Council Briefing
Hui Whakamōhio

AGENDA

Wednesday, 28 August 2024

Rāapa, 28 Hereturikōkā 2024

Tōtara Room, Whakatāne District Council
14 Commerce Street, Whakatāne

Commencing at: 9:00 am

Acting Chief Executive: David Bewley
Publication Date: 23 August 2024

whakatane.govt.nz

WHAKATĀNE
District Council
Kia Whakatāne au i ahau

Recording the Briefing- *Ka hopuhia te hui*

Recording the Briefing- Ka hopuhia te hui

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A Membership - *Mematanga*

A *Membership - Mematanga* 4

 Mayor Dr V Luca

 Deputy Mayor L N Immink

 Councillor T Boynton

 Councillor G L Dennis

 Councillor A V Iles

 Councillor W B James

 Councillor J C Jukes

 Councillor T O'Brien

 Councillor J W Pullar

 Councillor N Rangiaho

 Councillor N S Tánczos

B   *Briefing Purpose - Te Take o te hui*

Councillors have many complex issues about which to make decisions and rely on the advice they receive from the administration. Complex issues often require more extensive advice processes which culminate in the council report. Briefings are a key feature to help prepare Councillors with the appropriate background and knowledge for robust decision making during future meetings. They are sessions during which Elected Members are provided with detailed oral and written material, and which provide Elected Members with the opportunity to discuss the issues between themselves and with senior council staff.

Briefings are scheduled monthly; however due to the nature of Council business, additional Briefings may be held.

Briefings cannot be used to make final decisions, as final decisions and resolutions cannot lawfully be made outside the context of a properly constituted meeting.

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1. Recording

Welcome to members of the public who have joined us today.

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Recordings are available upon request (for a period of time) following the Briefing.

2. Health and Safety

In case of an emergency, please follow the building wardens or make your way to the nearest exit. The meeting point is located at Peace Park on Boon Street.

Bathroom facilities are located opposite the Chambers Foyer entrance (the entrance off Margaret Mahy Court).

3. Other

At the time of compiling the agenda, an apology was received from Councillor Pullar.

4 Presentations - *Whakaaturanga*

4   *Presentations - Whakaaturanga*

4.1   *1 - Health & Safety Audit Finding*

Melissa Vining from Findex, will speak to the attached report.

4.1 1 - Health & Safety Audit Finding(Cont.)

Whakatāne District Council
Health and Safety Management System Review

CONFIDENTIAL

Prepared for: Michelle Trudgen, Whakatāne District Council

Prepared by: Melissa Vining, Partner and Joseph Lill, Associate Partner, Findex, Human
                          Resources and Health & Safety Consulting

August 2024

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Executive Summary

Objective and Scope

1. The objectives and scope of this assignment were to assist Whakatāne District Council (**WDC**) to review its current health and safety management system (**HSMS**).

2. Our review includes the material requirements of the Health and Safety at Work Act 2015 (**HSWA**) and the WorkSafe interpretative guidance as well as a 'good practice' health and safety management systems. The review was conducted primarily through document review with limited discussion and observation.

Overview of findings

3. The health and safety management system review has identified a range of areas of concern with WDC's current HSMS.

4. Within the documentation we reviewed there are some areas where progress is being made to improve the procedures or processes. Further, initiatives such as encouraging reporting have been identified as leading to improvements in those metrics which is promising.

5. At a high level, it appears that the absence of consistency across WDC's business units has resulted in a variety of approaches having developed. It is evident that the different business units have spent time developing procedures and risk controls specific to their areas which, in many cases, address specific risks well. A risk we have identified is that inconsistent documentation and expectation on workers makes achieving compliance or alignment with WDC's HSW vision difficult. The lack of rigour with regard to document management and control makes it difficult to understand what parts of the system apply or are being used in different areas of WDC's business.

6. At a high level we recommend:

   a. Providing guidance and direction at a Council level for health and safety that integrates with or reflects the strategic framework for WDC's business or undertaking.

   b. Reviewing existing policies and procedures with a view to standardisation of documentation, rationalisation of superseded processes and exchange of beneficial information across the different work areas.

7. These steps will enable clear performance expectations to be communicated to workers and managers and strengthen ongoing monitoring and reporting.

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Review

8. Our review considered the material requirements of 'good practice' health and safety management systems. This was with reference to the Health and Safety at Work Act 2015, additional supporting legislation, standards and industry guidance.

9. We have set out a summary of our findings and recommendations below each of the following headings:

   a. Health and safety governance

   b. Worker engagement and participation

   c. Hazard identification and risk management

   d. Information, training, and supervision

   e. Contractor (PCBU) engagement

   f. Occurrence reporting and investigations

   g. Emergency management

   h. Review, auditing, and assurance processes

1. Health and safety governance

10. We viewed the "HSW Vision" and "Health, Safety & Wellbeing Policy August 2022" (**HSW Policy**). We note that the WDC's vision and eight strategic priorities as set out in the "Local Governance Statement 2023" are not reflected in or do not reflect the Policy.

11. There is regular quarterly reporting to the WDC Finance & Performance Committee. We sighted agendas and reports for meetings that occurred on 24 August 2023, 1 December 2023 and 29 February 2024. The reporting is not, however, consistent and the reporting document changed in terms of structure and content between meetings.

12. We understand that some training is provided to senior executive and elected councillors:

    a. For example, the Mike Cosman (Workshop - 5 April 2023) provided training to the Executive and Elected Council.

13. We have observed some processes to guide officers to gain an understanding of the PCBU operations:

    a. Due diligence visits for elected members and executive members are reported as being scheduled and completed.

    b. Executive members are sponsors for critical risks and, accordingly, we understand they will be engaged in their Critical Risk Control. As at the time of this audit, that work was still underway with no evidence of reporting on the current controls sighted.

14. The range of operations within WDC's business or undertaking means that, to ensure the other aspects of the due diligence obligations are properly discharged, a broad understanding of the various work activities is necessary.

15. Summary of recommendations:

    a. Consider drafting and finalising a governance charter.

    b. The HSW Policy should be reviewed to align with the charter, ensure it is consistent with wider WDC documentation and address all aspects of the PCBU's primary duty of

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care including, so far as is reasonably practicable, the provision of safe plant, systems of work and a work environment that is without risks to health and safety.

c.   Review the format of the current quarterly report. The officers should review any updated governance reporting template and confirm its suitability.

d.   An officer's handbook which outlines the due diligence requirements and processes which WDC has to facilitate officer's discharge those obligations should be developed.

e.   Develop the occurrence data analysis to assist in identifying trends and areas of concern.

2.   Hazard identification and risk management

16. The "Health and Safety Manual" (**Manual**) states that:

a.   All departments will maintain Hazard/Risk registers

b.   The Registers shall be reviewed to ensure control measures remain effective and must be available to employees at all times. Reviews are annual except for in three departments where they are to be reviewed six monthly (Water Treatment plant, Aquatics and Open Spaces Operations).

c.   The Manual is out of date and noted for review. Further, while it provides process for hazard identification and risk assessment it does not contain definitions of these key terms (or any definitions).

17. A range of different task specific procedures were provided. We observe that:

a.   Within different WDC business units there are specific risks that are not common with other parts of the business (for example, firearms for dog control) and specific procedures have been developed for those risks.

b.   The Temporary Traffic Management processes provided are the approved documents prescribed by NZTA Waka Kotahi. They do not provide insight into WDC's own approach or requirements (if any).

18. Summary of recommendations:

a.   Review and update the risk management policy so that it is current and reflects the operational approach within WDC and includes key definitions.

b.   Establish a regular review cycle for the risk register. Carry out a review to reconcile the risks to remove duplication and rationalise the register.

c.   Consider an external review of risk assessments carried out for a specific hazard and associated risk to confirm the adequacy of the process and system.

d.   A program to review and identify common procedures or hazard controls should be undertaken. This will provide for:

i.   The simplification of the existing documentation.

ii. Establishment of a baseline so reviews can be planned and undertaken as appropriate.

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3. Worker engagement and participation

19. Aside from the HSC meeting minutes and HSRs which are discussed below we received information to show that some communication occurs by way of:

    a. Noticeboards.

    b. Email updates.

    c. Toolbox talks or weekly meeting minutes from some areas.

    d. Due diligence meetings with members of the executive and/or elected councillors are scheduled and involve some engagement with workers.

    e. Questions as part of the staff engagement survey.

20. A list of Health and Safety Representatives (**HSRs**) and a document outlining their role was also sighted. While the HSW Report November 2023 to January 2024 records all HSRs were trained no information regarding the type of training and what further training is intended was sighted.

