

8 August 2025

[REDACTED]
Sent via email to [REDACTED]

LG25-0208 – Pride Storytime Rebranding Communications

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 17 July 2025 you requested the following information under the Local Government Official Information and Meetings Act 1987 (LGOIMA):

- 1. Please advise on the decision-making process that has led to your yearly Pride Storytime at your libraries being rebranded as 'Everyone is Welcome' Storytime.**
- 2. I would be interested to read any and all internal correspondence you can disclose surrounding this change and for whom it has been made.**

QLDC RESPONSE

Partial release of information

- 1. Please advise on the decision-making process that has led to your yearly Pride Storytime at your libraries being rebranded as 'Everyone is Welcome' Storytime.**

In response to your request, we consulted with both the QLDC Corporate Services Team and QLDC Community Services Team.

The decision to update the event name was not intended to diminish the celebration of diversity or the LGBTQIA+ community. Rather, it was a precautionary step aimed at protecting the safety of our community and staff by adopting a name that may reduce the risk of targeted hostility. QLDC remains firmly committed to inclusivity and maintains a zero-tolerance approach to any form of threat, abuse, attacks, or expressions of hatred directed at these values.

To provide insight into the factors that informed the decision—the drag artist involved in our event also participated in the Auckland Pride Storytime, which was disrupted by protestors. While he did not request a change to the event name, he shared concerns about the potential for similar incidents. These concerns significantly informed our risk assessment.

When the possibility of physical disruption at a children's event became a genuine consideration, ensuring the safety of our preschool-aged audience became paramount. This decision was made with input from various QLDC teams, including those with LGBTQIA+ representation and both the QLDC Assurance and Risk Team and the QLDC Health and Safety Team.

Importantly, at no stage was cancelling the event proposed. There was a strong, collective commitment across all teams to ensure the event went ahead safely and inclusively.

2. I would be interested to read any and all internal correspondence you can disclose surrounding this change and for whom it has been made.

In response to your request, we searched our email archives for correspondence dated between 1 January 2025 and 17 July 2025. This search focused on emails containing the terms “Storytime” and “Everyone is welcome”. The search included emails sent to or received from the QLDC Corporate Services Manager, and the Community Services General Manager.

Following the removal of duplicates and a review to determine whether the emails fell within the scope of your request, [two emails](#) have been identified and released, with minor redactions applied. The grounds for withholding information are outlined below.

Please note that the enclosed links will expire on 7 September 2025, 12:40 PM (UTC+12:00) Auckland, Wellington.

Decision to withhold information

We have good reason under section 7(2)(f)(ii) of the LGOIMA for withholding some of the information requested. We consider it is necessary to withhold this information on the basis of the following grounds:

- Section 7(2)(f) - maintain the effective conduct of public affairs through—
 - ii. the protection of such members, officers, employees, and persons from improper pressure or harassment.

Section 7(2)(f)(ii) of the LGOIMA protects individuals—such as members, officers, and employees—from improper pressure or harassment, ensuring the effective conduct of public affairs. This provision safeguards public officials from undue influence or intimidation, enabling them to perform their duties impartially and effectively.

In this case, we have provided the roles of individuals and withheld the names and contact emails, to avoid the risk of harassment. The protection of these individuals from improper pressure or harassment takes precedence over the public interest in disclosing specific information. Releasing the names and contact emails could potentially lead to undue pressure or intimidation, which could undermine the effective conduct of public affairs and harm the safety and well-being of those involved. Therefore, withholding this information is justified to preserve both individual rights and the integrity of public offices.

Public interest considerations

When making decisions about withholding information, we carefully consider the public interest—including whether release would promote transparency, accountability, or informed public participation—and whether those considerations are strong enough to outweigh the reasons for withholding. QLDC fully recognises the importance of these principles and remains committed to releasing information wherever possible to support good governance and public trust.

However, in this instance, QLDC has determined that the need to withhold part of the requested information—to safeguard public officials from undue influence or intimidation, enabling them to perform their duties impartially and effectively—is a consideration not outweighed by the public interest in favour of disclosure.

Accordingly, we consider that section 7(2)(f)(ii) of the LGOIMA, which protects individuals from improper pressure or harassment, applies. In this case, this ground for withholding is not outweighed by any overriding public interest considerations favouring disclosure.

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 (Director Democracy Services).

We trust that the above information satisfactorily answers your request.

