



**BULLER**  
DISTRICT COUNCIL  
Te Kaunihera O Kawatiri

# Subcommittee Handbook



Version 1 | 2026



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# Welcome and purpose of this handbook

Welcome, and thank you for being part of a Reserve and Hall Subcommittee. Your involvement plays an important role in supporting Council to manage and care for community assets that are valued, well used, and central to local life across the district with a Governance lens.

Reserve and Hall Subcommittees provide a formal way for community members to actively participate in the governance and oversight of Council-owned halls and reserves. Through local knowledge, commitment, and collaboration, subcommittees help ensure these spaces are maintained, developed, and used in ways that reflect community needs and aspirations.

The purpose of this handbook is to provide clear guidance to subcommittee members on their role, responsibilities, and operating requirements. It is intended to support consistent, transparent, and effective governance by setting out how subcommittees work with Council, how decisions are made, and what processes must be followed.

It explains how subcommittees fit within the Buller District Council structure, outlines roles and responsibilities, and details key processes for meetings, decision making, financial management, and engagement with Council staff.

It brings together key information, so members understand what is expected of them, how decisions are made, and where to go for support. It should be read alongside the relevant Terms of Reference, Council policies, and legislative requirements that guide subcommittee operations.

By working together within these agreed frameworks, Council and subcommittees can build strong partnerships, support good governance, and ensure halls and reserves continue to deliver positive outcomes for current and future generations.

# Understanding subcommittees

## What is a subcommittee and where does it fit?

Reserve and Hall Subcommittees were formed by Buller District Council to aid in managing specific reserves and halls for the local community. They operate with Council support and serve as subcommittees of the Community Services Committee.

Subcommittees provide a formal way for community members to participate in the governance, care, development, and oversight of Council-owned community assets. Through this structure, subcommittees work in partnership with Council to ensure reserves and halls are maintained, used, and developed in a way that reflects community needs and Council obligations.

## How is a subcommittee formed?

Buller District Council calls for expressions of interest after each triennial general election.

Community members who live in the local area, are nominated by at least two residents or ratepayers from that area, and have skills, attributes, or knowledge that will support the subcommittee's work may be appointed as members.

Subcommittees carry over each triennium and are not disbanded after Council elections. This means existing members do not need to reapply every three years unless they decide to step down.

Members may resign during a term. All resignations are formally resolved at a subcommittee meeting and acknowledged by the Community Services Committee.

# Roles, membership & decision making

## What are the roles and responsibilities of subcommittees?

Reserve and Hall Subcommittees are responsible for providing local governance and oversight of Council-owned halls, reserves and campgrounds. Their role is to support the sustainable management and use of these assets for the benefit of the local community and the wider district.

The role of Reserve and Hall Subcommittees includes:

- Managing the reserve, hall or campground in accordance with the Reserves Act 1977
- Making recommendations to Council on maintenance, improvements, and asset needs
- Developing and approving an annual budget

Through these responsibilities, subcommittees help shape community and recreational spaces while ensuring decisions align with Council policies, Reserves Management Plans, Asset Management Plans and legislative requirements.

## Meeting Attendance

If it becomes known that a subcommittee member moves away from the area, a request for resignation will be sought. Failing to gather a resignation, this decision can be bought back to the Community Committee for removal of the member. If a subcommittee member fails to attend two consecutive formal meetings with no apology, they automatically forfeit their subcommittee membership.

## Expressions of Interest

Expressions of interest are to run once a year.

## Duration of subcommittee membership

At the end of the triennium (three year term), if Council does not resolve continuation of the subcommittees, the subcommittees will automatically be disbanded. Council can resolve to continue with the subcommittee membership at the end of the triennium. If Council resolves to do this, all subcommittee members remain on their respective subcommittee.

## Planning Improvements and Projects

If your subcommittee would like to make changes or improvements to a hall, reserve, or Council-owned asset, the best forum to discuss these ideas is at a formal subcommittee meeting.

Council's Property Team will attend at least one formal meeting each year to help talk through future project planning, maintenance needs, contract management and budgeting priorities.

Council needs to work alongside subcommittees to make upgrades and improvements as easy as possible: delivering equitable outcomes, to a consistent standard, across the district.

While Council is responsible for approving and managing capital projects, including procurement, funding assistance and oversight, risk management, and compliance requirements, we rely on subcommittees to provide valuable local knowledge and help identify what is important for their community.

By working together, we can deliver projects that benefit the community while allowing subcommittees to focus on what they do best – supporting and advocating for their local hall, reserve, or facility.

