



Council Agenda

Thursday 15 May 2025, 8:30 am

The meeting will be held at Hato Hone St Johns,
35 Bowen Street, Feilding, and a video recording
made available on www.mdc.govt.nz.

www.mdc.govt.nz

MEMBERSHIP

Chairperson

Her Worship the Mayor, Helen Worboys

Deputy Chairperson

Councillor Michael Ford

Members

Councillor Bridget Bell
Councillor Steve Bielski
Councillor Lara Blackmore
Councillor Stuart Campbell
Councillor Grant Hadfield
Councillor Colin McFadzean
Councillor Andrew Quarrie
Councillor Kerry Quigley
Councillor Alison Short
Councillor Fiona Underwood

A handwritten signature in dark ink, appearing to read 'Shayne Harris', with a stylized flourish at the end.

Shayne Harris
Chief Executive

ORDER OF BUSINESS

PAGE

1. MEETING OPENING

Councillor Steve Bielski will open the meeting.

2. APOLOGIES

3. CONFIRMATION OF MINUTES

7

Recommendation

That the minutes of the Council meeting held 1 May 2025 be adopted as a true and correct record.

4. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Notification from elected members of:

- 4.1 Any interests that may create a conflict with their role as an elected member relating to the items of business for this meeting; and
- 4.2 Any interests in items in which they have a direct or indirect pecuniary interest as provided for in the Local Authorities (Members' Interests) Act 1968

5. PUBLIC FORUM

There are no public forum speakers scheduled for this meeting.

6. PRESENTATIONS

6.1 REPRESENTATIVE FUND PRESENTATION - TE MATATINI O TE KAAHUI MAUNGA 2025

Te Tu Mataora will be in attendance to speak to Council.

7. NOTIFICATION OF LATE ITEMS

Where an item is not on the agenda for a meeting, that item may be dealt with at that meeting if:

- 7.1 The Council by resolution so decides; and
- 7.2 The Chairperson explains at the meeting at a time when it is open to the public the reason why the item is not on the agenda, and the reason why the discussion of the item cannot be delayed until a subsequent meeting.

8. RECOMMENDATIONS FROM COMMITTEES

There are no recommendations from committees.

9. NON-COUNCIL MEETINGS – FOR INFORMATION

9.1 COMMITTEE AND GROUP MEETINGS – FOR INFORMATION

Minutes of the following Council Committees, Community Committees and Youth Council meetings are uploaded to the Council's website, as they become available.

Liaison councillors will have the opportunity to provide a verbal update.

The below meetings took place from 29 April to 14 May 2025:

COMMITTEE MEETINGS	
Creative Communities Assessment Committee	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 29 April 2025
https://www.mdc.govt.nz/about-council/meetings-agendas-and-minutes/agendas-and-minutes	

COMMUNITY COMMITTEE MEETINGS	
Halcombe Community Committee	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 5 May 2025
Rongotea Community Committee	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 5 May 2025
Sanson Community Committee	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 8 May 2025
https://www.mdc.govt.nz/about-council/committees-and-organisations/community-committees-and-plans	

YOUTH COUNCIL MEETINGS	
Meeting	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 5 May 2025
https://www.mdc.govt.nz/about-council/committees-and-organisations/mdc-youth-council/youth-council-meeting-minutes	

9.2 MARAE LIAISON COUNCILLORS

Councillors have the opportunity to update council about their marae committee.

10. OFFICER REPORTS

10.1	DECISION ON LOCAL WATER DONE WELL	19
	Report of the General Manager – Infrastructure.	
10.2	ADOPTION OF THE REMUNERATION AND REIMBURSEMENT FOR EXTERNAL COMMITTEE MEMBERS POLICY	61
	Report of the General Manager – People and Corporate.	
10.3	HEARING OF SUBMISSIONS - SIGNIFICANCE & ENGAGEMENT POLICY	72
	9.30AM	
	Report of the General Manager – People and Corporate.	

10.4 LOCAL GOVERNMENT NEW ZEALAND MEMBERSHIP

105

Report of the Chief Executive.

11. CONSIDERATION OF LATE ITEMS**12. PUBLIC EXCLUDED BUSINESS**

COUNCIL TO RESOLVE:

That the public be excluded from the following parts of the proceedings of this meeting, namely:

1. Confirmation of Minutes – 1 May 2025
2. Tender Award - MDC1470-1 Feilding Food Waste Collection - Bin Supply, Distribution and Ongoing Collection
3. Feilding Civic Centre Trust new trustee appointments
4. Public Excluded Resolutions for Release

That the general subject of each matter to be considered while the public is excluded, the reason for passing this resolution in relation to each matter, and the specific grounds under Section 48(1) of the Local Government Official Information and Meetings Act 1987 for the passing of this resolution are as follows:

General subject of each matter to be considered	Reason for passing this resolution in relation to each matter	Grounds under Section 48(1) for the passing of this resolution
13. Confirmation of Minutes; 01 May 2025	<i>To consider the accuracy of the minutes of the public excluded Council meeting on 01 May 2025.</i> <i>Any changes to previous minutes may require members to discuss its content.</i>	s48(1)(a)
14.1 Tender Award - MDC1470-1 Feilding Food Waste Collection - Bin Supply, Distribution and Ongoing Collection	s7(2)(i) – commercial negotiations <i>This report discusses Council's commercial position and negotiations relating to a Feilding Food Waste Collection</i>	s48(1)(a)
14.2 Feilding Civic Centre Trust new trustee appointments	s7(2)(a) – privacy <i>This report discusses private individuals prior to any formal appointment</i>	s48(1)(a)
14.3 Public Excluded Resolutions for Release	s7(2)(a) – privacy s7(2)(h) – commercial activities <i>To consider the release of previous public excluded resolutions. Any discussion around these need to remain public excluded</i>	s48(1)(a)

This resolution is made in reliance on Section 48(1) of the Local Government Official Information and Meetings Act 1987 and the particular interests protected by Section 6 or Section 7 of the Act which would be prejudiced by the holding of the whole or the relevant part of the proceedings of the meeting in public as specified above.

15. MEETING CLOSURE

MEETING MINUTES		
COUNCIL		TIME
THURSDAY 1 MAY 2025		8:30 AM

Minutes of a meeting of the Council held on Thursday 01 May 2025, which commenced at 8.30 am at Hato Hone St Johns, 35 Bowen Street, Feilding.

PRESENT:

Mayor Helen Worboys	Chairperson
Cr Bridget Bell	
Cr Steve Bielski	
Cr Stuart Campbell	
Cr Grant Hadfield	
Cr Colin McFadzean	
Cr Andrew Quarrie	
Cr Kerry Quigley	
Cr Alison Short	
Cr Fiona Underwood	

APOLOGIES: Cr Lara Blackmore, Cr Michael Ford

IN ATTENDANCE:

Lyn Daly	Acting Chief Executive
Hamish Waugh	General Manager – Infrastructure
Frances Smorti	General Manager – People and Corporate
Amanda Calman	Chief Financial Officer
Ash Garstang	Governance and Assurance Manager
Lisa Thomas	Principal Policy Adviser
Janine Hawthorn	Community Wellbeing Manager

MDC 22-25/1116

MEETING OPENING

Jan McGaffin from the Hub Church opened the meeting with prayer.

MDC 22-25/1117

APOLOGIES

Cr Lara Blackmore and Cr Michael Ford are on pre-approved leaves of absence for the LGNZ conference.

MDC 22-25/1118

CONFIRMATION OF MINUTES

RESOLVED

That the minutes of the Council meeting held 17 April 2025 be adopted as a true and correct record, as amended:

- The resolution numbering (“Recommendations from Committees” onwards) to be revised and made sequential

Moved by: Cr Bridget Bell

Seconded by: Cr Alison Short

MEETING MINUTES	
COUNCIL	TIME
THURSDAY 1 MAY 2025	8:30 AM

CARRIED (10-0)

MDC 22-25/1119

DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were no declarations of interest.

MDC 22-25/1120

PRESENTATION – REPRESENTATIVE FUND RECIPIENT – IRONMAN 70.3 WORLD CHAMPIONSHIP

Cheryl Hirschberg was in attendance speaking to Council. Highlights included:

- Cheryl trained at the Makino swimming pool, and on the bike near her farm in Pohangina. She does a lot of her running training at the Manawatu Gorge.
- She finished 24th out of 166 competitors in her age group – a result that exceeded her expectations.
- Cheryl's father, a strong supporter of her sporting journey, passed away two days before the event. She shared with Council that, despite a setback during the final bike leg, she competed in the Vintage category in his honour and was proud of her performance.

MDC 22-25/1121

PRESENTATION – REPRESENTATIVE FUND RECIPIENT – U16 YOUTH TOUCH NATIONALS

Tiana Keo was in attendance speaking to Council. Highlights included:

- This was her first time competing in the Youth Touch Nationals, and the grant assistance was appreciated as it helped her to attend the event.
- Over 20 teams competed, and the Manawātū sent six teams. She was in the under 16 mixed team.
- She learnt new skills alongside her teammates and enjoyed meeting new people.
- Moving forwards, she intends to build her skills and attend future touch rugby events.
- In response to a question, Tiana advised that she trained twice a week in the lead up to the event.

MEETING MINUTES	
COUNCIL	TIME
THURSDAY 1 MAY 2025	8:30 AM

MDC 22-25/1122

PUBLIC FORUM - CLIMATE CHANGE DISCUSSION

Angela Baker and Philip McConkey were in attendance speaking to Council. Highlights included:

- Philip has been involved in climate change action for several decades, and they belong to an organisation called Extinction Rebellion.
- Climate change will have a disproportionate impact on young people.
- They have both been participating in a small group in Palmerston North for the last six or so years, trying to raise awareness of climate change and stimulate action.
- Philip does not believe that our leaders are taking enough action.
- Angela noted that people feel powerless on what to do about climate change, and she felt that small tangible steps are helpful to get people taking action. She agreed that our leaders need to increase their guidance and action in this space.
- Angela suggested that the Council extend its emissions reduction work to the business community. For example, the Council could celebrate businesses that perform well in this area (e.g., awards).
- Philip suggested that the materials he provided could be disseminated wider to residents. He felt that leaders needed to put more effort into mitigation, as it is difficult to predict the outcomes of climate change (making adaption more difficult).
- Angela noted her support for any kitchen waste initiatives that the Council might be considering.

MDC 22-25/1123

NOTIFICATION OF LATE ITEMS

There were no late items of business notified for consideration.

MDC 22-25/1124

RECOMMENDATIONS FROM COMMITTEES

There were no recommendations from committees.

MDC 22-25/1125

COMMITTEE AND GROUP MEETINGS – FOR INFORMATION

The following Council Committees, Community Committees and Youth Council meetings were notified for information.

MEETING MINUTES	
COUNCIL	TIME
THURSDAY 1 MAY 2025	8:30 AM

COMMUNITY COMMITTEES	
Colyton Community Committee	• 17 April 2025
Himatangi Beach Community Committee	• 24 April 2025
Kiwitea Community Committee	• 30 April 2025
Tangimoana Community Committee	• 28 April 2025

Liaison Councillors provided brief updates on their respective Committees.

- Cr Quarrie – the Himatangi Beach Community Committee is looking at building a platform over the sand dunes. They are wanting to get Wi-Fi installed at the library.
- Cr Short – the Tangimoana Community Committee is going strong at the moment and are seeing good engagement from community members. There is some concern around the green waste area – one new fence has been built, but they would like to complete more. They also suggested that signage should be installed providing guidance on what green waste material can be included.

MDC 22-25/1126

MARAE LIAISON COUNCILLORS

Councillors provided a verbal update on their attendance at marae meetings.

- Te Hiiri Marae – Cr Bell advised that the marae had a wananga (workshop) on the weekend to work on their long-term plan and environmental strategy. They are partnering with Te Awanuiārangi to host about 30 students and 6 teachers, to work towards diplomas.
- Te Kōtui Reo – Cr Bell advised that the group met 30 April 2025 and several staff presented, discussing Papakāinga housing and the Significance and Engagement Policy.

MDC 22-25/1127

HEARING OF SUBMISSIONS AND DELIBERATIONS FOR LOCAL WATER DONE WELL CONSULTATION (PART 1)

Report of the General Manager – People and Corporate providing an opportunity for submitters to present their views and to verbally interact with Council, as required by Section 83(1)(d) of the Local Government Act 2002.

RESOLVED

1. **That the Council receive this report and the submissions received on Local Water Done Well.**

AND

2. **That the Council considers the matters raised in oral and written submissions on the Local Water Done Well consultation document.**

MEETING MINUTES	
COUNCIL	TIME
THURSDAY 1 MAY 2025	8:30 AM

Council will formally adopt the preferred option for the delivery of water services at the Council meeting on 15 May 2025.

The Water Services Delivery Plan will be developed based on the preferred option and will be presented to Council for adoption and approval for submission to the Department of Internal Affairs at the 19 June 2025 Council meeting.

Moved by: Cr Alison Short

Seconded by: Cr Kerry Quigley

CARRIED (10-0)

First block of verbal submissions

007 Shane Casey

Highlights:

- Supports the status quo option, noting the significant capital investment that the Council had made in previous years.
- There does not appear to be any consideration of Papakāinga housing, and requested that this covered in the formal response to his submission.
- He suggested that the Council should offer support to the Palmerston North City Council, in terms of advocating for Government assistance.
- The Government should not expect to be able to foist new standards onto local authorities without offering tangible support.

In response to questions, Shane Casey advised:

- There are a lot of links between Palmerston North and the Manawātū District, and many individuals who live and work in both locations.

089 Waituna West District Community – John Williamson

Highlights:

- The Waituna West District Community supports the status quo.
- The Council will need to carefully monitor its bore water quality and volume.
- John felt that it would be helpful to advocate for Palmerston North and try and include them where we can.

378 Luke Doidge-Bailey

Highlights:

- Acknowledged the work of previous councils and their investment in capital works over the years.

MEETING MINUTES	
COUNCIL	TIME
THURSDAY 1 MAY 2025	8:30 AM

- Generally supports the status quo, but noted a few additional issues:
 - Risks from climate change. The changing environment is likely to increase insurance costs.
 - Regulatory change. It is highly likely that the Government and local government sector will be required to raise water, wastewater and storm water standards in the future.
 - Cultural analysis. The financial impacts were well analysed, but there was little to no discussion about what this means for the District's relationship with mana whenua.
 - The risk that we are reinforcing the isolation of local authorities by not joining together with neighbouring councils. Luke suggested that the Council should at least consider other forms of interoperability (e.g., data management, other partnerships), in case the Council is forced to amalgamate in the future.
- There is an opportunity cost to investing in water infrastructure, and Council should be aware of this.

460 Angela Baker

Highlights:

- Acknowledged the work and investment that Council has made over the years.
- Angela is worried about the Council getting stuck in its own microcosm, and felt that this was not discussed in the consultation material. The discussions so far have not been as transparent as they could have been. For example, the meeting recording from December 2024 is not available and other parts of the discussion would have taken place in workshop sessions. She feels that the public has been underserved by this.
- During a public meeting, she heard the argument on how adopting a Council stand-alone model would be the best option for protecting water services from future corporatisation.
- Angela queried the bioplant initiative (that did not proceed) and what lessons were learnt from this.

468 Lynne Prior

Highlights:

- Lynne pays rates in both the Manawatū and Palmerston North.
- The Manawatū District Council rates are among the highest in the country. Over the years the Council has invested significantly in capital works and growth.

MEETING MINUTES	
COUNCIL	TIME
THURSDAY 1 MAY 2025	8:30 AM

- Supports the status quo option:
- Kāpiti Coast District Council – they have a well established network.
- Horowhenua District Council – have offered restrictions in the installation of metres, and are overseeing the provision of private water tanks in light of water volume challenges.
- Palmerston North City Council – they would want to join the Manawātū District. They do not appear to have been insightful over the years in their investment, and joining together with them would result in significant costs for Manawātū ratepayers.
- Fluoride – this has become a hot topic, but the body of evidence has increased supporting non-fluoridated water. The Council decision to add an industrial bi-product to water is making it more difficult for residents. She feels that the Council should provide both fluoridated and non-fluoridated options to residents.

In response to questions, Lynne Prior advised:

- She would prefer a non-fluoridated option to be available across the whole town.

The meeting was adjourned at 9.55 am and reconvened at 10.20 am.

442 Hinemoana Durie – on behalf of Aorangi Marae

Highlights:

- Aorangi Marae supports option 1 (status quo), and would not agree with subsidising ratepayers from other local authority areas.
- Hinemoana acknowledged the previous work of Council to invest in capital works.

498 Hinemoana Durie and Frances Pere - on behalf of Te Kōtui Reo

Highlights:

- Te Kōtui Reo supports option 1 (status quo).
- They would like to reinforce their desire for authentic partnership with the Council, based on mutual trust, shared commitment and the wellbeing of the community.
- They appreciated the workshop that Council held with iwi on this reform.
- Te Kōtui Reo would like iwi, hapu and marae to be part of all aspects of water service delivery. The current reform is focused on Feilding water service, but they would like to draw attention to water needs for rural whanau. It is important that an iwi voice is layered across all water-related Kaupapa.

MEETING MINUTES	
COUNCIL	TIME
THURSDAY 1 MAY 2025	8:30 AM

- They acknowledged the growing relationships between marae chairs and councillors.

MDC 22-25/1128

FEES AND CHARGES: ADOPTION OF ANIMAL CONTROL FEES

Report of the General Manager – People and Corporate seeking Council approval to set fees and charges for Animal Control for the period 01 July 2025 to 30 June 2026.

RESOLVED

That the Council adopt the Animal Control fees and charges (attachment 1) for the financial year commencing 01 July 2025 and ending 30 June 2026.

Moved by: Cr Alison Short

Seconded by: Cr Bridget Bell

CARRIED (10-0)

MDC 22-25/1129

HEARING OF SUBMISSIONS AND DELIBERATIONS FOR LOCAL WATER DONE WELL CONSULTATION (PART 2)

Second block of verbal submissions

486 Ngawhakaraua Marae - Peter Te Rangi

Highlights:

- Peter was initially in favour of option 1 (status quo), but after further thought he considered the role of Horowhenua District Council who have jurisdiction for the Manawatū river at its sea point.
- Peter's preference is now option 3.
- Hamish Waugh advised that the setting of the environmental standards has traditionally been set by Horizons Regional Council, and the new water and wastewater standards from Taumata Arowai will reinforce this.

In response to questions, Peter Te Rangi advised:

- The financial burden of a joint model would understandably fall on Manawatu whanau, however Horowhenua and Palmerston North are progressing towards metred water supply and this will cater for extra sources of revenue to meet the demands of Local Water Done Well.
- Whanau were aware of the concern around losing input within a joint model due to the risk of corporatisation, however they are supportive of the idea of collaborating with our neighbours across the wider region.

MEETING MINUTES	
COUNCIL	TIME
THURSDAY 1 MAY 2025	8:30 AM

483 Allan Dodge

Highlights:

- Allan was appreciative of the thorough financial analysis behind the consultation. He supports option 1 (status quo), for four reasons:
 - Financial and managerial governance will be a lot easier.
 - It will give residents more of a voice, as they would not need to compete with residents from other areas.
 - Since only Manawātū iwi would be involved, it would be easier to organise hui.
 - It would be significantly cheaper.
- Allan requested that the Council continue its maintenance of old pipes. Burst pipes cost more money to fix, and older pipes give the water an unpleasant taint.
- Allan requested that there is no water metering in the District, as this would present a burdensome cost to retirees.

MDC 22-25/1130

FEES AND CHARGES: PROPOSED PLANNING, ENVIRONMENTAL HEALTH AND DEVELOPMENT CONTRIBUTION FEES AND CHARGES FOR 2025/26

Report of the General Manager – People and Corporate seeking Council adopts the Statements of Proposal for the review of Planning Service fees and charges, Environmental Health fees and charges, and Development Contribution fees and charges for 2025/26, for public consultation.

RESOLVED

That the Council adopts the Statement of Proposal (attachment 1) for the review of Planning service fees and charges for the financial year commencing 01 July 2025 and ending 30 June 2026, for public consultation.

AND

That the Council adopts the Statement of Proposal (attachment 2) for the review of the Environmental Health fees and charges for the financial year commencing 01 July 2025 and ending 30 June 2026, for public consultation.

AND

That the Council adopts the Statement of Proposal (attachment 3) for the review of the Development Contribution fees for the financial year commencing 01 July 2025 and ending 30 June 2026, for public consultation.

MEETING MINUTES		
COUNCIL		TIME
THURSDAY 1 MAY 2025		8:30 AM

Moved by: Cr Stuart Campbell

Seconded by: Cr Alison Short

CARRIED (10-0)

MDC 22-25/1131

RECEIPT OF THE WELCOMING COMMUNITIES FOCUS GROUP PLAN 2025-2027

Report of the General Manager – Community presenting to Council for formal receipt the Welcoming Communities Focus Group Plan 2025-2027.

RESOLVED

That Council formally receives the Welcoming Communities Focus Group Plan 2025-2027.

Moved by: Cr Grant Hadfield

Seconded by: Cr Alison Short

CARRIED (10-0)

MDC 22-25/1132

CONSIDERATION OF LATE ITEMS

There were no late items notified for consideration.

MDC 22-25/1133

PUBLIC EXCLUDED BUSINESS

RESOLVED

That the public be excluded from the following parts of the proceedings of this meeting, namely:

1. Confirmation of Minutes – 17 April 2025
2. Manfeild Park Nine-Month Report to 31 March 2025
3. Electricity Procurement (report tabled)
4. Tender Award Recommendation - MC1888-1 Rongotea Wastewater Centralisation - Pump Stations and Rising Main. SEPARABLE PORTION B - Pump Stations Construction
5. CE Mid-Year Performance Review

That the general subject of each matter to be considered while the public is excluded, the reason for passing this resolution in relation to each matter, and the specific grounds under Section 48(1) of the Local Government Official Information and Meetings Act 1987 for the passing of this resolution are as follows:

MEETING MINUTES	
COUNCIL	TIME
THURSDAY 1 MAY 2025	8:30 AM

General subject of each matter to be considered	Reason for passing this resolution in relation to each matter	Grounds under Section 48(1) for the passing of this resolution
13. Confirmation of Minutes; 17 April 2025	<i>To consider the accuracy of the minutes of the public excluded Council meeting on 17 April 2025.</i> <i>Any changes to previous minutes may require members to discuss the content of the public excluded session.</i>	s48(1)(a)
14.1 *Manfeild Park Nine-Month Report to 31 March 2025	<i>7(2)(c)(i) – obligation of confidence</i> <i>This report discusses future options (potentially including commercially sensitive areas) for Manfeild Park</i>	s48(1)(a)
14.2 Electricity Procurement	<i>7(2)(c)(i) – obligation of confidence</i> <i>7(2)(j) – improper gain or improper advantage</i> <i>This report includes discussion on key negotiations and processes between the Council and electricity suppliers</i>	s48(1)(a)
14.3 Tender Award Recommendation - MC1888-1 Rongotea Wastewater Centralisation - Pump Stations and Rising Main. SEPARABLE PORTION B - Pump Stations Construction	<i>7(2)(h) – commercial activities</i> <i>This report includes discussion on tender offers that are subject to negotiation and agreement</i>	s48(1)(a)
14.4 Chief Executive Mid-Year Performance Review	<i>7(2)(f)(ii) – protection from improper pressure or harassment</i> <i>This report includes discussion on key performance indicators that are subject to a private employment agreement between the Council and Chief Executive</i>	

MEETING MINUTES	
COUNCIL	TIME
THURSDAY 1 MAY 2025	8:30 AM

This resolution is made in reliance on Section 48(1) of the Local Government Official Information and Meetings Act 1987 and the particular interests protected by Section 6 or Section 7 of the Act which would be prejudiced by the holding of the whole or the relevant part of the proceedings of the meeting in public as specified above.

*Also, that Manfeild Trust Board members, Hamish Waugh (Chair), Amanda Linsley, Stefan Speller, Stella Coleman, Kevin Hansen, Chief Executive Officer Paul Cocks, and respective Electoral College Representatives Richie Arber, Brian Davies, and Gary Child be permitted to attend this meeting, after the public has been excluded, because of their in depth knowledge of Manfeild Park. This knowledge and expertise will be of assistance in relation to the Nine-Month Report being discussed.

Moved by: Mayor Helen Worboys

Seconded by: Cr Grant Hadfield

CARRIED (10-0)

The meeting went into public excluded session at 11.35 am. For items MDC 22-25/1134 to MDC 22-25/1139 refer to public excluded proceedings. The meeting returned to open session at 2.53 pm.

MDC 22-25/1140

MEETING CLOSURE

The meeting was declared closed at 2.53 pm.

