



Our reference
F19/13/03-D21/26182

4 February 2026

Notice of Meeting

Notice is hereby given that the Ordinary meeting of Council will be held in the **Council Chambers, Stratford District Council, 63 Miranda Street, Stratford** on **Tuesday 10 February 2026** beginning at **1.30pm**.

Timetable for 10 February 2026 as follows:

1.30pm	Workshop - Prospero Place Update - Farm Profits Policy
3.00pm	Public Forum - Sports Taranaki
3.30pm	Ordinary Meeting of Council

Yours faithfully

Sven Hanne
Chief Executive

2026 - Agenda - Ordinary - February

10 February 2026 03:30 PM



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AGENDA

Ordinary Meeting of Council



F25/96/05 – D26/2845

Date: 10 February at 3.30 PM

Venue: Council Chambers, 63 Miranda Street, Stratford

1. **Welcome**

- 1.1 Opening Karakia
D21/40748 Page 5
- 1.2 Health and Safety Message
D21/26210 Page 6

2. **Apologies**

3. **Announcements**

4. **Declarations of Members Interest**

Elected members to declare any real or perceived conflicts of interest relating to items on this agenda.

5. **Attendance Schedule**

Page 7

Attendance schedule for Ordinary and Extraordinary Council meetings, including the 2025 summary of meetings schedule.

6. **Confirmation of Minutes**

6.1 Ordinary Meeting of Council – 9 December

D25/46311 Page 10

Recommendation

THAT the minutes of the Ordinary Meeting of Council, held on Tuesday 9 December 2025, be confirmed as a true and accurate record.

/
Moved/Seconded

- 6.1.2 Public Forum Notes
D25/42438 Page 15

The notes from the public forum were attached for Council's information.

6.2 Audit and Risk Committee – 16 December 2025

D25/47158 (Open) Page 16

Recommendations

- 1. THAT the unconfirmed minutes of the Audit and Risk Committee meeting, held on Tuesday 16 December 2025 be received.
- 2. THAT the recommendations in the minutes of the Audit and Risk Committee, held on Tuesday 16 December 2025 be adopted.

/
Moved/Seconded

6.3 Policy and Services Committee – 27 January 2026
D26/2728 Page 22

Recommendations

1. THAT the unconfirmed minutes of the Policy and Services Committee meeting held on Tuesday 27 January 2026 be received.
2. THAT the recommendations in the minutes of the Policy and Services Committee meeting held on Tuesday 27 January 2026 be adopted.

/
Moved/Seconded

7. District Mayor's Report
D26/2845 Page 27

Recommendations

THAT the report be received.

/
Moved/Seconded

8. Decision Report – Submission on proposed Resource Management Legislation
D26/1727 Page 31

Recommendations

1. THAT the report be received.
2. THAT the submission on the Natural Environment Bill and the Planning Bill included in the appendix be approved.
3. THAT the Director – Environmental Services be authorised to lodge the submission on behalf of the Council.

Recommended Reason

Submitting on the proposed Bills is the only way for Council's to contribute to developing new resource management legislation.

/
Moved/Seconded

9. Public Forum Response

Speaker Michael Carr
Topic Sports Taranaki

10. Questions

11. Closing Karakia
D21/40748 Page 51



TE KAUNIHERA Ā ROHE O
WHAKAAHURANGI
STRATFORD
DISTRICT COUNCIL

Our reference
F19/13/03-D21/40748

Karakia

Kia uruuru mai
Ā hauora
Ā haukaha
Ā haumāia
Ki runga, Ki raro
Ki roto, Ki waho
Rire rire hau Paimārire

I draw in (to my being)
The reviving essence
The strengthening essence
The essence of courage
Above, Below
Within, Around
Let there be peace.



TE KAUNIHERA Ā ROHE O
WHAKAAHURANGI
STRATFORD
DISTRICT COUNCIL

Our reference
F19/13/03-D22/17082

Health and Safety Message

In the event of an emergency, unless guided to an alternative route by staff, please exit through the main entrance. Once outside the building please move towards the War Memorial Centre congregating on the lawn area outside the front of the council building.

If there is an earthquake, please drop, cover and hold where possible. Remain indoors until the shaking stops and you are sure it is safe to exit or remain where you are until further instruction is given.

5. Attendance schedule for 2026 Ordinary and Extraordinary Council meetings.

Date	10/02/26	10/03/26	14/04/26	12/05/26	09/06/26	14/07/26	11/08/26	08/09/26	13/10/26	10/11/26	08/12/26
Meeting	PS	PS	PS	PS	PS	PS	PS	PS	PS	PS	PS
Neil Volzke											
David Chadwick											
Steve Beck											
Jaimie Bertie											
Josh Best											
Grant Boyde											
Annette Dudley											
Jono Erwood											
Ellen Hall											
Amanda Harris											
Katherine Sextus											
Mathew Watt											

Key	
O	Ordinary Meeting
E	Extraordinary Meeting
EM	Emergency Meeting
✓	Attended
A	Apology/Leave of Absence
AB	Absent
S	Sick
AV	Meeting held, or attended by, by Audio Visual Link

Summary (All Committees) -2025 [2025-2028 Triennium]

Note the summary only collates the standing committee members for Audit and Risk Committee. The full attendance can be found in the individual committee schedules.

Date	Ordinary	Policy & Services	Audit & Risk		
Meeting	O	O	O	Total	% of attendance
Neil Volzke	3/3	1/1	1/1	5/5	100%
David Chadwick	3/3	1/1		4/4	100%
Steve Beck	3/3	1/1		4/4	100%
Jaimie Bertie	3/3	1/1		4/4	100%
Josh Best	3/3	1/1		4/4	100%
Grant Boyde	3/3	1/1	1/1	5/5	100%
Annette Dudley	3/3	1/1		4/4	100%
Jono Erwood	3/3	1/1	1/1	5/5	100%
Ellen Hall	3/3	1/1	1/1	5/5	100%
Amanda Harris	3/3	1/1	1/1	5/5	100%
Katherine Sextus	3/3	1/1		4/4	100%
Mathew Watt	3/3	1/1		4/4	100%

Summary (All Committees) -2025 [2022-2025 Triennium]

Note the summary only collates the standing committee members for Audit and Risk and Farm and Aerodrome. The full attendance can be found in the individual committee schedules.

Date	Ordinary	Policy & Services	Audit & Risk	Farm & Aerodrome		
Meeting	O	O	O	O	Total	% of attendance
Neil Volzke	13/13	13/3	4/4	3/3	33/33	100.00%
Steve Beck	13/13	13/13		3/3	29/29	100.00%
Grant Boyde	12/13	13/13	3/4	3/3	31/33	93.94%
Annette Dudley	11/13	13/13			24/26	92.31%
Jono Erwood	13/13	12/13	3/3		28/29	96.55%
Ellen Hall	12/13	13/13			25/26	96.15
Amanda Harris	13/13	11/13			24/26	92.31%
Vaughan Jones	10/13	13/13	3/4	3/3	29/33	87.88%
Min McKay	13/13	13/13	3/4		29/30	96.67%
John Sandford	13/13	13/13			26/26	100.00%
Clive Tongaawhikau	2/13	0/13			2/26	7.69%
Mathew Watt	13/13	13/13			26/26	100.00%

MINUTES

Ordinary



F25/96/05 – D25/46311

Date: 9 December 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 – Environmental Services – Mr B Sutherland, the Director – Corporate Services – Mrs R Johnson, the Director – Community Services – Ms K Whareaitu, the Director – Assets – Mrs V Araba, the HR & Governance Administrator – Mrs C Reynolds, the Roading Manager – Mr S Bowden, the Economic and Community Development Manager – Mrs S Afzal, three members of the public and one member of the media (Stratford and South).

1. Welcome

The opening karakia was read.

2. Apologies

No apologies were received

3. Announcements

The District Mayor advised he had received a letter from Minister Bishop outlining the changes to the Resource Management act which were just announced, he will forward this to Elected Members.

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 Council Meetings was attached

6. Confirmation of Minutes

6.1 Ordinary Meeting of Council – 11 November D25/42432 Page 11

Recommendation

THAT the minutes of the Ordinary Meeting of Council, held on Tuesday 11 November 2025, be confirmed as a true and accurate record.

WATT/BERTIE
Carried
CL/25/143

The HR & Governance Administrator undertook to make the following amendments:

- Update the last bullet point on page 14 to *The District Mayor noted it is important to note that the auditors take particular interest in all allowances.*

6.1.2 Public Forum Notes
D25/42438 Page 19

The notes from the public forum were attached for Council's information.

6.2 Policy and Services Committee – 25 November 2025
D25/43983 Page 21

Recommendations

1. THAT the unconfirmed minutes of the Policy and Services Committee meeting held on Tuesday 25 November 2025 be received.
VOLZKE/BOYDE
Carried
CL/25/144
2. THAT the recommendations in the minutes of the Policy and Services Committee meeting held on Tuesday 25 November 2025 be adopted.
BOYDE/BECK
Carried
CL/25/145

6.3 Sport New Zealand Rural Travel Fund Assessment Committee – 2 December 2025
D25/44779 Page 36

Recommendations

1. THAT the unconfirmed minutes of the Sport NZ Rural Travel Fund Committee meeting held on Tuesday 2 December 2025 be received.
HARRIS/SEXTUS
Carried
CL/25/146
2. THAT the recommendations in the minutes of the Sport New Zealand Rural Travel Fund Committee meeting held on 2 December 2025 be adopted.
DUDLEY/CHADWICK
Carried
CL/25/147

7. District Mayor's Report
D25/45520 Page 38

Recommendations

- THAT the report be received.
- VOLZKE/BEST
Carried
CL/25/148

Economic and Community Development Manager joined the meeting at 3.45pm

Points noted in Discussion:

- The risk of attempting to keep rates within the 2-4% rate increase target outlined in the letter from the Hon Simon Watts was discussed, noting over time the cost increase may be faster than the allowance, which will make Councils fall further behind in infrastructure investment.

8. **Decision Report – Nominating Regional Transport Region**
D25/45619 Page 49

Recommendations

1. THAT the report be received.

VOLZKE/BERTIE
Carried
CL/25/149

2. THAT Council notifies the Taranaki Regional Council that with regard to regional transport it chooses to be represented on the Taranaki Regional Transport Committee.

HARRIS/BOYDE
Carried
CL/25/150

Recommended Reason

The Regional Council requires Council to formally advise every three years.

Points noted in Discussion:

- It was noted Council has always chosen to be represented on the Taranaki Regional Transport Committee.

9. **Decision Report – Committee Terms of Reference**
D25/44540 Page 53

Recommendations

1. THAT the report be received.

VOLZKE/HARRIS
Carried
CL/25/151

2. THAT the Committee review the proposed Terms of Reference Council Committees and make further amendments as appropriate.

3. THAT the Terms of Reference are approved to apply for the next three years, reviewed earlier.

ERWOOD/HALL
Carried
CL/25/152

Recommended Reason

To ensure the Committee's Terms of Reference are relevant and fit for purpose.

The Chief Executive noted the following point:

- The terms of reference were previously within the delegations policy, making them separate makes it easier to change going forward, and easier for members of the public to follow.
- The sole purpose of the terms of reference is to make the role and authorities of each committee clear.
- The Mayor established the Hearings Committee with the intention that all hearings would be managed within this committee. However, it has become clear that during the Annual Plan and Long-Term Plan processes this approach introduces delays. The requirement to go from the Hearings Committee back to Policy and Services creates a 10–12 day lag, which could be problematic when timelines are tight. The solution would be to retain the ability within the Policy and Services Committee to hold hearings.

