

Minutes

Council meeting

held Wednesday 10 December 2025 at 9:30 am

Council Chamber, Rotorua Lakes Council

- MEMBERS PRESENT: Mayor Tapsell (Chair)
Deputy Mayor Kai Fong (Deputy Chair), Cr Barker, Cr Brown, Cr Lee,
Cr Maxwell, Cr Paterson, Cr Raukawa-Tait, Cr Sandford,
Cr Temara-Benfell, Cr Wang
- APOLOGIES: None
- STAFF PRESENT: A Moraes, Chief Executive;
J-P Gaston, Group Manager, Destination Development;
S Michael, Group Manager, Infrastructure and Assets;
A Wilson, Group Manager, Community Experience;
P Warbrick, Manahautū Te Arawa Hourua;
D Jensen, Chief Financial Officer;
G Kieck, Manager - Governance, Strategy & Compliance;
C Tiriana, Programme Manager - Local Water Done Well;
R Pitkethley, Manager – Active and Engaged Communities;
K Williams, Principal Advisor – Community Safety & Regulatory Services ;
A Wilson, Chief Executive, RotoruaNZ;
J Kimberley, Head of Strategy & Investment, RotoruaNZ
C Litchfield, Corporate Strategy & Compliance Lead’;
S Kelly, Housing, Growth and Partnerships Manager;
N Michael, Executive of Communications – Mayor's Office;
I Tiriana, Communications Manager;
V Cawte, Senior Communications Advisor;
G Konara, Governance & Democracy Advisor.

The meeting opened at 9.31am.

The Mayor welcomed elected members, media, staff and members of the public.

1 KARAKIA WHAKAPUAKI – OPENING KARAKIA

Cr Barker opened the meeting with a Karakia.

2	NGĀ WHAKAPĀHA – APOLOGIES
	NIL

3 WHAKAPUAKITANGA WHAIPĀNGA – DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Cr Wang noted that he would raise a potential perceived conflict of interest for an item in the public excluded session.

4 NGĀ TAKE WHAWHATI TATA KĀORE I TE RĀRANGI TAKE – URGENT ITEMS NOT ON THE AGENDA

Letter to Minister Chris Penk from Mayor Tapsell & Chair McDonald regarding Rotorua lake weed (Attachment 1).

5 TE WHAKAŪ I NGĀ MENETI – CONFIRMATION OF MINUTES

5.1	MINUTES OF THE ORDINARY COUNCIL MEETING HELD ON 26 NOVEMBER 2025
	RESOLVED C 25/12-210 Moved: Mayor Tapsell Seconded: Cr Raukawa-Tait 1. That the minutes of the Ordinary Council Meeting held 26 November 2025 be confirmed as a true and correct record. CARRIED

6 TE PAPA KŌRERO MŌ TE TŪMATAWHĀNUI – PUBLIC FORUM

Tracey McLeod spoke to her report “Funding Investigation for the Rotorua Te Arawa Lakes Programme, Sewerage Schemes, Capital Projects and Infrastructure” and tabled the report. This report is attached to these minutes separately (ECM- 21942172).

Action Point

- Mayor Tapsell noted that a response will be provided to Tracey McLeod and circulated to Councillors.

7 HE PUKA INOI TŪMATAWHĀNUI – PUBLIC PETITIONS

Nil

8 NGĀ WHAKAMŌHIOTANGA MŌTINI – NOTICES OF MOTION**8.1 NOTICE OF MOTION – CR LEE****RESOLVED C 25/12-211**

Moved: Cr Lee

Seconded: Cr Paterson

- 1. That Council instructs the Chief Executive to end the trial as soon as reasonably practical and return the Night Market to Tutanekai Street while the investigation continues.**

In Favour: Cr Brown, Cr Lee, Cr Maxwell, Cr Paterson, Cr Raukawa-Tait, Cr Sandford,
Cr Temara-Benfell and Cr Wang

Against: Mayor Tapsell, Deputy Mayor Kai Fong and Cr Barker

CARRIED 8/3**9 NGĀ TĀPAETANGA – PRESENTATIONS**

Nil

10 PŪRONGO KAIMAHI – STAFF REPORTS**10.1 LOCAL ALCOHOL POLICY 2025 AMENDMENT****RESOLVED C 25/12-212**

Moved: Cr Paterson

Seconded: Cr Wang

1. That the report 'Local Alcohol Policy 2025 Amendment' be received.

CARRIED

Greg Kieck overviewed the report and spoke to a presentation titled "Local alcohol Policy Amendment" (ECM 21936960).

