



Local Governance Statement

2025 – 2028 Triennium

Prepared in accordance with section 40 of the Local Government Act 2002

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1. Overview

Our governance statement outlines how we engage with our communities and make decisions, and how you can be involved, so that you can effectively influence how we do things and have your say on important matters. It contains information about the following:

- The functions, responsibilities and activities of the Northland Regional Council;
- Local legislation that confers powers on the Northland Regional Council;
- Northland Regional Council Bylaws;
- The electoral system employed by the council and the opportunity to change that system;
- Representation arrangements, including Māori representation and the opportunity to change them;
- Members' roles and conduct;
- Governance structures and processes;
- Council organisations;
- Meeting processes;
- Consultation policies;
- Policies for liaising with Māori and any memoranda or agreements with Māori;
- The management structure and the relationship between management and elected members;
- The equal employment opportunities policy;
- Key approved planning and policy documents and the process for their development and review;
- Systems for public access to the local authority and its elected members; and
- Processes for requests for official information.

1.1 Keeping in contact

Keeping up to date with what we are doing and understanding our decision-making processes is important if you want to influence our decisions. In addition to this governance statement we provide information to our communities in a variety of ways including:

- Our website - www.nrc.govt.nz
- Email subscriptions – regular updates direct to your email account every time we update or add information – please register for this service at www.nrc.govt.nz/subscriptions
- Find out what we are consulting on at www.nrc.govt.nz/haveyoursay
- Read our public notices at www.nrc.govt.nz/publicnotices
- You can send us an email at info@nrc.govt.nz
- You can call us toll-free from anywhere within the Northland region between the hours of 8am to 5pm, Monday to Friday (except public holidays), on 0800 002 004
- Our central mailing address is:

Northland Regional Council
Private Bag 9021
Whangārei Mail Centre
Whangārei 0148

Please note that all postal items should be sent to this address.

- Join us on Facebook
www.facebook.com/NorthlandRegionalCouncil
- <http://www.linkedin.com/companies/northland-regional-council> Follow us on LinkedIn:
www.linkedin.com/companies/northland-regional-council



2. Functions, responsibilities and activities

The purpose of the Northland Regional Council is to enable democratic local decision-making and action by, and on behalf of, communities and to promote the social, economic, environmental, and cultural well-being of communities in the present and for the future (Section 10 of the Local Government Act 2002).

In meeting its purpose, the Northland Regional Council has a variety of roles including:

- Environmental resource management e.g. managing the effects of using freshwater, land, air and coastal waters;
- Managing rivers, mitigating soil erosion and flood control;
- Regional emergency management and civil defence preparedness;
- Regional land transport planning and contracting passenger services;
- Harbour navigation and safety, oil spills and other marine pollution; and
- Economic Development.

In fulfilling its purpose, Northland Regional Council exercises powers and fulfils responsibilities conferred on it by the legislation listed in **Appendix 1**.

3. Local legislation

In addition to the legislation that applies to all local authorities (**Appendix 1**), the Northland Regional Council is also bound by the following Local Act:

- **The Northland Regional Council and Far North District Council Vesting & Empowering Act 1992.**

The purpose of this Act is –

- To vest in the Far North District Council certain property, documents, rights and liabilities of the Northland Regional Council including land vested in the Northland Regional Council under the Local Government (Northland Region) Reorganisation Order 1989, certain harbour and maritime facilities, resource consents and approvals; and*
- To give the Far North District Council certain authorities and powers in respect of mooring charges; and*
- To repeal the Northland Harbour Board Act 1965.*

We also have bylaws:

- **The Northland Regional Council Navigation Safety Bylaw 2017**

The Northland Regional Council's Navigation Safety Bylaw 2017 came into effect on 1 August 2017. This bylaw applies to the waters in estuaries, inlets, harbours and along the Northland coast between the following boundaries:

- The outer boundary being 12 nautical miles from the shore; and
- The inner boundary being the line of mean high-water springs, except where the line crosses a river, in which case the inner boundary is deemed to be the landward boundary of the Coastal Marine Area as defined in the Regional Plan for Northland.

The bylaw covers: the safe use and operation of vessels, aids to navigation, flagged areas on beaches and areas where swimming is prohibited, mooring requirements, areas where anchoring is prohibited, reserved areas for special events, dive operations, requirements around carrying personal floatation devices on vessels and restrictions around hazardous cargoes, works and dangerous materials.

This bylaw was reviewed in 2025 and is awaiting approval from the Ministry of Transport. Once the 2025 bylaw is publicly notified, the 2017 bylaw will be withdrawn.

- **Kai Iwi Lakes Navigation Safety Bylaw 2017**

Council formally approved the Kai Iwi Lakes Navigation Safety Bylaw 2017 on 24 October 2017, with the bylaw taking effect from 1 November 2017. This bylaw applies to the lakes in the Taharoa Domain in the Kaipara district of Northland, comprising Lake Waikare, Lake Taharoa and Lake Kai Iwi

4. Electoral system

Northland Regional Council currently operates its elections under the first past the post-electoral system. Electors vote by indicating their preferred candidate(s), and the candidate(s) that receives the most votes is declared the winner regardless of the proportion of votes that candidate(s) obtained. Kaipara District Council also uses the first past the post electoral system.

The other option permitted under the Local Electoral Act 2001 is the single transferable vote system (STV). Electors rank candidates in order of preference. The number of votes required for a candidate to be elected (called the quota) depends on the number of positions to be filled and the number of valid votes. The necessary number of candidates to fill all vacancies is achieved first by the counting of first preferences then by a transfer of a proportion of votes received by any candidate where the number of votes for that candidate is in excess of the quota, and then by the exclusion of the lowest polling candidates and the transfer of these votes in accordance with voters' second preferences. This system is used by the Whangarei District Council and the Far North District Council.

The electoral system will be reviewed by council prior to the next local election in 2028.

5. Māori constituencies

In 2021, as a result of a Representation Review, council established Te Raki, the region wide Māori constituency with two Māori councillors elected at large.

In July 2024 the Government reinstated the requirement for councils to hold a poll before establishing Māori constituencies. This legislative change means that councils with existing Māori constituencies, like Northland Regional Council, were required to decide whether to disestablish these constituencies, or have the voters decide whether to retain or remove them in conjunction with the 2025 local elections.

In August 2024 Northland Regional Council voted to retain the Māori constituency. This meant it was required to hold a binding poll on whether to keep or remove the Te Raki Māori constituency in conjunction with the 2025 local election.

