

MINUTES OF A MEETING OF THE WAIMAKARIRI DISTRICT COUNCIL HELD IN THE COUNCIL CHAMBER, 215 HIGH STREET, RANGIORA, ON TUESDAY, 27 JANUARY 2026, COMMENCING AT 9AM.

PRESENT

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

IN ATTENDANCE

J Millward (Chief Executive), C Genet (General Manager Finance and Business Support), G Cleary (General Manager Utilities and Rooding), C Brown (General Manager Community and Recreation), K LaValley (General Manager Planning, Regulation and Environment), S Hart (General Manager Strategy, Engagement and Economic Development), S Salthouse (General Manager Organisational Development and Human Resources), C Roxburgh (Project Delivery Manager), M Harris (Customer Services Manager), W Harris (Planning Manager), J McBride (Rooding and Transport Manager), K Simpson (3 Waters Manager), K Waghorn (Solid Waste Asset Manager), C Fahey (Water and Wastewater Asset Manager), J Recker (Stormwater and Waterways Manager), M Greenwood (Aquatics Manager), T Sturley (Community Team Manager), D Roxborough (Strategic and Special Projects Manager), E Gessler (Emergency Management Manager), P Christensen (Finance Manager), A Keiller (Chief Information Officer) S Nichols (Governance Manager), M Bacon (Development Planning Manager), H Street (Corporate Planner), K Rabe (Governance Advisor) and C Fowler-Jenkins (Governance Support Officer).

Meeting Adjournments:

The meeting adjourned at 10.14am for refreshments and reconvened at 10.39am.

The meeting adjourned at 1.15pm for refreshments and reconvened at 2.05pm.

The meeting adjourned at 3.45pm for refreshments and reconvened at 4pm.

1. APOLOGIES

There were no apologies.

2. CONFLICTS OF INTEREST

There were no conflicts declared.

3. OVERVIEW AND FINANCIAL STRATEGY - C Genet (General Manager Finance and Business Support)

C Genet provided an overview of the current budget position, outlined the work completed to date and expected consultation topics for the Draft Annual Plan. The presentation also covered key financial highlights and projections, the wider financial environment, and key upcoming dates. It was noted that the average district rate increase was anticipated to be 4.92%, compared with the 4.95% signalled for year three of the 2024/34 Long Term Plan.

Councillor Ward sought clarification regarding the level of depreciation funded by the Council compared with other councils. C Genet advised that the Council had established a depreciation fund to ensure sufficient provision for asset replacement over time. The Council's Infrastructure Strategy spanned 150 years, during which asset valuations fluctuated significantly. The timing of these valuations could result in changes falling into different budget cycles. The Council currently funds a relatively high proportion of its depreciation.

Councillor Ward further asked what percentage of assets were being depreciated. J Millward noted that each council differs, and when the 2024/34 Long Term Plan was set during a period of high inflation, depreciation funding was, therefore, spread over four to five years. One year remained in that transition period. He estimated that the Council was currently funding approximately 90% of what it should be funding.

Councillor Fulton sought clarification on how unplanned asset failures, such as a recent burst water main on High Street, Rangiora, were accounted for. J Millward explained that most critical mains were assigned a shorter assumed asset life, although many were not expected to fail within that period. He noted that managing long-term assets required balancing these assumptions. Contingency provisions were incorporated into the Council's Asset Management Plan, and such assets were generally funded through loans. Any renewal funding already allocated would be utilised first, with any growth-related components funded through development contributions.

Deputy Mayor Redmond asked whether projections for the Local Government Cost Index were available to compare with the proposed rate increase and requested confirmation of the current Consumer Price Index (CPI). C Genet advised that staff relied on the BERL forecast for the relevant period and that CPI as at December 2025 was 3.1%. The BERL forecast for the 2026/27 financial year was 2.6%, but had been 3.5% in the previous year. An allowance of 2.3% incorporated into the 2024/34 Long Term Plan.

Deputy Mayor Redmond also enquired whether there was a statutory requirement for the Council to consult on the Annual Plan. J. Millward advised that there was not, although the Council's preference was to undertake consultation.

Councillor Doody asked how much longer the earthquake rate would be required and J Millward confirmed that it would be needed for a further 16 to 17 years.

4. CAPITAL PROJECTS OVERVIEW PRESENTATION – G Cleary (General Manager Utilities and Roading)

C Roxburgh provided an overview of the review undertaken by staff on the Capital Programme to ensure its deliverability. He noted that a range of factors contributed to the uncertainty of delivery, some within the Council's control and others external. Capital projects delivery was often affected by significant wind or rainfall events, which could divert resources or create additional unplanned work requiring immediate attention. He clarified that the planned carryover of projects did not indicate project delays but reflected the nature of multiyear projects. Once the proposed carryover of projects are allowed for, staff expected the 2026/27 capital budget could total \$73 million.

Councillor Fulton asked about the Council's capacity to deliver the Capital Programme, given the number of projects to be carried over. C Roxburgh reiterated that carryover projects were not necessarily indicative of the Capital Programme being behind schedule, but were often associated with planned multiyear projects. He cited the Pegasus Community Centre and the land purchase for the new Woodend/Ravenswood Community Centre as examples of carryovers expected, given the nature of the projects.

Councillor Fulton further queried whether the relatively high proportion of capital works being carried over implied that the Council had paused certain projects. G Cleary advised that, at times, factors outside the Council's control influenced the delivery of Capital Projects. For example, developer-led projects could be delayed by market conditions, even though the Council had anticipated earlier progress.

Following the presentations, each unit presented reports, followed by operational budgets, before proceeding to the next unit.

The order that operational units presented information to the Council was:

- *Utilities and Roading*
- *Community and Recreation*
- *Regulation and Planning*
- *Strategy, Engagement and Economic Development*
- *Finance and Business Support*
- *Management and Organisational Development and Human Resources*

Procedural Motion

Moved: Councillor Mealings

Seconded: Deputy Mayor Redmond

THAT the Council

- (a) **Receives** the budget pack papers and approves the recommended budget proforma, subject to debate in the meeting.

