

SmartGrowth Leadership Group

Minutes for Meeting No. SG26/06

Date and time 17 June 2026 at 9:00am

Venue Bay Of Plenty Regional Council, 1 Elizabeth Street, Tauranga (Chambers)

Members		
In attendance	Mayor James Denyer	Chairperson
In attendance	Cr. Stuart Crosby	Bay Of Plenty Regional Council
In attendance	Cr. Kat MacMillan	Bay Of Plenty Regional Council
In attendance	Cr. John Scrimgeour	Bay Of Plenty Regional Council
In attendance	Cr. Kate Graeme (alternate)	Bay Of Plenty Regional Council
In attendance	Mayor Mahé Drysdale	Tauranga City Council
In attendance	Deputy Mayor Jen Scoular	Tauranga City Council
In attendance	Cr. Marten Rozeboom	Tauranga City Council
In attendance	Cr. Glen Crowther (alternate)	Tauranga City Council
In attendance	Deputy Mayor Margaret Murray-Benge	Western Bay of Plenty District Council
In attendance	Cr. Grant Dally	Western Bay of Plenty District Council
In attendance	Cr. Graeme Elvin (alternate)	Western Bay of Plenty District Council
In attendance	Matire Duncan	Tāngata Whenua Representatives
In attendance	Whitiora McLeod	Tāngata Whenua Representatives
In attendance	Hakopa Tapiata	Tāngata Whenua Representatives
In attendance	Heta Gardiner	Tāngata Whenua Representatives
In attendance	Riki Nelson (alternate)	Tāngata Whenua Representatives
In attendance	Rebecca Maplesden (alternate)	Department of Internal Affairs
In attendance	Sarah Stevenson (alternate)	Ministry of Housing and Urban Development
-		Minister for Transport
In attendance	Andrew Corkill (Non-voting)	Waka Kotahi
In attendance	Cole O'Keefe (alternate)	Waka Kotahi
In attendance	Dave Courtney (Non-voting)	Priority One
Apologies	Sarah Fenwick (Non-voting)	Te Whatu Ora – Te Manawa Taki
Apologies	Dean Kimpton (Non-voting)	Transport System Plan
In attendance	Paul Tarrant (alternate)	Transport System Plan

Quorum 11

Meeting Frequency Quarterly

Support		
In attendance	Craig Batchelar	SmartGrowth Strategic Advisor
In attendance	Nichola Lennard	SmartGrowth Technical Advisor
In attendance	Te Pio Kawe	SmartGrowth Pou Ārahi Advisor
In attendance	Elisha Rolleston	SmartGrowth Kai Ārahi Advisor
In attendance	Eileen Mares	SmartGrowth Secretariat
In attendance	Ernst Zoellner	Kainga Ora
In attendance	Josephine Tam	Kainga Ora
In attendance	Marty Grenfell	Tauranga City Council
Apologies	Fiona McTavish	Bay Of Plenty Regional Council
In attendance	Matt Potton	Western Bay of Plenty District Council

SG26/06.01 Karakia Tīmatanga

Heta Gardiner opened the meeting with a Karakia.

Chair Mayor James Denyer welcomed Heta Gardiner as the SLG Tāngata Whenua representative, following his appointment to replace Riki Nelson. Riki will now serve as the alternate representative for all four Tāngata Whenua representatives on the SLG.

SG26/06.02 Apologies

Apologies for absence received from Sarah Fenwick.

Apologies for lateness received from Andrew Corkill and Councilors Scrimgeour, Elvin, Dally, Murray-Benge.

Apologies for early departure received from Councilors Crosby and Graeme.

Moved by: Cr. Kat MacMillan

Seconded by: Mayor Mahé Drysdale

That it be Resolved

That the apologies be accepted.

CARRIED

SG26/06.03 Declaration of Conflict of Interest

No declarations received

SG26/06.04 Public Forum

There were no public forum items.

SG26/06.05 Confirmation of Minutes (Paper A)

The Committee considered the minutes of SmartGrowth Leadership Group (SG26/03) dated 19 March 2026 circulated with the agenda.

Moved by: Cr. Kat MacMillan

Seconded by: Mayor James Denyer

That it be Resolved

That the minutes of SmartGrowth Leadership Group (SG26/03) dated 19 March 2026 be confirmed as a true and correct record.

CARRIED

SG26/12.06 SmartGrowth Quarterly Report (Paper B)

Craig Batchelar spoke to the SmartGrowth Quarterly Report (Paper B) and the group discussed:

Voting Rights

Government has proposed amendments that would restrict voting rights on council committees to elected members only. If enacted, the amendments would affect the SmartGrowth Leadership Group, which is a committee established under Schedule 7 of the Local Government Act 2002. Under the proposal, voting rights for the independent chair, Crown representatives, and Tāngata Whenua representatives would be removed.

