

Kaunihera | Council

Kaupapataka Wātea | Open Agenda



Notice is hereby given that an ordinary meeting of Matamata-Piako District Council will be held on:

Ko te rā | Date: Wednesday 4 March 2026
Wā | Time: 9:00
Wāhi | Venue: Council Chambers
35 Kenrick Street
TE AROHA

NGĀ MEMA | MEMBERSHIP

Tiamana | Chairperson: Koromatua | Mayor
Ash Tanner

Mema | Members: Koromatua Tautoko | Deputy Mayor
James Sainsbury

Kaunihera ā-Rohe | District Councillors

Vincent Andersen
Grace Bonnar
Bruce Dewhurst
Tyrel Glass
Dayne Horne
Greg Marshall
Andrew McGiven
James Thomas
Gary Thompson
Rewiti Vaimoso
Sue Whiting

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Ā-TIKANGA | PROCEDURAL

1	Whakatūwheratanga o te hui Meeting Opening	3
2	Ngā whakapāha/Tono whakawātea Apologies/Leave of Absence	3
3	Panui i Ngā Take Ohorere Anō Notification of Urgent/Additional Business	3
4	Whākī pānga Declarations of Interest	3
5	Whakaaentanga mēneti Confirmation of Minutes	3
6	Papa ā-iwi whānui Public Forum	3

NGĀ PŪRONGO A NGĀ ĀPIHA | OFFICER REPORTS

7	Pūrongo me whakatau Decision Reports	
7.1	Elected Members' Remuneration, Allowances and Expenses Policy	4
7.2	Approval of submission to RMA Reform-the Bills	13
7.3	Approval of draft Rates Remission and Postponement Policy for consultation	57
7.4	Reform Submissions for Council Approval	90
7.5	Draft Fees and Charges 26/27 - Adoption for Consultation	131

TAKE MATATAPU | PUBLIC EXCLUDED

8	Mōtini he aukati i te whānui Procedural motion to exclude the public	200
C1	Council Delegations - Legal Review	

1 Whakatūwheratanga o te hui | Meeting Opening

Chairperson to open the meeting.

2 Ngā whakapāha/Tono whakawātea | Apologies/Leave of Absence

At the close of the agenda no apologies had been received.

3 Pānui i Ngā Take Ohore Anō | Notification of Urgent/Additional Business

Section 46A(7) of the Local Government Official Information and Meetings Act 1987 (as amended) states:

“An item that is not on the agenda for a meeting may be dealt with at that meeting if-

- (a) The local authority by resolution so decides; and
- (b) The presiding member explains at the meeting, at a time when it is open to the public,-
 - (i) The reason why the item is not on the agenda; and
 - (ii) The reason why the discussion of the item cannot be delayed until a subsequent meeting.”

Section 46A(7A) of the Local Government Official Information and Meetings Act 1987 (as amended) states:

“Where an item is not on the agenda for a meeting,-

- (a) That item may be discussed at that meeting if-
 - (i) That item is a minor matter relating to the general business of the local authority; and
 - (ii) the presiding member explains at the beginning of the meeting, at a time when it is open to the public, that the item will be discussed at the meeting; but
 - (iii) no resolution, decision or recommendation may be made in respect of that item except to refer that item to a subsequent meeting of the local authority for further discussion.”

4 Whākī pānga | Declaration of Interest

Members are reminded of their obligation to declare any conflicts of interest they might have in respect of the items on this Agenda.

5 Whakaaetanga mēneti | Confirmation of Minutes

Minutes, as circulated, of the ordinary meeting of Matamata-Piako District Council, held on 25 February 2026

6 Papa ā-iwi whānui | Public Forum

Name	Position/Organisation	Topic
Vicki Black Sam Rosenberg	Property Manager Team Leader, Property Brokers Waikato Region Area Manager, Property Brokers	Management of Elderly Persons Housing and the changing legislation that may impact on Councils obligations

7 Pūrongo me whakatau | Decision Reports

7.1 Elected Members' Remuneration, Allowances and Expenses Policy

CM No.: 3137678

Te Kaupapa | Purpose

The purpose of this report is to consider and adopt Matamata-Piako District Council's Elected Members' Remuneration, Allowances and Expenses Policy.

Rāpopotonga Matua | Executive Summary

The Remuneration Authority set the rules and regulations for Elected Members' Remuneration, Allowances and Expenses and require Council's to have an Elected Members' Remuneration, Allowances and Expenses Policy. This must be available on Council's website.

Tūtohunga | Recommendation

That:

1. The information be received.
2. The Elected Members' Remuneration, Allowances and Expenses Policy as attached be adopted.
3. Staff are authorised to make minor amendments, such as the inclusion of translations.

Horopaki | Background





The Remuneration Authority set the rules and regulations for Elected Members' Remuneration, Allowances and Expenses and require Councils to have an Elected Members' Remuneration, Allowances and Expenses Policy. This must be available on Council's website.

Following each Triennial Election the new Council determine the remuneration and allowances via Council resolution. The resolution following the 2025 Triennial Election is in the appendix of the Policy for ease of reading.

Te Tākoha ki ngā Hua mō te Hapori me te here ki te whakakitenga o te Kaunihera | Contribution to Community Outcomes

Matamata-Piako District Council's Community Outcomes are set out below:

MATAMATA-PIAKO TŌ MĀTOU WĀHI NOHO OUR PLACE	MATAMATA-PIAKO DISTRICT COUNCIL TE ARA RAUTAKI STRATEGIC DIRECTION
TŌ MĀTOU WHAKAKITENGA OUR VISION	
Matamata-Piako District is vibrant, passionate, progressive, where opportunity abounds. 'The heart of our community is our people, and the people are the heart of our community.'	
TŌ MĀTOU WHĀINGA MATUA OUR PRIORITIES (COMMUNITY OUTCOMES)	

			
He wāhi kaingākau ki te manawa A place with people at its heart	He wāhi puawaitanga A place to thrive	He wāhi e poipoi ai tō tātou taiao A place that embraces our environment	He wāhi whakapapa, he wāhi hangahanga A place to belong and create

All of the community outcomes are relevant to this report.

Ngā Tāpiritanga | Attachments

[A↓](#). Elected Members' Remuneration Allowances and Expenses Policy - draft for adoption 4 March 2026

Ngā waitohu | Signatories

Author(s)	Tamara Kingi Kaiārahi Kāwana Governance Team Leader	
Approved by	Sandra Harris Pou Kaupapahere, Rāngai Mahitahi me te Kāwana Policy, Partnerships and Governance Manager	

Te Reo Translation | Elected Members' Remuneration, Allowances and Expenses Policy



Department: Policy, Partnerships and Governance

Date approved by Council: 4 March 2026

Kupu Whakataki | Introduction

The Remuneration Authority requires Councils to have an Elected Members' Remuneration, Allowances and Expenses Policy (Policy) and to have that Policy displayed on Council's website.

This Policy outlines the remuneration, allowances and expenses allowable for elected members – these are in accordance with the Remuneration Authority rules.

This Policy should be read in conjunction with Council's Sensitive Expenditure Policy. Any expenses under this Policy must comply with Council's Sensitive Expenditure Policy where applicable.

Audience

Elected members, staff.

Policy

Remuneration

- The Mayor shall receive remuneration as determined by the Remuneration Authority.
- The Remuneration Authority sets a Governance Pool, which is the total amount that can be paid in remuneration to elected members', and a minimum allowable annual total remuneration for each elected member. Council must make a formal decision following the Triennial Election as to how the Governance Pool is allocated according to roles and additional responsibilities held by elected members. The allocation of the Governance Pool as recommended by Council is then forwarded to the Remuneration Authority for approval.
- Elected members who sit on resource management or district plan hearings receive meeting fees as determined by the Remuneration Authority.
- Elected Members will not receive any additional remuneration for their roles on Council Committees and Subcommittees (including Advisory Committees).

Allowances

- **Vehicle Kilometre Allowance**
Elected members can claim a vehicle kilometre allowance to reimburse costs incurred for approved travel.

An elected member's travel is eligible for the kilometre allowance if:

- the elected member is not provided with a vehicle by Council;
- the elected member is travelling in a private vehicle (one claim per vehicle);
- the elected member is travelling on Council business; and
- the most direct route that is reasonable is taken.

The vehicle kilometre allowance is set by the Remuneration Authority and is based on the rate set by the Inland Revenue Department, as set out in the determination. In relation to attendances within the district, if the elected member travels from a place of permanent or temporary residence that is outside of the local authority area, the elected member is only eligible for the allowance after crossing the boundary of the local authority area. There is a set 100km per day limit on any mileage claim (except for Zone 2 meetings, LGNZ events, joint local authority meetings, the Hauraki Gulf Forum and other meetings where you are an appointed or otherwise authorised Council representative).

All elected members' claims for vehicle kilometre allowance are to be approved by two authorisers, one being a member of the Governance Team, the other being the Governance Team Leader or the Policy, Partnerships and Governance Manager for auditing purposes.

- Travel Time Allowance

Elected members may claim a travel time allowance for travelling within New Zealand on Council business. The Mayor is not eligible for this allowance because the role is deemed to be full time and remuneration is set accordingly.

Council will pay the travel time allowance set by the Remuneration Authority for all eligible travel claimed by an elected member.

An elected member's travel is eligible for the travel time allowance if:

- the elected member is travelling on authorised Council business; and
- the elected member uses the quickest form of transport that is reasonable in the circumstances; and
- by the most direct route that is reasonable.

Elected members cannot claim for the first hour of eligible travel per day.

In relation to attendances within the district an elected member who resides outside the district boundary is only eligible for a travel time allowance in respect of travel time after the first hour of eligible travel time within the local authority area.

All claims for travel time allowance are to be approved by two authorisers, one being a member of the Governance Team, the other being the Governance Team Leader or the Policy, Partnerships and Governance Manager.

- Communications (ICT) Allowance

All elected members are provided with a laptop (or similar) for Council purposes. Full technical support is provided.

The Mayor is provided with a mobile phone for Council purposes and full payment of all expenses related to the use of the mobile phone is covered by Council.

Council does not provide a Communications ICT allowance in addition to the issuing of Council owned laptops with mobile data.

- Child Care Allowance

Elected members may claim a childcare allowance as set by the Remuneration Authority as a contribution towards expenses incurred by the member for childcare provided while the member is engaged on Council business.

Elected members are eligible to be paid a childcare allowance if:

- they are engaged on local authority business at the time of the childcare;
- they are the parent or guardian of the child, or is a person who usually has responsibility for the day-to-day care of the child (other than on a temporary basis); and
- the child is under 14 years of age; and
- the childcare is provided by a person who: is not a parent of the child or a spouse, civil union partner, or de facto partner of the elected member; and does not ordinarily reside with the elected member.

Elected members must provide evidence satisfactory to the local authority of the amount paid for childcare. Evidence must include an invoice, payment details and declaration. All claims for childcare allowance are to be approved by two authorisers, one being a member of the Governance Team, the other being the Governance Team Leader or the Policy, Partnerships and Governance Manager.

- Home Security Allowance
Council does not provide for the home security allowance.

Expenses

Actual and reasonable expenses incurred by elected members while undertaking Council business will be reimbursed in line with Council's Sensitive Expenditure Policy.

Effects and Risks

Non-compliance with this Policy could result in a breach of the Remuneration Authority rules.

Monitoring, Measurement and Review

This Policy is monitored using two approvers for all allowances as stated above. When the Remuneration Authority releases new determinations this Policy is reviewed for consistency.

This Policy will be reviewed following each triennial election or earlier if required.

Relevant Information

Local Government Act 2002, Sch 7 Clause 6

Authorisation

Authorised by: Manaia Te Wiata
Tumu Whakarae | Chief Executive Officer
Matamata-Piako District Council

Signed: _____
Manaia Te Wiata
Tumu Whakarae | Chief Executive Officer

Appendix – Council minutes 5 November 2025

Kaunihera | Council
5 November 2025



7.8 Elected Member Remuneration and Allowances

CM No.: 3105598

Te Kaupapa | Purpose

The purpose of this report is for Council to:

- confirm how the Governance Remuneration Pool which is set by the Remuneration Authority should be allocated to the 12 Councillors, and
- confirm availability of any of the allowances as set by the Remuneration Authority.

