

I hereby give notice that a meeting of Horizons Regional Council will be held on:

Date: Tuesday, 24 June 2025
Time: 9.30am
Venue: Tararua Room Horizons Regional Council
11-15 Victoria Avenue
Palmerston North

REGIONAL COUNCIL

AGENDA

MEMBERSHIP

Chair	Cr RJ Keedwell
Deputy Chair	Cr JM Naylor
Councillors	Cr AL Benbow
	Cr EM Clarke
	Cr DB Cotton
	Cr JT Edmonds
	Cr SD Ferguson
	Cr EB Gordon
	Cr FJT Gordon
	Cr GM McKellar
	Cr NM Riley
	Cr AR Taylor
	Cr WK Te Awe Awe
	Cr T Teira

Michael McCartney
Chief Executive

Contact Telephone: 0508 800 800
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Palmerston North 4442

Full Agendas are available on Horizons Regional Council website
www.horizons.govt.nz

for further information regarding this agenda, please contact:
Julie Kennedy, 06 9522 800

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REGIONAL HOUSES	Palmerston North 11-15 Victoria Avenue	Whanganui 181 Guyton Street		
DEPOTS	Levin 120-122 Hokio Beach Rd	Taihape 243 Wairanu Rd		
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AGENDA

1 WELCOME / KARAKIA

2 APOLOGIES AND LEAVE OF ABSENCE

At the close of the Agenda no apologies had been received.

3 PUBLIC FORUMS: Are designed to enable members of the public to bring matters, not on that meeting's agenda, to the attention of the local authority.

DEPUTATIONS: Are designed to enable a person, group or organisation to speak to an item on the agenda of a particular meeting.

Requests for Public Forums / Deputations must be made to the meeting secretary by 12 noon on the working day before the meeting. The person applying for a Public Forum or a Deputation must provide a clear explanation for the request which is subsequently approved by the Chairperson.

PETITIONS: Can be presented to the local authority or any of its committees, so long as the subject matter falls within the terms of reference of the council or committee meeting being presented to.

Written notice to the Chief Executive is required at least 5 working days before the date of the meeting. Petitions must contain at least 20 signatures and consist of fewer than 150 words (not including signatories).

Further information is available by phoning 0508 800 800.

4 SUPPLEMENTARY ITEMS

To consider, and if thought fit, to pass a resolution to permit the Committee/Council to consider any further items relating to items following below which do not appear on the Order Paper of this meeting and/or the meeting to be held with the public excluded.

Such resolution is required to be made pursuant to Section 46A(7) of the Local Government Official Information and Meetings Act 1987 (as amended), and the Chairperson must advise:

- (i) The reason why the item was not on the Order Paper, and
- (ii) The reason why the discussion of this item cannot be delayed until a subsequent meeting.

5 MEMBER'S CONFLICT OF INTEREST

Members are reminded of their obligation to declare any conflicts of interest they might have in respect of the items on this Agenda.

Minutes of the thirty-first meeting of the twelfth triennium of Horizons Regional Council held at 9.30am on Tuesday 27 May 2025, in the Tararua Room Horizons Regional Council, 11-15 Victoria Avenue, Palmerston North.

PRESENT Crs RJ Keedwell (Chair), AL Benbow, EM Clarke (via Zoom), DB Cotton (via Zoom), JT Edmonds, SD Ferguson, EB Gordon, FJT Gordon (via Zoom), GM McKellar, JM Naylor, NM Riley (from 10.00am), AR Taylor, WK Te Awe Awe, and T Teira.

IN ATTENDANCE

Chief Executive	Mr MJ McCartney
Acting Group Manager	
Corporate and Governance	Mrs C Hesselin
Committee Secretaries	Mrs JA Kennedy and R De Souza

ALSO PRESENT At various times during the meeting:

Dr J Roygard (Group Manager Catchment Operations), Dr E Daly (Group Manager Strategy, Regulation & Science), Mr G Shirley (Group Manager Regional Services & Information), Mr J Galuszka (Senior Communications Advisor), Mr A Smith (Chief Financial Officer), Mr G Cooper (Land & Partnerships Manager), Mrs S Williams (Senior Environmental Educator), Ms L Cook (Ecologist), Ms A Lennard (Science Manager), and a member of the Press.

WELCOME

The Chair welcomed everyone to the meeting and invited Cr Teira to say a Karakia.

APOLOGIES

There were no apologies.

PUBLIC FORUMS / DEPUTATIONS / PETITIONS

There were no requests for public speaking rights.

SUPPLEMENTARY ITEMS

There were no supplementary items to be considered.

MEMBERS' CONFLICTS OF INTEREST

Cr Cotton declared a conflict of interest in Item PX2 Forestry, Report No. PX25-68, and left the meeting during discussion of that item.

CONFIRMATION OF MINUTES

25-392 **Moved** **Teira/B Gordon**

That the minutes of the Regional Council meeting held on 29 April 2025 as circulated, be confirmed as a correct record.

CARRIED

CHIEF EXECUTIVE'S REPORT

The Chief Executive summarised his report and responded to Members' questions.

25-393 **Moved** **Teira/Ferguson**

That the Chief Executive's report be received.

CARRIED

COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT AND ENVIRONMENTAL EDUCATION

Report No 25-64

This item provided Members with a Community Engagement and Environmental Education progress report for the period from 1 November 2025 to 30 June 2025. Mrs Williams (Senior Environmental Educator) gave a round-up of the EnviroSchool events and summarised the community engagements attended. She elaborated further on the nine teacher professional development workshops which had been held across the region and the suite of education kits available.

25-394 **Moved** **F Gordon/Te Awe Awe**

It is recommended that Council:

a. *receives the information contained in Report No. 25-64.*

CARRIED

INLAND WETLAND MAPPING PLAN

Report No 25-65

This report presented the outcomes of the Year One deliverable under the 2024 – 2034 Long-term Plan: the development of a project plan for the Wetland Mapping Project. The project plan outlined the proposed approach and proposed non-financial reporting measures for years two and three of the Long term Plan. The report also sought Council's endorsement of the project plan and of the proposed deliverables for Years Two and Three. Ms Cook (Ecologist) summarised the main points and benefits of the Plan.

Cr Riley joined the meeting at 10.00am.

Members provided their views on the Plan with some concern expressed from several Members that the proposed approach to map wetlands larger than 0.05 hectares was too small. It was noted that 0.05 hectares was in alignment with the NPS-FM. Following debate, an amendment was proposed to recommendation b. and the recommendations were taken separately with a division to b.& c.

25-395 **Moved** **F Gordon/Ferguson**

It is recommended that Council:

a. *receives the information contained in Report No. 25-65 and Annex.*

CARRIED

The Chair put the amendment to recommendation b. with a division.

Moved **B Gordon/Riley**

It is recommended that Council:

b. endorses the Wetland Mapping Project Plan and amends the wetland area to 0.5 hectares and above.

Against: Crs Keedwell, Naylor, Clarke, Ferguson, F Gordon, Te Awe Awe, Teira

For: Crs Edmonds, Benbow, Taylor, B Gordon, Riley, Cotton, McKellar

LOST

The amendment was Lost due to a lack of a majority (SO 19.1).

The Chair put the substantive recommendation b. with a division.

25-396 **Moved** **F Gordon/Ferguson**

It is recommended that Council:

b. endorses the Wetland Mapping Project Plan.

Against: Crs Edmonds, B Gordon, Riley, Cotton, McKellar

Abstain: Crs Benbow, Taylor

For: Crs Keedwell, Naylor, Clarke, Ferguson, F Gordon, Te Awe Awe, Teira

CARRIED

The Chair put recommendation c with a division.

25-397 **Moved** **F Gordon/Ferguson**

It is recommended that Council:

c. approves the proposed mapping deliverables of 200 hectares for Year 2 of the Long-term Plan and 300 hectares for Year 3 of the Long-term Plan.

Against: B Gordon, Edmonds, McKellar, Riley, Cotton

For: Crs Keedwell, Naylor, Clarke, Ferguson, F Gordon, Benbow, Cotton, Te Awe Awe, Teira

CARRIED

AFFIXING OF THE COMMON SEAL

Report No 25-66

This paper reports on documents to which Horizons Regional Council's Common Seal has been affixed

25-398

Moved

Ferguson/Naylor

That the Council:

a. *acknowledges the affixing of the Common Seal to the below mentioned documents*

- *MWRC One Plan
Plan Change 3 seal
Operative RMA 17:1 (29/04/25)
On 16 May 2025*
- *RCA : D & S Duncan for Otairi Station
Samuel Duncan Trust
SLUI WFP 399*

CARRIED

COUNCILLORS' WORKSHOP ATTENDANCE - 29 APRIL TO 16 MAY 2025

Report No 25-67

This item noted the Councillors' Workshop Attendance from 29 April to 16 May 2025

25-399

Moved

Ferguson/Naylor

It is recommended that Council:

a. *receives the information contained in Report No. 25-67 and Annex.*

CARRIED

RECEIPT AND ADOPTION OF COMMITTEE RESOLUTIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

REPORT OF INTEGRATED CATCHMENT COMMITTEE MEETING - RECEIVE AND ADOPT RESOLUTIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS - 14 MAY 2025

25-400

Moved

Taylor/Riley

That the Council receives and adopts the resolutions and recommendations of the Integrated Catchment Committee meeting held on 14 May 2025, as amended with the deletion of 'to be confirmed at the meeting' from recommendation ICC 25-41.

CARRIED

PROCEDURAL MOTION TO EXCLUDE THE PUBLIC

25-401

Moved

Keedwell/Benbow

THAT the public be excluded from the following part(s) of the proceedings of this meeting. The general subject of each matter to be considered while the public is excluded, the reason for passing this resolution in relation to each matter, and the specific grounds under section 48(1) of the Local Government Official Information and Meetings Act 1987 for the passing of this resolution follows.

This resolution is made in reliance on section 48(1)(a) of the Local Government Official Information and Meetings Act 1987 and the particular interest or interests protected by section 6 and section 7 of that Act which would be prejudiced by the holding of the whole or relevant part of the proceedings of the meeting in public, as follows:

CARRIED

General subject of each matter to be considered	Reason for passing this resolution	Ground(s) under section 48(1) for the passing of this resolution
PX1 Confirmation of Public Excluded Meeting held on 29 April 2025	s7(2)(h) - the withholding of the information is necessary to enable the local authority to carry out, without prejudice or disadvantage, commercial activities.	s48(1)(a) The public conduct of the part of the meeting would be likely to result in the disclosure of information for which good reason for withholding exists under section 7.
PX2 Forestry	s7(2)(h) - the withholding of the information is necessary to enable the local authority to carry out, without prejudice or disadvantage, commercial activities. This information is commercially sensitive. s7(2)(i) - the withholding of the information is necessary to enable the local authority to carry on, without prejudice or disadvantage, negotiations (including commercial and industrial negotiations).	s48(1)(a) The public conduct of the part of the meeting would be likely to result in the disclosure of information for which good reason for withholding exists under section 7.
PX3 Lower North Island Rail Integrated Mobility - Funding and Management Agreement	s7(2)(b)(ii) - the withholding of the information is necessary to protect information where the making available of the information would be likely unreasonably to prejudice the commercial position of the person who supplied or who is the subject of the information. Ongoing negotiations with GWRC and procurement activity for LNIRIM programme.	s48(1)(a) The public conduct of the part of the meeting would be likely to result in the disclosure of information for which good reason for withholding exists under section 7.

	<p>s7(2)(i) - the withholding of the information is necessary to enable the local authority to carry on, without prejudice or disadvantage, negotiations (including commercial and industrial negotiations).</p> <p>Ongoing negotiations with GWRC and procurement activity for LNIRIM programme.</p>	
<p>PX4 Council / Committee to consider whether any item in the Public Excluded minutes can be moved into the public domain and define the extent of the release</p>		

The meeting adjourned to the Public Excluded part of the meeting at 10.55am and resumed at 11.58am.

The meeting closed at 11.59am.

Confirmed

CHIEF EXECUTIVE

CHAIR

CHIEF EXECUTIVE'S REPORT TO COUNCIL

28 April – 27 May 2025

Michael McCartney – Chief Executive

INTRODUCTION

1. This report updates members on key organisational activities across April and May 2025.
2. Members are asked to view the upcoming activities towards the end of the report, and advise us of any meetings/events that may be of interest.

STRATEGY REGULATION & SCIENCE

Policy and Strategy

3. Plan Change 3 (urban development) was made operative in full on 16 May. Officers have also amended the One Plan (Plan Amendment 5) on 2 May to implement mandatory requirements of the national policy statements for freshwater management and urban development, and corrected minor errors. The public notices are available on [the One Plan webpage](#).
4. Members of the policy team visited owner/operators of Westview Farm to discuss environmental regulation and catchment groups with Nicola Shadbolt, Shane and Matt Carroll.
5. The policy team also attended a workshop run by Massey School of Agriculture and Environment to learn about and participate in panel discussions on innovative drainage techniques (constructed wetlands and woodchip bioreactors). The workshop was attended by staff from other regional councils, farmers and scientists and lead by Prof. Ranvir Singh.
6. Rural Advice team have also presented information at a Whanganui catchment group meeting near Taumaranui and at Farm Plan workshops run by Zespri and BakerAg.
7. *Resilient Tangimoana: Report for the Tangimoana Village* was shared with the Tangimoana Community Committee on 19 May. That report, along with a spatial risk assessment tool developed to visualise current and future hazards at Tangimoana, will assist developing the Tangimoana Adaptation Plan over the coming months. Horizons and the Manawatū District Council continue to play an active role in the development of the adaptation plan, with representatives on the Tangimoana Resilience Group.
8. Officers continue to provide input into Palmerston North City Council's draft Stormwater Strategy.
9. Officers are exploring updates to our NZLRI base map and options for how we can utilise other available datasets to support a deeper understanding of our highly productive land ahead of changes to the National Policy Statement Highly Productive Land 2022. The policy work has paused on this project while we await direction from central government, however,

we want to invest in developing our data and information so we can be prepared for how this may fit into future spatial planning, alongside resource management reform.

10. Following a workshop with elected members on 30 April to discuss the Regional Pest Management Plan review and Biosecurity Strategic Approach, an item will be brought to the 24 June Regional Council meeting to seek endorsement of the work programmes.

11. List of recent and upcoming Policy Submissions

- a. An updated list of consultations including both local and central government are presented below with further information and where we understand Horizons' position will be on responding to these.
- b. The Coalition Government's Q2 Action Plan for New Zealand also highlights a number of upcoming Policy changes that are on track to be introduced, with the relevant policy changes highlighted in the table below.

Submission	Description	Due	Horizons' response
Local Government Annual Plans 25/26 open for submissions	Various annual plans	Various	Horizons will review each annual plan for relevant changes and identify if any are relevant to respond to. Submissions have been made to the City Council and Rangitikei District Council.
Proposed Plan Change E (Roxbrough Crescent) to the Palmerston North District Plan	Rezoning some industrial land around Roxbrough Crescent to residential to enable new homes to be built.	Ongoing	Officers have made a submission and further submission. Planning evidence has been submitted to the independent hearings panel.
Proposed Plan Change I (increasing housing supply and choice) to the Palmerston North District Plan	Creating a new zone for medium density housing to allow more new homes to be built within the city.	Ongoing	Officers have made a submission and further submission, and are engaging with the City Council. Hearings are not yet scheduled.
Proposed Plan Change 6A to the Horowhenua District Plan	Rezone 22ha of land on the northwest of Levin from Deferred Residential (Future Residential) to Residential.	14 May 2025	Officers have made a submission.
Emergency Management Bill – Discussion Document Link	The National Emergency Management Agency is seeking feedback on options to strengthen New Zealand's emergency management legislation through a discussion document. Legislation is set to follow later this year	13 May 2025	EM officers are leading the submission and response.
Proposed changes to forestry in the New Zealand Emissions Trading Scheme (NZETS) Link	MPI are consulting on updates to forest types and default carbon tables for exotic forests and other regulatory amendments/	16 May 2025	The officer recommendation is to not submit on this consultation due to a limited interaction with Horizons' community and strategic outcomes, and limited officer capacity with the likely release of the Integrated National Direction Package.
Proposed product stewardship	MfE are seeking views on proposed regulations to enable a national take-back and recycling scheme	1 June 2025	Unsure if Horizons will want to submit on this.

regulations for agrichemicals, their contained and farm plastics Link	for agrichemicals, their containers, and farm plastics. This consultation looks at regulations and options covering a subset of the products declared as a priority under the Waste Minimisation Act 2008		Submission can be made via Citizen Space with 15 set questions for this consultation.
Proposed amendments to waste legislation Link	MfE are seeking views on proposed amendments to the Waste Minimisation Act (2008) and the Litter Act (1979).	1 June 2025	Unlikely Horizons will submit on this. This is relevant to TAs rather than RCs.
Public Works (Critical Infrastructure) Amendment Bill Link	Public submissions are now being called for the Public Works (Critical Infrastructure) Amendment Bill. The amendments propose to streamline land acquisition for: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Infrastructure projects listed in Schedule 2 of the Fast-track Approvals Act 2024 Roads of National Significance (RoNS) outlined in the Government Policy Statement on Land Transport 2024 	13 June 2025	Officers are able to support this, if the Council wishes to submit on this Bill.
Ngāti Hāua Claims Settlement Bill	The Chairperson of the Māori Affairs Committee is calling for submissions on the Ngāti Hāua Claims Settlement Bill. The bill seeks to give effect to certain matters contained in Te Pua o Te Riri Kore, the Ngāti Hāua deed of settlement of historical claims.	24 June 2025	Horizons does not typically submit on Settlement legislation.
Implementation Plan for NZ's Biodiversity Strategy Link	DoC are developing the next implementation plan for NZ's Biodiversity Strategy. The discussion document aims to test biodiversity priorities, investment and action at a national, regional and local level.	30 June 2025	Officers will likely respond to this submission.
Predator free 2050 Strategy Review Link	DoC are seeking feedback on the proposed goals and target predators for the next five years of the predator Free 2050 strategy. This also looks at the different support options and requirements to support these goals.	30 June 2025	Officers will likely respond to this submission.
<i>Integrated National Direction Package – RMA</i> Link	<i>Recent announcements have rescoped what will be released as part of the National Direction package under Phase 2 of the RMA reform.</i> <i>Government will be making targeted changes to a range of National Direction instruments and will also be consulting on wider policy proposals on how these fit into the replacement of the RMA in Phase 3.</i>	<i>Likely released in May 2025 (Likely will be pushed to June)</i>	<i>Horizons will most likely respond to all of the discussion papers and packages.</i> <i>There will be a significant level of involvement across the strategy and regulation teams.</i>
Q2 Action Plan – Relevant policy changes Link	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Introduce legislation to establish Invest NZ for foreign direct investment Introduce the Regulatory Standards Bill Begin public consultation on the 30-year National Infrastructure Plan Introduce legislation for targeted changes to the Public Works Act Agree the first Regional Deal MoU Introduce legislation to limit farm-to-forestry conversions from entering the ETS to protect productive land Introduce legislation to enable designation of herds of special interest to raise international hunting profile. 	1 April – 30 June	Officers will monitor upcoming changes and consultation opportunities.

	<ul style="list-style-type: none">+ further changes across public services and economy		
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Science

- Members of the Science team attended a Massey School of Agriculture and Environment Catchment Solutions Project workshop on innovative edge-of-field technologies (bio-reactors, detainment bunds, constructed wetlands) to reduce contaminant loss to waterbodies. The workshop was attended by regional councils, industry groups, and researchers.
- The swim spot sampling season concluded at the end of April. Over the sampling season (November to April) 81 sites along rivers, lakes and beaches across the region were visited weekly. During the season approximately 2,100 samples were collected and analysed. The wrap-up of the sampling season now underway to quality assure data and process field forms.
- A member of the team participated in the “Our Lakes, Our Future” hui at Lake Rotoiti, attended by researchers and regional councils, to discuss the future management of lakes across the country. The hui also provided an update on the Our Lakes, Our Future research programme, which is a collaboration between GNS, Cawthorn and Lincoln University.
- The 5-year State of the Environment Synthesis Report is in the final stages of drafting. The final drafts will be sent to our designers for production of the final report which will be published before the end of the financial year. The Synthesis Report covers the three broad domains of air, land and water alongside a case study on the impacts of Cyclone Gabrielle.
- The Science team continues to support our Environmental Educators at school and college Waiora stream study sessions including at Ruapehu College in mid-May.

REGIONAL SERVICES

Transport

- Te Ahu a Tūranga (the Manawatū – Tararua Highway is on track for an official opening on Saturday 7 June 2025. Final details will be available in due course. Another key priority for our region is O2NL (Otaki to North Levin) which is currently still planned for main construction to commence later this year in Oct – Nov, depending on final cost and design decisions. There have been recent changes in the expressway design that have prompted some concerns by some stakeholders. In general these relate to the design arrangements (interchanges) for traffic (including cars, pedestrians and cyclist) to access the expressway.
- Planning is underway for the development of the 2027 Regional Land Transport Plan (RLTP). This will commence with the Regional Transport Committee at the end of the year. Horizons transport team are meeting with officers from each Road Controlling Authority to help inform the evidence base for the RLTP.

Passenger Transport

- Almost 400 submissions were received on the Whanganui on the move engagement, which ran at the same time as the Annual Plan consultation. These submissions will be considered

as part of the Annual Plan deliberations and outcomes will be reported to the Whanganui Public Transport Governance Group and to the Passenger Transport Committee (PTC).

20. Procurement for the Feilding bus service has been underway over the past three months. Tenders closed 19 May 2025. Tender evaluation is currently underway which includes tender evaluators from Horizons, Manawatu District Council and Palmerston North City Council. A decision to award the new contract will be brought to Council in June 2025. The new contract will commence July 2026.
21. The bi-annual public transport customer satisfaction survey will be undertaken throughout June and into July. This survey is of public transport users, and provides a snapshot of satisfaction with the region's bus services. Outcomes from the survey will be reported to Horizons via the PTC and to NZ Transport Agency Waka Kotahi.

Emergency Management

22. The Group plan review draft document has been written and is currently under review by the Coordinating Executive Group and will be presented to the Joint Standing Committee on the 3 June for their review. The aim is for both committees to endorse/approve the Group Plan in August and September respectively. Public consultation and NEMAs technical review can then start in September.
23. Consistent and continuous training remains a key priority for building and sustaining the emergency management workforce across the Manawatū-Whanganui region. Most councils are actively engaging with regional training opportunities, which has led to improved baseline capability and stronger inter-agency collaboration. However, there is a recognised need to move beyond foundational training toward a more strategic and future-focused approach. To address this, the Emergency Management Office is exploring further development of a comprehensive regional training and exercising strategy that aligns with national frameworks and supports consistent skill development across all partner agencies. This strategy would include regular scenario-based exercises, joint agency simulations, and leadership development programmes to build confidence and operational readiness across the region. The assessment and development of a regional capability framework has begun and will continue to evolve over the coming months.
24. Work continues to strengthen emergency management capability and capacity within Horizons Regional Council. Training in the D4H incident management system is ongoing, with over 70 staff having now completed the introductory course. In addition, staff engagement with the Integrated Training Framework (ITF) remains steady, supporting consistent upskilling across the organisation. The next stage of D4H integration is to roll out function specific D4H training modules, the plan is to start this training mid/end of May.
25. The Manawatū-Whanganui region is placing increasing emphasis on strengthening its recovery capability and resilience. Recovery is now recognised as a core function of emergency management, requiring the same level of planning, coordination, and leadership as response. Across the region, efforts are underway to build recovery capability through workforce development, clear planning frameworks, and national/regional integration.
26. A review of priority roads across the region is being led by the Senior Emergency Management Advisor (Recovery and Lifelines) this project aims to identify critical transport routes essential for emergency response and recover across our region.
27. Key Events for this period:
 - a. EM Bill – Strengthening New Zealand's Emergency Management System April 2025 (Discussion document). – Submissions submitted 13 May.

- b. A new Emergency Management staff member started on the 20 May. Taking up the Senior Emergency Management Advisor (Response) position.
- c. 6 May – Coordinating Executive Group (CEG)
- d. 7 May - ITF Logistics Course
- e. 8 May - ITF Intelligence Course
- f. 14 – 15 May ITF Intermediate Course
- g. 20 May - Welfare forum
- h. 21 May - Regional Emergency Managers Forum
- i. 26 May - Recovery Forum

District Advice

- 28. **Natural Hazard Information in Land Information Memoranda (LIM)** comes into effect from 1 July 2025 as the LGOIMA Amendment Act 2023 has new requirements for regional councils to provide territorial authorities with natural hazard information. On the 17 April the [Local Government \(Natural Hazard Information in Land Information Memoranda\) Regulations 2025](#) were gazetted. Team Leader District Advice continues to communicate with the regional working group which has representation from all territorial authorities. The Team Leader is a member on the Practitioners Working Group for the development of the guidelines and has attended two meetings so far.
- 29. **Building (Dam Safety) Regulations** continues to be implemented. There is one remaining classification certificate required for a known large dam which is expected to be completed by mid-June. This brings the total to 67 classifiable dams in the region. In early May District Advice presented to the Coordinating Executive Group meeting on Dam Safety and Emergency Preparedness as dam owners are required to consult with local authorities, CDEM and emergency services on their dam emergency action plans.
- 30. PNCC are requesting Horizons feedback on the draft **Palmerston North Citywide Stormwater Strategy**. Team Leader District Advice and the Policy team are coordinating Horizons feedback which was provided to PNCC in line with the 23 May deadline.

CATCHMENT OPERATIONS

- 31. Council approved the final version of the Tōtara Reserve Management Plan on the 29 April. Staff assisted efforts to monitor and trap for rats/mustelids at Bushy Park on one of the public days in early May after the sanctuary was compromised when a tree fell onto the predator proof fence. Two additional sites for addition to the Priority Habitats programme have been approved to progress to the stage of engaging with landowners for inclusion into the programme. One existing site may be removed due to management cost and challenges. If these changes are made the current number of sites would increase by one to 95 sites.

Biosecurity

- 32. Regional Pest Plan review work continues with staff and council engagement; a workshop was held on the 30 April to present the concept of a pest management strategic document along with topics of interest to capture in a pest management discussion document for consultation with the public.

33. Animal pest team have three staff away on extended sick leave, one due to injury. The team have been able to use casual labour and have reduced external spending to keep the output on target. The team also met to plan Possum Control Operations for 2025/26, based on scheduled work and interrogation of 2024/25 monitor results to select a prioritised work plan for internal and external effort.
34. Pest plant team have nearly closed out all work across the spray and control programmes, including national wilding conifer control programme. A late season contract variation from MPI for more funds is likely in early June, meaning around \$45k more work can be achieved. The team met to plan work programmes for 2025/26, budget dependant, but with a mind to a programme focusing on operations against priority species where RPMP and Annual Plan targets are most likely achievable. A prioritisation tool has been developed to score feasibility of management and value of control in various landscapes while taking account of external constraints.

Freshwater and Projects

35. The riparian fencing and planting programme for this winter has commenced with the focus on riparian works to be completed and claimed prior to the end of the Jobs for Nature project on 30 June 2025. Fencing and planting claims continue to be processed, the wetter conditions have made ground conditions more conducive to fencing and planting being completed. With the focus on completing works that have been committed to within timeframes and staff capacity limitations.
36. The Jobs for Nature fish passage project also comes to an end in June 2025. The team are focused on ensuring that any remaining commitments such as reports are finalised prior to the end of June 2025.
37. The project team for the Arawhata Wetland project continue to work in good faith with the appellant to the Fast Track consent decision. The team hope to resolve the appeal without the need for a High Court hearing however, continue to prepare for the hearing in case a resolution is not possible. A court date is scheduled for early June.

Land Management

38. Land team are busy finalising claims for work for this financial year. Currently the programme is on track to meet the end of year MPI contract and Annual Plan targets.
39. The SLUI Advisory group met on 15 May. Topics covered included a progress update on SLUI over the life of the programme, an update on works this year and a discussion about future settings for the programme next year and beyond.
40. The Land Team met on 21 May in Taihape to discuss the winter work programme and the SLUI and other land programmes for next financial year.
41. Land and Comms team members visited Tony and Lynda Grays' property (SLUI Whole Farm Plan number 1) and produced a video and press release on their involvement in SLUI and retirement from the farm. The video is available on Horizons' website.
42. The Poplar and Willow Research Trust met on 8 May.
43. Staff are preparing for the winter pole season. Contracts have been let for the winter pole harvest from Council nurseries (Bulls and Woodville) with work to commence on 26 May.

44. A procurement process for irrigation at the Woodville Nursery has been completed and this is now progressing to building the irrigation system with work planned over this calendar year with the approved budget allowance.

River Management

45. The maintenance based programmes are continuing to be implemented with some additional work being completed via funding reallocated from the repairs budgets. Programmes will reduce over late May/June with the focus on completing the capital programme and moving to preparation for scheme meetings and planning for next years' maintenance based programmes. It is anticipated that the maintenance based programmes will be finalised over July.
46. The single asset management plan has been completed and published on Horizons' website. Asset management programmes are now focussing on completing inspections, finalising the asset revaluation, preparing the insurance schedule and capitalisation of works as they are completed.
47. The capital programme has progressed well over April and May. The Kanoa co-funded Climate Resilience programmes require works to be completed by 30 June. The Rangitīkei project is on track to be completed in May. The Foxton, Lower Manawatū and Palmerston North Climate resilience projects all have active work continuing into June. The Moutoa gates upgrades (sluice gates) are on track to have seven gates completed by early June with two more to complete. The Tremaine Avenue project has progressed well and is on track to be completed in mid-June. We are in discussions with potential purchaser of the Belvedere Crescent council purchased as part of the stopbank works. The required land from the section has been surveyed off and we now are looking to dispose of the balance of the land and dwelling. A land purchase for the Feilding Reid Line project is set to transact in early June.
48. The Regional Flood Vulnerability Assessment co-funded by the Cyclone Recovery Unit is on track to be completed by the end of June. While delivery of the reports will occur within this timeframe, it is clear that there will be further work to do to review the reports, communicate the findings and use the information to inform future work programmes.
49. A more detailed update on the Catchment Operations Group activity has been provided to the Integrated Catchment Committee in May.

CORPORATE & GOVERNANCE GROUP

Business Services

New Build

50. Procurement of the Consultancy Services continues through the month of May. Once complete, the Steering Group will commence work on developing the Client Brief. Concept Design will follow. Work is also progressing on the assessment of the existing Regional House in Palmerston North. Council will Workshop the treatment of Regional House on 11 June and formalise its decision at its Council meeting on 24 June.

People and Capability

51. Remuneration & Payroll Advisor continues to assist with testing ongoing development of DataScape time sheeting environment. The People & Capability Advisors are dedicated Business Partners to their respective groups with the People & Capability Officer supporting the generic HR administrative functions. Brook Rush, Senior Safety & Wellbeing Advisor focus has been on becoming familiar with the role and coordinating the service centre inspections.

52. Number of FTEs

The total number of FTEs is: **313.55** Headcount: **327** Annual Staff Turnover **13.15%**
Staff numbers are usually explained in two ways, full-time equivalent (FTE) or Headcount (Actual Staff Count).

- The FTE figure is determined by taking the total core hours worked by all staff and dividing this by 40 hours (1 FTE).
- The Headcount is just the total count of all staff employed at a given time.
The FTE figure is always less than the Headcount. The difference will depend on the overall number of part-time staff and the number of hours they typically work per week.

Future Fit

53. June/July service centre visits have been scheduled.

54. The progress report regarding Future Fit is underway through the work of John Hutchings. Various leaders and staff are involved in information gathering via interviews. The intention is to also include Councilors in a round of interviews. The final report is due in August and its findings will help inform the organisational direction for the incoming council and ahead to the Long Term Plan.

Integrated Catchment Management Programme

55. A draft Integrated Catchment Management Programme Charter has been developed and will be presented to the Project Control Group for approval to proceed on 19 May. Project planning, including development of communication and engagement plan, is underway.

56. The Programme Lead and Group Manager Strategy Regulation and Science attended the inaugural Ngā Wai Tōtā o Te Waiū 2-day hui in Ohakune. Ngā Wai Tōtā o Te Waiū is the governance entity for the awa in Te Waiū-o-Te-Ika (Whangaehu catchment). Ngā Wai Tōtā o Te Waiū is just one part of a

framework established to recognise, nurture and protect Te Waiū-o-Te-Ika and was negotiated as part of Rukutia te Mana, the Ngāti Rangī Claims Settlement Act 2019. The purpose of Ngā Wai Tōtā is to:

- a. promote Te Mana Tupua and Ngā Toka Tupua (the unique, special nature and intrinsic values associated with Te Waiū-o-Te-Ika)
- b. advance the health and well-being of the awa
- c. advance the integrated management of the awa
- d. be a voice for the relationship of ngā iwi o te awa (incl kawa, tikanga, and ritenga) with the awa.

57. We attended meetings with Wellington Water Chief Science Advisor and University of Canterbury representative regarding a potential research collaboration project. The project aims to develop an integrated catchment management decision support system.

58. We attended a meeting with the Kapiti Coast Integrated Catchment Manager from Greater Wellington Regional Council regarding lessons learned about integrated catchment management and resource sharing.

59. We attended a meeting with HRC Chairperson to discuss indicative political aspirations for the Integrated Catchment Management Programme.

60. Staff and a number of elected members attended the Lower North Island Catchment Leaders Forum at Massey on 21 May.

Region/Sector

61. On 19 May the executive team Chair, Integrated Catchment Chair (Alan Taylor) and Councillor Bruce Gordon met with the Rangitikei District Council where a number of topics were discussed.

62. The Regional Chief Executives met on 23 May in Wellington.

UPCOMING COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT EVENTS AND ACTIVITIES

Governance

Date	Event
29 April	Council meeting
30 April	Audit, Risk & Investment Financial Briefing
30 April	Councillors' Workshop on RM Bill 3, Regional Pest Management Plan and Wetland Mapping Project Plan
13 May	Councillors' Workshop on Tiritea Health Check and Lower North Island Rail Integrated Mobility
14 May	Integrated Catchment Committee meeting
14 May	Councillors' Workshop on Review of Palmy Future Development Strategy
19 May	HRC & RDC 1:1
20 May	Annual Plan Hearings in Whanganui
22 May	Annual Plan Hearings in Palmerston North
27 May	Council meeting
28 May	Audit, Risk & Investment Committee meeting
3 June	Civil Defence Emergency Management meeting
3 June	Regional Transport Committee meeting
3 June	Manawatu River Users Accord Group meeting
9 June	Mayoral Forum
10 June	Annual Plan Deliberations
11 June	Annual Plan Deliberations
17 June	Passenger Transport Committee meeting

18 June	HRC & PNCC 1:1
24 June	Council meeting to adopt Annual Plan and Set Rates
25 June	Audit, Risk & Investment Financial Briefing

Catchment Operations

Date	Event
29 May	Te Pūwaha Project Partners meeting via Teams
12 June	Te Pūwaha Governance Hui in Whanganui
12 June	Whanganui Port Project Management Group meeting in Whanganui
17 June	Manawatū River Users 5-Year plan workshops
19 June	Te Pūwaha Project Partners meeting via Teams

Strategy, Regulation & Science

Date	Event
20 May	Integrated Catchment Management Programme Lead has been invited to the Integrated Farm Plan Workshop hosted by Rangitikei Rivers Catchment Collective and KS Agri
21 May	Rural Advice have been invited to the Land Care Trust Catchment Leaders Forum
4 June	Women in Farming meeting – Rural Advice have been asked to present information on environmental standards regarding winter grazing and cropping.

Communications

Date	Event
30 April	Envirosapes with Feilding Ag High School Year 11 and teacher PD on Waiora Stream Study kit – Community Engagement Advisor
1 May	2024-34 LTP amendment/2025-26 Annual Plan and Whanganui public transport consultation closed
15 May	Waiora sessions Ruapehu College – Year 11 – Senior Environmental Educator in conjunction with Ngāti Rangī and Science team – Day 1
16 May	Waiora sessions Ruapehu College – Year 11 – Senior Environmental Educator in conjunction with Ngāti Rangī and Science team – Day 2
20 May	Pest Animals session #1 with Turaki School - Senior Environmental Educator
23 May	Planting at Browns Farm with Kiwitea School and Massey – Community Engagement Advisor & Senior Environmental Educator
26 May	Waiora Stream Study with St Matthews School x 3 sessions – will be either Senior Environmental Educator or Community Engagement Advisor (TBC)

Report No.	25-86
Decision Required	

TE TIRITI O WAITANGI PARTNERSHIP HEALTH CHECK

1. PURPOSE

- 1.1. The purpose of this report is to present the findings of the Te Tiriti o Waitangi Health Check, carried out by Buddle Findlay as an independent review of how Horizons Regional Council (Council) gives effect to its obligations under Te Tiriti o Waitangi in its relationships with iwi and hapū across the Manawatū–Whanganui region.
- 1.2. The review is a performance measure set in Year 1 of the 2024–2034 Long-term Plan. It reflects Council's strategic commitment to strengthening partnerships with tangata whenua and building relationships that are respectful and mana-enhancing.
- 1.3. The key objective of the review is to understand the current state of relationships with tangata whenua partners, and to identify practical opportunities for improvement.

