

MINUTES (in Review)

CANTERBURY MAYORAL FORUM



Name:	Canterbury Mayoral Forum
Date:	Friday, 14 February 2025
Time:	8:30 am to 12:45 pm (NZDT)
Location:	Commodore Hotel, 449 Memorial Avenue, Burnside, Christchurch
Board Members:	Nigel Bowen (Chair), Marie Black, Craig Pauling, Craig Rowley, Craig Mackle, Dan Gordon, Gary Kircher, Neil Brown, Phil Mauger, Sam Broughton, Karen Morgan
Attendees:	Alex Parmley, Angela Oosthuizen, Hamish Riach, Hamish Dobbie, Jeff Millward, Mary Richardson, Nigel Trainor, Sharon Mason, Stefanie Rixecker, Will Doughty, Maree McNeilly, Amelia Wilkins, Ann Fitzgerald
Apologies:	Anne Munro, Mayor Monique Croon, Paul Eagle, Stuart Duncan
Guests/Notes:	Minister James Meager (Item 3.1); Leeann Watson, Business Canterbury (Item 5.1); Ali Adams (CE) & Emma Renowden (Aerospace Cluster Lead) ChristchurchNZ (Item 5.2); Diane McDermott Regional Public Service Commissioner (Item 6.1)

1. Opening meeting

1.1 Karakia, welcome, introductions and apologies

The Chair welcomed everyone to the meeting, in particular Acting Mayor Karen Morgan, during Mayor Anne Munro's leave of absence.

Apologies from Mayor Anne Munro, Mayor Monique Croon and CE Paul Eagle from Chatham Islands, and Stuart Duncan were noted.

The apologies from Mary Richardson and Hamish Riach for item 2.1 were noted.

Craig Pauling led members in the opening karakia.

1.2 Confirmation of agenda

The agenda was confirmed, noting the changes to agenda item times to accommodate Minister Meagers diary.

1.3 Minutes from the previous meeting

Canterbury Mayoral Forum 29 Nov 2024, the minutes were confirmed as presented.



Decision

The minutes of the previous meeting held on 29 November 2024 were confirmed as presented.

Decision Date: 14 Feb 2025
Mover: Dan Gordon
Secunder: Marie Black

Outcome: Approved

1.4 Action List

Due Date	Action Title	Owner(s)
11 Dec 2024	Action Status: In Progress	Maree McNeilly
27 Jan 2025	Action Status: In Progress	Maree McNeilly

CWMS Technical report circulated Friday 14 February 2025

Draft letters re wilding conifers prepared for review 18 February 2025

2. Working Dinner discussion

2.1 Future regional and local government for Canterbury

This main part of this discussion was held at the CMF Working Dinner on Thursday 13th February. The discussion on the recommendations took place at the at the CMF meeting on Friday 14th February.

Introduction (Nigel Bowen and Hamish Dobbie)

The government is now actively looking for change within the local government sector, which presents an opportunity for the CMF to demonstrate to central government how Canterbury Councils can work together.

Chief Executives are of the view that sector challenges and recommendations in the Future for Local Government review remain valid and note that the CMF submission to the review largely agreed with the challenges identified in the final report.

To focus efforts, Chief Executives request clear direction from CMF, including the problem the CMF is trying to solve, and the “why” CMF should be looking at possible different options for the future of regional and local government in Canterbury.

It was noted that the current representation structure of local government is important to ratepayers, and this needs to be kept in mind when engaging in these discussions.

Problem statement discussion

- financial viability concerns, particularly for smaller councils
- the need for additional funding tools
- duplication of services
- effective service delivery while retaining local democracy
- retaining local governance while delivering shared local government functions to achieve more cost-effective service delivery
- what needs to be delivered locally, what can be delivered collectively
- delivering better outcomes for ratepayers - key criteria
- consideration of the council functions identified in the Wilde and Winder report “Local government Futures; A Discussion Paper” was raised as an option for review.

