



Minutes of an Extraordinary Meeting of the Finance and Performance Committee held in the Council Chamber, 26 Gordon Street, Dannevirke on Tuesday 11 June 2024 commencing at 8:30am.

1. Present

Her Worship the Mayor - Mrs T H Collis, Crs E L Peeti-Webber (Deputy Mayor), N L Chase, A K Franklin, S M Gilmore, P A Johns, M F Long, K A Sutherland, S A Wallace and S M Wards

In Attendance

Mr B Nicholson	- Chief Executive
Mrs K Tani	- Group Manager – Strategy and Community Wellbeing
Mr H Featonby	- Group Manager - Infrastructure
Ms G Nock	- Strategy and Corporate Planning Manager
Mr P Wimsett	- 3-Waters Transition Manager
Mr K van der Oord	- Communications Team Manager
Mrs S Walshe	- Finance Manager
Mrs B Fowler	- Senior Financial Accountant (via Teams)
Ms F Chase	- Facilities Manager
Mr C Yonge	- Team Leader Economic and Community Development (via Teams)
Ms K Stevens	- Economic and Community Development Advisor
Ms A Rule	- Policy and Planning Advisor
Ms E Roberts	- Revenue Manager
Ms L Sinclair	- Rates and Revenue Officer
Ms K Payne	- Facilities Property Officer
Ms M Yule	- Project Accountant (via Teams)
Ms M Brensell	- Executive Assistant
Mrs A Dunn	- Manager – Democracy Services
Ms S Ellis	- Democracy Support Officer

2. Apologies

There were no apologies.

3. Reports

3.1 Late submissions received on Long Term Plan 2024-34

The Finance and Performance Committee considered the report of the Manager - Democracy Services dated 06 June 2024 that presented late submissions, being submissions received after the close of the submission period on the draft Long Term Plan 2024-34, to Council for inclusion in the Long Term Plan Hearing process.

That the report from the Manager - Democracy Services dated 06 June 2024 concerning the late submissions received on Long Term Plan 2024-34 be received.

Gilmore/Sutherland

Carried

3.2 Hearing of Submissions - draft Long Term Plan 2024-34

Submission 503 – Ngāti Kahungunu ki Tamaki nui-a-Rua

Stacey Hape and Adele Small, representing Ngāti Kahungunu ki Tamaki nui-a-Rua spoke to their submission, and expressed satisfaction at seeing the Treaty statement in the front of the Long Term Plan, stating that it demonstrated a clear dedication to upholding Council's partnership with iwi. Heavy emphasis was placed upon maintaining roading networks to retain access to their awakura of Akitio beach, as well as maintaining wastewater throughout the district. Criticism was given regarding the ambiguous wording regarding climate change, with no clear direction provided from Council, and it was implored not to reduce rating for larger industries within the district to account for their impact on the environment; the connection of Maori to upholding the environment was emphasised. It was also requested that iwi partner with Council regarding town centre refurbishment and what contributions Maori could provide to emphasise their connection.

All Council's preferred options were agreed with, and comments provided on particular points:

- With regards to the proposed Pahiatua pool, they spoke to their support and expressed interest in partnering with Council to action it, especially in reference to their connection to water and ensuring the safety of rangatahi in the water.
- In consideration of differential roading rates, it was asked that the definition of what a 'heavy vehicle' entailed be improved so a better assessment could be made regarding how the change would impact them.

In response to questions by Council, it was stated that rates smoothing would ease the burden on their community, especially as many were not high earners. Additionally, in regards to economic development, it was asked that Council focus

moreso on climate impacts rather than the giving of grants, and that fast tracking iwi projects would be optimal.

The hearing adjourned at 8:51am and reconvened at 9:07am.

Submission 391 – Gordon Kuggeleijn

Gordon Kuggeleijn spoke to his submission in regards to each consultation option.

- He noted his approval for option 2 in reference to rates smoothing.
- He expressed support towards the Pahiatua pool, but queried the operational costs required.
- Regarding the NTLP he stated that the roads had not been constructed for the effects of heavy vehicles, and that reconstruction would be required. He added that some bridges would need replacement. He noted that not all trucks had been included in the provided figures, and requested to see the figure from NZTA.
- In reference to Economic and Community Development, he agreed with the reduction.
- Regarding the urban growth strategy he queried whether land would be available for certain industries to expand, given their historical location and current zoning.
- He asked why plastic waste wasn't incinerated.
- While in agreement with Option 2 regarding differential roading rates, he noted that complexities existed regarding carbon forests, which rarely used trucks and would be rated inequitably. He also raised an issue with Council regarding paying more for 25 hectares of forestry in comparison to an adjacent property, which owned 60 hectares and farmed sheep.
- Regarding non-contiguous rating units, he expressed his approval for Option 2.

Other issues raised included fluoridation, which he underlined as a health concern to water supply users, and as an ethical matter apropos of forced medication. He spoke positively of the new Council slogan and improved signage to a nearby forest park, as well as the increased visibility of the Tamaki Reserve round trip walk. He underlined that maintenance within these areas was essential.

