

QLDC Council
12 December 2019

Report for Agenda Item | Rīpoata moto e Rāraki take: 7

Department: Corporate Services

Title | Taitara Action for Healthy Waterways: Submission from QLDC

PURPOSE OF THE REPORT | TE TAKE MŌ TE PŪRONGO

The purpose of this report is to present a submission placed to the Ministry for the Environment and to seek the Council's retrospective approval.

RECOMMENDATION | NGĀ TŪTOHUNGA

That Council:

1. **Note** the contents of this report; and
2. **Approve** retrospectively the contents of the 'Action for Healthy Waterways' submission.

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29/11/2019

Reviewed and Authorised by:



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29/11/2019

CONTEXT | HOROPAKI

- 1 The Ministry for the Environment (MfE) has recently consulted on its 'Action for Healthy Waterways' proposals. QLDC officers from across the organisation co-ordinated a response, which was submitted on 31st October 2019.
- 2 The submission period was extended from six to eight weeks at the public's request, but the short timeline for response caused frustration amongst interested parties. Farming communities in the district are working hard to achieve and maintain sustainable operations, yet the short timeline placed unnecessary pressure on the co-ordination of a considered response to such a critical matter.
- 3 The short timeline, which traversed local body elections, provided insufficient time for QLDC officers to canvas the opinions of councillors in advance of the submission being placed. As such, retrospective approval for the submission is being sought.
- 4 Effective freshwater management is a primary concern for the district, as it takes its role as tiaki of some of New Zealand's most iconic bodies of water extremely seriously. As a theme, water quality emerged clearly within the preparation of Vision Beyond 2050:



- 5 The Action for Healthy waterways proposals contained the following three key objectives:
 - a. Stop further degradation of New Zealand's freshwater resources and start making immediate improvements so that water quality is materially improving within five years.
 - b. Reverse past damage to bring New Zealand's freshwater resources, waterways and ecosystems to a healthy state within a generation.
 - c. Address water allocation issues having regard to all interests including Māori and existing and potential new users.

- 6 In addition to the Action for Healthy Waterways proposals, the government has also recently consulted on proposals relating to the National Policy Statement for Urban Development and Highly Productive Land. QLDC has provided submissions to both processes.

ANALYSIS AND ADVICE | TATĀRITANGA ME NGĀ TOHUTOHU

- 7 The submission was prepared to ensure that Queenstown Lakes District's unique circumstances and environment as a high growth area are properly considered in the development of freshwater proposals.
- 8 The submission broadly supports the direction of the changes proposed and welcomes the clear prioritisation of water bodies and ecosystems signalled.
- 9 In summary, the key points made in the submission were:
 - a. Support for the strengthening of Māori values and the concept of Te Mana o te Wai in protecting, enabling and sustaining good freshwater management.
 - b. Support for the work undertaken by the Urban Water Quality Group (of which QLDC officers are members) and the need to align any proposal with the Urban Water Good Management Practice Guidelines.
 - c. Requests clarification as to the policy relationship between the proposals and other NPS documents currently under development i.e. Urban Development and Highly Productive Land. Highlights that competing priorities may be an issue in future.
 - d. Strongly supports requirements for the Regional Council to undertake enhanced monitoring, regulation and reporting activity. However, recommends that additional funding and resources are made available by the government to ensure a smooth transition.
 - e. Requests additional resources in the management of ageing septic tank systems and the enforcement of the proposed 2009 National Environmental Standard for On-Site Wastewater. Also seeks clarification of the residential density thresholds, which may trigger the installation of reticulated wastewater systems in small communities.
- 10 A number of additional points were also made, relating to:
 - a. Guidance on the monitoring of bare land.
 - b. Requests for further support in tackling the challenge of invasive and exotic weeds in the district, due to investment and infrastructural adaptation required.
 - c. Clarification in relation to wetlands exemptions.
 - d. Adjustment of the specified stock-fencing set-backs, in order to be effective on braided rivers.

- 11 As the submissions process has now closed, there are two options available to councillors:
- 12 Option 1 to retrospectively agree the contents of the attached submission.

Advantages: The submission will remain in the MfE review process and QLDC will have partaken in the submissions process.

Disadvantages: There are no clear disadvantages to this option.

- 13 Option 2- to request the withdrawal of the attached submission from the MfE process.

Advantages: The submission will be withdrawn from the MfE process and any inaccurate representations of QLDC's position will not be considered.

Disadvantages: QLDC will need to seek other opportunities to participate in the process, as it will not have submitted on this occasion.

- 14 This report recommends **Option 1** if the submission is broadly reflective of the council's position. If there are additional points to be made, it's recommended that these points are collated and imparted at the soonest opportunity to MfE under separate correspondence.
- 15 Option 2 is only recommended in the event that the direction taken by the submission is incorrect and fails to capture the position of the council at all.

CONSULTATION PROCESS | HĀTEPE MATAPAKI:

> SIGNIFICANCE AND ENGAGEMENT | TE WHAKAMAHI I KĀ WHAKAARO HIRAKA

- 16 This matter is of [low] significance, as determined by reference to the [Council's Significance and Engagement Policy](#) because it is consistent with current policy and will have a low impact on council capability and capacity.
- 17 The persons who are affected by or interested in this matter are residents and ratepayers of the Queenstown Lakes District community, for whom the lakes and rivers are integral to community wellbeing.
- 18 The Council will make this submission available on its website and will follow the progress of the development of MfE's proposals carefully.

> MĀORI CONSULTATION | IWI RŪNANGA

- 19 Iwi has not been consulted during the drafting of the attached submission. Further, MfE worked with Kahui Wai Māori during the formulation of the proposals and held a regional hui.

RISK AND MITIGATIONS | NGĀ RARU TŪPONO ME NGĀ WHAKAMAURUTANGA

- 20 This matter relates to the Strategic/Political/Reputation It is associated with Risk 00038 Lack of Alignment – Strategies and policies within the QLDC Risk Register.

- 21 The approval of the recommended option will support the Council by allowing us to retain the risk at its current level. This shall be achieved by ensuring that we deliver consistent messages in relation to QLDC's policy position.

FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS | NGĀ RITENGA Ā-PŪTEA

- 22 There are no financial implications resulting from the decision.

COUNCIL EFFECTS AND VIEWS | NGĀ WHAKAAWEAWE ME NGĀ TIROHANGA A TE KAUNIHERA

- 23 The following Council policies, strategies and bylaws were considered during the development of the draft submission:

- Stages 1, 2 and 3 of the Proposed District Plan
- Long Term Plan
- Annual Plan
- Master Plans
- Asset Management Plan
- 30 Year Infrastructure Strategy.

LOCAL GOVERNMENT ACT 2002 PURPOSE PROVISIONS | TE WHAKATURETURE 2002 O TE KĀWANATAKA Ā-KĀIKA

- 24 The recommended option:

- Will help meet the current and future needs of communities for good-quality local infrastructure, local public services, and performance of regulatory functions in a way that is most cost-effective for households and businesses by contributing to the development of the NPS-UD;
- Can be implemented through current funding under the Ten Year Plan and Annual Plan;
- Is consistent with the Council's plans and policies; and
- Would not alter significantly 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 | NGĀ TĀPIRIHANGA

- A Submission from the Queenstown Lakes District Council on the 'Actions for Healthy Waterways' proposals