



MINUTES

WRC Transport Committee Meeting

Tuesday, 17 February 2026

Order Of Business

1	Karakia Timatanga	4
2	Apologies	4
3	Confirmation of Agenda	4
4	Disclosures of Interest	4
5	General Items	4
5.1	Inter-regional Rail	4
5.2	Directors report	5
5.3	Regional Land Transport Plan.....	5
5.4	Bus Contract Renewal	5
5.5	Total Mobility Review.....	6
5.6	Public Transport Branding Refresh Update.....	7
5.7	Public Transport Operations Report	7
6	Karakia Whakamutunga	7

Waikato Regional Council
WRC Transport Committee Meeting
OPEN MINUTES

Date: Tuesday 17 February 2026, 1.01pm
Location: Council Chambers
 Waikato Regional Council
 Level 1, 160 Ward Street, Hamilton

Members Present: Cr Angela Strange – Chair
 Cr Chris Hughes – Deputy-Chair (from 1.03pm)
 Cr Robert Cookson (from 1.04pm until 1.46pm, back at 1.55pm)
 Cr Mich'eal Downard
 Cr Ben Dunbar-Smith (from 1.03pm)
 Cr Keith Holmes
 Cr Warren Maher
 Cr Tipa Mahuta (until 2.59pm)
 Cr Gary McGuire
 Cr Jennifer Nickel
 Cr Garry Reymer
 Cr Noel Smith
 Cr Liz Stolwyk (until 4.10pm)

Staff Present: Chris McLay – Chief Executive
 Phil King – Director, Regional Transport Connections
 Jess Hood – Democracy Advisor

The contents of these minutes meet all legal requirements and include a full set of decisions.

An audio-visual recording of the open session of the meeting is available on Waikato Regional Council's public website.

Recording	Document ID #	YouTube Link
Open Recording #1	34671142	https://youtu.be/txl7_Bgi2E0
Open Recording #2	34672946	https://youtu.be/1KF8edAbnmY

1 KARAKIA TIMATANGA

Item commenced in open recording 1, at 12 seconds.

Cr Tipa Mahuta opened the meeting with a karakia.

2 APOLOGIES

Item commenced in open recording 1, at 31 seconds.

COMMITTEE RESOLUTION WRCTC26/01

Moved: Cr Jennifer Nickel

Seconded: Cr Liz Stolwyk

That the apologies of Cr Kataraina Hodge for absence be accepted.

CARRIED

3 CONFIRMATION OF AGENDA

Item commenced in open recording 1, at 48 seconds.

1.03pm – Crs Ben Dunbar-Smith and Chris Hughes entered the meeting.

COMMITTEE RESOLUTION WRCTC26/02

Moved: Cr Jennifer Nickel

Seconded: Cr Warren Maher

- 1. That the agenda of the WRC Transport Committee Meeting of 17 February 2026, as circulated, be confirmed as the business of the meeting.**
- 2. That the order of items follows the order set out in the minutes.**
- 3. That the meeting may sit longer than two hours continuously and continue longer than six hours including adjournments.**

CARRIED

4 DISCLOSURES OF INTEREST

Item commenced in open recording 1, at 1 minute, 8 seconds.

No interests were disclosed pertaining to items on the agenda or interests not already recorded on a relevant register.

5 GENERAL ITEMS**5.1 INTER-REGIONAL RAIL**

Item commenced in open recording 1, at 2 minutes.

Presented by the Chair, Greater Wellington Regional Council (Daran Ponter). Refer Document # #34712753 for the PowerPoint presentation or on the public website.

1.04pm – Cr Robert Cookson entered the meeting.

COMMITTEE RESOLUTION WRCTC26/03

Moved: Cr Noel Smith

Seconded: Cr Jennifer Nickel

That the report *Inter-regional Rail* (WRC Transport Committee, 17 February 2026) be received.

CARRIED

5.2 DIRECTORS REPORT

Item commenced in open recording 1, at 44 minutes, 50 seconds.

Presented by the Director, Regional Transport Connections (Phil King) and Manager, Transport Strategy and Delivery (Lorraine Cheyne).

1.46pm – Cr Robert Cookson left the meeting.

1.55pm – Cr Robert Cookson entered the meeting.

COMMITTEE RESOLUTION WRCTC26/04

Moved: Cr Gary McGuire

Seconded: Cr Liz Stolwyk

That the *Directors report* (WRC Transport Committee, 17 February 2026) be received.

