

RUAPEHU DISTRICT COUNCIL

Te Kaunihera-ā-Rohe o Ruapehu

MINUTES

THE MEETING OF RUAPEHU DISTRICT COUNCIL HELD IN THE
COUNCIL CHAMBERS, 59-61 HUIA STREET, TAUMARUNUI
ON WEDNESDAY, 22 MARCH 2023, AT 10:02AM

PUBLIC BUSINESS | KAUPAPA O WAHO

Present | Tuhinga

Mayor	Weston Kirton
Councillors	Robyn Gram
	Janelle Hinch
	Channey Iwikau
	Fiona Kahukura Hadley-Chase
	Lyn Neeson
	Rabbit Nottage
	Brenda Ralph
	Korty Wilson

In Attendance | I Tae Mai

Clive Manley	Chief Executive
Vini Dutra	Executive Manager Infrastructure
Sonny Houpapa	Executive Manager Iwi Relationships
Natasha Poloai	Executive Manager People, Capability & Safety
Pauline Welch	Executive Manager Community & Economic Development
Warrick Zander	Executive Manager Regulatory & Customer Services
Vivita Matanimeke	Strategy & Policy Advisor
Chris Hankey	Senior Management Accountant
Candice McNaught	Manager Community Relationships & Wellbeing
Rina Hepi	Manager Community & Recreational Facilities
Tracy Norris	Governance Officer
Jo Kennedy	Visit Ruapehu Limited

By Zoom

Fiona Ferrar	Acting Manager, Finance, Strategy & Governance
Melissa Jackson	Manager Policy & Strategy
Mana Robinson	Financial Accountant
Carole Colquhoun	Community Property Assets Officer
Erana Cate	Project Coordinator
Tessa Owen	Executive Assistant Regulatory & Customer Services
Hannah Rix	Executive Assistant Infrastructure
Tasha Paladin	Governance Manager

Absent | Ngaro

Deputy Mayor	Vivienne Hoeta
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1 Opening Karakia | Karakia Timatanga

Councillor Kahukura Hadley-Chase

2 Apologies

The Chairperson invited notice from members of apologies, including apologies for lateness and early departure from the meeting.

RESOLVED

Moved: Cr Iwikau

Seconded: Cr Gram

That the Apologies from Deputy Mayor Vivienne Hoeta be accepted.

3 Declarations of Interest

No conflicts of interest were declared.

4 Notification of Additional Items

There were no additional items not on the Agenda.

5 Confirmation of Order of Meeting

The order of the meeting was confirmed.

RESOLVED

Moved: Cr Hinch

Seconded: Cr Ralph

1 *That the Council confirms the order of the meeting*

6 Public Forum: Temporary Suspension and Reinstatement of Standing Orders

There were no requests for Public Participation

7 Confirmation of Minutes of Council Meeting**RESOLVED**

Moved: Cr Wilson

Seconded: Cr Ralph

That the Council:

1 *Confirms the Public Business Minutes of the Ruapehu District Council meeting held Wednesday, 22 February 2023 as attached, a true and correct record*

Note: Due to Audio-visual Link issues, the Meeting moved to Item 9: Community and Town Revitalisation Projects Status Report

9 Community and Town Revitalisation Projects Status Report

Members were presented with a progress status update on the multiple Town Revitalisation Projects within the 2021-31 Long Term Plan (LTP). The projects span Raetihi, Ohakune, National Park and Taumarunui. Council's Executive Manager Community & Economic Development spoke to the report and answered Members' questions.

There are various community groups throughout the District supporting the Town Revitalisation projects for example, the Governance Group formed out of Ohakune Inc, and the Junction Community Ratepayers Group in Ohakune, and the National Park Village Steering Group. Aside from the group driving the museum works, Taumarunui and Ōhura do not currently have any community groups driving local projects. Rangataua has an active group working on the beautification around the hall and proposed associated playground by the hall. Waiouru has also had a community group driving the new playground project. Kakahi has not had an active community group since approximately 2009.

The principle of Town Centre Revitalisation links directly to the health and wellbeing of the community. There is \$11Million available for Town Centre Revitalisation, plus another \$100,000 available for smaller projects through Council's Pride of Place funding. Pride of Place funding is only open to community groups registered as a legal entity and enables communities to carry out small projects that they would not normally be able to afford.

