

Waimakariri District Council Community and Recreation Committee

Agenda

Tuesday 18 August 2026
1.00pm

Council Chambers
215 High Street
Rangiora

Members:

Cr Brent Cairns (Chairperson)
Cr Wendy Doody
Cr Bruce McLaren
Cr Niki Mealings
Cr Shona Powell
Deputy Mayor Philip Redmond
Mayor Dan Gordon (ex officio)

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A MEETING OF THE COMMUNITY AND RECREATION COMMITTEE WILL BE HELD IN THE COUNCIL CHAMBER, 215 HIGH STREET, RANGIORA ON TUESDAY 18 AUGUST AT 1PM

Recommendations in reports are not to be construed as
Council policy until adopted by the Council

BUSINESS

Page No

1 APOLOGIES

2 CONFLICTS OF INTEREST

Conflicts of interest (if any) to be reported for minuting.

3 CONFIRMATION OF MINUTES

3.1 Minutes of the meeting of the Community and Recreation Committee held on 16 June 2026

7 – 21

RECOMMENDATION

THAT the Community and Recreation Committee:

- (a) **Confirms** the circulated Minutes of the meeting of the Community and Recreation Committee, held on 16 June 2026 as a true and accurate record.

3.2 Matters arising (From Minutes)

4 DEPUTATIONS

4.1 Kaipoi Food Forest end of Year Report – Glenn Foley

G Foley will be in attendance to present the Kaipoi Food Forests end of year report.

5 REPORTS

5.1 Revision of Natural Burials Through a 24-Month Trial at Cust-West Eyreton Cemetery – Grant Stephens (Design and Planning Team Leader) and Aria Huang (Greenspace Landscape Planner)

22 – 35

RECOMMENDATION

THAT the Community and Recreation Committee:

- (a) **Receives** Report No. 260720174500.
- (b) **Approves** a 24-month trial of natural burials at Cust-West Eyreton Cemetery.

- (c) **Notes** that if approved, staff will engage with Natural Burials NZ, at an estimated cost of \$2,500, to provide specialist advice and support throughout the planning and establishment of the natural burial area at Cust-West Eyreton Cemetery, including site assessment and certification.
- (d) **Notes** that the Annual Plan includes a budget of \$5,100 for natural burial provision, which would be available for use in the 2026/27 financial year and would support the engagement of Natural Burials NZ, including specialist advice, assessment and certification.
- (e) **Notes** that staff will continue to develop the operational arrangements required to implement and manage the natural burial trial, informed by advice from Natural Burials NZ.
- (f) **Notes** that staff will report back to the C&R Committee at the end of the trial period with results of the trial and recommendations going forward.
- (g) **Circulates** this report to the Rangiora-Ashley Community Board for their information.

AND

THAT the Community and Recreation Committee recommends:

THAT Council:

- (h) **Approves** a fee of \$3,627.70 for a natural burial during the trial period with this fee to be reviewed at the end of the trial period.

5.2 **Report for Information – Kaiapoi Isite move from Enterprise North Canterbury to Waimakariri Libraries – Luke Sole (District Libraries Manager) and Simon Hart (General Manager Strategy, Engagement and Economic Development)**

36 – 39

RECOMMENDATION

THAT the Community and Recreation Committee:

- (a) **Receives** Report No. 260715169968.
- (b) **Notes** that the Kaiapoi isite has relocated from the Enterprise North Canterbury building in Kaiapoi, to the Kaiapoi Ruataniwha Civic Centre following a decision of Council during the 2026/27 Annual Plan deliberations meeting.
- (c) **Notes** that there has been a reduction to the Economic Development Grant (GL10.484.100.2502) ENC receive from Council of \$90,000 as a result of moving the isite service from ENC to the Waimakariri Libraries, and that there is no anticipated level of service impact of this change.
- (d) **Notes** that a reduced offering is being provided between 13 July and 31 August, while the isite service is fully transitioned. Full isite services will resume at the library from the 31st August.
- (e) **Notes** that libraries staff will be provided training for full isite duties, with support from Tourism New Zealand.

6 **PORTFOLIO UPDATES**

- 6.1 **Greenspace (Parks, Reserves and Sports Grounds) – Councillor Brent Cairns**
- 6.2 **Community Facilities (including Aquatic Centres, Multi-use Sports Stadium, Libraries/Service Centres, Town Halls and Museums) – Councillor Bruce McLaren**
- 6.3 **Community Development and Wellbeing – Councillor Shona Powell**
- 6.4 **Arts and Culture – Councillor Brent Cairns**
- 6.5 **Property – Deputy Mayor Philip Redmond**
- 6.6 **Housing – Councillor Wendy Doody**

7 **QUESTIONS**

8 **URGENT GENERAL BUSINESS**

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

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

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 is moved:

That the public is excluded from the following parts of the proceedings of this meeting.

- 9.1 Briefing notes Community and Recreation Committee 16 June 2026
- 9.2 ICE Gym Sports North Canterbury Lease to Own Update

Item No.	Subject	Reason for excluding the public	Grounds for excluding the public.
BRIEFING NOTES			
9.1	Briefing notes Community and Recreation Committee 16 June 2026	Good reason to withhold exists under Section 7	To protect the privacy of natural persons and enabling 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)
REPORTS			
9.2	ICE Gym Sports North Canterbury Lease to Own Update	Good reason to withhold exists under Section 7	To protect the privacy of natural persons and enabling 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)

NEXT MEETING

The next meeting of the Community and Recreation Committee is scheduled for Tuesday 15 September 2026 at 1pm in the Council Chamber, Rangiora Service Centre, 215 High Street, Rangiora.

Briefing

- *Mainpower Cricket Oval Future Options, Key Challenges and Recommendations – Chris Brown (General Manager Community and Recreation)*
- *GP Hall, Oxford – Chris Brown (General Manager Community and Recreation)*

WAIMAKARIRI DISTRICT COUNCIL

MINUTES OF A MEETING OF THE COMMUNITY AND RECREATION COMMITTEE HELD IN THE COUNCIL CHAMBER, 215 HIGH STREET, RANGIORA, ON TUESDAY 16 JUNE AT 1PM

PRESENT

Councillors B Cairns (Chairperson), W Doody, B McLaren, N Mealings, S Powell (via audio/visual link), Deputy Mayor Redmond and Mayor Gordon.

IN ATTENDANCE

J Millward (Chief Executive), C Brown (General Manager Community and Recreation), G MacLeod (Greenspace Manager) (via audio/visual link), T Sturley (Community Team Manager), M Greenwood (Aquatics Manager), L Sole (District Libraries Manager), D Roxborough (Strategic and Special Projects Manager), O Stewart (Airfield Manager and Safety Officer), E Belton (Youth Development Facilitator), L Mealings (Policy Analyst) and K Rabe (Governance Adviser).

There were two members of the public present.

1 APOLOGIES

Nil.

2 CONFLICTS OF INTEREST

There were no conflicts declared.

3 CONFIRMATION OF MINUTES

3.1 Minutes of the meeting of the Community and Recreation Committee held on 21 April 2026

Moved: Councillor McLaren

Seconded: Deputy Mayor Redmond

THAT the Community and Recreation Committee:

- (a) **Confirms** the circulated Minutes of the meeting of the Community and Recreation Committee, held on 21 April 2026, as a true and accurate record.

CARRIED

3.2 Matters arising (From Minutes)

There were no matters arising.

3.3 Notes of the Workshop of the Community and Recreation Committee held on 21 April 2026

Moved: Councillor McLaren

Seconded: Councillor Mealings

THAT the Community and Recreation Committee:

- (a) **Receives** the circulated Notes of the Workshop of the Community and Recreation Committee, held on 21 April 2026.

CARRIED

4 **DEPUTATIONS**

4.1 **Installation and Operation of Community-Focused Padel Courts at Main Power Stadium, Rangiora** – Riki Bennet

R Bennett addressed the Committee via an audio/visual link from London to discuss the potential installation and operation of a community-focused padel club on land adjacent to MainPower Stadium.

Councillor Cairns inquired about padel, and R Bennett explained that it combined elements of tennis and squash. He noted that the game was typically played in doubles format, although singles play was also possible. Matches were played on a court enclosed by glass walls, allowing players to use the walls during play, similar to squash, as well as to lob the ball over the net to score points. Councillor Cairns further asked whether the court would be used exclusively for padel. R Bennett advised that the courts could also support Pilates and other fitness activities, which could be incorporated into padel sessions to enhance fitness levels. He also noted that a soccer variant of padel could be played on the same courts. In response to a question regarding demand, R Bennett stated that padel was an emerging sport in Australia and New Zealand, with approximately 27 courts currently established in New Zealand, and that it was experiencing significant global growth.

Deputy Mayor Redmond asked whether the courts were typically indoor facilities. R Bennett responded that courts could be constructed both indoors and outdoors. In response to further questions, Mr Bennett confirmed that he was seeking a suitable location rather than funding, with investment to be sourced elsewhere. He advised that the cost of play was generally between \$60 and \$70 per hour per court, equating to approximately \$15 per person when shared among four players. He also confirmed that, while the venture would be commercial in nature, it would maintain a strong community focus.

Councillor Doody requested clarification on court dimensions, and R Bennett advised that a doubles court measured 20 metres by 12 metres, while a singles court measured 20 metres by 6 metres.

In response to Councillor Mealings' query, Mr Bennett stated that padel was suitable for a wide age range, from approximately five to 65 years, and was accessible to all sectors of the community, including people with disabilities.

Councillor Powell asked whether existing tennis courts could be converted for padel use. R Bennett confirmed that this was possible, particularly where groundwork was already in place, and explained how mobile courts could be installed on existing tennis facilities.

Mr Bennett advised that his proposed timeline for establishing the club was 2027.

The Chairperson thanked Mr Bennett for his presentation and the information he had provided.

5 **REPORTS**

5.1 **Adoption of the Waimakariri Youth Action Plan 2026-2029** – E Belton (Youth Development Facilitator) and L Mealings (Policy Analyst)

E Belton spoke to the report, noting that the draft Waimakariri Youth Action Plan (the Plan) was released for consultation from 18 February to 18 March 2026. The consultation process received eight formal submissions, alongside informal feedback from the health sector and additional input from internal staff. The overall sentiment expressed through submissions was positive, supportive, and encouraging. The constructive feedback received enabled staff to refine further the plan presented for adoption, including

amendments to the written content, the addition of images featuring local young people in local spaces, and improvements to design elements and overall presentation.

