

Empowered Communities Approach Quick Guide

What is meant by community empowerment?

An empowered community is one where individuals, whanau and communities have the power and ability to influence decisions, take action and make change happen in their lives and communities. This includes communities of place, interest and identity. At the local level, people are actively involved in improving their areas, they are energised and want to participate and do things for themselves. It means people coming together to shape local activities to ensure they address the things people care about in their community. This includes safe and clean streets, high-quality and welcoming public spaces, good quality facilities and leisure services, improved transport options, footpaths, walkways, public toilets and healthy green places and waterways.

What is meant by an enabling council?

An enabling council is one where every opportunity is maximised for council to work in ways that empower communities.

In order for communities to have more control over the things they care about, the whole of council, including council-controlled organisations, needs to work in more enabling ways. This requires a change in processes and attitudes; listening, being prepared to be influenced and giving real responsibility, funding and support to local residents and communities, while still ensuring alignment with local board priorities.

What will change – outcomes

- Communities and local people have greater control and influence over things they care about
- People from diverse backgrounds are engaging meaningfully and participating in public and community life
- Māori development is enhanced by council working together with mana whenua, mataawaka, marae and other Māori organisations
- Local initiatives are designed and delivered locally
- Voluntary and community groups have increased capacity and capability; they are inclusive and competent, committed to equity and connected to their wider community
- Community outcomes are improved through council and communities working together in joined up ways

Key focus areas of an empowered communities approach

- Integrate the empowered communities approach across council to achieve local board and regional outcomes and community aspirations
- Increase diverse community participation in council decision making
- Build community capacity to do things for themselves
- Develop and support community-led placemaking initiatives
- Respond to Māori aspirations in practical and effective ways

ECA principles

Treaty partnership

Through the empowered communities approach, council will enable Māori participation in council decision-making and build stronger and more productive partnerships with Māori.

Social inclusion and equity

Promoting inclusion and removing barriers to participation are central to an empowered communities approach. Initiatives that build power and control in communities need to be accompanied by capacity-building activities to ensure that everyone, not just groups already in a position of influence, can exercise meaningful control in their lives and communities. Given that Auckland is one of the most ethnically diverse cities in the world, it is critical that the empowered communities approach is able to be implemented in ways that are culturally appropriate and effective. Ethnic communities, communities of identity and communities of interest all need to be able to see themselves reflected in the empowered communities approach.

Collaboration – working more effectively together

Auckland faces increasingly complex issues that will not be solved by council, agencies or communities working alone or in silos. There is a need to work together differently and more effectively. The best results will be achieved if all the key stakeholders are enabled and empowered to work together. Council will work in ways that maximise the talents, insights and contributions of as many members of the community as possible, trusting in the expertise of communities.

EMPOWERED COMMUNITIES: ENABLING COUNCIL



MĀORI RESPONSIVENESS FRAMEWORK: WHOLE OF COUNCIL