



SUPPLEMENTARY AGENDA

Wastewater Management Review Committee meeting Wednesday, 7 October 2026

Date: Wednesday, 7 October 2026

Time: 9:30 am

**Location: Tauranga City Council Chambers
L1, 90 Devonport Road
Tauranga**

**Gareth Green
Acting Chief Executive**

Order of Business

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10 BUSINESS

10.3 Environmental Mitigation and Enhancement Fund - Policy Manual Review

File Number: A21205057

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PURPOSE OF THE REPORT

1. To provide the Wastewater Management Review Committee (WWMRC) with an update on the progress of the informal working group's review of the Environmental Mitigation and Enhancement Fund (EMEF) Policy Manual, and to highlight any significant opportunities, risks, key issues, and material changes since the last committee meeting.

RECOMMENDATIONS

That the Wastewater Management Review Committee:

- (a) Receives the report "Environmental Mitigation and Enhancement Fund - Policy Manual Review".
- (b) That the Wastewater Management Review Committee approves the adoption of the new 2026 Environmental Mitigation and Enhancement Fund (EMEF) Policy Manual.
- (c) Delegates authority to the General Manager to make any minor final edits to the 2026 Environmental Mitigation and Enhancement Fund Policy Manual arising from the committee's deliberations.

DISCUSSION

Environmental Mitigation and Enhancement Fund (EMEF)

1. The Environmental Mitigation and Enhancement Fund has not been effectively used since two successful applications in 2013. The current guideline created in 2019 added a number of criteria to assess applications against along with an independent panel process.
2. As a result, the application process became more complex and a review of the policy manual was initiated by the committee to ensure it remained fit for purpose, removed unnecessary administrative barriers, and provided greater flexibility in the administration of the fund.
3. Following the June 2026 Committee meeting recommendation, staff setup an informal working group with Cr Schuler, Chair Webster, and Cr Taylor to commence a review of the current 2019 Environmental Mitigation and Enhancement Fund (EMEF) Policy Manual.
4. Two working group meetings were held on 3 August 2026 and 28 September 2026 to review the policy manual and identify opportunities for improvement and provide direction to staff on proposed changes.
5. The first meeting focused on identifying areas where the current policy manual could be improved. Discussions centred on increasing flexibility within the fund, streamlining the application and assessment process, improving the management of conflicts of interest, and ensuring the Committee retains appropriate discretion over the operation of funding rounds.

6. Following the initial meeting, Council staff prepared a revised draft policy manual incorporating the working group's feedback. The draft was subsequently reviewed by Council's Policy Team, and their feedback was incorporated into the working document.
7. The second meeting considered the revised draft policy manual and focused on refining the proposed changes. Discussions included the appropriateness of terminology used within the policy manual, the adequacy of conflict-of-interest provisions, improving accessibility to funding opportunities, clarifying assessment criteria, and simplifying payment provisions to better align with the purpose of the EMEF.
8. The revised Environmental Mitigation and Enhancement Fund (EMEF) Policy Manual is attached for the Committee's consideration and adoption.

ATTACHMENTS

1. **EMEF Policy Manual - Final Draft October 2026 - A21214852** [↓](#) 



Environmental Mitigation and Enhancement Fund Policy Manual

August 2026

Version Tracker

Document Version	3
Past versions	2015 Policy Manual, 2019 Policy Manual
Prepared by:	Jim Summers, Environmental Programme Leader
Date:	1 October 2026



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Mihi

A te korowai o te kaihanga, a te korowai o te rangimārie, kua hora mai, i runga i a tātou. E ngā waka o ngā tai, e ngā kārangaranga maha, e ngā iwi o te moana, e ngā tangata whenua, waiho i te kōtahi, kua i te kōtahi, tēnā koutou, tēnā koutou, tēnā koutou katoa.

The cloak of the Creator, the cloak of peace, that has been spread upon us. The canoes of the shores, to the many affiliations, to the people throughout the moana, to the people of the land, let us join together and not fall apart, greetings, greetings, greetings to you all.

