

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, 25 OCTOBER 2023, AT 10:06AM

PUBLIC BUSINESS | KAUPAPA O WAHO

Present | Tuhinga

Mayor	Weston Kirton
Deputy Mayor	Vivienne Hoeta
Councillors	Robyn Gram
	Janelle Hinch
	Channey Iwikau
	Fiona Kahukura Hadley-Chase
	Lyn Neeson
	Korty Wilson

In Attendance | I Tae Mai

Clive Manley	Chief Executive
Vini Dutra	Executive Manager Infrastructure
Fiona Ferrar	Acting Manager, Finance, Strategy & Governance
Pauline Welch	Executive Manager Community & Economic Development
Mana Robinson	Financial Accountant
Melissa Jackson	Manager Strategy & Policy
Simon Pallin	Senior Management Accountant
Candice McNaught	Manager Community Relationships & Wellbeing
Tasha Paladin	Governance Manager

By Zoom

Lyn Hura	Executive Manager People, Capability & Safety
Paul Wheatcroft	Executive Manager Communications
Warrick Zander	Executive Manager Regulatory & Customer Services
Holly Buckley	Housing & Facilities Support Manager
Peggy Veen	Manager Community and Economic Development
Rina Hepi	Manager Community & Recreational Facilities
Carole Colquhoun	Community Property Assets Officer
Tessa Owen	Executive Assistant Regulatory & Customer Services

External Speakers

Clarence Susan	Audit New Zealand	Item
Kay Oloro	Audit New Zealand	8
Jo Kennedy	Visit Ruapehu	8
		C2

Absent | Ngaro

Councillors	Rabbit Nottage
	Brenda Ralph

1 Opening Karakia | Karakia Timatanga

Councillor Iwikau

2 Apologies

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

RESOLVED

Moved: Deputy Mayor Hoeta

Seconded: Cr Wilson

That the Apologies from Councillor Nottage and Councillor Ralph be accepted.

3 Declarations of Interest

Councillor Gram declared her interest in Item 10: Forestry Regulations Update: National Environmental Standard on Commercial Forestry (NES-CF).

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.

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 Kahukura Hadley-Chase

Seconded: Cr Hinch

That the Council:

- 1 Confirms the Public Business Minutes of the Ruapehu District Council meeting held Wednesday, 27 September 2023 as attached, a true and correct record subject to the following amendment.*

Apologies

Request to amend the apologies received from Councillor Iwikau and Councillor Wilson should have been apologies for lateness.

The Motion was PUT and CARRIED upon voting 5 votes to 3.

Councillor Gram, Deputy Mayor Hoeta and Councillor Neeson requested their votes AGAINST the motion be recorded.

8 Adoption of the Annual Report and Annual Report Summary 2022/23

Members received a report presenting the Annual Report and the Annual Report Summary for the year ended 30 June 2023 and, subject to any amendments, to recommend the report for adoption. Council's responsibilities in relation to the Annual Report arise from section 98 of the Local Government Act 2002 which sets out the purposes of an Annual Report, and Schedule 10 of that same Act. Council is responsible for meeting the requirements of Schedule 10 and must prepare and adopt an Annual Report and Annual Report Summary in respect of each financial year within four months of the end of that financial year.

The draft Annual Report 2022/23 for Ruapehu District Council was presented to the Risk & Assurance Committee meeting 12 October 2023 where it resolved to recommend the report to Council to adopt this report, with any further amendments to be agreed between the Council and Audit New Zealand.

Council's Acting Executive Manager Finance & Strategy and Financial Accountant spoke to the report, Clarence Susan and Kay Oloro of Audit New Zealand were in attendance to answer Members' questions.

Council's Financial accountant brought Members' attention to corrections to the Annual Report that had been made after the distribution of the Agenda.

Clarence Susan and Kay Oloro shared the Independent Auditor's Report (see **Minute Attachment**) noted that it should have been included in the Agenda pack to provide Members with time to digest the information. Audit has issued an Unqualified Opinion with an emphasis of matter on the uncertainty over the Water Services Reforms.