CARRIED

5. REPORTS

5.1 Minor Changes to Targeted Rates for 2026/2027 – M Harris (Customer Services Manager)

M Harris spoke to the report and outlined several minor amendments proposed to the rating system. The first related to the animal control stock rate, which was currently based on land zoning; staff had anticipated the need for this adjustment following the adoption of the new District Plan. The second amendment concerned an administrative record-keeping change, as some properties not formally connected to the Eastern District Sewer were disposing of wastewater into the system but were not included in the rating framework.

In response to a query from Councillor Doody regarding communication with affected property owners, M. Harris advised that staff had not yet notified them but would do so. She noted that the financial impact on property owners would be minimal, while the change would improve administrative accuracy for staff.

Moved: Councillor Fulton

Seconded: Councillor Doody

THAT the Council:

- (a) **Receives** Report No. 260107001900.
- (b) **Updates** the zoning description for the stock control rate to take effect from 1 July 2026 from:
“A targeted rate set under Sections 16-18 as a rate in the dollar on the rateable capital value on rating units situated in the Residential 4A, Residential 4B and Rural zones in the Waimakariri District Council District Plan, operative at 14th March 2025.”
to:
“A targeted rate set under Sections 16-18 as a rate in the dollar on the rateable capital value on rating units situated in the Large Lot Residential, Rural Lifestyle (including SPZ Kainga Nohoanga) and General Rural zones in the Waimakariri District Council District Plan, operative at 1 July 2026.”
- (c) **Introduces** a new targeted rate for the Eastern Districts Sewer from 1 July 2026 to cover rating units that have a Trade Waste Agreement with the Council for the disposal of waste into the sewer under the Wastewater Bylaw 2015.
“Eastern Districts – rating units covered by a Trade Waste Agreement under the Wastewater Bylaw 2015, fixed amount per rateable rating unit. (paid in addition to Trade Waste Disposal Charges)”.

CARRIED

5.2 2026/2027 Development Contribution Schedule and Policy for Consultation with Draft Annual Plan – J Eggleton (Project Planning and Quality Team Leader), J McSloy (Development Manager), and C Roxburgh (Project Delivery Manager)

C Roxburgh spoke to the report seeking Council approval of the Draft 2026/27 Development Contribution Schedules and Policy for consultation as part of the 2026/27 Annual Plan. The draft 2026/27 Development Contribution Schedules were based on the Annual Plan budgets and growth projects.

Moved: Councillor Bartle

Seconded: Councillor McLaren

THAT the Council:

- (a) **Receives** Report No. 251224246258.
- (b) **Approves** the Draft 2026/27 Development Contribution Schedules for consultation with the 2026-27 Annual Plan (Trim 260113004619);
- (c) **Approves** the proposed changes to the Draft 2026/27 Development Contribution maps (Trim 260114005432), noting that these updates will be made available on GIS from 1 July 2026;
- (d) **Approves** the 2026/27 Draft Development Contribution Policy to be consulted on as part of the Annual Plan, to ensure the Policy remains up to date, and clear (Trim 260109002662);
- (e) **Notes** that, based on proposed legislation, in the coming year(s), the Council will have to move from charging Development Contributions to Development Levies, and that this will trigger a replacement Policy in line with this new legislation.

CARRIED

6. BUDGETS

Utilities and Roading

6.1 Roading

G Cleary and J McBride presented the Roading Unit Budget, outlining the shortfalls resulting from reduced New Zealand Transport Agency (NZTA) funding. As a consequence, several projects had been deferred to later years of the 2024–34 Long Term Plan. New budget requests were submitted for the following, and fees and charges had been adjusted by 3.2% to offset inflation:

- Eastern Link Road design (\$100,000),
- Lees Valley cattle stops (\$100,000),
- Blake Street carpark reconfiguration (\$400,000),
- A public transport investigation (\$100,000).

In response to a query from Councillor Fulton regarding the Lees Valley cattle stop budget, J McBride advised that staff had received complaints from Lees Valley residents about deteriorating cattle stops and narrow widths that affect heavy vehicle access. Several gates had also been damaged and required replacement and widening.

Councillor Fulton further asked whether the Ashley Gorge bridge reseal budget would be required annually. J McBride explained that the bridge required a high-standard seal. Although it had recently been resealed, staff would continue to monitor the surface, and any unspent funds would be deferred to later years of the 2024/34 Long Term Plan.

Deputy Mayor Redmond sought clarification on the proposed repairs to the old Waimakariri bridge barrier rail. J McBride noted that NZTA funded 51% of the costs, with Christchurch City Council (CCC) and Waimakariri District Council (WDC) sharing the remainder. CCC would manage the maintenance and invoice the Council for its share. Plans were in place to remove the wooden rails and replace them with a vehicle-compliant barrier.

In response to a question from Councillor Cairns, J McBride confirmed that the NZTA was reducing funding nationwide, with some councils receiving no funding for upcoming projects. The NZTA also determined funding allocations across renewals and maintenance, with priority, such as pothole repairs.

Councillor Doody raised concerns regarding shingle road maintenance. J McBride acknowledged that recent weather conditions had contributed to the poor state of some shingle roads. Staff were working with the Council contractor to identify where heavy grading should be undertaken. While funding for maintenance renewals had improved, it remained below the original requests and would need to be managed under the new maintenance contract.

Councillor Mealings acknowledged the funding reductions and commended staff for efficiencies achieved through bundling work and utilising in-house delivery.

Councillor Fulton queried whether the proposed public transport work was appropriate for the Council to undertake. J McBride advised that a public transport specialist would be engaged to assess the Waimakariri District's future needs and support advocacy and long-term planning.

Councillor Powell noted that Environment Canterbury (ECan) planned to review public transport in the near future, which could align with the Council's work. J McBride clarified that while ECan's review focused on existing routes, the Council's efforts would consider district-wide future needs.

Mayor Gordon requested that further information on the Council's proposed review of public transport be reported to the Utilities and Roading Committee.

