



AGENDA

Policy & Planning

Tuesday 2 September 2025 10.30am

Policy and Planning Committee

02 September 2025 10:30 AM



Agenda Topic	Page
1. Cover	1
2. Health and Safety message	3
3. Apologies	
4. Confirmation of Policy and Planning Minutes - 22 July 2025	4
5. Submission on Local Government Systems Improvement Bill	10
6. Freshwater Implementation Update	39
7. Environmental Snapshot: Wainuku - Groundwater	43
8. Water Resilience in Taranaki	47
9. Public Excluded	
10. Public Excluded Recommendations	63
11. Confirmation of Public Excluded Policy and Planning Minutes - 2025	64
12. Karakia to close meeting	67
13. Agenda Authorisation	68



Health and Safety Message

Emergency Procedure

In the event of an emergency, please exit through the emergency door in the Committee Room by the kitchen.

If you require assistance to exit, please see a staff member.

Once you reach the bottom of the stairs make your way to the assembly point at 43 Cloten Road. Staff will guide you to an alternative route if necessary.

Earthquake

If there is an earthquake - drop, cover and hold where possible. Please remain where you are until further instruction is given.



Date: 2 September 2025

Subject: Policy and Planning Committee Minutes – 22 July 2025

Author: M Jones, Governance Administrator

Approved by: A D McLay, Director - Resource Management

Document: TRCID-1492626864-775

Recommendations

That Taranaki Regional Council:

- a) takes as read and confirms the minutes of the Policy and Planning Committee meeting of the Taranaki Regional Council held in the Taranaki Regional Council chambers, 47 Cloten Road, Stratford on Tuesday 22 July 2025
- b) notes the recommendations therein were adopted by the Taranaki Regional Council on Tuesday 5 August 2025.

Appendices/Attachments

TRCID-1492626864-955: [Policy and Planning Committee Minutes – 22 July 2025](#)



Date:	22 July 2025	
Venue:	Taranaki Regional Council Boardroom, 47 Cloten Road, Stratford	
Document:	TRCID-1492626864-955	
Present:	B J Bigham	Chairperson
	S W Hughes	
	A L Jamieson	
	C L Littlewood	(zoom)
	D H McIntyre	
	D M Cram	
	C S Williamson	ex officio
	N W Walker	ex officio
	G Boyde	Stratford District Council
	M Ritai	Iwi Representative
	E Bailey	Iwi Representative (zoom)
	P Moeahu	Iwi Representative
	L Gibbs	Federated Farmers
Attending:	M J Cloke	
	S J Ruru	Chief Executive
	A J Matthews	Director – Environment Quality
	D Harrison	Director – Operations
	A D McLay	Director – Resource Management
	F Kiddle	Strategy lead
	M Jones	Governance Administrator
	L Hawkins	Policy Manager (zoom)
	C Woollin	Communications Advisor
	B Hutterd	Senior Policy Analyst
	T Gordan	Programme Manager – Freshwater
	H Goslin	Consultant
	F Boyd	Consultant
	M Hokopaura	Pou Taiao (Te Mana o Te Wai) for Ngā Iwi o Taranaki Collective
	L Millar	Manager - Resource Consents (Joined meeting at 11.32am)

The meeting opened at 10.30am.

Apologies: Were received and sustained from C Filbee - South Taranaki District Council and Bali Haque – New Plymouth District Council.

Jamieson/Hughes

S Ruru provided an update on recent announcements made at the Local Government New Zealand (LGNZ) Conference regarding RMA reform. The Minister for RMA Reform advised that a freeze has been placed on most plan review processes.

Two key work programmes are affected:

- Coastal Plan Change - Endorsed earlier this year and is proposed to address issues created by the Marine Mammal Zone on the West Coast. Staff are continuing with work on the need for this plan change and will explore options for seeking Ministerial approval if needed.
- Freshwater and Land Plan Change - The Government has confirmed that no freshwater plan changes are to be notified before December 2027, with legislative amendments to the Resource Management Act 1992 proposed to give effect to this direction.

Although formal notification has been delayed, councils are encouraged to continue preparatory work. This includes addressing region specific issues such as water allocation and the pace at which good farming practices can be implemented.

Given the announcement, staff will use the additional time to review current priorities and report back to Council in early 2026.

1. Confirmation of Minutes Policy and Planning 10 June 2025

Resolved

That the Taranaki Regional Council:

- a) took as read and confirmed the minutes of the Policy and Planning Committee of the Taranaki Regional Council held on 10 June 2025 at Taranaki Regional Council 47 Cloten Road Stratford
- b) noted the recommendations therein were adopted by the Taranaki Regional Council on Tuesday 24 June 2025.

Bigham/Walker

2. Submission on National Direction Consultation

2.1 F Kiddle proved an overview of the submission.

2.2 Council Chair Bigham noted her Interest with Taumata Arowai throughout the agenda.

Resolved

That the Taranaki Regional Council:

- a) received the memorandum titled *Submission on national direction consultation*
- b) endorsed the submission contained in Attachment One
- c) determined that this decision be recognised as not significant in terms of section 76 of the Local Government Act 2002
- d) determines that it has complied with the decision-making provisions of the Local Government Act 2002 to the extent necessary in relation to this decision; and in accordance with section 79 of the Act, determined that it does not require further information, further assessment of options or further analysis of costs and benefits, or advantages and disadvantages prior to making a decision on this matter.

Williamson/Bigham

L Gibbs – Federated Farmers voted against as it doesn't align with the Federated Farmers position.

3. Mayoral Forum Hydrogen Submission

- 3.1 F Kiddle provided an overview of the Hydrogen submission from Mayoral Forum. Discussion occurred on the role of the forum representing councils and the need for change in the triennial agreement.

Resolved

That the Taranaki Regional Council:

- a) received the memorandum titled Mayoral Forum hydrogen submission
- b) noted the submission contained in Attachment One
- c) noted that when more detailed proposals emerge, including proposed legislative changes, these will be brought to the Policy and Planning Committee for detailed consideration.

Hughes/McIntyre

4. Submission on South Taranaki District Council Plan Change 4

- 4.1 L Hawkins provided an overview of the submission.

Resolved

That the Taranaki Regional Council:

- a) received the memorandum titled *Submission on South Taranaki District Council Plan Change 4*
- b) endorsed the submission contained in Attachment One
- c) determined that this decision be recognised as not significant in terms of section 76 of the Local Government Act 2002
- d) determined that it has complied with the decision-making provisions of the Local Government Act 2002 to the extent necessary in relation to this decision; and in accordance with section 79 of the Act, determined that it does not require further information, further assessment of options or further analysis of costs and benefits, or advantages and disadvantages prior to making a decision on this matter.

Boyde/Jamieson

5. Suspension of Standing Orders – Land and Freshwater Workshop items

Suspension of Standing Orders for the following agenda items:

- Freshwater Implementation Update
- Earthworks – Proposed Direction for the Draft Land and Freshwater Plan
- The management of Damming and Diversion within the Draft Land and Freshwater.

Resolved

That the Taranaki Regional Council:

- a) received the Suspension of Standing Orders - Freshwater Workshop items memorandum
- b) approved the suspension of Standing Orders 20.2, 20.5, 20.6, 20.8, 20.10, 20.11, 20.12, 20.13, 20.14, 20.15, 21, 24 and 25
- c) determined in accordance with Standing Order 3.5, that these standing orders should be suspended to facilitate more in-depth discussion between Committee members and officers in relation to the different policy options that might exist for a particular issue
- d) noted that the suspension of Standing Orders will end at the completion of the Animal Effluent phase out report back item

- e) determined that this decision be recognised as not significant in terms of section 76 of the Local Government Act 2002
- f) determined that it has complied with the decision-making provisions of the Local Government Act 2002 to the extent necessary in relation to this decision; and in accordance with section 79 of the Act, determined that it does not require further information, further assessment of options or further analysis of costs and benefits, or advantages and disadvantages prior to making a decision on this matter.

Bigham/Hughes

6. Freshwater Implementation Update

- 6.1 L Hawkins provided a freshwater Implementation update for July 2025.

Resolved

That the Taranaki Regional Council:

- a) received the July 2025 update on the Freshwater Implementation Programme.

Williamson/Jamieson

7. Earthworks - Proposed Direction for the Draft Land and Freshwater Plan

- 7.1 Consultant H Goslin gave a brief PowerPoint presentation to seek support for managing the policy direction of earthworks in the draft Land and Freshwater Plan.

L Millar Joined meeting

Resolved

That the Taranaki Regional Council:

- a) received the memorandum titled Earthworks – proposed direction for the draft land and freshwater plan
- b) supported the recommended direction for managing earthworks set out in Option 2 of this paper
- c) notes that staff will continue to engage with iwi Pou Taiao, including discussions with the Wai Steering Group, territorial authorities and the advisory group
- d) determined that this decision be recognised as not significant in terms of section 76 of the Local Government Act 2002, determined it does not require further information, further assessment of options or further analysis of costs and benefits, or advantages and disadvantages prior to making a decision on this matter.

Boyde/Williamson

8. The Management of Damming and Diversion within the Draft Land and Freshwater Plan

- 8.1 B Hutterd gave a brief PowerPoint presentation to seek support for managing the policy direction of damming and diversion provisions in the draft Land and Freshwater Plan.

G Boyde left the meeting 11.51am

Resolved

That the Taranaki Regional Council:

- a) received the memorandum titled the Management of Damming and Diversion within the Draft Land and Freshwater Plan

- b) received the proposed rule table found in paragraph 39 of this report
- c) supports the direction set out in Option 2 to refine the Draft Plan's management approach to damming and diversion activities
- d) noted further engagement is required with internal and external experts to ensure the details of the proposed framework are functional and appropriate
- e) determined that this decision be recognised as not significant in terms of section 76 of the Local Government Act 2002, determined it does not require further information, further assessment of options or further analysis of costs and benefits, or advantages and disadvantages prior to making a decision on this matter.

Hughes/Gibbs

9. Public Excluded

In accordance with section 48(1) of the Local Government Official Information and Meetings Act 1987, resolves that the public is excluded from the following part of the proceedings of the Policy and Planning Committee Meeting on 22 July 2025 for the following reason/s:

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

General subject of each matter to be considered	Reason for passing this resolution in relation to each matter	Ground(s) under section 48(1) for the passing of this resolution	When can the item be released into the public
Item 14: Nomination of panel member for the Taranaki VTM Project application	To enable any local authority holding the information to protect the privacy of natural persons.	That the public conduct of the whole or the relevant part of the proceedings of the meeting would be likely to result in the disclosure of information for which good reason for withholding would exist under section 7 (2) (a) of <i>the Local Government Official Information and Meetings Act 1987</i> .	Upon public announcement from the EPA of the panel members, even then some aspects of the agenda memo may need withholding

Bigham/Walker

Policy and Planning

Committee Chairperson: _____

B J Bigham



Date: 2 September 2025

Subject: Submission on Local Government Systems Improvement Bill

Author: F Kiddle, Strategy Lead

Approved by: A D McLay, Director - Resource Management

Document: TRCID-1492626864-1117

Purpose

1. To seek retrospective endorsement of a submission on the Local Government (Systems Improvement) Bill.

Recommendations:

That the Taranaki Regional Council:

- a) receives the memorandum titled *Submission on Local Government Systems Improvement Bill*
- b) endorses the submission in Attachment 1
- c) determines that this decision be recognised as not significant in terms of section 76 of the Local Government Act 2002
- d) determines that it has complied with the decision-making provisions of the Local Government Act 2002 to the extent necessary in relation to this decision; and in accordance with section 79 of the Act, determines that it does not require further information, further assessment of options or further analysis of costs and benefits, or advantages and disadvantages prior to making a decision on this matter.

Background

2. As part of its drive to focus councils on core services and reduce rates increases, the Government has introduced the Local Government (System Improvements) Bill (the Bill). The Bill, contained in Attachment 2, makes the following key changes to the Local Government Act 2002 (the Act):
 - a. refocusing the purpose of local government
 - b. better measuring and publicising council performance
 - c. prioritising core services in council spending
 - d. strengthening council transparency and accountability
 - e. providing regulatory relief to councils.
3. The headline change in the Bill is refocusing the purpose of local government by removing reference to the four well-beings. They are replaced with language around providing good-quality local infrastructure, public services, and regulatory services. This is also accompanied by a list of what are considered the core services of a local authority. These listed core services, and the overall purpose of

local government, must then be given greater regard than other matters when allocating budgets and determining long-term plans.

4. The Bill also:
 - a. Seeks to improve the measuring and publicising of council performance by, among other things, expanding regulation-making powers for benchmarks beyond financial performance and requiring reporting on contractor and consultant expenditure
 - b. Strengthens council transparency and accountability by allowing for a binding standardised code of conduct and set of standing orders, improving the availability of information to elected members, and creating new local governance principles on the freedom of expression and the responsibility of elected members to work collaboratively
 - c. Provides regulatory relief by, among other things, modernising public notice requirements, removing the requirement for 6-yearly service delivery review and extending the maximum length of a chief executive's second term to 5 years.
5. Submissions on the Bill closed on 27 August. To meet this deadline, a draft submission was circulated to members of the Policy & Planning Committee for out of session comment. The submission was then lodged on 21 August.

