

Working shoulder to shoulder

Exploring the skills required for effective public consultation
by collaborative entities



CONTENTS

Introduction	3
Purpose of the guide	4
Scope of the guide	4
Key skills for effective public engagement within a collaborative relationship	5
Understanding and working within the collaborative framework	6
Managing expectations within your local government organisation	8
Engaging or consulting with the public	9
Conclusion	11
Case studies	12
Case study 1: The Canterbury Water Management Strategy	12
Case study 2: Healthy Rivers – Wai Ora – He Rautaki Whakapaipai	14
Case study 3: The Rotorua Te Arawa Lakes Programme	16
Further information	18
Sources of assistance within local government	18
International Association for Public Participation	18
Appendix A: Examples of collaborative or co-governance models in local government	19
Appendix B: General public engagement and consultation considerations	20

INTRODUCTION

Increasingly, local government is moving towards more collaborative and innovative approaches to developing and implementing policy, ranging from informal collaborative agreements through to statutorily driven co-governance entities.

In part, this has arisen from Crown and iwi post-treaty settlement arrangements, where co-governance has been one way in which rangatiratanga has been reclaimed (Hill, 2009¹; Maaka and Flearas, 2005²) and respective Crown-Māori kaitiakitanga roles recognised, and the principles of the Treaty of Waitangi³, as articulated in government discourse, have been implemented. Partnership relationships in respect of tāonga, wāhi tapu and other culturally important sites are key aspects of Treaty agreements and enabling legislation. The Treaty's intent and obligations apply to all branches and levels of government, including in relation to functions, roles and activities delegated to local government.

The move to more local government collaborative and co-governance arrangements is also driven by a range of other factors including:

- The increased devolution of central government responsibilities to local government.
- The assignment of new responsibilities to local government.
- The need for local government to have sufficient capability and capacity to meet its responsibilities.
- New requirements for local government to regularly review arrangements for delivering services.
- Public expectations of increased participation and access to decision-makers.
- The increase in and complexity of “wicked problems⁴” requiring innovative solutions.

As Dodson (2014) notes,

“rather than viewing [collaborative and co-governance arrangements] as ‘solutions to problems’ we must view these arrangements as a starting point for [new or restored] relationships, which will continue to evolve as time passes”⁵.

1 Hill, R.S (2009) Māori and the State: Crown-Māori relations in New Zealand/Aotearoa, 1950-2000. Wellington, NZ: Victoria University Press.

2 Maaka, R., & Flearas, A. (2005) *The politics of indigeneity: Challenging the state in Canada and Aotearoa New Zealand*. Dunedin, NZ: University of Otago Press.

3 The principles of the Treaty of Waitangi, as articulated in government discourse, are: the principle of government; the principle of self-management; the principle of equality; the principle of reasonable co-operation and the principle of redress. Further detailed information about the principles can be found in *The Principles of the Treaty of Waitangi* compiled by Dr Janine Hayward. Link available [here](#)

4 Rittel, Horst W. J.; Melvin M. Webber (1973) Dilemmas in a General Theory of Planning in *Policy Sciences* 4: 155–169.

5 Dodson, Giles (2014) Moving forward, Keeping the Past in Front of Us: Treaty settlements, conservation co-governance and communication. In G Dodson, & E Papoutsake (Eds), *Communication issues in Aotearoa New Zealand: A collection of research essays* (pp62-73), Auckland, New Zealand: Epress Unitec.

THE PURPOSE OF THE GUIDE

The purpose of this guide is to identify specific skills local government requires to undertake public engagement or consultation within the context of a collaborative or co-governance partnership with other groups, organisations or agencies.

Its purpose is also to share the first-hand experiences of local government staff already engaging in this space and to better understand some of the practical issues, opportunities and challenges arising as we and our partners increasingly engage with the public.

SCOPE OF THE GUIDE

For the purposes of this guide, “collaborative relationship” includes a range of collaborative models including co-governance models and less formal arrangements⁶.

Within this guide, the terms public engagement and consultation are used interchangeably⁷.

The *Local Government Act 2002* sets out principles for consultation that all councils must follow when consulting. A number of other *Acts*⁸ also contain specific requirements for engagement or consultation. We must be aware of and adhere to all statutory consultation requirements.

All councils are required by legislation to develop a significance and engagement policy and we are required to comply with our respective council policies.

⁶ Examples of models are contained in the case studies section of this guide and in Appendix A

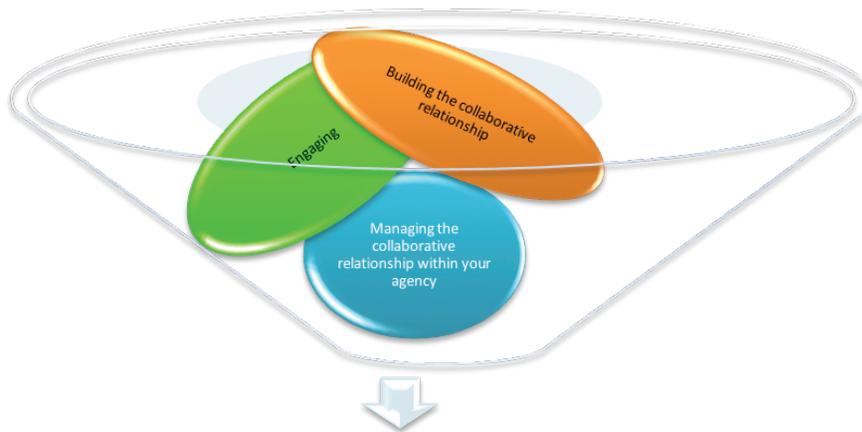
⁷ More discussion about public engagement and consultation is contained in Appendix B: General public engagement and consultation considerations.

