



Media Release

Wednesday 13 December 2017

Local Councils pleased with Immigration New Zealand announcement

Ashburton and Selwyn District Councils are delighted that the Welcoming Communities Standard has now been launched by Immigration New Zealand.

The Councils, which are among five regions in the country to pilot Welcoming Communities, will use the standard to measure the success of their Welcoming Communities initiatives, when they get underway in the new year. Equitable access; inclusive leadership; civic engagement and participation; and welcoming public spaces are just some of the elements of the outcomes-based standard.

“Around the world Kiwis are known for being friendly, hospitable, and inclusive and we want that to be the absolute reality for people living in the Ashburton and Selwyn Districts,” Ashburton Mayor Donna Favel says.

“It is about becoming better host communities, rather than only expecting newcomers and migrants to change their ways. We know that welcoming activities create bonds between local residents and newcomers that have social, economic and cultural benefits for everyone,” Selwyn Mayor Sam Broughton says.

The two-year Welcoming Communities programme is designed to support local councils and their communities to become even more welcoming to recent migrants, former refugees, international students, and even New Zealanders coming from elsewhere. Other Councils and communities taking part in the pilot programme are Tauranga/Western Bay of Plenty (Tauranga City Council and Western Bay of Plenty District Council); Southland (Gore District Council, Invercargill City Council and Southland District Council); Whanganui (Whanganui District Council); and Palmerston North (Palmerston North City Council).

Based on its success, the programme may be rolled out to other regions in New Zealand from July 2019.

For more information about Welcoming Communities visit the Immigration New Zealand website at www.immigration.govt.nz.

ENDS

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