Appreciation was extended to various stakeholders and the Youth Action Plan Advisory Group, which worked voluntarily alongside Council staff throughout the development process. The group's contribution highlighted the importance of collaboration. Their involvement and direction, particularly during the early engagement survey phase, were instrumental in the success of the consultation process, which received more than 1,100 responses.

Councillor Fulton noted that Rangiora High School did not have a representative listed on the Youth Action Plan Advisory. E Belton advised that, when invited to nominate a representative, the school did not have anyone available; however, several of the other representatives were students at the school and were therefore able to share information and obtain feedback as required.

Moved: Mayor Gordon

Seconded: Councillor Doody

THAT the Community and Recreation Committee:

- (a) **Receives** Report No. 260309071759.
- (b) **Receives** the Waimakariri Youth Action Plan 2026-2029 (Trim 260528126247).
- (c) **Receives** the Draft Waimakariri Youth Action Plan 2026-2029 Consultation Responses document (Trim 260429105490).
- (d) **Receives** the staff recommendations in response to submissions received on the Draft Youth Action Plan 2026-2029 document (Trim 260430105805).

THAT the Community and Recreation Committee recommends:

THAT the Council:

- (e) **Adopts** the Waimakariri Youth Action Plan 2026-2029 (Trim 260528126247).
- (f) **Nominates** the General Manager of Community and Recreation to approve any minor edits to the Plan over the 2026 to 2029 period, should any circumstances change, in acknowledgement of the need for flexibility in the delivery of youth development.
- (g) **Notes** that no further funding is being sought in relation to the Youth Action Plan project at this time, and that the Community Team will continue to actively seek external funding to support the implementation of community-related strategies.
- (h) **Notes** that the Waimakariri Youth Action Plan 2026-2029 (Trim 260528126247) is the direct result of a thorough early engagement process, co-designed with the Youth Action Plan Advisory Group. This engagement directly captured the voices of over 1,100 local 12- to 24-year-olds.
- (i) **Notes** that the Waimakariri Youth Action Plan 2026-2029 (Trim 260528126247) has received endorsement from the Youth Action Plan Advisory Group, as well as Sport Canterbury.
- (j) **Circulates** this report and attachments to Community Boards for their information.

CARRIED

Mayor Gordon acknowledged the significant effort that had gone into developing the Waimakariri Youth Action Plan over many years. It was noted that extensive collaboration had occurred with local schools throughout the process. He also highlighted the considerable work undertaken in Oxford, noting that the community had been instrumental in the original development of a youth-focused approach within the Waimakariri District. Mayor Gordon further noted that the original work had led to the establishment of a Youth Council and had helped identify initiatives specifically relevant to the needs of young people in the district. The plan was recognised as reflecting the issues and priorities identified by local young people. The next stage would involve implementing the actions outlined in the plan and managing expectations for their delivery. Mayor Gordon expressed appreciation to all staff who had contributed to the process and supported the plan's development.

Councillor Doody commented that the plan presented an exciting opportunity to incorporate youth perspectives, thereby enhancing communities and contributing positively to the district's culture.

Councillor Powell thanked staff and acknowledged Lauren Tilly for her work on the Plan. She noted the importance of fostering a sense of belonging and suggested this could encourage young people who had moved away to return to the district to raise their families.

Councillor Mealings congratulated the team and Advisory Group, noting that this consultation had achieved the largest number of responses of any Council consultation to date.

Councillor Mealings congratulated staff on bringing the Waimakariri Youth Action Plan to its current stage and presenting it for adoption. She noted that the plan was the result of an extensive consultation process that had generated one of the largest response volumes ever received by Council. Councillor Mealings commented that, in keeping with the principle of *"nothing about us without us,"* the plan successfully reflected the views, aspirations, and priorities expressed by young people throughout the consultation process.

Councillor Cairns expressed his appreciation for the enthusiasm and breadth of feedback received. It was noted that the level of participation and the number of young people who had contributed ideas were extremely impressive. Councillor Cairns further observed that the plan provided a clear, step-by-step guide for implementing actions and initiatives. Appreciation was expressed for the inclusion of a strong environmental focus, and enthusiasm was noted for the planting of fruit trees throughout the Waimakariri District as part of the environmental outcomes identified in the plan. He also referred to the common themes evident throughout this plan and other recently developed strategies, including the Welcoming Communities Programme. It was noted that these recurring themes demonstrated a consistent and aligned approach across Council's planning documents.

5.2 **Adoption of the Suite of Manuals for the Safety Management and Operation of Rangiora Airfield** – C Brown (General Manager Community and Recreation), D Roxborough (Strategic and Special Projects Manager) and O Stewart (Airfield Manager and Safety Officer)

O Stewart spoke to the report, which introduced the suite of manuals developed for the safe management and operation of the Rangiora Airfield and sought approval from the Community and Recreation Committee for their use. He explained that the Safe Management Manual and associated documents had been developed to provide policies and procedures for the safe and effective management of the airfield for users, neighbouring properties, and the wider community.

O Stewart advised that the three documents also supported the qualifying aerodrome certification process and would assist the Council in continuing its progress towards airfield certification. He noted that the Operations Manual provided the information, systems, and processes required for the Council to maintain the airfield in a safe condition while meeting its responsibilities and obligations under the Civil Aviation Rules and the Health and Safety at Work Act 2015. The Memorandum of Understanding and Airfield User Guidance Document were described as voluntary best-practice guides for pilots and aircraft operators using Rangiora Airfield. The documents provided procedures to support the safe, orderly, and efficient movement of air traffic. They also sought to protect the amenity of neighbouring properties by addressing aircraft noise management and reducing the risk of stock disturbance, while recognising that pilots undertook training activities that benefited the wider region.

Councillor Cairns asked whether there was a requirement for individuals to use the manuals. O Stewart responded that there was currently no requirement for the Council to provide manuals, processes, or procedures; however, it was considered best practice to have these in place for training and educational purposes. He added that this would position the airfield well should it proceed through certification to become a qualified airfield.

In response to Councillor Ward's query regarding bird management at the airfield, O Stewart advised that ducks could be trained through deterrence measures. He noted that when he drove a vehicle onto the aerodrome, the ducks would now take flight immediately.

Councillor McLaren queried the use of the term "best practice." O Stewart replied that any party could recommend improvements to the manuals and would be considered to ensure the documents remained up to date and appropriate, thereby continuing to align with best practice.

Moved: Councillor McLaren

Seconded: Deputy Mayor Redmond

THAT the Community and Recreation Committee:

- (a) **Receives** Report No. 260604130478.
- (b) **Approves** the adoption of the updated 2026 version of the Rangiora Airfield Safety Management Manual and embedded Safety Policy Statement, noting that this will be published on the Council's Airfield web page to replace the existing Safety Manual.
- (c) **Approves** the adoption of the Rangiora Airfield Operations Manual, noting that this will be an internal Council document for management of airfield operations.
- (d) **Approves** the adoption of the Rangiora Airfield Memorandum of Understanding and 'Fly Neighbourly' guideline document, noting that this will be issued to users in July 2026.
- (e) **Notes** the purpose and function of the Safety Management Manual, Airfield Operations Manual, Memorandum of Understanding, Fly Neighbourly Guidelines, and the Rangiora Airfield Safety Statement (Final Draft) as the core documents.
- (f) **Notes** the requirement for the continued use and periodic review of these documents to ensure alignment with Council requirements, Civil Aviation Authority expectations and community needs.

- (g) **Receives** the attached correspondence from Civil Aviation Authority (CAA) NZ with regard to their contributions to improving safety in the air at Rangiora Airfield and endorses the planned actions within that correspondence from CAA.

CARRIED

Councillor McLaren acknowledged the work undertaken to develop the manuals; however, he preferred the term “good practice” to “best practice,” noting that the latter implied the documents could not be further improved in the future.

Deputy Mayor Redmond also acknowledged the work completed. He stated that there should always be an ongoing aspiration to achieve best practice and, on that basis, did not take issue with the term's use. He further observed that the manuals represented a step towards the airfield achieving qualified status. He noted that members of the current advisory group had appeared reluctant to pursue certification, although he was uncertain of the reasons.

Councillor Cairns expressed support for the motion, stating that it would help embed a strong culture of safety and safe practices at the airfield, thereby reducing risk. He added that he had gained valuable insight into aviation and airfield operations from the report. However, he suggested that future reports include an appendix with an index of acronyms to improve accessibility and understanding.

5.3 **Aquatics June Update** – M Greenwood (Aquatics Manager)

M Greenwood spoke to the report, which summarised the aquatic facilities' year-to-date performance against the unit's most significant key performance indicators, noting that a 97% satisfaction rating had been achieved in the recent customer survey.

Councillor Cairns sought clarity on the challenges being experienced with the Aquatics Facilities telephone system. M Greenwood noted that concerns had been raised on several occasions about call handling and response times. He explained that the issue involved several complex technical and information technology processes relating to how calls connected and were routed through the system before ringing on staff devices. The Aquatics Team was working with the Information Technology Team to simplify the process. This included adopting a system similar to the one implemented by the Libraries, in which incoming calls were redirected to multiple phones across sites, increasing the likelihood that the next available staff member could answer promptly.

In response to a further question from Councillor Cairns, regarding bookings for the Learn to Swim Programme, M Greenwood advised that bookings were accepted both by telephone and in person. Online bookings were not available, and there were no alternative booking methods. It was noted that introducing online booking functionality was being considered for the future; however, given current workloads, implementation had not yet been prioritised.

Moved: Councillor Mealings

Seconded: Councillor McLaren

THAT the Community and Recreation Committee:

- (a) **Receives** Report No. 260603129612.
- (b) **Notes** a total customer year-to-date attendance of 229,329 as at 31 May 2026. This is down 17,937 (8%) compared with the same period last year, with 247,266 visits as at 31 May 2025.
- (c) **Notes that** these results include a programmed maintenance closure at Dudley in January 2026, with no significant disruptions in the 2025/26 period.

- (d) **Notes** a better than forecast year to date income result of \$1,376,208 attributed to strong interest in Learn to Swim programming.
- (e) **Notes** an overall customer satisfaction survey result of 97% on a target of 90%.
- (f) **Notes** that the survey saw 337 responses over the two-week period, which equates to 24% of the 1400 customers who were emailed the survey.
- (g) **Circulates** this report to the Community Boards for their information.

CARRIED

Councillor Mealings commended the aquatics team for their culture of continuous improvement and enthusiasm. She also acknowledged that the 97% satisfaction rating was particularly impressive given the large number of survey respondents.

Councillor McLaren congratulated the team and thanked staff for a well-received report.

Mayor Gordon acknowledged the recent incident at Dudley Pool and the manner in which staff had handled the situation. He noted that the woman's husband had praised staff for their professionalism and swift response and had asked that his thanks be conveyed to the team.

Councillor Cairns noted that he had enjoyed his aquarobics classes, which had been conducted with enthusiasm and cheerfulness, leaving participants smiling.

Councillor Mealings concurred with the Mayor's comments and extended her condolences to the family.

5.4 **Libraries Update to June 2026** – L Sole (District Libraries Manager)

L Sole spoke to the report, which provided an update on notable services, programmes, and experiences offered to the community from April to June 2026. This included an overview of the April school holidays, attendance levels, popular New Zealand Music Month events, and book lending volumes.

In response to Councillor Doody's query regarding the deaf community, L Sole advised that the libraries had delivered a children's "give it a go" sign language learning experience. The event had been light-hearted and low-key in nature and had been well received by participants.

Councillor Fulton queried whether the library provided resources to support learning and the attainment of educational credits. L Sole confirmed that the library offered LinkedIn Learning modules, among other resources, to support educational advancement.

Councillor Cairns commended the library for the variety and scope of its services and sought clarification on how offerings were determined. L Sole explained that many programmes were developed in response to community requests, while the library was also required to deliver services aligned with its contractual and funding obligations.

Moved: Councillor Doody

Seconded: Councillor Mealings

THAT the Community and Recreation Committee:

- (a) **Receives** Report No. 260604130208.
- (b) **Notes** record visitation at Waimakariri Libraries during April School Holidays and increased book lending, with particular reference to children and young people.

- (c) **Circulates** the report to the Community Boards for their information.

CARRIED

Councillor Doody noted that it was positive to observe an increase in reading, particularly among young people.

Councillor Mealings stated that she always looked forward to reviewing the report. She expressed her appreciation for the feedback and anecdotes, acknowledged the team's broad range of skills and talents, and particularly commended the musicians who had led the New Zealand Music Month event.

Councillor Ward concurred with Councillor Mealings, noting that it was not surprising that library usage was increasing.

Councillor Cairns agreed that the staff's enthusiasm in supporting programmes and events was commendable. He also observed that the calibre of authors and speakers engaged was impressive and that these events were consistently popular and well received.

6 PORTFOLIO UPDATES

6.1 Greenspace (Parks, Reserves and Sports Grounds) – Councillor B Cairns

- Councillor Cairns reported that the North Canterbury Foundation (NCF) playground project in Kaiapoi was nearing completion. However, concerns had been raised about incorporating an older seat into the playground area. Following discussions with the Greenspace Team, it was confirmed that the seat would be cleaned and refurbished as part of the playground installation works. Following consideration by the Kaiapoi-Tuahivi Community Board, support was also expressed for installing an interpretive sign recognising the NCF. Staff had commenced work on this proposal and would present further information, including an estimated budget, to the Community Board during the new financial year. Subject to Community Board support, a Working Group would be established to progress the project.
- The Greenspace Team continued to monitor any potential impacts arising from fuel supply and cost pressures. The Garden Maintenance Teams had been trialling smaller work crews to improve operational efficiency.
- Renovation works were underway within the perennial gardens at Victoria Park.
- Autumn sports field renovation and maintenance works had been completed across several sites, including Woodend Domain, Gladstone Park, Loburn Domain, Maria Andrews Park, and Sefton Domain.
- Council facilities had experienced an increase in vandalism incidents, particularly at public toilet facilities.
- It was noted that leaf fall had remained consistent throughout the winter period, with street and park clean-up programmes continuing across the district.
- At Pearson Park Playground, surface replacement works had been undertaken, and trials involving robotic mowing technology were currently being evaluated.
- Members were advised that Dylan Pederson had recently joined Council as the new Tree Asset Officer. He brought considerable arboriculture expertise, practical experience, and a strong customer-focused approach to the role. D Pederson's ability to undertake tree assessments would provide a valuable and timely service for the district.
- The construction of the Pegasus Community Centre was progressing well and remained on schedule for opening in November.
- Staff had developed concept options for the Pegasus Youth Space following workshops conducted with the Woodend-Sefton Community Board.

- An update was provided on the Mandeville Concept Design project. The club was consulting with its affiliated organisations on several design options. This feedback would assist the Oxford-Ohoka Community Board when considering a draft proposal for public consultation.
- A draft framework for the Parks and Recreation Strategy (PARS) had been presented to the Project Steering Group for feedback. A Greenspace intern had completed the mapping of neighbourhood reserves and play spaces across the district. This information would provide valuable data for the play and recreation components of the strategy and would remain on track for inclusion in the draft 2027–2037 Long Term Plan.
- It was noted that a deputation had been presented to the Kaiapoi-Tuahiw Community Board regarding the establishment of a Parkrun event within the district.
- Members were advised that following a deputation regarding natural burials, staff would prepare a report for the Community and Recreation Committee identifying potentially suitable locations throughout the district.
- It was further reported that the Greenspace Team was working collaboratively with the Roding Team to identify the most effective and efficient means of improving signage and visitor awareness of the location of Loburn Reserve.
- The Kaiapoi RSA had approached Council regarding the possibility of installing lighting at the Woodend Cenotaph.
- Construction of the St Margaret's Rowing Club building at Murphy Park was reported to be progressing. The new facility would provide boat storage, changing facilities, and associated amenities for club members. Once completed, the existing shipping containers would be removed from the site, addressing concerns regarding their vulnerability during flood events.
- The Northern Bulldogs Rugby League Club had recently held its season-opening day, which had attracted a large attendance. The club continued to maintain strong participation numbers across its teams.
- An update on Waimak United Football Club highlighted continued growth in membership. It was reported that winter-season participation exceeded 1,000 registered members, with an estimated additional 2,900 users participating outside the winter season. Due to high usage, the Kendal Park car park regularly reached full capacity on Saturdays, leading to additional vehicles parking on adjacent grass berms.
- Community Events
 - Kaiapoi Lights 2026 would be held from 8 July to 11 July 2026 at Cochrane Park and along the Kaiapoi River. The event would feature a Matariki-themed light trail, projections, performances, and educational displays highlighting the significance of Matariki and the history of Kaiapoi. Activities would operate from 5.00 pm to 7.00 pm each evening, with extended hours on Friday until 8.00 pm. Visitors would also be able to walk to the Matariki Kaiapoi celebrations at Norman Kirk Park and view the fireworks display.
 - Matariki Kaiapoi 2026 would take place from 10 July to 11 July 2026 and would feature kapa haka performances, live music, market stalls, food vendors, family activities, and educational experiences celebrating Māori traditions and the significance of Matariki.
 - Although not held within a reserve, it was noted that Kaiapoi Promotions would also host a Matariki community event at the Kaiapoi Club, utilising both the club facilities and the surrounding car park area.
 - An update was provided on the Experience Oxford Winter Festival, which was running from 27 June to 12 July 2026 and centred on the Matariki theme "Matariki Herenga Waka – The Mooring Place of Canoes." Members noted a programme that included roller skating, Māori storytelling sessions, Matariki stargazing, community- and whānau-focused activities, and a proposed hāngī and kapa haka performance. The festival was expected to provide a significant winter attraction for residents and visitors alike.

6.2 **Community Facilities (including Aquatic Centres, Multi-use Sports Stadium, Libraries/Service Centres, Town Halls and Museums) – Councillor B McLaren**

- In relation to the Libraries service, Councillor McLaren remarked that the reported 400,000 in-person visits and 500,000 books issued were exceptional achievements. Reference was also made to an Events Workshop held on 5 June 2026, during which it was noted that the Waimakariri District's libraries delivered more community events than any other organisation, professional or otherwise.
- The North Canterbury Museums Liaison Group meeting on 2 May 2026, which included representatives from museums across Hurunui, Waimakariri, and Kaikōura Districts.
 - Then presentations from the various museums highlighted their unique collections, perspectives, and activities.
 - Several common challenges faced by museums were discussed, including the digitisation of collections, the significant time and resources required to complete this work, and the need to appropriately archive original materials to prevent deterioration while enabling greater reliance on digital collections.
 - Ongoing difficulties in recruiting younger volunteers. It was noted that many long-serving volunteers possessed valuable knowledge of local history and artefacts, and concerns were raised about how to retain and pass this knowledge on to future generations.
 - Some museums reported a decline in school visits. This was attributed in part to increasing expectations from schools that the host organisation would provide educational programmes and learning resources.
- Attended an excellent presentation from a representative of the Wolff's Bridge Restoration Group. The presentation highlighted a relatively unknown aspect of local history and outlined plans for the restoration of the bridge, which attendees had very well received.
- The Ohoka Museum had recently held its Annual General Meeting, where John Brant-Eason had been appointed as the new Chairperson and a new Secretary had also been elected. Councillor McLaren acknowledged the significant contribution of the previous Chair, John Vick, and paid tribute to Kay Worsfold, who had served as Secretary for more than 30 years.
- Turning to town halls, Councillor McLaren acknowledged the upcoming centenary of the Rangiora Town Hall, which would celebrate 100 years of service to the community.
 - It was noted that a committee had been established to organise commemorative events and celebrations.
 - The Rangiora Town Hall centenary celebrations would be held on both 5 and 6 September 2026.
 - Two performances would be held on 5 September 2026, comprising a showcase of excerpts and performances from a range of user groups, including choirs, musical productions, and other performers. One matinee performance and one evening performance were planned.
 - On 6 September, guided tours of the Town Hall would be conducted, followed by a cocktail function to conclude the centenary celebrations.
- Members were advised that the North Canterbury Musical Society traditionally staged two productions each year, in May and October, and that *Little Shop of Horrors* was scheduled for October 2026.
- In relation to MainPower Stadium, Councillor McLaren advised that there continued to be issues with roof leaks that had affected the building since its opening. However, it was reported that the contractors involved had been responsive and were continuing to work towards identifying and implementing a permanent solution.

In response to a question from J Millward regarding the ongoing roof leak at MainPower Stadium, C Brown advised that, to the best of his understanding, the issue appeared to be related to workmanship rather than design. An independent assessor had been engaged, alongside the original contractor, to investigate the source of the leaks. The findings indicated that the issue was more likely to be associated with the installation of the components than with the building's design. As a result, it was hoped that the problem could be addressed with a relatively straightforward remedy. C Brown observed that the issue had persisted since the facility was constructed. Hence, the Council continued to hold retention monies relating to the contract and that these funds would not be released until the defect had been satisfactorily rectified and a permanent solution implemented.