He spoke regarding affordability, and underlined the need for prioritisation of funding towards maintenance of existing aging infrastructure. He noted that 34% of the current Dannevirke population lived in high economic deprivation, and another third were ineligible to pay rates. He stated that the population was not increasing, and though whilst people were moving to smaller towns due to the overwhelming cost of living, Dannevirke's population would continue to decrease. He advocated for further investment in larger industries, for the development of passenger rail, and for the improvement of load-bearing capacity for current rail bridge infrastructure. Concerns regarding mounting debt were also raised.

Her Worship the Mayor clarified that the population of the district had grown over the previous ten year period.

Submission 238 – Tararua Funerals

Tracey Friend of Tararua Funerals spoke to her submission regarding the proposed fee changes for cemeteries within the Tararua District. She expressed disappointment with the proposed changes, citing large increases of over 400% in comparison with other departments, which were cited to see increases of only ~25%.

She criticised the proposed merging of interment fees for all children from 0-14 years, comparing the decision to other Councils. This was especially highlighted in regards to babies, wherein service fees were often waived due to the devastation faced by parents as a result of the loss.

She brought attention to the general increase in prices for interment of ashes, stating that cremation often constituted the most cost effective option, and that the lack of crematorium in the district required individuals to travel to the Manawatū, which also incurred a 10% out of district fee. She questioned the purpose of the increase given the minimal contractor rate required to dig the hole, and warned that there would likely be an increase in individuals interring the ashes themselves. She emphasised that having a place to grieve improved the wellbeing of families experiencing loss.

She reported a 400% increase to add a memorial plaque, and that the cost was justified to go towards future proofing the walls. She stated that the area was not being cared for by the current contractor, and that the wall had been no cost to Council as it was originally gifted by a family.

Regarding plot reservation, she criticised the large jump in fees and suggested limiting the number of adjacent plots a family can reserve, as per the policies of other Councils. She noted that while works had been planned to expand the Mangatera cemetery area, nothing had been actioned, and the space would run out soon.

She questioned whether the amount set aside for cemetery development within the Long Term Plan was enough for Council to meet their obligations under the Burial and Cremation Act 1964, and challenged Council with following up on the disbursements for cemetery plots and internments and interacting with grieving families themselves should the scheduled changes proceed. She underlined that the proposed changes were unequitable and implored Council to reconsider.

It was asked whether other Councils had investigated the construction of a crematorium; in response it was reiterated that clients were required to travel out of district for this service. She stated that the ratio of cremations to burials in other districts was 70/30, but the ratio within the Tararua was closer to 50/50, in part due to the additional travel costs and as farmers preferred burials.

Submission 448 – Ben Orchard

Steven Orchard spoke to Ben Orchard's submission regarding rate setting, with respect to the water and wastewater needs of his tenants, in the Lee Building in Vogel Street Woodville. He stated that the Council has a monopoly on rate setting due to the necessity of using Council water and wastewater. He advocated for water metering, stating that the cost to his tenants would be reduced as a result; most significantly as his building was only serviced by one water connection, but charged for five. This resulted in a severely increased rate-take, and affected business profitability within the building.

It was responded that water metering was under consideration, and the situation regarding the building would be kept in mind.

The meeting adjourned at 9:52 am and resumed at 10:15 am.

Submission 464 – Tony Rhodes

Tony Rhodes spoke to his submission regarding several consultation topics. He expressed concerns regarding rate-take for aspirational funding. He observed the proposed \$74 million overall take across the community over the 10 year period, and expressed concerns regarding the increase from \$33 million. He questioned the value of the economic development.

He noted the cost budgeted to demolish the Carnegie building and urged Council to move on with that.

He spoke in support of the proposed Contestable Fund.

He spoke against the proposal for rates smoothing.

He spoke in support of the proposed Pahiatua Swimming Pool construction, but questioned whether the funding needed to come out of Year 1 in the Long Term Plan.

With regard to a proposed Sports Complex in Dannevirke, he did not support that noting there were already existing facilities in Dannevirke.

With regard to the National Land Transport Programme, he sought clarification on the funding allocated for that.

He spoke in support of the proposed differential roading rate. He sought clarification of the value of the forestry crop and whether that impacted the value of the land.

Submission 347 – Alcohol Healthwatch

Andrew Galloway and Jennifer Lamb of Alcohol Healthwatch spoke to their submission, and advised Council to consider alcohol harm prevention policies. They outlined alcohol as a harmful drug and a leading cause of death. They

highlighted it as a leading contributor to inequities within the community. They stated that the level of applications for special licenses to serve alcohol was increasing back to covid-levels, and that the number of liquor stores within the Tararua was above the national average and expressed concern about the disproportionate impact that alcohol has on vulnerable groups.

She noted that the Sale and Supply of Alcohol Act 2012 envisaged full cost recovery through the default fees set under the regulations, however these do not cover all the costs incurred by the Council in carrying out its duties in relation to the Act. This meant that ratepayers were subsidising the costs associated with monitoring and enforcement. She spoke about the ability of the Council to make a bylaw under the Alcohol Fees Setting Bylaws Order 2013 and set fees at a level that would recover Council's full cost as a licensing authority.

