

“Water your thoughts?”: Key findings from Council’s engagement on Government’s water reforms shared

Hutt City Council has shared key findings from the recent community engagement survey on the Government’s proposed three waters reforms.

In April residents were asked to share their thoughts on three areas: impact of reforms on water infrastructure, support for the reforms, and priorities for water services.

Our survey received 774 individual responses. The key findings are:

- 46% of respondents opposed the reforms, 38% were in support, and 16% were neutral towards reform
- The top three priorities on the impact of the proposed reform in Te Awakairangi ki Tai Lower Hutt:
 1. Investment decisions are made with transparency
 2. Water service entities are protected from privatisation
 3. Water services remain in community ownership
- The most important water services were:
 1. Safe drinking water with strict public health regulations
 2. Ensuring water resources are available for public safety (e.g. fire-fighting)
 3. Storm and wastewater services are managed to prioritise public safety

Lower Hutt Mayor Campbell Barry says that although these reforms are driven by the government, it’s important that Council hears the community’s feedback and views on this matter.

“I want to thank everyone who took time to submit. The results show a range of views which will be considered as part of Council’s submission to Parliament once the legislation is introduced.

“The results of this survey are reasonably balanced. 46% of respondents oppose the reforms, 38% are in support – and a sizeable proportion, 16%, are neutral, which suggests a need for more information from Government on what these reforms actually mean for our local communities.

“I also encourage Lower Hutt residents to make their own submission to Parliament when the time comes. These Government reforms will have an impact on the Lower Hutt community, and it is important to have your say. We will keep you updated on the legislative process and provide information on how to make a submission to select committee when it opens,” Mayor Barry says.

Council is continuing to analyse the results of the survey, including detailed analysis of the comments. Information on the proposed three waters reforms is available on the Hutt City Council [website](#).

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Note to editor: Three waters services (drinking water, waste water, and storm water) are the responsibility of, and currently delivered by, individual councils across New Zealand. In Wellington, the region’s councils – including Hutt City – jointly own Wellington Water, which manages these services on our behalf. The Government is proposing to consolidate the country’s water services into publicly-owned entities instead of 67 local government authorities.