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Upper Hutt City Council

Independent assessment report | August 2018

An independent assessment report issued by the Independent Assessment Board for the CouncilMARK[™] local government excellence programme. For more information, visit www.councilmark.co.nz



A measure
for better
community value.

* Period of assessment: May 2018

Assessment Summary

AT A GLANCE



Upper Hutt is part of a region which is rapidly changing through planned investment and regional collaboration.



LARGE METRO

**SMALL METRO
AND LARGE
PROVINCIAL**



SMALL PROVINCIAL AND RURAL

REGIONAL

The current situation

Upper Hutt City Council services the northern Hutt Valley region, a largely urban community but with significant lifestyle and bush spaces. The Council is led by a long-standing Mayor and an established Chief Executive. Relationships with the business community, ratepayers and most other external stakeholders are well informed.

The Council is emerging from a long period of austerity, during which time rates have been kept affordable and the approach to asset renewals has been conservative. Council makes extensive use of region-wide arrangements and shared back-office services to deliver services and achieve service levels that would not otherwise be achievable.

Upper Hutt City Council enjoys a positive reputation amongst residents and the business community. In recent years, elected members and staff have proactively sought to engage with stakeholder groups to understand their needs and preferences.

Approximately 14 per cent of the District's population identify as Māori. Te Atiawa is the dominant iwi. A genuine intent to engage is emerging as Māori/iwi are beginning to find their voice.

Period of assessment

The on-site assessment took place on 17 and 18 May 2018.



\$1,255m

GROSS DOMESTIC¹
PRODUCT

SERVES

40,179

PEOPLE², A MIX OF
84% EUROPEAN
14% MĀORI
6% ASIAN
5% PASIFICIKA



POPULATION TREND
GROWTH

MAKES UP

0.2%

OF NEW ZEALAND'S TOTAL LAND AREA³
REPRESENTING UPPER HUTT CITY
FROM AKATARAWA FOREST IN THE
WEST AND RIMUTAKA IN THE NORTH
TO SILVERSTREAM IN THE SOUTH. AN
AREA OF

540 km²

RESPONSIBLE FOR

238km

ROADS



Key learnings

Upper Hutt City Council is largely responsive to community needs and is delivering core services well. Population growth and demand for residential land over the medium and longer-term will require careful consideration and balancing of infrastructure demands and environmental and economic priorities. Council has committed to moving from a “delivery-centric” culture to a “community-centric” culture. Other key learnings were:

- > Despite a policy of austerity, Upper Hutt City Council has continued to deliver core services at an affordable level of rates over an extended period.
- > Much of the Council's infrastructure is managed by third parties via region-wide arrangements and shared-service outsourcing. For example, Wellington Water, a Council-Controlled organisation (CCO) both manages and operates core water services.
- > The Council has recently implemented a new organisational structure to better align resources and activities and to expedite progress towards its vision.
- > Council's provision for longer-term infrastructure renewals may require higher levels of rates and/or debt funding.

¹ MBIE

² Stats NZ Census 2013

³ DIA 2013

⁴ Ministry of Transport 2013/14

Assessment Summary

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OVERVIEW

Upper Hutt City Council is led effectively and the delivery of core services is sound. Interactions between councillors, staff and the broader community and key stakeholders appear to be settled. The Council’s commitment to embracing a ‘community-centric’ culture should see it become more responsive to both current and emerging community needs.

RATING



Findings

1.

UPPER HUTT CITY COUNCIL IS PERFORMING ADEQUATELY IN MOST OPERATIONAL AREAS.

The long-standing Mayor and councillors work well together, and with the Chief Executive and Council staff. Together, they are increasingly responsive to the needs of the community.

2.

STRONG EMPHASIS ON BUILDING LEADERSHIP CAPABILITY AND STRENGTHENING INTERNAL BUSINESS PROCESSES.

A new directorate of Business Transformation and Insights has been created to catalyse change. A critical appointment will be a new dedicated Chief Financial Officer. There is fresh opportunity for management to better support strategic decision-making and governance.

3.

COUNCIL FINANCES ARE ADEQUATELY MANAGED.

Council has managed its finances carefully. It remains sensitive to delivering on its vision while having regard to rates affordability. Councillors and management will need to ensure that close attention is paid to the risks inherent in the Council’s financial and infrastructure strategies.

