

**Minutes of an Extraordinary Meeting of the
Marlborough District Council
held in the Council Chambers and online via Teams, 15 Seymour Street, Blenheim
on THURSDAY 6 AUGUST 2026 commencing at 9.00 am**

Present

Mayor Nadine Taylor (in the Chair), Cllrs Scott Adams, Sally Arbuckle, Allanah Burgess (via Teams), David Croad, Deborah Dalliessi, Brian Dawson, Cyril Dawson, Barbara Faulks (via Teams), Gerald Hope, John Hyndman, Raylene Innes, Thelma Sowman, Ben Stace (via Teams) and Malcolm Taylor

In Attendance

Messrs John Boswell (Chief Executive), Phillip Eyles (Strategic Delivery Manager), Glyn Walters (Head of Communications), Geoff Blake (Chief Financial Officer), Hans Versteegh (Group Manager Environmental Science & Policy), Neil Henry (Group Manager Strategic Management), Setareh Masoud-Ansari (General Counsel), Claudia Mark (Solicitor), Richard Coningham (Water Services Establishment CE), Anna Pellett (Project Manager), Nicole Chauval (Committee Secretary), and Tiffany Wise (Governance Manager). Additional Council staff were in attendance in an observational capacity and did not participate in the meeting.

Karakia

The meeting opened with a karakia.

Apology

None Received.

Cncl-0826-34 Declaration of Interests

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Members were reminded of the need to be vigilant to stand aside from decision-making where a conflict arises between their role as an elected member and any private or external interest.

- Cncl-0826-39: Environment & Planning Committee Meeting Minutes (E&P-0726-11 – Mayor Taylor noted her role as Director for Marlborough Airport Limited; while not in attendance at the Committee meeting, Cllr Croad and B Dawson also noted their position as directors with the Marlborough Airport Limited.

Cncl-0826-35 Confirmation of Minutes

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The Mayor / Cllr Adams:

That the Minutes of the Council Meeting held on 25 June 2026 (Minute Nos. Cncl-0626-431 to Cncl-0626-447) be taken as read and confirmed.

Carried

Cncl-0826-36 Confirmation of Minutes

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The Mayor / Cllr Croad:

That the Minutes of the Extraordinary Council Meeting held on 2 July 2026 (Minute Nos. Cncl-0726 01 to Cncl-0726-04) be taken as read and confirmed.

Carried

Cncl-0826-37 Confirmation of Minutes

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The Mayor / Cllr Croad:

That the Minutes of the Extraordinary Council meeting on 30 July 2026 (Minute Nos Cncl-0726-31 to Cncl-0726-33) be taken as read and confirmed.

Carried

Committee Reports

Cncl-0826-38 Confirmation of Minutes

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The attendance of Councillor Cyril Dawson be added as “also attended”.

Cllr Adams / Cllr B Dawson:

That the minutes of the Marlborough Regional Transport Committee Meeting held on 2 July 2026 (Minute Nos. 1 – 4) be received and noted, with the record amended to reflect Cllr C Dawson also attended.

Carried

Cncl-0826-39 Confirmation of Minutes

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Cllr Adams noted his attendance during item E&P-0726-10 be reflected in the minutes.

Cllr Faulls / Cllr Innes:

That the Minutes of the Environment & Planning Committee Meeting held on 9 July 2026 (Minute Nos. E&P-0726-05 to E&P-0726-17) be received and the recommendations adopted with the record amended to show:

- Cllr Adams joined the meeting during the following item: E&P-0726-10 Housing and Business Development Capacity Assessment 2025.

Carried

Cncl-0826-40 Confirmation of Minutes

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Cllr Hope / Cllr B Dawson:

That the Minutes of the Strategy & Community Partnerships, combined with Infrastructure & Community Facilities Committee Meeting held on 16 July 2026 (Minute Nos. SCP-0726-18 to SCP-0726-30) be received and the recommendations adopted.

Carried

ATTENDANCE: Electoral Officer, Dean Heiford spoke to the following item.

Cncl-0826-41 2028 Representation Review Process D050-004-028-13

Council considered a report commencing the statutory 2028 Representation Review process and establishing a Representation Review Working Group to support development of representation options. Members were advised that, notwithstanding Council's progression of a joint Head Start outline proposal with Kaikōura District Council, Marlborough District Council remained required to comply with the Local Electoral Act 2001 representation review requirements unless alternative legislative arrangements were enacted.