2. RECOMMENDATIONS

It is recommended that Council:

- a. receives the information contained in Report No. 25-86 and Annex.
- b. thanks Buddle Findlay for their report and presentation.
- c. receives the Te Tiriti o Waitangi Review Report dated June 2025.
- d. notes that officers will commence development of an implementation plan in 2025/26 in response to the recommendations of the Te Tiriti o Waitangi Health Check.

3. FINANCIAL IMPACT

- 3.1. The cost of undertaking this independent health check was anticipated in the Long-term Plan 2024-2034. The costs associated with any future actions for improvement are yet to be identified.

4. TANGATA WHENUA AND INTERNAL ENGAGEMENT

- 4.1. Engagement took place from 14 April to 30 May 2025.
- 4.2. Engagement with Tangata Whenua was carried out by way of online survey with the offer of opportunities for follow-up calls or a face-to-face meetings.
- 4.3. Feedback from selected Horizons staff across all departments was sought by way of online survey.
- 4.4. Feedback from councillors was sought via a workshop held on 13 May 2025.

5. SIGNIFICANT BUSINESS RISK IMPACT

- 5.1. No significant business risks have been identified associated with receiving this report.

6. CLIMATE IMPACT STATEMENT

- 6.1. There is no direct climate impact associated with this item.

7. BACKGROUND

- 7.1. Council's Long-term Plan 2024–2034 outlines a strategic priority to deepen partnerships with tangata whenua by “responding constructively to changing expectations, realising the potential contribution of Māori leadership, and building mana-enhancing relationships.”
- 7.2. In developing the Long-term Plan, Council recognised the difficulty of measuring relationship quality through numbers alone. After several workshops and feedback from audit and elected members, Council adopted a three-year cycle to support ongoing improvement:
- Year 1: an independent Te Tiriti health check (this report).
 - Years 2–3: implementation of an action plan based on the health check recommendations.
- 7.3. Buddle Findlay was engaged in February 2025 to carry out the Year 1 review. Buddle Findlay has extensive experience working with councils on Te Tiriti issues and Māori partnerships and has worked previously with Horizons and in the region.
- 7.4. The methodology included document reviews, online surveys with iwi/hapū, staff, and councillors, and targeted online workshops to gather in-depth feedback.
- 7.5. The report covers:
- a) the methodology for the review;
 - b) the legislative context;
 - c) the Horizons context;
 - d) current structures and processes within the Council;
 - e) survey results;
 - f) what is working well;
 - g) what are the challenges and opportunities for improvement; and
 - h) overall conclusions and recommendations for improvement.
- 7.6. Buddle Findlay will present their findings at this Council meeting.

8. PERFORMANCE MEASURE ALIGNMENT

- 8.1. This report fulfils one of the Year 1 performance measures in the 2024–2034 Long-term Plan: *Iwi and Hapū relationships*.
- 8.2. These measures reflect Council's view that the quality of relationships with tangata whenua cannot be meaningfully assessed by numbers alone. Instead, the framework supports continuous improvement and deeper understanding of what strengthens enduring partnerships.
- 8.3. The relevant performance measures for this financial year are as follows:
- Performance Measure 1.1 *An independent Te Tiriti o Waitangi partnership health check of the organisation is completed in Year 1.*
 - Status: Completed (this report).
 - Performance Measure 1.2 *Develop an implementation plan based on recommendations from the independent health check.*
 - Status: This target will not be achieved within the 2024/25 financial year due to the timing of the health check. Development of the implementation plan will begin in early 2025/26.

8.4. The relevant performance measure for next financial year is as follows:

Performance Measure 1.3 *Implement steps and reflection process for areas for improvement raised in the health check.* Council will reflect annually in Years 2 and 3 of the performance cycle (2025/26 and 2026/27) on the following questions:

- What were our areas for focussed improvement?
- What steps did we take?
- What happened as a result?
- What difference did this make?
- What did we learn and how can we improve further?

9. TIMELINE / NEXT STEPS

- 9.1. Following receipt of this report, officers will need time to consider the recommendations and provide input into the development of an implementation plan.
- 9.2. Officers will begin work on the implementation plan in early 2025/26, informed by this report, the One Plan – Te ao Māori Chapter Review work, and Council’s guidance. A Council workshop will be scheduled to support this process and ensure alignment with Council priorities.
- 9.3. Actions arising from the implementation plan will be delivered and reflected on over the following two years. Progress and learning will contribute to performance reporting and inform the development of the 2027–2037 Long-term Plan.

10. SIGNIFICANCE

- 10.1. This is not a significant decision according to the Council’s Policy on Significance and Engagement.

Charlotte Almond
MANAGER POLICY & STRATEGY

Lizzie Daly
GROUP MANAGER POLICY & STRATEGY REGULATION AND SCIENCE

ANNEXES

- A Te Tiriti o Waitangi Review Report



1. INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 Buddle Findlay was engaged to carry out an independent Tiriti o Waitangi review for Horizons Regional Council (**Council**). The Tiriti review is an independent assessment by Buddle Findlay of how the Council implements its Tiriti o Waitangi obligations in engaging with iwi and hapū within the Manawatū-Whanganui region (**region**).
- 1.2 The objective of the review is to *"understand the state of existing relationships with tangata whenua partners in the Horizons region and identify opportunities to improve relationships to ensure they are respectful and mana-enhancing"*. In particular, the review seeks to understand:
- (a) What is working well?
 - (b) What are some of the challenges?
 - (c) What are the opportunities for improvement?
- 1.3 This report sets out:
- (a) the methodology for the review;
 - (b) the legislative context;
 - (c) the Horizons context;
 - (d) current structures and processes within the Council;
 - (e) survey results;
 - (f) what is working well;
 - (g) what are the challenges and opportunities for improvement; and
 - (h) our overall conclusions and recommendations for improvement.

2. METHODOLOGY FOR THE REVIEW

- 2.1 The methodology for the review involved the following:

Documentation review

- 2.2 We reviewed a range of relevant documentation provided by Council and available on Council's website. This provided us with a good understanding of some relevant background and context. We summarise our key findings arising from this documentation review in section 5 below.

Online survey for iwi and hapū representatives

- 2.3 Feedback was sought by way of an online survey from a number of iwi and hapū representatives identified by the Council. These iwi and hapū, and where relevant their representative organisation, are set out in **Appendix 1**, with the survey being sent to representatives at governance, managerial and operational levels of the relevant organisations or groups. The form for the survey is provided in **Appendix 2**. The questions for the survey were developed with a focus on what is working well, what some of the challenges are, and potential opportunities for improvement.

- 2.4 The period for the survey was initially Monday 14 April to Friday 2 May, however, this was ultimately extended to Friday 30 May to provide more time for responses. During this period, several reminder emails were sent encouraging representatives to complete the survey.
- 2.5 The email communication also offered representatives the opportunity for a follow-up call to explore matters in more depth.
- 2.6 Some of the iwi and hapū representatives preferred to provide feedback by way of a meeting. One representative requested a meeting with us. This meeting was held on 6 June 2025. In the meeting, rather than stepping through the survey questions, we facilitated a general discussion on what is working well and what are the areas for improvement as the representatives preferred to give more qualitative feedback. In addition, one iwi representative requested a meeting with Council staff and provided feedback that way. That meeting was held on Friday 30 May 2025 and that feedback has been passed on to us and considered in this report.
- 2.7 We also received some direct feedback from the two groups referred to above, and one additional group who chose not to participate that they considered the survey methodology to be inappropriate and that a face-to-face meeting with the Council itself would have been more appropriate.
- 2.8 As described further below, unfortunately, we did not receive many responses to the online survey. This is a limitation of this review process as gaining iwi and hapū perspectives is critical to understanding what is working well and any challenges in their dealings and relationship with Council. However, the feedback we did receive provides some valuable insights into the current state of the relationship for at least some of the iwi and hapū of the region.

Online survey for Council staff

- 2.9 Feedback was also sought from key Council staff across a number of departments by way of an online survey. These key staff were identified by Council (refer to **Appendix 3**). The form for this survey is provided in **Appendix 4**.
- 2.10 The period for the survey was initially Monday 14 April to Friday 2 May, however, this was ultimately extended to Friday 30 May to provide more time for responses. During this period, several reminder emails were sent encouraging staff to complete the survey, both by us and by the Council's Policy & Strategy Manager.
- 2.11 The email communication also offered staff the opportunity for a follow-up call to explore matters in more depth, however, we did not receive any requests for a meeting.
- 2.12 As described further below, we received a good number of responses from Council staff, which provided valuable insights into the state of Council's relationships with iwi and hapū from the Council's perspective, across a number of Council departments.

Online workshop with Councillors

- 2.13 We facilitated an online workshop with Councillors on 13 May 2025. The PowerPoint presentation for this workshop is provided in **Appendix 5**. The workshop focused on three key questions:
 - (a) What is working well?
 - (b) What are some of the challenges?
 - (c) What are the areas for improvement?

2.14 The workshop was well attended, with all but one Councillor in attendance. This workshop provided valuable insights into the state of the relationship from the perspective of Councillors.

3. THE LEGISLATIVE CONTEXT

3.1 In undertaking a Tiriti o Waitangi review, it is important to first acknowledge the legislative context for Te Tiriti o Waitangi obligations in a local government context.

3.2 There is no one coherent framework of statutory obligations for the relationship between Māori and local government. Rather, discrete statutory obligations have been developed on a statute-by-statute basis over many years, and they are framed in different ways depending on the statute in question.

3.3 There are different obligations that may apply to a council depending on the circumstances. For example, under the Resource Management Act 1991 (**RMA**) there are certain obligations that are relevant to a council in its regulatory capacity; and others when acting as an applicant for resource consents (eg when seeking resource consents for infrastructure). The statutory obligations arise under a range of statutes, including:

- (a) local government legislation (such as the Local Government Act 2002 (**LGA**));
- (b) planning and environmental legislation (such as the RMA);
- (c) Treaty settlement legislation;
- (d) customary rights legislation (such as the Marine and Coastal Area (Takutai Moana) Act 2011); and
- (e) other legislation (such as the Reserves Act 1977).

3.4 There are also other obligations to Māori that arise, for example, under RMA national policy statements such as the New Zealand Coastal Policy Statement 2010 or the National Policy Statement for Freshwater Management 2020 (**NPSFM**).

3.5 The specific legal obligations on the Council vary depending on the statute and the context, and those differences are important. Obligations may focus on (for example):

- (a) Te Tiriti o Waitangi/the Treaty of Waitangi;
- (b) recognition of tikanga Māori, values, culture and traditions;
- (c) understanding of tikanga and mātauranga Māori;
- (d) customary rights (for example in the Marine and Coastal Area (Takutai Moana) Act context);
- (e) participation for Māori in local authority decision-making;
- (f) recognition of areas or resources of particular significance to Māori; and
- (g) processes such as consultation.

3.6 The inconsistencies and gaps in the legislation present challenges to both Māori and councils in terms of understanding what is required in the relationship context. Where legislative requirements change, this also present challenges.

- 3.7 One important matter to be continuously explored is the extent to which the legislation is enabling or constraining in terms of advancing the partnership aspirations of the parties.

4. THE HORIZONS CONTEXT

- 4.1 In undertaking this Tiriti review, it is also important to understand the unique context of the area serviced by the Council. By unique context, we mean:

- (a) population structure and demographics for the region;
- (b) the iwi and hapū of the region; and
- (c) relevant Treaty of Waitangi settlements.

- 4.2 We consider each of these elements below.

Population structure and demographics

- 4.3 The 2023 census put the population count for the region at approximately 251,412 people¹ spread over an area of 22,200 km². Within that population, over 25% (or 25.1%) of the population were Māori.² Comparatively, the 2023 census found that Māori (including people of Māori descent) make up 19.6% of the total population of the country.³

Iwi and hapū

- 4.4 There are a number of different iwi and hapū who have interests in the region. We understand that there are approximately 30 iwi, 110 hapū and more than 60 marae in the region,⁴ and that the Council engages with more than 26 iwi and hapū groups.⁵
- 4.5 The Council has entered into seven signed memoranda of partnership and relationship agreements with iwi and hapū groups, as listed at paragraph 5.25. A further three are in development.⁶

Relevant Treaty settlements

- 4.6 Some iwi and hapū with interests in the region have settled their historical Treaty of Waitangi claims against the Crown through deeds of settlement and Treaty settlement legislation.
- 4.7 There are also other significant iwi and hapū groups who have not yet settled their historical Treaty claims with the Crown, including Ngāti Raukawa ki te Tonga, Muaūpoko, Mōkai Pātea and Whanganui Lands.
- 4.8 The relevant Treaty settlement legislation includes:⁷
- (a) Ngaa Rauru Kīitahi Claims Settlement Act 2005;
 - (b) Ngāti Apa (North Island) Claims Settlement Act 2010;
 - (c) Maraeroa A and B Blocks Claims Settlement Act 2012;

¹ Statistics New Zealand "2023 Census maps and data" [2023 Census population change | 2023 Census maps and data](#)

² Statistics New Zealand "Our Region: Manawatū-Whanganui" 11 March 2025, [Our region: Manawatū-Whanganui | Stats NZ](#).

³ Statistics New Zealand "People of Māori descent living in Aotearoa New Zealand" 13 February 2025 [People of Māori descent living in Aotearoa New Zealand | Stats NZ](#).

⁴ Horizons Regional Council, Long-Term Plan 2024-2034, at 1. See also the Te Kāhui Mangai list at <https://tkm.govt.nz/regionalauthority/horizons-regional-council-manawatu-whanganui/>

⁵ Based on the list provided on the Council's website. [Iwi and Hapū Contacts - Horizons Regional Council](#).

⁶ Horizons Regional Council, Annual Report 2023-2024, at 46 (**Annual Report 2023-2024**).

⁷ Based on the Te Kāhui Mangai list at <https://tkm.govt.nz/regionalauthority/horizons-regional-council-manawatu-whanganui/> and the Council's website.

- (d) Ngati Toa Rangatira Claims Settlement Act 2014;
 - (e) Rangitāne o Manawatū Claims Settlement Act 2016;
 - (f) Rangitāne Tū Mai Rā (Wairarapa Tamaki nui-ā-Rua) Claims Settlement Act 2017;
 - (g) Te Awa Tupua (Whanganui River Claims Settlement) Act 2017 (**Te Awa Tupua Act**);
 - (h) Ngāti Tūwharetoa Claims Settlement Act 2018;
 - (i) Ngāti Rangī Claims Settlement Act 2019;
 - (j) Maniapoto Claims Settlement Act 2022;
 - (k) Ngāti Maru (Taranaki) Claims Settlement Act 2022;
 - (l) Ngāti Kahungunu ki Wairarapa Tāmaki nui-a-Rua Claims Settlement Act 2022;
 - (m) Te Korowai o Wainuiārua Claims Settlement Act 2025; and
 - (n) Ngāti Hāua (Upper Whanganui) (signed deed of settlement on 29 March 2025, bill introduced 9 April 2025).
- 4.9 Consequently, these iwi also have established post-settlement governance entities (**PSGEs**).
- 4.10 Some of the Treaty settlement legislation listed above imposes specific requirements or obligations on the Council, including the following:
- (a) A number Treaty settlement Acts⁸ include statutory acknowledgements over statutory areas throughout the region. The Council must have regard to those statutory acknowledgements, provide summaries of resource consent applications that may impact those statutory areas to PSGEs, and attach information recording a statutory acknowledgement to statutory plans.
 - (b) The Te Awa Tupua Act, which recognises Te Awa Tupua and declares a legal personality of the Whanganui River, requires the Council, as a relevant local authority, to appoint members to Te Karewao (an advisory group that provides advice and support to Te Awa Tupua),⁹ and to Te Kōpuka (a strategy group for Te Awa Tupua).¹⁰ In addition, each time Te Heke Ngahuru or an amendment to it is approved, the Council must consider its RMA planning documents in light of the Te Awa Tupua status, Tupua te Kawa, and Te Heke Ngahuru and may initiate a review of those documents in order to meet its statutory obligations.¹¹
 - (c) The Ngāti Rangī Claims Settlement Act 2019, includes the Te Waiū-o-Te-Ika framework for the Whangaehu River, and requires the Council to recognise and provide for Te Mana Tupua (recognising the mana of the river) and Ngā Toka Tupua (the intrinsic values that represent the indivisible water body) when exercising particular statutory functions or powers relating to the Whangaehu River.¹² The Council is also required to appoint a member to Ngā Wai Tōtā (a joint committee that provides strategic leadership to promote Te Mana Tupua and Ngā

⁸ Maniapoto Claims Settlement Act 2022, Maraeroa A and B Blocks Claims Settlement Act 2012, Ngāti Apa (North Island) Claims Settlement Act 2010, Ngāti Kahungunu ki Wairarapa Tāmaki nui-a-Rua Claims Settlement Act 2022, Ngāti Maru (Taranaki) Claims Settlement Act 2022, Ngāti Rangī Claims Settlement Act 2019, Ngāa Rauru Kīitahi Claims Settlement Act 2005, Ngāti Tūwharetoa Claims Settlement Act 2018, Rangitāne o Manawatū Claims Settlement Act 2016, Rangitāne Tū Mai Rā (Wairarapa Tamaki nui-ā-Rua) Claims Settlement Act 2017 and Te Korowai o Wainuiārua Claims Settlement Act 2025.

⁹ Te Awa Tupua Act, s 28(1)(c).

¹⁰ Te Awa Tupua Act, s 32(1)(c).

¹¹ Te Awa Tupua Act, s 38(1).

¹² Including under the Biosecurity Act 1993, Local Government Acts 1974 and 2002, Reserves Act 1977, and the RMA; see Ngāti Rangī Claims Settlement Act 2019, Schedule 5.

Toka Tupuna and advance the health and well-being and integrated management of the catchment),¹³

- (d) The Rangitāne o Manawatu Claims Settlement Act 2016 provides for the establishment of the Manawatu River catchment advisory board.¹⁴ The board may provide written advice to the Council in relation to freshwater management issues concerning the Manawatū River catchment, and the Council must have regard to that advice, and report back to the board how the Council has considered that advice.¹⁵

5. CURRENT COUNCIL STRUCTURES, STRATEGIES AND PROJECTS

5.1 This section summarises information we have gathered regarding current Council structures, strategies and projects, based on our review of relevant documentation. This includes a summary of:

- (a) governance structures;
- (b) other statutory bodies;
- (c) key strategies, policies and plans, including the long-term plan, annual plans, annual reports, the One Plan, the future development strategy for Palmerston North and the significance and engagement policy;
- (d) formal memoranda of partnership and relationship agreements with iwi and hapū; and
- (e) specific projects and strategies that provide for Māori participation.

Governance structures

- 5.2 The Council's governing body is made up of 14 publicly elected councillors representing the following constituencies: Raki Māori, Tonga Māori, Ruapehu, Whanganui, Manawatū-Rangitīkei, Palmerston North, Tararua, and Horowhenua.
- 5.3 Raki Māori and Tonga Māori are the Council's two Māori constituencies, which were established in 2022. The Council is required to hold a poll on whether these constituencies should be retained under the Local Government (Electoral Legislation and Māori Wards and Māori Constituencies) Amendment Act 2024. This poll will be held from 9 September to 11 October 2025.
- 5.4 There are eight committees of Council as follows:
 - (a) Strategy & Policy (Committee of the Whole);
 - (b) Integrated Catchment (Committee of the Whole);
 - (c) Audit, Risk & Investment;
 - (d) Regional Transport;
 - (e) Passenger Transport Committee;
 - (f) Climate Action Joint Committee;

¹³ Ngati Rangi Claims Settlement Act 2019, s 118(1)(e).

¹⁴ Rangitāne o Manawatu Claims Settlement Act 2016, s 42(1).

¹⁵ Rangitāne o Manawatu Claims Settlement Act 2016, s 45.

- (g) Manawatu River Users' Advisory Group; and
- (h) Linklater Bursary Subcommittee.

5.5 The Climate Action Joint Committee includes eight council members and eight non-Councillor members to represent the views of tangata whenua. These members are appointed by Council on the recommendation of iwi leaders.¹⁶ One Co-Chair must be a tangata whenua representative. The objective of the committee includes developing a climate action plan; working collectively to engage with central government and deliver on responsibilities under the national adaptation plan and emissions reduction plan; and encourage partnerships with iwi and others in central and local government, health, education, youth, NGOs and business.¹⁷

5.6 The Manawātū River Users' Advisory Group includes one councillor and a number of appointed members representing the various parties interested in the Manawātū River, including river interest groups and river users. This group includes representation from Tanenuiarangi Manawatu Incorporated, the mandated iwi authority for Rangitāne o Manawātū.¹⁸

Other statutory bodies

5.7 As described at paragraph 4.10(b), (c) and (d) above, the Council is required to appoint members to statutory bodies established by Treaty settlement legislation, including Te Karewao and Te Kōpuka (Te Awa Tupua Act), Ngā Wai Tōtā (Ngāti Rangī Claims Settlement Act 2019) and the Manawātū River catchment advisory board.

Long-Term Plan 2024-2034

5.8 The Council's Long-Term Plan 2024-2034 (**LTP**) includes a strategic priority of strengthening partnerships with tangata whenua and "*responding constructively to changing expectations, realising the potential contribution of Māori leadership, building mana-enhancing relationships.*"¹⁹ The plan also sets performance measures which include to undertake this Tiriti review, and then to develop an action plan for improvement which will be a focus for years 2 and 3 of the LTP.²⁰

5.9 The LTP records that the Council offers a cultural confidence programme for elected members and staff to increase their understanding of te ao Māori,²¹ and, in year 2 of the LTP, the Council proposes creating an additional policy and relationship advisor role to support its relationship building with Māori.²²

5.10 The LTP also outlines how the Council approaches the Treaty partnership, through fostering partnerships enabling participation, supporting capacity and protecting Māori interests. This includes action such as:²³

- (a) entering into relationship agreements;
- (b) taking iwi management plans into account in planning and decision-making processes;

¹⁶ Horizons Regional Council. Terms of Reference, at 16 [COUNCIL AND COMMITTEE TERMS OF REFERENCE \(Terms of Reference\)](#).

¹⁷ Terms of Reference, at 15.

¹⁸ Manawatu River Users' Advisory Group Agenda for meeting on 5 June 2019.

¹⁹ LTP, at 7.

²⁰ LTP, at 7.

²¹ LTP, at 145.

²² LTP, at 149.

²³ LTP, at 12.

- (c) recognising Māori kaitiakitanga as part of policy development;
- (d) developing a regional marae locations map;
- (e) using te reo in Council mahi;
- (f) supporting development of Iwi Management Plans and keeping appropriate records;
- (g) sponsoring Māori to undertake RMA training;
- (h) enabling student internships and secondments;
- (i) maintaining an accurate Māori contacts directory;
- (j) consulting on resource consent applications; and
- (k) engaging early with iwi groups in the process of settling Treaty claims.

Annual plans

- 5.11 The Council's Annual Plan 2022-2023 included investing in the capacity of iwi and hapū so that they can be appropriately involved in the design and content of the Council's new freshwater plan.²⁴
- 5.12 In 2022, the Council also began to implement Horizons' Climate Action Plan, and progressed the Joint Climate Action Plan alongside iwi and territorial local authority partners.²⁵
- 5.13 The Council's Annual Plan 2023-2024 identifies that the vision for the region is to continue to build "*mutually beneficial iwi/hapū relationships*" including in the climate change, emergency management and freshwater areas. The plan notes that the target "*iwi and hapū satisfaction with their collaborative relationships with Horizons*" was not achieved (the required surveys were not completed to assess this), but the target of holding hui annually has been achieved.²⁶ It also includes the following Māori participation targets:
- (a) recognise the enduring presence, aspirations, and cultural practices of Māori as kaitiaki in the region;
 - (b) actively consider the recognition and protection of Māori rights and interests within the region and how the Council contributes to the needs and aspirations of Māori;
 - (c) where a decision relates to land or a body of water, take into account the relationship of Māori, and their culture and traditions with their ancestral land, water, sites, wāhi tapu, valued flora and fauna, and other taonga;
 - (d) recognise the entities and governance frameworks established by treaty settlement legislation and the intent of that legislation;
 - (e) establish and maintain processes to provide opportunities for Māori to contribute to our decision-making processes, including collaborative and partnership approaches;
 - (f) support Māori capability and capacity building; and
 - (g) build ongoing relationships with Māori that enable early engagement in the development of plans and policies.

²⁴ Horizons Regional Council, Annual Plan 2022-2023 (**Annual Plan 2022-2023**), at 7.

²⁵ Annual Plan 2022-2023, at 3.

²⁶ Horizons Regional Council, Mahere ā-tau 2023-2024 | Annual Plan 2023-2024 (**Annual Plan 2023-2024**), at 29.

Annual reports

- 5.14 The Annual Report 2022-2023 stated that the Council will contribute to vibrant and empowered communities by building mutually beneficial relationships with iwi and hapū.²⁷ One way of building such relationships was through the Oranga Wai | Freshwater Future Programme for the implementation of the NPSFM (**Oranga Wai programme**) which is described at paragraphs 5.27 to 5.29. The report noted that the work through this programme has lifted the level of engagement between tangata Māori and local government from an informing form of engagement to that of a collaborative decision-making process based on participation and reaching consensus.²⁸
- 5.15 The Annual Report 2023-2024 also records the value that the Council places on relationships and partnerships with tangata whenua.²⁹ This included funding five climate change wānanga across the region to support iwi/Māori climate change mahi.³⁰ The Council intends to continue investing in partnerships to input into a range of activities, including the Oranga Wai programme.³¹
- 5.16 The report also notes that the Council continues to work with iwi and hapū to prioritise their involvement and to support their capacity and capability needs.³²
- 5.17 The report notes that the Council was to continue to advance iwi and hapū relationships through partnership and relationship agreements and by holding at least two hui between tangata whenua and Council's governance and executive levels.³³

The One Plan

- 5.18 The Horizons Regional Council's One Plan (**One Plan**) combines the regional policy statement, regional plan and coastal plan for the region. Plan Change 3 to the One Plan has been operative since 16 May 2025, and helps to ensure planning decisions relating to urban environments take into account Te Tiriti o Waitangi (refer UFD-O4).³⁴
- 5.19 The One Plan includes a chapter on resource management issues of significance to iwi authorities.³⁵ The chapter identifies the resource management issues of significance to iwi and hapū and how those issues are to be addressed. The chapter provides background on the region's iwi and hapū, their involvement in resource management, an understanding of Māori values and resource management issues of concern.
- 5.20 Kahu Environmental has recently undertaken an independent review on the effectiveness of the Te Ao Māori provisions in the One Plan. Their report is still in draft form and includes insights and recommendations that complement this Te Tiriti review. We understand that this report will inform the action plan to be developed by the Council in years 2 and 3 of the LTP.

Future Development Strategy 2024 – Palmerston North

- 5.21 The future development strategy sets out the Council and Palmerston North City Council's long-term vision for the Palmerston North district and how the two councils intend to achieve well

²⁷ Horizons Regional Council, Annual Report 2022-2023 (**Annual Report 2022-2023**), at 45.

²⁸ Annual Report 2022-2023, at 47.

²⁹ Annual Report 2023-2024, at 43.

³⁰ Annual Report 2023-2024, at 44.

³¹ Annual Report 2023-2024, at 46.

³² Annual Report 2023-2024, at 46.

³³ Annual Report 2023-2024, at 59.

³⁴ One Plan, at 2-146.

³⁵ One Plan, at 2-9.

functioning urban environments, sufficient development capacity for the next 30 years and integration of planning decisions under the RMA with other pieces of legislation.³⁶

- 5.22 This strategy sets out tangata whenua aspirations, which include the recognition that Rangitāne o Manawatū are Te Tiriti partners and should develop the rules together with Council.³⁷ The strategy also records that regular hui take place between Council and Rangitāne.³⁸

Significance and Engagement Policy 2023

- 5.23 The Council has adopted a significance and engagement policy in accordance with the requirements of the LGA.³⁹ The policy notes that one of the factors the Council will consider in assessing the significance of matters includes whether the decision is of high interest to Māori.⁴⁰
- 5.24 The policy acknowledges the Council's obligations to engage with Māori and provide opportunities for Māori to contribute to decision-making. In order to uphold this obligation, the policy records that the Council has committed to:⁴¹
- (a) recognise the enduring presence, aspirations, and cultural practices of Māori as kaitiaki in the region;
 - (b) actively consider the recognition and protection of Māori rights and interests within the region and how we contribute to the needs and aspirations of Māori;
 - (c) where a decision relates to land or a body of water, take into account the relationship of Māori, and their culture and traditions with their ancestral land, water, sites, wāhi tapu, valued flora and fauna, and other taonga;
 - (d) recognise the entities and governance frameworks established by Treaty settlement legislation and the intent of that legislation;
 - (e) establish and maintain processes to provide opportunities for Māori to contribute to Council's decision-making processes, including collaborative and partnership approaches where appropriate;
 - (f) support Māori to fully engage with the Council, for example through capability and capacity building; and
 - (g) build ongoing relationships with Māori through a range of approaches that enables early engagement with Māori in the development of appropriate plans and policies and Māori to guide how they want to engage with the Council.

Formal memoranda of partnership and relationship agreements with iwi and hapū

- 5.25 The Council has signed seven memoranda of partnership and relationship agreements with iwi and hapū in its region, and a further three are in development.⁴² It has committed in its LTP to develop further agreements with iwi and hapū groups. The existing agreements include:

³⁶ Palmerston North Future Development Strategy 2024, at 8 (**Future Development Strategy**).

³⁷ Future Development Strategy, at 21.

³⁸ Future Development Strategy, at 20.

³⁹ LGA, section 76AA.

⁴⁰ Significance and Engagement Policy 2023, at 5.

⁴¹ Significance and Engagement Policy 2023, at 6.

⁴² Annual Report 2023-2024, at 46.

- (a) Kawenata / Partnership Agreement with Ngāti Hāua;
- (b) Memorandum of Partnership with Ngāti Kahungunu ki Tāmaki nui-a- Rua;
- (c) Memorandum of Partnership with Te Kāuru Eastern Manawatū River Hapū Collective;
- (d) Memorandum of Partnership with Ngāti Whakatare;
- (e) Memorandum of Partnership with Muaūpoko Tribal Authority;
- (f) Memorandum of Partnership with Tanenuiarangi Manawatu Incorporated and Te Mauri o Rangitaane o Manawatu; and
- (g) Relationship Agreement with Ngāti Rangi Trust.

Specific projects and strategies that provide for Māori participation

5.26 Through the documentation review, we also noted a number of specific Council projects and strategies that have provided for Māori participation. A number of these were referred to in the survey responses and other feedback we received as well. Some of the more significant examples that were referred to are summarised below.

Oranga Wai | Our Freshwater Future programme

- 5.27 Through the Oranga Wai programme, the Council has been working on a plan change to manage the well-being of freshwater in the region. We understand that this programme has involved various rounds of engagement with tangata whenua and other stakeholders.⁴³ However, notification of the plan change has been postponed until late 2026 / early 2027 due to the government changing the notification deadline to better align with new national direction. More recently, the government has also paused the notification of plan changes until 31 December 2025 due to proposed changes to national direction and new legislation.
- 5.28 As noted at paragraph 5.14, the Annual Report 2022-2023 stated that the Oranga Wai programme has changed the nature of engagement between Māori and local government from informing to collaborative decision-making. The Annual Report 2023-2024 also noted that this programme has "*continued in the spirit of partnership*".
- 5.29 This programme was also identified by the Council staff and Councillors we heard from as a positive example of developing relationships with iwi and hapū working together in a partnership.

Arawhata wetland project

- 5.30 The Council has successfully applied for a resource consent to construct Arawhata wetland in Horowhenua. The project aims to create improved habitats for native bird and fish species that will lead to better environmental outcomes through nutrient reduction in the Arawhata Stream and Punahau catchment.⁴⁴ A governance group has been established to oversee this project. This group includes representation from Muaūpoko Tribal Authority and Te Rūnanga o Raukawa.
- 5.31 We received feedback from Council staff that the Arawhata wetland project is a positive example of it partnering, collaborating and engaging with iwi and hapū on key projects.

⁴³ [About | Oranga Wai](#)

⁴⁴ [Arawhata wetland complex to be one of largest in the country - Horizons Regional Council](#)

Te Awahou Foxton Flood Mitigation Project

- 5.32 The Te Awahou Foxton Flood Mitigation Project was established to address persistent flooding issues in Foxton.⁴⁵ The project involves reinforcing the river bank with sheet piling and utilising temporary tractor pumps to provide for the removal of surface water during rain events. A governance group has been established to oversee this project that includes representation from the Council, Horowhenua District Council and local iwi and hapū.
- 5.33 We have received feedback from Council staff that the Foxton Flood Mitigation Project is a positive example of the Council partnering with iwi and hapū.

Tōtara Reserve Management Plan

- 5.34 The Tōtara Reserve Management Plan has been developed to provide for the use, enjoyment, maintenance, protection and appropriate development of the Tōtara Reserve. It is the only regional park in the Manawatū-Wanganui region and includes seven of the region's most rare and endangered ecosystems. The Plan is structured into six management areas, including mātauranga Māori. The Plan seeks to explore the reserve's heritage in partnership with mana whenua and look for opportunities to incorporate traditional knowledge, practices and spiritual connection.
- 5.35 The Plan acknowledges the requirement in section 4 of the Conservation Act 1987 that decision-makers must give effect to the principles of Te Tiriti/the Treaty and sets out the principles that are relevant to Tōtara Reserve to achieve that requirement. The Plan also acknowledges that Rangitāne o Manawatū and Rangitāne Tamaki nui-ā-Rua have interests in Tōtara Reserve and provides some detail of their connection to the land.
- 5.36 The Tōtara Reserve Advisory Group is responsible for guiding and supporting the management of Tōtara Reserve in alignment with the vision and management plan. There are two representatives of Rangitāne o Manawatū and two representatives of Rangitāne Tamaki nui-ā-Rua on the Advisory Group. We received feedback from an elected member that the iwi have been "amazing to work with" and that through this project there has been a shift in incorporating mātauranga Māori.

Manawatū River Leaders Accord

- 5.37 The Manawatū River Leaders Accord is a collaborative partnership between leaders from the iwi, industry, interest groups, local government and other members of the community who are working together to improve the state of the Manawatū River. This project encourages groups to work in partnership, set clear goals and provides accountability around clean-up actions and activities.⁴⁶
- 5.38 We received feedback from an elected member that this project encourages mana whenua to get involved and stay involved in decision-making and provides a positive example of how Council and iwi can work together in partnership.

6. SURVEY RESULTS

- 6.1 The survey was sent out to Council staff and iwi and hapū representatives on 14 April 2025. A high-level summary of the responses we received is provided below.

⁴⁵ [Te Awahou Foxton Flood Mitigation - Horizons Regional Council](#)

⁴⁶ [Details - Horizons Regional Council](#)

Survey responses from iwi and hapū representatives

- 6.2 The survey was sent to 53 iwi and hapū representatives, and we received 9 responses. As noted above, this low level of response means we have not been able to obtain fulsome feedback from iwi and hapū as part of this review process, which is a limitation, and there may be opportunities for further stages of the review to gain a deeper understanding of iwi/hapū views.
- 6.3 Nevertheless, the responses that were received provide some valuable insight into how some iwi and hapū feel about the state of their relationship with the Council.
- 6.4 Of those that responded to the survey, 22.2% stated that they were somewhat satisfied with how the Council manages its overall relationship with them. 44.4% were neither satisfied nor dissatisfied, and 33.3% were either somewhat or very dissatisfied. These results are set out in **Table 1** below.⁴⁷

Table 1: Iwi and hapū satisfaction with how the Council manages its overall relationship with them

	Very satisfied	Somewhat satisfied	Neither satisfied or dissatisfied	Somewhat dissatisfied	Very dissatisfied
How satisfied are you with the way in which the Council manages its overall relationship with your group?	0%	22.2%	44.4%	11.1%	22.2%

- 6.5 Within this overall response, the survey prompted a more fine-grained response to how iwi and hapū may feel about particular aspects of their engagement with Council – see **Table 2** below.

⁴⁷ Please note that the percentages in this report have been rounded to one decimal point, meaning that in some instances the percentages do not add up exactly to 100%.

Table 2: How iwi and hapū feel about aspects of Council engagement

How satisfied are you with the way in which the Council:	Very satisfied	Somewhat satisfied	Neither satisfied or dissatisfied	Somewhat dissatisfied	Very dissatisfied
engages with your group on resource consent applications that it receives?	0%	22.2%	11.1%	44.4%	22.2%
engages with your group on strategic planning?	0%	11.1%	33.3%	11.1%	44.4%
engages with your group on Council projects?	0%	11.1%	11.1%	55.6%	22.2%
engages with your group on other matters?	0%	33.3%	11.1%	11.1%	44.4%

6.6 The survey also asked representatives to provide their feedback on how they would rate the Council's understanding of Māori matters – see **Table 3** below. The results show that there is an opportunity for Council to improve its understanding of relevant matters, which may help to support stronger relationships with iwi and hapū.

