

29 April 2025

Chris Milne

[fyi-request-30569-4b550492@requests.fyi.org.nz](mailto:fyi-request-30569-4b550492@requests.fyi.org.nz)

Dear Chris

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

We refer to your official information request dated 30 March 2025:

*“Please provide any documents, including flow charts, which show or describe the process by which policy is developed, including liaison with parties external to council, during the period leading up to the proposed policy being released for general public consultation. In particular, please provide any documents, charts or diagrams which show how and when and in what order the general public and iwi are consulted as part of policy development.”*

**Answer:**

You have asked for any documents which show or describe the process by which policy is developed at Hutt City Council, including liaison with parties external to council, and documents which show how and when and in what order the general public and iwi are consulted as part of policy development.

Attached is Council’s staff guidance on the end-to-end process for developing and reviewing papers, policies and other documents. For consistency with best practice guidelines, it includes references to Government policy processes issued by the Department of Prime Minister and Cabinet.

The level of engagement required for Council projects is determined in consultation with Council's [Significance and Engagement Policy \(last reviewed in December 2023\)](#). This policy sets out the general approach that Hutt City Council takes to determine the significance of proposals and decisions relating to issues, assets or other matters and the appropriate level of engagement and/or consultation required. Appendix 2 in the policy includes a decision-making flow chart.

Where we have determined a Council project to be of public interest, officers develop a Communications and Engagement plan to guide audience identification, engagement objectives, risks and mitigations (see the attached template).

You have the right to seek an investigation and review by the Ombudsman of this decision. Information about how to make a complaint is available at [www.ombudsman.parliament.nz](http://www.ombudsman.parliament.nz) or freephone 0800 802 602.

Please note that this response to your information request may be published on Hutt City Council's website. Please refer to the following link: [www.huttcity.govt.nz/council/contactus/make-an-official-information-act-request/proactive-releases](http://www.huttcity.govt.nz/council/contactus/make-an-official-information-act-request/proactive-releases)

Yours sincerely

Lakna Siriwardena

Legal Operations Advisor



# Comms and engagement plan

---

## Project name:

**Project owner:** Name and contact details

**Date:** DD/MM/YYYY

## Summary

Text

*2-3 sentences on what's happening.*

## Background/context

Text

*Provide a short overview of the project and how we got to this point.*

## Objectives

Text

*Describe the purpose of the communications and what we want our audience to think/feel/do as a result. Check your objectives are SMART – Specific, Measurable, Achievable, Realistic, and Timebound.*

## Strategic approach

Text

Outline the approach we'll be taking to achieve our objectives. This isn't about tactics – they come later; think about how long we plan to be engaging with people, the general 'flavour' of what we'll be doing (eg using case studies, showcasing a partner, inviting people to get involved, etc)

## Audiences

Text

List primary and secondary audiences, including stakeholders who need to be consulted and/or kept informed.

## Key messages

Primary message:

What's the single most important message people need to hear?

Supporting messages (optional):

List any other information we should communicate, or details may be specific to certain audiences.

## Principles

Text

All of our communication and engagement activity should reflect our vision and values. Is there anything we need to be mindful of in our approach?

Our key priorities for the next ten years:

- Whakangao i ngā poupu hapori / Investing in Infrastructure – Investing in high-quality infrastructure that supports our people to move around, receive basic services (like water) and enjoy our community facilities.
- Hei Ahuru Mōwai mō te Katoa / Increasing housing supply – Effectively planning for growth in our city, ensuring an increase in housing supply and working with organisations to ensure our people have warm, safe, dry homes to live in.

- *Tiaki Taiao / Caring for and protecting our environment – Working with our communities to meet the challenges of climate change and our goal to become carbon zero by 2050.*
- *Taunaki Ōhanga Auaha, Tāone Whakapoapoa / Supporting an innovative, agile economy and attractive city – Investing to drive economic growth, and harnessing the talents of business, education, research and science communities in Te Awa Kairangi Lower Hutt to make our city an attractive place to work and invest.*
- *Tūhono Hapori / Connecting communities – Investing to connect and empower neighbourhoods and communities so they can thrive and remain safe, connected, healthy, inclusive and resilient*
- *Whakauka Ahumoni / Financial sustainability – Investing in a financially sustainable and prudent way that ensures we are carefully managing our finances to deliver on our community’s expectations.*

Consider:

- *Te Ao Māori (work with Te Tira Māori)*
- *Accessibility*

## Risks and mitigations

Text

List any issues we anticipate and how we will prepare. For example,

- *Is this likely to cause a negative reaction?*
- *Are people likely to want more information?*
- *What happens if they don’t get the information?*
- *Will our staff have everything they need to be prepared?*

Risk	Mitigation	Comment

# Tactics

Text

Map out key actions, responsibilities and milestones.

