

QLDC Council
12 March 2020

Report for Agenda Item | Rīpoata moto e Rāraki take 4

Department: Corporate Services

Title | Taitara QLDC Climate Action Plan

PURPOSE OF THE REPORT | TE TAKE MŌ TE PŪRONGO

The purpose of this report is to present the final QLDC Climate Action Plan and to recommend its adoption.

RECOMMENDATION | NGĀ TŪTOHUNGA

That Council:

1. **Note** the contents of the report; and
2. **Adopt** the QLDC Climate Action Plan.


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25/02/2020

Reviewed and Authorised by:



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28/02/2020

CONTEXT | HOROPAKI

- 1 In December 2018 Councillors considered a discussion paper on the implications of climate change for the Queenstown Lakes District. Staff were then asked to prepare a climate change strategy, now referred to as the Draft Queenstown Lakes District Climate Action Plan (CAP).
- 2 In February and March 2019, climate change was included as a topic in the 'My Place' facilitated workshops held throughout the district and on the 'Let's Talk' online engagement tool.
- 3 In April 2019, staff held two focus groups comprising local climate change experts and thought leaders. In addition, a number of targeted key stakeholders have had the opportunity to comment on an earlier version of the draft CAP, and their feedback has been incorporated where appropriate.
- 4 In preparing the draft CAP, meetings were held with representatives from Aukaha and Te Aō Marama to ensure Iwi support for the strategic direction, priorities, goals and actions in the of Ngāi Tahu climate change strategy, *He Rautaki Mō Te Huringa Nga O Te Āhuarangi*.
- 5 In July 2019, the Council adopted a draft CAP for further community engagement. At the same meeting, QLDC declared a climate change emergency. The pace of change in relation to climate change thinking over this period has been significant, with considerable appetite for action being consistently demonstrated by the community, officers and elected members alike.
- 6 In July – September 2019, the draft CAP was made available for public comment through an online engagement process. QLDC received 125 submissions, of which 121 were in favour of taking climate action. The rich feedback provided in this process has been instrumental in shaping the final CAP.
- 7 In November 2019, the Government passed the Climate Change Response (Zero Carbon) Amendment Act. The purpose of the Act is to provide a framework in which New Zealand can develop and implement clear and stable climate change policies that contribute to the international effort to limit the global average temperature increase to 1.5°C above pre-industrial levels. The proposed emissions reduction goals in the CAP are aligned to those in the Act.
- 8 In January – February 2020, officers have conducted further discussions with the Executive Leadership Team and Councillors to test ideas and potential actions. A peer review of the final version was undertaken by Dr Chris Cameron, Climate Change Champion at Nelson City Council.
- 9 The CAP is aligned to Vision Beyond 2050, specifically Zero Carbon Communities and Disaster-Defying Resilience. A copy of the final CAP as recommended for adoption is contained in **Attachment A**.

ANALYSIS AND ADVICE | TATĀRITANGA ME NGĀ TOHUTOHU

- 10 Adapting to the impacts of climate change has become increasingly urgent for many local authorities as they grapple with the hazards and costs of climate disruption, rising seas and extreme weather events. The sense of urgency was reiterated in a 2018 report from the Inter-Governmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) and subsequent research that shows the Earth is warming faster than predicted.
- 11 The task of reducing emissions is also necessary at a local and regional level if New Zealand is to meet its obligations under the Paris Agreement and the targets set out in the Climate Change Response (Zero Carbon) Amendment Act.
- 12 The purpose of the CAP is to help QLDC rise to meet the challenge of the climate change emergency and to:
- Invigorate a network of partners and working groups who will collaborate to deliver the CAP
 - Ensure our community understands and is prepared for the variety of different climate change impacts
 - Build momentum and demonstrate leadership locally, regionally and nationally
 - Measure success through effective monitoring and evaluation
 - Change the way we work, across all activities
 - Underpin the integrity of New Zealand's global climate change action reputation
- 13 The goals of the CAP are:
- To achieve net zero carbon emissions by 2050 across the whole district.
 - To be resilient to the local impact of climate change across the whole district.
- 14 This plan starts to identify ways in which to reduce emissions and provides strategic direction for addressing climate change impacts. It is an emergent plan that intends to lay good foundations through specific action.
- 15 The CAP is intended to provide an overview of QLDC's actions over the next three years (short term). It will be reviewed annually and will look forward across a three year horizon. The CAP is structured according to five key outcomes, supported by a range of actions. Each outcome is underpinned by a keystone action, which is central to its achievement:
- **Outcome 1** – The community looks to QLDC for leadership and action.

