
WAIMAKARIRI YOUTH COUNCIL MINUTES

COUNCIL CHAMBERS, WAIMAKARIRI DISTRICT COUNCIL, RANGIORA
7.00pm TUESDAY 28th JULY 2026

1. Opening Karakia (Simoné)

PRESENT: Jason Goldsworthy (Councillor), Dylan LaValley (Co-Chair), Simoné Bisschoff (Co-Chair), Cherry Burgess (Waimakariri District Council Community Team Youth Development Facilitator), Emily Belton (WDC Community Team), Hannah Wells, Esha-May McHugh, Matilda Parish, Zack Lappin, Caitlin Sands, Risha Prada, Sophia Burgess, Sophia Edwards, Orianna Patrick, Grace Lovelock, Sammy Smith,

Attended via Microsoft Teams: None

APOLOGIES: Oscar Bai, Jennie Son, Nicole Villanueva, Dan Gordon (Mayor), Niki Mealings (Councillor).

- 2. Whakatauki (Zack Lappin)** *“Whāia te iti kahurangi ki te tūohu koe me he maunga teitei”*
Seek the treasure that you value most dearly, if you bow your head, let it be to a lofty mountain.

3. MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING 30th JUNE 2026

Moved: Simoné Bisschoff

Seconded: Zack Lappin

4. Solomon Smith, Emily and Georgia, Electoral Commission (Government Elections)

Key details:

- General Election is on 7th November 2026
- First election in which enrolment and voting cannot be done on the day of the election.
- To be eligible to vote must be:
 - 18 years of age or older.
 - A New Zealand Citizen or Permanent Resident (lived continuously in New Zealand for 12 months with no ‘travel by’ date in Passport).
 - Be *enrolled* to vote no later than **25th October 2026**.
- To be on the electoral role (enrolled to vote) this is possible from the age of 17.

About the Electoral Commission

The Commission is a non-biased commission (non-partisan). It is not influenced by the Government.

What's Important to You?

- Having a voice, connections to the community.
- Build a stronger community and everyone feels heard. Ideas being shared.
- Accessibility (physically) and accessibility to resources and ideas.
- Waimakariri District not accessible enough for young people and young women.
- Encouraging people to get to know their district more; what is happening in the community.

Are there decisions in the district you did not agree with?

- Things that go against morals.
- Young people do not get a chance to vote and do not get a say in the governance issues that impact them the most.
 - Somewhat important for the Youth Council to be that voice to counter those decisions made not in youth bests interests.

Do you have the right people to represent your voice?

- Yes. To be heard, to be listened to.
- Education required on what is happening, as opinions often formed on emotion rather than fact. Might get upset about decisions made but might not always have all the information.

KFC or McDonald's? *[referring to Elections]*

- Elections are about making a choice, and about what is important to you, and who you want to represent to you.
- People approach you to ask you what is important to youth.

Enrolment and Voting

- **Question:** How old to enrol? **Answer:** 17 but can only vote 18+.
- When you enrol, it is not just for the national elections, it is also for the local body elections.
- Once you enrol, you are enrolled for life. Only time you need to let the Commission know, is when you move (i.e. for study).
- **Question:** If you do not vote, are you allowed to complain? **Answer:** Still allowed to complain.
 - **Question:** Is it right? **Answer:** Can say do what you believe.
 - *[from Youth Council]:* not voting is a choice it has consequence. What you're not changing, you're choosing.
 - **Question:** Can explain the role of the Children's Commissioner? Electoral Role is 18+ but Children's Commissioner looks after those below 18. **Answer:** Do not have an answer to that, happy to come back on that.
 - **Question:** Why don't we get to choose who represents us? It is adults that do not have a children's perspective. **Answer:** There are different mediums of how to speak to government, it makes the Youth Council especially important as a platform to have that voice. When speaking to

people who are eligible to vote and making it clear what is important to you. Be that person when the opportunity becomes available. Our worlds are not governed entirely by decisions because of the elections. Have the power right now to influence people in your sphere – to select someone or be the person to be elected. Many mediums you can speak into re: those who have influence.

