



**Minutes of a Meeting of the
STRATEGY & COMMUNITY PARTNERSHIPS (COMBINED INFRASTRUCTURE &
COMMUNITY FACILITIES) COMMITTEE
held in the Council Chambers and via Teams, 15 Seymour Street, Blenheim
on THURSDAY, 16 JULY 2026 commencing at 9.00 am**

Present

Cllrs G A Hope (in the Chair), R J Innes (Deputy), J D N Croad, D A Dalliessi, B G Dawson, C M W Dawson, B A Faulls, J C Hyndman, T P Sowman, B D Stace and M J Taylor

Present via Teams

Cllrs S R W Adams (from 9.47 am), S J Arbuckle, A R Burgess and Mayor N P Taylor

In Attendance

Mr N P Henry (Group Manager Strategic Management), Mr J Lyall (Group Manager Roading, Property & Community Facilities) and Ms N Chauval (Committee Secretary)

Apologies

Cllrs Hope/Dalliessi

That the apology for lateness from Cllr Adams and the apology for absence from Ms D McConnell and Ms Niven (Iwi Representatives) be received and sustained.

Carried

S&CP-0726-18 Declaration of Interests

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No interests with items on the agenda were declared.

ATTENDANCE: Ms Jodie Griffiths, Council's Community Partnerships Advisor, presented for the following item.

S&CP-0726-19 Update on MDC Youth Council c150-002-018-01

The Community Partnerships Advisor, Jodie Griffiths, presented an update on the Marlborough District Council Youth Council, outlining progress against the 2025–26 Youth Council Action Plan and introducing the newly appointed Youth Council members for the 2026–27 term. It was noted that the Youth Council term has been aligned with Council's financial year on a trial basis, commencing 1 July 2026 and concluding 30 June 2027. A total of 33 applications were received, resulting in the appointment of 21 Youth Councillors, including four returning members who will assist in supporting and mentoring new members.

To highlight the report a powerpoint presentation was shown (presentation filed in CM Record No. 26147203).

Members were advised that the Youth Council continues to provide an important mechanism for engaging young people in local governance and community leadership. The Youth Council had undertaken a wide range of activities over the previous 18 months, including representation at community events, participation in volunteer initiatives, support of the Pride Festival, Children's Day, Pink Shirt Day, the Future of Work event, and regional youth leadership activities. Attendance at the Involve Youth Conference in Christchurch and participation in the annual Top of the South Youth Council Hui were also highlighted as valuable leadership development opportunities. The Action Plan 2025/26 was attached to the agenda item for members' information.

Jodie Griffiths reported on a youth wellbeing and study-preparation expo organised in partnership with local health providers. Valuable lessons had been learned regarding engagement methods, with future delivery likely to occur within schools to improve participation by young people.

Particular emphasis was placed on strengthening the Youth Council's connection with the wider youth community. New relationships had been established with student councils from Marlborough's secondary schools and with the Bohally Intermediate School Council. Regular meetings between these groups are planned to encourage collaboration, develop leadership pathways, and ensure the views of a broader range of young people are considered in Youth Council discussions and activities.

Several Youth Councillors and departing members addressed the Committee, speaking about their reasons for joining Youth Council. Members acknowledged the value of hearing directly from the Youth Councillors and recognised the contribution they make to local governance and community wellbeing.

In discussion, members raised the desirability of increasing representation from rural communities, particularly Rai Valley, and noted efforts already undertaken to encourage applications from these areas. Members also supported extending engagement opportunities to intermediate-aged students from rural schools to strengthen pathways into Youth Council participation.

Members were advised that members of the Youth Council will be attending the annual Top of the South Youth Council Hui being held in Nelson tomorrow. The event will bring together approximately 60 young people from the Tasman District Council Youth Council, Nelson City Council, Marlborough Youth Council, and the Nelson Multicultural Youth Council. The day will include a youth leadership panel, workshops, and networking opportunities, with a focus on connecting young people and sharing ideas.

Cllrs Fauls/Innes:
That the information be received.

Carried

ATTENDANCE: Ms Samantha Young, Council's Events & Community Partnerships Manager, presented the following item.

S&CP-0726-20 Community Events Fund 2025/2026

E100-002-012

The Events and Community Partnerships Manager, Sam Young, presented the annual report on the Community Events Fund for the 2025/2026 financial year. Members were advised that the fund, established to support free or low-cost, family-friendly and accessible community events that provide direct community benefit, operates with an annual budget of \$28,000 and remains open throughout the year to allow applications to be considered as opportunities arise. Funding decisions are made under the delegated authority of the Community Events Portfolio Holder, with administrative support and recommendations provided by Council staff.

It was reported that 15 applications had been received during the 2025/2026 financial year, seeking a total of \$31,406.90. At the time the agenda was prepared, 11 applications had been approved, two had been declined, and two remained under consideration, with approved funding totalling \$21,797.40. Members were further advised that one of the applications previously under consideration, Festival of Wheels 2026, had subsequently been approved for funding of \$3,000, bringing the total approved allocation for the year to just under \$25,000. The 2026/2027 funding round opened on 1 July 2026.

