

Workshop - Council

NOTES ATTACHMENTS

Date: Tuesday 11 November 2025

Time: 11.30 am - 1.00 pm

Venue: Camellia Chambers, Civic Offices,
53 Hereford Street, Christchurch

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Government reforms

Council Workshop
11 November 2025

Context

Purpose

- Busy times ahead. Several key government reforms underway that impact local government.
- You will be required to consider the implications of these reforms, whether for submissions or planning for the future.
- This session is a high-level overview of four key reforms:
 - Water; Local Government; Building consents; Resource management
 - Discuss what it is, what it means, and next steps
 - You will receive more detailed information at future briefings.



Water reform

Background

- Local Water Done Well
 - Replaced previous Govt's '*Three Waters Reform*' to address long-standing water infrastructure challenges.
- Council decided to deliver water through an in-house delivery model
 - Council retains governance and control; water can be integrated with wider council functions; council accountability.
 - Christchurch has scale and capability to manage water services and retains flexibility.
- In October 2025, our Water Services Delivery Plan was approved by DIA which sets out:
 - Sustainability over 10+ years; financial ringfencing arrangements; pathways for compliance; asset and investment strategies.



Water reform

Impact for council

- Financial
 - Significant investment in water is needed over the coming decades.
 - Will put pressure on funding and greater transparency is required on rates and charges for water.
 - Governance
 - Councillors will retain direct accountability for water service performance.
 - Raises expectations on standards, affordability and environmental performance.
 - Council must embed the new approach into day-to-day delivery
 - Ensure funding, accountability and reporting requirements are met.
 - Strategies and processes are implemented.
-



Water reform

Next steps

- Implementation –
 - Develop a Water Services Strategy
 - Set long-term direction for drinking, waste, and storm water; Define levels of service; Align funding and investment decisions.
 - Implement ringfenced funding
 - Water services required to have ringfenced funding. Means changes needed to financial reporting, governance, planning processes.
 - Oversight and reporting
 - Regular reporting to Taumata Arowai and the Commerce Commission; Benchmarking; Complaint and redress mechanisms.
-



Local Government Act reform

Background

- Government position
 - Councils need to “rein in the fantasies... and do the basics brilliantly” (*Prime Minister*).
 - “Local government has drifted from their core responsibilities. This Bill draws a line in the sand – focus on the essentials and deliver value for your community.” (*Minister of Local Government*).
- Local Government (System Improvements) Amendment Bill
 - Address cost of living concerns; rates are a driver of household inflation; councils lack fiscal discipline.
 - Removes “four well-beings”; new list of core services; changes to measuring and reporting; increase transparency and accountability; regulatory relief. Rates cap not included but the Bill prepares for it.
- Council submission
 - Questions the Bill’s ability to ease rates burden – doesn’t focus on key drivers of rates; want the Govt to do more to ease regulatory burden; some have risks that need to be managed; want Govt to work more with councils.



Local Government Act reform

Impact for council

- Increased scrutiny on Council spending decisions
 - New reporting and benchmarking measures; core vs non-core spending; rates increases.
- Implementing new requirements
 - Reporting, benchmarking, code of conduct, standing orders, new governance principles, public notices, etc.
- There's more to come
 - Future changes signalled: Rates cap; reviewing LTP framework, planning, reporting and auditing requirements.



Local Government Act reform

Next steps

- Select Committee report back to Parliament on 25 November 2025.
- Bill likely to be passed early next year.
- Policy on rates caps to Cabinet before Christmas. Legislation likely next year.
- Other signalled changes likely next Govt term.



Building Act reform

Background

- Significant reforms of the building consents system are underway –
 - Making it easier to build granny flats
 - Changes to earthquake-prone building system
 - Building Consent Authorities (BCA) performance reporting on timeframes and inspection wait-times
 - Increasing remote inspections
 - Compliance pathways for overseas building products.
- Upcoming initiatives include:
 - Amending legislation to encourage voluntary BCA consolidation
 - Shift from joint and several liability to proportionate liability
 - Opt-in self certification schemes for house builders, plumbers and drainlayers.



Building Act reform

Impact for council

- Changes are designed to speed up NZ’s “sluggish consenting system” and stop driving up costs.
- The reforms are significant for the council as they will change the way some things are done. The Council will need to adapt accordingly.
- The changes to liability settings would mean less council exposure, but possible increased exposure for homeowners.
- BCA consolidation will appeal to some regions, but currently of limited value to Christchurch. The Canterbury Mayoral Forum is undertaking exploratory work on a regional BCA.



Building Act reform

Next steps

- New Amendment Bill due soon (late-2025/early-2026) – self-certification, BCA consolidation, liability, etc.
- Staff will:
 - monitor updates and proposals from Government and will engage with Government officials to put forward Christchurch's interests.
 - actively be involved in regional discussions
 - prepare to implement changes
 - update the council as reforms progress.



