

WAIMAKARIRI DISTRICT COUNCIL

MINUTES OF A MEETING OF THE UTILITIES AND ROADING COMMITTEE HELD IN THE COUNCIL CHAMBER, RANGIORA SERVICE CENTRE, 215 HIGH STREET, RANGIORA, ON TUESDAY, 11 AUGUST 2026 AT 9 AM.

PRESENT:

Deputy Mayor P Redmond (Chairperson), Councillors T Bartle, T Fulton, and J Ward.

IN ATTENDANCE:

Mayor Gordon (arrives 9.16 am), Councillors B Cairns, B McLaren and S Powell (via audio/visual link)

J Millward (Chief Executive), C Roxburgh (Project Delivery Manager) K Simpson (3 Waters Manager), J McBride (Roading and Transport Manager), K Waghorn (Solid Waste Asset Manager), R Kerr (Rangiora Eastern Link Programme Manager), J Recker (Stormwater and Waterways Manager), M Bacon (Development Planning Manager), S Allen (Water Environment Advisor), J Eggleton (Project Planning and Quality Team Leader), R Hunt (Senior Project Manager), H Downie (Strategy and Centres Team Leader) and T De Rooy (Governance Support Officer).

1 APOLOGIES

None.

2 CONFLICTS OF INTEREST

No conflicts of interest were declared.

3 CONFIRMATION OF MINUTES

3.1 Minutes of the meeting of the Utilities and Roading Committee held on Tuesday, 9 June 2026

Moved: Councillor Bartle

Seconded: Mayor Gordon

THAT the Utilities and Roading Committee:

- (a) **Confirms** the circulated Minutes of the meeting of the Utilities and Roading Committee held on 9 June 2026 as a true and accurate record.

CARRIED

3.2 Matters Arising (From Minutes)

There were no matters arising from the minutes.

4 DEPUTATION/PRESENTATIONS

4.1 Waimakariri Biodiversity Trust – Annual Report

The Waimakariri Biodiversity Trust's (the Trust) Annual Report was tabled at the meeting, and S Stewart mentioned her new role as Chairperson of the Trust (the Trust) following the previous chair's retirement in January 2026. S Stewart introduced N Davis, Coordinator and Specialist Water Ecologist, who was based in Woodend. The following points were noted:

- The Waimakariri Biodiversity Contestable Fund was recognised as a valuable funding source for community groups. It was one of the few remaining funds that enabled charitable organisations, such as the Trust, to employ administrative and coordination staff to manage operations, projects, and events.
- The Trust had successfully secured three years of funding from the Contestable Fund at \$20,000 per annum and was currently in the second year of that funding period. The report outlined the outcomes achieved during the second year and also provided background information on the Trust's activities over the previous three years for the benefit of new Councillors.
- It was noted that most public funding available to environmental organisations was project-specific and did not provide support for administration, coordination, monitoring, or reporting functions, which were often left to volunteers. This limited project effectiveness, coordination, and future development.
- The Trust was now supporting more than 50 landowners with native vegetation projects, including remnant habitat protection, high-value landscape restoration, wetland restoration, stream protection, and spring protection planting initiatives.
- A significant increase in requests from landowners for advice had demonstrated the value of the free advice, expertise, and funding support package offered by the Trust. These services were only possible because of the Council's community contestable funding.
- The Trust had undertaken approximately 30 landowner site visits over the three to four years since its establishment. A publicity campaign undertaken during the year had doubled the number of site visits within a three- to four-month period.
- It was noted that there were limits to working solely with individual landowners. The Trust wished to bring landowners together, demonstrate the positive work being undertaken by neighbouring properties, encourage collaboration, and support the formation of local catchment groups. Working with groups of landowners was considered more sustainable and effective than working solely with individuals.

S Stewart advised that a further publicity campaign was being planned, with a greater focus on freshwater ecology and specialist freshwater advice, which was N Davis's area of expertise. The Trust was exploring the development of a starter native plant package for interested landowners. It was seeking to secure eco-sourced plants at wholesale rates to pass on to property owners.

