

MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE WAIMAKARIRI DISTRICT COUNCIL HELD IN THE COUNCIL CHAMBER, 215 HIGH STREET, RANGIORA, ON TUESDAY, 3 MARCH 2026, COMMENCING AT 9AM.

PRESENT

Mayor D Gordon, Deputy Mayor P Redmond, Councillors T Bartle, B Cairns, W Doody, T Fulton, J Goldsworthy, B McLaren, N Mealings, S Powell, and J Ward.

IN ATTENDANCE

J Millward (Chief Executive), C Genet (General Manager Finance and Business Support), S Hart (General Manager, Strategy Engagement and Economic Development), G Cleary (General Manager Utilities and Roding), K LaValley (General Manager Planning, Regulation and Environment), J McBride (Roding and Transport Manager), S Nichols (Governance Manager), C Fahey (Water and Wastewater Asset Manager), J Recker (Stormwater and Waterways Manager), R Kerr (REL Programme Manager), S Fauth (Utilities Projects Team Leader), D Caird (Senior Policy Analyst) and C Fowler-Jenkins (Governance Support Officer).

There were four members of the public present.

1. APOLOGIES

Nil.

2. CONFLICTS OF INTEREST

There were no conflicts declared.

3. ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Mayor Gordon acknowledged Beverley McGowan, who was recently awarded a Waimakariri District Council Community Service Award in recognition of her extraordinary lifetime of service. Mr Ian Poulter was acknowledged following his appointment as a Member of the New Zealand Order of Merit for services to education.

4. CONFIRMATION OF MINUTES

4.1 Minutes of a meeting of the Waimakariri District Council held on Tuesday 27 January 2026

Moved: Councillor Mealings

Seconded: Deputy Mayor Redmond

THAT the Council:

- (a) **Confirms**, as a true and correct record, the circulated Minutes of the Waimakariri District Council meeting held on Tuesday 27 January 2026.

CARRIED

4.2 Minutes of a meeting of the Waimakariri District Council held on Tuesday 3 February 2026

Moved: Councillor Mealings

Seconded: Deputy Mayor Redmond

THAT the Council:

- (a) **Confirms**, as a true and correct record, the circulated Minutes of the Waimakariri District Council meeting held on Tuesday, 3 February 2026.

CARRIED

4.3 **Minutes of a meeting of the Waimakariri District Council held on Tuesday 17 February 2026**

Moved: Councillor Mealings

Seconded: Deputy Mayor Redmond

THAT the Council:

- (a) **Confirms**, as a true and correct record, the circulated Minutes of the Waimakariri District Council meeting held on Tuesday, 17 February 2026.

CARRIED

4.4 **Matters Arising from Minutes**

There were no matters arising.

5. DEPUTATIONS AND PRESENTATIONS

5.1 **SMA vs Onsite Management, Which is Best** – Simon Higgs

S Higgs advised that he owned two lots within the Outline Development Plan 160 (ODP160). He acknowledged the need for stormwater management but questioned whether a centralised Stormwater Management Area (SMA) was necessary or the most appropriate solution for the ODP. He noted that landowners could have sought the removal of the ponds through the Waimakariri District Plan submission process, but had not done so.

S Higgs expressed concern that landowners had not been informed of the detailed plans that had progressed for construction of the SMA, nor had they received any correspondence since April 2024 advising that the project and the associated Environment Canterbury consent applications remained on hold. Based on discussions with the Council, residents believed their views were understood and that work was underway to align the ODP with those views.

S Higgs noted that landowners had been canvassed on this matter three times, and their position had consistently been that they did not support a centralised system and preferred individual on-site stormwater management. He further advised that the SMA, as designed, could not service all properties. Approximately half of the ODP would be serviced by the front pond, which had no legal right to discharge water across Kintyre Lane. As a result, if that pond were constructed, half of the lots would still be required to manage stormwater on site.

S Higgs highlighted that while common law permitted natural sheet flow downhill, it did not permit concentrated discharge onto another property without easements, and the Council could not compel landowners to grant such easements. He added that if Canterbury experienced increased rainfall in the future, greater levels of stormwater management would be required.

S Higgs further noted that stormwater-related consent conditions were registered on property titles and that ongoing compliance was enforced. Within the ODP, six properties already held consent to use on-site storage and attenuation systems, and these systems had performed effectively during major rainfall events in recent years. He stated that the evidence within the catchment clearly demonstrated that a retention and attenuation model was functioning successfully.

There were no questions from elected members.

6. ADJOURNED BUSINESS

Nil.

7. WATER SERVICES RELATED REPORTS

7.1 Woodend Water Main Renewals 2026/27 and School Road Drainage Upgrade – Project Update and Additional Funding Request – S Fauth (Utilities Projects Team Leader), C Fahey (Water and Wastewater Asset Manager) and J Recker (Stormwater and Waterways Manager)

S Fauth spoke to the report, noting that a significant length of pipe running along Main North Road through Woodend was overdue for renewal. The main, an asbestos cement line installed in 1978, had experienced recurring issues, including leaks at the joints and failures of lateral connections. Over the past five years, this particular section of the drainage network required several repairs. S Fauth confirmed that the current financial year's budget would be insufficient to complete the full scope of the renewal work and that no funding was allocated for the next three to four years. Therefore, to enable construction in 2027, staff signalled their intention to submit a request for additional budget, including funding in the current year to undertake necessary investigation work.

