Tairāwhiti Local Advisory Committee Meeting

Minutes

Date: Tuesday 23 September 2025
Time: 10.00 am – 3.00pm
Venue: Online Teams meeting

Present:

Hikihiki Pihema	LAC Chair
Erana Reedy	LAC Deputy Chair
Teena Montgomery	LAC Member
Jordan Walker (Online)	LAC Member
Dr Raaniera Te Whata (Online)	LAC Member

In Attendance:

Amit Prasad (from 1.40pm)	Fire and Emergency Board
Antony Ruru	Senior Advisor Community Readiness & Recovery
Reihana Turner	Pou Takawaenga Māori
Shane Laulu (Online)	Senior Advisor, Local Advisory Committees

Apologies:

Willis Tamatea	LAC Member
Shane McClutchie	LAC Member
David Guard	Region Manager, Nga Tai ki te Puku
Peter Clark	District Manager, Tairāwhiti
Trudi Hicklin	Community Risk Manager

Welcome

The meeting was opened with a karakia, followed by a welcome from the Chair and whanaungatanga with those present.

Committee operations

Amendments were made to the Members Interests Register and confirmed. The minutes from the LAC's meeting on 29 May 2025 were amended and confirmed, actions updated, and correspondence noted.

Chair's update

Tee Montgomery briefed the LAC on the July LAC Chairs' Hui which she found productive engaging with Chairs discussing barriers and engagement as a collective group. Found synergies with Te Tai Tokerau LAC in a similar environment and challenges. Volunteerism was a shared issue across all LACs. The Hui provides the opportunity for LACs to work together and connect.

The Chairs discussed the Community Perceptions report, highlighting the need for an appropriate Te Ao Māori lens to support engagement. It was noted the Community Perceptions report highlighted practice the LAC identified it was already undertaking in approach. The LAC felt a lack of acknowledgement and understanding in the report about how Māori engage. The LAC highlighted the need to have capability to engage and being guided by values that support a relational approach. The Chair reflected the importance from the discussion to leverage local connections with marae and Fire and Emergency's Māori strategy.

Engagement reports and analysis

The LAC discussed its settings for the 25-26 Engagement Plan and how this should reflect the differing types of engagement and situations of how someone would engage in Tairāwhiti. The LAC also reviewed its engagement reports submitted for the period.

In discussing engagement reports the LAC identified some emerging themes with:

- Importance and value of reaching critical communities through iwi radio and investment in consistent and localised messaging for the region. The LAC noted this has been included in their reporting to the Fire and Emergency Board through annual insights. The LAC noted national media networks do not provide the local context and examples such as Cyclone Gabriele provided evidence of more effective communication and reach through localised messaging and repetition.
- Concern with the organisational changes and repositioning of the Pou Takawaenga roles. The LAC noted its continued support for the roles and their mahi with connection to communities.
- Appropriate support to volunteers and recognition of employers. This is important for Tairāwhiti and maintaining a sustainable base of volunteers for the district.
- The importance to add several areas of focus to the engagement plan to include:
    - Ethnic communities
    - Pacific Peoples
    - Civil Defence Emergency management (CDEM)
    - Māori Landowners – especially with the water supply consultation to be undertaken nationally

District update

The Senior Advisor Community Readiness & Recovery updated the LAC on recent activity and current issues in the Tairāwhiti District.

Discussed was:

- District activity involved with Te Wiki O Māori
- Three recruits have completed training and will begin in coming weeks in the District
- Social media campaign with recognition of volunteer and promote the value of volunteerism
- Shared was the Community Risk Manager report on community readiness and reduction for the period

- Discussed was building capability with the issue of fire permits with more of the team becoming qualified to issue permits
- The LAC was briefed on the preparation for the Wildfire preparedness and Fire season and fire permitting. Radio Ngāti Porou has been valuable in their support with messaging to communities
- The District team is building a strong connected network of wāhine in Tairāwhiti which includes recruiting and support in roles
- Marae evacuation scheme project is progressing with coverage across sixty-six marae in Tairāwhiti partnering with the Pou Takawaenga Māori
- The CRM team is working on Home Fire Safety campaigns focusing on communities in the west District and includes working with career staff in Gisborne City

Discussed also was the recent media attention with available firefighters in Gisborne. The LAC highlighted the need for Fire and Emergency to share key messages with the committee as a support and ensuring accurate information can be shared with the community through the committee.

Rautaki Māori update

The Pou Takawaenga updated the LAC on recent activity in Tairāwhiti, organisational changes and impact to the Pou Takawaenga within the Fire and Emergency structure.

Board Member

Board Member Amit Prasad joined the meeting online. The LAC had an engaged discussion with Amit across several areas and from the LAC discussions earlier in the meeting. Tairāwhiti to bring further discussion to the LAC Chairs' Forum in November.

General Business

The LAC confirmed the Deputy Chair to attend the LAC Chairs' Forum as the Tairāwhiti representative in November. The LAC confirmed the venues for the Trimester two and three meetings as Gisborne Fire Station.

Next meeting:

Trimester two meeting: **24 February 2025** Venue: **Gisborne Fire Station**

Closing

The meeting closed at 3.00 pm with karakia.

Action Log

Date	Action	Responsible	Due	Status
23 September 2025	Add Insight on engaging with Māori as above – from community perceptions report – feedback to FENZ	Chair/Senior Advisor	Immediate post meeting	Progressing

23 September 2025	Add insight on comms and campaign through iwi radio stations	Chair/Senior Advisor	Immediate post meeting	Progressing
23 September 2025	Provide LAC the schedule on national campaigns planned for the 25-26 financial year	Senior Advisor	Immediate post meeting	Progressing
23 September 2025	Planning meeting to be organised by end of October to confirm 25-26 Engagement Plan	Chair	Post meeting	Progressing
13 March 25	List of stakeholders for LAC	District Manager	March 2025	Completed
13 March 25	Consult with other LAC Chairs on volunteerism and the duration of the recruitment period.	Chair	T3 meeting May 2025	Completed