During discussion, clarification was sought regarding the funding approved for the Matariki Night Market 2026 event. Ms Young advised that the application had been considered through the Community Events Fund as the applicant had missed the deadline for the separate Matariki Fund. Funding was approved specifically to support transportation initiatives intended to improve accessibility and enable greater community participation in the event.

Cllrs B Dawson/Taylor:
That the information be received.

Carried

The Minutes of the Long Term Plan Working Group meeting held on 4 June 2026 were presented for ratification by the Committee.

The Committee considered the minutes of the Long Term Plan Working Group meeting held on 4 June 2026. Members were advised that, following consideration by the Working Group on 14 July 2026, an amendment had been approved to correct the record of a motion relating to the Long Term Plan Working Group Meeting Schedule and Agenda Topics. The amendment removed Councillor Faulls as seconder of the motion due to a declared conflict of interest and recorded Councillor Innes as the seconder. It was noted that the amendment was administrative in nature and did not alter the resolution or outcome of the matter considered.

The Chair explained the amendment and confirmed that the Working Group had resolved that the amended minutes be confirmed as a true and correct record. Members were advised that the amendment was made to ensure the accuracy and integrity of Council records in accordance with statutory meeting requirements.

Discussion also occurred regarding the ongoing work programme of the Long Term Plan Working Group. Members were reminded that the timetable and agenda topics remain subject to refinement as planning progresses and that updated schedules would continue to be circulated. The significant programme of work required to support preparation of the next Long Term Plan was acknowledged, together with the importance of councillor engagement in the process. Members were encouraged to attend Working Group meetings to ensure a shared understanding of issues, strategic direction, and future planning considerations before matters are brought forward for formal decision-making.

Cllrs Croad/Innes:

- 1. That the Minutes of the Long Term Plan Working Group meeting held on 4 June 2026 are confirmed as amended.**
- 2. That the amended Minutes of the Long Term Plan Working Group meeting held on 4 June 2026 be ratified.**

Carried

Then the Chair put a further recommendation, noting that the additional recommendation was moved to ensure a clear and formal ratification of the minutes as the final record of the meeting.

Cllrs B Dawson/Stace:

That the minutes of the Long Term Plan Working Group meeting held on 4 June 2026 be ratified.

Carried

ATTENDANCE: Cllr Hope withdrew as Chair (at 9.29 am) at the conclusion of the above item and Cllr B Dawson assumed the chair.

The Group Manager – Property, Roading, and Community Facilities presented a report outlining the short-term and long-term intentions for the future use of Waitohi Domain in Picton. Members were advised that the report was provided for information and described the historical transition of the site from a recreation reserve supporting community sporting activities to its current status as a Local Purpose (Utility) Reserve. The report also outlined how the site has progressively adapted to support infrastructure, utility and transport-related activities.

It was noted that Council had entered into a three-year lease with Port Marlborough New Zealand to provide staging, storage and assembly areas for the Waitohi Ferry Redevelopment Project. Members were informed that the current use of the site is consistent with its reserve classification and that a ring road is being installed around the perimeter to improve access for the ferry redevelopment works and to facilitate the site's future use as a truck parking facility.

Members were advised that truck parking in residential areas of Picton has generated ongoing complaints relating to noise, residential amenity and road safety. Council's longer-term intention is to convert the operational area used for the ferry redevelopment project into a purpose-built truck parking facility following completion of the project. The proposed concept plan would increase truck parking capacity from the current 25 spaces to approximately 70 spaces and is intended to assist in reducing truck parking within residential areas. A resource consent application is being prepared to enable this future development.

During discussion, members noted the ongoing truck parking activity around Nelson Square. Officers advised that Council did not currently have an alternative landholding option available while the ferry redevelopment project is underway.

Members acknowledged the importance of progressing the planned review of the Parking Bylaw in 2027, with specific provisions relating to truck parking in Picton. It was noted that consistent enforcement and appropriate management arrangements would be important in addressing community concerns and improving residential amenity. The cost-neutral aspects of the proposal were also noted, with lease revenue from Port Marlborough contributing to development costs and future truck park revenue intended to support ongoing maintenance and improvements.

The Mayor acknowledged the community concerns regarding truck parking at Nelson Square and advised that discussions would continue with the Chief Executive to explore potential interim solutions while the longer-term truck parking facility is developed. Members recognised the strategic importance of the ferry redevelopment project and the limited availability of suitable land in Picton to support both the redevelopment works and future truck parking needs.

Cllrs Croad/Sowman:
That the information be received.

Carried

ATTENDANCE: Cllr Adams joined the meeting, via Teams, at 9.47 am during the following item.

ATTENDANCE: Ms Jane Tito, Council's Manager, Parks and Open Spaces, was present for the following item.

S&CP-0726-23

Approval for Use of Picton Foreshore Reserve

R510-009-P02-04

The Manager, Parks and Open Spaces, Jane Tito, presented a report seeking Council approval for the temporary occupation and use of part of the Picton Foreshore Reserve to support construction activities associated with the Waitohi Ferry Redevelopment Project. Members were advised that the Reserve is classified as a recreation reserve under the Reserves Act 1977 and is subject to the provisions of the Picton Foreshore Reserve Management Plan 2014. As the proposed construction laydown activity was not a permitted activity under the management plan, Council approval is required.

To highlight the report a powerpoint presentation was shown (presentation filed in CM Record No. 26147333).

