COMMUNITY MEETING MINUTES, RANGIWAHIA HALL - 26 August 2026

PRESENT: Greg Clifton, Grant Hadfield, Fiona Morton, Paul Quarrie, Steve and Mary Bielski, Cliff Heath, Emma Bell, Heather Gee-Taylor, Lorna Day, Ian Hopkins, Shelley Dew-Hopkins, Mike and Kate Gee-Taylor, Alex and Angie McIntyre, Andrew Morton, Richard Goodwin

APOLOGIES:
Hannah Tokona (CD),Nat Masters, Fraser Martin, Duncan and Jane Guy, Hamish Waugh

M/S: Greg Clifton/Shelley DH

PREVIOUS MINUTES - 27 May 2026
Accepted and true and correct.

M/S: Greg Clifton/Kate GT

MATTERS ARISING

1. Project 3 - BBQ Storage completed and paid for.
Tennis Court marking booked in and completed

CORRESPONDENCE

2. Correspondence

In (via email)

- Invoices (Mary will cover)
- Georgia Jenkins - Road closure notifications - 3 December Silver Fern Rally
- Outcome of Council projects
- Should Local Decisions Stay Local
- Check it out newsletter
- FDP promotions email - Mary to co-ordinate response

Out (via email)

- May Minutes
- Emails circulating above

M/S: FM/GC

FINANCIALS

3. Financials as at May 2026

Go Account	$ 327.53
On Call	$ 8,590.12

Total income for the period was generated from the motorhome/cyclist site, the shower block, hall hire and the sale of one table to Brodie Family. The new cashless payment system for camping is working well.

Paper copies of the finances were made available for inspection at the meeting.

That the Financial Report be accepted.

M/S: Mary Bielski/Kate GT

GENERAL BUSINESS

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4. $3000 expenditure outcomes

Project 1 - $1,387 - BBQ storage facility - approved, constructed and paid for.

Project 2 - $1,449 - Sound system and storage - approved. Purchase to be organised via MDC to receive best deal

Project 3 - $499 - Sound system storage - approved

Projects exceeded $3,000. Balance to be met by Hall account

Action: Project 1 - Completed
Project 2 - Steve Bielski lead/Fiona support
Project 3 - Steve Bielski lead/Fiona support

5. Contestable funding outcomes

$3,468.40 approved for replacement of the existing coin-operated system with a cashless electronic timer.

Action: Mary Bielski

Mary detailed the costs involved to reinstall the camera and install lights. Approximately $1,564 required. All agreed.

Action: Mary Bielski

6. Otara Bridge

Greg Clifton asked for Grant Hadfield to speak to this item. Grant gave background to bridge construction use and development over time.

In January 2023, the bridge was allegedly damaged by an unapproved overweight vehicle travelling over the road posted speed limit. The damage observed included buckling of one segment of the truss top chord, failure of one of the hangers and spalled/broken concrete at the true left abutment. Approx $600K cost to strengthen the bridge. Involved stiffening the trusses by welding plates on the top and bottom flanges over the 104m span.

While the repairs were being undertaken, additional work was commissioned in 2023/24 to replace 22 of the hangers, following site inspections and laboratory analysis. The remainder had waterblasting and maintenance activities performed as well. That work was valued at another $167K.

The bridge was deemed suitable to reinstate the posted "GROSS" of 100% i.e 44 tonne loading when that work was completed.

Since those repairs were undertaken, further evidence has come forward of stock droving across the bridge and the 10km/hr posted speed limit had not been adhered to.

The speed limit was required to lessen the effects of heavy loadings on the suspension bridge as the stiffening had removed an element of flex that a suspension bridge operates as. Cameras and speed humps were installed to both control entry speeds and collect evidence of any non-compliance.

The profile of the speed humps has recently been brought into question and the roading teams are currently reviewing. However, since further recent structural failures have surfaced, further restrictions have been installed by way of concrete

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blocks to narrow the entrance and exit as the current posted GROSS weight is reduced to 6 ton until it is understood how a repair can be effected. Broadly speaking the failure is bearing plates shearing at one end, which is key to supporting the deck itself. The motion of physical forces coming onto the bridge, at speeds and variable weights, is sending a shock wave effect across the bridge and causing the steel components to shear and fail.

Structural engineers, and the roading teams of RDC and MDC are establishing whether a repair can be undertaken, whether the 44 tonne GROSS can be enabled again, whether a full replacement is required etc. Assessing the overall economic aspect may be required as funding constraints come into play, as our co-funding partner NZTA will be involved where additional investment may be requested.

Questions/Comments from the floor included:

1. Requested review of traffic calming measures (speed humps),
2. That placement of bollards was too tight and were impacting on vehicles under 6 T limit that were unable to navigate control measures safely (or successfully).
3. Should a letter from the Committee be sent to Council?
4. When was the Engineer's report due?
5. Were there any other practical solutions that could be investigated?
6. Should the bridge just be for local use?
7. Increased signage (speed and quantity of vehicles) at the bridge required.
8. Should police be receiving copies of camera images of people not using the bridge correctly and then ticketing them?
9. Had the Council looked at Kanoa (Regional Economic and Development Investment Unit) for possible funding assistance?