21. Three sets of HSC meeting minutes were sighted from October 2023, December 2023 and February 2024. There are 8 management representatives and 26 employee representatives on the committee (noting Transport is vacant at the February meeting).

22. The employee representatives are drawn from a range of areas within WDC's business and make up over half of the committee. The Management Representatives include General Managers with sufficient seniority to influence business processes.

23. Summary of recommendations:

    a. A charter or terms of reference for the WDC HSC should be created that is specific to the organization, reflects worker feedback and is aligned with the charter and/or policy.

    b. Consider developing an agenda to help strengthen the role of the HSC and how the HSC reports to and receives feedback from senior leadership within the WDC.

4. Information, training, and supervision

24. We sighted the "New Employee First Day H&S Induction form" which is comprehensive and covers:

    a. WDC's HSW vision, policy and non-negotiables.

    b. Emergency Procedures and location of first aid kits.

    c. The need to explain job specific hazards and risks.

    d. Vault processes for accident and near miss reporting.

25. We understand the manager is responsible for carrying out the induction as they must sign off on the induction form.

26. In addition, we sighted the "Corporate HSW Induction ppt" which also covers the WDC's HSW vision and various aspects of the HSMS. This is also comprehensive, and we understand all new employees are taken through this in group sessions.

27. External training records for some individuals were provided. Those sighted were all either current or did not include a recommended refresher date.

28. The job descriptions reviewed included largely generic health, safety and wellbeing requirements. The requirements are at a high level and only slightly tailored between the roles.

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29. Summary of recommendations:

    a. There should be consideration of what guidance or information is provided to managers regarding the induction process to ensure their individual processes align with WDC's expectations.

    b. A system for ongoing competency assessments aligned with the required training for each role should be developed and implemented.

    c. Where relevant include in Job Descriptions role specific safety requirements such as, ensuring direct reports' training is current or permits have been completed and reviewed as required.

5. Contractor (PCBU) engagement

30. The "Contract Supervisor Health and Safety Guide June 2017" provides the framework for WDC's management of contractors.   The flowchart aligns with the requirements of the policy. The steps prescribed reflect best practice and are:

    a. Consider health and safety implications at scoping stage.

    b. Assess the level of risk associated with the work (high, medium, low, very low) and then work through prescribed steps such as prequal for high and medium risk work and ensuring current H&S plans are stored on Vault.

    c. Overlapping duties checklist to be completed and, where necessary a JSA is to be created.

    d. An appropriate induction is to be provided to the contractor.

    e. Monitoring of the contractor during the work.

    f. Post-contract review once the work is completed.

31. WDC participates in the Local Authority Shared Services prequal system (SHEqual) and also accepts contractors prequalified through the Totika system.

32. We did not sight evidence of any process to monitor the level of compliance with the pre-qualification requirements across WDC's divisions.

33. Summary of recommendations:

    a. Consider a wider audit of the contractor management system to provide assurance that the expected approach is being followed consistently across WDC. This would include verifying documents are stored on Vault and the steps outlined in the Contract Supervisor Guide are being completed.

    b. Consider how information from across WDC's contractor audits is shared internally to ensure that any common issues are able to be identified and addressed.

6. Occurrence reporting and investigations

34. The "Health and Safety Manual 01 July 2017 – 30 June 2018" provides that all of the following events are to be reported on the Vault system:

    a. Events where a worker is harmed or near miss incidents that could have caused harm.

    b. Notifiable events.

    c. Where other persons including WDC volunteers or visitors have an accident on WDC's premises.

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35. The Vault 101 training that is provided to employees provides that the following can be reported via Vault:

    a. An injury.

    b. An illness.

    c. An incident which is an unplanned event or occurrence resulting in or having the potential for damage but not being a possible injury.

    d. A near miss which is an event that didn't cause harm but had the potential to cause injury or ill health.

36. We have also sighted a WorkSafe notification July 2023 Asbestos. This notifiable event occurred on 20 July 2023 but was not notified until 31 July 2023. This indicates that workers do not understand the escalation process for notifiable or potentially notifiable events.

37. The policies do not provide guidance on different levels of investigation except for notifiable events (which are to be investigated by "the Human Resources Manager, General Managers or a team designated by the CE") or a major incident involving property where a health and safety management review is to be initiated and involve the HSC.

38. We observe that the ICAM reports sighted did not detail organisational factors that could be addressed as corrective actions. Analysis of the underlying factors with a view to making organisational level corrections enables broader health and safety improvements to be made as an outcome of these investigations.

39. Summary of recommendations:

    a. Review the various terms used for occurrences and develop definitions that are able to be consistently applied.

    b. Provide training to workers regarding notifiable events and WDC's escalation process (which should be reviewed to ensure it is current).

    c. Where not directly involved, consider having occurrence investigations reviewed by the Health and Safety Manager and/or Health and Safety Committee to ensure they are being carried out effectively and identifying the appropriate root causes and corrective actions.

7. Emergency management

40. The "Emergency Evacuation Procedures – Civic Centre" provided detailed evacuation procedures for the Civic centre and identify a number of different roles and responsibilities such as building wardens and area wardens. Details of their roles are set out in the document.

41. The 3Waters "Evacuation procedures" cover both general emergencies and chlorine leaks. The document is brief and does not identify roles and responsibilities for ensuring buildings are clear or who is to conduct the headcount.

42. The 3Waters "Operations Emergency response centre plan" provides guidance on how 3Waters staff are to continue to operate in emergency work conditions

43. Summary of recommendations:

    a. Conduct a comprehensive review of all emergency procedures across WDC.

    b. Consider methods for collaboration among similar departments to establish best practice evacuations, i.e., learn from each other.

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8. Review, auditing, and assurance processes

44. We have not sighted any formal internal audits or reviews. Further, no previous external audits or reviews were provided to us. Site inspections through workplace safety inspections are occurring in some instances.

45. We did not view any policies or procedures relating to, or evidence of, a specific document control system. Many of the documents supplied were in different formats and contained different branding. The ProMapp documents appear to have accurate date and time stamps and some documents have version numbers or revision dates.

46. Summary of recommendations:

   a. A robust internal audit process supplemented by regularly scheduled external system reviews and health and safety management system audits should be developed.

   b. Create and implement a document control policy or system.

   c. Add version control to all polices and procedures and keep records of changes and alterations.

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Appendix – Basis and Use of this Report

This report is prepared on the basis of the limitations set out below:

- Because of the inherent limitations of any internal control structure, it is possible that errors or irregularities may occur and not be detected. Our procedures were not designed to detect all weaknesses in control procedures as they were not performed continuously throughout a specified period and any tests performed were on a sample basis.

- Any projection of the evaluation of the control procedures to future periods is subject to the risk that the systems may become inadequate because of changes in conditions, or that the degree of compliance with them may deteriorate.

- The matters raised in this report are only those which came to our attention during the course of performing our procedures and are not necessarily a comprehensive statement of all the weaknesses that exist or improvements that might be made. We cannot, in practice, examine every activity and procedure, nor can we be a substitute for management's responsibility to maintain adequate controls over all levels of operations and their responsibility to prevent and detect irregularities, including fraud. Accordingly, management should not rely on our report to identify all weaknesses that may exist in the systems and procedures under examination, or potential instances of non-compliance that may exist.

- Recommendations for improvement should be assessed by management for their full commercial impact, before they are implemented.

- This Report is not to be used by any other party for any purpose nor should any other party seek to rely on the opinions, advice or any information contained within this Report. In this regard, we recommend that parties seek their own independent advice. Findex disclaims all liability to any party other than the client for which it was prepared in respect of or in consequence of anything done, or omitted to be done, by any party in reliance, whether whole or partial, upon any information contained in this Report. Any party, other than the client for which it was prepared, who chooses to rely in any way on the contents of this Report, does it so at their own risk.

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4.2 2 - Diversity, Equity & Inclusion

4.2   2 - Diversity, Equity & Inclusion

Council Staff Karen Summerhays & Ayla Naidoo will be speaking to the following presentation.

Diversity, Equity & Inclusion Policy

Workshop with Elected Members

Karen Summerhays & Ayla Naidoo

whakatane.govt.nz

Better Together *Toitū te Kotahitanga*

Overview of Today

1. Background

2. What is DE&I?

3. Where are we now?

4. Focus Groups – feedback

5. Elected Members' feedback

Take a couple of moments to reflect on…

- What does belonging mean to you?

- How do you belong in your community or communities?

- Are there times when you have felt like you do or don't belong?