S Stewart noted that while several dedicated community groups had achieved positive results over many years, stronger connections within catchments and sub-catchments could deliver greater environmental improvements. He noted that many of the approximately 30 new landowners visited during the year were located within the same sub-catchments and could benefit from working together toward shared environmental objectives.

Deputy Mayor Redmond noted that the Committee required time to consider the report. He congratulated S Stewart on her appointment as Chair and asked the Committee to convey its appreciation and gratitude to the former Chair, Dr Roper-Lindsay, for her service.

Councillor Fulton queried whether it would be valuable to formalise engagement with catchment groups through Council, enabling them to interact with the Council in a more structured and manageable way. He suggested exploring opportunities for the groups to present to Council and showcase their work, including projects undertaken by groups such as Hunters Stream. S Stewart agreed that this could be suggested to the Catchment Groups.

Councillor Cairns acknowledged the Trust's beautification initiatives and expressed appreciation for the work being carried out throughout the Waimakariri District. He enquired about the source of the locally sourced plants being provided to the community and asked whether the Trust had considered establishing its own nursery. S Stewart advised that the Trust did not envisage establishing its own nursery. She referred to a recent visit by Trustees to Riverside Nursery and noted that the operation was a significant undertaking. S Stewart further advised that the Trust was exploring the possibility of establishing an account with Riverside Nursery, which had been receptive to the proposal. He noted that, by placing a sufficient number of orders each year, the Trust may be able to access wholesale pricing and pass those savings on to landowners.

Councillor Mealings acknowledged the contributions of S Stewart and N Davis and congratulated them on their work with the Trust. She sought clarity on the significant increase in the number of landowners the Trust supports. S Stewart reported that the increase had occurred across the Waimakariri district's rural areas, including locations west of Rangiora and around Woodend. She noted that the landowners being supported included a mix of large farming operations and smaller lifestyle properties. The Trust had employed a temporary advisor during an interim period and, through site visits in areas such as Cust and along nearby river corridors, identified opportunities for landowners with similar interests and environmental objectives to work together.

Councillor Mealings enquired about landowners with Significant Natural Areas (SNAs) and the District Plan and asked whether the Trust worked with ecologists as part of its engagement with property owners. S Stewart advised that during site visits, Trust representatives occasionally identified properties containing high-value native bush or significant natural landscapes. In such cases, the Trust liaised with the Council Ecologists and brought these areas to their attention. S Stewart observed that one of the Trust's strengths was its ability to engage with landowners who may be reluctant to deal directly with Council. However, she emphasised that the Trust valued the expertise of Council Ecologists and encouraged property owners to seek their advice where appropriate.

Deputy Mayor Redmond thanked S Stewart and N Davis for their comments and for coming along.

5 REPORTS

5.1 Waimakariri Biodiversity Trust Deliverables for 2025/26 – S Allen (Water Environment Advisor)

S Allen spoke to the report, noting it was provided for information purposes, and outlined the deliverables associated with the Waimakariri Biodiversity Trust (the Trust) funding grant of \$20,000. She advised that the Trust had been allocated funding through the Contestable Fund and that the Council's budget included provision for the 2026/27 and 2027/28 financial years. S Allen further advised that the Contestable Funding was available annually, with organisations able to apply for up to three years of funding. The Trust secured a three-year funding allocation through this process, enabling it to continue delivering its Biodiversity and Environmental Support Programmes across the Waimakariri District.

There was no question from elected members.

Moved: Councillor Mealings Seconded: Councillor Fulton

THAT the Utilities and Roothing Committee:

(a) **Receives** Report No. 260727213074.

- (b) **Notes** that Council staff will distribute the approved budget of \$20,000 to the Waimakariri Biodiversity Trust for the 2026-27 financial year, following satisfactory completion of deliverables for 2025-26.
- (c) **Circulates** this report to Community Boards for their information.

