MINUTES
Ordinary

TE KAUNIHERA Ā ROHE O WHAKAAHURANGI
STRATFORD DISTRICT COUNCIL

F25/96/005 – D25/42432

Date: 11 November 2025 at 3.30 PM
Venue: Council Chambers, 63 Miranda Street, Stratford

Present

The District Mayor N C Volzke (the Chairperson), the Deputy Mayor A K Harris, Councillors: S J Beck, J Bertie, J R Best, G W Boyde, D K Chadwick, , A M C Dudley, J M S Erwood, E E Hall, K A Sextus and M J Watt.

In attendance

The Chief Executive – Mr S Hanne, the Director – Assets – Mrs V Araba, the Director – Corporate Services – Mrs R Johnson, the Director – Environmental Services – Mr B Sutherland, the Director – Community Services – Ms K Whareaitu, the Committee Advisor and Executive Assistant – Mrs E Bishop, the Communications Advisor – Mrs S Clarkson, the Corporate Accountant – Mrs C Craig (*part meeting),* the HR & Governance Administrator – Mrs C Reynolds, three members of the public, and one member of the Media (Stratford and South)

1. Welcome

The District Mayor welcomed Elected Members, members of the public, staff and the media to the meeting.

The opening karakia was read.

The District Mayor reiterated the health and safety message and emergency procedures.

2. Apologies

No apologies were received.

3. Announcements

The District Mayor noted this was the last meeting for Mrs Bishop and thanked her for her work over the past 15 years.

Councillor Hall noted the words in the notes circulated at the last Audit and Risk Committee included comments about the Corporate Accountant, she noted no offence was intended but acknowledged those words may have caused some impact and she sincerely apologised for that. The District Mayor permitted Mrs Craig to provide her response where she acknowledged the apology and emphasised the impact the words had on her personally and professionally.

4. Declarations of Members Interest

Elected members were asked to declare any real or perceived conflicts of interest relating to items on this agenda. There were no conflicts of interest declared.

5. Attendance Schedule

The attendance schedule for Ordinary and Extraordinary Council meetings was attached.

6. Confirmation of Minutes

6.1 Inaugural Meeting of Council – 28 October 2025
D25/40171 Page 10

Recommendation

THAT the minutes of the Inaugural Meeting of Council held on Tuesday 28 October 2025, be confirmed as a true and accurate record.

VOLZKE/BECK
Carried
CL/25/122

7. Decision Report – Establishment of Committees
D25/40956 Page 16

Recommendations

1. THAT the report be received.

BOYDE/DUDLEY
Carried
CL/25/123

2. THAT the Council notes the Committee structure established by the Mayor as follows:

Committee	Meeting Frequency
Policy and Services Committee	Monthly
Executive Committee	As required
Audit and Risk Committee	Every 2 months
Water Services Committee	TBC
Hearings Committee	As required
Employment Relations Committee	1x meeting a year and as required beyond that.
Sport New Zealand Rural Travel Fund Committee	2x meetings a year

3. THAT the Committee structure be confirmed.

VOLZKE/WATT
Carried
CL/25/124

Recommended Reason
Under Section 41A Subsection 3 of the Local Government Act 2002 the Mayor has the power to establish committees, and to appoint the Chairperson of each of those committees. The Mayor has chosen to exercise this power. Council has however got the ability to discharge or reconstitute the committees established by the Mayor. The confirmation sought as per point 3 above serves to ensure the robustness of the proposed structure and appointments.

The Chairpersons will be appointed via a separate report.

The Chief Executive noted the District Mayor had exercised his powers under the Local Government Act to establish committees. Elected Members can challenge the structure but it must be done in accordance with the Local Government Act.

