



Community Engagement Strategy

December 2008



Council partners with the Youth Link Trust (several 2008 members pictured) in the development of Ruapehu youth leadership. This is one of a number of Council partnerships contained in this Strategy.

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1 Introduction

Simply speaking, community 'engagement' is about listening to the community's concerns, determining how best Council can respond, and taking action in the appropriate way. It starts with the public's guidance of Council action on its priorities. This Community Engagement Strategy outlines Council's community engagement direction and programme from 1 July 2008 to 30 June 2009, and is a first for the Council. It includes Council's approaches to advocacy, partnerships, and community education and advertising. The Strategy has arisen from Council's need to see a coordinated approach to engagement, and to monitor its effectiveness. Through this Community Engagement Strategy, Council is aiming to better coordinate how we engage with our customers, citizens and communities based on the belief that:

- Council is elected to give leadership in achieving the community's desired outcomes for strong, healthy, active and prosperous communities
- All communities should be involved in the decisions that affect them
- All communities deserve high quality Council services, shaped around their needs and ability to pay
- Council policies and strategies should reflect local priorities, requirements and aspirations.

Objectives of Community Engagement

In 2008, Council has introduced a significant new direction for its organisation that can be referred to as 'customer driven service'. This approach has been anchored around three platforms:

1. Council's Values Statement (March 2008)
2. Customer Service Strategy (November 2008)
3. Community Engagement Strategy (December 2008)

Council's Values Statement (2008) reinforces that a close partnership between Council and its communities is essential for future prosperity:

To prosper and achieve real growth we must:

- Earn the trust of communities, customers and employees by being good communicators and consistently delivering on commitments

We are successful in creating value when:

- Our District is improving in prosperity through our positive leadership.
- Our communities and customers are acknowledging the value we create for their rate-funded investment and getting satisfying solutions to their needs.

The objectives of the Community Engagement Strategy are:

1. The community understands issues and is confident to approach Council with concerns.
2. The community feels that Council is working on their behalf.
3. Council sticks to its priorities on behalf of its communities.
4. Council provides a welcoming environment where barriers to the community are reduced as much as practicable.
5. Council advocates for more resourcing for a prosperous and sustainable District future.

2 Partnerships and Advocacy Strategy

The Local Government Act 2002 gives a broad mandate for community engagement to councils, and requires these authorities to articulate their own role in achieving desired community outcomes. In general Council defines its role as a ‘provider’ of core infrastructure and statutory responsibilities, but a ‘facilitator’ or ‘advocate’ (a support role) of outcome areas outside of this role, eg in health, community safety. The Act does not state that Council must be a leader (primarily responsible for service delivery) in meeting each community outcome, and given Council’s resourcing and expertises, it could not and should not assume this role.

Process for Determining Priorities

The engagement process starts with listening to the concerns of residents which are expressed by ‘community outcome’ statements found in Council’s Long Term Plan (pages 28 – 47). These were developed through extensive public engagement including meetings, surveys and listening to submissions. Further, listed on pages 39-47 of Council’s Long Term Plan, are and stakeholders that Council suggested that it would engage in to achieve these outcomes. There are numerous groups and issues, and Council is not able to commit the resources to work on all these areas equally at the same time. Therefore, to guide Council response to achieving outcomes, Council has surveyed people to understand what their priorities are, and also has undertaken a ‘State of District’ report to guide priorities based on statistics. The following outlines these results:

Ruapehu Community Priorities Survey 2005

When residents were surveyed to find out what their priorities were in 2005, they listed the following:

- Crime and violence reduction, and police being open and accessible.
- A community that respects the welfare and safety of others.
- An environment which has an excellent quality of water, soil and air.
- A district where a range of medical services are provided and accessible.
- Core facilities, services and infrastructure planning and provision (water, sewerage, solid waste, power, roading and medical) keep pace with development.