Resource Management reform

Background

- Government want to simplify the planning system and remove red tape.
- Two new pieces of legislation to replace the Resource Management Act –
 - **Planning Bill:** regulate land-use planning and infrastructure development.
 - **Natural Environment Bill:** protecting and enhancing natural resources (land, air, freshwater, marine).
- Plan stop to reduce unnecessary costs and planning.
 - Government has prevented notification of new plan changes until December 2027 and required councils to withdraw plan changes that have not yet had a hearing. Council will apply for an exemption to this rule for five plan changes.
- Council submissions to date:
 - support changes that improve efficiency and provide clear guidance
 - raise concerns about balancing growth and environmental outcomes and minimising the fiscal impacts on council.



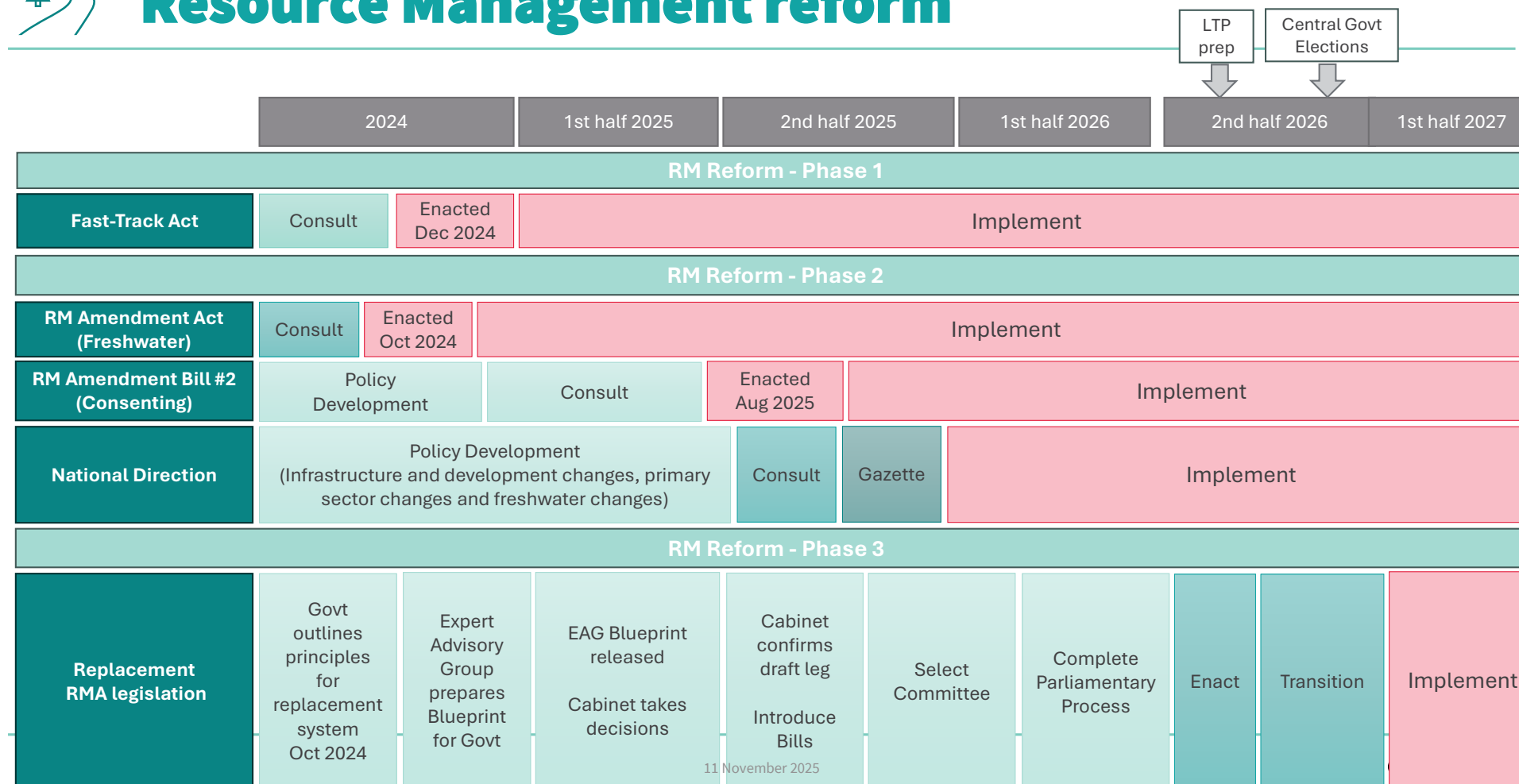
Resource Management reform

Impact for council

- Awaiting further detail from Government, but the changes suggest significant implications
 - Changes to Council's roles and responsibilities, e.g. city planning, resource consenting, compliance and enforcement
 - Funding and finance implications of transitioning to new systems
 - Resourcing implications (staff, systems, capability)
- Will influence how the city grows
- Some uncertainty and risks during transition period
 - Resource constraints, determining priorities, outcome of exemption requests, change of government.



