

Toituu Marae Wananga - Ngaa Taipitopito (Hui details)

Raa (Date)	Monday 29 June 2026	
Waaa (Time)	6:00-8.30pm	
Waahi (Venue)	Waikato District Council Chambers	
Te hunga i tae (Present)	Chair – Te Pora Thompson – Te Iti o Hauaa (Tauwhare) Chair – Koroki Waikai – Waahi Paa Secretary - Destiny Lord – Aramiro Paa Horahora Paa Hukanui a Muri Mai Uenuku ki te Whenua Maurea Marae Ngaa Tai e Rua Marae Oraeroa Marae Taupiri	Tauranganui Marae Te Awamaarahi Te Hoe o Tainui Te Kauri Marae Te Ohaakii Marae Te Papatapu Tikirahi Paa Tuuragawaewae Waikeri (Tangirau)
Manuwhiri (Guests Attending)	Mayor Aksel, CE Craig Hobbs, Roger MacCulloch and Neil Tunnel Councillors	
Ngaa whakapaaha (Apologies)	THAT the Toituu Marae Forum accepts ngaa whakapaaha (apologies) from Kaitumutumu, Te Aukau, Waikare	

Ngaa Waahanga o te hui (CONFIRMATION OF STATUS OF AGENDA):

Tohutoro (Reference)	Whakaahuatanga take kaupapa (Agenda item description)	Waa (Time)	Rangatira (Owner/Lead)
	Launch of Toituu Marae Forum		
	Mihi Whakatau & Karakia	6:00 PM	Harley
	Waiata – Ngaa Whakamoemiti	6:10 PM	Everyone
	Opening – Housekeeping	6:15 PM	
	Welcome Speeches	6:25 PM	Mayor Aksel, CE Craig Hobbs, Forum Chairs Koroki Waikai & Te Pora Thompson
	Signing of the Kii Tapu	6:35 PM	Mayor Aksel, CE Craig Hobbs, Forum Chairs Koroki Waikai & Te Pora Thompson, Marae Representatives
	Waarea	6:50 PM	Everyone
	Group Photo Opportunity	6:55 PM	Everyone
	Kai Break	7:00 PM	
	Operational Hui Starts	7:30 PM	
1	Apologies	7:30 PM	Koroki Waikai & Te Pora Thompson
2	Opening Remarks -	7:35 PM	Koroki Waikai & Te Pora Thompson
3	Head Start Koorero	7:40 PM	Mayor Aksel & CE Craig Hobbs
4	Marae Priorities	8:10 PM	Koroki Waikai & Te Pora Thompson
5	Long Term Plan Update	8:20 PM	Roger MacCulloch
6	Whenua Maaori Rates Remission Policy Update	8:30 PM	Neil Tunnel
7	Confirming next meeting date and venue	8:40 PM	Everyone
8	Ngaati Aamaru Katoa Trust Marae Capability & Rediness Programme	8:50 PM	Kandi Ngati
9	Close & Karakia Whakamutunga	9:00 PM	Koroki Waikai

LAUNCH OF TOITUU FORUM

The evening started with the launching of the Toituu Forum which included a mihi whakatau & karakia, waiata and welcoming speeches by Mayor Aksel, CE Craig Hobbs and the two Forum Chairs – Koroki Waikai and Te Pora Thompson. It concluded with the signing of the Kii Tapu between Mayor Aksel, CE Craig Hobbs and the two Forum Chairs – Koroki Waikai and Te Pora Thompson and the marae representatives and kai.

OPERATIONAL HUI

Opening Remarks - Te Pora Thompson & Koroki Waikai with support from Tilly Turner and Endine Dixon-Harris

Raarangi take rua 2 (Agenda Item 2)

Noted that the Forum brings a great opportunity and explained the expectations for it to work. Explained that the last set of minutes showed the process that was done in electing the governance roles and after numerous attempts to select a co-chair alongside Koroki, Te Pora was asked to step into the Co-chair position beside him. Te Pora expressed it was important to her that it was supported by the Forum and if it is not, then she was happy to step aside. Tilly and Endine supported her koorero and explained that the other person elected as Co-Chair besides Koriki at the last hui was not mandated by their marae and after discussions they decided to ask Te Pora. The following motion was put to the floor:

That all agree to Te Pora Thompson's appointment as Co-Chair of Toituu Marae Forum.