State of District Report

The State of District Report indicated a number of indicators where this area is not achieving to the same extent as nationally, and these indicators must also serve as a guide to action. Not all indicators are measured. For instance, there are health indicators that are important but not captured in this report – so the approach has its limitations. Ruapehu seems to be falling behind New Zealand in the following.

<p><u>Behind New Zealand, but improving</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Employment rate • Social connectedness • Drinking water quality • Household income • Growth in business numbers 	<p><u>Behind New Zealand, and falling further</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Home ownership
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From these sources, the steer that Council has to guide their Engagement Strategy is that priority engagement be given in the following issues:

- Developing core Council services
- Community health access
- Community safety
- High quality environment
- Encouraging business development in the District
- Assisting community organisations in Community development

Priorities for Engagement in 2008/09

From the large list of community outcomes, and the signals given on what issues are of priority concern, Council is pursuing the following for this year. Please note that these priorities may change from year to year, but must remain within the scope of the community outcome statements.

2008/09 priority engagement areas:

1. Ruapehu people want healthy, active and safe communities
 - i. Health access and community health advocacy
 - ii. Safety including food, buildings, graffiti and civil defence
 - iii. Partnering in recreation for healthy, active lifestyles
2. Ruapehu people want strong, prosperous and sustainable communities
 - i. Establishing the right planning frameworks for sustainable growth
 - ii. Economic development and attracting new business
 - iii. Advocating for road funding
 - iv. Supporting the building of strong and self-sufficient community organisations
3. Ruapehu people want inclusive communities where everyone's views are heard and respected
 - i. Ensuring engagement is inclusive and thorough
 - ii. Raising the status of iwi in Council planning and partnering

How we will work with our communities to achieve these outcomes is found on the following pages, under each strategic theme that was listed above.

Strategic Theme 1: Ruapehu District Council Builds Healthy, Active and Safe Communities

<i>Healthy Ruapehu – Key issues in 2008/09</i>	<i>Active Ruapehu – Key issues in 2008/09</i>	<i>Safe Ruapehu – Key issues in 2008/09</i>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <u>Health</u> – The community has identified to Council a number of health issues as significant to future community sustainability and individual health and Council will respond as follows: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Advocate for a Health Care Village in Taumarunui ○ Partner with the Warm Homes Committee ○ Advocate for improved southern health services through partnership with the Intersect Group and Locality Planning Group ○ Partner with Federated Farmers in droughts ○ Advocate for removal of Raetihi Hospital for asbestos reasons ○ Seek possible partners for older persons housing if a better service can be provided for less cost • <u>Food safety</u> – Compulsory regulations are emerging for all eating establishments to be accredited. To avoid a rushed approach, Council will work with its communities to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Introduce a voluntary food registration programme to prepare businesses voluntarily & slowly ○ Meet with community licensed clubs to discuss liquor licensing • <u>Waste Minimisation</u> – The community wants a healthy environment. Council will: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Partner with the Regional Waste Forum in primary school education ○ Continue its commitment to waste minimisation and community education 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <u>Youth</u> – The community has said that the development of youth is critical to build healthy and safe communities, and retain families. Council will: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Partner in the Youth Link Trust through contract management of MYD grant, and representation on the Trust. ○ Investigate partnership with Waikato DHB Population Health services for youth support • <u>Recreation</u> – The Ruapehu community has had a long and proud association with active sports, and the outdoors. Council will: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Partner in the Physical Activity Strategy ○ Host a Sport Wanganui employee in Council ○ Fund Sport Wanganui for service delivery from 2008 to 2010. • <u>Facilities</u> – The community considers that it is important that there be a diverse range of recreation facilities for families and communities: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Continue commitment to the ‘No Barriers’ disabled access pledge ○ Partner with Taumarunui Facilities Trust for recreation facilities’ grant funding ○ Explore similar structure to access grant funding in Ohakune / Raetihi ○ Support Hall Committees through grant funding and advice around governance processes 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <u>Graffiti</u> – The community considers that graffiti reduces the pride in communities and is a costly form of crime. Council will: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Continue its leadership of the ‘Zero Tolerance Graffiti Strategy’ partnership • <u>Building safety</u> – Council needs to continue its statutory responsibilities to foster safe building and building practices, but will be seeking increasing support from the trades’ sector in this. Council will: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Continue media and website education, and building sector forums, to educate community about nationally introduced accreditation procedures ○ Begin requirements on Council to monitor earthquake building construction standards and work with building owners to achieve this • <u>Civil Defence</u> - Build rural and iwi civil defence capability, and keep residents informed of safe practices during natural events • <u>Animal Control</u> – The community is concerned about the safety of its environment and the appropriate control of animals. Council will: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Formalise a partnership with SPCA for joint operations from a single site ○ Undertake a dog registration campaign in Raetihi to educate community on good dog care, and register animals

