



Local Governance Statement

Prepared in terms of Section 40 of the Local Government Act 2002

Ninth Edition

Horizons Regional Council is the trading name of the
Manawatū-Whanganui Regional Council

Date: April 2026

Co-ordinator:

Trina Bishop

Governance Team Leader

Received by Council: 21 April 2026

Updated April 2026

Ninth Edition

Report No. 2026/EXT/1999

ISBN No. 978-1-99-106108-9

Contacts:	24 hr Freephone: 0508 800 800 Email: help@horizons.govt.nz Website: www.horizons.govt.nz Postal Address: Horizons Regional Council, Private Bag 11025, Manawatu Mail Centre, Palmerston North 4442
Regional House	Palmerston North 11-15 Victoria Avenue Whanganui 181 Guyton Street
Service Centres	Kairanga Cnr Rongotea & Kairanga-Bunnythorpe Roads, Palmerston North Marton 19-21 Hammond Street Taumarunui 34 Maata Street Woodville Cnr Vogel (SH2) & Tay Streets
Depots	Levin 120-122 Hokio Beach Road Taihape 243 Wairanu Road
Manawatu-Whanganui Civil Defense Emergency Management Operations Centre (CDEM)	Level 2, Te Ao Nui, 17 Victoria Avenue, Palmerston North

Foreword and Chair's Message

This Local Governance Statement, which has been prepared by Horizons Regional Council in accordance with Section 40 of the Local Government Act 2002, is published at a significant moment for local government in our country. Central government has signalled wide-ranging reform of the local government system, including proposals that would see elected regional councillors replaced with Combined Territorial Boards. It would be remiss of me not to acknowledge that context plainly.

Horizons Regional Council serves one of Aotearoa New Zealand's most geographically diverse regions - from the volcanic plateau in Ruapehu to fertile plains in Horowhenua, and from the headwaters of rivers to the east and west coasts of the North Island. The communities across our region are just as varied: rural and urban, Māori and non-Māori, recent arrivals and those with deep roots. What they share is a right to be heard by people whom they chose to represent them.

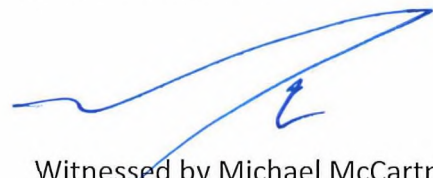
Regional councillors provide that accountability. We stand for election on the issues that matter to this region. We can be asked hard questions over the phone, at the farm gate, and at community meetings. That accountability is the foundation of democratic local government.

As you read this statement, you will find clear information about how Horizons Regional Council operates, how decisions are made, and how you can participate. I encourage you to use it. The real strength of regional governance lies not in the structure, but in the relationship between those structures and the people they serve.

Whatever the future holds for local government, Horizons councillors remain committed to serving our communities with integrity, transparency and genuine partnership.



Nikki Riley
CHAIR



Witnessed by Michael McCartney
CHIEF EXECUTIVE

Contents

Foreword and Chair's Message	3
Contents	4
1. Overview of Governance Statement	7
2. Functions, responsibilities, and activities	8
2.1. Purpose	8
2.2. Responsibilities	8
2.3. Community Outcomes	8
2.4. Activities	8
3. Roles of District / City Councils and Regional Councils	10
3.1. Horizons Region at a glance	12
4. Statutes Pertaining to Local Government	13
5. Bylaws	14
6. The electoral system and the opportunity to change it	14
7. Representation Arrangements	15
7.1. Constituencies	15
7.2. 2025 Constituency Boundaries	16
7.3. Māori Constituencies	17
7.4. Review of Representation Arrangements	17
8. The Reorganisation Process	18
9. Members' Roles and Conduct	20
9.1. Chair of a Regional Council	20
9.2. Division of responsibility between the Council and Management	20
9.3. Role of the Regional Council	21
9.4. Codes of Conduct	21
9.5. Applicable Statutory Requirements	22
10. Governance, Membership & Delegation	25
10.1. Independent Election	25
10.2. Council Meetings	25
10.3. Council Committees	25
10.4. Committee Membership	26
10.5. Public Forums Deputations and Petitions	26
10.6. Petitions	27

10.7.	Workshops	27
10.8.	Partnerships	27
10.9.	Council Organisations	27
10.10.	Legislative Compliance	28
10.11.	Council and Committee Meeting Processes	28
10.12.	Workshop Processes	29
10.13.	Council Appointments	29
11.	Consultation Policies	31
11.1.	The Special Consultative Procedure	31
11.2.	Community Consultation Policy	32
12.	Policies for Liaising With, and Memoranda or Agreements with, Māori	33
12.1.	Iwi within the Manawatū-Whanganui Region	33
12.1.1.	Legislative context	33
12.1.2.	Treaty settlements	33
12.1.3.	How Council provides for māori participation in decision making	34
13.	Management Structures and Relationships	35
13.1.	Chief Executive	35
13.2.	Responsibilities: Media & Communications	35
13.3.	Responsibilities: Strategy, Regulation and Science Group	36
13.4.	Responsibilities: Transport & Regional Services	36
13.5.	Responsibilities: Catchment Operations Group	36
13.6.	Responsibilities: Corporate & Governance Group	37
14.	Equal Employment Opportunities	38
15.	Key Planning and Policy Documents	39
15.1.	Planning Processes	39
15.2.	Long-term Plan (LTP)	39
15.2.1.	Community Outcomes	40
15.2.2.	Policies	40
15.2.3.	Long-term Plan (LTP) – Horizons Regional Council – The Next 10 Years	41
15.3.	Regional Policy Statement and Regional Plans	41
15.4.	Other Plans and Strategies	42

16.	Public Access to the Council and Its Elected Members	43
16.1.	Executive Team	43
16.2.	Chair & Deputy Chair	43
16.3.	Councillors	43
17.	Requests for Official Information	45
18.	Horizons Regional Council Organisational Chart (March 2026)	46

1. Overview of Governance Statement

Horizons Regional Council's Governance Statement is a collection of information about what the Regional Council's role is and the processes that Council uses to engage with its community. All councils must prepare this statement as a requirement of the Local Government Act 2002.

This Statement outlines how Council makes decisions and shows how the public can influence those processes. It also promotes local democracy by providing the public with information on ways they can influence local democratic processes.

Horizons Regional Council already discloses much of the information required in a local governance statement in the **Annual Plan** and **Long-term Plan (LTP)** which can be viewed at **www.horizons.govt.nz**.

A significant benefit of the Governance Statement is that it draws the material together into a single document. Council is obliged to produce a new governance statement six months after each triennial election.

Further information: www.horizons.govt.nz

Horizons Regional Council Annual Plan 25/26

Horizons Regional Council Long Term Plan 2024-2034

2. Functions, responsibilities, and activities

2.1. Purpose

The purpose of Horizons Regional Council, as per the **Local Government Act 2002**, is:

- to enable democratic local decision-making and action by, and on behalf of, local communities, and
- to promote the social, economic, environmental, and cultural well-being of communities in the present and for the future.

2.2. Responsibilities

The Council has overall responsibility and accountability for the proper direction and control of the Council's activities in pursuit of its purpose. This responsibility includes:

- Formulating the region's strategic direction in consultation with the community through various plans and strategies
- Determining the services and activities to be undertaken in consultation with the community
- Managing risks
- Administering various regulations and upholding the law
- Monitoring the delivery of the LTP and Annual Plan
- Ensuring the integrity of management control systems
- Safeguarding the public interest
- Ensuring effective succession of Elected Members
- Reporting to ratepayers

2.3. Community Outcomes

The following are what the Council, through the current 2024-34 Long-term Plan, has determined to be the high-level outcomes that it pursues. They are:

- Our region's communities are vibrant and empowered
- Our region's relationship with iwi and hapū are respectful and mana-enhancing
- Our region's communities are resilient to the impacts of natural hazards and climate change
- Our region has effective transport networks
- Our region's economy is thriving and environmentally sustainable
- Our region's ecosystems are healthy

2.4. Activities

To achieve the community outcomes the Council undertakes the following groups of activities, as identified in the Long-term Plan:

Groups	Activities
Partnerships, Governance and Leadership	• Governance • Iwi and hapū relationships • Community wellbeing and relationships
Strategy, science and regulation	• Policy, Strategy and Climate Resilience • Science and Environmental Reporting • Regulatory Management
Catchment Operations	• Biodiversity and Biosecurity • Freshwater and Partnerships • Land Management • River Management and flood protection
Transport and Regional Services	• District Advice • Emergency Management • Environmental data • Information Services • Transport Planning • Passenger Transport Services • Road Safety • Regional Economic Development (A35)

Further information: www.horizons.govt.nz

Horizons Regional Council Long Term Plan 2024-2034

3. Roles of District / City Councils and Regional Councils

District and city councils are primarily responsible for community services in your area, such as road maintenance, libraries, determining land use and subdivisions. Our regional council concentrate on the 'natural environment'.

The **Resource Management Act 1991 (RMA)** is a principal Act guiding regional councils, and many of their activities focus on managing environmental effects. Section 30 of the RMA states regional councils are responsible for controlling the taking, use, damming and diversion of surface water, groundwater, maintaining and enhancing water quality and quantity, the allocation of water, the discharge of contaminants to land, air or water; the effects of activities in the coastal marine area; introduction of plants into water bodies; and maintaining indigenous biodiversity; and the strategic integration of infrastructure with land use.

Regional council's also carry out important activities under the **Soil Conservation and Rivers Control Act 1941**. This Act specifically requires and empowers regional councils to undertake flood protection, river and catchment management, erosion control, construction and maintenance of flood protection schemes.

Under the **Biosecurity Act 1993**, regional councils are designated as management agencies for biosecurity and must:

- Carry out pest management (plants and animals);
- Prepare regional pest management plans; and
- Control pests to protect ecosystems, land, and water.

Under the **Land Transport Management Act 2003**, Horizons Regional Council is designated as Regional Transport Authority, and is responsible for:

- Regional land transport planning;
- Preparing Regional Land Transport Plans;
- Public transport planning and funding coordination.

Regional councils also have responsibility for local government functions that have overall regional benefits which are governed by other legislation.

An important distinction between regional councils and city or district councils is the scale at which each operate. A regional council generally covers a larger area, often encompassing multiple city or district councils. The boundaries of a region are based on river catchments, while district and city council territories are based on population and communities of interest.

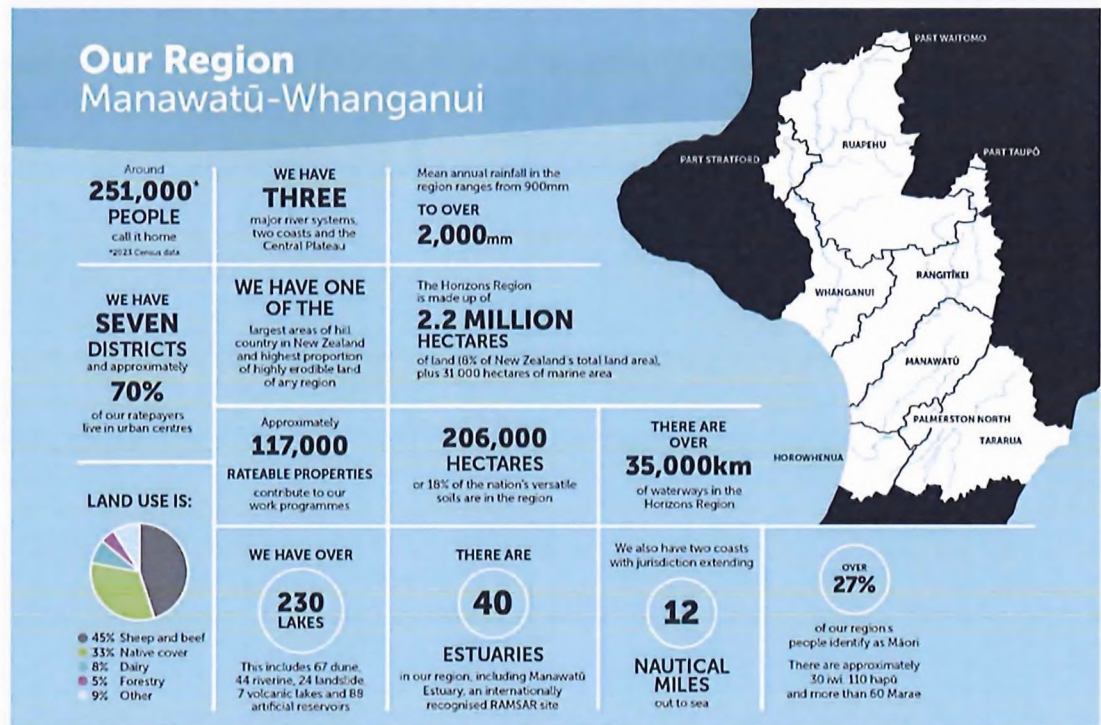
Horizons Regional Council's boundary extends over 22,200 km² and covers the Palmerston North City Council, Manawātū District Council, Rangitīkei District Council, Horowhenua District Council, Tararua District Council, Whanganui District Council, Ruapehu District Council, and parts of the Stratford District Council, Taupo District Council and Waitomo District Council.

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 our

District and City councils and other agencies on some issues to ensure they are managed to benefit the entire region.

Horizons also leads the Region's response to emergencies and work to increase community resilience through coordination of the Manawatū-Whanganui Civil Defence and Emergency Management Group.

3.1. Horizons Region at a glance



Further information: www.horizons.govt.nz

Horizons Regional Council Long Term Plan 2024-2034

4. Statutes Pertaining to Local Government

In fulfilling its purpose, Horizons Regional Council exercises powers and performs responsibilities conferred on it by various Statutes and their amendments.

Chief among these are the Local Government Acts of 1974 and 2002, the Soil Conservation and Rivers Control Act 1941, the Local Electoral Act 2001, the Local Government (Rating) Act 2002, the Local Government Official Information and Meetings Act 1987 and the Resource Management Act 1991.

Other general Acts of Parliament that confer powers on Horizons Regional Council and regulate its functions include:

- Biosecurity Act 1993
- Building Act 2004
- Civil Defence Emergency Management Act 2002
- Copyright Act 1994
- Employment Relations Act 2000
- Financial Reporting Act 1993
- Goods and Services Tax Act 1985
- Health and Safety in Employment Act 1992
- Human Rights Act 1993
- Income Tax Act 2007
- Land Drainage Act 1908
- Land Transport Act 1998
- Land Transport Management Act 2003
- Maritime Transport Act 1994
- New Zealand Bill of Rights Act 1990
- Oaths and Declarations Act 1957
- Privacy Act 1993
- Public Finance Act 1989
- Public Records Act 2005
- Remuneration Authority Act 1977
- Smoke-free Environments Act 1990
- Sovereign's Birthday Observance Act 1952
- Transit New Zealand Act 1989
- Transport (Vehicle and Driver Registration and Licensing) Act 1986
- Treaty of Waitangi Act 1975
- Climate Change Response Act 2002
- Resource Management (consenting and other system changes) Amendment Act 2025
- Treaty Settlement Acts

Further information: New Zealand Legislation www.legislation.govt.nz

5. Bylaws

Horizons has one Bylaw, the Manawatū River and Tributaries Navigation and Safety Bylaw (2022). Its purpose is to provide for navigation and safety on the Manawatū River and its tributaries. The bylaw regulates the use of boats and jet skis in specified areas, including imposing speed limits.

More information about this bylaw, including a copy of the full document, is available on the Horizons Regional Council's website or by free phoning 0508 800 800.

Further Information: www.horizons.govt.nz

Manawatū River and Tributaries Navigation and Safety Bylaw (2022)

6. The electoral system and the opportunity to change it

Horizons Regional Council currently operates its elections under the First Past the Post electoral system. Electors vote for their preferred candidate(s), and those with the most votes win.

The other option permitted under the **Local Electoral Act 2001 (LEA)** is the single transferable vote system (STV). This is currently used by some District and City Councils. Electors rank candidates in order of preference e.g. Jim Bloggs, 1; Mary Smith, 2; Wiremu Ngatai, 3, etc. Successful candidates must receive a quota of the votes cast and when there are enough candidates with a quota to fill all the seats, they are the winners. The quota (share of votes) that is needed for a candidate to be elected is determined by the number of seats, and the number of votes cast are achieved by redistributing votes. In the first round of counting, the candidates with the highest and lowest number of votes are identified. The lowest-polling candidates are then excluded. When the top polling candidates have received their quota, the second votes are redistributed. Thus, if Jim Bloggs, has a quota, the number 2 votes that his supporters have made, are allocated to their second choice. If this gives Mary Smith a quota, she is elected. This process is repeated until there are enough candidates with a quota.

Under the LEA the Council can resolve to change the electoral system to be used at the next two elections or conduct a binding poll on the question, or electors can demand a binding poll. A poll can be initiated by at least 5% of electors signing a petition demanding that a poll be held. Once changed, an electoral system must be used for at least the next two triennial general elections; that is, we cannot change our electoral system for one election and then change back for the next election.

Horizons Regional Council reviewed its electoral system in June 2023. The decision was made to retain the first past the post voting system for the 2025 elections.

Accordingly, the Council may resolve in 2026 to change the system for the 2028 elections or to conduct a poll, or its electors could demand a poll.

Further Information: www.horizons.govt.nz

7. Representation Arrangements

7.1. Constituencies

The Manawatū-Whanganui Region is divided into eight constituencies and their layout is shown on the map.

Horowhenua constituency (population 32,500)	Two Councillors
Manawatū-Rangitīkei constituency (population 43,400)	Two Councillors
Palmerston North constituency (population 81,000)	Four Councillors
Ruapehu constituency (population 9,700)	One Councillor
Tararua Constituency (population 16,150)	One Councillor
Whanganui constituency (population 40,100)	Two Councillors
Raki Māori constituency (population 19,350)	One Councillor
Tonga Māori constituency (population 18,850)	One Councillor

(Statistics NZ population estimates as at May 2025)

7.2. 2025 Constituency Boundaries



7.3. Māori Constituencies

The **Local Electoral Act 2001 (LEA)** also gives the Council the ability to establish separate constituencies for Māori electors. The Council may resolve to create separate Māori constituencies or conduct a poll on the matter, or the community may demand a poll. A petition of 5% (or more) of electors can require the Council to conduct a poll.

In May 2021 the Council resolved to introduce Māori constituencies in the Manawatū-Whanganui Region – Raki Māori and Tonga Māori. In accordance with section 19Z of the LEA, this continued in effect for two triennial elections of the regional council (2022 and 2025). It also continued for any associated election and continues in effect after that until either:

1. a further resolution takes effect; or
2. a poll of electors of the regional council held under section 19ZF takes effect.

Horizons was required to hold a referendum during the 2025 council elections on the future of these constituencies. The final result of the 2025 referendum was that the majority voted to keep the Māori constituencies. The Māori constituencies will therefore remain for both the 2028 and 2031 elections.

7.4. Review of Representation Arrangements

The Council is required to review its representation arrangements at least once every six years. This review must include the following:

- the number of constituencies;
- the number of Elected Members (between 6 and 14); and
- whether or not to have a separate Māori constituency.

The Council must follow the procedure set out in the LEA when conducting this review and should also follow guidelines published by the Local Government Commission. The LEA gives the community the right to make a written submission to the Council, and the right to be heard.

You also have the right to appeal any decisions on the above to the Local Government Commission, which will make a binding decision on the appeal. Further details on the matters that the Council must consider in reviewing its membership and basis of election can be found in the LEA.

The Council last conducted a review which commenced in June 2021. It is not legally required to review representation again until 2027.

Further information: www.horizons.govt.nz

8. The Reorganisation Process

The **Local Government Act 2002** sets out procedures, which must be followed during proposals for:

- the union of districts or regions
- the constitution of new districts or regions
- the abolition of districts or regions
- the alteration of boundaries of a district or region
- the transfer of a statutory obligation from one local authority to another
- establishing a territorial authority as a unitary authority¹ (that is, transferring the functions of Horizons Regional Council to the City or District Council in a particular area)

The process begins when an application is lodged with the Local Government Commission. This can be done by any person, body or group, including a local authority or the Minister of Local Government. Once the application has been lodged:

- the Commission decides whether the application has the required information to allow it to be assessed.
- as part of the process, the Commission determines whether there is community support for the application.
- if the application meets these requirements, it will be assessed by the Commission but first the Commission must be satisfied there is community support for local government reorganisation in the affected areas.
- if the Commission is satisfied this is the case, the application is publicly notified and alternative applications are called for.
- the Commission identifies the reasonably practicable options for local government in the affected area which must include current local government arrangements.
- if the Commission decides there should be changes to current arrangements, in order to promote good local government in the area, it identifies its preferred option and a draft proposal is developed and publicly notified.
- submissions on the draft proposal are made to the Commission.
- the Commission considers the submissions and may hold hearings on submissions.
- the Commission decides whether a final proposal is to be issued.
- if a final proposal is issued, a poll on the proposal may be requested by 10% of the electors in one of the affected districts.

- if a proposal is supported by a poll or there is no poll, a reorganisation scheme is prepared and implemented by Order in Council¹.

Further information on these requirements can be found in the Local Government Act 2002, Schedule 3. The Local Government Commission has also prepared guidelines on procedures for local government reorganisation, which are available on its website www.lgc.govt.nz.

Further Information: www.horizons.govt.nz

Local Government Act 2002

¹ Reproduced from the Local Government Commission website,
http://www.lgc.govt.nz/lgcwebsite.nsf/wpg_URL/Reorganisation-Index

9. Members' Roles and Conduct

9.1. Chair of a Regional Council

The Chair is elected by the members of the Council at the first meeting after local body elections. The Chair has the following roles as:

- A presiding member at Council meetings. The Chair is responsible for ensuring the orderly conduct of business during meetings (as determined in standing orders and the Code of Conduct).
- An advocate on behalf of the community. This role may involve promoting the community and representing its interests. Such advocacy will be most effective where it is carried out with the knowledge and support of the Council.
- A ceremonial head of Council.
- A provider of leadership and feedback to other elected members.
- A member to exercise any delegations and report back, as appropriate, at Council meetings.

9.2. Division of responsibility between the Council and Management

Key to the efficient running of any council is clear division between the role of elected members and that of management. The Local Government Act 2002 sets out a series of governance policies that support the principles of local government. The Council will adopt a Local Governance Statement, of which this is the **ninth** edition. This statement clarifies the difference between governance and management responsibilities, the governance role, and expected conduct of elected members, describes the effective, open and transparent processes used by Council and how separation of regulatory and non-regulatory decision-making responsibilities is achieved, and explains the good employer requirements.

Elected members, acting as the Council, are responsible for:

- Representing the interests of the residents and ratepayers of the Horizons Region in decision-making;
- The development and adoption of Council policy and strategy;
- Monitoring the performance of the Council against its stated objectives and policies;
- The appropriate and efficient allocation and use of council resources; and
- Employment of the Chief Executive.