Moved: Councillor Mealings

Seconded: Deputy Mayor Redmond

THAT the Council:

- (a) **Approves** the draft budget for the 2026 -2027 financial year.
- (b) **Notes** that Maintenance, Operations and Renewals budgets remain under pressure across the Roading and Transport portfolio due to ongoing CPI increases and the re-tendering of the Road Maintenance Contract. There have been no changes to address this in the current Annual Plan; however, staff will consider options for achieving a balance between Levels of Services and Budget and prepare information ahead of the next Long Term Plan, for consideration by Council.
- (c) **Notes** that as previously reported to Council, there was minimal funding endorsed through the National Land Transport Programme (NLTP) for Local Road Improvements, resulting in a significant funding shortfall for capital projects, and the need to re-prioritise a large number of projects over the three years of the current NLTP period (2024 to 2027).
- (d) **Notes** that Council previously resolved to take a multi-layered approach to progressing capital projects. This approach included allowing work to continue on the design of several declined projects, so that, if funding becomes available over the next NLTP period, Council would be well positioned to secure it and progress the projects quickly.
- (e) **Notes** that there are areas where additional funding is likely to be required in the short-term, including local road improvements resulting from the Belfast to Pegasus RoNS (Woodend Bypass) project and development in the South MUBA area.
- (f) **Notes** that funding constraints through the National Land Transport Programme are likely to be an ongoing issue. The impact on the delivery of key capital projects will need to be considered as part of the next Long Term Plan.
- (g) **Notes** that there is anticipated to be a deduction on depreciation of \$453,000.
- (h) **Notes** that while there is still an increase in the Roading Rate for the 2026/27 Year, this is 4.3% (including inflation) less than was originally indicated in the 2024/34 Long Term Plan.

CARRIED

6.2 Solid Waste

Councillor Mealings advised that she held the Solid Waste Portfolio and had recently been appointed as a Director of TransWaste, effective at the end of 2025. She noted that discussions were underway regarding the management of any perceived conflict of interest. She further confirmed that she had not yet attended any meetings and had no involvement in developing the budget presented to the Council.

K Waghorn presented the budget and tabled recently confirmed amendments to fees and charges.

Mayor Gordon expressed concern about the condition of the Southbrook Transfer Station, noting several complaints about the site's tidiness. He considered that the facility should be maintained to a higher standard. K Waghorn advised that she had raised these concerns on multiple occasions and noted that budget provision existed for further site improvements should the Council wish to progress this work.

Councillor Cairns requested additional information on the Paper 4 Trees programme, specifically what the \$165 per school covered. K Waghorn confirmed that this amount represented the total cost of the service, including the supply of trees. In response to a query about the meaning of "EERST," she noted that, to her knowledge, it referred to the Environmental Education for Resource Sustainability Trust.

Moved: Councillor Mealings

Seconded: Deputy Mayor Redmond

THAT the Council:

- (a) **Approves** the draft budget for the 2026-2027 financial year.
- (b) **Notes** that any new levels of service/performance measures are to be provided within a separate report provided to the Council.

CARRIED

6.3 Drinking Water

K Simpson and C Fahey presented the budget, noting the significantly increased electricity costs, particularly for the Summerhill Water Supply. These increases, along with higher depreciation and internal interest costs, had contributed to higher rates across all water supplies. They also reported an overall reduction in capital projects and advised that training requirements associated with the new Drinking Water Quality Assurance Rules would have budget implications.

In response to a query from Councillor Mealings regarding the increase to the Cust Water Supply, C Fahey explained that electricity costs had risen by approximately 50%, and depreciation costs had also increased due to newer infrastructure and upgraded headworks.

Moved: Councillor Mealings

Seconded: Deputy Mayor Redmond

THAT the Council:

- (a) **Approves** the draft budget for the 2026-2027 financial year.
- (b) **Notes** that the rate increases are predominantly due to increased internal interest and depreciation costs.

CARRIED

6.4 Wastewater

K Simpson and C Fahey presented the Wastewater budget, noting the Flatland Assessment Project, which included earthworks and planting of the first wetland, with planting of the second planned for the following year.

In response to a query from Councillor Fulton regarding the West Waimakariri Wastewater Strategy, C Fahey confirmed that a workshop on the strategy had been held the previous year and that work was underway to develop a practical long-term approach.

Councillor Fulton further questioned whether the sequencing of work was deemed appropriate and suggested that a Rating Review should occur prior to increasing water rates for smaller schemes such as Cust. J Millward advised that the proposed approach was intended to provide greater flexibility by smoothing rate increases over several years while the review was undertaken.

Councillor Cairns sought clarification on the \$800,000 budget for plantings at the Kaiapoi and Woodend wetlands, noting that the amount appeared high for low-quality plantings. C Fahey explained that the budget reflected the full scope of works, including the necessary site preparation prior to planting.

Moved: Councillor Mealings

Seconded: Deputy Mayor Redmond

THAT the Council:

- (a) **Approves** the draft budget for the 2026-2027 financial year.
- (b) **Notes** that the rate increases are predominantly due to increased depreciation costs.

CARRIED

6.5 **Drainage and Stock Water**

K Simpson and J Recker presented the Drainage and Stock Water budget, noting significant increases in Coastal Urban rates. These increases arose from additional maintenance costs associated with new assets, new funding requirements for resource consent monitoring under the global consent, quarterly water-quality sampling and testing, and higher depreciation expenses. A further budget request was also made for the Mandeville Resurgence Stage One project.

There were no questions from elected members.

Moved: Councillor Mealings

Seconded: Deputy Mayor Redmond

THAT the Council:

- (a) **Approves** the draft budget for the 2026-2027 financial year.
- (b) **Notes** that the 2026/27 depreciation expenditure increased compared to the 2025/26 Annual Plan. This is due to the revaluation of three waters assets, which was not finalised until August 2025, and the impact was not fully incorporated into the 2025/26 Annual Plan.

CARRIED

6.6 **Water Services**

K Simpson presented the Water Services budget, noting that this was the first time specific commentary had been provided for the activity, which had previously been included within Utilities and Roading overheads. The budget aligned with the 2024/34 Long Term Plan, apart from the addition of two temporary fixed-term roles for a two-year period to support the establishment of the new Water Services Business Unit.

In response to Councillor Fulton's query, K Simpson advised that while the primary focus of the roles was to establish the Water Services Business Unit, they could be deployed across water, stormwater, and wastewater as needed.

Deputy Mayor Redmond questioned whether the proposed ten-year loan to establish the Water Services Business Unit should be used to cover salaries. K Simpson confirmed that funding these roles was essential to setting up the Business Unit and would not represent an ongoing cost.

Moved: Councillor Mealings

Seconded: Deputy Mayor Redmond

THAT the Council:

- (a) **Approves** the draft budget for the 2026-2027 financial year.