Table 3: How iwi and hapū rate the Council's understanding of Māori matters

	Very good	Good	Average	Somewhat unsatisfactory	Entirely unsatisfactory
Te Tiriti o Waitangi/Treaty of Waitangi and its principles	0%	11.1%	66.7%	0%	22.2%
Council's statutory responsibilities with respect to Te Tiriti/the Treaty	0%	22.2%	55.6%	11.1%	11.1%
The iwi and hapū of the region	0%	11.1%	55.6%	22.2%	11.1%
Tikanga Māori	0%	0%	66.7%	22.2%	11.1%
Te reo Māori	0%	0%	55.6%	22.2%	22.2%

- 6.7 The survey also asked representatives which parts of Council the iwi or hapū group had engaged with over the last five years. The responses received indicate that the following Council departments had been engaged with the most (in descending order): Regulatory Team – Consents and Compliance; Iwi and Hapū Relationships; Executive; Customer Services; Strategy and Policy; Freshwater Partnerships; and Environmental Data. The results also showed that there had been some engagement with all of the listed departments.
- 6.8 The survey also posed a number of questions to obtain further information about what may be working well, and what some of the challenges are. This feedback is summarised in sections 7 and 8 below.

Survey responses from Council staff

- 6.9 The survey was sent to 25 Council staff, and we received 16 responses.
- 6.10 These responses provide some valuable insight into how the Council feels about the state of their relationship with iwi and hapū.
- 6.11 Of those that responded to the survey, 56.3% were somewhat satisfied with how the Council manages its overall relationship with iwi and hapū. Further details are provided in **Table 4** below.

Table 4: Council staff satisfaction with how the Council manages its overall relationship with iwi and hapū

Very satisfied	Somewhat satisfied	Neither satisfied or dissatisfied	Somewhat dissatisfied	Very dissatisfied
0%	56.3%	37.5%	6.3%	0%

- 6.12 The survey asked representatives to evaluate the Council's understanding of Te Tiriti and other Māori matters – see **Table 5** below. The results show that the Council considers that there is an average to good level of understanding of Te Tiriti matters, Council's statutory responsibilities with respect to Te Tiriti and knowledge of the iwi and hapū of the region, but there is an opportunity to improve on tikanga Māori and te reo Māori knowledge in particular. Increasing capability across all of these matters will help to support a stronger relationship with iwi and hapū.
- 6.13 We note that a much higher percentage of Council staff indicated satisfaction with relationships with iwi/hapū (56.3%) compared to iwi/hapū (22.2%). However, a significant proportion for both Council staff and iwi/hapū indicated they were neither satisfied nor dissatisfied with the relationship (37.5% and 44.4% respectively).

Table 5: How Council staff rate the Council's understanding of Māori matters

	Very good	Good	Average	Somewhat unsatisfactory	Entirely unsatisfactory
Te Tiriti o Waitangi/Treaty of Waitangi and its principles	0%	18.8%	56.3%	25%	0%
Council's statutory responsibilities with respect to Te Tiriti/the Treaty	0%	25%	43.8%	31.3%	0%
The iwi and hapū of the region	6.3%	25%	31.3%	37.5%	0%
Tikanga Māori	0%	18.8%	37.5%	43.8%	0%
Te reo Māori	0%	6.3%	37.5%	56.3%	0%

6.14 The survey also posed a number of questions to obtain further information about what may be working well, and what some of the challenges are. This feedback is summarised in the following two sections of this report.

7. WHAT IS WORKING WELL?

7.1 This section provides a summary of what we heard in terms of what is working well. This is based on the feedback we received from iwi and hapū representatives, Council staff and elected members.

7.2 As noted above, it is important to be clear that we have not received comprehensive feedback from iwi and hapū and, as a consequence, there is a risk that the summary provided below is not a full or accurate picture of what is working well. A similar disclaimer applies to the following section, which describes some of the challenges.

7.3 Bearing in mind that limitation, this section summarises the feedback we received about what is working well. The particular themes that were reported to us as positives or things working well are as follows:

- (a) The Council has made a number of commitments to strengthen its relationships with iwi and hapū.
- (b) Additional resources have been dedicated to support Council in developing its relationships with Māori.
- (c) There is a growing awareness within Council of the importance and value of engaging well with Māori.
- (d) There are examples of projects that have helped to foster strong relationships.
- (e) There are some good relationships between Council and iwi/hapū.
- (f) There are some formal structures in place that help to support relationships.
- (g) The Iwi and Hapū Relationships team is highly valued.
- (h) The Council is improving its level of cultural competency.

The Council has made a number of commitments to strengthen its relationships with iwi and hapū

7.4 Through the documentation we reviewed and the feedback we received, it is apparent to us that the Council has made a number of commitments to strengthen its relationships with iwi and hapū.

7.5 This includes the LTP, which identifies strengthening partnerships with tangata whenua as one of its four strategic priorities. The first step toward this priority is the commissioning of this independent Te Tiriti review. The implementation of recommendations from this review have been identified as a key focus for years two and three of the current LTP.

7.6 The other specific strategies outlined in the LTP to strengthen partnerships include:

- (a) responding constructively to changing expectations, realising the potential contribution of Māori leadership, and building mana-enhancing relationships;⁴⁸

⁴⁸ LTP, at 7.

- (b) developing meaningful partnerships with tangata whenua, by seeking their participation in planning and decision-making, by supporting capacity and capability building;⁴⁹ and
- (c) enabling tangata whenua involvement in policy development, monitoring and regulatory processes.⁵⁰

7.7 The Council's Annual Plan 2023-2024 also sets out its commitment to building mutually beneficial relationships with iwi and hapū and incorporates specific Māori participation targets, as described in paragraph 5.13 above.

7.8 Some of the survey responses we received from Council staff indicated that they felt this commitment had led to tangible changes and initiatives, such as providing additional resources, implementing cultural competency programmes and approaching engagement with a focus on working together and partnership.

Additional resources dedicated to support Council in developing its relationships with Māori

7.9 We heard of several examples of additional resources that the Council has committed to developing its relationships with Māori. The specific examples reported to us include:

- (a) carrying out this Te Tiriti review process and a commitment to implement recommendations in years two and three of the LTP;
- (b) creating additional resource in the Iwi and Hapū Relationships team;
- (c) developing and implementing a cultural competency programme for Council staff and elected members;
- (d) developing the Ngā Pae taonga app to educate Council staff about Māori culture; and
- (e) investing in formal relationship agreements and documents with iwi and hapū.

7.10 We were told that these initiatives have contributed to the Council building stronger relationships and developing its cultural competency.

7.11 It is important to note, however, that we were also told by several iwi and hapū representatives that resourcing remains a significant challenge for iwi and hapū. We address this further in the following section 9 of this report.

There is a growing awareness within Council of the importance and value of engaging well with Māori

7.12 The feedback we received demonstrates that there is a growing awareness by Council's elected members, and Council staff of the importance and value of engaging well with Māori. This awareness is supported by some positive examples of engagement that have led to positive outcomes and supported the relationship between Council and iwi/hapū (we comment on this further below).

7.13 There is an awareness, at least in some parts of Council, that for effective engagement, Council staff need to be culturally aware and competent, and need to engage early, proactively and in an open and transparent manner.

⁴⁹ LTP, at 12 and 146.

⁵⁰ LTP, at 156-157.

- 7.14 Some Council staff observed that the Council's approach to engagement is improving and there is greater consistency than in previous years (although, as we comment on further in section 9 below, it appears more can be done to ensure a consistent and appropriate approach across all of Council).
- 7.15 It was also noted that Council leadership is becoming more aware of the benefits of engaging and working in partnership with iwi and hapū.

There are examples of projects that have helped to foster strong relationships

- 7.16 As identified earlier in the report, several Council projects and initiatives have been developed to provide for Māori participation. We heard that these have been helpful in fostering relationships between the Council and iwi/hapū and have demonstrated the value of Council working collaboratively with iwi and hapū.
- 7.17 Feedback was received from survey participants on the following projects and initiatives in particular:
- (a) **Oranga Wai programme:** The Oranga Wai programme for implementing the NPSFM was noted in the Council's Annual Plan 2022-2023 as having lifted the level of engagement between tangata Māori and local government from an informing form of engagement to that of a collaborative decision-making process based on participation and reaching consensus.⁵¹ This was supported by feedback from a Council staff member who commented that:

"The Oranga Wai work programme to implement the NPSFM has been a catalyst for building relationships with iwi and hapu and there has been a strong sense of partnership throughout this programme. Levels of trust are building with some iwi which enables better sharing of information. There seems to be a desire from some iwi to work with Council to help navigate the governments resource management reform."

- (b) **Climate Action Joint Committee:** The Climate Action Joint Committee, established by the Council in 2020, was designed to provide a coordinated local government response to climate change issues across the region. It includes equal representation from council members and representatives appointed by iwi leaders,⁵² ensuring that tangata whenua have substantial input into the strategies developed to address climate change.

The Joint Climate Action Plan, adopted by the joint committee in 2023, draws on both te ao Māori and Western world views to create a unified approach towards climate change. The plan sets out recommended actions for councils and communities to respond to climate change and its related risks.

We received feedback that this committee had been positive and had helped to develop stronger relationships.

- (c) **Arawhata wetland and Foxton flood mitigation projects:** As described earlier in the report, the Arawhata wetland and Foxton flood mitigation projects are examples of partnership projects that have involved active participation from iwi/hapū throughout each of the project stages and at a governance level. An elected member recorded that where

⁵¹ Annual Report 2022-2023, at 54.

⁵² LTP, at 21.

partnership projects are in place, there is good engagement and collaboration and a genuine sense of working in partnership.

- (d) **'On the ground' activities with iwi and hapū:** Council staff recognised that working 'on the ground' with iwi and hapū across various activities, like monitoring Lake Horowhenua, has been beneficial and helped to develop relationships at an operational level. However, it was also acknowledged that there is room for improvement and there are some inconsistencies in terms of how Council engages at an operational level.

7.18 However, despite the positive feedback outlined above regarding these projects, we also note that 22.2% of the survey responses from iwi/hapū representatives recorded that they were very dissatisfied with Council engagement on projects and 55.6% were somewhat dissatisfied. This indicates that engagement across projects is not always considered to be consistent or positive. A common theme from iwi and hapū representatives was that there was inconsistency in the Council's approach, described by one representative as "*hit and miss*". We comment on this further in the following section 9 of this report.

There are some good relationships within Council

- 7.19 As noted above, survey feedback from iwi and hapū representatives shows mixed levels of satisfaction among iwi and hapū regarding their relationships with the Council, and higher levels of satisfaction among Council staff than among iwi/hapū. This may show that there is a disjunct between how Council perceives its relationships and what iwi/hapū experience. Further feedback would be required to confirm this (including further feedback from more iwi and hapū, and more Council staff).
- 7.20 However, bearing that initial observation in mind, we did receive feedback from both Council staff, elected members and iwi/hapū representatives that there are some strong and positive relationships between Council and iwi/hapū.
- 7.21 Some staff told us that particular Council projects had helped improve relationships, as well as formal structures and processes such as relationship agreements and/or regional hui.
- 7.22 We were also told that Council leadership recognises the importance of strong relationships and that this is being fostered at a leadership level.

There are some formal structures in place that help to support relationships

- 7.23 We heard that there are some formal structures in place that help to support the relationships between Council and iwi/hapū:
 - (a) **Formal relationship agreements and memoranda of partnership:** Various memoranda of partnership and relationship agreements between iwi and hapū and the Council date back to 2007. We heard that recent efforts have been made to ensure these documents deliver tangible outcomes. For example, we were told that some of these agreements now include appendices with action lists, clear expectations and budgets, which helps to ensure actions are followed up on and resourced appropriately. We also heard that the Council plans to enter into additional memoranda and relationship agreements with iwi and hapū throughout the region.

- (b) **Impact of governance-level iwi representation:** We received feedback from both Council staff, elected members and iwi/hapū representatives about the benefits of governance-level iwi representation on groups such as through the Māori constituencies and the joint committee. Iwi representation was recorded as having been constructive and collaborative and a valuable way to get tangata whenua voices recorded. One Council staff member stated that *"greater Māori representation at a governance level has seen an improved understanding of te ao Māori and tikanga, which have given this deeper meaning than before"*.
- (c) **Regular meetings and operational-level engagement:** Iwi and hapū commented that where regular bi-monthly meetings had been set up by iwi with Council staff at an operational level, this had helped to strengthen relationships, to ensure regular communication and to enable joint problem-solving.
- (d) **Regional hui:** Some staff told us that the regional hui with iwi and hapū had helped to forge stronger relationships.

7.24 We also heard about some challenges in this area, including:

- (a) **Lack of understanding of relationship documents:** Some Council staff acknowledged in their responses that some of the relationship documents are not well known or understood throughout all areas of Council.
- (b) **Implementation of relationship agreements in daily operations:** Existing relationship agreements were identified as being good in principle but their application in Council's daily business and operations can be inconsistent. This inconsistency often stems from a lack of understanding at various levels within the Council. As one Council staff member noted, *"This means that the majority of the organisation goes in blind into places when we don't know about such agreements or even worse agreements that have commitments but we aren't aware we have made a commitment to something"*.

7.25 In summary, the Council has established multiple structures and agreements intended to support strong relationships with iwi and hapū. However, for these efforts to be genuinely effective, there is a need for comprehensive education and awareness among Council staff regarding these frameworks and their implications.

The Iwi and Hapū Relationships team is highly valued

- 7.26 The Iwi and Hapū Relationships team has been established at the Council, tasked with supporting post-settlement co-governance structures and building relationships with Māori to enable meaningful engagement and partnership in policy development.⁵³
- 7.27 Feedback from Council staff and elected members was overwhelmingly positive and highlighted the value of the Iwi and Hapū Relationships team. The team is recognised for providing dedicated support that enhances the Council's capacity to engage effectively with iwi and hapū on various projects and processes. One representative reported that iwi and hapū have *"begun lowering their barriers and are becoming more open to engaging..."*

⁵³ LTP, at 140.

- 7.28 In recognition of the value of this team, the Council has committed to expanding the team by establishing an additional policy and relationship advisor in the second year of the LTP. This additional resourcing is intended to further increase the team's capacity to support and strengthen iwi and hapū relationships.
- 7.29 While Council feedback highlighted the benefits of the Iwi and Hapū Relationships team, iwi and hapū feedback was mixed. One representative recorded that their meetings with the Iwi and Hapū Relationships team had been "*proactively supportive*" and another recorded that they appreciated their support. However, others felt that the team's functions have been symbolic rather than substantive, and that they "*need to be more active in the RMA space particularly where developments are impacting our wāhi tapu, our awa and surrounding sites*".

The Council is improving its level of cultural competency

- 7.30 Finally, we received feedback that the Council has been improving the overall cultural competency of the organisation. By cultural competency, we mean a range of knowledge and understanding that helps Council to engage appropriately and respectfully with iwi and hapū, including an understanding of:
- (a) tikanga and te reo;
 - (b) Te Tiriti o Waitangi and its principles;
 - (c) the tribal landscape of the region, including iwi, hapū, whānau, marae, Māori land-owning entities and post-settlement governance entities, and the complex relationships between these; and
 - (d) relevant Treaty settlements.
- 7.31 Council staff recorded a notable uptake in cultural competency training for elected members and staff, which was reported as having positively impacted the Council's ability to engage with iwi and hapū.
- 7.32 We were also told that Council staff are increasingly aware of the different iwi and hapū interests in the region and this is helping to support better quality engagement.
- 7.33 We also received feedback that Council is aware of the need for further investment in this training. One staff member commented that "*further investment in targeted, practical, and regionally grounded learning experiences is needed to lift overall competency and meet the organisation's long-term strategic and cultural obligations*".
- 7.34 Council staff acknowledged in their responses that their ability to work effectively with iwi and hapū can sometimes stumble due to a lack of knowledge, confidence, or capacity. Council staff expressed in their responses the need to "*keep the pressure on*" in terms of staff continuing to develop their cultural competency.
- 7.35 We were also told that there are varied levels of cultural competency among staff: Feedback from iwi and hapū representatives in particular emphasised that there can be a wide variation in the level of cultural competence and understanding among Council staff. One representative summarised the position as follows:

"The ones who engage with a lot have a better understanding than those who don't engage with us. Some are also more committed to the journey than others. Staff who have been there for many years get it whilst newer staff are can often be very new to the concepts. Obviously key staff are fluent in the reo whilst others are not."

- 7.36 A particular matter that was raised with us was Council's understanding of relevant Treaty settlements and legal obligations. As described earlier in the report, specific Treaty settlements relevant to the region, such as the Te Awa Tupua Act and Ngāti Rangi Claims Settlement Act 2019, have established bespoke legal entities and structures which create specific obligations for the Council. These settlements and their mechanisms are critical and need to be thoroughly understood by all levels of the Council to ensure the settlements are being upheld.

8. WHAT ARE THE CHALLENGES AND OPPORTUNITIES FOR IMPROVEMENT?

- 8.1 This section provides a summary of some of the challenges we heard about and some of the opportunities for improvement. Again, this is based on the totality of feedback we received from iwi and hapū representatives, Council staff and elected members.

- 8.2 As noted above, it is important to be clear that we have not received comprehensive feedback from iwi and hapū and as a consequence, there is a risk that the summary provided below is not a full or accurate picture of the challenges that may be being experienced and relatedly, the opportunities for improvement.

- 8.3 However, bearing that limitation in mind, the particular themes that were reported to us as challenges or areas for improvement include the following:

- (a) There is a lack of consistency in the Council's approach to engagement.
- (b) There is an opportunity to further strengthen and formalise relationships with iwi and hapū.
- (c) The Council is working within a complex iwi/hapū environment.
- (d) There is an opportunity for the Council to continually improve its cultural competence.
- (e) The Council is working within a changing legislative environment.
- (f) Resourcing remains a challenge.
- (g) Environmental concerns can undermine the relationship.

There is a lack of consistency in the Council's approach to engagement

- 8.4 We heard that there can be a lack of consistency in how the Council approaches engagement with iwi and hapū. In particular, the following themes emerged in the feedback that we received:

- (a) **Different approaches across different teams:** As the Council is made up of a number of different teams, Council staff members noted that there can be inconsistent communication and relationship management across those teams. In addition to this, there is limited visibility and understanding of iwi and hapū priorities in some departments. Not all iwi and hapū regularly hear from the Council, including PSGE leads. One Council staff member considered that there is a need for deeper, more proactive partnerships, as opposed to reactive consultation. While some iwi and hapū have strong relationships with specific teams, others were under engaged with, or unclear about pathways into Council processes.

- (b) **Transactional approach:** Both Council and iwi and hapū survey participants expressed their concern that the relationships with iwi and hapū can feel too transactional. One iwi/hapū representative raised a concern that the Council's commitment to iwi and hapū and Te Tiriti is tokenistic and does not demonstrate a feeling of genuine obligation to their Tiriti partner.
- (c) **Lack of time and space to develop and maintain relationships:** Council staff members felt that it can be difficult to reach all iwi and hapū groups and to meet regularly to the frequency required to develop and maintain a strong relationship.
- (d) **Relationships not being nurtured at the right levels:** One iwi/hapū representative stated that there was a lack of direct engagement at the right levels from the Council, and iwi and hapū were not involved in big decisions.
- (e) **Lack of awareness of memoranda of partnership and relationship agreements:** Council staff members noted an opportunity for more communication with staff when formal mechanisms are adopted with iwi and hapū, and that there was not enough awareness of these documents.

There is an opportunity to further strengthen and formalise relationships with iwi and hapū

- 8.5 As noted earlier, Council has finalised seven memoranda of agreement and relationship agreements in recent years. However, there is scope to build on this work by developing agreements with more iwi and hapū and reviewing those already in place to ensure their effectiveness. It is also important that where formal documents exist, these are well known and understood throughout the Council.
- 8.6 Some of the specific feedback we received about the type of relationship that Council and iwi/hapū are aiming for and the kinds of structures that may assist include:
- (a) Some Council staff commented that there was an opportunity for the Council to move beyond a consultation approach to working in partnership.
 - (b) Some iwi/hapū representatives noted that their preference was to have an overarching strategic partnership with the Council that would enable the parties to better understand each other, and to work together towards shared objectives.
 - (c) To ensure there is direct engagement with iwi and hapū at the right levels, one iwi/hapū representative suggested engagement protocols and agreements could assist.
 - (d) There was a suggestion to create a central portal for contact details for iwi and hapū, as well as for memoranda of understanding and relationship agreements to ensure that these are well understood within Council.
 - (e) There was also a suggestion for an ongoing monitoring framework for how Council is engaging with iwi and hapū.
 - (f) We also received feedback that there was a need for the Council to have clearer arrangements and agreements with iwi and hapū about how their mātauranga and culturally sensitive information is to be protected if shared with Council.
 - (g) Finally, both Council and iwi and hapū recognised that building a strong relationship takes time, however, there can be changes to personnel within Council that can undermine

progress made in the relationship. With this in mind, putting in place strong systems that can endure through personnel changes and provide a strong foundation for the future are important.

- 8.7 Without a formalised approach, items appear to be falling through the cracks. One iwi / hapū representative expressed concern that they had never seen a resource consent at their table. Another commented that *"I hardly ever hear from Horizons"*.

The Council is working within a complex iwi/hapū environment

- 8.8 There are multiple different iwi and hapū groups within the Horizons region. From the iwi and hapū perspective, there are also multiple councils for them to work with, which increases the resourcing burden on them (this is addressed further below).
- 8.9 We heard that, in some instances, the Council struggles knowing who to engage with, given the many different groups and entities that may have interests in a matter. One iwi/hapū representative was concerned that the Council engages with different groups at the exclusion of their group. Another noted that there was a feeling that the Council played groups off against each other. In addition, there can be tensions between different iwi and hapū which sometimes play out in relation to Council projects or initiatives. This can be challenging for Council staff to manage, particularly without appropriate information and cultural competency.
- 8.10 Council and iwi and hapū representatives offered the following suggestions to address this challenge:
- (a) **Lead relationship managers:** A Council staff member considered that promoting and identifying lead relationship managers from the Council for each iwi group would be helpful. The suggestion was that these relationship managers could support staff so that relationships could be built at all levels of Council where needed, and so that the Council can get a better understanding of the group's concerns and aspirations.
 - (b) **Regular hui-a-iwi:** Another Council staff member suggested that more regular regional hui-a-iwi could provide a useful way for Council to engage with iwi about council activities and provide opportunities for iwi to get involved where they wish to. An iwi representative expressed a slightly differing view that the Council should not continuously ask iwi and hapū to come together, but instead encourage the iwi and hapū with mana whenua in that region to invite the other iwi and hapū groups, and the Council supports the iwi and hapū to do the hosting.
 - (c) **Engagement regardless of whether an iwi or hapū is settled or not:** One iwi/hapū representative provided feedback that they want to be assured that all iwi and hapū are being engaged with when issues arise in their respective areas, regardless of whether they are settled or not.

There is an opportunity for the Council to continually improve its cultural competence

- 8.11 In the preceding section, we summarised feedback about improvements in the cultural competency of Council.
- 8.12 Alongside this feedback, Council staff expressed a strong desire to continue to improve their competency and confidence in te reo and tikanga, Te Tiriti and understanding of the iwi and hapū of

- the region and relevant Treaty settlements. Having regular training programmes in place, and induction programmes when staff first join a team were identified as being important. There was also feedback that increasing Council staff's capability in engagement would assist with reducing work burden on the Iwi and Hapū Relationships team and ensure that iwi and hapū relationships are front of mind for all staff, so that iwi and hapū can be more collaboratively included in work streams. Centralising and updating the training resources and ensuring that staff know where to go to get training was also reported as important.
- 8.13 There was also feedback from iwi and hapū representatives that there are varying levels of cultural competency within Council.
- 8.14 The following feedback was provided as to what could be improved:
- (a) **Reframing of views and mindset:** One Council staff member stated that their views can be set in their cultural landscape – predominantly western – and so exploring and understanding Māori values can be difficult and requires comprehensive training.
 - (b) **Everyday tikanga training required:** Council staff members commented in their responses that there is more of a gap in understanding around everyday tikanga practices, rather than in formal protocols (like pōwhiri). Small group sizes for these training sessions would ensure that there is consistent understanding across all staff.
 - (c) **Consideration of recruitment:** One iwi/hapū representative commented that another way of improving the Council's cultural competency is to ensure that it takes these skills into account in recruitment decisions.

The Council is working within a changing legislative environment

- 8.15 Central government has consistently focused on resource management and local government reform for the last five years, and the multitude of changes impacts Council's work with its Treaty partners.
- 8.16 It was reported to us that the changing legislative environment can result in the following issues:
- (a) **Frustration with delays or changes of direction:** We received feedback that Council processes move slowly due to the need to involve the community through consultation and submissions, particularly for resource management changes. This can be frustrating for iwi and hapū, and this is then compounded by changes introduced by central government, which can lead to further delays in implementation or a change in direction.
 - (b) **Lost in translation:** We heard that changing legislative requirements can be complex and difficult to understand. It can be challenging to explain these changes and misunderstandings can occur.
 - (c) **Undermining of the relationship:** We also heard feedback that these changes can be undermining of the relationship in other ways, for example, one iwi/hapū representative expressed concern that there had been a lack of leadership from Council in engaging with iwi about changing legislative requirements and what these would mean for them.

Resourcing remains a challenge

- 8.17 Council staff recognised in their responses that there are significant demands on iwi and hapū from Council, and resourcing constraints. In addition, there are multiple competing demands for iwi and hapū from different government agencies and councils.
- 8.18 Iwi and hapū representatives also made similar comments and noted that sometimes there is not sufficient resourcing in place for iwi and hapū to complete the work that Council expects them to do. Some noted that there are times when iwi are overwhelmed by the demands that the Council put on them to provide feedback on policies, sometimes with short timeframes.

Environmental concerns can undermine the relationship

- 8.19 A final theme, particularly in the responses from iwi and hapū, was that where there are environmental concerns, this can undermine the relationship. There was a particular focus on environmental issues such as water quality, protection of wetlands and dunes and biodiversity.
- 8.20 Some iwi and hapū also expressed a concern about resource management monitoring and compliance, and a belief that this is not as strong as it should be.
- 8.21 It appears to us that where there are environmental concerns and there are not clear systems in place for Council to work alongside iwi and hapū to address these concerns, this is undermining of the relationship. On the other hand, where processes or projects are put in place to address these concerns, this can be significantly enhancing of the relationship (for example, some of the projects noted in the preceding section).

9. CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

- 9.1 In conclusion, our impression is that the Council is genuinely committed to working towards a Tiriti based partnership with the iwi and hapū of the region. This commitment is demonstrated at senior levels of the organisation and in key documents, such as the LTP. Positive steps taken by the Council to build and maintain relationships with iwi and hapū include entering into partnership and relationship agreements with iwi and hapū, appointing policy and relationship advisors (the Iwi and Hapū Relationships team), implementing staff cultural competency programmes, developing tools like the Ngā Pae taonga app, and investing in partnership projects such as the Oranga Wai programme and Foxton Flood Mitigation Project.
- 9.2 However, it is also clear that much more can be done to ensure the Council is consistent and proactive in its partnership with iwi and hapū.
- 9.3 Our conclusions are limited to an extent by the low levels of iwi and hapū participation in this review and there may be an opportunity to seek more comprehensive views through future review processes. If the Council carries out further Te Tiriti reviews in future years, we recommend that the methodology includes a series of meetings with iwi and hapū to gather their feedback. Additionally, if iwi and hapū request, a Council staff member could be present at these meetings. We consider this would be a more effective methodology for gaining feedback and, importantly, we have heard clear feedback from iwi and hapū that this approach would be considered more respectful and enhancing of the relationships between Council and iwi/hapū.

- 9.4 Bearing in mind that limitation, we set out below our recommendations about how we consider that the Council could work towards further developing its relationships with iwi and hapū in the region:
- (a) Develop the Council's guidelines for engagement with iwi and hapū to ensure consistency across Council. This could include case studies or examples of successful previous projects, such as those referred to in this report.
 - (b) Develop formal relationship arrangements with relevant iwi and hapū and review existing agreements to ensure their effectiveness, including consideration of the following matters:
 - (i) regular meetings;
 - (ii) moving from a transactional relationship to more of a strategic partnership;
 - (iii) iwi/hapū preferences for receiving and commenting on resource consent applications and other matters;
 - (iv) processes for recording actions and accountabilities; and
 - (v) resourcing.
 - (c) Together with iwi and hapū, review options for iwi and hapū to provide more direct input into Council decision-making. This could include more regular regional hui-ā-iwi, or consideration of a working party or similar to bring together iwi and hapū representatives and Council to discuss Council projects and initiatives and opportunities for Council and iwi/hapū to develop a stronger and more strategic relationship.
 - (d) Continue investment in staff cultural competency training programmes, including in tikanga, te reo Māori, Te Tiriti and its principles, the tribal landscape and relevant Treaty settlements.
 - (e) Review Council's recruitment policies to ensure that cultural competency is appropriately prioritised and valued in recruitment and performance management.
 - (f) Centralise existing memoranda of partnership and relationship agreements, and iwi and hapū contact details so that staff can easily access these.
 - (g) Review the demands on the Iwi and Hapū Relationships team to ensure it is resourced adequately.
 - (h) Develop guidelines for the reimbursement of iwi and hapū for their work on Council initiatives and projects, to ensure consistency across Council and that the appropriate resourcing can be easily accessed by iwi and hapū where needed.
 - (i) Consider what other resourcing Council may be able to provide to support iwi/hapū. For example, we are aware of some councils that provide technical support (either through dedicated Council staff or external consultants) to help build iwi/hapū understanding and capability in areas such as resource management. This can lead to meaningful improvements, particularly when linked to specific processes, such as a review of a resource management planning document or the review of resource consent applications.
- 9.5 With all of the above recommendations, we also recommend that Council discuss these directly with iwi and hapū to ensure they align with their aspirations and priorities. This is particularly important given that we have not had fulsome iwi and hapū feedback as part of this review.

APPENDIX 1 – IWI AND HAPŪ REPRESENTATIVES INVITED TO COMPLETE THE SURVEY

Iwi/Hapū Name	Organisation
Ngāti Tūwharetoa	Te Kotahitanga o Ngāti Tūwharetoa
Ngāti Tūwharetoa	Ngāti Manunui/Hinemihi
Ngāti Hāua	Ngāti Hāua Iwi Trust
Ngāti Maniapoto	Te Nehenehenui
Ngāti Maru	Ngāti Maru
Ngāti Uenuku	Uenuku Charitable Trust
Ngā Wairiki Ngāti Apa	Te Rūnanga O Ngā Wairiki-Ngāti Apa
Ngāti Whitikaupeka	Ngāti Whitikaupeka
Ngāti Whitikaupeka	Nga Puna Rau o Rangitikei governance & Taihape Environmental working party (EWP)
Ngāti Hauiti	Ngāti Hauiti
Ngāti Hinemanu me Ngāti Paki	Ngāti Hinemanu me Ngāti Paki Heritage Trust
Ngaa Rauru Kīitahi	Te Kaahui o Rauru
Ngāti Tūpoho	Whanganui Lands Settlement Trust
Whanganui Iwi (Te Awa Tupua)	Ngā Tāngata Tiaki o Whanganui
Ngāti Tamaūpoko	Tamaūpoko
Ngāti Raukawa	Te Rūnanga O Raukawa
Ngāti Raukawa ki te Tonga	Raukawa ki te Tonga Trust
Ngāti Maniapoto MMTB	Rangatahi/ MMTB Tuhua Hikurangi RMC
Ngāti Huia	Ngāti Huia
Ngāti Rangi	Ngāti Rangi
Ngāti Tamakopiri	Tamakopiri
Ngāti Tamakopiri	Nga Puna Rau o Rangitikei governance & Taihape Environmental working party (EWP)
Muaūpoko	Muaūpoko Tribal Authority
Rangitāne o Manawatū	Rangitane o Manawatu Settlement Trust
Rangitāne o Manawatū	Tānenuiarangi Manawatū Inc
Ngāti Kauwhata	Ngā Kaitiaki o Ngāti Kauwhata
Ngāti Kahungunu	Ngāti Kahungunu ki Tāmaki-Nui-ā-Rua
Rangitāne o Tamaki nui-ā-Rua	Rangitāne Tū Mai Rā Trust
Ngāti Tūpoho	Te Rūnanga o Tūpoho
Ngāti Whakatere	Ngāti Whakatere
Rangitāne o Tamaki nui-ā-Rua	Rangitane o Tamaki nui a Rua Incorporated
Ngāti Uenuku	Raetihi Marae (RDC Māori Council)
Ngai Te Ohuake	Ngai Te Ohuake

APPENDIX 2 – SURVEY FORM FOR IWI AND HAPŪ REPRESENTATIVES

Question 1: Could you please provide your name and the name of the iwi or hapū group that you represent?

Question 2: Which departments of Council have engaged with you or your group over the last five years? Please select all departments that are relevant.

- Executive Team
- Iwi and Hapū Relationships
- Strategy and Policy
- Science
- Regulatory Team – Consents and Compliance
- Freshwater Partnerships
- Biodiversity/Biosecurity Partnerships
- Land Partnerships
- River Management
- Emergency Management
- Environmental Data
- Customer Services

Question 3: How would you rate current Council staff's understanding of:

	Very good	Good	Average	Somewhat unsatisfactory	Entirely unsatisfactory
Te Tiriti o Waitangi/Treaty of Waitangi and its principles					
Council's statutory responsibilities with respect to Te Tiriti/the Treaty					
The iwi and hapū of the region					

Tikanga Māori					
Te reo Māori					

Question 4: Please explain your ratings for question 3.

Question 5: Overall, how satisfied are you with the way in which Horizons Regional Council:

	Very satisfied	Somewhat satisfied	Neither satisfied nor dissatisfied	Somewhat dissatisfied	Very dissatisfied
Manages its overall relationship with your group?					
Engages with your group on resource consent applications that it receives?					
Engages with your group on strategic planning?					
Engages with your group on Council projects?					
Engages with your group on other matters?					

Question 6: Please explain your ratings for question 5.

Question 7: What are three things that are going well in terms of Council's relationship with your group?

Question 8: What are three things that are not working well or which could be improved?

Question 9: If your group has a formal relationship arrangement with the Council (eg MOU, relationship agreement or other), how effective is that arrangement in strengthening the relationship between your group and Council?

Question 10: In your view, what are the three most important measures that Council could implement to improve its relationship with your group?

Question 11: Is there anything else you would like to tell us about the way in which the Council works with Māori and/or incorporates Te Tiriti o Waitangi in its practices that is not covered by the questions above?

APPENDIX 3 – COUNCIL STAFF INVITED TO COMPLETE THE SURVEY

Title	Team
Chief Executive	Executive
Group Manager Strategy, Regulation & Science	Executive
Group Manager Corporate & Governance	Executive
Group Manager Regional Service & Information	Executive
Group Manager Catchment Operations	Executive
Manager Media and Communications	Media and Communications
Senior Communications Advisor	Media and Communications
Regulatory Manager	Regulatory
Team Leader Consents	Regulatory
Team Leader Consents Monitoring - Rural	Regulatory
Team Leader Consents Monitoring – Infrastructure	Regulatory
Team Leader Investigations and Incidents	Regulatory
Manager Transport Services	Transport
Manager Emergency Management	Emergency Management
Manager Environmental Data	Environmental Data
Biodiversity, Biosecurity and Partnerships Manager	Biodiversity and Biosecurity
Land and Partnerships Manager	Land Management
Operations Manager	River Management
Manager Projects	River Management
Freshwater and Project Manager	Freshwater
Science Manager	Science
Policy and Strategy Manager	Strategy and Policy
Senior Iwi and Hapu Relationships Advisor	Strategy and Policy
Policy Advisor - Iwi and Hapu Relationships	Strategy and Policy
Cultural Development Advisor	Strategy and Policy
Team Leader Customer Services	Business Services

APPENDIX 4 – SURVEY FORM FOR COUNCIL STAFF

Question 1: Could you please provide your name, and your position for the Council?

Question 2: How would you rate current Council staff's understanding of:

	Very good	Good	Average	Somewhat unsatisfactory	Entirely unsatisfactory
Te Tiriti o Waitangi/Treaty of Waitangi and its principles					
Council's statutory responsibilities with respect to Te Tiriti/the Treaty					
The iwi and hapū of the region					
Tikanga Māori					
Te reo Māori					

Question 3: Please explain your ratings for question 2.

Question 4: Overall, how satisfied are you with the way in which Horizons Regional Council manages its relationships with iwi and hapū groups?

Very satisfied	Somewhat satisfied	Neither satisfied or dissatisfied	Somewhat dissatisfied	Very dissatisfied

Question 5: Please explain your rating for question 4.

Question 6: What are three things that are going well in terms of Council's relationship with iwi and hapū?

Question 7: What are three things that are not working well or which could be improved?

Question 8: Do you have any comments on any existing formal mechanisms that provide for the relationship between iwi/hapū and the Council and/or their participation in Council processes (eg MOUs, relationship agreements or similar?)

Question 9: In your view, what are the three most important measures that Council could implement to improve its relationships with tangata whenua?

