
Council Minutes – 3 December 2025

Minutes of the Council meeting held on Wednesday 3 December 2025, commencing at 1.00pm in the Hine Paaka Council Chamber, Te Whare Whakatere, 2 Baring Square East, Ashburton.

Present

Her Worship the Mayor, Liz McMillan; and Councillors Carolyn Cameron, Russell Ellis, Phill Everest, Deb Gilkison, Phill Hooper, Julie Moffett, Jeanette Maxwell, Tony Todd and Richard Wilson.

In attendance

Hamish Riach (Chief Executive), Helen Barnes (GM Business Support), Toni Durham (GM Democracy & Engagement), Ian Hyde (GM Compliance & Development), Neil McCann (GM Infrastructure & Open Spaces), Tania Paddock (General Counsel) and Phillipa Clark (Governance Team Leader).

Staff present for the duration of their reports: Mark Low (Strategy & Policy Manager, Emily Reed (Corporate Planner), Shelley Donnelly (Economic Development Manager), Gordon Cruickshank (Financial Performance Manager) Renee Julius (Property Manager) and Annette Littlejohn (Property Asset Management Advisor).

1 Apologies

Nil.

2 Extraordinary Business

Nil.

3 Declarations of Interest

Nil.

4 Confirmation of Minutes – 5/11/25

That the minutes of the Council meeting held on 5 November 2025, be taken as read and confirmed.

Wilson/Cameron

Carried

5 Confirmation of Minutes – 19/11/25

That the minutes of the Extraordinary Council meeting held on 19 November 2025, be taken as read and confirmed.

Hooper/Todd

Carried

6 Audit, Risk and Finance Committee – 19/11/25

That Council receives the minutes of the Audit, Risk & Finance Committee meeting held on 19 November 2025.

Gilkison/Cameron

Carried

- **Bancorp Treasury Report**

That Council receives the Bancorp Treasury report for the September 2025 quarter.

Cameron/Ellis

Carried

7 Three Waters Committee – 19/11/25

That Council receives the minutes of the Three Waters Committee meeting held on 19 November 2025.

Ellis/Moffett

Carried

8 Methven Community Board – 3/11/25

That Council receives the minutes of the Methven Community Board meeting held on 3 November 2025.

Maxwell/Gilkison

Carried

9 2024/25 Annual Report Adoption

Officers reported that the signed, unmodified Audit NZ report has been received today. Council noted that all requirements of the Local Government Act 2002 have been complied with, except for the adoption date of the Annual Report.

- **Elected Members' expenses**

With reference to the elected members' remuneration shown in the Annual Report, it was suggested that better transparency would be achieved through more regular reporting of the allowances and expenses claimed.

That the expenses claimed by elected members be shown in the financial variance report on a quarterly basis.

Cameron/Hooper

Carried

1. **That** Council adopts the 2024/25 Annual Report for the Ashburton District Council.
2. **That** Council authorises the Chief Executive to make any minor amendments or grammatical changes to the final Annual Report, including any identified as a result of Audit New Zealand's request, and report these changes to Council.

Ellis/Wilson

Carried

10 Reallocation of Economic Development Funds

The recommendation to reallocate funding wasn't fully supported. Councillors speaking against the proposal suggested that businesses should be paying for the feasibility study and questioned whether Council has a budget for work that is likely to arise from this study. Preference would be for the \$50k to be retained to reduce the rate requirement.

Those in support commented on the importance of obtaining information that will enable Council to identify ways of creating a vibrancy that will attract new businesses and events to the town.

Officers advised that the scoping study will also provide advice and information to the business community, showing how they can be involved through workshops. This will be formalised in discussions with the survey provider.

Council heard that no additional budget is currently allocated for any work that may result from the study.

That Council reallocates the sum of \$50,000 currently allocated for a feasibility study for the creation of a Learning Hub budgeted within the 2025/26 financial year, to:

Scope and undertake a feasibility study of the opportunities available to increase foot traffic in the Ashburton CBD as described in Goal 3, Objective A.1: of the Ashburton District Economic Development Strategy.

Ellis/Gilkison

Carried

Crs Hooper, Everest and Maxwell recorded their votes against the motion.

11 Financial Report

That Council receives the 31 October 2025 financial variance report.

Todd/Maxwell

Carried

Business transacted with the public excluded 1.50pm

That the public be excluded from the following parts of the proceedings of this meeting, namely – 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:

Item No	General subject of each matter to be considered:	In accordance with Section 48(1) of the Act, the reason for passing this resolution in relation to each matter:	
12	Council 5/11/25	Section 7(2)(i)	Conduct of negotiations
13	Audit, Risk & Finance 19/11/25	Section 7(2)(a)	Protection of privacy of natural persons
14	Backflow prevention on Council property	Section 7(2)(h)	Commercial activities

Ellis/Maxwell

Carried

Council resumed in open meeting at 2.01pm.

Welcome to Staff

People & Capability Manager Katie Perry introduced new staff – Samantha Gatley (Collections & Exhibitions Lead), Raymond Villacarlos (Financial Accountant), Nicky Doole (Horticulturalist), Nicka van Berlo (Lifeguard), Abby Cochrane (Learn to Swim Instructor), Corinne Delainey (Systems Accountant), Prasad Sappa (Senior Development Engineer), Aberdin Hosseinpour (Stormwater Engineer) and Debbie Watson (Customer Services Officer).

Council also acknowledged the long service – for 10 years Susan Philpott (AAGM Front of House); (for 5 years) Charin Phumcharoen (AAGM Front of House), Mel Neumann (Policy Advisor), Hannah Ashby-Coysh (Team Leader GIS), Lynnea Roach (Customer Services Officer) and Lauretta Smith (Finance Business Partner); and for 20 years – Maree McNally (Assets Manager Officer).

The meeting concluded at 2.20pm.

[Confirmed by Council 17 December 2025]

MAYOR