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Vision and Mission

More life in life

Working together to make living better for our communities, now and in the future

Thriving circular economies

Strong, connected, interdependent, diverse communities

Constructively and collaboratively engaging with iwi, hapū and whānau

Integrating nature into our decision making

Strong resilient Council organisation focused on continuous improvement

Vision: We want our people to experience belonging, connection and safety within our community.

Mission: Cherishing differences while protecting against discrimination.

Focusing on representation, fairness and equal opportunities for all genders, ethnicities, nationalities, sexual orientations, religions, disabilities, and ages.

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Background

- Requirement of the WAI MOU

- ELT approved the development of a DEI policy 8 Nov, 2023

- Compatible internal and external policies

- Policy + Action Plans

- Fundamental for Council's role in community development and engagement with and support for our communities.

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What is DEI

Diversity

Citizens should feel welcome to contribute and bring fresh perspectives to the table

Have a varied community and Council with different demographic characteristics, identities and experiences

Examples of diversity include:
- Ethnic and cultural diversity
- Racial diversity
- LGBTQ+ sexual orientation inclusion
- Gender diversity
- Disability inclusion
- Religious and spiritual diversity

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Inclusion

A state of belonging, meaning all citizens are respected, empowered, valued and feel comfortable being their authentic selves
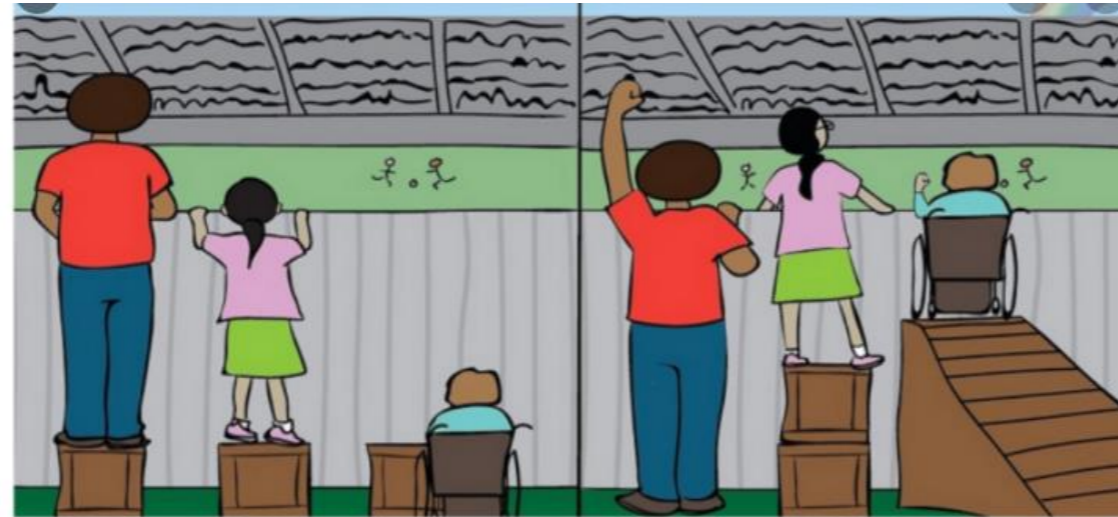
Lived experience representation e.g. governance, decision-makers, collaborations

Examples include:

- Inclusive leadership
- Inclusive policies and practices
- Mentorship and sponsorship programmes
- Inclusive decision-making
- Citizen engagement and feedback

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Equity

...the need for reasonable accommodations

Te Toi Waka Whakarei Strategy

Te Toi Waka Whakarei Strategy supports the Diversity, Equity and Inclusion (DE&I) Policy.

Te Toi Waka Whakarei strategy supports the DE&I Policy to ensure that considerations are given to Mana Taurite – Equity, Mana Ōrite and Mana Motuhake.

Draft Policy Statement of Support has been written

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4.2 2 - Diversity, Equity & Inclusion(Cont.)

Methodology & Interim Findings

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Policy Pre—engagement

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Established Project Group - Community Partnerships Team & Strategy and Policy Team to lead . Others in support

Ethnic and Migrant Research

Sought advice from Toi Kotuia team

Took a focus group approach. Positive reaction from community

Navigating Diversity:

Exploring Perspectives and Experiences of Migrant & Ethnic Communities in the Whakatāne District

September 2023 - January 2024

Prepared by Annelle Prince,
Community Social Researcher, BHSc

Submitted to Whakatāne District Council
January 2024

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Focus Groups

- Older People / Kaumātua
- Young People / Taiohi
- Neurodivergent People /Te Hunga Kanorau ā-roro
- Rainbow Community / Hapori Takatāpui
- Disabled People/ Tāngata whaikaha
- Rural People
- Hard to Reach Whānau
- Ethnic and Migrant Groups (research report)

Belonging   Connection   Safety

Feedback from Ethnic & Migrant Community

Themes	Policy Ideas	Co-designed Action Plan examples
Ethnic & Migrant people would like to **feel a sense of belonging** within our community through cultural events and initiatives	• We will support and celebrate cultural – led events and initiatives in our community	• Diwali celebration events
Ethnic & Migrant people would like to be **considered in decision-making** for situations that affect them such as public holidays etc.	• We will facilitate active participation through hui and consultation	• Outreach to cultural communities for hui and consultation for important decisions
Ethnic & Migrant people would like their **partnership** between Council **honoured**	• We will provide Governance training • We will maintain relationships with cultural groups	• Governance training • Ongoing relationship maintaining
Ethnic & Migrant people would like to be shown **respect, empathy and compassion**	• We will provide welcoming spaces • We can show inclusive leadership – accommodate for cultural commitments in employment setting	• Civic Centre as an assembly space • Reasonable accommodations in our internal policy e.g. needing to attend cultural commitments

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Feedback from Kaumatua & Older People

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Themes	Policy Ideas	Co-designed Action Plan examples
Older people would like to be **connected** to our community more and to each other, as they have knowledge which is taonga.	• We will support and celebrate kaumatua– led events and initiatives in our community	• Ngāti Awa runs a group, we could support them
Older people would like to be **considered in decision-making** for situations that affect them such as mobility scooters and pavements.	• We will facilitate active participation through hui and consultation	• Outreach to their community for hui and consultation for important decisions
Older people would like to be **brought in at policy making Levels** – Providers to then critique their decisions.	• We will provide Governance training • We will maintain relationships with them	• Governance training • Ongoing relationship maintaining
Older people would like **ease of access** in public transport, footpaths etc.	• Regular maintenance of our infrastructure and roads • Public transport	• Maintaining our footpaths are fit for purpose

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Feedback from Tangata Whai Kaha | Disabled People

Themes	Policy Ideas	Co-designed Action Plan examples
Disabled people would like to foster **communication and education** within our community through story-telling	• We will support and celebrate disabled– led events and initiatives in our community	• Support their education and awareness initiatives
Disabled people would like to be **considered in decision-making** for situations that affect them such as mobility scooters and pavements.	• We will facilitate active participation through hui and consultation	• Outreach to their community for hui and consultation for important decisions
Disabled people would like their **partnership** between Council and WAI **honoured**	• We will provide Governance training • We will maintain relationships with them	• Governance training • Ongoing relationship maintaining
Disabled people would like **ease of access** for events, public transport, footpaths mobile accessible toilet etc.	• Regular maintenance of our infrastructure and roads • Public transport • Universal Design	• Maintaining our footpaths are fit for purpose
Disabled people would like to be shown **respect, empathy and compassion**	• We will provide welcoming spaces • We can show inclusive leadership – accommodate for cultural commitments in employment setting	• Civic Centre as an assembly space • Reasonable accommodations in our internal policy e.g. working arrangements

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4.2 2 - Diversity, Equity & Inclusion(Cont.)