Question 10: Is there anything else you would like to tell us about how Council works with Māori and/or how Council incorporates Te Tiriti o Waitangi and its principles in its practices that is not covered by the questions above?

APPENDIX 5 – POWERPOINT PRESENTATION FOR ONLINE COUNCILLOR WORKSHOP ON 13
MAY 2025



BUDDLE FINDLAY

Purpose

- The purpose of the Te Tiriti o Waitangi / Treaty of Waitangi health check is to understand the state of existing relationships with tangata whenua partners in the Horizons region and identify opportunities to improve relationships to ensure they are respectful and mana-enhancing.



BUDDLE FINDLAY

Context for the review

- Statutory context
 - Many different statutory obligations
 - Some strong directions (eg LGA, RMA)
 - Not always clear
- The Horizons' context
 - Many different iwi and hapū
 - Some have negotiated Treaty settlements with the Crown but many do not yet
 - Large region – many different issues

BUDDLE FINDLAY

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Process for the review

- Online survey with iwi and hapū groups; and key Council staff (**9 May**).
- Workshop with Councillors (**13 May**).
- Draft report by **30 May**.
- Opportunity for Council staff to provide any comments/clarification.
- Report finalised and provided to Council and iwi/hapū groups by **13 June**.
- Present the report to Councillors on **24 June**.
- Council will then decide next steps.

BUDDLEFINDLAY

Survey responses

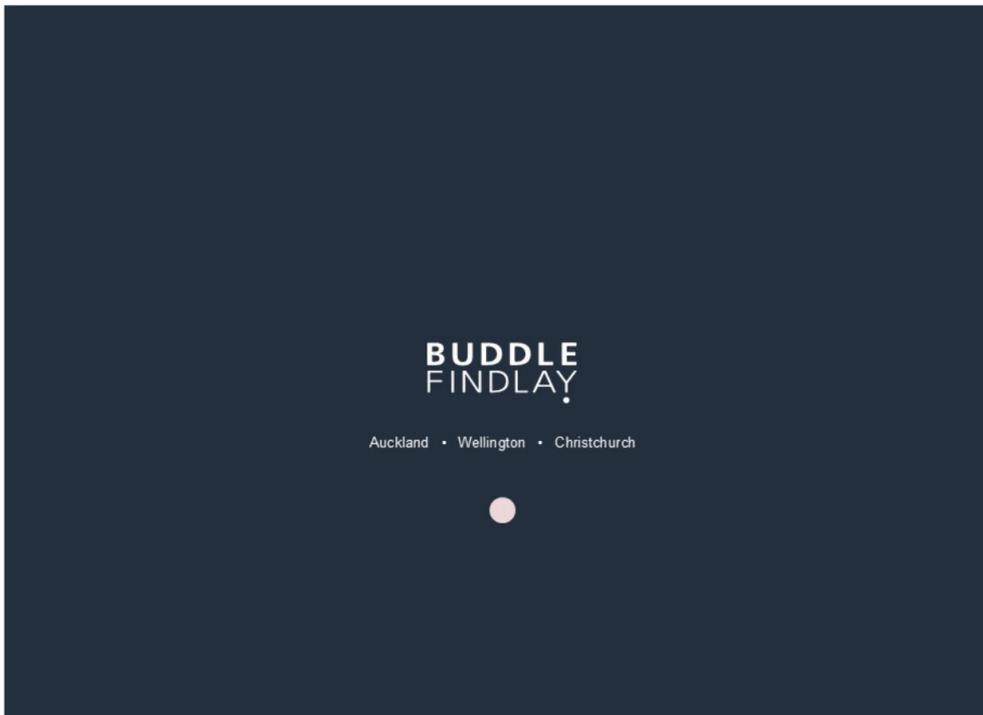
- Overview of responses so far.

BUDDLEFINDLAY

Questions to consider

- What is working well?
- What are Horizons' strengths in working with Māori?
- What structures are working well?
- What are the challenges and opportunities/areas for improvement?
- What can be improved?
- How can those improvements be successfully implemented (ie next steps)?

BUDDLE FINDLAY



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Report No.	25-87
Decision Required	

ADOPTION OF THE 2025-26 ANNUAL PLAN

1. PURPOSE

- 1.1. This report outlines the procedures for the approval and adoption of the 2025-26 Annual Plan.

2. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

- 2.1. The annual plan process commenced in August 2024, with a number of workshops held for Council.
- 2.2. The 2025-26 Annual Plan, if adopted, will see a total rate increase across the region of 8.8% for the 2025-26 year (the 2024-34 Long-term Plan Year 2 proposed 12.0%).

3. RECOMMENDATION

It is recommended that Council:

- a. receives the information contained in Report No. 25-87;
- b. adopts the 2025-26 Annual Plan, subject to any feedback received;
- c. requests the Chief Executive to prepare the final 2025-26 Annual Plan for publication, including minor proofing changes.

4. FINANCIAL IMPACT

- 4.1. The financial impact of adopting this plan is significant as it determines the operational and capital expenditure for the 2025-26 year and how these are funded from rates, activity revenues and loans.
- 4.2. The 2025-26 Annual Plan budgets a total rate increase of 8.8% when compared to the rates set in the 2024-25 financial year. The proposed rate increase will not be uniform across all ratepayers, particularly in Palmerston North that have had a revaluation completed this year.

5. COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

- 5.1. Council consulted with the community regarding the proposed 2025-26 Annual Plan, at that point reflecting a total rate increase of 11.3%. The consultation period was from 31 March to 1 May 2025, with public hearings held in Whanganui on 20 May and Palmerston North on 22 May 2025.
- 5.2. A 2024-34 Long-term Plan amendment was also consulted on at the same time, regarding the future of the shareholding held in CentrePort Ltd.

6. BACKGROUND

- 6.1. The Annual Plan has been in development over the past eleven months. The focus was on following through with the commitments made in Year 2 of the 2024-34 Long-term Plan

(LTP) and identifying changing priorities as a result of rising costs. Officers also reviewed the capital program that was set out in the LTP and reset this in conjunction with updated work plans that have been approved with Central Government agencies. Councillors worked through a programme of workshops which have reviewed various aspects of the Plan with a view to keeping the rates increases to a minimum.

- 6.2. Council considered all the feedback received on the LTP amendment and draft 2025-26 Annual Plan. As a result of submissions, Council revised some aspects of the Annual Plan through decisions made at deliberations at Council's Strategy and Policy meeting on 10 June 2025.
- 6.3. In relation to the LTP amendment consultation issue (Question Two): CentrePort, Option 1: *If those investigations come back showing a sale would produce favourable outcomes for ratepayers, sell the CentrePort shareholding and invest the proceeds into a managed fund.* This resolution was lost at the Strategy and Policy deliberations meeting on 10 June. As a result of this lost resolution, an LTP amendment is now no longer required, as Council are no longer signalling a potential sale of a strategic asset. While the decision to continue further investigations into the sale of CentrePort shareholding was passed, Council will now need to consult again in the future should these investigations indicate it would be more beneficial for Council to sell this asset rather than retain it.
- 6.4. Further options of what a total rates increase could look like were presented to Council at the Strategy and Policy deliberations meeting, with Council resolving to adopt Option 3, being a 7.9% total rate increase. This proposed the removal of 7 roles across Policy, Science and Regulatory; the removal of additional external costs for Policy work around an Eplan, climate risk assessment, Farm Plans and NPS-IB engagement; the removal of additional external costs for Science work for NPS-FM lakes monitoring and land research and monitoring; a reduction in the planned increases in Biodiversity and Biosecurity work for priority habitats and pest plant management; the removal of additional Sustainable Land Use Initiative (SLUI) work; and a reduction in river management insurance increases, operational maintenance programme and operationalising river management staff from capital programmes.
- 6.5. Council resolved to make additional changes to Option 3 with the use of reserves to fund the climate risk assessment, SLUI work programme and Horowhenua wetland costs. Council also put back increases that reflected the original LTP Year 2 budget for priority habitats and pest plant management, river management operational maintenance programme, river management staff moving from capital programmes to operational programmes, the reinstatement of one Policy and one Regulatory role, and additional budget for possum control work.
- 6.6. This took the total proposed rate increase to 8.8%.

7. DISCUSSION

- 7.1. Council now needs to adopt the Annual Plan for 2025-26 so that the rates and administrative charges can be set.

8. TIMELINE / NEXT STEPS

- 8.1. Once this Annual Plan has been adopted it will be printed and made publically available within a month.
- 8.2. Rates will be struck in our rating system and invoices will start being issued to ratepayers from late August 2025.

9. SIGNIFICANCE

- 9.1. The decision to adopt this report is significant as adoption will approve the 2025-26 Annual Plan and the consequential setting of the 2025-26 rates.

Adrian Smith
CHIEF FINANCIAL OFFICER

Cara Hesselin
GROUP MANAGER CORPORATE & GOVERNANCE

ANNEXES

- A 2025-26 Annual Plan (Supplementary Item)

Placeholder for Annex A

Adoption of the 2025-26 Annual Plan

2025-26 Annual Plan (Supplementary Item)

Report No.	25-89
Decision Required	

REGIONAL HOUSE PALMERSTON NORTH PROJECT GOVERNANCE

1. PURPOSE

- 1.1. The purpose of this report is to seek Council's endorsement of the formation of a Panel to act as the Governance Body for the Regional House Palmerston North (RHPN) New Build Project. The report also outlines the proposed Governance structure, procurement policy and associated delegations.

2. RECOMMENDATION

It is recommended that Council:

- a. receives the information contained in Report No. 25-89 and Annexes.
- b. acknowledges that MWRC Holdings Ltd (Holdings) will no longer act as the Governance Body for the Regional House Palmerston North New Build Project (the Project); and
- c. agrees to endorse decisions made by Holdings for the Project; and
- d. agrees to endorse the formation of a 'subordinate decision-making body' (Panel), made up of three Elected Members to act as the Governance Body for the Project; and
- e. agrees to appoint Chair of Council, Chair of Audit and Risk and one other Councillor (to be named at meeting) to the Panel; and
- f. agrees to adopt the Terms of Reference (Annex A) for the Panel with or without amendment (delete one).

3. FINANCIAL IMPACT

- 3.1. There is no financial impact associated with the setting up and operation of a 'subordinate decision-making body' (Panel). Councillors already receive remuneration for their role as a Councillor.

4. COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

- 4.1. Community engagement is not required to set up a 'subordinate decision-making body' (Panel).

5. SIGNIFICANT BUSINESS RISK IMPACT

- 5.1. A project of this magnitude has significant costs, which can be impacted by rising costs and inflation rates. Delays in the project, including decision making delays, will likely increase the cost of construction.

6. CLIMATE IMPACT STATEMENT

- 6.1. There is no climate impact in setting up the Panel.

7. BACKGROUND

7.1. At its 17 December 2024 Council Meeting, Council resolved the following:

- Remain in RHPN for up to a maximum of 5 years.
- To vacate RHPN permanently and occupy a new IL2 building on the Victoria Ave site.
- Approve the progression to the next phase of work.
- To endorse the Board of MWRC Holdings Ltd to act as the Governance Body for the RHPN Project, until such time (if at all) Holdings is revised.

7.2. At its 25 February Council Meeting, Council resolved the following:

- To endorse the Build and Own option as the preferred build model.
- Approve the progression to the next phase of work.

8. DISCUSSION

8.1. Following discussions at the 7 April Holdings Board meeting and the 8 April Council Workshop it was agreed that a paper would be brought to Council recommending that a Panel be formed to act as the new Governance Body for the Project (rather than Holdings).

8.2. Proposed Structure



8.3. Panel

Council can delegate to a sub-committee, person, or a ‘subordinate decision-making body’ (SDMB).

8.4. Three elected members who are required to make decisions as a group is within the meaning of a SDMB.

8.5. The term ‘Panel’ refers to a SDMB.

8.6. Part 7 of LGOIMA (relating to meetings) does not apply as to how the Panel will make decisions and does not fall within the statutory interpretation of a meeting. Furthermore, meetings of the Panel are not subject to the formal meeting process, however, information does remain discoverable within the provisions of LGOIMA.

8.7. The principle in Section 14(1)(f) LGA to ‘undertake any commercial transactions in accordance with sound business practices’ does apply to the Panel.

8.8. While the Panel would have responsibility for decision making throughout the Project, it would report to, update and consult with Council at regular intervals throughout the life cycle of the Project.

8.9. It is proposed that the Panel be comprised of the following members:

- Chair of Council
- Chair of Audit and Risk
- One other Councillor (to be appointed)

8.10. **Programme Director**

Horizons' Group Manager – Corporate and Governance has been temporarily seconded into this full-time role, effective 1 June 2025.

8.11. The Programme Director is accountable for the overall success of the Project. The Programme Director will champion the Project at a strategic level, ensuring it has the necessary resources, support, and alignment with the organisation's goals. This role acts as the link between Project Governance, The Steering Group and the Project Lead.

8.12. **Project Lead**

Horizons' Assets and Facilities Advisor - MWRCH has been temporarily seconded into this full-time role, effective 17 March 2025.

8.13. The Project Lead has responsibility for making day-to-day decisions and coordinating all activities necessary to successfully complete the project from inception to handover.

8.14. **Steering Group**

The Steering Group has been formed with its inaugural meeting taking place on 30 May. The Steering Group will perform an Advisory Function to the Panel. The Steering Group is composed of the following members:

- Chair of Council
- Chief Executive
- Secretary
- Exec Members (x4)
- Te Ao Māori Advisor
- Group Representatives (x4)
- Change Management Representative (x1)

8.15. The Steering Group will be supported by specialist reference groups from within Horizons, as well as external project consultants. It is anticipated the group would meet weekly, though the frequency is subject to change to align with the on-going project tempo.

8.16. The following reference groups have been identified with the acknowledgement that other specialist needs may be identified as the project commences:

- Technical (e.g. IT connectivity, technology and support).
- Design (e.g. architects working with specialist groups to address requirements).
- Te Ao Maori (partnership with Tangata Whenua and Iwi groups).
- Cultural (e.g. driven by Horizons' organisational culture and values, ensuring representation of the organisation's multi-cultural and diverse groups).
- Sustainability (e.g. shaping sustainability, carbon and climate positive goals for the new building, as well as identifying Horizons' aspirations on the spectrum of carbon efficiency versus cost efficiency).

8.17. **Specialist Groups**

8.18. A key focus in the early stage of the Project will be on requirements gathering. This is crucial to deciding what is incorporated in the building design. For this, specialist groups from within Horizons, identified below, will be consulted with to learn their specialist requirements. Once again, other specialist groups may be identified as the project commences:

- Cultural Reference Group
- Executive Group
- Chair Suite Requirements
- Elected Members and Democracy Services
- Contact Centre
- IT Services
- Print and Records
- Remote/Mobile Workers
- River Management Design Team
- Environmental Data Maintenance / Repair / Connectivity
- Science Laboratory
- Social Connectivity Group
- Sustainability

8.19. **Terms of Reference**

A Terms of Reference (ToR) document has been devised for approval by Council to be adopted by the Panel.

8.20. The ToR sets out how the Panel would provide strategic oversight and governance for the planning and delivery of the Project, facilitating transparent decision-making and accountability through regular reporting to Council.

8.21. The main responsibilities of the Panel would include monitoring progress, managing risks, engaging stakeholders, and ensuring transparency, accountability, and quality throughout all Project phases.

8.22. The ToR Delegations identify that while the Panel would be responsible for most decision making for the Project, there are five critical decision points that must be referred directly to Council for decision making. These are:

1. Treatment of existing RHPN
2. Funding arrangements for the Project, including design and construction
3. Approval of Concept Design
4. Approval of Detailed Design
5. Approval for tender for Main Contract.

8.23. While the Panel has delegation for all other decision making the ToR emphasizes the importance of regular reporting to Council to keep Council informed throughout the whole process. Through regular workshops, particularly throughout the design phases, Council will have the opportunity to provide feedback to the Panel which will help inform and shape the Panel's decision making.

8.24. As previously noted, at the 17 December Council meeting it was resolved that Holdings will act as Governance for this project (until such time (if at all) Holdings is revised), and

accordingly, the procurement approach adopted in the Project's Procurement Strategy (Annex B) utilises the provisions of Holding's procurement policy.

- 8.25. Should Council endorse the recommendation to transition Governance from Holdings to the Panel, Horizons' Procurement Policy and Delegations Manual would be utilised moving forward. It is important to note that although all procurement activity to date has utilised Holdings' procurement policy it does also comply with Horizons' procurement policy and it is anticipated to be an uncomplicated transition. The specific delegations to the Panel can be found in the ToR.

9. CONSULTATION

- 9.1. Public consultation for the wider project is occurring as part of the 2025-2026 Annual Plan process. However, there is no requirement to consult in support of the setting up of a 'subordinate decision-making body' (Panel).

10. TIMELINE / NEXT STEPS

- 10.1. It is important to recognise that at this stage timelines are indicative only but will be further developed following the appointment of key consultants and will continue to be refined throughout the lifecycle of the Project. Nevertheless, following a robust procurement process that commenced beginning of April, four key consultants/services will be appointed by mid-June 2025. These consultants will be involved throughout the life of the Project:
- Planning and Development Capability (P&D)
 - Technical Design and Architecture Capability (TDA)
 - Legal Services
 - Quantity Surveyor Services
- 10.2. By late June, requirements gathering will begin, led by the P&D and TDA teams and working with the Steering Group and Specialist Groups. This work will feed into and shape the Client Brief, which is expected to be completed and endorsed by the Panel (or Holdings) by late August.
- 10.3. Concurrently a range of due diligence reports will commence, such as:
- Geotechnical Site Investigation Report
 - Contamination Site Investigation Report
 - Topographical Survey
 - Environmentally Sustainable Design Strategy
 - Planning Assessment
- 10.4. Concurrent to this Council paper, a second paper is being brought to Council for decision making on the treatment of the existing RHPN.
- 10.5. In August, a second Council Workshop will be held on the funding structure for the Project but it is expected that a decision on the subject will be deferred until after the triennial general elections to be held in October.
- 10.6. The Concept Design is estimated to be completed, along with the first budget estimate in February 2026 these will be brought Council for approval at this time.
- 10.7. The Detailed Design is estimated to completed, along with it the detailed budget in May 2027 and these will be brought to Council for approval at this time.

- 10.8. The Tender for the Main Contractor (Construction), along with the Contracted budget, is expected to be brought to Council for approval in August 2027.
- 10.9. The timeline below is a high level programme of the key phases of the Project, showing in red the 3 significant approval points noted above.

Phase	★	PRE-PROJECT	Completed		15/11/23	17/12/24	266d
Workstream	☆	✦ Preliminary Feasibility Study	Completed		15/11/23	17/12/24	266d
	★	Regional House PNth - New Build	In Progress		26/03/24	27/02/30	1476d
Phase	☆	✦ INITIATE	In Progress		26/03/24	30/06/25	313d
Phase	☆	PLAN	Not Started		10/06/25	20/08/27	548d
Workstream	☆	✦ Project Establishment	Not Started		10/06/25	15/09/25	69d
Workstream	☆	✦ Due Diligence Reports	Not Started		23/06/25	01/08/25	30d
Workstream	☆	✦ Client Brief	Not Started		23/06/25	30/09/25	71d
Workstream	☆	✦ Master Planning	Not Started		01/10/25	05/12/25	47d
Workstream	★	✦ Concept Design	Not Started		13/11/25	02/02/26	52d
Workstream	☆	✦ Preliminary Design	Not Started		03/02/26	30/10/26	187d
Workstream	☆	✦ Resource Consent	Not Started		02/06/26	28/07/26	40d
Workstream	☆	✦ Developed Design	Not Started		29/07/26	15/12/26	99d
Workstream	★	✦ Detailed Design	Not Started		16/12/26	19/05/27	101d
Workstream	☆	✦ Building Consent	Not Started		07/04/27	19/05/27	30d
Workstream	★	✦ Tender Phase	Not Started		14/05/27	20/08/27	68d
Phase	☆	✦ DELIVER	Not Started		23/08/27	27/02/30	628d
Phase	☆	✦ CLOSE					

11. SIGNIFICANCE

- 11.1. This is not a significant decision according to the Council’s Policy on Significance and Engagement.

Craig Grant
PROGRAMME DIRECTOR

Harriet Jackson
PROJECT LEAD

ANNEXES

- A Terms of Reference RHPN Project Panel
- B Procurement Strategy

REGIONAL HOUSE PALMERSTON NORTH PROJECT

Panel Terms of Reference

Document Approval

Status	Name	Date	Signature
Drafted by	Craig Grant	May 2025	
Reviewed by			
Approved by			

Revision History

Status	Comment	Date
Rev 0.0		May 2025
Rev 0.1		
Rev 0.2		
Rev 0.3		

1. Statement of Purpose

- 1.1. To provide strategic oversight and governance for the planning, development, and delivery of the RHPN Project.
- 1.2. To facilitate transparent decision-making and accountability through regular reporting to Council.

2. Membership

- 2.1. The RHPN Project Panel (Panel) shall be a subordinate decision-making body of the Council made up of 3 elected members.
- 2.2. The Panel shall be appointed by the Council and shall consist of the Chair of the Council and the Chair of the Audit and Risk Committee, and one other Councillor.
- 2.3. The Programme Director will be the reporting officer, but the Chief Executive will remain ultimately responsible for executing instructions of the Panel, acting on the authority of Council.
- 2.4. For the avoidance of doubt, the Panel is not a committee or subcommittee of the Council and is not a Council Organisation.
- 2.5. The Council may revoke appointments and make new ones at any time. The membership of the Panel shall be reconfirmed following the triennial general election to be held in October 2025.

3. Meeting Quorum

- 3.1. As the delegations to the Panel are to the group, the presumptive quorum shall be 3, with a quorum of 2 if a member is unavoidably unavailable, and then only for minor and operational decisions.

4. Meetings

- 4.1. Meetings will be held monthly, or as required to meet the project tempo.
- 4.2. Meetings may be held in person, by audio link, by audio visual link, or by any combination of these.
- 4.3. An agenda and any relevant reports shall be circulated prior to any meeting with as much notice as is practicable in the circumstances.
- 4.4. Decisions shall be made by consensus where possible, and otherwise by majority.
- 4.5. A written record shall be kept of all decisions (and to the extent practicable, the reasons for them).
- 4.6. Standing Orders do not apply to the Panel unless partially or wholly adopted by the Panel.
- 4.7. Meetings of the Panel are not subject to LGOIMA but information provided to the Panel and its decisions may be subject to requests for information to which LGOIMA would apply.

5. Operating Principles

- 5.1. The Panel is subject to Council direction and policies, including internal policies, and any legislative requirements relevant to decision-making by the Council.
- 5.2. The Panel Chair shall call a meeting of the Panel if so requested by any Panel member or the Council, or when there are project issues to consider.
- 5.3. The Panel shall report to Council, as required.
- 5.4. The Panel has the authority to seek any information it requires from any officer or employee of the Council and is authorised to take such independent professional advice, as it considers necessary, for the account of the Council.

6. Responsibilities

- 6.1. Provide high-level oversight of the Project from initiation through to completion, ensuring it remains on track with Council objectives.
- 6.2. Report to Council via Workshops throughout the design phases of the project.
- 6.3. Provide updates to Council on expenditure tracking and budget forecasting on a three-monthly basis, or more frequently as required, during construction.
- 6.4. Regularly review project progress, timelines, budget performance, and risk management plans, and report findings to Council, as required.
- 6.5. Oversee engagement strategies to ensure effective communication with stakeholders, including community members, contractors, and regulatory bodies.
- 6.6. Ensure the project adheres to relevant legislation, Council policies, planning and environmental regulations and procurement requirements throughout the project lifecycle.
- 6.7. Review and provide input into financial plans, funding proposals and budget adjustments, ensuring fiscal responsibility and value for money.
- 6.8. Support the development and review of tendering, contracting, and procurement processes related to the project.
- 6.9. Evaluate and make recommendations on proposed changes to project scope, timelines, or budgets.
- 6.10. Oversee the transition from construction to operational use, ensuring readiness for occupation, maintenance, and long-term asset management.
- 6.11. Ensure the project aligns with Council objectives, community needs, and long-term asset management plans.

7. Procurement

- 7.1. The Panel will ensure the project adheres to Horizons' Procurement Policy.

8. Delegations

- 8.1. As per Horizons' Delegations Manual the project is designated as a Special Delegated Project / Activity. Accordingly, Council has delegated decision making to the Panel subject to the conditions and exceptions set out below.
- 8.2. The Panel has delegated authority for total expenditure in the design phases up to \$5,000,000 ex GST, noting that some components of the design phases will be a mix of Opex and Capex.
- 8.3. The budget range for expenditure within the construction phase will be resolved by Council on completion of the Detailed Design phase.
- 8.4. The Panel has delegations for all decision making for the project except for the following decision points:
- Treatment of Regional House Palmerston North,
 - Funding arrangements for the project, including design and construction,
 - Approval of Concept Design,
 - Approval of Detailed Design,
 - Approval for tender for Main Contract.
- 8.5. The Panel and employee delegations for the project are as shown in the table below:

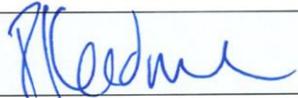
Project Expenditure	Project Lead	CFO	Programme Director	CE	Panel
Expenditure up to \$100,000 within the project budget	✓				
Expenditure up to \$200,000		✓			
Expenditure up to \$300,000 within the project budget			✓		
Expenditure up to \$400,000 within the project budget				✓	
Expenditure over \$400,000 within the project budget					✓

- 8.6. The Panel can appoint working groups if required.



Procurement Strategy Document – Regional House
Palmerston North New Build

Approvals	
Name:	Craig Grant
Position / title:	Project SRO
Signature & date:	 15 April 2025

Approvals	
Name:	Rachel Keedwell
Position / title:	Chair of MWRC Holdings Ltd
Signature & date:	 5/5/25

Document development control	
Prepared by:	Grant Thornton
Document version:	
Date of last version:	
Status:	Final

Executive summary

This document outlines the Horizons Regional Council (HRC) overarching approach to procurement activities for the new build project. This project aims to consolidate HRC staff from multiple locations into a single, modern, and sustainable office space. The new building will not only provide a fit-for-future workspace but also reflect HRC's commitment to progress, sustainability, and community well-being.

Key Objectives:

The below are high level key objectives of the procurement strategy document.

Efficient Decision-Making: Ensure procurement decisions are timely and informed by comprehensive considerations and decision documents.

Value for Money: Achieve the best value for money spent through competitive and transparent procurement processes.

Risk Management: Actively manage risks, aligning with Health & Safety requirements.

Alignment with HRC Objectives: Ensure procurement activities support HRC's strategic goals and community outcomes.

Probity and conflicts of interest management: Ensuring all tender management activities are carried out fairly with full transparency that can demonstrate no bias and no pre-determined outcomes.

Project Scope:

The specific key objectives for project scope are as follows.

New Building: A new IL2 building accommodating approximately 288 staff.

Location: The site is located on the corner of Victoria Avenue and Grey Street, adjacent to the Te Ao Nui Office and retail building.

Procurement Approach:

At its meeting on 17 December 2024, Council resolved that MWRCH Holdings Ltd (MWRCH) will act as the Governance Body for this project. Accordingly, the procurement approach will utilise the provisions of MWRCH's procurement policy.

The specific objectives for our procurement activities are as follows.

Framework: Utilise the Plan, Source, and Manage framework to guide procurement activities throughout the project lifecycle.

Methods: Employ a mix of open competitive RFPs, direct engagements, and closed tenders based on the specific needs of each procurement activity.

Timeline:

Tranche 1 (Mid-March – July): Includes RFI phase, RFP release, evaluation, and appointment of services.

This procurement strategy is designed to ensure that HRC can deliver a high-quality, sustainable office space that meets the needs of its growing staff and supports the council's strategic objectives.

A bit about us

The Horizons Region extends over 22,200km² - from Ruapehu in the north and Horowhenua in the south, to Whanganui in the west and Taranaki in the east. It's a landscape as vast and varied as the nearly 250,000 people who call it home. At Horizons Regional Council we work to make our region a great place to live, work and play.

While the city or district council is responsible for community services, such as road maintenance, libraries, determining land use and subdivisions, Horizons' responsibilities include ensuring sustainable use of our region's natural resources, leading regional land transport planning, contracting passenger transport services and coordinating our region's response to natural disasters. Some of our activities span several city and district council boundary lines and our jurisdiction extends 12 nautical miles out to sea. As a result we work closely with these councils and other agencies on some issues to ensure they are managed to benefit the entire region.

What is the opportunity?

Staff forecasting for HRC sees staffing numbers grow from 214 to 255 in the next three years and up to 288 in the next 15 years. Currently, staff sit across several locations (Queen Street, Central Energy Trust Arena, Regional House, Te Ao Nui) and the leases for these sites are set to start expiring in the near future, Queen Street (2026) and Central Energy Trust Arena (2028). Regional House has also been classified an Earthquake Risk Building (2017) and Earthquake Prone Building (2024), requiring us to come up with a solution to how we will accommodate our staff.

HRC needs an office space that will consolidate staff from multiple locations into a single shared space, connecting staff to foster a cohesive culture and address space deficits.

The proposed solution

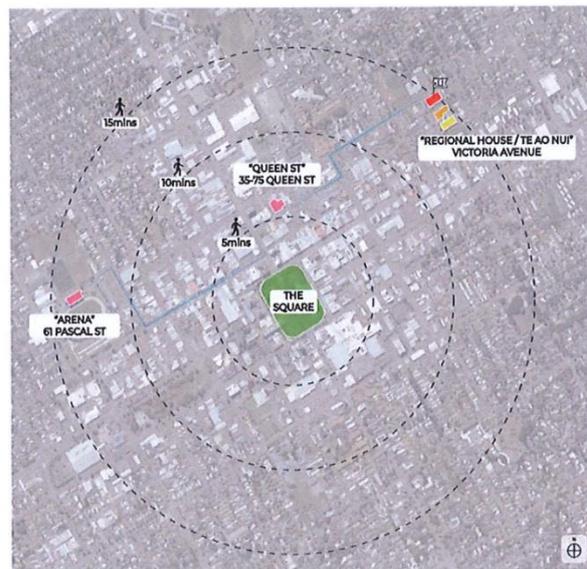
HRC has conducted previous engagements regarding this opportunity and through this analysis has concluded on a proposed solution to meet its requirements and strategic intent (option 4).

- New IL2 building for all Palmerston North based HRC Staff, excluding EOC staff
- Demolish, remediate or sell RHPN (**No Council resolution as at Version 1 release**)
- Te Ao Nui - retain existing EOC
- 4,600 m² GFA (1,533 m² footprint)

Potential Features

- Accommodation for approx. 280-290 staff
- 88 Carpark spaces [50 newly built]
- Allowance for future unplanned growth of staff
- Workplace neighbourhoods of a share ratio of between 60-65%
- Large staff hub and amenity
- Private Offices
- Lobby and reception area
- Wellness suite
- Aim for certification: Green Star, NABERS, WELL
- Staff storage and PPE rooms
- Breakout Work Spaces
- Meeting rooms
- Lunchroom
- Interconnecting stairs
- Commute friendly bike storage & changing facilities

The proposed site has already been purchased by HRC and is located on the corner of Victoria Avenue and Grey Street, adjacent to the recently completed Te Ao Nui Office and retail building (17-19 Victoria Avenue) and the existing RHPN (11-15 Victoria Avenue) northeast of the CBD and The Square. Victoria Avenue, between Grey Street and Main Street, is developing as a commercial area with most businesses towards Grey Street providing health services.



Our Procurement Approach

Our procurement approach will be centred on timely and efficient delivery, procurement activities will run through the entire lifecycle of this project making it a critical enabler to the successful delivery of the new build.

It has been identified that some respondents to our tenders may have previously provided services to HRC. Some of these services may have been within the options analysis phase of the new build project, which was carried out prior to any tender activities being initiated. This could be perceived as potential bias in the market should one of these suppliers be successful. To ensure fairness to all responders (to any of the tenders) we will provide all relevant documentation from the options analysis phase as appendices to the relevant tenders if applicable. This will provide fairness, transparency and equal opportunity for all responders.

Procurement Framework

The Plan, Source and Manage framework will be leveraged during this project. It will help provide us with the parameters of how we operate while maintaining good standards of procurement practice.

Planning

Planning can occur at both a strategic and tactical level and is closely integrated with both investment and project management planning disciplines.

At a strategic level, we influence investment plans and strategies with procurement and commercial considerations, develop and maintain a forward pipeline of procurement activity, identify opportunities for collaboration and smart packaging of requirements and identify the most appropriate delivery model.

Tactical planning involves choosing the most appropriate supplier selection method, developing requirements and evaluation criteria, and the preparation of tender documentation.

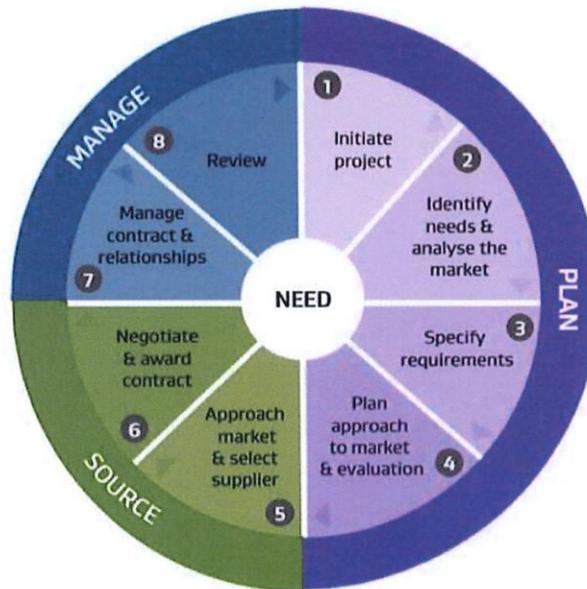
Sourcing

Having selected the most appropriate supplier selection method, we will engage with potential suppliers (open competitive, closed competitive, direct appointment), receive and evaluate responses and select the most appropriate supplier. Due diligence, refinement of requirements, negotiation of commercial terms, and development of relationship and operating procedures may also form part of the sourcing phase.

Managing

After entering into an agreement with one or more suppliers, HRC will onboard or induct the supplier, administer and manage the contract and supplier performance, provide appropriate oversight and supervision, and continuously review the agreement.

The Managing phase also includes the active monitoring and assessment of the performance and effectiveness of procurement strategies and plans, and the capturing and application of lessons and learnings.



Strategic Drivers

HRC view their strategic priorities and community outcomes as an integrated set that can only be achieved if they are developed and addressed together, as outlined in Te anga rautaki – Strategic Framework.

Te anga rautaki - Strategic Framework	
Tō mātou wawata Our vision	Tō tātou whenua ora - mauri wai, mauri whenua, mauri ora Our region - a healthy environment where people are thriving
Ngā putanga ā-hapori Our community outcomes	<p>He whakamana hapori, he hapori kori Our region's communities are vibrant and empowered</p> <p>He whanaungatanga whai mana Our region's relationship with iwi and hapū are respectful and mana-enhancing</p> <p>He pūnaha hauropi ora Our region's ecosystems are healthy</p> <p>He whatunga waka mauritau Our region has effective transport networks</p> <p>He rohe piki te ōhanga, piki te taiao Our region's economy is thriving and environmentally sustainable</p> <p>He hapori manawaroa Our region's communities are resilient to the impact of natural hazards and climate change</p>
Ngā rautaki arotau Our strategic priorities	<p>Te piki manawaroa ki te āhuarangi hurihuri Building resilience to the impacts of climate change</p> <p>Te whakakaha whanaungatanga ki te tangata whenua Strengthening partnerships with tangata whenua</p> <p>He ara torowhārahi - mai i ngā maunga ki te moana (whakahaere riu) A holistic approach, from the mountains to the sea (integrated catchment management)</p> <p>He tūhono wāhi he honohono tangata Connecting people and place through effective public transport connections</p>

How does the proposal align to HRC strategy?

This project will help create better alignment, connection and collaboration of the wider HRC team within one building (except EOC). It aligns with our strategic goal of ability to deliver, to investment so that we can deliver what our community needs now and in the future.

Is the proposal driven by compliance/policy/legislative requirements?

Yes, the project will ensure compliance with the Building Act 2004 and the Building (Earthquake-prone Buildings) Amendment Act 2016 and the Building (Earthquake-prone Buildings Deadlines and Other Matters) Amendment Act 2024. The legislative timeframe to remediate or vacate the building due to being earthquake prone is 2043.

This will also amend compliance with building capacity, which is currently exceeded, this is critical as forecasting sees staffing numbers continue to grow.

Is the proposal driven from prior risk identification?

This project is being driven by prior risk identification, Regional House has been classified as an Earthquake Risk Building (2017) and Earthquake Prone Building (2024).

Is this entered on the capital intentions schedule and/or business groups business plan?

Yes, Council has recognised the need to replace the building, and is going through public consultation. This project will feed into the Council Annual Plan and Long Term Plan.

Risks Ratings

Risk rating	Description
High	This refers to situation or activities that have a high probability of leading to significant negative consequences. These risks require immediate action/attention & strong mitigation strategies.
Medium	These risks have a moderate probability of occurring & can cause moderate negative impacts. While not as urgent as high risks, they require management & monitoring.
Low	This includes risks that have a low probability of occurring and would result in minor negative consequences. These risks are often considered acceptable and do not require significant resources to manage.