CARRIED – ALL AGREED

29/06/2026

Te Pora thanked everyone for their support. She stated that her, Koroki and Destiny have been thinking about what a partnership with the Council would look and she shared the work Tauwhare and the Council had done together as an example. She explained the reasoning behind sending out the survey asking for marae priorities was so those can be put forward to be included in decisions around the Long-Term Plan and Head Start. She encouraged all marae to think about what needs to go into the Long-Term Plan and Head Start and expressed that this Forum is a game changing opportunity for us to influence decision making and to look at the potential.

Head Start Koorero - Mayor Aksel & CE Craig Hobbs

Raarangi take rua 3 (Agenda Item 3)

Mayor Aksel expressed that it was a great privilege to be here today and spoke to his involvement in the work that was done at Tauwhare. He acknowledged some of the koorero that marae expressed at past hui. He explained that although the roll out of Head Start was not normal and that they would have preferred to have more opportunity to speak to this big change, we have to look at the positives and the opportunities in this. He shared a presentation on Head Start highlighting the following:

- The Waikato region, what the Waikato District Council and Waikato Regional Council cover and the other districts that sit in the region and this conversation is about how councils across this area might be organised in the future.
- The Government's Simplifying Local Government programme aims to reduce the number of councils. Councils can either work together on a proposal that meets the criteria or leave the decision to the Government. Proposals are due by 9 August.
- Proposals will be assessed on five factors: deliverability, support for the new planning system, simplified governance, economies of scale, and local voice. They must be submitted by two or more authorities, represent a majority of councils or the population, create a unitary authority, cover part or all of a region, and be lodged by 9 August.
- Changes could involve existing boundaries and the government structure such as how councillors and mayors are elected.
- Concern about supporting the new Resource Management Act and how it will work, and how local voice will be maintained within a larger council structure.
- All existing settlements and Joint Management Agreements and the right to be heard before a decision is made will stay the same.
- Discussions with iwi chairs highlighted these key points: the approach must be river-centric, protect existing agreements, uphold Maaori voices and Maaori wards, and consider Auckland's Maaori Statutory Board as an example. The Waikato awa should remain whole, from its main stem to its tributaries. A whole-region approach was preferred, while respecting the River Settlement and Te Ture Whaimana. All voices, including Maaori voices, must be protected in any larger merged council structure.

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- 3 maps showing the Waikato River/Hauraki Plains catchment boundary as the two major catchments in the region, Principle Iwi Groups areas in proximity to catchments and their use for food and transport, and Water catchments (Freshwater Management Units) in proximity to the relevant councils today.
- 4 Options currently at the forefront included 1. Waikato Region as one or 2 by Catchment, 2. Hamilton Metro and Waikato towns & rural – explained Morrinsville and Matamata are not interested, 3. Hamilton-Waikato-Waipā – this does not give effect to the whole of the awa and includes Cambridge and option 4. To do nothing.
- Due to the tight timeframe given by the Government they are asking for feedback which closes on 10th July and then they will need to work with other councils and then submit proposal to Government by 9 August 2026. In September 2026 Cabinet will decide if the proposal is approved and if not, then the Government will decide. In May/June 2027 cabinet will make the final policy and one omnibus bill that will go through public consultation and select committee and in 2028 the approved changes take effect, and council elections will be held.
- Wanting to hear from everyone and encouraged everyone to have their say. Explained the two major concerns that they are hearing are debt from other councils and protecting local voices. Encouraged everyone to think about how we consider those concerns. Explained how everyone can have their say.

The floor was opened up to questions. Discussion had about Māori Wards and since Waikato District Council lost theirs it maybe be a good argument to keep Māori Wards if we amalgamate with councils that kept theirs. Question was asked if it was a numbers game to make decisions, it was explained that normally yes but at this stage they are trying to get as much input for the councils to make an informed decision.

Question was asked about what would Waikato Centric look like because te taiao is important. Mayor Askel explained that connection to the whenua is important and not just about water and food but other amenities and the need to make it better not for us but the future and that's local governance, it is important to have your say and think about how we create something that invites everyone to participate in those decisions.

Discussed concerns with losing our voice and which options would be better suited. Question was asked that when they submit feedback is it on behalf of their marae or the Forum and expressed that it would be better to do it united to give it more weight. It was agreed and that is what the Forum is for, but this is not a numbers game, it is about giving important stakeholders a space.

Discussion was had about the sustainability of funds in relation to the environmental view and priorities and what avenues local governments have, to bring out the voice of our taiao that would economically give advantages to the people. It was explained that this county has a high level of centralised taxes and that a conversation is needed about that, but not all parties are open to having it.

Discussed using other models in the world to strengthen the economy and productivity. It was expressed that productivity can be hard in this country and that local government is hard to reform but they will elevate priorities, but cost is a real issue and gave examples of how they can address the cost issue.

Te Pora explained that this is a real opportunity to shape local government and asked everyone to have a think about what is important to our marae and explained that some marae have hui coming up and to have their say before 10 July.

Whenua Maaori Rates Remission Policy Update - Neil

Raarangi take rua 6 (Agenda Item 6)

Neil explained how the policy came about and that it has kept involving and will start on 1 July 2026. He expressed that it can be complex so to please call the council if you have any questions and ask for the rates team and that it is for Maaori Freehold Land. He presented on the Whenua Maaori Rates Remissions Policy noting the following:

- Ability to apply for remission and the opportunity to change the valuation of the land
- How it relates to Papakaainga
- Rates arrears involving Maaori Freehold Land
- Feedback was 71% Positive and is now closed
- Will push for this policy with the amalgamation
- Where to find more information and the policy

Question was asked to explain “no useable land”, explained that if you keep cultural and reservations for example, they are considered as “no useable land”.

Concern was raised about the definitions used in the Forum, everyone was encouraged to express what they want so that it can be organised for the next hui and to think about how we can participate and construct definitions used in council while making sure that the message is consistent between marae and generations that is helpful for all of us and then thinking about how does our input here get into other spaces that we need to contribute to.

Marae Priorities – Te Pora Thompson & Koroki Waikai

Raarangi take rua 4 (Agenda Item 4)

Marae Priorities sheet was handed out to all marae representatives.

Presented the Marae Priorities provided for the survey result which included:

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|--------------------------------------|----------------------------|
| - Marae Infrastructure | - Safe Communities |
| - Road Safety | - Stronger Infrastructure |
| - Water & Flood Management | - Climate Resilience |
| - Climate & Civil Defence Resilience | - Environmental Protection |
| - Whenua & Marae Aspirations | - Sustainable Development |
| - Council Partnerships | - Genuine Partnerships |

Te Pora elaborated on the presentation and explained that this can be aligned with council objectives such as head start and how this could be about genuine partnerships and could align us and our priorities. Expressed that we need to work out how we participate and the need to communicate between the council and ourselves and that we may need to change things to something that truly reflects the partnership we are wanting to create and transplant that into a document, so that whatever falls at the councils table they have a picture on where to go. Explained that going forward we can plan an agenda around our marae priorities.

Koroki supported Te Pora's koorero and expressed that we haven't really touched on the value of the Forum and the workings of it. Expressed that all of this can be overwhelming and the need to figure out those things first and that our marae are not resourced enough to be dispersing information and going back and forth, marae should be coming to the table with what support they need from the council not the other way round.

Mayor Askel explained that this Forum and the Kii Tapu started years ago and agreed that the timing of this was not the best with the added pressures of Head Start. The intention was to do things like the Rates Remission Policy and without the marae in the room the people writing the policy are using the language they know, this Forum was to get marae in the room to help shape language and policy.

