

Mēneti Wātea | Open Minutes



Minutes of an extraordinary meeting of Matamata-Piako District Council held in the Council Chambers, 35 Kenrick Street, TE AROHA on Tuesday 4 August 2026 at 8.30am.

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

An audio-visual recording of the open session of the meeting is available on Matamata-Piako District Council's website and YouTube channel.

Visit <https://www.mpd.govt.nz/live-stream> for the most recent meeting livestream.

Recording	Document Reference#
Council (Extraordinary) 4 August 2026	3206483

Ngā whakapāha | Apologies

Name	Position/Organisation
James Thomas	Morrinsville Ward Councillor, Matamata-Piako District Council

Ngā mema i reira o runga te tūhono ipurangi | Members present via audio/visual link

Name	Position/Organisation	Time In	Time Out
Vincent Andersen	Matamata Ward Councillor, Matamata-Piako District Council	8.30am	9.04am
Dayne Horne	Morrinsville Ward Councillor, Matamata-Piako District Council	8.30am	9.04am
Rewiti Vaimoso	Matamata Ward Councillor, Matamata-Piako District Council	8.35am	9.04am

Kaimahi i reira | Staff Present

Name	Title	Item No.
Manaia Te Wiata	Tumu Whakarae Chief Executive Officer	
Stephanie Hutchins	Kaitohu Mātāmua Kāwana Senior Governance Advisor	
Tamara Kingi	Kaiārahi Kāwana Governance Team Leader	
Ellie Gray	Kaitohu Kāwana Governance Advisor	
Niall Baker	Kaiārahi Tīma Kaupapahere Policy Team Leader	5.1
Sandra Harris	Pou Kaupapahere, Rāngai Mahitahi me te Kāwana Policy, Partnerships and Governance Manager	5.1
Kelly Reith	Hautū Rangatōpū, Tāngata me ngā Hononga Group Manager Corporate, People & Relationships	5.1
Ken Morris	Mōrearea, Kai-whakahaere ā Pakihi hoki Risk and Business Excellence Advisor	
Jenni Cochrane	Hautū Wheako Kiritaki Group Manager Customer Experience	
Ally van Kuijk	Hautū Tipu me te Whakamatua Group Manager Growth & Regulation	

I reira | In Attendance

Name	Position/Organisation	Item	Time In	Time Out
Ross Miller	Observer, member of public	5.1	8.35am	9.04am

1 Whakatūwheratanga o te hui | Meeting Opening

Mayor Ash Tanner welcomed members, staff and those viewing the livestream and declared the meeting open at 8.30am.

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

Apology

WHAKATAUNGA A TE KAUNIHERA | COUNCIL RESOLUTION

That the apology from Councillor James Thomas be accepted and leave of absence from the meeting be granted.

Resolution number CO/2026/00001

Moved by: Cr B Dewhurst

Seconded by: Cr S Whiting

KUA MANA | CARRIED

3 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.

4 Whakaaetanga mēneti | Confirmation of minutes

WHAKATAUNGA A TE KAUNIHERA | COUNCIL RESOLUTION

That the minutes of the meeting of the ordinary meeting of Matamata-Piako District Council held on Wednesday, 29 July 2026, be confirmed as a true and correct record of the meeting subject to an amendment that the declaration of conflict of interest attributed to Councillor Vincent Andersen, be crossed through as it was declared in error.

Resolution number CO/2026/00002

Moved by: Cr G Bonnar

Seconded by: Cr S Whiting

KUA MANA | CARRIED

5 Pūrongo me whakatau | Decision Reports

5.1 Simplifying Local Government – preferred amalgamation model

CM No.: 3200133

Te Kaupapa | Purpose

The purpose of this report is to enable Council to decide whether to participate in the Government's Simplifying Local Government Head Start pathway and, if so, to approve a Waihou–Piako–Coromandel Unitary Authority (previously referred to as East Waikato) as the proposal. The reasonably practicable options are:

- Option 1: do not submit or support a Head Start proposal and proceed into the Government's backstop process;
- Option 2: approve a Waihou–Piako–Coromandel Unitary Authority (previously referred to as East Waikato).

Rāpopotonga Matua | Executive Summary

The Government has indicated that local government reorganisation will proceed either through the voluntary Head Start pathway or through a later compulsory backstop process. Outline Head Start proposals are due by 9 August 2026.

Council is therefore not deciding whether reform will occur. It is deciding whether to seek greater influence over reform through a Head Start proposal for a Unitary Authority for the East Waikato (note for the purposes of community feedback and this report we refer to the East Waikato, this will not be the official name, that is to be determined during detailed design phase but in the proposal itself it will be referred to as a Unitary Authority for the Waihou-Piako-Coromandel to be more reflective of the participating Councils).

Since seeking community feedback from the Matamata-Piako community - South Waikato District Council have confirmed they will not be joining East Waikato so the option in this report refers to Matamata-Piako, Hauraki and Thames-Coromandel.

At its workshop on 8 July 2026, Council indicated a preference for East Waikato based on strong community feedback favouring an East Waikato model. Both Hauraki and Thames-Coromandel District Council's community feedback also favoured an East Waikato model. Respondents placed greatest weight on keeping decisions close to home, affordability and fair representation for town and rural communities.

At the time of the public consultation a Waikato-wide option was considered potentially viable. However, at this stage it appears no Council is currently pursuing it. The Waikato-wide proposal has not been finalised and as such has not been included in this report for consideration. The concepts explored in the draft Waikato-wide proposal have subsequently informed the development of the current Western Waikato (Waikato–Waipā Catchment) Unitary Authority proposal being progressed by some councils.