Commonly used terms

Term	Definition
Asset Management Plan	A tactical plan for managing a council’s infrastructure and other assets to deliver an agreed standard of service.
Infrastructure	Local and regional roads, pathways and cycleways, drinking water, wastewater and stormwater assets, sports and recreation facilities (parks, sportsgrounds, green spaces etc), community and tourism facilities (playgrounds, public toilets, libraries, museums, galleries and public art etc), town centres, and other facilities.
Local Government Act 2002	The legislative act that provides a framework and powers for councils to decide which activities they undertake and the manner in which they will undertake them.
Long Term Plan	The document required under the Local Government Act that sets out a council’s priorities in the medium to long-term.



Governance, leadership and strategy	Financial decision-making and transparency	Service delivery and asset management	Communicating and engaging with the public and business
Competent	Variable	Competent	Competent

STRENGTHS

The Council has a long-standing Mayor, committed Councillors and an established Chief Executive, providing stable leadership to satisfy agreed community priorities.

Council has invested heavily in understanding the needs and preferences of the community, resulting in a realistic long-term plan.

Council enjoys a strong reputation amongst stakeholders, and maintains open and effective communications channels.

Council makes extensive use of region-wide arrangements and shared back-office functions to deliver services to expected levels reliably and cost-effectively.

AREAS OF IMPROVEMENT

Strong leadership is required to ensure the change opportunities provided by the Business Transformation and Insight team are both realised and seen to be realised.

Further development of the Council's relationship with Māori/iwi is suggested, in pursuit of understanding and commitment to mutually-beneficial outcomes.

A stronger corporate view of leadership and support of Council by the Executive Leadership Team would be beneficial.

The capacity and capability of the Executive Leadership Team and elected members to provide financial and risk oversight could be enhanced.

Leading locally

Governance, leadership and strategy

Upper Hutt City Council serves a largely urban community, with adjoining lifestyle blocks and significant areas of native bush. Leadership is provided by a long-standing Mayor and capable Chief Executive. Relationships with the business community and other stakeholders are largely positive and those with Māori/iwi are developing, as Māori/iwi finds their voice.

Priority grading

Competent

< The Mayor, councillors, Chief Executive and the Executive Leadership Team have an established vision for the city, and display a strong commitment to serve residents and the business community, and their respective interests. >

Setting the direction for the community

The Council has a strong sense of vision for the city, which is encapsulated in the vision phrase, “Life. Leisure. Live IT!”. This phrase, which appears on the Council’s crest, was embraced in 2009 following extensive community consultation. The five strategic priorities in place to achieve the vision are Community, Environment, City Centre, Infrastructure and Economy.

Council uses a ‘vision matrix’ (an assessment framework) to determine which key initiatives and projects will be pursued, and to promote more effective decision-making. Increasingly, projects are being explicitly aligned with the agreed vision and strategic

priority areas, so that only those aligned directly to the vision are presented to Council for consideration.

The Council is consulting on the 2018–2028 Long-Term Plan. While the stated emphasis of the draft Long Term Plan is “business as usual”, several new initiatives, called “must-do projects”, and optional projects have been proposed. Community engagement has been demonstrably strong; over 300 submissions have been received, the most ever. Projects and initiatives identified in the Long-Term Plan will be funded through modest rates increases and debt.

Stable leadership

The Council is led by a long-standing Mayor who is active in regional activities. He is motivated by a belief that discovering and supporting the best interests of the region delivers benefits to Upper Hutt residents. However, some perceptions that the Mayor is the Council are apparent, raising the spectre of uncertainty when the Mayor leaves, unless suitable transition plans are presented to the community.

Historically, the Council has made a significant investment in the induction of incoming councillors at the beginning of each triennium. However, an incremental approach has been adopted more recently, to spread learning over time in an effort to increase knowledge retention. Elected members are invited to use budget provisions for additional training in areas they deem appropriate. A notable omission is that no formal training dedicated to effective governance capability is provided, except for good decision-making.

Neither the collective or individual effectiveness of councillors, nor the quality of Council’s decision-making are reviewed formally (as distinct from community satisfaction). Consequently, there is no independent formal evaluation of the performance of elected members. Notwithstanding this, the Mayor introduced an informal (survey-based) self-evaluation process in 2017, the

results of which led to some courageous discussions and adjustments in working relationships.

