

**To: South Wairarapa District Council**

**Re: Local Water Done Well Consultation**

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SUBMISSION BY RANGITĀNE TŪ MAI RĀ TRUST

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Thursday 17 April 2025

**SUBMITTER INFORMATION**

Iwi / hapū: Rangitāne  
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I am submitting on behalf of Rangitāne Tū Mai Rā Trust

**EXECUTIVE SUMMARY**

1. Rangitāne Tū Mai Rā Trust (**Rangitāne**) is in support of Option One – the Wairarapa-Tararua model – as set out on pages 8-13 of your consultation document.
2. We also support the proposed ownership, governance, delivery and accountability structure whereby iwi will work in collaboration with Councils, as set out at page 9 of your consultation document. We expect to be closely engaged in the planning and design of these arrangements.
3. We are concerned, however, with how this will affect rates and the addition of another utility bill for residents. We would like further information to be provided about these matters.

**INTRODUCTION**

4. Rangitāne Tū Mai Rā Trust is the post settlement governance entity for the Rangitāne iwi in Wairarapa and Tamaki nui-ā-Rua. We completed our Treaty Settlement in 2017 (<https://www.legislation.govt.nz/act/public/2017/0038/latest/DLM6929732.html>).
5. As part of our Treaty Settlement, the Crown indicated that, inter alia, it wanted to “develop a new relationship with Rangitāne o Wairarapa and Rangitāne o Tamaki-nui-a-Rua that has mutual trust and respect for te Tiriti/the Treaty and its principles as its foundation” (s3.26 refers). We understand this to refer to the principles of the Treaty of Waitangi as developed by the Waitangi Tribunal, including consideration of our enduring interests in fresh water.
6. As part of our Treaty Settlement, we received the following water-based redress:

- (a) Statutory acknowledgements over: the Akitio River and its tributaries; the Manawatū River and its tributaries; the Ruamāhanga River and its tributaries; and the Wainui River and its tributaries;
- (b) Membership of the Manawatū River Advisory Board;
- (c) Membership of the Wairarapa Moana Statutory Board, which is responsible for kaitiakitanga over Wairarapa Moana and the Ruamāhanga River catchment.

## STATEMENT OF KEY MATTERS

### Preferred Option

7. You presented two proposed options within the consultation document Local Water Done Well – Water Services Consultation [SWDC Local Water Done Well Water Services Consultation Document](#).
8. Rangitāne is in support of Option One – a multi-council owned water organisation (otherwise known as a ‘Water Council Controlled Organisation’, **CCO**) by the three Wairarapa district councils (Masterton, South Wairarapa, Carterton) and Tararua District Council (**Wai + T**).
9. We support the Wai + T model because of the following:
  - (a) we are happy with the logic and reasons that Council have provided within the consultation document;
  - (b) it provides an economy of scope and scale while retaining an appropriate level of local ownership and leadership;
  - (c) improves access to financing;
  - (d) lifts management and operational capability; and
  - (e) it reflects our iwi connections.
10. We also agree with the statement made by South Wairarapa District Council that: “These four councils have similar-sized communities, face similar challenges, and share iwi cultural ties”.<sup>1</sup>

### Proposed governance strategy and structure

11. The Wai + T model, as Rangitāne understands it, proposes that:
  - Councils will continue to own the water infrastructure;
  - It will be governed by a board of directors who are appointed by a joint council and iwi committee;
  - The joint council and iwi committee provides oversight by setting priorities and performance expectations and give direction to the board; and

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<sup>1</sup> Local Water Done Well – Water Services Consultation, p. 8,  
[SWDC Local Water Done Well Water Services Consultation Document](#)

- The board reports to the committee who will then report back to Councils and Iwi.
12. The mana and rights of iwi in freshwater governance, direction setting and accountability have been confirmed by the Waitangi Tribunal who in an inquiry into on freshwater matters found: that iwi hold a bundle of rights and interests in fresh-water bodies that include, among other things, authority over access to water and its use.<sup>2</sup>
  13. In the Wairarapa and Tararua district, the Crown has acknowledged that fresh-water bodies are taonga (see s 3.9, 3.13 and 3.23 of the Deed of Settlement). It has taken particular measures to reflect our enduring iwi rights and interests in our taonga fresh-water bodies including, among other things, specific provisions related to the Manawatu River Catchment (s 5.6 ff), Wairarapa Moana and the Ruamahanga River Catchment (s 7 refers).<sup>3</sup>
  14. Rangitāne support what is being proposed in the consultation document by way of ownership, governance, delivery and accountability. However, the details of this will need to be fully fleshed out with iwi, and we expect to be fully engaged in that detailed design work.

#### Other matters

15. Rangitāne is concerned about the impact this will have on rates, and therefore the effect this will have on our whānau, hapū and members of the community. With the proposal of a Water CCO, this will take water charges out of the rates bill into a separate invoicing mechanism. We would like more information about how this will be reflected in Council rates:
  - (a) Will there be a decrease in rates due to water charges no longer showing up in Councils books?
  - (b) Or will those charges be applied to other services, so rates stay the same and another utility bill be added to the Wairarapa-Tararua residents?
16. Rangitāne support the implementation of water meters for several reasons: data collection and as a means to encourage users to be more prudent with their water use.
17. Rangitāne advocate for the employment of our whānau, and local community members should this Wai + T model result in local job opportunities.

#### RECOMMENDATIONS

18. Rangitāne expect to be fully engaged in the planning and design of the joint council and iwi committee.
19. We require more discussion around the impacts on rates and separate billing of water from CCOs on whānau, hapū and residents.

<sup>2</sup> <https://www.waitangitribunal.govt.nz/en/inquiries/kaupapa-inquiries/freshwater/>.

<sup>3</sup> [https://www.whakatau.govt.nz/assets/Treaty-Settlements/FIND\\_Treaty\\_Settlements/Rangitane-o-Wairarapa/DOS\\_documents/Rangitane-o-Wairarapa-Deed-of-Settlement-6-August-2016.pdf](https://www.whakatau.govt.nz/assets/Treaty-Settlements/FIND_Treaty_Settlements/Rangitane-o-Wairarapa/DOS_documents/Rangitane-o-Wairarapa-Deed-of-Settlement-6-August-2016.pdf).

20. We ask that the Council consider the support that will be given to whānau, hapū and residents to ensure that any costs because of the transition to and implementation of these new arrangements will not exacerbate living costs.

Individual copies of our submission also sent to:

- Masterton District Council
- Carterton District Council
- Tararua District Council