CARRIED

6.7 **Utilities and Roothing Overhead**

G Cleary presented the budget for the Utilities and Roothing overheads.

There were no questions from elected members.

Moved: Councillor Mealings

Seconded: Deputy Mayor Redmond

THAT the Council:

- (a) **Approves** the draft budget for the 2026-2027 financial year.

CARRIED

6.8 **Project Delivery Unit**

G Cleary presented the budget for the Project Delivery Unit.

Mayor Gordon questioned the budget provision made for morning teas. G Cleary explained that it was not for the provision of morning teas for staff, but rather for the staff cost of morning teas, as they cost a set amount per minute worked.

Councillor Cairns asked what the direct expenditure covered, and G Cleary replied that it would cover items such as salaries and any additional costs for the unit. He also noted that the in-house hourly rate was substantially lower than the private sector.

Moved: Councillor Mealings

Seconded: Deputy Mayor Redmond

THAT the Council:

- (a) **Approves** the draft budget for the 2026-2027 financial year.

CARRIED

6.9 **Water Unit**

G Cleary presented the budget for the Water Unit, which derives revenue from fees for preliminary water services.

There were no questions from elected members.

Moved: Councillor Mealings

Seconded: Deputy Mayor Redmond

THAT the Council:

- (a) **Approves** the draft budget for the 2026-2027 financial year.

- (b) **Notes** that any new levels of service/performance measures are to be provided within a separate report provided to the Council.

CARRIED

Community and Recreation

6.10 Libraries and Local Museums

C Brown presented the District Libraries budget, noting that there were no changes.

Mayor Gordon sought an update on the installation of the Kaiapoi Museum lift. C Brown advised that the contractor had received the lift system and that the structural wall was under evaluation. A report outlining the available options would be provided to the Council once that work was completed.

Councillor Fulton asked whether funding had been allocated for a potential mobile library initiative. C Brown confirmed that no budget had been set, as the trial using the community van had not yet concluded. An assessment of the trial's effectiveness and usage levels would be undertaken before any budget allocation was considered, possibly during the Long Term Plan process.

In response to Councillor Doody's query regarding home-schoolers, C Brown noted that home-schooled students were dispersed throughout the district and would not be specifically targeted by the mobile library; however, they were welcome to use the service.

Moved: Councillor Mealings

Seconded: Deputy Mayor Redmond

THAT the Council:

- (a) **Approves** the draft budget for the 2026-2027 financial year.
- (b) **Notes** that the budgets remain largely unchanged from the 2024/34 Long Term Plan, with the exception of efficiencies identified in this document.

CARRIED

6.11 Aquatic Facilities

M Greenwood presented the Aquatics budget and invited questions.

In response to Councillor Cairns' queries regarding increased investment in Kaiapoi and potentially Woodend, given the significant growth in those areas, M Greenwood advised that a review of the Aquatic Strategy undertaken five years earlier had identified the need for upgrades to the Dudley Aquatic Facility and investment in the Kaiapoi Aquatic Facility, with potential future provision in northern Woodend. These initiatives had been included in previous Long Term Plans but were deferred for various reasons. He confirmed that the strategy would be updated as part of the forthcoming Long Term Plan process to reflect demographic changes, community demand, and broader budget priorities. When asked about heating at the Kaiapoi Aquatic Facility, M Greenwood noted that both air and water temperatures were consistent with those at Dudley; however, he acknowledged that the Kaiapoi environment could make the facility feel colder. M Greenwood further confirmed that the changing facilities required improved heating and that the number of women's changing spaces were inadequate.

Mayor Gordon sought assurance that maintenance at the aquatic facilities was being appropriately monitored and that issues were being addressed in a timely manner. M Greenwood confirmed that monitoring was ongoing and that systems were regularly reviewed and improved to ensure effective maintenance.

Councillor Fulton raised concerns about rising electricity costs and asked whether alternative energy sources, such as gas or solar, had been assessed to reduce operating expenses and support sustainability objectives. M Greenwood advised that comparisons between electricity and Liquefied Petroleum Gas (LPG) had been completed, with LPG appearing to offer a more favourable long-term option. He noted that only the Dudley Aquatic Facility had been assessed for solar power to date and that no budget currently existed for a district-wide investigation.

Councillor Fulton also highlighted the need for improved lighting and security cameras at the Oxford Pool carpark. C Brown responded that the Greenspace Unit held a budget for cameras, but installation, maintenance, and monitoring requirements would need to be considered.

Councillor Doody observed differences between income and expenditure in the Learn-to-Swim Programmes. M Greenwood advised that the programmes were generally cost-neutral and that participation continued to increase, resulting in the pools operating near capacity. He explained that income from all programmes was pooled, whereas expenditure was allocated across separate areas of the budget.

Councillor Ward queried whether the proposed solar installation east of Lineside Road would be sufficient to meet the Dudley Aquatic Facility's energy needs. M Greenwood advised that the installation was intended to provide behind-the-meter electricity for the wastewater treatment plant, with any surplus used to supply electricity at a reduced rate to other users at Dudley.

Moved: Councillor Mealings

Seconded: Deputy Mayor Redmond

THAT the Council:

- (a) **Approves** the draft budget for the 2026-2027 financial year.
- (b) **Notes** the recommendations from the District Aquatic Plan for the development of Hydrotherapy, Leisure and integration of the Dudley Pavilion to meet current community demand for services.
- (c) **Notes** that further development of the facilities in line with the recommendations of the District Aquatics Plan has been moved to fall outside of the current Long Term Plan period.

CARRIED

6.12 **Community Development**

T Sturley presented the budget and noted that operational costs for initiatives such as the Men's Charter for Jobs and Welcoming Communities were included in their respective project budgets.

In response to a query from Councillor McLaren regarding the reference to Arts Park, T Sturley advised that this formed part of the Arts Strategy implementation and remained aspirational at this stage.

Deputy Mayor Redmond sought clarification on the increase in the salary mileage. T Sturley explained that the variance resulted from an administrative error involving staff returning from parental leave and a role being divided into two 0.5 FTE positions. This should have been recorded as two 0.5 FTEs rather than two FTEs, which would reflect a cost saving once corrected.