Minute Attachment(s)

1 *Independent Auditor's Report*

RESOLVED

Moved: Cr Neeson

Seconded: Cr Kahukura Hadley-Chase

That the Council:

- 1 *Receives the Report **Adoption of the Annual Report and Annual Report Summary 2022/23**;*
- 2 ***Notes** that at its meeting on 12 October 2023, the Risk & Assurance Committee recommended that Council adopt the Annual Report 2022/23;*
- 3 *Adopts the audited Annual Report and Annual Report Summary of the Ruapehu District Council for the year ended 30 June 2023, with the inclusion of the audit opinion to be received from Audit New Zealand, in accordance with Section 98 of the Local Government Act 2002;*
- 4 *Approves for publication the audited Annual Report and Annual Report Summary of the Ruapehu District Council for the year ended 30 June 2023, in accordance with Section 98 of the Local Government Act 2002;*
- 5 *Receives the draft 'Representation Letter for the Year Ended 30 June 2023 and approves the letter to be signed by the Mayor and Chief Executive of Ruapehu District Council; and*
- 6 *Delegates authority to the Ruapehu District Chief Executive to make minor editorial changes to the 2022/23 Annual Report prior to publication (if necessary).*

9 Adoption of Council's Wellbeing Framework

Members received a report presenting Council's draft Wellbeing Framework for adoption as the strategic framework the Long Term Plan (LTP) 2024. After consideration of Council's current strategic context, it was felt Council would benefit from a wellbeing framework to promote a holistic focus to decision making going forward.

Council's Executive Manager Community & Economic Development spoke to the report and answered Members' questions. Council's Manager Policy & Strategy, and Manager Community Relationships & Wellbeing were in attendance. Members were advised the Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) attached to the report were examples, and the Policy and Strategy Team will be responsible for their development and presentation to Council for endorsement. It was emphasised that any agreed KPIs needed to be measurable and able to be audited.

Council's Chief Executive added that once the census results are released, officers would be looking to breakdown the New Zealand Index of Deprivation (NZDep) score for Ruapehu into the nine variables to identify where Council can influence and make positive changes to its NZDep score.

RESOLVED

Moved: Cr Neeson

Seconded: Cr Iwikau

That the Council:

- 1 *Receives the Report: **Adoption of Council's Wellbeing Framework**;*
- 2 *Concurs that the adoption of the Wellbeing Framework is considered moderately significant; and*
- 3 *Adopts the Wellbeing Framework as Council's strategic framework for the Long Term Plan 2024.*

10 Forestry Regulations Update: National Environmental Standard on Commercial Forestry (NES-CF)

Members received a report for information providing an update on the recent changes to the National Environmental Standard on Production Forestry (NES-PF). These changes will come into effect on Thursday 2 November 2023 under a new National Environmental Standard called the National Environmental Standard on Commercial Forestry (NES-CF).

Council's Manager Policy & Strategy and Executive Manager Regulatory and Customer Services. Members were advised that there needed to be an investigation into the volume of work to be undertaken to understand the cost to enact changes to the District Plan, in addition to other elements of the District Plan that Council would like to review and incorporate the RMA reforms.

RESOLVED

Moved: Cr Neeson

Seconded: Deputy Mayor Hoeta

That the Council:

- 1 *Receives the Report **Forestry Regulations Update: National Environmental Standard on Commercial Forestry (NES-CF)** for information.*

11 Elected Member attendance at LGNZ YEM Annual Hui: 6 to 8 December 2023, Far North District
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Members were presented with the expressions of interest from Council's Young Elected Members to attend the LGNZ Annual Hui at the end of the year. This is the first triennium that Council has sought to select delegates to this annual conference and will continue to do so to ensure the majority of eligible Members can attend the YEM Annual Hui during their term as an Elected Member.

Expressions of interest to attend the 2023 YEM Annual Hui in the Far North District were received from: Molly Jeffries, Deputy Chair Taumarunui-Ōhura Community Board; Oriwia Wanakore, Taumarunui-Ōhura Community Board; and Anthony Gurr, Chair Ōwhango-National Park Community Board.

Members were advised that since the publication of the Agenda, the YEM hui has reached capacity, and a waiting list is in place. All three Community Board Members have been placed on the waiting list.