Rāpopotonga Matua | Executive Summary

The Remuneration Authority is the independent body responsible for setting remuneration for elected positions in Councils. Each Council is allocated a Governance Remuneration Pool (Pool), this is the total Pool for all Councillors. Individual Councils are responsible for allocating its Pool to its Councillors and the Pool must be fully allocated. The remuneration for the Mayor is also set by the Remuneration Authority but is separate from the Pool.

The Remuneration Authority also sets the rules for reimbursement of costs or allowances incurred by Elected Members while engaged on Council business.

Kaunihera | Council
5 November 2025



WHAKATAUNGA A TE KAUNIHERA | COUNCIL RESOLUTION

That:

1. Council confirms how the Governance Pool should be allocated and instructs staff to forward this to the Remuneration Authority for confirmation;

Option C: A formula for setting the remuneration is used to recognise roles of extra responsibility and workload.

- i) Deputy Mayor (This position exercises the same roles as other Elected Members and may be called on to attend events where the Mayor cannot attend. In addition, the Deputy Mayor is appointed to additional committees as part of this role. If the Mayor is absent or incapacitated, the Deputy Mayor must perform all of the responsibilities and duties of the Mayor)
Ratio of 1.4 - \$55,032.

Deputy Mayor James Sainsbury declared a conflict of interest and did not participate in voting of the motion.

Resolution number CO/2025/00010

Moved by: Cr J Thomas

Seconded by: Cr S Whiting

KUA MANA | CARRIED

WHAKATAUNGA A TE KAUNIHERA | Council Resolution

That:

- ii) Risk and Assurance Committee Member (This position exercises the same roles as other Elected Members and is also a member of the Risk and Assurance Committee who generally meet four to six times per year and have responsibility for assisting Council in fulfilling its overall responsibilities relating to financial reporting, external audit, internal audit, compliance and risk reporting, and reporting any areas of concern to Council.)
Number of Members 1 (Member of Risk and Assurance Committee only)
Ratio of 1.1 - \$43,239.
(Also see below vii Member of more than one Committee)
- iii) Te Manawhenua Forum Committee Member (This position exercises the same roles as other Elected Members and is also a member of Te Manawhenua Forum who generally meet six times per year and have responsibility for facilitating tangata whenua contribution to Council's decision making.)
Number of Members 1
Ratio of 1.1 - \$43,239.
- iv) Waharoa (Matamata) Aerodrome Committee Member (This position exercises the same roles as other Elected Members and is also a member of the Waharoa (Matamata) Aerodrome Committee who generally meet two to three times per year and have responsibility for making recommendations to Council in respect of the Aerodrome land, making decisions on access and parking arrangements that affect Raungaiti Marae and functions regarding the Reserve Management Plan under the Reserves Act.)
Ratio (see below vii Member of more than one Committee)
- v) Hauraki Gulf Forum (this position exercises the same roles as other Elected Members and is also a member of the Hauraki Gulf Forum who generally meet four times per year and have responsibility for the promotion and facilitation of

Kaunihera | Council
5 November 2025



<p>integrated management and the protection and enhancement of the Hauraki Gulf. Ratio of 1.1 - \$43,239.</p> <p>vi) Hauraki Scheme Subcommittee (or similar name once confirmed) (this position exercises the same roles as other Elected Members and is also a member of the Hauraki Scheme Subcommittee who generally meet two times per year and have responsibility for the provision of local community advice to Integrated Catchment Management Committee. Ratio (see below vii Member of more than one Committee).</p> <p>vii) Member of more than one Committee (as per above descriptions) Number of Members 2 Ratio of 1.15 - \$45,205.</p> <p>viii) Councillor (all other) Ratio of 1 - \$39,308.</p> <p>Resolution number CO/2025/00011 Moved by: Deputy Mayor J Sainsbury Seconded by: Cr S Whiting</p> <p style="text-align: right;">KUA MANA CARRIED</p>
<p>WHAKATAUNGA A TE KAUNIHERA COUNCIL RESOLUTION That:</p> <p>2. Council confirms its approach to Elected Member Allowances;</p> <p><u>A Vehicle-Kilometre Allowance</u> Council adopts the vehicle-kilometre allowance in accordance with the Remuneration Authority's Determination and Council's Sensitive Expenditure Policy</p> <p>Resolution number CO/2025/00012 Moved by: Cr A McGiven Seconded by: Cr D Horne</p> <p style="text-align: right;">KUA MANA CARRIED</p>
<p>WHAKATAUNGA A TE KAUNIHERA COUNCIL RESOLUTION That:</p> <p><u>B Travel-Time Allowance</u> Council adopts the travel-time allowance in accordance with the Remuneration Authority's Determination and Council's Sensitive Expenditure Policy</p> <p>Resolution number CO/2025/00013 Moved by: Deputy Mayor J Sainsbury Seconded by: Cr B Dewhurst</p> <p style="text-align: right;">KUA MANA CARRIED</p>

continued on next page...

Kaunihera | Council
5 November 2025



<p>WHAKATAUNGA A TE KAUNIHERA COUNCIL RESOLUTION That: <u>C Information or Communication Technology (ICT) Allowance</u> Council does not adopt an ICT allowance in addition to the issuing of Council owned laptops with mobile data.</p> <p>Resolution number CO/2025/00014 Moved by: Cr B Dewhurst Seconded by: Deputy Mayor J Sainsbury</p> <p style="text-align: right;">KUA MANA CARRIED</p>
<p>WHAKATAUNGA A TE KAUNIHERA COUNCIL RESOLUTION That: <u>D Childcare Allowance</u> Council adopts the childcare allowance in accordance with the Remuneration Authority's Determination and Council's Sensitive Expenditure Policy;</p> <p><i>Deputy Mayor James Sainsbury and Councillors Rewiti Vaimoso, Grace Bonnar and Tyrel Glass declared a conflict of interest and did not participate in discussion or voting of this motion.</i></p> <p>Resolution number CO/2025/00015 Moved by: Cr D Horne Seconded by: Cr J Thomas</p> <p style="text-align: right;">KUA MANA CARRIED</p>
<p>WHAKATAUNGA A TE KAUNIHERA COUNCIL RESOLUTION That: <u>E Home Security Allowance</u> Council does not adopt the home security allowance.</p> <p>Resolution number CO/2025/00016 Moved by: Cr S Whiting Seconded by: Cr A McGiven</p> <p style="text-align: right;">KUA MANA CARRIED</p>

7 Pūrongo me whakatau | Decision Reports

7.2 Approval of submission to RMA Reform-the Bills

CM No.: 3141765

Te Kaupapa | Purpose

The purpose of this report is to gain the Council's retrospective endorsement for the submissions on the Planning Bill and the Natural Environment Bill (the Bills) which were authored by the Council's RMA Policy Team.

Rāpopotonga Matua | Executive Summary

The Council's RMA Policy Team recently made submissions on the Bills and although much of this material has been workshopped with the Council, it has not yet formally endorsed it. The Bills propose to introduce a new system of separate management and regulation processes for the built and natural environments to replace the current Resource Management Act 1991 (RMA). Both Bills have a top-down, streamlining approach with increased Ministerial powers on a range of matters, reduced timeframes and consultation requirements, and an increased range of permitted activities. Many elements referred to in the Bills, such as the national policy direction, national standards, standardised zones, and specified permitted activities are signalled to be developed at a future time.

Tūtohunga | Recommendation

That:

1. **Council retrospectively endorses the submissions on the Planning Bill and the Natural Environment Bill**

Horopaki | Background

The Government has been progressing significant reform to the current resource management system, working towards the replacement of the RMA. On 9 December 2025, the Government introduced the two new Bills to replace the RMA. The Bills were referred to the Environment Committee on 16 December 2025 and opened for submissions until 13 February 2026. Staff lodged the submission, together with the Waikato Mayoral Forum letter on the matter of current legislation changes, which the Council decided they broadly supported, and a copy of the submission was circulated to Te Manawhenua Forum and to elected members.

The replacement legislation proposes two new Acts: The Planning Act and the Natural Environment Act. The key drivers of the reform are to simplify the planning system, reduce duplication, and cut unnecessary red tape, creating a more efficient and streamlined framework for managing New Zealand's natural and built environments.

Staff received comments from Te Manawhenua Forum on the 10 February 2026 as part of the standing RMA update item, and comments from elected members at a workshop on the 11 February 2026. Staff also had the opportunity to engage with Waikato Regional Council and other local Council staff during the development phase of the submission and were able to review the draft submissions from Waikato Regional Council, Waikato District Council, Taituarā, and the New Zealand Planning Institute, who all raised similar issues.

Ngā Take/Kōrerorero | Issues/Discussion

The submissions focus on the changes that have significant implications for Council, including but not limited to, the system's architecture and the role of local decision-making, public participation, regulatory relief and ensuring the new system can deliver well-functioning urban environments. Specifically, the submissions sought:

Interpretation. The submission sought for many terms to be defined, for example “significant” historic heritage, “no net loss of biodiversity” and “rural” to assist in future policy development, plan making and administration of the bills.

Consideration of Te Tiriti o Waitangi / Treaty of Waitangi. The submission sought the reinstatement of Cl 8 of the RMA relating to the consideration of the principles of the treaty to ensure iwi/ Māori have the same role in decision making and that treaty settlements continue to be given the same consideration.

Mana Whakahono ā Rohe agreements. The submission sought the inclusion of new agreements in addition to the recognition of existing and initiated agreements, the ability to review these agreements and the retention of measures related to their development.

Goals. The goals set the direction taken under the Bills and staff recommended best planning practice be followed by ensuring matters covered within the Bills were included into the goals, for example subdivision. This enables a robust top-down consideration of a topic through the objective, policy and rule framework.

Consideration of effects. The Bills propose to amend the level of effects that can be considered by lifting the baseline upwards, defining the range of effects that cannot be considered, and not allowing the consideration of effects between the Bills. The submission makes suggestions regarding how the consideration of effects could be approached in a more efficient and effective manner.

Consideration of the relationship between the Bills. The submission seeks that greater clarity is given to the detailed operational nature of the relationship between the two Bills. For example, it is unclear in the Planning Bill whether activities must also occur within the environmental constraints of the Natural Environment Bill. Another cause for concern is the Bills having varying definitions of infrastructure and considering effects differently.

Regulatory Relief System. The Bills have proposed a new regulatory relief system to compensate owners whose properties are subject to a specified rule, for example a scheduled heritage item or wāhi tapu site. The complexity and scale of this proposal, at a time of proposed local government reform and rates capping has made staff seek the proposal be deleted or significantly amended in line with the Taituarā submission. This is consistent with other submitters.

Implications of new permitted activity regime. The Bills propose a range of permitted activities that will require registration, fees, applications, conditions and monitoring. To avoid misunderstandings staff have sought these activities are called controlled activities, rather than permitted activities.

Increased focus on compliance and monitoring. The Bills propose a substantial increase in the numbers of activities to be monitored, which will have implications for resourcing, so staff have sought these proposed activities to be included into the Bills. Clarity was also sought around the proposed requirement for the development of a compliance and monitoring strategy in the context of Ministry statements that a national compliance and monitoring system is to be developed.

Spatial planning. Staff supported the mandatory spatial planning process, however raised concerns around the role of central government, the likely need for a liaison role to be developed to ensure timely processes and other matters such as integration with other statutory processes such the LTP. Significant concerns were also raised around timing, particularly the short timeframe between the gazetting of national standards and the notification of the regional spatial plan.

Preparation of plans. Staff have raised concerns around operational matters in the Bills such as limitations on who can be consulted, for example, in some instances councils are not included in early consultation processes. The timing of certain processes and who can be on a hearing panel has also been highlighted in the submission.