⁸ Including the *Resource Management Act 1991*, *Land Transport Management Act 2003*, *Reserves Act 1977*, *Local Government Information and Meetings Act 1987*, *Local Government Ratings Act 2002*, *Local Electoral Act 2001* and *Te Ture Whenua Māori Act 1993*

KEY SKILLS FOR EFFECTIVE PUBLIC ENGAGEMENT WITHIN A COLLABORATIVE RELATIONSHIP

The primary focus of the guide is on identifying the specific skills we require for managing and supporting collaborative relationships. The reason for this is simple – building and maintaining effective collaborative relationships is essential for any activity undertaken by a collaborative entity. If not done well, it can jeopardise any public engagement or consultation.

The guide also focuses on managing the collaborative relationship within your own agency and on identifying specific skills needed when engaging with the public as part of the collaborative entity.



We also need to think closely about the individual parts of those processes and how they fit together. If one cog in the framework doesn't fit well with the others, it can jeopardise the ability to undertake effective public engagement.



In addition to a greater focus on communication and relationship management skills, we also need to be aware of how the values, objectives and world view of our home organisation may differ from that of the collaborative partnership. These differences can affect not just what we do, but how and why we do it.

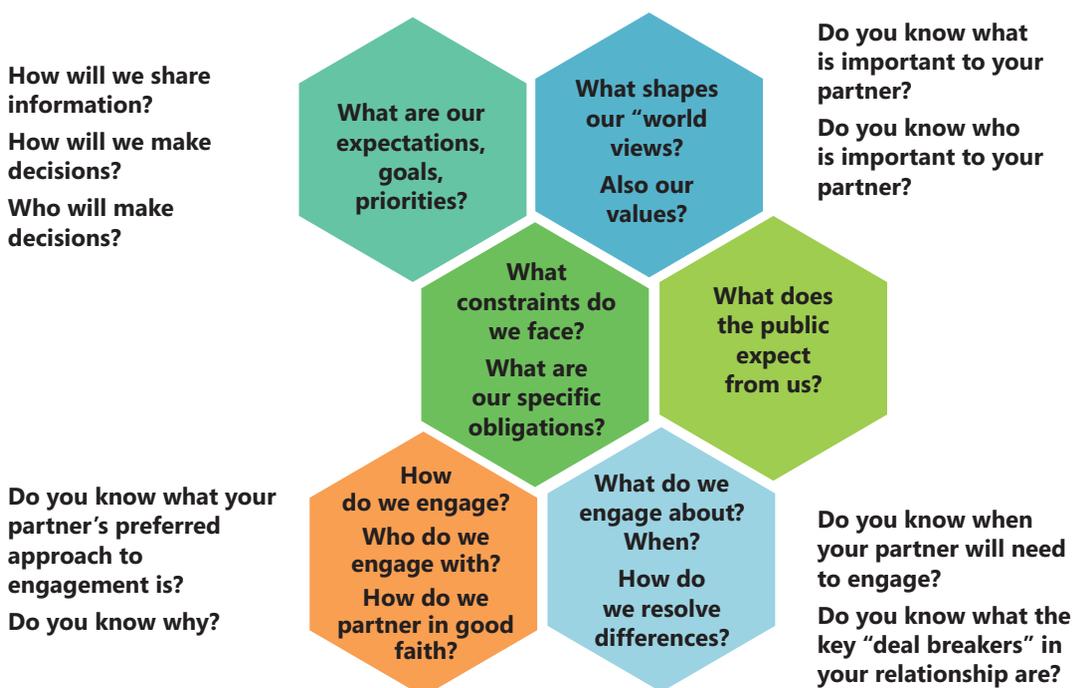
The skills required to engage with the public within collaborative arrangements relate to:

- **Understanding and working within the collaborative framework.** This includes understanding the “world views” of the individual partners, the history of the issue/s, technical knowledge (including any information asymmetries) and how these might impact on the collaborative partnership. It also includes both your day to day responsibilities within the collaborative entity as well how to grow and maintain the collaborative partnership.
- **Managing expectations within your local government organisation.** This includes managing dual and potentially conflicting obligations, accountabilities, and responsibilities to both the collaborative partnership and your local government employer.
- **Engaging or consulting with the public.** This primarily focuses on identifying “best fit” consultation and engagement approaches. This may involve considering roles, responsibilities and how to manage any potential problems that may arise. For example, what aspects of those issues get played out in public forums, and which are resolved within the collaborative relationship? It may also include how to reconcile or manage different interpretations of what the public contributes during the consultation.

