

Council – Māori Engagement 201

**Reflections after the Māori - Local Government
Advisory Group**

tim.leyland@marlborough.govt.nz

“Local government in our small, rapidly changing country could never be easy. It is, I think, where the rubber meets the road. While so much of the so-called race debate is played out in national politics, it is at the local level that communities must resolve the real challenges of growing diversity. And they must do that not via media-driven sound-bites, but face to face. That is much harder. It is also far more likely to produce positive outcomes.”

Chief Judge Joe Williams. Chief Judge of the Māori Land Court and Chairperson of the Waitangi Tribunal

Keynote address for Local Government New Zealand's annual conference, 2005.

Reflections on ...

- Rules vs Incentives
- Methods
- Imperatives

Rules: the statutory requirements

Responsibilities on Councils to consult with Māori/Tangata Whenua or give effect to the Treaty of Waitangi:

- Resource Management Act 1991
- Local Government Act 2002
- Hazardous Substances and New Organisms Act 1996
- Historic Places Act 1993
- Land Transport Management Act 2003
- Specific legislation such as Acts giving effect to Treaty settlements

LGA: Council responsibilities to Māori

Provide **opportunities** and **processes** for Māori to contribute to **decision-making** processes

Foster the development of Māori **capacity** to contribute to decision-making processes

Provide **relevant** information to Māori

Take into account the **relationship** of Māori and their culture and traditions with their ancestral land, water, sites, wāhi tapu, valued flora and fauna, and other taonga.

How have councils responded?

- Huge increases in number and type of mechanisms to provide for Māori participation over last 10 years
- Some type of process for engagement in nearly every council in the country
- Common mechanisms but diversity in relationships
- Largely response to RMA, adapting for other issues and needs? (evolving ??)
- Difficult to judge effectiveness (particularly from Māori perspectives) – we have come a long way, but still a way to go?
- LGA provides opportunities to broaden engagement

Ongoing challenges for all parties

- Capacity and resources
- Skills and capability
- Strategic versus ad hoc engagement
- Engaging at the right levels and with the right people on different issues
- Delivering mutual benefit and value (more than just Māori input into Council processes)
- Who gets to talk with who ?

Who should councils engage with?

LGA requires engagement with “Māori” (not defined)

- Implies engagement that includes *and goes beyond* iwi and hapu e.g. pan-tribal and urban Māori organisations, Māori health providers, kōhanga reo etc.
- Needs to be worked out locally to reflect diversity of local situations

Council and Māori Diversity

Relationships begin from differing starting points. Each party brings

- a unique history and understanding of that history
- a different set of aspirations
- differing resources and capabilities
- particular ways of implementing policy, practices and thinking.

No one right way - but **many good ways** to engage and work together

Incentives: the benefits of building good relationships with Māori

There must be tangible, positive results or why bother?

