

Eastern Bay of Plenty Joint Committee

Open Minutes

- Commencing:** Friday, 19 December 2025, 1.00 pm
- Venue:** Ōpōtiki District Council Chambers, 108 St John Street, Ōpōtiki
- Chairperson:** Mayor Nándor Tánczos - Whakatāne District Council
- Deputy Chair:** Mayor Faylene Tunui – Kawerau District Council
- Members:**
- Mayor David Moore – Ōpōtiki District Council
 - Deputy Mayor Maude Maxwell - Ōpōtiki District Council
 - Deputy Mayor Julie Jukes- Whakatāne District Council
 - Cr Sarah Jane van der Boom – Bay of Plenty Regional Council
 - Cr Mawera Karetai – Bay of Plenty Regional Council
 - Cr Dr Tim Maltby – Bay of Plenty Regional Council
 - Cr Dr Iwi Te Whau – Bay of Plenty Regional Council
 - Cr Glenn Dougal – Bay of Plenty Regional Council
 - Cr Steve Nelson – Ōpōtiki District Council
- In Attendance:**
- Stace Lewer – Chief Executive, Ōpōtiki District Council
 - Morgan Godfrey – Chief Executive, Kawerau District Council
 - Steven Perdia – Chief Executive, Whakatāne District Council
 - Antoinette Campbell – General Manager Strategy and Development, Ōpōtiki District Council
 - Namouta Poutasi – General Manager Strategy & Science, Bay of Plenty Regional Council
 - Lee Barton – Economic & Community Development Manager, Kawerau District Council
 - Emlyn Hatch - General Manager People & Partnerships
 - Leny Woolsey - General Manager Strategy and Growth, Whakatāne District Council
 - Dan Smith – Growth Manager, Whakatāne District Council
 - Michael Fyrer – Strategy & Policy Manager, Ōpōtiki District Council
 - Chirese Viljoen – Governance Service Manager, Whakatāne District Council
 - Gae Finlay – Executive Assistant and Governance Lead, Ōpōtiki District Council
 - Ranjini Manoharan – Executive Support Officer, Ōpōtiki District Council
 - Maheesha Silva – Governance Support Officer, Ōpōtiki District Council
 - Majeau Rogers – Mayoral Aids, Kawerau District Council
- Apologies:**
- Cr Malcolm Campbell – Bay of Plenty Regional Council
 - Chair Matemoana McDonald – Bay of Plenty Regional Council
 - Deputy Mayor Sela Kingi - Kawerau District Council

1. Opening Karakia

Michael Fryer – Strategy and Policy Manager, Ōpōtiki District Council opened the meeting with a Karakia.

Stace Lewer – Chief Executive, Ōpōtiki District Council took the Chair.

2. Apologies

Apologies were noted for Cr Malcolm Campbell (BOPRC) and Deputy Mayor Sela Kingi (Kawerau District Council).

3. Public Forum

No requests received for Public Forum.

4. Items not on the Agenda

No further items added to the Agenda.

5. Order of Business

No Order of Business changed within the Agenda.

6. Declaration of Conflicts of Interest

No Conflict of Interest declared.

7. Minutes

7.1 Eastern Bay of Plenty Joint Committee Minutes – 11 July 2025

Resolved

That the Eastern Bay of Plenty Joint Committee:

- 1 Receives the Eastern Bay of Plenty Joint Committee Minutes – 11 July 2025.

Moore/Tunui
CARRIED

8. Council Appointments to Eastern Bay of Plenty Joint Committee, Verbal Item

Presented by Stace Lewer, Chief Executive, Ōpōtiki District Council

The Chair explained that there are some differences in how each council is currently represented on the Eastern Bay of Plenty Joint Committee. The purpose of the discussion was to look at these differences and consider whether the committee would like a more consistent approach to representation.

Current representation on the committee is as follows:

- Ōpōtiki District Council has two representatives.
- Kawerau District Council has one representative and one alternate.
- Whakatāne District Council has one representative and one alternate.
- Bay of Plenty Regional Council has three representatives.

Members noted that these arrangements are not the same across all councils. It was discussed that, depending on what is agreed, some councils may need to review their appointments and take this back to their own councils for a decision.

It was also noted that this discussion links closely to the next agenda item on the committee's Terms of Reference. The committee agreed that it would be helpful to discuss committee representation at the same time as the Terms of Reference, to make sure both are aligned.