Consider

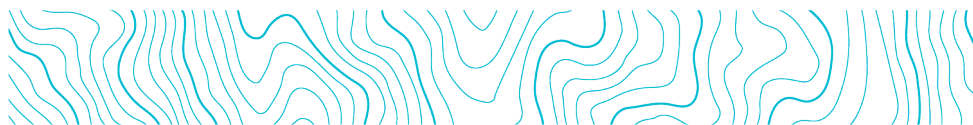
- Internal
- Customer Service Team
- Press release
- Social media
- FAQs

When	What	Who

# Appendices

Text

Include any supporting information (eg previous communications, other relevant plans and documents) here.



# End-to-End Process for Developing and Reviewing Papers

---

The purpose of this guidance document is to inform the policy development process within Council. For generic guidance, officers can utilise the policy process resources developed by the Department of Prime Minister and Cabinet (DPMC). Those resources can be found [here](#).

## Commissioning

The Work Request form provides the work commissioner the opportunity to give detailed insight into their expectations, purpose, and scope of the piece of work. This is essential to give the receiving party the greatest opportunity to understand what is required of them. The form can be found [here](#).

## Exploration

The attached policy template provides officers with basic structure and content recommendations on policy development to maintain consistency across Council. The template can be found [here](#). A guide to writing Reports to Council can be found [here](#).

## Green light

Attached [here](#) is DPMC's paper-scoring template. Officers can use the template to assess a paper's quality against the quality advice scale in the attached document.

## Final agreement

Officers are required to produce a memorandum to inform the Corporate Leadership Team (CLT) of the purpose, background, risks and implications of the

policy. The CLT memo template can be found [here](#). Officers are also required to produce a Report to Council; guidance for producing a Report to Council can be found [here](#).

## Implementation

The implementation plan details how the policy will take effect by outlining the roles and responsibilities of relevant parties. For example, to give practical effect to the Research Ethics Policy, a Research Ethics Panel has been established to provide advice to officers undertaking research that involves obtaining personal feedback and data from communities in the region. The implementation plan must include monitoring measures to ensure the policy remains relevant.

## Review

When reviewing policies, officers should refer back to the start of this process guidance. The Policies, Strategies and Bylaws Register, located [here](#), allows officers to input relevant data to ensure they are notified of upcoming review dates and the timeframe involved in the process of reviewing documents. Please refer to the Register's Guidance Material, located [here](#), for direction on how to use the space.

## FAQs

### **What is the difference between policies, strategies and bylaws?**

**Bylaws:** Establish the rules framework to implement legislation and within which policies are developed.

**Policies:** Often legislatively driven – i.e., giving effect to legislation or bylaws; Usually 'regulatory' in nature – i.e., they shape or affect behaviour – for example by setting entitlement limits, articulating 'must dos' or 'must not dos.'

**Strategies:** Inform or guide thinking; or set a broader direction of travel; strategies can be mandatory or self-directed.

### **Is there a template?**

The Policy Template can be found [here](#).



## **Where do I save working documents in Te Pataka?**

Create an entry and save all Council policies, strategies and bylaws in the Register space, located [here](#). Officers can search the register to locate preexisting entries.

## **Is my work confidential?**

The Information Management Team oversees privacy-related at Council. Officers can contact the Information Management Team at [informationmanagementteam@huttcity.govt.nz](mailto:informationmanagementteam@huttcity.govt.nz).

## **Who can I speak to for advice?**

Officers can approach the Policy Team or contact them at [policy@huttcity.govt.nz](mailto:policy@huttcity.govt.nz).

## **What do I do when I have been asked to peer review a document?**

The process of peer review is embedded within the policy creation process prior to submitting documents for authorisation. Officers can utilise DPMC's scoring template, found [here](#), to steer quality feedback.

## **How do I ensure I have the relevant information to do the peer review?**

To achieve a thorough peer review process, an understanding of relevant documentation such as bylaws, strategies, guides and legislation that is linked to the policy they are reviewing is required. This will give officers the best opportunity to provide quality feedback. Requesting relevant information from the reviewee should be part of the process.

## **How long does it take to get agreement to a new policy?**

The process for creating or reviewing policies is contingent on various factors, including legislative requirements, a special consultative procedure, changes to approach, and funding. This means policies could take anywhere from one month to multiple years to create or review. Democratic Services, who oversee the management of Council committees and hearings, can offer tailored advice to manage your development timeline. Officers can contact Democratic Services at [democraticserviceteam@huttcity.govt.nz](mailto:democraticserviceteam@huttcity.govt.nz).

## **Do we need to talk to the public?**

Council determines the need for consultation according to the impact the policy will have on the public. Consultation is sought in accordance with [Section 82](#) of the Local Government Act 2002 and Council's [Significance and Engagement Policy](#).

## **How do I find examples from other councils?**

District and city councils host policies on their respective websites. These can be used to guide the development process. Local Government New Zealand houses a list of councils [here](#).

## **How do I work out who is accountable?**

Policy owners, who are named in the register and within policies, are the primary port of call for officers seeking further information on specific policies. If a policy has an implementation plan, the plan *should* outline the responsibilities of relevant business units.

## **Who do I talk to within council?**

For any further guidance, contact the Policy Team at [policy@huttcity.govt.nz](mailto:policy@huttcity.govt.nz).