
**CONFIRMED MINUTES
OF THE INAUGURAL COUNCIL MEETING
HELD AT THE OAMARU OPERA HOUSE ON WEDNESDAY, OCTOBER 22, AT 5.30PM,
THEN ADJOURNED AND RECONVENED
AT THE COUNCIL CHAMBER, THIRD FLOOR OFFICE OF THE WAITAKI DISTRICT COUNCIL,
20 THAMES STREET, OAMARU
ON TUESDAY, 4 NOVEMBER 2025 AT 9:00 AM**

PRESENT: Mayor Melanie Tavendale, Cr Rebecca Ryan, Cr John McCone, Cr Jim Hopkins, Cr Jeremy Holding, Cr Brent Cowles, Cr Sven Thelning, Cr Dan Lewis, Cr Frans Schlack, Cr Mata'aga Hana Fanene-Taiti, Cr Courtney Linwood (online)

IN ATTENDANCE: Alex Parmley (Chief Executive)
Roger Cook (Director Natural and Built Environment)
Paul Hope (Director, Support Services)
Joanne O'Neill (Director, Strategy, Performance & Design)
Lisa Baillie (Director, Community Engagement and Experience)
Jason Lilley (Livestream Support)
Arlene Goss (Governance Services Lead/Minutes)
Ally Woock (Governance Services Officer)
Helen Pickering (Communications Manager)
John Palethorpe (Media and Communications Specialist)
Andrew Ashton (Otago Daily Times/Oamaru Mail)
Ray Henderson (public attending on November 4)
Peter de Reus (public attending on November 4)
Approximately 200 people (community board members, guests, staff, public and performers attending on October 22)

A public inauguration ceremony was held at the Oamaru Opera House auditorium at 5.30pm on Wednesday, October 22, 2025. This was the first part of the inaugural meeting of the new Council.

Following the ceremony the meeting was adjourned to Tuesday, 4 November, 2025. On that date the Mayor reconvened the meeting at **9.00am** and welcomed everyone present.

This was livestreamed and can be viewed at:

1. Recording of [Ceremony on October 22](#) (A copy of the printed programme is also available on request as an attachment to these minutes)
2. Recording of [Meeting reconvened on November 4](#)

1 APOLOGIES FOR MEETING ON NOVEMBER 4

RESOLVED WDC 2025/112

Moved: Cr Jeremy Holding

Seconded: Cr Hana Fanene-Taiti

That the apology for lateness received from Cr Courtney Linwood be accepted.

CARRIED

2 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Cr Rebecca Ryan declared a conflict of interest with item 5.2 – Appointment of Deputy Mayor, and will not vote on this matter.

3 PUBLIC FORUM

[1.16](#) Ray Henderson was registered to speak. He raised the following issues:

Water Services Delivery - He asked why the Department of Internal Affairs was “hell bent on getting water infrastructure done so quickly” and other questions related to the appointment of a Crown Facilitator.

Governance Structure – Mr Henderson was concerned that he did not see a Harbour Area Subcommittee mentioned in the staff report and believed this committee was needed.

Standing Orders – Mr Henderson said he could not see how members had voted from the public seats in the council chamber, or online when watching a livestream.

The Mayor responded that she shared his concern about the water timeframes and would be communicating this to the government.

The future of the committees would be discussed further by the councillors.

Staff will introduce new technology in February/March to show member voting on screen, making it easier to see what is happening in the chamber. Cr Hopkins suggested manually recording the votes between now and then and the Mayor agreed.

Mr Henderson was thanked for attending.

4 LEADERSHIP REPORTS

4.1 DECLARATION OF THE 13TH WAITAKI DISTRICT COUNCIL

[8.16](#) The purpose of this report was to formally record the declarations sworn by the elected members of the 13th Waitaki District Council and Community Boards at the ceremony at the Opera House on October 22.