Council partners with communities and moves at the pace with which the communities are comfortable. It was noted that Council funding is not allocated to any particular area; rather it is assigned to projects that are ready to go. It is for the Community Boards to determine the need, value and priority for projects within their ward area, whereas funding is an issue for Council to consider. In addition to Council budgets, officers are exploring external funding sources for Town Revitalisation projects for example, the Raetihi Swimming Pool and Community Hub projects which require external funding.

It was noted there was a typo at 6.5.1 in the report; National Park has \$926,100 over the first five years of the 2021-31 LTP, and not \$9Million as reported.

Wayfinding projects will not have a district-wide design as it is important to work with local iwi, who will influence the style of individual projects within their area.

The Ohakune isite re-brand is not included within Town Revitalisation, however, officers undertook to consider this as they agreed the re-brand impacts on the look and feel of Ohakune, akin to the Taumarunui Museum for Taumarunui Revitalisation.

It was confirmed that the Veranda project in Taumarunui is solely concentrating on Hakiha Street and any extension to the Veranda project scope would be subject to determining the retail need. To date, there has been no push to upgrade verandas outside of the current project scope, as there is a real uncertainty as to the future of retail in the central business district (CBD). The new verandas will be built to the new earthquake standards.

In terms of earthquake prone buildings in the District, these are a mix of privately owned and Council owned properties. Businesses have 10 to 15 years to either demolish or upgrade the buildings to meet the new standards. Council currently does not have plans to either upgrade or demolish the Memorial Hall in Taumarunui, and has budget allocated to maintain the building in its current state, with some external beautification such as landscaping and painting. It was noted the item could be raised at the Taumarunui-Ōhura Community Board for consideration in the next Long Term Plan.

A funding request has been submitted to the Ministry for Business, Information and Employment (MBIE) for the Pipiriki Hub and Signage projects; the playground development in Pipiriki is being funded through Pride of Place.

RESOLVED

Moved: Cr Wilson

Seconded: Cr Kahukura Hadley-Chase

That the Council:

- 1 *Receives the Report **Community and Town Revitalisation Projects Status Report***

Note: The Meeting moved to Item 8: Community and Town Revitalisation Projects Status Report

8 Adoption of the Annual Plan 2023/24 Consultation Document and Supporting Materials

Members received a report presenting the draft Annual Plan 2023/24 Consultation Document and supporting materials as the basis for community consultation in relation to the Annual Plan 2023/24 for approval. The consultation covers the proposed rate increase and debt levels and seeks the community’s view on those. Council’s Manager Policy & Strategy spoke to the report and answered Members’ questions.

Council’s Policy Analyst advised of an error on the Fees and Charges attachment, page 54, in relation to Waste Management (Refuse) Fees. The table reported a current charge of \$11, rising to \$12 in the next financial year, however, Members were advised the correct current charge is \$13, rising to \$15.

	2022/23	2023/24
Refuse Bags for Kerbside Collection Service		
Purchase of replacement compost large outdoor bin (incorrect)	\$11	\$12
Purchase of replacement compost large outdoor bin (amended)	\$13	\$15

Councillors applauded the approach taken by officers to seek community feedback, instead of asking leading questions, and felt it would enable richer feedback and comments for Council to consider. It was noted that the approach required the Consultation Document to be wholly accurate and raised points for clarification:

- (a) *Page 28: “How water is paid for the bigger issue.”*
It was felt that the line “everyone paying the same irrespective of where they live” could be misconstrued, and proposed it be amended to read “everyone who uses any of the Three Waters Services”.
- (b) *Page 29: “\$4.12m Better Off funding confirmed.”*
Members noted the budget for the Waimarino social housing upgrade is greater than the \$540,000 allocated from the Better Off funding. Officers advised that this had already been budgeted for.
- (c) *Page 30: “Annual Plan”*
Councillors asked if the \$3Million budgeted for work on Te Ara Mangawhero and Te Hangaruru (Missing Link) cycle trails should be noted as Government Funding. Council’s Acting Executive Manager Finance, Strategy & Governance undertook to clarify and make amendments to the document to reflect the percentage of the \$3Million being funded by Government.

- (d) *Page 31: “Capital Spending”*
It was noted that Land Transport capital expenditure is primarily associated with bridges which are debt funded.
- (e) *Page 32: “For every \$100 in rates, Council is proposing to spend.”*
Councillors asked if the \$22.27 for Land Transport included the Waka Kotahi New Zealand subsidy. Officers advised the figures reflected the actual amount of rates funding applied to each activity net of any other income attributed to the activity. The values are an overall reflection of where the rates revenue is apportioned, as opposed to any individual’s rates contribution.
- (f) *Page 33: “Rating examples”*
Members requested the rating example pages reflect that the values used are not actual properties and suggested either changing the title of the page, or including a note that the examples are indicative rating examples.
- (g) *Page 36: “Assistance with rates”*
Members requested information on the rates remission for Uniform Annual General Charge (UAGC) be included.