Members were advised that the request related to the temporary use of eleven existing public car parking spaces and adjacent berm land immediately in front of the former aquarium site for a period of approximately three months. Ms Tito advised that the project team had originally sought use of a significantly larger area of the foreshore reserve, however following site meetings and discussions between Council staff and the Project team, the requested occupation area had been reduced to the minimum area considered necessary to safely accommodate crane operations, unloading activities and construction of the site office. Public access through the reserve, including access to recreational facilities and the Edwin Fox area, would remain available throughout the construction period, with two-way traffic access maintained.

It was noted that alternative options had been considered by the project team, including use of rental vehicle parking areas and other nearby car parks. It was reported that these alternatives were not considered suitable because the construction methodology required a safety exclusion zone immediately adjacent to the building footprint, and no other practicable option was identified that would adequately address public safety requirements while minimising disruption to reserve users and neighbouring activities.

During discussion, members sought clarification regarding the timing of the occupation, anticipated construction traffic movements, impacts on tourism activity, and effects on concessionaires and the Edwin Fox Museum. It was reported that construction activity was expected to commence immediately and conclude prior to the start of the peak visitor season, with reinstatement anticipated before November 2026. Members emphasised the importance of maintaining effective communication with concessionaires, tourism operators, stakeholders, iwi, and the wider community throughout the occupation period. It was also noted that appropriate signage and communication measures should be implemented to ensure visitors remained aware that access to the Edwin Fox and other attractions would continue during construction.

Concern was expressed regarding the temporary loss of public parking and the potential impact on visitor activity and Council interests. Discussion occurred regarding whether an appropriate commercial arrangement should be established to reflect the temporary occupation of public reserve land and car parking spaces. Members considered that any approval should be accompanied by appropriate conditions to protect the interests of the community and ratepayers.

Members recognised the strategic importance of the Waitohi Ferry Redevelopment Project and acknowledged that some temporary disruption would be unavoidable as construction progressed. Members considered that, subject to appropriate conditions, the proposal represented the safest and most practical construction method currently available and that the adverse effects on reserve users would be temporary and limited.

Clr Innes advised that on the 24 October a large cruise ship is scheduled to come into port and tourism operators would usually use the area indicated as a pick up point. Clr Innes proposed an amendment from 1 November 2026 to 24 October 2026, to ensure both the commencement and completion timeframes were clearly defined.

The Mayor queried whether compensation had been considered for the temporary use of Council car parks, noting that Council would often seek a lease payment or similar remuneration when public parking spaces are unavailable for public use. The Mayor also asked whether discussions had been held with Port Marlborough regarding payment for the use of the car parks during the three-month occupation period. Ms Tito advised that discussions had not yet taken place.

Following discussion, members agreed to include an additional recommendation requiring a satisfactory commercial arrangement to be entered into with Port Marlborough.

Cirs Innes/Dalliessi:

That the Committee recommends that Council approves the temporary occupation and use of a defined area of the Picton Foreshore Reserve, including up to eleven existing car parks and adjacent berm land, as a construction laydown and safety exclusion area for the Waitohi Ferry Redevelopment Project for a period of up to three months, subject to:

- (a) the occupation area be limited to the minimum extent necessary for safe construction activities, with an expected end date of 23 October 2026;**
- (b) public access to the remainder of the Reserve being maintained at all times, except where temporary restrictions are required for public safety;**
- (c) all areas affected by the occupation being reinstated to the satisfaction of Council on completion of the works;**
- (d) the applicant meeting all associated costs arising from the occupation; and**
- (e) Council staff being authorised to approve operational arrangements necessary to give effect to this approval.**
- (f) a satisfactory commercial arrangement for parking being entered into with Port Marlborough.**

Carried

ATTENDANCE: Mr Glenn Webster, Council's Libraries Manager and Elizabeth Nott, Council's Library Services Team Leader, presented for the following two items.

S&CP-0726-24

Fines Free Aotearoa

L300-018-001-02

The Libraries Manager, Glenn Webster, presented a report proposing the removal of overdue charges on adult literacy resources at Marlborough District Libraries. Members were advised that Marlborough District Libraries had previously removed overdue charges for children's and teen collections in 2012 in recognition that fines created barriers to library use and that the proposal would extend this approach to adult collections. It was noted that the Fine Free Aotearoa initiative launched by Public Libraries New Zealand had resulted in 61 of New Zealand's 66 public library services removing overdue fines for all members by the end of 2025.

Members were advised that evidence from New Zealand and overseas libraries indicated that overdue fines did not significantly improve compliance with borrowing periods and could discourage library use. Fines disproportionately affected people with limited financial means and could result in users avoiding the library because of concern, embarrassment, or inability to pay. It was further noted that the removal of fines in other jurisdictions had generally resulted in increased library membership, increased borrowing, greater participation in library programmes and services, and the return of previously inactive members.

It was reported that the annual revenue budget associated with overdue fines was approximately \$12,000, while the administrative cost of managing the fines process was estimated at approximately \$8,000 per annum. It was noted that revenue generated through library room bookings provided an alternative income source capable of offsetting the loss of fine revenue.

