



**Far North
District Council**



TŪHONOTANGA MINITI ATTACHMENTS MINUTES

Ordinary Council Meeting

28 May 2026

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4.1 Tabled at Meeting

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Briefing paper: Proposal to Establish a Youth Hub at the Former Kaikohe Library Site

Date: 28 May 2026

Kaupapa | Purpose

Ngāpuhi Iwi Social Services (NISS) is meeting with the Far North District Council (FNDC) to present a proposal to establish a dedicated youth hub led by Parirau, NISS youth development team alongside other local youth services. This briefing paper is to inform council prior to NISS presentation on 28th May. This paper introduces NISS, the work of our Youth Teams and outlines the proposal.

Ko Wai Mātou | Who are we?

Established in 1997, NISS is a subsidiary of Te Rūnanga-a-Iwi o Ngāpuhi, is a Limited Liability Company with a Charitable Trust status and our own Governance Board. NISS offer universal services for all tamariki and whānau, a large proportion who have high or complex needs. NISS has an intergenerational focus and strategy for tamariki and whānau to be safe, secure, healthy and connected to whakapapa. NISS is a level 1 (highest level) accredited (S396) Iwi Care Provider. Since establishment NISS has grown a professional and qualified workforce of over 100 staff, dedicated to serving the aspirations of whānau, hapū and all those living within our rohe. We provide a range of social services across a continuum of care. These services are as summarised below:

- **Prevention services** include: (Youth development, school-based mental wellness programmes and taitmariki leadership, community awareness and education campaigns including Podcasts ie. impacts of methamphetamine, suicide prevention for youth)
- **Early intervention services** include: (Whata Kai our social supermarket providing food and running free sustainable living workshops, social and youth work in schools, iwi-led intervention and support in family court and statutory processes, whānau ora wrap around services)

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- **Intensive support services** include: (intensive mentoring, youth justice services, Family harm intervention services, Mahuru remand programme and Mātua Atawhai caregivers for tamariki in care)
- **Therapeutic support services** include: (hapū led, marae-based restorative wānanga, clinical individual and whānau-based therapies including our family functional therapy)

Learn more by visiting our website: <https://www.niss.org.nz/>.

Te Horopaki | Background

Taitamariki (young people) and their whānau who engage with NISS possess many strengths. Whether they come to us through youth development programmes or are referred through system involvement, many taitamariki express a strong sense of pride in Kaikohe and in the whānau, hapū and communities they belong to.

As part of the Mid North Youth Network, NISS contributed to the development of the Northland Youth Strategy, coordinated by the Social Wellbeing Governance Group. This focused on improving outcomes for young people across Te Tai Tokerau. This work identified consistent themes from feedback provided by approximately 400 young people in the region. Feedback included the need for greater connection, safe youth spaces, improved access to support services, positive mentoring relationships, and better coordination between organisations. These themes also reflect what taitamariki have shared directly with NISS youth mentors and kaimahi. Young people said they wanted spaces where they could access support, activities and services through a localised “no wrong door” approach. We believe a youth hub strongly aligns with these priorities and would create a welcoming environment where youth feel connected and supported.

Need for Safe and Supportive Youth Spaces

NISS works directly with taitamariki across a continuum of services. During the 2025 financial year, NISS staff worked across 51 schools and kura with 31 of those across the mid north. Our Parirau youth development team supports taitamariki experiencing significant challenges and complex needs. Many of these taitamariki are part of the Te

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Tai Tokerau OTAP (Oranga Tamariki Action Plan) population, which includes approximately 2,800 taitamariki Māori across Te Tai Tokerau who had a report of concern to Oranga Tamariki in 2024.ⁱ These taitamariki are disproportionately at risk of progressing through the wider justice pipeline, which often begins with care and protection involvement, youth offending, and youth justice engagement before leading to adult offending and becoming entrenched in the justice system. A substantial body of evidence supports prevention and early intervention approaches as critical to addressing youth offending and the broader wellbeing challenges experienced by whānau.ⁱⁱ NISS's focus on prevention and early intervention is reinforced by the disproportionate representation of Ngāpuhi taitamariki across care and protection and youth justice systems, including approximately 753 Ngāpuhi children recorded in the custody of Oranga Tamariki as at September 2025.ⁱⁱⁱ

There is a clear need for safe, youth-friendly spaces where young people can connect consistently with mentors and participate in positive, structured activities. This includes mentoring, education and training workshops, life skills development, peer connection activities, and other kaupapa designed to strengthen wellbeing, belonging, and future pathways.

Te Marohitanga | Proposal

Ngāpuhi Iwi Social Services (NISS) proposes to transform the former Kaikohe Library into a dedicated youth hub led by the Parirau Youth team working together with other local Youth services. The purpose of the hub is to create a safe, welcoming and youth-focused environment where taitamariki can access mentoring, support, programmes and positive development opportunities in one central location.

The hub would:

- Provide a safe and accessible space for taitamariki, particularly those experiencing challenges or at risk of entering the care and protection or youth justice systems

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- Act as a central base for youth mentoring, coordinated support and relationship-based engagement
- Enable delivery of youth programmes, education and life skills development, cultural activities, creative programmes and wellbeing initiatives
- Strengthen coordination and collaboration across existing youth services and community partners

Key advantages of the site include:

- A central Kaikohe location while still being appropriately distanced from the main street
- Close proximity to NISS offices and existing wraparound services
- An established and well-known community space that can be repurposed efficiently
- The ability to coordinate youth-focused activities, mentoring and support within one dedicated environment

A youth hub strongly aligns with the intent and shared aspirations of the Mana Whakahono ā Rohe arrangement between TRAION and FNDC:

- Supports shared goals relating to community wellbeing, healthy and resilient communities, and improved outcomes for future generations
- Repurposes an existing community asset into a space that directly responds to the needs of local taitamariki and whānau
- Reflects a locally led, community-based approach to strengthening positive pathways for young people
- Creates opportunities for greater coordination, collaboration and connection across youth-focused services and supports
- Contributes to long-term social wellbeing outcomes for Kaikohe and wider Ngāpuhi communities^{iv}

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He Kōrero Whakakapi | Conclusion

This proposal provides a practical, locally led solution to a well-recognised need within Kaikohe. A dedicated youth hub will strengthen engagement, improve coordination of support, and create better pathways for taitamariki and their whānau. Ngāpuhi Iwi Social Services is ready to lead this kaupapa as an extension of our existing services working with other local youth services to ensure the space is utilised effectively to deliver meaningful outcomes for the community.

Ngā manaakitanga,

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Tumu Whakarae (Chief Executive Officer)
Ngāpuhi Iwi Social Services

ⁱ Aroturuki Tamariki – Independent Children’s Monitor. (2025). *About tamariki and rangatahi Māori in Te Tai Tokerau 2025: Summary of health, education and justice measures*. <https://aroturuki.govt.nz/our-visits/monitoring-map/te-tai-tokerau/summary-of-our-visit-to-te-tai-tokerau>

ⁱⁱ Lambie, I. (2018). *It’s never too early, never too late: A discussion paper on preventing youth offending in New Zealand*. <https://www.dpmc.govt.nz/sites/default/files/2021-10/pmcsa-Its-never-too-early-Discussion-paper-on-preventing-youth-offending-in-NZ.pdf>

ⁱⁱⁱ Oranga Tamariki. (2025). *Ngāpuhi – Care and protection snapshot* (Q1 FY2026, 30 September 2025) [Internal operational data].

^{iv} Te Rūnanga-Ā-Iwi-Ō-Ngāpuhi & Far North District Council. (2025). *Relationship protocol and Mana Whakahono ā Rohe arrangement*. https://www.fndc.govt.nz/_data/assets/pdf_file/0019/45136/Mana-Whakahono-a-Rohe-with-Te-Runanga-a-Iwi-o-Ngapuhi-2025.pdf

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