Te Haumako; Te Whitingia

Strengthening Communities Together Strategy

Enabling active and connected communities to own their futures

Christchurch
City Council

Accessible formats

This strategy is available in large print and a reader-friendly Word version.

A summary of this strategy is available in Easy Read and has been translated into Te Reo, Farsi, Simplified Chinese, Korean, Nepali, Hindi, Samoan, Russian, Amharic, Tigrinya, Japanese, Dari and Tagalog here: **ccc.govt.nz/the-council/plans-strategies-policies-and-bylaws/ strategies/strengthening-communities-together-strategy**

A New Zealand Sign Language video will be available here: **ccc.govt.nz/the-council/plans-strategies-policies-and-bylaws/ strategies/strengthening-communities-together-strategy**

A PDF downloadable version will be available here: **ccc.govt.nz/the-council/plans-strategies-policies-and-bylaws/ strategies/strengthening-communities-together-strategy**

Te Haumako; Te Whitingia
To enrich; to shine

Mayor's Foreword

Resilient communities adapt through creating innovative approaches to collective governance, seizing unexpected opportunities to decide for themselves how to respond, organising to work with government agencies in new ways, and accepting both the promise and responsibility of joint decision-making. Tephra MCDEM Nov 2012

If we have learned anything from our experience over the past decade, it is that top-down decision-making by governments – be that central government or local government – does nothing to contribute to building social capital, which is the investment capital for building resilience.

When communities come together to plan for their own future, they get to know each other, and they learn to respect and trust each other. They build an appreciation of their collective strengths and what they need to work on. Planning together with diverse views brought to the table inevitably requires compromise. And it means there will be occasions where authority needs to be challenged.

It's as easy as A B C D – asset based community development – a community will always start with its strengths, whereas governments and councils seemed stuck on starting with deficits, they focus on what they can do for the community. Starting with the community's strengths is a much better approach and provides the foundation for a stronger relationship and the development of a true partnership.

Grants-based giving needs to be strengths-based to support capacity building. Council has come to the view that to help communities become more resilient, we need to partner with them – and that means we must be willing to give up doing some of the things we have traditionally done for communities and enter into new arrangements to support the community doing things for themselves.

A significant number of submissions on the last Long Term Plan picked up on this, with communities offering more to the city than they were asking from Council by way of financial contribution. This is why we have been reviewing our community grant funding to better align with our key strategies, goals and objectives – moving from a transactional funding model to a transformative partnership approach.

Finally, it is by working with our communities to help build social capital/cohesion that we reduce the risk of isolation and fear. We know how damaging these are. Diversity is our strength, and we need to ensure we support that in every way we can. Connected and active communities are at the heart of who we are as a city. This strategy is about how we make that commitment real.

**Lianne Dalziel**
Mayor, Christchurch

Whiria ngā whenu o ngā papa, honoa ki te maurua tāukiuki

Bind together the strands of each mat and join together with the seams of respect and reciprocity

This whakataukī sums up our mutual commitment, with Ngāi Tahu Papatipu Rūnanga, to a governing partnership relationship based on understanding and respect. This partnership commits us to working together to improve social, economic, environmental and cultural wellbeing for all and aligns to our commitment to Te Tiriti o Waitangi as a framework for all.

Te Hononga: The primary relationship
Council and Mana whenua
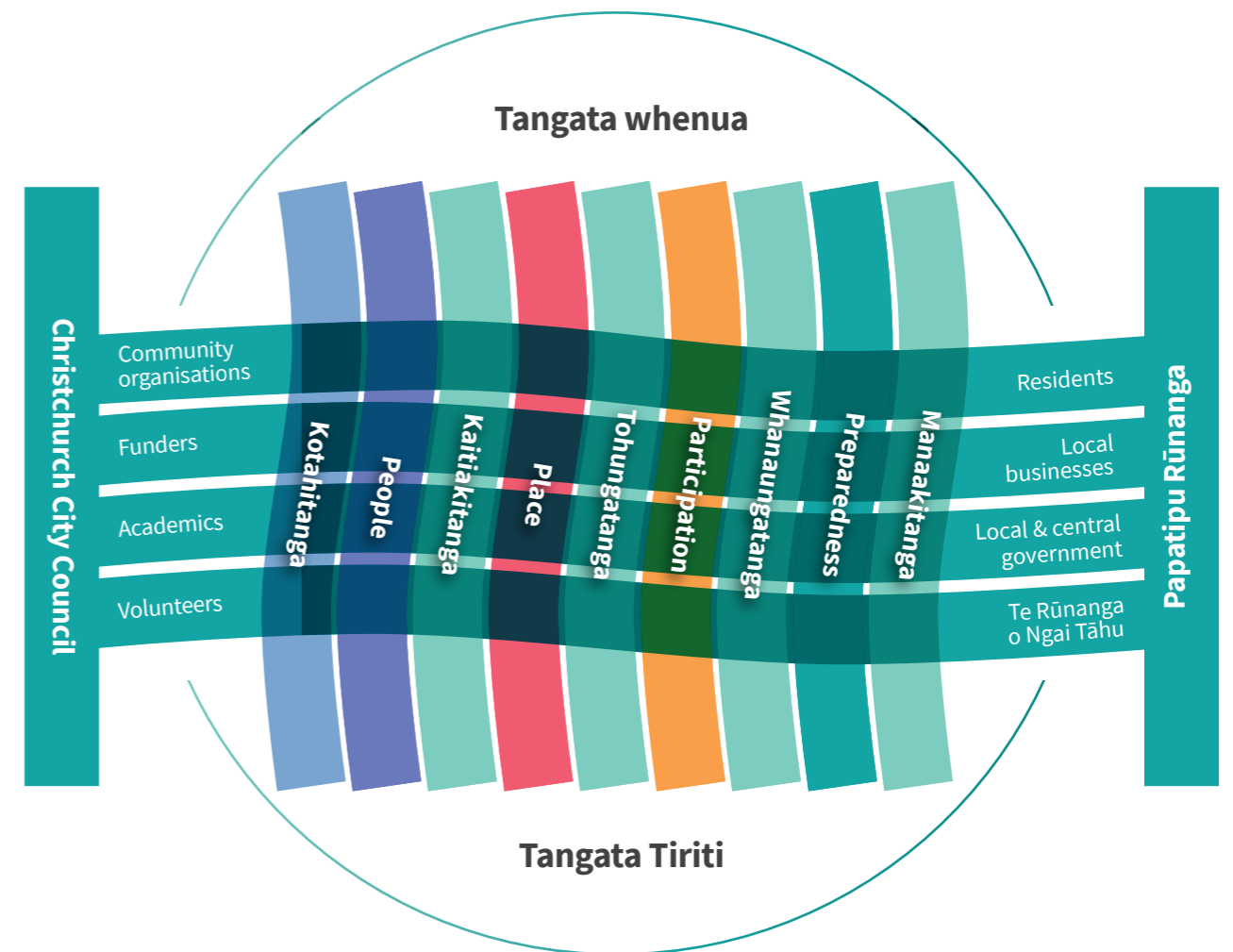
This design depicts the main components essential to strengthening communities.

The circle represents all communities with the outer circle representing the bi-cultural partnership that is Te Tiriti o Waitangi (Tangata Whenua or Tangata Tiriti). The heart of the circle is the community. Whether that community is physical, emotional, mental, spiritual or social, we are connected to others with similar interests, beliefs and understandings.

Each of the vertical strands represent the values many of us hold and are interwoven to strengthen our communities, our complexities and our similarities. Communities utilise these strands to connect to each other and to strengthen community.

The two pou (Christchurch City Council and Papatipu Rūnanga) represent the localised partnership underpinned by Te Hononga and Te Tiriti o Waitangi weaving the following core values that are fundamental to creating a strong, effective and nurturing environment.

Whanaungatanga
Fostering and maintaining important relationships within the organisation, within the iwi and within the community.

Manaakitanga
Showing respect, generosity and care for others.

Kaitiakitanga
Stewardship and guardianship of our environment as well as leadership, mentoring, guidance, nurturing, sharing, responsibilities, and external consultation.

Tohungatanga
The preservation and transmission of knowledge and expertise vital to sustain future generations.

Kotahitanga
Unity, togetherness, solidarity and collective action.

Whakarapopoto Matua
Summary

Since the Strengthening Communities Strategy was first launched in 2007, Christchurch and Banks Peninsula has faced significant challenges. These have tested even the strongest of us but have also have been the catalyst for creativity, innovation and collective action. This refreshed strategy builds on our long-term investment in strengthening communities and harnessing new opportunities – together.

Now entitled the Te Haumako Te Whitingia Strengthening Communities Together Strategy, it reflects our continued commitment to building, in partnership with others, inclusive, safe and resilient communities. It contributes to a range of other strategies, plans and partnerships, in particular the Greater Christchurch 2050 Partnership, a broader regional plan created to ensure the wellbeing of our people and the environment over the next 30 years.

In talking with a broad representation of the community throughout the review of the 2007 Strengthening Communities Strategy, we have heard the importance our communities place on equity, diversity, collaboration, being connected to one another and building capability. Residents also value the physical infrastructure the Council provides – parks, libraries, recreation opportunities, transport innovations, aquatic centres, and community facilities – and they want to live in safe and accessible communities. We heard that doing what we say we will is vitally important. The implementation of the strategy, adequately funded and with a regular way of reporting on progress is "where the rubber hits the road".

Our residents also told us that they place great value on the Council's community grant funding. This funding supports voluntary and community-initiated organisations to respond to community needs and aspirations, while increasing opportunities for people to volunteer their time and expertise. Residents would also like to see more regular storytelling about the impact this funding has had on communities.

We alone cannot address the many complex social issues that face our city, but we can bring resources and people together so that collectively we can achieve more. Particularly, we support communities to thrive through bonding, bridging and linking[1], alongside staff and elected members who strive to better understand the communities they serve.

The Strategy:

- Places our role with communities in the context of our responsibilities under the Local Government Act 2002 and our governing partnership with Ngāi Tahu Papatipu Rūnanga;
- Sets out a vision, principles and goals;
- Captures community feedback and identifies priority actions;
- Sets out a framework for implementation, monitoring and reporting over the next 10 years.

We have organised the strategy around four pillars that set out our commitment to working alongside the community over the next 10 years.

Te Pou Tua Tahi: Te Tāngata
Pillar 1: People

The city actively promotes a culture of equity by valuing diversity and fostering inclusion across communities and generations.

Te Pou Tua Rua: Te Whenua
Pillar 2: Place

We support and help build connections between communities and their places and spaces to foster a sense of local identity, shared experience and stewardship.

Te Pou Tua Toru: Te Mahi
Pillar 3: Participation

Residents and groups in the wider community are socially and actively engaged and able to initiate and influence decisions affecting their lives.

Te Pou Tua Whā: Te Takatū
Pillar 4: Preparedness

People feel safe in their communities and neighbourhoods and work together to understand, adapt and thrive in the context of change and disruption.

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[1] See "Our role", *page 12*

Ihirangi **Contents**

Whakataki
Introduction and background

The people of Christchurch and Banks Peninsula have experienced significant disruption over the past 10 years. As the city recovers from the effects of a devastating series of earthquakes, other events such as floods, fires and terror attacks and most recently a pandemic, have added to these stressors. Our communities have navigated house repairs, rebuilds, relocations, school closures, protracted insurance negotiations, employment and business insecurity, trauma, personal loss and uncertainty. Some of us continue to struggle with the effects of the last decade's events.

These collective stressors have also been the catalyst for creativity, community leadership, innovation and collective action across the city and within local communities. We want to build on this and enhance the way we work together through a range of partnerships.

By working together with communities, we can bring resources and people together so that collectively we can address the many complex social issues that face our city and achieve more. By empowering people, we enable them to take action and more responsibility for their communities. Empowerment also motivates and restores faith in the political process; believing we have a real stake in our futures.

In every community, everyone has something to contribute. It's important that we develop and nurture networks that connect our assets and strengths and use them for the greater good. Council helps to make visible values, skills, knowledge within our communities to increase connectedness and build social capital.

When this social capital is activated, residents of all ages and abilities support each other, especially those in greatest need. This may be, keeping in touch with neighbours and increasing opportunities for people to volunteer time to any of the multitude of environmental, cultural, and recreational options available. This can also be anything from buying locally through to monetary donations, discretionary effort and community leadership. When communities connect, diverse strengths are shared, enhancing understanding and growing mutually beneficial exchanges.

As our city grows and changes, so do the needs of our diverse communities, including the most vulnerable amongst us. Our refreshed Te Haumako Te Whitingia Strengthening Communities Together Strategy reflects our ongoing commitment to working alongside the many organisations and networks that help make our communities stronger, more resilient and better connected over the next 10 years and beyond.

Kei te pehea tatou?
How are we doing?

While Christchurch and Banks Peninsula is a relatively prosperous region, not everyone is thriving. We know that the needs of urban and rural communities are unique and we need to plan accordingly. We also acknowledge that some people face barriers to participation and do not feel like valued community members. We know that this contributes to loneliness and isolation. When people's voices are underrepresented in engagement and their contributions at a community level are overlooked this can have high costs for both individuals and families as well as the wider community.

A new way of working is required

Strong, dynamic community engagement is required to ensure we create a safe and welcoming city for everybody. The strength and success of our communities depend on the extent to which people are able to participate and contribute and the extent in which they feel they have agency over the things that are important to them. Council's processes and relationships across the organisation and the communities we serve need to enable this.

A range of latest resident surveys highlight some worrying trends. We have identified some key themes that we will give priority to over the next 5 years to achieve real and sustainable change.

Access and equity	Public safety	Active citizenship	Resilience
Individuals and families living in poverty struggle financially but also forego basic necessities in order to make ends meet. This can exclude people from accessing civic life and local amenities. Poverty is not evenly distributed across Christchurch with those areas most affected having negative effects on people's health and wellbeing at the neighbourhood and community level.	For Christchurch people to thrive, it is essential that our neighbourhoods are safe and accessible, and that residents have the opportunity to access public and community services. A thriving, vibrant central city is also critical to Christchurch's growth but perceptions (and the reality) about anti-social behaviour and safety impact this.	Survey respondents told us they feel disillusioned with Council's community engagement practices. While volunteering overall is decreasing, we see a change from older adults to more youth participants.	Communities are best placed to identify and respond in the most appropriate way to their needs. Our partnerships with NGOs support grass roots developments working in communities. This includes developing skills, exploration of community aspirations, supporting collective action on common goals and increasing cooperation and collaboration with Council.

Access and equity	Public safety	Active citizenship	Resilience
17% of NZ households with children are below this poverty line. (Otago University child poverty monitor 2019). 1 in 4 Pasifika children and 1 in 5 Māori children meet the criteria for material hardship. (Stats NZ 2021) Disabled people reported having less access to emotional and instrumental support from others, and lower levels of trust in other people and in public institutions. (Census 2018)	People are feeling less safe walking alone in their neighbourhoods after dark than in recent years. In 2020, 61% of Christchurch respondents felt safe, compared with 71% in 2010. This is also lower than the national average (65% in 2020). (Quality of Life Survey) People most likely to feel unsafe are people with a disability, non-heterosexual, Māori, people on incomes lower than $30,000 or those over 65. The central city is unsurprisingly deemed safer during the day than after dark. In 2020, 5% of Christchurch respondents felt unsafe in the city centre during the day, compared with 46% after dark. (Quality of Life Survey) Volunteering, at least once a month or more, in the local neighbourhood is 25%, compared to 36% in the wider community. (Life in Christchurch)	Confidence in Council decision-making has fallen over time. In 2020, around 30% of Christchurch respondents had confidence that Council makes decisions in the best interest of the city, down from 53% in 2010. This decrease has also occurred nationally and the 2020 proportion equalled the national average. (Quality of Life Survey, 2020). 24% feel they have no influence on public decision-making and 36% understand how Council decisions are made. (Residents Survey 2020-2021)	Since 2018, residents have become less prepared in case of a natural disaster. Younger people are less prepared than the rest of the population. Between 2018 and 2021, the proportion of residents who had enough water stored for 3 days declined from 70% to 62% (combination of discontinued residents survey question, and Life in Christchurch, 2020) The proportion of residents who had enough food stored for 3 days declined from 87% to 84% between 2018 and 2021. (combination of discontinued residents survey question, and Life in Christchurch, 2020) 46% of respondents are worried or very worried about the impact of climate change on the city's future (Quality of Life Survey, 2020).
We will			
Work to better understand and respond to factors that exclude people from fully participating in their communities and across Council services. We will improve the capture of consistent and relevant data, set clear targets and partner with communities and others to ensure more equitable and inclusive opportunities for all.	Improve community safety, with a specific emphasis on the central city after dark. Encourage community led activities that increase volunteering in local neighbourhoods, supporting the activation of public spaces and places to increase inclusion and a sense of belonging.	Ensure that the community's priorities, values, aspirations and concerns are incorporated at all levels of the organisation through policy development, planning, decision-making, service delivery and review. Improve our engagement processes so people and communities are fully informed and able to authentically shape and influence their futures.	Support and enable communities to respond to the impacts of climate change and emergencies, with a particular emphasis on underrepresented or vulnerable communities.

To Tatou mahi: **Our role**

Under the Local Government Act 2002, all councils must have a *strategic framework (page 18).*
Ours was updated in 2020 and is led by the vision that *Ōtautahi-Christchurch is a city of opportunity for all… open to new ideas, new people and new ways of doing things – a city where anything is possible.*

Te Haumako Te Whitingia Strengthening Communities Together Strategy is central to achieving our overall strategic priorities, with an emphasis on enabling active and connected communities to own their future. The Strategy works to achieve the community outcome of Resilient Communities specifically:

- A strong sense of community
- Active participation in civic life
- Safe and healthy communities
- Celebration of our identity through arts, culture, heritage, sports and recreation
- Valuing the voices of all (including children)

Ōtautahi-Christchurch is a city of opportunity for all… open to new ideas, new people and new ways of doing things – a city where anything is possible.

Staff and elected members work with and have a deep understanding of the communities they serve. Their roles are:

Bonding
Enabling a sense of community within groups and neighbourhoods with shared interests and goals

Bridging
Building strong and productive relationships across organisations, Māori, iwi and other key stakeholders, supporting from behind or leading where appropriate

Linking
Supporting others to access knowledge, resources, influence and opportunity

Capacity building
Providing advice, organisational support, and curating outcomes and learnings

A partnership approach is required to fully achieve this and we commit to working alongside:

Iwi Partners
Within the Christchurch City Council Territorial Authority area is the Tribal Authority of the six Papatipu Rūnanga that make up Ngāi Tahu in Ōtautahi – Christchurch and Te Pātaka o Rākaihautu – Banks Peninsula.

We also commit to strengthening our relationships with other tāngata whenua and iwi entities, including Ngā Mātā Waka, Taura Here groups and our urban marae, Ngā Hau e Whā Multicultural National Marae and Te Whatu Manawa Māoritanga o Rehua Marae.

The Third Sector
Community groups and non-governmental organisations (NGOs) are at the heart of this Strategy. They are the primary means by which people come together to work for the good of communities. Of the more than 14,000 such organisations across New Zealand, 27,000 are registered charities and 10 percent of these have no paid workers[1]. These formal and informal organisations make a significant contribution to the wellbeing of our city and economy. Our collaborations with publicly funded health, recreation and social services encourages stronger communities.

Voluntary sector
Spending time providing services and support to others without financial reward is an example of social connectivity and a way in which people build and maintain social networks. Including the value of unpaid work (calculated at $22.10 per hour), the sector makes a direct contribution, estimated to be $9.51 billion per annum, around 6 percent of the country's Gross Domestic Product.

The public sector (local and central government)
Central government agencies, including academic institutions, play an integral part in building strong communities, often as strategic partners, researchers, and funders, and by translating community needs into policy and services. Local government provides facilities, libraries, parks, transport links and options, recreation centres, events and opportunities for communities to connect and activate places and spaces. Local government also plays a lead role in driving social change through sustainable procurement policies.

Funders, philanthropic organisations, foundations and personal giving
Grant funders provide resources to charitable groups and other third sector organisations who provide programmes and activities to effect change in their own communities. Philanthropic organisations, foundations and personal giving also contribute to the economy. This includes commercial entities that provide pro-bono work or sponsorship. Along with other funders, we are exploring how we can move from an old transactional funding model to a more high-trust, transformational approach, where groups are partners rather than passive recipients of the charitable dollar.

Business Sector
For-profit businesses play an important role in the community, providing opportunities for research and development partnerships, resource sharing, technology and skills and knowledge transfer. A strong capable labour market strengthens the economy, improving people's incomes and life options. Opportunities abound for communities and businesses to work alongside each other where common goals and values align.

Community Boards
Community governance refers to a collaborative approach to decision-making which recognises the need to work in partnership and the value that each partner brings to the process and outcomes. This approach is based on the clear devolution of decision-making to be dealt with at the most local level (the principle of subsidiarity). A key way of shifting some governance responsibility closer to the community is through our community boards. Each board acts as an advocate for the interests of its community. Council staff support community boards to better understand the needs of community and to establish robust, trusted relationships and collaborations.

The Strategy

Te Whakakitenga: **Vision**

Ngā Mātāpono: **Principles and values**

Te Pou: **Pillars**

Te Rautaki: **Strategy alignment**

Te Whakakitenga
Vision

Te Haumako; Te Whitingia – **to enrich; to shine**

Ngā Mātāpono
Principles and values

Ngā Mātāpono – principles and values

- Te Tiriti o Waitangi is New Zealand's founding document
- Our work considers future generations
- We do not act alone – we always look for a partnership approach
- Our relationships are collaborative, trusted and enduring
- We commit to inclusive practices across the whole of Council
- We advocate for and support responses to social injustice and inequities
- People's time, knowledge and skills are valued

Our work will be

- Effective, accurate and evidenced based
- Guided by the needs and aspirations of people in the wider community
- Future focussed and ready us for change and disruption
- Strengths-based: identifying and valuing the assets within our community
- Agile and supportive of creativity, innovation and responses
- Supportive of community-led development, co-design and co-governance principles

Te Pou
Pillars

People
We actively promote a culture of equity by valuing diversity and fostering inclusion across communites and generations.

Place
We support and 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 are able to initiate, influence and make 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.
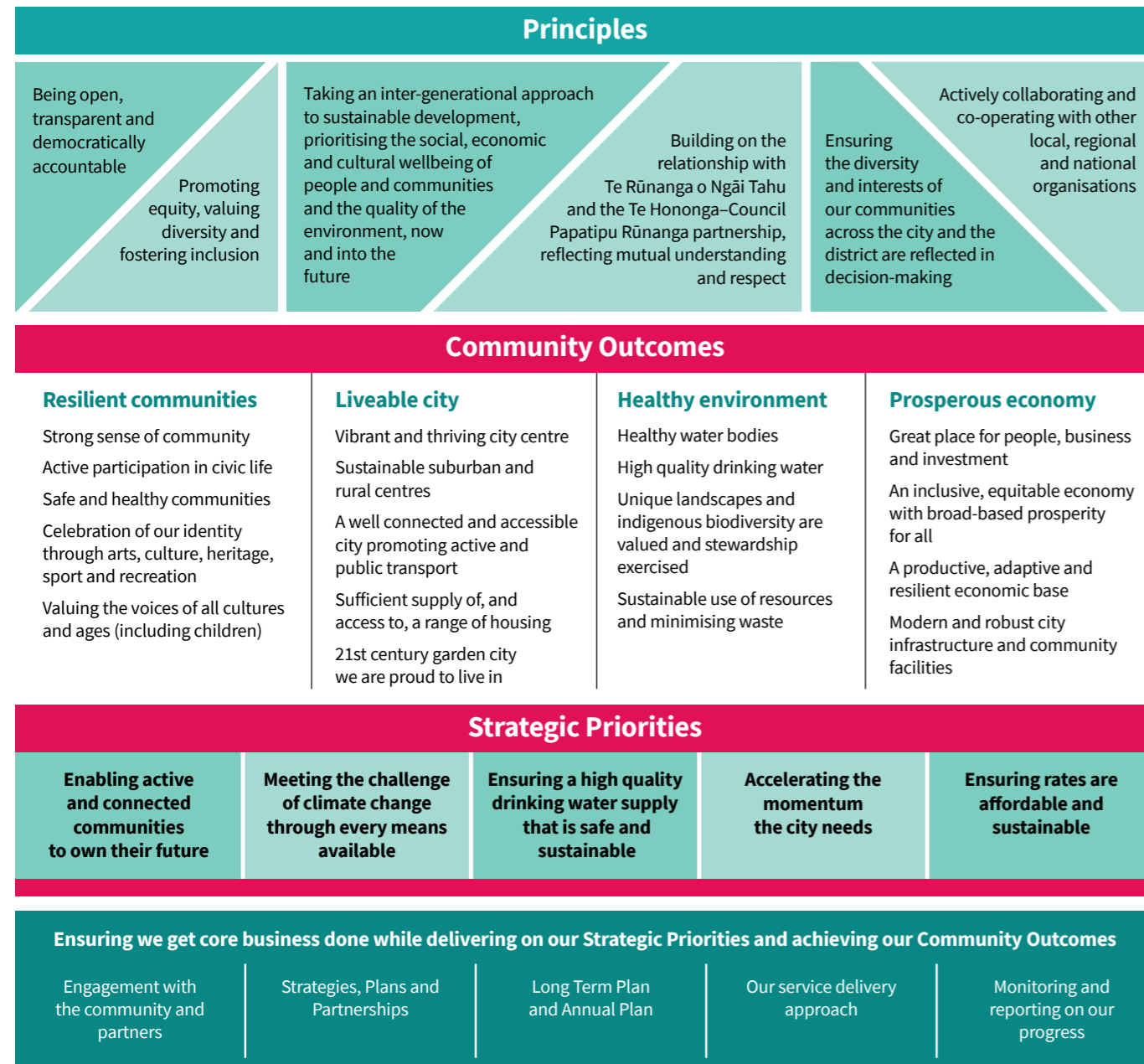
Te Rautaki
Strategy alignment

This strategy is not a stand-alone document. It aligns with Greater Christchurch 2050 in its desire to improve intergenerational wellbeing through the decisions and actions we take today. The strategy anchors a wide range of other cross cutting themes. We remain committed to these related strategies, plans, and partnership agreements across Council, Government and the wider community.

Ōtautahi–Christchurch is a city of opportunity for all
Open to new ideas, new people and new ways of doing things – a city where anything is possible

Principles

Being open, transparent and democratically accountable	Taking an inter-generational approach to sustainable development, prioritising the social, economic and cultural wellbeing of people and communities and the quality of the environment, now and into the future	Ensuring the diversity and interests of our communities across the city and the district are reflected in decision-making	Actively collaborating and co-operating with other local, regional and national organisations
Promoting equity, valuing diversity and fostering inclusion		Building on the relationship with Te Rūnanga o Ngāi Tahu and the Te Hononga–Council Papatipu Rūnanga partnership, reflecting mutual understanding and respect	

Community Outcomes

Resilient communities	Liveable city	Healthy environment	Prosperous economy
Strong sense of community	Vibrant and thriving city centre	Healthy water bodies	Great place for people, business and investment
Active participation in civic life	Sustainable suburban and rural centres	High quality drinking water	An inclusive, equitable economy with broad-based prosperity for all
Safe and healthy communities	A well connected and accessible city promoting active and public transport	Unique landscapes and indigenous biodiversity are valued and stewardship exercised	A productive, adaptive and resilient economic base
Celebration of our identity through arts, culture, heritage, sport and recreation	Sufficient supply of, and access to, a range of housing	Sustainable use of resources and minimising waste	Modern and robust city infrastructure and community facilities
Valuing the voices of all cultures and ages (including children)	21st century garden city we are proud to live in		

Strategic Priorities

Enabling active and connected communities to own their future	Meeting the challenge of climate change through every means available	Ensuring a high quality drinking water supply that is safe and sustainable	Accelerating the momentum the city needs	Ensuring rates are affordable and sustainable

Ensuring we get core business done while delivering on our Strategic Priorities and achieving our Community Outcomes

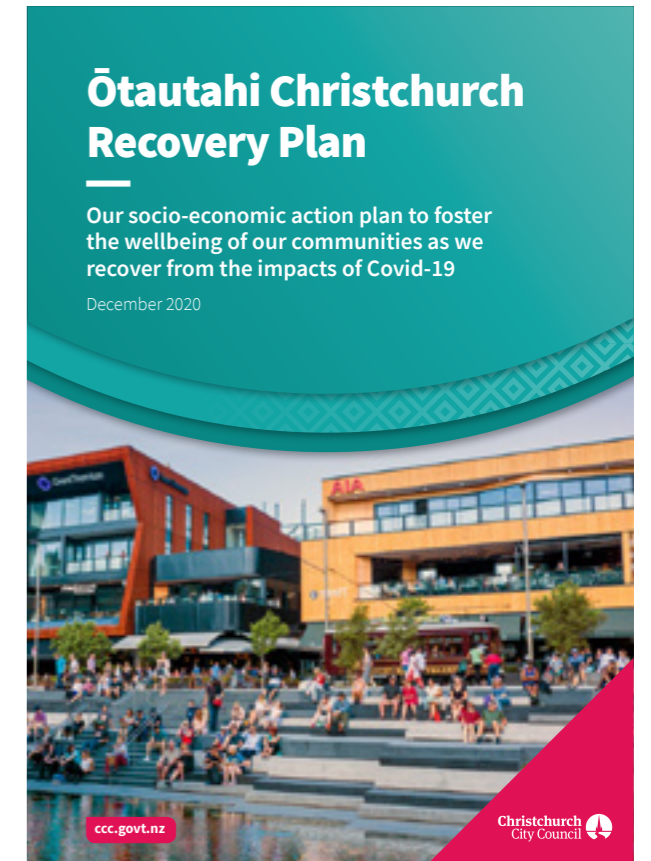| Engagement with the community and partners	Strategies, Plans and Partnerships	Long Term Plan and Annual Plan	Our service delivery approach	Monitoring and reporting on our progress

Council Strategic Framework 2020

Council Long Term Plan

Greater Christchurch 2050
(incorporating Resilient Greater Christchurch)

Ōtautahi-Christchurch Recovery Plan

Related key strategies

People	Waka Toa Ora – Healthy Christchurch	Community Board Plans and Profiles
	Te Rautaki Matawaka Rau	Enabling Good Lives
	Christchurch Multicultural Strategy	Wāhi Tuawhā – Iwi Management Plan
	Youth Action Plan and Memorandum of Understanding with the Christchurch Youth Council	Community Housing Strategy 2021
Place	Central City Plan	Community Facilities Network Plan
	Our Heritage Our Toanga Heritage Strategy	Christchurch Transport Strategic Plan
	Accessibility Charter	Christchurch Youth Friendly Spaces Audit Tool
Participation	Engagement Strategy	Libraries Network Plan
	Physical Sports and Recreation Strategy	Governance Partnership Agreement
	Toi O Tautahi Arts and Creativity Strategy	
Preparedness	Ōtautahi Christchurch Climate Change Resilience Strategy	
	Christchurch Safety Alliance (under development)	

Cross cutting polices: Wellbeing and Equity Policy (amalgamating, youth and children, older persons, disability and other council community facing policies)

Legislation
Local Government Act   Human Rights Act 1993

National and International Strategies
NZ Disability Strategy 2016 – 2026   •   United Nations Convention on the Rights on Persons with Disabilities
Kia Manawanui Aotearoa Mental Health and Wellbeing Strategy
Ministry for Pacific Peoples Strategic Intentions 2019 – 2024   •   Pacific Aotearoa – Lalanga Fou Report (2018)
Better Later Life Strategy NZ   •   National Disaster Resilience Strategy   •   Positive Youth Development Strategy Aotearoa
Road to Zero – National Road Safety Strategy 2020 – 2030   •   United Nations Sustainable Development Goals

Te Pou Tuatahi: Te Tāngata
Pillar 1: People

We actively promote a culture of equity by valuing diversity and fostering inclusion across communities and generations.

> **"Address structural exclusion – understand how and why it happens and respond."** *Elected member*

What you told us

- Prioritise accessibility in all aspects of the community.
- The relationship between Council and Pacific communities needs to be strengthened together.
- Support inclusive and welcoming activities and opportunities for lifelong learning.
- Communicate in a way the community wish to be communicated with.
- People need to see themselves reflected in the city.
- Value the contributions of older people, their families and whānau.
- Accessible services and environments are crucial to the wellbeing of people with disabilities.
- Community groups want us have deeper relationships with them.

We are committed to delivering better services and improving outcomes for everyone. We want to understand and work alongside the community to ensure these services and support systems are accessible and appropriate irrespective of income, age, gender, ability, ethnicity, religion or location.

We recognise the wide range of capacity and capability among communities both geographical in nature and those of interest or identity. We anticipate and respond flexibly to diverse needs, support those who are in greatest need and acknowledge that one size does not fit all - people will guide us in what is most important to them.

Practices that exclude and discriminate contribute to isolation and reduced trust. Where communities are able to respond to injustice and contribute to policies, plans and delivery, the result is a more effective use of resources, improved equity and access.

We will

Develop and enhance relationships with tangata whenua via mana whenua and Te Hononga.

Build, nurture and strengthen relationships with Pacific communities.

Continue to build on the relationships and achievements developed with multi-ethnic and multicultural communities through the Multicultural Strategy – *Our Future Together*.

Harness the strengths of diverse communities and address issues of social exclusion including the digital divide.

Support groups involved in providing access to arts, culture, heritage, recreation, and those who care for the environment.

Facilitate and promote lifelong learning opportunities for all.

Work with others to reduce loneliness and social isolation, with particular focus on intergenerational approaches.

Te Pou Tuarua: Te Whenua
Pillar 2: Place

We support and help build connections between communities and their places and spaces to foster a sense of local identity, shared experience and stewardship.

"Place is about geography – but also about memory and imagination. People make places even as places change people. Places are secured by individual and collective struggle and spirit. Place is where culture is made, where traditions and histories are kept and lost, where identities are created, tested and reshaped over time."
The Power of Place, National Museum of African American History and Culture

What you told us

- You want welcoming, inclusive spaces that are affordable, safe and accessible.
- Local and city-wide events are highly valued.
- The impact of residential intensification on local communities needs to be addressed.
- You want more opportunities for intergenerational activities.
- Public amenities need to be of a design that encourage more connection.
- Community input into the design process is critical.
- We care for our environment.

People intentionally create social interactions and bonds through common interest, aspirations and passion. It is these networks of relationships and goodwill among people that creates sense of community and feeling of connection. It is through sharing public spaces and places, that these bonds are strengthened.

We provide a wide range of public spaces, including libraries, parks, reserves, playgrounds, aquatic centres, heritage, environmental trails, coastal areas, recreation and sports facilities. We support activities and initiatives that create meaningful, life-enhancing connections.

We will

Encourage communities to create and sustain a sense of local identity and ownership.

Work with new and changing communities in both rural and urban areas to build a sense of identity and belonging.

Support the community activation and kaitiakitanga of public places and spaces.

Te Pou Tuatoru: Te Mahi
Pillar 3: Participation

Residents and groups in the wider community are socially and actively engaged and are able to initiate, influence and make decisions that affect their lives.

"It's time to explore a new model of governance, one based on a re-energised civil society that draws on the strength and resourcefulness of people working together in diverse local and regional communities – a localist response." *Future of local government declaration (2017)*

What you told us

- You feel at times that decisions are often predetermined making you question the authenticity of community engagement.
- Information needs to be accessible and easy to understand.
- A lack of personal resources or confidence hinder the ability to engage at times.
- Working with community takes time, relationships and trust are critical.
- There is a lack of awareness about opportunities to engage – we need to tailor engagements better.
- Bring new people into discussions, not just the same people.
- Young people, including children, have valuable contributions to make.
- Council is very difficult to engage with – reduce the red tape and silos.

Democracy requires active citizenship to create governance "of the people, by the people, for the people." Local governments have a responsibility to engage community members in a robust and equitable manner in order to effectively carry out their key functions. We are working towards a co-design approach to actively involve communities in decision-making.

Where communities have well developed skills and influence, they are more able to achieve the changes they want to see that will help improve their quality of life. Such communities are organised, able to maintain membership and participation and empowered to take collective action on the things that matter to them and have the capacity to plan for, implement and sustain change.

Volunteering helps us to build a more cohesive, safer, stronger community, increasing the social network between communities, neighbourhoods and individuals.

We will

Empower and equip residents and groups to participate in decisions affecting their communities and neighbourhoods.

Increase general understanding of the Council's decision-making processes and support people to have their say.

Provide well-informed support and advice to elected members for effective decision making and community engagement.

Increase volunteering opportunities across the Council and the wider community and support the organisations providing such opportunities.

Te Pou Tuawhā: Te Takatū
Pillar 4: Preparedness

People feel safe in their communities and neighbourhoods and work together to understand, adapt and thrive in the context of change and disruption.

> **"The world doesn't change one person at a time. It changes as networks of relationships form among people who discover they share a common cause and vision of what's possible. Community is the answer. Community is the unit of change. The only way we get through difficult times is together."** *Meg Wheatley, Using emergence to take social innovations to scale*

What you told us

- Use research and datasets intentionally to identify and prioritise work.
- Use appropriate information channels (formal and informal).
- Continue to support the community and voluntary sector – grant funding is important.
- Nurture community leadership.
- Address not only the perception of safety but also the reality.
- Communicate change and risks in a timely fashion and reach deeper into local populations.

As we prepare for and adapt to the effects of climate change, community capacity building has clear benefits. Communities have unique insight into the issues that affect them, so their contributions in planning and facilitating responses, recovery, or adaptation are critical.

The preservation of local and city networks, and the consistent contributions of core community group members over long periods, maintains readiness and agility to meet both predicted and unexpected change. Equally important is how we support and enable existing and emerging leadership and new ideas. This is climate resilience.

We will

Work with communities to prepare for and respond to emergencies, and also increase climate resilience and adaptation action.

Support the capacity of the community and voluntary sectors to understand, plan, adapt and respond to risk, disruption and change.

Support neighbourhood and city-wide initiatives aimed at increasing a sense of neighbourliness, safety and wellbeing.

Ngā Āpititanga
Glossary

Co-design
Early input from stakeholders in a design process. People become partners in the process and the delivery.

Co-Governance/Localism
Doing everything at the lowest possible community level and involving government only if absolutely necessary. (This is also known as subsidiarity and decentralisation).

Community Led Planning (CLP)
A step-by-step process that enables every citizen to participate in and contribute to improving the social, economic, environmental and cultural well-being of their local area. It relies on people coming together locally, to research local needs and priorities and to agree on a range of actions that will help to improve their neighbourhood.

Community resilience
The sustained ability of a community to use available resources to respond to, withstand, and recover from adverse situations.

Equity
Ensuring people have what they need, making things fairer so they can reach their full potential.

Pou
Pillar.

Resilience
Adapting well in the face of diversity, trauma, tragedy, threats, or significant sources of stress.

Social capital
Defined as "features of social organisation such as networks, norms, and social trust that facilitate coordination and cooperation for mutual benefit" *(Putman)*. There are three types of social capital – bridging capital, bonding capital and linking capital.

Social cohesion
Achieved by building social capital, increasing mobility and reducing exclusion.

Social exclusion
Where people are unable to participate fully in social, cultural, economic and political life and where society can exclude people for a range of reasons.

Tangata Tiriti
'People of the treaty' refers to all non-Māori citizens of New Zealand.

Te Whenu
Goal, objective.

Te Haumako Te Whitingia
Strengthening Communities
Together Strategy

Implementation Plan
2022-2027

Implementation

Here we outline our priorities for the next five years. While not a comprehensive list of what we do, it highlights activities that will significantly contribute towards achieving our goals and objectives.