In discussion, clarification was sought regarding the process for overdue and unreturned items should fines be removed. Mr Webster confirmed that reminder notices would continue to be issued prior to due dates and that users with items remaining overdue would have borrowing privileges suspended. Where items were not returned, replacement costs would continue to be charged and recovery processes would remain available, including referral for debt recovery where appropriate.

Members generally expressed support for the proposal, noting the importance of removing barriers to access, promoting literacy, encouraging community participation, and ensuring library services remained accessible to all members of the community. The social benefits of increased library use and alignment with national public library practice were acknowledged. A request was made for additional information regarding the number and cost of lost library books to be provided separately.

Cllrs Dalliessi/Innes:

That the Committee recommends that Council approve the removal of overdue charges (fines) on adult literacy resources.

Carried

ATTENDANCE: Cllr Burgess, via Teams, withdrew from the meeting at 10.00 am at the conclusion of the above item.

S&CP-0726-25

Libraries: Community Engagement Statistics

L300-018-001-02

The Libraries Manager, Glenn Webster, presented a report providing an update on community engagement and usage statistics for Marlborough District Libraries, including both Te Kahu o Waipuna in Blenheim and Waitohi Whare Mātauranga in Picton. Members were advised that public libraries remained among Council's most highly valued services and continued to function as important community hubs supporting learning, digital access, social connection and community participation.

Members were advised that Te Kahu o Waipuna had now been operating for three years and had experienced strong levels of community engagement since opening. The facility had reached a significant milestone in June 2026 by welcoming its one-millionth visitor. Average monthly visitation was reported at approximately 26,785 visitors, representing a substantial increase compared with the former Arthur Street library facility. Members noted that while visitor numbers had moderated from the initial opening period, visitation levels

remained strong and were settling into a sustainable pattern. Picton Library and Service Centre continued to record consistent and steady visitor numbers, averaging approximately 7,500 visitors per month.

It was noted that active library membership across both facilities totalled 17,833 users, representing approximately 34 percent of the district population. It was reported that physical borrowing trends had shown a modest decline over time, while demand for digital resources, including e-books and e-audio materials, continued to grow steadily, reflecting changing patterns in how library users access information and services.

The report highlighted the extensive use of community meeting spaces at both facilities. Members were advised that library spaces supported a wide range of community organisations, educational programmes, cultural activities, performances, support groups, community events, hosted services and public programmes.

Wi-Fi usage continued to increase at both locations, providing an important and accessible digital service for residents and visitors. Particular attention was drawn to the significant level of digital access services being utilised in Picton, including visitors, transient users and residents who relied on library facilities for internet access, printing and other online services.

Members acknowledged the role of both libraries as trusted and welcoming community hubs providing safe, accessible and inclusive spaces for people of all ages and backgrounds. Particular recognition was given to library staff for the quality of customer service provided, their support for community wellbeing and social connection, and their contribution to ensuring that library facilities remain accessible and responsive to community needs. Members commented positively on the breadth of services available, the support provided during cruise ship visits and ferry disruptions, and the important role libraries play in supporting vulnerable members of the community.

Discussion also occurred regarding the use of the atrium stairs area at Te Kahu o Waipuna for performances and community events. Officers advised that the space was primarily used during library operating hours for public events and performances, with health and safety requirements carefully managed to ensure appropriate access and egress. Members were also advised that arrangements would be considered to improve visibility and accessibility for future councillor community engagement activities within the facility.

Cllrs Dalliessi/Innes:
That the information be received.

Carried

ATTENDANCE: Cllr Adams withdrew from the meeting at 10.15 am at the conclusion of the above item.

ATTENDANCE: The meeting adjourned at 10.13 am and resumed at 10.27 am.

ATTENDANCE: Mr Steve Murrin, Marlborough Roads Transport Recovery Manager, presented the following three items.

S&CP-0726-26 Public Transport – Annual Fare Increase
R800-003-003-01

The Transport Recovery Manager, Marlborough Roads, Steve Murrin, presented the report seeking approval for the annual public transport fare increase required under NZ Transport Agency funding requirements. Members were advised that the proposed fare adjustment was intended to address increasing operational costs, including inflation, labour, fuel and maintenance expenses, while supporting progress towards NZTA's approved private share funding target of 6.5% for the 2026/27 financial year. The current private share contribution from fare revenue and advertising was reported to be tracking at approximately 5%.

Members were advised that the proposed fare increase represented a modest adjustment designed to improve farebox recovery while maintaining affordability and access to public transport services. The proposed fares would increase adult fares on the Blenheim North and Blenheim South routes from \$2.40 to \$2.50 and child fares from \$1.20 to \$1.30. On the Picton route, adult fares would increase from \$4.80 to \$5.10 and child fares from \$2.40 to \$2.50. The revised fares would apply from 1 July 2026 to 30 June 2027.

Members noted that the public transport service continued to operate with significant subsidy support. Financial information provided showed total contracted service costs of \$267,001 against total revenue of \$63,598, resulting in a net service cost of \$203,403 shared between Marlborough District Council and NZTA. It was noted that the proposed fare increase was expected to generate only a modest increase in revenue but would demonstrate progress towards meeting co-funding requirements and maintaining alignment with NZTA's public transport funding framework.