RESOLVED

Moved: Cr Gram

Seconded: Cr Hinch

That the Council:

- 1 *Receives the Report Elected Member attendance at LGNZ YEM Annual Hui: 6 to 8 December 2023, Far North District; and*
- 2 *Approves that Elected Members Molly Jeffries, Oriwia Wanakore and Anthony Gurr attend the LGNZ YEM Annual Hui between 6 and 8 December 2023 in representation of Ruapehu District Council.*

12 Adoption of Council Meeting and Workshop Schedule 2024
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Members were presented with the proposed Ordinary Meeting and Workshop Schedule for the period from January to December 2024 for consideration and approval. Governance Manager spoke to the report and answered Members' questions.

RESOLVED

Moved: Cr Kahukura Hadley-Chase

Seconded: Cr Hinch

That the Council:

- 1 *Receives the Report **Adoption of Council Meeting and Workshop Schedule 2024;***
- 2 *Approves and adopts the schedule of ordinary meetings for the Council for the period of February to December 2024 to be the following Wednesdays at 10AM with at least two meetings to be held on Marae:*

Southern Venue	Northern Venue
28 February	21 March
21 April	29 May
21 June	28 August
25 September	23 October
27 November	13 December (National Park)

- 3 Approves and adopts the schedule of workshops for Elected Members for the period of January to December 2024 to be the following Wednesdays at 10AM with at least two workshops to be held on Marae:
 - (a) January 31
 - (b) February 7, 14 and 21
 - (c) March 6, 13 and 20
 - (d) April 3, 10 and 17
 - (e) May 1 and 8
 - (f) June 6, 12 and 19
 - (g) July 31
 - (h) August 7 and 14
 - (i) September 4, 11 and 18
 - (j) October 2, 9, 16 and 30
 - (k) November 6, 13 and 20
 - (l) December 4 and 11
- 4 Notes that additional ordinary, and extraordinary meetings may be scheduled, and workshops may be rescheduled or cancelled from time in consultation with the Mayor and Chief Executive.
- 5 Approves for the Long Term Plan Hearings to be scheduled on two consecutive days, one day to be a Wednesday, in May;
- 6 Notes the Community Board Meetings schedules as follows:
 - (a) The Owhango-National Park and the Taumarunui-Ohura Community Boards have resolved to meet on an eight-weekly basis; and
 - (b) The Waimarino-Waiouru Community Board has resolved to meet on a six-weekly basis at community venues within the ward area as per the **attachment**.
- 7 Instructs the Chief Executive to investigate holding Council workshops in public and provide a report to a future Council Meeting; and
- 8 Agrees to explore changing Council's Meetings and Workshops to a different day of the week for 2025.

13 Financial Monitoring Report for the Month Ending 30 September 2023
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*Note: Councillor Hinch left the meeting at 11:27AM and reentered at 11:30AM
Deputy Mayor Hoeta left the meeting at 11:32AM and was absent for the decision*

Members received a report monitoring Council's financial performance against the Annual Plan 2022/23. Council's Senior Management Accountant spoke to the report and answered Members' questions.

RESOLVED

Moved: Cr Iwikau

Seconded: Cr Gram

That the Council:

- 1 Receives the Report **Financial Monitoring Report for the Month Ending 30 September 2023** for information.

14 Mayor's Monthly Report

Note: Deputy Mayor Hoeta was absent for this item

Members received a report advising Elected Members of appointments and meetings undertaken by the Mayor during the month of September 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.

RESOLVED

Moved: Mayor Kirton

Seconded: Cr Neeson

That the Council:

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

15 Chief Executive's Monthly Report

Note: Deputy Mayor Hoeta reentered the meeting at 11:34AM

Members received an update of the organisation's activity over the September 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.

Councillor Hinch requested the Council seek assistance from Local Government New Zealand to amend local Bylaws and prevent land banking.

