



Tiaki Wai

BOARD PACK

for

Tiaki Wai - Public Board Meeting

Monday, 15 December 2025

11:00 am (NZDT)

Held at:

Tiaki Wai Limited

L6, 79 Boulcott Street, Wellington

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AGENDA

TIAKI WAI - PUBLIC BOARD MEETING



Name:	Tiaki Wai
Date:	Monday, 15 December 2025
Time:	11:00 am to 11:50 pm (NZDT)
Location:	Tiaki Wai Limited, L6, 79 Boulcott Street, Wellington
Board Members:	Will Peet (Chair), Adrian Wimmers, Elena Trout, Jon Lamonte
Attendees:	Dougal List, Scott MacKenzie, Adrienne Black, Janice Rodenburg, Tessa O'Rorke, Dave Humm, Olivia Dovey, Mike Wakefield, Jess Davies, Jo Wills, Michael Brewster
Guests/Notes:	Andy Matthews, Tiaki Wai, Stu Cross, Morrison Low, Simon Floris, Tiaki Wai, Jason Bligh, PWC, and Joanna Wong, AON for agenda item 6.3, Graeme Darlow, Brockway Consulting, Hugh Blake-Manson Waugh Infrastructure Management and Ian Martin, AECOM for agenda item 6.7

1. Meeting Administration

1.1 Chair's Welcome

11:00 am (3 min)

Will Peet

1. Karakia to open the hui
2. Apologies
3. Confirm quorum

Whakataka te hau ki te uru
 Whakataka te hau ki te taonga
 Kia mākinakina ki uta
 Kia mākinakina ki tai
 E hī aka ana te atakura
 He tio, he huka, he hau hū
 Tīhei mauri ora!

Cease the winds from the West
 Cease the winds from the South
 Let the breeze blow over the land
 Let the breeze blow over the ocean
 Let the red-tipped dawn Come with a
 sharpened air
 A touch of frost, a promise of a glorious
 day

1.2 Interest Register

11:03 am (2 min)

Will Peet

For Noting

Tiaki Wai follows the Model Standards Guidance for disclosing and recording of its real, perceived or potential conflicts of interest set by Te Kawa Mataaho - [Te Kawa Mataaho, Public Service Model Standards Guidance](#)

Supporting Documents:

1.2.a	Interests Register	9
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2. Standing items

2.1 Establishment Director's Report

11:05 am (5 min)

Dougal List, Scott MacKenzie

For Noting

Recommendation: That the Board note the update on establishment activities, including a health, safety and wellness update and progress dashboard.

Supporting Documents:

2.1.a	02.1a Establishment Directors Report.pdf	12
2.1.b	02.1b - Tiaki Wai Est Prog - Progress Dashboard to 5 Dec.pdf	18

3. Matters for consideration

3.1 Statement of Expectations (SOE) - Final draft

11:10 am (10 min)

Adrienne Black, Mike Wakefield

For Discussion

Recommendation: That the Board note the updated final draft Statement of Expectations due to be adopted by the Partners Committee on 18 December 2025.

Supporting Documents:

3.1.a	03.1a 20251215 Board Paper - Statement of Expectations.pdf	23
3.1.b	03.1b Appendix A - Statement of Expectations Final Draft.pdf	25

3.2 Significance and Engagement Policy (SEP) - First draft

11:20 am (10 min)

Adrienne Black, Mike Wakefield

For Decision

Recommendations: that the Board:

1. **Note** the requirement to prepare and adopt a Significance and Engagement Policy.
2. **Review** and **provide comments/feedback** on the draft Significance and Engagement Policy.

Supporting Documents:

3.2.a	03.2a 20251215 Board Paper - Draft Significance and Engagement Policy.FINAL.pdf	37
3.2.b	03.2b Appendix A - Draft Significance and Engagement Policy.pdf	41

3.3 Questions from the Public

11:30 am (15 min)

Will Peet

For Discussion

An opportunity for members of the public to ask any questions of the Tiaki Wai Board.

Members of the public have three minutes speaking time at the discretion of the Chair of the Board. Questions should be submitted prior to the meeting via info@metrowaterwellington.co.nz

3.4 Move into in committee

Will Peet

For Decision

Recommendation: That the public be excluded from the following parts of the proceedings of this meeting, namely: Agenda Items 4 through 6. 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 its resolution are as follows:

	Subject Matter	Reason for Public Exclusion	Ground(s) under section 48(1)
4	In Committee Meeting Administration		
4.1	Wellington Water workshop debrief	Relates to commercial activities and the carrying out of commercial negotiations	7(2)(h) and (i)
4.2	Confirmation of in committee minutes and matters arising	Relates to commercial activities and the carrying out of commercial negotiations	7(2)(h) and (i)
4.3	Actions from previous in committee meetings	Relates to commercial activities and the carrying out of commercial negotiations	7(2)(h) and (i)
5	Shared lunch with Wellington Water		
6	Establishment Phase Matters		
6.1	Establishment planning	Relates to commercial activities and the carrying out of commercial negotiations	7(2)(h) and (i)
6.2	Water Services Strategy	Relates to commercial activities and the carrying out of commercial negotiations	7(2)(h) and (i)
6.3	Finance and Funding	Relates to commercial activities and the carrying out of commercial negotiations	7(2)(h) and (i)
6.4	Communications and Engagement Plan	Relates to commercial activities and the carrying out of commercial negotiations	7(2)(h) and (i)
6.5	People and Workforce Transition Planning	Relates to commercial activities and the carrying out of commercial negotiations	7(2)(h) and (i)
6.6	Customer Experience - Day one options	Relates to commercial activities and the carrying out of commercial negotiations	7(2)(h) and (i)
6.7	Operational Due Diligence	Commercial Activities/Conduct negotiations	7(2)(c)(i) and (ii)

This resolution is made in reliance on section 48(1) of the Local Government Official Information and Meetings Act 1987 and the particular interest or interests protected by section 7 of that Act.

In terms of the agenda and reports that will be discussed in public excluded (in-committee), Tiaki Wai relies on the withholding grounds in section 7(2)(h) (enabling Tiaki Wai to carry out, without prejudice or disadvantage, commercial activities) and section 7(2)(i) (enabling Tiaki Wai to carry out, without prejudice or disadvantage, negotiations). The Board is conscious that there will be

public interest in the establishment of Tiaki Wai, but at this stage, the establishment process and planning for establishment remain subject to various considerations, with decisions yet to be made on the intended establishment approach, and active discussions and negotiations with Shareholding Councils on various matters. If the information contained in the reports were to be made public at this stage, it could prejudice the active commercial negotiations and/or commercial activities of Tiaki Wai, which would not be in the public interest.

4. In Committee Meeting Administration

4.1 Wellington Water Workshop debrief

11:45 am (10 min)

Will Peet

For Discussion

Reason for Public Exclusion: The report and discussion relate to commercial activities and the carrying out of commercial negotiations (S7(2)(h) and (i))

4.2 Confirm Minutes

11:55 am (2 min)

Will Peet

For Noting

Reason for Public Exclusion: The report and discussion relate to commercial activities and the carrying out of commercial negotiations (S7(2)(h) and (i))

4.3 Action List

11:57 am (3 min)

Will Peet

For Noting

Reason for Public Exclusion: The report and discussion relate to commercial activities and the carrying out of commercial negotiations (S7(2)(h) and (i))

5. Shared Lunch with WWL

5.1 Lunch with Wellington Water Limited

12:00 pm (30 min)

6. Establishment Phase Matters

6.1 Establishment Planning

12:30 pm (25 min)

Dougal List, Scott MacKenzie

For Discussion

Reason for Public Exclusion: The report and discussion relate to commercial activities and the carrying out of commercial negotiations (S7(2)(h) and (i))

6.2 Water Services Strategy (WSS)

12:55 pm (20 min)

Adrienne Black, Dave Humm

For Decision

Reason for Public Exclusion: The report and discussion relate to commercial activities and the carrying out of commercial negotiations (S7(2)(h) and (i))

6.3 Finance and Funding

1:15 pm (55 min)

Dave Humm

For Decision

Reason for Public Exclusion: The report and discussion relate to commercial activities and the carrying out of commercial negotiations (S7(2)(h) and (i))

6.4 Communications and Engagement Plan

2:10 pm (10 min)

Janice Rodenburg, Tessa O'Rorke

For Noting

Reason for Public Exclusion: The report and discussion relate to commercial activities and the carrying out of commercial negotiations (S7(2)(h) and (i))

6.5 People and Workforce transition planning update

2:20 pm (10 min)

Jo Wills

For Noting

Reason for Public Exclusion: The report and discussion relate to commercial activities and the carrying out of commercial negotiations (S7(2)(h) and (i))

6.6 Customer Experience - Day one options

2:30 pm (10 min)

Tessa O'Rorke

For Discussion

Reason for Public Exclusion: The report and discussion relate to commercial activities and the carrying out of commercial negotiations (S7(2)(h) and (i))

6.7 Operational Due Diligence

2:40 pm (15 min)

Olivia Dovey

For Discussion

Reason for Public Exclusion: Commercial Activities/Conduct Negotiations 7(2)(c)(i) and (ii)

7. Other Business

7.1 Meeting summary/recap

2:55 pm (5 min)

Will Peet

For Discussion

Reason for Public Exclusion: Commercial Sensitivity, 7(2)(h)(i)

7.2 Any other business

Will Peet

For Discussion

Reason for Public Exclusion: Commercial Sensitivity, 7(2)(h)(i)

Move out of in committee to close the hui.

8. Close Meeting

8.1 Close the meeting

Next meeting: Tiaki Wai - Board Check-In - 22 Jan 2026, 8:00 am

The Chair to close the hui with a karakia.

<p>Unuhia, unuhia Unuhia i te urutapu nui a Tāne Kia wātea kia māmā Te ngākau, te tinana, te wairua I te ara takatū Hui e! Tāiki e!</p>	<p>Draw on, draw on, Daw on the supreme sacredness To clear, to free the heart, the body and the spirit On a path of unity All of us together</p>
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Interests Register

Tiaki Wai

Tiaki Wai

As of: 15 Dec 2025

Person	Organisation	Active Interests	Notice Date
Adrian Wimmers	Awhiowhio Advisory Limited	Director and Shareholder	21 Sept 2025
	Crown Infrastructure Delivery Limited	Director	2 Nov 2025
	Fale Malae Trust	Deputy Chair	2 Nov 2025
	KPMG New Zealand	Sub-contractor - current engagement Health NZ's Hawkes Bay LINAC project	2 Nov 2025
	KPMG New Zealand	Past Partner - as of 26 October 2025	2 Nov 2025
	MBIE - Science, Innovation and Technology Programme Governance Board	Member	2 Nov 2025
	MHUD - Housing Investment Advisory Group	Member	2 Nov 2025
	Next Generation Critical Communications	Commercial Advisor to Lead Entity Director on the potential establishment of a new Crown company organisational form and commercial model.	2 Nov 2025
Elena Trout	Ara Ake Limited	Deputy Chair	21 Sept 2025
	Callaghan Innovation	Chair of the Board	21 Sept 2025
	Chartered Professional Engineers Council (CPEC)	Chair of the Board	25 Nov 2025
	City Care Limited	Independent Director	21 Sept 2025

	Energy Efficiency and Conservation Authority	Chair of the Board	21 Sept 2025
	Kaikohe Berryfruit GP Limited (and LP)	Independent Director	21 Sept 2025
	Ministry of Defence	External Member Capability Governance Board	21 Sept 2025
	Motiti Investments Limited	Director and Shareholder	21 Sept 2025
	New Zealand Food Innovation Network Limited	Director	21 Sept 2025
	New Zealand Local Government Funding Agency Limited	Director	21 Sept 2025
	Ophua Water Limited	Independent Director	21 Sept 2025
	Te Rāhui Herenga Waka Whakatāne Limited	Independent Director	21 Sept 2025
	Waihanga Ara Rau Infrastructure and Construction Workforce Development Council	Co-Chair	21 Sept 2025
	Waikato Waters Limited	Chair of the Board	21 Sept 2025
	WET Gisborne Ltd	Independent Director	21 Sept 2025
	Worksafe	Member	24 Nov 2025
Jon Lamonte	Jon Lamonte Consulting Limited	Director and Shareholder	21 Sept 2025
	Waikato Waters Limited	Director	21 Sept 2025
Will Peet	Evans Bay Marina Tenants Group (EBMTG)	Recreational groups EBMTG - member of committee that engages with Wellington City Council on behalf of marina users	30 Sept 2025
	Kahanui Ventures Limited (incl Kahanui Consulting and Kahanui Limited)	Director and Shareholder, Consultancy & advisory business to Government, private sector and not-for-profit organisations	21 Sept 2025

Ministry of Education	Risk and Assurance Board member	30 Sept 2025
Site Safe NZ	Independent Director and Board Chair	30 Sept 2025
Te Wai Takamori o Te Awa Kairangi	Independent Chair - Te Wai Takamori o Te Awa Kairangi/ Riverlink (Waka Kotahi, Hutt City Council, Greater Wellington Regional Council, Taranaki Whānui ki Te Upoko o Te Ika, Te Rūnanga o Toa Rangatira)	30 Sept 2025
The Public Trust	Director	30 Sept 2025

Establishment Director's report

Progress, challenges and opportunities

To:	Tiaki Wai Board		
From:	Dougal List, Establishment Director	Date	15 12 2025
It is recommended that the Board:			
1. Receive the Establishment Director's report.			

