

Draft Significance and Engagement Policy

Community submissions

1 May 2026

Submitter Number	Name	Organisation
1	Eddie Hurst	
2	Rachel Barker	
3	Andy Dartmann	
4	Steven Weston	
5	Darren Graham	
6	Tony Stewart	
7	Simon McDermott	
8	Ruth Richardson	
9	Jeremy Wilson	
10	Paul Clarke	
11	Theresa Ellen Phelan	
12	Harvey Polglase	Darfield Residents Association Inc
13	Elene Anderson	
14	Rebecca Willis	
15	Anthony Ross	
16	Jane Huggins	
17	Laurie Squires	
18	Lloyd Bathurst	Rolleston Square Limited
19	Keith Land	
20	Grant Prescott	
21	Martin Russell	
22	Mark Mulholland	
23	Graham Searlr	
24	Sonya Morris	
25	Keith Morrison	
26	Joseph Clapp	
27	Malcolm Wassung	
28	Alan Leckie	
29	Andrew Renwick	
30	Charles Merfield	
31	Sandra Poff	
32	Dean Patfield	
33	Isobel Quinlan	

Submitter Number	Name	Organisation
34	Mhina Madriaga	
35	Tracey Baunton	
36	Richard Brewster	
37	John Verry	Tāwera Malvern Ward (Selwyn District)
38	Barbara Dillon	
39	Warwick Gay	
40	Helen Clarke	
41	Susan Carline-Wright	
42	Maree Horlor	
43	Jane Mulholland	
44	Carey Barnett	Ellesmere Sustainable Agriculture Inc
45	Hayley Lilley	
46	Mark Alexander	Rolleston Residents Association Inc
47	Wayne Lawson	
48	John McNamara	
49	Hilary Michie	
50	Steven Dean	
51	John smith	
52	Allison Rosanowski	
53	Gareth Payne	
54	David Page	
55	Zoran Rakovic	
56	Kirrily Fea	
57	Cleve Prescott	
58	Vanessa Murray	

Note: The following written submissions are unedited and unchanged. They may include errors or offensive information. They are the opinion of the submitter and Selwyn Water takes no responsibility for them. Where a submission or part of a submission constitutes hate speech, or otherwise is in breach of law, the submission has been omitted or redacted in this public version. All contact details have been removed.

Submitter Number: 1

Full Name: Eddie Hurst
Organisation:

Section 2: Draft Significance and Engagement Policy Questions

1. Is the draft policy clear about when and how community engagement will happen?

Very clear
Tell us why

3. Which methods would you prefer Selwyn Water to use when engaging with you?

Online surveys or feedback forms Email updates
Other

Submitter Number: 2

Full Name: Rachel Barker
Organisation:

Section 2: Draft Significance and Engagement Policy Questions

1. Is the draft policy clear about when and how community engagement will happen?

Somewhat clear
Tell us why

3. Which methods would you prefer Selwyn Water to use when engaging with you?

Online surveys or feedback forms Website announcements Email updates
Other

5. What would help you feel confident that your feedback is heard and considered?

If it actually is heard and considered. I don't have much faith in this as the actual set up of Selwyn Water was against the wishes of the majority of people who submitted!!

Submitter Number: 3

Full Name: Andy Dartmann
Organisation:

Section 2: Draft Significance and Engagement Policy Questions

1. Is the draft policy clear about when and how community engagement will happen?

Somewhat clear
Tell us why

3. Which methods would you prefer Selwyn Water to use when engaging with you?

Online surveys or feedback forms Website announcements Public events (drop-in sessions, facilitated meetings) Email updates
Other

4. What can we do to make it easier to share your views and ideas with us?

offer an email or a constant line to share ideas, even outside of policy changes / decisions. That gives you a feeling on what's the issue at the moment and eventually work towards those concerns and consider them.

5. What would help you feel confident that your feedback is heard and considered?

Share points / changes that originated from public feedback. It gives us the re-assurance, that a single voice can actually change something.

Submitter Number: 4

Full Name: Steven Weston
Organisation:

Section 2: Draft Significance and Engagement Policy Questions

1. Is the draft policy clear about when and how community engagement will happen?

Very clear
Tell us why - well drafted

2. Are there any other factors we should consider when deciding whether a decision is significant?

A reflection on whether decisions are on new requirements such as construction of a housing area, and how the costs are being allocated to; or legacy issues caused by the lack of budgeting and maintenance such as the cause for the need to chlorinate water supplies.

‘Significant’ - the cost of new builds should be covered by that development as part of being commissioned. Repair/replacement works
a) learn from the predicament that rate payers are now in, take proactive steps to avoid future issues. B) deal with legacy issues as a priority and cease/pause adding to the network until the existing supplies and drainage are in order

3. Which methods would you prefer Selwyn Water to use when engaging with you?

Online surveys or feedback forms Website announcements Public events (drop-in sessions, facilitated meetings) Email updates Direct mail

(letters or flyers) Social media
Other

4. What can we do to make it easier to share your views and ideas with us?

clarity, open meetings (not behind closed doors), engage people have authority and influence and who care and empathise with the rate payer

5. What would help you feel confident that your feedback is heard and considered?

Acknowledgement, inclusion, pragmatic feedback

This is a relevant question and thank you for raising it - we do not currently believe that the council/water service pay any attention to the ratepayers' views.

Submitter Number: 5

Full Name: Darren Graham
Organisation:

Section 2: Draft Significance and Engagement Policy Questions

1. Is the draft policy clear about when and how community engagement will happen?

Somewhat clear

Tell us why - so e vagie points when everthing should be open and engaged

2. Are there any other factors we should consider when deciding whether a decision is significant?

cost to the consimer - any increase is significant

3. Which methods would you prefer Selwyn Water to use when engaging with you?

Online surveys or feedback forms Website announcements Email updates Direct mail (letters or flyers) Social media
Other

4. What can we do to make it easier to share your views and ideas with us?

Be open and consultative

5. What would help you feel confident that your feedback is heard and considered?

provide a report on the feedback and general sentiments

Other feedback

make sure people get a clear understanding of what is and is not significant with clear rules around it.

Submitter Number: 6

Full Name: Tony Stewart
Organisation:

Section 2: Draft Significance and Engagement Policy Questions

1. Is the draft policy clear about when and how community engagement will happen?

Very clear
Tell us why

3. Which methods would you prefer Selwyn Water to use when engaging with you?

Email updates Direct mail (letters or flyers)
Other

4. What can we do to make it easier to share your views and ideas with us?

Have the ability to submit without details made public / searchable.

Submitter Number: 7

Full Name: Simon McDermott
Organisation:

Section 2: Draft Significance and Engagement Policy Questions

1. Is the draft policy clear about when and how community engagement will happen?

Somewhat clear
Tell us why

2. Are there any other factors we should consider when deciding whether a decision is significant?

Where there is a financial implication for ratepayers.

3. Which methods would you prefer Selwyn Water to use when engaging with you?

Online surveys or feedback forms Email updates
Other

4. What can we do to make it easier to share your views and ideas with us?

Monthly newsletters on whats happening delivered electronically via email - with pulse check on how it impacts ratepayers

5. What would help you feel confident that your feedback is heard and considered?

Actually seeing due process and cost constraints based on inflation levels only - so not on funding growth

Submitter Number: 8

Full Name: Ruth Richardson

Organisation:

Other feedback

spend more time on controlling your costs to keep them within the inflation rate and less time on virtue signalling such as surveys that you likely will ignore

Submitter Number: 9

Full Name: Jeremy Wilson
Organisation:

Section 2: Draft Significance and Engagement Policy Questions

1. Is the draft policy clear about when and how community engagement will happen?

Very clear
Tell us why

3. Which methods would you prefer Selwyn Water to use when engaging with you?

Public events (drop-in sessions, facilitated meetings) Email updates
Other

4. What can we do to make it easier to share your views and ideas with us?

Public forums

5. What would help you feel confident that your feedback is heard and considered?

results

Submitter Number: 10

Full Name: Paul Clarke

Organisation:

Section 2: Draft Significance and Engagement Policy Questions

1. Is the draft policy clear about when and how community engagement will happen?

Very clear
Tell us why

2. Are there any other factors we should consider when deciding whether a decision is significant?

no maori input needed

3. Which methods would you prefer Selwyn Water to use when engaging with you?

Online surveys or feedback forms Email updates
Other

5. What would help you feel confident that your feedback is heard and considered?

doesn't seem a point, votes were against this water system but you did it anyway.

democracy?

yeah right

Submitter Number: 11

Full Name: Theresa Ellen Phelan
Organisation:

Section 2: Draft Significance and Engagement Policy Questions

1. Is the draft policy clear about when and how community engagement will happen?

Very clear
Tell us why

3. Which methods would you prefer Selwyn Water to use when engaging with you?

Online surveys or feedback forms Website announcements Email updates
Other

4. What can we do to make it easier to share your views and ideas with us?

an option to do a survey for individuals not just the need to attach documents.

5. What would help you feel confident that your feedback is heard and considered?

feedback to say you got my message

Submitter Number: 12

Full Name: Harvey Polglase

Organisation: Darfield Residents Association Inc

Section 2: Draft Significance and Engagement Policy Questions

1. Is the draft policy clear about when and how community engagement will happen?

Somewhat clear

Tell us why - Looking for a date for a public meeting regarding Darfield/Kirwee sewerage proposals.

3. Which methods would you prefer Selwyn Water to use when engaging with you?

Public events (drop-in sessions, facilitated meetings) Email updates
Other

4. What can we do to make it easier to share your views and ideas with us?

Public forum

DARFIELD / KIRWEE SEWERAGE CONNECTIONS

Selwyn Water needs to develop a policy regarding connecting to the new sewerage system for existing residents of Darfield and Kirwee, with a timeline.

It was established by the Medical Officer of Health following extensive testing that there was no problem with the existing Darfield septic tank system and the new pipeline would be mainly for the benefit of businesses and the new subdivisions in the area. Connecting to the new system as it is extended along streets is obviously desirable but, bearing in mind the likely individual costs, should not be forced upon those with existing functional septic tanks, many with long term consents. Already facing significant annual rate increases, the prospect of having to pay a major sum for a connection is causing concern for many residents.

A policy which allows for voluntary connection once a street is available can be augmented by requiring new builds, those with consents expiring, and houses being sold, to be required to connect.

Council should contribute around \$500 per connection which would approximate the excess amount remaining in the targeted Sewerage Investigation rate (which has an unused surplus in the hundreds of thousands of dollars) and which they said would be used for funding connections to the system. There needs to be an option for a Council loan to the ratepayers at the lowest rate of interest Council obtains to enable paying over a number of years for those who require it.

If Selwyn Water develops a policy along these lines they could then put it out to the affected residents for discussion and pro-actively submit it to be adopted as Council policy. Otherwise, decisions are likely to be made by staff which may not be fair to those affected.

Submitter Number: 13

Full Name: Elene Anderson

Organisation:

Section 2: Draft Significance and Engagement Policy Questions

1. Is the draft policy clear about when and how community engagement will happen?

Somewhat clear

Tell us why

- Not clear on the details of what happens once "community engagement" has been activated - what weight (if any) would the community feedback have on any decisions and how this would be incorporated into any changes in design or approach as a result of the feedback.

- How would Selwyn Water determine it has reached as many community members as possible so as to ensure effective community engagement?

- The interaction between Selwyn Water and SDC - how would the two organisations work together to ensure meaningful community outreach rather than just "ticking the box" on the requirement to hold community engagement

- Timeframes for community feedback

- more details needed on the options in 5D especially in the Involve and Collaborate spectrum

2. Are there any other factors we should consider when deciding whether a decision is significant?



- Consideration of the decisions of other water entities - in order to ensure consistent water management across the country - eg any decision made by Selwyn Water that is contra to what others are doing would be considered significant
 - External considerations such as current fuel crisis would have an impact on decision making and would need to be taken into account
-

3. Which methods would you prefer Selwyn Water to use when engaging with you?

Online surveys or feedback forms Website announcements Public events (drop-in sessions, facilitated meetings) Email updates Direct mail (letters or flyers) Social media
Other

through community boards, resident associations etc

4. What can we do to make it easier to share your views and ideas with us?

- Website explaining who Selwyn Water is, what the assets are under their responsibility, relationship between Selwyn Water and SDC, what Selwyn Water is and is not able to do
 - Have a dedicated contact/team at Selwyn Water who manages public feedback and is responsible for communication
 - Hold drop in sessions at local libraries, have a stall at local A&P shows and fetes etc ie be visible in places where the people using these assets are
-

5. What would help you feel confident that your feedback is heard and considered?

- Updates on current planning and how public engagement is shaping this
 - regular updates using various channels of communication
-

Other feedback

- It's not clear which assets are under Selwyn Water's control - perhaps this could be outlined in the policy so we can better understand the scope of decisions that would require public feedback or where the public is able to have a meaningful say in things.

Submitter Number: 14

Full Name: Rebecca Willis
Organisation:

Section 2: Draft Significance and Engagement Policy Questions

1. Is the draft policy clear about when and how community engagement will happen?

Very clear

Tell us why - reiterated in different forms so it is understandable to different ways of thinking and seeing

2. Are there any other factors we should consider when deciding whether a decision is significant?

Most important above all is that decisions pertaining to the health and well-being of consumers are based on scientific facts and data and not influenced by feelings/culture/social media chatter.

3. Which methods would you prefer Selwyn Water to use when engaging with you?

Online surveys or feedback forms Email updates
Other

4. What can we do to make it easier to share your views and ideas with us?

concise, easily-understandable information about the decision to be made. A way to respond that is quick and easy.

5. What would help you feel confident that your feedback is heard and considered?

Send results of the responses and what the final decision is via email, or printed in the local paper.

Other feedback

It worked for me, but it might be more that most folks will be willing to plow through. Maybe bullet points at the beginning?

Submitter Number: 15

Full Name: Anthony Ross

Organisation:

Section 2: Draft Significance and Engagement Policy Questions

1. Is the draft policy clear about when and how community engagement will happen?

Not clear

Tell us why

Where is the policy?

This engagement process doesn't provide a link to the draft policy.

The email doesn't provide a link to the policy.

Selwynwater.co.nz doesn't have any links to the policy.

The Selwyn councils page for Selwyn water mentions the policy but doesn't have the link available.

[Selwyn District Council - Selwyn Water Limited](#)

[Selwyn District Council - Significance and Engagement Policy](#)

Where is the policy?

2. Are there any other factors we should consider when deciding whether a decision is significant?

Any decision that has a financial impact on rate payers represents a significant decision.

