

Finance and Performance Chair's Report 29th May 2025

Recent news has been dominated by the Government's budget and I look forward to the expert opinion of our economic advisor Mr Calkin and other professionals but note on first impressions that there will be little or no windfalls for the local government sector.

The meeting with the minister and HWTM and Councillor Piki Te Ora regarding the Taihape health campus rebuild is great news but unfortunately the health budget has not been increased in any areas that affect our district and pressure needs to be continually applied.

There was some good news with the 'NI Weather Events Programme initiative after Cyclone Gabrielle' being extended for another three years which may enable a number of the projects on the Taihape Napier Road that were recently turned down for funding, to go ahead.

The change of funding for Taumata Arowai to a mix of some Crown funding and levies applied to the water supply bodies adds another cost directly to the ratepayer or Water Provider customer.

Local Water Done Well (LWDW) has otherwise dominated Council time and resources and the corresponding amount of time and effort expended by Council staff to keep up with the fast moving changes is hard to appreciate by anyone not directly involved, in keeping Councillors and the public informed of all the economic effects of the myriad of choices. The present decision as outlined in HWTM's report for today's Council Meeting may give staff a brief reprieve until the other Councils' decisions are made and further changes to the make-up of the water entity groupings are known.

Jeff Wong