Issues

6. The key issue for Council in the Bill is how it will shape the allocation of resources amongst its different functions.

Discussion

7. The changes relating to the purpose of local government and core services are the focus of the Council submission. The submission is agnostic about the change to the overall purpose of local government, noting that these changes have been made before with limited benefits to communities. However, the submission does request greater recognition of "regulatory and other services mandated under other acts and associated non-regulatory support." The current list of core services in the Bill does not acknowledge these matters, which are particularly important for regional councils. The submission uses the Council's riparian and hill country programmes as examples of successful non-regulatory services that warrant greater recognition in the Bill.
8. Except for one matter regarding the creation of a national code of practice and set of standing orders, the Submission does not comment on the range of more administrative changes in the Bill. Both Taituarā and Te Uru Kahika are working on detailed submissions canvassing these other matters and are better suited to providing this level of analysis.
9. Feedback on the draft submission from the Committee has resulted in it being changed to state that Council does wish to be heard in support of this submission. Doing so will provide an opportunity to advocate for the services we provide. Since circulating the draft, officers have become aware that a definition of 'high-quality' still exists in the Act. Accordingly, the reference to needing to provide such a definition in the Bill has been removed.

Options

10. Council can endorse the submission as drafted, endorse the submission with amendments, or not endorse it. Considering the link to Council operations, it is appropriate that the Council's voice is heard. Accordingly, endorsing the submission is recommended.

Significance

11. This decision is assessed as not significant with regards to the Significance and Engagement Policy. It will have no impact on levels of service, incur more than \$10,000,000 budgeted or \$5,000,000 of unbudgeted expenditure, or involve the transfer of ownership or control of a strategic asset. More broadly, final decision-making authority rests with the Government.

Financial considerations—LTP/Annual Plan

12. This memorandum and the associated recommendations are consistent with the Council's adopted Long-Term Plan and estimates. Any financial information included in this memorandum has been prepared in accordance with generally accepted accounting practice.

Policy considerations

13. This memorandum and the associated recommendations are consistent with the policy documents and positions adopted by this Council under various legislative frameworks including, but not restricted to, the *Local Government Act 2002*, the *Resource Management Act 1991* and the *Local Government Official Information and Meetings Act 1987*.

Climate change considerations

14. There are no climate change impacts to consider in relation to this item.

Iwi considerations

15. This memorandum and the associated recommendations are consistent with the Council's policy for the development of Māori capacity to contribute to decision-making processes (schedule 10 of the *Local Government Act 2002*) as outlined in the adopted Long-Term Plan and/or Annual Plan. Similarly, iwi involvement in adopted work programmes has been recognised in the preparation of this memorandum.

Community considerations

16. This memorandum and the associated recommendations have considered the views of the community, interested and affected parties and those views have been recognised in the preparation of this memorandum.

Legal considerations

17. This memorandum and the associated recommendations comply with the appropriate statutory requirements imposed upon the Council.

Appendices/Attachments

TRCID-1553446934-114: [Local Government System Improvement Bill Submission](#)

TRCID-1553446934-112: [Local Government System Improvement Bill](#)



25 August 2025

Document: TRCID-1553446934-114

Committee Secretariat
Committee Secretariat
Governance and Administration Committee
Parliament Buildings
Wellington
Ga.legislation@parliament.govt.nz

Submission on Local Government (System Improvements) Amendment Bill

1. Taranaki Regional Council (Council) welcomes the opportunity to submit on the Local Government (Systems Improvements) Amendment Bill (the Bill). The Bill contains several practical improvements to local government processes that will help achieve administrative efficiency and reduce costs. Councils principal concern is the lack of bipartisan support and continued reversals on the purpose of local government. This is a continued barrier to councils getting on with supporting the needs of their communities.
2. Council is agnostic regarding replacing the four well-beings with language around good-quality local infrastructure, public services and regulatory services. We agree with the finding in the Bill's regulatory impact statement that the proposed changes are "unlikely to benefit communities more than the status quo." Changes to and away from the four well-beings have had limited impact in the past. Instead, they will impose additional administrative costs on councils to adjust their reporting to meet the new purpose.
3. In noting the above, there are two issues with the proposed purpose changes that need addressing. First, the list of core services of a local authority should specifically include "regulatory and other services mandated under other acts and associated non-regulatory support". Beyond reflecting vital regulatory functions, such as those under the Resource Management Act 1991, this acknowledges the range of other services, such as biosecurity and rivers management, that regional councils are required to deliver. This includes providing support for landowners to meet regulatory requirements and achieve environmental outcomes that can also increase their economic returns.
4. Council's voluntary riparian and hill country management programmes, for example, have been a cornerstone of farming practice in Taranaki for decades. Among other outcomes, the riparian programme has helped landowners' plant 12,401km of stream

bank and the hill country programme has provided famers comprehensive land-use mapping of 251,000 hectares of hill-country land. These programmes demonstrate the value of regional councils working alongside and in partnership with landowners to deliver better outcomes including improved economic returns by, for example, reducing the risk of losing land through erosion. This type of non-regulatory support should be acknowledged as a core service.

5. Finally, we support the proposed changes to council transparency and accountability. However, we do request that provision is made to enable councils to make targeted modifications to any standardised code of conduct or standing orders in exceptional circumstances. For example, matters that require a higher than 50% voting threshold.
6. We wish to be heard in support of this submission.

Yours faithfully

S J Ruru
Chief Executive

Local Government (System Improvements) Amendment Bill

Government Bill

Explanatory note

General policy statement

The primary policy objective of the Local Government (System Improvements) Amendment Bill (the **Bill**) is to reduce pressure on council rates by—

- refocusing the purpose of local government; and
- better measuring and publicising council performance; and
- prioritising core services in council spending; and
- strengthening council transparency and accountability; and
- providing regulatory relief to councils.

The Bill is intended to help address cost of living concerns. When councils were consulting on current long-term plans, rates were identified as a driver of household inflation. Rates had risen the fastest in 20 years and were forecast to rise again by an average of 15%.

Rates rises are being driven primarily by rising council costs, particularly for critical infrastructure. However, the Government is concerned that rates rises are being exacerbated by a lack of fiscal discipline among councils, including—

- spending on activities that stray from core services:
- spending more than necessary on the basics:
- not taking advantage of the full range of funding and financing tools available.

The Bill is intended to help address the Government's concern about a lack of fiscal discipline among councils, as well as ongoing public concern about the high cost of living.

The Bill proposes a range of amendments to the Local Government Act 2002 to meet its policy objectives.

2	Local Government (System Improvements) Amendment Bill	Explanatory note
---	--	------------------

Refocusing purpose of local government

To refocus the purpose of local government, the Bill—

- removes all references to the 4 aspects of community well-being; and
- reinstates as a purpose of local government being focused on the cost-effective provision of good-quality local infrastructure and public services; and
- reinstates the specific core services a local authority must have particular regard to in performing its role.

These amendments are intended to provide clearer direction for councils and to help them balance the need for investment with rates affordability.

Better measuring and publicising of council performance

To better measure and publicise council performance, the Bill—

- shifts the specific groups of activities councils must plan for and report on into regulations; and
- expands an existing regulation-making power to enable benchmarks to be set in areas of council activity beyond financial performance and asset management; and
- requires councils to report on contractor and consultant expenditure; and
- makes the issuing of rules for performance measures by the Secretary for Local Government (the **Secretary**) discretionary rather than mandatory.

These amendments are intended to—

- improve the consistency of council planning and reporting by activity group; and
- give members of the public a better sense of “what good looks like” in terms of council performance; and
- support a review of the current non-financial performance measures in light of new planning and reporting requirements for water services proposed under Local Water Done Well.

The Government intends to establish a council performance measurement framework similar to that established in New South Wales. This will involve the Department of Internal Affairs routinely publishing council performance information on its internet site so that members of the public can more easily access information about the performance of their council. These amendments are intended to lay the foundation for this framework.

Prioritising core services in council spending

To support the prioritisation of core services in council spending, the Bill includes an additional financial management principle for councils, meaning that a local authority must have particular regard to the purpose of local government and the core services of a local authority when determining its financial management approach.

Explanatory note	Local Government (System Improvements) Amendment Bill	3
------------------	--	---

The Government is investigating tools for limiting council expenditure on certain activities, such as the rate peg (maximum percentage amount by which a council may increase its general income for the year) used in New South Wales. This amendment is intended to encourage local authorities to adopt the sort of financial management principles that a rates capping system in New Zealand would be intended to foster.

Strengthening council transparency and accountability

To strengthen council transparency and accountability, the Bill—

- empowers the Secretary to issue a standardised code of conduct and set of standing orders, both of which would be binding on all councils; and
- requires councils to include the standardised code of conduct in statutory briefings of newly elected members (and extends the code's application to community board members); and
- requires chief executives of local authorities to facilitate information sharing between councils and elected members (and creates a regulation-making power for prescribing some of the processes associated with information requests); and
- emphasises, in the local governance principles, freedom of expression and the responsibility of elected members to work collaboratively to set the direction of their respective councils.

These amendments are intended to bolster the connection between councils and communities by—

- making public expectations of elected members and council staff clearer and more consistent across the country; and
- supporting elected members to effectively represent local people in council governance.

Providing regulatory relief to councils

To provide regulatory relief to councils, the Bill—

- modernises public notice requirements; and
- removes the requirement for 6-yearly service delivery reviews; and
- clarifies the authority of an acting or interim chief executive to sign certificates of compliance for lending arrangements; and
- clarifies that third-party contributions to capital projects for which development contributions are charged can be targeted to specific project drivers; and
- removes the requirement for councils to consider the relevance of tikanga Māori knowledge when appointing council-controlled organisation directors; and
- extends the maximum length of a chief executive's second term to 5 years.

4	Local Government (System Improvements) Amendment Bill	Explanatory note
---	--	------------------

These amendments are intended to reduce or clarify specific regulatory requirements on councils for greater efficiency.

Departmental disclosure statement

The Department of Internal Affairs is required to prepare a disclosure statement to assist with the scrutiny of this Bill. The disclosure statement provides access to information about the policy development of the Bill and identifies any significant or unusual legislative features of the Bill.

A copy of the statement can be found at <http://legislation.govt.nz/disclosure.aspx?type=bill&subtype=government&year=2025&no=180>

Regulatory impact statement

The Department of Internal Affairs produced regulatory impact statements on 31 October 2024 and 5 November 2024 to help inform the main policy decisions taken by the Government relating to the contents of this Bill.

Copies of these regulatory impact statements can be found at—

- <https://www.dia.govt.nz/Resource-material-Regulatory-Impact-Statements-Index#five>
- <https://www.regulation.govt.nz/our-work/regulatory-impact-statements/>

Clause by clause analysis

Clause 1 is the Title clause.

Clause 2 is the commencement clause. It provides that—

- *clause 26(2), (3), and (5)* of the Bill comes into force on a single date set by Order in Council. The trigger date will be the date on which regulations prescribing the groups of activities that a local authority must include in its long-term plan, annual plan, and annual report are first made under *new section 259(1)(de)*:
- if *clause 26(2), (3), and (5)* has not come into force by 30 June 2030, it will come into force on that date:
- the rest of the Bill comes into force on the day after Royal assent.

Clause 3 provides that the Bill amends the Local Government Act 2002 (the **principal Act**).

Clause 4 replaces section 3(d), which currently provides that one of the purposes of the principal Act is to provide for local authorities to play a broad role in promoting the social, economic, environmental, and cultural well-being of their communities (the **4 aspects of community well-being**), taking a sustainable development approach. *Clause 4* amends section 3(d) by removing the reference to the 4 aspects of community well-being and replacing it with the version of section 3(d) that was in

Explanatory note	Local Government (System Improvements) Amendment Bill	5
------------------	--	---

force immediately before the amendments made by the Local Government (Community Well-being) Amendment Act 2019 (the **2019 amendment Act**).

This is one of a number of amendments to the principal Act that remove references to the 4 aspects of community well-being by reinstating the version of the relevant provision of the principal Act that was in force immediately before the 2019 amendment Act was enacted.

Clause 5 amends section 5(1) (interpretation) by—

- reinstating the definitions of community outcomes and significance that were in force immediately before the 2019 amendment Act was enacted; and
- repealing the outdated definition of public notice to modernise the public notice requirements in the principal Act by relying on the default definition of public notice in section 13 of the Legislation Act 2019; and
- including a new definition of waste management.

Clause 6 amends section 10, which sets out the purpose of local government. The amendment broadly reinstates the version of section 10 that was in force immediately before the enactment of the 2019 amendment Act, with 1 adjustment. The adjustment is to include a new purpose to support local economic growth and development. The new purpose applies only to the extent that it fulfils the purpose set out in *new paragraph (b)* of section 10, which is to meet the current and future needs of communities for good-quality local infrastructure, local public services, and performance of regulatory functions in a way that is most cost-effective for households and businesses.

Clause 7 inserts *new section 11A*, which sets out the core services a local authority must have particular regard to in performing its role. The amendment broadly reinstates the version of section 11A that was in force immediately before the enactment of the 2019 amendment Act, with 2 adjustments. The adjustments include updated terms for solid waste collection and disposal (waste management) and the avoidance or mitigation of natural hazards (civil defence emergency management).

Clause 8 amends section 14, which sets out principles relating to local authorities. The amendments reinstate the versions of section 14(1)(c)(iii), 14(1)(h)(i), and 14(2) that were in force immediately before the enactment of the 2019 amendment Act.

Clause 9 amends section 17A (delivery of services) by removing the mandatory requirement for a local authority to carry out periodic reviews of the cost-effectiveness of its arrangements for meeting the needs of communities within its district or region for good-quality local infrastructure, local public services, and performance of regulatory functions.

Clause 10 amends section 39 (governance principles) to add the following 2 new governance principles:

- fostering the free exchange of information and expression of opinions by elected members; and

6	Local Government (System Improvements) Amendment Bill	Explanatory note
---	--	------------------

- fostering the responsibility of a local authority's elected members to work collaboratively to set its agenda, determine its policy, and make decisions on behalf of its communities.

Clause 11 amends section 40 (local governance statements) to require a local authority to include in its local governance statement information on how the local authority is acting in accordance with the 2 new governance principles set out in *new section 39(f) and (g)* (*see clause 10*).

Clause 12 amends section 42 (chief executive) to add to a chief executive's responsibilities the responsibility to ensure that members of the local authority have access to documents that the local authority holds and that are reasonably necessary to enable the members to effectively perform their duties as a member of the local authority.

Clause 13 amends section 48O (local board agreements) to remove the reference to clause 2(2) of Schedule 10, which is being replaced (*see clause 26(2)*).

Clause 14 amends section 48Q (application of Schedule 7 to local boards and their members) to remove the reference to clause 15 of Schedule 7. The effect of the amendment is that clause 15 of Schedule 7 will apply to local boards and their members for consistency with the amendments to Schedule 7 made by *clause 25*.

Clause 15 amends section 54 (application of other provisions to community boards) to remove the reference to clause 15 of Schedule 7. The effect of the amendment is that clause 15 of Schedule 7 will apply to community boards for consistency with the amendments to Schedule 7 made by *clause 25*.

Clause 16 repeals the requirement in section 57(3) for a local authority to consider, when identifying the skills, knowledge, and experience required of directors of a council-controlled organisation, whether knowledge of tikanga Māori may be relevant to the governance of that organisation.

Clause 17 amends section 99 (audit of information in annual report and summary) to clarify that the Auditor-General is not required to report on *new clause 32B* of Schedule 10 (*new clause 32B* is inserted by *clause 26(11)*).

Clause 18 amends section 101 (financial management) to insert a requirement for a local authority to have particular regard to the purpose of local government and the core services of a local authority when determining its approach to financial management. *Clause 18* also removes the reference to the 4 aspects of community well-being from section 101(3)(b).

Clause 19 amends section 118, which empowers the chief executive of a local authority to sign a certificate of compliance. The effect of the amendment is to clarify that if a local authority holds out a person as having the authority to exercise the power of a chief executive to sign a certificate, then any certificate signed by that person is conclusive proof for all purposes that the person has that authority.

Clause 20 amends section 200 (limitations applying to requirement for development contribution) to clarify that a territorial authority must not require a development contribution for a reserve, network infrastructure, or community infrastructure if, and to the extent that, a third party has provided, or undertaken to provide, funding that is

Explanatory note	Local Government (System Improvements) Amendment Bill	7
------------------	--	---

intended to be used for the growth costs of the same reserve, network infrastructure, or community infrastructure.

Clause 21 amends section 259 to enable regulations to be made that prescribe—

- parameters or benchmarks for assessing whether a local authority is performing specified activities or groups of activities in accordance with best practice;
- the groups of activities that a local authority must include in its long-term plan, annual plan, and annual report;
- processes, time frames, and other matters relating to a request for documents by a member of a local authority under *new clause 26A(2)* of Schedule 7 (as inserted by *clause 25(9)*).

Regulations prescribing groups of activities may differentiate between particular local authorities or types or classes of local authority and may prescribe, for example, which activities must be included in a group of activities. Before the Minister of Local Government (the **Minister**) may recommend the making of regulations prescribing groups of activities, the Minister must undertake any consultation that they consider to be appropriate and have particular regard to the purpose of local government and the core services of a local authority.

Clause 22 amends section 261B (Secretary must make rules specifying performance measures). The amendments—

- change the power of the Secretary for Local Government (the **Secretary**) to make rules specifying performance measures from a mandatory power to a discretionary power; and
- replace references to groups of activities with references to activities or groups of activities; and
- change the scope of the consultation that the Secretary must undertake before they make a rule; and
- empower the Secretary to make minor and technical amendments to rules without the need to have regard to specified considerations or to consult.

Clause 23 repeals specified transitional and savings provisions because they are spent.

Clause 24 and Schedule 2 amend Schedule 1AA (application, savings, and transitional provisions). The amendments—

- provide that a local authority must prepare and make publicly available a local governance statement that includes information on how the local authority is acting in accordance with the 2 new governance principles set out in *new section 39(f) and (g)* (see *clause 10*) within 6 months of commencement of the majority of the Bill rather than within 6 months of the 2025 general election of members of the local authority;
- provide that the code of conduct most recently adopted by a local authority before commencement of the majority of the Bill continues to have effect after

8	Local Government (System Improvements) Amendment Bill	Explanatory note
---	--	------------------

the Bill is enacted until the Secretary approves and issues a code of conduct under *new clause 15(1)* of Schedule 7 (as replaced by *clause 25(1)*):

- provide that the set of standing orders most recently adopted by a local authority before commencement of the majority of the Bill continues to have effect after the Bill is enacted until the Secretary approves and issues a set of standing orders under *new clause 27(1)* of Schedule 7 (as replaced by *clause 25(10)*);
- clarify what must be included in the first report in relation to expenditure by local authorities on consultants and contractors after commencement of the majority of the Bill (the requirement to provide the report is contained in *new clause 32B* of Schedule 10, which is inserted by *clause 26(11)*).

Clause 25 amends Schedule 7.

Clause 15 of Schedule 7 currently provides that a local authority must adopt a code of conduct for its members. Clause 15 is amended to instead empower the Secretary to approve and issue a code of conduct for members of local authorities (and to amend or replace it). Consequential amendments are also made to clauses 15 and 36B of Schedule 7. In addition, clause 21 of Schedule 7 is amended to add a requirement that the business conducted at the first meeting of a local authority after a general election must include a general explanation of the code of conduct by or on behalf of the chief executive of the local authority.

New clause 26A is added to Schedule 7 to clarify that a member of a local authority is entitled to have access to documents held by the local authority that are reasonably necessary to enable the member to effectively perform their duties as a member of the local authority. A member may request access to the documents from the chief executive of the local authority.

Clause 27 of Schedule 7 currently provides that a local authority must adopt a set of standing orders for the conduct of its meetings and those of its committees. Clause 27 is amended to instead empower the Secretary to approve and issue a set of standing orders (and to amend or replace them). Consequential amendments are also made to clauses 16, 19, 24, 25A, 27, and 30A of Schedule 7.

Clause 34 of Schedule 7 is amended to increase the period for which a local authority may appoint an incumbent chief executive for a second term without advertising the vacancy from 2 years to 5 years.

A *new clause 40* is added to Schedule 7 to provide that members of community boards must comply with the code of conduct.

Clause 26 amends Schedule 10, which relates to long-term plans, annual plans, and annual reports. The amendments to Schedule 10 are as follows:

- *clause 26(1)* replaces clause 2(1)(c) with the version of clause 2(1)(c) that was in force immediately before the enactment of the 2019 amendment Act;
- *clause 26(2)* replaces clause 2(2) and (3). The effect of the amendment is to remove the list of prescribed groups of activities (groups of activities will now be prescribed by regulation) (*see clause 21(2)*) and to clarify that local author-

Explanatory note	Local Government (System Improvements) Amendment Bill	9
------------------	--	---

ities may treat activities that are not prescribed as groups of activities by regulations made under *new section 259(1)(de)* as groups of activities for the purposes of Schedule 10:

- *clause 26(3) and (5)* amends clauses 4(a) and 17A(b) to remove references to clause 2(2) of Schedule 10, which is being replaced (*see clause 26(2)*):
- *clause 26(7)* replaces clause 23(d) with an adjusted version of clause 23(d) that was in force immediately before the enactment of the 2019 amendment Act (the adjustment is to include the same exception from the reporting requirement that is being added by the amendments in *clause 26(4), (6), and (8) to (10)*):
- *clause 26(11)* inserts *new clause 32B*, which requires a local authority to include information about its expenditure on consultants and contractors in its annual report.

In addition, *clause 26(4), (6), and (8) to (10)* provides that certain reporting requirements do not apply if—

- the groups of activities provided for in the principal Act have been changed by regulations made under *new section 259(1)(de)* in the year before the requirement would otherwise apply; and
- the change makes it impossible or impractical to comply with the reporting requirement.

In this situation, a local authority will instead need to note why the change makes it impossible or impractical to comply with the reporting requirement.

Clauses 27 to 30 provide for consequential amendments to the Local Government (Water Services Preliminary Arrangements) Act 2024. Those amendments are required as the result of the repeal of section 17A(1) to (4) of the principal Act (*see clause 9(2)*).

Hon Simon Watts

Local Government (System Improvements) Amendment Bill

Government Bill

Contents

		Page
<u>1</u>	<u>Title</u>	<u>2</u>
<u>2</u>	<u>Commencement</u>	<u>2</u>
<u>3</u>	<u>Principal Act</u>	<u>3</u>
 <u>Part 1</u> <u>Amendments relating to system improvements</u>		
<u>4</u>	<u>Section 3 amended (Purpose)</u>	<u>3</u>
<u>5</u>	<u>Section 5 amended (Interpretation)</u>	<u>3</u>
<u>6</u>	<u>Section 10 replaced (Purpose of local government)</u>	<u>3</u>
<u>10</u>	<u>Purpose of local government</u>	<u>3</u>
<u>7</u>	<u>New section 11A inserted (Core services to be considered in performing role)</u>	<u>3</u>
	<u>11A Core services to be considered in performing role</u>	<u>4</u>
<u>8</u>	<u>Section 14 amended (Principles relating to local authorities)</u>	<u>4</u>
<u>9</u>	<u>Section 17A amended (Delivery of services)</u>	<u>4</u>
<u>10</u>	<u>Section 39 amended (Governance principles)</u>	<u>4</u>
<u>11</u>	<u>Section 40 amended (Local governance statements)</u>	<u>5</u>
<u>12</u>	<u>Section 42 amended (Chief executive)</u>	<u>5</u>
<u>13</u>	<u>Section 48O amended (Local board agreements)</u>	<u>5</u>
<u>14</u>	<u>Section 48Q amended (Application of Schedule 7 to local boards and their members)</u>	<u>5</u>
<u>15</u>	<u>Section 54 amended (Application of other provisions to community boards)</u>	<u>5</u>
<u>16</u>	<u>Section 57 amended (Appointment of directors)</u>	<u>5</u>

cl 1	Local Government (System Improvements) Amendment Bill	
<u>17</u>	<u>Section 99 amended (Audit of information in annual report and summary)</u>	<u>5</u>
<u>18</u>	<u>Section 101 amended (Financial management)</u>	<u>5</u>
<u>19</u>	<u>Section 118 amended (Certificate of compliance)</u>	<u>6</u>
<u>20</u>	<u>Section 200 amended (Limitations applying to requirement for development contribution)</u>	<u>6</u>
<u>21</u>	<u>Section 259 amended (Regulations)</u>	<u>6</u>
<u>22</u>	<u>Section 261B amended (Secretary must make rules specifying performance measures)</u>	<u>7</u>
	<u>Part 2</u>	
	<u>Miscellaneous provisions</u>	
<u>23</u>	<u>Sections repealed</u>	<u>8</u>
<u>24</u>	<u>Schedule 1AA amended</u>	<u>8</u>
<u>25</u>	<u>Schedule 7 amended</u>	<u>8</u>
<u>26</u>	<u>Schedule 10 amended</u>	<u>10</u>
	<i><u>Consequential amendments to Local Government (Water Services Preliminary Arrangements) Act 2024</u></i>	
<u>27</u>	<u>Principal Act</u>	<u>11</u>
<u>28</u>	<u>Section 58 amended (Purposes of this Part)</u>	<u>11</u>
<u>29</u>	<u>Section 68 repealed (Exemption from cost-effectiveness review)</u>	<u>11</u>
<u>30</u>	<u>Section 69 repealed (Repeal of section 68)</u>	<u>11</u>
	<u>Schedule 1</u>	<u>12</u>
	<u>Sections repealed</u>	
	<u>Schedule 2</u>	<u>13</u>
	<u>New Part 10 inserted into Schedule 1AA</u>	

The Parliament of New Zealand enacts as follows:

- 1 Title**
This Act is the Local Government (System Improvements) Amendment Act **2025**.
- 2 Commencement** 5
 - (1) This Act comes into force on the day after Royal assent.
 - (2) However, **section 26(2), (3), and (5)** comes into force on a single date set by Order in Council.
 - (3) If **section 26(2), (3), and (5)** has not come into force by 30 June 2030, it comes into force then. 10
 - (4) An Order in Council made under this section is secondary legislation (*see* Part 3 of the Legislation Act 2019 for publication requirements).