Keystone action: Measure the district's GHG emissions and develop an emissions reduction master-plan with science-based targets, and an Emissions Reduction Toolkit. Include sequestration plan.

As a keystone action, the development of the master-plan will be of the highest priority. The master-plan will establish clear milestones for emissions reduction, alongside specific, measurable, achievable, realistic and time-bound targets. It will

include a carbon sequestration plan and establish an approach to offsetting and will create toolkit for delivery.

- **Outcome 2** – Queenstown Lakes has a low-carbon transport system.

Keystone action: Develop transformational options for net-zero emissions public transport.

QLDC will partner with the Otago Regional Council to identify options for net-zero emissions public transport. Opportunities to trial innovative ideas will be explored with a view to wider implementation.

- **Outcome 3** – Built environment and infrastructure is climate responsive.

Keystone action: Utilise appropriate eco design and low impact principles in all QLDC community and operational property projects, including thorough consideration of timber construction.

Working with eco-design experts and third party funders, QLDC will utilise sustainable methods in all upcoming community and property projects in support of both climate change adaptation and mitigation. Lessons will be taken from New Zealand's first passive built community facility (Luggate Hall) and applied to all future projects. Opportunities to utilise timber construction and other sustainable practices will be explored in detail.

- **Outcome 4** – Communities are climate-conscious and resilient.

Keystone action: Undertake a study of the potential health and wellbeing implications of climate change in the district, in preparation for future action planning and resilience-building activity.

Working with healthcare and community groups, QLDC will undertake a study to understand the health and wellbeing impacts of climate change. The research will utilise global evidence bases, trends and forecast data. This information will be used to better understand what resilience means for the communities of the district in practice

- **Outcome 5** – The economy and natural environment thrive together.

Keystone Action: Work with the tourism system to become a net zero carbon and zero waste destination. Become the most sustainable tourism system in New Zealand.

QLDC recognises that tourism is currently the dominant sector here and is important to the economic wellbeing of residents. Tourism in the district has always been synonymous with innovation and invention, but now the challenge is for the entire system to develop a world-leading approach to sustainable tourism.

- 16 It's important to note that whilst the Action Plan is a yardstick, it's not intended to stifle innovation that could add value and pace to progress. QLDC is committed to retaining open ears and an open mind in relation to the delivery and development of the CAP. Much will depend on the development of strong partnerships and the identification of energised, effective initiatives.
- 17 QLDC's role in climate action is to be bold, progressive leaders, collaborators with the community, agents of change and effective public servants. QLDC has a big role to play, but cannot do it alone. The CAP can only be achieved if a collaborative approach with the community, partners and stakeholders is taken.
- 18 This report identifies and assesses the following reasonably practicable options for assessing the matter as required by section 77 of the Local Government Act 2002:
- 19 **Option 1: Approve the Queenstown Lakes District CAP for adoption.**

Advantages:

- 20 It demonstrates bold leadership and sends a message to business and the rest of the community that the Council is serious about addressing climate impacts;
- 21 It provides an opportunity for all sectors across the district to collaborate on achieving shared goals;
- 22 It sets the scene for further action plans and collaboration using a community participation approach;
- 23 It responds to the Vision Beyond 2050 aspirations;
- 24 It may help control the Council's insurance costs and reduce the risk of litigation;
- 25 It means that the Council can set its own climate action agenda based on local conditions and priorities without interference from external agencies;
- 26 It contributes to global, national and regional efforts to reduce greenhouse gas emissions.

Disadvantages:

- 27 There will be additional costs associated with implementing the actions in years 2 and 3 of the proposed Climate Action Plan, and subsequent Climate Action Plans;
- 28 Some ratepayers may be concerned that rates will increase to pay for climate change adaptation;
- 29 **Option 2: Reject the Queenstown Lakes District CAP, and ask staff to report back to the new Council with a revised Plan in early 21/22.**

Advantages

- 30 It will (temporarily) remove the additional climate-related costs outlined in the draft Action Plan.