Executive Summary

1. This report provides the Board with an end of 2025 summary of progress towards the Day One (1 July 2026) establishment of Tiaki Wai along with key challenges and opportunities.
2. Overall, the programme has made substantial progress during 2025 and remains on track to Day One. This is based on the combined effort of Councils, Wellington Water Limited (WWL), mana whenua partners, the Establishment Team and governance including from the Board.
3. The programme will, however, need to continue to manage a range of complexities and challenges through to Day One.
4. The mahi completed in 2025 now presents a range of opportunities that can be built on in early 2026 including the governance arrangements, detailed programme planning, work underway on critical activities, increased communications and the start of new Tiaki Wai Chief Executive Michael Brewster.

2025 looking back - a new delivery model for water and the WSDP

5. Significant change and progress has been made over the 2025 year towards the goal of *'...ensuring the delivery of safe, reliable, environmentally and financially sustainable water services so the region can be resilient, restore te mana o te wai and enable new homes and the well-being of communities.'*
6. Leading into 2025, the five Council shareholders and two mana whenua partners recommitted to development of a joint Water Services Delivery Plan (WSDP) and implementation plan. Four other Councils that had been part of the earlier regional group decided at that point to pursue other options.
7. Governance was agreed through the Advisory Oversight Group (AOG) and Council Chief Executive (CE) Steering Group with the work delivered through a joint programme team and budget.
8. From March through to June 2025 Councils undertook the legislatively required public consultation on the future water services model and consideration of options alongside the Annual Plan process.

9. By June, all five Councils had confirmed decisions to establish and co-own a new water organisation for water supply, wastewater and stormwater services.
10. In support of these decisions, the WSDP was developed from early 2025. This involved considerable analysis of the water network and investment required for the 10- and 30-year period. The WSDP noted: *that to catch up on decades of under-investment, address growth, meet new regulatory standards, and deliver reliable and environmentally sustainable water services, requires sustained investment – anticipated at \$6.82 billion capital investment over 10 years and about \$25 billion over 30 years.*
11. The WSDP also reconfirmed the delivery model with an implementation plan for the establishment of a new council-owned water organisation. Ambitious target dates were set: Day Zero, incorporation by 1 October 2025; and Day One operations by 1 July 2026. Governance and leadership was to be provided by an independent Board of Directors, Partners' Committee and Chief Executive.
12. Following an extensive assurance process, the WSDP was signed and certified by the CEs of all five Councils and submitted to the Department of Internal Affairs (DIA) ahead of the statutory deadline of 3 September. In October, DIA confirmed acceptance of the WSDP.
13. To give effect to the WSDP, by August the Establishment Programme was underway. Key early activity during September to November included:
 - Board recruitment: the Tiaki Wai Board members were recruited with the inaugural Board meeting held on 7 November.
 - Incorporation of the company was completed by 30 October.
 - Recruitment of Michael Brewster as the Chief Executive, with a start date in February 2026.
 - Engagement and induction of new Councils following local government elections with three new mayors and around 30 percent of new elected members across the five shareholding Councils in total.
 - Establishment Team recruitment and programme planning: time critical activities were underway such as the foundation documents, development of the Water Services Strategy (WSS) finance policies and procedures including billing, transfer process for staff and assets and governance arrangements. The Establishment Team has grown from around 8 FTE in August to 26 FTE in December (all on a range of fixed-term contracts ending Day One). The team has now confirmed workstreams and leadership roles; procured key new contracts including for legal services; and set up interim office space and systems including secretariat for the Board.

Key Progress – November / December

14. Building on this early establishment period, key areas of progress since the 7 November Board meeting include those noted below (refer also to the programme dashboard).

Governance and Council Decision Making

15. Council decision making: all Councils have undertaken induction processes in relation to water reform. At time of writing, Hutt City Council (HCC) and Wellington City Council (WCC) had made decisions to confirm the Constitution, Partners' Agreement and for the set-up of the Partners' Committee. Similar decisions are on the agenda for Upper Hutt City Council (UHCC) on 10 December and Porirua City Council (PCC) and Greater Wellington Regional Council (GWRC) on 11 December.
16. Mana whenua input: Ngāti Toa Rangatira and Taranaki Whānui ki Te Upoko o Te Ika have both confirmed support for the Constitution and Partners' Agreement and nominations for membership of the Partners' Committee.
17. Partners' Committee: the inaugural meeting has been scheduled for 18 December, to be hosted at HCC.
18. Statement of Expectations: the draft Statement of Expectations (SOE) was approved by the CEs under delegations and provided to the Board for comment. The revised SOE will be considered for adoption by the Partners' Committee on 18 December.
19. Cost-Sharing Agreement for the establishment programme has been signed by council CEs and Tiaki Wai.

Programme Highlights

20. Considerable progress has been made across all workstreams including:
 - Development of the WSS and Significance and Engagement Policy in line with legislative requirements.
 - Progressing the transfer arrangements, including the Legal Transfer Questionnaire (LTQ) to confirm the assets to be transferred and service level arrangements.
 - Financial planning including impact of revenue on debt splits of general vs. water rates; how and when to harmonise charges; development of debt transfer methods, engagement of OAG, and assurance.
 - Customer – analysis of current state and service delivery options; progression of identity work
 - Billing – detailed planning and requirements including engagement of council system vendors and strengthened project governance arrangements.
 - Due diligence activity – in support of the transfer process, operations, people and workforce, and finance.
21. Across the programme, increased resources to deliver are now on board by way of contracts for services and staff via recruitment agencies. Resourcing has continued to increase and is expected to be around 43 FTE by end of March 2026.

22. Programme spend was \$3.34 million to end of November in relation to an approved budget of \$15 million. Total forecast expenditure for the year in November was \$18.1 million (with a range of \$14.5 million to \$20.5 million). A further update and potential request for an increase to the budget is to be developed in early 2026.

Looking Ahead – Challenges and Opportunities

Challenges

23. The programme currently remains on track to deliver key capabilities required for Day One. However, the tight timeline, broad scope, number of organisations involved, broader contextual challenges and complexity mean that is, and will remain, challenging to meet all Day One goals as well as being on a pathway to Day Two (full operational capability).
24. Key constraints include:
- Capacity of the programme and WWL / Council key staff. We are managing this through an ongoing focus on only delivering Day One essentials ('minimum viable product' or MVP), increasing programme resourcing, and active engagement with councils and WWL on resourcing and critical path / decision making required.
 - WWL remains under considerable organisational pressure and change. As far as possible the establishment programme has targeted and prioritised working with WWL where their input is required such as into the WSS, LTQ and due diligence.
 - Councils are facing further uncertainty with reforms signaled in relation to rates capping, regional reorganisation and RMA review. All of these will place strain on councils and their ongoing ability to fully engage with water reforms. We are managing this through ongoing engagement with Councils at a range of levels from elected members, CEs, senior staff including Responsible Officers and Chief Financial Officers, communications and other staff.
25. Other key challenges (as noted in the programme dashboard), include:
- Confirming and standing up customer service arrangements for Day One, including with councils and WWL;
 - Setting up functional billing arrangements – working closely with Councils including IT vendors and confirming service level arrangements;
 - Public awareness and understanding of the change, including for billing and differences in prices; and
 - Alignment with future IT system requirements through the WWL TSI programme.

Opportunities

26. Key opportunities moving into 2026 include:

- Delivery focus: building on the programme planning work and establishment of governance arrangements (including Board set up and Partners' Committee), work moves into a delivery phase which enables scarce resources to focus more on the doing, decision making and managing progress and risks. Board meeting dates are in place for 2026 and there is a clear plan of what direction or decisions are required from each meeting (as well as for Council and Partners' Committee decisions).
- Shifting the programme and team structure from workstreams (how we are organised) to work packages (what we deliver) and a focus on critical delivery activities will support the delivery focus. Future programme reporting will be based on packages rather than workstreams.
- Communications and engagement: early 2026 will see ramping up of communications and engagement with stakeholders including telling the Tiaki Wai story through the WSS. This presents an opportunity to build support for the programme outcomes and increased awareness of change.
- The new Tiaki Wai CE, Michael Brewster: when the new CE starts in February, several workstreams will be able to confirm approach and assumptions (such as people and workforce). This milestone is also important to the leadership and direction of Tiaki Wai; and for engagement with key stakeholders.
- Due diligence work: significant due diligence work across the transfer process, operations, people and workforce, and finance provides insights to other workstreams that can help manage risk and focus activity.
- Acceleration of Day Two activity: setting up new work areas in parallel to the current work programme can support Tiaki Wai to focus on the critical path to Day One. This includes work to model price harmonisation options beyond FY2026/27 in line with the requirement of legislation and the SOE to deliver harmonisation by 2031.
- People: there is a core team of highly capable and engaged people working on the programme including from Councils, partners and suppliers. Building on this base, the programme is looking to onboard key additional resources in early 2026 as well as expanding into additional office space at 79 Boulcott St.

Health, Safety and Wellbeing

27. There are no establishment programme health and safety issues to note.
28. The establishment programme wellbeing is being supported through ongoing team engagement and check ins.
29. Staff have worked hard and are looking forward to a safe and relaxing break over the holiday period. In support of this and the mahi ahead to Day One, the Tiaki Wai office will be closed from 4pm 19 December and will reopen on 12 January 2026.

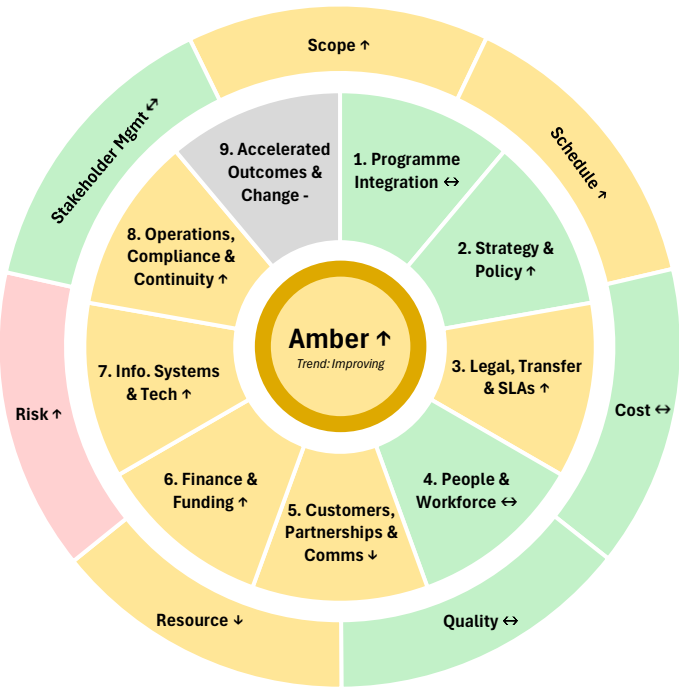
Issues and Risks

30. As noted above, there are a range of complex challenges and risks to the delivery of the programme that are being actively managed. Refer to programme dashboard for further details.