Any decision that creates a financial risk or burden to future ratepayers is a significant decision. (A burden could include a future environmental risk, or risk due to short-sighted decision now creating a problem in the future)

Any decision that involves borrowing money and generating debt is significant.

Considering any costs for improvements due to growth should be funded directly by the subdivisions and developers generating the growth, there should be no requirement for Selwyn Water to take on any additional debt on behalf of its primary stakeholders (the primary stakeholders being the ratepayers, not the council). Therefore any financial decision should be transparent and considered significant.

3. Which methods would you prefer Selwyn Water to use when engaging with you?

Online surveys or feedback forms Public events (drop-in sessions, facilitated meetings) Email updates
Other

Online public events rather than public drop-in sessions/facilitated meetings are more accessible. Public events should of course be held when there is clear public concern or debate over a decision.

4. What can we do to make it easier to share your views and ideas with us?

These online forms are a great way to garner feedback from the ratepayers, as well as an email address people can use to provide ad-hoc feedback or request clarity or information.

5. What would help you feel confident that your feedback is heard and considered?

Regular updates on the results of feedback, and any decision that goes against the theme of the feedback should have a thorough explanation that backs that decision, with accountability resting on the c-level with financial penalties for failures. An opportunity for debate in the public forum before a decision is set in stone where disagreements are clearly present.

Provide ratepayers the opportunity to vote on options, and take alternative approaches into consideration..

Other feedback

Publish it on the Selwyn Councils website, or the Selwyn Waters website. Google can't find it.

Submitter Number: 16

Full Name: Jane Huggins

Organisation:

Section 2: Draft Significance and Engagement Policy Questions

1. Is the draft policy clear about when and how community engagement will happen?

Very clear
Tell us why

3. Which methods would you prefer Selwyn Water to use when engaging with you?

Online surveys or feedback forms Public events (drop-in sessions, facilitated meetings) Email updates
Other

Submitter Number: 17

Full Name: Laurie Squires
Organisation:

Section 2: Draft Significance and Engagement Policy Questions

1. Is the draft policy clear about when and how community engagement will happen?

Not clear

Tell us why - Not all ratepayers have the time to read and analyse the whole document. A large number of ratepayers are ESOL. Not all ratepayers have access to computers/laptops or the internet. Some areas have a larger average older population.

2. Are there any other factors we should consider when deciding whether a decision is significant?

Who is it going to affect and why? Is it a rural area that has far greater implications? Take into account the difference between rural and urban needs, lifestyles, and income levels. Do not prioritise urban over rural. This is why rural infrastructure is in a deplorable state and has been for many years, with temporary patches being done and never achieving a permanent solution.

3. Which methods would you prefer Selwyn Water to use when engaging with you?

Online surveys or feedback forms Website announcements Public events (drop-in sessions, facilitated meetings) Email updates Direct mail (letters or flyers) Social media
Other

Submitter Number: 18

Full Name: Lloyd Bathurst
Organisation: Rolleston Square Limited

Section 2: Draft Significance and Engagement Policy Questions

1. Is the draft policy clear about when and how community engagement will happen?

Somewhat clear
Tell us why - Lacking detail

2. Are there any other factors we should consider when deciding whether a decision is significant?

Time for an individual to consume the information provided

3. Which methods would you prefer Selwyn Water to use when engaging with you?

Online surveys or feedback forms Website announcements Public events (drop-in sessions, facilitated meetings) Email updates Direct mail (letters or flyers) Social media
Other

4. What can we do to make it easier to share your views and ideas with us?

Keep it brief

5. What would help you feel confident that your feedback is heard and considered?

visible consultation results

Other feedback

No

Submitter Number: 19

Full Name: Keith Land
Organisation:

Section 2: Draft Significance and Engagement Policy Questions

1. Is the draft policy clear about when and how community engagement will happen?

Very clear
Tell us why

3. Which methods would you prefer Selwyn Water to use when engaging with you?

Online surveys or feedback forms Public events (drop-in sessions, facilitated meetings) Email updates Direct mail (letters or flyers)
Other

Submitter Number: 20

Full Name: Grant Prescott
Organisation:

Section 2: Draft Significance and Engagement Policy Questions

1. Is the draft policy clear about when and how community engagement will happen?

Not clear
Tell us why

3. Which methods would you prefer Selwyn Water to use when engaging with you?

Online surveys or feedback forms Public events (drop-in sessions, facilitated meetings) Email updates
Other

5. What would help you feel confident that your feedback is heard and considered?

when questions are not loaded in the favour of Selwyn Water. ask a straight question not list answers YOU WANT.

Other feedback

start again

Section 2: Draft Significance and Engagement Policy Questions

1. Is the draft policy clear about when and how community engagement will happen?

Not clear
Tell us why

3. Which methods would you prefer Selwyn Water to use when engaging with you?

Online surveys or feedback forms Public events (drop-in sessions, facilitated meetings) Email updates
Other

Other feedback

where is the publics opportunity to challenge your proposed charges. Absolutely no opportunity at all your just rail roading ratepayers who did NOT vote for this in any way at all. I can see significant push back unless YOU CONSULT on proposed charges as 18% is abhorrent and disgusting

Submitter Number: 21

Full Name: Martin Russell

Organisation:

Section 2: Draft Significance and Engagement Policy Questions

1. Is the draft policy clear about when and how community engagement will happen?

Not clear
Tell us why

have not seen it yet and have been to visit your web site and there was nothing there.

SWL have in my opinion been hiding in the shadows since formation and have communicated very poorly.

2. Are there any other factors we should consider when deciding whether a decision is significant?

Insufficient information to comment.

3. Which methods would you prefer Selwyn Water to use when engaging with you?

Website announcements Social media
Other

4. What can we do to make it easier to share your views and ideas with us?

public media is a good place so that the community can openly comment.

5. What would help you feel confident that your feedback is heard and considered?

The decisions that are made - actions speak louder than words.

Other feedback

I have not read the policy yet.

The policy though needs to reflect that SWL are part of the Selwyn Council and are aligned with Council needs and directions. SWL need to have open and honest communication with the community and keep the community advised on spending and on debt.

Section 2: Draft Significance and Engagement Policy Questions

1. Is the draft policy clear about when and how community engagement will happen?

Not clear
Tell us why

it is all based on a matrix score carried out by SWL in the back room.

Consultation will only happen when the target score is exceeded...so SWL avoid consultation by scoring the activity low.

This is not transparent.

There needs to be a list included in the policy, where certain activities WILL trigger consultation, like... The capital programme, consumer charges, any large spending or purchases, the Annual Plan, taking on any debt or borrowings etc.

2. Are there any other factors we should consider when deciding whether a decision is significant?

yes add a list of activities where consultation will be triggered, without the need to carry out a matrix calculation.

3. Which methods would you prefer Selwyn Water to use when engaging with you?

Website announcements Social media
Other

4. What can we do to make it easier to share your views and ideas with us?

Social media is visible and give everyone the opportunity to have their say.

5. What would help you feel confident that your feedback is heard and considered?

The actions taken by SWL

Other feedback

it is all based on a matrix score carried out by SWL in the back room.

Consultation will only happen when the target score is exceeded...so SWL avoid consultation by scoring the activity low.

This is not transparent.

There needs to be a list included in th poily, where certain activities WILL trigger consultation, like... The capital programme, consumer charges, any large spending or purchases, the Annual Plan, taking on any debt or borrowings etc.

Section 2: Draft Significance and Engagement Policy Questions

1. Is the draft policy clear about when and how community engagement will happen?

Not clear

Tell us why - Please read attached document

2. Are there any other factors we should consider when deciding whether a decision is significant?

Please read attached document

3. Which methods would you prefer Selwyn Water to use when engaging with you?

Website announcements Public events (drop-in sessions, facilitated meetings) Social media

Other

4. What can we do to make it easier to share your views and ideas with us?

Please read attached document

5. What would help you feel confident that your feedback is heard and considered?

Please read attached document

Other feedback

Please read attached document



* Martin Russell
22-3-2026

DRAFT

Significance and engagement policy

1. Introduction

Selwyn Water is responsible for delivering drinking water and wastewater services across the Waikikiriri Selwyn district. As part of this role, we need to make certain decisions on behalf of our communities.

This significance and engagement policy sets out the processes we will use to determine when and how to engage with our communities as part of our decision-making. It also sets out how we will engage with mana whenua as a strategic partner and ensures that we comply with our obligations under the Local Government (Water Services) Act 2025 (the LGWSA). It aligns with the Statement of Shareholder Expectations issued by Selwyn District Council (SDC) and has been developed having regard to SDC's own significance and engagement policy as well as Selwyn Water's obligations under other legislation including the Water Services Act 2021.

As required by the LGWSA, the purposes of this policy are:

- (a) to enable Selwyn Water, SDC as our shareholder, and our consumers and communities to identify the degree of significance attached to particular issues, proposals, water services infrastructure, decisions and activities;
- (b) to enable Selwyn Water to develop a flexible and locally appropriate approach to engagement, which recognises and accommodates the preferences and expectations of:
 - a. SDC as our shareholder;
 - b. Selwyn Water's consumers;
 - c. SDC's communities; and
 - d. any particular communities specified in this policy
- (c) to provide clarity about:
 - a. how and when communities can expect to be engaged in decisions about different issues, water services infrastructure, or other matters;
 - b. whether engagement will be undertaken by Selwyn Water or SDC; and
 - c. how Selwyn Water will take account of consumer and community views on matters on which SDC has expressed a view;
- (d) to inform Selwyn Water from the beginning of a decision-making process about:
 - a. the extent of any engagement that is expected before a particular decision is made;
 - b. with whom the engagement occurs; and
 - c. the form or type of engagement required.

In short, this policy provides information about:

- how SWL decides if a decision is significant;
- when people can expect to be informed or asked for feedback; and
- the different ways in which engagement may be carried out, depending on the level of impact.

These SDC documents
Need to be attached
as an Appendix.

It ensures we have the right conversations with the right people before decisions are made.

This policy only applies to decisions made by Selwyn Water – decisions to be made by SDC, including district and growth planning matters, continue to be subject to SDC's significance and engagement policy.

The Board of Selwyn Water will review this policy every three years or as required. *and any changes to the policy will be consulted on, with the community.*

2. How will Selwyn Water determine when a matter is significant?

Our approach to engagement is informed by the significance of the decision we are making. Significance in this context refers to how important the decision is and the potential impact it may have.

In this section, we set out the process and criteria we will use to determine how significant a decision is. We also set out the additional criteria and processes we need to follow when considering certain decisions as required by the relevant legislation.

A. General process for determining significance

In order to determine the significance of a decision, Selwyn Water will use the general approach set out below:

Approach to determining significance

1. Identify relevant criteria

Selwyn Water will consider which of the criteria set out below apply to the relevant decision, and whether there are any further criteria we should consider. Note: there are specific additional criteria which must be considered when determining whether a contract is a significant contract. These are discussed later in this policy.

Consult with the trigger list in Appendix A

2. Assess against relevant criteria

We will then consider what each of those criteria suggest about the significance of the decision.

3. Locate decision on spectrum of significance

Based on our assessment of each of the relevant criteria, we will then assess where the decision falls on a spectrum from low to high significance. Where the decision is in relation to a contract or joint water service provider arrangement, we will also determine whether that contract or joint water service provider arrangement is 'significant' or not, based on its position on the spectrum (noting that we expect most decisions regarding joint water service provider arrangements would be significant).

4. Engage

Based on our assessment of the decision's significance, we will then determine our engagement strategy.

B. Criteria for determining significance

The table below sets out the criteria Selwyn Water may consider in determining significance.

Criteria for determining significance

CRITERION	EXPLANATION
Financial and economic impacts	<p>These include financial impacts on consumers as well as on Selwyn Water.</p> <p>Decisions which reallocate funds within approved budgets and which do not affect consumer charges are more likely to be of low significance. Decisions which affect Selwyn Water's financial sustainability or which require significant increases in charges beyond those previously forecast or which have been the subject of previous engagement are more likely to be of high significance.</p>
Impacts on public health and levels of service	<p>Public health and the level of service we provide are key considerations for Selwyn Water. In considering this criterion, we will determine how many people are likely to be impacted and the extent of that impact.</p> <p>Routine decisions with little to no impact on public health or levels of service are more likely to be of low significance. Changes which may impact public health, or materially affect levels of service, are more likely to be of high significance.</p>
Mana whenua interests and impacts	<p>Recognising its partnership commitments, where a decision may affect mana whenua relationships with land, water, or other taonga, Selwyn Water will engage early with mana whenua to understand potential impacts and appropriate engagement.</p> <p>Informed by that engagement, where a decision is assessed as having limited or no cultural impact, it is more likely to be of low significance. Decisions with potential for material cultural impact are more likely to be of high significance.</p>
Impact on the environment	<p>In making decisions around water infrastructure and its effect on freshwater, Selwyn Water will consider the potential impacts on the environment.</p> <p>Decisions which have limited environmental impacts on a small area are more likely to be of low significance. Decisions which have major environmental impacts on a wide area are more likely to be of high significance. Decisions which have a major environmental impact on a small area may also be significant.</p>
Potential risks	<p>Selwyn Water will also consider the potential risks to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • individuals; • communities; • Selwyn Water; and • SDC as its shareholder. <p>In considering risks, we will consider their nature, the probability of the risk being realised and the extent of the potential impact.</p> <p>Decisions which pose small risks of causing limited harm are more likely to be of low significance. Decisions which generate risks which could have a significant impact on a large number of people if they eventuate are more likely to be of high significance.</p>

Public interest	<p>Selwyn Water will also consider the degree to which the public is likely to be affected by and/or interested in the particular decision. In particular, we will consider:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • the number of people affected or with an interest in the matter; • the nature and extent of that impact or interest; and • whether the issue is expected to be contentious. <p>Decisions in which the public have expressed, or are expected to have, little interest, and/or which are not controversial, are more likely to be of low significance. Decisions which have a major impact on the wellbeing of large groups of people or are expected to generate significant public interest or be highly controversial, are more likely to be of high significance.</p>
Impact on Selwyn Water's obligations	<p>Selwyn Water has various obligations under the LGWSA and to SDC as our shareholder. We will consider the extent to which any decision will, or has the potential to, impact its performance of those obligations.</p> <p>Decisions which have little to no impact on our obligations are more likely to be of low significance. However, as noted in Section 6 below, where Selwyn Water is required to adopt a particular course of action because of one or more of its obligations, this may also reduce the need or ability to engage on that decision. In such cases, Selwyn Water will still consider how best to inform the community about the decision.</p>
Ability to reverse decision	<p>Circumstances can change over time and the greater flexibility Selwyn Water has, the better able we will be to address unforeseen scenarios. Selwyn Water will therefore consider the extent to which any decision may lock it into a particular course of action.</p> <p>Decisions which are readily reversible are more likely to be of low significance. Decisions which cannot be reversed are more likely to be of high significance.</p>
Consistency with current approach	<p>Selwyn Water will also consider whether a decision simply gives effect to policies which have previously been determined and/or whether it is consistent with the current approach.</p> <p>Decisions which maintain Selwyn Water's existing approach are more likely to be of low significance. Decisions which represent a major departure from that existing approach are more likely to be of high significance.</p>
Any other key factors	<p>Particular decisions may raise specific considerations. Selwyn Water will therefore assess whether there are any other factors it should consider as part of determining the significance of a particular decision.</p>

DRAFT

C. Locating the decision on a spectrum of significance

Having identified the criteria relevant to a particular matter, and considered what each suggests about whether a decision is of low or high significance, Selwyn Water will look at the impact of the decision as a whole to determine where it falls on the spectrum of significance below.

