

# Bay of Plenty Mayoral Forum

## Open Minutes

- Commencing:** Friday 3 May 2024, 11.10 AM
- Venue:** Rotorua Lakes Council, Council Chambers, 1061 Haupapa Street, Rotorua
- Chairperson:** Mayor Tania Tapsell – Rotorua Lakes Council (RLC)
- Deputy Chairperson:** Deputy Chairperson Victor Luca – Whakatāne District Council (WDC)
- Members:** Mayor James Denyer – Western Bay of Plenty District Council (WBOPDC)  
Chairman Doug Leeder – Bay of Plenty Regional Council Toi Moana (BOPRC)  
Mayor David Moore – Ōpōtiki District Council (ODC)  
Commission Chair Anne Tolley – Tauranga City Council (TCC)  
Mayor Faylene Tunui – Kawerau District Council; (KDC)
- In Attendance:** Staff: Stephanie O’Sullivan - Chief Executive, WDC; Fiona McTavish - Chief Executive, BOPRC; Marty Grenfell - Chief Executive, TCC; John Holyoake - Chief Executive, WBOPDC; Stace Lewer - Chief Executive, ODC; Morgan Godfery - Chief Executive, KDC; Andrew Moraes – Chief Executive, RLC; Tone Nerdrum Smith – Senior Advisor Governance
- Also Present: Honourable Minister Simeon Brown (Minister of Local Government, Transport, Energy and Auckland), supported by Member of Parliament Tom Rutherford, Member of Parliament Andy Foster, and Ministerial Advisor Liam McNamara
- Apologies:** Mayor David Trewavas and Chief Executive Julie Gardyne (both Taupō District Council)

### 1. Opening

Mayor Tapsell opened the meeting and welcomed those present, in particular the Honourable Minister Simeon Brown (Minister of Local Government, Transport, Energy and Auckland), Member of Parliament Tom Rutherford and Member of Parliament Andy Foster.

This session was being recorded and the recording would be uploaded to the Bay of Plenty Toi Moana (BOPRC) website after the meeting [2024 05 03 Mayoral Forum Zoom Video Recording \(youtube.com\)](#)

## 2. Apologies

### Resolved

That the Bay of Plenty Mayoral Forum:

- 1 Accepts the apology from Mayor David Trewavas and Julie Gardyne - Chief Executive (both Taupō District Council) tendered at the meeting.

Tunui/Tolley  
CARRIED

## 3. Declaration of Conflicts of Interest

None declared.

## 4. Minutes

### Minutes to be Confirmed

#### 4.1 Bay of Plenty Mayoral Forum Minutes - 2 February 2024

### Resolved

That the Bay of Plenty Mayoral Forum:

- 1 Confirms the Bay of Plenty Mayoral Forum Minutes - 2 February 2024 as a true and correct record.

Tolley/Tunui  
CARRIED

## 5. Ministerial Attendance

### 5.1 Attendance by the Honourable Minister Simeon Brown

In Attendance: Honourable Minister Simeon Brown (Minister of Local Government, Transport, Energy and Auckland), supported by Member of Parliament Tom Rutherford, Member of Parliament Andy Foster, and Ministerial Advisor Liam McNamara.

#### **Key Points - Honourable Minister Simeon Brown:**

- Recognised the particular challenges at the moment as councils' were progressing their 2025-2035 Long Term Plans (LTP)
- Recognised that the change in Central Government had created unique challenges both at local and national level
- Priorities for the Government included ensuring value for money; reduce waste; and delivery of an efficient public service
- Recognised the current Government's significantly different approach to water service delivery
- Was focussed on Local Government being provided with the tools and responsibility to provide water services, e.g. via access to required financing

- Water Service Delivery Plans legislation was set to be introduced in the middle of 2024
- Further water legislation later in 2024 would address good value and asset management
- Any city/regional deals must be framed as an enabling relationship. Was working closely with Honourable Minister Chris Bishop (Infrastructure) on ways to deliver optimal deals/priorities/tools
- Recognised the differing views with regards to the decision to repeal the legislation that enabled councils to make the decision to establish Māori Wards
- Intended to extend the Government Policy Statement (GPS) from the current three yearly review to 10 years
- Clear priorities within the GPS on Land Transport included safety, resilience and future proofing
- Government was working through significant changes in funding towards roading/transport networks, e.g. introduction of additional tools to create and maintain infrastructure.

