



2025/26

# **Annual Report Summary**

**Whakaraapopoto o te Puurongo aa-Tau**

**Te Kaunihera aa Takiwaa o Waikato  
Waikato District Council**

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**Waikato**  
  
**District Council**  
Te Kaunihera aa Takiwaa o Waikato



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## Message from the **Mayor and Chief Executive** Karere naa te Koromatua me te Tumu Whakarae

### **A year of significant change, with more to come**

Local government is undergoing its most significant reform in 30 years, including proposals to rethink how councils are structured through the Government's *Simplifying Local Government* programme. At the same time, rising costs continue to place pressure on households and businesses across our district.

The October 2025 local elections brought a new Mayor and Council, elected with a clear mandate to give our communities greater voice, choice and control over the decisions that affect them. Since taking office, we have focused on listening, setting clear priorities and delivering practical results and value for ratepayers.

Against this backdrop, our responsibility has remained clear: keep affordability at the centre of our decisions, deliver the core services our communities rely on and prepare the district for the future.

### **Delivering across our district**

One of the year's most significant milestones was the establishment of IAWAI – Flowing Waters. Jointly owned by Waikato District Council and Hamilton City Council, the new organisation will ensure our communities continue to receive safe, reliable and affordable water and wastewater services.

We continued to deliver practical improvements across the district. More than 380 kilometres of roadside drainage was maintained, more than 110

kilometres of roads were resurfaced and over 9 kilometres of sealed roads were reconstructed. Improvements around Te Kowhai and Te Kauwhata schools, new footpaths, intersection upgrades and cycling education also helped make local journeys safer.

The first year of the new road maintenance contracts delivered one of the largest maintenance and renewals programmes in recent years: achieved a 94% on-time response rate for customer requests, repaired more than 500 streetlights, and progressed 40 resilience and emergency works. Capital works, winter readiness activities, and road safety improvements were also delivered across the district.

We invested in the places that bring communities together. This included pool upgrades in Huntly, Ngaaruawaahia and Tuakau, new and renewed playgrounds in Raglan, Huntly, Taupiri, Gordonton and Tauwhare; sports lighting in Whatawhata Tuakau, Whitikahu; walkways in Tamahere, Raglan, Huntly; and planning for future facilities in Ngaaruawaahia and Pokeno. We also supported community-led initiatives that strengthened wellbeing, resilience, food security and connections between whaanau.

We also progressed drinking water, wastewater and stormwater improvements across the district, including Raglan Wastewater Treatment Plant upgrade, awarding contracts for upgrades at Huntly, Ngaaruawaahia and Te Kauwhata Wastewater Treatment Plants, upgrading and extending



wastewater pipes in Horotiu, Ngaaruawaahia, Tuakau and Huntly, and improving equipment at the Ngaaruawaahia Wastewater Treatment Plant.

Alongside this we renewed water pipes across the district, upgraded water treatment facilities in Ngaaruawaahia, Horotiu, Huntly and Tuakau, progressed resilience improvements at Port Waikato, and planned for future water storage in Raglan, Tuakau and Matangi. We also supported restoration and biodiversity projects and worked with communities and partners to protect waterways and strengthen resilience. Contracts were awarded for stormwater infrastructure upgrades in Raglan, Te Kauwhata and Pookeno for delivery in 2026/2027.

We continued planning for the district's growth and advocating for the infrastructure our communities will need, including enabling up to 1,500 new homes through Government-approved infrastructure funding for Te Awa Lakes, and supporting fast-track approval of the National Green Steel project at Te Kauwhata.

None of this happens through Council alone. Progress depends on the knowledge, leadership and contribution of mana whenua, community organisations, volunteers, businesses, government agencies and residents across our rural, coastal and urban communities.

We also created more ways for people to participate in local decisions. Council delivered the 2025 local elections and Maaori ward referendum, established the Community Voice Panel and introduced public forums at Council meetings. These are practical steps towards a more open Council that listens earlier, understands different perspectives and makes better-informed decisions.

### Preparing for the future

Council began a major organisational change programme to become more financially sustainable and focused on the services and outcomes our communities value most.

We also submitted our Head Start proposal to central government. Throughout that process, communities told us clearly that any future structure must protect the district's assets and infrastructure, ensure local voices are heard and deliver value for money. Central government is considering all proposals, with decisions expected by the end of September 2026.

The transition to IAWAI, Council's ongoing transformation, and wider local government reform will require careful leadership, and open communication. Our direction remains clear: focus on essential services, keep affordability at the centre of our decisions, spend responsibly, and give communities meaningful opportunities to influence their district's future.

We thank our elected members, kaimahi, mana whenua, partners, volunteers and communities for their contribution throughout a demanding year. Together, we can build liveable, thriving and connected communities where current, and future generations, can prosper.

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**Nga mihi nui**  
**Thank you very much**

**His Worship**  
**Aksel Bech**

**Craig Hobbs**  
**Chief Executive**



## Karere naa te Koromatua me te Tumu Whakare

### Message from the Mayor and Chief Executive

#### He tau hurihanga nui, me eeteahi atu anoo hei whai

E whakahaerehia ana ngaa whakahoutanga nui puta noa i ngaa kaawanatanga aa-rohe o te motu i roto i ngaa tau 30, koia ko ngaa tono e tirohia anoo ai ngaa hanganga o ngaa kaunihera maa roto i te kaupapa *Simplifying Local Government* a te Kaawanatanga. I teenei waa tonu ko ngaa pikinga utu teenaa e peehi tonu ana i ngaa kaainga me ngaa pakihi puta noa i te takiwaa.

I tooia mai e ngaa pootitanga o te Oketopa 2025 teeteahi Manu Kaahui me teeteahi Kaunihera hou, i runga i te maarama kia whai mana kookiri kia whai waahi atu ngaa koorero a ngaa hapori, kia whai koowhiringa ngaa hapori, kia whai waahi i roto i ngaa whakataunga paanga nui ki a raatou. Noo taa maatou noho nei, kua aro ki te whakarongo, ki te whakarite aronga maarama me te tuku i ngaa hua whai tikanga moo ngaa kaiutu reiti.

Moo roto i teenei horopaki, he maarama ngaa haepapa: maatua raa ko te utu e taea ana kei te pito o ngaa whakataunga, ko te tuku i ngaa ratonga matua e whakawhirinaki nei e oo maatou hapori me te whakarite i te takiwaa moo te anamata.

#### Te tuku puta noa i te takiwaa

Ko teetahi o ngaa tutukihanga nui o te tau ko te whakatuunga o IAWAI – Flowing Waters. He mea whiwhi tahi i waenga i Te Kaunihera aa-takiwaa o Waikato me Te Kaunihera o Kirikiriroa, ko taa te

roopu nei he whakapuumaui i te haumarua, te tika me te utu e taea ana, o ngaa wai me ngaa ratonga waipara ka tuku ki oo maatou hapori.

E tukuna tonutia ana e maatou ngaa mahi whakatikatika, whakapai puta noa i te takiwaa. Neke atu i te 380 kiromita waikari taha rori i tiakina, neke atu i te 110 kiromita rori i papataungia, ka mutu, neke atu i te 9 kiromita rori i whakahoungia. Ko ngaa whakatikahanga i ngaa rohenga o ngaa kura o Te Kowhai me Te Kauwhata, ngaa ara whiikoi hou, whakapainga whakawhitinga rori me ngaa akoranga moo te eke pahikara he mea hiki i te haumarua o ngaa haereereetanga.

I te tau tuatahi o ngaa kirimana tiaki rori, i tutuki teeteahi o ngaa hootaka tiaki me te whakahou rori nunui rawa o ngaa tau tata nei: i eke ki te 94% ngaa whakautu wawe ki ngaa tono aa-kiritaki, neke atu i te 500 ngaa rama tiriti i whakatikangia, ka 40 ngaa tuumahi whakamaarohirohi, tuumahi ohotata hoki ka whanake haere. Kua tutuki anoo ngeeteahi mahi whakapai rawa, mahi whakariterite moo te hootoke, me ngeeteahi mahi whakahaumarua rori huri noa i te takiwaa.

I tuku puutea ki ngaa waahi huihui o ngaa hapori. Araa, ko ngaa whakatikahanga o ngaa puna kaukau ki Raahui Pookeka, Ngaaruawaahia me Tuakau, ngaa papataakaro hou, kua whakahoungia raanei ki Whaingaroa, Raahui Pookeka, Taupiri, Hukanui me Tauwhare; ngaa rama moo ngaa mahi haakinakina ki Whatawhata, Tuakau, Whitikahu; ngaa ara whiikoi

ki Tamahere, Whaingaroa, Raahui Pookeka; me te whakamahere i eeteahi atu rauhanganga a muri ake nei ki Ngaaruawaahia me Pookeno. Naa We Council hoki eeteahi taunakitanga ki ngaa kookiritanga aa-hapori e whakakaha nei i te hauora, te manahau, te whiwhinga kai me ngaa hononga i waenga i ngaa whaanau.

I kookiritia hoki e maatou ngaa whakatikahanga wai inu, waipara me te waiaawhaa puta noa i te takiwaa, koia ko te whakahounga o te Puna Raawekeweke Waipara o Whaingaroa, te tuku kirimana moo ngaa whakahounga Puna Raawekeweke Waipara ki Raahui Pookeka, Ngaaruawaahia me Te Kauwhata, te whakahou me te whakaroa i ngaa koorere tuku waipara i Horotiu, Ngaaruawaahia, Tuakau me Raahui Pookeka, me te whakapai i ngaa taputapu ki te Puna Raawekeweke Waipara o Ngaaruawaahia.

Aapiti atu ki teenei kua whakahoungia e maatou ngaa koorere wai puta noa i te takiwaa, kua whakapai ake i ngaa rauhanganga raawekeweke wai i Ngaaruawaahia, Horotiu, Raahui Pookeka me Tuakau, kua kookiritia ngaa mahi whakapakari tuupono ki Te Puuaha o Waikato, me te whakamahere i ngaa puninga wai ki Whaingaroa, Tuakau me Matangi. I taunaki hoki maatou i ngaa mahi whakaoranga, rerenga rauropi hoki, me te mahi tahi ki ngaa hapori me ngaa hoa paatui ki te tiaki i ngaa arawai me te whakapakari i te tuupono. I tukuna ngaa kirimana moo ngaa whakahounga hanganga waiaawhaa ki Whaingaroa, Te Kauwhata me Pokeno hei tuku a te 2026/2027.

Ka whakamahere tonu maatou e whanake tonu ai te takiwaa, me te hapahapai moo ngaa hanganga ka hiahia e oo maatou hapori, koia ko te haapai i ngaa kaainga hou eke atu ki te 1,500, i hua i roto i te hanganga puutea whakaaetanga-Kaawanatanga moo Te Awa Lakes me te taunaki i te tere whakaaetanga o te kaupapa National Green Steel ki Te Kauwhata.

E kore eenei katoa e tutuki i te Kaunihera anahe. Ko eenei ahunga whakamua he mea e kitea i te maatauranga, aratakitanga me ngaa tukunga a te mana whenua, ngaa roopu whakahaere aa-hapori, ngaa kaituuao, ngaa pakihi, ngaa puutahi kaawanatanga me ngaa kainoho puta noa i ngaa hapori tuawhenua, taimoana, noho taone anoo hoki.

I waihangahia hoki e maatou eeteahi huarahi e whai waahi ai ngaa taangata ki ngaa whakataunga a takiwaa. Naa te Kaunihera te pootitanga aa-rohe 2025 me te taapaetanga pooti Waari Maaori i whakahaere, te Pae Reo aa-Hapori i whakatu, me te whai waahitanga a te hunga tuumatanui ki ngaa hui Kaunihera i whakauru. He kookiritanga whai tikanga eenei maa teetei Kaunihera e whakaaro nui

ana ki te toomua o te whakarongo, te maarama ki ngaa tirohanga rerekee atu me te whakatau i ngaa whakatau whai taunakitanga.

### **Te whakarite moo te anamata**

I tiimata te Kaunihera i teetahi hootaka hurihanga nui hei whakauka i te taha tahua me te aro ki ngaa ratonga me ngaa putanga nui ki oo maatou hapori.

I tuku hoki i taa maatou tonu Head Start ki te Kaawanatanga aa-Motu.

Putu noa i teenaa tukatuka, he maarama te mea mai a ngaa hapori, ahakoa te anga a haere ake nei me maatua tiaki i ngaa rawa me ngaa hanganga, me whakarongo ki ngaa reo o te hunga kaainga, me te tuku i ngaa mea whai hua moo te puutea ka whakapauria.

E tirohia ana e te Kaawanatanga aa-motu ngaa tonu katoa, aa, e whakapae ana ka puta ngaa whakatau hei te whiore o te Hepetema 2026.

Moo te whakawhitinga ki IAWAI, te hurihanga a te Kaunihera me te whakahoutanga a ngaa kaawanatanga aa-rohe me whai aratakinga matapopore me ngaa whakawhitinga koorero tuwhera.

He maarama tonu te ahunga; aro ki ngaa ratonga matua, me noho tonu te taea o te utu ki te pito o ngaa whakataunga, me whakapau puutea i runga i te tika, me te tuku kia whai waahi ai ngaa hapori ki te whakaawe i te anamata o too raatou takiwaa.

E mihi ana ki oo maatou mema pooti, kaimahi, mana whenua, hoa paatui, kaituuao, hapori anoo hoki mo ngaa whai waahitanga puta noa i teenei tau taumaha. Ngaatahi nei e taea ana te waihanganga i ngaa hapori oranga pai, momoho, hononga nui e kitea ai te toonuitanga o ngaa whakatupuranga o naaiane, otiraa, o aapoopoo anoo hoki.

### **Ngaa mihi nui Thank you very much**



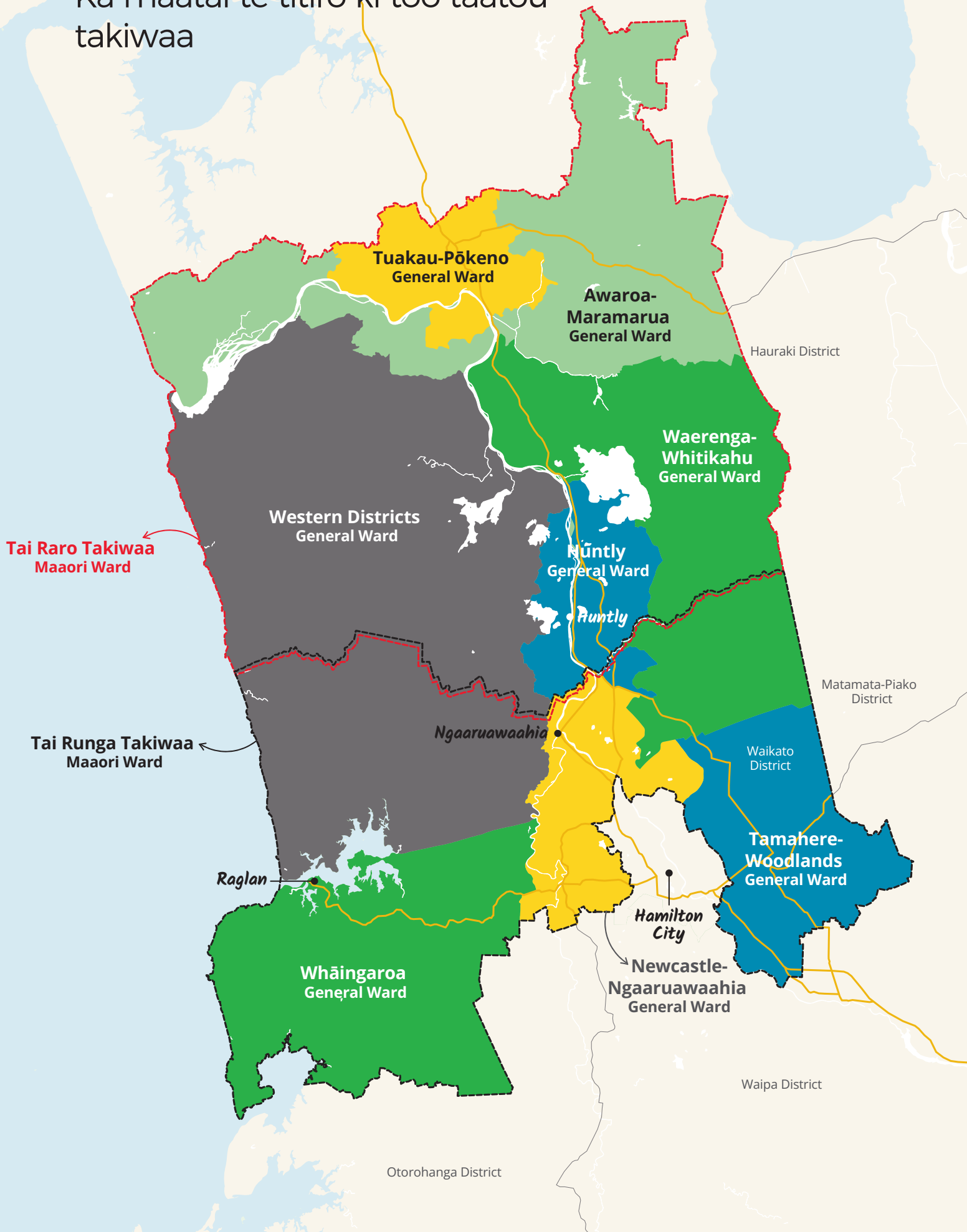
**His Worship  
Aksel Bech**



**Craig Hobbs  
Chief Executive**

# Our district at a glance

Ka maatai te titiro ki too taatou takiwaa



Our district  
is home to  
**91,100**  
people<sup>1</sup>



diverse population:

**73.6%** European,

**26.9%** Maaori,

**9.1%** Asian,

**5.5%** Pasifika

**1.1%** Middle Eastern/Latin America/African

**1.3%** other ethnicities<sup>2</sup>



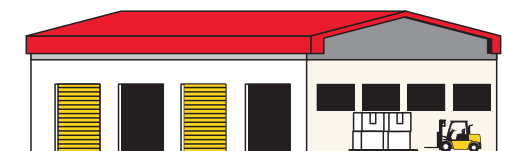
**49.7% male** and **51% female**  
with a median age of **38 years old**<sup>3</sup>

**400,400ha**

which makes us one of the largest  
councils geographically



and has **31,409** urban,  
rural or residential properties

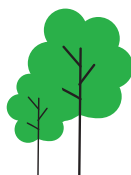


**3,422** business or other non-residential properties and  
**3,155** farmland properties

**39**  
Community  
centres and  
town halls



Six (6) Council  
libraries with over  
**85,000** books



**1,931ha**

of reserves and  
**21,064**  
trees

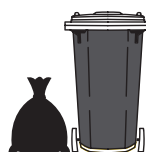


**206ha**

of sports and  
recreation areas



Council maintains over  
**2,520kms** of roads with  
**1,925kms** being sealed and  
**595kms** unsealed

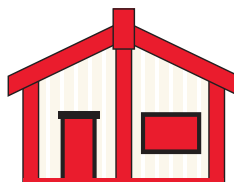


**3.1 million**

individual rubbish  
and recycling  
collections per year



**Over 1,350kms**  
of pipes either supply, drain or remove  
water through our residential towns



Waikato is the principal iwi  
in the district, we also have

**27** hapuu and

**40** marae

<sup>1</sup> As of 30 June 2025. Source: Estimated Resident Population, Stats NZ

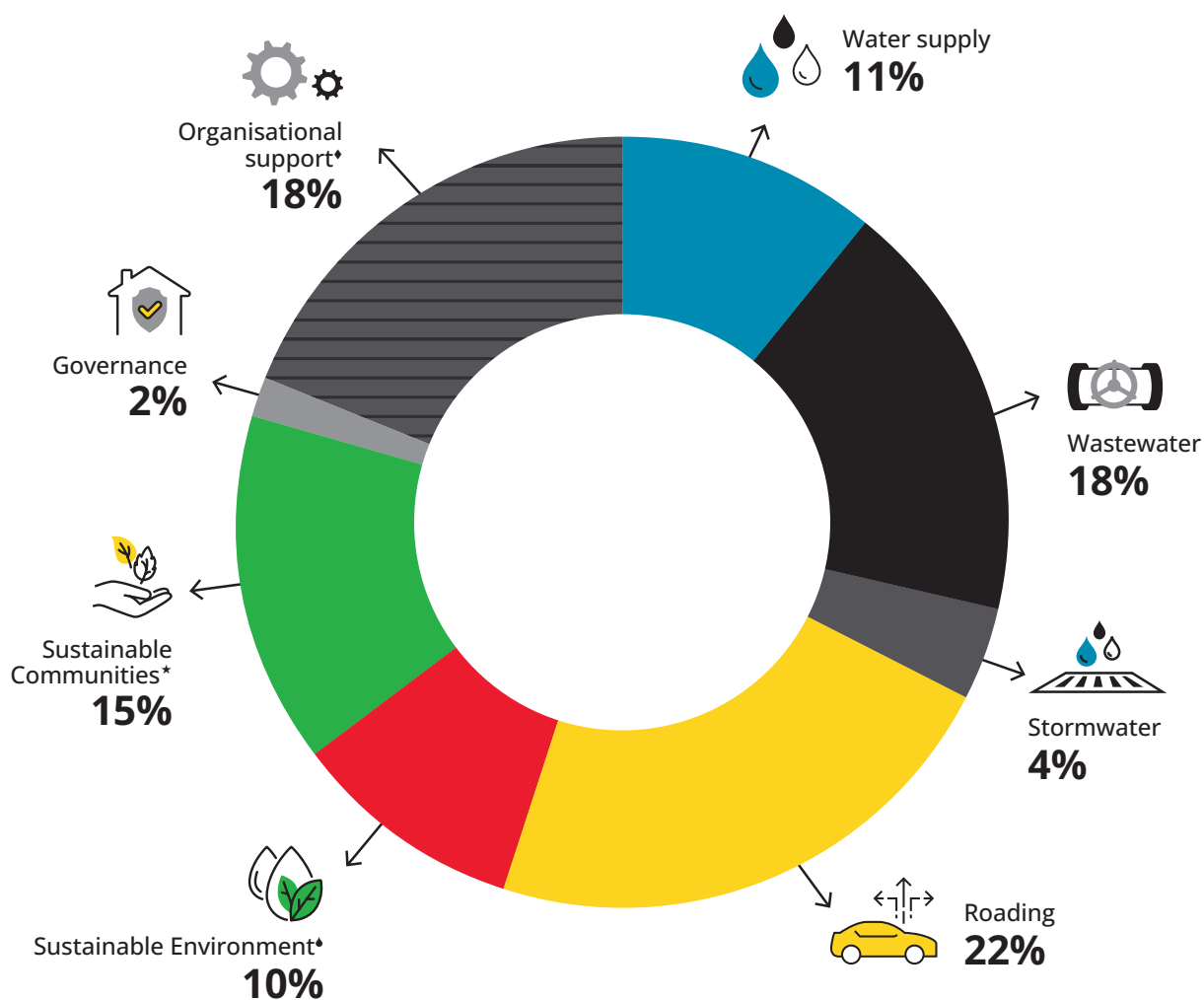
<sup>2</sup> Source: Census 2023, Stats NZ

<sup>3</sup> Source: Census 2023, Stats NZ

## Where we spend our money

### Ngaa utunga puutea

We deliver a broad range of services to our diverse district of residents, business owners, and visitors. Here is an overview of how your money is spent.



A number of these services are funded through targeted rates so you'll only pay for the services you receive.

- \* Sustainable Communities includes the following activities: economic and community development, open spaces (such as parks and reserves), property and community facilities, community resilience, and customer experience.
- \* Sustainable Environment includes consenting, regulatory services, waste management, and strategic and spatial planning.
- \* Other core Organisational Support services play a key role in moving Council forward, making services more efficient and cost effective for ratepayers, and fostering continuous improvement.

# Our vision and community outcomes

## Ngaa Whaainga me ngaa Putanga aa-Hapori

Our vision and community outcomes describe our aspirations for the Waikato district.

### Our vision | Too maatau whakakitenga

Our vision is that we work together to build:



#### Liveable, thriving, and connected communities.

*He noohanga aahuru, he iwi whai ora, he hapori tuuhono tahi.*

By working together, we will ensure that we meet present and future needs, so our district is the kind of place we all want for generations to come.

### Community outcomes | Ngaa putanga aa-hapori

We are responsible for improving the wellbeing of our community. Our community outcomes help define what wellbeing means and how Council and the wider community can contribute to this. They're aspirational statements and recognise that other agencies and the community itself will need to play a part in meeting those goals.

In early 2023, we undertook a review of our community outcomes. We asked our communities to define what wellbeing meant to them, and to share what was important to them now and in the future. Based on community feedback, we developed a new set of community outcomes aligned with the four wellbeing pillars described in the Local Government Act 2002: cultural, economic, environmental, and social. Our community outcomes describe what we want to achieve for the Waikato district in the future.

On the next page you'll see the work we did in 2025/26 that shows how our community outcomes enable us to make progress towards improving wellbeing.



#### Cultural Ahurea

##### We celebrate who we are.

*Ka whakanui i too maatou katoa.*



#### Economic Ohaoha

##### We support local prosperity.

*Ka tautoko maatou i te houkura aa-rohe.*



#### Social Paapori

##### We have well connected communities.

*He hononga whitake katoa o oo maatou hapori.*



#### Environmental Taiao

##### Our environmental health underpins the health of our people.

*Ka taunaki too maatou oranga aa-taiao i te oranga o oo taatou iwi.*

# Community Outcomes highlights

Ngaa hiranga putanga aa-hapori

## Cultural | Ahurea

**We celebrate who we are.**

*Ka whakanui i too maatou katoa.*



### Key focus

We celebrate all cultures. We treasure our diverse communities and acknowledge our cultural rights and obligations. We honour, understand and implement Te Tiriti o Waitangi and acknowledge the relationship with mana whenua of our district.

### Key highlights

#### Celebrating local identity, heritage and place

The stories, history and people of our communities are what make the Waikato district special. This year, we supported projects that celebrate and protect local heritage, including restoration work at Feather Cottage in Tuakau and new storytelling signs along the Te Araroa Trail that share the history of the places you're walking through. Feather Cottage was relocated to the Tuakau and District Museum site, with work progressing on consent, foundations, structural repairs and accessibility improvements so the building can be restored and used to share local history. The Te Araroa Trail signage project also supported place-based storytelling by helping people understand the cultural, environmental and historic context of the places they move through. Together, these initiatives help preserve local stories, strengthen community pride and create opportunities for residents and visitors to connect with the people, places and history that have shaped our district.

#### Supporting community voice and civic participation

Strong communities are built when people take part in the decisions that affect them. This year we delivered the 2025 local government elections and Maaori Ward referendum, and encouraged more people to get involved through the Enrol, Stand, Vote campaign and candidate information sessions. We added more special voting options to make voting easier to access. We also set up the Community

Voice Panel and brought back public forums at Council meetings, giving residents two direct ways to share their views with elected members.