9. Terms of Reference

9.1 Eastern Bay of Plenty Joint Committee Terms of Reference 10-21

Presented by Namouta Poutasi, Group Manager of Strategy and Science, Bay of Plenty Regional Council.

It was noted that staff, working collaboratively across the councils and with the Group Manager of Strategy and Science, Bay of plenty Regional Council, had reviewed and updated the Terms of Reference to ensure they remain fit for purpose.

Key points:

- It was noted that staff working collaboratively across the councils and with the Group Manager of Strategy and Science, Bay of Plenty Regional Council, have reviewed and updated the Terms of Reference.
- The principal changes include inclusion of an Eastern Bay Spatial Plan within the remit of the Board Committee and addition of a clearer focus on economic development.
- The meeting was advised that:
The annual rotation of the chair of the secretariat will continue, consistent with current practice.
Existing provisions relating to chair rotation remain unchanged.
The provision confirming the chair does not have a casting/deciding vote is retained.
- It was noted that the Eastern Bay Spatial Plan has transitioned from development into an implementation phase.
- The previous committee structure included specific representation relevant to that phase.
- Members were advised that committee representation during the implementation phase may be considered in the future.
- Staff indicated they can undertake further consideration of representation arrangements and report back to the committee as appropriate.

Mayor Faylene Tunui sought clarification on the basis for representation and governance of the Eastern Bay Spatial Plan. Namouta Poutasi explained that the Plan had been developed by a separate, time-limited committee which has now been disestablished, with responsibility for implementation transferring to the Eastern Bay Joint Committee.

Mayor Tunui supported this approach, noting it provides clear oversight, and raised considerations regarding iwi representation, emphasising the need to respect existing relationships, mana, and co-design principles. It was noted that some implementation matters fall solely within territorial authority responsibilities, and the intent of the governance change is to support co-ordination without undermining established relationships.

Stace Lewer sought confirmation of representation arrangements. Mayor Tunui advised that an appointment error by Kawerau District Council would be corrected following its 26 November resolution.

Resolved

That the Eastern Bay of Plenty Joint Committee:

- 1 Receives the report titled Updated Terms of Reference – Eastern Bay of Plenty Joint Committee.**
- 2 Endorses the updated Terms of Reference as presented in Appendix 2.**
- 3 Notes that once endorsed the Terms of Reference will need to be adopted by all member Councils.**

Moore/ Tunui

CARRIED

10. Reports, Presentations and Verbal Updates

10.1 Administrative Matters

10.1.1 Election of Chair and Deputy Chair

In accordance with the Terms of Reference, Mayor Tunui noted that the chairing role was due to rotate to Whakatāne District Council. The nomination of Mayor Nándor Tánczos was seconded by Mayor David Moore. Mayor Tanczos accepted the nomination, and with no further nominations, the appointment was confirmed.

Resolved

That the Eastern Bay of Plenty Joint Committee:

- 1 Selects system B as the voting system to elect the Chairperson and Deputy Chairperson.**
- 2 Elects Mayor Nándor Tánczos – Whakatāne District Council as the Chairperson for a term of one year.**

Tunui/ Moore

CARRIED

- 3 Elects Mayor Faylene Tunui - Kawerau District Council as the Deputy Chairperson for a term of one year.**

Moore/ Boom

CARRIED

Mayor Tánczos took the Chair.

10.2 Non- Council Funding

10.2.1 Shared Services, Verbal Update

Presented by Stace Lewer – Chief Executive, Ōpōtiki District Council

Key point:

- This update is provided to advise that a range of reforms are in progress.

10.3 Community Safety

10.3.1 Eastern BOP Road Safety, Verbal Update

Presented by Mayor David Moore, Opotiki District Council.

Key points:

- Members received an update on regional road safety initiatives delivered through the

Regional Transport Committee, noting the benefits of strong collaboration established during the previous term.

- Committees were reported as well aligned, particularly on road safety matters progressed to the Minister.
- A fatigue stop initiative was established along the river corridor in response to increased traffic volumes and a serious road safety incident in Rotomā.
 - The initiative aimed to support rangatahi and road users and improve wider community safety outcomes.
 - Officers, including Cr Gavin Dennis and Whakatāne District Council staff, worked with Gisborne stakeholders to progress the initiative, with additional support planned during peak periods.
- The committee acknowledged the leadership and contributions of Cr Gavin Dennis, Richard Hamer, and their teams, noting strong governance and effective outcomes.