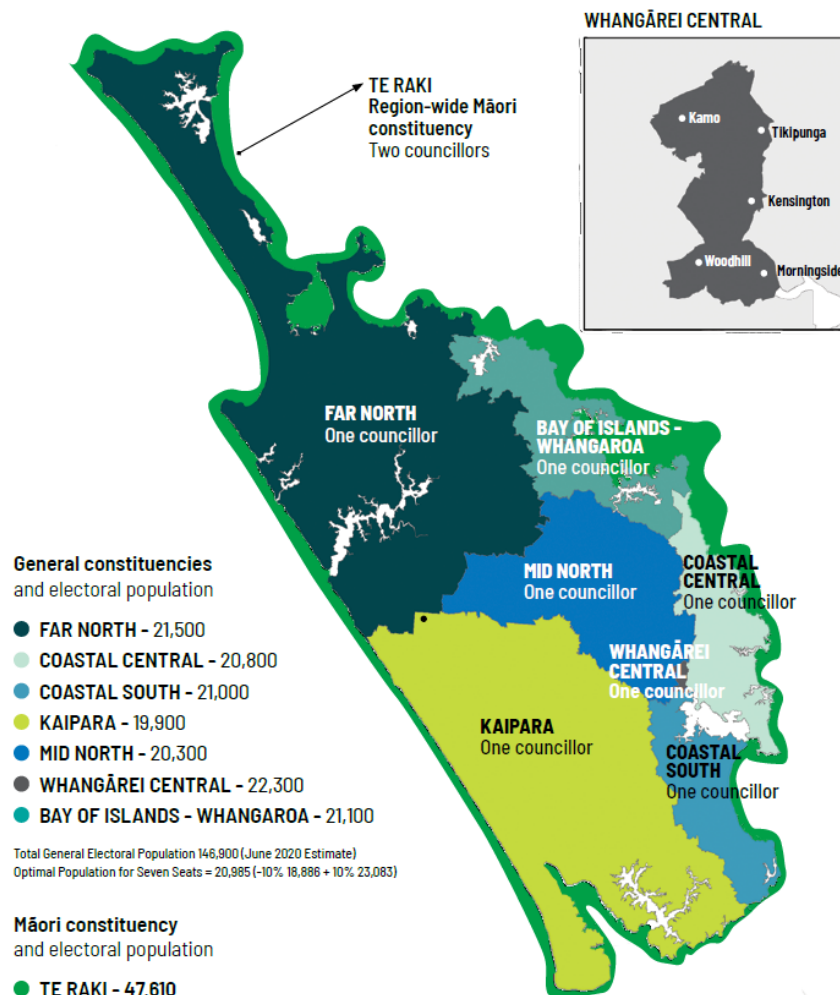
The result of the poll was to remove the Te Raki Māori constituency.

6. Representation arrangements

Representation reviews occur at least every six years under the Local Electoral Act 2001. Following council's decision to establish Māori constituencies it was required to undertake a representation review in 2021 in order to have new arrangements in place for the next local government elections in 2022.

On 19 October 2021 council adopted its final proposal that the Northland Regional Council comprise a total of nine (9) councillors, being seven (7) general councillors elected from seven (7) general constituencies and two (2) Māori councillors elected from one (1) region-wide Māori constituency. This is depicted in the graphic below.

Council received three appeals on its final proposal which were forwarded to the Local Government Commission to make the final decision. The final determination from the Commission was issued on 8 April 2022 and confirmed council's final proposal as the representation arrangements that applied for the October 2022 local elections.



Council will be undertaking its next Representation Review in 2026/2027.

7. Local Government (System Improvements) Amendment Bill

The primary policy objective of the Local Government (System Improvements) Amendment Bill (the Bill) is to reduce pressure on council rates by—

- refocusing the purpose of local government; and
- better measuring and publicising council performance; and
- prioritising core services in council spending; and
- strengthening council transparency and accountability; and
- providing regulatory relief to councils.

The Bill is intended to help address cost of living concerns.

The Bill is currently before a Select Committee which is expected to report back late November 2025.

8. Roles and conduct

The elected councillors of Northland Regional Council have the following roles:

- Setting the policy direction of the council;
- Monitoring the performance of the council;
- Representing the interests of the region (on election all members must make a declaration that they will perform their duties faithfully and impartially, and according to their best skill and judgment in the best interests of the region); and
- Employing the Chief Executive (under the Local Government Act the local authority employs the Chief Executive, who in turn employs all other staff on its behalf).

The Chairperson is elected by the members of the council at the first (inaugural) meeting. The Chairperson has the following roles:

- As presiding member at council meetings, the Chairperson is responsible for ensuring the orderly conduct of business during meetings (as determined in standing orders)
- Advocate on behalf of the community. This role may involve promoting the community and representing its interests. Such advocacy will be most effective where it is carried out with the knowledge and support of the council;
- Ceremonial head of council; and
- Provide leadership and feedback to other elected members on teamwork and chairmanship of committees.

The Chairperson may only be removed from office by resolution of council after following the procedure set out in the Local Government Act 2002 (Schedule 7 – Section 18).

The Deputy Chairperson is elected by the members of the council at the first meeting of the council. The Deputy Chairperson exercises the same roles as other elected members. In addition, if the Chairperson is absent or incapacitated, or if the office of Chairperson is vacant, then the Deputy Chairperson must perform all of the responsibilities and duties, and may exercise the powers of the Chairperson (as summarised above). The Deputy Chairperson may be removed from office by resolution of council.

The council may create one or more committees/subcommittees of council. A committee/subcommittee chairperson is usually appointed by the council but is otherwise appointed by the committee/subcommittee and is responsible for presiding over meetings of the committee/subcommittee, ensuring that the committee/subcommittee acts within the powers delegated by council. A committee/subcommittee chairperson may be removed from office by resolution of the council.

The Chief Executive is appointed by the council in accordance with Section 42 and clauses 33 and 34 of Schedule 7 of the Local Government Act 2002. The Chief Executive implements and manages the council policies and objectives within the budgetary constraints established by the council. Under Section 42 of the Local Government Act 2002, the responsibilities of the Chief Executive are:

- Implementing the decisions of the council;
- Providing advice to the council;

- Ensuring all responsibilities, duties and powers delegated to the Chief Executive or to any person employed by the Chief Executive, or imposed or conferred by any Act, regulation or bylaw are properly performed or exercised;
- Managing the activities of the council effectively and efficiently;
- Maintaining systems to enable effective planning and accurate reporting of the financial and service performance of the council;
- Providing leadership for the staff and council; and
- Employing staff (including negotiation of the terms of employment for the staff).