**Local Government (System Improvements) Amendment
Bill**

Part 1 cl 7

3 Principal Act

This Act amends the Local Government Act 2002.

Part 1**Amendments relating to system improvements**

- 4 Section 3 amended (Purpose) 5**
 Replace section 3(d) with:
 (d) provides for local authorities to play a broad role in meeting the current and future needs of their communities for good-quality local infrastructure, local public services, and performance of regulatory functions.
- 5 Section 5 amended (Interpretation) 10**
 (1) In section 5(1), replace the definition of **community outcomes** with:
community outcomes means the outcomes that a local authority aims to achieve in meeting the current and future needs of communities for good-quality local infrastructure, local public services, and performance of regulatory functions 15
 (2) In section 5(1), repeal the definition of **public notice**.
 (3) In section 5(1), definition of **significance**, replace paragraph (a) with:
 (a) the district or region:
 (4) In section 5(1), insert in its appropriate alphabetical order:
waste management means solid waste collection and disposal 20
- 6 Section 10 replaced (Purpose of local government)**
 Replace section 10 with:
- 10 Purpose of local government**
 The purpose of local government is—
 (a) to enable democratic local decision-making and action by, and on behalf of, communities; and 25
 (b) to meet the current and future needs of communities for good-quality local infrastructure, local public services, and performance of regulatory functions in a way that is most cost-effective for households and businesses; and 30
 (c) to support local economic growth and development by fulfilling the purpose set out in **paragraph (b)**.
- 7 New section 11A inserted (Core services to be considered in performing role)**
 After section 11, insert: 35

Local Government (System Improvements) Amendment Bill	
Part 1 cl 8	
11A Core services to be considered in performing role	
(1) The following services are the core services of a local authority:	
(a) network infrastructure:	
(b) public transport services:	
(c) waste management:	5
(d) civil defence emergency management:	
(e) libraries, museums, reserves, and other recreational facilities.	
(2) In performing its role, a local authority must have particular regard to the contribution that the core services make to its communities.	
(3) In subsection (1)(d), civil defence emergency management has the meaning given to it in section 4 of the Civil Defence Emergency Management Act 2002.	10
8 Section 14 amended (Principles relating to local authorities)	
(1) Replace section 14(1)(c)(iii) with:	
(iii) the likely impact of any decision on the interests referred to in subparagraphs (i) and (ii):	15
(2) Replace section 14(1)(h)(i) with:	
(i) the social, economic, and cultural interests of people and communities; and	
(3) Replace section 14(2) with:	20
(2) If any of these principles are in conflict in any particular case, the local authority must resolve the conflict in accordance with the principle in subsection (1)(a)(i).	
9 Section 17A amended (Delivery of services)	
(1) Replace the heading to section 17A with “ Delivery of services by different entity ”.	25
(2) Repeal section 17A(1) to (4).	
(3) In section 17A(5), replace “infrastructure, services” with “local infrastructure, local public services”.	
10 Section 39 amended (Governance principles)	30
After section 39(e), insert:	
(f) a local authority should foster the free exchange of information and expression of opinions by elected members; and	
(g) a local authority should foster the responsibility of its elected members to work collaboratively to set the local authority’s agenda, determine its policy, and make decisions on behalf of its communities.	35

**Local Government (System Improvements) Amendment
Bill**

Part 1 cl 18

- | | | |
|-----------|---|----|
| 11 | Section 40 amended (Local governance statements) | |
| | After section 40(1)(f), insert: | |
| | (fa) how the local authority is acting in accordance with the governance principles set out in section 39(f) and (g) ; and | |
| 12 | Section 42 amended (Chief executive) | 5 |
| | After section 42(2)(h), insert: | |
| | (i) ensuring that members of the local authority have access to documents that— | |
| | (i) the local authority holds; and | |
| | (ii) are reasonably necessary to enable each member to effectively perform their duties as a member of the local authority. | 10 |
| 13 | Section 48O amended (Local board agreements) | |
| | In section 48O(5)(a)(i), delete “for each activity described in clause 2(2) of Schedule 10”. | |
| 14 | Section 48Q amended (Application of Schedule 7 to local boards and their members) | 15 |
| | In section 48Q(2), delete “15 and”. | |
| 15 | Section 54 amended (Application of other provisions to community boards) | |
| | In section 54(2), delete “15 and”. | 20 |
| 16 | Section 57 amended (Appointment of directors) | |
| | Repeal section 57(3). | |
| 17 | Section 99 amended (Audit of information in annual report and summary) | |
| | In section 99(1)(d), after “Schedule 10”, insert “(excluding clause 32B)”. | |
| 18 | Section 101 amended (Financial management) | 25 |
| | (1) Before section 101(1), insert: | |
| | (1AAA) A local authority must, when determining its approach to financial management, have particular regard to— | |
| | (a) the purpose of local government stated in section 10 ; and | |
| | (b) the core services of a local authority stated in section 11A . | 30 |
| | (2) Replace section 101(3)(b) with: | |
| | (b) the overall impact of any allocation of liability for revenue needs on the community. | |

**Local Government (System Improvements) Amendment
Bill**

Part 1 cl 19

19 Section 118 amended (Certificate of compliance)

In section 118, insert as subsection (2):

- (2) If a local authority holds out a person as having the authority to exercise the power of a chief executive under **subsection (1)**, then any certificate signed by that person under **subsection (1)** is conclusive proof for all purposes that the person has that authority. 5

20 Section 200 amended (Limitations applying to requirement for development contribution)

- (1) Replace section 200(1)(c) with:

- (c) a third party has provided, or undertaken to provide, the same reserve, network infrastructure, or community infrastructure; or 10
- (d) a third party has provided, or undertaken to provide, funding for the same reserve, network infrastructure, or community infrastructure.

- (2) After section 200(4), insert:

- (4A) For the purposes of **subsection (1)(d)**, if the third party— 15

- (a) has stated that the funding provided by it, or any specific part of the funding, is to be used to pay for the capital expenditure necessary to service growth over the long term, the whole or the specific part of the funding must be deducted from the portion of costs being funded by development contributions; or 20
- (b) has not made a statement under **paragraph (a) or (c)**,—
- (i) the funding must be divided pro rata between—
- (A) the project cost attributable to growth; and
- (B) the project cost attributable to other purposes; and
- (ii) any funding that is attributable to growth costs must be deducted from the portion of costs being funded by development contributions; or 25
- (c) has stated that none of the funding provided by it is to be used to pay for the capital expenditure necessary to service growth over the long term, none of the funding is to be deducted from the portion of costs being funded by development contributions. 30

- (3) In section 200(6), (8), and (10), replace “(1)(c)” with “(1)(d)”.

21 Section 259 amended (Regulations)

- (1) Replace section 259(1)(dc) with:

- (dc) prescribing parameters or benchmarks for assessing whether a local authority is— 35
- (i) prudently managing its revenues, expenses, assets, liabilities, investments, and general financial dealings; or

**Local Government (System Improvements) Amendment
Bill**

Part 1 cl 22

- | | | |
|-----------|--|----|
| | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> (ii) performing specified activities or groups of activities in accordance with best practice: | |
| (2) | After section 259(1)(dd), insert: | |
| | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> (de) prescribing the groups of activities that a local authority must include in its long-term plan, annual plan, and annual report: | 5 |
| (3) | After section 259(1)(f), insert: | |
| | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> (fa) prescribing processes, time frames, and other matters relating to a request for access to documents under clause 26A(2) of Schedule 7: | |
| (4) | After section 259(4), insert: | |
| (4A) | Regulations made under subsection (1)(de) may— | 10 |
| | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> (a) differentiate between particular local authorities or types or classes of local authority (for example, regional councils and territorial authorities); and (b) prescribe— <ul style="list-style-type: none"> (i) which activities must be included in a group of activities: (ii) which activities may be included in a group of activities: (iii) which activities must not be included in a group of activities. | 15 |
| (4B) | The Minister must, before recommending the making of regulations under subsection (1)(de) ,— | |
| | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> (a) consult any of the following persons that the Minister considers appropriate: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> (i) any local authority; (ii) any individual or organisation that the Minister considers representative of the local government sector as a whole; (iii) any other person; and (b) have particular regard to— <ul style="list-style-type: none"> (i) the purpose of local government stated in section 10; and (ii) the core services of a local authority stated in section 11A. | 25 |
| 22 | Section 261B amended (Secretary must make rules specifying performance measures) | 30 |
| (1) | Replace the heading to section 261B with “ Secretary may make rules specifying performance measures ”. | |
| (2) | Replace section 261B(1) to (3) with: | |
| (1) | The Secretary may make rules specifying performance measures in relation to activities or groups of activities provided by, or on behalf of, a local authority. | 35 |
| (2) | Before making a rule under subsection (1) , the Secretary must— | |

Local Government (System Improvements) Amendment Bill	
Part 2 cl 23	
(a) consider whether an existing performance measure, including a performance measure set by another relevant regulator, is suitable for the purpose; and	
(b) have regard to whether a proposed performance measure—	
(i) measures the level of service for a major aspect of the activity or group of activities; and	5
(ii) addresses an aspect of the activity or group of activities that is of widespread interest in the communities to which a service in relation to the activity or group of activities is provided; and	
(iii) contributes to the effective and efficient management of the activity or group of activities.	10
(3) Before making a rule, if the Minister advises the Secretary that the Minister considers it appropriate to consult any of the following persons, the Secretary must consult:	
(a) any local authority:	15
(b) any individual or organisation that the Minister considers representative of the local government sector as a whole:	
(c) any other person.	
(3A) The Secretary may make minor and technical amendments to a rule without complying with the requirements set out in subsections (2) and (3).	20

Part 2

Miscellaneous provisions

23 Sections repealed	
Repeal the sections specified in Schedule 1 .	
24 Schedule 1AA amended	25
In Schedule 1AA,—	
(a) insert the Part set out in Schedule 2 of this Act as the last Part; and	
(b) make all necessary consequential amendments.	
25 Schedule 7 amended	
(1) In Schedule 7, replace clause 15(1) with:	30
(1) The Secretary may approve and issue a code of conduct for members of local authorities.	
(1A) The Secretary may approve and issue an amended or a replacement code of conduct, but may not revoke it without replacement.	
(2) In Schedule 7, repeal clause 15(3), (5), and (6).	35

**Local Government (System Improvements) Amendment
Bill**

Part 2 cl 25

- (3) In Schedule 7, clause 15(4), delete “of that local authority”.
- (4) In Schedule 7, clause 16(1), replace “adopted” with “approved and issued”.
- (5) In Schedule 7, clause 19(3)(c), replace “of the local authority” with “approved and issued under clause 27”.
- (6) In Schedule 7, after clause 21(5)(c)(ii), insert: 5
- (iii) the code of conduct approved and issued under clause 15; and
- (7) In Schedule 7, clause 24(4)(b), replace “of the local authority” with “approved and issued under clause 27”.
- (8) In Schedule 7, clause 25A(1)(a) and (2)(a), replace “of the local authority” with “approved and issued under clause 27”. 10
- (9) In Schedule 7, after clause 26, insert:
- Documents held by local authority*
- 26A Member entitled to documents held by local authority**
- (1) A member of a local authority is entitled to have access to documents held by the local authority that are reasonably necessary to enable the member to effectively perform their duties as a member of the local authority. 15
- (2) A member of a local authority may request access to the documents specified in **subclause (1)** from the chief executive of the local authority.
- (10) In Schedule 7, replace clause 27(1) and (2) with:
- (1) The Secretary may approve and issue a set of standing orders for the conduct of a local authority’s meetings and those of its committees. 20
- (2) The Secretary may approve and issue an amended or a replacement set of standing orders, but may not revoke them without replacement.
- (11) In Schedule 7, repeal clause 27(3) and (5).
- (12) In Schedule 7, clause 30A(6)(c)(iv), replace “of any local authority or” with “approved and issued under clause 27 or the standing orders of any”. 25
- (13) In Schedule 7, clause 32B(4), replace “the officer” with “an officer acting under subclause (1)”.
- (14) In Schedule 7, clause 34(4), replace “2” with “5”.
- (15) In Schedule 7, replace clause 36B with: 30
- 36B Code of conduct**
- Each member of each local board must comply with the code of conduct approved and issued under clause 15.
- (16) In Schedule 7, after clause 39, insert:

Local Government (System Improvements) Amendment Bill	
Part 2 cl 26	
40 Code of conduct	
Each member of each community board must comply with the code of conduct approved and issued under clause 15.	
26 Schedule 10 amended	
(1) In Schedule 10, replace clause 2(1)(c) with:	5
(c) outline any significant negative effects that any activity within the group of activities may have on the local community:	
(2) In Schedule 10, replace clause 2(2) and (3) with:	
(2) In addition to groups of activities prescribed in regulations made under section 259(1)(de) , a local authority may treat any other activities as a group of activities for the purposes of this schedule.	10
(3) In Schedule 10, clause 4(a), replace “described in clause 2(2)” with “prescribed in regulations made under section 259(1)(de) ”.	
(4) In Schedule 10, clause 4(d), after “reasons for the changes”, insert “(unless regulations made under section 259(1)(de) have made a change to the groups of activities provided for in this Act in the preceding year that makes it impossible or impractical to include the statement, in which case the local authority must note why it is impossible or impractical to do so)”.	15
(5) In Schedule 10, clause 17A(b), replace “specified in clause 2(2)” with “prescribed in regulations made under section 259(1)(de) ”.	20
(6) In Schedule 10, clause 23(c), after “achievement of those outcomes”, insert “(unless regulations made under section 259(1)(de) have made a change to the groups of activities provided for in this Act in the year to which the annual report relates that makes it impossible or impractical to provide the report, in which case the local authority must note why it is impossible or impractical to do so)”.	25
(7) In Schedule 10, replace clause 23(d) with:	
(d) describe any identified effects that any activity within the group of activities has had on the community (unless regulations made under section 259(1)(de) have made a change to the groups of activities provided for in this Act in the year to which the annual report relates that makes it impossible or impractical to provide the description, in which case the local authority must note why it is impossible or impractical to do so).	30
(8) In Schedule 10, clause 24(1), after “the amount spent”, insert “(unless regulations made under section 259(1)(de) have made a change to the groups of activities provided for in this Act in the year to which the annual report relates that makes it impossible or impractical to include the statement, in which case the local authority must note why it is impossible or impractical to do so)”.	35
(9) In Schedule 10, clause 25, insert as subclause (2):	

**Local Government (System Improvements) Amendment
Bill**

Part 2 cl 30

- (2) However, a local authority does not need to comply with **subclause (1)** if regulations made under **section 259(1)(de)** have made a change to the groups of activities provided for in this Act in the year to which the annual report relates that makes it impossible or impractical to include the statement, but must instead note why it is impossible or impractical to do so. 5
- (10) In Schedule 10, clause 26(2)(b), after “in accordance with clause 5(2)”, insert “(unless regulations made under **section 259(1)(de)** have made a change to the groups of activities provided for in this Act in the year to which the annual report relates that makes it impossible or impractical to provide the comparison, in which case the local authority must note why it is impossible or impractical to do so)”. 10
- (11) In Schedule 10, after clause 32A, insert:
- 32B Expenditure on consultants and contractors**
- An annual report must include a report on all operating and capital expenditure by the local authority on consultants and contractors— 15
- (a) in the financial year to which the report relates; and
- (b) in the immediately preceding financial year.
- Consequential amendments to Local Government (Water Services Preliminary Arrangements) Act 2024*
- 27 Principal Act** 20
- Sections 28 to 30** amend the Local Government (Water Services Preliminary Arrangements) Act 2024.
- 28 Section 58 amended (Purposes of this Part)**
- In section 58(b), replace “sections 65 to 68” with “sections 65 to 67”.
- 29 Section 68 repealed (Exemption from cost-effectiveness review)** 25
- Repeal section 68.
- 30 Section 69 repealed (Repeal of section 68)**
- Repeal section 69.

Schedule 1 **Local Government (System Improvements) Amendment Bill**

Schedule 1
Sections repealed

	s 23
Section 273	
Section 274	5
Section 275	
Section 276	
Section 277	
Section 278	
Section 280	10
Section 283	
Section 284	
Section 285	
Section 286	
Section 287	15
Section 290	
Section 291	
Section 294	
Section 295	
Section 296	20
Section 297	
Section 312	
Section 314	

**Local Government (System Improvements) Amendment
Bill**

Schedule 2

**Schedule 2
New Part 10 inserted into Schedule 1AA**

s 24

Part 10	
Provisions relating to Local Government (System Improvements) Amendment Act 2025	
59 Interpretation	5
In this Part,—	
amendment Act means the Local Government (System Improvements) Amendment Act 2025	10
code of conduct means a code of conduct adopted by a local authority under clause 15 of Schedule 7 (as it was before the commencement date)	
commencement date means the commencement date of the majority of the amendment Act under section 2(1) of that Act	
standing orders means a set of standing orders adopted by a local authority under clause 27 of Schedule 7 (as it was before the commencement date).	15
60 Local governance statements	
(1) This clause applies to the requirement in section 40(2) for a local authority to comply with section 40(1) within 6 months after each triennial general election of members of the local authority.	20
(2) A local authority need not comply with section 40(1) (as amended by the amendment Act) within 6 months after the 2025 general election of members of the local authority.	
(3) However, a local authority must comply with section 40(1) (as amended by the amendment Act) within 6 months after the commencement date.	25
61 Code of conduct	
(1) This clause applies to the code of conduct most recently adopted by a local authority before the commencement date.	
(2) The code of conduct continues to have effect as if the amendment Act had not been enacted until the Secretary approves and issues a code of conduct under clause 15(1) of Schedule 7 (as amended by the amendment Act).	30
62 Standing orders	
(1) This clause applies to the set of standing orders most recently adopted by a local authority before the commencement date.	

Schedule 2		Local Government (System Improvements) Amendment Bill	
(2)		The standing orders continue to have effect as if the amendment Act had not been enacted until the Secretary approves and issues a set of standing orders under clause 27(1) of Schedule 7 (as amended by the amendment Act).	
63		Expenditure on consultants and contractors	
		The first report under clause 32B of Schedule 10 prepared after the commencement date—	5
(a)		must include a report on the relevant expenditure in the financial year ending 30 June 2027; but	
(b)		need not include a report on that expenditure in the immediately preceding financial year.	10



Date: 2 Sept 2025

Subject: Freshwater Implementation September Update

Author: A Duncan, Policy Manager

Approved by: A D McLay, Director - Resource Management

Document: TRCID-1492626864-1098

Purpose

1. The purpose of this memorandum is to provide a Freshwater Implementation project update.

Executive summary

2. The memorandum provides a report on progress with implementation of the updated freshwater policy. The memorandum focusses on the impact of recent resource management reform developments, progress with key tasks since the previous Committee meeting, and identifies risks associated with the work programme moving forward.
3. On 16 July Minister Bishop announced a “stop” on plan changes and notifications. As a result, the Freshwater Implementation programme, which was aimed at notifying a plan, is under review. However, Freshwater planning projects will continue to progress required work on a “no regrets” basis while awaiting the detail of the new legislative framework. The Council’s Fresh Water Plan is 24 years old and requires a fundamental review.
4. The attached report summarises progress since the last meeting.

Recommendation

That the Taranaki Regional Council:

- a) receives the September 2025 update of Freshwater Implementation Programme.

Background

5. This memorandum continues to update on progress in implementing the freshwater planning programme. It provides an opportunity for discussions relating to progress and identified risks.

Discussion

6. The attached report, provides a high-level overview of progress since the last Committee meeting in July 2025.

Government Direction

7. On 16 July the Government announced that it would introduce an amendment to the Resource Management (Consenting and Other System Changes) Amendment Bill. The Bill was passed into law on 20 August 2025. The amendment means that notification of a new Freshwater Plan will not be possible before December 2027. The rationale is that this will allow councils to focus resources on preparing for resource management reform. While the Bill also identifies an exemption pathway, TRC is unlikely to be able to meet those requirements for its freshwater plan – we are exploring using this pathway regarding the coastal plan change.
8. However, until the new legislation which will replace the RMA is introduced to the House (expected in late 2025) the future statutory framework for freshwater planning is unclear. In addition, the relationship of the proposed Natural Environment Act with regional spatial planning, under the proposed Planning Act, is not yet known.
9. This ambiguity creates risk for TRC, which will need to be continuously assessed and responded to as we progress the planning already underway.

Ongoing planning and engagement

10. The Freshwater Implementation Progress Report indicates that there has been good progress on planning topics.
11. Some topics have been completed to an initial drafting stage ready for wider external engagement, however many others still require further work to enable their use in a future plan.
12. A recent stocktake of planning projects underway indicates that there is value in continuing to finalise issues and options papers on most policy topics and develop and engage further with a range of stakeholders on potential approaches in some cases.
13. Where there are gaps or opportunities to improve the technical information underpinning planning and policy development (e.g. science, economics, cultural), the additional time will enable this.
14. Links with non-regulatory programs and Freshwater Farm Planning as well as future spatial planning are being reviewed in relation to each topic where relevant as part of preparing for resource management reforms.
15. As more becomes known about the outcomes of resource management reform, re-allocation of resources to support reform work streams may need to be considered.
16. Papers and workshops on planning topics to this Committee will be paused, until more is known about the replacement legislation.
17. Officers are currently reviewing our overall freshwater programme and developing one for resource management reform. We will report back to the Committee in due course with a proposed way forward.

Appendices/Attachments

TRCID 1492626864-1107: [Freshwater Implementation Progress Report September 2025](#)

Freshwater Implementation Project Report to Policy & Planning Committee

September 2025

	Progress in the last six weeks	Key tasks in the coming six weeks	Risks
National Policy Statement for Freshwater Management	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Draft policy and objectives ready for refinement against expected new NPS-FM direction Response to the national direction released by the government. Meetings with Iwi/hapu Pou Taiao re key policy directions on topics including – water allocation, groundwater, wetlands and outstanding waterbodies, beds and structures and contaminated land. Meetings with key stakeholder groups to refine policy direction. Progress Science programme: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Projects completed: desirable and undesirable fish species, contaminant discharges, groundwater, N-cap assessment Continued existing work on key topics, including water allocation, forestry stocktake, nutrients, effluent discharges, wastewater management systems risk assessment. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Reviewing work to consider in context of resource management reform. Reviewing engagement requirements on a project-by-project basis to minimise risks and maximise benefits and efficiencies. Wai Steering committee meeting to discuss current situation and approach to consultation/engagement. Continue internal consultation for policy directions on key topics including – earthworks, contaminated land, primary production, effluent, bores and wells, oil and gas, other discharges, septic tanks, composting toilets and pit latrines, structures and dams. Continue meetings with Iwi/hapu Pou Taiao re key policy directions, where appropriate, on topics including water allocation, wetlands, primary production 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Medium risk – Resource management reform creates uncertainty and organizational risk in terms of continuing to invest in current plan. However, land and water planning issues and options and policy positions developed to date will remain very relevant information to inform the new plan. Risk is mitigated by reviewing each topic, including assessing the risk of continuing organizational investment (which is underway). Medium risk – Further delay in the timeframe of progressing a Land and Water Plan could be a frustration for the community. Continuing to engage about issues may not always be fruitful in these new circumstances. However, more time can also be viewed as an opportunity to focus on fostering a partnership approach. Risk mitigation is to discuss the benefits and risks of Iwi/hapu of consultation in the current situation with the Wai Steering

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Continue discussion meetings with key stakeholder groups to develop and refine direction where appropriate. • Continue to progress Science programme: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Focus on completion of existing work and peer review. ○ Continue some more detailed investigations of water allocation regimes ○ Continue existing attribute work – particular focus on nutrient framework. 	<p>Committee and use this to inform the programme going forward.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Medium risk – change to national direction. Work underway is broadly in line with the recent high-level announcements from the government. Mitigation of this risk can be achieved by maintaining momentum on policy development, keeping abreast of policy announcements from the government, and taking pause when necessary to confirm approach as policy guidance from the government develops. • Medium risk – participation in community engagement is low. Mitigated through continued promotion of process, community meetings switched to being held at various locations, targeted engagement with industry groups to lessen the load on individuals.
Freshwater Farm Plans	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reviewed RM Bill Two changes to Part 9A relating to Freshwater Farm Plans. Considering project implementation options. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Continue consideration of Freshwater Farm Plan implementation options and how they relate to the broader freshwater programme. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Low risk – new legislation gives better indication of government direction. Further progression of implementation will be limited until new regulations are released



Date: 2 September 2025

Subject: Environmental Snapshot: Wainuku - Groundwater

Author: T McElroy, Manager - Science and Technology and D Ge, Groundwater Scientist

Approved by: AJ Matthews, Director - Environment Quality

Document: TRCID-1492626864-1125

Purpose

1. The purpose of this memorandum is to provide the Committee with an overview of the *Environmental Snapshot: Wainuku – Groundwater*.

Recommendations

That the Taranaki Regional Council:

- a) receives the memorandum Environmental Snapshot: Wainuku - Groundwater
- b) receives the accompanying Environmental Snapshot.