#### Recognising diverse voices and perspectives

We worked alongside communities, mana whenua and local organisations again this year. Together we backed projects that reflect local identity and connect people with the places they live. We also partnered with schools, community groups, local businesses, funders and government agencies. These partnerships helped communities lead their own initiatives — to sharing local stories, strengthening participation, and creating lasting cultural, social and environmental value.



## Economic | Ohaoha

### We support local prosperity.

*Ka tautoko maatou i te houkura aa-rohe.*

#### Key focus

We champion sustainable growth in our local economy. We support local enterprise and encourage innovation and socio-economic prosperity for all while managing regulatory processes to protect and promote our unique district. We acknowledge our rural and Maaori economies as key contributors to our district's prosperity and sustainability.

#### Key highlights

##### Planning for growth across the district

Good planning today builds stronger communities tomorrow. This year we started reviewing Waikato 2070, our Growth and Economic Development Strategy. The review sets out our long-term direction for growth and will feed into the upcoming Regional Spatial Plan.

We also kept working on the Raahui Pookeka/ Huntly Socio-Economic Master Plan in partnership alongside central government agencies, local leaders and mana whenua.

Together, this work shapes where we invest in infrastructure, lifts economic and social wellbeing, and opens up development options across the district.

##### Making it easier to build and develop

We kept improving our planning tools and so people can get on with building, developing and investing. We launched the Development Portal, an online platform for engineering design approval applications. We also updated our webpages so planning information is easier to find.

Our team handled a big volume of work this year:

- 1,863 duty planner enquiries answered
- 770 resource consents processed
- 159 engineering clearances completed
- 888 new property lots issued
- 715 LIMs (Land Information Memoranda) processed
- 773 property information requests answered



This work gives residents, developers and businesses the certainty they need to plan.

##### Supporting housing choice and growth

Our District Plan improvements are giving people more flexibility to build. Updated rules make it easier to put a detached minor residential unit on your property. That means more housing choice, more options for whaanau needing multigenerational living arrangements, and better use of residential land we already have.

We also resolved six District Plan appeals this year. The District Plan — Operative in Part is now about 97 percent complete, which gives developers and landowners far more certainty about what they can build.

##### Establishing IAWAI for future generations

Establishing IAWAI Flowing Waters with Hamilton City Council and Waikato-Tainui was one of our biggest achievements this year. It draws on years of planning, collaboration and, and it creates a stronger platform for future investment, performance and growth in water services.

This year, we helped develop IAWAI's inaugural Water Services Strategy. We also completed the arrangements to transfer our water and wastewater assets across from 1 July 2026.

IAWAI puts us in a better position to meet growth, and to keep water services affordable and reliable for generations to come.

##### Supporting local leadership and opportunity

We continue to back locally led initiatives that contribute to long-term prosperity and community ownership.

Our Rural Ward Fund supported nine community projects this year. We also worked with community groups on the practical side of running an organisation — governance, funding strategies, project planning, working with stakeholders, and planning for the long-term. Some of that work went into rangatahi development and employment pathways, helping build young people build practical skills, confidence, and a clear route into work.

## Social | Paapori

### We have well connected communities.

*He hononga whaitake katoa o oo maatou hapori.*

#### Key focus

Our communities are connected, safe, accessible and resilient. We put community wellbeing at the heart of our decisions, and we embrace partnerships to get things done to improve people's lives.

#### Key highlights

##### Community-led wellbeing and connection

Communities do best when local people lead solutions. This year, we backed community groups to run initiatives that built wellbeing, connection and resilience.

That work included community gardens, maara kai projects, local food initiatives, and composting systems. We also supported programmes for education, sustainability, and the wellbeing of kaumaatua and whaanau.

Community groups also received assistance with planning, governance, funding, health and safety and stakeholder engagement, helping bring locally led ideas to life.



##### Investing in places where people come together

We continued investing in facilities where our communities gather, learn and play.

We finished upgrades at the Huntly, Ngaaruawaahia and Tuakau pools. Planning progressed for a new Ngaaruawaahia Library and the Pokeno Community Hub.



We also lease land and buildings to community groups at rates they can afford, so local organisations have somewhere to base themselves.

##### More places to get outdoors

Parks, reserves and sports grounds are where people get active and connect with each other.

This year, we renewed the sports lighting at Doctor John Lightbody Courts, Whatawhata Tennis Courts and Whitikahu Courts, and planning progressed for Te Kowhai Sports Park.

Walkway projects moved ahead in Tuumate Mahuta, Rotokauri, Te Kauwhata and Tamahere. We finished the Putoetoe Walkway and the Manu Bay Steps.

##### New playgrounds for tamariki and whaanau

We kept investing in playgrounds where children can play safely and families feel welcome. Tauwhare Playground opened this year. We renewed the playgrounds at Riverview Road and Huntly West, finished Hukanui Playground — which picked up national recognition — and kept working on the Waitetuna Pump Track.

##### Keeping people moving safely

Good roads get people to work, school, the shops and the sports field.

This year we reconstructed more than nine kilometres of sealed road, resurfaced more than 110 kilometres, and maintained over 380 kilometres of roadside drainage.

We also made improvements around Te Kowhai and Te Kauwhata schools, built new footpaths, upgraded intersections and ran cycling education programmes — all of it about getting people around more safely.

##### Ready for what's next

We keep investing in the systems that help us respond when things go wrong.

Transport recovery work progressed across several storm-damaged sites. We completed a three-year programme to strengthen our cyber security and upgraded our business continuity and disaster recovery systems so we can keep critical services running in an emergency.

## Environmental | Taiao

### Our environmental health underpins the health of our people.

*Ka taunaki too maatou oranga  
aa-taiao i te oranga o oo taatou iwi.*

#### Key focus

We want waterways which are healthy and create connections. We protect and enhance our soil, water and native biodiversity and take care of our Taiao (natural environment) for the health and wellbeing of our people, our communities and for future generations.

#### Key highlights

##### Protecting our waterways with world-leading infrastructure

Healthy waterways need steady investment in the infrastructure that protects them.

This year we completed and commissioned the Raglan Wastewater Treatment Plant upgrade, using treatment technology recognised internationally for its performance. We've since awarded contracts to upgrade the Huntly, Ngaaruawaahia and Te Kauwhata plants the same way.

We also renewed and extended wastewater networks across Horotiu, Ngaaruawaahia, Tuakau and Huntly.

##### Cleaner water, healthier ecosystems

We kept investing in the smaller projects that add up to healthier waterways.

We upgraded fish passages, renewed rain gardens, ran water quality monitoring, and planted and deluged the Horotiu pond — work that improves water quality and gives native species better habitat.

##### Restoring nature alongside volunteers

Looking after the districts natural places depends on people who give their time.

This year we worked alongside Kirikiripu Catchment Care, the Tamahere Mangaone Restoration Trust, Whaingaroa Weedbusters and the Te Otamanui Walkway Group to restore natural areas across the district. We endorsed the Lorenzen Bay Reserve



Restoration and Development Plan, and together we planted more than 9,000 trees in wetlands, along streams and reserves.

##### Reducing flood risk

We kept investing in stormwater infrastructure that lowers flood risk and keeps waterways healthier.

Key projects included renewing the Huntly Stormwater Pond, extending the Horotiu stormwater network, and inlet works at Port Waikato. We also designed major upgrades for Raglan, Te Kauwhata and Pokeno.

Planning progressed for future wastewater needs in Pokeno, Tuakau and Te Kowhai, so growth in those areas has the infrastructure to support it.



## Working in Partnership with Maaori

### Te mahi ngaatahi ki te iwi Maaori

**We're committed to building meaningful, enduring relationships with iwi, hapuu, marae and Maaori communities across the Waikato district. Working together, we support Maaori participation in decision-making and deliver outcomes that reflect the aspirations of taangata whenua and our wider communities.**

The Local Government Act 2002 requires us to create opportunities for Maaori to contribute to local decision-making. We also have obligations under Treaty settlement legislation, including giving effect to Te Ture Whaimana o Te Awa o Waikato — the Vision and Strategy for the Waikato River. Te Ture Whaimana sets the long-term framework for restoring and protecting the health of the river and the communities it sustains.

These commitments shape how we work: strengthening relationships, sharing decision-making, and contributing to environmental, social, cultural and economic wellbeing across the district. Here's how that looked this year:

#### **Working alongside marae**

Strong relationships with marae are central to how we work with Maaori communities.

The Toituu Marae Forum met three times this year, with representatives from 29 of the district's 40 marae taking part. We developed and rolled out the Kii Tapu framework, and kept delivering the Toituu Paanui, both of which strengthen the connection between us, marae, hapuu and iwi.

Marae representatives also sit on forum governance and help shape its operational planning, so Maaori perspectives inform how we work and engage.



#### **Maaori voices in our decisions**

We kept working with iwi, hapuu, marae and Maaori organisations so their aspirations shape the plans, policies and projects that set the district's direction.

This year that included engagement on community facility and infrastructure projects, and ongoing delivery of Joint Management Agreement work programmes with Waikato-Tainui and Te Nehenehenui. We also adopted the Whenua Maaori Rates and Remissions Policy after engaging with more than 400 Maaori stakeholders.

