



# **MINUTES**

**Ordinary Council Meeting**

**Thursday, 28 May 2026**

**Order Of Business**

<b>1</b>	<b>Karakia Timatanga</b> .....	<b>4</b>
<b>2</b>	<b>Preliminary Items</b> .....	<b>4</b>
<b>3</b>	<b>Apologies</b> .....	<b>4</b>
<b>4</b>	<b>Confirmation of Agenda</b> .....	<b>4</b>
<b>5</b>	<b>Disclosures of Interest</b> .....	<b>4</b>
<b>6</b>	<b>Minutes for Confirmation or Receipt</b> .....	<b>4</b>
	Ordinary Council Meeting – 30 April 2026 .....	4
6.1	Minutes of the Chief Executive Employment and Remuneration Committee meeting held on 21 April 2026 .....	5
6.2	Minutes of the WRC Transport Committee meeting held on 22 April 2026 .....	5
6.3	Minutes of the Waiora Co-Governance Committee meeting held on 5 May 2026.....	5
6.4	Minutes of the Strategy and Policy Committee meeting held on 6 May 2026.....	5
6.5	Minutes of the Regional Growth and Resilience Committee meeting held on 12 May 2026.....	6
6.6	Minutes of the Chief Executive Employment and Remuneration Committee meeting held on 12 May 2026 .....	6
<b>6</b>	<b>Minutes for Confirmation or Receipt (Recommendations for consideration)</b> .....	<b>6</b>
6.2	Minutes of the WRC Transport Committee meeting held on 22 April 2026 .....	6
6.4	Minutes of the Strategy and Policy Committee meeting held on 6 May 2026.....	7
<b>7</b>	<b>Public Excluded Items</b> .....	<b>7</b>
<b>8.4</b>	<b>Annual Plan 2026/27</b> .....	<b>8</b>
<b>7</b>	<b>General Items</b> .....	<b>8</b>
7.1	Health and Safety Report - April 2026.....	8
7.2	Te Huia Interregional Passenger Rail Service: Potential Service Changes for Final Year of the Trial.....	8
7.3	Approval of 2026/27 Annual Plan .....	10
7.4	Local Government New Zealand (LGNZ) Activity Update .....	10
7.5	Local Government New Zealand - Annual General Meeting and SuperLocal Conference 2026 .....	11
7.6	LGNZ AGM Remit - NZTA Bulk Funding for Transport.....	11
<b>8</b>	<b>Karakia Whakamutunga</b> .....	<b>11</b>
	<b>APPENDIX ONE: DECISIONS MADE IN PUBLIC EXCLUDED SESSION REPORTED INTO OPEN</b> .....	<b>13</b>

**Waikato Regional Council  
Ordinary Council Meeting**

**OPEN MINUTES**

**Date:** Thursday 28 May 2026, 9.31am  
**Location:** Council Chambers  
 Waikato Regional Council  
 Level 1, 160 Ward Street, Hamilton

**Members Present:** Cr Warren Maher – Chair  
 Cr Mich'eal Downard – Deputy Chair (until 11.42am, back at 11.47am)  
 Cr Robert Cookson (until 10.02am, back at 10.08am)  
 Cr Ben Dunbar-Smith  
 Cr Kataraina Hodge  
 Cr Keith Holmes  
 Cr Chris Hughes  
 Cr Tipa Mahuta (virtually via Teams from 10.55am until 11.08am, back in person at 11.29am)  
 Cr Gary McGuire  
 Cr Jennifer Nickel  
 Cr Garry Reymer (from 9.35am)  
 Cr Noel Smith  
 Cr Liz Stolwyk  
 Cr Angela Strange

**Staff Present:** Chris McLay – Chief Executive  
 Janine Becker – Director, Customer and Corporate Services  
 Phil King – Director, Regional Transport Connections  
 Tracey May – Director, Science, Policy and Information  
 Greg Ryan – Director, Integrated Catchment Management  
 Brent Sinclair – Director, Resource Use  
 Mali Ahipene – Pou Tuhono  
 Stuart Brown – Executive Manager, People and Capability  
 Jordan Metz – Democracy Advisor  
 Dave Doggart – Team Lead, Democracy

***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.***

<b>Recording</b>	<b>Document ID #</b>	<b>YouTube Link</b>
Open Recording #1	36143612	<a href="https://youtu.be/vPIC4zy6lCc">https://youtu.be/vPIC4zy6lCc</a>
Public Excluded Recording	36144530	–
Open Recording #2	36141818	<a href="https://youtu.be/7o_Vs1sJaAM">https://youtu.be/7o_Vs1sJaAM</a>
Open Recording #3	36142534	<a href="https://youtu.be/86vUdQ2OCmg">https://youtu.be/86vUdQ2OCmg</a>

**1 KARAKIA TIMATANGA**

Item commenced in open recording 1, at start.

