



## Notice of Meeting

A meeting of the Tararua District Council will be held in the Council Chamber, 156 High Street, Dannevirke on **Wednesday 25 February 2026** commencing at **9:30am**.

Malcolm Alexander  
Chief Executive

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## Agenda

- 1. Welcome and Meeting Opening**
- 2. Council Prayer**
- 3. Apologies**
- 4. Public Forum**

A period of up to 30 minutes shall be set aside for a public forum. Each speaker during the public forum section of a meeting may speak for up to five minutes.

Standing Orders may be suspended on a vote of three-quarters of those present to extend the period of public participation or the period any speaker is allowed to speak.

With the permission of the Chairperson, members may ask questions of speakers during the period reserved for public forum. If permitted by the Chairperson, questions by members are to be confined to obtaining information or clarification on matters raised by the speaker.

- 4.1. Public Forum - Angus Maniapoto**

Mr Maniapoto will be in attendance to address concerns with Council.

- 5. Notification of Items Not on the Agenda**

Major items not on the agenda may be dealt with at this meeting if so resolved by the Council and the Chairperson explains at the meeting at a time when it is open to the public the reason why the item was not listed on the agenda and the

reason why discussion of the item cannot be delayed until a subsequent meeting.

Minor matters not on the agenda relating to the general business of the Council may be discussed if the Chairperson explains at the beginning of the meeting, at a time when it is open to the public, that the item will be discussed at that meeting, but no resolution, decision or recommendation may be made in respect of that item except to refer it to a subsequent meeting.

- 6. Declarations of Conflicts of Interest in Relation to this Meeting's Items of Business**
- 7. Confirmation of Minutes 5**
- Recommendation*
- That the minutes of the Council meeting held on 17 December 2025 (as circulated) be confirmed as a true and accurate record of the meeting.*
- 8. Presentation - Department of Internal Affairs (10:30am)**
- Rebecca Maplesden, Partnership Director of the Policy and Te Tiriti Branch of Department of Internal Affairs Te Tari Taiwhenua, will be in attendance to address the Council.
- 9. Minutes Action List**
- 9.1 Decision Action Items 41**
- That the report providing an update on decision action items be noted.*
- 10. Community Boards and Community Committees Reports**
- 10.1 Minutes - Dannevirke Community Board 18**
- Recommendation*
- That the minutes of the Dannevirke Community Board meeting held 15 December 2025 be received.*
- 10.2 Minutes - Explore Pahiatua Community Committee 26**
- That the minutes of the Explore Pahiatua Community Committee meeting held 3 December 2025, and meeting held 4 February 2026 be received.*
- Note: Any of the Community Boards and Community Committees may send a representative to address the Council on any issues within the agenda or matters of interest to them.
- 11. Reports**
- 11.1 Request for funding by Dannevirke Multisport Complex 49**

<b>11.2</b>	<b>Adoption of the Environmental Scan as Supporting Information for the Long Term Plan 2027- 37</b>	<b>65</b>
<b>11.3</b>	<b>Appointment of the Chief Executive</b>	<b>141</b>
<b>11.4</b>	<b>Submission on Simplifying Local Government</b>	<b>145</b>
<b>11.5</b>	<b>Requests for Information under the Local Government Official Information and Meetings Act 1987</b>	<b>157</b>
<b>12.</b>	<b>Portfolio Reports</b>	
	Councillors assigned the responsibility to undertake the portfolio for a specific activity can report back on any of these matters.	
<b>12.1.</b>	<b>Portfolio Report - Youth</b>	<b>167</b>
<b>12.2.</b>	<b>Portfolio Report - Marae, Kōhanga Reo, and Kura Kaupapa Māori</b>	<b>171</b>
<b>13.</b>	<b>Mayoral Matters</b>	
<b>13.1.</b>	<b>Mayoral Update</b>	<b>173</b>
<b>14.</b>	<b>Items not on the Agenda Accepted in Accordance with the Procedure Outlined as per Agenda Item 4</b>	
<b>15.</b>	<b>Public Excluded Items of Business</b>	
	<b>Recommendation</b>	
	<i>That the public be excluded from the following parts of the proceedings of this meeting, namely:</i>	
	<i>Civic Honour Nomination for Community Service</i>	
	<i>Land and Community Building Disposal Plan (Review of Council-owned Buildings)</i>	
	<i>Delegation of Authority to Sign Agreement for Purchase of Land and Property - 33 York Street, Dannevirke</i>	
	<b>Confirmation of Minutes</b>	
	<i>The general subject of each matter to be considered while the public is excluded, the reason for passing this resolution in relation to each 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 follows.</i>	

<b>General subject matter to be considered</b>	<b>Reason for passing this resolution in relation to each matter</b>	<b>Ground(s) under Section 48 (1) for the passing of this resolution</b>
<b>Confirmation of Minutes</b>	<b>To protect the privacy of natural persons</b>	<b>&lt;Section (1)(a)(i)</b>
<b>Delegation of Authority to Sign Agreement for Purchase of Land and Property - 33 York Street, Dannevirke</b>	<b>To protect commercial and industrial negotiations</b>	<b>&lt;Section (1)(a)(i)</b>
<b>Land and Community Building Disposal Plan (Review of Council-owned Buildings)</b>	<b>To protect commercial and industrial negotiations</b>	<b>&lt;Section (1)(a)(i)</b>
<b>Civic Honour Nomination for Community Service</b>	<b>To protect the privacy of natural persons</b>	<b>&lt;Section (1)(a)(i)</b>

***This resolution is made in reliance on Section 48 (1) (a) 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 Section 6 or Section 7 or Section 9 of the Official Information Act 1982, as the case may require, which would be prejudiced by the holding of the whole or the relevant part of the proceedings of the meeting in public are as follows:***

- s7(2)(a) The withholding of the information is necessary to protect the privacy of natural persons, including that of a deceased person.***
- s7(2)(i) The withholding of the information is necessary to enable the local authority to carry on, without prejudice or disadvantage, negotiations (including commercial and industrial negotiations).***
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- s7(2)(a) The withholding of the information is necessary to protect the privacy of natural persons, including that of a deceased person.***

## **16. Closure**



Minutes of a meeting of the Tararua District Council held in the Council Chamber, 156 High Street, Dannevirke on Wednesday 17 December 2025 commencing at 9:30am.

## 1. Present

Mayor – Mr S M Gilmore, Crs S M Wards (Deputy Mayor), A J Amboy, C L Corlett, P A Johns, E F Kennedy, P M Naylor, E L Peeti-Webber, K E R Te Waaka, and S A Wallace

### In Attendance

- Mrs N Phillips - Chairperson – Dannevirke Community Board
- Mr T Hynes - Deputy Chairperson – Dannevirke Community Board
  
- Mr M Alexander - Interim Chief Executive
- Mrs K Tani - Group Manager – Strategy and Information
- Ms S Lowe - Group Manager – People, Capability and Customer Experience
- Mr H Featonby - Group Manager - Operations
- Ms T McDonald - Chief Financial Officer
- Ms J Smith - General Counsel
- Mr P Wimsett - Chief Advisor (online via Teams)
- Mr M Guile - Procurement Specialist
- Ms F Chase - Facilities Manager
- Mrs B Kawana - Corporate Planning and Reporting Advisor
- Mr K van der Oord - Communications Team Manager
- Mr J Single - Regulatory Services Manager
- Mrs A Dunn - Manager – Democracy Services

## 2. Council Prayer

Councillor Keshaan Te Waaka commenced the meeting with a karakia timatanga (opening prayer)

## 3. Apologies

There were no apologies.

#### **4. Public Forum**

There were no requests for public forum.

#### **5. Notification of Items Not on the Agenda**

The following late item of business was notified for consideration in the public excluded session of this meeting:

Recruitment of Chief Executive

The reason this item was not listed on the agenda was due to the interviews of shortlisted candidates being held after the agenda was published.

Consideration of this item cannot be delayed until a subsequent meeting due to the need to progress the making of an offer to the preferred candidate and delegation of authority for negotiating terms and conditions, noting the impact of the legislative designation of the period from 20 December to 10 January as non-working days on the timeline for the process.

***That the following item be accepted as a late item for consideration with the public excluded:***

***Chief Executive Recruitment***

***Mayor Gilmore/Cr Wards***

***Carried***

#### **6. Declarations of Conflicts of Interest in Relation to this Meeting's Items of Business**

There were no declarations of interest.

#### **7. Confirmation of Minutes**

***That the minutes of the Council meeting held on 26 November 2025 (as circulated) be confirmed as a true and accurate record of the meeting.***

***Crs Wallace/Corlett***

***Carried***

#### **8. Community Boards and Community Committees Reports**

##### **8.1 Minutes - Positively Woodville Community Committee**

***That the minutes of the Positively Woodville Community Committee meeting held 4 November 2025 be received.***

***Crs Johns/Peeti-Webber***

***Carried***

## 8.2 Minutes - Eketāhuna Community Board

*That the minutes of the Eketāhuna Community Board meeting held 01 December 2025 be received.*

*Crs Johns/Peeti-Webber*

*Carried*

## 9. Minutes Action List

### 9.1 Decision Action Items

Clarification was sought on the due date of the Plan Stop item. It was noted that this was underway.

The land rationalisation item was discussed, with clarification sought on the length of time taken for this item to progress, and clarification on the expected date of completion.

*That the report providing an update on decision action items be noted.*

*Crs Wards/Naylor*

*Carried*

## 10. Reports

### 10.1 Reserve Land Classification

The Tararua District Council considered the report of the Facilities Manager dated 3 December 2025 that sought reclassification and declaration and classification of reserves under the Reserves Act 1977 following the close of public submissions on the Tararua Omnibus Reserve Management Plan. It was noted that no submissions had been received, therefore approval was sought to declare, classify and reclassify the parcels of land identified in the report. Clarification was provided on the process specified in the Reserves Act 1977.

*That the report from the Facilities Manager dated 03 December 2025 concerning the Reserve Land Classification be received.*

*That Council approve to declare and classify according to their primary purpose three parcels of land pursuant to section 14 of the Reserve Act 1977 as described in Attachment 1.*

*That Council approve reclassification of three parcels of land to better cater for their primary purpose pursuant to section 24 of the Reserve Act 1977 as described in Attachment 2.*

*Crs Johns/Wards*

*Carried*

10.2

**Regulatory Services Report 1 July 2025 to 31 October 2025**

The Tararua District Council considered the report of the Regulatory Services Manager dated 4 November 2025, that provided statistical information for the year 1 July 2024 to 30 June 2025. It was advised that figures in the table on page 43 of the agenda, outlining noise and abandoned vehicle complaints for 2024-25 and the current year to date, had dropped from the published copy of the agenda. A copy of the table was circulated to members, as below:

**8.2 Other Complaints**

	<b>Total 2022/23</b>	<b>Total 2023/24</b>	<b>Total 2024/25</b>	<b>From 1 July 2025</b>
Noise	635	474	382	72
Abandoned Vehicles	71	97	57	17

It was asked that an information session be held for the community once the Government’s changes to the earthquake-prone buildings legislation is finalised.

In response to questions about the percentage of known dogs registered, it was noted that currently the percentage had increased up to 99%.

***That the report from the Regulatory Services Manager dated 04 November 2025 concerning the Regulatory Services Report 1 July 2025 to 31 October 2025 be received.***

***Crs Wallace/Corlett***

***Carried***

**11. District Merit Award**

The Mayor advised of a District Merit Award that would be made in recognition of many years of service to the community by Vanessa Dorreen.

Mayor Scott Gilmore read the following statement about the lasting contribution to Dannevirke, Norsewood and the wider district made by Vanessa Dorreen.

*“Vanessa Dorreen is an exceptional community volunteer whose dedication, leadership and generosity of spirit have made a lasting contribution to Dannevirke, Norsewood and the wider district. Over many years, she has given countless hours to education, sport, arts and community wellbeing, consistently stepping forward wherever support is needed.*

*Vanessa has been highly active within local schools, serving on both the Norsewood and Ruahine school committees and supporting a wide range of activities including event organisation, fundraising, coaching, gardening and school trips. She has also been a long-standing parent organiser for the*

*Norsewood Playgroup and a strong supporter of local theatre and arts initiatives.*

*Widely known for her positive and encouraging presence, Vanessa is a familiar and enthusiastic supporter at school and sporting events, including the Dannevirke Ross Shield. She has built strong, lasting relationships with young people and continues to support and celebrate them well into adulthood. Her commitment to community wellbeing extends to her involvement with Norsewood Civil Defence and her role in helping secure a defibrillator for the village.*

*For the past eight years, Vanessa has been deeply involved with the Dannevirke Netball Centre, contributing extensively to junior development programmes such as Fun Ferns and Future Ferns. She has coached and coordinated school teams, mentored umpires, supported representative teams, and carried out numerous operational roles including canteen, office, uniforms, game timing and prizegivings. She also established a Summer Business House competition. Her dedication was recognised when she was named Cadbury Volunteer of the Month for Netball Manawatū and Dannevirke Netball Centre Volunteer of the Year in 2023.*

*Vanessa has also served the Norsewood Smallbore Rifle Club for six years, stepping into the scorer role when needed and continuing in this position with professionalism. Her behind-the-scenes contribution was recognised this year with Life Membership.*

*For nine years, Vanessa has been a key contributor to junior hockey at the Dannevirke Sports Club, taking on roles including Health and Safety Representative, Treasurer, Tuck Shop and Referee Coordinator, as well as coaching and refereeing. Always reliable, she ensured each hockey day ran smoothly.*

*In addition, Vanessa has been a valued committee member of the Dannevirke Athletic Club, where she improved club systems, introduced new technology, supported athletes and schools, and volunteered at major events such as the Colgate Games. Her service was recognised when she was named Volunteer of the Year at the club's 2024 prizegiving.*

*Through her selfless service and unwavering commitment, Vanessa Dorreen has had a significant and lasting impact on her community and is a truly deserving recipient of the District Merit Award."*

Michelle Mitchell and Kelly Gillard joined the meeting to thank everyone for coming to celebrate this special award with Vanessa. Michelle Mitchell acknowledged the honour of being here to celebrate this award with Vanessa, who was known as "Mrs DJ" by everyone. She spoke about her time as a teacher at Norsewood School, and how as a teacher, you could not have asked for a better parent than Mrs DJ to be by your side, to help get things done. Following that, she worked closely with Mrs DJ in the Dannevirke Junior Netball Committee for many years. She said there had never been such a more deserving person to receive this award, and it was great to see her selfless, giving nature recognised

by the Mayor and the community. What she has done for so many people and organisations was remarkable and although Vanessa was very humble, she wanted her to know how appreciated her kind heart and many hours of volunteer commitment were. She had touched the lives of so many people and has made Mrs DJ a Dannevirke icon. She is a huge hard worker, and gave an example of fundraising event she ran to pick up woodchips and kindling to help a team get to a National event, and her commitment in travelling to the event to support the team even though her own children were not involved in the event. A truly exceptional individual.

Kelly Gillard gave an example of Mrs DJ's support from the sidelines by playing a recording of her cheering on their team. She spoke about the many times she'd heard Mrs DJ's voice from the sidelines cheering on the team, for so many different sports and how this will always stay with her. She spoke about how Mrs DJ is one of the rare people whose energy lifts everyone around her. Her passion for supporting kids in the wider community is inspiring and her willingness to step in whenever she's needed is nothing short of incredible. She spoke about how Vanessa would do anything for her two children, Pippa and Sean, supporting them wherever they go. She gave examples of this support, highlighting that Vanessa even sat umpiring exams so she could understand netball for her daughter. She spoke about how she learned emergency procedures so that she could support Norsewood Civil Defence, and how she even mastered the art of backing a trailer so she could get hay into sheds. Whenever people needed help, Vanessa would be there, often accompanied by her children. She spoke about how lucky Vanessa's children were to have Vanessa as their role model. If someone didn't have a supporter at a game, Vanessa was their support. She spoke about how Vanessa got her children involved in volunteering as well. Kelly thanked Vanessa's children and partner for lending Vanessa to them for all the sporting events, and reminded the children that Vanessa cheered the loudest for them both. She spoke about how they appreciate everything she does, her heart and commitment and unwavering support of others which has made a real difference in the community. She spoke about how Vanessa deserved this award so very much. She acknowledged Vanessa's mother, noting how she must have been a great role model to bring up this wonderful lady who has been a part of our lives and thanked her for bringing her here so we could show her what she means to the community. She then presented a gift to Vanessa's children that provided a reminder of everything that Vanessa had been involved with. She thanked the Council for allowing them to come and share with everyone how much Vanessa means to them.

Vanessa spoke in thanks, noting her surprise at the award. She said that when she first came to Dannevirke, she felt the best way to get to know people was to get involved, which started with the netball club. She acknowledged her parents who were also great volunteers in the community, noting they had an array of volunteer awards that they had won over the years. On behalf of the groups she has been part of and friends and family here today, thank you all very much.

In closing the Mayor again congratulated Vanessa and invited her, along with her friends, family and supporters to join the Council in a morning tea to celebrate Vanessa together.

*The meeting adjourned at 10:29am and resumed at 10:56am.*

## **10. Reports (continued)**

### **10.3 Council Controlled Organisation Exemption for Manawatu-Whanganui Local Authorities Shared Services**

The Tararua District Council considered the report of the Chief Advisor dated 4 December 2025 that Council's resolution to grant Manawatu-Whanganui Local Authorities Shared Services Ltd (MWLASS) status as an "exempted organisation" under the provisions of Section 7 of the Local Government Act 2002.

It was noted that future changes through the simplification of local government could see a changed level of utilisation for the CCO, with a view to value for ratepayers. It was suggested that representatives of the MWLASS visit Council in the future to explain the services undertaken through the MWLASS.

***That the report from the Chief Advisor dated 04 December 2025 concerning the Council Controlled Organisation Exemption for Manawatu-Whanganui Local Authorities Shared Services be received.***

***That the Tararua District Council provide an exemption to Manawatu-Whanganui Local Authority Shared Services from being a Council Controlled Organisation granted under Section 7(5) of the Local Government Act 2002 for the period of 1 July 2025 to 30 June 2028.***

*Crs Johns/Amboy*

*Carried*

### **10.4 Adoption of Committee Terms of Reference 2025-28**

The Tararua District Council considered the report of the Manager – Democracy Services dated 3 December 2025 that sought adoption of the Terms of Reference and delegation of authority for each committee established by the Mayor under section 41A of the Local Government Act 2002. It was noted that the Executive Support member for the Community Connections committee was yet to be decided.

***That the report from the Manager Democracy Services dated 03 December 2025 concerning the Adoption of Committee Terms of Reference 2025-28 be received.***

***That the Tararua District Council adopt the Terms of Reference for the Community Connections Committee, the Infrastructure and Projects Committee, the Performance and Monitoring Committee and the District Growth Committee as established by the Mayor under Section 41A of the Local Government Act***

**2002 and set out in Appendix 1 to the report “Adoption of Committee Terms of Reference 2025-28.”**

**Crs Corlett/Wallace**

**Carried**

#### 10.5 **Adoption of Meeting Schedule for 2026**

The Tararua District Council considered the report of the Manager – Democracy services dated 3 December 2025 that presented the proposed schedule of meetings for the 2026 calendar year.

***That the report from the Manager Democracy Services dated 03 December 2025 concerning the Adoption of Meeting Schedule for 2026 be received.***

***That the Tararua District Council adopt the schedule of meetings for the 2026 calendar year as set out in Appendix 1 to the report of the Manager – Democracy Services dated 03 December 2025.***

**Crs Naylor/Corlett**

**Carried**

#### 10.6 **Delegations to Community Boards**

The Tararua District Council considered the report of the Manager – Democracy Services dated 3 December 2025 that presented proposed delegation of functions from Council to the Dannevirke and Eketāhuna Community Boards for the 2025-28 triennium.

***That the report from the Manager Democracy Services dated 03 December 2025 concerning the Delegations to Community Boards be received.***

***That the Council delegate the following functions to the Dannevirke and Eketāhuna Community Boards, to:***

- 1. Liaise and communicate with individuals, community organisations and special interest groups within the Board’s area of responsibility.***
- 2. Represent and advocate for the community on any issue and make submissions to any organisation relating to a matter of interest to the Board in respect to the Board’s geographical area.***
- 3. Facilitate consultation with local residents and community groups on local issues and local aspects of district issues, including input into the District Plan, Long Term Plan and Annual Plan.***
- 4. Make submissions or provide feedback on local issues and local aspects of district issues included in the District Plan, Long Term Plan and Annual Plan.***
- 5. In respect of the Long Term Plan and Annual Plan (where appropriate)***

to:

- (a) Prepare a submission to the budgetary process of Council for expenditure within the community and methods of funding.**
- (b) Identify and make recommendations on priorities for local projects and community issues.**
- 7. Participate in any relevant consultative processes within the Board's geographical area, making submissions on relevant policies that impact on the Board's geographical area.**
- 8. Make submissions to the Council on the levels of service concerning its facilities and activities provided within the Board's geographical area and maintain an oversight of their delivery.**
- 9. Advise the Council on property related matters concerning the acquisition and sale of such assets of local community significance.**
- 10. Promote the community and support its economic development.**
- 11. Fix priorities and expend funds within such budgets allocated by Council for discretionary spending, including assistance towards rates and Council related fees and charges incurred by voluntary community groups.**
- 12. Make annual disbursements to community groups from the Community Board General Assistance Grants Scheme.**
- 13. Facilitate community events and maintaining services in the Board's geographical area, including providing financial assistance to support such initiatives.**
- 14. Consider and report on all matters referred to it by Council or any issue of interest or concern to the Board and speak at Council meetings in such circumstances considered appropriate.**
- 15. Appoint a Board representative to the Road Safety Committee and Emergency Management Committee (Welfare Response).**
- 16. Appoint Board representatives to local community groups.**
- 17. Appoint the Board's Chairperson as a member to the Civic Honours selection panel.**
- 18. Authorise the Board's Chairperson (or their nominee) to be the spokesperson for the Board in all matters within its jurisdiction or of particular interest.**
- 19. Advise the Council in advance of considering any actions resulting from**

*exercising its powers, authorities or functions that may have potential implications for the Council.*

20. *Maintain the development, knowledge and skills of board members through attendance at appropriate conferences, courses and training seminars within the budget funding available for this purpose.*

*Crs Wallace/Corlett*

*Carried*

10.7 **Requests for Information under the Local Government Official Information and Meetings Act 1987**

The Tararua District Council considered the report of the Manager – Democracy Services dated 2 December 2025 that provided information on the requests for information received under the Local Government Official Information and Meetings Act 1987.

*That the report from the Manager - Democracy Services dated 02 December 2025 concerning the Requests for Information under the Local Government Official Information and Meetings Act 1987 be received.*

*Crs Wards/Naylor*

*Carried*

12. **Correspondence**

Nil

13. **Portfolio Report - Rural**

*That the report from the Deputy Mayor dated 11 December 2025 concerning the Portfolio Report - Rural be received.*

*Crs Wards/Corlett*

*Carried*

14. **Other Portfolio Reports**

- 14.1 **Communications and Consultation Portfolio** – Councillor Naylor advised that Councillor Amboy and himself had received a report from the Group Manager – Strategy and Information outlining the results of the communications survey undertaken last year. He noted that this provided them with useful insights. He spoke about an event he attended in the weekend, where a ratepayer expressed concern that they hadn't seen any communications or publicity about the recent election. However, the person lived rurally and did not have a letterbox, so was not receiving the local newspaper. Their portfolio will be looking into solutions for the rural area.

- 14.2 **Marae, Kura Kaupapa Māori and Kohanga Reo Portfolio** – Councillor Te Waaka reported that Councillor Peeti-Webber and herself attended Te Maruata, a Local Government New Zealand committee of Māori elected members. She spoke

about the inspiration from meeting with like-minded people in local government, and it was good to have that support. She spoke about her attendance at a kaupapa at Kaitoke Marae, where she met potential candidates for the Ikaroa-Rawhiti Māori seat electorate for the next general election. Her aim was to establish good relationships with all candidates for that seat, and will be organising a youth hui to meet with candidates in the future.

- 14.3 **Youth Portfolio** – Councillor Te Waaka spoke about a hui held with Tararua Community Youth Services. The hui involved community groups and organisations from across the district, and it highlighted the need for the various youth services to come together to network and share with each other. She advised that she had been invited to speak at the Pahiatua school leavers dinner. Councillor Amboy spoke her attendance at the Young Elected Members hui in Wellington, organised by Local Government New Zealand. She spoke about this being an insightful event where she met many young elected members from across the country. They will be seeing what they can do to collaborate in the future.
- 14.4 **Pongaroa** – Councillor Wards spoke about her attendance at a working bee organised by the Pongaroa Way to Go committee at the Four Mile Bush reserve, which is a popular freedom camping area. She noted that the previous Council had received presentations from communities about maintenance of reserves, and this was a good example of a community taking responsibility to maintain and upgrade the space.
- 14.5 **Christmas Parades** – Councillor Wallace spoke about his attendance at the Dannevirke Christmas Parade. He congratulated the Lions Club and the Chamber of Commerce on the arrangements. The Mayor noted he was privileged to attend each of the Christmas parades held throughout the district and it was a great way to celebrate the community.

## 15. **Mayoral Update**

The Mayor provided an update to his written report on events attended. He noted that since providing his report, he attended the 60<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the Norsewood Pioneer Museum and also the Woodville school prize giving.

Councillor Wards spoke about the recent citizenship ceremonies held in Dannevirke and Pahiatua which were a fantastic celebration for the new citizens. She acknowledged the work of officers in making the arrangements and the councillors for their support.

***That the report from the Mayor dated 11 December 2025 concerning the Mayoral Update be received.***

***Mayor Gilmore/Cr Wallace***

***Carried***

## 16. Items not on the Agenda

It was noted that the late item of business would be considered in the public excluded session of Council.

## 17. Public Excluded Items of Business

*That the public be excluded from the following parts of the proceedings of this meeting, namely:*

*All of Government Electricity Procurement - Delegation to enter contract*

*Amendment to Delegation of Authority to negotiate Memorandum of Agreement for land purchase - 33 York Street, Dannevirke*

*Late item of business – Recruitment of Chief Executive*

*The general subject of each matter to be considered while the public is excluded, the reason for passing this resolution in relation to each 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 follows.*

<i>General subject matter to be considered</i>	<i>Reason for passing this resolution in relation to each matter</i>	<i>Ground(s) under section 48(1) for the passing of this resolution</i>
<i>Amendment to Delegation of Authority to negotiate Memorandum of Agreement for land purchase - 33 York Street, Dannevirke</i>	<i>To protect commercial and industrial negotiations</i>	<i>&lt;Section (1)(a)(i)</i>
<i>All of Government Electricity Procurement - Delegation to enter contract</i>	<i>To protect commercial activities</i>	<i>&lt;Section (1)(a)(i)</i>
<i>Recruitment of Chief Executive</i>	<i>To protect the privacy of natural persons</i>	<i>&lt;Section (1)(a)(i)</i>

*This resolution is made in reliance on Section 48 (1) (a) 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 Section 6 or Section 7 or Section 9 of the Official Information Act 1982, as the case may require, which would be prejudiced by the holding of the whole or the relevant part of the proceedings of the meeting in public are as follows:*

*S7(2)(a) The withholding of the information is necessary to protect the*

*privacy of natural persons, including that of a deceased natural person*

**s7(2)(h)** *The withholding of the information is necessary to enable the local authority to carry out, without prejudice or disadvantage, commercial activities.*

**s7(2)(i)** *The withholding of the information is necessary to enable the local authority to carry on, without prejudice or disadvantage, negotiations (including commercial and industrial negotiations).*

**Crs Corlett/Peeti-Webber**

**Carried**

The meeting went into public excluded session at 11:36am and resumed open session at 11:57am.

There being no further business the Mayor thanked those present for their attendance and contributions, and the meeting closed at 11:57am.



## **Dannevirke Community Board**

Minutes of a meeting of the Dannevirke Community Board held in the Council Chamber, 156 High Street, Dannevirke on Monday 15 December 2025 commencing at 9:00 am.

### **1. Present**

Board Members: N M Phillips (Chairperson), T J Hynes (Deputy Chairperson), E J Christison, R T Wallace and Cr A J Amboy

#### **In Attendance**

Mayor S M Gilmore  
Deputy Mayor S M Wards

Mr M Alexander – Chief Executive  
Mrs A Dunn – Manager – Democracy Services  
Mrs S Anthony – Democracy Support Officer

### **2. Apologies**

Nil

### **3. Public Forum**

Nil

### **4. Declaration by Member**

Board member Cr Alison Amboy made and attested her declaration pursuant to Schedule 7 Clause 14 of the Local Government Act 2002, with the declaration witnessed by Chairperson Nicola Phillips.

**5. Notification of Items Not on the Agenda**

Break ins at Community Gardens

Portfolio reports for this meeting

Manawatu Gorge Closure

Umutaoroa Domain

Lower Domain and Deer Park

Easton Street

Fire Hazard properties

Easton Fountain Upper Domain

**6. Declarations of Conflicts of Interest in Relation to this Meeting's Items of Business**

Nil

**7. Confirmation of Minutes**

*That the minutes of the Dannevirke Community Board meeting held on 17 November 2025 (as circulated) be confirmed as a true and accurate record of the meeting.*

*Christison/Hynes*

*Carried*

**8. Tararua District Council Report**

**8.1 Report from Tararua District Council**

The Dannevirke Community Board considered the report from the Tararua District Council meetings held 12 November 2025 and 26 November 2025.

A question was raised about the possibility of assigning Community Board representation on the Regional Transport Committee and the Civil Defence and Emergency Management Committee. It was advised that these are statutory regional committees, which differ from internal committees. The Mayor attends by statute and is confirmed by Council, and Cr Peter Naylor has also been appointed as the Council representative to the Regional Transport Committee for the Tararua District, and Board members were encouraged to connect with Cr Naylor for further discussion.

*That the report from the Tararua District Council meeting held 12 November*

***2025 and 26 November 2025 be received.***

***Christison/Amboy***

***Carried***

## **9. Reports**

### **9.1 Code of Conduct for Elected Members**

The Dannevirke Community Board considered the report of the Democracy Support Officer dated 21 November 2025 that presented an updated Code of Conduct, as adopted by the Tararua District Council at its meeting held on 12 November 2025, for consideration and adoption.

The Manager – Democracy Services advised members that the purpose of the Code of Conduct was to set out agreed values, understandings and expectations about the manner in which members of the Community Board conduct themselves, while acting in their capacity as Board members. She noted that the Code of Conduct sets out the agreed standards of behaviour between members, members and staff, and member of the public. It contains guidelines for dealing with media and social media, and how information, including confidential information will be handled.

She advised that under the Local Government (System Improvements) Amendment Bill, there was a proposal for the Secretary for Local Government to issue a standardise code of conduct that would be binding on all Councils and Community Board members.

***That the report from the Democracy Support Officer dated 21 November 2025 concerning the Code of Conduct for Elected Members be received.***

***Hynes/Phillips***

***Carried***

***That the Dannevirke Community Board adopts the Code of Conduct for Elected Members, as adopted by the Tararua District Council at its meeting held 12 November 2025.***

***Phillips/Hynes***

***Carried***

### **9.2 Adoption of Meeting Schedule for 2026**

The Dannevirke Community Board considered the report of the Manager - Democracy Services dated 24 November 2025 that sought confirmation of the meeting dates for Dannevirke Community Board meetings to be held during the 2026 calendar year, in accordance with Schedule 7, Clause 19(6) of the Local Government Act 2002.

It was noted that, following discussions with the Board and the Mayor, the proposed first formal meeting date for 2026 of Monday 16 March 2026 was considered too far away. The Board agreed to amend the resolution and hold an

informal meeting on Tuesday 20 January 2026 as Monday 19 January 2026 is a public holiday. Formal meetings will then be scheduled bi-monthly, starting Monday 16 February 2026, except for December, when the meeting will be held on the second Monday 14 December 2026, due to the third week falling on a non-working day as outlined in the Local Government Official Information and Meetings Act 1987.

The Board proposed holding informal meetings in the Dannevirke Council Chamber, with the intention of inviting the public to attend. Members were reminded to avoid creating a quasi-formal meeting and to focus on process-related discussions and driving improvement for Dannevirke and surrounding areas; decision-making must occur only at formal meetings. The Mayor indicated willingness to attend informal meetings if invited and subject to availability.

***That the report from the Manager Democracy Services dated 24 November 2025 concerning the Adoption of Meeting Schedule for 2026 be received.***

***Christison/Amboy***

***Carried***

***That the Dannevirke Community Board adopts the following schedule of meetings for the 2026 calendar year, noting the meetings will be held at the Council Chambers, 156 High Street Dannevirke, and will start at 09:00am:***

***16 February 2026***

***20 April 2026***

***15 June 2026***

***17 August 2026***

***19 October 2026***

***14 December 2026***

***Christison/Hynes***

***Carried***

***That the Dannevirke Community Board note that informal sessions of the Board will be held on the months between their formal meetings, being January, March, May, July, September, and November 2026 at 09:00am held in the Dannevirke Council Chambers, 156 High Street Dannevirke.***

***Christison/Amboy***

***Carried***

## **10. Reports from Board Representatives Appointed to Organisations and Assigned Responsibilities**

It was advised that Council is expected to make decisions on delegations to

Community Boards this Wednesday. The Board was encouraged to engage with community groups and, during informal meetings, discuss the allocation of portfolios among members. It was noted that representation reports are highly valuable for keeping the Mayor and Councillors informed about community concerns and achievements. Board members Hynes and Christison expressed interest in representing the Board on the Road Safety and Emergency Management Committees.

## **11. Correspondence**

### **11.1 Correspondence**

*That the correspondence as listed be received.*

☐ *Letter of thanks to Scanpower from Dannevirke Community Board*

☐ *Letter of thanks to Dannevirke Pharmacy from Dannevirke Community Board*

*Christison/Amboy*

*Carried*

## **12. Discussion Items**

**Date for Dannevirke Market Day** – The Board agreed to move the Dannevirke Market Day from October to the first Saturday in March, which will be 7 March 2026. This change aims to encourage greater community participation and improve the likelihood of better weather conditions.

