

Report 00.113

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[Report 00.113 IAM:ln]

Report to the Policy and Finance Committee
from Cr Ian Buchanan, Chairperson, Environment Committee

Strengthening the Relationship between the Council and tangata whenua

1. Purpose

To seek the Council's endorsement of a proposal to strengthen its relationship with tangata whenua.

2. Background

In response to concerns raised at Ara Tahī meetings, the Council has spent the past 12 months developing a proposal to strengthen its relationship with the tangata whenua of the Region. Councillors visited each Iwi authority in the Region, and explored possibilities at workshops. At all stages Councillors indicated willingness on their part to move beyond the current framework and explore ways that the relationship can be improved. For their part, Iwi indicated a desire to maintain a collective relationship with the Council, but sought increased emphasis on the relationship with individual Iwi authorities.

Council staff prepared a proposal that was discussed by Councillors at a workshop before staff consulted with Iwi. Ara Tahī considered the proposal at its meeting on December 1st 1999, and agreed that it should be progressed, subject to some further discussions about the appointment of an additional Iwi liaison officer.

3. The proposal

The proposal is included as Attachment 1 to this report. Councillors will have seen it as part of the Ara Tahī papers for the December meeting. Now is the time for it to be formally considered by the Council.

The proposal includes provision for the continuation of the collective forum, Ara Tahī, while providing for more emphasis on individual relationships with Iwi, as sought by them.

The proposal represents a huge increase in commitment on the Council's behalf considering that the Council does not at present address Maori values and issues in a systematic and comprehensive way. Awareness raising and an appreciation of all things Maori can only strengthen the relationship and provide a greater willingness on the part of Council to engage with Maori as Council becomes more aware of the differences between themselves and tangata whenua and seeks ways to acknowledge and respect those differences.

4. **Communication**

The outcome of the Committee's consideration will be communicated to the Iwi of the Region by Council staff. A press release for the wider community may be appropriate.

5. **Recommendation**

That the Committee recommends that Council adopt the proposal for strengthening the relationship between the Council and tangata whenua attached to this report.

Report prepared by:

CR IAN BUCHANAN
Chairperson, Environment Committee

Attachments: 1