#### **Giving effect to Te Ture Whaimana**

We continued working with Waikato-Tainui and Te Nehenehenui to protect the long-term health for the Waikato and Waipaa Rivers.

Through Joint Management Agreements and day-to-day collaboration on planning, infrastructure and environmental initiatives, iwi perspectives shaped decisions affecting our waterways and communities around them.

We also worked with Hamilton City Council, Waikato-Tainui and Watercare Waikato on IAWAI's first Water Services Strategy, planning tomorrow's water infrastructure while keeping the health of our rivers front of mind.

#### **Building resilience alongside marae**

We worked with Waikato-Tainui, Te Nehenehenui and Waikato Civil Defence Emergency Management partners to strengthen emergency preparedness at marae across the district.

This year we built the Marae Resilience Data Tool and set up a co-investment work programme with Waikato-Tainui. We installed AEDs (automated external defibrillators) and delivered first aid training at 68 marae, and established crisis bunkers at Waahi Paa and Te Kauri Marae. We also agreed a standard operating procedure with Waikato-Tainui for activating an emergency response.

Marae have always looked after their communities before, during and after emergencies. This work helps them keep doing it.

# Performance summary

## Taa Maatou Mahi

Our projects and work programmes span nine groups of activities. For eight of the groups, we have performance measures that provide us with targets to meet such as responsiveness, safety, timeliness, meeting statutory requirements, and compliance. The results on pages 19 - 23 summarise how we did and where we need to improve. Please see the full Annual Report to find out more about the targets and how we performed against them.

### Achieved

All components of the performance measure have been met, including meeting or exceeding a stated target for performance.

### Achieved in part

One or more but not all, of the components of a measure have been completed. This result is only applicable when the measure can be broken into more than one component.

### Not achieved

All components were not achieved.

### Over the last 12 months we have:

- Held 78 Council and Committee meetings.
- Ensured 99.8% of official information requests were responded to within timeframes.
- Engaged with 29 marae through Council's Toituu Marae Forum.
- Delivered eight economic and community development events across the district.
- Completed 32,722 service requests, with 28,605 within agreed timeframes.
- Improved our emergency management assessment result from 58% to 93%.
- Responded to 140 aggressive dog behaviour complaints within one hour of receiving them.
- Processed 1,362 building consents and 649 resource consents applications.
- Engaged 1,859 people through waste minimisation education and community events.
- Ensured drinking water standards were met across all our water supply areas.
- Verified 233 food premises for food safety.

An aerial photograph of a suburban neighborhood. In the foreground, there are several houses with dark roofs and green lawns, interspersed with trees. A winding road cuts through the middle of the neighborhood. To the left, a wide river flows through a green landscape. In the background, rolling hills are visible under a clear blue sky with some light clouds.

## Section two

# Performance results

## Ngaa Hua o te Mahi

## Overview

### Tirohanga Whaanui

There are 53 performance measures across the 2025-2034 Long Term Plan (LTP). In 2025/26, 91% (48) of performance targets were achieved, an improvement from 74% (45) in 2024/25. No performance targets were achieved in part this year. The proportion of performance targets not achieved decreased to 9% (5) from 26% (16) in the previous year.

We continued to perform well in several service areas including animal control, environmental health, building quality, stormwater, wastewater and water supply, where all or almost all measures were achieved. Notable achievements included 100% compliance with drinking water quality requirements, all stormwater and wastewater measures being achieved, significant improvements in emergency management preparedness, high levels of responsiveness to customer requests, and improved performance for both building and resource consent processing. We also exceeded targets relating to marae participation, waste minimisation engagement, economic and community development events, and service request response times.

Measures that were not achieved were primarily related to elected member attendance, the provision and maintenance of open spaces, monitoring of live land use consents, and the district's road safety outcome measure. In several cases, results were influenced by factors such as population growth, increased workloads, resource constraints, or factors outside of Council's direct control.

**48**  
are achieved (91%).

**5**  
are not achieved (9%).

## Governance

### Mana Whakahaere

Three of the four performance measures in this area were achieved. Council met all targets relating to the publication of meeting agendas, responding to official information requests within legislative timeframes, and participation by marae in the Toituu Marae Forum. The number of marae participating significantly exceeded expectations, reflecting the efforts to strengthen relationships and increase engagement with marae across the district.

Council maintained a high level of legislative compliance, with all meeting agendas published within required timeframes and 99.8% of official information requests responded to within statutory deadlines. During the year, 29 of the district's 40 marae participated in the Toituu Marae Forum, providing opportunities to strengthen collaboration on a range of kaupapa affecting Maaori communities.

The elected member attendance measure was not achieved, with 13 of 14 councillor seats meeting the required attendance threshold. An extraordinary vacancy during the year contributed to the result. Despite this, overall attendance across councillor seats remained strong at 91%.

**3**  
are achieved (75%).

**1**  
not achieved (25%).

## Sustainable communities

### Toituutanga Hapori

Overall, 10 of the 12 performance measures within this group of activities were achieved. Strong results were recorded across economic and community development, community resilience, customer experience, libraries, public facilities, emergency management, and service request performance.

Economic and community development activity exceeded expectations, with eight community and economic development events delivered during the year. Resilience and adaptation planning targets were also exceeded through community engagement initiatives and workshops delivered in at-risk locations. Existing community response plans were successfully tested through the Cyclone Vaianu response, providing practical evidence of community readiness.

Emergency management performance improved significantly. Assessed emergency response capability increased to 93%, up from 58% in the previous year. This result reflects a mature organisational response during Cyclone Vaianu and demonstrates strengthened emergency management capability.

Customer experience measures performed strongly. Service request response and completion rates significantly exceeded targets, customer effort scores improved throughout the year, digital tools remained available 100% of the time, and library satisfaction remained exceptionally high at 99.7%. Public toilets also continued to be maintained to a high standard.

The two measures not achieved related to open spaces. The amount of Council-managed open space available per 1,000 residents fell below target due to population growth, while the parks and reserves maintenance measure was affected by contractor reporting and data quality issues identified during the year. Council continues to plan for future growth through reserve acquisition and development programmes.

#### Open spaces

**2**  
are not achieved (0%).

#### Community facilities

**1**  
is achieved (100%).

#### Economic and community development

**1**  
is achieved (100%).

#### Community resilience

**3**  
are achieved (100%).

#### Customer experience

**5**  
are achieved (100%).

## Sustainable environment

### Toituutanga Taiao

Regulatory services continued to perform well. Dog registration compliance reached a record high of 92.8%, all aggressive dog complaints requiring an urgent response were attended within one hour, and food safety verification targets were exceeded. Targets relating to excessive noise complaint response times were also achieved.

Performance improved across consenting activities. Building consent processing exceeded targets with 95.8% completed within statutory timeframes. Resource consent processing also improved, achieving 96.3% within statutory timeframes. Council additionally completed all required building warrant of fitness audits, swimming pool inspections, and audits of buildings used for sleeping care and paid accommodation.

The only measure not achieved related to monitoring live land use consents. While performance remained close to target, fluctuations in the number of active consents and resource capacity pressures affected the team's ability to achieve full compliance with monitoring requirements.

Waste management measures were both achieved. Complaints regarding missed kerbside collections remained below target levels, and community participation in waste minimisation activities substantially exceeded expectations, with nearly 1,900 people participating in face-to-face engagements throughout the year.

#### Animal control

**2**  
are achieved (100%).

#### Regulatory services

**2**  
are achieved (100%).

#### Building quality

**5**  
are achieved (83%).

**1**  
is not achieved (17%).

#### Strategic and spatial planning

**1**  
is achieved (100%).

#### Waste management

**2**  
are achieved (100%).

## Roading

### Ngaa Huarahi

We achieved four of the five transport performance measures for 2025/26. Council met targets relating to road ride quality, sealed road resurfacing, footpath condition, and response times to customer service requests for roads and footpaths.

Significant improvements were made to the sealed road resurfacing programme, with 5.5% of the network resurfaced compared with 3.1% in the previous year. The average quality of ride on sealed roads also remained above target despite ongoing growth and increased traffic demand across the district. Customer service performance remained strong, with both road and footpath requests responded to within required timeframes

The district's road safety measure was not achieved. There were 48 fatal and serious injury crashes on the local road network compared with 43 in the previous year. While this represents an increase, the result remains below the longer-term average. Road safety outcomes continue to be influenced by a range of factors outside Council's direct control. Council continues to support safer roads through maintenance, safety improvements, renewals, and education initiatives.

**4**  
are achieved (80%).

**1**  
is not achieved (20%).

## Stormwater

### Wai Ua

We continued to operate a resilient stormwater network and maintained full compliance with stormwater-related resource consents. No flooding events were recorded that met the reporting criteria during the year, resulting in all flooding-related measures being achieved. Complaints about the performance of the stormwater network remained low and reduced compared with previous years. There were no abatement notices, infringement notices, enforcement orders, or successful prosecutions relating to stormwater discharges during the reporting period.

**5**  
are achieved (100%).

## Wastewater

### Wai Para

All wastewater performance targets were met. We maintained good levels of responsiveness and service reliability across the wastewater network while continuing to improve infrastructure and manage environmental compliance obligations.

