

KAIKŌURA MAYOR RESPONDS TO GOVERNMENTS HEAD START ANNOUNCEMENT

29th September 2026

Kaikōura Mayor Craig Mackle has expressed disappointment and frustration that the Government has delayed any decisions on progressing Head Start proposals to the detailed design stage.

“Around the country, councils and communities were asked to consider a large-scale decision within very short timeframes. We responded to that request, only for things to be mothballed by the Government for at least six months.”

He said that significant additional work had been undertaken by staff at both Kaikōura District Council and Marlborough District Council.

“We jointly put forward a compelling case for a merger, which was based on feedback from our communities,” said Mackle. “We were fortunate to be able to use internal resources for our proposal and therefore did not incur significant external costs for ratepayers. However, there is an opportunity cost, as other council work had to be reprioritised.”

“The positive news is that this work has further strengthened and built on our existing relationships with our northern neighbours. We have identified many areas of common interest.”

“We will continue to explore opportunities to work together on shared initiatives while we await the outcome of the elections and any new Government decisions regarding local government reform. The foundational work has not been wasted.”