Tauparapara / Whakataukī

Hei oranga whenua
Hei oranga moana
Hei oranga tangata

Healthy land
Healthy waters
Healthy people.

Ko au te pātiki
Ko te pātiki ko au

I am the flounder and the
flounder is me.

Puritia ngā taonga tuku iho
a ngā tupuna
hei tiki huia mā ngā uri whakatupu

Keep the treasures handed down
by the ancestors
as an adornment for the descendants
yet to come.



1.0 Fund Aims & Purpose

In accordance with condition 19 of Resource Consent 62878, the permit holder Tauranga City Council (TCC) have established a fund titled the Environmental Mitigation and Enhancement Fund (EMEF).

The EMEF is administered by Tauranga City Council's Wastewater Management Review Committee's (WWMRC) hereafter referred to as the 'Committee'.

The purpose of the EMEF is to fund and facilitate measures and initiatives particularly in Te Tahuna o Rangataua (Upper Tauranga Harbour) to:

- Avoid, remedy or mitigate the actual or potential effects of the Wastewater Scheme (in its broadest sense); or
- To acknowledge and provide mitigation by way of environmental compensation for ongoing adverse environmental effects (including by way of offence to tangata whenua cultural and spiritual values) associated with the Wastewater Scheme.
- To enhance the environment, which has been adversely affected by the Wastewater Scheme.

Section 19.1 of RC62878 records the EMEF may support the following initiatives:

- Providing opportunities for promoting and/or implementing initiatives for capacity building of tangata whenua;
- The carrying out by tangata whenua of monitoring the cultural effects associated with the operation of the Wastewater Scheme;
- Providing opportunities for promoting and/or implementing the involvement of tangata whenua in sampling, testing and monitoring;
- Research into issues relevant to water quality and ecological issues, particularly in the Upper Harbour; and
- Research into the health and size of shellfish populations and the relocation and/or re-seeding of such populations where appropriate.

The initiatives the EMEF may support are not limited to those that are directly address actual adverse effects. The direction in RC62878 clearly provides for a more holistic approach to be considered as reflected by the reference to iwi capacity building. The EMEF could also support strategic and spatial planning that fosters the avoidance, remedying or mitigation of actual, potential or cumulative effects of the Wastewater Scheme.

2.0 Application Streams

- Aligned with the purposes of the fund, there are two streams of application:

Project / Initiative Stream – for projects and initiatives that meet or give effect to the aims and purposes of the EMEF (as set out in 1.0), including but not limited to those which to avoid, remedy or mitigate actual / potential effects of the wastewater scheme, or enhance the environment affected by the scheme. The criteria and application process to obtain funding for potential projects or initiatives is outlined in this Policy Manual.



- **Compensation Stream** – to acknowledge and provide mitigation by way of compensation for ongoing adverse environmental effects. It is envisaged that Mana Whenua groupings that have been significantly impacted by the Wastewater Scheme will engage and negotiate directly with the Council in terms of potential compensation. The process can be initiated by providing written notice directly to the Chief Executive and the Chair of the WWMRC.

DRAFT



3.0 Project / Initiative Eligibility Criteria

Before an application can be considered for EMEF funding, the proposed project **must** contribute to, support, or give effect to at least one of the aims and purposes of the Fund, as outlined in the eligibility criteria below.

Please note - Meeting these eligibility criteria does not guarantee that your project will be funded.

1.	The project must do one or more of the following in giving effect to the aims and purposes of the EMEF: • achieve demonstrable benefits in the area, such as: ○ improved fresh, ground, estuarine or marine water quality ○ increased biodiversity ○ habitat protection ○ soil conservation • increase the capability and capacity of iwi and hapū to carry out their role as kaitiaki and to enable iwi and hapū to plan, manage and undertake projects aimed at avoiding, remedying or mitigating the actual or potential effects of the Wastewater Scheme • increase the application of mātauranga Māori • provide for the preparation of plans (including area-specific plans) that will assist in achieving the aims and purposes of the EMEF • include an applied research component that contributes to improved understanding of impacts, interventions and their outcomes
2.	The project must be led by the iwi and hapū in the area to which the application relates OR demonstrate an active partnership with the relevant iwi or hapū.
3.	The WWMRC may approve funding for a project in full or in part, at its discretion. Partial approvals may be granted in any proportion deemed appropriate.
4.	Projects may be funded for a maximum period of five financial years, after which the project objectives are expected to have been achieved or the project will become self-sustaining.
5.	The project must achieve benefits that would not otherwise be realised without the fund or are not more appropriately funded through other sources.
6.	The effectiveness of the project and its outcomes will be monitored, evaluated and reported. If the project is to be funded for more than one year, the project shall include an annual review and report.