Meeting Video

<https://www.mdc.govt.nz/about-council/meetings-agendas-and-minutes/videos-of-council-and-committee-meetings/manawatu-district-council-meeting-videos>

Council

Meeting of 15 May 2025

Business Unit: People and Corporate

Date Created: 31 January 2025

Decision on Local Water Done Well

Purpose Te Aronga o te Pūrongo

To present Council's preferred option for Local Water Done Well for adoption. The decision Council makes today will inform the preparation of Council's Water Services Delivery Plan.

Recommendations Ngā Tūtohunga

1. That the Council adopt Option 1 – Status quo in-house stand-alone model as its preferred model for the delivery of water services in the Manawātū District.
2. That Council approve the responses to issues and concerns raised in submissions on Local Water Done Well (Annex A) for distribution.

Note: The Water Services Delivery Plan will be developed based on the preferred option and will be presented to Council for adoption and approval for submission to the Department of Internal Affairs at the 24 July 2025 Council meeting or before if possible.

Report prepared by:
Lisa Thomas
Strategy Manager

Approved for submission by:
Hamish Waugh
General Manager – Infrastructure

1 Background Ngā Kōrero o Muri

- 1.1 Council has been working through the Local Water Done Well programme over the past 12 months.
- 1.2 Under the Local Government (Water Services Preliminary Arrangements) Act 2024, Council has a choice about how water services are delivered in the future so long as it meets new rules for investment, borrowing and pricing. There will also be a new regulator overseeing compliance with these rules.
- 1.3 The decision that Council makes around the preferred option for the delivery of water services will need to be documented in a Water Services Delivery Plan.
- 1.4 The content of the Water Services Delivery Plan and the consultative requirements are prescribed in the Local Government (Water Services Preliminary Arrangements) Act 2024. The Department of Internal Affairs has developed a template Water Services Delivery Plan document.
- 1.5 Over the past year, Council has participated in a regional options appraisal project with all of the Councils within the Manawatū–Whanganui region.
- 1.6 The Councils within the Manawatū–Whanganui region are:
 - Manawatū District Council
 - Palmerston North City Council
 - Tararua District Council
 - Horowhenua District Council
 - Rangitīkei District Council
 - Whanganui District Council
 - Ruapehu District Council
- 1.7 The regional options appraisal project looked at a multi-council Water Service Council Controlled Organisation and concluded that the seven council arrangement was not financially beneficial for Manawatū ratepayers, with Manawatū District Council providing cross-subsidisation to most of the other councils within the region throughout the entirety of the 30 year period that was modelled.
- 1.8 On 7 November 2024, Council resolved to discontinue further work on a multi-council Water Service Council Controlled Organisation involving all seven councils and resolved the following:
 - 1.8.1 To consider the development of a Water Service Delivery Plan on the basis of an in-house, stand-alone model (the status quo).
 - 1.8.2 To continue further work on the viability of a single-council (Manawatū District Council) Water Service Council Controlled Organisation.

- 1.8.3 To continue further work on the viability of a multi-council Water Service Council Controlled Organisation between Manawatū District Council and Palmerston North City Council.
- 1.8.4 To continue further work on the viability of a multi-council Water Service Council Controlled Organisation between Manawatū District Council, Palmerston North City Council, Horowhenua District Council and Kapiti Coast District Council.
- 1.9 Council has also continued to assess the full impact of moving water services into a Water Services Council Controlled Organisation with particular reference to the impact of stranded overheads¹ on the residual organisation should water services be separated out from Council's operations.
- 1.10 Council engaged Morrison Low (an independent advisory / consultancy company) to compare and contrast the various Water Service Council Controlled Organisation options referred to in paragraph 3.1 of this report.
- 1.11 The considerations around the impact of stranded overheads on the residual organisation should water services be separated out from Council's operations applies differently in each Water Service Council Controlled Organisation scenario.
- 1.12 On 19 December 2024, Council resolved to discontinue further work on a single-council MDC Water Service Council Controlled Organisation and resolved the following:
 - 1.12.1 That Council publicly consult on an in-house, stand-alone model (the status quo) for the delivery of water services in the Manawatū district and that this option would be Council's preferred option.
 - 1.12.2 That Council publicly consult on a multi-council Water Services Council Controlled Organisation jointly between Manawatū District Council and Palmerston North City Council for the delivery of water services in the Manawatū district.
 - 1.12.3 That Council publicly consult on a multi-council Water Services Council Controlled Organisation jointly between Manawatū District Council, Palmerston North City Council, Horowhenua District Council and Kapiti Coast District Council for the delivery of water services in the Manawatū district.
- 1.13 Council adopted the Consultation Document for Local Water Done Well at the 21 February 2025 Council meeting. The public consultation period was from 10 March 2025 until 5pm, Friday 11 April. A total of 505 submissions were received. Ten submitters spoke to their submissions at the Hearing on 1 May 2025.
- 1.14 To meet the statutory deadline for submission of the Water Services Delivery Plan, Council will have to adopt a Water Services Delivery Plan by way of Council resolution and submit the adopted Water Services Delivery Plan to the Department of Internal Affairs before 6 September 2025. The adoption of Council's Water Services Delivery Plan is scheduled for the 19 June 2025 Council meeting.

¹ Forming a Council Controlled Organisation means that some fixed costs — such as office expenses, IT systems, and certain corporate staff — remain with the Council, while the revenue previously used to fund these overheads is no longer available.

2 Strategic Fit Te Tautika ki te Rautaki

- 2.1 This report and the decision sought aligns with Council's strategic priority of "A future planned together." Council consulted with the Manawatū community to obtain feedback on which of the three options consulted on was most preferred. Council deliberated on all feedback received at the 1 May 2025 Council meeting. This feedback has helped inform the decision that Council is making today with respect to the future ownership, management and delivery of water services for the Manawatū District.
- 2.2 Council's strategic priority of "An Environment to be proud of" is relevant to Council's decision-making with respect to the future ownership, management and delivery of water services. Council is committed to ensuring that water services are managed in a way that protects the Manawatū District's natural and physical resources now, and into the future.
- 2.3 This report and the decision sought aligns with Council's strategic priority of "Infrastructure fit for future" as the purpose of this work is to ensure that the water services of the Manawatū are delivered in a way that meets the need of the Manawatū District's community now, and into the future.
- 2.4 Council's strategic priority of "value for money and excellence in local government" is also relevant to this report as, through consulting with the community, Council is focussed on doing what is best for the Manawatū District. Council has carried out extensive financial modelling to evaluate the feasibility of each option.

3 Discussion and Options Considered Ngā Matapakinga me ngā Kōwhiringa i Wānangahia

- 3.1 There are three reasonably practical options being evaluated by Council for the ownership, management and delivery of water services in the Manawatū District. These options are described as follows:
- Option 1 – Status quo with changes (preferred option).
 - Option 2 – 'the Two' – A multi-council Water Services Council Controlled Organisation jointly owned by Manawatū District Council and Palmerston North City Council.
 - Option 3 – 'the Four' - A multi-council Water Services Council Controlled Organisation jointly owned by Horowhenua District Council, Kāpiti Coast District Council, Palmerston North City Council and Manawatū District Council.
- 3.2 The Local Water Done Well for Manawatū District Consultation Document 2025 asked submitters to select their preferred option. Of the 505 submissions received, 487 (96.4%) selected Option 1 as their preferred option, five (1%) selected Option 2, and 13 (2.6%) selected Option 3.
- 3.3 The most common reasons for support of Option 1 were that Council has invested in three waters infrastructure and are managing the process well (222), a desire to keep local control (137) and that merging with other Councils would mean that MDC ratepayers would be subsidising those Councils that have under invested in three waters infrastructure (85).
- 3.4 The five submitters that selected Option 2 as their preferred option gave the reason that MDC and PNCC should combine and share resources.

- 3.5 The 13 submitters that selected Option 3 as their preferred noted potential benefits in combining to reduce overlap in services, reduce costs, and spread risk. Other reasons for support included independent management, greater ability to stand up to central government authority, and concerns with MDC's prior planning and decision-making.
- 3.6 Council deliberated on all feedback received through oral and written submissions at the 1 May 2025 Council meeting. At this meeting, Councillors gave officers clear direction that of the three options consulted on, Option 1 (status quo with changes) has the most support and is therefore Council's preferred option.
- 3.7 During consultation on Local Water Done Well, submitters were given the opportunity to share any other issues or concerns that they have with three waters services. These concerns have been grouped by topic and submission number, with officer responses in a table. This table is attached as Annex A to this report. It is our intention to send these submitters the responses to the matters raised in their submissions, as soon as practicable following this meeting. Those submitters who did not raise additional issues will still receive an email confirming Council's final decisions on Local Water Done Well.

4 Risk Assessment Te Arotake Tūraru

- 4.1 The Hearings and Deliberations Report on Local Water Done Well, presented at the 1 May 2025 Council meeting, identified the following potential risks:
- **Strategic risk** – there is potential for further government reform that might mean that MDC is required to deliver water services as part of a joint CCO with other Councils, even if this is not Council's preferred model. The likelihood of this is considered low given that there is nothing within the current legislation that would enable this to happen.
 - **Economic Regulation** – The Commerce Commission will be the economic regulator under the Government's Local Water Done Well regime. It is possible that the economic regulator could use revenue thresholds or price-quality regulations to set revenue levels for the delivery of water services that are below what is necessary to maintain current levels of service. The Commerce Commission will start implementing the economic regulation regime after the Local Government (Water Services) Bill is enacted. It is therefore too early to say how the economic regulation of water services will impact on funding for the delivery of water services in the Manawatū District.
 - **Privatisation** – the Local Government (Water Services) Bill outlines the different structure and delivery arrangements that water organisations may use to deliver water services. Concerns have been expressed that the arrangements for council-controlled organisations more readily lend themselves to privatisation than current in-house delivery of water services. However, the risk of privatisation of water services is considered low as the current legislation does not provide for this.
 - **Accuracy of cost forecasting** – the financial impact on ratepayers for each of the options is based on modelling undertaken by Morrison Low. This modelling includes a number of assumptions and forecasts. The accuracy of the cost forecasts are therefore dependent on the accuracy of the assumptions and forecasts on which they are based. The model was developed using the best available information from all Councils. In addition, all of the options being considered by the Manawatū District Council, Palmerston North City Council, Horowhenua District Council and Kapiti Coast District Council are based on the same modelling approach and assumptions so that all four consultation documents are consistent in the information

presented. Sensitivity analysis was used to highlight which assumptions that modelling outcomes are most sensitive to changes in.

- 4.2 These risks were discussed at the 1 May 2025 Council meeting during the deliberations on submissions received. These risks are noted and no additional risks have been identified.

5 Engagement Te Whakapānga

Significance of Decision

- 5.1 Councils' decisions with respect to who should own, manage and deliver water services for the Manawatū District was deemed 'significant' in accordance with the following criteria from section 4.2 of the Significance and Engagement Policy 2020:
- The level of financial consequences of the proposal or decision,
 - The number of residents or ratepayers affected and the degree to which they are affected by the decision or proposal,
 - The likely impact on Māori and mana whenua cultural values and their relationship to land and water and taonga,
 - The level of community interest,
 - Whether the decision, or something similar to it, has a history of, or is known to be, controversial.
- 5.2 Council therefore resolved to consult with the community in accordance with the requirements set out in section 83 of the Local Government Act 2002. A summary of the consultation undertaken is included in paragraph 5.8 of this report.

Māori and Cultural Engagement

- 5.3 The Mayoral Forum from across the Manawatu-Whanganui region met on 12 November 2024 to commence initial and high-level regional engagement with iwi.
- 5.4 A meeting was held at Te Āhuru Mōwai on 27 March 2025 with members of Te Kōtui Reo. There was positive feedback from attendees, and a request to hold a further meeting on the 7th of April for more iwi members to attend. The purpose of these meetings was to gain better understanding of what the options were, and the reasons for the preferred option.

Community Engagement

- 5.5 The Local Government (Water Services Preliminary Arrangements) Act 2024 outlines the community engagement requirements of the Local Water Done Well policy.
- 5.6 Council adopted the Manawatū District Council Consultation Document for the Local Water Done Well public consultation at the 6 March 2025 Council meeting. This document presented three options for the delivery of water services, including the advantages and disadvantages of each option.

5.7 Council consulted with the community over the period from 10 March to 11 April 2025.

5.8 The following public engagement events were held during the submissions period:

- Feilding Market: March 14
- Family Fun Day: March 16
- Pop Up Engagement at the Hub: March 21, 12.30-1.30pm
- Public Meeting: Feilding, March 25 at 7pm
- Pop Up Engagement at the Hub: March 26, 10-11am
- Public Meeting: Kimbolton, March 27 at 7pm
- Te Kōtui Reo Taumata: March 27
- Feilding Market: March 28
- Public Meeting: Rongotea, March 31 at 7pm
- Pop Up Engagement at the Hub: April 3, 2.30pm-3.30pm
- LWDW Hui: Feilding, April 7 at 6pm

6 Operational Implications Te Whai Pānga Atu ki ngā Kaupapa Mahi

6.1 As outlined in the Hearings and Deliberations report, presented at the 1 May 2025 Council meeting, the operational implications for the delivery of water services differ depending on which of the three options Council adopts.

6.2 If Council confirms its previous direction that its preferred option is to develop a Water Service Delivery Plan on the basis of an in-house, stand-alone model (the status quo), then the operational implications will be minimal. These implications will include additional reporting requirements and some changes to financial reporting to comply with the new ringfencing requirements.

6.3 If the final decision is a departure from the preferred option (the status quo) and requires the development of a Water Service Delivery Plan on the basis of a multi-council Water Services Council Controlled Organisation, there will be significant operational implications. This will include the legal establishment of a Water Services Council Controlled Organisation and the development of an Implementation Plan for the Water Services Council Controlled Organisation including the transfer of staff, assets and IT systems etc. from Council to the Water Services Council Controlled Organisation. The implementation of a Water Services Council Controlled Organisation may be spread over a number of years.

6.4 Notwithstanding the outcome, there will be new requirements of the Water Services Authority that all future water service delivery providers will need to adhere to. These include:

- 6.4.1 Statement of Expectations – which is issued to a water service providers by its owner(s) and sets out the strategic and performance expectations for the organisation. Each

water service provider will be required to give effect to the statement of expectations, including in its water services strategy.

6.4.2 Water Services Strategy – which is prepared by all water service providers for the water services they are responsible for delivering. This is each provider’s primary strategic, financial, and infrastructure planning and accountability document. Owners will be able to determine the nature of their involvement in the process for preparing their water organisation’s water services strategy.

6.4.3 Water Services Annual Report – prepared by water service providers to provide transparency about their performance over the preceding financial year, and detailed financial statements relating to water services.

7 Financial implications Te Whai Pānga Atu ki ngā Kaupapa Ahumoni

7.1 If the decision is to develop a Water Service Delivery Plan on the basis of an in-house, stand-alone model (the status quo) then there will be no direct financial implications relating to that decision.

7.2 If the final decision is a departure from the preferred option (the status quo) and requires the development of a Water Service Delivery Plan on the basis of a multi-council Water Services Council Controlled Organisation, there will be significant financial implications.

7.3 The size and nature of the financial implications of selecting a multi-council Water Services Council Controlled Organisation will depend on which multi-council Water Services Council Controlled Organisation is chosen. The Consultation Document outlined the financial impact of both of the multi-council Water Services Council Controlled Organisation options.

7.4 Regardless of the option chosen – status quo or multi-council Water Services Council Controlled Organisation, there will be additional costs for all water service providers relating to the Water Services Authority reporting requirements and Economic Regulator levies. The cost of these levies is estimated to be \$187,000 per year. The levies will be recovered in the same way that the rest of the water activity costs are recovered, which is a combination of targeted rates and user fees to those that are connected or able to connect to the services, with a small portion recovered via the general rate in the stormwater activity.

8 Statutory Requirements Ngā Here ā-Ture

8.1 The Local Government (Water Services Preliminary Arrangements) Act 2024 requires Council to prepare Water Services Delivery Plan that:

8.1.1 Identifies the current state of the authority’s water services; and

8.1.2 Demonstrates publicly its commitment to deliver water services in a way that:

8.1.3 Ensures that the territorial authority will meet all relevant regulatory quality standards for its water services; and

8.1.4 Is financially sustainable for the territorial authority; and

8.1.5 Ensures that the territorial authority will meet all drinking water quality standards; and

8.1.6 Supports the territorial authority's housing growth and urban development, as specified in the territorial authority's long-term plan.

8.2 It is noted that while this report and the recommendations contained therein are not statutory requirements in their own right, they are part of Councils process to prepare a Water Services Delivery Plan which is a statutory requirement.

9 Next Steps Te Kokenga

9.1 The Water Services Delivery Plan will be developed based on the decision Council makes today, and will be presented to Council for adoption and approval for submission to the Department of Internal Affairs at the 19 June 2025 Council meeting.

10 Attachments Ngā Āpitihanga

- Annex A – Officer responses to issues and concerns raised through submissions on Local Water Done Well

Responses Sought LWDW Submissions

Submission number and link	Submission points	Officer Response
Comments relating to stormwater		
Submission 07 07 Speaking to Submission Submission 84 Submission 29 Submission 439	<p>Large investments into stormwater networks across MDC needed before we start to see the real effects of projected climate change (07,84)</p> <p>Would like flood management possible future spends if 100-200 year flood model becomes a 1 in 10/20 year reality (29)</p> <p>Is there enough money budgeted for the required stormwater upgrades within the three options. Could we benefit from sharing Manawatū District stormwater upgrades? (439)</p>	<p>The flood events in November and December 2021 highlighted a number of deficiencies in the urban stormwater network across Feilding. In response to this, Council has approved a \$20 million stormwater upgrade programme with detailed design and consenting processes being carried out over the first three years of the Long-term Plan, with the capital investment commencing in year 6 of the Long-term Plan.</p> <p>Council is also aware of ongoing stormwater overland flow and ponding issues in many of the rural villages. Council committed to a village stormwater upgrade programme in the 2018-28 Long-term Plan, allocating \$500,000 per year over the life of the Long-term Plan. Many projects have been completed since then, however, with the increasing cost of investing in new infrastructure and the scale of investment required across the villages, Council has committed to increasing that investment to \$1 million per year for the duration of the 2024-34 Long-term Plan. This investment will see substantial improvement in stormwater services across the villages throughout the district.</p> <p>Council is planning for more frequent and intense extreme weather events in the future. Council is continually increasing the resilience of its stormwater network, including by reviewing capacity when renewing existing stormwater infrastructure or installing new infrastructure to support growth. Council is also</p>

Submission number and link	Submission points	Officer Response
		improving resilience through use of more resilient materials and pipe laying techniques.
Submission 84	<p>Concerned with the existing water drainage in the town of Feilding. The pipes are old and small and will not be able to withstand really heavy downpours. It will be expensive to dig up town roads for pipe replacement but the job could be done by jointly examining power and gas pipes at the same time. For new housing and commercial subdivisions, MDC does a great job of putting in large culverts in new subdivisions and cooperating with other organisations at the same time (power, gas, and fibre)</p>	<p>Despite general compliance with the level of service performance framework for stormwater in the 2022/23 financial year, the flood events in November and December 2022 highlighted a number of deficiencies in the urban stormwater network across Feilding. In response to this, Council has approved a \$20 million stormwater upgrade programme with detailed design and consenting processes being carried out over the first three years of the Long-term Plan, with the capital investment commencing in year 6 of the Long-term Plan.</p> <p>Council is continually increasing the resilience of its stormwater network, including by reviewing capacity when renewing existing stormwater infrastructure or installing new infrastructure to support growth. Council is also improving resilience through use of more resilient materials and pipe laying techniques.</p>
Submission 89 Speaking to Submission	<p>The area I reside does require an investment in storm water management. I believe the council are aware of this and have this factored into their future plans. Address is 233 Makino Road, Feilding.</p>	<p>The flood events in November and December 2021 highlighted a number of deficiencies in the urban stormwater network across Feilding. In response to this, Council has approved a \$20 million stormwater upgrade programme with detailed design and consenting processes being carried out over the first three years of the Long-term Plan, with the capital investment commencing in year 6 of the Long-term Plan.</p> <p>To assist in mitigating stormwater ponding impacts on western Maewa, Feilding (previously Precinct 4) growth area, including the</p>

Submission number and link	Submission points	Officer Response
		<p>Makino Road portion within this area, Council are developing concepts for stormwater detention ponds in the Precinct 3 growth area. Precinct 3 is a future residential parcel located at the intersection of Lethbridge Road and Makino Road, at the northwest corner of Feilding. The surface water from this area is conveyed through gullies to multiple stormwater outfalls, with a large portion of Precinct 3 draining directly to western Maewa. Stormwater detention ponds will assist to hold stormwater and slow down its release into the stormwater network to lessen the flow impacts on western Maewa.</p>
<p>Submission 100</p> <p>Submission 464</p>	<p>Investment in Himatangi Beach stormwater is overdue. After 20 years it's still flooding. Rates should be subsidized due to flooding and substandard water quality (100)</p> <p>District planning is viewing Himatangi as a growth area. However, there is focus on one area but there are several problem areas with no plan to address them. Sandown has also exacerbated stormwater issues downstream (464)</p>	<p>Council is also aware of ongoing stormwater overland flow and ponding issues in many of the rural villages. Council has increased the level of funding allocated to village stormwater upgrades from \$500,000 per year to \$1 million per year for the duration of the 2024-34 Long-term Plan. This investment will see substantial improvement in stormwater services across the villages throughout the district.</p> <p>Stormwater</p> <p>Work is programmed for Halcombe and Himatangi with planning and design underway to address the flooding issues for both villages.</p> <p>Finding a solution for Himatangi is challenging with a number of obstacles to overcome, including;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • tidal, sea level effects the ground water table and impacts ground soakage

Submission number and link	Submission points	Officer Response
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • very to little existing stormwater network, the township relies on water draining away into the ground but impacted during heavy rain and tides • low lying flat areas, limits our options for stormwater to gravity feed • sensitive sand dunes and protected plant life, restricts or eliminates the option to pump additional stormwater through or into the sand dunes. <p>We have explored a number of design options and we remain optimistic that we will be installing a stormwater solution next summer.</p> <p>Water</p> <p>Water supply in Himatangi is from a bore, with elevated levels of silica but within the required drinking water limits.</p> <p>Council have explored treatment options to remove silica with an estimated cost in excess of \$2M with a salt waste residual we can't treat in Himatangi. If a water treatment upgrade is required, the cost will be borne by the community, hence our reluctance to invest in a treatment upgrade.</p>
Submission 277	There needs to a plan in place with finances and realistic modelling to support the process of rapid repair if/when flood defences are damaged in major flooding(to prevent further extensive damage).	Horizons Regional Council has overall responsibility for flood protection from rivers and streams. Horizons Regional Council owns and maintains flood protection infrastructure such as stop banks and rural drainage schemes. The Manawātū District Council has responsibility for the management of stormwater infrastructure and flooding that results from stormwater.