Delivering this strategy is a Council-wide endeavour. The strategy aims to influence community outcomes, and will often involve working through complex relationships and interdependencies. We don't act alone, and rely on partnerships and collaboration with key stakeholders and communities across the organisation and city.

Monitoring and reporting

We will measure our performance annually against the objectives of the strategy, using a mix of quantitative metrics and narrative case studies to illustrate outcomes.

We will establish a cross-Council implementation team that will:

- Report to relevant committees and working groups to show how our goals and objectives are achieved at operational levels as and when required.

- Present community board reports to Council bi-monthly, highlighting local progress.

- Produce community newsletters to share activities and highlight success.

- Track survey data directly relevant to the strategy objectives.

- Monitor agreed actions in our joint Health in All Policies work plan with Te Whatu Ora - Health New Zealand.

- Encourage community reporting and storytelling to share best practice and highlight social impact.

- Produce an annual implementation plan and community grant funding report.

- Update the implementation plan in 2026.

Nga waahanga matua: **Priority areas**

As highlighted in the 'How are we doing?', our latest resident surveys highlighted some worrying trends. As a result, we have identified some key themes that we will give particular priority to over the next 5 years to achieve real and sustainable change.

Access and Equity	Public Safety	Active Citizenship	Resilience
We will: Work to better understand and respond to issues that exclude people from fully participating in their communities and across Council services by: • Improving the capture and use of consistent and relevant data • Setting clear targets and milestones • Partnering with communities and others to ensure more equitable and inclusive opportunities for all.	We will: Improve community safety, with a specific emphasis on the central city after dark. Encourage community-led activities that increase volunteering in local neighbourhoods. Support the community activation of public spaces and places to increase a sense of safety, inclusion and belonging.	We will: Improve our engagement practices so people and communities are able to authentically shape and influence their futures by: • Ensuring that the community's priorities, values, aspirations and concerns are incorporated at all levels of the organisation through policy development, planning, • Decision-making, service delivery; and review.	We will: Support and enable communities to respond to the impacts of climate change and emergencies, with a particular emphasis on underrepresented or vulnerable communities.

Te Pou Tuatahi: Te Tāngata
Pillar 1: People

We actively promote a culture of equity by valuing diversity and fostering inclusion across communities and generations.

Objective 1.1: Develop and enhance relationships with tangata whenua via mana whenua and Te Hononga.

Mahinga Actions	Examples
Promote learning and reference to Te Ao Māori in our work across Council and with communities.	• Festivals and events align with Māori dates of significance. • Signage and reports use te reo Māori in a respectful and appropriate way. • Māori values are reflected in all aspects of our key strategies, policies and plans.
Actively contribute to supporting strong and resilient Māoritanga within mana whenua and tangata whenua communities; fostering and maintaining relationships with Māori community providers and networks across the rohe.	• Increased cultural understanding and competency of staff across the organisation. • A range of events, resources and services to support knowledge and understanding of Te Ao Māori. • Recognise Māori cultural celebrations, such as Matariki, in Council's programme of events. • Māori Non-Governmental Organisations (NGOs) supported through Strengthening Communities and other Council grant funding.

Objective 1.2: Build, nurture and strengthen relationships with Pacific communities.

Mahinga Actions	Examples
Provide culturally appropriate channels for Pacific communities to have a voice and to share their culture.	• Increased cultural understanding and competency of staff across the organisation. • The specific characteristics, world views, needs and diversity of each island group are reflected in engagement and influence decision making and service design and delivery. • Community leadership and organisational capability and capacity of Pacific groups is supported.
Actively contribute to building strong and resilient Pacific communities, fostering and maintaining relationships with Pacific groups and networks.	• Groups are supported through Strengthening Communities Funding. • Increased contact between Council and Pacific community groups and networks.

Objective 1.3: Continue to build on the relationships and achievements developed with multi-ethnic and multicultural communities through the Multicultural Strategy – Our Future Together.

Mahinga Actions	Examples
Work with culturally and linguistically diverse (CALD) communities and sector networks to build capability and to promote and celebrate diversity.	• Increased cultural understanding and competency of staff across the organisation. • Multicultural Advisory Group advice provided to Council influences decision making and service delivery. • Community leadership and organisational capacity support are provided. • INFORM network is facilitated. • Events and activities are funded and/or supported. • Annual Diversity and Inclusion report is published. • Staff support and advice is provided to Council's Multicultural Committee.

Objective 1.4: Harness the strengths of diverse communities and address issues of social exclusion.

Mahinga Actions	Examples
Continue to enhance the capacity and aspirations of the youth, disability, older adults, rainbow, and other communities of interest or identity.	• Youth and young children related initiatives are funded and/or supported. • Activities and events for older adults are funded and /or supported. • The principles of the Accessibility Charter are upheld. • Disability Advisory Group (DAG) advice to Council impacts decision making and accessible solutions.
Support and promote community solutions for economic and social exclusion.	• Continued funding and development support to groups and networks focussing on this mahi. • Employment and internship opportunities are equitable.

Objective 1.5: Support groups involved in providing access to arts, culture, heritage, recreation, and those who care for the environment.

Mahinga Actions	Examples
Grant funding enables the delivery of a broad range of opportunities at community board and metropolitan levels.	• Annual funding report. • Celebrate community outcomes via storytelling. • Number of events, activities. • Number of volunteer hours. • Number of people who participated.
Provide accessible information on the opportunities available locally and citywide, through appropriate channels.	• Community Newsletters. • Community networks and forums. • Translated information where appropriate. • Sector networks are supported.

Objective 1.6: Facilitate and promote lifelong learning opportunities for all.

Mahinga Actions	Examples
Encourage active participation and connection to non-formal community-based learning opportunities.	• Activities funded or supported that enhance personal growth, health and well-being, active citizenship. • Support for people to upskill i.e. technological competencies and innovation for older adults. • Engagement with Council's library programmes. • Intergenerational learning opportunities are supported.
Encourage and support opportunities for cross cultural learning and connections.	• See implementation for the Multicultural Strategy.

Objective 1.7: Work with others to reduce loneliness and social isolation, with particular focus on intergenerational approaches.

Mahinga Actions	Examples
Support community initiatives that encourage opportunities for social connections, building friendships and increasing neighbourliness.	• Cross-generational activities where young people and older adults can connect. • Promotion of clubs and hobbies.

Te Pou Tuarua: Te Whenua
Pillar 2: Place

We support and help build connections between communities and their places and spaces to foster a sense of local identity, shared experience and stewardship.

Objective 2.1: Encourage communities to create and sustain a sense of local identity and ownership.

