

The South Taranaki District is now at COVID-19 Alert Level 1. Find out more at www.covid19.govt.nz

Govts Three Waters Reform



You may be aware that the Government is proposing some significant changes to how Three Waters (drinking water, wastewater and stormwater) are managed in New Zealand. The proposal is that four new entities are set up covering the whole country, and these entities take over the service delivery and management of the three waters infrastructure,

currently done by councils. For us, this would mean that our three waters assets (as well as the debt attached to the assets) would be taken over by a new entity that would include councils across the Waikato (including Hamilton), Bay of Plenty (including Tauranga and Whakatāne) and Taranaki Regions and the Ruapehu, Whanganui and Rangatīkei Districts. A comprehensive financial support package is also being offered alongside the reform proposal, which (if we 'opt in') is calculated at just over \$18 million for South Taranaki. The Government believes it has established a compelling 'case for change' based on the financial requirements needed over the next thirty years to upgrade and manage the nation's three waters infrastructure to meet increasing health and environmental standards as well as community expectations. They say the amount of investment needed would be almost impossible for councils to fund on their own, so some kind of change is needed. The Government believes that by moving these services from individual councils to new entities they will be able to create a large enough scale that will enable those entities to borrow more (to fund the investment needed), develop better capability and capacity in the water services industry, as well as creating operating efficiencies and cost savings. The Governments modelling suggests that South Taranaki will be better off financially under the proposal. We all support the need for clean, safe, affordable drinking water and a healthy environment. This is the approach that our Council has always taken when investing in our assets and it will continue to be the key driver of

future investment decisions, as has been outlined in our finalised Long Term Plan. However, we still have many unanswered questions about the Government's modelling and the reform proposal, such as:

1. How will the governance of the new entities be set up to ensure that South Taranaki District retains its voice over its assets, and that local priorities and development patterns are provided for across the large areas?
2. Will our ratepayers really be better off financially as a result of this proposal?
3. What will the impact of the change be on the Council organisation that remains after the change and what will local government look like in the future?
4. Is bigger actually better and are the efficiency assumptions made by Government realistic?
5. How can the three waters assets be separated from our other assets?

The Government has given us August and September to consider all the information and implications of its proposal. This is not a lot of time to digest the huge amount of information we've been provided so we're working with experts from Local Government New Zealand to help analyse this information and (hopefully) get answers to our questions.

To date the Government has said that councils could decide if they wished to 'opt in' or 'opt out' of these reforms. However more recently I have heard suggestions about it being mandatory. **I would see that as totally undemocratic. The assets we are talking about have been paid for by our communities, not by Government, and as such the Government must give councils the ability to effectively consult with our communities before we make any decision on whether we support these reforms and 'opt in', or not.**

The issues involved are complex and it's crucial that we should not be rushed (or forced) into making a decision of this magnitude without having time to fully understand the proposal or consult with our community.

For more information about the Government's Three Waters Reform Proposal, you can go to the Department of Internal Affairs website Three Waters Reform Programme - dia.govt.nz or Local Government New Zealand's website

Phil Nixon, Mayor of South Taranaki

Upcoming meetings

Ordinary Council
Monday 9 August, 7pm

Audit and Risk Committee
Wednesday 11 August, 11am

Extraordinary Council
To consider funding applications to the Community Initiatives Fund
Monday 16 August, 9am

Eltham-Kaponga Community Board
Monday 23 August, 10.30 am
Taumata Recreation Centre,
Preston Street, Eltham

Te Hāwera Community Board
Monday 23 August, 1.30 pm

Taranaki Coastal Community Board
Tuesday 24 August, 2.30pm
Sandfords Event Centre,
156 Tasman Street Ōpunakē

Pātea Community Board
Wednesday 25 August, 4pm
Alton Coronation Hall,
355 Ball Road, Alton

Unless otherwise stated, meetings are held in the Council Chamber, Albion Street, Hāwera

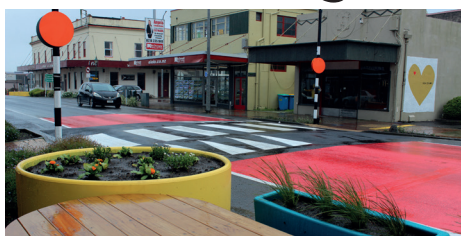
Impounded Stock

Section 46(2), Impounding Act 1955
The following stock has been impounded:

1 x Brown, Grey and White Nanny-Goat, approximately 3-4 years old found roaming near Turuturu Road on 28 July 2021.

Unless claimed by the owners, the above stock will be sold by public auction or otherwise disposed of in accordance with the Impounding Act 1955 at the South Taranaki District Council Pound, Beach Road, Hāwera on Thursday 12 August 2021 at 1pm.

Innovating Streets Feedback Wanted



Feedback on the two 90% Waka Kotahi funded main street safety improvement projects in Eltham and Waverley is currently open and comments from each community is coming in through online submission, email and phone. While all elements of the Waverley project are in place, the road marking at the northern

side of Eltham and the wayfinding signage on the footpath either side of the safety platform are still to be finished. Feedback closes on Friday 13 August. All comments received will be collated and read, with analysed data received from traffic monitoring also considered.

Ōpunakē Residents - Please conserve water and fix leaks now

The recent floods in the Waiaua River has made the water difficult to treat as it is laden with sand. We are working to keep water flowing however your help in reducing water use and fixing leaks will benefit everyone.

Lysaght-Watt Trust Ronald Hugh Morrieson Literary Awards

Closes midnight on Wednesday 11 August

Find out more about these annual awards and enter online at www.southtaranaki.com/rhm

Rates Instalment

Due Wednesday 25 August 2021

The last day for payment of the first instalment of rates for 2021/22 without incurring a penalty is 25 August. If you pay your rates in full by this date you'll receive a 2% discount.