



PAPAIOEA
PALMERSTON
NORTH
CITY

PALMERSTON NORTH CITY COUNCIL

AGENDA

SUSTAINABILITY COMMITTEE

9:00 AM, WEDNESDAY 18 JUNE 2025

COUNCIL CHAMBER, FIRST FLOOR
CIVIC ADMINISTRATION BUILDING
32 THE SQUARE, PALMERSTON NORTH

MEMBERS

Brent Barrett (Chair)
Kaydee Zabelin (Deputy Chair)
Grant Smith (The Mayor)

Roly Fitzgerald	Lorna Johnson
Patrick Handcock (ONZM)	Debi Marshall-Lobb
Leonie Hapeta	Karen Naylor

AGENDA ITEMS, IF NOT ATTACHED, CAN BE VIEWED AT

pncc.govt.nz | Civic Administration Building, 32 The Square
City Library | Ashhurst Community Library | Linton Library

Waid Crockett

Chief Executive | PALMERSTON NORTH CITY COUNCIL

Te Marae o Hine | 32 The Square
Private Bag 11034 | Palmerston North 4442 | New Zealand
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SUSTAINABILITY COMMITTEE MEETING

18 June 2025

ORDER OF BUSINESS

1. Karakia Timatanga

2. Apologies

3. Notification of Additional Items

Pursuant to Sections 46A(7) and 46A(7A) of the Local Government Official Information and Meetings Act 1987, to receive the Chairperson's explanation that specified item(s), which do not appear on the Agenda of this meeting and/or the meeting to be held with the public excluded, will be discussed.

Any additions in accordance with Section 46A(7) must be approved by resolution with an explanation as to why they cannot be delayed until a future meeting.

Any additions in accordance with Section 46A(7A) may be received or referred to a subsequent meeting for further discussion. No resolution, decision or recommendation can be made in respect of a minor item.

4. Declarations of Interest (if any)

Members are reminded of their duty to give a general notice of any interest of items to be considered on this agenda and the need to declare these interests.

5. Public Comment

To receive comments from members of the public on matters specified on this Agenda or, if time permits, on other Committee matters.

6. Presentation - Manawatū River Catchments Collective Page 7

7. Confirmation of Minutes Page 9

That the minutes of the Sustainability Committee meeting of 16 April 2025 Part I Public be confirmed as a true and correct record.

8. Wastewater Treatment Plant - Nature Calls; Quarterly Update Page 15

Memorandum, presented by Mike Monaghan, Manager Three Waters and Anna Lewis, Project Manager.

9. Draft Stormwater Strategy Page 21

Memorandum, presented by Hilary Webb, Planner and Jono Ferguson-Pye, Manager City Planning.

10. Update on opportunities for native species re-introductions in the Turitea Reserve (2025) Page 63

Memorandum, presented by David Watson, Senior Climate Change and Sustainability Advisor.

11. Options of new indicators to include in the 2026 Sustainability Review Page 67

Report, presented by Olivia Wix, Communications Manager and David Watson, Senior Climate Change and Sustainability Advisor.

12. Committee Work Schedule Page 75

13. Karakia Whakamutunga

14. Exclusion of Public

To be moved:

That the public be excluded from the following parts of the proceedings of this meeting listed in the table below.

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 this resolution are as follows:

General subject of each matter to be considered	Reason for passing this resolution in relation to each matter	Ground(s) under Section 48(1) for passing this resolution

This resolution is made in reliance on Section 48(1)(a) of the Local Government Official Information and Meetings Act 1987 and the particular interest or interests protected by Section 6 or Section 7 of that Act which would be prejudiced by the holding of the whole or the relevant part of the proceedings of the meeting in public as stated in the above table.

Also that the persons listed below be permitted to remain after the public has been excluded for the reasons stated.

[Add Third Parties], because of their knowledge and ability to assist the meeting in speaking to their report/s [or other matters as specified] and answering questions, noting that such person/s will be present at the meeting only for the items that relate to their respective report/s [or matters as specified].

PRESENTATION

TO: Sustainability Committee

MEETING DATE: 18 June 2025

TITLE: Presentation - Manawatū River Catchments Collective

RECOMMENDATION(S) TO SUSTAINABILITY COMMITTEE

- 1. That the Sustainability Committee receive the presentation for information.**
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SUMMARY

Fiona Burke, Catchment Coordinator and Christine Finnigan, Nguturoa Linton Catchment Leader will provide an overview of the Manawatu River Catchments Collective and the Nguturoa Linton Catchment Group.

ATTACHMENTS

Nil

PALMERSTON NORTH CITY COUNCIL

Minutes of the Sustainability Committee Meeting Part I Public, held in the Council Chamber, First Floor, Civic Administration Building, 32 The Square, Palmerston North on 16 April 2025, commencing at 9.03am

Members Present: Councillor Brent Barrett (in the Chair), The Mayor (Grant Smith) and Councillors Kaydee Zabelin, Patrick Handcock, Leonie Hapeta, Lorna Johnson and Karen Naylor.

Members Present: Councillors Roly Fitzgerald and Debi Marshall-Lobb.

Online:

Non Members: Councillors Mark Arnott, Rachel Bowen, Lew Findlay, Billy Meehan, Orphée Mickalad.

Councillor Rachel Bowen left the meeting at 9.52am during consideration of clause 7. She was not present for clauses 7 to 11 inclusive.

Councillor Vaughan Dennison entered the meeting at 11.53am during consideration of clause 9. He was not present for clauses 6 to 8 inclusive.

Councillor Lew Findlay left the meeting at 12.10pm after consideration of clause 9. He was not present for clauses 10 and 11.

Karakia Timatanga

Councillor Brent Barrett opened the meeting with karakia.

6-25 Local Water Done Well - Hearing of Submissions

Moved Brent Barrett, seconded Kaydee Zabelin.

The **COMMITTEE RESOLVED**

1. That the Committee receive the submissions and hear submissions from presenters who indicated their wish to be heard in support of their submission.
2. That the Committee note the Procedure for Hearing of Submissions, as described in the procedure sheet.

Clause 6-25 above was carried 14 votes to 0, the voting being as follows:

For:

The Mayor (Grant Smith) and Councillors Brent Barrett, Kaydee Zabelin, Roly

Fitzgerald, Patrick Handcock, Leonie Hapeta, Lorna Johnson, Debi Marshall-Lobb, Karen Naylor, Mark Arnott, Rachel Bowen, Lew Findlay, Billy Meehan and Orphée Mickalad.

The Committee considered submissions on Local Water Done Well with supporting oral statements including additional tabled material.

The following persons appeared before the Committee and made oral statements in support of their submission and replied to questions from Elected Members.

Chris Teo-Sherrell (186)

Chris spoke to his submission and made the following additional comments:

- Strong concerns with the CCO model due to the potential difficulty in controlling a CCO, noting it is not directly accountable to the public. Potential difficulties are likely to be greater when there is more than one council involved.
- Why not have independent CCOs making joint purchases each year?
- The prospect of saving money in the short term seems to too strongly affect the thinking of councils and central government; the proposal to form joint water CCOs is a good example of this.
- Palmerston North City Council has not charged enough for water services over the years, knowing that one day major upgrades to infrastructure would be required. We have to be willing to pay what it costs to do water well locally.
- Submission 180 demonstrates real knowledge of the system. Its point about the problems likely to arise from the disconnection between water and roading infrastructure that occurs when either is taken out of Council's direct control is one Council should pay attention to.

Christine Staples (196)

Christine spoke to her submission and made the following additional comments:

- With the Local Government Water Services Bill currently before Select Committee having not passed the final reading and uncertainty because options have yet to be negotiated and finalised, what are we actually consulting on?
- Lack of clarity on how a transfer of legal ownership of existing ratepayer funded water services assets would be made. Who actually owns the assets that ratepayers have paid for, for years?
- The community like to know where water comes from, it is important to them. There needs to be local input into the service. Options presented seem to decrease the public's say.
- Concerned about the increased costs that would be borne by councils and households. New separate entity would involve substantial set up costs and compliance with new and unattainable regulations under current conditions. Would create

more administrative debt. Iwi involvement would likely add to that as demands for further restrictions, agreements and consultants would be required which would add to ratepayer burden.

- Water provision has to be a priority over other spending.

Ian Staples (281)

Ian spoke to his submission and made the following additional comments:

- Not enough information in the public arena to make an informed decision. The Bill is still in the Committee stages of Parliament.
- Would like to see rates capped at 2-3% annual increase and Council would need to cut its non-essential spending to do so.
- The proposal should not cost this much. LGNZ should be at the water bill committee lobbying for reduction in standards so an affordable situation can be obtained.
- All councils should lobby Parliament that the new legislation needs to be written to get the job done in a sustainable way over a longer period of time.

Malcolm Frith (283)

Malcolm spoke to his submission and made the following additional comments:

- Real concern about affordability of water for the general public. He noted Papaioea Park bore water and public toilets and was concerned about future free access.
- We all need water. If we lose control of our water, it will cost us to the advantage of those who do not live here.
- Our water has been paid for by the ratepayers of this city to be our asset, over many generations. We have good water here, the city has invested a lot of money in making sure that we do, we have a sewerage system which works well.
- \$480M price tag to discharge clean water into our river is over the top. Could power a plant which would generate electricity which could then evaporate the water.
- He does not think it is the intention of the government to price us all out of existence; it is to make councils accountable to their residents as to how they spend residents' money.

John Bent (188)

John spoke to his submission, providing additional material (appended to these Minutes) and made no additional comments.

Janet Darragh (195)

Janet spoke to her submission and made the following additional comments:

- Water is a basic human need and people who struggle should

not be penalised or lose services. She hopes the water bill payment system will include flexibility and compassion for those who struggle and may get behind with their payments.

- Given Option 3 is not viable, Option 1 is preferred as it is more affordable and more local, with a smaller number of representatives involved.

Brett Hill (252)

Brett spoke to his submission and made the following additional comments:

- As many people are already struggling financially, they will be paying very close attention to what Elected Members prioritise spending on in the upcoming budget. Many people want Council spending only on absolute basics and anything else will have to wait.

7-25

Wastewater Treatment Plant - Nature Calls; Quarterly Update and Submission to Taumata Arowai on Draft Standards

Memorandum, presented by Mike Monaghan, Manager 3 Waters and Anna Lewis, Project Manager – Wastewater Discharge Consent Programme.

Officers advised the budget update to the end of March is \$640,865.

Councillor Rachel Bowen left the meeting at 9.52am.

Moved Brent Barrett, seconded Kaydee Zabelin.

The **COMMITTEE RESOLVED**

1. That the Committee receive the report titled 'Wastewater Treatment Plant – Nature Calls; Quarterly Update and Submission to Taumata Arowai on Draft Standards' presented to the Sustainability Committee on 16 April 2025.
2. That the Committee note the matters to be included in the submission on the Draft National Wastewater Standards.

Clause 7-25 above was carried 13 votes to 0, the voting being as follows:

For:

The Mayor (Grant Smith) and Councillors Brent Barrett, Kaydee Zabelin, Roly Fitzgerald, Patrick Handcock, Leonie Hapeta, Lorna Johnson, Debi Marshall-Lobb, Karen Naylor, Mark Arnott, Lew Findlay, Billy Meehan and Orphée Mickalad.

The meeting adjourned at 10.22am.

The meeting resumed at 10.42am.

8-25 **Local Water Done Well - Summary of Submissions**

Memorandum, presented by Olivia Wix, Manager Communications, Mike Monaghan, Manager 3 Waters and Julie Keane, Transition Manager.

Officers tabled updated graphs for the report, which are appended to these Minutes.

Moved Brent Barrett, seconded Kaydee Zabelin.

The **COMMITTEE RESOLVED**

1. That the Committee receive the memorandum titled 'Local Water Done Well – Summary of Submissions,' presented to the Sustainability Committee on 16 April 2025.
2. That the Committee note that deliberations will be referred to Council.

Clause 8-25 above was carried 13 votes to 0, the voting being as follows:

For:

The Mayor (Grant Smith) and Councillors Brent Barrett, Kaydee Zabelin, Roly Fitzgerald, Patrick Handcock, Leonie Hapeta, Lorna Johnson, Debi Marshall-Lobb, Karen Naylor, Mark Arnott, Lew Findlay, Billy Meehan and Orphée Mickalad.

9-25 **Annual Sector Lead Report: Environment Network Manawatū**

Memorandum, presented by Amy Viles, Community Development Advisor, Madz Batachei, ENM Coordinator and Jean Hera, Acting ENM Chairperson.

Councillor Vaughan Dennison entered the meeting at 11.53am.