6.3 **Community Development and Wellbeing – Councillor S Powell**

- **Community Development:**
 - Youth Action Plan – The Community and Recreation Subcommittee adopted the Plan as the strategic document guiding youth development over the following three years.
 - Mayor's Taskforce for Jobs (MTFJ) – The contract had been met for the year and had been renewed for the following year.
 - Homelessness – The recently established Homelessness Advisory Group was scheduled to meet that week, with the establishment of its Terms of Reference identified as a key agenda item.
 - Creative NZ – Regional partnerships had been established to enable regions to make decisions regarding their arts development needs. From 2027, Creative NZ would partner with organisations across the country to distribute resources.
 - Planning had continued for the annual Youth Futures Employment Expo, with the key priority being to secure exhibitors. The previous year's event had included 75 exhibitors.
 - A local mini conference for not-for-profit workers and volunteers was scheduled to be held on 18 June. Seventy-five registrations had been received to date, and staff hoped to reach 100. The previous year's event had attracted strong support, and evaluations had confirmed its value.
 - A neurodiversity education workshop in Kaiapoi had sold out, with approximately 130 attendees. This was the fourth in a series of popular seminars coordinated by the Resilient Communities Facilitator.
 - The annual Violence Free North Canterbury fundraiser and awareness-raising event had attracted 95 entrants and raised just under \$3,500 for family violence projects. The event had become an iconic local initiative.
 - The launch of the Welcoming Waimakariri Plan 2026–2029 and the signing of the Statement of Commitment had been held the previous week.
- **Accessibility:**
 - The first Core Board in the district, located at Victoria Park, was scheduled to be unveiled on 25 June 2026 at 1pm. The Greenspace Team was acknowledged for its input into this initiative for the disability community.
 - Boccia balls had been made available for people with disabilities or limited mobility to use on the marked courts at MainPower Stadium. Boccia New Zealand had donated the balls.
- **Community Wellbeing North Canterbury:**
 - The Winter Care Drive had commenced, providing support through the colder months, with several local businesses serving as collection sites.

- Funding had been secured from the Mental Health Foundation, with Community Wellbeing North Canterbury being one of 18 organisations selected nationwide from 455 applications. The funding would support a North Canterbury Rural Suicide Prevention Project.
- Recruitment had commenced for a new Chief Executive and a new Board member.
- What was coming up:
 - The Celebration of Cultures Potluck Dinner was scheduled to be held on 25 June at 6pm at the John Knox Centre, in partnership with GLOW and the Community Team. Tickets were available through Humanitix.
 - The Big Splash event for Rachel's House Trust was scheduled to be held at the Rangiora RSA on 26 June, from 5pm to 8.30pm.
 - National Volunteer Week was scheduled to run from 14 to 20 June 2026.

Councillor Fulton raised an accessibility-related service request based on a recent observation at local sports facilities. It was explained that a family member who primarily used a wheelchair had recently attended events at both the hockey turf in Kaiapoi and MainPower Stadium. During those visits, it became apparent that wheelchair users experienced significant difficulties obtaining a clear view of the playing surface. As a result, wheelchair users could be unable to view games and events adequately. He suggested that the provision of raised viewing areas, platforms, or other accessibility improvements could be considered at sports grounds and recreational facilities to improve sightlines for wheelchair users and others with accessibility needs.

6.4 **Arts and Culture – Councillor B Cairns**

Councillor Cairns highlighted the following:

- Waimakariri Public Arts Trust
 - Applications from prospective trustees for the Waimakariri Public Arts Trust had been received, and interviews had been undertaken as part of the appointment process. Murray Pashby, a descendant of Thomas Pashby, an early Kaiapoi settler, sawyer, farmer, and community committee member, had been proposed as a trustee. The Pashby family had offered funding towards the creation of a sculpture commemorating Thomas Pashby's life and contribution to the district.
 - Councillor Cairns explained that the Waimakariri Public Arts Trust was responsible for overseeing larger public art projects within the Waimakariri District. The former Waimakariri Art Collection Trust, which had owned the artworks displayed in Council facilities, had now been dissolved, with all assets transferred to Council ownership.
 - The Waimakariri District Art Collection Subcommittee had been established to oversee the management and care of the Council-owned art collection. Discussions had already been held with staff regarding the future management, storage, and care of the collection, and it was anticipated that a report would be presented to Council in due course addressing these matters.
 - Reference was made to initiatives being progressed by the Waimakariri Public Arts Trust, including the installation of a sculpture at MainPower Stadium. Members were advised that artist Victoria Bell, a Kaiapoi-based artist, had been selected to create the Kippenberger sculpture. It was noted that the Rangiora-Ashley Community Board had already viewed the proposed designs. Members were invited to request additional information if required.

- The Kaiapoi Art Expo would hold its 20th exhibition in July. The event was expected to attract approximately 5,000 visitors to the district and was regarded as a highly popular and significant arts event.
- The FOLD Studio in Rangiora had recently closed. Despite strong visitor numbers and foot traffic, sales had not been sufficient to cover the gallery's operating costs.
- A new creative space established on High Street, Rangiora, known as *Clay and Cotton*, which was offering workshops in pottery and sewing.
- It was further noted that a new art gallery space had opened in Kaiapoi, located on the upper level of Hansen's Lane.
- A Pegasus resident had offered a painting for installation within the new Pegasus Community Centre. Members were advised that the proposed donation would be reviewed by the Waimakariri District Art Collection Subcommittee, which would provide recommendations regarding its acceptance and placement.
- Two workshops had been held with local arts practitioners to discuss the implementation of the Waimakariri Arts Strategy and to gather feedback on future priorities and initiatives.
- An update was also provided regarding Creative New Zealand. Members were informed that the organisation was considering reducing paid staff positions and proposing to delegate responsibility for funding allocation decisions to regional committees.
- The Great Kiwi Bookstore was acknowledged for successfully hosting its inaugural community event, *The Book (Fight) Club*. It was noted that the event had been extremely well attended and, due to its popularity, additional events were planned.
- Finally, members *noted* that *Seven Sharp* had recently featured the Sparks family, their museum, and the work being undertaken to preserve historic buildings. The feature also highlighted the family's vision for establishing an arts and crafts centre within the Waimakariri District.

6.5 **Property – Deputy Mayor P Redmond**

- The Deputy Mayor Redmond provided an update on the activities of the Property Working Group, which had met the previous week:
 - Progress had been made regarding the disposal of a property in Rangiora following subdivision, with titles now having been issued. Members were also advised that progress had been made on the documentation for the Abbeyfield project.
 - An update was provided on Council housing occupancy levels. It was noted that occupancy rates had improved and, as at 28 June 2025, occupancy across the Elderly Persons' Housing portfolio, excluding Courtenay, had reached 87.5%. It was further noted that occupancy levels were expected to continue improving as recently upgraded units were filled and tenant transfers between units were finalised.
- The current Property Work Programme was outlined, which included 23 acquisition matters, encompassing activities such as land acquisitions associated with road intersections and infrastructure projects, five property disposals, seven easement matters, and five roading-related property matters.
- Members were advised that the Property Team continued to manage a substantial and diverse workload across the Waimakariri district. Further information was available through Council records, including agendas and minutes of previous Property Working Group meetings.

6.6 **Housing – Councillor W Doody**

Councillor Doody noted the positive impact of recently upgraded units. It was reported that the new developments had been well received and that occupancy levels had continued to improve. Vacant units were regularly filled, and in some cases, tenants were transferred from other housing locations to ensure occupancy. It was further noted that the occupancy figures would continue to improve as vacancies created through those transfers were backfilled as quickly as possible.

A question was raised regarding whether priority was given to local residents when allocating units. C Brown advised that applicants were allocated from the housing waiting list and that residency within the district was not a specific requirement. However, it was noted that many tenants either resided locally or had family connections within the district.

Councillor Fulton referred to the upcoming public consultation regarding the proposed pump track at Pearson Park in Oxford, which was located in close proximity to Council housing for older persons. He noted that the Pearson Park Advisory Group had previously found it challenging to engage directly with neighbouring residents and expressed the view that the perspectives of nearby housing tenants would be valuable during the consultation process. It was suggested that efforts be made to ensure that residents, or representatives of the housing community, were aware of the public meeting and allowed to participate.

7 **QUESTIONS**

Nil

8 **URGENT GENERAL BUSINESS**

Nil

9 **NEXT MEETING**

The next meeting of the Community and Recreation Committee was scheduled for Tuesday 18 August 2026 at 1pm in the Council Chamber at the Rangiora Service Centre, 215 High Street, Rangiora.

Briefing

- *Impediment of the Bowls Club and South Community Hub Decisions – G MacLeod (Greenspace Manager) and J Borland (Strategy and Partnerships Team Leader)*

THERE BEING NO FURTHER BUSINESS, THE MEETING CLOSED AT 2.35PM.

CONFIRMED

Chairperson

Date

WAIMAKARIRI DISTRICT COUNCIL**REPORT FOR DECISION****FILE NO and TRIM NO:** RES-20/260720174500**REPORT TO:** COMMUNITY AND RECREATION COMMITTEE**DATE OF MEETING:** 18 August 2026**AUTHOR(S):** Aria Huang – Greenspace Landscape Planner
Grant Stephens – Design and Planning Team Leader**SUBJECT:** Provision of Natural Burials Through a 24-Month Trial at Cust-West Eyreton Cemetery**ENDORSED BY:**
(for Reports to Council,
Committees or Boards)
General Manager
Chief Executive**1. SUMMARY**

- 1.1. The purpose of this report is to present the outcomes of the further investigation into the provision of natural burials within the Waimakariri District. This report has been undertaken following direction from the Community and Recreation Committee at its September 2025 meeting, and to seek approval for a 24-month trial of natural burials at Cust-West Eyreton Cemetery.
- 1.2. The September 2025 report (TRIM: 25082816228) assessed the suitability of 10 Council-owned cemeteries across the district for natural burial provision. That assessment identified three existing cemeteries and two future cemetery sites with potential to accommodate natural burials. The Committee subsequently approved staff undertaking further investigation into the three existing cemeteries identified as suitable for early implementation before reporting back with recommendations.
- 1.3. In response to the Committee's direction, staff undertook further investigation into the three existing cemeteries identified in the previous report, together with the policy, operational, financial, and long-term management considerations associated with implementing natural burial services. This included engagement with other councils, contractors, and Natural Burials New Zealand to better understand operational practices, indicative costs, and certification requirements.
- 1.4. The investigation confirms that natural burial provision can be implemented within the existing legislative and operational framework, with manageable establishment costs and no significant capital investment required. Operational costs are expected to be recovered through user fees, consistent with the current cemetery funding model. The further investigation identified Cust-West Eyreton Cemetery as the preferred location for the initial implementation of natural burial services due to its available capacity, opportunity for future expansion, and ability to establish a dedicated natural burial area with minimal operational constraints. A concept layout has been prepared to demonstrate the proposed location and indicative capacity.
- 1.5. Staff therefore recommend implementing natural burial services through a 24-month trial at Cust-West Eyreton Cemetery, which will enable Council to assess community demand, refine operational and management practices, and evaluate the service before making informed decisions on any future expansion of natural burial provision across the district.