Kind regards,



Democracy Services Team
Corporate Services | Queenstown Lakes District Council
P: +64 3 441 0499
E: information.request@qldc.govt.nz

From: [REDACTED]
Sent: Mon, 30 Jun 2025 17:36:05 +1200
To: [REDACTED]
Cc: [REDACTED]
Subject: RE: Library Rainbow Event - Everyone is Welcome - July 23rd/24th - Notification of Wider QLDC Team

Cool, thanks [REDACTED] :0)
Sorry it wasn't as clear in my prior email.

Best,
[REDACTED]

From: [REDACTED]
Sent: Monday, 30 June 2025 5:21 PM
To: [REDACTED]
Cc: [REDACTED]
Subject: RE: Library Rainbow Event - Everyone is Welcome - July 23rd/24th - Notification of Wider QLDC Team

Noted. Thanks for the clear email on this.
Looping in [REDACTED] my manager, as we all need to be on the same page. 😊

Cheers
[REDACTED]

From: [REDACTED]
Sent: Monday, 30 June 2025 5:14 PM
To: [REDACTED]
Cc: [REDACTED]
Subject: RE: Library Rainbow Event - Everyone is Welcome - July 23rd/24th - Notification of Wider QLDC Team

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

Thanks for understanding and for thinking of libraries 🙏
Happy to discuss :0)

Best,

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

From: [REDACTED]
Sent: Monday, 30 June 2025 5:01 PM
To: [REDACTED]
Cc: [REDACTED]
Subject: RE: Library Rainbow Event - Everyone is Welcome - July 23rd/24th - Notification of Wider QLDC Team

Thank you, [REDACTED], for your wonderful email.

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

Cheers

[REDACTED]

From: [REDACTED]
Sent: Monday, 23 June 2025 11:24 AM
To: [REDACTED]
Cc: [REDACTED]
Subject: RE: Library Rainbow Event - Everyone is Welcome - July 23rd/24th - Notification of Wider QLDC Team

Hello,
I am so proud to be QLDC – we have such a supportive and inclusive team, it's beautiful (and how it should be 🌈)!

Just a quick heads-up: we're working hard to make sure everyone feels safe and supported at this event. One of the ways we're doing this is by rebranding our *Rainbow Storytime* to *Everyone is Welcome Storytime*. This new name better reflects what the event is truly about — celebrating diversity, inclusion, and self-acceptance.

As part of this shift, the upcoming July Storytime isn't being promoted as a "rainbow event." However, because *Everyone is Welcome* celebrates inclusivity in all its forms, one of our special guests is a professional drag artist!

Due to the upsetting events in Auckland earlier this year — where a Rainbow Storytime was stormed by Destiny Church — we've chosen not to label this event as a "rainbow" one. This is a safety measure to help prevent unwanted attention, while still honouring and uplifting the rainbow community. If you're sharing this event, please refer to it by its full name: *Everyone is Welcome Storytime*.

If you'd like to support by attending, but won't be bringing a child, just flick me a message. We'll be asking that all adults attend with a child as part of our safety approach.

Thank you!

[REDACTED]

From: [REDACTED]
Sent: Thursday, 19 June 2025 2:27 PM
To: [REDACTED]
Cc: [REDACTED]
Subject: RE: Library Rainbow Event - Everyone is Welcome - July 23rd/24th - Notification of Wider QLDC Team

Thanks, [REDACTED], for sharing the upcoming activity. I love how you changed the title of the activity to better reflect the celebration of diversity and inclusion "Everyone is Welcome Storytime".

I am also thrilled to hear that my colleague [REDACTED] will have a focus on building connections with groups working with Youth and our LGBTQIA+ community.

[REDACTED] On Wednesday, [REDACTED] and I connected with Sam Coulthard, organiser of Winter Pride. Sam is very interested in connecting more with the community throughout the year as opposed to only during Winter Pride. Had I known I would have invited you to join in. 😊 I am happy to fill you in and for you to take the lead on working with LGBTQIA+ community groups.

Cheers

[REDACTED]

From: [REDACTED]
Sent: Thursday, 19 June 2025 12:25 PM
To: [REDACTED]
Cc: [REDACTED]
Subject: RE: Library Rainbow Event - Everyone is Welcome - July 23rd/24th - Notification of Wider QLDC Team

Kia ora [REDACTED],

Great work on this! I've also copied this to [REDACTED], who has recently joined the Community Partnerships Team. [REDACTED] role will also have a focus on building connections with groups working with Youth and our LGBTQIA+ community so please also keep her in the loop.

