



Dannevirke Community Board

Minutes of a meeting of the Dannevirke Community Board held in the Council Chamber, 156 High Street, Dannevirke on Monday 15 June 2026 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 Gilmore
Cr S Wards (Deputy Mayor)
Cr C Corlett

Mr C Haines – Chief Executive
Mrs A Dunn – Manager – Democracy Services
Mrs S Anthony – Democracy Support Officer

2. Apologies

There were no apologies.

3. Public Forum - Dannevirke Deer Park Group

Representatives of the Dannevirke Deer Park Community Group were in attendance to provide an update. Trevor Moore and Tracy Winther spoke on behalf of Our Place Dannevirke Inc. They advised that a committed, multi-skilled volunteer team—comprising deer farmers, fencers, tradespeople, and supporting organisations—is in place and ready to assume responsibility for the day-to-day care of the park.

A proposal was made for a 10-year stewardship arrangement, structured as two five-year terms, under which the group would take on operational responsibility. This would enable the park to be revitalised for community use while minimising costs to Council. The group would assume ownership and day-to-day

management of the deer, facilities, and the wider lower domain area.

The presenters noted this represents a significant opportunity, highlighting that without community involvement the park is likely to continue declining and require ongoing Council expenditure. Under a community stewardship model, the park could instead become a safe, active, and valued public asset.

It was acknowledged that there are limited precedents for this model and that costing is still being refined. Initial work will be required to bring the park up to a safe and usable standard. The group intends to reduce costs through volunteer labour, donated materials, and local expertise; however, Council support—particularly in the initial stages and for key infrastructure—will be important to the project’s success.

The proposal was framed not as creating new costs for Council, but as reducing long-term expenditure while protecting an existing asset and enabling community ownership. The group indicated they are ready to proceed from 1 July, subject to Council support.

It was clarified that ownership, animal health, and welfare responsibilities for the deer would transfer to the incorporated society, working alongside two or more deer farmers responsible for animal handling, movements, and associated compliance requirements. The introduction of a suitable stag was proposed to support fundraising through the sale of fawns, with a stag already offered for this purpose.

In response to a query regarding fencing upgrades, it was advised that a donor has offered to supply materials (including posts and netting), contingent on a confirmed 10-year plan to ensure long-term investment value.

The Chair thanked the presenters for their attendance and presentation.

4. Notification of Items Not on the Agenda

Nil

5. Declarations of Conflicts of Interest in Relation to this Meeting’s Items of Business

Nil

6. Confirmation of Minutes

That the minutes of the Dannevirke Community Board meeting held on 20 April 2026 (as circulated) be confirmed as a true and accurate record of the meeting.

Christison/Hynes

Carried

7. Tararua District Council Report

7.1 Report from Tararua District Council

A query was raised regarding whether Council had received any feedback from central government in relation to the audit costs of over \$300,000 and the proposal to request those costs be reduced. It was advised that given the recent announcement of significant reform changes, Council is currently focusing its efforts on those matters to avoid diluting the message.

That the report from the Tararua District Council meetings held 29 April 2026 and 27 May 2026 be received.

Wallace/Amboy

Carried

8. Reports

8.1 Community Board Budget Report 2026-27

The Dannevirke Community Board considered the report of the Manager - Democracy Services dated 26 May 2026 that presented information on the Board's budget for the 2026-27 financial year, and a reconciliation of expenditure to date for the current 2025-26 financial year.

Clarification was sought regarding the costs associated with the Spring Festival. It was advised that the expenditure related to a mail-out flyer funded by the Board to promote the event. The report reflects the previous year's spend as an indicative guide only, and the Board retains discretion over how funding is allocated in the coming financial year.

That the report from the Manager - Democracy Services dated 26 May 2026 concerning the Community Board Budget Report 2026-27 be received.

That the Dannevirke Community Board confirms that it will set aside one third of its budget to be used for General Assistance Grant funding in the 2026-27 financial year, with up to two formal advertised funding rounds to be held.

Christison/Wallace

Carried

8.2 Wackrow Memorial Youth Award Trophy Upgrade

The Dannevirke Community Board considered the report of the Democracy Support Officer dated 05 June 2026 that sought consideration to upgrade the Wackrow Memorial Youth Award trophy.