- Election date: 7th November. **Need to be enrolled by: 25th October.** After that date: you cannot enrol and cannot vote. Previous elections it has been possible to enrol on the day.
- **Question:** What to do as its quite scary for younger people? **Answer:** Remind them they have opinions. You know your community and people. Get them thinking about something you care about or passionate about.
 - Commissioner can support with providing info to feel more confident.
 - **Question:** Does the Commission have information that helps Youth navigate the parties etc? **Answer:** Solomon will send through the tools that help them. Can also then look through further which parties align with your values. Vote Compass is helpful too *[noted URL for the current election is not yet available]*.
 - Another way to discuss voting, is to use the analogy of selecting a sports team. Making a choice, what is going to work for you and your community?
 - **Voting Game:** four different buckets, each bucket has a different movie, and then each person votes for which movie they think is the best and then have that discussion as to why they chose the movie.
- **Question:** Is there anything that requires you to vote? **Answer:** In Australia, yes. In New Zealand, no.
- **Question:** Can standing candidates vote? **Answer:** Yes, they can vote.
- **Eligibility to Vote:** Allowed to vote if you are a permanent resident (with no leave date on the passport) and been here 12 months continuously, you have a right to vote.
- **ACTIONS:** Solomon will send through his presentation and information to disseminate to Youth Council.
- The Electoral Commission are often at community events, and more than happy to come along to events. *[pamphlets, left on Governance/notices table with QR Code to enrol, or take-home forms]*. Next time will bring the voting game.

5. MATTERS ARISING FROM PREVIOUS MINUTES

- **Oscar Bai** – Follow up with Hellers – sausages for the River Clean-up. *[Hellers only donate to schools]*.
 - **Esha-May McHugh** – Return re-Purpose Pal Purple Bin.
 - **Zack Lappin and Hannah Wells** - Submission on Head Start Proposal completed and accepted via Alistair Gray (WDC, Communications and Engagement Manager)
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6. REPORTS FOR DISCUSSION - COUNCILLORS

a) Jason Goldsworthy – Councillor

- In the throes of sorting out Head Start and heading towards the deadline for the council's submission.
 - Majority of WDC respondents to survey want the North Canterbury Unitary Council option. *[Waimakariri District Council merges with Hurunui District Council]*.
 - Discussions with Waimakariri District and Hurunui District Councillors.
 - Get in sub by 9th August, from there, then decision made if submission is accepted or back to drawing board.
- Council has officially adopted the Youth Action Plan.
- Following on from the Electoral Commission presentation: The National election system is Mixed Member Proportional (MMP) whereas the local council elections are first past the post.
- **Question:** How is it going with Head Start submissions? **Answer:** Southern districts struggling. Selwyn and Ashburton interesting. Christchurch City Council divided. Ashburton wanting to stay on their own. Kaikoura have indicated they are looking to join Marlborough.
 - **Question:** *[in reference to where offices will be]* Hurunui has Amberley. Waimakariri has Rangiora. Where will the central offices be? **Answer:** Infrastructure is in both districts. Likely (if approved) the proposed Unitary authority will exist in both locations, not sure if there will be just one central office. If accepted, then 2028 would be the election for North Canterbury Unitary Council.
- *[In reference to national elections and proposed NC Council]:* Electoral boundaries do not actually match district boundaries. Electoral boundaries are purely based on population.

PROJECT GROUP REPORTS

7. Dudley Park – Zack Lappin

- Met yesterday, running the launch event 20th November, the weekend after show weekend, and before the council Santa Parade. Officially opening the concrete Table Tennis table.
 - *[Simoné Bisschoff]* For the launch, it will be like the Activate launch. Looking to tie together all the projects into the launch. The project started in 2016 – 10-year long project. The delay arose from the Covid Pandemic, and follow-on issues from that pandemic.
 - The launch will have waterslides, bouncy castles, sausage sizzles, music, skate jam.
 - WaiYouth were thinking about a water fight event, but this might be good for the launch. Could also have a 'Dunk the Mayor' (or Councillors?) event.