Questions/Points of Clarification:

- The Deputy Mayor questioned on page 65 under membership if the Chairperson should be the Deputy Mayor, rather than the Mayor. It was confirmed it should be the Deputy Mayor.
- The Deputy Mayor sought clarification if the Deputy Chair of the District Licensing Committee should be the Deputy Mayor. The District Mayor advised the Deputy Mayor should be the Deputy Chair.

Points noted in Discussion:

- Councillor Hall requested the line on page 64 "best interests of the Council or its community" be changed to "best interests of the community or the Council" to reflect Council exists to serve the community.
- Councillor Hall suggested that urgency on page 64 could be clarified. She suggested the words "Urgency meaning a matter requires immediate consideration and cannot reasonably wait until the next scheduled meeting without causing significant risk, disadvantage, or loss of opportunity to the community or its Council." It was agreed to include this.

10. Decision Report – Proposed Parking Changes at Various Locations

D25/43973

Page 86

Recommendations

1. THAT the report be received.

VOLZKE/DUDLEY
Carried
CL/25/153

2. THAT the Council approves the following changes to the Parking Control Bylaw Schedule:

- Create a new 'P5 Loading Zone' at **BRO57**.
- Create 2x 'No Parking' lines on both sides of the corner of Montague Grove to be named **MON02** and **MON03**.
- Revoke the 2x (of 8x) *Angled Parking* spaces marked **REG28**.
- Create 1x 'Accessible Park' to be named **REG28A**.

BOYDE/CHADWICK
Carried
CL/25/154

Recommended Reason

In accordance with the Parking Control Bylaw Clause 9.1 *"the Council may, by resolution, set, amend or revoke parking restrictions on any urban or rural road under the Council's jurisdiction, by amending the schedule and maps, without the need to consult on the entire bylaw."* This report seeks Council approval to endorse the proposed on-street parking changes noted above in recommendation 2.

11. Public Forum Response

Speaker Craig Nielson
Topic Taranaki Motorsports Facilities Charitable Trust

Questions/Points of Clarification:

- The Chief Executive noted that at the time of deciding to grant a loan, it was discussed what role Council would take as it needed to be considered that as Council has a regulatory role, this could come into jeopardy if Council was too involved.
- The Chief Executive clarified Speedway were able to operate, but other motorsports are unable to as Speedway pre-dates the current legislation to have consent for such an activity. There has been discussion with Speedway that it would be better if they had a consent, however they would start off on a different foot to other activities.
- The Chief Executive noted that activities have occurred in the area without the required consent, which has heightened concerns among neighbouring properties. The consenting process involves both the applicants and affected neighbours, so these sensitivities need to be carefully managed.
- The District Mayor questioned whether the neighbours' objections were primarily related to noise, and if so, why car static activities would require consent. It was clarified that consent is necessary because the area is specifically zoned for farming, and not for other types of activities. Councillor

Boyde questioned if the changes to the Resource Management Act will affect to this? While it was noted it is not certain, it appears the direction it will take will go in favour of property owners.

- Councillor Hall questioned why a loan was granted for a project which consenting would not allow. It was advised that at the time of granting the loan it was not clear if the project could or could not go ahead, as the problems which come along will only be known as the process progresses. Taranaki Motorsports has attempted to go through the resource consent process twice for the smaller aspects, however these resource consents have not met the need required for complex consents, following the correct process is required.
- The District Mayor advised the funding application to Kanoa was supported by the Mayoral Forum, which had the weight of all four Councils rather than SDC, so the wording in the presentation was misleading.
- It was noted there were a lot of questions raised in the presentation. It was requested the Chief Executive provide some options going forward on if there is anything specific Council can do. This will be brought back to a workshop.

12. Questions

There were no questions.

13. Closing Karakia

D21/40748 Page 125

The closing karakia was read.

The meeting closed at 4.34 pm.

N C Volzke

Chairman

Confirmed this 10th day of February 2025.

N C Volzke

District Mayor

PUBLIC FORUM

Notes



F25/96/005 – D26/8323

Date: 9 December 2025 at 3.15 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 Acting Committee Advisor and Executive Assistant – Mrs C Reynolds, seven members of the public, and one member of the Media (Stratford and South)

1. Welcome

The District Mayor welcomed the Chief Executive, Councillors, members of the public, staff, and the media.

2. Speakers

Speaker: Craig Nielson and Andrew Larson

Topic: Taranaki Motorsport Trust

Points noted in the presentation:

- Mr Neilson noted they were here today to speak about the Taranaki Motorsport Trust, which Council used to be a partner of.
- The Loan given to Stratford Park from Council signals Council's support for the project.
- The Trust purchased 18 hectares of land with intention of doing motorsports on, this was a private investment. There have been roadblocks to generate income from the assets which have been installed on this land, currently two resource consents have been declined. The Trust Kanoa application was declined, there was a lack of support from Council. The question from the motorsport community is how are we going to get where we want to? The delays and restrictions from Council have been difficult and they would like assurance of meaningful assistance with consents.
- The vision is to bring people to Stratford, and the Trust is now leaning back on Council to see what they can do.

Questions/Points of Clarification:

- It was questioned what the Trust would like Elected Members to do. Mr Larsen would like see Elected Members on board supporting the project, and for there to be a key contact with operational staff.

The workshop closed at 3.29pm.

MINUTES

Audit and Risk Committee



F25/96/006 – D25/47158

Date: Tuesday 2 September 2025 at 2.00PM
Venue: Council Chambers, 63 Miranda Street, Stratford

Present

Mr P Jones (the Chair), the District Mayor N C Volzke, the Deputy Mayor A K Harris, Councillors: G W Boyde, A M C Dudley, J M S Erwood (*part meeting*), and E E Hall.

In attendance

Councillors: S J Beck, J R Best, D K Chadwick and K A Sextus. The Chief Executive – Mr S Hanne, the Director – Environmental Services – Mr B Sutherland, the Director – Corporate Services – Mrs R Johnson, the Director – Community Services – Ms K Whareaitu, the Director – Assets – Mrs V Araba, the HR & Governance Administrator – Mrs C Reynolds, the Senior Accountant – Mrs Christine Craig, the Health and Safety/Emergency Management Advisor – Mr D Pemberton (*part meeting*), the Communications Manager – Miss G Gibson, the Property and Project Manager – Mr S Taylor (*part meeting*).

1. Welcome

The opening karakia was read.

2. Apologies

An apology was received for lateness for Councillor Erwood

Recommendation

THAT the apology be received.

HALL/BOYDE
Carried
A&R/25/56

3. Announcements

There were no announcements.

4. Declarations of Members Interest

The Chair requested councillors to declare any real or perceived conflicts of interest relating to items on this agenda. Councillor Dudley declared an interest in item 16 relating to the Percy Thomson Trust.

5. Attendance Schedule

The Attendance schedule for Audit and Risk Committee meetings was attached.

6. Programme of Works
D21/42807

Recommendation

THAT the Audit and Risk Committee's rolling programme of works be received.

BOYDE/HALL
Carried
A&R/25/57

Questions/points of clarification:

- Councillor Boyde questioned if there has been any feedback from the Section 17a review into the procurement policy. This will be followed up.

7. Confirmation of Minutes

7.1 Audit and Risk Committee – 2 September 2025
D25/36480 (Open) D25/32957 (PE)

Recommendation

THAT the minutes of the Audit and Risk Committee Meeting, including the public excluded section, held on Tuesday 2 September 2025 be received.

JONES/VOLZKE
Carried
A&R/25/58

8. Matters Outstanding
D18/27474

Recommendation

THAT the matters outstanding be received.

JONES/BOYDE
Carried
A&R/25/59

9. Information Report – Health, Safety and Wellbeing
D25/44843

Recommendation

THAT the report be received.

HARRIS/BOYDE
Carried
A&R/25/60

The Health and Safety/Emergency Management Advisor noted the following point:

- Reporting of contractors is improving across the board. This is likely due to some new staff changing the dynamics.

Questions/Points of Clarification:

- The trespass moderation committee was discussed, particularly if this would cause delays. It was clarified this is just refining an already in place process to ensure it is fair and consistent.

Councillor Erwood joined the meeting and the Health and Safety/Emergency Management Advisor left the meeting at 2.21pm.

10. Information Report – Risk Management

D25/45495

Recommendation

THAT the report be received.

ERWOOD/JONES

Carried

A&R/25/61

Recommended Reason

To provide an update to the Audit and Risk Committee of any risk events or threats in relation to significant risks on Council's risk register, as part of Council's risk management processes.

The Director – Corporate Services noted the following point:

- The biggest new risk is the recent Local Government reform announcements. She recommended reading the LGNZ explainer which was attached to the report.

Questions/Points of Clarification:

- The District Mayor noted page 35 referring to rates capping explains that water services are excluded from the rates capping, however targeted rates aren't. He questioned what happens when the targeted rates is water. The Director – Corporate Services advised at this stage it would be expected these would be excluded, however it is not clear.
- The District Mayor questioned why on page 46, under 5.2 it notes the ratepayer who is objecting to paying forestry targeted rates is on there considering he is paying other rates. It was discussed that this would be removed.
- It was questioned if the full risk register could be supplied to Elected Members, this would be included in next meetings agenda.

11. Information Report – 2025/26 Capital Works Programme – Key Projects Update

D25/42727

Recommendations

THAT the report be received.

HALL/BOYDE

Carried

A&R/25/62

Recommended Reason

To provide a summary on the progress of our main capital projects for the 2025/26 financial year and assess Council's ability to complete them on time and within budget.

Questions/Points of Clarification:

- The demolition of the municipal building was discussed. The project has become more difficult than anticipated due to the services under the building, this issue is currently being worked through. It is unlikely the building will be demolished by the end of this financial year, and it is unknown if this will go over budget at this stage.
- The Chairman requested a summary of an estimated budget for the year as a percentage and what the consequences of not achieving what was set out are be brought back to the next meeting.

12. Information Report – Water Services Reform – Risk Update following decision
D25/45942

Recommendations

THAT the report be received.

HARRIS/BOYDE
Carried
A&R/25/63

Recommended Reason

This report is for information purposes only but gives elected members insight into the current state of the water services reform.

The Chief Executive noted the following point:

- As it is proposed at the moment the stand up of the water services entities is before any Local Government reforms, which runs the risk of standing up the water services, paying the associated costs, and then having to restructure due to the reforms.

Questions/Points of Clarification:

- The District Mayor questioned if the Annual Plan and Long Term Plan will be written with no water services in it. It was advised due to it being in house, water services will be included, however as the current Long Term Plan was written when it was not known what was happening, there will be substantial changes to the upcoming Annual Plan.

13. Information Report – Building Consent Authority Accreditation Report
D25/44792 Page 69

Recommendations

THAT the report be received.

BOYDE/HARRIS
Carried
A&R/25/64

Recommended Reason

As an accredited Building Consent Authority, the Stratford District Council must ensure its procedures and practices for building consent matters meet legal requirements.

The Director – Environmental Services noted the following point:

- Since writing the report the action plan has been submitted and has been approved by IANZ.

14. Information Report – Audit New Zealand – 2024/25 Report to the Council
D25/45708 Page 72

Recommendation

THAT the report be received.

VOLZKE/BOYDE
Carried
A&R/25/65

Recommended Reason

This report informs the Committee of the outcomes of the 2024/25 Annual Report audit.

15. Information Report – Audit New Zealand – 2024/25 Report to Management
D25/45830 Page 87

Recommendation

THAT the report be received.

ERWOOD/HARRIS
Carried
A&R/25/66

Recommended Reason

This report informs the Committee on relevant matters identified during the 2024/25 Annual Report audit and recommendations for improvement.