Dean Heiford outlined the statutory timeframes and proposed review programme, noting that the Working Group would assist with communities of interest analysis, option development and engagement planning prior to matters being referred to Council. He also advised that officers intended to develop alternative project timelines recognising the potential implications of the Head Start process and any future legislative direction from Government.

During discussion, members noted the requirement to commence the Representation Review under current legislation and discussed how the review process would interact with the proposed Head Start pathway. Assurance was sought that communities of interest would be comprehensively identified and assessed before representation options were developed, and officers confirmed this work would form a key part of the review programme and be reported back to Council through future workshops and reports.

Members discussed the potential implications of local government reform and the joint Head Start proposal on future representation arrangements. Officers advised that, while Council was required to continue the Representation Review process, a measured approach would be taken pending Government decisions on the Head Start proposal and any associated legislative changes, reducing the risk of unnecessary duplication of work.

The Mayor advised that, to ensure balanced ward representation within the Working Group, the recommendation would be amended to remove Councillor Scott Adams from the proposed membership. It was noted that Councillor Adams supported the amendment.

Clr Adams / The Mayor:
That Council:

- 1. Commence the 2028 Representation Review process in accordance with Part 1A of the Local Electoral Act 2001.**
- 2. Establish a Representation Review Working Group comprising:**
 - (a) The Mayor (Chair); and**
 - (b) Deputy Mayor David Croad, Councillors Brian Dawson, Barbara Faulls, and Gerald Hope.**
- 3. Approve the Working Group Terms of Reference attached as Attachment 1.**
- 4. Note that, notwithstanding ongoing work relating to a potential Marlborough-Kaikōura Head Start proposal, Council remains subject to the Representation Review requirements of the Local Electoral Act 2001 unless alternative legislative arrangements are enacted.**

Carried

ATTENDANCE: Electoral Officer, Dean Heiford spoke to the following item.

Cncl-0826-42 2028 Electoral Administration Arrangements D050-004-028-10

Council considered a report seeking the statutory resolutions required to support preparation for the 2028 Triennial Elections, including confirmation of the electoral system, electoral officer arrangements, candidate name ordering and election administration requirements.

Dean Heiford outlined the legislative requirements and advised that Marlborough District Council would continue to operate under the Single Transferable Vote (STV) electoral system unless changed through a poll process under the Local Electoral Act 2001. He noted that electors retained the statutory right to demand a poll on the electoral system and that Council was required to publicly notify those rights.

Mr Heiford outlined the available Electoral Officer appointment options and advised he was willing to continue in the role if that remained Council's preference. Members acknowledged the experience and continuity provided through the current arrangements and noted the value of retaining local knowledge and established electoral administration processes.

During discussion, members considered the merits of STV and noted it had been successfully used by Council since 2004. Members observed that STV provided electors with the opportunity to rank candidates and assisted in achieving representative election outcomes. It was also noted that, should there be sufficient community support for a change to the electoral system, electors retained the ability to initiate a poll through the statutory process.

Members also discussed the role of the Electoral Officer and the benefits of retaining local organisational knowledge and experience. Assurance was provided that existing contractual arrangements and administrative processes remained in place to support delivery of the 2028 elections and that the recommended approach represented continuity with previous election programmes.

**Clr Croad / Clr Hope:
That Council:**

- 1. Note that the Single Transferable Vote (STV) electoral system currently applies to Marlborough District Council for the 2028 Triennial Elections unless changed through a poll conducted under the Local Electoral Act 2001.**
- 2. Note that electors have a statutory right to demand a poll on the electoral system and that public notice of that right must be published by 19 September 2026 in accordance with the Local Electoral Act 2001.**
- 3. Resolve that the order of candidate names on voting documents for the 2028 Triennial Elections be fully random.**
- 4. Confirm the appointment of Dean Heiford as Electoral Officer for Marlborough District Council.**
- 5. Authorise the Electoral Officer to negotiate and finalise contractual arrangements associated with the conduct of the 2028 Triennial Elections, provided that**
 - (a) any resulting expenditure remains within approved budget provisions; and**
 - (b) all procurement processes are undertaken in accordance with Council's Procurement Policy and Delegations Manual.**

Carried

Cncl-0826-43 Notice of Motion – Council Reporting Framework D050-003-04

Councillor Malcolm Taylor advised that he did not wish to move the Notice of Motion standing in his name.

The Mayor ruled that, as the Notice of Motion had not been moved or seconded, there was no motion before the meeting and the Notice of Motion therefore lapsed.

Following a request for clarification regarding the application of Standing Orders, the meeting adjourned briefly (09:36 am – 09:40 am) while the Mayor sought procedural advice from the General Counsel.

Upon resumption of the meeting, the Mayor confirmed the original ruling that, as no motion was before the meeting, the matter had lapsed and no further discussion could occur.

No resolution was required.

ATTENDANCE: Strategic Delivery Manager, Phillip Eyles spoke to the following item with General Counsel, Setareh Masoud-Ansari responding to specific questions. A presentation, saved as CM Record No 26166638 was shared.

Cncl-0826-44 Item Previously Tabled – Provision of Draft Statement of Expectations to the Board of Marlborough Waters Limited for Comment S200-001-003-02

Council resumed consideration of the item tabled at the Extraordinary Council meeting on 30 July 2026 following circulation of the correct version of the draft Statement of Expectations.

Phillip Eyles advised that the Statement of Expectations was a key foundational governance document providing strategic direction to Marlborough Waters Limited during its establishment and transition phases. He noted that the purpose of the decision before Council was to provide the draft Statement of Expectations to the Board for comment as required by the Local Government (Water Services) Act 2025, before the document returned to Council for final consideration and adoption.

During discussion, members considered governance accountability, affordability expectations, pricing principles, stakeholder engagement, and the relationship between Council and Marlborough Waters Limited as sole shareholder. Assurance was provided that Council would retain the ability to consider Board feedback, amend the document if required, and approve the final Statement of Expectations before it was issued.

Members sought clarification regarding protections against future privatisation of water assets and share ownership arrangements. Phillip Eyles and Setareh Masoud-Ansari advised that protections were provided through both the Statement of Expectations and the company constitution. Members requested that further consideration be given to strengthening references to privatisation prior to final adoption of the Statement of Expectations.

Discussion also occurred regarding future reporting expectations, affordability considerations, governance oversight arrangements, and the balance between establishing an independent Board and maintaining appropriate shareholder accountability. Members noted that the Board would provide regular reporting to Council and that the Statement of Expectations would be reviewed within 18 months of adoption.

The Mayor noted that the draft Statement of Expectations would now be provided to the Board for consideration and comment, after which the document would return to Council for final approval.

Cllr Croad / Cllr Sowman:
That Council:

- 1. Receive the report “Provision of Draft Statement of Expectations to the Board of Marlborough Waters Limited for Comment”;**
- 2. Resume consideration of the report that was tabled on 30 July, 2026;**

3. **Approve the provision of the draft Statement of Expectations to the Board of Marlborough Waters Limited for its comments, as required by the Local Government (Water Services) Act 2025; and**
4. **Note that Council will have the opportunity to discuss the Board comments and any recommended changes before approving the final Statement of Expectations.**

Carried

The meeting adjourned at 10.20 am, returning at 10.30 am.

ATTENDANCE: Apology for early departure of the meeting from Cllr Faulls was received.

ATTENDANCE: Chief Executive, John Boswell and Strategic Delivery Manager, Phillip Eyles spoke to the following item. Chief Financial Officer, Geoff Blake, responded to specific questions. In guest attendance online, Will Doughty, Chief Executive of Kaikōura District Council also responded to specific questions. A presentation, saved as CM Record No 26166671 was shared.

Cncl-0826-45 Head Start Pathway Initial Proposal S200-007-01

Council considered the jointly developed Head Start Outline Proposal prepared by Marlborough District Council and Kaikōura District Council under the Government's Simplifying Local Government programme.

Phillip Eyles advised that Kaikōura District Council had approved the proposal the previous day and outlined the purpose and scope of the submission. Mr Eyles advised that the proposal represented an initial outline only. If Ministers agreed in principle to the proposal progressing under the Head Start pathway, a detailed design, due diligence and consultation phase would follow before any further decisions were required.

Members were advised that the proposal identified regional boundaries, representation arrangements, regional council functions, transition funding, implementation support, financial impacts and governance arrangements as key matters requiring detailed assessment. Mr Eyles advised that these issues would be investigated during the detailed proposal phase and that any finding of unacceptable affordability impacts, implementation costs or governance risks would materially influence whether officers could ultimately recommend progression of a final proposal.

Officers emphasised that the decision before Council was whether to submit an outline proposal to Government and not whether to proceed with a future amalgamation or governance change. Members noted that progression beyond the outline proposal stage remained subject to Ministerial agreement, further due diligence, public consultation and subsequent Council decisions.

Members discussed future governance arrangements and representation of Kaikōura communities within a combined authority. Discussion focused on balancing effective local representation with the need to retain flexibility for future governance structures. Members noted community expectations expressed by Kaikōura District Council regarding local representation and leadership arrangements. Officers clarified that the representation model included in the outline proposal was indicative only and intended to provide certainty for the initial transition period rather than predetermine future representation outcomes.

