

**OTAGO CENTRAL LAKES REGIONAL DEAL NEGOTIATION COMMITTEE:
18 AUGUST 2025**

Minutes of an ordinary meeting of the Otago Central Lakes Regional Deal Negotiation Committee held in Council Chambers, Central Otago District Council (CODC), 1 Dunorling Street, Alexandra on 18 August 2025 at 10.00am

Present:

Central Otago District Council (CODC) Mayor Tamah Alley, Otago Regional Council (ORC) Chair Gretchen Robertson, ORC Councillor Alexa Forbes, Queenstown Lakes District Council (QLDC) Mayor Glyn Lewers, QLDC Councillor Lyal Cocks

In attendance:

Mr Richard Saunders (Chief Executive, ORC), Mr Mike Theelen (Chief Executive, QLDC), Mr Dylan Rushbrook (General Manager Community Vision, CODC), Ms Anita Dawe (General Manager Regional Planning and Transport, ORC), Ms Pennie Pierce (Manager Strategy and Reform, QLDC), Ms Michelle Morss (General Manager Strategy and Policy, QLDC), Ms Anita Vanstone (Strategic Growth Manager), Mr Jon Winterbottom (QLDC Democracy Services Manager), Ms Marianna Brook (Principal Advisor, Otago Mayoral Forum, ORC), Ms Danette Hunter (Senior Communications Advisor, QLDC), Mr Wayne McEnteer (Governance Manager), no members of the public or media

Chair Robertson opened the meeting with a karakia.

Apologies

There was an apology for Councillor Tracy Paterson (CODC).

It was moved (Mayor Alley, Councillor Cocks):

That the apology be accepted.

Motion carried by consensus.

Declarations of Conflict of Interest

There were no declarations of conflicts of interest.

Confirmation of Agenda

Councillor Forbes asked whether an item should be added to the agenda to discuss exclusion of councillors from CODC, ORC and QLDC who are not members of the joint committee. Chair Robertson indicated that this matter could be discussed under existing agenda items such as the recommendation to exclude the public.

It was moved (Mayor Alley, Mayor Lewers):

That the agenda be confirmed without addition or alteration.

Motion carried by consensus.

Confirmation of Minutes

It was moved (Mayor Lewers, Councillor Forbes):

That the draft minutes of the public part of the 18 July 2025 Otago Central Lakes Regional Deal Negotiation Committee extraordinary (inaugural) meeting be confirmed as a true and correct record.

Motion carried by consensus.

1. Energising Queenstown Submission

A report from Ms Michelle Morss (General Manager Strategy and Policy, QLDC) sought a decision on whether the Otago Central Lakes Regional Deal Negotiation Committee (the Committee) would make a submission to the “Energising Queenstown” consultation process.

Ms Morss presented the report and officers responded to questions. Officers clarified that the intent was that the submission would be approved by all three members councils. Members discussed other related consultation processes on which the Committee or member Councils may wish to submit.

Members agreed to add the following words to the recommendation in the report to clarify that the approval from member councils would take place “through their established mechanisms.”

It was moved (Mayor Lewers, Councillor Forbes):

That the Otago Central Lakes Regional Deal Negotiation Committee:

1. Approve Option B and requests that staff prepare a draft submission to the ‘Energising Queenstown’ consultation process, which will be endorsed by the Joint Committee before passing to the respective councils for approval through their established mechanisms.

Motion carried by consensus.

Recommendation to Exclude the Public

It was moved (Mayor Alley, Mayor Lewers):

That the Otago Central Lakes Regional Negotiation Committee resolve that the public be excluded from the following parts of the meeting.

Councillor Forbes called for discussion during the public part of the meeting regarding the rationale for CODC, ORC and QLDC councillors who were not Committee members not being able to observe the public excluded part of the Committee meeting.

Officers provided clarification on the reasons for the current approach. Members expressed a range of views on the matter with Councillor Forbes indicating that she would not support going into public excluded given that she did not believe there were valid grounds under LGOIMA to exclude non-member councillors. The Chair put the matter to a vote.

Motion lost due to lack of consensus (with Councillor Forbes voting against the motion).

Officers clarified that according to the Committee's Terms of Reference motions could only be carried by consensus (i.e. all members present voting in favour) and so the motion had been defeated. The Chair called for an adjournment in order to obtain clarity on procedural issues related to the Committee.

It was moved (Chair Robertson, Mayor Alley):

That the Otago Central Lakes Regional Negotiation Committee adjourn the meeting to resolve issues relating to procedures and Standing Orders.

Motion carried by consensus.

The meeting was adjourned at 10.30am.

The meeting recommenced at 10.40am.

It was clarified that, under the circumstances, QLDC Standing Orders Section 23.10 permitted the motion to be put again with the consent of the Chairperson. Accordingly, the Chair called for a mover and seconder on a new resolution to exclude the public.

It was moved (Councillor Cocks, Chair Robertson):

That the Otago Central Lakes Regional Negotiation Committee resolve that the public be excluded from the following parts of the meeting.