Community Consultation dates

Date	Time	Location
28 March	6:30PM	Waiouru Primary School
30 March	6PM	The Centre, Waimarino Baptist Church, Raetihi as part of Waimarino-Waiouru Community Board meeting
4 April	6:30PM	Council Chambers, Ohakune
6 April	6PM	Council Chambers, Taumarunui as part of Taumarunui-Ōhura Community Board meeting
11 April	6:30PM	The Park Hotel, National Park
13 April	6:30PM	Ōhura Community Hall, Ōhura
18 April	6:30PM	Ōwhango Community Hall, Ōwhango as part of Ōwhango-National Park Community Board meeting

RESOLVED

Moved: Cr Neeson

Seconded: Cr Hinch

That the Council:

- 1 *Receives the Report **Adoption of the Annual Plan 2023/24 Consultation Document and Supporting Materials;***
- 2 *Adopts the following supporting materials for the 2023/24 Annual Plan Consultation:*
(a) Proposed Schedule of Fees and Charges 2023/24;
- 3 *Adopts the Annual Plan 2023/24 Consultation Document; and*
- 4 *Delegates authority to the Chief Executive to make minor editorial changes, including grammar and spelling, to the Annual Plan 2023/24 Consultation Document prior to publication (if necessary).*

10 Retrospective Adoption of the Submission to the Parliamentary Select Committee on the Natural and Built Environment Bill and the Spatial Planning Bill

Members were presented with Council's submission to the Parliamentary Select Committee on the Natural and Built Environment Bill and the Spatial Planning Bill for retrospective adoption. Through the Government's proposed Resource Management Act (RMA) Reform, the RMA will be split into three pieces of legislation, the Natural and Built Environment Act, the Spatial Planning Act, and the Climate Adaptation Act. While Council supports the objectives of the reform, it has concerns regarding whether the objectives can be achieved. The key concerns were outlined in the submission attached to the report. Council's Manager Policy & Strategy spoke to the report and answered Members' questions.

RESOLVED

Moved: Cr Neeson

Seconded: Cr Ralph

That the Council:

- 1 *Receives the Report **Retrospective Adoption of the Submission to the Parliamentary Select Committee on the Natural and Built Environment Bill and the Spatial Planning Bill**; and*
- 2 *Retrospectively adopts the submission to the Parliamentary Select Committee on the Natural and Built Environment Bill and the Spatial Planning Bill.*

11 Retrospective Adoption of the Water Services Legislation Bill Submission

Members were presented with Council's submission to the Parliamentary Select Committee on the Water Services Legislation Bill for retrospective adoption. The Water Services Legislation Bill (the Bill) is the second of a suite of bills to reform New Zealand's drinking-water, wastewater and stormwater services, collectively known as the "three waters" services. This bill amends the Water Services Entities Act 2022, which provides for the creation of the new entities services entities and provides the new Water Service Entities with the detailed powers necessary to operate successfully, together with limitations and accountabilities on their use. Council's Manager Policy & Strategy spoke to the report and answered Members' questions.

RESOLVED

Moved: Cr Neeson

Seconded: Cr Gram

That the Council:

- 1 *Receives the Report **Retrospective Adoption of the Water Services Legislation Bill submission**; and*
- 2 *Retrospectively adopts Council's submission to the Water Services Legislation Bill.*

12 Retrospective Adoption of the Submission to the Water Services Economic Efficiency and Consumer Protection Bill

Members were presented with Council's submission to the Parliamentary Select Committee on the Water Services Economic Efficiency and Consumer Protection Bill for retrospective adoption. The Water Services Economic Efficiency and Consumer Protection Bill (the Bill) is the third of a suite of bills to reform New Zealand's drinking-water, wastewater and stormwater services, collectively known as the "three waters" services. This bill establishes a regulatory framework for the new entities and provides for independent oversight of them. The Commerce Commission would be the regulator. This Bill also provides for funding of the regime via levies on regulated suppliers on behalf of consumers, and for remedies and enforcement mechanisms for breaches of regulatory obligations, including pecuniary penalties, enforceable undertakings, injunctions, and compensation. Council's Manager Policy & Strategy spoke to the report and answered Members' questions.

