

Council Report

Te Rīpoata Kaunihera ā-rohe

QLDC IS COMMITTED TO VISION BEYOND 2050

A unique place. An inspiring future.
He Wāhi Tūhāhā. He Āmua Whakaohoho.

QLDC Council
27 June 2019

Report for Agenda Item | Rīpoata moto e Rāraki take: 1

Department: Corporate Services

Title | Taitara Queenstown Lakes District Draft Climate Action Plan – approval for community feedback

PURPOSE OF THE REPORT | TE TAKE MŌ TE PŪRONGO

- 1 The purpose of this report is to seek approval to engage with the community on the draft Climate Action Plan in July/August 2019.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY | WHAKARĀPOPOTOTANGA MATUA

- 2 This Draft Climate Action Plan outlines proposed changes and activities for QLDC to action over the next three years.
- 3 It has been developed in consultation with iwi, the community and key external stakeholders. It takes a flexible, phased, district-wide approach that emphasises the need for cross-sector collaboration.

RECOMMENDATION | NGĀ TŪTOHUNGA

That Council:

1. **Note** the contents of this report;
2. **Approve** the draft Queenstown Lakes District Climate Action Plan for community feedback in July/August 2019, subject to any minor amendments.

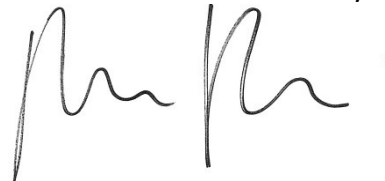
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14/06/2019

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14/06/2019

CONTEXT | HOROPAKI

- 1 On 3 December 2018, Councillors considered a discussion paper on the implications of climate change for the Queenstown Lakes District. Staff were then asked to prepare a climate change strategy, now referred to as the Queenstown Lakes District Climate Action Plan. A copy of the draft Climate Action Plan is contained in **Attachment A**.
- 2 Meetings have been held with representatives from Aukaha and Te Aō Marama during the development of the draft Climate Action Plan, which supports the strategic direction, priorities, goals and actions in the of Ngāi Tahu climate change strategy, *He Rautaki Mō Te Huringa Nga O Te Āhuarangi*.
- 3 Climate change was included as a topic in the 'My Place' facilitated workshops and the 'Let's Talk' online engagement tool held throughout the district in February and March 2019. The priorities identified during this engagement have been incorporated into the draft Action Plan.
- 4 In April 2019, staff held two focus groups comprising local climate change experts and thought leaders. In addition, a number of targeted key stakeholders have had the opportunity to comment on an earlier version of the draft Climate Action Plan, and their feedback has been incorporated where appropriate.
- 5 On 8 May 2019, the Government introduced the Climate Change Response (Zero Carbon) Amendment Bill. The purpose of the bill is to provide a framework in which New Zealand can develop and implement clear and stable climate change policies that contribute to the international effort to limit the global average temperature increase to 1.5° Celsius above pre-industrial levels.
- 6 The draft Climate Action Plan is aligned to Vision Beyond 2050, specifically Zero Carbon Communities and Disaster-Defying Resilience.
- 7 The proposed emissions reduction goals are aligned to those in the Climate Change Response (Zero Carbon) Amendment Bill.¹

ANALYSIS AND ADVICE | TATĀRITANGA ME NGĀ TOHUTOHU

- 8 Adapting to the impacts of climate change has become increasingly urgent for many local authorities as they grapple with the hazards and costs of climate disruption and rising seas. The sense of urgency was reiterated in a 2018 report from the Inter-Governmental Panel on Climate Change and subsequent research that shows the earth is heating up faster than predicted.
- 9 The task of reducing emissions is also necessary at a local and regional level if New Zealand is to meet its obligations under the Paris Agreement and the targets set out in the proposed Climate Change Response (Zero Carbon) Amendment Bill.

¹ The proposed targets in the bill are to reduce all greenhouse gases (except biogenic methane) to net zero by 2050; and to reduce emissions of biogenic methane within the range of 24–47 per cent below 2017 levels by 2050 including to 10 per cent below 2017 levels by 2030.