It was further noted that Regional Spatial Planning Committees are excluded from the proposed changes, as they will be established under separate planning legislation.

Going for Housing Growth

Financial incentive ball park estimate for the sub-region \$2 to \$3Million per year.

The Group discussed whether the incentives currently proposed are largely focused on supporting new development rather than intensification which would be against the SmartGrowth principals that support both greenfield and urban intensification developments. It was confirmed that they would apply to all housing.

Concern was expressed that intensification projects can be more challenging and costly due to site-specific considerations, including geotechnical requirements.

It was noted that councils have a key role in developing incentives to encourage intensification, given the advantages of utilising existing infrastructure rather than investing in new infrastructure to support greenfield growth. However, members acknowledged that greenfield development will remain necessary to accommodate future growth. It was further noted that the Regional Deal highlights greenfield development to recognise the additional complexity and costs involved, and the importance of alignment with, and support from, central government to enable its successful delivery.

It was also noted that Te Papa is identified as a Priority Development Area (PDA) and remains a key focus for SmartGrowth. Members observed that greater emphasis may be required to support intensification outcomes, particularly given the predominance of single-storey housing within the city.

Affordability was discussed and if more research is needed to see where infrastructure should be developed.

It was highlighted that Maori land is under serviced. E.g. Welcome Bay/Kaitemako has 2 main water lines that service public land but not the adjacent 500 acres of Maori land. Connection would enable affordable housing for that Maori community.

Group discussed the vision of the Commercial Centre Strategy.

The SmartGrowth vision of “live, work, learn and play” was confirmed but the programme can only be implemented in stages and seek to progress where it can within the constraints and opportunities of government policy of the day. These different drivers influence the programme, but the vision stays the same.

Transport System Plan

Paul Tarrant was introduced as the acting TSP Programme Manager. The current focus of the TSP programme for 2026/27 is the Transport System Operating Framework (TSOF) Version 3 review which will recalibrate the existing 30-year transport programme to reflect updated information, current priorities, and policy changes.

Amendment to Appendix 2 – TSP Timeline for Tauranga City Council's consultation is March – April 2027.

Development Sector Group

The DSG members recommended at their last meeting held on 10 June 2026 the need to update the Housing and Business Assessment as it is well out of date being 5 years old.

It was confirmed that DSG is kept up to date about the ongoing RSP work through that meeting by all SmartGrowth Partners. The transition into the new regime should manage to keep the confidence of the development sector in future housing delivery. It was confirmed to DSG that the RSP will be informed by the existing sub-regional FDS as a foundation for the new regional spatial plan.

Marae as Centres

Framework should be included/linked in the Regional Transport Plan and Infrastructure Planning to ensure infrastructure/connection between the Maori land.

Three Waters SLG Membership

The Group discussed Recommendation 2 and whether three representatives from the Joint Water Organisation should be appointed to the committee. It was noted that the committee does not make decisions on water matters; rather, the purpose of the representation is to ensure the Joint Water Organisation is informed of growth aspirations and priorities across the region and can maintain strategic alignment with SmartGrowth objectives.

Members also noted that all other partner organisations are represented by a single member and an alternate, and consideration was given to maintaining a consistent approach to representation across the committee.

Moved by: Deputy Mayor Margaret Murray-Benge Seconded by: Cr. Marten Rozeboom

That it be Resolved

That the **SmartGrowth Leadership Group:**

1. **Receives** the report “Quarterly Report – June 2026”.
2. **Invites** the new Western Bay of Plenty District Council and Tauranga City Council joint water organisation to appoint a representative to the SmartGrowth Leadership Group as provided under the SmartGrowth Leadership Group (Joint Committee) Agreement 2023.

It was noted that Whitiara McLeod abstained from voting on Item 2.

CARRIED

SG26/06.07 Tū Pakari Report June 2026 (Verbal)

Te Pio Kawe acknowledged Heta Gardiner and welcomed him to the committee and invited the Tāngata Whenua Representatives to speak.

Marae as Centres

It was suggested to link the Marae as Centre's workstream with Priority One's Energy Leadership Group to put some strategic weight on the model. Te Pio Kawe answered that CTWF replied to the same question for the Commercial Centre's linkage by doing a stocktake of existing infrastructure for Marae. Any gaps identified through this process should be assigned to the appropriate organisation or responsible party for action.

Ngāti Hangarau Rural Community Zone / Bethlehem papakāinga

Hapu management plan of Ngāti Hangarau includes to retain the rural character of the zone. The land trust is engaging with Tauranga City Council around infrastructure services, e.g. wastewater. Alternative option is septic tanks.

Tū Pakari

Tāngata Whenua Representatives to SLG highlighted that Tū Pakari aren't the voice of tāngata whenua and therefore some matters should be directed to Tāngata Whenua Representatives themselves. The Tū Pakari report gives a summary of the actions to date but does not represent the tāngata whenua view on such matters. Suggestion was made that a Combined Tāngata Whenua Forum report should be put on the SLG agenda as a standing item to show the tāngata whenua view on the current SLG matters. This will be discussed offline with SmartGrowth Advisory Team.

Moved by: Hakopa Tapiata

Seconded by: Cr. Kat MacMillan

That it be Resolved

That the **SmartGrowth Leadership Group:**

1. **Receives** the report "Tu Pakari Report – June 2026".

CARRIED

SG26/06.08 NZTA – Strategic Transport Plan – June Update (Paper C)

Cole O'Keefe spoke to the update report (Paper D)

Group Discussion

It was confirmed that the work is taking a wider multi-modal approach, with KiwiRail actively involved in the workstream exploring both freight and passenger transport opportunities and challenges.

It was noted that costs, constraints, and timing implications will be assessed during Stage 3 of the plan. Consideration is also being given to supporting infrastructure and services, such as park-and-ride facilities, and to ensuring alignment with existing strategies and plans, including UFTI.

The importance of involving council staff throughout the process was highlighted to ensure the Regional Spatial Plan appropriately reflects existing plans, initiatives, and detailed work programmes, even where implementation responsibilities sit with other organisations.

Engagement with the community was encouraged. Safety issues of State Highway 29 were noted and the more development is enabled, the worse the issues will be if not taken care of.

Very constrained environment funding-wise especially from a transport perspective in terms of national land transport fund / funding prioritisation. Interventions have been planned for many years for the area. Some have been undertaken others have gone unfunded.

It was confirmed that these plans are evidence based and not constrained by election cycle political priorities. They look into best practice internationally and are built on previous works that looked into vulnerability and testing this against today's elements. Should priorities change in the future options/plans will be already available to put in place.

NZTA used existing tāngata whenua project groups for engagement e.g. Tauriko and Takitimu North Link. No direct consultation with iwi or hapu only with representative on the forums yet. Suggestion was made to engage with any directly affected hapu.

It was noted that advocacy for this issue is ongoing through a number of channels, including the implementation of this plan, the region's representation at the Upper North Island Strategic Alliance (UNISA) table led by Mayor Mahe Drysdale, the development of the Regional Deal, and regular engagement between NZTA and the region's councils.

Members acknowledged that the National Land Transport Fund is insufficient to meet all transport investment requests across the country. While NZTA recognises the significant transport needs within the Bay of Plenty, it was noted that there are also a number of projects and investments already in the pipeline for the region.

It was noted that the Infrastructure Commission has released its report recently with Central Government accepting all recommendations within. The findings will flow through to NZTA as and when they are implemented.

NZTA advised that the Katikati Bypass project identified in the Regional Deal currently has no funding allocated. It was noted that the prioritisation processes associated with both the Regional Land Transport Plan (RLTP) and the Regional Deal will help provide greater clarity on the project's future funding and delivery pathway.

Moved by: Deputy Mayor Margaret Murray-Benge

Seconded by: Cr. Grant Dally

That it be Resolved

That the **SmartGrowth Leadership Group:**

1. **Receives** the report "NZTA – Strategic Transport Plan – June Update".

CARRIED

SG26/06.09 Population Projection Review (Paper D)

The Bay of Plenty Population Projections Working Group commissioned the University of Waikato's Te Ngira Institute for Population Research to independently review the Stats NZ 2023-base population projections for the Bay of Plenty. The review was initiated following a significant upward revision in projected long-term population growth for the region, and in particular the SmartGrowth area, with implications for housing demand, infrastructure investment, growth sequencing, and long-term planning. The review also responds to emerging national housing growth policies that may increase reliance on Stats NZ high-growth projections.

The review assesses the methodology and assumptions underpinning the projections, examines the drivers of the revised growth outlook, and considers implications for regional growth management and infrastructure planning.

Michael Cameron of the Te Ngira Institute presented his findings to the group and explained how population projections are modelled.

Michael confirmed that Future Proof uses Te Ngira projections since 2006.

