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## **Council Workshop**

### **NOTES**

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**Date:** Tuesday 14 April 2026  
**Time:** 9.32 am  
**Venue:** Camellia Chambers, Civic Offices,  
53 Hereford Street, Christchurch

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#### **Present**

Chairperson	Mayor Phil Mauger
Deputy Chairperson	Deputy Mayor Victoria Henstock
Members	Councillor Kelly Barber
	Councillor David Cartwright
	Councillor Melanie Coker
	Councillor Pauline Cotter
	Councillor Tyrone Fields
	Councillor Tyla Harrison-Hunt – via audio/visual link
	Councillor Nathaniel Herz Jardine
	Councillor Yani Johanson
	Councillor Aaron Keown
	Councillor Sam MacDonald
	Councillor Jake McLellan
	Councillor Andrei Moore
	Councillor Mark Peters
	Councillor Tim Scandrett

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The agenda was dealt with in the following order.

## **1. Apologies Ngā Whakapāha**

An apology from Councillor Donovan was received.

Apologies for lateness were received from Councillors MacDonald McLellan.

Councillor Moore joined the workshop at 9.35 am.

Councillor Henstock left the workshop at 9.35 am and returned at 9.41 am.

Councillor Moore Keown joined the workshop at 9.44 am.

Councillor McLellan joined the workshop at 10.17 am.

Councillor MacDonald joined the workshop at 10.19 am.

## **2. Chlorination Update**

Council officers, Gavin Hutchinson, Head of Three Waters, Veronica Zefferino, Manager Infrastructure Planning and Judy Williamson, Water Supply Security Specialist joined the meeting to present item 2 (refer to the presentation included in the agenda) and respond to questions.

Allan Prangnell, Chief Executive and Jim Graham, Chief Advisor Water Science of Taumata Arowai addressed the meeting and responded to questions.

### **Key presentation points:**

Officer presentation:

- What the legislation and regulator require, and the work needed.
- How much it will cost, and how long it would take.
- The Water Services Act requires residual disinfection (such as chlorine) unless an exemption is granted. There is a legal process to apply for an exemption, but it is demanding.
- Christchurch's source water is very high quality; almost all sources are classed as Class 1.
- Testing has confirmed there are no viruses in the aquifer, two shallow sources use UV treatment. There have been no E. coli breaches since chlorination began in 2018.
- Most treatment plants are not fully compliant at present
- Compliance with drinking water rules is the minimum standard. An exemption would require performance well above minimum compliance.
- An exemption from chlorination is possible but challenging. It would take 20 years, with major capital and operational costs. Chlorine systems would still need to remain in place for emergencies.
- The main risk to water quality is not the source, but the distribution network. Pipe breaks, old piping, reservoirs, suction tanks and maintenance work increase risk.
- Removing chlorine would require a complete change in how the system is operated.
- Public feedback shows that chlorine is an issue for some residents, though overall satisfaction with water quality remains above target.
- Alternative options to chlorination available include community water stations, household filters or treatments and public information about managing chlorine at home.

Taumata Arowai update:

- Appreciate the opportunity to address the Council, Christchurch's water is clean at source; risk is introduced by the network.
- Chlorine is currently absorbing network risk at very low cost.
- Exemptions are legally possible but require replacing chlorine with infrastructure and systems.
- For a large, complex system like Christchurch, the scale and cost are the main barriers.

- Removing chlorine does not remove risk, it reshapes how risk must be managed.
- Any pathway would need to be staged, evidence-based, and clearly justified.

**Key discussion points:**

- Condition and design of assets
- When full compliance is expected to be achieved - the project is underway in design phase, with full compliance two to three years away.
- Major changes or investment decisions would be consulted on through the LTP.
- What would need to happen to move toward an exemption, including what has already been discussed with Government and how long this could take.
- Why chlorination was introduced and what has changed; chlorination became mandatory and why the situation is different now.
- No council has sought an exemption on a major supply size.
- Requests for information on total cost, operational cost, and full cost estimates.
- Removal of chlorination would increase risk, even with upgrades. Risks can be reduced, not eliminated
- Communication, including the public being able to have a say in the level of risk they are prepared to accept with drinking water
- Alternatives to full network treatment, smaller scale or household level options (filters, pills, UV systems), can be beneficial for small or remote communities.
- Network condition and leakage, older pipes and the need for chlorination and whether fixing leaks reduces reliance on chlorine.
- Response times and monitoring: How quickly contamination can be detected and communicated, and whether newer technology could improve alert times.
- Risks beyond chlorination, other risks that exist and how these are managed in drinking water safety plans, and what the regulator focuses on.
- Water loss benchmarks- how Christchurch compares with other cities, and how impact on compliance and cost.
- Value for money: Whether the scale of investment is proportionate, whether current performance is already good, and whether all councillors support removing chlorination.

**Workshop concluded at 10.31 am.**