7.	An appropriate project governance structure (which includes mana whenua representation) is in place (or one will be established as part of the project).
8.	The applicant organisation must have a legal entity.

The fund will not provide financial support for:

- Activities outside Tauranga City Council's responsibilities and region.
- Projects more appropriately funded through other funding sources.
- Resource consent applications and mitigation requirements.
- Projects resulting in commercial profit.
- Applications which are incomplete or do not provide enough information.



4.0 Conflict of Interest

To ensure that the Committee assessment of applications to the EMEF is conducted in a clear, transparent, and impartial manner, any Committee member with an actual or perceived conflict of interest in relation to a particular application must not participate in the final decision-making process for that application.

Where a tāngata whenua representative is excluded from the final decision due to a conflict of interest, an equal number of Council members must also be excluded from the decision on that application. The remaining eligible members will determine the application.

This approach maintains the Committee's principle of equal decision-making representation and preserves the intended balance of decision-making authority between Council and tāngata whenua established through the governance arrangements.

For discussion with WWMRC:

5.0 Assessment Criteria

Applications that meet the eligibility criteria will be assessed by the Committee against the following assessment criteria. In determining the relative merits of eligible applications and the appropriate level of funding, the Committee may consider the following:

- The extent to which the project gives effect to the aims and purposes of the EMEF
- The project demonstrates a high likelihood of success based on sound technical information or examples achieved through comparable projects undertaken elsewhere
- The extent to which the project will leverage other funding
- The extent to which the project will involve relevant partner organisations to help ensure it's success
- The extent to which project will engage personnel with the required skills and experience to successfully deliver the project
- The extent to which the project provides educational opportunities, capabilities and development.

Please note - this is not intended to be exhaustive, The Committee may consider any other matters it considers relevant when assessing an application.

The Committee will assess all eligible applications against the eligibility and assessment criteria. Having considered the merits of each application, the Committee will determine the appropriate level of funding and make the final funding decisions.



6.0 Application process

Completion of the application form is required to enable the Committee to evaluate each application. Applications will be assessed on their merits against the eligibility and assessment criteria, based on the information provided. Failure to provide all required information may result in an application being declined.

Applicants and/or representatives of their organisation may be invited to present their application to the Committee as part of the assessment process.

The Committee will determine the dates when the EMEF is open for applications each year and publish those dates on Tauranga City Council's website

The Committee will assess all eligible applications against the eligibility and assessment criteria and make the final funding decisions. All applicants will be advised in writing of the outcome of their application as soon as practicable after decisions have been made.

7.0 Payment methods

Successful applicants will enter into a funding agreement with Tauranga City Council. The funding agreement will specify payment arrangements, reporting requirements, accountability expectations, and any conditions of funding. Payment methods may include payments in advance, reimbursement of costs, or other arrangements agreed between the parties

8.0 Administration database

In the inaugural funding year project applications and relevant documentation may be managed manually using Office word documents and Excel spreadsheets. In future years an in-house database may be developed. The main function of the database will be to keep information consistent, easily accessible and manageable through all stages of the application and assessment process and project implementation.

The Fund database may contain the following information:

- Mailing list of application inquiries
- Applicant and project details
- Project evaluation against screening criteria and related comments
- Project scoring against assessment criteria and related comments
- Assessment progress tables
- WWMRC decisions and related comments
- Contract details (to generate project contracts)
- Client contact/communication
- Progress/project completion report summaries
- Recipient invoices