Councillor Fulton asked whether staff were confident that sufficient budget and resources were available to scope the project. C Fahey advised that when staff prepared the Water Renewal Programme for the year, they assessed all assets due for renewal and prioritised accordingly. Sections of the network along Main North Road had already been identified as high-priority, and through detailed design, staff also identified additional sections that were logical to construct simultaneously.

Councillor Powell enquired whether advising the public of the disruption to traffic and business parking had been factored into the Communications Strategy for this project. S Fauth noted that wider communications would be undertaken. However, most of the work would not occur on the road; staff did not anticipate lane closures, and any required closures would happen overnight.

Councillor Powell further asked whether consideration had been given to approaching MainPower about installing underground power cables as part of the work to be done. C Fahey advised that staff had not yet engaged with MainPower but would do so prior to construction.

Responding to a question from Deputy Mayor Redmond, C Fahey explained that, typically, when compiling water renewal plans, staff considered several factors to determine the lifespan of infrastructure and based on those factors, identified this water main as critical and recommended for renewal.

Deputy Mayor Redmond sought confirmation that there would be no rating impacts from the proposed upgrade of the water infrastructure. C Fahey confirmed that there was a very healthy renewals fund for the Woodend water renewals, hence no impact on rates was expected.

Moved: Councillor Fulton

Seconded: Deputy Mayor Redmond

THAT the Council:

- (a) **Receives** Report No. 260211024183.
- (b) **Notes** the proposed works, which will have some impacts on traffic and business operations in Woodend for the approximate three-month contract duration.
- (c) **Notes** that there are a number of water mains on Main North Road in Woodend (State Highway 1) that are due for renewal, with the design underway currently prior to construction over the 2026/27 summer, with an expected construction duration of approximately three months. A small section of the stormwater main is being included as part of the works.

- (d) **Approves** an additional \$60,000 design budget for 2025/26 for the Woodend Water Renewals Budget (PJ 100911.000.5104) in order to have the design completed by the end of the financial year, including making allowance for pot-holing of existing services.
- (e) **Notes** that a staff submission will be presented in May 2026 to obtain sufficient budget to complete the Woodend Water Renewals portion of the construction works in 2026/27, once the design has progressed further and an Engineer's Estimate is produced, noting that preliminary estimates indicate the 2026/27 budget may have to increase from \$627,260 to \$1,200,000.
- (f) **Notes** there is a budget of \$198,930 for the School Road Drainage Upgrade (PJ 102696.000.5124) in 2026/27. Current estimates indicate this budget is sufficient. This will be confirmed as the design progresses, and a staff submission will be presented if required.
- (g) **Notes** that there will not be any rating impact as a result of the expected budget increase, as the Woodend-Pegasus water renewals account has a sufficient balance in the Renewals Fund to accommodate the forecast increase.
- (h) **Notes** that aside from three other sections of less than 25m length each, the renewal windows for other water mains in the Woodend Scheme are in the 2030's. Therefore, there is no residual impact on network resilience through prioritising the Main North Road works.
- (i) **Notes** that the project is considered essential to provide resilience for the Woodend water supply and to provide sufficient primary drainage capacity for the network to meet the required level of service.

CARRIED

Councillor Fulton observed that the community was supported by ageing infrastructure, much of which had also served Woodend's growth. He emphasised the importance of not only repairing existing assets but ensuring they were resilient and fit for the future. He expressed confidence in the project, noting his appreciation that funding for this community was available within the renewals budget.

Deputy Mayor Redmond spoke in support of the motion, highlighting the importance of maintaining the district's infrastructure. He observed that the Council took pride in its long-term infrastructure planning and that water infrastructure failures were the exception rather than the norm. He emphasised the need for effective traffic management to minimise impacts on businesses and residents during construction. Deputy Mayor Redmond further noted that the proposed water infrastructure renewal would have no impact on rates, as adequate funding was available.

Councillor Mealings acknowledged that infrastructure renewal works could be disruptive but noted the Council's strong track record of ensuring timely and effective infrastructure repairs. She appreciated the staff's willingness to engage with other parties to identify opportunities to coordinate or combine infrastructure projects where appropriate.

Councillor Powell observed that there was never an ideal time to undertake major infrastructure works; however, the appropriate time was always before infrastructure failure occurred. She acknowledged that staff had considered whether it would be preferable to wait until after the Woodend Bypass was completed. She supported proceeding at this time so that once the Main North Road became a local road, residents would not face an additional period of disruption. Councillor Powell acknowledged the positive aspects, including the absence of an impact on rates and the setting aside of depreciation funding. She emphasised the importance of a robust Public Communications Strategy and an effective Traffic Management Plan.

Councillor Doody expressed her appreciation for the consideration and planning that had gone into the proposed water infrastructure renewal.

Mayor Gordon endorsed the points raised by Councillor Powell regarding communications and traffic management, noting the importance of coordination with Emergency Services. He commented that the Council consistently invested in its infrastructure and commended staff for their ongoing work.

8. REPORTS

At the commencement of the meeting, Mayor Gordon advised members that Item 8.3 – Rangiora Airfield Governance Review 2026, had been withdrawn from the agenda, as further information was pending before proceeding to consideration of a report.

8.1 Rangiora Eastern Link: Adoption of Business Case – R Kerr (REL Programme Manager) and J McBride (Roading and Transport Manager)

R Kerr presented the report, noting that approval was being sought to submit the business case for the Rangiora Eastern Link to the New Zealand Transport Agency for consideration of co-funding. He provided the Council with a brief overview of the project.