The Chief Executive (Chris McLay) opened the meeting with a karakia.

**2 PRELIMINARY ITEMS**

Nil

**3 APOLOGIES**

Item commenced in open recording 1, at 30 seconds.

Nil

**4 CONFIRMATION OF AGENDA**

Item commenced in open recording 1, at 58 seconds.

**RESOLUTION WRC26/51**

**Moved: Cr Angela Strange**

**Seconded: Cr Mich'eal Downard**

- 1. That the agenda of the Ordinary Council Meeting of 28 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.**
- 3. That the meeting may sit longer than two hours continuously and continue longer than six hours including adjournments.**

**CARRIED**

**5 DISCLOSURES OF INTEREST**

Item commenced in open recording 1, at 1 minute 25 seconds.

Cr Liz Stolwyk declared an interest related to the Corbicula Clam Biosecurity response which received funding from the Council.

**6 MINUTES FOR CONFIRMATION OR RECEIPT**

Item commenced in open recording 1, at 1 minute 55 seconds.

**ORDINARY COUNCIL MEETING – 30 APRIL 2026**

**RESOLUTION WRC26/52**

**Moved: Cr Warren Maher**

**Seconded: Cr Kataraina Hodge**

**That the minutes of the Ordinary Council Meeting held on 30 April 2026 be confirmed as a correct record.**

**CARRIED**

**6.1 MINUTES OF THE CHIEF EXECUTIVE EMPLOYMENT AND REMUNERATION COMMITTEE MEETING HELD ON 21 APRIL 2026**

**RESOLUTION WRC26/53**

**Moved: Cr Noel Smith**

**Seconded: Cr Jennifer Nickel**

**That the open and public excluded minutes of the Chief Executive Employment and Remuneration Committee meeting held on 21 April 2026 be confirmed as a correct record.**

**CARRIED**

**6.2 MINUTES OF THE WRC TRANSPORT COMMITTEE MEETING HELD ON 22 APRIL 2026**

**RESOLUTION WRC26/54**

**Moved: Cr Noel Smith**

**Seconded: Cr Jennifer Nickel**

**That the open and public excluded minutes of the WRC Transport Committee meeting held on 22 April 2026 be confirmed as a correct record.**

**CARRIED**

**6.3 MINUTES OF THE WAIORA CO-GOVERNANCE COMMITTEE MEETING HELD ON 5 MAY 2026**

**RESOLUTION WRC26/55**

**Moved: Cr Noel Smith**

**Seconded: Cr Jennifer Nickel**

**That the minutes of the Waiora Co-Governance Committee meeting held on 5 May 2026 be received.**

**CARRIED**

**6.4 MINUTES OF THE STRATEGY AND POLICY COMMITTEE MEETING HELD ON 6 MAY 2026**

**RESOLUTION WRC26/56**

**Moved: Cr Noel Smith**

**Seconded: Cr Jennifer Nickel**

**That the minutes of the Strategy and Policy Committee meeting held on 6 May 2026 be confirmed as a correct record.**

**CARRIED**

**6.5 MINUTES OF THE REGIONAL GROWTH AND RESILIENCE COMMITTEE MEETING HELD ON 12 MAY 2026**

**RESOLUTION WRC26/57**

**Moved: Cr Noel Smith**

**Seconded: Cr Jennifer Nickel**

**That the minutes of the Regional Growth and Resilience Committee meeting held on 12 May 2026 be confirmed as a correct record.**

**CARRIED**

**6.6 MINUTES OF THE CHIEF EXECUTIVE EMPLOYMENT AND REMUNERATION COMMITTEE MEETING HELD ON 12 MAY 2026**

**RESOLUTION WRC26/58**

**Moved: Cr Noel Smith**

**Seconded: Cr Jennifer Nickel**

**That the open and public excluded minutes of the Chief Executive Employment and Remuneration Committee meeting held on 12 May 2026 be confirmed as a correct record.**

**CARRIED**

**6 MINUTES FOR CONFIRMATION OR RECEIPT (RECOMMENDATIONS FOR CONSIDERATION)**

**6.2 MINUTES OF THE WRC TRANSPORT COMMITTEE MEETING HELD ON 22 APRIL 2026**

Item commenced in open recording 1, at 3 minutes 30 seconds.

Presented by the Chair (Cr Warren Maher).

9.35am – Cr Garry Reymer entered the meeting.