Feedback from Neurodivergent Community

Themes	Policy Ideas	Co-designed Action Plan examples
Neurodivergent People would like to be **connected** to our community more and to each other.	• We will support and celebrate neurodivergent– led events and initiatives in our community	• Support their education and awareness initiatives
Neurodivergent People would like to be **considered in decision-making** for situations that affect them and be **brought in at Policy Making Levels**	• We will facilitate active participation through hui and consultation • We will provide Governance training • We will maintain relationships with them	• Outreach to their community for hui and consultation for important decisions • Governance training • Ongoing relationship maintaining
Neurodivergent People would like **ease of access** in public transport, as well as ensuring safe and comfortable spaces for them	• Universal Design	• Encouraging Businesses/Organisations to employ sensory spaces e.g Countdown quiet times
Neurodivergent people would like to be shown **respect, empathy and compassion**	• We will provide welcoming spaces • We can show inclusive leadership – accommodate for cultural commitments in employment setting	• Civic Centre as an assembly space • Reasonable accommodations in our internal policy e.g. working arrangements

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Feedback from Rainbow Community

Themes	Policy Ideas	Co-designed Action Plan examples
Rainbow Communities would like to be **connected** to our community more and to each other.	• We will support and celebrate rainbow events and initiatives in our community	• Support their education and awareness initiatives • Advisory / advocacy group
Rainbow Communities would like there to be **education and awareness**		
Rainbow Communities would like **to feel safe** in our community and public areas	• We will provide welcoming spaces	• Council spaces are safe assembly spaces
Rainbow Communities like to be shown **respect, empathy and compassion**		

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Feedback from Youth

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Themes	Policy Ideas	Co-designed Action Plan examples
Young People would like to **connect** with each other at targeted events for them to meet	• We will support and celebrate youth – led events and initiatives in our community	• Support their education and awareness initiatives
Young people would like to feel like they **belong** through having representation and a voice	• We will facilitate active participation through hui and consultation	• Outreach to their community for hui and consultation for important decisions
Young People would like to have **awareness** of Council initiatives through information services and boards	• We will provide Governance training • We will maintain relationships with them	• Governance training • Ongoing relationship maintaining
Young People would like to **feel safe** at age-appropriate places and spaces in our rohe that provide a hub for them to connect	• We will provide welcoming spaces	• Civic Centre as an assembly space

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Feedback from Rural Community

Themes	Policy Ideas	Co-designed Action Plan examples
Rural people would like to be **connected** to our community more and to each other.	• We will support and celebrate rural – led events and initiatives in our community	• Run more events rurally
Rural people would like to **feel a sense of belonging** through more employment opportunities, and events and activities in their area for equity of services and placebased planning.	• We can show inclusive leadership – accommodate for cultural commitments in employment setting	• Reasonable accommodations in our internal policy e.g. working arrangements
Rural people would like **ease of access** in remote areas, as well as transport options to and from Rural Communities	• Maintain rural areas • Consider rural areas when thinking of developments • Transport options	• Regular maintenance • Regular hui and consultation/participation • A public transport option – van etc.

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4.2 2 - Diversity, Equity & Inclusion(Cont.)

Summary of Findings

- Belonging, connected, safe

- Inclusive leadership

- Active participation in decision-making

- Democracy and civic skills

- Celebrations of identity

- Safe places of assembly

- Advisory and advocacy groups

Better Together *Toitū te Kotahitanga*

Where we are now

Milestone	Timeframe
Phase 1: Project and Team Development	October 2023
Phase 2: Research – internal and external	October – December 2023
Phase 3: Pre-engagement	February/April
Phase 4: Engagement – Focus Groups	February – May
Workshop with ELT	13 August
Council Briefing/ Workshop with Elected Members	Today, Wednesday 28 August 2024
Write Draft Policy	August/September
Draft Policy & Paper to ELT	17 September 2024
Draft Policy & Paper to Living Together Committee – approve to go to Consultation	3 October 2024
Consultation	October/November
Finalise Policy	November
Adopt Policy	12 December 2024

Next Steps

- Draft Policy based on your and external feedback

- Bring Draft Policy to Living Together Committee 3 October seeking approval to go out for consultation

- Consultation in November 2024

- Adoption Late 2024.

Photo caption

Better Together *Toitū te Kotahitanga*

Your Questions and Feedback

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Navigating Diversity:

Exploring Perspectives and Experiences of Migrant & Ethnic Communities in the Whakatāne District

September 2023 - January 2024

Prepared by Annelle Prince,
Community Social Researcher, BHSc

Submitted to Whakatāne District Council
January 2024

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1. Executive Summary

Migrant and ethnic population numbers in the Whakatāne District have been on the rise since the 2006 NZ Census of Population and Dwellings report. This project aimed to explore and better understand the perspectives and experiences of migrant and ethnic people living in the Whakatāne District. The information gathered builds context for future engagement with these cohorts and will guide the development of a Whakatāne District Council (WDC) diversity, equity and inclusion policy.

This project carried out a desktop exercise to gather quantitative data on migrant and ethnic communities living in Whakatāne. Interviews and surveys were conducted to capture their experiences and perspectives towards social inclusion and diversity, and how they can be supported to fully participate in their communities. A total of ten migrant and ethnic individuals from a range of different backgrounds, including; Tuvalu, Northern and Southern India, Philippines, China and Scotland participated in this project over a six week period.

Information gathered is presented in this report using the Ministry of Social Development's Social Cohesion Framework. A thematic analysis of the qualitative data revealed that migrant and ethnic groups' interaction with others, as well as their participation and sense of belonging in public space and places are significant determinants of their sense of belonging and well-being. Migrant and ethnic participants' access to resources and support affects their ability to actively engage in civic responsibilities and navigate socio-economic systems.

This report outlines recommendations for a WDC's diversity, equity and inclusion policy. This includes a partnership approach between WDC, tāngata whenua, and local migrant and ethnic community leaders to work together to create, advocate for and foster a welcoming and inclusive community. The report identified that organising multicultural community events, raising awareness to cultural events and traditions, and providing opportunities for intercultural interaction would assist in migrant and ethnic communities' sense of belonging in the District.

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2. Introduction

Whakatāne District is located in the Eastern Bay of Plenty region, with a population of 37,149 (Infometrics, 2023). In recent years, the district has seen an increase in the presence of non-Māori, non-Pakeha communities, contributing to its cultural diversity and socio-economic dynamics. According to the 2018 New Zealand (NZ) Census, more than 12% of the Whakatāne population were born overseas.

There is much to learn about the cultural values and priorities of migrant and ethnic groups in interacting with governing bodies, engaging with public spaces and their experiences in engaging with other ethnic groups. Fostering relationships with these communities will promote cultural awareness and embrace a society that values ethnic inclusivity.

The aim of this research project is to explore and better understand the diverse ethnic groups residing within Whakatāne District. This project carried out a desktop exercise to gather baseline data and connected to different ethnic and migrant individuals in Whakatāne to capture their experiences and perspectives towards social inclusion and diversity, and how they can be supported to fully participate in their communities.

The information gathered will help build context for further engagement with these cohorts in the future and guide the development of a Whakatāne District Council diversity, equity and inclusion policy.

For the sake of this report, the terms 'migrant' and 'ethnic' will be used to describe groups of people who are non-Māori and non-Pakeha. Migrant refers to people who were born overseas and now live in NZ, including refugees. Ethnic refers to non-Māori non-Pakeha people, who were born in NZ, but ethnically identify overseas

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3. Methodology

This project was launched over four phases:

- Research to identify and connect to migrant and ethnic communities in Whakatāne District

- Development of a questionnaire to discover challenges and aspirations of these communities

- Interviews and information gathering using an online survey

- Production of a report that informs the development of a diversity, equity and inclusion policy used both internally within the Whakatāne District Council, as well as externally by the Whakatāne community.

Phase one: Overview research and project design	- The aim of the overview research was to provide a snapshot of the current landscape of migrant and ethnic cohorts residing in Whakatāne, using data from various sources including government reports, community organisations, and networks of established community groups and individuals. - Information regarding the project was distributed to local businesses, migrant and ethnic individuals and groups to promote their participation.

Phase two: Develop questionnaire	- Developed a set of interview questions to be used as conversation prompters and an online survey. These questions were based on the Ministry of Social Development's, Social Cohesion Framework and intended to capture people's capacity to:
	  ○ Feel like they belong
	  ○ Feel respected and embraced in their community
	  ○ Be connected to their communities and others
	  ○ Be able to feel culturally safe

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	○ Feel supported to participate in community ○ Have equitable wellbeing outcomes ○ Have a sense of democracy ● The online survey was published on different WDC social media platforms.
Phase three: Undertake interviews and publish online surveys.	● Over the course of six weeks, we conducted six individual interviews with four participants completing the online survey. A total of ten migrant and ethnic individuals from a range of different backgrounds, including; Tuvalu, Northern and Southern India, Philippines, China and Scotland participated in this project. Most of the participants had lived in Whakatāne for over five years. ● The individual interviews ran for 30 - 60 minutes and participants were prompted to share about their experiences in connecting to and expressing their culture in Whakatāne. They were also invited to share their perspectives on strategies that create an ethnically inclusive environment. ● Each individual interview began with participants giving informed consent to volunteer their participation in this project. Each interview was audio-recorded and later collated into themes reflected in the findings of this report. ● The online survey was published on several Whakatāne District Council social media platforms. Those who engaged with the survey were asked to consent to the use of their feedback for the purposes of this project on the basis that their personal information was anonymised.

