

ORDER PAPER

TE RŌPŪ AHI KĀ MEETING

Date: Tuesday, 12 August 2025
Time: 11.00am
Venue: Council Chambers
Rangitikei District Council
46 High Street
Marton

Tumuaki: Ms Piki Te Ora Hiroa, (Ngāti Whitikaupeka)

Tumuaki Tuarua: Ms Kim Savage (Ngāti Parewahawaha)

Nga mema: Ms Gaylene Nepia (Ngāti Kauae/Tauira), Mr Thomas Curtis (Te Rūnanga o Ngāti Hauiti), Ms Marj Heeney (Ngāi Te Ohuake), Ms Moira Raukawa (Ngāti Tamakopiri), Ms Leanne Hiroti, (Ngā Ariki Turakina), Dr Katarina Gray-Sharp (Ngāti Rangi), Ms Grace Taiaroa (Rātana Pā), Mr Jordan Winiata-Haines (Ngāti Hinemanu/Ngāti Paki), Cr Coral Raukawa, Cr Gill Duncan, HWTM Andy Watson

Kezia Spence, Governance Advisor, 0800 422 522 (ext. 917), or via email

Contact:	0800 422 522 info@rangitikei.govt.nz www.rangitikei.govt.nz (06) 327 0099
Locations:	<u>Marton</u> Head Office 46 High Street Marton <u>Bulls</u> Bulls Information Centre Te Matapihi 4 Criterion Street Bulls <u>Taihape</u> Taihape Information Centre 102 Hautapu Street (SH1) Taihape
Postal Address:	Private Bag 1102, Marton 4741
Fax:	(06) 327 6970

Notice is hereby given that a Te Rōpū Ahi Kā Meeting of the Rangitīkei District Council will be held in the Council Chamber, Rangitīkei District Council, 46 High Street, Marton on Tuesday, 12 August 2025 at 11.00am.

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AGENDA

1 Karakia/Prayer

2 Apologies

3 Public Forum

4 Conflict of Interest Declarations

Members are reminded of their obligation to declare any conflicts of interest they might have in respect of items on this agenda.

5 Confirmation of Order of Business

That, taking into account the explanation provided why the item is not on the meeting agenda and why the discussion of the item cannot be delayed until a subsequent meeting, [enter item number](#) be dealt as a late item at this meeting.

6 Confirmation of Minutes

6.1 Confirmation of Minutes

Author: Kezia Spence, Governance Advisor

1. Reason for Report

- 1.1 The minutes from **Te Rōpū Ahi Kā Meeting held on 10 June 2025** are attached.

Attachments

1. **Te Rōpū Ahi Kā Meeting - 10 June 2025**

Recommendation

That the minutes of Te Rōpū Ahi Kā Meeting held on 10 June 2025 **[as amended/without amendment]** 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.

MINUTES

UNCONFIRMED: TE RŌPŪ AHI KĀ MEETING

Date: Tuesday, 10 June 2025

Time: 11.00am

Venue: Council Chamber
Rangitikei District Council
46 High Street
Marton

Tumuaki: Ms Piki Te Ora Hiroa (Ngāti Whitikaupeka)

Tumuaki Tuarua: Ms Kim Savage (Ngāti Parewahawaha)

Nga mema: Mr Thomas Curtis (Te Rūnanga o Ngāti Hauiti) (Zoom)
Ms Marj Heeney (Ngāi Te Ohuake)
Ms Moira Raukawa (Ngāti Tamakopiri) (Zoom)
Ms Leanne Hiroti (Ngā Ariki Turakina)
Dr Katarina Gray-Sharp (Ngāti Rangī)(Zoom)
Ms Grace Taiaroa (Ratana Pa)
Ms Gaylene Nepia (Ngāti Kauae Ngā Taurā)
Cr Gill Duncan
HWTM Andy Watson

Manuhiri: Mrs Carol Gordon, Chief Executive
Mr Arno Benadie, Deputy Chief Executive
Ms Katrina Gray, Group Manager – Strategy, Community and Democracy
Ms Fran Pere, Mana Whenua Strategic Advisor
Ms Joanne Manuel, Manager Mana Whenua & Community Hubs
Ms Tiffany Gower, Strategy Manager
Mr Jarrod Calkin, Economic Lead
Ms Kezia Spence, Governance Advisor
Ms Bronwyn Hautapu, Horizons Regional Council

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1 Karakia / Prayer

Ms Hiroa opened the meeting at 11.02am and welcomed Ms Nepia to the Komiti and staff from Horizons Regional Council.

2 Apologies

There were no apologies received.

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 was no change to the order of business.

6 Confirmation of Minutes

Resolved minute number 25/IWI/012

That the minutes of Te Rōpū Ahi Kā Meeting held on 8 April 2025 **without amendment** 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.

Ms P Hiroa/Ms G Taiaroa. Carried

7 Follow-up Actions

7.1 Follow-up Action Items from Te Rōpū Ahi Kā Meetings

The report was taken as read.

Resolved minute number 25/IWI/013

That the report 'Follow-up Action Items from Te Rōpū Ahi Kā Meetings' be received.

Ms M Heeney/Ms G Taiaroa. Carried

8 Chair's Report

8.1 Chair's Report, Including Updates from Pre-Hui June 2025

The Chair read her report.

Maori Wards Discussion

The Komiti discussed Maori wards in the pre hui.

Ms Gray responded to questions that there is an overall comms strategy, noting that council has to be cautious to have a neutral opinion on this item, the purpose of this strategy is information only.

Resolved minute number 25/IWI/014

That the 'Chair's Report – June 2025' be received.

Ms P Hiroa/Ms K Savage. Carried

9 Reports for Information

9.1 Mana Whenua - Strategic Advisor Report

The Komiti discussed the report in the pre-hui and thanked Ms Pere for the work on this report.

Resolved minute number 25/IWI/015

That the report 'Mana Whenua - Strategic Advisor Report' be received.

Ms L Hiroti/Ms K Savage. Carried

9.2 Māori Responsiveness Framework

The Komiti spoke about this item that there have been workshops on the framework previously. Ms Pere would like to review the framework, and a suggested workshop date will come out to the Komiti.

Resolved minute number 25/IWI/016

That the report for information – Māori Responsiveness Framework be received.

Ms M Heeney/Ms K Savage. Carried

Resolved minute number 25/IWI/017

That a review date for the Māori Responsiveness Framework be confirmed and scheduled within the current calendar year.

Ms P Hiroa/Ms G Taiaroa. Carried

9.3 Local Waters Done Well - Update June 2025

Mrs Gordon updated the Komiti on the current situation and advised that Ruapehu and Whanganui councils are working through their decision. Council has made the decision to go with a wider grouping that includes Palmerston North City Council and Horowhenua District Council. Palmerston North City Council have had a change to their wastewater programme which initially was a large cost for the Council and these changes will be supported by Taumata Arowai as they update wastewater standards.

The Komiti noted that as part of their next discussion they will work together to produce a solution to make iwi relationships with the new entity easier.

Resolved minute number 25/IWI/018

That the report for information – Local Waters Done Well – Update June 2025 be received.

.Ms M Raukawa/Ms L Hiroti. Carried

9.4 Rangitikei Tomorrow - Economic Strategy Draft

Mr Calkin advised that he would send out a survey to the Komiti for any feedback.

Resolved minute number 25/IWI/019

That the report 'Rangitikei Tomorrow – Economic Strategy Draft' is received.

Ms G Taiaroa/Ms Nepia. Carried

9.5 Update on Proposed Plan Change 3 - Urban Growth

The meeting adjourned at 12.06pm and returned at 12.20pm.

Ms Hiroti left at this item at 12.21pm.

Ms Gower advised that this will be going to the Policy/Planning committee this week and looking for feedback.

Resolved minute number 25/IWI/020

That the report Update on Proposed Plan Change 3 – Urban Growth be received.

Ms Nepia/Dr K Gray-Sharp. Carried

9.6 Where's the Annual Plan 2025/26 & Co @ Rangitikei update

Ms Gower highlighted that there were twenty-three submissions received, and that Council has deliberated on the Annual Plan 2025/26.

Resolved minute number 25/IWI/021

That the report 'Where's the Annual Plan 2025/26 & Co @ Rangitīkei Update' be received.

Ms M Heeney/Ms Nepia. Carried

9.7 External Consultations Update

Regulatory Standards Bill

Submissions on the Regulatory Standards Bill is closing on the 23 June and the Komiti would like to submit. Dr Gray – Sharp will undertake this submission on behalf of the Komiti and circulate this to members before submission.

Resolved minute number 25/IWI/022

That the report 'External Consultations Update' be received.

Ms M Raukawa/Ms K Savage. Carried

9.8 Mayor's Report - May 2025

Mayors Taskforce for Jobs

The Mayor updated that there are a number of councils pulling out of the programme as there is a change of focus for the programme for those on benefits instead of NEETS.

Health

The Mayor and Cr Hiroa met with Minister Simone Brown about the aspirations in Taihape for health services.

Nga Wai Tota

The Mayor highlighted the work on the Whangaehu catchment.

Resolved minute number 25/IWI/023

That the Mayor's Report – May 2025 be accepted.

HWTM A Watson/Ms M Heeney. Carried

9.9 Project Updates Report - May 2025

Marton to Bulls Wastewater Centralisation

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ATTACHMENT 1

There are uncertainties with the wastewater standards that may change and impact on this project.

Rātana Wastewater Discharge to Land

Officers advised, similar to the Marton to Bulls project as Council awaits advice on the wastewater standards changes.

There is also a hold on this project as there have been objections to this project and a Hearing to come.

Taihape Grandstand

There is a user group meeting on the building and the funds remaining for this project.

The Komiti raised the windfarms in Taihape, and the water required for this project. Officers were unable to provide a response to the questions as Council is not processing the consent.

Resolved minute number 25/IWI/024

That the report 'Project Updates Report – May 2025' be received.

Ms Nepia/Ms M Raukawa. Carried

The meeting closed at 1.35pm

The minutes of this meeting were confirmed at the Te Rōpū Ahi Kā Komiti held on 12 August 2025.

.....
Chairperson

7 Follow-up Action Items from Previous Meetings

7.1 Follow-up Action Items from Te Rōpū Ahi Kā Meetings

Author: Kezia Spence, Governance Advisor

1. Reason for Report

- 1.1 On the list attached are items raised at previous Te Roopuu Ahi Kaa meetings. Items indicate who is responsible for follow up, and a brief status comment.

2. Decision Making Process

- 2.1 Staff have assessed the requirements of the Local Government Act 2002 in relation to this item and have concluded that, as this report is for information only, the decision-making provisions do not apply.

Attachments:

1. Follow-up Actions Register [↓](#)

Recommendation

That the report 'Follow-up Action Items from Te Rōpū Ahi Kā Meetings' be received.

Current Follow-up Actions					
Item	From Meeting Date	Details	Person Assigned	Status Comments	Status
1	10-Jun-25	Huriwaka - where is the water going to come from for the project?	Johanna	At this stage it is not confirmed by the Applicant where or how an adequate water supply will be sourced. The applicant has been asked to provide detail of the source of water. Noted Horizons Regional Council has also received this action through Bronwyn.	In progress
2	10-Jun-25	1 page LWDW flyer - with information for TRAK members to take back to their members. E.g. FAQs.	Fran / Sophia	This was emailed out to komiti members on 23 June 2025	Completed
3	10-Jun-25	Communications material for the elections out to TRAK members. All phases Sophia to make contact with TRAK around elections promotion material. Including the date for close of Māori roll changes (13 July).	Katrina / Sophia	Fran sent this out 23 June 2025.	Completed
4	11-Apr-23	Continue to approach Ngāti Waewae to progress a relationship between them and Council.	HWTM / Carol / Karen	A letter has been sent to Ngāti Waewae offering a relationship. A hui is yet to be scheduled.	In progress

8 Chair's Report

8.1 Chair's Report, Including Updates from Pre-Hui August 2025

Author: Piki Te Ora Hiroa, Chair

**Te Roopu Ahi Kaa: Te Ripōata Tiamana
Here-turi-koka 2025**

E ngā raurangatira ma o te rohe e huihui mai nei, tena koutou, tena koutou, tena koutou katoa!