Appendices

Appendix A: Programme dashboard report

Overall Status



Grey = not initiated yet

Legend:

- Green: On track, going to plan
- Amber: Varying from plan, at risk
- Red: Off track, support needed

Trend – situation is:

- ↑ improving (risk decreasing)
- ↔ stable
- ↓ worsening (risk increasing)

Pending & upcoming decisions

- Foundation documents approval and Statement of Expectations (SoE) adoption by Councils (on track through Dec).
- Board direction on customer experience strategic options, and approval of WSS public consultation approach.
- Board Charter and Code of Conduct (discussion on draft in Dec).
- Establishment Plan approval (now targeting Jan).

Executive Summary

In November there was considerable advancement in month-by-month detailed planning, budget and timeline certainty, and risk analysis. Following Board discussion, this will be represented in the updated Establishment Plan. Reporting from January will be revised to reflect work packages (not the current work streams).

The setup of the Partners' Committee and foundation document approval is on track, as is transfer agreement and LTQ work. The Tiaki Wai CE has been appointed and will commence late February.

Billing and customer remain areas of high risk and have been a focus for detailed planning and additional resourcing and support. Interim service agreement requirements/specifications are being advanced.

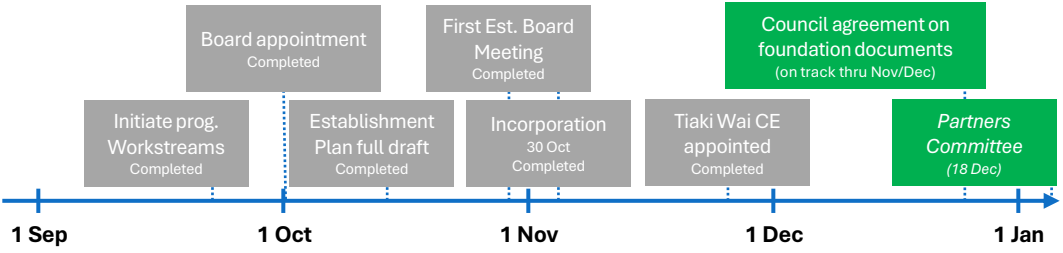
Highlights from the last period

- Cost sharing agreement and updates to the establishment budget agreed with councils. HCC and WCC have approved the foundation documents (others WIP).
- The Tiaki Wai CE has been appointed and will commence late February (Michael Brewster).
- Level of service, network issues, and water specific information gathered from WWL to inform the WSS.
- Majority of organisational design due diligence, initial policy & job description stocktake completed.
- LTQ on track with operational due diligence assessment interviews with WWL staff progressing well and on track.

Focus for next period

- Continued support for Council approvals of the foundation documents and SoE, development of WSS and the provide the draft Significance and Engagement Policy to the Partners' Committee (18 Dec).
- LTQ process substantively completed (80%), council engagement on transfer & SLA agreement templates.
- Billing detailed critical path and contingency planning, alongside interim service model development.
- Board discussion on strategic options for the customer experience, while current state analysis continues.
- Joint WWL and Tiaki Wai Board discussion on major WWL projects/decisions (15 Dec).
- Scope and confirm accelerated Day Two task for price modelling for harmonisation by 1 July 2027.
- Publish month-by-month work plan, begin transition to Monday.com for regular tracking/reporting.

Upcoming milestones



Challenges

- The **approval of the foundation documents** remains a critical path risk being actively managed. Successive Council approvals and minor amendments emerging indicate this risk has been mitigated. *Continue close management through Dec, anticipating this risk will have been mitigated following PC meeting 18 Dec.*
- Confirmation of **customer experience** for the range of customer types is ongoing and needs to be further investigated and confirmed in early 2026 to ensure that this can be delivered working with WWL and councils. *Current and future state analysis, increased resourcing, engagement with councils and Board.*
- The **interim billing arrangement** is a complex solution with multiple external dependencies and little/no contingency time for slippage, and with high potential implications on customers. *Revised cross-council governance in place, project brief verified and with the interim service model, contingency/alternatives analysis and detailed end-to-end planning underway.*
- Pricing and harmonisation** challenges of communicating differences in pricing on and the need to end cost to serve and CV based charges. *Board level engagement in relation to challenges and the need to move towards harmonisation by 1 July 2027. Scope and confirm accelerated Day Two task for price modelling.*
- WWL TSI programme**, alignment with/of the WWL Technology Systems Investment (TSI) programme and its timeframe for delivering (all post-Day One) is a key area of potential overlap between WWL and Tiaki Wai Board decision making. *Joint-board session 15 Dec, clear decision points for Phase Zero and Business Case, potential for additional support.*
- Timeline, scope and complexity** the programme is and will remain challenging to meet Day One as well as pathway to Day Two. Constraints include capacity for the programme as well for WWL / councils. *Ongoing focus on MVP, increased resourcing, active engagement with councils and WWL on resourcing and critical path / decision making.*

Financials

- In November CE Group agreed the 'approved budget' of \$15 million noting the forecast expenditure in November of \$18.1 million (range \$14.5 – 20.1m), with a further update and potential request for an increase to the budget to be provided in early 2026.
- Actual spend end November FY25/26 is \$3.34m (= budget).

1. Governance & Programme



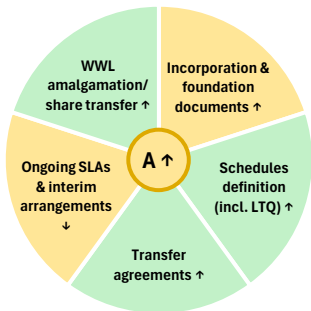
Setting up and managing governance, providing accurate programme management planning, resourcing, reporting, budget, risk and delivery management.

2. Strategy & Policy



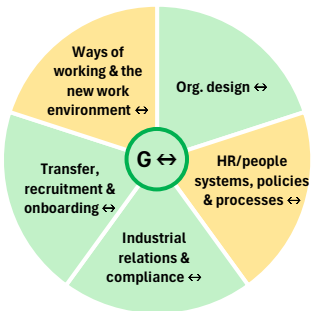
Getting strategic documents (including the Water Services Strategy) in place.

3. Legal, Transfer & SLAs



Legal and commercial activities to incorporate Tiaki Wai, then transfer the business and all related responsibilities from Wellington Water and councils.

4. People & Workforce



Implementing the organisational structure, staff transfer plans and recruitment so that Tiaki Wai is fully staffed, prepared, and operational from Day One.

Highlights from the last period

- | | | | |
|---|--|---|---|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none">Cost sharing agreement and budget agreed with councils.Revised and month-by-month work plans detailed.Programme Coordinator onboarded, recruitment underway for additional resources.CE recruitment completed and appointment announced. | <ul style="list-style-type: none">Budgeting process for the WSS undertaken with WWL.Level of service, significant network issues, and water specific information gathered from WWL to inform the WSS.Approach to revenue/pricing strategies prepared for Board directional discussion. | <ul style="list-style-type: none">Focus on supporting council inductions, review and approval of foundation documents.Legal Transfer RFI Questionnaire (LTQ) work continues and is on track to be substantively completed (80%) in December – no significant issues emerging.First draft of transfer and SLA agreement templates. | <ul style="list-style-type: none">Supporting Board with recruitment & appointment of CE.Majority of org. design due diligence completed.People comms plan drafted and to be socialised with WWL staff in December all staff briefing.Initial policy and job description stocktake completed.Draft transition guidelines underway. |
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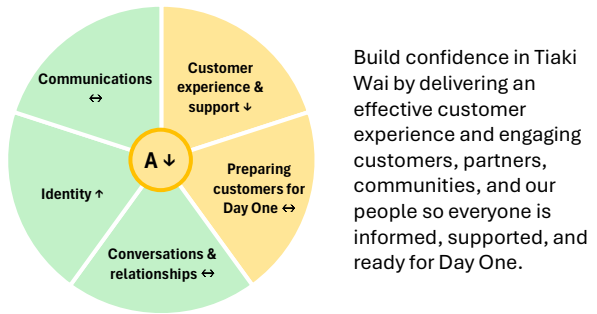
Focus for next period

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|--|---|---|--|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none">Publish month-by-month work plan, begin transition to Monday.com for regular tracking/reporting.Confirm establishment team applicable policies and refresh Conflict of Interest (COI) declarations/register.Following Board direction, realign/update Establishment Plan for approval (Jan). | <ul style="list-style-type: none">Statement of Expectations adopted by the Partners' Committee.Draft Significance and Engagement Policy shared with the Partners' Committee.Continue drafting the WSS, revenue/pricing strategies and policies. | <ul style="list-style-type: none">Achieve Council approval and execution of foundation documents and adoption of SoE.Continue to support LTQ process and associated advice.Template transfer agreement and SLA circulation and commence population.Advance approach to share transfer (incl. SWDC options) for WWL and Tiaki Wai Board discussion. | <ul style="list-style-type: none">Establishment team workshop on findings from organisation design due diligence.Staff transition guidelines legal review.Confirm involvement in WWL collective bargaining.Begin definition of CE-led culture initiatives.Develop plan for people policy gaps, updates, approvals. |
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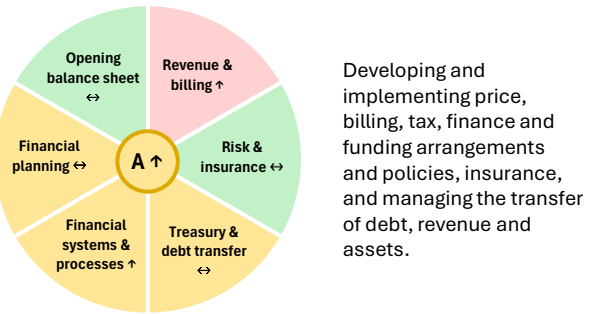
Key interdependencies and challenges

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|---|---|--|--|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none">Additional project management and business analysis expertise/capacity required (recruitment underway).Monday.com technical setup requires expert support (external provider being engaged).Team office space no longer sufficient (expanded office space being confirmed). | <ul style="list-style-type: none">Approval of the SoE and foundation documents continue to be critical dependencies (Partners' Committee first meeting scheduled for 18 Dec). | <ul style="list-style-type: none">Minor updates to foundation documents required due to successive Council approval process (envisaged and delegations in place to resolve).Upcoming resource-intense activities for councils to populate schedules (late Jan – early Mar).Engagement with SWDC contingent on separate decision-making by SWDC through December. | <ul style="list-style-type: none">Urgency from WCC to finalise decision on HR/payroll service requirements from Tiaki Wai (plan to resolve in Dec).Clarification of any Tiaki Wai involvement in WWL collective bargaining. |
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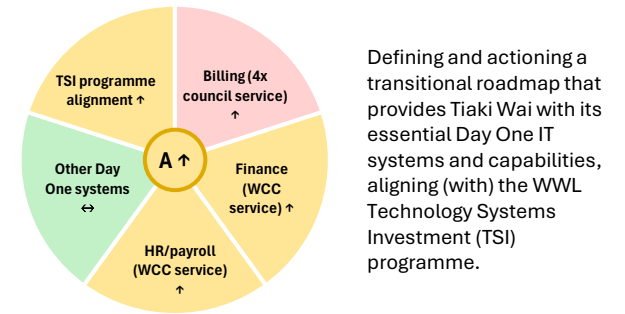
5. Customers, Partnerships & Comms



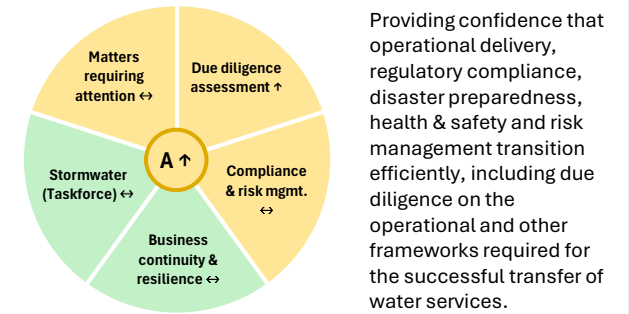
6. Finance & Funding



7. Info Systems & Tech Stewardship



8. Operations, Compliance & Continuity



Highlights from the last period

- Identity RFP and customer research procured.
- Current state analysis underway, strategic options for customer experience developed for Board direction.
- Recruitment for additional comms and customer expertise, and external provider support (into Dec).

- Developed revenue and pricing principles and development contributions approach.
- Further development of debt transfer method with Councils and further LGFA engagement.
- Engaged OAG and developed assurance framework.
- Billing revised governance in place, scope/brief verified and planning/definition advancing at pace.