16. Information Report – Percy Thomson Trust – Quarterly Report as at 30
September 2025
D25/45947 Page 96

Recommendations

1. THAT the report be received.
2. THAT Council receive the quarterly yearly report for Percy Thomson Trust as at 30 September 2025.

HARRIS/BOYDE
Carried
A&R/25/67

Recommended Reason

In terms of Section 66 of the Local Government Act 2002 the Percy Thomson Trust, being a council controlled organization (CCO), must deliver to Council a half yearly and an annual report. The trust has further agreed to provide quarterly reporting to council, the attached report represents the first quarterly report received.

The Chair noted the following point:

- Going forward he would like to see a forecast compared to the budget in the six monthly report.

17. Correspondence

There was no correspondence.

18. General Business

There was no general business.

19. Questions

There were no questions.

20. Closing karakia

D21/40748 Page 126

The closing Karakia was read.

The Meeting closed at 3.34pm. .

P Jones
Chairman

Confirmed this 17th day of March 2026.

N C Volzke
District Mayor

MINUTES

Policy and Services Committee



F22/96/005 – D26/2728

Date: Tuesday 27 January 2026 at 3.00pm
Venue: Council Chambers, 63 Miranda Street, Stratford

Present

The Deputy Mayor A K Harris (the Chairperson), the District Mayor N C Volzke, 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 Acting Chief Executive – Ms K Whareaitu, the Director – Corporate Services – Mrs R Johnson, the Director – Assets – Mrs Victoria Araba, the HR and Governance Administrator – Mrs C Reynolds, the Governance Advisor and Executive Assistant – Mr G Hancock, the Environmental Health Manager – Ms R Otter, the Communications Manager – Ms G Gibson, the Roading Manager – Mr S Bowden, the Property and Projects Manager – Mr S Taylor (*part meeting*), the Services Manager – Mr J Cooper (*part meeting*), the Revenue Manager – Miss K Lawrence (*part meeting*), the Assets Officer – Miss T Kooznetsoff (*part meeting*) and one member of the public.

1. Welcome

The opening karakia was read.

One minute silence was taken for those affected by the tragic events in Mt Maunganui.

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

2. Apologies

Apologies were noted from the Chief Executive and the Director – Environmental Services.

3. Announcements

- The Acting Chief Executive advised that, following publication of the agenda, Manawātū-Whanganui Regional Council requested that their Triennium Agreement not be signed until after their Mayoral Forum on 16 February 2026. Both Triennium agreements will be considered together in February, therefore agenda item 8 is being withdrawn.
- The Acting Chief Executive noted the correct graphs for item 9 had been uploaded to the Resource Centre and will be tabled.
- The District Mayor acknowledged the passing of long serving former Mayor Tim Shadbolt.
- The Acting Chief Executive introduced the new Governance Advisor and Executive Assistant, Mr Hancock.

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 Policy and Services Committee meetings, including Hearings, was attached.

6. Confirmation of Minutes

6.1 Policy & Services Committee – 25 November 2025

Recommendation

THAT the minutes of the Policy and Services Committee Meeting held on Tuesday 25 November 2025 be confirmed as a true and accurate record.

BOYDE/DUDLEY
Carried
P&S/26/1

7. Matters Outstanding

Recommendation

THAT the Matters Outstanding be received.

ERWOOD/HALL
Carried
P&S/26/2

The Acting Chief Executive noted the following points:

- The Assets monthly report as an update on the items regarding accessible parking and truck parking.
- The Community Services monthly report has an update on the community groups policy.

Questions/points of clarification:

- Councillor Boyde questioned when the strategy for farm profits would be presented to Elected Members. The Acting Chief Executive noted there would be an update on this at the next Policy and Services meeting.

8. Decision Report – Triennial Agreements - Withdrawn

Recommendations

1. THAT the report be received.
2. THAT the District Mayor be authorised to sign the Triennial Agreement for the Taranaki Region on behalf of the Stratford District Council.
3. THAT the District Mayor be authorised to sign the Triennial Agreement for the Manawatu-Whanganui Region on behalf of the Stratford District Council.

Recommended Reason

The Stratford District Council is required to enter into Triennial Agreements for both regions and the proposed agreements are fit for purpose.

/
Moved/Seconded

9. Decision Report - Requests for Rate Remission - Excessive Water Use Due To Leaks

Recommendations

1. THAT the report be received.

CHADWICK/WATT
Carried
P&S/26/3

2. THAT Council gives consideration under Clause 9 of the Rates Remission Policy to remit water use lost due to a leak for:
- a) A business based in Stratford; and
 - b) A rural residential property

3. THAT Council approves the requests for rate remission as sought.

BOYDE/HALL
Carried
P&S/26/4

Recommended Reason

Council Policy allows for rate remission due to a leak to be considered, if the water loss was out of their control and subject to appropriate actions being taken within a specified period. As detailed below, once the occupiers were made aware of the leaks, they were proactive in addressing them in accordance with Council policy provisions.

Questions/points of clarification:

- It was clarified that any meter readings with zero consumption are being investigated as they come in.

10. Decision Report – Americarna 2026 – Proposed Temporary Road Closures

Recommendations

1. THAT the report be received.

BERTIE/SEXTUS
Carried
P&S/26/5

2. THAT pursuant to Section 342(1) (b) in accordance with Schedule 10 clause 11(e) of the Local Government Act 1974, approval is hereby given that the Stratford District Council proposes to close the following roads on Friday 27 February 2026, for the purpose of the 2026 Americarna event.

Between the hours of 7:00am and 3:00pm

- Broadway (SH 3) – between Seyton Street and Fenton Street
- Miranda Street – Between Seyton Street and Fenton Street

Between the hours of 9:00am and 3:00pm

- Regan Street – Between Juliet Street and Miranda Street

During the closure, detours for through traffic will be available, and access to Z Petrol Station will be available via Regan Street.

3. THAT the Council approves the alternative routes detailed below:

- **Southbound traffic** – Left into Seyton Street, right into Juliet St, left on to Celia and right on to Orlando, continue along Orlando Street, on to Hills Road, returning to SH3.
- **Northbound traffic** – Left onto Fenton St, right into Portia St, continue to Pembroke Road West, turn right on Pembroke Road West and rejoin SH3.

HALL/BEST
Carried

P&S/26/6

Recommended Reason

For the Stratford Business Association to host Americarna, it is necessary to close the roads listed above for safety reasons and for the participants to exhibit their vehicles via a static display. The proposed road closures require formal endorsement by a Council resolution.

The Roading Manager noted the consultation period was December 2025, not 2026 as stated in the report.

11. Monthly Reports

11.1 Assets Report

Recommendation

THAT the report be received.

WATT/ERWOOD
Carried
P&S/26/5

Questions/Points of Clarification:

- Councillor Boyde noted his concern that incomplete projects snowball year on year, and questioned if planned projects will be completed this year. The Director Assets noted the priority of the Assets team is projects and some operational work may need to be deferred.
- The District Mayor requested a workshop on the allocation and retention of accessible carparks.

The Revenue Manager left the meeting at 3.23pm

- Trucks parking on residential streets was discussed, with the Roading Manager advising the only solution if enacting the bylaw is to apply it to the whole town.
- Councillor Hall questioned if the reason for the water outage mentioned in section 4.1.2 had been discovered yet. The Services Manager advised he has personally checked the valves and could not see any issues. He believes the outage may have been due to the venturi effect and resolutions have been put in place to stop this in the future.
- Councillor Dudley noted she had seen online and had comments from the public regarding safety issues at the transfer station, with elderly residents having to walk up stairs to the recycling bins, and having to lift green waste above their heads to get it into the skip bins. The Services Manager advised the green waste bin has been identified as a Health and Safety issue and has been raised with the contractor. A solution has been put in place so the bins have a side open. It has been found this solution has not always happened and this was raised by the Services Manager at the regional contractor meeting, and again today via email. Councillor Dudley requested that these issue come back to Council. It was advised this could be included in the Health and Safety report which is presented to Audit and Risk. There was discussion that while the Health and Safety issues of the green waste bin has been identified and the solution actively managed, the rest of the complaints may come down to the community getting used to a new system.

The Services Manager left the meeting at 3.44pm.

11.2 Community Services Report

Recommendation

THAT the report be received.

BECK/BERTIE
Carried
P&S/26/6

Questions/Points of Clarification:

- The Deputy Mayor questioned what the consequences of not achieving the MTFJ objectives. The District Mayor advised there have been some rule changes which have made placing people into jobs more difficult.
- It was questioned if Elected Members could be included in the workshops with iwi. Ms Whareaitu noted she will look into this.

11.3 Corporate Services Report

Recommendation

THAT the report be received.

DUDLEY/HARRIS
Carried
P&S/26/7

The Director Corporate Services noted on page 106 under investments there is a vendor loan included which was repaid in November.

11.4 Environmental Services Report

Recommendation

THAT the report be received.

DUDLEY/HARRIS
Carried
P&S/26/8

Questions/Points of Clarification:

- There was discussion on the Resource Consent for the solar farm. It was advised the decision by the Environment Court will be final. Information will be put together for Elected Members on the direct referral process for Environment Court, as there seems to be some confusion in the community regarding the process.

The Property and Project Manager and the Assets Officer left the meeting at 4.05 PM.

12. Questions

- Councillor Hall questioned if Council was making a submission on the Local Government Reforms. It was advised the document has not yet been received from LGNZ.

13. Closing Karakia

The closing karakia was read.

The meeting closed at 4.24pm.

A K Harris
Chairman

Confirmed this 24th day of February 2026.

N C Volzke
District Mayor

MONTHLY REPORT

District Mayor



F25/96/004-D26/3795

To: Council
From: District Mayor
Date: 3 February 2026
Subject: District Mayor Monthly Report – December 2025 / January 2026

Recommendations

THAT the report be received.

Moved/Seconded

1. Welcome Back

Welcome back. I trust everyone has had a decent break and is now energised and ready for the busy year ahead, already the pressure and pace of government led reforms is upon us. The first half of the year will have a focus on developing the 2026-27 Annual Plan and as we move through the year, the Long Term Plan deliberations will commence. There will also be a focus on the implementation of the Water Services Delivery Plan and the General Election in November will almost certainly throw up some wildcards for us to deal with as well.

The government reforms and changes with most impact on this council include: the Resource Management Act, the Emergency Management Act, Rates Capping and Simplifying Local Government proposals, changes to the Building Act and Building Regulations, Earthquake Prone Buildings and changes to the Local Government Act. Yes, there is a lot to get your head around.

2. Mayoral Gift Appeal 2025

The 2025 gift appeal was very well supported by the community and we received some great gift items to distribute. Many of these were brand new and were still in the original wrapping. Along with the gifts, we received several generous cash donations which are really appreciated, as it allows us to go out and purchase items to fill gaps where we don't have sufficient appropriate gifts donated.

In Xmas week we delivered the gift parcels to 22 families and individuals in the Stratford District. These people had been nominated via the Community Services team at council.

3. Summer Nights Events

The annual summer nights events went really well and being outdoors, it was pleasing that we were blessed with good weather for both. A little disappointing was the attendance at the movie night, which attracted only a small crowd. Given the amount of work and cost associated with organising an event of this type, the review process may need to consider whether future movie nights are viable.

On the other hand, the concert in dell was very popular with a good sized crowd turning up to enjoy the country music of rising star Jake Whittaker. Fresh from his success, a top six finish in last year's Australian Idol, Jake put on a great show for his audience. Originally from Eltham, before crossing the ditch to Australia, it was like a home coming for Jake and his energy and performance showed it. A great night and one to remember.