Problem statement discussion

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Canterbury regional service delivery – “the why” and the possible options

- efficiency/cost effectiveness, but still retain staff on the ground, and an effective community voice
- regional delivery is central government’s desired outcome, so it is better for CMF to be proactive in this space
- is there anything from central government that could be devolved regionally/locally, for example health services
- Government is undertaking reform of the building consent system. Is there an opportunity for Canterbury to work together on this, including becoming a pilot region for the government reform programme?
- consider building consent authorities delivery options e.g. CCO’s which could bring opportunities for private sector work to increase revenue
- other areas where Canterbury councils could consider working more closely together could include the regulatory space including planning consent, compliance and monitoring and the upcoming RM reforms.

Canterbury Mayoral Forum members acknowledged the importance of the current representation structure, however there was general agreement that there is an opportunity to consider potential options for a Canterbury Building Consent Authority to address issues of financial viability and efficiency of services, notwithstanding that this is not the sole response to the problems identified.

Consideration was also given to reviewing the functions identified in the Wilde and Winder report.



Decision

The Canterbury Mayoral Forum:

1. recognises the potential of joined up services to improve the efficiency and effectiveness of service delivery whilst acknowledging the right of individual Councils to self-determination. To this end, we collectively desire to realise the benefits of joined up service delivery in a manner that is appropriate for individual Councils
2. requests the Chief Executives Forum to investigate options for a Canterbury Building Consent Authority and report back to the May Canterbury Mayoral Forum on timelines and project plan for the proposal
3. endorses the Chair to speak with Hon Chris Penk, Minister of Building and Construction on the decision by the Canterbury Mayoral Forum to investigate options for a Canterbury Building Consent Authority
4. requests the Chief Executives Forum to review the 50 functions outlined in the Wilde and Winder Report as national, regional and local, along with current government priorities, and develop possible scenarios for the Mayoral Forum’s consideration.

Decision Date: 14 Feb 2025
Mover: Nigel Bowen
Seconder: Craig Pauling
Outcome: Approved



Action

Chief Executives Forum to investigate options for a Canterbury Building Consent Authority and report back to the May 2025 Canterbury Mayoral Forum on timelines and project plan for the proposal

Due Date: 30 May 2025
Owner: Hamish Riach



Action

Chair to speak with Hon Chris Penk, Minister of Building and Construction on the decision by the Canterbury Mayoral Forum to investigate options for a Canterbury Building Consent Authority

Due Date: 31 Mar 2025
Owner: Nigel Bowen



Action

Chief Executives Forum to review the 50 functions outlined in the Wilde and Winder as national, regional and local along with current government priorities, and develop possible scenarios for the Mayoral Forum's consideration.

Due Date: 22 Aug 2025
Owner: Hamish Riach

3. Discussion

3.1 Minister James Meager

Nigel Bowen welcomed Minister Meager, and staff member Tom Wyatt to the meeting.

The Minister referred to the government's focus on growth and economic return, noting this will underpin everything the government does.

The key function of the Minister for the South Island is to advocate for the South Island in terms of priorities, areas of strength and opportunities to grow.

Forum members were invited to identify Canterbury Mayoral Forum priorities and issues. Topics discussed included:

- regional deals – the current status in Canterbury, including collaboration on housing, infrastructure, water services
- Local Water Done Well
- Mayors Taskforce for Jobs – effective because it is at a local level but needs review to ensure it is a sustainable programme - channeling funding that currently sits with Ministry of Social Development was suggested. Social investment in employment for young people is important.
- assistance to reestablish effective engagement with the health sector was requested. CMF suggestions to improve workforce agility included transferring an individual's unemployment benefit to hospitals as a means of helping with staff shortages and retaining youth in the country, removing barriers for nurse practitioners and emergency services to enable them to fill workforce vacancies
- transport funding – the need to address South Island underfunding, and suggestions to achieve this, including tolls, issues with road user charges
- water storage, land use consent changes

- Canterbury's economic workstream in conjunction with Business Canterbury and private sector
- there is an upcoming Investment Summit, could local government be involved, Ngāi Tahu Holdings is considered a key partner
- tourism growth, noting the consequential cost increases to councils, particularly those with low rate bases, and issues with user pays, GST sharing option could be explored
- local government funding tools constraints – particularly in relation to asset replacements, for example Hurunui bridge infrastructure replacements currently funded through NZTA, where a debt facility would be more effective, and options for funding operating cost increases such as public toilet cleaning, that are a consequence of increased tourism
- river protection work and funding constraints

The Minister invited all Mayors to keep him advised of upcoming projects, including significant infrastructure replacements and indicated he is happy to meet regularly with the Forum.