Financial risks and affordability formed a significant part of the discussion. Members sought clarification regarding comparative financial information, debt levels, borrowing arrangements, recovery costs associated with recent weather events, and the potential financial consequences of assuming regional council functions. Geoff Blake advised that the current proposal contained high-level financial information only and that detailed financial analysis, debt modelling, affordability assessment, and funding implications would be undertaken as part of the detailed design phase. Will Doughty, Chief Executive of Kaikōura District Council, provided clarification regarding recent borrowing approvals associated with weather-event recovery works and advised that Kaikōura District Council remained unrated by external credit rating agencies.

A number of members raised concerns regarding the cost, risk, and long-term implications of potentially assuming regional council functions currently undertaken by Environment Canterbury. Officers advised that no decisions had been made regarding future regional functions and confirmed that detailed due diligence, financial modelling, and discussions with Environment Canterbury and other affected organisations would be

undertaken before any recommendation was made. Members noted that understanding the cost of those functions, associated liabilities, and the impacts on ratepayers would be a critical component of any future decision.

Questions were also raised regarding staffing arrangements, service delivery locations, bylaw integration, governance accountability, debt ring-fencing, and the protection of local communities from adverse financial impacts. Officers advised that these matters would form part of the detailed design process and that options would be developed with the objective of protecting the interests of both Marlborough and Kaikōura communities. Members noted that mechanisms such as transitional arrangements, debt ring-fencing, and separate rating considerations would be explored further as part of that work.

Members acknowledged concerns raised by Kaikōura regarding local identity and representation and discussed the importance of ensuring that any future arrangement was developed as a shared regional proposal rather than the absorption of one district into another. It was noted that both councils had identified similar concerns relating to community representation, affordability, governance, and long-term outcomes. Members also noted the positive working relationship that had developed between the two organisations during preparation of the outline proposal and acknowledged that issues arising during development had been resolved collaboratively.

Members expressed concern that significant transition and implementation costs associated with local government reform could fall disproportionately on ratepayers. Discussion occurred regarding the expectation that central government should contribute to reform costs should the proposal progress beyond the outline stage. The Mayor advised that opportunities for further advocacy, including jointly with Kaikōura District Council, would be explored.

Members sought assurance regarding opportunities for public participation before any final decision. Officers advised that, should Ministers agree in principle to progression, a detailed proposal would be prepared and publicly released for consultation, with opportunities for submissions, hearings and Council deliberations before any subsequent decision on implementation was required.

Members acknowledged the significant contribution of officers from both councils in preparing the proposal within compressed timeframes and recognised the potential long-term significance of the work for both districts.

**Clr Adams / Clr Croad:
That Council:**

1. **Approve submission of a joint Marlborough District Council and Kaikōura District Council Head Start outline proposal attached as Attachment 1 to the Ministry of Cities, Environment, Regions and Transport under the Government's Simplifying Local Government programme.**
2. **Note that the attached Head Start outline proposal is a draft. Further design work is currently underway to develop the document that will be submitted to the Government.**
3. **Note that Kaikōura District Council is scheduled to consider approval of the joint outline proposal on 5 August 2026.**
4. **Delegate authority to the Mayor, Deputy Mayor and Chief executive, in consultation with Kaikōura District Council, to make minor non-material factual or editorial amendments to the outline proposal prior to submission.**

Carried

**Cncl-0826-46 Decision to Conduct Business with the Public
Excluded**

The Mayor / Clr Croad:

That the public be excluded from the following parts of the proceedings of this meeting, namely:

- Confirmation of Public Excluded Minutes

- Confirmation of Reports (Public Excluded Sections)

The general subject of each matter to be considered while the public is excluded, the reason for passing this resolution in relation to each matter and the specific grounds under Section 48(1) of the Local Government Official Information and Meetings Act 1987 for the passing of this resolution are as follows:

General subject of each matter to be considered	Reason for passing this resolution in relation to each matter	Ground(s) under Section 48(1) for the passing of this resolution
Minutes and Committee Reports	As set out in the Minutes and Reports	That the public conduct of the relevant part of the proceedings of the meeting would be likely to result in the disclosure of information for which good reason for withholding exists under Section 7 of the Local Government Official Information and Meetings Act 1987.

Carried

The meeting closed at 11.58 am.

Confirmed this day of 2026

N P TAYLOR
MAYOR

Record No. 26166875