A Memorandum of Understanding has been prepared by Thames-Coromandel District Council. Council is asked to consider and adopt the Memorandum of Understanding.

It is intended the Mayors of Matamata-Piako, Hauraki and Thames-Coromandel (individually or collectively) send a letter to Central Government to express a view on the reform process. Council is asked to consider the key messages of the letter so it can be prepared.

This is a preferred-model decision only. Governance, representation, rating, debt and asset arrangements, service levels, organisational design, transition costs and cross-boundary regional functions would be addressed through detailed design if the proposal is accepted by the Government.

Tūtohunga | Recommendation

That Council:

OPTION 1: Do not submit a head start proposal

- 1. A) Receives the information.**
- B) Considers the community feedback, feedback received at public information sessions and Iwi feedback.**
- C) Approves Option 1: Do not submit or support a Head Start proposal and proceed into the Government's backstop process.**
- D) Approves a letter being prepared from the Mayors of Matamata-Piako, Hauraki and Thames-Coromandel (individually or collectively) to Central government regarding the reform process, with the following key messages:**
 - Expressing concern about the limited time available for councils and communities to fully consider the proposals, and the need for greater detail to clearly demonstrate the case for reform, particularly alongside other significant legislative changes occurring. Also note existing commitment to collaboration and shared services.**
 - A preference to continue operating under the current arrangements, enabling Council to build on its track record of delivering high-quality services, responding to local priorities, and maintaining effective local representation.**

OR

OPTION 2: Approve the Waihou-Piako-Coromandel Unitary Authority Proposal, previously referred to as East Waikato

- 2. A) Receives the information.**
- B) Considers the community feedback, feedback received at public information sessions and Iwi feedback.**

C) Approves Option 2: the Waihou-Piako-Coromandel Unitary Authority Proposal, noting this has been previously referred to as East Waikato both throughout this report and in community consultation.

D) Authorises the Mayor / Chief Executive to:

- Amend the proposal to reflect decisions made by the other Councils and any administrative and non-material amendments to the relevant proposal, consistent with Council's resolution.
- Sign off the proposal on behalf of Council
- Submit the proposal by 9 August 2026

E) Approves a letter being prepared from the Mayors of Matamata-Piako, Hauraki and Thames-Coromandel (individually or collectively) to Central government regarding the reform process, with the following key messages:

- Expressing concern about the limited time available for councils and communities to fully consider the proposals, and the need for greater detail to clearly demonstrate the case for reform, particularly alongside other significant legislative changes occurring. Also note existing commitment to collaboration and shared services.
- A preference to continue operating under the current arrangements, enabling Council to build on its track record of delivering high-quality services, responding to local priorities, and maintaining effective local representation.
- A Head Start proposal has been agreed to retain as much local influence as possible over any future arrangements, provide greater certainty for our community and to enable Council to proactively shape its future, rather than relying on a default backstop process with outcomes that are not yet clearly defined.

F) Memorandum of Understanding

- Adopts the attached Memorandum of Understanding between Matamata-Piako, Thames-Coromandel District and Hauraki District Councils, and approves the Mayor to make administrative and non-material amendments and sign it on behalf of Council.

WHAKATAUNGA A TE KAUNIHĒRA | COUNCIL RESOLUTION

That Council:

OPTION 2: Approve the Waihou-Piako-Coromandel Unitary Authority Proposal, previously referred to as East Waikato

2. A) Receives the information.

B) Considers the community feedback, feedback received at public information sessions and Iwi feedback.

C) Approves Option 2: the Waihou-Piako-Coromandel Unitary Authority Proposal, noting this has been previously referred to as East Waikato both throughout this report and in community consultation.

D) Authorises the Mayor / Chief Executive to:

- Amend the proposal to reflect decisions made by the other Councils and any administrative and non-material amendments to the relevant proposal, consistent with Council's resolution.
- Sign off the proposal on behalf of Council
- Submit the proposal by 9 August 2026

E) Approves a letter being prepared from the Mayors of Matamata-Piako, Hauraki and Thames-Coromandel (individually or collectively) to Central government regarding the reform process, with the following key messages:

- Expressing concern about the limited time available for councils and communities to fully consider the proposals, and the need for greater detail to clearly demonstrate the case for reform, particularly alongside other significant legislative changes occurring. Also note existing commitment to collaboration and shared services.
- A preference to continue operating under the current arrangements, enabling Council to build on its track record of delivering high-quality services, responding to local priorities, and maintaining effective local representation.
- A Head Start proposal has been agreed to retain as much local influence as possible over any future arrangements, provide greater certainty for our community and to enable Council to proactively shape its future, rather than relying on a default backstop process with outcomes that are not yet clearly defined.

F) Memorandum of Understanding

- Adopts the updated Memorandum of Understanding as tabled at the meeting between Matamata-Piako, Thames-Coromandel District and Hauraki District

Councils, and approves the Mayor to make administrative and non-material amendments and sign it on behalf of Council.

Resolution number CO/2026/00003

Moved by: Cr A McGiven

Seconded by: Cr B Dewhurst

KUA MANA | CARRIED

ATTACHMENTS

A Final MoU Simplifying Local Government - HDC and MPDC and TCDC 03.08.2026

9.04 am

The Chairperson thanked Members for their attendance and attention to business and declared the meeting closed.

CONFIRMED AS A TRUE AND CORRECT RECORD
OF THE MEETING OF KAUNIHERA | COUNCIL
HELD ON 4 AUGUST 2026.

KO TE RĀ | DATE:

TIAMANA | CHAIRPERSON: