



Tuia Taitonga Southlink

He karere tā te Kaunihera o Taranaki ki te Tonga News from the South Taranaki District Council

Rates payment reminder

Ratepayers are reminded that the first instalment of rates for 2026/27 must be paid by Wednesday 26 August 2026 to avoid a penalty. To do it online go to: www.southtaranaki.com/pay

South Taranaki and Stratford Councils submit two-council proposal for Taranaki



South Taranaki District Council and Stratford District Council have submitted a joint outline proposal to Government for two unitary councils covering Taranaki, through the Government's Head Start pathway for simplifying local government. The decision was made at South Taranaki District Council's Extraordinary Council meeting on Monday and Stratford District Council's Extraordinary Council meeting on Tuesday last week (3 and 4 August).

The proposal would see the South Taranaki District Council and Stratford District Council amalgamate to form one unitary authority, taking on both district council and relevant regional council functions for southern and central Taranaki. It assumes New Plymouth district would form a separate unitary authority or another appropriate structure, with some region-wide functions managed through shared regional governance arrangements. Unitary councils combine the responsibilities currently carried out by district or city councils and regional councils.

South Taranaki District Mayor Phil Nixon says the proposal reflects a strong and consistent message from the south and central Taranaki communities, iwi partners and key stakeholders that local voice, local decision-making, and local control over the services provided must be protected through any future local government changes.

"Our community has been very clear. People understand change is coming, but they do not want south or central Taranaki's voice to be lost in a single, region-wide council," says Mayor Nixon.

Mayor Nixon's comments were supported by strong community feedback which saw 1,392 responses being received through South Taranaki's Head Start survey, with an overwhelming 94% supporting a two-council model for the region. Stratford District Council's survey reflected similar results with 83% of the 633 responses also supporting a two-council regional model.

"These results gave us a clear mandate to take the next step and submit a locally led proposal to Government. Our proposal supports change where change is required, but it also recognises

that Taranaki is not one single community with one set of needs, priorities or interests."

Stratford District Mayor Neil Volzke says the two councils have worked together to develop a credible outline proposal that responds to the Government's objectives while prioritising the unique identity and aspirations that Stratford and South Taranaki communities hold.

"We believe this proposal offers a practical, locally led opportunity to simplify governance, strengthen service capability, and improve accountability while retaining the local representation our communities value. It sets out a realistic pathway for change, grounded in existing relationships, community support, and a shared commitment to better outcomes."

Local authorities had until 9 August 2026 to submit outline proposals for new unitary councils as part of the Government's Head Start pathway. The South Taranaki and Stratford proposal has been developed as a locally led response to that process.

Mayors Nixon and Volzke stressed their Councils' outline proposal does not make any immediate changes to services, rates, representation, or staffing.

"Our proposal will go to Cabinet for a decision, and we expect to hear back from Government sometime in September on the outcome. If our outline proposal gets approval, we then have around six months to develop a more detailed proposal. That's when the hard work really begins," says Mayor Nixon.

South Taranaki District Council has been considering its own position on local government reform and we remain committed to maintaining a constructive regional dialogue throughout the process.

"For us it is important that existing regional functions continue to be delivered efficiently. For some services, this may be via the new unitary council, but for other services a regional approach may be required to achieve the best outcomes for the people and environment of Taranaki," he said.

Creative Communities Funding Applications Open



Do you have a community arts project that needs some funding support? Applications for Creative Communities funding are now open and will close at 5pm on Friday 11 September 2026.

The South Taranaki Creative Communities Scheme provides funding assistance for community-based arts activities in South

Taranaki that take place between 12 October 2026 – 12 October 2027 and meet one or more of the following funding criteria:

- Broad community involvement - a project that will create opportunities for local communities to engage with and participate in arts activities.
- Diversity - a project that will support the diverse arts and cultural traditions of local communities, enriching and promoting their uniqueness and cultural diversity.
- Young people - a project that will enable and encourage young people (under 18 years) to engage with and actively participate in the arts.

Application forms are now available online at www.southtaranaki.com/funding or at your local LibraryPlus. For further information, email funding@stdc.govt.nz or phone (06) 278 0555 or 0800 111 323.

Upcoming Meetings

Policy and Strategy Committee
Monday 17 August, 1pm

Risk and Assurance Committee (MERCER)
Monday 24 August, 11am

Water Services Committee
Wednesday 26 August, 1pm

Ordinary Council
Wednesday 9 September, 4pm

Eltham-Kaponga Community Board
Monday 14 September, 10.30am
Mangamingi Community Hall, 1662 Rāwhitiroa Road, Mangamingi

Te Hāwera Community Board
Monday 14 September, 4pm Normanby School, Hunter Street, Normanby

Taranaki Coastal Community Board
Wednesday 16 September, 4pm
Warea Public Hall, Main South Road, StateHighway 45, Warea

Pātea Community Board
Wednesday 16 September, 4pm
Waverley Community Centre, Chester Street, Waverley

Eltham Drainage Committee
Monday 21 September, 10am
Taumata Recreation Centre, Preston Street, Eltham

Te Kāhui Matauraura,
Wednesday 23 September, 10am

Environment and Hearings Committee,
Wednesday 23 September, 1pm



Unless otherwise specified, meetings are held in the Council Chamber, Administration Building, Albion Street, Hāwera.

Grazing land for tender in Manaia

Grazing Land for tender in Manaia opens 10th August 2026. Please find tender information at www.southtaranaki.com/grazingtender

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