I'd like to firstly, acknowledge the important role that Marae play within Te Ao Maori especially in the times of Hui mate and would like to mihi to "Ahi Kaa" across the rohe who hold the line and continue to stand up to uphold the mana of their respective Marae and people. We acknowledge and send our aroha to whanau that have lost loved ones in this time period across the rohe!

E ngā pare raukura o te mate mo ēnei marama kua pahure, haere , haere , haere atu ra!

We all bear witness to the global madness that is happening at this very moment in time, that sees basic human rights trampled upon, tyranny, hatred, intolerance, oppression that leads to wars, mistrust, and fear. How is that being reflected back into Aotearoa New Zealand, into our government, into our regions and our towns and villages that we live in? One would hope that all of the negative things and behaviours that are being displayed by those other people are not what we see in our people of the Rangitikei! Look in the mirror everyday and ask "am I part of the solution?" or "am I part of the problem that continues to fuel mistrust, intolerance and hate?" Kia kaha whanau!

Te Roopu Ahi Kaa Hui are known to challenge thinking, ask our council to look at kaupapa from a different point of view but ultimately do it where everyone's mana remains intact. I am sure that today's hui will be no different!

Our Agenda items today include some of the Bi-monthly kaupapa under "business as usual" but also has a couple of out of the ordinary things to be discussed

- **Mayor's Report** - Mayor Andy to Feedback
- **Mana Whenua Strategic Advisor Report** - Fran to feedback
 - Local Water Done Well Iwi Hui
 - Rate Remission sub - Komiti
 - Process to be undertaken to appoint a new member on to this komiti
 - Horizons
 - Feedback on what re-engagement with Horizons could look like
- **Planning** - Tiffany to feedback
 - Update to be given on a directive from Central Government around planning

As always, we look forward as a group to being enlightened, to learn new things, and participate in another robust discussion around the table

Whakatauaki!

“ Whakatau to wairua
rapua to rangimarie e ture kore!”

“Calm your soul , find peace in the chaos!

Piki Te Ora Hiroa, Tiamana

Recommendation

That the ‘Chair’s Report – August 2025’ be received.

9 Reports for Information

9.1 Mana Whenua Strategic Advisor Report

Author: Fran Pere, Strategic Advisor Mana Whenua

Authoriser: Joanne Manuel, Manager Mana Whenua and Community Hubs

1. Reason for Report

- 1.1 This report provides an update on key activities, structured around the following performance criteria: Cultural Development, Engagement and Council Projects.

2. Updates

- 2.1 Te Reo Lessons continue to support the development of staff confidence in delivering mihimihi and engaging with basic tikanga practices. Ongoing participation in these sessions is contributing to understanding and application of te reo Māori and tikanga in daily workplace interactions.
- 2.2 On Tuesday July 22, a consultation workshop was held on the proposed National Environmental Standards (NES) Papakāinga Package 1. The workshop was facilitated by Rachelle Johnston from Te Puni Kōkiri and included discussions on the implications of the standards and how they may apply to Māori in the district. A submission on the National Direction Packages 1-3 was submitted on behalf of the Council.
- 2.3 The Māori Responsiveness Framework is due for review. At a workshop held on Tuesday July 22, it was agreed that Te Rōpū Ahi Kā members would review the sections of the framework and provide feedback.
- 2.4 The chairperson from O'taahuhu Marae has reached out for assistance with the marae rebuild plans. They have since connected with Council officers to provide guidance and support.
- 2.5 On July 30 a Local Waters Done Well hui was held, extending the invitation to mana whenua and the Rātana Community to bring additional representation in order to provide an update on the journey of the three-council WS-CCO and its background, and to present an earlier draft of the joint Water Service Delivery Plan as a basis for discussing how they saw mana whenua and the Rātana Community being involved, both during the establishment and operation of the new Water Service-CCO.
- 2.6 One outcome of the hui was the proposal to establish a Rangitikei Technical Group, drawing on the expertise of representatives. A follow-up hui has been scheduled for Monday August 11, 2025, with this item as a key focus on the agenda.
- 2.7 An invitation has been extended for a wider hui with mana whenua across Palmerston North and Horowhenua scheduled for August 19, 2025, at Te Rangimārie Marae.
- 2.8 On Thursday August 14, 2025, Rangitikei District Council will deliberate on the adoption of the Water Service Deliver Plan. The WSDP is scheduled to be submitted to the Department of Internal Affairs by 3 September 2025.
- 2.9 On Monday August 4, Council staff hosted a formal whanaungatanga welcome for new Council staff in council chambers. This event allowed the new staff to meet the Mayor,

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our Executive Leadership Team, and Managers. The event was well-received, with positive feedback from attendees.

3. Rates Remission for Māori Freehold Land Policy

- 3.1 An application has been received under Council's Rates Remission for Māori Freehold Land Policy. These applications are considered by the Māori Land Rates Remission Sub-Committee which includes three elected members and three Te Rōpū Ahi Kā members. Piki Te Ora Hiroa, Thomas Curtis and Chris Shenton were nominated as members of the Sub-Committee when the last application was received (2023). However, Chris Shenton has since resigned from the Komiti, therefore, another member is required.

4. Financial Implications

- 4.1 There are no financial implications.

5. Impact on Strategic Risks

- 5.1 There are no impacts on strategic risks associated with this report. The topic has a number of strategic risks.

6. Strategic Alignment

- 6.1 A trusted partner with iwi is a community outcome in Council's strategic framework. This report has strong alignment with Council's strategic framework.

7. Mana Whenua Implications

- 7.1 Section 81 of the Local Government Act 2002 requires the Council to facilitate participation by Māori in its decision-making processes, to consider ways in which it may foster the development of Māori capacity to participate, and to provide relevant information.
- 7.2 Mana whenua implications are noted throughout this report

8. Climate Change Impacts and Consideration

9. There is no climate change impacts or considerations relating to this item

10. Statutory Implications

- 10.1 Performance measures around Māori Responsiveness are included in the Long Term Plan under the Local Government Act 2002.

11. Decision Making Process

- 11.1 There are no decisions required as a result of this report and the report is for information only.

Recommendation 1

That the report 'Mana Whenua - Strategic Advisor Report' be received.

Recommendation 2

That [insert here] are endorsed as members of the Māori Land Rates Remission Sub-Committee.

9.2 Brief Update on "Plan Stop"**Author:** Tiffany Gower, Strategy Manager**Authoriser:** Katrina Gray, Group Manager - Strategy, Community and Democracy**1. Reason for Report**1.1 On 16 July 2025 the Government announced a "*plan stop*" which effectively:

- Suspends the requirement for councils to undertake 10-year reviews of their District and Regional Plans;
- Suspends the requirement for councils to implement the National Planning Standards; and
- Includes an extension of the restriction on notifying freshwater planning instruments for a further two years to 31 December 2027.

1.2 The *plan stop* prevents the notification of new plan or regional policy statement reviews, changes, or variations. This does impact Rangitīkei District Council's District Plan review including Proposed Plan Change 3 – Urban Growth which is already underway.1.3 There are some exemptions to the *plan stop* including proposed plans, or parts of proposed plans, where that proposal is required by, or gives effect to, an obligation in:

- Treaty settlement legislation or Deeds;
- the Ngā Rohe Moana o Ngā Hapū o Ngāti Porou Act 2019; and
- the Marine and Coastal (Takutai Moana) Act 2011.

1.4 A verbal update will be provided to the Komiti, briefly outlining what this means for the Rangitīkei District Plan and in particular Proposed Plan Change 3 – Urban Growth.

Recommendation

That the report 'Brief Update on "Plan Stop"' be received.

9.3 External Consultations Update**Author:** Janna Harris, Corporate Planner**Authoriser:** Tiffany Gower, Strategy Manager**1. Reason for Report**

- 1.1 To provide an update to Te Rōpū Ahi Kā on the opportunities currently available to submit on consultations run by external agencies.

2. ContextConsultations submitted on

- 2.1 Since the last Te Rōpū Ahi Kā meeting Council has submitted on the following consultations:

- Proposed changes to Drinking Water Acceptable Solutions
- Regulatory Standards Bill
- Climate Change Response (ETS – Forestry Conversion) Amendment Bill
- National Direction Packages 1-3

- 2.2 These submissions can be found on Council's [website](#).

Consultations proposed for submission

- 2.3 The updated list of current opportunities to submit on consultations run by external agencies is attached (Attachment 1). This attachment contains further information, including links to the relevant websites for all current consultations.

- 2.4 Council intends to submit on the following consultations that are open for submission:

- National Direction - Package 4: Going for Housing Growth which is being run by the Ministry of Housing and Urban Development, due 17 August 2025.

Going for Housing Growth proposes changes to the National Policy Statement on Urban Development (NPS-UD) and signals the Government's approach for the RMA reform, focusing more on Tier 1, 2, and 3 local authorities.

The Rangitīkei District is not a Tier 1, 2 or 3 local authority, and therefore, the proposed changes have limited relevance for this District. The Rangitīkei District and the other non-tiered (rural and semi-rural) districts still play an important role in providing for urban development and growth, and Council will highlight this in its submission (which is being drafted currently).

- Local Government (System Improvements) Amendment Bill, due 27 August 2025.

This Amendment Bill stems from the Government's commitment to get local government 'back to basics.' The amendments include changing the purpose of local government, changes to measuring and publishing councils performance, prioritising core services, strengthening transparency and accountability, and some other minor changes.

3. Financial Implications

- 3.1 There are no financial implications associated with this report, Council submits on external consultations within existing budgets.

4. Impact on Strategic Risks

- 4.1 Changes to government legislation are transformational:

4.1.1 There is a risk that legislation changes result in significant changes for local government. Council mitigates this risk by keeping track of all potential changes and takes up opportunities to submit on consultations that will affect Council or our community.

5. Strategic Alignment

- 5.1 Some consultation topics have the potential to impact the types of services Council delivers, which could impact Council's ability to deliver our strategic priorities.

6. Mana Whenua Implications

- 6.1 The Komiti are asked to advise of any other mana whenua implications associated with this report.

7. Climate Change Impacts and Consideration

- 7.1 There are no climate change impacts associated with this report.

8. Statutory Implications

- 8.1 There are no statutory implications associated with this report.

9. Decision Making Process

- 9.1 There are no decision making processes associated with this report as this report is for information purposes only.

Attachments:

1. External Consultation Update - August 2025 [↓](#)

Recommendation

That that report 'External Consultations Update' be received.

Current Consultations

Name of Initiative	Agency Engaging	Due Date	Description	Proposed RDC Action
Currently Open for Submissions				
<u>Going for Housing Growth: Providing for urban development in the new resource management system</u>	Ministry of Housing and Urban Development	17 August	The Going for Housing Growth programme is part of the Government's broader plan to tackle Aotearoa New Zealand's ongoing housing shortage. It's structured around three pillars that make system changes to address the underlying causes of the housing supply shortage.	Submit
<u>Local Government (System Improvements) Amendment Bill</u>	Parliament Governance and Administration Committee	27 August	This primary policy objective of this bill is to reduce pressure on council rates by refocusing the purpose of local government, better measuring and publicising council performance, prioritising core services in council spending, strengthening council accountability and transparency, and providing regulatory relief to councils.	Submit

9.4 Mayor's Report - July 2025

Author: Andy Watson, His Worship the Mayor

Good afternoon

July has been busy with a number of events and continued work on Government reforms such as Local Water Done Well (LWDW) and the Resource Management Act (RMA) changes.

1. Te Pāti Māori MP Takutai Tarsh Kemp passed away at the end of June after battling kidney disease. Tarsh's tangi was held on her marae, Opaea, in Taihape. Opaea Marae is small and has recently been remodelled and is beautiful, but the challenge of hosting and feeding hundreds of people a day for four days would not have been possible without the support of neighbouring maraes Moawhango and Winiata. I attended the tangi to help host the visitors and support where I could. The major political parties all travelled to pay their respects.
2. The Local Government New Zealand (LGNZ) conference was held this year in Christchurch on 16-17 July. Local Government represents Councils to take or voice our concerns to Government. Many senior politicians across several parties spoke at the conference and I attach the conference programme to this report.

Once again, the Government looked to blame Local Government for everything including the cost of living, inflation and unemployment etc. This year the Prime Minister elected not to attend the conference, which was disappointing. Unfortunately, several Councils have withdrawn from LGNZ, including Christchurch who hosted the event. Local Government needs to be united and yes, we are a sector under pressure – some of which we should be accountable for. Outside the venue was a trailer highlighting the rate rises by a number of Councils including the pictures of Chairs and Mayors which I illustrate as an attachment to my report. The Taxpayer's Union, which organised this banner, gave figures of rate rises that may not have been the final position for these Councils. The Councils highlighted have rate rises ranging from 11% to 16.5% for the year. Our rate rise in the Rangitikei for comparison is under 8%.

