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## Adoption of the Significance and Engagement Policy

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### 1. Purpose of Report

- 1.1 To consider the Significance and Engagement Policy and make a recommendation to Council.

### 2. Delegations

- 2.1 The Governance Committee has responsibility for the co-ordination and development of all policies specified in the Local Government Act 2002 for Annual Plan and Long Term Plan development.

### 3. Recommendation

***THAT the report Adoption of the Significance and Engagement Policy (A1262170) and its attachments (A1262973, A1241702 and A1264506) be received;***

#### Recommendation to Council

***THAT the Significance and Engagement Policy be adopted.***

### 4. Background

- 4.1 Recent amendments to the Local Government Act 2002 (the Act) require local authorities to develop a Significance and Engagement Policy, pursuant to section 76AA of the Act, by 01 December 2014. This policy extends the Significance Policy previously required by the Act.

### 5. Discussion

#### Community Consultation on the Draft Policy

- 5.1 Council was briefed on the requirements of the Act with regard to the new Significance and Engagement Policy at a workshop on 24 June 2014 and provided feedback to officers on the broad direction the policy should take. A further workshop on 11 September 2014 considered and provided guidance to officers on some of the key issues under the new policy such as the appropriate list of strategic assets.

- 5.2 On 25 September 2014, the Governance Committee met and considered the draft Significance and Engagement Policy and agreed that the community be consulted on its content. The report considered by the Committee at this time is attached (Attachment 2).
- 5.3 The community was advised of the draft policy and invited to make submissions, through advertisements in the Nelson Mail and Live Nelson, through direct email contact to sector groups, and by a notice in Volunteer Nelson's weekly newsletter. Iwi representatives were also contacted. Copies of the draft policy were made available at the Nelson libraries, the Nelson City Council Customer Service Centre, and online on the Nelson City Council website.
- 5.4 Three submissions were received on the policy and these are summarised in Attachment 3. Comments from submissions included the following:

Submission 1: Brian Mills

*Establishing "Significance" is a contestable level of importance that both the senders and the receivers of the subject matter will have different values as to their view of that subject's greater or lesser significance. In decision making keeping that "value" fluid and flexible is important. One of Councils prime functions is "engaging" at all levels with the work and business of the city, and it is encouraging to see the focus and discussion on this broader approach... information and opinion sharing is the oil that keeps the community engine room running smoothly. More is best. If in doubt... do it!*

Submission 2: Bicycle Nelson Bays (Chris Allison)

*We submit that Council needs to adapt its engagement with user groups like BNB in order to allow for a more timely and constructive process of contribution to Council planning and design. Doing so will accommodate the requirements of both existing Council goals around levels of service and safety, but also pending requirements regarding perceptions of cycling safety and satisfaction with cycling facilities.*

Submission 3: Ngati Koata Trust (Matt Hippolite)

*[Section 9] needs amendment: Engagement with Iwi  
The Council will honour all engagement processes, agreements and memorandums of understanding developed with iwi/Maori as they relate to its decision-making policies. It will also take into account its obligations as outlined under the ~~Resource Management and Local Government Acts~~ Te Tau Ihu Claims Settlement Act 2013.*

- 5.5 Comments in submissions 1 and 2 do not require an amendment to the policy as their message is consistent with the intent of the policy. Submission 1 supports the broader approach of the policy. Submission 2 has specific concerns about Council's engagement on cycling projects but does not propose any changes to the policy.
- 5.6 Submission 3 suggests that a reference be made to Te Tau Ihu Claims Settlement process and this seems appropriate. Previously, the policy referenced obligations under the Resource Management and Local Government Acts. Te Tau Ihu Claims Settlement Act 2013 encompasses both the RMA and LGA, along with other applicable legislation. Officers recommend that section 7 called "Engagement with Iwi" be amended in the draft policy to the following:

*Council will take into account its obligations as outlined under legislation including Te Tau Ihu Claims Settlement Act 2013 and all other relevant Acts. Council will also take into account National Policy Statement Frameworks, and will honour all engagement processes, agreements and memorandums of understanding developed with Maori as they relate to its decision-making processes.*

## **6. Options**

- 6.1 The Local Government Act 2002 Amendment Bill requires that Councils adopt a Significance and Engagement Policy by 01 December 2014.
- 6.2 There are no options in relation to whether or not a Significance and Engagement Policy is adopted, however there are options about the content of that policy. Officers recommend the draft policy be amended to reflect community feedback as per section 5.6 above.
- 6.3 If Council chooses to make more substantial changes to the policy at this stage, while a second consultation would not be required under legislation, this might be considered preferable by Council. This would mean that the timeframe for adoption of the policy would be outside the timeframe required by the legislation.

## **7. Assessment of Significance against the Council's Significance Policy**

- 7.1 This decision is not significant in terms of Council's Significance Policy.

## **8. Alignment with relevant Council Policy**

- 8.1 The adoption of a Significance and Engagement Policy is required under the Local Government Act 2002 and must be summarised as part of the Long Term Plan 2015-25.
- 8.2 The Significance and Engagement Policy aligns with the Nelson City Council Community outcomes (Outcome 6: Good Leadership), and with

Nelson 2060 (Goal 1: We are all leaders across our community and Goal 2: We are all able to be involved in decisions).

## **9. Consultation**

- 9.1 The Significance and Engagement Policy was consulted on over a three week period. The public was advised of the opportunity of providing feedback in various ways, with sector organisations directly advised of the content of the policy.

## **10. Inclusion of Māori in the decision making process**

- 10.1 Iwi were directly contacted about the Significance and Engagement Policy. Comments made in response have been incorporated in the attached document (Attachment 1).

## **11. Conclusion**

- 11.1 Officers recommend the policy, as amended following community consultation, be approved by the Governance Committee and referred to Council for adoption.
- 11.2 Once adopted by Council, the Significance and Engagement Policy will govern Council decision making from the date of that adoption.

Susan Moore-Lavo  
**Policy Advisor**

### **Attachments**

- Attachment 1: Significance and Engagement Policy 2014 [A1262973](#)
- Attachment 2: Report: Draft Significance and Engagement Policy [A1241702](#)
- Attachment 3: Submissions on Draft Significance and Engagement Policy [A1264506](#)