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## Community and Natural Environment Committee

### *Te Komiti Haapori me te oranga o te Taiao*

## OPEN MINUTES

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Minutes of a meeting of the Community and Natural Environment Committee held in Council Chamber, Municipal Building, Garden Place, Hamilton on Thursday 3 April 2025 at 9:30 am.

#### PRESENT

**Deputy Chairperson** Cr Anna Casey-Cox  
**Heamana Tuarua**

**Members**

- Mayor Paula Southgate
- Deputy Mayor Angela O’Leary
- Cr Maxine van Oosten
- Cr Ewan Wilson
- Maangai Olly Te Ua
- Cr Louise Hutt
- Cr Andrew Bydder
- Cr Geoff Taylor
- Cr Sarah Thomson
- Cr Emma Pike
- Cr Maria Huata
- Cr Tim Macindoe

**External Presenters** Matthew Cooper and Shane Brodie – Sport Waikato

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*The Deputy Chair assumed the role of Chair.*

*The Deputy Chair opened the meeting with a karakia.*

#### 1. **Apologies – Tono aroha**

**Resolved:** (Cr Casey-Cox/Cr van Oosten)

That the Community and Natural Environment Committee accepts the apologies of absence from Cr Naidoo-Rauf, and Cr Tauariki (Council Business), and for partial attendance from Cr Huata (Council Business).

#### 2. **Confirmation of Agenda – Whakatau raarangi take**

**Resolved:** (Cr Casey-Cox/Cr van Oosten)

That the Community and Natural Environment Committee confirms the agenda noting that Item 7 (Sport Waikato Update July-Dec 2024) will be taken after Item 5 (Confirmation of the Community and Natural Environment Open Minutes 18 February 2025) to accommodate availability of external presenters.

#### 3. **Declarations of Interest – Tauaakii whaipaaanga**

Cr Macindoe declared a conflict in relation to Item C1 (Momentum Proposal). He noted he would not take part in the discussion or vote on the matter.

Cr Pike declared an interest in Item C1 (Momentum Proposal). She noted she was not conflicted and would take part in the discussion and vote on the matter.

**4. Public Forum – Aatea koorero**

**Natasha Willison-Reardon & Mareta Matenga (The Serve)** spoke to Item 6 (Chair's Report) in support of further work in the Garden Place space and outlined the work they were doing to support people in this space.

**Joe Wilson (Waikato Wellbeing Project)** spoke to Item 6 (Chair's Report) in relation to the Garden Place activation work and suggested ways to better support those using the space.

**5. Confirmation of the Community and Natural Environment Open Minutes 18 February 2025**

**Resolved:** (Cr Casey-Cox/Cr Hutt)

That the Community and Natural Environment committee confirm the Open Minutes of the Community and Natural Environment Meeting held on 18 February 2025 as a true and correct record.

Item 7 (Sport Waikato Update July-Dec 2024) was taken after Item 5 (Confirmation of the Community and Natural Environment Open Minutes 18 February 2025) due to availability of external presenters.

**6. Sport Waikato Update July-Dec 2024**

The Community Services Unit Director introduced the external presenters from Sport Waikato who spoke to the report, in particular, funding, artificial fields, aquatic planning, coordinating partnership opportunities and regional sport. They responded to questions from Members concerning recent survey results, initiatives they were undertaking, field studies, challenges, economic impact of their organisation, multi-sport facilities, aquatic spaces, work in the older person's sport space and funding.

**Resolved:** (Cr van Oosten/Cr Macindoe)

That the Community and Natural Environment Committee receives the report.

*Cr Huata joined the meeting (9.54 am) during the discussion of the above item. She was present when the matter was voted on.*

**7. Chair's Report**

The Chair and Deputy Mayor O'Leary spoke to the report highlighting the lack of accessible space for the performing arts area, impact of regional theatre, performing arts growth and future proposals for the creative industries. They responded to questions from Members concerning Garden Place mitigation and the role of current bylaws.

**Resolved:** (Cr Casey-Cox/Cr Thomson)

That the Community and Natural Environment Committee:

- a) receives the report;
- b) requests staff:
  - i. investigate social, regulatory, safety and design interventions for supporting street whānau, reducing antisocial behaviour, and activating Garden Place;
  - ii. bring a report to 30 April Council meeting outlining process, timeframe and cost to review and amend the below bylaws and any proposed adjustments to the existing work programme to accommodate this work:
    - I. Public Places Bylaw 2016;
    - II. Hamilton Safety in Public Places Bylaw 2020;
    - III. Alcohol Control Bylaw 2020; and
    - IV. Waste Management and Minimisation Bylaw 2019.
  - iii. continue facilitating the Hamilton CBD Interagency Group, and present a report to the

June Community Committee on identified gaps and opportunities to support street community in Hamilton City, including the role of Council; and

- iv. report back with further information on the impact that population growth and intensification has on community houses and organisations supported via Councils Community Grants Programme in time for consideration in the 2027-37 Long-Term Plan.
- c) notes that this work will be undertaken in coordination with existing internal efforts (such as the central city alignment groups) to ensure consistency across various priorities and programmes of work; with recommendations reported to the appropriate Committee.

