

Dear Resident

The Government is proposing changes to the way our drinking-water, stormwater and wastewater services are delivered to residents through a Three Waters Reform.

The Government has given councils until the end of September to provide feedback on the proposed reform. Before we make a decision about the next stage of the reform process, we are keen to hear what our community thinks.

Currently most three waters assets and services in New Zealand are owned and delivered by local councils and are paid for by rates.

The Government is proposing that three water services move from the 67 councils, who currently manage these, into four large entities.

Waimakariri would become part of an entity that covers most of the South Island with a complicated governance arrangement.

A regional representative group of 12 (made up of six local authority and six mana whenua appointees) would appoint an independent selection panel that in turn appoints board members for each entity.

It is unlikely Council and residents would have a strong say or influence in local matters under this arrangement.

You can find out what this is proposed to look like by visiting:

[www.dia.govt.nz/diawebsite.nsf/Files/Three-waters-reform-programme/\\$file/three-waters-reform-programme-overview-a3-30-june-2021.pdf](http://www.dia.govt.nz/diawebsite.nsf/Files/Three-waters-reform-programme/$file/three-waters-reform-programme-overview-a3-30-june-2021.pdf)

The fundamental question our Council is considering: "Will the reform proposal benefit the Waimakariri Community?"

We all agree that quality drinking water and environmental outcomes are a good thing for the country. At the moment it's not clear whether the proposed reforms are the best way to achieve this, and what the advantages are for our District.

The information enclosed provides some background based on the best information to date and outlines the details of the reform process. We ask that you read and share your feedback by 5pm, Sunday 5 September.

We understand the Three Waters Reform proposal is complex. Your Councillors and I will be available at a series of drop-ins to discuss the reform proposals and answer any questions you may have. Details of these are in the enclosed pamphlet.

You will have read in the local papers your Council's issues regarding these reforms. These are based on the concern that councils such as Waimakariri, which has excellent infrastructure, will be subsidising those who haven't. We are also concerned at the proposed Governance and Management structure and the probability that we will have little influence in the future.

Your Council's position remains that, based on the limited information presented so far, we do not join the Government's reform programme at this point. We are not convinced that there are benefits for the Waimakariri community and we need to hear from you before reaching a formal decision.

I don't think anyone is fundamentally opposed to discussing new ideas and ways of doing things. But rushed reform without adequate time to consider the consequences, and without listening to those affected, is in no one's interest.

However, it is important that we know what you think so that we can make a well-informed decision that is best for our District.

Once we have reviewed all feedback, the Council will meet in late September to consider its position and respond to the Government's proposal. We will keep you updated on how this progresses, through our website and Facebook page.

We look forward to receiving your feedback.

Yours sincerely



Dan Gordon
Mayor