Report 26.347

Confirmed Public minutes of the Council meeting on Tuesday 4 August 2026

Taumata Korero – Council Chamber, Greater Wellington Regional Council
100 Cuba St, Te Aro, Wellington at 10.02am.

Members Present

Councillor Ponter (Chair)
Councillor Connelly (Deputy Chair)
Councillor Duthie
Councillor Elder
Councillor Free
Councillor Gaylor
Councillor James
Councillor Johnstone
Councillor Makarini
Councillor Rhodes
Councillor Saw
Councillor Woolf

Councillors Free and Woolf participated at this meeting remotely via Microsoft Teams and counted for the purpose of quorum in accordance with clause 25A of Schedule 7 to the Local Government Act 2002.

Karakia timatanga

The Council Chair opened the meeting with a karakia timatanga.

Public Business

1 Apologies

Moved: Cr Saw / Cr Connelly

That the Council accepts the apology for absence from Councillor Tupou, and apology for early departure from Councillor Woolf.

The motion was **carried**.

2 Declarations of conflicts of interest

There were no declarations of conflicts of interest.

3 Public participation

There was no public participation.

4 Confirmation of the Public minutes of the Council meeting of 25 June 2026 - Report 26.291

Moved: Cr Connelly / Cr Rhodes

That Council confirms the Public minutes of the Council meeting on 25 June 2026 - Report 26.291.

The motion was **carried**.

5 Confirmation of the Restricted Public Excluded minutes of the Council meeting of 25 June 2026 - Report RPE26.295

Moved: Cr Saw / Cr Duthie

That Council confirms the Restricted Public Excluded minutes of the Council meeting on 25 June 2026 - Report RPE26.295.

The motion was **carried**.

6 Wellington Region Headstart Proposal – Report 26.336

Cr Ponter spoke to the report and tabled updated recommendations.

Moved: Cr Ponter / Cr Saw

That Council:

1 Notes that the *Head Start Pathway: Simplifying Local Government* document does not adequately describe the costs and benefits of local government reform, with a simple proposition that "less is more".

2 Notes that the *Head Start Pathway: Simplifying Local Government* document, inviting proposals for local government reform, explicitly excludes the involvement of regional councils.

3 Notes that the Head Start proposal timeframe has not allowed sufficient time for appropriate involvement of elected members, iwi representatives, and communities, into the process to date.

4 Notes that short timeframes imposed by the Government has led to cursory engagement with communities across the region to the point that no proposal to the Government can be said to be the result of quality and sustained community involvement.

5 Notes that territorial councils undertook bespoke surveys that mean that there is limited ability to compare reactions to reform proposals across the region.

6 Notes that the Greater Wellington Regional Council has extensive Treaty settlement commitments that will need to be upheld under any new form of local government for the Wellington Region.

7 Notes that the Greater Wellington Regional Council has longstanding and comprehensive relations with mana whenua which must be transitioned and sustained by any new form of local government for the Wellington Region.

8 Notes that a thorough economic evaluation and costing needs to be undertaken of all regional and territorial authority functions to identify the current value added and the potential costs and benefits of reform.

9 Notes the proposal for a single unitary authority for the Wellington Region developed by the Wellington Mayoral Forum, and the various alternative proposals identified by territorial authorities, namely:

a. a proposal for a separate Kapiti unitary authority

b. a proposal for a separate Wairarapa unitary authority

c. possible different formulations for the Hutt Valley.

10 Agrees that the Greater Wellington Regional Council's functions and responsibilities in flood management, public transport, environment management, harbours management and regional spatial planning, are most effectively managed at scale.

11 Agrees that multiple unitary authorities across the Wellington Region will introduce new complexities rather than simplify local government in the region.

12 Agrees that irrespective of the proposal(s) put forward to Government, all councils, their elected members, and iwi should be included in the next phase of reform with a transparent process supported by publicly open meetings and documentation inherent in the next stage.

