

**TAUPŌ DISTRICT COUNCIL
MINUTES OF THE TAUPŌ DISTRICT WATER SERVICES COMMITTEE MEETING
HELD AT THE COUNCIL CHAMBER, LEVEL 1, 67 HOROMĀTANGI STREET, TAUPŌ
ON THURSDAY, 9 APRIL 2026 AT 1.00PM**

PRESENT: Mr Brian Hanna (in the Chair), Cr Kevin Taylor, Cr Rachel Cameron, Cr Duncan Campbell, Cr Ngāhuia Foreman, Cr Sandra Greenslade, Cr Steve Manunui, Mayor John Funnell (from 1.42pm until 2.17pm)

IN ATTENDANCE: Cr Kylie Leonard, Cr Hope Woodward (via MS Teams)
Chief Executive (J Gardyne), General Manager Organisation Performance (S Matthews), Three Waters Manager (S Lealand), Iwi and Co Governance Manager (D Rameka via MS Teams), Communications Specialist (A Taylor), Iwi Engagement Partner (T W Walker via MS Teams), Asset Manager Stormwater (P Burt), Asset Manager Wastewater and SCADA (M Cordell), Asset Manager Water (T Swindells), Manager Asset Information (F Valentine), Programme Manager (J Walton), Governance Quality Manager (S James)

MEDIA AND PUBLIC: No members of the public or media present.

- Note: (i) This meeting was livestreamed and is available to view on Taupō District Council's YouTube channel.
- (ii) All present recited Taupō District Council's opening karakia.
- (iii) Mayor John Funnell entered the meeting at 1.42pm and left at 2.17pm, he was not present for resolutions TDWSC2026/01 and TDWSC2026/05.

1 KARAKIA

2 WHAKAPĀHA | APOLOGIES

TDWSC202604/01 RESOLUTION

Moved: Mr Brian Hanna
Seconded: Cr Rachel Cameron

That the apology received from Mayor John Funnell for lateness be accepted.

CARRIED

Note: All members present at the Taupō District Water Services Committee meeting voted in favour of resolution TDWSC202604/01 above.

3 NGĀ WHAKAPĀNGA TUKITUKI | CONFLICTS OF INTEREST

None

4 WHAKAMANATANGA O NGĀ MENETI | CONFIRMATION OF MINUTES

4.1 TAUPŌ DISTRICT WATER SERVICES COMMITTEE MEETING - 12 MARCH 2026

TDWSC202604/02 RESOLUTION

Moved: Cr Ngāhuia Foreman
Seconded: Cr Rachel Cameron

That the minutes of the Taupō District Water Services Committee meeting held on Thursday 12 March 2026 be approved and adopted as a true and correct record.

CARRIED

Note: All members present at the Taupō District Water Services Committee meeting voted in favour of resolution TDWSC202604/02 above.

5 NGĀ RIPOATA | REPORTS

5.1 PUBLIC FORUM

Item withdrawn

5.2 PRESENTATION FROM ASSET MANAGER WASTEWATER & SCADA

The Asset Manager Wastewater and SCADA presented a PowerPoint (A3924526) to the Committee.

The following points were explained:

- There were 11 treatment plants across the district with approximately 20,000 properties connected.
- Sources of wastewater included domestic, commercial, industrial/trade waste, and stormwater inflow and infiltration.
- Council had a trade waste bylaw and Co-Lab managed the consents, inspections and monitoring.
- Stormwater inflow and infiltration was the main source of overflows at the treatment plants.
- The main reasons for having a wastewater system was firstly for the health of people and ensuring wastewater is kept separate and secondly environmental.
- There was a nitrogen cap environment in place for Lake Taupō which was managed through variation five with Waikato Regional Council.
- Wastewater Environmental Performance Standards (WEPS) had 4 categories. The district did not have any discharges to water, Tūrangi was wetlands which had a special exemption under the standard and would continue to be assessed as they always have. All other wastewater plants discharge to land. Biosolids were managed by a contractor. The standard had formalised the national guidelines that were already in place.
- New requirement was the management of overflows and bypass. This included overflows from treatment plants and networks. It covered overflows that were uncontrolled such as manhole popping and controlled overflow.
- Wastewater standards were in place since December 2025. Officers understanding was that the Waikato River Vision and Strategy meant that Regional Council maybe able to set stricter consent conditions than the standards. We have been advised that the Natural Environment Bill which was at the drafting stage would mean that the standards would be more strictly applied, however there remained uncertainty until the legislation was finalised.
- Under the Resource Management (Duration of Consents) Amendment Bill, consents were able to be extended. Council had two consents which had expired and a renewal had been applied for, under this Bill Council no longer had expired consents.
- Under the Local Government (Water Services Act) 2025, Council must choose the most cost effective solution over the life of the wastewater assets.
- Council was preparing for the next Long-term Plan and were working to the assumption were that the wastewater standards would be applied and would be strict. Tūrangi was discharged to wetland so this would be a bit different.
- There was a risk that things could change before enactment of the Act.
- The Acacia Bay, Motuoapa and Whakamaru treatment plants would require minor upgrades. Kinloch had been programmed for an expansion in 2027 and this would be aligned with the new standards.
- The two schemes most impacted by the new standards would be Taupō significantly impacted and Mangakino. Mangakino had an expired consent which had now been extended to December 2027, it would have some uncertainty and would be on hold until the legislation passed.
- The Taupō scheme had 2 land disposal sites with Rakaunui Road being the original one and View Road was built in 2008.

