

**Audit, Finance & Risk Committee**  
**14 June 2022**

**Report for Agenda Item | Rīpoata moto e Rāraki take [5]**

**Department: Corporate Services**

**Title | Taitara: Climate Action Plan Update**

**PURPOSE OF THE REPORT | TE TAKE MŌ TE PŪRONGO**

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The purpose of this report is to report on Climate Action Plan (CAP) priorities and progress.

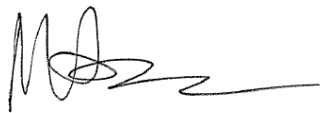
**RECOMMENDATION | NGĀ TŪTOHUNGA**

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That the Audit, Finance & Risk Committee:

1. **Note** the contents of this report.

Prepared by:



Name: Katherine Durman  
Title: Climate Action Programme Manager

26/05/2022

Reviewed and Authorised by:



Name: Meaghan Miller  
Title: General Manager Corporate  
Services

27/05/2022

Prepared by:



Name: Michelle Morss  
Title: Strategy & Development Manager  
26/05/2022

## CONTEXT | HOROPAKI

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- 1 In November 2019, the Government passed the Climate Change Response (Zero Carbon) Amendment Act. The purpose of the Act 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°C above pre-industrial levels. The emissions reduction goal in the [2019-22 Climate Action Plan \(CAP\)](#) is aligned to the Act.
- 2 On 27 June 2019, the same day as the draft version of the CAP was approved for public feedback, QLDC declared a climate and ecological emergency. Following public consultation and subsequent changes to the plan, the CAP was adopted by Council on 12 March 2020. It will help to guide local action as the district rises to and meets the challenges of the climate change emergency. QLDC has embarked on a journey of major organisational systems and behaviour shift.
- 3 The overarching goals for the CAP are:
  - To achieve net zero carbon emissions by 2050 across the whole district and;
  - to be resilient to the local impact of climate change across the whole district.
- 4 The CAP is intended to provide an overview of QLDC's actions over three years. It will be reviewed annually and will look forward across a three-year horizon. The CAP is structured according to five key outcomes, supported by 73 actions.
- 5 Over the last year the 2022-25 Climate and Biodiversity Plan (CBP) has been co-designed with the Climate Reference Group, community stakeholders, partners, experts, and staff.

## ANALYSIS AND ADVICE | TATĀRITANGA ME NGĀ TOHUTOHU

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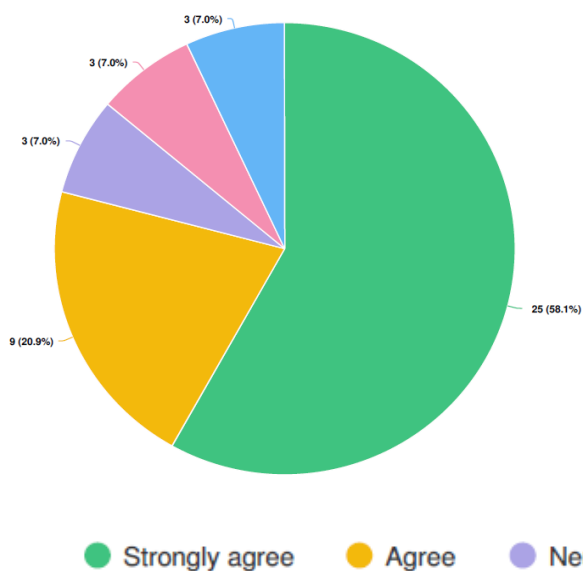
### 2022-2025 CLIMATE AND BIODIVERSITY PLAN

- 6 The [draft 2022-25 Climate & Biodiversity Plan](#) was released for public feedback 21 March – 25 April 2022. 54 submissions were received. Submissions were from a combination of individuals and representatives from local organisations such as community associations, conservation trusts and climate action charities.
- 7 Public submissions were captured through a Let's Talk survey and emailed submission reports. This feedback provided a broad overview of community sentiment and prioritisation of climate action, along with detailed feedback on the action programme that has been recommended for the next three-year period. Several of the emailed submissions were very detailed.
- 8 Key feedback themes included:
  - Appreciation to QLDC for the plan and how leadership in this space has progressed since the declaration of the climate emergency and ecological emergency in 2019.
  - Requests for biodiversity to be uplifted in terms of strategic priority