Dry weather sewer overflows remained below target levels and complaint levels reduced compared with the previous year. Attendance and resolution times for sewerage overflows continued to be comfortably within agreed service levels. There were no convictions, abatement notices, infringement notices, or enforcement orders issued against Council's wastewater system during 2025/26.

**6**  
are achieved (100%).

## Water supply

### Ara Tukutuku Wai

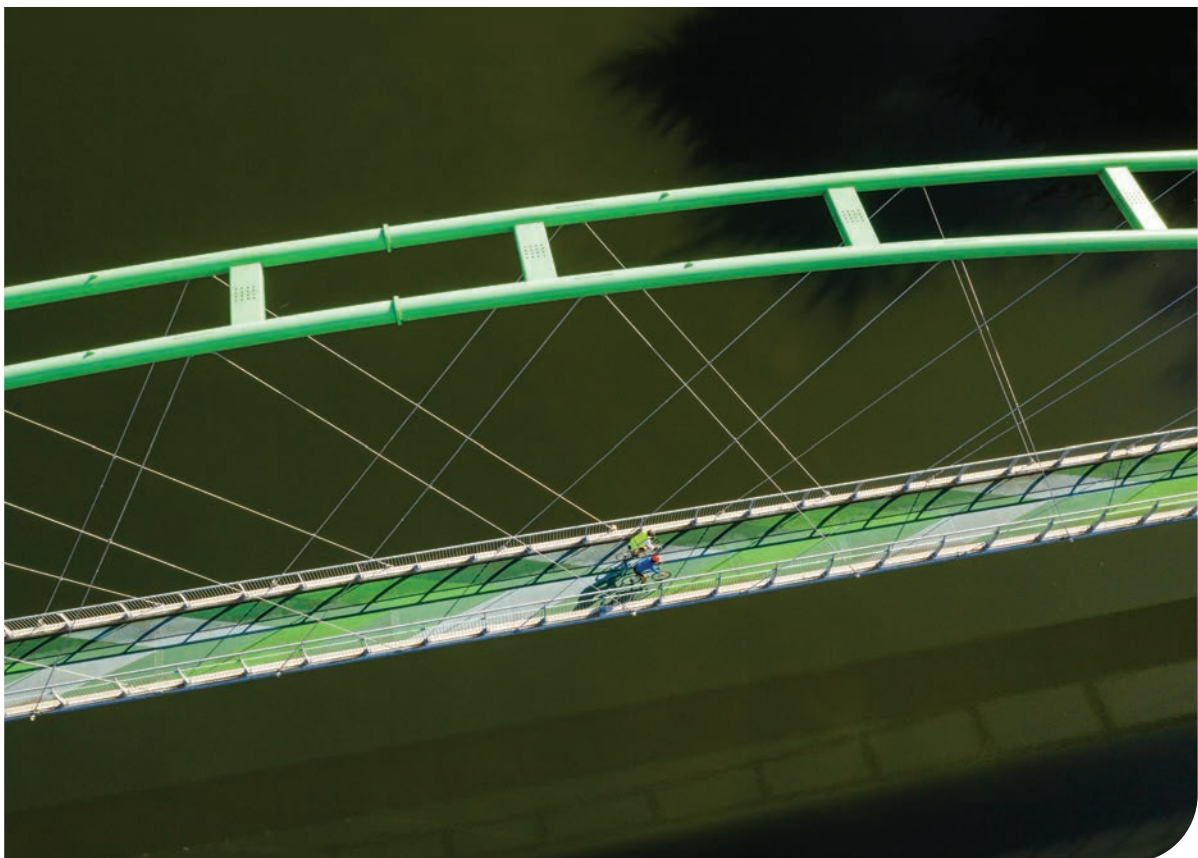
We met all our targets related to drinking water standards, treatment plants, pump stations, reservoirs, and the reticulation network. Response and resolution times for unplanned interruptions increased slightly compared to the previous year but were still within agreed timeframes. Complaints about drinking water increased, particularly in Huntly and Te Kauwhata. Much of this feedback related to proactive network cleaning and maintenance activities undertaken to improve long-term water quality.

**8**  
are achieved (100%).

## Organisational support

### Tautoko aa-Toopuutanga

There are no non-financial performance measures for Organisational Support as this group of activities primarily enables the delivery of Council's external services. During the year, Council continued to improve the systems and processes that support service delivery across the organisation. This included enhancements to Council's website to improve usability, accessibility and self-service functions, helping provide a better experience for customers accessing Council information and services online. Council also continued to review internal programmes and priorities to ensure resources are focused on delivering value for communities.



Section three

# Summary financial statements

## Whakaraapopoto Taukii Ahumoni



# Summary financial statements

## Whakaraapopoto Taukii Ahumoni

### Statement of comprehensive revenue and expense for the year ended 30 June 2026

|                                                                                                | Council and Group           |                             |                             |
|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------|-----------------------------|-----------------------------|
|                                                                                                | 2025/26<br>Actual<br>\$'000 | 2025/26<br>Budget<br>\$'000 | 2024/25<br>Actual<br>\$'000 |
| Total revenue                                                                                  | 270,412                     | 230,377                     | 265,651                     |
| Finance costs                                                                                  | (11,142)                    | (11,469)                    | (12,688)                    |
| Operating expenditure excluding finance costs                                                  | (232,617)                   | (224,706)                   | (213,422)                   |
| <b>Surplus (deficit) before tax</b>                                                            | <b>26,653</b>               | <b>(5,798)</b>              | <b>39,541</b>               |
| Income tax expense                                                                             | -                           | -                           | -                           |
| <b>Surplus (deficit) after tax wholly attributable to WDC</b>                                  | <b>26,653</b>               | <b>(5,798)</b>              | <b>39,541</b>               |
| <b>Other comprehensive income</b>                                                              |                             |                             |                             |
| Gain (loss) on property revaluations                                                           | 569,826                     | 54,046                      | 114,570                     |
| Revaluation reserve - landfill                                                                 | (117)                       | -                           | (458)                       |
| Gain (loss) on cessation of joint venture                                                      | -                           | -                           | -                           |
| Financial assets at fair value through other comprehensive income                              | 3,866                       | -                           | 6,156                       |
| <b>Total other comprehensive income</b>                                                        | <b>573,575</b>              | <b>54,046</b>               | <b>120,268</b>              |
| <b>Total comprehensive revenue and expense wholly attributable to Waikato District Council</b> | <b>600,228</b>              | <b>48,248</b>               | <b>159,809</b>              |

### Statement of financial position as at 30 June 2026

|                          | Council and Group           |                             |                             |
|--------------------------|-----------------------------|-----------------------------|-----------------------------|
|                          | 2025/26<br>Actual<br>\$'000 | 2025/26<br>Budget<br>\$'000 | 2024/25<br>Actual<br>\$'000 |
| Current assets           | 50,838                      | 33,362                      | 59,660                      |
| Non-current assets       | 3,576,231                   | 3,060,048                   | 2,913,023                   |
| <b>Total assets</b>      | <b>3,627,069</b>            | <b>3,093,410</b>            | <b>2,972,683</b>            |
| Current liabilities      | 162,229                     | 106,124                     | 102,535                     |
| Non-current liabilities  | 193,897                     | 325,556                     | 199,428                     |
| <b>Total liabilities</b> | <b>356,126</b>              | <b>431,680</b>              | <b>301,963</b>              |
| <b>Net assets</b>        | <b>3,270,943</b>            | <b>2,661,730</b>            | <b>2,670,719</b>            |
| <b>Total equity</b>      | <b>3,270,943</b>            | <b>2,661,730</b>            | <b>2,670,719</b>            |

## Statement of changes in net assets / equity for the year ended 30 June 2026

|                                                                                         | Council and Group           |                             |                             |
|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------|-----------------------------|-----------------------------|
|                                                                                         | 2025/26<br>Actual<br>\$'000 | 2025/26<br>Budget<br>\$'000 | 2024/25<br>Actual<br>\$'000 |
| <b>Balance at the beginning of the year</b>                                             |                             |                             |                             |
| Accumulated funds including share of joint venture*                                     | 1,388,762                   | 1,433,834                   | 1,328,562                   |
| Reserves*                                                                               | 1,281,955                   | 1,179,649                   | 1,182,347                   |
| <b>Balance at 1 July as previously reported</b>                                         | <b>2,670,717</b>            | <b>2,613,483</b>            | <b>2,510,910</b>            |
| Total comprehensive income for the year wholly attributable to Waikato District Council | 600,228                     | 48,248                      | 159,809                     |
| Other reserve movements                                                                 | -                           | -                           | -                           |
| <b>Balance at 30 June wholly attributable to Waikato District Council</b>               | <b>3,270,943</b>            | <b>2,661,730</b>            | <b>2,670,719</b>            |
| <b>Represented by equity at the end of the year</b>                                     |                             |                             |                             |
| Accumulated funds                                                                       | 1,451,138                   | 1,465,253                   | 1,390,636                   |
| Other reserves                                                                          | 1,819,806                   | 1,196,477                   | 1,280,083                   |
| <b>Balance at 30 June wholly attributable to Waikato District Council</b>               | <b>3,270,943</b>            | <b>2,661,730</b>            | <b>2,670,719</b>            |

\* Comparative information and opening balances have been restated in accordance with PBE IPSAS 3 to correct prior-period errors identified in the review of roading assets, vested assets, and land classifications. The restatement reallocated \$46.8m between roading and bridge assets, reduced the infrastructure revaluation reserve by \$1.8m with a corresponding adjustment to accumulated funds, and reclassified \$2.5m from land to restricted land. The corrections align recorded balances with supporting valuation records and asset classifications and, other than the vested asset adjustment affecting reserves and accumulated funds, have no impact on total assets, net assets/equity, or the current-year surplus/(deficit).

