

Taieri Liaison Group Meeting Minutes

Date: 18 March 2026

Time: 4.30pm

Venue: Dunedin International Airport

1. Attendance

Name	Role	Attending	Apology
Liaison Group Members			
William Kirkland (WK)	East Taieri		✓
Simon Parks (SP)	East Taieri	✓	
Julie Struthers (JS)	East Taieri	✓	
Colin Scurr (CS)	West Taieri	✓	
David Wilson (DW)	West Taieri	✓	
Matt Kerr (MK)	West Taieri	✓	
Nick Rodger (NR)	Dunedin International Airport Limited	✓	
Andrew Sutton (AS)	Mosgiel Taieri Community Board	✓	
Kate Wilson (KW)	Councillor	✓	
Otago Regional Council Staff			
Tom Dyer (TD)	GM Science and Resilience	✓	
Brett Paterson (BP)	Manager Engineering	✓	
Dan King (DK)	Team Leader Operations & Maintenance	✓	
Nathan Anderson (NA)	Team Leader Assets & Delivery	✓	
Kirsten Tebbutt (KT)	Team Leader Planning & Partnerships	✓	
Ian Telfer (IT)		✓	
Rationale			
Andy Longman (AL)	Rationale	✓	
Jimmy Sygrove	Rationale		✓
Tom Lucas (AL)	Rationale	✓	

2. Welcome & Confirmation of Previous Meeting Notes

The notes from the previous meeting were **passed as a true and correct record**.

CS moved

3. Chairman's Report – Simon Parks

General Update

- Minimal activity since the previous meeting aside from the spring wind event; river conditions have been relatively quiet.
- Positive feedback on Silver Stream progress, with fencing reductions improving operational flexibility.

Community Interest and Communications

- Increasing public attention on the Wal's Development and Inland Port, with uncertainty about ORC's role and next steps; updates will be important for community confidence.
- A Facebook group is being considered to support Liaison Group communications ahead of the community meeting.

Liaison Group Membership

- Discussion on co-opting an Outram representative; one person has shown interest but nothing confirmed.
- Suggestion to raise the matter at the April public meeting and decide next steps afterwards.

4. Rates Review

TD outlined the rates review process and outlined the purpose of this session is to seek early feedback. TD introduced AL and TL from Rationale who have been looking at options for the funding model to allow for public consultation. They presented funding models and what different options may look like. ORC staff have given some direction based on the feedback received from Council and previous submissions to Long Term Plans (LTP).

After the group provided feedback TD explained that results will be presented to Council to select an option to consult on which will be open to the public – likely 8 weeks of consultation, public meetings etc – results will be collated and then a final decision will be in the LTP for 27/28 (July 2027). The Liaison Group provided feedback on options to be used for a future Council paper.

Goals and Framing

- Discussion focused on how costs should be shared between urban and rural areas.
- Aim to clarify process, explore rating options, and identify next steps.

Process and Assumptions

- More complex, targeted models may improve fairness; simpler models remain on the table.
- Consideration of exacerbators (factors increasing or decreasing rates).
- Existing scheme boundaries used as a starting point; further refinement may be needed.
- Maps provided to illustrate areas and assumptions.
- Rationale has undertaken a virtual, not physical, tour of the scheme.

Rating Impacts and Observations

- Current anomalies noted between urban areas (e.g., Outram vs Mosgiel).
- Interest in exploring middle-ground scenarios and sensitivity testing.
- General rates not included in this analysis.

Key Discussion Themes

- Alignment with planning frameworks and historic scheme decisions.
- Need for clear public communication, especially for Mosgiel and Outram.
- Desire for simple, logical models supported by examples.
- Exacerbators seen as a useful tool to influence development behaviour.
- Importance of considering consent processes and downstream effects.

Boundaries and Benefit Areas

- Questions raised about fairness of current boundaries and treatment of edge properties.
- Potential need for different boundaries for flood protection vs drainage.
- Discussion on relative benefits across East and West Taieri.
- Consideration of airport contributions and whether a special zone is warranted.

Ponding Areas

- Proposal for discounted rates due to prolonged inundation.
- Need for data on frequency and duration of ponding.
- Recognition that ponding varies within the area.

Consultation and Process

- Rating review will follow a formal special consultative procedure.
- Consultation planned ahead of the Long Term Plan, with a second opportunity during LTP engagement.
- Group supportive of simpler options.

TD and Rationale sign off 5.57pm.

5. 2026/27 Budgets

Presenter: Brett Paterson, Manager Engineering

Budget Overview

- A brief financial update was provided.
- Staff cost allocations move between internal and scheme lines but do not change overall expenditure.
- Contractor and consultant costs sit within a single accounting line, which includes technical specialists and project-related consultancy.

Consultant and Funding Matters

- Consultant use remains limited and focused on specialist design and project management support.
- Some increased consultant spend reflects temporary staffing gaps and is expected to reduce next year.
- External funding (e.g., Regional Infrastructure Fund) appears in revenue only when received, as it cannot be pre-budgeted.
- Current funding round requires retrospective quarterly claims.

Scheme-Specific Budget Notes

- East Taieri pond structure upgrade shows separate annual allocations; earlier estimates assumed full replacement, but current procurement focuses on refurbishment.
- This upgrade is majority funded by central government.
- Hydraulic modelling work is still being scoped.
- Some drainage budget increases relate to Silver Stream works, which will require reallocation to flood protection once adjustments are made.

General Observations

- Some budget placements highlight the potential benefits of a unified flood protection and drainage rating approach.
- Silver Stream funding has been accelerated due to external funding availability and project urgency.

6. Operations and Maintenance Update

Presenter: Dan King – Team Leader Operations and Maintenance

Progress to End of Q2

- Mid-year report reviewed; some activities appear behind schedule but are expected to be completed by year end.
- Weather has delayed some work, but contractors are reporting weekly and remain confident about delivery.

Mechanical Drain Cleaning

- West Taieri drain cleaning is significantly incomplete but contractors expect to finish by year end.
- Once underway, the remaining work is expected to take only a few weeks.
- Contractors are engaging with affected landowners; some queries raised about pricing and delays.
- Follow-up requested to ensure completion and to consider landowner impacts in future contracts.

Vegetation and Tree Management

- Concerns raised about aging willow trees and vegetation in channels.
- A staged programme is being developed, similar to successful approaches used elsewhere.
- Reactive and proactive works are being identified, including follow-up spraying and site-specific control methods.

October Wind Event Follow-up

- Urgent tree issues were addressed immediately after the event; remaining sites are being packaged for efficient delivery.
- Approximately 20 sites identified across East and West Taieri; costs still being estimated.
- Landowners remain responsible for trees on private land, with council addressing impacts on scheme assets.
- Discussion on encouraging proactive landowner management, noting limited legal enforcement options.

General Observations

- Taieri was less affected by the October wind event than other regions, though river networks experienced significant tree damage.
- The scheme performed well overall despite the scale of the event.

7. Assets and Delivery Update

Presenter: Nathan Anderson, Team Leader Assets and Delivery

- First two phases of the four-phase programme are complete; Phase 3 is being prepared for tender.
- Happy with the completion of Phase 1 including hydroseeding; Phase 2 experienced bank erosion after a minor flood and remains under repair.
- Ongoing erosion requires continued management.
- Sediment control methods have been improved following earlier issues, including replacing pinned fencing with deployable log barriers.
- Learnings from this project will inform future floodbank work.
- Disposal locations for Phase 3 material have been identified, with a focus on efficiency.
- A query was raised about hedge growth affecting bank stability near Riccarton Road; this will be investigated.

Contour Channel

- Construction is progressing.
- Discussions continue with landowners regarding spillways, particularly near Miller Road.
- Work includes coordination with the Dunedin City Council on upsizing culverts.
- Additional spillway locations may be considered based on past overflow behaviour.
- Contractors are expected to complete the full section by the end of the next construction season.
- Fuel cost escalation is not specifically provided for in the contract.