- WEPS would have an impact on discharge of treated effluent once standards are applied.
- If the wastewater process did not change, based on forecasted growth models, there would be a shortfall.
- Seismic assessments had been completed at the Taupō Wastewater Treatment Plant and some of the structures do not meet the standards so some of the older parts of plant would need significant renewal work.
- There had been complaints from the north side of river complaining about the odour, officers did try to optimise the plant to keep odour at a minimum.
- Consultancy service had been contacted to look at the options for the Taupō Wastewater Treatment Plant to meet the WEPS and provide an indication of costs. All options were on the table currently and looking at what was technically achievable.

In answer to questions, the following was explained:

- Stormwater into the wastewater system was categorised in two ways, inflow and infiltration. Inflows were direct sources for example downpipes from roof go into the gully trap or a driveway sump into sewer lateral. This was largely a private property problem. Infiltration was a slow and low seepage into the network for example cracked pipes, however this was not a significant problem for Taupō District.
- Sources inflows could be illegal connections or flooding outside of homes raised above the gully trap, the water would find its way into the trap.
- Taupō District did not have any combined storm water and waste water systems.
- Inflow within Taupō was almost exclusively direct. In other parts of the community such as Tūrangi, there were some infiltration. This could be identified through flow monitoring, a rain event would cause a spike where infiltration was a longer and slower response over time.
- In some areas in Mangakino, Tūrangi and the Taupō industrial area, it was a significant issue. Officers had an inflow and infiltration programme that was beginning and there was a trial planned in Mangakino to address these issues.
- Work had begun to identify properties with an incorrect connection and one tool being used was smoke testing.
- Sludge from treatment plants went through a vermicomposting operation with 100% of biosolids going through the plant.
- Downer was the three waters maintenance contractor and have tools they could use. to see how blocked a pipe might be. Officers identify higher risk areas with known problems in the past, as reviewing the entire network every year was not possible.
- Overflows and bypasses consent requirement covered all areas so the Tūrangi network and treatment plant would be included.
- The Environment Bill was set to become enacted by the middle of 2026 and Council would gain a better understanding of the possible implications of the upper Waikato River plan change however officers were expecting standards to become stricter.
- The big challenge in the Taupō District was nitrogen. The standards for nitrogen had been set and Council knew where they sat against the standards.
- As the economic regulator going forward, the Commerce Commission would likely be responsible for monitoring whether councils were selecting the most cost-effective option for wastewater assets.
- Taupō District Council had three plants which discharge to land cut and carry bailage which were Taupō, Omori and Whareroa. Whareroa was a small scheme area with roughly 200 houses and 90% were empty most of the time. The rest of the plants were rapid infiltration trenches with both Mangakino and Kinloch having areas of drip irrigation within golf courses.
- Work on consents that had been extended had not completely stopped; officers continue to engage and progress the Tūrangi consent, Mangakino process was on hold pending more information.
- Council paid for biosolids processing. Council pays to drop it off and if we want to use it, we buy it back after processing. That was tendered roughly ten years ago and prior to this, it was going to landfill which was expensive. We do not pay to discharge the wastewater but we do pay to a contractor to harvest the bales, they are paid with the bales.
- There were two types of discharge to land, the first being rapid infiltration and the second bring low-rate where a crop was grown where Council must achieve a certain amount of nutrient removal from