## Statement of cash flows for the year ended 30 June 2026

|                                                                              | Council and Group           |                             |                             |
|------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------|-----------------------------|-----------------------------|
|                                                                              | 2025/26<br>Actual<br>\$'000 | 2025/26<br>Budget<br>\$'000 | 2024/25<br>Actual<br>\$'000 |
| Net cash from operating activities                                           | 65,714                      | 53,027                      | 63,694                      |
| Net cash from investing activities                                           | (117,230)                   | (161,370)                   | (81,107)                    |
| Net cash from financing activities                                           | 45,087                      | 109,427                     | 29,000                      |
| <b>Net (decrease) increase in cash, cash equivalents and bank overdrafts</b> | <b>(6,429)</b>              | <b>1,084</b>                | <b>11,588</b>               |

# Summary Accounting Policies

## Whakaraapopoto Kaupapa Here Kaute

Waikato District Council (the Council) is a territorial local authority governed by the Local Government Act 2002 and is domiciled and operates in New Zealand. The relevant legislation governing the Council's operations includes the Local Government Act 2002 and the Local Government (Rating) Act 2002.

The Waikato District Council Group (the Group) consists of the Council, as the ultimate parent, and its wholly owned subsidiary, Strada Corporation Limited (Strada).

Strada is no longer trading and is registered as non-active with Inland Revenue.

All the companies in which Council has an interest, directly or through Strada, are incorporated and domiciled in New Zealand.

The principal activity of the Council is the provision of local infrastructure, local public services and the performance of regulatory functions for the community. The Council does not operate for the purpose of making a financial return.

The Council and Group are designated as public benefit entities (PBEs) for financial reporting purposes.

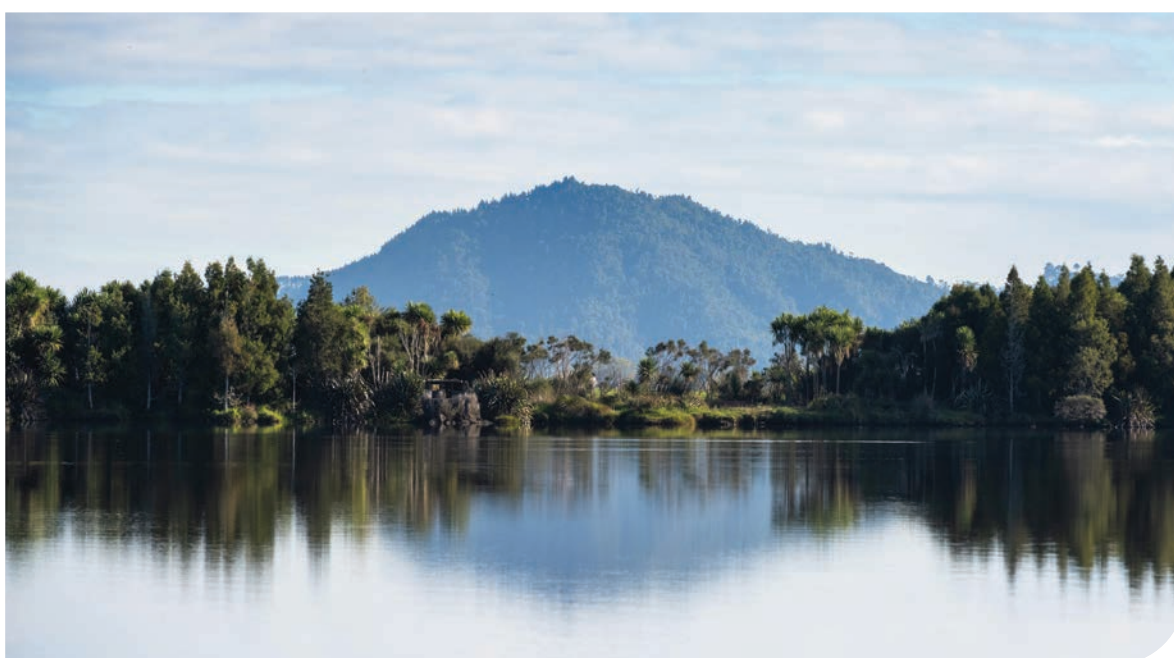
The full financial statements of Council and Group have been prepared in accordance with the requirements of the LGA and the Local Government (Financial Reporting and Prudence) Regulations 2014 (LG(FRP)R) which include the requirement to comply with generally accepted accounting practice in New Zealand (NZ GAAP).

The financial statements have been prepared in accordance with and comply with Tier 1 PBE accounting standards.

These summary financial statements comply with PBE-FRS 43 Summary financial statements.

The financial statements are presented in New Zealand dollars, and all values are rounded to the nearest thousand dollars (\$000's).

The summary financial statements of Council and Group are for the year ended 30 June 2026. The full annual report was authorised for issue by Council on 7 October 2026 and the summary financial statements were authorised for issue by Council on 7 October 2026.



# Summary additional disclosures

## Whakaraapopoto Whakapuakanga Aapiti

### Contingencies

Contingent liabilities for Council and Group at balance date are \$10,000 (2025: \$10,000). The contingent liabilities are uncalled capital contributions in Waikato Local Authority Shared Services Limited.

### Commitments

Council has \$140,758,093 (2025: \$288,971,000) of capital commitments. Strada had no capital commitments at balance date (2025: \$nil).

### Events after balance date

#### a) IAWAI – Flowing Waters Limited (Local Water Done Well)

As part of the Government's Local Water Done Well reform programme, IAWAI – Flowing Waters Limited (IAWAI) was established by Waikato District Council and Hamilton City Council as a jointly owned council-controlled organisation to deliver water supply and wastewater services. Stormwater services remain the responsibility of Waikato District Council.

Under a Transfer Agreement dated 9 April 2026, Council transferred water supply and wastewater assets, liabilities, reserves, debt and associated operations to IAWAI with effect from 1 July 2026. As the transfer occurred after balance date, it has been accounted for as a non-adjusting event after the reporting date in accordance with PBE IPSAS 14.

The estimated carrying values of the assets and liabilities transferred to IAWAI are summarised below:

| Description                   | Transfer Value \$'000 |
|-------------------------------|-----------------------|
| Total assets transferred      | \$1,102,622           |
| Total liabilities transferred | \$908                 |
| Net assets transferred        | \$1,101,713           |

In exchange for the transfer of net assets, Council received:

| Description                  | Transfer Value \$'000 |
|------------------------------|-----------------------|
| Investment in IAWAI          | \$896,579             |
| Loan receivable from IAWAI   | \$205,134             |
| Total consideration received | \$1,101,713           |

Following the transfer, Council holds 50% of the voting rights in IAWAI and approximately 36% of its issued share capital. Council's ongoing interest in IAWAI comprises its shareholding and loan receivable.

The financial performance of the water supply and wastewater activities that transferred to IAWAI for the year ended 30 June 2026 was:

| Description                           | Transfer Value \$'000 |
|---------------------------------------|-----------------------|
| Revenue                               | \$73,064              |
| Expenditure                           | \$58,759              |
| Surplus/(deficit)                     | \$14,306              |
| Net operating cash inflows/(outflows) | \$9,829               |

The net operating cash inflows/(outflows) presented above are based on the operating funding surplus/(deficit) disclosed in the Funding Impact Statement. Total revenue includes capital grant funding attributable to water supply and wastewater activities. Additional information on these activities is provided in the Funding Impact Statement and Group of Activities disclosures.

At 30 June 2026, water supply and wastewater assets and liabilities continued to be recognised and measured in accordance with the applicable PBE Accounting Standards. These assets and liabilities were not classified as held for sale because the transfer to IAWAI does not represent a sale transaction as contemplated by PBE IFRS 5 Non-current Assets Held for Sale and Discontinued Operations. Accordingly, the water supply and wastewater activities have not been presented as discontinued operations in these financial statements.

Council has assessed the transfer arrangement and has not identified any material contingent liabilities or contingent assets expected to be transferred to, or created as a result of, the Local Water Done Well reform.

## **b) Organisational Transformation**

On 31 July 2026, Council management began consultation an internal staff restructure.

This reorganisation is part of a wider Council transformation programme to deliver an efficient and agile organisation that is prepared for future delivery and any future sector reform.

Feedback on the consultation closed on 17 August 2026. Consideration of the feedback and final decisions are yet to be made.

## **c) Head Start Proposal**

In May 2026, Government announced an opportunity for local authorities to consider and make "Head Start" proposals around future sector amalgamations. Proposals would be considered by Department of Internal Affairs (DIA) against criteria and DIA will present recommendations to Cabinet.

Local authorities whose Head Start proposals were accepted would work to establish the proposed new unitary authority before the 2028 local government elections.

Local authorities who did not make a proposal, or did not make a complying proposal, would default to a backstop option that could see Government direct their reform.

On 7 August 2026, Waikato, Waipa and South Waikato District Councils submitted a proposal titled "A Strong Western Waikato Unitary Authority". This proposal recommends the amalgamation of Council's along the Waikato River (or awa) including Taupō District, South Waikato District, Waipa District, Hamilton City and Waikato District Councils.

A proposal was also submitted for the Eastern Waikato that is consistent with the Western Waikato proposal.

On 24 September 2026, the Government advised participating councils that decisions on individual Head Start proposals would not be made at this time. Further consideration of local government reorganisation proposals is expected to occur following the 2026 general election.

#### **d) Chief Executive Resignation**

Subsequent to balance date, Craig Hobbs, Chief Executive of Waikato District Council, resigned from his position. The resignation was publicly announced on 6 October 2026. Council has commenced the process to manage leadership transition arrangements and to recruit a replacement Chief Executive. As at the date these financial statements were authorised for issue, the resignation has not resulted in any adjustment to the amounts recognised in these financial statements and has been treated as a non-adjusting event after the reporting date in accordance with PBE IPSAS 14.

#### **e) LGFA Deed of Guarantee**

Subsequent to balance date, Council entered into a Deed of Guarantee in favour of the New Zealand Local Government Funding Agency (LGFA) in relation to borrowings of its council-controlled organisation (CCO).

Financial reporting standards require Council to recognise a guarantee liability at fair value. However, Council is unable to determine a sufficiently reliable fair value for the guarantee and, accordingly, no liability has been recognised.

Council considers the risk of LGFA defaulting on payments of principal or interest to be very low because:

Council is not aware of any local authority debt defaults in New Zealand; and

Local government legislation provides local authorities with the ability to levy rates to raise sufficient funds to meet debt obligations if required.

Accordingly, no adjustment has been made to the financial statements as a result of this event.

### **Explanation of major variances**

The major variance explanations are set out below and explain the significant differences between actual results for 2025/26 and the Year 1 Long Term Plan budget for 2025/26. Please note that the abbreviations used in this note are \$Xm, millions of dollars; \$Xk, thousands of dollars.

#### **Statement of comprehensive revenue and expense**

Council recorded an operating surplus of \$26.7m, compared with a budgeted deficit of \$5.8m. This favourable variance was primarily due to revenue being \$40.0m above budget, partly offset by operating expenditure being \$7.6m above budget.

Revenue was higher than budget mainly due to the recognition of \$23.1m of vested and found assets, rates revenue being \$4.9m above budget, development contributions being \$5.7m above budget, additional grant funding of \$5.1m and a fair value gain of \$2.9m on Council's Housing Infrastructure Fund loan portfolio. These favourable variances were partly offset by NZTA subsidies being \$3.1m below budget and solid waste user-pays revenue being \$2.6m below budget.

Operating expenditure was above budget primarily due to asset write-offs of \$6.5m, a doubtful debt provision of \$3.3m and repairs and maintenance expenditure being \$3.2m above budget. These variances were partly offset by employee costs being \$2.0m below budget and consultancy expenditure being \$534k below budget.

Total other comprehensive revenue and expense was \$600.2m, \$552.0m above budget, principally due to infrastructure asset revaluation gains. Revaluation gains totalled \$569.8m, compared with budgeted revaluation movements of \$54m.

#### **Statement of financial position**

The statement of financial position shows total assets were \$533.7m above budget at year end.

The largest variance was in property, plant and equipment, which was \$514.7m above budget, primarily due to infrastructure asset revaluation gains recognised during the year. Investments in council-controlled and associated entities were \$9.2m above budget, largely due to a higher-than-anticipated valuation of Waikato Regional Airport Limited. Receivables and recoverables were \$5.4m above budget, although \$3.9m lower than the prior year, and cash and cash equivalents were \$12.6m above budget, reflecting higher year-end cash balances than planned.

Total liabilities were \$75.6m lower than forecast, primarily due to lower borrowing requirements resulting from reduced capital programme delivery.

### Statement of cash flows

Net cash flows from operating activities were above budget, primarily due to higher-than-anticipated receipts from rates revenue, development contributions, and subsidies and grants. Net cash flows from financing activities were lower than budget due to reduced borrowing requirements and higher debt repayments, reflecting lower-than-anticipated capital programme delivery. As a result, cash balances at the end of the year were \$12.6m above budget.

### Funding impact statements

The whole-of-Council funding impact statement reports cash transactions and amounts expected to convert to cash, such as revenue and expenditure included in receivables or payables. It excludes non-cash transactions, including asset revaluations, asset write-offs and vested assets, and separately analyses operating and capital funding.

The operating funding surplus for the year was \$30.2m, compared with a budgeted surplus of \$29.1m. Total operating funding was \$1.1m above budget, largely due to growth in targeted rates revenue and rates penalty income. Operating expenditure was \$244k above budget, primarily due to increased payments to suppliers associated with higher activity levels during the year.

Capital funding sources were \$51.3m below budget, primarily due to lower borrowing requirements resulting from reduced capital expenditure delivery during the year.

### Disclaimer

The specific disclosures included in this summary annual report have been extracted from the full annual report which was authorised for issue on 7 October 2026.

The summary cannot be expected to provide a complete understanding as provided by the full annual report of the financial and service performance, financial position and cash flows of Waikato District Council.

The summary has been examined for consistency with the full annual report and was audited by The Audit Office on behalf of the Auditor General. The full annual report and summary received an unmodified audit opinion on 7 October 2026.

The full annual report can be obtained from any of the Council's offices or can be accessed online at [www.waikatodc.govt.nz](http://www.waikatodc.govt.nz).



## Independent Auditor's Report

### To the readers of Waikato District Council's summary of the annual report for the year ended 30 June 2026

The summary of the annual report was derived from the annual report of the Waikato District Council (the Council) for the year ended 30 June 2026.

The summary of the annual report comprises the following information on pages 17 to 31:

- the summary statement of financial position of the Council and Group as at 30 June 2026;
- the summaries of the statement of comprehensive revenue and expense, statement of changes in equity and statement of cash flows of the Council and Group for the year ended 30 June 2026;
- the notes to the summary financial statements that include accounting policies and other explanatory information; and
- the summary statement of service performance.

## Opinion

In our opinion:

- the summary of the annual report represents, fairly and consistently, the information regarding the major matters dealt with in the annual report; and
- the summary statements comply with PBE FRS 43: *Summary Financial Statements*.

## Summary of the annual report

The summary of the annual report does not contain all the disclosures required by generally accepted accounting practice in New Zealand. Reading the summary of the annual report and the auditor's report thereon, therefore, is not a substitute for reading the full annual report and the auditor's report thereon.

The summary of the annual report does not reflect the effects of events that occurred subsequent to the date of our auditor's report on the full annual report.

## The full annual report and our audit report thereon

We expressed an unmodified audit opinion on the information we audited in the full annual report for the year ended 30 June 2026 in our auditor's report dated 7 October 2026.

Our auditor's report on the full annual report also includes emphasis of matter paragraphs drawing attention to the following disclosures in the full annual report.

### Future changes in water service delivery

Note 32(a) on page 151 of the full annual report outlines how the future changes in delivery of water services will affect the Council.

Information about this matter is also disclosed on pages 28 to 29 of the summary of the annual report.

### Simplifying Local Government reform

The government has announced it wants to simplify local government, including reducing the number of local authorities by amalgamations within regions. As described in note 32(c) (page 152) of the full annual report, Waikato District Council, Waipā District Council, and South Waikato District Council endorsed a Head Start proposal under the Government's Simplifying Local Government reform

programme. If approved, this may be implemented before the 2028 local elections. The eventual outcome for the Council is dependent on future cabinet decisions and enactment of enabling legislation. Because of the significant uncertainty about the outcome and timing of any future reorganisation, the financial statements have continued to be prepared on a going concern basis.

Information about this matter is also disclosed on page 29 of the summary of the annual report.

### **Council's responsibility for the summary of the annual report**

The Council is responsible for preparing the summary of the annual report which includes preparing summary statements, in accordance with PBE FRS 43: *Summary Financial Statements*.

### **Auditor's responsibility**

Our responsibility is to express an opinion on whether the summary of the annual report represents, fairly and consistently, the information regarding the major matters dealt with in the full annual report and whether the summary statements comply with PBE FRS 43: *Summary Financial Statements*.

Our opinion on the summary of the annual report is based on our procedures, which were carried out in accordance with the Auditor-General's Auditing Standards, which incorporate the Professional and Ethical Standards and the International Standards on Auditing (New Zealand) issued by the New Zealand Auditing and Assurance Standards Board.

In addition to the audit, we have carried out a limited assurance engagement relating to the Council's debenture trust deed and assurance engagements relating to the procurement of significant contracts, which are compatible with the independence requirements.

Other than these engagements, we have no relationship with, or interests in, the Council or the Group.



Carl Wessels  
**The Audit Office**  
**On behalf of the Auditor-General**  
Auckland, New Zealand  
7 October 2026





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