

Tuesday, 2 June 2026

Te Hui o Te Kaunihera ā-Rohe o Heretaunga
Hastings District Council
Extraordinary Council Meeting

Kaupapataka
Agenda

Te Rā Hui:
Meeting date: **Tuesday, 2 June 2026**

Te Wā:
Time: **11.00am**

Te Wāhi:
Venue: **Council Chamber
Ground Floor
Civic Administration Building
Lyndon Road East
Hastings**

Te Hoapā:
Contact: **Democracy and Governance Services
P: 06 871 5000 | E: democracy@hdc.govt.nz**

Te Āpiha Matua:
Responsible
Officer: **Chief Executive - Nigel Bickle and
Group Manager: Office of the Mayor, Governance & Legal –
Craig Cameron**

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Extraordinary Council Meeting

Kaupapataka

Agenda

Tiamana

Chair: Mayor Wendy Schollum

Mematanga:

Membership:

Ngā KaiKaunihera

Councillors: Alwyn Corban, Siiam Daniel, Michael Fowler (Deputy Mayor), Stephen Gibson, Kellie Jessup, Yvonne Lorkin, Elisha Milmine, Hana Montaperto-Hendry, Simon Nixon, Derek Nowell-Usticke, Henare O’Keefe, Nicholas Ratcliffe, Callum Ross, Heather Te Au-Skipworth and Kevin Watkins

Tokamatua:

Quorum:

8 members

Apiha Matua

Officer Responsible:

Chief Executive - Nigel Bickle

Group Manager: Office of the Mayor, Governance, Legal – Craig Cameron

Te Rōpū Manapori me te

Kāwanatanga

Democracy and

Governance Services:

Louise Stettner (Extn 5543)

Te Rārangi Take

Order of Business

1.0 Opening Prayer – *Karakia Whakatūwheratanga*

2.0 Apologies & Leave of Absence – *Ngā Whakapāhatanga me te Wehenga ā-Hui*

At the close of the agenda no apologies had been received.

Leave of Absence had previously been granted to Councillor Jessup

3.0 Conflict of Interest – *He Ngākau Kōnatunatu*

Members need to be vigilant to stand aside from decision-making when a conflict arises between their role as a Member of the Council and any private or other external interest they might have. This note is provided as a reminder to Members to scan the agenda and assess their own private interests and identify where they may have a pecuniary or other conflict of interest, or where there may be perceptions of conflict of interest.

If a Member feels they do have a conflict of interest, they should publicly declare that at the start of the relevant item of business and withdraw from participating in the meeting. If a Member thinks they may have a conflict of interest, they can seek advice from the General Counsel or the Manager: Democracy and Governance (preferably before the meeting).

It is noted that while Members can seek advice and discuss these matters, the final decision as to whether a conflict exists rests with the member.

4.0 Confirmation of Minutes – *Te Whakamana i Ngā Miniti*

Minutes of the Council Meeting held Wednesday 25 March 2026.

(Previously circulated)

Minutes of the Council Meeting held Thursday 2 April 2026.

(Previously circulated)

5.0 Simplifying Local Government Head Start process

7

6.0 Proposed Amendments To Schedule Of Meetings

25

7.0 Minor Items – *Ngā Take Iti*

8.0 Urgent Items – *Ngā Take Whakahihiri*

9.0 Recommendation to Exclude the Public from Item 10

27

10.0 P2026-777 2026 Street Lights and Traffic Signal Management Contract

Tuesday, 2 June 2026

Te Hui o Te Kaunihera ā-Rohe o Heretaunga
Hastings District Council: Council Meeting

Item 5

Te Rārangi Take

Report to Council

Nā:
From: **Gus Charteris, Group Manager: Strategy**

Te Take:
Subject: **Simplifying Local Government Head Start process**

1.0 Executive Summary – Te Kaupapa Me Te Whakarāpopototanga

- 1.1 This report seeks Council’s agreement to participate in a regional process to explore the Government’s Simplifying Local Government Head Start pathway and enter into a Memorandum of Understanding to guide the regional process.
- 1.2 On Tuesday 5 May 2026, the Government announced final policy settings for Simplifying Local Government. The announcement moved away from the earlier proposal of Combined Territories Board model and reorganisation plans (in the first instance) and introduced two pathways:
 - a voluntary **Head Start pathway** for councils that want to come together to form new unitary authorities; and
 - a compulsory **back-stop approach** for councils that do not progress through the Head Start pathway, with further detail expected in 2027.
- 1.3 Under the Head Start pathway, outline proposals are due to the Government by midnight on Sunday 9 August 2026. Proposals must meet Government criteria before they can be considered by Cabinet.
- 1.4 Entering into the Memorandum of Understanding would not commit Hastings District Council to submitting a proposal to Government. It would establish an agreed framework for working with Napier City Council, Central Hawke’s Bay District Council, Wairoa District Council and Hawke’s Bay Regional Council to explore options, share information, engage with mana whenua and key stakeholders, and bring further decisions back to Council.
- 1.5 The decision sought now is a process decision. It is not a decision to support a particular local government structure, establish a unitary authority, or submit an outline proposal to Government.
- 1.6 Agreement to explore the Head Start pathway through the regional process, and enter into the proposed Memorandum of Understanding, would keep Council actively involved in shaping the region’s response while preserving Council’s ability to make its own future decisions.

- 1.7 Further decisions will be required. The current regional work programme anticipates:
- a) Council workshops on options in late June 2026;
 - b) A Council decision in July 2026 on option or options to progress;
 - c) Council workshops on the outline proposal in July 2026; and
 - d) A Council decision in early August 2026 on whether to submit an outline proposal to the Government.
- 1.8 Any outline proposal submitted by the 9 August 2026 deadline should be explicit that it is conditional on a range of factors, including community consultation, before any final proposal is submitted in March 2027.

2.0 Recommendations - Ngā Tūtohunga

- A) That Council receive the report titled Simplifying Local Government Head Start process dated 2 June 2026.
- B) That the Council note that the Government has announced:
 - i. a voluntary Head Start pathway for councils that want to come together to form new unitary authorities, with outline proposals due by midnight on Sunday 9 August 2026.
 - ii. a compulsory back-stop approach for councils that do not progress through the Head Start pathway, with further detail expected in 2027.
- C) That Council agree to Hastings District Council exploring the Simplifying Local Government Head Start pathway as part of a regional Hawke's Bay process.
- D) That Council agree to Hastings District Council entering into the Regional Reform Memorandum of Understanding with Napier City Council, Central Hawke's Bay District Council, Wairoa District Council and Hawke's Bay Regional Council, attached as Attachment 1.
- E) That Council note that agreeing to explore the Head Start pathway and entering into the Memorandum of Understanding does not commit Council to submitting an outline proposal to Government.
- F) That Council authorise the Mayor to sign the Regional Reform Memorandum of Understanding on behalf of Hastings District Council.
- G) That Council delegate authority to the Chief Executive, in consultation with the Mayor, to approve minor amendments to the Memorandum of Understanding before signing, provided those amendments do not materially change its purpose or effect.
- H) That Council note the indicative regional work programme, including further Council decision points in July and August 2026.
- I) That Council note that any future decision to submit an outline proposal to Government will be brought back to Council for formal consideration.

3.0 Background – Te Horopaki

- 3.1 The Government has been consulting on changes to local government arrangements through its Simplifying Local Government reform programme. On Tuesday 5 May 2026, Ministers Bishop and Watts announced the Government's decisions on the Simplifying Local Government policy settings.

- 3.2 The final policy settings represent a change from the proposals previously consulted on. The Government has moved away from progressing the Combined Territories Board model as the immediate pathway (the mayor-led board proposed under the original Simplifying Local Government proposal to govern regional council functions in place of separately elected regional councillors). Instead, it has announced:
- A voluntary **Head Start pathway**; and
 - A compulsory **back-stop pathway**.
- 3.3 The Head Start pathway is intended for councils that are willing and able to reorganise quickly. It allows councils to submit an outline proposal to establish one or more new unitary authorities (a council that performs both regional council functions and territorial authority functions within the same area).
- 3.4 The back-stop pathway would apply to councils that do not progress through the Head Start pathway. The Government has indicated that detail on the back-stop approach will be developed in 2027 and that it is likely to include a standard approach to local government reorganisation.
- 3.5 Outline proposals under the Head Start pathway are due to the Government by midnight on Sunday 9 August 2026. If an outline proposal meets the Government’s criteria, Cabinet is expected to consider the proposal in September 2026. If Cabinet gives in-principle agreement, councils would have until March 2027 to submit a final proposal.
- 3.6 The Government’s initial information is clear that Head Start proposals must provide for the establishment of one or more new unitary authorities. Proposals can be submitted by two or more territorial authorities or unitary authorities if they represent a majority of directly affected territorial authorities or a majority of the population across directly affected areas.
- 3.7 Regional councils cannot submit a Head Start proposal. However, Hawke’s Bay Regional Council has important statutory responsibilities and regional functions that are directly relevant to any future governance and service delivery arrangements for Hawke’s Bay. It is important they are part of the process. They are, however, excluded from being a decision-maker under the Government’s policy settings.
- 3.8 The Government has indicated that proposals will be assessed against five criteria:
- a) Deliverability;
 - b) Support for the new planning system;
 - c) Simplified local governance;
 - d) Economies of scale; and
 - e) Maintaining local voice.
- 3.9 The indicative timeline for the Head Start pathway is set out below. This timeline remains subject to further Government guidance and Cabinet decisions.

High-level timeline (indicative)	
2026	
Early June	Council meetings on the MoU
Mid-late June	Council workshops on Head Start options
Early-mid July	Council meetings on Head Start options
Late July	Council workshops on draft Outline Proposal

Early August	Final council meetings before proposal deadline on Outline Proposal
Sunday 9 August	Outline proposals due to Government
September	Cabinet agrees to Outline Proposals 'in-principle'
October	Cabinet response on Outline Proposals expected
TBC (between October 2026 and February 2027)	Formal public consultation will be required ahead of any final proposal submitted
2027	
March	Final proposals due to Government
May	Cabinet confirms Head Start proposals and model for backstop arrangements
Q3/Q4	Cabinet approves legislation and legislation introduced
2028	
Q1	Legislation enacted
May	Proposal implementation begins Nominations for local elections
October	Backstop begins Local elections

3.10 The Hawke's Bay Mayoral Forum has appointed Wayne Eagleson and Lawrence Yule as Independent Advisors to support regional discussions on the future of local government in Hawke's Bay. Across April and May, the Independent Advisors have:

- a) Held workshops with all five councils;
- b) Updated Mayors, the Hawke's Bay Regional Council Chair and Chief Executives on the Government's final policy settings;
- c) Supported the visit by the Minister of Local Government on Friday 22 May 2026; and
- d) Worked with the Interim Regional Office and the Council Reference Group made up of officers from each council to develop an indicative work programme.

3.11 The Hawke's Bay Mayoral Forum has considered advice that Hawke's Bay councils should agree to explore the Head Start pathway and enter into a Memorandum of Understanding to guide the regional process.

4.0 Discussion – Te Matapakitanga

- 4.1 The decision before Council is whether Hastings District Council should join the regional process to explore the Head Start pathway and enter into the proposed Memorandum of Understanding.
- 4.2 This is a process decision. It does not determine Council's final position on local government reorganisation. It does not commit Council to supporting a unitary authority, a particular boundary, a particular representation model, or a final proposal.
- 4.3 Outline proposals are due to the Government by Sunday 9 August 2026. This leaves limited time for councils to explore options, test evidence, consider community and mana whenua interests, and

make formal decisions. It is important to note that should an outline proposal be submitted, this should be subject to councils being able to fulfil these adequately, ahead of submitting a final proposal in March 2027.

- 4.4 The Memorandum of Understanding is intended to support an organised regional process. It establishes a framework for the four Hawke's Bay territorial authorities and Hawke's Bay Regional Council to work together while preserving each council's autonomy.
- 4.5 **Comment from HDC General Counsel.** An MOU expresses a convergence of will between parties, indicating an intended common line of action. It is often used to establish the groundwork for cooperation, sometimes as a precursor to a separate agreement between the parties. While an MOU is a written record of the parties understanding or arrangement, it is most often used where parties do not wish to be legally bound by its content. However, the legal effect of any MOU depends on the intent of the parties as expressed in the document and the surrounding circumstances, not simply by what they elect to call the document. Where an MOU is sufficiently certain, and shows an intention to create legal relations, it can be enforceable as a contract or deed. Otherwise, it remains a non-binding record of mutual understanding.
- 4.6 The proposed Memorandum of Understanding covers:
- a) The purpose of the arrangements;
 - b) Agreed principles;
 - c) Governance and working arrangements;
 - d) Engagement with mana whenua;
 - e) Process commitments;
 - f) Decision-making;
 - g) Communications and media;
 - h) Confidentiality;
 - i) Resources and participation;
 - j) Duration and review; and
 - k) Withdrawal.
- 4.7 The Memorandum of Understanding recognises that the four territorial authorities will lead the exploration of potential future governance and service delivery arrangements under the Head Start pathway and are the decision-makers under the Government's policy settings. It also recognises the statutory responsibilities, regional functions and perspectives of Hawke's Bay Regional Council.
- 4.8 The Memorandum of Understanding states that formal decisions on participation in any future local government reorganisation proposal or submission remain matters for each territorial authority to determine through its own formal decision-making process.
- 4.9 The principles in the Memorandum of Understanding are:
- a) Regional benefit and collective responsibility;
 - b) Respect for local identity and democratic representation;
 - c) Good faith collaboration and constructive engagement;
 - d) Evidence-based and future-focused decision-making; and
 - e) Community consultation.
- 4.10 These principles are important because the reform process raises issues that go directly to local democracy, local identity, the affordability and resilience of services, representation of urban and rural communities, and the future delivery of key regional functions.

- 4.11 The Memorandum of Understanding also acknowledges the importance of meaningful engagement with mana whenua. It recognises the importance of maintaining and respecting existing relationships between councils and mana whenua and engaging constructively and in good faith.
- 4.12 The Government has also signalled expectations that councils engage with post-settlement governance entities on how existing Treaty settlement arrangements could be transferred under any future local government reorganisation.
- 4.13 The regional work programme is currently structured around three key Council decision points (note, decisions can only be made at Council meetings, not workshops):
- a) Late May to early June 2026 – Council workshop and then meeting to decide whether to explore the Head Start pathway and agree to the Memorandum of Understanding;
 - b) Early to mid-July 2026 – Council workshop and then meeting to consider and endorse option or options; and
 - c) Early August 2026 – Council workshop and then meeting to decide whether to submit an outline proposal to Government.
- 4.14 Community engagement is a key issue. The Government has not required public consultation before the 9 August 2026 outline proposal deadline. However, any future proposal would have significant public interest and would require careful consideration under Council’s Significance and Engagement Policy and the Local Government Act 2002. Nevertheless Council’s intention is to engage with the community to get their perspective as part of this process, prior to more formal engagement.
- 4.15 Given the compressed timeline, officers recommend that any outline proposal submitted under the Head Start pathway should be clear that it is conditional on community consultation before any final proposal is submitted in March 2027.
- 4.16 The Government’s policy settings allow an outline proposal to take different forms. For example, a region may put forward an outline proposal that proposes more than one new unitary authority. The Government has indicated that proposals for more than one unitary authority in a region are only likely to be approved if they clearly meet the criteria and do not fragment key regional functions where collaboration is required, such as catchment management.
- 4.17 The policy settings are also not prescriptive in terms of representation and governing arrangements, as long as the outline proposal meets the Government’s criteria.
- 4.18 If Council agrees to explore the Head Start pathway and sign-up to the Memorandum of Understanding, the next stage of the regional work programme would explore in more detail possible arrangements for Hawke’s Bay.
- 4.19 The key advantage of participating in the regional process is that it allows Council to help shape the evidence, options and regional position before any further decision is made.
- 4.20 The key risk is that the process is moving quickly, with limited time for detailed analysis, adequate mana whenua engagement or full community consultation before the August deadline. This risk can be managed, but not removed, by being clear that the current decision is only to explore options, and that any outline proposal submitted to Government would be conditional on a number of factors, including later community consultation before a final proposal would be submitted.
- 4.21 Legal, governance and policy advice will be worked through before any later decision to submit an outline proposal to Government.
- 4.22 There are also important pre-existing statutory and regulatory requirements that will need to be considered alongside the Head Start process. These include, for example, Council’s representation review requirements and the Long-Term Plan process. Representation reviews are required at least every six years and involve significant governance and officer time. The estimated cost of the next representation review is approximately \$110,000, with around 100 days of governance time and

around 220 days of officer time required. The mandated audit requirements for the Long-Term Plan also carry a significant cost, with audit costs alone estimated at around \$100,000.

- 4.23 These matters have been raised with central government. The Government has invited councils to identify any regulatory relief that would be useful and sensible in light of possible regional reorganisation, and to include those matters in any regional proposal. This could help avoid unnecessary duplication, cost or process where existing statutory cycles may be overtaken by reorganisation decisions.

5.0 Options – Ngā Kōwhiringa

Option One - Recommended Option - Te Kōwhiringa Tuatahi – Te Kōwhiringa Tūtohunga

- 5.1 Council agrees to explore the Head Start pathway as part of the regional Hawke’s Bay process and enters into the proposed Memorandum of Understanding.
- 5.2 This option would allow Hastings District Council to participate fully in the regional work programme and help shape the options that may come back to Council in July and August 2026.
- 5.3 This option does not commit Council to submitting an outline proposal to Government. It preserves Council’s ability to consider the evidence, options, risks, community implications and mana whenua feedback before making any further decision.
- 5.4 Option One is consistent with the purpose and principles of the Local Government Act 2002. In particular, section 14 provides that councils should actively seek to collaborate and co-operate with other local authorities and bodies to improve effectiveness and efficiency. Entering the Memorandum of Understanding provides a clear framework for that collaboration, while preserving Council’s own decision-making authority.

Advantages

- Hastings District Council remains actively involved in shaping the regional response to the Government’s reform programme.
- Council can influence the evidence base, option development and assessment of local impacts.
- The Memorandum of Understanding provides agreed process commitments and working arrangements.
- The approach supports a regional response to issues that affect the whole of Hawke’s Bay.
- Council retains full autonomy over future decisions.
- The approach keeps open the opportunity to submit an outline proposal if Council later considers that to be in the district’s interests.

Disadvantages/Risks

- Officers have not identified any disadvantages, but the following risks will need to be actively managed:
 - The work programme will require staff, governance and leadership time during a compressed period.
 - The community may perceive the decision to explore the Head Start pathway as a decision to support reorganisation, unless communications are clear.
 - There will be limited time for community engagement before the 9 August 2026 outline proposal deadline.
 - Working regionally may require compromise on process, timing and messaging.

- Legal, financial, representation and service delivery implications cannot be fully assessed until more detailed options are developed.

Option Two – Status Quo - Te Kōwhiringa Tuarua – Te Āhuatanga o nāianeī

5.5 Council does not agree to enter into the Memorandum of Understanding at this time and does not formally participate in the regional Head Start exploration process. Under this option, Council could continue to monitor the Government’s reform process and consider future decisions when more information is available.