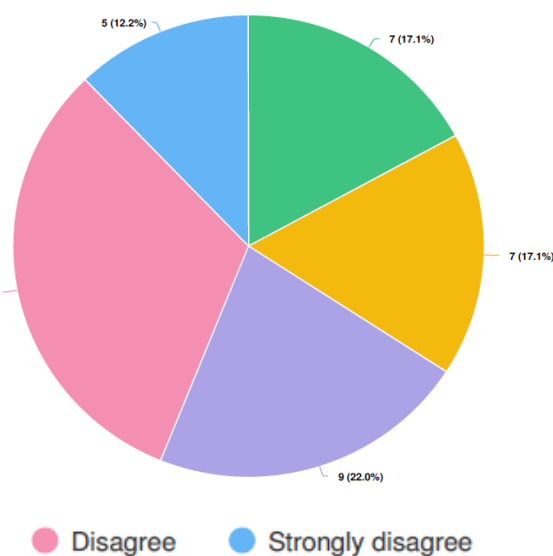
- Requests for higher level of urgency, additional resourcing and faster action in high profile areas, such as organics collection and public transport.
- A minority of submitters argued that QLDC should not be investing resources in climate action or should not follow particular policies, such as encouraging high density housing.
- Requests for more detail on actions, removal of “management speak” and commitment to “tangible actions” such as mandating solar panels and water tanks for all new consents.
- Requests for more robust measurement and target setting.
- Requests to partner with, promote and financially support the community groups who are already doing the mahi.

9 Included within the survey were questions relating to whether the respondents supported the strategic goals that have been proposed (Question 7) and whether they feel the action programme is sufficient to achieve the goals (Question 9). Although only a small sample, the results indicate that there is strong support from the community for the direction of the draft plan, however further work is required to refine the action programme to deliver upon the goals.

*Question 7: Do you think the Mitigation, Adaptation and Biodiversity goals reflect where we need to be as a district?*



*Question 9: Do you think that the actions proposed in the plan will enable us to achieve our goals and outcomes at the pace we need to?*



10 The development of the final version of the Climate & Biodiversity Plan is also being influenced by recent announcements from central government. On 16<sup>th</sup> May 2022, the [National Emissions Reduction Plan](#) was released by Ministry for Environment. The Climate Action Team have been urgently analysing this national plan to evaluate the opportunities that exist to align our district plan with the national plan. The national plan contains

strategies, policies and actions for meeting the first emissions budget period and contributing to global efforts to limit global temperature rise to 1.5°C above pre-industrial levels. The plan includes a broad range of actions for the decarbonisation of key sectors (e.g. transport, energy, industry etc) as well as a focus on ensuring there is an equitable transition, approaches for empowering Māori, and a commitment to utilising and prioritising nature-based solutions.

- 11 The draft district Climate & Biodiversity Plan aligns well with the strategic priorities of the National Emissions Reduction Plan, as well as the [draft National Adaption Plan](#) and proposed [National Policy Statement on Indigenous Biodiversity](#) which have also been recently released. The Climate Action Team are currently editing the final version of the Council plan to refine this alignment, and introduce improvements based on the feedback received from the community consultation.
- 12 The 2022-25 Climate & Biodiversity Plan is intended to be adopted on 30<sup>th</sup> June alongside the Annual Plan.

### 2022-2023 ANNUAL PLAN

- 13 The draft Annual Plan was released for formal consultation 21 March – 25 April 2022.
- 14 Climate and biodiversity action has an allocated \$257k in 2022-23, with an option presented for a \$420k increase. Submitters were asked *“Let us know what you think about the funding for climate and biodiversity action? Council’s preferred option (option 1) is to remain within the self-imposed rates limit of 6%. Do you think the proposed increase of \$420k should be included in the 2022-2023 Annual Plan (total investment \$677k, increasing the average rates increase to 6.39%)?”*.
- 15 The outcome of the increased funding option for Climate Action will be confirmed in the coming weeks through Council Annual Plan deliberations and will influence the timeline for a number of actions across the Climate & Biodiversity Plan.

### KEY AREAS OF PROGRESS ON THE 2019-2022 CLIMATE ACTION PLAN

- 16 A project to undertake a carbon baseline of the Long Term Plan (LTP) is underway. The baseline will aim to capture at least 80% of the ten year CAPEX values of all projects in each discipline, including 3 waters, transport, solid waste and vertical infrastructure. It will help QLDC to identify carbon ‘hotspots’ of its LTP and inform future decision making, including planning for the next LTP. This is expected to be completed in October 2022.
- 17 The Mode Shift Plan for the Queenstown Lakes District (entitled Better Ways to Go) has been significantly updated, particularly to align with changes in project status within the transport programme and also external related projects. Significant changes include alignment with the Climate & Biodiversity Plan, Spatial Plan and Government’s Emissions Reduction Plan.
- 18 [WAO’s Climate Action Initiative](#) pilot is now complete. Funded by QLDC, Lake Wanaka Tourism and Destination Queenstown, the project supported schools and businesses to calculate and reduce their emissions. A project review of the pilot has been conducted

with key stakeholders with options for further programme investment now being investigated.