## Membership and key roles

### Subcommittee membership

Each Reserve and Hall Subcommittee is made up of:

- Up to ten appointed community members
- One Ward councillor

This structure ensures a mix of elected representation and local community knowledge to support effective governance and decision-making.



## Key roles within the subcommittee

There are three key roles within each subcommittee. These roles support the effective operation of meetings, financial oversight, and compliance with Council requirements.

### Chair

The Chair is responsible for leading meetings, ensuring meetings are conducted in accordance with the Terms of Reference and Code of Conduct, and acting as the primary spokesperson, in line with Council policy and processes, for the subcommittee when required.

### Secretary

The Secretary is responsible for recording meeting minutes and managing basic administrative tasks, including correspondence and the timely distribution of agendas and records.

### Treasurer

The Treasurer is responsible for overseeing financial matters, including monitoring expenditure, managing budgets, preparing accounts for audits and supporting accurate financial reporting.

## How the voting process works

Agenda items are considered at formal subcommittee meetings and decided through a formal voting process.

Each subcommittee member has one equal vote and may vote for or against a proposal. Motions must be moved and seconded before being put to a vote.

Decisions are carried when they receive either a majority vote or, where required, a unanimous vote in accordance with the subcommittee's Terms of Reference and Council standing orders.

## Code of Conduct and Standing Orders

All subcommittee members are required to comply with the Council's Code of Conduct and Standing Orders.

*A summary of these documents is included on page 14 - 17 of this handbook.*

# Meetings and workshops

## Formal Meetings

A Formal Meeting is a meeting of the subcommittee that is held with Council. Council staff are present at all formal meetings, and the meeting follows Council meeting procedures.

Each subcommittee is required to hold at least one Formal Meeting each year.

Formal Meetings are used to consider and approve key governance matters, including:

- Approving the annual financial return
- Approving the annual budget
- Recommending officers
- Recommending new members
- Discussing and resolving general business

## Formal Meeting Rules and Responsibilities

### Scheduling a Formal Meeting

Role holders must give at least one month's notice to the Subcommittee Liaison Officer via email: [slo@bdc.govt.nz](mailto:slo@bdc.govt.nz)

## Agenda

The Chair or Secretary must provide any other (outside of usual templated items) agenda items to the Subcommittee Liaison Officer in advance of the meeting.

## Written record

The Secretary is responsible for recording official meeting minutes using the Council template, which will be supplied at the meeting.

## Advertising

Full meetings must be advertised, as this is a statutory requirement under the LGOIMA Act. You need to notify the Subcommittee Liaison Officer, who will liaise with governance to set the meeting date and oversee advertisement of the meeting.

## Attendance

Formal Meetings are open to the public. A public forum is not provided, and attendance and media interaction are at the Chair's discretion.

## Workshops

A Workshop is an informal meeting of a subcommittee where Council staff are not required to be present.

Workshops provide members with an opportunity to discuss future plans, budgets, working bees, fundraising initiatives, and potential projects in a collaborative, less formal setting.

Operational decisions may be agreed at Workshops, provided they are within the subcommittee's delegated authority and consistent with its terms of reference. Decisions that require formal approval or Council involvement must be progressed through a formal subcommittee meeting or through contact and approval from BDC staff.

## Workshop rules and responsibilities

### Scheduling a Workshop

Role holders must give a minimum of ten working days' notice to Buller District Council by email.

The notice must include the date, time, and location of the Workshop and be sent to the

Subcommittee Liaison Officer  
[slo@bdc.govt.nz](mailto:slo@bdc.govt.nz)

### Written record

The Secretary is responsible for recording a written record of the Workshop using the Council template. This record does not need to be detailed and should note the key topics discussed and members in attendance.

### Advertising

Workshops may be advertised through the subcommittee or community Facebook page where appropriate. Contact the Governance Team team via: [governance.assistant@bdc.govt.nz](mailto:governance.assistant@bdc.govt.nz) to request advertisement through Council social media channels.

### Providing the written record

The Secretary must provide the Workshop written record to the Subcommittee Liaison Officer within two weeks of the Workshop.

### Attendance

Workshops are open to the public. A public forum is not provided, and attendance is at the Chair's discretion.

# Governance framework

## Terms of Reference

Each Reserve and Hall Subcommittee operates under Council approved Terms of Reference.

The Terms of Reference define the purpose, scope, and operating framework for each subcommittee and set clear expectations about what subcommittees are authorised to do and how decisions must be made.

