

# **GW - Iwi Relationships in Wellington Region**

## **Introduction**

Greater Wellington Regional Council has a long-standing Charter of Understanding with seven manawhenua Iwi within the Wellington Region. Under the Charter of Understanding each of the manawhenua Iwi has two representatives on the Ara Tahi inter-iwi representative group.

Over the years that Ara Tahi has existed, the relationship between Iwi and Greater Wellington (GW) has strengthened considerably. Members of Ara Tahi - past and present - have contributed their wisdom and expertise to forging this relationship, which has matured into a unique partnership, valued by all participants.

The achievements of Ara Tahi remain as testament to the contributions of these many individuals and will form the basis of ongoing and expanded relationships.

In recent times the Iwi organisations have grown and strengthened and the Council's mandate has also expanded. Over the last year, Iwi representatives and GW have been discussing ways to strengthen the relationship to better reflect these new realities. This has included clarifying the different levels of relationships involved.

The establishment of the Te Upoko Taiao – Natural Resource Plan Committee was the first step in this process. Work has also been undertaken on revising the Charter of Understanding, and clarifying the relationships that GW has with manawhenua Iwi, both collectively through Ara Tahi, and individually.

This paper and the accompanying chart set out the proposed engagement structure between manawhenua Iwi and GW. This proposed structure incorporates and builds on both existing arrangements as well as introducing additional new initiatives.

## **GW Relationships with Regional Iwi as a Collective Group**

### **Ara Tahi Leadership Forum**

The Ara Tahi Leadership Forum will be the primary collective partnership between GW and the manawhenua Iwi of the region. This will essentially be a “rangatira ki rangatira” forum comprising the manawhenua Iwi leadership and similar senior leadership from GW. The proposed Ara Tahi Leadership Forum will:

- identify key regional issues and development opportunities
- agree priorities for action and endorse strategies
- engage with third parties if required.

Agendas will not be confined to natural resource issues, but will encompass any issues deemed relevant by the partners. Meetings will be held as required, but at least bi-annually or annually (the forum will agree on the frequency and timing). Any party to the forum can request agenda items and relevant officials from either Iwi or the Council will develop background papers and/or briefings as required. Meetings of the Ara Tahī Leadership Forum will not be constrained by formal Council standing orders, with the relationship manifest as a less formal dialogue between the partners. For instance, if meetings are held on a marae, the appropriate marae protocol will apply. GW will provide the administrative support for Ara Tahī.

The manawhenua Iwi members of the Ara Tahī Leadership Forum will also be responsible for nominating non-councillor members to Te Upoko Taiao - Natural Resource Plan Committee, as well as other GW standing committees. GW will be able to assist Iwi with managing these selection processes if required.

Over time, as Treaty settlements are finalised between the manawhenua Iwi and the Crown, the relevant post-settlement governance entities will be recognised by GW as the representative organisations of the relevant manawhenua Iwi groups.

### **Te Upoko Taiao – Natural Resource Plan Committee**

This committee is a manifestation of the formal Treaty partnership between GW and manawhenua Iwi in relation to the governance of natural resources. Te Upoko Taiao – Natural Resource Plan Committee provides joint governance of natural resources via the Regional Plans that the committee will develop and monitor. The committee comprises equal representation of non-councillor members (nominated by the Iwi authorities of the Wellington region) and GW councillors. Te Upoko Taiao – Natural Resource Plan Committee gives manawhenua Iwi a strong decision making role in the management of natural resources across the region.

### **Council standing committees**

Each of GW's existing standing committees includes a representative nominated by the collective manawhenua Iwi, ensuring manawhenua input into council policy. These committees meet within the normal GW meeting cycle. The existing Council standing committee structure will be subject to review by the incoming Council following the October elections and, consistent with this process, the manawhenua Iwi members of Ara Tahī will need to confirm their nomination of the Iwi representatives to the Council standing committees following the election of the new Council.

