

Three Waters Committee Minutes

Minutes of the Three Waters Committee meeting held on Wednesday 14 May 2025, commencing at 9.30am, in the Hine Paaka Council Chamber, Te Whare Whakatere, 2 Baring Square East, Ashburton.

Present

Mayor Neil Brown, Councillors Russell Ellis (Chair), Phill Hooper, Lynette Lovett, Liz McMillan and Tony Todd.

Also present: Crs Leen Braam and Richard Wilson.

In attendance

Hamish Riach (Chief Executive), Neil McCann (GM Infrastructure & Open Spaces), Toni Durham (GM Democracy & Engagement), Andrew Guthrie (Assets Manager), Hernando Marilla (Operations Manager), Ulrich Glasner (Water Services Manager), and Heather Stoddart (Governance Support).

1 Apologies

Cr Mackle

Sustained

2 Extraordinary Business

Nil.

3 Declarations of Interest

Nil.

4 Confirmation of Minutes – 26/03/25

That the minutes of the Three Waters Committee meeting held on 26 March 2025, be taken as read and confirmed.

McMillan/Hooper

Carried

A PowerPoint presentation accompanied the activity reports.

5.1 Three Waters operations & maintenance

- An amendment to the report 5.1 – there are 3 Wastewater Treatment Plants and 18 wastewater pump stations.
- A live map has been developed which details the CRMs in the district. Blue symbols represent the “not completed” and yellow are “completed”. Clicking on the symbols details all the information of the CRM, including photographs. It can all be shared with Customer Services. This map is for water, wastewater and other issues covering the whole of Ashburton.
- The map will also detail historical CRMs and repairs too, so that there is a future record.
- Currently an internal asset only, due to private information, hence why it’s not shared publicly.
- There was comment that it would be beneficial to have this tool for the Methven Community Board, so that their CRMs can be detailed in the same way.

5.2 Ocean Farm

- Farm Manager has retired with effect 1 May 2025.
- Three main contractors engaged to continue the farm manager's functions. (ACL, Alliance & Townsend Agricultural).
- Remaining activities that will not be covered by the contractors will be managed internally by existing staff.
- ADC Property team is currently planning to rent out the property on Ocean Farm, so that there will be an on-farm presence for added security.

6.1 Drinking Water

- Confident to get all the UV upgrades listed in this PowerPoint to be completed by the end of the year.
- Tinwald looking like a new bore on the next planning cycle, looking to go deeper or another location.

• Drinking Water Laboratory Accreditation

- The Lab now complies as of 8 April 2025 and testing in the laboratory back up and running on the 16 April 2025.

• Source Water Risk Management Plans

- This work involves completing a formal risk assessment of the SWRMA and will require liaising with ECan regarding information they may have on land use activities, potential sources of contamination and other hazards

• NE Ashburton Water supply extension

- The landowners will receive correspondence in the mail about the proposal. About 17 landowners involved in the first round of consultations.
- This will be part of the report in the decision making to Council.
- Because Council hasn't decided on wastewater it can't be packaged with Drinking Water. It also depends on the trench heights and the pipes still need to be one metre apart.

• Mixed Use Rural Water Supplies – Taumata Arowai Consultation

- Officers will look to submit on the changes. The consultation closes at 5pm on Friday, 13 June 2025.

• Montalto Water Supply

- Have discussed with Montalto residents about starting a cartridge filtration system trial.
- Still looking to find three houses for the house trials. Need to find the right locations.

• Leak Detection Programme Follow-Up

- Ashburton NW of the main road and as far up as the pressure zone, which is Allens Rd, and Methven.
- A total of 103 leaks were identified on the Council network.
- More testing would be beneficial, but Officers/contractors doing what they can currently. The challenge is the resourcing issues for the follow-up after detection.
- Haven't done the calculations on the water that is saved, but that could be done in the future.
- Some bigger leaks can mask the noise of smaller leaks, hence why they went into Methven twice.
- Water meters aren't currently in the Long-Term Plan, as the trial in Methven had not yet been completed. Councillors agreed it wouldn't be prudent to include them given not having the findings of the trial.

- **Advanced Water Metering Trial**

- MOU currently under review, which will be signed next week and will report back at the next meeting.
- Rakaia East has been identified as the most suitable location for the trial.