Increased flexibility. While staff supported some of the proposals for increased flexibility, they also sought that greater detail is provided to assist at the time of administration, for example the type, scale and location of activities that could utilise a resource consent to achieve a plan change.

Financial contributions. The submission sought an addition to the transitional provisions of the Bills to ensure the continuation of financial contributions until such time as development contributions are replaced with development levies.

Mōrearea | Risk

The submissions themselves are considered a low risk, with the goal being that their recommendations shape the future iterations of the Bills. As the authority responsible for contributing to spatial plans, developing land-use plans, administering, monitoring and enforcing any resource consents or designations it is important the Council has as much involvement in the formulation of the Bills and resulting related processes as possible.

Should the Bills as proposed by the Environment Committee become Acts (i.e. Council's submission points are ignored), this will have wide ranging implications for Council and their ability to operate effectively within the new streamlined environment.

Ngā Whiringa | Options

Given the Council's RMA Policy team has already submitted on the Bills, there are three options available to the Council. These are:

Option 1: Retrospectively endorse both submissions.

Options 2: Retrospectively endorse one submission but not the other.

Option 2: Do not endorse the submissions and direct staff to withdraw the submissions.

Recommended option

Option 1: Retrospectively endorse both submissions. The Bills represent a significant change from the current regime, and it is important that those who will ultimately administer the Bills are able to contribute to the process to shape the Bills to ensure efficient and effective processes and outcomes.





Ngā take ā-ture, ā-Kaupapahere hoki | Legal and policy considerations

This proposal will have some form of legal and policy impact on the Council. There are risks associated with the proposed changes in the Bills, including reduced ability of parties to participate in plan making process in a timely and effective manner, and reduced clarity regarding the management of effects between the Acts.

Ngā Pāpāhonga me ngā Whakawhitiwhitinga | Communications and engagement

The timeframe for making submissions was approximately two months from mid-December 2025 to mid-February 2026. Despite the short timeframe, staff received comments from Te Manawhenua Forum on the 10 February 2026 as part of the standing RMA update item, and comments from elected members at a workshop on the 11 February 2026. Staff also had the opportunity to engage with Waikato Regional Council and other local Council staff during the development phase of the submission and were able to review the draft submissions from Waikato Regional Council, Waikato District Council, Taituarā, and the New Zealand Planning Institute, who all raised similar issues.

Ngā Tāpiritanga | Attachments

- A. Submission of Matamata-Piako District Council to the Bills

- B. Appendix 1-Matamata-Piako District Council submission to the Planning Bill

- C. Appendix 2 - Submission of Matamata-Piako District Council to the Natural Environment Bill

- D. Waikato Mayoral Forum Letter


Ngā waitohu | Signatories

Author(s)	Carolyn McAlley Kaiwhakamahere Rautaki RMA Matua Senior RMA Policy Planner	
	Fiona Hill Kaiwhakamahere Rautaki RMA Matua Team Leader RMA Policy	

Approved by	Nathan Sutherland Pou Whakamahere Planning Manager	
	Ally van Kuijk Hautū Tipu me te Whakamatua Group Manager Growth & Regulation	



te kaunihera ā-rohe o
matamata-piako
district council

12 February 2026

Committee Secretariat
Environment Committee
Parliament Buildings
Wellington

Email: en.legislation@parliament.govt.nz

Dear Sir/Madam

Thank you for the opportunity to submit on the proposed Natural Environment Bill and Planning Bill ('the Bills'). Please find attached, at Appendix 1 & 2, Matamata-Piako District Council's (MPDC) submission.

The Council supports the overall intention to replace the Resource Management Act 1991 (RMA) and the intent to simplify the resource management system. MPDC acknowledges this proposal will change the way in which territorial authorities operate, however MPDC still wants to achieve the best possible outcome for our rural district while protecting the matters that are important to our community. MPDC are part of the Future Proof partnership and seek to maintain enduring relationships across the region at this time of change. The Waikato Mayoral forum, of which our MPDC Mayor is a part, have developed key messages on the Bills, which are broadly supported by MPDC and are attached to this submission. The mayoral forum messaging covers a range of reform areas, not just the Bills. MPDC supports the concern regarding the current level of proposed change in the local government sector, believing that it must be appropriately coordinated to prevent duplication and excessive costs.

MPDC has raised a range of concerns in their submission and highlights the following matters as requiring particular attention.

Te Tiriti o Waitangi | The Treaty of Waitangi. Both bills propose a markedly different approach to the consideration of the Treaty, and to the provisions that relate to Mana Whakahono ā Rohe agreements. Most notably, a provision for new agreements is not included in either Bill. MPDC is concerned that the application of a streamlining process to existing arrangements will not be able to give full regard to settlements developed under the RMA and seeks, subject to matters raised in the submission, that the status quo be maintained with C18 from the RMA being reinstated in the proposed Bills. MPDC is also concerned that the provisions will disproportionately affect iwi who have not settled.

Regulatory relief. Both Bills propose a new regulatory relief system to provide property owners with a possible range of relief if their properties are subject to a specified rule, such as an historic heritage site or a wāhi tapu. MPDC is opposed to this proposal. It increases risk and liability for the council. This approach is also proposed at a time when there is a proposal to cap rates. For MPDC this significant piece of work would involve, with retrospective investigations, consultation with 204 owners in relation to its 152 scheduled historic heritage items, 1700 owners for the 78 scheduled wāhi tapu sites, and over 130 owners for the 130 scheduled trees. MPDC supports the approach of the Taituarā submission in that the regulatory relief proposal is removed from the Bills or if retained significantly amended to reduce its risk and complexity.

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Timing of production of plans and strategies. Another focus of the MPDC submission is the tight timeframes proposed for a myriad of matters such as the reconsideration of treaty agreements within two years of the commencement of the Act, the development national direction in a timely manner to inform spatial planning, the development of regulatory relief proposals and the development of land use plans, and associated hearing and decision timeframes. While MPDC appreciates a focus on timeliness is important, there is a concern that the production of such complex pieces of work, particularly at the time of reform in the local government sector has the potential to compromise the quality and integration of these important processes. The submission suggests where timeframes could be amended to produce enhanced outcomes.

Integration between the Bills. MPDC does not contest the decision to separate planning, and environmental matters into the separate Bills, however, it considers the proposition that effects generated under one Bill cannot be considered under the other Bill is not only unrealistic, but it also does not provide for the best planning or environmental outcomes. MPDC seeks amendments to improve options where matters overlap and joint consideration should occur.

Spatial planning. MPDC supports a mandatory spatial planning process and the integration benefits this will bring the district and the region. The submission emphasises the importance of related processes, such as the development of national policy statements occurring in a timely fashion to enable the spatial plan to give full effect to national direction. The submission also raises concerns regarding the timing for producing spatial plans in relation to the production of other local government documents such as long-term plans, amidst a local government restructure.

Rural environment. MPDC is concerned that while the Goals of the Planning Bill seek to create well-functioning urban and rural areas, there is no further recognition of the rural environment within the Bill. The rural economy of the Matamata-Piako district makes a significant contribution to both the regional and national economies and its effective management is critical to the ongoing success of the district. MPDC has sought greater recognition of the rural environment and how it fits into the new planning regime.

Permitted activities. The bid to streamline planning processes is proposed to be achieved through an increase in permitted activities. While some permitted activities are as they are currently known, other permitted activities are required to be registered, have conditions and be subject to monitoring. MPDC seeks, to avoid misunderstanding, that these complex permitted activities are called controlled activities.

This submission (Appendices 1 & 2) will be endorsed at the next council meeting in early March. While MPDC does not wish to be heard, we look forward to the next steps in the development of the Bills and welcome the opportunity to comment on any issues raised in this submission.

Should you have any queries regarding this submission, please contact Fiona Hill, Team Leader, RMA Policy in the first instance, on fhill@mpdc.govt.nz.

Yours faithfully



Manaja Te Wiata
Chief Executive Officer
Matamata-Piako District Council

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Appendix 1 - Submission of Matamata-Piako District Council (MPDC) to the Planning Bill (PB)		
Additions = <u>underline</u>		
Deletions = Strikethrough		
Clause Number	Support or oppose	Discussion and Relief sought
Interpretation		
CI 3 Interpretation existing or initiated Mana Whakahono ā Rohe	Oppose in part	The proposed definition is constrained to existing or initiated Mana Whakahono ā Rohe agreements. MPDC considers this definition is limiting, especially given some iwi have not settled or others who are not yet resourced to start to develop these agreements. MPDC considers the definition should also include new Mana Whakahono ā Rohe agreements. Relief sought -The definition of “ <i>Mana Whakahono ā Rohe</i> ” should be expanded to include any new Mana Whakahono ā Rohe.
New Additional requirements for Mana Whakahono ā Rohe (MWāR)	Oppose in part	MPDC is concerned there are no transitional measures to follow for already initiated MWāR, no measures around developing new MWāR and no recognition of being an enduring document. MPDC is of the opinion that the PB needs to include such measures. Relief sought -The PB is amended to include transitional measures for already initiated Mana Whakahono ā Rohe agreements, and measures for new Mana Whakahono ā Rohe” as found in RMA s58L-s58U and confirm that Mana Whakahono ā Rohe agreements are enduring.
CI 3 Interpretation infrastructure	Oppose	MPDC is concerned there is no definition of infrastructure in the interpretation section, given the number of references to the term “ <i>infrastructure</i> ” in the PB. MPDC also notes there are defined terms “ <i>core infrastructure operation</i> ” and “ <i>core infrastructure operator</i> ” and there is a defined term “ <i>infrastructure</i> ” in schedule 5 in relation to infrastructure for a designation or an application to be approved as a designating authority. MPDC believes this does not assist with the efficient administration of the PB and seeks the bill is amended to provide greater clarity given the number of references around the term “ <i>infrastructure</i> ”, particularly as the RMA has a comprehensive definition which is then referred to by the NPS-I.

Appendix 1- Submission of Matamata-Piako District Council to the Planning Bill 1

		<p>Relief sought-The interpretation section is amended to include the definition “infrastructure” as it pertains to many references to infrastructure throughout the bill, and for any consequential amendments as required.</p>
<p>Cl 3 Interpretation</p> <p>New definition required</p> <p>Enjoyment of land</p>	<p>Oppose in part</p>	<p>MPDC seeks a new definition, “enjoyment of land” to assist in the administration of PB. This is of particular importance as this term is part of the Purpose (Cl4) of this Act.</p> <p>Relief sought: A definition of “<i>enjoyment of land</i>” is included in the interpretation section.</p>
<p>Cl 3 Interpretation</p> <p>New Definition required</p> <p>Significant history heritage</p>	<p>Support</p>	<p>The PB refers to significant historic heritage several times, for example in the Goals (cl 11.1. g. (iii)), however there is no definition of “significant” historic heritage. Given the wide-ranging implications historic heritage will have in terms of future processes such as spatial plans, land use plans and the development of regulatory relief processes, MPDC considers the PB must include a definition of significant historic heritage.</p> <p>Relief sought: The PB is amended to include a definition of significant historic heritage.</p>
<p>Cl 3 Interpretation</p> <p>New Definition required</p> <p>Unreasonably</p>	<p>Support</p>	<p>MPDC is concerned at the use of the term “unreasonably” in the following goal”: <i>Goal- (a) to ensure that land use does not unreasonably affect others, including by separating incompatible land use.</i> MPDC considers the term subjective and likely contestable at the time of consenting and monitoring. It is unclear as to the relationship between the consideration of effects in this goal and the effects regime contained in other parts of the PB.</p> <p>Relief sought: Amend the goal to remove the term “unreasonably”. Alternatively, the term is defined in the context of the consideration of effects.</p>
<p>Cl 4 Purpose</p>	<p>Oppose</p>	<p>MPDC is concerned the purpose of the PB “<i>The purpose of this Act is to establish a framework for planning and regulating the use, development, and enjoyment of land</i>” is ambiguous as it does not refer to subdivision, which can still be subject to a rule in a plan, and refers to the “enjoyment of land” an undefined term.</p> <p>Relief sought: Amend the purpose of the PB to include “subdivision”, and that “enjoyment of land” becomes a defined term.</p>