RESOLVED C 25/12-213

Moved: Cr Brown

Seconded: Cr Temara-Benfell

2. That the Council approve the recommended options in the proposed SOP as outlined in appendix
3. That the proposed Draft Statement of Proposal on the Local Alcohol policy 2025 Amendment: Draft Local Alcohol Policy 2026 be adopted for consultation.
4. That the Council approve a public consultation on the proposed Draft Statement of Proposal on the Local Alcohol Policy 2025 amendment: Draft Local Alcohol Policy 2026 to commence on Tuesday 6 January 2026 until Friday 13 February 2026.

CARRIED

10.2 DRAFT PARKING - POLICY, BYLAW AND INNER-CITY PARKING REVIEWS

RESOLVED C 25/12-214

Moved: Cr Lee

Seconded: Deputy Mayor Kai Fong

1. That the report 'Draft Parking - Policy, Bylaw and Inner-City parking reviews' be received.

CARRIED

Jean-Paul Gaston and Kurt Williams overviewed the report and spoke to a presentation titled "Parking Policy and Bylaw Update" (ECM 21936970).

The meeting adjourned at 11.22am and resumed at 11.46am.

RESOLVED C 25/12-215

Moved: Deputy Mayor Kai Fong

Seconded: Cr Sandford

2. That the proposed draft Statement of Proposal Parking - Policy, Bylaw and Inner-City parking reviews be adopted for consultation.
3. That the Council approve the recommended options in the proposed SOP as outlined in Appendix 1.
4. That draft copies of the amended Bylaw, Policy and Guidelines be received and approved for publishing alongside the SOP during consultation, namely:
 - I. Parking Policy (name change from Performance Based parking Management Practices – Policy and Guidelines)
 - II. Traffic Bylaw 2025
 - III. Parking Management Guidelines (separated from the Parking Policy to be a standalone document)
5. That the Council approve public consultation on the proposed Draft Statement of Proposal Parking - Policy, Bylaw and Inner-City parking reviews to commence on Monday 15 December 2025 until Friday 13 February 2026 via a special consultative procedure.

In Favour: Mayor Tapsell, Deputy Mayor Kai Fong, Cr Barker, Cr Brown, Cr Maxwell,
Cr Paterson, Cr Raukawa-Tait, Cr Sandford, Cr Temara-Benfell and Cr Wang

Against: Cr Lee

CARRIED 10/1

10.3 GARDEN BED HEALTH AND SAFETY MITIGATION OPTIONS**RESOLVED C 25/12-216**

Moved: Cr Wang

Seconded: Cr Barker

1. That the report 'Garden bed health and safety mitigation options' be received.

CARRIED

Alex Wilson and Rob Pitkethley overviewed the report and spoke to a presentation titled “Inner-City Garden Beds- Health & Safety Mitigation Options” (ECM 21936972).

2. That the Council adopts:

- (a) Option B: Removal of high risk gardens and replacement with hard surfaces or grassed areas.**

OR

- (b) Option C: Replace high risk gardens with a combination of grass and lower maintenance natives, AND undertake offset planting with new flower bed gardens within the inner city (recommended).**

3. That the Council:

- (a) Does not seek community feedback on the selected option.**

OR

- (b) Does seek community feedback on the preferred option before deciding on which option to adopt at a later meeting.**

OR

- (c) Authorizes the CE to proceed with the selected option, and include a community consultation topic for a future suitable time, noting that this change may be reversed following that consultation (recommended).**

The Chair ruled to consider recommendations 2 and 3 separately.

