

Taupō District Council

Notes of Council Workshop

Group	Council
Date	Thursday 14 March 2024, 11.30am – 12.15pm
Venue	Council Chamber
Topic	Local Water Done Well
Facilitated by	Acting General Manager Operations and Delivery (T Hale), and Programme Manager (J Walton)
Elected Members present	Cr Kevin Taylor (in the Chair), Cr Sandra Greenslade (via MS Teams), Cr Danny Loughlin (via MS Teams), Cr Anna Park, Cr Christine Rankin, Cr Rachel Shepherd (via MS Teams), Mayor David Trewavas (via MS Teams), Cr Yvonne Westerman
Officers present	Chief Executive (J Gardyne), Acting General Manager Operations and Delivery (T Hale), Acting Three Waters Manager (K Sears), Finance Manager (J Paenga) (via MS Teams), Policy Manager (N Carroll), Senior Project Manager PMO (T Delich), Asset Manager Stormwater (P Burt), Programme Manager (J Walton), Student Project Management (G Reynolds), Governance Quality Manager (S James), Committee Advisor (D Periam)
Public / media present	No public or media present
Documents either pre-circulated or tabled	Local Water Done Well PowerPoint Presentation (A3517244) – presented at the workshop to Elected Members on the day
Public or closed¹	<i>Public</i>

Notes²

The purpose of this workshop was to provide Elected Members with an update on Local Water Done Well (LWDW) and seek guidance on how much time should be spent on LWDW within the next 12 months.

What LWDW would look like was still unclear, however messaging from Central Government included:

- Water Quality i.e. ongoing compliance with Taumata Arowai regulations
- Investment Rules
- Regulation
- Financial Sustainability

¹ Workshops are public (and are always advertised whether public or closed), unless there is a good reason(s) for information to be withheld and there is no overriding public interest in holding the workshop in public. Withholding grounds set out in the Local Government Official Information and Meetings Act 1987 (LGOIMA) are a guide. If closed, cite relevant LGOIMA section.

² Workshops are not decision-making forums, therefore this document contains notes of key points discussed only, not decisions.

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There would be a greater Central Government oversight for water regulations. Council Controlled Organisation (CCO)/shared services was one option being considered by Central Government with suggestions to work with other councils. Meetings at regional level with other councils and iwi had occurred and discussions would continue about how best to work together. Taupō District Council (TDC) would conduct their own research to determine what is best for this district.

The Programme Manager spoke through the high-level roadmap showing the steps Central and Local Government would take and what this means the process looks like for TDC, including regional discussions with Waikato and Bay of Plenty regional councils.

The following points were clarified:

- The water services reform national transition unit (NTU) would be disestablished in May 2024.
- New legislation was expected to be in place mid-2025. The Government had signalled this would include a requirement for councils to submit water plans for Ministerial approval.
- No money from Central Government to support this change had been confirmed.
- Joint work with other councils was not about sharing assets but a focus on financial modelling.
- A CCO model would not provide the ability to move debt off Council's balance sheet, so may not be the best approach for TDC.
- Staff perceived that continuing to work on LWDW would not be a huge strain on TDC's resources.

Elected Members expressed the view that work on LWDW should continue as they did not want TDC to fall behind with what was required, it was better to be ahead and involved in conversations to ensure TDC was in a favourable position as LWDW progresses. They suggested having strong communication with the public via various channels to keep the public informed about what was happening within this space.