- Continued engagement with councils on interim billing technical approach (2x signed with vendors, 2x due Dec).
- Engagement with WWL on expectations/approach for upcoming decisions, and technical transition planning where systems need change or update.
- WCC on finance, HR and payroll systems (existing arrangements to be amended).

- Due diligence assessment interviews with WWL staff are progressing well and on track to complete in December.
- Regulatory compliance and risk due diligence assessment underway and on track for February report back.
- Stormwater taskforce brief endorsed by the CE Group.

Focus for next period

- Identity agency briefed; development of public-facing messaging and collateral.
- Customer current state analysis work continues.
- Drafting the Customer Charter.
- Advance preparation for WSS public consultation.

- Agree approach to treasury establishment, debt transfer, insurance, revenue, pricing, hardship, insurance, and assurance with the Board.
- Confirming debt guarantee approach with LGFA
- Draft the Net Asset Calculation Manual (NACM) to support the transfer agreement drafting.
- First draft of billing internal service model/specification.

- Finalisation of WWL technical transition plan. WWL TSI detailed briefing with Board.
- Continued engagement with WCC on interim payroll, HR and finance requirements.
- Discussions with a payment experience platform provider for a billing/payment portal option that would simplify customer interactions and council support processes.

- Due diligence face-to-face interviews completed, and an update provided to the Board.
- Detailed planning of the business continuity and resilience sub workstreams.
- Stormwater Taskforce inaugural meeting 19 December.

Key interdependencies and challenges

- The challenges regarding the customer experience are becoming clearer and represent a critical path and reputational risk to delivery (Board discussion in Dec).
- Increased urgency from councils for clarity on expectations and outcomes.
- Uplift in comms/engagement demand with CE arrival.

- Timeline pressure across all sub-workstreams, particularly billing and financial planning.
- Interim billing complexity, multiple interdependencies, parties, and systems — being actively managed with additional project management and resourcing, and revised governance arrangements.

- Billing remains a high risk area with risks being mitigated through vendor discussions, alignment with the customer work, the Project Brief, and revised governance/management arrangements being adopted.
- Advancing definition of HR/payroll and finance service provision (WCC), and the work required to implement.
- TSI decision making and Board decision engagement.

- Many interdependencies associated with the Stormwater Taskforce to be managed.
- Challenging to plan the next phase of work until outcomes from the due diligence assessments are understood.
- Additional/replacement supporting resour²⁰ following resignation of team member.

9. Accelerated Outcomes & Change

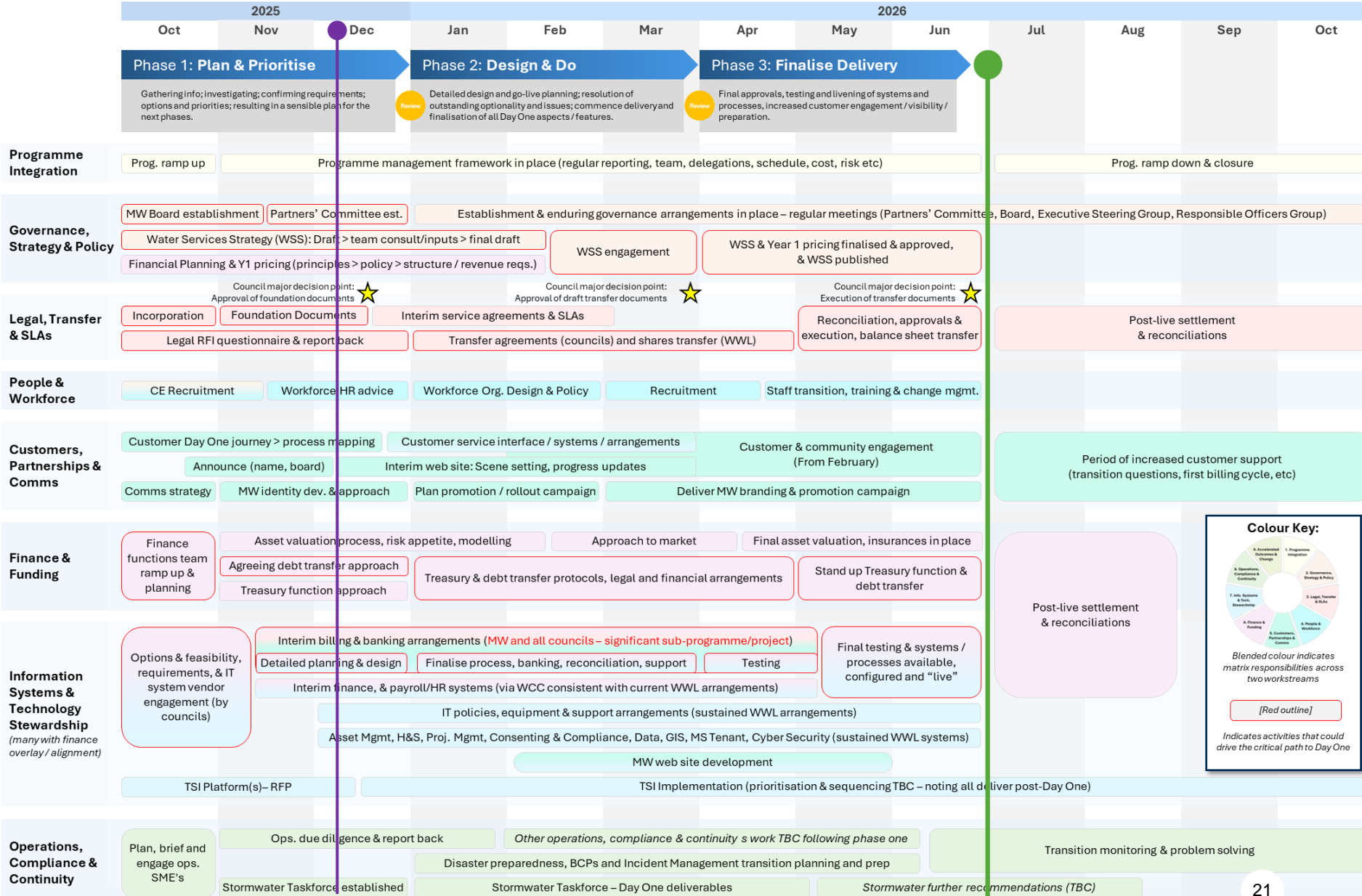
Investigating and fast-tracking alternative options, approaches, components and deliverables that “move the dial”, without disruption to the other workstreams until a decision is made to amalgamate them.

Initial work area is to scope and confirm accelerated Day 2 task for price modelling for harmonisation by 1 July 2027.

Focus Areas & Progress

- This is currently a placeholder for this workstream, pending Board discussion and direction on priority areas not yet addressed in the other workstreams. Suggested areas for discussion include:
- **Producing the Day Two roadmap:** As the Day One planning matures there is an increasing awareness of post-Day One activities and the need to plot and sequencing them. Examples include the next WSS, easements transfer, TSI and other WWL programmes.
- **Centralised other customer support ahead of TSI delivery:** There may be options to start centralising customer support ahead of TSI delivery of the ongoing CRM solution.

Tiaki Wai Establishment Programme | Roadmap to Day One



Managed out of workstream:		October 2025	November 2025	December 2025
1	Programme Integration	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Leads and other core est. team resources onboarded ✓ First iteration of establishment plan compiled (full draft) ✓ Regular reporting mechanisms/dashboard implemented ✓ Programme support tools investigated ✓ 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Detailed programme schedule compiled ✓ Council cost recovery principles verified & reflected in budget ✓ Monday.com implemented (registers, task mgmt. etc) ✓ Onboarding of Programme Coordinator ✓ 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Further review of resourcing levels, prog. budget completed ✓ First iteration of establishment plan updated & approved > Jan Detail plan(s) for Jan-Feb-Mar period compiled WIP Revised Terms of References agreed for ESG, ROG groups > Jan
2	Governance, Strategy & Policy	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Tiaki Wai legal incorporation complete, interim constitution approved, board and name announced, interim web site live ✓ Statement of Expectations (SoE) released to Board for review ✓ WWL workshop on WSS requirements, schedule and roles ✓ 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> First Tiaki Wai Board meeting 7 November, including SoE review ✓ WSS: Confirm income & expenses being removed from councils LTPs; level of service measures and targets > Dec Upfront Board discussions on current working assumptions ✓ Tiaki Wai Chief Executive selection/appointment confirmed ✓ 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Partnership Committee established ✓; foundation documents and Statement of Expectations approved WIP WWL TSI "Phase 0" approval, metering & other major decisions WIP Significance and Engagement Policy drafted ✓ Establishment Team high priority policies approved WIP
3	Legal, Transfer & SLAs	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Onboarding of Simpson Grierson lead and team, planning ✓ Complete peer review of foundation documents ✓ Develop and issue Legal Transfer RFI Questionnaire (LTQ), aligned with drafted transfer principles ✓ 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Support Council foundation documents & SoE decisions; support WWL & councils responding to the LTQ (& through December) ✓ Develop SLA and support arrangement principles, and high-level requirements (first pass) > Dec 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> LTQ substantively completed, report back on issues emerging WIP In-principle agreement for interim service arrangements scope, duration and general terms (e.g. billing, HR/payroll, finance). > Jan Confirm specifics of WWL integration and share transfer WIP Develop template transfer agreements ✓, finalise principles > Jan
4	People & Workforce	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Onboarding of lead (late in October), planning ✓ Initiate discussion with WCC on payroll/HR interim service ✓ Investigate pre-Day One payroll options ✓ 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Advice on staff transition given WWL amalgamation approach ✓ CE appointment and announcement. ✓ Confirm involvement in WWL union collective bargaining > Dec Day One HR/payroll interim service principles agreed (WCC) > Dec 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Due diligence of workstream and staff transition approach completed WIP People comms plan drafted and socialised with WWL WIP Begin work on staff transition guidelines WIP
5	Customers, Partnerships & Comms	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Onboarding of lead, planning, recruitment of resources ✓ Deliver communications strategy and high level plan ✓ Draft detailed plan(s) to advance full workstream ✓ Draft detailed plan(s) to advance identity (RFP) ✓ 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Day One customer experience mapping underway (i.e. faults, queries, complaints; billing); upfront options & principles drafted ✓ Manage procurement for identity development agency ✓ Hold identity workshops with councils, WWL & mana whenua ✓ 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Surface any options for CEs and/or the Board to consider emerging from the customer experience work ✓ Confirm WWL website transition plan (with IT workstream) > Jan Develop and test identity and story system (Dec/Jan) WIP
6	Finance & Funding	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Interim billing approach feasibility (leading into revised Project Brief) & vendor engagement confirmed ✓ Draft options for debt guarantee ✓ Early engagement with LGFA ✓ Treasury (PwC) and financial model dev (Mafic) procurement ✓ 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Billing Project Brief finalised; priority customer & payment policy work advanced (second 'deep dive' workshop); council IT development commences (timing varies between councils) ✓ Day One finance service arrangement and high-level requirements agreed in principle (WCC) > Dec 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Confirm treasury and debt transfer approaches, asset valuation process, risk appetite and financial modelling, Y1 pricing WIP Active management/monitoring of billing project ✓ Finance reqs. & implementation plan agreed in principle (WCC)
7	Information Systems & Technology Stewardship	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Document IT high-level reqs. for interim billing (completed in Sept - noted for completeness) ✓ Document IT high-level reqs. For HR/payroll, finance (for WCC) ✓ Ongoing coordination/alignment with TSI programme ✓ 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Confirm approach to, and level of HR/payroll IT system changes required (WCC) > Dec (pending IRD number advice) Finalise IT high-level requirements (Est. Director signoff) > Dec Ongoing coordination/alignment with TSI programme ✓ 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Begin execution of an agreed technical transition plan for existing WWL systems and any changes required for Day One given amalgamation approach WIP Support for governance decisions on TSI alignment ✓
8	Operations, Compliance & Continuity	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Detailed planning ✓ Statement of Work for Due Diligence work packages/resources agreed, and WWL/council engagement confirmed ✓ 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> WWL engagement and interviews for due diligence underway (council deferred to Feb) ✓ Stormwater Taskforce Terms of Reference approved and meetings scheduled ✓ 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Initial report back from due diligence (full report February 2026) ✓ First meeting of the Stormwater Taskforce WIP Board update on WWL SMF project ✓

Orange = Deferred/extended activities; Red = time-critical activities, 22 ember

Statement of Expectations

Final Draft

To:	Tiaki Wai Board		
From:	Mike Wakefield, Legal Lead Adrienne Black, Strategy and Policy Lead	Date	15 12 2025
Approved:	Dougal List, Establishment Director		
It is recommended that the Board:			
1. Note the updated final draft Statement of Expectations due to be adopted by the Partners Committee on 18 December 2025.			

