MINUTES

Strategy and Policy Committee Meeting

Thursday, 18 June 2026

Order Of Business

Waikato Regional Council

Strategy and Policy Committee Meeting

OPEN MINUTES

Date:	**Thursday 18 June 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 10.13am, back at 10.18am until 12.34pm, back at 12.38pm) Cr Kataraina Hodge (until 10.27, back at 10.34am) Cr Keith Holmes Cr Chris Hughes (until 10.55am, back at 11.01am) Cr Warren Maher Cr Tipa Mahuta (virtually via Teams from 9.36am until 10.07am, back at 10.53am) Cr Gary McGuire Cr Garry Reymer Cr Noel Smith Cr Angela Strange (virtually via Teams until 1.02pm)
Staff Present:	Tracey May – Director, Science, Policy and Information Brent Sinclair – Director, Resource Use 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
Open Recording 1	36633926	https://youtu.be/EI9TL5eQqeA
Open Recording 2	36638198	https://youtu.be/QzdTipj7hRU
Public Excluded Recording	36635049	–
Open Recording 3	36635048	https://youtu.be/JfxO2d0L4t8

Please note that there were technical difficulties affecting the audio-visual in Open Recording 1, resulting in a loss of audio between 34 minutes 26 seconds and 1 hour 24 minutes 5 seconds.

1 KARAKIA TIMATANGA

Item commenced in open recording 1, at 5 seconds.

The Director, Science, Policy and Information (Tracey May) opened the meeting with a karakia.

2 APOLOGIES

Item commenced in open recording 1, at 28 seconds.

COMMITTEE RESOLUTION SP26/35

Moved: Cr Noel Smith
Seconded: Cr Robert Cookson

That the apologies of Cr Mich'eal Downard for absence and Cr Jennifer Nickel for lateness be accepted.

CARRIED

3 CONFIRMATION OF AGENDA

Item commenced in open recording 1, at 54 seconds.

COMMITTEE RESOLUTION SP26/36

Moved: Cr Gary McGuire
Seconded: Cr Robert Cookson

1. **That the agenda of the Strategy and Policy Committee Meeting of 18 June 2026, as circulated, be confirmed as the business of the meeting.**
2. **That Councillors will receive an informal briefing on progress in responding to the Environment Court directions on Plan Change One during the public excluded session of the meeting. The update is public excluded pursuant to section 7(2)(g) (to maintain legal professional privilege) of the Local Government and Official Information and Meetings Act 1987. There will be no decisions, actions or resolutions related to this update.**
3. **That the order of items follows the order set out in the minutes.**

CARRIED

4 DISCLOSURES OF INTEREST

Item commenced in open recording 1, at 2 minutes.

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

5 MINUTES FOR CONFIRMATION OR RECEIPT

5.1 MINUTES OF THE SUBMISSIONS SUBCOMMITTEE MEETING HELD ON 24 APRIL 2026

Item commenced in open recording 1, at 2 minutes 14 seconds.

COMMITTEE RESOLUTION SP26/37

Moved: Cr Liz Stolwyk
Seconded: Cr Ben Dunbar-Smith

That the minutes of the Submissions Subcommittee meeting held on 24 April 2026 be confirmed as a correct record.

CARRIED

6 GENERAL ITEMS

6.1 SUBMISSION ON THE CONSERVATION AMENDMENT BILL AND THE NATIONAL CONSERVATION POLICY STATEMENT PROPOSAL DOCUMENT

Item commenced in open recording 1, at 2 minutes 37 seconds.
Audio is unavailable from 34 minutes 26 seconds due to technical difficulties.

Presented by the Specialist Policy Advisor (Judy van Rossem) and the Team Leader, Policy Implementation (Naomi Crawford). Refer Document # 36570121 for the PowerPoint presentation or on the public website at slides 3-5.

The item provided an overview of the submission on the Conservation Amendment Bill and the proposed National Conservation Policy Statement. It outlined the purpose of the proposals, which was to modernise conservation management and improve system efficiency, and noted key implementation considerations and alignment with existing frameworks.