Greater understanding of one another's aspirations and expectations

Opportunities for shared projects

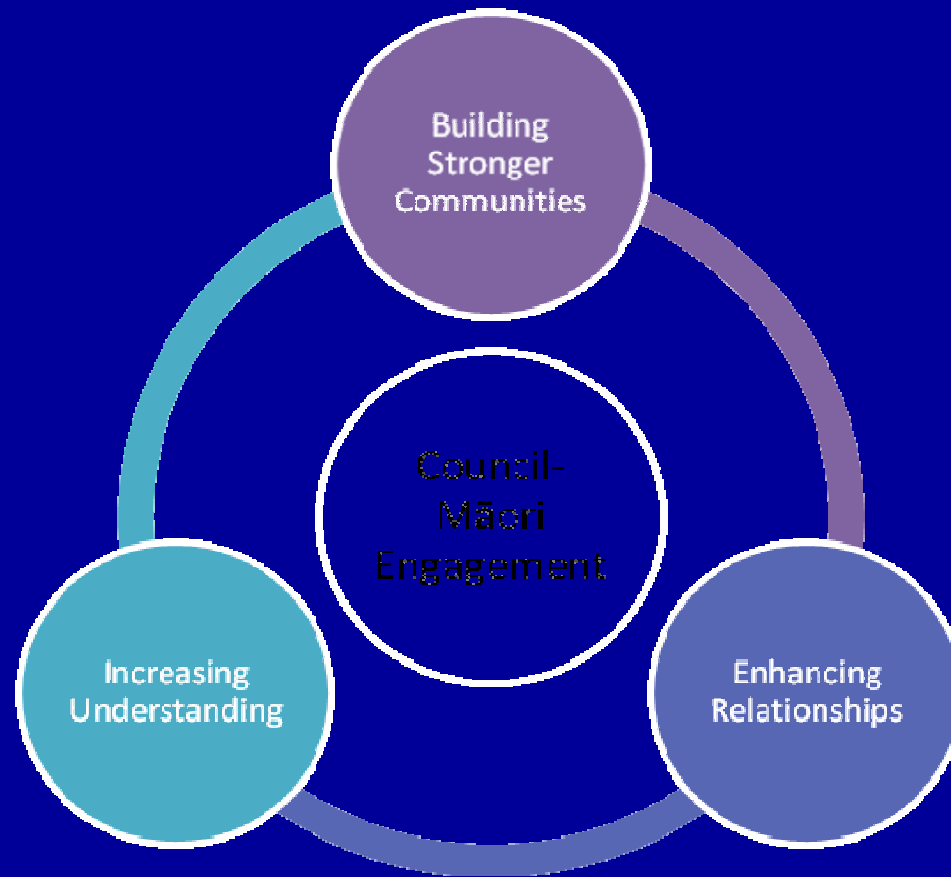
Improved processes

More efficient use of resources

More informed decision making

Supporting Māori aspirations to promote wellbeing of Māori and wider community

Strengthening engagement



Increasing council understanding

Local iwi, hapū and Māori groups

The Treaty of Waitangi

Māori language and protocol

Relevant legislation

Clear processes that are understood throughout council

Enhancing relationships

Investing in lasting and meaningful relationships

- Identifying who to work with (and on what)
- Shift from issue by issue to long term strategic (and *purposeful*) engagement of benefit to all parties
- Formal and informal interaction across a range of activities and issues
- Building capacity in all dimensions
- Continuity and consistency

Enhancing relationships cont.

Formalising relationships e.g.

- Māori Advisory/Standing Committees
- Co-management arrangements
- Joint Charters/Memoranda
- Working Parties and Sub-committees
- Māori constituencies or wards
- Service Contracts with iwi, hapū, groups

Enhancing relationships cont.

Joint capacity building – both parties adequately informed and resourced to achieve positive outcomes
e.g.

- Skill exchanges and secondments
- Sharing access to learning and development such as Making Good Decisions programme (RMA)
- Resourcing Māori participation (projects, administration or services)

What does this mean?

Councils need to:

- provide opportunities for Māori to participate
- take an informed approach to decision making (understand Māori issues and aspirations)
- engage beyond environmental and cultural issues
- deliver on the rhetoric

“What works is engagement – working with people and developing a relationship where both parties contribute towards resolving issues.”

Donald Couch, Deputy Kaiwhakahaere Te Rūnanga o Ngāi Tahu and representative Te Hapū o Ngāti Wheke (Rapaki).

Your roles

Ensure structures are in place to fulfill your Council's obligations

Increase your own awareness and capacity

Be open to engagement

Build relationships

Be proactive

Take responsibility for leadership within the council and the community

Building Stronger Communities

Working together to develop and deliver policies, programmes and services that promote the well-being of Māori communities and the wider community across housing, health, employment, economic development, youth, land, natural resources ...



Resources and training

LGNZ project

- developed fact sheets and FAQs that supplement earlier good practice materials www.lgnz.co.nz
- offering training to councils (on demand and locally tailored) – have run two workshops to date, in discussions with other councils
- developing additional resources into the future

The Imperative

“... [due to demographic and political changes] the next 35 years could present some of the greatest challenges to nation-building that New Zealand has ever faced. We will need leaders of great wisdom and humility to guide us through these challenges. Nowhere will this be more so than at the face to face level of local government.

We will need people skilled in community building, conflict resolution, diplomacy and compromise. We will need people with appropriate cultural and linguistic skills. We will need, in particular, local governments in which all the strands feel a sense of ownership.”

Chief Judge Joe Williams. Chief Judge of the Māori Land Court and Chairperson of the Waitangi Tribunal
Keynote address for Local Government New Zealand's annual conference, 2005.