Effective working relationships

Working relationships between the Mayor and elected members, and the Mayor and Chief Executive appear to be cohesive and effective. The offices of the Mayor and Chief Executive are located near each other. In-person interaction is at least daily, and transparency and trust between them is demonstrably high.

The Mayor makes use of informal catch-ups with elected members and the Chief Executive. This was generally endorsed as a means of focusing more directly on key matters and developing a stronger sense of collegiality.

Strengthening risk management

Council has an established Audit, Risk and Finance (ARF) Committee to review and oversee risk and finance functions. The combination of audit and risk with finance within one committee carries a natural tension: audit and risk has a big picture, formative focus whereas finance is typically more operational.

Despite 'Risk' in the ARF committee's title, the effective management of risk does not appear to be fully embedded in the work of the committee. Historically, risk has been assessed in the context of the next three years of the Long Term Plan only. This exposure has been recognised, and a 'bigger, more formative' view of risk (and strategy-risk alignment) is being worked on. The stated intent is to enhance risk capability within the ARF committee.

Health and safety

The Council maintains a strong commitment to providing a safe working environment for staff and contractors. A comprehensive health and safety policy is in place. Formal health and safety reviews are conducted at six-weekly intervals and reports are presented to the ARF committee.

The results of an online questionnaire suggests high levels of health and safety awareness amongst staff. However, no formal external reviews of the Council's workplace health and safety practices have been conducted to date.

Information flows and advice

Councillors meet regularly in accordance with a published schedule. While Council meetings are convened and chaired by the Mayor, the Chief Executive sets the agenda of meetings.

Elected members note that the volume and complexity of reporting they receive has increased. The level of understanding amongst councillors appears to be mixed, and an information asymmetry is apparent. A Democratic Services Advisor role was established and filled in 2017 to refine both reporting flows and committee structures, and to provide policy advice.

Strengths

The Mayor, councillors, Chief Executive and staff have a strong sense of vision, and a commitment to transform the Council into a community-centric entity serving identified community needs.

The Mayor and Chief Executive work effectively as a 'team', with an expressed commitment to support the development of a fully contributing council and an effective leadership team.

Projects are assessed using a 'vision matrix' to test alignment with both the agreed vision and strategic priorities.

Areas for improvement

There is no formal, annual assessment system in place to evaluate individual and collective capability of councillors.

Specific skills gaps in the areas of finance and risk are apparent.

The effective management of risk does not appear to be fully embedded within the ARF committee or Council.

Health and safety reporting is devoid of lead indicators aligned with strategic risks and supporting documentation to highlight areas of systemic risk.

Investing money well

Financial decision-making and transparency

Upper Hutt City Council has a long history of austerity, and of keeping rates rises in check. However, the Council now needs to consider whether policy changes are required, to ensure service expectations and longer-term renewal requirements are catered for.

Priority grading

Variable

< The Council's financial position is strong. The community has indicated a willingness to pay for additional services and higher service levels on a value-for-money basis. >

The Council's financial strategy is rational and reasonable. Affordability of rates has been a primary driver for Upper Hutt City Council. Rates levels are generally consistent with other similar councils in New Zealand. The basis and make-up of rates is explained well in Council documentation.

The strong focus on rates control and conservative expenditure to fund necessary maintenance and basic infrastructure renewal has dominated the Council's approach to financial management for many years. However, more recently, the community has indicated a willingness to pay for additional services and higher service levels, so long as value-for-money is not compromised.

Planning and evaluating financial goals

The Council's finances and associated reporting appear to be compliant with the basic requirements of the Local Government Act. A forward-looking financial strategy, complete with goals, is in place. The principles, while generally sound, carry a heightened risk around asset renewals.

The Council has commissioned many Section 17a reviews, indicating an active approach to analysing service delivery and value for money.

Financial reporting

A high-level overview of Council performance is presented to both the ARF committee and the elected members once per quarter, in a dashboard format. These reports, the format and content of which was last revised in 2012, include financial and non-financial information. Elected members reported no concerns in relation to the financial reports provided by management. However, the frequency and level of reporting may not be sufficient to enable elected members to monitor actual performance effectively, or to make timely and informed decisions.

While there are reasonable grounds to be assured of good fiscal control, improved financial management discipline based on monthly information and standard financial data is needed (to enable whole of Council financial accountability at both executive management and elected member level).

Addressing financial risk

The Council maintains an Audit, Risk and Finance (ARF) committee with responsibility to provide oversight of audit, risk management and internal financial control practices.

