
Hearings and Regulatory Committee

OPEN MINUTES UNCONFIRMED

Minutes of a meeting of Hearings and Regulatory Committee held in the Horowhenua Room , 126-148 Oxford St, Levin on Wednesday 1 April 2026 at 1:30 pm.

PRESENT

Chairperson Cr Clint Grimstone
Councillors Mayor Bernie Wanden
Cr Mike Barker
Cr Sam Jennings
Cr Lani Ketu
Deputy Mayor David Allan

IN ATTENDANCE

Applicants	Jimmy Jamieson	Compassion Horowhenua Limited Partnership
	Peter Barton	
	Keri Ma	
	John Robinson	
	Sr Lusiana Raratini	
	Sr 'Alisi Tu'ipulotu	
Council officers	Bella Blinken	Senior Consent Planner
	Lisa Poynton	Senior Policy Planner
	Steve Tanner	Finance Manager

1 Apologies

There were no apologies.

2 Declaration of Interest

There were no declarations of interest.

3 Hearings

3.1 Development Contributions Remission: Compassion Housing - 1-40 Cambridge Place, Levin

This report was prepared in order to inform the Hearings Panel, in the matter of the request for remission of Development Contributions made by Compassion Horowhenua Limited Partnership in relation to the Development Contributions imposed on Building Consent 100/2025/420 (plans attached as Appendix A). Compassion Horowhenua Limited Partnership is the applicant for this project and is undertaking an integrated residential development, being the construction of 11 new one bedroom units at 1–40 Cambridge Place, Levin. The site is owned by Compassion Horowhenua Limited Partnership.

The Council has delegated responsibility for, and authority to act, in certain matters to the Hearings and Regulatory Committee.

The Council's Terms of Reference (Delegations) at clause 2.3.2.9 provides that the Committee has responsibility for and authority to "determine matters under any other legislation where a hearing process is necessary"

Council has developed a Development Contributions Policy under s 102 (1) of Local Government Act 2002. This policy provides a mechanism for Council, as delegated to the Committee, to receive, hear and decide requests for remissions of Development Contributions.

The Chair advised that the committee had been convened to consider an application for remission of development contributions under the Development Contributions Policy. The Chair explained that, in undertaking this function, the committee was acting in a quasi-judicial capacity rather than in its usual consultative role. As a result, the hearing process differed from standard council consultation processes, and members of the public did not have the same formal rights to make submissions or to be heard.

The Chair noted that correspondence had been received from members of the public seeking permission to address the committee in relation to the application. Those individuals were advised that they could write to the Chair setting out the nature of their direct interest in the matter, explaining why that interest was greater than that of the general public, and outlining how the information they wished to provide would assist the committee in determining the application under the policy. As this information was not provided, the Chair exercised discretion under Standing Order 15.4 to decline the requests to be heard.

The Chair further noted that some individuals who had requested to speak subsequently emailed all councillors, including committee members. Members were reminded that this correspondence did not form part of the formal hearing record and must not be taken into account when determining the application.

The Chair advised that officers had raised a concern regarding a potential error in

the public notice for the hearing. The Chair stated that the matter had been considered and that they were satisfied the public notice clearly conveyed the time, location, and subject matter of the hearing, and that this was sufficient for the purposes of public notification.

The applicant Compassion Horowhenua Limited Partnership introduced their request for remission of the development contribution. They outlined the services they provide as low cost housing for people over the age of 65, as well as providing wrap around services through their partnership with the Sisters of Compassion

The applicant is a Class-1 registered provider of Community Housing, and is required by its contract to provide low cost social housing. The applicant received 50% funding of this project through Department of Housing and Urban Development.

The applicant explained that their development is in-fill housing which will not see the need for any additional infrastructure to be created, the only addition being he connections which the applicant would pay for regardless of remission.

Council officers provide and assessment of the application and confirmed the applicant meets the requirements for development contributions remission under section 3.6.1.2a of the remissions policy. It meets this criteria because it is providing significant community benefit, and the organisation is a registers community housing provider.

The committee agreed that the criteria to receive a remission had been met.

The committee turned it mind to whether grant a full or partial remission. Officers confirmed there is no criteria for deciding a full or partial remission; this was matter for the committee to decide.

Councillors turned their minds to the options of granting a full remission, partial remission or no remission of the Development Contributions. Several countervailing arguments were raised during deliberations.

A core consideration was the underlying development contributions principle that growth should pay for the additional infrastructure demand it creates. One councillor emphasised that if a developer does not pay development contributions, the cost does not disappear but is instead transferred elsewhere—most commonly to ratepayers or to other future developers. From this perspective, concerns were raised about equity and fairness, both for developers who are required to pay full development contributions and for ratepayers who may effectively subsidise the project if contributions are remitted.

A significant reservation related to the level of public funding already supporting the project. Councillors noted that more than half of the total project cost was funded through central government support via the Ministry of Housing and Urban Development. One councillor stated explicitly that this was a strong reason to consider declining the development contributions remission, or at least limiting it, on the basis that the project was already substantially subsidised by taxpayers. From this viewpoint, granting a further remission was seen as adding an additional layer of public subsidy.

Some councillors expressed concern about the precedent that a further full remission might set. In particular, there was apprehension that repeated full remissions could reinforce expectations for similar treatment in future cases, especially for social or community housing developments. Over time, this could place increasing pressure on council finances if multiple projects sought the same level of relief.

The chair highlighted that the development contributions policy explicitly allows council to “remit or reduce” contributions and does not prescribe specific percentages, leaving discretion with the hearings committee. It was suggested that a partial remission could strike a balance by recognising the significant community benefit of the project while still maintaining some alignment with the “growth pays for growth” principle. The chair indicated that a remission in the order of approximately 70 percent could heavily weight the social outcomes of the development while still requiring a meaningful contribution toward infrastructure costs.

Councillors also questioned how any remission would ultimately be funded. Discussion focused on whether the cost would fall on current ratepayers or be offset by future development contributions from other developments, particularly commercial projects, as outlined in paragraph 22 of the report. One councillor remained uneasy even if the remission were to be funded by future development contributions, arguing that this approach merely shifts the burden forward and defers the cost rather than resolving it.

Despite these considerations, those advocating for a partial remission or no remission remained in the minority. The majority concluded that the strength of the social benefit, the supporting policy framework, and the relatively low marginal impact on infrastructure collectively justified granting a full remission

Resolution Number HARCC/2026/1

MOVED by Cr Allan, seconded Mayor Wanden:

- A. That the Committee approve a full remission of the assessed Development Contribution, being \$117,642.08 excluding GST under the Development Contributions Policy.

CARRIED

3.22 pm

There being no further business, the Chairperson declared the meeting closed.

CONFIRMED AS A TRUE AND CORRECT RECORD
AT A MEETING OF HEARINGS AND REGULATORY
COMMITTEE HELD ON

DATE:

CHAIRPERSON: