



# **DRAFT MINUTES**

**Wastewater Management Review  
Committee meeting**

**Tuesday, 17 March 2026**

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**MINUTES OF TAURANGA CITY COUNCIL  
WASTEWATER MANAGEMENT REVIEW COMMITTEE MEETING  
HELD AT THE TAURANGA CITY COUNCIL CHAMBERS, L1, 90 DEVONPORT ROAD,  
TAURANGA  
ON TUESDAY, 17 MARCH 2026 AT 1:00 PM**

**MEMBERS PRESENT:** Mr Spencer Webster (Chair), Ms Lara Burkhardt, Cr Rick Curach, Mr Whitiora McLeod, Cr Kevin Schuler, Cr Rod Taylor, Cr Hēmi Rolleston (online)

**ABSENT** Ms Destiny Leaf, Mr Des Heke.

**IN ATTENDANCE:** Reneke van Soest (General Manager: Operations & Infrastructure), Jim Summers (Environmental Programme Leader), Wally Potts (Head of City Waters), Radleigh Cairns (Manager: Drainage Services), Sarah Holmes (Team Leader: Governance & CCO Support Services) and Caroline Irvin (Governance Advisor).

Timestamps are included at the start of each item and signal where the agenda item can be found in the recording of the meeting held on 17 March 2026 on [Council's You Tube Channel](#).

## **1 OPENING KARAKIA**

Mr Spencer Webster opened the meeting with a karakia.

## **2 APOLOGIES**

Nil

## **3 PUBLIC FORUM**

Nil

## **4 ACCEPTANCE OF LATE ITEMS**

That the Wastewater Management Review Committee accepts the following late items for consideration at the meeting:

- Wastewater Activity Report

And

- Environmental Mitigation and Enhancement Fund Policy Manual

The above items were not included in the original agenda because they were not available at the time the agenda was issued, and discussion could not be delayed until the next scheduled meeting of the Committee because a decision was required in regard to these items.

## ACCPETANCE OF LATE ITEMS

### COMMITTEE RESOLUTION WW/26/0/1

Moved: Mr Whitiora McLeod  
Seconded: Cr Kevin Schuler

That the Wastewater Management Review Committee accepts the following late items for consideration at the meeting:

- Wastewater Activity Report
- Environmental Mitigation and Enhancement Fund Policy Manual

**CARRIED**

## 5 CONFIDENTIAL BUSINESS TO BE TRANSFERRED INTO THE OPEN

Nil

## 6 CHANGE TO ORDER OF BUSINESS

Nil

## 7 CONFIRMATION OF MINUTES

### 7.1 Minutes of the Wastewater Management Review Committee meeting held on 10 December 2025

### COMMITTEE RESOLUTION WW/26/0/2

Moved: Mr Spencer Webster  
Seconded: Cr Rick Curach

That the Minutes of the Wastewater Management Review Committee meeting held on 10 December 2025 be confirmed as a true and correct record.

**CARRIED**

## 8 DECLARATION OF CONFLICTS OF INTEREST

Nil

## 9 BUSINESS

Timestamp: 3 minutes and 30 seconds

### 9.1 Wastewater Activity Report (Late Item)

**Staff** Jim Summers, Environmental Programme Leader  
Radleigh Cairns, Manager: Drainage Services

The Environmental Programme Leader and the Manager: Drainage Services spoke to a PowerPoint presentation (attached) and provided the following points:

- Monitoring results for council's wastewater consent were compliant. There was no feedback as yet from Bay of Plenty Regional Council on the monitoring upgrade and technological review. Staff were working with tangata whenua on the kaitiaki monitoring plan and baseline monitoring.
- Marearea was preparing a report on consent conditions effectiveness. A workshop was proposed for the next committee meeting for in-depth discussion.
- 31 blockages had been reported since last meeting; 27 contained, four potentially reached the environment, all followed overflow protocol.
- No odour complaints had been received for Chapel Street or Te Maunga Wastewater Treatment Plants.
- The emergency bypass at Chapel Street was activated due to heavy rainfall. 120,000 cubic metres of treated wastewater was discharged but was compliant with the consent.
- Capex projects: Clarifier 3 works completed, final commissioning pending bioreactor 2 completion. Bioreactor 2 construction progressing, expected completion end of 2026, service in early 2027. Bioreactor 1 will be serviced after Bio 2 is online.
- The new inlet works preliminary design was completed. The next phase was due to start in April 2026, with construction scheduled for July 2028.
- The Opal Drive pump station works were progressing and expected to be in operation by June 2026. An archaeological find had temporarily halted works.
- The Wairakei Wastewater pump station design was complete, works being priced and consents on hold pending engagement with Nga Potiki. Tauranga City Council was working with Nga Potiki on a Memorandum of Understanding on the future of the entire area.
- Renewals programme: The pipe relining and dig/relay works were ongoing at Mansell's Ave and Totara Street South.
- The Environmental Mitigation and Enhancement fund remained at \$850,000. Staff were available to support a guideline review.

