

STRATFORD DISTRICT COUNCIL

SECTION: DEMOCRACY	
POLICY:	<u>CONSULTATION</u>
RESPONSIBILITY: Communications Officer	REVIEW DATE: June 2008
VERSION: 1	APPROVED DATE: June 2005
FILE NUMBER: 16069	
DELEGATIONS REGISTER NO: [Click here]	

Principles

- Effective community participation in the decision making processes of Council.
- Elected representatives of Council make more informed decisions on behalf of those they represent.
- All the community has equitable opportunity for participation.
- Public issues and concerns are sought, acknowledged, understood and considered; and
- Council fulfils its commitment and legal obligations to consult on issues, plans and strategies that may directly or indirectly affect the district community.

Definition

Consultation: *Communication between two or more people or groups to seek opinions, advice and information on a particular issue, with the view to considering options and solutions for a final decision and/or action.*

Objectives

- That all the Community feels it has the opportunity to be involved in Councils decision making process and has the potential to influence the outcomes.
- That Council complies with the Local Government Act 2002 (Part 6- Planning, decision making and accountability), the Resource Management Act 1991 and any other relevant Acts.
- That Council will seek, consider and acknowledge relevant community and stakeholders views and interests as part of the decision making process.
- That Council will be consistent, clear and accountable in its consultation process.
- All consultation will define its purpose and offer a range of possible outcomes; and
- That the community, stakeholders and any parties involved in the consultation shall be informed of the outcomes of the consultation and the reasons for those outcomes.

Policy Guidelines

- Along with the community, Council will develop the issue for consultation and identify the specific interest groups or persons with the purpose of scoping out the issue and range of possible outcomes.
- Consultation will be clear in purpose, accountable, timely, use appropriate methods and be adequately resourced.

- Consultation processes will encourage participation and aim to identify relevant representative views of all the community.
- Council will ensure accurate and important information is available, in the appropriate format, so that the community has the opportunity to make informed contributions.
- Community consultation will be a significant contributor to decision-making. (NOTE: The role of decision-making remains with elected members of Council, unless specifically delegated. Community consultation will be considered along with other information such as costs, benefits, social, cultural, economic, environmental wellbeing, technical advice and other plans and policies as part of decision-making processes.)
- Council consultation will meet Council's Code of Conduct requirements; and
- Council will inform the community, stakeholders and parties involved in the consultation process the outcomes and reason for any decision that has been subject to consultation.

Process

Refer to the Consultation Process.

Related Policies

Policy on Significance, Maori Consultation, Communication and Media Releases.

Conclusion

Stratford District Council values community consultation and is committed to an effective consultation process that will enable improved understanding and increased participation, which will lead to accountable and sound decision making.

APPENDIX 1

CONSULTATION PROCESS

Introduction

Stratford District Council is required to consult under the Local Government Act 2002 (Sections 82 to 90). The Council must, legally, follow the Special Consultative Procedure before it:

- adopts a Long-Term Council Community Plan (LTCCP) or Annual Plan,
- amends an LTCCP,
- adopts, revokes, reviews or amends a bylaw; and
- changes the mode of delivery for a significant activity that is not provided for in an LTCCP.

Significance

Stratford District Council has discretion to decide whether or not to undertake consultation if the issue is not of a nature or significance that requires consultation (Appendix 3 Policy on Significance).

Maori Consultation

Specific consideration is made for Maori consultation and is outlined in the 'Maori Consultation Policy' (Appendix 4).

Consultation Methodology

Consultation may be conducted through various means such as:

- General Public Meetings
- Public Notices
- Direct Mail Outs
- Media Advertising/Advertorial
- Key Stakeholder Meetings
- Focus Groups
- Partnership Agencies And Organisations
- Council Newsletters
- Councillors Liaison
- Surveys
- Council Websites
- Regional Co-ordination With Other Three Councils
- Submissions Process
- Individual Interviews

The Council also holds Public Forums where residents give their views on the performance of the Council, share feedback and information with the Council and discuss current issues the residents see as significant.