Elected members have specific obligations as to their conduct in the following legislation:

- Schedule 7 of the Local Government Act 2002, which includes obligations to act as a good employer in respect of the Chief Executive and to abide by the current code of conduct and standing orders;
- Sections 54A to 54I of the Local Government Act requires members to provide annual returns of certain pecuniary interests.
- The Local Authorities (Members' Interests) Act 1968 which regulates the conduct of elected members in situations where there is, or could be, a conflict of interest between their duties as an elected member and their financial interests (either direct or indirect);
- The Secret Commissions Act 1910, which prohibits elected members from accepting gifts, favours or inducement which could be seen to sway them to perform their duties in a particular way; and
- The Crimes Act 1961 regarding the acceptance or trying to obtain a bribe in a councillor's official capacity.
- Financial Markets Conduct Act 2013, which prohibits trading in listed securities (broadly shares or bonds) by an information insider.
-

All elected members are required to adhere to a code of conduct. Adopting such a code is a requirement of the Local Government Act 2002. Once adopted, such a code may only be amended by a 75% or more vote of the council. The code sets out the council's understanding and expectations of how the Chairperson and councillors will relate to one another, to staff, to the media and to the general public in the course of their duties. It also covers disclosure of information that is received by or is in the possession of elected members and contains details of the sanctions that the council may impose if an individual breaches the code. Copies of the full code of conduct may be obtained from the Governance Specialist or from council's resource library via its website www.nrc.govt.nz

9. Governance structures

As a matter of priority, the new council will review its governance structure after the triennial election.

Northland Regional Council (NRC)

The full council is the ultimate decision making body for all council operations and is comprised of all 9 councillors.

Chair:

Deputy Chair:

Members: Councillors Blackwell, Carr, Craw, Crawford, Hunt, Kitchen, Macdonald, Morunga, Tipene

Except for the subcommittee delegations detailed below, all other decisions are made by the full council via a recommendation or series of recommendations from the relevant subcommittee, joint committee or working party.

For reasons of efficiency and/or expediency, should a subcommittee or working party not be able to perform their functions, the council will assume their role and responsibilities.

The Council Chair is ex-Officio on all subcommittees and working parties and carries full voting rights where appropriate.

Committees

Working parties

Te Ruarangi

Māori Representation: 21 Māori representatives

- Monitor and advise on council's compliance with its legislative obligations to Māori including under the Local Government Act 2002 and the Resource Management Act 1991.
- Provide advice to council on topics referred to it by council.
- Develop pathways (and processes) that will achieve lasting and meaningful relationships between Māori and council.
- Ensure the views of Māori are taken into account in the exercise of council functions.

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Joint Committees

Te Oneroa-a-Tōhē-Board – Joint committee

Members:

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ID: [DMHUB-1834428678-75](#)

- Oversee the implementation of the Beach Management Plan for Te-Oneroa-a-Tōhē (Ninety Mile Beach).
- To provide governance and direction to all those who have a role in, or responsibility for, the Te Oneroa-a-Tohe management area, in order to protect and enhance environmental, economic, social, cultural, and spiritual well-being within that area for the benefit of present and future generations.

Civil Defence Emergency Management Committee

Member:

Alternate:

- Co-ordinate planning, programmes, and activities related to civil defence emergency management across the areas of reduction, readiness, response, and recovery.
- Encourage co-operation and joint action within the Northland region.

Regional Transport Committee

Chair:

Deputy Chair:

Alternate:

- Prepare Regional Land Transport Plan for council approval.
- Liaise with appropriate road safety bodies and advise council on new initiatives.
- Administer Total Mobility Scheme and report to council as appropriate.
- Prepare a Regional Public Transport Plan for council approval.
- Recommend the required independent appointments for this committee.

Joint Climate Change Committee

The Joint Climate Change Adaptation Committee is a standing committee made up of elected members from all the Northland councils and representatives from Northland hapū and iwi.

Member:

Alternate:

NRC iwi/hapu representative: TBA

- Provide direction and oversight of the development and implementation of climate change adaptation activities by local government in Te Taitokerau.
- Receive advice and provide direction and support to Climate Adaptation Te Taitokerau.
- Make recommendations to member councils to ensure a consistent regional approach is adopted to climate change adaptation activities.

Kaipara Moana Remediation Joint Committee

The Kaipara Moana Remediation Joint Committee consists of 6 appointed Kaipara Uri entities, three elected members appointed by Auckland Council and three elected members appointed by NRC.

Members:

NRC Local Governance Statement (2025 – 2028 triennium) – updated October 2025

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- Provide stewardship and governance over the expenditure of the Crown Grant and council funding, as well as contributions from land-owners.
- Commissioning and approving remediation budgets and work-plans for the Kaipara Moana Remediation programme.

Joint Regional Economic Development Committee

Members:

District Council Representation: Two members from the Far North District Council and two members from the Kaipara District Council.

- Make the decisions necessary as shareholders of Northland Inc (including the appointment of directors and the development of the Statement of Intent).
- Make funding allocations from the Investment and Growth Reserve (including operational funding of Northland Inc).
- Receive advice and provide direction and support to economic development in Northland and makes recommendations to member councils to ensure a consistent regional approach.

All subcommittees, working parties and joint committees are required to regularly report progress on their functions to the council.

A schedule of meeting dates can be found on the council website: www.nrc.govt.nz

Terms of Reference

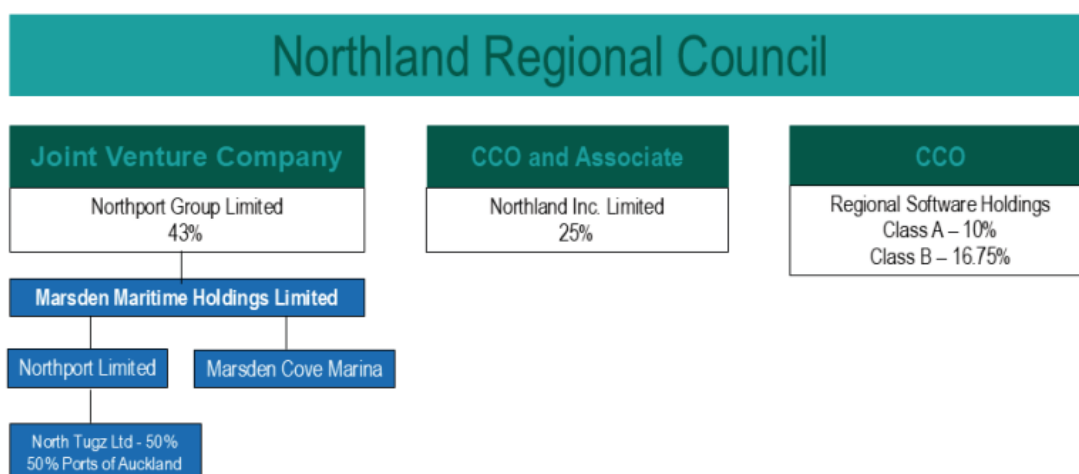
The Terms of Reference for each committee, subcommittee and working party can also be found on the council website.