NCW

The District Mayor noted the following points:

- A list was circulated noting the disestablished committees and groups being:
  - Farm Committee
  - Positive Ageing Committee
  - Waste Levy Funding Advisory Group
  - Broadway Project Group
  - Section 17a Group
  - Postponement of Rates for Extreme Financial Hardship Committee
  - Postponement of Rates for Farmland Affected by Natural Disaster Committee
  - Taranaki Regional Solid Waste Management Committee
  - Central Landfill Joint Committee
- Some of the changes will require alterations to various policies and delegations which he hoped would be presented at the next Policy and Services Committee.
- There are three new council committees and two new joint committees:
  - Hearings Committee
  - Employment Relations Committee
  - Water Services Committee
  - Waste Services Joint Committee
  - Taranaki Passenger Transport Joint Committee

8. Decision Report – Committee Appointments

D25/41345 Page 26

Recommendations

1. THAT the report be received.

ERWOOD/BERTIE
Carried
CL/25/125

2. THAT the appointments to committees and community representations as listed in ***Table 1*** and ***Table 2*** be confirmed.

BECK/HALL
Carried
CL/25/126

Recommended Reason
Council committees are established to meet the governance and organisational requirements of the Stratford District Council.

The District Mayor noted the following points:

- Table 1 identifies the various committees and the chair of those committees.
- The Hearing Committee will be jointly chaired by Councillor Erwood and Councillor Boyde who will assume the role at alternate hearings.
- The Water Services Committee is yet to be established and will likely include external appointments but in the interim period the District Mayor will be appointed chair.
- He noted the new appointments to the Sports New Zealand Rural Travel Fund Committee and acknowledged the dedication of Mr Gary Vincent who had been on the committee since its inception. He has done a great job and provided valuable input into the allocation of funds throughout his time on the committee.

- The below updates were provided for Table 2:

TABLE 2:

The following list appoints individuals to various community organisations:

GROUP	APPOINTMENTS
Stratford District Youth Council	Councillor Bertie
Sport Taranaki Trust	Councillor Boyde
Eltham Drainage Board	Councillor Beck
Creative Communities Committee	Councillor Watt Councillor Best
Central Taranaki Safe Community Trust	Deputy Mayor Harris
Stratford Community House Trustee	Mrs Carol Spragg *(Trustee appointed as the Mayor's representative)*
Te Wera Outdoor Recreation Trust	Deputy Mayor Harris
Ostlers Gardens Trust	District Mayor Volzke *(Trustee appointed as the Mayor's representative)*

- He noted a review would be done next year on whether the Te Wera Outdoor Recreation Trust still required a council representative.
- The appointments to the joint committees will be brought to the next council meeting as it was not known at the time of printing the agenda whether alternatives were required or not.
- He noted the addition of Min McKay and the Deputy Mayor to the District Licensing Committee.
- The Percy Thomson Trust lists the existing trustees. He noted that Councillor Hall's appointment to the trust expires on 1 December. He suggested that this now be extended to the 2026 AGM of the Trust which will align with the roster of the seat she filled when appointed.

Recommendation

THAT Councillor Ellen Hall's appointment to the Percy Thomson Trust be extended to align with the appointment roster of her seat to the Percy Thomson Trust 2026 AGM.

BOYDE/DUDLEY
Carried
CL/25/127

Recommendations

3. THAT the appointments to committees and community representations as listed in ~~***Table 3*** and~~ ***Table 4*** be noted.

BEST/HARRIS
Carried
CL/25/128

Recommended Reason
Council committees are established to meet the governance and organisational requirements of the Stratford District Council.

RW

9. Decision Report – Elected Member Remuneration

D25/40409 Page 32

Recommendations

1. THAT the report be received.

BEST/CHADWICK
Carried
CL/25/129

Recommended Reason

The Remuneration Authority allows Council to calculate the remuneration for elected representatives to recognise roles with additional responsibilities and requires input from Council as how the remuneration pool is to be allocated out.

Council must adopt a policy on Elected Members Expenses prior to any payments being made.

The Corporate Accountant noted that in addition to the remuneration, council needed to consider the frequency for payments of the honorarium and the Elected Members Expense Policy.

