

# Comprehensive Report: Communities 4 Local Democracy - He hapori mo te Manapori

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## 1 Background

### Introduction

Communities 4 Local Democracy He hapori mo te Manapori is a new local government action group committed to working with central government to ensure all New Zealanders have access to safe drinking water and that all communities continue to have a say on the use of assets purchased on their behalf using ratepayers funds.

The action group states that Mayors and councillors are the elected local voice of our communities.

The action group believes there is a better way to achieve the Government's objectives on the Three Waters Reform and wants to work in partnership with the Government to do that.

### Member Councils (as at 11 March 2022 – source [communities4localdemocracy.co.nz](http://communities4localdemocracy.co.nz))

There are 32 member councils



## 2 Discussion

The action group presented to the Ministerial Working Party on 28 January 2022 with an alternate approach see **Attachment B** (*C4LD presentation to Ministerial Working Group*).

### Assessment of options

There are three options available with regards to showing support and alliance with Communities 4 Local Democracy or not.

#### (a) Do nothing

An option available is for TCDC not to have a position either as a Council or as individual councillors with regards joining or aligning with Communities 4 Local Democracy.

Advantages	Disadvantages
Allows council to remain independent and provide a TCDC specific voice on matters related to this subject in the future	By remaining an independent voice TCDC may lose the opportunity to gain collective strength and be part of a more substantive group hearing
It does not support the perception that council has aligned with one group over another and therefore remains open minded on how and who it wishes to deal with this issue	It does not provide a clear position of Council and Council could be criticised for not advocating and representing the district.

#### (b) Individual elected members to sign a declaration

On 5 February Mayor Goudie sent the following email to councillors.

**From:** Trena Hokianga <[Trena.Hokianga@mdc.govt.nz](mailto:Trena.Hokianga@mdc.govt.nz)>  
**Sent:** Friday, 4 February 2022 3:39 PM  
**To:** Helen Worboys <[Helen.Worboys@mdc.govt.nz](mailto:Helen.Worboys@mdc.govt.nz)>  
**Subject:** 3 Waters Elected Member Declaration Invitation

Communities **4** Local Democracy  
He hapori mō te Manapori

Fresh ideas.  
Better water.

## Your invitation as an Elected Member

Happy New Year!

We trust you had a great break, are now refreshed and back serving your community again in 2022.

As you are aware **Communities 4 Local Democracy – He Hapori mo te Manapori** is a growing group of partner Councils, currently 25 participating Councils, from around New Zealand, including cities, rural and provincial Councils.

This group was formed to respond to our communities' serious concerns about the Government's mandated Three Waters Reform model and the implications of this proposed legislation.

Our purpose is to be constructive and support the new drinking water regulator Tamata Arowai. We have proposed alternative governance and ownership models, which will in our view, better support the efforts to improve environmental and public health outcomes with long-term sustainable investment mechanisms, without losing control of community owned assets – more details are on our website [www.communities4localdemocracy.co.nz](http://www.communities4localdemocracy.co.nz)

Every Mayor of the 67 Councils in NZ was invited in early November 2021, to seek their Council's support to join our pushback campaign by signing up to the MOU (see copy attached). Some Councils voted not to join, while others have yet to make a decision. Councils are welcome to join up at any time.

We are well aware that within every Council there are individual elected members who support our local democracy campaign.

**This is your opportunity to join us as an elected member by signing this Declaration to show your community that you are opposed to community property rights being confiscated, without compensation and the removal of direct community input into local decision-making.**

Once completed, this Declaration with your signature on it, will be advertised widely throughout the country as part of this campaign strategy and you can use it locally to show your support for protecting local democracy.

**To read the details of the Declaration and to sign up, please open the attachment above.**

Your feedback is welcome.

Regards

Mayor Helen Worboys

Mayor Dan Gordon

Chair **Communities 4 Local Democracy**  
**Local Democracy**

Deputy Chair **Communities 4**

E: [helen.worboys@mdc.govt.nz](mailto:helen.worboys@mdc.govt.nz)

E: [dan.gordon@wmk.govt.nz](mailto:dan.gordon@wmk.govt.nz)

M: 027 230 6690

M: 021 906 437

This communication offered the opportunity for individual councillors to follow this link <https://www.communities4localdemocracy.co.nz/declaration> whereby individual elected members can sign to support Communities 4 Local Democracy. See **Attachment B** (Communities 4 Local Democracy declaration memo).

It would seem this fulfils an individual choice requirement for elected members to show their individual support for Communities 4 Local Democracy.

There is no cost to Council or individual elected members for signing this declaration of support for Communities 4 Local Democracy.

<b>Advantages</b>	<b>Disadvantages</b>
It allows individual elected members to participate in this process by making an individual decision	It does not provide a strong collective voice and still relies on individual views to be expressed rather than the collective
It supports the individual choice being made by elected members to represent their views on behalf of the community they represent	It does not provide a clear position of Council and Council could be criticised for not advocating and representing the district.

### **(c) Council to sign MoU**

In the final quarter of 2021, Council discussed the opportunity available to it to sign the MOU see **Attachment D** – (3 Waters MoU between Partner Councils).

Council concluded, following a discussion and by consensus, not to progress with signing the MoU.

The opportunity for Council signing the MoU has been raised again.

Some questions to consider include:

- What will the \$15,000 as a provincial council to be a member provide TCDC?
- Has the timing for the campaign effectiveness passed with the Government now in the final stages of considering feedback from the Working Group (which the C4LD presented to) before the Bill is introduced into the House?
- How effective will a campaign be that TCDC contributes \$15,000 to, if the Government chooses not to work with or partner as is the desire of the C4LD?

<b>Advantages</b>	<b>Disadvantages</b>
Supports a strong collective voice representing the views of Council while aligning with other Councils with similar views	It may not necessarily reflect the views of all elected members and creates a perception that this is the view of all
It provides a clear position of Council and Council can be seen to be advocating and representing its district	It could be perceived Council has aligned with one group over another and has a closed position on this matter

### **3 Significance and engagement**

The decision being considered by the Council is not considered significant when assessed against the criteria within the Council’s Significance and Engagement Policy.