



# Te Tai o Poutini PLAN

*A combined district plan for the West Coast*

Prepared for: Te Tai o Poutini Plan Committee

Prepared by: Jo Armstrong, Project Manager

Date: 4 March 2026

Subject: Late Report – Proposed Change to TTPP 2027 Budget

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## SUMMARY

This late report provides some updated information on the proposed appeals mediation process which will have implications for the TTPP 2027 budget. A recommendation to increase the budget is included.

## RECOMMENDATION

1. That the TTPP Committee receive this item
2. That the TTPP Committee approves an increase of \$290,000 to the 2027 budget to account for up to 13 weeks of anticipated additional mediation meetings.

## REPORT

1. At your meeting on 10 February 2026, you approved a budget for 2027, on the understanding that there is a high level of uncertainty surrounding expenses for appeals mediation and hearings. Staff committed to update you during monthly financial reporting on any information that would substantially impact the budget. This late report is provided for under s8.12 of the TTPP Committee Standing Orders.
2. On 3 March a legal memo was sent from Wynn Williams to the Environment Court providing information routinely requested by the Court ahead of mediation and hearings. The information included a list of appeals points with corresponding appellants and s274 parties who have joined the appeals on those points. There are multiple points appealed in each appeals document and different s274 parties have joined on a variety of different points.
3. The court requested that the legal team grouped appeals points they recommend could be heard together, and to also estimate the number of days required for each appeal. The memo has estimated a total was 82 days will be spent in mediation.
4. This estimate provides a higher level of certainty than was previously available for calculating the 2027 budget.
5. Staff are hopeful that a number of topics may be resolved in direct discussions between the TTPP representatives and the parties via Zoom, and that some points may be able to be heard on a single day at mediation. This would reduce the number of days required. However, it is very hard to estimate the amount of time that will be required to mediate some of the more complicated topics where many parties are involved, and /or have strongly opposing views.
6. Mediation was anticipated to take 3-4 weeks, and the approved 2027 budget anticipated that only 1 week of mediations would fall in the 2027 financial year. On current information it is possible that

mediation may take up to 16 weeks meaning an additional 12 weeks would occur in the 2027 financial year.

7. A rough estimate of daily costs for representation at mediation is 5900-6,400/day, and on days when expert witnesses are required this could climb to \$7,800.
8. Staff anticipate that the Court will set their TTPP mediation schedule ahead of your 10 April meeting, which will provide some more certainty for budget calculations.
9. However, information for the West Coast Regional Council Annual Plan decisions is required by 15 March 2026, and this includes a finalised TTPP budget.
10. Staff recommend that the 2027 TTPP budget be increased to include an additional 13 weeks of mediation expenses. This will include some expert witness input on 4 or more topics. As the current budget already includes a portion of the TTPP Contractors time, the estimated additional cost for 13 weeks of mediation is \$290,000.
11. Table 1 below indicates the updated figures for the Legal fees, Consultant/Contractors and Meals, Travel and Accommodation items where a budget increase is needed.
12. Staff have previously indicated that these items carry the greatest budgetary risk during the appeals mediation and hearings process. The uncertainty, although reduced somewhat by this proposed budget increase, still remains, as final control over the length of meetings and hearings remains with the Environment Court and not the TTPP Committee.

**Table 1 Proposed 2027 TTPP Draft Budget Expense Increase**

| <b>Expense Item</b>                       | <b>Description</b>   | <b>Assumptions</b>  | <b>Expense Budget Updated</b> |
|---|--|---|-------------------------------|
| Employee costs                            | Permanent TTPP staff costs   |   | 150,000                       |
| Consultant<br>Planners and<br>Contractors | Planning and project management for meetings and appeals mediation or court processes, Decision Plan updates. Expert witness representation at proceedings. Research | Appellant meetings, 13 weeks of mediation, 2 or 3 hearings, additional experts and planners required. Some research | 600,00                        |
| Chair and iwi<br>representatives          | Remuneration   |   | 66,000                        |
| Governance                                | Meeting expenses/attendance  |   | 4,000                         |
| Poutini Ngai<br>Tahu                      | Technical Advisory Team Plan change input and advice   |   | 5,000                         |
| TTPP Website                              | Updates and notices as appeals are settled   |   | 4,500                         |
| Isovist e-plan<br>Platform                | Hosting service of TTPP and related maps, technical support, updates of plan versions  |   | 9,000                         |
| Meals, Travel &<br>Accom                  | Appeals and meeting attendance for legal, planning, experts, delegate  | Appellant meetings, 13 weeks of mediation and 2 or 3 hearings   | 116,000                       |
| Workshops &<br>Events                     | Plan change 1 engagement, appeals venue hire, consumables  |   | 2,500                         |
| Media Costs                               | Notices and advertising  |   | 3,500                         |
| Legal Fees                                | Appeals advice, liaison and representation at mediation and court proceedings  | Appellant meetings, 13 weeks of mediation and 2 or 3 hearings   | 410,000                       |

|  |  |  |                  |
|--|--|--|------------------|
| Interest Payments                            | Loan servicing   |  | TBA              |
| Overhead costs                               | CE, GM and staff time, administrative services, facilities |  | TBA              |
| <b>EXPENDITURE ex interest and overheads</b> |  |  | <b>1,370,500</b> |