- 10 This draft Climate Action Plan sets out four goals and is structured around four priority action areas with high level actions listed under each year for the next three years. It takes a flexible, phased, district-wide approach that emphasises the need for cross-sector collaboration.
- 11 The draft goals are:
- a. Every community in the Queenstown Lakes District is equally prepared for climate change impacts and a zero carbon future;
 - b. Our built environment and infrastructure networks are resilient to climate change impacts;
 - c. Queenstown Lakes District Council achieves net zero greenhouse gas emissions by 2050;
 - d. Queenstown Lakes District achieves net zero carbon emissions by 2050.
- 12 The proposed goal for QLDC includes all greenhouse gas emissions, whereas the goal proposed for the district overall is aligned to the proposed legislation, which excludes biogenic methane from the 2050 zero emissions target.
- 13 The draft priority action areas identified for 2019 to 2022 are:
- a. Identify, assess and respond to climate change risks and vulnerabilities;
 - b. Identify and leverage resources;
 - c. Measure and reduce the district's greenhouse gas emissions;
 - d. Evaluate, monitor and communicate progress.
- 14 Option 1: Approve the draft Queenstown Lakes District Climate Action Plan for community engagement, subject to any minor amendments.

Advantages:

- 15 It demonstrates bold leadership and sends a message to business and the rest of the community that the Council is serious about addressing climate impacts;
- 16 It provides an opportunity for all sectors across the district to collaborate on achieving shared goals;
- 17 It sets the scene for further action plans and collaboration using a community participation approach;
- 18 It responds to the Vision Beyond 2050 aspirations;
- 19 It may help control the Council's insurance costs and reduce the risk of litigation;

- 20 It means that the Council can set its own climate action agenda based on local conditions and priorities without interference from external agencies;
- 21 It contributes to global, national and regional efforts to reduce greenhouse gas emissions.

Disadvantages:

- 22 There will be additional costs associated with implementing the actions in years 2 and 3 of the proposed Climate Action Plan, and subsequent Climate Action Plans.
- 23 Some ratepayers may be concerned that rates will increase to pay for climate change adaptation.

24 Option 2: Retain the status quo

Advantages:

- 25 The Council is already undertaking a range of climate-related activities. Continuing a business-as-usual approach to climate adaptation, such as the provision of infrastructure that is designed to cope with anticipated climate impacts, may provide some protection against climate hazards in the medium term.
- 26 Not adopting a climate action plan will remove the need for funding future climate-related activities unrelated to infrastructure including but not limited to carbon sequestration, further research, incentives, funding community-led initiatives, supporting future transformational projects, and recruiting staff to implement the actions identified in the draft Climate Action Plan.

Disadvantages:

- 27 It runs counter to the community's desire for the Council to take a strong leadership role in climate action as expressed in the 'My Place' facilitated workshops, 'Let's Talk' online engagement, and the 2018 Quality of Life Survey;
- 28 It is inconsistent with the 10-Year Plan, which states that a climate change strategy is being developed, and to Vision Beyond 2050, especially the principles of zero-carbon communities and disaster-defying resilience.
- 29 It could damage the Council's reputation with the community, iwi, stakeholders, central and other local government agencies, and international relationships given our status as a premium visitor destination.
- 30 It could act as a deterrent to other sectors contributing to climate action;
- 31 Whilst at this stage there are many unknowns in terms of liability and responsibility, it is feasible that this could increase the risk to the Council of litigation and increased insurance costs.

- 32 **Option 3:** Reject the current draft Queenstown Lakes District Climate Action Plan, and ask staff to report back to the new Council with a revised Plan in early 2020.

Advantages

- 33 There may be an opportunity to co-design a new Action Plan using a stronger participatory approach with the community and other stakeholders;
- 34 It will (temporarily) remove the additional climate-related costs outlined in the draft Action Plan.

Disadvantages

- 35 The goodwill built during the development of the current draft Climate Action Plan with iwi, stakeholders and the community may be lost;
- 36 Some of the actions identified in the proposed draft Action Plan cannot proceed;
- 37 There could be reputational risk to the Council across several sectors by not proceeding with climate action initiatives at a time when the community expects action and leadership from local government;
- 38 Future opportunities for cross-sector collaboration may be lost.
- 39 **This report recommends Option 1.**

CONSULTATION PROCESS | HĀTEPE MATAPAKI:

> SIGNIFICANCE AND ENGAGEMENT | TE WHAKAMAHI I KĀ WHAKAARO HIRAKA

- 40 This matter is of high significance, as determined by reference to the Council's Significance and Engagement Policy because of the level of community interest and the overall social, environment and economical importance to residents, visitors and businesses. The draft Climate Action Plan is not inconsistent with existing policy and strategy. It aligns to the Vision Beyond 2050 statements and the 10-Year Plan.
- 41 The persons who are affected by or interested in this matter are residents/ratepayers of the Queenstown Lakes District community, visitors to the district who may be affected by climate disruption, businesses, community organisations, other local and central government agencies, environmental groups, schools, Council staff, and households.
- 42 The Council has undertaken pre-consultation with the community through the 'My Place' facilitated workshops and 'Let's Talk' online engagement. Staff have consulted with local climate change experts and thought leaders via two focus groups and ongoing engagement, met with key stakeholders, including the Queenstown Airport Corporation, the Otago Regional Council (ORC) and the Central Otago District Council, and invited input from the following targeted stakeholders: Civil Defence and Emergency Management Otago; Environment Southland; ORC; Regional Tourism Organisations; Land Information New Zealand; neighbouring district councils, New Zealand Transport Agency and the Department of Conservation. All the stakeholders who responded to the call for

comments support the development of a Climate Action Plan for the Queenstown Lakes District.