During discussion, members supported the principle of implementing small and regular fare adjustments rather than larger increases at less frequent intervals. It was acknowledged that public awareness of rising transport-related costs would assist in understanding the need for the adjustment. Members also noted that even with the proposed increase, user fares would continue to meet only a relatively small proportion of the overall cost of providing the service, with the balance continuing to be subsidised through public funding.

Cllrs Croad/Taylor:

That the Committee recommends to Council that:

1. **The public transport fares for Marlborough passenger transport services be increased from 1 July 2026 as follows:**
 - (a) **Blenheim North Adult fare from \$2.40 to \$2.50 and Child fare from \$1.20 to \$1.30;**
 - (b) **Blenheim South Adult fare from \$2.40 to \$2.50 and Child fare from \$1.20 to \$1.30;**
 - (c) **Picton Adult fare from \$4.80 to \$5.10 and Child fare from \$2.40 to \$2.50.**
2. **The revised fares apply for the period 1 July 2026 to 30 June 2027.**
3. **Council note that the fare adjustment supports achievement of NZ Transport Agency funding requirements and improved farebox recovery.**

Carried

S&CP-0726-27 Variable Speed Limits Around Schools R800-009-04

Mr Murrin noted the purpose of the report was to seek approval to implement variable speed limits around all schools located on local roads within the Marlborough region. Members were advised that the Land Transport Rule: Setting of Speed Limits 2024 requires road controlling authorities to make reasonable efforts to establish variable speed limits around schools and that the recommendations reflected the work undertaken by the Marlborough Speed Committee in conjunction with Marlborough Roads and NZ Transport Agency staff.

It was reported that the proposed approach would introduce variable 30 km/h speed limits outside all schools on local roads throughout Marlborough. The recommended operating periods were designed to provide consistency across schools while accommodating variations in school opening and closing times. Members were advised that schools in Blenheim and Picton would generally operate under reduced speed limits between 8.15 am and 9.15 am and between 2.45 pm and 3.45 pm, with alternative operating periods proposed for schools in other parts of the district and for a small number of schools with earlier operating hours.

Discussion highlighted the importance of applying a consistent and equitable approach across the region, including rural schools. Members noted that consideration had been given to schools located on roads carrying higher traffic volumes and higher-speed traffic, including Linkwater School and schools situated on key transport routes. It was considered that introducing variable speed restrictions at these locations would improve safety for school communities while maintaining consistency with the legislative framework.

Support was expressed for the recommendation that existing advisory speed signs be retained and modified where practicable, reducing implementation costs and enabling a practical solution that met legislative requirements. Members also acknowledged the work of the Speed Committee and Marlborough Roads staff in developing an approach that balanced road safety objectives, transport efficiency considerations and

affordability. It was noted that the revised legislative framework provided a more practical and cost-effective outcome than earlier proposals considered under previous speed management requirements.

Particular support was expressed for the safety benefits likely to be achieved at rural schools located on roads carrying freight, ferry-related traffic and visitor traffic, where vehicle speeds can be significantly higher. Members considered that the introduction of clearly defined variable speed limits would improve driver awareness and reduce safety risks for children travelling to and from school.

Cllrs Innes/Fauls:

That the Committee recommends to Council that:

- 1. Variable speed limits of 30 km/h be implemented outside all schools on local roads in Marlborough in accordance with the Land Transport Rule: Setting of Speed Limits 2024.**
- 2. The variable speed limits of 30 km/h operate:**
 - (a) from 8.15 am to 9.15 am and 2.45 pm to 3.45 pm for schools in Blenheim and Picton;**
 - (b) from 8.15 am to 9.15 am and 2.30 pm to 3.30 pm for schools in the remaining areas of Marlborough; and**
 - (c) from 7.45 am to 8.45 am and 2.15 pm to 3.15 pm for the three schools identified by Marlborough Roads as having earlier operating hours.**
- 3. Where practicable, existing school speed advisory signs be retained and overlaid to display the new variable speed limits.**
- 4. Schools located on roads with existing permanent speed limits greater than 50 km/h, and schools where the existing school speed treatment extends beyond 150 metres from the school gate, be classified as Category 2 schools for the purposes of implementing variable speed limits.**
- 5. Marlborough Roads be authorised to undertake all actions necessary to implement the approved variable speed limits and update the National Speed Limit Register.**

Carried

Note: The following agenda items 12 (S&CP-0726-28) and 13 (S&CP-0726-29) were considered together for discussion purposes. Members first received presentations on both reports (presentations filed in CM Record No. 26147201 and 26147197) then Mr Blake provided an overview of the combined rating impacts. The Committee then returned to consider the recommendations for Item 12 (S&CP-0726-28) and 13 (S&CP-0726-29) separately.

ATTENDANCE: Mr Geoff Blake, Chief Financial Officer, presented the following item.

S&CP-0726-28 Recovery Funding Surplus R800-006-18

The Recovery Manager, Marlborough Roads, Steve Murrin and Geoff Blake presented an update on the Storm Recovery Programme and sought direction on declaring a portion of Phase 3 recovery funding surplus to NZ Transport Agency Waka Kotahi. Members were advised that the programme continued to progress across the Marlborough Sounds and wider network, with staged completion dates extending through to December 2027. It was noted that separate recovery funding allocations apply to individual storm events and that funding allocated to the Phase 3 recovery programme could not be redirected to more recent weather events or future damage.