Strategic Theme 2: Ruapehu District Council Builds Robust, Prosperous and Sustainable Communities

- Planning – Council has heard from residents that the planning framework it operates under has a major impact on District economic growth. Council will foster District economic growth, within a sustainable framework, by:
 - Advocacy to align the Horizons' One Plan to long term Ruapehu community economic and social sustainability
 - Engaging community and stakeholders in the development of the Ruapehu District Plan – consultation plan to Council by end-January 2009
 - Engaging community and stakeholders in the development of the Ruapehu Long Term Plan - consultation plan reviewed by Council end-Nov 2008
 - Explore a Unitary Authority (not amalgamation) option with Wanganui District Council
- Economic Development – The community have prioritised economic development as critical to the District's future, and said that both economic diversification, and excellence in infrastructure, are important. Council will:
 - Partner with other councils and iwi in the Regional Partnership Programme to advance economic initiatives, including the Tourism MRI
 - Provide oversight of the Tourism MRI, and progress on other economic priorities from the RPP agreement, through the RED Trust.
 - Advocate for Ruapehu funding from NZTE through the regional economic development agency
 - Launch an 'Investor pack' for new business enquirers to assist them in decision-making on setting up a new business in the Ruapehu
 - Support REAP in the development of an Employment Shop concept
 - Partner more closely with the tourism industry in the delivery of RTO services
 - Partner with DoC / Horizons in the development of a tourism and ecological project based around eradication of pests in the Whanganui National Park
 - Advocate for the continuation of the rail link between Taumarunui and Stratford through involvement in meeting jointly
 - Secure funding for economic, social and environmental development of the Whanganui River and environs through involvement in the Whanganui River Enhancement Trust
 - Partner in a small airport investigation for the Ruapehu located near tourism and producing areas
- Roading – Council recognises that roading is the organisation's single largest expenditure requirement, is critical to economic and social wellbeing, and needs concerted advocacy and partnering to secure funding in a competitive environment with limited nationally available funds. Council will:
 - Maintain a strong advocacy presence on the Regional Roding Forum
 - Continue partnership with Wanganui District Council in the sealing of the Raetihi-Pipiriki-Wanganui Road
 - Continue partnership with iwi and DoC in the upgrades and maintenance required on the Ohakune Mountain Road
 - Advance partnerships with the farming community in the maintenance of bridges on paper roads, the rationalisation of unnecessary paper roads, the impact of forestry harvesting
- Community Development – Council recognises that the District's community organisations need a level of support to keep going. Council aims to build the capabilities of community groups to plan and provide for their own futures by themselves, or in partnership with Council. Strong community groups that look to themselves for leadership can achieve more than simply reliance on Council for leadership and resources. Council will:
 - Engage with District Promotion Groups to assist them with articulating their community infrastructure and other needs through the Long Term Planning process, providing adequate timeframes for planning development and consultation.
 - Develop a 'Community Connect' site on the Council's website containing resource for community organisations, including grants information, tools to assist community groups' planning, community statistics and research, and local events.
 - Protection of District heritage by involvement in the Wanganui Historic Place Trust organisation, and investigation of a Ruapehu branch
 - Develop a Community Development Strategy to map a pathway forward for development, and the role of Council in this.

