

## **Statement of Proposal on the draft He kaupapa here mō te noho rangapū ā-Tiriti me te Māori (Policy on Te Tiriti Partnerships with Māori)**

### **Purpose**

The purpose of this document is to inform the public and seek comments on the council's draft Policy on Te Tiriti Partnerships with Māori (previously named the Policy on fostering Māori participation in council processes).

### **Background**

The draft Policy on Te Tiriti Partnerships with Māori has been prepared under the LGA framework and is included within the Long Term Plan. It outlines how council intends to advance meaningful partnerships among tāngata whenua and itself in decision-making and work processes. The policy considers the relevant legislative context; He Whakaputanga (Declaration of Independence of New Zealand); Te Tiriti o Waitangi and treaty principles developed by the courts and the Waitangi Tribunal; te reo Māori as a taonga tuku iho (cultural treasure); and council's own values.

Councils are required to outline in their Long Term Plan any steps that they intend to take to foster the development of Māori capacity in order to contribute to council decision-making.

### **Proposal**

The council proposes to adopt the Policy on Te Tiriti Partnerships with Māori, which is to be included in its Long Term Plan 2024-2034. This draft policy is based on the previous Policy on fostering Māori participation in council processes adopted in the 2021-2031 Long Term Plan, with the following proposed changes:

- Under the heading Te Tiriti o Waitangi, there is recognition of the special importance placed by Te Taitokerau tāngata whenua on He Whakaputanga and Te Tiriti, and on the findings of the Paparahi o te Raki inquiry, which concluded that the rangatira who signed Te Tiriti did not cede their sovereignty. Council's commitment to equitable participation for tangata whenua in council decision-making processes is also described.
- Under the heading Legislative Context, detail has been provided on the key principles of the Treaty of Waitangi (including partnership, reciprocity, mutual benefit and active protection) and the associated obligations and duties of council. Active protection includes protecting te reo Māori. It is explained that council must take into account Treaty settlements in its policies, plans and processes. Mana Whakahono ā Rohe are also mentioned as a mechanism for Māori participation.

- Council's mission statement has been updated (which is still currently a draft), and reference to council's vision (Te Pae Tawhiti) has been removed due to the likelihood of that changing in the proposed Long term plan.
- Under Fostering Māori Participation, more prominence is given to council's governance structures to reflect a commitment to Māori representation and independent tangata whenua experts. The prioritisation and delivery of Tāiki ē is described as a key way of giving effect to council's Te Tiriti obligations. Supporting and resourcing Tāngata Whenua Water Advisory Group (TWWAG) is also committed to in relation to the freshwater plan change and to generally enhancing understanding of te mana me te mauri o te wai. More detail is provided on enhancing the cultural competency of council staff. Council commits to providing regular opportunities for Māori leaders, technicians, and kaitiaki in the region to learn about legislation, policies, regulations, plans and rules. Council also commits to providing opportunities for Māori businesses and experts in accordance with its Māori services procurement policy.

In addition, the policy focuses on Tāiki ē to improve the capacity and capability of Māori to give effect to their aspirations. It also commits to further building the cultural competency of council; outlines ways to foster and support partnerships, Māori representation and voice; and commits to enabling effective communication and positive interactions with Māori.

### Assessment of options

The reasonably practicable options are:

- Make the proposed changes as outlined above.
- Make all or some of the proposed changes above, and make alternative relevant changes if raised in submissions.
- Do not make the proposed changes and retain the current policy.

The advantage of making the proposed changes is that the policy is kept up to date with legislation, process and approach, and accurately reflects the work council is trying to achieve.

There is also an advantage to making all or some of the proposed changes outlined above, and making additional relevant changes that may be raised in submissions. As with the above option, this option keeps the policy up to date but also takes into consideration relevant community feedback.

There is no real advantage of retaining the existing policy as this is now out of date and does not align with current legislation, nor does it accurately reflect the work council is trying to achieve.

It is therefore council's preferred option to make the proposed changes.

### **Submission process**

A full copy of the draft Policy on Te Tiriti Partnerships with Māori, and information on how to make a submission, are available from the council website at [www.nrc.govt.nz/futureplan](http://www.nrc.govt.nz/futureplan) .

The draft Policy on Te Tiriti Partnerships with Māori also forms part of the supporting information to the council consultation on the Long Term Plan 2024-2034. Information on the Long Term Plan consultation and submission process can also be found on the above website and will be undertaken concurrently with consultation on this policy.