Resource Management reform



LTP
prep

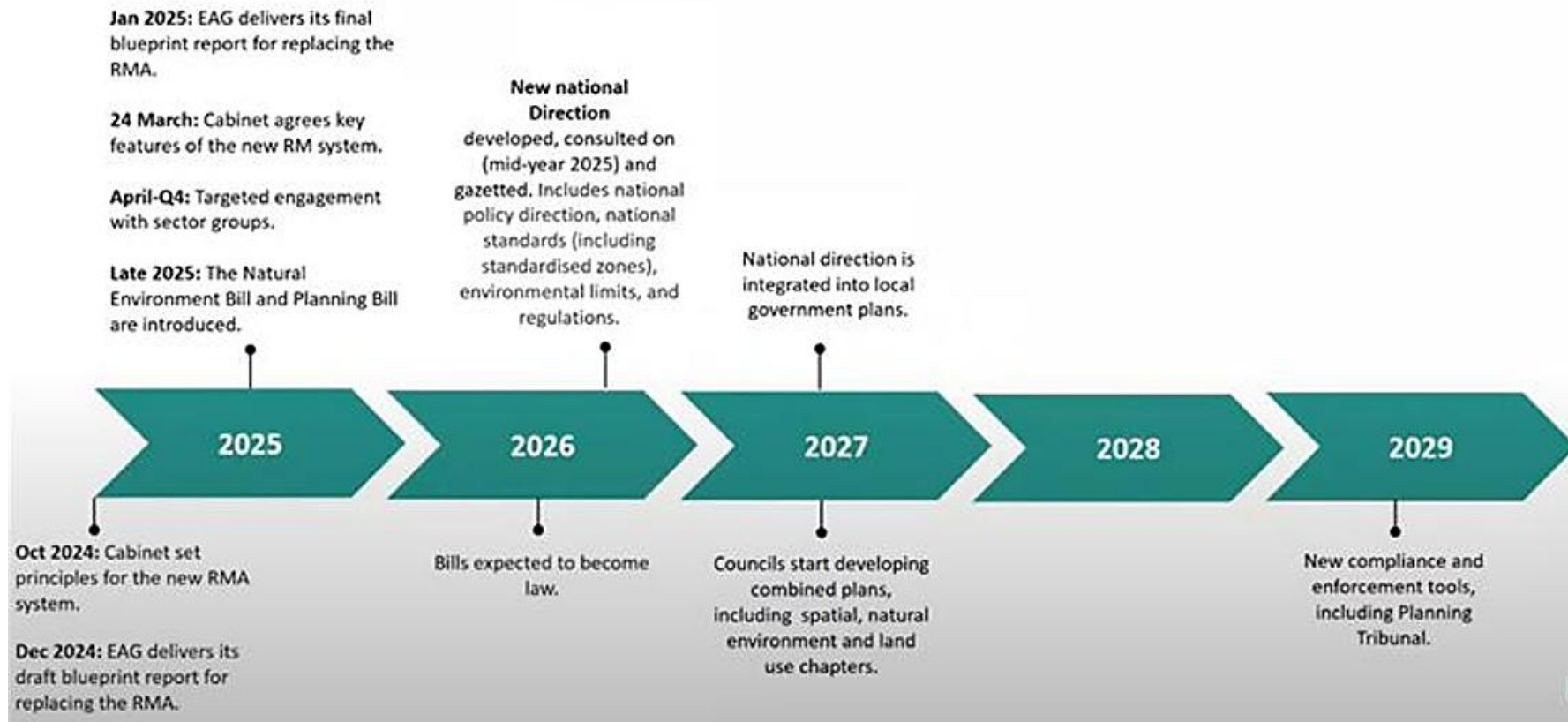
Central Govt
Elections

Item 2

Attachment A



Resource Management reform



11 November 2025



Resource Management reform

Next steps

- Two new Bills expected before the end of the year.
- Staff will assess the implications for resourcing and funding once Bills are released.
- Staff will brief the Council on the content and implications of the Bills.
- Plan to make Council submissions on both of these.

Questions

11 November 2025

Standards New Zealand – Local Government Standing Orders Review

Council Workshop November 2025

Katie Matheis – Senior Democratic Services
Advisor

Today's Purpose & Goal

- To provide an update on the proposed *Local Government Standing Orders* (LGSO)
- Present the key changes in the LGSO
- Prepare members to provide feedback to the draft submission



Background

- Local Government (System Improvements) Amendment Bill
- Department of Internal Affairs & Standards New Zealand
 - Model Standing Orders (NZS 9202)
- Standards Development Committee
 - Membership
 - Proposed LGSO for consultation



November 2025

General Items and Additions

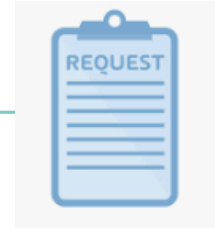
- Principles removed
- Structure / Formatting
 - 10 Parts organised to follow flow of meeting
 - Use of more detailed subsections
 - Cross references
- General clarifications of process throughout

General Items and Additions

- LGSO mandated but with discretion to adopt:
 - Procedure for speaking and moving motions/amendments
 - Casting vote
 - Time limits
- Meeting duration – 6 hours
- Legislatively prescribed sections added:
 - Appointments, elections, delegations, etc.
 - Emergency meetings

Meeting Agenda

- CE may delay or refuse to commission reports that:
 - Involve significant cost/resource *unless* resolved
 - Are beyond the scope of the decision-making body
- Withdrawal of agenda item
 - By CE if staff report
 - By EM if EM report



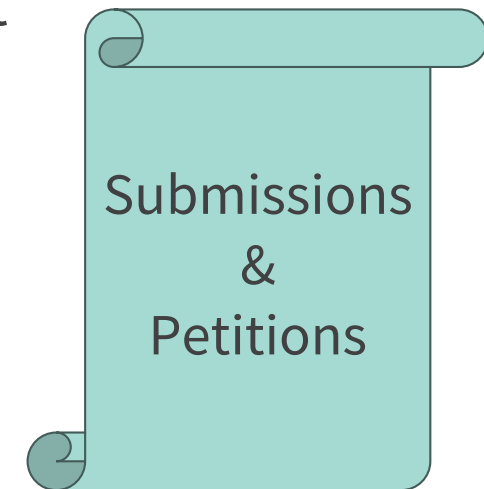
Public Participation

- Requests - one clear working day before meeting
- Default speaking timeframes – 5 minutes
- Additional discretion to decline requests where the matter:
 - Was considered by another decision-making body (Part A)
 - Rests with another decision-making body / within its ToR
 - Is in contravention of Council policy or legislative requirements



Public Participation (continued)

- New section on hearing submissions – default timeframes outlined
- Updated provisions on petitions
 - Electronic petitions
 - No maximum word count
 - Same restrictions as PF and Deputations



AV Attendance & Member Conduct

- Updated to reflect changes in legislation - AV attendance counts toward quorum
- More explicit language around requests and conditions to attend via AV
- Conflict of interest provisions strengthened / clarified –
 - Members *must* physically withdraw themselves from the table for both financial *and* non-financial COI; if PX, must leave the room
 - Nature of the conflict does not need to be disclosed
 - Non-participation in vote is not considered abstention

Questions & Debate

- Process around questions before debate clearer
- Clarified provisions – Chair’s discretion when addressing questions
- Process clarifications – when an item can be moved/seconded
- Procedure for speaking and moving/seconding motions & amendments*



Debate

- 3 minutes for all speakers*
 - Chair discretion or resolution to extend
- Updated requirements for raising an amendment
 - Conflicts an already carried amendment
 - Does not meet the LGA decision-making requirements
 - Negates a decision made under delegated authority
- Clarification around foreshadowed motions/amendments



Procedural Motions & Points of Order

- Process clarifications –
 - Timing – a PM can be moved at any time once item is tabled
 - Acceptance of closure motion
- PMs to be limited to advancing procedural directives
- Points of Order
 - If raised against Chair's performance, ruling deferred to DM
 - Criticism of resolutions

Notice of Motion

- Notice of Motion Requirements:
 - 10 clear working days
 - Requires a seconder
- Refusal of NoM – clarifications and additions
 - Disrespectful, offensive
 - Ambiguity or statement of fact/opinion that cannot form effective resolution *and* declining to comply with requirements made by CE
 - Matters already on the agenda or the subject of forthcoming reports
 - Does not satisfy LGA or contravenes other legislative requirements
 - Matter sits with another body with delegated decision-making authority

Notice of Motion - continued



- Referral of NoM
 - Where matter sits with another body
 - Mover has right to raise but not vote
- Repeat NoMs
 - If declined, fails for lack of seconder, or declared lost
 - No similar NoM for 12 months unless supported by 1/3 membership

Further Guidance Needed

- Timeline
- Copyright restrictions
- Accessibility



November 2025

Questions?