4. Morning tea

4.1 Morning tea

5. For discussion and decision

5.1 Economic Priorities next steps with Business Canterbury

Leeann Watson and Tait Dench, Business Canterbury, recapped the work undertaken to date, including engagement with the private sector and the November 2024 joint public sector/private sector session. The environment, and innovation were central themes in the sessions.

It was noted that the end product of this work is intended to be an advocacy tool, not an economic development strategy, which councils and Economic Development Agencies have responsibility for.

The next stage is to convene a smaller group (representatives from each part of Canterbury) to refine and develop a more focused document, with a target of launching the final product in May/June 2025. Ideally this is then used by the private sector and local government in their advocacy with government. Councils may wish to use it in the preparation of their Long Term and Annual Plans, so that there is consistent messaging and language.

Engagement to date with Ngāi Tahu has focused on Ngāi Tahu Holdings at a corporate level. It was suggested that letters should now be sent to the 10 papatipu rūnanga and chairs explaining the initiative and inviting feedback on appropriate next steps.



Decision

The Canterbury Mayoral Forum:

1. delegated to the Chair and Deputy Chair final approval of the feedback to the Canterbury Regional Leadership Discussion held at Business Canterbury, updated to reflect the discussion today and other feedback received
2. noted the information provided in this paper to inform a discussion on next steps of the work with Business Canterbury on development of regional economic priorities for all of Canterbury.

Decision Date: 14 Feb 2025
Mover: Dan Gordon
Seconder: Gary Kircher

Outcome: Approved

5.2 Canterbury Aerospace Strategy

Ali Adams (CE) and Emma Renowden (Aerospace Cluster Lead) ChristchurchNZ joined the meeting to outline the work underway on a draft Canterbury Aerospace Strategy, including the vision of Canterbury as a global leader in aerospace. It was noted that the Canterbury point of difference in this sector is the fact that development is being led by innovators, rather than government, or for defense reasons. Canterbury Mayoral Forum endorsement would add weight to the strategy, further encouraging international interest.

Discussion on the draft strategy included:

- reference building networks in order to leverage the benefits
- include/highlight skills profile
- highlight the strategy in a “regional deals” context, noting the opportunities for private and overseas capital investment
- noting the strategy is high level, and the next level would include the detail that would be required for regional deals opportunities
- looking at the wider Canterbury region – in terms of training, and vacant land near smaller airports. Economic Development Agencies could be asked to collate possible assets across the region, and businesses with the potential to supply skills and services
- to date there has been engagement with local hapū, wider engagement with Rūnanga will be required. Craig Pauling offered to assist with this
- ensure Aerospace is in the final product from the Economic priorities work being developed in conjunction with Business Canterbury for any future regional deals
- include reference to agriculture, as a number of companies are currently exploring technology around use of drones for spraying crops and pests
- consider reference to Lincoln University regarding the agricultural aspect
- identify any constraints that local councils can assist with
- Zone 5 & 6 Conference in Canterbury could include a visit to the Tāwhaki National Aerospace Centre, Birdlings Flat
- having the social license to operate, by employing and supporting local skills development and manufacturing businesses, environmental considerations.

The Canterbury Mayoral Forum acknowledged the benefits of the draft aerospace strategy and can see value in the work developing the strategy to date. Some further areas to be considered for inclusion, such as agriculture were suggested.

The Canterbury Mayoral Forum noted their support for the strategy.



Decision

The Canterbury Mayoral Forum

1. supports the draft Canterbury Aerospace Strategy.