Council Representation

There is also councillor representation on each of the NRC River Working Groups. The council may also, from time to time, appoint a councillor to provide representation on external bodies. Typically these entities will have synergies with the key roles and functions of council.

Elected member memberships/portfolios are detailed in **Appendix 2**.

10. Council organisations



Northport Group Limited

During 2025 council derecognised its controlling interest 53.61% in subsidiary entity Marsden Maritime Holdings Limited (MMH) while retaining an interest in MMH via a 43% ownership of Northport Group Limited which itself holds 100% of the ordinary shares in MMH, and MMH holding 100% of the ordinary shares in Northport Limited.

Northland Inc. Limited

Northland Inc. Limited, established in July 2012, is the region's economic development agency and regional tourism organisation. Prior to 1 July 2021 it was 100% owned by Northland Regional Council. Since this time it is equally and jointly owned by NRC, Kaipara District Council and Far North District Council (together referred to as the shareholder councils). Whangarei District Council became an equal and joint owner in September 2024.

Northland Inc has identified nine work areas separated into three strategic priorities and six enablers (as set out in its 2024/26 Statement of Intent) as the organisational objectives:

Work areas	Objectives
Strategic Pou 1: Investment and Infrastructure	Grow investment and business support services such that regional economic activity improves consistently year on year.
Strategic Pou 2: The Primary Sector (Tuputupu Grow Northland)	Support and facilitate adaptation and innovation in Northland's primary and associated manufacturing sectors to ensure the people and environment of Te Tai Tokerau can thrive into the future.
Strategic Pou 3: Tourism and Destination Management	Support Te Tai Tokerau's visitor industry through delivery of destination management and marketing activity that aims to better manage the impacts of visitation, improve the distribution of benefits and enhance our region's, heritage, and culture. Position Te Tai Tokerau Northland within target markets as a desirable place to visit.
Enabler 1: Innovation & Enterprise	Support SME's and Start Ups who want to start or grow their business in Te Tai Tokerau Northland.
Enabler 2: Advocacy and Brand	Advocate for Te Tai Tokerau Northland to improve the economic well-being of the region, helping to support strong communities and environmental sustainability. Develop and improve the profile of economic development and of Northland Inc to ensure that Te Tai Tokerau Northland understands and values the efforts of Northland Inc.
Enabler 3: Māori Economic Development ("Āe Mārika")	Assist strategic partners in the Māori Economic Development economy with their high impact Māori economic development projects across all levels, with a specific focus on improving capacity and capability of those with whom we partner with for delivery.
Enabler 4: Environmental Sustainability	Help Te Tai Tokerau Northland businesses achieve environmental sustainability; particularly by reducing their emissions; through partnerships that provide support and practical programmes.
Enabler 5: Partnerships	Develop and nurture high trust partnerships across the region with those who have the capability to positively impact economic development outcomes across Te Tai Tokerau.
Enabler 6: Organisational Culture and Capability	At its core, regional economic development is about improving the livelihoods of the Tai Tokerau Northland's people. As an economic development agency, our culture should therefore be focused on supporting our people and their livelihoods. Therefore, Northland Inc actively upholds a culture where teams are respectful and supportive of one another; our histories, our whānau, and our aspirations.

Regional Software Holdings Limited

During the previous triennium council's investment in Regional Software Holdings Limited (RSHL) was declassified as an Associate as council ceased to hold significant influence over RSHL's operating and financial policies.

11. Conduct of meetings

The legal requirements for council meetings are set down in the Local Government Act 2002 and the Local Government Official Information and Meetings Act 1987 (LGOIMA).

All council, committee and subcommittee meetings must be open to the public unless there is reason to consider an item 'in committee'. Although meetings are open to the public, members of the public do not have speaking rights unless prior arrangements are made with the Chairperson. LGOIMA contains a list of the circumstances where councils may consider items with the public excluded. (These circumstances generally relate to protection of personal privacy, professionally privileged or commercially sensitive information, and the maintenance of public health, safety and order). The council agenda is a public document, although parts may be withheld if the above circumstances apply.

The Chairperson or Committee/Subcommittee Chairperson is responsible for maintaining order at meetings and may, at their discretion, order the removal of any member of the public for disorderly conduct, or remove any member of council who does not comply with standing orders.

Minutes of meetings must be kept as evidence of the proceedings of the meeting. These must be made publicly available, subject to the provisions of the LGOIMA.

The LGOIMA requires all meetings of the council, its committees and subcommittees to be publicly notified. This is done by notice in one or more daily newspapers and on the council's website (www.nrc.govt.nz) during the last week of each month.

During meetings the Chairperson and councillors must follow standing orders (a set of procedures for conducting meetings). The council may suspend standing orders by a vote of 75% of the members present. .

A copy of the standing orders is available for inspection from the Governance Specialist or from council's resource library via its website www.nrc.govt.nz.

12. Significance and Engagement Policy

Council makes decisions every day, ranging from day-to-day matters to those with a very high level of importance, impact or public interest. This policy¹ set out when and how our communities can expect to be engaged in our decision-making processes. The policy:

- tells our community when and how we will engage with them on an issue or proposal; and
- provides us with a tool for defining what is significant,² helping to determine where a greater level of community engagement will result in better decision making.

Our approach to community engagement

Community engagement means connecting with other people in a decision-making process, to share ideas and build understanding. It involves a range of different approaches.

We are elected to make decisions on your behalf, however, when we are engaging communities, or deciding the extent of engagement, we will be guided by the following principles:

We will:

- seek community views on significant issues, to ensure we have enough information to make our decisions;
- give you the information you need to be involved;
- listen to your views and consider them with an open mind;
- continue to improve how we engage with Māori and enable input into our decisions;
- target our engagement to those directly affected or interested in the decision;
- do our best to provide opportunities for you to present your views in a way that suits you;
- let you know what decisions we make and why; and
- continue to improve how we engage with you.

