

**MINUTES OF THE KAIKŌURA DISTRICT COUNCIL EXTRAORDINARY MEETING
TO HEAR AND DELIBERATE SUBMISSIONS ON THE WAKATU QUAY JOINT
VENTURE PROPOSAL HELD ON 15th APRIL 2026 AT 9.00AM, IN TOTARA
COUNCIL CHAMBERS, 96 WEST END, KAIKOURA**

PRESENT: Mayor C Mackle (Chair), Deputy Mayor V Gulleford (attendance via Teams for part of the meeting), Councillor C Smith, Councillor T Blunt, Councillor J Diver, Councillor J McInnes, Councillor M Redwood, Councillor K Heays

IN ATTENDANCE: W Doughty (Chief Executive Officer), P Kearney (Senior Manager Corporate Services), D Hirst (Policy Planner), J York (Regulatory Manager), B Makin (Executive Officer-Minutes)

1. KARAKIA

2. APOLOGIES

3. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

4. Overview of responses for the Wakatu Quay Joint Venture Proposal

P Kearney provided an overview of the background to discussions relating to Wakatu Quay. He advised that previous proposals had been explored with an alternative partner and that the current opportunity for a joint venture had since arisen with two different partners. He explained that, given the size and scale of the Council, its potential contribution to the joint venture would comprise the transfer of the land as part of its equity share. This would be matched by the other equally by the other two partners. Accordingly, Council required sufficient understanding through the public consultation of whether a land transfer should be undertaken before progressing to a feasibility study to determine what development could occur on the site. He clarified that the consultation was not intended to address specific development outcomes, detailed design, or due diligence matters, as these steps would only be undertaken once Council determined whether it was appropriate to proceed with consideration of a land transfer.

A total of 52 submissions were received, comprising a mix of supportive and non-supportive responses. Of these, 25 submissions indicated that they were not in support. The reasons for non-support were varied. Approximately 10 submitters opposed the transfer of Council land as part of the proposal. A further 10 submissions raised concerns relating to accommodation provision or building height, and approximately five submitters expressed concerns about potential environmental impacts. Overall, the submissions indicated a level of potential community support for the proposal, with submitters emphasising the importance of appropriate safeguards and protections being incorporated should the proposal proceed.

The next steps were clarified, subject to Council direction.

- If Council resolved not to support progressing the joint venture option through to due diligence phase, officers would move toward alternative approaches, such as exploring another lease arrangement or taking no further action.
- If Council resolved to support exploration of the joint venture option, officers would proceed with further work, including a feasibility assessment and consideration of commercial arrangements, with findings to be reported back to Council. It was noted that this would be an early stage in a longer process.

It was further clarified that Council was not being asked to agree to enter into a joint venture agreement at this stage, but rather to indicate whether it supported or did not support undertaking feasibility work toward a potential formal joint venture agreement.

RESOLUTION

THAT the Council:

- a) Receives this report for information.*
- b) Considers the submission feedback and initial officer response and provides feedback and direction to Council officers following the hearings and deliberations process.*

Moved: Councillor T Blunt
Seconded: Councillor J McInnes

CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY

5. SUBMITTERS TO BE HEARD

9.10am Youth Council – Submission #4

Page and ~~Ruby Myra~~ *(amendment as per Resolution 29 April 2026)* spoke on behalf of the Youth Council. They commented that the Youth Council would like to see a local rate applied for anything that went there and advocated for a marine aquarium as one of the development options.

9.12am Robyn Cameron – Submission #10

Robyn strongly disagreed with the proposal and felt that information around the JV partner should have been disclosed in the consultation materials. It was clarified that at the time of the consultation material it was not agreed to disclose who the JV partner was. However, the JV partner was later confirmed at a public consultation drop-in session at Wakatu Quay. She asked the Council to pause the process and consider a range of alternative options for the site, and if a JV is considered that other partners are also considered.

Robyn clarified that the underground carpark was speculated discussions in the community of being included in the design of the building.