The over-riding duty of an elected member is to the whole community covered by Horizons Regional Council. However, each member also has a special duty to their own constituents, including those who did not vote for them.

The Chief Executive is appointed by the Council in accordance with section 42 of the **Local Government Act 2002**. The Chief Executive is responsible for implementing and

managing the Council's policies and objectives within the budgetary constraints established by the Council.

Local Governance Statements ensure the community has information on the processes the Council follows when making decisions and taking action, and how the community can influence these processes.

9.3. Role of the Regional Council

The Council has overall responsibility and accountability for the proper direction and control of the Council's activities in pursuit of community outcomes. This responsibility includes:

- Formulating the region's strategic direction in consultation with the community through various plans and strategies;
- Meeting the current and future needs of communities for good-quality local infrastructure, local public services, and performance of regulatory functions in a way that is most cost-effective for households and businesses;
- Determining the services and activities to be undertaken;
- Managing principle risks;
- Administering various regulations and up-holding the law;
- Monitoring the delivery of the LTP and Annual Plan;
- Ensuring the integrity of management control systems;
- Safeguarding the public interest;
- Ensuring effective succession of Elected Members; and
- Reporting to ratepayers.

9.4. Codes of Conduct

Schedule 7, Clause 15 of the **Local Government Act 2002** requires every council to adopt a Code of Conduct for the Elected Members of the Council (the Councillors). **Horizons Regional Council's Code of Conduct** provides guidance on the standards of behaviour expected from Elected Members in their dealings with:

- Each other
- The Chief Executive
- Executive management staff
- Staff
- The media
- The general public

Codes of conduct are an important part of building community confidence in our system and processes, and contribute to:

- good governance of the region,

- effective decision-making and community engagement,
- the credibility and accountability of the local authority to its communities, and
- a culture of mutual trust and respect between elected members of the local authority and with management.

The Code of Conduct is based on the following principles of good governance:

- **Public interest:** members should act solely in the public interest.
- **Integrity:** members should not act or take decisions to gain financial or other benefits for themselves, their family, or their friends, or place themselves under any obligation to people or organisations that might inappropriately influence them in their work.
- **Tāria te wā and kaitiakitanga/stewardship:** members should use long-term perspective when making decisions. Decisions, which impact on past, current and future generations, also affect collective well-being.
- **Objectivity:** members should act and take decisions impartially, fairly, and on merit, using the best evidence and without discrimination or bias.
- **Accountability:** members will be accountable to the public for their decisions and actions and will submit themselves to the scrutiny necessary to ensure this.
- **Openness:** members should act and take decisions in an open and transparent manner and not withhold information from the public unless there are clear and lawful reasons for so doing.
- **Honesty:** members should be truthful and not misleading.
- **Leadership:** members should not only exhibit these principles in their own behaviour but also be willing to challenge poor behaviour in other elected members, wherever it occurs.

Horizons Regional Council, at its meeting held in **November 2022**, adopted a **Code of Conduct** which remains in place unless Council resolve to make changes. A copy can be made available upon request to Horizons Regional Council (Phone: 0508 800 800 or email help@horizons.govt.nz).

9.5. Applicable Statutory Requirements

Under **section 46(1) Local Government Act 2002**, Councillors can be held liable for losses reported by the Auditor-General under section 44 of the same Act, resulting from negligence or unlawful action by the elected Council.

Under **Schedule 7, Clause 1, Local Government Act 2002**, any Elected Member will be disqualified if they cease to be an elector or become disqualified for registration as an elector under the Electoral Act 1993 or are convicted of an offence punishable by a term of imprisonment of two years or more.

The **Local Authority (Members' Interests) Act 1968** regulates the circumstances under which a member has a pecuniary interest in a matter before the Council. Nobody may be elected to a Council, or once elected, remain a member, if the value of contracts

between the Council and that member exceed \$25,000 in any financial year. Nor may a member participate in the discussion or voting on a matter in which the member has a direct or indirect pecuniary interest, except an interest in common with the public. If members are convicted of a breach of this requirement they will be automatically disqualified from office. They may also be fined. A disqualified member may, however, stand for election at a by-election.

The **Local Government Official Information and Meetings Act 1987 (LGOIMA)**. The obligations of LGOIMA are binding on members and apply to the disclosure of information by a member in respect of any information held by that member (in his or her capacity as member) to a member of the public. The underlying principle is that unless there is good reason to withhold it, information should be made available. Sections 6 and 7 of the Act give a number of grounds for withholding disclosure. The LGOIMA also sets out the procedural requirements for meetings of local authorities, the publication of agenda, procedures for discussion with the public excluded and access by the public to the minutes of meetings.

The **Secret Commissions Act 1910** makes it unlawful for a member (or officer) to advise anyone in respect of entering or not entering into a contract with a third person in relation to the business of the Council and/or receive a gift or reward from anyone outside the Council in return for advice or services in relation to the business of the Council, or to present false receipts to the Council.

The **Crimes Act 1961** makes it unlawful for members to accept or solicit for themselves (or anyone else) any gift or reward for acting or not acting in relation to the business of the Council, or use information gained during the member's duties for monetary gain or advantage by the member, or anyone else.

The **Securities Act 1978**, places members in the same position as company directors whenever the Council offers shares in a company to the public. Members may be personally liable if investment documents, such as a prospectus, contain untrue statements and may be liable for criminal prosecution if the requirements of the Act are not met.

The **Local Government (Pecuniary Interests Register) Amendment Act 2022**. The purpose of the new provisions which came into force on 20 November 2022, is to increase transparency, trust and confidence in local government by keeping and making publicly available, information about members' pecuniary interests. It is largely modelled on the regime that applies to members of Parliament but has been tailored to reflect particular aspects of local government.

The **Financial Markets Conduct Act 2013**. Under this Act elected members are essentially placed in the same position as company directors whenever the Council offers financial products (such as an issue of debt or equality securities). Elected members may be personally liable if documents that are registered under the Act, such as a produce disclosure statement, contain false or misleading statements. Elected members may also be liable if the requirements of the Act are not met in relation of

offers of financial products and prohibits insider trading in relation to listed securities (e.g. shares or bonds).

The **Protected Disclosures (Protection of Whistleblowers) Act 2022** provides protection to elected members. Under the Act the definition of an employee of a Public Sector Organisation (PSO) includes elected members of a local authority.

Personal Liability of Elected Members. Elected Members are indemnified in respect of their actions as a member of the Council. Section 43 of the Local government Act 2022 provides for this indemnity (by the Council) in relation to:

- a. Civil liability (both for costs and damages) if the Member is acting in good faith and in pursuance of the responsibilities or powers of the Council;
- b. Costs arising from any successfully defended criminal action relating to acts or omissions in his or her capacity as an elected member.

The **Health and Safety at Work Act (HSWA) 2015** provides a significant change to New Zealand's current health and safety legislation and is a response to the scrutiny placed on New Zealand's health and safety practices following the Pike River tragedy.

One of the significant changes is the introduction of "Officers", who is any person occupying a position in relation to the business or undertaking, that allows the person to exercise significant influence over the management of the business or undertaking. For the purpose of the HSWA, elected members (which include the Chair and Councillors) and the Chief Executive are by default identified as "Officers".

Further information: HRC Code of Conduct Jan 2023.

10. Governance, Membership & Delegation

10.1. Independent Election

The Council believes that its democratic election by citizens of the Manawatū-Whanganui Region ensures that it is able to operate in the best interests of the region.

10.2. Council Meetings

Council meetings generally take place each month (excluding January and July). These meetings are used to monitor management activities and to ensure that the affairs of the Council are being conducted in accordance with legislative mandate and Council objectives. The Council also monitors the performance of Council Organisations and its Council Controlled Organisation (CCO).