Cr Wang moved recommendation 2 (b);

RESOLVED C 25/12-217

Moved: Cr Wang

Seconded: Cr Lee

- 2. That the Council adopts Option C: Replace high risk gardens with a combination of grass and lower maintenance natives, and undertake offset planting with new flower bed gardens within the inner city (recommended).**

CARRIED

Cr Wang moved recommendation 3(c);

RESOLVED C 25/12-218

Moved: Cr Wang

Seconded: Cr Lee

- 3. That the Council authorizes the CE to proceed with the selected option, and include a community consultation topic for a future suitable time, noting that this change may be reversed following that consultation.**

In Favour: Cr Barker, Cr Lee, Cr Maxwell, Cr Paterson, Cr Sandford, Cr Temara-Benfell and Cr Wang

Against: Mayor Tapsell, Deputy Mayor Kai Fong, Cr Brown and Cr Raukawa-Tait

CARRIED 7/4

10.4 LOCAL WATER DONE WELL WATERS WORKING GROUP - HEADS OF AGREEMENT**RESOLVED C 25/12-219**

Moved: Cr Temara-Benfell

Seconded: Cr Wang

- 1. That the report 'Local Water Done Well Waters Working Group - Heads of Agreement' be received.**
- 2. That the council note the tabling of the Local Water Done Well Waters Working Group (LWDW WWG) Heads of Agreement.**

CARRIED

The report was taken as read.

10.5 SCHEDULE OF COUNCIL AND COUNCIL COMMITTEE MEETINGS FOR YEAR 2026**RESOLVED C 25/12-220**

Moved: Cr Brown

Seconded: Cr Wang

1. That the report 'Schedule of Council and Council Committee Meetings for Year 2026' be received.

CARRIED

Greg Kieck overviewed the report.

RESOLVED C 25/12-221

Moved: Mayor Tapsell

Seconded: Deputy Mayor Kai Fong

2. That the Council resolves to adopt the schedule of Council and Council Committee Meetings for year 2026.

CARRIED

2 HE WHAKATAUNGA KIA HOKI ATU TE ARONGA O TE HUI HAI HUI TŪMATAWHĀNUI – RESOLUTION TO MOVE INTO PUBLIC EXCLUDED (TO CONSIDER AND ADOPT CONFIDENTIAL ITEMS)

RESOLVED C 25/12-222

Moved: Cr Brown

Seconded: Cr Maxwell

1. That Council resolves to exclude the public on the grounds contained in Section 48(1) of the Local Government Official Information and Meetings Act:

General subject of each matter to be considered	Reason for passing this resolution in relation to each matter	Ground(s) under section 48 for the passing of this resolution
11.1 - Parking Services - Parking Supplier Tender Decision	s7(2)(b)(ii) - the withholding of the information is necessary to protect information where the making available of the information would be likely unreasonably to prejudice the commercial position of the person who supplied or who is the subject of the information	s48(1)(a)(i) - the public conduct of the relevant part of the proceedings of the meeting would be likely to result in the disclosure of information for which good reason for withholding would exist under section 6 or section 7

	s7(2)(i) - the withholding of the information is necessary to enable Council to carry on, without prejudice or disadvantage, negotiations (including commercial and industrial negotiations)	
11.2 - Approval to progress the development and disposal of 61 Kawaha Point Road on revised terms and conditions	s7(2)(b)(ii) - the withholding of the information is necessary to protect information where the making available of the information would be likely unreasonably to prejudice the commercial position of the person who supplied or who is the subject of the information s7(2)(i) - the withholding of the information is necessary to enable Council to carry on, without prejudice or disadvantage, negotiations (including commercial and industrial negotiations)	s48(1)(a)(i) - the public conduct of the relevant part of the proceedings of the meeting would be likely to result in the disclosure of information for which good reason for withholding would exist under section 6 or section 7
11.3 - Inner City Development	s7(2)(b)(ii) - the withholding of the information is necessary to protect information where the making available of the information would be likely unreasonably to prejudice the commercial position of the person who supplied or who is the subject of the information s7(2)(i) - the withholding of the information is necessary to enable Council to carry on, without prejudice or disadvantage, negotiations (including commercial and industrial negotiations)	s48(1)(a)(i) - the public conduct of the relevant part of the proceedings of the meeting would be likely to result in the disclosure of information for which good reason for withholding would exist under section 6 or section 7
11.4 - Appointment of Board Members of the Mountain Bike Events Ltd	s7(2)(a) - the withholding of the information is necessary to protect the privacy of natural persons, including that of deceased natural persons	s48(1)(a)(i) - the public conduct of the relevant part of the proceedings of the meeting would be likely to result in the disclosure of information for which good reason for withholding would exist under section 6 or section 7

Plain English	Withholding of the information is necessary to protect information due to commercial position of the person who supplied or who is the subject of the information, to carry out commercial and industrial negotiations without prejudice and to protect privacy of a person.
Consideration has been given to public interest in these matters and officers' advice is that the above reasons for confidentiality outweigh the public interest in these matters.	
CARRIED	

The meeting moved into public excluded session at 12.54pm.

