

Full Council

26 June 2025

Report for Agenda Item | Rīpoata moto e Rāraki take [7]

Department: Community Services

Title | Taitara: QLDC Community Fund 2025-2026 Allocation Recommendations

Purpose of the Report | Te Take mō te Pūroko

This report provides an overview of the Queenstown Lakes District Council (QLDC) Community Fund 2025-2026 (QLDC Community Fund) application and review process and seeks approval from Council on the recommended funding allocations.

Recommendation | Kā Tūtohuka

That the Council:

1. **Note** the contents of this report; and
2. **Approve** the following recommended funding allocations from the QLDC Community Fund 2025-2026:

Organisation	Recommendations
Abbeyfield Wānaka Incorporated	\$ 8,500
Arrowtown Community Nursery (a sub-group of Arrowtown Village Association)	\$ 5,000
Aspiring Beginnings Early Learning Centre Incorporated	\$ 5,000
Central Lakes Breastfeeding Charitable Trust	\$ 5,000
Fernhill Sunshine Bay Community Association Incorporated	\$ 10,000
Glenorchy Heritage and Museum Group/Tāhuna Glenorchy Dark Skies Group	\$ 10,000
Graeme Dingle Foundation Southern	\$ 5,000
Hanley's Farm Community Garden Association Incorporated	\$ 8,000
Hāwea Charitable Trust	\$ 5,000
Headlight Trust	\$ 5,000
KnowYourStuffNZ Charitable Trust	\$ 5,000
Lakes District Air Rescue Trust	\$ 12,000
Mental Hunts Charitable Trust	\$ 10,000
OUT&about Wānaka	\$ 5,000
Queenstown & Southern Lakes Highland Pipe Band	\$ 5,000
Queenstown Arts Society Incorporated	\$ 5,000

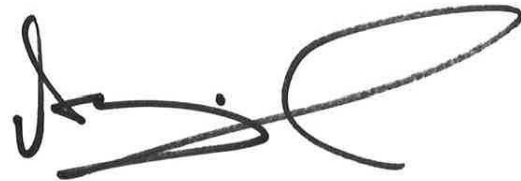
Organisation	Recommendations
Queenstown Association of Migrant Pinoys Incorporated	\$ 3,000
Queenstown Disc Golf Club	\$ 5,000
Queenstown Fijian Community Charitable Trust	\$ 2,000
Shotover Four Wheel Drive Club Incorporated	\$ 7,000
Southern Cancer Society Trust	\$ 5,000
Te Kākano Aotearoa Trust	\$ 4,500
Te Kohanga Reo o Whakatipu Waimaori charitable trust	\$ 10,000
The Salvation Army New Zealand Trust	\$ 15,000
Upper Clutha Senior Citizens	\$ 5,000
Wakatipu Toy Library	\$ 5,000
Wānaka Backyard Trapping trading as Predator Free Wānaka	\$ 5,000
WORD (World Off-road Riding Department)	\$ 5,000

Prepared by:



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3 June 2025

Reviewed and Authorised by:



Name: Ken Bailey
Title: General Manager Community Services
4 June 2025

Context | Horopaki

1. QLDC has responsibilities under the Local Government Act 2002 (LGA) to 'play a broad role in promoting the social, economic, environmental, and cultural wellbeing of their communities', including their present and future communities. A key mechanism for QLDC to promote and support local wellbeing is through direct financial investment into community organisations via community grants. This report focuses specifically on the 2025-2026 QLDC Community Fund.
2. The QLDC Community Fund is an annual contestable fund for community organisations seeking funding to support wellbeing outcomes across the Queenstown Lakes District for people, place and community. Applications are submitted and managed through QLDC's online funding platform, which continues to streamline the process for both applicants and Council.
3. The 2025-2026 funding round occurred in a climate of significant fiscal constraint at both the local and national levels. At the level of central government, widespread cuts to public sector funding and services have placed increased pressure on community organisations to find alternative sources of support. Locally, QLDC continues to make tough prioritisation decisions regarding investment in projects, service, programmes and operations, to ensure the best outcome is achieved for the community within a fiscally constrained environment.
4. As central government has withdrawn or reduced funding for many social and community support services, Council funding plays an increasingly critical role in maintaining the wellbeing and resilience of the district. Operational funding remains one of the biggest gaps, particularly for administrative salaries, rent, and ongoing programme costs. QLDC continues to be one of the few funders in the district that provides this type of support.
5. Key dates in the QLDC Community Fund 2025–2026 round included:
 - February–March 2025: promotional outreach to community groups
 - 1–30 April 2025: applications open on QLDC's online grants platform
 - 14–15 May 2025: applicant presentations to the Community Fund Panel
 - 28 May 2025: Community Fund Panel assessment meeting
 - 26 June 2025: recommendations adopted by Council
6. The 2025–2026 round was for one-year funding only, with no multi-year grants available. Despite this limitation, interest remained high:
 - 52 applications received
 - Total amount requested: \$703,800.77
 - Average request size: \$13,414.83
 - Minimum request: \$3,000; Maximum request: \$36,000
7. As in previous years, applicants had the option to present to the Community Fund Panel (full Council) on 14 and 15 May 2025. Though not a part of the assessment process, these presentations provided an opportunity for the panel to connect with the applicants and understand the community need.

