

**RE^A^ITEM Welcoming Communities Update for Community Committees & Boards - January 2022****Author: Aly Thompson, Welcoming Communities Coordinator****Authoriser: Anne McLeod, Manager - Community Development****1. Reason for Report**

This report provides key information to the Committee about the Welcoming Communities programme, the upcoming planned work, and how community representatives may choose to participate and/or support the programme.

**2. Context**

- 2.1 Welcoming Communities is a programme coordinated by Immigration New Zealand that “puts the welcome mat out to newcomers: recent migrants, former refugees and international students.” Rangitīkei’s situation is unique in that Welcoming Communities also extends to domestic migrants, such as our newcomers to Ohakea, the agricultural and horticultural industries, and those anticipated to work in new business developments.
- 2.2 Communities that make newcomers feel welcome are likely to enjoy better social outcomes, and stronger economic growth.
- 2.3 Rangitīkei District Council was successful in applying to join the Welcoming Communities programme in July 2021. The programme now consists of 16 Councils and 11 regions across New Zealand.
- 2.4 The Welcoming Communities Standard identifies eight outcome areas important to creating a welcoming and inclusive environment. These are:
  - Inclusive Leadership
  - Welcoming Communications
  - Equitable Access
  - Connected and Inclusive Communities
  - Economic Development, Business and Employment
  - Civic Engagement and Participation
  - Welcoming Public Spaces
  - Culture and Identity
- 2.5 Each Council prepares a Welcoming Plan that sets out the community’s planned activities, that seek to deliver on the eight outcomes.
- 2.6 Councils can also apply for formal accreditation as a Welcoming Community. Accreditation has the following four stages:
  - Stage 1 — a Committed Welcoming Community
  - Stage 2 — an Established Welcoming Community

- Stage 3 — an Advanced Welcoming Community
  - Stage 4 — an Excelling Welcoming Community
- 2.7 More information about Welcoming Communities, the Welcoming Communities Standard and accreditation can be found on Immigration New Zealand’s website.

<https://www.immigration.govt.nz/about-us/what-we-do/welcoming-communities>

### 3. Project plan & timeline

- 3.1 The project plan for Rangitikei identifies outcomes and outputs over the first 12 months beginning in November 2021, resulting in the development of a Welcoming Plan.
- 3.2 The outcomes of the project plan are as follows:
- Achieve Stage 1 Accreditation
  - Create a Welcoming Communities communication plan
  - Establish a Welcoming Communities advisory group
  - Complete a “stocktake” of the district
  - Develop a Welcoming Plan for Rangitikei
- 3.3 The project plan can be viewed on Council’s website:  
[https://www.rangitikei.govt.nz/files/general/Other/Project-Plan-for-website\\_Welcoming-Communities-Rangitikei\\_2021-22.pdf](https://www.rangitikei.govt.nz/files/general/Other/Project-Plan-for-website_Welcoming-Communities-Rangitikei_2021-22.pdf)

### 4. More information about the Welcoming Communities advisory group

- 4.1 The Welcoming Communities advisory group will play a critical role in guiding the Welcoming Communities Officer, supporting the stocktake process, and decision-making about the final Welcoming Plan.
- 4.2 Representatives from the community, including committee/board members, are invited to self-nominate to be on the advisory group. To keep numbers manageable, not every community committee and board will have a representative on the advisory group, but it is intended to have at least one representative from each town or area in the district, along with representatives of our newcomer communities.
- 4.3 Expressions of interest can be made here: <https://forms.office.com/r/WJ6G0bhBKd>
- 4.4 Due to the community-led nature and the funding arrangement of Welcoming Communities, participation on the advisory group is entirely voluntary and will not be remunerated by Council.

### 5. More information about the “stocktake”

- 5.1 A stocktake, in the context of Welcoming Communities, is a process that involves the wider community to identify activities that are already happening that contribute to the eight elements of the Welcoming Communities Standard, and identifies opportunities for new activities.
- 5.2 The stocktake process will engage with a broad range of stakeholders, such as new residents/migrants communities, Iwi, businesses, community service groups, new

resident youth, along with council and associated committees ie: Youth Council, Community Committees/Boards.

- 5.3 That process will include consultation about what those further activities should be, and who could/should lead them. The stocktake process, and the new opportunities identified, will inform our Welcoming Plan for Rangitikei.

## 6. More information about the Welcoming Plan

- 6.1 A Welcoming Plan is a document prepared by Council, owned by the community, that sets out the intended actions as a community, over a set period, and who will lead them. The Welcoming Plan aims to deliver on the eight elements of the Welcoming Communities Standard (mentioned above).
- 6.2 Every council participating in the Welcoming Communities programme must prepare a Welcoming Plan, scheduled to be reviewed and updated in alignment with other key Council plans and documents, such as the Long-term Plan or Annual Plans.
- 6.3 Welcoming Plans from other Councils can be viewed on Immigration New Zealand's website: <https://www.immigration.govt.nz/about-us/what-we-do/welcoming-communities/resources-welcoming-communities>

## 7. Further updates about Welcoming Communities

- 7.1 Regular updates will be shared to the community committees through formal reports. Public updates will be made on Council's website and through the Welcoming Communities Rangitikei Facebook page; both linked below.
- <https://www.rangitikei.govt.nz/district/welcoming-communities>
  - <https://www.facebook.com/Welcoming-Communities-Rangit%C4%ABkei-102184512328959>

## Attachments

Nil

## Recommendation

That the report 'Welcoming Communities Update for Community Committees & Boards - January 2022' be received.