Mayor Moore and Cr van der Boom raised concerns about recurring scheduling clashes between Regional Transport Committee meetings and other meetings, which limited participation.

Cr van der Boom advised the issue would be raised with the Regional Council and suggested earlier release of public meeting agendas to improve co-ordination.

10.4 Council Plans

10.4.1 EBOP Spatial Plan, Verbal Update

Presented by Namouta Poutasi – General Manager Strategy & Science, Bay of Plenty Regional Council.

Key points:

- The Eastern Bay Spatial Plan is a collaboratively developed project between Bay of Plenty Regional Council, Eastern Bay territorial authorities, iwi, and partners, providing a 30-year spatial framework to guide growth and development.
- The Spatial Plan supports well planned growth, housing choice, economic development, social and cultural wellbeing, integrated infrastructure provision, and protection of the natural environment, and has been formally adopted by all partner councils. Implementation is now underway.
- In Whakatāne District, key challenges include sea level rise, rising groundwater, and flood risk in the Whakatāne basin. Short term infill development is to continue where infrastructure capacity allows, with longer term growth directed inland, including Awakeri and Matatā Heights. Industrial and housing growth, including Māori land development, were identified as priorities.
- In Kawerau District, the Spatial Plan supports infill housing development and enables industrial growth through District Plan provisions. Industrial rezoning has allowed development, with projects currently underway, and aligns with emerging Central Government planning directions.
- In Ōpōtiki District, the primary growth area identified is Hukatāia for staged residential development, alongside coastal growth areas. Iwi economic and housing aspirations

are reflected in the Plan, with offshore aquaculture identified as a key economic factor influencing future growth.

- Implementation actions include District Plan changes, infrastructure planning, and growth sequencing. A regional stocktake is underway to support future regional spatial planning, with the Eastern Bay Spatial Plan forming a foundation for this work. Further work is required to respond to new planning and climate legislation, including environmental limits, infrastructure sequencing, and climate adaptation.

Mayor Faylene Tunui raised concerns regarding the impact of Resource Management Act reform announcements on the delivery of iwi aspirations within the Spatial Plan, as well as risks associated with more permissive planning settings and managing community expectations.

Cr van der Boom noted potential impacts of projected growth at the Port of Tauranga, which may increase freight volumes through the Eastern Bay, with implications for local infrastructure and roading.

In response to questions on iwi engagement at a regional planning level, Mayor Tunui advised that engagement with iwi and Māori entities in Kawerau occurs across multiple workstreams and emphasised the importance of maintaining local relationships and co-design approaches. She suggested iwi participation in relevant Joint Committee agenda items to support implementation.

10.5 Economic Development

10.5.1 Economic Development Strategy, Verbal Update

Presented by Stace Lewer – Chief Executive, Ōpōtiki District Council.

Key Points:

- It was noted that previous approaches prioritised local community direction, whereas current projects are being progressed within a national policy context.
- Kawerau District Council Chief Executive Officer Morgan Godfrey advised that a committee had been established to initiate development of a local plan. A business engagement event was held in November with a wide range of local businesses to gain buy-in and co-shape a local strategy.
 - Engagement with elected members is planned for early 2026, with some concrete steps expected. It was noted that government influence may affect council direction over the next 12 months; however, economic development remains a high priority.
 - Feedback on the Regional Economic Development Strategy was reported as positive, with businesses seeing their aspirations reflected, particularly in relation to sustainable and renewable energy and alignment with neighbouring districts. Momentum has been built, with sustaining this momentum identified as a challenge.
- Bay of Plenty Regional Council General Manager Strategy and Science Namouta Poutasi advised that the internal team had been reshaped to integrate tourism, events, and economic development, and that Maia Warren had been appointed to progress local economic development work following adoption of the regional strategy.
 - Key focus areas include those identified in the strategy and the Māori economy. Attendance at the Economic Development Conference in Auckland in November provided valuable insights and external learning.

It was noted that Regional Council staff plan to visit Tairāwhiti to learn from the reporting model used by Trust Tairāwhiti, with ongoing work occurring with partners on housing and workforce development initiatives.

The discussion acknowledged the District Council perspective while recognising the Regional Council's role in the economic development space.

