

Community Engagement Charter

The Tauranga City Council candidates committed to this charter believe that when residents, stakeholders and government are actively involved in co-creating their community, it strengthens civic pride and commitment to making Tauranga the city of choice where people can live, work, play, and learn together.

Engaging Tauranga's residents will:

- Allow for responsible decision-making, for a range of perspectives, experience and knowledge and improve transparency and accountability.
- Involve sharing ideas in ways that support learning and the creation of sustainable solutions.

All of us are very aware that the Council has repeatedly failed to properly engage, work with or listen to its residents. We are determined to turn this around.

We will ensure the Council adopts practices of engagement which give all residents the opportunity to share in making decisions which affect their place. We understand this includes supporting capability development and making resources available to assist communities with engagement.

We know this will mean working with residents to discuss what this means in practice - and what is the 'place' or 'community' to which engagement should apply? We believe that the people best able to decide which are Tauranga's communities are the people of those communities themselves.

We want a Council which is recognised for its leadership in giving voice, choice and control to communities who have lacked a voice.

We want a commitment to engagement by elected members and by council management and staff which recognises "Engagement is achieved when the community is and feels part of the overall governance of that community. Local governments have an important role in building stronger communities, and engaging communities is a key means to doing so". (Taken from an international statement on engagement).

We are satisfied from the experience of councils which have done this, that the benefits of this approach to community engagement include greater mutual respect between councils and their communities, better decision-making, stronger communities and real returns both to a council and its communities which exceed the costs involved in supporting engagement.