4. Taranaki Civil Defence Emergency Management Joint Committee meeting

The Taranaki Civil Defence Emergency Management Joint Committee met on 4 December 2025. Minutes of the meeting can be found on the Taranaki Regional Council website. Included in the meeting was the adoption of the CDEM Group Annual Plan 2025-2026.

5. Taranaki Mayoral Forum meeting

The Taranaki Mayoral Forum met on 4 December 2025. Items included on the meeting agenda were the Triennial Agreement, the Simplifying Local Government proposal, a Resource Management Reform update and the setting of meeting dates for 2026. The Forum also had a presentation from the TOI Foundation on Social Investment Agency Opportunities.

6. Waste Services Joint Committee Representative Appointment

The newly established Taranaki Waste Services Joint Committee replaces several other similar, purpose related committees that were dis-established toward the end of the last triennium. The Taranaki Regional Council will discontinue as the host council.

The newly formed committee has a single representative position for the Stratford District Council. I advise that I have appointed Councillor Hall to that position.

7. Stratford Health Trust

Over the last two years the Stratford Health Trust has been in ownership negotiations with the Marire Society, as owners of Age Care Central Limited. This company owns and operates Maryanne Rest Home and Hospital, as well as the Maryann Retirement Village.

As a result of those successful negotiations, 100% ownership of the company shares have now been transferred to the Stratford Health Trust, effective December 2025. This share transfer better secures its future and ensures the ownership remains 100% local by being vested in a community-owned, charitable organisation.

The Stratford Health Trust now owns the Stratford Health Centre building on Romeo Street, the Maryann Rest Home and Hospital, as well as the Maryann Retirement Village.

8. Taranaki Regional Housing Fund

Following two earlier stakeholder hui's, the Toi Foundation Board met on 12 December, 2025. A statement from them said: "The Board discussed progress to date on implementing the Housing Fund and considered whether to keep progressing. The input from everyone who attended the co-design hui was appreciated and a valuable contribution. It was also clear that there continues to be housing need in our region that a Housing Fund can have a positive impact on.

It was agreed to continue with implementation of the Housing Fund, and stick with the ambitious goal of launching on 1 July 2026."

There will be one further Go/No-Go decision point at the end of April, and a lot of work between now and then. They are intending to hold one further hui in early March 2026 on the Housing Fund. This will be a shorter session to update people on progress, have some speakers on housing issues, and provide a chance to continue the networking that took place at the previous co-design hui.

9. Ngaere School Enviro School Award

In December, Deputy Mayor Harris, Councillor Beck and myself attended a presentation gathering at the Ngaere School. The school had recently achieved the Enviro Schools Silver status which is a significant accomplishment for a small school. It comes from hard work and commitment, and requires a high level of buy in from the wider school community. Congratulations to the school and best wishes as they move forward towards gold status.

10. Correspondence

- Stratford Volunteer Fire Brigade Call Outs – December 2025/January 2026

11. Some Events Attended

- Attended – Sport NZ Rural Travel Fund Assessment Committee meeting
- Attended – Youth Council meeting (x1)
- Attended – Taranaki Civil Defence Emergency Management Joint Committee meeting
- Attended – Mayoral Forum meeting
- Attended – Council staff Xmas function
- Attended – Ngaere School Enviro Award presentation
- Attended – Stratford Health Trust meeting
- Attended – Taranaki Diocesan School Prizegiving
- Attended - Stratford Business Association BA5
- Attended - SDC Induction training session
- Attended – DIA presentation on rates capping (by zoom)
- Attended – Youth Council Xmas function
- Attended – Age Concern Taranaki Xmas Dinner
- Attended – Margaret Higginson Award presentation
- Attended - Stratford Rotary Club Xmas meeting
- Attended – RMA Legislation, presentation at TRC
- Attended - Summer Nights Movie event
- Attended - LGNZ Leaders Zoom meeting (x2)
- Attended – meeting of the Stratford Health Trust (x2)
- Attended – Summer Nights Concert event
- Met – with representatives of Coastal Medical
- Met – with a representative of Audit New Zealand
- Met – with representatives of Venture Taranaki (x2)
- Met - with representatives of Age Care Central Limited
- Radio Interview – Access radio conversation with the Mayors (x1)
- Radio Interview – More FM (x1)
- Newspaper - Stratford Press Interviews (multiple)
- Newspaper - Daily News / Stuff (multiple)
- Attended - Regional Mayors and Chairs weekly meeting (x2)
- Attended - Council Pre-Agenda meetings (x3)
- Attended – Council Workshop (x1)
- Attended – Public Forum (x1)
- Attended - Council Meetings (x3)



N C Volzke JP
District Mayor

Date: 3 February 2026

Attachment One

Stratford Volunteer Fire Brigade Callouts - December 2025/January 2026

The Stratford Fire Brigade responded to 19 calls in December 2025

- 02-12-25 Alarm activation TET Sports Stadium Portia Street
- 02-12-25 Assist ambulance with medical call Cassandra Street
- 06-12-25 Alarm activation New Commercial Hotel Broadway
- 06-12-25 Investigate alarm sounding Exeter Street
- 06-12-25 Investigate leaking gas bottle Warwick Road
- 06-12-25 Investigate rubbish fire Fenton Street
- 11-12-25 Investigate smoke showing from Ample Meats Mountain Road False Alarm Good Intent
- 12-12-25 Tanker required scrub fire Scout Road Egmont Village assisted New Plymouth, Inglewood, Ngamotu and Kohi fire brigades
- 13-12-25 Tanker required back at scrub fire Scout Road Egmont Village
- 15-12-25 Investigate fire in area Mountain Road / Climie Road False Alarm Good Intent
- 15-12-25 Rural Appliance required trees on fire Waiinu Beach Road Waiinu assist multiple brigades
- 15-12-25 Tanker required back at trees on fire Waiinu Beach Road Waiinu assist multiple brigades
- 15-12-25 Trees on fire Upper Duthie Road assist Eltham fire brigade
- 16-12-25 Motor vehicle accident Mountain Road / Climie Road stood down before arrival
- 16-12-25 Investigate fire in roof cavity Climie Road assisted by the Eltham fire brigade
- 17-12-25 Brigade van required alarm activation Waverley Four Square assist Waverley and Patea fire brigades stood down before leaving the station
- 19-12-25 Tanker required alarm activation Manutahi Road Hillsborough stood down before arrival
- 26-12-25 Brigade van required 2 car motor vehicle accident London Street / Derby Street Eltham assist Eltham fire brigade
- 29-12-25 Special Service assist occupant with gate Climie Road

The Stratford Fire Brigade responded to 14 calls in January 2026

- 02-01-26 Investigate rubbish fire Oberon Street
- 04-01-26 Alarm activation Stratford Primary School Regan Street
- 05-01-26 Alarm activation Stratford High School Swansea Road
- 08-01-26 Assist ambulance with medical call Hunt Road
- 10-01-26 Motor vehicle accident Mountain Road between Bird / Climie Road
- 13-01-26 Landing Zone required for Taranaki Rescue Helicopter next to swimming baths Portia Street
- 14-01-26 Rural appliance required at vegetation fire Plantation Road Egmont Village stood down before leaving the station
- 15-01-26 Assist ambulance with medical call Romeo Street
- 16-01-26 Meter board smoking Barleymans Road assist Toko fire brigade
- 16-01-26 Alarm activation Elizabeth R Life Care Elizabeth Grove
- 17-01-26 Landing zone required for Taranaki Rescue Helicopter Portia Street
- 20-01-26 Brigade van required smell of electrical burning Waverley Bowling Club assist Waverley and Patea fire brigades stood down before leaving the station
- 23-01-26 Assist ambulance with medical call Broadway South
- 26-01-26 Assist ambulance with medical call Cassandra Street

DECISION REPORT



F25/96/004 – D26/1727

To: Council
From: Director – Environmental Services
Date: 10 February 2026
Subject: Submission on proposed Resource Management Legislation

Recommendations

1. THAT the report be received.
2. THAT the submission on the Natural Environment Bill and the Planning Bill included in the appendix be approved.
3. THAT the Director – Environmental Services be authorised to lodge the submission on behalf of the Council.

Recommended Reason

Submitting on the proposed Bills is the only way for Council's to contribute to developing new resource management legislation.

/
Moved/Seconded

1. Purpose of Report

- 1.1 This report seeks approval of a draft submission on the Natural Environment Bill and Planning Bill so that the Council's view on the proposed legislation can be taken into account in deciding its final content.

2. Executive Summary

- 2.1 This report recommends the Council approves the submission on the Natural Environment Bill and the Planning Bill included in the appendix and authorises the Director – Environmental Services to lodge the submission on behalf of the Council. The proposed legislation represents significant change to New Zealand's resource management framework and would directly affect New Zealand Councils. Because of the level of impact, it is appropriate that the Council submits.

3. Local Government Act 2002 – Section 10

Under section 10 of the Local Government Act 2002, the Council's purpose is to “enable democratic local decision making by and on behalf of communities; as well as promoting the social, economic, environmental, and cultural well-being of communities now and into the future”			
Does the recommended option meet the purpose of the Local Government 4 well-beings? And which:		Yes	
Social	Economic	Environmental	Cultural
		✓	

This matter supports the environmental wellbeing as it directly relates to the delivery of a regulatory function.

4. Background

- 4.1 At the time of the last general election (October 2023), New Zealand's resource management legislation was transitioning from the Resource Management Act 1991 to two newly established acts; the Natural and Built Environment Act 2023 and the Spatial Planning Act 2023. These acts had been drafted and brought into force by the previous government.
- 4.2 One of the current Government's election commitments was to repeal both the Natural and Built Environment Act 2023 and the Spatial Planning Act 2023 and instead rely on the Resource Management Act 1991 to provide a legislative framework for resource management while an entirely new suite of resource management legislation was developed.
- 4.3 That new suite of resource management legislation has now been drafted and comprises of the Natural Environment Bill and the Planning Bill which were released on 9 December 2025. There is an opportunity for to lodge submissions on the two new Bills, which ends on 13 February 2026.
- 4.4 The new Bills represent significant change to New Zealand's resource management framework and will have significant implications for all Councils in New Zealand because of our responsibility for exercising various regulatory powers authorised by the new Bills if they are passed into law.
- 4.5 Because of the level of change brought about by the new Bills, the level of importance of Councils, the significant amount of material in the two Bills and the difficult timing with the submission period being divided by the Christmas break. Taranaki Councils have chosen to work together on understanding and responding to the new legislation and have engaged Govett Quilliam to assist with the preparation of submissions. Govett Quilliam is a local law firm with staff who specialise in resource management law.
- 4.6 Since the release of the Bills, staff from Govett Quilliam have worked with council officers to understand how the Bills would work and to identify areas where improvements could be made or where change is necessary for successful implementation so that those areas can be incorporated into submissions by the four Councils. This work has been informed by workshops with resource managers and Elected Members.
- 4.7 While there are a lot of commonalities between the respective positions of the four councils and the need to accommodate four separate decision-making process for submissions within tight timeframes. Separate submissions have been prepared for each Council so that points of importance for each Council can be incorporated into

their submission. The Bills also have a range of implications for regional councils which would not affect district or city councils in the same way.

- 4.8 The appendix contains a submission drafted to express the Council's view on the Bill and this report recommends that the submission be approved for lodgement.

5. Consultative Process

5.1 Public Consultation - Section 82

This matter does not require public consultation.

5.2 Māori Consultation - Section 81

This matter does not require consultation with Māori.

6. Risk Analysis

- 6.1 This matter relates to risk 1 which is associated with compliance and legislation. In this instance the Government is developing new legislation that the Council will need to deliver functions in accordance with. Submitting on the new legislation or not does not carry any particular risks for the Council. The submission has been prepared with specialist legal assistance.