RESOLVED

Moved: Cr Kahukura Hadley-Chase

Seconded: Cr Wilson

That the Council:

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

16 Mayor, Deputy Mayor, Chief Executive and Elected Members' Reports (Verbal)

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

17 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 Wilson

Seconded: Cr Hinch

That the Council:

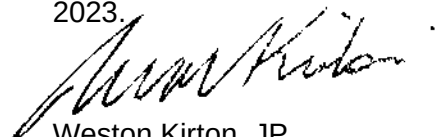
- 1 *Receives the **Report Resolution to Exclude the Public for Consideration of Council Business**;*
- 2 *Excludes the public from the following part(s) of the proceedings of this meeting;*
- 3 *Notes the general subject of the matters to be considered while the public is excluded, the reason for passing 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 27 September 2023	For the reasons set out in the Public Business Minutes of the Council Meeting 27 September 2023.	
C2 Confidential Deputation: Visit Ruapehu Section 17A Review	s7(2)(a) To protect the privacy of natural persons that may be impacted as a result of the resolution of Council following the review.	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 7.
C3 Section 17A Review Economic Development RTO isite	s7(2)(a) To protect the privacy of natural persons that may be impacted as a result of the resolution of Council.	
C4 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 representatives of Visit Ruapehu are permitted to remain at this meeting after the public has been excluded to present Item C2.*
- 5 *Approves that representatives of Morrison Low are permitted to remain at this meeting after the public has been excluded because of their knowledge of Item C3.*

The Public Business part of the meeting concluded at 12:02PM.

The minutes of this meeting were confirmed at the Council Meeting held this 22nd day of November 2023.



Weston Kirton, JP
MAYOR

ITEMS BROUGHT INTO THE PUBLIC BUSINESS MINUTES
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C2 Confidential Deputation: Visit Ruapehu Section 17A Review

Jo Kennedy, General Manager, and Antoinette Rolls, Chair of Visit Ruapehu made a presentation to Members regarding the Economic Development Section 17A review as tabled at Item C3 of the Agenda (see Minute Attachment). Members were advised the intention of the deputation was to support the process and to help Council find the right decisions for the community that meets the needs of the District's visitors.

Councillor Hinch's position as the Council appointed Director to the Visit Ruapehu Board was noted; she clarified her position and expressed she did not feel she had a conflict of interest.

Minute Attachment(s)

- 1 *Visit Ruapehu Presentation*

RESOLVED

Moved: **Cr Kahukura Hadley-Chase**

Seconded: Cr Hinch

That the Council:

- 1 *Receives the Confidential Deputation **Visit Ruapehu Section 17A Review** for information;*
- 2 **Does** *record this resolution in the Public Business Minutes of this meeting; and*
- 3 **Does Not** *release this report as publicly available information.*

Councillor Neeson requested her vote AGAINST the motion be recorded

RUAPEHU DISTRICT COUNCIL
Te Kaunihera-ā-Rohe o Ruapehu

MINUTE ATTACHMENT(S)

THE MEETING OF RUAPEHU DISTRICT COUNCIL HELD IN THE
COUNCIL CHAMBERS, 59-61 HUIA STREET, TAUMARUNUI
ON WEDNESDAY, 25 OCTOBER 2023, AT 10:06AM

Item	Page
8 Adoption of the Annual Report and Annual Report Summary 2022/23	2
1 Independent Auditor's Report	

Independent Auditor's Report

To the readers of Ruapehu District Council's annual report for the year ended 30 June 2023

The Auditor-General is the auditor of Ruapehu District Council (the District Council) and its subsidiaries and controlled entities (the Group). The Auditor-General has appointed me, Clarence Susan, using the staff and resources of Audit New Zealand, to report on the information in the District Council's annual report that we are required to audit under the Local Government Act 2002 (the Act). We refer to this information as "the audited information" in our report.

We are also required to report on:

- whether the District Council has complied with the requirements of Schedule 10 of the Act that apply to the annual report; and
- the completeness and accuracy of the District Council's disclosures about its performance against benchmarks that are required by the Local Government (Financial Reporting and Prudence) Regulations 2014.

We refer to this information as "the disclosure requirements" in our report.

We completed our work on 25 October 2023. This is the date on which we give our report.