Understanding and working within the collaborative framework

An effective collaborative relationship is a necessary foundation for any shared work plan or programme, including a public consultation project. A poor relationship can present a risk to achieving the project and programme objectives. It is important that parties to the collaborative relationship have effective relationship management skills to support the work programme.

So, it’s important to start by thinking of some of the “big issues” about the collaborative relationship upfront.



It’s important to ensure you have a shared understanding of how to manage some of these issues and put strategies in place to support shared understanding. For example, thinking about how you may manage information, what would the impact be if you were working with different information? How might that affect the engagement? And how can you make sure you have the same understanding of that information? One example we heard about involved a council

setting up a shared cloud Dropbox for the collaborative partnership so the partners had a real-time online shared collaboration space.

It's also useful to think about how you individually and collaboratively document the evolving collaboration; what records you keep of key decisions, progress across the projects or initiatives and where those are stored. Will you want to have that sort of information at your fingertips? Or are you happy to have it available only as you require it?

As noted in the accompanying case studies, we'll also need a healthy dose of personal resilience.

"Staff working in collaborative groups such as the Stakeholder Advisory Group are put in particularly high pressure environments. They need to have the maturity and mind-set to be able to take criticism regularly and deal with conflict. There have been examples where staff haven't dealt well with these situations. Because these situations are isolated they tend not to have a direct impact on the programme itself but they do affect staff morale. Is it important that staff are not put into positions where they are subject to criticism or attempted undermining, where they don't have the skills to handle that?"

The Rotorua Te Arawa Lakes Programme Case Study
– Bay of Plenty Regional Council (2015)

It also means we need to consider our own behaviour within the collaborative relationship quite carefully as our impact can be significant.

"[The people we selected to be members of the Collaborative Stakeholder Group] are identified as having emotional intelligence, being able to work well in teams and have the ability to strategically influence decision makes . . . also important is the ability to facilitate complex community people and relationship interactions by working across boundaries."

Canterbury Water Management Strategy Case Study
– Environment Canterbury (2015)

You may also need to think about how you work skilfully across boundaries and operate in the "grey areas" where there is no clear guidance about what to do and how to do it. This might involve you exercising judgement about how best to handle more complex issues including:

- Recognising and managing risks when things go wrong or partners are no longer committed or face constraints.
- Actively managing conflicts of interest, in particular understanding and managing horizontal accountability i.e. obligations between partners, with vertical accountability i.e. obligations to the establishing party and any collective obligations i.e. to the public.
- Being able to develop, agree and apply both formal and informal 'rules of engagement' within the collaborative relationship i.e. one of the principles of Te Waihora Co-governance agreement is that they approach all material engagement with other stakeholders standing "shoulder to shoulder/pakahiwi ki pakahiwi"⁹.
- Strategic agility; being able to identify "hot priorities", through intelligence or environmental scanning skills.
- Being able to develop operational protocols that are consistent with local government agencies and the partner organisation's requirements.

⁹ From Te Waihora Co-governance agreement (Te Waihora Management Board, Te Runanga o Ngai Tahu, and Canterbury Regional Council)

You will also have a crucial role in securing other resources from your organisation for public engagement activities and understand how to leverage the available resources for best effect but you may need to also act as a “gatekeeper” of scarce resources, too. For example, this might include making decisions about your partner’s access to training or capability building provided by your organisation or about how much effort you put into building your partner’s capability or building continuous improvement practices within the collaborative entity.

As well as thinking about your own input and your organisation’s input, it’s really important to consider what you can do to ensure continuity throughout the life-span of the collaborative relationship. This might mean thinking carefully upfront about who gets allocated to manage the collaborative relationship, how staff changes are managed and what processes are in place to manage effective hand-overs between staff.

While there might be benefits in rotating staff into the collaborative relationship, for example ensuring a stream of “fresh ideas and approaches”, there is also the potential for it to impact adversely on the relationship and there is a risk of specific tasks or activities falling through the gaps or being under-resourced during transitions, particularly as we come up to speed with our new roles.

The pay-offs for ensuring effective collaboration can be high and impact directly on the level of both public engagement and public buy-in to key decisions as noted in one of the accompanying case studies.

“The strategy...signified a shift from often-adversarial management of water to a collaborative, locally-driven process aiming for improved environmental, cultural, economic and social outcomes . . . Without expertise in collaborative process, [the Canterbury Water Management Strategy] would have reverted to a more usual plan process, and would not have the same level of community support that it now receives. The planning framework might be in place but not necessarily with community support for its outcomes.”

Canterbury Water Management Strategy Case Study
– Environment Canterbury (2015)

Managing expectations within your local government organisation

If we’re standing within the collaborative relationship wearing two hats, that of the relationship and that of our own organisation, sooner or later we will face some challenges in managing those dual perspectives and roles. We’ll need to decide which hat to wear and when, and be clear about why we’re making those choices. This will require us to have a degree of comfort working with and shaping an emerging set of norms, roles and values and good conflict management and negotiation skills as well as having good judgement about how to meet the needs of both organisations. For example, we may need to recognise when we should discard “council think” or the “council way of doing things” in favour of developing a more effective collaborative partnership? What would that mean for our own organisation? How would we manage the risks?