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Phase four: Write a report to support the development of a WDC Inclusion and Diversity policy	• Analysed data from interviews and the online survey and identified key themes from participant's feedback. • Provided recommendations to the Community Partnerships and Strategy and Policy arms of the Whakatāne District Council for implementing a diversity, equity and inclusion policy.

4. Understanding the Socio-Cultural Landscape of Migrant and Ethnic Communities in Whakatāne

Ethnicity

The ethnic makeup of Whakatāne is diverse, with several major ethnic groups. According to the 2018 NZ Census of Population and Dwellings report, 63.2% of people in Whakatāne belong to the European ethnic group, 46.8% of the population identify as Māori and 11.8% of the district's population were born overseas. In this census, people were able to identify with multiple ethnicities. Within the percentage of people born overseas, 5.7% of people were born in North-West Europe; 1.6% were born in Australia; 1% were born in Sub-Saharan Africa and others from Asia, America, Pacific Islands, North Africa, the Middle East and South-East Europe.

More recently, Radio NZ reports that there are early indications of the 2023 Census results showing that the Māori population in the Whakatāne District has risen to 53%; although these numbers have not yet been formally released by NZ Statistics (2023). Also in recent data, immigration statistics by Infometrics (2023), recorded a national net gain of 129,800 non-citizens in June 2023. Although major cities such as Auckland will 'soak up' the majority of immigrant influx, Infometrics predicts that this increase will spreadout to other areas such as the Bay of Plenty. The steady incline of immigration trends to NZ indicate that the Whakatāne District will see a rise in immigration numbers in 2024.

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4.2.1 Appendix 1 - Navigating Diversity(Cont.)

New Zealand is one of around 37 countries that take part in the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) regular refugee resettlement programme. Quota refugees are settled throughout New Zealand in the Auckland region, Waikato, Manawatu, the Wellington region, Nelson, Christchurch, Dunedin and Invercargill (Immigration NZ, 2024). Whakatāne District is not currently listed as a settlement district as part of this refugee programme. This project did not identify nor connect to former refugee's living in Whakatāne.

Pacific Peoples

People from the Pacific Islands in Whakatāne make up 3% of the district's population, which is a small increase from the 2.2% in 2006 (Statistics NZ, 2018). Pacific People are an incredibly diverse group with a range of different nationalities, cultures and languages. People can also identify with multiple ethnicities. Many Pacific people are actively involved with the Whakatāne community through local churches. Infometrics (2023), reported that Pacific people constitute 1.9% of the total employed population in Whakatāne. In the neighbouring districts of Opōtiki and Tauranga, there is also a growing presence of Pacific people working in agriculture and horticulture. People also travel to these areas to participate in cultural events where they sing songs, dance, share food and spend time together.

Asian and South Asian

According to the NZ Census of Population and Dwellings, the Asian community in Whakatāne is steadily increasing. In 2018, 3.4% of the population identified as Asian, compared to 1.6% in 2006 (NZ Statistics, 2023). This statistic is published by NZ Stats as including both Asian and South Asian ethnic groups. The term Asian is used in this report as an umbrella term to cover people from countries like China, Korea, Japan, Okinawa, Taiwan, and Mongolia. South Asian is used in the same way to identify people from countries such as Bangladesh, Bhutan, India, the Maldives, Nepal, Pakistan, and Sri Lanka.

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Many Asian people are drawn to the district by employment opportunities. The highest workforce industries that Asian people work in are health care and social assistance, where 28% of the Asian population living in Whakatāne occupy these roles, accommodation and food services (18%), manufacturing (15%), retail and agriculture (14%), forestry and fishing (14%). Asian people are also more likely to have received secondary education overseas and have a bachelor's degree or higher, than the general population in Whakatāne. Asian Family Services (2022) also noted that many Asian people face challenges related to language barriers, loneliness and work-related stress.

South Asian ethnic groups also have a high percentage of people working in health care and social assistance, with 25% of the South Asian population living in Whakatāne occupying these roles. They also have a high presence in other industries including agriculture, forestry and fishing (25%), retail trade (17%), accommodation and food services (10%), manufacturing and administration and support services (6%). Like Asian ethnic groups, South Asian ethnic groups are also more likely to have received secondary education overseas and have a bachelor's degree or higher, than the general population in Whakatāne.

Smaller ethnic groups

The NZ Census of Population and Dwellings (2018) reported that 1.3% of people living in Whakatāne identified as Middle Eastern/Latin American/African and South African and others. In terms of the socio-economic landscape of these groups, 26% of people who identify as these ethnic groups are employed in healthcare and social assistance roles, 21% are employed in education and training roles and 16% work in manufacturing. There are also higher reports of these groups having received secondary education overseas, as well as having a postgraduate degree, than the general population in Whakatāne (Ministry for Ethnic Communities 2023).

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Languages

According to the Ministry for Ethnic Communities (2023), the top five languages spoken in the Whakatāne District within migrant and ethnic groups are, English, Afrikaans, Tagalog, Panjabi and Hindi. A report done by Cunningham & King (2018), outlines how language statistics amongst migrant and ethnic groups can reflect the level of social integration or discrimination within the host country. Where, an adoption of the host country's language may suggest a higher degree of assimilation. On the other hand, migrant and ethnic groups maintaining their native language alongside the use of the host country's language indicates a more balanced acculturation.

Current Support and Services Available

There are two main bodies who currently provide support to migrant and ethnic groups in the Whakatāne District. The first is a newly formed Eastern BOP Migrant Advice & Support Group which aims to support and facilitate the integration and well-being of individuals from diverse cultural backgrounds. There is also the Citizens Advice Bureau, which offers newcomers a database of networks, information on services and in-person support that enable migrant and ethnic groups to seamlessly navigate the socio-economic and physical landscape of the Whakatāne District.

Rotorua and Tauranga are large neighbouring cities of Whakatāne that people travel to for support and connection. The Sikh Temple in Te Puke is also a popular destination for many of the Indian community. Rotorua has a Multicultural Council that is set up to provide information and social support to ethnic and migrant groups. They aim to promote a sense of belonging through friendship and connection. Rotorua is one of the areas where the English Language Organisation provides Kiwi English classes. They will be offering weekly classes in Whakatāne from February 2024 (English Language Partners New Zealand, 2023). In the Western Bay of Plenty District, the Ministry of Business, Innovation and Employment works with local councils to implement the Welcoming Communities NZ programme. This programme invests and supports local councils to

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promote the settlement of newcomers and create inclusive environments through platforms such as Multicultural Tauranga (Immigration NZ, 2024).

5. Qualitative Insights from Migrant and Ethnic Voices in Whakatāne

People's capacity to feel a sense of belonging

Eighty percent of those that participated in this project expressed a positive sense of belonging in Whakatāne. Things that helped them feel a sense of belonging in the district included building friendships and a sense of community through their workplace and within social groups. Those that expressed a poor sense of belonging within Whakatāne pertained this to having a lack of connection to others in their local community and poor access to public spaces that promote ethnic cultural expression. Ninety percent of participants expressed that having good connections to those in their community was important to them.

People's capacity to feel respected and embraced in their community

Participants expressed feeling a sense of respect and embrace contingent on the extent to which they assimilated into the predominant culture in Whakatāne. Participants felt that the understanding of cultural norms and wide use of colloquialisms that they had built over time, helped them to navigate social systems and spaces better.

People's capacity to feel connected to their communities and others

People's capacity to feel connected to their ethnic and migrant communities varied across participants. A significant proportion of the participants expressed a deep and affirming connection to their ethnic communities, finding solace, support, and cultural continuity within these groups. Some participants indicated that they engage with inter-ethnic groups through social gatherings and attending local churches. However, there was a notable subset that reported a diminished sense of connection to other members of their ethnic community. Factors such as the small-scale demographic of those ethnic groups residing in Whakatāne, and

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the lack of organised multicultural events in the area were identified as potential contributors to this sense of detachment. To mitigate this, many travelled out of the district to connect with their ethnic communities, but this is only awarded to those who have access to transport. Those that have limited access to public transport and do not drive experience heightened feelings of isolation.

People's capacity to feel culturally safe

All participants expressed a general sense of feeling culturally safe, with little account of cultural bias encounters. The limited recordings related to feeling culturally unsafe were expressed as feelings of cultural indifference, as opposed to discrimination.

People's capacity to feel supported to participate in community

While most participants reported feeling supported and included in the workplace, where efforts were made to acknowledge and embrace diversity, a contrasting narrative emerged in the educational context. A small proportion of respondents shared negative experiences of family members within schools, citing challenges of a lack of efforts towards cultural inclusivity. Additionally, there was a recurring sentiment of disappointment regarding the limited availability of cultural events and activities organised within the community, which further hindered opportunities for meaningful cultural exchange and integration.

