

Equity and Inclusion Policy

Introduction

Te Haumako Te Whitingia Strengthening Communities Together Strategy 2022 details the Council's commitment to building inclusive, safe, resilient and connected communities. The Strategy contains four pou/pillars:

- **People** The city actively promotes a culture of equity by valuing diversity and fostering inclusion across communities and generations.
- **Place** We help build connections between communities and their places and spaces to foster a sense of local identity, shared experience and stewardship.
- **Participation** Residents and groups in the wider community are socially and actively engaged and able to initiate and influence decisions that affect their lives.
- **Preparedness** People feel safe in their communities and neighbourhoods and work together to understand, adapt and thrive in the context of change and disruption.

In adopting Te Haumako Te Whitingia Strengthening Communities Together Strategy, the Council agreed to a review of several community-facing policies, with the intention that these policies would be incorporated into an overarching Equity and Inclusion Policy. The principles of these policies remain and are actioned through Council's Te Haumako Te Whitingia Strengthening Communities Together Strategy, Council's Multicultural Strategy 2017, and this policy statement.

Implementation and monitoring

The Equity and Inclusion Policy is a policy framework. Policy frameworks provide a high-level statement of intent and influence how and what Council activities are delivered. This policy is supported by strategies, plans and programmes of work to ensure that the Council's commitments are implemented and maintained.

The Policy will be implemented, and progress and impact will be monitored and reported on, as part of the Strengthening Communities Together programme of work.

Definitions

Equity

Equality means each individual or group of people is given the same resources or opportunities. Equity recognises that each person has different circumstances and allocates the exact resources and opportunities needed to reach an equal outcome.

People should have equity, regardless of age, gender, disability, ethnicity, culture, faiths, geographical location, sexual orientation, neurodiversity or socio-economic status.

Inclusion

The practice or policy of providing equitable access to opportunities and resources for people who might otherwise be excluded or marginalised, such as those who have physical, hidden, or mental disabilities and members of other minority and disadvantaged groups.

Accessibility

People have equitable access to the physical environment, information, communication, participation and Council services.

Legislation

Te Tiriti o Waitangi is New Zealand's founding document. Te Tiriti requires councils to establish, maintain and improve opportunities for Māori to contribute to local government decision-making processes.

New Zealand Bill of Rights Act 1990 protects the civil and political rights of all New Zealanders. Under this Act, everyone has the right to freedom from discrimination as outlined in the Human Rights Act 1993.

Building Regulations 1992 contains the Building Code for which all building work in New Zealand must comply. The Building Code's access provisions ensure that people with disabilities can carry out normal activities and functions within buildings.

Human Rights Act 1993 protects all people in New Zealand from discriminatory treatment based on personal characteristics, including religion, race, ethnicity, disability, age, and sexual orientation.

Local Government Act 2002 requires councils to consider and promote the social, economic, environmental, and cultural well-being of communities in the present and for the future. When making decisions councils are expected to take account of the diversity of their community, and the community's interests and the interests of the future community.

Purpose

This policy describes the Council's approach to enabling people from all communities and all areas of the city to have equitable access to our services. It recognises Council's responsibility to ensure that decision-making reflects its commitment to foster equity and inclusion for all Christchurch and Banks Peninsula residents.

The Council values the skills and strengths that all residents bring to our city and recognises that some of our residents may face disproportionate disadvantage in accessing Council services. The purpose of the policy is to ensure that equity and inclusion is embedded into everything we do.

The policy is intended to:

- Inform Council decision-making and investment, including grant funding and procurement.
- Apply an equity, access and inclusion lens over all Council services.

Policy Scope

For some of our residents, there may be barriers in accessing information, places, and spaces. There may also be challenges in feeling included and seen in Council decision-making – both at a governance and at an operational level.

The Council recognises and values everyone in our community of any age, gender, disability, ethnicity, culture, faiths, geographical location, neurodiversity, sexual orientation, or socioeconomic status.

This policy applies to the procurement, management, and delivery of Council services. All elected members, employees, volunteers, and third parties/contractors carrying out work on behalf of Council are expected to apply the principles of this policy to their activities and decision-making.

Policy Statement

The Council recognises, values and welcomes the diversity of people living, working and visiting our city. We are committed to promoting equity and tackling social exclusion and discrimination in our community. Social exclusion occurs when people are unable to participate fully in social, cultural, economic and political life, and where society excludes people for a range of reasons.

The Council will strive to achieve a more equitable city where everyone is respected and shares in the city's success and prosperity. The Equity and Inclusion Policy affirms the Council's commitment to this.

We will continue to develop an inclusive and accessible city where diversity is celebrated, human rights are protected, our interdependencies are recognised, and all abilities are valued and developed.

Principles

The Council will have regard to the following seven pillars of inclusion:

- ACCESS – creating barrier-free access to information and places.
- ATTITUDE – celebrating diversity in our city.
- CHOICE – providing inclusive spaces for informed community decision-making and participation.
- COMMUNICATION – examining and improving the way we share information and let people know about opportunities to get involved.
- OPPORTUNITY – enabling active, engaged, and connected communities.
- PARTNERSHIP – working together with mana whenua, stakeholders, NGOs and the community.
- POLICY – detailing our commitment to, and responsibility for, inclusive practices.

Policy Detail

The Council commits to promoting equity and fostering an environment in which equity and inclusion are valued. This policy should guide decision-making and action across the organisation.

This means:

- Understanding and addressing structural exclusion and its impact on delivery of services.

- We will take a collaborative approach to address disproportionate disadvantage in our city, where we can.
- We will treat everyone with dignity and respect their rights and beliefs.
- Being aware of inequalities and barriers to participation and what this means in decision-making.
 - We will build capability across the organisation so that everyone at the Council is aware of inequalities and what this means in their role.
 - We will work to foster an environment for residents to provide feedback in a safe and inclusive way.
 - We will work to measure the wellbeing of our residents in our monitoring and reporting to ensure Council responses reflect the needs and views of the whole community.
- Consistently applying equity and diversity principles in everything we do.
 - We will integrate equity and inclusion principles across the whole of Council.
 - We will actively pursue positive outcomes across our services and programmes.
- Anticipating, identifying and responding to people’s different needs and circumstances.
 - We will utilise inclusive design principles to remove barriers to access to physical spaces, information, and participation.
 - We will ensure easy access to Council services and provide information in formats that suit the needs and preferences of our residents.
- Championing equity and inclusion within the Council to ensure that equitable considerations are integrated in the decision-making and governance of Council.
 - We will use an equity, access and inclusion lens to inform decision-making to avoid discrimination promote inclusion and increase fairness in the city, wherever possible.
 - As an organisation with resource, influence, and authority, using this lens means that our decisions do not create or perpetuate further inequities.

References and related documents

Document	Link
Intersection Design for People with Disabilities 2016	https://ccc.govt.nz/the-council/plans-strategies-policies-and-bylaws/policies/accessibility-policies/intersection-design-for-persons-with-disabilities-policy/
Infrastructure Design Standard 2022	https://ccc.govt.nz/consents-and-licences/construction-requirements/infrastructure-design-standards/download-the-ids/
Parks and Waterways Access Policy 2002	https://ccc.govt.nz/assets/Documents/The-Council/Plans-Strategies-Policies-Bylaws/Policies/ParksAndWaterwaysAccessPolicy2002.pdf

Multicultural Strategy 2017	https://ccc.govt.nz/assets/Documents/The-Council/Plans-Strategies-Policies-Bylaws/Strategies/Multicultural-Strategy.pdf
Te Haumako Te Whitingia Strengthening Communities Together Strategy 2022	https://ccc.govt.nz/assets/Documents/The-Council/Plans-Strategies-Policies-Bylaws/Strategies/Te-Haumako-Te-Whitingia-Strengthening-Communities-Together-Strategy-document-WEB.pdf
New Zealand Disability Strategy 2016–2026	https://www.odi.govt.nz/assets/New-Zealand-Disability-Strategy-files/pdf-nz-disability-strategy-2016.pdf
United Nations Convention on the Rights on Persons with Disabilities	https://social.desa.un.org/issues/disability/crpd/convention-on-the-rights-of-persons-with-disabilities-crpd