

Independent Auditor's Report

To the readers of Hawke's Bay Power Consumers' Trust and Group's financial statements for the year ended 31 March 2024

The Auditor-General is the auditor of Hawke's Bay Power Consumers' Trust and its controlled entities (the Group). The Auditor-General has appointed me, Chris Webby, using the staff and resources of Audit New Zealand, to carry out the audit of the financial statements of the Trust and Group on his behalf.

Opinion

We have audited the financial statements of the Trust and Group on pages 8 to 57, that comprise the statement of financial position as at 31 March 2024, the statement of profit or loss and other comprehensive income, statement of changes in equity and statement of cash flows for the year ended on that date and the notes to the financial statements that include material accounting policy information and other explanatory information.

In our opinion, the financial statements of the Trust and Group:

- present fairly, in all material respects:
 - its financial position as at 31 March 2024; and
 - its financial performance and cash flows for the year then ended; and
- comply with generally accepted accounting practice in New Zealand in accordance with New Zealand Equivalents to International Financial Reporting Standards and International Financial Reporting Standards.

Our audit was completed on 28 August 2024. This is the date at which our opinion is expressed.

The basis for our opinion is explained below. In addition, we outline the responsibilities of the Trustees and our responsibilities relating to the financial statements, we comment on other information and we explain our independence.

Basis for our opinion

We carried out our audit in accordance with the Auditor-General's Auditing Standards, which incorporate the Professional and Ethical Standards and the International Standards on Auditing (New Zealand) issued by the New Zealand Auditing and Assurance Standards Board. Our responsibilities under those standards are further described in the Responsibilities of the auditor section of our report.

We have fulfilled our responsibilities in accordance with the Auditor-General's Auditing Standards.

We believe that the audit evidence we have obtained is sufficient and appropriate to provide a basis for our opinion.

Responsibilities of the Trustees for the financial statements

The Trustees are responsible on behalf of the Trust and Group for preparing financial statements that are fairly presented and that comply with generally accepted accounting practice in New Zealand.

The Trustees are responsible for such internal control as they determine is necessary to enable them to prepare financial statements that are free from material misstatement, whether due to fraud or error.

In preparing the financial statements, the Trustees are responsible on behalf of the Trust and Group for assessing the Trust and Group's ability to continue as a going concern. The Trustees are also responsible for disclosing, as applicable, matters relating to going concern and using the going concern basis of accounting, unless the Trustees intend to wind up the Trust and Group or to cease operations, or have no realistic alternative but to do so.

The Trustees' responsibilities arise from the Electricity Industry Act 2010 and the Trust Deed of the Trust.

Responsibilities of the auditor for the audit of the financial statements

Our objectives are to obtain reasonable assurance about whether the financial statements, as a whole, are free from material misstatement, whether due to fraud or error, and to issue an auditor's report that includes our opinion.

Reasonable assurance is a high level of assurance, but is not a guarantee that an audit carried out in accordance with the Auditor-General's Auditing Standards will always detect a material misstatement when it exists. Misstatements are differences or omissions of amounts or disclosures, and can arise from fraud or error. Misstatements are considered material if, individually or in the aggregate, they could reasonably be expected to influence the decisions of readers taken on the basis of these financial statements.

We did not evaluate the security and controls over the electronic publication of the financial statements.

As part of an audit in accordance with the Auditor-General's Auditing Standards, we exercise professional judgement and maintain professional scepticism throughout the audit. Also:

- We identify and assess the risk of material misstatement of the financial statements, whether due to fraud or error, design and perform audit procedures responsive to those risks, and obtain audit evidence that is sufficient and appropriate to provide a basis for our opinion. The risk of not detecting a material misstatement resulting from fraud is higher than for one resulting from error, as fraud may involve collusion, forgery, intentional omissions, misrepresentations, or the override of internal control.
- We obtain an understanding of internal control relevant to the audit in order to design audit procedures that are appropriate in the circumstances, but not for the purpose of expressing an opinion on the effectiveness of the Trust and Group's internal control.

- We evaluate the appropriateness of accounting policies used and the reasonableness of accounting estimates and related disclosures made by the Trustees.
- We conclude on the appropriateness of the use of the going concern basis of accounting by the Trustees and, based on the audit evidence obtained, whether a material uncertainty exists related to events or conditions that may cast significant doubt on the Trust and Group's ability to continue as a going concern. If we conclude that a material uncertainty exists, we are required to draw attention in our auditor's report to the related disclosures in the financial statements, or if such disclosures are inadequate, to modify our opinion. Our conclusions are based on the audit evidence obtained up to the date of our auditor's report. However, future events or conditions may cause the Trust and Group to cease to continue as a going concern.
- We evaluate the overall presentation, structure, and content of the financial statements, including the disclosures, and whether the financial statements represent the underlying transactions and events in a manner that achieves fair presentation.
- We obtain sufficient appropriate audit evidence regarding the financial statements and the performance information of the entities or business activities within the Trust and Group to express an opinion on the consolidated financial statements and the consolidated performance information. We are responsible for the direction, supervision, and performance of the Trust and Group audit. We remain solely responsible for our audit opinion.

We communicate with the Trustees regarding, among other matters, the planned scope and timing of the audit and significant audit findings, including any significant deficiencies in internal control that we identify during our audit.

Our responsibilities arise from the Public Audit Act 2001.

Other information

The Trustees are responsible for the other information. The other information comprises the information included on pages 2 to 7, but does not include the financial statements, and our auditor's report thereon.

Our opinion on the financial statements does not cover the other information, and we do not express any form of audit opinion or assurance conclusion thereon.

In connection with our audit of the financial statements, our responsibility is to read the other information. In doing so, we consider whether the other information is materially inconsistent with the financial statements or our knowledge obtained in the audit, or otherwise appears to be materially misstated. If, based on our work, we conclude that there is a material misstatement of this other information, we are required to report that fact. We have nothing to report in this regard.

Independence

We are independent of the Trust and Group in accordance with the independence requirements of the Auditor-General's Auditing Standards, which incorporate the independence requirements of Professional and Ethical Standard 1: International Code of Ethics for Assurance Practitioners (including International Independence Standards) (New Zealand) (PES 1) issued by the New Zealand Auditing and Assurance Standards Board.

In addition to the audit, we have carried out a range of assurance engagements for the Group, which are compatible with those independence requirements. Other than the audit and these engagements, we have no relationship with or interests in the Trust and Group.



Chris Webby
Audit New Zealand
On behalf of the Auditor-General
Palmerston North, New Zealand