

Name: Arohanui Allen

Ward: Māori Ward

Date: June

Meetings Attended

Date	Meeting Topic	Comment
03/06	Kaikohe-Hokianga Community Board	South Hokianga Electricity Network Update: Following concerns raised about outage frequency, Top Energy reviewed six years of network performance. The review found South Hokianga's reliability is comparable to similar rural networks, with major outages largely driven by severe weather events. Top Energy has committed \$7.4 million in targeted infrastructure upgrades to further improve resilience and reliability across the South Hokianga network. Another topic of interest was "What's next for the current Kaikohe Library building?" both Council and the Community Boards have great engagement from community members, groups, hapū and iwi and we look forward to the next steps in this development.
04/06	Bay of Islands-Whangaroa Community Board	Attended the June meeting where the Board considered amenity lighting projects, road naming, updated community funding guidance, community grant applications, project funding reports, and member reports. Discussions focused on improving community safety, supporting local initiatives, and ensuring funding decisions align with Board priorities and community needs.
04/06	Proposed District Plan Submissions - Q&A Workshop 3	Participated in the third Q&A workshop on the Proposed District Plan submissions. The workshop highlighted the significant role unelected Hearing Commissioners play in considering submissions and making recommendations on planning decision, a longstanding feature of the Resource Management Act process. I reflected on the contrast between this accepted model and the way engagement with hapū and iwi is characterised as creating an imbalance of power.

		I also raised concerns about the limited role of elected members in addressing community concerns arising from Proposed District Plan decisions, despite our responsibility to maintain public trust, confidence, and constructive relationships with our hapori.
05/06	Ahuwhenua Trophy Awards	I attended the 2026 Ahuwhenua Trophy Awards at McKay Stadium, Whangārei, celebrating excellence in Māori horticulture and agribusiness. Established in 1933 by Sir Āpirana Ngata and Lord Bledisloe, the awards recognise innovation, kaitiakitanga, and intergenerational stewardship. Congratulations to Mātai Pacific Iwi Collective on winning the 2026 Ahuwhenua Trophy and to Te Rina Joe for receiving the Young Māori Grower Award. The evening showcased the strength of Māori enterprise and its significant contribution to regional and national prosperity.
08/06	Youth Education and Leadership Pathway Portfolio	The Youth Education & Leadership Pathways Portfolio met to progress the draft Youth Participation Strategy 2026–2028, including previous action points, the Youth Engagement Strategy, uptake of the NZYMN Strengths-Based Skills workshop at Te Ahu, and opportunities to host schools at Council.
08/06	NWL - Shareholders Representative Group	Workshop focused on governance arrangements, establishment progress, and development of a regional Statement of Expectations for Northland Waters. Discussions covered strategic oversight, performance reporting, transition milestones, governance frameworks, and shareholder priorities to guide the new water organisation through establishment and long-term service delivery.
08/06	Ōkaihau Community Association Meeting	Presented a Community Board update covering funding opportunities, local infrastructure, community safety, and engagement initiatives. Provided clarification on land ownership and development opportunities behind the Community Hall, discussed available Council land and road reserves, and updated members on progress advocating for the Two Ponga Park bollard replacement.
10/06	Local Government Reforms - Head Start Process	zParticipated in a workshop exploring Northland's local government reform options. Discussions focused on community feedback, governance models, local representation, Māori partnerships, Treaty obligations, and the