Decision Date: 14 Feb 2025
Mover: Craig Pauling
Seconder: Craig Rowley
Outcome: Approved

5.3 Canterbury Climate Partnership Plan implementation

Dan Gordon, in his role as Chair of the Climate Action Planning Reference Group acknowledged those involved in the successful Canterbury Climate Partnership Plan launch and advised of plans for a meeting in March with a number of the young people involved in the launch event.

The role of the Climate Action Planning Reference Group was discussed, noting it provided an opportunity for an update on what each council is doing in respect of the key actions. It was suggested that the Biodiversity Champions group could be a model suitable if the Climate Action Planning Reference Group was to pivot its advocacy.

Feedback from Christchurch City Council staff was a preference for fewer meetings to enable a focus on delivering on the agreed actions, rather than additional actions that may come from future Reference Group meetings.



Decision

The Canterbury Mayoral Forum:

1. provided feedback on the implementation overviews for key actions 1, 2 & 4
2. approved the implementation overviews of key actions 1, 2 & 4
3. agreed to extend the completion date of action 4.1 from 30 June 2025 to 31 October 2025
4. agreed to continue the Climate Action Planning Reference Group and review the Terms of Reference with the members
5. received the first quarterly Progress Report and budget summary.

Decision Date: 14 Feb 2025

Mover: Dan Gordon

Seconder: Craig Pauling

Outcome: Approved



Action

Secretariat to work with Mayor Dan Gordon and the members of the Climate Action Plan Reference Group on revised terms of reference to bring back to the May 2025 Mayoral Forum for approval.

Due Date: 30 May 2025

Owners: Dan Gordon, Maree McNeilly

5.4 Canterbury Water Management Strategy update

Craig Pauling provided an update on the CWMS review, noting the range of responses from Zone Committee Chairs, with some expressing disappointment at proposed changes. The technical report that covers the review findings and engagement feedback has been circulated to Canterbury Mayoral Forum members.

The impact of Local Water Done Well on the CWMS is being considered by the working party. RMA reforms may also have an impact.

It was noted that there will be a further report to the CMF May 2025 meeting.

Neil Brown noted that an alternative group to a Zone Committee, including a consents perspective, is being considered in Ashburton.



Decision

The Canterbury Mayoral Forum:

1. received the progress update for the Canterbury Water Management Strategy Zone Committee Review 2024 and identified next steps to be

- undertaken in 2025 towards establishing the proposed local leadership groups
2. noted the initiation of the Canterbury Water Management Strategy 2025 Targets Progress Report that will be presented to the Mayoral Forum in May 2025
 3. received the update for October to December 2024 on the region-wide work underway to implement the Canterbury Water Management Strategy.

Decision Date: 14 Feb 2025
Mover: Craig Rowley
Seconder: Sam Broughton
Outcome: Approved

5.5 Light-touch proposal Regional Deals

Discussion on submitting a regional deals proposal included:

- irrespective of Canterbury not being on the initial “short list”, the Canterbury Mayoral Forum wish to engage with the Government and will submit a letter of intent for a future regional deal
- options for a regional deal could focus on:
 - outcomes from the work with Business Canterbury
 - regional spatial planning – including a critical infrastructure layer
 - housing strategy
 - transport matters, including the possibility of tolling
 - agriculture – direct and support services
 - tourism - how to support tourism growth along with options for managing the implications of this, including access a share of the visitor levy
 - energy inventory
 - aerospace
 - water storage
 - climate action planning
 - it is important to signal involvement with iwi, therefore this will need to be worked through with Ngāi Tahu and Papatipu Rūnanga
 - timeframes are short and it is problematic to resource the work to meet the deadlines for a “Light-touch proposal”. Suggestions for navigating this included signaling an intent to lodge an application for a regional deal, but seeking an extension of time
 - it was noted that City deals now appear to be back on the table as an option.



Action

Prepare a letter to be submitted by 28 February 2025, signaling the Canterbury Mayoral Forum's intention to submit a future proposal for a regional deal.

