



**Te Taumutu
Rūnanga**



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Mana whenua representation strengthened with Selwyn District Council

Decision making at Selwyn District Council now includes greater Ngāi Te Ruahikihiki ki Taumutu representation, with mana whenua joining all future council hui.

Ngāi Te Ruahikihiki ki Taumutu and Selwyn District Council are proud to announce the selection of Megan McKay who will represent Te Taumutu Rūnanga with speaking rights during council hui, and full voting rights on all council committees.

The selection comes after a Council decision in December to meet commitments made in a relationship agreement signed by Te Taumutu Rūnanga and the Council late last year.

Te Taumutu Rūnanga Chair Liz Brown says Megan's selection is an example of Selwyn District Council's commitment to working with mana whenua in true partnership for the benefit of Waikirikiri Selwyn.

"We have strengthened our relationship over the past decade, and we're now seeing the results of that mahi. Ngāi Te Ruahikihiki ki Taumutu is proud to have Megan represent our people and bring our rich whakaaro to council decision making.

Ngāi Te Ruahikihiki ki Taumutu hold mana whenua over Waikirikiri Selwyn and intergenerational responsibilities to exercise rangatiratanga as kaitiaki of its rohe. More than 30,000 whānau members share ties to the district spanning centuries.

"This is a first step in achieving greater mana whenua representation on the district council, but an important one. We look forward to demonstrating the value a mana whenua presence brings to council hui."

Mayor Sam Broughton says the selection of Megan McKay is a positive move for the Council and community.

"This is a proud moment for us as a Council as we take another step in our partnership with mana whenua and put into practice the commitments made under Te Tiriti o Waitangi to be a community of partnership, working together for the better of our whenua."

The selection follows Future for Local Government Review recommendations to the Local Government Act to enable Te Tiriti based appointments. Other councils around New Zealand already have mana whenua representation, and the passing of the Ngāi Tahu Representation Act last year empowered the iwi to select two regional councillors on Environment Canterbury with full voting rights.

"We've previously had mana whenua representatives on individual committees and projects over the past decade providing richer discussions, wider consideration and faster processes which together deliver better outcomes for Selwyn," says Mayor Broughton.

“One fantastic example of our shared partnership is the development of our community facility, Te Ara Ātea. The mana of Ngāi Te Ruahikihiki ki Taumutu is woven through the building, which also reflects our multi-cultural district. The name Te Ara Ātea describes our collective footprints on the landscape and the journey of all our ancestors.”

Te Taumutu Rūnanga Representative Megan McKay holds extensive legal and governance experience as an independent hearing commissioner.

As well as a life-long connection to Waikiriki Selwyn through her hapū and pā, Megan is a proud resident and her whānau have been heavily involved with the council for decades.

“I am excited by the opportunity to represent my people on council. While I will be a mana whenua voice and advocate for our hapū, I am also focused on promoting a sustainable environment and achieving strong outcomes that meet the needs of our diverse community.

She says she will bring a te ao Māori and environmental view to council decision making while advocating for communities who have gone unheard.

“During my term on council, I am most looking forward to engaging on the long-term plan to ensure all communities have fair and equitable access to council services.”

Megan McKay will be formally welcomed to Selwyn District Council during a mihi whakatau next month.

ENDS

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Background:

Megan McKay will sit as a representative of Te Taumutu Rūnanga on the Transport and Infrastructure Committee, Community Services & Facilities Committee, Finance & Performance Committee and Planning & Climate Change Committee and attend Council meetings with speaking rights, but not voting rights.

Te Ngāi Tūāhuriri Rūnanga also share mana whenua over Whakiriri. They may choose to select their own representative to Council in the future.