When and how we will engage

Different levels of community engagement will be used in different situation. Sometimes we already have a good understanding of community views and preferences, but at other times we may need more information. Wherever possible we will endeavour to engage with communities on their turf, and at a time that best meets their needs, to make it as simple as we can for you to have your say.

Consulting

We will consult when we are required to by law, when a proposal is considered significant (as defined later in this policy) and when we need more information on options for responding to an issue.

When we consult we will make information about the issue or proposal available to the relevant communities, present options where relevant, tell them how our process works, and how they can

¹ This policy is intended to meet the requirements of the Local Government Act 2002 (Section 76AA) for a Significance and Engagement Policy.

² Significance (as defined by the Local Government Act 2002) 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.

provide feedback. We will offer an opportunity to talk to councillors, or independent commissioners, face-to-face. We will collect information and feedback on the proposal or issue from our communities and use this to guide decision-making. This will often follow a formal process set out in legislation.

Involving and collaborating

We will involve or collaborate with our communities in decision-making when we need more information on community views to fully understand an issue and develop a proposal for dealing with that issue; or where we can be more effective and efficient in achieving our priorities through working with others.

When we involve or collaborate we will approach those that are likely to be affected by the proposal and invite them to share their thoughts and ideas. This will guide our decision-making, and in some cases help us decide if we need to consult. We will also work with already established groups to achieve shared goals.

Informing

We will inform our communities about decisions made when we believe there is some interest in the decision and/or people may be affected by the decision, but further engagement is not warranted.

When we inform we will let you know what we have decided to do, where you can find out more and who to talk to if you have questions and advise you of any timeframes that might be relevant.

No engagement

When there is a need for confidentiality or the matters concern internal operational issues, we won't engage. In this case we will follow all procedures required by law to ensure that decisions are made in a lawful way.

We will always consider:

- The likely impact on, and consequences for, the environmental, social, cultural and economic well-being of the region.
- Who is affected by or likely to have an interest in or want to be involved in decision making on the issue and what we know about their preferences for engagement.
- The importance of the matter to both us as the council, and those affected.
- The impact on Māori and their relationship with ancestral land, water, sites, wāhi tapu, valued flora and fauna and other taonga.
- How to engage Māori in a way that is meaningful to them.
- What we already know about community views.
- The circumstances in which the issue has arisen.
- Options, benefits and costs (current and future).
- The extent to which options will achieve or promote council objectives.
- The extent to which any costs outweigh the benefits of engagement methods.
- The impact on council's capability to fulfil its statutory responsibilities.
- The likely impact on service delivery, levels of service or any of council's strategic assets.
- The degree of information/research required to inform decision-making.
- How we will inform you of the final outcome of the decision or issue.

Defining which issues and decisions are significant

Distinguishing which decisions are significant and which are not, is not always black and white. The significance of an issue, proposal, asset, decision or activity (referred to in this document as a ‘matter’) lies somewhere on a continuum from low to high, and its significance will influence the level of engagement that council undertakes.

We will consider the significance of each matter on a case-by-case basis. When considering whether any matter is significant, we will consider a combination of factors as detailed in the following table.

Does the matter being considered involve:		Degree of significance	What this means
Rates Setting a new rate; or Increasing an existing specific targeted rate; or Increasing an existing region-wide targeted rate by more than 2% (annually) above that previously approved in the most recent Long Term Plan?		SIGNIFICANT	We will consult with our communities
Assets The transfer, replacement or abandonment of a strategic asset?		SIGNIFICANT	We will consult with our communities
Level of Service A proposal to begin a new activity or cease an existing activity? ⁽¹⁾		SIGNIFICANT	We will consult with our communities
Legislation A legislative requirement to consult?		SIGNIFICANT	We will consult with our communities
Thresholds The matter triggers two or more of the following thresholds:	Is substantially inconsistent with existing policies, strategies or decisions.	LIKELY TO BE SIGNIFICANT	We will determine the best approach, which may be to: - consult - involve/collaborate - inform
	Incurs high capital or operational expenditure, or a financial transaction, with a value greater than \$750,000. ⁽²⁾		
	Large divisions in community interest or high levels of prior public interest.		
	The decision is irreversible, has a high degree of risk, or significance of the decision is largely unknown.		
	The decision has a large impact on a moderate number of people or a moderate impact on a large number of people. ⁽³⁾		
Everyday operations The matter is part of normal day-to-day operations of council or is provided for in the Long Term Plan or Annual Plan.		NOT SIGNIFICANT	We will follow usual decision-making procedures

1. Activities as set out in the 'Groups of activities' section of the Long Term Plan 2018-2028

2. This limit covers a single issue, asset or matter as well as a package of the same aligned to deliver a single outcome or objective. This limit does not apply to expenditure funded from the Investment and Growth Reserve, regional projects reserve, or changes to the council's investment portfolio. Note that these investments will need to meet the criteria of council's Investment Policy, pursuant to section 102 of the Local Government Act.

3. As a guide: a moderate number of people is considered to be 4000-8000, and a large number of people is considered to be greater than 8000.

Every report to the council or decision-making body will include an assessment of the significance of the matter, the degree of engagement proposed, the engagement plan proposed and a clear recommendation.

Strategic Assets

A strategic asset (as defined by the Local Government Act 2002) means an asset or group of assets that the local authority 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.

The Northland Regional Council's strategic assets as defined in this policy are:

- the Awanui river scheme
- Hopua te Nihotetea (the Kotuku Street Dam in the Whangarei urban rivers scheme) and the land which the dam structure occupies;
- the Kāeo stopbank scheme; and
- other river scheme assets as they are constructed.

A decision to transfer the ownership or control of a strategic asset to or from the regional council can only be taken if it has been provided for in its Long Term Plan and, therefore, will be the subject of the Local Government special consultative procedure.

Reviewing this policy

Council intends to review this policy every three years after the local body elections. Any consultation required would likely occur concurrently with a future Annual or Long Term Plan.

13. Policy on fostering Māori participation in council processes

Legislative context

The Local Government Act 2002 (LGA) recognises the relationship between Māori and the Crown under Te Tiriti o Waitangi / the Treaty of Waitangi. Section 4 of the LGA states:

‘In order to recognise and respect the Crown’s responsibility to take appropriate account of the principles of the Treaty of Waitangi and to maintain and improve opportunities for Māori to contribute to local government decision-making processes, Parts 2 and 6 provide principles and requirements for local authorities that are intended to facilitate participation by Māori in local authority decision-making processes.’

Accordingly, councils must provide for the principles and requirements stipulated by the LGA, in order to facilitate participation by Māori in local authority decision-making processes.