RESOLVED

Moved: Cr Iwikau

Seconded: Cr Nottage

That the Council:

- 1 *Receives the Report **Retrospective Adoption of the Submission to the Water Services Economic Efficiency and Consumer Protection Bill**; and*
- 2 *Retrospectively adopts Council's submission to the Water Services Economic Efficiency and Consumer Protection Bill.*

13 Retrospective Adoption of the Future for Local Government Submission

Members were presented with Council's submission on the draft Future for Local Government Report (October 2022) for retrospective adoption. The Review provides a significant 'once-in-a-generation' opportunity to reimagine the future and think about how local government should evolve over the next 30 years and beyond. The draft report indicates that the function of local government will change, to focus more on community wellbeing and move away from infrastructure related work. The report argues that because local government has established relationships within their respective communities, they are better positioned to lead work that aims to address certain social issues. Council's Strategy & Policy Advisor spoke to the report and answered Members' questions.

RESOLVED

Moved: Cr Ralph

Seconded: Cr Hinch

That the Council:

- 1 *Receives the Report **Retrospective Adoption of the Future for Local Government Submission**; and*
- 2 *Retrospectively adopts the Future for Local Government Submission.*

14 Financial Monitoring Report for the Month Ending 28 February 2023

Members received a report monitoring Council's financial performance against the Annual Plan 2022/23 and sought Members' approval to transfer funding between budgets. Due to the report not being based on cash accounting, any subsidies and grants from the Ministry of Business, Innovation and Employment are included in the Year-to-Date results. Council's Senior Management Accountant spoke to the report and answered Members' questions.

It was noted that February's reporting included January figures. Officers sought Members' approval to transfer \$325,680 of funding from the Taumarunui Sewerage level of service funding to the Ohakune Sewerage upgrade programme. The amount to be transferred reflects the actual costs and does not impact operational levels of service for Taumarunui. Officers advised that as the geographical location of the project has changed, the budgets should reflect this.

Members noted it was reported the personnel costs budget was underspent and questioned if this was related to the Ohakune site frequently being closed. Council's Executive Manager Community & Economic Development advised the site had experienced an increase in staffing, and the closures were due to illness. It was also noted that reported personnel costs include any consultants or services contracted to cover existing vacancies within the wider organisation.

RESOLVED

Moved: Cr Hinch

Seconded: Cr Neeson

That the Council:

- 1 *Receives the Report **Financial Monitoring Report for the Month Ending 28 February 2023**; and*
- 2 *Approves the Transfer of \$325,680 from the Taumarunui Sewerage Level of Service Funding to the Ohakune Sewerage Upgrade Programmes for:*
 - (a) *Goldfinch Waste Water Main Critical Upgrade \$315,000*
 - (b) *Burns Street Waste Water Main Critical Upgrade \$10,680*

15 Mayor's Monthly Report

Members received a report advising Elected Members of appointments and meetings undertaken by the Mayor during February 2023. The report also outlines fee waiving applications approved (if any) by the Mayor during the same period. Mayor Kirton spoke to the report and answered Members' questions.

Members asked what would happen to the Mayor's previous vehicle now that it had been replaced. The Mayor advised it was still to be determined, however, options were to reallocate it internally, or sell it. It was noted that Council owns all of its vehicles as lease arrangements are less favourable than owning. It is unlikely the Mayor's new vehicle will be sign written due to the associated additional costs.

RESOLVED

Moved: Cr Neeson

Seconded: Cr Gram

That the Council:

- 1 *Receives the Report **Mayor's Report: February 2023***

16 Chief Executive's Monthly Report

Members received an update of the organisation's activity over the February 2023 period. The report provides a snapshot of the wider legislative environment and focus from a regional perspective, an overview of the wellbeing of the District, and highlights key achievements and activity over the period, including significant projects from the Chief Executive's perspective since the last Council meeting. Council's Chief Executive spoke to the report and answered Members' questions.

It was noted that there is huge uncertainty around the future of local government and implications for budgeting and plans.

Members asked if Council should delay work on the Speed Management plan around schools, if there is a chance the Prime Minister's review will decide not to proceed with it. Officers advised that Government has mandated what Council can do, and they have raised the issue with Waka Kotahi New Zealand that funding for the project is disproportionate to the spending required. At the time of the meeting, Waka Kotahi New Zealand were yet to respond.