AS departed 6.43pm.

8. Planning and Regulatory Update

Presenter: Kirsten Tebbutt – Team Leader Planning & Partnerships

Taieri Trails

- Application received for the Mosgiel–Outram section after being identified as an affected party.
- Written approval is close to being issued.

Southern Inland Port (Stedman Road)

- Application not yet lodged with EPA but expected shortly.
- Ongoing engagement with Port Otago on landscaping, planting, and access.
- Final design details not yet available; advice has been provided on expected requirements.
- Fast-track process limits early visibility of impacts, including potential effects of land elevation changes.
- Discussion on whether future industrial development should be treated as a differential or exacerbator in rating models.

Universal Developments – Wals Site

- ORC working with the developer; concerns remain about downstream effects and how flows will be managed.
- Development approach differs from typical practice due to Taieri scheme characteristics.
- Pump station upgrades are being considered, with discussion on appropriate developer contributions.
- Rating implications noted, including potential increases from new households.
- Concerns raised about capacity constraints in Owhiro and Mill Creek systems.
- Range of pumping upgrade options discussed, from full replacement to mobile pumps.
- Group emphasised the need for future-proofing infrastructure given expected growth.
- Developer willing to engage with the Liaison Group; discharge direction agreed in principle.
- Preliminary assessment indicates approx. 30,000 m³ of water over 72 hours; tractor pump could manage this.
- Environmental considerations include duration of ponding and downstream effects.

Silver Stream Beautification

- Some planted species were not approved; further planting paused pending resolution.
- Work underway with environmental teams to ensure plantings do not reduce flood capacity.
- Need for clearer public understanding of Silver Stream's function.
- ORC reinforcing consistent rules while being sensitive to existing plantings.
- Questions raised about long-term maintenance responsibility.
- Suggestion to engage the Mosgiel Taieri Community Board for broader community alignment.

MK departed 7.07pm

9. Questions on other pre-circulated Materials

- Funding arrangements from RIF is the only paper that has been to Council since we last met.
 - No questions on this report.
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10. General Items

Drop-in Session (31 March)

- Drop-in session scheduled at Henley Community Centre, the same venue used for the LTLG election.
- LTLG members are encouraged to attend and have a visible presence.
- Public meeting originally planned to follow has been postponed

Session Format and Timing

- Planned format includes open drop-in followed by a presentation around 4.30pm.
- Concern raised that 4.30pm is unsuitable for farmers; a later presentation time (e.g., 7pm) would be preferable.
- Event timing cannot be changed due to prior advertising, but a later presentation slot may be added.
- Noted that the Ballance Farm Awards occur the same night.

Public Meeting Planning

- LTLG requested a short speaking slot during the drop-in presentation to outline the upcoming public meeting.
- Availability constraints mean the public meeting will be held the week of 20 April, with 22/23 April identified as suitable; later confirmed for **22 April**.
- Discussion on venue and involving Mosgiel representation; Outram Rugby Club suggested.
- If a new member is co-opted, their term should align with existing LTLG terms until the next election.

Communications

- ORC will manage communications for the public meeting.
- ORC communications team will connect with SP to coordinate messaging.

- *Post meeting note: the 4.30 meeting time suits attendees best for future meetings of the Lower Taieri Liaison Group, so will be retained.*

Next meeting – September / October TBC.

11. Meeting Closed

Time: 7.41pm

Action	Who?
Develop a paper that sets out basis for meeting schedule implemented, along with a potential schedule for future engagement activities.	ORC Staff
All Engineering papers to Council to include reference to the Liaison Group's input to the matter.	ORC staff
Kirsten to pull together a plan for the next 4 months and provide back to Group.	
Liaison Group keen to better understand modelling process and how that is used to inform assessment under the Bylaw.	Modelling