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## Submission on Proposed Kaipara District Plan

### Form 5 Submission on publically notified proposal for policy statement or plan, change or variation

*Clause 6 of Schedule 1, Resource Management Act 1991*

**To:** Kaipara District Council - District Plan Review

**Date received:** 30/06/2025

**Submission Reference Number #:**118

This is a submission on the following proposed plan (the **proposal**): Proposed Kaipara District Plan

**Submitter:**

Amanda (Mandy) Harris

**Contact person and address for service:**

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**Attachments:**

Deliberative processes – citizens' juries and citizens' assemblies - Te Kawa Mataaho Public Service Commission.pdf

**I wish to be heard:** No

**I am willing to present a joint case:** Yes

Could you gain an advantage in trade competition in making this submission?

- No

If you have answered yes to the above question, are you directly affected by an effect of the subject matter of the submission that:

- (a) adversely affects the environment; and
- (b) does not relate to trade competition or the effects of trade competition

- Yes

## Submission points

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### Point 118.1

**Section:** Urban Form and Development

**Sub-section:** Objectives

**Provision:**

**SD-UFD-O3      Infrastructure**

**Support / Amend / Oppose:** Amend

**Submission:**

I propose council establish a Kaiwaka Citizens' Assembly to co-create a preferred design of a Kaiwaka Water Infrastructure master plan. Focus group of community working in collaboration between Council, NZTA, DOC, mana whenua, community groups, developers, and central government agencies to explore viable options on town stormwater management, potable water supply, wastewater upgrade within the context of urban growth aligned with regenerating and protecting our river and it's path to the Kaipara Harbour

### Relief sought

support the establishment of a Kaiwaka citizen assembly to deliberate, strategize and inform council of local priorities and community about relevant information currently held by council and NZTA along with the many incohesive projects. Pilot this innovative solution by a citizens assembly which alongside relevant entities will develop an integrated water strategy masterplan.

# Deliberative processes – citizens' juries and citizens' assemblies

11 December 2024

## What is a deliberative process?

A deliberative process is when a group of people come together to learn about an issue, discuss it and reach a conclusion on what they think should happen. Citizens' juries and citizens' assemblies are examples of deliberative processes.<sup>[1]</sup>

While deliberative processes are still relatively new to New Zealand, citizens' assemblies and juries are increasingly used in Europe, North America and Australia to address complex issues and involve citizens in policy making.

You can learn more about overseas citizens' assemblies and deliberative democracy here:

[Involve.org.uk – UK examples](https://involve.org.uk)

[CitizensAssembly.ie – Ireland examples](https://citizensassembly.ie)

[MosaicLab.com.au – Victoria, Australia examples](https://mosaiclab.com.au)



## How do they work?

A process like a citizens' assembly usually involves selecting a group of people who are reflective of their community and providing them with information about an issue and access to experts on the topic. The group discuss and deliberate on the topic, and reach a decision or recommendation on the issue.

It's important that from the start of the process, the group knows how their recommendations or decisions will inform outcomes. Ideally, decision makers should agree from the outset that the recommendations from the group will be implemented, unless there's a really good rationale not to. If decision makers cannot commit to this at the outset, they should be clear with the group about how their inputs will be used. For example, recommendations will be put to a public referendum or are subject to final agreement by a board, chief executive or oversight group.

They've been engaged, and it's quite clear they are committed to this as a process.

### **PARTICIPANT**

WATERCARE CITIZEN'S ASSEMBLY

## Why run a deliberative process?

Deliberative processes have many advantages over traditional consultation processes:[\[2\]](#)

- Deliberative processes can be a helpful tool for decision makers and politicians when trying to resolve contentious issues. This is because they provide an insight into public opinion, and can lend support and legitimacy to making the required policy changes, even on contested topics. One example is the Irish Citizens' Assembly, which considered the issue of abortion legislation in Ireland. The assembly voted 64% in favour of a change to the law to allow abortion, which was closely matched by the results of a later referendum, where 66% of the population voted in favour of legalising abortion in Ireland.
- Citizens' assemblies and juries use a sortition process to ensure the people involved reflect the community across a range of criteria (for example, age, ethnicity, gender and education level). This means a diverse range of voices come through that reflect the whole community.
- The group learn about an issue in-depth and must consider the pros and cons of different options before putting forward their view. This makes for a better and more informed public conversation than a survey or opinion poll, as people are well informed on the topic.

Deliberative processes can support and supplement traditional representative democracy models and are an innovative way to solve complex problems. Policy advisors and decision makers may find a citizens' assembly helps to progress difficult and contested issues.

This sort of forum is exactly what we should be doing for those kind of really complicated, knotty issues.

**JON LAMONTE**

WATERCARE CHIEF EXECUTIVE

## What are the challenges?

- It costs to run a deliberative process. Costs include things like hiring a venue, planning and organising, paying participants for their time and arranging support such as childcare so participants can attend the assembly.
- There is usually a significant time commitment for people to participate in a citizens' assembly. This can exclude those with care responsibilities and filter out anyone except those with a very high sense of civic duty or those who are already politically engaged.<sup>[3]</sup> This problem can be mitigated by paying participants and ensuring costs such as childcare are covered.
- There needs to be clarity for participants about how their contribution will be used. If leaders agree to make changes based on the recommendations of an assembly, this should be followed through on, or it undermines trust in the process.

## Case studies

Recent case examples where deliberative processes have been used by central and local government (all supported by Koi Tū: The Centre for Informed Futures) to solve difficult problems with the input of the community are linked below.

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### **Citizens' assembly: Next source of water for Auckland**

Watercare

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### **Deliberative forum: Transport for Auckland**

Auckland Council

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### **Deliberative mini-publics: The Future of Transport in Aotearoa NZ**

Te Mānatu Waka Ministry of Transport

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### **Citizens' assembly: Proposed land use changes in Tairāwhiti**

Te Weu Charitable Trust with Gisborne District Council

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Going into this I was a bit worried I'd be very strongly pushed towards a single option, but it really seems like they're encouraging discussion.

**PARTICIPANT**

WATERCARE CITIZENS' ASSEMBLY

## Video of the Watercare citizens' assembly



[1] OECD, *Eight Ways to Institutionalise Deliberative Democracy OECD Public Governance Policy Paper*, p.6 [https://www.oecd-ilibrary.org/docserver/4fcf1da5-en.pdf?](https://www.oecd-ilibrary.org/docserver/4fcf1da5-en.pdf?expires=1690855472&id=id&accname=guest&checksum=70AFEE66054A8198A0F463F7663D610E)

[expires=1690855472&id=id&accname=guest&checksum=70AFEE66054A8198A0F463F7663D610E](https://www.oecd-ilibrary.org/docserver/4fcf1da5-en.pdf?expires=1690855472&id=id&accname=guest&checksum=70AFEE66054A8198A0F463F7663D610E)

[2] *Eight Ways to Institutionalise Deliberative Democracy OECD Public Governance Policy Paper*, P. 7.

[3] <https://www.politico.eu/article/the-myth-of-the-citizens-assembly-democracy/>



