



# **DRAFT MINUTES**

**Tangata Whenua / Tauranga City  
Council Committee meeting  
Wednesday, 22 April 2026**

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**MINUTES OF TAURANGA CITY COUNCIL  
TANGATA WHENUA / TAURANGA CITY COUNCIL COMMITTEE MEETING  
HELD AT THE WAIMAPU MARAE, 76 WAIMAPU PA ROAD, POIKE, TAURANGA  
ON WEDNESDAY, 22 APRIL 2026 AT 9:30 AM**

**MEMBERS PRESENT:** Mr Anthony Fisher (Chair), Cr Hautapu Baker, Mayor Mahé Drysdale, Cr Hēmi Rolleston, Cr Kevin Schuler, Ms Matire Duncan, Mr Puhirake Ihaka, Ms Destiny Leaf, Mr Whitiora McLeod, Ms Kura Martin.

**OTHERS IN ATTENDANCE** Te Rangapū Mana Whenua o Tauranga Moana Members:

- Cheryl Hayes – Ngati Hangarau
- Arthur Flintoff – Nga Potiki
- Rondell Reihana - Ngai Te Ahi
- Des Heke – Ngati Ranginui

**IN ATTENDANCE:** Marty Grenfell (Chief Executive), Reneke van Soest (General Manager: Operations & Infrastructure), Emma Joyce (Open Space & Community Facilities Planner), Keren Paekau (Acting Head of Strategic Māori Engagement), Cynthia Hamel (Acting Team Leader: Takawaenga Māori), Leonie Cairns (Kaiārahi Māori), Tuana Kuka (Kaiārahi Māori), Anahera Dinsdale (Governance Advisor), Caroline Irvin (Governance Advisor)

Timestamps are included at the start of each item and signal where the agenda item can be found in the recording of the meeting at [Council's You Tube Channel](#).

The meeting began with a powhiri and light refreshments before moving into the official meeting.

## **1 OPENING KARAKIA**

Ms Waaka opened the meeting with a karakia.

## **2 APOLOGIES**

### **APOLOGY**

### **COMMITTEE RESOLUTION TW/26/0/1**

Moved: Mayor Mahé Drysdale

Seconded: Ms Matire Duncan

That the apology for absence received from Deputy Mayor Scoular and Member Steven Te Kani be accepted.

**CARRIED**

### 3 PUBLIC FORUM

Nil

### 4 ACCEPTANCE OF LATE ITEMS

The Chair advised there was a supplementary agenda containing his Chair's report.

### 5 CONFIDENTIAL BUSINESS TO BE TRANSFERRED INTO THE OPEN

Nil

### 6 CHANGE TO ORDER OF BUSINESS

The Chair advised that the presentation item Ngāti Ruahine would be taken as the last item of business.

#### CHANGE TO THE ORDER OF BUSINESS

##### COMMITTEE RESOLUTION TW/26/0/2

Moved: Mr Puhirake Ihaka  
Seconded: Mr Whitiora McLeod

That the presentation item Ngāti Ruahine be taken as the last item of business.

**CARRIED**

### 7 CONFIRMATION OF MINUTES

#### 7.1 Minutes of the Tangata Whenua / Tauranga City Council Committee meeting held on 25 February 2026

##### COMMITTEE RESOLUTION TW/26/0/3

Moved: Ms Matire Duncan  
Seconded: Cr Hēmi Rolleston

That the Minutes of the Tangata Whenua / Tauranga City Council Committee meeting held on 25 February 2026 be confirmed as a true and correct record.

**CARRIED**

### 8 DECLARATION OF CONFLICTS OF INTEREST

NIL

## 9 DEPUTATIONS, PRESENTATIONS, PETITIONS

This item was taken as the last item of business.

## 10 BUSINESS

Timestamp: 5 minutes

### 10.1 Tangata Whenua/Tauranga City Council Committee - Chairperson's Report - April 2026

**Chair** Mr Tony Fisher

- Mr Fisher provided a summary of his report.

#### **Mayor Drysdale**

- The Chair's report led nicely into the ongoing development of the Regional Deal involving partnership between Tauranga City Council, Western Bay of Plenty District Council and Bay of Plenty Regional Council. The deal was expected to provide certainty over a 10-year timeframe, with a vision extending 30 years into the future.
- It was important to emphasise partnerships and engagement among stakeholders including the government, local councils, and the wider community and finding each group's place in delivering on the deal's promises.
- There was an opportunity for iwi to play a significant role in the Regional Deal, especially in areas like housing and transport, noting the government's interest in economic growth and the need for Māori to find their place and contribute to the delivery of these initiatives.

#### **Ms Matire Duncan**

- There were ongoing conversations with iwi/hapū throughout their involvement in the Regional Deal.
- The Māori Land Trust was ready to start moving on their Papakāinga housing and investments.

#### **Mr Whitiara McLeod**

- Infrastructure planning and funding for marae was critical – in particular in weather events where marae were opening their doors to support people in need.
- There needed to be a focus for each marae to have infrastructure that included wastewater infrastructure and engineering solutions so marae could also access water from surrounding land.