At conference there was a talk from Government about future rates pegging, or setting the maximum rate increases for Council. However, even Government recognises that it is not simple and if rates pegging happens it will not include rates attached to three water services, housing and potentially roading – all of which are the major contributors to rate increases.

Every sector of Local Government and Government knows that a review of the RMA is needed. New Zealand spends about \$1.3b per year on resource consents which is a process that is both incredibly expensive and takes far too long. Minister Bishop has instructed Councils not to proceed with planning changes while the reshape of the RMA is happening. So, the valuable work we as a Council have done on spatial plans and rezoning for housing growth will go "on hold". However, there will be a conversation and possible exemption for the Rangitikei because the Government also wants us to provide for housing urgently.

The key messages from Government throughout the conference, repeated several times, were:-

- i) "The culture of Yes starts now, the time for excuses is over".

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- ii) “Housing and supermarkets are essential services – make it easy”.
- iii) “Councils need to get back to basics”.
- iv) “Buildings need to be basic/functional not an architect’s gold-plated design”.

Many of which are valid points. As a sector we do have to cut our cloth to meet affordability.

In contrast, the Opposition’s address by Chris Hipkins was one where he thanked the Local Government sector, saying that “swimming pools, libraries etc are not nice to have – they are important and needed”. He highlighted that the increased cost on ratepayers comes partly due to new services/costs imposed by Government. Chris said that there needs to be a true relationship between Central and Local Government and that rate increases have been because many generations have neglected to invest. He warned Councils that “there is a significant cost to inaction or doing nothing” and that if Councils don’t fund replacements now, the cost to future populations will increase markedly.

There was an interesting presentation around unlocking the Māori economy, citing Iwi capital position in New Zealand, now valued at \$126b and that they contribute \$32b to New Zealand’s GDP.

I will try to comment further on a number of speakers at conference in a future report.

3. The Mayor’s Taskforce for Jobs (MTFJ) also had both a breakfast session for members and an evening celebration of 25 Years of operation at the LGNZ conference. Louise Upston as Minister, was at both functions highlighting the success of the MTFJ programme in finding jobs and her willingness to support by way of another year’s guaranteed funding. She also wanted to signal the contract changes with the Ministry of Social Development. In the past MTFJ have focussed on working with young people, described as NEETs (Not in Education, Employment or Training). Under the new contract, we are required to have a 20% NEETs component with the 80% balance being people on the unemployment register. There has been disquiet around this contract with several Councils not taking a contract this year, which is a pity. Our results in the Rangitikei continue to be outstanding and consistently we lead the results nationally. The changes in the contract will make little difference to us as we find jobs for everyone and the needed results are covered.
4. On 1 July we changed roading contracts, with Downer replacing Higgins. This is a multi-million dollar contract over several years to service our road maintenance and construction. I congratulate Downer and look forward to working with them – their willingness to work alongside us in the form of an alliance model rather than just for us is quite a change. Equally, I thank Higgins for the work that they have done over the last few years. It is not an easy contract to service – our geology/land form and climate is particularly challenging. Many of the Higgins employees who live locally have transferred to Downer and will continue to be employed, which is satisfying.
5. Recently the Prime Minister Chris Luxon visited our district, stopping in at PEC in Marton, Honest Wolf in Hunterville and Hautapu Pine in Taihape, before a final meeting with party members in Feilding. The benefits of this trip were huge, for example, Taihape Health (fronted by Councillor Piki Te Ora Hiroa and Jude Macdonald) took the chance to update the Prime Minister on local health initiatives and the need to finalise arrangements at Taihape Hospital. The Prime Minister made several references to the effectiveness of local voice through Suze Redmayne. I don’t think that is just a standard response – it is a comment I have heard often from senior Government officials, so thanks Suze! I was also questioned by the Prime Minister

around our three waters decisions and the pressures we are under. He is happy with Council's positions.

6. On 29 June the Chris Amon statue was unveiled in the main street of Bulls. It was certainly a festive affair recognising a local hero who had an incredible record of Formula 1 racing throughout the world. My congratulations go to the organising committee, in particular Councillor Paul Sharland for the amount of research and fundraising undertaken which has obviously taken a huge effort over the last couple of years. The main street was closed off which allowed, I think, 17 Ferraris to be parked in front of the statue, something that the crowd drooled over. Certainly I was impressed and it's way beyond my ability to own one. The event finished with a social gathering at Te Matapihi.
7. I have recently attended two or three meetings with funders. The Bulls & District Community Trust AGM was held on 27 June and was a chance for me to say thankyou on behalf of the District for the vast amounts of money raised by the Trust for community projects over many many years. Equally, I attended the Four Regions Trust AGM in Whanganui on 23 July to acknowledge around \$300,000 that was paid out in the 24/25 year to the Rangitikei district with one of the major recipients being the Taihape Squash Club who received \$100,000 and \$50,000 for the Hautapu Bridges Project. I have also had a visit from Din Bandara, the CE of Whanganui Community Foundation, where we had a conversation around potential funds available for the Rangitikei. Our district would be incredibly poorer without external funding in these areas and it is appropriate that we thank them.
8. I have been approached by the Bulls & District Community Trust regarding the annual Christmas Parade. Following extensive consultation with stakeholders there is strong support for transitioning the "Celebration of Christmas" to the Bulls Domain. The location is seen as safer, more inclusive and better suited for a sustainable family-friendly event. There are also issues with road closures and traffic management plan costs - it's getting more difficult and expensive to continue to block the state highway for the annual street parade. The Trust have asked whether we would support this in principle and I am convinced that this is a good move. It's nice that this approach has come from the Trust as organisers rather than a directive from us or NZTA.
9. Recently I was called to a public meeting at St Joseph's School in Taihape regarding the ongoing concerns about safety at the SH1/Rauma Road intersection. The community are concerned about there being no effective pullover parking area while waiting to cross the intersection and the open speed limit of 100km/hr with difficulty of sight lines. The request from the community to NZTA is that there is a speed restriction on SH1 just south of Winiata Marae into Taihape, accompanied by effective electronic warning signs. This is not a new request – this is something that Council has asked for on numerous occasions. My understanding is that there have been 22 accidents in reasonably recent times and the concern is that we would like to see this action taken before one of those turns into a fatality. I attach as part of this report, the draft letter from Principal Peter Hijazeen, supported by Jordan Winiata from the Winiata Marae. As part of my report the recommendation is that we write a letter of support to NZTA highlighting our concerns.
10. Recently there has been a number of issues raised in Hunterville. The first of those was the issue of local policing possibly being replaced, and I stress 'possible' because a decision has not been made yet, by resourcing from Marton. I thank Hunterville for organising the community meeting which was incredibly well attended and the Area Police Commander Neil Forlong for his attendance. We understand that the final decision will be made at a higher level by the Central District Commander Dion Bennett. I have reached out to Dion asking for a

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meeting ahead of that decision, something he has agreed to. I am hopeful that policing will continue to be provided correctly out of Hunterville. On another matter, recently the main street of Hunterville has had a resealing that was a disaster with the road being ripped up in several areas. There has been a temporary fix which took considerable time and involved closures of sections of the street affecting retail trade. Our Economic Development lead Jarrod Calkin and I spent a little bit of time trying to repair the relationships in Hunterville over this. The road will need final resealing this coming summer and remediation works. It was a chance for us to apologise and explain the process going forward. Certainly our staff need to be absolutely definite around what will be done and the timeframes for road closures etc. I also take the chance to congratulate Hunterville – the Argyle Hotel has been sold and bought by, as I understand, around 50 members of the wider Hunterville Community who have all reached into their pockets. This is so typical of Hunterville – the history of just getting on with things and taking charge of their own destiny is something I absolutely admire and I am hoping as a Council we support them throughout the consenting processes and sit alongside them where we can. Hats off to you all in Hunterville!

Mayor's Engagements

July 2025

1	Attended Te Pāti Māori MP Takutai Tarsh Kemp's tangi Attended weekly meeting with Deputy Mayor
2	Attended fortnightly meeting with staff re Marton Water Strategy Attended meeting with Acting Chief Executive Attended networking event with Prime Minister at Hautapu Pine Taihape Attended fundraising event with Prime Minister in Feilding (at my personal expense)
3	Attended Marton Office & Library fortnightly governance meeting
4	Attended meeting with Acting Chief Executive Attended meeting at Napier Port
7	Attended Horizons River Management and Flood Protection Scheme Meeting
8	Attended meeting with Acting Chief Executive Attending meeting with Deputy Mayor
9	Attended Bulls Community Committee meeting
10	Attended Elected Member Working Group for National Direction packages Attended Assets/Infrastructure Committee Meeting Attended Tenders Board Meeting Attended MTFJ online hui Attended Council Workshop Attended meeting with Acting Chief Executive
11	Attended meeting with Marton Country Music Festival Event Organisers
14	Attended monthly meeting with RDC Comms Manager

	Attended Hunterville businesses morning engagement Attended meeting with Acting Chief Executive
15	Attended meeting with Acting Chief Executive Attended MTFJ Core Group Online Hui Attended LGNZ Superlocal 2025 Conference Welcome Function
16	Attended LGNZ Superlocal 2025 Conference Attended Mayors Taskforce for Jobs 25 Years function
17	Attended LGNZ Superlocal 2025 Conference & Awards Evening
19	Attended meeting at St Joseph's School Taihape re speed zone Attended Bulls Fire Brigade Annual Honours Evening
21	Attended breakfast meeting with Mayor Helen Worboys Attended meeting with Chief Executive Attended meeting with Whanganui Community Foundation
22	Attended Maori Responsiveness Framework Review Workshop Attended weekly meeting with Deputy Mayor Attended Rangitikei Rivers Catchment Collective meeting at Whangaehu
23	Attended meeting with Chief Executive Attended RCA Forum webinar Attended Four Regions Trust AGM Attended Quarterly Catchup with Chief Executive and Base Commander Ohakea
24	Attended AgBaker/MPI Biodiversity function at Te Matapihi Attended Rangitikei Rivers Catchment Collective meeting at Raetihi
25	Attended meeting with Chief Executive Attended fortnightly economic development meeting with staff
28	Attended meeting with Chief Executive Attended meeting with Sage Planning re Civil Defence Emergency Review
29	Attended Regional Transport Matters Regional Chiefs' Matters fortnightly catch-up Attended NZ Tiny Homes Association Local Planning Policy online meeting Attended weekly meeting with Deputy Mayor
30	Attended meeting with Chief Executive Attended fortnightly meeting with staff re Marton Water Strategy Attended meeting with District Commander re Hunterville Policing Attended Youth Council meeting
31	Attended Marton Office & Library fortnightly governance meeting Attended Finance/Performance committee meeting Attended LWDW Council Workshop

	Attended Council meeting
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Attachments:

- 1. Four Monthly LGNZ Report [↓](#)
- 2. TUIA 2025 Report [↓](#)
- 3. SuperLocal 2025 Programme [↓](#)
- 4. Taxpayers' Union Protest at LGNZ [↓](#)
- 5. St Joseph's School letter to NZTA [↓](#)
- 6. Elected Member Attendance [↓](#)

Recommendation 1

That the Mayor’s Report – July 2025 be received.



LGNZ four-monthly report for member councils

// March - June 2025





Ko Tātou LGNZ.

This report summarises LGNZ’s work on behalf of member councils and is produced three times a year. It’s structured around LGNZ’s purpose: to serve local government by **championing**, **connecting** and **supporting** members.

Please consider putting this report on the agenda for your next council meeting so that all councillors can review it and provide feedback. Sam, Susan or other National Council members are very happy to join council meetings online to discuss the report or any aspect of it – just let us know.

This report complements our regular communication channels, including *Keeping it Local* (our fortnightly e-newsletter), providing a more in-depth look at what we do.

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Introduction

March to June has been intensely busy for LGNZ, as we advocated around reform and other issues like council metrics/profiles, engaged with the Government, and launched new products and services for members.

