

Name: Cr Davina Smolders
Ward: Bay of Islands - Whangaroa
Date: 31 March 2026

Meetings Attended

Date	Meeting Topic	Comment
05/03	Council Meeting	Notices of Motions
17/03	Northland Waters Done Well Workshop	
17/03	Te Huia Committee for Chief Executive Performance Workshops	
18/03	Te Kūkupa Committee for Strategy, Policy and Regulation	
18/03	Workshop - LG Reforms, Northland Waters and Annual Plan	
19/03	LGNZ Zone One	
19/03	Northland Forward Together Strategic Planning Workshop	
24/03	Annual Plan Workshop	
25/03	Te Kuaka Committee for Māori Strategic Relationships	
30/03	Drop in Session/Q&A - Te Pātukurea - Kerikeri Waipapa Spatial Plan (including KFO)	
30/03	RM Reform – Information Drop in	
31/03	Northland Waters Done Well - Elected Member 'Drop-In Q&A session'	

- **Meetings held with individuals, families, professionals, business leaders, groups and MP's in locations throughout the District: Pipes, Blocked Drains, Potholes, Paths, Development Contributions, Rates Rebates, Roaming Dogs, Roadside Rubbish & Libraries.**

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.

March 2026 Summary

1. **Committee Decisions Being Altered Before Council**
 - Concerns that resolutions passed at committee level are being changed before reaching full Council, undermining democratic process and transparency.
2. **Te Kuaka Committee Structure and Voting Rights**
 - Unelected members appear to hold full speaking and voting rights, raising questions about accountability and whether this creates de facto co-governance.
3. **Lack of Transparency on \$1.3M Strategic Relationships Spend**
 - Council has repeatedly failed to clearly disclose who received significant grant or koha funding and for what purpose.
4. **Obstruction of Information (LGOIMA and Requests)**
 - Repeated difficulty accessing information needed to perform governance duties, including declined or delayed responses.
5. **Mayor’s Office Staffing and Recruitment Process**
 - Concerns about governance boundaries, potential conflicts of interest, and lack of transparency in hiring roles tied to the Mayor.
6. **Rapid Growth in Council Staffing and Costs**
 - Significant increase in staff numbers and salary expenditure without clear justification or affordability lens for ratepayers.
7. **FNHL (Far North Holdings Ltd) Governance Weaknesses**
 - Lack of clear asset classification, performance measures, dividend strategy, and capital allocation discipline.
8. **Statement of Expression (SOE) Amendments Not Carried Through**
 - Amendments agreed at committee level not reflected in final documents sent to FNHL, raising process integrity concerns.
9. **Significance and Engagement Policy Not Applied**
 - Major agreements and decisions progressing without appropriate public consultation as required under policy.
10. **Concerns Around Co-Governance Arrangements (MWaR and MOUs)**
 - Perception that agreements are embedding shared decision-making without clear mandate or public consent.
11. **Council Submissions to Central Government Without Member Oversight**
 - Submissions may be made in the name of Council without full elected member review or agreement.
12. **Rates Increases vs Affordability**
 - Ongoing tension between rising rates (including planned increases) and the financial pressure on ratepayers.
13. **NZTA Funding (FAR) Timing Risk**
 - Risk of missing critical external funding opportunities due to delays in Council decision-making.

14. **Taupō Bay Steps Removal and Community Engagement Failure**
 - Removal of public infrastructure without consultation, followed by community backlash and reactive engagement.
15. **Privacy Breach Allegations**
 - Concerns about inappropriate disclosure of councillor-related information and handling of sensitive data.
16. **Code of Conduct Complaint Process Fairness**
 - Questions about transparency, timing, and fairness of complaints being investigated against elected members.
17. **Use of Public Excluded (PX) Processes**
 - Concern that important matters are being discussed behind closed doors without sufficient justification.
18. **Co-Ordination of Bulk Water to Rawene Hospital during Storms**
 - Storm assistance to Houora Hokianga, Residents in Waipapa & Kerikeri.
19. **Inconsistent Messaging vs Actual Practice**
 - Gap between what Council says publicly (e.g. “advisory only”) and what is happening in practice.
20. **General Governance Culture and Accountability**
 - Broader concern about whether FNDC is operating in a way that is transparent, accountable, and aligned with democratic principles.

Portfolio Update: (Name of Portfolio)

- N/A

Matters for Discussion

This section should be completed for matters which the elected member wishes to raise with wider Council, Community Boards and/or in relation to delivery.

- Numbers 1 to 20 in Community Matters

Training / Conference Attendance

This section is to be completed when an elected member has attended a professional development opportunity or a conference on behalf of Council. It should outline the learnings from attending the event and value to the organisation.

Name of Event:

Date of Event:

Learnings:

Value for the organisation: