

Northland Regional Council Minutes

Meeting held in the Council Chamber
36 Water Street, Whangārei
on Tuesday 27 May 2025, commencing at 10.15am

Tuhinga/Present:

Chairperson, Geoff Crawford

Councillors:

John Blackwell

Jack Craw

Peter-Lucas Jones (*Via audio-visual link*)

Amy Macdonald (*Via audio-visual link*)

Marty Robinson

Tui Shortland (*Left 10.41am*)

Rick Stolwerk

Joe Carr

I Tae Mai/In Attendance:

Full Meeting

Independent Tangata Whenua Advisor

Independent Risk Advisor

Tāhūhū Rangapū - Chief Executive Officer

Pou Taumatua - GM Corporate Services

Pou Manawhakahaere - GM Governance and Engagement

Pou Whakaritenga - GM Regulatory Services

Group Manager - Community Resilience

Pou Tiaki Taiao - GM Environmental Services

Pou Tiaki Pūtaiao - GM Biosecurity

Translator

Māori Engagement and Governance Support Administration

Governance Specialist

Part Meeting

Finance Manager

Transport Manager

Biosecurity Manager – Pest Plants (*Via audio-visual link*)

Compliance Monitoring Manager

Financial Accountant

Senior Policy Planner

Policy Specialist (*Via audio-visual link*)

Economic Policy Advisor

Transport Project Officer

Digital Experience Support

Secretarial Note: The Chair declared the meeting open at 10.15am.

Ngā whakapāha/Apologies (Item 1.0)

Moved (Stolwerk/Blackwell)

That the apologies from Independent Tangata Advisor, Dee-Ann Wolferstan, for non-attendance and Councillor Shortland for early departure be received.

Carried

Nga whakapuakanga/Declarations of Conflicts of Interest (Item 2.0)

It was advised that councillors should make declarations item-by-item as the meeting progressed.

Public Forum - Ban of power boats from Kai Iwi Lakes (Item 5.1)

Libby Jones and Peter Hames were in attendance, advocating for an alternative long term solution to banning power boats from Kai Iwi Lakes to prevent the infestation of Gold Clam (*Corbicula*).

Public Forum - Bus fare increases (Item 5.2)

Jodie Rameka was in attendance, advocating on behalf of youth for council to reconsider its decision (March 2025) and options regarding increases to bus fares.

Secretarial Note: It was requested that Councillors Jones, Macdonald, Shortland and Stolwerk, as the elected members appointed to a councillor sub-group to progress the establishment of a Rangatahi (Youth) Executive Panel, note Jodie Rameka's agreement to be part of the review process of the increase in bus fares (if this was the appropriate forum).

Confirmation of Minutes - 22 April 2025 (Item 5.3)

Report from Meloney Tupou, Māori Governance and Engagement Support Admin

Moved (Carr/Blackwell)

That the minutes of the council meeting held on 22 April 2025, be confirmed as a true and correct record and that these be duly authenticated with the Chair's electronic signature.

Carried

Receipt of Action Sheet (Item 5.4)

Report from Chris Taylor, Governance Specialist

Moved (Robinson/Craw)

That the action sheet be received.

Carried

Regional Rates Collection - Update to 31 March 2025 (Item 6.1)

Report from Simon Crabb, Finance Manager

Moved (Craw/Carr)

That the report 'Regional Rates Collection - Update to 31 March 2025' by Simon Crabb, Finance Manager and dated 6 May 2025, be received.

Carried

Secretarial Note: It was acknowledged that there was a slow decline in collection rates over time which reflected affordability issues and the impact of the increasing cost of living. Collection rates would continue to be monitored closely each quarter to understand the impact, if any, on council's provision budgets.

Financial Report to 30 April 2025 (Item 6.2)

Report from Taka Skipwith, Financial Accountant

Moved (Stolwerk/Blackwell)

That the report 'Financial Report to 30 April 2025' by Taka Skipwith, Financial Accountant and dated 12 May 2025, be received.

Carried

Secretarial Note: It was advised that following the April results, the total gains for the year to date were \$200k behind budget which would impact on the proposed 2024-2025 year end surplus apportionment framework as presented in the financial report.

Adoption of the Future Development Strategy for Whangarei District (Item 7.1)

Report from Ingrid Kuindersma, Senior Policy Planner and Michael Payne, Policy Specialist

Moved (Stolwerk/Crawford)

1. That the report 'Adoption of the Future Development Strategy for Whangarei District' by Ingrid Kuindersma, Senior Policy Planner and Michael Payne, Policy Specialist and dated 12 May 2025, be received.
2. That council adopt the Future Development Strategy for Whangārei District.
3. That the Group Manager - Environmental Services be given delegated authority to approve minor typographical or design changes to the Future Development Strategy Document required for editing purposes.

Carried

Secretarial Note: Appreciation was extended to all involved in progressing the Future Development Strategy to the point of adoption, which was described as 'a big piece of work' with considerable time and effort to reach completion. The strategy would provide a clear direction as the district grew and a foundation to extend similar work Northland-wide.

Council Deliberations and Adoption of the User Fees and Charges Policy 2025/26 (Item 7.2)

Report from Samuel van Hout, Corporate Policy Analyst

Moved (Stolwerk/Craw)

1. That the report 'Council Deliberations and Adoption of the User Fees and Charges Policy 2025/26' by Samuel van Hout, Corporate Policy Analyst and dated 15 April 2025, be received.
2. That, as consulted, council supports a baseline inflationary increase of 3.1% to fees and charges contained in the schedule of Draft User Fees and Charges 2025/26 that are not otherwise subject to individual increases as set out in the following recommendations.
3. That, as consulted, council supports an inflationary increase of 3.6% to all activities that are funded in the majority by user fees (as set out in Council's Revenue and Financing Policy). These activities are:
 - Consent applications
 - Compliance monitoring
 - Harbour safety and navigation.
4. That council supports the Draft User Fees and Charges 2025/26, including changes as consulted and outlined in the draft document and statement of proposal, for adoption.
5. That council sets and adopts the User Fees and Charges 2025/26, as consulted on and included as Attachment 1 to this item.
6. That council authorises Group Manager – Corporate Services to make any necessary minor drafting, typographical, rounding, or presentation corrections to the User Fees and Charges 2025/26 prior to final publication of the document.

Carried

RMA Compliance, Monitoring and Enforcement Framework (Item 7.3)

Report from Colin Dall, Pou Whakaritenga - Group Manager Regulatory Services

Moved (Stolwerk/Blackwell)

1. That the report 'RMA Compliance, Monitoring and Enforcement Framework' by Colin Dall, Pou Whakaritenga - Group Manager Regulatory Services and dated 29 April 2025, be received.
2. That council approve the RMA Compliance, Monitoring and Enforcement Framework attached to this report.

Carried

Secretarial Note: Appreciation was extended to the Regulatory Group for the development of the framework.

Minor Amendment to Regional Pest Plan (Item 7.4)

Report from Joanna Barr, Biosecurity Manager Pest Plants

Moved (Craw/Crawford)

1. That the report 'Minor Amendment to Regional Pest Plan' by Joanna Barr, Biosecurity Manager Pest Plants and dated 8 May 2025, be received.
2. That council approves a minor amendment to the Pest Plan by council resolution under the Biosecurity Act 1993 section 100(g) (4) to replace Gravel groundsel (*Senecio skirrhodon*) with Madagascar ragwort (*Senecio madagascariensis*) in the Pest Plan.

Carried

Transport Procurement Strategy 2024 to 2027 (Item 7.5)

Report from Chris Powell, Transport Manager - Northland Regional Council

Moved (Stolwerk/Carr)

1. That the report 'Transport Procurement Strategy 2024 to 2027' by Chris Powell, Transport Manager - Northland Regional Council and dated 12 May 2025, be received.
2. That Northland Regional Council approve the Transport Procurement Strategy 2024 – 2027 to ensure continued national funding assistance through the National Land Transport Programme.

Carried

Secretarial Note: It was a legal requirement, under the Land Transport Management Act 2003, for council to have a Transport Procurement Strategy to be eligible for national funding assistance.

Chair's Report to Council (Item 8.1)

Report from Rae Hetaraka, Executive Assistant to the Chair

Moved (Crawford/Carr)

That the report 'Chair's Report to Council' by Rae Hetaraka, Executive Assistant to the Chair and dated 5 May 2025, be received.

Carried

Chief Executive's Report to Council (Item 8.2)

Report from Jonathan Gibbard, Tāhūhū Rangapū - Chief Executive Officer

Moved (Blackwell/Robinson)

That the report 'Chief Executive's Report to Council' by Jonathan Gibbard, Tāhūhū Rangapū - Chief Executive Officer and dated 5 May 2025, be received.

Carried

Secretarial Note:

- *Whilst there was 'still a lot to do' attention was drawn to the considerable improvement in the compliance of Northland's municipal wastewater treatment plants.*

- Staff to make an enquiry to Bio Managers whether there was an appetite for a national partnership and to resurrect the previous agreement NRC and other regions had with Biosecurity New Zealand for responding to new pest threats. The response to be reported back to the Biosecurity Biodiversity Working Party.
- Staff to determine the 'report back mechanism' for national surveillance surveys conducted in Northland (particularly in relation to mosquitos).
- Appreciation was extended for council's eNewsletters which were an efficient way of conveying council business to the community.
- The recent CDEM Forum was described as a successful, well patronised event with interesting presentations.

Reporting on Amended Long Term Plan 2024-2034 Performance Measures for Quarter Three of the 2024/25 Year (Item 8.3)

Report from Robyn Broadhurst, Corporate Planning Specialist

Moved (Craw/Jones)

That the report 'Reporting on Amended Long Term Plan 2024-2034 Performance Measures for Quarter Three of the 2024/25 Year' by Robyn Broadhurst, Corporate Planning Specialist and dated 24 April 2025, be received.

Carried

Secretarial Note: The audio-visual system malfunctioned at 11.25am losing the connection with external participants. The system was reinstated at 11.27am (during Item 9.2).

Receipt of Committee Minutes (Item 9.1)

Report from Meloney Tupou, Māori Governance and Engagement Support Admin

Moved (Blackwell/Crawford)

That the unconfirmed minutes of the:

- Regional Transport Committee – 1 April 2025 and
- Joint Regional Economic Development Committee - 29 April 2025

be received.

Carried

(Councillor Robinson abstained from voting)

Working Party Updates Report (Item 9.2)

Report from Meloney Tupou, Māori Governance and Engagement Support Admin

Moved (Crawford/Blackwell)

That the 'Working Party Updates Report' be received.

Carried

Secretarial Note: The audio-visual system malfunctioned at 11.25am (during Item 8.3) losing the connection with external participants. The system was reinstated at 11.27am (during Item 9.2).

Kaupapa ā Roto/Business with Public Excluded (Item 10.0)

Moved (Stolwerk/Robinson)

1. That the public be excluded from the proceedings of this meeting to consider confidential matters.
2. That the general subject of the matters to be considered whilst the public is excluded, the reasons for passing this resolution in relation to this matter, and the specific grounds under the Local Government Official Information and Meetings Act 1987 for the passing of this resolution, are as follows:

Item No.	Item Issue	Reasons/Grounds
10.1	Confirmation of Confidential Minutes - 22 April 2025	The public conduct of the proceedings would be likely to result in disclosure of information, as stated in the open section of the meeting.
10.2	Receipt of Confidential Committee Minutes	The public conduct of the proceedings would be likely to result in disclosure of information, as stated in the open section of the meeting.
10.3	Vote on the Scheme of Arrangement	The public conduct of the proceedings would be likely to result in disclosure of information, the withholding of which is necessary to enable council to carry out, without prejudice or disadvantage, commercial activities s7(2)(h).

3. That the Independent Advisors be permitted to stay during business with the public excluded.

Carried

Whakamutunga (Conclusion)

The meeting concluded at 11.34am with a karakia by the GM – Governance and Engagement .