10.3. Council Committees

The Council has set up several Standing Committees made up of Elected Members to monitor and assist in the effective discharging of specific responsibilities. Each Committee meets on a regular basis, with additional meetings held as required.

These Standing Committees are:

- Strategy and Policy Committee (not less than 4 times per year)
- Integrated Catchment Committee (meets 4 times per year)
- Regional Transport Committee (meets 4 times per year)
- Audit, Risk and Investment Committee (meets every month, except January and July). Some of these meetings are workshop style briefings, while some are verbal updates and some are HUB updates only
- Passenger Transport Committee (meets 3 times per year)
- Climate Action Joint Committee (meets at least twice a year)

10.4. Committee Membership

	Chair	Deputy Chair	Members
Council	All Councillors (14)		
Strategy & Policy (Committee of the Whole)	Deputy Chair of Council; Cr Fiona Gordon	Cr Te Kenehi Teira	All Crs
Integrated Catchment (Committee of the Whole)	Cr Peter Wells	Cr Ben Fraser	All Crs
Audit, Risk & Investment	Cr Elijah Pue	Cr Hamish Easton	Cr Bruce Gordon Deputy Chair; Cr Fiona Gordon Cr Luka Jansen Chair, Nikki Riley Cr Peter Wells Cr Te Kenehi Teira
Regional Transport	Chair of Council; Cr Nikki Riley	Substitute – Deputy Chair of Council; Cr Fiona Gordon	Chair of Passenger Transport Committee; Cr Jono Naylor
Passenger Transport	Cr Jono Naylor	Cr Hamish Easton	Cr Alan Taylor Cr Ben Fraser Cr Elijah Pue
Climate Action Joint Committee	Chair of Council; Cr Nikki Riley as Co-Chair	N/A	N/A

10.5. Public Forums Deputations and Petitions

Members of the public that wish to speak to Council this can be done either through a Public Forum (on general matters) or through a Deputation (specific to items on the agenda). Requests can be made by contacting the Committee secretary on 0508 800 800, by 12 noon on the working day before the meeting.

10.6. Petitions

Members of the public that wish to write a petition to Council, or a Committee of Council, the petition must be received by the Chief Executive at least five clear working days before the date of the meeting at which it will be presented. The petition must contain at least 20 signatures and consist of fewer than 150 words.

Further information is available on Horizons' website www.horizons.govt.nz or via freephone 0508 800 800.

10.7. Workshops

Council workshops provide opportunities for members to discuss particular matters, receive briefings and provide guidance for officials. Workshops are not meetings and cannot be used to either make decisions or come to agreements that are then confirmed without the opportunity for meaningful debate at a formal meeting.

10.8. Partnerships

An essential element of Horizons Regional Council's operations is input from the community. By establishing close working relationships with various sectors within the community, the Council is in a better position to accommodate community needs in its decisions.

10.9. Council Organisations

The Regional Council either owns or has an interest in several Council organisations, as follows:

- Council has set up **MWRC Holdings Limited**, being a Council Controlled Organisation to manage Council's investments.
- **MWRC Holdings Limited** owns 23.08% of the issued equity in CentrePort Ltd.
- Council is a shareholder of **MW LASS Limited**, being a Council Organisation to facilitate shared services between the Region's councils.
- Council is a shareholder in **Regional Software Holdings Limited (RSHL)** which is a shared services organisation for the regional sector. All 16 regional and unitary councils in New Zealand are customers of RSHL along with a small number of Territorial Authorities and several Government Departments. RSHL enables councils to act collaboratively and deliver solutions that, in the normal course of events, would be unaffordable or unachievable on their own.

These investments are managed in line with policies outlined in **Council's Investment Policy**.

10.10. Legislative Compliance

The Council is a regulatory body administering various regulations and laws. It must also comply with all relevant legislation. To help it comply with applicable legislation the Council employs qualified staff in a number of disciplines and takes advice from staff, senior management and where required, external expertise (including legal expertise). The Audit, Risk and Investment Committee plays a role in legislative compliance by providing assurance to Council that the organisation is meeting its statutory obligations.

10.11. Council and Committee Meeting Processes

The legal requirements for council meetings are set down in the **Local Government Act 2002** and the **Local Government Official Information and Meetings Act 1987 (LGOIMA)**.

All Council and Committee meetings must be open to the public unless there is reason to consider some item in “Public Excluded”. Although meetings are open to the public, members of the public do not have speaking rights unless prior arrangements are made with the Council (details on how to arrange this are on our website). The LGOIMA contains a list of the circumstances where councils may consider items with the public excluded (these circumstances generally relate to protection of personal privacy, professionally privileged or commercially sensitive information, and the maintenance of public health, safety and order).

The Council agenda is a public document, although parts may be withheld if the above circumstances apply.

The Chair or committee chair is responsible for maintaining order at meetings and may, at his or her discretion, order the removal of any member of the public for disorderly conduct, or remove any member of the Council who does not comply with Standing Orders (a set of procedures for conducting meetings).

Minutes of meetings must be kept and made publicly available, subject to the provisions of the LGOIMA. These meetings are also livestreamed to **Horizons’ Facebook page**, with recordings available after the day on Horizons’ website.

LGOIMA requires all meetings of Council to be publicly notified in a monthly meeting schedule. Extraordinary meetings require public notification as soon as practicable before the meeting date. Where extraordinary meetings are held at short notice these require public notice as is reasonable in the circumstances.

During meetings of the Council or Committees, all council participants (the Chair, Councillors or Members) must follow **Standing Orders** unless Standing Orders are suspended by a vote of 75% (or more) of the members present.

10.12. Workshop Processes

Standing Orders do not apply to workshops and briefings. The Chair or workshop organisers will decide how a workshop or briefing will be conducted.

This council has adopted a principle of openness by default for all workshops (and briefings, forums etc) including a commitment to record a clear basis for closure where justified, on a case by case basis as per LGOIMA guidelines.

Workshops have the time, dates, venues, and subject matter publicised on council's website. Members of the public are welcome to attend public workshops or view the material discussed. These are also audio recorded and available on request.

10.13. Council Appointments

- **RHPN Project Panel** – appoints Chair Nikki Riley and Councillors Elijah Pue, Bruce Gordon, and Peter Wells as members.
- **Contestable Fund Panel** – appoints Chair Nikki Riley and Councillors Fiona Gordon, Hamish Easton, Luka Jansen, Alan Taylor, Wiremu Te Awe Awe, Sally Dryland and Peter Wells as members.
- **Manawatū River Users' Advisory Group** – appoints Councillors Hamish Easton as Chair and Te Kenehi Teira as a member.
- **Manawatū Gorge Te Āpiti Governance Group** – appoints Councillor Fiona Gordon as Chair and Councillor Peter Wells as voting members with-Councillor Sally Dryland appointed as an alternate and will attend out of interest, noting all Councillors are welcome to attend.
- **Tōtara Reserve Advisory Group** – appoints Councillor Fiona Gordon as Chair and Councillor Hamish Easton as a member.
- **Horowhenua Freshwater Management Unit Water Quality Intervention Jobs for Nature Project Governance Group** – appoints Councillor Luka Jansen as Co-chair and Councillors Te Kenehi Teira and Hamish Easton as members.
- **Accelerate35 Lead Team** – appoints Chair Nikki Riley or her nominee as her alternative as members.
- **Whanganui Public Transport Governance Group** – appoints the Chair Councillor Jono Naylor and the Deputy Chair Councillor Hamish Easton of the Passenger Transport Committee and Councillors Alan Taylor, and Ben Fraser as members.
- **Palmerston North Public Transport Governance Group** – appoints the Chair Councillor Jono Naylor and Deputy Chair Councillor Hamish Easton of the Passenger Transport Committee and Councillors Fiona Gordon, Peter Wells and Wiremu Te Awe Awe as members.
- **Manawatū Public Transport Governance Group** – appoints the Chair Councillor Jono Naylor and Deputy Chair Councillor Hamish Easton of the Passenger Transport Committee and Councillor Gordon McKellar as members.