- 1.6. Certification through Natural Burials New Zealand has been identified as a best-practice step to support implementation. If a trial is approved, Staff will engage with Natural Burials New Zealand to provide specialist advice throughout the planning and establishment of the natural burial area, including site assessment and certification. Funding for this work has been included in the Annual Plan and can be used for implementation if approved.
- 1.7. As the delegation for approval of fees and charges sits with Council, should the C&R Committee choose to approve the trial, Council would then need to approve a fee for the duration of this trial. The suggested fee of \$3,627.70 is therefore included within the recommendations below for Committee recommendation to Council.

2. **RECOMMENDATION**

THAT the Community and Recreation Committee:

- (a) **Receives** Report No. 260720174500.
- (b) **Approves** a 24-month trial of natural burials at Cust-West Eyreton Cemetery.
- (c) **Notes** that if approved, staff will engage with Natural Burials NZ, at an estimated cost of \$2,500, to provide specialist advice and support throughout the planning and establishment of the natural burial area at Cust-West Eyreton Cemetery, including site assessment and certification.
- (d) **Notes** that the Annual Plan includes a budget of \$5,100 for natural burial provision, which would be available for use in the 2026/27 financial year and would support the engagement of Natural Burials NZ, including specialist advice, assessment and certification.
- (e) **Notes** that staff will continue to develop the operational arrangements required to implement and manage the natural burial trial, informed by advice from Natural Burials NZ.
- (f) **Notes** that staff will report back to the C&R Committee at the end of the trial period with results of the trial and recommendations going forward.
- (g) **Circulates** this report to the Rangiora-Ashley Community Board for their information.

AND

THAT the Community and Recreation Committee recommends:

THAT Council:

- (h) **Approves** a fee of \$3,627.70 for a natural burial during the trial period with this fee to be reviewed at the end of the trial period.

3. **BACKGROUND**

- 3.1. In September 2025, the Community and Recreation Committee received a report investigating the feasibility of providing natural burials within the Waimakariri District (TRIM: 25082816228). The report outlined the principles of natural burials, summarised current practice across New Zealand, and assessed the suitability of Council-owned cemeteries to accommodate natural burial provision.
- 3.2. The previous report assessed the suitability of ten existing and future cemetery sites using an assessment framework that considered the key requirements for establishing a natural burial area. These requirements considered operational needs, environmental and design considerations, and the relevant legislative and policy framework. The assessment identified three existing cemeteries with potential to accommodate natural burials in the short term and two future cemetery sites that could incorporate natural burial provision as part of their future development.

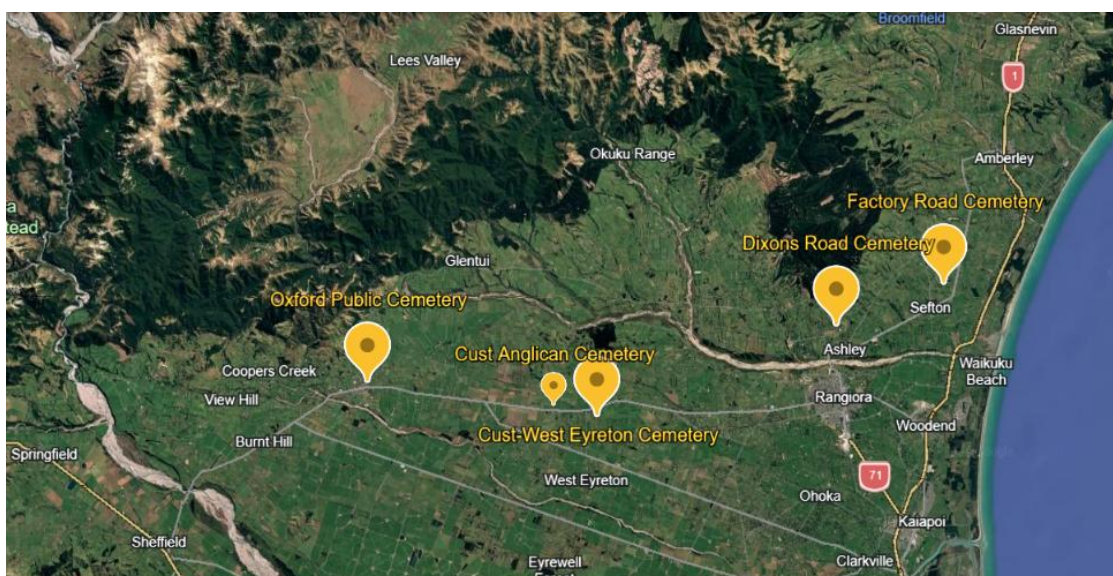
- 3.3. Following consideration of that report, the Committee approved staff undertaking further investigation into the practical requirements for implementing natural burial services. This included site planning, policy and legislative considerations, operational and financial implications, certification requirements, and long-term management considerations before reporting back with recommendations.

4. **KEY ISSUES**

Site Selection and Proposed Trial Approach

District-wide Assessment of Potential Natural Burial Locations

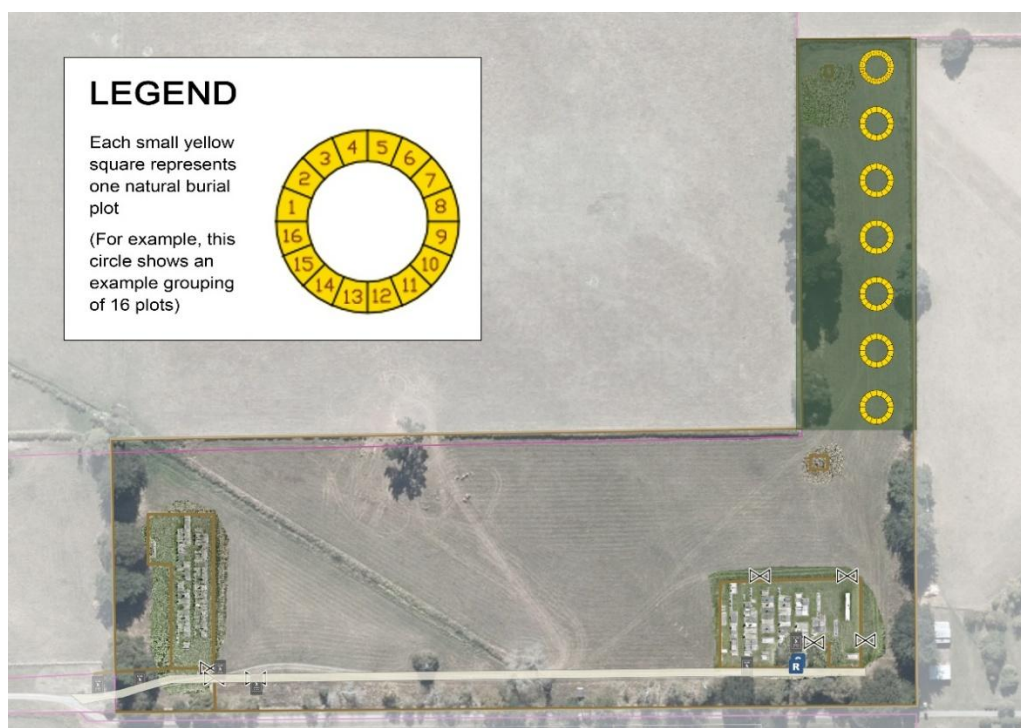
- 4.1. The previous feasibility assessment identified five locations across the Waimakariri District with the potential to accommodate natural burial provision. These comprise three existing cemeteries at Oxford Public Cemetery, Cust-West Eyreton Cemetery, and Cust Anglican Cemetery, as well as two future cemetery sites at Dixons Road and Factory Road, where natural burial areas could be incorporated as part of future development.



- 4.2. Collectively, these locations provide broad geographic coverage across the district and support a staged approach to implementing natural burial services. Rather than establishing natural burial areas across multiple sites from the outset, staff consider it more appropriate to begin at a single existing cemetery. This approach will enable Council to assess community demand, refine operational and management practices, and better understand long-term service requirements before considering expansion to additional locations.
- 4.3. As future cemetery developments at Dixons Road and Factory Road progress, natural burial provision could be incorporated into their design from the outset. By that stage, Council will have gained practical experience through the proposed trial and will be better informed about community demand, operational requirements, and the appropriate scale and distribution of future natural burial areas across the district.
- 4.4. To identify the most suitable location for early implementation, staff undertook further investigation into the three existing cemeteries identified in the previous report. The assessment considered the existing use and layout of each cemetery, opportunities to utilise undeveloped land, operational requirements, site access, separation from existing burial areas, indicative burial capacity, opportunities for future expansion, and the overall landscape character.

Preferred Location – Cust-West Eyreton Cemetery

- 4.5. Based on the outcomes of the further investigation, Cust-West Eyreton Cemetery has been identified as the preferred location for the initial implementation of natural burial services.
- 4.6. A suitable area has been identified along the northern portion of the cemetery, where natural burials can be established while maintaining clear physical separation from the existing conventional burial areas. A preliminary concept layout has been prepared to demonstrate how the area could be developed for natural burials and to estimate its indicative capacity.



- 4.7. The concept layout indicates that the site could accommodate approximately 112 natural burial plots, based on typical natural burial plot dimensions and indicative planting arrangements currently used by other councils. As this assessment is a high-level review only, the layout has been based on the circular burial design model commonly used elsewhere. However, this design is not fixed. Should the trial be approved, staff would work with Natural Burials NZ to develop a detailed site-specific design that responds to the characteristics of the reserve and operational requirements. Through this more detailed planning process, it is possible that additional burial capacity could be identified. Accordingly, the estimated capacity of 112 plots should be considered a conservative planning estimate that provides sufficient capacity to support the proposed trial while allowing for future expansion if required.
- 4.8. Cust-West Eyreton Cemetery offers several advantages that make it well suited for the initial implementation of natural burial services. The cemetery contains a substantial area of undeveloped grassland, including land currently leased for grazing, providing flexibility to establish a dedicated natural burial area without affecting existing cemetery operations.
- 4.9. The site also benefits from existing supporting infrastructure, including vehicle access, an internal driveway, seating, bin, and informal parking near the entrance. The existing conventional burial areas are well defined and separated by open space, allowing natural burials to be integrated into the cemetery while maintaining the character and function of the existing burial areas.

