



MINUTES

**Extraordinary Council meeting
Tuesday, 25 March 2025**

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**MINUTES OF TAURANGA CITY COUNCIL
EXTRAORDINARY COUNCIL MEETING
HELD AT THE GROUND FLOOR, 306 CAMERON ROAD , TAURANGA
ON TUESDAY, 25 MARCH 2025 AT 4:00 PM**

PRESENT: Mayor Mahé Drysdale, Deputy Mayor Jen Scoular, Cr Glen Crowther, Cr Rick Curach, Cr Steve Morris, Cr Marten Rozeboom, Cr Kevin Schuler, Cr Rod Taylor

APOLOGIES: Cr Hautapu Baker

IN ATTENDANCE: Sarah Omundsen (General Manager: Regulatory & Compliance), Clare Sullivan (Team Leader: Governance Services)

1 OPENING KARAKA

Cr Kevin Schuler opened the meeting with a karakia.

2 APOLOGIES

2.1 Resolution to receive apologies

RESOLUTION CO/25/0/1

Moved: Cr Steve Morris

Seconded: Cr Marten Rozeboom

That the Council

Accepts the apologies of Cr Hautapu Baker.

CARRIED

3 ACCEPTANCE OF LATE ITEMS

Nil

4 CONFIDENTIAL BUSINESS TO BE TRANSFERRED INTO THE OPEN

Nil

5 CHANGE TO THE ORDER OF BUSINESS

Nil

6 DECLARATION OF CONFLICTS OF INTEREST

Cr Taylor noted that he was the holder of two liquor licences in the city he would observe but not participate in the meeting or vote on the issue.

7 BUSINESS

7.1 Draft Alcohol Licensing Fees Bylaw - Hearings

Timestamp :04

Sebastian Miklos (via teams)

Key Points

- Had been an alcohol inspector for Auckland Council and the Ministry of Justice for 14 years.
- Congratulate TCC for a good bylaw, noting that ratepayers should not fund the process.
- People adjust to the reduced hours of licenced premises.
- A licence for a concert should not be the same as it was for a wedding.

Timestamp :09

Christine Gore – Vetro Mediterranean Foods

Key Points

- All in the industry were working towards reducing alcohol harm and were on the same side as Council.
- Would like to work together with Council to reduce cumbersome costs of licencing and streamline the costs that fell on the businesses.
- There was no assessment on the impact of the bylaw on businesses, some of which add character to the city may fail due to costs.
- Increasing costs could lead to some outlets pushing more sales to cover costs which would not be ideal.
- There was only a 20-22% retail margin on alcohol in restaurants and taxes were already imposed on it.

In response to questions

- The submitter's rates were already increasing by 17% and the businesses were contributing to making Tauranga an attractive place to come to and ratepayers needed to be made aware of that.

Timestamp :17

Kerry McCaffery

Key Points

- There was currently an alcohol pandemic in Tauranga with 80% of adults drinking on a regular basis. 85% of drinkers were in the least deprived neighbourhoods.
- Much of drinks available had a high percentage of alcohol.
- Drink driving was common, many were not picked up and Police patrols needed to increase.
- Alcohol was now part of the weekly grocery shop.
- If an alcoholic wants to stop drinking there was no safe place for them to go and they were taking up medical time. A medical detox centre was required in Tauranga.

Timestamp :24

Jennifer Lamm – Alcohol Healthwatch (via Teams)

Key Points

- Commend Council on the bylaw specific to alcohol licencing fees as it was another key measure to reduce alcohol related harm with enforcement.
- Alcohol was the most harmful drug available in our society which had far reaching effects that harmed individuals, whanau and communities at a cost of \$9.1b annually.
- Local government had a role in promoting the social, economic and cultural wellbeing of its communities and alcohol regulation was an important control to create a safer environment, to reduce drinking and instances of alcohol harm.
- Supports the recovery of the cost of licencing as the licencing regulations had not kept pace with the cost and were overdue for a review.

Timestamp :29**Harris William, Mt Maunganui Business Association****Key Points**

- Considered that Council did not adequately engage with affected parties before drafting the bylaw which had been created with a lack of detail context and transparency.
- Council were imposing more costs on businesses without placing internal scrutiny on its own systems.
- Queried whether a small restaurant would need to pay the same fee as a liquor store and why a business should pay for a hearing if the only objections were raised by the general public.
- Requested the Council to engage with stakeholders and provide a transparent breakdown of fees, cost and structures to allow meaningful feedback to be provided.

In response to questions

- In relation to whether it was a cost recovery or set fee, staff advised that the process was to allow Council to be able to set a fee with a separate decision making process around what the fee would be. The fee was currently fixed fee for each category.
- With the reallocation of the \$750,000 cost, there were factors and fairness that needed to be taken into account and the bylaw needed to go back to the drawing board.

Timestamp :36**Luke van Veen, Hospitality New Zealand****Key Points**

- Recognise Council were facing cost pressures, but the hospitality industry was also overburdened with unnecessary costs with many struggling to continue to operate and others closing.
- Noted that the fees had not increased since 2013, and request that consideration be given to a 33% inflation adjustment rather than a 240% increase. Imposing the same increase on a \$15 drink would increase the sale to \$36.60.
- The proposal to take all costs from ratepayers ignored that the businesses were also ratepayers at a higher rate percentage than residential.
- There was no evidence to show that the costs could be recovered by other means and asked that Council look at streamlining its own system process efficiencies and undertake less hearings.
- Want to see fees set by licencing regulation.

In response to questions

- In answer to a query as to where Council could make improvements, the submitter noted that he was not aware of the Council process but it seemed to be a lot of people being involved and the timeline to sign off was lengthy. Applicants had to adhere strictly to the time constraints when applying for a licence, so it should be the same for Council to issue the licence.
- The industry want compliance and as a customer he was happy to assist with having those conversations but to date as a stakeholder he had not been approached.
- In response to a query as to where the responsibility of the cost lay, the submitter considered that there was an imbalance of costs and there were a lot of Council facilities that the businesses did not use but knew they had to pay for them. Most of the businesses sold alcohol in a controlled premise environment and Council should be investing in them to drive the community to flourish.
- Data could be provided on what other local authorities do and how they operated to compare them to TCC.

Timestamp: : 53

Staff: Sarah Omundsen, General Manager: Regulatory & Compliance

In response to staff questions raised

- Comparison information from other local authorities and an analysis of the decisions would be provided to Council in the upcoming report to set the fees. It would include a number of relevant factors including the number of staff, the time taken, the cost, the ratio of ratepayer and business to provide a benchmark and to ensure that all processes were being undertaken as efficiently as possible.

RESOLUTION CO/25/0/2

Moved: Cr Rick Curach

Seconded: Cr Glen Crowther

That the Council:

- (a) Receives the report "Draft Alcohol Licensing Fees Bylaw - Hearings".
- (b) Receives the submissions and feedback to the draft Alcohol Licensing Fees Bylaw (**Attachment One**).

CARRIED

8 DISCUSSION OF LATE ITEMS

Nil

9 CLOSING KARAKIA

Cr Kevin Schuler closed the meeting with a karakia.

The meeting closed at 5.16 pm.

The minutes of this meeting were confirmed at the Ordinary meeting of the Tauranga City Council held on 28 April 2025.

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CHAIRPERSON