CARRIED

5.3 REGIONAL LAND TRANSPORT PLAN

Item commenced in open recording 1, at 1 hour, 1 minute and 41 seconds.

Presented by the Team Leader, Transport Planning (Katherine Simpson) and Manager, Transport Strategy and Delivery (Lorraine Cheyne).

COMMITTEE RESOLUTION WRCTC26/05

Moved: Cr Jennifer Nickel

Seconded: Cr Ben Dunbar-Smith

That the report *Regional Land Transport Plan* (WRC Transport Committee, 17 February 2026) be received.

CARRIED

5.4 BUS CONTRACT RENEWAL

Item commenced in open recording 1, at 1 hour, 4 minutes and 40 seconds.

Presented by the Manager, Public Transport Operations (Trudi Knight), Team Leader, Transport Planning (Katherine Simpson) and Manager, Transport Strategy and Delivery (Lorraine Cheyne), and the Team Leader, Contracts and Insights (Vincent Kuo).

2.59pm – Cr Tipa Mahuta left the meeting.

COMMITTEE RESOLUTION WRCTC26/06

Moved: Cr Warren Maher

Seconded: Cr Chris Hughes

- 1. That the report *Bus Contract Renewal* (WRC Transport Committee, 17 February 2026) be received**
- 2. That the WRC Transport Committee:**
 - (a) Notes the feedback received from public transport operators through the pre-procurement engagement process undertaken over December 2025 and January 2026 (as summarised in the report, WRC Transport Committee, 17 February 2026 at pages 39-45) and as discussed during the meeting).**
 - (b) Notes the findings of the Local Government Act Section 17A Public Transport Efficiency and Effectiveness Review and the management response (refer attachments 1 and 2, WRC Transport Committee, 17 February 2026 at pages 46 and 198 respectively).**
 - (c) Approves the objectives sought through the renewal of the upcoming bus contracts covering Hamilton, North Waikato, Raglan and Eastern Waikato (including Thames-Coromandel and Hauraki) (refer attachment 3, WRC Transport Committee, 17 February 2026 at page 206).**
 - (d) Requests that staff finalise the procurement documentation, incorporating any changes discussed at the meeting (with the documentation approved by the Committee Chair (Cr Angela Strange), Deputy Chair (Cr Chris Hughes) and Director, Regional Transport Connections (Phil King) prior to publishing Request for Proposals in late March 2026.**
 - (e) Notes that decision to award contracts will be required by Council in late August 2026.**

CARRIED

5.5 TOTAL MOBILITY REVIEW

Item commenced in open recording 1, at 2 hours, 17 minutes and 41 seconds.

Presented by the Accessible Transport Lead (Maurice Flynn) and Manager, Transport Strategy and Delivery (Lorraine Cheyne).

COMMITTEE RESOLUTION WRCTC26/07

Moved: Cr Liz Stolwyk

Seconded: Cr Noel Smith

That the report *Total Mobility Review* (WRC Transport Committee, 17 February 2026) be received.

CARRIED

3.29pm – The meeting adjourned.

3.39pm – The meeting reconvened.

5.6 PUBLIC TRANSPORT BRANDING REFRESH UPDATE

Item commenced in open recording 2, at 25 seconds.

Presented by the Team Leader, Customer Focus (Sandra Sesto-Dekic) and Strategy Director, Special Group (Jane Etheridge), Lead Business Partner, Special Group (Emma Vivian) and Executive Design Director, Special Group (Heath Lowe).

4.10pm – Cr Liz Stolwyk left the meeting

COMMITTEE RESOLUTION WRCTC26/08

Moved: Cr Jennifer Nickel

Seconded: Cr Keith Holmes

That the report *Public Transport Branding Refresh Update* (WRC Transport Committee, 17 February 2026) be received.

CARRIED

5.7 PUBLIC TRANSPORT OPERATIONS REPORT

Item commenced in open recording 2, at 46 minutes and 40 seconds.

Presented by the Director, Regional Transport Connections (Phil King).

COMMITTEE RESOLUTION WRCTC26/09

Moved: Cr Chris Hughes

Seconded: Cr Keith Holmes

That the *Public Transport Operations Report* (WRC Transport Committee, 17 February 2026) be received.

CARRIED

6 KARAKIA WHAKAMUTUNGA

Item commenced in open recording 2, at 58 minutes and 26 seconds.

The Director, Regional Transport Connections (Phil King) closed the meeting with a karakia.

4.38pm – The meeting closed.