In doing so, we will consider both:

- the number of criteria which suggest that the decision is of higher significance. If three or more criteria suggest higher significance, then the decision is likely to be of high significance; and
- each criterion individually – for example, a decision may be of high significance if there is a major public health or financial impact, even if the remaining criteria suggest that it should be of low significance.

• *the views of the SDC*
Spectrum of significance

SIGNIFICANCE		
LOW	MEDIUM	HIGH
<p>Likely to include decisions which:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • have limited financial or no impacts • may result in no or minimal change to levels of service • are consistent with existing policies, plans or standards • are routine, operational or administrative in nature • are of little public interest 	<p>Likely to include decisions which:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • have moderate financial impacts or impacts on levels of service • may result in noticeable but not substantial changes to levels of service • may deviate from existing policies and plans in material but not substantial ways • are expected to be of interest only to limited groups 	<p>Likely to include decisions which:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • have significant financial impacts • may result in major changes to levels of service or infrastructure • represent a substantial departure from existing policies, plans or standards • are of significant public interest • may have lasting impacts on communities, the environment or taonga

Where a decision falls on the spectrum above will then inform our approach to engagement on that issue.

D. Additional arrangements for certain decisions

The LGWSA sets out further requirements which apply to decisions on proposed contracts and proposed joint water service provider arrangements. The table below sets out how we will modify our general approach to determining significance when addressing these issues.

Modifications to the general approach to significance

SUBJECT OF DECISION	HOW WE WILL MODIFY OUR APPROACH
Contracts	<p>Under the LGWSA, Selwyn Water must consider the following criteria when determining whether a proposed contract is a significant contract:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • whether the proposed contract is of high value relative to the revenue that Selwyn Water receives from providing the water service to which the contract relates; • whether the proposed contract will create a public-private partnership; • all matters that are essential to Selwyn Water's ability to meet its obligations under the LGWSA in relation to the water service to which the contract relates; and • any relevant thresholds. <p>Selwyn Water will therefore consider these criteria in addition to the criteria for determining significance set out above.</p> <p>In addition, once we have located the decision we are making on the significance spectrum set out above, we will consider whether this means that the contract should be considered significant for the purposes of the LGWSA.</p>
Joint water service provider arrangements	<p>Once we have identified where on the significance spectrum our decision on a joint water service provider arrangement sits, we will consider whether this means that the joint water service provider arrangement should be considered significant for the purposes of the LGWSA.</p> <p>Selwyn Water notes that, at this time, we do not have any plans to enter into any significant joint water service provider arrangements. However, in order to comply with our obligations under the LGWSA, the requirements in relation to such arrangements are set out later in this policy.</p>
Water services assets	<p>When making decisions to transfer or receive ownership or control of a water services asset, we must consider whether the asset is a strategic water services asset. Under the LGWSA, a strategic water services asset is water services infrastructure, or another asset or group of assets, without which Selwyn Water is unable to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • meet its regulatory requirements; or • maintain its capacity to achieve the outcomes set out in its water services strategy. <p>Appendix 1 to this policy (which will be added to as assets are identified) lists all assets Selwyn Water has identified as strategic water services assets.</p>
Proposed change to level of service	<p>When making decisions in relation to changes to levels of service, we will follow the process set out in this policy, including locating that decision on the spectrum of significance. Having done so, we will then consider whether this means that the change to levels of service should be considered significant for the purposes of the LGWSA.</p>

DRAFT

3. Engagement with mana whenua

We acknowledge the cultural and spiritual significance of wai (water) and the relationship of Māori with it. We will ensure that our engagement with mana whenua (Te Taumutu Rūnanga and Te Ngāi Tūāhuriri Rūnanga) is meaningful and upholds the mana and mauri of all water as set out in the Waioira One Water Strategy.

Our engagement approach will be guided by:

- intergenerational thinking — decisions consider long-term impacts on water and communities;
- Ki Uta Ki Tai — managing water holistically from mountains to sea; and
- shared responsibility — working together to restore and protect water health.

We are committed to embedding these principles throughout our decision and engagement processes and to ensuring that partnership is at the heart of how we manage drinking and wastewater.

*Annual Plan -
Consumer changes
Proposed capital programme,
All proposed debt or
borrowings alert*

4. Engagement with Selwyn District Council

We will engage with SDC as part of our decision-making processes. SDC is our shareholder, and council members are the elected representatives of the Waikirikiri Selwyn community.

We will therefore engage with SDC on key decisions (such as around charging frameworks, significant capital programme changes and major service level changes), as well as where we are required to do so under the LGWSA and in line with the Statement of Shareholder Expectations. We will also ensure that SDC is kept informed of our decisions, particularly where these may interact with council activities.

In some cases, we may wish to engage with the wider community on decisions on which SDC has already provided us with a view. In such cases, we will consider how best to balance obtaining community views with those already given to us by the community's elected representatives. This may include limiting the options on which we engage based on SDC feedback or otherwise noting SDC's views as part of our engagement materials.

Appendix A

5. Engagement with our communities

Engagement is an important part of how Selwyn Water will make decisions. In this section, we set out our general approach to deciding what forms of engagement we will use as part of our decision-making, including the factors we will consider and the forms of engagement available to us.

A. Overall approach

When we are considering our preferred approach to engagement, we will follow the general approach below:

- *Consult with the trigger list in Appendix A.*
- consider if there are reasons why engagement may not be appropriate (as set out in section 6 of this policy);
- consider the factors relevant to engagement as set out below;
- choose the most suitable engagement approach from the options outlined later in this policy; and
- aim to identify that preferred approach as early as possible in the process so there is plenty of time to plan and carry out the engagement effectively.

B. Factors relevant to determining engagement approach

The approach Selwyn Water takes to engagement will be determined on a case-by-case basis, in light of the particular decision being considered. As part of deciding on our approach, Selwyn Water may consider the following:

There needs to be a definitive list of areas where engagement is required

NOTE: it is too vague simply to leave it to SDC to decide on what gets consulted on.

DRAFT

• the trigger list in Appendix A.

- how significant the decision is;
- what we are trying to achieve through engagement — for example, are we primarily seeking to inform the community and share information or are we seeking feedback to help shape a decision;
- the extent to which we have already sought, and obtained, feedback on related issues and the extent to which we are comfortable that we already understand relevant community perspectives;
- the level of desire and capacity amongst relevant groups and individuals to provide feedback on the decision;
- the wider public interest in a decision;
- the benefits, costs and limitations of undertaking engagement and of different engagement options;
- timing considerations, including any other engagement happening at the same time (whether by Selwyn Water or otherwise) with similar communities; and
- community preferences, as outlined below.

In addition, we are required to consult on certain matters, including significant contracts and significant changes to proposed services levels, as set out in more detail later in this policy.

As a new organisation, much of the work we will be undertaking in our early years reflects decisions which have already been made by SDC and consulted on, including as part of its Long Term Plan process. Where our decisions effectively implement decisions that SDC has already made and engaged on, we do not expect to further engage on those issues.

C. Community preferences on engagement

When considering engagement on a decision, Selwyn Water will consider any preferences expressed by relevant communities as to whether and how Selwyn Water engages on such decisions. This includes any preferences expressed as part of:

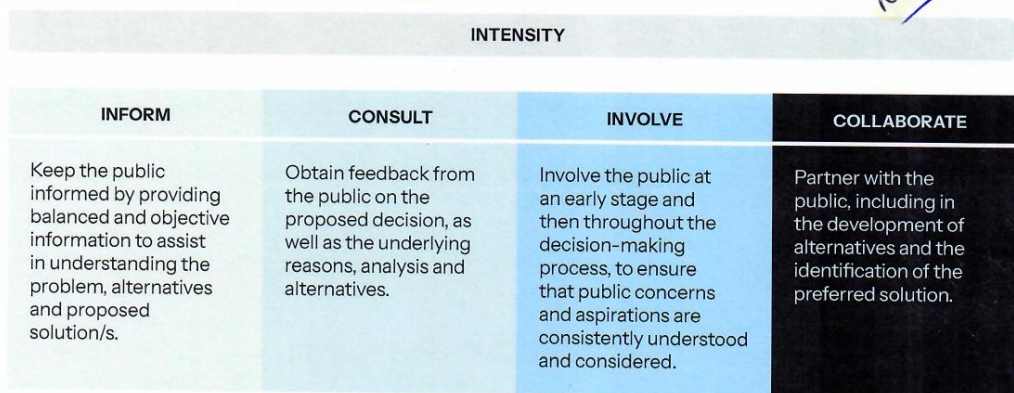
- engagement on this Significance and Engagement policy;
- engagement on similar previous decisions; and
- Selwyn Water's other interactions with relevant groups.

Selwyn Water may adapt its engagement approach to address these preferences, subject to its consideration of other factors outlined in this policy.

D. Options for engagement

As with significance, options for engagement fall along a spectrum. When considering engagement on a decision, Selwyn Water will consider where along this spectrum its engagement should fall.

Spectrum of engagement options



No this just leaves it open for SWL to do no consultation or limit consultation to suit its own desires. - there needs to be a list where consultation is a MUST

Diagram adapted from IAP2 Spectrum of Public Participation

Depending on the decision, Selwyn Water may adopt different approaches at different stages throughout a project or decision-making process.



Channels Selwyn Water may use to implement its preferred engagement option include:

CHANNELS FOR ENGAGEMENT

- Announcements on our website ✓
- Local radio
- Advertisements in local newspapers ✓ *Local Selwyn news is good.*
- Digital advertising
- Email newsletters
- Directly mailing information material
- Public events, such as drop-in sessions and facilitated events ✓
- Focused engagement sessions with particular stakeholders e.g. mana whenua, community groups and associations
- Engagement platforms operating through Selwyn Water's website
- Email
- Social media ✓
- Collateral in public spaces, such as information in public libraries and community rooms

Selwyn Water remains open to hearing from the public and community groups regarding their preferences as to engagement options or any other engagement options Selwyn Water should consider utilising in future.

E. Specific arrangements for significant contracts, significant joint water service provider arrangements, strategic water services assets and significant proposed changes to service levels

The LGWSA requires a specific approach to engagement when certain decisions are considered to be significant. Specifically, these arrangements apply to decisions in relation to:

- significant contracts;
- significant joint water service provider arrangements;
- transferring or receiving ownership or control of strategic water services assets; and
- significant proposed changes to levels of service.

Decisions on these issues are likely to be relatively rare. However, we set out the process we are required to follow in such cases below.

First, Selwyn Water will engage with SDC over who will conduct engagement relating to the proposal. If SDC wants Selwyn Water to be responsible for this, we will follow the process set out below.

DRAFT

STEP	ADDITIONAL DETAIL
1. Identify and assess options	We will identify and assess the range of options for achieving the objectives of the proposal, including continuing with the existing approach to providing water services, the proposal, and at least one further reasonably practicable option (assuming one is available).
2. Make available information	We will make available the information we are required to provide under section 32 of the LGWSA, including the change proposal, assessment of options, how the proposal (and status quo) are likely to affect charges, and the implications of the proposal for communities in our district.
3. Consult with mana whenua	Where any of the options identified involve a significant decision in relation to land or a body of water, Selwyn Water will take into account the relationship of Māori and their culture and traditions with their ancestral land, water, sites, wāhi tapu, valued flora and fauna and other taonga. In making our assessment, Selwyn Water will consider the matters relevant to engaging with mana whenua as set out in Section 3 of this policy.
4. Undertake consultation	We will undertake consultation on our preferred option. As part of this consultation, anyone who will or may be affected by, or have an interest in, the proposal will have an opportunity to share their views with us.
5. Consult on any significant amendments	<p>If our consultation results in an amendment to our proposal, we will consider whether it is a significant amendment. We will determine this in light of:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • the extent to which we already know the views and preferences of those affected; • the nature and significance of the change proposal; and • the criteria for determining significance set out in Section 2 of this policy. <p>If we consider that the amendment is a significant amendment to our proposal, we will consult further on that amended proposal.</p>
6. Consult with SDC	We will consult with SDC to obtain its approval for our final decision.

F Water Services Strategy

Our Water Services Strategy (WSS) is a key document setting out how we will provide water services over the long term. Given the importance of this document, we do intend to engage on the draft strategy. However, this engagement will reflect the fact that the first WSS addresses some matters that have already been the subject of consultation, such as via the SDC Long-Term Plan. We do not expect to further engage on these issues.

NOTE
 This here is the most important factor... SDC are the parent and SDC are the parent. The child must do what the parent says.



6. Circumstances in which Selwyn Water may not engage

While we consider engagement to be important, there are times where it may not be possible or appropriate for Selwyn Water to engage on a particular decision. Such circumstances include where the decision:

- is routine or operational;
- is an organisational matter (e.g. decisions involving our staff);
- must be made urgently and/or in an emergency situation;
- is required to comply with Selwyn Water's legal obligations;
- is necessary to protect life or health, or to prevent serious property damage;
- is necessary to avoid, remedy or mitigate an adverse effect on the environment;
- is necessary to protect the integrity of infrastructure;
- is commercially sensitive; and
- is in relation to water charges to an individual or small group of individuals (for example, decisions as to the application of Selwyn Water's waiver policy to individual consumers).

Otherwise, where Selwyn Water is not required to engage or consult by law, it will consider the appropriateness of doing so on a case-by-case basis, in line with this policy.

Appendix 1: List of strategic water services assets

This list will be added to as further assets are identified.

1. Water supplies including reservoirs, pump stations and reticulation.
2. Wastewater collection, treatment and disposal systems including the pipes, pump stations, treatment and disposal works.

Appendix A

Consultation is required in all of the following matters.

