

MINUTES OF A MEETING OF THE WAIMAKARIRI DISTRICT COUNCIL HELD IN THE COUNCIL CHAMBER, RANGIORA SERVICE CENTRE, 215 HIGH STREET, RANGIORA, ON TUESDAY 27 FEBRUARY 2024 WHICH COMMENCED AT 1PM.

PRESENT

Mayor D Gordon (Chairperson), Deputy Mayor N Atkinson, Councillors A Blackie, R Brine, B Cairns, T Fulton, J Goldsworthy, N Mealings, P Redmond (remotely via Teams), J Ward, and P Williams.

IN ATTENDANCE

J Millward (Chief Executive), S Hart (General Manager Strategy, Engagement and Economic Development), N Robinson (General Manager Finance and Business Support), K LaValley (General Manager Planning, Regulation and Environment), C Brown (General Manager Community and Recreation), M Bacon (Development Planning Manager), A Keiller (Chief Information Officer and Programme Executive), A Gray (Communications and Engagement Manager), H Street (Corporate Planner) and C Fowler-Jenkins (Governance Support Officer).

1. APOLOGIES

There were no apologies.

2. CONFLICTS OF INTEREST

Councillor Mealings and Deputy Mayor Atkinson declared a conflict of interest with Agenda Item 6.2 *Endorsement of Request for Adjournment to Environment Court for PC31*, due to their roles as Commissioners in the District Plan Hearings.

3. REPORTS

3.1 Draft Long Term Plan 2024 – 2034, draft Consultation Document, draft 30-Year Infrastructure Strategy, and draft Financial Strategy – J Millward (Chief Executive)

J Millward advised that the Council was requested to adopt the Draft 2024/34 Long Term Plan (LTP) for public consultation from 15 March to 15 April 2024. Much work has been done over the last six months to reduce the proposed annual rate increase from 19% to 8.94% and then 2.8% in year ten. Staff took note of the Community Boards' comments and increased the proposed number of public drop-in sessions to include additional areas. J Millward noted that the Council's LTP Consultation Documents was one of the first LTPs to be audited by Audit New Zealand, and the Audit Report was included in the Consultation Document. Regarding roading, J Millward commented that many of the subsidies for the Eastern Link Road had yet to be confirmed, however, this was clearly outlined in the Consultation Document.

Councillor Redmond noted that the Central Government had given Councils' the option to collate an Annual Plan followed by a nine-year LTP. He questioned if staff had considered recommending to the Council to defer the LTP. J Millward explained that the Central Government made the option available late in the LTP process; by then, staff had done substantial work reviewing policies and other documents, hence the decision to proceed with the LTP.

Moved: Deputy Mayor Atkinson

Seconded: Mayor Gordon

THAT the Council:

- (a) **Receives** report No. 240111003062.
- (b) **Receives** the Audit opinion from Audit New Zealand on the Consultation Document.

- (c) **Adopts** the draft Financial Strategy, noting it is one of the principal documents relied on for the content of the Consultation Document and is included within the Draft 2024/34 Long Term Plan for adoption.
- (d) **Adopts** the draft Revenue and Financing Policy that is included within the Draft 2024/34 Long Term Plan for adoption.
- (e) **Adopts** the draft 30-Year Infrastructure Strategy (Trim no. 240111003192), noting it is one of the principal documents relied on for the content of the Consultation Document and is included alongside the Draft 2024/34 Long Term Plan for adoption.
- (f) **Adopts** the Draft 2024/34 Long Term Plan (Trim 231114183205) as the principal document relied on for the content of the Consultation Document.
- (g) **Adopts** the draft Consultation Document (Trim 240115004304) as the statement of proposal for public participation in decisions on the content of the Draft 2024/34 Long Term Plan.
- (h) **Notes** the Draft 2024/34 Long Term Plan Engagement Schedule with the special consultative procedure to open on 15 March 2024 and close on 15 April 2024.
- (i) **Notes** the Draft 2024/34 Long Term Plan and the draft Consultation Document refer to further information and reports, and this information will be provided on the Council website during the special consultative procedure from 15 March 2024 to 15 April 2024.
- (j) **Delegates** to the Mayor and Chief Executive authority to make changes to the Consultation Document following Audit opinion and Council comments.

CARRIED

Deputy Mayor Atkinson acknowledged the work that had gone into creating the LTP document and thanked staff for their efforts. He commented that the next three years would be an uncertain time. People were angry; some were losing their jobs and financially struggling, while others were thriving. The Council had to try to balance the needs of all sections of the community in the LTP. He was proud of the LTP Consultation document produced by the Council and was confident that the Council would receive many submissions from the community. Deputy Mayor Atkinson commended staff for reducing costs so that the proposed average annual rate increase would only be 8.94%. He looked forward to the results of the public consultation process.