Moved Brent Barrett, seconded Kaydee Zabelin.

The **COMMITTEE RESOLVED**

1. That the Committee receive the memorandum titled 'Annual Sector Lead Report: Environment Network Manawatū' presented to the Sustainability Committee on 16 April 2025.

Clause 9-25 above was carried 14 votes to 0, the voting being as follows:

For:

The Mayor (Grant Smith) and Councillors Brent Barrett, Kaydee Zabelin, Roly Fitzgerald, Patrick Handcock, Leonie Hapeta, Lorna Johnson, Debi Marshall-Lobb, Karen Naylor, Mark Arnott, Vaughan Dennison, Lew Findlay, Billy Meehan and Orphée Mickalad.

Councillor Lew Findlay left the meeting at 12.10pm.

10-25 Committee Work Schedule

Moved Brent Barrett, seconded Kaydee Zabelin.

The **COMMITTEE RESOLVED**

1. That the Sustainability Committee receive its Work Schedule dated April 2025.

Clause 10-25 above was carried 13 votes to 0, the voting being as follows:

For:

The Mayor (Grant Smith) and Councillors Brent Barrett, Kaydee Zabelin, Roly Fitzgerald, Patrick Handcock, Leonie Hapeta, Lorna Johnson, Debi Marshall-Lobb, Karen Naylor, Mark Arnott, Vaughan Dennison, Billy Meehan and Orphée Mickalad.

11-25 Confirmation of Minutes

Moved Brent Barrett, seconded Kaydee Zabelin.

The **COMMITTEE RESOLVED**

1. That the minutes of the Sustainability Committee meeting of 19 February 2025 Part I Public be confirmed as a true and correct record.

Clause 11-25 above was carried 11 votes to 0, with 2 abstentions, the voting being as follows:

For:

The Mayor (Grant Smith) and Councillors Brent Barrett, Kaydee Zabelin, Roly Fitzgerald, Patrick Handcock, Leonie Hapeta, Lorna Johnson, Debi Marshall-Lobb, Karen Naylor, Vaughan Dennison and Orphée Mickalad.

Abstained:

Councillors Mark Arnott and Billy Meehan.

Karakia Whakamutunga

Councillor Brent Barrett closed the meeting with karakia.

The meeting finished at 12.17pm.

Confirmed 18 June 2025

Chair

MEMORANDUM

TO: Sustainability Committee

MEETING DATE: 18 June 2025

TITLE: Wastewater Treatment Plant - Nature Calls; Quarterly Update

PRESENTED BY: Mike Monaghan, Manager Three Waters and Anna Lewis, Project Manager

APPROVED BY: Chris Dyhrberg, General Manager Infrastructure

RECOMMENDATION(S) TO SUSTAINABILITY COMMITTEE

1. That the Committee receive the report titled 'Wastewater Treatment Plant – Nature Calls; Quarterly Update' presented to the Sustainability Committee on 18 June 2025.
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1. ISSUE

- 1.1 The Nature Calls Project Team completed the concept design and development of the resource consent application to Horizons Regional Council (Horizons) in late 2022. This was the culmination of four years of work developing the Best Practicable Option (BPO), which comprises highly treated wastewater being discharged to the Manawatū River or to land.
- 1.2 Quarterly updates for the project were requested by Council. This report provides an update on the project for the period from December 2024 to April 2025.

2. WASTEWATER STANDARDS

- 2.1 The draft Council response to the national wastewater standards was presented to the Sustainability Committee on 16 April 2025 for Elected Member feedback.
- 2.2 The Committee provided valuable feedback on a few items, including strengthening the message on the value we place on our relationship with treaty partners. This feedback was incorporated into the response document.
- 2.3 The Council response was submitted to Taumata Arowai in April 2025.
- 2.4 Council Officers met with Taumata Arowai staff on 23 May 2025 to discuss the implication of the draft standards on the Nature Calls project in person, as a follow up to the content in the response document.

3. BEST PRACTICABLE OPTION (BPO) UPDATE

- 3.1 The project team revisited the long list of BPO options after the release of the draft standards. These were assessed against the project objectives, cost and draft standards and presented to Elected Members at the 7 May Council meeting.
- 3.2 At the same meeting the report titled 'Consideration of options to take forward for Nature Calls' was presented to Council. The decisions made are detailed below, including which options Council will not commit further technical resource to.
- 3.3 Council resolved to not progress further technical development on five options as they were either exceeding the cost threshold; were misaligned with treaty party values and/or non-compliant with the draft wastewater standards. It was decided:
- That Council direct the Chief Executive to discard Option I as not a practicable option for Nature Calls because of cost.
 - That Council direct the Chief Executive to discard Option H as not a practicable option for Nature Calls because of cost and compliance.
 - That Council direct the Chief Executive to discard Option G as not a practicable option for Nature Calls because of cost and compliance.
 - That Council direct the Chief Executive to discard Option F as not a practicable option for Nature Calls because of cost and likelihood of Treaty Partner objections.
 - That Council direct the Chief Executive to discard Option D as not a practicable option for Nature Calls because of cost.
- 3.4 The remaining options are:
- Option A – Discharge to River at Opiki
 - Option B1 – Discharge to River at Totara Road
 - Option B2 – Discharge to River at Totara Road + Adaptive Management
 - Option E – Discharge to River at Totara/Opiki and Discharge to Land (soil moisture dependent, >75% ADWF)
- 3.5 The project team have established the scope for the next stage of technical work, up to the estimated release date for the wastewater standards. The work is on a 'low regrets' basis and balances progressing some work while being mindful of the current uncertainties of the standards development. This work is now underway.

4. HORIZONS REGIONAL COUNCIL

4.1 The next quarterly update with Horizons will be held in person to update them on the recent Council decisions and our estimated timeframe to reach a BPO. This meeting will be held on 17 June 2025.

5. IWI ENGAGEMENT

5.1 In March 2025 Rangitāne leadership and Palmerston North City Council Officers visited the Cambridge Wastewater Treatment Plant (WWTP) to discuss the in-construction treatment plant and the approach to working with treaty partners while integrating cultural concerns. Cambridge WWTP has a river discharge via land passage.

5.2 The updated programme discussed with Elected Members will allow for more robust engagement with iwi on options both prior to shortlisting, and selection.

5.3 Regular meetings continue with representatives from Rangitāne, Te Tūmatakahuki and Ngāti Whakātere.

5.4 Council senior leadership and Iwi leadership from Rangitāne, Ngāti Whakātere, and Te Tūmatakahuki have a meeting in June 2025 to discuss the Nature Calls project.

6. BIOSOLIDS STRATEGY

6.1 Design activities are underway for the Awapuni southern slopes development. A programme has been included in the 2025/26 Annual Plan to facilitate this work.

7. ORGANISATIONAL STRUCTURE

7.1 Procurement of construction expert advisor for the TAG (Technical Advisory Group) is underway.

8. RISK

8.1 The following top risks have been identified and are being actively managed by the project team.

Risk	Risk Level	Mitigations	Residual Risk
<p>Long-Term Plan budget The project may fail to secure funding or be unable to proceed due to exceeding the Long-Term Plan FY24-34 budget allocation.</p>	<p>■ VERY HIGH</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Introduce fatal flaw screening on estimated option cost. • Adjustment of weighting of BPO selection considered 	<p>■ HIGH</p>

		<p>with input from EMs.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Determine P90 costs for options before shortlisting. 	
<p>Ratepayer affordability The project may face public opposition, delays, or inability to proceed due to ratepayers being unable to afford the proposed scheme. This could lead to reputational damage for the Council.</p>	<p>■ VERY HIGH</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Council has set Long-Term Plan budget cap, with instructions to reduce further if possible. Council decision not to progress work on several more expensive options. Options will go out to public engagement before final BPO selection. 	<p>■ HIGH</p>
<p>Iwi relationships The project risks damaging relationships with Iwi and breaching obligations under the Treaty of Waitangi, potentially leading to reputational harm and project disruptions.</p>	<p>■ HIGH</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Iwi represented on Project Oversight Committee. Iwi involvement and consultation in operational project activities to be determined by Council and Iwi agreement. 	<p>■ HIGH</p>
<p>National Wastewater Standards Additional cost and time incurred due to standards release. Standards could affect how the project can be consented and require high levels of rework to options.</p>	<p>■ HIGH</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Continuing with low regrets works only. Determine on standards release if delays will be required to reach required level of information for decisions. 	<p>■ MEDIUM</p>
<p>Programme Delays Additional costs (overhead and project management) may be incurred due to schedule slippages. Some slippages are outside the control of the project team.</p>	<p>■ HIGH</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Planning possible programme scenarios. Conversations with governance about available slots this year. Booked in relevant Council Meetings. 	<p>■ MEDIUM</p>

9. BUDGET

9.1 At the end of April 2025, a total of \$794,935 has been spent YTD from the revised \$1.55M Nature Calls budget for 2024/25.

10. COMPLIANCE AND ADMINISTRATION

Does the Committee have delegated authority to decide?	Yes
Are the decisions significant?	No
If they are significant do they affect land or a body of water?	No
Can this decision only be made through a 10 Year Plan?	No
Does this decision require consultation through the Special Consultative procedure?	No
Is there funding in the current Annual Plan for these objectives?	Yes
Are the recommendations inconsistent with any of Council's policies or plans?	Yes
The recommendations contribute to: Whāinga 4: He tāone toitū, he tāone manawaroa Goal 4: A sustainable and resilient city	
The recommendations contribute to this plan: 13. Mahere wai 13. Water Plan The objective is: Lodge resource consent application for future discharge of Wastewater Treatment Plant.	
Contribution to strategic direction and to social, economic, environmental and cultural well-being	Lodging for resource consent allows Council to continue to provide its wastewater services and allows for future proofing the city.

ATTACHMENTS

Nil

MEMORANDUM

TO: Sustainability Committee

MEETING DATE: 18 June 2025

TITLE: Draft Stormwater Strategy

PRESENTED BY: Hilary Webb, Planner and Jono Ferguson-Pye, Manager City Planning

APPROVED BY: David Murphy, General Manager Strategic Planning

RECOMMENDATION(S) TO SUSTAINABILITY COMMITTEE

1. That the Committee approve the Draft Stormwater Strategy for public consultation.
2. That the Committee adopt either Option 1 or 2 as the preferred timeframe for public consultation and deliberations on the Draft Stormwater Strategy.

SUMMARY OF OPTIONS ANALYSIS

<p>Problem or Opportunity</p>	<p>The Water Plan and Future Development Strategy adopted as part of the 2024 Long Term Plan included an action to develop a Stormwater Strategy.</p> <p>A draft Stormwater Strategy has been co-developed with Rangitāne o Manawatū following engagement with stakeholders and a Council workshop.</p> <p>The Committee now need to consider the Draft Stormwater Strategy and the preferred timeframe for public consultation and deliberations.</p>
<p>OPTION 1:</p>	<p>Pre-election public consultation and deliberations on the Draft Stormwater Strategy</p>
<p>Community Views</p>	<p>Will be sought through the public consultation process. Further direct engagement with key stakeholders can occur alongside formal public consultation.</p>
<p>Benefits</p>	<p>Creates certainty by ensuring timely finalisation of the strategy in the current term of Council.</p> <p>Avoids creation of a disjointed public consultation, hearings, deliberations and decision-making process.</p> <p>Ensures alignment with cycle of growth policy and planning, starting with Future Development Strategy Review in</p>

	September 2025.
Risks	Could be perceived as limiting the public's ability to reasonably present their views on the strategy and for these to be robustly considered by Elected Members.
Financial	Within existing Long-Term Plan budgets.
OPTION 2:	Pre-election public consultation and post-election deliberations on the Draft Stormwater Strategy
Community Views	Will be sought through suggested public consultation process. Further direct engagement with key stakeholders can occur alongside formal public consultation.
Benefits	Enables more time for direct engagement with stakeholders alongside public consultation and more time for Officers and Elected Members to consider submissions.
Risks	Additional time and uncertainty resulting from a potentially lengthy and disjointed public consultation, hearings, deliberations and decision-making process. Delay to interrelated and dependant policy planning work.
Financial	Within existing Long-Term Plan budgets.
OPTION 3:	Do not adopt the Draft Stormwater Strategy
Community Views	Not required.
Benefits	Avoids the additional time/cost associated with further public consultation.
Risks	Exposes the Council to a high level of relationship and reputational risk. Fails to provide high-level, integrated direction on how stormwater is managed in the city. Council has previously resolved to prepare a Stormwater Strategy as part of the 2024 Long-Term Plan process.
Financial	None.
OPTION 4:	Do not adopt the Draft Stormwater Strategy at this time and direct that further engagement occurs with key stakeholders, Rangitāne o Manawatū and Elected Members
Community views	Additional community views sought via further engagement

	prior to considering the Draft Stormwater Strategy.
Benefits	Provides more time for key stakeholders, Rangitāne o Manawatū and Elected Members to shape the Draft Stormwater Strategy prior to public consultation.
Risks	The further engagement is likely to reinforce the feedback already received, i.e. we have already obtained the views of key stakeholders, Rangitāne o Manawatū and Elected Members.
Financial	Additional time and costs prior to public consultation.

RATIONALE FOR THE RECOMMENDATIONS

1. OVERVIEW

- 1.1 As previously signalled the Council is currently co-developing with Rangitāne o Manawatū a city-wide Stormwater Strategy.
- 1.2 A copy of the Draft Stormwater Strategy (the strategy) is included as Attachment 1.
- 1.3 The intended purpose of the strategy is to provide high-level, integrated direction on how the city and its residents can live and grow with stormwater in future. Additionally, it will usefully serve to inform and support future Council decision-making relating to the Future Development Strategy, Long-Term Plan, District Plan, Bylaws, and Asset Management Plans.
- 1.4 The strategy identifies the stormwater challenges confronting the city and sets out a series of strategic outcomes sought in response to these challenges. It also outlines a number of supporting implementation principles and priorities to guide how these will be achieved.
- 1.5 A workshop was held on 16 April 2025 to update Elected Members on progress and provide input on the strategy.

2. BACKGROUND

- 2.1 As outlined at the April workshop, the strategy has been developed in partnership with Rangitāne o Manawatū, with supporting input from a range of external parties and sector interests including Horizons Regional Council, central government agencies (KiwiRail, Waka Kotahi, Ministry of Education, Kainga Ora), the Greater Bunnythorpe Committee, OraKonnnect, representatives of the development community and representatives of the environment and sustainability community (Green Corridors, Forest & Bird, Environment Network Manawatu and Massey University).

2.2 Although the general nature and proposed direction of travel of the strategy was well received by Elected Members at the workshop, mixed views were expressed regarding the potential pace of further consultation with the public on the proposal. To this end, two public consultation options have been provided (Option 1 and Option 2) and an option to undertake further engagement with key stakeholders, Rangitāne o Manawatū and Elected Members (Option 4).

3. SUMMARY OF STRATEGIC APPROACH

3.1 The strategy identifies the following stormwater challenges:

- Stormwater flood risk
- Inequity of risk
- Changes to natural flows
- Loss of freshwater biodiversity
- Degradation of the mauri of water
- Climate change
- Limited understanding
- Need for better collaboration and alignment
- Limited resources
- Obtaining access for maintenance
- Legislative change
- Stormwater constrains the way we plan for growth

3.2 The strategy identifies ten stormwater management areas:

- Taonui
- Kākātangiata
- Kawau
- Hokowhitu
- Whakarongo
- Te Matai
- Otangaki
- Tararua
- Turitea
- Te Kairanga

3.3 While all the city-level challenges are largely present in all ten Stormwater Management Areas, some of these challenges are more complex in some areas relative to others. As a result, it is likely that management will need to be

tailored by area, with some areas such as Kawau, Taonui, Hokowhitu, Otangaki, and Whakarongo requiring bespoke implementation plans because of the demand for development by growing in, growing up, and growing out.

3.4 The strategy also includes a set of aspirational outcomes (section 3.2) and principles (section 3.3), and culminates with the following four priorities for action (section 4.1):

1. Investigations, increasing our knowledge through:

- Updating the stormwater model to better inform decision-making.
- Using the updated stormwater model to review the extent of increased density against overland flow paths in existing neighbourhoods.
- Collecting, storing, and sharing monitoring data to support future stormwater models.
- A detailed assessment of Council's consenting obligations for the stormwater network.
- A stormwater risk assessment using upgraded models to inform future growth.
- A gap analysis to understand levels of service in the Stormwater Asset Management Plan.

2. Building stormwater capability through:

- Choosing a stormwater champion within Council to drive and co-ordinate work across Council functions.
- Building a team to implement the Strategy.
- Careful consideration of resourcing for stormwater management as part of the next Long-Term Plan process and establishment of the Local Water Done Well entity.
- Ensuring that Rangitāne o Manawatū are represented in stormwater governance, management, and operations.
- Monitoring and reviewing the Strategy to be current and relevant

3. Improving stormwater outcomes by:

- Developing stormwater plans for priority Stormwater Management Areas, i.e., Kawau and Taonui in the next three years, Hokowhitu, Otangaki and Whakarongo within 10 years.
- Utilise blue and green infrastructure for nature-based solutions where this is possible.

- Restore ecosystems where possible and practicable through restoration and rehabilitation.
- Prioritising avoidance over stormwater flood mitigation for new development.
- Carrying out flood risk assessments at rezoning stage for new developments.
- Ensuring that levels of service for flood protection structures are in place prior to new development.
- Securing a global consent for the stormwater network.
- Resourcing enforcement to ensure compliance with rules and regulations that are designed to improve stormwater outcomes.
- Making changes to the District Plan on stormwater as recommended by investigations such as flood risk assessments.

4. Working together with partner agencies through:

- A working group of Rangitāne o Manawatū, Council, and Horizons Regional Council.
- Working with Horizons Regional Council, Manawatū District Council, and landowners in upper catchments to identify funding sources for riparian retirement and other measures to mitigate stormwater flows into the city.
- Practical working service agreements with private owners for stormwater assets on private land.
- Community education and communication about stormwater,
- Working with Rangitāne o Manawatū to name un-named streams, tributaries, and stormwater reserves.
- Working with Rangitāne o Manawatū to grow capacity to be involved in stormwater management.
- Help community groups and volunteers to share riparian revegetation and freshwater ecosystem knowledge.

4. DESCRIPTION AND ANALYSIS OF OPTIONS

4.1 In response to this request four high level options have been identified:

- Option 1: Pre-election public consultation and deliberations on the Draft Stormwater Strategy.
- Option 2: Pre-election public consultation and post-election deliberations on the Draft Stormwater Strategy.
- Option 3: Do not adopt the Draft Stormwater Strategy.

- Option 4: Do not adopt the Draft Stormwater Strategy at this time and direct that further engagement occurs with key stakeholders and Elected Members.

4.2 Each of these options are described in more detail and assessed below:

Option	Description	Benefits/Risks
Option 1	This option involves implementation of a public consultation process followed by deliberations and adoption of the draft strategy prior to the local government elections in October 2025.	<p>Enables finalisation of the strategy in the current term of Council.</p> <p>Provides a timely outcome regarding high level direction on stormwater management in the city.</p> <p>Reduces the potential risk of the strategy being relitigated part way through the consultation and adoption process if there are significant changes in the composition of the incoming Council.</p> <p>Could be perceived as limiting the public's ability to reasonably present their views on the proposal and the time available to Council to robustly consider these views in arriving at a decision on the strategy.</p> <p>Alignment with growth policy and planning cycles.</p>
Option 2	This option is a variation on Option 1 and involves public consultation on the draft strategy in the lead up to the local government elections, with deliberations and adoption of the strategy deferred until after the elections (i.e. late 2025/early 2026).	<p>Enables more time for direct engagement with stakeholders alongside public consultation and more time for Officers and Elected Members to consider submissions.</p> <p>Creates uncertainty and a potentially disjointed and lengthy public consultation and deliberations and adoption process, with the potential risk of the strategy being relitigated if there are significant changes in the composition of the incoming</p>

		Council.
Option 3	This option involves no further need for public consultation due to Council deciding not to proceed with the draft strategy and placing continued reliance on existing Council plans, policies and strategies to manage stormwater (e.g. District Plan, Asset Management Plans).	<p>Avoids the additional time/cost associated with further public consultation.</p> <p>Exposes the Council to a high level of relationship and reputational risk, particularly in relation to Rangitāne o Manawatū.</p> <p>Fails to provide high-level, integrated direction on how stormwater is managed in the city, with consequences arising which unintentionally impact on property owners and Council operations.</p>
Option 4	Do not adopt the Draft Stormwater Strategy at this time and direct that further engagement occurs with key stakeholders, Rangitāne o Manawatū and Elected Members.	<p>Additional community views sought via further engagement prior to considering the Draft Stormwater Strategy.</p> <p>Provides more time for key stakeholders, Rangitāne o Manawatū and Elected Members to shape the Draft Stormwater Strategy prior to public consultation.</p> <p>The further engagement is likely to reinforce the feedback already received, i.e. we already know the views of key stakeholders and Rangitāne o Manawatū.</p> <p>Additional time and costs prior to public consultation.</p>

5. NEXT ACTIONS

- 5.1 Following adoption of a preferred option by the Committee a tailored consultation plan will be developed by Council Officers.

6. COMPLIANCE AND ADMINISTRATION

Does the Committee have delegated authority to decide?	Yes
Are the decisions significant?	No
If they are significant do they affect land or a body of water?	No
Can this decision only be made through a 10 Year Plan?	No
Does this decision require consultation through the Special Consultative procedure?	No
Is there funding in the current Annual Plan for these objectives?	No
Are the recommendations inconsistent with any of Council's policies or plans?	No
<p>The recommendations contribute to: Whāinga 1: He tāone auaha, he tāone tiputipu Goal 1: An innovative and growing city</p> <p>Whāinga 3: He hapori tūhonohono, he hapori haumarū Goal 3: A connected and safe community</p> <p>Whāinga 4: He tāone toitū, he tāone manawaroa Goal 4: A sustainable and resilient city Giving effect to Te Patuinga me Rangitāne o Manwatū Partnership with Rangitāne o Manwatū</p>	
<p>The recommendations contribute to this plan:</p> <p>13. Mahere wai</p> <p>14. Governance and Active Citizenship Plan</p> <p>For Mahere Wai Water Plan, the objective is: We want our city to be safe from flooding during storm events.</p> <p>For Mahere Mana Urungi, Kirirautanga Hihiri Governance & Active Citizenship Plan, the objective is: We want to actively engage with the community to enable well-informed, transparent, and joined-up decisions. We want to work in partnership with Rangitāne o Manawatū.</p> <p>Mahere Wai Water Plan includes a one-off action to develop a Stormwater Strategy.</p>	
Contribution to strategic direction and to social, economic, environmental and cultural well-being	<p>Stormwater affects all four aspects of well-being, now and in the future. Stormwater also interacts with almost all of Council functions.</p> <p>The recommendation of this memo contributes to fulfilling the following objectives:</p> <p>Mahere Wai Water Plan has the new or one-off action for Years 1 & 2 to develop a Stormwater Strategy, to keep our city safe from flooding during storm events.</p> <p>Mahere Mana Urungi, Kirirautanga Hihiri – the</p>

	<p>direction by Council for further public consultation will enable well-informed, transparent, and joined-up decisions informed by active engagement with our communities. The Stormwater Strategy is being co-developed in partnership with Rangitāne o Manawatū.</p>
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ATTACHMENTS

1. Draft Stormwater Strategy [↓](#) 



Papaioea Palmerston North City

Draft Stormwater Strategy

2025 – 2035

Draft for consultation

This document was prepared by Palmerston North City Council, City Planning Division.

	Name	Signature	Date
Prepared by:	Kāhu Environmental Ltd		28 April 2025
Reviewed by:	Hilary Webb		11 June 2025
Approved for Issue by:			

Version No.	Reason for Amendment	Date
A	WORKING DRAFT revised	28 April 2025
B	DRAFT FOR CONSULTATION	11 June 2025
C	FINAL VERSION FOR ADOPTION	

PNCC Reference No:	OASIS: xxxxxx
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Executive Summary

Stormwater is one of Palmerston North's most significant challenges, and this challenge will increase with climate change. It is time to think about a shift to a more adaptive way of living and growing with stormwater.

Stormwater brings flood risk for people and properties, and different parts of the city are affected more than others. Poorly managed stormwater affects freshwater ecosystems and degrades the mauri or life force of the water. Stormwater also restricts how we provide for and manage growth. Growing out through greenfield development is expensive but offers opportunities for best practice, nature-based and future proofed stormwater systems such as detention ponds and stormwater corridors. Growing in and growing up through intensification in the existing urban areas is more complicated and will require considerable investment in network upgrades and interventions for us to live with stormwater in these places.

Stormwater competes with other priorities for funding, so resources are currently limited for maintenance, and there are gaps in our knowledge of the stormwater network and levels of service, which affects our ability to prepare for a more challenging future. We need better collaboration and alignment with Horizons Regional Council, tangata whenua, neighbouring councils, and our communities to manage stormwater within and beyond our boundaries. Added to these challenges, central government reform to resource management and water infrastructure legislation will mean changes to the way the we manage stormwater in the near future.

