## Three Waters Steering Committee formed

Over the past three years central and local government have been considering solutions to challenges facing three waters services delivered to communities. This has seen the development of new legislation and the creation of Taumata Arowai, the new, dedicated Water Services Regulator, to oversee and enforce a new drinking water regulatory framework, with an additional oversight role for wastewater and stormwater networks.

At the recent Central/Local Government Forum, Central and Local Government leadership discussed the particular challenges facing water service delivery and infrastructure and committed to continue working jointly on reform.

These challenges include under-investment in three waters infrastructure in parts of New Zealand and persistent affordability challenges; and the need for additional investment to meet improvements in freshwater outcomes, increase resilience to climate change and natural hazards, and enhance community wellbeing.

This has led to the formation of a joint Three Waters Steering Committee to provide oversight and guidance to support progress towards reform, and to assist in engaging with local government, iwi and other water sector stakeholders on options and proposals.

The Government has indicated that its starting intention is to form public multi-regional models for water service delivery, with a preference for local authority ownership, to realise the benefits of scale for communities. Final decisions on a service delivery model will be informed by discussions with the local government sector, wider engagement with iwi and other stakeholders, and the work of the Steering Committee.

The Steering Committee will ensure that the perspectives, interests and expertise of central and local government, and of communities throughout New Zealand, are considered as the broader challenges facing local government water services and infrastructure are addressed. This will involve periods of engagement, including an initial series of webinars and workshops with local government most likely in July this year. Details of these will be provided soon.

The committee will build on the constructive collaboration modelled by the COVID-19 Local Government Response Unit and will adopt its general principles of regular updates, advice and two-way communications with the sector and other stakeholders as appropriate.

The Steering Committee comprises:

**Independent Chair:** Brian Hanna

**Local Government**: Rachel Reese (Mayor, Nelson City Council), Alex Walker (Mayor, Central Hawke's Bay District Council), Stuart Crosby (Councillor, Bay of Plenty Regional Council), Bayden Barber (Councillor, [Hastings District](https://www.facebook.com/baydenbarberforhastings/) Council), Vaughan Payne (Chief Executive, Waikato Regional Council) , Monique Davidson (Chief Executive, Central Hawke’s Bay), Pat Dougherty (Chief Executive, Nelson City Council), Hamish Riach (‎Chief Executive - ‎Ashburton District Council), Steve Ruru (Chief Executive Officer - Southland District Council), Miriam Taris (Chief Executive, Western Bay of Plenty District Council), Heather Shotter (‎Chief Executive Officer - ‎Palmerston North City Council), Alastair Cameron (CCO Governance and External Partnerships, Auckland Council), Craig McIlory (‎General Manager Healthy Waters - ‎Auckland Council).

**Society of Local Government Managers (SOLGM)**: Karen Thomas (Chief Executive), Kevin Lavery

**Local Government New Zealand (LGNZ)**: Jason Krupp (Deputy Chief Executive Advocacy)

**Department of Internal Affairs (DIA) officials and advisors**: Paul James (Chief Executive, DIA, Secretary for Local Government), Allan Prangnell, Richard Ward, Michael Chatterley, Nick Davis, Natalie McClew

**Taumata Arowai**: Bill Bayfield (Establishment Chief Executive)

**The Treasury**: Morgan Dryburgh

**Three Waters Steering Committee**

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