Special Consultative Procedure

This outlines the process for consultation, reporting and outcome development for issues to be considered by the Community and Council (see below text and schematic).

APPENDIX 2

SPECIAL CONSULTATIVE PROCEDURE

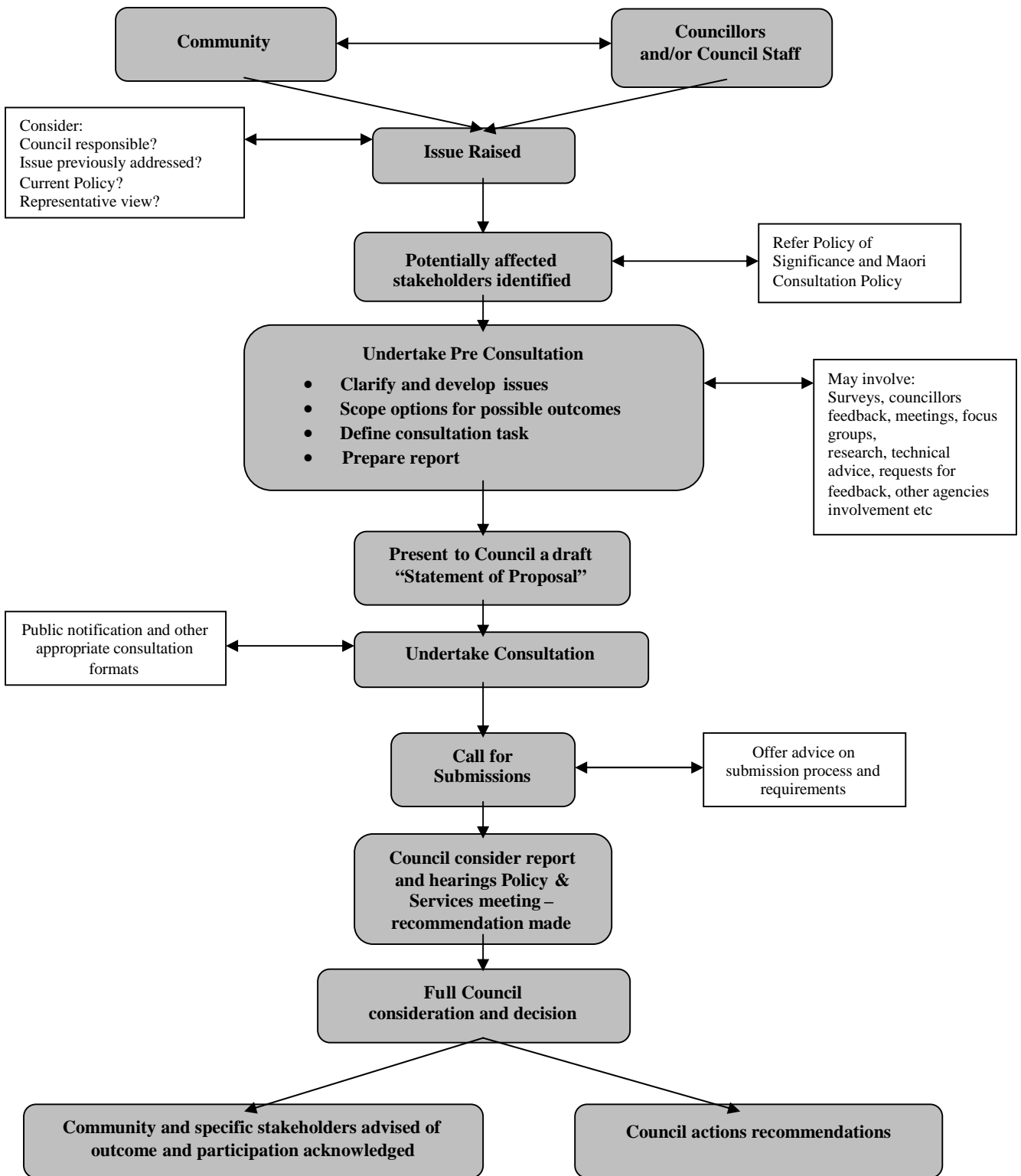
(a) Consultation Process

The Local Government Act sets out the Special Consultative Procedure - consultation principles and a procedure that local authorities must follow when making certain decisions. (Local Government Act 2002, part 6, section 83)