Co-developed with Rangitāne o Manawatū, the DRAFT Stormwater Strategy will guide, integrate, and inform action to manage stormwater across Council functions and responsibilities, and with partners who are responsible for stormwater that affects the city. Stormwater in Palmerston North is geographically and technically complex, so we have chosen a city-level approach, complemented by ten Stormwater Management Areas. We have identified four priorities for action:

- 1) Investigations to improve our knowledge
- 2) Building and resourcing stormwater capability
- 3) Improving stormwater outcomes
- 4) Working together with our partners.

Without careful planning, we are at risk of exacerbating the flooding to which our low-lying city is prone. We need to shift from our traditional way of managing stormwater to a more adaptive approach, more like the sponge cities of Europe and Asia that draw on a toolbox of nature-based techniques that can support sustainable growth, reduce flood risk, build community resilience, and improve the health of water.

The Strategy was developed during the Local Water Done Well reform which includes structural changes to how stormwater assets are currently owned and managed. The

Strategy was developed with the intention to inform the planning and delivery of any subsequent changes that might arise from the reforms.

The Strategy will be monitored annually against the outcomes and actions and reviewed three-yearly to ensure that it remains relevant and effective.

We welcome your feedback on this DRAFT version of the Strategy.

1 The stormwater problem for Palmerston North

1.1 Te Papaioea Palmerston North is prone to flooding

1.1.1 Then and now and the future

The landscape, or waterscape if we emphasise water, of Te Papaioea Palmerston North was once a dynamic and intricate network of natural waterways, wetlands, and river floodplains. The Manawatū River meandered widely across the landscape, shaping fertile lowlands and forming lagoons and oxbow lakes as it moved. Its many tributaries, including the Mangaone, Kawau, Raukawakawa (Ashhurst), Turitea and Kahuterawa Streams, wove through dense podocarp forests, feeding into extensive wetlands that retained and filtered and absorbed flood waters. These wetlands, streams and their margins - once teeming with harakeke, raupō, tuna, and rich birdlife - provided vital resources for Rangitāne o Manawatū, supporting mahinga kai, weaving, and other cultural practices. Seasonal flooding replenished the soil and nurtured a thriving ecosystem. The plants, animals, and people living here were adapted to the ebbs and flows of the water cycle, as water moved and changed.

This landscape has been modified to enable agriculture, the city of Palmerston North and villages of Ashhurst, Bunnythorpe, Linton, and Longburn, with interlinking road, rail, and air networks. These changes have enabled our communities to evolve into the vibrant and innovative places of today, where our people, businesses, and organisations thrive. However, these changes mean that our waterways and land have lost much of their ability to respond naturally to stormwater. The Kawau, Awatea, and Mangaone Streams and the old oxbow lagoons receive stormwater much faster than they used to when forests captured and slowed down this water. The stormwater they receive may carry traces of microbes, hydrocarbons, chemicals, sediments, and other contaminants that have been washed off roads, buildings and other surfaces.

We have built parts of our city, villages, and infrastructure where stormwater would once have naturally ponded and flowed, and we have built in a way that generates more water than the drains and streams can carry during heavy rain. Figures 1 and 2 show how parts of the old waterscape often reappear when it rains heavily and old watercourses flood with stormwater.

One of Palmerston North's most significant challenges is managing stormwater, and this challenge will increase with climate change. Without careful planning for growth, we are at risk of exacerbating the flooding to which our low-lying city is prone. This Strategy seeks to identify the challenges that stormwater brings for the city, and to develop high-level responses that can support effective stormwater management, reduce disaster risk, improve the health of water, and inform planning for sustainable growth.

Figure 1: One in 50-year flood event modelled water depths (Map 26 in the Future Development Strategy 2024) shows how parts of the pre-existing waterscape reappear in heavy rain when lagoons, oxbows, and former water courses fill with stormwater. The PNCC boundary is shown as a dashed red line.

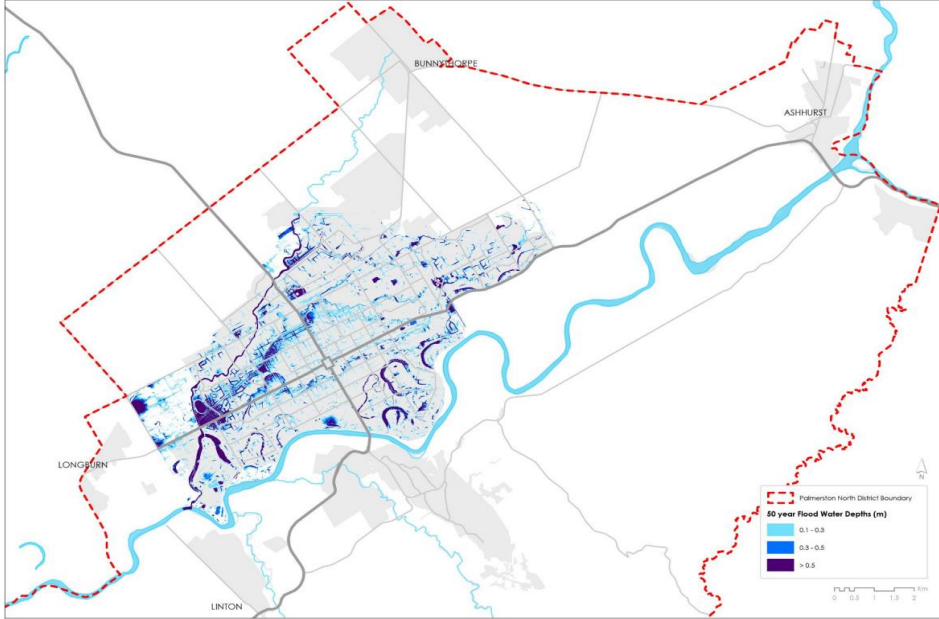
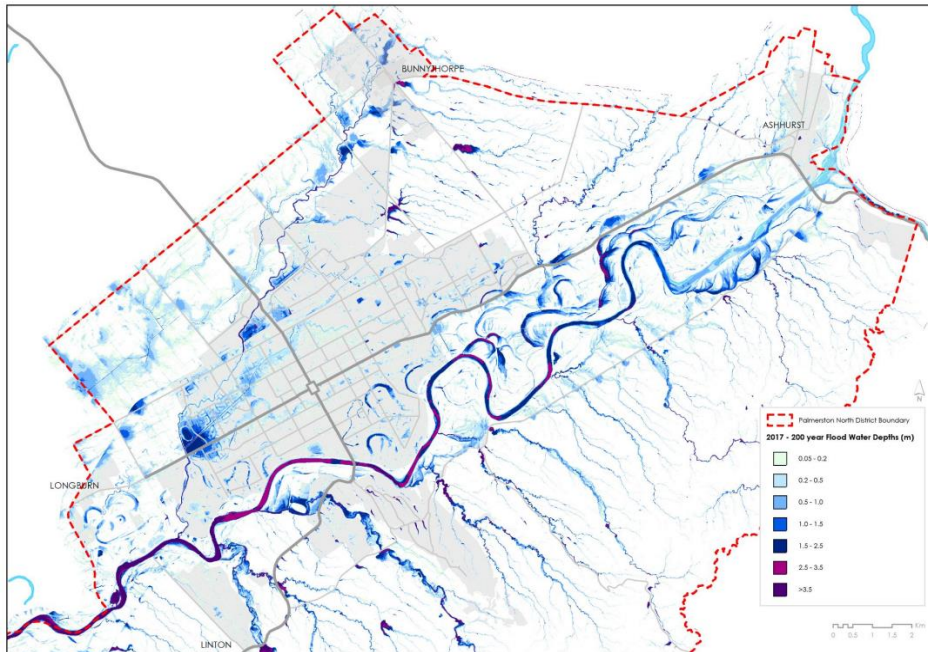


Figure 2: One in 200-year flood event modelled water depths (Map 28 in the Future Development Strategy 2024) shows the risk to people and property from a significant storm event. The PNCC boundary is shown as a dashed red line.



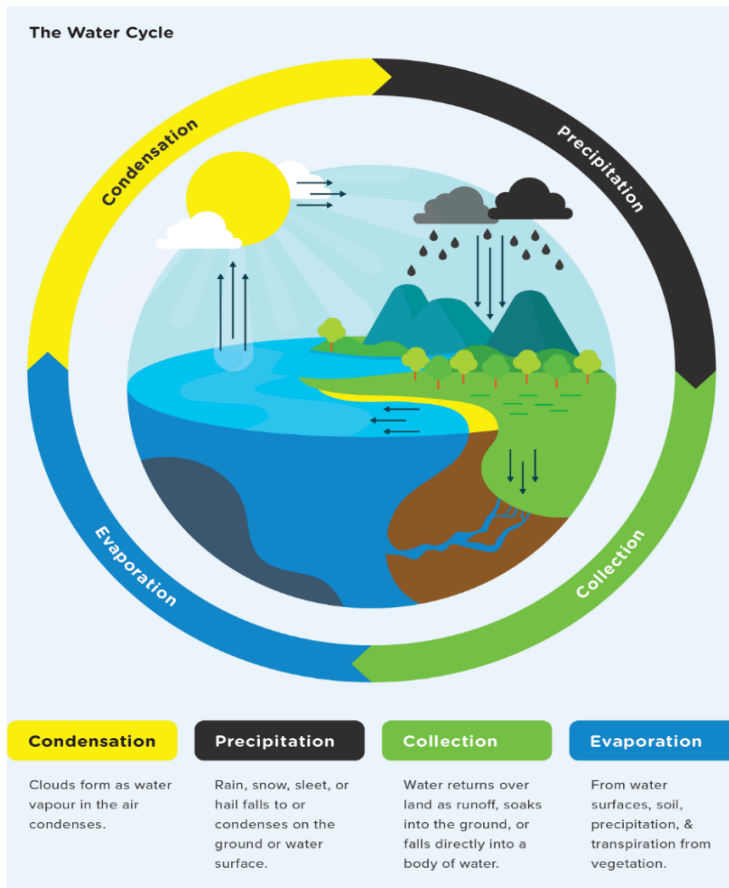
Map Note: These maps are based on a high-level citywide model and further assessment may be necessary. More detailed analysis by stormwater experts may be needed to confirm site-specific ponding risk or rezoning land for urban use. The modelled depths should not be relied on for individual lot-scale decisions. Particular site-specific features (for instance culverts and open drains) may not be presented in the model accurately. Consultation with the Palmerston North City Council is required to advise on the appropriateness of the model for certain projects.

1.1.2 Stormwater as part of the water cycle

Stormwater is the water that runs off the land when it rains, and in this Strategy, stormwater is considered separately to flood waters from rivers and streams. Although both forms of flooding are related to heavy rainfall, they are managed differently, and by separate organisations.

Stormwater overland flow is different in urban and rural environments. In rural areas (Figure 3), most rain that falls will evaporate or is transpired by plants, or soaks into the ground, with only a small proportion moving as a thin layer across the land surface, and through underground layers, before collecting in lower-lying channels and drains. Some of these overland flow paths in the rural parts of PNCC are managed by Horizons River and Drainage Schemes.

Figure 3: The water cycle shows how water changes its form and moves from one location to another. In rural areas, water can evaporate, transpire, and soak into the ground. Urban development contributes to a higher proportion of stormwater that runs overland compared with rural areas.



In urban areas, there are more impervious surfaces such as roofs, roads, driveways, footpaths, and parking areas so rain can't soak into the ground. Instead we convey stormwater by swales and drains into pipes or channels. Ultimately, stormwater in

Palmerston North makes its way to the Manawatū River. In the city and villages, overland flow paths are mostly managed by Council.

1.2 A holistic and integrated response to stormwater flood risk

1.2.1 A partnership approach

In Oranga Papaioea City Strategy, Council committed to giving effect to Te Patuinga me Rangitāne o Manawatū Partnership with Rangitāne o Manawatū through working together on projects and initiatives such as stormwater that both partners agree are a high priority, enabling participation by Māori in Council decisions and processes, and supporting and embedding a Whānau Ora approach in Council activities.

Consistent with the Partnership commitment, the Strategy has been co-developed with Rangitāne o Manawatū. In recognising and embodying Rangitāne o Manawatū tikanga and Mātauranga, the Strategy adopts a holistic and integrative approach. The Strategy uses terms such as ‘our waterways’ and to capture the concept that we are part of our environment and the environment is part of us, therefore we have a collective responsibility to care for the water, land, plants, and creatures that make up our natural environment, and for each other.