Disadvantages

- 31 The goodwill built during the development of the CAP with iwi, stakeholders and the community may be lost;
- 32 Some of the actions identified in the proposed CAP cannot proceed;
- 33 There could be reputational risk to the Council by not proceeding with climate action initiatives at a time when the community expects action and leadership from local government;
- 34 Future opportunities for cross-sector collaboration may be lost.
- 35 **Advice: this report recommends Option 1.**

CONSULTATION PROCESS | HĀTEPE MATAPAKI:

> SIGNIFICANCE AND ENGAGEMENT | TE WHAKAMAHI I KĀ WHAKAARO HIRAKA

- 36 This matter is of high significance, as determined by reference to the Council's Significance and Engagement Policy because of the level of community interest and overall social, environment and economical importance to residents, visitors and businesses. The CAP is not inconsistent with existing policy and Strategy. It aligns to the Vision Beyond 2050 statements and the 10-Year Plan.
- 37 The persons who are affected by or interested in this matter are residents/ratepayers of the Queenstown Lakes District community, visitors to the district who may be affected by climate disruption, businesses, community organisations, other local and central government agencies, environmental groups, schools, Council staff, and households.
- 38 The Council has undertaken pre-consultation with the community through the My Place facilitated workshops and Let's Talk online engagement. Staff have consulted with local climate change experts and thought leaders via two focus groups and ongoing engagement, met with key stakeholders, including the Queenstown Airport Corporation, the Otago Regional Council (ORC) and the Central Otago District Council, and invited input from the following targeted stakeholders: Civil Defence and Emergency Management Otago; Environment Southland; ORC; Regional Tourism Organisations; Land Information New Zealand; neighbouring district councils, New Zealand Transport Agency, and the Department of Conservation. All the stakeholders who responded to the call for comments support the development of a CAP for the Queenstown Lakes District.

> MĀORI CONSULTATION | IWI RŪNANGA

Council staff have worked with Maree Kleinlangevelsloo and Cassino Doyle of Aukaha, and Dean Whaanga of Te Aō Marama during the draft stages of the CAP. Aukaha requested the inclusion of high level goals, which has been actioned, in addition to targets and measures, which will be determined during the first six months after the CAP's adoption.

RISK AND MITIGATIONS | NGĀ RARU TŪPONO ME NGĀ WHAKAMAURUTANGA

39 This matter relates to the environmental risk category. It is associated with RISK000519 within the QLDC Risk Register: Ineffective planning for climate change effects. This risk has been assessed as having a very high inherent risk rating.

40 The approval of the recommended option will support the Council by allowing staff to implement additional controls for this risk. This will be achieved by identifying climate-related risks and vulnerabilities and setting out a plan to mitigate those risks.

FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS | NGĀ RITENGA Ā-PŪTEA

41 In order to achieve the CAP, a reforecast for of \$184k has been requested for 19/20 and \$170k has been requested for 20/21 via the Annual Plan process. These funds are to establish the emissions monitoring system, develop the emissions-reduction master plan, establish the Climate Reference Group and to initiate smaller projects and engagement activities outlined in the CAP.

42 A Climate Action Plan Co-ordinator has also been requested through the Annual Plan process to ensure delivery of the CAP.

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

43 The following Council policies, strategies and bylaws were considered:

- The draft Climate Action Plan is aligned to the principles of the Vision Beyond 2050, in particular to Zero Carbon Communities and Disaster-Defying Resilience.
- Related policies, strategies and bylaws (including Management plans) are:
 - 2018-48 Infrastructure Strategy
 - 2018 Three Waters Asset Management Plan
 - 2018 Transportation Activity Management Plan
 - 2018 Waste Minimisation and Management Plan
- The QLDC Disability Policy has been considered in the development of this draft Action Plan.
- The recommended option is consistent with the principles set out in the named policy/policies.

44 This matter is included in the Ten Year Plan:

- *“QLDC is currently developing its first generation Climate Change Strategy – this strategy intends to broadly line up with the recent LGNZ Climate Change*

Programme – New Zealand’s commitment to the Paris Agreement. There are two streams to this strategy, the first being emissions reduction. Identifying projects that reduce Councils [sic] and the Community’s emissions i.e. public transport, energy efficiency on large items such as swimming pools and pumping costs for three waters. Other initiatives currently underway include measuring the emissions base line for Council, i.e. what do we emit today, this will allow us to measure and report our future performance. The second stream is about resilience and climate change, i.e. exploration of vulnerabilities and mitigation of the effects. If the future will be characterised by stormy and warmer weather, what is our exposure to that as a district? It is about identifying what aspects of a changing climate will most need to be responded to and what are our responses i.e. the district’s natural hazards are flooding and storms, warming temperatures and wind erosion. Identifying and actively pursuing ways to improve the district’s resilience”. (6.1 Demanding Natural Environment, p. 32)

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

45 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 a more effective resource management system.
- 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	Climate Action Plan
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