People's capacity to have equitable wellbeing outcomes

There was a compelling correlation between participants' connection to their culture and their overall sense of wellbeing. Majority of the respondents expressed that their connection and capacity to express their culture played a pivotal role in positively influencing their mental and emotional wellbeing. For these individuals, maintaining a strong link to their cultural roots provided a source of resilience, identity, and support. The importance of expressing their culture through language, traditions, or community events emerged as a common theme amongst those who reported a correlation between culture and positive wellbeing outcomes. Interestingly, only

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a small minority of participants suggested that their connection to culture had minimal to no impact on their overall sense of wellbeing.

People's capacity to have a sense of democracy/idea that their voice matters

Nearly all respondents reported actively engaging in the voting process during elections. These participants expressed how important expressing their civic duty is to them, particularly as many left their ethnic country due to political and civil unrest. Notably, only one out of ten participants cited a lack of understanding of NZ politics as a reason for abstaining from voting.

6. Diverse Narratives: Thematic analysis of Migrant and Ethnic perspectives in Whakatāne

Interaction of migrant and ethnic groups with others

Many New Zealanders interact with ethnic and migrant people in their communities through local businesses. People can experience a taste of migrant and ethnic culture through food restaurants like Chinese takeaways, Indian restaurants and Turkish kebab shops. A prevalent theme revealed amongst participants emphasised the value of intercultural relationships with non-ethnic, non-migrant people in fostering their sense of belonging. A significant number of respondents expressed a shared appreciation for the role of food sharing and building friendships with New Zealanders in building a supportive and inclusive community. Many participants highlighted that sharing traditional dishes and culinary practices facilitated cultural exchange, fostering mutual understanding and appreciation. One participant shared the value of having intercultural relationships with non-ethnic, non-migrant people as it enables him to learn more about other people's culture and share elements of his ethnic identity. Doing so, strengthens connection to people which contributes to his positive wellbeing. In his experience, these relationships can also open employment opportunities that are based on his character, rather than potential ethnic biases.

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"Most of the [non-Indian] people like Indian food [...], I think it's good [to be able to share his culture with non-Indian people], because I have a couple of friends from different countries, and they are interested in it [the food and culture]. [...] Sometimes I feel like I'm far from home and I want to go back. But if I have something like this [strong relationships with those in his community], then it can help me feel [more] at home."

Building friendships with individuals from diverse backgrounds was identified as a key driver for a heightened sense of belonging, contributing to meaningful social connections within the community. Another participant shares the transformative power of interpersonal relationships and shared cultural experiences in creating a more inclusive and cohesive environment for her as a migrant individual in Whakatāne.

"All the friends and colleagues that I have here [...] that's what makes me feel like I belong. [...] The relationships that you build, make you feel that way. [...] Being a part of the community to me is the friends that I have here, going for walks with them and having lunches, I feel good. They have accepted me even though I am new here. [...] I'm more interested to know what happens here, but they [non-migrant groups] are more interested in how I do things in my own culture. The feeling is mutual."

Participants identified the lack of common mutual understanding around norms, cultural celebrations, and language between the migrant and ethnic community, and the rest of the local residents as a barrier to meaningful inter-ethnic interactions. One participant shared an encounter he had with members in his neighbourhood who were predominantly Pākeha. He and his family were lighting fireworks as an expression of the meaning behind the Diwali holiday. Diwali is one of India's biggest and most important holidays of the year. It is a celebration of light over darkness, good over evil and the human ability to overcome suffering. In 2023, the Diwali holiday fell the weekend after a well-known and widely accepted NZ celebration, Guy Fawkes. Unfortunately, non-Indian residents in his neighbourhood made public complaints on social media of his use of fireworks on a day that was not Guy Fawkes. The general lack of public

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knowledge around this important Indian holiday created a sense of angst and dissatisfaction amongst his non-Indian neighbours that adversely affected his capacity to build relationships with New Zealanders.

Participants also talked about the role of inter-ethnic dialogue in building connection to New Zealanders, which in turn impacts their sense of belonging. Participants encountered challenges related to the use of colloquialisms and adherence to local social norms in everyday Kiwi dialogue. The casual and informal nature of colloquial language, combined with the use of idioms and slang that is normalised in Kiwi dialogue can be challenging to navigate as a newcomer. Participants who worked jobs that allowed them to interact with New Zealanders daily, acknowledged that these jobs afforded them the benefit of being exposed to Kiwi dialogue that other ethnic and migrant people working in farming and agricultural roles may not have. One participant from India, often felt he had the responsibility to mediate Indian immigrants who worked in farming roles navigate social spaces to help them translate Kiwi jargon and colloquialism that may be newer to them. When asked, do you feel a part of the Whakatāne community, this participant responded, *"It's basically if you adopt their culture, if you behave."*

To bridge the lack of awareness between migrant and ethnic groups and New Zealanders, participants suggest that key community stakeholders could promote awareness to multicultural events such as Diwali, Eid, Chinese New Year, and different cultural language weeks. This may help promote inclusivity within different cultures that exist in the Whakatāne District. Similarly migrant and ethnic groups can raise their awareness of the unique nuances of New Zealand English through the delivery of language classes held in the community that are specifically designed to teach Kiwi English.

Participation and belonging in public spaces and places

A significant determinant of whether migrant and ethnic participants felt actively included in the Whakatāne community was their capacity to participate and have a sense of belonging in public spaces. Public places are areas where individuals from diverse backgrounds come together,

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interact, and build a shared sense of identity. When these spaces are welcoming, accessible, and reflective of the cultural diversity within the community, newcomers are more likely to feel a sense of belonging (Radford, 2017). One participant shared an encounter where his daughter was asked to translate the Hindu word for 'grandmother' in a school activity. He described his daughter as feeling hesitant to participate in this activity as she did not feel like the school culture prioritised creating a space where multicultural identities were celebrated. He understood how his daughter felt reluctant to participate in fear of being perceived as different.

Parents who migrated to NZ for better socioeconomic opportunities for their families shared the perspective that the most consequential challenge with migrating to another country is the cultural impact this has on their children. One father explained how he battles with the balance of accepting the influence of Western norms that his children will be exposed to whilst growing up in a cultural space where their ethnic identity is not the cultural norm; for the benefit of pursuing educational and economic opportunities for his children. Although he acknowledges that as his children grow up in NZ, they will create a cultural identity that is influenced by the social space, he is afraid that they may lose connection to the traditions, language and culture that is a part of their ethnic identity.

"The challenging thing here is for our kids to follow the same [cultural practices and understanding] as where we come from..[..] so really you are fighting inside, that your kids should know the [cultural] background where we come from."

He and many other participants expressed that having multicultural events in Whakatāne is one way to help migrant and ethnic children normalise and celebrate parts of their ethnic practices and customs, outside of the context of their home. A Filipino mother who we engaged with highlighted that multicultural events are a good opportunity to teach the generation of children who were born in NZ because of their parents' migration, the traditional dances, songs and activities of their ethnic culture. Multicultural events create a space that celebrates the cultural diversity within Whakatāne. It fosters the cultural identity of migrant and ethnic individuals,

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which promotes a sense of belonging in public spaces. One participant went on to say that the capacity to which a place celebrates multicultural communities determines whether migrant and ethnic families will live in that area.

"That's one way of teaching these young ones [...] some of them don't know much about the Filipino [culture], and it's only when they see those things [dances, attire, language and cultural norms], that they [know]."

"Have you seen the Tinikling? It's the tradition of the Philippines where they tap the bamboo [...] for some kids, even just holding the bamboo is a big deal for them."

Participants also identified the lack of spaces for culturally safe activities in Whakatāne as a barrier to fostering a sense of belonging. Whakatāne is widely known for its long coastline. Many people come to the District for swimming and surfing activities. One participant shared how many Indian people do not feel comfortable participating in these activities. Firstly, the Northern part of India where he is from has no coastline, so activities like swimming and surfing are foreign to many Northern Indians. Secondly, the culturally appropriate attire that some Sikh women honour conflicts with the culturally accepted swimwear attire for women in NZ. This contrast can heighten their sense of feeling marginalised in social settings. In saying that, participants also vocalised that the cultural expectation for swimwear is not adopted by all Indian families in NZ. People's swimwear choices are influenced by a variety of factors, including personal preferences, regional customs, and individual interpretations of cultural and religious values. It is crucial to understand the diversity within migrant and ethnic people to avoid the generalisations of beliefs and practices amongst these communities.