- the crop to achieve top category.
- When accessing the land categories that determined consent conditions, various factors would be taken into account for example pumice vs clay, environmental factors, risk assessment. Low rate land disposal was a treatment process.
 - If you compare the Taupō Wastewater scheme it was not as good as modern nutrient removal plants with roughly 15-20g per cubic metre of nitrogen lost to the environment. Tūrangi was roughly 5-8 discharge, Kinloch less than five, and Acacia Bay six.
 - New technology options had been explored for nitrogen absorption of plants. Crops grown were ryegrass and lucerne grown on the periphery where we do not irrigate. Trials had been done with maize with similar results to the ryegrass, however there was a downside of maize requiring a downtime after harvesting which meant a loss of capacity while reestablishing the crop.
 - Council received a lot of advice from the contractor and it was in their interest to maximise production and get as much growth as they can.
 - One of the downsides of the land disposal process in this area was during winter, there was not much growth so this meant that nutrient uptake was lower, however in summer performance was better as there was more crop growth.
 - Every bale coming off the farm was counted and dry matter and nitrogen testing on a selection of the bales was undertaken.
 - The Taupō Wastewater Treatment Plant had received some for odour. There have been periods where with no complaints and periods with more complaints, some people can be more sensitive to others with smell.
 - Monitoring of odour was available.
 - Various options would be explored to close the gap of forecasted growth including buying more land and expanding harvest or more nutrient removal at treatment plant.
 - There would be national standards however within that, there would be site-specific assessments to be done, looking at different loading rates in Taupō pumice versus clay soils. Those differences were built into the standards. The WEPS were not a single standard, it was a set of standards and what applies to each site was based on the specific assessment for that site.
 - Before the standards came out, consents could be anywhere from one year to 35 years however with the new standards it would be 35 years.
 - Taupō North was being considered in the long-list options assessment due to concerns about the wastewater crossing the river. Due to growth we need a new plant now or more land and continue to expand the current plant.
 - Different treatment technologies have different footprints.

TDWSC202604/03 RESOLUTION

Moved: Cr Ngāhuia Foreman

Seconded: Cr Kevin Taylor

That the Taupō District Water Services Committee receives the information presented by Taupō District Council's Asset Manager Wastewater & SCADA.

CARRIED

Note: All members present at the Taupō District Water Services Committee meeting voted in favour of resolution TDWSC202604/03 above.

5.3 WATER SERVICES ASSET MANAGEMENT POLICY

The Programme Manager summarised the report and explained that one of the key findings was to review our asset management maturity with the Commerce Commission expecting continuous improvement.

In answer to questions, the following was explained:

- The policy sits at a high level and included a principle of cost effectiveness.
- The primary objective was sustainability for the system to work effectively while meeting the

- standards.
- Because Council was in-house for water services, the financial strategy would sit across Council and water services.
 - Officers would come back to the committee with Asset Management Plans for activity areas and this would delve deeper into things like measurables etc.
 - This policy would give direction to the staff and assist them in investigating options and consulting experts.

The following feedback from the Committee was noted:

- Explain the crossover with stormwater and other asset management practices.
- Define intermediate of maturity level.

TDWSC202604/04 RESOLUTION

Moved: Cr Sandra Greenslade

Seconded: Cr Rachel Cameron

That the Taupō District Water Services Committee recommends to Council adoption of the Three Waters Asset Management Policy.

CARRIED

Note: All members present at the Taupō District Water Services Committee meeting voted in favour of resolution TDWSC202604/04 above.

5.4 WATER SERVICES COMMITTEE PERFORMANCE REPORT

Mayor John Funnell left the meeting at this point (2.26pm).

The Programme Manager summarised the report and the following points were explained:

- The actions from the first Committee meeting were being worked on, including requests of a map with locations of sites and a roadmap for the year.
- Background on Council's water services would continue to be provided to the Committee, with presentations from Asset Manager Water and Compliance and Monitoring Lead – Three Waters.
- The Water Services Asset Management Policy was the first step and officers will come back with strategic approach.
- Water New Zealand provided a free one hour training course and would be of interest to the Committee, the link would be shared with members.

In answer to a question, it was explained that there was technology that could be used to manage arsenic levels to be within the maximum allowable value.

TDWSC202604/05 RESOLUTION

Moved: Cr Kevin Taylor

Seconded: Cr Steve Manunui

That the Taupō District Water Services Committee receives the attached Water Services Performance Report.

CARRIED

Note: All members present at the Taupō District Water Services Committee meeting voted in favour of resolution TDWSC202604/05 above.

6 NGĀ KŌRERO TŪMATAITI | CONFIDENTIAL BUSINESS

Nil

The meeting closed at 2.33pm.

The minutes of this meeting were confirmed at the Taupō District Water Services Committee Meeting held on 14 May 2026.

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CHAIRPERSON