Advantages

- Officers have not identified any major advantages, but the following risks would not need to be managed:
 - The commitment of staff and governance resources to the regional work programme at this stage.
 - Avoiding any perception that Council has moved toward supporting a particular reorganisation outcome.
 - Having the benefit of more information and further Government guidance before making process commitments.

Disadvantages/Risks

- Council would have reduced influence over the regional evidence base and options.
 - Other Hawke’s Bay councils involved in the Head Start pathway would continue to develop a regional position without full Hastings District Council participation.
 - If Council chose to sign-up to the Head Start pathway at a later date, Council may have less time to consider whether any outline proposal should be submitted before the 9 August 2026 deadline.
 - If Council chose not to be involved in the Head Start pathway at all, then Council would be left responding to the Government’s future compulsory back-stop approach.
 - The option may weaken the region’s ability to present a coherent Hawke’s Bay response.
 - This option may be less consistent with the Local Government Act 2002 principle that councils should actively seek to collaborate and co-operate with other local authorities and bodies to improve effectiveness and efficiency, particularly where the issue is regional in nature.
- 5.6 Officers do not recommend Option Two because the Government’s timeframe is compressed and Council’s interests are best protected by participating in the regional process while preserving future decision rights.

Other options considered

- 5.7 Council could agree to explore the Head Start pathway but not enter into the Memorandum of Understanding. Officers do not recommend this approach because it would create uncertainty about process commitments, information sharing, governance arrangements and communications.
- 5.8 Council could seek to develop its own Hastings District Council-specific position outside the regional process. Officers do not recommend this approach at this stage because the Government’s criteria require consideration of regional governance, economies of scale, regional functions and local voice. A Hastings District Council-only approach would also reduce alignment with the regional work programme.
- 5.9 Council could ask officers to seek changes to the Memorandum of Understanding before signing. This remains available if Councillors identify material issues. The recommendation includes a delegation for minor amendments only. Any material change would need to be agreed by all participating councils and could delay the work programme in an already compressed timeframe.

6.0 Next steps – *Te Anga Whakamua*

- 6.1 If Council agrees to the recommendations, the Mayor will sign the Memorandum of Understanding on behalf of Hastings District Council, subject to any minor amendments approved under delegation.
- 6.2 Officers will continue to participate in the Council Reference Group and support the regional work programme.
- 6.3 The next phase of work will focus on developing and testing potential arrangement options. This will include consideration of Government criteria, local voice, regional functions, service delivery, affordability, planning system implications, mana whenua interests and transition risks.
- 6.4 A Council workshop is expected in late June 2026 to discuss potential arrangement options. A Council decision is expected in July 2026 on option or options to progress.
- 6.5 A further Council workshop in July 2026 and a report will be prepared for a Council decision in early August 2026 to seek a formal decision on whether Hastings District Council supports submitting an outline proposal to Government.
- 6.6 Any report seeking approval to submit an outline proposal will need to include a clearer assessment of:
- a) The option or options proposed;
 - b) Advantages and disadvantages;
 - c) Expected implications for Hastings communities;
 - d) Financial, rating and service delivery issues, to the extent known;
 - e) Legal, policy and delegation matters;
 - f) Regulatory relief matters, including representation review and Long-Term Plan requirements;
 - g) Local voice and representation;
 - h) Māori impact and engagement with mana whenua and post-settlement governance entities;
 - i) Significance and engagement requirements;
 - j) Transition risks; and
 - k) The process for community consultation before any final proposal is submitted in March 2027.
- 6.7 A coordinated communications and engagement approach is being developed to support the regional process and ensure communities, staff and stakeholders receive clear and consistent information as councils consider the Government's Simplifying Local Government reform process and proposed Head Start pathway.
- 6.8 While each council remains responsible for their own governance process and communications, the approach will support coordinated timing and shared factual information across Hawke's Bay where appropriate. The approach is expected to include:
- Shared website information and FAQs
 - Internal communications for staff and elected members
 - Coordinated media and public information activity associated with key decision points
 - Communications relating to council consideration of the Memorandum of Understanding and any subsequent regional work

- Options for light-touch public information and engagement as the process progress.
- 6.9 Any future engagement activity would be designed to support public understanding and provide opportunities for communities and mana whenua to help inform future discussions and decision-making.
- 6.10 Hastings District Council will be supporting a coordinated approach to mana whenua engagement. This will involve support from the Interim Regional Office (the regional coordination function supporting Hawke’s Bay councils), working closely with Te Kupenga (Council Māori/iwi engagement leads), CEs, and senior officials on the Council Reference Group.

