



1 July 2026

Te Wahine Ora o Hakepa Foundation

s7(2)(a)

Tēnā koe,

Request for Information – Local Government Official Information and Meetings Act (LGOIMA) 1987

We refer to your official information request dated 11 June 2026, seeking information about the Tino Rangatiratanga flag currently flown at Hutt City Council. Specifically, you requested:

1. *The policy, resolution, decision, or authority under which the Tino Rangatiratanga flag is flown at Council facilities.*
2. *Any Council reports, briefing papers, minutes, or recommendations relating to the decision to fly the flag.*
3. *The date on which the decision was made.*
4. *Whether the flag is intended to be flown permanently or on specified occasions only.*
5. *Any guidance, protocol, or rationale relied upon by Council when determining the placement of the Tino Rangatiratanga flag 1990 alongside the New Zealand flag.*

Answer:

The Flying of Flags Protocols guide how flags are flown at Council facilities. A copy is attached for your reference and is also available on Council's website at: [Council policies, plans and strategies | Hutt City Council.](#)

Under these protocols, decisions about which flags are flown are made by the Chief Executive in consultation with the Mayor. The protocols address the National Māori (Tino Rangatiratanga) flag and provide that it may be flown daily where this reflects the wishes of mana whenua. They also explain that flying the Tino Rangatiratanga flag alongside the New Zealand flag recognises Council's partnership with Māori under Te Tiriti o Waitangi and its intention to work alongside Māori, as reflected in Memoranda of Understanding with mana whenua.

There are no Council reports, briefing papers, minutes, or recommendations relating to a separate decision to fly the Tino Rangatiratanga flag, and no single recorded date on which such a decision was made. The current approach reflects the application of the protocols and Council's relationship with mana whenua. Accordingly, we are refusing parts 2 and 3 of your request under section 17(g) of the LGOIMA, as the information is not held by Council.

In terms of placement, the protocols note that the Tino Rangatiratanga flag complements the New Zealand flag, and that flying both together symbolises and enhances that partnership. Council also follows Ministry for Culture and Heritage guidance when displaying flags together.

You have the right to seek an investigation and review by the Ombudsman of this response. Information about how to make a complaint is available at: [Office of the Ombudsman - Complaints](#), or freephone 0800 802 602.

Please note that this response to your information request may be published on Hutt City Council's website: [Proactive releases - Hutt City Council](#).

Ngā mihi nui



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FLYING OF FLAGS PROTOCOLS

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1. INTRODUCTION

These protocols provide Council and its administration with principles and guidelines for the flying of flags on Council managed flag poles. These protocols will assist Council to address requests to fly flags at times while ensuring Council continues to foster a sense of local and national pride in the community.

The development of these protocols has taken into account requirements of the flag protocols issued by Manatū Taonga Ministry for Culture and Heritage. The Chief Executive will be responsible for making determinations about flag flying in line with these protocols in consultation with the Mayor.

2. PRINCIPLES

The following principles underpin these protocols:

- Flying flags represents an opportunity to demonstrate and foster a sense of pride in the community
- Flying specific flags can bring attention to a cause or event
- Flying flags should be done with respect and sensitivity to the Lower Hutt community including Mana Whenua. City flag poles

Hutt City Council maintains flagpoles at the following locations:

- Council's primary civic building (3)
- The War Memorial Library
- Council's pavilion building.

The New Zealand Flag will be flown daily at Council's primary civic building and Council's pavilion building.

Council assists with painting RSA owned flag poles at:

- The Cenotaph, Queen Street Wainuiomata;
- The Wainuiomata Memorial Gardens; and
- The ANZAC Memorial Flagstaff at Petone Railway Station.

3. THE NEW ZEALAND FLAG

3.1 DAYS OF NATIONAL COMMEMORATION

The New Zealand flag can be flown on any day of the year, especially on days of national commemoration such as:

- 6 February – Waitangi Day
- 25 April - Anzac Day*
- First Monday in June - Her Majesty the Queen's (official) birthday
- Fourth Monday in October - Labour Day
- Official occasions, such as the opening of Parliament, and visits by distinguished people.

*At places where commemorative services are held, it is appropriate for the flag to be lowered to half-mast for the duration of a memorial service as a sign of respect.

3.2 TIMES OF MOURNING

The New Zealand flag can be flown at half-mast as a sign of mourning when major public figures die or during days of national mourning, following direction by the Chief Executive of Manatū Taonga Ministry for Culture and Heritage and through Council's Chief Executive.

When the New Zealand flag is at half-mast no other flags may be flown above it.

The Maintenance Manager will be responsible for ensuring all New Zealand flags flying on Council flag poles are appropriately moved to half-mast.

3.3 MANATŪ TAONGA MINISTRY FOR CULTURE AND HERITAGE PROTOCOLS

When displaying the New Zealand Flag [the protocols of the Ministry of Culture and Heritage](#) for positioning and presentation should always be followed.

4. FLYING OTHER FLAGS

4.1 NATIONAL MĀORI (TINO RANGATIRATANGA) FLAG

The national Māori flag should be flown daily if it is the wish of mana whenua for this to happen. The act of flying both flags together embraces Te Ao Māori and is recognition of Council's role in partnership with Māori under Te Tiriti o Waitangi and its intention to work alongside Māori. This partnership is reflected in Memoranda of Understanding with mana whenua.

The national Māori flag does not carry official status but is a symbol of New Zealand and complements the New Zealand flag. In 2009 four flags of national significance were identified by the New Zealand Government for consideration as the preferred national Māori flag. 80.1% of submissions selected the Tino Rangatiratanga flag.

The elements of the national Māori flag represent the three realms:

- Te Korekore, potential being (black, top).

- Te Whai Ao, coming into being (red, bottom).
- Te Ao Mārama, the realm of being and light (white, centre).

The koru is symbolic of a curling fern frond, representing the unfolding of new life, hope for the future and the process of renewal.

Cabinet has recognised the Tino Rangatiratanga flag as the preferred national Māori flag and has noted it will complement the New Zealand flag. Flying the two flags together, particularly on days of national significance such as Waitangi Day, symbolises and enhances Council's partnership with Māori.

4.2 **TE KARA O TE WHAKAMINENGA O NGA HAPU O NU TIRENI (TE KARA) / THE FLAG OF THE UNITED TRIBES OF NEW ZEALAND**

New Zealand's first flag, Te Kara, was chosen and flew at Waitangi on 20 March 1834 by 25 chiefs from the Far North. It is still one of New Zealand's official and legally recognised flags. It represents the Northern tribes of the North Island who signed He Whakaputanga / Declaration of Independence.

4.3 **FLAGS OF OTHER NATIONS**

New Zealand follows international custom when flying multiple national flags, which puts the official flags of other countries directly after the New Zealand flag, and before other flags. Māori flags can be flown directly following the official flags of other countries. The flags should be the same size and should fly from a flagpole of the same height.

See [the guidelines of the Ministry of Culture and Heritage](#) for more information on official protocols.

4.4 **SPECIAL FLAGS**

Flags may commemorate or recognise special days, weeks or events of significance. Flags particular to the occasion or commemoration may be flown. The Chief Executive, in consultation with the Mayor will be responsible for making determinations about flying special flags in line with these protocols.

See <https://nzcurriculum.tki.org.nz/Curriculum-resources/National-events-and-the-NZC#co> for the various national events recognised in New Zealand as days and weeks of importance.

Council has no authority over flags flown by private companies or businesses.

5. **RESPONSIBILITY FOR MAINTAINING THE FLAG AND PROTOCOLS**

Flags should never be flown in a dilapidated condition.

Responsibility for storing and maintaining flags in good condition rests with the Chief Executive's Office and/or the Corporate Leadership Team. On a day-to-day basis this

responsibility is delegated to the Assets and Facilities Management Business Unit. The Maintenance Manager is the contact person for when flags are to be flown or require maintenance.

RELEASED UNDER THE LOCAL GOVERNMENT OFFICIAL INFORMATION AND MEETINGS ACT 1987

6. REFERENCES

- Flying NZ flag <https://www.mch.govt.nz/nz-identity-heritage/flags/flying-new-zealand-flag>
- Displaying NZ flag <https://mch.govt.nz/nz-identity-heritage/flags/displaying-new-zealand-flag>
- The national Māori flag <https://mch.govt.nz/nz-identity-heritage/flags/national-māori-flag>