9.36am – Cr Tipa Mahuta entered the meeting.

10.17am – Cr Tipa Mahuta left the meeting.

10.13am – Cr Robert Cookson left the meeting.

10.18am – Cr Robert Cookson entered the meeting.

COMMITTEE RESOLUTION SP26/38

Moved: Cr Warren Maher
Seconded: Cr Chris Hughes

1. **That the report *Submission on the Conservation Amendment Bill and the National Conservation Policy Statement proposal document* (Strategy and Policy Committee, 18 June 2026) be received.**
2. **That the Strategy and Policy Committee delegates to the Committee Chair (Cr Ben Dunbar-Smith) and the Director, Science, Policy and Information (Tracey May) approval for lodgement of the Waikato Regional Council submissions on the Conservation**

Amendment Bill and the National Conservation Policy Statement Proposal Document subject to amendments identified in discussion had at the committee meeting.

CARRIED

6.2 SUBMISSION ON THE HAZARDOUS SUBSTANCES AND NEW ORGANISMS AMENDMENT BILL

No audio was captured for this item due to technical difficulties.

Presented by the Team Leader, Policy Implementation (Naomi Crawford) and Policy Advisor (Brooke Swanson). Refer Document # 36570121 for the PowerPoint presentation or on the public website at slides 6-8.

The item outlined the submission on proposed amendments to improve regulatory efficiency, responsiveness, and national consistency in hazardous substances and biosecurity management. It also identified key considerations, including role clarity between agencies, alignment with regional frameworks, and effective information sharing and coordination.

10.27am – Cr Kataraina Hodge left the meeting

10.34am – Cr Kataraina Hodge entered the meeting.

COMMITTEE RESOLUTION SP26/39

Moved: Cr Chris Hughes
Seconded: Cr Keith Holmes

1. **That the report *Submission on the Hazardous Substances and New Organisms Amendment Bill* (Strategy and Policy Committee, 18 June 2026) be received.**
2. **That the Strategy and Policy Committee delegates the Committee Chair (Cr Ben Dunbar-Smith) and the Director, Science, Policy and Information (Tracey May) the approval for lodgement of the proposed Waikato Regional Council submission to the *Hazardous Substances and New Organisms Amendment Bill submission* subject to amendments identified in discussion had at the committee meeting.**

CARRIED

6.3 SUBMISSION ON THE REVIEW OF MEASURES FOR SHORE-BASED HARVESTING IN THE AUCKLAND COROMANDEL AREA

Due to technical difficulties, audio was not captured for the majority of this item. Audio resumed in Open Recording 1 at 1 hour 24 minutes 5 seconds.

Presented by the Team Leader, Policy Implementation (Naomi Crawford) and Team Leader, Coastal and Marine Science (Michael Townsend). Refer Document # 36570121 for the PowerPoint presentation or on the public website at slides 9-10.

The item outlined the submission on proposed measures for shore-based harvesting in the Auckland Coromandel area. It summarised the preferred regulatory options, key implementation considerations, and the broader environmental and management context for the review.

10.55am – Cr Chris Hughes left the meeting, Cr Tipa Mahuta entered the meeting.

COMMITTEE RESOLUTION SP26/40

Moved: Cr Warren Maher
Seconded: Cr Chris Hughes

1. **That the report *Submission on the review of measures for shore-based harvesting in the Auckland Coromandel area* (Strategy and Policy Committee, 18 June 2026) be received.**
2. **That the Strategy and Policy Committee approves for lodgement the proposed Waikato Regional Council submission on the review of measures for shore-based shellfish harvesting in the Auckland Coromandel area; noting the point raised at the committee meeting.**

CARRIED

6.4 WAIKATO WATER SECURITY ACTION PLAN

Item commenced in open recording 1, at 1 hour 25 minutes and 55 seconds.

Presented by the Team Leader, Hydrology and Groundwater (Thomas Wilding). Refer Document # 36570121 for the PowerPoint presentation or on the public website at slides 11-20.

