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# Māori Contribution to Council Decision Making

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The Council acknowledges Rangitāne o Manawatū as mana whenua – the original custodians and stewards of this whenua.

The Local Government Act 2002 provides Councils with direction regarding their role as obligatory stewards of Treaty Partnership on behalf of the Crown. The contribution of Māori to local government decision making processes is integral to inter-generational well-being of all citizens. In line with Treaty principles Councils are required to create systems and pathways that contribute to that well-being through partnership, representation, and meaningful consultation with mana whenua and wider Māori communities.

Council is committed to its formal kawenata with Rangitāne whilst also committed to building greater participation and engagement with the wider Māori community. This will ensure that Rangitāne and Māori interests are reflected and contributions to positive Māori development are captured in the Long-term Plan.

## **Rangitāne o Manawatū Partnership**

The Council signed a Partnership Agreement in 2019 that formally acknowledges the status of Rangitāne as mana whenua. This has created a reciprocal working relationship between Iwi leadership and Council to align priorities across the suite of Council Strategies and Plans.

Council has a Rangitāne o Manawatū Committee. This considers matters relating to the wellbeing of Māori in Palmerston North and has a strong focus on the ongoing development of Te Motu o Poutoa. Three Rangitāne representatives (and two Māori ward Councillors) sit as appointed members on this committee providing Rangitānenuiara expertise.

The Council has established a Māori Ward called Te Pūao, held by two Councillors that sit alongside Rangitāne appointees to Committees and represent the specific interests of the wider Māori community.

Council staff and management meet regularly with Iwi leaders regarding a very broad set of projects and programmes. In particular there is a monthly hui called Te Whiri Kōkō where collaboration, information sharing and advice is provided and shared on a range of activities and projects. The Council provides capacity funding to support this engagement and acknowledges the significant contribution that mana whenua bring to the City. This is augmented by early engagement between Rangitāne and Elected Members on the Long-term Plan and other major programmes and projects.

The Council also maintains a Māori advisory function to ensure Elected Members and staff understand Māori mātauranga (practices and principles) so that Rangitāne and wider Māori are appropriately involved in Council decisions.

The need to understand and work alongside the relationships that can assist Council to reach the Māori community is key. For Council to know when to adopt the role of facilitator, supporter or leader where appropriate is vital to a connected sector that is making a difference to the aspiration of Māori development and participation in local government decision making processes.

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The visibility of Rangitāne in the landscape of Te Papaioea is increasing rapidly and this can be directly attributed to that partnership and spaces where Rangitāne have representation and contribution. Visibility of Iwi provides a strong signal to our community that Iwi and Māori perspectives are relevant and valued and this has a connection to levels of Māori engagement.

Rangitāne continue to provide leadership as partners with the Manawatū River Framework and the establishment of the working group Te Ohunga Mauri. This ensures Council staff and Rangitāne continue to work together to create an engaging and inspiring environment as well as affirm and share cultural and historical narratives. Rangitāne are also often represented on other advisory and working groups to ensure input and influence at an appropriate level.