In early April, LGNZ launched our new *Local Government Quarterly Economic Insights*. This report is exclusive to member councils. It's designed to ensure elected members are the best-informed people on local government economic data. Developed in partnership with Infometrics, *Insights* will be released quarterly, with the second issue published in early July.

Our Ratepayers Assistance Scheme is advancing in leaps and bounds. The RAS would allow ratepayers to borrow cheaply for ratepayer charges like development contributions/levies and rates postponement, and could be used for specific property improvements (like solar panels). It leverages the high credit quality of local government rates to access capital market financing. Minister Watts has written to LGNZ expressing his support and confirming DIA will begin policy work on RAS in August. As well as successfully securing capital commitments from councils and third parties, we are seeing growing media interest in RAS.

Membership was top of mind during this period. Before Easter we sent out invoices alongside our [value of LGNZ membership report](#). This report provided a comprehensive summary of our advocacy wins over the last year, a specific list of how we save councils money, and a summary of all the other work we do for members. While Western Bay of Plenty voted to leave before invoicing started, all other members have since renewed, with the exception of Waikato Regional Council, which is voting again on membership in July.

Other highlights of these four months included:

- We launched pre-elected learning for anyone considering standing for council. This interactive course steps potential candidates through what it means to be an elected member. It's freely available without an Ākōna log-in and has proved very popular.
- Our well-attended 1 May All-of-local-government meeting, focused on delivering infrastructure for growth, featuring an engaging q+a with Minister Watts. Other speakers included Minister for Building and Construction Chris Penk and Simplicity's Sam Stubbs, as well as the Infrastructure Commission, S&P Global Ratings and the Treasury.
- In June we secured funding from councils to sustain Policy.nz, which otherwise would have ceased to exist. This platform allows candidates to upload their profiles and policies so that voters have easy access to this information.
- We have had strong media engagement on issues of the day – from electoral reform to rates capping and benchmarking and the safety of elected members, as well as facilitating the Candidates Corner pre-election series with the Sunday Star-Times.

We always welcome your comments and feedback.

Ngā mihi
Sam and Susan

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Champion

Government relations

Because our relationships with individual Ministers are now stronger and more mature, we're increasingly able to have robust and constructive discussions with them. For example, on resource management reform and potential implications for local government's functions/structure, rates capping, and ensuring that funding and financing tools announced as part of Pillar 2 of the Going for Housing Growth programme actually deliver the desired outcomes for councils and communities.

We've been staying closely in touch with Minister Watts on benchmarking (including DIA's metrics release) and rates capping through informal discussion and formal meetings, including in late June.

LGNZ met with the Prime Minister in early April and discussed our approach to the rates capping conversation. We all agree that no one wants high rates increases. We all agree that rates rises need to come down. However, we also set out rates capping's potential unintended consequences for councils and ratepayers (see more on rates capping below). We also note that recent rates increases have been driven by the need to fund essential infrastructure and services – and because of the increasing volume of unfunded mandates from central government.

We met again with the Prime Minister for another of regular meetings in early June. We raised cross-portfolio issues such as pressures on growth councils and low voter turnout in local elections.

Voter authorisation of major projects has been floated by several politicians. This refers to running public referenda to make key decisions, like large infrastructure purposes. We will explore with Ministers whether there is any real commitment to this approach from the Government. We'll also have conversations about this idea with members.

We've also begun quarterly meetings with other political parties, which currently in the policy development phase. We met with Labour's local government spokesperson Tangi Utikere and sought cross-party support for our electoral reform work. We also briefed him on LGNZ's funding and financing tools project, and received an update on Labour's "no unfunded mandates" policy work. We had a meeting with the Green Party in June and we are working to lock in dates with NZ First and ACT. We have a date secured with ACT's local government spokesperson for after SuperLocal.

We have requested to meet with the Justice Select Committee to brief them on our electoral reform work after it is launched at SuperLocal

Media

We have had significant engagement with the media on a range of topics – and are proactive or reactive in our approach depending on the issue at hand.

Late February saw Housing Minister Chris Bishop announce some of the new funding and financing tools we've been calling for, at our Metro and Rural & Provincial sector meetings. This resulted

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in stories appearing on [1News](#), [ThreeNews](#), [RNZ](#), [Stuff](#), [NZ Herald](#), [Gisborne Herald](#), [The Press](#), [The Post](#) and the [Waikato Times](#).

The All-of-local-government meeting also saw media cover topics LGNZ has been championing, from talking about alternatives to rates capping and four-year terms to a new stalking bill and housing growth. Local Government Minister Simon Watt's speech and [rates capping](#) took centre stage, with stories on [Newsroom](#), [NBR](#), [BusinessDesk](#), [RNZ](#), [The Press](#) and [The Post](#).

[Four-year terms](#) for local government has been a popular discussion point. Sam appeared on [Mike Hosking breakfast](#) on [Newstalk ZB](#) to discuss the issue, with his comments included in [The Post](#) and [Waikato Times](#). Mayors Alex Walker and Hon Dr Nick Smith also publicly addressed the issue via the [NZ Herald](#), [1News](#) and [95bFM](#).

Then in March the release of LGNZ's Electoral Reform Working Group's (ERWG) [draft position paper](#) swiftly become one of local government's biggest stories this year. Media were intrigued by the proposed move to booth voting, with stories appearing in the [Post](#), the [Press](#), [Waikato Times](#), [ODT](#) and [NZ Herald](#), and Mayor Nick speaking with [RNZ](#), [Newstalk ZB](#) (also [here](#)) and on [95bFM](#). The announcement continued to spark debate across [Newstalk ZB](#), the [Post](#) and the [Press](#).

[Rates capping](#) continued to be a topic of discussion, with LGNZ President Sam Broughton speaking to [RNZ](#) and [Newstalk ZB](#) on the recent S&P downgrading decision for 18 councils. Rates capping articles also appeared in the [Press](#), the [Post](#) and [Waikato Times](#), with Mayor Neil Holdom appearing on the [Platform](#).

The stalking and harassment of elected members remains in the spotlight. In February LGNZ Chief Executive Susan Freeman-Greene and Invercargill councillor Alex Crackett spoke with [Stuff/ThreeNews](#) and [Newstalk ZB](#) about the Government's proposed [stalking legislation](#), with [RNZ](#) also running a story on this issue. In recent weeks LGNZ's position has carried in stories on [1News](#) and [Stuff](#). LGNZ CE Susan Freeman-Greene spoke alongside multiple councillors and Mayors on [TVNZ Breakfast](#) about the impact this has on members. There have been a large number of follow-up stories in April, driven by [a University of Otago study](#), setting out disturbing behaviour experienced by elected members.

LGNZ also weighed in on the [RMA reforms](#), expressing cautious support while signalling to the Government it needs to ensure that communities have a voice and regional councils play a key role in the changes going forward.

In other funding and financing coverage, LGNZ President Sam Broughton spoke with [the Press](#) about LGNZ's position on a bed tax, while also covering how [GST sharing on new builds](#) could help bring rates down.

[Stuff news](#) and [RNZ](#) covered the Te Maruata hui in April.



We sent out a media toolkit to Mayors, Chairs and CEs when we released our new Infometrics' quarterly economic insights, with ideas on how councils can use this data to encourage local discussion.

Electoral reform has been a hot topic, with Wellington City Council calling for a [lowering of the voting age](#), Invercargill City Council supporting the report's call for improved [civics education](#), and Ashburton District Council [supporting a shift to four-year terms](#) for local and central government. LGNZ partnered with Infrastructure New Zealand to [urge the Government](#) to include a move to four-year terms for local and central government in the referendum.

Susan's announcement about [moving on from LGNZ](#) in August was covered by [the Post](#), [the Press](#) and [NBR](#).

Ex-Grey Power Vice-President Peter Matcham wrote an [opinion piece](#) in April on why a rates cap should be opposed at all costs. Elected member abuse and harassment also continued to dominate the headlines, with stories appearing on [TVNZ](#), [RNZ](#), the [Press](#) and [ODT](#).

LGNZ waded into the truancy debate, with LGNZ President Sam Broughton saying that the Government asking mayors to help lift school attendance doesn't align with its "back to basics" direction for councils. This was a lead story in the [Post](#), [Press](#) and the [Waikato Times](#). Sam also spoke to [ThreeNews](#) about the Government's new scheme to allow self-assessment for some trade work.

[Elected member safety was in the spotlight](#) following our All-of-local-government meeting in May, where we shared [a new guide for members on how to stay safe](#). This media advocacy led to the Remuneration Authority asking us for the guide, to aid their work towards considering an allowance to support elected members' home safety.

LGNZ's oral submission on congestion charging, led by Transport Forum Chair Mayor Neil Holdom, also resulted in a number of stories across various outlets [calling for more local input](#).

Following the Budget, LGNZ spoke out in support of the Government's [Rates Rebate Scheme](#) expansion to cover all SuperGold card holders, and how increased support for [local journalism](#) will positively impact elections later this year.

We've been working closely with the Sunday Star Times on a "Candidates Corner" series detailing key issues ahead of elections. Recent articles covered [rates capping](#) along with the case for and against [council mergers](#), with Mayor Neil Holdom and Mayor Nick Smith sharing their thoughts.

Rates – and the lack of other revenue-raising options for local government – were the focus of [an article by LGNZ Vice President Campbell Barry](#).

LGNZ's [How to stay safe' guide](#) continued to receive positive press in the [Otago Daily Times](#), [Stuff](#), [The Press](#) and [1News](#), while our submission on congestion charging appeared in the [Herald](#) and [RNZ](#). Mayor's Taskforce for Jobs was also in the spotlight, thanks to an article in the [Otago Daily Times](#).



Local government funding and financing

Ratepayer Assistance Scheme (RAS)

On 21 March, Minister Watts wrote to LGNZ expressing his support for the RAS and confirming DIA will begin policy work on the initiative in August. The Minister has asked LGNZ to update the RAS business case to help the work progress quickly. We are working on this with project partners as well as seeking the necessary council capital commitments. With RM reform meaning a move away from development contributions (more on this below), the RAS could support financing of development levies as an alternative to other structures for this purpose (such as the IFFA). The RAS would be cheaper, more efficient and more flexible than the IFFA.

Since then significant progress has been made towards making a decision to establish the RAS. The RAS Steering group has been meeting with local authorities to affirm support for the RAS and secure establishment funding for the scheme. At the request of the Minister for Local Government, the group has also been meeting with developers to test the scheme's design with them. We have secured preliminary equity pledges from councils, and developers are supportive of the scheme.

We have secured a \$400k repayable grant from the Energy Efficiency & Conservation Authority. We have raised the \$2.5 million to progress to a stop/go decision – and with several councils taking decisions in the next few weeks, we may be a little oversubscribed. This demonstrates the high level of support for the RAS.

DIA continues to engage on the scheme: their substantive policy work is set to begin in August.

Infrastructure funding and financing

The Infrastructure Minister announced changes to New Zealand's infrastructure funding and financing settings at our late February All-of-local-government meeting. The Government will replace development contributions with a development levy system, allowing councils to charge developers a share of long-term infrastructure costs. There will be regulatory oversight of these development levies to ensure charges are fair and appropriate. Councils will also have more flexibility to set targeted rates based on the date of subdivision, allowing them to apply to new developments. Finally, the Infrastructure Funding and Financing (IFF) Act will be improved for developer-led projects and expanded to support major transport projects like those led by NZTA.

LGNZ welcomed these changes, which were in our funding and financing toolkit. We will work with officials to ensure these reforms make sense on the ground for councils.

This legislation likely to be introduced in September. DIA is unlikely to issue a substantive consultation on the changes, although they have engaged with technical experts from high-growth councils, and an early draft may be circulated to some individuals for feedback. While DIA is open to input from councils, given the Government's direction there may be limited scope for changes.

We will continue to engage on the development levy regulation when introduced, and with the regulatory regime. We understand this is likely to be in two stages: initial information disclosure requirements, followed by the creation of a regulator (or empowering an existing regulator with oversight of development levies).

We have raised with Under-secretary Simon Court the importance of balancing local democracy and the needs of communities with changes to the Infrastructure Funding and Financing Act. Potential

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changes include limiting councils' ability to withhold endorsements of developer-led special purpose vehicles. We also discussed the need to disentangle the proposed new functions of the IFFA with the RAS, thresholds and legal frameworks for regulatory takings under the forthcoming RMA, and our support for ACT's proposed GST-sharing policy.