**RESOLUTION WRC26/59**

**Moved: Cr Angela Strange**

**Seconded: Cr Jennifer Nickel**

1. That as recommended by the WRC Transport Committee, Council resolves that the remaining unallocated balance of the Community Transport Grant Fund (\$8,972.94) be allocated to the next funding pool.
2. That as recommended by the WRC Transport Committee, Council supports Option 3 (*refer WRC Transport Committee Agenda, 12 April 2026 at page 39*), that is a maximum subsidy of \$22.75 per ride regionwide (65% of up to \$35) and recommends this be included as part of the 2026/27 Annual Plan approvals in May 2026.

CARRIED

#### 6.4 MINUTES OF THE STRATEGY AND POLICY COMMITTEE MEETING HELD ON 6 MAY 2026

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

Presented by the Chair (Cr Warren Maher).

##### RESOLUTION WRC26/60

Moved: Cr Keith Holmes

Seconded: Cr Ben Dunbar-Smith

As recommended by the Strategy and Policy Committee, that Council:

- (a) Amends 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 the Strategy and Policy Committee Agenda, 6 May 2026 at page 12.
- (b) Notes that, 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

#### 7 PUBLIC EXCLUDED ITEMS

Item commenced in open recording 1, at 6 minutes.

##### RESOLUTION TO EXCLUDE THE PUBLIC

##### RESOLUTION WRC26/61

Moved: Cr Kataraina Hodge

Seconded: Cr Robert Cookson

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
8.4 - Annual Plan 2026/27	<p>s7(2)(b)(ii) of the Act - To avoid unreasonable prejudice the commercial position of the person who supplied or who is the subject of the information</p> <p>s7(2)(g) of the Act - To maintain legal professional privilege</p>	<p>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</p>

**CARRIED**

9.37am – The meeting moved into public excluded session.

10.01am – The meeting moved back to open session.

**7 GENERAL ITEMS**

**7.1 HEALTH AND SAFETY REPORT - APRIL 2026**

Item commenced in open recording 2, at start.

Presented by the Executive Manager, People and Capability (Stuart Brown).

10.02am – Cr Robert Cookson left the meeting.

10.55am – Cr Tipa Mahuta entered the meeting.

**Action:** Members requested an update on the Health and Safety legislative changes that are currently before parliament.

**RESOLUTION WRC26/64**

**Moved:** Cr Kataraina Hodge

**Seconded:** Cr Gary McGuire

**That the report *Health and Safety Report - April 2026 (Council, 28 May 2026)* be received**

**CARRIED**

**7.2 TE HUIA INTERREGIONAL PASSENGER RAIL SERVICE: POTENTIAL SERVICE CHANGES FOR FINAL YEAR OF THE TRIAL**

Item commenced in open recording 2, at 5 minutes 50 seconds.

The Director, Regional Transport Connections (Phil King) introduced the Contractor (James Llewelyn).

10.08am – Cr Robert Cookson entered the meeting.

**MOTION****Moved: Cr Jennifer Nickel****Seconded: Cr Angela Strange**

1. That the report *Te Huia Interregional Passenger Rail Service: Potential Service Changes for Final Year of the Trial* (Council, 28 May 2026) be received.
2. That Council approve a fare increase of 25% for Te Huia, as part of the general change across the region's public transport system.
3. That Te Huia service patterns remain substantially the same for the final year of the trial.
4. Council requests that staff make significant efforts to enhance the marketing of Te Huia services.
5. That an informal Te Huia Working Group - comprising Councillors from Waikato Regional Council, Hamilton City Council and Waikato District Council - be re-established.

**AMENDMENT****Moved: Cr Noel Smith****Seconded: Cr Chris Hughes**

That Council approve a fare increase of 60% for Te Huia, as part of the general change across the region's public transport system.

In putting the motion, a division was called and results were recorded as:

In Favour: Crs Chris Hughes, Garry Reymer and Noel Smith

Against: Crs Warren Maher, Mich'eal Downard, Robert Cookson, Ben Dunbar-Smith, Kataraina Hodge, Keith Holmes, Tipa Mahuta, Gary McGuire, Jennifer Nickel, Liz Stolwyk and Angela Strange

LOST 3/11

**SUBSTANTIVE MOTION****RESOLUTION WRC26/65****Moved: Cr Jennifer Nickel****Seconded: Cr Angela Strange**

1. That the report *Te Huia Interregional Passenger Rail Service: Potential Service Changes for Final Year of the Trial* (Council, 28 May 2026) be received.
2. That Council approve a fare increase of 25% for Te Huia, as part of the general change across the region's public transport system.
3. That Te Huia service patterns remain substantially the same for the final year of the trial.
4. Council requests that staff make significant efforts to enhance the marketing of Te Huia services.
5. That an informal Te Huia Working Group - comprising Councillors from Waikato Regional Council, Hamilton City Council and Waikato District Council - be re-established.