Councillor Fulton questioned the anticipated improvements in traffic flow. R Kerr highlighted that East Rangiora was projected to grow with the development of an additional 5,000 to 7,000 homes over time. The primary objective of the Rangiora Eastern Link Road was to alleviate congestion in Southbrook by reducing traffic volumes on Southbrook Road. He advised that the current modelled average travel time from north to south was approximately 7.5 minutes; without intervention, this time was expected to at least double. With the Rangiora Eastern Link in place, even with projected growth in East Rangiora, the modelled travel time remained at approximately 7.5 minutes.

Councillor Fulton asked whether any secondary or related road works could further improve traffic flow. J McBride noted that a programme of various improvements was planned along the West Rangiora route, which staff were also progressing over the coming years.

Councillor Goldsworthy queried whether, given the uniqueness of the project, staff intended to undertake a post-project review. D Young confirmed that with the additional project management capability recently developed within the organisation, staff were working towards a more structured and robust lessons-learned process.

Deputy Mayor Redmond enquired whether, in the staff's view, the project was of such political significance, in the broader context, that it should proceed now. R Kerr noted that an upcoming general election in November 2026 could result in a new Government Policy Statement on Transport, which could alter the current National Land Transport Programme. Under the current Government Policy Statement, the Rangiora Eastern Link aligned well with the outcomes being sought.

Moved: Mayor Gordon

Seconded: Councillor Ward

THAT the Council:

- (a) **Receives** Report No. 260207021456.
- (b) **Approves** the Rangiora Eastern Link (REL) Single-Stage Business Case (Trim Ref 260207021457).
- (c) **Authorises** submission of the Rangiora Eastern Link (REL) Single-Stage Business Case to the New Zealand Transport Agency (NZTA) for consideration for co-funding under the National Land Transport Plan.
- (d) **Approves** the proposed funding arrangements in the business case for submission to NZTA as follows:

Total project cost (\$2025)	\$ 65,590,000
LESS	
East Rangiora ODA DC's (not co-funded)	(\$ 14,577,384)
Cost to be shared by Council and NLTP	\$ 51,012,615
Made up as follows	
NZTA co-funding 51% FAR.....	\$ 26,016,434
District wide growth (DC's).....	\$ 8,034,775
Rates/LoS (debt funded).....	\$ 16,961,406

- (e) **Approves** staff commencing the procurement of the design consultants and seeking prior approval with NZTA for recovery of expenditure on design and consenting during the NZTA decision-making period up to a maximum expenditure of \$250,000.
- (f) **Notes** that the financial figures in the draft 2026/27 Annual Plan, which is about to be consulted upon, are based on the original cost estimate of \$35 million, although there is a specific section in the document noting the likely increase in expected costs.
- (g) **Notes** that if the resolutions are passed, and following community feedback, then a staff submission will be made for consideration as part of the Annual Plan deliberations, to give effect to the change in costs and funding requirements, in particular requesting the budget for 2026/27 is increased from \$250,000 to \$4,8 million to fund the detailed design of the project and commerce acquisition of the necessary land.
- (h) **Notes** that if NZTA co-funding is not approved, then a separate report will be brought to the Council for consideration.
- (i) **Notes** that staff are currently reviewing the share of development contributions to the project and this will also be brought to the Council for consideration.

CARRIED

Mayor Gordon believed this was the appropriate time to advance the Rangiora Eastern Link project, noting that the Council had agreed, through its Annual Plan process, to lodge the business case, subject to community feedback. He acknowledged that project cost estimates had increased substantially but commended staff for undertaking thorough market testing to ensure the figures were robust. Mayor Gordon advised that members of the development community had expressed significant concern about the negative impact should the project not proceed.

Mayor Gordon noted that the estimated cost to ratepayers would be approximately 70 cents per week, assuming the Council secured NZTA's share of funding. If funding support was not achieved, the Council would need to reconsider the project and potential alternatives. The project had been under consideration for many years, and he expressed a desire for the Council to consider tendering approaches that would provide local contractors with every opportunity to participate.

Councillor Ward expressed her appreciation that the Council had brought the project forward and thanked staff for their work. She highlighted the Bellgrove subdivision, which was expected to grow by a further 800 sections, as an example of the high-quality outcomes achieved by local contractors. She believed that an estimated cost of ten cents per day represented excellent value for the community. Councillor Ward, therefore, supported the motion.

Councillor Bartle observed that the Rangiora Eastern Link project was now long overdue. He noted that the project's productivity benefits were clear and expressed strong support for it. He commented that delaying the project would increase the Council's share of costs by approximately 25%, and that further delays would only compound this. Councillor Bartle supported progressing the project as quickly as possible.

Deputy Mayor Redmond expressed his support for the motion. He commented that the project represented an excellent return and strong value for ratepayers, noting the benefits in reduced travel times, decreased congestion, and improved productivity. Deputy Mayor Redmond acknowledged that the project was not without risk, particularly given uncertainties around future cost escalation, but emphasised that it was a necessary response to growth, and that the Waimakariri was a growth district.

Councillor Mealings noted that many people avoided travelling through Southbrook due to existing congestion. She highlighted that the Waimakariri District was a rapidly growing district and that the Waimakariri District Plan had enabled the development of up to 5,000 new sections in eastern Rangiora, whose residents would require an efficient route south. While long-term modelling showed the project would maintain current travel times, she noted that the report identified an initial reduction of three to four minutes, which was a significant benefit. Councillor Mealings commented that the project had a strong benefit-to-cost ratio and represented money well spent. Although there was always some hesitation when embarking on a major project, she believed this investment was necessary.