You will need to be able to effectively manage the dual relationships; the responsibilities and obligations to the collaborative arrangement and to your local government organisation. Key skills for this include relationship management, political awareness and risk management.



More specifically, you might want to think about how you will be able to assess potential gains and risks from collaborative processes and explain them in ways which will be understandable and acceptable to different audiences (for example to key stakeholders, the public, peers, managers, councillors, CCOs).

You will also need to have a solid understanding of your own organisation's risk management practices and how you go about identifying any new risks that may arise. Risks may occur within the collaborative relationship or as part of consulting or engaging with the public.

You will need to know your own internal stakeholders well enough to understand how they might react to any loss of control or probity issues that might arise and you will need to take steps to mitigate those issues. Thinking about relationship management, what would give your key internal stakeholders comfort about the work of the collaborative relationship? This might include you being able to provide clear advice on how the needs of the local government agency and the collaborative partnership can be balanced, including where and how trade-offs can be made. Or, it might include operating a "no surprises" approach to reporting, managing budgets and managing media issues.

Engaging or consulting with the public

Before moving on to consider the skills specifically required for collaborative relationships, it is important to think about what skills we need for public engagement and consultation more generally, as well as how we might build on these. The Rotorua Te Arawa Lakes Programme case study in this guide demonstrates the complexity of consultation, even without the added layers of operating within a collaborative framework:

Skills required include the ability to transfer complex . . . information so it can be understood across a wide range of people in the community, and be understood and accepted. It is not only the science behind a problem that is complex, potential and chosen solutions are complex not only from a scientific perspective, but from economic, social and cultural perspectives also. This requires that staff have the skills and time to understand the problem and solutions, and they have the ability and tools to communicate them in a way that can be understood and accepted by those they are talking to . . . Communications resources and staff who understand the political environment are critical to managing key risks of the programme."

Rotorua Te Arawa Lakes Programme Case Study
– Bay of Plenty Regional Council (2015)

A checklist of general engagement issues is attached in Appendix B.

So, what are the issues that arise solely out of the nature of the collaborative relationship that we need to take into account when undertaking public engagement? Largely, they all connect back to how the three cogs we've seen earlier in the guide fit together.



What function does consultation play within the collaborative context? Is it the same as within local government? If not, how will we manage that?

What impact might it have? Do we understand our partner's "world views" and what these might mean for who we engage with, when and how we engage and what our partner's preferred engagement approaches will be? Are we open to a wider range of engagement techniques and methods?

Can we identify options to effectively integrate our partner's world views and preferred engagement approaches with ours? If not, do we know how to work towards establishing new norms for the collaborative relationship?

Do we know how to integrate each partner's and the collaborative working group's values, cultures and practices into customer facing and quality tools?

Do we have the right skill level of project planning and management capability - particularly given the layers of complexity arising from both the relationship and the engagement activity?

What sort of influencing and advocacy skills do we need to achieve the collaborative consultation goals? Do we have the necessary level of expertise? Do we influence in the same way within the collaborative relationship as within local government? How are our audiences different?

Do we have sufficient expertise within the collaborative relationship to understand how to:

- Plan work programmes effectively?
- Identify and manage dependencies?
- Manage budgets? And resources?
- Identify implementation issues?
- Fit into various roles and take on various responsibilities?
- Comply with legal and policy requirements?
- Identify constraints and manage risks?

CONCLUSION

There are a range of additional steps we could take to better support effective public engagement within our collaborative frameworks. We could for example:

- Develop a pool of case studies to share, grow and support good consultation and engagement practice.
- Promote and support membership of professional engagement and consultation bodies such as IAP2.

But in doing so, we need to remember that “rather than viewing [collaborative and co-governance arrangements] as ‘solutions to problems’ we must view these arrangements as a starting point for [new or restored] relationships, which will continue to evolve as time passes”¹⁰.

¹⁰ Dodson, Giles (2014) Moving forward, Keeping the Past in Front of Us: Treaty settlements, conservation co-governance and communication. In G Dodson, & E Papoutsake (Eds), *Communication issues in Aotearoa New Zealand: A collection of research essays* (pp62-73), Auckland, New Zealand: Epress Unitec.

CASE STUDIES

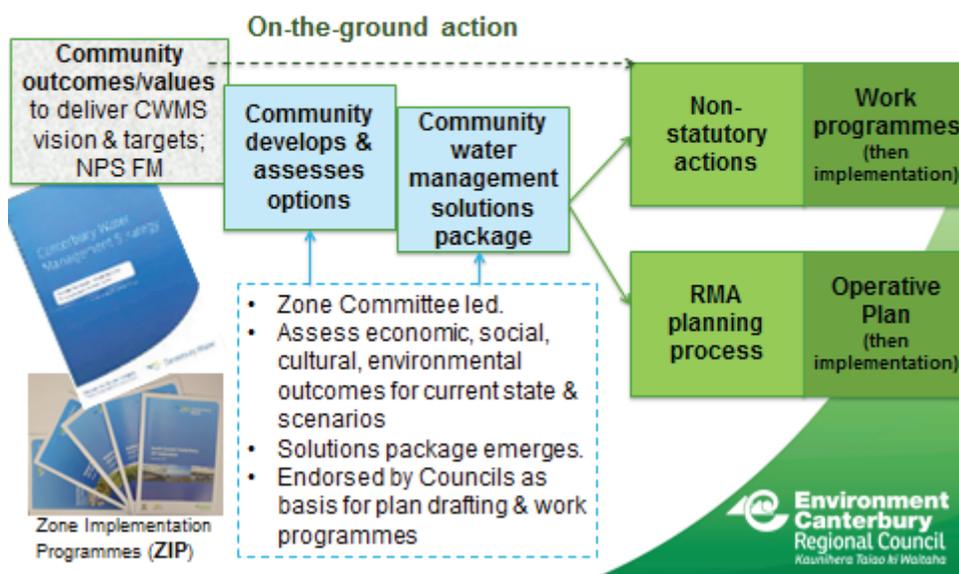
Case study 1: The Canterbury Water Management Strategy¹¹