Attachments:

- 1 [↓](#) Hawke's Bay Regional Reform Memorandum of Understanding - 26 May 2026 CG-18-01-00306

Summary of Considerations - *He Whakarāpopoto Whakaarohanga*

Fit with purpose of Local Government - *E noho hāngai pū ai ki te Rangatōpū-ā-Rohe*

The decision supports Council’s ability to consider how local governance and service delivery arrangements may best support the present and future wellbeing of communities. The current decision is procedural. It enables Council to explore options and does not determine a future governance structure

Link to the Council’s Community Outcomes – *Ngā Hononga ki Ngā Putanga ā-Hapori*

The matter links to Council’s Community Outcomes because local government structure and service delivery arrangements affect how Council supports community wellbeing, infrastructure, resilience, local identity, democratic representation and affordability.

Māori Impact Statement - *Te Tauākī Kaupapa Māori*

The proposed Memorandum of Understanding acknowledges the importance of meaningful engagement with mana whenua throughout the process. It also acknowledges the importance of maintaining and respecting existing relationships between councils and mana whenua.

The Government has also signalled expectations that councils engage with post-settlement governance entities on how existing Treaty settlement arrangements could be transferred under any future local government reorganisation.

This report does not make a decision on a reorganisation proposal. Māori impact will need to be assessed in more detail as options are developed.

Sustainability - *Te Toitūtanga*

There are no direct sustainability or climate impacts from the decision to enter into the Memorandum of Understanding and explore the Head Start pathway.

Future options may have sustainability implications if they affect regional planning, catchment management, infrastructure investment, climate adaptation, transport, emergency management or

environmental functions. These matters should be assessed in any future report on options or an outline proposal.

Financial considerations - *Ngā Whakaarohanga Ahumoni*

There are no direct capital or operational funding decisions sought in this report.

The regional work programme will require officer time and will require support from the Interim Regional Office, Independent Advisors and council officers. Any direct unbudgeted costs will be identified and reported to Council.

Future local government reorganisation options could have significant financial implications, including rating, debt, asset ownership, service levels, transition costs and long-term affordability. Those matters are not determined by this report and will need to be assessed in future reports.

Significance and Engagement - *Te Hiranga me te Tūhonotanga*

This broad reform programme is of high strategic importance and significant in terms of Council's significance and engagement policy.

The decision sought in this report is to enter a process to explore options. It does not commit Council to any local government reorganisation proposal.

The Government has not required public consultation before the 9 August 2026 outline proposal deadline. However, officers recommend that any outline proposal submitted by that date should be explicit that it is conditional on community consultation before any final proposal is submitted in March 2027.

Consultation – internal and/or external - *Whakawhiti Whakaaro-ā-roto / ā-waho*

The regional process has been supported by the Independent Advisors, the Interim Regional Office and the Council Reference Group.

Further internal consultation will be required with Council's executive team, finance, legal, governance, communications, Māori partnerships, planning, infrastructure and service delivery leads.

External engagement with mana whenua, post-settlement governance entities, key stakeholders and the wider community will need to be planned as the work progresses.

Key risks include:

- a. **Compressed timeframe:** The 9 August 2026 deadline leaves limited time to develop options, test evidence and engage. This can be partly mitigated by making clear that any outline proposal is conditional on later consultation.
- b. **Community perception:** The public may see the decision to explore the Head Start pathway as a decision to support reorganisation. This can be mitigated through clear communications.
- c. **Loss of influence:** If Council does not participate, it may have less influence over regional options and evidence.
- d. **Legal and governance risk:** Future decisions will require careful legal and governance review, including delegation, consultation and statutory process advice.
- e. **Mana whenua and Treaty settlement risk:** Future options may affect Treaty settlement arrangements and council relationships with mana whenua and post-settlement governance entities. Early, good-faith engagement will be important.
- f. **Financial uncertainty:** The financial implications of reorganisation are not yet known and must be assessed before any future decision on an outline proposal.

g. **Regional alignment risk:** Councils may not reach consensus on a preferred option. The Memorandum of Understanding preserves each council’s autonomy while supporting good-faith collaboration.

Rural Community Board – *Te Poari Tuawhenua-ā-Hapori*

6.11 The decision sought in this report does not directly affect the Rural Community Board.

Future local government reorganisation options may have implications for rural representation, local voice and community decision-making. These matters should be assessed in future reports and discussed with the Rural Community Board as options develop.

Hawke's Bay Councils Regional Reform Memorandum of Understanding

1. Parties

This Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) is entered into between:

- Hastings District Council
- Napier City Council
- Central Hawke's Bay District Council
- Wairoa District Council
- Hawke's Bay Regional Council

(together referred to as "the Parties").

2. Purpose

The purpose of this MoU is to establish a collaborative framework through which the four Hawke's Bay territorial authorities and the Hawke's Bay Regional Council will jointly explore opportunities for future regional governance and service delivery reform in the context of the Government's Simplifying Local Government reforms. In particular, this includes agreement to consider options under the Head Start pathway.

This MoU is intended to support a constructive, evidence-based, and regionally focused process for considering future arrangements that may better support the long-term affordability, resilience and prosperity of Hawke's Bay communities.