- 4.10. From a landscape perspective, the site is well suited to natural burial provision. The gently undulating landform, open outlook towards the surrounding rural landscape, and relatively limited existing vegetation provide an appropriate setting for the gradual establishment of native planting and the development of a natural woodland character over time. As the majority of the site currently consists of grassland with only scattered native and exotic trees, site preparation is expected to be relatively straightforward.
- 4.11. The concept layout is preliminary and is intended to support decision-making at this stage rather than represent a final design. Should the proposed trial be approved by the Committee, the layout and operational arrangements will be further developed with input from Natural Burials NZ to ensure the site aligns with recognised natural burial principles and operational best practice.

Other Investigated Sites – Oxford Public Cemetery and Cust Anglican Cemetery

- 4.12. Oxford Public Cemetery also remains a suitable location for future natural burial provision. While the cemetery has sufficient land to accommodate a natural burial area, it is one of the district's larger and more actively used cemeteries, and undeveloped areas may be required to meet future demand for conventional burials. For this reason, staff consider it more appropriate to monitor demand through the proposed trial before determining whether natural burial provision should be introduced at Oxford Public Cemetery or how it could best be integrated alongside future conventional burial needs.
- 4.13. A smaller area has also been identified at Cust Anglican Cemetery, with an indicative capacity of approximately 16 natural burial plots. While the site provides an opportunity for future natural burial provision, its limited capacity and known groundwater constraints would require careful consideration during detailed design and site planning. In addition, its close proximity to Cust-West Eyreton Cemetery means there is currently limited strategic benefit in establishing natural burial provision at both sites during the initial implementation phase.

Trial Approach

- 4.14. Staff recommend introducing natural burial services through a 24-month trial at Cust-West Eyreton Cemetery. While interest in natural burial options has been identified both within the Waimakariri District and more broadly across New Zealand, the level of local demand and community expectations are not yet well understood. Given that burial decisions occur relatively infrequently and are influenced by factors such as location and family preference, a 24-month trial period will provide a more meaningful timeframe to assess demand and community uptake. The trial will enable Council to respond to emerging demand in a measured and coordinated manner while gaining practical experience before considering any future expansion.
- 4.15. The trial will enable Council to better understand community demand for natural burial services, community expectations regarding the design and management of natural burial areas, and any matters that may arise through implementation. The information gathered will help inform future planning, including the appropriate size, layout, and distribution of natural burial areas across the district.
- 4.16. The trial will also enable Council to evaluate the operational aspects of delivering natural burial services, including burial procedures, maintenance requirements, cost recovery, and ongoing management practices. This will provide valuable information to support the development of operational procedures and the proposed Cemeteries Management Plan.
- 4.17. Community engagement will form an important part of reviewing the proposed trial. Following Committee approval, staff will engage with Natural Burials NZ to provide

specialist advice on the detailed design and establishment of the natural burial area, including site layout, planting principles, operational requirements, and long-term management considerations. As these burials are within the existing cemetery area and this is more just an operational difference of internment, staff do not recommend engagement with the wider community is required at this point. From talking with other Councils who carry out natural burials, the perceived risks such as impacts to neighbouring residents or grave disturbances are not actual risks that have been experienced.

- 4.18. If requested by C&R Committee, Staff could undertake consultation with the surrounding community, however, this would add significant time, cost and resourcing to the process and would likely raise feedback more on the operational nature of the process rather than the actual question of whether the wider community want natural burials to be available.
- 4.19. At the completion of the 24-month trial, staff will review the outcomes and report back to the Committee on the level of community demand, operational performance, maintenance requirements, financial implications, and feedback received through the implementation period. During this time, any feedback received from the community will be collated for inclusion within this report. This review will inform future decisions on whether natural burial provision should be expanded to additional cemeteries, including Oxford Public Cemetery, Cust Anglican Cemetery, and future cemetery developments at Dixons Road and Factory Road.

Policy and Legislative Considerations

- 4.20. Burials and cemetery management are regulated under the Burial and Cremation Act 1964, supported by Council policies and operational frameworks. The Waimakariri District Council currently manages cemeteries under its Cemetery Policy (Trim No. 200916122776) and the Cemetery Strategy 2020–2039 (Trim No. 200702081921).
- 4.21. As part of this further investigation, staff engaged with the Strategy and Business Unit to confirm the requirements for implementing natural burial services. This confirmed that natural burials can be provided within the existing legislative framework and do not require amendments to primary legislation.
- 4.22. To support consistent delivery and operational clarity, should the committee approve the trial of natural burials, staff consider that the development of a Cemeteries Management Plan would be the appropriate mechanism to establish the operational framework for natural burial provision. This plan would outline operational procedures for natural burials, define site management and maintenance expectations, and provide clear guidance for staff and contractors.
- 4.23. The Strategy and Business Unit and Greenspace Unit will work collaboratively on the development of this plan, informed by the outcomes of the trial and advice from specialist organisations including Natural Burials NZ.

Operational and Financial Considerations

Burial Operations and Costs

- 4.24. Natural burials have been included as provisional items within the new Parks Contract, providing a reliable indication of operational costs. The current provisional rate is \$1,000.91 per natural burial. This pricing covers the full burial process, including excavation and backfilling of burial plots, labour and plant, site safety measures, liaison with funeral directors, attendance during burial, and reinstatement of the surrounding area. Contractors have advised that the physical burial process for natural burials is broadly similar to standard burials and therefore does not introduce significant additional operational complexity.

Ongoing Maintenance Requirements

- 4.25. The key difference between natural burials and standard burials relates to the long-term maintenance and management of the burial area. Natural burial areas are intentionally designed to develop into regenerating native vegetation environments, and maintenance practices reflect this approach. The focus is on establishing and supporting native planting that contributes to create a peaceful, informal landscape character while supporting environmental outcomes.
- 4.26. Plant selection and layout are typically designed to encourage native flora and fauna, with each burial contributing to the gradual development of a natural bush environment. Formalised maintenance practices such as regular mowing or intensive landscape management are generally not required. Instead, maintenance is kept to a minimum and is primarily focused on supporting plant establishment, managing weeds during early growth stages, and ensuring the long-term health of the vegetation.
- 4.27. Staff have engaged with Christchurch City Council to better understand their experience managing natural burial areas. Their advice indicates that, aside from the burial process itself, ongoing management is broadly comparable to maintaining native planting or garden bed areas, typically based on standard square-metre contract rates. At these sites, a tree is usually planted for each burial, supported by additional shrubs or low planting to assist with ecological establishment.
- 4.28. Christchurch City Council applies a premium fee for green burials to partially offset the costs associated with planting and early-stage maintenance. While natural burial areas do introduce some establishment and management costs, long-term maintenance requirements are generally lower than those associated with traditional lawn cemetery areas, particularly once vegetation is established. While the overall cost profile will depend on the final design approach and planting strategy adopted for each site, it is apparent that the provision of natural burials would not be expected to lead to increased operational costs to these sites.

Natural Burial Fees

- 4.29. Recent national data indicates that the average cost of a natural burial in New Zealand is approximately \$4,075, which typically includes both the burial plot fee and the interment fee. Fees vary between councils depending on site characteristics, planting requirements, and local pricing structures. For example, Christchurch currently charges approximately \$4,846, while Ashburton charges approximately \$3,477 and Marlborough approximately \$7,596.
- 4.30. Benchmarking of natural burial services provided by other councils indicates that a premium is commonly applied to the interment fee for natural burials, generally in the order of \$1,500 above a standard burial interment fee. This additional charge reflects the additional establishment and maintenance requirements associated with natural burial areas, including native planting, tree establishment, and ongoing care during the establishment period.
- 4.31. Based on this approach, staff recommend establishing the natural burial interment fee by applying an additional \$1,500 premium to the current standard burial interment fee during the trial period. The current standard adult burial fee within Waimakariri District comprises an interment fee of \$1,042.00, a burial plot purchase fee of \$1,032.00, and a records fee of \$53.70, resulting in a total standard burial fee of \$2,127.70.

- 4.32. Applying the additional \$1,500.00 premium to the interment component results in the proposed natural burial fee of \$3,627.70 for the trial period. The proposed fee breakdown is provided below.

Fee component	Standard burial fee	Natural burial fee (proposed)
Interment fee	\$1,042.00	\$2,542.00
Burial plot purchase	\$1,032.00	\$1,032.00
Records fee	\$53.70	\$53.70
Total fee	\$2,127.70	\$3,627.70

- 4.33. Staff recommend that an interim natural burial fee of \$3,627.70 be approved for the duration of the trial period. The fee should be reviewed at the conclusion of the trial period, informed by actual demand, operational experience, establishment and maintenance costs, and any feedback received from the community.

Specialist Support and Certification – Natural Burials NZ

- 4.34. Natural Burials NZ is a not-for-profit organisation that works with councils across the country to support the establishment and certification of natural burial areas. At present, certified natural burial services are available in 14 districts throughout New Zealand, including Auckland, Wellington, Ashburton, Marlborough, Nelson, and Westport. The closest location offering certified natural burial services to the Waimakariri District is Diamond Harbour Cemetery on Banks Peninsula, operated by Christchurch City Council.
- 4.35. Staff have engaged with Natural Burials NZ to better understand the certification process and the level of support available to councils establishing new natural burial areas. Their involvement typically includes providing specialist advice during the planning and establishment stages, including guidance on site layout, design principles, operational considerations, and long-term management expectations. Once a site is established and ready for operation, Natural Burials NZ can undertake a formal assessment process to certify that the natural burial area aligns with recognised standards.
- 4.36. Certification of a natural burial area is not a legal requirement. However, it is widely regarded as a best-practice step when establishing a new natural burial service. Certification provides independent assurance that the natural burial area meets recognised standards and supports public confidence in the service. It also allows Council to draw on specialist expertise during the planning stage, helping to identify potential design or operational issues early and supporting a consistent approach to long-term management.
- 4.37. The cost of certification is a one-off charge associated with the site visit and assessment process. Based on recent experience at Ashburton District Council, the cost of certification, including travel, was \$1,750. This cost covered the site visit, assessment, and certification, along with ongoing advice provided throughout the planning and establishment stages.
- 4.38. Should Council proceed with the proposed natural burial trial, staff recommend engaging Natural Burials NZ during the implementation planning stage. Early involvement will help ensure the design and operational approach for Cust-West Eyreton Cemetery aligns with recognised natural burial standards from the outset and will support an efficient pathway towards certification once the site is ready for operation.