Executive Summary

1. The purpose of this paper is to provide you with an overview of the final changes that have been made to the initial Statement of Expectations (SOE) for Tiaki Wai.

Background

2. At the November Board meeting the Board was advised that the initial SOE for Tiaki Wai must be adopted by the shareholding Councils and provided to Tiaki Wai by 31 December 2025. This timing is set by the requirements of the Local Government (Water Services) Act 2025 (LGWSA) to have the SOE adopted and shared with Tiaki Wai no later than six months before Tiaki Wai is required to adopt its Water Services Strategy (WSS) - that date being 30 June 2026.
3. Tiaki Wai was provided opportunity to comment on the draft SOE, as required under the LGWSA, and this feedback was provided back to the shareholding Councils to consider.
4. To recap, the feedback Tiaki Wai provided was centred on ensuring the final SOE was as clear, practical and workable as possible. The feedback given focused on:
 - 4.1 Restructuring the document to provide clarity of intent and expectation timeframes, and to set out the expectations Tiaki Wai must achieve more explicitly;
 - 4.2 Acknowledging the need for Tiaki Wai and the Councils to work together; and
 - 4.3 Streamlining half-yearly reporting.

Changes to the Draft SOE

5. The changes proposed by Tiaki Wai have been adopted in the final draft SOE, either in totality or part. Some expectations have also been made stronger by the shareholding Councils by changing wording such as ‘consider’ to ‘commit to’.

6. The Board should note changes made to expectations relating to price harmonisation and reporting on enduring expectations.

Harmonised Water Charges

7. Two new expectations have been added relating to price harmonisation:
 - 7.1 The initial WSS must now provide a roadmap for the implementation of price harmonisation by no later than 1 July 2031.
 - 7.2 Tiaki Wai must report to the Partners' Committee, at least twelve months before the intended harmonisation date on the impact of harmonisation for governance arrangements and community engagement requirements.

Reporting on Enduring Expectations

8. Tiaki Wai proposed there be no requirement to report on the enduring expectations until the 2030/31 financial year (FY30/31). The reason being many of these expectations do not reflect the asset condition and operating environment Tiaki Wai will inherit and need better systems, and increased budget and capability to achieve and report on them.
9. The final draft SOE acknowledges that some enduring expectations are aspirational but is clear that Tiaki Wai is expected to progressively work towards achieving and reporting on the enduring expectations as its operating model matures. It states that Tiaki Wai must establish reporting baselines over the first two years and begin to report against them as soon as practicable, rather than waiting until FY30/31.

Next steps

10. The final SOE is due to be adopted by the Partners' Committee on 18 December 2025. Following this, it will be formally issued to Tiaki Wai.

Appendices

Appendix A: Final Draft SOE



DRAFT Statement of Expectations

1. Introduction

This Statement of Expectations (**SOE**) has been prepared for Tiaki Wai Metro Water Limited (Tiaki Wai) as required by the Local Government (Water Services) Act 2025.

It was adopted by the Tiaki Wai Partners Committee, which is made up of representatives of Hutt City Council, Porirua City Council, Upper Hutt City Council, Wellington City Council, and Greater Wellington Regional Council (the Shareholding Councils), and mana whenua partners Taranaki Whānui ki te Upoko o Te Ika and Ngāti Toa Rangatira (the Partners) on 18 December 2025.

2. Context and purpose

Tiaki Wai has been established to deliver safe, reliable, affordable, and sustainable drinking water, wastewater and stormwater services within the Wellington metropolitan area. Tiaki Wai is required to deliver these services in accordance with the objectives in section 17, and financial principles in section 18, of the Local Government (Water Services) Act 2025 and the expectations set out in this SOE.

This SOE describes the collective expectations of the Shareholding Councils and mana whenua partners of Tiaki Wai. It provides direction on the outcomes Tiaki Wai is to seek to achieve when delivering water services for communities, as well as expectations for how Tiaki Wai should conduct itself and its relationships with key stakeholders.

The Partners have agreed that the initial focus for Tiaki Wai should be on achieving a successful transition, which beds in operational stability, robust and independent governance, and the establishment of effective planning and investment processes with strong financial management. This focus is reflected in this SOE.

This SOE sets expectations in four areas:

- 2.1** Governance, Accountability and Reporting expectations, including details on the content for the required half-yearly report.
- 2.2** Establishment expectations (December 2025 to 30 June 2026) – expectations that must be achieved before operational go-live.
- 2.3** Transitional expectations (1 July 2026 to 30 June 2030) – expectations that will apply through the transitional / establishment phase.
- 2.4** Enduring expectations.

Tiaki Wai will need to build its internal capability and capacity so it can deliver on its objectives and the expectations that govern it. Existing staff, particularly those transitioning from the Shareholding Councils will also need to be well supported through transition.

3. Strategic goals and key outcomes for Tiaki Wai

- 3.1** To ensure the delivery of safe, reliable, environmentally and financially sustainable water services that will be resilient, restore te mana o te wai and enable new homes and the well-being of communities across Tiaki Wai's service area.
- 3.2** The following are the key outcomes Tiaki Wai must reflect in the initial Water Services Strategy:

- (a) Improving and compliant water services are delivered for customers and partners, through significant focus on the state of the water network, infrastructure and assets.
- (b) Financially sustainable water services are delivered for customers and partners, with consideration given to affordability when setting water charges.
- (c) Working and reliable water services are delivered for customers continuously, during and after the transition of water services to Tiaki Wai.

4. Governance, Accountability and Reporting

Maintaining independence while establishing strong governance arrangements will be important to the success of Tiaki Wai. Tiaki Wai must be open and transparent in its decision-making with Partners, key stakeholders and the communities it serves.

It is also acknowledged that Tiaki Wai will remain reliant on existing council systems, processes, varying degrees of support, and information, particularly through the establishment phase and the transition phase for no longer than 24 months unless mutually agreed. Tiaki Wai will take responsibility for systems, business processes and resourcing as soon as possible. Working together to ensure reliable service provision for customers will be critical through the transition and establishment phases, and thereafter ongoing.

4.1 It is expected that:

- (a) Tiaki Wai and the Shareholding Councils will work constructively to agree clear, coordinated support processes and shared arrangements to ensure that reliable, and customer-focused, service delivery is achieved.
- (b) Tiaki Wai will operate under a skills-based board that has the capability to oversee a complex, multi-owner organisation.
- (c) Tiaki Wai will meet best practice governance standards as set out by the [Elements of effective governance — Office of the Auditor-General New Zealand](#).
- (d) Tiaki Wai must provide advance notice to the Partners Committee of any decisions Tiaki Wai is considering that would involve a significant departure from its Water Services Strategy, or reprioritisation of activities, including advice about how the decision will be consulted on (if required by the Significance and Engagement Policy) or otherwise regularised (e.g. through an amendment to the Water Services Strategy).
- (e) Partners will be made aware of any material or significant events or other issues that may attract public interest on a “no surprises” basis. To achieve this, Tiaki Wai must proactively advise the partners of:
 - (i) any emerging significant risks including potential significant service failures, critical risks or compliance issues in advance of such events where possible, and immediately if significant service failures occur, and
 - (ii) advise of mitigations, solutions or remediations that will be put in place to minimise the likelihood and/or impact of the reported risks, issues or service failures.

- (f) all reporting will be written in plain English and made easily accessible to the community so that customers and the wider public can understand how the organisation is performing and to ensure trust and accountability are continually reinforced, noting sensitive information will be redacted from public communication.

5. Content of Tiaki Wai's first Half-yearly report

5.1 Tiaki Wai will provide to the Partners Committee a half-yearly report at an aggregated, organisational level (i.e. not council-by-council) which includes the following content:

- (a) Delivery of capital projects against those specified in investment delivery plan for the financial year to which the report relates, and any departures from planned capital programmes.
- (b) Compliance and enforcement status of resource consents and other regulatory requirements including actual or potential compliance issues, along with proposed solutions for addressing any compliance issues.
- (c) Forecast expenditure, projects specifically subject to government or other third party funding, lending and any associated implications for future water charges.
- (d) Critical risks and proposed mitigations
- (e) Key stakeholder relationships, including meetings or other engagements.
- (f) Progress on the transition of services from Shareholding Councils and other hosted systems and services to Tiaki Wai systems.

6. Expectations of Tiaki Wai during the Establishment Phase (19 December 2025 to 30 June 2026)

The following expectations are intended to ensure that Tiaki Wai is set up for success, with all necessary components in place for 'Day One' (1 July 2026).

Customer Charter

The move to Tiaki Wai holding full responsibility for revenue, charging and service provision is a significant change for customers. Clear communication, and public confidence are essential as responsibilities transfer from Wellington Water Limited and the Shareholding Councils.

6.1 It is expected that:

- (a) Tiaki Wai will develop and publish a Customer Charter which sets out the organisation's commitment to operate openly, with clear and accessible information available for communities.
- (b) The Customer Charter is to:
 - (i) inform customers of what they can expect from Tiaki Wai regarding the provision of water services, service levels and how charges are set;
 - (ii) outline how customers can engage with Tiaki Wai and how Tiaki Wai will consider the views of customers when providing water services;

- (iii) commit Tiaki Wai to being professional, open and transparent, acting with integrity, treating its customers fairly and with respect, and operating with clear and accessible information; and
- (iv) outline the commitment Tiaki Wai has to the environment.
- (c) Tiaki Wai provides opportunities for the Partners Committee to review and comment on any draft Customer Charter and consider those comments before adopting it.
- (d) Once adopted, the Customer Charter will be made publicly available and actively promoted so that customers understand what they can expect from Tiaki Wai.

Initial Water Services Strategy

In developing its initial Water Services Strategy, Tiaki Wai is expected to take ownership of its strategic direction while ensuring oversight and appropriate alignment with existing planning completed by the Shareholding Councils.

It is intended that the initial focus for Tiaki Wai is on achieving a successful transition. As a result, the first Water Services Strategy for Tiaki Wai should be prepared to focus on the first financial year of operations from 1 July 2026, ahead of a more comprehensive Water Services Strategy being developed in 2026-2027 to align with the Shareholding Councils' Long-Term Plan cycle. The next Water Services Strategy will provide direction on the approach for the 2027-37 period and will be informed by an updated SOE prepared by the Partners Committee in late 2026.

6.2 It is expected that the initial Water Services Strategy will:

- (a) Act as an initial strategy focusing on the delivery of services, financing and charging in Year 1 (2026/27), which will be broadly aligned with the Water Services Delivery Plan (albeit refined through the financial planning process).
- (b) Set water charges in line with the projected amounts in the Shareholding Councils' Long Term Plans for the 2026/27 financial year.
- (c) Reflect the longer-term strategic priorities of keep up, catch up, build up, clean up, address faults and improve resilience, noting the link between these priorities and the existing strategic priorities guiding Wellington Water's investment.
- (d) Provide a roadmap for the implementation of price harmonisation by no later than 1 July 2031.
- (e) Include detail on the implementation plan for water meters, or in lieu of one being in place, the plan to deliver one.
- (f) Include the prioritised programme for the Technology Systems Investment (TSI) Programme being rolled out within Wellington Water, for Tiaki Wai.
- (g) Include detail on how corporate capability within Tiaki Wai will be built to ensure efficient delivery of services.
- (h) Generally reflect performance indicators and measures from the Shareholding Councils' Long Term Plans, with those indicators and measures to form the basis for accountability during the initial transitional phase.

- (i) Reflect a pricing strategy that is generally based on the Shareholding Councils' existing rating policies.