#### Project Business Case (PBC)

- The strategic case had been completed. The economic case had a long list of options and had been paused due to the potential water organisation transition. The next step was to reduce options to a shortlist, with remaining work to be completed post-transition.

#### Biosolids Disposal and Classification

- Currently, biosolids were sent to vermicomposting. Future risks included cost and legislative changes. A technical assessment was underway for alternative disposal options (e.g., anaerobic digestion, incineration).
- Incineration was not viable due to high operating costs and wet biosolids. Landfill disposal would increase OPEX by \$1.5–\$2 million/year.

**Actions Requested:**

That staff:

- Schedule a workshop directly before the next committee meeting to discuss consent effectiveness and a monitoring plan, and to review long and shortlist options for the Project Business Case. Staff to provide further information before the workshop, including a growth servicing study.
- Report back with further information on Biosolids Disposal and Classification

**COMMITTEE RESOLUTION WW/26/0/3**

Moved: Mr Spencer Webster

Seconded: Cr Rick Curach

That the Wastewater Management Review Committee:

- (a) Receives the report "Wastewater Activity Report".

**CARRIED**

**Attachments**

- 1 Wastewater Management Review Committee Presentation March 2026

**10 LATE ITEM**

Timestamp: 30 minutes and 15 seconds

**10.1 Environmental Mitigation and Enhancement Fund Policy Manual (EMEF)**

Mr Spencer Webster (Chair) introduced his item. The Committee discussed the following points:

- The intended purpose and application of the Environmental Mitigation and Enhancement Fund (EMEF) was to support measures and initiatives in the upper Tauranga Harbour to address actual and potential effects of the wastewater scheme, provide environmental compensation, and enhance the environment.
- Concerns were raised that the current policy may be too restrictive, particularly regarding the 50% funding cap for project applications and the lack of flexibility for broader, catchment-wide planning or restoration initiatives.
- The customary marine title holders were considering a proposal for a catchment plan that would assess the current state, impacts, and potential restoration/enhancement actions for Rangatahi, aligning with legal requirements for a plan under the new title order.
- There was agreement that more funds should be directed toward tangible mitigation and enhancement projects, rather than studies, but a comprehensive plan was needed to prioritise impactful projects.
- The Committee sought clarity on whether it had authority to amend the policy, as the guidelines were adopted by the committee and not full Council, and the terms of reference are silent on policy review.
- The fund currently sat at approximately \$850,000, with annual increases of \$50,000 plus CPI, and had not been utilised recently due to lack of suitable applications.
- No independent panel was currently active, as there had been no applications requiring assessment.
- The committee was not aware of any pending applications except for the potential proposal from customary marine title holders.

**Actions requested**

- That a working group is formed to review the environmental mitigation and enhancement fund policy – to include Cr Taylor, Cr Schuler and Chair Spencer Webster, with the aim of reporting back to the next committee meeting.
- That staff review the EMEF policy and bring back recommendations or amendments to enable more flexible and impactful use of the fund, including consideration for planning work and broader restoration strategies.
- That staff supply the working group with documents from the previous policy review to inform their considerations.

**COMMITTEE RESOLUTION WW/26/0/4**

Moved: Mr Spencer Webster

Seconded: Mr Whitiora McLeod

That the Wastewater Management Review Committee:

- a) Receives the late item 'Environmental Mitigation and Enhancement Fund Policy Manual' item.
- b) Recommends to Council that a review is undertaken of the Environmental Mitigation and Enhancement Fund Policy Manual and that a working group is established to progress the review that includes Cr Taylor, Cr Schuler and Chair Spencer Webster and associated Tauranga City Council staff.
- c) Recommends to Council that the Terms of Reference are updated to delegate decision making powers to the Wastewater Management Review Committee regarding the review of the Environmental Mitigation and Enhancement Fund policy.

**CARRIED**

**Attachments**

- 1 Environmental Mitigation and Enhancement Fund Policy Manual

**11 CLOSING KARAKIA**

Mr Spencer Webster closed the meeting with a karakia.

**The meeting closed at 2pm.**

**The minutes of this meeting were confirmed as a true and correct record at the Wastewater Management Review Committee meeting held on 17 June 2026.**