What is the Canterbury Water Management project?

In 2009, the Canterbury Water Management Strategy (CWMS) was agreed to by the Canterbury Mayoral Forum and Ngāi Tahu. It signified a shift from often-adversarial management of water to a collaborative, locally driven process aiming for improved environmental, cultural, economic and social outcomes. The 2009 document sought progress in 10 areas – ecosystem health/biodiversity, braided rivers, kaitiakitanga, drinking water, recreational and amenity opportunities, water use efficiency, irrigated land area, energy security and efficiency, regional and national economies, and environment limits – and set targets in each of these for 2015, 2020 and 2040.

Ten catchment-based zone committees have the purpose of facilitating community engagement to develop and review programmes of work to give effect to the CWMS targets locally. The zone committees are joint committees of the district or city council and Environment Canterbury, and comprise members from each of the councils and the rūnanga with interests in that zone, together with four to seven appointed community members. The committee is asked to “Facilitate community involvement in the development, implementation, review and updating of a Zone Implementation Programme that gives effect to the Canterbury Water Management Strategy in their Zone.” The Zone Committees lead extensive community engagement and makes recommendations to the councils on RMA plan provisions, work programmes, partnership actions, and on infrastructure.

CWMS Collaborative Community Process



¹¹ Information provided by Environment Canterbury

What were the skills required?

Environment Canterbury employs six trained facilitators to run the committees. In addition, two tangata whenua facilitators focus on supporting manawhenua involvement. The facilitators are essential for helping committees to work together and find a common vision, for building consensus, for ensuring progress towards the targets is made in each zone, for organising meetings, field-trips and working groups, and for liaising with other Environment Canterbury staff, district/city council staff and agencies.

The community process has also required substantial change in the way planners and scientists work, particularly when committees (and the community in the zone) go through the process of setting environmental limits as required by the National Policy Statement – Freshwater Management. Essential skills include information presentation, farm systems expertise, mediation, and cross-disciplinary thinking. Environment Canterbury's uses cross-disciplinary teams of a planner, a scientist, a community engagement person, someone with links to rūnanga and a facilitator. Increasingly district council staff are also participating in these teams.

Without those skills

Without expertise in collaborative processes, the CWMS would have reverted to a more usual plan process, and would not have the same level of community support that it now receives. The planning framework might be in place but not necessarily with community support for its outcomes. We had to adjust our approach to science communication, dealing with manawhenua, and the inclusion of all parts of the farming community.

Staff response

Environment Canterbury staff have responded incredibly well to the need to do things differently. There was very clear communication about the need to change. Some staff left.

An Environment Canterbury Commissioner sits on each zone committee and they have demanded a community-focused approach by staff.

Operational staff, particularly those involved in consents, compliance and enforcement, have been more difficult to bring into the philosophy of the CWMS, and we are still tripping up with our communities over consenting and compliance issues.

Soon after the CWMS was introduced, Environment Canterbury staff experienced both a high-profile change in governance and a major earthquake. Both of those factors meant change was inevitable.

What could have been improved?

The CWMS has been a learning process for the whole Canterbury community.

- Resourcing issues have been and continue to be a huge challenge. Once a community is engaged they expect action. The skill set that builds community process is not the best skill set to communicate resourcing constraints.
- Possibly starting all zone committees within six months was over-ambitious. There are definitely easier times after the first few years.
- The community engagement process has evolved over time and more could have been learnt quicker by looking at processes in other disciplines/locations. The process we have works well in rural communities but has failed to engage in a large urban centre.
- The speed and scale of the CWMS has challenged the capacity of organisations such as Federated Farmers, Fish and Game and Rūnanga. We have not yet worked out how to address this.

Case study 2: Healthy Rivers – Plan for Change/Wai Ora – He Rautaki Whakapaipai¹²

What is the Healthy Rivers project?

The shared goal held by Waikato Regional Council (WRC) and Waikato and Waipa River Iwi for developing the Healthy Rivers – Plan for Change / Wai Ora – He Rautaki Whakapaipai (HRWO) is to jointly recommend that “the council notify a change to the Regional Plan that addresses the adverse effects of discharges in the Waikato and Waipa catchments”. The plan change will provide a platform to implement legislation such as Te Ture Whaimama o Te Awa o Waikato, the Vision and Strategy for Waikato River.

