

Consultation and Engagement Policy



1. Purpose

The purpose of this Policy is to ensure a consistent approach to consultation and engagement with our community throughout Westland District Council (the Council) and compliance with the consultation requirements of the Local Government Act 2002 (LGA).

This policy does not cover the submission processes that may be required under the Resource Management Act 1991.

1.1. Scope

This policy applies to all consultation and engagement opportunities that are undertaken by the Council.

This Policy should be read in conjunction with the Significance and Engagement Policy and assists in determining the appropriate means to consult or engage with the community. The principles in this Policy do not override any requirements to consult using the special consultative procedure set out in s 83 of the LGA.

1.2. Background

The Council is committed to ongoing and effective consultation and engagement with the community it serves. This policy reflects current practice and its responsibilities under the LGA.

1.3. Commencement

This policy comes into force on 25 May 2022.

1.4. Definitions

Community	Includes resident ratepayers, non resident ratepayers, residents of Westland, community and volunteer organisations and key stakeholders of Westland District.
Consultation	Formal consultation undertaken during a decision-making process following the principles of s82 of the LGA or a special consultative procedure as required by s 83 of the LGA.
Council Communications Channels	Include Council Website, Council Facebook page, Westland Matters, Westland Matters Youtube channel, media releases and radio advertising.
Engagement	Methods of seeking community participation where formal options have not been identified, or there are numerous options to refine, e.g. open feedback, surveys, focus groups. This can be used to develop formal options for consultation.

2. Policy

2.1 Commitment to Consultation and Engagement

Council is committed to ongoing and effective consultation and engagement with the Westland community. The decision-making processes is enhanced by understanding the community's views and interests.

Council is committed to understanding the overall view of the Westland community as accurately as possible and will use the principles set out in Clause 2.2 to determine the appropriate method to gather the information.

Council welcomes and encourages [Māori contribution to its decision-making processes](#). In doing so, it has special regard to the views of mana whenua of the Westland District; that is, with Poutini Ngāi Tahu (Te Rūnanga o Makaawhio and Te Rūnanga o Ngāti Waewae).

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2.2 Types of Consultation and Engagement

Consultation and engagement is any contact with the community. Staff should use the table in Appendix 1: Increasing levels of public impact, to assess the appropriate form of engagement or consultation.

The table is guided by the [IAP2 Spectrum of Public Participation](#) (International Association for Public Participation) and guides the determination of the most appropriate level of consultation or engagement required on a given issue.

3. Principles

In conducting Consultation, Council will present a proposal that requires a decision. Public feedback will be considered with an open mind and any changes incorporated into the final decision. Council will engage with the community throughout the process.

Not all of the following principles will apply to all situations.

Inclusiveness	Consultation and engagement runs in a way that encourages the participation of the people who are affected by a decision.
Timing	Allow enough time for participants to contribute.
Focus	Consultation and engagement is purpose-driven.
Information Provision	Information relating to the consultation is readily available so that participants can make informed and timely contributions.
Resourcing	Consultations are conducted in a way that allows as much of the community as possible to participate.
Responsiveness	The Council will consider and respond to the community's feedback with genuinely open-mind.
Consultation with Maori	Council recognises tangata whenua as an important part of the Westland community and is committed to consulting appropriately.
Accuracy	Use market research and other quantifiable research methods if necessary to ensure the information gathered summarises the views of a whole community.
Implementation and Feedback	Evaluate all consultations after the decision making is complete. Provide feedback to participants whenever possible.
Pragmatism and Balance	Consultation will not take place when a decision has essentially been made, where the Council must act quickly in the interests of the District, or the issue is not of significance. Council will engage with the community in these instances.

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4. Related Documents and Acts

The following Westland District Council documents relate to this policy:

- [Significance and Engagement Policy](#)
- [Consultation Templates](#)
- [Communications Plan Template](#)

The following Legislation relates to this policy:

- Local Government Act 2002
- Local Government Official Information and Meetings Act 1987

5. Policy Review

A review of this policy will take place in May 2025.

Created:	February 2022	Date for review:	May 2025
Author:	Strategy & Communications Advisor	Authorised by:	Executive Team
Consulted on:	24.05.2022 Executive Team	Version	1.1

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Appendix 1: Increasing level of public impact



	Advise	Inform	Consult	Involve	Collaborate	Empower
Goal	To provide information to the community on actions being taken by Council.	To seek the view of the community.	To seek the view of the community on options and allow the community to propose suggestion to Council for consideration	To work with the community to make sure that concerns and aspirations are considered and understood.	To work in partnership with the public in each aspect of the decision making process.	To place final decision making in the hands of the public
Commitment	Council will provide information about decisions to the community.	Council will listen and be open to the community's feedback.	Council will listen and acknowledge the community's concerns.	Council will work with the community to ensure their concerns and aspirations are directly reflected in the decisions made.	Council will work in partnership with the public to receive advice and innovation and incorporate this in decisions as much as possible.	Council will implement what you decide.
Example of Use*	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Water service notifications. Council operating hours. Legislative changes. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Prior to developing formal options. When the proposal only affects a particular part of the community. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Bylaw reviews Policy reviews Annual Plans 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Long Term Plans Township CBD plans 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> District Plan reviews Wastewater treatment plant options Non-statutory strategic plans. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Election voting systems (MMP, STV, FPP)
Example Engagement Methods^	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Council communications channels, as appropriate. Public Notices. Radio advertising. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Workshops with targeted stakeholders. Surveys to targeted stakeholders. Request for feedback. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Any of the methods in the Advise and Inform columns, plus: Information sessions. Request for formal feedback. Public hearings. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Any of the methods in the Advise, Inform and Consult columns, plus: Workshops with the wider community. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Any of the methods in the Advise, Inform, Consult and Involve columns, plus: Working Groups 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Binding referendum Local body elections

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Timing	In a timely manner, depending on the type of information communicated.	Early planning stages.	Generally allow at least 4 weeks for the community to participate and respond, in line with s 82 LGA.	At least four weeks as per applicable legislation, eg s 83 LGA.	This is likely to take place over an extended period.	This is likely to take place over an extended period.
Community Response	No feedback sought.	Feedback sought from specific parties.	Feedback sought from the wider community / specified stakeholders. Public has opportunity to present to a meeting or hearing.	Feedback sought from the wider community / specified stakeholders to refine the options. Public has opportunity to present to a meeting or hearing.	Working group will provide feedback to the appropriate Committee / Council.	Participation in referendum or election.

*Examples of use are not exhaustive.

^ Listed engagement methods are examples, not all will be used and others may be used.