Section 81 of the LGA provides for Māori participation in decision-making by requiring local authorities to:

1. establish and maintain processes to provide opportunities for Māori to contribute to the decision-making processes of the local authority; and
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 paragraphs 1 and 2.

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.

The Resource Management Act 1991 (RMA) promotes the sustainable management of natural and physical resources. The RMA also recognises the relationship between Māori and the Crown and requires councils to take into account the principles of Te Tiriti o Waitangi / the Treaty of Waitangi (section 8) when undertaking its functions. The RMA also requires councils to ‘recognise and provide for ... the relationship of Māori and their culture and traditions with their ancestral lands, water, sites, wāhi tapu, and other taonga’ (section 6(e)), ‘the protection of protected customary rights’ (section 6(g)); and to ‘have particular regard to ... kaitiakitanga’ (section 7(a)).

Council’s values

Council’s mission says ‘Working together to create a healthy environment, strong economy and resilient communities’.

Council’s vision articulates a region working together for a sustainable and thriving future. With statutory obligations to empower Māori to participate in local government processes, a key focus area for council is through fostering meaningful partnerships and relationships with tāngata whenua.

This commitment needs to be reflected across all aspects of council business. To help guide council and staff, and be effective, council will work towards ensuring Māori (past, present and future generations), and their culture and traditions, are valued and reflected in our work.

Te Tiriti o Waitangi / the Treaty of Waitangi

Te Taitokerau has the second-largest Māori population of regional councils across New Zealand, with approximately 36% of the region’s population identifying as Māori.

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Council supports the intention of the Crown to uphold the principles of the Te Tiriti o Waitangi / the Treaty of Waitangi as prescribed in local government and Treaty settlement legislation.

Upholding Te Tiriti principles requires council to work with Māori to encourage and enable the participation of Māori in council processes in ways that meet their needs and aspirations, as well as regional outcomes.

To guide council's implementation of Te Tiriti obligations, Tāiki ē (NRC's Te Tiriti Strategy and Implementation Plan) was developed on behalf of council and TTMAC. Tāiki ē lays out a wide range of specific actions to achieve desired goals for Capacity and Capability and Māori Representation. It was adopted by council in July 2022.

Relationships and partnerships

Council will continue to develop genuine relationships and partnerships with Māori that will underpin and facilitate the inclusion of Māori in its decision-making processes. Council will remain committed to maintaining and strengthening these.

The Tai Tokerau Māori and Council Working Party (TTMAC) is a key relationship mechanism that is facilitating the inclusion of Māori in council's decision-making processes. The 30-strong working party consists of iwi and hapū members (appointed members) and councillors (elected members). TTMAC's key purpose is 'to advance a model of Māori engagement that supports environmental, economic, social, cultural and spiritual priorities across the region'. A dedicated sub-group of Māori technical experts and kaitiaki (formerly Māori Technical Advisory Group — MTAG) provides technical and cultural support and advice to TTMAC. Due to increased demands for their expertise, current MTAG members are guiding the establishment of a successor to this group that will better resource tāngata whenua technical experts and kaitiaki. The group's purpose, criteria, roles and responsibilities are also being further refined.

Council has a regional-level relationship with iwi authority managers through the Iwi and Local Government Chief Executives Forum (ILGACE) which further strengthens relationships with the region's Iwi Chief Executives.

Liaison and information

For Māori to have effective input into council's decision-making processes, relevant information must be communicated accurately, in a timely manner, and in a form that is appropriate to the decision-making process and audience.

Council staff will continue to develop council's processes and mechanisms to enable effective communication and positive interactions with Māori.

Fostering Māori participation

Specific steps council will take to foster capacity and provide opportunities for Māori to contribute to council's decisions are:

- Continue to update, further resource and monitor implementation of council's Tāiki ē (NRC Te Tiriti Strategy and Implementation Plan).
- Ensure an appropriate level of specialist technical and cultural support is provided for staff and councillors, including the two elected Māori-constituency councillors.
- Continue to support the operations of TTMAC, as an avenue for discussing issues of concern to Māori and recommending solutions; for providing input into council's decision-making

processes; and for building the capacity of the wider Māori community to contribute to council decision-making.

- Continue to support the ongoing operation of MTAG or its successor group, to enable it to provide technical and cultural expertise to TTMAC and council decision-making processes.
- Undertake early pre-consultation with Māori on all RMA planning processes.
- Strengthening the council's governance relationship with the region's Iwi Chairs.
- Maintain and grow the relationship between councils and the chief executives of the region's iwi authorities through ILGACE.
- Continue to implement a programme to enhance the cultural competency of council.
- Continue to provide funding support for writing or reviewing iwi and hapū environmental management plans (recognised by an iwi authority).
- Continue to provide funding and technical support to tāngata whenua for environmental monitoring.
- Maintain, improve and regularly update council's Māori contact database to facilitate contacts between council and Māori.
- Distribute copies of resource consents lodged with council in a timely manner to relevant marae, hapū and iwi.

14. Management structures and relationships

The Local Government Act 2002 requires council to employ a Chief Executive Officer whose responsibilities are to employ other staff on behalf of the council, implement council decisions and provide advice to the council. Under the Local Government Act the Chief Executive Officer is the only person who may lawfully give instructions to a staff member. Any complaint about individual staff members must therefore be directed to the Chief Executive Officer, rather than the Chairperson or councillors.

Chief Executive Officer – Jonathan Gibbard

Executive Leadership Team

Group Manager – Regulatory Services - Colin Dall

Group Manager – Corporate Services - Bruce Howse

Group Manager – Strategic Partnerships and Engagement – Auriole Ruka

Group Manager – Environmental Services –Ruben Wylie

Group Manager – Biosecurity - Don McKenzie

Group Manager – Community Resilience - Louisa Gritt

People and Culture Manager – Shane Cleary

Deputy Leadership Team

Deputy Group Manager – Regulatory Services – Tess Dacre

Deputy Group Manager – Governance and Engagement - Cathy Erstich

Deputy Group Manager – Environmental Services – Jason Donaghy

Deputy Group Manager – Biosecurity – Kaeden Leonard

Deputy Group Manager – Community Resilience - Jim Lyle

Deputy Group Manager – Corporate Services – Carol Cottam

15. Equal employment opportunity policy

The Northland Regional Council is firmly committed to the principle of Equal Employment Opportunity (EEO). The council will practice equal opportunities in all respects of employment, including recruitment, selection and appointment, education, training and development, career path planning and promotions. The council will ensure that all policies and practices comply with legislative requirements.