Action: Grant H to take back to MDC

Grant advised that the next round of conversations would be after the engineer's report was received.

Action: Grant H report back.

7. Memorabilia Room

Work in progress, some items trickling in. Notice to go into the newsletter again.

8. Rangiwahia School Sign

Kate GT discussed potential display locations. All agreed that the Playground is the best place to display the sign. All agreed that any minor fencing costs incurred to secure and display the sign would be covered by the hall account.

Action: Kate GT

9. Scenic Reserves - Scenic and Kaikawaka Reserves

Steve spoke regarding future management options for the Rangiwahia Reserve. MDC had visited and discussions were underway. MDC will talk with DoC and see if they (MDC) can be responsible for running the Community side of the bush. Everyone who visits the bush agrees it is an amazing example of accessible native bush. Pest trapping continues by Steve and Mary. There are 3 AT220 traps in Reserve and 1 in Kaikawaka.

10. Traffic/Police Report - Ben Flintoff

Ben's newsletter had been circulated by Nat via the newsletter network.

COUNCIL REPORTS

11. Officer report

Janine Hawthorn no longer works in this role. Adie Johansen is the Manager. Stacey McLaughlin first point of Committee contact.

12. Council Report - Clr Hadfield

Grant provided a written report (below) in advance of the meeting which he then talked to (below). This report was also circulated via email.

June

Tangimoana Adaptation Plan – was selected as one of two pilot communities in the Deep South National Science Challenge project, Embedding Adaptation led by Massey University. In early 2025 the Tangimoana Resilience Group was established comprising reps from the Community Committee, Horizons and MDC. The preliminary adaptation plan identifies a set of priority actions to strengthen community preparedness and undertake further investigation to improve understanding of flood and drainage risks. Stormwater modelling has been commissioned.

CEDA final statement of intent 2026 – 2027

Council Controlled Organisations Exemption Report – the following were granted exemption for a 3 year period:

- Manawatu District Youth Development & Wellbeing Trust
- Camp Rangi Woods Trust
- Manawatu-Wanganui Regional Disaster Relief Fund
- RNZAF Ohakea Visitor Centre Trust
- MWLASS
- Heartland Contractors

Manawatu Community Trust final statement of intent 2026 – 2027
Silver Fern Rally 2026 Road Closure Request

Submissions made on behalf of Council between 12 March and 14 May:

- Health and Safety at Work Amendment Bill
- Proposals to Change Total Mobility
- NZTA Lane Use Improvements
- NZTA Revised Procurement Manual
- Statistics NZ Infringement Consultation
- Targeted Speed Limit Reviews
- Technical Amendments to the Wastewater Performance Standards
- Data and Statistics Amendment Bill
- Cyber Security of Critical Infrastructure
- Policing Amendment Bill 2026
- Firefighting Water Supplies – Code of Practice
- Sale of Alcohol (Improving Alcohol Regulation) Amendment Bill

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Health NZ – Smokefree / Vapefree signs – Outlined Health NZ's role in environmental health, disease prevention and public health regulation. As of 2023 7.7% of kiwis smoke, with Maori being 3 times higher and for those suffering deprivation 6 times higher. As of 2024 26% of 18-24 year olds vape.

Presentation from Feilding High School first XV rugby team participation in the Sanix world rugby youth tournament.

Manawatu Water Services Committee re decision on whether to audit the water services strategy. Council resolved, on recommendation of the Water Services Committee, not to engage the Audit office to audit Council's Water Services Strategy

Adoption of the Annual Plan for the Financial Year 2026/2027

Adoption of the Rates Resolution and the Borrowing resolution for the Financial Year 2026/2027

Development of Grants Policy and revoked Community Development Policy

Risk Management Policy adopted without amendment

July

One Council meeting only in July

Local Government Reform – Head Start Pathway. Council resolved to:

- Receive the report titled "Local Government Reform – Head Start Pathway."
- Not submit an outline proposal under the Government's Head Start pathway for local government reform.
- Confirmed its opposition to compulsory local government amalgamation while continuing to engage constructively with the Government on alternative local government reform approaches.
- Authorise the Mayor and Chief Executive to continue exploring and advocating for alternative local government reform models outside the Head Start pathway that seek to achieve the Government's objectives while retaining local representation, local decision-making and local accountability, including working collaboratively with other councils where appropriate.
- Authorised the Mayor to communicate Council's position to the Minister of Local Government, Ministry for Cities, Environment, Regions and Transport, or any affected councils should the Manawatū District Council be identified as a proposed partner in any Head Start proposal or other local government reform proposal that has not been endorsed by the Council.
- Authorised the Mayor to sign the tabled Draft Regional Memorandum of Understanding and tabled Draft Letter to the Minister of Local Government, subject to any minor amendments approved by the Chief Executive.

