

Full Council

31 July 2025

Report for Agenda Item | Rīpoata moto e Rāraki take [3]

Department: Corporate Services

Title | Taitara: Proposed Amentments to Council's Standing Orders

Purpose of the Report | Te Take mō te Pūroko

The purpose of this report is for the Council to consider adopting updated standing orders following the release of a new Local Government New Zealand (LGNZ) template.

Recommendation | Kā Tūtohu

That the Council:

1. **Note** the contents of this report; and
2. **Adopt** the amended standing orders [as per **Attachment C**].

Prepared by:



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10 July 2025

Reviewed and Authorised by:



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Title: General Manager Corporate Services
14 July 2025

Context | Horopaki

1. All local authorities in Aotearoa New Zealand are required, under the Local Government Act 2002 (LGA) Schedule 7 clause 27, to adopt a set of standing orders for the conduct of its meetings and those of its committees and community boards.
2. LGNZ provides a template for the local government sector that is the basis for standing orders that have been historically adopted by Queenstown Lakes District Council (QLDC).
3. The Council adopted its current standing orders by resolution on 17 November 2022, and made amendments by resolution on 15 February 2024.
4. At the start of 2025 LGNZ, in partnership with the Taituarā Democracy and Participation Reference Group, completed a review of the standing orders template it provides and released an updated template. The substantive changes to the template were to rewrite them in plain English and strengthen and give prominence to the principles that inform them. They also reflect the latest amendments to corresponding legislation and have been legally reviewed by Simpson Grierson. The new LGNZ template is available on the LGNZ website (www.lgnz.co.nz/learning-support/governance-guides/).
5. Under the LGA Schedule 7 clause 27(3), after the adoption of the first standing orders of the local authority, an amendment of the standing orders or the adoption of a new set of standing orders requires, in every case, a vote of not less than 75% of the members present.

Analysis and Advice | Tatāritaka me kā Tohutohu

6. 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.
7. The new template has been reviewed by the Democracy Services team, General Manager Corporate Services and Chief Executive, and has had input from the QLDC legal team. Through this review, further amendments were made to the template to reflect QLDC localisations that had previously been adopted, to integrate information from the LGNZ Guide to Standing Orders that enhanced understanding or clarity, and to more clearly differentiate between legislative requirements and discretionary protocols. These are explained in an accompanying explanatory note (see **Attachment B**).
8. On Tuesday, 1 July 2025, a public workshop was held to provide the opportunity for elected members to review the updated template and discuss potential further amendments. Officers have considered the direction provided and these changes are tracked in **Attachment A**.
9. A “clean” version of the proposed standing orders is also attached (see **Attachment C**).

10. Option 1 Retain the current standing orders (status quo)

Advantages:

- The incoming Council will be able to decide whether to retain the existing standing orders if it chooses to do so.
- The existing standing orders are known and the current Council does not need to amend its practice.

Disadvantages:

- The current and incoming Council, Wānaka-Upper Clutha Community Board, officers, and the public, do not benefit from what is considered a more accessible and easy-read version of standing orders.
- Latest legislative changes are not reflected in the current standing orders.

11. Option 2 Adopt the amended standing orders including minor amendments agreed by Council during debate

Advantages:

- Council's standing orders will accurately reflective up to date legislative changes and the latest sector template.
- Council's standing orders will be written in plain English and be more accessible for members of the public, officers, and the incoming Council and Wānaka-Upper Clutha Community Board following the October local elections.
- Proposed changes support increased participation, transparency and accountability in Council decision-making, for example recommending public forum at extraordinary meetings to speak to the matter for which the meeting was called.
- Alignment with sector best practice (in the use of the LGNZ template) and views of the Office of the Ombudsman.
- Supports commitments made through the Local Government Commission Action Plan for the Wānaka-Upper Clutha, such as public participation in meetings remotely.
- Reflects the experience and knowledge of the current Council to the benefit of a new and unknown Council after the triennial election.

Disadvantages:

- A parties will need to familiarise themselves with changes to protocol.
- The decision is made ahead of the incoming Council and its views are not know, however best practice recommends that any new Council review its standing orders within six months of a triennial election.