To achieve this, a co-governance arrangement was developed with terms of reference being agreed for the Healthy Rivers Wai Ora committee which was established as a sub-committee of council. Representation on this committee comprises equal numbers of trustees from the five iwi authorities and councillors from WRC. The governance members are supported by Te Rōpū Hautū (TRH) - a steering group of senior staff from iwi and council.

What were the skills required?

Establishment of a Collaborative Stakeholder Group (CSG) involved a lengthy process of consulting with interested sector groups and the wider community leading up to a nomination process. The CSG comprises 25 members who were selected based on a set of criteria that ensured a balance across social, cultural, economic and environmental interests; a demographic and geographic balance; the right mix of skills; established networks and mandate from their sector; and the ability to recognise the difference between those with responsibilities for the statutory decision making process and the role of CSG members.

The project team identified the skills required for collaboration are dependent on, or reflective of, the context and intent of collaboration.

To achieve desirable and acceptable outcomes for management of water, staff have a need for skills in strategic thinking and planning; the ability to influence across all levels of the organisation; awareness of community engagement processes and sensitivities; awareness of Te Ao Māori; project management skills including facilitation, monitoring, reporting and risk management.

These people are identified as having emotional intelligence, being able to work well in teams and have the ability to strategically influence decision makers.

Also important is the ability to facilitate complex community processes by managing people and relationship interactions by working across boundaries identified within the organisation and the diverse community groups involved in the project.

Without those skills

The HRWO project is constantly challenged by the complex nature of relationships and managing expectations between policy staff, community engagement professionals, technical and science experts, iwi and CSG members.

¹² Information provided by Waikato Regional Council

Staff response

Members of staff involved in the project have responded positively to the challenges of working in a collaborative co-governance process. The collaborative process has created a need for new frameworks, tools and skills to be applied with a great deal of flexibility.

Multiple reporting requirements within short timeframes have informed the need for tight project management and regular communication between the project manager and the project sponsor, work-stream leads, the CSG, independent contractors and the technical leaders group.

The complexity of the project has also provided a new level of awareness in relation to the interface between co-management and collaboration, as well as how the collaborative governance approaches work together. The resourcing of collaborative processes and the need for ongoing evaluation will continue to be a focus as these lessons are translated into templates for the future.

Case Study 3: The Rotorua Te Arawa Lakes Programme¹³

What is the Rotorua Te Arawa Lakes Programme?

The Rotorua Te Arawa Lakes Programme is primarily responsible for improving and protecting the water quality of the 12 Rotorua Te Arawa lakes. The programme is a partnership between the Te Arawa Lakes Trust (who own the bed of the lakes, passed back to them as part of their Deed of Settlement with the Crown in 2005), the Bay of Plenty Regional Council and Rotorua Lakes Council (formerly Rotorua District Council). Four of the 12 lakes are subject to a Deed of Funding Agreement with the Crown; these lakes are known as the priority lakes. Essentially the deed means that the Ministry for the Environment funds 50 percent of most of the water quality interventions on the four priority lakes (Rotoiti, Rotomā, Rotoehu and Rotorua). The management, administration and science of the programme is funded by the Bay of Plenty Regional Council. Each lake has a goal Trophic Level Index (water quality indicator) set within the Regional Water and Land Plan. The ultimate goal of the Rotorua Te Arawa Lakes Programme is to sustainably achieve that target Trophic Level Index for each lake. The programme itself was established following Te Arawa's Deed of Settlement with the Crown, a time when algal blooms were a feature of our priority lakes, sparking a public call to action.

The Rotorua Te Arawa Lakes Programme is still operating.

What are the skills required?

Skills required include the ability to transfer complex scientific information so it can be understood across a wide range of people in the community, and be understood and accepted. It is not only the science behind the problem that is complex, but also potential and chosen solutions are complex not only from a scientific perspective, but also from economic, social and cultural perspective. This requires that staff have the skills and time to understand the problem and solutions, and that they have the ability and tools to communicate them in a way that can be understood and accepted by those they are talking to. The community also wants to see independence in the messages being delivered to them about the cause and solutions to water quality, staff working in the programme have to be able to understand not only what the key messages are and how they should be delivered so that the community can understand them, but also who should deliver them so that they will be accepted. Communications resources and staff who understand the political environment are also critical to managing key risks of the programme in this respect.

Negotiation skills have also been critical in setting a nitrogen target and the timing for that to be achieved for Lake Rotorua. The nitrogen input target for Lake Rotorua is now required by the Bay of Plenty Regional Policy Statement; the Oturoa Agreement between Bay of Plenty Regional Council, Federated Farmers and the Lake Rotorua Primary Producers Collective resolved the appeal on this matter and meant the programme could move forward with a solution to water quality in Lake Rotorua. As a result of the target and timing for Lake Rotorua nitrogen reductions being set in the Regional Policy Statement, the Integrated Framework for the Lake Rotorua water quality solution was adopted. The Integrated Framework was recommended by the Lake Rotorua Stakeholder Advisory Group (a group which has been running for three years advising on the Lake Rotorua water quality solution and made up of a variety of stakeholder representatives in the catchment and adopted by the co-governance framework for the Rotorua Te Arawa Lakes Programme. Staff working with the Stakeholder Advisory Group over that time have also had to have the range of skills identified above and below.