### **In Response to Questions:**

- Although all the various financing tools/levers relevant to local government did not sit within his portfolio, he recognised the value of tools such as removing GST on new builds to enable increased/faster supply of housing
- Development of necessary transport infrastructure could be curtailed if councils relied solely on New Zealand Transport Agency (NZTA) for funding, hence it was important to review this tool against other potential avenues
- Time-of-use charges, i.e. congestion charging, could be valuable
- Was working closely with local councils in the establishment of the new water entities/CCOs, which impacted the on vs off balance sheet debt councils could carry
- Sought to give councils the independence to choose the best funding options/tools for their particular city/district/region
- Central Government was committed to lending \$1b per annum to NZTA towards transport infrastructure
- Was at this stage not considering rolling over councils' existing water take consents, rather, wanted to ensure any investments were done in the most cost effective way possible
- Noted some instances where water infrastructure investments by local councils were over and above the legal requirement, which represented an unnecessarily high cost to ratepayers
- Sought increased standardisation to water services, rather than the current bespoke approach which increased costs, including at a governance/management level
- Recognised that 'everyone had to pay somehow', but providing financing tools to spread the cost over a longer period time was being investigated
- Balance sheet separation within the Local Water Done Well discussions was essential and encouraged councils to have these conversations now
- Economic regulations would focus on efficiencies, with work currently being undertaken at Central Government level that was intended to be passed into legislation in 2025
- Noted the comparison with the Electricity Board regarding efficiencies in service delivery
- Recognised that infrastructure funding demands would traditionally exceed what was available
- Ringfencing funding towards infrastructure maintenance was recognised as a key aspect

- Public transport service and infrastructure: Expected a higher level of private contribution, i.e. advertising opportunities, while maximising other funding streams. Value for money/outcomes would always be the key considerations
- Recognised that transport maintenance, e.g. road management represented a significant cost to councils and encouraged pursuing increased efficiencies
- Recognised that District Plans could limit evening/night infrastructure work and that this could prolong roading projects
- CCOs enabled councils to borrow from Central Government, but the entities' credit ratings impacted on the interest rate offered. Councils would accordingly have to consider the debt they were willing to take on/able to service
- Recognised that changing standards represented a risk of increased costs, e.g. if requesting an improved quality in discharged wastewater
- Differing policies between councils regarding wastewater discharge to land vs water had made standardisation challenging for Central Government
- Would not mandate practises that increased costs to councils unless it significantly contributed to better/required outcomes
- Recognised the priority of effective roading connections between Waikato and Tauranga for export purposes/access to the Port of Tauranga. This was supported by the Roads of National/Regional Significance programme
- Sought to extend coastal resource consents to enable operators e.g. ports, to continue their operations without having to seek frequent renewals at high costs
- There was a vast number of components involved with obtaining a resource consent, which made the process time-consuming and expensive. Central Government was seeking to address this through the one-stop-shop approach of the Fast Track legislation.

#### **Key Points - Members:**

- 'Debt was debt', irrespective of whether on or off a Council's balance sheet
- Queried if, considering the current reviews of the Regional Transport Plans, combined with the current prioritisation within the Roads of National Significance programme, there was sufficient funding available overall to deliver the intended outcomes
- National efficiencies were driven by exporting practices overseas, and Central Government should prioritise international transport in its strategic thinking
- Noted that the Port of Tauranga was New Zealand's main export port, compared to other ports, e.g. Auckland, that were mainly focussed on imports
- Concerned regarding the changes in legislation to Māori Wards, and the impact on local communities where engagement was a significant challenge
- Supported and respected the encouragement to offer more financing tools, however sought recognition that 'everything' could not be done at once.

12.21 pm - the meeting **adjourned**,

1.10 pm - the meeting **reconvened**.

## 6. Public Excluded Section

### Resolved

#### Resolution to exclude the public

- 1 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:**

<b>Item No.</b>	<b>Subject of each matter to be considered</b>	<b>Reason for passing this resolution in relation to each matter</b>	<b>Grounds under Section 48(1) for the passing of this resolution</b>	<b>When the item can be released into the public</b>
6.1	Public Excluded Bay of Plenty Mayoral Forum Minutes - 2 February 2024	As noted in the relevant Minutes.	As noted in the relevant Minutes.	To remain in public excluded.
6.2	Workshop Session - Local Water Done Well	Withholding the information is necessary to maintain the effective conduct of public affairs through the free and frank expression of opinions by or between or to members or officers or employees of any local authority, or any persons to whom section 2(5) applies, in the course of their duty.	48(1)(a)(i) Section 7 (2)(f)(i).	To remain in public excluded.

- 2 That Vaughan Payne - Kāhu Manawa be permitted to stay in the public excluded section of the meeting due to his knowledge of the matter under discussion, being: Workshop Session - Local Water Done Well.**

**Luca/Moore  
CARRIED**

## 7. Closing Karakia

A karakia was provided by Mayor Tania Tapsell.

**2.42 pm - the meeting closed.**

**CONFIRMED**

---

Mayor Tania Tapsell  
Chairperson, Bay of Plenty Mayoral Forum