CLOSED SESSION

The meeting moved out of public excluded session at 2.12pm

13 TE KARAKIA WHAKAMUTUNGA – CLOSING KARAKIA

Cr Barker closed the meeting with a Karakia.

The Meeting closed at 2.12pm

Confirmed at the Council meeting on 18 February 2026.



Chair

Note: -Rotorua Lakes Council is the operating name of Rotorua District Council

Attachment 1 – Letter from Mayor Tapsell and Chair McDonald to Minister Chris Penk



THE OFFICE OF THE MAYOR

28 November 2025

DocNo. 21913951

Hon Chris Penk
Minister for Land Information

Email: C.Penk@ministers.govt.nz

Kia ora Minister,

Thank you again for your time earlier this month. I look forward to working more closely with you in the future.

I'm writing today seeking your help as Land Information Minister to respond to an urgent environmental issue which is set to have a significant economic impact on Rotorua as a top tourism destination.

Two weeks ago Rotorua experienced extreme weather and strong winds, resulting in significant amounts of aquatic weed being ripped from the lakebed and washing up along our recently redeveloped \$40m Lakefront which was co-funded by Government through PGF/Kanoa (see picture attached). The weed is decomposing and removes oxygen from water which has caused fish to die - my family counted over 100 floating dead fish that they could see washed up in the lake weed.

It's also creating a severe pungent odour across the city causing serious impact on businesses and locals' quality of life. Bad reviews are already being received from tourists, and national media attention regarding the aquatic weed disaster are causing deep concern for Rotorua's reputation as a world-class visitor destination, especially for up-coming summer holidays.

Rotorua Lakes Council and the Bay of Plenty Regional Council are working urgently together to clear the weed, 530 tonnes of weed has been removed and 300 tonne is estimated to still need removal. However, even with extensive efforts this reactive response won't clear the weed until another week at least. It is also costly for our ratepayers and not a sustainable long-term solution.

A lasting solution to lake weed control sits with LINZ, and this is clearly identified as a Crown obligation under the Te Arawa Settlement Act 2006. I regretfully share that there is great disappointment from leaders and our community who've learnt that LINZ funding for this important work has been decreasing year on year despite increase in need.

The comparison of funding we receive compared to other lakes is quite shocking:

- We understand that Lake Wānaka alone receives approximately \$1 million annually from LINZ.
- However, over the past 5 years LINZ has invested only \$2.5m into 6 lakes in Rotorua (Lakes Rotorua, Tarawera, Ōkātina, Rotoiti, Rotomā, Rerewhakaaitu).
- LINZ funding primarily supports maintenance of swimming and boat access to lakes, and it is known that current investment is not enough to reduce the overall weed biomass which continues to expand.
- This year, we have received \$350,000 from LINZ for Lakes in our district, despite there being 300 hectares of weed beds in Lake Rotorua alone.

In Rotorua we have developed local solutions through a business case and are confident that, with appropriate and reasonable level of investment, aquatic weed issues can be effectively managed using proven, well-understood methods and tools that are already available.

On behalf of our Rotorua community, we would appreciate you urgently looking into this matter please to ensure the Government is providing appropriate support to Rotorua for effective lake weed management.

We also invite you, or a Senior representative from LINZ, to please join us for an urgent meeting via video call to discuss this matter. I will also be inviting Chairpersons and CE's of our partners BOP Regional Council, Te Arawa Lakes Trust and Ministry for Environment.

We will confirm directly with your office the next available time and look forward to discussing this significant issue as soon as possible.

Ngā mihi nui,



Tania Tapsell
Her Worship the Mayor of Rotorua



Matemoana McDonald
Chair, Bay of Plenty Regional Council