[REDACTED]

Kā mihi nui,

[REDACTED]

<p>[REDACTED] (she/her) Community Partnerships Manager Community Services Queenstown Lakes District Council DD: [REDACTED] M: [REDACTED] P: +64 3 441 0499 E: [REDACTED]</p>	 QUEENSTOWN LAKES DISTRICT COUNCIL
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From: [REDACTED]
Sent: Monday, 16 June 2025 12:56 PM
To: [REDACTED]
[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]
Cc: [REDACTED]
[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]
Subject: Library Rainbow Event - Everyone is Welcome - July 23rd/24th - Notification of Wider QLDC Team

Hello QLDC Team,

Our libraries are holding a *Rainbow* storytime event— on the 23rd July in Wānaka and Hāwea Libraries, and the 24th July in Frankton and Queenstown Libraries. Our libraries are heavily focused on providing a safe event for our guests, attendees, *and staff*, especially with how an [Auckland rainbow event in February was targeted](#) by Destiny Church. Our libraries have taken steps to mitigate risk. This email serves to alert you, and your teams, of the event, and to request your help in gathering any “noise” leading up to the event.

A few steps our libraries have taken include:

1. **Event Name Change:** We have changed the “Rainbow Reads/Hugo Grrrl & Friends Storytime” to “Everyone is Welcome Storytime” to broaden the scope of the event, to make it less of a target, and to better reflect the celebration of diversity and inclusion.
2. **Community Involvement:** We have invited respected members of the community to participate as guest readers on the panel. Participating in the event this year include Police, Fire Brigade, local DJ, and a Drag Artist.
3. **Cougar:** We have organised for Cougar Security for all events.

Library Social Media Team:

Could I please ask the Social Media and Comms teams actively monitor online channels for any “noise” or commentary relating to LGBTQIA+, Pride, Rainbow, or any related topics that may arise in connection with the event.

If you notice anything of concern, please add it to your usual trackers, but also email me directly so I can monitor and collate any emerging themes.

Could I please ask the Customer Service team to keep me informed of any feedback received that may be relevant to this event especially regarding LGBTQIA+/ Pride?

Just keeping you both informed as part of the security group. If anything comes to your attention, please don’t hesitate to email me directly.

Library Branch Managers:

Please share this with your staff, but especially with those on circulation.

I will collate all emails. Hopefully this collective monitoring will help us detect any developing trends and give us the ability to respond proactively.

Thank you all very much for your support and assistance.

With warmest regards,

| District Children & YA Services
Librarian
Whakatipu and Upper Clutha Libraries | Te Whare
Pukapuka o Tāhuna
DD:
E:
E: childrens.librarian@qldc.govt.nz





With warmest regards,

[Redacted]

[Redacted] | District Children & YA Services Librarian
Whakatipu and Upper Clutha Libraries | Te Whare Pukapuka o Tāhuna
DD: [Redacted]
E: [Redacted]
E: childrens.librarian@qldc.govt.nz



From: [REDACTED]
Sent: Thu, 15 May 2025 13:20:32 +1200
To: [REDACTED]
Cc: [REDACTED]
Subject: RE: Library Event - Rainbow / Everyone is Welcome - July 2025

Works for me [REDACTED]. Great general message of inclusion.

[REDACTED] (he/him/ia) | Stakeholder & Democracy
Services Manager | Kaiwhakahaere Ratoka Huka Whaipāka me
Manapori
Corporate Services | Queenstown Lakes District Council
DD: [REDACTED] | M: [REDACTED] | P: +64 3 441 0499
E: [REDACTED]



From: [REDACTED]
Sent: Thursday, 15 May 2025 12:57 PM
To: [REDACTED]
Cc: [REDACTED]
Subject: Library Event - Rainbow / Everyone is Welcome - July 2025

Hello [REDACTED]
[REDACTED] has advised to loop you into the comms that I am planning on sending [REDACTED] for our library July event. This event would have been previously called, Rainbow Storytime, or Drag Storytime, but have decided to go with, "Everyone Is Welcome Storytime" to focus on the message of acceptance and inclusion.

The comms will say, "Join us as we celebrate equity, inclusion, and self-acceptance through stories. Your special guest could be a firefighter, police officer, radio DJ, drag artist, or even our mayor! These everyday heroes will share stories about being kind, brave, and proud of who you are – no matter who you are!"

Not all guests will attend all events, except the drag artist, Hugo Grrrl, who will attend all four :0)

I would love any feedback. :0)

With warmest regards,
[REDACTED]

[redacted] | District Children & YA Services
Librarian
Whakatipu and Upper Clutha Libraries | Te Whare
Pukapuka o Tāhuna
DD: [redacted]
E: [redacted]
E: childrens.librarian@qldc.govt.nz