11.01am – Cr Chris Hughes entered the meeting.

COMMITTEE RESOLUTION SP26/41

Moved: Cr Noel Smith
Seconded: Cr Liz Stolwyk

1. **That the report *Waikato Water Security Action Plan* (Strategy and Policy Committee, 18 June 2026) be received.**
2. **That in endorsing the Draft Water Security Action Plan, the Chief Executive KPI *''Develop a water security plan for approval by the appropriate committee by 30 June 2026. The plan will include a preferred pathway and programme using an adaptive planning approach, a monitoring framework to support implementation, identify specific actions, roles, and responsibilities and address information gaps and provide management options"*, is considered achieved.**

CARRIED

11.20am – The meeting adjourned.

11.30am – The meeting reconvened.

6.5 2027-2037 LONG TERM PLAN DEVELOPMENT

Item commenced in open recording 2, at start.

Presented by the Manager, Corporate Planning (Jane Apperley). Refer Document # 36570121 for the PowerPoint presentation or on the public website at slides 21-24.

COMMITTEE RESOLUTION SP26/42

Moved: Cr Warren Maher
Seconded: Cr Tipa Mahuta

That the report *2027-2037 Long Term Plan Development* (Strategy and Policy Committee, 18 June 2026) be received.

CARRIED

6.6 SIGNIFICANCE AND ENGAGEMENT POLICY REVIEW 2026

Item commenced in open recording 2, at 9 minutes 24 seconds.

Presented by the Manager, Corporate Planning (Jane Apperley). Refer Document # 36570121 for the PowerPoint presentation or on the public website at slides 25-28.

COMMITTEE RESOLUTION SP26/43

Moved: Cr Noel Smith
Seconded: Cr Warren Maher

1. **That the report *Significance and Engagement Policy Review 2026* (Strategy and Policy Committee, 18 June 2026) be received.**

CARRIED

COMMITTEE RESOLUTION SP26/44

Moved: Cr Warren Maher
Seconded: Cr Noel Smith

2. **That the Strategy and Policy Committee requests staff to look at further amendments in line with the discussion had and brings a further version of the Draft Waikato Regional Council Significance and Engagement Policy 2027 (Attachment 1) to the August Committee Meeting.**

CARRIED

6.7 UPDATE ON NATIONAL DIRECTION - NATURAL HAZARDS, INFRASTRUCTURE, MARINE AQUACULTURE, COMMERCIAL FORESTRY, PAPAKĀINGA, ELECTRICITY NETWORK ACTIVITIES AND TELECOMMUNICATION FACILITIES

Item commenced in open recording 2, at 29 minutes 15 seconds.

Presented by the Team Leader, Policy Implementation (Naomi Crawford). Refer Document # 36570121 for the PowerPoint presentation or on the public website at slides 29-32.

COMMITTEE RESOLUTION SP26/45

Moved: Cr Ben Dunbar-Smith
Seconded: Cr Chris Hughes

That the report *Update on National Direction - Natural Hazards, Infrastructure, Marine Aquaculture, Commercial Forestry, Papakāinga, Electricity Network Activities and Telecommunication Facilities* (Strategy and Policy Committee, 18 June 2026) be received.

CARRIED

6.8 STRATEGY AND POLICY COMMITTEE - COST OF ACTIVITIES

Item commenced in open recording 2, at 35 minutes 45 seconds.

Presented by the Director, Science, Policy and Information (Tracey May). Refer Document # 36570121 for the PowerPoint presentation or on the public website at pages 33-35.

COMMITTEE RESOLUTION SP26/46

Moved: Cr Chris Hughes
Seconded: Cr Dunbar-Smith

That the report *Strategy and Policy Committee - cost of activities* (Strategy and Policy Committee, 18 June 2026) be received.

CARRIED

6.9 RESOURCE MANAGEMENT POLICY WORK PROGRAMME REFOCUS 2026/27

Item commenced in open recording 2, at 1 hour 1 minute.

Presented by the Director, Science, Policy and Information (Tracey May) who requested the report be taken as read.