*That the Dannevirke Community Board hold the next Dannevirke Market Day on Monday 7 March 2026.*

*Wallace/Christison*

*Carried*

**High Street Footpaths** - A request was made for the maintenance schedule for High Street footpaths, where weeds are growing through areas where water blasting has removed grout, resulting in an untidy appearance. It was requested that further details be included in the next Management Report. Additionally, information on repair work required for broken railings along High Street was also requested for inclusion in the report.

**Government changes to Regional Councils** – - An update was requested on the timeframes for the Government's recent proposal to simplify local government. It was advised that this is currently a proposal, not legislated, and remains in the consultation phase, so specific timeframes are not yet confirmed. Government intends to implement the legislation by 2029, with an expectation that Councils begin making changes by 2027.

The Board was encouraged to make a submission. Council will also submit

feedback, with submissions closing in February 2026. Following this, Government will begin drafting legislation.

**Government's proposal for Rates Capping** - An update was requested and it was advised that this represents a significant change for Tararua District Council, who will need to refocus and consider how to improve efficiency, taking into account the Systems Improvement Bill. Council will be limited in what can be delivered and will need to adapt operations. Community consultation on levels of service will occur through the Long Term Plan process. Affordability for the community remains a key consideration with a focus on infrastructure.

**TDC rates direct debit error** - - It was noted that some members of the public had raised concerns with Board members regarding penalties on their rates, which they felt were unjust. Further context is required to determine whether these cases relate to the recent rates direct debit error. Affected community members are advised to contact Council staff directly, as individual matters cannot be debated in a public forum. It was also advised that the resolution process for the direct debit error is nearly complete, with only a small number of cases remaining.

**Earthquake strengthening update** - Legislative changes have not yet been passed by Government, so no update is available at this stage.

**Carnegie Building** - It was advised that the update on the Carnegie Building is dependent on proposed legislative changes and cannot inform until regulations and standards are finalised.

**Mowing/Cleaning (Stanley Street/Cemeteries/Toilets)** - A concern was raised regarding unmaintained areas. It was advised that TDC has faced recent district-wide challenges, and service levels are still being restored, with the team working hard to catch up. The expectations and standards for contractors remain consistent. Board members were encouraged to submit CRMs for any issues identified. It was requested that these concerns be included in the next management report.

**Signs need repairing** - Concerns were raised regarding the poor workmanship on Stanley Street signs. Three signs were recently vandalised, and the subsequent repairs were noted as substandard. The community have offered assistance with repairs. It was recommended that this issue be included in the next management report.

### 13. Chairperson's Remarks

The Chair noted that the Board was gaining good momentum in the short time since the election and is progressing well with developing a strategic plan for discussion at the Board's first informal meeting in January.

## 14. Items not on the Agenda

**Break ins at Community Gardens** – The Board reported there have been multiple break ins and plant theft at the Dannevirke Community Gardens. They are making changes to improve security and would benefit from CCTV.

**Portfolio reports for this meeting** – This topic was discussed at item 10.

**Manawatu Gorge Closure** – While acknowledging the Gorge as a significant feature of the Tararua District, it remains under NZTA control as a State Highway. The revocation process is still underway. There are considerable risks and costs associated with converting the old road into a recreational walkway or cycleway, and budget constraints must be considered. The Mayor expressed strong support for preserving this area as a community asset and will engage in discussions with NZTA and other local Mayors regarding future possibilities.

**Umutaoroa Domain** – it was requested that the health and safety concerns yet to be addressed at the Domain be included in the next management report. It was noted that requests have been submitted to TDC.

**Lower Domain and Deer Park** – A concern was raised regarding the untidy appearance of the lower domain, aviary, and lake, as well as questions about whether the deer will be removed from the Deer Park. Additionally, the perimeter fence requires maintenance. An update on these matters was requested for inclusion in the next management report.

**Easton Street** – Board member Christison advised that multiple requests have been received regarding the untidiness of the street, noting that this issue has been on the agenda for over 12 months with no improvement. The Mayor undertook to seek further information to gain insight and provide an update to the Board.

**Fire Hazard properties** – A query was raised regarding whether Council has a policy to identify and manage fire hazards on overgrown sections and roadsides. It was advised that concerns on private land fall under FENZ, and TDC has very limited ability to enforce these matters. The Mayor noted he would look into fire hazard concerns around waterways that cross multiple properties, as ownership needs to be clarified and any risks to the network assessed. Enforcement in these cases is challenging.

**Easton Fountain Upper Domain** – it was noted that the fountain has been a concern for the community for some time, however members of the community have advised that it is salvageable and are willing to look into refurbishment, while acknowledging there are technical aspects to navigate. It was agreed that the Dannevirke Community Board adopt the restoration of the Easton Fountain.

***That the Dannevirke Community Board adopt the restoration of the Upper Domain Easton Fountain as a Dannevirke Community Board Project.***

***Hynes/Christison***

***Carried***

There being no further business the Chairperson thanked those present for their attendance and contributions, and declared the meeting closed at 10:35am.



**Minutes of the Explore Pahiatua Incorporated Society meeting held at the Tararua District Council Service Centre, 136 Main Street, Pahiatua on 3 December 2025 at 7pm**

**1. Present**

1.1. Committee Members: Raylene Tredder (Chair), James Devoe (Treasurer), Georgina Morrison (Secretary), Ingrid de Graaf, Anaissa Mandal, Bex Brown

1.2. Tararua District Council Representatives: Mayor Scott Gilmore, Cr Elisabeth

Kennedy

1.3. Public attendees: Debs

**2. Apologies**

2.1 Nil

**3. Conflicts of Interest**

3.1 Nil

**4. Notification of Items not on the agenda / General Business**

4.1 Nil

**5. Confirmation of Minutes**

**That the minutes of the Explore Pahiatua meeting held Wednesday, 5 November 2025 (as circulated) be confirmed as a true and accurate record of the meeting.**

**Carried**

**6. Matters Arising**

6.1 Footprints - Walkway of Fame. Have only received the two quotes. James will be in contact with both to clarify the specifics and contract the most appropriate on behalf of the Committee.

6.2 Mangatainoka Friends of the Cemetery were happy with the grant.

6.3 No response from Peter Whimsett re security cameras. Raylene/Mayor Gilmore to follow up.

6.4 Georgina has created a Google Drive.

ACTION: Georgina to ask members for Gmail addresses to allow access to the drive.

ACTION: George to create and circulate a new Conflict of Interest Register to sit in the drive.

## 7. Correspondence

### Inwards

- i. Robert Smith: Mowing services
- ii. Steven Marshall: Seeking Funding sources information
- iii. Emma Elliot: Mural opening @ Community Garden
- iv. Mike Butterick: Availability to meet the Public
- v. St John: AED Product Correction Notification
- vi. Ceri Tredler: Aon - Insurance Policy
- vii. Stephanie Whyte: Christmas Parade Info
- viii. TDC
  1. Simone Anthony: Jared Gardner (Meeting speaking request)
  2. Simone Anthony: Request for Meeting Minutes
- ix. Buy a Block - Feilding 60's Up Movement - Bronze block
- x. Funding Requests - St Johns re Health Shuttle
- xi. Invoices
  1. Robert Smith: Toki Mows
  2. Ceri Tredler: Aon - Insurance
  3. Stephanie Whyte: St Anthony Road Patrol Treat

### Outwards

- i. Georgina Morrison - Simone Anthony re Minutes
- ii. Georgina Morrison - Jared Gardner re Meeting speaking request
- iii. Georgina Morrison - Melody Lawrence re Court Support request
- iv. Georgina Morrison - Help n' Hand; Invite to speak at Dec Meeting
- v. Georgina Morrison - Steven Marshall: Re Funding Information request

7.1 Items Arising - Nil

ACTION: Georgina to create list of successful grant recipients from the 2025 year.

**That the inwards be received and outwards noted.**

**Carried**

## 8. Council Report - Cr Kennedy & Mayor Gilmore

- Council is still in recruitment for the CE- there will be a handover through to March
- Portfolios have been assigned. Cr Kennedy assigned to Explore Pahiatua.
- Central Government decisions affecting Council. The System Improvement Bill will redefine what District Council can and can't do. The Simplifying Local Government means Regional Councils will be redefined. Proposed rates caps won't come in until 2029. Resource Management Act proposals are due in coming weeks.

- The service agreement has been forwarded to Sandy who agreed it needed a refresh. Council will look to come up with a draft. It was clarified Pahiataua Information Centre reporting only requires their reporting to go straight to Council and they will be advised of this.

Mayor Gilmore wished the Committee a Merry Christmas and thanked Committee members for their work.

ACTION: Georgina to add Cr Kennedy to the distribution list.

## 9. Financial Report James Devoe

### 9.1 Current status

- The balance of the main account is \$ 233,119.84 (including term deposit \$135,921.36).
- The balance of the Business Group account is \$184.76

9.2 Invoices to be approved for payment on 20 December & 9.3 Invoices since last meeting for retrospective approval:

Invoice to be approved for payment on DEC 20th.	
	AMOUNT
Bush Tele	\$538.84
Murray contractors	\$156.00
Explore Christmas Photography	\$750.00
Mitre 10	\$174.03
BUSH Multi Quiz	\$50.00
Lawnmowing for Polish memorial	\$400.00
	\$2,068.87

Invoices since last meeting for retrospective approval:		
INV#	Description	AMOUNT
	Explore Christmas mural reveal emma reimbursement	\$1,868.88
		\$188.75
		\$2,057.63

9.4 Tagged funds - James spoke to these and will send through the table.

Tagged Funds				
Harvard Playground				\$20,000.00
Carnival Park (originally \$9,289.33 but reduced by invoices/charges; reflects \$2,708.33 received for weed management share)				\$3,212.16
Bush Telegraph Advertising				\$4,731.64
Community Garden remaining infrastructure works				\$1,556.75
Lawnmowing for Polish memorial (until Nov 2025)				
Discretionary funding (originally \$7,507 but reduced by allocations)				\$7,619.75
Meeting fees/7 members yearly				\$12,150.00
Civil Defence Group – funds for generator plug for Bush Multisports Park				\$15,000.00
Explore Christmas				\$5,032.85
Dog Park maintenances				\$2,000.00
			Total	\$71,303.15

There is a \$137 shortfall for the quiz that the Committee approved to cover.

**That the financial report from James Devoe (Treasurer) for the preceding month be received and that identified invoices are approved for payment.**

**Carried**

### **11. Grant Application - St Johns**

Raylene approached the Bush Charitable Trust to cover this and this grant was approved by that Committee and therefore they no longer require this from Explore.

### **12. Insurance**

Our new cover means we've got a refund from the previous policy as it covers events but we need to notify them when we are running events.

### **13. Roles and Responsibilities**

No suggestions or changes.

ACTION: Georgina to note these have been reviewed in Dec 2025

#### **14. Portfolio Reports**

##### **Pahiataua Districts Business Group (PDBG) (Ingrid de Graaf)**

- PDBG Social Quiz was a huge success! 9 teams, lots of fun, a great night. A huge thanks to Bexx Brown for the quiz questions and helping to organise the venue, Raylene Treder for helping to mark the questions, Sarah Polglase-Wills on the bar, Clint Worthington as emcee and Ruby Cole and Ayla Bisset for running papers and helping to clean up.
  - Events in the pipeline for next year:
    - Civil Defence for businesses with Georgina Morrison
    - Side hustles
    - Collaboration with TDC (just an idea, not investigated yet)
- Need to reset the budget in January next year

##### **Explore Pahiataua Marketing (Ingrid de Graaf & Anaissa)**

- Facebook has focussed on Explore Christmas and the PDBG quiz
- November Bush Tele - 24 Nov - Explore Christmas main poster
- December Bush Tele - 15 Dec - Explore Christmas debrief
- Anaissa working on a Civil Defence advert
- Ingrid to post regarding the stage on Facebook this week

##### **Explore Christmas (Ingrid de Graaf)**

- A meeting was held today which will be our last meeting before the event:
  - Elf Land is nearly organised - just need to complete the volunteer schedule
  - 27 stalls registered
  - 8 food trucks registered
  - 12 registered for parade so far but need to keep pushing the pre-registrations
  - Road closure is sorted
  - Window competition judging is underway - a few less entries than usual, only 7
  - Concert is nearly confirmed but need to see if Tararua College Kapa Haka are in?
  - Santa is organised
  - Facebook teasers to roll out this week
  - Decoration of town centre to begin on Wednesday, 3rd December

##### **Community Garden (Emma Elliot)**

- None received

##### **Swimming Pool (Raylene Treder)**

- QS provided estimates which were not aligned with the current market and pricing expectations. Council have had to enter into a redesign and value engineering phase with

architects and main contractor HMC. Currently revising costings. Hoping to have these finalised by 12th December 2025.

**Road Safety Committee** (Raylene Tredler)

- Nothing to report - no meeting held.

**Civil Defence** (Georgina Morrison)

- Attended Regional Civil Defence Meeting
- Meeting with Schools & Go Bus - Brent Tomlinson
- Listening to [Under the Weather podcasts](#) from Post Cyclone Gabrielle - well worth a listen if you're into podcasts but a warning that they're super rough to listen to. There is so much valuable learning in them though!

**Harvard Playground Upgrade** (James Devoe)

- Awaiting playground report

**Stage**

- Ingrid to put up Facebook post this week
- Stage unpacked and erected in the stadium by James in the weekend for Explore Committee members to have a look at.
- Put in a price structure after 6 months. Current booking which Committee agreed to \$200

**Cycleway project** (Ingrid de Graaf)

- No progress due to focus on Explore Christmas - have contacted Gerry Parker regarding catching up with him but not heard back.
- Still need to look into land titles.

**Youth** (Raylene)

- Raylene attended an inaugural Tararua Youth Network meeting. Raylene noted it was good to hear what others are doing in this space. Discussed barriers, needs and so on. Some discussion of trying to bring students from the College into the youth group in the future. They're really interested in the marae programme and learning.

**Carnival Park** (Karolyn)

- No report received

**Swimming Baths** (Karolyn Donald)

- No report received

**Next meeting date:** 8.20pm 4th February 2026 at Tararua District Council Service Centre, 136 Main Street, Pahiataua.

Noted that there is no January meeting and that a Thank Event will be held in February with

Members of the Society invited.

Meeting closed at 8.32pm.

Raylene Tredler (Chair): \_\_\_\_\_



**Minutes of the Explore Pahiatua Incorporated Society meeting held at the Tararua District Council Service Centre, 136 Main Street, Pahiatua on 5 February 2026 at 7pm**

**1. Present**

1.1 Committee Members: Raylene Tredder (Chair), James Devoe (Treasurer), Georgina Morrison (Secretary), Ingrid de Graaf and Anaissa Mandal

1.2 Tararua District Council Representatives: Cr Elisabeth Kennedy

1.3 Public attendees: Nil

**2. Apologies**

2.1 Bex Brown, Mayor Scott Gilmore

**3. Conflicts of Interest**

3.1 Nil

**Action:** All Committee Members to fill in Conflict of Interest Tab in Meeting documents

**4. Notification of Items not on the agenda / General Business**

4.1 Explore Service Agreement

**5. Confirmation of Minutes**

**That the minutes of the Explore Pahiatua meeting held on Wednesday, 3 December 2025 (as circulated) be confirmed as a true and accurate record of the meeting.**

**Carried**

**6. Matters Arising**

6.1 Note that under Public Attendance the full name is Debs McKay

6.2 Pavers will be completed by the end of the month

6.3 An assessment will be carried out for the placement of CCTV cameras in Pahiatua CBD which will enable Explore to apply for funding.

**7. Correspondence**

## **Inwards**

7.1 Items Arising - Tararua Sports Awards normally has the Chairs of the Community Group however given Raylene's COIBex will represent Explore.

**Action:** Georgina to continue to liaise with the Displaced Persons group.

**That the inwards be received and outwards noted.**

**Carried**

## **8. Council Report**

- Submitted report from Cr Kennedy: Corin Haines has been appointed as CE and will start 1<sup>st</sup> March! He will be moving to Dannevirke - which I think is fantastic for the community as it shows the dedication he is going to have towards Tararua! He comes from Masterton District Council as a Group Manager - but he has held a range of leadership roles but importantly a sense of humour - which I think is going to be needed during the change due for Tararua in the next few years! (With the Water CCO and Government reforms for local councils.). On the 29th and 30th January, the elected members, senior council management and the interim CE and newly appointment CE, had a strategic retreat at the Woodville bowling club. Where we all shared our values, goals and priorities going forward for the council. It was a brilliant way to build our working relationships, for the positive future of Tararua. Some of the team also had the opportunity to demonstrate their sharp skills on the bowling green!
- Other updates:
  - The Polish Deputy Prime Minister may be visiting Pahiatua on Feb 20th to visit the marae & Polish Memorial, however, this is unconfirmed.
  - Tararua Alliance Meeting noted there is a new priority to address water leaks so that the risk of Pahiatua not having water is avoided.
  - The Councillors present welcome feedback from the Community on infrastructure projects

**Action:** Georgina to add Chris and Peter to distribution list

## **9. Financial Report James Devoe**

### **9.1 Current status**

- The balance of the main account is \$77,867.93
- The balance of the Business Group account is \$20
- The balance of the Term Deposit is \$136,800.12

9.2 Invoices to be approved for payment & 9.3 Invoices since last meeting for retrospective approval:

<b>Invoice to be approved for payment on DEC 20th.</b>	
	AMOUNT
Mitre 10	\$117.85
Bush Multisports	\$845.25
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$963.10</b>

9.4 Tagged funds

<b>Tagged Funds</b>	
Harvard Playground	\$20,000.00
Carnival Park (originally \$9,289.33 but reduced by invoices/charges; reflects \$2,708.33 received for weed management share)	\$3,212.16
Bush Telegraph Advertising	\$4,192.80
Community Garden remaining infrastructure works	\$1,055.51
Lawnmowing for Polish memorial (until Nov 2025)	
Discretionary funding (originally \$7,507 but reduced by allocations)	\$7,619.75
Meeting fees/7 members yearly 2026	\$12,150.00
Civil Defence Group – funds for generator plug for Bush Multisports Park	\$15,000.00
Explore Christmas	\$10,000.00
Dog Park maintenances	\$2,000.00
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$75,230.22</b>

- Ingrid asked for an increase to the Business Group up to \$2,000.
- Discussion about reducing Christmas given the purchase of the stage. Suggestion to look at the previous budget to see what needs to be prioritised.

**Decision:** The Committee agreed to tagged funds for the Business Group of \$1,500.

**Action:** James to add tagged funding lines for \$10,000 for Swimming Pool & Business Group.

**Action:** Raylene to organise an invoice from Bush Aquatic Trust for the \$10,000

**That the financial report from James Devoe (Treasurer) for the preceding month be received and that identified invoices are approved for payment.**

**Carried**

## 10. Grant Application

A grant was received on the day of the meeting from The Children's Day Committee and circulated at the meeting. It was agreed in principle to fund one large item from the quoted supplied.

**Action:** Ingrid to follow up with the Committee via email.

## 11. Portfolio Reports

### Pahiatua Districts Business Group (PDBG) (Ingrid de Graaf)

- Please can I have the PDBG budget reset and an increase this year - didn't have quite enough in 2025. Also, should we align this to when we receive our grant from TDC each year? Should it be a percentage of this amount?
- 2025 was a great year for the PDBG, looking to maintain the momentum
- First event - Civil Defence in Business - planned for early March

### Explore Pahiatua Marketing (Ingrid de Graaf & Anaisa)

- I have a stack of the Community Plans which Ali Romanos gave me after I asked for them for Explore Christmas - what do we want to do with them?
- I have (pending approval by committee) offered our February Bush Tele ½ page to Children's Day and booked this for Monday, 16 February (copy to come).

#### Facebook

- Over December 2025 - Pahiatua Crafter's group at Old Courthouse asked for help to look for their custodian. That was sorted and posted early January 2026
- Reposted the Tararua Sports Awards on our Explore page for nomination entries (end of January 2026)

### Explore Christmas (Ingrid de Graaf)

- I'm keen to hand over this portfolio - I've done it a number of years but am keen to step back and enjoy it again with my kids. I am happy to do a full hand-over and even attend meetings to answer questions and give guidance but don't want any jobs!
- Should we get the bunting in now? (I have the rest at work)
- Last year's event came in at 10,256.98 inc GST.
- One final job to do - type up and upload notes of debrief meeting
- **Action:** Bex to take over portfolio from Ingrid

#### **Swimming Pool** (Raylene Treder)

- Updated timeline:
- February 2026 - Building Consent, contract negotiation and finalisation.
- March 2026 Delivery and Construction
- December 2026 Project closure and handover.
- Comms have been posted on facebook with an update of progress.

#### **Road Safety Committee** (Raylene Treder)

- First meeting to be held Monday 3rd March 2026 - can a committee member please attend or link in via teams to these meetings which will be held quarterly, as I'm unavailable Monday mornings due to work commitments.
- **Action:** Ingrid to attend this meeting for Raylene

#### **Civil Defence** (Georgina Morrison)

- Generator delivered to stadium 4th February by Tim Sorenson.
- Georgina setting up meetings
- **Action:** Georgina & Raylene to test what it will do & same with the marae

#### **Harvard Playground Upgrade** (James Devoe)

- as expected, is a few bits n pieces to upgrade to comply, worn parts to replace etc. (hence parts I've ordered & planned repairs)...
- mentioned the larger future issues (which we already knew about) we will need to plan to sort out (i.e. budget for) in next couple years including.
  - Need to completely dig out all the old bark and completely replace it all (vs last year's temporary fix of 'topping-up' bark)
  - Will eventually need to completely replace the 'Eagles Nest' ropework (vs repairs needed which were id in report) as is 'end of life' (I'd recently obtained a quote (even though currently not budgeted for) and is near enough to \$50k)
  - The old large horizontal swing does need a safety surface installed (and some other modifications) to comply
  - Some additional barriers are required at upper/launch end of flying fox
  - And as you're aware neither the 'monorail' (basically worn out) or the 'swinging seats' (frame has 'entrapment' areas) comply so will be good to continue to investigate replacing these pieces of equipment with you & team.
- ❖ Above is from Council, I am working to get another quote for replacing the old play equipment.

#### **Stage** (James)

- Please tentatively book the stage for Children's Day on Sunday, 1st March - no cost.
- Need to have a conversation to confirm the process and payments/vouchers for setup.

#### **Cycleway project** (Ingrid de Graaf)

- I have contacted Gerry Parker again to ask to speak with him regarding his knowledge (and where things got to) but he hasn't got back to me yet, I will try ringing him instead.
- Need to decide next steps:
  - Have a planning session with a small group? OR
  - Call a larger meeting with all of those who expressed interest?

**Youth** (Raylene)

- Attended two Tararua Youth Network hui's led by Tararua Community Services. Following from the previous meeting Leah from Tararua Youth Services developed a summary document outlining the key issues and needs raised.
- To take this work a step further, Sport Manawātū, alongside Dantayne - Diversity, Equity and Inclusion Advisor, has offered to deliver a series of youth focus sessions and a survey to be shared with rangatahi across the Tararua District. While Sport Manawātū is supporting this mahi, the survey and focus sessions are not sport-specific and will focus broadly on the wellbeing, needs, and aspirations of young people.
- This will allow us to better understand what rangatahi would like to see in their community. There is little value in developing a plan without the voices of our young people being heard.
- Sport Manawātū, alongside Leah from Tararua Community Services and Jarnan from Ngāti Kahungunu who have offered to assist. They will be visiting schools and engaging with young people, including those who are no longer attending school.

**Dog Park** (Raylene)

- Needs lime on the entrance.

No report received:

**Carnival Park** (Karolyn)

**Swimming Baths** (Karolyn Donald)

**Community Garden** (Emma Elliot)

**Action:** George to check in with Emma re Community Garden reports. Raz to talk to Karolyn.

**12. Social Meeting** - move to Mid March. To be discussed at the March Explore meeting.

**13. TDC & Explore Service Agreement**

**Action:** Georgina to check with Sandy Lowe's progress so far and bring back to the Committee for input.

**Next meeting date:** 7.00pm 4th March 2026 at Tararua District Council Service Centre, 136 Main Street, Pahiataua.

Meeting closed at 8.09pm.

Raylene Tredder (Chair): \_\_\_\_\_

# Action List

**Action for All Committee Members**

Committee Members to fill in Conflict of Interest Tab in Meeting documents

**Actions for Georgina**

Georgina to continue to liaise with the Displaced Persons group.

Georgina to add Chris and Peter to distribution list

Georgina & Raylene to test what it will do & same with the marae

George to check in with Emma re Community Garden reports. Raz to talk to Karolyn.

Georgina to check with Sandy Lowe's progress so far and bring back to the Committee for input.

**Actions for Raylene**

Raylene to organise an invoice from Bush Aquatic Trust for the \$10,000

Georgina & Raylene to test what it will do & same with the marae

**Actions for James**

James to add tagged funding lines for \$10,000 for Swimming Pool & Business Group.

**Actions for Ingrid**

Ingrid to follow up with the Committee via email re Children's Day grant

Ingrid to attend the Road Safety meeting for Raylene

**Decisions**

The Committee agreed to tagged funds for the Business Group of \$1,500.

### Decision Action Items from Minutes

Meeting Date	Topic	Decision	Action	Due Date	Assigned to	Status	Progress Notes
25-06-2025	Disposal Plans for Rationalisation of Land and Buildings	<i>That the Council pursue the disposal of the following assets:  39 Gregg Street, Dannevirke 39 Ransom Street Reserve, Dannevirke DVK Rural Bus Depot, Dannevirke Land at 16 Bengston Street, Eketāhuna That, prior to disposal, the Council inform occupiers of each property under consideration for disposal.  That the Council initiate engagement with iwi regarding the disposal of identified assets.  That the Council engage with the public regarding the disposal of identified assets.</i>	Report to Council	April 2026	GM - Operations	In Progress  Complete In progress On hold Overdue Not started	Consultation due to occur Feb/Mar '26 with a decision point to be brought back to Council in April.
30-07-2025	Reserve Management Plan - Land Status and Classification	<i>That the Council:  Confirm 25 parcels of land that will continue to be held under the Local Government Act 2002 as described in Attachment B of the Tararua District Reserve Classification report, noting the corrections required as advised by officers.  Approve public notification of the proposal to declare and classify 3 parcels of land according to their primary purpose, pursuant to section 14(2) of the Reserves Act 1977 as described in Attachment C of the Tararua District Reserve Classification report.</i>		December 2025	GM - Operations	Complete	Council approved reclassification by resolution on December 17 2025

Meeting Date	Topic	Decision	Action	Due Date	Assigned to	Status	Progress Notes
		<i>Approve the classification of 152 parcels of reserve land pursuant to section 16(1) and 16(2A) of the Reserves Act 1977, as described in Attachment D of the Tararua District Reserve Classification report</i>				<i>Complete In progress On hold Overdue Not started</i>	
		<i>Approve public notification of the proposal to reclassify 3 parcels of reserve land pursuant to section 24(2)(b) of the Reserves Act 1977, as described in Attachment E of the Tararua District Reserve Classification report.</i>					
30-07-2025	Pukaha Loan Interest	<i>That the Chief Executive be directed to provide a report to Council on the options available to recover the interest of the loan through the contestable fund</i>	To be considered through Annual Plan process	June 2026	Chief Advisor	In progress	
25-09-2025	Water Services Organisation - Wairarapa Tararua Water Draft Constitution and Shareholders' Agreement	<i>That the Tararua District Council delegate to the Chief Executive and the Council's appointed member of the Stakeholders' Forum to agree any required final, non-material changes to the Constitution and Shareholders' Agreement.</i>  <i>That the Tararua District Council request that the Chief Executive report back to Council on any changes made under this delegation</i>	Report to Council	March 2026	Mayor / Chief Executive	In progress	Will be reported once the Company Office documentation is ready for legally forming the company
12-11-2025	Remuneration of Elected Members 2025-26	<i>That the report from the Manager - Democracy Services dated 05 November 2025 concerning the Remuneration of Elected Members 2025-26 be received.</i>		November 2025	Manager - Democracy Services	Complete	Gazetted December 2025 and changes implemented.

Meeting Date	Topic	Decision	Action	Due Date	Assigned to	Status	Progress Notes										
		<p><i>That the Council recommend the following role descriptions to the Remuneration Authority for approval:</i></p> <table border="1"> <thead> <tr> <th>Role</th> <th>Position Description</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td>Deputy Mayor</td> <td>Responsible to assist and deputise for the Mayor in a range of civic, regional and national forums. Chairing of Council meetings in the absence of the Mayor. Responsible for assigned Committee Chairperson role, as well as Portfolio Lead role.</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Committee Chairperson</td> <td>Responsibility for chairing of committee meetings and efficient running of the committee. Liaison with executive officers in the preparation of the committee meeting agendas. Liaison with stakeholders appearing before the committee.</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Deputy Chairperson / Portfolio Lead</td> <td>Responsible for chairing of assigned committee meetings in absence of Committee Chairperson.</td> </tr> <tr> <td></td> <td>Responsible for leading the designated portfolio focus area, including liaison with stakeholders and officers in relation to portfolio responsibilities, and preparation of written progress</td> </tr> </tbody> </table>	Role	Position Description	Deputy Mayor	Responsible to assist and deputise for the Mayor in a range of civic, regional and national forums. Chairing of Council meetings in the absence of the Mayor. Responsible for assigned Committee Chairperson role, as well as Portfolio Lead role.	Committee Chairperson	Responsibility for chairing of committee meetings and efficient running of the committee. Liaison with executive officers in the preparation of the committee meeting agendas. Liaison with stakeholders appearing before the committee.	Deputy Chairperson / Portfolio Lead	Responsible for chairing of assigned committee meetings in absence of Committee Chairperson.		Responsible for leading the designated portfolio focus area, including liaison with stakeholders and officers in relation to portfolio responsibilities, and preparation of written progress				Complete In progress On hold Overdue Not started	
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Meeting Date	Topic	Decision	Action	Due Date	Assigned to	Status	Progress Notes																				
26-11-2025	Tararua District Plan Review: Plan Stop	<table border="1"> <tr> <td></td> <td>base remuneration</td> <td></td> <td></td> </tr> <tr> <td>Deputy Mayor</td> <td>1:45</td> <td>1</td> <td>\$63,675</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Committee Chairperson</td> <td>1:2</td> <td>3</td> <td>\$52,697</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Deputy Chairperson / Portfolio Lead</td> <td>1:1</td> <td>5</td> <td>\$48,305</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Councillor with no additional responsibilities</td> <td>1:0</td> <td>0</td> <td>\$43,914</td> </tr> </table> <p>That the report from the Planning Manager dated 12 November 2025 concerning the Tararua District Plan Review: Plan Stop be received.</p> <p>That Council notes that the Resource Management (Consenting and Other System Changes) Amendment Act 2025 has:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Suspended the requirement under section 79(1)-(4) of the Resource Management Act 1991 (the RMA) to review the District Plan every 10 years, until 31 December 2027.</li> <li>Prohibited Council from notifying any plan change to the District Plan until 31 December 2027, except where an exemption applies.</li> </ul>		base remuneration			Deputy Mayor	1:45	1	\$63,675	Committee Chairperson	1:2	3	\$52,697	Deputy Chairperson / Portfolio Lead	1:1	5	\$48,305	Councillor with no additional responsibilities	1:0	0	\$43,914	Outcome to be reported to District Growth Committee		GM Operations	In Progress	Application lodged and awaiting decision by the Minister.
	base remuneration																										
Deputy Mayor	1:45	1	\$63,675																								
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Meeting Date	Topic	Decision	Action	Due Date	Assigned to	Status	Progress Notes
		<p><i>That Council notes the Government's intent to avoid council resources being used on work that will not be compatible with the intended new resource management system.</i></p> <p><i>That Council notes the Government's intent for councils to begin implementing the new resource management system from mid-2027.</i></p> <p><i>That Council suspends its review of the District Plan, which was commenced under section 79 of the RMA.</i></p> <p><i>That Council adopts Option three to prepare and submit two separate Plan Stop exemption applications to the Minister for Approval:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><i>Plan Change One: To provide for rezoning of residential and industrial land across the four main town centres of Tararua District, including Dannevirke, Woodville, Pahiatua and Eketāhuna.</i></li> <li><i>Plan Change Two: To provide for designation plan change for our requiring authorities, including Tararua District as a local authority.</i></li> </ul>				<p><i>Complete In progress On hold Overdue Not started</i></p>	
17-12-2025	Earthquake Prone Buildings Legislation	<p>It was asked that an information session be held for the community once the Government's changes to the earthquake-prone buildings legislation is finalised.</p>	Arrange community information session		GM Operations	Not started	Awaiting finalisation of legislation

Meeting Date	Topic	Decision	Action	Due Date	Assigned to	Status	Progress Notes
17-12-2025	MW/LASS services	Request to invite representatives of the Manawatu-Whanganui Local Authorities Shared Services Ltd (MW/LASS) visit Council in the future to explain the services undertaken through the MW/LASS	Arrange visit by MW/LASS representatives		Chief Advisor	Not started	
11-02-2026	Disposal of Chemicals	Request from Infrastructure Projects Committee for information to be provided to the committee on requirements for disposal of chemicals such as brake fluid at the transfer station.	Provide information to committee	April 2026 meeting	GM Operations	Not started	
11-02-2026	Solid Waste	Request from Infrastructure Projects Committee for comparative data from former years to be included in solid waste table in management report	Provide information to committee	April 2026 meeting	GM Operations	Not started	
11-02-2026	Driveway Crossings	Request from Infrastructure Projects Committee for a report to Council on options for driveway crossings	Report to Council	Tba	GM Operations	Not started	
11-02-2026	Carnegie Building Dannevirke	Request from Infrastructure Projects Committee for an update report on the Carnegie Building in Dannevirke	Report to committee	Tba	GM Operations	Not started	
11-02-2026	Integration of Services at Woodville	Request from Infrastructure Projects Committee for an update report on the Integration of Services project at Woodville	Report to Committee	Tba	GM Operations	Not started	
18-02-2026	Complaints Register Report	Request from Community Connections Committee for a high level report to be regularly provided to the committee from the complaints register, including information such as number of complaints received, categories, and trends.	Report to committee	TBA	GM People, Capability and Customer Engagement	Not started	

Meeting Date	Topic	Decision	Action	Due Date	Assigned to	Status	Progress Notes
18-02-2026	Mowing Contract	Request from Community Connections Committee for a high level report to the next few meetings of the committee on contract audit outcomes	Report to committee	TBA	GM Operations –	Not started	
						Complete In progress On hold Overdue Not started	



## Report

Date : 19 February 2026  
To : Mayor and Councillors  
Tararua District Council  
From : Allie Dunn  
Manager - Democracy Services  
Subject : **Request for funding by Dannevirke Multisport Complex**  
Item No : **11.1**

---

### **1. Recommendation**

1.1 *That the report from the Manager - Democracy Services dated 13 February 2026 concerning the Request for funding by Dannevirke Multisport Complex be received.*

#### **AND EITHER**

1.2 *That the Tararua District Council approves the request from Dannevirke Multisport Complex for \$40,000 from the Tararua District Community Recreation Fund towards the costs associated with constructing a skatepark at the Upper Domain in Dannevirke.*

#### **OR**

1.3 *That the Tararua District Council approves the request from Dannevirke Multisport Complex for funding towards the costs associated with constructing a skatepark at the Upper Domain in Dannevirke, and grants the remainder of the balance of the fund, including accrued interest, towards this project.*

#### **OR**

1.4 *That the Tararua District Council declines the request from Dannevirke Multisport Complex for funding towards the costs associated with constructing the skatepark at the Upper Domain in Dannevirke.*

## 2. Reason for the Report

- 2.1 To present a request for funding assistance from the Dannevirke Multisport Complex towards the costs of constructing a a xxx at the Upper Domain in Dannevirke.

## 3. Background

### Community Recreation Fund

- 3.1 In 1999, the Council established through its Annual Plan the Community Recreation Fund to assist community organisations and arts and cultural groups within the district to develop significant recreation and arts and cultural facilities.
- 3.2 A copy of the policy guidelines adopted by the Council as the basis for managing that fund is attached for reference and information. Note the eligibility criteria within this fund requires the organisation applying to the fund to be able to contribute a significant proportion of the cost of the project. In the funding priority section of the criteria, it is noted “Subsidy: Clubs and organisations must contribute a minimum of 50% of the total cost of the project – which may be by means of cash or ‘in kind’. There may, at the Council’s discretion, be some flexibility with the 50% contribution requirement to not disadvantage smaller communities.”
- 3.3 Originally the sum of \$20,000 was contributed in each financial year to the fund, however as part of the Long Term Plan decision-making to reduce community grant funding, this contribution ceased.
- 3.4 The current balance of this fund is \$44,720.00.
- 3.5 Previous projects that have been granted financial assistance from this fund are as follows:

Project	Amount
Pahiatua Repertory Society (to complete the restoration and development of the Regent Theatre)	\$10,000.00
Woodville Mainstreet Committee (for completion of the Lindauer Centre)	\$6,724.53
Dannevirke Brass Band (to build a new band room)	\$15,000.00
Eketahuna Combined Sports Club (sealing of carpark)	\$8,200.00
Woodville Districts’ Vision (Lindauer Replica Studio Link project)	\$8,000.00
Woodville Swimming Pool Committee (to build a toddlers pool and family picnic area)	\$25,546.50

<b>Project</b>	<b>Amount</b>
Pahiatua Repertory Society (purchase property to develop as a workshop and provide car parking)	\$12,500.00
Pahiatua Swimming Baths Committee (erect a sun shelter over the toddlers pool)	\$1,465.00
Pukaha Mount Bruce Board (Stage 1 of their visitor centre upgrade)	\$50,000.00
Bush Multisport Trust (Stage 3 of the building pavilion development)	\$60,000.00
Bush Multisport Trust (Pahiatua community pool feasibility study)	\$20,000.00
Pahiatua Wheel Park establishment	\$50,000.00
Eketahuna Youth Trust (Eketahuna Skate Park Contribution)	\$38,000.00
Positively Woodville Inc (Woodville Skate Park)	\$50,000.00
Tararua Aquatic Community Trust (Splashpad)	\$44,720.00

#### **4. Application from Dannevirke Multisport Complex (DMCI)**

4.1 The Dannevirke Multisport Complex (DMCI), has written to formally request financial assistance through the Community Recreation Fund for the development of the Dannevirke Skate Park. They have provided the following information in their request, for consideration by Council:

4.1.1 “The proposed skate park is a significant recreation facility that will provide a safe, modern, and inclusive space for local youth, families, and visitors to participate in sport, fitness, and physical activity. The facility will be publicly accessible and free for community use, encouraging healthy lifestyles, social connection, and positive youth engagement.

4.1.2 The total estimated cost of the project is \$453,973.84, based on current concept design and costings. We are seeking a contribution of \$40,000 from the Community Recreation Fund to support construction.

4.1.3 Our community has demonstrated strong commitment to this initiative through both fundraising support and sponsorship. Confirmed funding to date includes:

- Council Better Off Funding (Skate Park Design) – \$50,000
- Community Fundraising Total – \$65,000

- Spring Swing Fundraiser – \$45,000
  - Viva Dannevegas Ball – \$13,000
  - Additional community events including walks and raffles
- 4.1.4 We are also currently preparing funding applications to the Eastern & Central Community Trust and the New Zealand Lotteries Grants Board to contribute toward the remaining project costs.
- 4.1.5 We sincerely acknowledge and appreciate Council’s support to date, including financial assistance for design, staff guidance with services, stormwater and consent processes, and facilitation of community meetings.

### **Community Benefit**

- 4.1.6 The Dannevirke Skate Park will:
- Increase opportunities for youth recreation and physical activity
  - Provide a safe and positive community gathering space
  - Support mental health and wellbeing
  - Encourage skill development and active lifestyles
  - Enhance local recreational infrastructure
- 4.1.7 This is a community-led project that reflects a clear need for improved recreational facilities within Dannevirke and the wider Tararua.
- 4.1.8 Please find attached a draft 3D concept plans and detailed project cost estimates. We would welcome the opportunity to discuss our application further and provide any additional information required.”

## **5. Considerations**

- 5.1 Attached to this report are the draft 3D concept plans and Policy for the Community Recreation Fund. The detailed project cost estimates referred to in 4.1.8 above is not attached to this report, due to commercial sensitivity of providing this breakdown. The provider has also marked that schedule as being confidential.

## **6. Financial Considerations**

- 6.1 The Tararua District Community Recreation Fund has a remaining balance of \$44,720.00.
- 6.2 Should the Council wish to make a grant from this fund towards the construction of the skatepark at the Upper Domain in Dannevirke, the Council could consider expending the entire remaining funds towards this project and close the fund.

## **7. Conclusion**

- 7.1 A request has been received from Dannevirke Multisport Complex Inc for funding towards the construction of a skatepark in Dannevirke. Their request seeks a contribution of \$40,000 from the Tararua District Community Recreation Fund.
- 7.2 The remaining balance in the fund is \$44,720. Should the Council wish to make a grant towards this project, an additional option that could be considered is to clear the remaining balance of this fund by granting the remaining balance towards the Dannevirke Skatepark Project.
- 7.3 A copy of their application and supporting information, and a copy of the Council's Policy Guidelines for use of the Community Recreation Fund, are attached.

### **Attachments**

1. [Policy - Community Recreation Fund adopted August 1999](#)
2. [1353 Dannevirke SP Developed Design P3](#)

COMMUNITY RECREATION FUND - POLICY GUIDELINES ADOPTED BY  
THE COUNCIL - MEETING 25 AUGUST, 1999

- 11.7.10 *That the policy guidelines as set out below and incorporating the above changes be adopted by the Council as the basis for managing the Community Recreation Fund.*

*Community Recreation Fund*

*This fund is to assist community organisations and arts and cultural groups within the Tararua District develop local sport, fitness and physical activity. The sole purpose is to promote the development of recreation and arts and cultural projects within local communities, that would otherwise be difficult for the local community to fund. Applications will be considered on merit and benefit to the community.*

*Facility Development*

*The Community Recreation Fund is to assist with the development of significant recreation and arts and cultural facilities.*

*Facilities may be defined as playing fields, courts, all weather surfaces, playgrounds, clubrooms, swimming pools, halls and arenas.*

*Eligibility*

*Organisations can apply for funds if they are:-*

- Legally constituted club or organisation eg: Inc.Soc, Trust etc, and*
- Operating as a non-profit club or organisation, and*
- Accessible for any member of the public to use/join, and*
- Able to contribute a significant proportion of the cost of the project, and*
- Able to account for their funds.*

*Funding Priority*

*Subsidy: Clubs and organisations must contribute a minimum of 50% of the total cost of the project – which may be by means of cash or ‘in kind’.*

*There may, at the Council’s discretion, be some flexibility with the 50% contribution requirement to not disadvantage smaller communities.*

Information to be Provided by the Applicant

To enable the Council to be able to evaluate the merits and benefits of any proposal all applicants are required to submit a detailed application containing the following information:-

1. Name and address of applying organisation and contact person.
2. Number of members in organisation.
3. Objectives of organisation.
4. Description and detailed costing of the project.
5. Amount of financial assistance being requested and details of where the remainder will come from.
6. Outline of how the project will benefit the community and when it is to take place.
7. Provide evidence of funding already available for the project and its source.

All applications must be accompanied by a Balance Sheet or Statement of Income and Expenditure for the current financial year.

Accountability

To satisfy the Council that the public money distributed through the Community Recreation Fund has been used for the purpose it was provided the recipient organisation shall within one month of completion of their project:-

1. Submit a report detailing the success of the project and the benefits produced.
2. Account for the expenditure which the assistance from the fund has been applied to.

Types of Projects That Are Ineligible for Funding

1. School based activities that would reasonably be expected to be covered by the schools own resourcing provision, except that applications may be considered where there are community benefits outside of the school.
2. Council projects that would normally be funded by the Council, except that users of Council facilities can apply.

In addition to the above, funding will not be provided to assist with any expenditure relating to the following:-

1. Ongoing costs that are not related to a specific project.
2. Retrospective project costs (for projects already completed)
3. Elimination of accumulated debt or debt servicing.
4. Costs associated with fund raising.

Crs Lea/Crispin

Carried



# DANNEVIRKE SKATEPARK DEVELOPED DESIGN DOCUMENT

Dannevirke Domain, Dannevirke

February 5, 2026



## DOCUMENT CONTENTS

**D00** Cover Page

**D01** Document Contents and Locality Plan

## CIVIL

**C01** Existing Features and Services Plan

**C02** Skate Elements Plan

## PERSPECTIVES

**P01** Perspectives 1

**P02** Perspectives 2

**P03** Perspectives 3

### NOTES

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SITE OF WORKS

LOCALITY PLAN

PROJECT		
<b>DANNEVIRKE SKATEPARK</b> Dannevirke Domain, Dannevirke		
TITLE		
Document Contents		
SCALE	DATE	
-	February 5, 2026	
JOB NO.	DRAWING NO.	REVISION
1353	D01	-
ISSUED FOR		
DEVELOPED DESIGN PHASE		

**RICH LANDSCAPES**  
Richard Smith +64 21 101 4988  
www.richlandscapes.co.nz



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PROJECT

**DANNEVIRKE SKATEPARK**  
Dannevirke Domain, Dannevirke

TITLE  
Existing Features and Services Plan

SCALE	DATE
1:100 @ A1	February 5, 2026
1:200 @ A3	

JOB NO.	DRAWING NO.	REVISION
1353	C01	-

ISSUED FOR  
**DEVELOPED DESIGN PHASE**

**RICH LANDSCAPES**  
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**LEGEND**

- 0.00 General Levels (m)
- 0.00 Existing Levels (m)
- Drainage direction

PROJECT

**DANNEVIRKE SKATEPARK**  
Dannevirke Domain, Dannevirke

TITLE  
Skate Elements Plan

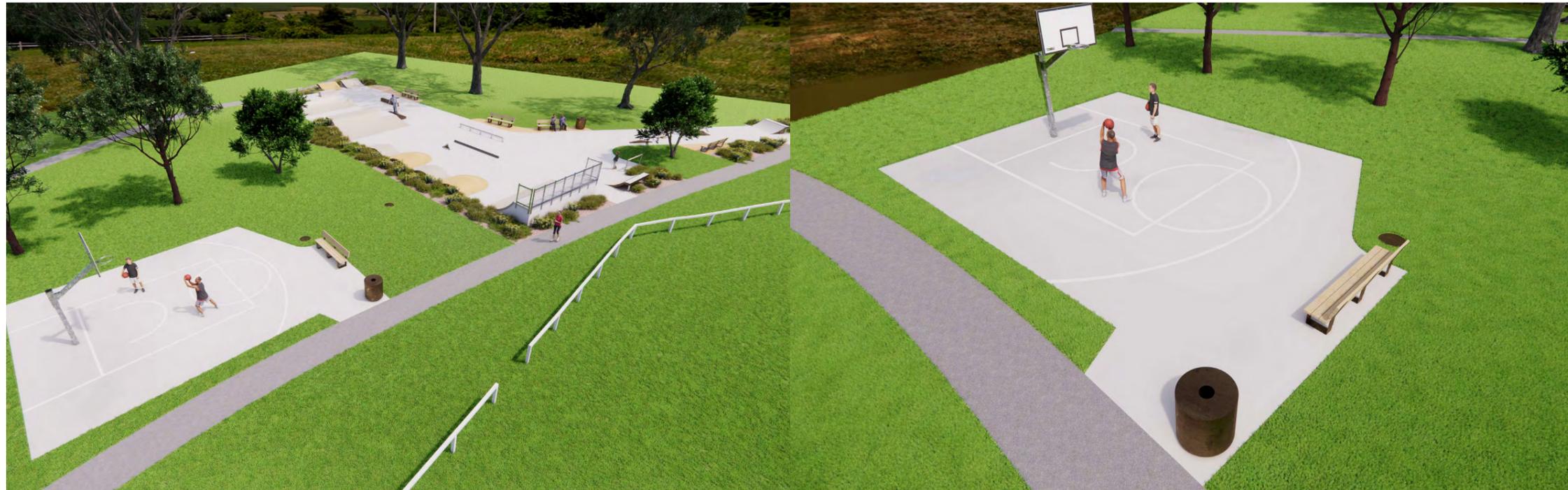
SCALE	DATE
1:100 @ A1	February 5, 2026
1:200 @ A3	

JOB NO.	DRAWING NO.	REVISION
1353	C02	-

ISSUED FOR  
**DEVELOPED DESIGN PHASE**



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PROJECT

**DANNEVIRKE SKATEPARK**  
Dannevirke Domain, Dannevirke

TITLE  
Perspectives 1

SCALE	DATE
-	February 5, 2026

JOB NO.	DRAWING NO.	REVISION
1353	P01	-

ISSUED FOR  
**DEVELOPED DESIGN PHASE**



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PROJECT

**DANNEVIRKE SKATEPARK**  
Dannevirke Domain, Dannevirke

TITLE  
Perspectives 2

SCALE - DATE February 5, 2026

JOB NO. DRAWING NO. REVISION  
1353 P02 -

ISSUED FOR  
**DEVELOPED DESIGN PHASE**



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PROJECT

**DANNEVIRKE SKATEPARK**  
Dannevirke Domain, Dannevirke

TITLE  
Perspectives 3

SCALE	DATE
-	February 5, 2026

JOB NO.	DRAWING NO.	REVISION
1353	P03	-

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## Report

Date : 19 February 2026

To : Mayor and Councillors  
Tararua District Council

From : Kawtar Tani  
Group Manager - Strategy and Information

Subject : **Adoption of the Environmental Scan as Supporting Information for the Long Term Plan 2027- 37**

Item No : **11.2**

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### **1. Recommendation**

- 1.1 *That the report from the Group Manager - Strategy and Information dated 16 February 2026 concerning the Adoption of the Environmental Scan as Supporting Information for the Long Term Plan 2027- 37 be received.*
- 1.2 *That Council adopts the Environmental Scan as supporting information for the consultation document and the Long Term Plan 2027 – 37.*

### **Executive Summary**

- 1.2.1 The Draft Environmental Scan is being presented today for adoption as supporting information to the consultation document and the Long Term Plan.
- 1.2.2 While an Environmental Scan is not a legislative requirement for the Long Term Planning Process it contributes to informed decision making by ensuring Council is staying abreast of changes in the external landscape.
- 1.2.3 Likewise, adoption of the scan is not a requirement, however it does provide transparency and clarity to the LTP process.

## **2. Reason for the Report**

2.1 The reason for this report is to present the Environmental Scan for adoption as supporting information for the Long Term Plan 2027-37 (LTP) and consultation document under section 93G of the Local Government Act 2002.

## **3. Background and Description**

3.1 On 29 and 30 January 2026, Elected Members attended a strategic direction setting workshop.

3.2 Staff prepared some scene-setting material for elected members to inform their strategic thinking over the two days, and throughout the long-term planning process.

3.3 The scene setting material consisted of:

- An Environmental Scan
- A Strategic Stocktake
- A Financial Health Check

3.4 The Environmental Scan forms part of Council's evidence base for its planning and decision-making for the LTP. While there is no direct legislative requirement to prepare a scan, it ensures that Council is staying abreast of changes in the external landscape as it begins its preparation of the LTP.

3.4.1 An Environmental Scan:

- describes external drivers (political, economic, social, technological, legal, environmental).
- provides context for assumptions and risks.
- informs community outcomes, levels of service, and financial strategy.
- may be relied on explicitly in the consultation document.

3.4.2 The Environmental Scan was presented at the strategy hui as a draft, with the intention that any questions or discussion from the session might result in additions or refinements to the draft. No edits to the draft were required following the hui.

3.4.3 The Environmental Scan is now being presented for adoption as supporting information to the consultation document and the LTP.

3.5 The Strategic Stocktake is a summary of Council's current strategies and key plans. It was intended as a snapshot style, reference tool only and may be updated following the adoption of the 2027 – 37 LTP.

- 3.6 The Financial Health Check is a high-level look at where Council sits currently in relation to what was projected in the Long Term Plan 2024 – 34. This too was intended as a snapshot of a point in time. There is no need to adopt it as a basis for planning.

#### **4. Significance Assessment**

- 4.1 This matter does not trigger Council’s Significance and Engagement Policy.
- 4.2 There is no need to engage with the community on the Environmental Scan prior to adoption, however, if adopted as part of the supporting information to the Consultation Document and the Long Term Plan, it will be made available to the public via Council’s Long Term Plan page on its website. It will also be included in the supporting information during the formal consultation process in 2027.

#### **5. Options**

- 5.1 Adopt the Environmental Scan as presented.
- 5.2 Adopt the Environmental Scan with amendments.
- 5.3 Receive the Environmental Scan rather than adopt it.

#### **6. Assessment of Options**

- 6.1 Adopting the Environmental Scan (either as presented or with amendments) provides transparency about the evidence Council relied on, clarity for audit and a clear administrative record of what informed decisions.
- 6.2 There is no legislative requirement to adopt an Environmental Scan. Council may wish to simply receive the Environmental Scan instead.

#### **7. Consultation**

- 7.1 Refer to section 4.2 of this report.

#### **8. Conclusion**

- 8.1 The Environmental Scan is being presented today for adoption as supporting information to the consultation document and the LTP.

#### **Attachments**

- 1 [↓](#). Environmental Scan - Long Term Plan 2027-2037



# Setting the Scene: Long Term Plan 2027-2037

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## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Tararua District Council is entering the 2027–2037 Long Term Plan (LTP) cycle in an environment of exceptional change and uncertainty. The external context is being reshaped by major central government reforms, structural changes to local government, economic volatility, demographic pressures, climate risks, and rapid technological transformation. These forces are converging in ways that may materially affect Council’s funding autonomy, service delivery model, asset base, and long-term financial sustainability.

The Environmental Scan highlights major reform to the local government system, including proposed structural reorganisation, a national rates cap, replacement of the Resource Management Act, major changes to water services delivery, and shifts in regulatory and liability settings. Together, these reforms signal a redefinition of the role, scale, and independence of councils. The transfer of three waters services, changes to planning frameworks, and potential changes to regional governance will alter Council’s balance sheet, staffing profile, overhead structure, and strategic influence. These changes create both risks and opportunities, but significantly increase planning complexity and uncertainty for the 2027 LTP.

Economically, Tararua presents a split profile. The rural sector is currently performing strongly, providing confidence and rating capacity in the short term, while urban households face ongoing cost-of-living pressures. Interest rates are likely at the bottom of the cycle, with inflationary and funding risks re-emerging over the medium term. Forestry, construction, and external funding constraints remain volatile influences on Council’s capital programme and roading network.

Social and demographic trends are dominated by population stagnation and rapid ageing. The proportion of residents aged 65 and over continues to rise, while youth numbers and urban populations decline. These trends will affect service demand, facility provision, infrastructure timing, affordability, and workforce availability. Housing affordability and social housing shortages remain persistent challenges.

Climate change and environmental pressures are intensifying. Flood risk, insurance availability, infrastructure resilience, and new adaptation planning requirements will increasingly shape Council’s asset management, investment priorities, and community engagement. National climate and environmental policy direction is shifting, creating further uncertainty around future compliance obligations and funding responsibilities.

Technological change, particularly artificial intelligence, digital service delivery, and energy technology, presents opportunities for productivity and cost efficiency, but also requires strategic investment and capability development.

The Strategic Stocktake confirms that Council has a wide and interconnected strategy framework in place, spanning growth, infrastructure, housing, environment, recreation, transport, economic development, and community wellbeing. However, many strategies were developed under assumptions that are now changing. The upcoming LTP will require deliberate choices about which strategic ambitions to progress, which to pause, and how to reweight investment in light of affordability, demographic change, and system reform.

Collectively, this context demands a disciplined, realistic, and strategic approach to the 2027–2037 LTP. Key decisions will be required on growth assumptions, service levels, infrastructure investment, adaptation planning, and Council’s appetite for risk and change. This document is intended to provide elected members with a clear, integrated picture of the environment in which those decisions will be made.

## 1. ENVIRONMENTAL SCAN – PESTLE SUMMARY

### 1.1. Introduction

The information below summarises the detailed Environmental Scan (January 2026) found in Appendix A. The summary has been organised into the following categories:

Political	Economic	Social	Technological	Legal	Environmental
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Each section of the PESTLE summary contains a list of related risks, a high-level impact assessment, and some questions for Council to consider as it sets out on its Long Term Plan 2027 – 37 process.

The risks identified are drawn from Council’s Strategic Risk Register. The full wording of Risk Appetites is available in the Risk Management Framework.<sup>1</sup> Appendix B contains more information on each of the risks mentioned in the PESTLE summary. The Risk and Assurance Committee will be holding an induction item on 17 February 2026 to provide an overview of Council’s Risk Management Framework and Risk Appetite settings.

#### 1.1.1. Summary of the key matters:

Factor	Key Highlights
<b>Political</b>	Major local government reforms underway; rates cap likely; RMA replacement announced; 2026 general election
<b>Economic</b>	Farm sector booming with record prices; NZ economy flat; interest rates fallen; likely to be the bottom of the interest rate cycle - may rise 2026; trade tariff risks/ China trade imbalances; fiat currencies under pressure by private and public debt /generational changes in US geopolitical stance.
<b>Social</b>	Population stalled/declining; ageing population (22% 65+); housing affordability issues; net migration negative.
<b>Technological</b>	AI transformation accelerating; perhaps over-hyped but will have major impacts over time; online services demand growing; solar/EV adoption increasing; digital divide concerns.
<b>Legal</b>	RMA replacement legislation; 3 Waters CCO formation; building regulations changing; freshwater standards relaxed.
<b>Environmental</b>	Climate adaptation framework released; 1.5°C Paris target likely breached; insurance costs rising; flood risk increasing; Planetary boundaries breach 7 out of the 9 critical limits.

<sup>1</sup> The Strategic Risk Register and Risk Management Framework can be found in the Big Tin Can.

## 1.2. Political Factors

### 1.2.1. Introduction

Political factors represent the most significant area of change for Tararua District Council, with major reforms to local government structures, funding mechanisms, and regulatory frameworks.

### 1.2.2. Local Government (Systems Improvements) Amendment Bill

The Local Government (System Improvements) Amendment Bill is intended to refocus councils on the cost-effective delivery of core infrastructure, public services and regulatory functions, and to tighten financial discipline, transparency, and governance accountability. Key proposed changes:

- Narrows the purpose of local government by removing references to the four well-beings (social, economic, environmental, cultural).
- Reinstates and refines a “core services” framework that councils must have particular regard to.
- Refocuses the purpose statement on cost-effective provision of infrastructure, public services and regulatory functions, with a supporting role for local economic growth.
- Amends section 17A to remove the mandatory six-yearly service delivery review requirement.
- Strengthens financial management, performance reporting and benchmarking requirements.
- Introduces changes to governance principles, codes of conduct, standing orders, and clarifies elected-member access to information.
- Enables greater use of regulations to set performance and reporting requirements.

### 1.2.3. Local Government Structural Reform

With its *Simplifying Local Government* proposal, the government is signalling the biggest changes to local government since the amalgamations of 1989. Key elements include:

- Regional council governance changes: Proposals to remove elected regional councillors, with mayors collectively leading regional issues through Combined Territories Boards (CTBs);
- Crown Commissioner option: Government-appointed commissioners may lead or join regional boards;
- Regional Reorganisation Plans: Each CTB must develop plans within two years, mapping all council functions and recommending delivery models (which may include shared services, joint CCOs, or amalgamations).

Consultation closes 20 February 2026. Expected legislation introduced mid-2026 and enacted in 2027.

#### 1.2.4. Rates Cap Policy

The proposed rates cap represents a constraint on council funding autonomy:

- Target range of 2-4% increases per capita, per year – but this range may alter depending on how the economy is performing.
- 3 Waters exempt from cap (likely significant component of future rate/CCO increases). Roading CCOs may be exempt as well.
- For areas with declining populations, this could mean even lower allowable increases.
- Central government regulatory approval required to exceed cap. Approvals are likely to be rare.
- Consultation open until February 2026; legislation expected 2026 with full implementation by July 2029.
- May impact Council's ability to access debt or increase borrowing costs.

#### 1.2.5. 3 Waters Reform

Water services reform is proceeding with establishment of a CCO with Wairarapa:

- Transfer of assets, debt, and depreciation will significantly change Council budget and balance sheet.
- Cash reserves will re-establish.
- Pressure will reduce on rates increases for compliance and capital expenditure.
- Direct implications on 2027 Long Term Plan with transfer and stranded overheads.
- New CCO will require full reviews of capex and renewal programmes currently in LTP.
- Reduced and simplified LTP amendment impacts as a consequence (2026/27) – LG (Water Services Preliminary Arrangements) Act 2024.

#### 1.2.6. Planning Law reform

The RMA is being replaced with the Planning Act (focusing on land-use planning to enable development and infrastructure), and the Natural Environment Act (concentrates on the use, protection, and enhancement of the natural environment).

- Current Growth Strategy cannot proceed until new legislation is passed.
- Structural changes resulting in a more regional and national approach.
- Less local input into planning rules and possible impacts on Council staff.

#### 1.2.7. Hollowing out of Council

The major legislative changes will result in 3 Waters and some planning staff being removed from core Council. This will have a wider impact on support staff numbers and the overhead allocation.

There will be 'stranded overheads' that will increase costs for the remaining core Council. For example, the administration buildings and governance costs remain the same but will be spread over less activity.

These impacts will be felt from the 2027/28 year.

#### 1.2.8. 2026 Election Uncertainty

The national election in late 2026 may determine whether current proposed changes are fully implemented. This creates significant planning uncertainty for Council as some reforms may be reversed or modified depending on election outcomes.

#### 1.2.9. Trade Policy & Protectionism

- USA has imposed 15% tariff on NZ imports (beef tariff recently removed).
- World trade rules increasingly subject to change by few decision-makers.
- Growth in regional trading agreements based on shared cultures and values.
- Risk that access to rich markets used as political weapon.

#### 1.2.10. Risk Summary

##### *Primary Strategic Risks*

- Legislation Changes (R00158)– structural reform, rates cap, planning law replacement, regulatory direction.
- 3 Waters Reform (R00049) – CCO transition, affordability and service levels, stranded overheads.
- NZTA Waka Kotahi Funding (R00091) – national funding pie shrinking impacts local delivery.

##### *Cross-cutting risks*

- Resource Consent Renewals (R00165)– interplay between regulatory settings and cost.
- Conflicts of Interest (R00095)/ Fraud (R00096)– integrity expectations during high reform/procurement.
- Population Growth (R00039) – political signalling of growth assumptions influences LTP.

##### *Relevant Risk Appetites*

- Central Government Relationships – Moderate (Maintain)
- Strategy Implementation – Moderate (Maintain)
- District Planning – Moderate (Decrease)
- Rates Setting – Low (Maintain)

- Key Stakeholder Relationships – Moderate (Maintain)

#### 1.2.11. Council Impact Assessment

Area	Impact	Likelihood
Governance Structure	Significant - reduced independence	Medium
Rating/Funding Autonomy	High - constrained by caps	High
3 Waters Transfer	Major budget/balance sheet change	High

#### LTP QUESTIONS AND CONSIDERATIONS

1. What degree of proactivity in the reform debate does TDC want to take?

### 1.3. Economic Factors

*For more detail, see Appendix A: Detailed Environmental Scan.*

#### 1.3.1. Introduction

Tararua's economy presents a tale of two sectors: a booming agricultural sector with record returns – however farm product prices are unlikely to stay at historically high levels (history shows that they don't) - contrasting with challenging conditions for urban households and retail businesses.

#### 1.3.2. Farm Sector Performance

The rural economy is experiencing exceptional conditions:

- Dairy: Record nominal returns per kg milkfat solids for 2024/25; forecast payout reduced to \$9.50/kg for 2025/26 (from \$10). Dairy returns are already signalled to be lower than 2024/25 as world milk volumes increase.
- Lamb: \$191/head - nominal record price, up 45% on November 2024 - note: sheep and beef returns are unlikely to stay at the current record levels.
- Beef: \$8.93/kg (up 33% from 12 months ago); just off record of \$9.18/kg.
- Wool: Prices up 20%+ on 2024/25 at around \$4.40/kg clean.
- Farm costs: Stable - just 2% increase in year to September 2025.
- Fonterra capital return: Average \$200,000 per dairy farm expected after March 2026 from consumer brands sale. There should be a one-off boost to dairy farmers from the Fonterra capital return.

#### 1.3.3. Interest Rates

- RBNZ OCR at 2.25% - no further cuts expected.
- 10-year government bonds at 4.6% - not fallen in 2025.
- Mortgage rates now in 5-6% range (fixed).
- Term deposit rates more than halved in 2025 - significantly reducing investment income for savers.
- Next move in NZ interest rates likely to be up. This is likely to be the bottom of the interest rate cycle.

#### 1.3.4. Currency & Trade

- NZD at US\$0.582 - generally lower than 10-year average.
- Against AUD at decade low (87.2 cents) – benefiting exporters; adverse to imports.
- Down 10% against Euro, 5% against UK Pound.

- US tariff risk: 15% tariff on most goods (beef exempted). Tariffs could be increased at any time and other new barriers to trade could impact the costs and availability of imports and returns on exports.

#### 1.3.5. Employment & Labour Market

- Total employment in Tararua: 8,380 jobs (Sept 2025) - down 1.9% from Sept 2024.
- Jobseeker numbers increased 7% in year to November 2025.
- Health and Disability Support up 27% to 411 over 2 years.
- Private sector wages up 1.9% (below CPI); Local government up 4.9%.
- Business units: 2,772 in Feb 2025, up 0.7%.

#### 1.3.6. Construction & Development

- Capital Goods Price Index increased 0.8%.
- Civil Construction Index increased 1.8%.
- Construction sector depressed but signs of turning - more activity expected 2026.
- Competition for work has constrained tender prices.

#### 1.3.7. Forestry

- Production forestry returns subdued - China demand low.
- Domestic sawmill closures continuing.
- Many hard-to-access blocks unprofitable to harvest.
- New government restrictions on whole farm forestry conversions from December 2025.

#### 1.3.8. Risk Summary

##### *Primary strategic risks*

- Interest Rates (R00103) – long-term rate stability vs rising risks.
- Inflation (R00102) – general CPI and sector-specific costs (insurance, energy, water/sewerage).
- Access to External Funding (R00166) – tightening credit/borrowing headroom.
- Revaluation of Property, Plant and Equipment (R00161) – depreciation impacts from valuation movements.
- Contracts (R00162) – retendering price variability and market competition.
- Population Growth (R00039) – growth demand assumptions affect affordability profile and capex timing.

*Cross-cutting risks*

- NZTA Waka Kotahi Funding (R00091) – subsidy constraints affect programme.
- Sources of Funds for Replacement of Significant Assets (R00058)– adequacy of Council reserves.
- Forest Harvesting (R00164)/Wind & Solar Developments (R00163) – sectoral activity impacting roading economics.

*Relevant risk appetites*

- Revenue – Low (Decrease)
- Expenditure – Low (Decrease)
- Debt & Interest Rates – Moderate/High (Maintain)
- Strategy Implementation – Moderate (Maintain)

**1.3.9. Council Impact Assessment**

Area	Impact	Likelihood
Rating Affordability (Rural)	Positive - strong farm incomes. Rural –very positive. Cost increases are modest, and incomes are significantly higher. Confidence is at high levels for the year ahead.	High
Rating Affordability (Urban)	High pressure - cost of living. Urban households – continuing to be tough with ongoing high living costs.	High
Interest/Inflation Costs	Low currently, rising medium-term	Medium
Roading (from forestry)	Moderate 10yr / High 30yr	Medium

**LTP QUESTIONS AND CONSIDERATIONS**

1. Does Council want to be more involved in business promotion?

## 1.4. Social Factors

For more detail, see Appendix A: Detailed Environmental Scan.

### 1.4.1. Introduction

Demographic changes present significant challenges for Tararua, with population stagnation, an ageing population, and ongoing housing affordability pressures requiring strategic responses.

### 1.4.2. Population Trends

- Current population: 18,950 (June 2025 estimate) - down 0.3% from June 2024.
- 2023 Census result: 4% increase on 2018 (0.8% per year; LTP assumes 0.9% per year growth).
- Urban decline: Dannevirke -0.5%, Pahiatua -1.0%, Woodville -1.2%.
- Rural growth: +0.3% with strong lifestyle block subdivision activity.
- New highway expected to boost growth 2025/26, particularly in Woodville.

Recent changes in economic and immigration trends over the last few years has resulted in little to no population growth. The current population forecasts adopted by TDC are now looking optimistic. Council is required to review these forecasts as part of the assumptions in the 2027 LTP process.

The current Growth Strategy and its implementation via the review of the District Plan under the RMA has been blocked by the government until the new planning laws are implemented (late 2026 onwards).

June Ending	Year	TDC 2024 LTP assumptions and Growth Strategy	Current Stats NZ estimates (2025 release)	New Census Stats Medium forecasts	2023 based NZ	New 2025 Infometrics Medium Scenario	2025 Infometrics High Scenario
	2018	18,450	18,450				
	2023	19,150	18,950	18,950			
	2024	19,250	19,000				
	2025	19,263	18,950			18,950	18,950
	2028	19,814		19,400		19,409	19,601
	2033	20,648		19,800		19,678	20,027
	2038	21,617		20,100		19,881	20,391
	2053	22,350		20,300		19,902	20,922

#### 1.4.3. Ageing Population

The ageing trend is the dominant demographic factor:

- Median age: 42.6 years (up from 41.8 in 2018); NZ average is 38.2 years.
- 65+ population: 4,227 residents (22.2% of population vs 18% NZ average).
- 65+ growth: +2.7% in year to June 2025 (vs total population decline).
- Since 2018: 75% of total population increase was in 65+ age group.
- Last 2 years: 65+ grew by 8% (300 people) while total population unchanged.

#### 1.4.4. Declining Youth Population

- School enrolments: 2,788 pupils - down 3.2% from 2024.
- Children 0-15: Declined 3.7% (144 children) since 2018.
- Birth rate turned upward from March 2025 (net +54 births year to Sept 2025).
- All main areas showing decline in enrolled children except remote rural.

#### 1.4.5. Migration

- Tararua net migration now negative: approximately -50 - 100 people per year.
- Internal NZ migration: Estimated net 90 resident loss (year to June 2025).
- NZ-wide: 71,000 Kiwis permanently left in year to October 2025 (near record).
- NZ net migration: ~11,900 (down from record 135,000 in Oct 2023). This dramatic reduction in net migration gains over the last two years is one of the key drivers for the reduced economic activity in NZ.
- Arrivals to Tararua increasing - possible net gains in 2026.

#### 1.4.6. Housing Affordability

- House prices: \$426,008 average (up 3.2% on Nov 2024, down 12% from Dec 2021 peak).
- Rents: ~\$450/week average; +7.4% annual average change; +66% over 5 years.
- Lower quartile rents: Still increasing (+7.8% for year).
- Social housing register: 48 households (October 2025).
- Active rentals: +14% over 5 years - finding rental now easier.
- Severe shortage continues of general and social rental housing in Tararua.

#### 1.4.7. New Housing

- 53 new house consents (year to Nov 2025) - up 6% on 2024.
- 50% now factory-built relocatable housing.
- 50% urban, 50% rural in 2025.
- Woodville seeing significant activity (7 new houses in 2025).
- Kainga Ora investment ended after 2023/24 builds in Dannevirke.

#### 1.4.8. Social Demographics

- Māori population: 29% (NZ average 20%) - increasing quickly.
- Accommodation Supplement recipients: 1,770 households.
- Households: +4.2% (2018-2023 Census).
- Generally low incomes reflected in high welfare dependency.

#### 1.4.9. Broader Social Trends

- Affordability: Key election issue; households struggling with increased costs while demanding higher services.
- Healthcare: Living longer but taxes insufficient for ever more costly healthcare.
- Global trend: Lower birthrates in developed countries leading to intense competition for skilled migrants.

#### 1.4.10. Risk Summary

##### *Primary strategic risks*

- Ageing Population (R00157) – service mix and affordability impacts.
- Iwi and Māori Partnerships (R00048) – partnership strength and codesign effectiveness.
- Inadequate Staff Resources (R00046) – workforce capability/capacity.
- Health and Safety (R00047) – obligations to staff and the public.

##### *Cross-cutting risks*

- Population Growth (R00039) – youth/whānau retention, town/rural distribution.
- Natural Disaster (R00054) – social wellbeing and service continuity impacts.
- Conflicts of Interest (R00095)/ Fraud (R00096) – community trust and reputation.

##### *Relevant risk appetites*

- Community Relationships – *Low (Increase)*

- Iwi Partner Relationships – *Low (Maintain)*
- Resourcing – *Moderate (Maintain)*
- Health, Safety & Wellbeing – *Low (Decrease)*

**1.4.11. Council Impact Assessment**

Area	Impact	Likelihood
Service Delivery Focus	Shift to meeting older people needs	High
Sports/Recreation Facilities	Reallocation needed (fewer children)	Medium
Urban Infrastructure Timing	Very low growth questions timing	High
3 Waters (from low growth)	Cost per connection implications	Medium

**LTP QUESTIONS AND CONSIDERATIONS**

Council has limited ability to affect population outcomes (especially in the short term). The population assumptions adopted for the 2027 LTP are important as this will influence the budget and levels of service. These assumptions must be defensible to Audit NZ.

Direction from Councillors will be factored into the draft population and household assumptions to be developed for consideration later in the LTP process.

1. Population Forecast Assumptions
  - a. How optimistic does Council want to be (High or Medium scenarios)?
  - b. What should the urban / rural mix assumption be (current LTP assumption 70/30 vs closer to 50/50)?
2. Should Council start to shift levels of service towards focusing more on older people? If so, would this be done by shifting resources from other types of services?
3. Tararua District has a high proportion of residents that identify as Māori – should Council services and processes reflect this more?
4. Does Council wish to invest more effort to be business friendly by reducing costs and time in regulatory process?

## 1.5. Technological Factors

### 1.5.1. Introduction

Technology is driving fundamental changes in how residents live, work, and interact with services, creating both opportunities and challenges for Tararua.

### 1.5.2. Artificial Intelligence

- Huge change sweeping through society and already changing how we work and plan - Annual Plan and LTP implications: How best to apply and fund this new technology.
- Impact patchy with some employment winners and losers.
- Productivity should increase but accompanied by increase in 'fake' knowledge.
- Likely to have major impacts over time.
- AI bubble identified as a risk factor for international financial markets.
- AI bubble identified as a risk factor. The risks are mostly international from politics (US) and highly leveraged financial markets (AI bubble and massive increases in debt across multiple large economies).

### 1.5.3. Online Services & Digital Transformation

- Demand continues to grow for online transactions.
- Demand for physical retail and commercial dropping.
- Businesses moving to reduce physical shop fronts.
- Cutting demand for office/retail space; warehousing increasing for coordination and logistical support.
- General retail will likely continue to be very tough as online shopping reduces need for local businesses.

### 1.5.4. Energy Technology

- Solar: Now achieving payback in 4 years.
- Battery storage: Rapidly reducing in price – expect to halve in price over a few years (Sodium ion – sodium-carbonate “salt” battery now in mass production).
- Household energy independence: Increasingly accessible where roof factors allow.
- Increasing renewable energy production reducing risks of future spikes in oil commodities for energy consumption.

### 1.5.5. Electric Vehicles

- Large range of EVs now available at \$40k-\$50k inc. GST.

- EV prices continue to fall with more Chinese brands increasing competition.
- Demand shifted to hybrids to avoid Road User Charges (RUCs).
- Government intending to introduce RUCs for all vehicles.
- New electric and battery technologies being commercialised (within 5 years) may make EVs the common new vehicle purchased.
- A combination of home solar, battery and EV will reduce car operational costs.

#### 1.5.6. Government Technology Initiatives

- Ministry for Environment developing first-generation flood map (2027 delivery expected).
- Data and technology identified as underpinning new planning system.
- Signalled shift from fuel excise duty to road user charges (2027 at earliest) – requires new technology systems.

#### 1.5.7. Risk Summary

##### *Primary strategic risks*

- Information Technology Failure (R00045) – service delivery/resilience.

##### *Cross-cutting risks*

- Infrastructure Failure (R00044) – monitoring/SCADA and data capabilities reduce failure likelihood.
- Revaluation (R00161) – data quality influences valuation accuracy (economic/legal interfaces).

##### *Relevant risk appetites*

- Information Technology – Moderate (Decrease)
- Records and Data – Moderate (Decrease)
- Strategy Implementation – Moderate (Maintain)

#### 1.5.8. Council Impact Assessment

Area	Impact	Likelihood
Service Delivery Channels	Online demand increasing	High
Town Centre Vitality	Retail decline continuing	High
Productivity/Efficiency	AI opportunities emerging	Medium

**LTP QUESTIONS AND CONSIDERATIONS**

1. Should Council invest more resources into new technology to improve productivity?
2. Should Council invest in solar power on Council / community buildings where this would reduce operating costs (could be self-funding)?

## 1.6. Legal Factors

For more detail, see Appendix A: Detailed Environmental Scan.

### 1.6.1. Introduction

The legal and regulatory environment is undergoing major change, with reforms to planning law, building regulations, liability frameworks, and environmental standards.

### 1.6.2. RMA Replacement

New planning legislation announced 9 December 2025, with phased implementation over two years. Key features:

- 46% reduction in resource consents required.
- Far more permitted activities that will not require resource consent.
- Narrower set of regulated effects - more activities without approval needed.
- One combined plan per region (spatial, natural environment and land-use).
- Binding environmental limits set by central and local government for health and ecological factors.
- National standards across country for environmental limits and land use.
- Only 5 categories of Special Places warranting additional regulation (historic heritage, outstanding landscapes, sites significant to Māori, coastal high natural character, indigenous biodiversity).

### 1.6.3. Building Regulations

#### *Earthquake-Prone Building Changes (September 2025)*

- Removing low risk buildings from EPB system,
- Introducing tiered risk mitigation based on location and building type,
- Allowing deadline extensions to encourage incremental progress,
- Removing requirement for concurrent fire and accessibility upgrades.

#### *Building Act Reforms*

- Support for voluntary amalgamation of consent authorities,
- Reforms expected via second Bill in 2026.

### 1.6.4. Liability Changes

- Proportionate Liability: Moving from joint and several liability.
- Council will only be liable for proportion of harm it is held accountable for causing.
- Ends 'last man standing' scenario where Council is liable for 100% if other parties (builders/ developers/ insurers) collapse. Change is intended to reduce aversion to risk.

#### 1.6.5. Freshwater & Environmental Standards

- Significant changes to freshwater standards and wastewater discharge consents.
- Changes to freshwater standards is likely to reduce the capex requirement for new Waters CCO.
- NPS-Indigenous Biodiversity: SNA identification suspended for 3 years.
- Urban food scraps collection requirement (by 2030) removed.

#### 1.6.6. Development Contributions

- Repeal of development contributions.
- Replaced with development levies.
- Broader powers to set targeted rates.

#### 1.6.7. Climate Change Legislation

- Methane targets lowered: 2050 target now 14-24% reduction (from 47%).
- Government carbon neutrality postponed from 2025 to 2050.
- Climate Change Commission advice role reduced.
- ETS decoupled from Nationally Determined Contributions.
- Public consultation requirements for emissions budgets substantially reduced.

#### 1.6.8. Other Significant Changes

- Public Works Act overhaul: Land acquisition made easier with emergency provisions via Order in Council.
- Systems Improvement Bill: Changes to purpose of local government and core services list. (See 1.2.2)
- National Adaptation Framework: New requirement for councils to prepare adaptation plans for priority coastal and flood risk areas.

#### 1.6.9. Risk Summary

##### *Primary strategic risks*

- Legislation Changes (R00158) – governance and planning shifts.
- Resource Consent Renewals (R00165) – renewal terms and capex requirements.
- Non Compliance with Statutory Requirements (R00052) – drinking water standards/consents.
- Conflicts of Interest (R00095) – procurement/employment integrity.
- Fraud (R00096) – financial control failures and probity.

- Health and Safety (R00047) – HSWA compliance.

*Cross-cutting risks*

- 3 Waters Reform (R00049) – legal obligations under new water regulatory frameworks.
- Natural Disaster (R00054) – statutory duties during emergencies.

*Relevant risk appetites*

- Enforcement – Low/Moderate (Maintain)
- District Planning – Moderate (Decrease)
- Environmental Impacts & Resource Consents – Moderate (Decrease)
- Rates Setting – Low (Maintain)

**1.6.10. Council Impact Assessment**

Area	Impact	Likelihood
Planning/Consenting	Major reduction in workload/fees	High
Liability/Risk	Significantly reduced (proportionate)	High
Waters Capex	Likely reduced requirements	Medium
Adaptation Planning	New requirement for priority areas	High

**LTP QUESTIONS AND CONSIDERATIONS**

1. Does Council want to be
  - a. Proactive? I.e. Develop policies and responses quickly under the new legislation? (More resources are required), or
  - b. Wait for others and copy what is proven to work? (i.e. “Fast followers”)
2. Does Council want to seek to introduce new Development Contribution charges on new housing and commercial building / subdivisions?

## 1.7. Environmental Factors

For more detail, see Appendix A: Detailed Environmental Scan.

### 1.7.1. Introduction

Climate change represents a growing threat to Tararua, with increasing flood risks, changing weather patterns, property values, and significant implications for the availability and cost of insurance

### 1.7.2. Global Climate Context<sup>2</sup>

- 1.5°C Paris Accord temperature limit now almost certainly breached.
- Columbia University multi-year report: 99% likelihood UN IPCC forecasts are wrong.
- Potsdam/Stockholm research: Earth has breached 7 of 9 planetary boundaries.
- 2025 turning out to be second warmest year recorded (after 2024).
- Global response disjointed: USA withdrawn from Paris Accord; many countries pulling back on climate investments – the costs of reducing emissions is hard to impose politically.

### 1.7.3. Local Climate Impacts

- Risk of localised flooding impacts increasingly likely.
- Sudden stratospheric warming event (23-24 September 2025) 30km above Antarctica disrupted Southern Hemisphere weather for months.
- Cold weather moving outwards from poles, increasing temperature differences with warm air.
- Result: high winds and other extreme weather effects.

### 1.7.4. Planetary Boundary Framework Summary of Breaches<sup>3</sup>

The Planetary Boundaries Framework identifies nine critical processes essential for maintaining global stability and the planet's life-support functions. These boundaries are crucial for maintaining the planet's health and stability.

The 2025 Planetary Health Check report reveals that seven of the nine boundaries have been breached, with all showing increasing adverse trends. This makes it essential to both increase resilience and deploy options to reduce human impacts. (It is worth noting that NZ has no meaningful impact on global position. Focus should be on adaptation not mitigation. Mitigation is dealt with at a national level by central government.)

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<sup>2</sup> University of Columbia – 2024 and 2025. Nature 2024.

<sup>3</sup> Environmental Research Volume 260, 1 November 2024, 119668;  
<https://www.sciencedirect.com/science/article/abs/pii/S0013935124015731>

*Boundaries Breached – Unsafe Levels*

- Climate Change: The planetary boundary for climate change is transgressed, with rising CO<sub>2</sub> concentrations causing global temperatures to rise and altering climate patterns.
- Biosphere Integrity: This includes biodiversity loss, which is a critical process for maintaining ecosystem health.
- Land System Change: Deforestation and land degradation are significant threats to the planet's health.
- Freshwater Change: Freshwater resources have been overused in some areas, crossing the boundary for freshwater use.
- Modification of Biogeochemical Flows: This includes agricultural pollution and other human activities that disrupt natural cycles.
- Introduction of Novel Entities: The presence of synthetic chemicals and plastics in the environment is causing environmental harm.
- Ocean Acidification: Excess carbon dioxide from fossil fuel emissions is leading to ocean acidification, harming marine ecosystems.

*Boundaries Within Safe Levels*

The only two boundaries that remain within the safe operating space are:

- Aerosol loading.
- Stratospheric ozone.

**1.7.5. Insurance Implications**

- Insurance cover in NZ increasingly restricted.
- Premiums rising well above inflationary factors.
- Industry reflecting localised risk factors rather than smoothing costs.
- Some property owners will find getting insurance at any price difficult.
- Affects viability for resale and access to mortgage funding.
- High-risk properties (flooding, coastal inundation) likely to fall in value – this is not widely understood by the general public.

**1.7.6. National Adaptation Framework**

Government released framework (November 2025) built around four pillars:

- Risk and response information sharing,
- Roles and responsibilities,
- Investment in risk reduction,

- Cost-sharing pre- and post-event.

Key shift: Clear move away from government-assisted property buyouts - long-term shift to more personal responsibility for monetary losses. This is likely to impact property values in due course.

National Flood Map expected by 2027; councils required to prepare adaptation plans for priority coastal/flood areas.

#### 1.7.7. Emissions Trading Scheme

- NZU carbon price collapsed to ~\$40/tonne (all-time low).
- Government announced major ETS reforms (4 November).
- ETS decoupled from Nationally Determined Contributions.
- Government carbon unit auctions failing to meet reserve price (\$68/tonne).
- Provisions added for recalculating carbon absorption from disaster-damaged forests.
- Carbon Removals Assessment Framework released for activities beyond forestry.

#### 1.7.8. Land Use & Forestry

- New restrictions on whole farm conversions to forestry from December 2025.
- Protections added for land use classes 1-5 (majority of Tararua is LUC 6+).
- Will limit demand for forestry conversions in short term.
- Hanging land use to forestry remains a threat to established farming servicing industries.

#### 1.7.9. Risk Summary

##### *Primary strategic risks*

- Climate Change (R00051) – frequency/severity of events, adaptation needs.
- Natural Disaster (R00054) – severe damage/disruption.
- Forest Harvesting (R00164) – roading impacts and funding pressure.
- Wind & Solar Farm Developments (R00163) – construction traffic/renewals impacts.

##### *Cross-cutting risks*

- Resource Consent Renewals (R00165) – environmental standard shifts and affordability.
- Infrastructure Capability (R00159) – capacity pressures from growth/climate impacts.
- 3 Waters Reform (R00049) – environmental performance/consent obligations under CCO.
- Infrastructure Failure (R00044) – event driven asset failure risk.

*Relevant risk appetites*

- Infrastructure Assets & Service Delivery – *Moderate (Decrease)*
- Environmental Impacts & Resource Consents – *Moderate (Decrease)*
- Expenditure – *Low (Decrease)* (for funding choices)
- Debt & Interest Rates – *Moderate/High (Maintain)* (for resilience funding)

**1.7.10. Council Impact Assessment**

Area	Impact	Likelihood
Roading	Significant (longer term)	High
3 Waters	Significant (supply & stormwater)	High
Policy Across Council	Moderate - adaptation planning	High

**LTP QUESTIONS AND CONSIDERATIONS**

1. Does Council want to allocate more resources to stormwater management in Roothing?
2. Does Council want to allocate more resources to natural disaster recovery?
3. How proactive should Council be in adaptation planning – leader or follower?
4. What level of risk is acceptable on insurance cover? Insurance is becoming increasingly unaffordable – retaining existing cover will impact rates and reduce available ‘cap’ for other services.

## 1.8. Conclusion & Strategic Implications

This PESTLE analysis reveals a complex external environment with significant opportunities and threats for Tararua District Council.

### 1.8.1. Key Opportunities

- The transfer of water services will create overhead pressure but give Council more choices once debt is transferred and cash reserves are established – constrained by community affordability issues.
- Strong rural economy providing rating capacity and local economic activity. This boost to farm profits is likely to result in increased spending on farm services.
- New highway boosting growth potential, particularly in Woodville (new housing being consented).
- Reduced regulatory compliance burden from RMA replacement.
- Proportionate liability reducing Council risk exposure.
- Lower freshwater/wastewater capex requirements are likely to reduce the capex requirements for the new Waters CCO.
- Technology enabling service delivery efficiencies.

### 1.8.2. Key Threats

- Rates cap constraining funding autonomy.
- Structural reforms reducing Council independence. Council likely to see changes to structure and scale (smaller) if all implemented. Muted response from Labour and Greens on RMA and local government reforms point to these changes being potentially more enduring than first thought.
- Population stagnation/decline affecting rating base.
- Ageing population shifting service demand patterns.
- Climate change increasing flood risk and infrastructure costs.
- 2026 election uncertainty affecting long-term planning. The national election in late 2026 will determine whether all the current changes proposed / in process will be implemented. That said, one-term governments are rare in New Zealand.
- International trade tariff risks to primary sector.

### 1.8.3. Critical Decisions Required for the LTP

- Growth forecasts adoption for 2027 LTP (first half of 2026)
- 3 Waters CCO transition planning
- Service reallocation to meet changing demographics
- Climate adaptation plan development for priority areas

## 2. APPENDIX: DETAILED ENVIRONMENTAL SCAN (V14)

**ENVIRONMENTAL SCAN V14**  
**January 2026**

**Current to 16 January 2026.**  
**Prepared by Malcolm Thomas**

**Trends and High-Level External Challenges**  
**facing Tararua District**

**Key issues impacting Tararua**

**Environmental scanning** is the process of gathering information about events and analysing their relationships with an organisation's internal and external environments. The basic purpose of environmental scanning is to help management advise governance of known and possible future trends, to inform a response to likely challenges and to help set the future direction of the organisation.

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### Changes in this Version

Topic	Impact on Wellbeing's	Comment
Climate Change	↓↓	Recent data implies that the 1.5 Celsius increase temperature limit from the Paris accord is now almost certainly breached. Risk of localised impacts from flooding <b>increasingly likely</b> . Columbia University complete a multiple-year report concluding a 99% likelihood that UN IPCC forecasts are wrong. Potsdam Institute for Climate Impact Research and the Stockholm Resilience Centre. conclude that Earth has now breached of 7 of the 9 planetary boundaries; A sudden atmospheric warming event occurred on 23-24 September 30km above Antarctica, disrupting the Southern Hemisphere weather patterns for months, resulting in cold weather moving outwards, increasing temperature differences with warm air resulting in high wind and other effects.
<b>The Economy</b>	↓ NZ Mixed / flat Tararua ↑↑	<b>NZ economy – recovery weak. Growth in the farming sector offset by very tough conditions in Auckland and Wellington, and provincial retail.</b> Net immigration low. Inflation modest (ex-insurance, rates, some food and health costs). Retail trade (physical) very tough, but dairy, beef, sheep prices and export returns at high / record levels.
<b>Immigration rapid changes continue</b>	↓	Numbers arriving to Tararua sharply reduced, departures have increased substantially so net gain is now negative around 50 – 100 people per year. For NZ number of kiwis and non – NZ residents leaving NZ continuing at very high levels. Arrivals strong - overall net gain is around 10,000 a year
<b>Unemployment</b>	↓	Jobseeker numbers stable after big increase winter 2024 and well below Covid peak in 2020. Health and Disability very large increase to 411, up 27% in 2 years.
<b>Population growth</b>	↓	Census 2023 - 4% increase on Census 2018 (0.8% a year). Consistent with assumptions. Stats NZ latest estimates for June 2025 continue to revise down (19,000 +0.3% growth for the year) and June 2025 (18,950 -0.3%) - lower immigration, lower birth rate and very few new houses. Very low urban growth has implications for 3 waters costs. New highway expected to boost growth 2025/26. Birth rate has turned upwards, and more housing consents have been granted.
<b>Farm product prices (excluding forestry) high resulting in profitable season</b>	↑↑↑	China demand improved and very strong demand from EU, UK and USA. Beef prices at record high, lamb schedule prices also at near record. Dairy payout at nominal record high but reducing for 2025/26. Wood prices average to poor (below long-term averages – China demand low and NZ demand low). Wool prices continuing to increase and strongly up on last few years at around \$4.40 kg clean.
House prices stabilised	→	House prices stable – \$426,008 up 3% on November 2024 and 12% off the peak Dec 21. Market stabilising with signs of activity picking up. Number of new house consents increased from low levels.
<b>Affordable housing shortage and rents</b>	↓↓	Rents now stable on average, with rentals available increasing. Owning now more affordable than renting if deposit can be found. <b>There continues to be severe shortages of general and social rental housing in Tararua.</b>

		Trust House to rationalise housing stock to fund new build 1 and 2 bed units – but no current plans for new units in Tararua.
<b>Government policy and regulation impact uncertain</b>	<b>Mixed</b> ↓	Waters, RMA, ETS, Housing, rate caps, Regional governance – many changes underway or being consulted. Impact = significant! RMA replacement released. Council likely to see changes to structure and scale (smaller) if all implemented.
<b>Price increases low (Ex Insurance, power and Council rates)</b>	<b>Good for all</b> ↑	Asset and materials prices low. Interest rates much lower. Farm cost increases low. Oil prices are again low and stable. This is likely to be the bottom of the interest rate cycle – increases expected later 2026.
<b>Interest rates falling – but maybe not much more</b>	↑↑ for those in debt / businesses ↓↓ For savers	Reserve Bank NZ OCR at 2.25%, no further cuts now expected. Risks on the upside due to massive world debt and AI bubble. High uncertainty in markets with trade wars (and shooting ones).
<b>Wage and Salary levels still increasing</b>	↑ Income levels ↓ Business margins	Average ordinary time hourly earnings from wages and salaries to Sept 2025 for public sector up 2.1% for the year (but local government up 4.9%), private sector 1.9%. Net migration has eased shortages of staff.

### Key Stats Snapshot

Measure	Change / Result	Period	Comment
Population	District - down 0.3% Urban – down 0.7% Rural – Up 0.3%	Year to June 2025	June 2025 Stats NZ estimate 18,950, June 2024 Est 19,000 (revised down). 2023 census - up 4% from 2018.
Births and Deaths net gain	+54 +15	Year to Sept 2025 Year to Sept 2024	Births declined in 2024 (living costs stress?) but have increased since March 2025.
New house consents (new and relocates)	53 = +6% on Nov 2024 year	Nov 2025 year	12 months to Nov 25 = 53 (27 new and 26 relocate house consents). Compares to 50 (20 new, 30 relocates) Nov year 24.  Urban 27 vs Rural 26 (Nov year 2025)
Ageing Population – Superannuation numbers	2.2% (NZ up 3.2%)	Year to Sept 2025 – MSD	Growth trend strong – now 4,227 residents on Super (est 22.2% of population).
Median Age	42.6 years	2023 Census and June 2025 update	Median age increased from 41.8 in 2018.
Māori share of Population	29%	2023 Census	NZ average is 20%. Increasing quickly.

11.2 Adoption of the Environmental Scan as Supporting Information for the Long Term Plan 2027- 37  
Attachment 1 Environmental Scan - Long Term Plan 2027-2037

(Māori Descent)			
School enrolments – MoE	-3.2%	July 2024 to July 2025	Numbers falling. ECE (preschool) declining.
Household Numbers	+2.9%	2013 – 2018	Household occupancy up marginally. Shortage of rentals now easing.
Stats NZ Census	+4.2%	2018 - 2023	
House Prices – QV	+3.2%	Year to November 2025	Prices stable and house sales increasing. NZ -0.1% annual and -14.7% from peak. Tararua still up 21% in last 5 years.
3 month rolling average	-11.8%	From peak Dec 2021	
Rents – average change for District	7.4%	Annual average change to October 2025	Rents have stabilised during 2025, but lower quartile rents are still increasing. On annual basis - now up 66% in last 5 years. Lower quartile rents +7.8% for year.
Housing Register	48	October 2025	Was 47 in October 2024. Kainga Ora now has 9 houses in Dannevirke.
Total Employment (living in Tararua)	-1.9%	As of September 2025 – Annual change	8,380 jobs Sept 2025 – down 1.9% from Sept 2024. Numbers declining since mid-2024.
# of Business Units	+0.7%	As of Feb 2025 – Annual	There were 2772 businesses (separate geographic units) in Feb 2025, up from 2754 in Feb 2024. NZ + 0.5%
Jobseekers – MSD benefits - Tararua	Total +6% Job Ready 8% Health/Disability 21%	Nov 2025 vs Nov 2024	Jobseeker numbers remain high at 903. Peak (Sept 2020) was 934. Large increase in Health and Disability – up 8% 1 year and 55% in 3 years.
Accommodation Supplement	1%	Year to Nov 2025	1,770 households receiving AS payments in Tararua – number stable.
Commercial Vehicle registrations	233 + 22%	Year to Nov 2025	Year to Nov 2024 was 233 – 10-year average is 210.
Dairy Payout ( <b>excludes dividend</b> ) – forecasts are midpoint Fonterra	\$7.80 kg milkfat \$10.00 \$9.50	2023/24 2024/25 2025/26 forecast	Current (Dec 25) GDT auction dairy prices are declining on peak in 24/25 season. Payout forecast still high.

## Topic Discussions

### Introduction and Overview

This environmental scan describes major drivers likely to shape the Tararua District over the medium term and beyond from the viewpoint of the Council. Many of the drivers are completely outside of Council control, or any meaningful impact in the medium term at least.

For other drivers Council can act as a leader for the district or as a lobbying agency to government on behalf of residents. 'Black Swan' events, such as a cyclone, pandemic, war or international economic crash can change trends and create huge impacts on residents, often in ways that cannot be anticipated.

Council is facing major changes to the delivery of key services that will involve structural change. 3 Waters is the largest of these and implementation is underway. The changes to planning laws will also see a more regional approach with less local decision making. The Rates Cap will limit Council capacity and significantly constrain the investment in new civic and recreational facilities.

This scan focuses on the trend changes and key risks currently facing Council, Tararua and New Zealand in the context of the change. The election in later 2026 will be crucial as to whether all the changes proposed will be implemented.

### Guidance on 2024 LTP Assumptions

The current Long-Term Plan contains some key assumptions that impact on costs, societal and environmental changes. These assumptions often directly or indirectly drive rate impacts over time.

Assumption	LTP forecasts	2025/26 Estimate	Current Trends against Assumptions
Growth	Population 0.6% yr Households 0.7% a year (70% urban and 30% rural)	0.5% 0.6% <b>50 - 60% urban</b>	Population growth is currently nil to negative. Immigration (net) likely negative and natural increase (births less deaths) is currently 0.3%.  Lower urban growth means the costs for 3 waters are spread more on existing properties.
Aging Population	Increased to 26% of population by 2034	Currently 22.2% of pop - and increasing every year (ratio increasing by around 0.5% a year)	On track to be 26% of total population by 2034
Natural disasters	No extreme natural disasters	Increasingly probable	Warmer and wetter generally forecast.

11.2 Adoption of the Environmental Scan as Supporting Information for the Long Term Plan 2027- 37  
Attachment 1 Environmental Scan - Long Term Plan 2027-2037

Assumption	LTP forecasts	2025/26 Estimate	Current Trends against Assumptions
Legislation and one plan changes	Significant and ongoing impact on Council finances and levels of service.	Significant change continues. 3 Waters CCO,RMA replacement with shift to regional plans. Rates Cap will constrain investments.	3 Waters CCO reduces Council debt and risks – although Council is still owner.  Rates Caps threatens ability to deliver LTP programme.
Infrastructure Capability	Forecast growth can be partly met by the current and planned capacity of infrastructure assets.	Urban growth is currently low.	Growth in urban areas (3 Waters) is currently very low so remains true. It's the mandatory standards and renewals that are expensive.
Waka Kotahi funding	requirements for the performance of subsidised work will not alter to the extent they adversely impact operating costs.	NZTA - Less than assumed	FAR still 73%, but size of total pie has shrunk (less funding available).
Inflation	Local Government Cost Index – 2.4% to 3% in 24/25.  2 – 2.5% a year medium to longer term	Is possible. Some activities are lower than this already.	CPI currently 3% as at September 2025, Capital Goods 0.8%. But Water and sewerage costs +3.7%. Heavy Civil construction 1.7%. LG wages up 4.9% on year.  OK short term, higher medium term likely.
3 Waters reform and subsidies for water and wastewater upgrades	Will remain with Council and there will not be further government subsidies for upgrades	CCO established with Wairarapa. Possible Amendment to LTP as a consequence (2026/27).	The new CCO will result in full reviews of the capex and renewal programmes currently in the LTP.
Interest Rates	Average 4.71% in year one and increasing to 5.75% by 2034. The average is 5.12% over 10 years.	Close to outcome. Current 10-year govt bond rate is 4.6%	Interest rates have fallen far quicker than forecast – but mainly at the short end and for savers. International uncertainty / risk holding up longer rates. Possibly higher longer rates in 2026 (International drivers).
Access to markets for farm exports	Continues to be open with high uncertainty for the US. More trade	15% tariff now on exports to US. Tariffs removed for beef. High demand and new free	Possible tariffs and trade barriers. High uncertainty.

Assumption	LTP forecasts	2025/26 Estimate	Current Trends against Assumptions
	agreements being put in place (for NZ)	trade agreements offsetting risks.	

### Changing Societal Trends

The big trends that are or will change how we live:

- Affordability – this was the key issue in the last US election and likely to be a focus of the next NZ one. Households are struggling to cope with increased costs while as a society we keep demanding higher levels of service. Without higher taxes / rates this is impossible to deliver – not without stronger economic growth. Constraints on rates and government spending will result in scaling back of required standards and infrastructure investments.
- Protectionism and retreat from social services focused government – some countries are electing new leaders that favour stronger borders, less immigrants, lower taxes and a return to ‘the good old days’,
  - Increase in trade barriers – risk to NZ farm exports
  - World trade rules subject to change on the whim of a few people (or mainly one!)
  - Restricted movement of people between countries
  - Growth in regional trading agreements based on shared cultures and values
  - Access to rich markets used as political weapon resulting in all countries being poorer
- AI (Artificial Intelligence) – already changing the way we work and plan our lives,
  - Huge change sweeping through society
  - Impact patchy with some employment winners and some losers
  - Productivity should increase – but increase in ‘fake’ knowledge.
  - Is over hyped but will have major impacts over time.
- Online everything – demand continues to grow for online transactions. Demand for physical retail and commercial is dropping, and businesses are moving to reduce physical shop fronts which is cutting the demand for office / retail space. Warehousing increasing for logistics.
- Climate change – hotter, with more destructive storms becoming more common. Will result in mass movement of people (mostly from Asia) seeking safety and a place to live,
  - Global commitment to decarbonisation is faltering as USA withdraws from Paris Accord and promotes drilling for fossil fuels. Insurance cover in NZ is increasingly restricted and premiums rising well above inflationary factors as the industry reflects localised risk factors. This affects viability for resale and access to mortgage funding.
- Lower birthrates in developed and emerging countries resulting in significant declines in future population, and a shortage of workers and tax revenue to support ageing populations,
  - Leads to intense competition for skilled migrants from developing countries
  - In countries where government is offering incentives to have more children birth rates are still dropping (China, Japan, Italy)
- Healthcare – living longer but taxes not sufficient to pay for resulting and ever more costly healthcare.
- Solar cells now achieving payback in just over 4 years; Battery storage rapidly reducing in price. Household electricity independence is increasingly accessible where roof factors allow. A large range of EVs now available in NZ at \$40k to \$50k inc. GST.