		interface with Resource Management reforms. Council reaffirmed this phase is about testing options, gathering evidence, and undertaking meaningful community and hapū engagement before any decisions are made. I remain firmly committed to retaining Māori Wards at the Far North District Council. The people of the Far North made their position clear through a democratic referendum, voting to retain Māori Wards, and I continue to respect and uphold that mandate. I also acknowledge that the Northland Regional Council, as a regional body currently being considered for disestablishment through local government reform, has democratically resolved not to retain Māori Wards. Given the uncertainty around the future structure of regional governance, I have no concern with that decision. My focus remains on ensuring Māori representation and meaningful hapū and iwi participation continue to be embedded within whatever governance arrangements emerge for the Far North.
10/06	Local Alcohol Policy workshop	Participated in a workshop on the development of the Far North District's first Local Alcohol Policy. Discussions focused on balancing community wellbeing with responsible alcohol availability, licensing conditions, trading hours, sensitive sites, and reducing alcohol-related harm before the draft proceeds to public consultation. Given the well-documented impacts of alcohol across our communities, I advocated for harm reduction over any perceived economic gain. This was reinforced by feedback from rangatahi, who consistently told us they often bear the consequences of alcohol-related harm experienced within their whānau and communities.
10/06	Proposed District Plan Submission Q&A Workshop	Participated in the Proposed District Plan Q&A workshop, where elected members received a further opportunity to ask questions before the Proposed District Plan recommendations came to Council for decision. While Independent Hearing Commissioners play an important statutory role in hearing submissions and making recommendations, the final decision rests with the Council. If councillors believe there is sufficient justification to depart from a recommendation, it is entirely appropriate to undertake due diligence and bring the matter back to Council for debate and decision. Following a social media reel I shared outlining

		my experience, I noted that this is the only Council process I have encountered where elected members have been strongly encouraged by legal counsel to adopt a plan recommended predominantly by unelected decision-makers in its entirety. It has been interesting to observe the public interest in kaupapa Māori within Council processes, while comparatively little attention has been given to this longstanding statutory planning process.
11/06	Extraordinary Council Meeting - Proposed District Plan Submission	Council considered the Independent Hearings Panel recommendations following an extensive statutory process. While most recommendations were accepted, councillors exercised their decision-making role by differing from parts of the recommended plan where justified. T
16/06	Visit to Kaikohe Christian School	Reported back to Kaikohe Christian School on the Housing for the Elderly kaupapa, demonstrating how their whakaaro informed Council discussions. Maintaining this feedback loop is critical to sustaining rangatahi engagement in local democracy. The visit also sparked interest in civic participation, with voter registration forms distributed and a future deputation discussed.
16/06	Te Koekoeā Committee for Council Controlled Organisations	
17/06	Te Koukou Committee for Transport and Infrastructure	
18/06	Monthly Governance and Operational Briefing	Council received a comprehensive update across organisational operations, including workforce capability, Housing for the Elderly, Long Term Plan preparation, strategic reform, communications, community engagement, and economic development. Significant focus remained on Local Government and Resource Management reform, regional collaboration, recovery from severe weather events, and strengthening governance oversight. Communications activity increased substantially, driven by emergency responses and high public interest in Council decisions, while work continued to improve organisational capability, regional advocacy, and delivery of key community projects.
18/06	LTP Workshop	Kahika provided an update following the Regional Steering Group meeting, highlighting ongoing Head Start proposal development, DIA guidance, and continued assessment of

		governance options. There was strong support for exploring a staged transition from four councils, to two, and ultimately to one, over a defined period of no more than 10 years. Throughout these discussions, I remained steadfast that any reform must preserve strong local community voice, retain the Far North's democratically endorsed Māori Wards, and ensure meaningful hapū and iwi participation in local decision-making.
19/06	Northland College School Visit	Hosted 20 ākonga from Northland College for an interactive session on Local Government Reform. Students explored governance options and overwhelmingly supported balancing strong local decision-making with regional coordination. Their insights have been shared with elected members, and I will report back to the students once Council determines its preferred reform direction.
22/06	Whakatūwhera o ngā whare hou	Attended the opening of eight new papakāinga homes in Waitangi, delivered by Te Tii Waitangi B3 Trust in partnership with Te Pouahi o Te Tai Tokerau and Advance Build. The development marks the Trust's first papakāinga housing project in 50 years, celebrating whānau wellbeing, whakapapa, and the return of uri to their kāinga.
22/06	Head Start Pathway - Hapū and Community Engagement Hui @ Te Kona	Attended a hapū and community hui with whānau travelling from as far as North Hokianga. Discussions centred on local government reform, proposed council boundaries, Māori representation, preserving local voice, and ensuring rural communities are not further isolated through any future governance changes.
23/06	LTP Workshop	Participated in a full-day workshop to commence development of the 2027–2037 Long Term Plan. Discussions focused on Council's strategic direction, community outcomes, levels of service, activity groups, rates affordability, funding gaps, strategic levers, capital investment, asset management, and user-pays opportunities. This planning is occurring alongside significant structural change, including the establishment of the Northland Waters CCO, the ongoing Local Government Reform process, and the prospect of Central Government introducing rates capping. Collectively, these reforms will have a significant influence on Council's ability to fund infrastructure, maintain

