



MINUTES

Strategy and Policy Committee Meeting

Wednesday, 6 May 2026

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Waikato Regional Council
Strategy and Policy Committee Meeting

OPEN MINUTES

Date: Wednesday 6 May 2026, 9.30am

Location: Council Chambers
 Waikato Regional Council
 Level 1, 160 Ward Street, Hamilton

Members Present: Cr Ben Dunbar-Smith – Chair
 Cr Liz Stolwyk – Deputy Chair
 Cr Robert Cookson (until 10.35am, from 10.43am)
 Cr Mich'eal Downard
 Cr Kataraina Hodge
 Cr Keith Holmes
 Cr Chris Hughes
 Cr Warren Maher
 Cr Tipa Mahuta (from 9.50am)
 Cr Gary McGuire
 Cr Jennifer Nickel
 Cr Garry Reymer (until 11.18am, from 11.23am)
 Cr Noel Smith
 Cr Angela Strange (virtually via Teams from 10.23am, and in person from 10.35am)

Staff Present: Tracey May – Director, Science, Policy and Information
 Greg Ryan – Director, Integrated Catchment Management
 Brooke Roebeck – 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 |
|-------------|----------------|---|
| Recording 1 | Doc # 35770599 | https://youtu.be/EBu0XXY0i6A |

1 KARAKIA TIMATANGA

Item commenced in recording 1, at 9 seconds.

The Democracy Advisor (Brooke Roebeck) opened the meeting with a karakia.

2 APOLOGIES

Item commenced in recording 1, at 31 seconds.

COMMITTEE RESOLUTION SP26/13

Moved: Cr Warren Maher

Seconded: Cr Liz Stolwyk

That the apologies of Cr Angela Strange for lateness be accepted.

CARRIED

3 CONFIRMATION OF AGENDA

Item commenced in recording 1, at 1 minute 15 seconds.

COMMITTEE RESOLUTION SP26/14

Moved: Cr Gary McGuire

Seconded: Cr Kataraina Hodge

- 1. That the agenda of the Strategy and Policy Committee Meeting of 6 May 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.**

CARRIED

4 DISCLOSURES OF INTEREST

Item commenced in recording 1, at 1 minute 33 seconds.

Cr Noel Smith disclosed that he was a farmer with an interest related to stock exclusion requirements affecting a waterway referenced in item 6.3. *Update on National Direction - Stock Exclusion Regulations and Electric Vehicle charging infrastructure.*

5 MINUTES FOR CONFIRMATION OR RECEIPT

Nil

6 GENERAL ITEMS**6.1 NATIONAL POLICY STATEMENT ON FRESHWATER MANAGEMENT 2020 - S55(2A) CHANGES TO THE WAIKATO REGIONAL PLAN**

Item commenced in recording 1, at 1 minute 40 seconds

The Director, Science, Policy and Information (Tracey May) introduced the Team Leader, Water Policy (Naomi Crawford). Refer Document # 35821732 for the PowerPoint presentation (at page 3-4) or on the public website.

COMMITTEE RESOLUTION SP26/15

Moved: Cr Mich'eal Downard

Seconded: Cr Jennifer Nickel

- 1. That the report *Changes to the Waikato Regional Plan Required by Freshwater Management Policy Amendment* (Strategy and Policy Committee, 6 May 2026) be received.**
- 2. That the Strategy and Policy Committee recommends that Council:**
 - (a) Amend the Waikato Regional Plan, under section 55(2A) of the Resource Management Act 1991, to give effect to the December 2025 amendment to clause 3.22 of the National Policy Statement for Freshwater Management 2020, by incorporating the mandatory policy change relating to quarrying and mining activities affecting natural inland wetlands, as set out in Attachment 1 (Strategy and Policy Committee, 6 May 2026 at page 12-13).**
 - (b) In accordance with section 55(2A) of the Resource Management Act 1991, public notification of the amendments to the Waikato Regional Plan will occur within five working days of the amendments being made.**

CARRIED

6.2 A BIODIVERSITY STRATEGY FOR THE WAIKATO REGION - ENDORSEMENT OF DRAFT STRATEGY FOR PUBLIC CONSULTATION

Item commenced in recording 1, at 10 minutes 17 seconds.