Opinion on the audited information

In our opinion:

- the financial statements on pages xx to xx of section two:
 - present fairly, in all material respects:
 - the District Council and Group's financial position as at 30 June 2023;
 - the results of the operations and cash flows for the year ended on that date; and
 - comply with generally accepted accounting practice in New Zealand in accordance with the Public Benefit Entity Reporting Standards;
- the funding impact statement on page xx of section two, presents fairly, in all material respects, the amount of funds produced from each source of funding and how the funds were applied as compared to the information included in the District Council's Long-term plan;

- the statement of service provision (referred to in the annual report as Council Activities) on pages xx to xx of section one:
 - presents fairly, in all material respects, the levels of service for each group of activities for the year ended 30 June 2023, including:
 - the levels of service achieved compared with the intended levels of service and whether any intended changes to levels of service were achieved;
 - the reasons for any significant variation between the levels of service achieved and the intended levels of service; and
 - complies with generally accepted accounting practice in New Zealand; and
- the statement about capital expenditure for each group of activities on pages xx to xx of section one presents fairly, in all material respects, actual capital expenditure as compared to the budgeted capital expenditure included in the District Council's Long-term plan; and
- the funding impact statement for each group of activities on pages xx to xx of section one, presents fairly, in all material respects, the amount of funds produced from each source of funding and how the funds were applied as compared to the information included in the District Council's Long-term plan.

Report on the disclosure requirements

We report that the District Council has:

- complied with the requirements of Schedule 10 of the Act that apply to the annual report; and
- made the disclosures about performance against benchmarks as required by the Local Government (Financial Reporting and Prudence) Regulations 2014 on pages xx to xx of section two, which represent a complete list of required disclosures and accurately reflects the information drawn from the District Council and Group's audited information and, where applicable, the District Council's Long-term plan and annual plans.

The basis for our opinion is explained below and we draw attention to uncertainty over the water services reform programme. In addition, we outline the responsibilities of the Council and our responsibilities relating to the audited information, we comment on other information, and we explain our independence.

Emphasis of matter – Uncertainty over the water services reform programme

Without modifying our opinion, we draw attention to Note XX on page XX, which outlines developments in the Government's water services reform programme which will affect the District Council in future years.

The Water Services Entities Act 2022, as amended by the Water Services Entities Amendment Act 2023 on 23 August 2023 and the Water Services Legislation Act 2023 on 31 August 2023, establishes ten publicly owned water services entities to carry out responsibilities for the delivery of three waters services and related assets and liabilities currently controlled by local authorities. Water services entities' establishment dates are staggered, with all the water services entities becoming operational between 1 July 2024 and 1 July 2026. The financial impact of the water services reform on the Council as outlined in note XX remains uncertain until the relevant water services entity's establishment date is known, and the allocation schedule of assets, liabilities, and other matters to be transferred is approved.

Basis for our opinion on the audited information

We carried out our audit in accordance with the Auditor-General's Auditing Standards, which incorporate the Professional and Ethical Standards and the International Standards on Auditing (New Zealand) issued by the New Zealand Auditing and Assurance Standards Board. We describe our responsibilities under those standards further in the "Responsibilities of the auditor for the audited information" section of this report.

We have fulfilled our responsibilities in accordance with the Auditor-General's Auditing Standards.

We believe that the audit evidence we have obtained is sufficient and appropriate to provide a basis for our opinion on the audited information.

Responsibilities of the Council for the audited information

The Council is responsible for meeting all legal requirements that apply to its annual report.

The Council's responsibilities arise under the Local Government Act 2002 and the Local Government (Financial Reporting and Prudence) Regulations 2014.

The Council is responsible for such internal control as it determines is necessary to enable it to prepare the information we audit that is free from material misstatement, whether due to fraud or error.

In preparing the information we audit the Council is responsible for assessing its ability to continue as a going concern. The Council is also responsible for disclosing, as applicable, matters related to going concern and using the going concern basis of accounting, unless there is an intention to amalgamate or cease all of the functions of the District Council and the Group or there is no realistic alternative but to do so.

Responsibilities of the auditor for the audited information

Our objectives are to obtain reasonable assurance about whether the audited information, as a whole, is free from material misstatement, whether due to fraud or error, and to issue an audit report that includes our opinion.