Reference	Level of consultation			
Annual Plan				
Capital Programme				
Consumer charges				
large expenditure				
Creation of debt/loans				
Sale of assets				

Submitter Number: 22

Full Name: Mark Mulholland
Organisation:

Section 2: Draft Significance and Engagement Policy Questions

1. Is the draft policy clear about when and how community engagement will happen?

Somewhat clear

Tell us why - Be up front and transparent. We should have been consulted and listened to before it was formed

2. Are there any other factors we should consider when deciding whether a decision is significant?

We need to be kept informed

3. Which methods would you prefer Selwyn Water to use when engaging with you?

Online surveys or feedback forms Email updates Social media
Other

4. What can we do to make it easier to share your views and ideas with us?

Make sure the views are listened to

5. What would help you feel confident that your feedback is heard and considered?

Results from feedback and not ignoring feedback

Other feedback

Duplication of costs and listening to the rate payer at all times.

Submitter Number: 23

Full Name: Graham Searlr
Organisation:

Section 2: Draft Significance and Engagement Policy Questions

1. Is the draft policy clear about when and how community engagement will happen?

Somewhat clear

Tell us why - some terms still vague, for example what level of financial impact is 'high'? The table says those that are significant? Why not specify a dollar amount? Also one criterion is reversibility, however this is not measured in section c table?

3. Which methods would you prefer Selwyn Water to use when engaging with you?

Website announcements Email updates
Other

5. What would help you feel confident that your feedback is heard and considered?

a good summary of all feedback received, show what has been adopted and what has not (and why if possible). No throw away reasons for not adopting feedback that has received strong comment but make an effort to inform and explain

Submitter Number: 24

Full Name: Sonya Morris
Organisation:

Section 2: Draft Significance and Engagement Policy Questions

1. Is the draft policy clear about when and how community engagement will happen?

Somewhat clear

Tell us why - I think it looks pretty clear, as clear as it could be for what are unknown decisions that might need to be addressed.

2. Are there any other factors we should consider when deciding whether a decision is significant?

If you have a live document you can revise as you develop, there will always be unforeseen events

3. Which methods would you prefer Selwyn Water to use when engaging with you?

Online surveys or feedback forms Public events (drop-in sessions, facilitated meetings) Email updates Direct mail (letters or flyers) Social media
Other

4. What can we do to make it easier to share your views and ideas with us?

online feedback or surveys are great

5. What would help you feel confident that your feedback is heard and considered?

published results and what you are intending to implement, prior to the final decision

Submitter Number: 25

Full Name: Keith Morrison
Organisation:

Section 2: Draft Significance and Engagement Policy Questions

1. Is the draft policy clear about when and how community engagement will happen?

Very clear

Tell us why - It is structured over several levels to avoid any ambiguity

2. Are there any other factors we should consider when deciding whether a decision is significant?

Possibly, in relation to the initial ones to be made, how far they deviate from ones made prior to Selwyn Waters establishment.

3. Which methods would you prefer Selwyn Water to use when engaging with you?

Online surveys or feedback forms Website announcements Public events (drop-in sessions, facilitated meetings) Email updates
Other

4. What can we do to make it easier to share your views and ideas with us?

drop in sessions and facilitated meetings work for me personally. Though so do the opportunity to provide a comprehensive submission when required.

5. What would help you feel confident that your feedback is heard and considered?

The ultimate sense is given when public in person submissions can be presented, and then to be able to listen in the deliberation process.

Other feedback

Not at this stage. On a good path I think. I think some challenges will emerge however as the flexibility sought by Selwyn Water will turn around quickly some longstanding inertias

Submitter Number: 26

Full Name: Joseph Clapp
Organisation:

Section 2: Draft Significance and Engagement Policy Questions

1. Is the draft policy clear about when and how community engagement will happen?

Somewhat clear

Tell us why - Engagement will be considered on a case by case basis is not "Very Clear".

2. Are there any other factors we should consider when deciding whether a decision is significant?

The long term benefit to Selwyn

3. Which methods would you prefer Selwyn Water to use when engaging with you?

Online surveys or feedback forms Website announcements Public events (drop-in sessions, facilitated meetings) Email updates Direct mail (letters or flyers) Social media
Other

5. What would help you feel confident that your feedback is heard and considered?

If council decisions aligned with the ratepayer views (my views may not align with all rate payers, but at least I would not feel ratepayers in general are being ignored).

Submitter Number: 27

Full Name: Malcolm Wassung
Organisation:

Section 2: Draft Significance and Engagement Policy Questions

1. Is the draft policy clear about when and how community engagement will happen?

Somewhat clear

Tell us why - *We appear to be losing our democratic redress by devolving the management of our water resources to an unelected body*

2. Are there any other factors we should consider when deciding whether a decision is significant?

All factors that may affect increased costs

3. Which methods would you prefer Selwyn Water to use when engaging with you?

Online surveys or feedback forms Public events (drop-in sessions, facilitated meetings) Email updates
Other

4. What can we do to make it easier to share your views and ideas with us?

Regular updates

5. What would help you feel confident that your feedback is heard and considered?

Responses to criticism and inquiries

Other feedback

Avoid empire building as has happened in Some Auckland CCO s

Submitter Number: 28

Full Name: Alan Leckie

Organisation:

Section 2: Draft Significance and Engagement Policy Questions

1. Is the draft policy clear about when and how community engagement will happen?

Somewhat clear

Tell us why

Kia ora, When I read the draft Significance and engagement policy statement I see there are no examples on how the public can better engage with the SDC. The SDC statement is "seeking public feedback on how it should engage with residents" (Selwyn Times March 25th 2026. My thinking is that an example(s) would assist how the SDC will engage with residents.

Using The IAP2 method is a tried and tested method of engagement with the public. It takes the community along five levels of public participation.

https://cdn.ymaws.com/www.iap2.org/resource/resmgr/pillars/spectrum_8.5x11_print.pdf

2. Are there any other factors we should consider when deciding whether a decision is significant?

The SDC should itself engage with experts from both the local and nationwide scientific communities who hold the knowledge based on long standing community engagement research. Some of these experts work in the Selwyn District.

3. Which methods would you prefer Selwyn Water to use when engaging with you?

Public events (drop-in sessions, facilitated meetings)
Other

Fora such as public meetings, Scenario Workshops, cafe conversations, funding social science research using local experts.

4. What can we do to make it easier to share your views and ideas with us?

Hold meetings with the SD communities. Explain examples such as the reuse of treated wastewater within the community, the reuse of biosolids, how and where biosolids can be utilised within the district on exotic forests, on non-food crops such as flax (*Phormium tenax*), on beautification of residential planting, on large scale vermicomposting schemes, production of biochar from biosolids, and other areas.

5. What would help you feel confident that your feedback is heard and considered?

When I hear from both social and biophysical scientists, academic experts and mana whenua that the SDC is engaging with local experts. Only then will I feel confident that my feedback has been enacted upon.


Other feedback

Our SDC community has world class experts based at the Crown Research Institutes, Lincoln University, the SDC, consultants, mana whenua who all should be part of this engagement process.

IAP2 Spectrum of Public Participation



IAP2's Spectrum of Public Participation was designed to assist with the selection of the level of participation that defines the public's role in any public participation process. The Spectrum is used internationally, and it is found in public participation plans around the world.

INCREASING IMPACT ON THE DECISION 					
	INFORM	CONSULT	INVOLVE	COLLABORATE	EMPOWER
PUBLIC PARTICIPATION GOAL	To provide the public with balanced and objective information to assist them in understanding the problem, alternatives, opportunities and/or solutions.	To obtain public feedback on analysis, alternatives and/or decisions.	To work directly with the public throughout the process to ensure that public concerns and aspirations are consistently understood and considered.	To partner with the public in each aspect of the decision including the development of alternatives and the identification of the preferred solution.	To place final decision making in the hands of the public.
PROMISE TO THE PUBLIC	We will keep you informed.	We will keep you informed, listen to and acknowledge concerns and aspirations, and provide feedback on how public input influenced the decision.	We will work with you to ensure that your concerns and aspirations are directly reflected in the alternatives developed and provide feedback on how public input influenced the decision.	We will look to you for advice and innovation in formulating solutions and incorporate your advice and recommendations into the decisions to the maximum extent possible.	We will implement what you decide.

© IAP2 International Federation 2018. All rights reserved. 20181112_v1

Submitter Number: 29

Full Name: Andrew Renwick
Organisation:

Section 2: Draft Significance and Engagement Policy Questions

1. Is the draft policy clear about when and how community engagement will happen?

Very clear
Tell us why

3. Which methods would you prefer Selwyn Water to use when engaging with you?

Online surveys or feedback forms Website announcements Public events (drop-in sessions, facilitated meetings) Email updates Direct mail (letters or flyers) Social media
Other

5. What would help you feel confident that your feedback is heard and considered?

Providing summaries of all feedback - financial implications of decisions on rates over next 5 years, 10 years, pollution reduction targets, cost for farming and interested sectors, publication of all lobbying groups involved and payments made to council by such

Submitter Number: 30

Full Name: Charles Merfield
Organisation:

Section 2: Draft Significance and Engagement Policy Questions

1. Is the draft policy clear about when and how community engagement will happen?

Very clear
Tell us why - Well thought out and logical

2. Are there any other factors we should consider when deciding whether a decision is significant?

No

3. Which methods would you prefer Selwyn Water to use when engaging with you?

Online surveys or feedback forms Email updates
Other

4. What can we do to make it easier to share your views and ideas with us?

Use as many diverse comms channels as practical and allow citizens to register for comms via their preferred channel

5. What would help you feel confident that your feedback is heard and considered?

Using the same feedback approaches SDC already uses when undertaking consultation

Other feedback

No

Submitter Number: 31

Full Name: Sandra Poff
Organisation:

Section 2: Draft Significance and Engagement Policy Questions

1. Is the draft policy clear about when and how community engagement will happen?

Somewhat clear
Tell us why

2. Are there any other factors we should consider when deciding whether a decision is significant?

no

3. Which methods would you prefer Selwyn Water to use when engaging with you?

Online surveys or feedback forms Public events (drop-in sessions, facilitated meetings) Email updates
Other

4. What can we do to make it easier to share your views and ideas with us?

be open and give full information

5. What would help you feel confident that your feedback is heard and considered?

seeing action

Other feedback

no

Submitter Number: 32

Full Name: Dean Patfield

Organisation:

Section 2: Draft Significance and Engagement Policy Questions

1. Is the draft policy clear about when and how community engagement will happen?

Somewhat clear

Tell us why- many engagement options and decisions subjective, so can't be considered very clear

3. Which methods would you prefer Selwyn Water to use when engaging with you?

Online surveys or feedback forms Public events (drop-in sessions, facilitated meetings) Email updates

Other

5. What would help you feel confident that your feedback is heard and considered?

clear summaries of feedback and consequential decision

Other feedback

some concern about the exception for commercial sensitivity. Even if sensitive, if significant some form of engagement should be undertaken.

Submitter Number: 33

Full Name: Isobel Quinlan
Organisation:

Section 2: Draft Significance and Engagement Policy Questions

1. Is the draft policy clear about when and how community engagement will happen?

Very clear

Tell us why - If a decision has an impact on cost, service levels or long-term planning Selwyn Water will engage with the community if a decision is "significant"

2. Are there any other factors we should consider when deciding whether a decision is significant?

Fairness - may affect certain groups more than others - rural homes, renters, low income families, communities with limited water resilience.

Cultural impacts - Mana Whenua - impact on culturally important water bodies, Effect on customary practices, Alignment with Te Mana o te Wai principles,

Reversibility, A decision that is hard or impossible to reverse (e.g., major infrastructure placement, long-term contracts) is often treated as more significant.

3. Which methods would you prefer Selwyn Water to use when engaging with you?

Online surveys or feedback forms Website announcements Public events (drop-in sessions, facilitated meetings) Email updates Social

media
Other

4. What can we do to make it easier to share your views and ideas with us?

Quick polls, many people won't do long surveys.

Pop-up feedback stations at supermarkets, sports events, or farmers' markets

Host drop-in sessions in smaller townships like Leeston, Dunsandel, Southbridge, or Darfield.

Offer evening or weekend sessions for people who work long hours

Have a walkin centre from 9-10am on a Wednesday (any day)

5. What would help you feel confident that your feedback is heard and considered?

By publishing the report on 4 May 2026 - "What the community said"

Other feedback

Nope

Submitter Number: 34

Full Name: Mhina Madriaga
Organisation:

Section 2: Draft Significance and Engagement Policy Questions

1. Is the draft policy clear about when and how community engagement will happen?

Not clear
Tell us why - I've only known about it now.

2. Are there any other factors we should consider when deciding whether a decision is significant?

One factor to consider is if the council has done the best it can to inform the public about any changes to policies or services. Are the decision makers within the council unbiased i.e no hidden agendas or conflict of interest that would affect their decision on matter? Have they been open to public conversations? Will the majority of the public benefit from the decision or just a few fortunate ones?

3. Which methods would you prefer Selwyn Water to use when engaging with you?

Online surveys or feedback forms Website announcements Public events (drop-in sessions, facilitated meetings) Email updates Direct mail (letters or flyers) Social media
Other

4. What can we do to make it easier to share your views and ideas with us?

you can reach out via email or hold public talks/conversations/seminars on weekends and not weekdays when people have work and would not be able to attend talks/conversations/seminars for least a month (4 weekends) to ensure that the majority of the public are able to share their views.

5. What would help you feel confident that your feedback is heard and considered?

simple letter of acknowledgement; show results of surveys/feedbacks via emails or on the website.

Other feedback

See comments on questions #4 and #5.

Submitter Number: 35

Full Name: Tracey Baunton
Organisation:

Section 2: Draft Significance and Engagement Policy Questions

1. Is the draft policy clear about when and how community engagement will happen?

Very clear
Tell us why - It's explicit

2. Are there any other factors we should consider when deciding whether a decision is significant?

The impacts on ratepayers and consumers seems to be a gap. For example, it doesn't seem to consider cumulative impacts of many smaller decisions, likelihood of service disruption, and whether the decision disproportionately affects specific communities or user groups, or has intergenerational tradeoffs..

3. Which methods would you prefer Selwyn Water to use when engaging with you?

Online surveys or feedback forms Email updates Direct mail (letters or flyers) Social media
Other

4. What can we do to make it easier to share your views and ideas with us?

Advertise on the social channels your ratepayers use most frequently

5. What would help you feel confident that your feedback is heard and considered?

An acknowledgement, followed by an outcome update in due course

Other feedback

The policy should explicitly requiring decisions to be assessed through a consumer impact lens—including cumulative affordability, service reliability, fairness across communities, and loss of consumer influence—so that “significance” reflects lived household impacts, not just organisational governance.

