedback on analysis, alternatives and/or decisions.	To work directly with the public throughout the process to ensure that public concerns and aspirations are consistently understood and considered.	To partner with the public in each aspect of the decision including the development of alternatives and the identification of the preferred solution.	To place final decision making in the hands of the public.
Types of issues that we might use this for	Flood and storm cautions	Rates review	Long Term Plan	Safer Whanganui	Election voting systems (MMP, STV or first past the post)
Tools Council might use	Website Public notices Newspaper Media releases Social media	Formal submissions and hearings, focus groups, surveys, huis	Workshops Focus groups Citizens Panel World cafes Formal submissions and hearings	External working groups (involving community experts)	Binding referendum Local body elections
When the community can expect to be involved	Council would generally advise the community once a decision is made	Council would advise the community once a draft decision is made and seek feedback and input. Generally the community would have up to 4 weeks to participate and respond.	Council would generally provide the community with a greater lead in time to allow them time to be involved in the process.	Council would generally involve the community at the start to scope the issue, again after information has been collected and again when options are being considered.	Council would generally provide the community with a greater lead in time to allow them time to be involved in the process. e.g. typically a month or more.

Attachment 4: Engagement Toolbox

TYPE OF ENGAGEMENT	WHEN USEFUL	COST	TIMEFRAME	POSITIVES	NEGATIVES	EXPERT HELP REQUIRED?	NOTES
INFORM							
All methods of informing • Community Link • Newspaper • Radio • Social media updates • Media releases • Letter drop • Online community panel • Conversation with Council officer • Posters • Public meetings • Interactive websites • Email • Phone call	• To build interest and update people on progress and decisions	Medium- varies according to format and distribution	Variable	• Interest can be built over a series of communications • Keeps people up-to-date • Wide distribution	• Only a form of consultation if community feedback is also sought • Printing and distribution costs can be high • Some methods are inappropriate for non-readers and non- English speakers/readers and the visually impaired • Unappealing for oral cultures • Access problems if information not distributed to all appropriate audiences	Depends on audience and format.	• Must ensure that format and distribution will reach target audience. • Use existing tools such as Community Link, Facebook, Council website, Council's online panel, Viewpoint Whanganui, twitter, newsletters and existing networks such as Rural Community Board and Youth Committee. • Youth – Current social media channels.

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TYPE OF ENGAGEMENT	WHEN USEFUL	COST	TIMEFRAME	POSITIVES	NEGATIVES	EXPERT HELP REQUIRED?	NOTES
CONSULT/INVOLVE							
Written submissions (including online)	• Special Consultative procedure • Complex or technical issues • Arguments that take a long time to prepare • Legislative issues • Policy and service reviews	Low to Medium	Medium	• Allows opportunity to consider issues/do background preparation before writing submissions • Good for highly technical/complex proposals that require well prepared responses	• Low response rates • Engage a narrow range of people – not representative of population • Time consuming to prepare • Off-putting to those unfamiliar with process • Some methods are inappropriate for non-readers and non- English speakers/readers and the visually impaired • Unappealing for oral cultures	No	• Can increase response rate by giving people plenty of time to make submissions, (not over holiday period) simplifying response forms, being proactive, approaching a range of interest groups etc • Use Viewpoint Whanganui and Online panel • Changes made as a result of consultation should be reported back to submitters • Need to be clear about what respondents are being asked to submit on

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TYPE OF ENGAGEMENT	WHEN USEFUL	COST	TIMEFRAME	POSITIVES	NEGATIVES	EXPERT HELP REQUIRED?	NOTES
Oral submissions	• Special Consultative procedure • Oral cultures (especially Māori and Pacific island groups) • Those unable to communicate in written form	Low to Medium	Medium	• More appropriate for oral cultures • Opportunity to clarify	• Can be very intimidating for those who do not like public speaking • Requires a good grasp of English • Puts off those unfamiliar with submission process	In some instances translators may be required	• Need not be public (can be one-on-one or by phone) • Can be held in venues that are more 'friendly' to participants • Send information to submitters on what to expect on the day

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TYPE OF ENGAGEMENT	WHEN USEFUL	COST	TIMEFRAME	POSITIVES	NEGATIVES	EXPERT HELP REQUIRED?	NOTES
Surveys (written and online)	• When issues are clear and easily communicated in a survey form • Consulting with a large number of people • When quantitative data is required	Medium	Medium to high	• Doesn't require interviewers • Can be quick and easy to complete • Can be completed at a time that suits respondents • Information • collected can be represented • statistically • Provides a basis to compare amongst groups	• Survey design and sampling procedures can be complex (badly designed questionnaires lead to poor quality and incorrect information gathering) • Order of questions may influence responses – however with online surveys the order can be randomly changed • Written surveys can be costly to process • Response rates are generally poor for postal surveys • Some methods are inappropriate for non-readers and non- English speakers/readers and the visually impaired • Unappealing for oral cultures • Respondents can misinterpret questions • Only useful for gauging views on relatively straightforward issues • Little scope for further in-depth comment • Not representative of population	Yes • survey design • sampling procedu-res • online survey setup • statistical analysis	• Assumption that target population already has enough information to make an informed response • Respondents can be given reminders to complete surveys • Incentives are becoming an acceptable way of increasing response rates • Need to consider potential sample and responses bias when analysing results • If surveying youth, aim to keep it to multi choice questions and if online, no more than three questions. • Use Viewpoint Whanganui and Online panel

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TYPE OF ENGAGEMENT	WHEN USEFUL	COST	TIMEFRAME	POSITIVES	NEGATIVES	EXPERT HELP REQUIRED?	NOTES
Telephone surveys	Good for gathering the views of a large number of people in a short time frame	Medium/High	Medium	• Opportunity for clarification • Guarantees a particular level and representativeness of response (can keep going until required number reached) • Doesn't usually require large time commitment from respondents	• Easier for potential respondents to refuse to respond to an anonymous voice • Only useful for gauging views on relatively straight forward issues • Usually only a snapshot of information collected • This method is becoming less viable as fewer research companies are offering this service. • Relies on matching phone numbers from the Yellow Pages to names on the electoral roll, which causes difficulties in obtaining an adequate sample size due to increased mobile phone usage and unlisted numbers.	Yes • Survey design • Sampling procedures • Interviewer Selection and training • Analysis of results	Hours of operation critical to ensure equity of access Often contracted to external research agencies When responses are made to a person on the telephone, as opposed to online or in written form, there can be a tendency to respond more truthfully when answering about something that is socially desirable. There is also a tendency to respond more neutrally, towards the middle of the scale and away from extremes

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TYPE OF ENGAGEMENT	WHEN USEFUL	COST	TIMEFRAME	POSITIVES	NEGATIVES	EXPERT HELP REQUIRED?	NOTES
Face-to-face interviews	• In situations where the issues/questions are more complex and/or open ended • Interviewer can explain questions to respondents • Better for use with oral cultures	Medium/high	Medium to high	• Minimises respondent errors in interpreting questions • More participatory and interviewers can get more information by probing for responses (semi structured interviews) • Higher response rates than written surveys • Better for oral cultures • Able to note non-verbal cues	• Can be expensive if training and employment of interviewers is required. • Can introduce interviewer biases • Cultural barriers	Yes • Sampling procedures • Interviewer selection and training	Appearance and demeanour of interviewer are crucial Interviewers must be familiar with questions Interviewers must remain neutral When possible provide the interviewee with information beforehand Ask sensitive questions last

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TYPE OF ENGAGEMENT	WHEN USEFUL	COST	TIMEFRAME	POSITIVES	NEGATIVES	EXPERT HELP REQUIRED?	NOTES
Referenda	• Suitable when committed to acting on the views of the majority of voters • Best for consultation relating to citywide and strategic decision making	High	High	• Decisive way of resolving an issue • Can provide a specific mandate – important for controversial issues • Adds legitimacy to a decision • Can provide a clear answer to a specific question • Encourages political participation	• Costly exercise requiring considerable rigour • Only the motivated who vote • Limited number of questions can be asked • Issues can be too complex to be resolved in simple terms • Minority voters alienated by acting on the views of the majority • Some methods are inappropriate for non-readers and non- English speakers/readers and the visually impaired	Yes • Question design • Access to the electoral database • Overseeing of a political process	Costs can be reduced by timing a referendum to coincide with an election Well balanced public information campaign can allow for more informed responses Can be binding or non-binding