Once an issue has been brought to Council, either through the Councillors or the Staff, the Stratford District Council will undertake the following consultative procedure:

1. Identify the issue, consider Council responsibility and current policy, and prepare a draft “statement of proposal” and a summary of the information.
2. Identify the affected general users, specific users and stakeholder groups.
3. Consult with those affected over the issue to specify the issues and options and further develop the “Statement of Proposal”. (Choice of consultation techniques will be guided by public interest and impact, significance, nature of issue, cost, benefit, and current awareness and information on issue).
4. Prepare a report for the Council on the pre-consultation review and analysis, back grounding and assessing the issues, outlining options for resolution and identifying their impacts (social, managerial, cultural, financial, other issues).
5. Workshop the issues with the Council or relevant portfolio group.
6. Further develop the “Statement of Proposal” and a summary with a description of the proposed decision or course of action.
7. Present the “Statement of Proposal” to the Council’s Policy and Services Committee Meeting to be approved for Public Notice by Council.
8. Inform the community of the “Statement of Proposal” with copies being held at Council offices and distributed as widely as Council considers reasonably practicable.
9. Publish a notice of the proposal and call for submissions through the appropriate media. Submission Forms will be provided and submissions for and against the proposal will be sought.
10. Acknowledge all written submissions and offer submitters the opportunity to make an oral submission. At least one month (from the date of the notice) will be allowed for submissions.
11. Prepare a summary report on the submissions and other consultation.
12. Present report to the Council’s Policy and Services Committee Meeting and submission hearing will be held. Meetings will be open to the public (unless there is a reason to exclude the public under the LGOIMA).
13. Make a recommendation to be presented at the next full Council Meeting for consideration.
14. Report to the community, submitters and stakeholders directly involved in the current issue on outcomes of the process, reasons for decisions and to acknowledge their participation.

(b) **Process Chart**



APPENDIX 4

MAORI CONSULTATION

Introduction

Section 81 of the Local Government Act 2002 sets out the obligations for Council to both consult with Maori and encourage Maori involvement in the Council decision making processes.

Consultation

Council currently has an ongoing commitment to Maori consultation with respect to all of its planning processes, including those under the Resource Management Act, the Strategic Plan and its financial planning. It is important to the Council that its processes of consultation with Maori are appropriate to the needs of Maori in the district.

Resource Management Act 1991

The consultation carried out under the Resource Management Act recognises the interests within the Stratford District area of the following iwi and hapu groups:

- Ngati Ruanui Tahua Iwi Authority.
- Ngati Mutunga Iwi Authority.
- Nga Ruahine Iwi Authority.
- Te Atiawa Iwi Authority.
- Pukerangiora Hapu Management Committee Inc.
- Nga Rauru Trust Board.
- Ngati Maru Tribal Council.

In respect of the Resource Management Act, Council also gives regard to the Statutory Acknowledgements in accordance with the Ngati Ruanui Claims Settlement Act 2003.

Further Planning Consultation

Council recognizes the role of Stratford's Whakaahurangi Marae within the District. Council welcomes and encourages Maori involvement in its consultation processes and holds consultation meetings on the Marae.

Council will seek to honour any processes or agreements developed with Maori as they relate to consultation as a part of its decision-making processes.

Development of Maori capacity to contribute to decision-making

Council is committed to maintaining communication and its good working relationship with Whakaahurangi Marae, so as to encourage and facilitate the involvement of local Maori in Council's decision-making processes.

Council is also mindful that there may be additional processes which are also appropriate. It will therefore continue to consult with Maori in the district on its decision making, taking into account the nature and significance of the decision to Maori. It will also seek opportunities to expand the current processes to accommodate any additional consultation mechanisms preferred by Maori.