The ARF committee has operated without independent (external) members. Such appointments have not been considered necessary because elected members possessed strong accounting and financial acumen. However, the need to be seen to be applying objective judgement has been recognised, which may lead to a decision to appoint an external member.

Further, the Executive Leadership Team is making a conscious effort to move its focus from 'corporate and management' to 'strategy and leadership'. This should result in a more informed understanding of risk and risk options.

Conflicts of interest are reported annually. More frequent reporting would be more appropriate.

Balancing the budget and meeting targets

The Council's budget is not balanced. However, the Council appears to comply with fiscal prudence benchmarks, most notably in relation to rates affordability and debt levels. The most recent audit report (for the year ending 30 June 2017) is unqualified.

Notwithstanding this, increasing pressure on infrastructure renewals to ensure infrastructure capacity and reliability will place pressure on the Council to take a more strategic view of debt and how projects are to be funded in the future. The low levels of capital expenditure (including renewals) over the next ten years may mean that Council will not meet essential services benchmarks.

Considerable discipline and close cooperation between asset managers and financial managers will be required if the current financial and infrastructure strategies are to be achieved. Additional reporting to both the Executive Leadership Team and elected members will be required to enable effective monitoring against these strategies.

The Council does not have a credit rating. However, the Council recognises a rating may be required in the future, especially if it determines that more debt is needed to fund infrastructure renewals and other new projects.

The Council recognises the need to improve its approach to capital project planning and delivery, and to reduce the amount of carry-overs. To this end, a programme of project management training has been initiated. The establishment of a project management office would enhance project delivery disciplines.

Being clear and transparent to all

Council describes how rates are set in its public reporting, and rating information is published on the Council website. Details are both readily accessible and presented in a straightforward manner.

The current long-term plan consultation document is well set out; the financial costs and implications of each major project are clearly described, including descriptions of how each project is aligned with and contributes to the Council's five strategic priority areas.

Strengths

Council has a track record of prudent spending and financial management.

Council is willing to make up for the gap in its collective understanding and expertise in relation to financial and risk management.

Areas for improvement

Financial reporting to the ARF committee and elected members should occur more frequently and with sufficient detail to enable more effective monitoring and decision-making.

Financial management acumen could be strengthened through training and development of executive leadership team members.

Council should consider appointing an external member to the ARF committee.

Assumptions about the funding of longer-term infrastructure renewals (to ensure capacity and capability) need to be tested for reliability over time.

Delivering what's important

Service delivery and asset management

The Council's delivery of core infrastructure services is sound. A comprehensive land use strategy and associated suite of asset management plans are in place.

Priority grading

Competent

< Upper Hutt City Council makes extensive use of region-wide arrangements, contracted parties and shared back-office services to deliver services to the community. >

The regional approach to service delivery has enabled the Council to achieve value-for-money and quality-of-service outcomes that would not otherwise have been achieved if the Council had acted alone. The shared service model has also enabled strategic resilience projects to be funded and implemented.

Aligning services with strategy

The Council's core infrastructure documentation is current and complete, as described in the individual documents pertaining to each of the asset groups. A 30-year infrastructure strategy drives the financial strategy. The Council's intentions in terms of longer-term usage of land are described in its land use and open spaces strategy documents.

Cross-references between the Council's vision, strategic priorities, strategy documents and asset management plans are apparent, but not consistent. Explicit linkages within asset management plans in particular would help ensure tighter alignment of service delivery with strategic intent.

Monitoring and assessing service levels

Service levels are set in conjunction with the local community, via surveys and other consultation processes. They are communicated via the Long Term Plan and annual plans. The results are used for longer-term planning and to inform strategic decision-making for other district initiatives.

Some stakeholders, the business community in particular, have suggested that a less austere approach to decision-making and investment would be helpful to secure long-term social and economic outcomes.

Transforming engagement

An important priority of the Council is to become more explicitly 'community-centric'. The general intent is to deliver core services in a more responsive and cost-effective manner. However, a precise and unambiguous expression of what 'community-centric' means, and the operational implications, is yet to emerge.

The Chief Executive has established a 'Business Transformation and Insights' directorate to catalyse change. This has occurred within the context of a wider re-organisation designed to ensure people capability is aligned with agreed priorities and service level commitments. A positive culture with the Executive Leadership Team is emerging. This is expected to be enhanced by the creation of a new position of Chief Financial Officer, which has recently been filled. This is expected to lead to further productivity and engagement benefits throughout the organisation over time.