CARRIED

Councillor Mealings supported the motion, noting that the reported deliverables clearly reflected the work undertaken by the Trust. She commented that the Trust was unique in the services it provided and the opportunities it created for landowners seeking to protect and enhance significant natural areas. The Trust enabled property owners to access valuable advice and support independently of the Council, which was particularly important when landowners were more comfortable engaging with a community-based organisation.

Councillor Fulton noted the positive outcomes the Trust was achieving. He was encouraged to hear that landowners and emerging Catchment Group Clusters were working more closely together and that these collaborative efforts were contributing to improved environmental outcomes. Councillor Fulton expressed his support for the motion.

Mayor Gordon thanked the Trust for providing a copy of its Annual Report. He acknowledged the significant contribution of the former Trust Chair, Dr Roper-Lindsay, and thanked her for her many years of service and leadership. Mayor Gordon expressed his admiration for the work she undertook and the commitment she showed over an extended period.

Mayor Gordon also acknowledged S Stewart on her appointment as Chairperson of the Trust. He noted that S Stewart had been a strong advocate for biodiversity and environmental initiatives within the Waimakariri District and that many issues she had championed over the years had since become mainstream. Mayor Gordon recognised her passion, enthusiasm, and ongoing commitment to environmental stewardship, including her leadership in encouraging land acquisition for environmental purposes and keeping Council informed of progress and opportunities.

In her right of reply, Councillor Mealings also acknowledged S Stewart's dedication to biodiversity and environmental protection. She noted that the Trust benefited from her extensive knowledge, proactive approach, and enthusiasm, all of which contributed significantly to the organisation's success and its initiatives.

6 PORTFOLIO UPDATES

6.1 Roading – Deputy Mayor P Redmond

- Focus areas for staff:
 - Ice-gritting operations had continued across the district, with August 2026 recording the coldest morning temperature experienced so far during the winter season.
 - Drainage improvement works had been undertaken at various locations throughout the Waimakariri District, including the installation of new soak pits in identified ponding areas.
 - Re-metalling of unsealed roads had continued as part of the ongoing maintenance programme.
 - Bridge maintenance works were currently underway at several locations.
 - The design phase for the 2026/27 Kerb and Channel Renewal Projects was underway.
 - A further under-slip had occurred on Lees Valley Road. Staff were working with the Council's Geotechnical Engineer to determine the most appropriate repair solution. Repair works were expected to commence later in August 2026 in conjunction with planned cattle-stop works.

- Roading Capital Projects:
 - Construction of the Kaiapoi to Pineacres Cycleway had been completed, with only minor works remaining, including road marking and driveway reinstatement. A final site inspection and cycleway ride-through ("bike over") were scheduled for later that week.
 - Kerb and Channel Replacement works in Akaroa Street were nearing completion. The Ashley Place turning area was prepared and ready for sealing.
 - Kerb and Channel Replacement works had commenced in Leech Place. Similar works in Williams Street, Kaiapoi (south of Smith Street), were scheduled to follow.
 - The upsizing of three culverts in Lees Valley, undertaken as part of resilience improvement works, had been completed.
 - Replacement of two cattle stops in Lees Valley was scheduled to commence the following week.
 - Renewal of the quadrant kerb and associated drainage improvements at the Waikuku/State Highway 1 intersection were underway. The kerb had been installed, and repairs to the footpath and timber bridge were in progress.

Councillor Ward noted that information published on the Council website stated that Northbrook Road would reopen on 11 August 2026. However, she had also read a separate report indicating that the project would not be completed until the end of August 2026. She expressed concern that this discrepancy could confuse the public and requested clarification. In response, it was advised that the road works were effectively complete and that Northbrook Road had reopened as planned. However, some remedial works remained, including works associated with capping off the end of the line. While these minor works were still to be completed, full project completion was not expected until the end of August 2026. Councillor Ward requested that this distinction be clearly communicated to the public.

