

What is “Local Water Done Well”?

Local Water Done Well is the Government’s plan to address New Zealand’s long standing water infrastructure challenges. It replaces the previous government’s Three Water Reform proposals. It aims to:

- Tackle New Zealand’s long-standing water infrastructure challenges by enhancing the quality, sustainability, and affordability of water services nationwide;
- Introduce new economic and quality regulations to improve service standards;
- Ensure water services are future-proofed and financially sustainable; and

- Make water services delivery more effective and efficient.

While the reforms provide some local flexibility on how this is achieved, it puts a strong emphasis on compliance with central government rules and regulations.

A key feature of this change is to provide Councils with the flexibility to determine the most suitable structure and delivery method for delivering water services to their communities. Potential options include establishing a council-controlled organisation, or a multi-council owned water organisation.

Any proposed new water organisation would have the aim of enabling enhanced access to long-term borrowing for investment in water infrastructure which supports the growth and resilience of water services provided for consumers.

Three Waters



Drinking Water

Wastewater

Stormwater



Key Information

Will the legislation affect your drinking water, wastewater and stormwater services while we are deciding on a delivery model?

Council will continue to provide drinking water, wastewater and stormwater services to the community until the chosen model is implemented. This will likely be in July 2027. Until then, Council's focus is on ensuring residents continue to receive quality water services.



What does the legislation require councils to do?

The Local Government (Water Services Preliminary Arrangements) Act 2024 (the Act) established the Local Water Done Well framework and put in place preliminary arrangements for the new system.

The first bill enacted, February 2024, repealed the previous water legislation.

The second bill, enacted September 2024, outlines the Local Water Done Well framework including the requirements for councils to develop Water Service Delivery Plans. Councils must develop these by September 2025. The Act requires that:

- Water Service Delivery Plans outline future delivery arrangements, and that councils commit to an implementation plan.
- Water Service Delivery Plans include baseline information from councils about their water services

operations, assets, revenue, expenditure, pricing, and projected capital expenditure, as well as necessary financial arrangements, as a first step towards future economic regulation.

This Bill also streamlines consultation and decision-making processes for establishing Council Controlled Organisation (CCOs).

The third Bill, introduced December 2024, provides the enduring setting for water services. This includes:

- Arrangements for the new water services delivery system;
- A new economic regulation and consumer protection regime for water services; and
- Changes to the water regulatory framework and the water services regulator.

What are the options for delivering water services in the future?

The Water Services Delivery Plan must include a description of the proposed model or arrangements for delivering water services. Options available to councils are:

- Internal business unit or division
- Single Council-owned water organisation
- Multi-Council owned water organisation
- Mixed Council/Consumer trust owned
- Consumer Trust Owned

Councils are not required to consult on their draft or final Water Services Delivery Plan, however they are required to consult on their anticipated or proposed options for delivering water services.

What will the cost implications be?

The reality is that delivery of drinking water, wastewater disposal, and

stormwater management will be more expensive in the future no matter what options is chosen.

We have proposed significant investment in our Long Term Plan for projects and the cost for water services in the coming 9 years. This is for compliance with new standards, renewal of aging infrastructure (plant and reticulation) and renewals of wastewater treatment plants.

What has Council done so far?

To allow for integration of the Local Water Done Well legislation, Council has deferred its Long Term Plan to 2025. Consultation on the options for how drinking water, wastewater and stormwater will be managed under the Water Services Act will take place after the 2025 – 2034 Long Term Plan consultation in April.

Westland District Council has engaged Tokin and Taylor to support the Council

in developing a Water Services Delivery Plan that meets the Government's requirements under the Local Government (Water Services Preliminary Arrangements) Act 2024. This plan will be informed by our Activity Management Plans and the 30-year Infrastructure Strategy.

Early discussions have been held with neighboring councils, including Grey and Buller District Councils, to explore the possibility of a multi-owned water organisation.

Workshops have also been held with Councilors, outlining the strategic context, drivers and challenges relating to the future of water services delivery.

What is the next step?

Council has been working through the options to create a short list. Three options will be formally consulted on with the public from 16 May to 16 June.

How can you stay informed?

We will keep the community informed about this via our website.

We encourage you to keep up to date so you can make an informed decision and make a submission. We will be asking you which option you think is best for managing Westland's water services in the future.

- Check our website



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