Budget 2025

LGNZ was in the Budget lock up so we could [analyse the impact of the Budget on local government](#). There were no significant new local government funding initiatives launched or changes to funding and financing tools. Points of note included the Government:

- Raising the threshold for the rates rebate scheme and increasing the maximum rebate.
- Introducing regionally specific transport funding boosts.
- Announcing new funding for the 2023 North Island weather events recovery.
- Cutting public transport and transport resilience funds.

The Government's accelerated depreciation policy and increases to employer contribution for KiwiSaver will also have impacts for councils.

Local Government Quarterly Economic Insights

On 7 April, LGNZ launched our new Local Government Quarterly Economic Insights report. This report, developed in partnership with Infometrics, will be produced quarterly and provides insights into the economy with specific relevance to local government. The report is exclusive to LGNZ members and is intended to make sure they are the best-informed people on local government economic data. It will also support LGNZ's policy and advocacy work.

The first edition was well received. There were high levels of engagement in the associated zoom, and we received positive and constructive feedback from members. We then worked with Infometrics on the briefing schedule and the next issue, which was released in early July. We are keen to respond to member feedback, and have identified rates capping, contextualising rates against utilities and other charges, and regional sector specific topics as areas to explore in future editions.

DIA metrics release ("council profiles")

These profiles, based on a range of metrics taken from LTPs and annual reports, were originally scheduled to be released on 30 June, although this was later delayed. National Council discussed the profiles and associated issues at a special meeting on 30 May.

In May, LGNZ proactively sought changes from DIA based on a range of concerns. As a result of this advocacy:

- DIA shared group medians and the data of other councils within that council's group.
- Each council profile will now link to that council's website (for example, a page with LTP or other plan data) and councils will be able to specify what page.
- The government metrics website and guide will provide specific context about why some councils might be different from the median; for example, being high growth, high tourism, or recovering from a natural disaster.

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While we are pleased that DIA agreed to these changes as a result of our advocacy, we recognise members will remain concerned that there's not enough information about their specific context, including the specific pressures on your council and how you are dealing with them, or what your community gets for this investment.

On 11 June, we released a guide to support councils' communication planning for the launch, which is now expected to be in mid July. We've received positive feedback on the guide from members.

Regional deals

Cabinet announced that the first Regional Deal Memorandum of Understanding will be decided before July (and announcements of the regions selected were subsequently made in early July). These regions will negotiate a final deal, which may require enabling actions to take place. The end of 2025 is the target for signing the deal.

Rates capping

In March, we submitted on a petition before Parliament seeking to limit local authority rates increases to a maximum of the annual inflation rate. We do not expect this petition to progress through Parliament due to its overlap with the Government's local government work programme. However, submitting on the petition was a good opportunity to set out the clear evidence against rates capping and highlight the pressures facing councils to Parliament.

We understand that rates capping was discussed at the Cabinet Economic Policy Committee in the week of 31 March. To support these discussions, LGNZ sent letters to Ministers on this committee highlighting the likely impacts of rates capping on their portfolios and objectives. LGNZ also reiterated concerns about rates capping to the Prime Minister and Minister of Local Government during our regular meetings as discussed above.

In line with direction from the May National Council meeting, we developed a paper on our approach to rates capping, including that a stronger public campaign may be needed, and shared that with members for discussion at this year's AGM. We also held a zoom to help members prepare for the AGM discussion. If the AGM agrees the direction of travel, then we will develop a plan for this campaign and hold an AGM in 2026 to gain a member mandate before launching that campaign.

We have also supported member advocacy against rates capping by developing and distributing a set of messages and a letter template that can be used by elected members.

As part of our advocacy, there needs to be an acknowledgement of the public mood around rates. We also need to clearly set out other approaches to achieving the Government's aims. To take the next step in our advocacy, we want to engage with members on exactly what this response could look like.

Water services reform

During this period, councils were consulting on aspects of their Water Service Delivery Plans with communities. This has included decision making about the future water services delivery model. For many, this has put these reforms (and their implications for councils) in the spotlight. Plans need to be finalised and submitted to the Secretary for Local Government by 3 September 2025. The



Minister has called for councils to consider including other councils in their delivery model – and has made it clear that extensions of time are unlikely to be granted.

LGNZ made its oral submission to the Finance and Expenditure Committee in March on the Local Government (Water Services) Bill. This submission sought a range of improvements to the legislation to provide greater clarity and certainty for councils. The committee reported back to Parliament on 3 July 2025 and adopted several of our suggested changes. These include: adding supporting growth as an objective for water service providers; clarifying the development contribution provisions to ensure a smoother transition of these for councils who set up water organisations; and clarifying the accountability framework to give water organisations greater separation from shareholding councils (as is the case for other CCOs).

Resource management reform

RMA replacement

The Government announced further details of its plan to replace the Resource Management Act, following the reporting back of the Expert Advisory Group tasked with designing a “blueprint” for replacement legislation. This has significant implications for local government in a variety of areas. The current RMA will be replaced with a Planning Act and a Natural Environment Act. Both will be enabling of development.

While there is plenty to support in the reforms, there is a significant move towards standardisation and narrowing of the scope of the resource management, which could mean limiting local input into planning and environmental management decisions.

We developed and shared [an explainer](#) identifying key issues for councils, and held an Ako Hour webinar with Buddle Finlay on 16 May. We’ve recently shared an analysis of [what we think councils need from the new system](#) and are seeking member feedback.

Another particular area of note is the implications for regional councils if the proposal to remove compliance, monitoring, and enforcement functions and shift them to a centralised body goes ahead. The Government has noted that this raises questions about the structure and functions of the local government system as a whole, and it will consider this and what should be done to address it later this year.

We have raised the issues flagged above in our regular meetings with Under Secretary Simon Court and Minister Chris Bishop, and are approaching the Ministry for the Environment on how we can work more closely with them as further policy decisions are made.

We’re also working closely with Taituarā, Te Uru Kahika, and the New Zealand Planning Institute on our response to the reforms, particularly on how we can collaborate together to input constructively into the new spatial planning system.

National direction changes

The Ministry for the Environment has opened consultation on [16 new or changed pieces](#) of National Direction under the RMA. These are in three packages:

- [Package one](#) – infrastructure and development changes (covering electricity generation and network changes, housing changes, and natural hazards)



- [Package two](#) – primary sector changes (covering marine aquaculture, highly productive land, commercial forestry, stock exclusion, and mining and quarrying)
- [Package three](#) – proposals to amend the National Policy Statement for Freshwater Management 2020 and the Resource Management (National Environmental Standards for Freshwater) Regulations 2020. Further consultation will be undertaken later this year through an exposure draft process, which will have more detail.

Consultation for the first three packages is open until 11.59pm, Sunday 27 July. We expect a fourth package looking at how the first pillar of the Going for Housing Growth programme could fit into the new resource management system to be consulted on in early June. We're currently reviewing what all this means for councils and will submit on aspects of these proposals.

Transport

We submitted on the Government's legislation to enable time of use (congestion) charging. While we are highly supportive of time of use charging, we have concerns about the highly centralised model that the Government is proposing, which would see councils having little control of the design or operation of the schemes, and how any revenue from them is spent.

Our Transport Forum met virtually on 12 May. They covered a range of topics: potentially proposing alternatives now that NZTA has halted its proposed emergency works changes; transport perspectives on resource management reform; and an update from the Road Efficiency Group.

Looking ahead, the Government has indicated it will be taking Cabinet decisions on transitioning to Road User Charges for all vehicles this quarter, and we'll be looking closely at the details given the implications it will have for asset management and funding and financing in the transport space.

In April, NZTA announced it would no longer be going ahead with changes to its emergency works funding. These changes would have seen a significant reduction in the additional funding made available to councils to repair transport networks following a natural disaster.

The proposed cuts would have significantly affected local transport networks, particularly in rural areas and other isolated communities, and came at a time where many councils were grappling with the cost of repairing damage caused by the severe weather events of early 2023.

LGNZ advocated strongly on this issue, including through speaking directly with the Minister of Transport and NZTA, submitting on the consultation document, and raising our concerns in the media. NZTA has signalled they will now work on alternative reform options, and we will engage constructively to ensure they land on an option that works for councils.

Climate change

We engaged with the Climate Change Commission on the second National Climate Change Risk Assessment (NCCRA). The assessment will look at all the climate risks the country faces and identify priorities to focus on. This risk assessment is due to be delivered to the Minister of Climate Change by August 2026 and will inform the Government's National Adaptation Plan.

With the Government's climate adaptation framework set to be released later this year, we are planning member engagement to inform our submission. This legislation is expected to have



significant impacts for local government and the topic is politically sensitive. Collating and mediating divergent member views will require care.

Other policy issues

Seismic strengthening

With the work of the Government's review into the seismic strengthening regime progressing at pace, our reference group chaired by Manawātū District deputy mayor Michael Ford met to get an update from the local government representatives on the MBIE steering group, and to start considering LGNZ's submission on the eventual legislation.

Electoral Reform Working Group

We consulted on the Electoral Reform Working Group's draft position paper, with this closing on Monday 28 April. Engagement included all zone meetings, the Local Government Business Forum, and with members of Auckland Council's local boards.

The Electoral Reform Working Group presented its final recommendations for endorsement by National Council at its May meeting. After National Council agreed to the working group's recommendations, we finalised the position paper. This will be launched at SuperLocal by working group chair Mayor Nick Smith. As well as this plenary session, the working group will host a breakout that explores the final recommendations in depth.

We are now planning post-launch actions, in terms of government relations and concepts like a local government week.

In June we secured funding from councils to sustain Policy.nz, which otherwise would have ceased to exist. The Electoral Reform Working Group's recommendations reinforce the importance of voters being able to access information about candidates and their policies.



Connect

Member visits and zone engagement

We continued our member visits, visiting, Waipa District, Waikato Regional, Waitomo District, Tauranga City, Whanganui District, and Manawatu District during this period as well as connecting with a range of Mayors and CEs.

Sam or Campbell and at least one LT member attended in-person all zone meetings between March and June.

Women in Local Government

In late February we emailed all women elected members with an update on our work, including a link to a Whatsapp group where they can chat with each other, our advocacy on the anti-stalking legislation and a link to Australian research. More recently we have facilitated media around the threats some women are experiencing, with Susan also providing comment as discussed in the media section above. Minister for Women Nicola Grigg launched a toolkit targeted at women leaders at our 1 May All-of-local-government meeting, which has been positively received.

We are planning a breakfast event ahead of SuperLocal, which has strong registrations. The keynote speaker will be former Minister Tracey Martin.

All-of-local-government meetings

The 1 May All-of-local-government meeting was the last before the elections. Before the main programme, we held a session on abuse and harassment that elected members are facing. Minister Nicola Grigg will launch her toolkit, and a guest speaker from Reliance Risk covered practical tools and strategies any elected member can use when you're faced with this behaviour in the community. We also launched a toolkit that pulled together all the work we have done on elected member safety and security in the past 18 months, so that it's easy for members to access and use.

The main programme for that meeting focused on delivering infrastructure for growth. Highlights included Minister Watts participating in an engaging q+a with attendees, speakers including Minister for Building and Construction Chris Penk, industry thought leaders such as Infrastructure Commission and Simplicity's Sam Stubbs, as well as speakers from S&P Global Ratings, the Treasury, and the Opposition – alongside a number of high-quality case studies.

We are having early conversations with current sector chairs to plan for the November sector meetings. These sector meetings will be an opportunity to connect as a sector for the first time in the new triennium and vote on sector chairs. There will be time set aside for priority setting, which will feed into subsequent National Council strategy sessions.

The theme for the first All-of-local-government meeting of the new triennium in February will be "Making an impact in our communities – the role of data, collaboration and innovation". We are currently working to secure Sir Brian Roche as our keynote speaker.



SuperLocal25

We launched promotion and registration for SuperLocal 2025 on 10 April. We have a stellar line up of speakers One NZ's Chief Executive Jason Paris, who will provide his reflections on the value of a strong local government sector to the business community; Google Cloud New Zealand's Natalie de Boursac who heads the local government team and will focus on technology's role in driving efficiencies and high performance; and our final key note speaker Mark Di Somma – a strategist behind LGNZ's first localism campaign. Key political speakers include Deputy Prime Minister David Seymour, Minister Chris Bishop, Minister Simon Watts and Minister James Meager (with Minister Louise Upston speaking to MTFJ), along with the Leader of the Opposition. The Prime Minister will be providing a video.