9.25am – Raylene Clearwater – Submission #14

Raylene was against the proposal to transfer the land to the JV. At the time of writing her submission she was not aware of who the third party was. Raylene provided a handout of her speech. She included 10 points on why she disagrees being; *“public land must remain public, lack of transparency and accountability in the proposed partnership, transferring land to Te Runanga o Kaikoura was not justified, accountability and public oversight, avoiding fragmentation of strategic land holdings, partnerships do not require ownership transfer, insufficient evidence of public benefit, risk of unequal power dynamics, council has a duty to treat all parties equally and protecting future generations”*.

9.39am – Ted Howard – Submission #25

Ted was supportive of the JV approach but felt there should have been more openness and that a lease version would be less risker approach for the ownership of the land. He has concerns regarding the site being a high energy site, risk of invading water, sea level rises and accessibility requirements for the commercial wharf. Ted commented that he regularly releases the Hutton Shearwaters on the Wakatu Quay and the bollards restrict public access. Public access to the wharf needs to be retained in any option.

9.44am - Thomas Kahu on behalf of Whale Watch Kaikoura– Submission #28

Thomas advised that he was representing Whale Watch as a deeply invested stakeholder in Kaikoura. Whale Watch supported the intend behind the proposal of stronger year-round investment in Kaikoura. They raised concerns of fairness of the structure with the Council being the regulatory,

landowner and partner and effectively competing in the market set ups an unfair advantage with the commercial entity having an advantage over others in the community.

At the time of writing the submission, Whale Watch had not known who the third JV partner was. They raised concern of perceived bias with the structure and the asset being placed into a commercial environment. They asked the Council to consider proposals of other structures to make it fairer for other businesses. Thomas clarified that submitters were guessing on what the structure could look like as the consultation wasn't transparent enough as not everyone has had a chance to participate.

Deputy Mayor V Gulleford left the meeting at 9.55am.

9.55am – Gordon Ocallahan – Submission #36

Gordon spoke regarding his concerns the proposal would impact the rates and that by privatising the wharf area will put people into a situation where they can be trespassed against by business owners, for examples cafes. He also raised concern over who owns the crane.

10.00am – Michael Webber – Submission #48

Michael strongly recommended that Council obtain community buy-in for the proposal. He noted that the Runanga had announced that Kirk Roberts was the joint venture (JV) partner in their recent panui, and that this information was not widely known within the community. He expressed concern that waiting until design drawings were available was too late in the process, and that without community support the project would likely need to be restarted when it gets to that stage. Michael did not support the transfer of the land into the JV, stating that this would place ratepayers at risk. He clarified that further transparency would be required around how any such risk would be mitigated.

The meeting adjourned for break at 10.08am and reconvened at 10.29am.

6. SUBMITTERS WHO CHOSE NOT TO SPEAK

The Council reviewed each of the submissions from those who chose not to speak. The submissions were noted, and key points were highlighted. It was clarified that references to "Council" within the staff comments column relate to Council staff and reflect staff views, informed by previous discussions with the Council.

Tim Aldridge on behalf of Puro New Zealand – Submission #1

The submitter was supportive of the proposal. The submitter commented that the proposed structure and collaboration with the Runanga was sensible. Staff comments noted that the partnership would bring long-term benefits.

Janice Atkinson – Submission #2

The submitter was supportive of the proposal, citing anticipated economic growth and associated benefits. Staff comments noted that the hot pools and accommodation referred to in the submission had not been determined and were provided as examples of potential investments the joint venture may choose to pursue.

Nigel Baxter – Submission #3

The submitter was not supportive of the proposal, expressing frustration with ongoing rates increases and advocating for a user-pays model. Staff comments noted that under the proposed structure, any debt would sit with the company rather than the Council, meaning ratepayers would not be directly responsible for the debt. It was further noted that safeguards would be in place to protect the community, compared with direct Council investment. It was also clarified that the additional \$800,000 was subject to a special consultative procedure, which included a public process that provided the community with options.