It was acknowledged that, while this represents an expense, maintaining the trophy in good condition is important. Reference was made to a recent event held in Eketāhuna for the Alf Rowden Humanitarian Award, where the trophy had

undergone the same re-silvering process, resulting in a significant improvement in appearance. This work, undertaken as an Eketāhuna Community Board decision, was considered worthwhile as the trophy now presents to a high standard. It was further noted that the Wackrow Memorial Youth Award has a long-standing history, and that the cost of maintenance is minimal over time.

That the report from the Democracy Support Officer dated 05 June 2026 concerning the Wackrow Memorial Youth Award Trophy Upgrade be received.

That the Dannevirke Community Board approves the payment of \$870.00 from its discretionary funds to re-plate in silver the Wackrow Memorial Youth Award Trophy.

Christison/Hynes

Carried

8.3 Proposed Carry Over of Funding for Dannevirke Easton Fountain Works

The Dannevirke Community Board considered the report of the Manager - Democracy Services dated 05 June 2026 that sought confirmation from the Board to seek approval from the Council for a carry forward of unspent funds from the Board's 2025-26 discretionary funding budget to the 2026-27 year towards the Dannevirke Easton Fountain Project costs.

The Chair and Deputy Chair met with Council officers to discuss the potential carry-over of remaining funds from the current financial year. It was proposed that these funds be set aside for the Easton Fountain Project until further costs are confirmed.

It was noted that project work is ongoing, with significant progress being led by John Phillips. The project is complex, involving reconfiguration to enable water recycling, as the previous system resulted in substantial water loss. Work is underway to develop a more efficient and sustainable recirculation system. The intention is to secure funding to assist with refurbishment costs as the project progresses.

That the report from the Manager - Democracy Services dated 05 June 2026 concerning the Proposed Carry Over of Funding for Dannevirke Easton Fountain Works be received.

That the Dannevirke Community Board recommends:

That the Tararua District Council approves the carry forward of remaining funds from the Dannevirke Community Board's Discretionary Funds 2025-26 for addition into the 2026-27 year's budget towards the Dannevirke Easton Fountain Project Costs.

Christison/Wallace

Carried

8.4 System of Voting for Local Elections

The Dannevirke Community Board considered the report of the Manager - Democracy Services that advised of the opportunity to change the voting system to be used at the next two triennial elections and any by-elections that take place after the 2028 triennial election.

A query was raised regarding the voting system and how local representation would be maintained in the event of a proposed amalgamation. Members were reminded that this report relates only to the current governance structure and should not be conflated with potential future changes arising from amalgamation.

The report seeks the Board's view on the voting process for Tararua District Council under the existing arrangements, noting that any changes arising from government-approved reorganisation would apply from the 2028 elections and would supersede this work. It was noted that government policy has been announced and that councils may submit proposals through a voluntary process; if approved, changes would take effect for the 2028 elections, otherwise a backstop process would apply.

It was further noted that, under current assumptions, a 2028 election will proceed on existing boundaries, with elected members required to undertake regional council responsibilities. While this report assumes a Tararua District Council election in 2028, it may become irrelevant if structural changes occur. Members were advised that Council is legally required to make a decision on the voting system, with public notice to be issued by 19 September 2026, and that there is provision for a public poll if requested.

It was queried what percentage of votes were received in the previous election, and it was advised that this information would be provided to the Board. The Board considered that further discussion was required and agreed to defer the matter to the next informal meeting, with a decision to be made at a subsequent formal meeting.

Members were cautioned that, in undertaking further consideration, they should be mindful of potential confusion around voting systems during a period of significant change. They were encouraged to assess the types of councils that use each system and consider their comparability, noting that each option has advantages and disadvantages. It was acknowledged that this is a complex issue, and the Board was commended for taking the time to carefully evaluate the options, as previous discussions at Council level have typically been brief.

That the report from the Manager - Democracy Services dated 29 May 2026 concerning the System of Voting for Local Elections be received.

That the Dannevirke Community Board note that the Tararua District Council is required to advertise the System of Voting to be used in the next local elections

no later than 19 September 2026.