Reasonable assurance is a high level of assurance, but is not a guarantee that an audit carried out in accordance with the Auditor General's Auditing Standards will always detect a material misstatement when it exists. Misstatements are differences or omissions of amounts or disclosures, and can arise from fraud or error. Misstatements are considered material if, individually or in the aggregate, they could reasonably be expected to influence the decisions of readers taken on the basis of this audited information.

For the budget information reported in the audited information, our procedures were limited to checking that the budget information agreed to the District Council's Long-term plan.

We did not evaluate the security and controls over the electronic publication of the audited information.

As part of an audit in accordance with the Auditor-General's Auditing Standards, we exercise professional judgement and maintain professional scepticism throughout the audit. Also:

- We identify and assess the risks of material misstatement of the audited information, whether due to fraud or error, design and perform audit procedures responsive to those risks, and obtain audit evidence that is sufficient and appropriate to provide a basis for our opinion. The risk of not detecting a material misstatement resulting from fraud is higher than for one resulting from error, as fraud may involve collusion, forgery, intentional omissions, misrepresentations, or the override of internal control.
- We obtain an understanding of internal control relevant to the audit in order to design audit procedures that are appropriate in the circumstances, but not for the purpose of expressing an opinion on the effectiveness of the District Council and Group's internal control.
- We evaluate the appropriateness of accounting policies used and the reasonableness of accounting estimates and related disclosures made by the Council.
- We determine the appropriateness of the reported intended levels of service in the statement of service provision (referred to in the annual report as Council Activities), as a reasonable basis for assessing the levels of service achieved and reported by the District Council.
- We conclude on the appropriateness of the use of the going concern basis of accounting by the Council and, based on the audit evidence obtained, whether a material uncertainty exists related to events or conditions that may cast a significant doubt on the District Council and Group's ability to continue as a going concern. If we conclude that a material uncertainty exists, we are required to draw attention in our audit report to the related disclosures in the audited information or, if such disclosures are inadequate, to modify our opinion. Our conclusions are based on the audit evidence obtained up to the date of our auditor's report. However, future events or conditions may cause the District Council and the Group to cease to continue as a going concern.
- We evaluate the overall presentation, structure, and content of the audited information, including the disclosures, and whether the audited information represents, where

applicable, the underlying transactions and events in a manner that achieves fair presentation.

- We obtain sufficient appropriate audit evidence regarding the audited information of the entities or business activities within the Group to express an opinion on the consolidated audited information. We are responsible for the direction, supervision and performance of the Group audit. We remain solely responsible for our audit opinion.

We communicate with the Council regarding, among other matters, the planned scope and timing of the audit and significant audit findings, including any significant deficiencies in internal control that we identify during our audit.

Our responsibilities arise from the Public Audit Act 2001.

Other Information

The Council is responsible for the other information included in the annual report. The other information comprises the information included on pages xx to xx and xx to xx of section one and pages xx to xx and xx and xx of section two, but does not include the audited information and the disclosure requirements, and our auditor's report thereon.

Our opinion on the audited information and our report on the disclosure requirements do not cover the other information, and we do not express any form of audit opinion or assurance conclusion thereon.

Our responsibility is to read the other information. In doing so, we consider whether the other information is materially inconsistent with the audited information and the disclosure requirements, or our knowledge obtained during our work, or otherwise appears to be materially misstated. If, based on our work, we conclude that there is a material misstatement of this other information, we are required to report that fact. We have nothing to report in this regard.

Independence

We are independent of the District Council and Group in accordance with the independence requirements of the Auditor-General's Auditing Standards, which incorporate the independence requirements of Professional and Ethical Standard 1: International Code of Ethics for Assurance Practitioners (including International Independence Standards) (New Zealand) (PES 1) issued by the New Zealand Auditing and Assurance Standards Board.

In addition to our audit and our report on the disclosure requirements, we have carried out engagements in the areas of a limited assurance engagement related to the District Council's debenture trust deed, which are compatible with those independence requirements. Other than these engagements we have no relationship with or interests in the District Council.

Clarence Susan
Audit New Zealand
On behalf of the Auditor-General
Tauranga, New Zealand