Access to resources and support

Most of the participants interviewed in this project discussed the importance of participating in electoral voting. We asked interviewees how they express democracy, and one participant defined his perspective on democracy as everyone having access to equal rights, irrespective of their ethnic background. One participant shared her experience of growing up in their home country where her parents felt they had to migrate to NZ due to the political war and civil unrest

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occurring around them. She says that seeing her parents protest and the impact that unjust governments had on her community, instilled the importance of voting and using one's voice. For her, voting is a way for her to honour the sacrifice that her parents made in migrating to NZ for better opportunities for her and her siblings.

"When I got the opportunity to vote, I felt so empowered. [...] I feel really proud that I've done my part."

Participants discussed that having access to information that is easily understood is a significant barrier to participating in informed voting. One participant said that despite having gained permanent resident status, he does not engage with voting campaigns as he feels he does not have a good understanding of the political system both locally and nationally. Some also felt that the representation of migrant and ethnic people in local councils and national government also influences their vote. These perspectives highlight the need for information relating to governance structures, policies, and electoral processes to be readily available and comprehensible to people from diverse backgrounds.

One participant shared his initial experience in NZ where he had little to no information on his employment rights. He had moved to NZ to study and was able to work part-time. He talked about the pay discrepancies he was receiving in his first job, without the awareness that he was being underpaid by his employer. Not having access to resources and information put him in a vulnerable position as an employee who relied on the good will of employers to operate within the boundaries of employment law. He also talked about the lack of information given to newcomers regarding how social institutions operate and how the interpretations of human rights are expressed here. For many migrant and ethnic people, it is challenging to navigate new physical environments without having local support. In addition, newcomers can feel overwhelmed in their attempts to get an IRD number and set up a bank account.

"When I came, I had no idea where to find that information [how to get a job]. I just came here blindly. [I had to find] my own community so I could express myself, because that is important.

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When I first started, I just wanted to go back because I didn't know how things work. For example, reading a map was a big challenge for us"

Leadership amongst ethnic communities

Participants in this project discussed the need to strengthen leadership structures within their local ethnic and migrant social groups. These social groups provide sources of support, connection, and identity for many newcomers. One participant shared how he connected to an Indian social group based in Whakatāne through social media. The support and networks of this group helped him to find a rental property in Whakatāne which enabled his relocation to the District. These social groups will continue to grow with the rising immigration trends predicted by Infometrics (2023). Participants vocalised the need for leadership roles within these groups to help facilitate events and build connection to other local entities. One participant who actively engages with an ethnic social group noted that it can be difficult to organise gatherings and maintain strong connections as a group, as people also have other commitments with work and their own families. Another participant also expressed that the lack of leadership within ethnic groups is a barrier for migrant families being able to connect to each other and foster their cultural identity. This participant has been living in NZ for over 20 years. Throughout the many years in Whakatāne, she has seen an influx of other Filipino migrants to the area. In her perspective, the impact of a lack of leadership within ethnic and migrant groups is that people belonging to the same ethnicity become dispersed and live isolated from each other.

"Now I couldn't keep up [with the sudden increase in the demographic]. Before, I used to chase them, because I love to hear our language [being spoken]. Sometimes I see them at the supermarket, and I try to say a word in Tagalog, and hopefully they understand that."

Strengthening leadership within ethnic and migrant groups will aid in their capacity to advocate for their communities and liaise with broader societal structures. The call for leadership is rooted

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in their desire for representation, empowerment, and the ability to address specific issues and opportunities relevant to migrant and ethnic populations.

7. Recommendations for WDC Diversity, Equity and Inclusion Policy:

Inclusive leadership

The findings of this project point to the recommendation of a partnership approach between the WDC, tāngata whenua and ethnic and migrant community leaders to create, advocate for and continue to foster a diverse and inclusive District. A partnership approach will ensure a sense of shared responsibility to promote meaningful interactions between ethnic and migrant communities and other NZ residents. To do this, a focus on building leadership capabilities within ethnic and migrant groups is crucial.

Create welcoming spaces through multicultural community events

Collaborative planning with local iwi and community leaders to organise multicultural community events that provide a platform for ethnic and migrant communities to express and share their customs, practices, and culture. These events should be designed to celebrate diversity and promote an exchange of cultural experiences that will foster a sense of unity and understanding amongst community members.

Promote connected and inclusive communities through cultural awareness initiatives

To enhance interaction between migrant and ethnic communities and the wider population in Whakatāne, efforts should be made to raise awareness about significant cultural events such as the Chinese New Year, Pacific Island Language Weeks, Diwali and many others. Additionally, initiatives that facilitate cultural awareness, such as Kiwi English language classes, can be

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instrumental in breaking down communication barriers. This will contribute to building migrant and ethnic people's awareness of social norms in Whakatāne and create opportunities for meaningful intercultural interactions. Providing opportunities to practise intercultural dialogue will also increase participation in decision making, democracy and civics amongst migrant and ethnic cohorts.

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8. Appendices

Appendix 1: Glossary

Cultural diversity	Refers to the presence of a variety of cultural groups and different cultural backgrounds within a specific community
Discrimination	A form of unfair treatment or prejudice directed at individuals or groups based on their perceived or actual ethnic or racial background
Ethnic groups	People who were born and live in New Zealand but do not ethnically identify as Māori or Pakeha
Inclusion	A practice that promotes the equal participation, access, and opportunities of all individuals
Migrant groups	Non-Māori, non-Pakeha people that were born overseas and are now permanently residing in New Zealand
Population	Refers to the total number of individuals residing in a specific geographic area or belonging to a particular group
Social Integration	The process of fostering the full and equitable participation of individuals or groups from diverse backgrounds in the economic, cultural, and social life of a society.
Social Cohesion	Refers to the degree of social unity, integration, and harmony within a group or society. It is often characterised by a sense of belonging and inclusion amongst members of a society.
Intercultural Dialogue	Inter-cultural dialogue entails the sharing of ideas and differences with the intent of developing a deeper understanding of different perspectives and practices. Often achieved through shared projects.
Acculturation	The process through which individuals or groups from different cultural backgrounds come into contact and interact with one another, leading to changes in their cultural beliefs, values, behaviours, and identities.

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4.2.1 Appendix 1 - Navigating Diversity(Cont.)

Appendix 2: Interview Questions

Whakatāne District Ethnic Communities Social Research

September 2023 - December 2023

Interview questions/kōrero prompters

Based on the Ministry of Social Development - social cohesion framework

1. Tell us a bit about where you're from.

2. Do you feel a part of your community? What does that look like?

3. How important is it to you to feel like your ethnic culture is enabled/celebrated in the Whakatāne community?

4. How important to you is it to have good relationships with those in your community?
   a. Are you connected to cultural groups or formal/ informal groups in or outside of Whakatane? (e.g. churches, social media groups, charity trusts).
   b. How do you connect? (e.g. online via facebook groups, or in person)
   c. What support might be needed to connect well with your wider community?

5. What does being culturally safe mean to you?
   a. Have you experienced bias or felt culturally unsafe? If so, do you feel comfortable telling us about your experience?
   b. In what ways has your community supported you to feel included/welcome/respected/able to participate?

6. How does your connection to your culture influence your overall well being?

7. What is your Citizenship/Residency status?
   a. Do you vote in the elections?
   b. What does expressing democracy (the idea that you have a voice), mean to you?

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4.2.1 Appendix 1 - Navigating Diversity(Cont.)

Appendix 3: Consent Form

Whakatāne District Ethnic Communities Social Research Project

September 2023 - December 2023
Consent Form

INTRODUCTION:

You are invited to participate in a research interview conducted by the Whakatane District Council. The purpose of this research is to better understand the perspectives and experiences of ethnic communities within the Whakatane District in order to inform policy around social cohesion and community development. Your participation is entirely voluntary, and we greatly appreciate your willingness to contribute to this important study.

Purpose of the Research:

The purpose of this research is to gather information and insights from members of ethnic communities within the Whakatane District. The findings will be used to inform policies and initiatives aimed at promoting social cohesion and improving community relations within the district.

Confidentiality:

Your participation in this research will be kept confidential.

All data collected during the interview will be anonymized and stored within the Whakatane District Council's information database.

Your identity and personal information will not be disclosed to any third party without your explicit consent.

Your interview will be audio recorded for the purposes of capturing the feedback you provide us. This audio will be destroyed upon completion of this project.

Voluntary Participation:

Your participation in this research is entirely voluntary. You have the right to withdraw from the study at any time without penalty or consequence. If you choose to withdraw, your data will not be used in the study.

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4.2.1 Appendix 1 - Navigating Diversity(Cont.)