Due Date: 28 Feb 2025
Owners: Maree McNeilly, Nigel Bowen



Action

Prepare a report for the 22 August 2025 Canterbury Mayoral Forum meeting on the basis for a regional deal.

Due Date: 22 Aug 2025

Owners: Hamish Riach, Maree McNeilly



Action

Advise Department of Internal Affairs of the Canterbury Mayoral Forum decision to signal their intent to submit a future proposal for a regional deal.

Due Date: 28 Feb 2025

Owner: Maree McNeilly



Decision

The Canterbury Mayoral Forum:

1. agreed to signal its intention to submit a future proposal for a regional deal, by 28 February 2025.

Decision Date: 14 Feb 2025

Mover: Nigel Bowen

Seconder: Karen Morgan

Outcome: Approved

6. For information

6.1 Regional Public Service Commissioner update

Marie Ward (on behalf of Diane McDermott, Regional Public Service Commissioner) presented the February 2025 Regional Public Service Commissioner update, including

- regional leadership group focus areas
- regional energy inventory work
- RPSC Team visits to Hurunui and Waimakariri councils
- youth focused workstreams
- healthy homes.



Decision

The Canterbury Mayoral Forum:

1. received the written update from the Regional Public Service Commissioner on the Regional Leadership Group Waitaha priorities.

Decision Date: 14 Feb 2025

Mover: Gary Kircher

Seconder: Sam Broughton

Outcome: Approved

6.2 Chief Executives Forum report

Hamish Riach noted with the local body elections later in the year, some council staff are experiencing instances of harassment from potential candidates. Canterbury Mayoral Forum members and Chief Executives will be proactive in calling out this behaviour.



Decision

The Canterbury Mayoral Forum:

1. received the quarterly report from the Chief Executives Forum
2. noted updates on work under way or completed on the key actions in the Mayoral Forum's Plan for Canterbury 2023-2025.

Decision Date: 14 Feb 2025
Mover: Craig Rowley
Seconder: Craig Mackle
Outcome: Approved

6.3 Mayoral Forum Activities and Engagements

This paper was taken as read.



Decision

The Canterbury Mayoral Forum:

1. received the update on Canterbury Mayoral Forum activities, engagements and correspondence since the Forum's last meeting on 29 November 2024.

Decision Date: 14 Feb 2025
Mover: Phil Mauger
Seconder: Sam Broughton
Outcome: Approved

7. General business

7.1 General business

Visitor Levy

Consider Canterbury Mayoral Forum advocacy, via a letter to central government, calling for the levy to return to being made available for its original purpose, and that a portion is redistributed to local government.

It was noted that LGNZ is advocating in this space, and it was agreed the Mayoral Forum letter should align with LGNZ messaging.

Regional Summit – Hon Shane Jones 28 March 2025

Guest lists need to be provided for this event. Suggestions included:

- Business Canterbury, and suggested representatives
- Ngāi Tahu
- Papatipu Rūnanga representatives
- Economic Development Agencies
- Chambers of Commerce

Members were asked to provide the Secretariat with suggested attendees by Tuesday 18 February 2025.

It was suggested that for consistency, topics could be the same as those outlined in the Canterbury Mayoral Forum briefings to Government Ministers and proposed for the Canterbury Regional Deals proposal.

Media inquiries

Currently Canterbury Mayoral Forum meeting packs (which includes confirmed minutes of the previous meeting) are uploaded to the Canterbury Mayoral Forum website following a meeting.

It was suggested that unconfirmed minutes (with appropriate unconfirmed watermark) of the current meeting could also be uploaded at the same time as the meeting pack.

7.2 Meeting review

8. Close Meeting

8.1 Closing karakia

8.2 Close the meeting

Next meeting: Canterbury Mayoral Forum - 30 May 2025, 8:30 am

Information regarding accommodation in Kaikōura for the Canterbury Mayoral Forum meeting on 30 May 2025 has been sent to each council. Details of the dinner and meeting arrangements will be circulated once these have been finalised.

Signature: _____

Date: _____