

Informal Workshop Notes

Strategy and Policy Committee Workshop

Held: 11.00 am, Friday 30 June 2023, Council Chambers, Ground Floor, Regional House, 1 Elizabeth Street, Tauranga

Chairperson: Cr Paula Thompson

Deputy Chairperson: Cr Kat Macmillan

Present: Cr Stuart Crosby
Cr Matemoana McDonald (via Zoom)
Cr Jane Nees (via Zoom)
Cr Andrew von Dadelszen (via Zoom)
Cr Te Taru White (via Zoom)
Cr Kevin Winters (via Zoom)
Cr Ken Shirley

In Attendance: Staff: Namouta Poutasi – General Manager, Strategy and Science; Kumaren Perumal – Chief Financial Officer; Graeme Howard – Corporate Planning Lead; Stephanie Macdonald – Community Engagement Team Leader; Kate Barnes – Communications Partner; Olive McVicker – Corporate Performance Team Lead; Alicia Burningham – Corporate Planner; Gillian Payne – Principal Advisor; Jenny Teeuwen – Committee Advisor

Apologies: Chairman Doug Leeder and Cr Toi Kai Rākau Iti for absence.

1. Introduction

Cr Paula Thompson, Chairperson, welcomed those present and noted that today's workshop had **reconvened** from the Strategy and Policy Committee Workshop session held on Tuesday 27 June 2023 and had **resumed** in Public Excluded.

At 11.45 am, the workshop **moved** in to the open session.

2. Workshop Paper

2.1 Significance and Engagement Policy Review

Presented by: Kumaren Perumal – Chief Financial Officer
Graeme Howard – Corporate Planning Lead
Stephanie Macdonald – Corporate Engagement Team Leader

Key Points

- Provided overview of the role of the Significance and Engagement Policy (SEP) and the current principles of the policy.
- The policy review process ran alongside the Long term Plan process.
- Outlined the suggested areas for review.
- Provided explanation of how significance was determined and the criteria and thresholds for determining high significance.
- Provided an overview of the policy review process to date.
- If the policy was substantively changed then further consideration would need to be given to consulting with the community.

In Response to Questions

- The policy was broad and provided a framework to operate within. The bar for triggering public consultation was set high. There was more flexibility around how Bay of Plenty Regional Council Toi Moana (Regional Council) decided to approach its engagement if the bar had not been met.
- Changing the nature of an entity or the structure of ownership that Regional Council had would be of high community interest and would likely trigger the thresholds for consultation.
- Transfer of responsibility was outlined in the policy under Mandatory Consultation. This was also covered under Section 17 of the Local Government Act 2002 (LGA) where there was a requirement to consult on transfer of responsibility in line with Section 82 Consultation Principles.
- The intent of the policy was to ensure that council was giving due consideration to items of significance. It did not prescribe exactly how to go about public engagement but offered guidance of how/when public consultation might be required and what this engagement might look like.

Key Points - Members

- The Future for Local Government Review Report:
 - Contained a number of recommendations around participation and engagement in terms of enhancing participation in local democracy. There needed to be a robust discussion to help guide how participation and engagement would work over the next ten years.
 - It was suggested that the report was a distraction. There was a high level of uncertainty with a general election coming up. There was a risk of getting tied up in knots over something that was not yet policy.
 - Whilst there were a number of positive aspects of the report that should not be ignored, there was no need to get into in deep analysis of the report at this stage; however, it could still be used it as a reference point.
- Did not want the policy to be too restrictive, but allowed for discretion to enable innovative engagement to get better outcomes.

Guidance provided

Determining significance

- Suggested adding more guidelines around public/community interest. Suggested re-wording the criteria for “Likely impact of the decision on the

- community” to be more equitable i.e. remove reference to “most” of the Bay of Plenty community.
- Suggested adding in an engagement options line to Council/Committee agenda reports with a range from “fully consult” to “do nothing” to operationalise engagement on an issue by issue basis.
 - The framework set the bottom line but council also wanted to have discretion over engagement issues. Wanted to be expressive, innovative and nimble in this space.

Engaging with our community

- Reasonably comfortable with where Regional Council was at with its engagement and consultation.

Engaging with Māori

- There needed to be a more in-depth discussion around engagement with Māori going forward.

Strategic Assets

- Suggested that a public interest component needed to be included when determining significance for strategic assets.

Next Steps

Based on guidance from Councillors at this workshop, staff would undertake a review of the current SEP and bring information back, together with an updated SEP for consideration at a future Strategy and Policy workshop, currently proposed for September 2023.

12.29 pm – the workshop closed.