¹³ Information provided by Bay of Plenty Regional Council

Without those skills

Staff working in the collaborative groups such as the Stakeholder Advisory Group are put in particularly high pressure environments. They need to have the maturity and mindset to be able to take criticism regularly and deal with conflict. There have been examples where staff haven't dealt well with these situations. Because these situations are isolated they tend not to have a direct impact on the programme itself but they do affect staff morale. It is important that staff are not put in positions where they are subject to criticism or attempted undermining when they don't have the skills or information to handle that. Trained and experienced staff with a good grasp of the subject matter must front these groups.

What could have been improved?

The resourcing required for a truly collaborative process should never be underestimated. A proper plan and resource analysis needs to be developed for the key projects of the programme including a communications plan. The resource requirements need to be understood and then adequately resourced. It is also important to get true community representation on groups and ensure that the people representing large stakeholder groups have the resources to communicate key messages back to the people they represent and equally have avenues available for the people they represent to communicate with them. For a true representative stakeholder group, the costs of representatives participating needs to be covered if it is not part of their paid employment.

FURTHER INFORMATION

Sources of assistance within local government

Some examples of collaborative and co-governance relationships local government is currently involved in are attached as Appendix A to this guide.

Case study contributors have kindly agreed to be available to answer specific questions about public engagement within collaborative frameworks.

- **Helen Creagh:** Rotorua Catchments Manager, Bay of Plenty Regional Council
Ph 0800 884 881 extension 9463
- **Ruth Buckingham:** Manager Social and Economic Science, Waikato Regional Council
Phone (07) 8592751
- **Christina Robb:** Christina.Robb@ecan.govt.nz

A basic checklist of general public engagement and consultation considerations is attached as Appendix B to this guide.

In addition to this guide, SOLGM also has a range of related training courses and materials available at www.solgm.org.nz

IAP2 International Association for Public Participation

IAP2 is an international association seeking to promote and improve the practice of public participation in relation to individuals, governments, institutions, and other entities that affect the public interest in nations throughout the world. IAP2 carries out its mission by organising and conducting activities to:

- Serve the learning needs of members through events, publications and communication technology;
- Advocate for public participation throughout the world;
- Promote a results-oriented research agenda and use research to support educational and advocacy goals;
- Provide technical assistance to improve public participation.

The Australasian website is at www.iap2.org.au It contains details of training, events and has a range a free resources covering a range of public engagement and consultation policies, practices, readings and practical tools.

Appendix A: Examples of co-governance or collaborative relationships in local government

There are different types of co-governance or collaborative models, which may require different types of skill sets and be framed in different ways. Examples of models include:

- **Substitutive models:** primarily replacing local government inputs with inputs from communities.
Example: Waimakariri – You Me We Us
Example: Local Board Planning in Devonport/Takapuna, Auckland
Examples: TCDC and Christchurch “community governance” approaches.
- **Additive models:** adding more user/community inputs to professional inputs or introducing professional support to previous individual self-help or community self-organising groups. The recently established Business Leadership Group in Auckland is a possible example of this. It operates independently of council but council helps to facilitate and acts as an observer.
Example: PNCC Place-making Initiative
- **Statutory models:** imposing specific statutory obligations and responsibilities.
- **Special interest models:** to represent a specific community or interest.
Example: Community Action Plans – Kaipara District Council [p\[insert link\]](#)
Example: Porirua’s Villages Planning Programme
- **Co-governance entities:** where decision-making, accountability, strategic oversight and delivery occur. Examples include the Maniapoto Maori Trust Board Co-governance and Co-Management Agreement in relation to the management of the Waipa River.
- **Co-management entities:** where specific work or activities are organised and implemented. Examples include the Waikato River Authority and Waikato Regional Council’s partnership agreement outlining how they will work together to restore the health of the Waikato River.
- **Special purpose joint projects** including co design, co-delivery, co-evaluation entities. An example is the Auckland Co-Design Lab, a collaborative cross-agency pilot project led by MBIE.
- Relationships arising from MOUs, records of understanding or partnership agreements. An example is the 2010 MOU between Waikato Regional Council and Kiwirail in relation to compliance with the Regional Pest Management Strategy.
- **Less formal ad hoc arrangements.**