Risks

Risk	Mitigation	Rating	Owner
1. Delays in project timeline	Implement a detailed project schedule with contingency time. Monitor schedule closely, work closely with external teams, use Smartsheets to track tasks & deadlines. Delays in delivery will be managed by the internal HRC project team and reported to the governance group.	M	HRC Project Sponsor – Craig Grant HRC Project Lead - Harriet Jackson.
2. Budget overruns	Develop a detailed budget plan with contingencies for unexpected expenses. Review & update the budget to reflect actual costs. Implement cost control measures, the internal HRC project team will manage budgets and report changes to the governance team.	H	HRC Project Sponsor – Craig Grant. HRC Project Lead - Harriet Jackson.
3. Vendor/responder reliability issues	Conduct thorough due diligence before selecting vendor/responders, including checking references & past performance (specifically the use of hybrid RFI & RFP process and meeting preconditions before full RFP documentation sent out). Establish clear contracts with detailed performance metrics. HRC internal project team will manage these relationships.	M	Grant Thornton Procurement Team. HRC Project Sponsor – Craig Grant. HRC Project Lead - Harriet Jackson.

<p>4. Regulatory & compliance issues.</p>	<p>The project has been designed to ensure that HRC complies with the Building Act 2004, the Building Earthquake-prone Buildings Amendment Act 2016 and the Building (Earthquake-prone Building Deadlines and Other Matters) Amendment Act 2024.</p> <p>Potential issues with obtaining permits, adhering to building codes and complying with environmental regulations. This will be managed via supplier selection and will be part of their identified requirements to deliver. This will be overseen and managed by the HRC internal project team.</p>	<p>M</p>	<p>HRC Project Sponsor – Craig Grant.</p> <p>HRC Project Lead - Harriet Jackson.</p>
<p>5. Potential Future Local Government Reforms.</p>	<p>Council may struggle to balance the demands of any new reforms with its existing responsibilities, leading to a strain on resources and capacity. This may result in either an increase or decrease to forecast staffing levels.</p>	<p>M</p>	<p>HRC Project Sponsor – Craig Grant.</p> <p>HRC Project Lead - Harriet Jackson.</p>
<p>6. Inflationary Pressures.</p>	<p>Global uncertainty on international tariff increases and the resulting impact on inflation. Potentially impacting access to supplies and/or overall project budget.</p>	<p>H</p>	<p>HRC Project Sponsor – Craig Grant.</p> <p>HRC Project Lead - Harriet Jackson.</p>

Dependencies

- The leases of buildings that currently accommodate staff are set to start expiring.
- Successful delivery of previous procurement activity.
- Regulatory approvals, ensuring that necessary permits and licences are obtained.
- Timeline – the project needs to be delivered by December 2029.
- Stakeholder engagement – including Public Consultation.

Probity

Probity within procurement ensures that public money is spent carefully and properly, throughout this project probity will be managed by:

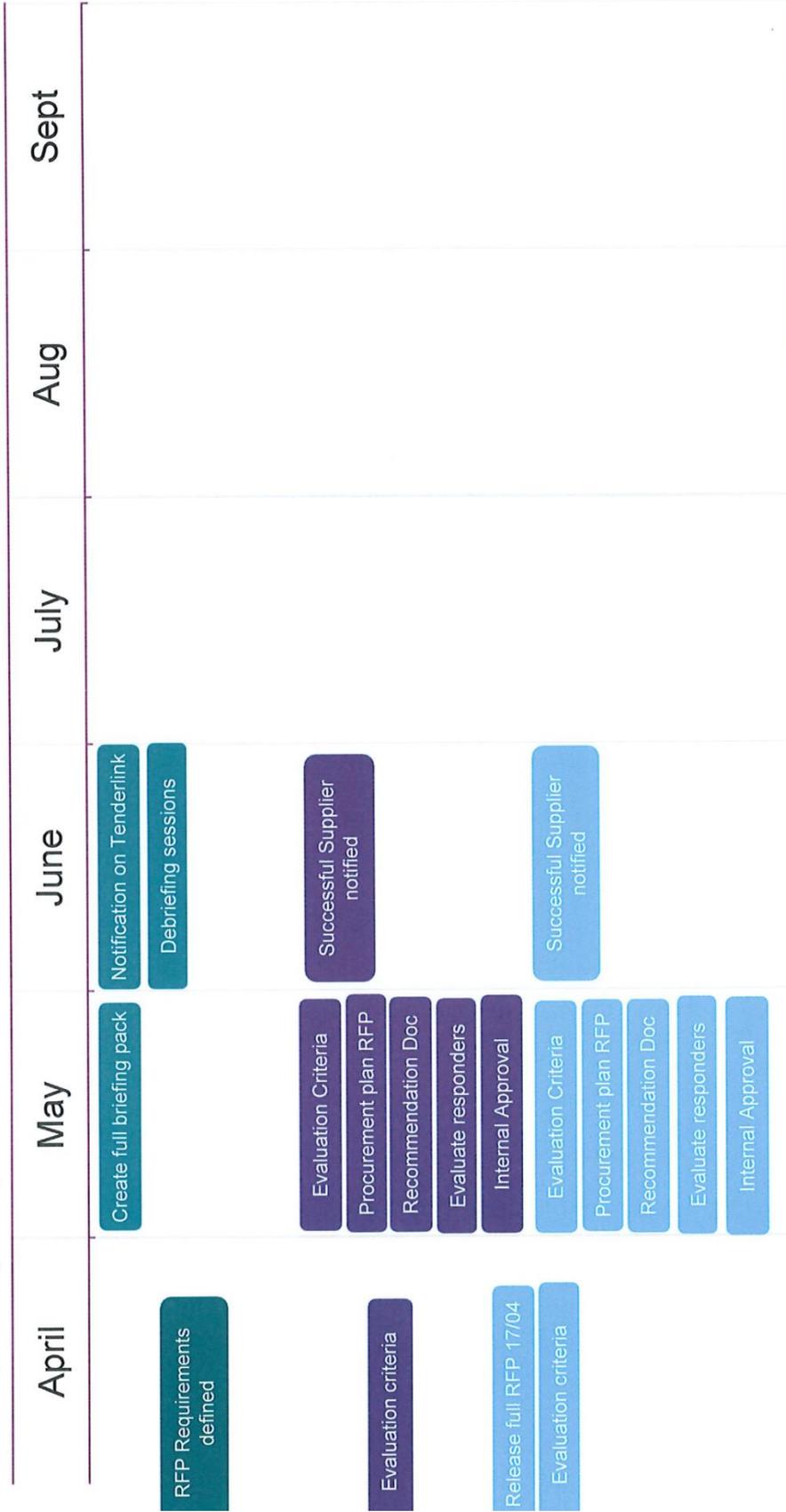
- Acting fairly, impartially and with integrity, acting lawfully, and being accountable and transparent.
- Ensuring compliance with HRCs code of conduct.
- Ensuring that financial authority for the procurement is approved before proceeding to tender.
- Identifying and effectively managing all conflicts of interest.
- Protecting the supplier's commercially sensitive and confidential information.
- Providing each supplier with a comprehensive debrief at the end of the tender process.

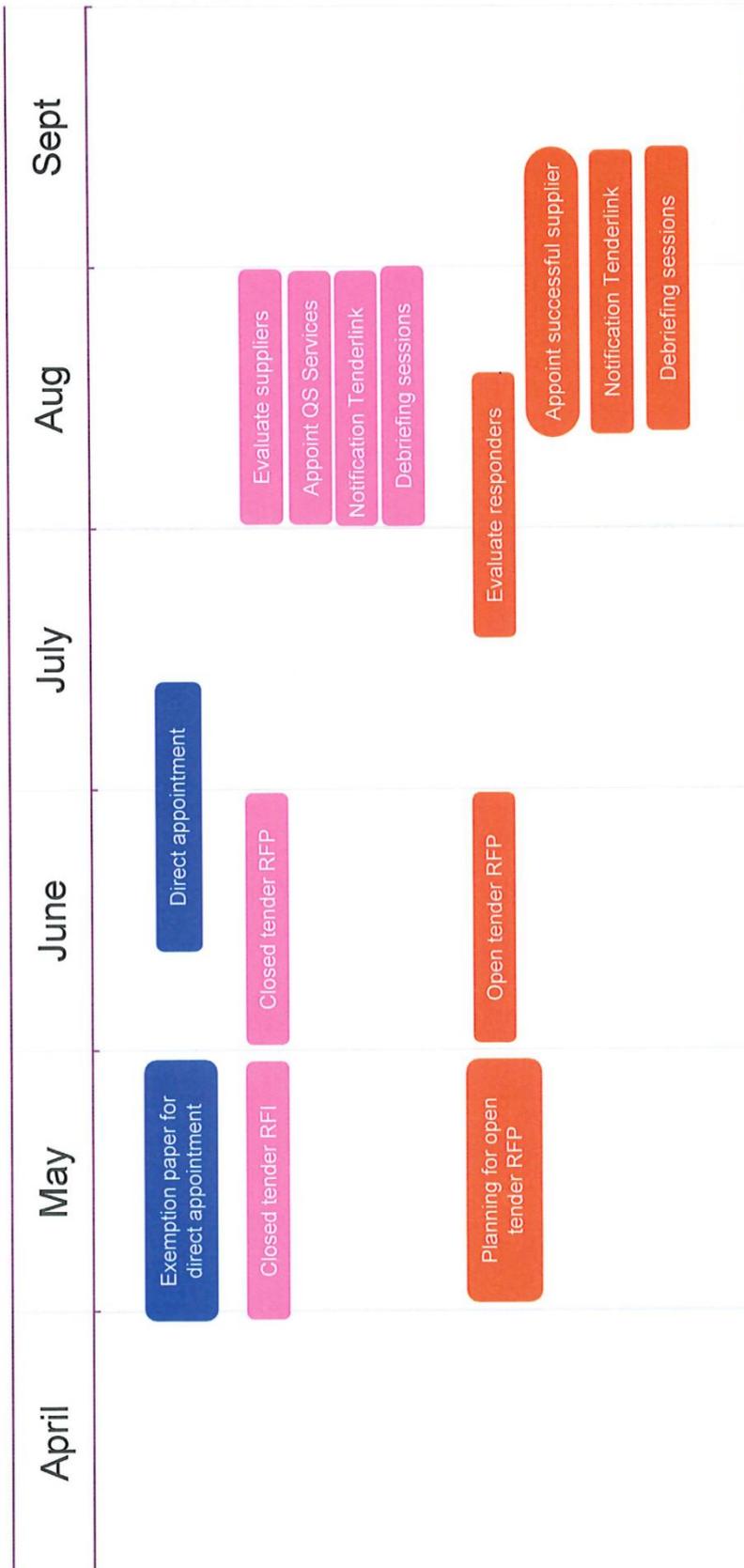
Key

- Procurement 0
- Procurement 1
- Procurement 2
- Procurement 3
- Procurement 4
- Procurement 5

High-level Procurement Timeline (March – Sept 25)

The below timeline aligns with procurement activities for ease;





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Procurement Activities (March – September 2025)

Procurement 0 – Tender Documentation & Processes

HRC has partnered with Grant Thornton to provide expertise & guidance to support HRC run successful procurements processes to secure Project Planning & Development capability, Project Technical Design & Architecture capability, Legal services, Quantity Surveyor and early construction phase services. We will be working to plan and execute fair and transparent procurement processes, that will be robust in nature so that HRC select the best suppliers to deliver the work set within the scope of the brief, to the expected quality, on time and within budget.

Below is a guide of expected activity.

Procurement documentation & process	Planned activity	Due date
Creating RFI & RFP documents	GT will have draft copies to Horizons by April 2, 2025.	03/04/2025
Initial RFI released, with high-level requirements and preconditions	Go live via Tenderlink on April 4 th .	4/04/2025
Deadline for Questions		5pm 11/04/2025
Deadline for us to answer questions	Respond to RFI questions.	14/04/2025
Complete full RFP	Work to complete full RFP documentation. Confirm evaluation criteria.	14/04/25
Deadline for Initial RFI responses	Evaluate & triage responders, meeting all pre-conditions.	2pm 16/04/2025
Full RFP Released	Released to eligible respondents, who have met the preconditions.	17/04/2025
	Deadline for Questions.	5pm 12/05/2025
	Deadline for us to answer questions.	16/05/2025
Deadline for Full RFP responses		22/05/2025
Release of responses to evaluation team	Shortlist and send through to HRC team.	23/05/2025
Evaluation of responders	Evaluation panel work through responses.	26/05-30/05
Internal approval process	Present recommended responder to Governance, to confirm decision	02/06-06/06
Successful respondents notified of outcome		06/06/2025
Expected start date of Contract		10/06/25

Procurement 1 – Planning & Development Capability

Please note - same timeline as above

The purpose of this procurement activity is to appoint consultancy services that will support the planning and development services for the full project lifecycle (project establishment through to post completion of the office build).

Each phase of the project to subject to budget and governance approval however the procurement will be for full project lifecycle.

The following procurement options were assessed. This was based on dollar value of procurement and alignment to government procurement rules.

Tender Approach	Yes	No	Rationale
Open tender – RFP	X	X	Time constrains within the project Not knowing many response we could get. Not enough time to do full reference checks. Inability to have one supplier to have ie, may have to contract multiple services.
Closed tender – RFI followed by RFP	X	X	Not fit for purpose - not enough market information/knowledge of potential suppliers.
Hybrid Open RFI – closed RFP	✓	X	Fairness and transparency to the market for the open RFI. Strict pre-conditions to be meet with evidence to be considered for the shortlist to closed RFP this ensures no bias shown from any evaluation panel member. Maximum of 5 shortlisted to closed RFP ensures we are not wasting time, effort & cost to respond. Maximum of five RFPs ensures efficient management of time to know what needs to be assessed and ability to appoint quickly following a robust tender process.
Direct Source – exemption required	X	X	Not fit for purpose - we did not have enough information on the market. Also know that there would be a lot of potential supplier candidates.
AOG Panel	X	X	AOG does not have a panel for all services required for the construction and build and would therefore need to do multiple secondary selection panels.
RFQ	X	X	Not fit for purpose - need to assess skill sets as well as cost.

For this appointment, we will utilise a hybrid procurement process, consisting of an original Request for Information (RFI) followed by a full Request for Proposal (RFP). This approach has been selected as responders must confirm and evidence that they meet the pre-conditions of the RFI to receive the full RFP documentation.

This will be an open competitive tender to deliver a fair, equitable and transparent opportunity for all potential suppliers, ultimately leading to better value for money and better solutions for HRC.

This procurement activity will run concurrently with the procurement of project technical and architectural design consultancy services.

HRCs project team will work directly with the appointed responder, this will include having clearly defined roles, responsibilities and deliverables.

The successful delivery of this project will rely on all involved parties working collaboratively together to achieve the projects intended outcomes. At times, this may include the appointed supplier participating in stakeholder/community engagement.

Procurement activity 2 – Project Technical Design & Architecture Capability

Please note – see above timeline

The objective of this procurement activity is to appoint consultants that will deliver the technical and architectural design of this project for the entirety of the full project. The respondent's technical expertise will bring strategic oversight, technical expertise and industry best practice to the project, helping HRC mitigate risk, optimise cost and ensure compliance with all regulatory and building code requirements.

This appointment will use a hybrid procurement process, consisting of an original RFI process followed by a full RFP process. This approach has been selected as responders must confirm and evidence that they meet the pre-conditions of the RFI to receive RFP documentation.

This will be an open competitive tender process to deliver a fair, equitable and transparent opportunity for all potential suppliers, ultimately leading to better value for money and better solutions.

This procurement activity will run concurrently with the procurement activity to appoint services for project planning and development.

HRCs project team will work closely with the appointed supplier and as part of this partnership each group will clearly understand their roles, responsibilities and deliverables.

The successful delivery of this project will rely on all involved parties working collaboratively together, at times this may include stakeholder/community engagement.

The following procurement options were assessed. This was based on dollar value of procurement and alignment to government procurement rules.

Tender Approach	Yes	No	Rationale
Open tender – RFP	X	X	Time constrains within the project. Not knowing many responses we could get. Not enough time to do full reference checks. Inability to have one supplier to have ie, may have to contract multiple services.
Closed tender – RFI followed by RFP	X	X	Not fit for purpose - not enough market information/knowledge of potential suppliers.
Hybrid Open RFI – closed RFP	✓	X	Fairness and transparency to the market for the open RFI. Strict pre-conditions to be meet with evidence to be considered for the shortlist to closed RFP this ensures no bias shown from any evaluation panel member.

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			<p>Maximum of 5 shortlisted to closed RFP ensures we are not wasting time, effort & cost to respond.</p> <p>Maximum of five RFPs ensures efficient management of time to know what needs to be assessed and ability to appoint quickly following a robust tender process.</p>
Direct Source – exemption required	X	X	<p>Not fit for purpose - we did not have enough information on the market.</p> <p>Also know that there would be a lot of potential supplier candidates.</p>
AOG Panel	X	X	AOG does not have a panel for all services required for the construction and build and would therefore need to do multiple secondary selection panels.
RFQ	X	X	Not fit for purpose - need to assess skill sets as well as cost.

Procurement Activity 3 - Legal Services

The purpose of these procurement activity is to directly appoint appropriate legal services for the project.

Direct appointment procurements are non-competitive and explicitly exclude non-selected suppliers from the work.

Exemptions from the direct appoint thresholds can be made with good justification on a case by case basis. This will focus on the ability to enable an efficient and cost-effective solution under the circumstances, consistent with HRC strategic objectives.

Key considerations for a direct sourcing tender approach include;

- They knew the business and have worked with HRC previously.
- Their experience of working with local Government and Local Government building projects will be a key consideration.
- They are geographically local to HRC.
- HRC know their price rates/cards, this will help reduce negotiation times and therefore overall spend.

The following procurement options were assessed. This was based on dollar value of procurement and alignment to government procurement rules.

Tender Approach	Yes	No	Rationale
Open tender – RFP	X	X	<p>Time constrains.</p> <p>Not knowing many responses we could get.</p> <p>Not enough time to do full reference checks.</p> <p>Inability to have one supplier to have ie, may have to contract multiple services.</p>
Closed tender – RFI followed by RFP	X	X	Not fit for purpose - not enough market information/knowledge of potential suppliers.
Direct Source – exemption required	✓	X	Already know entity - they have provided several years of legal advice/services to HRC.

			<p>Are experienced in working with Local Government and Local Government Building Projects.</p> <p>Ability to hit the ground running and provide legal advice immediately.</p> <p>A change in supplier would cause significant inconvenience or substantial duplication of costs to HRC.</p> <p>Price rates/cards are known to HRC, this will help reduce negotiation times and therefore overall spend.</p>
AOG Panel	X	X	AOG does not have a panel for all services required for the construction and build and would therefore need to do multiple secondary selection panels.
RFQ	X	X	Not fit for purpose - need to assess skill sets as well as cost.

Procurement Activity 4 – Quantity Surveyor Services

The purpose of this procurement activity is to run a closed tender procurement to appoint appropriate Quantity Surveyor services for the project.

Closed tenders invite a small group of pre-selected suppliers to submit bids for the tender, meaning that non-selected suppliers cannot bid for the work.

Using a closed tender approach will aid HRC with efficiencies, for example, by having a smaller numbers of responders time taken to evaluate and appoint a supplier will be reduced. It will also help the project manage quality control, pre-selection of potential suppliers will be based on technical capability and experience and a proven track record as this vetting is done prior to inviting suppliers to bid. This will help HRC mitigate against risks around supplier reliability.

The following procurement options were assessed. This was based on dollar value of procurement and alignment to government procurement rules.

Tender Approach	Yes	No	Rationale
Open tender – RFP	X	X	<p>Time constrains.</p> <p>Not knowing many responses we could get.</p> <p>Not enough time to do full reference checks.</p> <p>Inability to have one supplier to have ie, may have to contract multiple services.</p>
Closed tender – RFI followed by RFP	✓	X	<p>Only suitable selected suppliers can bid for the tender.</p> <p>Suppliers available within the market who can provide these services.</p> <p>This will help ensure efficiencies for HRC and overall project.</p> <p>Time management – only inviting a small selected group of suppliers will help streamline the evaluation process of responders.</p>

			Quality control – because they are pre-selected HRC have assurance around reputation, experience and ability to deliver.
Direct Source – exemption required	X	X	Not fit for purpose – Direct source can at times lead to higher cost due to the restricted amount of competition.
AOG Panel	X	X	AOG does not have a panel for all services required for the construction and build and would therefore need to do multiple secondary selection panels.
RFQ	X	X	Not fit for purpose - need to assess skill sets as well as cost.

Procurement Activity 5 – Early Construction Phase (Indicative June – Sept 2025)

The purpose of this procurement activity is to appoint construction services for the project. This will be an open tender process and we are aiming to have this activity completed prior to detailed design sign offs. This will help mitigate and reduce the likelihood of overall project delays because handovers between suppliers will have occurred and it will enable the construction team to have excellent understanding of requirements and project timeline.

By using an open tender process HRC will be able to test the market more thoroughly, this means having better understanding of capabilities and pricing trends within the industry. This will support transparency and competitive pricing helping ensure better value for money.

The following procurement options were assessed. This was based on dollar value of procurement and alignment to government procurement rules.

Tender Approach	Yes	No	Rationale
Open tender – RFP	✓	X	<p>Increased competition, leading to more competitive pricing and better value for money.</p> <p>Supports innovation – a wider pool of responders encourages more innovative responses.</p> <p>Transparency – this can be vital if the project/cost is open to public scrutiny.</p> <p>Market testing – it allows the buyer to test the full market in regard to capabilities and pricing.</p>
Closed tender – RFI followed by RFP	X	X	<p>Only selected suppliers can participate within the tender.</p> <p>This will help ensure efficiencies for HRC and overall project.</p> <p>Time management – only inviting a small selected group of suppliers will help streamline the evaluation process of responders.</p> <p>Quality control – because they are pre-selected HRC have assurance around reputation, experience and ability to deliver.</p>
Direct Source – exemption required	X	X	<p>Not fit for purpose – HRC do not have enough understanding of the construction industry/market.</p> <p>Direct Source can at times lead to higher costs due to the restricted amount of competition.</p>

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AOG Panel	X	X	AOG does not have a panel for all services required for the construction and build and would therefore need to do multiple secondary selection panels.
RFQ	X	X	Not fit for purpose - need to assess skill sets as well as cost.

Report No.	25-90
Decision Required	

PRE-ELECTION PERIOD COMMUNICATION STRATEGY

1. PURPOSE

- 1.1. The purpose of this report is to provide a brief preliminary outline of the timetable for the 2025 Triennial Local Body Elections, note the advice from Taituarā about communications in a pre-election period and, having regard to that advice, recommend a Pre-Election Communications Strategy, with regard to councillor profiles for Horizons Regional Council in the run up to the 2025 elections.

2. RECOMMENDATION

It is recommended that Council:

- a. receives the information contained in Report No. 25-90 and Annexes;
- b. receives the preliminary timetable for the required procedures for the elections (refer Annex A);
- c. approves Horizons Regional Council's "Pre-Election Communications Strategy" through the pre-election period from 11 July 2025 to 11 October 2025 (refer Annex C); and
- d. receives the relevant section attached from the Taituarā Code of Good Practice for the Management of Local Authority Elections and Polls (Communications in the pre-election period) document and agrees that Horizons' communication staff follow these guidelines to make decisions in the pre-election period (refer Annex D).

3. FINANCIAL IMPACT

- 3.1. There is no financial impact.

4. COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

- 4.1. The community will be widely informed about the 2025 local body elections through national and regional publicity campaigns encouraging people to stand for council, enrol on the electoral roll, and reminding electors to vote in these elections.

5. SIGNIFICANT BUSINESS RISK IMPACT

- 5.1. There is no significant business risk associated with this strategy.

6. CLIMATE IMPACT STATEMENT

- 6.1. As this item deals with administrative matters, there is no direct climate impact statement.

7. COMMENT

- 7.1. The local body elections will be held on Saturday, 11 October 2025. The process of preparing for the elections has now commenced.

- 7.2. A timetable for the election processes is set out in Annex A. At the 25 March 2025 Council meeting (report 25-33), Horizons Regional Council appointed Warwick Lampp from Electionz.com as Electoral Officer for local council elections. This is in line with Section 12(1), 12(2) and 12(3) of the Local Electoral Act 2001. Horizons Regional Council Deputy Electoral Officer will act as Electoral Officer if the current electoral officer “resigns, is dismissed from office or becomes incapable of acting” (section 13 LEA 2001). A schedule of provisions applying to the electoral officer is provided at Annex B.
- 7.3. The Electoral Officer has considered what should be done in terms of publicising the fact of the elections, the role of Horizons, and candidate information. Because of the widespread geography of the region it was not deemed practical to have meetings for prospective candidates on the role of councillors and Horizons Regional Council. However, the electoral officers for the territorial authorities (TAs) within the region, have agreed to include this information on behalf of Horizons, when they hold meetings for potential candidates. It is intended that an electoral official from Horizons will also attend these meetings to answer any specific questions that may be asked. Any requests for information about standing for Horizons will be handled by the Electoral Officer on a case by case basis, and an overall publicity programme is outlined at Annex C.
- 7.4. Following on from Council’s decision in May 2021 and the subsequent Representation Review completed in April 2022, Horizons Regional Council established two Māori constituencies: Raki Māori and Tonga Māori. These two Māori constituencies were part of the 2022 local body elections.
- 7.5. On 30 July 2024 the Local Government (Electoral Legislation and Māori wards/constituencies) was repealed which meant that Councils that had established Maori constituencies since 2021 had until 06 September 2024, to either:
- affirm the 2021 decision to establish Maori wards/constituencies and hold a binding poll at the 2025 elections, or
 - reverse their Maori wards/constituencies, with no requirement for a poll at the 2025 elections.
- 7.6. At the 27 August 2024 Council meeting, council resolved to affirm Maori constituencies for the 2025 election.
- 7.7. A referendum will take place along the 2025 local body elections on the future of these constituencies.
- 7.8. Advertising regarding the referendum has been included in the communications strategy (Annex C) and will include advertising on iwi and Māori radio stations. Staff will also work to communicate with tangata whenua via established relationships (e.g. iwi policy team). All advertising material prepared will be reviewed to ensure there is no undue influence favouring a specific party, candidate or binding poll outcome.
- 7.9. The TAs are responsible for maintenance of the ratepayer and residential electoral rolls and they also update and publicly notify roll qualification and procedures, and publicly notify when rolls are available for inspection. The TAs prepare and despatch voting papers on behalf of Horizons. They also count the votes at close of polling on 11 October 2025 with provisional results being advised to this Council as they become available following close of polling. Public notification of the final results as to who has been elected to Horizons Regional Council will be made by the Electoral Officer as soon as is practicable.

8. CANDIDATE INFORMATION PACKS

- 8.1. At each election the Council produces a Candidate Information Pack (CIP) which consists of an Election Handbook and Nomination form. This year’s CIP will be issued to all persons intending to stand as candidates for election to Horizons. The CIP will also be available at Candidate Information meetings held by TAs, on the Horizons’ website, at Horizons’

Service Centres, and from local authorities within Horizons' Region. The CIPs are designed to better inform any potential candidate with the necessary information about Horizons and the election process.

9. COMMUNICATION IN A PRE-ELECTION PERIOD

- 9.1. The pre-election period of three months for the 2025 local body elections, will cover the period from 11 July to 11 October 2025.
- 9.2. The relevant section of the Taituarā Code of Good Practice for the Management of Local Authority Elections and Polls relating to Communications in the pre-election period is attached at Annex D. These principles include:
 - 9.2.1. The operation of local authorities continues during the pre-election period. Elected members continue to have the right to govern and make decisions during the pre-election period.
 - 9.2.2. During the pre-election period, communities have the same legitimate need for information about their local authority's decisions and activities as at any other time; and
 - 9.2.3. Local authorities must not promote, or be perceived to promote, the prospects of any candidate, especially a sitting member. Using council resources for re-election of sitting members is unacceptable and potentially unlawful.
- 9.3. A local authority's communications policy should recognise the risk that communications about members, in their capacities as spokespersons for Council, during a pre-election period could result in the Member achieving an electoral advantage at ratepayers' expense.
- 9.4. Mass communications planned for the period include news releases, advertising (newspaper, radio, bus backs, digital and social media), and Horizons' website. There will also be a national advertising programme in addition to that undertaken at a regional level.
- 9.5. The Horizons website gives details of current elected members and will remain as current information during the election period. Other information currently available on the website will be retained.

10. SIGNIFICANCE

- 10.1. This is not a significant decision according to the Council's Policy on Significance and Engagement.

Cara Hesselin
ELECTORAL OFFICIAL

ANNEXES

- A 2025 Election Timetable
- B Electoral Officer Provisions - Local Electoral Act 2001
- C 2025 Communications Elections Strategy
- D Taituarā Communications In The Pre-Election Period

2025 Election Timetable

11 October 2025

3 July 2025	A Public Notice of Election will be placed on Horizons' website, advising the date of the election, seeking nomination of candidates for the eight constituencies in the Region and advising the closing date for nominations. (Sec 42, 52, 53 LEA)
4 July 2025	Nominations open (Sec 42 LEA)
1 August 2025	Nominations close (12 noon) (Sec 5 LEA, and reg 21 LER)
By 6 August 2025	A Public Notice will be placed on Horizons' website listing candidates for each constituency (Sec 65 LEA)
9 September – 22 September 2025	Voting papers forwarded by post (by Territorial Authorities)
11 October 2025	Election Day. Voting closes at 12 noon, and counting commences. Provisional results available as soon as practicable after close of voting. (Sec 85 LEA, reg 80A, LER)
8 October – 13 October 2022	Official count. (Sec 84 LEA)
15 October – 22 October 2025 <i>As soon as practicable</i>	Declaration of Result / Public Notice of results. (Sec 86 LEA)
By mid December 2025	Return of election expenses and donations forms (Sec 112A LEA)

LEA Local Electoral Act 2001
LER Local Electoral Regulations 2001

Local Electoral Act 2001 Provisions Relating to the Electoral Officer (Horizons Regional Council)

(Note: non-relevant paragraphs have been omitted from sections 14 and 15)

14 Rules applying to electoral officers, deputy electoral officers, and other electoral officials

- (1) An electoral officer, deputy electoral officer, or other electoral official is not subject to the directions of any local authority or community board in the exercise of powers or the carrying out of duties under this Act or regulations made under this Act.

15 General duties of electoral officer

- (1) An electoral officer is responsible for conducting every election or poll-
 - (a) falling within the description of the type of election or poll he or she was appointed to conduct; and
 - (b) to be held or taken within the local government area for which he or she was appointed to conduct elections and polls.
- (2) An electoral officer is responsible, in accordance with the provisions of this Act and regulations made under this Act, for-
 - (b) the publication of any public notice relating to elections and polls and the calling of nominations, required to be given:
 - (c) receiving nominations, candidate profile statements, and deposits required to be paid:
 - (f) the declaration of results:
 - (g) receiving returns of electoral donations and expenses:
 - (h) investigating possible offences and reporting alleged offences to the police.
- (3) The electoral officer has all the powers and duties conferred on the electoral officer by this Act or any other enactment.

Horizons Regional Council 2025 Elections – Overarching Communications Strategy

Election Overview

Local government elections voting is open from 9 September to 11 October 2025, with voters in the Horizons Region electing 14 councillors across eight constituencies for positions on Horizons Regional Council.

Horizons is also required to hold a referendum alongside the 2025 council elections on the future of its Māori constituencies. Horizons has had two Māori constituencies (Raki Māori and Tonga Māori) since the 2022 elections. This referendum will determine whether these constituencies continue beyond the 2025-2028 term.

The communications activities will be delivered in line with the three different stages of the election year: **Enrol** to vote, **Stand** for council, **Vote** for your councillors.

Strategic Objectives

- **Increase voter turnout** across the region, particularly among young people/those new to voting.
- **Boost candidate numbers** standing for council positions.
- **Raise awareness** of Horizons' role and distinction from city/district councils.
- **Educate communities** about the importance of regional councils.
- **Counter misinformation** regarding the Māori constituencies referendum to enable factually informed decision-making.

Phase 1: Enrol (1 April - 10 July 2025)

Focus: Getting people registered to vote

Priority Audiences:

- Youth
- Māori (general vs Māori roll options).
- Migrants eligible to vote

Key Activities:

- Media release
- Website updates with enrolment information
- Collaborative poster campaign with other councils
- Social media outreach

Phase 2: Stand (4 July - 1 August 2025)

Focus: Encouraging candidates

Priority Audiences:

- Young people interested in caring for the environment.
- Māori.
- First-time candidates.
- Community representatives.

Key Activities:

- Multi-platform advertising (digital, radio, print).
- Enhanced website resources.
- Promotional materials highlighting Horizons' unique role.
- Social media strategy (including potential new channel launch).

Phase 3: Vote (9 September - 11 October 2025)

Focus: Driving voter participation.

Priority Audiences:

- All enrolled voters, with emphasis on youth and Māori.
- People needing voting information and assistance.

Key Activities:

- Candidate video profiles on website.
- Comprehensive Māori constituencies referendum explainer information providing factual information about how the constituencies work and the referendum process..
- Voting location map (including location of orange voting bins).
- Final push media & advertising campaign.
- Social media engagement drive.

Strategic Partnerships

- **City/District Councils:** Collaborative messaging and shared resources.
- **Electoral Commission:** Coordination to avoid duplication and ensure compliance.

- **Media:** Engagement with media outlets in the region, including Māori media, to explain roll options, attract candidates and providing accurate referendum information.
- **Education institutions:** Reaching young and new residents.

Risk Management

- **Misinformation monitoring:** Particularly around the Māori constituencies referendum to ensure voters have access to accurate, factual information.
- **Electoral law compliance:** Careful candidate interaction protocols during the voting period.
- **Message coordination:** Ensuring consistency across multiple councils while respecting regional variation.
- **Media landscape changes:** Adapting to reduced local journalism capacity.

Success Measures

- Voter turnout increase compared to 2022.
- Number of candidates standing for election.
- Social media engagement metrics.
- Media coverage reach and frequency.

Innovation Opportunities

- Enhanced digital tools and platforms.
- Potential new social media channels for new audiences (e.g. TikTok).
- Collaborative regional approach with shared resources.



Communications in the pre-election period



Item 8.5

Annex D

FOREWORD

This guidance sets out principles and guidelines for local authorities and their members to apply when developing and delivering communications during the pre-election period. It may also assist elected members seeking to distinguish between their campaigning and council responsibilities.

It is important that local authorities be able to continue to operate effectively during the pre-election period, but additional care should be taken during this time. Public interest in, and scrutiny of, communications by councils and their elected members is likely to be greater during this period.

With the development of tools such as social media, guidance can not possibly contemplate every potential situation that may arise. As a result, this guidance is principle based – though there are a number of worked examples (based on real life issues that have arisen). These serve as a ‘common sense’ basis for the application of good judgement backed by appropriate advice.

There are cases or circumstances that are relatively clear cut. For example, elected members inserting personal statements or photos in the pre-election report is both a legislative breach and a breach of the principles set out in this guidance. For cases that are not as clear cut, the guidance provides some bottom lines to keep in mind when navigating the situation

Communications in the pre-election period

WHAT STATUS DOES THIS GUIDANCE HAVE?

The guidance represents good practice advice prepared by Taituarā. It has been reviewed by legal advisors and by staff at the Office of the Auditor-General.

Taituarā has no authority to receive or investigate allegations around local authority communications made during the pre-election period.

However, the Auditor-General remains interested in the appropriate use of council resources at all times. Use of council resources for personal or political purposes is not appropriate.

The Office of the Auditor-General is not the agency to take complaints about the veracity (or otherwise) of claims made in communications material, but it could choose to investigate where, for example, there are questions as to whether a council-funded communication was made for a proper purpose. In the latter case the Auditor-General may report their conclusions and make recommendations – they cannot direct local authorities to take (or not take) a particular action.

Local authorities and their members should also be aware that, in some cases, communications that breach the principles of the *Local Electoral Act 2001* could give rise to an irregularity in the election process. Such an irregularity may be used as grounds to challenge an election outcome under the *Local Electoral Act*.

WHAT IS THE PRE-ELECTION PERIOD?

For the purposes of this guidance, we've aligned the pre-election period to the definition of the 'applicable period' in *section 104* of the *Local Electoral Act 2001*. That is, the pre-election period starts three months from polling day. An election could be a triennial general election, by-election or less frequently, a poll.

WHAT IS A COMMUNICATION?

For the purposes of this guidance, a communication is any presentation of information by the council to its local community, regardless of the form in which the information is presented (e.g. documents, internet, spoken word etc).

Some common examples of a communication include but are not limited to:

- statutory documents such as an annual report (or its summary), long-term or annual plans (or their associated consultation documents)
- information contained on a council website about council plans, policies, bylaws, services, or information about council meetings (such as meeting agendas and minutes)
- newsletters and information releases providing council news and information about council activities
- educational material about issues affecting the community
- promotional material about a particular event, proposal or policy
- council administered social media channels (such as Facebook, YouTube, Twitter and the like)
- representing council in media interviews.

PRINCIPLES

- 1. The operation of local authorities continues during the pre-election period. Elected members continue to have the right to govern and make decisions during the pre-election period.***

There is no legal requirement that local authorities avoid making decisions in the pre-election period. Equally, there is no convention such as the so-called "period of restraint" that applies in central government or the so-called "purdah" that applies in local government in some jurisdictions in the United Kingdom.

In any case, routine business must continue. Some examples of routine business include the following:

- giving effect to decisions that have already been made. For example, implementing decisions in an already adopted long-term plan or annual plan (the necessary actions and funding have already been committed)
- meeting statutory requirements e.g. reviewing a bylaw that is due to expire or adopting some policy or bylaw where a deadline falls during the pre-election period (though this should be rare)
- preparing, adopting and publicly releasing reports or other documents that are statutory requirements (for example the pre-election report and annual report)
- releasing other factual information – especially where release regularly occurs during the pre-election period in other years (for example, where information of a monitoring or statistical nature is regularly released in August, September and October).¹

Councils can minimise the risks of undue and adverse public scrutiny of decision-making in the pre-election period by ensuring that, where practicable, significant decisions are made before the pre-election period commences or that officers have sufficient direction to continue to work on major projects during the pre-election period. Mechanisms such as providing a rolling programme of policy and bylaw reviews early in the triennium can help manage this and ensure the work gets done.

Sitting members with roles such as a mayor, council chair or council spokesperson on an issue may continue to make public statements on council business as they would outside the pre-election period.

During the pre-election period councils should take particular care to actively identify and manage risks associated with communications that might be used for political purposes (or be seen to be). For example, media interviews often contain elements of the unscripted where it is easy for politicians to slip into campaign mode unintentionally. If the risks can't be managed it may be less risky for the chief executive or communications manager to act as a spokesperson.

¹ Decisions to defer or alter releases of information in the pre-election period can give rise to the same claims of undue politicisation as decisions to communicate such information.

Communications in the pre-election period

2. *During the pre-election period, communities have the same legitimate need for information about their local authority's decisions and activities as at any other time.*

A legitimate provision of information consists of five key elements: timeliness, accuracy, completeness, fairness of expression and neutrality. Information is timely if it is provided either before an event or decision, or as soon as reasonably practicable thereafter. Accuracy means that information should be based on a verifiable fact, and recorded in a manner consistent with those facts. Completeness requires that all of the information necessary for readers to reasonably form a view on a matter is included. Information is fairly expressed if its presented in an objective, unbiased and equitable way. Neutrality in expression means that the council's collective position is expressed.

The council's 'usual' processes and timeframes for the preparation and release of information should continue to operate 'as normal' in the pre-election period. For example, staff who prepare responses to requests for official information should continue to follow the same timeframes they normally would. Decisions to defer or to expedite a request for information during the pre-election period can leave officers open to claims of bias that are mostly avoidable.

The *Local Government Act 2002* allows councils until 31 October to adopt an annual report. However it is not good practice for an incoming council to adopt a report on the performance of its predecessor. It is good practice to adopt an annual report before the elections – indeed around two-thirds of local authorities did so in the lead-up to the 2019 elections. (In 2022 all local authorities were given a two-month deferral on the adoption of an annual report – most adopted after the 2022 local elections.) Local authorities wanting to adopt pre-election should exercise caution in the use of comment from elected members, photos of elected members etc.

3. *Local authorities must not promote, or be perceived to promote, the prospects of any candidate, especially a sitting member. Using council resources for re-election of sitting members is unacceptable and potentially unlawful.*

The Office of the Auditor-General has previously noted that promoting the re-election prospects of a sitting member, whether directly or indirectly, wittingly or unwittingly, is not part of the proper role of a local authority. We can only agree with what should be a statement of the obvious. This includes allowing sitting members to use council resources for election purposes.

While much less likely to arise, it would also be entirely inappropriate for a local authority to, in any way, promote any other candidates for an election. Again, council resources cannot be used for such electioneering purposes.

Council resources include assets and services such as stationery, post, internet, council provided email/social media accounts or telephones. If in doubt as to whether something is a council provided resource, a good question to ask is whether the council purchases or funds it. For example, a council funded radio slot would be regarded as a council resource.

Election activities carried out at council facilities are similarly unacceptable, except where these facilities are open to hire by the general public (for example, community halls) and the candidate is meeting the standard terms for using the facility.

If in doubt, it's usually a good idea to take a precautionary approach. It doesn't mean that elected members can not use a council's resources for normal activities but care is needed as the boundaries between answering a ratepayer query and campaigning can be difficult to navigate. For example, it's legitimate for an elected member to use a council email to defend a council decision or action, or even to explain their own position on a decision where different from other elected members. But doing the latter without slipping into campaign mode can sometimes be difficult during the pre-election period.

CASE STUDIES: THE PRINCIPLES IN ACTION

Example One: Appearances in a council-funded radio slot

Manu is the Mayor of the Kiwi District Council. Kiwi District Council pays for a fortnightly radio spot on Eastland FM. The mayor and the Eastland FM director of news talk about issues facing Kiwi District and other issues in the Eastland Region.

A month out from the election, Manu appears on the radio show 'as usual'. His interview covers a range of topics – including a change to the council's recycling policy, the first instalment of rates for the year, and the council's joining in the Eastland economic development CCO. Manu answers these questions drawing on a series of talking points prepared by council staff that reflect the existing council policy.

A fortnight from the election Manu appears again. This time the interview occurs the night after a candidates' debate in which the mayor's opponent (local business leader IB Sharp) described the council's financial management as an "uninterrupted retreat from reality". Among regular questions such as the Prime Minister's visit to Kiwi District and answering ratepayer questions on recycling, the interviewer asks if Manu wants to respond to Ms Sharp's comments.

Manu replies with a comment that, "rates have gone up an average 10 percent across the district in this term, debt's increased but we've funded the recycling transfer station, and the new Kiwi bypass. We haven't had to lay anyone off, unlike Ms Sharp recently did. If I'm re-elected, I'll reduce the council debt by a third in the next term".

Ms Sharp releases a statement deploring Manu's regular misuse of a council resource for political purposes.

Is she right?

In the first interview, Manu did nothing more than state and explain the council policy. On the facts presented, Manu has not made any statements that could be seen as anything beyond a spokesperson's role.

Manu's statements during the second interview have elements of campaigning. Manu's statements about the average rates increase, the increase in debt and what the debt was applied to are factual (assuming they were correct). A council spokesperson would normally be required to provide factual information about council performance.

The statement about the council not having to lay off any staff may well be factual, as indeed may the layoffs in Ms Sharp's business. But the latter has little or nothing to do with any council activity. By linking or comparing the two, Manu has, however inadvertently, used a council resource for campaign purposes.

In a similar vein, in using the personal pronoun "I" and referencing his own re-election in his statement about future council debt ("If I'm re-elected, I'll..."), Manu would almost certainly be seen as making a campaign pledge. Had Manu said something like "the council's current financial strategy has debt forecast to reduce by a third over the next term", he would have been providing a factual statement about the forecast impacts of present policy.

Communications in the pre-election period

This example, while having fictional elements, provides a good example of challenges that sitting elected members may face when in a role as a council spokesperson during the pre-election period. It illustrates how easily the line between legitimate council communications and campaigning can be crossed, sometimes unintentionally.

These situations usually occur spontaneously and cannot be easily predicted. While normal council business continues during the pre-election period, risks must be actively managed. There may be less risk in Kiwi District's Chief Executive filling the slot, or perhaps getting an elected member who is not standing again, or has been re-elected unopposed to do the interview.

Example Two: Use of a council vehicle

Lucy is the chair of the Eastland Regional Council. Her remuneration package includes the use of a council-provided motor vehicle (assume this is all in accordance with Remuneration Authority guidelines). The car has the Eastland Regional Council logo painted on the front door on each side.

Campaigning has started. One night Lucy's teenage son returns from a stint handing out campaign collateral and places a 'Re-elect Lucy' sticker on the car's rear bumper. Lucy does not notice the sticker and drives around Eastland Region for the next week before a local journalist sees the car at the council office, takes a cellphone photo of it, and runs it in the newspaper the following day.

On seeing the story the council's electoral officer asks Lucy to remove the sticker.

What should Lucy do?

Lucy should remove the sticker to avoid any appearance of using council resources for her campaign advertising. While there is some element of de minimis (the law does not bother with trifles), in the pre-election period it is probably 'better to be safe than sorry'.

It would be up to Lucy to decide whether she might seek to respond to the newspaper story about the sticker. If she were to do so, it would be in the context of her campaign, not in her role as chair.

Example Three: Use of council-owned facilities

Ted is a councillor at the Weka District Council and the council's local economy spokesperson. His campaign manager has booked two campaign meetings in two council-owned halls. Both halls are open for any member of the public to book – subject to payment of the applicable fee. The campaign manager booked the venue and paid the fee on 31 August i.e. during the pre-election period.

Ted's opponent, I M Wright, claims Ted is using council resources for campaign purposes. The council's chief executive responds pointing out that Ted's campaign paid the same fee as any other user, and that Wright (and any other candidate) could book the halls. She declines to take further action.

Who is correct?

In this instance the chief executive is correct. While the halls are council-owned, they are open to booking by any person who pays the fee and meets the Council's standard terms and conditions. As long as Ted and his campaign have paid the fee and met any relevant conditions in the same way that any other person hiring the venue would need to, this is not considered a council resource for the purpose of this guidance.

Had the council extended use of the halls for free or not made the halls available to other candidates on the same terms as they did for Ted, that would be a potentially serious issue.

Of course, Ted should ensure the payment of the booking fee is properly documented and recorded as a campaign expense for *Local Electoral Act* purposes.

Example Four: Candidate use of social media

Councillor Playne is a member of Kiwi District Council and chair of the Finance Committee. She runs a personal Facebook page 'Playne Speaking' in which she comments on issues of the day. The council has recently adopted a service delivery plan in which it proposes to join Eastland Water, a regional water services CCO being established by the three Eastland Region TAs. The Anti-Privatisation League of Aotearoa (APLA) has endorsed a mayoral candidate and a slate of five anti-water CCO council candidates.

A week before election day, Cr Playne posts two comments on Facebook. In the first she posts on her own Facebook page to comment on a press release put out by the APLA comparing the council's recent decision to "privatisation by stealth". Her post includes a link to APLA's Facebook page with a 'thumbs down' emoji and states: "Speaking for myself, I have better things to do than debate the policy equivalent of the flat earth society when they're so obviously wrong. Get a life APLA!" We'll call this the APLA Post.

In the second instance, she comments on a post by the council on the council's Facebook page celebrating the first anniversary of the Upper Creek branch library opening. She 'likes' the post on the council's page and comments: "Happy anniversary! It was a real battle to convince the other members that Upper Creek needed a library. Re-elect me and I'll get the town a pool." We'll call this the Library Post.

Do these posts contravene these guidelines?

Councillor Playne's post about APLA, while somewhat aggressively worded, is not contrary to these guidelines. She has used a personal social media account and clearly identified that she is not speaking on behalf of the Council in response to material on a social media site not associated with council. The rest of the comment is a matter for democratic debate and henceforth for the voters to judge.

The Upper Creek Library post is a little different. Here Councillor Playne has commented on a council post on a council social media site (which is a council resource). The last sentence is obviously a campaign pledge and therefore puts this post into the campaigning category. The second sentence also has elements of campaigning in that it suggests a particular service choice might not have been made without Councillor Playne's intervention. Council would then be justified in deleting Councillor Playne's comment on the post. Council is entitled to edit its own Facebook page to ensure this council resource remains 'neutral', i.e. not supporting/promoting or criticising any election candidate.

Communications in the pre-election period

But suppose Cr Playne had just 'liked' the post, or 'liked' and said "*Happy anniversary*". In and of itself, that isn't necessarily campaigning. In other words, an assessment of these cases turns on what the candidate has **actually communicated** in such a post.

What about members (or others) using their personal social media accounts to link to the council's account? Suppose, for the sake of clarity, that Councillor Playne had used a personal social media tool such as Twitter to 're-tweet' a Twitter communication from the Council regarding the anniversary of the Upper Creek Library, and that Councillor Playne made the same campaigning comment described in the above example.

While Councillor Playne has linked to a Council social media site she's done so using her own account. The information she has accessed is a general communication about council services available to anyone with a social media account, and therefore can be used by any candidate (and indeed any other member of the public). It does not necessarily amount to the council promoting Councillor Playne (or anyone else).

While council resource (such as staff time) has been used to produce the communication, this expenditure has already occurred regardless of whether Councillor Playne had posted or not. In this instance, the information is quite obviously a communication to inform the public of a significant date in the Upper Creek community, and even in the pre-election period, it would be pretty difficult to suggest that it amounts to a promotion of a candidate.

At this point readers may ask what the council might do in this circumstance? If feasible, it may delete any post **on its own social media account** (note it can delete other people's comments on its Facebook page, although cannot typically delete other people's re-Tweets). It could potentially ask Councillor Playne to delete a communication on or from her own personal social media account, but it cannot enforce such a request (and indeed if she's circulating publicly available information there is probably a larger reputational risk from making such a request).

Example Five: Release of statistical information

The Upper Creek District Council releases the 'Upper Creek 2030 – Community Outcomes report on or around September 20 each year. The release date is driven by the release of data from Stats NZ (mid-late August) which is not within council's control.

(For the purposes of this example assume the release date each year is within a week either side – it is council's practice to release information like this on a Wednesday.)

The report effectively provides the results of the monitoring the council has done of progress its community outcomes for the year ended 30 June prior.

The report is a compilation of statistical information drawn from sources at Stats NZ, NIWA, Waka Kotahi etc. This is accompanied by analysis and commentary from the staff under the CEs signature. Elected members are provided a copy 'for information' only.

The data is keenly sought after by ratepayer groups, local media and the council's partners in achieving community outcomes.

In February 2025, a new manager asks your advice as to whether release of the 2025 report should be delayed?

What would you advise?

Communications in the pre-election period

This is a good example of the community having rights to information to hold councils accountable at all times. Release when ready is consistent with the above guidelines. The release is regularly undertaken on the same (or similar) dates – delaying or deferring may risk claims of politicisation – especially where the report might contain matters that are ‘good’ or ‘bad news’.

Further adding to this stance is that the report is statistical and monitoring in nature. The elected members have little or no role in the preparation – it’s an officer document signed by the chief executive. The release date is largely driven by the release of data from an independent third party.



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Report No.	25-91
Decision Required	

UPDATE ON HORIZONS APPROACH TO PEST MANAGEMENT

1. PURPOSE

- 1.1. The purpose of this item is to provide an update on Horizons' approach to pest management, including progress on the Regional Pest Management Plan (RPMP) review, and to seek endorsement in principle of current work programmes.
- 1.2. This report also outlines key topics discussed during a Council workshop on 30 April 2025.

2. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

- 2.1. A workshop was held on 30 April 2025 to discuss our role in New Zealand's biosecurity system, our approaches to biosecurity, and the RPMP review process.
- 2.2. Staff sought feedback on a proposal to prepare a biosecurity strategy in conjunction with the RPMP review. Staff also provided updates on the key work streams currently being progressed in order to produce and consult on a RPMP discussion document.
- 2.3. During the workshop Councillors identified key issues they are hearing from their communities regarding biosecurity, and identified stakeholders for Council to engage with on biosecurity projects.

3. RECOMMENDATION

It is recommended that Council:

- a. receives the information contained in Report No. 25-91 and Annex.
- b. endorses in principle the key work programmes identified in Section 9 of this report, relating to preparing a biosecurity strategy and producing and consulting on a Regional Pest Management Plan (RPMP) discussion document.

4. FINANCIAL IMPACT

- 4.1. The RPMP review budget for the 2024/25 year was \$200,000. This has been used to fund the **Better Biosecurity Solutions Limited (BBSL)**, project planning, staff time, legal advice and technical work.
- 4.2. The RPMP review budget for the 2025/26 financial year is \$204,400. This is intended to be spent on staff time for preparing a discussion document and biosecurity strategy, legal advice, promotional material for the discussion document, technical advice and costs associated with engagement.
- 4.3. The total forecasted cost of the RPMP review is \$878,600. This amount has been allocated through to the end of 27/28. If forecasts change as the project progresses this will be communicated to Council.
- 4.4. The cost of preparing a biosecurity strategy is intended to be absorbed from the RPMP review budget, with the key cost being staff time. The intention is to produce this document in-house.

5. COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

- 5.1. Community engagement is a key component of the RPMP review. Engagement is proposed during both the discussion document phase and the proposal phase as outlined in the project plan.
- 5.2. Key stakeholders, including iwi/hapū and Territorial Authorities, will be consulted throughout the process. Initial engagement with these groups has already been initiated, as discussed in Section 9 of this report.
- 5.3. Under Section 72 of the Biosecurity Act, Council must be satisfied that appropriate consultation has been undertaken. This is a statutory requirement and will be addressed at key points in the review process.
- 5.4. Council approval will be sought at key points in the process. Supporting documents will be provided at each stage to inform Council decision making.
- 5.5. In relation to the biosecurity strategy, staff intend to seek Council approval to consult on the draft strategy at the same time as the RPMP discussion document to ensure alignment and efficient engagement.

6. SIGNIFICANT BUSINESS RISK IMPACT

- 6.1. There is no significant business risk impact associated with this item.
- 6.2. The proposed approach to the RPMP review contributes to ensuring Council's obligations under s100D of the Act (and as relevant when carrying out the review, ss68-78 of the Act) are met.
- 6.3. Key work programmes identified in this report align with Strategy and Policy Committee resolutions on 12 November 2024 ("*approves the commencement of the work programme associated with the Regional Pest Management Plan review*" and "*endorses the proposed phases identified for the review in principle*"), and discussions at the workshop on 30 April 2025.

7. CLIMATE IMPACT STATEMENT

- 7.1. There is no direct climate impact associated with this item.
- 7.2. Pest management in general contributes to climate resilience by protecting indigenous biodiversity.

8. BACKGROUND

- 8.1. A review of the RPMP must be initiated from 26 September 2027 under s100D of the Act as the plan will last have been reviewed as a whole more than 10 years previously.
- 8.2. A workshop was undertaken on 1 October 2024 to familiarise Council with the relevant components of the Act and the proposed process to undertaking the RPMP review. A further workshop on the 30 October provided a presentation and opportunity for discussion about the evaluation report prepared by BBSL.
- 8.3. On 12 November 2024 a report went to the Strategy and Policy Committee to inform Council of the findings from the BBSL evaluation, to seek approval for the initiation of the review, and to seek endorsement of the proposed timeline of the review in principle.

- 8.4. Four phases were approved by Council as part of the review work programme. These consist of:
- Phase 1 – Project establishment (Jan 2024 – Nov 2024) - completed
 - Phase 2 – Discussion document (Nov 2024 – mid 2026)
 - Phase 3 – Preparation of a RPMP proposal (mid 2026 – Sept 2027)
 - Phase 4 – RPMP decision (Oct 2027 – Jul 2028)
- 8.5. The key work programmes identified in Section 9 of this report are primarily to ensure the project plan requirements for Phase 2 are successfully completed.
- 8.6. Phase 2 builds on the BBSL evaluation of the RPMP. It involves the preparation of, and feedback on, the discussion document. The discussion document is intended to bridge the gap between our operative RPMP and what will ultimately be the review proposal document, setting out some issues found through the evaluation and options that might be used to address them as part of the review process. It will also set out what biosecurity management means when using the RPMP and define the scope of what is achievable. Any feedback received will be used by officers to scope the review proposal.
- 8.7. Council will determine when to release the discussion document for consultation.

9. KEY WORK PROGRAMMES

- 9.1. This section outlines key work programmes that staff are progressing in order to implement Phase 2 discussion document, and to prepare a biosecurity strategy.
- 9.2. **Further Evaluation/Gap Analysis of the operative RPMP**
- 9.3. The purpose of the further evaluation/gap analysis is to undertake some of the additional work recommended in the BBSL evaluation and to help to confirm the scope of the RPMP review. A gap analysis table will be produced to reflect the variety of views heard thus far about potential management programmes, and the technical information that has been developed. This will help to identify where options can be presented in the discussion document, and where further technical work is required. This work also includes:
- Assessing the current RPMP in the regional context, including Treaty settlement legislation, iwi and hapū planning documents, and the One Plan.
 - Assessing internal agreement with the BBSL recommendations relating to individual pest species.
 - Incorporating legal input around matters such as the Good Neighbour and Clear Land Rules, and Approved Management Plans, particularly in terms of enforceability.
 - Continuing discussions with technical experts from Horizons' Biosecurity Team, including sense checking of findings from the BBSL evaluation report.
 - Incorporating technical and operational reports.
- 9.4. Due to the timing of the upcoming local government elections, there will be a period during which Council will not be available to make decisions. To ensure continuity of the RPMP review process, officers propose that if required the Steering Group approve the continuation of evaluation work during this period. Final approval would then be sought from the incoming Council following the elections — ideally after an RPMP induction has been provided to new elected members.

9.5. Elected members involvement

9.6. A workshop with elected members was undertaken on 30 April 2025, as previously mentioned in this report. Feedback collected from the workshop will assist with preparing the discussion document and engagement. A summary of Councillor feedback is provided as Annex A to this report.

9.7. A future workshop is intended to be held after the local body elections to provide an opportunity for new elected members to both get up to speed on the process, and to provide a further project update.

9.8. Workshops with elected members will be held at key points throughout the process to keep elected members abreast of progress and provide opportunities for input.

9.9. Regular updates are to be provided to the Strategy & Policy Committee.

9.10. Council will determine when to release the discussion document for consultation.

9.11. Iwi/Hapū and Stakeholder Engagement

9.12. An initial letter was sent to iwi/hapū in March 2024 seeking to understand the extent to which involvement in the process was sought and to inform groups of the proposed review process. No responses were received as a result of this letter.

9.13. In March 2025, a second letter was sent out, which also included a fact sheet. This letter included a more detailed overview of the review process and included links to the Better Biosecurity Solutions evaluation. Again, the letter sought involvement in the review process, and also asked for any specific feedback on the Better Biosecurity Solutions evaluation. At the time of writing, one response has been received from Te Runanga o Tamaupoko.

9.14. In March 2025, a letter was sent to a list of key stakeholders identified by the Project Control Group. This letter sought stakeholder involvement in the process and asked whether they would like to be kept informed, to provide written feedback, or to actively engage. It provided an overview of the process and included a link to the Better Biosecurity Solutions evaluation with a request for specific feedback on that evaluation. A number of responses have been received through the RPMP designated email address. These responses have primarily been to provide a key contact or to acknowledge the letter.

9.15. Engagement will be ongoing throughout the whole project, in accordance with the project plan.

9.16. Integrated Catchment Management (ICM)

9.17. Staff are in the early stages of considering opportunities for an ICM approach to the RPMP Review.

9.18. Drafting of the Discussion Document

9.19. This is scheduled to occur during September to November 2025. This piece of work will be informed by the above work programmes and the BBSL evaluation of the operative RPMP.

9.20. Biosecurity strategy

9.21. As discussed at the 30 April 2025 workshop, a biosecurity strategy is proposed to be developed. This document is intended to be a piece of high-level direction, sitting above Horizons' regulatory and non-regulatory work. The document would make reference to other documents and work programmes. It is intended that this document would explain that the RPMP is only one of the tools we have available to us, the roles of other parties (such as the Ministry for Primary Industries and Territorial Authorities), and where to find further resources.

- 9.22. It would also inform readers about how to raise emerging pest management issues with Horizons. Currently, this will be through engaging with the RPMP review process, including the discussion document. We intend for the document to be reviewed after the new RPMP is made operative, including providing a new process for raising emerging pest management issues.

10. CONSULTATION

- 10.1. As outlined in this report, consultation has occurred, and will continue to occur, with key stakeholders.
- 10.2. The work programmes outlined in this report involve internal staff from the policy and strategy, biosecurity, science, and communication teams.

11. TIMELINE / NEXT STEPS

- 11.1. Staff intend to continue to progress the key work programmes discussed in this report, in order to progress the RPMP review programme in accordance with the Council resolution on 12 November 2024.
- 11.2. A workshop is intended to be held after the local body elections to provide an opportunity for new elected members to both get up to speed on the process, and to provide a further project update.
- 11.3. A workshop is intended to be held in early 2026 on the draft discussion document and draft biosecurity strategy. Council resolution will then be sought to undertake consultation.

12. SIGNIFICANCE

- 12.1. This is not a significant decision according to the Council's Policy on Significance and Engagement.

Maria Reiche
POLICY ANALYST

Robert Marshall
SENIOR POLICY ANALYST

Craig Davey
BIODIVERSITY, BIOSECURITY AND PARTNERSHIPS MANAGER

Dr Lizzie Daly
GROUP MANAGER STRATEGY, REGULATION AND SCIENCE

Dr Jon Roygard
GROUP MANAGER CATCHMENT OPERATIONS

ANNEXES

- A Notes from Council workshop 30/04/25

Notes from council workshop 30/04/2025

General comments

- Want a visual of integration of pest management within the strategic doc
- Strategic principles for pest management which sit under LTP outcomes. How we will do what we can do.
- **Action:** upload to the hub the BBSL recommendations/report
- Pita could try ringing iwi/hapū for engagement
- Investigation of various poisons and timing in relation to deer exportation

Pest plants for consideration

- Old man's beard x3 (be good to see information shared on biocontrol release and success rate)
- Gorse (needs to be managed before it takes hold and gets away)
- Plants bordering National Park (e.g. Old man's beard)
- Phragmites (localised approach?)
- Broom
- Yellow bristlegrass
- Needlegrass

Pest animals for consideration

- Rabbits x3 (everywhere, widespread)
- Samba on Manawatū dune country
- Deer x2 (widespread, eating up bush area)
- Possums x2 (patchy performance; ood control where being treated but pockets of untreated areas where they are bad, encroaching rapidly where none for 20 years)
- Deer meat (hunting -> food opportunity)
- Wasps?
- Domestic animals – cats
- Fish & Game

- Pest fish? (trout, carp, do we need trout everywhere?)
- Rooks

Process issues/considerations

- Limited list of pest plants in RPMP
- Weeds importing from outside the region from trucks etc., how do we mitigate this?
- Enforce the GNR
- How to manage community expectations with limited budgets
- In favour of 1080 drops
- Control of pest corridors on crown land, roads and rail networks
- Crown as good neighbour
- Balance between generalised control vs total eradication in select areas
- How we fund local interventions
- How to deal with the fact there are more pests and pest problems than there is money to deal with it
- Earlier intervention of new pests
- Thriving nature is first line of climate protection
- More adaptive enforcement. Action is a stitch in time.
- Holding the line
- Clarity on urban biosecurity/pest management
- Keep pests affecting biodiversity as a priority
- Fish passage onwards and upwards
- Better buffer zones/control in neighbouring regions (e.g. rooks, yellow bristlegrass, needle grass)
- Predator free movement – how we support/lead
- Biosecurity Community Fund (separate to KKT)
- Training of all staff who work in the field to be able to identify pest issues. E.g. possum control staff/contractors aware of pest plants and report on them

Localised issues

- Not sure how to bring focus to local issues
- Pests in Lake Horowhenua
- Pest management at icon sites is a priority for species/habitats (future reintroduction)
- Priority habitats – keep safe from pests. Site-led designation.
- Working with DOC – crown land pest management issue costing us

Māori perspectives

- Importance of pest management
- Direct involvement of iwi/hapū on the ground
- Iwi and hapū pest management in own rohe (procurement process)

Key stakeholders

- Federated Farmers
- Academics (e.g. Massey University)
- DOC
- Enviroschools? Schools? Younger generation
- Deerstalkers association (pest food manufacturers)
- Iconic site groups
- Local non-profits (small NGOs)
- Green corridors?
- People that have submitted to LTP/AP about pest management
- Environment groups x2 (ENM etc.)
- Make good use of catchment care groups
- Visit groups where possible and invite councillors to help run that process
- Whole of government (e.g. MPI, DOC, NZTA, LINZ)
- Māori Land Incorporations

-
- Māori Land Trusts
 - Community groups
 - Predator free
 - Our wild coastal environment (e.g. Foxton-Himatangi)
 - Coast care groups
 - Local officers

Report No.	25-92
Information Only - No Decision Required	

STATE OF THE ENVIRONMENT SYNTHESIS REPORT 2025

1. PURPOSE

- 1.1. The purpose of this paper is to present to Council the 2025 State of Environment Synthesis Report and release the report to the public.

2. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

- 2.1. Horizons' State of Environment (SoE) Synthesis Reports provide an overview of the state and trends of the region's environment, as required every five years under Section 35 of the Resource Management Act 1991.
- 2.2. The 2025 report synthesises monitoring data, research, and technical work completed since 2019, highlighting community actions, environmental issues, and gaps in the organisation's environmental knowledge, including mātauranga Māori.
- 2.3. There are three primary chapters, focusing on Air, Land, and Water, as well as a comprehensive case study on Cyclone Gabrielle and its impact on the region, including both the environment and people.
- 2.4. The report supports decision-making, policy development, accountability, and public education, and references 70 sources for further reading. An outline of the report and key topics were presented at Council workshops in February and April 2025.

3. RECOMMENDATION

It is recommended that Council:

- a. receives the information contained in Report No. 25-92 and Annex.

4. FINANCIAL IMPACT

- 4.1. There is no financial impact associated with recommendations in this paper.

5. COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

- 5.1. Between July and September 2024, the Horizons' Science and Communications team ran a Creative Arts Competition, requesting artistic submissions that express how nature contributes to our communities' wellbeing. We received over 200 submissions, providing insights into the ways communities interact with, rely on, and otherwise value the environment, which have been reported in the 2025 SoE Synthesis Report.
- 5.2. Some of the artwork submitted through the Creative Arts Competition is presented within the report including the winning entry on the front cover.
- 5.3. Members of the reporting team spoke with iwi representatives at the Oranga Wai | Our Freshwater Future hui on 22 August 2024 on how Horizons should acknowledge mātauranga Māori in our reporting. The conversations at the hui helped shape the mātauranga Māori section of the document.

6. SIGNIFICANT BUSINESS RISK IMPACT

- 6.1. No significant business risk has been identified.

7. CLIMATE IMPACT STATEMENT

- 7.1. There is no or minimal climate change impact associated with the recommendations of this paper.
- 7.2. The report includes several references to climate change and its role in environmental change from both adaptation and mitigation perspectives. It also includes the influence of climate change on rainfall during Cyclone Gabrielle.

8. DISCUSSION

- 8.1. State of Environment (SoE) Synthesis Reports are published regularly to inform New Zealanders about the environment's health over a certain period and its changes over time. Legislation (Section 35 of the Resource Management Act 1991) requires Regional and Unitary Councils to publish a region-wide report every five years. Horizons last published an SoE Synthesis Report in 2019. A synthesis report is a document that distils (summarises) data and technical information from various sources to provide an overview of the Council's scientific understanding of the region's environment.
- 8.2. Horizons publishes SoE Synthesis Reports to: enable the public and decision-makers to know what impact we are having on the environment; present data as useful information, enabling the evidence-based analysis, decision-making, and policy development needed for effective environmental stewardship; inform communities on progress towards achieving the Council's environmental goals (e.g., One Plan targets); educate people about their local environment and actions they can take in their communities to achieve desired environmental outcomes; provide some accountability in terms of expenditure on Council activities; support other reporting and review processes (e.g., Section 35 One Plan Chapter evaluations).
- 8.3. The 2025 SoE Synthesis Report summarises findings from Horizons' environmental monitoring data, science reporting, and other technical work undertaken since the publication of the 2019 SoE Synthesis Report. The report also draws upon research done at the national scale to provide additional context for readers. The document aims to acknowledge community actions that are progressing us towards desired environmental outcomes, while also presenting the clear areas for improvement in the region's environment. The report also acknowledges the gaps in Horizons' environmental monitoring, including mātauranga Māori, which affects our understanding of the environment. Science reports and other documentation have been referenced throughout the report, resulting in 70 sources that readers can consult for further information.
- 8.4. The report comprises three primary chapters, focusing on Air, Land, and Water, as well as a comprehensive case study on Cyclone Gabrielle and its impact on the region, including both the environment and people. Te Ao Māori is woven throughout the introduction of each chapter. The purpose (discussed in point 8.2), key findings, and the reporting team's approach to developing the document were presented to Council in workshops earlier this year.

9. TIMELINE / NEXT STEPS

- 9.1. The official release of the 2025 State of Environment Synthesis Report is scheduled for 24 June 2025.
- 9.2. We will promote the SoE Synthesis Report gradually over a six-month period to encourage quality engagement across various publics.
- 9.3. The report will be circulated via email to identified interested parties in early July.
- 9.4. Throughout July and August, the SoE Synthesis Report will be promoted to the community via Horizons social media channels (e.g., Facebook and Instagram), and a more extensive campaign will be launched on LinkedIn, reaching more technically engaged stakeholders.
- 9.5. We are also investigating the possibility of exhibiting the artworks submitted to the Creative Arts competition alongside key messages from the report at suitable venues in Palmerston North and Whanganui over the remainder of the year.
- 9.6. The Science and Communications teams are investigating small, in-person presentations on the SoE Synthesis Report by our Subject Matter Experts to Catchment Care Groups over the remainder of the year.

10. SIGNIFICANCE

- 10.1. This is not a significant decision according to the Council's Policy on Significance and Engagement.

Rhianne Tod
SCIENCE COMMUNICATOR

Amy Lennard
SCIENCE MANAGER

Lizzie Daly
GROUP MANAGER – STRATEGY, REGULATION AND SCIENCE

ANNEXES

- A State of Environment Synthesis Report 2025 (Supplementary Item)

Placeholder for Annex A

State of the Environment Synthesis Report 2025

State of Environment Synthesis Report 2025
(Supplementary Item)

Report No.	25-93
Decision Required	

HORIZONS SUBMISSIONS ON RESOURCE MANAGEMENT REFORM PHASE 2 - INTEGRATED NATIONAL DIRECTION PACKAGE

1. PURPOSE

- 1.1. The purpose of this item is to:
 - a) Inform elected members about the contents and implications of the integrated national direction package (Phase 2 of the Government's **Resource Management (RM)** reform)
 - b) Seek endorsement of the proposed high-level policy positions.
 - c) Seek agreement to delegate approval of the final submissions to the Chair.

2. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

- 2.1. The Government is consulting on changes to a number of existing Resource Management Act national direction instruments, and is proposing several new instruments. The infrastructure and development changes are intended to enable infrastructure and development where it is needed, while managing its effects on people and the environment. They are aimed at improving opportunities and choice for housing and support development in areas that reduce risks from natural hazards. The primary industry changes are intended to reduce restrictions on the primary sector. The freshwater changes are intended to rebalance freshwater direction to better reflect the interests of all water users, and reduce complexity and give councils more flexibility in how they implement this direction.

3. RECOMMENDATION

It is recommended that Council:

- a. receive the information contained in Report No. 25-93.
- b. endorse the proposed high-level policy positions set out in Annex 1.
- c. Delegate authority to the Chair to approve the final submissions.

4. FINANCIAL IMPACT

- 4.1. There is no direct financial impact associated with this item other than staff time to analyse, gather feedback and draft the submissions. However, the outcomes of this consultation and the broader RM reform programme, is likely to have a significant financial impact on Horizons' One Plan review and regulatory work programmes.

5. COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

- 5.1. No community engagement has been carried out on the national direction package by Horizons.
- 5.2. The final submissions will be made publicly available as part of the consultative process carried out by the **Ministry for the Environment (MfE)**.

6. SIGNIFICANT BUSINESS RISK IMPACT

- 6.1. No significant business risk associated with this item has been identified.

7. CLIMATE IMPACT STATEMENT

7.1. Package 1 – infrastructure and development

7.1.1. The **Regulatory Impact Statement (RIS)** considers that the amendments to the infrastructure and electricity national instruments are required to ensure the resource management system delivers on New Zealand's climate critical infrastructure needs. The RIS draws on NZ Infrastructure Commission research which estimates that New Zealand is on track to miss between around 30 per cent of the emission reductions required from the energy and transport sectors by 2050 due to consenting constraints and delays.

7.1.2. In its *New Directions for Resource Management in New Zealand* (2020) report, the Resource Management Review Panel found a lack of clear national direction has led to issues with the management of significant effects from natural hazards and climate change. This impacts the extent to which local authorities' plans address and manage these risks. The proposed NPS for Natural Hazards is intended to provide an incremental step towards improving natural hazard management and addressing the issues raised in this report.

7.2. Package 2 – primary sector

7.2.1. The RIS for proposals on instruments for primary sector states one of the objectives is making it easier to get things done while adapting to the effects of climate change and reducing the risks from natural hazards. No significant climate impacts are stated in the RISs.

7.3. Package 3 - freshwater

7.3.1. The RIS for proposals on water security and storage aim to increase New Zealand's resilience to climate change, including through reduced exposure to climate-related events such as drought, as the climate changes and the natural availability of water declines or becomes more unpredictable.