This MoU relates to the process through which the Parties will work together and does not commit any Party to a predetermined governance, structural, or organisational outcome.

The understandings recorded in this MoU are subject to each of the Parties undertaking such consultation and engagement with its communities, mana whenua, and stakeholders on the proposed Local Government reforms and options available.

3. Role of the Territorial Authorities

The Parties acknowledge that the four Hawke's Bay territorial authorities are leading the exploration of potential future governance and service delivery arrangements under this MoU, including consideration of participation in the Government's Head Start local government reform pathway. The Parties further acknowledge the statutory responsibilities, regional functions, and perspectives of Hawke's Bay Regional Council and the importance of its participation throughout the process.

The Parties acknowledge that there may be aspects of the work programme associated with this MoU that are specific to the responsibilities, obligations, or decision-making requirements of the territorial authorities, and that the territorial authorities may, where appropriate, progress aspects of this work collaboratively and independently while continuing to keep Hawke's Bay Regional Council appropriately informed.

Formal decisions relating to participation in any future local government reorganisation proposal or submission under the Government's reform programme remain matters only for territorial authorities to determine through their own formal decision-making processes.

4. Principles

All work undertaken through this MoU must be informed and aligned with the following set of principles:

1. *Community Consultation*

The Parties recognise the importance of community views and commit to undertaking community consultation as part of any reform process. Each Party may conduct this in a manner of their choice, but the Parties agree that it would be beneficial for this to be done on an agreed common timeframe.

2. *Regional Benefit and Collective Responsibility*

The Parties acknowledge that the prosperity, resilience and wellbeing of Hawke's Bay are interconnected, and that many of the region's future challenges and opportunities are best considered collectively. The Parties also acknowledge that the delivery of local government services is becoming increasingly unaffordable for many in Hawke's Bay.

3. *Respect for Local Identity and Democratic Representation*

The Parties recognise the importance of local identity, community representation, and democratic accountability within Hawke's Bay and commit to ensuring these considerations remain central throughout the process.

4. *Good Faith Collaboration and Constructive Engagement*

The Parties commit to working collaboratively, respectfully and in good faith, including through the open sharing of information, constructive engagement, and a commitment to maintaining positive inter-council relationships.

5. *Evidence-Based and Future-Focused Decision Making*

The Parties commit to exploring future governance and service delivery options through robust evidence, strategic analysis, and a long-term focus on delivering sustainable outcomes for the communities of Hawke's Bay.

The Parties acknowledge the compressed timeframes associated with the Government's reform programme and commit to using their best efforts to progress constructive, evidence-based analysis and decision-making within the available timeframes.

5. Governance and Working Arrangements

The Parties agree to establish and maintain appropriate governance and working arrangements to support the process established under this MoU, which will include:

- A Mayoral Forum;
- A Chief Executive Steering Group;
- A Council Reference Group comprising senior officers from each Party;
- The Independent Advisors to the region;
- Engagement with mana whenua and key stakeholders; and

- Agreed work programmes and reporting arrangements.

The Chief Executive and Officers from the HBRC will be members of the officer-level groups.

The Interim Regional Office and the Council Reference Group will support coordination, information sharing, analysis, and the progression of work programmes associated with this MoU.

6. Engagement with Mana Whenua

The Parties acknowledge the importance of meaningful engagement with mana whenua throughout the process established under this MoU.

The Parties acknowledge the importance of maintaining and respecting existing relationships between councils and mana whenua and commit to engaging with mana whenua constructively and in good faith throughout the process.

The Parties further acknowledge that the perspectives of mana whenua will be important in informing consideration of any future governance or service delivery arrangements within Hawke's Bay.

7. Process Commitments

The Parties acknowledge the importance of maintaining momentum, transparency, and effective communication throughout the process established under this MoU.

Accordingly, the Parties agree that:

- The Mayoral Forum will meet at least monthly, unless otherwise agreed by the Parties;
- Each Mayor, Chair and Chief Executive is responsible for ensuring their respective council is appropriately informed regarding progress, key issues, and matters requiring consideration throughout the process;
- Each Party remains responsible for its own governance processes and decision-making requirements;
- The Parties will work collaboratively and in good faith to ensure that any decisions, approvals, or documentation required to support participation in the Government's Simplifying Local Government Head Start pathway are progressed within the relevant Government timeframes, including the initial proposal submission date of 9 August 2026;
- Where practical, the Parties will seek to align work programmes, reporting, and decision-making timeframes to support an efficient regional process.

8. Decision-Making

The Parties will seek to work collaboratively and reach consensus wherever possible throughout the process.

Each Party retains full autonomy regarding its own governance and formal decision-making processes in accordance with the requirements of the Local Government Act 2002.

Participation in this MoU does not limit or override the statutory obligations or decision-making responsibilities of any Party.

9. Communications and Media

The Parties acknowledge the importance of maintaining trust, confidence, and constructive regional relationships throughout the process.