		service levels, and respond to community expectations over the coming decade.
23/06	Head Start Pathway - Hapū and Community Engagement Hui @ Te Tii Marae	Attended a well-supported hui where hapū and whānau shared strong views about the future of local government and Māori representation. A recurring theme was concern that changes to the political and legislative environment could reduce Māori influence in decision-making. Discussions referenced the proposed Resource Management reforms, Mana Whakahono ā Rohe agreements, the Government's review of Treaty-related legislation, local government reform, and the importance of protecting local voice, rangatiratanga, and meaningful partnerships between councils, hapū and iwi.
25/06	Council Meeting	Council adopted the 2026/27 Annual Plan, set rates and associated fees and charges for the financial year, and considered a Notice of Motion seeking greater transparency in staff reporting. I participated in debate on governance matters, including the importance of robust decision-making and ensuring elected members receive clear information to fulfil their responsibilities. The meeting also considered an amendment to the Terms of Reference for Te Kūkupa Committee. Collectively, these decisions established Council's financial and governance framework for the coming year while reinforcing accountability, transparency, and effective decision-making.

Community Matters

This section should be completed for matters arising within the community, which Council need to be aware of. It could be related to ongoing projects, requests, feedback etc.

Topic	Comment
Amotai - Meet the Buyers	While I was unable to attend this event, I look forward to seeing more initiatives like this delivered in the Far North. Strengthening local and social procurement creates opportunities for our businesses, keeps more rates and investment circulating within our district, and builds stronger, more resilient local economies through meaningful buyer–supplier connections. https://www.eventbrite.co.nz/e/meet-the-buyer-te-tai-tokerau-tickets-1981106203986?aff=odcleoeventsincollection
Local Procurement	I continue to receive strong interest from local contractors engaging with the SiteWise programme. The support provided by Whāriki has been invaluable

	in helping businesses navigate procurement requirements, build capability, and position themselves for future opportunities. Growing local procurement remains a key priority to keep investment, employment, and economic benefits circulating within the Far North.
Request for Service (RFS) System	I continue to advocate for timely resolution of outstanding community requests, including the replacement of the Two Ponga Park safety bollard. Despite the RFS being lodged in October last year, the bollard remains unreplaced, allowing vehicle access into the park. I will continue following this matter until a permanent solution is delivered, reinforcing the importance of a responsive and accountable Request for Service system.
Pukepoto Bridge	Continued advocating for a long-term solution to the Pukepoto Road bridge. While current funding pathways through NZTA are unavailable, alternative options are being explored, including discussions with Northland Regional Council and investigating cost-saving measures. I remain committed to pursuing practical solutions and advocating for funding opportunities as they arise.
New Zealand Youth Mentoring Network – Strengths-Based Workshop	Far North District Council, in collaboration with the New Zealand Youth Mentoring Network, delivered this free professional development opportunity at Te Ahu, Kaitiāia, to strengthen local youth mentoring capability. It was encouraging to see rangatahi participate, including our Tuia Rangatahi Representative, Noah McBirney-Warnes. The workshop forms part of a broader programme of engagement opportunities designed to increase rangatahi participation in Council, foster youth leadership, and build meaningful pathways for young people to contribute to local decision-making.
Hosting Rangatahi at Council	Interest in the Rangatahi in Council programme continues to grow, with schools, rangatahi groups, and hapū increasingly seeking opportunities to visit Council. These experiences provide young people with firsthand insight into local government, strengthen civic understanding, and create meaningful pathways for rangatahi to engage with and influence decision-making in Te Hiku o Te Ika.
Community Litter Initiative	Initiated discussions with Council staff to explore how the organisation can better support volunteers and community groups who generously collect litter from public spaces. The focus is on recognising their contribution and identifying ways to reduce the financial burden of disposing of rubbish that is not their own.
Infrastructure Planned Procurements	I was pleased to see the release of Council's planned infrastructure procurement pipeline. This is a positive step towards greater transparency and gives local contractors better visibility of upcoming work, allowing them to plan ahead and prepare for opportunities. While a small number of District Facilities projects are still to be included, this initiative has the potential to strengthen local procurement, build business confidence, and keep more investment circulating within the Far North.
Kaikohe Transport Planning	Supported Cr Court's Request for Service seeking an updated traffic assessment for the Mangakahia Road intersection. With increasing traffic volumes, freight movements, school activity, and the opening of the new Civic Hub, it is timely to reassess whether current intersection design, safety, parking, and traffic flow arrangements remain fit for purpose and meet the future needs of Kaikohe.