Members were advised that the total approved emergency works funding across all relevant recovery events amounted to approximately \$297.36 million, with Council's share estimated at \$50.99 million. It was reported that the Phase 3 programme was forecasting a significant underspend as a result of establishing appropriate levels of service, clearly allocating risk, avoiding unnecessary over-engineering of repair solutions, and utilising competitive procurement processes for all recovery works. Large and complex sites had been tendered individually, while smaller projects had been bundled to achieve efficiencies and value for money.

Members were advised that the projected Phase 3 surplus totalled approximately \$62.998 million. Of this amount, it was proposed that Council retain \$18.305 million as contingency funding and \$4.412 million for escalation costs until project completion, leaving \$40.281 million available to be declared surplus and returned

to NZTA. Officers advised that this would reduce Council's funding share by approximately \$11.68 million under the applicable 71 percent Funding Assistance Rate arrangement and would provide an ongoing rates benefit estimated at approximately \$300,000 per annum from 2028.

Progress updates were provided on individual recovery areas, including Awatere, Northbank, French Pass/Tennyson Inlet, Port Underwood, Queen Charlotte Drive, Waihopai and Kenepuru. Members noted that while most projects remained on programme, some Queen Charlotte Drive sites had required revised engineering solutions involving piling works to provide longer-term stability, resulting in a revised completion date. Mr Murrin expressed confidence that the retained contingency and escalation provisions were sufficient to manage remaining risks through to programme completion.

Refer to the resolution for Item 12 (S&CP-0726-28) noted below in minute S&CP-0726-29.

ATTENDANCE: Cllr Innes declared a conflict of interest and withdrew for the following item and did not take part in discussion nor vote on the issue.

S&CP-0726-29 Marlborough Sounds Future Access Study – Roothing Resilience Programme L150-026-01-64

The Recovery Manager, Marlborough Roads, Steve Murrin, presented a report seeking support to accelerate delivery of the Marlborough Sounds Future Access Study Roothing Resilience Programme and to prepare a funding application to NZ Transport Agency Waka Kotahi. Members were advised that the resilience programme, estimated at approximately \$44.56 million, had been identified through the Marlborough Sounds Future Access Study and was intended to complement the substantial investment already being made through the Marlborough Sounds Roothing Recovery Project. The programme was designed to address underlying causes of network vulnerability, including inadequate drainage, culverts and scour protection, rather than simply repairing storm damage after events occur.

Members were advised that the Long Term Plan currently anticipates delivery of the resilience programme over a 16-year period commencing in 2027/28, and that accelerating delivery over the next two to three years would better protect the more than \$150 million being invested through recovery works, reduce exposure to future weather-related disruptions, and improve the prospects of securing NZTA co-investment through the 2027–30 National Land Transport Programme. It was reported that \$3.5 million of Crown resilience funding has already been secured and is being used to commence early resilience work and associated investigations.

Mr Murrin explained that recent severe weather events had highlighted the ongoing vulnerability of parts of the roading network and that future government recovery funding could not be assumed at the same level as had been provided following earlier storm events. Bringing resilience work forward was therefore considered a prudent approach to reducing future risks and protecting completed recovery investments. It was noted that key routes identified for priority resilience improvements included Queen Charlotte Drive, French Pass Road, Kenepuru Road and Port Underwood Road.

During discussion, members expressed support for the proposal and acknowledged the importance of undertaking resilience improvements while recovery works, project management resources and contractor capability remained in place. Officers advised that the existing programme management structure had developed strong expertise, established effective relationships with contractors and demonstrated success in achieving value-for-money outcomes through careful cost management, procurement and project delivery processes. Members noted that continued use of these resources was likely to enhance delivery efficiency and reduce long-term costs.

Members considered the financial implications of accelerating the programme. It was noted that while bringing forward the investment would temporarily increase the annual rates requirement compared with the profile signalled through the Long Term Plan, the effect was expected to be temporary and would be offset over time by the earlier repayment of debt and the financial savings arising from the surplus recovery funding returned to NZTA under the preceding item. Members were advised that the modelling represented a conservative or worst-case scenario and that further efficiencies and savings may be achieved as programme estimates are refined and work is delivered.

Members acknowledged that delaying resilience works could leave recently completed recovery projects exposed to avoidable future damage and potentially reduce opportunities to secure external funding while current investment momentum remains in place. The view was expressed that undertaking the work sooner represented a sound long-term investment in network resilience and access across the Marlborough Sounds.

Refer to the Resolution for Item 13.

Resolution Item 12 (S&CP-0726-28)

Cllrs Faulls/Innes:

That the Committee recommends Council agrees to declare \$40.281 million of Phase 3 funding surplus to NZTA, while retaining the identified project contingency and escalation allowances until the end of the project.

Carried

Resolution Item 13 (S&CP-0726-29)

Cllrs Faulls/Taylor:

That the Committee recommends Council:

- 1. Agrees in principle to bring forward funding for the full Roding Resilience Programme so that the programme can be positioned for delivery through the 2027–30 NLTP.**
- 2. Approves Marlborough Roads finalising programme estimates and preparing a funding application to NZTA later this year.**

Carried

ATTENDANCE: The Mayor withdrew from the meeting at 11.06 am during the following item.