1.2.2 The purpose of the Strategy

The Strategy’s purpose is:

To provide long-term and high-level direction to Council to identify and respond to stormwater flood risk in a holistic way; working across Council functions and with other actors, protecting people and property and the well-being of water, while enabling sustainable growth and development, in a way that reflects the partnership with Rangitāne o Manawatū.

1.2.3 What the Strategy covers

The Strategy begins by describing the context and current state of stormwater in Palmerston North, then identifies the stormwater challenges currently facing the city, and presents outcomes that respond to those challenges. The Strategy proposes priorities for action and principles that will guide decision-making around stormwater, then concludes with a plan for monitoring and reviewing progress.

1.2.4 What the Strategy does not cover

The Strategy was developed during the Local Water Done Well reform which includes structural changes to how stormwater assets are currently owned and managed. The Strategy was developed with the intention to inform the planning and delivery of any subsequent changes that might arise from the reforms.

Other things the Strategy doesn’t address include:

- River flood management within the Manawatū River corridor or the Taonui Basin. Managing flood risk from rivers and managing stormwater from overland flows and ponding are interrelated. However, flood management responsibilities for rivers within the city lie with the Horizons Regional Council while stormwater flood management lies with Council. The Strategy encourages better integration with Horizons Regional Council through, for example, sharing information, aligning decision-making, and coordinating actions.
- Upstream catchments, which lie partly across or outside our district. In particular, the Strategy doesn't cover the upper catchments of the Mangaone and Raukawakawa (Ashhurst) Streams, where much of the water that flows into our city comes from. While we don't have direct control over those areas, we intend to work with our neighbouring local authorities and Horizons Regional Council to influence positive changes in those areas that can improve stormwater outcomes.
- Stormwater disaster response to stormwater flooding events, which is the responsibility of our Civil Defence Emergency Management team. The Strategy complements disaster response through planning that can reduce disaster risk and increasing our communities' resilience to the effects of stormwater flooding.

1.3 The policy context

1.3.1 Direction by central and regional government

Stormwater management is a core function of Council and is closely directed by legislation. The main legislative drivers of the Strategy are the Local Government Act 2002 and the Resource Management Act 1991.

The Local Government Act 2002 requires Council to prepare a 30-year Infrastructure Strategy and a 10-year Long-Term Plan. Both documents describe how stormwater will be managed by Council, the services that will be provided and how stormwater assets will be managed.

The Resource Management Act 1991 controls the effects of stormwater activities by Council. Under the Act, the Council must address stormwater effects through the District Plan and stormwater discharges to waterbodies must comply with consents issued under Horizons Regional Council's One Plan. National Policy Statements are also produced by central government to drive action towards achieving the sustainable management purpose of the Act.

In response to the National Policy Statement on Urban Development 2020, Council co-produced in 2024 with Horizons Regional Council a three-year Future Development Strategy, which identified stormwater as the primary constraint to growth for the city. The Implementation Plan for the Future Development Strategy includes the action of developing a Stormwater Strategy.

In response to National Policy Statement on Freshwater 2020, Council must give effect to the values framework Te Mana o Te Wai. In the context of stormwater, this is achieved through the Council's Stormwater Asset Management Plan and through acknowledging the Te Mana o Te Wai statement of Rangitāne o Manawatū.

At operational level, the Water Services Act 2021 and the National Environmental Standard Freshwater 2020 prescribe technical and engineering standards that affect stormwater service. The Land Drainage Act 1908 and Stormwater Bylaw 2022 protect the stormwater network from damage, contamination, and obstruction.

The Strategy will also help us play our part in responding to climate change, in line with the National Adaptation Plan 2025. The Strategy can also inform disaster risk reduction planning to support the goals of the National Disaster Resilience Strategy 2019.

At the time of writing the Draft Strategy, a series of changes were proposed to various national planning directions that will affect Council's role as it relates to stormwater. The Government is also working to replace the Resource Management Act 1991. These changes will be monitored as the Draft Strategy is further developed following public consultation.

1.3.2 Rangitāne o Manawatū Te Mana o Te Wai Statement

The Resource Management Act 1991 requires Councils to take into account iwi management plans when preparing or changing regional policy statements, regional and district plans. Iwi management plans also provide guidance for policy that is co-developed with iwi partners, such as the Strategy.

The Environmental Management Plan 2021 of Rangitāne o Manawatū takes a holistic approach to environmental management; the well-being of people is inseparable from that of the environment. In their Environmental Management Plan 2021, Rangitāne o Manawatū lay out their Te Mana o Te Wai statement to direct freshwater management by local authorities in the rohe. This statement is framed by the following broad principles:

- ki ua ki tai, which requires Council to adopt an integrated approach to kaitiakitanga, recognising the whole of the water cycle and all freshwater bodies. The phrase also refers to the need to understand the overall effects of the choices and decisions that we make in managing stormwater.
- Mauri, the most significant quality that flows through water, generated in the catchments and carried through tributaries and connections including groundwater, wetlands, and lagoons, binding together physical, traditional, spiritual elements to generate, nurture, and uphold life.
- The catchment, tributaries and connections, wetlands, and lagoons of the Manawatū River are taonga to Rangitāne o Manawatū

The statement includes objectives for managing land and freshwater management, i.e., to protect and restore the mauri of the Manawatū River, recognise and provide for the relationship of Rangitāne o Manawatū with their waters, and to recognising water as an

interconnected whole.

The statement also prioritises the health and well-being of waterbodies and freshwater ecosystems and the role of mana whenua in upholding these, over the health and well-being of people as they interact with water, over the ability of social, cultural and economic well-being of people and communities.

1.3.3 PNCC context

Council's Oranga Papaioea City Strategy describes four high-level goals for the city. Some of the outcomes for each goal are relevant to stormwater:

- Whāinga 1: He tāone auaha, he tāone tiputipu
Goal 1: An innovative and growing city
(includes the outcome enough land and infrastructure to enable housing development and business growth)
- Whāinga 2: He tāone whakaihiihi, tapatapahi ana
Goal 1: A creative and exciting city
(includes the outcome that our unique heritage is preserved and promoted)
- Whāinga 3: He hapori tūhonohono, he hapori haumarū
Goal 3: A connected and safe community
(includes the outcomes: the support they want to lead healthy lives: access to healthy and affordable housing; and access to safe and accessible community places)
- Whāinga 4: He tāone toitū, he tāone manawaroa
Goal 4: A sustainable and resilient city
(includes the outcomes: a resilient city and communities prepared for the impacts of climate change; the Manawatū River and waterways restored to a healthy, respected, and connected state; and appropriate infrastructure and development to avoid or minimise the effects of flood events)

Oranga Papaioea is the foundation for the 2024-34 Long-Term Plan. Fifteen subsidiary plans describe actions to achieve the goals of Oranga Papaioea City Strategy. One of these plans is Mahere Wai Water Plan, which sets out the objectives and actions of Council regarding water services over the life of the 2024 - 2034 Long-Term Plan. For stormwater, the high-level objective in Mahere Wai is to:

- protect buildings and communities from flooding

This means minimising the risk of negative impacts on the community in flood events and ensuring that the stormwater system is effective and responsive to the effects of climate change. Developing a Stormwater Strategy is a specific action highlighted in the Water Plan. Other plans are also less directly related of stormwater but are considered because we are working holistically. These are:

- Mahere Āhuarangi Hurihuri, Toitūanga Climate Change and Sustainability Plan

(actions: support Rangitāne o Manawatū to achieve their climate change aspirations, provide information and education about nature-based solutions to climate change adaptation)

- Mahere Kanorau Koira me Te Awa o Manawatū Biodiversity and Manawatū River Plan

(actions: develop biodiversity corridors along main streams, protect and restore the mauri of the Manawatū Awa)

- Mahere Hoahoa Tāone Urban Design Plan

(action: apply urban design best practice to all city planning and development)

1.3.4 How the Strategy will drive stormwater outcomes

The Strategy is a policy mechanism for identifying and analysing the components of a problem then developing high-level responses to guide and enable action at an operational level. Council operational policy (i.e., procedures and management processes) and responsive policy (i.e., policies and bylaws and governance processes) will drive the outcomes proposed by the Strategy.

At an operational level, the Strategy can inform expenditure and resourcing through Council's Long-Term Plan and the Infrastructure Strategy, which will both be reviewed in 2027 and then 2030. Council also prepares a Stormwater Asset Management Plan that informs the Long-Term Plan, the Infrastructure Strategy and Council's Financial Strategy. This plan sets out how the services identified in the Long-Term Plan will be provided and managed, including detail on the levels of service that will be provided, planned capital works, operating and maintenance costs.

The Strategy can also inform future reviews of the District Plan, where Council regulates land uses that can reduce communities' exposure to stormwater disaster risk and through rules, can mitigate the effects of development works on stormwater, for instance requiring a certain percentage of on-site surfaces to remain permeable.

Implementation of the Strategy can also support growth planning such as the three-yearly review of the Future Development Strategy that is underway for 2027, by clarifying information gaps and directing resources towards improved modelling.

**Editing note – replace the previous image that shows the policy context of the Strategy.

1.4 Summary

- Palmerston North is prone to stormwater flooding because it was built on the Manawatū River floodplain at the bottom of large catchments
- Stormwater is a normal part of the water cycle, but overland flow is different in urban environments because the things we do here increase stormwater runoff
- Climate change will bring more intense rainfall that will challenge the stormwater network, so we need to adapt
- The Future Development Strategy Implementation Plan 2024 and Mahere Wai Water

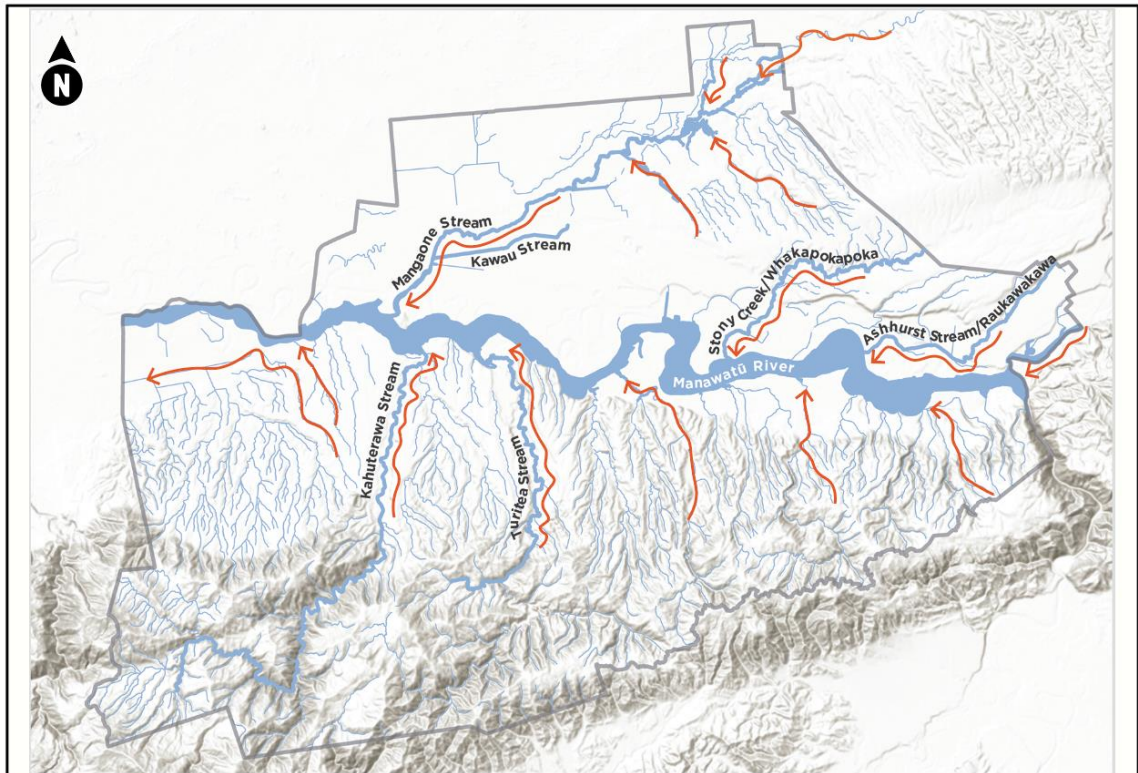
- Plan include the action of developing a Stormwater Strategy
- The Strategy recognises and embodies the partnership between Council and Rangitāne o Manawatū
- The Strategy directs, integrates, and informs action to manage stormwater across Council functions and responsibilities and with iwi partners and agencies responsible for stormwater that affects the city

2 Complexity and challenges

2.1 A two-level approach to deal with complexity

Stormwater in Papaioea Palmerston North is geographically complex. The city was established on the true right bank of the Manawatū River, on a mix of river soils. The Manawatū River has meandered and changed course over millennia, leaving wetlands, oxbows, and lagoons, such as those in Hokowhitu. Streams such as the Kawau and Mangaone, and their tributaries flow through the city, eventually discharging into the Manawatu River as shown in Figure 4. The city sits at the bottom of large catchments that drain downhill, so stormwater often ponds in the western suburbs of Awapuni, Highbury, Takaro, and Milson. In the east, Aokautere, Turitea and Kahuterawa developments are built on the steep slopes, clays and wind-deposited loess-type soils of the Tararua Ranges, which can be relatively impervious. This mix of soils and slopes and the multiplicity and distribution of different waterbodies means that the way stormwater moves through the city is complex.