Councillor Cairns also supported the motion. He noted the relevance of the NZTA's principle that growth should pay for growth and observed that the Council was seeking only \$26 million in co-funding. Councillor Cairns commented that a desktop review of GST generated from new builds in the Bellgrove area alone suggested a figure of approximately \$90 million, making the Council's request appear reasonable.

Councillor Fulton too indicated his support for the motion. He was encouraged by the work relating to Koura Creek and the ongoing engagement with Ngāi Tūāhuriri. He looked forward to the outcomes of the wider ecological assessment, particularly opportunities to minimise environmental impact.

In his right of reply, Mayor Gordon emphasised the importance of network connectedness, noting that this project formed part of a broader suite of initiatives aimed at addressing congestion and roading challenges across the district.

8.2 **Proposed Stock Movement Bylaw 2026 – Draft for Formal Public Consultation Request** – D Caird (Senior Policy Analyst) and S Maxwell (Roading Compliance Officer)

D Caird presented the report, noting that approval was being sought to consult on the Proposed Stock Movement Bylaw 2026. She advised that staff were coordinating the consultation to follow the 2026/27 Annual Plan process and highlighted that the key proposed changes would:

- clarifies and updates definitions and objectives
- removes duplication
- updates the permit process
- removes outdated clauses and confusing language

Councillor Fulton asked whether damage to the road included fouling and whether a remediation provision existed. D Caird confirmed that fouling was included and that the draft Bylaw provided for remediation. She noted that the Council also could utilise the Litter Act, 1979, to deal with excrement left on the road, which could be treated as litter, enabling staff to require its removal and issue a \$400 infringement notice. D Caird added that permits could include conditions such as requiring the use of a road mat.

Responding to Councillor Bartle's question, J McBride advised that the Stock Movement Permit fee was \$766 and that permits were renewed every five years.

Councillor Bartle enquired about the types of service requests the Council typically received associated with stock movement. D Caird explained that the primary issues related to road fouling including mud and effluent, as well as damage to verge plantings. She also noted recurring incidents where tape had been placed across roads to control stock movements without appropriate monitoring.

Councillor McLaren observed that the draft Bylaw referenced the Code of Practice for Temporary Traffic Management, which had since been suspended and replaced by the New Zealand Guide to Temporary Traffic Management. J McBride explained that the change was not reflected in the draft Bylaw due to the timing of the Bylaw review and confirmed that staff would update the wording to reference the new guide and any subsequent standards.

Deputy Mayor Redmond noted that the existing Bylaw was adopted in 2020 and that the draft Bylaw proposed a 10-year review period. He questioned why the Council was reviewing the 2020 Bylaw earlier than usual. S Docherty explained that under the Local Government Act, 2002, any new bylaw must be reviewed within five years, and if unchanged at that point, subsequent reviews occur every ten years.

Councillor Bartle asked whether farmers or relevant interest groups would be contacted directly during public consultation on the draft Bylaw. D Caird confirmed that staff would contact all current and former permit holders and intended to work with Farmlands and PGG Wrightson to display notices in their stores.

Moved: Councillor Mealings

Seconded: Councillor Goldsworthy

THAT the Council:

- (a) **Receives** Report No. 260116006552.
- (b) **Approves** the Statement of Proposal and Draft Stock Movement Bylaw 2026 (Trim: 251201228264 and Trim: 260116006535) for public consultation.
- (c) **Appoints** a Hearing Panel to The Stock Movement Bylaw 2026, consisting of Deputy Mayor Redmond (Portfolio holder) and Councillors McLaren, Fulton and Doody, to consider submissions and make recommendations to the Council meeting on 4 August 2026.
- (d) **Notes** the consultation timeline (March/April 2026) and proposed adoption date 4 August 2026.
- (e) **Delegates** authority to the General Manager, Strategy, Engagement, and Economic Development to approve minor edits prior to consultation.
- (f) **Circulates** the report and attachments to the Community Boards for information.

CARRIED

Councillor Mealings noted that staff had identified various shortcomings in the current Stock Movement Bylaw and had appropriately brought these to the Council for review. She acknowledged the strength of the appointed Hearing Panel and emphasised the importance of receiving public feedback, particularly from rural communities most affected by the proposed changes. Councillor Mealings supported the motion.

Mayor Gordon expressed his support for the draft Stock Movement Bylaw, calling it a sensible and practical measure. He looked forward to hearing the community's views through the consultation process.

Councillor Fulton observed that on the rural fringes, particularly in areas with an increasing number of lifestyle blocks, there was potential for conflict resulting from stock movement. He considered the Stock Movement Bylaw a useful tool for addressing issues involving repeat offenders and expressed his appreciation for the opportunity to serve on the Hearing Panel.

Councillor Doody noted that issues did not always arise from landowners themselves but often from sharemilkers, who changed regularly. She emphasised the need to ensure that all parties responsible for stock movement were informed of their obligations under the Bylaw.

Deputy Mayor Redmond recalled chairing the hearings for the 2020 Stock Movement Bylaw review, when the Council had believed it had developed a comprehensive and effective document. He commented that farmers were typically practical and constructive submitters, and he valued the solutions-focused approach they brought to the process.

In her right of reply, Councillor Mealings acknowledged the issues raised and expressed her appreciation that the consultation process would provide an opportunity to address them.

8.3 **Rangiora Airfield Governance Review 2026** – Duncan Roxborough (Strategic and Special Projects Manager)

Item 8.3 was withdrawn from the agenda due to more information pending.

Report 8.5 “Elected Member Conference Attendance” was taken at this time. The agenda order was retained in the Minutes to mitigate confusion.