Submission 297 – Dannevirke Community Board

- Terry Hynes and Ron Wallace of the Dannevirke Community Board spoke in support of their submission, regarding all questions for consultation.
- In reference to Rates smoothing, Option 3 was noted as most preferred. The cost of living for senior citizens was listed as a major factor, and the need for the Government to regularly review the rates subsidy was highlighted.
- In regards to the Pahiatua pool, Option 2 was supported. They felt that this made good business sense, and that a joint trust alongside Bush Aquatic would set a precedent for other cross-district ventures.
- NLTP Option 1 was preferred.
- For Economic and Community Development, Option 1 was preferred. It was stated that a need for rationalisation within the area was paramount. However, it was requested that the funding level remain static, as the contribution was valued heavily by community organisations.
- For Differential Roding Rates Option 2 was supported, though consistent review was recommended. It was emphasised that the damage caused by trucks exceeding 50 tons in weight was considerable, and could be observed in areas such as the Laws Road bypass.
- For non-contiguous rating units, Option 2 was preferred, but it was noted that the option had some inequities.
- Regarding Town Centre Refurbishment, Option 2 was preferred, with the emphasis upon eliminating the north and south divide.

Additional issues were also brought to the attention of the Committee:

- It was advised that the fee for dog ownership for over 65s was too high, and a decrease to \$50 was recommended. This was justified as companion animals provided some benefit to elderly owners, and the number of individuals registered under this category amounted to less than 200.
- The maintenance and resurfacing requirements of the Smith-Adelaide-Victoria Street walkway were highlighted, with the request that \$10,000 be raised and invested for this purpose. Notably as the area was well used,

and though a verbal agreement had been initially made for the upkeep of the walkway, very little had been done.

- It was requested that full support be given to Dannevirke Multisport Complex Inc for the skatepark facility they intended to build in the community.

Submission 497 – Dannevirke Brass Band

Kathryn Illsley of the Dannevirke Brass Band spoke to her submission, noting her objection to the establishment of a contestable fund for community organisations, and expressing a preference towards maintaining the current grant system. She stated that the Dannevirke Brass Band was considered historically to be an asset of Council, owing to a purchase of instruments made by Councillors holding office in 1915, and emphasised the obligation of Council to maintain assets. She underlined the contribution of the Dannevirke Brass Band to the community, with the band undertaking six parades a year, and spoke of the pervading interest in the band even beyond the District borders.

It was asked whether funding from the group had been sought from any other charitable organisations; it was responded that the band primarily subsisted upon monetary bequeaths provided by the estates of deceased enthusiasts. Additionally, other community groups enjoyed performances by the band or would use the hall, and the band would be compensated consequently.

Submission 285 – Eketāhuna Community Board

Steen McGhie, Chairperson of the Eketāhuna Community Board, spoke to the Board's submission regarding several points.

- He requested Council lobby central government for flexibility regarding the upgrades required for the Eketāhuna wastewater treatment plant due to the \$8 million necessary to completely cover costs. Inquiries were also made regarding the separation of stormwater from wastewater, as some benefit could be found by farmers to use the stormwater for irrigation.
- Budget for footpath maintenance was requested. In response to a question about the rating impact of funding footpath maintenance, it was proposed that savings could be made by spraying as opposed to mowing and that could contribute to footpath repairs. It was also emphasised that the original bitumen footpaths worked well and an upgrade to elaborate pavers was not required; it was simply asked for further flattening of the paths.
- Regarding derelict buildings, one site in particular was pointed out as an issue. It was asked whether a process existed to convince the owner to sell so repairs or revitalisation could take place.
- It was asked for consideration to be given towards spraying the roadsides of the rural roads as opposed to consistent mowing in an effort to decrease costs, especially in areas closer to the edge of town where budget did not exist to maintain consistent upkeep.

- Replacements for select drains were requested due to their small size and easy blockage. It was underlined that an upgrade would reduce maintenance costs in the long term.

Submission 425 – Federated Farmers

Thomas Read of Federated Farmers spoke in support of their submission. He discussed the increased difficulties of sheep and beef farmers, with their dairy counterparts not far behind, and that many were still in recovery from both cyclone Gabrielle and other adverse weather events. He stated that rates were within the top 10 costs for most farmers, and within the top 5 for some. He added that farmers were also under increased banking pressure.

Regarding all consultation options, several topics were commented on:

- A reduction in rates was preferred, as business would struggle in consideration of the proposed increases in the LTP. It was recommended Council reduce internal expenditure.
- A better strategy regarding Pahiatua Pool funding was preferred.
- Confidence was lacking with respect to the implementation of the NLTP, and thus Option 2 was preferred.
- Option 2 was preferred regarding differential roading rates, though complexity with use of land usage to define rating was questioned.
- It was recommended that non-contiguous rating be applied to land outside a 10km radius of the initial property, as this would align it with existing policy.

Lastly, concerns were raised regarding the short consultation timeframe of one-month, which only granted 20 working days to tabulate a submission.

It was noted that the roading differential rates and non-contiguous rating units were the two largest concerns. It was questioned whether larger or smaller farms were most affected by non-contiguous rating units; all were affected, but with a noticeable impact primarily on sheep and beef farmers. Likewise, the complexity within the roading differential rates highly affected dairy farmers, whilst sheep and beef farmers were less impacted. It was recommended to look at heavy transport of specialty cargo as well, such as wind turbine transport.

It was proposed that the Council consider changing to a capital value system of rating.

The meeting adjourned at 11:31 am and resumed at 11:39 am.

Submission 294 – Positively Woodville

Joy Kopa, Vicky McMillan and Malcolm Stuart of Positively Woodville advised that a more fiscally prudent approach was preferred regarding the Pahiatua Pool, and submitted in support of Option 1. They stated that Wai Splash already constituted an ongoing burden for ratepayers, and advised that if a pool was necessary in

Pahiatua, it would be better to either upgrade the existing facility or to utilise the Tararua College pool. They noted that a facility would be more suitable for Woodville, and advocated for Wai Splash firstly achieving financial independence before funding another pool.

For Economic Development, greater clarity was requested regarding the amount of funding provided to Community Boards and Committees, and where the funding for the contestable fund would stem from. Information was also sought regarding eligibility for funding, and what mainstream grants entailed.

Lastly, the increase in fees and charges for utilisation of Woodville recreational facilities was criticised, as it would constitute a drop in usership. It was preferred to see growth of facility use by supporting local groups. It was also underlined that the group was happy to work with Council regarding the campground.

Given any decrease in the proposed fees and charges would likely place the responsibility further on ratepayers for subsidisation, it was asked what areas would be the highest priority to maintain as-is. It was noted that the key deposit fee would be the most critical, with all others flexible.

It was asked why no rates smoothing (Option 1) was selected. It was replied that spreading the rates over several years only served to delay the inevitable, especially with the increased risk of a new adverse event occurring within the 10 year timeframe. They asked for prioritisation of infrastructure.

The meeting adjourned at 12:07 pm and resumed at 1:00pm.

Submission 440 – Wayne Salmons and Submission 445 – Todd Wheeler

Wayne Salmons and Todd Wheeler, neighbours within vicinity of each other, gave a presentation regarding the locations of their respective properties, and spoke in opposition to the proposal to remove the remission for non-contiguous rating units.

They noted the valuation of their properties had recently increased but with the recent installation of the Turitea wind farm believes the valuation should have dropped due to the impacts from the wind farm.

Submission 292 – Letisha Nicholas

Letisha Nicolas spoke in support of her submission regarding climate change and emission reduction. She pointed out the lack of acknowledgement within the Long Term Plan, and advised Council give the topic further consideration. It was recommended to look at the risks from climate change impacts and opportunities for reducing emissions. She spoke about the Global Covenant of Mayors for Environmental Act that Local Government New Zealand had made a commitment to.

Submission 358 – Woodville Recreation and Play

Turia Brackenbury and Malcolm Stuart of Woodville Recreation and Play spoke to their submission. They acknowledged the infrastructure maintenance requirements projected to be necessary, as well as the repairs needed in the wake of Cyclone Gabrielle but questioned the construction of the new Pahiatua pool. They expressed concerns about the running costs for the pool, funding for maintenance, and difficulties in attracting lifeguards to work at the pool. They suggested that Council pools be managed by private contractors, similar to how pools are managed in other areas.

Submission 346 – Malcolm Stuart

Malcolm Stuart spoke in support of his submission regarding the Pahiatua Pool. He opposed its construction, stating that Council needed to be effective with its investment decisions, and proposed that instead the Council explore entering into a partnership with Tararua College for the use of their pool by the community.

Submission 115 – Cancer Society

Jose Gutry of the Cancer Society spoke to their submission regarding cancer prevention policies. They advocated for a healthy, safe and inclusive environment and recommended several courses of action and policies previously implemented by other Councils. These included:

- Smokefree/vape free policies, noting that the smoking rate within Tararua was on the higher end, especially among Maori and Pasifika. They highlighted reducing normalisation of smoking and vaping, in particular emphasising the respiratory harm associated with vaping, and advocated for further support regarding addiction and recovery.
- Reducing overexposure to UV, in acknowledgement of the high incidence of skin cancer in NZ. An increase in shady areas in high use outdoor areas was recommended.
- Alcohol policies, noting its status as a class 1 carcinogen – in particular being a potential causative factor behind liver, breast, stomach, GI tract and throat cancers. It was recommended that the availability of alcohol be reduced.

It was acknowledged that the Tararua District was behind in implementation of smokefree policy. It was also asked whether the policies would interact with educational facilities, given the high incidence of youth vaping, and it was responded that the best course of action was to increase the amount of education via signage, awareness of quit lines and support avenues, and education of the community.

The hearing adjourned at 2:25pm and reconvened at 3:01pm.

Submission 380 – Mark Wheeler

Mark Wheeler spoke in support of his submission regarding several consultation topics.

