

16 June 2025

Sent via email to [REDACTED]

LG25-0133 - Communications Marketing and Public Relations

Dear [REDACTED],

REQUEST FOR OFFICIAL INFORMATION – PARTIAL RELEASE OF INFORMATION

Thank you for your request for information held by the Queenstown Lakes District Council (QLDC). On 20 May 2025 you requested the following information under the Local Government Official Information and Meetings Act 1987 (LGOIMA):

1. **Can you update us on the total number of people working at QLDC in all aspects on communications, public relations, web, marketing and strategy - as well as their managers - plus the annual budget on top of salaries for all aspects of these roles (marketing, advertisements, statutory notices, internal, external campaigns, travel, training - everything)?**
2. **Can we also include an organisation chart with reporting lines for all the QLDC communications, public relations, marketing, governance, democracy, communications strategy staff members?**

QLDC RESPONSE

Partial release of information

In response to your request, we consulted with the QLDC People and Capability Team.

The QLDC Communications and Engagement Team currently comprises 9.8 full-time equivalent roles. An organisational chart for both the Communications and Engagement Team and the Stakeholder and Democracy Services Team is available [here](#) (please note the link will expire on 13 July 2025 at 1:31 PM NZST).

QLDC does not have standalone teams dedicated to public relations, marketing, or web services. Likewise, there is no separate strategy team focused solely on communications and engagement.

Roles within the Communications and Engagement Team are remunerated in accordance with Strategic Pay market data. A detailed breakdown of individual remuneration will not be provided; the reasons for withholding this information are outlined below.

The publicly available [Draft Annual Plan](#) includes the relevant budget information. Operational costs for the Communications and Engagement Team are approximately \$331,000, which includes expenses such as advertising and publications.

QLDC does not provide travel allowances for employees. Training and development opportunities are tailored to an individual employee needs and may include a combination of internal and external offerings. Participation in external training is neither mandatory nor guaranteed for all staff, which makes it challenging to attribute a definitive financial figure to this activity at the team level.

Decision to withhold information

We have good reason under section 7(2)(a) of the Local Government Official Information and Meetings Act 1987 (LGOIMA) for withholding part of the information requested. We consider it is necessary to withhold part of the requested information on the basis of the following grounds:

- Section 7(2)(a) - the withholding of the information is necessary to protect the privacy of natural persons, including that of deceased natural persons.

Section 7(2)(a) of the LGOIMA is intended to protect the privacy of individuals by allowing information to be withheld where its release would involve the unreasonable disclosure of personal information or could cause harm or distress. This provision seeks to balance the public's right to access official information with the need to respect individual privacy and prevent the misuse of personal information.

In this instance, the information is being withheld as it relates to identifiable natural persons, given that each role is held by a limited number of individuals. The Privacy Act 2020 upholds individuals' rights to be informed about the collection, use, and disclosure of their personal information. Releasing the requested information could constitute an unreasonable intrusion into the personal affairs of the individuals concerned.

In this case, the need to protect the privacy of natural person outweighs any public interest in the release of the information. Accordingly, the decision to withhold the information is justified and consistent with the provisions of both LGOIMA and the Privacy Act.

Public interest considerations

We consider the interests of the public when making decisions to withhold requested information, including considerations in favour of release, whether the disclosure of the information would promote those considerations, and whether those considerations outweighed the need to withhold the information.

Promoting the accountability and transparency of local authority members and officials is in the public interest, as is the public interest in "good government". Where possible, we have favoured the release of information. However, QLDC considers that withholding information to protect the privacy of individuals by allowing for the withholding of information that could infringe on personal privacy, is a consideration not outweighed by the public interest in favour of its release.

We conclude that the important section 7 withholding interests identified – to protect the privacy of individuals by allowing for the withholding of information that could infringe on personal privacy - which relate to a subset of the information within the scope of your request, is a consideration not outweighed by a countervailing public interest requiring release.

Right to review the above decision

Note that you have the right to seek an investigation and review by the Ombudsman of this decision. Information about this process is available at www.ombudsman.parliament.nz or freephone 0800 802 602.

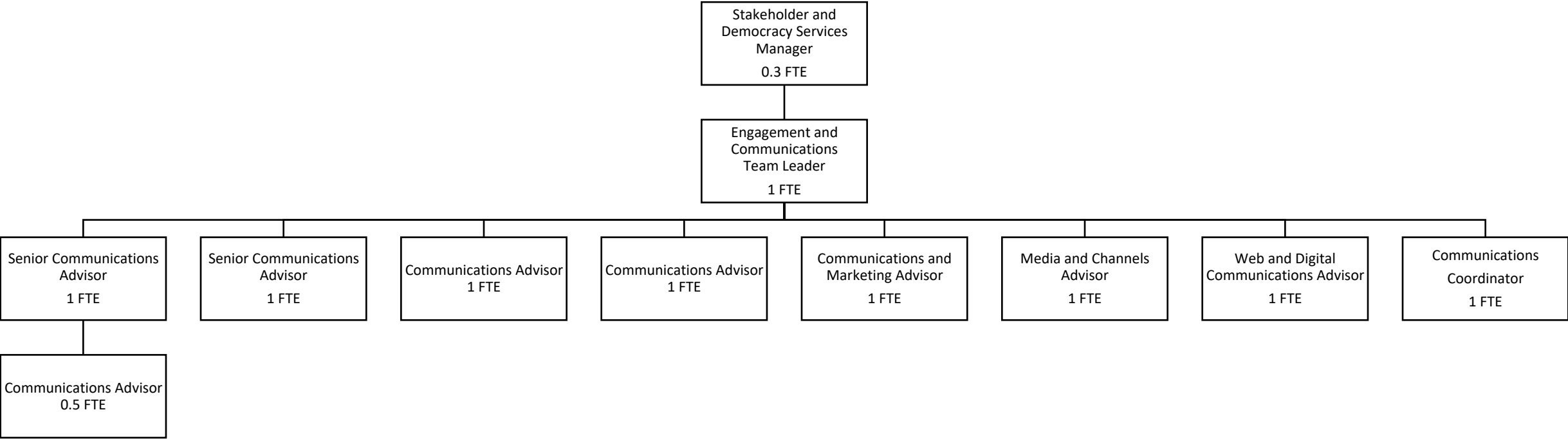
If you wish to discuss this decision with us, please contact Naell.Crosby-Roe@qldc.govt.nz (Stakeholder and Democracy Services Manager).

Kind regards,

A black rectangular box used to redact a signature.

Democracy Services Team
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Communications and Engagement



Stakeholder and Democracy Services