Local Procurement & Māori Business Development	Received an update following engagement with Te Whāriki and Amotai, reinforcing the support available to build capability within local small and medium-sized businesses. Te Whāriki will provide tailored one-on-one support to suppliers, while Amotai is planning to bring its next Māori Business Meet the Buyer event to Kaitiāia. Additional funding has also been secured to help local businesses build the capability and capacity needed to compete for major infrastructure opportunities. I look forward to supporting this initiative and encouraging strong elected member involvement.
Urgent: Water Quality and Landslip Remediation – Kaikou / Hikurangi Awa	Community concerns were raised regarding ongoing sediment contamination from a historic landslip in the Kaikou catchment, affecting the Kaikou and Hikurangi awa and local drinking water sources. Council, community representatives, Northland Regional Council, and forestry stakeholders have begun discussions, with a site visit and hui being coordinated to assess impacts and explore remediation options. I offered to attend any hui and support the community in whatever way I can.

Portfolio Update: (Name of Portfolio)

Kōkako – Youth Education & Leadership Pathways Portfolio Update

Youth Participation Strategy 2026–2028

One of the most significant milestones for the Kōkako Portfolio this quarter has been the development of the Youth Participation Strategy 2026–2028. This strategy represents a shift from engaging with rangatahi to partnering alongside rangatahi, establishing a framework that empowers young people to actively influence local government decision-making while building long-term civic leadership across Te Hiku o Te Ika.

The strategy is intentionally ambitious. It establishes a clear purpose to empower rangatahi to meaningfully participate in, influence and co-design local decision-making, supported by a vision of "A Far North where every young person feels empowered, represented, connected, and able to shape the future of their communities." This aligns strongly with Council's FN2100 Strategy and regional strategies focused on participation, resilience, accessibility and Māori leadership.

A key focus throughout development has been ensuring youth engagement moves beyond traditional consultation. The draft now embeds principles of meaningful participation and shared decision-making, co-design, culturally grounded engagement and practical influence. Its focus areas include informed communities, inclusive engagement, meaningful and sustained participation, and strengthened partnerships with hapū, iwi, schools, youth organisations and community leaders. Importantly, the strategy recognises rangatahi as leaders and stakeholders of the present, not simply the leaders of tomorrow.

I also want to acknowledge the outstanding contribution of our Tuia Rangatahi Representative, Noah McBirney-Warnes, whose feedback has helped elevate this strategy considerably. Noah challenged us to move beyond language that positions young people as consultees and instead adopt an international best-practice approach that recognises rangatahi as partners in governance. His recommendations included strengthening references to youth leadership, intergenerational equity, participatory governance, youth-led innovation, systems change, and long-term civic capability

building. He also emphasised the importance of transparent feedback loops so rangatahi can clearly see how their contributions influence Council decisions, strengthening trust and accountability.