### COMMITTEE RESOLUTION TW/26/0/4

Moved: Mr Whitiara McLeod

Seconded: Cr Hautapu Baker

That the Tangata Whenua / Tauranga City Council Committee:

- (a) Receives the report "Tangata Whenua/Tauranga City Council Committee - Chairperson's Report - April 2026".

**CARRIED**

Timestamp: 15 minutes and 40 seconds

## 10.2 Te Rangapū Mana Whenua o Tauranga Moana Report - April 2026

### Ms Matire Duncan

- Ms Duncan provided a summary of her report.

### Mr Whitiora McLeod - Asset transfers to new water organisations

- There was ongoing concern regarding the transfer of assets, particularly land taken under the Public Works Act 1981, for a minimal amount of money and then being sold for significantly more.
- There was also concern around the transparency of these processes as assets move to new water organisations to improve mortgage capability.
- It was very important to continue these discussions.

### Mayor Drysdale

- Funding would be raised through Local Government Funding Agency (LGFA) borrowing, not through traditional mortgages over land or physical assets.
- The debt would be secured against future income streams of the water services entity (similar to other water service organisations), rather than against whenua or transferred council land.
- Councils involved would provide a joint and several guarantee to the LGFA, meaning councils collectively guarantee repayment of the debt if required.
- It was very unlikely that any mortgage would be placed over land that was transferred to the new entity.
- It was acknowledged that this guarantee arrangement represented a risk consideration for councils. Indemnity arrangements between councils were being examined to manage this risk appropriately.
- The Mayor acknowledged and thanked the contribution of the tangata whenua partnership group for their participation and hard work so far. They had been very organised and had added a lot of value to the process.
- A joint committee had been established to oversee the new water organisation, comprising of representatives from each partner council. The committee acted as a recommending body only, with final decisions made by the respective councils, and required consensus among the parties for recommendations to proceed.

### Ms Kura Martin - Governance Training

- The importance of governance training and community engagement was highlighted, particularly for Māori, to ensure effective participation in decision-making and the successful implementation of partnership initiatives.
- The availability of governance training for Māori was noted. Participation to build capacity and understanding of roles, responsibilities, and strategic planning within the community was encouraged.

### Ms Matire Duncan - Māori Ward Retention and Referendum Deferral

- The committee discussed the future of the Māori ward, ultimately recommending to Council that the ward be retained and that the referendum on its status be deferred to the 2028 election, with a focus on investigating and advocating for this deferral.
  - **Recommendation to Retain Māori Ward:** The committee agreed to recommend to Council to retain the Māori ward, citing the importance of partnership, democratic fairness, and the need for the ward to demonstrate its value before any changes were

considered.

- **Referendum Deferral Advocacy:** It was resolved to investigate and advocate for deferring the referendum on the Māori ward to the 2028 election, considering the financial and practical implications of holding a separate referendum and the legislative constraints under the current government.
- **Process and Next Steps:** The need to prepare a communications and engagement plan to mobilise community support and ensure transparent information about the Māori ward and the referendum process was discussed.

#### COMMITTEE RESOLUTION TW/26/0/5

Moved: Mr Whitiara McLeod

Seconded: Cr Hautapu Baker

That the Tangata Whenua / Tauranga City Council Committee:

(a) Recommends to Council:

- (i) To retain the Māori Ward; and
- (ii) To investigate and advocate for the deferral of the Māori Ward referendum to the 2028 election.

**CARRIED**

#### COMMITTEE RESOLUTION TW/26/0/6

Moved: Mr Puhirake Ihaka

Seconded: Cr Kevin Schuler

That the Tangata Whenua / Tauranga City Council Committee:

- (a) Receives the report "Te Rangapū Mana Whenua o Tauranga Moana Report - April 2026

**CARRIED**

#### Attachments

1 Additional Comments

Timestamp: 45 minutes

### 10.3 Tangata Whenua Presentation Updates - April 2026

**Staff** Keren Paekau, Acting Head of Strategic Māori Engagement

The Acting Head of Strategic Māori Engagement reviewed the issues report, highlighting completed actions and the removal of resolved items, such as noise complaints and maintenance issues, and explained that new issues from the current meeting would be added to the tracking system for follow-up.

#### In response to a question:

- At this point the only update regarding Mangatapu marae from the weekend cyclone was that Council had provided some support around skip bins and signage and were continuing to

work together with others to provide more support. Staff would come back to the Committee on whether the marae needed an arborist to investigate and/or support them.

### Discussion – Resilience of Marae

- Concerns about the resilience of marae and other community facilities in the face of natural disasters was raised, including insurance arrangements, emergency funding, and the need for structural assessments and support:
  - **Insurance and Shared Services:** There were challenges around insuring marae. It was suggested that collective insurance arrangements across the region could reduce costs and improve coverage, and that Council involvement in shared services may provide additional support.
  - **Emergency Funding and Support:** Questions were raised about the availability of emergency funds, such as mayoral disaster funds, for marae affected by disasters. Marae were also places of shelter for the community during emergency events and as such it was felt they should receive funding.