People policies shall apply equally to all staff, whether salary or wage employees. No employee, or potential employee, shall gain any advantage or suffer any disadvantage by reason of their race, colour, age, national or ethnic origin, sex, marital status, personal disability, sexual preference or religious or political beliefs.

All council staff have a responsibility to act in a non-discriminatory manner. Those that fail to do so may be liable to appropriate disciplinary procedures.

Further advice and information can be obtained from the Human Resources Manager.

16. Key approved planning and policy documents

Northland's Long Term Plan

The Long Term Plan 2024-2034 reflects the council's future vision and direction for what it delivers on behalf of Northlanders. It reflects the council's current thinking and how we plan to deliver on it over the coming decade, based on various assumptions about our future environment.

We review this 10 year outlook every three years to reflect current policy, legislation requirements and take into consideration the current economic climate. In some cases future policy direction, legislation or a change in our economic circumstances may result in a change in direction and this may have different effects on the budgets rates and services described in this plan.

This plan includes budget projections for all of the council's groups of activities; the impact on the council's funding sources (including the impacts on rates) and the overall financial position for the council over the next 10 years. The plan describes the activities that we deliver; why we deliver them and how these activities contribute to community well-being and the council objectives. The information is related back to the current year's budget with explanations for any significant differences. The plan contains the council's major financial policies for borrowing, investing and the funding of its activities. It also contains the council's policy on significance, appointment of directors, partnerships with the private sector and developing Māori capacity for participation in the council's decision-making processes.

Each time we update the plan we consult with the community seeking comment/feedback on any proposed changes to our activities, policies, funding, rates and council-controlled organisations. In the two years between long term plan updates the council develops an annual plan which highlights any differences to the projections contained in the Long Term Plan and contains any new proposals for public consultation. The annual plans also cater for differences in any of the financial assumptions made within the Long Term Plan, for example, interest and inflation rates.

Other Regional Council Plans

The Northland Regional Council has also produced plans and policy documents under the following legislation:

- Resource Management Act 1991;
- Biosecurity Act 1993;
- Maritime Transport Act 1994;
- Civil Defence Emergency Management Act 2002; and
- Land Transport Management Act 2003.
- Soil Conservation and Rivers Control Act 1941.

Copies of all the plans and policy documents specified below can be obtained on request.

Plans and policy documents prepared under the **Resource Management Act (RMA)** are:

- Regional Policy Statement –Operative in June 2018.
- The Proposed Regional Plan (which will replace/amalgamate Regional Air Quality Plan, the Regional Coastal Plan and Regional Water and Soil Plan) is partly operative.

The process for the preparation of (or changes to) these documents is set out in the First Schedule of the RMA. The preparation process includes:

- Consultation during preparation of the proposed plan;
- Public notification of the proposed plan;
- Submissions;
- Notification of a summary of submissions;
- Further submissions;
- Hearing of submissions;
- Notification of decisions on submissions;
- Rights to Appeal decisions to the Environment Court;
- Council adoption of plan and notification of operative date.

For regional coastal plans (and plan changes), the Minister of Conservation's approval must also be gained prior to the plan being made operative.

Under section 79 of the RMA, regional plans and regional policy statements must be fully reviewed not later than 10 years after the operative date. However, a review can be done at any time before then.

If the review identifies a need to change the plan or policy document then the change must be undertaken in accordance with the First Schedule process.

Approved plans and reports prepared under the **Biosecurity Act 1993 (BSA)** are:

- Regional Pest and Marine Pathways Management Plan 2017-2027.
- Annual biosecurity operational plan
- Annual report on the biosecurity operational plan

The process for the preparation of these documents is set out in part five of the BSA and under regional pest Management plans and Regional Pathway Plans. The preparation process of the 10 year pest and pathway plan includes:

- Consultation during preparation of the proposed plan;
- Notification of the proposed plan;
- Submissions;
- Notification of a summary of submissions;
- Hearing of submissions;

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- Notification of decisions on submissions;
- Appeal of decisions to the Environment Court;
- Council adoption of the plan.

Section 100c sets out the duration of plans.

A plan ceases to have effect when the earliest of the following occurs:

(a) the plan's termination date is reached:

(b) the Minister or council issues a public notice declaring that the plan's objectives have been achieved:

(c) the plan is revoked following a review under section 100D. (If the review identifies a need to change the plan or policy document then the change must also be done in accordance with the specified preparation process.)

Preparation of the annual operational plan is set out in section 100b and must be prepared within three months after the commencement date of the plan and thereafter annually.

Preparation of the annual report on the operational plan must be completed no later than 5 months after the end of each financial year.

Approved plans and policy documents prepared under the **Land Transport Management Act 2003** are:

- *Regional Land Transport Plan for Northland* - The six year Regional Land Transport Plan for Northland 2021-2027 was implemented on 1 September 2021.
- *Northland Regional Public Transport Plan 2021-2031* – The ten year Northland Regional Public Transport Plan is scheduled for release in December 2021.
- *Northland Road Safety Issues 2017-2021 Crash Data* – This document informs the decision making process for proposed road safety actions in Northland. It is normally released in April of each year but has been delayed for 2021.

Approved plans and policy documents prepared under the **Maritime Transport Act (MTA)** are:

- Northland Marine Oil Spill Contingency Plan (updated and approved by Maritime New Zealand in September 2020 and due to be updated again by September 2023).

The process for the preparation of regional marine oil spill contingency plans is set out in Sections 289, 291 and 292 of the MTA. The preparation process includes:

- Consultation during preparation of the contingency plan; and
- Approval of the plan by the Director of Maritime Safety.

There is no statutory requirement or provision for notification of draft contingency plans, submissions, hearings, or appeals.

Under section 290 of the MTA, regional marine oil spill contingency plans must be reviewed at least once every 3 years.

Approved plans and policy documents prepared under the **Civil Defence Emergency Management Act 2002 (CDEMA)** are:

- Northland Civil Defence Emergency Management Group Plan December 2021 - 2026.

The plan was prepared by the Northland Civil Defence Emergency Management Group (made up of representatives of the regional council and each local authority in the region).

The process for the preparation of civil defence emergency management group plans is set out in Sections 49 and 52 of the CDEMA. The preparation process includes:

- Public notification of a proposal to prepare an emergency management plan;
- Submissions on proposed plan;
- Forwarding of proposed plan to the Minister responsible for emergency management for comment; and
- Approval of plan by the civil defence emergency management group.

Submissions were dealt with in accordance with the requirements of S.52(1) which provides for submissions to be heard.