The meeting adjourned for a refreshment break from 11:03 am to 11:21 am.

8.4 **Consideration of an Independent Member on the Audit and Risk Committee** – C Genet (General Manager Finance and Business Support)

C Genet took the report as read.

Councillor Fulton asked whether any consideration had been given to upskilling or training existing Audit and Risk Committee members, and C Genet responded that training for Committee members would be considered.

Councillor Ward questioned what was wrong with the Audit and Risk Committee's current governance structure. C Genet noted that there was nothing wrong with the governance structure, but the aim was to strengthen the governance processes.

Councillor Ward enquired whether the advice provided by Bancorp Treasury Service to the Audit and Risk Committee was insufficient. C Genet explained that the guidance Bancorp provided related to treasury, which was only a small subset of the Council's finances.

Councillor Ward queried the necessity of obtaining an additional external opinion when the Council was already performing effectively in this area. J Millward noted that this was the fourth occasion on which staff had raised the matter of appointing an independent member to the Audit and Risk Committee. He clarified that the issue first emerged several years ago, following the release of guidance from the Office of the Auditor-General recommending the inclusion of an independent member on audit committees.

Councillor Goldsworthy noted that the budget request was between \$20,000 and \$25,000. He sought clarification on whether this amount included recruitment costs for an independent Audit and Risk Committee member and what the recruitment would entail. C Genet advised that a self-assessment of current Committee members would be an ideal starting point, as it would help identify the skills and experience required in an independent appointee. He added that a proposed recruitment process had been outlined, including the establishment of an appointment panel. The estimated costs were based on three to four comparable positions that had recently been advertised.

Councillor Cairns asked, in relation to the current contract with Bancorp Treasury Service, how much insight the firm had into the Audit and Risk Committee's operations and whether it had the capability to provide independent advice to the Committee. C Genet again clarified that Bancorp's role was limited to treasury advice.

Moved: Mayor Gordon

Seconded: Deputy Mayor Redmond

THAT the Council:

- (a) **Receives** Report No. 260122010323.
- (b) **Agrees** that no change to the governance structure of the Audit and Risk Committee is required.

LOST

Mayor Gordon observed that the appointment of an independent Audit and Risk Committee member had previously been considered by the Council and acknowledged the strong views about the value of independent oversight. He noted that, from his experience serving on several boards, he had no concerns about appointing an independent member. In his experience, independent members did not have voting rights but contributed valuable perspectives that might otherwise be overlooked. Mayor Gordon commented that there was a degree of risk in not appointing an independent member, as audit bodies generally expected such representation. The Local Government New Zealand Excellence Programme had also identified this as an area for improvement.

Mayor Gordon further commented that Council remained an outlier compared with many other councils that had adopted this practice. He outlined several reasons why he remained comfortable with the current governance arrangements:

- The Council continued to perform at a very high standard.
- It maintained a balanced and well-managed budget.
- It effectively oversaw its debt and infrastructure programmes, and
- Its rates remained among the lowest in the country.

Mayor Gordon also highlighted the expertise already available to the Council, noting that both J Millward and C Genet were experienced Chartered Accountants, supported by skilled finance staff, and that the Council received independent treasury advice from Bancorp Treasury Service.

Deputy Mayor Redmond noted that he could appreciate both perspectives. He did not consider the current Audit and Risk Committee to be deficient or in need of correction. He emphasised that Councillors were elected by the community, whereas an independent appointee would not be. Deputy Mayor Redmond expressed concern about granting voting rights to an unelected member. However, he acknowledged that if a clear skills gap was identified, an independent member could provide valuable expertise.

Given the Council's strong performance and the elected Council's broad skill set, Deputy Mayor Redmond believed the current governance arrangements were functioning well. He added that the high calibre of Council staff was a testament to the fact that an independent member was not required to hold them to account.

Amendment

Moved: Councillor Goldsworthy

Seconded: Councillor Powell

THAT the Council:

- (a) **Receives** Report No. 260122010323.
- (b) **Agrees** to an independent external member with financial and governance expertise being appointed to the Audit and Risk Committee as soon as conveniently possible for a period of 18 months. Prior to the end of the term, the Council will review the arrangement's effectiveness and consider whether to extend it.
- (c) **Notes** that the independent external member remuneration could cost up to approximately \$25,000 per annum.

- (d) **Notes** that the budget has not been provided for in the 2025/26 Annual Plan.
- (e) **Approves** a budget of up to \$25,000 to appoint an independent member.
- (f) **Approves** the amendment to the Council's Governance Structure and the Delegations Document in relation to the Audit and Risk Committee.
- (g) **Approves** that a selection panel comprising Mayor Gordon, Councillor Ward (portfolio holder of Audit and Risk), the Chief Executive and the General Manager Finance and Business Support, be delegated the authority to manage the appointment of the external member for Council approval.
- (h) **Approves** the position description of an external independent member (Trim: 260122010331).

CARRIED

A division was called on the Amendment:

For 8: Councillors T Bartle, B Cairns, W Doody, T Fulton, J Goldsworthy, N Mealings, S Powell and Mayor D Gordon.

Against 3: Deputy Mayor P Redmond and Councillors B McLaren and J Ward.

The Amendment became the Substation Motion.

A division was called on the Substation Motion

For 9: Councillors T Bartle, B Cairns, W Doody, T Fulton, J Goldsworthy, B McLaren, N Mealings, S Powell and Mayor Gordon.

Against 2: Deputy Mayor Redmond and Councillor Ward.