Background

2. In accordance with Section 35 of the Resource Management Act 1991, which requires local authorities to monitor the state of the environment (SoE), Taranaki Regional Council has established a comprehensive monitoring programme. This includes dedicated monitoring of groundwater quality and quantity in Taranaki.
3. Our SoE groundwater quality monitoring programme involves taking measurements and collecting water quality samples from 32 monitoring bores located across the region, once every three months. This information allows us to examine how our groundwater systems are being impacted by land use and discharge activities and how suitable groundwater is for various uses (such as drinking water).
4. The SoE groundwater quantity monitoring programme involves the collection of continuous water level data from 15 monitoring bores. The data is analysed to assess the range of groundwater level fluctuation across aquifers and identify possible drivers of observed fluctuations.
5. Results from this monitoring programme have been presented in a simplified and engaging summary in the *Environmental Snapshot: Wainuku - Groundwater*, to facilitate public understanding and engagement.

Discussion

6. Groundwater quality over the past five years was assessed against drinking water standards, and long-term trends in groundwater quality and quantity were also summarized.

7. Of the monitoring sites with sufficient data, 32 (out of 32) met the drinking water standards for electrical conductivity, 21 sites (out of 25) met the standards for *Escherichia coli* (*E. coli*), and 27 sites (out of 29) met the standards for nitrogen.
8. The proportion of sites with improving trends was smaller than the proportion of sites with worsening trends for electrical conductivity (12 sites improving 38.7% vs. 16 sites worsening, 45.2%); while for *E. coli*, the opposite was true (9 sites improving, 56.3% vs. 5 sites worsening, 31.3%). The sites with improving and worsening trends were evenly distributed for nitrate (10 sites improving, 41.7% vs. 10 sites worsening, 41.7%).
9. With regards to groundwater quantity, the proportion of sites with decreasing trends in groundwater levels was higher (9 sites, 60%) than the proportion of sites with increasing trends (4 sites, 40%).
10. Over the next 12 months, we will be undertaking further comprehensive analyses of the state and trend data presented here. This will be carried out in order to update our SoE technical report series in preparation for the next five-yearly SoE synthesis report which is due to be published in 2027.

Appendices

TRCID-1332295633-400: [Environmental Snapshot: Wainuku – Groundwater](#)



Wainuku Groundwater

HE KOHINGA PŪRONGO TAIAO | ENVIRONMENTAL SNAPSHOT



He aha te wainuku? | What is groundwater?

Deep underground, seeping through layers of rocks, vast quantities of water can be found. This natural resource is groundwater.

Groundwater doesn't exist as rivers flowing through the ground as you might imagine. Instead, groundwater exists in pockets or layers of rock, sand or gravel called an aquifer.

There are two kinds of aquifers – unconfined and confined.

Unconfined aquifers are close to the surface and receive water from the surface which makes them more susceptible to contamination. Groundwater moves through unconfined aquifers relatively quickly. **Confined aquifers** are deep underground where groundwater moves slowly and may have been underground for hundreds of years

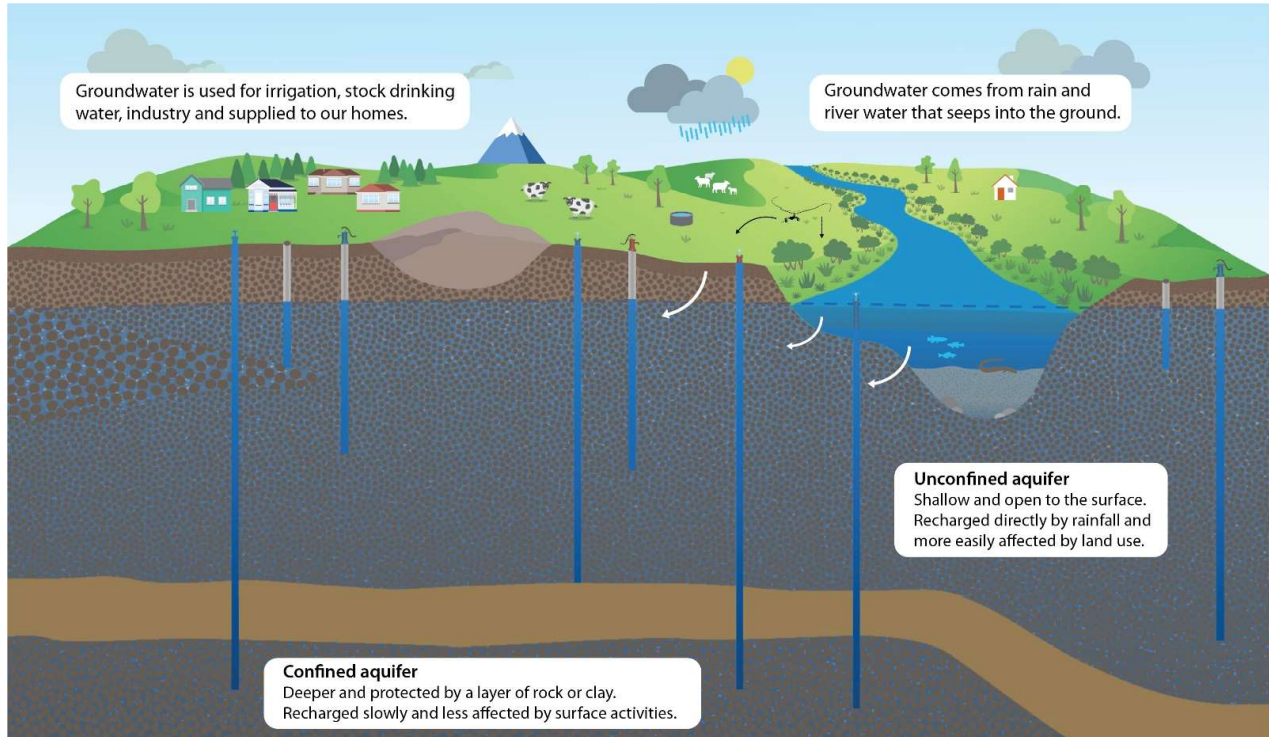
There are 12 main aquifers extending deep below Taranaki, both confined and unconfined are found in the region. The largest is the Taranaki Volcanics, which holds more than nine times the water in Lake Taupō.

Groundwater plays an important role in the wellbeing of the region. It provides water to farms, is a possible water source during dry weather and is used as drinking water for homes and towns.

It is important to protect the quality of water in aquifers as contamination may make groundwater unsuitable or unsafe for drinking water and may affect other important qualities such as taste.



Find out more about where groundwater comes from, how it travels and how we use it:
www.edu.trc.govt.nz/groundwater/story



0800 736 222



info@trc.govt.nz



www.trc.govt.nz



TaranakiRegionalCouncil



Te aroturukitanga wainuku | Groundwater monitoring

Taranaki Regional Council monitors groundwater quality at 32 sites, taking water quality measurements every three months. We access groundwater using a bore, a pipe drilled deep into the ground.

Assessing groundwater quality generally needs long-term monitoring data. Some sites are new to our programme, so more results will become available as monitoring continues. These bores are not associated with community drinking water supplies.

He aha te hanganga wainuku? | What's in groundwater?

Groundwater picks up minerals as it moves through rock and soil. We test groundwater's **electrical conductivity (EC)** to see how much of those minerals are dissolved.

- All 32 sites meet drinking water standards for EC.
- Dissolved minerals can change how water tastes.
- Higher EC means more dissolved minerals and the older and/or deeper the groundwater.

Escherichia coli (*E. coli*) is bacteria and when found in groundwater, it may be a sign of contamination from animal or human waste.

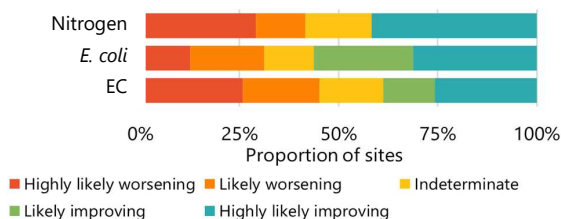
- Four of the 25 sites did not meet drinking water standards.
- *E. coli* was detected at least once over the last five years at 88% of sites.
- Most detections were in shallow, poorly constructed or deteriorating bores highlighting how easily surface contamination can reach shallow groundwater.

Nitrogen is found in fertilisers and effluent. When too much nitrogen is applied to land it can end up in groundwater.

- Two of the 29 sites did not meet drinking water standards.
- Agriculture is a common source of nitrogen in groundwater. Shallow bores are more vulnerable to nitrogen contamination.

Te ia kouna wainuku | Groundwater quality trends

We look at data from the past 15 years to understand how groundwater is changing over time.



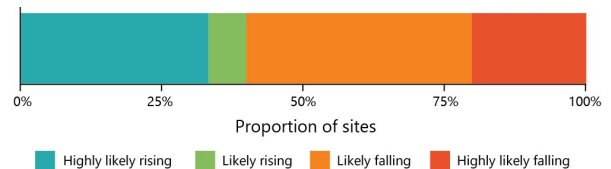
He pēhea rawa te nui wainuku? | How much groundwater is there?

Tens to hundreds of millions of cubic metres of groundwater are available to be allocated for use each year. We continuously measure groundwater levels in 15 bores, the deepest of which is 1,383m, the length of 14 rugby fields.

- Rainfall and water use both affect groundwater levels.
- Groundwater levels rise in winter and spring when there's plenty of rain and fall in summer when it's drier.

Te ia whakapaparanga wainuku | Groundwater level trends

We look at data from the last 15 years to understand how groundwater levels are changing over time. Generally, groundwater levels are relatively stable across the region. However, groundwater levels do respond to changes in climate and localised pumping which can affect these trends.



**One of the Highly likely falling sites is due to a nearby water supply bore*

Ki whea aroturuki ai | Where we monitor



Read recent Council groundwater reports:

www.trc.govt.nz/environmental-monitoring-technical-reports

Information on other water quality attributes we measure:

www.lawa.org.nz/explore-data/groundwater-quality



Date: 2 September 2025

Subject: Water Resilience in Taranaki

Author: AJ Matthews, Director - Environment Quality

Approved by: S Ruru, Chief Executive

Document: TRCID-1492626864-1104

Purpose

1. The purpose of this memorandum is to provide a brief overview and accompanying presentation on the recent drought experienced in Taranaki and outline the next steps for investigating future water resource availability in the region.

Recommendations

That the Taranaki Regional Council:

- a) receives the memorandum *Water Resilience in Taranaki* and the accompanying presentation
- b) notes that Council will continue to work proactively with partners and relevant stakeholders to scope an appropriate work programme to enhance our knowledge and the region's ability to respond to future drought events
- c) notes Council's Water Shortage Event Standard Operating Procedure (2009) is currently under review and will be presented to the Council in due course.

Background

2. Regional councils are charged with the integrated management of land, air, and water resources, including working with key partners to build more resilient communities in the face of climate change and natural hazards. Environmental science and local knowledge underpins this work.
3. We know that the climate is changing and that this will increasingly affect our environment, economy and society over the course of this century. Weather patterns will continue to change and extreme weather events will become more common – with drier summers and lower river flows, and more intense rainfall/severe weather events.
4. During 2025/26 Taranaki experienced some of the driest conditions it has seen in recent years. While not unprecedented, the hot, dry conditions with below average rainfall resulted in the Government declaring a medium-scale adverse event. This affected pasture growth, particularly along the south coast and around the mid and lower ring plain.
5. While we do not anticipate that these conditions are our 'new normal', over the next few decades we do anticipate experiencing similar conditions more often. Adapting to these changes early will ensure that Taranaki is prepared, and has the appropriate infrastructure, systems and processes in place to support our communities into the future.

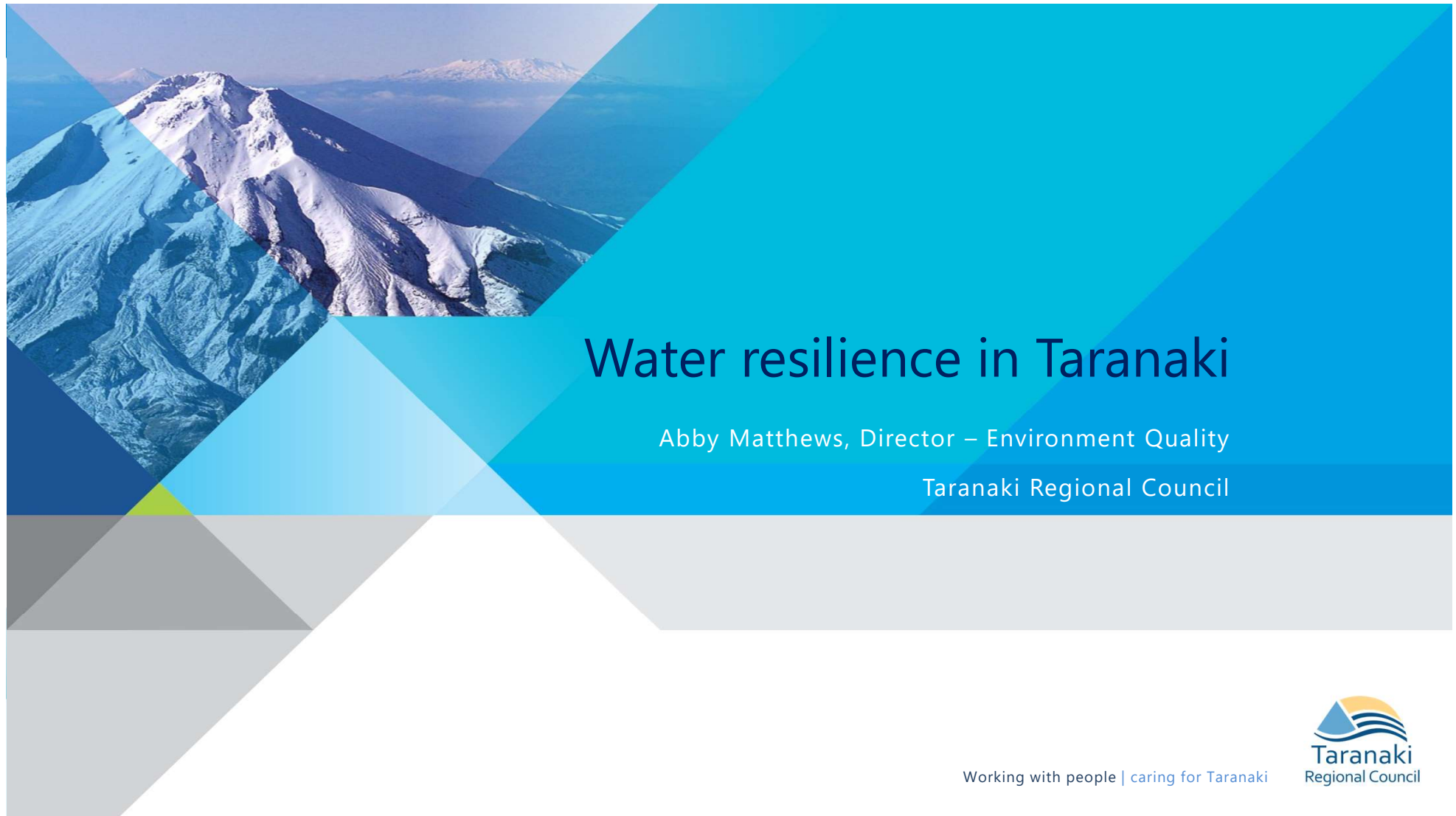
6. Taranaki Regional Council has been working toward the notification of a new Land and Freshwater Plan that aims to provide a new framework for how we manage freshwater in the region. This includes adapting how we take and use water to ensure people have access to water when they need it, and that ecosystems are resilient to changing conditions. While we are awaiting further direction from Government to fully understand the new national resource management and freshwater policy settings, there are practical steps that this Council can continue to take now to build our knowledge base.
7. The Council has a Water Shortage Event Standard Operating Procedure that has been in place since 2009. The strategy has been prepared to outline operational procedures that the Council will follow when managing a water shortage event. It has four phases: normal water use; impending water shortage; water use restrictions; and water shortage direction issued. The procedure involves the Council collaborating with a number of key stakeholders with an impending water shortage direction. It is currently under review and will reflect the learnings from the 2025/26 dry period. It will be presented to Council in due course.

Discussion

8. Over the past few months, we have had initial discussions with the district councils (though the Mayoral Forum), and more recently with South Taranaki District Council (STDC), Venture Taranaki, the Ministry for Primary Industries (MPI) and Ministry for Business, Employment and Innovation (MBIE) to explore the potential development of a proactive regional work programme focused on water resilience.
9. Ensuring this work programme is commensurate with the size and scale of the issue is key. While the region may experience drought in the future, we are unlikely to experience the conditions that other regions, such as those situated on our east coast, will need to adapt to. Ensuring we have a good understanding of current and future water availability and demand will inform future discussions around management options.
10. While scoping is in the early stage of development, there are some practical steps that can be taken now, such as gathering baseline information and embarking on further investigations. Some of this preliminary work is already planned, such as a review of our climate and river flow monitoring networks and further investigations into groundwater availability. Other tasks, such as exploring in greater detail the potential impacts of a changing climate on freshwater may be progressed as part of our broader science programme.
11. While we are cognisant of the Government's resource management work programme and future changes to freshwater policy, much of this work will still be needed irrespective of future requirements and can be advanced in a shorter timeframe.
12. Scoping an appropriate work programme with key partners, including tangata whenua should they wish to be involved, and relevant stakeholders will be undertaken during the course of 2025, with a view to bringing a report back to Council outlining our proposed next steps during the reporting year.

Appendices/Attachments


Document TRCID-1492626864-1118: [Water resilience in Taranaki](#)



Water resilience in Taranaki

Abby Matthews, Director – Environment Quality
Taranaki Regional Council

Working with people | caring for Taranaki



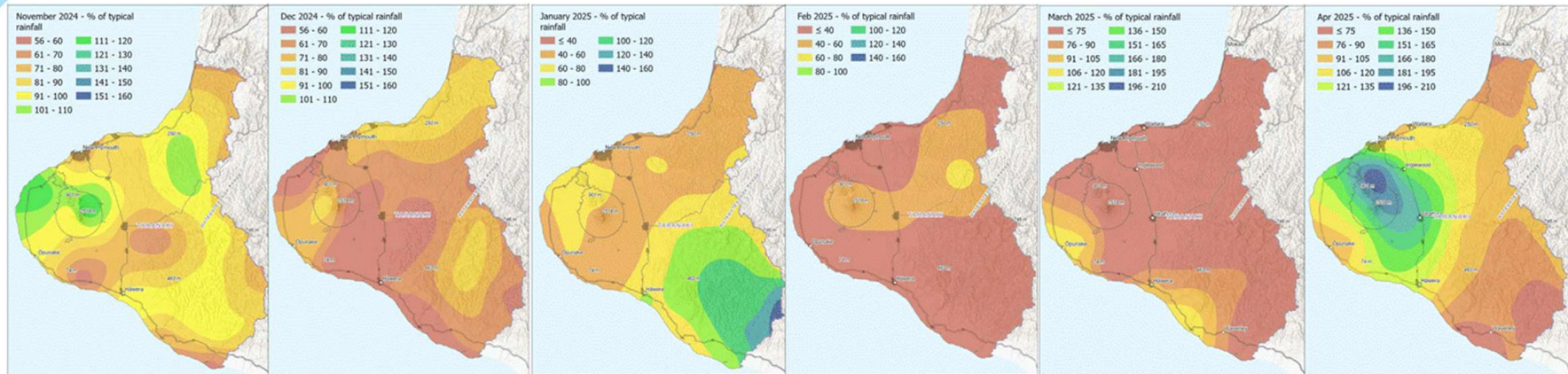


Objectives

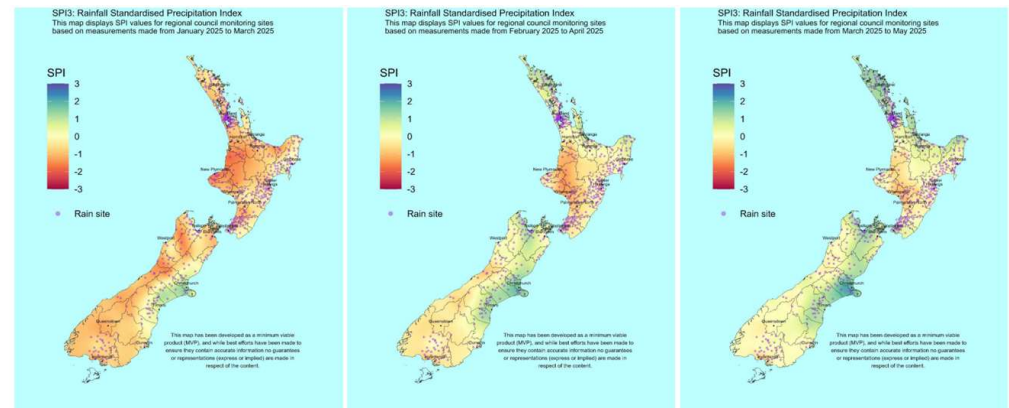
- Provide an overview of readily available data and climate change projections for the region
- Take a look at water availability and use in Taranaki
- Set out proposed next steps to determine potential impacts of a changing climate on water availability

CLIMATE IN TARANAKI – CURRENT AND FUTURE

2025/26 - Rainfall and agricultural drought

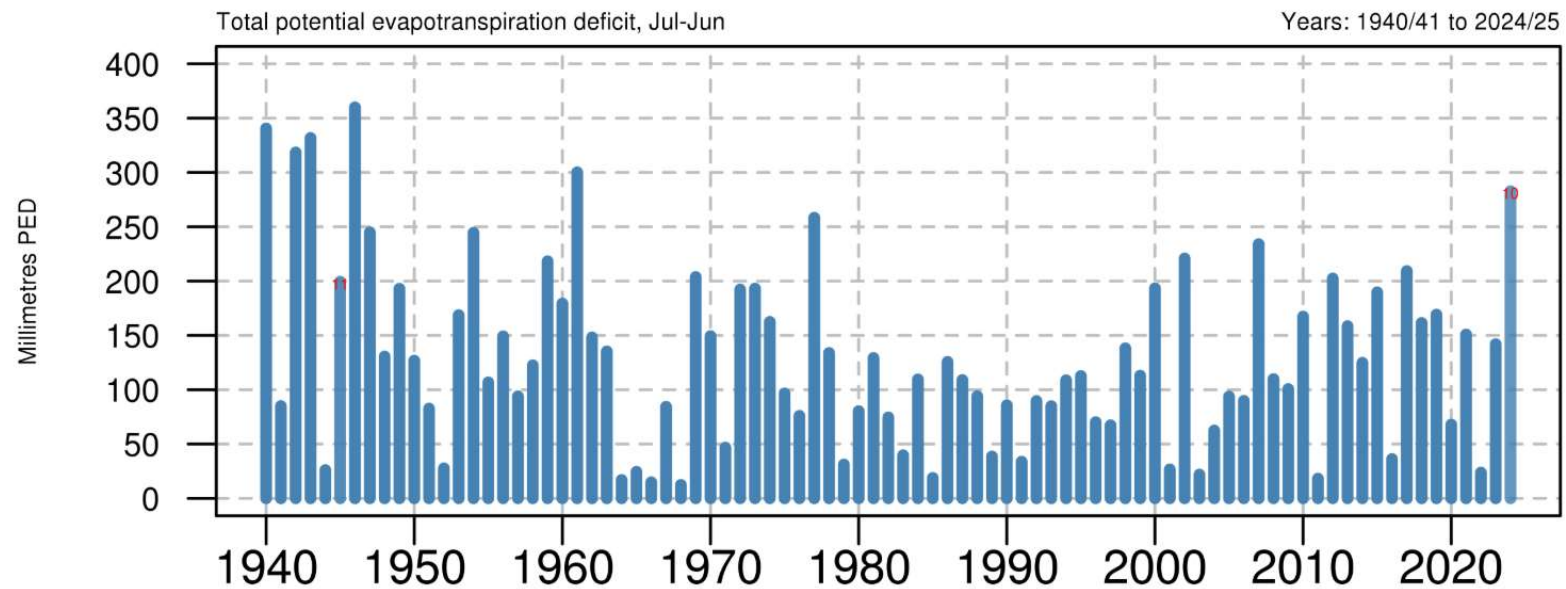


One of our drier summers, with parts of Taranaki receiving less than half of the rainfall typical of February and March (above); while recent national reporting shows rainfall and agricultural drought indicators returning to normal levels in March – May 2025 (right).