- Could run the two events. Look at nearer the time. For now, working on timeline for getting the Table Tennis installed.

8. Enviro – Sophia Burgess

- Youth Council Future Voices Survey Flyer is out now. **ACTION:** Grace, Sophia, and Esha-May to hand out to their school. Everyone to send to their networks.
 - Hannah will look to scan the flyer and send around the networks.
 - *[Zack Lappin]* would need logos of WDC and Youth Council and can then send through UCSA.
 - **Question:** Can this go to schools in Christchurch? **Answer:** Yes, still valid.
 - Youth Voice Canterbury: Can share with them, could also collaborate with them.
- **River Clean Up: Question:** Is transport provided? **Answer:** No. Flyers sent out.
 - Confirmed 13 people coming to river clean up.
 - **ACTION:** Esha-May may be able to contact a manager via own networks at Hellers.
- **Street Clean-Up** *[Risha Prasad]*: Organising a street clean up on East Belt would you be interested? Approx date 28th August. **ACTION:** RSVP to Risha

9. WaiYouth

- Music event – disco – 14th August 7pm to 9pm. John Knox Church. **ACTION:** Need help with the clean-up. Best to register via the poster.
- Band that is playing is Spirit Boy
- Food pizzas, hot chips, popcorn

10. Consultations Open - Zack

- Most big consultations have just closed.

11. WYC Member Report

a) Simoné

- Referring to elections: If you could vote right now, would you? Consensus is Yes. Simoné:
 - part of organisation called 'Make it 16'. [Lower the Voting Age | Make It 16](#) There is a need for more youth involvement in the political landscape. Informative website too is: 'On a Role?
 - In Wellington last month making video materials for 'Make it 16'.

b) Zack

- Had dialogue with different departments and organisations in Wellington, has brought through resources from Parliamentary Services.
- Subject to approval, will be a new Chair of WDC committee.
- **Question:** *[to Simoné and Zack]* How are trips funded? **Answer:** Depends on which organisation the travelling is for. Zack and Simoné happy to answer queries.

- **Question:** Is there a model parliament this year? **Answer:** Not this year, because of the national election. Instead, there is a model EU in Christchurch, Friday, Saturday, and Sunday end of August [29th – 31st August 2026]. [New Zealand Model European Union: Delegate Registrations | UN Youth NZ](#)

12. GENERAL BUSINESS

- **Youth Futures Expo** [Tuesday 11th August]. [2026 Futures Expo | NC Youth Futures](#)
 - Youth Council have a table from 4:00 to 7:30pm, would like the Youth Council to take it in shifts. There is food there.
 - **ACTION:** Roster to be set up by Simoné and circulated to the Youth Council.
 - Realistically out the door at 8:00pm.
 - Caitlin can be there from 6:30pm to 8:00pm.
 - General discussion about the kind of questions people might ask.

ACTIONS:

Item:	Who:
Set up roster for Youth Future Expo and disseminate to Youth Council	Simoné Bisschoff
Roster sign up for Youth Future Expo	All Youth Council
Music Event/disco sign up for cleaning (register via the poster)	All Youth Council
Youth Council Future Voices Survey – disseminate through networks and schools	All Youth Council
See if Future Voices Survey poster can be scanned and placed on social media	Hannah Wells
Electoral Commission Presentation and tools to engage in voting	Solomon Smith (Electoral Commission) to provide & Cherry Burgess to pass onto YC
Return Purple Repurpose Bin to Council	Esha-May McHugh
Investigate Lead for Hellers Sponsorship for river clean up.	Esha-May McHugh
Indicate availability Street Clean Up to Risha Prasad	All Youth Council

Closing Karakia: [led by Simoné Bisschoff]

Meeting closed at **8:27pm**

Next meeting is on TUESDAY 25TH AUGUST 2026 7PM

Signed

Date