Councillor Goldsworthy commented that he had not identified any deficiencies in the current Audit and Risk Committee structure. He reflected on the adage that *"the more I learn, the less I know,"* noting that, through experience, everyone inevitably developed blind spots simply by virtue of being human. It was not possible to anticipate every circumstance. He acknowledged concerns regarding non-elected members participating in decision-making; however, he reminded members that the majority of Audit and Risk Committee members would still be elected Councillors, ensuring that all decisions remained those of the Council. While he believed the Council's structures and systems were currently robust, he cautioned that without ongoing testing and review, any system could eventually deteriorate.

Councillor Powell endorsed Councillor Goldsworthy's comments. She noted that while the Council consisted of capable elected members and highly competent staff, future risks could not be predicted. She emphasised that the key consideration should be an independent perspective. The proposal was not a reflection on staff expertise, dedication, or integrity, all of which were highly valued by elected members. Nor was it criticism of elected members; rather, it recognised that members were elected for a range of reasons and were not necessarily specialists in audit and risk. An independent member could provide an external perspective and technical expertise that may not otherwise be available. Although there would be a cost associated with attendance, there could also be high costs if issues went undetected. Councillor Powell added that an independent presence could reassure the public that oversight was not solely internal and provide staff with confidence that decisions were being made with the fullest possible information.

Councillor Ward expressed concern that appointing an independent chairperson would introduce unforeseen risk. She cited the example of Ashburton District Council, which had appointed an independent chair from Wellington, noting that the arrangement had not been successful. Councillor Ward, therefore, did not support the amendment.

Councillor Doody stated that she had initially opposed appointing an independent member. However, upon further consideration of the role such a member would play on the Audit and Risk Committee, she indicated that she was now supportive of the proposal.

Councillor Fulton observed that the matter before the Council concerned not only the expertise of elected members and staff but also the willingness to engage in ongoing learning. He acknowledged a natural reluctance or scepticism when working with external experts, particularly in Community Board and community settings. However, informed by recent experience, he recognised that there were occasions when an external perspective, grounded in knowledge, experience, and sometimes a calming influence, was valuable. Councillor Fulton noted that the Audit and Risk Committee had functioned effectively, but he had come to the view that openness to external evaluation and continued learning were essential. He emphasised that this was not a reflection on the Committee's members and expressed his support for the amendment.

Councillor Cairns commented that he had been undecided prior to the meeting, however after considering the estimated cost of \$25,000, he believed it represented a modest annual investment for access to specialised skills that could assist the Audit and Risk Committee. He recognised the value an independent member could bring and indicated his support for the amendment.

Councillor Bartle noted that although \$25,000 was not an insignificant amount, it was still an additional cost. However, he referred to the Good Practice Guidance issued by the Office of the Auditor-General, which strongly recommended appointing an independent member to Audit and Risk committees. He noted that this was a clear and compelling statement, and that the Council was an outlier, being one of only a small number of councils that had not adopted this practice. Councillor Bartle emphasised the importance of public perception, observing that if the Auditor-General recommended such an appointment and the Council chose not to follow that guidance, it could be viewed unfavourably by the community. He confirmed his support for the amendment.

Mayor Gordon noted that an independent member could be appointed at any time, and that he had seen such arrangements work effectively on several boards on which he had served. He acknowledged the current financial climate, observing that councils were facing increasing costs and additional expectations. Mayor Gordon commented that audit-related matters were frequently raised by Local Government New Zealand. When Waimakariri had been assessed as a high-performing council, there had been considerable discussion about the regulatory requirements placed on councils, including whether those in the high-performing category should continue to be subject to the same level of additional oversight. He noted that annual auditing requirements for such councils had been debated. In Mayor Gordon's view, the appointment of an independent member was not necessary at this time.

Councillor Mealings agreed that Waimakariri was a high-performing council and had been the first to be audited. To her knowledge, the Council had never received an unmodified Audit Opinion, which indicated that the Council's processes were sound. Councillor Mealings added that even if an independent member were appointed, the Council would still need to procure specialist advice from time to time; the appointment would not remove that requirement. She supported the amendment proposing an 18-month trial period for the independent member, with a review to occur prior to the end of that term.

Councillor McLaren expressed support for the original motion. While he accepted the general recommendation that an independent member could be appointed, he did not believe the Council currently required one. He noted that although \$25,000 may appear modest in the context of Council expenditure, it represented a significant sum for many families in the district. Councillor McLaren believed the community had given a clear mandate for greater fiscal prudence. He also cautioned against placing undue weight on the practices of other councils.

In his right of reply, Councillor Goldsworthy expressed his appreciation for the robust discussion and acknowledged the reservations raised. He emphasised that the proposal was not merely a procedural formality, noting that the cost equated to approximately one dollar per ratepayer per year. Councillor Goldsworthy argued that an additional layer of oversight could help prevent issues, noting risks associated with both adopting and not adopting the proposal.

Councillor Ward acknowledged that the matter had been considered through a democratic process, though she did not support the amendment.

In his right of reply, Mayor Gordon stated that, having listened to the discussion, he was persuaded in favour of the amendment. He reaffirmed his strong belief in the role of the elected Council and noted that he had no objection to the presence of an independent voice, especially as the arrangement would be subject to review after 18 months.

8.5 **Elected Member Conference Attendance** – S Nichols (Governance Manager)

S Nichols took the report as read, and there were no questions from elected members.