Ngaati Aamaru Katoa Trust – Marae Capability & Rediness Programme – Kandi Ngati

Raarangi take rua 8 (Agenda Item 8)

Kandi gave a mihi and explained that this Forum was an opportunity for marae, but things are going to take time to set up and that this has potential for Aotearoa and shows genuine partnership which is essential and hopes that the words from council today continues into action. She expressed that she hopes this continues and that we ensure that Toituu Marae has every opportunity to continue to grow and was proud that Waikato District Council has chosen to lead the way.

She presented the Two-Year Work Plan and explained that this programme sits alongside the vision of Toituu marae and is another pathway that supports our marae to continue with their aspirations and focuses on strengthening marae capability. It compliments Toituu Marae Forum and creates further partnerships such as working with Department of Internal Affairs, Waikato Tainui and Te Puni Kokiri and is about empowering marae to create their own future with strong marae, strong whaanau, strong hapuu and strengthens communities. It looks like continuing conversations and reaching out to her and everyone and working alongside this Forum, Maaori Ward Councillors and Council teams. Encouraged everyone to connect and reach out and to share their ideas to keep building together as tonight was the foundation and together, we can build something that becomes legacy.

Long Term Plan (LTP) Update – Roger MacCulloch

Raarangi take rua 5 (Agenda Item 5)

Roger explained he is responsible for helping elected members deliver the Long-Term Plan (LTP) and gave a presentation noting the following:

- The need to think about the LTP for 2-3 years with Head Start happening in 2 years. The next 12 months Work Plan has been set in place till 1 July 2027 leaving 1 year to be in the best shape before the amalgamation happens.
- Bringing marae aspirations to the table to fit in the LTP
- Planning now and for the future including the need for reliable central services, high-quality core services and affordable communities including fair rates and that funding is fair, responsible and transparent.
- Engaging with communities and making sure they are heard properly
- Strong partnerships and proper consultation making sure local identity honours Te Tiriti and Mana Whenua so that local identity and matauranga Maaori shape decisions and services.
- Alongside Head Start the Council will be engaging and consulting with communities about the LTD for feedback to join with the priorities of the Council.

Question was asked about how the community get things included in the LTP and actioned and the how this limits the opportunities to put things in the next plan. Roger explained that they will heading out to ask what the core services will be for them and will give people a chance to have their say. He explained the way funds are allocated to the LTP and why it is important to align things with what the Council has decided to deliver and that when they engage they will go through their deliverables and that is the chance to let them know if they are good or not. Mayor Aksel explained that they need to be honest about what they can afford and what they are willing to pay and that there is a need to have a conversation about what is important.

Confirming next meeting date and venue

Raarangi take rua 7 (Agenda Item 7)

Discussion had about when and where the next hui will be and the need to allow for time to do the planning and waananga to expand on the marae priorities and work programme for this Forum so that at the next meeting we can plan with the Council which of their team we need time with but the next one is largely around getting our work programme done.

It was expressed that all of this was a bit full on tonight and so overwhelming that it can be off putting and that we need to focus on our marae priorities. Concern was raised about people going home tonight confused and the need to figure out how we capture genuine voices to contribute into this Forum and how this with impact us in the future.

Advised that there have been communications sent out via facebook posts and emails and attempts have been made to reach out to try and hold hui and it is happening wherever it can happen, to provide the opportunity to explain these things and for people to have their say. That is the reason for this Forum and if they can take away one point from tonight that it be Head Start because it is happening.

Mayor Askel explained that he hears the concerns about Head Start and that they have tried to do the best they can with the timeframe that was given.

Koroki expressed that as the representatives they know their marae so things have to be done in stages, but from what we have heard tonight we have to make this work and that is why we are all here tonight. Suggested that we come together to talk in groups of marae such as two people from each marae for the northern area meet and the same for the southern area. Continued to explain that the ability comes down to us and to think about mokopuna ora.

Destiny asked everyone to confirm and check that their email addresses are correct as that is the most common form of communication used.

Decided the next hui will be Monday 28th September and then Monday 19th November and both to be held at the Council Chambers.

Karakia Whakamutunga

Raarangi take rua 9 (Agenda Item 9)

Koroki Waikai

There being no further business the meeting was declared closed at 9:00 PM.

Minutes approved and confirmed this 16/09/ 2026.

Alicia Sunnex

POU HONONGA