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TYPE OF ENGAGEMENT	WHEN USEFUL	COST	TIMEFRAME	POSITIVES	NEGATIVES	EXPERT HELP REQUIRED?	NOTES
Hui/Formal public meetings	For small scale and localised consultation	Medium	Medium	• Provides an opportunity for dialogue where clarification can be sought from all parties • Provides opportunity for all to voice their opinions publicly • Everyone hears the same information and comments – less interpretation errors	• Participation often low • Participation requires a good grasp of language • Can be intimidating for those who do not like public speaking • Can be confrontational if not well facilitated • Quality feedback on contentious issues can be minimal if not well facilitated	Yes • Quality facilitation essential	Strong emphasis on quality facilitation to encourage all present to participate Cultural factors need to be considered e.g. location, language etc Equity of access is important (e.g. mobility issues)

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TYPE OF ENGAGEMENT	WHEN USEFUL	COST	TIMEFRAME	POSITIVES	NEGATIVES	EXPERT HELP REQUIRED?	NOTES
Focus groups/working panels/Local action groups/task groups	Where a high level of engagement and qualitative information are sought	Can be high	High	• Allows for discussion of issues which can include decision making • Complex issues can be explored • Good for gauging the opinions of those who don't normally participate • Can be representative of wider community views depending on composition	• Can be unrepresentative of wider community views depending on composition • Can be susceptible to capture by particular view points • Good facilitators can be costly and hard to find • Transcription can be costly and time consuming • Participation requires a good grasp of language	Yes • Facilitation	• Focus group sessions should be no larger than 8-12 people • Good facilitation crucial • Can be conducted in other languages • Can be used in association with other consultation techniques

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TYPE OF ENGAGEMENT	WHEN USEFUL	COST	TIMEFRAME	POSITIVES	NEGATIVES	EXPERT HELP REQUIRED?	NOTES
COLLABORATE/EMPOWER							
Interactive web sites	Technical situations when there is a large amount of information available. Situations where stakeholders have internet access	Medium/High	Low	• Time and cost savings • Interactive • Accessible locally, nationally and internationally	• Access only to those with the internet • Some methods don't cater for non-readers and non- English speakers/readers and the visually impaired English speakers • Websites can be costly to set up and keep updated	Yes • Set up	Websites should be designed to be access through smart phones. Interactive options with visual displays are preferred by youth.

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TYPE OF ENGAGEMENT	WHEN USEFUL	COST	TIMEFRAME	POSITIVES	NEGATIVES	EXPERT HELP REQUIRED?	NOTES
Multi Stakeholder Processes such as: - Participatory Appraisal – Participatory Action Planning	All inclusive forms of consultation recognising the right of all interested parties to work together in shared decision making. Everyone begins working on the project at the same time.	High	High	• Improved Decision making • Includes the normally 'silent majority' • Promotes consensus problem solving • Open, democratic process • Minimises conflict • Develops long term relationships between parties • Educational • Can be visual rather than language based	• Requires skilled facilitation • Costly in terms of time and money • Not suitable for projects which are already underway	Yes • Process design • Facilitation	• Cannot be an add on to some other process • Good process design and facilitation essential

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TYPE OF ENGAGEMENT	WHEN USEFUL	COST	TIMEFRAME	POSITIVES	NEGATIVES	EXPERT HELP REQUIRED?	NOTES
Citizens Juries/ Panels/Charettes (Group of 12-25 people representative of a community, brought together for three to five day to consider an issue)	Provides a controlled environment for different viewpoints on controversial issues to be considered without interference or interruption. May pull together many elements of a project and generate alternatives	High	High	• Improved Decision making • Includes the normally 'silent majority' • Promotes consensus problem solving • Open, democratic process • Educational • Deal well with complex issues • Legitimacy through representative make-up • Controlled environment for debate	• Costly and time consuming • Cannot be totally representative of the community • Public expectation that jury's "verdict" will be actioned • "Jurors" may need to be financially compensated for loss of earnings	Yes • Jury selection • Process design and set up and facilitation	• All relevant information must be presented • Good venue required • Often used in urban planning • Charettes has a decision-making focus