5. **OPTIONS**

- 5.1. Staff are seeking direction from the Community and Recreation Committee regarding whether to proceed with the provision of natural burial services through a 24-month trial at Cust-West Eyreton Cemetery. Two options are outlined below for the Committee's consideration.

Option 1 – Approve the provision of natural burial services commencing with a 24-month trial at Cust-West Eyreton Cemetery (Recommended Option)

- 5.2. The Community and Recreation Committee approves the implementation of a 24-month natural burial trial at Cust-West Eyreton Cemetery. If approved, staff would undertake the following actions to progress implementation:
- Engage with Natural Burials NZ to provide specialist advice on the detailed design, operational approach, and establishment of the natural burial area at Cust-West Eyreton Cemetery.
 - Implement the 24-month natural burial trial and monitor demand, operational requirements, maintenance practices, costs, and community feedback.
 - During the trial period, work with the Strategy and Business Unit to develop the operational framework required for future natural burial provision, including updating the Cemeteries Management Plan to incorporate relevant guidance and procedures.
 - Report back to the C&R Committee at the end of the trial period with results of the trial and recommendations going forward.
- 5.3. The estimated implementation cost of this option is approximately \$2,500 for specialist advice, assessment, and certification through Natural Burials NZ, which can be met from the existing Annual Plan budget allocation of \$5,100 for natural burial provision. Operational costs associated with individual burials would be recovered through user fees, consistent with Council's existing cemetery funding model.
- 5.4. This option provides an opportunity for Council to respond proactively to emerging community interest in natural burial services while taking a measured approach through a trial period. The trial will provide practical information on demand, operational requirements, maintenance implications, and community expectations before Council considers any wider expansion of natural burial provision across the district.
- 5.5. This option aligns with Council's strategic priorities by supporting community wellbeing, providing greater choice in end-of-life services, and contributing to environmental outcomes through the establishment of native vegetation areas and more sustainable burial practices.
- 5.6. Operationally, this option will require staff time to develop detailed site plans, operational procedures, and management approaches. However, these impacts can be managed through existing staff resources and specialist support from Natural Burials NZ.
- 5.7. This option provides positive community benefits by enabling residents to access an additional burial choice within the district and providing a locally available option for those seeking a more environmentally focused approach to burial practices.

Option 2 – Decline Provision of Natural Burials

- 5.8. The Community and Recreation Committee decline to proceed with the provision of natural burial services.
- 5.9. Under this option, natural burial services would not be introduced within the Waimakariri District at this stage. Should the Committee choose not to approve this provision, this would remain the status quo and staff would inform any inquirers that this is not an option within our district.
- 5.10. If the natural burial trial does not proceed, the district will continue to provide existing cemetery services without change. However, Council foregoes the opportunity to evaluate natural burials as an alternative end-of-life option within the district and to better understand local community demand for this service. Council also foregoes the opportunity to assess the operational, maintenance, and land management implications of natural burials in a local context, as well as their potential contribution to biodiversity enhancement, ecological restoration, and wider sustainability objectives. Future consideration of natural burials would continue to rely primarily on information and experiences from other jurisdictions, rather than evidence gathered through local implementation and community feedback.
- 5.11. There is interest in natural burial options within the community, and suitable sites with available capacity have been identified. Given these factors, staff do not consider the option to decline the trial to be the recommended approach.
- 5.12. The Management Team has reviewed this report and supports the recommendations.

6. STRATEGIC ALIGNMENT AND COMMUNITY VIEWS

Mana Whenua Engagement

- 6.1. The subject matter and recommendations contained within this report are likely to be of interest to mana whenua. If the Community and Recreation Committee approve the trial for the provision of natural burials within the district, staff will provide information to Whitiara Centre Limited, as key advisors to Te Ngāi Tūāhuriri Rūnanga, to determine whether and/or how they wish to be involved. Staff will consider any views, advice, or feedback received from mana whenua and incorporate these into future planning, design, and decision-making processes where appropriate.

Groups, Organisations and the Wider Community

- 6.2. There are groups, organisations, or members of the wider community likely to be affected by, or to have an interest in, the subject matter of this report. In particular, sexton services, local undertakers, and funeral directors will have a direct interest in the provision of natural burial services, and relevant operational information will need to be made available to support the introduction of this service.
- 6.3. There is also growing awareness and interest in natural burial options across New Zealand, and enquiries regarding this type of burial have been raised within the Waimakariri community. The provision of natural burial areas would enable Council to respond to this emerging demand in a planned and coordinated manner.
- 6.4. At this stage, community board approval is not considered necessary as the proposed natural burial layout is an operational trial rather than a permanent design change. The trial will allow us to better understand demand, capacity requirements, and operational considerations. Once the trial is complete and a final design and long-term capacity needs are established, we will engage with the relevant community board on the proposed permanent layout and future development of the natural burial area.

Implications for Community Wellbeing

- 6.5. There are implications on community wellbeing by the issues and options that are the subject matter of this report.
- 6.6. Providing natural burial options within the district would support community wellbeing by offering residents greater choice in how they honour and remember loved ones, including an environmentally responsible alternative to traditional burial practices. This additional option enables Council to better meet diverse community needs and preferences while supporting more sustainable end-of-life practices.
- 6.7. Natural burial areas are designed to support the establishment of native vegetation and minimise environmental impacts associated with conventional burial methods. Over time, these areas can contribute to improved environmental outcomes, such as increased biodiversity and enhanced natural landscapes. These environmental benefits are shared by the wider community, supporting the long-term health and sustainability of the district's natural environment.

Community Outcomes and Strategic Priorities

- 6.8. The Council's community outcomes are relevant to the actions arising from recommendations in this report.

Social ...a place where everyone can have a sense of belonging...

- Public spaces are diverse, respond to changing demographics and meet local needs for leisure and recreation.
- Our community has equitable access to the essential infrastructure and services required to support community wellbeing.

Cultural ... where our people are enabled to thrive and give creative expression to their identity and heritage.....

- Public spaces express our cultural identities and help to foster an inclusive society.

Economic...and is supported by a resilient and innovative economy.

- Infrastructure and services are sustainable, resilient, and affordable.

Environmental...that values and restores our environment...

- People are supported to participate in improving the health and sustainability of our environment.
 - Land use is sustainable; biodiversity is protected and restored
 - Our district transitions towards a reduced carbon and waste district.
 - Our communities are able to access and enjoy natural areas and public spaces.
- 6.9. The Council's Strategic Priorities are relevant to the actions arising from recommendations in this report.

Protect and enhance the resilience of our natural and built environment

- Respond to the challenges posed by climate change by building resilient infrastructure, managing adaptation, and minimising council's carbon emissions.

Enhance community wellbeing, safety, inclusivity and connectedness

- Waimakariri District is a high growth area with an increasingly diverse population. We want to build a wellbeing centred community where all feel safe and welcome; are accepted and connected.

7. **OTHER IMPLICATIONS AND RISK MANAGEMENT**

Financial Implications

- 7.1. There are financial implications for the decisions sought by this report.
- 7.2. There is no direct cost required to set aside space for natural burial provision or to approve its introduction within the district. Cemeteries operate on a user-pays basis, and therefore the operational costs associated with natural burials would be recovered through fees charged to users of these services.
- 7.3. Natural burials do not require concrete vaults, headstones, or other infrastructure typically associated with conventional burial areas. While establishment costs may be higher initially due to requirements such as native planting, tree establishment, and site development, these costs are proposed to be incorporated into the natural burial fee. Staff recommend an interim natural burial fee of \$3,627.70 during the trial period, comprising a premium of \$1,500.00 above the standard burial interment fee to contribute towards the additional establishment and maintenance requirements associated with natural burial areas. As the delegation for approval of fees and charges sits with Council, should the C&R Committee choose to approve the trial, Council would then need to approve a fee for this trial. This is included within the recommendations as a recommendation to Council by the Committee for this fee as per the suggested fee shown in the below table of \$3,627.70.

Fee component	Standard burial fee	Natural burial fee (proposed)
Interment fee	\$1,042.00	\$2,542.00
Burial plot purchase	\$1,032.00	\$1,032.00
Records fee	\$53.70	\$53.70
Total fee	\$2,127.70	\$3,627.70

- 7.4. Over the longer term, natural burial areas are expected to require less intensive maintenance than conventional lawn cemeteries due to the use of natural vegetation rather than regularly maintained lawn areas. Once vegetation and tree planting are established, these areas may provide an opportunity to reduce ongoing maintenance requirements and operational costs associated with cemetery management.
- 7.5. The only direct cost associated with establishing a natural burial area is the certification process. The estimated cost of specialist support and certification is approximately \$2,500, based on recent example provided by Natural Burial NZ. This cost covers the site visit by Natural Burials NZ, assessment of the proposed burial area, certification, and ongoing advice provided throughout the planning and establishment stages.
- 7.6. In anticipation that Natural Burials might be approved in the future, budget has been included within the Annual Plan for its provision and as noted above, this was included as a provisional item when tendering for the Greenspace Maintenance Contract. The Natural Burials Budget has \$5,100 allocated in the 26/27 financial year. If certification of a natural burial area is confirmed as part of implementation, the associated cost could be met through this budget.

Community Resilience and Sustainability

- 7.7. The recommendations in this report do have sustainability and/or climate change impacts. Natural burials support sustainability and help mitigate climate change by avoiding embalming chemicals, non-biodegradable materials, and energy-intensive cremation processes. They allow the body to decompose naturally, enriching the soil and promoting native vegetation, which can enhance carbon sequestration and restore ecosystems

Risk Management

- 7.8. There are risks arising from the adoption/implementation of the recommendations in this report. Establishing natural burial provision requires appropriate planning, site design, and operational procedures to ensure the service is delivered safely and in accordance with recognised standards. These risks can be effectively managed through staged implementation, engagement with experienced providers such as Natural Burials NZ, and the development of clear operational guidance through the proposed Cemeteries Management Plan.
- 7.9. If the Community and Recreation Committee does not support the provision of natural burials, there is a risk that future community demand may increase without Council having the capacity or preparation in place to respond in a timely and coordinated manner. Early approval allows staff sufficient time to plan and implement natural burial areas in a considered and proactive way, reducing the likelihood of reactive decision-making in the future.

Health and Safety

- 7.10. There are no health and safety risks arising from the adoption/ implementation of the recommendations in this report, as this report seeks approval to enable the provision of natural burial services within the district.
- 7.11. Any site-specific health and safety considerations associated with the design, construction, or operation of natural burial areas would be identified and managed through standard Council processes. Should specific health and safety issues arise, these would be managed accordingly and reported to the Committee as required.

8. CONTEXT

Consistency with Policy

- 8.1. This matter is not a matter of significance in terms of the Council's Significance and Engagement Policy.

Authorising Legislation

- 8.2. Burial and Cremation Act 1964: Any new cemetery development must comply with the Burial and Cremation Act 1964, including the requirement for land to be legally vested for cemetery purposes. Where land is vested in Council, this process involves formal notification and approval procedures, which may involve the Ministry of Health.
- 8.3. Council Bylaws and Policy Alignment: The Waimakariri District Council currently manages cemeteries under its Cemetery Policy (Trim No. 200916122776) and the Cemetery Strategy 2020–2039 (Trim No. 200702081921). Natural burial provision can be delivered within the existing legislative and policy framework and does not require changes to primary legislation. To support consistent implementation, if approved, a Cemeteries Management Plan will be developed to outline operational procedures for natural burials, define site management and maintenance expectations, and provide clear guidance for staff and contractors.

- 8.4. Certification Standards: Council may seek certification from Natural Burials NZ, which provides nationally recognised standards for natural burial practice and supports consistent and credible service delivery. Certification also assists Council in establishing natural burial areas in accordance with recognised environmental and operational standards.

Authorising Delegations

- 8.5. The Community and Recreation Committee have the delegated authority to approve the trial period however the approval of fees and charges sits with Council. This is in line with the recommendations within this report.

WAIMAKARIRI DISTRICT COUNCIL**REPORT FOR INFORMATION**

FILE NO and TRIM NO: LIB-04-01/260715169968

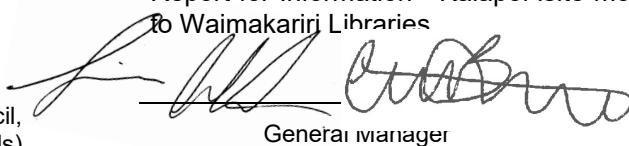
REPORT TO: Community & Recreation Committee

DATE OF MEETING: 18 August 2026

AUTHOR(S): Luke Sole District Libraries Manager & Simon Hart General Manager, Strategy, Engagement & Economic Development

SUBJECT: Report for Information - Kaiapoi isite move from Enterprise North Canterbury to Waimakariri Libraries

ENDORSED BY:
(for Reports to Council,
Committees or Boards)



General manager



Chief Executive

1. SUMMARY

- 1.1. The purpose of this report is to provide an update to the Community and Recreation Committee of the process of changing the location and service of the Kaiapoi isite. The service has moved from Enterprise North Canterbury (ENC), 143 Williams Street, to the Ruataniwha Civic Centre, 176 Williams Street, Kaiapoi.
- 1.2. Waimakariri Libraries will take on the isite requirements for Waimakariri District Council. The full service will be based at Ruataniwha Kaiapoi Civic Centre and will offer pamphlets and integration of the isite software platform for bookings.
- 1.3. Once the isite service has been fully relocated at the Ruataniwha Civic Centre and has been successfully operating for six months, staff will report back to the Community Recreation Committee with further options, including whether the service would have value at other library locations within the district.

Attachments:

- i. Media release detailing the transition of the isite service:
<https://www.waimakariri.govt.nz/council/news-and-information/2026/07/new-chapter-for-kaiapoi-isite>

2. RECOMMENDATION

THAT the Community & Recreation Committee

- (a) **Receives** Report No. 260715169968.
- (b) **Notes** that the Kaiapoi isite has relocated from the Enterprise North Canterbury building in Kaiapoi, to the Kaiapoi Ruataniwha Civic Centre following a decision of Council during the 2026/27 Annual Plan deliberations meeting.
- (c) **Notes** that there has been a reduction to the Economic Development Grant (GL10.484.100.2502) ENC receive from Council of \$90,000 as a result of moving the isite service from ENC to the Waimakariri Libraries, and that there is no anticipated level of service impact of this change.
- (d) **Notes** that a reduced offering is being provided between 13 July and 31 August, while the isite service is fully transitioned. Full isite services will resume at the library from the 31st August.
- (e) **Notes** that libraries staff will be provided training for full isite duties, with support from Tourism New Zealand.

3. BACKGROUND

- 3.1. As part of Annual Plan (AP) deliberations, a decision was made by Council to cease funding isite services at ENC, noting that staff at the libraries could deliver these services to the same level of service, and a budget saving of around \$90,000 could be made. As such, ENC ceased receiving funding as of 30 June 2026. ENC is responsible for communicating the change to Tourism New Zealand and community stakeholders.
- 3.2. The isite in Kaiapoi has fluctuating business with their busiest period typically being December to March. They serve a mix of tourists and locals, and support with booking tickets for community events, bus travel (intercity), train journeys, Department of Conservation tickets, Fish & Game licences, ferries, accommodation and other tourist activities.
- 3.3. Waimakariri Libraries provide a range community-responsive services and there are number of public libraries throughout the country that are isite integrated. It is anticipated integration of isite services will increase visitation to Ruataniwha Kaiapoi Civic Centre and further promote the facility as a destination library for community members and visitors to the District.
- 3.4. Waimakariri Libraries are currently working with ENC to integrate the service, with brochures and equipment being moved to the library on 8 July 2026.
- 3.5. Waimakariri Libraries has advertised for a .8 FTE Tourism and Social Services Coordinator for six months with the goal of connecting our core services for adults. This role will work on building how best the service works in our space. This role is funded from budget allocated for resourcing for libraries as part of the 2026/27 Annual Pan.
- 3.6. A budget of \$5,000 has been allocated to this move. This includes moving costs, isite subscription fees, and software fees. Any additional budget will go towards signage requirements.
- 3.7. Waimakariri Libraries is currently working with isite (Vin Incorporated) to develop the level of service for Waimakariri in the future. We aim to be able to communicate to our Library teams any changes to our service model on 27 July.
- 3.8. Waimakariri Libraries aims to reopen the isite with full services from 31 August 2026.

4. KEY ISSUES

- 4.1. Waimakariri Libraries are working with Council IT and Finance Teams to support the addition of a new software platform. This is a core requirement for Council to become an isite.
- 4.2. The transition will require clear communication with customers, tourism operators, and community partners to manage expectations about the temporary reduction in service. This is particularly important because the isite supports both visitor information and local community bookings, and any lack of clarity may result in customer frustration or reputational risk for Council.
- 4.3. Staff will continue to work through the operational requirements of the service, including staff training, software access, service standards, and the placement of brochures, equipment, and signage within Ruataniwha Kaiapoi Civic Centre. Waimakariri Libraries will provide an update on the level of service in the next report.

5. OPTIONS

- 5.1. Future reports to the Community and Recreation Committee will provide appropriate updates, and any future options to evolve the isite services will be provided to the Committee for their consideration prior to changes occurring.
- 5.2. The Management Team has reviewed this report and supports the recommendations.

6. STRATEGIC ALIGNMENT AND COMMUNITY VIEWS

Mana Whenua Engagement

- 6.1. The subject matter and/or recommendations contained within this report are unlikely to be of interest to mana whenua.

Groups, Organisations and the Wider Community

- 6.2. There are groups, organisations, or members of the wider community likely to be affected by, or to have an interest in, the subject matter of this report. These include community members that have previously engaged with the site offering, visitors to the District, and local businesses and tourism operators who will benefit from referral to their services.

Implications for Community Wellbeing

- 6.3. There are implications on community wellbeing by the issues and options that are the subject matter of this report. Continuity of the site service has benefits for economic and social wellbeing of business operators, employees, and visitors. It also promotes pride in Waimakariri as a tourist destination.

7. OTHER IMPLICATIONS AND RISK MANAGEMENT

Financial Implications

- 7.1. There are no financial implications for the decisions sought by this report for the Waimakariri Libraires.
- 7.2. There is a reduction to the Economic Development grant provided to ENC for the 2026/27 financial year of \$90,000. This reduction to the Economic Development Grant will be reflected in future Long Term Plan years.

Community Resilience and Sustainability

- 7.3. The recommendations in this report do not have sustainability and/or climate change impacts.

Risk Management

- 7.4. There are no risks arising from the adoption/implementation of the recommendations in this report.

Health and Safety

- 7.5. There are no health and safety risks arising from the adoption/ implementation of the recommendations in this report.

8. CONTEXT

Consistency with Policy

- 8.1. This matter is not a matter of significance in terms of the Council's Significance and Engagement Policy.

Authorising Legislation

- 8.2. Local Government Act 2002.

Authorising Delegations

- 8.3. The Council is delegated authority to allocate and alter Long Term and Annual Plan budgets.

New Chapter for Kaiapoi isite

3 July 2026

Kaiapoi's isite is starting a new chapter - moving from Enterprise North Canterbury (ENC) to a new home at the Ruataniwha Kaiapoi Civic Centre and Library.

The current Kaiapoi isite, operated by ENC, is operating at limited capacity from 3 to 9 July, with Waimakariri District Council and Waimakariri Libraries working to transition the service to the library.

While the full service is expected to resume after 31 August, an interim service is in place already to ensure visitors and residents can continue to access tourism and local information.

Waimakariri Libraries Manager Luke Sole said, "Libraries are already popular destinations with tourists and there's a natural fit between what libraries do and the role isite plays in the community."

"Across New Zealand, libraries and isite services often work successfully alongside each other. This gives us an opportunity to provide visitor information from a welcoming, accessible community hub."

Library staff are working closely with ENC Chief Executive Heather to manage the transition. A new role is also being created within the libraries team to help lead the service and support its future development.

As part of the move, tourism brochures and selected isite equipment will be relocated to Kaiapoi Library on 8 July.

A dedicated brochure display area will be installed near the main service desk, making it easy for visitors to access information about local attractions, accommodation and activities.

The move brings visitor information services into the heart of Kaiapoi's civic centre, creating a convenient location where both residents and visitors can access local knowledge, digital assistance and community services under one roof.