6.3 It is expected that:

- (a) Tiaki Wai provides the Partners Committee with an early opportunity to comment on the draft Water Services Strategy, with the intention that a draft be provided by 1 March, but no later than 1 April, with a minimum review period for the Partners Committee of four weeks;
- (b) Tiaki Wai prepares and provides a summary document clarifying any proposed significant changes to key projects or costs to customers when compared to the Long Term Plans (and annual plans) of the Shareholding Councils, which is to be provided at the same time as the draft Water Services Strategy; and
- (c) Tiaki Wai consider the benefit of public consultation, as against its significance and engagement policy, noting that the Shareholding Councils have not required Tiaki Wai to consult on the draft Water Services Strategy in full or part.

Other establishment phase expectations

6.4 It is expected that:

- (a) Alongside the Shareholding Councils, Tiaki Wai will work with the Local Government Funding Agency (LGFA) to prepare to accede as a participating borrower, ensuring access to the same financing terms available to councils and maintaining consistency across the region's funding arrangements.

7. Expectations of Tiaki Wai during the transition phase (1 July 2026 to 30 June 2030)

These expectations are the focus areas for the transition phase, however a version of these expectations will also carry through to the enduring expectations in future SoEs.

Our expectations during this transition phase are set out below, and they will be reviewed in late 2026 to ensure that they remain relevant in the lead up to the next Water Services Strategy for the 2027-37 period.

The first four years will be a pivotal time for Tiaki Wai. During this phase, it will be important to establish strong foundations and effective ways of working, while also maintaining continuity of service for customers. This phase will also require a smooth transition for employees, and the contractor and consultant market.

Continuity of Service for Customers

The transition to Tiaki Wai must be as smooth as possible for customers, with the move to paying directly for water services managed carefully to ensure transparency and avoid price shocks as far as reasonably possible. Customers should receive effective service when reporting faults, and have a formal pathway to raise complaints, and a mechanism to resolve them.

7.1 It is expected that:

- (a) the Pricing Strategy:
 - (i) for the 2027/28 financial year and beyond will focus on changes to pricing structures or charges and this will be clearly laid out as part of the 2027-2037 Water Service Strategy; and

- (ii) will be clearly communicated and will ensure transparency and affordability for customers.
- (b) by 1 July 2027, Tiaki Wai will develop and implement a Financial Support Policy, including provisions for customer hardship assistance. This policy will set out how the organisation will support customers experiencing financial hardship to ensure equitable access to essential water services.
- (c) Tiaki Wai own the customer relationship and will work closely with Shareholding Councils to respond to customer queries, as defined in the SLA.
- (d) Tiaki Wai will join the Utilities Disputes Ltd and promote this service to its customers.

Making Use of Existing Knowledge

Tiaki Wai is to work closely with Wellington Water and the Shareholding Councils to ensure a smooth transition and make full use of existing knowledge, strategies and plans wherever possible.

7.2 It is expected that:

- (a) Tiaki Wai will work with the Shareholding Councils to transfer any necessary consents, and in a way that upholds settlement or consent condition commitments.
- (b) Tiaki Wai will collaborate with all Shareholding Councils, including by adopting appropriate shared service and service level support arrangements.
- (c) Tiaki Wai will draw on, and where appropriate, rely on existing strategies, plans and programmes.

Stormwater Management

Effective stormwater management requires collaboration across multiple parties, and it is critical that a whole-of-catchment approach is taken.

7.3 It is expected that:

- (a) Tiaki Wai will, in partnership with the Shareholding Councils and Mana Whenua, take a catchment wide approach to stormwater management, including in its Water Services Strategy, noting the importance of recognising the full stormwater system incorporating both the natural and built environments.
- (b) through the development of transfer agreements, Tiaki Wai will work to resolve the approach to stormwater management and accountability between Tiaki Wai, Shareholding Councils and other parties.
- (c) Tiaki Wai will collaborate with Partners in preparing a Stormwater Network Risk Management Plan to identify any hazards and assess and manage risk relating to the network, to prepare Service Agreements for the stormwater network, and to inform the 2030-2040 Water Services Strategy.
- (d) Tiaki Wai will establish a Stormwater Service Level Agreement by 1 July 2027 between Tiaki Wai and the Shareholding Councils. As far as possible, the Agreement is expected to be regionally consistent.

Financial and Investment Management

Tiaki Wai must quickly establish prudent financial management practices. These should align with the Local Government Funding Agency (LGFA) framework and provide clear visibility to the partners of organisational costs, funding requirements, and investment needs.

7.4 It is expected that:

- (a) Tiaki Wai will work to establish a development contributions framework (or equivalent, in the event of future reform and the introduction of a development levy regime) that aims to recover 100% of growth-related costs, but in the initial transition phase will adopt the relevant parts of the Shareholding Council's existing development contributions policies.
- (b) Tiaki Wai will take over responsibility for charging and billing capability, replacing the territorial authority shareholders, as soon as practicable (in line with the TSI system programme), and until that time will work closely with the Shareholding Councils who will act as invoicing agents on behalf of Tiaki Wai to facilitate the collection of water charges.
- (c) Tiaki Wai will initiate work to develop a regionally harmonised approach to water charges, with that approach documented in the 2030-2040 Water Services Strategy, and implemented no later than 1 July 2031.
- (d) Tiaki Wai will report to the Partners Committee, at least twelve months before the intended harmonisation date on the impact of harmonisation for governance arrangements and community engagement requirements.
- (e) Tiaki Wai will build its dedicated finance and payroll capability, delivered through the Technology Systems Improvement (TSI) programme as soon as practicable. Until that time, Tiaki Wai will work closely with Wellington City Council, using the agreed payroll and finance hosted arrangements established via Service Level Agreements.

Workforce and Capability

A safe, skilled, diverse, and culturally competent workforce is essential to the success of Tiaki Wai.

7.5 It is expected that:

- (a) Tiaki Wai must provide a workplace that prioritises health, safety, and staff wellbeing, and invest in the development of its people. Appropriate policies and structures must be in place to support this.
- (b) Tiaki Wai progressively establishes partnerships with the wider water sector, central and local government, training providers, and mana whenua to develop enabling policy, grow local capability and to create employment pathways that support long-term workforce sustainability.
- (c) Tiaki Wai builds capacity and capability - including at governance and leadership level - to uphold Te Tiriti and Treaty settlements and commitments to mana whenua for future health and wellbeing of the water.
- (d) to support a positive workplace culture, Tiaki Wai will:
 - (i) embed organisational values and behaviours into daily practices; and

- (ii) ensure leadership expectations are clear.

Broader Outcomes

There is an opportunity for Tiaki Wai to consider broader outcomes and use its purchasing power to deliver wider community benefits such as employment, training, and support for local communities.

7.6 It is expected that:

- (a) Tiaki Wai will progressively work towards reflecting a social procurement approach in its procurement strategies while balancing the most cost-effective outcome to ensure water services remain affordable for customers.
- (b) Tiaki Wai will pay the Living Wage.
- (c) Tiaki Wai will establish a climate mitigation and adaptation policy to inform the 2030-2040 Water Services Strategy.

8. Our Enduring Expectations of Tiaki Wai

Our enduring expectations outline how Tiaki Wai is expected to operate across the longer term. They reflect shared values and principles of the Partners and are considered to be relevant to the operations of Tiaki Wai, including over the initial establishment / transitional phase.

The Partners acknowledge that Tiaki Wai's achievement of all of the enduring expectations must be viewed against the context of the current operating environment, the condition of the assets being transferred, the operating budgets available in the first financial year and the time required to establish new systems and capability. In certain respects the enduring expectations are deliberately aspirational, but Tiaki Wai is expected to progressively work towards delivering water services in a way that satisfies those expectations, so that once the transition phase is complete, an operating model has been developed that aligns with and seeks to satisfy these expectations.

While Tiaki Wai is to focus on the initial expectations and half-yearly report content during the first year of operations, the Partners expect Tiaki Wai to develop reporting baselines for all expectations over its first two years of operations, and begin to report on these enduring expectations as soon as practicable thereafter.

Upholding Treaty principles, settlement obligations and te mana o te wai

Tiaki Wai will uphold the principles of Te Tiriti o Waitangi, existing Treaty settlement obligations, and act in accordance with existing relationship arrangements and other commitments with Māori.

8.1 It is expected that:

- (a) Tiaki Wai develops genuine partnerships with mana whenua, by providing opportunities and establishing formal mechanisms that facilitate and improve mana whenua input into strategic policy development and investment decisions.
- (b) Tiaki Wai uphold the Treaty principles, any Treaty settlement obligations of the Shareholding Councils.
- (c) Tiaki Wai will give effect to councils' commitments to ensure te mana o te wai is enhanced in its strategies, planning and investment decision making.
- (d) the existing Partnership Service Agreements and Relationship Charter in place between mana whenua and Wellington Water Limited will endure until 30 June 2028.

Customer and Community

Tiaki Wai is to be a customer facing organisation and must embed a culture that puts the customer first. It is to be established and operated so that effective customer service, clear and regular communication and ensuring the views of communities are central to how water services are delivered.

8.2 It is expected that:

- (a) Tiaki Wai will progressively work towards creating and embedding an organisational culture that is customer first, transparent, and recognised as a leader in health, safety, and wellbeing within the water services sector.
- (b) Tiaki Wai will demonstrate a strong customer service ethos that prioritises responsiveness, respect, and accountability in every interaction.
- (c) Tiaki Wai will establish and maintain a customer reference group that includes representatives from communities across the service area.
- (d) Tiaki Wai will engage in open, collaborative consultation on significant issues or projects with directly affected or interested communities (in line with its Significance and Engagement Policy).
- (e) Tiaki Wai will communicate with customers in an open and timely way, and in a manner that is appropriate for the audience, about intended activities that may affect them, with clear explanations about key issues and drivers for activities, and opportunities for engagement with Tiaki Wai.

Environmental Stewardship

Tiaki Wai must be a responsible guardian of the environment and actively seek to protect and enhance the health of harbours and catchments in its service area, and other natural ecosystems it interacts with.

8.3 It is expected that:

- (a) With the Shareholding Councils and mana whenua, Tiaki Wai will commit to the outcomes in the following documents (as applicable) and with a balanced view of other outcomes Tiaki Wai must deliver on:
 - (i) Te Wai Ora o Porirua – Porirua Harbour Accord and any other future Accords, and
 - (ii) iwi management plans, and
 - (iii) Te Mahere Wai, and
 - (iv) Poutiaki Plan, and
 - (v) Te Whanganui a Tara Whaitua Implementation Plan, and
 - (vi) Te Awarua o Porirua Whaitua Implementation Plan, and
 - (vii) any relevant memorandum of understanding and management plans for lakes.
- (b) Tiaki Wai will focus on delivering water services in a manner that minimises adverse environmental effects, and to pursue improvement in environmental outcomes.

- (c) Tiaki Wai will use its best endeavours to meet or exceed all environmental regulatory requirements, and where it does not meet those requirements shall take a proactive and practical approach to resolving all non-compliance.
- (d) Tiaki Wai will progressively work towards applying a climate change lens to its decision making and reduce carbon emissions across its activities over time.

Safe, reliable and resilient water services

As the water service provider for the Wellington metropolitan area, Tiaki Wai must remain aware of the importance of its role in protecting and supporting public health. Ensuring drinking water, wastewater and stormwater services are provided in a reliable, safe, and resilient way in the face of natural hazards, climate change, and the demands of population growth requires strong asset management practices, proactive investment, and sound risk management.

8.4 It is expected that:

- (a) Tiaki Wai will build its asset management capability by improving the quality and completeness of asset data, and in doing so will proactively manage existing infrastructure to, optimally manage any deterioration, avoid future deficits, and support timely, well-planned investment decisions.
- (b) Tiaki Wai will prioritise asset management planning towards very highly critical and highly critical assets so that risks of failure are minimised, ensuring communities can depend on these essential services now and into the future.
- (c) Tiaki Wai will plan and deliver water services that are resilient to future challenges, including the impacts of climate change and natural hazards. Focus should be placed on ensuring long-term security and reliability of water services through strategic infrastructure and asset planning over a minimum 30-year horizon.
- (d) Tiaki Wai will identify critical gaps or risks in its ability to operate as a sound asset manager of water services in the service area and will have a recommended pathway to improved risk maturity.
- (e) Tiaki Wai will establish an effective enterprise level risk management framework and align internal management with strategic goals to improve operational efficiency and compliance.
- (f) Tiaki Wai will demonstrate improved programme and project governance including performance monitoring to ensure Asset Management Plans are applied fully to deliver the organisation's asset management responsibilities and ongoing work programmes.