Presented by the Manager, Strategic Policy Implementation (Lisette Balsom), the Manager, Biosecurity and Biodiversity (Patrick Whaley) and Director, Place Group Limited (Angus McKenzie). Refer Document # 35821732 for the PowerPoint presentation (at page 5-8) or on the public website.

9.50am – Cr Tipa Mahuta entered the meeting.

Action: That staff provide councillors the consultation questions for feedback before they are released for public consultation.

COMMITTEE RESOLUTION SP26/16

Moved: Cr Jennifer Nickel

Seconded: Cr Mich'eal Downard

1. That the report *A Biodiversity Strategy for the Waikato Region - Endorsement of Draft Strategy for Public Consultation* (Strategy and Policy Committee, 6 May 2026) be received.
2. That the Strategy and Policy Committee endorse the Draft Biodiversity Strategy, subject to any amendments identified during discussion at the Committee meeting.

CARRIED

6.3 UPDATE ON NATIONAL DIRECTION - STOCK EXCLUSION REGULATIONS AND ELECTRIC VEHICLE CHARGING INFRASTRUCTURE

Item commenced in recording 1, at 42 minutes 46 seconds.

The Director, Science, Policy and Information (Tracey May) introduced the Team Leader, Water Policy (Naomi Crawford) and Principal Advisor (Hamish Smith) who requested the report be taken as read. Refer Document # 35821732 for the PowerPoint presentation (at pages 9-11) or on the public website.

10.23am – Cr Angela Strange entered the meeting.

COMMITTEE RESOLUTION SP26/17

Moved: Cr Warren Maher

Seconded: Cr Liz Stolwyk

That the report *Update on National Direction - Stock Exclusion Regulations and Electric Vehicle charging infrastructure* (Strategy and Policy Committee, 6 May 2026) be received.

CARRIED

6.4 WAIKATO RESIDENTS' ENVIRONMENTAL PERCEPTIONS SURVEY 2025

Item commenced in recording 1, at 1 hour 4 minutes and 12 seconds.

Presented by Social Scientist (Melissa Hackell) and Engagement and Research Specialist (Louise Stone). Refer Document # 35821732 for the PowerPoint presentation (at page 12-16) or on the public website.

The *Waikato Resident's Environmental Perceptions Survey 2025* was inadvertently omitted from the agenda. Refer Document # 35840826 or on the public website.

10.35am – Cr Robert Cookson left the meeting.

10.43am – Cr Robert Cookson entered the meeting.

COMMITTEE RESOLUTION SP26/18

Moved: Cr Tipa Mahuta

Seconded: Cr Noel Smith

That the report *Waikato Residents' Environmental Perceptions Survey 2025* (Strategy and Policy Committee, 6 May 2026) be received.

CARRIED

6.5 SUBMISSIONS SUMMARY REPORT - MAY 2026

Item commenced in recording 1, at 1 hour 43 minutes and 5 seconds.

Presented by the Team Leader, Strategic and Spatial Planning (Miffy Foley) who requested the report be taken as read.

11.18am – Cr Garry Reymer left the meeting.

COMMITTEE RESOLUTION SP26/19

Moved: Cr Tipa Mahuta

Seconded: Cr Noel Smith

That the *Submissions Summary Report - May 2026* (Strategy and Policy Committee, 6 May 2026) be received.

CARRIED

7 KARAKIA WHAKAMUTUNGA

Item commenced in recording 1, at 1 hour 52 minutes and 54 seconds.

The Democracy Advisor (Brooke Roebeck) closed the meeting with a karakia.

11.23am – Cr Garry Reymer entered the meeting.

11.24am – The meeting closed.