Benefits:

By participating in this research, you will have the opportunity to contribute to the improvement of social cohesion and community engagement in the Whakatane District. Your input will help shape policies and initiatives that directly impact your community.

Risks:

There are no anticipated risks associated with participating in this research interview.

Questions and Concerns:

If you have any questions or concerns about the research, please feel free to contact:

Annelle Prince (Project Lead)
021 255 8291
aprince95@hotmail.com

Karen Summerhays (Project Manager)
027 251 4269
Karen.Summerhays@whakatane.govt.nz

Consent:

I have read and understood the information provided in this consent form. I voluntarily agree to participate in the research interview conducted by the Whakatane District Council. I understand that I can withdraw from the study at any time without consequences.

Signature: ....

Date:...

Thank you for your participation in this important research project.

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4.2.1 Appendix 1 - Navigating Diversity(Cont.)

Appendix 4: Fact Sheet

Whakatāne District Ethnic Communities Social Research Project

September 2023 - December 2023

Fact Sheet

OVERVIEW

The Whakatāne District Council is carrying out a project to explore and better understand the diverse ethnic groups residing in the Whakatane district. This project aims to partner with ethnic communities to collect valuable data, insights, and perspectives from the different ethnic communities to foster inclusivity, promote cultural awareness, and inform policy decisions.

WHY DO WE WANT TO CONNECT WITH YOU?

- The Whakatāne District Council's vision for our community is of a society that fosters inclusion, where barriers to social cohesion are removed. We know there are still many barriers to inclusion and wish to hear about these so we can see what might improve the experiences of people from different ethnic backgrounds.
- We want to take the time to listen to the voices of our ethnic communities, and what they determine as appropriate responses and strategies that enable and celebrate their cultural identity in our community.
- To strengthen our relationship with different ethnic groups in Whakatāne to develop ongoing participation and a collaborative approach to decision making.

HOW WILL WE CONNECT WITH YOU?

We aim to partner with different community leaders, representatives, and individuals from various ethnic backgrounds to gather qualitative insights into their experiences, challenges, and perspectives. We can arrange a date and time that suits you to talk about this project and answer any questions you may have. Once you feel comfortable and confident to be a part of this journey with us, then we will ask you to sign a consent form. Before working with you to arrange an interview. These can be done individually or in a group discussion.

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4.2.1 Appendix 1 - Navigating Diversity(Cont.)

KEY RESEARCH QUESTIONS:

The questions will be based around the Ministry of Social Development's (MSD) Social Cohesion Framework. This framework looks at different factors that measure social cohesion, where people, whānau and communities:

1. Feel like they belong
2. Are respected and embrace diversity
3. Are connected to their communities and others
4. Are able to disagree in a respectful and safe way
5. Have equitable wellbeing outcomes
6. Are supported and have the capacity to participate

RESEARCH METHODS

To explore these research themes, this project will employ a mixed method approach that includes:

1. Data Analysis: Examining existing demographic data to understand the ethnic composition and trends in Whakatane.
2. In-Depth Interviews: Conducting qualitative interviews with community leaders, representatives, and individuals from various ethnic backgrounds to gather qualitative insights into their experiences, challenges, and contributions.
3. Focus Groups: Organizing focus group discussions to delve deeper into specific issues, such as cultural preservation, language maintenance, and integration.

WHAT WILL MY INFORMATION BE USED FOR?

The findings from this research project will inform the Whakatane Council's policy decisions around community development and engagement strategies. The council aims to promote inclusivity, celebrate diversity, and address the unique needs of diverse ethnic groups to create a more cohesive and thriving community.

The Whakatane Council plans to continue its engagement with diverse ethnic communities, implement targeted policies and initiatives, and work collaboratively with community leaders to ensure a more inclusive and culturally rich Whakatane.

All data collected during the interview will be anonymized and stored within the Whakatane District Council's information database. Your identity and personal information will not be disclosed to any third party without your explicit consent.

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4.2.1 Appendix 1 - Navigating Diversity(Cont.)

Appendix 5: MSD Social Cohesion Framework

Ministry of Social Development Social Cohesion Framework:

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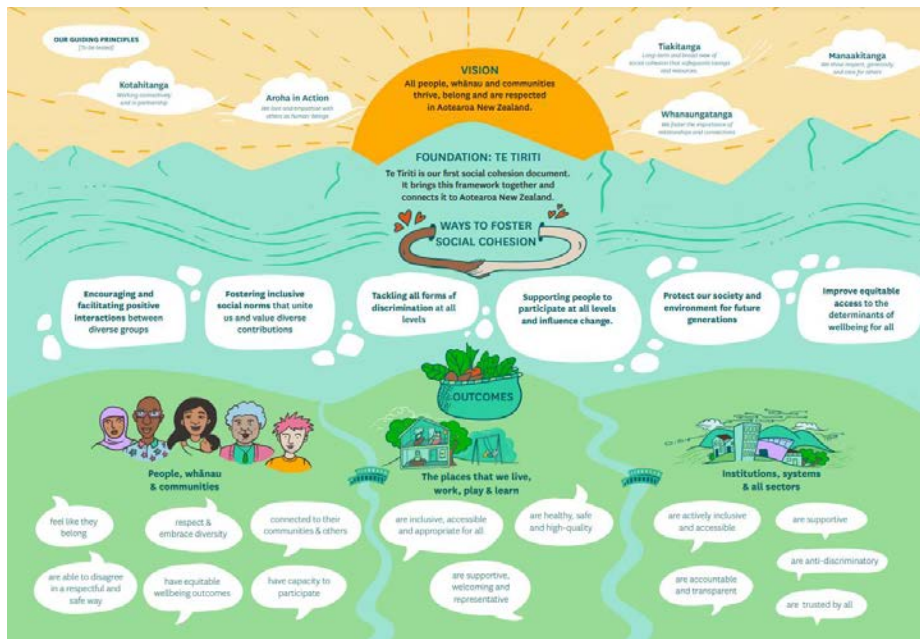
4.2.1 Appendix 1 - Navigating Diversity(Cont.)

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4.3   3 - Communications Strategy

Council Staff Alexandra Pickles will be speaking to the following presentation.

4.3 3 - Communications Strategy(Cont.)

WHERE WE'RE AT

- Not long ago, Council communication was one-way and 2D
- Things have shifted quickly since the world moved online
- Social media has changed the game
- We're more aware of and committed to our role as Treaty partners
- Our learning has accelerated, and so has the demand
- We know our communities have unique needs and offerings
- We need to meet people where they're at

OUR COMMUNICATION STRATEGY GOAL

'We champion Whakatāne District's people and places'

8/23/2024

We champion Whakatāne District's people and places

WE WILL DO THIS BY

1. Promoting communities across the district

2. Focusing on targeted communication and building relationships

3. Celebrating Iwi, Hapū and Whānau across all our communication deliverables

4. Embedding systems and processes that prioritise people and places

4.3 3 - Communications Strategy(Cont.)

SUCCESS LOOKS LIKE

- The Council - and what we do - is understood better by all our communities

- People are better informed to participate

- People feel they are being celebrated

- People feel they are being listened to and responded to

- Staff are contributing to the building of trust and confidence between communities and our organisation

8/23/2024

4.3 3 - Communications Strategy(Cont.)

MEASURES FOR SUCCESS

Understanding - increased knowledge about Council activities and democratic processes

Participation – across youth, Iwi/Hapū/Whānau and smaller/rural communities

Levels of acknowledgement – "We feel acknowledged and celebrated"

Responsiveness – reach and connectivity into our targeted communities

Staff engagement – what the staff survey tells us

Sample Footer Text   6

4.3 3 - Communications Strategy(Cont.)

KEY ACTIONS

- **Development of a relationship database** that identifies key communities of interest so we can deliver relevant and timely communication

- **Creation of an engagement calendar** that captures and aligns organisational opportunities for community engagement

- **A full revision of whakatane.govt.nz** to ensure it's responsive to the current online environment and to enable a place-based approach

- **Development of information sheet and FAQ resources** for all key Council projects to ensure clear and consistent messaging

- **Establishment of a People's Panel** to generate a flow of feedback for elected members to aid their decision-making and as a way of informing those most engaged in Council activities

- **Work with Community Boards to develop their own communication plans** that map methods and opportunities for engagement

- **Alignment of community newsletters to Community Board areas** to ensure information is relevant and inclusive

- **Capability building and increased generation of online video content** to support Council's social media channels

- **Development of a school civics programme** for both primary and secondary students to provide information on Council activities, encourage involvement in democracy and highlight future employment opportunities

- **Revision of Council's branding and corporate guidelines** to support the goal of championing our people and places