Emergency Preparedness and Continuity of Service

Tiaki Wai is the water lifeline utility as defined in the CDEM Act 2002 and is therefore expected to lead water community resilience before, during and after any emergency event.

8.5 It is expected that:

- (a) Drinking water supply and wastewater services either continue to operate during and following emergencies, even if at reduced levels, or is subject to minimal disruption only.

- (b) Tiaki Wai actively participates in regional and local emergency management planning and maintains and regularly updates its own emergency response and business continuity plans.
- (c) Tiaki Wai works closely with Shareholding Councils, emergency services, and other lifeline utilities to ensure a coordinated and effective response to emergencies, including through timely and transparent communication with key agencies, and the public.
- (d) Tiaki Wai will hold critical spare parts and equipment to enable rapid response to significant natural disasters or other major events that could disrupt service delivery. It will also develop plans for such events to ensure that it has the capability and resources to effectively and restore services as quickly as possible.

Affordability, Equity and Value for Money

Delivering value for money is about both cost efficiency and fairness, with decisions always to be tested against the affordability of water services for the community.

8.6 It is expected that:

- (a) Tiaki Wai will develop a regionally harmonised approach to water charges, and will document that in the 2030-40 Water Services Strategy, so that the approach can be implemented by no later than 1 July 2031.
- (b) Tiaki Wai will deliver services in a way that is cost effective, financially sustainable and efficient. It must balance the affordability of water services for households with the need for sustained long-term investment in resilient infrastructure and any regulatory requirements.
- (c) Tiaki Wai will be open and transparent on how it charges for water services.
- (d) Tiaki Wai should pay particular attention to equity and hardship, ensuring vulnerable households are supported through appropriate policies which document options such as flexible payment options.
- (e) water supply is an essential lifeline service and while restrictions may need to be applied across the service area at times to manage supply and demand, this will be a last resort, and no household will be denied access to water services due to financial hardship or other vulnerabilities.
- (f) Tiaki Wai will work with councils to develop regional water bylaws.

Aligned strategic growth planning

Upgraded and new water services infrastructure is needed to provide for expected population growth in the service area. This infrastructure must be planned and delivered to support the timing and location of growth identified in urban growth strategies and plans. This will ensure that new development areas have the necessary water infrastructure in place when they are needed, consistent with the sequencing and priorities agreed across the service area.

At the same time, Tiaki Wai needs to retain flexibility to respond to and support development that occurs outside of the planned sequence, where this is necessary to meet community or housing needs.

8.7 It is expected that:

- (a) Tiaki Wai will consider and engage with the following strategies and plans when making decisions about the water services infrastructure required to support growth, and the sequencing of such infrastructure:
 - (i) Te Rautaki Whanaketanga ki tua a Wairarapa - Wellington-Horowhenua Future Development Strategy;
 - (ii) the Shareholding Councils' District Plans, Long-Term Plans, Infrastructure Strategies and other growth-related plans;
 - (iii) any iwi led plans and strategies, to the extent that they are relevant to growth planning.
- (b) Tiaki Wai will work closely with its Partners to ensure its long-term investment plans support and align with Shareholding Councils' growth strategies and urban development goals across the Wellington metropolitan region, over time. This includes:
 - (i) collaborating with Shareholding Councils when requested, as they develop key planning documents, such as Long-Term Plans, District Plans, Regional Plans, Policy Statements and Spatial Strategies, to ensure water infrastructure planning supports agreed growth priorities; and
 - (ii) providing clear advice to Shareholding Councils on the different infrastructure needs and costs associated with greenfield (new development areas) and brownfield (redevelopment of existing areas) growth, to assist councils to make informed decisions about where and how to grow.
- (c) Tiaki Wai will actively support the Shareholding Councils' building and resource consenting processes by:
 - (i) providing timely, accurate, and fit-for-purpose technical advice and approvals related to water service connections; and
 - (ii) ensuring that its input enables councils to meet statutory processing timeframes and deliver a positive customer experience.
- (d) The role of Tiaki Wai in facilitating connections to water networks and assessing infrastructure capacity as part of these consent processes must be clearly defined, consistently applied, and supported by transparent communication with both councils and applicants.
- (e) Tiaki Wai will support the Shareholding Councils with any collective advocacy on growth related reform or plan change processes, so that a "one family" approach is taken where possible to growth planning across the service area.

9. Review Date

The Statement of Expectations will be updated mid-late 2026 and provided to Tiaki Wai Board prior to 31 December 2026 to inform the expectations for the Tiaki Wai Water Services Strategy 2027-2037.

END

Significance and Engagement Policy: First Draft

Board Comments and Council Approval

To:	Tiaki Wai Board		
From:	Mike Wakefield, Legal Lead Adrienne Black, Strategy and Policy Lead	Date	15 12 2025
Approved:	Dougal List, Establishment Director		
It is recommended that the Board: <ul style="list-style-type: none">1. Note the requirement to prepare and adopt a Significance and Engagement Policy.2. Review and provide comments/feedback on the draft Significance and Engagement Policy.			

Executive Summary

1. This paper outlines the process and content requirements for the Significance and Engagement Policy (SEP) that must be developed and adopted by Tiaki Wai.
2. The key legal requirement is that the SEP must be adopted within 12 months of Tiaki Wai being established, but it is proposed that it be developed and then consulted on in parallel with the draft Water Services Strategy (WSS), to align consultation processes.
3. This paper outlines the content requirements and the recommended approach to the preparation of the SEP, and invites feedback on the draft SEP, prior to it being considered by the Councils (via council officers, initially).

Legislative Context

4. Sections 35 to 37 of the Local Government (Water Services) Act 2025 (LGWSA) requires a water organisation to adopt a SEP that sets out how it will determine the significance of particular issues, proposals, water services infrastructure, decisions and activities (including the Water Services Strategy), and how it will engage with their communities regarding certain decisions .
5. At a general level, an SEP is intended to support decision making by water organisations, so that it is possible to develop clear, transparent processes for identifying the significance of proposed decisions and then determine whether, and if so how, engagement or consultation should occur. The SEP provisions in the LGWSA have been designed to support the underlying policy intent, which is to achieve and enhance transparency and accountability in decision making by water organisations.
6. Sections 35 and 36 set out the required content for a SEP, which includes:
 - 6.1 Criteria or procedures for determining significance, including whether a contract is a significant contract.

- 6.2 Criteria for determining whether an arrangement is a significant joint water service provider arrangement.
- 6.3 Mechanisms or tools that will be used for any engagement with communities and stakeholders, ensuring appropriate processes for undertaking engagement in relation to a proposed significant contract or significant joint water service provider arrangement.
- 6.4 All matters and information necessary for the organisation to make/develop its WSS.
- 6.5 All matters and information necessary for decisions and consultation required by section 236(11), including whether an asset is a strategic asset and a change to a level of service is significant.
- 6.6 A list of strategic water services assets.
- 7. In practice, the SEP required by the LGWSA is similar to the SEP required under the Local Government Act 2002, but with additional content requirements relating to significant contracts, joint arrangements and the WSS.
- 8. Section 37 outlines the steps that a water organisation must follow when preparing a SEP, including requirements for the water organisation to:
 - 8.1 Engage with its shareholders, consumers, communities within its service area and any specific communities identified by shareholders.
 - 8.2 Obtain shareholder approval of the proposed policy.
 - 8.3 Agree on respective roles and responsibilities between the water organisation and the shareholders.
 - 8.4 Agree on amendments to the proposed SEP and the existing SEPs of the shareholders, to minimise unnecessary duplication and inconsistency between them. This is expected to be finalised by Day One (1 July 2026).

Shareholder Council and Partner Engagement, and Approval of the Draft SEP

- 9. The Board is being provided with a copy of the draft SEP prepared by the Establishment Team so that it can review the recommended approach taken, ahead of it being provided to the Councils for review.
- 10. In terms of the process steps from here on, the recommendation that will be canvassed with the Chief Executives of the shareholding Councils is as follows:
 - 10.1 Draft SEP – post review by the Board – is circulated to the shareholding Councils (via CEs and ROG), to allow for Council officer advice to be provided to the Establishment Team / Board;
 - 10.2 After receiving council feedback, the Establishment Team will prepare an updated version and provide this to the Board at the February Board meeting. The Board will be asked to approve consultation on the draft SEP;

- 10.3 The draft SEP will be provided to the Partners' Committee, along with the draft WSS, on or around 27 February. A report to the Partners' Committee will outline the process the Establishment Team has gone through to prepare the SEP and invite feedback on the draft SEP;
 - 10.4 Tiaki Wai will commence consultation with the public on the draft SEP in parallel with consultation on the draft WSS, anticipated to be from 9 March to 3 April;
 - 10.5 In parallel with consultation on the draft SEP, Tiaki Wai will work with the shareholding Councils on amendments to the existing council SEPs so that any unnecessary duplication and inconsistency between them can be resolved from 1 July 2027 (which will be when Tiaki Wai will formally become the water service provider);
 - 10.6 After consultation has concluded, Tiaki Wai will consider any required changes and then finalise the draft SEP;
 - 10.7 The final SEP will be reported back to the Partners' Committee for approval (as per section 37(3)(b), LGWSA) in May, ahead of adoption by the Tiaki Wai Board in June.
11. We would not expect the Partners' Committee to be directly involved in substantive redrafting to the draft SEP but note that there could be suggestions (likely received from Council officers) as to areas of refinement or improvement through the consultation process.

Legislative and Strategic Considerations for Board Comments

12. In terms of the Board's review of the draft SEP:
- 12.1 The Establishment Team has sought to capture the content required by both sections 36 and 37, but it is recommended that the Board review those provisions for coverage;
 - 12.2 The Establishment Team notes that it has sought to develop a policy that provides for an appropriate level of engagement to meet the public accountability and transparency expectations of a public organisation. However, Tiaki Wai could decide that it will engage more extensively using innovative approaches where it considers there is good reason to do so;
 - 12.3 The Board should consider the proposed approach to determining significance, and the criteria identified, particularly in relation to the financial thresholds included in the draft SEP;
 - 12.4 The requirement placed on all water service providers by sections 23 and 24 of the LGWSA to determine whether contracts are "significant" is conceptually difficult to address. While section 24(4) sets out required content, there is a question as to when those matters can, or should, be assessed. The Establishment Team's view, which is reflected in the draft SEP, is that the value of a contract (and thresholds) are more likely than not to be considered at the time of developing the project, or planning for a new activity, and consulted on as part of the WSS. As a result, the SEP

has been designed to reflect that where consultation has already occurred, there may be no benefit in further consultation ahead of negotiating or entering into a contract that is assessed as significant. The Board's view on this approach would be appreciated.

13. Overall, we would appreciate the Board's views on any practical workability challenges that may arise for Tiaki Wai based on the draft SEP.
14. For completeness, we note that the SEP will not displace any mandatory consultation requirements that exist in either the LGWSA or the Resource Management Act 1991.

Stakeholder Considerations

15. The draft SEP provides an opportunity for Tiaki Wai to outline its intended approach to determining significance, and process for engaging with communities and stakeholders. While there will be some targeted reporting to the Partners' Committee (and Council officers) in relation to the draft SEP, it is intended that broader, formal, engagement occur in parallel with consultation on the first WSS – noting that the first WSS will be consulted on in any event, and in a manner that will align with the draft SEP.

Next Steps

16. After the Board has reviewed the draft SEP, it will be provided to the shareholder Councils for review, ahead of it being considered by the Partners' Committee at or around the time that consultation is intended to commence, in March.

Appendices

Appendix A: Draft Significance and Engagement Policy

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Tiaki Wai

Significance and Engagement Policy

Approved by the Board of Tiaki Wai Metro Water Limited on [insert date].

About Tiaki Wai

Tiaki Wai is a council-owned water organisation that, from 1 July 2026, will deliver drinking water, wastewater and piped stormwater services across the metropolitan Wellington area.

Tiaki Wai was established by five shareholding councils – Wellington City, Hutt City, Upper Hutt City, Porirua City, and Greater Wellington Regional Council – and two mana whenua partners, Ngāti Toa Rangatira and Taranaki Whānui ki Te Upoko o Te Ika.

