



Te Kaunihera-ā-Rohe o Ngāmotu

NEW PLYMOUTH DISTRICT COUNCIL

newplymouthnz.com

AGENDA

KAITAKE COMMUNITY BOARD

EXTRAORDINARY MEETING

**Thursday 6 November 2014
at 4.30pm**

Meeting Room 4, Civic Centre

Chairperson:	Mr	Doug	Hislop
Members:	Mr	Paul	Coxhead
	Mr	Mike	Pillette
	Mr	Keith	Plummer
	Cr	Richard	Jordan

**KAITAKE COMMUNITY BOARD
THURSDAY 6 NOVEMBER 2014**

Community Boards

Role of community boards (s52 Local Government Act 2002)

- a) represent, and act as an advocate for, the interests of its community; and
- b) consider and report on matters referred by the council and other matters of interest
- c) maintain an overview of services provided by the council within the community; and
- d) prepare an annual submission to the council for expenditure within the community;
- e) communicate with community organisations and special interest groups within the community; and
- f) undertake any other responsibilities that are delegated to it by the territorial authority.

Addressing the community board

Members of the public have an opportunity to address a community board during the public forum section or as a deputation.

A public forum section of up to 30 minutes precedes all community board meetings. Each speaker during the public forum section of a meeting may speak for up to 10 minutes. In the case of a group a maximum of 20 minutes will be allowed.

A request to make a *deputation* should be made to the secretariat within two working days before the meeting. The chairperson will decide whether your deputation is accepted. The chairperson may approve a shorter notice period. No more than four members of a deputation may address a meeting. A limit of 10 minutes is placed on a speaker making a presentation. In the case of a group a maximum of 20 minutes will be allowed.

Purpose of Local Government

The reports contained in this agenda address the requirements of the Local Government Act 2002 in relation to decision making. Unless otherwise stated, the recommended option outlined in each report meets the purpose of local government and:

- Will help meet 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;
- Would not alter significantly the intended level of service provision for any significant activity undertaken by or on behalf of the Council, or transfer the ownership or control of a strategic asset to or from the Council.

APOLOGIES

None advised

PUBLIC FORUM

None advised.

DEPUTATIONS

None advised.

A ITEM FOR DECISION BY KAITAKE COMMUNITY BOARD

**A1 SUBMISSION TO THE DRAFT SIGNIFICANCE AND ENGAGEMENT
POLICY**

**KAITAKE COMMUNITY BOARD
THURSDAY 6 NOVEMBER 2014**



ITEM FOR DECISION**ITEM A1**

FULL NAME:

Doug Hislop

EMAIL:

douglashislop@gmail.com

ORGANISATION:

Kaitake Community Board

POSTAL ADDRESS:

31 Mace Terrace, Oakura

PHONE (DAY):

06 752 7324

SUBMISSION

Draft Significance and Engagement Policy

COMMENTS:**The issue**

The KCB believes that this policy must provide the first line of defence against the risk of decision-making from an organisational perspective. It must be, according to Council's own key principles of its recently adopted vision statement, provide facilitation, collaboration and partnership, and open and honest engagement. Therefore it is crucial that the policy gives individuals and community groups a direct, transparent route to reach the core of the council decision-making process in a way that cannot be ignored.

Regarding this important piece of local government legislation, KCB believes that with the short public consultation timeframe the final document may well fall well short of its intention for both communities and the council. Surely a responsive public process ensuring maximum understanding and participation has a far higher priority than meeting some distant, imposed deadline. It is, indeed, ironic that a policy about significance and engagement is being rushed through on the 'requirement' of central government legislation. The sky isn't falling folks!

If this draft isn't addressed thoroughly by all stakeholders prior to final decision then it's definition can be ticked off as a one-time activity and perhaps viewed by the community as an example of unrealistic, bureaucratic inspired dogma.

While we understand that the word 'will' signifies a contractual obligation, KCB believes there are several draft policy statements that require a more robust modal such as 'must' to remove any ambiguity in future policy interpretation.

SOME SUGGESTED TIDY-UPS AND QUERIES

Purpose

The purpose of this policy is to provide clarity for the New Plymouth District community on how *'the New Plymouth district Council must engage with them in various levels of its'* decision-making processes.

Policy Statements

- 1 Change 'important' to '*necessary*'.
- 3 '*... will be determined..*' this should clearly state by whom.
Change 'at an early stage' to '*at the initial stage*' or '*at the earliest stage*'.
- 4 In determining the significance of an issue requiring a Council decision we ask if that will be done formally in the public arena?
- 5 Change to '*The greater significance of an issue, proposal, decision making or other matter, the more detailed the community engagement and decision-making process must be.....*'
- 7 Some clarification is needed for the bullet point 'The degree to which the issue, proposal, decision or other matter is reversible.' This brings into focus the whole question of assumptions driving decision-making.
- 8 Change 'it is likely to have' to '*it will*'.
- 9 Change 'The Council shall ensure' to '*The Council will ensure*'.
- 10 Add '*prior to the decision being made.*'
- 11 Change 'Different levels of engagement may be required for different stages...' to '*Different levels of engagement will be used for different stages of the decision making process when necessary...*'
- 14 '*... will be determined..*' should clearly state by whom.
- 16 Change 'may' to '*will*'.
- 19 This statement is particularly unacceptable as it provides the opportunity to disregard virtually all the other parts of the draft policy statements and therefore the opportunity for manipulation to arrive at an already determined outcome.

IN CONCLUSION

We realise there are statutory requirements embedded in this policy but surely the underlying tenet for it (and the statements placed within it) must focus on the encompassing practice of community engagement, which the Council has determined to engage in, rather than a policy that is just a reaction to previous opposition to Council activity. The policy must be clear, transparent, and ingrained into the culture of both management and governance to reach its strategic value.

The KCB believes it is reasonable to include a statement about utilising the knowledge and expertise individuals and groups have in respect of their own communities. This is already mentioned in statements 7, 15, 16 and 17 for Maori but should further embrace locality-based communities. After all it is generally accepted that people within communities are the best experts in terms of knowing the needs, priorities and dynamics of their localities.

A responsive policy that provides a platform to listen to, and reflect on, the comments of everyone who chooses to participate will produce a much better outcome than an organised and centrally directed process that solves a few problems around a service and then moves on. After all community engagement is more than just a process or set of processes for dealing with certain issues - surely it is a cyclical one that leads to ongoing action and adjustment. It ought to be inherent in the way in which the local government functions in whatever it does and this policy should reflect that.

Doug Hislop
Chair
Kaitake Community Board
5 November 2014