- **Horowhenua Public Transport Governance Group** – appoints the Chair Councillor Jono Naylor and Deputy Chair Councillor Hamish Easton of the Passenger Transport Committee and Councillor Luka Jansen as members.
- **Sustainable Land Use Initiative (SLUI) Advisory Group** – appoints Councillor Ben Fraser as Horizons Regional Council members representative.
- **Manawatū River Leaders’ Forum** – appoints Chair Nikki Riley and Councillors Sally Dryland, Luka Jansen, Te Kenehi Teira and Hamish Easton as members.
- **Ruahine Kiwi Governance Group** – appoints Councillor Sally Dryland as a member.
- **Feilding Flood Resilience Governance Group** – appoints Chair Nikki Riley and the Chair of the Integrated Catchment Committee Councillor Peter Wells and Councillors Gordon McKellar, and Alan Taylor as members.
- **Te Pūwaha Governance Group** – appoints Chair Nikki Riley and Councillors Ben Fraser as members.
- **Massey University Animal Ethics Committee** – appoints Councillor Peter Wells as a member.
- **Te Utanganui Governance Group** – appoints Chair Nikki Riley as a member.
- **Bushy Park Tarapurui Trust Board** – appoints Councillors Alan Taylor and Ben Fraser (as alternate) as members.
- **OSPRI** – appoints Councillors Gordon McKellar, Ben Fraser, Elijah Pue and Sally Dryland as Horizons Regional Council representatives as an interested party to OSPRI.
- **Foxton Futures Group** – appoints Councillors Hamish Easton, Te Kenehi Teira and Luka Jansen as members.
- **Te Kōpuka nā Te Awa Tupua** – appoints Chair Nikki Riley as the Horizons Regional Council representative with Councillor Ben Fraser as alternate.
- **Zone 3** – appoints Chair Nikki Riley and Councillors Fiona Gordon, Luka Jansen, Elijah Pue, Te Kenehi Teira, Wiremu Te Awe Awe, Hamish Easton, Ben Fraser, Peter Wells, and Sally Dryland as Horizons Regional Council’s representatives.
- **Local Government New Zealand Regional Sector** – appoints Chair Nikki Riley or Deputy Chair Fiona Gordon in the Chair’s absence, as this Council’s representative.
- **MWRC Holdings** – appoints Chair Nikki Riley and Councillors Elijah Pue, Bruce Gordon and Peter Wells as Directors.
- **Palmerston North Future Development Strategy Joint Steering Group** – appoints Councillors Fiona Gordon, Luka Jansen, Peter Wells, and Wiremu Te Awe Awe as members and Te Kenehi Teira as a backup member.
- **Ngā Wai Tōtā o te Waiū** – appoints Chair Nikki Riley to the statutory body.

Further information: www.horizons.govt.nz

11. Consultation Policies

11.1. The Special Consultative Procedure

The **Local Government Act** sets out the **Special Consultative Procedure** – consultation principles and a procedure that local authorities must follow when making certain decisions, including the adoption of the LTP and annual plan, and decisions in relation to bylaws.

This procedure is regarded as a minimum for these specific decision-making processes, and Horizons Regional Council carries out more than is required by the procedure. When it is adopting its LTP or Annual Plan the Council will hold formal meetings with community groups and other interested parties. At these meetings, the Council will seek views on the matters it considers important and identify issues it believes are of concern to the community.

The **Special Consultative Procedure** consists of the following steps:

- **Step One: *Preparation of a statement of proposal and a summary***
The Council must prepare a description of the proposed decision or course of action. The statement must be available for distribution throughout the community and inspection at Regional Council offices and may be made available elsewhere. The Council must also prepare a fair summary of the major matters in the proposal, which must be distributed as widely as Council considers to be reasonably practicable. That statement must be included on an agenda for a Council meeting.
- **Step Two: *Public notice***
The Council must publicly notify the proposal and the consultation being undertaken.
- **Step Three: *Receive submissions***
The Council must acknowledge all written submissions and offer submitters a reasonable opportunity to make an oral submission. At least one month (from the date of the notice) must be allowed for submissions.
- **Step Four: *Deliberate in public***
All meetings where the Council deliberates on the proposal or hears submissions, must be open to the public (unless there is a reason to exclude the public under the LGOIMA). All submissions must be made available unless there is reason to withhold them under LGOIMA.
- **Step Five: *Follow up***
A copy of the decision and a summary of the reasons must be provided to submitters. There is no prescribed format for such a summary.

The Council must, legally, follow the Special Consultative Procedure before it:

- Adopts an LTP;
- Amends an LTP; or
- Changes the mode of delivery for a significant activity that is not provided for in an LTP (for example, changes from Council delivery to delivery by a Council Controlled Organisation (CCO) or from a CCO to a private sector organisation).

The Council may be required to use the Special Consultative Procedure under other legislation and it may use this procedure in other circumstances if it wishes to do so.

11.2. Community Consultation Policy

Horizons Regional Council is committed to ongoing and effective consultation with the community. We recognise that we need the views and information held in the community to guide the decisions we make on behalf of the community and will use appropriate methods, tailored to participants' needs, to do this.

Elected members of Council have been voted into office to make decisions on behalf of the community. Both the law and the community hold the Council accountable for making responsible decisions that reflect the best interests of this community. While it is the role of elected members to represent community interests, consultation provides additional decision-making guidance.

Horizons Regional Council's vision is: *Tō tātou rohe – taiao ora, tangata ora, mauri ora. Our region – a healthy environment where people are thriving.* We have identified *active community engagement* as a key success factor for the future and have adopted organisational values such as *accountability* and *responsiveness*. We cannot fulfil these without ongoing two-way communication with the community.

It is not possible to cover all the situations when consultation is either required or advisable, however in general we will undertake formal consultation when:

- We are required to do so by statute;
- The decision is one identified as "significant" under our Significance Policy (included in the LTP); or
- We need community views and information to guide decision-making; and
- There is evidence of widespread community views or interest in a matter for decision.

Horizons Regional Council defines consultation as:

Exchanging information and ideas to ensure that the widest range of views are considered in making decisions.

Further information: www.horizons.govt.nz

Significance and Engagement Policy 2023

12. Policies for Liaising With, and Memoranda or Agreements with, Māori

12.1. Iwi within the Manawatū-Whanganui Region

12.1.1. Legislative context

The **Local Government Act 2002** requires local authorities to take steps to enable Māori to contribute to decision-making processes, and where appropriate consult. This includes providing opportunities for Māori to participate and, where appropriate, establishing mechanisms to support participation. Specific provisions include, but are not limited to, sections 4, 77 and 81 of the Local Government Act.

Under the **Resource Management Act 1991**, Horizons is required to recognise and provide for the relationship of Māori with their ancestral lands, water, sites, wāhi tapu, and other taonga (section 6E), have particular regard to kaitiakitanga (section 7(a)), and take into account the principles of the Treaty of Waitangi (section 8). Schedule 4 of the Act further requires that assessments of environmental effects identify and assess any actual or potential effects on Māori values where these may be affected by a proposal. In addition, the Resource Management Act 1991 provides for development of Mana Whakahono ā Rohe agreements (section 58), a mechanism for formalizing iwi and hapū participation in resource management and decision-making processes and requires resource management issues of significance to iwi authorities to be identified and included in the Regional Policy Statement (section 62(1)(b)). Sections 61(2A) and 66(2A) require regional councils to take Iwi Management Plans into account when preparing or changing regional policy statements and regional plans.

Additionally, many **national policy statements** specify or direct Māori participation in document development and decision-making processes. Horizons follow the requirements of national direction to ensure we are meeting our obligations in this regard.

