

21 October 2024

Sent via email to [REDACTED]

RE: LG24-0245 - Policy on Council Workshops and Briefings

Dear [REDACTED],

REQUEST FOR OFFICIAL INFORMATION – RELEASE OF INFORMATION

Thank you for your request for information held by the Queenstown Lakes District Council (QLDC). On 11 October 2024 you requested the following information under the Local Government Official Information and Meetings Act 1987 (LGOIMA):

- 1. What is your Council's current policy in relation to whether elected member workshops and briefings are open to the public?**
- 2. Did your Council open up, or is it in the process of opening up, these workshops and briefings to be "open to the public by default" in line with the Ombudsman's recommendations in his "Open for Business" report of October 2023?**
- 3. If you have opened up, or are intending to open up, these workshops and briefings to the public, how are you doing so? (e.g., internet livestreaming, public attendance in person, after the fact video or audio recordings" etc.).**

QLDC response

Release of information

To address your request, we consulted the QLDC Stakeholder and Democracy Services Team who assisted in providing the following response:

As of 1 March 2024, workshops and briefings for QLDC elected members were opened to the public by default. Attendance is only restricted when specific grounds are identified in accordance with sections 6 or 7 of the LGOIMA. This initiative aims to enhance transparency regarding workshops and the role they play in elected member decision making and provide opportunities for public attendance.

Members of the public are welcome to attend workshops and briefings in person, except for items that are designated as public excluded. Workshop agendas and materials are made available on the QLDC website two business days prior to each session. In line with the Public Records Act 2005 and guidance from Local Government New Zealand, minutes—including any materials not included in the agenda—are published within one week following the session. Please note that workshops and briefings are not livestreamed or recorded.

This approach to workshops and briefings was adopted in response to the Ombudsman's recommendations in his "Open for Business" report in October 2023, demonstrating the Council's commitment to conducting business in an open, transparent and democratically accountable manner.

QLDC's Council Meetings webpage provides information on past and upcoming workshops and briefings, including relevant agendas and minutes where applicable. For more details, please visit the following link: [QLDC Council Meetings](#).

We trust the above information satisfactorily answers your request.

Kind regards,

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Democracy Services team

Queenstown Lakes District Council

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