<p>CI 8 Treaty of Waitangi/Te Tiriti o Waitangi</p>	<p>Oppose</p>	<p>The PB materially changes how Te Tiriti o Waitangi will be implemented and MPDC is concerned Māori rights and interests are being diminished. MPDC is supportive of the essence of the Treaty of Waitangi/Te Tiriti o Waitangi being included into the PB in the same manner it is currently considered in the RMA.</p> <p>MPDC considers fulsome regard needs to be given to Treaty of Waitangi/Te Tiriti o Waitangi, rather than the current list of Crown responsibilities. MPDC considers the current and new MWāR agreement processes and iwi management plan could provide mechanisms to address current concerns on matters such as timely responses.</p> <p>Relief sought: MPDC seeks the Treaty provisions in the PB are amended to reflect clause 8-Treaty of Waitangi in the RMA, with any consequential changes as required.</p>
<p>CI 9 Crown to seek to enter arrangements to uphold Treaty settlement redress or arrangements</p>	<p>Oppose</p>	<p>MPDC seeks Treaty settlements are upheld as originally intended under the RMA. This will be easier if CI 8 of the PB is amended to reflect CI 8 of the RMA.</p> <p>In the event CI 9 is retained, MPDC considers this clause will materially change how Treaty settlement redress or arrangements operate in practice and could be diminished through processes associated with CI 9. MPDC considers settlement redress or arrangements must have the same or equivalent effect and the clause to the “<i>greatest extent possible</i>” is deleted as it is not appropriate to renegotiate these significant agreements. MPDC is concerned the PB requires the Crown to discuss how to give effect to existing settlements within two years and this is an unrealistic timeframe given the number of settlements to be discussed, just in Waikato alone, and creates a risk the deadline will lapse, potentially impacting Treaty Settlement obligations. In addition, how does this process then relate to the timeframes for the regional spatial plan and land use plans etc.? How can we advance these documents in absence of any agreements as to how settlement agreements are to be upheld?</p> <p>Relief sought: Treaty Settlements are upheld as originally intended under the RMA., or in the event CI 9 in the PB is retained, amend CI 9.1.2.a by deleting “<i>greatest extent possible</i>”, and amend CI 9(1)(2)(3) by removing the two-year timeframe for re-negotiating treaty settlements, and make further amendments with regard timing to reflect the need for regional spatial plan and land use plans etc to give effect to these settlements.</p>
<p>Part 2 Foundation Sub part 1 Core Provisions for decision making</p>		
<p>Goals New</p>	<p>Support</p>	<p>MPDC is concerned there are matters within the PB that will be subject to rules, which have not been referenced in the goals. This does not reflect best planning practice or conceptually represent the ‘funnel’, which is</p>

Appendix 1- Submission of Matamata-Piako District Council to the Planning Bill 3

		<p>essentially a cascade of considerations from matters of national importance and other matters, down through to objectives, policies and rules. The PB makes it clear that a matter must be in a goal to be able to be reflected further down the system. MPDC seeks that the PB is reviewed to ensure all relevant matters that will be subject to an objective, policy and rules framework are included into a goal</p> <p>Relief sought: Amend the goals to ensure that all matters within the PB that are to be subject to an objective, policy or rule are included in the goals.</p>
<p>CI 11 Goals</p>	Support	<p>MPDC is concerned with the mandate to implement the goals: <i>All persons exercising or performing functions, duties, or powers under this Act must seek to achieve the following goals subject to sections 12 and 45</i>, is too weak, particularly given the development of plan and rules are to implement to the goals, and should be strengthened.</p> <p>MPDC is also concerned and would welcome clarity at the reference and intention behind the statement “<i>achieve the following goals subject to sections 12 and 45</i>”. The statement appears to remove the overarching mandate that is expected from the term “goals” and that the content of national direction may not be subject to the goals in every instance.</p> <p>Relief sought: Amend CI 11 as follows: All persons exercising or performing functions, duties, or powers under this Act must seek to achieve <u>recognise and provide</u> the following goals subject to.... Amend CI 11 to provide clarity at the reference and intention behind the statement “<i>achieve the following goals subject to sections 12 and 45</i>”.</p>
<p>CI 11 Goals (a) (g) & (i) New matter Subdivision</p>	Support	<p>MPDC considers the Goals are incomplete and need to be amended to also recognise subdivision. Subdivision is a core function of local authorities and affects how land can be used in the future. It can also have significant implications for river access, access to cultural sites and historic heritage in terms of effects on heritage items. The goal related to Māori interests should also provide for the “use” of Māori land. Given the implications of these activities, the goals should be amended as sought in the relief below.</p> <p>Relief sought: Amend Goal (a) as follows: to ensure that <u>subdivision land use and development</u> does not unreasonably affect others, including by separating incompatible land uses: Relief sought: Amend Goal (g) as follows: to protect from inappropriate <u>subdivision, land use and development</u> the identified values and characteristics of— Relief sought: Amend Goal (i) as follows: to provide for Māori interests through—(iii) enabling the <u>use</u>, development and protection of identified Māori land.</p>

<p>CI 11 Goals (g) & (i) New matter Areas</p>	<p>Support</p>	<p>MPDC is concerned the Goals do not include the consideration of “<i>areas</i>”, only “<i>sites</i>” when discussing historic heritage and places of importance to Māori. Many places of importance to Māori, and important historic heritage sites are best captured as an area as the area contains important collective values that contribute to its significance. The goals need to be amended to reflect this important matter.</p> <p>Relief sought: Amend goal (g) to ensure that land does not unreasonably affect others, including by separating incompatible land uses:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ to protect from inappropriate development the identified values and characteristics of— <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ (iii) sites <u>and areas</u> of significant historic heritage: <p>Relief sought: Amend goal (g) to provide for Māori interests through—</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> (i) the identification and protection of sites <u>and areas</u> of significance to Māori (including wāhi tapu, water bodies, or sites in or on the coastal marine area); and
<p>CI 11 Goals (a)</p>	<p>Oppose in part</p>	<p>MPDC is concerned goal, (a) <i>to ensure that land use does not unreasonably affect others, including by separating incompatible land uses</i>, includes several undefined terms that will affect the ability to implement this goal. Clarification needs to be provided around the terms “<i>unreasonably affect</i>”, “<i>others</i>” and “<i>separating incompatible land uses</i>”.</p> <p>Relief sought: The terms “<i>unreasonably affect</i>”, “<i>others</i>” and “<i>separating incompatible land uses</i>” are either defined and included into the interpretation section of the planning bill or clarified as part of this goal.</p>
<p>CI Goals (b)</p>	<p>Oppose in part</p>	<p>MPDC is concerned goal, (b) <i>to support and enable economic growth and change by enabling the use and development of land uses a new term “economic change”</i>, has no defined meaning, with regard the nature or extent of the change, which will affect the ability to implement this goal.</p> <p>Relief sought: The interpretation section is amended to include a new definition of “<i>economic change</i>”.</p>
<p>CI 11 Goals (c)</p>	<p>Oppose in part</p>	<p>MPDC is concerned with the goal, (c) <i>to create well-functioning urban and rural areas</i>, as the term “<i>well-functioning urban and rural areas</i>”, has not been defined in the context of the PB, which will affect the ability to implement this goal. The National Policy Statement for Urban Development contains direction on what is well functioning for urban environments but not for rural environments. It would be of benefit to provide national direction on rural environments, which could include the matter of highly productive land.</p> <p>Relief sought: The interpretation section is amended to include the defined term “<i>well-functioning urban and rural areas</i>”, and consideration is given to a national policy statement on the rural environment.</p>
<p>CI 11 Goals (i)</p>	<p>Oppose</p>	<p>MPDC has submitted for s8 from the RMA to be rolled over to the PB and seeks that goal (i) is amended to reflect this position. MPDC are concerned goal (i) seeks to narrow the consideration of Māori interests to the small</p>

Appendix 1- Submission of Matamata-Piako District Council to the Planning Bill 5

		<p>range of defined matters, which is much reduced from that of the RMA and precludes Māori from their role as kaitiaki.</p> <p>Relief sought: Amend goal (i) of the PB to give the same regard in the goals as would be expected from the expanded consideration of the Treaty as sought in response to Cl 8 of the PB. In the event this approach is not accepted amend goal (i) as sought below.</p> <p>That Cl 11(i) is amended as follows: the reference to “participation” is amended to “<u>engagement</u>”</p> <p>Cl 11(i)i is amended as follows: the reference in Cl 11(1)(i)(ii) to “<i>sites of significance to Māori</i>” is expanded to include areas, and</p> <p>Amend relevant clauses to require statutory acknowledgements, relevant documents recognised by an iwi authority and applicable iwi participation legislation and existing or initiated Mana Whakahono ā Rohe are taken into account when a joint committee prepares a regional spatial plan, not just a Natural Environment Plan or a land use plan.</p>
<p>Cl 11 Goals</p> <p>Cl 56 National policy direction may restrict how goals may be achieved</p> <p>Cl 57 National direction to resolve conflicts between goals in both Acts</p>	Oppose	<p>MPDC is concerned in Cl 11 has not provided a hierarchy of the goals, but Cl 56 - National policy direction may restrict how goals may be achieved and Cl 57 provides to resolve conflicts between goals in both Acts and outlines how the goals are to be achieved. This creates tension between what is in the Bill and how it is to be interpreted.</p> <p>Relief sought: Provide methods to resolve conflicts between goals in the bill/s rather than be the subject of future national policy direction and not be the subject of a minister’s discretion.</p>
<p>Cl 12 Relationship between key instruments in</p>	Oppose	<p>MPDC is concerned the consideration of the natural environment is excluded from decisions made under the PB. Land use needs to occur within the environmental limits set by the natural environment plan. We recommend placing natural environment plans above land use plans in the hierarchy.</p>

decision making		Relief sought: Amend Cl 12 to place natural environment plans above land use plans in the hierarchy of key instruments to ensure that development occurs within environmental limits. Consequential amendments to other provisions within the Bill may be required to achieve this outcome.
Cl 13 Procedural Principles	Oppose	<p>MPDC considers “(e) <i>act in an enabling manner</i>” is superfluous to the requirements of this section, given that many councils already operate in this manner. MPDC considers there should be guidance regarding: the relationship between the procedural principles and the decision-making tests within the legislation, and guidance on acting proportionately to the scale and significance of the matter.</p> <p>Relief sought: Amend Cl 13 by deleting “(e) <i>act in an enabling manner</i>”. If it is retained, then develop guidance on this and the following matters: the relationship between the procedural principles and the decision-making tests within the legislation, and act proportionately to the scale and significance of the matter.</p>
Cl 14 Effects outside the scope of this Act Schedule 11 Amendments to other legislation Part 1 Amendments to RMA commencing 1 month after Royal Assent, Section 104	Oppose in part	<p>MPDC is concerned regarding the lack of clarity within Cl 14 and Schedule 11, particularly as the clause in Schedule 11 comes into force one month after enactment. There is also concern that some of the matters being excluded would contribute to the enjoyment of land such as side yards and height to boundary and the need for a dedicated outdoor space. The “enjoyment of land” forms part of the purpose of the PB and inclusion of these matters would also contribute significantly to the Cl 11-Goal “(c) <i>to create well-functioning urban and rural areas</i>”.</p> <p>With regard (a) <i>the internal and external layout of buildings on a site (for example, the provision of private open space)</i>: it is not clear if this clause also excludes yard setbacks, height to boundary and similar? MPDC is also concerned if the building/site relates to an historic heritage building/site or a site of significance to Māori, how would the impacts on these values be assessed if layout of buildings cannot be assessed? As currently drafted, this clause will lead to implementation difficulties and requires further clarity.</p> <p>With regard (c) <i>retail distribution effects</i>, as currently drafted, it appears to require decision makers to disregard retail distribution effects in all cases. A blanket exclusion risks unintended consequences for the strategic role, integrity, and long-term vitality of town centres and other identified local centres. If retail distribution effects are not assessed, what effect does that have on the existing physical resources in CBDs or business zones and the retail hierarchy and the maintenance of main streets? How does this impact applicants and administrators regarding developing and giving effect to the contents of regional spatial plans and undertaking traffic modelling?</p> <p>With regard, (e) <i>the visual amenity of a use, development, or building in relation to its character, appearance, aesthetic qualities, or other physical feature</i>, MPDC is unclear how effect will be given to the goal “(c) <i>to create</i></p>

		<p><i>well-functioning urban and rural areas</i>” if consideration cannot be given to visual effects. By way of example, how can visual effects in respect of yard setbacks be assessed.</p> <p>MPDC is also seeking a deletion from Schedule 11 - Part 1 Amendments to RMA commencing 1 month after Royal Assent, relating to s104(1) insert (1A). MPDC considers that (1A) should be deleted from the transitional measures as it is considered it will be too complicated to administer this clause given that many of the matters proposed to be outside the scope of effects are still part of the objective and policy framework of the RMA, which will be the primary document for some considerable time.</p> <p>Relief sought: Amend Cl 14 as follows:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Cl 14 is not to be administered as part of the transitional provisions, and • Amend (a) <i>the internal and external layout of buildings on a site (for example, the provision of private open space)</i> to provide certainty by clearly stating the matters to which it pertains, and • Delete (e) the visual amenity of a use, development, or building in relation to its character, appearance, aesthetic qualities, or other physical feature, or in the alternative provide guidance regarding the consideration of amenity regarding achieving the goals • Amend Cl 14(2) as follows, <ul style="list-style-type: none"> (2) This section does not restrict the management of – (a) (e) <i>the effects of natural hazards;</i> (f) <i>retail distribution effects where those effects are relevant to the function, viability, or strategic role of town centres or local centres within a planning framework,</i> and consequential amendments to give full effect to the amendments.
<p>Cl 15 Considering the adverse effects of activities</p>	<p>Oppose in part</p>	<p>MPDC is concerned with Cl 15(1)(a)(i) which includes a diluted threshold in terms of resolving the effects of activities, as “(i) adverse effects are to be avoided, minimised, or remedied, <i>where practicable</i>,”. MPDC considers these terms to be more effective by the removal of the phrase “<i>where practicable</i>”. In the alternative, guidance should be provided as to what “<i>where practicable</i>” means in this context.</p> <p>MPDC considers Cl 15(1)(a)(ii) requires guidance in relation to limits around offsetting or compensation, and instances where this is not acceptable. MPDC is also concerned at the lack of clarity around the proposed lower threshold when considering effects, as a less than minor adverse effect is proposed to be an effect that does not have to be considered Cl 15(4). To arrive at a decision an assessment is required, from both an applicant and the processing planner/engineer etc., as would also be the case for Cl “b) <i>must not consider a less than minor adverse effect unless the cumulative effect of 2 or more such effects create effects that are greater than less than minor</i>”. It is of interest to MPDC how this could be considered if an effect under the PB and the NEB could produce a cumulative effect that are greater than less than minor yet cannot be considered as the effects cannot be considered between the Acts, which is not an appropriate approach.</p>

		<p>In addition, there is also concern around the interaction between the PB and the NEB as effects cannot be considered between the Acts. Post consent there may also be the matter of both Acts being breached, and MPDC suggests that consideration should be given to how this would be managed/resolved.</p> <p>Relief sought:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Amend CI 15(1)(a)(i) as follows “(i) adverse effects are to be avoided, minimised, or remedied, where practicable” • Amend CI 15(1)(a)(ii) to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • provide clearer limits on when offsetting or compensation may be relied upon; • Amend CI 15(1)(b) to consider the potential of the cumulative impacts of effects under both Acts • Amend CI 15(5) to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • provide clearer, more objective criteria for determining what constitutes a “less than minor adverse effect”; • reduce reliance on subjective concepts such as “acceptable” and “reasonable”, and provide guidance on their meanings; • clarify how cumulative effects are to be assessed and when “less than minor” effects must be considered collectively; and • provide guidance to ensure consistent application of the threshold across decision-makers to reduce uncertainty and litigation risk, and • provide guidance as to how breaches of both Acts for one activity would be managed.
<p>Classification of activities</p>		

<p>CI 31 Principles for classifying activities</p>	<p>Oppose in part</p>	<p>MPDC is concerned at the ambiguity of subclause (a) in particular: <i>an activity should be classified as a permitted activity if—(i) the activity is acceptable, is anticipated, or achieves the desired level of use and development; or....</i> The clause as currently drafted is very broad. For example, if the activity of “mining” was deemed acceptable, anticipated and achieved the desired level of use and development, would that mean that mining was a permitted activity? MPDC suggests as a starting point that a permitted activity typically has a less than minor effect that can be achieved without special management conditions. The permitted activity should be the activity is acceptable, is anticipated, or achieves the desired level of use and development within expected bounds.</p> <p>Relief sought: Amend CI 31 by replacing subclause (a) with the wording below: “An activity should be classified as a permitted activity if the activity is acceptable, is anticipated, or achieves the desired level of use and development and: (i) the effects of the activity are less than minor; or (ii) a specific assessment of the activity or part of the activity is not required.”</p>
<p>CI 32 Consequences of permitted, restricted discretionary, or restricted discretionary activity classification</p>	<p>Oppose in part</p>	<p>MPDC is concerned, based on their review of the interpretation section, the PB contains two types of permitted activities, which appear to be: a. Permitted activity: Essentially requires a standard to be met, such as a boundary setback. b. Permitted activity rule: Where there are specific conditions to be met for carrying out a permitted activity. This could for instance be landscaping, noise attenuation etc...</p> <p>It would be helpful, if this is the intent, that these two types of permitted activities were recognised as separate subclauses in part of CI 32. This would assist in the development of the nationally standardised zones where these terms will be used</p> <p>MPDC also considers the intent of Permitted activity rules would be clearer if they were called controlled activities as this better reflects the need for the planning process involving registration, conditions, monitoring and fees.</p> <p>Relief sought: Amend CI 32 to clearly recognise the two types of permitted activities, and for permitted activity rules to be amended to be termed controlled activities.</p>
<p>Permitted activity rules</p>		
<p>CI 38 Permitted activity rules</p>	<p>Oppose in part</p>	<p>MPDC considers greater clarity should be provided around the types permitted activity rules that are expected, given the anticipated large number of these types of rules. Also, CI 38(4) provides for written approval to be valid for three years unless it is withdrawn. MPDC is concerned how a council monitors this and what happens if a</p>

		<p>person withdraws their approval part way through a project. MPDC questions what liability this may create and how it may affect the status of that project?</p> <p>Relief sought: Amend CI 38 to specify that activities that are to be registered permitted activities rule must be identified in nationally standardised zones and / or any bespoke provisions. MPDC also wants further clarity around a neighbours approval lasting three years, unless it is withdrawn and how this situation would be monitored.</p>
<p>CI 45 Matters to consider when making national instrument</p>	<p>Oppose</p>	<p>MPDC is concerned at the following clause (5) <i>If the proposed national instrument contains new content.</i> MPDC has assumed this clause applies to new content outside the scope of the goals. MPDC considers creating the ability to bring in new content outside the goals is not democratic and creates uncertainty for parties. MPDC considers this clause should be deleted to ensure new content can only be introduced through a notified process.</p> <p>Relief sought: Delete CI 5) CI 5 If the proposed national instrument contains new content, the Minister must consider all existing national instruments for the purpose of ensuring there is a coherent set of national instruments.</p>
<p>CI 46 Process for making national instrument</p>	<p>Oppose in part</p>	<p>While MPDC supports CI 46, which provides for iwi to comment on a draft of a national instrument, MPDC seeks other parties including councils to be provided with the same opportunity to review draft documents. It has the potential for undue influence from lobby groups or sectors. Subclause 46(4) should ensure any TAG established by the Minister is made up of experts in a wide range of fields that are of relevance to the matter, and those experts represent a balanced field of knowledge. This would negate any potential criticism of a TAG being populated with members who have a particular bias.</p> <p>Relief sought: Amend CI 46(1)(a) to provide for other parties to review a draft national instrument including councils, and amend subclause 46(4) to include an additional subclause 46(4)(a)(iii): "... with membership made up of experts from a wide range of relevant fields that represent a balanced view; and ..."</p>
<p>National policy direction</p>		

<p>CI 54 Purpose of National policy direction</p>	<p>Oppose in part</p>	<p>MPDC have previously, as part of the RMA reform process, requested increased national direction on various matters, and guidance regarding the resolution process when there is a conflict between national direction instruments. MPDC considers the approach outlined in this clause does still not provide clarity around conflicts between the different NPD instruments and only offers to “help” resolve conflicts in clause (b). MPDC is also unclear of the meaning of the word “particularise” in clause (a).</p> <p>Relief sought: Amend CI 54 to provide clearer guidance regarding the resolution of potential conflicts between national direction, and the meaning of the term “particularise”.</p>
<p>CI 56 National policy direction may restrict how goals may be achieved</p>	<p>Oppose in part</p>	<p>MPDC is concerned by the lack of integration between the two Bills. The national instruments should be key mechanism to integrate the Bills, yet the Minister is not required to consider effects on the natural environment when making national policy direction relating to the achievement of goals. While CI 67 is explicit in stating that regional spatial plans must implement national instruments under both Acts in a way that provides for use and development within environmental limits and Schedule 2 clause 2 requires regional spatial plans to be consistent with environmental limits, this is strategically constrained by the national instruments they are implementing.</p> <p>Relief sought: Amend CI 56(2) by adding a new subclause: <i>“the direction ensures that use and development of the built environment occurs within environmental limits”</i>.</p>
<p>National Standards</p>		
<p>CI 60 What national standards can do</p>	<p>Support in part</p>	<p>MPDC supports the direction the standards will provide and would like to understand the timing of these as the standards outline so many of the requirements for plans and how they will be structured. MPDC is particularly concerned given the timing requirements for the development of a spatial plan, particularly if the standards are directing the development of the spatial plan.</p> <p>Relief sought: Clarity is provided regarding the development of standards in relation to the plan development process.</p>
<p>CI 60 (5) (5) National standards may empower territorial authorities to charge for monitoring any specified permitted</p>	<p>Support in part</p>	<p>MPDC supports the ability to be able to continue to charge for monitoring, however, recognises there will be a substantive change in the scale of what is to be monitored, which will have significant resourcing and skill implications for the district. This clause is related to the development of the monitoring and compliance strategy sought in CI 272 and discussed later in this submission. MPDC considers there would be benefit in identifying the specified permitted activities, proposed to be developed in the upcoming standards, in the PB instead, to better inform councils around resourcing and in the development of the monitoring and compliance strategy.</p> <p>Relief sought: Amend CI 60(5) to include the specified permitted activities where charges would be sought for monitoring to better inform council resourcing and the development of the monitoring and compliance strategy.</p>

activities in the standard.		
CI 62 Amendments to national standards without full process	Oppose	MPDC continues to be concerned regarding the ability provided in this clause to allow the Minister to amend national standards without a full process. MPDC has previously submitted against this type of clause as part of earlier RMA reform processes. MPDC considers this to be undemocratic and creates uncertainty. Relief sought: Delete CI 62.
Purpose of spatial plans and other amendments associated with spatial plans		
CI 67 Purpose of regional spatial plans CI 72 Ministerial appointment to spatial plan committee Schedule 1 – Transitional, savings, and related provisions Schedule 2 Spatial plans Schedule 3 Further provisions relating to plans	Support in part	Overall MPDC is supportive of regional spatial plans but has concerns over timing, cost and the relationship between the regional spatial plan and private plan changes. MPDC agrees with the Taituara submission, in that the 15-month timeframe for notification of the regional spatial plan (following royal assent of the PB) is too tight. For the reasons explained MPDC considers it will lead to increased costs and unintended consequences. It is critical that an integrated suite of national direction instruments is in place prior to the Regional Spatial Plan being prepared. As it currently stands there is only four months between when the first suite of national policy direction and national standards is to be published and the notification of the Regional Spatial Plan. It is simply not enough time to understand national policy direction and standards including environmental limits, research where and how they are to be applied, and undertake the administrative tasks to notify the spatial plan. (By way of example, Schedule 2 Cl 2 Contents of Regional Spatial Plans lists the mandatory matters to be included one of which is the spatial implications of environmental limits). Furthermore, the second suite of national direction is to be published after the notification of the spatial plan. This is not an effective way forward and will lead to increased costs and a regional spatial plan that contains inaccuracies. It is important the appropriate amount of time is provided to develop a regional spatial plan that incorporates national direction in a meaningful manner. Whilst supportive of regional spatial plans, MPDC is concerned about the increased cost regional spatial plans and their associated implementation plans will place on the ratepayers of the district. MPDC is strongly of the opinion that ways in which the costs can be managed is through: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> revising the timeframes, ensuring there is a representative from central government involved with each regional spatial plan. This will foster greater collaboration between central and local government and assist in sharing of resources.

<p>Schedule 11 Amendments to other legislation</p>		<p>The person/people may act as an advisor to the Spatial Plan Committee rather than a committee member of the Committee, and</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> reconsidering whether it is necessary for each council to include a statement on the implementation of regional spatial strategy within the Annual Report (Schedule 11 Amendments to Local Government Act). The audit requirements of the Annual Report are a significant cost to ratepayers and using this this mechanism will add to this cost <p>MPDC is concerned that Schedule 3, CI 52 Grounds for rejecting request for a private plan change has no relationship with the Regional Spatial Plan. Whilst MPDC understands the intent of providing a degree of flexibility it is also noted as part of the Regional Spatial Plan process key designation corridors can be identified. It would seem more efficient to include change in land use within a designation corridor as a reason for a Council to reject an application for a private plan change.</p> <p>Relief sought:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Either amend Schedule 1, CI 4 so the notification of the regional spatial plan is six months after the second suite of national direction under both the PB and the NEB or amend the current timeframe from 15 months to 24 months. Amend CI 72 to require the Minister to appoint a central government representative to the spatial plan committee or act as an advisor to the Committee Amend Schedule 3, CI 52 to identify where an applicant is contrary to a Regional Spatial Plan, and designations, in particular, as a reason to refuse a request for a private plan change. Amend Schedule 11 so the Annual Report is not the reporting mechanism to report on implementation of the Regional Spatial Plan. As an alternative, MfE could co-ordinate reporting on the implementation of Regional Spatial plans and these reports could be published on the MFE website. If the Annual Report is retained as the reporting mechanism, it should be clear within the legislation that the requirements only apply once actions have been identified for the local authority within the implementation plan.
<p>CI 88 Requirements for further evaluation report</p>	<p>Oppose in part</p>	<p>MPDC is concerned this clause seeks further evaluation reports for a proposed plan only in the instance of a significant change to that plan. Clarification is required as to what constitutes a ‘significant change’. MPDC is concerned that only requiring a further evaluation report when there is a significant change also precludes a record of the reasoning behind a change to the proposed plan document and creates the potential to reduce the understanding of the plan document.</p> <p>Relief sought: Amend CI 88 to clarify what constitutes a significant change and ensure an evaluation report is required for all changes to the plan excluding very minor changes.</p>
<p>Regulatory Relief</p>		

<p>CI 92 Obligations relating to regulatory relief</p>	<p>Oppose</p>	<p>MPDC has reviewed this clause and the associated clauses in Schedule 3 and has significant concerns related to this proposal given its potential significant impact on both Council funding, and resourcing to manage the development of this type of plan and landowners' consultation. These provisions are also likely to have a significant impact on the scheduling of historic heritage, wāhi tapu, and indigenous biodiversity. Currently MPDC has identified for its 152 scheduled historic heritage items in its District Plan. There are 204 property owners associated with these items. For the 78 scheduled wāhi tapu sites, there are 1700 associated property owners, and for the 130 scheduled trees in the District Plan, most have one to two property owners associated with them.</p> <p>In addition, the provisions in of themselves contain drafting errors, ambiguous terminology, for example “<i>significant impact</i>” and “<i>reasonable use</i>”. They also introduce conflicting requirements for local authorities to compensate owners for places and locations they are required to identify and protect and manage under both the PB and the NEB. MPDC considers if changes cannot be made to these provisions they should be removed from the PB, or in the alternative changes are made to the provisions to avoid the substantial risk these provisions pose to local government. MPDC is supportive of the discussion in the Taituarā submission and its proposed approach and seeks the same relief.</p> <p>Relief sought: Adopt the approach sought in the Taituarā submission, to remove the regulatory relief provisions, or in the alternative, provide the specified amendments in the Taituarā submission.</p>
<p>Future Provisions</p>		
<p>CI 93 Land use plan or proposed land use plan may make area subject to future provisions</p>	<p>Support in part</p>	<p>MPDC is supportive of this clause, which is part of a suite of clauses to enable people to move from deferred zones to live zoning without a plan change process. Future provisions allow land to be subject to temporary planning rules, with the removal of these provisions based on a specified date when a rule (CI 94) is deemed to be met (CI 96).</p> <p>MPDC considers there would be benefit in providing guidance on how consents are assessed during this interim period, including any potential overlap with regulatory relief. MPDC also considers there would be benefit in defining the terms “<i>temporary provisions</i>” and “<i>future provisions</i>” to provide clarity in administration of these provisions.</p> <p>Relief sought: Amend the interpretation section to provide definition of the terms “<i>temporary provisions</i>” and “<i>future provisions</i>” and guidance on how consents are assessed during this interim period.</p>
<p>Changing plan provisions without using Schedule 3 process if authorised by planning consent</p>		

7 Pūrongo me whakatau | Decision Reports

7.3 Approval of draft Rates Remission and Postponement Policy for consultation

CM No.: 3144362

Te Kaupapa | Purpose

The purpose of this report is to approve the draft Rates Remission and Postponement Policy and associated Statement of Proposal for consultation.

Rāpopotonga Matua | Executive Summary

This report recommends that Council adopt the draft Remission and Postponement of Rates Policy and associated Statement of Proposal for community consultation.

The proposed changes to the policy include:

- One new remission for additional kerbside collection targeted rates for small stand-alone dwellings (granny flats).
- Making provision for rates penalties to be remitted at the discretion of delegated staff where exceptional, compassionate, or otherwise compelling circumstances exist, that the policy does not otherwise allow for.
- Increasing the threshold for very low value properties where it is more economical to write-off the rates generated rather than collect them.
- Addition of a purpose and scope section and minor update in preparation for transition to Waikato Waters Limited.

The draft Policy and the Statement of Proposal will be circulated separately.

Tūtohunga | Recommendation

That:

1. **The information be received**
2. **Council adopts the Statement of Proposal for the draft Rates Remission and Postponement Policy for consultation.**
3. **Council adopts the draft Rates Remission and Postponement Policy for consultation.**
4. **Council authorise staff to make any minor amendments needed to the draft Rates Remission and Postponement Policy and Statement of Proposal prior to consultation.**

Horopaki | Background

Council's Rates Remission and Postponement Policy (Policy) sets out how and when Council can remit or postpone payment on rates. Council can only remit rates if they have adopted a rates remission policy under section 85 of the Local Government (Rating) Act 2002.

Remission of rates involves reducing the amount owing or waiving collection of rates altogether. Postponement of rates means that the payment of rates is not waived in the first instance but delayed for a certain time, or until certain events occur. The overall objective of remissions is to

provide rates relief in situations to support both the fairness and equity of the rating system, and the overall wellbeing of the community.

In general, all ratepayers are expected to pay rates. However, rates postponement and remission policies allow Council to recognise financial or other special circumstances where ratepayers may require support to manage their rates payments. While there are some exceptions outlined in legislation, in general, all land is rateable. However, there may be circumstances where ratepayers need support to manage their rates. Councils can choose to provide for rates postponement or remit rates through policies stating the objectives and criteria for postponement or remission.

In setting and granting remissions, it is important to remember that any amount remitted then needs to be recovered from, or shared across other ratepayers.

In order to allow rates relief where it is considered fair and reasonable to do so, Council is required to adopt policies specifying the circumstances under which rates will be considered for remission. There are various types of remission, and the circumstances under which a remission will be considered for each type may be different. The conditions and criteria relating to each type of remission are set out in the various parts of the Policy.

Following recent legislative changes and the Waikato Waters Limited transition date, changes to the Policy are proposed. Consultation is required, in accordance with the principles set out in section 82 of the Local Government Act 2002.

Ngā Take/Kōrerorero | Issues/Discussion

Council is required by legislation to review the Policy at least every six years, but it may be reviewed more often when considered necessary.

Additional remission proposed

A review of the current Policy was considered necessary, particularly to address an unintended consequence of our rating policies, brought about by a recent change by Government to the rules making it easier for people to build granny flats (referred to in the Building Act as a “Small Stand-alone Dwelling”, and in the Resource Management Act 1991 as a “Detached Minor Residential Unit”).

Under Council’s current rating policies, the kerbside collection targeted rate is charged on a uniform basis per separately used or inhabited part of a rating unit (SUIP)¹ to which the service is provided. The addition of a granny flat would therefore trigger an additional targeted rate for kerbside collection to be added to the rate account for the property (for 2025/26 that would equate to an additional charge of \$307.68).

However, in some cases the addition of a granny flat or small dwelling may in fact cause no significant additional impact on the kerbside service, especially if there are no additional refuse or recycling bins required to service the property.

Staff have proposed the addition of a new part to the draft remissions policy - Part 12, a remission of additional kerbside collection targeted rates for small stand-alone dwellings. In summary, if no additional refuse and recycling bins are requested by the ratepayer following the completion of the additional small dwelling, then the remission would allow staff to

¹ A SUIP is defined as follows: A separately used or inhabited part of a rating unit is any part of a rating unit that is or is able to be separately used or inhabited by the ratepayer, or by any other person or body having a right to use or inhabit that part by virtue of a tenancy, lease, licence or other agreement.

remove the additional kerbside targeted rate.

In the event that the ratepayer subsequently requests additional refuse and recycling bins any time in the future, the kerbside collection targeted rate can be applied pro-rata from the date the additional service is supplied, in accordance with Council's current fees and charges policy.

Other minor changes proposed

Other minor changes to the policy proposed include:

- Addition of a Purpose and Scope section to provide context to the reader.
- Making provision for rates penalties to be remitted at the discretion of delegated staff where exceptional, compassionate, or otherwise compelling circumstances exist, that the policy does not otherwise allow for (see Part 2 of the draft policy). Currently our policy for remitting rates penalties makes no allowance for penalties to be remitted outside of the strict criteria set. For rates staff administering this policy on a day-to-day basis with our customers, it makes their job extremely difficult. On review, many councils' policies do allow for staff to apply a level of discretion, and any risk associated with doing so can be managed within appropriate financial delegations.
- The threshold for remitting rates on very low-value properties - typically small utility parcels with no services - has been unchanged for many years. Revaluations have increased the values of these properties, even though the original intent of the remission remains. Staff therefore recommend the threshold values be increased to a capital value of \$6,000 (currently \$3,000) or a land value of less than \$1,000 (currently \$500).
- Waikato Waters Limited (WWL)
 1. Inclusion of the following wording to address transition arrangements for WWL:
 - *Matamata-Piako District Council will continue to set and assess all water-related rates until the transition of water and wastewater service delivery to Waikato Waters Limited (WWL) occurs from 1 October 2026.*
 - *From 1 October 2026, WWL will assume responsibility for the provision of drinking water and wastewater services across the district.*
 - *Following the transition date, Council may continue to set and assess water-related rates on behalf of WWL, where agreed by both organisations. During this interim period:*
 - *Water-related charges collected by Council will be transferred to WWL; and*
 - *Council's role will be limited to acting as WWL's billing agent, not the service provider.*
 - *Once WWL's charging systems are live, the rates remission and postponement provisions in this Policy will no longer apply to any water or wastewater charges set or billed by WWL. Ratepayers seeking financial support for WWL issued charges will need to apply directly to WWL under its own policies.*
 2. Inclusion of the following note in water-related remission sections:

This remission applies only while Council sets and assesses the relevant water-related rate. It does not apply to any charges set or billed by Waikato Waters Limited (WWL) from the date WWL assumes responsibility for charging or remission functions.