The programme was finalised in June, with speaker briefings and panel meetings underway. We have a comprehensive breakout programme this year to complement a tightened plenary, with a wide range of topics covering current issues and reforms, driving change, tools for success and benchmarking.

Our three key pieces of LGNZ work launching at Superlocal are an economic data piece which quantifies the contribution of local government's investment to the country's economy; the final recommendations from the Electoral Reform Working Group Chaired by Mayor Nick Smith; and a guide spearheaded by CBEC on improving relationships between councils and community boards.

Sponsorship has been strong despite a difficult economic environment. Similarly, exhibitors have been strong, with booths sold out. We have successfully used all our channels to promote attendance and we are also keeping a close eye on conference costs.

Finalists for the SuperLocal Awards have been announced. We saw an excellent quantity and calibre of entries this year, with the largest category receiving over 20 entries. Winners will be announced at the Awards Night, again sponsored this year by Fulton Hogan. Our judges have been very generous with their time – it has not been a small task to review, score and comment on every entry.

2026 events calendar and forward planning

We have developed a draft events calendar for 2026 that has received National Council feedback and will be circulated to members in July.

Vote25

We updated the Candidates Guide and other material on the Taituarā-hosted VoteLocal website – this has launched with the Ākōna pre-elected learning for candidates (discussed further below).

We are rolling out a social media campaign designed to support people to register, stand and vote. This includes a focus on what councils do and why this matters to communities.

We have been engaging with policy.nz, which has struggled to secure funding for its web platform for candidates. We are pleased to report that in June LGNZ coordinated between councils to raise the funding needed to keep the platform in place for the 2025 elections. Policy.nz is the only comprehensive, nationwide source of candidate information that's hosted by a neutral third party. Being able to easily find out information about candidates is an important part of the local



democratic process and policy.nz was identified as a useful tool for voters by our Electoral Reform Working Group.

Regional Sector

The President briefed Chairs, Mayors, and CEs of the Regional Sector in April on his conversation with the PM around potential impacts on local government of RM reform. There was a discussion on the best approach to this issue at the regular LGNZ meeting with Minister Bishop.

The May Regional Sector Meeting focused on the future resource management system, with Secretary for the Environment James Palmer speaking. The meeting also included engagement with the Minister of Conservation, Māori Crown Relations and Māori Development Tama Potaka.

LGNZ has supported planning for Te Uru Kahika's plenary session, which brings together CEs, Chairs and Mayors, and the leaders of the Te Uru Kahika's special interest groups. This will be held on 11 September 2025.

We have been working with the new Chair and co-deputy Chair to help establish them in their new roles. The next Regional Sector meeting will be online on the morning of 8 August. This is likely to focus on the wide range of reforms currently affecting the Regional Sector, including resource management and water.

LGNZ Acting Policy Director Simon Randall will accompany the Regional Sector on their annual pre-conference tour, which will visit the West Coast.

Te Maruata

Te Maruata whānui held an in-person hui in Taupō from 3-4 April with the theme Ngā Maunga Koutuutu. This acknowledges the three tipuna maunga in the rohe and the role they hold in terms of kaitiakitanga. It also references bringing people together to wānanga and share kōrerō and insights to support each other. Over 60 Te Maruata members from across the motu attended the event. Speakers included Tina Porou (Poipoia), Sharon Te Rangi (Tainui Live) and Lauren Fletcher (Tūrangitukua Chair) covering kaupapa such as Taiao, Partnership and Elections. Members visited key locations in Taupō including He Whare Hono o Tūwharetoa – a building owned by Tūwharetoa that brings together the Iwi, council and other key agencies under one roof; and Pūkawa Marae, a significant landmark in the connection between Tūwharetoa and the Kiingitanga. The final evening was a celebration of all the great mahi the network has seen over the last triennium, with Trevor Maxwell and Peter Moeahu being inducted into the Te Maruata Hall of Fame.

Te Maruata Rōpū Whakahaere met in April and are working on several key kaupapa, including supporting the development of a plan that spans Vote25, elections and induction, to support Te Maruata members and councils holding referendum. Also top of mind is Te Maruata involvement in the development and delivery of SuperLocal.

Te Maruata Rōpū Whakahaere met again at the end of May for an in-person hui. Several key kaupapa were discussed, including preparations for SuperLocal 25. The Te Maruata pre-conference hui will be held on 15 July at the Christchurch Town Hall, with the theme being Te ngana o Tū te pou o Rongo – which speaks to the balance of all things and how this intersects the roles and responsibilities of Māori elected members.

LGNZ four-monthly report for member councils: March – June 2025 // 16



Te Maruata rōpū whakahaere will be supporting several aspects of the SuperLocal programme including the whakatau, poroporoaki, awards and breakout sessions.

Also discussed at the hui were opportunities to guide RM reform submissions, the ongoing workplan and the mahi around support heading into elections (specifically around Māori wards referenda), and induction.

Young Elected Members Network

We are producing an induction document for YEM that includes its history, the purpose of the committee, the programme of events and key achievements so far. We are working with the YEM Committee on a plan to release it.

The Young Elected Member Network committee met in early June to sign off the programme for their pre-Conference hui. Former National Minister Paula Bennett and Former Labour Minister Kelvin Davis will be guest speakers.

The committee agreed a fee would apply for all in-person events in the next triennium, apart from the pre-conference hui for member councils. The committee noted that, to stay true to the network's roots, YEM events need to strike the right balance between a structured agenda with time to network and leveraging the safe space YEM has created over the years.

Community Boards

CBEC met in May to discuss a range of issues including their forthcoming guide launch at SuperLocal. CBEC will have a booth in the exhibition space so that this work has maximum visibility and we are working with them on what that will look like.



Support

Ākona and Induction 2025

The pre-election learning was launched on 14 April. This interactive course steps potential candidates through what it means to be an elected member. It offers three videos, two e-modules and a range of downloadable resources designed to educate potential candidates and offer insight to the general public on the reality of being an elected member. The three animated videos look at: 'Structure of Local Government', 'Roles within a council' and 'How councils are funded'. The two e-modules cover: 'Stepping into Local Leadership: The role of an elected member' and 'Stepping into Local Leadership: The life of an elected member'.

As of mid-June, since the launch of the pre-election learning, the site had received 1,028 views, with 453 people actively accessing the learning. These are very good numbers, especially given registration to run for office did not open until 1 July and interest in elections is only just ramping up. Feedback from councils has been all positive, with those spoken to confirming that they are sharing the links and promoting the learning on their websites.

We have decided to allow non-members to attend Mayors' and Chairs' Schools and elected members induction at a premium rate. We believe this is appropriate from the principle of supporting councils setting themselves up for success at the start of the triennium. Attending helps non-members understand the full breadth of LGNZ's work and makes rejoining more likely. The price differential will be sufficient to avoid disincentivising membership.

Logistics for the Mayor Induction, Chair Induction and EM Induction hui are almost in place with agenda construction nearly finalised.

In other work, development of the Team Builder Toolkit is going well and it's on track for release in August. Development of the 2026 workshop schedule and Ako Hour Academy schedule is also going well, with both due for release in July. Construction of the updated Ākona site and conversion of the Emodules is nearing completion. The Ākona team continues to work with councils to ascertain what local content they want added to the Ākona site.

Te Korowai – CouncilMARK

In April, we launched the new Te Korowai webpage and digital prospectus, making it easier than ever for councils to explore what the new programme offers and how it can support their improvement journey.

We have already completed three assessments under the new programme,:

- Waikato Regional Council
- Otago Regional Council
- Ōtorohanga District Council

In May, we were on the ground with Central Hawke's Bay District Council for their on-site assessment. Next up, we're excited to launch the Integrity Survey with Marlborough District Council



ahead of their July assessment. This will be our first unitary authority to participate under the refreshed Te Korowai banner. Central Otago District Council is also preparing for its assessment in August.

Undertaking an assessment during an election year provides multiple benefits: it supports operational continuity, offers valuable insights for incoming elected members, and gives councils a clear, independent view of how they're tracking—like a 'warrant of fitness' for local government.

For councils not ready to commit to a full assessment, Te Korowai also offers staged entry options. A great starting point is the Integrity Survey. This tool goes beyond traditional engagement surveys by assessing how well strategy and values are aligned across the organisation, including with elected members. It's also an effective early intervention tool for identifying issues before they escalate.

Other staged options allow councils to focus on specific areas—for example, a targeted assessment of financial health.

Te Korowai is presenting at SuperLocal as part of two breakout sessions.

Roading Efficiency Group

The Road Efficiency Group (REG) programme is now in its 10th year of LGNZ involvement, and is coming to the end of this financial year's work plan. We are proud to be a Roding Efficiency Group (REG) partner and will continue to support the 2024-2027 programme.

We have worked hard to further develop the REG relationship and ensure alignment with our Transport Forum and add value where we can.

Our involvement provides increased support for the sector, and over the past five months we have seen significant increased activity in the REG programme. We are planning to develop an online platform for REG, which involves developing an online learning solution for REG and migrating all the historical content over the course of the next two years to Ākōna.

REG is presenting at Conference as part of two breakout sessions.

Governance support

We are currently supporting several councils to navigate sensitive issues, albeit on the sidelines given we have not formally been asked by the council to intervene. Alongside this work are the numerous calls we receive for general advice and support.

Work continues on updating LGNZ's suite of governance guides. The first products of the shelf were the Standing Orders' templates and the Standing Orders' Guide. The templates and Guide were updated to reflect legislative changes made over the last three years and to incorporate additional guidance where this has been requested, for example, information on workshops following advice from the Ombudsman and clarity on the new quorum rules.

Other guides to be updated include:

- Guidance for new mayors and chairs;



-
- The community boards' governance guide (this will also include the council/community board relationship guide when complete);
 - The tax guide for elected members; and
 - The CE Recruiting Guide.

LGNZ has received a number of queries from councils about whether our Code of Conduct template will be updated. We have plans to streamline the Code of Conduct template, based on feedback from users. However, the Local Government Commission has been charged with developing a model Code of Conduct, and there may be further changes as a result of the LGA amendment bill due to be introduced in the middle of the year. So our template update is on hold until the picture is clearer.

Work is also underway on a Guide to help councils determine governance and decision-making structures. This Guide is intended to assist councils to look at the pros and cons of different governing arrangements, such as the pros and cons of establishing committees, whether committees should have delegated responsibilities, or simply be advisory, and whether they should be committees of the whole, or not.

2025 TUIA Programme Report

July 2025

Kia ora,

This is an update on how things have been going in the 2025 TUIA Programme so far.

The programme this year has had a bit of a slow start for me, but I have already taken a lot away from it. Being part of TUIA has challenged my thinking and given me valuable insights around leadership, my role in the community and the direction I want to take next. I have thoroughly enjoyed it so far and look forward to building on that over the rest of the year.

So far, I've attended the first wānanga of the year, Tuia i Runga, hosted at Pōhara Marae. The kaupapa focused on "weaving above", exploring our connections to our tūpuna and whakapapa, to te ao wairua, and to our aspirations as future leaders.

One of the biggest highlights for me was visiting Maungatautari. We got to walk through the bush and spent time learning about the ecological sanctuary there. I was genuinely blown away by the commitment and effort from the local iwi and community to protecting the bush and native manu. One of the volunteers spoke to us about the intense care taken to maintain the pest-proof fence, and how even a small breach is treated seriously and fixed straight away. It showed me what kaitiakitanga in action looks like, not just as a concept, but as something that is lived and protected daily.

Another highlight for me was being surrounded by like-minded rangatahi from around the motu. All of us young Māori, all on our own journeys, and all deeply passionate about giving back to our communities. Being in that space made me feel understood and supported. Some of the kōrero I had with other Tuia participants helped shift my thinking about what's next for me and actually gave me the confidence to explore studying at university next year. Their honesty around things like juggling study with work, staying grounded and dealing with imposter syndrome really stuck with me.

While I haven't been able to attend all wānanga due to illness and the most recent wānanga in Nelson being cancelled due to the State of Emergency there, I am committed to attending the rest of the wānanga throughout the year and look forward to continuing my journey through the programme.

For my community service project, I've started exploring a kaupapa around emergency preparedness and flood awareness in Kauangaroa, where I now live. My whānau was directly impacted by the 2004 flood, and recent heavy rainfall events have reminded me how important it is for our community to be prepared and informed.