It was noted that the review confirmed concerns raised following the release of Stats NZ's population projections in October 2025. As a result, Stage 2 will involve Te Ngira undertaking a more detailed and refined population projection exercise for the Bay of Plenty region and its constituent local authorities. The projections are to be used as a foundation for the RSP.

Assumptions that there is a population coming to pay for the investments. What happens if not...?

It was also noted that the current projections are produced at a broader regional level rather than at the SA2 (suburb-level) scale. Developing ethnicity group projections, including Māori population projections, would add further complexity to the analysis.

Concerns raised about Central Government using Stats NZ statistics for growth projections. Signalled national direction to use Stats NZ high +20% for land supply targets even though Stats NZ medium amounts would possibly be closer to the reality. It would be very difficult to supply additional land in the subregion to meet this target. It was also noted that different projections are used for infrastructure planning because of the cost implications.

It was noted that SmartGrowth's role is to plan for and enable growth through the provision of land use planning, zoning, and infrastructure to support Government-directed population growth. Responsibility for the integration of new residents, including fostering welcoming communities and cultural connections, sits with individual local authorities rather than SmartGrowth.

Moved by: Cr. John Scrimgeour

Seconded by: Deputy Mayor Jen Scoular

That it be Resolved

That the **SmartGrowth Leadership Group**:

1. **Receives** the report "Population Projection Review".

CARRIED

SG26/06.10 **Resource Management Reform – Mayoral Forum Report (Paper E)**

The report Resource Management Reform – Mayoral Forum Report (Paper E) was taken as read. No questions or comments were raised.

NZTA confirmed the importance of remaining closely engaged in the Spatial Planning process to ensure alignment with its current transport planning activities.

Moved by: Mayor Mahé Drysdale

Seconded by: Cr. John Scrimgeour

That it be Resolved

That the **SmartGrowth Leadership Group:**

1. **Receives** the report “Resource Management Reform – Mayoral Forum Report”.

CARRIED

SG26/06.11 **Priority One – Western Bay of Plenty Regional Deal Update (Paper F)**

Dave Courtney spoke to the update report (Paper F).

Confirmed that regional level connection as well as linkage to SmartGrowth for the Implementation Plan development.

Implementation Governance as per signed agreement “Western Bay of Plenty Deal” - page 6:

Responsible Ministers and Mayors and Chair: Deal Strategic Oversight and leadership	✓ Ministers for Infrastructure and Local Government ✓ Mayors Tauranga City Council and Western Bay of Plenty District Council, and Chair Bay of Plenty Regional Council.
Western Bay of Plenty Deal Oversight Board: Deal-level governance and monitoring.	✓ Bay of Plenty Regional Council, Tauranga City Council and Western Bay of Plenty District Council Chief Executive Officers ✓ Priority One (Economic Development Agency for Western Bay Sub Region) Chief Executive Officer. ✓ Chair of the Combined Tāngata Whenua Forum ✓ Deputy Secretary Department of Internal Affairs, Deputy Chief Executive Officer National Infrastructure Funding and Financing Limited, and Director Regional Relationships - Waikato/Bay of Plenty for New Zealand Transport Agency ✓ An independent representative appointed by the Crown ✓ An independent representative appointed by the Councils ✓ Oversight Board Executive Function.

Steering Group(s), Working Committee(s) (as required)	✓ Operational oversight and coordination ✓ Day to day planning and implementation (Working Committees) ✓ Delivery agencies & Councils.
Advisory Groups (as required)	✓ Smartgrowth and other Advisory Groups to be determined.

Implementation Plan will come back to elected members for Council approval as well as Central Government.

Appointment of iwi representatives sitting with iwi/ tāngata whenua. Priority One can inform tāngata whenua what is needed within which timeframe.

Tāngata Whenua representatives highlighted it would be important to them that tāngata whenua priorities will be delivered.

Priority One confirmed that the membership of the steering/working groups is currently being developed. Some could seek participation from SmartGrowth Senior Manager Group sub-committee. Some initiatives are economic, other social infrastructure to land, housing and transport

Working group below steering group. Trying not to create duplication. So where possible, existing structures/workstreams will be used. E.g. to deliver a refreshed sub-regional spatial plan as part of the regional spatial plan.

RON's projects will be entirely funded by the National Land Transport Fund and sit with NZTA and are tied to the 2027 GPS. Whereas local roading components are supported with 51% central government funding and sit within the RLTP priorities.

Connecting Mount Maunganui and Katikati bypass projects are connected to the asset recycling programme and are likely to be delivered 2030 and beyond based on the Crown funding uplift capabilities and the region's capability to deliver.

The Deal and its projects do not sit outside any decision-making body, but confirms between this region and central government which projects are of most interest and will elevate prioritisation.