12.1.2. Treaty settlements

At the time of this statement, there are 15 Treaty Claims Settlement Acts applicable within the Horizons Region. These Acts typically include formal acknowledgements of areas in public ownership in which iwi have an interest (known as statutory acknowledgements) and, in most cases, describe the claimant group's rohe.

The interests of iwi or hapū recognised in these Acts are given effect through other legislation, including the Resource Management Act 1991 (RMA). In addition, the Te Awa Tupua and Ngāti Rangi Claims Settlement Acts include specific obligations that are provided for in other legislation, including the Local Government Act 2002, Biosecurity Act 1993, and the Soil Conservation and Rivers Control Act 1941.

12.1.3. How Council provides for māori participation in decision making

Horizons reflects its commitment to meeting its legislative obligations through various council processes. These include targeted participation through early engagement and ongoing consultation during plan development, consideration of iwi management plans as relevant documents, and the establishment of memoranda of partnership where these support effective communication and participation in decision-making. Most recently Council has commenced development of iwi-initiated Mana Whakahono-ā-Rohe agreements.

Horizons provides opportunities for Māori participation in planning and resource consent processes in accordance with these statutory requirements. This includes engagement with affected iwi and hapū where proposals have the potential to affect Māori interests, consideration of iwi management plans, and the inclusion of relevant cultural information in decision-making. Horizons considers it best practice to engage early and appropriately to ensure that Māori perspectives and relevant statutory considerations are properly understood. Where resource consent applications raise matters of particular relevance to Māori, Māori Hearing Commissioners may be appointed to provide specialist cultural knowledge and expertise to assist deliberations. The appointment of Māori Hearing Commissioners supports robust and informed decision-making while ensuring that statutory decision-making functions remain with the consent authority, consistent with the RMA and representative governance framework.

Horizons includes links to treaty settlements, Iwi Management Plans and Statutory Acknowledgements on its website as follows:

- [Treaty Settlements](#)
- [Iwi Management Plans](#)
- [Statutory acknowledgements](#)

Further Information: www.horizons.govt.nz

Horizons Regional Council Long Term Plan 2024-2034

13. Management Structures and Relationships

13.1. Chief Executive

The **Local Government Act 2002** requires the Council to employ a Chief Executive, whose responsibilities are:

- to employ other staff on behalf of Council and negotiate their terms of employment;
- ensure that all responsibilities, duties and powers delegated to the Chief Executive or other staff by Council are carried out properly;
- implement Council decisions;
- provide leadership to staff and ensure the efficient and effective management of the Regional Council's activities;
- maintain systems for effective planning and accurate reporting of the financial performance and service provision of the Regional Council; and
- provide advice to the elected members.

Under the Act the Chief Executive is the only person who may lawfully give instructions to a staff member. Any complaint about individual staff members should, therefore, be directed to the Chief Executive rather than the Councillors.

13.2. Responsibilities: Media & Communications

- Media Relations
- Public Information/Publications
- Marketing Communications (promotion)
- Corporate Image and Identity (branding)
- Environmental Education
- Digital Content (including social media)
- Event Management
- Community Engagement
- Public Information Management (civil defence comms)

13.3. Responsibilities: Strategy, Regulation and Science Group

- Strategic Issues and Planning
- Regional Policy monitoring and development
- Response to national policy issues
- Implementation of Treaty settlement legislation including development of policy to give effect to treaty settlement obligations
- Resource Management Regulatory Functions
- Research/Environmental Science
- Pollution Incident Response
- Environmental Monitoring and Reporting
- Regulatory Investigations
- Development of Long-Term Plan

13.4. Responsibilities: Transport & Regional Services

- Emergency Management (Regional Civil Defence Emergency Management, HRC Response, Marine Oil Spill response)
- District Advice (Subdivision/Land Use Advice, District Plan coordination/changes, Building Act – Dams)
- Information Services (Software development, Catchment Information, GIS, Flood Plain Modelling, Infrastructure Technology Services)
- Environmental Data (Hydrology site installations, Environmental Data Collection, Catchment Survey/Monitoring)
- Transport (Regional Land Transport, Strategic Planning, Passenger Services, Road Safety)
- Regional Economic Development (A35)

13.5. Responsibilities: Catchment Operations Group

- River and Drainage Scheme Management
- Scheme Reviews and Rating Systems Development
- River and Drainage engineering advice
- Environmental Grant Works (Rivers)
- Engineering Investigations and Design
- Flood and Erosion Hazard Identification and Investigation
- Flood Management

- Emergency Works
- Environmental Management
- Sustainable Land Management and Soil Conservation
- Water Quality Management
- Biodiversity and Native Habitat Management
- Coastal Land Management
- Pest Plant and Pest Animal Biosecurity, Management and Regulation
- Biosecurity Response

13.6. Responsibilities: Corporate & Governance Group

- Governance Support
- Property Management
- Vehicle Management
- Business Risk Management
- Administration Support
- Electoral Support
- Human Resources
- Budgeting
- Financial Accounting and Reporting
- Long-term Plan
- Payments
- Purchasing
- Records and Information Management
- Library and Archive Services
- Corporate Project Management
- Management of MW LASS

14. Equal Employment Opportunities

The Regional Council is committed to the principle of equal opportunity in the recruitment, selection, employment, training and promotion of its employees and potential employees. The organisation will provide a welcoming, positive environment and will implement a purposeful programme of action to ensure its activities and services are carried out with an awareness of, and an intent to eliminate discrimination in the areas of race, colour, ethnic or national origin, gender, religion, marital status, family responsibilities, sexual orientation, disability, or age.

An affirmative Equal Employment Opportunities Programme is a planned, result-orientated management programme designed to eliminate policies, procedures and other institutional barriers that cause or perpetrate inequality or unfairness within the organisation.

The Council will ensure that equal employment opportunities are promoted and provided within the organisation by:

- Fostering a positive climate in the workplace which allows for a diversity of backgrounds and individual contribution, and which encourages employees to develop their potential.
- Selecting the best person for the job on the basis of the job requirements and the ability of that person to perform the job.
- Ensuring that all personnel policies, procedures and activities reflect the fundamental principles of the Equal Employment Opportunities Programme in the recruitment, selection, employment, training and promotion of its employees.
- Identifying and providing appropriate training programmes to enable employees to best meet the requirements of their current jobs, develop additional skills with a view to future promotion opportunities, and active self-development.
- Promoting employees on the basis of skills, qualifications, and capacity to perform a job, and the willingness of the individual to accept greater responsibility.

Maintaining a workplace free of discrimination and harassment on the basis of race, colour, ethnic or national origin, gender, religion, marital status, family responsibilities, sexual orientation, disability, or age.

Further information: Horizons Equal Employment Opportunities Policy

15. Key Planning and Policy Documents

15.1. Planning Processes

Local Government Act 2002

This Act provides the governance and funding framework under which regional councils:

- Own and manage flood protection and river control assets
- Undertake long-term planning (e.g. Long-Term Plans)
- Deliver services and infrastructure related to land and water management

15.2. Long-term Plan (LTP)

Under the **Local Government Act 2002**, the Council is required to develop a Long-term Plan (LTP) in consultation with the community. This covers the 10 years from the date of its publication and will be reviewed and updated every three years. The LTP contains detailed information for each of the first three years. In each of the following two years (of the three year review period), the Council will publish an Annual Plan, which updates any financial information in the LTP. Horizons' first LTP was released in 2004, and every three years thereafter. It is due for release again in 2027.

LTPs are required by law and are must:

- Describe the Regional Council's activities;
- Describe the community outcomes of the Horizons Region;
- Provide integrated decision-making and co-ordination of the Regional Council's resources;
- Provide a long-term focus of the Regional Council's decisions and activities;
- Provide a basis for the Regional Council's accountability to its communities; and
- Provide an opportunity for participation by the public in decisions made about the Regional Council's activities.