In putting the motion, a division was called and results were recorded as:

<b><u>In Favour:</u></b>	<b>Crs Warren Maher, Mich'eal Downard, Robert Cookson, Ben Dunbar-Smith, Kataraina Hodge, Keith Holmes, Tipa Mahuta, Gary McGuire, Jennifer Nickel, Noel Smith, Liz Stolwyk and Angela Strange</b>
<b><u>Against:</u></b>	<b>Crs Chris Hughes and Garry Reymer</b>
<b>CARRIED 12/2</b>	

11.08am – The meeting adjourned. During the adjournment, Cr Tipa Mahuta left the meeting.

11.23am – The meeting reconvened.

### 7.3 APPROVAL OF 2026/27 ANNUAL PLAN

Item commenced in open recording 3, at start.

Presented by the Director, Customer and Corporate Services (Janine Becker) who requested the report be taken as read. Refer Document # 36111823 for the PowerPoint presentation or on the public website.

11.29am – Cr Tipa Mahuta entered the meeting (in person).

11.42am – Cr Mich'eal Downard left the meeting.

11.47am – Cr Mich'eal Downard entered the meeting.

#### RESOLUTION WRC26/66

**Moved: Cr Mich'eal Downard**

**Seconded: Cr Chris Hughes**

- 1. That the report *Approval of 2026/27 Annual Plan (Council, 28 May 2026)* be received.**
- 2. That Council approves a maximum subsidy rate for total mobility services of \$22.75 per ride regionwide from 1 July 2026.**
- 3. That Council approves the 2026/27 Annual Plan budget, with an estimated total rates revenue requirement of \$156.341 million resulting in an estimated increase in rates revenue from current ratepayers of 0.9 per cent in 2026/27.**

**CARRIED**

### 7.4 LOCAL GOVERNMENT NEW ZEALAND (LGNZ) ACTIVITY UPDATE

Item commenced in open recording 3, at 25 minutes 20 seconds.

Presented by the Chair (Cr Warren Maher).

#### RESOLUTION WRC26/67

**Moved: Cr Noel Smith**

**Seconded: Cr Tipa Mahuta**

**That the report *Local Government New Zealand (LGNZ) Activity Update (Council, 28 May 2026)* be received.**

**CARRIED**

## 7.5 LOCAL GOVERNMENT NEW ZEALAND - ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING AND SUPERLOCAL CONFERENCE 2026

Item commenced in open recording 3, at 43 minutes 35 seconds.

Presented by the Team Lead, Democracy (Dave Doggart) who requested the report be taken as read.

### RESOLUTION WRC26/68

Moved: Cr Kataraina Hodge

Seconded: Cr Tipa Mahuta

1. That the report *Local Government New Zealand - Annual General Meeting and SuperLocal Conference 2026 (Council, 28 May 2026)* be received.
2. That council appoints the following Councillors as its delegates at the Local Government NZ Annual General Meeting to be held on Friday, 31 July 2026:
  - (a) Cr Warren Maher as the presiding delegate carrying the right to vote.
  - (b) Cr Angela Strange as a delegate and alternate presiding delegate.
  - (c) Cr Mich'eal Downard as a delegate.
  - (d) Cr Keith Holmes as a delegate.
3. That the presiding delegate, may support or otherwise, in accordance with council's position, any number of remits or other motions before the 2026 Local Government New Zealand Annual General Meeting on behalf of council for discussion and voting.

CARRIED

## 7.6 LGNZ AGM REMIT - NZTA BULK FUNDING FOR TRANSPORT

Item commenced in open recording 3, at 46 minutes 35 seconds.

Presented by the Chair, WRC Transport Committee (Cr Angela Strange).

### RESOLUTION WRC26/69

Moved: Cr Warren Maher

Seconded: Cr Kataraina Hodge

That the report *LGNZ AGM Remit - NZTA Bulk Funding for Transport (Council, 28 May 2026)* be received.

CARRIED

## 8 KARAKIA WHAKAMUTUNGA

Item commenced in open recording 3, at 48 minutes.

The Chief Executive (Chris McLay) closed the meeting with a karakia.

12.12pm – The meeting closed.

**APPENDIX ONE: DECISIONS MADE IN PUBLIC EXCLUDED SESSION REPORTED INTO OPEN****8.4 ANNUAL PLAN 2026/27**

RESOLUTION WRC26/62

Moved: Cr Chris Hughes

Seconded: Cr Ben Dunbar-Smith

1. That the report Annual Plan 2026/27 (Council, 28 May 2026) be received.
2. That the proposed budget for the 2026/27 Annual Plan be adjusted in line with the recommendations contained in the report (Waikato Regional Council Agenda, 28 May 2026 at pages 22 to 25).
3. [Redacted, s7(2)(b)(ii), s7(2)(g) of the Act]
4. That the decision be released into the open session of the meeting, redacting point three above. The report and attachments remain publicly excluded.

CARRIED