



FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

What is the Diversity, Equity and Inclusion Policy?

This policy is designed to guide Whakatane District Council on how we can enhance social cohesion through supporting diversity, inclusion and equity in our work and everyday behaviour.

It describes the Council's approach to enable all people to participate, and makes extra accommodations for those who face greater barriers to participation and are more likely to experience discrimination and bias.

Why do we need one?

This policy is important to ensure we are engaging with a diverse range of individuals and communities, including these individuals and groups in decision-making, and providing equitable opportunities for those who may have experienced discrimination and disadvantage.

It aims to tackle unfair disadvantages and systems that keep inequality in place for marginalised and minority groups. The goal is to 'level the playing field' and provide equal opportunities for everyone.

What does diversity mean?

Diversity is all about representing people from a range of different social and ethnic backgrounds.

It encompasses a sense of belonging, celebrating our identities, and awareness and appreciation of the intersectionality of people so that the people in our communities are represented.

What does equity mean?

Equity means fairness and justice in the distribution of resources, opportunities, and privileges, taking into account the unique circumstances and needs of individuals or groups. It recognises that different individuals or groups may require different levels of support or accommodations to achieve a level playing field. Equity aims to address historical and systematic disadvantages and achieve equal opportunities.

What does inclusion mean?

Inclusion means the practice or policy of providing equal access to opportunities and resources for people who might otherwise be excluded or marginalised. This includes those who have physical or intellectual disabilities and members of other minority groups.

How has the policy been developed?

Early in 2024, the Council signed a Memorandum of Understanding with the Whakatāne Accessible and Inclusive (WAI) group. As part of the MOU, the Council promised to undertake the development of a Diversity, Equity and Inclusion (DEI) Policy.

Council staff have also researched our community demographics to inform the policy and supported qualitative research regarding our migrant and minority communities in the district.

Extensive pre-engagement with our communities was done over the past two years to better understand the needs of those that we rarely hear from, and to provide baseline information for the development of this policy.

Why is it the Council's responsibility to develop this policy?

Legislation currently states that local government must promote social, economic, environmental and cultural wellbeing of communities in the present and for the future.

I really like this draft policy, how do I let you know?

Great! There are several ways you can tell us what you think. Visit koreromai.whakatane.govt.nz and fill out the online form, submit a hard copy form to any of our Customer Services Centres, or speak to your Mayor and Councillors at a meeting on Thursday 5 December.

There are some parts I don't agree with, how do I let you know?

Fair enough! There are several ways you can tell us what you think. Visit koreromai.whakatane.govt.nz and fill out the online form, submit a hard copy form to any of our Customer Services Centres, or speak to your Mayor and Councillors at a meeting on Thursday 5 December.

What will happen when the policy is finalised?

We'll review the feedback from consultation and make necessary changes to the policy. Your Mayor and Councillors will agree to adopt the final version at a Council meeting in early 2025. We anticipate several action plans will be created once the final policy is in place.

