

22 February 2024

Sent via email to [REDACTED]

Dear [REDACTED],

### REQUEST FOR OFFICIAL INFORMATION – PARTIEL RELEASE OF INFORMATION

Thank you for your request for information held by the Queenstown Lakes District Council (QLDC). On 31 January 2024 you requested the following information under the Local Government Official Information and Meetings Act 1987 (LGOIMA):

1. The number of households for kerbside collection – and how materials are collected (glass separate/ commingled + rubbish).
2. Number split by material type of what is collected at kerbside (so that we can isolate the plastic component – for transport and for sortation at the Material Recovery Facility (MRF)).
3. Cost of the kerbside collection or the Council's budget for kerbside collections.
4. Cost of MRF process or Council's budget for MRF process.
5. Export market for plastic by resin type – cost of shipment / port costs + revenue.

### QLDC response

1. *The number of households for kerbside collection – and how materials are collected (glass separate/ commingled + rubbish).*
  - At 31 December 2023, the number of residentially rated dwellings was 23,408.
  - The Queenstown Lakes district has 3 bins (mixed recycling, glass, and rubbish).
  - Rubbish is collected weekly while mixed recycling and glass are collected on alternate weeks.
2. *Numbers split by material type of what is collected at kerbside (so that we can isolate the plastic component – for transport and for sortation at the Material Recovery Facility (MRF)).*
  - Financial YTD average monthly tonnes collected kerbside:
    - Mixed recycling – 201.33
    - Glass – 194.83
    - Rubbish – 876.00.

- Please refer to the most recent SWAP data for breakdown by material type for each stream: [Solid Waste Assessment | Queenstown Lakes District Council \(gldc.govt.nz\)](https://www.gldc.govt.nz/solid-waste-assessment)
3. *Cost of the kerbside collection or the Council's budget for kerbside collections.*
- We are withholding this information because it is commercially sensitive. We provide our rationale below.
4. *Cost of MRF process or Council's budget for MRF process.*
- 2022/23 cost for the MRF was approximately \$800K (excl. GST), not including offsite overheads or profit, or repairs / maintenance / upgrades.
5. *Export market for plastic by resin type – cost of shipment / port costs + revenue.*
- Commodities are sold to various markets depending on things like market demand, price and requirement to move material from sites. Costs of shipment / port costs and revenue vary from shipment to shipment. For the 2022/23 financial year the average net revenue per tonne across all commodities (plastics, paper, OCC, steel, aluminium, glass) was \$2.98. Typically, Plastics 1 are sent to Pact Recycling Solutions; Plastics 2 & 5 to Comspec; OCC to Malaysia; Paper to Indonesia; Steel and aluminium to China and Japan; Glass to Visy.

We trust the above information satisfactorily answers the relevant components of your request.

#### **Decision to withhold remaining information requested**

We have good grounds under the LGOIMA for withholding the answer to question 3 – “Cost of the kerbside collection or the Council's budget for kerbside collections”. We consider it is necessary to withhold this information on the basis of the following ground:

- s 7(2)(b)(ii) – to protect information where the making available of the information would be likely unreasonably to prejudice the commercial position of the person who supplied or who is the subject of the information.

If we were to release the cost / budget of kerbside collection, alongside the release of the number of residentially rated dwellings and the recycling lift frequency, then it would be possible to determine a “per lift” rate. The release of such rates could prejudice the commercial position of our recycling contractors, as any competitors could compare the identified costs with their own prices.

#### **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 general public interest in “good government”. Where possible, we have favoured the release of information.

However, we do not believe that these public interest considerations mean we should release the information withheld. Protecting a competitive business environment, in the rubbish and recycling space, is essential for ensuring costs are contained and rate payer money is spent efficiently.

We conclude that the important section 7 withholding interests identified (e.g. commercial sensitivity), which relate to a subset of the information within the scope of your request, are 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](http://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](mailto:Naell.Crosby-Roe@qldc.govt.nz) (Governance & Stakeholder Services Manager).

We trust this response satisfactorily answers your request.

Ngā mihi,

A handwritten signature in black ink, consisting of several loops and a long horizontal stroke extending to the right.

██████████  
Senior Official Information Advisor