



**ADVISORY COMMITTEE  
for the Waikato  
REGIONAL ENVIRONMENT**



**ADVISORY COMMITTEE  
for the Waikato  
REGIONAL ENVIRONMENT**

**Minutes of the  
Advisory Committee for Regional Environment (ACRE)  
held at Waikato Regional Council, Level 1 Tui/Kowhai Rooms, 160 Ward Street, Hamilton  
on Wednesday 26<sup>th</sup> March 2025  
3:00- 5:00pm**

**ATTENDEES**

Anna Casey-Cox (Chair)  
Megan Thomas (Minutes)  
Steph Parkyn via teams  
John Badham  
Wiea Montemezzani  
Shepard Isaac  
Neville Williams  
Krtistel Van Houte via teams

**APOLOGIES**

Craig Solomon  
Rachel Thompson  
Malcome Green

**OPENING**

- **Karakia:** Shepard opens the meeting.

**Standing Items**

- **Conflicts of Interest:** No conflicts reported.
- **Current Workplan:** Review and updates.



## ADVISORY COMMITTEE for the Waikato REGIONAL ENVIRONMENT

- **Chair's Report:** Presented by the Chair.

### Membership

- Anna has reached out to a contact within North Waikato and is awaiting a response.
- Shepherd's membership is up for renewal. He will continue as a member for another three-year term. **Kirstal** moved, **Steph** seconded, and all members were in favor.
- Anna will step down as Chair, with **John** stepping up as the new Chair. Shepherd seconds this change. Anna will remain as a member and continue as Deputy Chair. **Weia** seconded this motion.

### Confirmation of ACRE Operational Plan 2025

#### Public Transport Funding Update and Annual Plan Submission

- **Presented by Bryan:**
  - Vision: No change in terms of inspiration and planning.
  - **Public Transport Funding:** A breakdown of funding, including the National Land Transport Fund (NLTF), public funding, and rates.
  - The Te Huia service is not included in the local investment level graph. The 5-year trial for Te Huia will end in 2026, with a review to be presented to the board regarding its continuation.
  - Electric buses are expected in mid-year.
  - National Ticketing System – a new move towards a unified payment system across New Zealand.
  - The Taxi Scheme does not currently include Uber.
  - **Better Together Role:** Involves ACC, NZTA, and NZ Police collaboration.
  - Government Policy Statement on Transport (GPS) will guide initiatives.
  - High-frequency bus services (e.g., Meteor, Comet) are not currently funded.
  - **Increase:** 20% at the start of the financial year, with a 6.4% increase for inflation and 5% towards the GPS this year.

### Q&A

- A discussion about discount fares for younger people and the bus contract renewal process, which includes a revision of the fares policy.
- Collaboration with NZTA is expected on these discussions.
- For Coromandel: The bus contract renewal process will focus on optimizing services, such as the Coromandel to Thames route, to provide cost-effective and frequent services.
- Concerns about carrying bikes on buses were raised. This is a work-in-progress issue.

### Approval of Minutes

- **Anna** moved to approve the minutes, **Weia** seconded.

### Other Business

- **Healthy Rivers Co-Governance Meetings:** The plan change for the Waikato and Waipa rivers is currently with the Environment Court. Freshwater policy development is scheduled for next Friday, April 4th, at 10 a.m. This will be a public meeting, and the co-governance group will provide iwi input for the freshwater policy. The agenda will be published by the end of this week or latest by Monday on the WRC website.
- **Megan and Anna** will create a Doodle poll for alternate hui dates.

### Reports

- Any issues or discussions regarding these reports?
  - **Kirstal's** report on Rangatahi Voices regarding increased engagement with young people will be sent. Kirstal is happy for this report to be shared.
  - **Rachel and Anna** had a discussion about biosecurity.
  - Rangatahi may work in the Coromandel. Anna will connect with **Mish Whaler** about pest trapping, weed control, and the Moihō Environment Group. There are also potential monitoring opportunities within the Drivnc Creek Railway Conversation Network.
  - All members are to contact **John** and **Megan** to allocate their preferred lead for the operational plan.
  - Operational plan, Appendix 1 comments from Regional Councillors on ACRE's ongoing role, including a possible joint workshop later in the year. In the meantime, ACRE to review its Constitution (Purpose, Values, etc), in preparation for further dialogue with WRC.

### Te Ture Whaimana Review

- **John** is in contact with a member regarding the work plan for this review and will follow up. This may be added as an agenda item for the April meeting. John will attend the hui next week for the Healthy Rivers initiative.

### Closing

- **Neville** closed the meeting with a karakia.

**Meeting Adjourned at 4:30 p.m.**