Remuneration

Recommendations

2. THAT elected members choose ~~Option 1,~~ Option 2, ~~or propose an alternative option~~ regarding the extra remuneration to elected members for roles with additional responsibilities.

HALL/BECK
Carried
CL/25/130

3. THAT Council agree to advise the Remuneration Authority of council's proposal regarding allocation of remuneration based on the option selected in recommendation 2.

VOLZKE/SEXTUS
Carried
CL/25/131

Frequency of Payment

Recommendations

4. THAT elected members choose Option 1 ~~or Option 2~~ for the payment frequency of the honorarium.

HARRIS/BOYDE
Carried
CL/25/132

Points noted in discussion:

- Councillor Hall spoke against the motion. She noted that this contributes to the family pool and it is a challenge when you are not sure when it may come through. Weekly would be a more consistent option.
- Councillor Watt asked if it a certain date of the month could be the set date? Mrs Craig noted it is the second Tuesday of every month.

RW

- Councillor Boyde asked if there were other councils that paid some monthly and others weekly? Mrs Craig was not aware of any councils that did this and she confirmed it would be a lot of work to implement this.
- Councillor Hall noted that there had been times it has not been paid on the second Tuesday of the month and elected members had been told officers have until the end of the month to process the payment. Mrs Craig noted this happened once last year but the target has always been every second Tuesday of the month.
- Councillor Dudley asked if setting the payment day could be included in the resolution but it was clarified this would make it difficult if there were circumstances out of our control which would then be in breach of the council recommendation.

Elected Members Expenses and Reimbursement Policy

Recommendations

5. THAT Council adopt the updated Elected Members Expenses and Reimbursement Policy and to include the following allowances:

    - Travel Allowance
    - ICT Allowance
    - Childcare Allowance
    - Home Security

BOYDE/HALL
Carried
CL/25/133

Points noted in discussion:

- Mrs Craig noted the amendments to the existing policy were highlighted. The additional allowances are optional.
- Councillor Erwood questioned who would undertake the risk assessment and security threat check. The Chief Executive noted this would be a suitably skilled person and it may be appropriate to have an external person to ensure the assessment is independent. The District Mayor noted there would need to be a reasonable degree of threat to meet the threshold as this would be a big expense for the ratepayers.
- Councillor Hall noted she supported the inclusion of the home security allowance as after the last triennium they had seen increased concern around elected member safety and increased volatility.
- It was confirmed if an elected member already had a home security system they would still be required to meet the threshold and risk assessment to have the monitoring allowance.
- Councillor Beck noted his concern that this was at the ratepayers expense and felt the bar needed to be set quite high to receive any of the allowances.
- Mr Hanne noted that the travel allowance has historically been limited to meetings attended in their council appointed roles. The preference is to take a pool vehicle or the elected member takes their own vehicle then they are reimbursed at the IRD travel rate. Appointments with residents had not been a consideration before.
- ICT Allowance – the rates for this are set by the remuneration authority, but most of the rates don't apply because council supplies an ipad. The applicable allowances include a portion of a mobile phone, portion of phone plan and internet costs.
- Childcare Allowance – this is a legislative amount per child. It is important to note this is not limited by elected member but is per child or dependent. It has been used in the past and it is not difficult to max out the full allowance per child.
- The District Mayor noted it is important to note that the auditors take particular interest to all allowances. Mrs Craig noted the amendment to reimbursements being submitted within one month of incurring the expense was also an audit request. It was also important that full/itemised receipts are provided and not just eftpos receipts as these expenses are classed as sensitive expenditure.

10. Decision Report – Adoption of 2025-26 Meeting Schedule

D25/41125 Page 47

Recommendations

1. THAT the report be received.

VOLZKE/DUDLEY
Carried
CL/25/134

2. THAT Council confirm the 2025/26 Meeting Schedule as presented with the amendments noted below.

BOYDE/HARRIS
Division
For: 11
Against: 1
Carried
CL/25/135

Recommended Reason

Meetings are required to be held to effectively and efficiently conduct Council business in a clear and open manner. Setting an annual scheduled reduces conflicts of appointments.

The Committee Advisor and Executive Assistant noted the following points:

- There were a few errors in the dates in the attached schedule:
  - January Policy and Services and Workshop should be 27 January.
  - March – Workshop, Public Forum and Ordinary – should be 10 March. Audit and Risk will be moved to 17 March.
  - July – Audit and Risk should be 14 July.
  - Sport New Zealand Rural Travel Fund – the November date will be set in discussion with the newly appointed chair and committee.
  - All workshops will be amended to start 1pm.

Questions/Points of Clarification:

- It was noted that July had two options for the Policy and Services Committee as the LGNZ Conference is starting on 29 July in Rotorua and therefore those attending will likely be travelling on 28 July. It was agreed to set this at 21 July 2026.
- Councillor Hall suggested an amendment to meeting times. She acknowledged one of the reasons for afternoon meetings had been to allow those to attend work in the morning and attend their council commitments in the afternoons. She suggested that the makeup of this council has changed significantly and the commitments of elected members may now be quite different. She noted there is a finite end for workshops, but meetings go until they are finished. She proposed that workshops be scheduled for 10am, Public Forums at 12.30pm and meetings to start at 1pm. She felt benefits would include entering council business fresh in the day.
- The District Mayor noted that hearings will now be separate to Policy and Services Committee meetings which means they can be put on other days and will lessen the impact on P&S days and balance out the commitment a bit.
- Councillor Erwood supported the status quo. He noted he had a full time job and felt if he can show his employer that he is using some of his work time and personal time to come to council meetings then he thinks this is fairer to his employer.
- Councillor Beck supported the status quo as it works for him as a businessman.
- Councillor Boyde supported the status quo for those who are working and/or business owners, he noted that during spring the rural sector would struggle to get in by 10am.
- Councillor Best noted his employer had been kind enough to give him afternoons off for council. He noted there was also a lot of public feedback about attending meetings as they can't attend early in the day and had also suggested later in the afternoon or even in the evening.

A division was called:

Those voting for the motion: Councillors Chadwick, Beck, Bertie, Best, Boyde, Dudley, Erwood, Sextus, Watt, the Deputy Mayor and the District Mayor.

Those voting against the motion: Councillor Hall

- It was timely to remind and inform new elected members that if they vote against a motion and wish their names to be recorded they need to state this at that time.
- Councillor Erwood requested the Chief Executive confirm the order of the division as he felt if the mover or seconder went first it can impact the vote. The Chief Executive would ensure it was truly random in its order.

The Communications Advisor and Corporate Accountant left the meeting at 4.34pm.

11. Decision Report – Adoption of Code of Conduct

D25/40918 Page 56

Recommendations

1. THAT the report be received.

VOLZKE/BERTIE
Carried
CL/25/136

2. THAT the 2025 Local Government New Zealand Code of Conduct be adopted, including~~/excluding~~ the ability of an independent investigator to make a binding rule in case of an alleged breach of this code. .

BOYDE/HALL
Carried
CL/25/137

Recommended Reason
The 2022 LGNZ Code of Conduct template, which has been developed after consultation with councils, contains several changes to previous versions and is the result of ongoing, collective, industry-wide learning and improvements. This is the most recent template version available.

The Chief Executive noted the following points:

- It is a legal requirement for Councils to have both Standing Orders and a Code of Conduct. If they were not adopted today the current documents remain in place, so council is currently operating under those previous versions.
- He noted it was good practice to adopt these with the new council to show their commitment to uphold these standards rather than them being imposed upon them.
- Central Government is currently working on replacing both of these with standardised documents for the whole industry. The templated mandated model of the Code of Conduct is expected in mid 2026. Standards NZ have been engaged to work on the Standing Orders and no timeframe has been provided for these.
- The Code of Conduct is how you commit to conducting business in this room through behaviour, engaging with your colleagues, staff and members of the public. Standing Orders are how the meetings operate.
- Any council can write their own Code of Conduct, what is presented is a template that has been offered by LGNZ to the industry and has had a lot of legal investment to make sure it aligns with various legislation and considered collective learnings from all councils around the country.
- If a Code of Conduct complaint process is triggered then the document outlines the process that is followed. There is a choice for elected members on whether or not the investigators findings are binding. If it is not binding then the investigator/assessor can make a recommendation but council could vary it.
- He recommended that all elected members read and become familiar with the document.

Questions/Points of Clarification:

- Councillor Beck questioned if it was worth changing the current document as not much would be changing to have a new one in place for only six months. The District Mayor noted the report looks to reaffirm that the newly elected council buys into the code of conduct presented.

Points noted in discussion:

- Councillor Boyde noted that having a binding rule takes all the emotion out of a decision and makes it a very clean process going forward.
- The District Mayor note that if a member is found guilty of a breach they have no right of appeal to the investigators findings which he did not think sat with natural justice as the outcome of almost everything else could be challenged.
- The Deputy Mayor noted that council had submitted on the proposed standardised code of conduct noting its concern over:
  - Potential misuse with members of the public added to the complaints process. Currently only elected members can make a complaint or the Chief Executive on behalf of staff.
  - Suggestions for a possible cost recovery for non-upheld complaints.
  - Addition of the right to amend incorrect statements in the findings.

12. Decision Report – Adoption of Standing Orders

D25/40922 Page 93

Recommendations

1. THAT the report be received.

VOLZKE/HARRIS
Carried
CL/25/138

2. THAT the 2025 Local Government New Zealand Standing Orders be adopted as tabled, with the following amendments:

   a. That the standing order enable members to join by audio visual link – **Yes**/~~No~~

BOYDE/HARRIS
Carried
CL/25/139

   b. That the chair be given the option of a casting vote – **Yes**/~~No~~

BECK/BEST
Carried
CL/25/140

   c. That the following option be adopted as the default option for speaking and moving motions:
      ~~i. A (formal)~~
      ~~ii. B (medium)~~
      iii. C (informal)

ERWOOD/BOYDE
Carried
CL/25/141

3. THAT standing orders 16 and 17 require that requests for deputations or petitions are made at least 5 days prior to any presentation being made to the council.

BERTIE/CHADWICK
Carried
CL/25/142

Recommended Reason
Good local governance requires us to ensure that the way in which we undertake public decision-making is open, transparent, and fair. Council standing orders aim to achieve this.

RW

The Chief Executive noted he following points:

- There are a few more options in this document. The Standing Orders set out how the meetings happen and includes options on attendance via audio/visual link, the chair having a casting vote, notice period for deputations and petitions and the level of formality for holdings meetings noting the chair can change the level at any time during the meeting to relax them or increase formality for structure

Questions/Points of Clarification:

- Councillor Boyde noted that deputations were to be made at least 5 days clear of a meeting but that the chairman has discretion to wave the time. He asked for good practice would there be a process where councillors will be informed that a deputation is occurring. It was noted that often a deputation request is received after an agenda is published and the items of the agenda are known. Councillors will be informed as soon as possible.
- It was noted that currently council operates under Option C for formality. This allows members to speak more than once and is more user friendly. If the conversation becomes repetitive the chair can move to a more formal situation.

13. Public Forum Response

Speaker Michael Cooper
Topic Town aesthetics

Questions/Points of Clarification:

- The District Mayor noted this topic had been discussed a lot during the election campaign. It is his intention to create a working group to look at this issue specifically and come up with some ways of making improvements to bring those suggestions back to council. It will be added to matters outstanding.

14. Questions

There were no questions.

15. Closing Karakia

D21/40748 Page 341

The closing karakia was read.

The meeting closed at 5.07 pm.

N C Volzke
Chairman

Confirmed this 9th day of December 2025

N C Volzke
District Mayor