Member asked how much of Council's induction process for staff was in te reo Māori, and what recruitment strategies were used to target Māori candidates, and those who had studied either New Zealand or local history. Council's Executive Manager People, Safety & Capability advised that Council is continually improving its recruitment and onboarding process and offers whānau support for kaimahi interviews. It was acknowledged there are areas that need to improve, including uptake for Māori staff, however, under employment legislation, whilst Council can encourage Māori to apply for vacancies, it is unable to discriminate either positively or negatively. Members expressed their desire for iwi to be included as part of the onboarding process, to be able to tell the stories of their place depending on which part of the District staff are working.

Council's Chief Executive provided an update on the Chateau Tongariro that is now being managed by the Department of Conservation (DOC) following a handover ceremony 9 March 2023. The Chateau and associated buildings are not operating as a hotel; however, DOC has committed to maintaining the building to avoid deterioration. It is understood DOC is progressing talks with interested parties.

The Ministry of Business, Innovation and Employment (MBIE) remains in talks with the appointed Voluntary Administrators of Ruapehu Alpine Lifts. To date, there has not been any firm plan announced to continue operating post Winter 2023.

The Ohakune courthouse remains closed, impacting users of the service. Mayor Kirton sought Members' support to pursue the matter with the Ministry of Justice to ensure a facility remains in place for the community.

Council officers and legal advisors have been working with Trust, formerly Ngāti Rangi Trust, to develop a relationship agreement that reflects both parties' aspirations, desires, values and strengths. A draft of the agreement has been shared with Ngā Waihua o Paerangi for further consideration. Council's Chief Executive noted that whilst the overarching Relationship Agreement had not been finalized, specific project agreements are in place.

RESOLVED

Moved: Mayor Kirton

Seconded: Cr Ralph

That the Council:

*1 Receives and notes the Report **Chief Executive's Report** for information.*

17 Mayor, Deputy Mayor, Chief Executive and Elected Members’ Reports (Verbal)

Note: Councillor Iwikau left the meeting at 11:54AM and re-entered at 12:06PM

Members each gave verbal updates on recent and upcoming events, and other matters of general and topical interest to the District.

RESOLVED

Moved: Cr Kahukura Hadley-Chase

Seconded: Cr Neeson

- 1 *That the meeting continues past the 2-hour mark.*

18 Resolution to Exclude the Public for Consideration of Council Business

Section 48 of the Local Government Official Information and Meetings Act 1987 gives the Council the right by resolution to exclude the public from the whole or any part of the proceedings of any meeting only on one or more of the grounds contained within that Section.

RESOLVED

Moved: Cr Kahukura Hadley-Chase

Seconded: Cr Wilson

That the Council:

- 1 *Receives the **Report Resolution to Exclude the Public for Consideration of Council Business**;*
- 2 *Excludes the public from the following part(s) of the proceedings of this meeting;*
- 3 *Notes the general subject of the matters to be considered while the public is excluded, the reason for passing this resolution in relation to each matter, and the specific grounds for excluding the public, as specified under Section 48(1) of the Local Government Official Information and Meetings Act 1987 for the passing of this resolution are as follows:*

General subject of each matter to be considered	Reason for passing this resolution in relation to each matter	Ground(s) under section 48(1) for the passing of this resolution
C1 Confirmation of Public Excluded Minutes of the Council Meeting 22 February 2023	For the reasons set out in the Public Business Minutes of the Council Meeting 22 February 2023.	
C2 Confidential Deputation: Te Arawhiti and Ngāti Hauā Iwi Trust Negotiations - Sites Proposed for Vesting in Ngāti Hāua	s7(2)(j) To prevent the disclosure or use of official information for improper gain or improper advantage. Release would prejudice the goodwill of the parties and the progress of the negotiations	s48(1)(a)(i) the public conduct of the relevant part of the proceedings of the meeting would be likely to result in the disclosure of information for which good reason for withholding would exist under section 6 or section 7
C3 Confidential Briefing by the Chief Executive	s7(2)(c) To protect information which is subject to an obligation of confidence where the making available of the information would be likely to: prejudice the supply of similar information, or information from the same source, where it is in the public interest that such information should continue to be supplied; or would be likely otherwise to damage the public interest	

- 4 *Approves that Officers of Te Arawhiti and the Ngāti Hauā Iwi Trust Treaty Settlement Project Manager is permitted to remain at this meeting after the public has been excluded because of their knowledge of Item C2.*

The Public Business part of the meeting concluded at 12:12PM.

The minutes of this meeting were confirmed at the Council Meeting held this 26th day of April 2023.



Weston Kirton, JP