Figure 4: Water flows into and through Palmerston North city (orange arrows) via numerous streams that eventually discharge to the Manawatū River. The city boundary is shown as a grey line.



The legacy of stormwater infrastructure in the inner and older parts of the city adds to the complexity. Our previous approach to managing stormwater prioritised conveyance - rapid drainage and disposal of stormwater to protect homes and businesses - above permeability and water retention mechanisms. Conveyance is expensive to service and maintain and

competes with priorities for funding. Intensification - growing in and up - requires more resourcing to increase network capacity. In some instances, it may not be possible to retrofit the required conveyance capacity to support urban intensification which will mean a greater reliance on minimum floor levels and stormwater management systems to protect property and people.

Furthermore, the constraints to conveyance are exacerbated by development in low lying areas, and increased areas of impervious surfaces from urban development. These pressures will likely increase with the more intense rainfall events that are predicted as our climate changes. All of which points to a need to adapt away from our traditional reliance on conveyance to a more adaptive approach to managing stormwater such as those used in sponge cities where parks, wetlands, and riparian margins are used to absorb, retain, and purify stormwater.

We propose a two-level approach to address this complexity; city-level, complemented by ten Stormwater Management Areas. In order to retain a high-level focus, this Strategy will focus on the city-level challenges and outcomes, leaving the Stormwater Management Area plans to be developed later.

2.2 Challenges that stormwater presents for the city

The value of the Strategy comes from identifying the challenges that stormwater presents for the city. If we are clear about these challenges, we can develop outcomes for the city, and to identify ways to achieve these.

The challenges identified in the Strategy are derived from:

- a review of national, regional, and local statutory and policy direction;
- existing information, including the Palmerston North City and regional stormwater models, stormwater servicing assessments, State of the Environment reporting, technical and scientific literature, and climate change projections;
- reports produced by Rangitāne o Manawatū that consider stormwater;
- face-to-face engagement with Council staff, Rangitāne o Manawatū, Horizons Regional Council, community organisations and collaborations, Crown agencies and developers; and
- analysis of community submissions to the draft Long-Term Plan, recent District Plan changes E, F, G, and I and the Future Development Strategy.

Based on these sources, we have identified thirteen current city-level stormwater challenges. Most of these challenges are inter-related, especially for holistic and multi-faceted concepts such as mauri and ecosystem health.

- **Stormwater flood risk:** Palmerston North is flood prone and urban development brings an increase in impervious surfaces that has interrupted the natural water cycle, increasing volumes, speed and direction of surface flows. Stormwater with high velocities can erode land, damage buildings and structures and redistribute pollutants and sediment. Stormwater ponding and overland flows are a flood risk for

people and properties in some of our communities.

- **Inequity of risk:** Topography and past drainage and development activities result in variable stormwater ponding and flows across the city. Some areas and communities are affected more than others during heavy rain events. This difference can have implications for insurance and ability to recover from flood events that impact the resilience of affected individuals, households, and communities.
- **Changes to natural flows:** Our waterways have less room to naturally move than they have in the past from channelling, and culverting, and building over top of, and up to their edges. This adds to runoff from more impervious surfaces in the city, exacerbating stormwater volumes, and increased peak flow velocities. Increased velocity and altered flow patterns change the availability of food and shelter for aquatic plants and animals. In low rainfall, an emphasis in conveying, rather than detaining, stormwater can lead to reduced storage and base flow rates.
- **Loss of freshwater biodiversity:** Loss of riparian vegetation reduces shading, which can increase water temperatures, reduce dissolved oxygen, and result in problematic algal growth. Vegetation clearance also removes leaf litter and woody debris which provides habitat for fish and insects and assists with processes such as pool and riffle development. Culverts and other stormwater structures prevent tuna and fish from accessing different parts of waterways for different life stages. Invasive weeds such as alligator weed can reduce native species habitat, impact water quality and restrict water flow.
- **Degradation of the mauri of water:** Modifying and removing waterways by building over or channelising them has diminished the mauri of our waterscapes. Our waterways have lost much of their natural form, character, indigenous habitat and biodiversity. The indigenous vegetation and healthy deep soils, which previously held and filtered water, are gone from many places, and some waterways are now unsafe for recreation or gathering freshwater resources such as food. Poor water quality and changes to natural flows are impacting the relationship that our communities have with water. For Rangitāne o Manawatū, this includes their ability to harvest resources, exercise kaitiakitanga and ensure cultural practices are handed down to the next generation. Te Ihi, te wana, and te wehi, the awe-inspiring properties of water, need to be restored. While mauri has a spiritual and cultural element for Tangata Whenua, water is precious and sustains life for everyone in the city, and so should be managed well for all.
- **Climate change:** Our changing climate will increase the risks of stormwater flooding and poor water quality. While the projections vary, potential changes could include increases in rainfall intensity and frequency of high-intensity rainfall events. In these situations, our existing stormwater networks become overwhelmed. Increased temperatures will mean warmer water which could affect ecosystem health.
- **Limited understanding:** There are gaps in our existing information and knowledge about the performance of our stormwater network and how it functions. We don't currently monitor stormwater quality, groundwater levels, flows, and the presence/absence of fish within the network, nor do we evaluate the performance of the stormwater network in response to storm events. We need better information

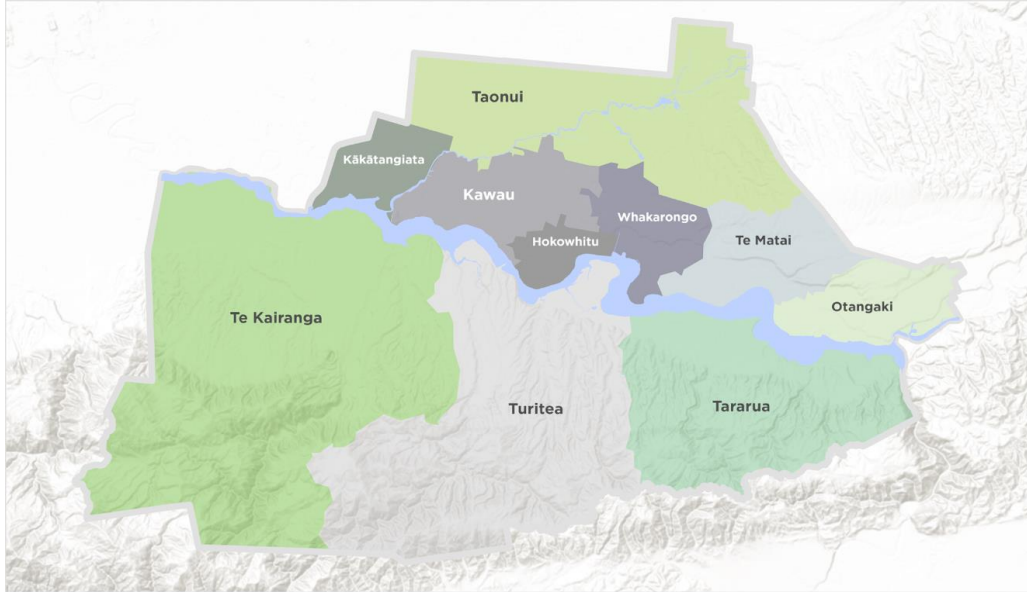
to make optimal decisions and to share this information more widely so our community and partners can play their part in stormwater management.

- **Need for better collaboration and alignment:** Unlike drinking water or wastewater, which is piped, the stormwater network is partly an open network that is strongly influenced by activities around and upstream of the network. Some parts of the stormwater and flood protection network are managed and owned by Horizons Regional Council. To manage stormwater in the best way possible, we need to work more effectively with our iwi partners and a range of stakeholders, including Horizons Regional Council, neighbouring local authorities, central government agencies, developers, and with the community.
- **Limited resources:** Council's ability to undertake stormwater maintenance and interventions is currently constrained by funding, internal resources and capability. This reduces our ability to be proactive in addressing the challenges that stormwater brings. Substantial investment is needed across our stormwater network and in staffing to enable further growth. Some of our community-owned land could be better used as multifunctional spaces, including to hold and treat stormwater. Council's ability to monitor and enforce activities that impact stormwater is also currently constrained.
- **Obtaining access for maintenance:** Some of our public stormwater assets and natural waterways are located within private property, which makes them difficult to access for maintenance and repair. Despite a stormwater bylaw that requires Council's prior approval for new connections to the public stormwater network, this is rarely monitored or enforced.
- **Legislative change:** Ongoing reform of water infrastructure could mean changes to the way we own and manage stormwater assets in future, and to the water quality standards we need to achieve when stormwater is discharged from our network to the Manawatū River and streams. Similarly, resource management reform may affect how we manage the effects of development. We need to be able to respond appropriately to these changes.
- **Stormwater constrains the way we plan for Tagrowth:** Stormwater is one of the main constraints to sustainable growth for the city. Growing out as greenfield development provides opportunities for best practice, nature-based stormwater systems such as detention ponds and stormwater corridors. Growing in and up through intensification in the existing urban areas is complicated due to capacity constraints and historical decisions regarding stormwater management.

2.3 Stormwater Management Areas

The Stormwater Management Areas are loosely catchment based but each has distinctive characteristics that arise from their topography, stream catchments, existing land uses, and potential for future growth and development. These ten Stormwater Management Areas are shown in Figure 5 and described briefly in the Appendix.

Figure 5: The Strategy proposes ten Stormwater Management Areas to address the complexity of stormwater across the city. Each Stormwater Management Area has unique characteristics arising from topography, stream catchments, existing land uses and stormwater infrastructure, and potential for future growth and development. The names for each area reflect Mātauranga Rangitāne o Manawātū



**Editing note for this image – the urban area and villages will be added so that readers can orient themselves.

*Editing note for this image – designed tohu will replace black squares, and names of challenges will be updates to match text.

Table 1. The challenges of the stormwater management areas














	Taunui	Kakatangata	Kawu	Hokowhitu	Whakarongo	Te Matai	Otangaki	Tarua	Turitea	Te Kairanga
 Flood risk	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●		
 Inequity of risk	●		●				●			
 Challenges to Natural flows	●				●		●	●	●	●
 Poor Water Quality and Ecosystem Health	●	●	●	●	●	●		●	●	●
 Loss of Biodiversity	●					●			●	●
 Degradation of the mauri of water	●		●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●
 Climate Change	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●
 Limited understanding	●		●	●	●	●		●	●	●
 Need for better collaboration and alignment	●						●			
 Limited resources	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●
 Obtaining access for maintenance				●						
 Legislative Change	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●
 Urban Growth	●	●		●	●				●	●



Table 1 shows that, while all the city-level challenges are largely present in all ten Stormwater Management Areas, some of these challenges are more complex in some areas relative to others. As a result, it is likely that management will need to be tailored by area, with some areas such as Kawau, Taonui, Hokowhitu, Otangaki, and Whakarongo requiring bespoke implementation plans because of the demand for development by growing in, growing up, and growing out.

2.4 Summary

- Stormwater in Palmerston North is geographically and technically complex, so we adopted a two-level approach - city-level, complemented by ten Stormwater Management Areas
- For now, we are prioritising the city-level challenges
- Thirteen city-level challenges arise from how we currently live with stormwater
- Identifying these challenges makes us think about how we want to live and grow with stormwater in the future
- Demand for development by growing in, growing up, and growing out in different parts of the city will require tailored stormwater management to address the specific challenges of each Stormwater Management Area

3 Aspirations for living well with stormwater

In this section, the Strategy identifies a set of outcomes and principles that direct decision making towards addressing the stormwater challenges that stormwater presents for the city.