Following the transition of water and wastewater services to WWL from 1 October 2026, Council may continue to set and assess water-related rates on behalf of WWL, where agreed between both organisations, until WWL’s billing and customer-support systems are fully operational. During this interim period, this remission only applies while Council is still issuing water rates (including those on WWL’s behalf). Once WWL begins setting charges to customer’s directly, Council’s remission will no longer apply and customers will need to use WWL’s own remission and/or postponement policies.

Mōrearea | Risk

No specific risks have been identified relating to the recommendations contained in this report.

Ngā Whiringa | Options

In order to be able to provide for the remission and/or postponement of rates, Council must adopt a policy under section 85 of the Local Government (Rating) Act 2002.

The following options are available to Council:

Option One – Status Quo; do not adopt the Policy for consultation as proposed	
This option allows for Council to NOT adopt the Policy for consultation as proposed.	
Council can choose not to adopt the Rates Remission and Postponement Policy for consultation. Therefore, the current Policy 2024-2034 would remain in effect.	
Advantages	Disadvantages
A policy would remain in place to allow Council to remit or postpone rates.	The Rates Remission and Postponement Policy would not provide for the equitable outcomes or administrative improvements sought in the proposed amendments to the policy.
	The community would not be able to provide feedback on the Policy for Council’s consideration.
Option Two – Revoke current Policy	
This option allows for Council to revoke the current Policy	
Council can choose to revoke the current Rates Remission and Postponement Policy. This means that Council would not have a policy and would be unable to remit or postpone rates.	
Advantages	Disadvantages
No one would be eligible for a rates remission, however Council may collect more in rates and penalties on late payments.	No one would be eligible for a rates remission, removing the ability to remit rates in certain circumstances where it would otherwise be reasonable to do so.
	Revocation of certain policies would be in breach of our role under section 102 of the Local Government Act 2002 that states that we are required to adopt a policy on the remission

	and postponement of Māori freehold land.
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Option Three – Adopt the draft Policy for consultation

This option allows for Council to adopt the draft Policy for consultation with the community

Council can choose to adopt the draft Rates Remission and Postponement Policy for consultation as circulated separately to this report.

Advantages	Disadvantages
The new policy on the remission of additional kerbside collection targeted rates for small stand-alone dwellings is expected to provide a fair and equitable outcome for ratepayers.	None identified.
Transitional arrangements would be made for remissions in relation to Waikato Waters Limited.	
A policy would remain in place to allow Council to remit or postpone rates.	
The community will have the opportunity to provide feedback and contribute to the decision-making process.	
Following consultation, Council can choose to make amendments to the draft Policy following community feedback.	

Option Four – Adopt the draft Policy with further amendments for consultation

This option allows for Council to suggest further amendments be made prior to adopting the draft Policy for consultation with the community

Council may identify further amendments required to the draft Rates Remission and Postponement Policy prior to community consultation.

Advantages	Disadvantages
This option allows Council to identify any further amendments that may be required to the draft Rates Remission and Postponement Policy prior to community consultation.	No disadvantages identified.

Recommended option

The preferred option is **option three** – Council adopt the draft Rates Remission and Postponement Policy for consultation as per the recommendations of this report.

Ngā take ā-ture, ā-Kaupapahere hoki | Legal and policy considerations

Council can only remit rates if they have adopted a rates remission policy under section 85 of the Local Government (Rating) Act 2002. Other legislation that applies is:

Section 102 provides for Council to consult on a draft policy or amend an existing policy in accordance with section 82 of the Local Government Act 2002. Consultation is required in a manner that gives effect to the requirements of section 82.

- Policy on the remission of rates: other categories - *Section 20 of the Local Government (Rating) Act 2002 states that Council must treat two or more rating units as one if they are owned by the same person(s), used as one unit, are contiguous or separated only by road, rail, drain, water race, river, or stream.*
- Policy on the remission of rates on Maori freehold land - *Statutory requirement under section 114 of the Local Government (Rating) Act 2002.*
- Policy on the postponement of rates on Maori freehold land - *Statutory requirement under section 115 of the Local Government (Rating) Act 2002.*

The Local Government (Rating of Whenua Māori) Amendment Act 2021

The Local Government (Rating of Whenua Māori) Amendment Act 2021 came into force in 2021.

Among other things it:

- a) expanded the purpose of the Local Government (Rating) Act 2002 to include facilitating the administration of rates in a manner that supports the principles set out in the Preamble to Te Ture Whenua Māori Act 1993;
- b) expanded non-rateability to unused rating units of Māori freehold land;
- c) introduced a statutory remission for Māori freehold land under development;
- d) requires a council's policy on the remission and postponement of rates on Māori freehold land to support the principles set out in the Preamble to Te Ture Whenua Māori Act 1993, by 1 July 2022.

The principles in the preamble are wide ranging. The most relevant to local government are:

“And whereas it is desirable to recognise that land is a taonga tuku iho of special significance to Māori people and, for that reason, to promote the retention of that land in the hands of its owners, their whanau, and their hapu, and to protect wahi tapu: and to facilitate the occupation, development, and utilisation of that land for the benefit of its owners, their whanau, and their hapu”.

The inclusion of a policy on the remission and postponement of rates on Māori freehold land was included in Council's Rates Remission and Postponement Policy following consultation undertaken in May 2023.

Local Government Act 2002 (LGA 2002) Decision-making requirements

Having regard to the decision making provisions in the Local Government Act 2002 and Councils Significance and Engagement Policy, a decision in accordance with the recommendations is assessed as having a medium-low level of significance.

Whilst the Policy forms a critical part of Council's rating system and supports the Council's overall purpose and the achievement of community outcomes, previous submissions have demonstrated a low level of interest in the Policy.

As effectively only minor changes are proposed following this review, it is determined that the Policy will attract a low level of public interest. However, the Policy directly affects those people/properties for which will have their rates remitted and a targeted approach to consultation is planned. Out of District ratepayers will also need to be considered, as both occupiers and owners are affected by the Policy.

It is considered that the Policy may be of interest to Māori/iwi organisations as a policy is included that addresses the remission and postponement of rates on Māori freehold land (this policy was included following consultation in May 2023).

All Council decisions, whether made by the Council itself or under delegated authority, are subject to the decision-making requirements in sections 76 to 82 of the LGA 2002. This includes any decision not to take any action.

Section 102 of the Local Government Act 2002 provides for Council to consult on a draft policy or amend an existing policy in accordance with section 82 of the Local Government Act 2002. Consultation will be conducted in a manner that gives effect to the requirements of section 82.

Local Government Act 2002 decision making requirements	Staff/officer comment
Section 77 – Council needs to give consideration to the reasonable practicable options available.	Options are addressed above in this report.
Section 78 – requires consideration of the views of Interested/affected people	Council will share the draft Policy with groups/individuals that it considers will be affected or who may have an interest in the relevant issues and will give due consideration to the views and preferences received through the consultation process.
Section 79 – how to achieve compliance with sections 77 and 78 is in proportion to the significance of the issue	The Significance and Engagement Policy is considered above. This issue is assessed as having a medium-low level of significance.
Section 82 – this sets out principles of consultation.	Consultation will give effect to section 82 of the LGA which includes the following principles: (a) Persons who will or may be affected by, or have an interest in, the decision or matter should be provided with reasonable access to relevant information in a manner and format that is appropriate to their preferences and needs. (b) Persons who will or may be affected by, or have an interest in, the decision or matter should be encouraged to present their views to Council. (c) Persons who are invited or encouraged to present their views to Council should be given clear information concerning the purpose of the consultation and the scope of the decisions to be taken following the consideration of views presented. (d) Persons who wish to have their views on the decision or matter considered by Council should be provided with a reasonable opportunity to present those views to the local authority in a manner and format that is appropriate to their preferences and needs. (e) Views presented to Council should be received with an open mind and should be given due consideration. (f) Persons who present views to the

	Council should have access to a clear record or description of relevant decisions made by Council and explanatory material relating to the decisions.
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Policy Considerations

To the best of the writer’s knowledge, this recommendation is not significantly inconsistent with nor is anticipated to have consequences that will be significantly inconsistent with any policy adopted by this local authority or any plan required by the Local Government Act 2002 or any other enactment.

Ngā Pāpāhonga me ngā Whakawhitiwhitinga | Communications and engagement

Pursuant to section 82 of the Local Government Act 2002, consultation that Council undertakes in relation to any decision or other matter must be undertaken in accordance with certain principles in mind. This includes allowing those have an interest in, or are affected by a decision to be given the relevant information and encouraged to present their views to Council.

Where Council is required to consult in accordance with section 82 it must make the following publicly available:

- the proposal and reasons for the Policy.
- an analysis of the reasonably practicable options identified,
- a draft document of the Policy.

The Statement of Proposal and the draft Policies which addresses these requirements will be circulated separately.

It is proposed to use a range of communication tools to encourage the community to take part in the consultative process. Māori/iwi organisations and those who have submitted on the Policies previously will be contacted to inform them of the opportunity to provide feedback.





Timeframes

The below table sets out key dates for the consultation process:

Key Task	Dates
Draft Policy and Statement of Proposal approved for consultation - Council meeting	4 March 2026
Public consultation/engagement period	16 March to 19 April 2026
Hearings of submitters - Council meeting	12 May 2026 (if required) 13 May 2026
Deliberations/decision making - Council meeting	27 May 2026
Adoption of Policy - Council meeting	24 June 2026
New Policy applicable	1 July 2026

Te Tākoha ki ngā Hua mō te Hapori me te here ki te whakakitenga o te Kaunihera | Contribution to Community Outcomes

Matamata-Piako District Council's Community Outcomes are set out below:

MATAMATA-PIAKO TŌ MĀTOU WĀHI NOHO OUR PLACE		MATAMATA-PIAKO DISTRICT COUNCIL TE ARA RAUTAKI STRATEGIC DIRECTION	
TŌ MĀTOU WHAKAKITENGA OUR VISION			
Matamata-Piako District is vibrant, passionate, progressive, where opportunity abounds. 'The heart of our community is our people, and the people are the heart of our community.'			
TŌ MĀTOU WHĀINGA MATUA OUR PRIORITIES (COMMUNITY OUTCOMES)			
			
He wāhi kaingākau ki te manawa A place with people at its heart	He wāhi puawaitanga A place to thrive	He wāhi e poipoi ai tō tātou taiao A place that embraces our environment	He wāhi whakapapa, he wāhi hangahanga A place to belong and create

The community outcome relevant to this report are as follows:

- He wāhi puawaitanga | A place to thrive

The Policy supports economic wellbeing of communities by providing opportunities for rates remissions and postponement in certain circumstances. The overall objective is to provide rates relief in situations to support both the fairness and equity of the rating system, and the overall wellbeing of the community.

Pānga ki te pūtea, me te puna pūtea | Financial Cost and Funding Source

A consultation process to amend the Policy is required. The associated costs of this include the placement of public notices and staff costs in supporting the submissions and hearings process.

Ngā Tāpiritanga | Attachments

[A↓](#). Proposed Draft Rates Remission and Postponement Policy 4 March 2026



Ngā waitohu | Signatories

Author(s)	Larnia Rushbrooke Pou Pūtea, Ratonga Pakihi Finance & Business Services Manager	
	Laura Hopkins Kaitohu Kaupapahere Mātāmua Senior	

	Policy Advisor	
Approved by	Kelly Reith Hautū Rangatōpū, Tāngata me ngā Hononga Group Manager Corporate, People & Relationships	

7 Pūrongo me whakatau | Decision Reports

7.4 Reform Submissions for Council Approval

CM No.: 3145001

Te Kaupapa | Purpose

The purpose of this report is to provide Council the final submissions on the various proposed central government reforms that have been submitted.