S&CP-0726-30 Information Package

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ATTENDANCE: Cllr Faulls declared a conflict of interest for the Sport & Recreation Community Activity Fund Decision-Making Panel minutes for the application Havelock Vision 2020 "Ebb & Flow".

Cllrs B Dawson /Dalliessi:

That the Strategy & Community Partnerships Information Package dated 16 July 2026 be received and noted.

Carried

The meeting closed at 11.11 am.

Record No: 26150856

Annexure

In Attendance: Jamie Arbuckle (MP for New Zealand First) via Teams and Vanessa Manley Representative of the Office of Stuart Smith (MP for Kaikōura).

Public Forum

1. **Marianne Govaerts** (St. Vincent de Paul (St Vinnies) Picton Manager) – Topic: Poverty / Community Hub. A copy of Marianne's notes was circulated to members for their information along with information from the Sounds Souper Soup run. Refer to Attachment 1.

In the public gallery were Michelle Campbell, Marina Cove Manager / The Sounds Souper Soup run and Bridget Nolan, Marlborough / Blenheim Salvation Army.

Action: Bridget Nolan to forward information to the Committee Secretary on the number of transient and local individuals engaged with through homelessness support services. Committee Secretary to circulate the information to members once received.

The Chair requested that a report be provided, through the Mayor's Office, on the prevalence of methamphetamine use within the community, particularly in Picton. The report is to provide supporting information and evidence to substantiate advice that the issue is not at epidemic levels in Marlborough.

Attachment 1

Speech to Marlborough district councillors:
A call for action on homelessness, poverty, mental health and addiction.

Good Morning Mayor, councillors and members of our community.
My name is Marianne Govaerts, I work for the St Vincent de Paul Society in Picton.
Thank you for giving me the opportunity to speak.

When most people think of Picton, they think of a beautiful seaside town. They think of the Marlborough sounds, the Interislander ferries, the cruise ships, tourism, and a welcoming gateway to the South Island.

But behind that postcard image is another Picton.
It's a Picton that has a wound that keeps getting covered with sticky plasters. That wound is getting bigger and we are running out of sizeable plasters!

It's the Picton where people suffering from depression, anxiety, complex trauma or addictions are left waiting months for the help they desperately need and it never comes.

Across Marlborough the cost of living continues to rise. Rent has increased dramatically, home ownership is becoming further out of reach and many working families are finding that full-time employment no longer guarantees financial security.

For some, one unexpected event—a relationship breakdown, losing a job, poor health, or a rent increase—is enough to push them into homelessness or poverty.
Once they fall, climbing back out becomes incredibly difficult.

One of the greatest challenges facing our region is methamphetamine, commonly known as P. Its impact reaches far beyond the individual using it.

It destroys families, fuels violence, contributes to crime, it places enormous pressure on the police and emergency services. It leaves children growing up in unsafe and unstable environments.

Addiction is not simply a matter of bad choices .
It is often rooted in trauma, abuse, mental illness, loneliness and hopelessness.

If we continue treating addiction only as a law enforcement issue, we will never break the cycle.

Our backpackers accommodation are full of people with P addictions , alcoholics and transient people.

The Corrections Department bail people to backpacker accommodation.

Police are overworked.

There are not sufficient cameras around for police to check crimes.

Police struggle to identify people as the quality of the cameras is poor. E.g. recently I had contact with a very badly beaten woman who could not be tracked as there were insufficient cameras in Picton.

Our local library serves as a food bank where people can donate to those who are starving and sleeping in the libraries doorways. As our library is open 7 days a week.

We have a group of Picton people making soup for us to hand out to those that cannot afford to eat.

People have come to me after having been seen at the hospital or medical centres—where they are told to see Marianne from Vinnies for extra help.

People have come to me after having been declined for extra help from Winz with their letter of denial and my name written on the back of the letter to seek help from Vinnies.

St Vincent de Paul Picton help people with transport: bus and ferry, fuel vouchers- this is often for parents who cannot afford fuel to drive kids to school.

Vinnies work with the following agencies: Winz, ACC, Police, Maata Waka, Te Piki Oranga, Heartlands, Oranga Tamariki, Social workers at Wairau hospital, Medical centre, Pharmacy, women refuge and many more.

We help the local schools: bought them washer dryers as some parents have no washing facilities at home, fresh choice vouchers, swimming lessons, camps, pie warmers, Speld assessment for kids with learning difficulties to identify the problem, sports fees and trips, riding for the disabled, school uniforms. We buy the uniforms and gift them to children so that every child has a uniform that often parents can't afford .

We give blankets to the homeless and to the Picton and Koromiko fire brigades.

We visit the elderly and the sick in our community and do welfare checks.

We give financial support with medical/pharmacy bills, dental bills, power bills and grocery vouchers.

We work with Foodbank and caterers to supply food parcels and meals to people.

Our shop has a free food stand that is stocked all day

We gave 85 grocery hampers to schools and 35 baskets to the elderly at Christmas time.

We furnish houses when people come out of transitional housing.

We supply food parcels, clothing and sleeping bags to ex-prisoners, 501's and homeless people.

We support the love Grace program.

We work with corrections. I take people under my wing who need to do community service.