- **Backflow Investigations and Implementation**

- Of the 652 properties, 80% have some form of backflow prevention but not compliant. Moving forward the focus is to target the 80% to comply and then target the 20%.
- To comply, backflow should be testable. To make backflow testable is quite an easy process.

6.2 Wastewater

- **Rakaia WWTP Sludge Drying Beds**

- Still working to minimise the leaks.
- The switchboard upgrade was included in the initial budget scope. But the estimate from the consultant, wasn't affordable, so officers wrote out the switchboard. But once the tenders came through, they were below budget, so it was decided to include the switchboard back in.
- Estimate for a new Switchboard \$200-300k

- **Ocean Farm Irrigation Investigations**

- Met with 2 contractors, Rainer and Ray Maine about options around Irrigation.
- When using pivots, it's the high-power rate. Currently have "pop-up" sprinklers and although financially cheaper, they are not as effective.
- In favour to have a discussion around Wastewater strategy, which prompted a talk with ECan. ECan requested an action plan and now officers are 95% finished with the action plan, which will be put to the Councillors when complete.
- The aim would be to gather more data from all 11 zones, but there's only one meter. Ideally would like to do more calculations on a wider area with more meters, which is underway.

- **NE Ashburton Wastewater Servicing Concepts**

- A summary of the report of the servicing options will be shared to this committee when they are ready.

The Committee adjourned for a 10 minute break.

6.3 Stormwater

- Council's consent requires us to identify those top 10 properties that pose the highest risk of a site discharging contaminants to the Council stormwater network.
- Asked a consultant to develop a risk prioritisation framework.
- Difficult to put a label on what property might be high risk but the GIS tool, hopefully will make it easier to identify.

6.4 Asset Management

- **Asset Management Maturity Assessment**

- The targets are assessed internally and determined by the size of the organisation.
- Inform future asset management programmes.
- A tool to identify the gaps and the decision to close those gaps is Council's decision.

7 Drinking Water Compliance

- Annual assessment of 2024 based on the rules that applied at that stage.
- Now new rules have been enforced and the changes reflected that.
- Officers plan to update the compliance table quarterly.
- The main increase in compliance will come with completion of the capital work. Other stuff is related to back-office processes and there is a plan to address that in the next 18 months.
- Officers can expand the reporting, to show the full scope of compliance. This would require additional time in the meeting to discuss however it would help highlight the areas that need the most improvement and include an overview of the risk profile.

8 RMA Consent Compliance

- Three consents (CRC231924; CRC031002 & CRC031148) are Compliant
- CRC030999.1, Ocean Farm – Discharge contaminant to land) is assessed as Significant Non-compliance.
- Action Plan has been developed to address the non-compliance.
- Action Plan has been reviewed, and it is to be completed by the end of this week and ECan will confirm next week whether they accept this Action Plan.
- Effluent Quality reporting – repeating the testing to confirm that the long-standing issue is caused by the bird population within the wetland.
- Bird control has been considered previously, but potentially this might need to be revisited.
- HHWET use lasers to keep birds off of their ponds, so might be worth a call to them.

9 Financials

- Discussion around how officers are addressing the gap on the operating budget. Keep doing the work and then declare we'll go over; the alternative is that we stop work. Currently, reports are to look at the over's and under's and consider the budget as a whole. The financial variances are reported to Council monthly and so it was agreed that additional reporting on a 6-weekly basis was unnecessary.

Questions

- With the recent heavy rain event there was a wastewater complaint in relation to Wellington Street. Upon further investigation the stormwater roof run-off was directed into the wastewater system, which can add a strain on the network. The right pipe project – done almost 10 years ago –but there will continue to be new sites and changes to property post project.
- Discussions were had around the water service network. Gather thinking internally about what work needs to evolve. Understand the rationale behind the service. Neil, Hamish and the team to discuss and organise a workshop in August/September. Consider the individual ratepayers, policy implications and where enforcement and knowledge sits, the non-compliance issues.
- LWDW - Discussions in progress about firstly, what appropriate resources are required; secondly, how we help each other out – standalone business unit – not in isolation. ADC need to work as one and assist all parts of council, but it needs to be accordingly charged. It's an uncertain regulatory exposure, but as time evolves, ADC will learn more about how to establish the business unit to reach compliance, and the infrastructure required will become evident, once ADC have the systems, reporting and monitoring in place.

The meeting concluded at 11:40am.