- 19 On 6 May 2022 the Government released the draft National Adaptation Plan for consultation. This Plan will set the direction for how New Zealand will adapt to the unavoidable impacts of climate change, and address key climate risks up to 2028. A detailed submission on the plan is being prepared in partnership with the Climate Reference Group.
- 20 QLDC has provided support funding for a Conservation Standards workshop led by the Southern Lakes Sanctuary. This 5-day workshop brought together representatives from a broad range of local conservation groups, predator trapping projects, reforestation trusts, agencies, regional and district Councils and the United States Embassy. The hui and training workshop was the first of its kind in New Zealand to bring together such a wide range of conservation partners with a shared vision and focus on landscape-scale biodiversity outcomes.

#### **PRIORITIES FOR NEXT QUARTER**

- 21 Adoption of the 2022-25 Climate and Biodiversity Action Plan.
- 22 Close-out delivery of the current Climate Action Plan.
- 23 Plan a detailed work programme for year one of the Climate & Biodiversity Plan and commence delivery of the plan.

#### **CLIMATE REFERENCE GROUP**

- 24 Amanda Robinson has been appointed to the Whakatipu Community Leader position. Amanda Robinson is co-founder and Chair of the Lightfoot Initiative, a charitable trust focused on promoting active travel. She has served on several local committees and represented Plunket NZ's volunteers on an advisory board in 2017/2018. She has a background in secondary education in NZ and the UK and works for the New Zealand Qualifications Authority, managing national internal assessment for several subjects. Her background in education, along with a corporate career prior to teaching provided the foundation for recent Masters' study focusing on equity and change leadership. In the past two years, her interests and research have coalesced into exploring the intersection between sustainable and climate sensitive transport networks, innovative mobility technology and community behaviour change – focalised through an equity lens.
- 25 Climate Reference Group membership is as follows:
  - Bridget Legnavsky: Chair
  - Alec Tang: Climate Action in Government Expert
  - Amanda Robinson: Whakatipu Community Leader
  - Barrie Wills: Biodiversity Expert
  - Councillor Esther Whitehead
  - Councillor Niki Gladding
  - Councillor Quentin Smith: Infrastructure Committee Chair
  - Dr Jim Salinger: Climate Change Expert
  - Dr Lyn Carter: nominated by Aukaha on behalf of runaka

- Tony Pfeiffer: Upper Clutha Community Leader
- Gail Thompson: nominated by Te Ao Marama on behalf of runaka
- Otago Regional Councillor Alexa Forbes

## CONSULTATION PROCESS | HĀTEPE MATAPAKI:

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### > SIGNIFICANCE AND ENGAGEMENT | TE WHAKAMAHI I KĀ WHAKAARO HIRAKA

- 26 This matter is of low significance, as determined by reference to the Council's Significance and Engagement Policy because it is consistent with existing strategy, and does not impact on the objectives set out in the Financial Strategy, Ten Year Plan or Annual Plan. Although the matter is of importance to the district and is of community interest, it is of low significance due to its alignment with the CAP.
- 27 The persons who are affected by or interested in this matter are all residents/ratepayers of the Queenstown Lakes district community, particularly individuals who take an interest in climate change.
- 28 As the significance of this matter is low and only for noting, no consultation with the community or local iwi is required.

## RISK AND MITIGATIONS | NGĀ RARU TŪPONO ME NGĀ WHAKAMAURUTANGA

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- 29 This matter relates to the Environmental risk category. It is associated with RISK00019 Ineffective mitigation response to the declared climate and ecological emergency and RISK00059 Ineffective planning to support Climate Change Adaptation within the QLDC Risk Register. These risks has been assessed as having a very high inherent risk rating.
- 30 The Climate Action Plan work programme will support the Council by allowing us to implement additional controls for this risk. The effectiveness of these controls and mitigations shall be supported by the continued governance of the CAP by the Audit, Finance and Risk Committee.

## FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS | NGĀ RITENGA Ā-PŪTEA

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- 31 There are no budget, cost or resource implications to consider at this time.

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

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- 32 The following Council policies, strategies and bylaws were considered:
- The Climate Action Plan is aligned to the principles of the Vision Beyond 2050, particularly Zero Carbon Communities, Disaster-Defying Resilience and Deafening Dawn Chorus.
  - 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 was considered in the development of the CAP

The recommended option is consistent with the principles set out in the named policies.

33 This matter is included in the Ten Year Plan/Annual 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)