13 Agrees that councils are inherently community bodies and decisions to reform local government should be subject to a regional public referendum.

14 Invites the Council Chair to write to the Ministers of Local Government, Resource Management Reform, Housing and Transport, and Leaders of all elected political parties, advocating for:

a. single unitary authority for the Wellington Region that retains local voice while providing effectively for regional functions (i.e. the proposal originally worked up by the Mayoral Forum – Attachment 2)

b. co-design with all councils and iwi authorities by Government on its proposal for local government reform in Te Upoko o Te Ika a Maui – the Wellington Region

c. active community engagement by Government on proposals for reform, and a regional referendum on any final proposal advanced by the Government

d. the Government to commit to uphold Te Tiriti o Waitangi, including all Treaty settlement instruments and a minimum effect of current commitments, in any new local government model for te Upoko o Te Ika a Maui; and

e. Strategic public assets - such as regional parks, Centreport shareholding and Metlink assets - being protected from sale in the reform process.

Voting on the motion was taken in parts: Parts 1 to 6 were put to the vote and were **carried**; Part 7 was put to the vote and was **carried**; Parts 8 to 10 were put to the vote and were **carried**; Part 11 was put to the vote and was **carried**; Parts 12 and 13 were put to the vote and were **carried**, and Part 14 was put to the vote and was **carried**.

Councillor Elder requested that his vote against Parts 7 and 14 of the motion be recorded.

Councillors Free and Rhodes requested that their vote against Part 11 of the motion be recorded.

The motion was **carried**.

Resolution to exclude the public

7 Resolution to exclude the public – Report 26.309

Moved: Cr Gaylor / Cr Makarini

That Council excludes the public from the following parts of the proceedings of this meeting, namely:

Public Excluded minutes of the Council meeting on 25 June 2026 – Report PE26.293

Appointment of mana whenua members to Te Tiriti o Waitangi – Report PE26.431

The general subject of each matter to be considered while the public is excluded, the reasons for passing this resolution in relation to each matter, and the specific ground/s under section 48(1) of the Local Government Official Information and Meetings Act 1987 (the Act) for the passing of this resolution are as follows:

Public Excluded minutes of the Council meeting on 25 June 2026 – Report PE26.293	
Reason for passing this resolution in relation to each matter	*Ground(s) under section 48(1) for the passing of this resolution*

The matters contained in these minutes relate to Review of the Waterloo Transit Oriented Development: Proposal Final Initial Business Case. Release of this information is likely to prejudice or disadvantage the ability of Greater Wellington Regional Council to carry on negotiations with potential investors and/or developer (section 7(2)(i) of the Act). Greater Wellington has not been able to identify a public interest favouring disclosure of this particular information in public proceedings of the meeting that would override the need to withhold the information.	The public conduct of this part of the meeting is excluded as per section 7(2)(i) of the Act, to enable Greater Wellington to carry out, without prejudice or disadvantage, commercial activities.
Appointment of mana whenua members to Te Tirit o Waitangi Komiti – Report PE26.431	
Reason for passing this resolution in relation to each matter	*Ground(s) under section 48(1) for the passing of this resolution*
Information contained in this report includes personal and identifying information about persons for appointment to Te Tiriti o Waitangi Komiti. Release of this information is likely to prejudice the privacy of natural persons (section 7(2)(a) of the Act) as releasing this information would disclose their consideration for appointment as a Komiti member. Greater Wellington has considered whether the public interest outweighs the need to withhold the information and has determined that there is no public interest favouring disclosure of this particular information in public proceedings of the meeting that would override the need to withhold the information.	The public conduct of this part of the meeting is excluded as per section 7(2)(a) to protect the privacy of natural persons.

The motion was **carried**.

Councillor Elder requested that his vote against the motion be recorded.

The public part of the meeting closed at 11.01am.

Councillor Ros Connelly

Deputy Council Chair

Date: 3/9/26