That the Dannevirke Community Board feedback on the System of Voting for Local Elections be left lying on the table for consideration at the 17 August 2026 meeting of the Dannevirke Community Board .

Christison/Wallace

Carried

8.5 Management Report

The Dannevirke Community Board considered the report of the Democracy Support Officer dated 04 June 2026 that provided an update on key activities and items of interest as reported to the Community Connections Committee on 20 May 2026 and to the Infrastructure and Projects Committee on 10 June 2026.

A query was raised regarding the disposal of sludge from settling ponds, including the associated costs, potential for local disposal options, and whether any research had been undertaken. The Chief Executive advised that cost information would need to be confirmed, noting from prior experience that discharge to land would require appropriate consents and drying of the sludge. It was agreed that further information, including costs, would be obtained and reported back to the Board.

An update was sought on the Mayor's Taskforce for Jobs (MTFJ), particularly regarding its direction and the reduction in second tranche funding due to unmet milestones. It was advised that targets were not achieved due to low referral numbers over an extended period, and that the reduction in funding was not of concern as expenditure had also been lower. It was noted that changes to MTFJ contracting arrangements and participant criteria have created challenges, highlighting the need to ensure effective use of Council and coordinator resources. It was agreed to extend the programme for a further 12 months, with ongoing monitoring to ensure value is being achieved. The Mayor will continue to review the programme regularly. Members acknowledged the positive impact of the initiative on young people and the local business community. It was noted that while the programme is not Council-funded, funding constraints and central government priorities do influence its delivery, and it remains important to ensure funding is used effectively.

Members noted their support for a review of contestable funding and sought an update on its progress, including whether Community Board funding was included. It was advised that a report is close to being presented to Council, with a focus on outlining options. Progress had been impacted by the resignation of the staff member previously responsible, and the work is being completed to ensure it is robust. It was clarified that Community Board funding is considered separately, with no changes proposed for the current Annual Plan year. Any potential changes will be considered as part of the Long Term Plan (LTP)

development and consultation process.

That the report from the Democracy Support Officer dated 04 June 2026 concerning the Management Report be received.

Amboy/Hynes

Carried

8.6 **Portfolio Programme Project Report**

The Dannevirke Community Board considered the report of the Democracy Support Officer dated 04 June 2026 that provided an update on the key portfolios, programmes and project statuses reported to the Infrastructure and Projects Committee on 10 June 2026.

In relation to the review of the Carnegie Building, a query was raised regarding the expected timing of the earthquake-prone buildings report. It was advised that current indications from central government are that the report is due in September, at which time it will be presented to Council.

That the report from the Democracy Support Officer dated 04 June 2026 concerning the Portfolio Programme Project Report be received.

Amboy/Phillips

Carried

8.7 **Decision Action Items for Dannevirke Community Board**

It was noted that six nominations have been received for the 2026 Wackrow Memorial Youth Awards. A guest speaker and judging panel are yet to be confirmed.

It was noted that, in relation to Market Day and the proposed closure of Ward Street, pricing for traffic management is yet to be confirmed and will be discussed further at the next Dannevirke Community Board informal meeting.

A request was made for updates and action plans to be provided at the next formal Board meeting in relation to the Anderson and Waterloo Street footpaths, Tamaki River Road concerns, and Cyclone Gabrielle damage on Top Grass Road. It was noted that while an update on the CRM process had been included in the management report, there has been no progress on the physical works. The Chief Executive will request that the Group Manager – Operations provide an update to the Board at the next formal meeting. It was further noted that no dedicated funding for footpaths was secured for the district. This will need to be considered as part of the Long Term Plan, including decisions on strategic priorities and financial contributions, acknowledging the potential impact on rates. Members were encouraged to keep these matters front of mind during LTP discussions and to communicate to the community that increased investment in this area will have cost and trade-off implications. It was also noted that funding remains

constrained, with priority given to more urgent work programmes.

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

Amboy/Hynes

Carried

9. Reports from Board Representatives Appointed to Organisations and Assigned Responsibilities

Dannevirke Multisport Trust - Work is ongoing to secure additional funding, including obtaining quotes and completing funding applications. The basketball court project is awaiting an engineer's report, after which it is expected to proceed. It was also noted that the final skate park plans have been completed and are ready for implementation.

Road Safety meeting - the next meeting will be in July 2026.

Emergency Management meeting - further discussion on the impacts of recent weather events and opportunities for improvement. It was noted that one outcome was the lowering of Wainui River levels. Staff training was also discussed, and it was advised that a dedicated Emergency Operations Centre space has now been established within the Council Service Centre.

Dannevirke Community Vehicle Trust - the AGM for the Trust is coming up in August 2026.

Iwi liaison - It was noted that two meetings had been held in recent months with kaumātua from Ngāti Kahungunu. The meetings were described as constructive and rewarding, with discussions covering proposed council amalgamation and other district matters. The engagement was considered valuable.

Phil Lamason Memorial Trust - It was reported that the project is progressing well, with Corten steel materials sourced from Australia expected to arrive within the next one to two weeks. Excavation is anticipated to commence within six to seven weeks, with completion targeted for mid-October, subject to weather conditions. A positive response to funding efforts was also noted.

Dannevirke and Districts A&P Association - power upgrades have been installed at the bandstand to improve resilience for show events and food stalls. It was also noted that the Association's AGM is upcoming, and additional committee members are being sought. The grounds were described as being in excellent condition and a valuable community asset.

Chamber of Commerce - the year is progressing well. The recent Service Spotlight featured Dart Panel and Paint, with the next scheduled to be Eileen Mary Care Home. An After 5's event was held at the Ministry of Social Development and was well attended, with the next event planned for 30 June 2026 at Westlow Workshop. It was also noted that a Christmas subcommittee has been established to coordinate the Dannevirke Christmas Parade.

Tararua Community Youth Services - it was noted that Cr Amboy and Cr Te Waaka attended a recent meeting, which was described as insightful, and

expressed a commitment to continuing to build the relationship.

Wai Splash (Tararua Aquatic Community Trust) - An update was provided on Wai Splash, noting that an event will be held on the morning of 28 June 2026 to mark the opening of the new Splash Pad. The project was commended as a significant improvement to an already valuable community asset.

10. Correspondence

10.1 Correspondence

That the correspondence as listed be received:

- ☐ *Letter of thanks from Tararua Aquatic Community Trust*
- ☐ *Letter of thanks from Dannevirke JAB Rugby*
- ☐ *Letter of thanks from Friends of Dannevirke Domain*
- ☐ *Letter of thanks from MenzShed Dannevirke*
- ☐ *Letter of thanks from Dannevirke CACTUS*

Christison/Wallace

Carried

11. Discussion Items

Code of Compliance - length of time to obtain: A concern was raised regarding the length of time taken to obtain Certificates of Compliance (COC), with feedback from owners of completed building projects indicating delays of up to four to five years. It was noted that this can impact and limit owners' ability to obtain insurance. Clarification was sought regarding responsibility for issuing COCs. The Chief Executive advised that further information is required to fully understand the issue, noting that seeking a COC retrospectively can complicate the process. It was indicated that matters would need to be considered on a case-by-case basis. The Board agreed to provide specific examples to assist, and it was noted that recruitment is underway for an additional Building Control Officer.

High Street - Lights not working: It was noted that the High Street area around Ward Street is poorly lit, with several streetlights not functioning. Members were encouraged to submit a CRM to accurately identify the affected locations, noting that responsibility may involve both Council and the lines company, and potentially NZTA.

The Chief Executive advised that logging a CRM is important to ensure the issue is addressed through the appropriate channels and undertook to notify the relevant team, and will also investigate whether any CRMs have already been lodged

regarding this issue.

Ormondville Viaduct Project: An update was provided on the Ormondville Viaduct Project, which has been in progress for over a year and is being led by the Ormondville Domain Board and Ormondville Hall Committee. The project proposes the development of a lookout/viewing platform, including a metalled area, picnic table, and display boards, to view the historic rail viaduct. The proposed location is near the former Ormondville School.

Concerns were raised regarding Council's requirement for the Hall Committee and Domain Board to obtain \$2 million in public liability insurance prior to development of the site. It was noted that the viewing platform is located approximately 1km from the rail corridor, and that there had been a misunderstanding regarding the site's proximity to the corridor. Clarification was provided that the issue related to vegetation control, with KiwiRail responsible for clearing two trees partially obstructing the view. Following discussion with the Group Manager – Operations, it was acknowledged that there had been a miscommunication regarding work within the rail corridor.

