

## Northland Regional Council Minutes

Meeting held in the Council Chamber  
36 Water Street, Whangārei  
on Tuesday 26 May 2026, commencing at 10.00am

### Tuhinga/Present:

Chairperson, Pita Tipene  
Deputy Chairperson, Jack Crow  
Councillors:  
John Blackwell  
Joe Carr  
Geoff Crawford  
John Hunt  
Colin Kitchen  
Amy Macdonald  
Arama Morunga

### I Tae Mai/In Attendance:

**Full or Part Meeting**  
Independent Risk Advisor  
Independent Tangata Whenua Advisor  
Tāhūhū Rangapū - Chief Executive Officer  
Pou Taumatua – GM Corporate Services  
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  
People and Culture Manager  
Finance Manager  
Policy and Planning Manager  
Governance and Corporate Planning Manager  
Transport Manager  
Biodiversity Manager – Predator Free  
Senior Policy Planner  
Financial Accountant  
Translator  
Learning and Development Advisor  
Digital Experience Support  
Māori Engagement and Governance Support Administration  
Governance Specialist

*Secretarial The Chair declared the meeting open at 10.00am.*

## **Ngā whakapāha/Apologies (Item 1.0)**

The apology from the Independent Tangata Whenua Advisor, Dee-Ann Wolferstan, for non-attendance was noted.

## **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.

## **Confirmation of Minutes - 21 April 2026 (Item 5.1)**

**Report from Meloney Tupou, Māori Governance and Engagement Support Admin**

**Moved (Kitchen/Craw)**

That the minutes of the council meeting held on 21 April 2026, 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 5.2)**

**Report from Chris Taylor, Governance Specialist**

**Moved (MacDonald/Morunga)**

That the action sheet be received.

**Carried**

## **Financial Report to April 2026 (Item 6.1)**

**Report from Taka Skipwith, Financial Accountant**

**Moved (Blackwell/Crawford)**

That the report 'Financial Report to April 2026' by Taka Skipwith, Financial Accountant and dated 12 May 2026, be received.

**Carried**

Secretarial Note:

- It was ten months into the financial year council was reporting a \$1.68m surplus; which was slightly less than the previous month.
- The April results from managed funds had been received since the time of reporting and it was advised that these funds had returned \$2.4m in one month (representing a 3.9% return in one month).
- A report had been presented to the Audit and Risk Committee which supported a framework for the allocation of any surpluses; which would be presented to council for formal consideration at the June ordinary meeting.
- Staff to liaise with council's Investment Manager, Russell Investments to determine whether the end of month results could be provided in a more timely manner to council.
- Assurance was provided that despite the unfavourable variances reported for Environmental Services and Strategic Partnerships & Engagement that these programmes were on track and 'delivering priorities'.

- Further assurance was provided that all efforts were made to ensure grants and subsidies received by council from external funders were fully expended .
- A report from Northport Group Limited would be provided to the Investment Committee the following week which would provide an update to members on a range of issues.

## **Regional Rates Collection - update to 31 March 2026 (Item 6.2)**

**Report from Simon Crabb, Finance Manager**

### **Moved (Carr/Crawford)**

That the report 'Regional Rates Collection - update to 31 March 2026' by Simon Crabb, Finance Manager and dated 30 April 2026, be received.

### **Carried**

#### Secretarial Note:

- Concern was raised regarding the Far North District Council's rate take compared to the other territorial authorities. It was suggested that NRC should write a formal letter to elevate this concern and that the FNDC Revenue Manager be invited to attend council to address key issues.
- It was advised that if members of the community applied for a rates rebate and it was approved by the district council, then DIA provided the rebate up to a certain threshold.
- It was requested that more information be provided regarding rates per ratepayer by district; with the concern particularly focused on rural and farming areas paying rates compared to urban areas.
- It was also requested that a map be generated to demonstrate the areas in which rate arrears were accumulating. This could indicate areas where council could actively engage with.