It was clarified there were some types of funding available and that eligibility depended on specific government regulations.
  - **Structural Assessments and Resilience Planning:** The need for structural assessments of marae and other facilities was highlighted, with suggestions to conduct a stocktake of at-risk sites and explore ways to support resilience, including compliance checks and potential Council assistance.

### Actions Requested:

That staff:

- Come back to the Committee on whether Maungatapu marae needed an arborist to investigate and/or support them in terms of the cyclone.
- Conduct a stocktake of marae within the rohe to assess their insurance status and to ascertain whether a type of collective insurance agreement could be arranged.
- Conduct a stocktake of marae within the rohe to assess their resilience, and potential need for structural assessment or support, and report findings back to the next Committee meeting.

### COMMITTEE RESOLUTION TW/26/0/7

Moved: Cr Kevin Schuler

Seconded: Ms Destiny Leaf

That the Tangata Whenua / Tauranga City Council Committee:

- (a) Receives the report " Tangata Whenua Presentation Updates - April 2026"

**CARRIED**

At 11.41am the meeting adjourned.

At 11.51am the meeting resumed in open.

## PRESENTATION

Timestamp: 1 hour

### 9.1 Presentation: Ngāti Ruahine

#### Mr Keni Piahana

- Mr Piahana highlighted key aspects of working with Council as effective participation and monitoring and working together in good faith to achieve desired outcomes.
- The big issues for Ngāti Ruahine were stormwater, riparian management, proposed intensification within the rohe and the resilience of the Waiorohe Stream bridge on Oropi Road particularly in terms of weather events.

#### Environmental systems and catchments

- Mr Piahana provided an overview of the longstanding issues with the Waimapu River system and its tributaries that included:
  - The interconnected nature of surface water, groundwater, wetlands, and land use, with emphasis on recharge areas, seepage zones, and wetlands as critical ecological infrastructure.
  - Evidence of sedimentation, erosion, and declining water quality, particularly where pastoral land use, forestry blocks, and unmanaged riparian margins persisted.
  - Concern that land use change and intensification continue without sufficient regard for receiving environments, cumulative effects, or tikanga based environmental values.
- Wetlands were cost-effective, measurable intervention points offering immediate ecological gains when protected, planted, or enhanced. Landowner willingness existed, provided costs and implementation were supported.

#### Flooding, climate resilience, and infrastructure vulnerability

- There was increased exposure to:
  - Flooding, storm damage, and infrastructure failure, referencing recent weather events and emergency evacuations.
  - Vulnerable community facilities, marae, access routes, and bridges used during emergencies.
- Specific concerns included:
  - Debris and fallen trees in river channels posing both flood and bridge-strike risks.
  - Limited or no response from landowners and agencies (notably where asset responsibility was unclear or contested).
  - There was a feeling that this was insufficiently acted upon, despite repeated escalation.
- Climate change was already manifest, not a future risk, requiring preventative investment, cross-agency coordination and recognition of marae and pā as critical community resilience hubs.

#### Water services reform and affordability

- Concerns regarding Local Water Done Well / water services changes included equity and affordability concerns for communities already carrying historic burdens and a desire for more transparency and early information sharing around asset transfers, financing mechanisms, and long-term cost impacts.

#### Planning, intensification, and receiving environments

- Concerns included building height, scale, and intensification proposals near waterways, escarpments, and culturally sensitive landscapes and reliance on discretionary planning pathways without strong environmental or cultural thresholds.
- Due to the risk of precedent-setting developments that cumulatively degraded natural and

cultural landscapes, tangata whenua expected:

- Stronger use of planning tools to reflect receiving environment capacity.
- Design responses that worked with landform and ecology, not against them.
- Clear signals from Council on where limits apply.

### **Governance, monitoring, and partnership maturity**

- Tangata whenua saw their role as partners, monitors and guardians of long-term outcomes.
- It was important that issues raised were recorded, feedback and/or progress provided, and tracking kept if these had been resolved or not.
- There was a clear expectation that Council and agencies actively used this Committee as a place for shared problem-solving and accountability.

### **Actions Requested:**

That staff:

- Ensure the issues register accurately reflect matters raised, particularly where tangata whenua request formal recognition of risks or unresolved issues.
- Continue working with willing landowners on wetland protection and enhancement projects.
- Engage with responsible agencies (e.g. transport, Bay of Plenty Regional Council) regarding river debris, bridge resilience, and flood risk mitigation.
- Provide clearer guidance on how receiving environment capacity and cultural landscape values are influencing planning decisions.
- Improve early-stage engagement with tangata whenua on reforms (notably water services).
- Continue committee-level dialogue as a monitoring and governance forum, not just an information channel.

## **11 DISCUSSION OF LATE ITEMS**

Nil

## **12 CLOSING KARAKIA**

Mr Keni Piahana closed the meeting with a karakia.

**The meeting closed at 12.23pm.**

**The minutes of this meeting were confirmed as a true and correct record at the Tangata Whenua / Tauranga City Council Committee meeting held on 24 June 2026.**