Councillor Fulton noted that the Utilities and Roding Team had previously shared information regarding the historical development of Lees Valley. The material provided a historical account spanning approximately 105 to 110 years. It documented road development, subdivision patterns, and ongoing access challenges in the area, including the long-standing difficulty of securing funding for roading improvements. Councillor Fulton advised that he intended to share this historical information with the Oxford Museum and the Council's Library Team, as it provided valuable insight into the area's development and infrastructure history.

6.2 **Drainage, Stockwater and Three Waters (Drinking Water, Sewer and Stormwater) – Councillor T Fulton**

- Water Supply:
 - The Percival Street Watermain Upgrade Project was progressing well. The new watermain had been commissioned and was operational, with reinstatement works scheduled to continue over the following two weeks.
 - Construction works associated with the Northbrook Road Watermain Upgrade were nearing completion and were expected to be fully completed by the end of August 2026.
 - Annual Drinking Water Compliance Results for the 2025/26 monitoring period had recently undergone peer review by an external auditor. The review outcomes would be presented to the Utilities and Roding Committee at its October 2026 meeting.

- Wastewater:
 - Desludging works at the Kaiapoi Wastewater Treatment Plant (WWTP) were progressing well and were expected to be completed by the end of the month.
 - Planting of the bund at the Kaiapoi WWTP, following the completion of tree removal works, had been completed.
 - The Annual Wastewater Compliance Reports for the 2025/26 monitoring period for the Eastern Districts and Oxford Wastewater Schemes were scheduled to be submitted to Environment Canterbury at the end of August 2026. It was noted that the compliance results would be reported to the Utilities and Roading Committee at its October meeting.
 - Members were advised that an Elected Members visit to the Kaiapoi Wastewater Treatment Plant had been scheduled for 21 September 2026. A further site visit with the Kaiapoi River Preservation Society was planned for early November 2026.
- Drainage / Stockwater:
 - Blackett Street Stormwater Upgrade works, located north of the Rangiora town centre, had commenced on site. Construction was expected to continue through until mid-November 2026.
 - Members were advised that the annual All Groups Meeting had been scheduled for 7 September 2026. Invitations to attend the meeting were to be distributed during the week.

Responding to a question from Deputy Mayor Redmond, Mayor Gordon advised that public tours of the Kaiapoi WWTP were not being proposed. He noted that the Kaiapoi River Preservation Society had approached him about a possible site visit. Mayor Gordon explained that it had been agreed to facilitate a limited site visit for selected representatives rather than opening the facility to the public. He noted that previous correspondence and discussions with the Kaiapoi River Preservation Society had raised several questions and concerns, and it was hoped that a site visit would help those representatives better understand the facility and its management.

Councillor Cairns sought an update regarding the tree removal works at the Kaiapoi WWTP. In response, it was advised that the landscape had changed significantly after the pine trees were harvested. The harvesting contractor had completed its work; however, a number of tree stumps remained on site and had not yet been removed. A separate contractor would be engaged to undertake site tidy-up works, including removing remaining logs and other material. This work would support the next stages of the revegetation programme.

Members were advised that planting had already been undertaken to assist with screening for properties along Ferry Road, with additional planting planned for the spring season. It was noted that the new vegetation would require several years to become fully established. Some areas further south toward the river would be replanted with forestry species, while most planting north of Ferry Road and along the Beach Road frontage would consist of native species.

Deputy Mayor Redmond enquired about the primary purpose of the planting programme and whether it was intended for screening, environmental enhancement, or odour management purposes. In response, it was advised that the primary purpose was to provide visual screening and establish a buffer around the perimeter of the Wastewater Treatment Plant. It was further noted that the vegetation species selected would also assist with midge management by influencing wind movement and creating conditions less favourable for midge activity.

