

Northland Regional Council Minutes

Meeting held in the Council Chamber
36 Water Street, Whangārei
on Wednesday 18 February 2026, commencing at 10.00am

Tuhinga/Present:

Chairperson, Pita Tipene (*Via audio-visual link. Left at 11.43am*)

Deputy Chairperson, Jack Crow

Councillors:

John Blackwell

Joe Carr (*Via audio-visual link*)

Geoff Crawford

John Hunt

Colin Kitchen

Amy Macdonald

Arama Morunga

I Tae Mai/In Attendance:

Full Meeting

Independent Risk Advisor

Tāhūhū Rangapū - Chief Executive Officer

Pou Manawhakahaere - GM Strategic Partnerships and Engagement

Pou Whakaritenga - GM Regulatory Services

Group Manager - Community Resilience

Pou Tiaki Taiao - GM Environmental Services

Pou Tiaki Pūtaiao - GM Biosecurity

Deputy GM – Corporate Services

Translator (*Via audio-visual link*)

Māori Governance and Engagement Support Admin

Governance Specialist

Part Meeting

Finance Manager

Financial Accountant

Corporate Strategy Manager

Business Improvement Manager

Governance and Corporate Policy Manager

Strategic Policy Specialist

Corporate Planning Specialist

Economist

Digital :Experience Support

Secretarial Note:

- *In accordance with Standing Order 13.10 'Chairperson's duties', given the Chair was attending by audio-visual link the chairing duties were undertaken by the Deputy Chair.*
- *The Deputy Chair declared the meeting open at 10.02am and proceedings commenced with a karakia by Councillor Morunga.*

Ngā whakapāha/Apologies (Item 1.0)

There were no apologies.

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.

Receipt of Supplementary Confidential Item: Northport Group Limited CEO Appointment (Item 4.0A)

Report from Chris Taylor, Governance Specialist

Moved (Macdonald/Hunt)

That That as permitted under section 46A(7) of the Local Government Official Information and Meetings Act 1987 the following supplementary report be received:

- Confidential Item 10.2: Northport Group Limited CEO Appointment

Carried

Confirmation of Minutes - 17 December 2025 (Item 5.1)

Report from Meloney Tupou, Māori Governance and Engagement Support Admin

Moved (Kitchen/Crawford)

That the minutes of the council meeting held on 17 December 2025 and the extraordinary council meeting held on 22 December 2025 be confirmed as a true and correct record (*subject to the correction of Councillor Morunga - relating to Item 7.11 of the minutes dated 17 December 2025*) and that these be duly authenticated with the Chair's electronic signature.

Carried

Receipt of Action Sheet (Item 5.2)

Report from Chris Taylor, Governance Specialist

Moved (Macdonald/Blackwell)

That the action sheet be received.

Carried

Financial Report to January 2026 (Item 6.1)

Report from Taka Skipwith, Financial Accountant

Moved (Carr/Craw)

That the report 'Financial Report to January 2026' by Taka Skipwith, Financial Accountant and dated 4 February 2026, be received.

Carried

Secretarial Note:

- *The Finance Manager verbally addressed the report; confirming that at the end of January 2026 council had achieved a favourable variance of \$1.20m compared to the original budget of \$1.5m. The focus over the next three months was to spend to budget and fulfil obligations in order to 'hit target' and avoid OPEX carry forwards at the end of the year.*
- *There was a concerning trend regarding rates collection. The WDC Revenue Manager was invited to the March council meeting to provide any insights on trends within the community and mechanisms/actions that could be undertaken.*

Approval of updated Procurement Policy (Item 7.1)

Report from Chris McColl, Business Improvement Manager

Moved (Crawford/Morunga)

1. That the report 'Approval of updated Procurement Policy' by Chris McColl, Business Improvement Manager and dated 28 January 2026, be received.
2. That council approve the updated Procurement Policy (*included as Attachment One pertaining to Item 7.1 of the 18 February 2026 council agenda*).