Service delivery models

The Council uses outsourcing agreements with third parties to deliver services to the community. These are overseen by capable and experienced Council staff. Agreed service levels are described within service contracts.

The regional approach is useful for protecting and adding discipline to the management of the three waters, which is delivered by Wellington Water, which is now nationally recognised as a smart and effective asset manager and operator. A similar delivery model is used for the management and maintenance of roading and parks/reserves infrastructure.

This approach enables many benefits to be realised. However, service delivery quality has not been consistently reliable or at expected levels. Consequently, additional monitoring and review activity (and associated costs) by the Council has been needed to re-align expectations and remove ambiguities.

Environmental monitoring and reporting

Environmental monitoring is provided by Greater Wellington Regional Council (GWRC). GWRC carries out long-term monitoring

across the region, and it undertakes short-term research and investigations where information gaps or potential problems are identified. Findings and results are reviewed by Council officers.

Collaboration with GWRC is effective. It extends to District Plan work streams, examples of which are Plan Change 42: Mangaroa River and Pinehaven Stream flood and erosion hazard extents, and Plan Change 47: Natural Hazards.

Assessing capability and capacity

A series of Section 17a reviews have been undertaken during 2017 and 2018, the majority by Council staff. Findings and recommendations are being reviewed.

The recruitment of suitably skilled and experienced staff, especially into technical disciplines such as inspectors, engineers and building control officers, presents an ongoing challenge. Managers regularly juggle priorities to ensure services levels are met. The Council has responded by contracting out selected back-office functions and increasing its investment in training (to build capability from within). However, the securing of appropriate expertise remains an on-going challenge.

Regulatory compliance

The Upper Hutt City Council regulatory system appears to be operating adequately. However, Council sees a “complex set of regulations and requirements” as a burden on team members who need to keep up to date and apply rules correctly.

The Council’s regulatory programme places a high emphasis on understanding and education, founded on a ‘constructive’ and collaborative approach to compliance. However, blatant or repeated infringements are dealt with through enforcement provisions.

Staff recognise that an overarching policy framework is needed to ensure consistency and provide protection for both compliance officers and the public.

Policy planning

A long-term vision for the district was developed in 2009 (“Life. Leisure. Live IT!”), following a comprehensive community consultation. This vision has provided a platform for subsequent long-term, annual and district planning activity, including the development of a long-term land use strategy.

The Council is committed to using supply/demand levers to ensure adequate land is available to satisfy the requirements of the National Policy Statement: Urban Development Capacity.

Community services

Core community services are delivered within the context of Section 11a of the Local Government Act. Council uses a combination of in-house (eg, library) and external entities (eg, Expressions, Upper Hutt’s art gallery, theatre, and civic hall

complex). A high degree of cooperation and understanding of the community is evident.

Library services have been impaired since February 2018, following the unexpected closure of the main library building due to structural safety concerns. However, this has created an opportunity for a broader discussion with the community, to reconsider its current and future needs in developing a new facility, possibly a community ‘hub’.

Capital investment decisions and delivery

The Council is starting to think critically about its investment in and delivery of capital programmes. Project management training is being provided to improve the delivery and oversight of major capital works. A standardised approach to project management should lead to better and more predictable delivery outcomes.

The Council’s approach to fiscal management, and its historically conservative asset renewal programme, suggests that the close monitoring of both asset performance and delivery of its future capital programme is imperative. Yet the need to respond quickly should an asset failure occur must also be preserved.

Strengths

Council makes extensive use of region-wide arrangements and shared back-office functions to deliver services to expected levels reliably and cost-effectively.

Council appears to be compliant with all relevant legislative and regulatory requirements.

Community engagement in future planning is very high, most notably the Long Term Plan consultation.

Areas for improvement

Linkages between asset management plans, and the Council’s overall vision and strategic priorities could be made more explicit.

More effective integration of financial and engineering/asset delivery functions, would improve planning and delivery.

Service delivery expectations and commitments of shared back-office services should be reviewed to remove ambiguities and to ensure required service levels are achieved.

Listening and responding

Communicating and engaging with the public and businesses

The Council's Mayor and councillors, Chief Executive and staff all have a strong commitment to effective communication and high levels of engagement with community stakeholder groups. Stronger relations with Māori/iwi are being formed.