7.3.2. The RIS for proposals on wetland provisions note that the MfE consider wetland mapping can be achieved by central government as part of climate mitigation work.

7.3.3. No other RISs on package 3 directly mentioned the climate impact of the proposals.

8. BACKGROUND

8.1. The Government is taking a phased approach to the reform of the resource management system as part of the Coalition Government's commitment as part of the National Party and Act Party Coalition Agreement to replace the **Resource Management Act 1991 (RMA)** with resource management laws premised on the enjoyment of property rights as a guiding principle. Cabinet agreed that the new RM system will make it easier to get things done by:

- Unlocking development capacity for housing and business growth.
- Enabling delivery of high-quality infrastructure for the future, including doubling renewable energy.
- Enabling primary sector growth and development, including aquaculture, forestry, pastoral, horticulture, and mining.

8.2. Cabinet agreed that the system must achieve those objectives while also:

- Safeguarding the environment and human health.
- Adapting to the effects of climate change and reducing the risks from natural hazards.
- Including regulatory quality in the system.
- Upholding Treaty of Waitangi settlements and other related arrangements.

8.3. **Phase 1**

8.3.1. Phase 1 of RM reform consisted of the repeal of the Natural and Built Environment Act and the Spatial Planning Act in December 2023.

8.4. **Phase 2**

8.4.1. Phase 2 is comprised of the Fast-track Approvals Act 2024, the Resource Management (Freshwater and Other Matters) Amendment Act 2024, the Resource Management (Consenting and Other System Changes) Amendment Bill, and the integrated national direction package.

8.4.2. Fast-track Approvals Act 2024

- The Fast-track Approvals Bill was introduced to Parliament in March 2024. Horizons submitted on the Bill. The Bill went to the Environment Select Committee before passing its final readings and becoming law in December 2024.
- The Act's one-stop-shop approach consolidates and speeds up the multiple approvals processes under different legislation for large and/or complex projects if they meet the eligibility criteria.

8.4.3. Resource Management (Freshwater and Other Matters) Amendment Act 2024 (RM Bill 1)

- The Act (formerly known as RM Bill 1) was introduced to Parliament in May 2024. Horizons made a submission on the Bill. The Bill then went to the Primary Production Select Committee before coming into force in October 2024.
- The Act amended the RMA and several national direction instruments with nine key changes:
- Exclude the hierarchy of obligations in the **National Policy Statement for Freshwater Management (NPSFM) 2020** from resource consenting.
- Repeal the low slope map and associated requirements from the **Resource Management (Stock Exclusion) Regulations 2020 (Stock Exclusion Regulations)**.
- Repeal the permitted and restricted discretionary activity regulations and associated conditions for intensive winter grazing from the **Resource Management (National Environmental Standards for Freshwater) (NESF) 2020** and replace these with new regulations for setbacks from waterways and critical source areas.
- Align the provisions of coal mining with other mineral extraction activities under the **National Policy Statement for Indigenous Biodiversity 2023 (NPSIB)**, NPSFM, and NESF.
- Suspend the requirements under the NPSIB for councils to identify new **Significant Natural Areas (SNA)** and include them in district plans, and extend some SNA implementation timeframes.
- Speed up and simplify the process for preparing and amending national direction.

- Clarify councils' ability to consent discharges that would result in significant adverse effects.
- Pause the rollout of freshwater farm plans until work to improve the system is finalised.
- Restrict notification of freshwater planning instruments (regional policy statements and regional plans that give effect to the 2020 NPSFM until a new NPSFM takes effect or 31 December 2025).

8.4.4. Resource Management (Consenting and Other System Changes) Amendment Bill (RM Bill 2)

- The Bill was introduced in December 2024 and has been referred to the Environment Select Committee for consideration. Horizons made a submission on the Bill.

The Bill can be grouped into four packages:

- The infrastructure package, which includes extended consent durations and lapse periods for renewable electricity activities and extended durations of port coastal permits
- The housing package, which includes allowing councils to opt out of or modify the Medium Density Residential Standards and enables councils to use the streamlined planning process to de-list heritage buildings
- The farming and primary sector package, which includes changes to certification and auditing of freshwater farm plans, reduced overlap between the RMA and the Fisheries Act 1996 and enabling changes to consent conditions for aquaculture; and
- The systems improvements and natural hazards package, which makes changes to emergency provisions under the RMA, clarifies and strengthens councils' ability to decline land-use consents or impose relevant conditions where there is significant natural hazard risk, and provides consenting efficiencies, including by clarifying the scope of further information requests.

8.4.5. Integrated national direction package

- This item is intended to inform Horizons' submissions on the integrated national direction package.
- In November 2024, the Government confirmed for February 2025, a refocused package of national direction under the RMA to be progressed as part of Phase 2, focusing on proposals with an immediate effect on the resource management system while Phase 3 is progressed. In March 2025, the timing of these packages was reconfirmed for mid-2025.
- On Thursday 29 May, consultation opened for the first three packages of phase 2; infrastructure and development, primary sector, and freshwater.

- Summary of the instruments within each package (package 4 yet to be released):

	Package 1 – Infrastructure and development	Package 2 – Primary sector	Package 3 – Freshwater
Amended National Policy Statements (NPS)	Renewable Electricity Generation Electricity Transmission (renamed Electricity Networks)	New Zealand Coastal Policy Statement Highly Productive Land Indigenous Biodiversity (mining and quarrying provisions) Freshwater (mining and quarrying provisions)	Freshwater
Amended National Environmental Standards (NES)	Electricity Transmission Activities (renamed Electricity Network Activities) Telecommunication Facilities	Marina Aquaculture Commercial Forestry Stock Exclusion Regulations Freshwater (mining and quarrying provisions)	Freshwater
New Instruments	NPS for Infrastructure NES for Granny Flats (Minor Residential Units) NES for Papakāinga NPS for Natural Hazards		Option for NES Commercial Vegetable Growing Option for NES Water Security and Storage
Consultation type	Statutory (under RMA s46A)	Statutory (under RMA s46A)	Non-statutory
Next steps	Gazettal. Immediate effect on consenting, no deadline for plan changes.	Gazettal. Immediate effect on consenting, no deadline for plan changes, except for NPSHPL.	Statutory consultation then gazettal. Government is consulting on implementation timeframes.

8.5. Phase 3

- 8.5.1. In March 2025, the Blueprint for Resource Management Reform was publicly released which contained the Expert Advisory Group recommendations on RM reform. Cabinet has made recommendations on whether to proceed with the EAG recommendations or not.
- 8.5.2. The government is proposing to replace the RMA with two new pieces of legislation: the Natural Environment Act, focused on managing the natural environment; and the Planning Act, focused on planning to enable development and infrastructure. Both Acts

will be based on the enjoyment of property rights and reduced regulatory scope. Each Act will contain national goals and a set of national policy direction.

- 8.5.3. It is proposed that Regional Policy Statements will be eliminated and replaced in part by mandatory Regional Spatial Plans that will enable development and will focus on mapping major constraints, identifying existing and future infrastructure, future urban growth areas, and growth and development opportunities.
- 8.5.4. The Government aims to introduce the Bills in late 2025 and pass these into law in mid-2026 with implementation beginning in 2027. The Select Committee process will be the primary consultative mechanism.

9. PACKAGE 1 – INFRASTRUCTURE AND DEVELOPMENT

- 9.1. The infrastructure and development package aims to make it easier for councils to plan and deliver infrastructure. It proposes a new **National Policy Statement for Infrastructure (NPSI)**, amendments to the **National Policy Statement for Renewable Electricity Generation 2011 (NPSREG)**, amendments to the **National Policy Statement on Electricity Transmission 2008 (NPSET)** which is proposed to be renamed National Policy Statement for Electricity Networks, amendments to the **Resource Management (National Environmental Standards for Electricity Transmission Activities) Regulations 2009 (NESETA)** which is proposed to be renamed National Environmental Standards for Electricity Network Activities, amendments to the **Resource Management (National Environmental Standards for Telecommunication Facilities) Regulations 2016 (NESTF)**, new **National Environmental Standards for Granny Flats (Minor Residential Units) (NESGF)**, new National Environmental Standards for Papakāinga, and a new **National Policy Statement for Natural Hazards (NPSNH)**.
- 9.2. The proposals include new and amended rules to clarify where consent is required in district, unitary or regional plans and targeted national policy direction to support resource consent and plan-making processes.
- 9.3. The infrastructure and development package is statutory consultation under s46A of the RMA and contains draft provisions as part of the consultation
- 9.4. This package mostly aligns with the intent of existing One Plan provisions, except in relation to Natural Hazards.
- 9.4.1. This package departs from our current approach for consent decision-making in relation to natural hazards. The NPSNH presents a fundamental departure from existing processes with new developments (including extensions).
- 9.5. See the [Factsheet for Package 1: Infrastructure and development](#).
- 9.6. See the [Discussion document for Package 1: Infrastructure and development](#).
- 9.7. The Discussion document also lists the proposed provisions in Section 6. These show the proposed objectives and policies for the new instruments and proposed changes to existing instruments:
- [Attachment 1.1: Proposed provisions – New National Policy Statement for Infrastructure](#)
 - [Attachment 1.2: Proposed provisions – Amendments to the National Policy Statement for Renewable Electricity Generation 2011](#)
 - [Attachment 1.3: Proposed provisions – Amendments to the National Policy Statement on Electricity Transmission 2008](#)
 - [Attachment 1.4: Proposed provisions – Amendments to the Resource Management \(National Environmental Standards for Electricity Transmission Activities\) Regulations 2009](#)

- [Attachment 1.5: Proposed provisions – Amendments to the Resource Management \(National Environmental Standards for Telecommunication Facilities\) Regulations 2016](#)
- [Attachment 1.6: Proposed provisions – New National Environmental Standards for Granny Flats \(Minor Residential Units\) Regulations](#)
- [Attachment 1.7: Proposed provisions – New National Environmental Standards for Papakāinga](#)
- [Attachment 1.8: Proposed provisions – New National Policy Statement for Natural Hazards](#)

9.8. See Annex 1 for high level position statements that have been developed with council officers and workshopped with elected members.

10. PACKAGE 2 – PRIMARY SECTOR

- 10.1. The primary sector package aims to enable growth in the primary sector. It proposes amendments to the **Resource Management (National Environmental Standards for Marine Aquaculture) Regulations 2020 (NESMA)**, amendments to the **Resource Management (National Environmental Standards for Commercial Forestry) Regulations 2017 (NЕСF)**, amendments to the **New Zealand Coastal Policy Statement 2010 (NZCPS)**, amendments to the **National Policy Statement for Highly Productive Land 2022 (NPSHPL)**, amendments to the Stock Exclusion Regulations, and amendments to mining and quarrying provisions in the NPSIB, the NPSHPL, the NPSFM, and the NESF.
- 10.2. The proposals include new and amended rules to enable activities, and clarify where consent is required in district, unitary or regional plans
- 10.3. The primary sector package is statutory consultation under s46A RMA and contains draft provisions as part of the consultation.
- 10.4. This package may introduce changes to how we work and therefore presents uncertainty with how these instruments align with the intent of existing One Plan provisions. Especially for:
- Amendments proposed for the NESCF that look at repealing councils' discretion to have more stringent rules to control afforestation. It is likely there will need to be a plan amendment or process to de-conflict the One Plan with any gazetted changes in this instrument.
 - Further removal of requirements under the Stock Exclusion Regulations 2020. The proposal looks to remove the requirement to exclude grazed beef cattle and deer in low intensity farming systems from wetlands which support a population of threatened species. Of note, the One Plan is silent on this matter.
 - The implementation and mapping of highly productive land (HPL). Proposed amendments look to remove LUC3 from the definition (either for urban development or for both urban development and rural lifestyle) as well as including new protection for special agricultural areas that will likely include areas in Horowhenua.
- 10.5 See the [Factsheet for Package 2: Primary sector.](#)
- 10.6 See the [Discussion document for Package 2: Primary sector.](#)

- 10.7 The Discussion document also lists the proposed provisions in Section 6. These show the proposed objectives and policies for the new instruments and proposed changes to existing instruments:
- [Attachment 2.1: Proposed provisions – Amendments to the Resource Management \(National Environmental Standards for Marine Aquaculture\) Regulations 2020](#)
 - [Attachment 2.2: Proposed provisions – Amendments to the Resource Management \(National Environmental Standards for Commercial Forestry\) Regulations 2017](#)
 - [Attachment 2.3: Proposed provisions – Amendments to the New Zealand Coastal Policy Statement 2010](#)
 - [Attachment 2.4: Proposed provisions – Amendments to the National Policy Statement for Highly Productive Land 2022](#)
- 10.8 Quarrying amendments to:
- [Attachment 2.5: Proposed provisions – Amendments to the National Policy Statement for Indigenous Biodiversity 2023](#)
 - [Attachment 2.6: Proposed provisions – Amendments to the National Policy Statement for Freshwater Management 2020 and the Resource Management \(National Environmental Standards for Freshwater\) Regulations 2020](#)
 - [Attachment 2.7: Proposed provisions – Amendments to the Resource Management \(Stock Exclusion\) Regulations 2020](#)
- 10.9 See Annex 1 for high level position statements that have been developed with council officers and workshopped with elected members.

11. PACKAGE 3 – FRESHWATER

- 11.1. The freshwater package is non-statutory consultation, seeking feedback on options to amend the NPSFM and NESF, as well as options for new **National Environmental Standards (NES) for commercial vegetable growing (CVG)**, and water security and storage. Further consultation is expected later in 2025, including through an exposure draft of the proposed replacement NPSFM.
- 11.2. The consultation document seeks feedback on whether any of the changes in the discussion document should be implemented now, or if they should instead be incorporated into, or made under, the upcoming replacement legislation for the RMA.
- 11.3. It is unclear in many instances how this package aligns in intent with existing One Plan provisions. With such broad and wide ranging topics covered in this discussion document, it will be important to follow the next steps of subsequent statutory consultation. The proposals test changes to the:
- 11.3.1. NPSFM that include rebalancing Te Mana o te Wai, provisions for commercial vegetable growers, enabling water storage, amending wetland regulations, drinking water protection and flexibility for the National Objectives Framework.
- 11.3.2. NESF that include amendments to fish passage requirements, wetland and culverts and synthetic nitrogen fertiliser requirements.
- 11.4. The Government is seeking feedback on the potential impacts on Māori rights and interests and Treaty settlements. They are also seeking feedback on any additional perceived impacts of the proposals on sites of significance to Māori, marae, Māori land, land returned under Treaty settlements, or other matters of significance to Māori groups.

- 11.5. See the [Factsheet for Package 3: Freshwater](#)
- 11.6. See the [Discussion document for Package 3: Freshwater](#)
- 11.6.1. As this is not statutory consultation, there are no proposed provisions provided for this package.
- 11.7. See Annex 1 for high level position statements that have been developed with council officers and workshopped with elected members.

12. PACKAGE 4 – GOING FOR HOUSING GROWTH

- 12.1. At the time of writing, the housing growth package was expected in early June but had not yet been released for consultation. The aim of the package is to free up land for development and remove unnecessary planning barriers.
- 12.2. It has been indicated that the package will contain amendments to the National Policy Statement on Urban Development 2020 and a broader housing policy package.
- 12.3. The outcomes of this consultation are intended to be incorporated into the replacement RM system at the start of 2027, including by making use of new system tools such as standardised zones and spatial planning.

13. STAFF ENGAGEMENT ON SUBMISSION DEVELOPMENT

- 13.1. Engagement has occurred, and will continue to occur as the submissions are developed, with officers from the Policy, Strategy & Climate Resilience, Science, Regulatory, District Advice, Land and Partnerships, Freshwater and Projects, and Environmental Data teams.

14. TIMELINE / NEXT STEPS

- 14.1. Submissions on packages 1, 2, and 3 close on Sunday 27 July 2025. Officers will ensure the submissions are submitted by Friday 25 July 2025.
- 14.2. The changes proposed in Packages 1 and 2 are expected to be gazetted later this year. These targeted changes are being progressed for their immediate impact on the resource management system (particularly resource consenting), without directing the requirement for direct insertion in plans or plan changes. The policy intent of all the National Direction proposals is intended to flow through into the new resource management system.
- 14.3. Statutory consultation for the freshwater package is expected later this year, including through an exposure draft of the replacement NPSFM. The Government is consulting on whether the changes should be implemented now, or through Phase 3 of RM Reform
- 14.4. Package 4 – Going for Housing Growth will be implemented through Phase 3.
- 14.5. The freshwater farm plan system is expected to be finalised by the end of 2025.
- 14.6. The Bills to replace the RMA are expected to be introduced in late 2025, with a Select Committee consultative process, and passed into law in mid-2026.

15. SIGNIFICANCE

- 15.1. This is not a significant decision according to the Councils' Significance and Engagement Policy 2023.

Maria Reiche
POLICY ANALYST

Dr Ellie Shokri
POLICY ANALYST

Erin Murphy
SENIOR POLICY ANALYST

Aruna Wickramasinghe
SENIOR POLICY PLANNER

Nicolaas Portegys
TEAM LEADER POLICY

Charlotte Almond
MANAGER POLICY AND STRATEGY

Dr Lizzie Daly
GROUP MANAGER STRATEGY, REGULATION & SCIENCE

ANNEXES

There are no attachments for this report.

Report No.	25-94
Information Only - No Decision Required	

SAFETY AND WELLBEING REPORT AS AT 31 MAY 2025

1. PURPOSE

- 1.1. The purpose of this report is to provide Council with a summary of safety and wellbeing related activities and performance for the financial year to date.

2. RECOMMENDATION

It is recommended that Council:

- a. receives the information contained in Report No. 25-94 and Annex.

3. FINANCIAL IMPACT

- 3.1. There is no direct financial impact.

4. COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

- 4.1. This is a public item and therefore Council may deem this sufficient to inform the public.

5. SIGNIFICANT BUSINESS RISK IMPACT

- 5.1. There is no significant business risk associated with this item.

6. CLIMATE IMPACT STATEMENT

- 6.1. As this report deals entirely with administrative matters, there is no climate change impact.

7. SAFETY AND WELLBEING REPORT

- 7.1. The Safety and Wellbeing Report for the financial year up to 31 May 2025 is attached.

8. SIGNIFICANCE

- 8.1. This is not a significant decision according to the Council's Policy on Significance and Engagement.

Brook Rush
SENIOR SAFETY & WELLBEING ADVISOR

ANNEXES

- A Safety and Wellbeing Report to 31 May 2025

Safety and Wellbeing Report to 31 May 2025

1. Critical Risk Update

Hazard Management Plan reviews

It was stated in our March 2025 report that Hazard Management Plan reviews were paused over December—February. These have recommenced and are now back on track as per the review timeline.

2. Wellbeing Update

Mental Wellbeing Training

Resilience and mental health awareness training will recommence in the new financial year.

3. General Update

4WD Refresher, LUV Refresher, Quad Refresher and Trailer Training

We are running a number of 4WD, LUV, Trailer use and Quad Bike trainings over May—July 2025.

Flu Vaccinations

Proactive4Health completed our flu vaccinations over April.

Site Inspections

The majority have been completed, with the final inspection to be completed in the second week of June. Nothing major has come from these and actions have been passed on to those responsible. Assembly points were an interesting topic at two sites—Taumarunui will change their assembly point and Kairanga will move the assembly point signage so it is more visible.

Situational Safety and Tactical Communication Training

Situational Safety and Tactical Communication (SSTC) training with an emphasis on sexual harassment and unacceptable behaviour is being organised for female field-based or customer-facing staff. We have identified a need to provide the standard SSTC training with this sexual harassment and unacceptable behaviour due to the increasing risk in this space. As we gather information from people leaders, we are also asking for rough numbers of staff in their teams who may also benefit from the standard SSTC training, so we can look to book these in too.

Health and Safety Software System

A business case for our move to Donesafe has been drafted and, at the time of writing this report, is going through its final round of feedback before it is shared with Exec for their approval. It will then go to the Information Systems Group (ISG) for final sign off. We are continuing to have small but frustrating issues with our current Health and Safety Management System, Vault.

Four Councils within the MW LASS are actively working to move to Donesafe, with another two indicating they intend to join within the next 18 months.

Health, Safety and Wellbeing Strategy

A plan is being drafted to action our strategy and give ourselves the best chance of moving from Performing to Leading when we next have a SafePlus assessment. This is still a draft plan, but currently the four key pieces of work include:

1. Team Health, Safety and Wellbeing Risk Workshops. Use the outputs to improve Due Diligence.
2. Identify mental wellbeing related risks and reasonably practicable controls and assurance.
3. Review what Health, Safety and Wellbeing related training and upskilling team leaders and managers receive.
4. Move from Vault to Donesafe.

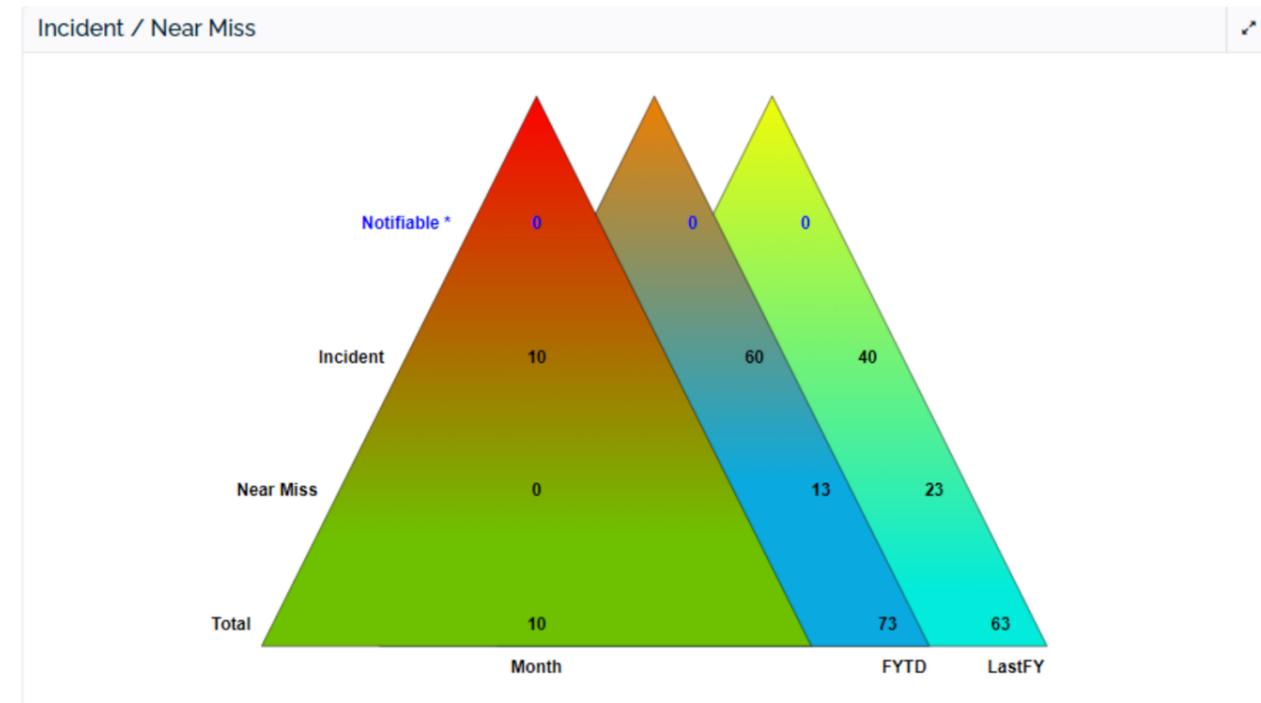
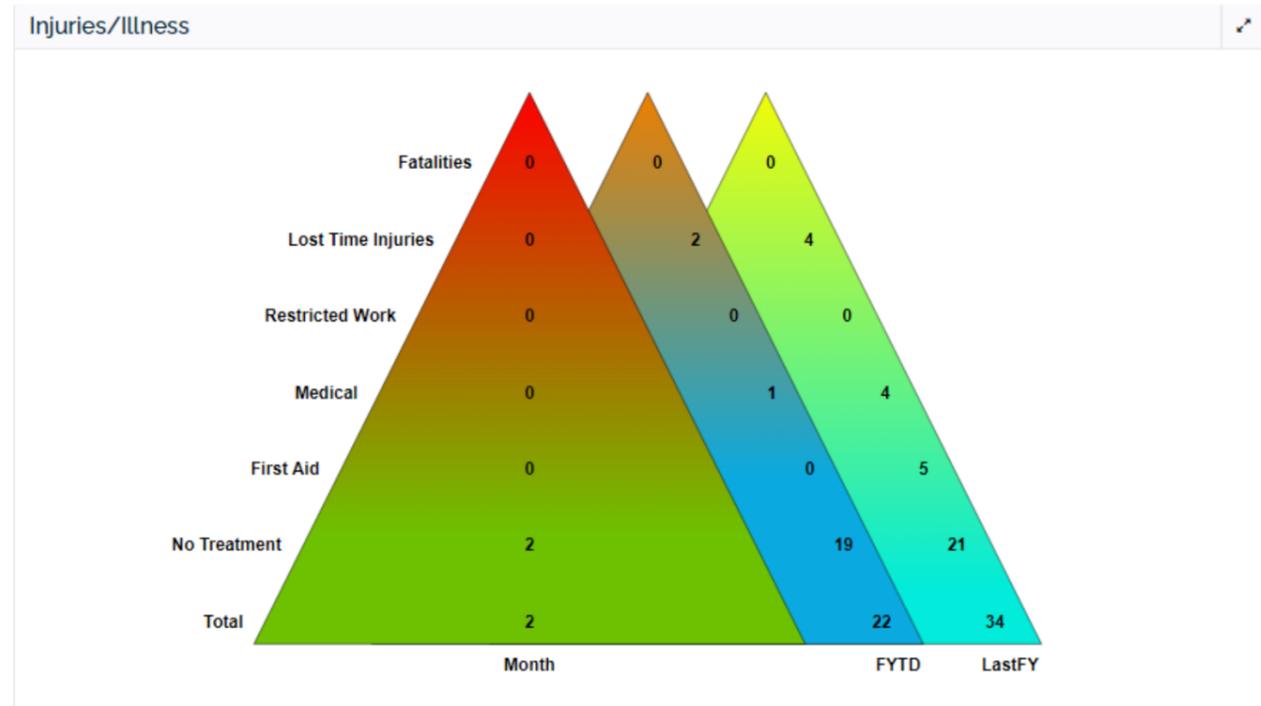
4. Notifiable Events (Staff) for 2024/25 FY

Notifiable Injuries / Illnesses	Nil
Notifiable Incidents	Nil

5. Progress on the Plan

Task	Month	Status	Comment
Review progress on objectives	Each meeting		Start Apr 25
HMP 3,18,27, 36 (Boats, water)	August		17 Oct 24
Fire Warden Training	August		22 Oct 24
Review - Generic TMPs	October		17 Oct 24
HMP 16 (Working on Roadsides)	October		17 Oct 24
HMP 12, 34 (Outdoor related)	October		15 Aug 24
HMP 17,22,24 (Outdoor related)	December		12 Dec 24
H & S Inspections - all sites	February		13 Jun 25
HMP 6,8,13 (Hazsub)	February		10 Apr 25
Skin Clinic	March		Will take place in Oct / Nov 25
Flu vaccinations	April		30 Apr 25
HMP 14,21,29 (Hazsub)	April		12 Jun 25
HMP 2, 7 (Confined Space, Work at Height)	June		12 Jun 25
Review - Biennial Plan	June		11 Jun 25

6. Performance Indicators



7. Lead Indicators

Lead Indicator	2024-25 (to date)	2023-24	2022-23	2021-22
Employees passed training	637	851	698	449
Investigations closed	53	84	65	60
Vault Checks completed	1483	924	559	693
Service Centre Inspections completed	10/11	9/11	11/11	-

One service centre inspection for the 2024/25 year is outstanding, but will be completed during June. Overall, these inspections have been really positive, with only minor recommendations related predominantly to signage.

Lead Indicator	May	April	March	February
Vehicle inspections completed	60% (84/140)	41% (57/140)	41% (57/140)	40% (56/140)
Quad / LUV / Motorcycle inspection completed	45% (15/33)	21% (7/33)	52% (17/33)	39% (13/33)
Heavy vehicle inspections completed	7	13	17	10

Over April a reminder to complete vehicle inspections went out to staff which has supported an improvement in these being completed in the month of May.

Quad / LUV / Motorcycle inspections dropped away significantly over April, but have returned to their normal pattern over May.

In comparison, heavy vehicle inspections have dropped in May.

People leaders that have completed mental health awareness training	80% (51/64)
Staff that have completed resilience training	25% (83/334)

The above numbers are the same as the previous report. Mental health awareness training and resilience training will recommence in the 2025/26 year.

We are in the process of working with a training provider to implement more Situational Safety and Tactical Communication training, including an offering which focusses on dealing with and responding to sexual harassment and inappropriate behaviour.

Selected Contractors in SiteWise	131 (down 7)
Selected Contractors Average Score	90% (no change)
All Contractors Average Score	84% (no change)
Assessments Out of Date	7 (down 7)
Account Expired	1 (no change)
Insurance Expired	20 (up 2)

Seven contractors who have never responded since we moved to SiteWise in 2022 have been removed from our selected contractors list. These contractors were moved into the system as their internal Horizons prequalification was still valid in 2022. These seven contractors have not been used by Horizons in the last three years and have not responded to any correspondence.

Report No.	25-95
Information Only - No Decision Required	

AFFIXING OF THE COMMON SEAL

1. PURPOSE

- 1.1. This paper reports on documents to which Horizons Regional Council's Common Seal has been affixed.

2. RECOMMENDATION

That the Council:

- a. **acknowledges** the affixing of the Common Seal to the below mentioned documents.

3. FINANCIAL IMPACT

- 3.1. There is no additional financial impact.

4. COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

- 4.1. The community is able to see this information either in the agenda or on the Council's website.

5. COMMENT

- 5.1. The Common Seal has been affixed to the following document:

a. **Under Chief Executive's Delegated Authority:**

- Warrant Card: Harbourmaster
New Staff Member
Brittany Hogan

b. **Under Urgency:**

Nil

c. **To be Approved:**

Nil

6. SIGNIFICANCE

- 6.1. This is not a significant decision according to the Council's Policy on Significance and Engagement.

Craig Grant
GROUP MANAGER CORPORATE & GOVERNANCE

ANNEXES

There are no attachments to this report.

Report No.	25-96
Information Only - No Decision Required	

COUNCILLORS' WORKSHOP ATTENDANCE - 14 MAY TO 16 JUNE 2025

1. PURPOSE

- 1.1. This item is to note the Councillors' Workshop Attendance from 14 May 2025 to 16 June 2025.

2. RECOMMENDATION

It is recommended that Council:

- a. receives the information contained in Report No. 25-96 and Annex.

3. SIGNIFICANCE

- 3.1. This is not a significant decision according to the Council's Policy on Significance and Engagement.

Craig Grant
GROUP MANAGER CORPORATE & GOVERNANCE

ANNEXES

- A Councillors' Workshop Attendance

**HORIZONS REGIONAL COUNCIL
COUNCILLORS' WORKSHOP ATTENDANCE**
(For the period)
14 May to 16 June 2025

Date	Details	Councillor Attendance
14 May 2025	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Palmerston North Future Development Strategy (<i>workshop focus was for Palmerston North Crs only</i>) 	<p>Present: Cr JT Edmonds Cr FJT Gordon Cr RJ Keedwell Cr JM Naylor Cr T Teira Cr WK Te Awe Awe Cr AR Taylor</p> <p>Apology: Cr AL Benbow Cr EM Clarke Cr DB Cotton Cr SD Ferguson Cr EB Gordon Cr GM McKellar Cr NM Riley</p>
28 May 2025	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - PX RHPN Project Governance 	<p>Present: Cr AL Benbow Cr JT Edmonds Cr SD Ferguson Cr EB Gordon Cr FJT Gordon (via zoom) Cr RJ Keedwell Cr GM McKellar (via zoom) Cr JM Naylor Cr AR Taylor (via zoom) Cr T Teira Cr WK Te Awe Awe</p> <p>Apology: Cr DB Cotton Cr EM Clarke Cr NM Riley</p>
11 June 2025	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - PX Compliance Review & Research Warrants - PX Old RHPN Treatment - PX Councils Metrics Briefing - Drafting Horizons Submission on the Regulatory Standards Bill 	<p>Present: Cr EM Clarke (via zoom) Cr JT Edmonds Cr SD Ferguson Cr EB Gordon Cr FJT Gordon Cr RJ Keedwell Cr GM McKellar Cr JM Naylor (in person up to 12.32pm then via zoom from 12.32pm) Cr NM Riley (via zoom until 10.04am, in-person from 10.04am) Cr AR Taylor Cr T Teira</p>

Date	Details	Councillor Attendance
		Cr WK Te Awe Awe Apology: Cr AL Benbow Cr DB Cotton

18.11

Annex A

Report of the Strategy and Policy Committee to hear submissions on the Horizons 2024-34 Long-term Plan Amendment and 2025-26 Annual Plan held at Cooks Gardens Events Centre, Whanganui at 9.30am on Tuesday 20 May 2025, and Horizons Regional Council, 11-15 Victoria Avenue, Palmerston North from 9.30am on Thursday 22 May 2025.

Tuesday, 20 May 2025 – Cooks Gardens Events Centre, Whanganui at 9.30am

PRESENT Crs RJ Keedwell (Chair), AL Benbow, EM Clarke (via Zoom from 9.50am), DB Cotton, JT Edmonds, SD Ferguson, EB Gordon, FJT Gordon (via Zoom), GM McKellar (via Zoom from 10.03am), JM Naylor, NM Riley, AR Taylor, WK Te Awe Awe, and T Teira.

IN ATTENDANCE

Chief Executive	Mr MJ McCartney
Acting Group Manager	
Corporate and Governance	Mrs C Hesselin
Committee Secretaries	Mrs JA Kennedy
	Mrs R De Souza

ALSO PRESENT At various times during the meeting:
Dr J Roygard (Group Manager Catchment Operations), Dr E Daly (Group Manager Strategy & Regulation & Science), Mr G Shirley (Group Manager Regional Services & Information), Mr C White (Applications Support-Business Services), Mr M Read (Manager Transport Services), Mrs J Thorby (Senior Transport Planner).

The Chair welcomed everyone to the submissions hearing for Horizons 2024-34 Long-term Plan Amendment and 2025-26 Annual Plan 2024-2034 and invited Cr Te Awe Awe to say a Karakia.

APOLOGIES

AP/LTP 25-01 *Moved* **Keedwell/Naylor**

That the Council receives an apology from Cr Clarke (via Zoom for lateness).

CARRIED

A late apology was received from Cr McKellar (via Zoom for lateness).

SUPPLEMENTARY ITEMS

The Chair noted that two late submissions, Contribution Nos. 3888L & 3887L had been included in the speaking list for Thursday 22 May, 2025.

MEMBERS' CONFLICTS OF INTEREST

There were no conflicts of interest declared.

HEARING OF SUBMISSIONS FOR HORIZONS 2024-34 LONG-TERM PLAN AMENDMENT AND 2025-26 ANNUAL PLAN

Report No 25-60

The purpose of this report was to provide the schedule of submitters who wished to speak to their submission to the 2024-34 Long-term Plan Amendment and 2025-26 Annual Plan. The number of late submissions received as per recommendation b. was increased from 4 to 5.

AP/LTP 25-02 Moved Ferguson/Naylor

That the Committee recommends that Council:

- a. receives the information contained in Report No. 25-60 and Annexes.
- b. receives 5 submissions (Contribution ID Nos. 3883, 3884, 3885, 3887 and 3888) as late submissions to the 2024-34 Long-term Plan Amendment and 2025-26 Annual Plan.

CARRIED

The Chair invited each submitter to speak to Council, outlined the timeframe of 10 minutes including questions, following which she thanked each submitter for taking the time to speak in support of their submission.

Sarah Barrie outlined her support for increased funding and coverage for bus services in Whanganui, especially for Bastia Hill which currently did not have a public bus service.

Cr Clarke joined the meeting at 9.50am (via Zoom).

Phil Haynes, Juno & Jupiter Consulting spoke to his personal submission and a submission from Juno & Jupiter Consulting which summarised his support for the sale of CentrePort and promoted increased investment into bus services.

Cr McKellar joined the meeting at 10.03am (via Zoom).

Francis Stark, Gonville Centre for Urban Research voiced his strong support for a strengthened bus service and urged Council to extend “The Tide” service to other parts of the City.

Ngakuru Reynolds & Atticus Ranginui spoke in support of funding improved bus services in Whanganui and outlined their ideas to enhance the passenger experience on public transport e.g. provision of free Wi-Fi and charger ports on buses.

Kevin Wilkie outlined his support for improved bus services in Whanganui, was supportive of having free Wi-Fi on buses, and also advocated for inter-regional public transport.

David Lupton, David Lupton & Associates outlined his support for increasing public transport options in Whanganui, noting that the current timetable was too infrequent. He recommended that “The Tide” service be increased and included night time services.

The meeting adjourned at 10.46am

The meeting reconvened 11.23am.

Brian Wadman supported increased bus services in Whanganui, and summarised his support for a Palmerston North / Whanganui / Waikanae bus service which also included the Palmerston North Airport. He did not support selling the CentrePort shareholding.

