

**TAUPŌ DISTRICT COUNCIL
MINUTES OF THE TAUPŌ EAST RURAL REPRESENTATIVE GROUP MEETING
HELD AT THE RANGITAIKI COMMUNITY HALL, RANGITAIKI SCHOOL ROAD, RANGITAIKI
ON THURSDAY, 17 APRIL 2025 AT 11.00AM**

PRESENT: Cr Kylie Leonard (in the Chair), Mr Patrick Hart, Mayor David Trewavas (until 12.20pm), Mr Mark Wynyard, Cr Danny Loughlin, Cr John Williamson

IN ATTENDANCE: Chief Executive (J Gardyne), Infrastructure Manager (R Stokes), Senior Community Engagement Advisor (J Charteris), Community Engagement Advisor Northern Taupō District (C Dredge), Policy Advisor Resource Management (C Pilkington), Legal and Governance Coordinator (M Cammell), Senior Committee Advisor (K Watts),

MEDIA AND PUBLIC: Mr Tim Bowron and Mr Tim Barke, Poronui Lodge

Notes: (i) *The meeting was opened and closed with a karakia from all present, and an English translation provided by Chair Cr Kylie Leonard.*
(ii) *Mayor David Trewavas left the meeting at 12.20pm. He was not present for resolutions TERR202504/04-01.*

1 KARAKIA

2 WHAKAPĀHA | APOLOGIES

TERR202504/02 RESOLUTION

Moved: Cr Danny Loughlin

Seconded: Mr Mark Wynyard

That apologies from Ms Evelyn Forrest be received and accepted.

CARRIED

Note: *All members present at the Taupō East Rural Representative Group meeting voted in favour of resolution TERR202504/02 above.*

3 NGĀ WHAKAPĀNGA TUKITUKI | CONFLICTS OF INTEREST

Nil

4 WHAKAMANATANGA O NGĀ MENETI | CONFIRMATION OF MINUTES

4.1 TAUPŌ EAST RURAL REPRESENTATIVE GROUP MEETING - 17 OCTOBER 2024

TERR202504/03 RESOLUTION

Moved: Mr Mark Wynyard

Seconded: Cr Danny Loughlin

That the minutes of the Taupō East Rural Representative Group meeting held on Thursday 17 October 2024 be approved and adopted as a true and correct record.

CARRIED

Note: *All members present at the Taupō East Rural Representative Group meeting voted in favour of resolution TERR202504/03 above.*

5 NGĀ RIPOATA | REPORTS

5.1 PUBLIC FORUM

Item **withdrawn**.

5.2 PRESENTATION FROM PORONUI LODGE

Mr Tim Bowron introduced himself to members and explained that Poronui Lodge was owned by Westervelt Company NZ Ltd whose owners were from Alabama in the United States and managed multiple businesses. Westervelt Company NZ Ltd was a land stewardship company that improved the wellbeing of the land, people and ecosystems. Generating profit was secondary to this.

The land was around 6,500 hectares in the Tauhara Valley and backed onto Kaimanawa Forest Park. Poronui Lodge offered accommodation and experiences including the Tourism Lodge, trophy hunting of red stags, trout fishing and pheasant shooting.

The area covered over 900 hectares of carbon plantations, 1500 hectares of native beech forest and 1500 hectares of regenerated manuka. There were around 30 staff plus seasonal guides and contractors. Poronui Lodge protected the waterways by managing nutrients and working closely with PGG Wrightson. Staff would continue to plant to provide shade and shelter for livestock.

Unlawful hunting was a threat, as well as tuberculosis but they were managing this by restricting movement of cattle.

Mr Tim Barke introduced himself as the General Manager and explained that his background was in the tourism industry in Otago. He emphasised that the average length of tenure for employees at Poronui Lodge was 10.7 years and that 70% of guests were repeat. Poronui Lodge provided multiple benefits to the community by producing primary products to sell and also utilising the lodge for farming and tourism. Staff and the owners were keen to learn from others and ensure that the tourism operations worked hand in hand with the ecological and agriculture operations to benefit the land, not deteriorate it. Forward bookings for the Lodge were strong and there was a good relationship with both Destination Great Lake Taupō and Tourism New Zealand.

TERR202504/04 RESOLUTION

Moved: Mr Mark Wynyard

Seconded: Mr Patrick Hart

That the Taupō East Rural Representative Group receives the presentation from Poronui Lodge's Farm Business Manager Tim Bowron.

CARRIED

Note: All members present at the Taupō East Rural Representative Group meeting voted in favour of resolution TERR202504/04 above.

5.3 ITEMS OF INTEREST

The Community Engagement Advisor Northern Taupō District updated members on the following:

Rangitaiki Hall

The committee that looked after the hall and were connected to the school had been applying for funding for new flooring and the Community Engagement team had been providing assistance to the committee over the last 18 months.

Taupō / Taupō East Rural Community Grants

Many applications had been received for this fund and her team had supported the processing of applications. It was recognised that there was a huge need for funding from communities.