Tiaki Wai recognises that it is managing and delivering water services on behalf of, and for, the communities across the metropolitan Wellington area, and that it needs to engage meaningfully with those who are likely to be affected by decisions made by Tiaki Wai.

About this policy

The Local Government (Water Services) Act 2025 (LGWSA) requires Tiaki Wai to adopt a significance and engagement policy. The purpose of the policy is to guide the approach Tiaki Wai takes to engagement and provide clarity about when communities can expect to be engaged in relation to decisions by Tiaki Wai.

Tiaki Wai will be required to make a range of decisions in relation to water services throughout the year, including decisions about: the level of service customers receive, where and when essential infrastructure is renewed or built, the investment required in water infrastructure and assets, how that investment is financed (including through water charges), and the contracts that will be entered into to deliver services and infrastructure projects.

Many strategic decisions will be made and documented through the Water Services Strategy and Water Services Annual Budget, but there is also the potential for other decisions to be made throughout the year. This could include decisions about significant contracts, potential joint water service provider arrangements, and other significant proposals or projects.

The decisions Tiaki Wai makes will affect residents, businesses and communities in different ways. It is important that people who are likely to be affected about decisions are informed and that they have the opportunity to provide their views when necessary.

Purpose of this policy

This policy:

- sets out how Tiaki Wai will determine the significance (importance) of particular proposals, issues, infrastructure, decisions and activities;
- identifies criteria and matters that will generally be used when assessing the significance of proposals, etc;
- outlines how and when communities can expect to be engaged, and by who, and what Tiaki Wai will do with feedback and views provided through engagement.

Any engagement or consultation about decisions, proposals, significant contracts and joint water service provider arrangements Tiaki Wai intends to make will generally be conducted by Tiaki Wai. The only other parties that may consult on behalf of Tiaki Wai, where there is good reason for doing so, are: Hutt City Council, Porirua City Council, Wellington City Council or Upper Hutt City Council.

Engagement principles

Clarity	Tiaki Wai will provide clear information about the proposed decision, the purpose of consultation (including the feedback desired), and the timing of consultation and the eventual Tiaki Wai decision.
Accessibility	Tiaki Wai will provide all relevant information in a format that the community can access and understand.
Opportunity	Tiaki Wai will provide clear feedback forms and accept feedback online and in writing but will also accept feedback from the community in other ways, where practical and where that will work better for any communities or individuals.
Identifying key or interested stakeholders	Before consulting, Tiaki Wai will work to identify the key or most interested stakeholders in relation to a proposal and invite feedback from those stakeholders. This will include mana whenua, for any proposals or decisions of relevance to Māori interests.
Open-mindedness and fairness	Tiaki Wai will receive feedback from the community with an open mind and give due consideration to those views when making decisions.
Transparency	Where it can, Tiaki Wai will publish a clear record of decisions made and details of how it considered the community feedback it received.
Coordination	Where required, Tiaki Wai will coordinate with Shareholding Councils when planning engagement and consultation to ensure consistency in approach and minimise confusion and costs.

Approach to decision-making

For all decisions, Tiaki Wai will adopt the following approach:

- determine the significance of the proposal/decision using the criteria in **Schedule 1: Determining Significance**, and **Schedule 2: Significant Assets** and then
- based on that determination, decide whether any engagement is required for the proposal/decision; and
- if engagement is considered appropriate, develop an engagement plan in a manner that aligns with the guidance in **Schedule 3: Engagement Planning**.

Specific additional considerations apply to the following matters or types of decisions, as set out below:

1. Water Services Strategy
2. Significant Tiaki Wai decisions on projects or proposals
3. Decisions relating to joint water service provider arrangements
4. Decisions about significant contracts

1. Water Services Strategy

The Water Services Strategy is the key strategic planning document developed by Tiaki Wai, which sets out the short, medium and long term direction for Tiaki Wai. It includes infrastructure investment plans, proposed levels of service, performance measures, proposed water charges, and financial forecasting.

Tiaki Wai will generally consult with the community in relation to its proposed Water Services Strategy by:

- developing a draft Water Services Strategy and making this available to the public. This will be communicated across multiple channels, including the Tiaki Wai website, social media, news media and advertising;
- inviting feedback on the draft Water Services Strategy through the use of feedback forms, available both on-line and in hard copy;
- allowing feedback from the community over a period of generally no less than three weeks; and
- publishing insights received from community feedback at the time of publishing its final Water Services Strategy and decisions.

When consulting the community on its draft Water Services Strategy, Tiaki Wai will specifically seek community feedback on:

- any proposal to transfer ownership or control of a strategic water services asset from Tiaki Wai to another party;
- any proposal to transfer ownership or control of a strategic water services asset to Tiaki Wai from another party; and/ or

- any proposal to significantly change levels of service provided by Tiaki Wai.

Schedule 1 provides a definition of a significant change in level of service and **Schedule 2** provides definitions of what is considered a strategic water services asset.

2. Significant Tiaki Wai decisions on projects or proposals

Tiaki Wai will generally engage on new significant projects or proposals, in particular where they have not been consulted on through the Water Services Strategy process. Where existing planned significant projects or proposals are proposed to be amended, Tiaki Wai will consider the approach to consultation based on the significance of the proposed amendments.

3. Decisions relating to joint water service provider arrangements

If Tiaki Wai was to consider the delivery of water services through a joint water services arrangement, outside of the Tiaki Wai service delivery area, then it would consider whether and how to engage in line with this strategy.

4. Decisions on significant contracts

The legislation requires Tiaki Wai to determine whether any proposed contracts are significant, based on this policy. If a contract is assessed as significant, then Tiaki Wai must consult with its shareholders the public as required by sections 30 to 32 of the Local Government (Water Services) Act 2025.

In order to inform the assessment of whether any proposed contract is significant, the following criteria will be used in addition to the criteria and matters in **Schedule 1**:

- If the contract would create a public-private partnership;
- the extent to which the contract could risk Tiaki Wai's ability to meet its statutory obligations;
- The value of the contract, where Tiaki Wai has not previously consulted on the matter or project requiring the entering into of the contract:
 - for capital expenditure projects, where the forecast annual expenditure of the contract is greater than 10% of the total projected annual capital expenditure for Tiaki Wai
 - for operational expenditure contracts, where forecast the annual expenditure of the contract is greater than 30% of the total projected annual operational expenditure for Tiaki Wai

Where one or more of these criteria are met, or the proposed contract is assessed as significant against the criteria in **Schedule 1**, Tiaki Wai would need to consult based on the contract being a significant contract.

Any engagement on a significant contract would not include any matters that could impact on the ability to conduct a competitive commercial tender process.

Tiaki Wai will not generally consult on high value contracts where:

- the matter, proposal or project that the contract relates to has already been consulted on, i.e. through the Water Services Strategy; and
- the scale or outcome of the matter, proposal or project the contract will cover has not substantively changed.

In those instances, Tiaki Wai will instead inform the community that the contract has been awarded.

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Schedule 1: Determining significance

In relation to this policy, the term “significance” means the relative importance of the decision or proposal being considered. When assessing significance, Tiaki Wai will consider a number of criteria. These will be considered from the perspective of the entire service area covered by Tiaki Wai, while also taking into account local interests and impacts, recognising that Tiaki Wai’s decisions will not be relevant, or impact, the entire service area in all cases.

The criteria used to assess significance are:

Criteria	High significance	Medium significance	Low significance
<p>Consistency with existing policy or decision</p> <p><i>The extent to which a decision is consistent with, or a departure from, existing policy or decisions made by Tiaki Wai.</i></p>	<p>Decision is inconsistent or contrary to existing policy or plans made in the Water Services Strategy, or prior decisions made by Tiaki Wai, and will result in a significant change in outcomes being delivered.</p>	<p>Decision involves some variation from existing policy or plans, but will not result in a material change to the overall outcomes being delivered.</p>	<p>Decision aligns with existing policy or decisions, or is a reasonable consequence of Water Services Strategy or previous decisions</p>
<p>Impact on Mana Whenua interests</p> <p><i>The extent to which a decision relates to land or a body of water, takes into account the relationship of Māori and their culture and traditions with their ancestral land, water, sites, waahi tapu, valued flora and fauna, and other taoka.</i></p>	<p>Decision has a significant impact on te mana o te wai (the health and wellbeing of the water), freshwater quality, or could impact on a site / area of significance to Mana Whenua</p>	<p>Decision may relate to te mana o te wai (the health and wellbeing of the water), freshwater quality, or land of interest to Mana Whenua, but will not lead to any adverse effects or cultural consequences</p>	<p>Decision relates to projects, assets or plans with no link to matters of specific interest to mana whenua</p>

Criteria	High significance	Medium significance	Low significance
Community interest <i>The extent to which existing individuals, organisations, groups and sectors in the community are affected by Tiaki Wai's decision</i>	High level of interest likely across the entire Tiaki Wai service area	High level of interest for a particular location or community, but low to moderate interest elsewhere	Low level of interest, either at a wider service area or local frame of reference, or only likely to impact a small group (eg single street or household)
Level of service provided	Large, permanent change to level of service from that outlined in Water Services Strategy	Moderate effect or temporary impact on level of service outlined in Water Services Strategy	Decision has little effect on levels of service, or resourcing requirements
Transfer of ownership or control of strategic assets (see definitions of strategic assets below)	Note: Mandatory consultation required under section 28, Local Government (Water Services) Act 2025.		
Ability for decision to be reversed	Very difficult to reverse (eg. project already under contract)	Moderately difficult	Easy to reverse (eg policy amendment)
Financial impact on for water charges	Decision causes an uplift in annual water charges >5% above projections	NA	NA

Schedule 2: Strategic assets

A strategic asset is an asset that is needed to deliver on the strategic outcomes and priorities that are important to the current or future performance of Tiaki Wai.

Tiaki Wai considers the following assets, in their entirety, to be strategic assets:

- The drinking water network, including pump stations and reservoirs
- Drinking water treatment plants
- The wastewater network, including pump stations
- Wastewater treatment plants
- Piped stormwater network, including pump stations

Although Tiaki Wai owns and manages a number of assets as a single group (ie. the drinking water network), and considers it to be strategic asset, not all decisions made about a group of assets will be regarded as significant, nor do they affect the asset's strategic nature. For example, the wastewater network is strategic, but small parcels of land related to that network may not be, and the purchase or sale of such parcels of land are unlikely to amount to a significant decision. It is only where separate decisions could materially impact on the ability to deliver across the whole network that they will generally be significant decisions.

Schedule 3: Engagement

In general, the higher the significance of a proposal or decision, the more likely there will be a need for some form of community engagement. The principles set out above will inform Tiaki Wai's approach to engagement.

Forms of engagement

The engagement methods used will reflect the level of significance and respond to the diverse needs and requirements of communities.

The following table provides examples of different levels of engagement that may be appropriate, and the tools that may be used by Tiaki Wai.

Level of engagement	Inform (low to medium significance decisions)	Consult (Water Services Strategy and medium to high significance decisions)	Involve /collaborate (high significance decisions)
What does this level of engagement involve?	<p>Tiaki Wai provides balanced and objective information to help the public understand the issue requiring a decision, the alternatives, opportunities and solutions.</p> <p>Tiaki Wai regulatory reports on decisions made, and implementation of those decisions.</p>	Two-way communication where Tiaki Wai provides information and supporting analysis and seeks public feedback to inform decision-making.	Participatory process to help the public identify issues and views to ensure concerns and aspirations are consistently understood and considered when making decisions.
Types of issues we might use this level of engagement for	Local water restrictions, works that will disrupt traffic/ access, night works, general operational decisions, small or temporary level of service change	Proposed (draft) Water Services Strategy (other than for major projects); major infrastructure projects that impact communities for extended periods	Major projects that involve environmental, cultural, economic concerns, including material amendments or changes to existing major projects.

Tools Tiaki Wai might use for this level of engagement	Direct delivery e.g. information fliers/ letters; public notices in newspapers/ social media/ newsletters/via council channels. Website information.	Formal submissions through an online process.	Online information. Face to face engagement (e.g. targeted meetings, community stakeholder forums, public workshops, focus groups).
When the community can expect to be involved for this level of engagement	Usually after a decision is made, but in advance of the activity being undertaken.	Formal consultation in advance of adopting policy documents or plans.	Tiaki Wai will generally provide the community with opportunities to identify and canvass options, prior to initiating consultation ahead of decision-making.