Mayor Gordon supported the motion and endorsed the comments made by Deputy Mayor Atkinson. He noted that it had been one of the more challenging LTP processes the Council had to consider. He commended staff for taking the lead in identifying savings to reduce the proposed annual rate increase from 19% to only 8.94%. He understood the difficulties that people were facing in the community. However, the Council did not want to see the level of service that people had come to expect to be affected. The Council, therefore, had gone through the LTP Budget to determine which larger capital projects could be postponed without jeopardising the Council's level of service. The Council had added projects such as the Eastern Link Road and upgrading the Skew Bridge to the LTP in the hope that it would secure matched funding from the Central Government. Mayor Gordon acknowledged the spirit that elected members displayed going through the process to date and the leadership that the Chief Executive and management had shown. He looked forward to learning what the public had to say.

Councillor Ward congratulated J Millward and staff on the difficult task of balancing costs and supporting the district's growth while future-proofing the district's infrastructure. The Council had a responsibility to the community to keep the rates as low as possible, and she therefore thanked staff for the efforts to ensure this.

Councillor Williams supported the LTP going out for consultation, as he was keen to know what the public thought about the proposed LTP Budget.

Councillor Redmond also supported the motion, believing that the draft Consultation Document was one of the best he had seen. He hoped the document would result in a significant public response, as the Council wanted to know what the community thought. Councillor Redmond commented that staff and the Council had done well to produce such an LTP under challenging times.

Councillor Fulton commented that the community were facing challenges, and a 10% increase in their consumable items could hit households hard. The cost increases that the Council and ratepayers faced had consequences on people's daily lives. Councillor Fulton, therefore, supported the motion.

Councillor Brine noted that he supported the Council's continued investment in infrastructure. He pointed out that councils around New Zealand were struggling with crumbling infrastructure.

Councillor Blackie noted that inflation increased by 7.5%, so an 8.94% rate increase was the minimum the Council could achieve. He supported the LTP going out for public consultation.

In his right of reply, Deputy Mayor Atkinson commented that the Council's earthquake loan needed to be brought to the forefront every time because the money was to good use. He noted that if the Council cut its level of service, it would most likely be in areas such as aquatic facilities and libraries. Usually, the people using those facilities could not afford to spend money on buying books or private swimming lessons.

4. QUESTIONS

Nil.

5 URGENT GENERAL BUSINESS

Nil.

6. MATTERS TO BE CONSIDERED WITH THE PUBLIC EXCLUDED

Section 48, Local Government Official Information and Meetings Act 1987.

Moved: Mayor Gordon

Seconded: Councillor Ward

In accordance with section 48(1) of the Local Government Official Information and Meetings Act 1987 and the particular interest or interests protected by section 6 or section 7 of that Act (or sections 6, 7 or 9 of the Official Information Act 1982, as the case may be), it was moved:

That the public be excluded from the following parts of the proceedings of this meeting:

- 6.1 CES Programme – Request for Proposal for Quality Assurance Services
- 6.2 Endorsement of Request for Adjournment to Environment Court for PC31

The general subject of each matter to be considered while the public was excluded, the reason for passing this resolution in relation to each matter, and the specific grounds under section 48(1) of the Local Government Official Information and Meetings Act 1987 for the passing of this resolution were as follows:

Item No.	Subject	Reason for excluding the public	Grounds for excluding the public-
REPORTS			
6.1	CES Programme – Request for Proposal for Quality Assurance Services	Good reason to withhold exists under section 7	The report, attachments, discussion, and minutes remain public excluded for reasons of enabling the local authority to carry on without prejudice or disadvantage, negotiations (including commercial and industrial) negotiations and maintain legal professional privilege as per LGOIMA Section 7 (2)(a), (g) and (i). Once negotiations and transactions are concluded, the name of the preferred/successful supplier will be made publicly available.
6.2	Endorsement of Request for Adjournment to Environment Court for PC31	Good reason to withhold exists under section 7	This report and any record of the discussion remain public excluded under s7(g) of the Local Government and Official Meetings Act 1987 to maintain the legal professional privilege of the Council as a respondent to ENV-2023-CHC-136

CARRIED

CLOSED MEETING

Resolution to resume in Open Meeting

Moved: Mayor Gordon

Seconded: Councillor Goldsworthy

THAT the Council:

- (a) **Resolved** that the open meeting resumes and that the business discussed with the public excluded remained public excluded unless otherwise resolved in the individual resolutions.

CARRIED

OPEN MEETING

The public excluded meeting commenced at 1:28pm and concluded at 2:26pm.

7. NEXT MEETING

The next ordinary Council meeting was scheduled for Tuesday 5 March 2024, commencing at 1pm.

THERE BEING NO FURTHER BUSINESS, THE MEETING CONCLUDED AT 1.24PM.

CONFIRMED



Chairperson
Mayor Dan Gordon

2 April 2024
Date