Tim Blake – Submission #5

The submitter was supportive of the proposal and considered the proposed partners to be strategically aligned.

Jacque & Daryl Bloomfield - Submission #6

The submitter was supportive of the proposal. As holiday homeowners, the submitters noted they had an interest in the outcome of the proposal. They raised concerns regarding the existing building, including issues of commercial liability and whether small private businesses would be able to afford market rent. Staff comments highlighted that feasibility work would determine what was financially viable for the site and noted that a key aspect of the Runanga's involvement was to bring a cultural perspective to the proposal.

Lisa Bond on behalf of the Dark Sky Trust - Submission #7

The submitter was supportive of the proposal. The submission included comments relating to appropriate lighting standards and approaches and expressed support for economic growth. Staff comments noted that any design plans, including lighting, would be subject to a resource consent process. It was further noted that an independent commissioner would consider the resource consent application, with decision-making outsourced so that the Council would not act as the regulator.

Chrissy Boyd – Submission #8

The submitter was not supportive of the proposal, stating that they did not consider the site to be appropriate for the proposed development. The submitter supported the concept of hot pools but considered that this should be pursued through a lease arrangement only. Staff comments noted that the investment of the joint venture was yet to be determined and would include a resource management process and robust community engagement. It was further noted in the Statement of Proposal that the Wakatu Quay land would be ring-fenced, such that if the company were to fail, the land would revert to Council ownership. Staff noted that this would be a key focus area to work through as part of the feasibility process.

Lynette & Dennis Buurman – Submission #9

The submitter was supportive of the proposal and provided limited comment.

Christine Chambers – Submission #11

The submitter was supportive of the proposal and provided no additional comments.

Jon & Bronwyn Chandler – Submission #12

The submitter was supportive of the proposal, noting the positive outcomes for supporting growth and tourism. Staff comments noted that a key economic objective is achieving year-round employment.

Tim Chapman – Submission #13

The submitter was supportive of the proposal, noting the benefits it would bring to the area and the local economy. Staff comments noted that the proposal would increase year-round activity, helping to broaden economic growth.

Kathryn Corbett – Submission #15

The submitter was supportive of the proposal, conditional on the site being used for community purposes, with facilities focused on community use rather than accommodation. The submitter included various ideas in their submission that they supported. Staff comments noted that no final agreement has been entered into with any partners, although preferred partners have been identified.

Colette Doughty – Submission #16

The submitter was supportive of the proposal but opposed buildings exceeding two storeys in height. Staff comments noted that the exact arrangements for what would be built on the site would be determined at a later date and tested through the resource consent process.

Kevin Duncan – Submission #17

The submitter was not supportive of the proposal, expressing concern about the transfer of the land into shared ownership and the Council holding a one-third ownership interest and associated influence over decision-making. The submitter also raised concerns about a lack of transparency regarding the joint venture partner. Staff comments noted that no formal agreement had been entered into with a third party at this stage, and that further due diligence would be required before any confirmation. It was further noted that issues relating to governance and control of the company would be addressed through the due diligence process.

Mark Fissenden – Submission #18

The submitter was supportive of the proposal and provided no additional comments.

Ben Foster – Submission #19

The submitter was not supportive of the proposal, advocating for the land to remain under Council ownership and governance, and opposing any further development under a joint venture model. Staff comments noted that no final decision has been made regarding what would occur on the land. It was clarified that one of the options referred to in the Statement of Proposal was an option of no development.

Alastair Gilchrist – Submission #20 – absent

The submitter was not supportive of the proposal. Although scheduled to speak, the submitter did not present at the hearing. The submitter expressed concern that developments such as hot pools would exacerbate parking issues on the site, with the surrounding residential area unable to accommodate overflow parking. Staff comments noted that parking impacts would be addressed as part of the resource consent process.

Jenny Gilchrist – Submission #21

The submitter was not supportive of the proposal, raising concerns about coastal impacts, environmental outcomes, and rāhui in the area. Staff comments noted that matters relating to habitats and the coastal environment would be addressed through the resource consent process.

Heather Harmon – Submission #22

The submitter was not supportive of the proposal, expressing concern about the lack of clarity regarding the investor and what was proposed for the site. The submitter considered that the current proposal did not address a community-focused outcome and stressed the importance of protecting the site's natural beauty and wildlife. Staff comments noted that no final decision around a third-party investor has been made at this point. It was further noted that wildlife protection would be addressed through the resource consent process.

Geoff Harmon – Submission #23

The submitter was not supportive of the proposal, questioning whether the development would encourage young people to remain in the district. The submitter considered that hospitality-based development would be more likely to attract transient workers rather than long-term residents. Staff comments noted that the proposed model was based on past learnings and would allow the Council to use the Wakatu Quay land as equity, without requiring loans. It was further noted that car parking issues would be addressed through the resource consent process.

It was raised that the wording of the staff comments appeared to imply that a defined model already existed, when in fact no formal model had been signed off and approved. Staff clarified that the land equity approach was included in the Statement of Proposal and acknowledged that there remained a number of unknowns at this stage.

The Chief Executive further clarified that a formal response has not been provided to submitters and that this would be prepared following the outcome of the deliberations and decision at the end of April. He noted some language changes would be required in the response to submitters.

Leigh Harris – Submission #24

The submitter was supportive of the proposal and welcomed the partnership with Te Rūnanga and the private sector.

Juliet Howden – Submission #26

The submitter was supportive of the proposal and considered that, without sufficient financial capacity, Council would be unable to progress the development on its own. The submitter raised concerns about the proposed structure and anticipated that borrowing may occur within the joint venture, and was concerned that Council's risk exposure in relation to its assets may not be adequately addressed. Staff comments noted that no final decisions had been made regarding borrowing or funding mechanisms, and that these matters would be addressed through the due diligence process. The CEO confirmed that the submitter chose not to speak at the hearing.

Derek Jones – Submission #27

The submitter was not supportive of the proposal, advocating for the site to be retained as a public recreation space. The submitter raised concerns about potential loss of views, building height, and parking pressures, and opposed commercial development on the site. Staff comments noted that any issues relating to building scale, impacts, and parking pressures would be addressed through the resource consent process.

Sean Kavanagh – Submission #29

The submitter was not supportive of the proposal and provided no additional comments.

Jacki King – Submission #30

The submitter was supportive of the proposal and considered that hot pools would be a positive addition to the site.

9.45am – Sabrina Luecht – Submission #31

The submitter was not supportive of the proposal. Although scheduled to speak, the submitter did not present at the hearing. The submitter supported Option 1, being the status quo, and advocated for the land to remain under Council ownership. Concerns were raised that the joint venture would shift the focus of the site from community use toward tourism and commercial activity. The submitter also noted concerns regarding disturbance of nesting sites, light spill impacts, car parking, lack of detail, and the absence of disclosure of the private developer. Staff comments noted that all physical elements and environmental assessments would be addressed at a later stage through the consent processes.

9.50am – Dave Mackie – Submission #32

The submitter was not supportive of the proposal. Although scheduled to speak, the submitter did not present at the hearing. The submitter considered that any development of the site should be for public, rather than commercial, purposes and raised concerns about the absence of confirmed joint venture partners, including the lack of a private partner. The submitter opposed the Council holding a minority ownership interest and was also opposed to the establishment of a cultural centre on the site. A preference was expressed for a lease arrangement instead. Staff comments noted that no

formal agreement had been entered into with a third party at this stage. In relation to the submitter's preferred model, staff outlined the respective benefits and drawbacks of the options considered.

Ailsa McGilvary-Howards – Submission #33

The submitter was supportive of the proposal but noted that the lack of detail was challenging. Concerns were raised regarding access and environmental impacts, with a desire to see incorporation of a wildlife habitat. The submitter was also concerned that developments such as hot pools and hotels could limit public access to the area. Staff comments noted that matters relating to lighting and habitat would be addressed through the resource consent process and involve consultation.

Graham Moody – Submission #34

The submitter was not supportive of the proposal and considered that the land should remain in Council ownership. The submitter advocated for alternative models to be explored, such as a joint venture between Council and universities to support research and education.

Staff comments noted that no structure or development had been finalised for the site. It was clarified that while there were preferred joint venture partners, no formal agreement had been established. It was noted that the Runanga had announced Kirk Roberts, and that other parties had also approached Council over time, with opportunities available for proposals for the site.

Staff further clarified that Council had initially been exploring a lease option, and that the joint venture proposal arose following interest from Kirk Roberts and the Runanga. It was noted that due diligence had not been undertaken at an earlier stage to avoid incurring costs for ratepayers if Council later decided not to proceed.

It was clarified that the decision at this stage was whether Council was willing to consider the transfer of the land to a joint venture model. No agreements had been entered into, and further joint venture options could be explored if due diligence determined the current preferred proposal was not financially viable. It was noted that there was no intention to withhold information regarding a third partner it was not deemed material for the consultation decision.

Jane Nelson – Submission #35

The submitter was supportive of the proposal and noted that appropriate controls would be important. Council staff commented that appropriate safeguards and controls are acknowledged in the proposal, including governance protections, reserved matters, and legal mechanisms to ensure responsible stewardship of the land.

Gavin Oliver on behalf of EcoZip Adventures – Submission #37

The submitter was supportive of the proposal. The submission included comments on the potential to increase the tourism sector, while noting challenges associated with seasonal impacts. The submitter supported the proposed joint venture governance model. Council staff noted that the Statement of Proposal outlines the intention to achieve year-round economic activity, and that further due diligence and statutory processes would be required.

Martin Pattison – Submission #38

The submitter was supportive of the proposal and provided brief comments.

Seth Piercey – Submission #39

The submitter was supportive of the proposal and provided no additional comments.

Brian Richards – Submission #40

The submitter was supportive of the proposal and suggested that the independent chair be from outside Kaikōura to avoid potential conflicts of interest. Council staff agreed that independence is a key consideration and noted that the process and criteria would form part of the detailed governance arrangements should the proposal proceed.

Nina Russell – Submission #41

The submitter was supportive of the proposal and referred to other hot pools developments as examples of what could be achieved. Additional suggestions for the site were included. Council staff noted that no final decisions have been made regarding specific development components, design, or facilities, and that these would be determined later in the process.

10.00am – Mel Skinner – Submission #42

The submitter was not supportive of the proposal. Although scheduled to speak, the submitter was unable to attend. The submitter considered that the sale of public land was being framed as a joint venture and raised concern that Council holding a one-third ownership interest would place it in a minority position and shift the focus from community to commercial use.

Staff comments clarified that the land is not being sold but proposed to be transferred as Council's equity share into the joint venture, with no sale and purchase arrangement. It was noted that while a sale involves disposing of land in exchange for income, the proposal involves a transfer of land, with protections and safeguards to be worked through as part of the due diligence process. Staff advised that if sufficient protections could not be achieved, this would be reported back to Council for final decision. It was further highlighted that the land is freehold Council-owned land and not a reserve.

10.05am – Wiremu Stone – Submission #43

The submitter was not supportive of the proposal. Although scheduled to speak, the submitter did not present at the hearing. The submitter considered that there was insufficient information available and raised concerns about Council holding a one-third ownership interest. Staff comments noted that matters relating to ownership balance and governance control would be determined at later stages of the process.

Chris Sturgeon – Submission #44

The submitter was supportive of the proposal and provided no additional comments.

Chris Sturgeon (On behalf of Destination Kaikoura) – Submission #45

The submitter was supportive of the proposal, noting the long-term economic benefits and the ability to leverage private sector development without placing a financial burden on ratepayers. Council staff noted that further due diligence would be required to address the concerns raised.