## **RM Reform: Joint Northland Work Programme (Item 7.1)**

**Report from Tami Woods, Policy and Planning Manager**

### **Moved (Craw/Morunga)**

1. That the report 'RM Reform: Joint Northland Work Programme' by Tami Woods, Policy and Planning Manager and dated 28 April 2026, be received.
2. That council approve the Draft Terms of Reference for the Resource Management Joint Committee (included as Attachment 1 pertaining to Item 7.1 of the 26 May 2026 council agenda).
3. The council appoints Councillors Macdonald and Crawford as members of the Resource Management Joint Committee.
4. That the council approves its quarter share of placeholder funding for the establishment and delivery of the reform programme, being an indicative contribution of \$15,000 in 2025/26 and \$125,000 in 2026/27.
  - a. \$15,000 in 2025/26 funded from the existing Policy and Planning budget
  - b. \$125,000 in 2026/27 funded from the existing Policy and Planning budget.

5. That council note that resourcing and budgets will be refined as part of the setup phase of the programme and reported back to council as required.

**Carried**

### **Panel Nominee for Fast Track Application - Alternative to Brynderwyn Hills (Item 7.2)**

**Report from Ingrid Kuindersma, Senior Policy Planner and Tami Woods, Policy and Planning Manager**

#### **Moved (Kitchen/Crawford)**

1. That the report 'Panel Nominee for Fast Track Application - Alternative to Brynderwyn Hills' by Ingrid Kuindersma, Senior Policy Planner and Tami Woods, Policy and Planning Manager and dated 6 May 2026, be received.
2. That Northland Regional Council nominate Benje Patterson as a member of the Expert Panel convened to determine the NZTA Alternative to the Brynderwyn Hills Application lodged under the Fast Track Approvals Act.

**Carried**

Secretarial Note: It was stressed that an alternative to the Brynderwyn Hills was 'one of the most critical things' for the Northland region and when shut had a detrimental impact on Northland's reputation and economy. Council's ongoing pressure to resolve this issue was critical.

### **PF2050 Future Funding (Item 7.3)**

**Report from Don McKenzie, Pou Tiaki Pūtaiao - GM Biosecurity and Sam Johnson, Biosecurity Manager - Predator Free**

#### **Moved (Macdonald/Morunga)**

1. That the report 'PF2050 Future Funding' by Don McKenzie, Pou Tiaki Pūtaiao - GM Biosecurity and Sam Johnson, Biosecurity Manager – Predator Free and dated 11 May 2026, be received.
2. That council confirms its ongoing financial contribution towards the jointly funded PF2050 partnership programme alongside the Department of Conservation and Foundation North as outlined in this report.

**Carried**

Secretarial Note:

- Appreciation was extended to the Chief Executive Officer and staff for initiating the discussions with potential funders, culminating in what was described as a 'fantastic result'.
- It was acknowledged that some councillors needed to better understand the Predator Free 2050 programme and 'sustainability over the longer term'.

## **Approval of Terms of Reference for Whangarei Public Transport Working Party (Item 7.4)**

**Report from Chris Powell, Transport Manager - Northland Regional Council**

### **Moved (Macdonald/Craw)**

1. That the report 'Approval of Terms of Reference for Whangarei Public Transport Working Party' by Chris Powell, Transport Manager - Northland Regional Council and dated 5 May 2026, be received.
2. That the Northland Regional Council approve the recommended changes to the Whangarei Passenger Transport Working Group Terms of Reference (*included as Attachment 1 pertaining to Item 7.4 of the 26 May 2026 council agenda*).

### **Carried**

Secretarial Note: There was general agreement there needed to be representation from both NRC and WDC at the Whangarei Public Transport Working Party meetings to ensure collective buy in to work programmes.

## **Appointment to Mangawhai Harbour Working Group. (Item 7.5)**

**Report from Ruben Wylie, Pou Tiaki Taiao**

### **Moved (Crawford/Blackwell)**

1. That the report 'Appointment to Mangawhai Harbour Working Group.' by Ruben Wylie, Pou Tiaki Taiao and dated 7 May 2026, be received.
2. That council appoints Councillor John Hunt as the Northland Regional Council representative on the Mangawhai Harbour Working Group.

