



EXTRAORDINARY COUNCIL MINUTES

MINUTES OF THE ORDINARY COUNCIL MEETING OF WESTLAND DISTRICT COUNCIL HELD IN THE COUNCIL CHAMBERS, 36 WELD STREET, HOKITIKA AND VIA ZOOM ON WEDNESDAY 01 APRIL 2026 COMMENCING AT 1:00 PM

The Council Meeting was live streamed to the Westland District Council YouTube Channel and presentations were made available on the Council Website.

1. KARAKIA TĪMATANGA OPENING KARAKIA

The opening Karakia was led by Cr Maitland.

2. MEMBERS PRESENT AND APOLOGIES

Chairperson:	Her Worship the Mayor
Northern Ward Members:	Deputy Mayor Cr Burden, Cr Maitland, Cr Mackenzie
Hokitika Ward Members:	Cr Gillett (via zoom), Cr Martin, Cr Walker
Southern Ward Members:	Cr Manera, Cr Munns
Iwi Representatives:	Kw Madgwick (via zoom), Kw Tumahai (via zoom)

NGĀ WHAKAPAAHA APOLOGIES

Apologies received from Cr Mackenzie, Kw Tumahai, and Kw Madgwick.

STAFF PRESENT

B. Phillips, Chief Executive; S. Lewis, Chief Financial Officer; C. Nabben, Financial Accountant; S. Hewett, Governance Administrator; N. Martin, Governance and Communications Officer.

3. WHAKAPUAKITANGA WHAIPĀNGA DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

The Interest Register had been circulated to the Mayor and Councillors.

There were no changes made to the Interest Register.

4. PŪRONGO KAIMAHI STAFF REPORTS

Draft Annual Plan

The Chief Executive advised that while a number of matters were still being worked through, Council was proceeding with the meeting to maintain statutory consultation timeframes. A system error had

caused calculation issues in the rates tables, which were therefore removed from the draft document for this meeting. Staff were working to resolve the issue, with the intention of releasing updated rate tables prior to public consultation.

Public consultation was confirmed as opening at 9.00am on 10 April 2026, closing 10 May 2026, with hearings scheduled for 13 and 14 May 2026.

It was noted that the average rates increase had moved from 6.6% to 6.67% since the previous workshop. Options within the Draft Annual Plan had been left blank pending public feedback, after which Council would determine preferred options for the final plan. There was no change to total Council expenditure values, with movements relating to timing rather than scope.

The CFO explained that in the draft plan LTP 2025/26 figures reflected current budgets, LTP 2026/27 figures reflected Long Term Plan forecasts, and AP 2026/27 figures reflected updated forecasts for this upcoming Annual Plan.

The Chief Executive clarified that references to the isite related only to operating hours, with any substantive changes requiring consideration through a future Long Term Plan.

The wastewater treatment plant (WWTP) project cost was expected to reduce to \$2.2 million, as it would transfer into the Council Controlled Organisation. As the project was debt funded, the impact on rates was minimal.

Councillors were advised that a complete Draft Annual Plan would be provided to assist with community engagement. Financial statements reflected the same LTP versus Annual Plan comparisons, with the increase in grant funding largely attributable to airport-related funding.

Forecasts were based on anticipated positions as of June 2026 and would be updated with more accurate data prior to adoption of the final plan. Rate table pages remained blank pending resolution of the system issue.

It was reiterated that the rates increase represents an average across the district, with individual impacts varying based on property location and value. Debt growth remained lower than forecasted in the Long Term Plan.

Council-created reserves were noted as being able to be amended by Council resolution, while restricted reserves were subject to tighter conditions due to their donor or legislative origins.

Councillors were reminded that Council was required to include its preferred options in the consultation document, while still allowing the public to provide feedback on all options. Officers confirmed that depreciation funding could be drawn down where work had been deferred, potentially reducing future rating pressure. Councillor Gillett requested further information on items that do and do not affect rates.

Attention was drawn to fees and charges, noting these are often an area of public focus. Council and staff were acknowledged for budgeting responsibly and maintaining long-term financial sustainability. A typographical error on page 75 (duplicate "Option 2") was noted for correction. Councillors were reminded of the importance of being familiar with options to support public engagement.

Options For Consideration:

Remittance of Rates

Staff confirmed that legal recovery costs associated with late rates were borne by the ratepayer, not Council. The need for clearer communication to ratepayers on payment options was raised, with a request that this be strengthened through FAQs, including accessibility considerations for older residents.

Voting:

- Option 1: 6 votes
- Option 2: 2 votes

Pool Opening Hours

It was noted that flexibility in opening and closing times had been considered operationally but was not clearly reflected in the document but would not tangibly affect the proposed figure. A proposal has also been made to charge swim clubs by the hour rather than one off annual fees, this has come about in discussions with the effected clubs.

Voting:

- Option 1: Unanimous

Museum Operating Hours

Cr Martin abstained due to a conflict of interest.

Staff advised that public submissions would be assessed by staff, including impact assessments, and reported back to council.

Voting:

- Option 2: 7

Library Operating Hours

It was noted that options could be refined prior to the final plan based on public feedback.

Voting:

- Option 2: Unanimous

Isite Operating Hours

Cr Maitland abstained due to a conflict of interest.

Voting:

- Option 1: 0
- Option 2: 5
- Option 3: 0

Library Reserves

Voting:

- Option 1: Unanimous

Heritage Park

Voting:

- Option 1: Unanimous

The draft annual plan will be updated to reflect council's preferred options and corresponding rates impacts. Officers advised that changes would be monitored and evaluated to inform future planning cycles.

Inflation assumptions remained at 2.6%, noting this would continue to be monitored given global events. Rising diesel costs for pool heating were identified as a risk, with a commitment to report back if costs continued to increase.

The next district property revaluations were scheduled for September 2026, with impacts on rates not expected until the following financial year.

Moved Cr Walker, seconded Cr Gillett and resolved that:

- 1.1 The Draft Annual Plan be received.
- 1.2 Council adopts the Draft Annual Plan 2026/27 and Draft Consultation Document pending the amendments decided upon regarding preferred options during this meeting.
- 1.3 Engagement with the community will be undertaken from 10 April 2026 to 10 May 2026, followed by public hearings on the 13th and 14th of May.

Resolutions carried unanimously.

5. **Ka Matatapu Te Whakataunga I Te Tūmatanui Resolution To Go into Public Excluded**

Moved Cr Manera, seconded Cr Munns and resolved that Council move into the Public Excluded section at 2:27pm.

MEETING CLOSED AT 3:08 PM

**DATE OF THE NEXT ORDINARY COUNCIL MEETING – 23 APRIL 2026 AT 1:00 PM
COUNCIL CHAMBERS, 36 WELD STREET, HOKITIKA AND VIA ZOOM**

Confirmed by:

**Her Worship the Mayor Helen Lash
Chair**

Date: 23 April 2026