Secretarial Note:

- *Concern was raised that 'local businesses' was not clearly defined within the Policy and could be open to interpretation.*
- *In accordance with Standing Order 23.5 'Substituted motion', with the approval of the mover and seconder of the motion it was agreed to amend Section 8 of the Policy 'Promotion of Northland Businesses' by replacing the reference to 'local businesses' with 'Northland businesses'.*
- *There were differing opinions whether Section 8 could be misinterpreted to read that Māori and Pasifika businesses received preferential consideration or whether it simply identified opportunities and the need for a rigorous and equitable approach to procurement by council.*
- *It was requested that the Policy include a clear process to inform governance when staff did not accept the best scoring supplier during evaluation (as detailed in Section 15 of the Policy 'Rules applying to the procurement thresholds').*
- *It was further requested that going forward council have a deeper discussion regarding Te Tiriti o Waitangi and how it 'cascades through the organisation'.*
- *Assurance was provided that council's Legal Counsel had reviewed the Procurement Policy to ensure it was legally sound. Council's Independent Risk Advisor also confirmed council's policy reflected the 'tone' set by the Officer of the Auditor General for procurement best practise.*

An amendment was moved (Carr/Hunt)

- 2A. That council approve the updated Procurement Policy, subject to bullet point four of Section 15, 'Rules applying to procurement thresholds', being amended to read in totality:

'If staff are not accepting the best scoring supplier during evaluation, then the reasons must be documented and forwarded to the group manager or CEO for

acceptance and sign off. In such circumstances where the value of the contract exceeds \$50k it will be reported to the next Audit and Risk Committee.'

Carried

A further amendment was moved (Craw/Kitchen)

- 2B. That council approve the updated Procurement Policy, subject to Section 8, 'Promotion of Northland Businesses' being further amended to read in totality:
- 'Council will identify opportunities for Northland businesses to participate in council procurement processes, **including** engaging with Māori, Pasifika and Northland businesses and social enterprises, ensuring evaluation of quotes and tenders reflects council's commitment to contribute to Northland's local economy.'*

Carried

Secretarial Note: Given there were no further amendments forthcoming the Chair put the substantive motion (incorporating receipt of the report and all changes to Sections 8 and 5 of the Procurement Policy) which was carried.

Adoption of the Statement of Proposal for Draft User Fees and Charges 2026/27 and Approval for Consultation (Item 7.2)

Report from Jane Hickmott, Governance and Policy Manager and Kyla Carlier, Corporate Strategy Manager

Moved (Macdonald/Blackwell)

1. That the report 'Adoption of the Statement of Proposal for Draft User Fees and Charges 2026/27 and Approval for Consultation' by Jane Hickmott, Governance and Policy Manager and Kyla Carlier, Corporate Strategy Manager and dated 12 January 2026, be received.
2. That council adopts the Statement of Proposal and the Draft User Fees and Charges 2026/27 (*included as Attachment One pertaining to Item 7.2 of the 18 February 2026 ordinary council agenda*), for the purpose of public consultation, pursuant to section 150 of the LGA.
3. That council delegates to the Group Manager - Corporate Services, the authority to make necessary minor formatting, typographical and administrative changes to the Statement of Proposal and Draft User Fees and Charges 2026/27 prior to formal consultation.

Carried

Secretarial Note:

- *Appreciation was extended to staff for supporting a 'process of continual improvement'.*
- *Council's decision was to issue the draft User Fees and Charges for consultation. It would have the ability to review the proposal based on feedback/submissions through deliberations.*

Simplifying Local Government Draft Proposal - NRC Submission (Item 7.3)

Report from Tami Woods, Policy and Planning Manager and Justin Murfitt, Strategic Policy Specialist

Moved (Macdonald/Craw)

1. That the report 'Simplifying Local Government Draft Proposal - NRC Submission' by Tami Woods, Policy and Planning Manager and Justin Murfitt, Strategic Policy Specialist and dated 21 January 2026, be received.
2. That the submission on the Simplifying Local Government Draft Proposal (*included in Attachment One pertaining to Item 7.3 of the 18 February 2026 ordinary council meeting agenda*) be approved.
3. That the submission be lodged on, or before, 20 February 2026.
4. That the submission be signed on behalf of the council by the Chair.

Carried

Secretarial Note: Appreciation was extended to the staff involved in 'creating quality content under time pressure', setting an appropriate tone for the submission and striking a balance between representing a Northland perspective while acknowledging the need for change.

Ratepayer Assistance Scheme (Item 7.4)

Report from Darryl Jones, Economist and Simon Crabb, Finance Manager

Moved (Hunt/Kitchen)

1. That the report 'Ratepayer Assistance Scheme' by Darryl Jones, Economist and Simon Crabb, Finance Manager and dated 30 January 2026, be received.
2. That council approves in principle support for the establishment of the Ratepayer Assistance Scheme (RAS), subject to commitment from other key stakeholders including central government, Local Government Funding Agency (LGFA) and other local authorities, acceptable final development, and due diligence.
3. That council acknowledges that, due to government time constraints, this in principle support is provided prior to any discussions taking place with the three district councils in Northland and that such discussions will be required before any final commitment is made.
4. That council approves notification to the Minister for Local Government that assuming the RAS is established as envisioned, Northland Regional Council (NRC) intends to:
 - a. Make RAS products (which may include Rates Postponement, Deferred Development Contributions and potentially IMPACT (Investment for Modernising Properties and Community Transformation loans) available to its ratepayers by joining RAS as a member.
 - b. Join RAS as a member requiring it to:
 - i. Sign up to joint and several guarantee (based on the LGFA joint and several guarantee)
 - ii. Support ratepayer access to RAS products through for example links on the NRC website
 - iii. Support information sharing arrangements between council and RAS

- c. Consider making an equity investment in RAS in due course, noting that total equity is estimated to be \$30 million to \$35 million, the majority of which will come from the local government sector.
5. That any commitment, beyond the notification of intent to the Minister of Local Government as outlined in resolution four is subject to final approval of council upon further development of the RAS and discussion with the three district councils. This will include consideration of the relevant amount of equity required to be invested in the future and any consultation requirements that are needed for an equity investment consistent with that required on the establishment of the LGFA. For the avoidance of doubt the passing of resolution four does not commit NRC to any contribution of equity or other funding unless approved at a later date by council.

Carried

Life Jackets for Children and Young Persons Bill (Item 7.5)

Report from Einnee Facey, Harbourmaster Administrator

Moved (Kitchen/Blackwell)

1. That the report 'Life Jackets for Children and Young Persons Bill' by Einnee Facey, Harbourmaster Administrator and dated 29 January 2026, be received.
2. That council retrospectively approve the submission (*included as Attachment One pertaining to Item 7.5 of the 18 February 2026 ordinary council meeting agenda*).

Carried

CEO Performance Review Process (Item 7.6)

Report from Kayla Ludlow, Human Resources Advisor and Shane Cleary, People and Culture Manager

Moved (Macdonald/Blackwell)

1. That the report 'CEO Performance Review Process' by Kayla Ludlow, Human Resources Advisor and Shane Cleary, People and Culture Manager and dated 20 January 2026, be received.
2. That council endorse the Chair, Deputy Chair and Councillor Hunt to oversee the CEO performance agreement and remuneration review.
3. That in doing so, the Chair, Deputy Chair and Councillor Hunt engage with all councillors to seek their feedback on:
 - a. the CEO's performance measures,
 - b. the CEO's annual performance review, and
 - c. the CEO's remuneration review.

Carried

Health and Safety quarterly report for October to December 2025 (Item 8.1)

Report from Tamsin Sutherland, Health and Safety Advisor and Shane Cleary, People and Culture Manager

Moved (Blackwell/Craw)

That the report 'Health and Safety quarterly report for October to December 2025' by Tamsin Sutherland, Health and Safety Advisor and Shane Cleary, People and Culture Manager and dated 28 January 2026, be received.

Carried

Secretarial Note:

- *Appreciation was extended to staff for a 'comprehensive report'.*
- *The Chief Executive Officer undertook to provide more detail regarding:*
 - *the date for completion of the lift repair at the Water Street office;*
 - *what mitigation measures were in place to ensure that the training of in-house contract managers was kept on track; and*
 - *the two firearm reports.*

Chief Executive's Report to Council (Item 8.2)

Report from Jonathan Gibbard, Tāhūhū Rangapū - Chief Executive Officer

Moved (Kitchen/Tipene)

That the report 'Chief Executive's Report to Council' by Jonathan Gibbard, Tāhūhū Rangapū - Chief Executive Officer and dated 19 January 2026, be received.

Carried

Secretarial Note:

- *Staff to provide an update on progress clearing the slip closing Old Russell Road to Helena Bay.*
- *The next Health and Safety Report to provide more detail on council's process for the use of body cameras.*
- *Appreciation was extended to the GM – Community Resilience and CDEM team for their work during the recent extreme weather events. Staff undertook to provide more detail how the learnings from those impacted could be shared with other communities.*
- *Appreciation was also extended to the comms and field staff for 'long hours and a lot of effort' over the Summer period.*

Quarterly People and Culture Report (Item 8.3)

Report from Kayla Ludlow, Human Resources Advisor; Shane Cleary, People and Culture Manager and Jessica Matson, Human Resources Advisor

Moved (Craw/Blackwell)

That the report 'Quarterly People and Culture Report' by Kayla Ludlow, Human Resources Advisor; Shane Cleary, People and Culture Manager and Jessica Matson, Human Resources.

Carried

Secretarial Note: The Chief Executive Officer undertook to email councillors with the tracking of annual leave (as a liability) to budget.

Chair's Report to Council (Item 8.4)

Report from Rae Hetaraka, Executive Assistant to the Chair

Moved (Tipene/Morunga)

That the report 'Chair's Report to Council' by Rae Hetaraka, Executive Assistant to the Chair and dated 3 February 2026, be received.

Carried

Secretarial Note:

- *A debrief of Waitangi commemorations to be conducted to assess council's contribution and identify future opportunities.*
- *Appreciation was extended to the Chair for a great report and 'being so available'.*
- *The Chair left the meeting at 11.43am.*

Reporting on Long Term Plan 2024-2034 Performance Measures for Quarter Two of the 2025/26 Year (Item 8.5)

Report from Robyn Broadhurst, Corporate Planning Specialist

Moved (Morunga/Macdonald).

That the report 'Reporting on Long Term Plan 2024-2034 Performance Measures for Quarter Two of the 2025/26 Year' by Robyn Broadhurst, Corporate Planning Specialist and dated 3 February 2026, be received.

Carried

Receipt of Committee Minutes (Item 9.1)

Report from Meloney Tupou, Māori Governance and Engagement Support Admin

Moved (Kitchen/Crawford)

That the unconfirmed minutes of the:

- Civil Defence Emergency Management – 9 December 2025
- Te Oneroa-a-Tōhe Board – 19 December 2025 and
- Extraordinary Joint Regional Economic Development Committee – 22 December 2026

be received.

Carried

Secretarial Note:

- *The Regional Transport Committee minutes from 9 December 2026 were not attached to the report. These to be included in the March council agenda for receipt.*
- *Congratulations were extended to Councillor Crawford who had been appointed the Chair of the Joint Regional Economic Development Committee and Councillor Kitchen who had been appointed the Chair of the Civil Defence Emergency Management Group.*

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

Moved (Crawford/Morunga)

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 - 17 and 22 December 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	Northport Group Limited CEO Appointment	The public conduct of the proceedings would be likely to result in disclosure of information, the withholding of which is necessary to protect the privacy of natural persons, including that of deceased natural persons s7(2)(a).

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

Carried

Whakamutunga (Conclusion)

The meeting concluded at 12.10pm with a karakia by Councillor Morunga.