Oliver Wade – Submission #46

The submitter was not supportive of the proposal, considering that it focused primarily on tourism. The submitter also provided ideas on what they would like to see on the site. Council staff noted that broader community assets and youth engagement are important considerations as part of wider district planning and investment decisions.

Kay Ward – Submission #47

The submitter was not supportive of the proposal, expressing concern about wildlife protection and the need to protect the environment. The submitter also raised concerns about potential community risk. Council staff noted the importance of maintaining the natural character of the area and advised that environmental assessment would form part of the resource consent processes.

Vicki Welsh – Submission #49

The submitter was not supportive of the proposal, raising concerns regarding wildlife, environmental and coastal protection. The submitter expressed concern that a large-scale development would be environmentally damaging and detract from the area's natural character. Council staff noted the concern regarding precedent and clarified that the proposal relates only to Wakatu Quay and does

not establish a precedent. It was further noted that these matters would be addressed through due diligence and the resource consent process.

Jo Wilson – Submission #50

The submitter was supportive of the proposal, noting that year-round tourism was a key consideration. Council staff noted that no design or development details had been finalised at this stage and that these matters would be addressed later in the process.

Bridget Wyatt – Submission #51

The submitter was not supportive of the proposal and provided no additional comments.

John Wyatt – Submission #52

The submitter was supportive of the proposal and considered it to be significant. Council staff noted the importance of transparency and advised that no transfer of land would occur without a formal public consultation process.

The meeting adjourned at 11.52am and reconvened at 12.01pm

7. DELIBERATIONS TO THE WAKATU QUAY JOINT VENTURE PROPOSAL

Key themes from submitters were noted as follows:

- loss of public ownership and control of land
- concerns regarding the type and scale of development
- concerns about environmental and coastal impacts, including parking
- concerns regarding the ecological benefits of the joint venture
- concerns about financial risk
- concerns about transparency

The issue of Council's dual role as landowner and statutory authority was discussed. It was noted that such conflicts are not uncommon for councils, and that due diligence and statutory decision-making processes would involve decision-making being outsourced where required. Suitable separation can be achieved.

Council discussed the scope of the consultation, noting that it was intended to enable Council officers to progress discussions to further explore the preferred joint venture option. It was clarified that no transfer of land would take place as a result of the hearing or deliberations held today.

Council sought clarification on whether officers would bring a further report back to a Council meeting in April outlining options for and against progressing the joint venture. It was confirmed that this report would be prepared and presented to Council, informed by the submission feedback and today's determinations.

Council acknowledged that a number of matters raised were not unexpected and that further detail would need to be worked through. It was noted that clarity regarding potential financial returns would be required prior to entering into any final joint venture agreement. Council also emphasised that the due diligence process would need to ensure that risks related to the land equity and any potential adverse impact on ratepayers can be suitably mitigated.

Council noted that the consultation was focused on a joint venture model and whether land is transferred into a joint venture rather than a lease arrangement. It was discussed that a joint venture option may provide beneficial financial returns compared with other available options. This would be tested during a due diligence phase.

Next Steps

It was noted that the forthcoming Council report would include a summary of the options for Council consideration as well as a recommended way forward.

Council members expressed a range of views on the proposed next steps. A majority of members were supportive of progressing discussions for the JV and land transfer to the comprehensive due diligence. It was emphasised that any further work would need to ensure that risks related to the land equity and any potential adverse impact on ratepayers can be suitably mitigated.

Two members indicated they were not supportive of progressing further discussions involving the transfer of land ownership, expressing concern about Council's ability to adequately secure ongoing ownership and control of the land.

It was noted that Council would like to have a kōrero with Te Rūnanga following this process.

8. CLOSE MEETING

There being no further business, the meeting was declared closed at 12.32 pm.

Moved: Councillor T Blunt
Seconded: Councillor M Redwood

Chairperson  Signed by

Date: 04/05/2026

THIS RECORD WILL BE HELD IN ELECTRONIC FORM ONLY