- Rates Smoothing: he spoke in favour of option 2, citing a lack of difference in the long term.
- Pahiatua Pool: he queried the decision of Council to fund a facility that remained \$1.5 million shy of its targeted goal, and advocated for fixing up and/or potentially replacing the existing pool. He suggested constructing the pool closer to Fonterra. He stated that parents in Pahiatua tended to go to Masterton for their children's swimming lessons, and that the number of residents per local pool for Pahiatua (18,000) fell far below the average (29,000), which, alongside the cost of assets, would further burden the ratepayer with unnecessary costs.
- NLTP: He agreed with accepting the full allocation from NZTA
- Economic Development: He expressed interest in reviewing the function of the Community Boards, and questioned their relevancy, level of engagement, and their value as a connection between Council and community. He recommended completely cutting grant funding by year 3, thereby forcing community groups to find external funding.
- Differential Rooding Rates: He stated his opposition, and expressed concern with the lack of differentiation between types of forestry.
- Non-contiguous Rating Units: He stated that the UAGC dictates that each property contributes a set amount to the district. He questioned whether it was fair for landowners to pay rates for services they did not use.
- Town Centre Refurbishment: He agreed with this point, but recommended Council focus on current in-progress projects to bring them to a completed state. A focus on cost efficiency was underlined.

Given the number of items under consideration, he recommended decisions be made regarding rooding rate differential, which he felt was inequitable. He advised against the Pahiatua pool, and suggested keeping part of the amount reserved for economic development.

Submission 313 – Bush Aquatic Trust

Raylene Treder and Louise Powick of Bush Aquatic Trust spoke in support of their submission regarding the Pahiatua Pool. They thanked Council for their partnership, and discussed the development history of the pool, including the assembly of a business case and subsequent conduct of a feasibility study, as well as fundraising prior to approaching Council. They asserted their determination to provide a future-proof facility for Pahiatua, and with the majority of their funding achieved, the money given by Council would permit commencement of construction. They intended to secure commitments from local sponsors and Council for operational costs. In reference to the original facility, its disrepair was emphasised, and it was outlined that the complex could no longer be put off.

Several points were clarified regarding the funding of the pool, as well as on

claims made by previous speakers:

- Some funding sources for the pool may expire should it be delayed an additional year.
- The final \$1.1 million would be sought from Lotteries New Zealand, as that organisation had requested the trust return for funding only once \$1 million remained.
- Regarding the alternative use of Tararua College as a community pool, this was addressed in the feasibility study, with several reasons including but not limited to lack of funding, the lack of straightforward arrangement with the ministry of education, the lack of learn to swim pools and the lack of adequate ventilation cited against the prospect.
- Funders may contribute to a rescope plan for fixing the current pool, but this would require re-review
- No formal commitment was given to allow kids to swim free during summer; though funding may be applied for and the committee may offer the community subsidised recreational swimming during these months.
- Bush Multisport had not distanced themselves from the project and had previously sent letters in support.
- The business case for the pool was an accumulation of all work done to date, including surveys, feasibility studies, business models, asset replacement and options for governance structures, and had not been simplified nor pared down.
- Two members no longer resided in the district, but remained passionate about the construction of the pool.
- Regarding the longevity of the facility once the initial novelty waned, it was responded that all members were committed, and that succession planning would be undertaken.

Ongoing operating costs were highlighted as a concern. Proposed areas of reduction included opening the pool for limited hours, and to prioritise efficiency and minimise staff costs where possible without compromise to the level of service. Regarding the first year budget, it was stated that the sale of the original pool would contribute towards costs.

With respect to the current operational costs of Wai Splash, it was stated that the new pool would be optimised for efficiency as of current standards, and that community sponsorship would be solicited for the continued support of the facility.

The meeting adjourned at 4:02 pm and reconvened on 12 June 2024 at 9:01 am.

Submission 404 – Susan Lyford

Susan Lyford spoke in support of her submission regarding several consultation topics.

- Rates smoothing – she spoke in support of option 1, no rates smoothing,

as she believed rate smoothing enabled a culture of underfunding expenses.

- National Land Transport Programme – she spoke in support of option one, to accept the funding requested and increase rates for this activity to a maximum of 3%, however was concerned that government departments could reduce funding for emergency events such as Cyclone Gabrielle.
- Economic and Community Development – she spoke in support of option one, to reduce the funding for the Economic and Community Development activity, including a reduction in community grants funding and creation of a contestable fund of \$100,000 per year, ensuring that applicants provide benefit to the community.
- Differential roading rates – she spoke in support of option 2 to create a land value roading differential rate.
- Town Centre Refurbishment – she spoke in support of option 1, no change to rating unit and continue to rate as north and south.

In speaking to other topics, she questioned the provision of pensioner housing by the Council, although noted it was a self-funded activity.

She expressed concern about the increase in personnel costs, and questioned whether Council had contingency funds for responding to climate events, and for funding the three waters reform.

Submission 394 – Sport Manawatu

Hinekawa Wilson-Munday and Kelly Shanks of Sport Manawatu spoke to their submission regarding the accessibility of sports, and the resultant holistic effect on the mental and physical wellbeing of the community. They stated that while infrastructure was important, community wellbeing and engagement also held high importance, and that significant financial barriers such as a reduction in lotteries and government funding contributed to decreasing community participation and interest in sport.

Her Worship the Mayor left the meeting at 9:27am and Deputy Mayor Erana Peeti-Webber assumed the Chair.