Appendix B: General public engagement and consultation considerations

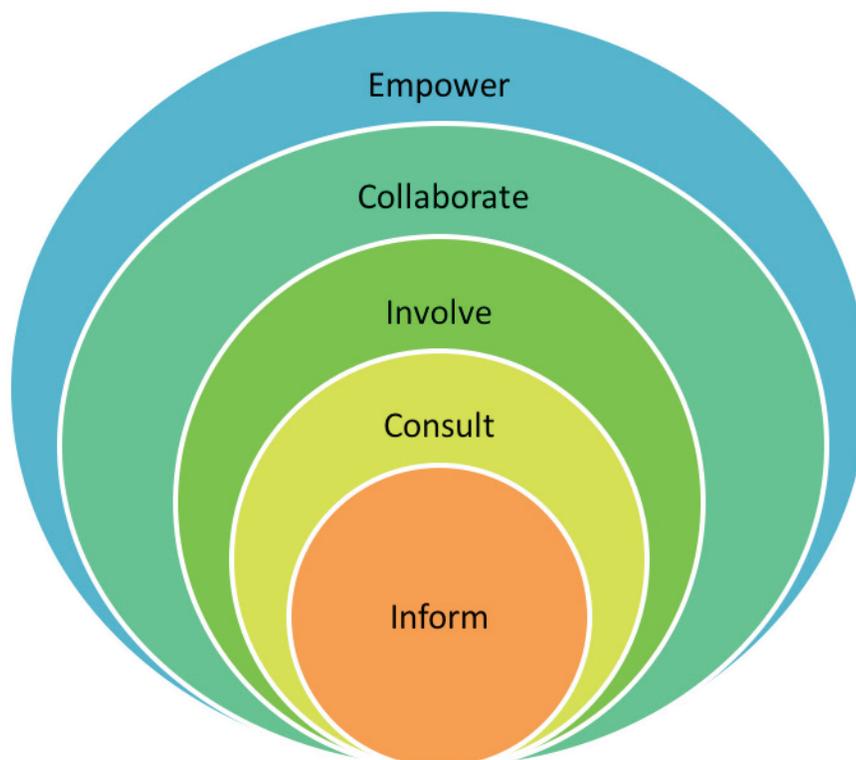
"[We] identified the skills required for collaboration are dependent on, or reflective of, the context and the intent of collaboration."

Wai Ora – He Rautaki Whakapaipai Case Study Waikato Regional Council (2015)

Public consultation and engagement fits across a wide spectrum of activities. Within this guide, public engagement or consultation is used interchangeably but there are clear differences in terms of the way we consult or engage, its purpose and the extent of influence the public has on decision-making.

- **Community engagement:** Collaborative partnership engages with the community (or specific sectors of the community) to understand issues, develop options and solutions and build common understanding.
- **Statutory consultation:** Collaborative partnerships (or partners) consult to receive formal or statutory feedback on options or proposals in adherence to legislative obligations.
- **Opinion related research:** Collaborative partnerships conduct research to develop a representative view of public opinion on issues, problems, potential options and proposals.

This guide applies to all five engagement approaches outlined below.



From: *A Practical Guide to Consultation and Engagement Project Planning* Auckland Council (October 2011)

Distinguishing characteristics of public engagement models					
Type of engagement	Inform	Consult	Involve	Collaborate	Empower
Goal of engagement	To provide the public with balanced and objective information to assist them to understand the problem, alternatives, opportunities and/or solutions.	To obtain public feedback on analysis, alternatives and/or decisions.	To work directly with the public throughout the process to ensure that public concerns and aspirations are consistently understood and considered.	To partner with the public in each aspect of the decision including the development of alternatives and the identification of the preferred solution.	To place final decision making in the hands of the public.
Promise to the public	We will keep you informed.	We will keep you informed, listen to and acknowledge concerns and aspirations, and provide feedback on how public input influenced the decision.	We will work with you to ensure that your concerns and aspirations are directly reflected in the alternatives developed and provide feedback on how public input influenced the decision.	We will look to you for direct advice and innovation in formulating solutions and incorporate your advice and recommendations into decisions to the maximum extent possible.	We will implement what you decide.
Extent of public influence over the decision	Very limited influence on the decision.	Some or significant influence on the decision.	Some or significant influence on the decision.	Some or significant influence on the decision.	100% influence – the community will make the decision.

From: *A Practical Guide to Consultation and Engagement Project Planning* Auckland Council (October 2011)

As well as thinking about the type of engagement we will use, we also need to think about some other key issues including:

- Understanding the consultation requirements under the *Local Government Act* (and other Acts) our partner is subject to and what that means for any joint engagement.
- Understanding engagement and consultation methodology principles and knowing which to select for specific purposes. For example:
 - When do we need to use representative sampling techniques?
 - How best can we access various groups' and individual's views?
 - Which practices fit best in specific stages of the engagement and consultation processes?
 - How can we produce appropriate and fit for purpose background or supporting material for different audiences?

- Do we appreciate the differing impacts of when or which stage of various processes consultation is undertaken? And are we engaging at the right times?
- Ensuring that we design, develop and implement robust quality assurance processes to maintain the integrity of the feedback and accurately evaluate the quality of public input.
- Knowing how to supplement or address information gaps or inadequacies in public consultation processes including testing the information received, identifying biases and more broadly interpreting the information.
- Understanding and practicing principles of “good public participation including moving away from treating engagement and consultation as a compliance issue rather than with a view to improving decision-making, trust or legitimacy. This also includes understanding that legislative consultation requirements are not a “maximum” standard. They set a minimum standard for what we need to do, and how we do it.
- Understanding how to work with changing demographics, increasing ethnic and ideological diversity and growing social inequalities that can sometimes make it more difficult to reach people.
- Thinking carefully about when we involve the public in decision-making processes i.e. after problems and issues, and typically solutions are defined or before.



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