In response to Councillor Fulton's question regarding the classification of externally funded projects as "at risk," T Sturley advised that the majority of operational and staffing costs for the Community Team were funded through the Long Term Plan. The Welcoming Communities Plan development was a fixed-term role funded by the Ministry of Business, Innovation and Employment in partnership with Immigration New Zealand. The Taskforce for Jobs Programme was funded by the Ministry of Social Development and was therefore also externally funded.

Moved: Councillor Mealings

Seconded: Deputy Mayor Redmond

THAT the Council:

- (a) **Approves** the draft budget for the 2026-2027 financial year.

- (b) **Notes** that any new levels of service/performance measures in the longer term will be highlighted in the Long Term Plan Budgets, and will then be provided within a separate report to the Council as part of the Long Term Plan process.

CARRIED

6.13 **Greenspace and Community Facilities**

C Brown presented the Greenspace budget, noting that the parks and tree contract had been reduced. The delivery of waterside safety signage had been revised, with flotation devices installed in coastal areas to reduce drowning risks. For Capital Projects such as the 154 East Belt cricket facility, staff were working with Canterbury Cricket to secure additional funding to support timely delivery. Staff were also assisting with planning for future sports grounds in the South MUBA area, although this work was scheduled for later years.

In response to Mayor Gordon's query regarding whether the tagging budget included commercial properties, C Brown advised that Tagbusters operated proactively and regularly engaged with business owners and residents regarding graffiti removal. Their low service rates generally encouraged property owners to utilise the service. The Mayor requested that Tagbusters liaise with business owners on High Street, Rangiora, following recent widespread graffiti in the area.

Mayor Gordon also sought clarification on the \$50,000 budget for the Rangiora Airfield Review, noting that he understood this work had already been completed. C Brown explained that the Council had deferred reviewing the airfield's fees and charges in favour of examining alternative ownership models. This work aimed to assess opportunities to reduce ratepayer liability and risk, and to determine whether alternative governance structures could improve operational performance.

Regarding the Kaiapoi Marine project, C Brown advised that the delay was related to the installation of gates at each end of the ramp leading to the pontoons. The Kaiapoi–Tuahiwi Community Board (the Board) opposed installing a gate at the top of the ramp, as it considers the area a public space that should remain accessible. Staff considered the improvements important for health and safety, particularly given increased activity at businesses such as Paris for the Weekend and the River Queen. Feedback from the public and business owners had originally prompted the proposal. As the businesses had not contributed funding, the Board did not support proceeding. The Mayor requested that staff re-engage with the Board, noting that any revised position would need to be reported to the Community and Recreation Committee.

In response to questions from Councillor McLaren regarding the MainPower Oval, C Brown outlined the history of the Council's involvement with stakeholders, including the Rifle Club, Canterbury Cricket, and Canterbury County Cricket. He noted that the Rifle Club occupied part of the building, which accounted for the Council's insurance and power costs. The grant provided to Canterbury Cricket covered only a small proportion of the actual cost of maintenance staff. By comparison, all staffing at Hagley Oval was funded by ratepayers. C Brown emphasised that Rangiora benefited from having a first-class cricket venue capable of attracting significant fixtures.

Deputy Mayor Redmond asked whether the Rifle Club contributed to the building's use. C Brown confirmed that the Club did not. The Deputy Mayor also queried whether a portion of the \$17,000 hire income received by Canterbury Cricket was returned to the Council. C Brown advised that this income offset part of the substantial annual cost, exceeding \$200,000, of operating the grounds as a first-class venue.

Councillor Cairns observed that no income had been recorded from the Lineside Road property. C Brown explained that an outdated coding structure had caused the omission. Two codes were currently in use: one for arrears owed by the former tenant, who was now repaying the outstanding rent, and one for the current tenant, who was performing well. Income from hay and stock remained with the tenant, who paid the agreed lease amount.

In response to Councillor Fulton's suggestion for a more robust tenant selection process for Lineside Road, C Brown advised that a thorough process had been followed for both tenants, although the initial outcome had been less than ideal.

Regarding street decorations, the Deputy Mayor sought clarification on the provision for Christmas decorations, noting that the current budget related only to street flags. C Brown confirmed that separate annual budgets existed for the installation and removal of Christmas trees in Rangiora and Kaiapoi. The Deputy Mayor further noted that Christmas decorations were intended to be gradually expanded, with provision required for the replacement of damaged items. The Mayor supported reinstating the former working group to review budgets and consider separating Christmas decorations from the flag budget. Both the Mayor and Deputy Mayor observed that some decorations required replacement due to age and fading. Councillor Powell requested that Pegasus/Ravenswood be included in future planning, given the area's population and commercial growth.

Councillor Ward sought an update on the Sefton Domain Pavilion and the Sefton Community Hall. C Brown advised that the pavilion remained in use but was not fit for purpose. The Sefton Community Hall project had experienced delays, although the sale of the former Sefton Library had strengthened the group's financial position. A redesign was being considered due to funding constraints, and the sale of the old Public Hall was still pending. The Sefton Public Hall remained in use but required earthquake strengthening. The Council might need to consider further investment to enable the project to progress.

Councillor Mealings asked whether Hurunui District's potential development of a first-class cricket ground had been considered. C Brown questioned the practicality of such a development, noting the need to accommodate teams and officials, as well as increasingly stringent facility standards for playing surfaces, moisture levels, and supporting infrastructure.

Councillor Cairns queried whether business or promotional rates applied to towns beyond Kaiapoi and Rangiora. C Brown confirmed that they did not. Councillor Cairns suggested that this be reviewed ahead of the Long Term Plan.

Deputy Mayor Redmond also noted the budget provision for a Ravenswood Community Centre. C Brown confirmed that the Council had previously resolved to establish a centre in Ravenswood, but delivery had been deferred to later years. Two feasibility studies had identified a need for a facility in North Woodend. The current budget allocation of \$4 million was for the land purchase, with no decisions yet made on the facility's design.

Councillor Doody noted the cost of child interment seemed quite high. C Brown explained that it was based on tendered rates from contractors to do the works.

Moved: Councillor Mealings

Seconded: Deputy Mayor Redmond

THAT the Council:

- (a) **Approves** the draft budget for the 2026-2027 financial year.

CARRIED

6.14 **Community and Recreation Overhead**

C Brown noted that the lack of information was due to the absence of changes.

There were no questions from elected members.

Moved: Councillor Mealings

Seconded: Deputy Mayor Redmond

THAT the Council:

- (a) **Approves** the draft budget for the 2026-2027 financial year.

CARRIED

6.15 **Earthquake Recovery and Regeneration**

D Roxborough advised that there were no significant changes to the budget to report.

In response to a question from Councillor Fulton about the expected timeline for the remainder of the regeneration work, D Roxborough noted that staff had previously indicated they were nearing completion of the programme. He advised that, in terms of overall Capital Expenditure, approximately 95 percent of the programme had been delivered. Some projects were multi-year and were now entering their final year, while others had been deferred into future years. These projects were funded through the Earthquake Recovery Loan, which was why the activity remained open to allow the remaining projects to be completed.

Councillor McLaren sought clarification on the location of the Kaiapoi Community Hub and the nature of the future foundation works. D Roxborough confirmed that the facility was the Kaiapoi Community Hub on Courtenay Drive. He advised that the Council had worked with the Kaiapoi Croquet Club on its facility and continued to work with several clubs seeking to establish themselves on the site. A decision was made to allocate some of the existing Capital Budget to these clubs to help cover their foundation costs, at approximately \$25,000 per building.

Councillor Mealings asked whether, once the programme was capped, the activity would still need to remain in the budget until the loan was repaid. D Roxborough confirmed that it would need to remain in place for that purpose, but that it would not incur any further costs beyond loan repayment.

Moved: Councillor Mealings

Seconded: Deputy Mayor Redmond

THAT the Council:

- (a) **Approves** the draft budget for the 2026 -2027 financial year.
- (b) **Notes** that internal and external funding provisions for the proposed Kaiapoi Community Hub Trust's development of buildings and associated facilities on site are not included in this budget and commentary.
- (c) **Notes** that these budgets do not include for Mixed Use Business Area developments and contributions (including Public Realm) – these are covered in Recreation Activity or Business & Centres Activity budgets.
- (d) **Notes** that these budgets do not include any further Council inputs or in-kind support to the WHoW Aquasports Park proposal.

CARRIED

6.16 **Strategic and Special Projects – Community and Recreation**

D Roxborough noted there were no changes to the budget.

There were no questions from elected members.

Moved: Councillor Mealings

Seconded: Deputy Mayor Redmond

THAT the Council:

- (a) **Approves** the draft budget for the 2026-2027 financial year.

CARRIED

6.17 **Property, Housing for the Elderly, Camping Grounds**

R Hawthorne took the budget as read, noting that the only substantive changes related to forestry and housing activities.

In response to Mayor Gordon's question regarding whether the vacant Council-owned housing units could be made available to those in need, R Hawthorne advised that additional staff resources had been allocated to improve performance across both housing sites. Specific plans had been developed to ensure vacant units were returned to service, although some units with more complex issues would need to be reported back to the Council. Significant effort had also been directed toward addressing maintenance concerns. Two units, one on Meadow Street and one at Tyler Courts, remained uninhabitable.

Councillor Fulton asked whether a comprehensive asbestos assessment had been undertaken across the Council's housing units. R Hawthorne confirmed that a full assessment of all Council buildings had been completed. Staff were currently undertaking a review, with external support, to ensure no material changes had occurred since the initial assessment.

Councillor Doody enquired how many housing units still require upgrades to meet modern standards. R Hawthorne advised that the Council had completed 30 full refurbishments. The remaining significant work related to Tyler Courts, which comprised 28 units. Staff were seeking approval to bring forward the refurbishment of this site. The remaining units requiring work did not involve upgrades of the same scale.

In response to a question from Councillor Mealings, R Hawthorne explained that the Central Government contributed 70 cents in the dollar through the accommodation supplement once rent exceeded a certain threshold. As the Council's rents consistently sat above the threshold but below the upper limit, any rent increase, for example, \$10, would result in the tenant paying \$3 and the Government contributing the remaining \$7.

Mayor Gordon noted that Council housing was intended to operate on a break-even basis, yet the budget reflected a loss of approximately half a million dollars. He asked what steps were required to return the activity to a more sustainable financial position. R Hawthorne responded that if a house were built and rent were set based on the initial investment, the rent would increase gradually over time. However, when significant mid-life costs arise, such as replacing a roof, it would not be feasible to double the rent in a single year to cover them. Instead, capital costs were intended to be spread over the long term.

R Hawthorne advised that, until 2018, the Council had not been recovering sufficient rent to cover the long-term costs of owning and operating its housing portfolio. In 2018, the Council approved a 30 percent rent increase, phased in over several years, and this adjustment was still being implemented. Most of the Council's units were now 50 to 60 years old and required mid-life refurbishment. Had adequate funds been set aside in earlier years, these costs could have been met without the need for further rent increases.

Moved: Councillor Mealings

Seconded: Deputy Mayor Redmond

THAT the Council:

- (a) **Approves** the draft budget for the 2026-2027 financial year.

CARRIED

Regulation and Planning

6.18 Planning, Regulation and Environment Management Overhead

K LaValley noted the key issues affecting the whole unit were the Government Reforms and their impact on how staff operated, the number of resource consents, and the approach to compliance and monitoring. Staff did not know what costs would be associated with those changes and had not accounted for them in the budgets.

Councillor Fulton was interested in compliance and inspections related to the installation of tiny homes, relocatable homes, sleep-outs, etc. He asked what impact that would have across the inspection and regulatory space. K LaValley stated that the Council did not conduct inspections of projects with exemptions in place.

Moved: Councillor Mealings

Seconded: Deputy Mayor Redmond

THAT the Council:

- (a) **Approves** the draft budget for the 2026-2027 financial year.
- (b) **Notes** the potential for reform impact on the wider department and department budgets. Given the current uncertainty on specific budget impacts, no direct budget for reforms is currently being sought through the Annual Plan.

CARRIED

6.19 **Planning Implementation Unit**

W Harris noted that staff had suggested to adjust the fee for a Flood Assessment Certificate, which set the minimum finished floor level. It was currently \$200, but did not cover the work involved. Staff had, therefore, suggested increasing it to \$460, but there was scope for a tiered system, which would be brought back to the Council.

There were no questions from elected members.

Moved: Councillor Mealings

Seconded: Deputy Mayor Redmond

THAT the Council:

- (a) **Approves** the draft budget for the 2026-2027 financial year.
- (b) **Notes** that the fees and charges align with the median market across Canterbury councils.

