MINUTES

RANGITĪKEI DISTRICT COUNCIL
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EREWHON RURAL WATER SUPPLY MANAGEMENT SUB-COMMITTEE MEETING

Date:	**Tuesday, 3 March 2026**
Time:	**4.00pm**
Venue:	**Kokako Street Pavilion** **2 Kokako Street** **Taihape**

Present	Mr Jock Stratton Mr Peter Batley Mr Simon Plimmer Mr Paul McLaren Mr Benjamin Mallalieu Cr Jeff Wong
In attendance	Cr Diana Baird Mr Dene Smith Mr Danny Hopkins Mr Warren Pedley, Manager Finance and Partnerships (Zoom) Ms Kezia Spence, Governance Advisor

Order of Business

1 Welcome

Mr Stratton opened the meeting at 4.00pm

2 Apologies

Resolved minute number 26/ERWS/001

That the apologies from Barry Thomas, Geoff Duncan and HWTM Watson be received.

Mr B Mallalieu/Mr S Plimmer. Carried

3 Public Forum

There was no public forum.

4 Conflict of Interest Declarations

There were no conflicts of interest declared.

5 Confirmation of Order of Business

There were no changes to the order of business.

6 Confirmation of Minutes

Matters arising:

- Members raised that there was a loan of $25,000 was identified as an error due to insufficient supporting documentation to reconcile it with the ledger. The balance showed inconsistencies year on year, and as it could not be substantiated or verified, it was written off and noted in the meeting minutes. HWTM will follow up on the write-off and any related actions.

Amendment:

- Spelling of Mangaohane

Resolved minute number 26/ERWS/002

That the minutes of Erewhon Rural Water Supply Management Sub-Committee Meeting held on 2 December 2025 as amended be taken as read and verified as an accurate and correct record of the meeting, and that the electronic signature of the Chair of this Committee be added to the official minutes document as a formal record.

Mr P McLaren/Mr S Plimmer. Carried

7 Chair's Report

7.1 Chair's Report - March 2026

There was no chair's report.

8 Reports for Information

8.1 Erewhon RWS - Financial Summary - Year to Date 31 January 2026

Mr Pedley introduced the report noting there are significant costs relating to contractors and services, expected to more than double compared to last year. This increase is largely driven by ongoing repairs and maintenance across the network, including continuation repairs and 4x4-related work, with approximately $134,000 attributed to maintenance contractors. The Aorangi payment of $1,250 per quarter (CPI adjusted) was also noted. Concerns were raised about being over budget, with no financial projections completed to date. Mr Pedley advised he would provide a more detailed breakdown of costs following further discussions with Mr van Bussel particularly in relation to increased repairs on the network.

Mr Smith highlighted that repairs have focused on key areas, including Pukerimu and ongoing works in the Mangaohane areas, with additional high-priority sections identified, though potentially expensive. Costs associated with sluicing (approximately $3,500 monthly), leak repairs, and operational expenses such as side-by-side vehicle use (around $200 per day) were noted as contributing to budget pressures. Mr Pedley will further analyse and report back to Mr Stratton regarding these concerns.

In relation to rate setting, it was noted that this is based on a three-year capital programme, with little capital expenditure undertaken in recent years. A potential overdraft position of $108,000 was discussed, which could be covered by Council, though this would require a formal recommendation and agreement, including repayment terms and possible interest at Council cost. The committee discussed whether to proceed with the capital expenditure (CAPEX) programme, noting a lack of clear direction from the previous meeting. Scheme users are seeking greater certainty, and a rates increase was discussed as a possible mechanism to accelerate planned works. It was agreed that a longer-term plan (including the 10-year plan) should be revisited, prioritising high-leak areas that are costly to maintain, such as sections in the Hanna Block, where multiple failures have occurred despite no renewals in the past 18 years.

The need for a structured and disciplined approach was emphasised, including obtaining quotes, setting timelines, and developing a clear plan before engaging with Council and scheme users. Key projects identified include works in Pukerimu (from the bridge upstream), Kelly Line, Mangaohane Swamp, sections above the river, and areas from Pukerimu yards down to the Rangitikei River. It is intended that some or all of these projects be scoped and quoted to support funding discussions with Council and enable work to commence early the following summer. Obtaining quotes from contractors and having them independently reviewed was recommended.

It was noted that if the committee enters a deficit position, engagement with Council and clear communication with scheme users will be required, particularly if rates are to increase. Any proposed rate increase must be well justified and communicated. A reminder regarding the potential rates increase will be included in the December meeting agenda.

Cr Baird left the meeting at 5:00pm.

Resolved minute number 26/ERWS/003

That the report 'ERWS Financial Summary – Jan 2026 be received and approved.

Mr S Plimmer/Mr P McLaren. Carried

Resolved minute number 26/ERWS/004

That the Erewhon Rural Water Scheme Committee do not increase rates for the 2026/27.

Mr P McLaren/Mr P Batley. Carried Unanimous

8.2 Operations Report – March

Mr Smith provided an operational update, noting that the scheme is generally progressing well, although there has been a continued run of repairs. Discussion included the treatment of certain pipe-related costs and whether these should be coded as CAPEX or maintenance, with a follow-up action to confirm correct coding.

A request for a quote for the Mangaohane Swamp project from Mr van Bussel was noted as a follow-up action.

The meeting moved into public excluded at 5:26pm to discuss matters relating to privacy and negotiations, including staff pay rates.

The Mayor arrived at 5.36pm.

The meeting moved out of public excluded at 5:40pm.

Resolved minute number 26/ERWS/005

That the Operations Report – March be received.

Mr J Stratton/Mr P McLaren. Carried

The meeting closed at 6.00pm

The minutes of this meeting were confirmed at the Erewhon Rural Water Supply Management Sub-Committee held on 2 June 2026.

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Chairperson