

Kāeo River - Whangaroa Catchment Working Group Record of Actions

Meeting held in the Kaeo Fire Station
33 Leigh Street, Kaeo
on Wednesday 4 February 2026, commencing at 10:00 am - 11:30am

Tuhinga/Present:

Chairperson, NRC Councillor Colin Kitchen
Ratepayer representative, Ngaere Manning
Business and commercial interests representative, Bruce Mills
Te Runanga O Whangaroa, Stephen Rush
FNDC Councillor, Kelly Stratford
Area representative, Thomas Hawtin
Area representative, Les Jackson

I Tae Mai/In Attendance:

Full Meeting

NRC Rivers Manager, Joseph Camuso
NRC Projects Manager, Meg Tyler
NRC Secretariat, Haylee Labelle
Stuart White
Emma White
Lyndsey Whyte
Cynthia Page
Ron Knox
Kevin Herewini
Stellar – Senior Project Manager, Chris De Beer
OS Services, Jofe Graham-Jenkins
Phil Andrew
Murray Waldon
Maggie Rudolph

The meeting commenced at 10am with karakia by Kevin Herewini.

Ngā Mahi Whakapai/Housekeeping (Item 1.0)

Ngā Whakapahā/Apologies (Item 2.0)

Cr. Ann Court (FNDC), Nyze Manuel, Louisa Gritt (NRC), Raniera Kaio, Tammy Wooster (FNDC), Andy Brown (FNDC), Jacqui Hori-Holt (NZTA), L&C Bramley, Cr Joe Carr (NRC)

Record of Actions – 4 September 2025 (Item 3.1)

Presented by: Cr Kitchen (confirmed by Cr Stratford and Thomas Hawtin)

Secretarial notes: The chair introduced himself to the group and gave thanks for efforts in the recent weather event response. A round of introductions were undertaken by meeting attendees.

Agreed action points:

- **A letter of thanks to be written to former Councillor Marty Robinson in behalf of the Kaeo River-Whangaroa Catchment working group for his role as chair and for the work he has done**

Receipt of Action Sheet (Item 3.2)

Presented by: Cr Kitchen

Secretarial notes: It was noted that all actions are completed/closed and a general discussion was had to provide context to the completed actions

- Meg explained the process for calculating depreciation on infrastructure assets, noting that depreciation is only included once capital works are completed, and offered to revisit this explanation during the budget discussion.
- The group discussed current methods for sharing project updates, such as distributing posters to local businesses and emailing committee members and considered expanding to social media platforms like the Whangaroa Facebook page, with Kelly volunteering to assist on behalf of FNDC.
- Interested individuals were encouraged to join the community environmental forum, with their names added to the communication list, and Meg clarified that the forum is tied to the environmental assessment for the resource consent.
- In response to a previous request, Joe provided documentation detailing the consultation process and engagement with hapu, ensuring transparency for interested parties.

Agreed action points:

- **Cr Stratford has agreed to post project updates on the Whangaroa Facebook page**

Terms of Reference Confirmation (Item 3.3)

Presented by: Cr Kitchen

Secretarial notes: Reviewed the terms of reference as required at the commencement of the new triennium. One member pointed out that he has been a representative longer than 3yrs. This was acknowledged by the group and no concerns raised. It was noted that Wai-Care has been taken over by FNDC

Agreed action points:

- **NRC Secretariat to contact the school and former college, and Whangaroa Health Services to request representation at the next meeting and provide a summary of the committee's purpose**
- **Chris De Beer to provide a contact for Wai Care on behalf of FNDC**

Presentation Slides - containing all agenda items (Item 3.4)

Presented by: Cr Kitchen

Secretarial notes: All slides are covered in the minutes below as per the agenda.

Budget (Item 3.5)

Presented by: Meg Tyler & Joe Camuso

Secretarial notes: Presented detailed financial reports for the Kaeo River projects, explaining the structure of operational and capital accounts, sources of funding, recent expenditures, and the current financial position, with questions addressed by committee members.

- Described the two main bank accounts: one for operational expenses funded by targeted rates, and another for capital works funded by a mix of regional rates, local rates and central government contributions.
- Reviewed actual expenditures and income for the past year, noting a small operational deficit but a healthy overall surplus in the accounts, with explanations provided for variances and the impact of depreciation.
- Detailed the funding split for capital works, highlighting the significant contribution from central government (60%) and the remaining 40% split between regional and local rates (via 70/30 split), resulting in a favourable cost to local residents.
- Discussed projected expenses and income for the coming year, anticipated continued spending on active projects, and the expected drawdown of surpluses as construction progresses.

Agreed action points:

- **NRC Secretariat to obtain the copy of the budget with the descriptions attached as these were inadvertently left off the slide and circulate with the meeting minutes**

Recent Heavy Rain Events (Item 3.6)

Presented by: Joe Camuso & Meg Tyler

Provided an overview of recent heavy rain events in the region, demonstrating the use of rain and river gauges, radar data, and historical comparisons to assess flood impacts and inform ongoing flood management strategies.

- Described the use of regional rain gauges and radar technology to monitor rainfall, including the installation of a new gauge at Punaruku and the use of colour gradients to visualise rainfall intensity. There is a river water level gauge at Kaeo Fire Station and at Waiare Road. In 2008 the river gauge was installed. It was noted that the Bramley gauge is located near Puketi forest – the locations are not disclosed to prevent theft/vandalism.

- The gauge at Punaruku recorded 285ml of rain from midnight to 6am (Whangaruru) during the 18 Jan 2026 weather event
- Recent events were compared to historical floods, with the January 2026 rainfall noted as significant but less severe than the 2007 Kaeo event, and the importance of catchment characteristics in determining flood impacts was discussed.
- Acknowledged the limitations of static rain gauges, which may miss localised intense rainfall, and emphasized the value of radar and multiple gauges for comprehensive monitoring.
- The discussion highlighted how recent data supports the need for ongoing capital works and adaptive flood management, especially given the variability and intensity of recent weather patterns.

Agreed action points:

- **NRC Secretariat to obtain the slide presented where the Towai gauge was overlaid with the Punaruku gauge and circulate it with the minutes – this slide was presented but wasn't in the meeting pack**
- **NRC Rivers manager to obtain the rainfall measurement for other areas not shared in the slides**
- **NRC Project Manager to provide the fire station gauge slide**
- **NRC Rivers Manager to ask the NRC hydrology team to pull data from the rain radar for the days before and after the Jan weather event**

Kaeo Stage 2 Update (Item 3.7)

Presented by: Meg Tyler

Secretarial notes: Updated the committee on the progress of the Kaeo Stage 2 flood protection project, covering construction status, archaeological findings, environmental controls, and the expected timeline for completion.

- KCL (Kaitaia Construction, Limited) won the tender for the earthworks, and construction is underway with an expected completion date in April, subject to weather and archaeological discoveries. They have been delayed 1.5wks due to the rain but are still tracking well towards the original deadline
- The project site is monitored by cultural and archaeological experts, with approximately 120 features identified, and environmental officers ensure compliance with sediment controls during construction.
- Mentioned that archaeological findings and rain are the primary potential project risks to timelines
- The project involves creating a new channel and deflection bank to redirect floodwaters, with careful management of excavated materials and the use of on-site clay for construction.

- Wetland and habitat improvements are integrated into the design, including fish refuges and rock armouring to enhance ecological resilience and infrastructure durability.
- The committee discussed the value of public meetings and ongoing updates to ensure residents understand the project's purpose and progress

Tauranga Bay Business Case (Item 3.8)

Presented by: Meg Tyler & Joe Camuso

Secretarial notes: Tasked by Council in Dec 25 to look at this. NRC is presenting a business case to Council in August. If the business case is approved, construction could begin after 2027, subject to long-term plan inclusion and potential central government support. NRC will be tendering for a consultant to peer-review the design to determine if it is fit for purpose.

The team shared the preliminary designs for a stop bank, bund and drainage improvements to protect approximately 30 homes, with the committee. With the goal of completing the business case for approval by Council and potential inclusion in the long-term plan July 2027.

There is a general meeting of the Tauranga Bay Association over Easter that NRC, will be attending to share information with residents.

Residents provided input on specific flooding challenges, such as inadequate culverts and stormwater drains, and suggested remedial actions to mitigate recurring issue.

Discussion about catch pits filled with silt which FNDC has committed to looking into.

Agreed action points:

- **Chris De Beer (FNDC) to arrange the catch pits in Tauranga Bay to be visited with a view to arranging cleaning**

Omaunu Road Model (Item 3.9)

Presented by: Meg Tyler & Joe Camuso

Secretarial notes: A modelling study is underway to assess options for raising sections of Omaunu Road and improving culvert capacity, with results expected by the next committee meeting with further consultation planned with the Far North District Council to discuss a shared project. A crucial first step in the process is to determine the level of service for the road. Route resilience is a good case for doing this work.

Funds have been allocated to modelling, the road raising and options to keep the road open for longer.

Any other business (Item 3.10)

Presented by: Cr Kitchen

Secretarial notes:

- Murray raised additional community concerns, including recent damage at Te Ngaere Bay, the need for remedial works, and requests for access to flood modelling and environmental reports.
- Charles and Meg have visited Te Ngaere Bay to assess recent flood damage, with initial remedial works planned using available funds (suggested better off fund for remedial works e.g. scour on road) and an invitation for ongoing dialogue with residents about long-term resilience.
- Enquiry about the availability of flood modelling and environmental reports, and were directed to the NRC website and offered direct links for further information

Agreed action points:

- **NRC Rivers Manager to send a link to the NRC web page or data hub with flood modelling, environmental statements, and risk assessments to interested parties.**
- **Future discussion to be had about community update meetings being arranged to share the progress on Kaeo Stage 2 and keep the wider community informed.**

Whakamutunga (Conclusion)

The meeting concluded at 1130am with karakia.