Priority grading

Competent

< Council engagement with its community is strong and effective, with evidence of considerable formal and informal engagement. >

Planning effective engagement

Council has an existing marketing strategy, and is developing a social media strategy and policy. The communications and engagement strategy is being refreshed to ensure an integrated and consistent approach to community engagement.

Currently and historically, the Council has placed a high priority on community engagement, including informal engagement. The Mayor is highly visible in the community, often attending events and speaking with locals.

The Council wants to embrace a 'community centric' culture. A new directorate, Business Transformation and Insights, has been formed to lead the transition. The need to define what 'community centric' means and to inculcate a new, more responsive way of operating is recognised. The overall goal is to deliver a coherent, cohesive and consistent experience.

Engaging with the community

Most of the Council's communication is clear and direct, and most of its key accountability documents are easy to understand.

Evidence of high levels of community engagement has been apparent via the Long Term Plan consultation process. Examples include elected members and staff standing in public places seeking feedback on the long-term plan proposals and answering questions.

Engaging through digital means

The Council has a range of digital channels to communicate with the community. A functional website is in place, as well as phone and email-based interaction options. The website was redeveloped in 2014, and includes options to pay for a selection of services online.

However, staff note that further improvements to the customer experience will be possible when back office systems are fully integrated with the website. A tendering process to achieve this is underway.

How the community views the Council

Informal commentaries suggest the Council is respected in the community, even if considered somewhat austere in its positioning and interactions. However, it intends to transition to a 'perceptions monitor' questionnaire framework in 2018. The aim of this approach is to gain a more holistic view of Council performance across several areas including reputation, satisfaction with services and perceived value for money.

The Council's intention to construct a new library/community hub will test its ability to lead well. Understanding what is required, and balancing what is needed with the scale of the opportunity and the cost will require confident leadership.

Communicating through the media

The Council's relationship with the media is largely positive. Media tends to contact the Mayor to comment on topical matters as required.

Council's use of social media is relatively immature. There is no formal policy in place, but development work is underway.

Building relationships with Māori/iwi

The Council's relationship with Māori/iwi is forming, and the Council is starting to reach out to discover the expectations of Māori/iwi.

Te Atiawa describe the engagement and relationship with the Council as being "historically dormant", with evidence of tokenism in the past. Both Council and Māori/iwi acknowledge that genuine engagement has been difficult due to disagreements between iwi groups.

Māori/iwi are becoming more engaged, and Te Atiawa “expects to be heard” so the Council needs to be ready to consult meaningfully.

A project, the “Cultural Corridor”, is being held up as a test case for a stronger relationship. A diverse group of entities and interests are being brought together with the intention of collaborating on a significant riverside renewal project. The learnings are expected to inform greater and more meaningful engagement between Māori/iwi and the Council.

Building relationships with the community

The Council has proactively established formal and informal relationships with a wide range of groups across the community. Many different approaches have been used to engender a sense of engagement. These include focus groups, individual workshops, submissions and seminars. Community stakeholders say that they appreciate the Council’s level of engagement.

Engagement with business community and other stakeholders

Council appears to be committed to strong engagement with the local business community. It is committed to attracting more businesses, but acknowledges this is difficult. The Council recognises the need to be connected regionally where possible.

Regional initiatives, especially roading initiatives and land use strategies, have been identified to assist in making the Upper Hutt community an attractive place to live and work. However, business leaders report that there is some discrepancy between desire and practice. A genuine intent is displayed by the Mayor, councillors and the Chief Executive, but some staff seem to be more focussed on adhering to processes and practices in a formal and strict sense. This may indicate that some operational staff are yet to embrace a community-centric *modus operandi*.

Strengths

The need for a meaningful relationship with Maori/iwi is recognised.

Council makes good use of facilities such as *Expressions*, the art gallery and sports and recreation facilities. It is looking to add to its community connections through re-development of the library campus.

A strong commitment to effective communication with the community.

Areas for improvement

Relationships with Māori/iwi have been historically dormant. A genuine sense of commitment is starting to emerge to which Council needs to respond to.

The Council and staff need to be consistent and have a higher level of responsiveness when dealing with economic and business initiatives.

Development of a social media strategy and policy, and refreshment of the communications and engagement strategy, to provide a more cohesive and consistent means of communicating with the community.

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