After reading the Whangaehu Flood Resilience Uplift Project and learning more about the work that has been done, I've become interested in how I can contribute at a local level, especially in

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supporting whānau preparedness and safety planning. I want to have further discussion around this kaupapa with my neighbours, the community and the Rūnanga as I believe that this would be a meaningful and relevant kaupapa to build my community contribution around.

TUIA is already helping me to grow and develop my leadership skills not just in theory, but through the real-life mahi I'm starting to do in my own community.

Ngā mihi nui,

Faenza Hiroti

SuperLocal 2025 Programme >

WELCOME TUESDAY 15 JULY

8.30AM	Te Maruata Hui - Limes room, Christchurch Town Hall [PRE-REGISTRATION REQUIRED]
2.00PM	Conference registrations open
2.30PM	Young Elected Members Hui - Limes room, Christchurch Town Hall [PRE-REGISTRATION REQUIRED]
5.30PM	Simpson Grierson Welcome reception - Dobson foyer, Te Pae
7.00PM	Presidents Dinner - 27 Steps, New Regent Street [BY INVITATION ONLY]

DAY ONE WEDNESDAY 16 JULY

7.00AM	Women in Local Government Breakfast - sponsored by Datascope Waitaki room [PRE-REGISTRATION REQUIRED]
8.30AM	LGNZ AGM - Conway room Level 1 [PRE-REGISTRATION REQUIRED]
10.30AM	Welcome and mihi whakatau - Auditorium Prime Minister's address, Rt Hon Christopher Luxon (by video)
11.15AM	Connect & refuel break - sponsored by Meredith Connell
12.00PM	Plenary session: Powering the economy - growth from the ground up - sponsored by Arup and NZ Transport Agency Waka Kotahi Minister for RMA Reform and Infrastructure address, Hon Chris Bishop KEYNOTE ADDRESS: Insights from the corporate world, Jason Paris, One NZ Minister of Local Government address, Hon Simon Watts Q & A with Hon Chris Bishop and Hon Simon Watts LGNZ research launch: Defining local government's contribution to the national economy, Mayor Sam Broughton, President, LGNZ and Susan Freeman-Greene, LGNZ PANEL DISCUSSION: How local contributes to the national economy FACILITATED BY Miriama Kamo PANELLISTS: Justin Tipa, Chair Ngai Tahu; Hillmarè Schulze, BERL; Seija Wellington, Arup
2.15PM	Connect & refuel break - sponsored by Meredith Connell
3.00PM	Breakout session one/ Reform ready: Navigating the big changes - sponsored by Martin Jenkins Auditorium - Navigating reform: What it means for financial sustainability - sponsored by Martin Jenkins Councils' playbook: Tools for success - Conway 4 / 5 - The make-or-break relationship: Mastering your CE partnership - sponsored by QLG Advisory Leading the charge: Driving change and achieving results - sponsored by GHD Conway 2 / 3 - Leading the charge: driving change and delivering results - sponsored by GHD From insight to impact: Dialling up performance Conway 1 - From scenario to strategy: creating value through local investment - sponsored by Arup
4.00PM	Breakout session two/ Reform ready: Navigating the big changes - sponsored by Martin Jenkins Auditorium - Māori wards and constituencies: What councils need to know Councils' playbook: Tools for success Conway 4 / 5 - What makes big projects work? - sponsored by Frequency Leading the charge: Driving change and achieving results - sponsored by GHD Conway 2 / 3 - Delivering value under pressure - sponsored by Warren and Mahoney From insight to impact: dialling up performance Conway 1 - Beyond numbers - supporting true performance improvement
5.00PM	Networking function - sponsored by Suncorp Exhibition space

DAY TWO THURSDAY 17 JULY

7.00AM	MTFJ Breakfast - Conway rooms [PRE-REGISTRATION REQUIRED]
	Welcome
8.40AM	Plenary session: Local government's role in our natural and built environment - sponsored by Boffa Miskell
	PANEL DISCUSSION: Beyond the RMA: What do we need from a future development and environmental protection system?
	FACILITATED BY Sarah Scott, Simpson Grierson
	PANELLISTS: Chair Craig Pauling, Environment Canterbury; Mark Todd, Ockham; Stephanie Styles, Boffa Miskell
	Deputy Prime Minister's address, Hon David Seymour
9.45AM	Plenary session: Driving efficiencies and productivity
	KEYNOTE ADDRESS: Pathways to transformation - driving efficiencies and productivity, Natalie de Boursac, Local government, Google Cloud NZ
	Opposition address, Rt Hon Chris Hipkins and Hon Tangi Utikere
10.40AM	Plenary session: Increasing participation in local elections
	Launch of LGNZ's electoral reform position - Hon Dr Nick Smith, Nelson City Council
11.00AM	Connect & refuel break - sponsored by Meredith Connell
12.00PM	Breakout session three
	Reform ready: Navigating the big changes - sponsored by Martin Jenkins Auditorium - Shifting the dial on local elections
	Councils' playbook: Tools for success - Conway 4 / 5 - Funding and financing tools to unlock housing growth
	Leading the charge: Driving change and achieving results - sponsored by GHD Conway 2 / 3 - Unlocking the Māori economy
	From insight to impact: Dialling up performance - Conway 1 - Beyond numbers - supporting true performance improvement
1.00PM	Breakout session four
	Reform ready: Navigating the big changes - sponsored by Martin Jenkins Auditorium - Role of local government in the changing landscape - sponsored by Simpson Grierson
	Councils' playbook: Tools for success - Conway 4 / 5 - Whiria te muka tangata: Strengthening Council/Iwi Partnerships
	Leading the charge: Driving change and achieving results - sponsored by GHD Conway 2 / 3 - Community facility projects: Managing scope, costs and expectations - sponsored by Apollo Projects
2.00PM	Connect & refuel break
2.45PM	Plenary session: Local government for local impact - licence to lead - sponsored by Warren and Mahoney and Creative New Zealand
	PANEL DISCUSSION: The role of local government in building communities
	FACILITATED BY: Mayor Rehette Stoltz, Gisborne District Council
	PANELLISTS: Michael Barnett, Former CE of Auckland Chamber of Commerce; Gretchen La Roche, Creative NZ; Vajini Pannila, Warren and Mahoney
	KEYNOTE ADDRESS: Licence to lead, Mark Di Somma, The Audacity Group
	Conference concludes
5.30PM	Pre-awards networking refreshments - Level one foyer
6.15PM	SuperLocal Awards Ceremony - Conway rooms
7.30PM	Fulton Hogan Gala Dinner - Rivers room





Peter Hijazeen

Principal

St Joseph's Catholic Primary School

0212314517

Principal@saintjos.school.nz

[Date]

To:

NZTA / Waka Kotahi

official.correspondence@nzta.govt.nz

Subject: Urgent Request to Reassess Speed and Safety Measures on SH1 South of Taihape through to Winiata Marae

Tēnā koutou,

Following a community consultation held on 19 July 2025, I am writing on behalf of the local community to raise urgent concerns regarding the safety and traffic conditions along the section of State Highway 1 (SH1) that runs south of Taihape, from the Rauma Road intersection through to Winiata Marae.

This stretch of road is vital to our community, as it services both **St Joseph's Catholic School** and **Winiata Marae**—two taonga (treasures) of our region that are frequented by tamariki, whānau, kaumātua, and manuhiri, alongside the residents of this area. The current open road speed limit of 100 km/h is inappropriate and unsafe for such a significant and heavily used community corridor.

The community has strongly expressed the need for:

- A **speed limit reduction**—ideally to **50 km/h** in the immediate areas surrounding the school and marae, and no more than **80 km/h** along the full corridor from south of Taihape to Winiata Marae.
- **Improved signage** clearly alerting motorists to the presence of a school, marae, residential areas, and frequent turning traffic.
- The adoption of **innovative and technological solutions** to reduce/ manage speed during key times — including school pick-up/drop-off hours, hui and tangihanga gatherings at the marae, and holiday and peak traffic periods.
- A **full reassessment of the road design and layout**, including consideration for a **turning bay for northbound traffic turning into Rauma Road**, to address safety risks and reduce the likelihood of further incidents.

Recent accidents in the area — including the one on 15 July near the SH1/Rauma Road intersection — only confirm what the community has long feared: that without change, more serious or even fatal incidents are likely to occur.

The wellbeing and safety of our tamariki, our kaumātua, and all road users must be the top priority. We are asking NZTA/Waka Kotahi to act urgently to review and improve safety measures along this section of SH1, in partnership with our community, Rangitikei District Council, and mana whenua.

We appreciate your attention to this matter and trust that you will respond with the urgency and seriousness it deserves.

Ngā manaakitanga,
Peter Hijazeen
Principal/ Tumuaki

Peter Hijazeen
Principal/Tumuaki
Saint Joseph's School
Rauma Road
Taihape
06 388 0531

My work hours may be different to yours. I don't expect you to respond outside of your usual work schedule.



ITEM 9.4 ATTACHMENT 6

Date	Meeting	HWTM	Wilson	Carter	Dalgety	Duncan	Hiroa	Lambert	Loudon	Maughan	Sharland	Raukawa	Wong	Notes
29-May-25	Council Meeting	PR	AP	PR	AP	PR	PR	PR	PR	PR	PR	PR	PR	
3-Jun-25	Erewhon RWS	PR				AT							PR	
3-Jun-25	Omatane RWS	PR				PR								
5-Jun-25	Tenders Board	PR	PR		AP									
5-Jun-25	Council Meeting	PR	PR	PR	PR	PR	AP	PR	PR	PR	PR	AP	PR	
5-Jun-25	Turakina CC	PR		PR										
9-Jun-25	Hunterville RWS	CB	AT		PR			PR						
10-Jun-25	TRAK	PR				PR	PR							
10-Jun-25	Ratana CB	PR					PR							
11-Jun-25	Taihapa CB	CB				PR							PR	
11-Jun-25	Marton CC	PR	PR	AT										
12-Jun-25	PPL Meeting	PR	PR			PR	PR	PR	AP	AP	PR		PR	
16-Jun-25	Hunterville CC	PR			PR			PR						
19-Jun-25	Risk and Assurance	PR	PR		PR		PR		PR					
24-Jun-25	Hearing												PR	
26-Jun-25	Finance/Performance	PR	PR	PR	PR				PR	PR	PR		PR	
26-Jun-25	Council Meeting	PR	PR	PR	PR	PR	PR	PR	PR	PR	PR	PR	PR	
9-Jul-25	Bulls CC	PR		PR								PR		
10-Jul-25	AIN Meeting	PR	PR	PR	PR	PR		PR	PR	PR	AP		PR	

Present (and is a member of the committee)	PR
Apology	AP
Absent - no apology received	AB
Not a member of the committee	
Not a member of the committee (but still attended)	AT
Not present as on Council business	CB
Attended via Zoom [this indicator is no longer used]	ZM

9.5 Project Update Report - July 2025**Author:** Arno Benadie, Deputy Chief Executive**Authoriser:** Carol Gordon, Chief Executive**1. Reason for Report**

- 1.1 This is a monthly report on progress on significant projects currently being delivered by Council staff.

2. Key Highlights from Current Projects**Wastewater Projects****3. Marton to Bulls Wastewater Centralisation (Project Manager – Steve Carne)**

- 3.1 Responding to the proposed new Taumata Arowai Discharge Standards, and as outlined at the Assets / Infrastructure Committee meeting on 10 July, the project team has refined the shortlisted options as follows:
- Option 1 - 100% Discharge to land- treatment plant at the RDC-owned site.
 - Option 2 – as per Option 1 with I/I reduction in the networks.
 - Option 3 - Combined discharge to land and river.
 - Option 4 - 100% Discharge to river – standards as per the draft Wastewater Discharge standards (moderate dilution environment).
 - Option 5 - 100% Discharge to river – discharge requirements as per the Horizon One Plan (i.e. the treatment assumptions in the long list options report).
 - Option 6 – Option 4 with an I/I reduction program
- 3.2 A Design Report on each of these Options is anticipated to be supplied before the end of July 2025. Costing of these options are anticipated to be completed by end of July.
- 3.3 The team will be ready to identify a preferred option by the end of July. However, it has been decided that the identification of the preferred option will not be carried out until the Wastewater Discharge Standards are finalised. Taumata Arowai advised that this is anticipated for early August. We consider this timeline ambitious.
- 3.4 It is proposed that a preferred option will be identified immediately after this and that the preferred option will be presented to Council in either late August or September for ratification.
- 3.5 Taumata Arowai have also advised in a meeting with them on 3 June that RDC is covered by the Interim provisions of Standards re operating on existing use rights for expired consents and that the insistence of consent lodgement before 30 June 2026, is no longer necessary. A consent could therefore be lodged at a date later than this. However, this is

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not the preferred process, with consent lodgement still being targeted to before 30 June 2026.