Submitter Number: 36

Full Name: Richard Brewster
Organisation:

Section 2: Draft Significance and Engagement Policy Questions

1. Is the draft policy clear about when and how community engagement will happen?

Somewhat clear

Tell us why - Under the criterion of 'Impacts on public health and levels of service' - it would be clearer to state what criterion under this will be tested. It would be preferable to know if nitrate levels will be tested, and if so what levels are deemed safe by Selwyn Water. The public have a right to know, especially as the NZ legal limit of 11.3mg/l is unsafe.

Submitter Number: 37

Full Name: John Verry

Organisation: Tāwera Malvern Ward (Selwyn District)

Section 2: Draft Significance and Engagement Policy Questions

1. Is the draft policy clear about when and how community engagement will happen?

Very clear
Tell us why

2. Are there any other factors we should consider when deciding whether a decision is significant?

see below

3. Which methods would you prefer Selwyn Water to use when engaging with you?

Online surveys or feedback forms Website announcements Public events (drop-in sessions, facilitated meetings) Email updates Social media

Other

Malvern Community Board and Residents | Community Associations and the local Councillor

Other feedback

Enhanced Transparency for Tariff and Service Decisions, for when proposals exceed the level of public interest normally associated with

the Annual Plan, Selwyn Water could pre-publish simple engagement summaries outlining:

- The issue and options;
- Likely household cost impacts;
- How and when the public can influence outcomes.

Submission on Draft Significance and Engagement Policy: Selwyn Water Limited

Submitter:

John Verry, Councillor – Tāwera Malvern Ward - Selwyn District Council

john.verry@selwyn.govt.nz

1. Purpose of Submission

This submission provides feedback on the Draft Significance and Engagement Policy prepared by Selwyn Water Limited (“Selwyn Water”).

The submission is informed by and made in my capacity as an elected member representing the Tāwera Malvern Ward, with a focus on ensuring that the policy is operationally robust, locally responsive, and aligned with good practice in territorial authority decision-making and community engagement.

2. Overall Position

I support the development of a standalone Significance and Engagement Policy for Selwyn Water.

In particular, I support:

- the use of a significance-led decision-making framework;
- the identification of multi-factor assessment criteria (including financial, service, environmental, and mana whenua considerations);
- the recognition that engagement is broader than formal consultation; and
- the commitment to early engagement with mana whenua and specific communities, where relevant.

However, in its current form, the policy would benefit from refinement to ensure consistent, transparent, and locally responsive application across Selwyn District.

3. Key Issues and Recommendations

3.1 Recognition of Localised Significance

Issue:

The draft policy appropriately recognises “relevant communities” but does not explicitly provide that a matter may be of low or medium significance at a district-wide level while being highly significant for a particular community, township, or scheme area.

This is a critical omission in a district such as Selwyn, (Tāwera Malvern) where infrastructure decisions frequently have uneven geographic and community impacts.

Recommendation: Insert an explicit clause recognising localised significance.

Proposed wording:

“A decision or proposal may be of low or medium significance at a district-wide level but of high significance for a particular community, town, settlement, scheme area, or group of consumers. In such cases, Selwyn Water will recognise and respond to that local significance when determining the appropriate level and form of engagement.”

3.2 Strengthening Operational Clarity (Engagement Matrix)

Issue:

The policy is principles-based and appropriately flexible; however, it may lack sufficient

operational guidance to ensure consistent application. Clearer guidance, would reduce any risk of variable interpretation and increase transparency for stakeholders.

Recommendation:

Include in the appendix or schedule:

- worked examples of low, medium, and high significance decisions; and
- links each level to typical engagement approaches.

Suggested inclusions:

- Low significance: routine renewals, minor operational changes, implementation of previously consulted decisions.
- Medium significance: local service adjustments, scheme-specific operational changes.
- High significance: material changes to levels of service, significant capital programmes, major charging impacts, or decisions with substantial localised effects.

3.3 Local Engagement Channels and Methods

Issue:

While the draft references community preferences, it does not sufficiently recognise the importance of place-based engagement mechanisms in a geographically diverse and predominantly rural district.

Recommendation: Strengthen the policy to explicitly recognise local engagement channels.

Suggested addition:

“Selwyn Water will utilise appropriate local engagement channels where relevant, including the Malvern Community Board, residents’ and community associations, local meetings, and targeted engagement with affected communities, particularly where impacts are geographically concentrated.”

This will better reflect how engagement is effectively undertaken in Selwyn District.

3.4 Interface with Selwyn District Council

Issue:

The draft policy acknowledges that engagement may be undertaken by either Selwyn Water or Selwyn District Council. However, the delineation of roles is not sufficiently clear.

This creates a risk of:

- duplication of engagement;
- gaps in accountability; and
- confusion for the public.

Recommendation: Clarify the interface between Selwyn Water and SDC.

Suggested additions should address:

- which entity leads engagement in different circumstances;
- how reliance on prior council consultation will be assessed; and

- how community views gathered through elected members and community boards will be incorporated.

3.5 “Closing the Loop” – Reporting Back to the Community

Issue:

The draft policy provides limited assurance that communities will be informed of how their feedback has influenced decisions. → This is a key component of good engagement practice and public trust.

Recommendation: Include an explicit commitment to reporting back.

Proposed wording:

“For decisions involving medium or high levels of engagement, Selwyn Water will, where practicable, report back to the community on the key themes raised through engagement and how those views have informed the final decision.”

3.6 Reliance on Prior Consultation

Issue:

The draft appropriately notes that some decisions will implement matters previously consulted on through Selwyn District Council processes (e.g. Long Term Plans).

However, there is a risk that this principle is applied too broadly, particularly where:

- impacts are localised;
- there have been material changes in cost, scope, or timing; or
- community expectations have evolved.

Recommendation: Refine the policy to ensure that reliance on prior consultation is applied cautiously.

Suggested addition:

“Selwyn Water will not rely solely on prior consultation where a proposal has materially different impacts, including localised or scheme-specific effects, or where there have been significant changes in context, cost, or service delivery.”

3.7 Affordability and Consumer Impacts

Issue:

The draft appropriately references financial and economic impacts, including effects on consumer charges. Given current public concern regarding affordability, this factor should be given greater prominence.

Recommendation: Strengthen the policy to explicitly recognise affordability impacts as a driver of significance.

Suggested addition:

“Material changes to charges, fees, or cost allocation affecting consumers, particularly where impacts are concentrated on specific communities or groups, will be treated as a factor indicating higher significance.”

4. Conclusion

The draft Significance and Engagement Policy provides a solid and legally aligned foundation. The recommended amendments are intended to:

- strengthen local responsiveness in a diverse and growing district;

- improve clarity and consistency in application; and
- reinforce public confidence in Selwyn Water's decision-making processes.

In particular, the policy should more clearly recognise that significance is not solely a district-wide concept, and that local impacts (Tāwera Malvern ward) require proportionate local engagement.

Subject to the recommended amendments, I support the policy proceeding.

Cr John Verry, 3rd April 2026

Submitter Number: 38

Full Name: Barbara Dillon
Organisation:

Section 2: Draft Significance and Engagement Policy Questions

1. Is the draft policy clear about when and how community engagement will happen?

Somewhat clear

Tell us why - as a first draft it is sufficient for this consultation

2. Are there any other factors we should consider when deciding whether a decision is significant?

There needs to be a failsafe that stops decisions being encompassed onto an area that does not require engagement - for example - building a new pump station in an area of minimal growth where the existing pump station is still functioning - and doing it anyway under 'emergency work'

3. Which methods would you prefer Selwyn Water to use when engaging with you?

Online surveys or feedback forms Website announcements Public events (drop-in sessions, facilitated meetings) Email updates Direct mail (letters or flyers) Social media
Other

The policy is not clear on 'website' if this refers to the Selwyn water website or SDC - and it should be on both

4. What can we do to make it easier to share your views and ideas with us?

transperancy needs to be the goal, you need to earn trust from the community that you are doing whats best for example publish all 'low significance' decisions that do not go out for engagement on the website so people can see the policy in action and be open to receiving comment

5. What would help you feel confident that your feedback is heard and considered?

meaningful acknowledgement of the submission - i understand that you will not necessarily have the resources to answer every point if everyones submission - but set it up so that anyone that butts in a submission can opt in to all followup communication (or not) and dont decide what you think is imaterial because if people take the time to submit they deserve to be acknowledged

Other feedback

not at this stage

Submitter Number: 39

Full Name: Warwick Gay
Organisation:

Section 2: Draft Significance and Engagement Policy Questions

1. Is the draft policy clear about when and how community engagement will happen?

Very clear

Tell us why - I believe it confirms that Selwyn Water will at least inform if not provide an opportunity for me to contribute to any issues of significance that impact on me as a rate payer

2. Are there any other factors we should consider when deciding whether a decision is significant?

I am not aware of any

3. Which methods would you prefer Selwyn Water to use when engaging with you?

Online surveys or feedback forms Email updates
Other

4. What can we do to make it easier to share your views and ideas with us?

Surveys, feedback forms and emails are all I require.

5. What would help you feel confident that your feedback is heard and considered?

That it is formally acknowledged

Other feedback

No

Submitter Number: 40

Full Name: Helen Clarke
Organisation:

Section 2: Draft Significance and Engagement Policy Questions

1. Is the draft policy clear about when and how community engagement will happen?

Very clear
Tell us why

3. Which methods would you prefer Selwyn Water to use when engaging with you?

Online surveys or feedback forms Website announcements Public events (drop-in sessions, facilitated meetings) Email updates Direct mail (letters or flyers) Other

5. What would help you feel confident that your feedback is heard and considered?

once you have feedback in you need to share key themes and metrics with the public. You also need to tell the public the decisions, outcomes or learnings from said feedback.

Other feedback

I assume this includes everyone as a whole in the district equally. In which case consulting iwi/maori separately is not equality at all singling out one race over another is not acceptable. This should be removed. We are one district and one country for that matter, stop creating divisions. Let's all work together. one people many many different cultures.

Submitter Number: 41

Full Name: Susan Carline-Wright
Organisation:

Section 2: Draft Significance and Engagement Policy Questions

1. Is the draft policy clear about when and how community engagement will happen?

Somewhat clear

Tell us why - It seems there will be occasions where community engagement may not happen, and it does sound that all options are covered just in case (but agree that it will not always be timely or financially responsible to engage the community).

2. Are there any other factors we should consider when deciding whether a decision is significant?

Cannot think of anything else over and above what has been listed.

3. Which methods would you prefer Selwyn Water to use when engaging with you?

Online surveys or feedback forms Public events (drop-in sessions, facilitated meetings) Email updates Social media
Other

in local newspapers

4. What can we do to make it easier to share your views and ideas with us?

Personally I prefer on-line surveys so this works well for me.

5. What would help you feel confident that your feedback is heard and considered?

If results of surveys were published and decisions taken are shown to consider the feedback that has been received.

Other feedback

Not at this stage.

Submitter Number: 42

Full Name: Maree Horlor
Organisation:

Section 2: Draft Significance and Engagement Policy Questions

1. Is the draft policy clear about when and how community engagement will happen?

Very clear
Tell us why

2. Are there any other factors we should consider when deciding whether a decision is significant?

Nothing extra from me.

3. Which methods would you prefer Selwyn Water to use when engaging with you?

Online surveys or feedback forms Website announcements Public events (drop-in sessions, facilitated meetings) Email updates Social media
Other

4. What can we do to make it easier to share your views and ideas with us?

I like online feedback.

I found out about this thru Prebbleton Life, in a comment by the Councillor at Large. Does SDC support broad newsletters like Prebb Life financially or in other ways. I make a personal and political choice to not follow social media, so get most of my info about annual plan updates etc thru small and local paper media.

(I lived in Wanaka for a long time, where the weekly advertising newsletter was the best source of everything, including local and important discussions, so am used to living in a very engaged community.)

5. What would help you feel confident that your feedback is heard and considered?

Submission forms written well, with clear info about next steps, dates, and public consultation processes. Once I've submitted to something well designed, then I forget it and move onto the next thing.

Other feedback

Concerned about Section 6, "s necessary to avoid, remedy or mitigate an adverse effect on the environment". I'd be interested to know if there is a way we define "adverse effects". Something I as a science graduate might consider adverse, may not be the same as what someone with no science background might consider adverse. Is there a statement in the policy about using science-based approaches?

Submitter Number: 43

Full Name: JANE MULHOLLAND
Organisation:

Section 2: Draft Significance and Engagement Policy Questions

1. Is the draft policy clear about when and how community engagement will happen?

Somewhat clear

Tell us why - It is unclear how we can question a decision NOT to engage in community engagement - or the type of engagement proposed. At the moment all the power to make these decisions lies with Selwyn Water - is this what you are proposing as the basis of your engagement policy?

2. Are there any other factors we should consider when deciding whether a decision is significant?

yes - ask the community if we feel a decision is significant - perhaps set up a user group for this purpose. Remember also that we have just held local council elections so views and circumstances are always evolving and adapting - dont rely on something decided by the previous council.

3. Which methods would you prefer Selwyn Water to use when engaging with you?

Online surveys or feedback forms Public events (drop-in sessions, facilitated meetings) Email updates Direct mail (letters or flyers)
Other

Announcements via local newspapers, notices in local libraries

4. What can we do to make it easier to share your views and ideas with us?

We can't offer SMART ideas unless we are given timely updates. Hold open Board meetings so that interested community members can attend. Give regular updates via local newspapers or as handouts available at library. It is essential to remember that many of us do not use social media, nor do we check your website. There needs to be a proactive stream of information from you that is accessible to all members of the community. There also needs to be an avenue for us to share our views and ideas AT ANY TIME - not solely when you ask for it.

Also, as part of this current engagement you should have provided case studies of how you propose to use the criteria proposed in your draft policy. Give a couple of examples of situations where these criteria are being applied (or can be applied) so that we can see them in action before offering our views on whether they will work or not. Since you failed to offer us examples this time, I suggest you do so in future information-sharing with us - this will ensure our feedback is better informed.

5. What would help you feel confident that your feedback is heard and considered?

See above - regular updates published and made available to all members of the community. These to include all feedback received and what was done with it. This process must be transparent so that there is clear accountability. It should go without saying that any consultation, regardless of the process chosen, must include reporting back to the community. It should also go without saying that we would expect to see changes made as a result of our feedback - unless this happens there can be never be any confidence in your engagement policy.

Other feedback

Yes - see my earlier response. Our voice needs to be heard as part of your process for deciding whether community engagement is required.

How do you intend to ensure we have a role in your decision-making? This needs to be specifically addressed in the policy. At the moment it appears that we are excluded from key decisions about when to inform/consult/involve/partner; or when to go ahead without any form of community engagement. Such decision-making in your draft policy lies purely with you and your perspectives on how to apply the criteria in each case.