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TYPE OF ENGAGEMENT	WHEN USEFUL	COST	TIMEFRAME	POSITIVES	NEGATIVES	EXPERT HELP REQUIRED?	NOTES
World cafes	A meeting process featuring simultaneous conversations in response to predetermined questions. To foster open and meaningful discussion of topics and bring areas of commonality out in to the open.	Medium/High	High	• Can bring closure to a set of questions • Simultaneous conversations can include a wide range of participants in one go • Participants change tables as they go and can focus on identifying common ground with each question.	• Success is dependent on the responsiveness of participants • Complicated to keep conversations on target with multiple conversations happening at once	No • It allows for people to work in small groups without the need for staff facilitators	Room set up is very important. Should feel conducive to a conversation and not like a standard meeting format. Useful when determining priorities, or pre engagement for Plans.

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TYPE OF ENGAGEMENT	WHEN USEFUL	COST	TIMEFRAME	POSITIVES	NEGATIVES	EXPERT HELP REQUIRED?	NOTES
Revolving conversations /Conversation circle/Samoan circles	To foster open and meaningful conversation about a topic when there is minimal need for participant education. Used when there is a high level of mistrust for the meeting 'sponsor' Often used for controversial topics.	Low	Low	• Minimal role for facilitation required • Participants can provide their views in depth • Can question and challenge • Gives everybody a chance to talk and to hear what others are saying	• Discussion is limited to four participants at a time • Participants can feel intimidated • Can be socially hard for participants to join in an existing conversation • Not all participants may get an opportunity to have their say	No • No leader is required however a facilitator welcomes and explains the process.	Room set up is important. Not designed to make decisions - more useful to use at the beginning to gauge what people think.

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TYPE OF ENGAGEMENT	WHEN USEFUL	COST	TIMEFRAME	POSITIVES	NEGATIVES	EXPERT HELP REQUIRED?	NOTES
Advisory groups	To provide ongoing advice directly to the decision maker. Useful when there is a high volume of decisions being made that requires a level of public input and there is public fatigue on consultation. Helpful on controversial topics.	Low	Ongoing	• Membership includes representation from all primary perspectives or all relevant organisations • Can be focused on achieving specific objectives • Obtains information from diverse perspectives • Information can be gained overtime on complex topics • Builds a sense of partnership with the community	• Effectiveness is defined in terms of how useful the group's decision is to the decision maker • Advisory groups are supposed to reflect public perspectives, which can be difficult • Maintaining autonomy is critical to the group's credibility amongst the wider public • Does not substitute for broader public involvement If no agreement is reached the usefulness for the decision maker diminishes	No	Can be used at any single step in the decision-making process or throughout the entire process Other processes should be run concurrently to provide opportunities for the broader public to participate.

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Attachment 5: Engagement Plan Template

When and issue, proposal or matter is considered significant a report will go to council and this will include a proposed engagement plan.

Project description and background

This will describe the nature of the engagement to be undertaken, clarify the decision to be made, the circumstances that led to it, related council decisions already made, and legislation applying.

Engagement objectives

Identify what feedback or decisions we want from communities. What decisions will be made by council that need to be informed by the community's input?

Timeframe and completion date

Describe each stage of the project, including when key decisions need to be made by Council.

Communities to be engaged with

List the communities and key stakeholders to engage with.

Communication planning

This outlines any potential reputation risks associated with the project and mitigations. It will outline the key messages to be communicated to the public, and where necessary will include a communications plan.

Engagement tools and techniques to be used

Describe the tools and techniques that will be used to engage with each of the identified communities and stakeholders. Refer to the Engagement Spectrum to determine the level of engagement for each (Inform, Empower).

Resources needed to complete the engagement

This includes time allocations for council staff and councillors and costs involved to undertake the selected engagement tools and techniques. Should also include costs of external service providers, venue hire etc.

Basis of assessment and feedback to the communities involved

This will describe how the community input will be analysed and how results will be communicated to the Council and to participating communities. Also includes an indication of when this feedback will occur – prior to, or after Council decisions are made.

Project team roles and responsibilities

This identifies who will be involved in this project, excluding external providers, and who the key contact point within Council will be.

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References

Local Government Act 2002

Māori Community Act 1962

Electoral Act 1993

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