They outline:

- Objectives and responsibilities
- Membership and key roles
- Delegated authority and decision-making limits
- Financial responsibilities and reporting requirements
- Meeting and governance requirements

**All subcommittee members are expected to understand and comply with their Terms of Reference at all times.**

*Terms of Reference for your subcommittee can be obtained from the Secretary or Council's Subcommittee Liaison Officer.*

# Key documents, funding and support

## Reserves Management Plans

Reserves Management Plans are a statutory legal requirement under the Reserves Act 1977. These documents set out how the community wishes to see parks and reserves managed, developed, and used now and into the future.

Reserves Management Plans guide decision-making for Council officers, subcommittees, the community, and stakeholders, and should be considered when planning projects, improvements, or changes to the use of a reserve.

## Asset Management Plans

Asset Management Plans set out how Council-owned assets, including halls, buildings, and reserve infrastructure, are managed, maintained, renewed, and replaced over time. These plans provide information on asset condition, levels of service, maintenance programmes, and long-term investment planning. They help Council make informed decisions about funding, renewals, and prioritisation of work across the district. Budgets for the Asset Management Plan are set by elected members.

Subcommittees should consider the relevant Asset Management Plan when identifying maintenance needs, planning improvements, or making recommendations to Council. Asset Management Plans support evidence-based decision making and help ensure community facilities remain safe, fit for purpose, and financially sustainable.

*Note: Reserves Management Plans work alongside Asset Management Plans, with the Reserves Management Plan outlining how a reserve is utilised and developed, and the Asset Management Plan guiding the maintenance, renewal, and funding of the physical assets.*

## Funding options and how to access them

Subcommittees can access funding through a range of Council and external funding sources, including:

### Long-Term Plan and Annual Plan

Subcommittees seeking Council funding must have agreed priorities and obtained relevant quotes. Submissions are prepared as part of the Annual Plan and should be ready by the end of February each year.

### Community Grants

Buller District Council's Community Grant rounds are open once a year.

### Creative Communities

Creative Communities funding supports local arts and cultural activities that encourage community participation and access to the arts.

Subcommittees may support or partner with community groups applying for Creative Communities funding where projects align with the purpose and use of the reserve or hall.

### Facility Hire Fund

The Facility Hire Fund may be used to support community groups or events that wish to use Council-owned halls or facilities but face financial barriers due to hire costs. Subcommittees can advocate for, or support applications where the proposed activity benefits the local community and aligns with the intended use of the facility.

### External funding and GrantGuru

Subcommittees are encouraged to explore external funding opportunities to support projects and improvements.

Council provides access to GrantGuru, an online funding database that helps identify external grant opportunities relevant to community projects. The Subcommittee Liaison Officer can assist with accessing GrantGuru and identifying suitable funding options.



# 4 steps to grant success...



## Be strategic

Match what funding is available and when - we all know that writing a grant application in a rush rarely works.



## Alignment

Make sure you find grants that align well with the future direction of your organisation. Find out the purpose for the funding provider and ensure it's a match.



## Avoid making simple mistakes

Make sure you have someone working with you on the application and checking it before submission.



## Live up to your funding obligations

Make sure you're prepared to provide interim and final reports to the funding provider to keep up your end of the agreement.



# Appendix 1:

## Code of Conduct summary

### Scope (Clause 1)

The Code applies to Elected Members, committee and subcommittee members covering their interactions with each other, the CEO and staff, the media, and the public, and guiding information disclosure in line with the Local Government Act (LGA) 2002.

### 1. Application (Clause 2)

Members must comply with the Code and relevant Acts (e.g., LGA, LGOIMA 1987, Health and Safety at Work Act 2015).

### 2. Principles of Governance (Clause 3)

- **Integrity and Honesty:** Members must act with transparency, fairness, and integrity (3.1).
- **Accountability:** Members are accountable for decisions and must use Council resources prudently (3.2).
- **Respect:** Members must show respect to all individuals, refraining from aggressive or disrespectful behaviour (3.3).

- **Good Faith:** Decisions should reflect the best interests of the community (3.4).
- **Proper Use of Position:** Members must avoid misuse of their position, such as personal gain or influencing staff for personal benefit (3.5).

### 3. Roles and Responsibilities (Clause 4)

- **Elected Members:** Govern Council plans, policies, budgets, and CEO employment (4.1).
- **Committee Chairs:** Oversee committee proceedings and may represent Council on issues within their remit (4.4).