Under section 56 of the CDEMA, civil defence emergency management group plans may be reviewed at any time but must be reviewed after five years of being in force.

Non-Statutory Council Plans

- Mooring & Marinas Strategy.

The Moorings and Marinas Strategy (the strategy) was adopted by council in July 2014 and will inform council's decision making about the way in which moorings and marinas are provided for in Northland over the next 20 years. The strategy seeks to outline how the council will deal with anticipated demand for mooring and marina space in Northland in a way that's consistent, sustainable and fair. The strategy does this by setting out:

- A set of universal principles to ensure a regionally consistent approach to the allocation of marine space for boat storage;
- A 'decision making guide' to apply to determine the best the best way to manage future growth in discrete areas like the Bay of Islands;
- A policy to ensure fair allocation of marine space – including compensation – where intensification (for instance a new marina) is proposed in an existing mooring area; and
- A proposal to increase council-ownership of moorings to enable more effective management;
- Where and how moorings and marinas will be provided for in the Bay of Islands (where regional demand for mooring space is currently highest). Other areas will be added to the strategy as required.

The strategy will be implemented primarily in the Regional Plan but also in the council's Navigation Safety Bylaws and through the council's maritime operations.

17. Public access to council and its elected members

Your Regional Councillors

Jack Crow

Constituency: Whangārei Central General

Email:

John Blackwell

Constituency: Kaipara General

Email:

Joe Carr

Constituency: Far North General

Email:

Geoff Crawford

Constituency: Mid North General

Email:

Arama Morunga

Constituency: Te Raki Māori

Email:

Pita Tipene

Constituency: Te Raki Māori

Email:

Amy Macdonald

Constituency: Coastal Central General

Email:

Colin Kitchen

Constituency: Bay of Islands – Whangaroa General

Email:

John Hunt

Constituency: Coastal South General

Email:

The Northland Regional Council

HEAD OFFICE

Street Address: 36 Water Street, Whangārei.
Postal Address: Private Bag 9021, Whangārei Mail Centre, Whangārei 0143.
Telephone No: 09 470 1200
Facsimile No: 09 470 1202
Email: info@nrc.govt.nz
Freephone: 0800 002 004
24/7 Environmental Hotline: 0800 504 639
Website: www.nrc.govt.nz

ŌPUA OFFICE

Street Address: Unit 10, Ōpua Marine Park, Ōpua 0200 (Note Ōpua is an operational base and may not be manned. Please contact before visiting).
Telephone No: 09 402 7516

DARGAVILLE OFFICE

Street Address: 32 Hokianga Road, Dargaville 0310.
Telephone No: 09 439 3300

KAITĀIA OFFICE

Street Address: 192 Commerce Street, Kaitāia 0410.
Telephone No: 09 408 6600

WAIPAPA OFFICE

Street Address: Shop 9, 12 Klinac Lane, Waipapa 0295.
Telephone No: 09 470 1200

18. Requests for official information

The Local Government Official Information and Meetings Act 1987 (LGOIMA) provides that any person may request the council to make available to them any specified official information held by the council.

The LGOIMA requires that any information so requested must be specified "with due particularity in the request", so that it does not for instance require the council to make its files on any subject available for perusal.

The Act says that information may be withheld if release of the information would:

- Endanger the safety of any person;
- Prejudice maintenance of the law;
- Compromise the privacy of any person;
- Reveal confidential or commercially sensitive information;
- Cause offence to tikanga Māori or would disclose the location of waahi tapu;
- Prejudice public health or safety;
- Compromise legal professional privilege;
- Disadvantage the local authority while carrying out negotiations or commercial activities; or
- Allow information to be used for improper gain or advantage.

Applicants for official information, whose applications are refused, have the right to request a review of that decision by an Ombudsman.

The Act requires a decision on any information request to be given to the applicant within 20 working days. The council may charge for official information under guidelines set down by the Ministry of Justice.

Any person can make a request:

- **Online** using our online official information request form
- **By email** through info@nrc.govt.nz
- **In person** at one of our regional council offices
- **By post to:**
Northland Regional Council
Private Bag 9021
Whangārei Mail Centre
Whangārei 0148

Appendix One: Core legislation fundamental to the council's operations

The following legislation has been identified by council's auditors and the Executive Leadership Team as 'core legislation' fundamental to the council's operations:

- The Local Government Act 2002
- The Local Government (Financial Reporting and Prudence) Regulations 2014
- The non-financial Performance Measures Rules 2013
- The local Government Borrowing Act 2011
- The Local Government (Rating) Act 2002
- The Local Government Official Information and Meetings Act 1987
- The Local Authorities (Member's Interests) Act 1968
- The Resource Management Act 1991
- The Health and Safety at Work Act 2015
- The Holidays Act 2003
- The Employment Relations Act 2000
- The Biosecurity Act 1993
- The Building Act 2004
- The Fire Security Act
- The Civil Defence and Emergency Management Act 2002
- The Land Transport Act 1998
- The Maritime Transport Act 1994
- The Fire and Emergency New Zealand Act 2017

There are a number of other pieces of legislation that also have relevance to council operations but are not considered to be 'core legislation'.

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Appendix Two – Councillor memberships/delegations

1. River Working Groups

Memberships / Delegation	Councillor
Kāeo-Whangaroa River Working Group	To be reviewed
Kaihū River Working Group	To be reviewed
Kerikeri River Working Group	To be reviewed
Ruakākā River Working Group	To be reviewed
Taumārere River Liaison Working Group	To be reviewed
Urban Whangārei Working Group	To be reviewed
Awanui River Working Group	To be reviewed

2. Memberships/Delegations

Memberships / Delegation	Councillor
Kaipara Moana Working Party	To be reviewed
Northland Conservation Board	To be reviewed
Shareholder representative for Northland Marsden Maritime Holdings Ltd <i>(Delegating all necessary authority to represent the council's interest including but not limited to exercising council's vote at Annual General Meetings and giving effect to council's shareholder resolutions).</i>	To be reviewed
Shareholder representative for Northland Inc Ltd <i>(Delegating authority to exercise council's shareholder vote at any shareholder meeting of Northland Inc. Limited)</i>	To be reviewed
Shareholder representative on Regional Software Holdings Ltd. <i>(Delegating all necessary authority to represent the council's interest including but not limited to exercising the council's vote at Annual General Meetings and giving effect to council's shareholder resolutions)</i>	To be reviewed
Upper North Island Strategic Alliance (UNISA)	To be reviewed
Zone one (LGNZ)	To be reviewed

Northland Regional Council

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