The following members were sworn in:

Name	Office
Melanie Tavendale	Mayor for Waitaki

Declarations of Councillors-Elect

Name	Office
Brent Cowles	Councillor
Mata’aga Hana Fanene-Taiti	Councillor
Jeremy Holding	Councillor
Jim Hopkins	Councillor
Dan Lewis	Councillor
Courtney Linwood	Councillor

John McCone	Councillor
Rebecca Ryan	Councillor
Frans Schlack	Councillor
Sven Thelning	Councillor

Declarations of Community Board Members-Elect

Name	Office
Steve Dalley	Ahuriri Community Board
Mike King	Ahuriri Community Board
Calum Reid	Ahuriri Community Board
Karen Turner	Ahuriri Community Board
Clifford Day	Waihemo Community Board
Heather McGregor	Waihemo Community Board
Kerry Stevens	Waihemo Community Board

Apologies were received from the following members, who have arranged to swear their declaration at the upcoming community board meetings –

- Alan Pont – Ahuriri Community Board
- Tanya Bell and Paul Roy – Waihemo Community Board

RESOLVED WDC 2025/113

Moved: Cr Jeremy Holding

Seconded: Cr Jim Hopkins

That Council receives and notes the information.

CARRIED

This decision was unanimous.

4.2 CHIEF EXECUTIVE'S TRANSITION REPORT

[9.07](#) The purpose of this report was to notify Council that no decisions were made by the chief executive during the election period from 11 October 2025 to Wednesday, October 22, 2025, when he was given delegated authority to deal with urgent issues.

RESOLVED WDC 2025/114

Moved: Cr Jim Hopkins

Seconded: Cr Brent Cowles

That Council notes that the chief executive did not make any decisions under the delegated powers of council in the period between the old council ending and the new council being sworn in.

CARRIED

This decision was unanimous.

5 DECISION REPORTS

5.1 APPOINTMENT OF CROWN FACILITATOR

[10.16](#) Alex Parmley introduced this report and provided some background to the issue. Council was required to provide a response to the Minister's letter by tomorrow.

Mr Parmley would like to respond that Council would accept a facilitator with reservations, noting that a facilitator has both powers to assist and powers to direct the council.

Paul Hope said Waitaki was the first council to have a water services plan rejected, so there was no precedent to base advice on. The report was crafted as a discussion starter for the meeting today. He noted difficulties in interpreting the legislation and the letters from the secretary and minister.

Cr Cowles said that the legislation did not define "reasonable" direction. Would Council be consulted before any recommendations were made to the Minister? Who would sign off on a new plan and whether it meets the legislative requirements?

The Mayor provided her views on how things would work with a facilitator. She hoped that conversations could happen in a reasonable manner.

Mr Parmley said the revised water plan would have to come to council for approval, and the chief executive would sign off on it meeting legislative requirements. They would need to discuss with the facilitator on how to work in a collaborative way.

Cr Hopkins raised a comment on page 11 of agenda. What was meant by "sub optimal"? It was not the most affordable option for the organisation, or the community.

Regarding the timing of the letter that went to the previous council. No consideration was given to holding an urgent meeting before the election, as DIA couldn't meet with Council until after the election to explain the issue with our water services delivery plan.

Cr Ryan asked about the level of information sharing between council, the facilitator and the Minister. How can we communicate the next steps with the community? Is there additional workload for staff? She would like to ask for progress updates in the first meeting with the facilitator. And, by default, engagement with the facilitator should be conducted in the public domain.

The workload would be significant due to losing time with the process, and the government's deadline of next June.

Cr McCone asked what would happen if Council did not reply immediately. If we decline their request or don't respond the Mayor believed the government might move up the ladder towards a commissioner approach. Council might not have a role in decision making after that.

Cr Hopkins asked if there had been any indication from neighbouring local authorities that they might be interested in joining an agreement. Southern Water was still open. Timaru District Council was still open to an approach.

The Mayor noted an amendment to the recommendations was circulated by Cr Schlack before the meeting. There was some discussion on whether this was a Notice of Motion or an amendment and it was agreed it was an amendment.

Cr Schlack moved his amendment, which was for recommendations 1-4 to stay as they are, changes made to number 5, then 6-8 to stay as they are. Cr Thelning seconded the amended motions.

[38.10](#) Cr Schlack spoke in support of the amended motions.

[40.07](#) Cr Holding spoke against the amended motions.

