

Generational improvements on the table for IAWAI Board

Decisions which will shape the future of its region's water services are on the agenda for the IAWAI Board this Thursday.

IAWAI is the new council-owned company responsible for water and wastewater services in the Hamilton City and Waikato District Council areas. It was established last year to jointly deliver efficiencies for the communities it serves and to align with Government policy and direction.

This Thursday, the independent Board which governs the organisation will consider reports on the site of a future new wastewater treatment plant south of Hamilton, a multi-year upgrade to the existing Pukete Wastewater Treatment Plant, and a recommendation to proceed with implementation of residential water metering in Hamilton following a further, large scale, trial.

These projects were among those summarised as part of the public consultation in the first IAWAI Water Services Strategy earlier in 2026. That Strategy identified around \$3 billion in capital expenditure to improve the region's water services in the next decade. These three projects combined represent around \$640 million of that investment.

The agenda considers the preferred site for the proposed new wastewater treatment plant, in Raynes Road south of Hamilton. In response to requests from some members of the community, IAWAI and Hamilton City Council commissioned a 'like for like' assessment of another site using the same criteria as the original assessment of sites which started four years ago. A mana whenua representative group, the Kaitiaki Roopuu, also re-assessed the option for the alternative site on a like-for-like basis using the same cultural framework as was used to evaluate all other sites.

The report confirms the original preferred site remains the recommended option. The property offers a substantially better layout for a buffer zone for plant operations and design and is better able to mitigate any effects for other properties in the area.

The Board will also consider next steps in consideration of residential water metering in Hamilton. A successful trial of 200 properties in Hamilton East has informed next steps and a further trial in 2027 is recommended ahead of roll-out of metering over several years.

The Hamilton East trial highlighted the potential water conservation benefits of metering. The meter data identified leaks on private property across 19% of the participating homes. Addressing these leaks enabled this group alone to prevent the loss of an estimated 5.1 million litres of treated drinking water every year.

Waikato District properties already have metered water for residential and commercial properties. Hamilton has around 4000 meters in commercial properties.

Under Government's Local Water Done Well legislation, IAWAI is required to move away from capital value charging for water within five years (currently Hamilton households pay for their share of water services based on the value of their home, rather than by how much water they use).

Other topics for Thursday's meeting include formal adoption of the Water Services Strategy, including changes made following public feedback, as well as adoption of policies and the Schedule of Fees and Charges ahead of the 'go-live' operational date of 1 July 2026.

The Strategy confirms a reduction in the water charge increases for this year previously forecast by both councils - down \$91 for Hamilton households and \$247 for those in Waikato District.

The strategy introduces an annual growth charge for new dwellings consented after 1 July 2026 as a contribution to the costs of growth.

The combined charge for water and wastewater services (\$500 for a new dwelling and \$250 for a new secondary minor dwelling – or ‘granny flat’) are applied to the property as an ongoing annual charge for 25 years.

The draft strategy projects the charge will generate \$40 million over 10 years – costs which otherwise would fall to existing ratepayers.

The agenda for Thursday’s meeting is here: [IAWAI - Flowing Waters Establishment Board | Hamilton City Council](#)

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Notes for Editors: *From 1 July 2026, Hamilton City and Waikato District Councils transfer responsibility for drinking water and wastewater services to IAWAI – Flowing Waters Ltd. IAWAI will also deliver stormwater services on behalf of councils.*

The new water services company is a joint council-controlled organisation 100% owned by the two councils. They are the only two shareholders, and work in partnership with Waikato-Tainui.

Under legislation, IAWAI has legal responsibility for delivery of water and wastewater services from 1 July 2026, regulated by the water services regulator Taumata Arowai.