Submitter Number: 44

Full Name: Carey Barnett

Organisation: Ellesmere Sustainable Agriculture Incorporated

Section 2: Draft Significance and Engagement Policy Questions

Somewhat clear

Tell us why - Ultimately it will come down to judgement calls by the entity unless there are explicit guidelines.

2. Are there any other factors we should consider when deciding whether a decision is significant?

See attached submission.

3. Which methods would you prefer Selwyn Water to use when engaging with you?

Online surveys or feedback forms Website announcements Public events (drop-in sessions, facilitated meetings) Email updates Direct mail (letters or flyers) Social media
Other

4. What can we do to make it easier to share your views and ideas with us?

Involve catchment groups and landholders at the outset of relevant consultation rather than formal submissions later in discussions.

5. What would help you feel confident that your feedback is heard and considered?

Involvement during the course of option development and decision making, rather than too late in a process.

Other feedback

Yes, see attached submission.



Contact: Carey Barnett
carey.barnett@xtra.co.nz

15 April 2026

Submission on Selwyn Water

Draft Significance and Engagement Policy

Ellesmere Sustainable Agriculture Incorporated (ESAI) appreciates the opportunity to comment on Selwyn Water's draft *Significance and Engagement Policy*. As a catchment group representing landowners and primary producers across the wider Ellesmere area, ESAI strongly supports the intent of ensuring *'the right conversations with the right people before decisions are made,'* as the policy states. ESAI also acknowledges the policy's recognition that decisions may have *'major environmental impacts on a wide area'* and that public interest and potential risks must be considered when determining significance.

ESAI's submission focuses on one key issue: **any new water supply or wastewater infrastructure that has effects/zones of influence beyond town boundaries must trigger engagement with affected rural landowners and catchment groups.**

1. Community Wells and New Town Water Supplies

1.1 The policy notes that Selwyn Water will consider under '2.B. Criteria for determining significance, Public Interest,' the number of people affected, the extent of that impact and whether the issue will be contentious' when assessing significance. In practice, new or expanded town water supply wells often draw from aquifers that extend well beyond township limits. These groundwater systems are shared with surrounding farms, lifestyle blocks and rural communities which are already operating permitted or consented activities. The introduction of new or upgraded community wells and associated infrastructure may well pose a significant impact on rural activities and communities.

1.2 ESAI requests that the policy explicitly recognise that:

- **Any proposal for a new community water supply well, or a significant change to abstraction volumes or locations, must involve early engagement with affected landowners and the relevant catchment group.**
- **Engagement should occur at least at the *Consult* level, and in many cases the *Involve* level, given the potential for impacts on existing private wells, groundwater levels, rural/farm activities and local environmental outcomes.**

1

- **Catchment groups hold valuable local hydrological knowledge and can support better long-term decision-making.**

1.3 This aligns with the policy's commitment to consider environmental impacts and public interest, and its assertion that decisions with major environmental impacts on a wide area are more likely to be of high significance.

2. Wastewater Disposal Systems Affecting Rural Areas

2.1 Similarly, any new or expanded wastewater treatment or disposal system that has effects beyond town boundaries such as land-based irrigation, discharge to waterways, or changes in nutrient loading—must be treated as a high-significance decision.

2.2 The policy states that Selwyn Water will consider 'potential risks to individuals [and] communities'ⁱⁱ and that decisions with the potential for lasting impacts on communities, the environment or taonga are likely to be highly significant. Wastewater disposal clearly falls within this category.

2.3 **ESAI therefore requests that the policy explicitly requires:**

- **Consultation with affected landowners and catchment groups whenever wastewater disposal infrastructure or discharge locations may impact rural land, groundwater or surface water;**
- **Transparent sharing of technical information, including modelling, monitoring data and alternative options; and**
- **Recognition that rural communities bear the direct environmental and land-use consequences of such decisions.**

3. Recognition of Catchment Groups as Key Stakeholders

3.1 The draft policy lists various engagement channels and stakeholder types but does not explicitly reference catchment groups. Given the role of such groups in water quality improvement, environmental monitoring and community coordination, **ESAI requests that:**

- **Catchment groups be added as a recognised stakeholder category for engagement on decisions with environmental or land-use implications.**
- **Selwyn Water consider catchment groups when assessing community preferences and when determining who will or may be affected by, or have an interest in, the proposal.**

4. Conclusion

4.1 ESAI supports the overall structure and intent of the draft policy. However, to ensure that decisions with effects beyond township boundaries are informed, fair and environmentally responsible, the policy must explicitly require engagement with affected rural landowners and catchment groups for:

1. **New or expanded town water supply wells, and**

2. New or expanded wastewater disposal systems.

4.2 We welcome ongoing dialogue with Selwyn Water and are willing to assist in shaping practical engagement processes that reflect the realities of the Ellesmere catchment.

ⁱ Selwyn Water Significance and Engagement Policy, 2.B. Public Interest, page 4

ⁱⁱ Selwyn Water Significance and Engagement Policy, 2.B. Potential Risks, page 3

Submitter Number: 45

Full Name: HAYLEY LILLEY
Organisation:

Section 2: Draft Significance and Engagement Policy Questions

1. Is the draft policy clear about when and how community engagement will happen?

Somewhat clear
Tell us why

3. Which methods would you prefer Selwyn Water to use when engaging with you?

Online surveys or feedback forms Website announcements Public events (drop-in sessions, facilitated meetings) Email updates Social media
Other

4. What can we do to make it easier to share your views and ideas with us?

email with engagement opportunities

5. What would help you feel confident that your feedback is heard and considered?

an email summary of feedback received and decisions made

Submitter Number: 46

Full Name: Mark Alexander

Organisation: Rolleston Residents Association Inc

Section 2: Draft Significance and Engagement Policy Questions

1. Is the draft policy clear about when and how community engagement will happen?

Somewhat clear

Tell us why- The document is still technical with terms that many will struggle to understand.

2. Are there any other factors we should consider when deciding whether a decision is significant?

Appendix 1 should explicitly include in clause 2 land bought for wastewater disposal.

To make explicitly clear that disposal of land bought for wastewater disposal is strategic.

Appendix 1: List of strategic water services assets

This list will be added to as further assets are identified.

1. Water supplies including reservoirs, pump stations and reticulation.
-

3. Which methods would you prefer Selwyn Water to use when engaging with you?

Online surveys or feedback forms Website announcements Public events (drop-in sessions, facilitated meetings) Email updates Direct mail

(letters or flyers) Social media
Other

Print and radio media

4. What can we do to make it easier to share your views and ideas with us?

Hold public meetings at times that working people can attend.

5. What would help you feel confident that your feedback is heard and considered?

Public hearings.

Other feedback

No

Submitter Number: 47

Full Name: Wayne Lawson

Organisation:

Section 2: Draft Significance and Engagement Policy Questions

1. Is the draft policy clear about when and how community engagement will happen?

Somewhat clear

Tell us why

The draft document includes a table setting out the criteria to be used to determine if an issue is 'significant' enough to warrant public engagement. No actual \$ values are set which might determine a low, medium or high level of significance. This will inevitably lead to subjective determination of that level, not transparent to external parties. For example, we all might agree a \$100 cost is 'low' significance and a \$1,000,000 cost is of high significance. What appropriate cost bands are being considered for the low, medium or high significance levels?

Table C of the document does note generalised examples in 3 significance bands, but the criteria do not suggest cost values

2. Are there any other factors we should consider when deciding whether a decision is significant?

Contractual responsibilities should be an item considered. Selwyn Water will clearly partner with various construction companies & such contracts will include obligations on both parties. In the event of a dispute, contractual obligations may become significant. Any capital works project should include standard risk management approaches which would inform this issue.

Table D does note 'contracts' as an additional arrangement that might impact on the general approach to evaluation of significance, but no value is set.

3. Which methods would you prefer Selwyn Water to use when engaging with you?

Online surveys or feedback forms Website announcements Public events (drop-in sessions, facilitated meetings) Email updates Direct mail (letters or flyers)

Other

Create 'focus groups' who are willing to constructively engage with Selwyn Water.

4. What can we do to make it easier to share your views and ideas with us?

Engage with existing community (Community Board, Residents Associations etc) groups and/or create focus groups

5. What would help you feel confident that your feedback is heard and considered?

Reasonably prompt collation of feedback & proposed response timeframe. If community feedback just disappears into a Selwyn Water 'black hole', then the public will become both disappointed & disengaged.

Other feedback

I am confident that, as for any business, you will have a risk register which sets out individual risks, mitigation approaches & residual risk after those (mitigation) approaches have been applied. Such risk registers can include small items contractual items and governance level items. Sharing a high level overview of that risk register would demonstrate good management practice & perhaps generate some level of confidence.

Submitter Number: 48

Full Name: John McNamara
Organisation:

Section 2: Draft Significance and Engagement Policy Questions

1. Is the draft policy clear about when and how community engagement will happen?

Very clear
Tell us why .

2. Are there any other factors we should consider when deciding whether a decision is significant?

Seems to me that Selwyn Water isn't going to be answerable to SDC or the ratepayers on whether a decision is significant or not. Any significant decision should be done by SDC and Ratepayers.

3. Which methods would you prefer Selwyn Water to use when engaging with you?

Online surveys or feedback forms Website announcements Public events (drop-in sessions, facilitated meetings) Email updates Direct mail (letters or flyers)
Other

4. What can we do to make it easier to share your views and ideas with us?

Try consultation.

5. What would help you feel confident that your feedback is heard and considered?

yes, but it will probably be ignored.

Other feedback

I worry that this organisation will ignore water users and be an unchecked authority that won't take any notice or consideration to its (unwilling) users. It seems to me that Selwyn Water can make decisions and increase charges at their own discretion without any thought of the financial strain it would put households under, we see that already with overpaid board members that don't live in Selwyn district. The cost to bring board members together with flights, accommodation and other associated costs will be an outrageous invoice that Selwyn Water users will have to pay, disgraceful doesn't even come close to describing it.

Submitter Number: 49

Full Name: Hilary Michie
Organisation:

Section 2: Draft Significance and Engagement Policy Questions

1. Is the draft policy clear about when and how community engagement will happen?

Somewhat clear
Tell us why

2. Are there any other factors we should consider when deciding whether a decision is significant?

Using simple language and not jargon when communicating the significance of a decision and why it is or is not being communicated to the people who pay your retainers/salaries; walk in your audiences' shoes when communicating.

3. Which methods would you prefer Selwyn Water to use when engaging with you?

Online surveys or feedback forms Website announcements Public events (drop-in sessions, facilitated meetings) Email updates Direct mail (letters or flyers)
Other

Those methods that Selwyn Water will take heed of

4. What can we do to make it easier to share your views and ideas with us?

Provide forums at suitable times and venues to enable the people of Selwyn's townships and settlements to attend meetings, support the meetings with appropriately written thought provoking documents tailored to the particular audiences distributed prior to the meetings. Ensure senior personnel/board members attend these meetings so they hear the population's opinions.

5. What would help you feel confident that your feedback is heard and considered?

Outcomes that reflect the population's opinions, and not just outcomes that reflect the opinions of the loudest voices and those with the deepest pockets.

Other feedback

Ensure Selwyn's population knows Selwyn Water exists; a lot of people don't which is the fault of your organisation for not raising awareness about yourselves.

Submitter Number: 50

Full Name: Steven Dean
Organisation:

Section 2: Draft Significance and Engagement Policy Questions

1. Is the draft policy clear about when and how community engagement will happen?

Not clear

Tell us why - no hard line triggers eg if expenditure increases rates above national rate of inflation or GDP. Selwyn Water are self determining what is “significant deviation”

2. Are there any other factors we should consider when deciding whether a decision is significant?

financial cost to rate payers.

debt levels beyond published levels.

cost of consultation and compliance with mana whenua. This should be a Crown cost not business cost or even passed back to SDC

3. Which methods would you prefer Selwyn Water to use when engaging with you?

Online surveys or feedback forms Website announcements Public events (drop-in sessions, facilitated meetings) Email updates Social media

Other

4. What can we do to make it easier to share your views and ideas with us?

public meetings. Through SDC councillors who are voted to their positions

5. What would help you feel confident that your feedback is heard and considered?

Posting the feedback results. Staying within agreed service plans and financial budgets

Other feedback

There are a lot of words but no detail. Transparency on financial expenditure and project deadlines.

Submitter Number: 51

Full Name: John smith

Organisation:

Section 2: Draft Significance and Engagement Policy Questions

1. Is the draft policy clear about when and how community engagement will happen?

Somewhat clear

Tell us why - council soeak is not easily understood

2. Are there any other factors we should consider when deciding whether a decision is significant?

yes, listen to what the majority of people are saying, if the oppose what is being offered then review what you are asking them to accept

3. Which methods would you prefer Selwyn Water to use when engaging with you?

Public events (drop-in sessions, facilitated meetings)

Other

4. What can we do to make it easier to share your views and ideas with us?

not everyone understand how to use social media, drop in sessions may work, the trouble you have is that you are damned if you do and damned if you don't.

5. What would help you feel confident that your feedback is heard and considered?

regular up dates in local papers such as Malvern news and Selwyn times

Other feedback

break it down into parts instead of some 300 page document that not everyone understands

Submitter Number: 52

Full Name: Allison Rosanowski
Organisation:

Section 2: Draft Significance and Engagement Policy Questions

1. Is the draft policy clear about when and how community engagement will happen?

Somewhat clear
Tell us why

2. Are there any other factors we should consider when deciding whether a decision is significant?

Effect on ratepayers which have different needs- urban, rural , rural residential.

3. Which methods would you prefer Selwyn Water to use when engaging with you?

Online surveys or feedback forms Public events (drop-in sessions, facilitated meetings) Email updates Direct mail (letters or flyers) Social media
Other

4. What can we do to make it easier to share your views and ideas with us?

Regular workshops for ratepayers. Seems no method for individual ratepayers to have an input.

5. What would help you feel confident that your feedback is heard and considered?

There should be Councillors and residents as part of governance body.

Other feedback

Selwyn Water will rate ratepayers with no democracy in the governance structure.

Selwyn Water can set up public private projects again without ratepayer consultation.

Submitter Number: 53

Full Name: Gareth Payne
Organisation:

Section 2: Draft Significance and Engagement Policy Questions

1. Is the draft policy clear about when and how community engagement will happen?

Not clear

Tell us why - No. You have poorly defined carve outs as per section 6. Community Engagement should always happen and should take precedence over all other considerations. Your primary function is to serve the community.

2. Are there any other factors we should consider when deciding whether a decision is significant?

You should not be considering mana whenua. There is no partnership. The community's you serve should be your sole and only consideration.

3. Which methods would you prefer Selwyn Water to use when engaging with you?

Other

Online Voting by all eligible ratepayers - direct local democracy in action

4. What can we do to make it easier to share your views and ideas with us?

Yes you could actually listen. perhaps disestablish yourself. You were formed against the wishes of the community as per the Water Done Well public consultation and over 80% of submissions against the formation of this entity....

5. What would help you feel confident that your feedback is heard and considered?

Actually implement the outcome of a community consultation process.....you could start with disestablishing yourself....

Other feedback

your entire entity is against local democracy and a farce.....

Submitter Number: 54

Full Name: David Page
Organisation:

Share your feedback on Selwyn Water Limited's draft Significance and Engagement Policy

Selwyn Water is the new council-controlled organisation responsible for drinking water and wastewater services in the Selwyn district. As part of our role, we need to make certain decisions on behalf of our communities.

Under the Local Government (Water Services) Act 2025, Selwyn Water must have a Significance and Engagement Policy. This policy explains when, how, and why we involve our communities in decision making.

We are seeking your feedback that will help inform our final policy.

What the policy does

Our draft Significance and Engagement Policy sets out:

- how we decide whether a decision is significant;
- when we will engage with the community;
- how engagement will be carried out; and
- how we work with mana whenua and with Selwyn District Council as our shareholder.

We want to hear from you

We're inviting you to share your feedback on our draft Significance and Engagement Policy, is it clear, or are there changes you think we should make?

Once engagement closes, we'll share what we heard from the community and what we changed as a result, so you can see how your feedback shaped the final policy.

How to share your feedback

To share your feedback, please read the draft Significance and Engagement Policy included with this document and then:

1. Visit selwyn.govt.nz/SWLSEP on your computer or mobile device to access the online survey, or
2. Fill out the feedback form in this document and drop it off to:
 - Selwyn District Council Rolleston Offices, 2 Norman Kirk Drive, Rolleston; or
 - a Selwyn District Council Library or Service Centre.

You can also scan and email your feedback form to communications@selwynwater.co.nz.

Please return your feedback by 5pm Thursday 16 April.

Feedback form

Selwyn Water is seeking community feedback on its draft Significance and Engagement Policy. Feedback will help determine the final policy.

Please read the draft Significance and Engagement Policy with this document or online at selwyn.govt.nz/SWLSEP before completing your feedback.

You can share your feedback using this form or you can complete the online survey at selwyn.govt.nz/SWLSEP.

If you need extra space, you can use additional paper and attach it to this form.

Privacy statement

Feedback is part of our public engagement process and becomes part of the public record.

Anonymous feedback will not be accepted. Your name may be published alongside your feedback on our website and in official documents.

Your contact details (address, phone number and email) will be provided to decision makers when your feedback is considered, but these details will not be published on our website or in official documents.

If someone requests copies of feedback under the Local Government Official Information and Meetings Act 1987, your name and contact details must be supplied unless there is good reason to withhold them. If you have a genuine reason for your personal details or feedback to be kept confidential, please email communications@selwynwater.co.nz to outline your reasons.

Your details

First name

Last name

Address

Email address

Is your feedback on behalf of an organisation?

Yes No

If yes please state the name of the organisation

Draft Significance and Engagement Policy questions

1. Is the draft policy clear about when and how community engagement will happen?

Very clear Somewhat clear Not clear

Please add your comments

Provided for SWL Consultation feedback only

Apparent lack of Customer (Ratepayers / Community) centrality

As the first new water organisation, with a new council focused on community alignment with transparency, it is important to have an outward looking customer centric engagement policy that meets the requirements for transparency and engagement with the community.

Based on how the draft is constructed, it comes across as having multiple significance optionality - could this mean a determination of a decision might be made for low/no significance by choosing a specific option and hence no requirement for engagement with the community? In some cases, this could be to the detriment of the community or community groups, financially, health or service level wise, without community recourse. Specific examples in the draft can be highlighted to explain this, if required.

Auckland Council has a significance policy which is outwardly focused on the communities within their area including the same document applying to their CCO's with, it seems, obligations to understand and anticipate upfront the potential impacts on the community. This would appear to be a model to consider.

The concerns centre around Item B – Significance Criteria. Across these criteria, the current wording comes across as allowing issues for small geographic areas, small groups, SWL changes to plans, forming of partnerships, and perceived no or low interest issues to potentially be not engaged with the community, also on health and safety and environmental matters. This does not seem to be a customer centric approach, and the policy should reflect a customer first focus for all of the diverse communities in Selwyn. Further, any public-private partnership will require the partner to make a profit. We have been told that it is not the mandate of SWL to return a profit but in this situation a partner would, at cost to ratepayers. With a profit-making partner this would likely increase rates as well as seeming contradictory to the mandate of not being a profit generating venture. This example seems of high significance requiring community engagement given the rates impact.

Additionally, the current wording reads that if there is limited interest in an issue then SWL can decide whether to engage. This does not seem to align with transparency to the community, regardless of what / who the community group is. If SWL has not communicated about the issue in the first place, then there could be no or little community interest and significant actions may possibly be taken by SWL not in the public / community interest.

Regarding Operating Model, the Auckland Council / Auckland Transport (AT) case is a big learning with the government stepping in in 2025 with planned legislation and a scope change for AT CCO due to concerns over **democratic accountability**, with planning and strategic functions moving to a new committee in Auckland Council. Having this level of disruption in Selwyn would not be welcome so it should be clear to the community about SWL alignment, activity and engagement, from the start.

2. Are there any other factors we should consider when deciding whether a decision is significant?

Strategy

Consider the alignment of the decision with the agreed confirmed action plans in the of SWL strategy and the LTP of SDC – e.g. Does the decision align with the action plans approved as part of the SWL, and SDC endorsed SWL business strategy?

3. Which methods would you prefer Selwyn Water to use when engaging on significant decisions?

Select all that apply

Online surveys or feedback forms

Website announcements

Provided for SWL Consultation feedback only

- Public events (drop-in sessions, facilitated meetings)
- Email updates
- Direct mail (letters or flyers)
- Social media
- Other (please specify)

Answer: - All of these above are applicable, and it depends upon individuals' ways of taking in news, events, their demographics & preferences etc etc. as to what each person prefers. SWL should not rely on limited consultative feedback as to reducing this list. Rather, they should take a lead from SDC, and other mature councils e.g. Auckland Council, on how best to communicate with the community to have the broadest possible reach, also using existing channels and processes as appropriate.

This broad communications reach is also required to help address the "No interest" issue highlighted earlier

4. What can we do to make it easier to share your views and ideas with us?

Publish the SWL Strategy for public consultation so that we have clear understanding of SWL direction and activity, particularly given the strategy is in effect a Long-Term Plan for SWL, and SDC consults on their LTP.

Can you explain why this policy is coming to the public before the strategy is available please as policies should be based on a strategy, not the other way around?

5. What would help you feel confident that your feedback is heard and considered?

Present a customer centric significance and engagement policy.
Publish Activity Plans, KPI's and progress against them.

6. Do you have any other comments or suggestions about the draft Significance and Engagement Policy?

There should only be one Significance and Engagement Policy across SDC, and its CCO's. This saves cost, aligns the organisations on community expectations and doing the right things right. Any specifics to a CCO could be added in a simple addendum. The existing SDC policy should be reviewed for its appropriateness.

Thank you for taking the time to provide your feedback.

Provided for SWL Consultation feedback only

Submitter Number: 55

Full Name: Zoran Rakovic
Organisation:

From: [REDACTED]
Sent: Thursday, 16 April 2026 8:37 am
To: Communications <communications@selwynwater.co.nz>
Subject: S0010 - Submission on Draft Significance and Engagement Policy

Dear Madam/Sir,

Submission on Draft Significance and Engagement Policy

Submitter: Zoran Rakovic, West Melton

Position: Supports the adoption of a significance and engagement policy in principle, but submits that the draft should be amended before adoption.

To the Board of Selwyn Water Limited,

Thank you for the opportunity to submit on the draft Significance and Engagement Policy.

I support the adoption of a significance and engagement policy. Selwyn Water is now the water service provider for the transferred drinking water and wastewater services, and the Local Government (Water Services) Act 2025 requires a water organisation to adopt a significance and engagement policy addressing significance, engagement, community preferences, and statutory decision-making requirements. The policy is therefore an important governance instrument, not a mere administrative formality.

My submission is that the draft policy is **sound in concept but too discretionary in operation**. It broadly reflects the statutory architecture, but in its present form it leaves Selwyn Water with very wide room to decide whether a matter is significant, whether engagement will occur, how narrow the options for engagement will be, and when earlier Selwyn District Council consultation will be treated as sufficient. In a utility now exercising important drinking water and wastewater responsibilities, that degree of discretion is too broad.

I therefore support the draft **in principle only**, and seek amendments so that the final policy becomes more transparent, more predictable, and more closely aligned with Selwyn Water's actual legal role.

1. The policy should more clearly state Selwyn Water's limited statutory role

A threshold issue is scope. Selwyn Water has not inherited Selwyn District Council's general democratic or legislative role under the Local Government Act 2002. Under the

2025 Act, anything not expressly transferred remains with council, and a transfer agreement must not transfer the council's power to make bylaws, its shareholder role, or its power to delegate functions under the LGA 2002. The Act also limits a water organisation to providing water services and related or necessary services.

Selwyn's own transfer documents confirm that Selwyn Water took over the drinking water and wastewater service role, including statutory, operational, management, and resource consent responsibilities for those services, while stormwater, land drainage, and water races were excluded and retained by council. Selwyn's Water Services Delivery Plan likewise confirms that the WSCCO model was for drinking water and wastewater, including trade waste, while stormwater remains in-house.

The draft policy does say that it applies only to decisions made by Selwyn Water and not to SDC district and growth planning matters. That is helpful. But it should go further and state expressly that the policy is confined to Selwyn Water's transferred drinking water and wastewater service-provider role and does not extend to council-retained functions, including stormwater, land drainage, water races, wider district planning, or bylaw-making. That would make the policy easier for the public to understand and would better reflect the transparency purpose of the transfer regime.

2. The policy only partly achieves the statutory purposes in Part 1(a)–(d)

The draft reproduces the statutory purposes now found in section 35(3) of the 2025 Act. In my view, it **substantially addresses** those purposes, but it does so unevenly. It is strongest on setting out a framework and weakest on giving the public practical certainty.

As to purpose **(a)**, the policy broadly enables Selwyn Water, the shareholder, consumers, and communities to identify significance, because it sets out criteria and a low-medium-high spectrum. However, it does not require publication of a written significance assessment for medium or high significance decisions. Without that discipline, the framework exists internally but is not fully visible externally.

As to purpose **(b)**, the policy nominally supports a flexible and locally appropriate engagement approach, including community preferences and mana whenua engagement. But that flexibility is almost entirely controlled by Selwyn Water on a case-by-case basis. The draft does not contain enough firm safeguards to ensure that the

preferences and expectations of consumers and communities actually shape the engagement approach.

As to purpose **(c)**, the draft gives some clarity about who may engage and what forms engagement can take, but it does not give strong clarity about **when** communities can expect engagement. There are no hard triggers, no thresholds, and no minimum publication requirements for medium or high significance decisions. The result is a policy that says many sensible things, but still leaves the public uncertain about when engagement must actually happen.

As to purpose **(d)**, the policy does direct Selwyn Water to think early about engagement. That is positive. But again, there is no requirement to document that early assessment, no obligation to publish the chosen engagement pathway, and no requirement to explain why a low-engagement pathway was selected for a matter with real public impact.

For these reasons, I submit that the draft only **nominally or partly** meets some of the statutory purposes. It should be strengthened so those purposes are achieved in practice rather than simply recited.

3. The significance framework is useful, but too discretionary

The criteria in section 2 are generally sensible. Financial impact, public health, service levels, mana whenua interests, environmental impacts, risks, public interest, obligations, reversibility, and consistency with current approach are all relevant considerations for a water service provider. The spectrum of significance is also a sensible tool.

The problem is that the criteria are framed too softly. Selwyn Water “may consider” them. Three or more higher-significance criteria “likely” indicates high significance. A matter can move across the spectrum without any published reasons. That may suit internal administrative flexibility, but it does not provide robust public assurance.

I submit that the final policy should require Selwyn Water to prepare and publish a short written significance assessment for every medium and high significance decision. That assessment should identify the relevant criteria, record the rating reached, explain

whether any statutory consultation requirement is triggered, and state the proposed engagement pathway. This would materially improve transparency without making the policy unworkable. It would also better align with the Act's requirement that a water organisation clearly identify and explain decisions significantly inconsistent with its policy.

4. The policy needs clearer mandatory triggers for high significance

The present draft relies almost entirely on open-textured judgment. That is not enough for a utility that may make decisions affecting charges, contracts, strategic assets, and service levels.

I submit that the policy should state that the following are presumed to be **high significance**, unless Selwyn Water publishes reasons to the contrary:

1. any material increase in charges beyond what has previously been forecast or publicly consulted on;
2. any significant proposed change to service levels;
3. any proposal to transfer, receive, or materially alter ownership or control of a strategic water services asset;
4. any significant contract, especially one of high value or involving public-private partnership features;
5. any major outsourcing, long-term operational concession, or joint water service provider arrangement; and
6. any decision likely to create substantial district-wide public controversy or materially affect public health, environmental outcomes, or long-term financial commitments.

That would make the policy more predictable and would better serve the statutory goal of letting communities identify what counts as significant.

5. The “already consulted on by SDC” clause is too broad

One of the most important weaknesses in the draft is the statement that, as a new organisation, much of Selwyn Water's early work reflects decisions already made and consulted on by SDC, and that where Selwyn Water's decisions effectively implement

those decisions, it does not expect to engage further. The same theme appears again in the Water Services Strategy section.

That proposition is understandable administratively, but it is too broad as drafted. Council consultation during Long Term Plan or delivery-model consultation is not necessarily the same thing as public engagement on a later, concrete Selwyn Water decision about charges, service levels, strategic assets, contracting structure, or operational model. Selwyn's own consultation materials make clear that the transfer changed who would provide drinking water and wastewater services and that, from 2026/27 onwards, the SWL would set drinking water and wastewater charges directly. That is a meaningful change in institutional decision-maker and in the charging framework.

I submit that prior SDC consultation should only reduce the need for fresh engagement where all of the following apply: the issue is materially the same, the earlier consultation was recent and specific, the options have not materially changed, and Selwyn Water publishes reasons explaining why further engagement is unnecessary. Otherwise, the clause risks becoming a standing exemption that undermines the whole policy.

6. The SDC engagement clause risks pre-narrowing public options

Section 4 says Selwyn Water may engage with the wider community on decisions on which SDC has already expressed a view, and may limit the options on which it engages based on SDC feedback or otherwise note SDC's views in its engagement materials.

It is proper that Selwyn Water engages with SDC as shareholder, and section 37 of the Act clearly requires coordination to minimise duplication and inconsistency between the organisation's and the territorial authority's policies. But the statute also requires clarity about whether engagement will be undertaken by the organisation or its shareholders, and how community views will be taken into account where shareholders have expressed a view. That statutory design is not a licence to convert community engagement into a constrained exercise on a pre-filtered menu of choices.

I submit that the policy should say that SDC's views may inform engagement design, but community engagement should not be artificially narrowed unless Selwyn Water publishes reasons showing why broader options are not reasonably available.

7. Section 6 gives Selwyn Water too many ways not to engage

Section 6 is presently too wide. It allows non-engagement where a decision is routine or operational, organisational, urgent, required by legal obligations, needed to protect life or health, prevent property damage, avoid or mitigate environmental harm, protect infrastructure integrity, commercially sensitive, or concerns charges to an individual or small group. Some of these exceptions are plainly necessary. But taken together, they create a very large escape hatch.

Many contentious utility decisions can be framed as operational, urgent, legally required, infrastructure-protective, or commercially sensitive. Without tighter discipline, this section could swallow the policy.

I submit that section 6 should be amended so that:

- if Selwyn Water relies on an exception, it must publish a brief statement of reasons unless legally impossible;
- commercial sensitivity cannot justify withholding the existence, nature, significance rating, and overall rationale of a proposal;
- urgency does not remove the obligation to inform the public as soon as practicable afterward; and
- no exception may be used to avoid consultation or engagement specifically required by the Act. The Act itself requires the policy to be consistent with statutory consultation requirements.

8. Mana whenua engagement is positive in principle, but under-specified

Section 3 is respectful in tone and rightly recognises the significance of wai, intergenerational thinking, Ki Uta Ki Tai, and shared responsibility, while identifying Te Taumutu Rūnanga and Te Ngāi Tūāhuriri Rūnanga. That is a constructive starting point.

However, the section remains very high level. It does not specify minimum timing expectations, when engagement must begin, what happens where cultural concerns materially affect option assessment, or how Selwyn Water will show that mana whenua input affected the final outcome. Given that section 35 expressly contemplates particular approaches for specified communities, including iwi and hapū, and section

37 requires engagement with particular communities identified by shareholders, the policy should be more operational here.

I submit that the policy should require early engagement with mana whenua where a proposal may materially affect water, land, taonga, strategic assets, or culturally significant outcomes, and should require a brief explanation in decision materials of how mana whenua views were considered.

9. The strategic asset appendix is too broad and should be refined

Appendix 1 presently lists water supplies including reservoirs, pump stations and reticulation, and wastewater collection, treatment and disposal systems including pipes, pump stations, treatment and disposal works. That is extremely broad.

The Act requires Selwyn Water to develop a list of strategic water services assets for use in decisions under the water services strategy framework. A strategic water services asset is one without which the organisation cannot meet regulatory requirements or maintain its capacity to achieve the outcomes in its water services strategy. The present appendix reads more like a broad category list than a true strategic asset register.

I submit that the appendix should be refined over time into a more precise list or classes of assets that are genuinely strategic, and should expressly state that it relates only to the transferred drinking water and wastewater system, not stormwater or other council-retained networks.

10. The final policy should mirror the statute's inconsistency discipline

The Act requires that if a water organisation makes a decision significantly inconsistent with its significance and engagement policy, it must clearly identify the inconsistency, the reasons for it, and any intention to amend the policy.

The draft policy should contain an explicit clause reflecting that statutory discipline. That would make the obligation visible to readers of the policy itself and would strengthen accountability.

Relief sought

I respectfully submit that Selwyn Water should amend the draft policy before adoption by:

1. adding a stronger scope clause expressly limiting the policy to Selwyn Water's transferred drinking water and wastewater responsibilities and excluding council-retained functions;
2. requiring a written, published significance assessment for every medium and high significance decision;
3. creating presumptive high-significance triggers for major charges, service-level changes, strategic asset decisions, significant contracts, and major outsourcing or joint arrangements;
4. narrowing the "already consulted on by SDC" clause so it only applies where the issue is materially unchanged and Selwyn Water publishes reasons;
5. amending the SDC engagement section so shareholder views may inform, but not improperly pre-limit, public engagement options;
6. tightening section 6 so exceptions cannot be used as a broad substitute for engagement and must be explained publicly where relied on;
7. strengthening the mana whenua section with minimum process expectations and decision-reporting requirements;
8. refining the strategic asset appendix so it operates as a real strategic asset schedule within Selwyn Water's transferred service scope;
9. requiring a short "what we heard / what we decided / why" report after consultation on medium and high significance matters; and
10. inserting an express clause mirroring the statutory duty to identify and explain decisions significantly inconsistent with the policy.

Conclusion

This draft policy is a reasonable first attempt, but it is still too soft in the places that matter most. It gives Selwyn Water a framework, but not enough public discipline. A significance and engagement policy for a utility with direct responsibility for drinking water and wastewater charges, contracts, assets, and service levels should not depend so heavily on internal discretion. It should tell the public, clearly and reliably, when they will be engaged, how significance will be assessed, and how Selwyn Water will explain itself when it chooses not to engage.

I therefore ask that the policy be **amended and strengthened before adoption**.

Yours faithfully,

Zoran Rakovic

Independent Candidate for Selwyn Electorate

(2026 New Zealand General Election)

Standing with farmers, families/whānau, and businesses.
Bringing logic back to politics - one engineer at a time.

<https://www.zoran4selwyn.nz>



Submitter Number: 56

Full Name: Kirrily Fea
Organisation:

Feedback form

Selwyn Water is seeking community feedback on its draft Significance and Engagement Policy. Feedback will help determine the final policy.

Please read the draft Significance and Engagement Policy with this document or online at selwyn.govt.nz/SWLSEP before completing your feedback.

You can share your feedback using this form or you can complete the online survey at selwyn.govt.nz/SWLSEP.

If you need extra space, you can use additional paper and attach it to this form.

Privacy statement

Feedback is part of our public engagement process and becomes part of the public record.

Anonymous feedback will not be accepted. Your name may be published alongside your feedback on our website and in official documents.

Your contact details (address, phone number and email) will be provided to decision makers when your feedback is considered, but these details will not be published on our website or in official documents.

If someone requests copies of feedback under the Local Government Official Information and Meetings Act 1987, your name and contact details must be supplied unless there is good reason to withhold them. If you have a genuine reason for your personal details or feedback to be kept confidential, please email communications@selwynwater.co.nz to outline your reasons.

Your details

First name. Kirrily

Last name. Fea

Address. [REDACTED]

Email address [REDACTED]

Is your feedback on behalf of an organisation?

No.

If yes please state the name of the organisation

Draft Significance and Engagement Policy questions

1. Is the draft policy clear about when and how community engagement will happen?

Somewhat clear

Please add your comments

- (1) Section B is good in that provides examples. These become very useful for all parties when the significance of a decision is assessed.
- (2) Section 5. C. Community Preferences on Engagement. This section is very good. This allows for a feedback loop with affected communities and is great to see.
- (3) My concern in assessing significance and then type of engagement is when a decision is significant to a smaller group/community and not the whole district. Targeted engagement should occur with that group. This is not specifically covered by your policy which could lead to confusion and mistrust. This has happened to Upper Selwyn Huts in the past with Selwyn District Council and caused a breakdown in the relationship and lead to significant legal expenses borne by that community to ensure appropriate engagement.
- For example Section 2.B. Potential risks. Wouldn't significant harm to a small amount of people or community also be significant and require targeted consultation with that group? Or Section 2. B. Public Interests. Shouldn't major impact on a smaller group of people or community require significant engagement with that community?
- Section 2. C. Spectrum of Significance. The concern for smaller more vulnerable communities that do not have the resources to fight for their own rights, follows on in this section of your policy. Your policy states that when the decision is of interest only to limited groups, the significance is currently defined as "Medium". However, if a decision is significant to a smaller group the significance should be defined as "high" for that group involving targeted engagement at the involve or collaborative level with that community. This opportunity is not clearly available in your policy.
- Ask yourself, how will you engage with smaller, vulnerable communities when the decision is significant to them but not to the wider community? How is this covered by your policy?
- There should be an opportunity for targeted and appropriate engagement in this policy for significant decisions affecting smaller groups and the wording for this should lead to objective not subjective significance assessments.
- Your policy should specify how you will protect the interests of smaller, more vulnerable communities.
- (4) Section 4. Engagement with Selwyn District Council. 3rd paragraph. Prioritising feedback from SDC over ~~the the feedback from the affected communities in your policy is concerning. Advice from SDC on behalf of their constituents should not exempt Selwyn Water from consulting the affected communities directly. I would delete this paragraph.~~
- (5) Section 5. B. (6th bullet point). Using "costs" as a reason not to engage appropriately to a highly significant decision is very concerning. Costs should not be a reason to not engage appropriately.
- (6) Section 5. D. Spectrum of Engagement Options. In previous SDC Significance & Engagement Policies, examples of when to use each one and examples of how to engage were given under the Inform, Consult, Involve, Collaborate columns. These were very useful and increased the objectivity when making decisions on how to engage at each level. This would reduce the chance of each party concluding different engagement levels reducing the chance of disputes arising.

-
2. Are there any other factors we should consider when deciding whether a decision is significant?
-

Yes

As above. If a decision is significant to a smaller more vulnerable group your policy should specifically allow for an appropriately high level of targeted engagement with that group.

3. Which methods would you prefer Selwyn Water to use when engaging on significant decisions?

Select all that apply

All of the examples given below are appropriate when used together.

- Online surveys or feedback forms
- Website announcements
- Public events (drop-in sessions, facilitated meetings)
- Email updates
- Direct mail (letters or flyers)
- Social media
- Other (please specify)

4. What can we do to make it easier to share your views and ideas with us?

All of the above is appropriate

5. What would help you feel confident that your feedback is heard and considered?

Acknowledgement of receipt of feedback and all submissions made publicly available

6. Do you have any other comments or suggestions about the draft Significance and Engagement Policy? **No**

Thank you for taking the time to provide your feedback.

Submitter Number: 57

Full Name: Cleve Prescott
Organisation:

Feedback form

Selwyn Water is seeking community feedback on its draft Significance and Engagement Policy. Feedback will help determine the final policy.

Please read the draft Significance and Engagement Policy with this document or online at selwyn.govt.nz/SWLSEP before completing your feedback.

You can share your feedback using this form or you can complete the online survey at selwyn.govt.nz/SWLSEP.

If you need extra space, you can use additional paper and attach it to this form.

Privacy statement

Feedback is part of our public engagement process and becomes part of the public record.

Anonymous feedback will not be accepted. Your name may be published alongside your feedback on our website and in official documents.


Your contact details (address, phone number and email) will be provided to decision makers when your feedback is considered, but these details will not be published on our website or in official documents.


If someone requests copies of feedback under the Local Government Official Information and Meetings Act 1987, your name and contact details must be supplied unless there is good reason to withhold them. If you have a genuine reason for your personal details or feedback to be kept confidential, please email communications@selwynwater.co.nz to outline your reasons.

Your details

First name OLIVER

Last name PRESCOTT

Address 

Email address 

Is your feedback on behalf of an organisation?

Yes No

If yes please state the name of the organisation

Draft Significance and Engagement Policy questions

1. Is the draft policy clear about when and how community engagement will happen?

- Very clear Somewhat clear Not clear

Please add your comments

I FIND TO MUCH Double-Speak

2. Are there any other factors we should consider when deciding whether a decision is significant?

any cost increase to rate payers
of any sort
any major projects for future development

3. Which methods would you prefer Selwyn Water to use when engaging on significant decisions?

Select all that apply

- Online surveys or feedback forms
 Website announcements
 Public events (drop-in sessions, facilitated meetings)
 Email updates
 Direct mail (letters or flyers)
 Social media
 Other (please specify)
-

4. What can we do to make it easier to share your views and ideas with us?

Keep it simple

5. What would help you feel confident that your feedback is heard and considered?

Recognition of receipt

6. Do you have any other comments or suggestions about the draft Significance and Engagement Policy?

Keep the cost down - to below
what we were paying under SDC.
Please.

Thank you for taking the time to provide your feedback.

Submitter Number: 58

Full Name: Vanessa Murray
Organisation:

Feedback form

Selwyn Water is seeking community feedback on its draft Significance and Engagement Policy. Feedback will help determine the final policy.

Please read the draft Significance and Engagement Policy with this document or online at selwyn.govt.nz/SWLSEP before completing your feedback.

You can share your feedback using this form or you can complete the online survey at selwyn.govt.nz/SWLSEP.

If you need extra space, you can use additional paper and attach it to this form.

Privacy statement

Feedback is part of our public engagement process and becomes part of the public record.

Anonymous feedback will not be accepted. Your name may be published alongside your feedback on our website and in official documents.

Your contact details (address, phone number and email) will be provided to decision makers when your feedback is considered, but these details will not be published on our website or in official documents.

If someone requests copies of feedback under the Local Government Official Information and Meetings Act 1987, your name and contact details must be supplied unless there is good reason to withhold them. If you have a genuine reason for your personal details or feedback to be kept confidential, please email communications@selwynwater.co.nz to outline your reasons.

Your details

First name Vanessa Murray

Last name _____

Address [REDACTED]

Email address _____

Is your feedback on behalf of an organisation?

Yes No

If yes please state the name of the organisation

Draft Significance and Engagement Policy questions

1. Is the draft policy clear about when and how community engagement will happen?

- Very clear Somewhat clear Not clear

Please add your comments

Not Clear.

2. Are there any other factors we should consider when deciding whether a decision is significant?

Clear rules on when public is consulted
Transparency when decisions are made
without engagement

Water decisions made with the community
not around it

3. Which methods would you prefer Selwyn Water to use when engaging on significant decisions?

Select all that apply

- Online surveys or feedback forms
 Website announcements
 Public events (drop-in sessions, facilitated meetings)
 Email updates
 Direct mail (letters or flyers)
 Social media
 Other (please specify)
-

4. What can we do to make it easier to share your views and ideas with us?

5. What would help you feel confident that your feedback is heard and considered?

6. Do you have any other comments or suggestions about the draft Significance and Engagement Policy?

Rate payers wanted water keep
in house SDC did what they
wanted Do not put the rate up
and want Rate payers to pay more
when some don't get water or to dirty
to drink

Thank you for taking the time to provide your feedback.