> MĀORI CONSULTATION | IWI RŪNANGA

43 Council staff have worked with Aukaha and Te Aō Marama on the draft Climate Action Plan. Aukaha requested the inclusion of high level goals, which has been actioned, in addition to targets and measures, which will be determined following community engagement.

RISK AND MITIGATIONS | NGĀ RARU TŪPONO ME NGĀ WHAKAMAURUTANGA

44 This matter relates to the Environmental risk category. It is associated with RISK00019 within the QLDC Risk Register. This risk has been assessed as having a very high inherent risk rating.

45 The approval of the recommended option will support the Council by allowing staff to implement additional controls for this risk. This will be achieved by identifying climate-related risks and vulnerabilities and setting out a Plan to mitigate those risks.

FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS | NGĀ RITENGA Ā-PŪTEA

46 There are no additional resources required for the 2019-2020 financial year with work expected to be undertaken within existing budgets. There may be some funding sought in the 2020/21 Annual Plan to progress initiatives in Year 2 and to recruit staff to implement the Climate Action Plan, if approved. There will be further funding sought in the Long Term Plan 2021/22 for infrastructure investment and for progressing actions set out in this and subsequent Climate Action Plans.

COUNCIL EFFECTS AND VIEWS | NGĀ WHAKAAWEAWE ME NGĀ TIROHANGA A TE KAUNIHERA

47 The following Council policies, strategies and bylaws were considered:

- The draft Climate Action Plan is aligned to the principles of the Vision Beyond 2050, in particular to Zero Carbon Communities and Disaster-Defying Resilience.
- Related policies, strategies and bylaws (including Management plans) are:
 - 2018-48 Infrastructure Strategy
 - 2018 Three Waters Asset Management Plan
 - 2018 Transportation Activity Management Plan
 - 2018 Waste Minimisation and Management Plan
- The QLDC Disability Policy has been considered in the development of this draft Action Plan.
- The recommended option is consistent with the principles set out in the named policy/policies.

48 This matter is included in the Ten Year Plan:

- *“QLDC is currently developing its first generation Climate Change Strategy – this strategy intends to broadly line up with the recent LGNZ Climate Change Programme – New Zealand’s commitment to the Paris Agreement. There are two streams to this strategy, the first being emissions reduction. Identifying projects that reduce Councils [sic] and the Community’s emissions i.e. public transport, energy efficiency on large items such as swimming pools and pumping costs for three waters. Other initiatives currently underway include measuring the emissions base line for Council, i.e. what do we emit today, this will allow us to measure and report our future performance. The second stream is about resilience and climate change, i.e. exploration of vulnerabilities and mitigation of the effects. If the future will be characterised by stormy and warmer weather, what is our exposure to that as a district? It is about identifying what aspects of a changing climate will most need to be responded to and what are our responses i.e. the district’s natural hazards are flooding and storms, warming temperatures and wind erosion. Identifying and actively pursuing ways to improve the district’s resilience”. (6.1 Demanding Natural Environment, p. 32)*

LOCAL GOVERNMENT ACT 2002 PURPOSE PROVISIONS | TE WHAKATURETURE 2002 O TE KĀWANATAKA Ā-KĀIKA

49 The recommended option:

- Will help meet the current and future needs of communities for good-quality local infrastructure, local public services, and performance of regulatory functions in a way that is most cost-effective for households and businesses by identifying and responding to climate-related risks and vulnerabilities and providing infrastructure and services that are resilient to anticipated climate impacts;
- Will help promote the social, economic, environmental, and cultural well-being of communities in the present and for the future (LGA s10 (1) (b));
- Can be partially implemented through current funding under the Ten Year Plan and Annual Plan;
- Is consistent with the Council's plans and policies; and
- Would not alter significantly the intended level of service provision for any significant activity undertaken by or on behalf of the Council, or transfer the ownership or control of a strategic asset to or from the Council.

ATTACHMENTS | NGĀ TĀPIRIHANGA

A	DRAFT QUEENSTOWN LAKES DISTRICT CLIMATE ACTION PLAN
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