We have paid for driving lessons at the request of the police for those that drive with an incorrect licence, to prevent them from breaking the law.

We supply free Covid/viral test kits.

We bought a lawn mower for a man whose livelihood depended on it and his had broken down.

We bought 2 lifting cushions for St John's ambulances, one for Picton and one for Blenheim.

St Vincent de Paul Picton has given \$65,700 in financial assistance in 2026 (so far) to the Picton Community compared with \$34,500 in 2024. All our income comes from the Vinnies Shop.

St Vincent de Paul is a charity organisation. We are not a social service. The community is becoming more reliant on us as a social service. Our team is based on retirees not social service providers, skilled in very necessary trauma informed work.

Our volunteers work tirelessly.

People need treatment for addictions

They need counselling,

They need rehabilitation .

Mental illness presents a challenge that continues to grow.

Far too many people in Marlborough struggle to access timely mental health support.

By the time help becomes available, many have already lost employment, housing, relationships, or faith in the system itself.

This is not failure by the individual.

It is failure by the systems that are supposed to support them.

Poverty.

Poverty is not simply about income.

It is about choices no one should have to make.

Do I pay the rent or buy groceries?

Do I fill the car with petrol so I can get to work, or do I pay the power bill?

Do I seek medical treatment, or do I wait because I cannot afford the cost?

As people we cannot solve every one of these issues alone!

But you can lead.

You can support partnerships with iwi, health providers, charities, churches and community organisations that already work tirelessly to support vulnerable people.

You can ensure future planning includes affordable housing, access to essential services , half way housing , MDC contract a social worker available in Picton, hot public showers and community spaces where people feel safe, connected, supported and heard.

You can also ensure homelessness is not hidden simply because it makes people uncomfortable.

Ignoring the problem does not make it disappear.

Compassion is not weakness.

Compassion is leadership.

But I also want to say this clearly,

Local government cannot carry this burden alone.

Central government must do more.

New Zealand cannot continue responding only after people reach crisis point.

We need greater investment in affordable housing.

We need more accessible mental health services.

We need addiction treatments available when people ask for help.

We need better support for families before children become another generation trapped in poverty.

The cost of doing nothing is far greater than the cost of acting now.

Every dollar invested in prevention saves many more in emergency housing, healthcare, policing, and corrections.

More importantly it saves lives.

Every person sleeping rough has a name.

Everyone person battling addiction has a story.

Every family living in poverty has dreams for a better future.

One of the greatest frustrations facing people in our community is that asking for help does not always lead to receiving it. Too often people are told to join a waiting list, travel long distances or navigate a complex system when they are already in crisis.

In a community like Picton there are simply not enough local services to meet the growing need.

People experiencing homelessness, mental illness, addiction, particularly methamphetamine, or extreme poverty can find themselves falling through the gaps between agencies. By the time support becomes available, their situation has often become far worse.

When we say “help is available” we must ask: is it available when people need it? Is it accessible? Is there enough of it? For to many people in Marlborough the answer is NO. That is why we need stronger investment in local mental health services, addiction treatment, emergency housing and early intervention, so that people receive support before they reach crisis point.

None of them should be invisible.

Today I ask you not simply to acknowledge these issues but to champion them.

Be the voice that keeps these conversations alive.

Be the leaders who refuse to accept homelessness as normal.

Be the council that works alongside government and our community to create real and lasting change.

Because the measure of a community is not found in its waterfront, its tourism numbers, or its economic success.

It is found in how we treat the people who are struggling the most.

Picton and Marlborough are communities built on resilience, generosity, and looking after one and other.

MDC mission statement is I quote

WE INVEST IN MARLBOROUGH'S FUTURE, OUR PEOPLE, QUALITY LIFESTYLE
AND OUTSTANDING NATURAL ENVIRONMENT.

Let us honour those values.

Let us choose action over excuses.

Let us choose compassion over judgement.

Let us choose hope over despair.

And let us build a future where every person in Marlborough has not only a roof over their head, but dignity, opportunity and the chance to belong.

Thank you



Supporting Older People in Picton

Why this matters: Picton has an older population profile than New Zealand overall. Many older residents are living on fixed incomes while everyday costs such as food, power, transport, medical care, and rent continue to rise.

Key local picture	Statistic
Picton total population	4,812 residents
Picton residents aged 65+	1,575 residents
Share of Picton aged 65+	32.7% — nearly one in three residents
Picton median age	56.0 years, compared with 38.1 years nationally
Marlborough residents aged 65+	10,548 residents, or 23.9% of Marlborough
Single pensioners nationally with little/no income beyond NZ Super	About 40%

The issue in one sentence

“There’s a point at which you can’t budget what you don’t have.” For many older people, hardship is not about poor budgeting — it is about trying to make a fixed income stretch further than it can.

What Sounds Souper offers

- **Practical support:** simple, nourishing food made available locally.
- **Dignity:** help that feels neighbourly, respectful, and community-led.

How you can help us at Sounds Souper

- Donate fresh vegetables or pantry items.
- Donate supermarket or local business vouchers.
- Become a “Souper” by giving time, transport, preparation help, or friendly conversation.
- Share the message with someone who may want to help.

Call to action: If everyone does one small thing, together we can make Picton a more connected, caring place for older people.