



Minutes of a meeting of the Tararua District Council held in the Council Chamber, 156 High Street, Dannevirke on Wednesday 25 February 2026 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
- Mr H Featonby - Group Manager - Operations
- Ms T McDonald - Chief Financial Officer
- Ms J Smith - General Counsel
- Mrs S Walshe - Finance Manager
- Ms S Lawrence - Project 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

4.1 Public Forum - Angus Maniapoto

Mr Maniapoto, accompanied by Mr Thomas Scott, spoke about his concerns with the painting contract for the Dannevirke Town Hall, where the scaffolding

contractor selected was not a local business. He spoke about his concerns that using businesses from outside of the district would mean a large sum of ratepayers money leaving the district rather than contributing to local economic development. Mr Scott also spoke about his concerns with the contract for scaffolding not going to a local business and asked for clarification of what policies the Council had to look after local businesses in its contracting. He also spoke of a solution for local businesses to strengthen relationships with each other, and advocated for Council to play a leading role in that to support local businesses and contractors.

The Mayor noted that contracts sometimes were let as a master contract. The contract for the Dannevirke Town Hall was a painting contract, with the successful tenderer to provide all associated services for that work. With regards to Council being more involved with all the separate levels in a contract, that could come at a cost for example rates affordability. He noted that any decisions the Council had to make had to take affordability into account. He advised that Council's Procurement Policy had a value first weighting, and within that it looks towards local. In summary he noted that there were learnings that could be taken and had to make sure everyone had a fair go at getting work and getting best value for ratepayers. He thanked Mr Maniapoto and Mr Scott for speaking at the meeting.

5. Notification of Items Not on the Agenda

5.1 Late item of business – Ormondville Viaduct Viewing Area- Licence to Occupy

The following item of late business was notified for consideration:

Ormondville Viaduct Viewing Area- Licence to Occupy

The purpose of the item is to seek approval for issuing a licence to occupy for a section of paper road in Ormondville for the purpose of establishing a viaduct viewing area.

The reason the item was not included on the agenda for the meeting was due to operational assessments not being completed prior to this agenda being published.

The consideration of the item cannot be delayed until a later meeting due to the need for timely approval from Council to enable construction to be completed over the next few weeks.

That the item "Ormondville Viaduct Viewing Area- Licence to Occupy" be accepted as a late item of business.

Mayor Gilmore/ Cr Wards

Carrie

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

Cr E L Peeti-Webber – DMCI Application for Funding

7. Confirmation of Minutes

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.

Crs Corlett/Wallace

Carried

8. Community Boards and Community Committees Reports

8.1 Minutes - Dannevirke Community Board

That the minutes of the Dannevirke Community Board meeting held 15 December 2025 be received.

Crs Amboy/Johns

Carried

8.2 Minutes - Explore Pahiatua Community Committee

It was noted that Councillors Corlett and Naylor were in attendance at the February meeting, however were not recorded in the minutes as being present.

That the minutes of the Explore Pahiatua Community Committee meeting held 3 December 2025, and meeting held 4 February 2026 be received.

Crs Kennedy/Corlett

Carried

9. Minutes Action List

9.1 Decision Action Items

During discussion of this item, an update was provided on the Water Services Organisation advising that the company was likely to be incorporated towards the end of March or early April, at which point the directors would be appointed. The meeting noted that Mayor Scott Gilmore was Tararua District Council's representative on the stakeholders group and was involved in that process.

Clarification was also sought on progress with the Plan Stop application. It was advised that this matter was awaiting decision by the Minister.

Clarification was also sought on the definition of "TBA" which had been noted as the due date for items added to the list from the committee meetings held in the past two weeks.

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

Crs Corlett/Peeti-Webber

Carried

10. Reports

10.1 Request for funding by Dannevirke Multisport Complex

Having declared a conflict of interest, Councillor Peeti-Webber left the meeting at 9:54am.

Lina Castles and Sam Jones, of Dannevirke Multisports Complex gave a presentation outlining their project vision, shared the skate park virtual design, and spoke about the fundraising they had undertaken. They noted that they were keeping the momentum for fundraising going. They outlined the design programme and timeline, and noted the estimated cost was \$460,000. They noted that the basketball court was ready to go, just awaiting receipt of the Geotech report. The next steps were to complete final skatepark design and construction pricing, and then would begin the basketball court earthworks. The community impact would be to have a safe and social recreation space, youth engagement and wellbeing, enhanced use of the upper Domain, and long term benefit for Dannevirke. They spoke about a recent meeting held at the upper Domain with the Friends of the Domain group to show the plans and footprint of the skatepark. They thanked the Council for continued support of their project.

In response to a question about where the remaining funding would come from, it was advised that applications were being made to the Lotteries Foundation and Eastern and Central Community Trust.

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

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.

Crs Wallace/Johns

Carried

Councillor Peeti-Webber returned to the meeting at 10:24am.