Moved: Deputy Mayor Redmond Seconded: Councillor Goldsworthy

THAT the Council:

- (a) **Receives** Report No. 260220060392.
- (b) **Approves** Mayor Gordon and all Councillors attending the Local Government New Zealand Zone 5/6 conference on 30 April and 1 May 2026 in Christchurch.
- (c) **Notes** the cost per attendee is \$395 plus any mileage that may be claimed.
- (d) **Notes** that a verbal report from attendees will be provided to a future workshop to discuss information and opportunities learnt from the attendance.
- (e) **Notes** as a Council member of Local Government New Zealand, it is acknowledged that Mayor Gordon, one Councillor, and the Chief Executive attend in accordance with the membership and policy requirements, and that a report on Councillor attendance at the LGNZ National Conference will be presented to Council in May 2026 once programme details are available.

CARRIED

Deputy Mayor Redmond observed that attendance at such events formed an important part of an elected member's role, providing both educational and professional development benefits. He noted that, given the Zone 5/6 National Conference was being held in Christchurch, it represented a very cost-effective opportunity. Deputy Mayor Redmond expressed his support for all Councillors attending.

Councillor Goldsworthy commented that the networking opportunities and information gained from these events were invaluable. He noted that he consistently left such gatherings with his perspectives constructively challenged. Councillor Goldsworthy was strongly encouraged to know that all members wished to participate.

9. **HEALTH, SAFETY AND WELLBEING**

9.1 **Health, Safety and Wellbeing Report January 2026 to February 2026** - J Millward (Chief Executive)

J Millward took the report as read.

Councillor Cairns noted there had been no e-scooter incidents and asked if Flamingo Scooters reported incidents to the Council. J Millward confirmed that e-scooter incidents were reported.

Moved: Councillor McLaren Seconded: Councillor Cairns

THAT the Council:

- (a) **Receives** Report No 260217028626.

- (b) **Notes** that there were no notifiable incidents this month. The Council is, so far as is reasonably practicable, compliant with the duties of a person conducting a business or undertaking (PCBU) as required by the Health and Safety at Work Act 2015.
- (c) **Circulates** this report to the Community Boards for their information.

CARRIED

10. MATTERS REFERRED FROM COMMITTEES

10.1 Updates to Risk Management Policy and Framework – S Nation (Senior Quality and Risk Advisor)

S Nation spoke to the report, noting that it requested adoption of the changes made to the Council's Risk Management Policy and Framework.

There were no questions from elected members.

Moved: Councillor Fulton

Seconded: Councillor Goldsworthy

THAT the Council

- (a) **Adopts** the proposed changes to the Risk Management Policy and Risk Management Framework.

CARRIED

10.2 Welcoming Waimakariri Plan – T Sturley (Community Team Manager) and A Claassens (Community Development Facilitator)

C Bown took the report as read, and there were no questions from elected members.

Moved: Councillor Powell

Seconded: Councillor Cairns

THAT the Council

- (a) **Adopts** the Welcoming Waimakariri Plan 2026 – 2029.
- (b) **Notes** that broad community engagement informed the development of the initial draft Welcoming Waimakariri Plan.
- (c) **Notes** that the attached Stocktake Report (Trim 250508081046) summarises that engagement, including details of participating stakeholders.
- (d) **Notes** that at the September meeting of the Community and Recreation Committee, the initial draft plan was approved and released for community consultation.
- (e) **Notes** that community consultation was undertaken via a Welcoming Waimakariri survey on the Council's Let's Talk platform. The period for this consultation was 1 October – 30 November 2025.
- (f) **Notes** that the attached Consultation Summary summarises the results of the Let's Talk consultation, and feedback from the community and advisory groups.
- (g) **Notes** that Strategy and Business, Communications and Engagement, and Community Team staff reviewed the feedback in the Consultation Summary to determine appropriate amendments to the draft document, resulting in production of the attached Welcoming Waimakariri Plan, 2026 – 2029, presented in this report.
- (h) **Notes** that the Welcoming Waimakariri Plan 2026 – 2029 document covers the period 1 July 2026 to 30 June 2029.

CARRIED

Councillor Powell noted that the report had previously been considered by the Community and Recreation Committee and commended it as a strong piece of work led by A Claassens.

Councillor Cairns congratulated A Claassens on her efforts, acknowledging the significant commitment she had shown in developing the Welcoming Waimakariri Plan 2026. He stated that she had invested considerable energy in the project and had done an excellent job of bringing it to the Council.

Mayor Gordon expressed his support for the programme and the work undertaken by A Claassens in this area. He emphasised the importance of the Waimakariri District's welcoming approach, noting that it had never needed to advertise itself to attract new residents. Mayor Gordon remarked that at Citizenship Ceremonies, new residents consistently commented on how welcoming and special they found the Waimakariri District to be. He endorsed the work being undertaken and expressed his support for the Welcoming Waimakariri Plan 2026.

In her right of reply, Councillor Powell noted that the plan encompassed a significant number of actions being progressed behind the scenes by staff. She stated that she looked forward to seeing the outcomes of this work.

11. COMMITTEE MINUTES FOR INFORMATION

11.1 Minutes of the Audit and Risk Committee meeting 18 November 2025

11.2 Minutes of the Community and Recreation Committee meeting 16 December 2025

Moved: Councillor Ward

Seconded: Councillor McLaren

THAT the Council

(a) **Receives** Item 11.1 and 11.2 for information.