### 4. Relationships & Behaviours (Clause 5)

- **With Other Members:** Interactions should be constructive, avoiding personal attacks (5.1).
- **With CEO and Staff:** Members must respect the CEO's authority over staff, and avoid influencing or criticizing staff publicly (5.2).

- **With the Public:** Engage respectfully and openly with community members (5.3).
- **With Media:** Only the Mayor or delegated officials speak on behalf of the Council. Members may express personal views if they do not conflict with Council positions (5.4).
- **Confidentiality:** Members must protect confidential information and comply with the LGOIMA (5.5).
- **Gifts and Hospitality:** Members must report gifts over \$150 to the Governance Assistant for inclusion in the Gift Register (5.6).
- **Conflicts of Interest:** Members must declare financial or personal conflicts to avoid bias in decision-making (5.7).
- **Bankruptcy & Disqualification:** Bankruptcy and certain criminal convictions can disqualify a member from office (5.8-5.9).

## 5. Breaches of the Code (Clause 6)

- **Complaints Process:** Complaints about breaches are submitted in writing to the CEO. Minor issues may be resolved informally, while serious breaches are investigated by an independent investigator (6.2).
- **Materiality:** Breaches that affect public trust or reflect poorly on the Council are treated as material and are reviewed by an independent investigator (6.2).
- **Penalties:** The Council can impose penalties ranging from a letter of censure to removal from committees or privileges (6.3).

# Appendix 2:

## Standing Orders summary

### 1. Purpose and Compliance

- a. Standing Orders enable transparent, inclusive, and lawful governance (Clause 1, Preface).
- b. Councils are required to adopt Standing Orders for effective meeting conduct (Clause 3.1).

### 2. Adoption and Amendment

- a. Adoption or amendment requires a vote by at least 75% of members present (Clause 3.2).

### 3. Application

- a. Standing Orders apply to all council meetings, committees, subcommittees, and local boards unless specified otherwise (Clause 3.4).
- b. Workshops or advisory groups are excluded unless explicitly stated in their terms of reference (Clause 1.4).

### 4. Suspension

- a. Specific Standing Orders can be temporarily suspended by a motion supported by at least 75% of members (Clause 3.5).

### 5. Meetings

- a. Meetings must comply with the Local Government Act 2002 and LGOIMA (Clause 4.1).
- b. A meeting cannot exceed six hours without a resolution to continue or more than two continuous hours without a break (Clause 4.2).

### 6. Language Use

- a. Members can address meetings in English, te reo Māori, or New Zealand Sign Language. Notice must be given two working days in advance if not in the meeting's default language (Clause 4.3).

### 7. Appointments and Committees

- a. The Mayor can appoint committee members, including chairs and deputy mayors, and establish committees. These appointments must be tabled at the next meeting (Clauses 5.1–5.3).
- b. Committees can delegate powers to subcommittees, but these decisions cannot be rescinded by the council (Clauses 6.3–6.5).

## 8. Notice Requirements

- a. Public notice for meetings must be given 5–14 days before a meeting, depending on circumstances (Clauses 8.1, 8.7).
- b. Emergency meetings require 24-hour notice by any reasonable means (Clause 8.6).

## 9. Public Access and Confidentiality

- a. Meetings are open to the public unless justified exclusions are applied (Clause 12.1).
- b. Public excluded sessions are governed by LGOIMA, and confidential information is protected (Clauses 18.1–18.5).

## 10. Voting and Decision-Making

- a. Decisions are by majority vote, with open voting required unless legally exempt (Clause 19.1–19.2).
- b. The chairperson holds a casting vote in the event of a tie (Clause 19.3).

## 11. Conduct and Order

- a. Members must follow the Code of Conduct, and the chairperson has authority to manage behavior during meetings (Clauses 20.2–20.6).
- b. Points of order can be raised for breaches, irrelevance, or procedural matters (Clause 26.1).

## 12. Record Keeping

- a. Accurate minutes must be maintained as evidence of proceedings and are publicly accessible unless part of a public-excluded session (Clauses 28.1–28.4).

# Contacts

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## Where to get help

The primary point of contact for Buller District Council is the Subcommittee Liaison Officer: **slo@bdc.govt.nz**

The Subcommittee Liaison Officer provides guidance, support, and coordination between subcommittees and Council staff and should be contacted if advice or clarification is needed.



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## **Subcommittee Handbook V1**

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**[bullerdc.govt.nz](https://bullerdc.govt.nz)**