Community Development

The first round of capability workshops had been completed and were successful. Four more workshops would be held in May, some in person, some online. Information was being distributed to interested community groups.

Both the River Road and Wairakei community groups had applied for grants from the Department of Internal Affairs. Wairakei was interested in hosting an event for Matariki to strengthen the community spirit. River Road had held a successful community barbeque the previous month with a good turnout of community members.

Local Water Done Well

The government was requiring councils to offer a preferred and alternative option for water services delivery. The recommendation from Council officers was to keep the delivery inhouse. The decision for the preferred and alternative options would be made by elected members at the Council meeting on 29 April, then consultation with the public would be from 30 April to 29 May 2025. The community would be invited to have their say by completing a submission on Council's website.

The Infrastructure Manager updated members on the following:

Transport and Infrastructure

- There was a limited road network including unsealed road around the Rangitaiki area which would be looked at and assessed to be either graded or sealed depending on maintenance costs.
- The willow trees along River Road that had been mentioned at a previous meeting had been poisoned and were now under control.
- The Tirohanga Road reconstruction had gone really well and the final sealing would be completed in the coming week.
- Link Road was progressing after some initial performance issues. HEB Construction had brought in contractors from out of the district and the team had not performed to expected standards. They were now on notice and manager supervision to finish the job.
- Over the next financial year testing and design of Broadlands Road renewal and widening would be done and the work would commence around September 2025.
- Water pipelines at Bonshaw Park were completed, and a new reservoir would be put in behind Richmond Heights with another to follow on Napier Road.

In answer to a question, the Infrastructure Manager advised that Council provided its roading work programme to the New Zealand Transport Agency but unfortunately they did not always work in together.

Annual Plan 2025-26

The Chief Executive advised that over the Long-term Plan 2024-34 the previous year, an 8.3% rates increase had been forecast for the coming financial year. Council officers had been looking over budgets and financial pressures including Local Water Done Well reform and insuring assets. The forecast would be kept to around an 8.4% rates increase but Council would need to reduce some of the funding and make some other tradeoffs. A whole of organisation approach had been taken to manage budget pressures. A report would go to the 29 April Council meeting and because there were no major changes, no consultation with the community would take place for Annual Plan 2025-26.

The Policy Advisor Resource Management updated members on the following:

Future Development Strategy

This had been adopted by Council at its meeting on 25 March following consultation in November and December 2024, and a hearing in February 2025. The strategy looked at growth projections over the next 30 years. The next round of review would be completed early 2026.

District Plan

- The District Plan had been converted to the national planning format. Feedback on the document was being received until 25 April.
- Officers were working on the next bundle of plan changes which included residential zones, open spaces, neighbourhood centres and Māori purpose zones.
- The residential area included all existing residential areas, no additional areas were being rezoned. The exception was low density residential zone, where there was a shortage identified. This would occur through submissions where sites met set criteria.

- The open spaces would recategorise Taupō District Council and Department of Conservation owned reserves.
- The plan changes would be notified around July 2025 followed by consultation with the community.
- The last bundle was fully operative from March 2025.

In answer to a question, the Policy Advisor Resource Management advised that Contact Energy had appealed the change on Centennial Drive. Through the appeal process a special overlay was added so there was now a precinct on the map where no more subdivisions were permitted. In addition, three discrete areas of rural lifestyle zoning were changed back to rural through the appeal process.

Mayor David Trewavas left the meeting at this point (12.20pm).

The Policy Advisor Resource Management explained that urban and rural Māori purpose zones were to enable activities such as marae or kohanga reo. The team were engaging with hapū and Māori landowners for feedback on the provisions but also to gauge the interest of development aspirations. It was a long process that could be put forward as a submission now or applied for in the future.

TERR202504/05 RESOLUTION

Moved: Mr Mark Wynyard

Seconded: Mr Patrick Hart

That the Taupō East Rural Representative Group receives the Items of Interest information provided.

CARRIED

Note: All members present at the Taupō East Rural Representative Group meeting voted in favour of resolution TERR202504/05 above.

5.4 MEMBERS' REPORTS

The following member report was received:

Mr Mark Wynyard

- Was seriously concerned about Broadlands Road and wanted the road to be built for the future. He explained that the roads in rural areas needed to have wider verges for farm traffic or cyclists to get past without going over the centreline. If turning right, a longer hatching was required on a rural road and was safer.

TERR202504/06 RESOLUTION

Moved: Cr John Williamson

Seconded: Cr Danny Loughlin

That the Taupō East Rural Representative Group receives the reports from members.

CARRIED

Note: All members present at the Taupō East Rural Representative Group meeting voted in favour of resolution TERR202504/06 above.

6 NGĀ KŌRERO TŪMATAITI | CONFIDENTIAL BUSINESS

Nil

The meeting closed at 12.33pm with a karakia from all present.

The minutes of this meeting were confirmed at the Taupō East Rural Representative Group Meeting held on 26 June 2025.

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CHAIRPERSON