New Zealand is now politically in a period of cost control and efficiency. Government budgets have been reduced in real terms for much of the public sector. The economy and household budgets are adjusting to this lower spending reality. Unemployment has increased and asset prices are stabilising (house prices are still high – but becoming more affordable as wages rise and interest rates fall).

The government has a large number of policy changes and ‘balls in the air’ that will impact on Council, with more changes being announced regularly. With the proposed rates cap councils could come under pressure to cut back services to contain costs (note this will not be fully in place for 2026/27 Annual Plan).

The national election in late 2026 may determine whether all the current changes proposed / in process will be implemented.

#### The Economy and Affordability Overview

- Interest mortgage rates have fallen significantly but now bottomed out – but government 10-year bonds stuck at 4.6% and have not fallen in 2025. International pressures and high government debt are underpinning long term yields.
- Inflation at 3% at the top end of the RBNZ target range.
- Boost from immigration gains gone as net gains fall to 10,000 a year from 130,000.
- Household budgets under pressure from huge cost increases in 2022 and 2023, and spending has not recovered. After no economic growth over much of 2025 there are signs of increasing activity and optimism for 2026.
- Sharply lower deposit rates for savers have significantly reduced investment incomes.
- Farming affordability in the best position for many years.
- New highway improving connections to Manawatu is providing a boost to Tararua and to the confidence of local business. New houses in Woodville coming through in building consents.
- Changing land use to forestry threatens the established farming servicing industries.

The NZ economy has been stuttering over 2024 and most of 2025 as households continue to limit spending and rising unemployment hits confidence. Housing and other asset prices have seen a major correction from the 2021 bubble in asset prices but are now stabilising. This hit consumer confidence hard, and people cut back spending. It has taken far longer for households to improve their overall finances and feel more confident than most economists (and the government) expected. Things are looking up for 2026 with most activity indicators rising.

The exodus of kiwis heading overseas leaving many empty houses for sale and taking with them skills and capital is still continuing. In the last year (to October) 71,000 kiwis were estimated to have permanently left, close to a record high. On the flip side around 26,000 kiwis permanently arrived back in the country in the last year. There are still many people from other countries that see NZ as a wonderful place to live.

Government spending is still under pressure with the government hoping that growth will provide more revenue for spending in 2026 prior to the election.

Record export returns from the farming sector that has given a boost to the regions. The local Tararua economy is driven primarily from the farm returns of dairy, beef, lamb and forestry. The next largest sector is retail followed by manufacturing. After two tough years farm product prices significantly increased over the 2024/25 season (excluding forestry), and these income gains are continuing through the 2025/26 season. Farm profitability across the Tararua farming sector will be substantially improved with farmers mostly focused on improving their balance sheet. Farmer confidence is very high. Farm costs are currently running at close to nil, and that includes large insurance, power and rates increases.

Sheep and beef returns are unlikely to stay at the current record levels. As the season progresses volumes increase, and prices will come under pressure. Prices are proving remarkably strong to date. Dairy returns are already signalled to be lower than 2024/25 as world milk volumes increase. There should be a one-off boost to dairy farmers from the Fonterra capital return from the sale of Mainland and Anchor later in 2026.

This boost to farm profits is likely to result in increased spending on farm services, improvements and flow onto increased employment in the sector plus support services. With lower interest rates and further relaxing of government regulations, economic activity for Taranaki in 2026 should be much more robust. New housing activity is picking up, and renewed activity is underway.

In terms of sectors for 2025/26 the outlook is:

- Urban households – continuing to be tough with ongoing high living costs. Risks around employment will continue. For those with sizable mortgages the situation has improved significantly. Interest rates are expected to start increasing again in 2026. For those with sizable term investments and / or no debt, incomes will be reducing. Overall 2026 is looking much better.
- Business – profitability continues to be challenging with high costs (wages, insurance, power, regulations, etc). On the plus side interest rates are lower and some regulations are being eased. General retail will likely continue to be very tough as on-line shopping and services reduce the need for local businesses. For those servicing the farming sector activity and profitability should increase.
- Rural – very positive. Cost increases are modest, and incomes are significantly higher. Confidence is at high levels for the year ahead. Note - Farm product prices are unlikely to stay at historically high levels (history shows that they don't) but are expected to remain at good levels. Dairy prices are already substantially lower as world milk production increases in response to high prices.
- It should be noted that insurance costs still increasing as insurance companies are changing the assessment of risks and pricing them more on local hazards rather than smoothing out costs. Some property owners will find getting insurance at any price difficult.

#### **Limitations of this Scan**

This scan is not intended to be 'definitive'. Change in society, technology, business, and environment is occurring fast and it is difficult to forecast for the next year, let alone 10 or 30 years.

Disruptive factors are resulting in changes to how we live and the state of the environment. We have no or very little control over these, and the impacts are significant.

- Government policy changes impacting on service standards, household incomes, costs and structures, urban and rural land values and land use changes:
  - Election outcomes 2026 (maybe),
  - 3 Waters implementation and unaffordable capex programmes,
  - Rates Cap,
  - RMA replacement,
  - ETS – forestry, carbon prices,
  - NPS - Freshwater regulation outcomes.
- Interest rates – likely to start rising again later 2026
- World trade and tariffs – we are a trading nation and Taranaki especially so. Tariffs could be increased at any time and other new barriers to trade could impact the costs and availability of imports and returns on exports.

- Technology (e.g. artificial intelligence) fundamentally changing how society operates.
- Climate change events.

**Note: The Council Impact tables at the end of each section relate to the resources required relative to existing overall Council budgets, not what is currently allocated to the specific activity (so a moderate increase in Roading is significant for Council, while for Service Centres it is not). This is a guess based on current knowledge.**

## Economic and Demographic Trends – the detail

After a very tough economy over the last two years activity indicators are looking better. The standout sector is the primary sector and Tararua business and development activity is showing early signs of recovery driven by much improved farm profitability.

The outcome for 2026 is looking positive underpinned by a recovering household sector and construction, with continued strong farm returns and solid tourism. The risks are mostly international from politics (US) and highly leveraged financial markets (AI bubble and massive increases in debt across multiple large economies).

### Cost increases largely under control – with some exceptions

Inflation (CPI) is now at 3% and driven by the same sectors over 2025. Costs are being driven by:

- Energy prices as electricity grid charges are hiked and gas supplies decrease,
- Insurance costs as higher risks from natural disasters are factored in,
- Higher food prices driven by very good export prices for red meat and dairy, and
- Council rates increase have been high for multiple years now driven by the need to address continued long term renewal issues and the sunk costs (debt and depreciation) of recent 3 waters investments (as well as the costs of establishing the new CCOs).
  - This has led to the government deciding to impose rates caps

Council has now agreed to form a joint Waters CCO with the Wairarapa. The future capital programme and the Tararua network share of these costs will become clearer through 2026. The removal of Waters debt and depreciation costs will result in major changes to the Council budget and balance sheet. While this will be largely positive for the Council the ratepayers connected to the Waters networks will still be paying for the services (likely at an increasing amount).

Interest rates are continuing to drop at the short end and are now below 'normal' levels on an historical basis. The RBNZ has reduced the official interest rates (the OCR) to 2.25%. Further cuts are now not expected as activity picks up. Funding costs for longer term debt has been rising despite the OCR cut. Banks source significant funds from overseas. This implies a 10-year government bond of over 4% and mortgage rates in the 5 - 6% range (fixed). Current risks include wars, massive debt increases / AI bubble in the US and trade barriers which are all keeping longer term and wholesale interest rates higher than expected.

The lower borrowing interest rates has resulted in term deposits more than halving over 2025. Many people, especially older people, will have much lower incomes in 2026 which will counter the stimulus from lower mortgage rates.

The next move in interest rates in NZ is likely to be up.

### Key Prices for Council

Council budgets are driven by 4 key costs.

1. Labour costs (including consultants),
2. interest rates,
3. Capital and construction materials – pipes, machinery, concrete, pumps, and buildings,

- a. These are a big driver of depreciation costs
4. Diesel prices and bitumen.

Most civil works are a combination of the above. While costs are still high, competition for work in a depressed construction sector has resulted in constrained (and sometimes lower) prices for projects. Tender prices are varying substantially reflecting the amount of work each company has at the moment.

Current anecdotal talk is that things are looking up for construction – the cycle has turned. Projects are being planned, and more activity is likely in 2026. This will lead to increased prices – or at least much less discounting.

The NZD is at US58.2 cents and rising, which is generally lower than the average for the last 10 years.

Year to September 2025 selected price indices:

- Farm prices increased 2.3% – driven by livestock prices for beef and sheep,
  - Overall costs for Dairy increased by 0.4% for the year,
- Capital Goods Price Index increased 0.8%,
- Capital Goods Price Index - Civil Construction increased 1.8%,
- Producer Price Index input prices for Heavy and civil engineering construction increased 1.7%,
- Producer Price Index output prices - Water, Sewerage, Drainage and Waste Services increased by 3.7% for the year (with cost increases easing).

#### **Labour costs**

The Quarterly Employment Survey to September 2025 indicated that private sector wages are now increasing at below CPI levels at 1.9% for the year. Public sector earnings increases have slowed to 2.1% for the year. Of note is local government where average hourly earnings increased by 4.9% for the year to September 2025. With pressures on Councils to contain costs via the proposed Rates Cap there will be considerable pressure for low wage increase in 2026.

While unemployment has increased the net immigration has significantly reduced, with a near record number of New Zealand citizens continuing to leave for Australia and other countries. The result is a rapidly declining net population gain for the year. These two factors are offsetting each other. With modest to low growth there is unlikely to be any substantial wage rises in 2025/26.

#### **Energy prices – Oil and Diesel**

The price of oil and fuel has been a key price driver for Council costs historically. The oil price is still a key component in the roading activity (vehicle fuel and re-seals) and plastic pipes. Oil prices have been very stable and relatively low. Increasing renewable energy production has meant that demand is not increasing at anything like forecast a decade ago. Peak oil and souring prices are no longer likely (from a demand point of view – supply disruptions will still cause spikes in oil prices).

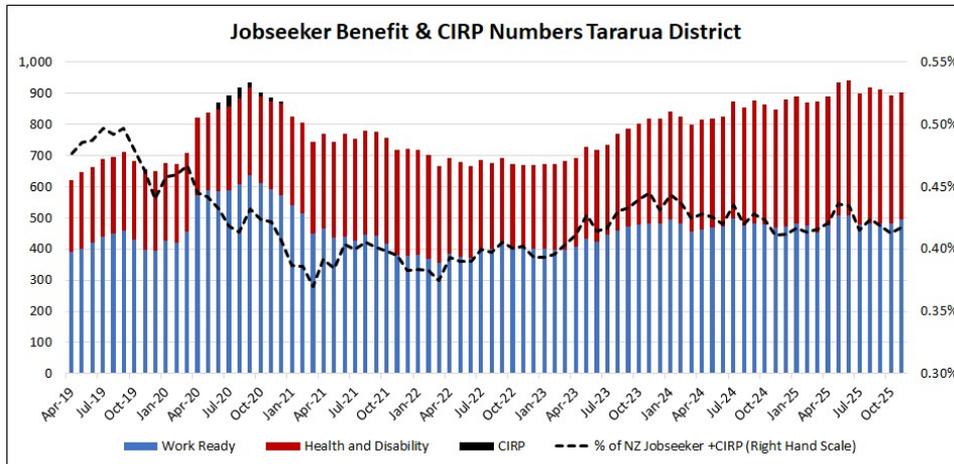
Diesel prices in NZ at the pump are currently about 3% higher than this time a year ago.

Electric vehicle prices continue to fall with more Chinese brands resulting in competition and discounts. Demand has shifted to hybrids to avoid RUCs. The government is intending to introduce RUCs for all vehicles to level the field. Making this system work (online and simple etc) could hold up implementation. New electric and battery technologies currently being commercialised (within 5 years) will result in electric vehicles being the common new vehicle purchased.

Unemployment

Jobseeker numbers in Taranua have increased 7% in the year to November 2025. Jobseeker Work Ready increased by just 6%, but Jobseeker Health and Disability increased by 8%. Across NZ the increase in total Jobseeker is 6.6%. Increased farming returns and should work through to more jobs locally.

Since the peak in Taranua during Covid in 2020/21 Jobseeker Work Ready has declined by 24%, with Jobseeker Health and Disability increasing by 46%.



A large number of Taranua households receive the Accommodation Supplement (1,770) and other forms of social welfare. This reflects the generally low incomes of residents in the district. The number receiving the Accommodation Supplement in Taranua has reduced slightly over the last six months and is up just 1% on the year, compared to NZ overall that has increased by 2.6%.

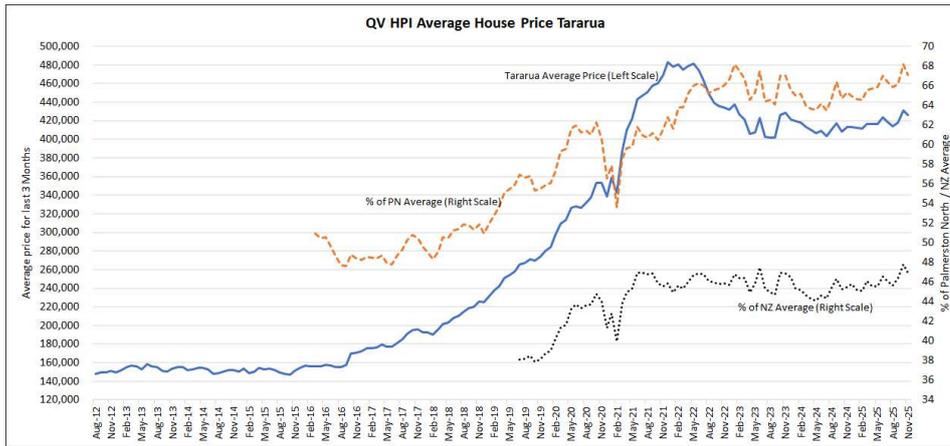
Housing and Rental Costs

House prices have stabilised over the last year in Taranua after coming off the peak of 2021. Across NZ the average prices are still gradually reducing driven by Auckland and Wellington. The latest QV average price for Taranua for the year to November 2025 was up 3.2% for the year. Prices are down 12% from the peak of December 2021. After a very slow market in 2024 and early 2025 the number of sales has increased in 2025.

Affordability and a significant oversupply of properties for sale is keeping prices in check despite low interest rates. Taranua has performed better than the Palmerston North and the NZ market overall but remains significantly cheaper. Palmerston North has dropped 18% and New Zealand overall -15% from the 2021 peak.

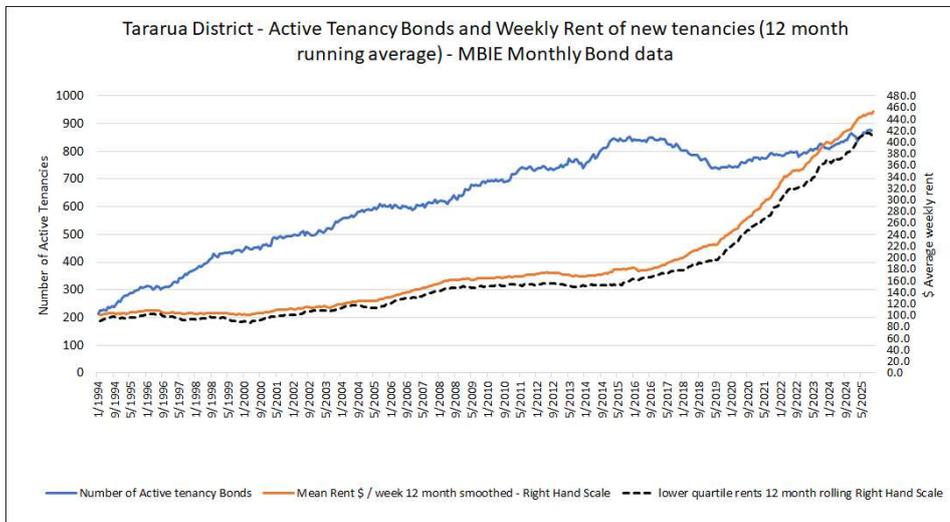
The new house sector has changed with 50% of new houses in Taranua ‘factory or yard’ built relocatable housing. These houses are of decent quality and tend to be smaller, with lower costs per m2. Demand from those seeking affordable housing remains high.

11.2 Adoption of the Environmental Scan as Supporting Information for the Long Term Plan 2027- 37  
 Attachment 1 Environmental Scan - Long Term Plan 2027-2037



After some new social houses were built by Kainga Ora in Dannevirke in 2023/24 further investment has been ended. Budget 2025 (government) confirmed the cutting back of funding for Kainga Ora and the consolidation of social housing assistance funding into MHUD. This new fund will not be open to applications until 2026.

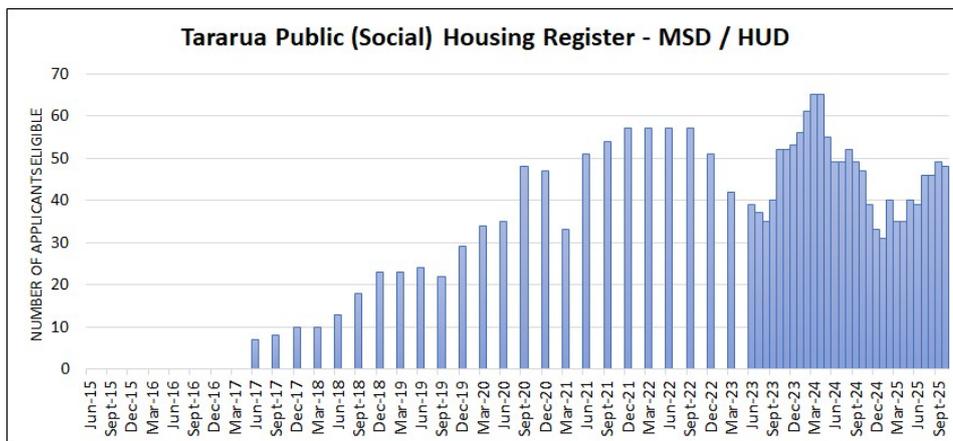
Pressure on the rental market has eased a little in Tararua in 2025 after many years of an acute shortage. Rent levels have been relatively flat on average in 2025, but the lower quartile end of the market is still rising. The market is still tight compared to Palmerston North where there is significantly more availability. Average rents are still around \$450 a week. Rents across NZ are also flat to declining as unsold townhouses and units are rented out. In Tararua there has been a 4% increase in active rentals (those with lodged bonds with the Tenancy Tribunal) over the last year. Over the last five years active rentals have increased 14% - a big increase that has made finding a rental much easier.



Due to the high cost of construction and relatively low rentals and house prices in Tararua the gross and net returns from a rental investment property are currently relatively poor, although this has improved with lower interest rates and tax changes.

The public housing register for Tararua has settled at just under 50 after a spike in numbers in mid-2024 to 65. This trend is seen across New Zealand - including Manawatu, Whanganui, and Masterton. This is due to the large number of public houses being completed by Kainga Ora. Other reasons include:

- more rental availability in many urban areas as some houses that cannot achieve the desired sale price are taken off the market and rented out ‘until the market improves’.
- many people leaving for overseas, and
- many townhouse developments are completed (in the major cities), there has been a surge in rental stock.



Council Impacts

Note: the resources required relates to the overall Council budgets, not what is currently allocated. It also may reflect political effort / impacts rather than budgets. This is a guess based on current knowledge.

Growth in housing has continued to be very low during 2024 and to mid-2025 and brings into question the **timing** for urban expansions in the short term and the infrastructure costs that come with that. New housing activity is now picking up in Dannevirke and Woodville. Some government regulation constraints relating to soils, freshwater and planning rules are being relaxed by the government.

Council Group	Impact – Resources Required	Likelihood
Finance – Rating Policy (affordability of property owners)	High	High
Council overall (inflation / interest rates increases now reduced)	Low	Likely

## Growth

### Population

The growth in population in Tararua has stalled over the last two years reflecting:

- tough economic conditions and job market,
- a fall in the natural increase (less births),
- a fall in inward migration and a sharp increase in overseas departures, and
- affordability pressures from cost increases.

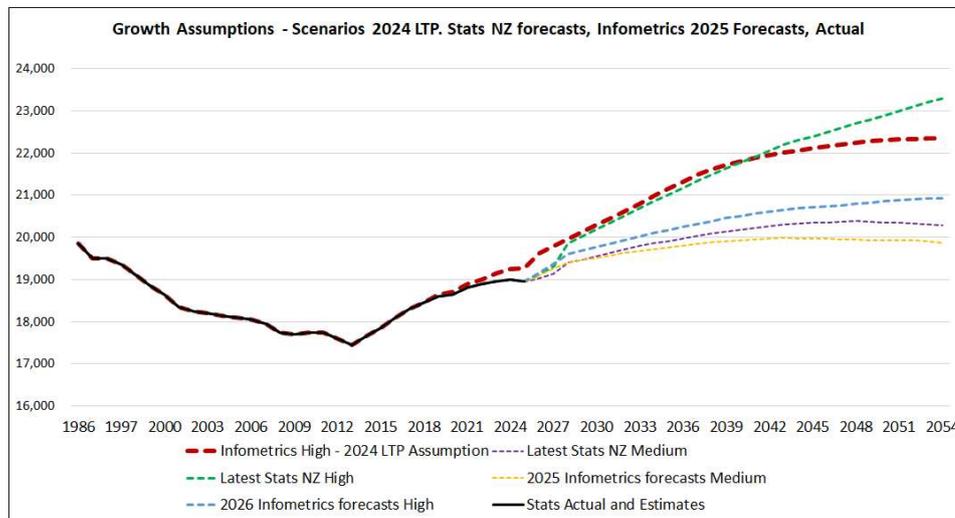
Prior to 2023 population was growing at around 0.5% a year increase (around 100 people extra per year), with even faster growth from 2019 and 2021. The economic recession over 2024/25 saw new house building falling away to low levels.

The latest population estimates (as of June 2025) from Stats NZ are based on the 2023 Census result. This update resulted in further downward revisions to the total population number from 2023.

The population estimates are now lower than our assumptions for the 2024-34 LTP, which used the Infometrics high growth scenario. The new 2025 base Infometrics High growth Scenario is significantly lower than the 2024 assumption. These are significantly lower forecasts than the 2023 Tararua Growth Strategy. The forecasts grow further apart into the longer term. Interestingly the new Stats NZ High Scenario forecasts, based on the 2023 Census, are very similar to the LTP assumption until 2045 onwards.

Note that these major differences in forecasts result from changes to assumptions around NZ internal and international migration flows to and from Tararua.

Adopting growth forecasts will be an important decision in the first half of 2026 for the 2027 LTP.



June Year Ending	Previous Stats NZ estimates (June Year)	New revised Stats NZ estimates (2025 release)	New 2023 Census based Stats NZ Medium forecasts	TDC LTP assumptions – Infometrics High Scenario (June Year)	New 2025 Infometrics High Scenario
2018	18,450	18,450			
2019	18,600	18,600			
2020	18,650	18,650			
2021	18,800	18,800			
2022	18,900	18,900		19,000	
2023	18,950	18,950	18,950	19,150	
2024	19,050	19,000		19,250	
2025		18,950		19,263	18,950
2028			19,400	19,814	19,409
2033			19,800	20,648	19,678

**Note** that the June year estimates are higher than the Census results as Stats NZ then add on people that are estimated to have been missed by the census (and those overseas longer term) and adjust for a June year as opposed to March.

Below are the latest estimates for the major urban areas in Taranua.

**Population - usually resident**

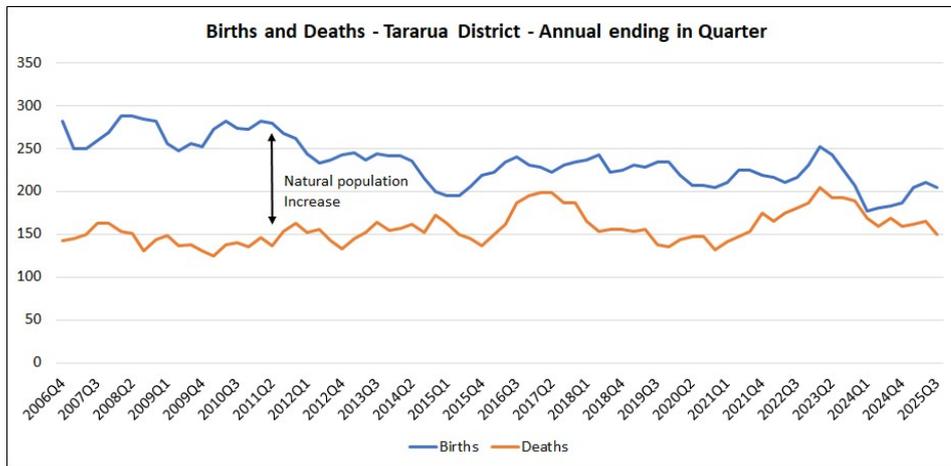
	2014	2019	2024	2025	% Change 2024 to 2025
<b>District</b>	17,650	18,600	19,000	18,950	-0.3%
Dannevirke	5,330	5,660	5,670	5,640	-0.5%
Pahiatua	2,530	2,790	2,860	2,830	-1.0%
Woodville	1,460	1,620	1,700	1,680	-1.2%
Eketahuna (est 2023 Census)	460	518	579		
All rural and other	7,886	8,026	8,770	8,800	0.3%
New Zealand estimated population Increase					0.7%

There has been a strong increase in lifestyle block subdivisions, some of which are now seeing new housing being built. Woodville is also now seeing new housing and subdivision activity driven by the new highway opening. Pahiatua is seeing very little activity and is estimated to have declined from 2023 to 2025. Note these are estimates from Stats NZ based on a range of available statistics, but they are only estimates.

Overall, we are seeing evidence that urban growth in Taranua been very low over the last two years. The gain in births less deaths over the last 5 years has fallen by around a third compared to the 5 years before that. Also new house consents have been at very low levels and school pupil numbers are down.

In the year to September 2025 Taranua recorded a net gain of residents (births – deaths) of 54. There was a significant drop in the number of births over 2023/24, while deaths are gradually increasing. Births for the 2024 year were around the lowest in at least 20 years. Pressures on housing and cost of living in 2022 and 2023 were likely reasons for fewer births, as well as the ageing population. The number of births has increased over 2025, and deaths have reduced as well. This is an important driver of employment and

activity for the district (schools, daycare, retail etc), so hopefully the recovery in the birth rate will continue.



The following still seems to support the growth assumption over the medium / long term:

- new highway operating very well enabling easy commuting to Palmerston North / Manawatu,
- high farm product prices and loosening of government regulations,
- new housing activity picking up,
- Palmerston North continuing to grow,
- many new lifestyle blocks subdivided during the last 2 years.

However, there are risks that point to lower population outcomes:

- Carbon forestry land use – hollowing out of rural population and less demand for agricultural services,
- An aging population (unless more younger people move to Tararua) meaning fewer births over time and more deaths,
- New waters CCO, new RMA replacement planning structure could see a loss of professional staff from Tararua,
- More people leaving for overseas (maybe – cycle may be turning),
- Ongoing online shopping and services reducing local businesses,
- Continued government austerity.

**Immigration**

New immigrants still came into NZ in high numbers in the year to October 2025, but less than the peak of 2023. This is offset by a near record number of kiwis heading for greener pastures (71,400), itself offset by a near record number (26,300) of kiwis coming home. The overall net gain of people through migration for the year to April 2025 has dropped to 11,900. This dramatic reduction in net migration gains over the last two years is one of the key drivers for the reduced economic activity in NZ. This net number is stabilising and will increase if fewer kiwis leave in 2026. Current flows of people for the year to October 2025 for New Zealand:

Year to October 2025:

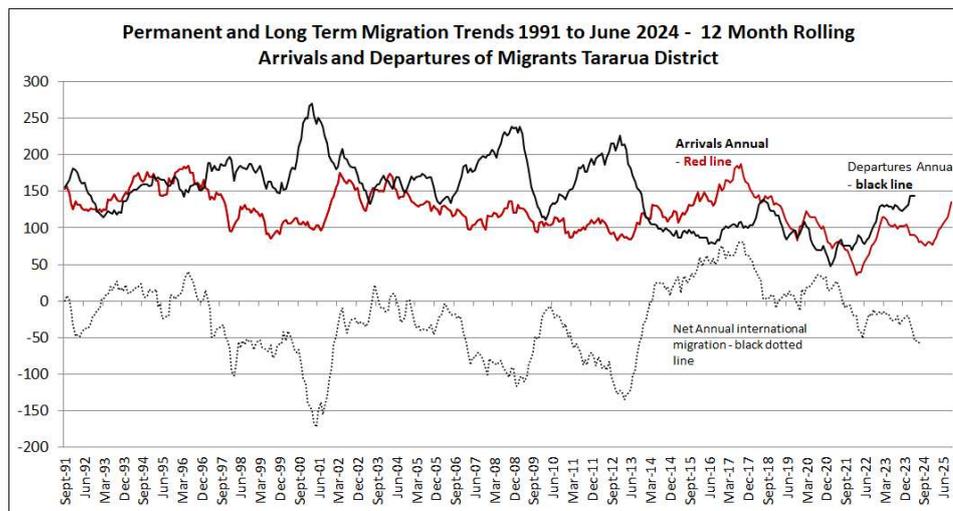
- Net Migration = +11,900 – down from the record 135,000 in year to Oct 2023 and lower than long term average.
- Net Migration of NZ Citizens = -45,100 (Leaving = 71,400 and Arriving home 26,300)
- Net Migration of non-NZ Citizens = +57,000

Note that these inflows and outflows are having profound impacts as they are not uniform across New Zealand. Data is subject to major revisions. We have poor up to date data on the location of those departing permanently.

Migrant arrivals are reducing from the record highs of 2023 (which were double the previous record of 2020). Citizens of New Zealand, India, China, the Philippines, and Sri Lanka drive the net migration gains (in that order).

For Taranaki this surge of arrivals of permanent residents into NZ did not result in record inflows. Arrivals were steady post Covid. In the last few months, the arrivals estimates have increased again and point to a possible net gains in 2026. Note that these estimates are only for arrivals and they are subject to major revisions (eventually – lagged by 16 months). Departure data is only available to June 2024. Departures increased reflecting the record numbers of NZ citizens leaving the country. This resulted in a net loss on international migration for Taranaki and contributed to the revised population estimates.

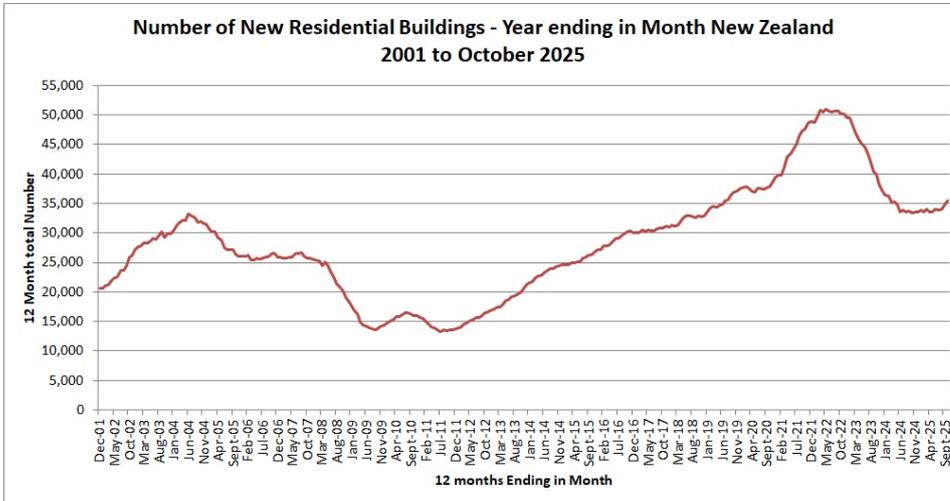
There are much larger flows of people within NZ to and from Taranaki. We have no data on these flows between Census years but use other data as indicators of these flows. The latest Stats NZ annual population estimates for the year to June 2025 included an estimated net 90 resident loss to internal NZ migration.



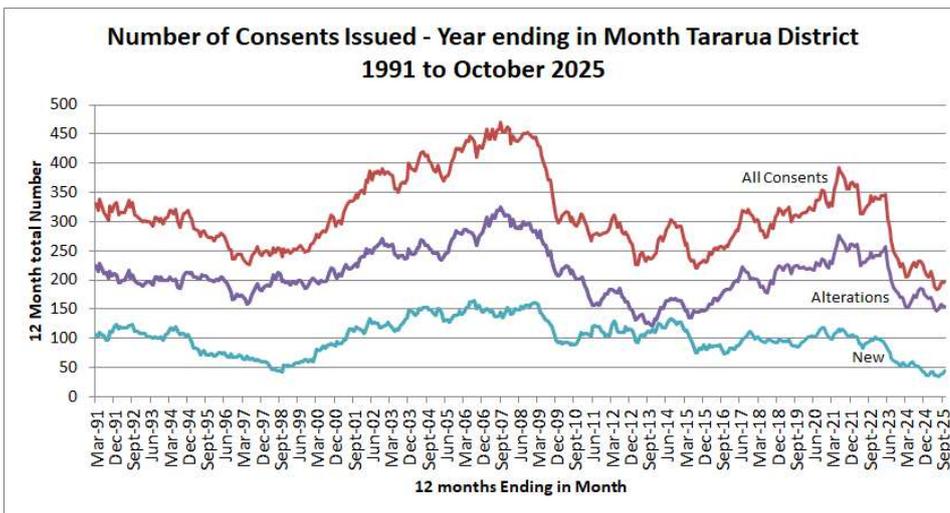
### New Houses

Nationally new housing consents have turned the corner after a significant decline over 2023 and 2024. In the year ended October 2025 new housing consents are up 6% on the year ending October 2024. While

the cycle has turned these numbers are still down 30% on the peak of the year ending May 2022. The decline from the peak of 2022 in Taranua has been over 50%. The current upturn will be welcomed by the local construction sector and may signal a modest increase in population in the short to medium term.