12. Option 3 Direct staff to make further substantive amendments and bring back to a future meeting

Advantages:

- Allows for further substantive changes that may not have been identified through the review and workshop process.

Disadvantages:

- Delaying adopting standing orders would make any subsequent decision too close to the triennial election and potentially deemed significant, therefore strongly recommended against.
- Would not reflect the consensus of direction provided by Council to officers through the workshop process.

13. This report recommends **Option 2** for addressing the matter because it allows all parties to benefit from a more accessible and up to date standing orders, that reflects sector best practice, and supports increased participation, transparency and accountability.

Consultation Process | Hātepe Matapaki

Significance and Engagement | Te Whakamahi I kā Whakaaro Hiraka

14. This matter is of medium significance, as determined by reference to the Council's Significance and Engagement Policy 2024 because the proposed changes to standing orders effect meeting protocols, public participation, and transparency and accountability in Council decision making.
15. The persons who are affected by or interested in this matter are elected members, officers and the public.
16. The Council has considered options through the public workshop process but will not consult as it is not a legislative requirement or needed to inform Council's decision.

Māori Consultation | Iwi Rūnaka

17. The Council is not required to consult with Iwi Māori on this matter.

Risk and Mitigations | Kā Raru Tūpono me kā Whakamaurutaka

18. This matter relates to the Strategic/Political/Reputation risk category. It is associated with RISK10015 Ineffective Governance within the QLDC Risk Register. This risk has been assessed as having a high residual risk rating.
19. The approval of the recommended option will allow Council to avoid the risk. This will be achieved by providing clear, accessible and up to date meeting protocols that align with relevant legislation.

Financial Implications | Kā Riteka ā-Pūtea

20. None

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

21. The following Council policies, strategies and bylaws were considered:
- QLDC Strategic Framework, through the core activity of ‘local democracy’ and wellbeing framework outcome of connected communities and participation and governance.
 - Significance and Engagement Policy 2024
22. The recommended option is consistent with the principles set out in the named policies.
23. This matter is not included in the Long Term Plan/Annual Plan but has no implications for either.

Legal Considerations and Statutory Responsibilities | Ka Ture Whaiwhakaaro me kā Takohaka Waeture

24. Adopting standing orders, and the process by which they are amended or replaced, is governed by the Local Government Act 2002. This process is in alignment with the requirements laid down by that Act.

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

25. 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. Updating the protocols within, and improving the accessibility of, standing orders helps improve understanding of local government processes, opportunities for public participation, and transparency and accountability of decision making. As such, the recommendation in this report is appropriate and within the ambit of Section 10 of the Act.
26. 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.

Attachments | Kā Tāpirihaka

A	Draft standing orders 2025 with tracked changes
B	Explanatory note
C	Draft standing orders 2025 (clean)

Attachments A and C are circulated separately.

Attachment B: New Standing Orders Template Explanatory Note

1. LGNZ has produced a new template for standing orders that has been written with a “plain English” approach to make the document more accessible and easily understood by all.
2. The new template includes some legislative and procedural updates. These have been signalled in the document in **green text**.
3. The Democracy Services team has reviewed the template and made a number of further recommendations or amendments.
4. Where the existing adopted standing orders differs intentionally from the template, for example distributing agenda materials to elected members four clear working days ahead of a meeting not the two clear working days defined in the template, these have been carried over and signalled in the document in **blue text**.
5. LGNZ has released an accompanying guidance document with the new template. Additional recommendations have been included for clarifying comments to be included in the template where a standing order may be unclear. These have been signalled in **purple text**.
6. The previous standing orders template (and Council’s adopted standing orders) included SO1.2 *Statutory references* that states “Please note, where it is employed the word ‘must’, unless otherwise stated, identifies a mandatory legislative requirement.” This was not consistently applied and therefore any non-legislative references to “must” have been amended to “should” denoting it is the expected procedure or action but is not a legislative requirement. Any references to “must” that remain in the new template are therefore definitively a legislative requirement. To further clarify this for the purposes of the workshop, all standing orders that are a legislative requirement and therefore **cannot** be amended are signalled in **red text**.