Strategic Theme 3: Ruapehu District Council builds inclusive communities where everyone's views are heard and respected

Council commits to good information, consultation and partnering organisation-wide.		
Strategies	Milestones	Who and when
Barriers to residents engaging with Council are removed as far as possible.	Customer Service Strategy programme achieved by 30 June 2009.	CE. End-June 2009
	All Council Teams have an engagement strategy, including information and education campaigns.	Communications Manager. November 2008
	A formal 'Engagement Calendar' of upcoming consultations is developed annually and accessible through the website.	Team Leader Strategic Development. End-November 2008
	Annual staff training in community consultation and engagement.	TL Strategic Development. End-June 2009
	Elected members are invited to all public engagement meetings and involved in resolution of local issues.	CE
	Review of the environmental health procedures surrounding festivals	EHO. Mid-November 2008
	Distribution of a guide to undertaking work or events in a public place	TL Community Properties. February 2009
Elected Council annually review and monitor the organisation's approach to community engagement	First Community Engagement Strategy adopted in 2008.	CE. End-November 2008
	Engagement Strategy monitored by Council six-monthly.	CE and Council
	Service levels for formal consultation processes are: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 80% satisfaction with consultation • 100% of affected parties sent consultation material, and are informed of consultation results 	Team Leader Strategic Development. End-November 2008

Council will grow capability amongst iwi partners to contribute to the decision-making process, and understanding amongst Council staff.		
Milestones	Who and when	
Development of a regular iwi advisory group to meet with Council and discuss issues	CE. End-February 2009	
Continued support for iwi aspirations through joint involvement through the Regional Partnership programme	CE and Mayor. Ongoing	
Formal receipt of iwi management plans through Council for consideration in future decision-making	CE. As received from iwi	
Establish one formal Memorandum of Understanding with an iwi group.	CE. One signed by end-Feb 2009 if acceptable	
Contribute positively to the resolution of outstanding iwi Treaty claim issues that involve RDC.	Mayor and CE. Ongoing	

4 External Appointments

This section outlines the appointments made by Council to external organisations, and staff appointments, as part of its strategy to partner and advocate for Ruapehu priorities, and in conjunction with the interests of the wider area. The involvement of Council in these groups / committees relates directly to achieving the community's desired outcomes expressed in the Long Term Plan and the strategic priorities as outlined in the previous section.

Elected Member Appointments

Organisation	Appointee
Roading and Transport	
Regional Land Transport Committee	Mayor Sue Morris Cr John Compton
Okahukura-Stratford Railway Working Party	Cr Marion Gillard
Economic Development	
Tourism Board of the MRI	Cr Murray Wilson
Joint Wanganui District Council Forestry Committee	Cr John Compton
Whanganui River Enhancement Trust	Cr Cynthia Dowsett Team Leader Land Transport (Warren Furner)
Community Development	
Youth Link Trust	Cr Karen Ngatai
Otaihape Trust	Cr John Compton
Creative New Zealand	Cr Cynthia Dowsett (south) Cr Karen Ngatai (north)
Wanganui District Committee of NZ Historic Places Trust	Ms Dorothy Battersby (until 30 June 2009) and Cr Karen Ngatai
Waimarino Rest Home Trust	Cr Don Cameron
Avonlea Rest Home Trust	Cr Jeni Kydd (Until 30 June 2009)
Warm Homes and Clean Air Committee	Cr Bruce Broderson
Taumarunui High School Community Pool Trust	Cr Karen Ngatai and Cr Ron Cooke (both until 30 June 2009)
Sport Wanganui	Cr Graeme Cosford
Ohura Memorial Hall Board	Cr Marion Gillard
Kirikau Hall Committee	Cr Marion Gillard
Otunui Hall Committee	Cr Marion Gillard
Planning and Other	
Upper Whanganui River Management Scheme – Scheme Management Committee	Cr Graeme Cosford
Civil Defence Emergency Management Group (CDEMG)	Cr Karen Ngatai Cr John Compton
Manawatu-Wanganui Disaster Relief Fund	Cr Cynthia Dowsett