Rāpopotonga Matua | Executive Summary

Several central government reforms are underway, and Council has prepared submissions on relevant proposals. These submissions were developed through Council workshops held on 4 and 11 February 2026 and submitted to the Department of Internal Affairs (DIA) by their respective deadlines. Council approval is required in accordance with the Submissions to External Organisations Policy.

Tūtohunga | Recommendation

That:

1. The information be received.
2. Retrospective approval is given to the following Council submissions:
 - a) Simplifying Local Government submission
 - b) Going for Growth – Development Levies System submission
 - c) Rates Target Model submission

Horopaki | Background

Several central government reforms are underway, Council have workshopped these reforms and provided submissions by the due date.

Council's Submissions to External Organisations Policy (attached) says that approval of 'Council' submissions that focuses on high level strategic matters like policy reform and funding require approval from Council or delegated Committee.

Under the Policy, approval may be delegated to the Mayor or Deputy Mayor in time-sensitive cases (Elected Members will still have the opportunity to input).

Simplifying Local Government:

The Government is proposing to simplify local government in two steps:

- **Step 1:** Instead of electing separate regional councillors, the mayors will collectively form a Combined Territories Board (CTB). The CTB will lead regional issues and govern the regional council, taking over all of the current regional council's roles and obligations. We are invited to provide views about the alternative options of appointing one or more Crown Commissioners (appointed by the Government) to lead or join the board.
- **Step 2:** The CTB will develop a plan for how the councils in the region can work together more effectively and efficiently (called a Regional Reorganisation Plan). The plan will be

developed in consultation with Council, examined independently, and be approved by the Minister of Local Government.

Council considered the submission at its 4 February and 11 February workshops and the final submission was provided to the DIA by the 20 February deadline.

Useful links:

- <https://www.dia.govt.nz/simplifying-local-government>

Going for Growth – Development Levies System:

The Government has made policy decisions to replace development contributions under the Local Government Act 2002 with a development levies system that will ensure that development pays an appropriate amount towards the infrastructure required for growth

- To enable Councils to recover from developments the cost of capital expenditure necessary to provide capacity for growth. Six principles based on – necessity, sufficiency, proportionality, particularity, transparency and economic efficiency.
- Councils must prepare a development levies policy
- The Government is considering independent, centralised, regulation of development levies.

Council considered the submission at its 4 February workshop and the final submission was provided to the DIA by the 20 February deadline.

Useful links:

- Joint Ministers' press release: [Going for Housing Growth: Reforming infrastructure funding](#) (26 November 2025)
- Partial exposure draft of the [Local Government \(Infrastructure Funding\) Amendment Bill \(the Bill\)](#)

Rates Target Model:

- On 3 December 2025, LGNZ and other agencies were approached by the DIA to provide feedback on 'Consultation on rates target model for New Zealand'.
- Initially, consultation on the rates cap model was targeted to sector organisations only and not offered publicly. We were advised by LGNZ on 17 December 2025 that DIA has agreed that all councils can submit. LGNZ were clear to DIA that every council should have the opportunity, so they changed their position.
- It is consultation on the policy proposal (the proposed model for implementing a rates cap) and is not consultation on the draft legislation. The consultation requested feedback on five questions regarding the rates cap modelling and its impacts. The background material provided by the DIA for the consultation is limited.





- The Government has proposed a target range for rates increases of 2-4% per year and that councils must adhere to this from 1 July 2029, with a two-year transition period commencing 1 July 2027. The Government's objectives are to keep rates affordable for households while ensuring councils can maintain essential services and invest in infrastructure.

Council drafted a submission at its 4 February workshop that was provided to the DIA the same day (4 February deadline).

Useful links:

- Press release: <https://www.beehive.govt.nz/release/getting-rates-under-control-ratepayers>
- Cabinet and briefing materials: [Proactive Releases - dia.govt.nz](#) ‘
- [Regulatory Impact Statements and Assessments - dia.govt.nz](#)

Ngā Tāpiritanga | Attachments

- A↓. Simplifying Local Government Submission

- B↓. Going for Growth Development Levies System Submission

- C↓. Rates target model Submission

- D↓. Submissions to External Organisations Policy


Ngā waitohu | Signatories

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Approved by	Sandra Harris Pou Kaupapahere, Rāngai Mahitahi me te Kāwana Policy, Partnerships and Governance Manager	
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7 Pūrongo me whakatau | Decision Reports

7.5 Draft Fees and Charges 26/27 - Adoption for Consultation

CM No.: 3145238

Te Kaupapa | Purpose

The purpose of this report is to present the Draft Fees and Charges 2026/27 and Statement of Proposal to Council for adoption for public consultation.

Rāpopotonga Matua | Executive Summary

Council reviews its Fees and Charges annually, and consults on any proposed changes with the community as part of the Annual Plan or Long Term Plan process.

The Draft Fees and Charges 2026/27 has been developed with relevant staff, workshopped and further developed with Council, and is now presented, along with the Statement of Proposal to Council for approval for public consultation.

Tūtohunga | Recommendation

That:

1. The information be received.
2. Council approve the Draft Fees and Charges 2026/27 and Statement of Proposal for public consultation.
3. Council authorise staff to make any minor amendments, needed for accuracy or clarity, prior to consultation.

Horopaki | Background

Council reviews its Fees and Charges annually, and consults on any proposed changes with the community, as part of the Annual Plan or Long Term Plan process.

Some fees and charges are set by statute, while others are at Council's discretion.

Council's Revenue and Financing Policy sets the range within which fees and charges under each activity are set.

Generally, Council's approach is to increase its Fees and Charges by inflation each year. For the 2026/27 year, the inflation rate has been set at 2.7%, as determined by Business and Economic Research Ltd (BERL).

Council is consulting on its Fees and Charges under Section 83 of the Local Government Act which requires a Statement of Proposal to be prepared.

Ngā Take/Kōrerorero | Issues/Discussion

The Draft Fees and Charges 2026/27 has been developed in conjunction with the Annual Plan budgets for 2026/27. Fees and charges were reviewed by relevant staff and workshopped and further developed with Council through a series of workshops. The proposed fees and charges

have also been reviewed against Council’s Revenue and Financing Policy, and are consistent with the Policy.

This year, as part of developing the Annual Plan budgets and seeking to keep rates as low as possible, Council has chosen to slightly increase the proportion of revenue collected from fees and charges for some activities, and therefore slightly lower the proportion collected from general rates. The activities where this approach has been taken are those where fees and charges have been sitting at the lower end of the band set for that activity in the Revenue and Financing Policy. This has resulted in increases above the rate of inflation for these activities.

A summary of the proposed changes to the Draft Fees and Charges 2026/27 is set out in the Statement of Proposal (attached).

Detail of all proposed fees and charges, including a comparison with the current year’s fees and charges, and the reasons for any proposed changes, are outlined in the Draft Fees and Charges 2026/27 (attached).

A period of public consultation will take place 16 March to 19 April 2026, with a Hearing to be held on 13 May 2026 (and 12 May if required). Council is required to adopt its Fees and Charges in time for the 2026/27 financial year, beginning 1 July 2026.

Mōrearea | Risk

The Fees and Charges form a key revenue source for a number of Council activities. Any change to the revenue from user fees will have a financial impact.

Ngā Whiringa | Options

Options are outlined in the Statement of Proposal (attached).

Ngā take ā-ture, ā-Kaupapahere hoki | Legal and policy considerations

Legal and policy considerations are outlined in the Statement of Proposal (attached)

Local Government Act 2002 (LGA 2002) Decision-making requirements

Having regard to the decision making provisions in the LGA 2002 and Councils Significance Policy, a decision in accordance with the recommendations is assessed as having a [medium] level of significance.

All Council decisions, whether made by the Council itself or under delegated authority, are subject to the decision-making requirements in sections 76 to 82 of the LGA 2002. This includes any decision not to take any action.

Local Government Act 2002 decision making requirements	Staff/officer comment
Section 77 – Council needs to give consideration to the reasonable practicable options available.	Options are addressed in the Statement of Proposal.
Section 78 – requires consideration of the views of Interested/affected people	Public consultation will be undertaken.
Section 79 – how to achieve compliance	The Significance and Engagement Policy is

with sections 77 and 78 is in proportion to the significance of the issue	considered above. This issue is assessed as having a [medium] level of significance.
Section 82 – this sets out principles of consultation.	Consultation will be undertaken in accordance with Section 83.

Policy Considerations

To the best of the writer’s knowledge, this recommendation is not significantly inconsistent with nor is anticipated to have consequences that will be significantly inconsistent with any policy adopted by this local authority or any plan required by the Local Government Act 2002 or any other enactment.

Ngā Pāpāhonga me ngā Whakawhitiwhitinga | Communications and engagement





Timeframes

Key Task	Dates
Council approval of Draft Fees and Charges 2026/27 and Statement of Proposal for public consultation	4 March 2026
16 March – 19 April 2026	Public consultation
13 May 2026 (and 12 May if required)	Submitters present views to Elected Members (hearing) Adoption of Animal Control Fees
24 June 2026	Adoption of Fees and Charges 2026/27
1 July 2026	All Fees and Charges 2026/27 in force

Te Tākoha ki ngā Hua mō te Hapori me te here ki te whakakitenga o te Kaunihera | Contribution to Community Outcomes

Matamata Piako District Council’s Community Outcomes are set out below:

MATAMATA-PIAKO TŌ MĀTOU WĀHI NOHO OUR PLACE	MATAMATA-PIAKO DISTRICT COUNCIL TE ARA RAUTAKI STRATEGIC DIRECTION
TŌ MĀTOU WHAKAKITENGA OUR VISION	
Matamata-Piako District is vibrant, passionate, progressive, where opportunity abounds. ‘The heart of our community is our people, and the people are the heart of our community.	
TŌ MĀTOU WHĀINGA MATUA OUR PRIORITIES (COMMUNITY OUTCOMES)	

			
He wāhi kaingākau ki te manawa A place with people at its heart	He wāhi puawaitanga A place to thrive	He wāhi e poipoi ai tō tātou taiao A place that embraces our environment	He wāhi whakapapa, he wāhi hangahanga A place to belong and create

The community outcomes relevant to this report are as follows:

- All of the community outcomes are relevant

Pānga ki te pūtea, me te puna pūtea | Financial Cost and Funding Source

The Fees and Charges are developed within the Annual Plan budget.

Ngā Tāpiritanga | Attachments

[A↓](#). Draft Fees and Charges 26/27



[B↓](#). Statement of Proposal Draft Fees and Charges 26/27



Ngā waitohu | Signatories

Author(s)	Anne Gummer Kaitohu Kaupapahere Mātāmua Senior Policy Advisor	
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Approved by	Niall Baker Kaiārahi Tīma Kaupapahere Policy Team Leader	
	Sandra Harris Pou Kaupapahere, Rāngai Mahitahi me te Kāwana Policy, Partnerships and Governance Manager	

Exclusion of the Public: Local Government Official Information and Meetings Act 1987

The following motion is submitted for consideration:

That the public be excluded from the following part(s) of the proceedings of this meeting.

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 follows.

This resolution is made in reliance on section 48(1)(a) of the Local Government Official Information and Meetings Act 1987 and the particular interest or interests protected by section 6 or section 7 of that Act which would be prejudiced by the holding of the whole or relevant part of the proceedings of the meeting in public, as follows:

C1 Council Delegations - Legal Review

Reason for passing this resolution in relation to each matter	Particular interest(s) protected (where applicable)	Ground(s) under section 48(1) for the passing of this resolution
Legal Privilege.	s7(2)(g) - The withholding of the information is necessary to maintain legal professional privilege. A legal review of the content has been undertaken..	s48(1)(a) The public conduct of the part of the meeting would be likely to result in the disclosure of information for which good reason for withholding exists under section 7.