John Milnes noted his concern around climate change, supported increased public transport services to reduce CO2 emissions, and supported “The Tide” bus service.

David Kirby explained his support for increased bus services in Whanganui and outlined some of the barriers to the current bus service.

Sheryn Maria Robertson spoke in support of her submission advocating for a frequent reliable bus service for St John’s Hill residents.

Jango challenged the Council on its budgeting ability and in support of his submission outlined a number of projects from the Annual Plan that he believed were not needed.

Peter Zimmer, Land Search and Rescue NZ shared a karakia and spoke to his submission which detailed the benefits of supporting a volunteer rescue-based search and rescue service and advocated to Council for a multi-year renewable support grant of \$49,000 per annum.

Anthony Tonnon spoke to points made in his submission, confirmed his support for Option 1A and explained how Whanganui public transport improvements would impact positively on the community.

Nicola Smith outlined her support for improved bus services in Whanganui.

The meeting adjourned at 12.25pm.

The meeting reconvened at 1.02pm.

Jeff Wong (Rangitikei District Council (RDC) Councillor) spoke to the submission in support of option 1, and outlined the benefits of increasing investment in public transport services.

Brian Vaughan explained his support for Option 1 for Whanganui public transport, option 1 for follow up on investigations into the sales of the CentrePort shareholding, and option 2 against the sale of CentrePort shareholding.

Colin Anderson summarised the points made in his submission noting that an increase in rates was unaffordable. He outlined his opposition to selling the CentrePort shareholding, opposed any further investment in public transport, and detailed his opposition to the construction of a new building.

Deb Frederikse, I Love Public Transport Whanganui detailed their support for improved bus services in Whanganui.

The meeting adjourned at 1.35pm.

The meeting reconvened at 2.23pm.

Felicity Wallace & Sally Patrick, Residents of Marton and Rangitikei Incorporated (IRO-MAR) spoke in support of their submission, summarised the main points and advocated for progress reports on key issues consulted on in the Long-term Plan 2024/2034.

Mayor Andrew Tripe, Whanganui District Council (WDC) confirmed the points made in the submission which included support for continued investment in Whanganui public transport and expressed WDC's opposition to the sale of CentrePort shareholding.

The meeting adjourned at 2.43pm with a karakia from Cr Te Awe Awe.

The meeting reconvened at Horizons Regional Council, 11-15 Victoria Avenue, Palmerston North at 9.30am on Thursday, 22 May 2025.

Thursday, 22 May 2025 – Horizons Regional Council, Palmerston North at 9.30am

PRESENT Crs RJ Keedwell (Chair), AL Benbow, DB Cotton, JT Edmonds, SD Ferguson, EB Gordon, FJT Gordon (from 9.48am), GM McKellar, JM Naylor (via Zoom), NM Riley, AR Taylor, WK Te Awe Awe, and T Teira.

IN ATTENDANCE

Chief Executive	Mr MJ McCartney
Acting Group Manager	
Corporate and Governance	Mrs C Hesselin
Committee Secretaries	Mrs JA Kennedy
	Mrs R De Souza

ALSO PRESENT At various times during the meeting:
Dr J Roygard (Group Manager Catchment Operations), Dr E Daly (Group Manager Strategy & Regulation & Science), Mr G Shirley (Group Manager Regional Services & Information), Mr M Read (Manager Transport Services), Mrs J Thorby (Senior Transport Planner), Mr R Marshall (Senior Policy Analyst), and a member of the Press.

APOLOGIES

AP/LTP 25-03 Moved Keedwell/Cotton

That the Council receives an apology from Cr Clarke, an apology from Cr F Gordon for lateness, and an apology from Cr Cotton for possible early departure.

CARRIED

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION – CONTRIBUTION NO. 3654

AP/LTP 25-04 Moved Ferguson/Teira

That the Council:

accepts and considers the supplementary information for Contribution No. 3654 to the 2024-34 Long-term Plan Amendment and 2025-26 Annual Plan.

CARRIED

The Chair invited each submitter to speak to Council, outlined the timeframe of 10 minutes including questions, following which she thanked each submitter for taking the time to speak in support of their submission

Alice Williamson, Chair, City To Sea Trail – Manawatū outlined the economic benefits and opportunities to promote cycle tourism throughout the Manawatū region and appealed to Council to commit to the inclusion of cycle tourism in the Long-term plan.

Cr F Gordon joined the meeting at 9.48am.

Vivienne Bold highlighted the need for a bus service in the Horowhenua area, raised concerns about pollution and other matters relating to the Arawhata Wetlands, commented on updates needed to the Horizons website and commented on areas of work that was needed to be undertaken on the Hōkio Stream.

Andy Brooke, Land Search & Rescue spoke in support of the submission and highlighted the number of deployments in the Palmerston North area by volunteer members.

Ian Strahan & Ben Fraser, Federated Farmers of New Zealand was opposed to the funding of additional bus services in Whanganui without New Zealand Transport Agency funding and urged Council not to sell its CentrePort shareholding below asset value. They expressed their concern at the percentage of rates increase which they believed was unsustainable and advised Council to reduce its expenditure to keep rate increases in line with the Consumer Price Index of inflation.

James Barron, Chair Progress Castlecliff highlighted the success of “The Tide” bus service and spoke in support of increased funding for improved bus services. He also advocated for investment in inter-regional services between Palmerston North and Whanganui.

The meeting adjourned at 10.29am.

The meeting reconvened at 10.45am.

Peter Wells, Landsdale Farming Company spoke to a PowerPoint presentation which detailed his opposition to the proposed rates increase, outlined his opposition to the selling of CentrePort shareholding in the current electoral term, and expressed his dissatisfaction with the level of communication to ratepayers regarding the amendments to the Long-term Plan.

Jodi Starr, Ruapehu Alpine Rescue Organisation (RARO) spoke in support of the submission and outlined how Horizons contribution helped to support the efforts of the emergency service volunteers.

Michael McCartney, Chief Executive & Craig Grant, Horizons Regional Council took Members through Horizons Regional Council Staff Submission which sought first stage funding for the work programme to consult on Regional House Palmerston North new build.

The meeting adjourned at 11.12am.

The meeting reconvened at 12.02pm.

Sharon Williams, Horowhenua Access & Inclusion Forum detailed her strong support for funding improved bus services in Whanganui and new services in Horowhenua. She advocated for effective transport networks to be both accessible and affordable across the region.

Cacia Wall, Arlo Campbell & Miya Harding-Nation, Youth Voice Horowhenua spoke to their submission which advocated for improved public transport in the Horowhenua area. They detailed

the many benefits and opportunities that public transport would provide to the community and the youth of Horowhenua.

Mayor Bernie Warden, Horowhenua District Council (HDC) acknowledged the Youth Voice presentation and their efforts to submit. He detailed HDC's support for improved transport services both within, and to and from the district, and wished to continue to work closely with Horizons Regional Council to achieve that.

Jessica Smith (via zoom) spoke in support of Option 1 as the preferred option to improve bus services in Whanganui and detailed how the enhancements would ensure a reliable and accessible transport option for the Pūtiki community.

The meeting closed at 12.48pm with a Karakia from Cr Teira.

Confirmed

CHIEF EXECUTIVE

CHAIR

Report of the ninth meeting of the twelfth triennium of the Audit, Risk and Investment Committee held at 9.30am on Wednesday 28 May 2025, in the Tararua Room, Horizons Regional Council, 11-15 Victoria Avenue, Palmerston North.

PRESENT Crs AL Benbow (Chair), FJT Gordon (via Zoom), JT Edmonds, EB Gordon, RJ Keedwell, JM Naylor, N Riley, and T Teira.

IN ATTENDANCE Councillors Te Awe Awe, Ferguson, Taylor (via Zoom) and McKellar (via Zoom from 10.15am).
Chief Executive Mr MJ McCartney
Committee Secretaries Mrs R De Souza and Mrs T Bishop

ALSO PRESENT At various times during the meeting:
Mr C Grant (Group Manager Corporate & Governance), Dr J Roygard (Group Manager Catchment Operations), Dr E Daly (Group Manager Strategy, Regulation & Science), Mr G Shirley (Group Manager Regional Services & Information), Mr A Smith (Chief Financial Officer), Mr S Yi (Financial Accounting Team Leader), Mrs P Tan (Finance Business Partner), Ms J Hamblyn (Communications Advisor), and Mr G Bevin (Regulatory Manager).

The Chair welcomed everyone to the meeting with a karakia from Cr Teira.

The meeting adjourned at 9.31am.

The meeting resumed at 10.01am.

APOLOGIES

There were no apologies.

PUBLIC FORUMS / DEPUTATIONS / PETITIONS

There were no requests for public speaking rights.

SUPPLEMENTARY ITEMS

The Chair noted Supplementary Item PX3 PWC Fraud Risk Assessment Report (PX25-78) on the agenda which had been distributed via the Hub to Councillors.

MEMBERS' CONFLICTS OF INTEREST

During the public excluded part of the meeting, Cr FJT Gordon noted a possible conflict of interest during General Managers financial performance updates and did not take part in any discussion related to consents under legal dispute in Court.

CONFIRMATION OF MINUTES

ARI 25-36 **Moved** **Naylor/Teira**

That the Committee:

confirms the minutes of the Audit, Risk and Investment Committee meeting held on 26 February 2025 as a correct record, and notes that the recommendations were adopted by the Council on 25 March 2025.

CARRIED

FINANCIAL PERFORMANCE REPORT FOR THE NINE MONTHS ENDING 31 MARCH 2025

Report No 25-72

This report informed Committee members of Council's financial performance for the third quarter ended 31 March 2025 against the Council's Annual Plan. This report also covered progress against performance targets as well as a treasury and investment update. Mr Smith (Chief Financial Officer) summarised the report and clarified Members' questions. Group Managers responded to various questions relating to their respective areas of business.

Cr McKellar joined the meeting at 10.15am (via Zoom).

ARI 25-37 **Moved** **Teira/Keedwell**

That the Committee recommends that Council:

a. receives the information contained in Report No. 25-72 and Annexes.

CARRIED

NON-FINANCIAL PERFORMANCE RESULTS TO 31 MARCH 2025

Report No 25-71

This item informed members of Council's non-financial performance results to 31 March 2025.

ARI 25-38 **Moved** **Keedwell/Teira**

That the Committee recommends that Council:

a. receives the information contained in Report No. 25-71 and Annex.

CARRIED

FINANCIAL PERFORMANCE BRIEFING TO 30 APRIL 2025

Report No 25-70

The report briefed members of Council’s financial performance for the period ending 30 April 2025. Mr Smith (Chief Financial Officer) briefly summarised the report and answered members’ questions.

ARI 25-39 Moved B Gordon/Naylor

That the Committee recommends that Council:

- a. receives the information contained in Report No. 25-70 and Annex.

CARRIED

PROCEDURAL MOTION TO EXCLUDE THE PUBLIC

ARI 25-40 Moved Teira/B Gordon

THAT the public be excluded from the following part(s) of the proceedings of this meeting. The general subject of each matter to be considered while the public is excluded, the reason for passing this resolution in relation to each matter, and the specific grounds under section 48(1) of the Local Government Official Information and Meetings Act 1987 for the passing of this resolution follows.

This resolution is made in reliance on section 48(1)(a) of the Local Government Official Information and Meetings Act 1987 and the particular interest or interests protected by section 6 and section 7 of that Act which would be prejudiced by the holding of the whole or relevant part of the proceedings of the meeting in public, as follows:

CARRIED

General subject of each matter to be considered	Reason for passing this resolution	Ground(s) under section 48(1) for the passing of this resolution
PX1 Confirmation of public excluded meeting held on 26 February 2025	s7(2)(h) - the withholding of the information is necessary to enable the local authority to carry out, without prejudice or disadvantage, commercial activities.	s48(1)(a) The public conduct of the part of the meeting would be likely to result in the disclosure of information for which good reason for withholding exists under section 7.
PX2 Risk Register Update	s7(2)(h) - the withholding of the information is necessary to enable the local authority to carry out, without prejudice or disadvantage, commercial activities. The report refers to areas of risk which may be of a commercially sensitive nature.	s48(1)(a) The public conduct of the part of the meeting would be likely to result in the disclosure of information for which good reason for withholding exists under section 7.
PX3 PWC Fraud Risk Assessment Report	s7(2)(h) - the withholding of the information is necessary to enable the local authority to carry out, without prejudice or disadvantage, commercial activities.	s48(1)(a) The public conduct of the part of the meeting would be likely to result in the disclosure of information for which good

	The report is still in draft format and is subject to being finalised before it can be released to the public.	reason for withholding exists under section 7.
PX4 Council / Committee to consider whether any item in the Public Excluded minutes can be moved into the public domain and define the extent of the release		

The meeting adjourned to the Public Excluded part of the meeting at 10.35am and resumed at 11.54am.

The meeting closed at 11.55am.

Confirmed

CHIEF EXECUTIVE

CHAIR

Report of the twelfth meeting of the twelfth triennium of the Regional Transport Committee held at 11.00am on Tuesday 3 June 2025, in the Tararua Room, Horizons Regional Council, 11-15 Victoria Avenue, Palmerston North.

PRESENT Crs RJ Keedwell (Chair), SD Ferguson (via Zoom), Mayor B Wanden (Horowhenua District Council), Mayor H Worboys (Manawatū District Council), Mayor G Smith (Palmerston North City Council), Mayor A Watson (Rangitīkei District Council), Mayor W Kirton (Ruapehu District Council), Mayor T Collis (Tararua District Council), Mayor T Tripe (Whanganui District Council), Ms L Stewart (New Zealand Transport Agency), Mr E Christiansen (Road Users), Mr L Hammond (KiwiRail), Mr R McLachlan (Active Transport - via Zoom), Mr L Calvi-Freeman (Transporting New Zealand via Zoom)

IN ATTENDANCE

Chief Executive	Mr M McCartney
Group Manager Regional Services and Information	Mr G Shirley
Manager Transport Services	Mr M Read
Committee Secretaries	Mrs JA Kennedy & Mrs R De Souza

ALSO PRESENT At various times during the meeting:
Mr M Mayston (Senior Transport Planner), Ms J Hamblyn (Communications Advisor), Mr D Murphy (Group Manager Strategic Planning, Palmerston North City Council), Mr J Miguel (Senior Transport Planner, Palmerston North City Council), Ms L Faulknor (Regional Manager System Design, New Zealand Transport Agency), and Mr I Robertson (Member of the Public).

The Chair welcomed everyone to the meeting with a Karakia.

APOLOGIES

There were no apologies.

PUBLIC FORUMS / DEPUTATIONS / PETITIONS

There were no requests for public speaking rights.

SUPPLEMENTARY ITEMS

There were no supplementary items to be considered.

MEMBERS' CONFLICTS OF INTEREST

There were no conflicts of interest declared.

CONFIRMATION OF MINUTES

RT 25-71 **Moved** **Watson/Wanden**

That the Committee:

confirms the minutes of the Regional Transport Committee meeting held on 4 March 2025 as a correct record, and notes that the recommendations were adopted by the Council on 25 March 2025.

CARRIED

NZ TRANSPORT AGENCY WAKA KOTAHI DIRECTOR'S REPORT

Report No 25-75

Ms Stewart (NZ Transport Agency Waka Kotahi) spoke to a PowerPoint presentation which updated Members on the NZ Transport Agency's regional and national activities. She took Members through each of the activities and clarified questions and comments. As a result of discussion and concern expressed at the proposed Ōtaki to North of Levin Expressway (Ō2NL) design changes, a new recommendation b. was proposed.

RT 25-72 **Moved** **Wanden/Watson**

That the Committee recommends that Council:

- a. receives the information contained in Report No. 25-75 and Annexes.
- b. supports Mayor Bernie Wanden in advocating to the New Zealand Transport Agency Board and to the Minister of Transport for reconsidering the proposed Ōtaki to North of Levin Expressway (Ō2NL) proposal and ensuring it retains its consented scope.

Abstain: Ms Stewart

CARRIED

APPROVED ORGANISATION QUARTERLY UPDATE

Report No 25-76

This item updated Members on significant roading, public transport and planning activities within the Horizons Region. It also served to inform Members on the progress against various work programmes approved through the National Land Transport Programme (NLTP) and Regional Land Transport Plan 2021-31 (RLTP). The Chair and Mayors of the local authorities in the region introduced their reports, highlighted activities of note and clarified Members' questions.

RT 25-73 **Moved** **G Smith/Collis**

That the Committee recommends that Council:

- a. receives the information contained in Report No. 25-76 and Annex.

CARRIED

TRANSPORT PLANNING AND GOVERNMENT POLICY UPDATE

Report No 25-77

This item informed Members of recent developments in central government transport policies. Mr Read (Manager Transport Services) clarified Members' questions.

Members expressed concern around stock effluent disposal options throughout the Region and provided their views.

RT 25-74 **Moved** **Worboys/Watson**

That the Committee recommends that Council:

- a. receives the information contained in Report No. 25-77 and Annex.

CARRIED

The meeting closed at 12.21pm.

Confirmed

MANAGER TRANSPORT SERVICES

CHAIR

Report of a meeting of the Manawatū River Users' Advisory Group held at Tararua Room, Horizons Regional Council, 11-15 Victoria Avenue, Palmerston North, at 5.01pm on Tuesday 3 June 2025.

PRESENT Cr T Teira (Chair), Mr M Wheatley (New Zealand Four Wheel Drive Association NZFWDA), Mr D Burmeister (Coastal Ward – New Zealand Police), Mr B Culley (River Warden/Manawatū Marine Boating Club), Mr B Sprozen (Manawatū Power Boat Club), Mr T Hardie (Central Districts Jet Boating NZ), Mr D Emery (Ngā Kaitiaki O Ngāti Kauwhata), Mr B Russell (Manawatū Estuary Management Team MEMT), Mr K Lane and Mrs K Lane (Manawatū Estuary Trust).

IN ATTENDANCE

Senior Biodiversity Advisor	Mrs S Cass
Operations Manager, River Management	Mr J Foxall
Area Engineer	Mr P Arcus
Harbourmaster	Mrs B Hogan
Emergency Services Ltd Contractor	Mr R Brannigan
Committee Secretaries	Mrs R De Souza and Mrs T Bishop

The Chair welcomed everyone to the meeting with a Karakia.

APOLOGIES

Moved **Arcus/Sprozen**

That an apology be noted from Dr Roygard and from Mr Arcus for early departure.

CARRIED

CONFIRMATION OF MINUTES

Moved **Culley/Sprozen**

That the Committee:

confirms the minutes of the Manawatū River Users' Advisory Group meeting held on 3 December 2024 as a correct record, and notes that the recommendations were adopted by the Council on 17 December 2025.

CARRIED

Matters Arising from the Minutes:

- Mr M Wheatley (New Zealand Four Wheel Drive Association NZFWDA) informed that New Zealand Four Wheel Drive Association meeting would be held next week .

LOWER MANAWATŪ SCHEME (LMS) - RIVER MANAGEMENT UPDATE

Report No 25-61

This item informed the Manawatū River Users' Advisory Group (MRUAG) about management issues related to the Lower Manawatū Scheme (LMS) that would impact the recreational use of the river from December 2024 to May 2025. Mr Arcus (Area Engineer) presented his report highlighting progress on the Regional Flood Vulnerability Assessment which identified both current and predicted levels of service for existing flood protection infrastructure. Mr Foxall (HRC Operations Manager) noted the ongoing resilience work at the Moutoa Sluice Gates, the replacement of the Moutoa wet gates, stopbank upgrades on the Tokomaru Stream, and final reinstatement works at Te Matai Road. He also mentioned that the fabrication of new wet gates at the downstream end of the Moutoa Spillway was in progress, with possible installation later in June.

Moved **Arcus/Hardie**

That the Committee recommends that Council:

- a. receives the information contained in Report No. 25-61.

CARRIED

HARBOURMASTER REPORT

Report No 25-62

This report provided members of the Manawatū River Users' Advisory Group (MRUAG) with an update on matters relating to navigation and safety on the Manawatū River and its tributaries. Mrs Hogan (Harbourmaster) introduced herself, took the report as read and with Mr Brannigan (Emergency Services Ltd Contractor), answered Members' questions.

Moved **Hogan/Brannigan**

That the Committee recommends that Council:

- a. receives the information contained in Report No. 25-62.

CARRIED

PAPANGAIO TE WHARANGI MANAWATŪ ESTUARY MANAGEMENT PLAN

Report No 25-63

Mr Russell (Manawatū Estuary Management Team MEMT) presented the Papangaio Te Wharangi Manawatū Estuary Management Plan 2025-2035 (The Plan) prepared by the Manawatū Estuary Management Team (MEMT) which was composed by representatives of various stakeholder groups. The Plan's purpose was to ensure a strategic approach for everyone to work together, to optimise progress towards the vision, and to maintain the estuary's internationally recognised ecological significance as a Ramsar site. As Members considered the contents of the Plan, Mrs Cass (HRC Senior Biodiversity Advisor) and Mr Brannigan Emergency Services Ltd Contractor provided clarification.

Moved **Emery/Russell**

That the Committee recommends that Council:

- a. receives the information contained in Report No. 25-63 and Annex.

CARRIED

GENERAL BUSINESS

During general business, Mr Culley moved that the start time of the meeting be amended to 5.30pm.

The Chair put the recommendation.

AMENDMENT TO START TIME OF THE MANAWATU RIVER USERS' ADVISORY GROUP MEETING

Moved

Culley/Hardie

That the Committee recommends that Council:

amends the start time of the next Manawatū River Users' Advisory Group meeting to 5.30pm.

CARRIED

The meeting closed at 6.33pm.

Confirmed

CHIEF EXECUTIVE

CHAIR

Report of the public meeting of the Strategy and Policy Committee to deliberate on submissions made to Horizons 2024-34 Long-term Plan amendment and 2025-25 Annual Plan held at 9.30am on Tuesday 10 June 2025, in the Tararua Room, Horizons Regional Council, 11-15 Victoria Avenue, Palmerston North.

PRESENT Crs RJ Keedwell (Chair), EM Clarke (via Zoom), DB Cotton (via Zoom), JT Edmonds, SD Ferguson, EB Gordon, FJT Gordon, GM McKellar, JM Naylor, NM Riley (via Zoom), AR Taylor, WK Te Awe Awe, and T Teira.

IN ATTENDANCE

Chief Executive	Mr MJ McCartney
Acting Group Manager Corporate and Governance	Mrs C Hesselin
Committee Secretary	Mrs JA Kennedy & Mrs T Bishop

ALSO PRESENT At various times during the meeting:
Dr J Roygard (Group Manager Catchment Operations), Dr E Daly (Group Manager Strategy, Regulation & Science), Mr G Shirley (Group Manager Regional Services & Information), Mr J Galuszka (Acting Media & Communications Manager), Mr A Smith (Chief Financial Officer), Mrs N Dodd (Financial Accountant), Mr M Read (Manager Transport Services), Mrs J Thorby (Senior Transport Planner), Mr R Marshall (Senior Policy Analyst), Mr C Grant (Programme Director, Regional House Project), Mr A Tonnon (Passenger Transport Committee representative), various submitters to the 2024-34 Long-term Plan Amendment and 2025-26 Annual Plan, members of the public, and a member of the Press.

The Chair welcomed everyone to the meeting and invited Cr Ferguson to say a Karakia.

APOLOGIES

AP/LTP 25-05 Moved Keedwell/Taylor
That the Council receives an apology from Cr Benbow.
CARRIED

PUBLIC FORUMS / DEPUTATIONS / PETITIONS

There were no public speaking rights.

SUPPLEMENTARY ITEMS

The Chair referred to supporting documents that had been emailed to Councillors prior to the meeting.

AP/LTP 25-06 Moved Keedwell/Teira
That the Council receives the detailed spreadsheet with different rating scenarios as a supplementary item.
CARRIED

MEMBERS' CONFLICTS OF INTEREST

There were no conflicts of interest declared.

CONFIRMATION OF MINUTES

AP/LTP 25-07 Moved

Teira/Ferguson

That the Committee:

confirms the minutes of the Strategy and Policy Committee meeting Submissions Hearing for the 2024-34 Long-term Plan amendment and 2025-25 Annual Plan held on 20 and 22 May 2025 as a correct record.

CARRIED

DELIBERATIONS ON HORIZONS 2024-34 LONG-TERM PLAN AMENDMENT AND 2025-26 ANNUAL PLAN

Report No 25-79

This report provided a summary and analysis of the submissions received to Council's 2024-34 Long-term Plan Amendment and 2025-26 Annual Plan.

The Chair outlined the deliberations process and said Councillors would be given the opportunity to consider the proposed recommendations, seek clarity, propose amendments, and explained that new recommendations could be introduced for debate.

Members began by debating the recommendations contained in the report, sought clarification, provided amendments to some of the recommendations, and introduced new ones.

The meeting adjourned at 11.02am.

The meeting reconvened at 11.18am.

Members continued debate on the recommendations and sought clarity around the options presented in the supplementary spreadsheet which contained different rating scenarios.

The meeting adjourned at 12.15pm.

The meeting reconvened at 12.50pm.

The Chair took Members through each of the recommendations, grouped some of them together, and called for a mover / seconder. As each recommendation was put, Members had the opportunity to provide their views and explain any amendments they wished to have.

AP/LTP 25-08 Moved

Keedwell/Teira

That the Committee recommends that Council:

- a. receives the information contained in Report No 25-79 and annexes.
- b. notes the matters raised by all 323 submitters.

CARRIED

Members asked that recommendations c. and d. be taken separately with a division.

AP/LTP 25-09 Moved B Gordon/Naylor

That the Committee recommends that Council:

- c. *in relation to Long-term Plan Amendment Consultation Issue (Question One): CentrePort, proceeds with Council's preferred option, Option 1: Continue further investigations into the sale of the CentrePort shareholding.*

Against: Ferguson, McKellar, Riley, Cotton

For: Crs Naylor, Teira, Edmonds, B Gordon, Taylor, Te Awe Awe, F Gordon, Keedwell, Clarke

CARRIED

Moved B Gordon/Taylor

That the Committee recommends that Council:

- d. *in relation to Long-term Plan Amendment Consultation Issue (Question Two): CentrePort, proceeds with Council's preferred option, Option 1: If those investigations come back showing a sale would produce favourable outcomes for ratepayers, sell the CentrePort shareholding and invest the proceeds into a managed fund.*

Against: Crs Ferguson, Teira, Edmonds, McKellar, Te Awe Awe, F Gordon, Riley, Taylor

For: Crs Naylor, B Gordon, Keedwell, Clarke, Cotton

LOST

Recommendation e. was put with an amendment. A division was requested.

AP/LTP 25-10 Moved B Gordon/Keedwell

That the Committee recommends that Council:

- e. *in relation to Annual Plan Consultation Issue 1: Public Transport Funding, proceeds with Council's preferred option - Option 1: Fund the improved bus services in Whanganui and new bus services in Horowhenua 100% via targeted transport rates (i.e. without New Zealand Transport Agency (NZTA) co-investment), noting that whilst this decision currently does not attract NZTA funding that Horizons Regional Council will continue to lobby NZTA for co-investment.*

Against: Crs McKellar, Cotton, Riley

For: Crs Keedwell, Naylor, Clarke, Edmonds, Ferguson, B Gordon, F Gordon, Taylor, Te Awe Awe, Teira

CARRIED

A new recommendation f. was debated.

AP/LTP 25-11 Moved Taylor/Naylor

That the Committee recommends that Council:

- f. *in relation to Annual Plan Consultation Issue 2: Te Pūwaha, proceeds with Council's Option 3: Have a loan term of 35 years*

CARRIED

Recommendations g.i. ii. iii. in relation to submitter requests were debated and put by the Chair.

AP/LTP 25-12 Moved Ferguson/Cotton

That Committee recommends that Council:

- g.i. *declines the funding request from Land Search and Rescue for \$49,000 per annum.*

CARRIED

Recommendation g.ii. - a. c. and d. were selected and put separately. Recommendation c. was put with an amendment. Recommendation b. was deleted.

AP/LTP 25-13 Moved B Gordon/Te Awe Awe

That Committee recommends that Council:

g.ii.

- a. *allocates \$950,000 (OPEX) in the 2025/26 financial year for detailed planning and design work in relation to a new Regional House build.*

Against: Crs Riley, F Gordon, McKellar

For: Crs Keedwell, Naylor, Clarke, Cotton, Edmonds, Ferguson, B Gordon, Taylor, Te Awe Awe, Teira

CARRIED

- c. *funds the 2025-26 work programme from General Reserves utilising the two recent property sales.*

Against: Crs Riley, McKellar

For: Crs Keedwell, Naylor, Clarke, Cotton, Edmonds, Ferguson, F Gordon, B Gordon, Taylor, Te Awe Awe, Teira

CARRIED

- d. *agrees that, in accordance with Council's Significance and Engagement Policy, the decision regarding first stage funding on the Regional House Palmerston North new build is significant, and the appropriate level of engagement is to inform.*

Against: Crs F Gordon, Riley, Cotton

For: Crs Keedwell, Naylor, Clarke, Edmonds, Ferguson, B Gordon, McKellar, Taylor, Te Awe Awe, Teira

CARRIED

Recommendation g.iii - Option a. was selected with an amendment. Option b. was deleted.

AP/LTP 25-14 Moved Keedwell/Taylor

That Committee recommends that Council:

g.iii.

- a. declines to fund the Ashhurst school buses as requested by the Ministry of Education (MoE) but instructs the Chief Executive to engage with MoE around options.*

CARRIED

Three additional Options, h.i, h.ii, and h.iii, were provided for Members' consideration under recommendation h. Following Option h.iii. being moved and seconded, a series of amendments and new recommendations were debated by Members prior to being put by the Chair.

AP/LTP 25-15 Moved McKellar/Naylor

That the Committee recommends that Council:

h.iii adopts Option 3 being a 7.9% total rate increase.

CARRIED

Plus the inclusion of the following amendments and additional motions:

Moved Ferguson/Taylor

That the Committee recommends that Council:

- h.iii – (a) - Retains Whanganui bus service improvements of \$400,000 as per consultation.*

CARRIED

Moved Keedwell/Naylor

- h.iii – (b) Retains Climate Regional Risk Assessment of \$100,000 as per year 2 of the 2024-34 Long-term Plan, funded from Reserves.*

Against: Cr McKellar

CARRIED

Moved F Gordon/Teira

- h.iii – (c) Retains Priority Habitats funding of \$400,000 as per year 2 of the 2024-34 Long-term Plan.*

Against: Crs B Gordon, McKellar, Cotton

For: Crs Naylor, Ferguson, Keedwell, Clarke, Edmonds, F Gordon, Riley, Taylor, Te Awe Awe, Teira

CARRIED

Moved **Riley/B Gordon**

h.iii – (d) Uses \$300,000 from SLUI reserves to fund the SLUI works programme to reduce the amount of rate funding required.

CARRIED

Moved **Riley/F Gordon**

h.iii – (e) Retains \$195,000 for Pest Plant Management activities as per Annual Plan consultation.

CARRIED

Moved **Riley/F Gordon**

h.iii – (f) Increases the budget for possum control by an additional \$170,000 to cover the exit of OSPRI.

CARRIED

Moved **Riley/B Gordon**

h.iii – (g) Increases the river management operations maintenance budget funding by an additional \$50,000 to be targeted at Ruapehu Schemes.

CARRIED

The meeting adjourned at 2.26pm.

The meeting reconvened at 2.36pm.

Members continued debating a series of amendments and new recommendations to h.iii..

AP/LTP 25-15 **Moved** **Riley/F Gordon**

(Continued)

That the Committee recommends that Council:

h.iii – (h) Funds the reduction in capital funding for staff time in river management at \$500,000.

CARRIED

Moved **Ferguson/Teira**

h.iii – (i) Retains the following additional roles as per consultation:

- *Iwi Advisor role at \$90,000.*

Against: Cr McKellar

CARRIED

h.iii –(d) - Uses \$300,000 from SLUI reserves to fund the SLUI works programme to reduce the amount of rate funding required.

Moved **Riley/F Gordon**

h.iii –(e) - Retains \$195,000 for Pest Plant Management activities as per Annual Plan consultation.

Moved **Riley/F Gordon**

h.iii –(f) - Increases the budget for possum control by an additional \$170,000 to cover the exit of OSPRI.

Moved **Riley/B Gordon**

h.iii –(g) - Increases the river management operations maintenance budget funding by an additional \$50,000 to be targeted at Ruapehu Schemes.

Moved **Riley/F Gordon**

h.iii –(h) - Funds the reduction in capital funding for staff time in river management at \$500,000.

Moved **Ferguson/Teira**

h.iii –(i) - Retains the following additional roles as per consultation:

- *Iwi Advisor role at \$90,000.*
- *Approves the position of ~~Compliance Officers x 5 for Year 2 and for Year 3~~ 1 Compliance Officer for Year 2 of the 2024-35 Long-term Plan.*

Moved **McKellar/Naylor**

That the Committee recommends that Council:

h.iv notes that the recommended option does not currently allocate resources to support the implementation and delivery of Plan Change 2 (PC2). Once the outcome of the court decision is known, Council may need to consider a further decision regarding the approval of an overspend to enable delivery of PC2.

Moved **Naylor/Teira**

That the Committee recommends that Council:

- authorises the Chief Executive to make any minor amendments to the Long-term amendment and Annual Plan drafts, as required.*
- authorises the Chief Executive to release the final draft of the Long-term Plan Amendment to Audit New Zealand for a final audit, if required, prior to adoption.*
- approves, in principle, the drafted responses to the points raised by submitters (that don't require a decision of Council), as provided in Annex D, and authorises the Chief Executive to finalise the responses.*

CARRIED

The meeting closed at 3.21pm with a Karakia from Cr Ferguson.

Confirmed

CHIEF EXECUTIVE

CHAIR

Public Excluded Section

RECOMMENDATION

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

This resolution is made in reliance on section 48(1)(a) of the Local Government Official Information and Meetings Act 1987 and the particular interest or interests protected by section 6 or section 7 of that Act which would be prejudiced by the holding of the whole or relevant part of the proceedings of the meeting in public, as follows:

General subject of each matter to be considered	Reason for passing this resolution	Ground(s) under section 48(1) for the passing of this resolution
PX1 Confirmation of Public Excluded Meeting held on 27 May 2025.	<p>s7(2)(h) - the withholding of the information is necessary to enable the local authority to carry out, without prejudice or disadvantage, commercial activities.</p> <p>s7(2)(b)(ii) - the withholding of the information is necessary to protect information where the making available of the information would be likely unreasonably to prejudice the commercial position of the person who supplied or who is the subject of the information.</p> <p>s7(2)(i) - the withholding of the information is necessary to enable the local authority to carry on, without prejudice or disadvantage, negotiations (including commercial and industrial negotiations).</p>	<p>s48(1)(a)</p> <p>The public conduct of the part of the meeting would be likely to result in the disclosure of information for which good reason for withholding exists under section 7.</p>
PX2 Report of Audit, Risk & Investment Committee Meeting - Receive and Adopt Resolutions and Recommendations – 28 May 2025	<p>s7(2)(a) - the withholding of the information is necessary to protect the privacy of natural persons, including that of a deceased person.</p>	<p>s48(1)(a)</p> <p>The public conduct of the part of the meeting would be likely to result in the disclosure of information for which good reason for withholding exists under section 7.</p>
PX3 Feilding bus service - contract award	<p>s7(2)(b)(ii) - the withholding of the information is necessary to protect information where the making available of the information would be likely unreasonably to prejudice the</p>	<p>s48(1)(a)</p> <p>The public conduct of the part of the meeting would be likely to result in the disclosure of information for which good</p>

	<p>commercial position of the person who supplied or who is the subject of the information.</p> <p>Paper related to tender and contract award. Contains commercially sensitive third party information..</p> <p>s7(2)(i) - the withholding of the information is necessary to enable the local authority to carry on, without prejudice or disadvantage, negotiations (including commercial and industrial negotiations).</p>	<p>reason for withholding exists under section 7.</p>
<p>PX4 Treatment of Existing Regional House Palmerston North</p>	<p>s7(2)(b)(ii) - the withholding of the information is necessary to protect information where the making available of the information would be likely unreasonably to prejudice the commercial position of the person who supplied or who is the subject of the information.</p> <p>Commercially Sensitive.</p> <p>s7(2)(h) - the withholding of the information is necessary to enable the local authority to carry out, without prejudice or disadvantage, commercial activities.</p>	<p>s48(1)(a)</p> <p>The public conduct of the part of the meeting would be likely to result in the disclosure of information for which good reason for withholding exists under section 7.</p>
<p>PX5 Chief Executive end of Year Performance Review</p>	<p>s7(2)(a) - the withholding of the information is necessary to protect the privacy of natural persons, including that of a deceased person.</p> <p>This report should remain confidential because it includes information about the performance and employment terms of an identifiable individual.</p>	<p>s48(1)(a)</p> <p>The public conduct of the part of the meeting would be likely to result in the disclosure of information for which good reason for withholding exists under section 7.</p>
<p>PX6 Council / Committee to consider whether any item in the Public Excluded minutes can be moved into the public domain and define the extent of the release</p>		