It was asked what priorities would be primarily considered, with due consideration of the public facilities and sports awards. Regarding the awards, it was commented that the awards were primarily funded by the public and themselves. Emphasis was instead placed upon community wellbeing, and it was argued that while focus on infrastructure was important, failing to consider community wellbeing in the process was an oversight. It was queried whether prioritising infrastructure such as the water supply would have a greater effect on community wellbeing, and whether it would be better to focus on the maintenance of current recreational and sporting facilities rather than establishing new ones. In response, it was highlighted that the former option of maintenance was the focus, as retaining participation and increasing accessibility

to sports was paramount.

Submission 441 – Tararua Aquatic Community Trust

John Phillips, Marian Holdaway, Philomena Beale and Tatum Kingon of Tararua Aquatic Community Trust spoke to their submission, and gave a presentation regarding the Wai Splash pool operations over the last 12 months.

Her Worship the Mayor returned to the meeting at 9:43am and resumed the Chair.

Points highlighted included:

- They reported a turnover of \$1 million.
- The swim school reported good attendance, and the implementation of a new reporting system was working well.
- Power costs remained a challenge, but the pool remained within budget.
- Outreach into the community had prompted the purchase of a new vehicle, which could deliver staff to schools to teach water sports and safety, life skills, and to act as sporting coaches. It would also help in the expansion of the holiday programme.

A 10 year plan had been formulated, including a foundational document and service agreement which provided stability regarding the future of the complex. The lease agreement had finally been found, and a 99 year lease had been signed, so building plans could begin. Surveys had been conducted regarding upgrades of current facilities and prospective new facilities; and new changing rooms had emerged as the top priority. Nonetheless, the construction of new facilities was underlined as highly desirable, so to establish self-sufficiency and ease ratepayer burden, and to increase turnover rate by 35%-45%??. In particular, activities to improve community health, lifestyle and wellbeing were considered. Taking advantage of the increased traffic flow over the new highway would be paramount.

The trust emphasised that they were not approaching Council for funding due to the current uncertainty, instead searching for major funders to take over operational costs.

It was noted that topics provided from feedback included changing rooms and staff facilities, indicating internal input and a need to upgrade the existing facilities. Regarding other items, the addition of attractions was stated to provide a benefit to the community and thus worth including whilst remaining mindful of not relying on ratepayer contributions.

The original concept for the pool construction involved a central sporting hub, though would be costly. The ease of gathering groups in areas such as Pahiatua was noted, and it was suggested that resources could be shared between areas within the district – an example being the training of lifeguards in Woodville.

The meeting adjourned at 9:53am and resumed at 9:56am.

Submission 171 – Liam McCoy

Did not show.

Submission 197 – Matthew Trent

Matthew Trent spoke to his submission regarding the opposition of non-contiguous rating in reference to his property. He noted his ownership of 400 hectares of land, all blocks running together, and stated that he would see a 400% rating increase with option 2. He evaluated this to be an increase of \$17,500. This would also be associated with an increased land valuation 2 years ago. He questioned why he would need to pay for urban facilities he did not use, and stated that as a sheep and beef farmer the large increase would not be optimal.

It was asked how distantly each land title was situated, and whether they were within 2-5km of each other. It was responded that the farm was comprised of 6 titles, all directly adjacent. A suggested change to a 10km radius was considered agreeable.

The meeting adjourned at 10:04 am and resumed at 10:40 am.

Submission 203 – Toni MacArthur

Did not show.

Submission 246 – National Forests

Ed Kight of National Forests spoke to his submission regarding differential roading rates and the impact on his business. He stated that he had no issue with a user pays system, but reported that as his business only saw revenue over 28 year periods, the proposed differential rate for forestry was unequitable. He stated that dairy farmers saw a similar amount of loaded traffic. Nonetheless he noted that forestry operations would be fine with contributing to road maintenance.

Submission 367 – Susan Walsh

Susan Walsh spoke to her submission regarding the earthquake strengthening requirements for commercial buildings within the district, and the resultant prospective costs placed upon business owners. She outlined the need for a DSA should the building be evaluated under 34%, which she described as a category most buildings on Dannevirke could be placed under, and that the cost could be upwards of \$34,000-\$40,000. She also stated that no government financial support existed, and requested Council lobby central government for help.

To begin earthquake strengthening works a DSA would be required, and while some building owners had applied for a residential loan to help, many had yet to be approved. It was reported that many shop owners were declining to get DSAs

or upgrade due to the prohibitive cost.

It was asked whether hiring a DSA inspector would be plausible, and requested that priority be given to earthquake strengthening as opposed to the installation of the Pahiatua pool.

A query was raised regarding whether it was expected that Council would cover the costs, or whether building owners would help. It was responded that people were willing to help, but that a culture of independence existed amongst some owners, who preferred to front the costs themselves where possible. It was underlined that a way to lower the costs to \$4000-\$5000 would be optimal.

Regarding how long she had owned her building for, it was responded that she had owned it for a year, but had been unaware of the underlying repair costs and requirements upon sale. A suggested method to alleviate pressure on owners was to collaborate and pay for one building each time – eventually fixing all structures.