[43.31](#) Cr Hopkins spoke in support of the amended motions.

A vote was taken as follows:

RESOLVED WDC 2025/115

Moved: Cr Frans Schlack

Seconded: Cr Sven Thelning

That Council:

1. Receives the letter of 6 October 2025 from the Secretary of Local Government Mr Paul James. (Carried unanimously)
2. Agrees to not formally respond to the letter from the Secretary of Local Government until the matter of the Crown facilitator is resolved and to allow full consideration of the matters raised. (Carried unanimously)
3. Receives the letter and Terms of Reference of 21 October 2025 from the Minister of Local Government Simon Watts. (Carried unanimously)
4. Accepts the appointment of a Crown facilitator. (Carried unanimously)
5. Agrees to note in Council's response to the Minister accepting the appointment, that:
 - a) Council is concerned that this action has been taken before the newly formed Council has been inaugurated and had opportunity to meet formally and consider the letter of 6 October relating to the Water Service Delivery Plan and (Carried unanimously)
 - b) To date, Council has been working in good faith with the DIA and has already commenced work on an agreed scope to achieve an amended compliant Water Services Delivery Plan, pending the new Council's decision on the response to the letter from the Secretary and (Cr Holding voted against. All others in favour. Carried by majority vote)
 - c) In view of the time constraints placed on the delivery of a compliant Water Services Delivery Plan, Council requests that the formal appointment of the Crown Facilitator is carried out as expediently as practicable so that Council can commence work to achieve such plan collaboratively with the Hon Amy Adams as soon as possible. (Carried unanimously)
6. Agrees to bring forward the desk-top analysis of water asset condition to be provided within existing resources and (Carried unanimously)

7. Agrees to fully consider all other aspects of the Secretary of Local Government's letter including necessary funding and resources for critical water asset condition assessment within one month of this meeting and, (Carried unanimously)
8. Notes that a further report to Council will detail next steps and funding requirements to complete all work necessary to satisfy outstanding requirements in the Water Services Delivery Plan to comply with the Act. (Carried unanimously)

CARRIED

5.2 APPOINTMENT OF DEPUTY MAYOR

[55.35](#) At the inauguration ceremony on Wednesday, October 22, Mayor Tavendale announced she was appointing Cr Rebecca Ryan as deputy mayor under section 41A(3)(a) of the Local Government Act. The purpose of this report was to confirm this by resolution.

Cr Ryan expressed her gratitude to the members and the community who had supported her. She thanked Cr Fanene-Taiti for her leadership in the position over the last three years.

RESOLVED

Moved: Mayor Mel Tavendale

Seconded: Cr Jim Hopkins

That Council:

- (a) **Notes** the decision of Mayor Mel Tavendale to appoint a deputy mayor pursuant to section 41A(3)(a) of the Local Government Act 2002.
- (b) **Supports** the appointment of Councillor Rebecca Ryan to the role of Deputy Mayor for the 2025-2028 triennium.

CARRIED

This decision was unanimous. Cr Ryan declared an interest and did not vote.

5.3 GOVERNANCE STRUCTURE AND REMUNERATION PROPOSAL FOR 2025-2028 TRIENNium - STAGE 1

[59.00](#) The purpose of this report was to confirm stage 1 of the governance structure of the new council.

The Mayor noted that this work was ongoing and would come back to a future meeting.

Cr Hopkins asked questions about the tasks assigned to the Hearings Panel, the lack of a Development Contributions Committee in the structure, and the replacement for the Zone committees. These required more work before being confirmed.

Cr Ryan asked about the Water Services Advisory Group. How has this progressed and is it too important to delay to Stage 2? Alex Parmley would like to discuss the advisory group further and the direction to take. The purpose of the advisory group was to help set up in-house water services, but this was uncertain given the appointment of the Crown Facilitator.

Cr McCone felt an outside advisory group would be helpful and did not need to involve staff time.

Further discussion took place on whether to advertise for the role of independent member of Performance, Audit and Risk. Noted that this role would be advertised each triennium.

RESOLVED WDC 2025/116

Moved: Cr Jim Hopkins

Seconded: Cr Rebecca Ryan

That Council:

1. **Agrees** to establish “stage one” of the committee structure as attached, pursuant to Section 41A(3)(b) and (c) of the Local Government Act 2002. (Carried unanimously)
2. **Appoints** the following members to the Audit and Risk Committee – Cr Thelning (deputy chair), and members Cr McCone, Cr Hopkins, Cr Schlack, and Cr Cowles. (Carried unanimously)
3. **Instructs** the chief executive to advertise for expressions of interest for the role of independent chairperson of the Audit and Risk Committee. (Cr McCone voted against the motion. All others voted in favour. Carried by majority vote)
4. **Delegates** the Mayor to approve a role description for the independent chairperson of the Audit and Risk Committee before advertising. (Cr McCone abstained, all others voted in favour. Carried by majority vote)
5. **Approves** the temporary re-appointment of former Audit and Risk chairman Simon Neale, until the position of independent chairperson is filled. (Carried unanimously.)

Cr Hopkins asked that the remaining motions be put to the vote jointly and the Mayor agreed.

6. **Appoints** the following councillors and independent members as chairs, deputy chairs, and members to the committees as listed below:
 - a) Hearings Panel:
 - i. Chair: Cr Linwood
 - ii. Deputy Chair: Cr Hopkins
 - iii. Members: Cr Thelning, Cr Cowles
 - b) District Licensing Committee:
 - i. Chair: Cr Hopkins
 - ii. Deputy Chair: Cr Holding
 - iii. Members: Barry McDonald (independent), Kelli Williams (independent)
 - c) Chief Executive’s Employment Committee:
 - i. Chair: Mayor
 - ii. Deputy Chair: Cr Cowles
 - iii. Members: Cr Lewis, Cr Holding, Cr Fanene-Taiti
 - d) Grants and Awards Committee:
 - i. Chair: Cr Holding
 - ii. Deputy Chair: Cr Linwood

iii. Members: All councillors and both community board chairs, by roster to each funding round. And independent members to be arranged by the Grants and Funding officer.

7. **Notes** that the Mayor is a member of all committees and community boards with full voting rights pursuant to Clause 41A(5) of the Local Government Act 2002 (LGA).
8. **Appoints** the following councillors to community boards:
 - Cr Schlack – Waihemo Community Board (legislated)
 - Cr Cowles – Ahuriri Community Board (legislated)
9. **Appoints** the following councillors to joint committees:
 - Otago Civil Defence and Emergency Management Committee: Mayor
 - Waitaki Lakes Shoreline Authority: Cr Cowles
 - Alps2Ocean (A2O) Joint Committee: Cr Cowles
 - Regional Land Transport Committee: Cr McCone and Cr Schlack
 - Canterbury and Otago Mayoral Forums: Mayor
10. **Appoints** the following councillors to external groups:
 - Waitaki Whitestone Geopark Trust: Cr Lewis
 - Observatory Village Trust: *No appointment needed.*
 - Waitaki Community Recreation Centre Trust: Cr Ryan
 - Network Waitaki Events Centre Project Board: Cr Ryan and Cr Fanene-Taiti
 - Donald and Nellye Malcolm Trust: Mayor and Cr Holding
 - Stronger Waitaki: Mayor and Cr Fanene-Taiti
 - Waitaki District Youth Council Liaison: Cr Ryan and Cr Linwood
 - Macraes Community Development Trust: Cr Schlack
 - Oamaru Opera House Charitable Trust: Cr Ryan
11. **Agrees** that council meetings will be held once a month on Tuesdays, or on the alternate meeting day, which will be Monday.
12. **Notes** that the Meetings Schedule for 2026 will come to the next council meeting for approval.

CARRIED

The meeting adjourned at 10.30am for morning tea and reconvened at 10.55am.

5.4 ADOPTION OF CODE OF CONDUCT

[1.41.23](#) The purpose of this report was to ensure that Council has a Code of Conduct in place.

The Mayor asked if there were any questions. Cr Hopkins objected to some of the sections in the code.

Referring to clause 4 on page 48 of the agenda, he said the code confused behaviours with beliefs in a way that he did not think was appropriate. Clause 4 says members will “operate in a manner that recognises and respects the significance of the principles of Te Tiriti o Waitangi.