- 3.6 Prioritised investigative works carried out by the team thus far have concluded that the RDC purchased land will not be able to dispose of more than 65% of current design flows in a 100% discharge to land option. A land disposal solution will require more land, adding significantly to the cost. The associated costs may make this option unfeasible. This is currently being assessed by the project team.
- 3.7 Autosamplers are now installed to provide better definition on possible trade waste flow components of the flows entering the Marton and Bulls treatment plants. A representative from Ngati Parewahawaha is carrying out the sampling for RDC.
- 3.8 Direct liaison with Malteurop, Speirs and Nestle Purina about their current and projected trade waste flows has helped better define trade waste inputs.
- 3.9 Dialogue with ANZCO Manawatu is ongoing to determine the feasibility and appropriateness of incorporating their discharge into the Bulls plant inlet. ANZCO Manawatu would become a trade waste customer of RDC under this scenario. Discussions will evolve further once the additional components of capex and Opex due to the ANZCO Manawatu flow are determined.

4. Rātana Wastewater Discharge to Land (Project Manager – Steve Carne)

- 4.1 The project is in a holding pattern awaiting approval to proceed with track pricing and hard stand construction, needed to enable the pipe materials to be delivered. Work on designing the large dam that will store the treated wastewater, up to Building Consent status, continues with WSP and external experts.
- 4.2 A pre-hearing meeting with all three submitters to the new Ratana consent was held at Horizons Regional Council. A full hearing date has not been set yet.
- 4.3 Also as outlined at the Assets / Infrastructure Committee meeting on 10 July, due to relative high salinity of treated wastewater in the Ratana oxidation ponds, (caused by the softening process at the water treatment plant), it is likely that land irrigation of Ratana effluent as proposed could be problematic.
- 4.4 Investigation of the engineering feasibility of an alternative arrangement involving long distance pumping of Ratana effluent to the new Whanganui District Council / Kaitoke Prison wastewater connection is almost complete.
- 4.5 The estimated cost of this alternative solution is \$4.6M which is approximately 60% of the estimate of the previously adopted solution.
- 4.6 A second alternative of reticulating Koitiata and receiving flows at Koitiata from Ratana and discharging these flows via a small ocean outfall at Koitiata is also being considered for its engineering feasibility and costs.

5. Taihape Wastewater Treatment Plant Improvement Projects (Project Manager - Steve Carne)

- 5.1 To improve current plant operations and increase consent compliance outcomes, an investigation into possible short term operational improvements and longer-term capital works improvements (given new requirements in the Taumata Arowai Wastewater Discharge Standards) is being undertaken.

- 5.2 A range of low-cost operational improvement opportunities have been identified for immediate implementation.
- 5.3 An assessment of plant infrastructure needs has been completed cognisant of the Wastewater Discharge Standards requirements.
- 5.4 Outcomes relating to both 5.2 and 5.3 above will be greatly improved if the extensive rainfall-dependent inflow and infiltration (I/I) in the network is reduced.
- 5.5 A strategy for network I/I reduction has been developed and was outlined at the Assets / Infrastructure Committee meeting on 10 July.
- 5.6 Based on a numerical I/I KPI analysis already completed, I/I levels in Taihape have been quantified by 4 sub-catchments and have been found to be significant and throughout the whole system.
- 5.7 A range of investigative field works has been scoped, and some already completed by RDC, some rectification and remedial works have been identified for immediate implementation.
- 5.8 News of the I/I Strategy development and the proposed remedial works needs to be communicated to the Taihape community. A community awareness campaign has been developed by RDC which will be implemented in early August.

Water Projects

6. Marton Water Strategy (Project Manager – Gwilym van Hoffen)

- 6.1 Relocation of the pilot plant to the Reservoir Bore site is now complete, and testing of the bore water commenced on 21 July. It will run continuously for 8-12 weeks, to collect information relating to the proposed membrane's design and performance.
- 6.2 Draft Principal's Requirements, NZS3916 Contract Document (Design and Construct), and Separable Portions for stage payments are being finalised with GFS. RDC will appoint a "principal's design reviewer" to carry out the necessary design reviews at Preliminary Design, Detailed Design, and Construction Design stages.
- 6.3 An extended operating warranty (5 years) is still being negotiated, in addition to the 12-month defects liability period. This will provide RDC with good protection from any 'teething' issues that are to be expected with an innovative design solution.
- 6.4 Design and costing of ancillary works to deal with the waste stream from the new plant are being undertaken by GFS. This is a new cost, which has not been included in the original (or later revised) GFS offer.
- 6.5 A design consultancy with WSP has almost completed design of the inlet work. This is inclusive of a permanent pump for the new Reservoir Bore and some new inlet pipework.
- 6.6 Extended full capacity testing of the 10-year-old Tutaenui Bore has been completed and indicating that sustainable yield (stable water levels without on-going unacceptable drawdown) of this bore is of the order of 3-3.1ML/day.
- 6.7 Staff are keeping the Marton community up to date with progress. A press release was picked up and published by The Post/Manawatu Standard on 10 July 2025, and by the Whanganui Chronicle on 13 July 2025.

<https://www.thepost.co.nz/nz-news/360752587/trial-plant-begin-tests-bid-improve-marton-drinking-water>

<https://www.nzherald.co.nz/whanganui-chronicle/news/rangitikei-town-marton-set-for-new-trial-treatment-plant-to-combat-poor-water-quality/I6MCU622XRFDE3I7XQDVS7MSE/>

Community Facilities

7. Marton Offices and Library (Project Manager - Eswar Ganapathi)

- 7.1 Council authorised staff to proceed with the Emergency Operations Centre (EOC) as a separate project independent of the Marton Offices and Community Hub.
- 7.2 Team Architects have now been engaged to provide Design Consultancy services for the EOC project.
- 7.3 Geotech, soil contamination and underground tank detection surveys are now completed with the report being forwarded to both Maycroft and Team Architects for their review.
- 7.4 The contract document is now signed, and a further kick-off meeting was held with the project team on 18 July 2025.
- 7.5 Maycroft will make use of the above-mentioned reports to better understand the implications of the identified findings on the project and report back to the project team in the next few weeks.
- 7.6 In the meantime, RDC have scheduled a workshop with Councillors to make a final decision on the scope of the project. Once the scope is approved, Maycroft will start with the concept design process.
- 7.7 As previously advised Horizons Regional Council will not be part of the Marton Offices & Community Hub build project but may consider being part of the King Street development in future.

8. Taihape Grandstand (Project Manager - Eswar Ganapathi)

- 8.1 A second meeting with the user group was held on 2 April 2025 in Taihape. Staff presented work completed to date including a list of project documents developed during the process.
- 8.2 Staff presented the indicative floor plans that were developed and was used as a basis for initiating a discussion around what the community wants to achieve with the redevelopment works.
- 8.3 Council resolved that the remaining available funding of approximately \$700,000 shall only be utilised towards seismic strengthening works. This means, any design services required for the community's initiatives will need to be funded by the community.
- 8.4 Most parties that attended the second meeting would prefer that any renovation underneath the grandstand be done at the same time as seismic strengthening. It is unclear at this stage if this will be achievable.
- 8.5 Council would have to decide whether to put the seismic strengthening works on hold until such time that the community is ready to move ahead with their proposed initiatives.

- 8.6 If Council choose to proceed with undertaking the seismic strengthening works as a separate activity, the community will no longer be able to use the interior of the building as they currently do.
- 8.7 Another user group meeting was held on 21 July 2025 in Taihape. RDC were informed that the group have now finalised their requirements for utilising the underside of the building.
- 8.8 These requirements have since been shared with RDC staff. Staff shall now engage with design consultants to determine the extent of design works involved in addition to estimating the design fee.
- 8.9 In the meantime, the community is looking at various funding avenues to fund the design works.
- 8.10 The community are of the opinion that the design fee would be in the \$40K to \$60K range. Staff reminded the group that these estimates might not be sufficient compared to design costs received in other projects.

9. Taihape Town Hall and Library Redevelopment (Project Manager - Eswar Ganapathi)

- 9.1 During the Council meeting in March 2025, staff presented two concept options for the redevelopment works. Council approved to proceed with the option of retaining the front two storey structure and to demolish and rebuild the hall, stage, supper room and toilets.
- 9.2 A meeting was held with the User Group on 3 June 2025 where staff presented the preliminary design proposal along with an optional proposal with enhanced features.
- 9.3 Further discussions are required to finalise the stage height. These investigations will include additional costs to increase the stage height from the current 900 mm to 1200 mm and identify additional regulatory requirement and risks.
- 9.4 A meeting was held with the northern ward Councillors, RDC staff and Maycroft representatives on 14 July 2025. A separate report is being brought to Council on this topic.

10. Marton Swim Centre Structural Remediation (Project Manager – Eswar Ganapathi)

- 10.1 During the April 2025 Council meeting a report was presented to Council that provided a more detailed analysis of the options available for the Marton Swim Centre. This report aimed at providing more detailed information to facilitate Council's decision making for how to address the structural issue with the Marton Swim Centre.
- 10.2 Council agreed to proceed with investing in the repair of the Marton Swim Centre and to upgrade the existing facility to modern standards. Council selected the Base Recommendation option 1-B as their preferred option.
- 10.3 This option proposes that the swim centre main pool hall is strengthened and includes a range of repairs and some replacement of end of life or out of date assets. This option excludes any upgrades to the changing rooms and reception area.
- 10.4 The items identified in this option will be phased to align with available funding. The first items to be actioned will be the replacement of the roof and the earthquake strengthening of the main pool hall.
- 10.5 At the June 2025 Council meeting, Council confirmed the scope for the Marton Pool repairs to include the replacement of the roof with like for like with the addition of a ETFE liner for improved insulation and to allow more daylight into the facility.

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- 10.6 The scope of work to be included in the first phase of repairs and upgrades has now been finalised with Create Architects and Engineers and work has commenced.
- 10.7 The timeline for the design is expected to be completed by the end of October 2025, followed by a tender process expected to be finalised by the end of February with a Contractor expected to be on site by early March 2026. Construction of phase 1 repairs and upgrades are expected to be completed by August 2026.
- 10.8 The remainder of the upgrades may be included in future years depending on available funding.
- 10.9 A Geotechnical survey was carried out on site on 7 and 8 July 2025. The report is expected to be completed by end of July 2025.
- 10.10 Staff had a meeting with CLM (the pool operator) to update them with the Marton Pool development timelines. CLM were notified during this meeting that the pool will remain closed for this summer.
- 10.11 CLM were asked to evaluate other potential venue options for this swim season and to work with Council staff to inform the public of any alternative arrangements.

Miscellaneous**11. Scotts Ferry**

- 11.1 Council staff are working on finalising the Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) that will determine the activities, responsibilities and conditions when the Council owned tractor will be used in conjunction with the pump owned by a local farmer to reduce the risk of flooding at Scotts Ferry.
- 11.2 A draft has been created and is currently being reviewed by all the parties (Legal Counsel, RDC, Horizons, The farmer, the Scotts Ferry Firefighting group).
- 11.3 During the MOU review process, affected parties could specify their requirements and comment on the current draft MOU. A number of previously unknown aspects of the solution has been identified. It is suggested that these items be discussed in more detail before a final decision is made regarding this solution. Staff are planning to present this to Council at a future workshop.

12. Financial Implications

- 12.1 This report does not identify and financial implications.

13. Impact on Strategic Risks

- 13.1 No impacts on strategic risks

14. Strategic Alignment

- 14.1 All projects are aligned with strategic goals.

15. Mana Whenua Implications

- 15.1 All mana whenua implications are managed by the individual projects.

16. Climate Change Impacts and Consideration

- 16.1 There is no climate change impact.

17. Statutory Implications

17.1 There are no statutory implications.

Recommendation

That the report 'Project Updates Report – July 2025' be received.

10 Meeting Closed.