Councillor Fulton asked whether the Council had an established policy or guiding principles when determining the use of native species versus pine forestry plantings in areas such as the wastewater treatment plant. In response, it was advised that a key consideration was the need to harvest the existing pine trees and determine a long-term solution that would provide effective screening without requiring large-scale harvesting and replanting cycles every 25 to 30 years. It was noted that if Council replanted pines alone, it would face a similar situation in the future when those trees reached harvest age again. Council adopted a similar approach at the Woodend Wastewater Treatment Plant, where it established native planting and screening after harvesting trees on the western and southern boundaries of the site.

6.3 **Solid Waste– Councillor N Mealings**

- Southbrook Transfer Station:
 - Atrax had been engaged to install Automatic Number Plate Recognition (ANPR) cameras at the inbound and outbound weighbridges at the Southbrook Transfer Station. The new system was expected to reduce errors associated with manually entering vehicle registration numbers and improve processing times for customers using the facility. The system was expected to be operational by the end of August 2026.
 - Atrax provided the Weightrax software-as-a-service (SaaS) system currently used at the Transfer Station to record and charge for waste loads. The ANPR system would be fully integrated and compatible with the existing Weightrax platform.
 - The contract had been awarded to Stewart Civil for the construction of a hardstand area to store skips and large waste bins used for transferring waste from the site. Once the hardstand is complete, the area currently used behind the refuse pit for this purpose will be tidied and reinstated.
- Canterbury Waste Joint Committee:
 - Members were advised that the Committee had met on Monday. It had approved an increase in total funding for the Waste Facilitator role and associated projects, with funding adjusted in line with the Consumer Price Index (CPI). As a result, total funding would increase from \$203,070 to \$215,856, a 6.3% increase.
 - It was further noted that each participating council's funding contribution would be adjusted based on the 2023 Census population figures. Consequently, the Council's contribution would increase by 2.26%, from \$21,210 to \$21,688.85.
 - A total of 22 funding applications had been received, with combined funding requests totalling \$600,802. The Committee also approved \$127,468.87 in funding for nine projects.
- The Canterbury Regional Landfill Joint Committee:
 - The Canterbury Regional Landfill Joint Committee also met on Monday and received a presentation from Transwaste with the following messages:
 - General waste had been decreasing 5% year-on-year, with a 6% decline in 2025/26 (327,000 tonnes this year).
 - Received the first load of out-of-region waste, with other opportunities being progressed; extension to transportation hours had reduced morning traffic congestion.
 - Greenhouse gas emissions in 2025 were approximately 74% of the 2022 baseline year emissions. This reduction was primarily attributable to increased gas destruction activities, which had offset increases in potential emissions arising from landfill gas and higher transportation-related emissions.

- Members were advised that electricity exports from the site had doubled, increasing from a level equivalent to supplying approximately 2,000 homes to approximately 4,000 homes. This increase followed an increase in voltage limits on the power network, enabling a greater volume of electricity generated at the site to be exported to the grid.
- Transwaste continued to investigate and work through the logistics associated with the use of B-train combinations and electric prime movers. These initiatives were being explored as opportunities to improve transport efficiency and reduce transport-related greenhouse gas emissions.
- Staff were investigating a proposal to change refuse and recycling collection days for a portion of the Woodend area from Monday to Friday. The proposed change was intended to better balance collection numbers and travel distances across both collection days. It was noted that the change would improve service levels for affected Woodend properties while having minimal impact on the existing Friday collection route and workload. A report was being prepared for elected members outlining the proposed change, the rationale for the adjustment, and the expected operational and service benefits.

Councillor Bartle sought clarification regarding the increase in electricity exports. Councillor Mealings advised that the increase in network capacity now enabled all four generators at the facility to export electricity to the grid when conditions were favourable. She noted that the economic viability of electricity generation depended on electricity market prices, which could vary considerably throughout the day.