**Cr Bydder Dissenting**

**The meeting was adjourned from 10.53am to 11.10am.**

*Cr Huata retired from the meeting during the above adjournment.*

*Deputy Mayor O'Leary and Cr Pike left the meeting during the above adjournment.*

**8. Civil Defence Emergency Management (CDEM) Quarterly Report**

The Safety & Resilience Unit Director took the report as read. They responded to questions from Members concerning medical services, collaborative relationships, operation centres, staff training and earthquake building requirements.

**Resolved:** (Cr Pike/Maangai Olly)

That the Community and Natural Environment Committee receives the report.

*Deputy Mayor O'Leary and Cr Pike re-joined the meeting (11.11am) during the above item. They were present when the matter was voted on.*

**9. Tree Policy - Request to Consult**

The Programme & Planning Manager spoke to the report highlighting the purpose for the tree policy, guiding principles of the tree canopy, amenity value and tree management. They responded to questions from Members concerning existing mature trees, infrastructure impacts, tree removal, species selection, planting and vandalism.

**Resolved:** (Cr Hutt/Cr Wilson)

That the Community and Natural Environment Committee:

- a) receives the report;
- b) approves the Draft Tree Policy (attachment 1) and the Draft Statement of Proposal (**Attachment 2**);
- c) approves public consultation to occur 19 May to 16 June 2025; and
- d) notes that verbal submission will be heard by the Regulatory and Hearings Committee 22 July 2025, with recommendations from the Committee being provided to the 18 September 2025 Council meeting for deliberations and approval.

**10. Accessible Properties 2024 Annual Report**

The Community Advisor & Grants Manager provided an update on the initiatives being undertaken by Accessible Properties about engagement with the tenants. Staff responded to questions from Members concerning discussion outcomes, social housing and rates.

**Resolved:** (Cr Casey-Cox/Cr van Oosten)

That the Community and Natural Environment Committee:

- a) receives the report; and
- b) notes that:
  - i. Council staff have reviewed two 6-monthly reports attached for the period ending 30 June 2024 and 31 December 2024; and

- ii. the reports show compliance with the agreed encumbrances and other clauses in the agreements between the Council and Accessible Properties.

# **11. Resolution to Exclude the Public**

**Resolved:** (Cr Casey-Cox/Cr Hutt)

That the public be excluded from the following parts of the proceedings of this meeting, namely consideration of the public excluded agenda.

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 follows.

General subject of each matter to be considered	Reasons for passing this resolution in relation to each matter	Ground(s) under section 48(1) for the passing of this resolution
C1. Momentum Waikato Proposal	) Good reason to withhold ) information exists under	Section 48(1)(a)
C2. Confirmation of the Community and Natural Environment Committee Public Excluded Minutes 18 February 2025	) Section 7 Local Government ) Official Information and ) Meetings Act 1987	

This resolution is made in reliance on section 48(1)(a) of the Local Government Official Information and Meetings Act 1987 and the particular interest or interests protected by Section 6 or Section 7 of that Act which would be prejudiced by the holding of the whole or relevant part of the proceedings of the meeting in public, as follows:

Item C1.	to avoid the unreasonably, likely prejudice to the commercial position of a person who supplied or is the subject of the information	Section 7 (2) (b) (ii)
Item C2.	to prevent the disclosure or use of official information for improper gain or improper advantage	Section 7 (2) (j)

**The meeting moved into the public excluded session at 11.53am.**

**The meeting was declared closed at 12.35pm.**

## Appendix 1. Public Forum Submission:

1 April 2025



Hamilton Christian Nightshelter Trust / Te Whare Korowai Taangata o Kirikiriroa

Written Submission to Hamilton City Council in Preparation for Oral Submission – 3 April 2025

**Subject:** Supporting the Establishment of Te Rito Awhi: A Collaborative Community Hub for Housing Vulnerable Adults in Kirikiriroa/Hamilton.

**Submitted By:** Joanne Turner, Kaiwhakahaere Matua / CEO

**Date:** 01-04-2025

**Addendum:** Concept overview of 'Te Rito Awhi'

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### Introduction:

Te Whare Korowai is deeply committed to supporting the most vulnerable members of our community. Within our service we provide a total of 83 warm, dry and supportive spaces to accommodate those who would otherwise be homeless, while they search for their own, sustainable long-term home. In more recent times, we have provided 'visitor' support to male visitors to our male-only facility when we have been unable to provide accommodation.

At the behest of the government late last year, we curated a proposal for a government-wide response to homelessness in Kirikiriroa which includes an increase in bed availability for those who remain on the street.