10.2 Adoption of the Environmental Scan as Supporting Information for the Long Term Plan 2027- 37

The Tararua District Council considered the report of the Group Manager – Strategy and Information dated 16 February 2026 that presented 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. It was noted that the environmental scan is an input to the forecasting assumptions, which is what is used to plan for the Long Term Plan.

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.

That Council adopts the Environmental Scan as supporting information for the consultation document and the Long Term Plan 2027 – 37.

Crs Johns/Wards

Carried

10.3 **Appointment of the Chief Executive**

The Tararua District Council considered the report of the Mayor dated 2 February 2026 that sought passing of the formal resolution of appointment for the new Chief Executive, in accordance with section 42 of the Local Government Act 2002.

That the report from the Mayor dated 02 February 2026 concerning the Appointment of the Chief Executive be received.

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 up to five years.

Mayor Gilmore/Cr Corlett

Carried

The meeting adjourned at 10:38am and resumed at 10:51am.

10.4 **Submission on Simplifying Local Government**

The Tararua District Council considered the report of the Manager – Democracy Services dated 19 February 2026 that presented the Council’s submission on Simplifying Local Government proposal, that was submitted to the Department of Internal Affairs by the deadline of 20 February 2026.

That the report from the Manager - Democracy Services dated 19 February 2026 concerning the Submission on Simplifying Local Government be received.

That the Tararua District Council submission on Simplifying Local Government that was lodged with the Department of Internal Affairs be noted.

Crs Naylor/Wallace

Carried

10.5 **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 30 January 2025 that provided information on requests for

information received under the Local Government Official Information and Meetings Act 1987. The Council noted the multiple requests for information being received from one organisation, and suggested that a record be kept of the time and cost of responding to these requests.

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.

Crs Peeti-Webber/Corlett

Carried

11. Portfolio Reports

11.1. Portfolio Report - Youth

It was noted that since submitting their report, Councillors Amboy and Te Waaka had sent letters of introduction out to schools. Their kōrero was targeted at high school aged students, but included years 7 and 8 as well.

That the report from the Councillor dated 19 February 2026 concerning the Portfolio Report - Youth be received.

Crs Te Waaka/Amboy

Carried

11.2. Portfolio Report - Marae, Kōhanga Reo, and Kura Kaupapa Māori

Councillor Te Waaka noted that she attended the Kōhanga Reo whanau day on Saturday.

That the report from the Councillor dated 20 February 2026 concerning the Portfolio Report - Marae, Kōhanga Reo, and Kura Kaupapa Māori be received.

Crs Te Waaka/Peeti-Webber

Carried

The meeting adjourned at 11:06am and resumed at 11:11am.

12. Presentation - Department of Internal Affairs

Rebecca Maplesden, Partnership Director of Department of Internal Affairs, was in attendance and gave a presentation outlining the key thematics of Local Government reform. She talked about the case for change and outlined the Government's preferred option for change.

The Chief Executive noted in Tararua District Council's submission on Simplifying Local Government that there needed to be care taken about the lens being used to frame the arguments, as one person's barrier was another person's local democracy. The presentation talked about "barriers" to reorganisation. He noted that these should be looked at as hurdles, to ensure the affected communities were able to have their say. He gave an example of the proposal for

reorganisation of the Hawkes Bay Councils, which was stopped due to the community voting against the proposal.

The presentation continued, outlining the steps being taken.

Step 1 – unify regional governance through combined territories board to replace the separately elected regional councillors.

Councillor Naylor commented about the voting powers for the new combined territories board, noting the functions of regional councils was to do with land rather than services to people so this needed to be taken into account through voting rights.

Step 2 – enable locally-led reorganisations through the combined territories boards preparing a regional reorganisation plan on to more efficiently and cost-effectively deliver local infrastructure, public services and regulatory functions by all councils within the region.

The Mayor noted that our communities were concerned about having choices and sought clarification as it seemed the direction that Government wanted councils to go in was amalgamation rather than shared services. In response it was clarified that options were from Council Controlled Organisations, shared services and could include amalgamation and that would play out through conversations with the community on what works best for your community.

It was noted the Regional Reorganisation Plan on how to more efficiently and cost-effectively deliver local infrastructure, public services and regulatory functions would need to be consulted on and delivered within two years.

The Chief Executive noted that one of points in the Tararua District Council submission related to the Minister of Local Government being the decision maker regarding the Regional Reorganisation Plan. If the plan did not have unanimous support of all member Councils, there was concern the Minister's decision could be overriding community choice. He asked whether that was a sound base for durable policy making. In response it was noted that this would need to be considered in the next steps in decision making.

Clarification was also sought about whether the Minister would have to take the recommendation from the majority of the members of the Combined Territories Board.

Ms Maplesden spoke about the rapid review of regional council roles and functions which would inform the Regional Reorganisation Proposals. The Mayor expressed concern of the Combined Territories Board having not only the capacity, but also the knowledge to be serving in the governance arm of a regional Council. He asked whether there would be flexibility for allowing the current regional Council to serve out its term, which would allow the members of the Combined Territories Board the time to develop plans and engagement with their respective communities. He noted that being a Mayor was a full time job.

Undertaking the Combined Territories Board on top of that and effectively being a regional councillor could be challenging. He asked how committed the Government were to removing that layer in the short term.

In response Ms Maplesden noted the level of feedback on those concerns and advise they were considering how they could mitigate these.

Mayor Gilmore proposed that one option he would like considered is leaving the regional councillors in place, noting they were democratically elected, and this would leave the Mayors to get on with the Regional Reorganisation Plan.

Ms Maplesden outlined the following points to note:

- engagement document seeking public feedback on the proposals;
- all existing Treaty settlement arrangements relating to regional councils remain unchanged;
- regional council funding to be used to put together the Regional Reorganisation Plans as there would be no separate Government funding accompanying the proposals; and
- Councils would need to determine the arrangements that best meet the needs of their regions.

Councillor Naylor questioned from what budget the Regional Councils would find the funding for the Regional Reorganisation Plans from, as it wouldn't be in their Long Term Plans or Annual Plans.

The next steps and timeline for Simplifying Local Government were outlined, noting legislation was expected to be passed mid 2027 with implementation and transition being undertaken in 2029.

It was noted that the Local Government election in 2028 would potentially change some members of the Combined Territories Board.

A concern was also raised that the Simplifying Local Government would be a dilution of democracy, focusing too much on the cost of democracy at the expense of democracy.

The next part of the presentation was about Rates Capping, noting the targeted consultation closed a few weeks ago. An outline of the model was provided, noting there would be a transition period between 2026 and 2029. The next steps were for Cabinet to consider the feedback received from the consultation and relevant legislation brought to the House this year.

With regards to Resource Management reform, the key system changes and direction of the Planning Bill and Natural Environments Bill were outlined.

An outline of the reform timetable was provided.

The Mayor thanked Ms Maplesden for taking the time to attend the Council meeting noting it was sincerely appreciated.

Councillor Te Waaka left the meeting at 11:58am and returned at 12:00pm.

13. Items not on the Agenda

13.1 Late item of business – Ormondville Viaduct Viewing Area- Licence to Occupy

The Tararua District Council considered the report of the Group Manager – Operations dated 24 February 2026 that sought approval in principle for a site-specific exception to Council’s standard approach to managing unformed legal roads, enabling a modest community-led viewing area at Ormondville.

That the report from the Error! No document variable supplied. dated Error! No document variable supplied. concerning the Error! No document variable supplied. be received.

That the Tararua District Council approve in principle the establishment of a community-led viewing area on part of the unformed legal road adjacent to the Ormondville Viaduct, with implementation subject to the matters outlined in Section 4 of the report and formalised through a Licence to Occupy.

Crs Johns/Wallace

Carried

14. Portfolio Reports - Continued

14.1. Portfolio Report – Te Apiti Governance Group

Councillor Johns spoke about meeting of the Te Apiti Governance Group held recently at Horizons Regional Council. He advised that he had moved a motion for the Woodville Domain Board to become a member of Te Apiti Governance Group, due to a significant portion of the area Te Apiti Governance Group encompasses being under the management of the Woodville Domain Board for the past 150 years. This motion was passed unanimously.

15. Mayoral Update

In addition to the written update provided, the Mayor spoke about the successful visit by the Polish Deputy Prime Minister on Friday, accompanied by the Polish Ambassador and delegation. He noted that a written update will be provided to the next meeting and thanked everyone involved in the visit.

Councillor Corlett commented on the Mayor’s report on the Emergency event and

thanked everyone involved in responding to the event. He noted that the Tararua District had been flagged as an orange alert level, and believed that in a situation where there could be risk to life for example from falling trees, that the alert level should be set at red.

That the report from the Mayor dated 19 February 2026 concerning the Mayoral Update be received.

Mayor Gilmore/Cr Wards

Carried

16. Farewell to Interim Chief Executive

Mayor Gilmore noted that this was the last Council meeting of Interim Chief Executive, Malcolm Alexander. He formally thanked Mr Alexander for his huge service to the Tararua District and the invaluable advice provided. He acknowledged that Malcolm has had the interesting time of a joining a council at the end of one council and the beginning of the next council and has supported the council through a number of challenging situations.

He presented Mr Alexander with a plaque commemorating his time with the Council

Councillors expressed their thanks for his service and sound advice provided, noting he had helped grow Council's knowledge especially with regards to working with central Government.

Mr Alexander thanked everyone for their kind words, noting they meant a lot to him. He said it had been a privilege to work with the Tararua District Council and he had enjoyed it immensely. He acknowledged the staff and executive leadership team, and wished everyone and the district all the best for the future.

17. Public Excluded Items of Business

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

Confirmation of Minutes

Civic Honour Nomination for Community Service

Land and Community Building Disposal Plan (Review of Council-owned Buildings)

Delegation of Authority to Sign Agreement for Purchase of Land and Property - 33 York Street, Dannevirke

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.

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

Carried

The meeting went into public excluded session at 12:22pm and resumed open business at 2:21pm.

There being no further business the Mayor thanked those present for their attendance and contributions, and the meeting closed at 2:21pm.