8. In total, \$180,000 was allocated to applicants following careful review and prioritisation based on alignment with QLDC strategic outcomes and demonstrated community impact. While the limited budget constrained the number and size of grants available, the funding continues to play a vital role in supporting high-impact community initiatives across the district.

Analysis and Advice | Tatāritaka me kā Tohutohu

9. This report identifies and assesses the following reasonably practicable options for assessing the matter as required by section 77 of the Local Government Act 2002.

10. Option 1: Approve QLDC Community Fund 2025-2026 allocation recommendations

Advantages:

- **Timely Distribution:** Ensures that community organisations receive funding promptly, allowing them to continue their essential work.
- **Community Support:** Enhances the wellbeing, resilience, and development of the local community through targeted financial support.
- **Strategic Alignment:** Supports QLDC's strategic objectives by fostering community-led initiatives and promoting social, economic, environmental, and cultural wellbeing.

Disadvantages:

- **Resource Limitation:** Limited financial resources may result in some applicants not receiving the funding they requested.
- **Potential Dissatisfaction:** Unsuccessful applicants may be dissatisfied with the outcome.

11. Option 2: Approve the QLDC Community Fund 2025-2026 allocation recommendations with changes.

Advantages:

- **Flexibility:** Allows elected members to adjust allocations based on emerging insights or community needs.
- **Responsiveness:** Enables funding decisions to better reflect feedback from presentations or recent developments.
- **Strategic input:** Gives Council the opportunity to shape funding in line with broader strategic or political priorities.

Disadvantages:

- **Objectivity risk:** May compromise the structured and consistent officer and panel assessment process.
- **Perceived unfairness:** Could be seen as inequitable if changes lack clear rationale.
- **Administrative burden:** Significant changes may complicate communications and add to the administrative burden.
- **Impact trade-offs:** Reducing funding to higher-impact projects may weaken overall fund effectiveness.

12. This report recommends **Option 1** for addressing the matter because it ensures timely fund distribution to community organisations, supports community wellbeing and resilience, and aligns with QLDC's strategic goals.

Consultation Process | Hātepe Matapaki

Significance and Engagement | Te Whakamahi I kā Whakaaro Hiraka

13. This matter is of medium significance, as determined by reference to the Council's Significance and Engagement Policy 2024 because:

- There is high community interest as numerous organisations depend on this funding to sustain operations and deliver beneficial services.
- It has a medium impact on the district's social, economic, environmental, and cultural wellbeing. The funding supports crucial community services/programmes run by nonprofit/voluntary/charitable organisations.

14. The persons who are affected by or interested in this matter are community organisations that are not-for-profit or charitable operations.

Māori Consultation | Iwi Rūnaka

15. Officers have not undertaken any consultation specifically with iwi.

Risk and Mitigations | Kā Raru Tūpono me kā Whakamaurutaka

16. This matter relates to the Community & Wellbeing risk category. It is associated with RISK10002 Erosion of social cohesion within the QLDC Risk Register. This risk has been assessed as having a moderate residual risk rating.

17. The approval of the recommended option will allow Council to retain the risk at its current level. This will be achieved by conducting thorough assessments of community groups' applications

before recommending fund allocations and establishing monitoring mechanisms to track and address any issues promptly.

Financial Implications | Kā Riteka ā-Pūtea

18. There are no financial implications associated with the allocations recommended from the QLDC Community Fund as they have been fully budgeted for in the Annual Plan 2025-2026.

Council Effects and Views | Kā Whakaaweawe me kā Tirohaka a te Kaunihera

19. The following Council policies, strategies and bylaws were considered:

- Local Government Act 2002
- QLDC Strategic Framework and Wellbeing Outcomes
- Grow Well | Whaiora Spatial Plan
- Community Facilities Strategy (2018)
- Welcoming Plan (2025)

20. The recommended option is consistent with the principles set out in the Act.

21. This matter is included in the Annual Plan and Long Term Plan 2024-34.

Local Government Act 2002 Purpose Provisions | Te Whakatureture 2002 o te Kāwanataka ā-Kiaka

22. Section 10 of the Local Government Act 2002 states the purpose of local government is (a) to enable democratic local decision-making and action by, and on behalf of, communities; and (b) to promote the social, economic, environmental, and cultural well-being of communities in the present and for the future.

23. This funding allocation recommendation aligns with the aims of the Act by empowering communities through democratic decision-making and action. By supporting community organisations addressing various aspects of wellbeing, including social, economic, environmental, and cultural dimensions, this recommendation contributes to enhancing the overall wellbeing of communities both now and in the future. As such, the recommendation in this report is appropriate and within the ambit of Section 10 of the Act.

24. The recommended option:

- Can be implemented through current funding under the Long Term Plan and Annual Plan;
- Is consistent with the Council's plans and policies; and
- Would not significantly alter 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.