The LTP builds on what has been done already and sets out the next phases of work for the coming ten years.

The LTP enables the Council and the community to work together to build a sustainable region.

The Long Term Plan is available on **Horizons website** www.horizons.govt.nz.

You can also freephone 0508 800 800 for more information.

15.2.1. Community Outcomes

Community outcomes are the outcomes that Horizons Regional Council aims to achieve in order to meet the current and future needs of its communities, for good-quality local infrastructure, local public services, and the performance of regulatory functions. These outcomes are described in the LTP.

Through the consultation process for the 2024-34 LTP the following Community Outcomes were identified for the region.

- Our region's communities are vibrant and empowered
- Our region's relationship with iwi and hapū are respectful and mana-enhancing
- Our region's communities are resilient to the impacts of natural hazards and climate change
- Our region has effective transport networks
- Our region's economy is thriving and environmentally sustainable
- Our region's ecosystems are healthy

15.2.2. Policies

The Regional Council has a number of policies including those listed below.

- Rates Collection Policy
- Policies on Rate Remissions and Postponements (including Māori Land Rates Remission Policy)
- Revenue and Financing Policy
- Policy on Financial Contributions
- Liability Management Policy
- Investment Policy
- Significance and Engagement Policy
- Asset Management Policy

The policies listed above are available on **Horizons website www.horizons.govt.nz**.

You can also freephone 0508 800 800 for more information.

15.2.3. Long-term Plan (LTP) – Horizons Regional Council – The Next 10 Years

The LTP sets out what Council plans to do over the next 10 years, how these actions contribute to community outcomes and how we will know whether we are achieving the set objectives and following the chosen direction.

The financial management of the region and how Council's action plan will be financed are further key sections of the LTP.

15.3. Regional Policy Statement and Regional Plans

The Regional Council Environmental Plans are operative. Under the **Resource Management Act 1991 (RMA)**, regional councils must review their regional policy statement and regional plan provisions every ten years. To meet this requirement, the Proposed One Plan was notified in May 2007 and replaced the Region's operative regional policy statement and regional plans.

The One Plan became operative on 19 December 2024. The focus in recent years has been on monitoring and evaluating policy effectiveness and planning for review and update of the One Plan, alongside progressing plan changes to give effect to new national direction.

Most recently, a mandate from government to stop progressing plan changes for public notification has meant work has paused on the Oranga Wai Freshwater Plan change and One Plan review programme. Significant legislative change is expected in July 2026 with the replacement of the Resource Management Act with the Planning Act and Natural Environment Act due to be passed into law. This will require Council to prepare a Regional Spatial Plan (together with territorial authorities) and Natural Environment Plan.

Horizons Regional Council's current resource management plans and supporting information are available on its website **www.horizons.govt.nz**.

You can also freephone 0508 800 800 for more information.

15.4. Other Plans and Strategies

The Regional Council has a number of other plans and strategies as listed below:

- Regional Land Transport Plan, 2024 review
- Regional Public Transport Plan, 2022
- Manawatū Whanganui Civil Defence and Emergency Management Group Plan, 2026
- 2024-34 Long-Term Plan
- 30-year Infrastructure Strategy
- Regional Pest Management Plan, 2017
- Tōtara Reserve Management Plan, 2024
- Annual Plan
- Triennial Agreement (with District and City Councils in the Manawatū-Whanganui Region)
- Future Development Strategy (joint with Palmerston North City Council), 2024

The plans and strategies listed above are available on **Horizons' website** www.horizons.govt.nz or via request. You can also freephone 0508 800 800 for more information.

16. Public Access to the Council and Its Elected Members

16.1. Executive Team

Chief Executive

Michael McCartney
Phone: 0508 800 800
Email: michael.mccartney@horizons.govt.nz

Group Manager Strategy, Regulatory & Science

Dr Lizzie Daly
Email: elizabeth.daly@horizons.govt.nz

Group Manager Transport & Regional Services

Ged Shirley
Email: ged.shirely@horizons.govt.nz

Group Manager Corporate & Governance

Craig Grant
Email: craig.grant@horizons.govt.nz

Group Manager Catchment Operations

Dr Jon Roygard
Email: jon.roygard@horizons.govt.nz

Media and Communications Manager

Cara Hesselin
Email: cara.hesselin@horizons.govt.nz

16.2. Chair & Deputy Chair

Chair & Councillor for Ruapehu Constituency

Councillor Nikki Riley
Mobile: 021 227 7845
Email: nikki.riley@horizons.govt.nz

Deputy Chair & Councillor for Palmerston North Constituency

Councillor Fiona Gordon
Mobile: 027 373 8277
Email: fiona.gordon@horizons.govt.nz

16.3. Councillors

Horowhenua Constituency

Councillor Hamish Easton
Mobile: 021 114 3303
Email: hamish.easton@horizons.govt.nz

Horowhenua Constituency

Councillor Luka Jansen
Mobile: 021 583 440
Email: luka.jansen@horizons.govt.nz

Manawatū-Rangitīkei Constituency

Councillor Bruce Gordon
Mobile: 027 442 7462
Email: bruce.gordon@horizons.govt.nz

Manawatū-Rangitīkei Constituency

Councillor Gordon McKellar
Mobile: 027 267 1551
Email: gordon.mckellar@horizons.govt.nz

Palmerston North Constituency

Councillor Jono Naylor
Mobile: 027 569 0937
Email: jono.naylor@horizons.govt.nz

Palmerston North Constituency

Councillor Peter Wells
Mobile: 027 430 3441
Email: peter.wells@horizons.govt.nz

Palmerston North Constituency

Councillor Wiremu Te Awe Awe

Mobile: 027 511 5644

Email: wiremu.teaweawe@horizons.govt.nz

Tararua Constituency

Councillor Sally Dryland

Mobile: 027 423 8997

Email: sally.dryland@horizons.govt.nz

Whanganui Constituency

Councillor Alan Taylor

Mobile: 027 348 9684

Email: alan.taylor@horizons.govt.nz

Raki Māori Constituency

Councillor Elijah Pue

Mobile: 027 740 6253

Email: elijah.pue@horizons.govt.nz

Tonga Māori Constituency

Councillor Te Kenehi Teira

Mobile: 027 262 8890

Email: tekenehi.teira@horizons.govt.nz

Whanganui Constituency

Councillor Ben Fraser

Mobile: 020 400 81610

Email: ben.fraser@horizons.govt.nz

17. Requests for Official Information

Under the **Local Government Official Information and Meetings Act 1987 (LGOIMA)** any person may request information from the Council. You do not have to say you are making a request under LGOIMA. Any request for information is a request made under LGOIMA because this is automatic. Once a request is made, the Council must supply the information unless reason exists for withholding it. The LGOIMA says that information may be withheld if release of the information would: Endanger the safety of any person;

- Prejudice maintenance of the law;
- Compromise the privacy of any person;
- Reveal confidential or commercially sensitive information;
- Cause offence to Tikanga Māori or would disclose the location of waahi tapu;
- Prejudice public health or safety;
- Compromise legal professional privilege;
- Disadvantage the local authority while carrying out negotiations or commercial activities; and
- Allow information to be used for improper gain or advantage.

The Council must answer requests within 20 working days (although there are certain circumstances where this time-frame may be extended). The Council may charge for official information under guidelines set down by the Ministry of Justice.

In the first instance, requests for official information should be addressed to:

Chief Executive
Horizons Regional Council
Private Bag 11025
Manawatu Mail Centre
Palmerston North 4442

Further information on making an official information request is available on **Horizons'** website www.horizons.govt.nz.

18. Horizons Regional Council Organisational Chart (March 2026)