COMMITTEE RESOLUTION SP26/47

Moved: Cr Noel Smith
Seconded: Cr Chris Hughes

1. **That the report *Resource management policy Work Programme refocus 2026/27* (Strategy and Policy Committee, 18 June 2026) be received.**
2. **That the 'pause but be ready' approach to policy development within the context of resource management reform is supported.**
3. **That the Committee acknowledges the prioritised 6-month work programme is focused on work that retain value and contribution to future legislative direction.**

CARRIED

6.10 SUBMISSIONS SUMMARY REPORT - JUNE 2026

Item commenced in recording 2, at 1 hour, 3 minutes and 36 seconds.

Presented by the Team Leader, Strategic and Spatial Planning (Miffy Foley).

12.34pm – Cr Robert Cookson left the meeting.

COMMITTEE RESOLUTION SP26/48

Moved: Cr Noel Smith
Seconded: Cr Keith Holmes

That the *Submissions Summary Report - June 2026* (Strategy and Policy Committee, 18 June 2026) be received.

CARRIED

7 PUBLIC EXCLUDED ITEMS

Item commenced in open recording 2, at 1 hour 7 minutes and 5 seconds.

RESOLUTION TO EXCLUDE THE PUBLIC

COMMITTEE RESOLUTION SP26/49

Moved: Cr Keith Holmes
Seconded: Cr Chris Hughes

That in accordance with section 48(1) of the *Local Government Official Information and Meetings Act 1987* (Act) and the interests protected by section 6 or 7 of that Act, the public is excluded from the following parts of this meeting. The general subject of the matters to be considered while the public is excluded, the reason for passing this resolution in relation to each matter, and the specific grounds for excluding the public are set out below:

Meeting item no. and subject	Grounds for excluding the public	Reason for excluding the public
7.1 - Update on Proposed Waikato Regional Coastal Plan Appeals	s7(2)(g) of the Act - To maintain legal professional privilege	section 48(1)(a)(i) of the Act - the public conduct of the relevant part of the proceedings of the meeting would be likely to result in the disclosure of information for which good reason for withholding would exist under section 6 or section 7
Update on Plan Change One	s7(2)(g) of the Act - To maintain legal professional privilege	section 48(1)(a)(i) of the Act - the public conduct of the relevant part of the proceedings of the meeting would be likely to result in the disclosure of information for which good reason for withholding would exist under section 6 or section 7

CARRIED

12.37am – The meeting moved into public excluded session.

7.1 UPDATE ON PROPOSED WAIKATO REGIONAL COASTAL PLAN APPEALS

Item commenced in public excluded recording, at start.

Presented by the Manager, Resource Management (Bruce McAullife).

12.38pm – Cr Robert Cookson entered the meeting.

COMMITTEE RESOLUTION SP26/50

Moved: Cr Warren Maher
Seconded: Cr Keith Holmes

1. **That the report *Update on Proposed Waikato Regional Coastal Plan Appeals* (Strategy and Policy Committee, 18 June 2026) be received.**
2. **That the decision be released into the open session of the meeting.**

CARRIED

- UPDATE ON PLAN CHANGE ONE

Item commenced in public excluded recording, at 5 minutes 45 seconds.

The Director, Science, Policy and Information (Tracey May) provided the members an update on Plan Change One. Supporting commentary was also provided by the Director, Resource Use (Brent Sinclair) and the Manager, Resource Management Policy (Bruce McAuliffe).

There were no actions, decisions or resolutions.

1.02pm – Cr Angela Strange left the meeting.

Item commenced in public excluded recording, at 28 minutes and 55 seconds.

COMMITTEE RESOLUTION SP26/51

Moved: Cr Warren Maher
Seconded: Cr Robert Cookson

That the meeting return to the open session.

CARRIED

1.07pm – The meeting moved back to open session.

8 KARAKIA WHAKAMUTUNGA

Item commenced in open recording 3, at 5 seconds.

The Director, Science, Policy and Information (Tracey May) closed the meeting with a karakia.

1.08pm – The meeting closed.