

## **Media Release**

### **Communities 4 Local Democracy**

**10 February 2022**

#### **Group Offers Better Alternative for Three Waters Delivery**

Councils are better placed to deliver the Government's Three Waters outcomes than mega-entity model, new research shows.

Analysis commissioned by Communities 4 Local Democracy He hapori mō te Manapori(C4LD) has concluded that both the council owned with stronger regulation, and a new Council Owned Enterprise (COE) model would perform better than the government's proposal.

C4LD is a local government action group with 27 member councils throughout Aotearoa representing more than a 1.3 million New Zealanders.

The group is committed to working with central government to ensure all New Zealanders have safe and environmentally sound three waters systems. The group is also committed to ensuring that all local communities continue to have a say on the use of assets purchased on their behalf using ratepayer funds.

C4LD Chair, and Manawatu District Mayor Helen Worboys, said there was still the opportunity for central government to work in partnership with local government to create lasting change that delivers the outcome that everyone can support.

"We are not against change, but we strongly oppose this forcing through of massive reforms that are based on questionable evidence and analysis," she said.

"Our membership – and we could safely say most of local government – agree that change is needed, but it needs to be change that doesn't take away property rights and the community's right to have a say.

"The alternative approaches we've developed are based on models that we believe can achieve broad support, and that deliver a better outcome for our communities compared to the governments oversimplified 'one size fits none' model.

"Ours is a framework for local government to work with its neighbours – with the support of central government – to transform three waters delivery for the better and in a way that all our communities can agree.

“We’re the experts in local service delivery and we want to drive that change, not have unsuitable solutions forced upon communities based on unsound evidence and faulty analysis.”

Analysis by global infrastructure advising firm Castalia shows the Council owned with regulation and council owned enterprise models of delivery achieve better outcomes on accountability, Iwi-Maōri partnership, incentives of management and governance, access to financing, scale and scope efficiencies and flexibility for the future.

In comparison, the government’s mega-entity proposal showed significantly worse outcomes across the board, on most of the criteria across the board on these outcomes.

“Most of the infrastructure we’re talking about has a 100-year life and this is a once in a generation decision that will change things forever,” Helen Worboys said.

“No-one needs a rushed decision forced through against the clear wishes of our communities. We want to partner with the government to create real change that will last in the long term, and look forward to presenting our alternative approach to the Minister.”

The full reports from Communities 4 Local Democracy He hapori mō te Manapori and Castalia which details our proposals are now available at: [www.communities4localdemocracy.co.nz/ideas](http://www.communities4localdemocracy.co.nz/ideas)

### **Media Enquiries**

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**Graphic:** Comparison of council owned plus regulation, new COE model and Government four entity proposals commissioned from Castalia for Communities 4 Local Democracy He hapori mō Manapori