Accordingly, the Parties agree to speaking with respect to the views and positions of all Parties.

Where appropriate, the Parties may agree to joint communications, public statements, or coordinated engagement approaches.

10. Confidentiality

The Parties acknowledge that frank discussion and the exchange of preliminary information will be necessary throughout the process and agree to maintain appropriate confidentiality where required to support constructive engagement.

11. Resources and Participation

Each Party agrees to reasonably support the process through the provision of staff resources, participation in agreed work programmes, and the sharing of relevant information where appropriate.

12. Duration and Review

This MoU will commence on the date it is signed by all Parties and will remain in effect until it is:

- Replaced by agreement of the Parties;
- Terminated by agreement of the Parties; or
- Withdrawn from by a Party in accordance with this MoU.

The Parties agree to periodically review the effectiveness and operation of this MoU

13. Withdrawal

Any Party may withdraw from this MoU at any time by providing written notice to the other Parties.

Prior to withdrawal, the Parties commit to making reasonable efforts to discuss and resolve any matters giving rise to the proposed withdrawal.

14. Status of MoU

Except where expressly stated, this MoU is not intended to create legally binding obligations between the Parties.

15. Signatories

Hastings District Council
Mayor Wendy Schollum

Signed: _____
Date: _____

Napier City Council
Mayor Richard McGrath

Signed: _____
Date: _____

Central Hawke's Bay District Council
Mayor Will Foley

Signed: _____
Date: _____

Wairoa District Council
Mayor Craig Little

Signed: _____
Date: _____

Hawke's Bay Regional Council
Chair, Councillor Sophie Siers

Signed: _____
Date: _____

Tuesday, 2 June 2026

Te Hui o Te Kaunihera ā-Rohe o Heretaunga
Hastings District Council: Council Meeting

Te Rārangi Take

Report to Council

Nā:
From: Louise Stettner, Manager, Democracy & Governance Services

Te Take:
Subject: Proposed Amendments To Schedule Of Meetings

1.0 Purpose and summary - *Te Kaupapa Me Te Whakarāpopototanga*

1.1 The purpose of this Report is to consider amendments to the schedule of Council and Committee Meetings for the 2026 Meetings Calendar which was adopted by Council on 11 December 2025.

1.2 The Local Government Act 2002, Schedule 7, Clause 19 states:

“A local authority must hold meetings at the times and places that it appoints”.

If a local authority adopts a schedule of meetings-

a) The schedule-

i) may cover any future period that the local authority considers appropriate, and

ii) may be amended.

Although a local authority must hold the ordinary meetings appointed, it is competent for the authority at a meeting to amend the schedule of dates, times and number of meetings to enable the business of the Council to be managed in an effective way.

1.3 It is proposed that the meeting schedule be amended as outlined in the Recommendations of this Report.

2.0 Recommendations - Ngā Tūtohunga

- A) That Council receive the report titled Proposed Amendments To Schedule Of Meetings dated 2 June 2026.
- B) That Council adopt changes to the 2026 Schedule of Meetings as follows:

Thursday 16 July 2026, 1pm Council Chamber	New Meeting	Council
Thursday 29 October to Wednesday 21 October, 1pm Council Chamber	Change of date	Council

Attachments:

There are no attachments for this report.

HASTINGS DISTRICT COUNCIL

COUNCIL MEETING

TUESDAY, 2 JUNE 2026

Item 9

RECOMMENDATION TO EXCLUDE THE PUBLIC

SECTION 48, LOCAL GOVERNMENT OFFICIAL INFORMATION AND MEETINGS ACT 1987

THAT the public now be excluded from the following part of the meeting, namely:

10 P2026-777 2026 Street Lights and Traffic Signal Management Contract

The general subject of the matter to be considered while the public is excluded, the reason for passing this Resolution in relation to the matter and the specific grounds under Section 48 (1) of the Local Government Official Information and Meetings Act 1987 for the passing of this Resolution is as follows:

<i>GENERAL SUBJECT OF EACH MATTER TO BE CONSIDERED</i>	<i>REASON FOR PASSING THIS RESOLUTION IN RELATION TO EACH MATTER, AND PARTICULAR INTERESTS PROTECTED</i>	<i>GROUND(S) UNDER SECTION 48(1) FOR THE PASSING OF EACH RESOLUTION</i>
10 P2026-777 2026 Street Lights and Traffic Signal Management Contract	Section 7 (2) (b) (ii) The withholding of the information is necessary to protect information where the making available of the information would be likely to unreasonably prejudice the commercial position of the person who supplied or who is the subject of the information. Section 7 (2) (i) The withholding of the information is necessary to enable the local authority to carry on, without prejudice or disadvantage, negotiations (including commercial and industrial negotiations). This report relates to an active tender which contains third party commercial information.	Section 48(1)(a)(i) Where the Local Authority is named or specified in the First Schedule to this Act under Section 6 or 7 (except Section 7(2)(f)(i)) of this Act.