Deputy Mayor Redmond asked whether increased electricity exports would affect dividend returns and whether the facility was now generating additional revenue from electricity sales. Councillor Mealings explained that increased electricity exports could contribute positively to overall profitability where market conditions were favourable. She noted that maximising the beneficial reuse of landfill gas aligned with waste management and sustainability objectives. However, Councillor Mealings also pointed out that ongoing waste minimisation efforts reduced the volume of waste entering the landfill and, over time, the amount of landfill gas available for electricity generation. Consequently, profitability remained dependent on both the volume of gas available and prevailing electricity spot prices at any given time.

6.4 **Transport – Mayor Dan Gordon**

- Woodend Bypass:
 - Mayor Gordon tabled and circulated correspondence received from the Minister of Transport, Hon C Bishop, regarding the Roads of National Significance Programme, specifically the Belfast to Pegasus Motorway and the Woodend Bypass projects. He noted that concerns had previously been raised regarding the apparent absence of funding commitments for these projects. While the Minister's response indicated that the projects had not been deprioritised or removed from consideration, funding had not been confirmed beyond the initial stages of work already committed.
 - The Council would continue its advocacy in support of these transport projects. He advised that the Council had recently met with the Automobile Association (AA), which shared Council's concerns, had strongly advocated for these projects, and had jointly issued a public statement. Mayor Gordon noted that the AA was a significant organisation with a large membership base and that its support strengthened the Council's advocacy efforts.

- Transport Projects
 - Mayor Gordon advised that the Council continued to advocate for a number of transport projects to be included within future funding programmes and election priorities. He observed that all of the Council's key roading projects, including the Eastern Link Road, remained important priorities and that it was encouraging to see increasing attention being given to transport issues in the lead-up to the election period.
 - While receiving initial funding commitments was positive, particularly where land acquisition was required, the Council would prefer to see full project funding confirmed from the outset. Mayor Gordon noted that such an approach would provide greater certainty for long-term planning and project delivery, rather than relying on staged funding arrangements.
 - Certainty of funding was particularly important for a high-growth district such as Waimakariri, as it assisted the Council in planning infrastructure and managing community expectations.

Councillor Bartle sought clarification regarding funding for the Woodend Bypass project. Mayor Gordon confirmed that discussions had taken place; however, the Council was awaiting further clarity on the Government's future Transport Funding Policy. He noted that, during the previous election, both major political parties had committed to the project. Mayor Gordon explained that, given the anticipated timeframe required to deliver the Bypass project, there remained a need to address existing safety deficiencies on the corridor. Funding for some safety improvements had previously been identified; however, a change of Government had resulted in a shift in funding priorities.

Mayor Gordon reiterated that Council had supported fast-tracking the Bypass project. However, if delivery was significantly delayed, interim safety improvements remained important. He observed that traffic congestion and queuing on the route contributed to a range of safety risks and accident types. The Council would continue to strongly advocate for both the delivery of the Belfast to Pegasus Motorway and Woodend Bypass projects, as well as any necessary interim safety improvements. Mayor Gordon noted that Council would continue to engage with relevant political parties and agencies to maintain momentum on the project.

Councillor Powell expressed agreement with Mayor Gordon's comments.

Deputy Mayor Redmond observed that, when the New Zealand Transport Agency had previously been questioned on the matter, he had advised that no funding was currently available for Minor Safety Improvement Works.

7 QUESTIONS UNDER STANDING ORDERS

Nil.

8 URGENT GENERAL BUSINESS

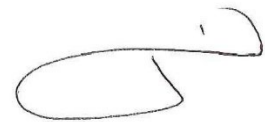
Nil.

9 NEXT MEETING

The next meeting of the Utilities and Roding Committee was scheduled for Tuesday 8 September 2026 at 8.30 am in the Council Chamber, Rangiora Service Centre, 215 High Street, Rangiora.

THERE BEING NO FURTHER BUSINESS, THE MEETING CONCLUDED AT 10.07 AM.

CONFIRMED



Chairperson

8 September 2026

Date