These outcomes are related to the two relevant Oranga Papaioea City Strategy goals and the high-level objective for stormwater in Mahere Wai Water Plan and Te Mana o Te Wai statement of Rangitāne o Manawatū; drawn together in a Whānau Ora framework. Stormwater is a multi-faceted problem, so the holistic framing provided by Whānau Ora works well to integrate action across all of Council functions, and between multiple agencies responsible for stormwater.

3.1 Whānau Ora approach

In Oranga Papaioea City Strategy, Council committed to giving effect to Te Patuinga me Rangitāne o Manawatū Partnership with Rangitāne o Manawatū through embedding a Whānau Ora approach in Council activities.

The outcomes in this Strategy are based on a Whānau Ora approach, drawing on seven aspirational outcomes for the short-, medium-, and long-term. Figure 6 shows how these aspirations have been interpreted in a stormwater context and used to define the high-level outcomes for stormwater we want to achieve through this Strategy.

Whānau Ora recognises that the health, well-being, and resilience of people and communities now and in the future is intrinsically and relationally linked to holistic and sustainable management of resources such as water. In adopting this approach, the Strategy recognises that the well-being of our communities is entwined with water.

3.2 Aspirational outcomes for stormwater

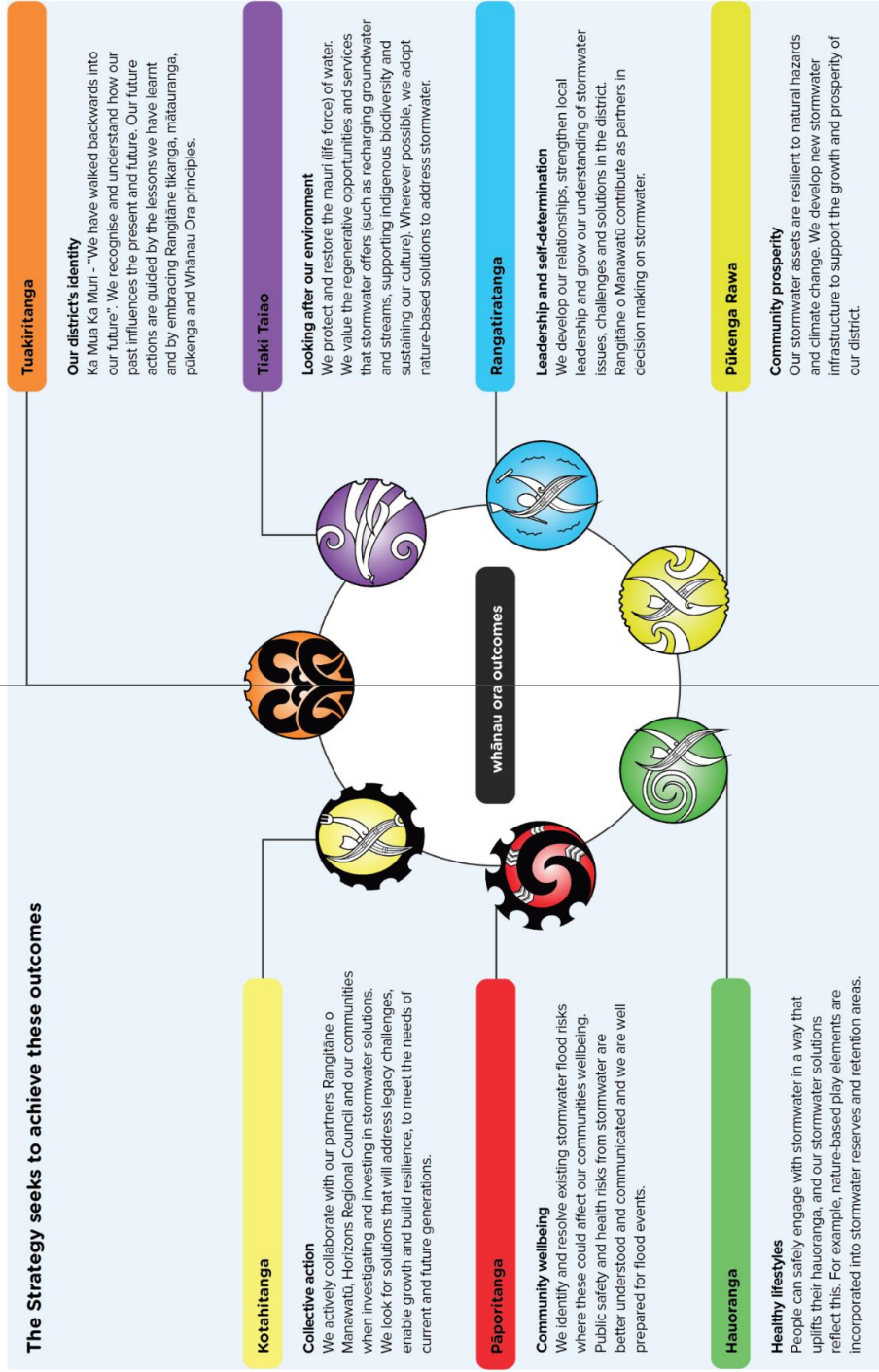
Using the Whānau Ora framing to draw together Council's high-level goals for the city and Rangitāne o Manawatū aspirations outlined in their Te Mana o Te Wai statement, the seven inter-related outcomes are:

- **Kotahitanga;** collaborative action, working with partners and communities to meet the challenges brought by stormwater
- **Rangatiratanga;** develop relationships and strengthen local leadership to meet stormwater challenges
- **Pāporitanga;** identify, understand, and resolve stormwater flood risks to protect buildings and communities from flooding
- **Pūkenga Rawa;** stormwater assets and infrastructure support housing development and business growth, prosperity, and climate resilience
- **Hauoranga;** people engage with stormwater in a way that creates healthy lifestyles
- **Tuakiritanga;** we understand and learn from past approaches to stormwater,

drawing on technical knowledge and Mātauranga to develop adaptive and innovative solutions that avoid or minimise the effects of flood events

- Tiaki Taiao; the mauri of water is protected and regenerated, and the Manawatū River and waterways are restored to a healthy, respected, and connected state, using nature-based solutions where possible.

Figure 6: The seven Whānau Ora principles interpreted in the context of aspirational outcomes for living and growing with stormwater



MEMORANDUM

TO: Sustainability Committee

MEETING DATE: 18 June 2025

TITLE: Update on opportunities for native species re-introductions in the Turitea Reserve (2025)

PRESENTED BY: David Watson, Senior Climate Change and Sustainability Advisor

APPROVED BY: David Murphy, General Manager Strategic Planning

RECOMMENDATION(S) TO SUSTAINABILITY COMMITTEE

1. That the Committee receive the memorandum titled 'Update on opportunities for native species re-introductions in the Turitea Reserve (2025)' presented to the Sustainability Committee on 18 June 2025.
-

1. ISSUE

- 1.1 This memorandum follows a previous memo, which was presented to the 22 May 2024 Sustainability Committee. The memo recommended conducting a follow-up translocation of toutouwai (North Island robins) to supplement the existing population from the 2021 release and seeking expert advice about the suitability of the Turitea Reserve for kiwi and weka. The Committee received this information and endorsed investigations into the feasibility of future translocations. We have since completed a successful supplementary toutouwai translocation and have consulted wildlife specialists on future possible kiwi and weka translocations.

Toutouwai translocation

- 1.2 Following last year's resolution, Council have worked with Rangitāne towards a translocation of toutouwai. In April 2025, 30 toutouwai were gifted by Ngāa Rauru and Bushy Park Trust and were successfully released in the Turitea Reserve. This raised the number of birds in the reserve to 64, increasing the genetic diversity of the population and strengthening resilience against environmental threats, such as an unusually cold winter.

Turitea Reserve pest control

- 1.3 Increased Council investment and contractor efforts in predator control through the current Long-Term Plan have resulted in consistently low predator numbers in Turitea. December 2024 monitoring results showed zero rats in the 400-ha 'core zone', where the majority of toutouwai have established territories. These pest control results gave confidence both to Ngāa Rauru, the

kaitiaki who were gifting us the toutouwai, and Rangitāne to allow us to pursue the translocation. Maintaining current pest control levels should provide security for the future of the Turitea toutouwai population.

Kiwi and weka translocation

- 1.4 The May 2024 Sustainability Committee endorsed investigating the future reintroduction of kiwi and weka into Turitea. Expert advice was sought through the Kiwi Recovery Group, and a site visit has determined the habitat quality in Turitea to be suitable for kiwi. Mustelid monitoring is currently underway, which will help determine whether current predator control methods are adequate for kiwi survival or if more targeted measures are required.
- 1.5 A member of the Weka Recovery Group has advised that, due to the competitive and omnivorous nature of weka, the introduction of kiwi and any other ground-nesting bird species to the area should be completed prior to a weka reintroduction. Council's priority should therefore be to focus initial efforts towards a kiwi translocation.

2. BACKGROUND

- 2.1 Council-run predator control efforts in Turitea began in 2003 and have expanded significantly since then. Today, the project spans 40 square kilometres across the Turitea Reserve and Hardings Park, with thousands of traps and bait stations in place. The programme has resulted in a large increase in key native bird species, including a 10- to 15-fold increase in the populations of tūi and kererū.

Toutouwai translocation

- 2.2 Building on the success of the predator control programme, Council partnered with Rangitāne, Massey University, and expert volunteers to reintroduce the locally extinct toutouwai to the Turitea Reserve in 2021. Unfortunately, a nation-wide surge in rat numbers later that year significantly impacted the breeding season of the birds, leaving the population small and potentially vulnerable to environmental shocks, disease, or other threats.
- 2.3 To mitigate the increased rat numbers, Council conducted a targeted rat control programme within the core breeding area where the toutouwai had established their population. Rat monitoring was substantially increased, and 13,000 rat bait strips have been annually deployed within the core area over the last 4 years. As a result, rat numbers have remained remarkably low over the last several years, with our December pest monitoring yielding results of zero rats or mice in the core toutouwai zone – a nationally leading statistic for an unfenced mainland site.
- 2.4 Increased pest control has yielded noticeable improvements in toutouwai survival. A highly successful 2024/2025 breeding season left us with a growing population of 34 robins (12 adults and 22 juveniles), demonstrating that the

Reserve provides favourable conditions for long-term habitation. These numbers provided the confidence for a supplementary translocation in autumn this year to boost numbers and increase genetic diversity.

- 2.5 In the week of 14 April 2025, the Climate Change and Sustainability Team worked with Ngaa Rauru and conservation biologists to capture and band 30 toutouwai from Bushy Park Tarapurahi. The birds were blessed by Ngaa Rauru before their departure, and on 16 April they were welcomed by Rangitāne and successfully released into the Turitea Reserve. The arrival of these 30 birds has increased the total number within the reserve to 64. Monitoring of the population will be ongoing. However, early monitoring has shown the recent arrivals have quickly acclimated to their new environment.
- 2.6 The permit allows for a further 10 toutouwai to be translocated from a more remote site. Investigations are underway for the practicality and desirability of this operation.

Turitea Reserve pest control

- 2.7 Our pest control contractors in the reserve currently maintain ~3,500 bait stations and ~1,500 predator traps. Following the first year of the initial translocation, pest control measures were increased to include the installation of modern self-resetting 'AT220' traps, alongside the deployment of the rat bait strips each year.
- 2.8 Rat monitoring has been substantially improved since the 2021 translocation, and pest monitoring now includes a network of 20 automatic trail cameras that are regularly set up on a rotating grid to ensure both a wide coverage and an early warning system for any sudden increase in predator numbers.

Kiwi and weka translocation

- 2.9 Professor Isabel Castro (Kiwi Recovery Group) advises that the Rowi is the most suitable kiwi for Turitea, due to their historic presence in Turitea.
- 2.10 Rhys Burns (Weka Recovery Group) explained that weka are very competitive and territorial in nature, and their omnivorous diet can pose a risk to ground nesting birds and skinks. He therefore advised not to pursue a weka translocation until we have considered all other species we would want to translocate in the near future.
- 2.11 Both experts recommended ensuring low mustelid numbers before pursuing a translocation. A trial run of monitoring is currently being conducted, with trail cameras positioned according to the Kiwi Recovery Group's monitoring protocol. The results of this monitoring will determine whether or not additional, targeted pest control measures are needed.

3. NEXT STEPS

- 3.1 Continue monitoring the existing and new toutouwai population. Plan logistics for a possible second translocation.

- 3.2 Continue current pest control measures, including the delivery of a winter striker operation conducted whenever rat numbers increase to dangerous levels within the core toutouwai zone.
- 3.3 Alter pest control measures, depending on the results of mustelid monitoring, if necessary. Begin application process for kiwi translocation permit once low mustelid numbers confirmed.