He also spoke against section 1.2(1) and (2) and on page 49 of the agenda. These sections are headed “Te Tiriti o Waitangi – Tino Rangatiratanga” and “Te Tiriti o Waitangi – Partnership”.

Cr Hopkins was also concerned that the process for investigating complaints ended with the decision of the independent investigator. He said this did not allow for natural justice, or allow for a member to make a submission to their peers/councillors prior to the conclusion of an investigation.

Cr Fanene-Taiti said she supported section 1.2, as this was a guideline to help us work together in partnership with manawhenua. She did not see it as negative. Regarding the process for investigation, she agreed that it would be good to have an opportunity to appeal or a step change added to the investigation process.

Cr Hopkins suggested an amendment to the first recommendation and Cr McCone seconded this. The amendment was rejected by majority vote.

RESOLVED WDC 2025/117

Moved: Cr Jim Hopkins

Seconded: Cr John McCone

That Council:

Adopts the Draft Council Code of Conduct as attached, with the removal of clause 4 on page 48 of the agenda, and the deletion of section 1.2(1) and (2) and on page 49 of the agenda, in accordance with Schedule 7 Clause 15 of the Local Government Act 2002, until the government provides a standardised document as a replacement.

In Favour: Crs John McCone and Jim Hopkins

Against: Mayor Melanie Tavendale, Crs Courtney Linwood, Rebecca Ryan, Hana Fanene-Taiti, Frans Schlack, Dan Lewis, Sven Thelning, Jeremy Holding and Brent Cowles.

LOST

The original recommendation from staff was then put to the councillors. It was moved by Cr Lewis and seconded by Cr Thelning.

RESOLVED WDC 2025/118

Moved: Cr Dan Lewis

Seconded: Cr Sven Thelning

That Council:

Adopts the Draft Council Code of Conduct as attached, in accordance with Schedule 7 Clause 15 of the Local Government Act 2002, until the government provides a standardised document as a replacement.

In Favour: Mayor Mel Tavendale, Crs Sven Thelning, Dan Lewis, Courtney Linwood, Rebecca Ryan, Hana Fanene-Taiti, Frans Schlack, Jeremy Holding and Brent Cowles

Against: Cr Jim Hopkins

Abstained: Cr John McCone

CARRIED

Discussion then shifted to whether the findings of an independent investigator should be the final word, or whether these findings should be referred to full Council for approval. The councillors agreed to refer the findings to full Council and passed a resolution to this effect.

RESOLVED WDC 2025/119

Moved: Cr Jim Thomson

Seconded: Cr John McCone

2. **Adopts** the Draft Policy for Investigating and Ruling on Alleged Breaches of the Elected Member Code of Conduct 2025-2029, as attached, until the government provides a standardised document as a replacement.
3. **Agrees** to continue with the current arrangements of a two-step investigation process, and the investigator's decision to be referred to Council for approval, for as long as the code is in place.

CARRIED

This decision was unanimous.

5.5 ADOPTION OF STANDING ORDERS

[2.12.49](#) The purpose of this report was to ensure that Council has appropriate and relevant guidance and rules for the conduct of meetings. This supports good governance practice and meets the requirements of Schedule 7 27(1) Local Government Act 2002.

The Mayor noted that if she was in a position to provide the casting vote on an issue, she would vote in favour of the status quo.

Cr Hopkins asked several questions on details in the Standing Orders and these were noted by the Governance Lead. In particular he asked for a policy to be drawn up, similar to the one used by Timaru District Council, that outlined how information in the public excluded part of the meeting would be released to the public.

RESOLVED WDC 2025/120

Moved: Cr John McCone

Seconded: Cr Brent Cowles

That Council:

1. **Adopts** the Standing Orders for Council and Community Boards, as attached, until the government provides a standardised document to all councils.
2. **Agrees** to provide a casting vote to the Mayor, or chair of committee, or community board chairperson, in the event of equal votes (see item 19.3 in the attachment).
3. **Agrees** to continue with Option C as the default option for speaking to and moving motions (see item 22.2 in the attachment).
4. **Notes** that the Local Government Act 2002 (Clause 16 of Schedule 7) requires members to comply with the Council's Standing Orders.