Note: Includes all new relocatable houses

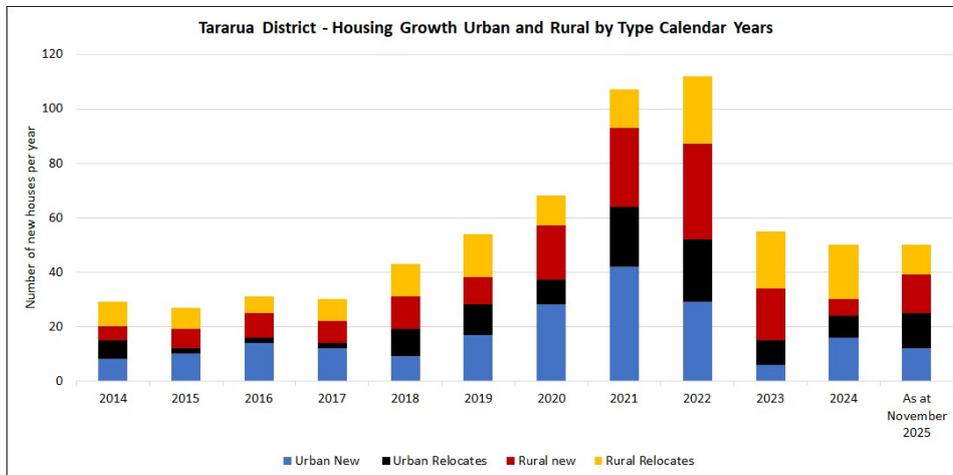


Note – new house relocates included in alterations and additions since 2015 except for those built in Taranua.

New housing activity in Taranua dramatically slowed from late 2022 as falling property prices and large increases in the costs of development and building has significantly increased the cost of a new house vs buying an existing house.

While current cost increases of subdivision development and building are now modest, it remains very expensive. Relatively low new section / house values in Taranua mean that there is little to profit for private developers.

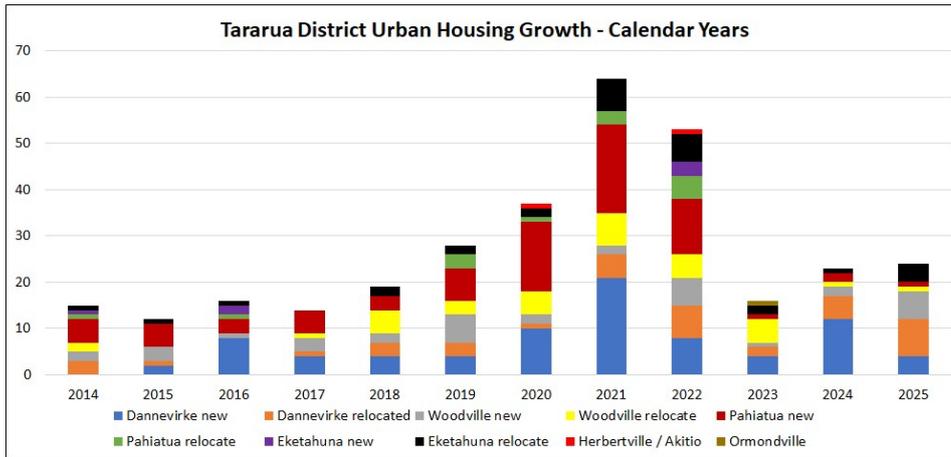
In recent months there are signs that the cycle is turning and there have been an increased number (but still modest) of new and new relocatable houses being consented. Since July there have been 29 new and relocatable house consents issued.



Of the new housing currently underway around half of all new housing consents are new on-site builds, and half are relocates almost entirely built in yards in Palmerston North. These relocates have a consent for the new house issued in Palmerston North or Feilding, with a TDC consent of foundations and services only.

In 2025 (to November) 50% of new houses are urban and 50% rural. This is an improvement on the last two years where urban housing was very low. Of note is the number of new houses in Woodville starting to come through (7 in 2025 – 6 being on site builds), both urban and on the recently subdivided lifestyle blocks. The new Highway is having an impact and there is considerable housing development being planned in and around Woodville. Dannevirke has had 4 new builds and 8 relocates in 2025. Pahiataua has only had 1 new build all year.

Of note is the assumptions in the 2024 LTP and the Growth Strategy that the majority of new housing (built on site and relocated) will be in the urban areas. For 2025 this was getting closer with 50% being urban – in 2024 it was 40%.



### Getting Older

The latest Stats NZ estimate for June 2025 median age is 42.6 years, up 0.3 years from June 2024 and up from 41.5 in 2018. This compares to 38.2 years for NZ (June 2025). This jump is partly driven by the drop in international inward migration to Taranua and the jump in residents leaving for overseas.

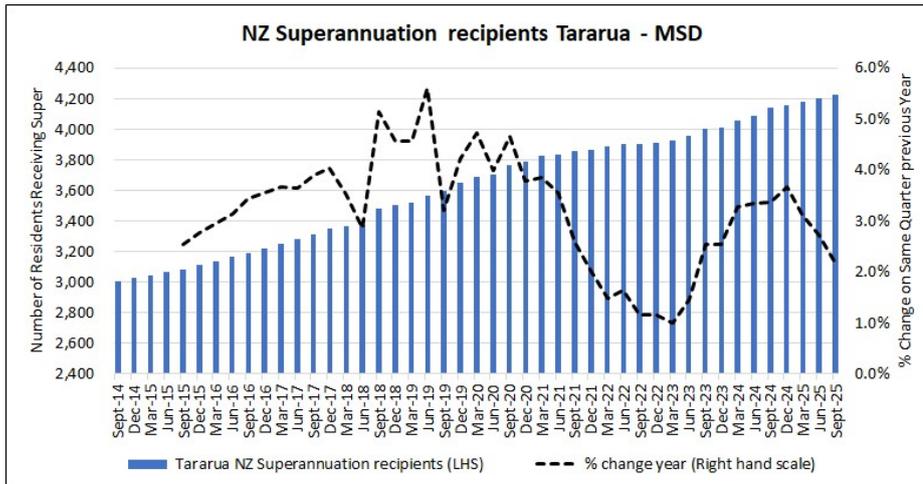
The Stats NZ estimates for June 2025 for Taranua have seen a drop in population, including downward revisions for the past few years. These estimates are now based on the 2023 Census results and include lower numbers for migration and natural increase. The total population in Taranua is now estimated at 18,950, a 0.3% drop on the June 2024 estimate of 19,000 (which was previously 19,150).

The majority of population growth in Taranua is in the 65+ years ages. In the year to June 2025 the number of residents receiving super (so aged 65+) was 4,200, 2.7% (+111 people) more than June 2024. Given that the total population estimate dropped by 50 people the only growth currently is in older people. The NZ wide increase in 65+ was 3.2%. This age group now makes up an estimated 22.2% of the population in Taranua, compared to 18% for New Zealand.

The 2023 Census results that show that residents aged 65+ accounted for 75% of the total increase in population since 2018. All other age groups amounted to a 1% increase on 2018. Children aged 0 - 15 declined by 3.7% or 144. In the last two years since the Census years the number of people aged 65+ in Taranua has grown by 8% or 300. This compares to a total population increase estimated at nil over this time.

The 2023 Census is the last Census. It is being replaced with data sourced from government databases and spot surveys. By 2030 there will be annual updates of partial census data. In the next five years there will be estimates to guide Councils. Areas with a higher proportion of Māori / Pacifica and highly deprived residents are at risk of low coverage. Stats NZ has identified this issue and intends to carry out surveys and work with iwi to address this.

This will be an ongoing risk to Taranua as under counting leads to drops in government funding allocations.



The implications for TDC are major. Services need to be delivered with an increasing emphasis on meeting the needs of older people.

### Less children

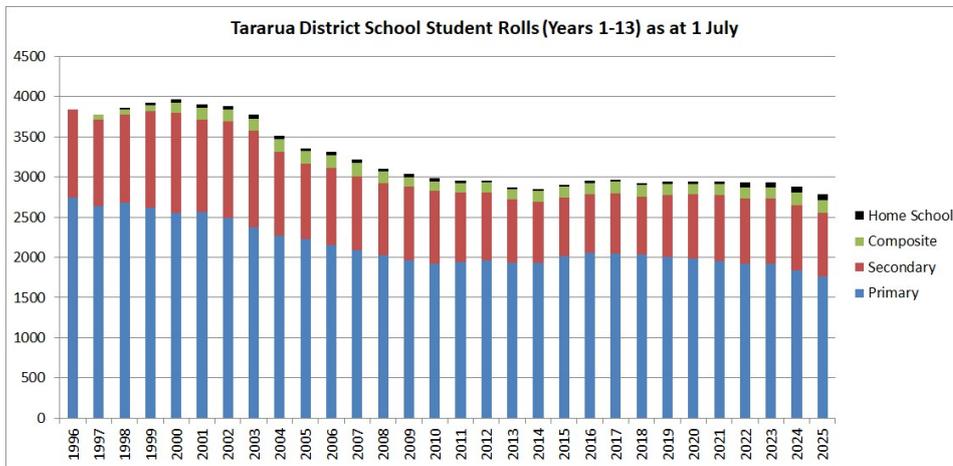
Reflecting the trends highlighted in the previous section the number of children enrolled in schools in Tararua are declining. The decline was greater in 2025 after a decade of consolidation following major reduction in numbers from 2000 to 2014. All main areas in Tararua show a decline in enrolled children except more remote rural areas.

We do not know the number of children living in Tararua that are enrolled in schools outside the district. This includes private schools and day pupils enrolled in Palmerston north secondary schools. Unless these numbers have significantly increased then the decline in children reflects the 2023 Census results.

For Council this could require a reallocation of resources especially in activities such as sports fields and future indoor recreation centres.

Schools in Tararua	Number of enrolled pupils 1 July 2025	Change in enrolled pupils from 2024
Dannevirke area	1,360	-2.9%
Woodville area	170	-5.0%
Pahiatua area	890	-4.7%
Eketahuna area	133	-1.5%
Other (more remote rural)	159	+2.6%
Homeschool (Dec 2024)	76	-1.3%

Total enrolled Pupils	2,788	-3.2%
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Emerging global trend and wildcard event - Around the world lower births are a common trend, which if continued will lead to a fundamental change in many countries' society and economies. In Japan the population is now falling by 500,000 a year and housing in many provincial areas is very cheap. In China the birth rate has dramatically reduced, and the government is offering large incentives for new births. The population in China in 2100 could collapse by 600 million people with current birthrates. India, Indonesia and Africa are emerging as the future powerhouses based on population.

Council Impacts

Council	Impact – Resources Required	Likelihood
Rating Policy / Funding	Positive (Rural) Neutral (Residential and Business)	High
3 Waters (retic and treatment)	<b>Moderate</b>	Medium

## Government Policy / Structural Change in Local Government

There is a huge amount of legislative change either introduced to parliament or proposed. This amounts to the biggest changes in local government since the amalgamations of 1989. Council is facing structural and governance changes (at Regional level) that will likely reduce the size and independence of Council. At the same time decisions on rates levels are to be constrained.

A replacement for the RMA was announced on 9<sup>th</sup> December with legislation before the 2026 national elections. It will be phased in over two years.

The rapid pace of change in legislation and government policy impacting local government is continuing, but now in a different way. Many of the legislative and regulatory changes put in place by the previous Labour government are or have been repealed. A range of changes are open for consultation with more to come.

Some of the announced changes will reduce the future costs of compliance for Council. This includes several significant changes to freshwater standards and wastewater discharge consents which is likely to reduce the capex requirements for the new Waters CCO. The requirement for urban food scraps collections (by 2030) has been removed. Some of the new changes will have a profound impact on the Council. Others will not impact Tararua much at all.

Recent significant legislative changes announced are:

- Rates cap proposed. The government has released its proposed Rates Cap to reign in high rates increases.
  - 3 Waters are exempt – likely to be a major part of rate / CCO increases. Roading CCOs may also be exempt.
  - Suggesting a target range of 2% to 4% increases per capita, per year (subject to economic growth across the economy)
    - For Councils with a declining population this could mean LOWER rates increases are allowed.
    - Councils won't be able to increase rates beyond the upper end of the band - unless they get permission from a regulator that is appointed by the central government.
    - Permission would only be granted under extreme circumstances such as a natural disaster, and councils will need to show how they plan to return to the target range.
  - Will apply to all sources of rates - general rates, targeted rates and uniform annual changes - but will exclude water charges and other non-rates revenue like fees and charges
  - Consultation is open until February 2026 and if it goes through, legislation would be enacted in 2026 and be in law from January 1, 2027. There would be a transition period before a full regulatory model would be in place by July 1, 2029.
  - May impact Council ability to access debt, or the cost of that debt.
- Simplifying Local Government – Proposals to remove Regional Council governance. Council Mayors to decide future of service delivery in each Region.

- Discussion document at this stage seeking feedback. Feedback closes 26 February 2026. Legislation mid 2026 and enacted 2027.
  - **Step 1:** Instead of electing separate regional councillors, the mayors you already vote for will collectively lead regional issues and govern the regional council. We also want to know what you think about the appointment of Crown Commissioners (appointed by the Government) to lead or join the board.
  - **Step 2:** This board of mayors will develop future-focussed plans for how the councils in your region can work together more effectively and efficiently. These plans will be developed in consultation with you, examined independently, and be approved by the Government.
    - To be called a Combined Territories Board (CTB)
- Each CTB would develop a regional reorganisation plan within two years of being established.
  - map all council functions in the region
  - recommend the best delivery model for each across the region (e.g., shared services, joint council-controlled companies, or amalgamations)
  - require mandatory consultation with communities, iwi, hapū, Māori, and stakeholders in the region
  - be approved by the Minister of Local Government if they meet statutory criteria (not by referendum).
- Earthquake prone building regulations changing (announced September 2025) and will substantially reduce the number of buildings requiring upgrades or demolition.
  - bill containing the proposed changes is expected to be introduced in the coming months
  - Removing low risk buildings and buildings in low seismic zones (Auckland, Northland and the Chatham Islands) from the EPB system.
  - Introducing tiered risk mitigation requirements, making use of new engineering methodologies, based on location and building type.
  - Allowing building owners to apply for deadline extensions, to encourage incremental progress.
  - Reducing barriers to seismic strengthening by removing the requirement for concurrent fire and accessibility upgrades.
- Systems Improvement Bill
  - The Local Government (System Improvements) Amendment Bill is intended to refocus councils on the cost-effective delivery of core infrastructure, public services and regulatory functions, and to tighten financial discipline, transparency, and governance accountability.
  - In practical terms this will not have a significant impact on Tararua DC

- Key proposed changes:
  - Narrows the purpose of local government by removing references to the four well-beings (social, economic, environmental, cultural).
  - Reinstates and refines a “core services” framework that councils must have particular regard to.
  - Refocuses the purpose statement on cost-effective provision of infrastructure, public services and regulatory functions, with a supporting role for local economic growth.
  - Amends section 17A to remove the mandatory six-yearly service delivery review requirement.
  - Strengthens financial management, performance reporting and benchmarking requirements.
  - Introduces changes to governance principles, codes of conduct, standing orders, and clarifies elected-member access to information.
  - Enables greater use of regulations to set performance and reporting requirements
  - A second Bill expected in 2026
- Repeal of development contributions, replaced with development levies and broader powers to set targeted rates
- Reforms to the Building Act
  - to support voluntary amalgamation of consent authorities to administer building consenting and inspections.
- Changing from Joint and Several Liability to Proportionate Liability - ensure councils are no longer the “last one standing”
  - An important change that will significantly reduce Council liability for issues such as leaky buildings – in legal liability cases on incorrectly consented buildings Council will only be liable for the proportion of harm that it is responsible for. Currently Council can be ‘last man standing’ and liable for 100% of costs if builders / developers no longer exist.
  - Property owners will shoulder a lot more risk, and developers / trades will be required to have insurance. Costs for building likely to increase.
- Complete replacement of the RMA with two new Acts – the Planning Act (focusing on land-use planning to enable development and infrastructure), and the Natural Environment Act (concentrates on the use, protection, and enhancement of the natural environment). The Bills will have their first reading before Christmas and then will be referred to select committee.
  - There will still be local setting of rules – but on a much narrower set of situations and activities.

- Council will still decide where zones will be – but for every zone that a land use plan might have, central government will have written the rules that apply to properties within it.
- There are five main issues that have been singled out as warranting additional regulation. Any restrictions on property rights for public benefits may require compensation to the property owner (rates waivers, extra development rights etc). These are:
  - Significant historic heritage
  - Outstanding natural landscapes or features
  - Sites of significance to Māori
  - Areas of high natural character in the coastal environment (wetlands, lakes, rivers, etc.)
  - Indigenous biodiversity
- Bundled regional plans
  - Reduced number of planners and less local decisions and rules
- 46% reduction in resource consents required,
  - Far more permitted activities and work that will not require a resource consent,
  - More permitted developments / activities / construction will likely upset many neighbours that will no longer be able to object. **“We don't like having restrictions on our property. But we do quite like having restrictions on the neighbours”** (from Stuff article).
- **A narrower set of effects** that are regulated, so more activities can happen without needing approval.
- a **clear set of national direction under each Bill to** guide decision-makers.
- **more standardisation with new** national standards across the country for environmental limits and land use.
- **one combined plan for each region** that that implements national direction and includes spatial, natural environment and land-use.
- **binding environmental limits set by central and local government** for human health and ecological limits for air, water, land and soils, and indigenous biodiversity.
- **data and technology to underpin the system.**
- **National Adaptation Framework** - first national strategy to guide how the country prepares for and responds to the impacts of climate change released November.
  - proposed National Flood Map by 2027 could significantly improve access to flood-risk information
  - new requirement for councils to prepare adaptation plans for priority areas
    - The Framework proposes to amend the Climate Change Response Act 2002 to require district councils to prepare adaptation plans for high priority areas for coastal and flooding risks.
    - Expected that these amendments will be introduced in early 2026 and followed by further legislation that will set out process requirements for preparing adaptation plans.

- Has to be integrated with the requirement for new regional spatial plans under the new planning laws.
- clear shift away from government assisted property buyouts - a long-term shift to a user-pays system which will further increase insurance costs for at risk property. In some cases, the value of high-risk properties (flooding, coastal inundation etc) are likely to fall.
- **An overhaul of the Public Works Act** to make land acquisition for public works easier.
  - new emergency provisions signalled as part of the Public Works Act reforms - which are expected to authorise land acquisition activated by an Order in Council following a declared state of emergency
- **Signalled shift from fuel excise duty to road user charges – 2027 at the earliest.**
- National Policy Statement for Indigenous Biodiversity 2023 (NPS-IB)
  - Regional Councils are required to identify new Significant Natural Areas –
    - this has been suspended for three years,
  - Changes to the NPSIB are being considered as part of the broader Resource Management Act (RMA) reforms.
- **Infrastructure, development and primary sector policy / legislation changes - consultation closed.**

The government consulted on a mix of RMA, national policy statements and national environmental standards.

This is a major package of changes covering many issues and policies. Decisions on these are expected in early 2026. The following is a brief summary of the proposed changes. A detailed list of changes was in the July Scan.

**Package 1: Infrastructure and development**

The Government aims to make it easier for councils to plan and deliver infrastructure by making four new national direction instruments and amending four existing national direction instruments.

**Package 2: Primary sector**

The Government aims to enable growth in the primary sector by making changes to eight existing national direction instruments.

The proposals to prepare and amend national direction in Packages 1 and 2 are being consulted on under section 46A of the Resource Management Act.

**Package 3: Freshwater**

The Government is seeking feedback on options to amend freshwater national direction to better reflect the interests of all water users, and on whether changes should be implemented under the existing RMA or under new resource management legislation.

This is an interim consultation step, with further consultation undertaken later this year with more details of the proposed freshwater national direction.

**Package 4: Going for Housing Growth**

The Government is seeking feedback on how the proposals in the first pillar of the Going for Housing Growth programme could fit into the new resource management system. Pillar 1 aims to free up land for development and remove unnecessary planning barriers. This is mainly for larger urban areas and has limited direct impacts on Tararua.

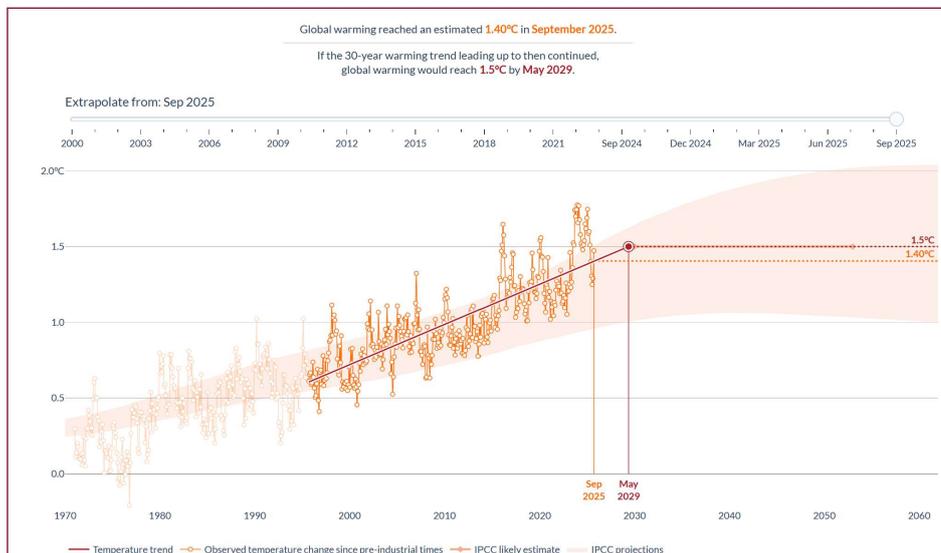
## Climate Change

Over 2025 the global response to climate change has become disjointed. The USA, following the election of Trump, has withdrawn from the Paris Accord. Numerous countries have now pulled back on policies / investments in climate adaptation – including New Zealand. The chances of bold actions succeeding in meeting the Paris Accord targets are rapidly fading. 2025 is turning out to be a very warm year (on average) but will be cooler than 2024 (but still the second warmest year recorded).

There does not appear to be political will in many economically advanced countries to increase costs to force changes on local populations that result in lower carbon emissions. The major gains being made with solar, wind and electric cars have largely been driven by economics – they are now cheaper anyway.

### Global Climate Context<sup>4</sup>

- 1.5°C Paris Accord temperature limit now almost certainly breached.
- Columbia University multi-year report: 99% likelihood UN IPCC forecasts are wrong.
- Potsdam/Stockholm research: Earth has breached 7 of 9 planetary boundaries.
- 2025 turning out to be second warmest year recorded (after 2024).
- Global response disjointed: USA withdrawn from Paris Accord; many countries pulling back on climate investments – the costs of reducing emissions is hard to impose politically.

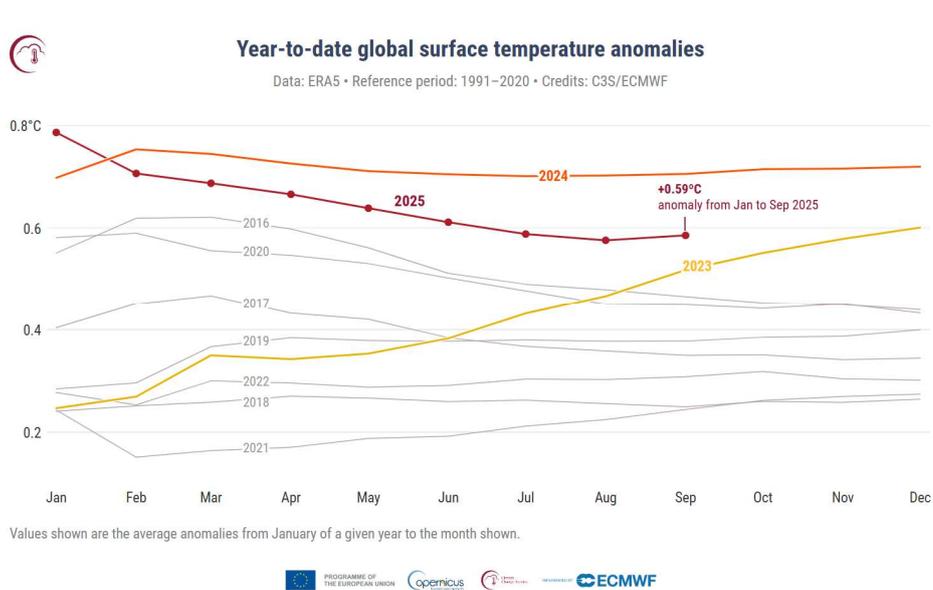


### Major legislative and target changes recently announced

- **Methane Targets:** The 2050 biogenic methane target has been lowered from 47% to 24% reduction against 2017 levels, to 14% to 24% reduction.
- **Government Carbon Neutrality:** The goal for government organisations to be carbon neutral by 2025 has been postponed to 2050.

<sup>4</sup> University of Columbia 2024 and 2025. Nature 2024.

- **Climate Change Response Act (CCRA) changes:**
  - Removing the requirement for the Climate Change Commission to provide advice on emissions reduction plans, unless requested by the Minister.
  - Substantially reducing public consultation requirements for emissions budgets.
  - Removing the link between the Emissions Trading Scheme (ETS) settings and New Zealand's Nationally Determined Contributions (NDCs)
  
- **National Adaptation Framework:** The government has released this framework, which outlines work on risk and information sharing, risk reduction, and defining roles and responsibilities between local and central government. There are 16 actions listed with more details to come.
  - The Framework is built around four pillars:
    - Risk and response information sharing
    - Roles and responsibilities
    - Investment in risk reduction
    - Cost-sharing pre- and post-event
  
- **Carbon Removals Assessment Framework:** This framework was released to assess other carbon removal activities (beyond forestry, such as wetlands) for potential inclusion in the ETS.
  
- **Flood Mapping:** The Ministry for the Environment is developing a first-generation flood map, with a 2027 delivery expected.
  
- **Extreme Weather Event Provisions:** The ETS will include provisions for recalculating carbon absorption from forests that are damaged in disasters.



**Planetary Boundary Framework Summary of Breaches<sup>2</sup>**

The Planetary Boundaries Framework identifies nine critical processes essential for maintaining global stability and the planet's life-support functions. These boundaries are crucial for maintaining the planet's health and stability.

The 2025 Planetary Health Check report reveals that seven of the nine boundaries have been breached, with all showing increasing adverse trends. This makes it essential to both increase resilience and deploy options to reduce human impacts.

- Boundaries Breached – Unsafe Levels
  - Climate Change: The planetary boundary for climate change is transgressed, with rising CO<sub>2</sub> concentrations causing global temperatures to rise and altering climate patterns.
  - Biosphere Integrity: This includes biodiversity loss, which is a critical process for maintaining ecosystem health.
  - Land System Change: Deforestation and land degradation are significant threats to the planet's health.
  - Freshwater Change: Freshwater resources have been overused, crossing the boundary for freshwater use.
  - Modification of Biogeochemical Flows: This includes agricultural pollution and other human activities that disrupt natural cycles.
  - Introduction of Novel Entities: The presence of synthetic chemicals and plastics in the environment is causing environmental harm.
  - Ocean Acidification: Excess carbon dioxide from fossil fuel emissions is leading to ocean acidification, harming marine ecosystems.
  
- Boundaries Within Safe Levels
  - The only two boundaries that remain within the safe operating space are:
    - Aerosol loading.
    - Stratospheric ozone.

The NZU carbon price has collapsed due to the government's announcement (4 November) of major reforms to the Emissions Trading Scheme (ETS). These changes include a decision to decouple the ETS settings from the country's Nationally Determined Contribution under the Paris Agreement. This decoupling is seen by the market as likely to lead to weaker settings, such as potentially increasing the volume of NZUs available or softening price controls, which lowers scarcity and consequently the price. The NZU is currently at an all time low of \$32 a unit.

The market has responded by valuing carbon units lower, meaning that the auction of new carbon units by the government are failing (currently a reserve price of \$68 / tonne - so government has received less funding than expected to pay for climate change initiatives).



Source: Interest.co 16 January 2026

**Local Impact forecasts.**

There have been no further regional climate change forecasts issued by the government. Current forecasts were detailed in the last Scan. The government has released the National Adaptation Framework and has stated that property owners are likely to be financially bailed out from natural disasters in the future. Legislation changes are coming that will be linked to the replacement of the RMA.

**Council Impacts**

Note: the resources required relates to the overall Council budgets, not what is currently allocated. This is a guess based on current knowledge.

Council Group	Impact – Resources Required	Likelihood
Roading	Significant (longer term)	High
3 Waters	Significant (water supply and Stormwater)	High
Policy across Council	Moderate	High

## Farm Product Prices and Costs – Rural Sector

**Farming Incomes - The Current Situation is very positive for Tararua farmers and will flow through to supporting businesses and retail.**

2024/25 has been a great season for pastoral Tararua farming and 2025/26 is shaping up well. Dairy payout, lamb and beef prices are at record nominal levels. The high prices are forecast to continue into 2025/26 but are likely to ease back as farmers around the world increase production in response to demand. This is already occurring for Dairy, and the forecast payout has been reduced for 2025/26. This continued increased profitability at a local level will flow through to the wider agricultural support services sector as well as retail and other sectors. This impact is lagged as farmers improve their balance sheets, reduce debt and catch up on maintenance.

The key drivers have been:

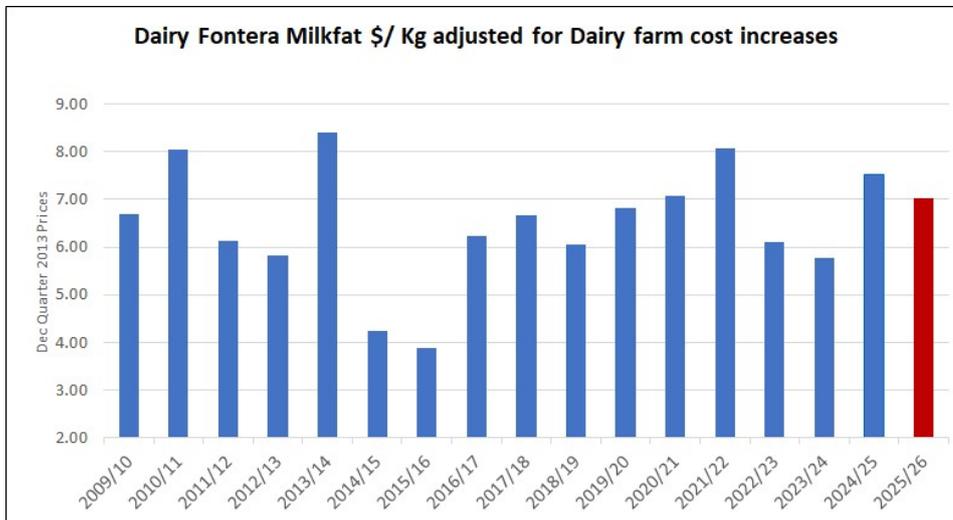
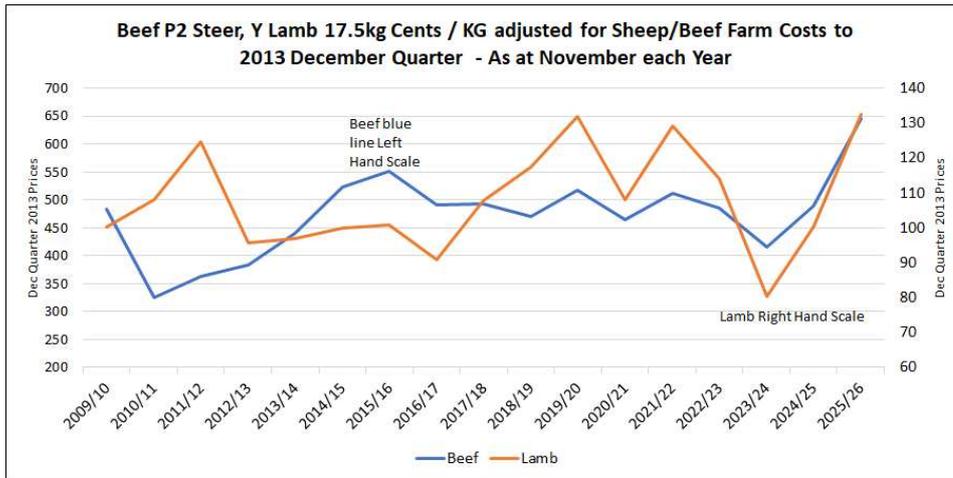
- Lower \$NZD helping to support higher prices for exports, while overall imported and domestic material costs are increasing,
- Lower interest rates,
- The increasing demand for beef and lamb from the US, UK and EU,
- Flow on market access (lower tariffs and quotas relaxed) from recently agreed trade agreements,
- No major climatic events (floods, drought etc), and
- Signals and actions from the government to reduce compliance costs and reverse some regulations that would have increased costs / reduced stock numbers further.

Risks – the USA has imposed a 15% tariff on imports from NZ. This has mostly resulted in higher prices for the US consumer as the importers appear to be paying the tariffs. Changes could be imposed at any time and markets are volatile. Recently the tariff on beef has been removed – an attempt by the US government to limit price rises for burgers.

New government regulations have restricted whole farm conversions and protections have been added for land use classes 1 – 5. The majority of Tararua LUC is 6 or higher. These new restrictions on permanent forestry are set to take effect from December this year and will limit the demand for forestry conversions in the short term. The Emissions Trading Scheme is under pressure as the market carbon price has fallen significantly, and the government carbon unit auctions have failed in 2025 to meet the reserve price. Government announcements recently have implied lower emission reduction targets.

The following charts show the latest indicator prices for beef, lamb and dairy products adjusted for farm costs (from the Farm Expense Price Index) with the 2013/14 season as the starting point. Cost adjusted beef and lamb prices are currently at record highs (adjusted for costs) for the last 15 years. This means that beef and lamb farmers, in cost adjusted terms, are seeing the best returns for at least 15 years.

On a cost adjusted basis Dairy prices for the 2024/25 season were well above the last decade average, and the 5<sup>th</sup> highest in real terms in the last 15 years. The initial forecast for the 2025/26 season of \$10 kg milkfat has been reduced to \$9.50 kg with risks on the downside. Most dairy farmers remain optimistic but increased milk production across the world (in response to the very high prices) has started to balance demand and supply. There will also be a significant cash injection (average \$200,000 per dairy farm) into Tararua from the capital return following the sale of Fonterra consumer brands after March 2026.