4. COMPLIANCE AND ADMINISTRATION

Does the Committee have delegated authority to decide?	Yes
Are the decisions significant?	No
If they are significant do they affect land or a body of water?	No
Can this decision only be made through a 10 Year Plan?	No
Does this decision require consultation through the Special Consultative procedure?	No
Is there funding in the current Annual Plan for these objectives?	Yes
Are the recommendations inconsistent with any of Council's policies or plans?	No
The recommendations contribute to: Whāinga 4: He tāone toitū, he tāone manawaroa Goal 4: A sustainable and resilient city	
The recommendations contribute to this plan: 11. Mahere mō te kanorau koiora me Te Awa o Manawatū 11. Biodiversity and the Manawatū River Plan The objective is:	
Contribution to strategic direction and to social, economic, environmental and cultural well-being	Reintroductions of locally extinct species contribute to the restoration of the Turitea Reserve's biodiversity.

ATTACHMENTS

Nil

REPORT

TO: Sustainability Committee

MEETING DATE: 18 June 2025

TITLE: Options of new indicators to include in the 2026 Sustainability Review

PRESENTED BY: Olivia Wix, Communications Manager and David Watson, Senior Climate Change and Sustainability Advisor

APPROVED BY: Danelle Whakatihi, General Manager Customer & Community
David Murphy, General Manager Strategic Planning

RECOMMENDATION(S) TO COUNCIL

1. That the Chief Executive continue using existing data, include additional data already collected, and draw on data from other organisations to support the 2026 Sustainability Review (Option 3).

SUMMARY OF OPTIONS ANALYSIS

OPTION 1:	Continue to use only the existing data that has been reported in previous Sustainability Reviews
Benefits	Consistent approach.
Risks	There is an opportunity to add more data which could further enhance the purpose of the report.
Financial	No impact.
OPTION 2:	Continue to use the existing data, as well as include new data from information Council already collects
Benefits	Assists in meeting the purpose of the Sustainability Review.
Risks	None.
Financial	No impact.
OPTION 3:	Continue using existing data, include additional data already collected by Council, and draw on data from other organisations to support the report
Benefits	Includes more data, which assists in meeting purpose of

	Sustainability Review.
Risks	The data tends to be more regional without localised breakdowns. There is no oversight or awareness of how the data is collected or managed. Council has no ability to control or influence the outcomes of the data reported.
Financial	No impact.
OPTION 4:	Create new datasets for information not currently collected by Council or organisational partners.
Benefits	Could fill gaps of knowledge.
Risks	These should form part of the Long-Term Plan process.
Financial	Depending on data desired, there could be costs in setting up and collecting the data.

RATIONALE FOR THE RECOMMENDATIONS

1. BACKGROUND AND PREVIOUS COUNCIL DECISIONS

- 1.1 The Environmental Sustainability Review is published every two years for our community, partners, and stakeholders. It shows how committed our organisation is to sustainability. The report combines stories and data to highlight the work we have undertaken over the past two years. It is organised into key areas like transport, housing, energy, water, rubbish and recycling. In recent years, we have also included stories about partnerships with Council and other organisations in the city doing great work in this area.
- 1.2 When receiving the latest Environmental Sustainability Review in 2024, Elected Members asked for options to include more organisational and community-wide indicators in the 2026 report.

2. ANALYSIS OF OPTIONS

Option 1: Continue to use only the existing data that has been reported in previous Sustainability Reviews

- 2.1 One of the main challenges with the review since it began is that data is collected at different times. This makes it hard to compare information from year to year. For example, the city-wide waste audit only happens every six years.

2.2 Currently, the Sustainability Review reports on the following measures:

<p>Carbon Emissions</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Organisational Emissions Inventory (Water treatment and pumps, Depot and operations, pools, transport, waste management, workplace travel by staff, property, CET Arena operations, libraries, parks and reserves and streetlights) • Annual emissions (tCO₂e) compared to council goal for city and organisation
<p>Transport</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Km's of roads, footpaths and bus stops • Number of street trees • Annual cycling counts • E-scooter kms
<p>Water</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Km's of pipes, reservoirs, bores, manholes, pump stations, drains for all three waters • Water treatment, consumption and disposal
<p>Resource Recovery</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Number of public bins • City wide waste audit (six yearly data) including amount of waste gone to landfill, and what could have been diverted • Rubbish collected from kerb • Recycling collected from kerb • Glass collected from kerb • Recycling at drop-off points • E-waste • Motor oil recycling • Green waste drop-off • Compost sold • Number of rubbish bags collected • Number of recycling bins emptied
<p>Biodiversity</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Robin bird counts

Option 2: Continue to use the existing data, as well as include new data from information Council already collects

2.3 The information below includes data we already collect but have not included in past Sustainability Reviews, as well as new data that was not available before. In many cases, this data is reported in the aggregate, such as through the carbon reporting, but is not currently presented at the granular level. This data could be added to the 2026 Sustainability Review easily and at no extra cost.

	Data	Where from:
Carbon Emissions	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Fertiliser use • Refrigerant use • Wastewater emissions • • Air travel • Taxi use • Workplace travel 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Manual records • Contractor records • Calculated from wastewater data • Agent data • Invoices • Internal survey
Energy	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Power use / Generation • Gas use • Non-transport fuel use 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Energy invoices • Tanker meters
Transport	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Active and Public transport to work/education on Census Day • Fuel use 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Census data already being used in city dashboards • Fuel invoicing
Water	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Power use / generation 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Internal dashboards
Resource Recovery	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Polystyrene recycled • Tetrapak recycled • Waste collected from Council facilities 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • New data from recycling partners • Triennial waste audit
Biodiversity	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Native bird count • Predator catch numbers and tracking 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • City dashboards • Contractor records and surveys

	Data	Where from:
	rates	
Other	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Access to green spaces 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • City dashboards

Option 3: Continue using existing data, include additional data already collected by Council, and draw on data from other organisations to support the report

- 2.4 There are several external data sources we could consider including in the 2026 Sustainability Review. However, we recommend using them with caution, as in many cases we do not have full visibility of how the data was collected or analysed, which makes it harder to judge its accuracy or how well it applies to our local context.
- 2.5 Some of the data looks at things from a regional perspective or groups together multiple areas – such as different rivers or catchments – so it does not always give a clear picture of what is happening in our city. Many of the indicators reflect outcomes that Council has little or no control over, which means we can't always take direct action to improve them.
- 2.6 Because of these issues, the data is less relevant to the purpose of the Sustainability Review and to our intended audience (our wider community), who are primarily interested in what is happening locally and where Council can make a difference.
- 2.7 That said, some of this data may still be useful for providing context or telling the wider story – particularly when highlighting the work of other organisations through the stories in the review. We suggest treating these indicators in this way, rather than using them as key indicators in the review. For example, Horizons State of the Environment Report could be a story within the 2026 Sustainability Review. The report is released every five years but the data set that includes our city also includes Feilding, Woodville, Pahiatua, Eketahuna and Foxton.

	Data	Where from:	Comments
Carbon Emissions	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Regional climate inventory • National climate inventory 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Horizons Regional Council (HRC) • Ministry for the Environment (MfE) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Confusing for readers as scope and methodology vary considerably
Energy	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Detailed generation and use statistics 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ministry of Business, Innovation 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Not held at PN City Council

	Data	Where from:	Comments
	(fossil fuels, renewables, etc.)	and Employment (MBIE)	level
Transport	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Bus statistics – patronage, energy use, etc. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • HRC 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • May further confuse public that we're responsible for buses
Water	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Water Quality of Manawatu River • Mangaone Water Quality Indicators 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Land Air Water Aotearoa (LAWA), HRC • HRC 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Snapshot in time, likely to vary considerably from one report to next. Scope of these catchments considerably larger than Palmerston North City Council boundary
Resource Recovery	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Landfill tonnage received, and forward investments 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • MBIE 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Bonny Glen (i.e. regional) level only
Biodiversity	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Regional biodiversity indicators, particularly for Te Apiti 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • HRC, Department of Conservation (DOC) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reserve only partly within rohe. Palmerston North City Council is not directly involved in operations
Other	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Regional Climate Vulnerability Assessment • State of Environment 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • HRC 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Top 50 communities at risk from climate related hazards • Palmerston North City

	Data	Where from:	Comments
	Report		Council is included in a wide regional data set

Option 4: Create new datasets for information not currently collected by Council or organisational partners

2.8 If Elected Members would like to see additional sustainability indicators included in the report, but we do not currently hold the necessary data, we could work on sourcing this. In this case, Officers would need direction as to what data Elected Members would like to include, and then they can explore what it would take to collect or source that information; however, this would involve additional time and cost (to be confirmed depending on data needed and ease of collecting). We recommend considering new indicators as part of the next Long-Term Plan process. That is the point at which we review and update existing measures, and since some supporting data is already available, it is the ideal time to formally introduce and resource any new indicators within our ongoing monitoring and reporting framework.

3. CONCLUSION

- 3.1 Officers recommend Option 3. This would see us continue to use the data we have used in the past, as well as add new data we have access to.
- 3.2 Regional data is helpful, but has risks, as outlined above. Officers recommend using this data as part of wider storytelling in the report.

4. NEXT ACTIONS

4.1 Work is already underway determining the stories that will be highlighted in the next edition. Indicators selected today will be added to the next review, along with existing data we report on. The publication will be brought to council in early 2026 for release.

5. COMPLIANCE AND ADMINISTRATION

Does the Committee have delegated authority to decide?	No
Are the decisions significant?	No
If they are significant do they affect land or a body of water?	No
Can this decision only be made through a 10 Year Plan?	No
Does this decision require consultation through the Special Consultative procedure?	No
Is there funding in the current Annual Plan for these objectives?	Yes

Are the recommendations inconsistent with any of Council's policies or plans?	No
<p>The recommendations contribute to:</p> <p>Whāinga 4: He tāone toitū, he tāone manawaroa Goal 4: A sustainable and resilient city</p>	
<p>The recommendations contribute to this plan:</p> <p>10. Mahere āhuarangi hurihuri, toitūtanga 10. Climate Change and Sustainability Plan</p> <p>The objective is: access to relevant information and education to support more sustainable choices.</p>	
Contribution to strategic direction and to social, economic, environmental and cultural well-being	The review highlights what we are doing and also includes examples of what our community are doing to help.

ATTACHMENTS

Nil

COMMITTEE WORK SCHEDULE

TO: Sustainability Committee

MEETING DATE: 18 June 2025

TITLE: Committee Work Schedule

RECOMMENDATION TO SUSTAINABILITY COMMITTEE

1. That the Sustainability Committee receive its Work Schedule dated June 2025.

SUSTAINABILITY COMMITTEE WORK SCHEDULE – JUNE 2025

Estimated Report Date	Subject	Officer Responsible	Current Position	Date of Instruction & Clause number
18 June 2025	Wastewater Treatment Plant Nature Calls: Quarterly Report	General Manager Infrastructure		Council 29 May 2024 Clause 95.11-25 (rec 2)
18 June 2025	Options to enable inclusion of organisational and community wide sustainability indicators in the 2026 Sustainability Review	General Manager Strategic Planning/ General Manager Customer & Community		22 May 2024 Clause 15
18 June 2025	Draft city-wide stormwater strategy	General Manager Strategic Planning		16 October 2024 Clause 42-24 Council 29 May 2024 Clause 95.7-24 2F(3)
As required	Manawatū-Whanganui Climate Joint Action Committee Update	General Manager Strategic Planning	Subject to agenda of Joint Committee or any changes at a national	Climate change plan ongoing

			level	
	Resource Recovery Services Review	General Manager Infrastructure	Council 6 August	21 August 2024 Clause 28-24
	PNCC Organisational Emissions Inventory 2024/25 Annual Report	General Manager Strategic Planning	Council 8 October	Climate change plan ongoing action #1
	Waste management and minimisation plan 2024 - annual progress update for 2024/25 FY	General Manager Infrastructure	Council 8 October	9 Sept 2020 Clause 17-20
	Citywide Emissions Inventory 2024 Annual Report	General Manager Strategic Planning	Council 8 October	Climate change plan ongoing action #3
	Low Carbon Fund Allocations 2024/25	General Manager Strategic Planning	Council 8 October	21 August 2024 Clause 24-24
2026	Annual Sector Lead Report: Environment Network Manawatū	General Manager Customer & Community		Terms of Reference
18 June 2025 2026	Draft community-focused city-wide climate action plan	General Manager Strategic Planning	Community engagement underway	Climate change plan ongoing action #5 16 October 2024 Clause 34-24