Staff Appointments

Committee/Organisation	Appointee Title	Term of Appointment
Roading and Transport		
Road Control Authorities meeting (Wellington)	GM – Assets; Team Leader Land Transport; Mayor (as able)	Three times per year
Regional Officers Group of Regional Land Transport Committee	Team Leader Land Transport	Ongoing
Local Authority Co-ordinators Group (Transit NZ and councils)	Road Technical Co-ordinator	Quarterly
Road Safety Committee	Road Technical Co-ordinator	Ongoing
Ohakune Mountain Road action Group	GM – Assets; Team Leader Land Transport; Road Technical Co-ordinator	Quarterly
Economic Development		
RED Trust	CE and RED Trust Chair	2008-2009
Whanganui River Enhancement Trust	Team Leader Land Transport	Appointed by Council – until October 2010 (next Election)
Manawatu-Wanganui LASS working party	GM – Corporate Services	Ongoing
Community Development		
Intersect	CE and Intersect Chair	2008
Taumarunui PHO	CE	Ongoing
Emergency Management		
Manawatu – Wanganui Regional Rural Fire Committee	Emergency Management Officer	Ongoing
Manawatu – Wanganui Regional Emergency Management Committee	Emergency Management Officer	Ongoing
Whats the Plan Stan Education Working group	Emergency Management Officer	Ongoing
Manawatu – Wanganui Pandemic Group	Emergency Management Officer	Ongoing
Manawatu-Wanganui CDEM Group	GM Community and Regulation	Ongoing
Central Plateau Volcanic Advisory Group	Emergency Management Officer	Ongoing
Manawatu – Wanganui & Waikato Welfare Agency Group	Emergency Management Officer	Ongoing
National Public Education reference Group	Emergency Management Officer	Ongoing
Planning and Other		
Local Area Shared Services company	CE. Director on company	Ongoing
Horizons Regional Council Drainage/Rivers	Team Leader – Environment and GM - Assets	Ongoing
Regional Community Outcomes Group	Team Leader Strategic Development	Ongoing
Regional Chiefs	CE	Ongoing
Taumarunui Facilities Trust	Team Leader – Community Property	Ongoing

In addition to these appointments, Council maintains a commitment to staff training and attendance at directly work related conferences to enhance professional skills, find out how other councils are achieving better efficiency and effectiveness of service deliver.

2 Public Communications Strategy

The following section outlines the way in which Council will engage the community through the media in 2008/09. It also describes the key messages and campaigns on a month by month basis. The year calendar on the next page marks advertising or education campaigns with a 1, 2, 3 or 4. These represent the 'significant' communications scheduled for that month. In communications there is a trade-off between frequency (how often a message is run) and reach (how many of our target audience that we get through too and pick-up). In order to balance Council's limited communications budget with our objective of maximising our reach to target audiences, a limit of four significant communication/engagement programmes running in any given month has been set. This will also assist in lessening the potential for Council communications to become 'noise' (confusing).

Because of their importance, these communications are all scheduled for high frequency/tactics communications over three or more months. The un-numbered Community Engagement activities that are presented as taking half a month are communications that need to be scheduled for that month but are not seen as requiring the same degree of promotion or frequency.

Significant community engagement activities marked 1, 2, 3 or 4 will include:

- Paid for print media (advertising) and Press Releases
- Paid for radio (advertising)
- Targeted communications (direct mail to targeted publics)
- Internet

The following page presents a month-by-month summary of the key education and advertising messages for the remainder of the year. A very detailed account of all Teams' communications plans may be viewed with Council's Communications Manager.