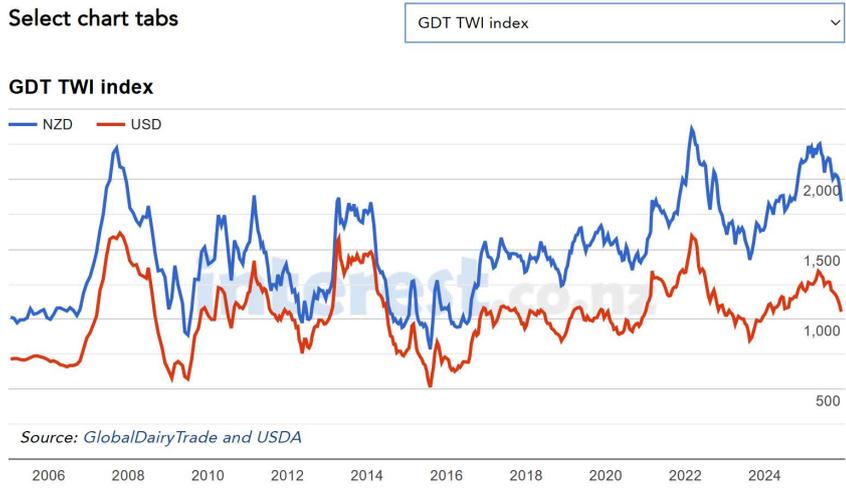
Government regulations and reporting requirements for farmers have been reduced, and a replacement for the RMA has now been released. The number of resource consents to develop or farm the land will be significantly reduced for most farmers with nationally set rules.

The NZD has fallen recently against major currencies, increasing export returns to NZ farmers and exporters. Currently the \$NZD is worth \$USD 0.582, after recovering from the .56 level. This is around the same as a year ago. Against the \$AUS we are at a decade low (87.2 cents and down 4% on a year ago) which is benefiting exporters. Against the Euro the \$NZD is down 10% for the year, the Chinese Yuan 2% and against the UK Pound down 5%.

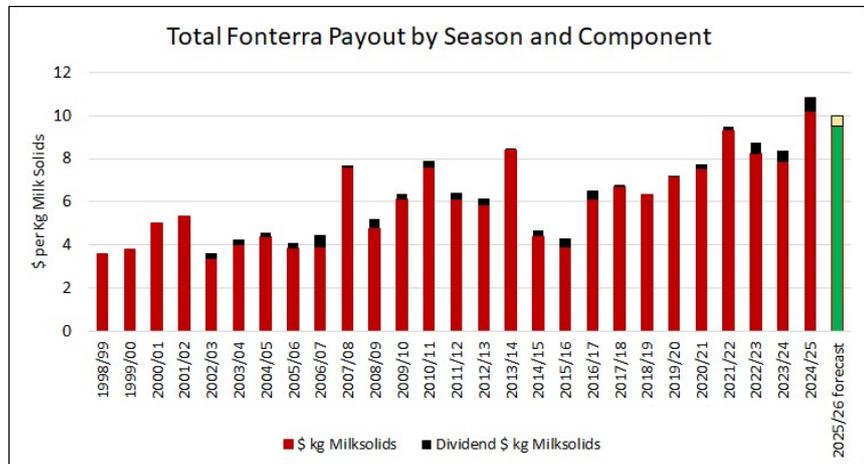
**Farm Product Prices**

Dairy milk products saw record nominal returns per kg of milkfat solids for the 2024/25 season. Current forecast by Fonterra and many analysts is for a reduced payout of 0.50 cents per kg for the 2025/26 season. Great for dairy farmers but not so great for consumers. While this is not a record income when adjusted for dairy farm price inflation it is still one of the higher returns over the last 15 years. The Global Dairy Trade price is currently 14% below the level of December 2024. Market prices have fallen about 18% from the peak 6 months ago.

In response to the high prices for dairy products milk production is ramping up across the World (where possible). It is likely that the current high returns to NZ dairy farmers will come under pressure to hold these higher prices over the full 2025/26 season.



Source: Interest.co as of 12 December 2025.



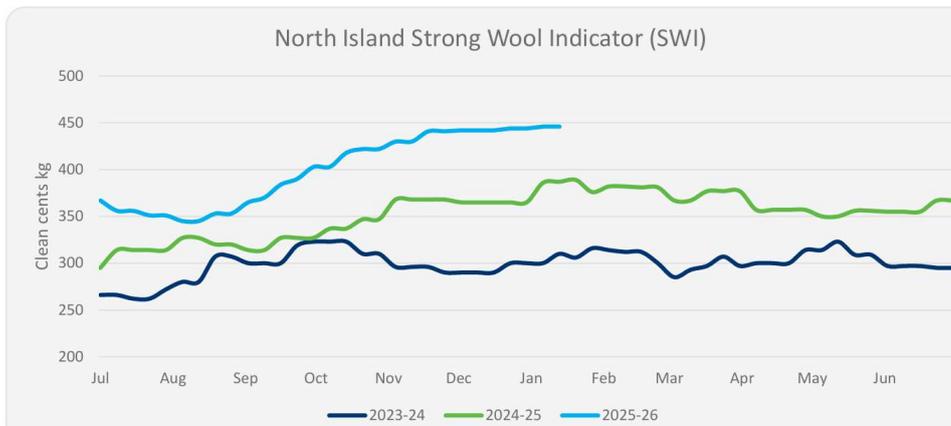
Note: A special dividend of 50 cents per share was paid to Fonterra shareholders in August 2023 (not included in the chart above).

A capital return around \$2 per Fonterra suppliers share will be paid out to all suppliers after March 2026.

Sheep meat prices have significantly increased in 2025 as strong global demand, especially from the UK and EU, has been met with less sheep meat being available. Demand from China has improved. Prices in the North Island for standard lambs (works schedule) has increased to \$191 a head, a huge 45% increase on November 2024. This is now a nominal record price. As prices have spiked many farmers are holding onto breeding stock and more of this season's lambs. This classic market response will likely mean more lambs from 2026/27. The current record prices are very likely to reduce as more lamb volume arrive.



Source – Interest.co.nz as of Saturday 10 January 2026 (17.5kg carcass weight North Island)



Source: PGG Wrightson January 2026 North Island Wool Report

Wool prices are getting closer to be cost neutral on farm, with prices increasing substantially from the last 2 years. Returns barely cover the costs of shearing, and coarse wool continues to be a by-product of many sheep farms. Low wool volumes (falling sheep numbers) and good demand = supply and demand principle is continuing to have a positive flow on for sheep farmers. Prices in 2025/26 are up 20%+ on 2024/25 and

overall costs are similar. Wool is now being selected for rental units and commercial use through the new wool carpet tile products.

Beef steer prices are at \$8.93 kg vs \$6.73 kg 12 months ago (North Island average 6 December 2025 - a 33% increase). Prices have just come off the recent nominal price record of \$9.18 kg in November. High demand from the US is driving the firm prices. While the 15% tariff has not seen any adverse impact to NZ farmers, that tariff has now been removed (for beef – not all goods). There is a reduced volume of beef available in the United States as they rebuild their beef herd (climate and feed price impacts). This is the key driver behind New Zealand’s higher prices for lean product used to supply mince for the burger market. Beef exports by value are at an all-time high.

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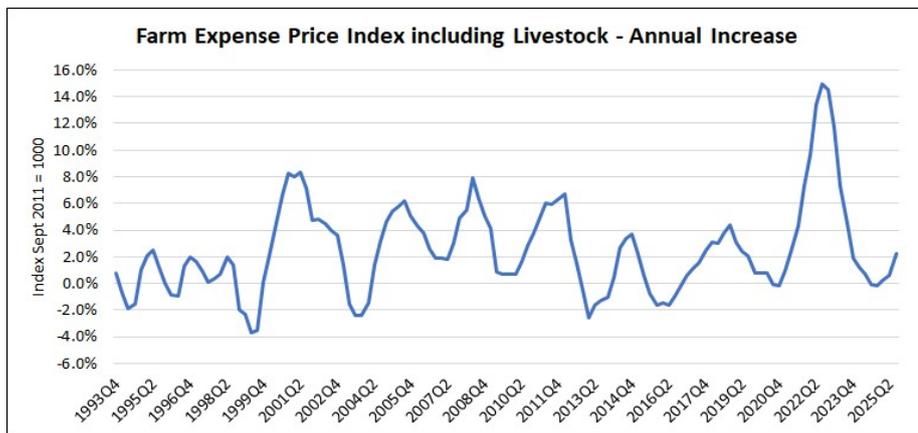
NI average

**P2 steer schedule prices**



Source – Interest.co.nz as of Saturday 10 January 2026 - (270-295kg carcass weight)

After a few years where farm costs had risen at a very high rate (peaking at 15% in the year to September 2022) the last two years has seen increased product prices and stable costs (at a high level). Farm expenses increased 22.9% in the 2 years to December 2023. Cost increases are now stable with the 2 following years seeing cost increases of just 2% (September years).

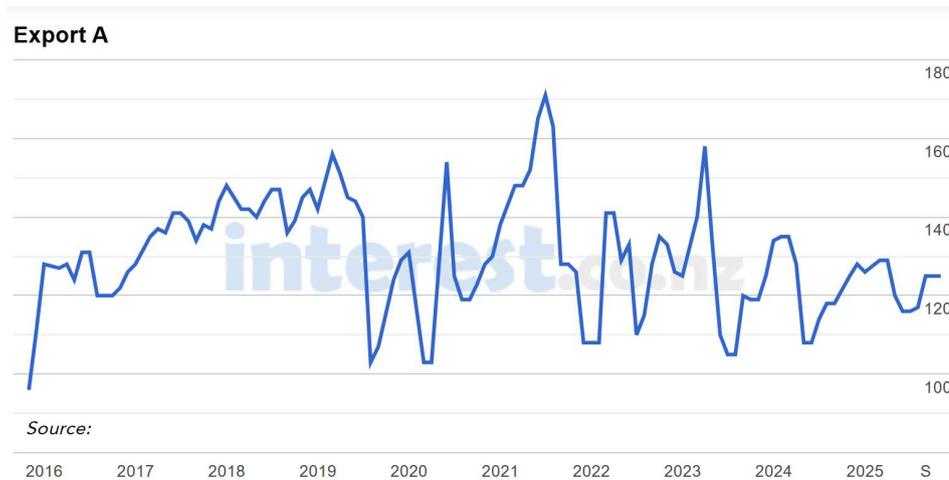


Source – Stats NZ

While some costs have continued to increase substantially (insurance, rates, electricity), this was countered by falling on-farm costs. In the year ended September 2025 costs increased by 2%. The record red meat prices have resulted in a spike in livestock prices.

Production forestry (pine) returns have been subdued for most of the last few years. Closures of domestic sawmills in New Zealand continue as construction demand remains low. When construction activity does increase, there will likely be a shortage of material. Export returns are subdued with low prices resulting in many hard to access forestry blocks being unprofitable to harvest.

On the retail lumber side in New Zealand prices are increasing reflecting higher processing costs. The closure of several large mills in 2025 has likely reduced domestic competition while construction cycle is turning with more residential building consents being issued.



Source: Interest.co from PF Olsen monthly reports.

**Council Impacts**

Note: the resources required relates to the overall Council budgets, not what is currently allocated. This is a guess based on current knowledge.

Council Group	Impact – Resources Required	Likelihood
Finance – Rating affordability	<b>Low</b>	Medium
Roading and Footpaths (from forestry)	<b>Moderate</b> (10 years) High but reducing (carbon forests) (30 years)	Medium

### 3. APPENDIX: STRATEGIC RISK SUMMARY

The following is a brief summary of strategic risks referred to in the Environmental Scan. A full list is available in the Strategic Risk Register Review report to the Risk and Assurance Committee meeting of 22 July 2025.

The full wording of Risk Appetites is available in the Risk Management Framework in the Big Tin Can.

#### 3.1. Climate Change (R00051)

- **Residual Risk:** High
- **Related Risk Appetites:** Infrastructure – Moderate (↓), Environmental/Consents – Moderate (↓), Expenditure – Low (↓), Debt & Interest – Moderate/High (→)
- **Why It Matters:** More frequent/intense events, rising insurance costs, statutory adaptation duties; pressure on roading, stormwater, water supply.
- **Controls/Treatments:** Financial headroom; resilience projects; regional climate plan; adaptation plans; insurance strategy.

#### 3.2. Natural Disaster (R00054)

- **Residual Risk:** High
- **Related Risk Appetite:** Infrastructure – Moderate (↓), Expenditure – Low (↓), Debt & Interest – Moderate/High (→)
- **Why It Matters:** Severe event disrupts core services; recovery funding and insurability uncertain.
- **Controls/Treatments:** Emergency reserves; regional EM group; corporate BCP; staged resilience works; insurance.

#### 3.3. 3 Waters Reform (R00049)

- **Residual Risk:** Severe (Target: Moderate)
- **Related Risk Appetite:** Infrastructure – Moderate (↓), Environmental/Consents – Moderate (↓), Central Govt/Stakeholders – Moderate (→)
- **Why It Matters:** CCO transition reshapes capex, consents, affordability; risk of stranded overheads.
- **Controls/Treatments:** Collaboration agreement; LoS reviews; CCO guardrails; programme review; comms plan.

#### 3.4. Legislation Changes (R00158)

- **Residual Risk:** High
- **Related Risk Appetite:** District Planning – Moderate (↓), Strategy Implementation – Moderate (→), Rates Setting – Low (→), Central Govt – Moderate (→)

- **Why It Matters:** Significant upcoming change impacting LTP.
- **Controls/Treatments:** Submissions to government; effective partnerships with iwi and government.

### 3.5. NZTA Funding (R00091)

- **Residual Risk:** High (Target: Moderate)
- **Related Risk Appetite:** Infrastructure – Moderate (↓), Debt & Interest – Moderate/High (→)
- **Why It Matters:** Shrinking national funding pool threatens renewals/resilience/safety programmes.
- **Controls/Treatments:** Advocacy; scenario budgets; define non-negotiables; co-funding options.

### 3.6. Population Growth (R00039)

- **Residual Risk:** Moderate
- **Related Risk Appetite:** District Planning – Moderate (↓), Strategy Implementation – Moderate (→)
- **Why It Matters:** Low/negative growth and ageing trend affect capex timing and affordability.
- **Controls/Treatments:** District Plan review, depreciation funding, sustainable finances, Lobby government, Infrastructure Improvement Plan

### 3.7. Ageing Population (R00157)

- **Residual Risk:** Low
- **Related Risk Appetite:** Community Relationships – Low (↑), Resourcing – Moderate (→)
- **Why It Matters:** Service mix and accessibility must pivot to older residents; workforce impacts.
- **Controls/Treatments:** Re-weight LoS; accessibility upgrades; partnerships; targeted amenity.

### 3.8. Iwi & Māori Partnerships (R00048)

- **Residual Risk:** High (Target: Low)
- **Related Risk Appetite:** Iwi Relationships – Low (→), Community Relationships – Low (↑)
- **Why It Matters:** Partnership strength underpins co-design, consent outcomes and legitimacy.
- **Controls/Treatments:** Governance and operations hui; engagement policies, electoral ward, partnership agreements.

### 3.9. Inadequate Staff Resources (R00046)

- **Residual Risk:** Moderate

- **Related Risk Appetite:** Resourcing – Moderate (→)
- **Why It Matters:** Specialist gaps risk delivery and compliance.
- **Controls/Treatments:** Clear staffing requirements, training and development.

### 3.10. Infrastructure Failure (R00044)

- **Residual Risk:** High (Target: Low)
- **Related Risk Appetite:** Infrastructure – Moderate (↓)
- **Why It Matters:** Failure of critical assets disrupts water, wastewater, stormwater, roading.
- **Controls/Treatments:** Monitoring; condition ratings; prioritised renewals.

### 3.11. Resource Consent Renewals

- **Residual Risk:** Moderate (Target: Low)
- **Related Risk Appetite:** Environmental/Consents – Moderate (↓), District Planning – Moderate (↓)
- **Why It Matters:** Renewal terms may drive unplanned capex or constrain LoS.
- **Controls/Treatments:** Track rule changes; staged capex; transparent trade-offs.

### 3.12. Access to External Funding (R00166)

- **Residual Risk:** Moderate
- **Related Risk Appetite:** Debt & Interest – Moderate/High (→), Revenue – Low (↓)
- **Why It Matters:** Tight credit or policy shifts restrict borrowing headroom.
- **Controls/Treatments:** Maintain headroom; seek credit rating; diversify revenue.

### 3.13. Forest Harvesting (R00164)

- **Residual Risk:** Moderate
- **Related Risk Appetite:** Infrastructure – Moderate (↓)
- **Why It Matters:** Heavy vehicle movements damage roads, pulling renewals off-cycle.
- **Controls/Treatments:** Route planning; developer conditions; renewals brought forward.

### 3.14. Conflicts of Interest (R00095) /Fraud (R00096)

- **Residual Risk:** High (Target: Low)

- **Related Risk Appetite:** Community Relationships – Low (↑), Stakeholders – Moderate (→), Enforcement – Low/Moderate (→)
- **Why It Matters:** Integrity failures cause financial/reputation damage.
- **Controls/Treatments:** COI policy/training; Protected Disclosures; audits; sensitive expenditure monitoring.

**3.15. Non-Compliance (Council as Consent Holder) (R00052)**

- **Residual Risk:** Severe (Target: Low)
- **Related Risk Appetite:** Environmental/Consents – Moderate (↓), Enforcement – Low/Moderate (→)
- **Why It Matters:** Breaches of DWSNZ/consent conditions drive harm, penalties, cost escalation.
- **Controls/Treatments:** Compliance capex; regulator collaboration; monitoring uplift.



**Dannevirke Service Centre**  
26 Gordon Street, Dannevirke  
PO Box 115, Dannevirke 4942  
Monday - Friday  
8:00am - 5:00pm  
**Phone:** 06 374 4080 (24 hours)  
**Email:** [info@tararua.govt.nz](mailto:info@tararua.govt.nz)

**Pahiatua Service Centre**  
136 Main Street, Pahiatua  
Monday - Friday  
8:00am - 4:30pm  
**Phone:** 06 376 0110 (24 hours)  
**Email:** [info@tararua.govt.nz](mailto:info@tararua.govt.nz)

**Eketāhuna Service Centre & Library**  
31 Main Street, Eketāhuna  
Monday - Friday  
10:30am - 12:30pm & 1:00pm - 4:30pm  
**Phone:** 06 376 0110 (24 hours)  
**Email:** [info@tararua.govt.nz](mailto:info@tararua.govt.nz)

**Woodville Service Centre, Library & isite**  
45 Vogel Street, Woodville  
Monday - Friday  
9:00am - 5:00pm  
**Phone:** 06 376 0200 (24 hours)  
**Email:** [info@tararua.govt.nz](mailto:info@tararua.govt.nz)





## Report

Date : 3 February 2026  
To : Mayor and Councillors  
Tararua District Council  
From : Scott Gilmore  
Mayor  
Subject : **Appointment of the Chief Executive**  
Item No : **11.3**

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### 1. Recommendation

- 1.1 *That the report from the Mayor dated 02 February 2026 concerning the Appointment of the Chief Executive be received.*
- 1.2 *That the Tararua District Council appoints Mr Corin Haines as its Chief Executive effective 1 March 2026, noting the appointment is for a period of five years.*

### 2. Reason for the Report

- 2.1 To seek the passing of the formal resolution of appointment for the new Chief Executive, in accordance with section 42 of the Local Government Act 2002.

### 3. Background

- 3.1 A Council must appoint a chief executive, following the procedures set out in clauses 33 and 34 of Schedule 7 of the Local Government Act.
- 3.2 Following the resignation of the previous Chief Executive in 2025, the Council resolved on 22 July 2025 to appoint an interim Chief Executive. This interim appointment was to remain in place until the newly elected Council, after the October 2025 elections, could undertake and complete the recruitment of a permanent Chief Executive.
- 3.3 After completing the recruitment process, the Council selected its preferred candidate in December 2025. It then delegated authority to the Chief Executive

Recruitment Panel to extend an offer of employment, conduct negotiations, and finalise the terms of the appointment.

3.4 On 16 January 2026, Mr Corin Haines was announced as the new Chief Executive of Tararua District Council, starting 1 March 2026.

#### **4. Discussion and Considerations**

4.1 The Council now needs to complete the process by passing the formal resolution of appointment, as required by Section 42 of the Local Government Act 2002.

4.2 Although the Council was able to delegate authority for extending an offer of employment, conducting negotiations and finalising the terms of the appointment, the Local Government Act does not allow the Council to delegate the authority for making the formal resolution of appointment.

4.3 This decision must be made at a meeting of the Tararua District Council. Accordingly, it is presented to the Council at the first scheduled meeting following the completion of the appointment process.

#### **5. Statutory Requirements**

5.1 The Local Government Act 2002 sets out the requirements for appointing a Chief Executive.

5.2 Section 42 (1) “a local authority must, in accordance with clauses 33 and 34 of Schedule 7, appoint a Chief Executive.”

5.3 Schedule 7, clause 33 outlines the skills and competencies the Council must consider when appointing a Chief Executive. Clause 34 then specifies the requirements relating to the Chief Executive’s terms of employment.

5.4 Section 42 (2) lists the responsibilities of the chief executive:

- Implementing the decisions of the Council;
- Providing advice to elected members and to community boards;
- Ensuring that all responsibilities, duties and powers delegated to themselves or any other Council officer, or imposed or conferred by an Act, regulation or bylaw, are properly performed or exercised;
- Ensuring the effective and efficient management of the activities of the Council;
- Facilitating and fostering representative and substantial elector participation in elections and polls held under the Local Electoral Act 2002;
- Maintaining systems to enable effective planning and accurate reporting of the financial and service performance of the Council;

- Providing leadership for the staff of the Council;
- Employing, on behalf of the Council, the staff of the Council; and
- Negotiating the terms of employment of the staff of the Council.

5.5 Clause 32 of Schedule 7 sets out the powers that the Council cannot delegate. Under clause 32(1)(e) of schedule 7, the Council cannot delegate the power to appoint a chief executive.

## **6. Conclusion**

6.1 Having undertaken a recruitment process following the requirements of clauses 33 and 34 of Schedule 7 of the Local Government Act 2002, and acceptance of the offer of employment by Council's preferred candidate, the last step required is to pass the formal resolution of appointment as required by Section 42 of the Local Government Act 2002.

## **Attachments**

Nil.





## Report

Date : 19 February 2026  
To : Mayor and Councillors  
Tararua District Council  
From : Allie Dunn  
Manager - Democracy Services  
Subject : **Submission on Simplifying Local Government**  
Item No : **11.4**

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### **1. Recommendation**

- 1.1 *That the report from the Manager - Democracy Services dated 19 February 2026 concerning the Submission on Simplifying Local Government be received.*
- 1.2 *That the Tararua District Council submission on Simplifying Local Government that was lodged with the Department of Internal Affairs be noted.*

### **2. Reason for the Report**

- 2.1 To present the Tararua District Council's submission on the Simplifying Local Government proposal.

### **3. Background**

- 3.1 The Government is proposing to simplify local government in two steps.
- 3.2 The first step is for the Mayors of the local Councils to form a Combined Territories Board, that will lead regional issues and govern the regional council.
- 3.3 The second step is for the Combined Territories Board to develop a plan for how the councils in the region can work together more effectively and efficiently.

### **4. Discussion and Considerations**

- 4.1 The closing date for submissions on the proposal was 20 February 2026.

- 4.2 In order to meet this deadline, the Council developed its submission which has been lodged with the Department of Internal Affairs.
- 4.3 The submission from Tararua District Council is attached to this paper, for formal discussion and receipt by resolution.

### **Attachments**

- 1 [↓](#). Simplifying Local Government - Submission from Tararua District Council - 16 February 2026



## **Simplifying Local Government: A draft proposal**

### **Submission from Tararua District Council**

**16 February 2026**

## **Introduction**

This submission is made by Tararua District Council (“TDC”), a territorial authority located in the Southern Hawkes Bay and Northern Wairarapa. TDC’s district spans the boundaries of two regional councils: The Manawatū-Whanganui Region and (to a smaller extent) the Greater Wellington Region. TDC is a member of the Manawatū-Whanganui Mayoral Forum.

TDC is a predominantly rural council serving a population of approximately 20,000 across a land area of 4,365 Km<sup>2</sup>. It has five urban centres: Dannevirke, Woodville, Pahiatua, Eketāhuna, and Norsewood.

TDC is divided into three wards and has 10 elected members. The Mayor is Scott Gilmore.

This submission has been approved by TDC elected members.

## **Key Points of this Submission**

TDC’s key points are:

- TDC agrees that a case for a change in local government does exist. However, it considers that the case for change presented in the Draft Proposal is under-developed. This risks undermining long-term buy-in to change proposals;
- TDC considers that a more direct focus on rates affordability should be a key criterion underpinning change but that this must be balanced carefully against the need to secure on a long-term basis support for change from local communities;
- The present incentives to achieve change in the local government sector could be stronger. But centrally mandated reform risks weakening political durability if reform does not adequately reflect local preferences and circumstances consistent with the principle of subsidiarity;
- Reform proposals should place greater emphasis on innovation in service delivery, rather than focussing primarily on structural change;
- Amalgamation leading to unitary authorities should be a structural reform option but should not be mandated without community support, either through the unanimous agreement of mayoral representatives on a Combined Territories Board (“CTB”), or where unanimity is not achieved, by local referendum;
- In addition to enabling amalgamation where supported, reform legislation should allow, as an acceptable alternative, shared service arrangements that effectively and comprehensively address rates affordability. Existing disincentives impeding such shared services should be removed from the system;
- To introduce competition and innovation in governance design, territorial authorities should be able to engage with more than one CTB where this reflects their circumstances. At a minimum, territorial authorities spanning more than one region should be members of all relevant CTB’s;

- TDC's preference is to limit voting on CTB's to mayors. TDC is open to non-voting Crown representation on CTB's, but considers the analysis in the Draft Proposal to be insufficiently developed to support firm conclusions at this stage;
- The voting arrangements proposed for councils on a CTB require further analysis grounded in sound decision-rights theory. The viewpoints of smaller rural and provincial councils located in a region with a large metropolitan council need adequate protection. The Draft Proposal requires further work on this point;
- Given the scale and complexity of the issues involved, more detailed governance design work is required; and
- CTB's are likely to carry a substantial workload which should not be under-estimated given that the mayoralty is already a full-time role in most cases. Strong consideration should be given to retaining some regional councillors solely for the purposes of managing existing statutory functions, allowing mayors to focus on implementing the new resource management framework and leading reorganisation discussions.

### **Overarching Observations on the Draft Proposal**

TDC supports initiatives that directly improve ratepayer affordability by eliminating unnecessary duplication and improving efficiency. In TDC's view, current local government settings do not provide sufficiently strong incentives to drive an unrelenting focus on efficiency and effectiveness. Without such incentives, the local government sector can drift and may focus on issues whose relevance to the day to day lives of people in its jurisdiction is not immediately apparent.

In this context, TDC agrees that a case for change exists.

However, reform must be balanced against the very real desire of communities to have a say in the governance of their district. If the issues were simply about the number of councils or their areas of responsibility, then the logical conclusion is to have no councils and simply rely on central government to discharge governance duties. The Draft Proposal does not suggest that, and neither does TDC.

Consequently, a robust policy framework is required to enable a decision-maker to discriminate between competing governance options to balance and address these differing concerns.

TDC's concern is that the Draft Proposal does not yet provide such a framework.

The Draft Proposal relies in places on anecdotal observations, unsupported assertions, and, in some instances, statements that lack precision or clarity. Overall, the Draft Proposal gives the impression of having been prepared under time constraints, without sufficient insight into the sector, attention to incentive structures or the importance of local democratic engagement in some communities.

The Draft Proposal is clearly linked to the wider reform of New Zealand's resource management system. TDC supports those reforms and notes the significant analytical effort that has gone into their development. By contrast, the Draft Proposal's suggested reforms appear significantly less developed, which creates a perception that they are an afterthought.

Given that TDC agrees with the Government that local government governance design can be greatly improved, TDC's aim in this submission is to offer comment and constructive suggestions that could

improve the robustness of the analysis and, in due course, lead to a policy framework that will result in governance design choices that deliver real value to communities.

### **Target Audience**

One challenge with the Draft Proposal is that it appears to address multiple audiences simultaneously, each with different levels of understanding of local government complexity and governance design. The commentary on page 8 under the heading “What does it mean for me?” illustrates this tension.

Local government is inherently complex. The issues are multifaceted, and different options carry different implications for different stakeholders. TDC considers that the effort to communicate with a broad public audience may have come at the expense of analytical depth and an evidence-based assessment of reform options.

For example, the Summary states that regional and territorial authorities “look after separate (but often similar) things.” This characterisation is inaccurate. While the distinction may not be obvious to those unfamiliar with the legislative framework, the roles of regional councils and territorial authorities are in fact distinct. A government discussion paper should aim to be accessible without oversimplifying to the point of misrepresentation (if, however, the point is about achieving efficiencies through a rationalisation of, for example, back-office functionality, then the similarity point has more merit).

That example is cited to make the point. There are other instances in the Draft Proposal of a “similar” nature. Again, as an example, the first paragraph on page 7 which appears to be drawing a causal connection between voting turnout and a need for change (arguably the declining turnout in general elections also might be caught by such analysis). People vote or don’t vote for many reasons, both positive and negative. The position is not as simplistic as suggested in the Draft Proposal.

TDC suggests that, following the collection of public feedback, officials should focus on preparing a more detailed governance design paper aimed primarily at the local government sector. Targeted feedback from the sector on such a paper could then more meaningfully inform the development of a robust framework to support informed decision-making by both central and local government

### **“Why do we need to change things?”**

This section of the Draft Proposal appears intended to set out the “problem definition” that underpins the reform proposals. TDC considers that it does not yet present a sufficiently clear, evidence-based case for change.

For example:

- While having two types of councils operating in the same [geographic?] area may be complex or confusing for some, this alone does not establish a need for structural reform. The complexity often reflects the nature of the statutory functions involved, and alternative solutions, such as legislative reform, or better communication of functions may be equally, or more, effective;
- Anecdotal references to difficulties in recruiting staff are not, in themselves, a strong basis for reform. While TDC, from time to time, does experience recruitment challenges in some areas,

these are not universal and could easily be addressed through effective shared service design (TDC notes that the private sector is not immune to recruiting difficulties); and

- Inter-council litigation is cited as evidence of a systemic problem, but such litigation is uncommon and generally arises from legitimate differences in statutory roles and responsibilities and should not automatically be viewed as inefficient or unnecessary. Councils are not flippantly expending resources on unnecessary litigation between councils.

To illustrate how such anecdotes can be counter-productive to keen analysis, one could equally cite perceived instances where the internal governance conflict inherent in a unitary council (the regional council functionality internally regulating the territorial functionality) has not resulted in good outcomes. No one system is without issues.

While TDC agrees that reform is warranted, it considers that the case for change needs to be articulated more rigorously to ensure credibility and long-term durability. Without a stronger problem definition, there is a risk that resulting legislation may not be sufficiently flexible or effective. TDC believes the analysis can be strengthened.

### **Response to Draft Proposal's Questions**

The following section of TDC's submission directly addresses questions posed in the Draft Proposal document.

#### ***Part A: Background***

##### ***1. Do you agree there is a need to simplify local government?***

As framed, the question is somewhat leading. Whether simplification is appropriate depends on the characteristics and preferences of individual communities. Arrangements that may suit a large metropolitan area may not be appropriate for provincial or rural districts.

The Draft Proposal appears to place particular emphasis on amalgamation. While amalgamation can deliver benefits in some circumstances, other options (such as well-designed and effectively implemented shared services) can also achieve meaningful improvements to ratepayer affordability. All options should be considered equally, based on their ability to deliver outcomes for communities.

Critically, a guiding principle for reform should be that decisions about governance arrangements should rest with the communities affected. Ministerial approval should be used only where all affected local authorities support the proposal and have communicated that support through their mayors (on the CTB). In those circumstances, ministerial approval can act as an efficiency mechanism to avoid an unnecessary referendum, rather than replacing outright the right of communities to express a view.

**2. What do you think of the proposed approach overall?**

TDC welcomes the overall direction of the reform proposals. However, the Draft Proposal would benefit from deeper consideration informed by practical experience of local government processes, incentives, and lessons from past reform efforts.

The alignment with resource management reform is logical, and there is merit in ensuring that governance arrangements support new responsibilities such as regional spatial planning. However, the emphasis on reorganisation appears somewhat accelerated and simplified.

That said, a more deliberate approach to the reorganisation aspect of the proposals, one that recognises the scale of concurrent reforms, considers alternative pathways to improving value for ratepayers, and is grounded in incentives, may be more likely to attract durable, bipartisan support and lead to lasting improvement.

For example, the Government appropriately allowed local authorities to develop different approaches to water reform (see the Local Government (Water Services Preliminary Arrangements) Act 2024) which required the sector to meet certain bottom lines but, within that, allowed for competitive variety in governance models. TDC recommends that a similar approach be employed if the Government chooses to progress with the suggested reform proposals.

**Part B: Simplifying Regional Governance**

**3. Do you agree with replacing regional councillors with a CTB?**

TDC does not oppose the proposal in principle and offers the following observations.

The primary focus of a CTB should be:

- Implementing the new resource management framework, including preparing required regional and local plans; and
- Ensuring continuity of existing regional council functions until legislative changes make aspects of that redundant.

Given the breadth of current regional council responsibilities, it is unclear how readily these could be assumed by a CTB composed of mayors. TDC considers that there is merit in retaining some or all regional councillors to manage existing functions, allowing the CTB to focus on reform implementation. TDC remains open-minded on this issue.

The Draft Proposal suggests that the CTB also should develop and submit a reorganisation plan for the particular area. TDC makes the following comments:

- This issue risks diverting the CTB from its core tasks. A reorganisation review could be achieved through other mechanisms. However, if the CTB is to have that responsibility then it will need to be resourced appropriately to deliver both this function and the other two functions noted above; and
- Locking a territorial authority into one specific area may be counter-productive to innovation in organisational design and service delivery. To address this, a territorial authority should

have the power either to choose another area to engage with or (and ideally) participate in more than one region's discussions where that makes sense. For example, TDC is a member of two regions and has deep connections with both. At the very least a territorial authority with such overlapping jurisdictions should have the right to opt into both sets of discussions should it wish to do so.