CARRIED

This decision was unanimous.

5.6 MINUTE OF APPRECIATION FOR OUTGOING ELECTED MEMBERS 2025

[2.27.27](#) The purpose of this report was to record a Minute of Appreciation to outgoing Waitaki District Councillors and Community Board Elected Members. A correction was made by Cr Lewis that Mayor Kircher was mayor for 12 years and spent 9 years as a councillor.

RESOLVED WDC 2025/121

Moved: Mayor Mel Tavendale

Seconded: Cr Rebecca Ryan

That Council records its sincere thanks to the following former elected members for their loyal and conscientious service to the district –

Gary Kircher – Mayor for 12 years and councillor for 9 years.

Guy Percival – Councillor for the Corriedale Ward for 11 years.

Jim Thomson – Councillor for the Waihemo Ward for 4 years.

Tim Blackler – Councillor for the Oamaru Ward for 3 years.

Carol Watson – Community Board Member for Waihemo for 9 years.

CARRIED

This decision was unanimous.

6 MEMORANDUM REPORTS

6.1 EXPLANATION OF LEGISLATION BY THE CHIEF EXECUTIVE

The purpose of this report was to provide a summary of the key legislation that is of importance to elected members, as required under the Local Government Act 2002. The chief executive, Alex Parmley, read from the report.

RESOLVED WDC 2025/122

Moved: Cr John McCone

Seconded: Cr Jeremy Holding

That Council receives and notes the information.

CARRIED

This decision was unanimous.

6.2 ELECTION REPORT

The purpose of the report was to provide Council with the results of the 2025 local authority elections conducted in the Waitaki District.

Lisa Baillie introduced the report and noted the increase in voter turnout. She thanked the elections team, the comms team and other helpers who worked on the election.

Cr Ryan asked for a breakdown on the number of votes that came through bins and the number that arrived via the postal service. Lisa Baillie will come back to the councillors with this information if it is available.

RESOLVED WDC 2025/123

Moved: Cr Rebecca Ryan

Seconded: Cr John McCone

That Council receives and notes the information.

CARRIED

This decision was unanimous.

6.3 CONFIRMATION OF UPDATED MEETINGS SCHEDULE FOR THE REMAINDER OF 2025

[2.48.45](#) The purpose of this report was to provide a meeting schedule for the remainder of 2025.

Would there be a roster for the councillors to attend community board meetings. Yes. Still to come.

An extraordinary meeting could be called at any time if the council needed to address urgent issues over the holiday period.

RESOLVED WDC 2025/124

Moved: Cr Dan Lewis

Seconded: Cr Rebecca Ryan

That Council approves the attached meeting schedule for the remainder of the calendar year 2025.

CARRIED

This decision was unanimous.

7 CONFIRMATION OF PREVIOUS MEETING MINUTES

7.1 PUBLIC MINUTES OF THE COUNCIL MEETING HELD ON 30 SEPTEMBER 2025

The following changes to the minutes were requested by Cr Hopkins and Cr Schlack:

Page 88 of agenda: under Public Forum continued

“From” to change to lower case

“Held” to change to lower case

Correct the spelling of “name”

Page 89 of agenda: under The Future Status of Beach Road North

“and” to change to “an”

Page 90 of agenda: under Capital Works Programme Approval

“is” to change to “are”

Page 91 of agenda: in fourth paragraph

Space added between the words “budget” and “to”

Page 95 of the agenda: last line

Change “Cr McCone” to “Cr Thomson”.

RESOLVED WDC 2025/125

Moved: Cr Jim Hopkins
Seconded: Cr Courtney Linwood

That the Council confirms the Public minutes of the Council Meeting held on 30 September 2025, as circulated, as a true and correct record of that meeting with the changes noted above.

CARRIED

This decision was unanimous.

4 MEETING CLOSE

The Chair declared the meeting closed at approximately 12.30pm.

TO BE CONFIRMED at the Council Meeting to be held on Tuesday, 9 December 2025.

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CHAIRPERSON