### **Resource management hearings**

Qualified Hearing Commissioners, with expertise in matters of significance to iwi, will continue to be engaged by GW to sit on consent hearings alongside councillors and/or commissioners. This provides for manawhenua views to be included in decisions on resource consent applications regarding the use of natural resources.

### **Issue-based regional Iwi/GW technical working groups**

As outlined above, the Ara Tahi leadership Forum will identify key regional issues and development opportunities, as well as agreeing on priorities for action and endorsing strategies. Where appropriate, GW will establish joint technical working groups between Iwi and GW to progress these and other projects.

### **GW Relationships with Individual Iwi in Wellington region**

Parallel to Ara Tahi as a collective manawhenua/GW leadership forum, it is critical that GW also builds strong relationships with each of the individual manawhenua Iwi groups across the region. While there will be some common issues that can be addressed regionally, many issues and opportunities will be specific to individual Iwi.

#### **Individual Iwi-Council Leadership Groups**

It is proposed that, following each local government election, the GW Chair, local councillor(s) and senior management leadership will meet with the leadership of each manawhenua Iwi group. These meetings will be an opportunity to identify key local issues and priorities for joint action. The number/frequency of other meetings of this group will be agreed between the partners. These forums could also develop or approve programmes and funding to address agreed priorities and opportunities in the rohe. Regular management and operational level meetings between GW staff and Iwi representatives will support these meetings.

#### **Joint management mandated by Treaty Settlements**

In specific places (eg, Parangarahu Lakes, Whitireia Park, and Wairarapa Moana), Treaty settlements have, or are anticipated to, require some form of joint management of specified resources. Providing for these joint management arrangements will involve both governance and operational levels. GW and the relevant Iwi need to work closely together to ensure sustainable arrangements are established for the long-term management of these resources.

#### **Joint operational work by agreement**

In addition to Treaty settlement mandated arrangements, there is significant benefit from manawhenua Iwi and GW working together on a number of levels. This could include integrated research, joint approaches to the management of some specified areas or issues (including when appropriate working with third parties such as DOC or Fish & Game), or a variety of other options, to be decided by the parties from time to time. This work would be undertaken by the kaimahi of the organisations but will be agreed at the policy/governance level by the Individual Iwi-Council leadership groups.

### **Iwi consultants and contractors**

GW will want to contract Iwi or individual consultants with expert knowledge to deliver work in various areas. This will be a commercial arrangement and could include work such as providing Iwi advice on consent applications, fieldwork, or assistance with policy development.

### **Enhanced Cultural and Technical Knowledge and Understanding**

GW senior management has agreed to develop a programme of secondments and internships in partnership with Iwi. The operational details of this programme are currently being developed. The purpose of this programme is to provide opportunities for appropriate people from manawhenua Iwi to gain experience working within GW. This programme will also provide the opportunity to develop technical skills within specific areas of expertise.

These placements could be offered across the entire ambit of GW's functions. The programme will not just be delivered through land-based departments of GW but may include the range of GW activities – eg, transport, planning, finance, harbours, biosecurity etc.

GW would also value the opportunity to second GW staff into manawhenua Iwi organisations.

These secondments would be beneficial for both the Iwi organisations and GW with mutual learning.

GW is also putting together an internal cultural capacity development programme. Manawhenua Iwi will be invited to participate as part of that programme to ensure staff have an appropriate understanding of who our manawhenua Iwi partners are and how they operate.

GW currently provides funding to support manawhenua Iwi participation in a range of natural resource management issues. This includes Iwi capacity funding to support the processing of non-notified resource consents, a contestable Iwi project fund, funding for the existing Ara Tahi inter-iwi representative group and for Iwi participation in Council standing committees. GW intends to review the effectiveness of these funding arrangements to ensure they are delivering the outcomes expected by both manawhenua Iwi and GW as efficiently as possible. Future funding requirements will also be a core consideration for both the Ara Tahi Leadership Forum, as well as the individual Manawhenua Iwi Leadership Forums.