It was recommended that the public be excluded from the following parts of the meeting:

The general subject of each matter to be considered whilst the public is excluded, the reason for passing this resolution in relation to each matter, and the specific grounds

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under Section 48(1) of the Local Government Information and Meetings Act 1987 for the passing of this resolution is as follows:

Confirmation of Public Excluded Minutes

Item 3: Update on negotiation progress

Item 4: Legal Advice: Confidentiality

Item 3: Update on negotiation progress	<p>That the public conduct of the whole or the relevant part of the proceedings of the meeting would be likely to result in the disclosure of information where the withholding of information is necessary to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> enable any local authority holding the information to carry out, without prejudice or disadvantage, negotiations (including commercial and industrial negotiations). <p><i>Reason for recommendation</i></p> <p>The agreement of City and Regional Deal for Otago Central Lakes is in the public interest as it is premised on delivering improved economic, environmental and social outcomes for the community. Premature release of information could result in public commentary about ongoing negotiations that disadvantages the councils in that negotiating process. This could include the termination of the negotiation process resulting in no City and Regional Deal being agreed for the Otago Central Lakes. This information needs to be withheld to protect the ability to agree a City and Regional Deal and achieve these outcomes for the community.</p> <p>While there is public interest in the development of a Regional Deal, this is outweighed by the interest in holding these discussions with the public excluded to ensure that the councils' position is not disadvantaged and to protect the integrity of the negotiations.</p>	Section 7(2)(i)
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Item 4: Legal Advice: Confidentiality	<p>That the public conduct of the whole or the relevant part of the proceedings of the meeting would be likely to result in the disclosure of information where the withholding of information is necessary to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> to maintain legal professional privilege <p><i>Reason for recommendation</i></p> <p>The agreement of City and Regional Deal for Otago Central Lakes is in the public interest as it is premised on delivering improved economic, environmental and social outcome for the community. While the Act includes a public interest test, the threshold to override privilege is very high. The legal advice does not reveal misconduct or urgent public risk and releasing it could undermine trust and future negotiations. Therefore, the public interest in disclosure does not clearly outweigh the need to protect privileged legal communications.</p>	Section 7(2)(g)
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Agenda Items:

Item 2: General Progress Update

Item 3: Health Package Update

Item 4: Visitor and Investor Workstream

Item 2: General Progress Update	<p>That the public conduct of the whole or the relevant part of the proceedings of the meeting would be likely to result in the disclosure of information where the withholding of information is necessary to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • enable any local authority holding the information to carry out, without prejudice or disadvantage, negotiations (including commercial and industrial negotiations). <p><i>Reason for recommendation</i></p> <p>The agreement of City and Regional Deal for Otago Central Lakes is in the public interest as it is premised on delivering improved economic, environmental and social outcomes for the community. Premature release of information could result in public commentary about ongoing negotiations that disadvantages the councils in that negotiating process. This could include the termination of the negotiation process resulting in no City and Regional Deal being agreed for the Otago Central Lakes. This information needs to be withheld to protect the ability to agree a City and Regional Deal and achieve these outcomes for the community.</p> <p>While there is public interest in the development of a Regional Deal, this is outweighed by the interest in holding these discussions with the public excluded to ensure that the councils' position is not disadvantaged and to protect the integrity of the negotiations.</p>	Section 7(2)(i)
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<p>Item 3: Health Package Update</p>	<p>That the public conduct of the whole or the relevant part of the proceedings of the meeting would be likely to result in the disclosure of information where the withholding of information is necessary to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> enable any local authority holding the information to carry out, without prejudice or disadvantage, negotiations (including commercial and industrial negotiations). <p><i>Reason for recommendation</i></p> <p>The agreement of City and Regional Deal for Otago Central Lakes is in the public interest as it is premised on delivering improved economic, environmental and social outcomes for the community. Premature release of information could result in public commentary about ongoing negotiations that disadvantages the councils in that negotiating process. This could include the termination of the negotiation process resulting in no City and Regional Deal being agreed for the Otago Central Lakes. This information needs to be withheld to protect the ability to agree a City and Regional Deal and achieve these outcomes for the community.</p> <p>While there is public interest in the development of a Regional Deal, this is outweighed by the interest in holding these discussions with the public excluded to ensure that the councils' position is not disadvantaged and to protect the integrity of the negotiations.</p>	<p>Section 7(2)(i)</p>
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<p>Item 4: Visitors and Investor Workstr eam</p>	<p>That the public conduct of the whole or the relevant part of the proceedings of the meeting would be likely to result in the disclosure of information where the withholding of information is necessary to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> enable any local authority holding the information to carry out, without prejudice or disadvantage, negotiations (including commercial and industrial negotiations). <p><i>Reason for recommendation</i></p> <p>The agreement of City and Regional Deal for Otago Central Lakes is in the public interest as it is premised on delivering improved economic, environmental and social outcomes for the community. Premature release of information could result in public commentary about ongoing negotiations that disadvantages the councils in that negotiating process. This could include the termination of the negotiation process resulting in no City and Regional Deal being agreed for the Otago Central Lakes. This information needs to be withheld to protect the ability to agree a City and Regional Deal and achieve these outcomes for the community.</p> <p>While there is public interest in the development of a Regional Deal, this is outweighed by the interest in holding these discussions with the public excluded to ensure that the councils' position is not disadvantaged and to protect the integrity of the negotiations.</p>	<p>Section 7(2)(i)</p>
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This recommendation was made in reliance on Section 48(1)(a) of the Local Government Official Information and Meetings Act 1987 and the particular interest or interests protected by Section 6 or Section 7 of that Act or Section 6 or Section 7 or Section 9 of the Official Information Act 1982 as the case may require, which would be prejudiced by the holding of the whole or the relevant part of the proceedings of the meeting in public are as shown above with respect to each item.

Motion carried by consensus.

The meeting went into public excluded at 10.42am