CARRIED

6.20 **Development Planning Unit**

M Bacon took the budget as read.

There were no questions from elected members.

Moved: Councillor Mealings

Seconded: Deputy Mayor Redmond

THAT the Council:

- (a) **Approves** the draft budget for the 2026-2027 financial year.

CARRIED

6.21 **Building Unit**

A Haymes advised that staff were not anticipating any significant changes to overall work volumes. The primary adjustment was a 3.2 percent increase, consistent with inflation, along with several amendments to the fees schedule. He noted that the Council had introduced a fixed fee for small standalone dwellings to provide applicants with the option of obtaining a building consent, even though such structures could be processed under the exemption pathway.

In response to a question from Councillor Fulton, A Haymes explained that recent legislative changes, particularly exemptions for smaller buildings such as sheds and sleepouts, had not had a major impact on Council operations. Many of these structures had historically been built without consent and were therefore technically non-compliant.

The legislative changes effectively legitimised this type of building work. He noted that the Council typically received around 40 granny-flat consent applications per year, and while the exemption had not significantly altered this volume, it had introduced a more complex PIM process for applicants.

Deputy Mayor Redmond referred to the option of charging a fee for small standalone buildings and queried whether doing so created additional liability for the Council. A Haymes responded that the Council's intention was not to avoid liability but to ensure that property owners had confidence in the amenity and compliance of their buildings, and that the structures met legislative requirements.

Moved: Councillor Mealings

Seconded: Deputy Mayor Redmond

THAT the Council:

- (a) **Approves** the draft budget for the 2026-2027 financial year.

CARRIED

6.22 Environmental Services

B Charlton noted the only major change was a 6.43% reduction in budget requirements, due to legislative changes that increased all infringement fees and an increase in dog registrations, which increased revenue.

Councillor Doody asked whether there were many abandoned vehicles in the Waimakariri District. B Charlton noted that the number of abandoned cars increased year on year, but it was not a huge number, around ten to 20 each month.

Councillor Doody further enquired where the abandoned vehicles were being found. B Charlton stated that around 90% of abandoned vehicles were on the side of the road, and the other 10% were in bushes or riverbeds.

Deputy Mayor Redmond queried what the staff did with the abandoned vehicles. B Charlton explained that the cost of retrieving such vehicles was substantial. When a vehicle was written off and collected by a scrap contractor, the Council did not incur disposal costs because the contractor retained the vehicle for scrap value and paid only a minimal fee. If a vehicle had resale potential, it was impounded and subsequently sold.

Councillor Mealings noted that the Council had previously increased the District Licensing Committee membership to five, but it was now operating with four members. She asked whether the vacant position would be filled. Charlton advised that the Council was not currently seeking to appoint an additional member.

Councillor Goldsworthy observed a discrepancy between the fees earned from alcohol licensing applications and the expenses incurred by the District Licensing Committee and asked whether any adjustment to the fees was being considered. B Charlton stated that the fee structure had remained unchanged since 2012. He noted that Taituarā submitted annual recommendations to the Central Government seeking an increase; however, to date, no changes have been approved.

Moved: Councillor Mealings

Seconded: Deputy Mayor Redmond

THAT the Council:

- (a) **Approves** the draft budget for the 2026-2027 financial year.

CARRIED

6.23 Strategy and Business Unit

S Hart noted that there were no changes to the budget from the forecast in the 2024/34 Long Term Plan.

Councillor Fulton sought clarification regarding the budget for Tuahiwi Reserve MR873. S Hart explained that this item sat under the "Better Off Funding" within the budget. All funding allocated in this area originated from the former Government's Better Off Funding Programme. Within the strategy workstream, \$250,000 had been set aside to support the Kāinga Nohoanga Strategy structure-planning exercise. The Strategy, developed by Ngāi Tahu, examined how Māori Reserve land, such as MR873, could be utilised.

Moved: Councillor Mealings

Seconded: Deputy Mayor Redmond

THAT the Council

(a) **Approves** the draft budget for the 2026-2027 financial year.

CARRIED

6.24 Communications and Engagement

S Hart noted that the budget was in line with the 2024/34 Long Term Plan forecast, except for additional support provided as an option to Councillors and the Mayor.

Deputy Mayor Redmond sought clarification regarding the \$75,000 increase allocated to support Elected Members. He asked what type of support was envisaged. S Hart explained that the funding was intended to serve a dual purpose. One component related to assisting Elected Members with media engagement, including responding to media enquiries, preparing statements, and supporting public engagements that reflected the Council's image. The second component aimed to strengthen the team's internal capacity, particularly in document design and related communications functions.

Moved: Councillor Mealings

Seconded: Deputy Mayor Redmond

THAT the Council:

(a) **Approves** the draft budget for the 2026-2027 financial year.

CARRIED

6.25 Civil Defence Emergency Management

E Gessler took the budget as read, noting that some changes were anticipated.

Deputy Mayor Redmond observed that some of the identified savings and efficiencies had come at the expense of youth and emergency management activities. He asked whether there were opportunities to create synergies with NZRT12 to maintain youth involvement. S Hart noted that staff had previously reported challenges with the Cadet Programme, which had led to a decision to step back from its delivery. Consideration was now being given to whether the Council could develop an alternative programme rather than continue operating the cadet model.

Moved: Councillor Mealings

Seconded: Deputy Mayor Redmond

THAT the Council:

(a) **Approves** the draft budget for the 2026-2027 financial year.

CARRIED

Finance and Business Support

6.26 Finance and AIM (Asset Information Management)

P Christensen presented the Finance and AIM budget and invited questions.

Councillor Fulton questioned the significant increase in the 2026/27 budget compared with the projected Operational Budget. P Christensen advised that the increase reflected the inclusion of a fixed-term position to support implementation of the Local Government (Water Services) Act 2025.

Moved: Councillor Mealings

Seconded: Deputy Mayor Redmond

THAT the Council:

- (a) **Approves** the draft budget for the 2026-2027 financial year.

CARRIED

6.27 Customer Services

M Harris presented the Customer Services budget, noting that only minimal changes had been made and reporting that the team had had its busiest year since 2023.

In response to a question from Councillor McLaren regarding postage costs, she advised that the team continued to encourage the use of electronic payments. She further noted that once the new DataScape System was operational, it would include a customer portal, which is expected to reduce reliance on postal communication.

When Councillor Powell queried the budget allocation for the Customer Services Help Desk, M Harris explained that a review was underway to assess how staff time was recorded and to determine whether a more accurate and efficient method could be implemented.

Councillor Fulton asked about the street numbering budget, referencing Hurunui District Council's successful initiative to number rural properties to support emergency service access. M Harris clarified that the budget applied solely to renumbering urban subdivisions when street names changed, and that residents were not charged for this service. She acknowledged the work undertaken by the Hurunui District Council but advised that the Council had no plans to undertake a similar project due to the scale and associated cost.

In response to a further question from Councillor Fulton, M Harris confirmed that the Council collected water rates on behalf of Hurunui District Council and received a commission to cover administration costs.

Moved: Councillor Mealings

Seconded: Deputy Mayor Redmond

THAT the Council:

- (a) **Approves** the draft budget for the 2026-2027 financial year.
- (b) **Adopts** the recommended Land Information Memoranda fees for consultation in the 2026/27 Annual Plan.

CARRIED

6.28 Canterbury Museum

C Genet presented the budget for the Council's contribution to the Canterbury Museum, noting that the increase related to an increase in the requested operating levy. Further capital levies had been requested over the next four years to fund cost increases on the Museum rebuild project. C Genet advised that this had not yet been incorporated into the Annual Plan budget.

Mayor Gordon noted that the Council was legally required to contribute to the operating costs of the Canterbury Museum; however, discussion was still underway regarding the extent of the Council's commitment to the increased cost of the Museum redevelopment.

Moved: Councillor Mealings

Seconded: Deputy Mayor Redmond

THAT the Council:

- (a) **Approves** the draft budget for the 2026-2027 financial year.

CARRIED

6.29 **Information and Technology Services**

A Keiller presented the Information and Technology Services budget and invited questions.

Members acknowledged the significant workload involved in maintaining technological systems, including the upcoming July 2026 rollout of the DataScape System and ongoing cybersecurity requirements.

There were no questions from elected members.

Moved: Councillor Mealings

Seconded: Deputy Mayor Redmond

THAT the Council:

- (a) **Approves** the draft budget for the 2026-2027 financial year.

CARRIED

6.30 **Governance and Quality and Risk**

S Nichols presented the Governance budget and invited questions.

Councillor Mealings observed that the sample rates bill showed a reduction in Community Board costs and asked whether this would affect service delivery. S Nichols advised that the reductions reflected a change related solely to the allocation of staff time across the Boards, however there was no reduction of service delivery.

Mayor Gordon requested a review of the level of service provided during the 2025 Local Body elections, expressing dissatisfaction with Electionz.com's performance. S Nichols noted that only two providers operated nationally however that the Council's contract with the current provider would be reviewed later in the year, with outcomes reported back to the Council in due course.

Deputy Mayor Redmond sought clarification on the increase in legal opinion costs. S Nichols explained that the increase reflected legal advice obtained over the previous 12 to 18 months, particularly regarding the Council's Code of Conduct and Local Government Official Information and Meetings Act 1987 information requests.

Mayor Gordon acknowledged the Governance Team for its wide-ranging work undertaken in addition to the support provided to elected members at meetings.

Moved: Councillor Mealings

Seconded: Deputy Mayor Redmond

THAT the Council

- (a) **Approves** the draft budget for the 2026-2027 financial year.

CARRIED

Management and Organisational Development and Human Resources

6.31 District Management

J Millward noted that this budget was much the same as the previous year and called for questions.

Councillor Ward commended the work of the Chief Executive and his senior leadership, which made for a well-run organisation. The Mayor concurred.

There were no questions from elected members.

Moved: Councillor Mealings Seconded: Deputy Mayor Redmond

THAT the Council:

- (a) **Approves** the draft budget for the 2026-2027 financial year.

CARRIED

6.32 Organisational Development and Human Resources

S Salthouse presented the budget and called for questions.

Mayor Gordon commended S Salthouse on her team's work and on her efforts to encourage wellbeing in the workforce.

There were no questions from elected members.

Moved: Councillor Mealings Seconded: Deputy Mayor Redmond

THAT the Council:

- (a) **Approves** the draft budget for the 2026-2027 financial year.

CARRIED

7. MATTERS TO BE CONSIDERED WITH THE PUBLIC EXCLUDED

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

Moved: Mayor Gordon

Seconded: Councillor Mealings

That in accordance with section 48(1) of the Local Government Official Information and Meetings Act 1987 and the particular interest or interests protected by section 6 or section 7 of that Act (or sections 6, 7 or 9 of the Official Information Act 1982, as the case may be), it was moved the public be excluded from the following parts of the proceedings of this meeting.

7.1 Te Kōhaka O Tūhaitara Trust Financial Support

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

| Item No | Subject | Reason for excluding the public | Grounds for excluding the public. |
|----------------|---|--|--|
| REPORTS | | | |
| 7.1 | Te Kōhaka O Tūhaitara Trust Financial Support | Good reason to withhold exists under Section 7 | To protect the privacy of natural persons and enabling the local authority to carry on without prejudice or disadvantage, negotiations (including commercial and industrial) negotiations and maintain legal professional privilege. LGOIMA Section 7 (2)(a), (g) and (i). |

CLOSED MEETING

The public excluded portion went from 4.35pm to 5.36pm.

OPEN MEETING

Moved: Mayor Gordon

Seconded: Councillor Goldsworthy

That the open meeting resumes and the business discussed with the public excluded remains public excluded.

CARRIED

8. BUDGET SUMMARY

C Genet provided a brief verbal update which summarised the budget outcomes and advising that the proposed rate increase was 4.91%, which would be announced the following day, 28 January 2026.

9. NEXT MEETING

The Council would meet on Tuesday, 17 February 2026, to consider a report to approve the Draft 2026/27 Annual Plan for consultation.

The next ordinary meeting of the Council was scheduled for 9 am Tuesday, 3 February 2026, in the Council Chamber, Rangiora Service Centre, 215 High Street, Rangiora.

THERE BEING NO FURTHER BUSINESS, THE MEETING CLOSED AT 6:18PM.

CONFIRMED



Chairperson
Mayor Dan Gordon

3 March 2026

Date