### **Carried**

## **Chair's Report to Council (Item 8.1)**

**Report from Rae Hetaraka, Executive Assistant to the Chair**

### **Moved (Tipene/Blackwell)**

That the report 'Chair's Report to Council' by Rae Hetaraka, Executive Assistant to the Chair and dated 30 April 2026, be received.

### **Carried**

## **Chief Executive's Report to Council (Item 8.2)**

**Report from Jonathan Gibbard, Tāhūhū Rangapū - Chief Executive Officer**

### **Moved (Crawford/Hunt)**

That the report 'Chief Executive's Report to Council' by Jonathan Gibbard, Tāhūhū Rangapū - Chief Executive Officer and dated 29 April 2026, be received.

### **Carried**

Secretarial Note:

- Staff to provide clarification what the amendments to the Resource Management (Stock Exclusion) regulations meant for farmers in practical terms and ensure that this was clearly communicated to the community.
- Councillor Morunga to be provided an update on Te Riingi Marae appeal on the Oranga Kai Limited Partnership's consent
- It was stated that council should be 'extremely proud' of its hull surveillance programme which inspected over 2000 vessels during the 2025/2026 season and was critical to prevent the spread of marine pests.
- More detail was requested regarding the large number of coastal permits exhibiting moderate non-compliance.
- Whilst Kaeo Stage 2 river works had been halted due to the discovery of archaeological material and poor ground conditions, assurance was provided that the works were still on track to be completed in December.

### **Reporting on Long Term Plan 2024-2034 Performance Measures for Quarter 3 of the 2025/26 Year (Item 8.3)**

**Report from Robyn Broadhurst, Corporate Planning Specialist**

**Moved (Macdonald/Morunga)**

That the report 'Reporting on Long Term Plan 2024-2034 Performance Measures for Quarter 3 of the 2025/26 Year' by Robyn Broadhurst, Corporate Planning Specialist and dated 28 April 2026, be received.

**Carried**

### **Receipt of Committee Minutes (Item 9.1)**

**Report from Chris Taylor, Governance Specialist**

**Moved (Carr/Blackwell)**

That the unconfirmed minutes of the:

- Kaipara Moana Remediation Joint Committee – 20 April 2026;
- Joint Regional Economic Development Committee – 24 April 2026; and
- Regional Transport Committee – 30 April 2026

be received.

**Carried**

Secretarial Note: The minutes of the Kaipara Moana Joint Committee meeting dated 20 April 2026 were tabled at the meeting.

### **Working Party Updates Report (Item 9.2)**

**Report from Meloney Tupou, Māori Governance and Engagement Support Admin**

**Moved (Morunga/Macdonald)**

That the report 'Working Party Updates Report' be received.

**Carried**

Secretarial Note. The Terms of Reference for the Kerikeri Waipapa River Liaison Committee to be brought back to council to approve the proposed membership change.

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

### **Moved (Blackwell/Crawford)**

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:

<b>Item No.</b>	<b>Item Issue</b>	<b>Reasons/Grounds</b>
10.1	Confirmation of Confidential Minutes - 21 April 2026	The public conduct of the proceedings would be likely to result in disclosure of information, as stated in the open section of the meeting.

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

**Carried**

## **Open Meeting**

### **Moved (Carr/Kitchen)**

That the council resumes in open meeting.

**Carried**

Secretarial Note: The Independent Risk Advisor, Steve Watene, who was finishing his tenure with the council was acknowledged for his valuable contribution over the past three years; specifically his expertise and independent assurance. In turn the Independent Risk Advisor extended appreciation to council and specifically the finance team for the opportunity and learnings from working in the local government environment.

## **Whakamutunga (Conclusion)**

The meeting concluded at 10.58am.