Mahinga Actions	Examples
Enable and support community-led placemaking initiatives.	• Effective activation of placemaking initiatives. • Funding provided. • Number of collaborative relationships we have. • Youth Friendly Spaces Audit tool used for design and review phases.
Work with volunteers to encourage care for their local neighbourhoods.	• Volunteer numbers, public planting days. • Schools in local parks, volunteer numbers from libraries, graffiti team etc. • Physical area cared for.
Support local events that connect people.	• Neighbourhood weeks, local awards, celebrations, our events and festivals. • Local grassroots initiatives supported.
Actively support and advocate for the arts, play, active recreation and sport to enhance wellbeing and community connection and foster regional pride.	• Improved promotion of and participation in community arts, play and sport and recreation opportunities across diverse communities. • Activities funded and supported.

Objective 2.2: Work with new and changing communities in both rural and urban areas to build a sense of belonging.

Mahinga Actions	Examples
Initiate engagement with residents and stakeholders in new and changing communities (including the central city).	• Community development assistance provided. • Local community building events are supported. • Communities are supported to thrive as density increases.
Help establish residents' associations and community groups as requested.	• Number of groups supported including new residents' associations (both formally recognised and informal). • Residents' associations Policy review.
Help welcome and settle new residents.	• Community development advice and support provided.

Objective 2.3: Support the community activation and kaitiakitanga of public places and spaces.

Mahinga Actions	Examples
Support community-led activation and management of facilities and public spaces through a partnership model.	• Community Facilities Network Plan implementation. • Number of community groups managing local Council facilities. • Parks' environmental and community partnership programmes.
Encourage and promote volunteering opportunities.	• Volunteer events promoted on Facebook and website.
Provide development of volunteer programmes to upskill and recognise our volunteers.	• All volunteers recorded in Better Impact database.

Te Pou Tuatoru: Te Mahi
Pillar 3: Participation

Residents and groups in the wider community are socially and actively engaged and are able to initiate, influence and make decisions that affect their lives.

Objective 3.1: Empower and equip residents and groups to participate in decisions affecting their communities and neighbourhoods.

Mahinga Actions	Examples
Ensure mana whenua are represented, as a decision-maker in all areas of mutual interest.	• Papatipu Runanga Committee. • Engagement reporting.
Ensure local government engagement processes are appropriate, with clear pathways to involvement.	• Improve accessibility and transparency across all information channels, including Community Board briefings, engagement and decision making processes. • Utilise diverse media and ways of participation to provide equitable access. • Empower diverse communities to participate in improvements to Community Board processes and through trialling and sharing of innovations. • Increased number and diversity of submissions. • Presentations/deputations to community boards and Council. • Trialling and sharing engagement innovations. • Relevant resident surveys.
Increase participation of children and youth to enable them to influence decision-making; nurture emerging leadership.	• Youth-related initiatives are funded and supported. • Civics training provided.
Stimulate more interest in local democracy, especially electoral participation.	• Presentations/deputations to community boards and Council. • Access "How to" guides developed. • Stimulate more interest in local democracy • Provide more opportunities for communities to direct, engage and influence local decision making; • Council/youth partnerships or collaborations underway.

Objective 3.2: Increase general understanding of Council's decision-making processes and support people to have their say.

Mahinga Actions	Examples
Let people know how they can influence what happens in their communities and how they can have their say.	• Provide timely and accurate information via social media, written material and face to face on how people can provide targeted feedback. • Communities understand the difference between compliance and where they influence.
Let people know what happens to their feedback.	• Clearly explain what decisions are to be made and provide updates at every stage of the process so those providing feedback are aware of all the information influencing decision-makers.

Objective 3.3: Provide well-informed support and advice to staff and elected members for effective decision making and community engagement.

Mahinga Actions	Examples
Document and share community issues and trends.	• A deep understanding of community issues is developed through building trusted relationships. • Community profiles are evidence-based that inform decision-making and actions incorporating equitable contributions. • Council reports and funding recommendations are reflective of the communities' needs and aspirations.
Empower local communities to have greater input into the development and review of Community Board plans	• Community board plans reflect community needs and aspirations. • Resident surveys show improved trust in decision-making.
Staff across council work together more seamlessly to respond to community needs and aspirations.	• Cross unit/team working groups and project teams. • Using local knowledge in planning and delivery. • Examples provided in outcomes reporting.

Objective 3.4: Increase volunteering opportunities across the Council and the wider community and support the organisations providing such opportunities.

Mahinga Actions	Examples
Support and acknowledge volunteers and those managing volunteers.	• Maximise use of the Better Impact database. • Policies for volunteer events and sufficient oversight. • Training and mentorship for those managing volunteers. • Acknowledge and take part in national days of celebration for volunteers.
Promote and direct people to our volunteering opportunities.	• Website, social media, word of mouth, attendance at community forums.
Explore Council skills, share with community groups.	• Corporate Volunteering.

Te Pou Tuawhā: Te Takatū
Pillar 4: Preparedness

People feel safe in their communities and neighbourhoods and work together to understand, adapt and thrive in the context of change and disruption.

Objective 4.1: Work with communities to prepare for and respond to emergencies, and also increase climate resilience and adaptation action.

Mahinga Actions	Examples
Support and resource community approaches to sustainable environmental practices and climate action.	• Community gardens, food resilience, environmental projects are funded and or supported.
Support communities to develop Community Response Plans, working alongside residents' associations, neighbourhood groups, and sector networks.	• Community Response Plans completed. • An established network of community activators share information and approaches. • Rural and isolated communities have plans unique to their particular locales.
Ensure community adaptation plans are developed in key areas across the district impacted by climate change.	• Community plans completed

Objective 4.2: Support the capacity of the community and voluntary sector to understand, plan, adapt and respond to risk, disruption and change.

Mahinga Actions	Examples
Nurture and support new and existing community leadership through capacity building.	• Community succession and sustainability planning. • Community board level or sector based networks and forums supported and/or facilitated' after bullet point one. • Work with the youth and children's sectors to support the development of young leaders.
Work collaboratively with other funders to deliver high trust, community grant funding/ social enterprise and other sector resourcing opportunities.	• Collaboratively funded projects under way. • Council funding review completed to align with strategy. • Explore innovative ways of reducing organisational costs through joint procurement. • Participatory budgeting.
Acknowledge and support community champions and leadership to manage change well.	• Sector and community networks are supported. • Leadership training opportunities provided.

Objective 4.3: Support neighbourhood and city-wide initiatives aimed at increasing a sense of neighbourliness.

Mahinga Actions	Examples
Develop neighbourhood and metropolitan safety partnerships, identifying priority areas for working together and increase perceptions of safety in the Central City.	• Alliance and safety plan developed. • Dashboard monitoring and reporting system in place. • Increased engagement with diverse communities including rainbow, disability, multicultural, youth and older adults. • Residents' initiatives supported.
Deliver our graffiti prevention and removal programme.	• Number of volunteer hours. • 95 percent of requests are responded to within two days. • Graffiti prevention initiatives undertaken.

Christchurch
City Council