Submission 371 – Sylvie O’Donnell

Sylvie O’Donnell spoke regarding her submission, and expressed concerns surrounding the water supply. She stated that Council had undertaken several temporary fixes, with no permanent fix apparent. She added that the cost of these repairs would be saddled upon ratepayers, and as a pensioner with a fixed income this would be of substantial cost to her. She also objected to the implementation of fluoridation, citing studies regarding the health concerns of fluoride, including skeletal fluorosis, endocrine system impacts, and neurodevelopmental issues. She stated that fluoride was a neurotoxic substance purported to accumulate in the body, and expressed disapproval with the directive made by the Director General of Health.

It was asked whether she had shared her views with the Ministry of Health; she stated that her views were the product of independent research out of concerns that fluoride would exacerbate her existing health issues as a senior citizen. She advocated for the use of initiatives targeting sugar consumption over blanket water supply fluoridation.

Submission 377 – Jim Crispin

Jim Crispin spoke to his submission, and provided a brief history on the funding and construction of both the Wai Splash pool complex in Dannevirke and the sports complex in Pahiatua, as well as how the northern and southern ward division affected the process. He stated that he did not doubt Pahiatua deserved the pool, but queried whether it was a worthwhile investment given the current economic climate. He spoke in support of the roading works and the Cyclone Gabrielle response by Council, and advised to further work on connectivity in the district going forwards.

When asked whether he would rather keep the current Pahiatua pool facility, whilst understanding the current maintenance costs and potential for greater

accumulation of costs with respect to the aged infrastructure in the long term, or would upgrade to a new facility, he responded that the lack of affordability and population as well as the proximity to better facilities in Palmerston North upon opening of the new Te Ahu a Turanga highway presented significant barriers.

The meeting adjourned at 11:48am and reconvened at 11:54am.

Councillors N L Chase, M F Long and E L Peeti-Webber left the meeting at 11:48am.

Submission 383 – N Kilmartin

Did not show.

Submission 499 – Pūkaha Mt Bruce

Moira Paewai and Emily Court of Pūkaha Mt Bruce spoke to their submission. They thanked Council for their partnership, and commented on the recent opening of a new educational/conference venue, with various schools and community groups utilizing the space. They reported an income of \$50,000 within the first 10 months of operation.

Owing to a large loan taken out, debts had recently been incurred and fundraising efforts were being placed towards ensuring its payment. Interest fees would be added shortly. It was requested that the loan be paid back over 3 years,

They asked Council not reduce Economic Development funding, and asked that Council continue with the multi-year agreement at reduced rate from \$14,000 dropping to \$10,000. They also noted that they were due to start paying interest on the loan from Council, and asked that loan costs be gradually increased over three years.

Income was tracking well at 10% ahead of visitor numbers, and interest was expressed in maintaining current prices and therefore accessibility. Annual open days were set, and plans for other koha-based events to promote community engagement were in the works. An anniversary celebration would also be observed.

Submission 434 – Rangitane o Tamaki-nui-a-Rua

Lorraine Stephenson and Shaun Lines were in attendance, accompanied by Kiri Roimata as part of their succession planning, and spoke about their 25 year partnership with the Council, and noted their stake as manawhenua.

They noted that their experience with involvement in the Long Term Plan this year had been the best they had experienced, and thanked Council for this. Through their involvement in the Long Term Plan process, much of their concerns had been talked through.

As historical context, they spoke about the origins of Rangitāne and the travels of

their ancestors who settled in Wairarapa, the top of south island, Manawatū, and the Tararua District. They spoke about the welcoming of settlers, however experienced pressure from the Crown to sell / relinquish land, and Māori land ownership continued to drop. Only 2% owned under Māori land title today. They spoke about Te Tapere Nui o Whatonga as a guiding document.

They noted the collaboration with the Council through the Cyclone Gabrielle response and recovery exercise.

They spoke about their aspirations for great outcomes for the Rangitāne people, and noted one of their priorities was in developing Papakainga.

In respect to the consultation items in the draft Long Term Plan, they made the following comments:

- Rates smoothing – supported option 3. They noted housing affordability was not good, and need to be mindful of people’s ability to pay.
- Pahiatua Pool – supported providing funding towards the proposed new pool, and noted the value a new pool would bring to the community in Pahiatua.
- National Land Transport Programme - supported option 1 for increasing the spend on roads.
- Economic and Community Development – noted that organisations relied on grant funding and felt this should be revisited. They spoke about the development that they would be undertaking over the next five years and believed that work in the economic development space needed to continue to work in with the Growth Strategy. A shared approach could be taken with Rangitāne.
- Non-contiguous rating units – they spoke in support of option one and supported the submission made by Federated Farmers. They noted the rural ratepayers contributed well towards rates in the district.
- Reserves classification and land status – recommended that Rangitāne and Council work together to research parcels of land that are used as open space to understand the legal status and appropriate usage. They spoke about then considering options for retention / disposal / reverting back to Whatonga.
- With regard to climate change, noted that climate change will have large implications for the community and recommend continuing on the journey of learning, and spoke about the first Climate Change Hui.
- With regard to integration of services, they noted that Rangitāne were interested in establish a community hub for social services provision, and were proposing using the Pahiatua Town Hall for this venture. This would provide savings for the individual organisations who were all currently paying leases for separate premises.
- With regard to the Section 17A review for campgrounds, they noted their interest in involvement in that process, and the opportunity to create a domestic tourism product.
- They spoke about Three Waters and noted their interest in working with

the Council and private sector. They spoke about their proposal for a waste processing plant for processing foodwaste, greenwaste, sludge and biosolids within the district. The waste processing plant was a key pou for their iwi that they want to support, and would have environmental and cost benefits for the Council. The spoke about their support for a joint three waters entity with the Wairarapa Councils.

