FACTSHEET

Horowhenua DISTRICT COUNCIL

A snapshot of our water services in Horowhenua

Horowhenua is home to around 37,500 people and is a growing district, with more people choosing to live here and establish businesses.

We have approximately 12,813 residential water connections, which help distribute the cost of essential water services.

Due to the district's geographic spread, Horowhenua has a significant number of water assets relative to its size.

We've looked after our district's water needs

We're proud to have taken good care of water for Horowhenua, meaning you have safe and resilient water infrastructure. Water assets make up about 51% of Council assets. The reality though, is that we are the 10th fastest growing district in New Zealand and have major investment required (30% of Council's total expenditure relates to growth) which would mean we couldn't invest in other Council services if we continue to deliver water services alone.

Here are some examples of the wide range of water assets we've invested in:

Drinking Water

Council provides safe and reliable drinking water to 13,700 residential, industrial, and commercial properties in Levin, Foxton, Foxton Beach, Shannon, and Tokomaru. Council also provides water for firefighting capability.

- We supply **5 billion litres of safe drinking water** each year.
- **11 reservoirs** to hold your treated water and handle emergencies.
- **327km of pipes** – enough to stretch from Levin to Wairoa.
- **5 drinking water treatment plants**.

Wastewater

Council's wastewater (sewage) reticulation network and pump stations collect sewage from households, businesses, and industrial customers. It is then transported to wastewater treatment plants (Levin, Foxton, Foxton Beach, Shannon, Tokomaru and Waitārere Beach) where it is biologically treated, and the treated effluent is then applied to land.

WE HAVE:

- **252km of pipes** – enough to stretch from Levin to New Plymouth.
- **52 wastewater pump stations** to help move wastewater to the treatment plants.
- **6 treatment plants**
- **5 discharge to land sites**
- **9 oxidation ponds** to help treat wastewater.

Stormwater

Council's stormwater activity provides piped and open drainage systems to collect the stormwater from roads, footpaths, and hard standing surfaces from residential and commercial properties.

- We have **102km of underground pipes**.

The future of water services in Horowhenua

Horowhenua has over a billion dollars in water assets and while a considerable amount of development occurred in the district 60-70 years ago, a number of these assets now require upgrades and investment to keep up with growth. Equally important is the projected growth in our region and our community's increasing expectations on service delivery across all the water activities. Over the next 10 years our water assets requires investment of $284m with a further $340m anticipated for the following 20 years.

Water

We are in the process of improving our water master plan, which takes a long-term view of water supply within our district. The water master plan includes Levin, Shannon, and Foxton, and address the following: improving water demand management for Levin, Shannon and Foxton through the installation of water meters; increasing water storage for Levin and Ōhau, by building a large raw (untreated) water reservoir to improve the resilience and reliability of the Levin and Ōhau drinking water supply and meet the projected demand from a growing population; investigating a reticulated water supply to growing smaller settlements, such as Waitārere Beach and Ōhau, and upgrading the Levin Water Treatment Plant to increase capacity.

Wastewater

Council is currently developing a masterplan for the Levin Wastewater Treatment Plant (LWWTP), this will see the treatment plant is developed into a fit for purpose facility for both the current and future Levin community. Other key investments include consenting and implementation of Tokomaru Wastewater Treatment Plant (WWTP) upgrades, investigation and increasing capacity for wastewater irrigation and disposal at the POT and Foxton wastewater treatment plant and further investment at the Waitārere Beach, Foxton, Shannon, and Foxton Beach Treatment Plants.

Stormwater

Predictions of more frequent and intense rainfall indicate we may see increased pressure on the ability of existing infrastructure to provide adequate service. This requires an ongoing focus on solutions for flood prone areas. Infill development within existing urban areas is increasing the ratio of impermeable surface to uncovered land, which can exacerbate flooding in low-lying areas. Key focus investment areas include upgrading our network through renewal works, preparing for growth.

Who should deliver local water services?

As part of the Government's Local Water Done Well programme and new legislation, every council must consult with their communities on how we deliver water services in the future. We have explored three options.

How do the options compare and what are the key considerations?

We've been working hard to determine the best option for our community, considering factors like affordability for ratepayers, operational and capital efficiencies, the impact of strict regulations, the number of ratepayers to share costs, and environmental, social, and cultural effects. We're also looking at asset value, debt, planned capital investments, and which option will make us more appealing for regional government deals.