CARRIED

12. COMMUNITY BOARD MINUTES FOR INFORMATION

12.1 Minutes of the Oxford-Ohoka Community Board meeting 3 December 2025

12.2 Minutes of the Kaiapoi-Tuahiwi Community Board meeting of 8 December 2025

12.3 Minutes of the Woodend-Sefton Community Board meeting 8 December 2025

12.4 Minutes of the Rangiora-Ashley Community Board meeting 10 December 2025

Moved: Councillor Bartle

Seconded: Councillor McLaren

THAT the Council

(a) **Receives** Items 12.1 to 12.4 for information.

CARRIED

13. COUNCIL PORTFOLIO UPDATES

13.1 **Iwi Relationships** – Mayor Dan Gordon

Mayor Gordon noted that a hui would be held on 3 March 2026 at the Tuahiwi Marae and that the Council's relationship with the local Rūnanga was strong. He acknowledged J Millward for making significant progress in strengthening that relationship.

13.2 **Greater Christchurch Partnership Update** – Mayor Dan Gordon

Mayor Gordon opted not to provide an update at this time.

13.3 **Government Reforms** – Mayor Dan Gordon

Mayor Gordon opted not to provide an update at this time.

13.4 **Climate Change and Sustainability** – Councillor Niki Mealings

Councillor Mealings highlighted the following:

- The Arohatia te Awa Working Group had reconvened and held its first meeting, reaffirming its role as the principal working group for biodiversity projects.
- The Waimakariri Biodiversity Contestable Fund was now open for applications until 15 March 2026. The fund was available to registered community groups and entities engaged in protecting, maintaining, and enhancing biodiversity and ecological values within the district.
- The Council's organisational greenhouse gas footprint for 2024/25 was progressing well, with the final report scheduled for completion by the end of March 2026.
- Good progress was also being made on the implementation actions of the Canterbury Climate Partnership Plan. A rapid review was expected to be completed by the end of June 2026 to inform councils' Long Term Plans.
- Resilience Explorer was a digital platform providing intuitive geospatial mapping, network-wide visualisation, and interactive simulations of hazard events and risk assessments, drawing on world-leading research.
- Within the Council's Natural Hazard and Climate Work Programme, a new group was proposed: the Waimakariri Natural Hazards and Climate Adaptation Coordination Group.

13.5 **International Relationships** – Deputy Mayor Philip Redmond

Deputy Mayor Redmond attended the Chinese New Year Spring Festival concert at the Isaac Theatre Royal and met the Chinese Consul-General, He Ying. He also attended the Oxford Area School farewell for 12 Chinese exchange students, who had enjoyed a successful and productive stay in Oxford.

Deputy Mayor Redmond reported that the Waimakariri Passchendaele Advisory Group would meet on 11 March 2026, being the first meeting under the new term.

14. **QUESTIONS**

Nil.

15. **URGENT GENERAL BUSINESS**

Nil

16. **MATTERS TO BE CONSIDERED WITH THE PUBLIC EXCLUDED**

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

Moved: Councillor Doody Seconded: Councillor Goldsworthy

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:

- 16.1 Confirmation of Public Excluded Minutes of Council Meeting 27 January 2026
- 16.2 Confirmation of Public Excluded Minutes of Council Meeting 3 February 2026
- 16.3 Well Head Construction Tender Approval and Request for Additional Budget
- 16.4 Extension of Kesteven Street
- 16.5 Partial Acquisition Lees Valley Road, Oxford
- 16.6 2026 Mainpower Trust Election: Trustee Vacancies and Voting Process

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.
MINUTES			
16.1	Confirmation of Public Excluded Minutes of Council Meeting 3 February 2026	Good reason to withhold exists under Section 7	To protect the privacy of natural persons and enable the local authority to carry on without prejudice or disadvantage, negotiations (including commercial and industrial), and maintain legal professional privilege LGOIMA Section 7 (2)(a), (g) and (i).
WATER SERVICES REPORT			
16.2	Well Head Construction Tender Approval and Request for Additional Budget	Good reason to withhold exists under Section 7	To enable the local authority to carry out, without prejudice or disadvantage, commercial activities and enable the local authority to carry on, without prejudice or disadvantage, negotiations (including commercial and industrial negotiations). LGOIMA Section 7(2)(h) and (i).
REPORTS			
16.3	Extension of Kesteven Street	Good reason to withhold exists under Section 7	To protect information where the making available of the information would be likely unreasonably to prejudice the commercial position of the person who supplied or who is the subject of the information, and 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)(b ii), (i) and (g).
16.4	Partial Acquisition of Oxford Land	Good reason to withhold exists under Section 7	To protect the privacy of natural persons and enable the local authority to carry on without prejudice or disadvantage, negotiations (including commercial and industrial), and maintain legal professional privilege LGOIMA Section 7 (2)(a), (g) and (i).
16.5	2026 Mainpower Trust Election: Trustee Vacancies and Voting Process	Good reason to withhold exists under Section 7	To protect the privacy of natural persons and enable the local authority to carry out, without prejudice or disadvantage, negotiations (including commercial and industrial) negotiations and maintain legal professional privilege LGOIMA Section 7 (2)(a), (g) and (i).

CARRIED

CLOSED MEETING

The public-excluded portion of the meeting was held from 12:47pm to 1:38pm.

OPEN MEETING

NEXT MEETING

The next ordinary meeting of the Council was scheduled for Tuesday, 31 March 2026, commencing at 9am to be held in the Council Chamber, Rangiora Service Centre, 215 High Street, Rangiora.

THERE BEING NO FURTHER BUSINESS, THE MEETING CLOSED AT 1:38PM.

CONFIRMED



Chairperson
Mayor Dan Gordon

31 March 2026

Date