Many of Noah's recommendations have already been incorporated into the latest draft, including:

- a stronger purpose and vision statement;
- recognition of rangatahi as current leaders and contributors;
- the inclusion of meaningful participation and shared decision-making as a core principle;
- reframing participation as sustained partnership rather than one-off consultation;
- establishing transparent reporting and feedback mechanisms;
- embedding regional, national and international youth collaboration;
- strengthening innovation through initiatives such as the Tu Rangatahi Innovation Lab; and
- introducing a comprehensive three-year implementation roadmap with measurable outcomes and six-monthly Youth Impact Reports to the Kōkako Portfolio.

As Chair, I am incredibly encouraged by the direction this work is taking. Rather than simply creating another engagement document, we are building a framework that seeks to develop the next generation of civic leaders while ensuring rangatahi have genuine opportunities to shape the decisions affecting their communities today. The success of this strategy will ultimately be measured not by the number of young people we consult, but by how effectively Council creates space for rangatahi to influence policy, co-design solutions, and become long-term partners in local democracy.

Matters for Discussion

Te Kahu o Taonui Media Release – Local Government Amendment Bill

I support Te Kahu o Taonui's response to the Government's proposed amendments to the Local Government Act, which would remove voting rights from non-elected members of council committees. The statement argues that Māori participation in local government is not anti-democratic but reflects decades of Treaty partnership, recognition of mana whenua, and the practical value of Māori knowledge in decisions affecting whenua, wai, and the environment.

The release responds directly to the Government's reference to the Far North District Council's Te Kuaka – Māori Strategic Relationships Committee, emphasising that Te Kuaka is not a decision-making body. Rather, it exists to provide recommendations to the full Council, with all final decisions remaining the responsibility of democratically elected councillors. Te Kahu o Taonui contends that portraying Māori participation as a threat to democracy misunderstands both the committee's role and the purpose of meaningful partnership.

The statement also raises concern that the proposed legislation sends a damaging message to Māori communities and rangatahi—that participation in civic life is conditional and can be removed according to the political priorities of the day. It calls on the Government to engage directly with Te Kahu o Taonui before progressing the legislation and urges local government across Aotearoa to recognise and defend the value that hapū and iwi bring to governance, planning, and decision-making.

As an elected member, I support continued partnership with hapū and iwi, recognising that inclusive decision-making, local knowledge, and strong relationships produce better outcomes for all communities across Te Hiku o Te Ika.

Taipā Electrocoagulation (EC) Wastewater Project Update

I welcome and support the update on the continued progress of the Taipā Electrocoagulation (EC) pilot, which builds on the momentum created through the successful Rāwene wastewater project. The collaboration between local hapū and the Far North District Council continues to demonstrate the value of working together to develop innovative, practical, and environmentally responsible wastewater solutions for our district.

With the monitoring equipment now installed and commissioning underway, the anticipated opening of the Taipā EC plant marks another significant milestone. The timing is particularly important as Northland Waters Ltd begins its establishment phase. As the new Council-Controlled Organisation develops its strategic direction, investment priorities, and Statement of Expectations, two operational EC plants will provide locally proven examples of alternative wastewater treatment technology for consideration.

The update also highlights the importance of securing funding for the next stage of the project, particularly the de-sludging of the existing ponds, to ensure progress is not lost during the transition to Northland Waters Ltd. Equally encouraging is the advancement of land-based discharge, with Council having conditionally approved the purchase of nearby land, subject to further soil testing. If successful, this approach has the potential to significantly reduce coastal discharges while improving environmental outcomes.

This project reinforces the benefits of collaborative problem-solving between Council and local hapū, demonstrating how innovation, local knowledge, and partnership can deliver practical solutions that support environmental restoration, protect our waterways, and provide value for ratepayers. I look forward to following its progress as it continues to inform the future direction of wastewater management across Te Hiku o Te Ika.