7. Sustainability Consideration

- 7.1 This matter relates to participating in a process that would change the Council's statutory responsibilities. It is not affected by the Sustainability Policy.

8. Decision Making Process – Section 79

8.1 Direction

	Explain
Is there a strong link to Council's strategic direction, Long Term Plan/District Plan?	This matter does not relate directly to the strategic direction in the Long-Term Plan. It would provide a replacement framework for future District Plans.
What relationship does it have to the communities current and future needs for infrastructure, regulatory functions, or local public services?	This matter relates to the provision of a regulatory function.

8.2 Data

There is limited statistical data available about this matter.

8.3 Significance

	Yes/No	Explain
Is the proposal significant according to the Significance and Engagement Policy in the Long Term Plan?	No	
Is it:	No	
• considered a strategic asset; or	No	
• above the financial thresholds in the Significance and Engagement Policy; or	No	
• impacting on a CCO stakeholding; or	No	
• a change in level of service; or	No	
• creating a high level of controversy; or	No	
• possible that it could have a high impact on the community?	No	
In terms of the Council's Significance and Engagement Policy, is this proposal of high, medium, or low significance?		
High	Medium	Low
		✓

8.4 Options

There are two options available for dealing with this matter:

Option 1 – To approve the submission and authorise the Director – Environmental Services to lodge it on behalf of the Council.

Option 2 – To do nothing.

These options will be assessed against the following criteria:

1. The provision of quality regulatory functions; and
2. The ability to influence the content of legislation that will affect the Council and community.

Option 1 – To approve the submission and authorise the Director – Environmental Services to lodge it on behalf of the Council.

Approving the submission and authorising the Director – Environmental Services to lodge it on behalf of the Council would mean that the Council's views on the Bills could be considered by the Government when deciding their final content. The Bills have been drafted by government officials who are not involved in the day-to-day application of resource management legislation, and it is considered that feedback from individuals and organisations who are involved could contribute positively to the final product. The Council has a range of regulatory functions under the existing resource management legislation and would also have a range of similar functions if the Bills are passed into law as they are proposed. It is important for the provision of quality regulatory functions that feedback from practitioners is provided to decision-makers.

Resource management legislation is important for the prosperity of our community and will likely have a significant impact on the Council's operations. While the Council cannot directly influence its content making, a submission is the only way to exert any influence at all. Making a submission does not guarantee the Bills would be changed to reflect that submission but the reverse applies. That is, if affected individuals and organisations do not submit there is no pathway for their views to influence the form of the final legislation.

Option 1 is the recommended option.

Option 2 – To do nothing.

Doing nothing would mean that the Council would not submit on the Bills. This would mean that the Council's views would not help to ensure the new resource management legislation promotes the provision of quality regulatory services. It is likely that much of our feedback will align with other Councils and that it is not necessary for every council to submit but it is important for councils to submit to show consistency in our feedback.

The Bills propose significant change to New Zealand's resource management system and the only opportunity to influence the content of the legislation is by submitting when we have the opportunity. Not making a submission would mean not exerting any influence over the legislation and instead relying on others to effectively do that on our behalf. The performance of the current resource management system has been a significant source of frustration for the community and practitioners alike. Considering the significance to the community it is considered appropriate to exert the limited influence that the Council has on this matter.

Option 2 is not recommended.

8.5 Financial

The implementation of any new legislation would have financial implications for the Council relating to the preparation of new resource management plans and income from consenting activities. Whether or not the Council lodges a submission on the new Bills would not have any financial implication beyond the cost associated with

preparing the submission which has been shared with the other Taranaki councils and met from existing budget.

8.6 **Prioritisation & Trade-off**

This matter does not affect any prioritisation or trade-off matters.

8.7 **Legal Issues**

This matter does not give rise to any legal issues; there is no legal requirement to submit or legal implication from submitting. The submission has been prepared by a resource management lawyer with assistance from resource management practitioners from throughout Taranaki.

8.8 **Policy Issues - Section 80**

This matter would not conflict with any Council policies.



Blair Sutherland
Director – Environmental Services



[Approved by]
Sven Hanne
Chief Executive

Date: 3 February 2026



Our reference

SUBMISSION ON PLANNING BILL AND NATURAL ENVIRONMENT BILL STRATFORD DISTRICT COUNCIL

Introduction

This submission is prepared on behalf of Stratford District Council (SDC) in relation to the proposed reform of the Resource Management Act (RMA), being the Planning Bill (PB) and Natural Environment Bill (NEB), referred to collectively as “the Bills”.

SDC welcomes the opportunity to provide feedback on the Bills.

SDC has engaged with the other councils within the Taranaki region (Taranaki Regional Council, South Taranaki District Council and New Plymouth District Council) in its review of the Bills. Except where submission points vary, SDC supports the submissions made by New Plymouth District Council, South Taranaki District Council and Taranaki Regional Council.

SDC requests to be heard in support of this submission.

General position

SDC generally supports the need for reform of the resource management system to address the long-standing complexity, cost, delays and inconsistent outcomes experienced under the RMA. SDC emphasises the critical need for reform to provide a stable and enduring national planning regime. Continued change in the resource management and planning regime has a direct effect on the community's to plan and develop and protect the environment.

SDC supports a number of aspects of the Bills as proposed, including:

- The concept of a simplified “funnel” approach to key instruments;
- Removal of consideration of precedent effects under the Planning Bill;
- The intention to simplify the consenting process; and
- The intention to provide a stronger focus on permitted activities.

However, the success of the replacement legislation is contingent on a number of matters. Without limiting SDC's submission points included in the attached table, SDC wishes to highlight the following concerns:

Central government providing implementation funding to local government: Local authorities have limited funding and resourcing available to absorb and implement significant changes in the planning system. The proposed implementation timeframes appear unrealistic, particularly within a rates cap context. Without sufficient resourcing of local government, the new system will not be effective, noting that as drafted, the Bills include numerous unfunded mandates (including regulatory takings and the registration of permitted activities).

Goals: The proposed goals will be critical in ensuring the success of the new system. As currently drafted, the application of the goals depend heavily on national direction which is yet to be developed. Further, there is currently no established approach to resolution of conflict between goals, which is critical to ensure a stable and effective resource management regime. The inability to address conflict between national direction in particular has long been an issue experienced under the RMA and the Bills should be seeking to resolve this.

Issues affecting adjacent regions: SDC falls within both the Taranaki and Manawatu-Whanganui regions and accordingly is subject to additional provisions affecting councils located within more than one region. SDC considers that further consideration must be given to circumstances where district and regional boundaries do not align. In some instances the level of misalignment is minimal and under the Bills as drafted, this requires simultaneous participation in the development of multiple plans for multiple regions. This is a significant additional cost to SDC, particularly given that the proposed transition timeline is intended to be aligned across all regions.

Regulatory relief regime: SDC does not support the regulatory relief regime as currently drafted. SDC considers that the issues underlying this proposed regime can be more appropriately addressed through robust assessment processes to ensure undue restriction is not placed on landowners and other existing forms of regulatory relief. If the regime is retained within the Bills, SDC considers that specific amendments should be made to the specified topics subject to the regime, the eligibility criteria and the relief options available.

Transition timeframes and system capacity: SDC is concerned that the timeframes proposed for the transition to the new system will be difficult, and in some instances, impossible to achieve. There is a real risk that there is insufficient capacity within the system and among practitioners in light of the tight timeframes and the “waterfall” risk regarding common expiry dates (where existing consents due to expire are extended under the transitional provisions).

SDC's submission points and recommendations on the Bills are attached to this letter.

Blair Sutherland
Director – Environmental Services

STRATFORD DISTRICT COUNCIL SUBMISSION POINTS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

PB = Planning Bill

NEB = Natural Environment Bill

Red wording = recommended wording changes to the Bills

Topic	Relevant Bill(s)/ Provision(s)	Comment	Recommendations
General	All	- SDC agrees that the resource management system is in need of reform to address long-standing complexity, cost, delay, and inconsistent outcomes under the RMA. The comments provided in this submission are intended to highlight areas where the SDC believes improvements can be made in the Bills to ensure the replacements for the RMA provide the stable and appropriate solutions to issues faced in the current system. - Please see the cover letter for SDC's further general comments on the proposed reform. - Except where our submission points below differ, SDC supports the submissions made by New Plymouth District Council, Stratford District Council and Taranaki Regional Council.	
System architecture	All	Two Bills - The rationale for separating land-use planning and infrastructure enablement from environmental protection and natural resources management is understood, but there are risks with this separation in the proposed system architecture which have not been adequately addressed: <i>No clear guidance within the legislation itself on how conflict is resolved</i> to assist with determining which statute or goal prevails in the event of conflict (see 'Goals' below for further comments). <i>Removal of integrated management fails to recognise that natural systems are interconnected and do not respect artificial administrative boundaries.</i> The two-Bill model replaces the integrative concept of sustainable management with a more segmented and rules-based approach. This may make it more challenging to manage land use, resources and the environment in a cohesive way. <i>Poor interaction between the Bills and fragmentation of decision-making may see effects fall between the gaps and responsibilities becoming blurred.</i> For example, failures in environmental outcomes may be blamed on planning decisions. The split between land use/planning and environmental management also risks siloed agencies – different councils, with different teams, goals and different funding streams. Without integrated statutory duties, each may optimise for its own metrics, even when that undermines system-wide outcomes (for example, housing and infrastructure delivery vs. environment protection). This has been an issue that has arisen with the approach under the RMA which likely will be continued rather than improved by the Bills. <i>Operating under two statutes may increase administrative complexity,</i> requiring councils and plan-users to engage with multiple statutory frameworks simultaneously. - The two-Bill model replaces the <i>integrative</i> concept of sustainable management with a more <i>segmented and rules-based</i> approach. This may make it more challenging to manage land use, resources and the environment in a cohesive way. - In practice, there will be elements of the NEB that necessarily will affect how the PB operates, such as the need for the development framework to be set with reference to environmental limits. If the separation is to be retained, it is essential that the Bills properly accommodate these points of interaction. For example, the Bills should provide fulsome direction on environmental limits and ensure these can be easily translated in plans and addressed in decisions on planning consents.	Two Bills - To avoid risks associated with shift away from integrated management, recommend a statutory requirement that planning decisions must consider effects beyond their immediate domain, even if managed under another statute (e.g. such as land-use impacts on the coast) and strong, legally enforceable mechanisms for cross-boundary effects. - Amend to ensure the relationship of environmental limits to planning decisions is explicit and easily implementable. - Where possible, amend to provide consistent terminology and legal tests across both statutes to avoid interpretive ambiguity. - Review Bills and amend to correct cross-referencing errors.

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		- One example of an area that will be affected by the above risks is subdivision. Subdivision frequently involves a cross-over of both planning and environmental matters. For example, while the division of land title itself might be a PB-related matter, the subdivision also may impact wetlands or require setbacks from waterways. An integrated approach not only could assist councils with managing these matters cohesively, but also assists with making processes 'user-friendly' for applicants and other plan users by avoiding the need to engage with multiple agencies, processes and legal tests for the same proposal. - There is a significant amount of cross-referencing between the Bills and there are errors. This needs to be corrected and simplified to the greatest extent possible. Future amendments will also require a high degree of care to avoid cross-referencing errors and unintended consequences. - As set out below, joint hearings should be provided for somehow whether the system architecture provides for two Bills or one. The need for multiple approvals under the RMA is already a source of frustration for applicants. Interaction with other legislation - The purpose of local government (per s 10 of the Local Government Act 2002 (as will be amended by Bill 180-2) is to "enable democratic local decision-making and action by, and on behalf of, communities" and "to meet the current and future needs of communities for good-quality, cost-effective, and local .. infrastructure ... public services ... performance of regulatory functions". No further amendments to this are proposed as part of the Bills. - There are no consequential amendments to the Local Government (Rating) Act 2002 (despite the Schedule 2 of that Act including reference to the Resource Management Act 1991).	The Bills' processes should be consistent with the broader legislative context, particularly the enablement of local decision-making action described in s 10 of the Local Government Act 2002. Consequential amendments should be added for the Local Government (Rating) Act 2002.
Purpose, Goals and Principles	Both, cl 4	Purposes - There is no overall purpose or direction on what success under the proposed system looks like. The purposes are procedural and describe what the legislation establishes, not what it seeks to achieve in measurable or evaluative terms (such as sustainable management for future generations). If national direction is the primary vehicle for defining "what success looks like", the system risks shifting objectives over time, and inconsistent application across planning cycles. This undermines long-term certainty for councils, communities, and investors. - SDC considers that the Bills should include a substantive purpose statement to provide sufficient guidance to local authorities and decision-makers under the new regime. This substantive purpose should be provided for in legislation rather than through national instruments.	Purpose Amend the purposes of both Bills to include a substantive policy purpose.
	Both, cl 11	Goals <i>General</i> - The phrase "must seek to achieve" introduces uncertainty as to the legal weight of the goals, particularly when combined with the various qualifying words in the goals. - Clarity of application of the goals will depend heavily on national direction. As this has not been developed, it is unclear how the goals will be applied in practice. This means that there are some matters on which comprehensive comment cannot be made due to the lack of information on the national instruments. Substance - The wording of the goals loses the future focus inherent with the concept of sustainable use. They do not recognise the fundamental role of planning to ensure optimal future outcomes. - Enabling use and development within environmental limits is conceptually clear but relies on robust limit-setting.	Goals <i>General</i> - Support simplification of matters currently addressed in Part 2 of the RMA. - Encourage well-developed and maintained national instruments as well as consistent terminology and legal tests across all national instruments to avoid interpretive ambiguity. Substance - Recommend NEB goals include stronger direction to protect environment, given the NEB's core function of setting environmental limits. - Ensure consistent terminology and legal tests across all national instruments to avoid interpretive ambiguity.

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		“No net loss of indigenous biodiversity” may allow localised loss through offsetting <i>Hierarchy and conflicts</i> - There is no explicit hierarchy or primacy between the goals in each Bill. Multiple development-enabling goals may compete with each other and with protection goals. The PB contains environmental protection goals (e.g. natural character, historic heritage) that may overlap or conflict with NEB protections. Without a clear primacy rule, there is a risk that development-focused goals are given disproportionate weight in planning decisions. - The combined number and breadth of goals risks recreating the “everything matters” evaluative complexity of s 5 RMA - Proposed clause 57(1) has no general consideration of the current and long term impact on the natural environment (as is available for the built environment) when the Minister is resolving conflicts between the goals in the PB and the NE. Instead, the mandatory consideration in respect of the natural environment is limited to whether “<i>the proposal enables development to occur within environmental limits</i>”, essentially requiring mandatory consideration of s 11(a) NEB.	<i>Hierarchy and Conflicts</i> - Amend clause 57 of the PB and clause 81 of the NEB to provide more guidance in resolving conflicts amongst the goals. In particular extra weight ought to be given to: - Avoiding the loss of life or damage to property from natural hazards. - Matters of significance to Māori.
	Both, cl 12	Funnel – relationship between key instruments - The success of the funnel relies heavily on national instruments and ministerial direction. Across many provisions this makes it very difficult to assess the proposed provisions. It also increases instability in the system as it is easier for a new government to make significant changes to the resource management regime. - SDC has concerns that limiting/focussing public participation at the top of funnel will not work for our community. In SDC’s experience, the plan making process can be overwhelming for smaller stakeholders to participate in, whereas a consent is a more focused and relatable process whereby parties can assess what the proposal means for them.	Funnel – relationship between key instruments General support for the concept of a funnel approach, however its success depends entirely on the content and quality of national instruments. Greater checks and balances are needed, as well as the ability to recognise and respond to regional differences.
	Both, cl 13	Procedural principles - SDC is cautious about cl 13’s enforceability and the potential for increased challenges being brought in the Planning Tribunal regarding timeliness and opposing requests for further information, which is likely to create more administrative work for Councils. - While SDC acknowledges the importance of procedural fairness, it should be stated expressly that non-compliance with the cl 13 procedural principles does not automatically invalidate a decision. There is an example of this type of direction in the equivalent section in the Fast-track Approvals Act 2024 provides the following: “<i>A failure to comply with this section does not of itself invalidate the performance of a function or duty or the exercise of a power under this Act</i>”. This will assist avoiding minor or technical compliance with cl 13 requiring significant decisions to be reconsidered, causing unnecessary duplication	Procedural principles Include the following (or wording to similar effect) as a new subclause: “<i>A failure to comply with this section does not of itself invalidate the performance of a function or duty or the exercise of a power under this Act</i>”
	PB, cl 14	Effects outside scope <i>Visual amenity</i> - SDC does not support the complete removal of visual amenity effects (cl14(1)(e)). Complete removal of this effect from the scope of the PB will compromise development standards and design quality. Visual amenity is closely linked to people’s sense of place and identity. Allowing essential visual amenity values to be considered provides an important mechanism for safeguarding people’s enjoying of their properties, and for supporting the success of urban and rural environments. If there are specific concerns around how these effects are considered in practice, the proposed national instruments provide a mechanism for managing this in nuanced way. Whole scale removal prevents justified management of visual amenity matters and risks poor outcomes. - However SDC would support the removal of specific visual amenity effects such as certain internal matters including outlook space and viewshafts unless specifically identified.	Effects outside scope Amend cl14(1)(e) to narrow the scope of excluded visual amenity effects to specific effects only such as outlook space and viewshafts (unless specifically identified)

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		<i>Retail distribution effects</i> - Removing the ability to consider retail distribution effects (cl14(1)(c)) will limit long-term strategy planning around retail centres and ability to protect vitality and vibrancy of existing centres. <i>Precedent effects</i> - SDC supports the removal of precedent effects (cl14(1)(i)). SDC considers that this provides clarity and supports a consenting framework where each application is considered on its own facts and merits.	
	Both, cl 15	Considering adverse effects - Regarding the use of 'minimised', SDC considers 'mitigate' is a more appropriate word in this context. Using 'minimising' may result in more absolute requirements to reduce effects as far as possible, whereas 'mitigate' seeks a reduction. Should 'minimise' be retained, the new terms should be defined and aligned with existing terms as far as possible. - We note the Bills do not include an effects hierarchy, but one may be imposed by national direction. SDC would prefer that an effects management hierarchy is provided within the legislation, rather than being left to the national direction. It is good practice to consider avoiding an adverse effect first, before considering whether the effect can be minimised or remedied, and so on. If an effects hierarchy is not included in the legislation it should be <u>required</u> within national direction. - Where possible, SDC would prefer for terms used within the Bills to be defined and aligned with existing and established terms. In particular, the new 'Less than minor adverse effect' test (being <i>acceptable and reasonable in the receiving environment with any change being slight or barely noticeable</i>) is likely to result in interpretive uncertainty and increased litigation.	Considering adverse effects Provide for an effects management hierarchy within the Bills rather than leaving to national direction. Alternatively, amend cl15(3) to outline an effects management hierarchy which applies where no national instrument is in force.
Duties and restrictions	Both Bills – PB, cl 16-26 NEB, cl 16 – 27	Restrictions and duties - Regional councils are better placed than territorial authorities to manage biodiversity responsibilities, but this will require resourcing and capability shifts, as well as some integrated management Existing use rights - SDC generally supports additional clarity regarding existing use rights as set out in cl20PB, including the timeframe provided for assessing the establishment of an existing use.	
Te Tiriti o Waitangi and Māori interests	Both, cl 8 PB, cl 11(1)(i) NEB, cl 11(f) Various	Overall - The Bills take a prescriptive approach to Māori rights and interests, and the Treaty of Waitangi. It reduces settlement obligations to involvement in plan-making. - The Bills' approach does not appear to reflect relevant relationships and responsibilities, let alone take the opportunity to improve. - The focus on "<i>identified Māori land</i>" which is defined by reference to land status or ownership is likely to disproportionately exclude land which might be of significance but was alienated through confiscation or other processes. This is particular pertinent in the Taranaki-context. - It is unclear how existing settlements can be fully accommodated within the framework of the Bills. The two-year negotiation period regarding settlements will coincide with the development of instruments under the Bills. Clarity is needed on how plans will be able to properly integrate any Treaty settlement arrangements if negotiations are ongoing.	- Support clarity in engagement processes in principle, but the Bills' proposed approach does not seem to reflect partnership. - Amend to reinstate provisions equivalent in effect to sections 6(e), 7(a) and 8 of the RMA in both Bills. In the alternative, amend to provide that upholding the principles of te Tiriti o Waitangi is a mandatory goal. - Recommend changes to the transitional provisions to clarify how the cl 9 negotiations will interface with the transition.
Environmental limits and resource allocation		No specific comments	SDC supports the position taken by TRC in its submission
National instruments	PB 44 - 52 NEB 68 - 76	National instruments As above, without an overall success statement for the Bills, it is unclear what will be guiding the Minister when choosing which goal needs to be achieved and how conflicts will be resolved. Nor what	National instruments

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		criteria will guide decision-making when the Minister considers submissions that have conflicting positions. - SDC supports the inclusion of cl 45(5) – Minister must ensure new instruments result in a coherent set of national instruments. However, SDC considers that coherence across all national instruments (not just new instruments) will be critical in ensuring certainty and an enduring system. - The discretion provided to the Minister to consider “<i>any other matter</i>” by cl 45(6)(b) is significantly wide and risks uncertainty. SDC considers that the scope of consideration of additional matters should be narrowed or this section removed. Process for making national instruments - As drafted, local authorities are not required to be consulted or provided with a draft of the proposed national instrument (noting the Minister’s general discretion to consult at any time under cl 46(3) PB). To ensure effective outcomes, it is critical that local authorities should be invited to participate in prior consultation on national instruments. - As drafted, cl 46(2)(c) is not clear who the chief executive is (definition simply says: the chief executive of the department). When preparing the report, the chief executive must consider whether the proposal provides for 1 or more goals.	- Retain cl 45(5) regarding the requirement to consider existing national instruments for the purpose of ensuring there is a coherent set of national instruments. - Consider amending or removing cl 45(6)(b) to provide more guidance regarding the scope of additional matters the Minister must consider. - Amend 46(1)(a)(b) and (c) to include local authorities as follows: “...<i>iwi authorities and local authorities</i>...”
	PB, cl 53 - 57 NEB, cl 77 - 81	National policy direction (NPD) - SDC is concerned that there is no requirement for national direction to include guidance as to the resolution of conflicts between the goals of each Act. The general requirement for the Minister to have regard to conflict resolution within national direction under 45(2)(c) does not ensure that the national direction will provide sufficient guidance for local authorities when conflicts arise between competing goals. - Further, SDC does not consider that the considerations set out in cl 57 when resolving conflicts between goals of the PB and NEB provide sufficient guidance as to how such conflicts should be resolved.	Amend the relevant national direction provisions to include a requirement to provide explicit guidance for local authorities when goals within each Act compete (for example natural hazards and development capacity).

