

Māori contribution to decision-making processes

1. PURPOSE

The purpose of this policy is to acknowledge the value of Māori contribution to Council decision-making, and commit to strengthening relationships and enhancing opportunities for dialogue.

2. BACKGROUND

Although the Treaty of Waitangi is between Māori and the Crown, the Local Government Act 2002 (LGA) imposes certain obligations on local government to reflect those Treaty obligations. Section 81 of the LGA requires all local authorities to develop ways that it can involve local Māori in the Council decision-making process.

Council values the contribution Māori make to Council decision-making. We are committed to giving effect to the principles and intent of the Treaty of Waitangi and to engaging in genuine and appropriate consultation with Māori.

Council acknowledges that Te Runanga o Ngai Tahu is the representative of Ngai Tahu Whānui and that where any enactment requires consultation with any iwi or any iwi authority, that consultation shall, with respect to matters affecting Ngai Tahu Whānui, be held with Te Runanga o Ngai Tahu.

Council is a signatory to the following agreements with Māori:

- Governance Charter Te Ropu Taiao Otago for Kāi Tahu ki Otago and the local authorities of Otago (2015);
- Memorandum of Understanding with Te Rūnanga o Moeraki (2016);
- Relationship Agreement with Waitaha Taiwhenua O Waitaki Trust Board (2020).

3. POLICY

1. Where Council is seeking to engage with tangata whenua as a collective it is mandated to engage firstly with Te Runanga o Ngai Tahu.
2. Council will encourage both formal and informal opportunities for developing a closer relationship with groups representing local Māori.
3. Council acknowledges that the involvement of local Māori in the Council decision making process is not restricted to matters directly affecting the Rūnanga.
4. Council will provide opportunities for discussion on a wide range of matters in the early stages of policy development and planning.
5. Council will respect the views expressed on behalf of local Māori and foster close collaboration at an operational level.
6. Council may enter in to a Memorandum of Understanding or Relationship Agreement to formally recognise any such relationship and the expectations of it.