Mana Whakahono ā Rohe

Below is my response to the 4 emails I have received to halt MWar with hapū and iwi.

"Thank you for taking the time to write and share your views regarding the proposed agreements currently being developed between Far North District Council and iwi and hapū entities.

I appreciate your interest in ensuring Council processes remain transparent, accountable, and democratic.

In relation to your question regarding the Far North District Council Significance and Engagement Policy, the policy itself provides clear guidance on how Council approaches engagement and decision-making. One of the policy's core principles states:

"Our principles for engagement are laid out in the Local Governance Statement and are guided by the Local Government Act 2002 sections 82 Principles of Consultation and section 81 Contributions to Decision Making Processes by Māori."

Section 81 of the Local Government Act 2002 requires local authorities to:

"(a) establish and maintain processes to provide opportunities for Māori to contribute to the decision-making processes of the local authority; and

(b) consider ways in which it may foster the development of Māori capacity to contribute to the decision-making processes of the local authority; and

(c) provide relevant information to Māori for the purposes of paragraphs (a) and (b)."

These are statutory obligations placed upon councils through legislation and form part of lawful and good local government practice throughout Aotearoa.

Importantly, the Council's own Significance and Engagement Policy explicitly recognises that:

"Māori are more than an interest group or stakeholder."

The policy further commits Council to:

- building and strengthening relationships with mana whenua representative entities;
- recognising and empowering formal relationships with iwi and hapū, including Memoranda of Understanding and other relationship instruments;
- supporting Māori participation in decision-making processes;
- ensuring Council reports identify impacts on Māori; and
- fulfilling obligations arising from Treaty Settlement legislation.

The policy also acknowledges the enduring presence, aspirations, and cultural obligations of mana whenua as kaitiaki of the Far North and specifically identifies building genuine relationships with Māori and Treaty partners as one of its objectives.

It is also important to distinguish between participation in decision-making processes and decision-making authority itself. The Council's engagement framework is very clear that elected members retain final decision-making responsibility on behalf of their constituents:

"The final decision is in the hands of the public. Under the Local Government Act, the Mayor and Councillors are elected to make decisions on behalf of their constituents."

Engagement with iwi and hapū therefore does not replace democracy, nor does it transfer decision-making powers away from elected members. Rather, it helps ensure that decisions are better informed, legally robust, and reflective of the communities and Treaty relationships that exist within Te Hiku o te Ika.

As a district, we have already seen significant benefits for all residents and ratepayers when Council works in partnership with iwi and hapū.

Examples include:

- The work of Te Mauri o Te Wai in the Hokianga, where a hapū-led solution to wastewater discharge has delivered environmental and cultural benefits while reducing projected costs from up to \$22 million dollars to approximately \$1 million, all while staying within Central Government funding and therefore removing costs to ratepayers.
- The work of Te Kahu o Taonui in developing relationships with international investors and renewable energy providers through the Northland Renewable Energy Zone initiative, creating opportunities for infrastructure investment, employment, energy resilience, and economic growth across Te Tai Tokerau.
- The work of Te Hauora o Ngāpuhi in delivering approximately 100 homes on Bisset Road to support whānau housing needs and attract critical health professionals such as doctors and nurses into our district.

These examples demonstrate that iwi and hapū engagement is not simply about representation; it is often about unlocking expertise, relationships, investment opportunities, local knowledge, and solutions that benefit entire communities.

As a Councillor elected to represent all residents of Te Hiku o te Ika, I support transparency and public participation in Council decision-making processes. Equally, I support Council meeting its obligations under both the Local Government Act and its own policies to work alongside tangata whenua and Tiriti partners in matters that affect our district.

Interestingly, I have not seen the same level of concern raised regarding other significant governance decisions before local government, including the establishment of Council-Controlled Organisations

and the transfer of public assets and infrastructure into separate governance structures, despite those arrangements potentially carrying substantial long-term governance and ownership implications.

Thank you again for your email and for taking an interest in local government and the future of our district.”