

Council Meeting February 25th 2026 - Summary News

Below is a brief summary of the decisions from the Council meeting held on the 25th February 2026.

You can read the full reports online in our agenda:

<https://www.kaikoura.govt.nz/council/meetings-calendar-agendas-minutes>

Wakatu Quay Commercial Development

Background:

Council is considering a joint venture with Te Rūnanga o Kaikōura (Ngāti Kuri) and a private developer to revitalise Wakatu Quay. The proposal would see Council contribute the land for the duration of the project, while keeping full ownership long-term. The vision includes hot pools, high-quality accommodation, hospitality, a cultural centre, and a new waterfront promenade. The project is designed to strengthen the local economy, attract private investment, and support a stronger partnership with iwi. A full public consultation will run from 2 March to 2 April 2026 so the community can have their say.

Outcome:

Council has received the report and approved the release of the **Wakatu Quay Joint Venture Statement of Proposal**, along with the accompanying **Public Notice** and **Questions & Answers document**, for community feedback from **2 March to 2 April 2026**. These documents will be updated to include the amendments agreed at the meeting before being published.

The Chief Executive has also been authorised to make any minor editorial or typographical changes prior to release.

Economic Development Strategy 2075

Background:

Council is releasing a long-term strategy outlining how Kaikōura can build a more diverse, resilient, and environmentally responsible economy over the next 50 years. The plan focuses on housing availability, year-round job opportunities, renewable energy, and creating well-connected, thriving communities. It explores opportunities in marine science, technology,

creative industries, and Māori enterprise. Public feedback will be sought from 2 March to 2 April 2026.

Outcome:

Council has received the report and approved the release of the **draft Kaikōura Economic Development Strategy 2075** for community feedback from **2 March to 2 April 2026**. The draft strategy, along with the supporting **Questions & Answers document**, will be updated to include the amendments agreed at the meeting before being published.

The Chief Executive has also been authorised to make any minor editorial or typographical changes prior to release.

Section 35 District Plan Review

Background:

A recent review found that Kaikōura's District Plan is not keeping up with the community's housing needs. Most residential land is tied up in large sections, and over 30% of homes are unoccupied. Many developers are seeking smaller lot sizes than rules currently allow, showing demand for change. The review recommends more flexibility in housing types, clearer commercial zones, and better use of land. However, under new national legislation, Council will need Ministerial approval to progress significant changes before 2027.

Outcome:

Council has accepted the section 35 report and now has agreed to seek approval from Minister Bishop to undertake changes to the District Plan, this work is intended to occur within existing planning budgets.

Plan Change 6 – Ocean Ridge

Background:

Council is finalising the hearings panel for Plan Change 6 affecting the Ocean Ridge development. The panel will include an independent chair, an iwi representative, and an accredited councillor. Hearings are expected to take place in early May 2026.

Outcome:

Council has confirmed the makeup of the hearings panel for Plan Change 6 (Ocean Ridge). The panel will include:

- **An independent Commissioner Chair** – to be appointed by staff from one of the following accredited commissioners: Gary Rae, Cindy Robinson or Paul Rogers.
- **Ma-rea Clayton.**
- **One elected member** – either Councillor Diver or Deputy Mayor Gulleford, with the final decision to be made by the Mayor.

The panel will be responsible for hearing submissions and making recommendations on Plan Change 6.

Streetlight 3G Node Replacement

Background:

Because New Zealand's 3G network will be switched off in March 2026, Kaikōura's streetlights need an urgent technology upgrade. While lights will still turn on and off, remote monitoring and fault detection will no longer operate without replacement hardware. Council plans to upgrade 373 nodes to 4G+ units, funded from underspend in another project, meaning no additional cost to ratepayers.

Outcome:

Council has agreed to upgrade 373 streetlight nodes to new 4G+ technology to ensure our lighting network continues to operate reliably after the national 3G shutdown in March 2026. The \$97,500 (excl. GST) upgrade will be funded using unspent capital from the Jordan Bridge project, meaning no additional cost to ratepayers.

Council has also asked staff to continue advocating for co-funding support from NZTA.

IWK Letter of Expectation 2026/27–2028/29

Background:

Council has drafted its expectations for Innovative Waste Kaikōura Ltd for the next three years. Priorities include staff wellbeing, financial sustainability, improved waste diversion, stronger community education, and continued innovation in waste minimisation.

Outcome:

Council has approved the **2026–2029 Letter of Expectation** for Innovative Waste Kaikōura Ltd (IWK), with allowance for any minor amendments. IWK will now use this document to prepare its **Statement of Intent**, which will come back to Council for feedback before being finalised by the IWK Board.

Delegations Manual Update

Background:

Council is updating its Delegations Manual to reflect new legislation, refreshed committee structures, and operational improvements. This ensures staff and elected members have clear, legally sound authority to carry out their roles efficiently.

Outcome:

Council has noted the proposed changes to the Delegations Manual outlined in Appendix 1 of the report. These updates ensure our delegations remain current, clear, and aligned with recent legislative and operational changes.

Canterbury Triennial Agreement 2025–2028

Background:

All 11 Canterbury councils are preparing to adopt their new Triennial Agreement, which outlines how councils will collaborate on regional issues. The agreement supports strong communication, shared planning, and coordination across the region, with Te Rūnanga o Ngāi Tahu invited to participate.

Outcome:

Council has received the report and approved the **Canterbury Local Authorities' Triennial Agreement 2025–2028**. This agreement sets out how all Canterbury councils will work together over the next three years to collaborate on regional issues and strengthen communication across the region.