Tairāwhiti Local Advisory Committee Meeting

Minutes

Date: Thursday 29 May 2025 **Time:** 10.00 am – 1.30pm

Venue: Online Teams meeting

Present:

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

In Attendance:

David Guard	Region Manager
Peter Clark	District Manager, Tairāwhiti
Hori Mana	Pou Takawaenga Māori Matua
Trudi Hicklin	Community Risk Manager
Leanne Hay	Senior Advisor, Local Advisory Committees

Apologies:

Shane Laulu	Senior Advisor, Local Advisory Committees
Shane McClutchie	LAC Member
Willis Tamatea	LAC Member

Welcome

The meeting was opened with a karakia, followed by a welcome from the Chair.

Committee operations

Amendments to the Members Interests Register were noted as follows:

- Erana Reedy has joined the Te Mangai Paho Board (Māori Broad casting authority)
- Jordan Walker advised he will stand in the Local Body elections for Gisborne District Council

The minutes from the Local Advisory Committee's meeting on 13 March 2025 were confirmed, actions updated, and correspondence noted.

The District Manager let the LAC know that the local plan for the District would be available in draft in the next few weeks. He will forward to the committee for their information and planning.

Chair's update

The Chair attended the Volunteer Leadership Conference over the previous weekend. This was attended by approximately 200 volunteer leaders and was a great opportunity to connect with volunteers and meet with other LAC members and Chairs. There was some great feedback received from volunteers. Themes included managing tensions within the organisation, particularly at brigade level could be complicated and isolating. The Chair has requested that the LAC have a stand at the next conference as this would be a great opportunity to promote the LAC and gather feedback.

The next LAC Chairs' Hui is in July, and the Deputy Chair would be attending as the Chair has a prior commitment.

Engagement reports and analysis

The LAC revisited their engagement plan and confirmed priorities and actions. Members discussed engagements undertaken by members identified some emerging themes. A key focus was on connecting with Māori landowners. Some key issues from this group include the difficult geography of the land, different views within each group, climate change and how prepared each group is for an emergency, and that many of the landowners are remote from the land. It was discussed that while it is easy to get volunteers for a specific emergency, it was harder to get long term engagement.

Some ideas canvased by the LAC include connecting Fire and Emergency with the landowners to enhance relationships and encourage a pool of volunteers. The LAC will help Fire and Emergency with connections where they can. The District noted it would like to work more closely with landowners to ensure appropriate fire safety measures are in place, e.g.: water supplies and fire breaks.

The LAC raised a question for the District team on the new Strategic Direction recently released by Fire and Emergency and the lack of any reference to gender issues. The Region Manager noted that there are Diversity and Inclusion Strategies and a Rautaki Māori Strategy that sit under the Strategic Direction that provide further detail in these areas.

An LAC member connected with the Regional Director of Te Puni Kokiri (TPK), who gave them some valuable insights on the community and who the LAC could be talking too. Korero with local sports clubs had resulted in success with encouraging members to volunteer for Fire and Emergency. Engagement with local volunteers had garnered a better understanding of barriers to volunteering from a local perspective. A common theme was that more localised and relevant training would make a difference. Noted was the importance of support from family members, and in some cases, this could be a source for future volunteers.

The LAC discussed with the District on how Fire and Emergency works with Civil Defence, what communication processes are in place in the event of an emergency. Also discussed were how local radio stations can help with promotion of fire safety and emergencies, and the national marketing campaigns run by Fire and Emergency.

The administration burden on volunteers was also discussed and the District noted that while tedious it was important that incidents were recorded. This was vital for future planning and to enable

brigades to have the right levels of resourcing and is also critical information for police and insurance investigations.

Engagement Annual Insights Report

The committee discussed and completed their annual insights report.

District update

The District Manager gave an update on activities in the district including current levels of recruitment, training and property issues. The District is aiming to undertake more recruitment for volunteers for the January and March intake of training next year. They are also looking to build capability for a new water rescue team, and potentially other specialist teams as needed. They are looking at how to support volunteers better through the volunteer recognition programme, ensuring volunteers that are self-employed are included. One Group Manager is currently deployed to help in the NSW flooding which is a great opportunity for both the organisation and the individual.

The District is working to deliver the Fire Wise programme to all schools in the area and have been actively pursuing Ake Kura – a programme working on a 1:1 basis with children who have started fires or a curious about fires. This programme has had good success with these children. Home fire safety campaigns are underway in a number of areas and the District's work closely with communities to provide a bespoke campaign for different communities. Tairāwhiti District has its own Face Book page which they try to keep updated. The District is endeavouring to get further into different communities and would appreciate the LAC help with any connections.

General Business

The Region Manager gave an update on the new Strategic Direction and how it fitted into the Future Operating Capability Project which is due to roll into the Business Plan in 2025-26. The Strategic Direction focuses on five key areas including safe, effective and resilient operations, effective regulations, strong relationships, support for our people and strong business foundations. The Region Manager noted that the Districts are now waiting on a road map for the next five years on how Fire and Emergency will deliver on the new Strategic Direction. It was acknowledged the voice of the LAC will be valuable in this area.

The Future Operating Capability Project will allow Fire and Emergency to provide training that is more relevant to location and individual district needs.

Next meeting:

Trimester 1 meeting: **23 September 2025** Venue: Ruatoria Fire Station

Closing

The meeting closed at 1.30 pm with karakia.

Action Log

Date	Action	Responsible	Due	Status
29 May 25	Provide LAC with the Minister's letter of expectations	DM/Senior Advisor	June 2025	Completed

29 May25	Provide LAC with a copy of the Strategic Direction	Senior Advisor	June 2025	Completed
29 May25	National Marketing Campaign sent out to LAC members	Senior Advisor	June 2025	Completed
13 March 25	List of stakeholders for LAC	District Manager	March 2025	Draft sent post meeting – Chair will email to members
13 March 25	Liaise with other LAC Chairs on volunteerism and the duration of the recruitment period.	Chair	T3 meeting May 2025	Took opportunity to discuss at VLC Will follow up with Chairs
13 March 25	Update the LACs 2024-25 engagement plan and circulate.	Chair/LAC	March 2025	Competed
13 March 25	Set up of LA Chat group	Chair	March 2025	Completed
5 November 24	Arrange meeting for new Chair with NLAC Coordinator when in Wellington Chairs Forum over 13-14 November to discuss IT needs	Senior Advisor	November 2024	Completed
5 November 24	Arrange meeting with new Chair and District Manager to further discuss induction of new LAC members for early 2025.	Senior Advisor	November 2024	Completed