

Working with manawhenua

The Council recognises Kati Huirapa o Arowhenua holds manawhenua status from the Rakaia to Waitaki in the south including the Timaru District Council.

In recognising its relationship with manawhenua Council is required to take appropriate account of the principles of the Treaty of Waitangi when carrying out its duties under the Local Government Act (LGA) 2002 and the Resource Management Act 1991. The relationship between manawhenua and the Timaru District Council reflecting, at a local level, the partnership relationship between the Crown and its Treaty Partners.

Section 81 of the LGA requires all local authorities to establish and maintain processes to provide opportunities for manawhenua to contribute to Council's decision-making processes. It also requires councils to consider ways to foster the development of the capacity of manawhenua to contribute to these processes and to provide manawhenua with relevant information.

The RMA has specific requirements for Council to engage with manawhenua when preparing and reviewing the district plan and to consider tangata whenua values as part of decision-making on resource consent applications. While engagement with is provided specifically within the project planning for the District Plan Review and other key Council projects it is important that the Long Term Plan recognises these obligations and provides for adequate resourcing and timeframes to ensure an appropriate level of engagement on relevant Council projects.

It is also important that Council recognises its relationship with manawhenua under all legislation it administers, not just the LGA and the RMA. It is also important that the Council look for opportunities to strengthen its role and relationship with manawhenua in any government legislative reforms process.

Council will ensure all its key policy and decision-making processes include opportunities for discussion with mana whenua, through their mandated representatives, at the earliest opportunity and before any decisions are made; and endeavour to provide resources to help facilitate that engagement.

Council shall provide opportunities for mana whenua to engage in the development of key policy and plans, including long- term plans and annual plans, and on resource management plans, policies and strategies including the process, timing and content of plan or policy development and review. Opportunities are also considered for appointments on planning and resource consent hearing committees.

To assist in this commitment, the Council has signed a Service Level Agreement with Aoraki Environmental Consultancy Limited (AEC). AEC is mandated by Arowhenua to help advise councils and other agencies on issues of interest to Arowhenua Runanga, to facilitate consultation with Arowhenua and to ensure timely and appropriate input into policy, plans, resource consents and processes on behalf of Arowhenua.

Council will continue to offer places for manawhenua representatives on Council Committees, including the Environmental Services Standing Committee, the Safer Communities Committee and the Local Arts Assessment Committee, and other bodies as appropriate, and seek regular engagement with manawhenua to discuss matters of common interest and foster general relationships.

Council's Senior Management Team are available to meet with manawhenua representatives as required.

Manawhenua interests in Council activities are broad. Arowhenua has a strong connection to the land including within the Timaru District. Arowhenua has a deep sense of responsibility to ensure the whenua (land) and wai (water) will continue to provide for their mokopuna - 'for those who come after us'.

Current specific projects between the Council and manawhenua include:

- Exploring potential for transfer of powers to make decisions over ancestral land.
- Appropriate use of traditional place names.
- Spatial planning for growth of the district.
- Protection and enhancement of mahika kai (traditional food and other natural resources and the places where those resources are obtained).
- Management and protection of significant sites including rock art, wahi tapu and wahi taoka sites.
- Stormwater and sewerage management.
- Management of natural hazards including flooding and coastal erosion.
- Effects of industrial development and expansion at Waitarakao / Washdyke.