Monthly Communications & Engagements.

Communications marked 1, 2, 3, 4 are significant community engagement programmes scheduled for that month (high frequency and tactics). Un-numbered programmes shown over a half month are scheduled for that month but have a lower

2008-2009 Financial Year.	December 2008	January 2009	February 2009	March 2009	April 2009	May 2009	June 2009
Executive Office.	Rural Fire & Civil Defence ^{1.} Long Term Plan, Intro comms	Rural Fire & Civil Defence ^{1.} Long Term Plan, Intro comms	Rural Fire & Civil Defence ^{1.} Long Term Plan, Intro comms	Rural Fire & Civil Defence ^{1.} Long Term Plan, Intro comms ^{2.}	Long Term Plan, Consulta-^{1.}	Civil Defence ^{1.}	
Community and Regulation.	Building accreditation. 2. Library: Membership drive Summer programme	Pre RC application meeting ^{2.} 1st passenger train Community Development Strategy	Building accreditation. 2. Library membership drive Community Dev Strategy 3.	Building accreditation. 2. Library membership drive RDC Grant Fund Community Development Strategy	Building accreditation. 2. Library membership drive RDC Grant Fund Community Dev Strategy 3.	Dog registration inc amnesty Creative Communities Community Development Strategy	Building accreditation. 1. Library membership drive SPARC Travel Fund Community Dev Strategy 3.
Asset Group.	Water conservation. 3.	Water conservation. 3. Solid waste/tipping 4. Land Transport Road Projects Pukehou Quarry Sale	Water conservation. Vegetation in Ohakune waterways Pukehou Quarry Sale	Water conservation. 3. Vegetation in Ohakune waterways Land Transport Road Pro- Pukehou Quarry Sale		Solid waste/fly tipping 3. Land Transport Road Pro- Pukehou Quarry Sale	Ski Season comms: Winter Bull, TStn hrs, etc
Corporate Services.	DD/AP, Rate Rebats/Arrear ^{4.}	DD/AP, Rate Rebate/	DD/AP, Rate Rebate/Arrear ^{4.}	DD/AP, Rate Rebate/Arrear ^{4.}	DD/AP, Rate Rebate/Arrear ^{4.}	DD/AP, Rate Rebate/Arrear ^{4.}	DD/AP, Rate Rebate/Arrear ^{4.} IT on-line svcs Budget dependent?

Key Messages from each Group of Council

The following are the key communication and engagement programmes for each Group of Council. It is not an exhaustive list, but these are the significant messaging until 30 June 2009:

Community and Regulation.

1. Building Accreditation including sector forums, education, Nailing the Issues newsletters, use of Council website, and information for DIY-ers.
2. Promotion of new planning advice offered prior to any consent lodging, and use of the Council website.
3. Library membership drive and building 'Friends of the Library' group.
4. Development of business investor pack for business enquirers to the District.
5. Raetihi Dog Registration Campaign.
6. Continuation of meetings with community organisations to develop a 'Community Development Strategy for Ruapehu.

Asset Group.

1. Solid Waste education about Transfer Station hours, Kerbside Recycling.
2. Ski season refuse collection education campaign.
3. Summer Water Conservation.
4. Major road projects; Dobbs Bluff, Ohakune Mountain Road, Okahukura Saddle.

Executive Office.

1. Long Term Plan 2009-2019.
2. Rural Fire season, volunteer promotion, and Emergency Management preparedness.
3. Maori Representation in RDC Decision Making and Consideration of Committee structure. (Mostly directly targeted; Hui planning to start Feb 09; Seeking feedback by May/June 2009).
4. Development of resources to assist recruitment in Ruapehu District.
5. Unitary Authority investigation – progress updates and consultation as determined by Council.

Corporate Services.

1. Rate direct debit campaign, and rate payment education.
2. Development of Ratepayer information on-line.