It was further noted that the land has been vested in the Domain Board and Hall Committee, and that it would need to be taken over and managed by Council. The Committee intends to undertake ongoing maintenance of the site, with the expectation that visitors will stop at the railway station and proceed to the viewing platform.

The Committee requested that Council review the requirement for \$2 million public liability insurance, noting the ongoing cost of approximately \$500–600 per annum.

The Chief Executive advised that further investigation is required to fully understand the matter and will report back, as this was the first time he has been made aware of the issue.

CRM's - Ongoing: It was noted that CRM responsiveness remains an ongoing issue. The Chair advised that three CRMs lodged following the April formal meeting had not received a response, and that similar feedback is often received from the public, particularly in relation to roading, leading to frustration and reduced confidence in the process.

The Chief Executive advised that this is an active area of focus. The Mayor and Chief Executive have met with Tararua Alliance to address the issue, with an expectation that all CRMs should receive a response within defined timeframes. This includes acknowledgement of receipt and an indication of the likely response timeframe, whether short or long term. It was noted that in some cases, where issues are resolved immediately (e.g. an illegally parked vehicle that is moved), a response may not currently be provided.

It was acknowledged that providing some form of response is important to ensure the community feels heard and continues to use the service. The Chief Executive

indicated a desire to improve communication, including through the Antenno app, to reinforce the value of the system and encourage continued use.

Cr Corlett noted that he has recently submitted CRMs and has received responses, indicating some improvement.

Adelaide Road Walkway - who is responsible for maintaining?: A query was raised regarding responsibility for maintenance of the Adelaide Road Walkway, noting that sections are overgrown and areas have been washed out. It was understood that, at the time the walkway was established, Council had assumed responsibility for ongoing maintenance, although no formal agreement appears to be on record. The walkway was originally community-funded, however the surface is now deteriorating, with holes forming and weed control required.

It was also noted that a Board member had previously received verbal assurance from a senior Council staff member that the Victoria Avenue section would be maintained by Council, although this has not been documented. Concern was expressed given the walkway is well used, and there is currently no clear mechanism to ensure it is maintained to an acceptable standard.

The Chief Executive will investigate and report back. It was noted that the absence of formal agreements presents a challenge, and that future arrangements regarding maintenance responsibilities and stewardship should be clearly documented to support budgeting and provide clarity for the community.

Pot holes in sealed and unsealed roads - Smith, Top Grass, Pinfold, Rule Road and Knights Road, level of metal on unsealed roads/water tables: Concerns were raised regarding potholes on both sealed and unsealed roads, including Smith, Top Grass, Pinfold, Rule, and Knights Roads, as well as the condition of metal levels and water tables on unsealed roads. It was noted that issues have persisted for several months, with a perceived decline in the condition of rural roads. Board members advised they are receiving frequent feedback from users and the community, indicating concern that the current level of service is decreasing. Clarification was sought regarding the expected level of service for these roads. It was requested that a future management report provide clear guidance on agreed service levels for different road types.

It was noted that the 4% rates cap will necessitate discussion on levels of service, including the potential need to reduce service standards. The Chair will provide the Chief Executive with examples of relevant CRMs and user feedback, including from regular road users such as couriers and mail drivers, to inform this work.

Roadside trees - Top Grass Road and Stanley Street: Concerns were raised regarding roadside vegetation on Top Grass Road and Stanley Street. It was noted that overgrown vegetation is obstructing road signage, making it difficult to read, and that on Top Grass Road some corners have become hazardous, with vehicles crossing the centreline due to limited visibility. A large tree on Stanley Street was also identified, with uncertainty as to whether responsibility lies with NZTA - an

action was requested to seek clarification on the responsibility for maintenance.

Easton Street - clutter and illegal vehicles: Concerns were raised regarding clutter and illegal vehicles on Easton Street, including unregistered and burnt-out cars, and clarification was sought as to responsibility for their removal.