10.6 Government Matters and Impacts

10.6.1 Local Government Reforms, Report

Presented by Michael Fryer, Strategy and Policy Manager, Ōpōtiki District Council.

Key Points:

- The presentation provided recommendations relating to the Local Government reforms report. The report was taken as read, with contextual background provided prior to discussion.
- It was acknowledged that this is a significant period across Central, Local, and Regional Government, with the next six months identified as a time of transition. The importance of maintaining motivation and a forward focus was emphasised.
- Local Government reform was described as part of a broader suite of reforms and policy proposals, with an emphasis on undertaking reform in a secure, considered, and integrated manner. The report was noted as providing a clear starting point.
- The proposed approach involves working in principle-based groups to navigate the reform process collaboratively. The approach includes multiple layers and allows work to commence despite uncertainties.
- The work is structured in phases, with review points at the end of each phase to assess progress, identify gaps, and determine next steps. The process is intended to result in either a refined reform vehicle or a record of actions and learnings.
- The Eastern Bay's history of collaboration, unique characteristics, and credibility were acknowledged, along with the need for commitment from members, staff, and the wider community.

Mayor David Moore emphasised the importance of including governance representatives in any working groups established, noting strong working relationships between Mayors and Chief Executives. Stace Lewer, Chief Executive of Ōpōtiki District Council, supported structured touchpoints between the working group and governance to ensure alignment prior to finalising any joint submission.

Mayor Faylene Tunui noted the challenging timeframes set by Central Government, particularly over the summer period, and referenced information circulated by the LGNZ interim CEO outlining reform timelines. She reiterated the importance of local decision-making.

Steven Perdia, Chief Executive of Whakatāne District Council, supported a regional approach of speaking with one voice while allowing individual council submissions, and welcomed the inclusion of governance touchpoints.

It was agreed that an extra ordinary or online meeting may be required before the early February 2026 submission deadline to agree on a joint statement, with the option of adding a provision to the Terms of Reference to enable an extra ordinary online meeting.

Michael Fryer clarified that the report identifies priorities rather than a hierarchy, and that most systemic reforms remain in consultation, with phase two between May and June providing further iterations and a review opportunity for Chief Executives.

In response to questions on joint submissions, Michael Fryer advised that a working group would prepare an initial draft for consideration by the Joint Committee or potential signatories, without precluding individual councils from making separate submissions.

Resolved

That the Eastern Bay of Plenty Joint Committee:

- 1 Receives the Local Government Reforms Report.
- 2 Agrees to work together in giving effect to the phases of work.
- 3 Agrees to adopt the proposed principles that will guide how all Councils will work together throughout this activity.

Tunui/Moore

CARRIED

11. RESOLUTION TO EXCLUDE THE PUBLIC

Excludes the public from the following parts of the proceedings of this meeting as set out below:

The general subject of each matter to be considered while the public is excluded, the reason for passing this resolution in relation to each 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 are as follows:

Item No.	Subject of each matter to be considered	Reason for passing this resolution in relation to each matter	Ground(s) under section 48(1) for the passing of this resolution	When the item can be released into the public.
11.1	Public Excluded Eastern Bay of Plenty Joint Committee Minutes – 11 July 2025	Withholding the information is necessary to protect information which is subject to an obligation of confidence where the making available of the information would be likely to prejudice the supply of similar information or information from the same source, where it is in the public interest that such information should continue to be supplied.	48 (1) (a) (i) Section 7(2)(b)	To remain in public excluded.

Tunui/ Moore

CARRIED

Item No.	Subject of each matter to be considered	Reason for passing this resolution in relation to each matter	Ground(s) under section 48(1) for the passing of this resolution	When the item can be released into the public.
11.2	Unlocking the Eastern Bay of Plenty: A vision of Housing and Employment Growth Paper – December 2025	Withholding the information is necessary to protect information which is subject to an obligation of confidence where the making available of the information would be likely to prejudice the supply of similar information or information from the same source, where it is in the public interest that such information should continue to be supplied.	48 (1) (a) (i) Section 7(2)(h) Section 7(2)(c)(i)	To remain in public excluded.

Jukes/ Tunui

CARRIED

12. Closing Karakia

Mayor Moore closed the meeting with a karakia.

The meeting closed at 2.49pm.

CONFIRMED

Mayor Nándor Tánczos
Chairperson, Eastern Bay of Plenty Joint Committee