- District Plan Review – they spoke about their support for including a Māori Purpose Zone in the upcoming District Plan Review. This would allow Māori to use Whenua Māori in ways that support their cultural practices, including Papakainga. They expressed their wish to partner with Council in the public engagement meetings to help explain the concept.
- They expressed concern about maintenance of the Huxley Drain and the impact on neighbouring properties during periods of heavy rain. Asked that the Council work with Horizons to sort the cause of the problem.
- Growth Strategy – they spoke about the need to plan for light industry, due to the growing appetite for this.

Councillor Gilmore left the meeting at 1:04pm and returned at 1:06pm.

In conclusion reiterated the relationship of 25 years between Rangitāne and the Council and their confidence that this will continue. They spoke about the importance of a unified response to divisive policies proposed by the coalition Government, for example Treaty Principles Bill, Fast Track legislation, changes to Māori Wards.

The meeting adjourned at 1:13pm and reconvened at 1:46pm.

Directions for next steps

Her Worship the Mayor sought feedback from elected members on each of the consultation items, relating to any direction or any information that they wished officers to provide for consideration at the meeting where the matters raised by submitters would be deliberated on.

Rates Smoothing:

- further information on sector splits for three-year smoothing and no smoothing, including impacts on other items such as NLTP funding and roading differential;

Pahiatua Pool:

- Further information was requested on this option, in particular as part of the Section 17a review and Tararua Aquatic Community Trust, and to estimate what the pool would look like in future – notably in consideration of operating costs.
- The pool would be a sprung pool model, which was purported to cost less than the conventional build observed with Wai Splash. It was asked that further information on this be included.

- Information on the feasibility of funding should it be spread across two years as opposed to only within the first year, as well as operational costs after the first year of operation.
- It was queried whether any business as usual information existed for the current structure, and whether its operation could last for an additional 2 years before decommission.
- Request for prioritisation of the Section 17A review to be expedited.

National Land Transport Programme:

- Information on impact of lowered funding proposed by NZTA.

Economic Development:

- Contestable fund – local input - information on how the fund could be distributed by Community Boards or Community Committees with proviso of clear guidelines.
- Impact on small towns with removal of main street funding
- Consider the question of economic development funding separately from contestable fund question

Differential Roading Rates:

- Clarification on the tonnage information from Infometrics, the principles basis that the methodology was based upon and the rationale behind that.

Non-contiguous Rating Units:

- Information on locations between non-contiguous rating units, and any impact from putting in a distance so that only non-contiguous rating units greater than the set distance apart would lose the remission. Also include information on any administration costs that may arise for adding complexity to the system. Also provide information on a rates remission policy for uneconomic units in the rural zone.

Town Centre Refurbishment:

- No further information requested.

Cemetery fees:

- Officers were requested to relook at the cemeteries fees, and provide information on the result of that.

Loans and debt headroom:

- Include any impact on debt headroom if pool not funded, and information on any loans expected to be taken out in the future. Also include information on impact of rating an additional 1% for accelerated debt

repayment.

Pūkaha National Wildlife Centre:

- Information to be provided on the status of the loan to Pūkaha National Wildlife Centre, and cost implications of recommendations made through the Pūkaha National Wildlife Centre submission.

Climate change strategy:

- Information what options there were for Council in the absence of an adopted strategy.

Development of Smokefree / Vapefree environments policy:

- Cost implications of any proposed policy.

Dannevirke Walkway:

- Information on the maintenance budget for the walkway.

Companion dogs:

- Suggestion for introduction of a reduced fee for companion dogs for elderly people. It was noted that the dog control fees had already been set for the 2024-25 year, however introduction of that category could be considered when setting the fees for the 2025-26 year.

Commercial building in Woodville:

- Information to assist elected members understand the particular situation raised by a submitter regarding multiple water and wastewater connection charges for their building in Woodville.

Woodville camp ground key deposit fee:

- Information requested on the rationale for the level of charge, and consideration of reducing the deposit fee.

Submitter requests for Council to cut costs and reduce expenditure:

- Chief Executive requested to provide information outlining potential ways to make a reduction to operational expenditure and showing a pathway to doing so.

Assistance for Earthquake Prone Building owners:

- Information on what avenues are open for Council to assist owners of earthquake prone buildings, and information on any barriers to Council

providing assistance.

There being no further business the Mayor thanked those present for their attendance and contributions, and declared the meeting closed at 3:29 pm.

Mayor