Submission number and link	Submission points	Officer Response
	<p>This could a council-managed volunteer labour component; a proactive version of what happened during the Christchurch earthquakes.</p>	<p>Both Horizons and the Manawātū District Council have staff that are trained to respond during a civil defence emergency. Local authorities, in conjunction with emergency services, often lead the response. This would include Horizons Regional Council staff evaluating any damage to their flood protection assets, and carrying out emergency works to prevent further damage.</p> <p>While MDC appreciates the contribution made by volunteers that may involve themselves in the emergency response (e.g. the Student Army following the Canterbury Earthquakes), Council has some concerns about the lack of clarity around our responsibilities and obligations under the Health and Safety at Work Act in respect to these groups.</p>
Submission 254	<p>Please continue to work on flooding issues</p>	<p>The flood events in November and December 2021 highlighted a number of deficiencies in the urban stormwater network across Feilding. In response to this, Council has approved a \$20 million stormwater upgrade programme with detailed design and consenting processes being carried out over the first three years of the Long-term Plan, with the capital investment commencing in year 6 of the Long-term Plan.</p> <p>Council is also aware of ongoing stormwater overland flow and ponding issues in many of the rural villages. Council committed to a village stormwater upgrade programme in the 2018-28 Long-term Plan, allocating \$500,000 per year over the life of the Long-term Plan. Many projects have been completed since then, however, with the increasing cost of investing in new infrastructure and the scale of investment required across the villages, Council has committed to increasing that investment to</p>

Submission number and link	Submission points	Officer Response
		<p>\$1 million per year for the duration of the 2024-34 Long-term Plan. This investment will see substantial improvement in stormwater services across the villages throughout the district.</p>
Submission 462	<p>Better management of stormwater, use of swales for example.</p>	<p>Managing stormwater in urban areas is generally the job of the utility department. When heavy rain causes water to pool on roads or footpaths, it's often because the current stormwater system can't handle the amount or length of rain we're now getting.</p> <p>If water is collecting in dips or low spots on roads or paths, the roading team wants to know about it. That way, we can ask our Contractor to fix it by helping direct the water into the stormwater system.</p> <p>Because of how urban streets are built, it's often hard to install swales. Even when swales can be added, they might not fully solve the flooding problem since the water still ends up in the same overloaded system.</p>
Submission 383	<p>Stormwater needs to be maintained by clearing dead leaves and rubbish and inlets being cleared regularly. This will prevent localised flooding after even moderate rainfall.</p>	<p>Council's Roding Contractor regularly sweeps the kerbs and channels to keep them clear. During autumn, when lots of leaves fall, we ask the Contractor to sweep more often. We also give special instructions to clear areas where debris tends to build up, especially if heavy rain is on the way.</p> <p>Still, flooding can happen if the rain is so heavy that the underground stormwater pipes (which the Utilities team looks after) can't keep up. When this happens, the Roding Contractor</p>

Submission number and link	Submission points	Officer Response
		will do what they can - like putting up warning signs - to help keep people safe.
Costing Queries		
Submission 09	PNCC advised approximate cost of \$2100 per year to independent water service provider if the option to combine is selected. Could you please provide costs for MDC ratepayers?	If MDC proceeds with a standalone, in-house model for the delivery of water services (the preferred option), the average cost will be approximately \$2,002 per year over the first ten years, and \$2,135 over the first 20 years. This compares to approximately \$2,423 per year over the first ten years and \$2,561 per year over the first 20 years under a two Council CCO jointly owned by MDC and PNCC; and \$2366 per year over the first ten years and \$2,464 over the first 20 years under a four Council CCO model.
Submission 089 Speaking to Submission	Why are government levies of \$187,000 pa being charged? Is this to force councils to join so that individually it will be less	<p>The levies being charged are from the Commerce Commission and the Water Services Authority. These levies are to fund two separate regulatory regimes for New Zealand's water services. The Water Services Authority – Taumata Arowai is the drinking water regulator and the Commerce Commission will be the economic regulatory. The Water Services Act 2021 included provision for these levies to be introduced to fund the Authority's work regulating drinking water suppliers for safety and quality and overseeing the environmental performance of drinking water, stormwater and wastewater networks.</p> <p>The Ministry of Business, Innovation and Employment consulted on the proposed levies in November 2024. They are still in the process of finalising the levy proposals. Based on the information contained in the consultation document, MDC estimates that a levy of \$187,000 per year will be charged to the Manawatū</p>

Submission number and link	Submission points	Officer Response
		District. Council is yet to make decisions on how costs of levies will be recovered via rates.
Submission 141 Speaking to Submission	There is potential that this will increase rates. When will rubbish bags and entry into the pool be free for ratepayers?	<p>Due to those matters that sit outside of Council's control, such as government levy charges and additional reporting requirements, the cost of delivering water services for the Manawatū District will increase under all options being considered.</p> <p>The way that Council funds services such as rubbish collection and the Makino Pool are described in Council's Revenue and Financing Policy. Any proposed change to the funding of these services would need to be consulted on with the community as part of an Annual Plan or Long-term Plan.</p>
Submission 160	As a business, we buy water from MDC and then deliver that to MDC ratepayers. Why do we pay double the amount of other commercial users? Understand that the meter needs to be read and invoices written but there is limited infrastructure to maintain but significant charges added compared to other commercial users	<p>Water supply to commercial customers starts at \$1.93/m³ compared to \$3.38/m³ from our water filling stations.</p> <p>The difference between commercial and water filling rate is \$1.45/m³ and covers the infrastructure, hardware and testing costs for these water filling sites.</p> <p>That being said, we are aware our water supply rate is more expensive than other Councils. To address this, Council will not be increasing our water supply rate next financial year.</p>
Submission 378 Speaking to Submission	Council should advocate for a high standard of transparency and modelling of future considerations. The financial analysis must be paired with sensitivity testing,	The Horowhenua, Kāpiti Coast, Manawatū District and Palmerston North City Councils engaged Morrison Low, an Australasian management consulting firm, to carry out financial modelling on those Local Water Done Well options these Councils were considering. This modelling included consideration of factors such

Submission number and link	Submission points	Officer Response
	social and cultural impact assessments, and a clearer description of how governance structures will function. I would like to see: How stranded overheads will be managed under a CCO; How innovation, environmental outcomes, and service quality will be benchmarked across models; How local and iwi voices will remain empowered in any future structure; How different models would perform under future regulatory change scenarios (378)	<p>as stranded overheads under a CCO model and different harmonising scenarios, as well as sensitivity testing of the different assumptions used. The findings of this analysis was a net cost to Manawatū ratepayers under all scenarios considered, relative to the status quo in-house model. The cost information contained in the consultation document comes from this independent financial modelling.</p> <p>Council considers that the in-house model also gives greater weight to the voices in our District and ensures conversations with local communities, iwi/hapū, and stakeholders remain local.</p> <p>More detailed information on the governance model for the delivery of water services for the Manawatū District will be contained in Council's Water Services Delivery Plan, once Council has made final decisions on its preferred option.</p>
Submission 378 Speaking to Submission	While I have selected Option 1, I am concerned that none of the models, including the status quo, account for regulatory risk. If national water quality or environmental standards rise significantly, the cost of compliance could grow sharply — potentially making upgrades unaffordable for smaller councils like MDC. That would undermine the financial case for Option 1 and pose serious service delivery risks. These kinds	<p>Council is aware of the risk of future regulatory change. Council is regularly meeting with Ministry officials, Chief Executives from across New Zealand and sector organisations to ensure we have the best possible understanding of the political situation and the likelihood of future regulatory change. We have assurance from the Minister of Local Government that Government does not intend to depart from the flexibility inherent in the legislation that allows Council's to determine, in consultation with their communities, their own water services arrangements.</p> <p>The Morrison Low report includes a list of key assumptions contained in their modelling, one of which is:</p>

Submission number and link	Submission points	Officer Response
	of "what if" scenarios should be stress-tested across all options before long-term commitments are made	<p><i>"Capital investment included within long term plans and infrastructure strategies is sufficient to meet future regulatory standards."</i></p> <p>The risk assigned to this assumption is <i>Medium-High</i>. All Council programmes have been reviewed and updated. Future standards are unknown.</p> <p>The likely impact has been evaluated as "High". High and low capex scenarios have been modelled as part of sensitivity testing. Under all scenarios modelled, option 1 remains the most cost-effective option for Manawātū District Council ratepayers.</p>
Submission 383	Rates relating to water services should be ring fenced and clearly reported to ratepayers	<p>Council's Revenue and Financing Policy describes how Council currently funds its water services. All rates collected for (water supply and wastewater are via a targeted rate which means they are spent providing those services. Stormwater is predominately a targeted rate with a small amount being rated as a general rate; however, council does treat the full rates as being targeted and they are spent on providing the stormwater activity. The water activities are reported individually in both the Annual Plan, Long Term Plan and Annual reports.</p> <p>Council may be making some further changes to the way that it reports water services in line with the new legislative requirements.</p>
Residential/Commercial Builds		

Submission number and link	Submission points	Officer Response
Submission 27 Submission 104 Submission 364	<p>Need to look at installing water tanks in new builds to manage when there is reduced rainfall (27)</p> <p>Based on lack of rain this year, additional water supply/storage could be required in the future particularly if Feilding is developed with housing and commercial facilities (104)</p> <p>All properties with adequate space should be required to have a tank installed to collect water (364)</p>	<p>Council does not require water tanks to be installed in new builds, however, there is nothing stopping someone from doing that.</p> <p>There are some locations within Feilding where water tanks are required for stormwater attenuation purposes. This requirement is assessed on a case-by-case basis and the requirements relate to the intensity of the planned residential development.</p>
Submission 82	<p>Continued development of residential and commercial properties will increase demand, expects planning is in place but proposed that new residents might have to provide their own water tanks, pumps, drainage, septic tanks rather than this being a cost to council</p>	<p>Where Council's reticulated services such as wastewater are available, there is an expectation to connect. The cost of these services is recovered using targeted rates for those areas that receive those services.</p> <p>Developments in rural areas where reticulated services are not available are required to be self-serviced.</p>
Submission 089	<p>Development/Expansion should be self-funded (89)</p>	<p>Council uses population and demographic forecasts to predict future demand for new residential, industrial and commercial</p>

Submission number and link	Submission points	Officer Response
<p>89 Speaking to Submission</p> <p>Submission 350</p> <p>Submission 409</p> <p>Submission 223</p>	<p>Our district (especially Feilding residential areas) is rapidly growing and I think it is vital that our storm water, sewerage and water treatment facilities continue to improve to meet growing demand. I also think the cost of this should be factored into the planning process for developers of new subdivisions - existing residents should not have to pay more to update facilities due to planned growth of the town (350)</p> <p>Any expansion of MDC water infrastructure to be paid by developers and not ratepayers (409)</p> <p>I would like MDC to always continue to upgrade, systems as required to ensure all water management is always ahead of future growth in and around Feilding (223)</p>	<p>growth. Council then plans what new infrastructure will be needed to facilitate this growth.</p> <p>Council evaluates each infrastructure project that is included in Council's Long-term Plan in terms of whether the works are necessary to improve levels of service, are to renew existing infrastructure, or are required to service growth (i.e. development and expansion of residential areas). That portion of the protect cost that is growth related is funded in accordance with Council's Development and Financial Contributions Policy. This policy specifies what portion of the project cost should be paid for by those that generate the demand (i.e. developers) and that portion that is a community benefit (such as the economic development opportunities that come from growth).</p>
<p>Submission 483</p>	<p>Can surge valves be installed to maintain adequate water-quality in</p>	<p>We have experienced issues in the past when flushing water in dead end areas and where a known problem exists, installing</p>

Submission number and link	Submission points	Officer Response
	new subdivisions as this has drastically improved water quality in the area that submitter lives	hydrants or flushing points to be able to flush our watermains as required. In new areas we have started installing flushing points on both the main and rider mains as required.
Submission 234	Would like to see sewerage pipe access extended from town to Stewart Road as future development occurs	Council's Long-term Plan 2024-34 does not include funding to extend Council's reticulated wastewater network to Stewart Road. Council is currently focussing investment in the rural villages, including Sanson and Rongotea.
Water Meters/Uses Pays/Water Restrictions		
Submission 53 Submission 247 Submission 427 Submission 258	<p>Rates are expensive in order to pay for water infrastructure. Please don't install meters (53,247,427)</p> <p>Supports a metering system to ensure user pays and support water usage reduction (258)</p>	<p>The installation of water meters for all residential properties is not a priority of Council and has not been included within our 2024-34 Long-term Plan. Water meters are only required for extraordinary water users such as residential properties with swimming pools and industrial and commercial properties.</p> <p>Council adopts an 'education first' approach to water conservation and will continue to educate the community on water use via our social media.</p>
Submission 057	Has consideration been given to charging for water supply on a user pays basis?	Council charges for water supply in accordance with its Revenue and Financing Policy (Revenue and Financing Policy within the LTP). The amount that a rating unit pays depends on whether they are connected, or capable of connection, to the Council's water system (excluding those properties connected to a rural water supply scheme), or receive a restricted service.

Submission number and link	Submission points	Officer Response
		<p>Council currently only requires volumetric water charges on rating units that are “extraordinary water supply users” and those that have chosen volumetric charging. The rates are assessed on a differential basis based on the level of service provision (i.e. connection size and number of connections).</p> <p>If Council was to charge for water supply on a user-pays basis, this would require the installation of water meters on all residential properties. This is not a priority of Council and has not been included within our 2024-34 Long-term Plan.</p>
Submission 138	Supports a metering system if it used to control waste and not a subsidy for rates increases.	The installation of water meters for all residential properties is not a priority of Council and has not been included within our 2024-34 Long-term Plan. Water meters are only required for extraordinary water users such as residential properties with swimming pools and industrial and commercial properties.
SUBMISSION 292	Supports the use of water restrictions to teach people the value of water	Council adopts an ‘education first’ approach to water conservation and will continue to educate the community on water use via our social media.
Rural Systems		
Submission 68	For rural septic systems stop demanding useless plastic systems that are designed to fail and consume huge amounts of power to be installed. Triple bottom line accounting and life cost/consumption prove that these are terrible for the planet.	<p>There are a variety of septic systems available that meet the requirements of the New Zealand Building Code (including durability requirements). The type of septic system that is determined to be most appropriate depends on the soil type and other conditions on the site, and is specified on the building consent.</p> <p>A system is site specific and is designed by the applicant’s contractor in accordance with the requirements of Horizons One</p>

Submission number and link	Submission points	Officer Response
		Plan. MDC don't dictate the construction required. Smaller land sizes require secondary and above treatment, requiring power to operate pumps and to aerate the waste prior to discharging to land as per Horizons One Plan.
Submission 138	Monitoring quality of drinking water needs to be well controlled especially in small rural systems	<p>Council continually monitors its reticulated drinking water and reports on its performance to the Water Services Authority – Taumata Arowai, against the Drinking Water Quality Assurance Rules (updated January 2025). These rules set out how drinking water suppliers must comply with key parts of the New Zealand Drinking Water Standards and the Water Services Act 2021.</p> <p>Private drinking water schemes are not currently monitored by Council, but these schemes are still required to comply with water quality requirements set by the Water Services Authority – Taumata Arowai.</p>
Submission 152	Looking ahead, removing the Kimbolton village wastewater system and resource consent issues would be beneficial. Similarly to Sanson, could residents here have their wastewater piped to Feilding?	<p>Due to affordability challenges and Council's overall borrowing constraints, the decision was confirmed in the 2024-34 Long Term Plan to prioritise centralisation of wastewater from Rongotea and Halcombe over stages in the northernmost areas – Cheltenham and Kimbolton.</p> <p>Council will further consider including the Cheltenham and Kimbolton wastewater treatment plant discharges into the wastewater centralisation project during the development of the draft 2027-37 Long-term Plan as budget allows.</p>
Submission 368	Te Reureu Māori, whānau and whenua need access to water (368)	Manawatū District Council has been working alongside representatives from Te Reureu Valley for several years to look at

Submission number and link	Submission points	Officer Response
Submission 426 Submission 472	<p>Rural water needs, in Te Reureu this needs to be fair & equitable system for both Māori landowners & residents going forward regardless of what central government may propose we need access to water (426)</p> <p>Council needs to continue to extend the rural water scheme to support these communities. In particular, Te Reu Reu valley (472)</p>	<p>different water supply options, such as extending the Stanway-Halcombe Rural Water Scheme, creating a separate Te Reureu scheme, or combining the two.</p> <p>So far, the main challenge has been the cost. Because there are only a small number of potential users, the price per each household would be high, and unaffordable for most.</p> <p>Council will continue to review the viability of these options and, if government funding becomes available, may be able to carry out further investigations.</p>
Submission 199 Submission 379	<p>Rural rates are being used by council to fund other expenses and not the services provided. Rural rates should be lowered accordingly to the services provided (199)</p> <p>Rural households not connected to any MDC water systems should not be charged rates to fund the urban population. Our water systems are self-funded (379)</p>	<p>Council services are funded by a mixture of rates, user fees and other funding sources. When deciding how to fund services, the first thing Council considers is who benefits from the service or activity. Across most of our services, we use a mix of general rates, targeted rates and user charges in a combination that we think most fairly shares the cost. These combinations (also known as our 'funding mixes') are outlined in the Revenue and Financing Policy (link: Revenue and Financing Policy within the LTP). For example, for water services, the amount that a rating unit is charged depends on whether they are connected, on a restricted supply, or capable of connection, to the Council's water system (excluding those properties connected to a rural water supply scheme). Properties that are not connected or able to be connected (as those services are not available at their gate) do not pay.</p>

Submission number and link	Submission points	Officer Response
Submission 328	Continue to move forward, drawing in rural areas to improve their water supply (e.g., Rongotea, Sanson, Kimbolton)	Council has invested in new water treatment plants at Rongotea and Sanson. However, these rural areas are still on a restricted water supply (i.e. trickle feed). Council is not able to provide an on-demand water supply as the current pipe network would not cope with high pressures. The cost to upgrade the current water supply pipe network would be significant and has not been budgeted for in the 2024-34 Long-term Plan.
Submission 341	Water discoloration for whānau in rural issues continues to be an issue. As there may be further legislations coming from select committees, it would be interesting to know this legislation/CCOs will affect rural schemes	<p>Council's reticulated water supply is always compliant with the New Zealand Drinking Water Standards when it leaves our water treatment plant. The Stanway-Halcombe rural water scheme does not comply with the New Zealand Drinking Water Standards for protozoa but this is being addressed through planned investment this financial year. Any issues with odour from a reticulated water supply should be reported to Council.</p> <p>However, it is possible that your concerns relate to small water supplies such as roof water or groundwater bores that are not the responsibility of Council.</p> <p>Council is aware that the Water Services Authority – Taumata Arowai recently made changes to New Zealand's Drinking Water Quality Assurance Rules for supplies that serve 500 or fewer people. These new rules came into effect on 1 January 2025.</p> <p>Council's submission on the draft rules (October 2024) noted that the proposed changes to the rules for treatment do not really affect the Manawatū District Council as those supplies that we manage for very small populations are sourced from roof water. However, our submission noted that we are aware of a few marae whose</p>

Submission number and link	Submission points	Officer Response
		<p>water is sourced from groundwater. Our understanding is that the new rules would make it easier for these marae to comply.</p> <p>Here is a link to the current Drinking Water Quality Assurance Rules that drinking water suppliers must comply with: Drinking Water Quality Assurance Rules.</p>
Submission 433	<p>Council is yet to provide clarity regarding potential hidden costs that could arise for the rural community. Through this process, rural ratepayers have discovered that they will face increased charged due to government legislation. Council should have been transparent and presented this information during the consultation process. Rural ratepayers should not be expected to cover upgrades to town infrastructure. An example is, the stormwater drain on Makino Road which is poorly maintained and the Council have relied on developers to resolve problems which should have been managed from the outset.</p>	<p>As outlined in the consultation document, the levies being charged are from the Commerce Commission and the Water Services Authority. These levies are to fund two separate regulatory regimes for New Zealand’s water services. The Water Services Authority – Taumata Arowai is the drinking water regulator and the Commerce Commission will be the economic regulatory. The Water Services Act 2021 included provision for these levies to be introduced to fund the Authority’s work regulating drinking water suppliers for safety and quality and overseeing the environmental performance of drinking water, stormwater and wastewater networks.</p> <p>The Ministry of Business, Innovation and Employment consulted on the proposed levies in November 2024. They are still in the process of finalising the levy proposals. Based on the information contained in the consultation document, MDC estimates that a levy of \$187,000 per year will be charged to the Manawatū District.</p> <p>When deciding how to fund services, the first thing Council considers is who benefits from the service or activity. Across most of our services, we use a mix of general rates, targeted rates and user charges in a combination that we think most fairly shares the cost. These combinations (also known as our ‘funding mixes’) are</p>

Submission number and link	Submission points	Officer Response
		<p>outlined in the Revenue and Financing Policy (link: Revenue and Financing Policy within the LTP).</p> <p>The levies will be recovered in the same way that the rest of the water activity costs are recovered which is a combination of targeted rates and user fees to those that are connected or able to connect to the services, with a small portion recovered via the general rate in the stormwater activity.</p>
Water Bores		
Submission 84	We have 3 water bores in the MDC rating area. MDC should retain control over these. Are there any other bores for smaller towns in the District apart from Feilding?	<p>Council owns and manages ground water bores that are part of Feilding's reticulated water supply. Council holds resource consents from Horizons Regional Council for these water takes.</p> <p>There are other ground water bores owned and managed by Council within smaller towns and villages, not just within Feilding.</p>
Submission 89	During the hearing, this submitter asked that Council carefully monitor the new Feilding drinking water bores due to concerns about aquifer maintenance.	The three bores that are part of the Feilding reticulated water supply network are from deep aquifers. Hydrological testing that has been carried out on these bores has demonstrated that the abstraction rates are sustainable.
MDC contracting services to/working with other Councils		
Submission 07	During the Hearing, this submitter requested that MDC recognise the important economic and strategic relationships that we have with the Palmerston North City Council and support them politically to get the funding they need from Central	MDC has a good working relationship with the Palmerston North City Council and recognises the importance of this relationship from a strategic perspective. MDC would be happy to offer its political support in any application by PNCC for central government funding.

Submission number and link	Submission points	Officer Response
	Government. We have a social responsibility to support them in that space, particularly given that many of our ratepayers also work and travel to Palmerston North or are also ratepayers there.	Through our submission to PNCC's draft Long-term Plan 2024-34, MDC offered to share our knowledge and expertise in the area of wastewater treatment plant discharges, to assist with the Nature Calls Wastewater Project.
Submission 127	MDC should continue to carry on providing the good services and consider contracting their services to other councils to support them with current and future plan providing MDC have surplus personal to be able to do it	Council can explore shared services with other Councils in the future, if there is demand and need.
SUBMISSION 210	While submitter believes option one is the best option, they also think that MDC could work with other councils on some matters such as buying hardware could offer buying power during the tender process with some technical sharing also possible. Identifies that the decision doesn't have to be all in or all out (210).	Council can explore shared services and procurement with other Councils in the future, if there is demand and need.
Individual concerns		
Submission 128	The submitter at 12 Wellesley Street, Feilding raised concerns that there is water running through their property and along the	Thank you for bringing these concerns to our attention. Council officers will investigate this issue.

Submission number and link	Submission points	Officer Response
	hillside from their neighbours and they consider it dangerous.	
Submission 472	Submitter would like to know if there is some benefit to being connected to a CCO in a wide scale environmental event. And whether it would afford iwi more protection.	<p>MDC does not believe that being connected to a CCO would benefit MDC in a wide-scale environmental event. With an in-house water services delivery model, MDC would retain staff with the relevant local knowledge and expertise to assist in a response to an environmental event. In the case of a CCO, decision-making and resourcing would be more centralised, and a reduced likelihood of local staff with relevant knowledge and expertise being retained.</p> <p>MDC believes that option 1 (status quo – in-house model) gives the greatest voice to local iwi. In a CCO model, the needs and priorities of local iwi would have to compete with those of other iwi / hapū from those other councils that are part of the CCO.</p>
Water Usage enquires		
Submission 128	It would be interesting to know which properties use excess water	The installation of water meters for all residential properties is not a priority of Council and has not been included within our 2024-34 Long-term Plan. Water meters are only required for extraordinary water users such as residential properties with swimming pools and industrial and commercial properties.
Submission 135	There are a number of leaking water pipes in the line from Feilding to Cheltenham which is cost and waste	Council is aware of these issues. Within the next 10 years Council is looking to close the Almadale Water Treatment Plant and to support that network from Roots Street.
Fluoridation		

Submission number and link	Submission points	Officer Response
Submission 143 Submission 142	<p>Recommends not fluoridating as it is not the naturally generated mineral found underground but a neurotoxin that is a byproduct of fertilizer.</p>	<p>The addition of fluoride to municipal water supplies to improve oral health is in line with the Ministry of Health recommendations.</p> <p>Given the size of the Feilding municipal water supply Manawatū District Council would have been directed to add fluoride if we had not already been doing so.</p>
Submission 155 SUBMISSION 213 Submission 284 Submission 398 Submission 468 Speaking to Submission Submission 501	<p>Potable water must be fluoride free (155)</p> <p>Submitter does not want fluoride in local water supply (213,398,468,501)</p> <p>Water supplied should be potable. Fluoridation, like lead and asbestos before it has been recognised by a number of countries as dangerous and is being rejected (284)</p>	<p>The addition of fluoride to municipal water supplies to improve oral health is in line with the Ministry of Health recommendations.</p> <p>Given the size of the Feilding municipal water supply Manawatū District Council would have been directed to add fluoride if we had not already been doing so.</p> <p>However, out of a desire to give residents choice, Council is investigating options for installing a non-flouride tap.</p>
Iwi Considerations		
Submission 07	<p>During the hearing, this submitter asked for a response on how Council is regarding papakāinga development and Māori</p>	<p>We know there is interest in papakāinga and are working with Mana Whenua to ensure that this interest is reflecting in Council's planning documents. Council's growth strategy acknowledges marae and places where papakāinga is likely to locate. Any</p>

Submission number and link	Submission points	Officer Response
	development matters in water management.	changes to water delivery to service papakāinga development and other Māori development is a future decision for Council.
Submission 146 , Submission 498 Submission 460 Speaking to Submission	Iwi participation needs to be included at the highest level of decision making (146) Concerns regarding the lack of detail regarding iwi engagement. Although, highlights this as a central government issue (460)	<p>The delivery of water services is a key function of Council. Council's preferred option is to retain the status quo, with the Manawatū District Council taking overarching responsibility for decision-making with respect to water services delivery. Council believes that this option gives the greatest weight to the voices of local communities including iwi/hapū. Under a Council Controlled Organisation, an independent board would be responsible for decision-making. The larger the area that the board is responsible for, the greater the risk that local needs and voices would be under-represented.</p> <p>A key principle of Council's Significance and Engagement Policy 2025, relates to Māori and Mana Whenua participation in decision making. This policy states that Council will actively provide opportunities for Māori and Mana Whenua to contribute to its decision-making processes.</p>
Submission 368	Work alongside our neighbouring iwi downstream (368)	<p>Council strives to work primarily with the relevant Mana Whenua of the Manawatū District for any project, prior to considering iwi outside of the District. However, Council is still cognisant of the need to ensure our activities do not adversely impact on the environment and on our neighbours.</p> <p>One of the Council's priorities is "an environment to be proud of." Council protects and cares for the Manawatū District's natural and physical resources, including our waterways. One example of</p>

Submission number and link	Submission points	Officer Response
		<p>how Council is working with our 'neighbours' including iwi/hapū, local and central government, Massey University, environmental advocacy groups and others is through being a signatory to the Manawatū River Leaders' Accord. Signatories have pledged to work together to improve the health of the Manawatū River and its Catchment.</p>
Submission 486	<p>At the Hearing this submitter expressed concern that Council will be at the mercy of whoever has the mandate to govern the quality of water in the Manawatū River.</p>	<p>The setting of environmental standards is traditionally done by Regional Council's. The Water Services Authority – Taumata Arowai, is putting in place new national standards for wastewater discharges from wastewater treatment plants. These standards will need to be met by all Councils, regardless of which entity they are managed under.</p> <p>Diffuse discharges are still controlled by Regional Councils, but are outside of the Taumata Arowai standards. The standards and enforcement of those will still sit with regional councils, managed via conditions on resource consents.</p>
Waste Water		
Submission 234	<p>We would not like to see the development at Kawakawa Road grow unless newer technology is used to mitigate environmental impacts</p>	<p>The National Policy Statement for Urban Development categorises urban environments as tier 1, 2 or 3, based on population size, and is aimed at addressing housing supply in urban areas. As a tier 3 Council, we are required to monitor supply and demand for new residential, commercial and industrial land, and are encouraged to look at urban growth options in the short, medium and long term. This is a key driver for Council's urban growth strategy.</p>

Submission number and link	Submission points	Officer Response
		<p>Council's has a role in zoning and servicing land to support industrial growth. The Long-term Plan 2024-34 includes funding for the Turners Road extension (stages 2 and 3). This project also provides a pathway for a trade waste line between key industrial areas and the Manawatū Wastewater Treatment Plant. This project will enable commercial and industrial development on the southern end of Feilding. The trade waste line is a key project of Council that will enable a higher quality of wastewater treatment, prior to discharge to the Ōroua River.</p> <p>MDC recognises the importance of environmental stewardship and is committed to ensuring that all business developments comply with environmental standards and legislative requirements. However, Council is limited in its ability to control which businesses choose to locate/establish in the Kawakawa Road Industrial Precinct.</p> <p>Any new activity is required to comply with the relevant rules within the Manawatū District Plan and Horizons Regional Council's One Plan. Council decisions are guided by the Resource Management Act 1991, which requires that the potential environmental effects of any proposed activity—including impacts on land, water, air, and the surrounding community—are carefully assessed before consent is granted.</p>
Submission 393 Submission 479	MDC has lacked transparency over the past few years with known contamination occurring in the Oroua river and little to no recording and action been taken for	In the 2023/24 financial year, Council complied with all of its level of service performance measures and targets, as set out in the 2021-31 Long-term Plan, in relation to:

Submission number and link	Submission points	Officer Response
	<p>a number of years. Combining with other councils in a CCO would provide greater transparency (393)</p> <p>Do not agree for treated sewage to be released to rivers or the sea. It should be discharged to land to ensure it does not contaminate aquatic and human health (479)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The number of dry water sewage overflows from Council's sewerage system; • Compliance with resource consents for discharge from its treated wastewater system; • Response and resolution of faults and blockages; and • Satisfaction with our service. <p>Since January 2015, Council has invested significantly in the Manawatū Wastewater Treatment Plant (WWTP), including investing in new land and assets, including infrastructure to support the irrigation of treated wastewater to land. Council has also worked closely with Ngāti Kauwhata to construct and plant a native plant wetland to improve the quality of the proportion of the treated wastewater that eventually flows into the Ōroua River.</p> <p>Council must apply for a new resource consent from Horizons Regional Council for discharges to water from the Manawatū WWTP by May 2026. Funding has been allocated in years 1 and 2 of the Long-term Plan for this consenting project which includes a second stage wetland with the goal of removing all direct discharge of treated wastewater to the Ōroua River, except for emergency weather events.</p> <p>Key stakeholders during this process are Ngāti Kauwhata, other local iwi groups, neighbours of the Manawatū Wastewater Treatment Plant, environmental interest groups, and the wider Manawatū community. Council direction on wastewater management is guided by the National Policy Statement for Freshwater Management, the Horizons Regional Council One Plan,</p>

Submission number and link	Submission points	Officer Response
		the Ōroua Declaration which was co-signed by Ngāti Kauwhata and Council in December 2015, as well as critical success factors such as affordability and achievability.
Water Quality		
Submission 273 Submission 479 Submission 483	<p>Discoloration of water supply needs addressing (273)</p> <p>During periods of rain, the water is discoloured. Could the infrastructure of all pipes be checked to ensure they are up to date and equipped for the volume of water (479).</p> <p>Continue to maintain old infrastructure as old pipes may impart odoriferous VOCs and off-flavours (483)</p>	<p>Thank you for raising concerns regarding discolouration of the water supply. Council continually monitors the quality of its reticulated water supply and ensures that it meets the Drinking Water Quality Assurance Rules (2022) from the Water Services Authority – Taumata Arowai.</p> <p>Discolouration of Council’s reticulated water supply only occurs when pipes are being flushed. This is advertised through Council’s social media.</p> <p>Council continually monitors performance of the network and has budgeted money through the 2024-34 Long-term Plan to maintain its reticulated water network to maintain current levels of service and customer service expectations. However, if you have any concerns with water quality please contact Council via phone or via the Antenno App.</p>
Submission 318	Submitter wishes the Feilding water supply did not cause limescale deposits on areas in the home such as showers.	Thank you for raising your concerns regarding limescale build-up. All water supply managed by the Manwatū District Council is compliant with the Drinking Water Quality Assurance Rules (2022). Limescale is caused by minerals in the water (known as hardness) and while it can leave deposits on showers and appliances, it does not affect the safety of the water.

Submission number and link	Submission points	Officer Response
Submission 334	Need to stop contaminating the river with pollution where we draw off water to drink	<p>The Feilding water supply scheme has multiple sources of water. Water from the Ōroua River is drawn from well upstream of the Manawatū Wastewater Treatment Plant (at Barrows Road) and is treated at the Almadale Water Treatment Plant. Drinking water from Almadale is fully compliant with the New Zealand Drinking Water Standards for both bacteria and protozoa.</p> <p>The Manawatū District Council has consent from Horizons Regional Council to discharge treated wastewater to the Ōroua River. Council has invested substantially in the Manawatū Wastewater Treatment Plant to meet these consent requirements, including by investing in land-based discharge of treated wastewater and the construction of wetlands to minimise direct discharges to the Ōroua River.</p>
SUBMISSION 297	MDC need to continue to ensure adequate potable water supply and appropriate wastewater treatment into the future (297)	Council's Long-term Plan 2024-34 includes information on how Council plans to invest in its reticulated water and wastewater networks to meet both current needs and future growth and demand. Key projects include Council's wastewater centralisation project, Feilding water resilience and upgrades to the Stanway-Halcombe Rural Water Scheme.
Submission 460 Speaking to Submission	Was the consultation document also prepared before the updated report (relating to the other harmonisation options? (460)	Council meetings are generally available to view; however, due to technical issues during the meeting on the 19th of December, only the first hour of the meeting was recorded. As a result, the meeting was not published on the website. Local Water Done Well was discussed during the second part of the meeting, which unfortunately was not recorded. A summary of the discussions and decisions recorded is available in the Council minutes

Submission number and link	Submission points	Officer Response
		Manawatū District Council Agendas & Minutes Manawatū District Council
Submission 460 Speaking to Submission	<p>Was the updated harmonisation modelling that stated option four would not financially disadvantage Manawatū District done after the decision made on December 19th? As MDC stated in a council meeting, attended by the submitter, that even though a combined option wouldn't necessarily cost more they would still opt to go it alone. It would have been beneficial to know the proposed advantages to combining even if this wasn't the MDC preferred option.</p>	<p>The updated Local Water Done Well modelling for the Horowhenua, Kāpiti Coast, Manawatū District and Palmerston North City Councils was finalised by Morrison Low on 25 February 2025.</p> <p>As outlined in the Consultation Document, Council also considered that option 1 (status quo) would best provide for local decision making as under options 2 and 3 water services would be removed from each individual council and managed by an independent Board of Directors. It was also the option that would give greatest weight to the voices in our District, and ensures conversations with local communities, iwi/hapū, and stakeholders remain local. Under options 2 and 3, decision making would be removed from Council and the voices and needs of the various local communities, iwi/hapū and stakeholders would have to be balanced and prioritised.</p> <p>Local Water Done Well legislation and guidance from the Government and the Department of Internal Affairs suggests that it could be advantageous for Councils to join together as a higher numbers of ratepayers contributing to the water service delivery pan should help to make the cost of upgrading and maintaining assets more affordable over time. However, due to the investment that the Manawatū District Council has made in its three waters infrastructure relative to other Councils in the region, options 2 and 3 would mean that Manawatū District</p>

Submission number and link	Submission points	Officer Response
		ratepayers would be paying more for water services and subsidising investments in other Districts.
Submission 460 Speaking to Submission	What is Council doing to ensure future decisions are made with sufficient research? Refers to Bioplant	Council has robust decision-making processes and endeavours to make decisions that are in the best interests of the District. Council reviews decision processes and project outcomes and documents lessons learned to guide future decision-making.
Submission 460 Speaking to Submission	Could utilising a CCO to borrow money be beneficial to safe-guard in the event of climate-change weather events or do MDC believe they are able to manage these events?	<p>It is true that a CCO has the potential to be able to borrow more money than a stand-alone in-house water service provider as they are not subject to the same borrowing limits that are set out in the Local Government (Financial Reporting and Prudence) Regulations 2024.</p> <p>However, even if a CCO is able to borrow more money, communities will still have to service that debt via rates. The more that is borrowed, the less affordable repayments become for the community.</p> <p>Council's Long-term Plan 2024-34 includes the following assumption with respect to emergency events:</p> <p>"The Manawatū District Council is prepared to respond and recover from emergency events that impact the district over the life of the Long-term Plan. However, a catastrophic event, (such as a major earthquake or major weather event) or several consecutive extreme weather events will exceed Council's financial provision to recover costs incurred."</p> <p>This assumption relies on the following mitigating factors:</p>

Submission number and link	Submission points	Officer Response
		<p>Emergency Management planning and preparedness aligns with Council's Business Continuity Plan 2020. This plan covers Council's response to an event. It outlines the actions that will be taken internally, to ensure that the critical services Council delivers continue throughout and following an event. The Council also continues to be part of the Manawatū-Whanganui Civil Defence Emergency Management Group working to ensure preparedness for any emergency event, ability to deliver a coordinated response and recovery.</p> <p>Council has a \$5 million buffer between our self-imposed debt cap and the Borrowing Management Policy to ensure we have adequate borrowing facilities in case of emergencies. Council also maintains a resilience fund that it is able to use to offset some of the costs for recovery from emergency events, particularly the local share of any roading emergency works that are not funded by the New Zealand Transport Agency (NZTA) emergency works subsidy. Catastrophic emergency events are assumed to attract Government and private charitable sector support.</p>
Environmental Considerations		
Submission 472	Submitter would like to know if, putting aside finances, there were environmental advantages in combining, such a protecting waterways?	<p>MDC has not identified any environmental advantages that would come with delivering water services in conjunction with other Council's through a combined CCO delivery model.</p> <p>MDC is committed to achieving good environmental outcomes on behalf of the Manawatū Community. One example of the work that we have done to improve environmental outcomes is our Wastewater Centralisation Project. MDC transports wastewater from the villages of Sanson (including the Royal New Zealand</p>

Submission number and link	Submission points	Officer Response
		<p>Airforce Base Ohakea), Rongotea and Halcombe to the Manawatū WWTP through a network of pipes and pump stations. Once completed, this project will result in over 100km of waterways being free of any treated wastewater discharge, and enables MDC to treat that wastewater to a higher quality than could be achieved in smaller wastewater treatment plants across the District.</p> <p>If MDC makes the decision to continue to own, manage and deliver its water services in-house, this does not prevent Council from working with other Councils or CCO's through shared service agreements, should such arrangements be of benefit to the community and environment of the Manawatū District.</p>

Council

Meeting of 15 May 2025

Business Unit: People and Corporate
Date Created: 30 April 2025

Adoption of the Remuneration and Reimbursement for External Committee Members Policy

Purpose Te Aronga o te Pūrongo

To present the Remuneration and Reimbursement for External Committee Members Policy to the Council for adoption.

Recommendations Ngā Tūtohinga

That the Council adopts the Remuneration and Reimbursement for External Committee Members Policy without amendment, noting that funding will be sourced from existing budgets.

OR

That the Council adopts the Remuneration and Reimbursement for External Committee Members Policy with amendments, noting that funding will be sourced from existing budgets.

Report prepared by:
Ash Garstang
Governance and Assurance Manager

Approved for submission by:
Frances Smorti
General Manager - People and Corporate

1 Background Ngā Kōrero o Muri

Creative Communities Assessment Committee

1.1 The Council re-established the Creative Communities Assessment Committee at its meeting 17 November 2022 in accordance with the Local Government Act 2002 (schedule 7, cl. 30). The five **external members** on the Committee are currently eligible to claim:

- \$130 for pre-meeting work (the assessment of grants);
- \$130 for attendance at a Committee meeting; and
- \$1.04 per kilometre for mileage (in accordance with the rates set by the Remuneration Authority).

1.2 The two **elected members** on this Committee can only claim for mileage.

District Licencing Committee

1.3 The District Licencing Committee is established in accordance with the Sale and Supply of Alcohol Act 2012 (cl. 186) and is not disestablished at the end of the triennium. Members of the Committee (both elected and externally appointed) are currently eligible to claim the below fees:

- \$82.75 per hour – Committee Chair;
- \$54.11 per hour – Committee Member; and
- \$1.04 per kilometre for mileage (in accordance with the rates set by the Inland Revenue Department).

1.4 The hourly fee covers both pre-meeting work and attendance at meetings.

1.5 Fees for the District Licencing Committee are guided by the “Revised Fees Framework for members appointed to bodies in which the Crown has an interest” (the “**Fees Framework**”), most recently updated and released by the Cabinet Office on 06 October 2022 (CO(22)2). The Fees Framework is revised every three years, with the next review due in October 2025.

1.6 The Remuneration Authority has no jurisdiction over fees paid to licencing committees and does not prohibit elected members claiming for fees when acting in their capacity as a licencing committee member.

1.7 The Policy was last reviewed in May 2024 and is on a 1-yearly review schedule, in order to ensure that the fees for external members remain up to date and are appropriate.

2 Strategic Fit Te Tautika ki te Rautaki

2.1 Not applicable as this is considered a routine item.

3 Discussion and Options Considered Ngā Matapakinga me ngā Kōwhiringa i Wānangahia

3.1 In accordance with the Fees Framework, the District Licencing Committee is categorised under Group 2 (Statutory Tribunals and Authorities), Level 3.

3.2 The Fees Framework specifies a tiered approval level for fee increases, based on a percentage increase of existing fees:

Increase %	Approval Level
Up to 3%	Chief Executive or Governance Board
3% - 5%	Responsible Minister
5% - 10%	Minister for the Public Service
Above 10%	Cabinet Appointments and Honours Committee (APH) and Cabinet

3.3 The rates listed in Schedule 2 (highlighted) of the Policy are a 3% increase on the current rates offered to members of the Committee:

Current rate	New rate in the Policy
Chair: \$82.75 per hour	Chair: \$85.23 per hour
Member: \$54.11 per hour	Member: \$55.73 per hour

3.4 These rates will be reviewed in one year's time during the Policy review.

4 Risk Assessment Te Arotake Tūraru

4.1 Not required as this is considered to be a routine item.

5 Engagement Te Whakapānga

Significance of Decision

5.1 The Council's Significance and Engagement Policy is not triggered by matters discussed in this report. No stakeholder engagement is required.

Māori and Cultural Engagement

- 5.2 There are no known cultural considerations associated with the matters addressed in this report. No specific engagement with Māori or other ethnicity groups is necessary.

Community Engagement

- 5.3 No community engagement is required.

6 Operational Implications Ngā Pānga Whakahaere

- 6.1 There are no operational implications.

7 Financial Implications Ngā Pānga Ahumoni

- 7.1 The financial implications of this Policy are minor. There has been no increase to the pre-meeting or meeting attendance fees offered to external members on the Creative Communities Assessment Committee, and the increase to fees for the District Licence Committee members are small (less than \$250 per annum).
- 7.2 There is no effect on the mileage rate for both Committees as the two Schedules tie this directly to the rates currently set by the Remuneration Authority and Fees Framework.
- 7.3 The increases to DLC can be comfortably accommodated within existing budgets.

8 Statutory Requirements Ngā Here ā-Ture

- 8.1 The remuneration and reimbursement rates for the Creative Communities Assessment Committee are not set by any specific legislation or statutes, although they should not contravene any relevant provisions contained within the Local Government Act 2002 (particularly around the Committee's establishment and appointment of members) or prescriptions set by the Remuneration Authority.
- 8.2 The remuneration and reimbursement rates for the District Licencing Committee are stipulated by the Fees Framework. The Fees Framework sets fee 'brackets and any fee amount that an agency wishes to set that is above the relevant bracket requires Ministerial approval. The fees included in the Policy are within the bracket (Group 2, Level 3) set by the Fees Framework.

9 Next Steps Te Kokenga

- 9.1 If approved, staff will update Policy and expense forms to display the new rates for the District Licencing Committee.

10 Attachments Ngā Āpitihanga

- P281 Remuneration and Reimbursement for External Committee Members Policy



Remuneration and Reimbursement for External Committee Members Policy

Previous Adoption Date:	01 August 2024
Adopted/Confirmed:	
Review Frequency:	1 Year
Next Review Date:	May 2025
Policy type:	Governance
Reviewer	GM People & Corporate
Policy version	P281

Contents

1	Purpose	1
2	Scope	1
3	Definitions	1
4	Background	1
5	Remuneration and Reimbursement Rates.....	2
6	Eligibility for Council-organised training	2
7	Taxation obligations	2
8	Applicability of Council's Code of Conduct	3
9	Applicability of Council's Standing Orders	3
10	Term of Appointment	3
11	Delegations	3
	Schedule 1 – Creative Communities Assessment Committee.....	4
	Schedule 2 – District Licensing Committee	5

1 Purpose

- 1.1 This policy sets out guidelines for the remuneration and reimbursement of expenses applicable to external members appointed as community representatives to Council committees and subcommittees.

2 Scope

- 2.1 This policy applies to the appointment of external members to Council Committees and Subcommittees.
- 2.2 This policy does not apply to:
- Appointment of Independent Commissioners;
 - Appointment of external member to Audit and Risk Committee; and
 - Individuals appointed in their role as an employee or representative of an organisation and where that person is receiving financial remuneration from that organisation.

3 Definitions

- 3.1 External member – a person who is not an elected member and who is appointed by Council resolution as a member of a committee or subcommittee in accordance with Schedule 7, Clause 31 of the Local Government Act 2002.
- 3.2 Member – a person who is currently an elected member of a local authority (the Council), in accordance with Section 19A of the Local Electoral Act 2001.
- 3.3 Code of Conduct – the Code of Conduct applying to members of the Council, which has been adopted by a resolution of the Council in accordance with Schedule 7, Clause 15 of the Local Government Act 2002. This document is distinct from any conduct or ethics policies applying to Council officers.
- 3.4 Standing Orders – the Standing Orders adopted by a resolution of the Council for the conduct of its meetings and its subordinate decision-making bodies, in accordance with Schedule 7, Clause 27 of the Local Government Act 2002.
- 3.5 Committee – a standing committee or subcommittee established by the Council, in accordance with Schedule 7, Clause 30 of the Local Government Act 2002. The Policy does not apply to any other groups, including Council organisations (CO's) or Council-controlled organisations (CCO's). The remuneration for CO's and CCO's is covered by the Appointment of Directors to Council Organisations and Council-Controlled Organisations Policy.

4 Background

- 4.1 The membership of a committee can be made up of elected members and/or external members, or a mix thereof. At least one member of a committee must also be a member of the Council (this requirement does not apply to subcommittees).
- 4.2 Responsibility for appointing committee members (both elected and external) resides with the Council. The Council may appoint external members if they deem a

person to have skills, attributes or knowledge that will assist the work of the relevant committee or subcommittee.

Schedule 7, Clause 31, Local Government Act 2002

4.3 Council recognises that:

- Members of the community may voluntarily and actively contribute to Council processes in the interests of the public good or in the interests of particular groups that they may represent.
- Many of its decision-making processes will require the active involvement of community representatives to ensure acceptable outcomes can occur.
- Community representatives may have limited capacity and financial resources and this may restrict their ability to actively participate in Council processes.
- Nominally compensating community representatives for their involvement in decision-making processes will support fuller, fairer and more equitable participation.

5 Remuneration and Reimbursement Rates

5.1 Remuneration and Reimbursement Rates for specific committees and subcommittees are included in the schedules, located at the bottom of this Policy.

6 Eligibility for Council-organised training

6.1 External members are eligible to attend any Council-organised training for committee members in relation to matters relevant to the committee, e.g., training in relation to new legislation.

6.2 Requests for skills development-related training are to be considered by the Chief Executive on a case-by-case basis.

6.3 An allowance for time spent at training may be paid on a per-hour basis if specified in the relevant Schedule to this Policy. Where not explicitly stated, an allowance may be paid at a pre-determined rate if approval is provided by the relevant budgetary manager prior to the training taking place.

7 Taxation obligations

7.1 For tax purposes, committee members are treated by the Inland Revenue Department as self-employed. Payments made to committee members are treated as schedular payments and have withholding tax deducted at 33%. Committee members are able to claim expenses incurred in their role as part of their annual filing of their tax return.

7.2 Committee members are responsible for meeting their own ACC Levy obligations.

7.3 For the purposes of the Goods and Services Tax Act 1985, the term “taxable activity” does not apply to the role of a Chairperson or member of any committee (refer Goods and Services Tax Act 1985 section 6(3)(c)(iii) and section 6(4)). There are some exceptions to this, outlined in sections 6(4) and 6(5) that members will need to review to see if the situations described apply to them. These relate to circumstances when

the member has to account to their employer for the remuneration received, and when the member already carries out a taxable activity as defined in the Act and their services as a member of the committee are deemed to be supplied in the course of that taxable activity.

8 Applicability of Council's Code of Conduct

- 8.1 All external members of a committee and subcommittee must abide by the Council's Code of Conduct adopted under Schedule 7, Clause 15 of the Local Government Act 2002.

9 Applicability of Council's Standing Orders

- 9.1 All external members of a committee and subcommittee must abide by the Council's Standing Orders adopted under Schedule 7, Clause 27 of the Local Government Act 2002.

10 Term of Appointment

- 10.1 Appointments are considered to have commenced from the date of the applicable Council resolution making the appointment.
- 10.2 For appointees to committees and subcommittees, the appointment will end when the committee or subcommittee is discharged at the end of the local government triennium.

Schedule 7, Clause 30(7), Local Government Act 2002

- 10.3 The Council may discharge any member of a committee or subcommittee at any time.

Schedule 7, Clause 31(1), Local Government Act 2002

11 Delegations

- 11.1 The implementation of this policy is delegated to the Chief Executive and their delegates.
- 11.2 The Governance and Assurance Manager is responsible for providing advice, support and the implementation of this policy.

Schedule 1 – Creative Communities Assessment Committee

1. The Creative Communities Assessment Committee was (re)established by the Council on 25 October 2022.
2. External members are appointed by the Council near the beginning of each triennium. The appointments must be aligned with Creative New Zealand's guidelines around the tenure of community representatives.
3. There are five external members, comprised of:
 - 4x Community representatives
 - 1x Tangata whenua representative
4. External members of the Committee are eligible for remuneration and reimbursement, as detailed in the below table. External members are required to submit an expense claim form to officers for each eligible meeting, detailing the rates that they are claiming for and the distance travelled for mileage.

Creative Communities Assessment Committee		
Item	Rate per meeting	Notes
Assessment Allowance	\$130	For the assessment of grants submitted to a funding round
Meeting Allowance	\$130	For attendance at a Committee meeting
Mileage	\$..... /km	In accordance with the rate (per kilometre) set by the Remuneration Authority

5. The rates for mileage will be aligned with the rates paid to elected members for travel to and from meetings (set by the Remuneration Authority). This ensures that there is fairness among elected members and external members who are appointed to the Committee.
6. As elected members are remunerated in accordance with the determinations made by the Remuneration Authority (including the provision of a salary), they are not eligible to claim the assessment and meeting allowance detailed within this Schedule.

Schedule 2 – District Licensing Committee

1. The District Licensing Committee is established by legislation under the Sale and Supply of Alcohol Act 2012. It is not subject to disestablishment at the end of the local government triennium and members (both elected and external) are appointed by the Council to serve for a term of five years. Member's tenure is complete at the end of five years, however they may be reappointed by the Council for additional tenures.

Clauses 186 and 192, Sale and Supply of Alcohol Act 2012

2. There are four members, comprised of:
 - 1x Chair
 - 2x Members (external)
 - 1x Member (elected member)
3. The fees payable to members of the Committee are detailed in the **Fees Framework**, released by the Cabinet Office. For the purpose of paying fees to members, the District Licensing Committee currently sits within Group 2 (Statutory Tribunals and Authorities), Level 3.
4. Both external and elected members are eligible to claim the fees.

Note: The Sale and Supply of Alcohol Act 2012 and Fees Framework make no distinction between external and elected members for the provision of fees. The Remuneration Authority has no jurisdiction over fees related to alcohol Licensing hearings and does not prohibit the payment of fees to elected members for this purpose.
5. Members of the Committee are eligible to claim for fees as detailed in the below table. Members are required to submit an expense claim form to officers for each eligible meeting, detailing the rate and hours that they are claiming for and the distance travelled for mileage.

District Licensing Committee		
Item	Rate per hour	Notes
Fee (chair)	\$85.23	Includes preparation (i.e., pre-reading) and meeting time
Fee (members)	\$55.73	Includes preparation (i.e., pre-reading) and meeting time
Mileage	\$..... /km	In accordance with the rate (per kilometre) set by the Inland Revenue Department

6. Members of the Committee are eligible to claim an hourly rate for time spent at formal training, provided that the member's attendance has been approved by the Council. Unless approved by the Regulatory Services Manager beforehand, an hourly allowance will not be provided for pre-reading or other pre-course work that may be required.
7. The rates for mileage are set in accordance with the Inland Revenue Department's most recently published table of rates.

Council

Meeting of 15 May 2025

Business Unit: People and Corporate

Date Created: 15 April 2025

Hearing of Submissions - Significance & Engagement Policy

Purpose Te Aronga o te Pūrongo

The purpose of the Hearing is to provide an opportunity for submitters to present their views and to verbally interact with Council, as required by Section 83(1)(d) of the Local Government Act 2002.

Recommendations Ngā Tūtohunga

That the Council receives this report and hears verbal submissions on the Significance & Engagement Policy.

Report prepared by:

Ash Garstang

Governance and Assurance Manager

Approved for submission by:

Frances Smorti

General Manager - People and Corporate

1 Background Ngā Kōrero o Muri

- 1.1 Section 76AA of the Local Government Act 2002 (LGA 2002) requires that each local authority has a Significant and Engagement Policy (the “Policy”). At a minimum, the Policy must cover:
- Indicators of Significance
 - Methods and/or principles of Engagement
 - A list of Strategic Assets
- 1.2 The Policy does not expire and can be reviewed at any time.
- 1.3 Those submitters who wished to speak to their written submission will present to the Council at its meeting 15 May 2025.

2 Strategic Fit Te Tautika ki te Rautaki

- 2.1 During the adoption of the Long-term Plan 2024-34, the Council resolved not to adopt the Significance & Engagement Policy, and instead asked that staff review and update it.
- 2.2 The hearing of submissions to this Policy review furthers the Council’s strategic goal of “A future planned together”, by working with all parts of the community to plan for the future together.

3 Discussion and Options Considered Ngā Matapakinga me ngā Kōwhiringa i Wānangahia

- 3.1 The draft Policy (attachment 1) is different from the existing Policy in the following areas:
- Structural and grammatical improvements.
 - A new section on community participation, outlining practical ways residents can engage with the Council.
 - A more detailed approach to assessing the significance of proposals.
 - A tiered framework for engagement methods, based on the level of significance.
 - A revised list of strategic assets, including Te Āhuru Mōwai (Community Hub).
 - Clearer principles for engagement, including a strong commitment to inclusion, transparency, and Māori participation.
- 3.2 The submission process and submission form asked the public to provide their views on these points, in addition to any other views that they may have around engagement with the Council.
- 3.3 The Council received eight submissions, with four submitters indicating their wish to present their views verbally.

- 3.4 The hearing today is an opportunity to hear from those members of the public who have accepted the invitation to give their views on the draft Policy.

4 Risk Assessment Te Arotake Tūraru

- 4.1 There are no risks for this hearing.

5 Engagement Te Whakapānga

Significance of Decision

- 5.1 As this is the Policy that determines how the Council determines significance, any substantial update to it requires community consultation, as per Section 76AA(5) of the Local Government Act 2002.

Māori and Cultural Engagement

- 5.2 Te Kīwai is the engagement process which guides Council's practice and ensures the onus to engage and include Māori is shared between Council and all partners. In this manner, we progress both the articles and principles of Te Tiriti o Waitangi by maintaining the balance between Kawanatanga (Governance) of the Council and Tino Rangatiratanga (Sovereignty) of whānau, hapū, and iwi Māori.
- 5.3 Cr Bell and staff presented to a Te Kōtui Reo Taumata Hui on 30 April 2025, to discuss the draft Policy and seek views on its content.
- 5.4 The Manawatū Multicultural Council helped to promote the consultation through their internal contacts and social media page.

Community Engagement

- 5.5 Consultation on the draft Policy took place from 04 April to 08 May 2025, and was promoted via the Council's Make Your Mark website, which included an online submission form. The Policy consultation was also advertised via the District News and Council's social media platforms.

6 Operational Implications Ngā Pānga Whakahaere

- 6.1 There are no operational implications.

7 Financial Implications Ngā Pānga Ahumoni

- 7.1 There are no financial implications.

8 Statutory Requirements Ngā Here ā-Ture

- 8.1 The LGA 2002 defines several important concepts for this report and/or the content of the draft Policy, including:

- Section 81 – Contributions to decision-making processes by Māori

- Section 82 – Principles of consultation
- Section 83 – Special consultative procedure

9 Next Steps Te Kokenga

- 9.1 The draft Policy will be brought to Council on 05 June 2025 for deliberation and adoption. This is the opportunity for elected members to take account of the public's feedback and consider changes to the draft Policy. If changes are requested that require a substantial re-write (rather than adopting the Policy with amendments), it will be brought back to Council on 19 June 2025.

Stages	Date/s	Explanation
Statement of Proposal adopted by Council	03 April 2025	
Consultation Period	04 April – 05 May 2025	As per Section 83 of the Local Government Act 2002.
Oral Submissions	15 May 2025	
Deliberations and Adoption of the Draft Policy, with or without amendment	05 June 2025	Includes both deliberations, and adoption (or non-adoption) of the draft Policy. There is an opportunity to defer adoption until 19 June 2025 if the draft Policy requires more substantial amendment.
Adoption	19 June 2025	Back-up meeting for adoption, if substantial amendments are required.

10 Attachments Ngā Āpitihanga

- Draft Significance & Engagement Policy
- Schedule of Speakers and their Written Submissions

Significance and Engagement Policy



Adopted/Confirmed	
Review Frequency	4 yearly
Date last reviewed / Reconfirmed	March 2020
Next review due	2024
Policy type	Governance
Policy Owner	Governance and Assurance Team
Policy version	P274

Contents

1. Purpose	2
2. Scope	2
3. Glossary	3
4. Community Participation	4
5. Significance.....	5
6. Engagement	6
7. The Community	7
Schedule 1: Determining Significance	9
Schedule 2: Engagement Methods.....	10
Schedule 3: Strategic Assets	11
Schedule 4: Engagement Principles.....	12

1. Purpose

The purpose of the policy is to:

- Aid the Council in assessing the significance of ideas, problems, assets, services, planning and finances.
- Explain when the Council will engage with residents.
- Describe the ways that residents can share their opinions with the Council, and how they can influence decision-making.
- Meet the requirements of Section 76AA of the Local Government Act 2002.
- Clarify Council decision making on consultation and engagement.

2. Scope

- This Policy applies to Council elected members and staff.
- It is applicable to any proposal presented to the Council or its Committees for a decision.
- The Policy does not affect any statutory requirement to undertake specific consultation and decision-making processes (e.g., under the Local Government Act 2002 or resource management legislation).

3. Glossary

Term	Description
Significance	<p>Significance refers to how important something is and its impact on residents. The Council determines this by looking at how the District will be affected, the long-term consequences, and the associated costs.</p> <p>‘Significant’ is also defined in section 5 of the Local Government Act 2002: <i>“In relation to any issue, proposal, decision, or other matter, means that the issue, proposal, decision, or other matter has a high degree of significance.”</i></p>
Engagement	<p>Engagement is the process by which the Council seeks input from the community. It ranges from informing residents to actively involving them in decision-making.</p>
Consultation	<p>Consultation is a more formal process than engagement, with principles outlined in section 82 of the Local Government Act 2002 (LGA 2002).</p> <p>In certain cases, the Council is required to use the Special Consultative Procedure (section 83, LGA 2002), which includes specific legal requirements such as:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The type of information that must be provided to the public • The minimum length of the consultation period • The opportunity for the public to provide both written and oral submissions <p>Once a consultation period closes, the process typically continues with:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Hearing oral submissions • Deliberating on the content of submissions and public feedback • Deciding whether to adopt the proposal (with or without changes), or not adopt it at all.
Annual Report	<p>A document published yearly that summarises the Council’s performance, including how much money it spent.</p> <p>This document allows residents to scrutinise the Council’s performance against the goals set out in Long-term Plans and Annual Plans.</p>
Assets	<p>Assets are resources owned by the Council that have economic value and can provide future benefit for the community.</p> <p>Strategic assets are important assets that the Council needs to keep and maintain, in order to continue providing for the needs of the community. The Council’s current strategic assets are detailed in Schedule 3 of this policy.</p>
Planning	<p>This refers to the Council’s long-term planning. Planning is generally significant, and the community is asked to provide input. Important pieces of planning include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Long-term Plans where the Council decides how to use its finances and how to deliver services. Completed every three years (next due in 2027).

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Annual Plans which take place in the “in-between years” of Long-term plans. • The District Plan which sets the rules for the District around zoning, land-use and consenting.
Mana Whenua	Refers to iwi/hapū with ancestral connection, custodianship and guardianship over the lands in the Manawatū district. Mana whenua in a Te Ao Māori lense has distinct responsibilities of a particular area.
Tangata Whenua	A translation to “People of the land” and refers to the Māori people or Indigenous people of Aotearoa.

4. Community Participation

While the Council has a responsibility for determining how and when to engage with the community, we welcome and encourage the public to reach out to the Council themselves – there are several ways to do this:

Contacting the Council

- The public can contact Council staff for routine matters and queries:
Email: public@mdc.govt.nz
Phone: 06 323 0000
Visit us: 135 Manchester Street, Feilding
- Antenno. The public can contact the Council via the Antenno app to report things that need fixing, provide feedback about services or make suggestions. Lodged queries include the GPS location of the submitter, which combined with the ability to send photos, allows the Council to respond quickly to reported issues.

Contacting the Mayor or Councillors

- The public have a right to contact their Mayor or Councillors and to request to meet with them, although routine matters may be referred back through to Council staff if appropriate. Contact details are published on our website.

Attending Meetings

- The Council holds regular meetings where the Mayor and Councillors make decisions. These are advertised on the Council’s website. They are open for the public to attend, but may include a “public excluded” portion towards the end of the meeting to discuss anything confidential (e.g., to maintain the privacy of individuals, or to discuss commercially sensitive matters).

Public Forum

The public can speak at a Council meeting if they send the Council a request at least 5 working days prior. The request should describe the subject the individual wants to talk about, and can be made by email (governance@mdc.govt.nz), or by calling Customer Services (06 323 0000).

Deputations

Deputations are when a group or individual wants to speak about an item at the specific time that it is being presented to the Council for consideration. Like public forums, requests should be made 5 working days prior to the meeting either by email or phone.

Petitions

- The public can present petitions to the Council requesting that they consider a topic or undertake some type of action. A petition must be fewer than 150 words and signed by at least 20 people. It should be sent to the Council at least 5 working days prior to a Council meeting.

Elections

- Elections are held every 3 years (due in 2025 and 2028) to elect our Mayor and Councillors. Anybody over 18 years of age who resides in the District, or owns a property in the District, is eligible to vote.

5. Significance

The significance of an issue is assessed based on a range of considerations, and while it requires careful judgement, the Council applies a consistent set of factors when making this assessment, including:

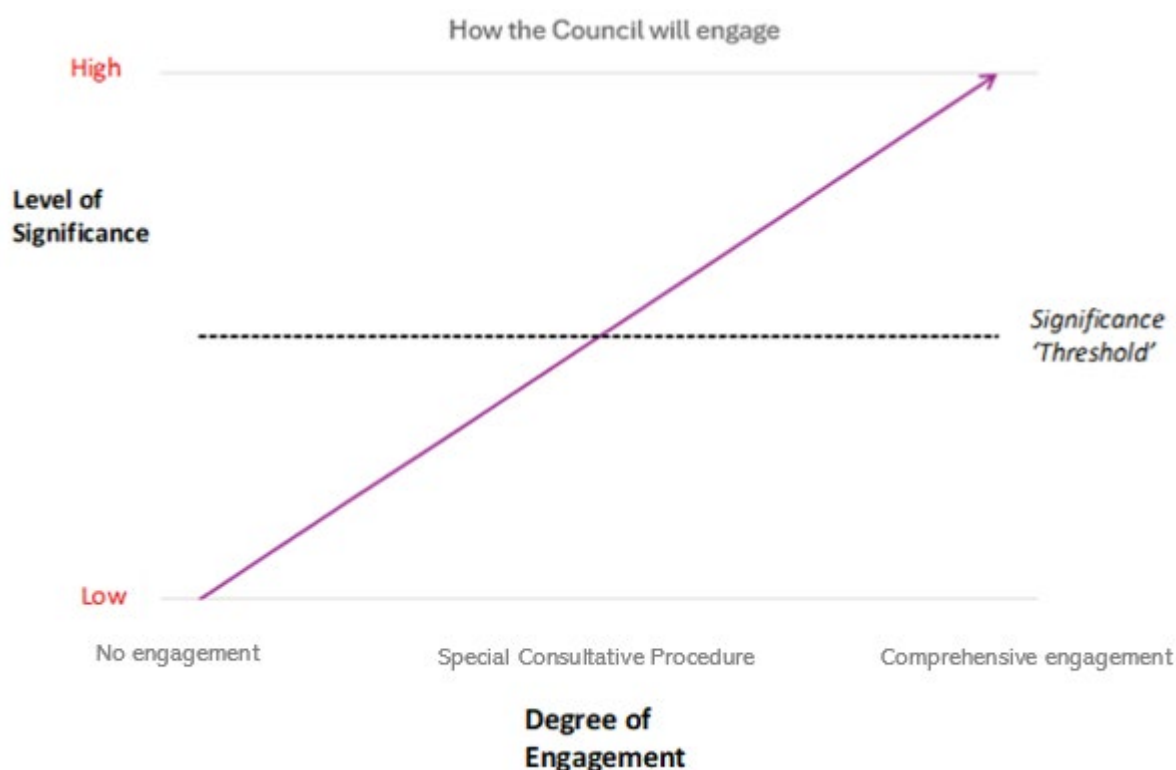
- The importance to the District as a whole
- Any disproportionate impacts on some parts of the community
- The amount of money involved (e.g., any impact on rates, debt or financial stability)
- The types of assets involved
- The effects on levels of service that the Council provides (including day-to-day services and longer-term projects)
- The permanence of the decision (e.g., can it be reversed at a later stage)
- Any effects on Council's relationships with partners and stakeholders
- Any inconsistencies with existing strategies, plans and policies

The way that the Council decides the significance of an issue is explained more fully in Schedule 1 of this policy.

6. Engagement

The Council has a responsibility to engage with the community when a topic is significant. As a general principle, it is also expected that the Council will engage with relevant people when an issue is not significant but may be of interest to specific groups.

The ways the Council will engage are described in Schedule 2 of this policy, but in general the more significant an issue is, the greater the level of engagement will be:



When the Council won't engage

There are extraordinary cases where the Council won't engage on an issue that is deemed to be significant, such as:

- In an emergency event response
- Where failure to make a decision urgently would risk harm to people or property, cause the Council to miss a substantial opportunity, or result in significant financial loss
- When physical alterations or repairs to strategic assets are required to remove immediate hazards and protect the health and safety of people

In these rare cases, the Council may notify the public of a decision made after the fact. If there are aspects of an issue yet to be resolved, or opportunity to readdress it at a later stage, the Council's engagement response will be reconsidered.

Special Consultative Procedure

The Local Government Act 2002 (section 82) sets out a legislative minimum for consultation. Consultations following the Special Consultative Procedure must:

- Include sufficient information to inform the public of the issue, and publicise this as widely as practical (e.g., newspapers, website, Council public facilities)
- Provide people with an opportunity to give comment (both in writing and in-person)
- Last for at least 1 month

There are several things that the Council is legally required to consult on, regardless of whether the Council would have otherwise determined them to be significant. For example, proposed plan changes and variations to the District Plan amendments must be consulted on in accordance with the Resource Management Act 1991, unless the changes are of a minor/technical nature or there is government direction which says consultation is not required.

7. The Community

While ‘the community’ is generally referred to in this policy as being everybody in the District, the Council also recognises that there are smaller communities within and across our boundaries that have unique interests.

Several major communities of note in our District (not a complete list) include:

Community	Description
Feilding community	The Feilding community is made up of residents living in our major District town. Projects in the town are of particular interest to this community, such as industrial and residential expansions. This group may also include commuter workers, visitors and tourists.
Village residents	There are several villages across the District and residents in these may have particular interests in roading, village growth and local facilities.
Rural community	The rural community in our District is closely tied to the land and natural resources, with a deep sense of stewardship and responsibility for the environment. This connection often shapes their way of life and influences their perspectives on land use, conservation, and local infrastructure needs.
Iwi, hapū and marae	In the District there are six mana whenua iwi and ten hapū on twelve marae (standing and non-standing). This makes for a complex and diverse cultural narrative but together they share a common affinity to the land and waterways.
Youth	Children and youth in the District are more likely to be impacted by education, transport, sport and recreational issues. Additionally, youth will naturally be impacted by Council decisions for a longer-period of time. The Council considers the long-term effect of its decisions on future residents and ratepayers.

Senior residents	Our senior residents may be more impacted by housing, health, and transport topics.
Business community	The ease of doing business in Feilding and the rural areas is important for ensuring the District's economic wellbeing.

Other communities that will have specific interests include whaikaha (those living with disabilities), the rainbow community (LGBTQI+), other ethnic communities, migrants, and transient workers.

Schedule 1: Determining Significance

The below considerations broadly sit on a continuum of low to high significance. A decision that involves two or more of these factors with greater significance is likely to be important and require some level of engagement with the community.

The Council's risk appetite informs the assessment of significance, particularly in areas such as service delivery, financial affordability, and cultural considerations. These factors are reflected in the table below:

Considerations	Description	Low significance	High significance
Importance to the District	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> General sense of importance to the community The degree of change from the status quo, and whether this is positive or negative How wide-ranging the impacts will be 	Issues that are routine and related to the inner workings of the Council	Controversial subjects, or decisions that will result in very noticeable changes from the present situation
Disproportionate impacts on select parts of the community	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Disproportionate impacts (positive or negative) can lead to perceptions of unfairness Is it likely to be controversial 	The impact is generalised relatively equally across different segments of the community	Decisions that specifically impact one or more community groups
The amount of money involved	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Is this likely to result in higher rates Who does it benefit Will it have any impact on Council's borrowing capacity 	Low-cost decisions that are more related to the inner workings of Council	Costly decisions that will generate high community interest, and involve risk or opportunity
The types of assets involved	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Strategic assets vs other assets Sentimental value of assets to the community Cultural value of land to mana whenua 	Low-value assets of limited cultural or social importance	Assets that see high community use or have sentimental value
Effects on levels of service	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Is it an increase or reduction in service Will the change clash with the expectations of the community 	No effects or minor increases to levels of service	Reductions or major increases in levels of service, particularly for publicly valued services
Permanence of the decision	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Will there be opportunity in the future to reconsider, perhaps with some level of community engagement Is the funding of the decision equitable across existing and future ratepayers 	Short-term decisions that do not involve much funding, or are subject to formal engagement	Irreversible decisions that have major impacts on the community, and commit future generations to higher debt
Effects on relationships	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Are there any risks around a decision having a negative impact on the Council's relationship with partners and stakeholders 	No foreseen impact on Council's relationships with partners and stakeholders	There is a risk that Council's relationship with a partner or stakeholder could be damaged
Inconsistencies with existing strategies, plans and policies	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Is the decision likely to contradict other frameworks the Council has What degree of change or uncertainty is there in this area 	Decisions that do not significantly conflict with existing documentation	Decisions that substantially differ from existing strategies, plans and policies

Schedule 2: Engagement Methods*

Degree of Significance	<div> <div>←</div> <div>Significance</div> <div>→</div> </div>				
	Low Significance (not important)	Limited Significance (of interest to select people or groups)	Significant (i.e., threshold) (community-wide)	High Significance (issue of high interest to the community)	Very high Significance (critical issue)
Council's Method of Engagement	Provide information: Public notices Websites and/or emails Media releases Council agendas Community noticeboards Billboards / displays	Provide information, and seek targeted feedback: Brainstorms Surveys Events / roadshows Meeting with Council staff Hui	Involve the community: Formal proposals Hearings Public meetings Community committees Iwi / hapū Partner organisations	Collaborate with the community: External working groups Steering committees Continuous feedback loops Iterative developments	Empower the community to decide: Legislated processes Externally facilitated Binding referendums
Special Consultative Procedure?	No		Possible	Yes	
When will the Engagement happen?	After a decision has been made	After the issue has been discussed by the Council and Council decides to seek feedback from relevant people or groups	The Council will generally notify the public of the process and topic, before making a proposal for community-wide feedback	The Council will undertake some type of pre-engagement (i.e., prior to making a proposal), to better understand the community's viewpoints	The Council will provide a long lead-in time (typically several months), before facilitating a process that hands decision-making to the community
Example of issues (not an exhaustive list)	Water restrictions Road closures Emergency repair works New policies	Signage Leases and licences New minor facilities (e.g., gardens, toilets)	District Plan Annual Plan (major updates) Changes to level of services Repairs to major facilities	Long-term Plan Changes to strategic assets Key reductions to services Bylaws	Elections Polls Representation reviews

*based on the IAP2 Spectrum of Participation

Schedule 3: Strategic Assets

The Local Government Act 2002 requires the Council to list its strategic assets in this Policy. These assets are essential for the Council to achieve outcomes important for the community's well-being, both now and in the future.

The Council considers its networks and other large assets as “complete single assets”, as it is the group of assets within these that deliver the service. This means that the Council will not follow the special consultative procedure if only part of a strategic asset is affected, unless that part substantially alters the level of service provided to the community.

Any change of ownership or control for a strategic asset as a whole must be provided for in the current Long-term Plan, and the Long-term Plan must involve engagement with the community (including the special consultative procedure).

Strategic Assets

- Parks, reserves and sports grounds
- Council administration building (135 Manchester Street, Feilding)
- Te Āhuru Mōwai (Community Hub Libraries)
- Recreational buildings including theatres, recreation complexes and high-priority halls
- Makino Aquatic Centre
- Roading network
- Stormwater network (urban)
- Land drainage networks (rural)
- Wastewater reticulation networks and treatment assets
- Water supply reticulation networks, treatment assets and storage facilities

Schedule 4: Engagement Principles

Principles <i>Council will reinforce the below principles when engaging with the community</i>	Indicators <i>Engagement processes that follow these principles commonly exhibit the following characteristics</i>	Outcomes <i>Meeting these principles and indicators will be likely to result in the following outcomes</i>
Transparency The Council ensures decision-making is accessible and transparent, providing the community with timely information to participate effectively.	Council will: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Conduct engagement in a genuine effort to listen to, and consider with an open mind, community and stakeholder input • Present realistic and deliverable options for feedback • Ensure that engagement questions are objective (i.e., not leading) • Provide enough time and resources to ensure participants have been provided fair opportunity to understand the matter and contribute their views • Allow sufficient extra time in case other issues arise during an engagement process • Value contributions made by the public, acknowledging the time and effort they have given • Give timely feedback on the results of the public's input, and the subsequent decisions made • Respect and give weight to local knowledge 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Members of the public have a better understanding of the proposal or decision, and are able to participate effectively • Council has an enhanced understanding of community sentiment

Principles <i>Council will reinforce the below principles when engaging with the community</i>	Indicators <i>Engagement processes that follow these principles commonly exhibit the following characteristics</i>	Outcomes <i>Meeting these principles and indicators will be likely to result in the following outcomes</i>
Building Relationships and Community Capacity Engagement is an opportunity for the Council to build on its long-term relationship with the community.	Council will: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Exercise a variety of engagement approaches (as set out in schedule 2) and make optimal use of these to build ongoing relationships with the community • Ensure that engagement opportunities are suited to the target audience, and provide ample opportunity for participants to present their views • Promote ways for the community to raise issues directly with the Council so that it is a two-way relationship (see section 3) • Identify opportunities to work in partnership with the community, to encourage a shared sense of ownership and participation • Ensure that community views and preferences are widely shared among Council members and officers • Engage early with partners and stakeholders in the development of plans, policies and decisions that affect them • Actively consider how to address and contribute to the needs and aspirations of our villages and marae 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Engagement processes improve awareness, elevate future participation and enhance the capacity of the community • A better decision or proposal will result from community participation • The decision or proposal will have greater community acceptance • Residents at our villages and marae will feel more supported in their growth aspirations
Inclusiveness and Equality Engagement and decision-making processes identify and encourage participation of the community in its full diversity. Historically excluded groups and individuals are included authentically in processes, activities, and decision-making.	Council will: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Fairly identify and distribute costs and benefits, to ensure comparable outcomes across the community • Explore creative and genuine ways of reaching community groups and individuals whose views are typically heard from the least often • Identify the specific ways that different demographics of the community may be affected by decision-making, and tailor the engagement process to amplify their views 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Council activities and decisions are responsive to the full range of needs and priorities in the community • Trust and respect for the Council increases among community members • Inclusivity and equality are increased by actively involving communities that may have been underrepresented in previous decision-making processes • New decisions and policies do not disadvantage

Principles <i>Council will reinforce the below principles when engaging with the community</i>	Indicators <i>Engagement processes that follow these principles commonly exhibit the following characteristics</i>	Outcomes <i>Meeting these principles and indicators will be likely to result in the following outcomes</i>
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide multiple ways for people to participate, and remove as many physical and mental barriers to this as possible • Where required, invest in community capacity building to enable participation • Consider cultural norms and values when designing engagement techniques for Council decision-making and consultation • Use plain language and avoid jargon or acronyms wherever possible. If formal or legal language is necessary, provide a plain language summary document • Follow up with under-engaged groups to see how the process worked for their community members, and identify improvements for future engagement 	<p>historically underrepresented groups</p>
<p>Māori and Mana Whenua participation</p> <p>Council will actively provide opportunities for Māori and Mana Whenua to contribute to its decision-making processes.</p> <p>Joint Management Agreements, Memoranda of Understanding or other similar, high level agreements will be considered when engaging with Iwi and Māori.</p>	<p>Council will:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Work with iwi, hapū and marae to provide for the protection and enhancement of the natural environment (e.g., Mana Whakahaere) • Recognise and protect Māori and Mana Whenua rights and interests within the Manawatū District • Work with Māori to determine who the relevant spokespeople/parties/experts are for each specific matter • Seek guidance from Māori in the ways that they would like the Council to engage with them (e.g., Council-marae liaisons) • As required by Section 81 of the LGA 2002, consider how it might build the capability and capacity of active Māori engagement in Council decision-making (e.g., supporting Māori involvement in briefings and workshops) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Treaty of Waitangi obligations are met (as per the LGA 2002, RMA 1991 and any other legislation relevant to local government) • Iwi and hapū relationships are maintained or enhanced

Schedule of Submission Speakers

Significance & Engagement Policy

15 May 2025

TIME	NAME	Sub #
9.30 am	Heather Browning	001
9.40 am	Angela Baker	005
9.50 am	Mark Wasley	006
10.00 am	Frances Pere (on behalf of Te Kōtui Reo Taumata)	007

From: [Make your mark Manawatū](#)
To: [MDC Submissions](#)
Subject: Significance and Engagement Policy Submission Form Form Submission
Date: Sunday, 13 April 2025 8:25:30 pm

001

Significance and Engagement Policy Submission Form Form Submission

There has been a submission of the form Significance and Engagement Policy Submission Form through your Make your mark Manawatū website.

First and Last Name:

Heather Browning

Phone:

[REDACTED]

Email:

[REDACTED]

Postal Address:

[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]

Age Group:

60-79

How did you hear about this Consultation?

Social Media

Thinking about the past 2–3 years, have you ever engaged with Manawatū District Council on a decision, proposal or issue?

I made an application for information under the Local Government Official Information and Meetings Act (LGOIMA)

If you answered yes and have engaged with Manawatū District Council, how would you rate your experience?

Very negative

What are the best ways for you or your community to engage with the Manawatū District Council?

Online surveys or feedback forms
Public meetings or workshops
Hui with iwi/hapū or marae-based engagement

Are there any groups or communities you feel are underrepresented in Council engagement?

Yes

If yes, who are they and how could we better include them?

Disabled people. You could establish a Disability Reference group to mirror the arrangements made by PNCC to engage with the disability community.

Do you have any feedback or suggestions on how we could improve the draft Significance and Engagement Policy?

It would be great if your staff adhered to the policy particularly about significant issues and potential developments.

There have been two significant processes in which I don't believe the Council engaged adequately or even at all. The first was the debacle over the Pyrolysis plant proposal. There was no public discussion run by Council at all and the information I was able to access via my LGOIMA request was not representative of all the discussions and decisions that had been made by Council. It was very sparse and included no information about meetings and proposals.

The second issue was the establishment of a radioactive materials waste disposal facility in near Ohakea air base. There was no public consultation at all about a facility of the nature. It is in the public's interest to know what is being established in our region particularly when it is a facility of this type. There was no consultation or even information sharing - in fact no engagement at all!

Would you like to come to a hearing and speak to Elected Members about your submission?

Yes

I wish to request that my name and contact details be withheld from general publication by ticking this box. Please note that if you wish to speak to your submission at the hearing, your name but not your contact details will be published within the Council Agenda.

Yes

To view all of this form's submissions, visit

https://makeyourmark.manawatudc.govt.nz/index.php/dashboard/reports/forms_new/data/38

This is not SPAM. You are receiving this message because you have submitted feedback or signed up to Make your mark Manawatū.

From: [MDC Submissions](#)
To: [Ash Garstang](#)
Subject: FW: Significance and Engagement Policy Submission Form Form Submission
Date: Thursday, 8 May 2025 7:58:05 am

From: Make your mark Manawatū <makeyourmark@mdc.govt.nz>
Sent: Wednesday, 7 May 2025 10:37 pm
To: MDC Submissions <submissions@mdc.govt.nz>
Subject: Significance and Engagement Policy Submission Form Form Submission

005

Significance and Engagement Policy Submission Form Form Submission

There has been a submission of the form Significance and Engagement Policy Submission Form through your Make your mark Manawatū website.

First and Last Name:

Angela Baker

Phone:

[REDACTED]

Email:

[REDACTED]

Postal Address:

[REDACTED]

Age Group:

60-79

How did you hear about this Consultation?

Word of Mouth

Thinking about the past 2–3 years, have you ever engaged with Manawatū District Council on a decision, proposal or issue?

This question doesn't allow us to 'select all that apply'. I wanted to tick 'Yes' for the first 4 items

If you answered yes and have engaged with Manawatū District Council, how would you rate your experience?

These were mostly 'positive' experiences i.e. not unpleasant, people said encouraging words etc, though largely I felt like I had no power to influence anything

What are the best ways for you or your community to engage with the Manawatū District Council?

Public meetings or workshops

Hui with iwi/hapū or marae-based engagement

Focus groups with key community sectors

If yes, who are they and how could we better include them?

See attached submission

Do you have any feedback or suggestions on how we could improve the draft Significance and Engagement Policy?

See attached submission

Would you like to come to a hearing and speak to Elected Members about your submission?

Yes

I would like to include additional documentation to support my submissions uploaded here.

- [Significance_and_Engagement_Submission_final.docx](#)

I wish to request that my name and contact details be withheld from general publication by ticking this box. Please note that if you wish to speak to your submission at the hearing, your name but not your contact details will be published within the Council Agenda.

Yes

To view all of this form's submissions, visit

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Engagement Subission

"The Policy helps ensure that the level of community engagement is proportionate to the importance of the issue, and it sets clear principles and expectations around how and when the Council will consult with the public."

Context

I recognise that improving community engagement is a major challenge. Both globally and nationally there has been an increasing emphasis on the importance of the individual, and a narrative (with little connection with reality) that we are all capable of looking after our own needs and that needing or leaning on others is a sign of weakness. The idea of 'community' is increasingly being eased out of political policies and programmes, and instead our political leaders speak of community services and assets using the same language as they would for profit-making businesses, and treat citizens / residents as if they were 'customers' giving feedback on 'products'. Confidence and trust in both central and local government is at an all-time low, and for the second time, New Zealand has dropped its placing, this time significantly so, in the Corruption Perceptions Index (CPI), published annually by Transparency International.

So, as I said, finding a way back from this all-time low of loss of trust is a major challenge, for Manawatū District as much as for all our local bodies.

I believe that transparency is key to rebuilding trust. But before I get into that ...

My vision

My vision for local body engagement is for a much more transparent system which includes processes of participative and deliberative democracy. To quote from a recent newsroom article: "Representative democracy presupposes that people feel that somebody is representing them. The reality is, it's a spectator sport from the citizen's point of view and it's an adversarial sport from the representative leadership's point of view". (<https://newsroom.co.nz/2025/04/26/kiwi-citizens-assembly-succeeds-in-experiment-to-find-climate-solutions/>). I found it heartening that the inaugural Rod Oram award went to an essay written on deliberative democracy.

It is being increasingly recognised that our representative democracy system only really represents those who already have a significant degree of 'power' in our world – those of us who are privileged due to such things as financial stability, being white, being male, being from the business world, being well-educated etc etc. Many people don't feel that they are being 'represented' in this system. This is more visible in central politics, but applies equally to local bodies.

I am not asking MDC to over-turn the whole system, but I'd love to see small nudges in the direction of a more participatory system. These might include things like:

- Joint Council and community committees on issues of local concern

- Pre-consultation meetings with the public. This could be useful to Councillors to find out what residents are thinking and saying before you put up the options and state which is your preferred option. No doubt you have such meetings with more important 'stake holders' but residents are stake-holders too. Pre-consultation meetings could help residents feel involved if there were opportunities for discussion on important issues before policy is written or decisions were made i.e. if the meetings were genuinely for discussion, not just designed to 'inform' residents. At present writing submissions or going to consultation meetings feels like 'going through the motions' of having a say because almost always there is a sense that the decision has already been made and that the submission process and the meetings are simply to meet government requirements or to give council a sense that they have done the right thing.

Pre-consultation meetings would provide opportunities to hear the thinking of councillors as they are still in the decision-making process. Hearing the arguments for and against various options, and hearing about the factors that have been taken into consideration would help residents to have a greater understanding of the decisions once they have been made. Recording 'workshops' and making the recordings available could be a step towards this. At present, the formal consultation documents e.g. on Local Water Done Well feel like justifications of the Council's preferred option rather than an even-handed identification of the pros and cons of the different options. The LWDW document felt dumbed-down and repetitive. Is there a requirement for these documents to have a really low reading-age level? Even if there is, with skilful writing it should still be possible to include more meaningful information. Perhaps it would be useful to have a test focus group to run the submission documents in front of before they go out.

Significance: I'm yet to write this section.

- Reading the policy document helped me understand why the Aviary was included as a consultation question in recent years – presumably because it was an issue that was perceived to possibly be 'of high importance to the community' perhaps more in an emotional sense, although in the bigger picture there are many issues that are more important that we don't get asked about. The Aviary may have met the 'emotional issue' threshold of your engagement policy but it was a whole lot less important than things such as a waste incinerator proposal.

Community

Are there other significant communities of interest which should be included?

- The Social Services sector. At present Alison Short participates actively in the Feilding Sincoss group (Social Issues Network Council of Social Services). I think this is a very valuable involvement, giving Council a direct overview of what is happening with the local social

services and what issues in the community are of concern to them, and giving representatives of the social service organisations a more detailed background to issues that Council is dealing with. The social services are a very important part of community wellbeing and whether or not central government allows local government to focus on wellbeing, it is still an important mandate as far as the majority of residents are concerned. I don't know if having a Councillor representative at Sincoss meetings is formally embedded in Council engagement processes, but if not, I recommend that this be done.

- Feilding Community Committees. I think there is a huge gap in terms of community representation by the absence of such committees. I use the plural here as I think 'Feilding' is too big an area for residents to relate to in a personal way. I think part of the reason the village committees succeed is because they relate to a smaller area and their residents strongly identify with this smaller 'neighbourhood'. I don't see it as M.D.C.'s role to these up – they are only likely to work if they emerge from genuine community desire. I think it is unlikely that this will happen anytime soon, but think it is still a gap that needs to be acknowledged. I often hear the pride of Councillors and staff expressed in what is happening in the village community committees. But please remember when you talk about this, that half of the MDC population is not included under these. For example, our villages may be really well prepared for civil defence emergencies. The same does not apply to Feilding residents.

I disagree with Michael Ford's comment on the 'Manawātū District Elections 2025' Facebook page that Feilding community committees are not needed because the community is well served by its many community organisations, and also by the Manawatu Residents and Ratepayers association. Our community organisations have completely different purposes than a community committee. And while the Residents and Ratepayers association may have some things in common with a community committee, this organisation appears focussed on opposing any Council activities other than 'roads, rats and rates'. They also appear to oppose involvement of Iwi. As such, while they believe they represent all the residents and ratepayers of the district they absolutely don't represent me, and probably not the majority of the community. I value Iwi involvement. I value our library and other cultural, arts, sports and community facilities. I value financial prudence, as they do, but don't see cutting out all service except the essential infrastructure as creating the kind of community I want to live in. Their group has its place, but it is not equivalent to a community committee.

Perhaps there is scope somehow to help Neighbourhood Support develop more street and neighbourhood groups, and use larger groupings of 'street' groups within their networks as the equivalent of community committees.

- I wonder if 'parents of children and young people' is a specific population that should be focussed on, in addition to the ones you already mention.
- I wonder if there is any way to more consciously and actively include the interests of future generations when making decisions. The busy-ness and the 'business-style' focus of meetings

could easily result in there being more focus on the here and now. This approach is sometimes framed by the idea of seven generation stewardship, a concept that urges the current generation of humans to live and work for the benefit of the seventh generation into the future. This approach is increasingly important in the light of climate change.

- **Engagement Principles**

I strongly endorse all of the four 'Principles for Engagement'.

Building Relationships and Community Capacity – this implies a two way relationship which hasn't felt strong in the past – I have felt more like I'm treated as a 'customer' with service provided by Council, rather than feeling as if 'engagement' or 'relationship' or 'conversation' was particularly important.

I applaud MDC's efforts with regard to community events. These result in the community enjoying time together in different ways and are good for our community. In no way am I suggesting that these not be offered, but I don't think they build 'engagement' – they are 'consumer events' where people attend and enjoy themselves, and it probably helps them to think more positively about Feilding and MDC. However, I don't think participation in entertainment and engagement are the same thing.

Inclusiveness and Equality. I would prefer this be changed to Inclusiveness and Equity. There are particular barriers for some groups in terms of engaging with Council. Treating everyone the same (equally) will not help to remove these barriers.

Māori and Mana Whenua participation. I strongly value this principle, and note that the work the current Councillors have done on this has been significant. I am blown away by the way that Marae have engaged with planning and submission processes. I really enjoyed the more 'robust' discussion on Local Water Done Well hosted by Bridget Bell and Council officers – this felt more like a real conversation than the main Feilding meeting the previous week. I really hope that residents vote to support the continuation of Māori Wards.

Transparency

Transparency is so much more than this: "The Council ensures decision-making is accessible and transparent, providing the community with timely information to participate effectively." I believe that lack of transparency is one of the main reasons for the lack of trust in Council and would benefit from a much more rigorous set of indicators.

The more information that is in the public domain the better. I accept that when it gets to the point of tenders, this is no longer possible 'for commercial reasons' but there is a lot more scope to be transparent up to that point. I also recognise that some people cry 'lack of transparency' regarding information that Council already has in the public domain or where questions on the issue would happily be answered by Council.

Some of the actions that I think Council could take:

- Make information available in an easily 'findable' format. For example, people complain about how much they believe was spent on the new Library / Community Hub. Being able to easily point people to the correct information on this would be helpful.
- Keeping the Public Informed on important issues that will or could affect them: A great deal of trust has been lost by not doing this. Three recent examples I am aware of are the Bioplant Waste Incinerator proposal, the Kainga Ora block, and the disposal of nuclear medical waste on Defence Ministry land near Ohakea. Of these, the one I am most familiar with is the Bioplant proposal. I would like an explanation for the following, please.
 - o Why was information withheld from the public on this? It was a proposal that had 'Significance' in terms of its potential effect on our community. There were no issues regarding commercial sensitivity – if MDC really believed our community needed one of these incinerators operating at the Resource Recover Park there should have been some kind of open 'expression of interest' process to attract the best available option.
 - o Why was this never discussed in a public council meeting prior to it being a fait-accompli (in terms of there being an agreement to lease and an intention to support the application through the Resource Management Act application process).
 - o Why were Councillors never given the opportunity to vote on it, but rather were asked to vote to support the MDC submission supporting Bioplant once the application was notified?
 - o What checks and balances have been put in place to ensure that our district never gets caught up in such a shonky process again?
 - o What will you do to ensure that residents know that changes have been made?

This particular proposal was almost laughably shonky. It turned out that the company involved were dishonest, arguably fraudulent in their application and it also turned out that contrary to their PR they had little experience in setting up these plants and the only one actually built was in South Korea. It looked like a farmer's implement shed surrounded by garbage, and was later closed down by the city authority who called it an 'environmental abomination'. A local resident identified that they had photo-shopped laboratory certificates as part of their application and National Business Review followed this up, exposing further issues with the certificates. NBR also wrote an article about the shonky nature of the share-holding of Bioplant NZ, again, alerted to the issue by a local resident.

Even if this had turned out to be a totally credible company offering largely safe technology (unfortunately such technology still does not exist) the secrecy of the proposal was, in my view, totally inappropriate, and was yet another event resulting in resident's erosion of trust in MDC.

LGOIMAs: I was not familiar with this process prior to becoming involved in the opposition to the Bioplant Waste Incinerator proposal. I was a bit shocked to discover the level of avoidance of providing information that could be involved. I learnt that unless you included every possible parameter, but at the same time making your request very broad, you might not get the information asked for. Hence Feilding Against Incineration members made several requests in their attempt to gain useful information. This is very odd. There wasn't any credible

'commercial' / competition reason for not providing the information. The proposal was of high enough significance that if MDC wanted such a plant in our region there should have been some kind of open expression of interest process. The response to one of our member's requests for a document related to a Land-use application related to the Bioplant proposal was that no such document existed. Some time later on the Council website showing LGOIMA requests I found a response from some-one else's request with the document we had been wanting to have access to, but didn't know the correct title of. Although the absolutely correct name for the document may wasn't given by our member, the description clearly indicated she was talking about this document. To me that is willful obstruction of democratic process. Again, this lack of transparency further erodes people's trust in the Council.

From: [MDC Submissions](#)
To: [Ash Garstang](#)
Subject: FW: Significance and Engagement Policy Submission Form Form Submission
Date: Friday, 9 May 2025 7:45:09 am

From: Make your mark Manawatū <makeyourmark@mdc.govt.nz>
Sent: Thursday, 8 May 2025 6:07 pm
To: MDC Submissions <submissions@mdc.govt.nz>
Subject: Significance and Engagement Policy Submission Form Form Submission

006

Significance and Engagement Policy Submission Form Form Submission

There has been a submission of the form Significance and Engagement Policy Submission Form through your Make your mark Manawatū website.

First and Last Name:

Mark Wasley

Phone:

[REDACTED]

Email:

[REDACTED]

Postal Address:

[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]

Would you like to come to a hearing and speak to Elected Members about your submission?

Yes

I wish to request that my name and contact details be withheld from general publication by ticking this box. Please note that if you wish to speak to your submission at the hearing, your name but not your contact details will be published within the Council Agenda.

Yes

To view all of this form's submissions, visit

https://makeyourmark.manawatudc.govt.nz/index.php/dashboard/reports/forms_new/data/38

This is not SPAM. You are receiving this message because you have submitted feedback or signed up to Make your mark Manawātū.

From: [MDC Submissions](#)
To: [Ash Garstang](#)
Subject: FW: Significance and Engagement Policy Submission Form Form Submission
Date: Friday, 9 May 2025 7:45:15 am

From: Make your mark Manawatū <makeyourmark@mdc.govt.nz>
Sent: Thursday, 8 May 2025 9:27 pm
To: MDC Submissions <submissions@mdc.govt.nz>
Subject: Significance and Engagement Policy Submission Form Form Submission

007

Significance and Engagement Policy Submission Form Form Submission

There has been a submission of the form Significance and Engagement Policy Submission Form through your Make your mark Manawatū website.

First and Last Name:

Frances Pere on behalf of Te Kōtui Reo Taumata

Phone:

0278336140

Email:

freetakuz@hotmail.com

Postal Address:

17 Vera Street
Marton
4710

Age Group:

40-59

How did you hear about this Consultation?

MDC Website

Thinking about the past 2–3 years, have you ever engaged with Manawatū District Council on a decision, proposal or issue?

Yes, I have made a submission or spoke at a Manawatū District Council meeting.

If you answered yes and have engaged with Manawatū District Council, how would you rate your experience?

Mostly positive

If yes, what worked well or could have been improved?

The officers who presented LWDW and significance of engagement did an excellent job. The presentations were very detailed and well-prepared.

What are the best ways for you or your community to engage with the Manawatū District Council?

Hui with iwi/hapū or marae-based engagement

Public meetings or workshops

Direct contact with Council staff

Are there any groups or communities you feel are underrepresented in Council engagement?

Not sure

Do you have any feedback or suggestions on how we could improve the draft Significance and Engagement Policy?

Engagement is not just about formal process. Council staff and elected members should continue to invest in building relationships and understanding, the local values, aspirations, of iwi, hapū and marae in the district. It is encouraging to see relationships developing between

marae chairs and Councillors, this is a promising start. I would also like to acknowledge the Mayor's availability to meet with the chair of Te Kōtui Reo Taumata. These relationships form the

foundation of meaningful engagement and demonstrates a willingness to engage authentically,

not just follow a process.

We support the intent of this policy and continue to encourage Manawatū District Council to strengthen relationships, with the goal of creating co-partnership.

Would you like to come to a hearing and speak to Elected Members about your submission?

Yes

To view all of this form's submissions, visit

https://makeyourmark.manawatudc.govt.nz/index.php/dashboard/reports/forms_new/data/38

This is not SPAM. You are receiving this message because you have submitted feedback or signed up to Make your mark Manawatū.

Council

Meeting of 15 May 2025

Business Unit: Chief Executive's Office

Date Created: 30 April 2025

Local Government New Zealand Membership

Purpose Te Aronga o te Pūrongo

The purpose of this report is for Council to decide on whether to renew its membership with Local Government New Zealand (LGNZ).

Significance of Decision Te Hira o te Whakataunga

The Council's Significance and Engagement Policy is not triggered by matters discussed in this report. No stakeholder engagement is required.

Recommendations Ngā Tūtohunga

1. That the Manawātū District Council renews its membership with Local Government New Zealand and pays the subscription of \$53,730.53 (GST EXCL) for the 2025-26 year.

OR

2. That the Manawātū District Council does not renew its 2025-26 membership with Local Government New Zealand.

Report prepared and approved by:

Shayne Harris

Chief Executive

1 Contribution to Community Well-being and Council's Community Outcomes Te Tūhono ki ngā Whāinga a te Kaunihera mō te Oranga Hapori me te Whakawhanake Hapori

1.1 Relationship to Council's strategic priorities (community outcomes):

A place to belong and grow He kāinga e ora pai ai te katoa	✓
A future planned together He kāinga ka whakamaherea tahitia tōna anamata e te hapori tonu	✓
An environment to be proud of He kāinga ka rauhītia tōna taiao	✓
Infrastructure fit for future He kāinga ka tūwhena tonu ōna pūnahanga, haere ake nei te wā	✓
A prosperous, resilient economy He kāinga ka tōnui tōna ōhanga	✓
Value for money and excellence in local government He kāinga ka eke tōna kāwanatanga ā-rohe ki ngā taumata o te kairangi	✓

1.2 This year National Council have reset LGNZ's strategy to make their purpose clear: To serve members by championing, connecting and supporting local government. Their workplan for 2025 reflects these three principles:

- Champion: Focusing on advocacy, working relationships and communicating with communities.
- Connect: Events, safety of members, new Māori strategy (Hutia te Rito).
- Support: Induction for members, Ākona platform improvements, conflict resolution service for members, revitalised CouncilMARK/Te Korowai.

1.3 The Value of LGNZ Membership pamphlet (produced by LGNZ) is attached to this report.

2 Background Ngā Kōrero o Muri

2.1 LGNZ is a Local Government membership organisation. Local Government in New Zealand consists of 11 Regional Councils, 61 Territorial Authorities and 6 Unitary Authorities.

2.2 Of these, 71 councils are members of LGNZ. The 7 councils who are not members are:

- Auckland Council
- Christchurch City Council
- Kaipara District Council
- Grey District Council
- West Coast Regional Council
- Western Bay of Plenty District Council (leaving 2025)

- Westland District Council

2.3 MDC has been a member of LGNZ since its inception in 1989.

3 Discussion and Options Considered Ngā Matapakinga me ngā Kōwhiringa i Wānangahia

3.1 LGNZ undertakes a wide range of initiatives each year on behalf of the councils it represents. A core part of this work is sector-wide advocacy, particularly in response to the many reforms currently being initiated by central government.

3.2 Membership in LGNZ offers many benefits. The organisation provides access to key information, strategic advice, and connections into central government agencies that individual councils would struggle to establish on their own. LGNZ is recognised by Ministers and officials as the representative body for local government, with regular access to key decision-makers. In 2025, the LGNZ National Council reset its strategy to clarify its purpose: **"We champion the things that matter most as one strong national voice"**.

3.3 LGNZ also delivers several tangible services that would otherwise incur significant cost if the Council were to source or develop them independently. These include:

- A wide array of governance and operational templates (e.g., Standing Orders, Codes of Conduct, CE recruitment)
- Sector-wide research and data
- Professional development opportunities such as seminars and the online Ākona learning platform

3.4 Membership provides opportunities for elected members to engage in sector forums and working groups, such as Te Maruata (Māori advisory group) and Young Elected Members (representing members under 40).

3.5 LGNZ also hosts key events including the LGNZ Conference, the Rural and Provincial Sector meeting, and Zone 3 meetings. These gatherings offer the only consistent opportunity for elected members to connect across regions, share experiences, and contribute to sector-wide conversations.

4 Te Kīwai (o te kete)

4.1 Te Kīwai is the engagement process which guides Council's practice and ensures the onus to engage and include Māori is shared between Council and all partners. In this manner, we progress both the articles and principles of Te Tiriti o Waitangi by maintaining the balance between Kawanatanga (Governance) of the Council and Tino Rangatiratanga (Sovereignty) of whānau, hapū, and iwi Māori.

4.2 There are no known cultural considerations associated with the matters addressed in this report. No engagement with Māori is necessary.

5 Community Engagement Te Whai Wāhitanga mai o te Hapori

5.1 There are no community engagement requirements associated with this report, and there has been no community engagement regarding membership of LGNZ.

6 Operational Implications Te Whai Pānga Atu ki ngā Kaupapa Mahi

- 6.1 LGNZ supports Council operations through access to webinars, policy updates, legal guidance, and professional forums. These are particularly valuable during government reforms.
- 6.2 Staff benefit from platforms like LGConnect discussion groups, which connect professionals across councils to share advice, templates, and best practice.
- 6.3 Council also participates in LGNZ-facilitated events such as the annual conference, Rural and Provincial meetings, and Zone 3 hui, which support elected member development and cross-sector collaboration.
- 6.4 If Council chooses not to renew its LGNZ membership, it will need to determine which services and events to replace through other means, and which to discontinue.

7 Financial implications Te Whai Pānga Atu ki ngā Kaupapa Ahumoni

- 7.1 Council's annual subscription is set at \$53,730.53 (GST excl) for the year from 1 April 2025 to 31 March 2026. This is an increase of \$4,661.56 from last year (9.5%).
- 7.2 If MDC was not a member of LGNZ then there would be a saving of the subscription plus the costs spent on attending conferences and zone meetings.

8 Statutory Requirements Ngā Here ā-Ture

- 8.1 There are no statutory requirements.

9 Delegations Te Mana Whakatau

- 9.1 Council has the authority to decide if it wishes to be a member of LGNZ or not.

10 Conclusion Whakatepenga

- 10.1 This report seeks a Council decision on whether to renew MDC's annual membership for LGNZ for a further 12 months commencing 1 April 2025 or to not renew the membership.
- 10.2 In making that decision, Council needs to be cognisant of the fact that LGNZ is the only sector voice at governance level within local government. It is important to acknowledge that if MDC was not a member of LGNZ, the opportunity for elected members to interact with other elected members across the country would be minimal.

11 Attachments Ngā Āpitihanga

- The Value of LGNZ Membership

THE VALUE OF LGNZ MEMBERSHIP

April 2025

From the President

It's a real privilege to be the President of LGNZ and to work alongside elected members from all around the country. I see councils and community boards facilitating the improvement of infrastructure, delivering projects and impact for your communities. I also hear that many elected members and executives feel deeply stressed by always having to do more with less while juggling unfunded mandates and constantly shifting reforms and government expectation. As local government, we are present and accountable to our local community – as we should be. It means we receive sought-after and warranted feedback. Unfortunately I continue to hear that we also receive more and more unwarranted abuse, which only amps up in our election year.

Whether you feel like your council is running at 100kph or treading water, LGNZ has your back. We've listened to what you need from your membership body. We are here to champion, connect and support elected members and councils. We are focused on what unites local government – including what we can advocate on together, for the good of all councils and communities. Your National Council leaders, including me, are very deliberate about speaking out only on issues that have broad consensus, to avoid a repeat of Three Waters. Our advocacy work is robust and backed by evidence-based data – like the reports LGNZ commissioned last year on the drivers behind council costs and rates rises.

LGNZ's relationship with the Government has entered a new phase as the Government is more settled in its second year. Our new Minister Simon Watts said at our February All-of-local-government event that we have a positive relationship and he wants to work with us as equals at the table rather than continuing a parent-to-child relationship. Minister Watts acknowledged local government was fatigued by waves of reform – and that a lot of the cost and burden that falls on local government is often because of central government legislation. LGNZ commissioned research from NZIER last year that clearly demonstrated this burden.

This report you are about to read has been requested by members and prepared so all councils and elected members can understand the breadth and depth of LGNZ's work on your behalf.

It goes into a lot of detail about advocacy wins, the value you get for your dollar, and exactly what LGNZ delivers for you. It also sets out the significant programme of work LGNZ is doing right now aimed at making sure councils elected in October hit the ground running. In terms of pure return for investment, we provide examples of how belonging to LGNZ saves ratepayers money (check out page 7) but it's very hard to put a price on all the intangible benefits. Things like the power councils gain by speaking with one voice, or providing easy access to politicians, or generating media campaigns that highlight the issues you face and support greater understanding in the public domain. Every day, the small LGNZ team works on your behalf, in line with our LGNZ constitution that reminds us to look after the national interests of local government as a whole. That means the system as a whole, as well as the different parts within that system.

The figures show that a council choosing to leave LGNZ on the basis of cost savings doesn't make sense – councils often end up spending far more on these individual services. Councils leave for political reasons. Often reasons that don't reflect LGNZ's current direction or our actual relationship with the Government.

This report shows how LGNZ delivers many services that councils use every day that no one else could provide as efficiently and cost effectively, or sometimes even at all. So please absorb this report, ask us questions and get involved. The more engaged members are with LGNZ, the more value you get out of us, and the more our work responds to your feedback because we are a reflection of you.

In both mountaintop and challenging times, your LGNZ networks of fellow elected members and executives will help you learn and grow, stay the course and celebrate your successes. I know I have needed, and continue to appreciate, my networks within our local government family. They have helped me get through some difficult times and supported me to look for the opportunities to learn inside each challenge – and refresh my perspective. Local Government New Zealand is your organisation. I trust this report paves new ways to understand both the individual benefits and connections we offer, as well as a greater appreciation of the collective impact we can make together.

Ngā mihi

Sam Broughton
President

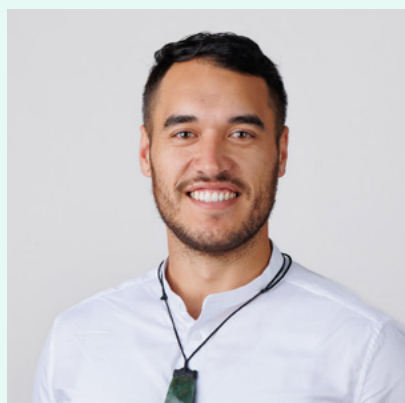
National Council members



Sam Broughton
LGNZ PRESIDENT



Campbell Barry
VICE PRESIDENT, ZONE 4
REPRESENTATIVE



Moko Tepania
ZONE 1 REPRESENTATIVE



Toby Adams
ZONE 2 REPRESENTATIVE



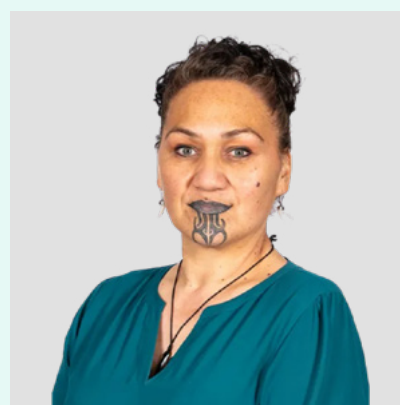
Craig Little
ZONE 3 REPRESENTATIVE



Dan Gordon
ZONE 5 CHAIR AND
REPRESENTATIVE



Ben Bell
ZONE 6 REPRESENTATIVE



Toni Boynton
TE MARUATA REPRESENTATIVE



Iaeen Cranwell
TE MARUATA REPRESENTATIVE



Paula Southgate
METRO SECTOR CHAIR



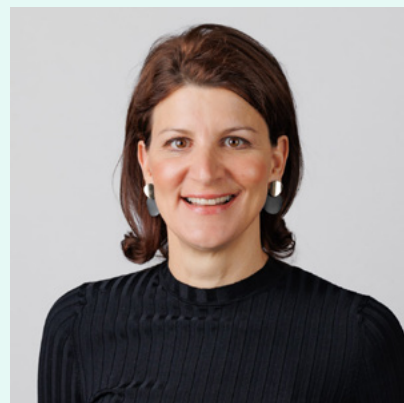
Vince Cocurullo
METRO SECTOR REPRESENTATIVE



Jules Radich
METRO SECTOR REPRESENTATIVE



Rachel Keedwell
REGIONAL SECTOR REPRESENTATIVE



Rehette Stoltz
REGIONAL SECTOR REPRESENTATIVE



Alex Walker
RURAL SECTOR CHAIR AND
REPRESENTATIVE



Neil Holdom
PROVINCIAL SECTOR CHAIR AND
REPRESENTATIVE



Alex Crackett
YOUNG ELECTED MEMBERS
REPRESENTATIVE

TOP 10 ADVOCACY WINS FROM THE PAST YEAR >

1. Minister Watts told our February All-of-local government meeting that he wants to work in partnership with local government and LGNZ.

In a q+a with LGNZ, he also said: "As Minister of Local Government, my vision is for a financially sustainable sector that works in true partnership with central government to drive economic growth and productivity in our cities and regions."

2. In November we launched a set of funding and financing tools, which gained significant media and political attention, and now two are set to be delivered.

The Government will replace development contributions with a development levy system, allowing you to charge developers a share of long-term infrastructure costs.

The Minister has expressed strong interest in progressing the Ratepayers Assistance Scheme. The RAS will allow ratepayers to cheaply borrow for specific improvements to their properties or to pay ratepayer charges. By leveraging the high credit quality of local government rates, it accesses efficient capital market financing, passing savings to ratepayers. Like the Local Government Funding Authority, which LGNZ helped set up in the early 2010s, RAS has the potential to be a gamechanger for councils.

3. No one likes rates rises but our rates rise toolkits meant everyone knew councils were facing rising costs.

Research we commissioned by Infometrics revealed that the cost of building bridges had gone up 38% in three years, among other facts. Many of you used this data to help explain rates rises to your communities.

4. Unfunded mandates research we commissioned from NZIER gave new prominence to the costs that governments pass to councils.

For example, new water quality standards under the National Policy Statement for Freshwater Management (NPS-FM) meant regional and district councils had to monitor freshwater quality more rigorously and invest in better infrastructure, generating significant costs for you. Ministers now have greater visibility of these costs and we don't have to explain them from scratch every time. This research has strengthened our submissions against any new reforms that create additional unfunded mandates, and has also meant media and the public are now more aware of the issue.

5. We sourced a "red tape" list from you of ways to save councils money and reduce the complexity you need to navigate, so that these can be addressed as part of upcoming changes to the Local Government Act.

This list was presented to the PM and then-Minister of Local Government and we understand a number of these items will be included in changes to the Act. These include removing the requirements to carry out s17a reviews and removing requirements for newspaper notices.

6. We set up the Electoral Reform Working Group, chaired by Mayor Nick Smith, which engaged extensively with members to develop its thinking.

Its [March 2025 draft position](#) paper – which makes it clear that postal voting has a very limited shelf life and change is urgent – gained significant media, political and third-party interest. It's also allowed you to respond proactively to key issues that matter. Minister Watts and the Prime Minister are positive about the working group's recommendations and keen to make progress for the 2028 local body elections.

7. Our city/regional deals framework was picked up and used by the Government, to local government's advantage, including the focus on partnership, new funding tools and a commitment to long-term planning.

In particular, our framework called for all councils to have an opportunity to be part of the EOI process – which the Government eventually enabled despite initially only inviting five regions to participate.

8. We ran an Infrastructure Symposium attended by more than 200 people, with speakers including Infrastructure Minister Chris Bishop, former Prime Minister Bill English, Fulton Hogan's COO and the President of the Australian Local Government Association.

Strong media coverage included stories on Stuff, BusinessDesk, the NBR and RNZ setting out our view that you need more funding tools to pay for infrastructure.

9. We ensured people who get local government were in key conversations.

For example, we secured a local government representative on the technical expert working group feeding into the Government's work on adaptation to climate change. In another example, LGNZ put forward local government people to be part of the steering group set up by MBIE to inform a comprehensive review of the seismic strengthening system. We also set up our own informal Seismic Strengthening Group, chaired by Manawātū deputy mayor Michael Ford, which met for the first time in late November.

10. There was strong media coverage of our balanced position on Māori wards: that they should be treated the same as all other wards, with councils able to decide what's right for their community.

For some councils, that means not having a Māori ward while for others it means having one.

HOW LGNZ SAVES COUNCILS (AND RATEPAYERS) MONEY >

Guides, guidance and crises

- > We develop guides and templates that councils use every day.
 - > Our standing orders templates (and guide) would cost you **\$50K-\$60K** to commission yourself.
 - > Our Code of Conduct template (and guide) would cost you **\$50K-\$60K** to commission yourself.
 - > Members can also access these guides, which would cost you **tens of thousands of dollars to create** yourself:
 - + Elected member governance guide
 - + Mayors and Chairs governance guide
 - + Community boards governance guide
 - + Community boards chairs governance guide
 - + Tax guide for elected members
 - + Guide to recruiting and managing your CE
 - + Guide to council declaration
 - + Representation reviews guide
 - > We can also give expert advice on how to use these templates and guides, saving you more time and money.
- > We field a lot of calls from you when you want a sense check – or when things go wrong. Whether it's questions about the Local Government Act, conflict between the Mayor/councillors/CE, or other curly issues, you can ring Susan, Scott, Dr Mike, Simon and the team when you want advice or just a confidential sounding board. We are impartial and we work to deescalate conflict so you can avoid costly legal disputes. Calling us can save your council a huge amount of money.
- > We provide crisis media support for councils, particularly when multiple councils are involved. Tailored guidance like this would cost individual councils thousands of dollars.
- > LGNZ gives every elected member in New Zealand free, anonymous access to counselling.

Policy and submissions

- > We develop submissions on policies that impact local government. Councils use our draft content in your own submissions, saving you time and money. Because we do the heavy lifting, your staff can focus on making local implications clear. Each submission is worth between **\$30K-\$80K+** depending on its complexity. Our submissions saves councils spending money on your own research, legal advice, and consultancy/subject matter experts – as well as staff time in terms of preparing your submissions or even needing to submit.
- > For example, in response to concerns raised by councils, in the past year our submissions have reflected technical or legal advice on:
 - + The limits on the proposed change in the Resource Management (Consenting and Other System Changes) Amendment Bill which grant the Minister for the Environment the power to direct a local authority to prepare or amend their district plans or regional policy statements
 - + In the water space, what changes would be needed for the Water Services Bill to ensure that councils could continue to collect development contributions after transferring assets to a CCO but before they had adopted a development contributions policy.
- > Our submissions reflect our extensive engagement with officials and Ministers and as members of working groups. This means either bills already reflect our input or we are really clear on the best ways to frame our submissions to enact change. Select committees also prioritise LGNZ so that our oral submissions are heard in hearing processes with tight timeframes.

- > Submissions since the start of 2024 represent about **\$1 million** in value. GPS Land Transport 2024 (Round 2)
 - > Fast Track Approvals Bill
 - > Local Government (Electoral Legislation and Māori Wards and Māori Constituencies) Amendment Bill
 - > Local Government (Water Services Preliminary Arrangements) Bill
 - > Inquiry into Climate Adaptation (further Submission)
 - > NZTA Emergency Works Investment Policies consultation
 - > New Zealand's second emissions reduction plan (2026–30): Discussion document
 - > Building (Earthquake-prone Building Deadlines and Other Matters) Amendment Bill
 - > Consultation on increasing the use of remote inspections in the building consent process
 - > Petition of Christian van der Pump: Remove Building Act 2004 restriction of access to the District or High Court
 - > Consultation on Testing our thinking: Developing an enduring National Infrastructure Plan discussion document
 - > Land Transport Management Act (Time of Use Charging) Amendment Bill
 - > Local Government (Water Services) Bill
 - > Principles of the Treaty of Waitangi Bill
 - > Resource Management (Consenting and Other System Changes) Amendment Bil
 - > Crimes Legislation (Stalking and Harassment) Amendment Bill
- > In November we shared an explainer on water services reform ahead of the introduction of the Local Government Water Services Bill in December, which had a very tight timeframe for submissions that ran over the holiday period. Our work supported your staff to produce quality submissions without having to grapple with complex legislation from scratch.
- > Now the Government is proposing changes to the resource management system and Local Government Act with significant implications for the structure and functions of local government. All councils need to understand the legal impact of these changes before you respond – and it doesn't make sense for every council to individually commission expensive advice. LGNZ will share advice that all members can use.

Data councils can use

- > We now produce national data you can use locally, giving all member councils access to centrally produced research by respected economists. We package our research with slides and key messages that members can use, as well as generating media interest. It would be cost prohibitive for councils to commission this research individually.
- > In March 2024, we shared [research by Infometrics on how costs had risen dramatically for councils](#), driving rates rises. For example, that the cost to build a bridge had risen 38% in just three years.
- > In July 2024, we released work we had commissioned from NZIER on the [impacts of unfunded mandates on local government](#).
- > In April 2025, we launched our first [Infometrics Local government economic insights report](#). These reports will come out quarterly, exclusively to members, and mean elected members and CEs can have quality local government economic data at their fingertips. You could also join a zoom with Infometrics Chief Economist Brad Olsen, and an Infometrics economist will speak at our next All-of-local-government event.

Events and networks

- > At our events you regularly have access to multiple Ministers at once, saving you travel time and money. You get opportunities to pull them aside and discuss local issues.
- > We offer dedicated networks for Māori elected members, Young Elected Members, and Community Board members, and we've started to run events to connect women in local government. These networks meet in-person and online to provide support and development. There's no way of recreating this without spending significant council staff time and effort.

Elections

- > If you're aiming to be back on council, you want colleagues who understand what being an elected member means and can quickly get up to speed. We've developed a "pre-elected" programme that steps potential candidates through what it means to be an elected member – and you can freely share this with candidates.
- > Alongside the pre-elected programme, we've updated the guide for candidates, which will be available on the VoteLocal website.
- > Our Vote25 toolkit includes design files councils can customise to create posters, graphics and social media content to promote voter registration, standing, and voting. It would cost you **\$50k-70k** to develop this toolkit externally from scratch – and what's the point of all councils paying individually to create the same thing?

Induction and professional development

- > Through our Ākona platform, elected members can now access **\$1.2 million** worth of professional development for free – that's what it would cost to commercially develop and host the 15 Ako hours and 22 courses available, with more being added all the time in response to your feedback.
- > Ākona isn't just the online platform – it's induction for elected members (more on page 14):
 - > Mayors school is right after the elections – so both new and returning Mayors can hit the ground running. The Prime Minister and Minister have both confirmed they plan to be there. You'll also get some insights into how you can really drive your councils' performance.
 - > Later in October, there's induction for elected members, with LGNZ delivering sessions all around the country to help people get quickly up to speed and deliver for communities. This will be relevant for both new and returning EMs.
 - > And once chairs are elected, we'll be running a Chairs' School along similar lines to the Mayors' School.
 - > Many councils choose to use our induction template to support your own elected member induction, saving significant amounts staff time.

*It's much cheaper for us to do this work for all members than if you do it yourselves. Councils that leave LGNZ end up spending more on these services across a range of cost centres, because **\$2.1m** they don't benefit from collective buying power.*

SETTING YOUR NEXT COUNCIL UP FOR SUCCESS >

In October 2025, your new council needs to hit the ground running. LGNZ is here to support each part of that process.

1. **Making sure candidates know what they're getting into**

We've developed a "pre-elected" programme that steps potential candidates through what it means to be an elected member. This interactive course covers how councils work, your obligations, and dealing with the demands of the job. Three animated videos look at: 'Structure of Local Government', 'Roles within a council' and 'How councils are funded'. Plus there are two e-modules: 'Stepping into Local Leadership: The role of an elected member' and 'Stepping into Local Leadership: The life of an elected member'.

Unlike the rest of Ākōna, this pre-elected material doesn't need a log-in – so you can share it freely with any potential candidate.

We're also updating the written Candidates Guide that is available on the Votelocal website.

2. **Promoting registering, standing and voting**

In December 2024 we shared a free toolkit of Vote25 digital assets that you can customise into posters, social media tiles or any other format.

3. **Mayors' School**

Join New Zealand's mayors, the Local Government Minister and expert speakers in Wellington for two days of intensive networking and learning how to drive council performance. We are also working with the Prime Minister's office to schedule his attendance.

4. Elected member induction

We'll be in 11 cities and towns around New Zealand, delivering in-person induction for elected members that complements your own council's induction, and lets you meet many of your new regional colleagues. Thanks to your feedback, induction has been revamped for 2026 to better deliver what you need, with relevance for both new and returning EMs. You can also use our template to deliver induction to your own council.

5. Chairs' School

Once Regional Councils have elected their Chairs, we'll be holding a Chairs' School in mid-November. The Minister of Local Government will attend this event.

6. Team builder toolkit for Mayors and Chairs

Our team builder toolkit will set out a range of activities and strategies that Mayors and Chairs can use to create an event that brings your council together for the first time, so you can lay the best possible foundation for you to work productively together.

7. Post-induction Ako hour academy

A three-month academy of Ako hours will offer two live Ako hours every week between February and May 2026. Each Ako hour will focus on a different governance topic, offering elected members the chance to engage with both experts and their peers from around the country.

8. Ongoing professional development via Ākona

Our Learning and Development Manager is meeting with every member council in turn to discuss what materials they could upload into the new Ākona platform so it's a one-stop shop for all your elected member learning.

LGNZ already has over 20 custom-designed and built catalogues of learning that offer micro-learning opportunities alongside our popular live Ako hours, workshops, templates and downloadable resources designed to support new and returning elected members throughout the triennium.

LGNZ'S 2025 STRATEGY >

OUR VISION/

To create the most active and inclusive local democracy in the world.



Our purpose:

We serve members by championing, connecting and supporting local government

CHAMPION/

- > Advocate for local government on critical issues.
- > Build relationships with ministers and officials.
- > Decode policy and make submissions.
- > Speak out for local government in the media.

CONNECT/

- > Bring members together at zone, sector and conference events or via networks like Te Maruata and YEM.
- > Create strong feedback loops between members and LGNZ's work.

SUPPORT/

- > Provide professional development uniquely tailored to local government.
- > Support councils and elected members when they are stuck.
- > Support elected members to deal with pressure and harassment.

Our long-term goals:

01.

Local government and central government are trusted partners.

02.

Council can access the right funding and financing tools to reduce pressure on ratepayers and entrench localism.

03.

Elected members are connected, engaged and highly capable.

04.

Te Tiriti partnerships between local government and Māori are authentic, strong and respected.

05.

More New Zealanders value and participate in local government.

06.

A sustainable and fit-for-purpose LGNZ.

Our work in 2025:

CHAMPION/

- + Focus our advocacy effort on shifting the dial on systematic issues that are mutually beneficial to local government, its communities and central government.
- + Leverage off the strengthened working relationship with the Government and new Minister to develop solutions.
- + Advocate for councils to have access to a greater range of funding and financing tools that are fit-for-purpose, through the lens of regional deals.
- + Show the value that councils deliver to communities and the cost pressures that they face in the lead up to the 2025 elections.

CONNECT/

- + Deliver All-of-local government and SuperLocal25 events focused on the challenges and opportunities in front of councils.
- + Advocate for increased safety for all elected members, while specifically enhancing connections between women EMs.
- + Make members feel more connected to our advocacy.
- + Activate LGNZ's new Māori strategy, Hutia te Rito.

SUPPORT/

- + Revitalise induction for Mayors, Chairs and elected members, supported by our Ākona learning and development platform.
- + Launch a resolution and support service to help councils deescalate and effectively resolve conflict.
- + Launch the revitalised CouncilMARK/Te Korowai.

EVERYTHING LGNZ DOES FOR MEMBERS >

LGNZ champions local government

We hold regular meetings with the PM and key Ministers

We meet every quarter, in-person, with the Prime Minister. For example, we had one of our regular quarterly meetings with the PM on 1 April:

- > The PM was very open to our electoral reform work, led by Mayor Nick Smith, and understood the need to progress recommendations in time for the 2028 elections.
- > We made clear our concerns about the potential unintended consequences of rates capping. But – without sugarcoating it – the PM does have serious concerns about the financial literacy of councils.
- > In response we acknowledged that there may be some work to do to build capability – and that we all agree on the need to reduce rates rises.
- > The PM is very keen to reduce red tape for local government and wants us to help. We gave him a list of 10 actions suggested by members in our meeting in December – and now we'll again work with members to see if there are any more quick wins.

We have regular meetings locked in with Local Government Minister Simon Watts; Infrastructure, Transport and Resource Management Reform Minister Chris Bishop, Regional Development Minister Shane Jones; and Under Secretary Simon Court. We meet other Ministers, such as the Minister for Rural Communities and Minister for Social Development and Tourism Louise Upston, when issues arise. For example, we met with Minister Casey Costello about the role councils could play in reform of vaping regulations, which resulted in an agreement that LGNZ would further engage with health officials on what a system in which councils have greater control over where vape retailers are located could look like.

We help Ministers engage with local government – and local government issues

When Minister Watts stepped into the Local Government portfolio in February, we provided both an immediate letter on key issues, and a fuller briefing for the Minister that set out the current state of play, including where there are opportunities to work together in support of New Zealand's economic development.

Ministers want to deal with one body rather than 76 separate councils. Minister Watts is very clear he wants to work constructively with LGNZ and local government – and take full advantage of LGNZ's events and meetings.

Ministers use our events to make announcements, which helps us attract media and gives Mayors and councillors who are there the chance to comment to media directly. For example, the February All-of-local-government meeting featured an announcement on funding and financing for housing growth by Minister Chris Bishop and Under Secretary Simon Court; at SuperLocal last August, the Government made announcements around its Regional Deals framework.

While we work hardest and most closely with the government of the day, we maintain relationships with all political parties, so that local government is ready to build relationships with whoever is in government.

We calibrate our advocacy to the government of the day

You'll remember our Future by Local Government project in the second half of 2023 (a response to the previous government's Future for Local Government report). It came up with five agreed directions, approved at an SGM. But we're not advocating on all of them. We're only pushing those that resonate with the current government. The others can wait for future governments.

It's the same with our funding and financing tools. Our set of 25 tools was divided into three categories reflecting where we are likely to get traction with this government – some to focus on now, some for later, and others for the distant future. We have no plans to advocate for GST on rates or paying rates on Crown land, for example, because they aren't currently palatable.

We champion local government issues in the media

Our media engagement means balancing standing up for councils while being seen as a constructive partner of the Government. We are very thoughtful about keeping that balance steady.

Some examples: Our June 2024 Infrastructure Symposium, including Infrastructure Minister Chris Bishop's speech at our networking function the night before, received very strong media coverage, with stories in The Post, BusinessDesk, NBR and RNZ focused on our support for more funding tools to pay for infrastructure. Our SuperLocal conference in August 2024 generated 394 pieces of media coverage on topics ranging from bed taxes and regional deals to being a young elected member.

We educate media about local government. We hold regular briefings with journalists funded by the Local Democracy Reporter scheme, to help them have a better understanding of the challenges councils face. We invite senior journalists to key events: for example, Stuff's political editor spent an hour with National Council at their February 2025 meeting. Through that he gained insights into the challenges facing councils, which resulted in a thoughtful opinion editorial later that week.

We advocate on topical issues that affect all councils

Electoral reform: We set up a working group led by Mayor Nick Smith to create a roadmap for future electoral reform, given the reality of declining voter turnout and the declining postal system.

Rates capping: If the Government introduces rates capping, councils' ability to raise rates will be constrained. In Australia, while rates capping constrained rates increases, it has degraded delivery and left councils increasingly financially unstable. Every overseas jurisdiction that has implemented rates capping is telling us to oppose it as strongly as we can, because of its negative impacts on councils' ability to deliver. In March 2025 S&P downgraded 18 councils' credit ratings, identifying the Government's proposal to investigate rates capping as an area of concern.

You've heard from Victoria and New South Wales guests at the November All-of-local government meetings – and then from South Australia, which avoided rates capping by pushing for greater transparency and accountability – at our February meeting. We're shared facts and messages you can use to talk to MPs, Ministers and the public about the potential implications. LGNZ is talking to the Local Government Minister and other Ministers, sharing information with officials and getting media coverage, to advocate for local government's interests.

Funding and financing: In late November we launched a set of 25 tools to help councils better fund infrastructure and services – from sharing GST on new builds, to value capture, to improving councils’ ability to recover costs. We take every opportunity to advocate on the tools in category one, to both politicians and the media (while working less intensively on category two and not at all on category three right now, as discussed above).

Some of these tools are already being delivered:

- > The Minister for Infrastructure used our February All-of-local-government meeting to announce changes to New Zealand’s infrastructure funding and financing settings. The Government will replace development contributions with a development levy system, allowing councils to charge developers a share of long-term infrastructure costs. Councils will also have more flexibility to set targeted rates that apply to new developments, among other changes.
- > In April 2025 we submitted on the Land Transport Management (Time of Use Charging) Bill, another tool. We want to make sure the model adopted gives councils as much flexibility as possible.

We engage on critical local government reforms

Our relationships with Government officials mean we discuss policy as it’s developed, providing opportunities to influence before decisions are made.

Recently we submitted on multiple pieces of legislation related to **resource management**, and we expect significantly more consultations in the RM space over the next 18 months, including new legislation to replace the RMA and changes to national direction.

Our **Transport** Forum, chaired by Mayor Neil Holdom, is engaging with Government Ministers and officials on a range of issues as well as gathering data to support this advocacy. For example, we surveyed Transport Forum members to get an idea of the cost of implementing the Government’s new policy of variable speed limits in school areas. Early indications are that this is having a significant fiscal impact on councils already facing significant financial pressure as a result of funding decisions made in the NLTP 2024-27. We have also raised concerns with Ministers and in the media about the proposal to increase the private share of public transport operating expenditure, which is of concern to regional councils because it would significantly increase passenger fares.

In August we shared an explainer on **water services reform** ahead of the introduction of the Local Government (Water Service Preliminary Arrangements) Bill, and the Local Government (Water Services) Bill. As well as submitting on those bills in January, we hosted a well-attended Āko hour to inform councils' engagement on the Commerce Commission's discussion paper on the economic regulation of water. There is still a huge amount of investment required in the water space – which is only getting more expensive over time. We are thoughtful that, even with reform, CCOs will still be constrained by consumers' ability to pay for water services.

The Government made announcements around its **regional deals** framework at SuperLocal, with the framework largely reflecting our position. It included partnership, new funding tools and a commitment to long-term planning, and was modelled on LGNZ's proposal released earlier in 2024. We know funding tools and regulatory relief will be made available in the regions that secure deals. We have been advocating for those benefits to be available for all of local government (where that makes sense). The government so far has committed to completing one regional deal by the end of 2025 and a further two by 2026. We called for more deals to be agreed sooner in our briefing to Minister Watts when he took over as Minister of Local Government, and we understand he is supportive of this view.

We advocate to protect elected members

Every elected member knows harassment and bullying related to your role is on the rise, especially online. We help connect you to expertise (see below) and we also push for broader system change. For example, our advocacy meant the requirement to put your address on electioneering material was dropped. This year we submitted in favour of new anti-stalking legislation and how it could be relevant to elected members. We also run surveys across local government that track these trends and provide data about the scale of the problem that we can use in the media and submissions.

We innovate in the long-term interests of local government

LGNZ was instrumental in creating the Local Government Funding Authority back in 2011. Now we're working on the **Ratepayers Assistance Scheme**, which would leverage the high credit quality of local government rates, to give ratepayers access to cheap borrowing for specific home improvements or ratepayer charges in support of local and central government priorities. By accessing efficient capital market financing, the RAS would pass savings to ratepayers. The RAS lends directly to ratepayers, keeping councils financially whole.

The new Local Government Minister has expressed strong interest in progressing the RAS. We are now taking next steps to secure the necessary financial commitment and legislative changes.

We celebrate the best of local government

Our annual SuperLocal awards recognise outstanding local government projects and people – and generate media coverage for the winners.

We help Iwi connect with local government

Through our MOU with the Iwi Chairs Forum, we are engaging more closely with that group. We are working on building our direct relationships with mana whenua to support our ability to guide councils and enable Iwi to partner with you.

LG NZ connects local government

Events

Our events give you the chance to network with Ministers and other politicians. Recent events have featured Local Government Minister Simon Watts (and before him Simeon Brown), Chris Bishop (several times), Chris Penk, Simon Court, Mark Patterson, Matt Doocey, Shane Jones (several times), James Meager, Penny Simmonds, Louise Upston, Mark Mitchell, Andrew Hoggard, Todd McLay. SuperLocal featured the Prime Minister and all key Ministers (and Opposition), with Finance Minister Nicola Willis speaking at the pre-conference women's lunch. Minister Watts has told us he wants to maximise LGNZ events because he sees them as a great opportunity to engage with a wide range of local government at once – so we work closely with his office to give him opportunities to address the sector together.

All LGNZ events – from our SuperLocal conference to All-of-local government meetings, Sector meetings and Zone meetings – help elected members build relationships, learn from experts and hear about best-practice. They're a chance to build and grow relationships that provide critical support or enable regional or cross-regional projects. SuperLocal is the local government event of the year, with the Prime Minister, Ministers, experts and guest speakers joining local government to speak, network and set the media agenda. More than 800 people attended in 2024.

Networks

Our dedicated networks provide support and advice for specific groups of elected members. Te Maruata connects Māori elected members, helping give new elected members a strong local government foundation as well as somewhere to go with challenges and questions. Te Maruata holds monthly zooms as well as also meeting two or three times a year in person to hear expert speakers, workshops and discussions. Te Maruata also plays a pivotal role in LGNZ's relationship with the Iwi Chairs Forum.

Young Elected Members holds an annual in-person hui as well as meeting ahead of SuperLocal, and providing YEMs with ongoing support.

The Community Boards Executive Committee brings together community board members and runs a biennial conference, as well as working to build better relationships between community boards and councils.

Last year we brought women in local government together both online and in person, including at the hugely popular pre-conference event featuring Finance Minister Nicola Willis that received significant media coverage after she “called out the trolls”. This year we’ll be creating more vehicles for women to come together while continuing to advocate for measures to keep all elected members safer.

Elected member safety

A poll at LGNZ’s All-of-local-government meeting in April 2024 revealed 53% of attendees felt abuse and harassment was worse than a year ago. We’ve highlighted the seriousness of these issues in the media, and via our zooms with the likes of NZ Police and Netsafe. Last year we ran three zooms on your safety and security, with tips and advice from security experts, real-life case studies, and a session on how to deal more efficiently and safely with Sovereign Citizens, who are consuming huge amounts of some councils’ resources. These zooms gave elected members and CEs the chance to share experiences and realise the scale and seriousness of the problem, as well as sharing strategies to manage it.

Keeping you in the loop

Finally, we keep you informed through a broad range of communications, from personal emails to newsletters like *Keeping it Local*, social media and topical zooms.

LGNZ supports local government

Ākona professional development for election members

Elected members can access our professional development platform Ākona at home or whenever it suits you. Or, like increasing numbers of councils, councillors can gather and go through one course together. Ākona has about 500 active users, with 42 users even choosing to engage with the platform over the summer break. Over 200 users have made use of the skills analysis tool and 483 members have enjoyed the top five e-modules.

At the moment, 22 courses are available on the Ākona online platform covering these topics:

- > Asset management
- > Chairing meetings
- > Climate change
- > Conflicts of interest
- > Council membership
- > Designing and delivering great speeches
- > Engaging with Māori
- > Engaging with the media
- > Engaging with your community
- > Financial governance
- > Funding and finance
- > Governance
- > Health & safety and good governance
- > Leading complex communities
- > Local Government Official Information and Meetings Act
- > Long Term Plan
- > Navigating Local Government meetings
- > Remuneration and Tax for elected members
- > Te Reo Māori
- > The chief executive relationship
- > What is local government?

There are also 23 recorded Ako hours available:

- > Economic regulation of water services – information disclosure
- > Introducing water meters
- > Funding and financing infrastructure
- > Standing Orders with Dr Mike Reid
- > Tairāwhiti: resourcing regional resilience
- > Mangatāwhai Wetlands restoration project
- > Innovations for climate adaptation
- > Pecuniary and non-pecuniary interests
- > Te Tiriti o Waitangi
- > No News is good news – working with media
- > Social media safety
- > Empowering localism
- > Deliberative democracy
- > Privacy Act
- > Code of Conduct
- > Applied governance
- > Debate not destruction
- > Electoral reform and the future of local democracy
- > Electoral reform – a historical perspective
- > Applied governance
- > Māori wards legislation
- > Community committees
- > How to transition a new Mayor

Te Korowai

Our Te Korowai programme helps councils to understand how you're performing by identifying your most pressing challenges and opportunities, guiding you toward growth and continuous improvement. Formerly known as CouncilMARK, Te Korowai has been totally revamped and provides insights and analysis that can be turned into real action and change.

Guides and templates

LGNZ publishes a large range of guides as noted on [page 7](#). Most recently, the 2025-2028 edition of the LGNZ standing orders template was [published in late December](#). There are three templates: one for city and district councils, one for regional councils and one for community boards. Then in March we published the [Guide](#) to these templates, which includes:

- > Advice on implementing the Ombudsman's Guidance on public access to workshops;
- > More information on delegations and setting agendas;
- > Guidance on issues that emerged in the last term, such as using co-chairs and vacating the chair;
- > Protocols for online meetings and people joining meetings remotely; and
- > Templates for parental leave and childcare policies.

Last year at SuperLocal, we launched [Localism: A Practical Guide](#), which sets out a wide range of tools and approaches councils can use to apply localism across your day-to-day work.

Data and decision making

We are a founding partner of the Road Efficiency Group Te Ringa Maimoa (REG) sector partnership, which works with Road Controlling Authorities and NZTA Waka Kotahi to enhance business practices in the transport sector. This programme focuses on improving the local government capability, leading to better decision-making based on solid activity planning, service delivery, and quality comparative data.

We also work with councils to implement the Moata Carbon Portal, which helps councils manage and reduce carbon in infrastructure projects.

Want even more detail?

Every four months, LGNZ publishes a report that sets out exactly what we've worked on and achieved for members during that period. Read our most recent four-monthly reports:

- > [November-February 2025](#)
- > [July-October 2024](#)
- > [March-June 2024](#)

WHAT PROGRESS HAVE WE MADE ON 2023 AND 2024 REMITS?

Member councils can propose remits to LGNZ's AGM. The AGM then prioritises the remits that pass, to guide how much resource LGNZ puts into them.

2024 remits

Remit

Progress update

Appropriate funding models for central government initiatives

That LGNZ proactively promote and lobby for the development of a more equitable and appropriate funding model for central government initiatives.

This remit is being progressed as part of the wider funding and financing work programme (and is a core objective of this work).

GST revenue sharing with local Government

That LGNZ be proactive in lobbying central government on sharing GST revenue with local government, derived from local government rates and service fees related flood protection mitigation, roading, and three waters, for investment in these areas.

This remit is being progressed as part of the wider funding and financing work programme. The Government has signalled the return of GST on new housing and wider incentives for councils as part of pillar three of its Going for Housing Growth policy. We have been engaging with officials and the Minister to advocate for such measures.

Local Government Māori Wards and Constituencies should not be subject to a referendum

That LGNZ lobbies central government to ensure that Māori wards and constituencies are treated the same as all other wards in that they should not be subject to a referendum. We oppose the idea that Māori wards should be singled out and forced to suffer a public referendum.

Now that legislation has been passed, we know that 42 councils will be holding a referendum on Māori wards. LGNZ will support Te Maruata and the wider membership around the upcoming referenda and elections broadly.

Proactive lever to mitigate the deterioration of unoccupied buildings

That LGNZ advocate to Government:

- > For legislative change enabling local authorities to compel building owners to remediate unoccupied derelict buildings and sites that have deteriorated to a state where they negatively impact the amenity of the surrounding area.
- > To incentivise repurposing vacant buildings to meet region-specific needs, for example, accommodation conversion.

Late last year we had an initial discussion with Gisborne District Council to determine the work programme for progressing this remit, which was also discussed at the first meeting of the LGNZ Seismic Strengthening Group. We are working with GDC to deliver the work programme for this work, including raising it in engagement with Minister Penk as part of his reforms of the building system.

Representation Reviews

That LGNZ advocate for changes that support the provision of timely and accurate regional and sub-regional population data to councils for use in council representation reviews.

We have written to the Minister to highlight these matters. Statistics NZ is reviewing the methodology for the 2028 census. We are monitoring this process in case it provides an opportunity to progress this remit. A move to a four-year term, which we are actively lobbying for, would require a change in the timings of representation reviews so this remit is also informing the thinking of the Electoral Reform Working Group.

Community Services Card

That LGNZ advocate to Central Government to amend the Health Entitlement Cards Regulations 1993 so that the cardholder can use the Community Services Card as evidence for the purposes of accessing Council services which would otherwise rely on a form of means testing.

We wrote to relevant Ministers asking that councils be allowed to make use of the Community Services Card when offering discounts to council facilities. We have yet to receive a response. We also put out a media release, which got good coverage, and engaged via social media.

Graduated Licensing System

That LGNZ advocate for changes to the fee structure for driver licensing, better preparing young people for driver licence testing, and greater testing capacity in key locations throughout New Zealand, in order to relieve pressure on the driver licensing system and ensure testing can be conducted in a quick and efficient manner.

Mayors Taskforce for Jobs (MTFJ) has agreed to progress this remit because it relates to its work with the Driving Change Network. As part of this work, MTFJ has revitalised its links with the network, including joining its steering group as an *ex officio* member. The remit aligns well with the Network's work to create an equitable and accessible driver education, training and licensing system that enables safe drivers.

Since the remit was adopted, the Government has also announced changes to the drivers licensing system in line with the remit, in particular free unlimited resits of license tests have been stopped, and the community driver test officers programme has been rolled out.

2023 remits

Remit

Progress update

Allocation of risk and liability in the building sector

We've raised the issues that this remit addresses in engagement with the Minister for Building and Construction, particularly through the Metro Sector's engagement with him, and when the Minister announced a number of changes to streamline building consent requirements earlier this year. We also used the Minister's recent announcements on moves to make remote building inspections the default as an opportunity to raise the issues this remit addresses in the media. We will continue to advocate for the changes this remit proposes in our ongoing engagement with the Minister and MBIE, and in our submission on the shift to remote building inspections.

Rates rebates

The Minister for Local Government announced an increase to the rates rebate scheme, shortly after we met Ministers Brown and Costello in early April 2024, and talked about the need for these changes to support low-income households. However, the increases that were announced are only in line with inflation, not the Local Government Cost Index, which is the core ask of a similar remit put forward by Horowhenua District Council in 2020. We'll continue to advocate for increases to the rates rebate scheme in line with the LGCI.

Roading/transport maintenance funding

Our Transport Forum is leading work on this remit. Our submission to the draft Government Policy Statement advocated for increased investment in road maintenance. The Government subsequently announced through the Budget significant additional investment (over and above that signalled in the draft GPS) of \$939.3 million for roads damaged by last year's severe weather events, and confirmed that \$1.9 billion for pothole prevention on local roads will be made available through the NLTP. Our Transport Forum will continue to advocate on this remit.

Local election accessibility

We have written to the Minister for Local Government and Minister for Disability Issues about this remit. It is also included in the draft position paper of the Electoral Reform Working Group.

Ability for co-chairs at formal meetings

We incorporated guidance (informed by legal advice) on how to introduce co-chairs into our revised Guide to the LGNZ Standing Orders Template, which was published in early February 2024.

Parking infringement penalties

Following discussions around progressing this remit, the Ministry of Transport confirmed that it was working to increase the maximum fees councils could charge for parking infringements and towing costs. This goes some way to addressing the concerns raised by the remit, though would not ultimately give councils the authority to set rates at the levels they deem appropriate as the remit requested. We will continue to advocate for devolving authority to councils in this area as part of our funding and finance work.

Rural and regional public transport

This remit is being progressed through the work that our Transport Forum is leading. Our submission to the draft GPS Land Transport advocated for increased investment in rural and regional public transport. The Government subsequently announced a 41% increase in indicative funding for public transport in June, including beginning rollout of the National Ticketing Solution, and in July announced \$802.9 million for investment in Lower North Island commuter rail. Our Transport Forum will continue to advocate on this remit.

Establishing resolution service

We built work on developing a resolution service into the refreshed LGNZ strategy, but National Council has decided to pause this work as a result of some councils withdrawing from LGNZ (which has had an impact on our resourcing levels). We are doing work to bring together all the work we already do in this space so that councils are aware of what support is available to them.

Earthquake prone buildings

As championed by Manawatū District Council (the mover of this remit), a review of the current earthquake strengthening requirements has been announced. Our Policy Team has been working with Manawatū District Council and officials at MBIE to ensure the review meets the needs of local government, and that there is strong local government input into it – including getting our three suggested members appointed the steering group. There has been good media coverage of this review, and the role Manawatū District Council has played in pushing for it. An issues paper has now been drafted ahead of convening a group of elected members/officers to help guide LGNZ’s response to the review.

KiwiSaver contributions for elected members

We have engaged with Ministers and officials on this issue. We have engaged Simpson Grierson to provide detailed advice on options for providing KiwiSaver contributions for elected members – including drafting of relevant legislative clauses. We have proactively raised this issue with Minister Watts as part of our briefing to the incoming minister.

Scope of audits and audit fees

We have raised the cost of audits with the Minister and Prime Minister as part of our wider advocacy around seeking reform of the Long-term Plan to make it more effective and efficient.

Another part of our approach to reduce fees is to ensure that the legislative requirements and scope (and resulting repetition and complexity) of Long-term Plans and Annual Plans and reports are reduced to be better aligned with needs and cost less to audit. We have met with Audit NZ, Taituarā and the Office of the Auditor General to review the current requirements of long-term planning and associated reporting. This has informed further advocacy to DIA and the minister.

Ko Tatou
LGNZ.