Total potential evapotranspiration deficit in Taranaki

Taranaki



Copyright NIWA (C) 2025

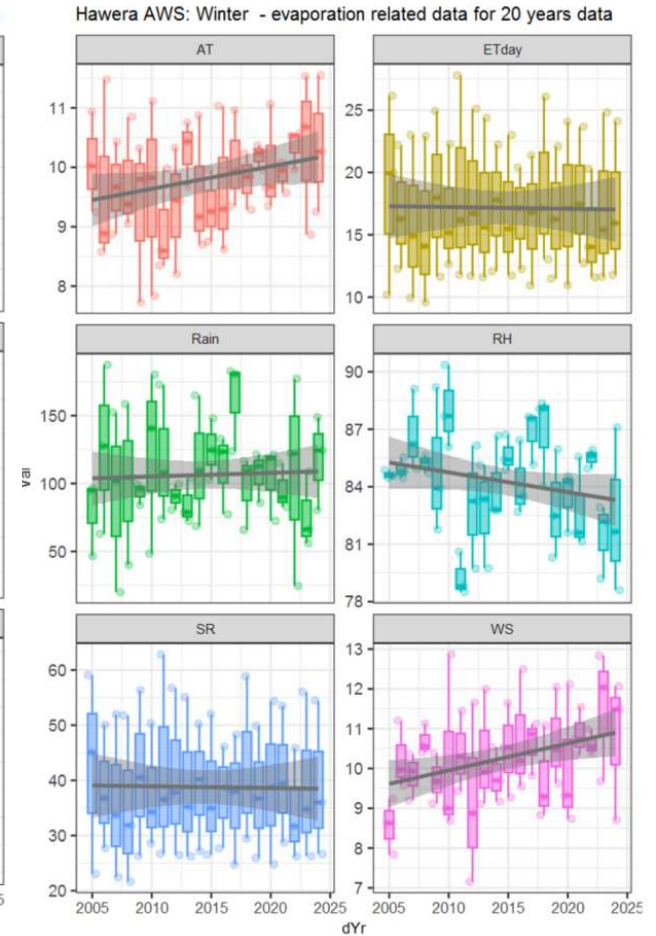
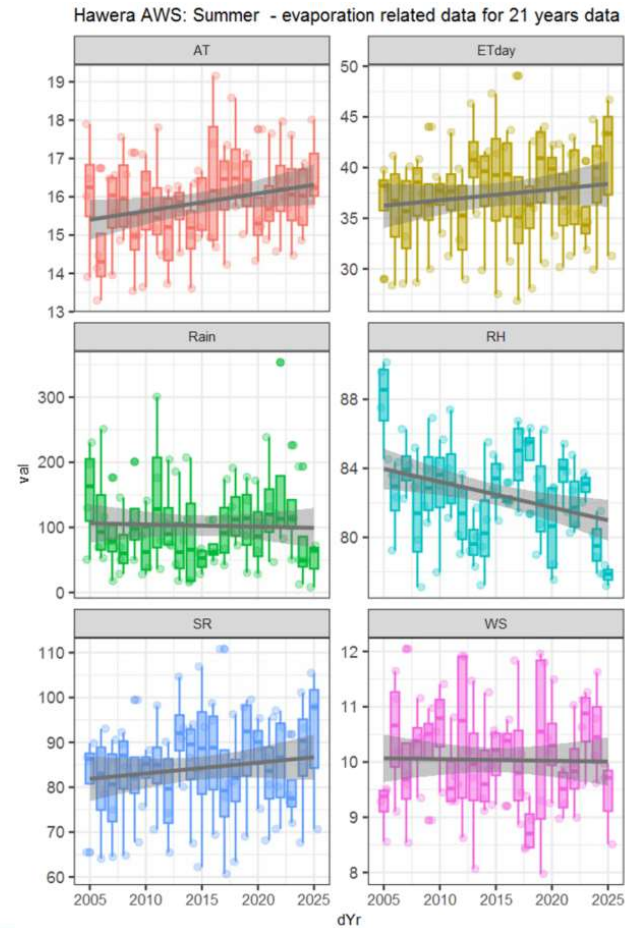
Trends at Hawera Weather Station (Met Service site)

Increasing

- Average temperatures (AT)
- Summer evapotranspiration (ETday)
- Winter windspeed (WS)

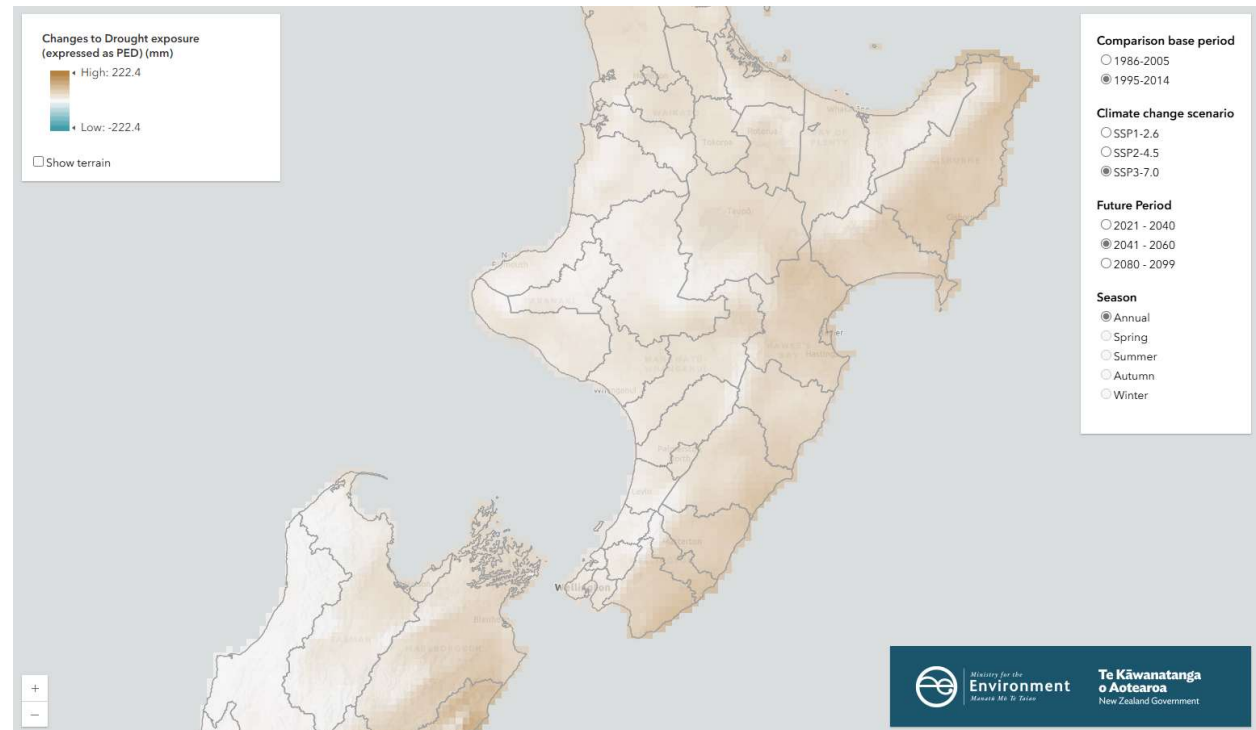
Decreasing

- Relative humidity (RH) – summer and winter



MfE & NIWA – South Taranaki climate projections

- Drought exposure measured as potential evapotranspiration deficit (PED) in mm
- It is the gap between water demand and water availability across the year, and it affects the moisture retained in soil and plant growth.
- An increase in PED indicates an increase in drought severity.



WATER ALLOCATION AND USE IN TARANAKI

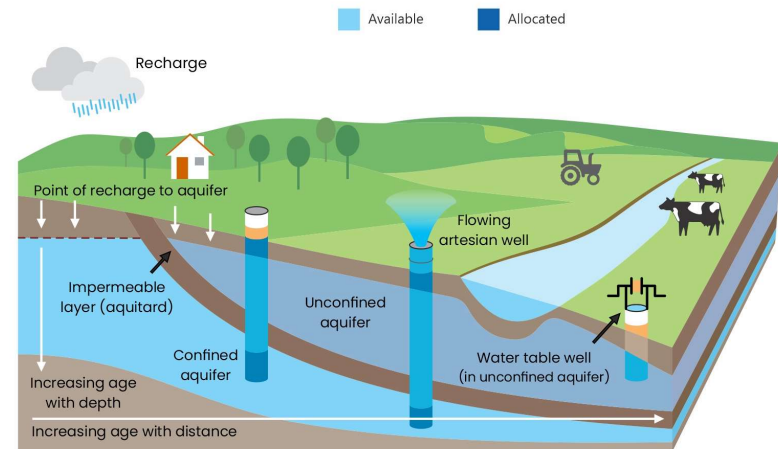
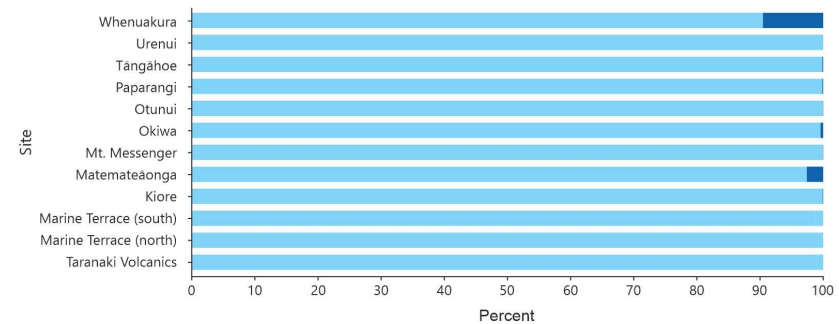
Surface water allocation and use

- TRC has investigated five different scenarios, with the preferred option (Scenario 3) proposing different approaches for different sized streams and rivers, based on mean flow:
 - Small: $<5\text{m}^3/\text{s}$ (95% of Taranaki rivers)
 - Moderate: $5 - 30\text{m}^3/\text{s}$
 - Large: $>30\text{m}^3/\text{s}$ (only Waitara)
- Provides for 90% species protection while allowing for some degree of flow modification and take of water, as well as periodic flushing of sediment and algae. This aligns with the visions and outcomes identified through community consultation.
- Proposed limits will allow for the continued taking of water for most users, but water will need to be used more efficiently to minimise impacts on flow restrictions. By 2050, restrictions may increase with impacts of climate change.
- For water suppliers, future proofing could include assessing water demand and use, looking into alternative or supplementary sources, or investigating options such as high flow harvesting and storage.



Groundwater allocation and use

- Groundwater is not well-utilised in Taranaki.
- Demand for groundwater may increase as surface water becomes less reliable due to reduced rainfall, increased evapotranspiration and more frequent droughts.
- Properly installed and secure bores can provide more secure supply over a longer time (20-25 years).
- Barriers can include the cost of installing and maintaining appropriate infrastructure, and the risk of not encountering usable groundwater (quantity and quality issues).
- Groundwater levels rise and fall in response to localised pumping. They also respond to changes in recharge (i.e. climate) – but presently we don't have a good understanding of these impacts.



Case studies

RESPONDING TO FUTURE DEMAND

Addressing water resilience: a multi-pronged approach

- Current and future water use and demand (resource accounting)
- Water use conservation and efficiency
- Regional growth and development
- Water storage, technology and alternative management options

Hawke's Bay Regional Council water security response



Figure 6 Hawke's Bay Regional Council's water security work programme

Next steps in Taranaki

- We'll be working with our district councils, central government agencies and other stakeholders to identify opportunities to better understand the current and future demands for water in Taranaki, and how surface and groundwater systems are responding to a changing climate.
- During 2025/26, Council is reviewing the spatial coverage of its climate and river flow monitoring networks as part of an assessment of our flood monitoring and warning system. The scope of this study will be expanded to include monitoring of soil moisture (i.e. an indication of drought).
- We'll also continue to refine our science and evidence-base to inform future freshwater planning, as and when this is able to advance. This includes seeking independent peer review of the science work completed to date.
- The Council has a Water Shortage Event Standard Operating Procedure that has been in place since 2009. The strategy has been prepared to outline operational procedures that the Council will follow when managing a water shortage event and involves the Council collaborating with key stakeholders. It is currently under review and will reflect the learnings from the 2025/26 dry period. It will be presented to the Council in due course.



Public Excluded Recommendations – Policy and Planning Committee 2 September 2025

In accordance with section 48(1) of the Local Government Official Information and Meetings Act 1987, resolves that the public is excluded from the following part of the proceedings of the Operations and Regulatory Committee Meeting on 2 September 2025 for the following reason/s:

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

Item 11 – Confirmation of Public Excluded Policy and Planning Committee Minutes – 22 July 2025

That the public conduct of the whole or the relevant part of the proceedings of the meeting would be likely to result in the disclosure of information for which good reason for withholding would exist under section 6 (a) and [section 7](#) (2) (a) and (2) (g) of the *Local Government Official Information and Meetings Act 1987*.



Kia uruuru mai

Karakia to close meetings

Kia uruuru mai
Ā hauora
Ā haukaha
Ā haumaia
Ki runga, Ki raro
Ki roto, Ki waho
Rire rire hau
Paimārie

Fill me with
Vitality
Strength
Bravery
Above, below
Within, outwards
Let the wind blow and bind
Peace upon you

Nau mai e ngā hua

Karakia for kai

Nau mai e ngā hua
o te wao
o te ngakina
o te wai tai
o te wai Māori
Nā Tāne
Nā Rongo
Nā Tangaroa
Nā Maru
Ko Ranginui e tū iho nei
Ko Papatūānuku e takoto ake nei
Tūturu o whiti whakamaui kia
tina
Tina! Hui e! Taiki e!

Welcome the gifts of food
from the sacred forests
from the cultivated gardens
from the sea
from the fresh waters
The food of Tāne
of Rongo
of Tangaroa
of Maru
I acknowledge Ranginui above and Papatūānuku
below
Let there be certainty
Secure it!
Draw together! Affirm!

AGENDA AUTHORISATION

Agenda for the Policy and Planning Committee meeting held on Tuesday 2 September 2025.

Approved:



25 Aug, 2025 11:41:29 AM GMT+12

A D McLay

Director - Resource Management

Approved:



25 Aug, 2025 11:19:54 AM GMT+12

S J Ruru

Chief Executive