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Regional Spatial Plans	PB, cl 64 - 68	Purpose - Addressing infrastructure priorities in regional spatial plans align with district planning needs. However, the Bill only defines “<i>infrastructure</i>” in the context of designations (as set out in Sch 5 of the PB). This means it is unclear whether “<i>infrastructure</i>” for the purpose of regional spatial plans covers all infrastructure (including private on-site infrastructure serving, for example, one residence) or is targeted at more community-wide infrastructure. Integration - Clause 68 also should confirm how spatial plans interact with key statutes such as the Climate Change Response Act, Civil Defence Emergency Management Act, and the provision of water services. - Clause 68(2) states that the provision is “<i>a guide only</i>,” which undermines clarity. If the clause is intended to outline how legislation aligns, it should do so explicitly.	Purpose and integration - Define “Infrastructure” clearly in the Bill to provide focus and consistency and without being constrained to in the context of designations. This definition should be based on/consistent with the definition in the RMA and NPS Infrastructure. - Remove or revise clause 68(2) to provide clear, enforceable integration requirements rather than limiting this to guidance.
	PB, cl 69–70	Plan making process - SDC supports the requirement for a process agreement (s69) is supported as it provides a framework for collaboration between councils - The PB does not specify when the process agreement must be completed or whether it must be agreed before work begins on the RSP. For Taranaki, this could delay progress by months, as agreement would require coordination across four councils, iwi PSGEs, infrastructure providers, and sector groups. - The Bill uses “consult with” for iwi authorities (clause 69(f)) and “work with” for infrastructure providers and sector groups (clauses 69(c) and (g)). This distinction is unclear and may imply different levels of obligation. For Taranaki, this risks iwi being treated as stakeholders rather than Treaty partners. - The process agreement should include how the secretariat will be established and managed. Without clarity, councils may face governance and resourcing challenges. - The statutory baseline regarding consultation with iwi authorities appears to be limited to prior notification of plan preparation, provision of the draft and seeking views. This is more limited than the requirements for consultation for land use plans and natural environment plans which include obligations to consider how to foster the iwi authorities’ capacity to respond to an invitation to consult, to establish processes, enable identification of issues and indicate how the issues have or will be addressed. Instead, any additional consultation processes are to be set by the process agreement.	Plan making process - Amend provisions to specify a timeframe for completing the process agreement and confirm whether it must be in place before spatial plan work begins. Consequential amendments should also be made to the transition timeframes to allow this to occur (including amendments to Sch 1, cl 5(4) PB regarding the timeframe for notification of the draft regional spatial plan). - Clarify the obligations implied by “<i>consult with</i>” versus “<i>work with</i>” and ensure iwi engagement reflects Treaty partnership principles. - Amend cl 69 to include requirements for secretariat structure and funding in the process agreement.
	PB, cl 71-73	Spatial Plan Committees SDC supports the requirement to appoint a chairperson and a secretariat provides structure and accountability for spatial planning committees. However for clarity, the Bill should set out the core functions the secretariat must deliver, in particular the provision of administrative and policy support to the Spatial Planning Committee. Detail on the role of the secretariat should be provided in primary legislation rather than in regulations. This will greatly speed up implementation. This role should be focused on providing administrative and policy support to the spatial planning committee.	Spatial Plan Committees Add a new section setting out the core functions the secretariat must deliver, with a particular focus on providing administrative and policy support to the spatial planning committee.

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	PB, Sch 2, cl 11-14	Notification The notification process for spatial plans differs from that for natural environment and land-use plans, creating inconsistency across planning instruments.	Notification Standardise the notification framework for spatial plans with that used for natural environment and land-use plans to ensure consistency and reduce complexity.
	PB, Sch 2, Part 2, Sub part 2	Issues affecting adjacent regions - Further consideration must be given to circumstances where district and regional boundaries do not align. In some instances the level of misalignment is minimal which means simultaneous participation in the development of multiple plans for multiple regions (in accordance with the relevant provisions of the Bill) where nearly all of a district falls within one region (as is the case with Stratford district). - This is particularly pertinent where the transition timeline is intended to be aligned across all regions. A staggered transition between regions would alleviate this pressure placed on these local authorities. - SDC supports the clarification in Schedule 1, cl5(6) that the relevant notification period for land use plans is within 9 months after the <i>last</i> relevant RSP is decided. Where possible time frame extensions or clarifications should be provided for territorial authorities located in 2 or more regions.	Issues affecting adjacent regions - Consider staggering the transition of regions to the new framework so that relevant local authorities are not required to participate simultaneously in the development of multiple plans for multiple regions. - Consider further assessment of district and regional boundaries with a view to aligning where suitable.
		Historic heritage - Shift to focus on significant historic heritage (not defined, and who determines significance) (goals, TA responsibilities) - Cumulative loss of historic heritage (that is not significant) not expressly provided for - Exclusions of amenity effects do not apply to significant historic heritage (PB s14). However wider amenity effects often contribute to and support heritage values - Historic heritage is defined but no guidance as to how <i>significant</i> HH is defined or determined (contextual or streetscape arguments in relation to heritage are likely excluded unless the area is identified as a significant heritage area) - Is included in Regulatory relief regime - Who is responsible for enforcement	
Land Use Plans		Historic heritage - The PB appears to focus on "significant historic heritage" which is not defined. - In some sections of the PB, reference is made to regulating significant historic heritage (or variations of this, e.g. "<i>significant historic heritage sites or significant historic heritage structures</i>" – specified topic definition; "<i>sites of significant historic heritage</i>" – effects outside the scope of this Act; "<i>significant historical heritage</i>"). Terminology should be used consistently to avoid confusion. - SDC does not consider that historic heritage should be included in the proposed regulatory relief regime.	Historic heritage - Remove from regulatory relief framework. - Clarify what 'significant' historic heritage means - Use consistent terminology, e.g. "<i>significant historic heritage</i>" and not variations of this.
Regulatory relief	Both PB, cl 92, Part 4 of Sch 3 NEB, cl 111	Overall - It has been indicated by that the Bills are intended only to manage negative externalities. By definition, those are the consequence of an activity that adversely affects others without that effect being reflected in market prices. If the Bills do indeed only focus on externalities, then the provision of regulatory relief is unnecessary. Planning controls only will be applied where the actions taken by a landowner on their property create an adverse effect on others. In those circumstances, it is appropriate for the cost (including the opportunity cost) of managing that adverse effect fall on the landowner. Regulatory relief effectively means the ratepayer subsidises those creating the adverse effect. The disproportionate burden on ratepayers, and indeed the difficulties in principle with the regime, is exacerbated by regulatory relief being a one-way assessment. There is no proposal that ratepayers receive compensation from landowners or relief requirement off-set where changes in rules increase value of land or development potential. - The regulatory relief regime appears to present a significant implementation burden which undermine the ability of councils to prepare plans in the transition timeframes proposed. If the	Overall - Oppose regulatory relief provisions as the issue underlying these provisions would be more appropriately addressed through robust assessment processes to ensure undue restriction is not placed on landowners and existing forms of regulatory relief. - If a regulatory relief system is put in place: - remove sites of significance to Māori from the regulatory relief system; - remove significant historic heritage sites or significant historic heritage structures from the regulatory relief system;

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		provisions are retained, it therefore may be appropriate to delay implementation until after the first generation of plan are completed. - There is a risk of councils being required to include rules on specified topics as part of plans to comply with higher order instruments then required to provide certain types of relief under the cl 65 regulation. Specified topics - The inclusion of sites of significance to Māori as a specified topic in both Bills risks diluting on the primary mechanisms listed as how responsibilities under the Treaty of Waitangi are met. If sites are not scheduled due to the cost of regulatory relief, this means the active protection of sites of significance will not be achieved. These sites of significance were of cultural significance before private property boundaries were placed on top of them.	- make it so regulatory relief is not required where the provisions are necessary for ensuring an environmental limit is not breached; - explicitly give councils the ability to not apply a specified rule over a property where the cost of regulatory relief would be too high; and - set in the Act that a property is only subject to regulatory relief where a local authority applies a bespoke rule on a specified topic, i.e., the use of nationally standardised rules is not subject to regulatory relief; and - Further amendments as recommended below.
		Eligibility criteria - Application to existing sites will reopen resolved issues and present significant administrative burden. - The eligibility exclusions as drafted do not comprehensively cover all situations where a landowner might have supported inclusion of the rule. - The eligibility exclusions may discourage participants in the plan making process from expressing their position on specified rules, risking the overall submissions not being representative of local opinion.	Eligibility criteria - Replace cl 68 (6) to (7) with a new sub-clause which provides that a person is not eligible for relief in respect of land subject to a rule in the RMA operative plan that is similar to a specified rule in the first proposed plan unless the impact on the land is substantially worse. - Amend cl 68(4) to provide that a landowner is ineligible for relief where the landowner has received incentives under a previous plan unless the impact on the land is "substantially worse".
		Relief options - There is no ability provided for a council to not schedule something due to the cost of regulatory relief. However, if councils are able to avoid scheduling sites due to the cost of regulatory relief, this undermines achieving the goals of the system and could result in limits (e.g. on indigenous biodiversity) being breached. - The mechanism for granting "additional development rights" on the property or another site owned by the landowner is unclear. The plan rules will be operative before the site-specific relief assessment is undertaken, and determining what other sites are owned the landowner and the utility of "additional" rights on those will require consultation with the landowner which is not provided for in the cl 71(2) process. - Further consideration should be given to the form and extent of relief. For example, rates relief on land that cannot be used productively as a result of a planning rule is quite different (and more palatable) than financial compensation for a reduction in value of a heritage building. Many of the features that are the subject of this type of rule have already had an effect on the value of the land at purchase. Regulatory relief should only apply to the effect of the regulation itself, not the effect of the existence of the item that is the subject of the relief. - If monetary payment is retained as a form of relief, landowners may receive a windfall in situations where land uses and value change over time or where restrictions are reduced or removed in a later plan. This issue could be resolved by limiting the forms of relief to matters tied to the specific plan such as incentives, reduced consent fees or development rights. - The assessment process will duplicate the Local Government (Rating) Act 2002 processes as it will a) require some sort of valuation evidence in order to assess effects on land value and b) provide a separate rate remission regime where mechanisms are already available (and utilised) under the LG (R). Also, necessary consequential amendments to the LG (R) appear to have been overlooked.	Relief options - Amend to limit relief to: - options which enable landowners to derive benefit from the land via alternative uses i.e. incentives, other development rights elsewhere on the property or another site; and - situations where a bespoke provision is utilised. - Remove reference to rates remission as a form of relief. Instead, amend the Local Government (Rating) Act 2002 to update the Schedule 2 categories of land to refer to the Bills and, specifically, land that is subject to specified rule/s and leave rates remission to be determined by the relevant policies under that Act. - Expressly allow Councils to not apply a specified rule over a site where the cost of regulatory relief would be too high as an alternative to providing relief to the landowner. - Amend Schedule 3 s70(2) PB to add an additional relief option of "provision of advice". - For example, cl 70(2) could read: A relief framework may, without limitation, include any of the following types of relief: (a) monetary payment:

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			(b) waiving or reducing local-government-rates-or fees for planning consent applications; (c) granting additional development rights elsewhere on the property or on another site owned by the landowner; (d) offering alternative parcels of land in exchange for the affected site; (e) providing access to targeted grant programmes, restoration, fencing, planting, or other mitigation activities; (f) provision of advice; or (g) exempting the property from the specified rule.
		Assessment Approach <i>Clause 71(1) – Relief framework must be implemented as soon as reasonably practicable after its plan is made operative</i> - While separating the development of the relief framework from its implementation may help limit appeals on the plan provisions by delaying site-specific implementation until after the plan is operative, it does present other practical issues: - It is unclear how the first stage assessment of whether a rule “<i>reasonably likely to have a significant impact on the reasonable use of land</i>” is to be undertaken abstracted from specific sites. - It also limits the opportunity for councils to assess the regulatory relief associated with including a specified rule and decide not to proceed with that rule if it is intended that no site specific assessment take place until the implementation stage. - SDC considers that it may be more appropriate for councils to delay regulatory relief until a plan is operative as prior to this point, there is no effect to provide relief from and until the provisions are finalised and the level of effect understood, it will be difficult to determine the appropriate level of relief. However, SDC acknowledges that for landowners it may be beneficial to understand the level of relief that would be applied when considering the level of effect of the plan on their property (and therefore their level of support or opposition). SDC notes that the various considerations required in assessing this aspect of the proposed regime highlights the difficulties in preparing and implementing a relief regime that is beneficial on balance to all system-users. <i>Clause 71(2)</i> - Clause 71(2) requires councils to proactively carry out relief assessments and notify affected persons of the results. This may see relief provided to disinterested parties or where the rule change makes no actual difference to the landowner’s planned land uses (as opposed to the hypothetical development potential of the land).	Assessment Approach If retained, amend to remove the duty to implement the relief framework and instead provide that landowners may apply for relief. This would operate similar to s 85(3A) - (3D) of the RMA except that application could be made to the relevant council (with appeal to the Planning Tribunal) rather than an appeal to the Environment Court on the proposed plan provisions being required. Alternatively, in the least, insert new clause that allows for a person that is eligible for relief to essentially ‘opt out’ of relief.
Consenting and permitting	PB, cl 31 NEB, cl 32	Activity classification SDC supports the removal of controlled and non-complying activities and the intention to provide simplification by way of reduced consent categories	Activity classification Retain removal of controlled and non-complying activities/support simplification and reduction of consent categories
	PB, cl 38 and S180 NEB, cl s202(3)	Permitted activity rules (PAR) and registration - SDC is supportive of the intention to provide a stronger focus on permitted activities to provide certainty and support economic growth. However SDC is concerned that the proposed permitted activity regime imposes an unnecessary regulatory and administrative burden on both councils and applicants which will not achieve the stated intention of the Bills. - As drafted, it is unclear whether it is intended that all permitted activities will be subject to permitted activity rules (in particular when s38 is read in conjunction with s32(2)(b)(i)). SDC considers that further amendment is required to clarify the extent to which permitted activity rules will apply to permitted	Permitted activity rules and registration - Further clarification and/or amendments required to confirm and minimise the extent to which permitted activity rules apply - Amend cl 38(1) as follows: “A permitted activity rule must may....” - Delete cl 38(2)(b)(i)

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		activities. The supporting documentation provided alongside the Bills indicate that “more activities will be permitted without the need for a consent or permit” and fewer consents required. SDC considers that the permitted activity rule regime should only apply to a small portion of permitted activities which require monitoring or assessment - to apply this regime to a larger portion of permitted activities would be inconsistent with the stated intention of the consenting and permitting regime under the Bills. - Registration and ongoing monitoring requirements for permitted activities subject to permitted activity rules will be significant for councils. Further, there are many categories of permitted activities where registration or conditions (particularly written approvals) are simply not necessary. Accordingly, PAR should only apply to a small portion of permitted activities. - SDC considers that in principle and as currently drafted, PAR are largely similar to controlled activities. Notification and registration of activity subject to permitted activity rule (s180) - The 10 working day timeframe for councils to determine and notify an applicant of outcome (s180(3)) will be difficult to comply with without additional resourcing. In certain circumstances, it will require more than 10 working days to determine whether an activity will comply with a PAR, particularly if a PAR sets a number of conditions or where it is difficult to determine whether the activity meets the requirements of the PAR. For example, under the RMA, while most permitted activities give rise to a lower level of effects than an activity that requires consent and is generally easier to assess, in practice it is often difficult to assess whether the parameters of an activity meet the relevant requirements to be a permitted activity (for example minor residential units and PIM assessments). In such cases, 10 working days is not sufficient to carry out this assessment. Accordingly, if retained, this timeframe should be extended. - It is unclear whether consent authorities will have the ability to request further information in relation to an application under clause 180, including where the information required by cl38(3) and cl180(2)(ii) is not provided.¹ The ability to request information that has not been provided and/or further information required to carry out the PAR assessment in relation to the particular activity should be provided for. Where such requests are made, the consent authority should be provided with the ability to pause the timeframe for determination.	- Amend cl 180 to enable consent authorities to request information that is not provided and/or further information required to carry out the PAR assessment. Subsequent amendment to enable consent authorities to pause the PAR processing timeframe if an information request has been made. - Amend clause 180(3) to provide for a longer and more workable timeframe for consent authorities
	PB, 117 – 118 NEB, cl 138 - 139	Processing timeframes - Increase in maximum processing timeframes to 45 working days is supported as it better reflects the complexity of the new process and provides more realistic timeframes for councils. - Timeframes, pauses, and extensions are spread across multiple sections and regulations, making them difficult to track. This increases administrative burden and risk of error for councils and could frustrate applicants. - Introducing “maximum time periods” alongside timeframes may create confusion and misalignment with the current RMA clock. For example, if extensions are allowed up to a year, this could undermine certainty for applicants and councils.	Processing timeframes Consolidate all timeframes, pause rules, and extension provisions within the Bill for clarity and consistency.
	PB, cl 124 and 125 NEB, cl 145 and 146	Notification Unlike the RMA, notification decisions cannot be completed at the end of the process and must now be separated from the main report. This adds complexity and may increase administrative burden for councils. The Bills should provide clear guidance on how notification decisions and main reports should be managed to avoid double handling.	Notification Provide for notification assessments within main report.
	PB, cl 131 NEB, cl 152	Public participation SDC generally supports the approach of focusing public participation in plan making and having reduced scope in the consent process.	Public participation

¹ Clauses 119 and 122 refer only to applications for a planning consent.

Topic	Relevant Bill(s)/ Provision(s)	Comment	Recommendations
		- SDC generally supports the inclusion of “qualifying resident” in relation to the ability to make submissions. However, SDC anticipates that as drafted, the definition of “qualifying resident” may result in some uncertainty, particularly in regard to interest groups who are not infrastructure providers or ratepayers. The role of such interest groups should be clarified. Obligation to hold a hearing (s135) - SDC generally supports the changes made to hearing requirements in clause 135	Clarify the role of interest groups who aren’t infrastructure providers or ratepayers under the definition of “qualifying resident” and ability to make submissions
	PB 98,144	Applications that authorise change to spatial application of plan provisions SDC considers that the ability to change the spatial application of plan provisions where a qualifying planning consent is granted should remain discretionary (ie not elevated to a mandatory requirement if qualifying consents are granted).	Applications that authorise change to spatial application of plan provisions Retain “may” in cl 144(1)
		Joint hearing The ability to hold a joint hearing for related applications under the RMA (s102) has not been carried through to the PB. This will likely duplicate administrative efforts and resources.	Joint hearing Amend the PB to provide for joint or combined hearings (consistent with s 102 of the RMA).
	PB, Sch 7	Subdivisions/ Esplanade reserves / strips As with the RMA, the provisions as currently drafted are quite difficult to understand for esplanades. Within the Taranaki region, there are numerous waterways that are close together that poses further difficulties in applying esplanade requirements. SDC considers that where possible (including by way of national standards) these provisions should be simplified.	
Planning Tribunal	PB, cl 216 and Sch 10	SDC supports, in principle, the establishment of the Planning Tribunal	
Other matters	PB, cl 283 and 291	Levies - SDC is concerned that as drafted, planning consent levies are ultimately at discretion of the Minister - As currently drafted, planning consent levies are intended to apply to planning consents and registered permitted activities but are available to fund only for the functions of the development and review of national directions and preparing and maintaining the system performance framework (under cl 283(2)). Under cl 291(4), money collected may only be used for these prescribed purposes. As drafted, this does not seem to reflect the concept of a “planning consent levy” – SDC considers it would be more appropriate for the functions to extend to functions related to the implementation by local authorities of the planning consent and permitted activity regime. - Under cl 291(4) consent authorities are required to collect the money but must pay the money collected to MfE. This puts councils in a difficult position where they are collecting money from applicants but not able to utilise the levy in relation to their functions. This can be compared to natural resource levies under NEB	Levies - Amend cl 283(2) to extend the functions for which planning consent levies can be used to fund (and in particular, functions carried out by consent authorities to implement the planning consent and permitted activity regime). - Amend cl 291 to enable consent authorities to directly utilise money collected by planning consent levies where this meets the additional purposes provided for in cl 283(2) (as amended)
	PB, Part 5, cl 210 – 214	System performance - The purposes of the framework refers to “legislative and system outcomes” but it is unclear what those would be, particularly the Bills do not have an outcome-focused purpose. - There is no limit on what might be included as a “key system performance indicator”. The terminology suggests that these indicators are quantifiable measures of how the system is performing. As such, it should be ensured that the indicators included provide a meaningful reflection of how the system is performing. Providing relevant agencies with opportunity to comment on the usefulness of any proposed indicators would assist with this. - The entities from which the chief executive may collect data includes persons contracted by a local authority. It would be appropriate for local authorities to oversee any data requests from its contractors given, for example, that data may be treated as held by the relevant local authority under s 10 of the Privacy Act 2020 and the local authority will have the responsibilities relating to disclosure described Information Privacy Principle 11.	System performance - Support in principle mechanisms to identify issues with system-wide issues, including national direction outcomes (which is a stated purpose of the framework) given the extent to which the system will rely on adequate national direction. - Ensure sufficient resourcing is made available to support data collection and provision. - Amend cl 210(4)(b) to add the consultation with relevant agencies is also directed to ensuring that any proposed key system performance indicators are meaningful measures of system performance and outcomes.

Topic	Relevant Bill(s)/ Provision(s)	Comment	Recommendations
			Amend to provide that any data to be collected from persons contracted by a local authority should be requested from the local authority or be collected with local authority oversight to ensure accuracy, and compliance with the Privacy Act 2020 or any other obligations regarding that data.
Transition	PB, cl 5, Sch 1	Timeframes - SDC is concerned that the timeframes proposed for the transition to the new system will be difficult, and in some instances, impossible to achieve. In particular, the six month time limit from notification to determination of the first-generation Regional Spatial Plan is likely unachievable. This timeframe should be extended. SDC also considers that the transition timeframe should provide additional time for the completion of RSP process agreements and other preparatory steps. - In addition the, timeframes referenced in Schedule 1 and 2 of the PB use both "months" and "working days". This can create confusion and uncertainty and accordingly a consistent approach should be used.	Timeframes - Amend Sch1, cl5(4)(b) to provide for a longer timeframe for first generation Regional Spatial Plans to be decided.
		System capacity - SDC is concerned that there is insufficient capacity within system and practitioners in light of the tight timeframes and the "waterfall" risk regarding common expiry dates (where existing consents due to expire are extended under the transitional provisions). Given the short timeframes and alignments of transition across all districts and regions, local authorities will be seeking assistance from experts and Commissioners at the same time. - SDC is concerned that this approach will limit the ability for later regions to learn from earlier regions and make changes to approach to avoid challenges or issues experienced (ie when compared to a staggered transition).	



TE KAUNIHERA Ā ROHE O
WHAKAAHURANGI
STRATFORD
DISTRICT COUNCIL

Our reference
F19/13/03-D21/40748

Karakia

Kia uruuru mai
Ā hauora
Ā haukaha
Ā haumāia
Ki runga, Ki raro
Ki roto, Ki waho
Rire rire hau Paimārire

I draw in (to my being)
The reviving essence
The strengthening essence
The essence of courage
Above, Below
Within, Around
Let there be peace.