At a high level, here's how Option 1 - a jointly owned water services organisation and Council's preferred option, stacks up against the status quo - how we currently deliver water services.

Which option will better meet the new economic and environmental regulatory standards?

Which option positions Horowhenua as a more attractive partner for Central Government's regional and national water infrastructure deals?

Considerations

Ability to borrow
Option 1 will give Council more ability to borrow money for other council services such as roading, rubbish, recycling and community facilities. The separation of water services into a Water Services Organisation would create $45m of new borrowing capacity for Council's non-water services.
OPTION 1 ✓
STATUS QUO –

Water Services Investment
Alongside Council's ability to borrow more for capital investment outside of water services, the joint water organisation will also have the ability to invest more in water services delivery and leverage shared professional expertise and operational efficiencies gained via economies of scale.
OPTION 1 ✓
STATUS QUO ✗

Water Services Connections
The more water connections able to pay for investment, the better. There'd be 77,172 water connections for Option 1 and 12,813 under the status quo.
OPTION 1 ✓
STATUS QUO –

Environmental, social and cultural impacts
Tighter regulations and additional debt headroom for both the jointly owned Water Services Organisation and Council will likely result in better outcomes. Regardless of option, Council will continue to work with Iwi/hapū partners and community to achieve the best outcomes for our district.
OPTION 1 ✓
STATUS QUO –

Impact to household costs
If all pricing was shared equally (harmonised) on day one of Water Services Organisation establishment, Option 1 would cost average households less than the status quo at year one of establishment - $1779 per year compared to $2,514.
OPTION 1 ✓
STATUS QUO –

Transition costs
A jointly owned Water Services Organisation would require councils to contribute setup costs to establish the entity, these costs would be debt funded and transferred to the Water Services Organisation.
OPTION 1 –
STATUS QUO –

Influence over decision making
Councils can influence the jointly owned Water Services Organisation through the Statement of Expectations and as shareholders, however decisions will ultimately be the responsibility of the Water Services Organisation governance board.
OPTION 1 –
STATUS QUO ✓

Iwi and hapū involvement
Outside of Council's current Māori Engagement Framework, the extent to which Iwi and hapū will be involved in decision-making for a new Water Services Organisation is yet to be confirmed. Regardless of how water services are delivered, legislation requires that the principles of the Treaty of Waitangi are upheld.
OPTION 1 –
STATUS QUO ✓

✓ Favourable – Neutral ✗ Unfavourable

Water Charges

In 2024/25, connected residential ratepayers pay:

$500 **For Drinking Water**
$359 if in Foxton Beach.

$724 **For Wastewater**

$206 **For Stormwater**
Based on a property with an average capital value of $600,000. Exact amount depends on capital value of each property.

These targeted rates contribute towards the day-to-day costs of looking after your water needs, including the replacement of assets we currently own. Your rates also help cover the cost of repaying the debt for large construction projects.

Have your say

This is one of the most important decisions we'll make for our district, as it will impact on the way we deliver your water for decades to come.

Come along to a drop in session

We encourage you to join us at one of our Cuppa with a Councillor sessions, a Citizens' Panel workshop, watch our Facebook Lives, chat to us online, and submit your feedback before 10 April. All the details are on our website at letskorero.horowhenua.govt.nz/LWDW

10 **Cuppa with a Councillor**
Te Takeretanga o Kura-hau-pō and Te Awahou Nieuwe Stroom
10.30am to 12.30pm, and Shannon Library from 1pm to 2.30pm

20 **Citizens' Panel Workshop**
More details to come

Make a submission!

Making a submission is the most important thing you can do. It also means that if you'd like, you can choose to speak to Elected Members about your views at our hearings. Simply tick the box on the submission form to do that and we will be in touch to arrange a time.

There are four easy ways you can make a submission:

1. **On our website letskorero.horowhenua.govt.nz/LWDW**
2. **Fill in a hardcopy submission form from one of our libraries or customer service centre and drop it in a box in person**
3. **Fill in a hardcopy submission form and post it to us:**

Posted to:

Horowhenua District Council
Submission – LWDW
Private Bag 4002
HOROWHENUA 5540

4. **Send an email to submissions@horowhenua.govt.nz**