The Mayor advised that this matter had been addressed at the previous Dannevirke Community Board meeting and reiterated that it is being managed through a regulatory process. As individuals involved are part of ongoing discussions, it was noted that it is not appropriate to discuss specific details in a public forum. It was further emphasised that a lack of visible change does not indicate that action is not being taken.

It was noted that where vehicles are abandoned or burnt out, Council is responsible for removal, at a direct cost to ratepayers, which can be significant as such vehicles are treated as waste. A report on this matter is regularly presented to Council.

High Street - Tree Replacement: The Board expressed concern about the current appearance of the High Street trees, noting they are unattractive and costly to prune and maintain. Members suggested consulting the public on the potential replacement of these trees with more attractive evergreen species.

It was noted that this matter was not included in the Dannevirke Community Board's previous submission to the Long-Term Plan (LTP). Members were encouraged to include such proposals in future submissions, as the Council's budget process allows for changes to be considered through formal LTP submissions.

The Board requested information on the current maintenance costs of the High Street trees to be provided, having this information will support informed discussion on possible alternatives. The Board will prepare a submission to the LTP proposing a change in tree species for improved appearance and to reduce maintenance costs.

It was also noted that many of the existing trees were donated by ratepayers or individuals, and there is an obligation to consult with the public before making any changes. Some trees also have plaques recognising these contributions.

Public Toilets: The Board noted that, when travelling through the district, the Norsewood public toilets were of a high standard, whereas the Dannevirke facilities were reported to be in poor condition, with one toilet often not operational. It was acknowledged that the higher volume of users in Dannevirke may contribute to the condition of the facilities. It was further noted that this issue is regularly raised in surveys; however, Council does not have the capacity for constant cleaning. Even with increased cleaning, it only takes one or two individuals to significantly affect the state of the facilities.

Members were advised that any increase in cleaning services would have financial

implications, and decisions around service levels involve trade-offs. A district-wide approach would require consideration of whether the current level of service remains appropriate. It was also noted that larger contracted providers may not demonstrate the same level of care as smaller, community-based providers.

The Board was encouraged to consider making a submission if they wish to support increased funding for this service, noting that all service level decisions carry associated costs.

Millers Street - 3 month disruption: The Board noted concerns regarding the three-month disruption on Millers Street, which has impacted local trades and businesses. Concerns were raised about the length of the project, the effect on businesses, and a lack of responses to customer requests (CRMs), with an expectation that communication should be improved.

It was requested that an update be provided on the project, including information on timelines and the causes of delays, and seeking assurance that steps are being taken to minimise disruption where possible.

Waterloo Street Corner - Dangerous Footpaths: this item is already included in decision action items.

Sweeper Truck - Effective Use: It was noted that the sweeper truck regularly services High Street but culverts not being cleared manually, and there are ongoing flooding issues at the corner of Neptune Street, it was queried whether this is due to a drainage problem or a build-up of leaves. An update was requested to identify the cause of the blockage.

LGOIMA requests: The Board discussed LGOIMA requests, including the handling of commercially sensitive information and whether the use of AI could improve efficiency. It was noted that Council is exploring AI to help streamline processes; however, implementation is complex and must consider system integration and data security.

It was advised that charging for LGOIMA requests is appropriate where large volumes of information are requested, as this can divert staff from business-as-usual activities. The purpose of any charges is not to generate revenue, but to ensure that the cost of staff time is met, rather than being borne by ratepayers.

Council follows established guidelines, with the first hour of work provided free of charge. Minor overages are generally not charged; however, where requests involve significant volumes of information, requestors may be asked to refine their request. Where appropriate, LGOIMA responses are published, and requests are processed within required timeframes.

12. Chairperson's Remarks

On behalf of the Community Board, thanks were extended to the Mayor, Councillors, Chief Executive, and staff for their significant efforts in delivering recent community meetings on proposed amalgamations. The Council was acknowledged for its proactive approach to community engagement.

The importance of ongoing and increased community involvement was emphasised, with residents encouraged to share their views through appropriate channels to help inform decision-making during this significant period for the district.

The Chair reiterated the Board's role in advocating for the community and encouraged residents to stay informed, including by following Council communications and social media updates.

13. Items not on the Agenda

Nil

There being no further business the Chairperson thanked those present for their attendance and contributions, and declared the meeting closed at 10:41am.