



Whakatāne District Council

Diversity, Equity and Inclusion Policy



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What the policy is about



The Whakatāne District Council:

- looks after the services that make Whakatāne a great place for people to live
- is working on a new Diversity Equity and Inclusion **policy**.



A **policy** is a set of guidelines the Whakatāne District Council follows.



In this document the:

- words **us / we / our** mean the Whakatāne District Council
- Diversity Equity and Inclusion policy will be called the **DEI policy**.



The DEI policy guides us in making our communities better through supporting:

- inclusion – making sure everyone is able to take part in the community
- equity – people getting fair chances to access services that they need
- diversity – including all the different people in the community such as people of different:
 - ages
 - disabilities
 - ethnicities – where you are from
 - **religions.**



A **religion** is a group of people who believe similar things about ideas like:

- if there is a God or Gods
- what happens after we die.

Some examples of religions are:

- Christianity
- Islam.



In early 2024 we signed a **Memorandum of Understanding** with Whakatāne Accessible and Inclusive group.



A **Memorandum of Understanding** is:

- an agreement between:
 - us
 - Whakatāne Accessible and Inclusive
- called an MoU
- not a legal document.



We promised to work on the DEI policy as part of the MoU.



We talked to people from different community groups to better understand their needs such as:

- older people / kaumātua
- young people / taiohi
- disabled people / tāngata whaikaha
- rural people / te hunga taiwhenua
- hard to reach family / whānau groups
- **the rainbow community / hāpori takatāpui**
- **neurodivergent people / te hunga kanorau ā-roro.**





The rainbow community / hapori takatāpui includes people who are:

- lesbian
- gay
- bisexual
- transgender
- takatāpui
- queer
- intersex
- asexual.



Neurodivergent people / te hunga kanorau ā-roro have brains that work in different ways.

Neurodivergent includes people who:

- are autistic
- have ADHD.



We found that some people in these communities were:

- feeling like they were not being included
- getting less service than other people.



The objective of the DEI policy



An **objective** is like a goal.

The objectives of this policy are to:



- make everyone feel:
 - like they belong
 - safe to be themselves
- include people from all backgrounds when we make decisions
- build / keep good relationships with people from all communities.





Another objective of this DEI policy is to make sure people from all communities are treated with:

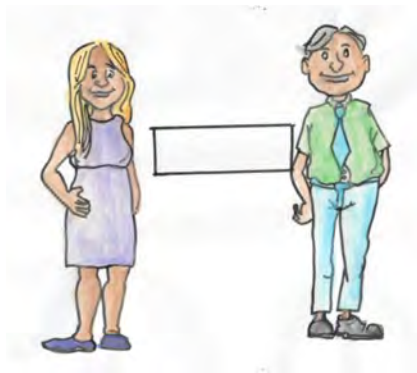
- empathy – caring about how other people feel
- compassion – treating people with kindness
- respect –
 - accepting people for who they are
 - treating people like they are important.



What this policy will look like



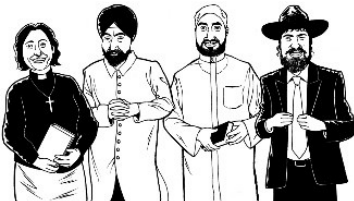
Pages **12** to **20** go through the things we are planning to do as part of the DEI policy based on:



- diversity
- equity
- inclusion.

Diversity

We will support diversity by:



- supporting:
 - an understanding of DEI in our communities
 - events that celebrate different communities
 - projects that are led by different communities
- respecting the:
 - **rights** of all people
 - beliefs of all people like their religion
- treating everyone with respect.



Rights are things everyone should:

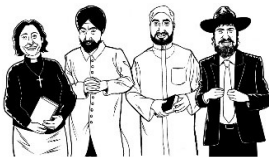
- have
- be able to do.



For example everyone should have a right to things like:

- housing
- being kept safe
- having enough food to eat.





Equity

The main areas we will focus on to support equity are:

- accessibility
- inclusive leadership
- **reasonable accommodations.**

Reasonable accommodations are changes that are made to support fairness between people for their different needs.

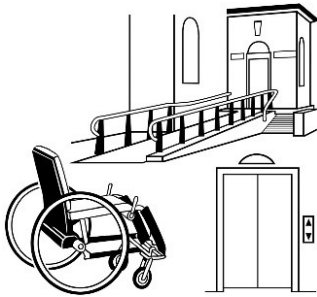
These needs can be:

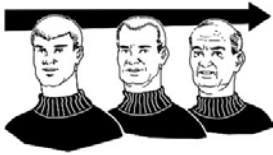
- religious
- physical
- mental.



We will focus on accessibility by:

- making sure people have easy access to our services
- providing information in alternate formats like Easy Read
- using **universal design** when we build things
- making it so there can be accessible:
 - **sensory environments**
 - equipment.





Universal design is making things that can be used by everyone no matter:

- how old they are
- what size they are
- what disabilities they have.

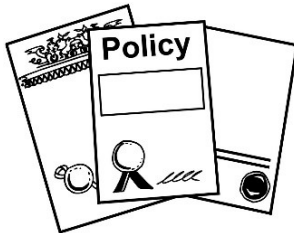
Sensory environment means the things around you that you can:

- hear
- see
- smell
- touch.

We will show inclusive leadership by:



- making more people aware of what reasonable accommodations are



- using reasonable accommodations in:

- our DEI policy
- other work we do



- using **Nothing About Us Without Us.**



Nothing About Us Without Us

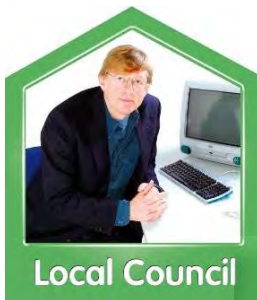
means no decisions should be made about a community without the community being part of the decision making.

Inclusion



To make sure communities feel included we will spend our time on 2 main things:

- decision making
- **safe spaces.**



Safe spaces are places where our communities feel safe.

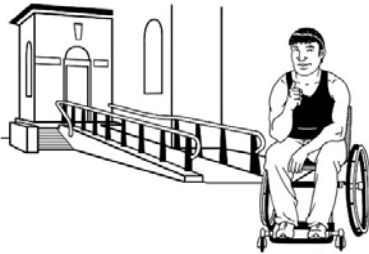
Safe spaces include places like:

- council offices
- parks
- libraries.



We will do this by making sure our spaces are:

- available for the community to use in a safe way
- more **accessible**
- places where people feel safe to be themselves.



Accessible means people can use the spaces:

- easily
- in a way that works well for them.



We will support people / communities to be part of decision making by:

- making spaces available for communities to have their voices heard
- encouraging people to:
 - take part in our projects
 - tell us what they think of our projects
- supporting better understanding of how we make our decisions.



Who needs to follow the DEI policy



We want everyone who works for / with us to follow the DEI policy such as:

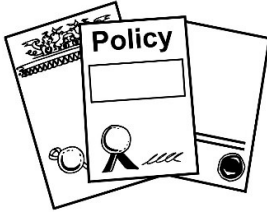
- elected members like people on the Council
- employees – people who we pay to work for us
- volunteers – people who work for us but do not get paid
- contractors – people who work for us but are not employees.



How the DEI policy will work



We will try to support plans that are led by communities to support the **implementation** of the DEI policy.



Implementation means how we will use the policy in our work.



This information has been written by the Whakatāne District Council.



It has been translated into Easy Read by the Make it Easy Kia Māmā Mai service of People First New Zealand Ngā Tāngata Tuatahi.



The ideas in this document are not the ideas of People First New Zealand Ngā Tāngata Tuatahi.



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