As part of our proposal, we also advocated for the establishment of **Te Rito Awhi**, a collaborative community hub designed to address the urgent needs of those struggling with housing vulnerability and homelessness.

**The current approach of policing, criminalising mental health and addictions and further displacing the homeless population is not a solution. Without a cohesive, compassionate, and coordinated response, the cycle of community suffering will continue, with increasingly tragic outcomes.**

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### The Current Crisis:

The failures of our existing systems are well-documented, and we consistently attend to:

- Those who have experienced severe childhood trauma, (including those being made a ward of the state), are pushed out of services.
- People released from mental health facilities to no fixed abode, without follow up support.
- Individuals suffering from addiction with no treatment options available.
- People released from prison to no fixed abode
- People becoming mentally unwell, have no access to timely treatment and pushed out of family/community networks.

The suggestion to return to outdated nightshelter models is not a viable solution. Such models merely serve as **dumping grounds** for individuals that agencies wish to pass on. This approach will not address the underlying issues — it will only exacerbate them.

### Te Rito Awhi – A Genuine Solution:

Te Rito Awhi is not just about providing a physical space. It is about providing access to **meaningful support**. It is about fostering partnerships where mental health services, addiction recovery programs, housing providers, the Police, Corrections, MSD and the Council can work **together** to provide coordinated care.

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By offering culturally responsive services, support for addiction and mental health needs, and pathways to sustainable housing, we can create a community where everyone is treated with dignity, compassion, and respect.

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**Our Request to the Council:**

We are asking the Hamilton City Council to:

1. **Support the establishment of Te Rito Awhi** as a collaborative community hub.
2. **Advocate for genuine partnerships** between health services, Police, social support agencies, and Te Whare Korowai.
3. **Reject outdated models of 'night shelters'** that perpetuate the harmful cycle of displacement and neglect.
4. **Provide resources and endorsement** to ensure Te Rito Awhi can function effectively as a long-term, sustainable solution.

**Conclusion:**

We have the opportunity to build something truly transformative. A model of care that provides hope, safety, and healing rather than punishment, displacement, and further harm.

Te Whare Korowai is ready to contribute our resources, knowledge, and compassion to this effort. But we cannot do it alone. We need the Council's support to make **Te Rito Awhi** a reality and to ensure that our most vulnerable are not abandoned by the systems meant to protect them.

Ngā mihi nui ki a koutou katoa.

Joanne Turner  
Kaiwhakahaere Matua / Chief Executive  
Te Whare Korowai Taangata o Kirikiriroa  
Hamilton Christian Shelter Trust



### Te Rito Awhi (The Hub)

*Te Rito Awhi* will serve as the central space for any person 18+ who are 'housing vulnerable' to receive connection, support, and empowerment to achieve positive and fulfilling goals. Designed as a one-stop hub, it will offer in-house support and activities and, through formalising our collaborative relationships, access to external services, fostering a sense of community and belonging.

#### Key Features

##### 1. Connection and Collaboration

A welcoming environment where individuals can access health, accommodation, and social services, kai, clothing, community and connection.

Partnerships with government agencies and community providers to streamline support.

##### 2. Holistic Well-Being – Māori Health Models of Care

Grounded in *Te Pae Mahutonga* (M. Durie, 1999) concept of well-being, the Hub will focus on:

**Mauriora:** Supporting cultural identity and access to *te ao Māori* learning and support.

**Waiora:** Ensuring a safe, inclusive physical environment.

**Toiora:** Promoting healthy lifestyles through tailored programmes and activities.

**Te Oranga:** Encouraging active participation in society, fostering pathways to stability and success.

**Nga Manukura:** Leadership development through collaboration with community leaders.

**Te Mana Whakahaere:** Empowering individuals to take ownership of their well-being.

##### 3. Incorporating Connection as a Core Value

*Te Rito Awhi* will directly address social exclusion, a root cause of homelessness, by fostering intentional and daily connection. This aligns with research emphasising social inclusion as both a treatment and protective factor for addiction and homelessness.

Drawing inspiration from models like Whakamaru in Wellington and HomeGround in Auckland, the Hub will provide an inclusive and non-judgmental space for all genders and ethnicities to access essential services and connect within their community.

##### 4. Pathways to Thriving

Activities will focus on moving individuals from survival to stability, then thriving, through:

- Mindfulness and creative activities such as art, carving, music, exercise.
- Access to cultural practices and group *korero* sessions to build confidence and connection.
- Counselling, advocacy, and well-being support.
- Values aligned external services who will meet people where they are at by offering supports via *Te Rito Awhi*.

##### 5. A Tūrangawaewae for All

A place to stand and belong, free from judgment, fostering dignity and self-worth in those who have experienced exclusion and displacement.

Addendum to HCC Brief – *Te Rito Awhi* concept.