Members highlighted alignment needed between SmartGrowth and Regional Deal to avoid duplication

It was confirmed to the members that the Oversight Group will have Maori representation. The Tāngata Whenua Representatives on SLG will take this matter offline and work through possible pathways of representation for all iwi/hapu on the Regional Deal.

Moved by: Deputy Mayor Margaret Murray-Benge

Seconded by: Cr. Marten Rozeboom

That it be Resolved

That the **SmartGrowth Leadership Group:**

1. **Receives** the report "Priority One – Western Bay of Plenty Regional Deal Update".
2. **Receives** the agenda attachment Western Bay of Plenty City and Regional Deal Summary
3. **Notes** that Priority One representatives have provided further updates at the meeting.

CARRIED

SG26/06.10 Implementation Plan Update for 2026-27 (Paper G)

Craig Batchelar spoke to the Implementation Plan Update (Paper G) and highlighted;

The Implementation Plan is required under the National Policy Statement on Urban Development (NPS-UD) and supports delivery of the SmartGrowth Strategy, including the Future Development Strategy (FDS). It is a coordination document to help all SmartGrowth Partners align their resourcing efforts.

Main change is the inclusion of some of the regional deal commitments that have a direct link to housing delivery and spatial planning, and of interest to the wider partnership. Their inclusion leads to update reporting to SLG and visibility on progress. One commitment of the Regional Deal is a "Refreshed Sub-regional Spatial Plan" which has been incorporated into the SmartGrowth Implementation Plan and contributing workstreams have been identified.

When the implementation plan was developed it was identified that the public did not want heavy, emitting industries in the region. The related action in the plan (Consider pathways for heavy and emitting industries to potentially relocate to low sensitivity areas and/or implement progressive environmental improvements) is an unresolved issue. Alternative land areas have not been identified to date.

Correction for page 98 of the agenda. Under Delegated Authority to Approve Updates the text should read: "The SLG has delegated authority to approve updates to the IP under the SLG Joint Agreement 2023 without reference back to the partner organisations."

The identified Preliminary PDAs should be called "preliminary" in the Implementation Plan.

Crown entities named under FDS key actions in relation to the Regional Deal include Te Puni Kokiri with DIA being the lead agency.

Moved by: Deputy Mayor Margaret Murray-Benge

Seconded by: Cr. Kat MacMillan

That it be Resolved

That the **SmartGrowth Leadership Group**:

1. **Receives** the report "SmartGrowth Implementation Plan Update for 2026-27"
2. **Approves** the SmartGrowth Implementation Plan Update for 2026-27 with changes as recommended for the reasons as set out in the summary table.
3. **Authorises** the SLG Chair to make minor editorial and factual changes or corrections where necessary.
4. **Notes** that the SmartGrowth Implementation Plan may require further amendment after a Regional Deal Implementation Plan is finalised later in 2026.

It was noted that Whitiara McLeod abstained from voting on Item 2.

CARRIED

SG26/06.11 Public Excluded Session

The SmartGrowth Leadership Group:

1. **Agree** that the public be excluded from the following parts of this meeting:
 - a) Approval of Closed Minutes – 19 March 2026
 - b) Priority Development Area Tracker

2. **Note** that this resolution is made in reliance on section 48(1)(a) of the Local Government Official Information and Meetings Act 1987 and that the report are to be considered in public excluded in accordance with s7(2)(i) - enables any local authority holding information to carry on, without prejudice or disadvantage, negotiations (including commercial and industrial negotiations).
3. **Noted** that at the end of the closed session the meeting will move back into open.

Moved by: Deputy Mayor Jen Scoular

Seconded by: Mayor Mahé Drysdale

That it be Resolved

The meeting moved to closed at 1:05pm

The meeting resumed in open at 1:08pm

CARRIED

SG26/06.12

Other Business

Chair Mayor Denyer informed the members about Ernst Zollner's imminent departure from Kāinga Ora and recognised his significant contribution to SmartGrowth and spatial planning nationally over the past nine years through his roles with Kāinga Ora and HUD/MBIE.

His leadership in establishing the Urban Growth Partnerships, championing the Priority Development Area concept, and supporting the Housing System Plan refresh was noted. Appreciation was expressed for his ongoing collaboration, insight, and commitment to partnership across central and local government.

SmartGrowth wishes him well in his new role as Chief Strategy and Partnerships Officer with Waikato Waters.

SG26/06.13

Karakia Whakamutunga

Heta Gardiner formally closed the proceedings.

The meeting concluded at 1:10pm

Confirmed as a true and correct record.



Mayor James Denyer

Chairperson

Date