**4. *What do you like or dislike about the proposal to replace regional councillors with a CTB?***

From an efficiency perspective, removing a tier of elected representatives that has historically struggled to achieve visibility with communities may be beneficial, although the resulting efficiency gains are likely to be modest.

The proposal does not address internal reform of regional councils other than where this occurs as part of a wider reorganisation involving territorial authorities. If such reorganisation does not proceed, the CTB may assume ongoing responsibility for day-to-day regional governance. In that event, it would be important for the CTB to be equipped with governance tools similar to those available to territorial authorities, including a clearly defined leadership role and fixed term, as provided for mayors under the Local Government Act 2002.

As indicated earlier, careful thought is required about how best to resource and manage the workload on a CTB given the existing fulltime nature of the mayoralty. An effective resource plan (that might include, for example, retaining some regional councillors to manage existing responsibilities) is required. A strategy is only as good as its execution plan.

**5. *What level of Crown participation in regional decision-making do you prefer?***

TDC's preference is to limit voting on CTB's to mayors. TDC, however, is open to non-voting Crown representation on CTB's but given the early stage of design work, TDC does not yet hold a fixed position on this matter. The Council is open to a Crown perspective being included, provided there are clear safeguards in place to protect effective local democracy.

This could include, for example, a Crown-appointed observer participating in meetings if governance dysfunction emerges over time, or potentially from the outset if a strong case is made during the design phase.

Crown voting rights require further careful consideration. There may be circumstances where such participation is justified, for example, where a large metropolitan authority dominates a region, but this is not universally applicable. The discussion paper would benefit from a more rigorous and nuanced analysis of these issues, and further work is needed.

**6. *Do you agree that mayors on the CTB should have a proportional vote adjusted for effective representation?***

The discussion paper provides limited justification for this proposal. While there may be a case for some form of proportional voting, its appropriateness is likely to depend on regional characteristics, the matters under consideration, and the preferences of affected communities.

Effective decision-rights are always key to any governance design model. The Draft Proposal contains no substantive analysis on the pros and cons of the competing decision-rights models. But this can be easily remedied with a bit more work.

The viewpoints of smaller rural and provincial councils located in a region with a large metropolitan council need adequate protection, including consideration of the appropriate balance between population, land area, and affected waterways.

**7. *What do you like or dislike about the voting proposal for the CTB?***

As noted earlier, TDC is concerned by the lack of detail provided. More advanced governance design work is needed to support informed consideration of the proposals. TDC would welcome the opportunity to participate constructively and expeditiously in further development of this work.

**8. *What do you think about the ways that communities crossing regional boundaries could be represented?***

As noted earlier, TDC spans two regional council areas and borders a third. While it primarily lies within the Manawatū–Whanganui Region, it also includes part of the Greater Wellington region and borders the Hawke’s Bay region.

This geographic position provides Tararua with a degree of optionality when considering improvements to local government arrangements. TDC has previously exercised this optionality, for example by pursuing (in response to Local Water Done Well) an approach through a water services CCO with the three Wairarapa councils, rather than with the Manawatū–Whanganui councils.

The Draft Proposal does not adequately recognise this optionality. Its approach to cross-boundary issues is framed primarily through the lens of existing regional council boundaries. That approach may unnecessarily constrain innovation in service delivery.

TDC submits that the advantages of its geographic position should be preserved and enabled in order to maximise value for its community. As noted earlier, at a minimum, the ability for councils spanning multiple regions to participate fully in all relevant CTB’s should be considered.

***Part C: Improving Local Government***

**9. *Do you support the proposal to require CTBs to develop regional reorganisation plans?***

Requiring territorial authorities to actively consider ways to improve value for ratepayers is a positive objective, and TDC supports this direction.

However, when read alongside the examples provided, the proposed reorganisation plans appear to focus primarily on amalgamation. While amalgamation may be appropriate in some parts of the country, it should be pursued only where communities wish to do so. Where councils prefer alternative approaches, such as shared services, and can demonstrate over time (through effective benchmarking and financial outturns) that these deliver genuine value for ratepayers, then councils should be supported in pursuing those pathways.

These proposals should not be a mechanism for forcing amalgamation against community wishes.

As indicated above, TDC considers that any change proposal must be capable of delivering meaningful outcomes. Shared services initiatives, in particular, need to be pursued with vigour. Too often, responsibility for developing such proposals rests with parties who benefit from maintaining the status quo, contributing to the limited ambition and impact of past efforts. CTB's should therefore be empowered and incentivised to convert intent into tangible action.

**10. What do you think about the criteria proposed for assessing regional reorganisation plans?**

The proposed criteria are a reasonable starting point. Over time, they would benefit from greater sophistication and clearer, measurable benchmarks.

**Part D: Treaty of Waitangi and Māori Representation**

**11. What do you think about how the proposal provides for iwi/Māori interests and Treaty arrangements?**

TDC has two settled iwi in its district. At first blush the Draft Proposal's proposals appear to protect each iwi's rights and interests arising from the Deeds of Settlement. Additionally, the legal rights of Māori generally to participate in council processes appears to be retained. On that basis, TDC is comfortable with the Draft Proposal's position.

**Conclusion**

The Mayor and other representatives of Tararua District Council would welcome the opportunity to meet with responsible Ministers and officials to discuss our submission further and how best to progress needed local government reform.



Scott Gilmore  
Mayor  
Tararua District Council





## Report

Date : 19 February 2026

To : Mayor and Councillors  
Tararua District Council

From : Allie Dunn  
Manager - Democracy Services

Subject : **Requests for Information under the Local Government Official Information and Meetings Act 1987**

Item No : **11.5**

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### **1. Recommendation**

1.1 *That the report from the Manager - Democracy Services dated 30 January 2026 concerning the Requests for Information under the Local Government Official Information and Meetings Act 1987 be received.*

### **2. Reason for the Report**

2.1 To provide information on the requests for information received under the Local Government Official Information and Meetings Act 1987.

### **3. Background**

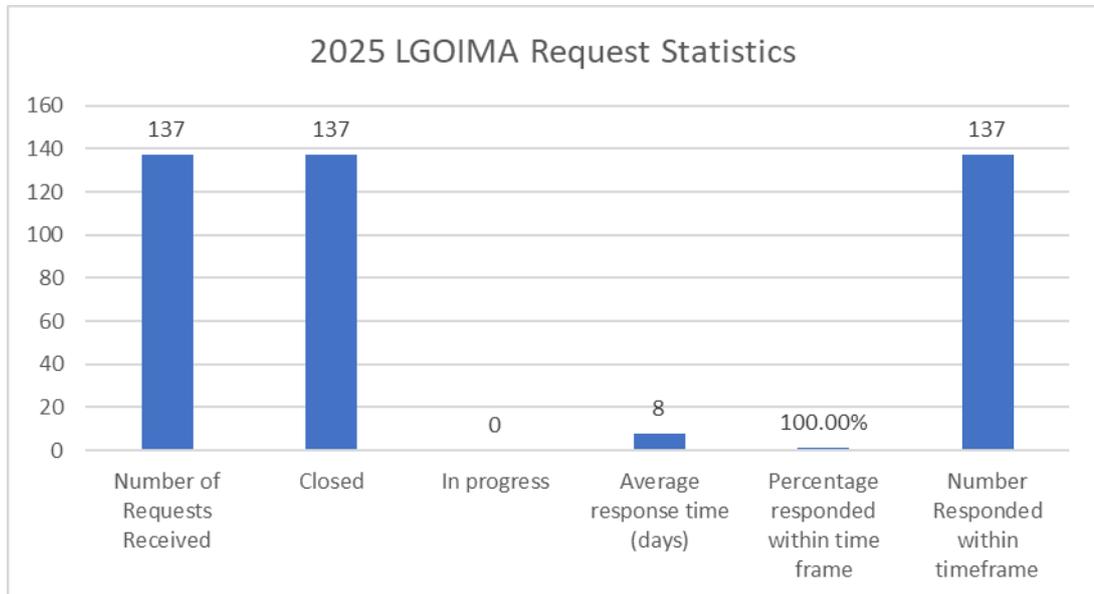
3.1 The Local Government Official Information and Meetings Act 1987 makes provision for public access to Council information.

3.2 The Act also details requirements for how Council must deal with any requests for access to information that it holds.

3.3 Each month a report is provided to Council on the requests received. This report details a list of requests received over the preceding month to date, timelines associated with the requests, and the subject matter of the requests.

#### 4. 2025 Summary Report

4.1 In 2025, 137 requests for official information were received. All requests were processed within the statutory 20 working day timeframe, with an average response time of eight days.



#### 5. Discussion

5.1 Following are tables that detail requests that were received from the start of the preceding two months up to the date of completing the report. Under the Privacy Act 2020, details and information relating to individuals have been withheld.

##### Resolved Requests

Received	Responded	# Days	Requester	Subject
2/12/2025	3/12/2025	1	Individual	Follow up question re animal control revenue and expenditure
5/12/2025	9/12/2025	2	Individual	Fluoride Supply Chain Information
9/12/2025	9/12/2025	0	Individual	Information on financial reporting
9/12/2025	9/12/2025	0	Individual	Information on legislative requirements for Annual Reporting
10/12/2025	21/01/2026	15	Speak up for women	Information about swimming pool changing

Received	Responded	# Days	Requester	Subject
				rooms
11/12/2025	21/01/2026	14	Individual	Road marking cost - Rua Roa Hall intersection
16/12/2025	21/01/2026	10	Ministry For Regulation	Hospitality review
19/12/2025	19/12/2025	0	Responsible Campers Association	Communication from Third parties that mention Responsible Campers Assoc.
19/12/2025	22/01/2026	8	Responsible Campers Association	Clarified request re Communication from Third parties that mention Responsible Campers Assoc.
22/12/2025	21/01/2026	7	Individual	Information re Eketāhuna Community Swimming Pool Contract
23/12/2025	23/01/2026	9	Individual	Painting of Dannevirke Town Hall
1/01/2026	9/02/2026	18	Individual	Annual environment report and construction design for wetland treatment system
8/01/2026	15/01/2026	3	NZ Police	House Plan for Specified Address
19/01/2026	23/01/2026	3	Individual	Information on the Contestable Fund and Recovery of Pukaha Loan Interest
20/01/2026	13/02/2026	17	Growater	Tender Documents Dannevirke Intake Flow Meter
21/01/2026	19/02/2026	20	Individual	Information relating to the requester

Received	Responded	# Days	Requester	Subject
21/01/2026	17/02/2026	18	Federated Farmers	Rates Information
21/01/2026	17/02/2026	18	Taxpayers Union	Ratepayers Report 2026 part 1
21/01/2026	17/02/2026	18	Taxpayers Union	Ratepayers Report 2026 part 2
21/01/2026	17/02/2026	18	Taxpayers Union	Ratepayers Report 2026 part 3
26/01/2026	27/01/2026	1	Individual	Signage on Herbertville Beach
26/01/2026	17/02/2026	15	My Native Forest	Support for protection of native forest on private land
26/01/2026	2/02/2026	5	Taxpayers Union	Council Art Portfolio and Expenditure
27/01/2026	27/01/2026	0	Individual	List of carriageways in Tararua District
28/01/2026	29/01/2026	1	Stuff	Unpaid rates, Cost of Recovery Council disputes
29/01/2026	19/02/2026	14	Stuff	Clarified request re unpaid rates, Cost of Recovery Council disputes
29/01/2026	30/01/2026	1	Individual	Comprehensive Parking Infringement Statistics, Revenue, Court Outcomes, and Enforcement Costs (2000–2025)
30/01/2026	13/02/2026	9	Individual	Further question about Pukaha Loan
10/02/2026	13/02/2026	3	Individual	Contact Details for Staff Engagement Proposal
12/02/2026	12/02/2026	0	Individual	Permitted Areas for

Received	Responded	# Days	Requester	Subject
				Election Billboards
13/02/2026	17/02/2026	2	Taxpayers Union	Payments on behalf of Mana Whenua

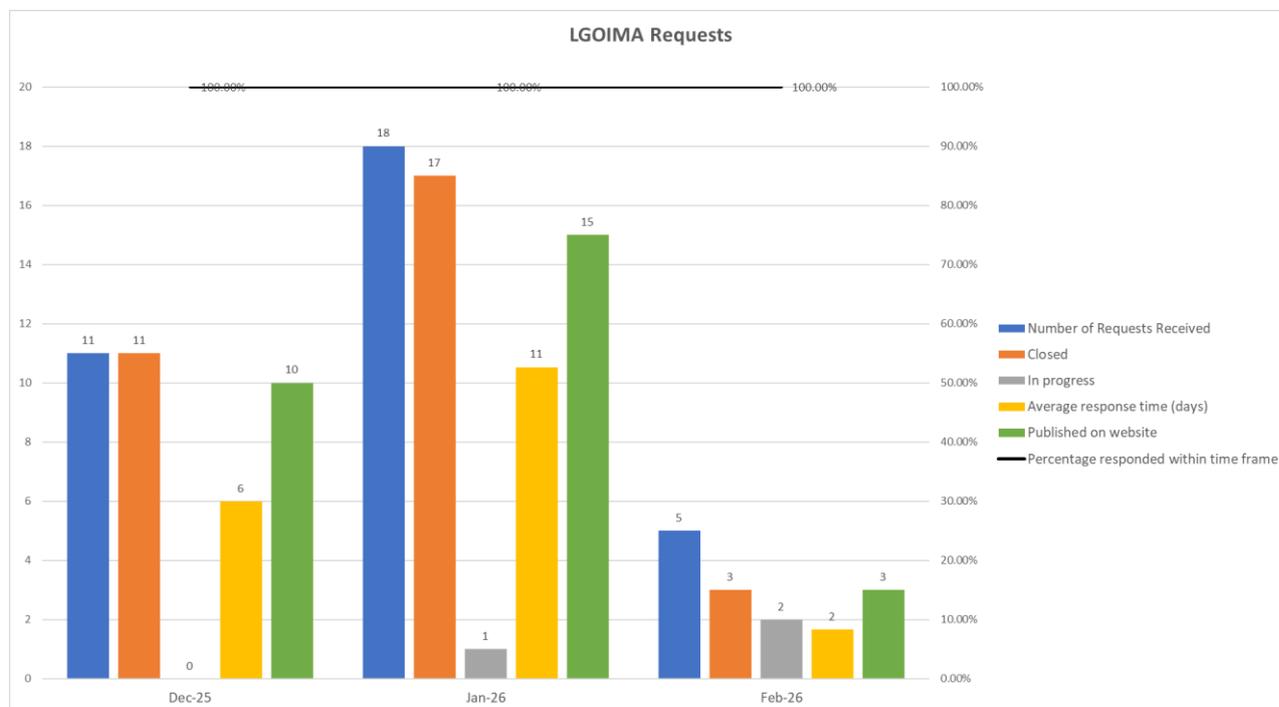
### Requests pending response

There are currently three open requests pending response.

Received	Responded	# Days	Requester	Subject
23/01/2026			Tararua Community Law	Complaints made about specified address
3/02/2026			Individual	Noise Control Complaints re Buckeridge Wood Chipping Plant in Miller Street
5/02/2026			Individual	Speed Limit Signs on Herbertville Beach

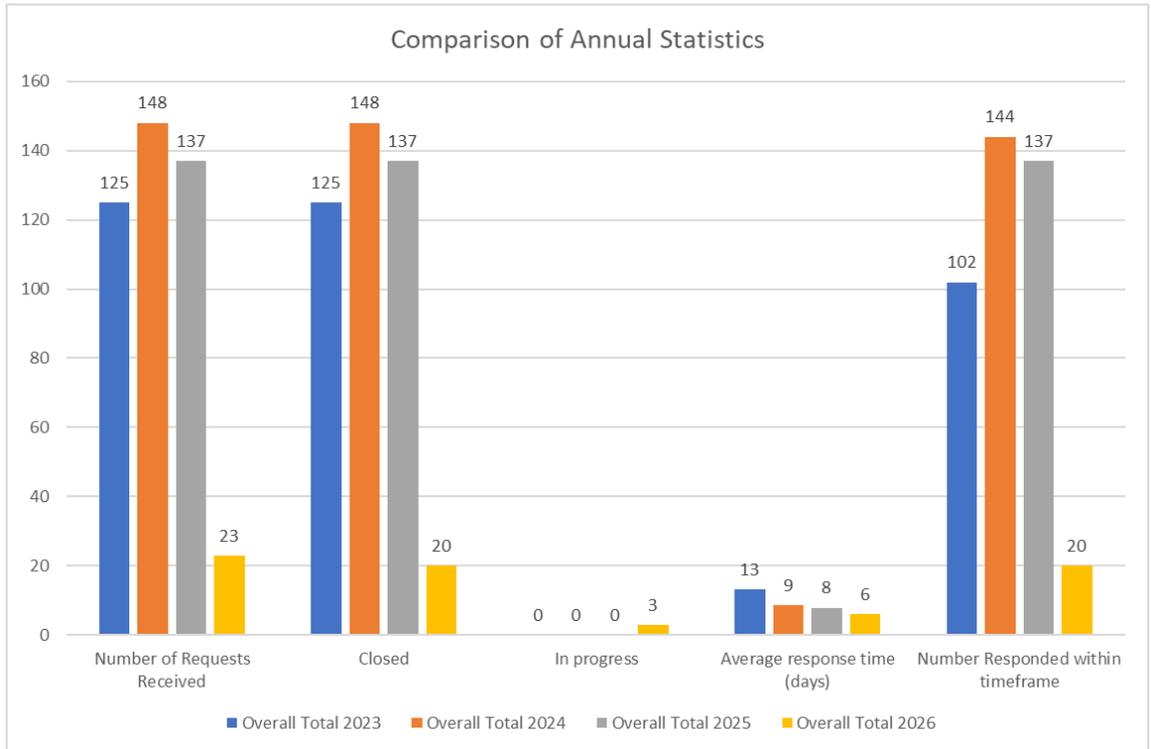
## Status of Requests Received and Timelines for Response

The following graph provides a snapshot of the status of requests received and timelines for response, for the period covered by this report.



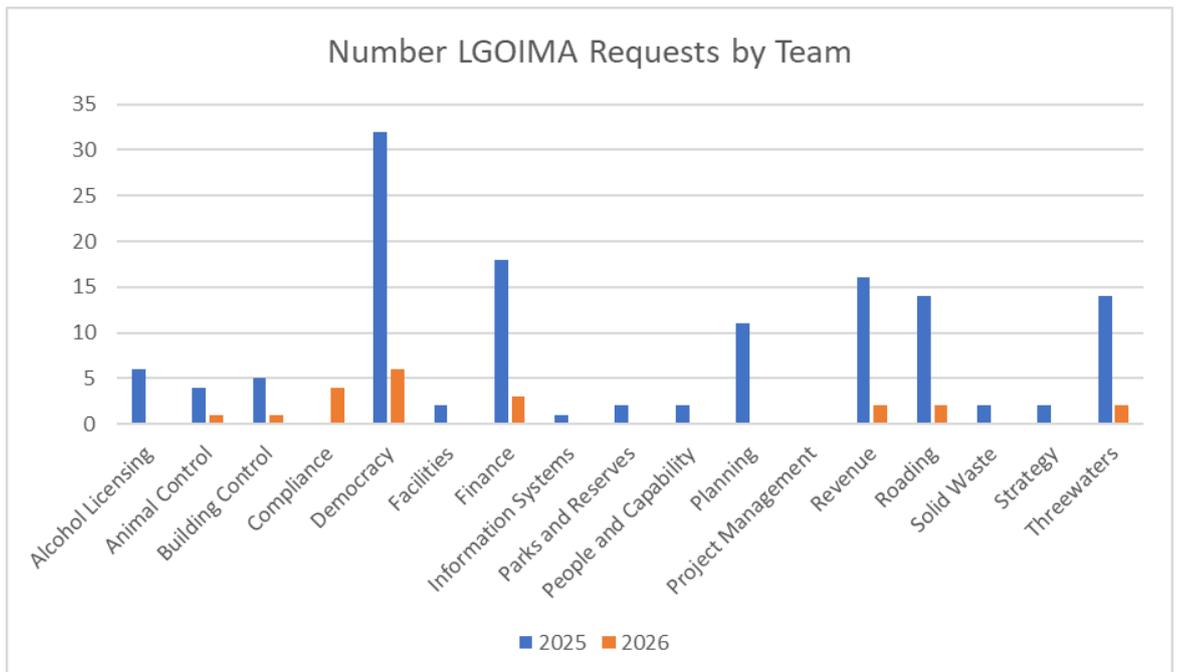
## Statistics for Calendar Years 2023 to 2025 and Comparative Data for 2026 to date

5.2 The following graph provides statistics relating to the requests for information processed during the year 1 January to date, compared against statistics for the previous three calendar years.



**Assignment of LGOIMA Requests by Team**

- 5.3 Each request for information is reviewed on receipt, and then assigned to the relevant team in Council to provide the information requested.
- 5.4 The following chart shows the spread of LGOIMA requests by the Activity the request relates to:



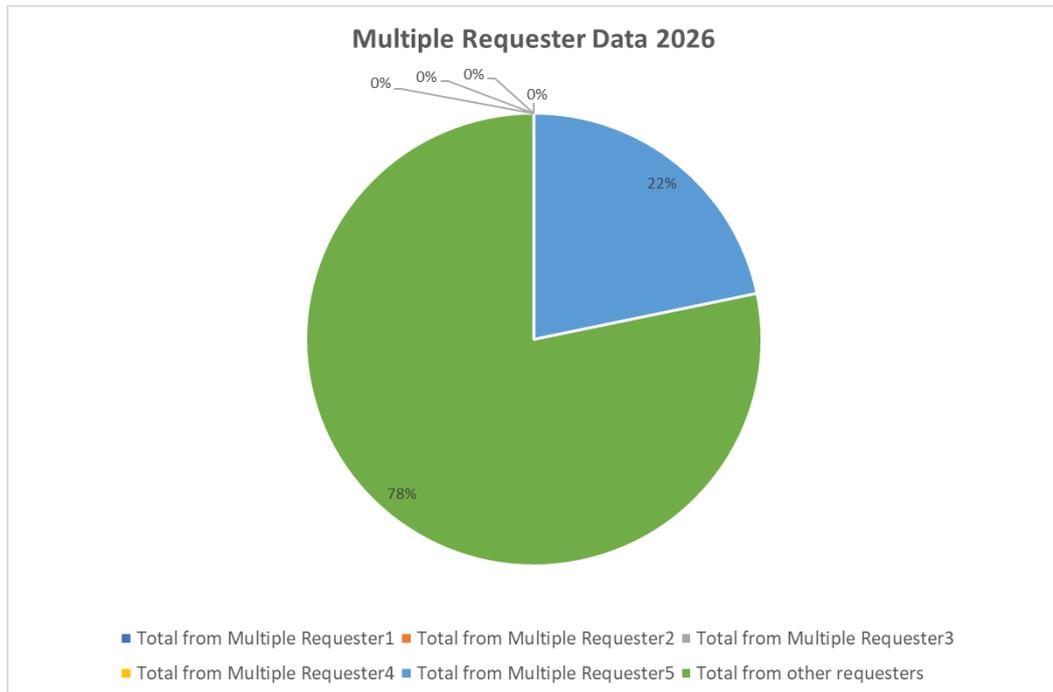
## **Proactive Release and Publishing of Local Government Official Information**

- 5.5 Proactive publishing of official information is an opportunity for Council to increase the transparency and accountability of its operations. The Office of the Ombudsman strongly encourages Councils to engage in effective proactive release of official information, and proactive release is in line with the purpose of the Local Government Official Information and Meetings Act 1987, which requires that information shall be made available unless there is good reason to withhold it.
- 5.6 Many of the requests for information responded to by Council could have an element of public interest, which means it would be appropriate to publish the information via Council's website when the information is released. For example, where there is a level of interest in the information, such as numerous requests for similar or related information. Also, whether public interest considerations such as transparency and accountability would be served by publication of the information.
- 5.7 Processes for proactively releasing information include the redaction of any personally identifying information from the request prior to publication.
- 5.8 The template used for acknowledging receipt of LGOIMA requests includes advice for the requester that their request and the response would be published on Council's website, and that any personal identifying information would be redacted from both the request and the response to ensure compliance with the Privacy Act 2020.
- 5.9 The proactive release of LGOIMA requests started from 1 July 2024. The information released can be viewed on Council's website, from the following page:  
<https://www.tararua.govt.nz/publications/information-requests-proactive-release>

## **Multiple Requests from Individual**

- 5.10 In 2024 we started receiving multiple requests from one individual, which saw a rise in the amount of officer time that needed to be diverted from their day-to-day responsibilities, to providing answers to the questions being asked.
- 5.11 Over 2024, one individual was responsible for 22.45% of the total number of requests for information processed in 2024 (33 out of 147 requests for 2024).
- 5.12 For 2025, we had another individual making multiple requests for information from the Council. Requests received from that individual were 17% of the total number of requests for information that year.
- 5.13 This year, we started the year with a number of requests from the Taxpayers' Union. To date their requests have formed 22% of our total requests received. In speaking to one of their agents to clarify a recent requests, they were asked to

consider the impact on smaller local authorities of the volume of requests they were making. We will continue to monitor this.



5.14 The Office of the Ombudsman provides guidance on dealing with multiple requests for information from a single person, allowing officers to consider aggregating multiple requests, and dealing with these as if they were a single request for information. The guidance also includes processes for charging for the provision of the information being requested, in order to recoup a portion of the costs incurred by the Council in providing the information being sought.

5.15 Due to the number of requests continuing from the new multiple requester, we are now advising the requester that there will be a charge for provision of information for any requests that involve more than one hour of officer time to respond to.

## 6. Statutory Requirements

6.1 The statutory requirements associated with access to local authority information, and the procedures for dealing with requests received for information held by local authorities, is set out in Parts 1, 2, 3, 4, 5 and 6 of the Local Government Official Information and Meetings Act 1987.

6.2 There are also requirements within the Privacy Act 2020 and the Information Privacy Principles within that Act to comply with.

6.3 As part of the requirements for providing access to local authority information, the Act sets out timeframes for:

- Making a decision on whether to grant a request and communicate that decision;

- Making the requested information available, which can be at a later date, after the decision to grant has been made;
- Transferring all or part of a request to another agency;
- Extending timeframes for both transferring a request, and making a decision and communicating it.

6.4 The Office of the Ombudsman also publishes a Guide to assist local authorities in recognising and responding to requests for information. The processes outlined in this Guide are followed by officers in responding to requests.

## **7. Conclusion**

7.1 This report presents data relating to requests for information under the Local Government Official Information and Meetings Act 1987 that have been received from 1 December 2025 to 19 February 2026.

### **Attachments**

Nil.



## Report

Date : 19 February 2026  
To : Mayor and Councillors  
Tararua District Council  
From : Keshaan Te Waaka  
Councillor  
Subject : **Portfolio Report - Youth**  
Item No : **20**

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### 1. Recommendation

1.1 *That the report from the Councillor dated 19 February 2026 concerning the Portfolio Report - Youth be received.*

We have prepared and distributed a letter to all kura and youth organisations across the district. The purpose of this correspondence is to introduce the Youth portfolio and to initiate direct contact with the spaces where our young people are actively engaged.

Our intention is to:

- Build strong, ongoing relationships with school leadership and youth providers
- Create accessible pathways for rangatahi voice into Council
- Better understand the aspirations, challenges, and priorities of our young people
- Increase visibility and presence in youth spaces across the district

### Waitangi Commemorations – Supporting Tira Hoe

Over Waitangi, I had the privilege of being present at Waitangi Treaty Grounds to support a group of approximately 30 rangatahi and whānau members from across the district, including:

- Pongaroa
- Eketāhuna
- Pahiatua
- Woodville
- Dannevirke

These rangatahi were part of a Tira Hoe, which translates to “paddling group”.

Over several months, I was fortunate to observe and support their preparation journey as they trained to paddle a waka during the Waitangi Day commemorations.

Their training extended far beyond physical fitness. It included:

- Learning haka and waiata
- Practising traditional chants
- Developing paddling technique and teamwork
- Learning whakapapa and local histories
- Creating their own hoe (paddles)

The discipline, commitment, and pride demonstrated by this group was outstanding. Their participation at Waitangi was not only a significant personal achievement, but also a moment of representation and leadership for our wider district.



**Attachments**

Nil.





## Report

Date : 20 February 2026

To : Mayor and Councillors  
Tararua District Council

From : Keshaan Te Waaka  
Councillor

Subject : **Portfolio Report - Marae, Kōhanga Reo, and Kura Kaupapa Māori**

Item No : **21**

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### 1. Recommendation

- 1.1 *That the report from the Councillor dated 20 February 2026 concerning the Portfolio Report - Marae, Kōhanga Reo, and Kura Kaupapa Māori be received.*

Over the past month, Cr. Erana and I have focused on initiating meaningful connections with all marae, kōhanga reo in the district, as well as Te Kura Kaupapa Māori o Tamaki Nui A Rua, with an emphasis on whakawhanaungatanga and strengthening relationships across the district.

Erana and I curated introductory letters to all marae and Kōhanga Reo within the district, as well as to our local Kura Kaupapa Māori. These letters were sent out last week.

In our correspondence, we formally introduced ourselves in our portfolio roles and requested the opportunity to meet kanohi ki te kanohi (face-to-face) with each community. The purpose of these hui is to build relationships, listen to aspirations and challenges, and ensure strong communication channels moving forward.

All hui are scheduled to be completed by the end of April.

### Responses to Date

We are pleased to report that, to date, approximately half of the marae across the district have responded positively to our outreach.

**Te Kura Kaupapa Māori o Tamaki Nui A Rua** has responded and extended an invitation for both Erana and I to attend their upcoming whānau hui (school community meeting) at Mākirikiri in three weeks' time.

**Te Kapua o Te Rangi Kōhanga Reo**, based in Pahiatua, has also responded warmly. They have invited us to attend the upcoming korowaitanga (graduation ceremony) for all Ngāti Kahungunu Kōhanga Reo from **Wairoa** through to **Te Wairarapa**.

This significant event is being hosted by Te Kapua o Te Rangi Kōhanga Reo, bringing together 54 Kōhanga Reo. It presents a valuable opportunity to engage with a wide network of Kōhanga Reo leadership, whānau, and tamariki.

### **Acknowledgement of Marae Response to Weather Events**

Following the recent severe weather events across the district, it was evident that many marae were prepared to act as places of shelter and support for our wider community should the need arise.

We would like to formally acknowledge and extend a sincere mihi to our marae committees and whānau who continue to serve as strong pou (pillars) for our communities. Their preparedness and ongoing commitment reflect the enduring role of marae as centres of care, resilience, and leadership within our district.

### **Attachments**

Nil.



## Report

Date : 19 February 2026  
To : Mayor and Councillors  
Tararua District Council  
From : Scott Gilmore  
Mayor  
Subject : **Mayoral Update**  
Item No : **22**

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### 1. Recommendation

- 1.1 *That the report from the Mayor dated 19 February 2026 concerning the Mayoral Update be received.*

It's been a busy start to the year, including attending many community events over the summer period. Thank you to all the organisers who've put in so much time and effort to bring these events to our communities. Your work doesn't go unnoticed.

Since our last update, Council has appointed Corin Haines as our new Chief Executive. Corin will join us on 1 March from Masterton District Council. We were fortunate to receive a high calibre of applicants. Corin stood out for his ability to think differently, lead meaningful change, build trust and buy in from both staff and the community, and maintain a strong focus on service delivery. He's a people focused leader and we're looking forward to welcoming him into this vital role. A formal resolution to confirm his appointment is included in this meeting.

Work is continued on Council's Annual Plan, with a clear focus on keeping any rates increase to a more manageable level for our community while still protecting the delivery of essential services and infrastructure. We know any increase will be challenging for many households. We're working hard to strike the right balance and to limit the impact as much as we can.

At the end of January, Council, senior staff and our incoming Chief Executive took part in a two day strategy workshop. The focus was on how we work together as a team and agreeing our key priorities. We are very conscious of doing things in an affordable way, so rather than

using a traditional conference venue, we stayed local and made use of the Woodville Bowling Club. It proved to be an excellent space for what we needed and a good reminder of the quality venues we have across the Tararua District. The workshop's given us a strong foundation as we begin preparation for our Long-term Plan, which is already under way.

Another significant focus since my last update has been my involvement in the Stakeholder Group for our new water CCO. The group's been interviewing prospective board members, with decisions to be made shortly. Appointing a capable board is a critical step in progressing the new entity. While the process is time consuming, it's important we secure the right people and ensure the needs and perspectives of our district are reflected from the outset.

On Sunday 15 February, I made the decision to pre-emptively declare a local state of emergency based on severe weather forecasts. The predicted conditions were described as comparable to Cyclone Gabrielle and the 2004 floods and posed a credible risk to life and property if they eventuated as forecast. It wasn't a decision I took lightly. However, I was advised that an early declaration would give our teams and response agencies the powers and flexibility needed to act quickly if conditions deteriorated.

Timing was a key consideration. The worst of the weather was expected overnight. If a declaration became necessary, it made sense to act during daylight hours so systems could be put in place properly and our community had time to prepare. The safety of our people is always our top priority. I'm relieved that the weather didn't arrive as expected but pleased that we were well prepared if it had.

I want to acknowledge our Emergency Management team for their professionalism and commitment. Our Emergency Management Officer, controllers and staff stepped away from their usual responsibilities to ensure we were prepared. In particular, thank you to those who remained on duty throughout Sunday night and into Monday morning to monitor conditions and be ready to respond.

A few other highlights since our last meeting include:

- The opening of the latest Rinitawa Art and History Exhibition
- Attending the Ākitio Beach Community and Ratepayers AGM
- The official reopening of the Eketāhuna / Mellemskov Museum
- Judging the "Pooch Party" at the Dannevirke A&P Show
- Visiting Mr Ron Lowe to celebrate his 100th birthday

I'm looking forward to the work ahead as we move further into the year and as we continue focusing on delivering for our communities.

## **Attachments**

Nil.