Roading Emergency Works Claim February 2026

- In the 2025/26 Financial Year Council's roading network was impacted by a severe weather event. Claims amounting to $3,135,281 were approved by the NZTA Emergency Works fund to cover the cost of the response and recovery for these events.

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- The initial response valued at $537,000 has been completed to re-open roads and unblock critical bridges and drainage assets.
- The remaining works require investigations, design and construction works across more than 500 recorded defective items valued at $2,598,281. This work will commence in the 2026/27 financial year. This amount includes $169,092 of new capex work.
- Council resolved to approve an increase in Roading operational budget for the 2026/27 financial year by $3,135,281 noting that $1,598,993 will be funded by NZTA and the balance of $1,536,288 will be funded by Council.

August

Residential Satisfaction quarterly/Yearly summary

- Overall satisfaction rating increase over last three years
- 65 plus year olds happiest age demographic
- 10 of 11 measures had seen a yearly increase
- Largest decreases around Community Halls (funding and maintenance) and footpath and crossing point quality

Manawatu Data Snapshot

- Despite challenging national economy, Manawatu District recorded modest economic growth while the national economy contracted
- Export activity has recovered
- House prices remain well below the national average
- Community facilities continue to be well used
- EV registrations are recovering and solar installations continue to increase across the Manawatu region
- Population continues to age, we have a higher proportion of oldies than NZ overall
- Youth disengagement has increased (NEET increased in 2025 following national trend)
- Employment conditions softened
- Crime increased in early 2026 after remaining relatively low during 2025

Representative Fund – Max Dodunski spoke to the Council regarding the U18 National men's hockey tournament, Tauranga.

Development and Financial Contributions policy – the purpose of this policy is to recover a fair share of growth related infrastructure from new developments and capital contributions are payable for new connections or additional units of demand to existing Council three waters networks

Endorsement of the Council Strategy

Feilding & District Promotion – annual report to 30 June 2026

Adoption of the Halls Policy

Adoption of the Road Stopping Policy

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District news June and July:
District News - June
District News - July

Press releases of Interest

Council Unanimous on Next Steps for Local Government Reform | Manawatū District Council
Joint Statement from Mayor Michael Ford, Manawatū District Council and Mayor Scott Gilmore, Tararua District Council | Manawatū District Council
Five Manawatū-Whanganui councils unite to shape the region's future | Manawatū District Council
A new identity for an essential service | Manawatū District Council
Manawatū's ambitions take shape despite uncertainty ahead | The Post

My recent Councillor column in Feilding First on how Govt legislation impacts the voluntary sector:

After more than ten years, the Awahuri Forest Kitchener Park Trust has made the decision to formally wind up, marking the end of a significant chapter in the development of one of the district's valued natural spaces.

As a community we owe a great deal to the many volunteers who have both guided and contributed many hours to the Trust and it's objectives.

While this decision was made independently by the Trust (and supported by Council), there are some determinant factors behind that decision.

Firstly, maintenance and protection of the forest is now the primary focus. Secondly, it is becoming increasing difficult to attract volunteer Trustees and thirdly, Government legislation can be a deterrent to point two.

Several parts of New Zealand law make it harder to attract volunteer trustees, and community organisations across the country are feeling it. The issue isn't that trustees don't care; it's that the compliance burden has grown to a point where many people simply won't take the risk or the workload.

Three pieces of legislation are the biggest contributors – they are the Charities Act 2023, the Health and Safety at Work Act 2015 and the Financial reporting standards (Tier 3 & 4).

These three bits of legislation require volunteers qualification checks, increased reporting obligations, personal accountability for governance failures, responsibilities as a PCBU H&SWA Act), structured performance reports, asset registers and audit thresholds.

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So, there is a fear of personal liability and a workload that can feel like a second job. Many community organisations historically relied on willing local folk prepared to pitch in. Now it feels like they need accountants, lawyers and governance professionals.

My message to the Central Government (all stripes) is think carefully when enacting legislation on how it impacts the voluntary sector. Making one size fit all is just plain bollocks!!

13. Upcoming events:

- Joy McKean Bantam Day out - 8 November 2026. Friends of St Barnabas will take the lead on this. Morning tea and Lunch, tea and coffee.
- Community Trust Applications and meeting - September

Meeting closed: 8.52 pm
Next meeting: Wednesday 25 November 2026

Meeting Outcomes/Actions

1. Steve Bielski/Fiona Morton - complete Project 2 and 3 - microphone and storage
2. Mary Bielski - organise cashless electronic timer for shower
3. Mary Bielski - organise reinstallation of camera and lights
4. Nat Masters - note in newsletter for items for memorabilia room
5. Kate GT - organise installation of Rangiwahia School sign in playgroup

Manawatu District Council Actions

6. Ensure notice of road closures provided to Committee Chair/Secretary for circulation (in relation to rally's and other closures e.g. bridge)
7. Report back on Otara Bridge options and solutions **[item 6]**

Signed

Greg Clifton
Chair
25 August 2026

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