

### Minutes of a Council Workshop

Tuesday 17 December 2024 at 9.30am  
Council Chambers, Gorge Road, Queenstown

<b>Present:</b>	Mayor Lewers (online)	Councillor Ferguson (Chair)
	Councillor Bartlett	Councillor Smith
	Councillor Bruce	Councillor Tucker
	Councillor Cocks	Councillor Wong
	Councillor Gladding (online)	Councillor White
	Councillor Guy	Mr John Wellington
<b>Apologies:</b>	Councillor Whitehead	
<b>In attendance:</b>	Mike Theelen	Jan Maxwell
	Phoebe Arthur	Ian Dunbar
	Naell Crosby-Roe	Zoe Baptiste
	Michelle Morss	Caleb Dawson-Swale
	Isabelle Logez	Carrie Williams
	Sean Gillespie	Ken Bailey
	Marie Day	Jon Winterbottom
	Gareth Noble	Briana Pringle
	Jeannie Galavazi	Meaghan Miller
	Kat Banyard	Katherine Harbrow
	Paddy Cribb	Alison Kelly
	Charlotte Wallis	Rebecca Pitts
	Tony Avery	Jeremy Payze
	Peter Harris	
	No members of the public	No members of the media

No.	Agenda Item	Actions
1.	<p><b><u>Draft Events Policy</u></b></p> <p>The purpose of this workshop was to provide early input into the new Events Policy and note key process improvement initiatives.</p> <p>Michelle Morss introduced the item, explaining the background and context for the development of an updated Events Policy. Ms Morss highlighted the unique challenges associated with holding events in the district.</p> <p>Officers spoke to a PowerPoint presentation.</p>	

No.	Agenda Item	Actions
	<p>Dan Crosby introduced the first part of the discussion, which was focused on process improvements, and introduced Zoe Baptiste.</p> <p>Ms Baptiste provided an overview of the process review undertaken by Mr Crosby's team, then talked through the process framework related to the development of the draft Events Policy.</p> <p>Officers clarified that the Events Policy would apply to private events where council assets or areas of regulation were implicated. Commercial versus community events is a blurred line, and both could be covered by the policy.</p> <p>Jan Maxwell introduced Phoebe Arthur and thanked Ms Arthur and Ms Baptiste for their work in this space. Ms Arthur emphasised the unique challenges of holding events in the district and highlighted the potential positive and negative impacts of events. Clarified that would be no major changes to the 2025 grants process. Explained how the events policy related to QLDC's Vision Beyond 2050 relevant QLDC strategies and policies, and also highlighted guides and resources that would assist with implementation of the policy.</p> <p>Officers requested feedback over the delivery objectives for events.</p> <p>The discussion included the following points (among others):</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Clarification that competing priority of regular community use of venues vs use for events would not be set via Events Policy but rather via reserve management plans and venue guides.</li> <li>• Issues related to free speech in considering whether certain events should be permitted; officers clarified that Objective 2 of the draft policy refers to QLDC's statement of Diversity, Equity and Inclusion, also guidelines were being developed and even though guidelines don't come to council, staff could receive and incorporate councillor feedback on those.</li> <li>• Discussion of issues beyond the policy related to monitoring compliance, consistent and efficient reporting, event bidding, sustainability expectations, and fees for event permits.</li> </ul>	

No.	Agenda Item	Actions
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Councillors offered feedback related to the size and scope of the policy, whether there is too much regulation/health and safety controls that are prohibitive; Councillors noted various events, e.g. LUMA and Matariki, that have been lost or are at risk.</li> <li>• Officers clarified that there are liabilities with respect to Health and Safety, and that some of these events take place in a QLDC space.</li> </ul> <p><b>Attachments:</b>  <b>Attachment A:</b> <i>Draft Events Policy (see workshop agenda)</i>  <b>Attachment B:</b> <i>Presentation Slides (see attached)</i></p>	
2.	<p><b><u>QLDC Wildfire program for the 2024/25 season</u></b></p> <p>The purpose of this briefing was to inform Council about the Wildfire closure plan for the 2024/25 season.</p> <p>Briana Pringle and Kat Banyard spoke a PowerPoint, noting key elements of the program including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• A total fire ban on three reserves (Te-Taumata-o-Hakitekura Ben Lomond, Te Tapunui Queenstown Hill and Mount Iron Recreation Reserves)</li> <li>• Signage and education</li> <li>• Activity controls to manage wildfire risk within the reserves</li> <li>• Environmental Monitoring Systems</li> <li>• Wildlife Closure Plan</li> </ul> <p>Noted that working very closely with FENZ, which will support QLDC over the upcoming season.</p> <p>Highlighted changes to the program based on experience of prior seasons, including simplification of trigger points leading to closures, new clearer signage, and review of where reserves would be closed or remain open. Noted updated maps of potential closures for each reserve, which would be posted at the relevant reserve.</p> <p>Overview of Commercial Stakeholder Group, which is meeting regularly with QLDC and FENZ to discuss how to reduce risk of fire at Ben Lomond reserve. Clarified this is a voluntary plan in which FENZ would take a leadership role.</p>	Officers to confirm whether can share copy of Ben Lomond Commercial Stakeholder Voluntary Wildfire Management Plan 2024/25 and FENZ Review of Ben Lomond Wildfire Plan with councillors and, if so, to share these plans.

No.	Agenda Item	Actions
	<p>Update on the uncontrolled burn, which entered the Project Tohu Coronet site in October 2024. Monitoring will continue for next few months to confirm if the fire is out. Noted that no impact at this time on Project Tohu and its milestones.</p> <p>Concern raised about whether the Environmental Monitoring signage, and data capture are compliant with QLDC policy. Officers noted responses to last year's concerns over privacy breaches from the system. Officers indicated would follow up on whether the data is being appropriately handled.</p> <p><b>Attachments:</b> <i>Attachment A: Presentation Slides (see attached)</i></p>	
3.	<p><b><u>Draft Annual Plan 2025-2026: Indicative funding analysis &amp; community engagement</u></b></p> <p>The purpose of this workshop was to present key elements of the planning and initial stages of Annual Plan 2025-2026, and to validate a proposed inform and engagement approach and seek relevant direction.</p> <p>Dan Crosby introduced the officers who would be presenting during the item. Officers spoke to a PowerPoint.</p> <p>Caleb Dawson-Swale provided an overview of the timeline, noting that the goal was to adopt the Annual Plan at the 26 June 2025 Council Meeting.</p> <p>Katherine Harbrow introduced discussion of financial aspects of the Annual Plan. Highlighted key assumptions. Noted that year 2 of LTP would require rates around 19% and the goal was to reduce this to the LTP target of 13.5%.</p> <p>Paddy Cribb and Alison Kelly gave an overview of cost pressures related to operating expenses, which included external cost pressures (e.g. impacts of Central Government policies), weather-related events, supplier contract increases, salary/wages increases, and Councillor remuneration pool increases.</p> <p>Outlined a list of opportunities to increase revenue so as to limit increase in rates. These included – among other things</p>	<p>In response to query staff confirmed they were looking at whether there could be further savings made.</p> <p>A workshop discussion to be held in 2025 to discuss councillors thoughts on revenue through fees and charges (user pays) or through rates – noting existing policy settings in the Revenue and Financing policy.</p>

No.	Agenda Item	Actions
	<p>- investigation of property sales, parking revenue increases, inflation added to Development Contribution (DC) charges, and various financial tools.</p> <p>Mr Theelen requested that councillors provide a steer to ensure that officers not be challenged that fees and charges are too high. If Council wishes to set different targets on fees and charges this would require a higher target for rates increases.</p> <p>Jeremy Payze spoke to the Capex budget for the 2025/26 Annual Plan, highlighting proposed adjustments to the year 2 LTP budget in order to secure \$13.6M decrease. There was discussion of fees for venues, the meaning of level of services, and when the MRF project would begin.</p> <p>Naell Crosby-Roe and Meaghan Miller spoke to the proposed community engagement approach, noting there was no requirement to consult given that no material/significant changes to the Annual Plan are being proposed. Proposed a community update campaign rather than a full community consultation. Councillors shared different views on whether a formal consultation would be advisable including: concern that not consulting at same level as previous years might be perceived as not listening to the community, while also noted that formal consultation would incur greater cost.</p> <p><b>Attachments:</b> <b>Attachment A:</b> <i>Presentation Slides (see attached)</i></p>	

*The workshop concluded at 11.50pm*

Item 1 Attachment B: Presentation

# Draft Events Policy and related process improvements

Council workshop  
17 December 2024

# Agenda

1. Background
2. Process improvements
3. Draft Events Policy
4. Issues identified beyond the policy



## Objectives

- Simplify Customer Experience
- Maximise Efficiency
- Mitigate Risks
- Decision making is transparent and balances the needs of event organisers, the community and QLDC assets
- Process alignment with the policy objectives



## Recommendations

- Specific Process Improvements
- Technology Solution
- Finance and Legal Clarifications
- Responsibilities



# Process Framework



# Expected outcomes

- Online tools, guides and application process
- Single point of entry
- Visibility of application
- Clarity and transparency of QLDC decision processes
- Process supports the policy objectives
- Reduced effort and friction for organisers and QLDC staff

# Draft Events Policy

- Queenstown Lakes district is a unique place to hold events
- New policy has a broader focus - not just economic outcomes
- Aims to mirror community expectations
- No changes to 25/26 contestable events funding round



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graph TD; A[Vision Beyond 2050] --- B[Relevant strategies and plans  
e.g. Climate and Biodiversity, Creativity, Culture and Heritage, Destination Management, Diversification];
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## Vision Beyond 2050

Relevant strategies and plans  
e.g. Climate and Biodiversity, Creativity, Culture and Heritage, Destination Management, Diversification

Vision Beyond 2050

Relevant strategies and plans  
e.g. Climate and Biodiversity, Creativity, Culture and  
Heritage, Destination Management, Diversification

Outlines what events  
should contribute to

Events Policy

Clarifies how  
Council makes  
decisions

Events Policy Guidelines

Operational guidelines e.g.  
Reserve management plans  
Venues guidelines

Vision Beyond 2050

Relevant strategies and plans  
e.g. Climate and Biodiversity, Creativity, Culture and  
Heritage, Destination Management, Diversification

Outlines what events  
should contribute to

Events Policy

Clarifies how  
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decisions

Events Policy Guidelines

Operational guidelines e.g.  
Reserve management plans  
Venues guidelines

Improvements  
to implement  
alongside the  
Policy

Events Policy Action Plan

Event Organiser Handbook

Helps organisers to put on  
an event in our district

# Community-building objectives:

- Bring people together in ways that help create a positive sense of community.
- Create opportunities for residents and visitors to participate in and attend events.
- Respect and celebrate Mātauraka Kāi Tahu.
- Protect and celebrate the unique identity of this place.

*Is there anything missing?*

*Do these objectives reflect the concerns from the community?*

# Event delivery objectives

- Ensure the safety of event participants, workers, residents and audiences.
- Respect QLDC's statement of Diversity, Equity and Inclusion.
- Minimise the adverse impacts of events on the district, including the environment.
- Maximise the local economic benefit that events bring by using local suppliers and organisers.

*Is there anything missing?*

*Do these objectives reflect the concerns from the community?*



# Draft timeline to approval

## February 2025

- Community and sector feedback (4 weeks) via Let's Talk survey
- 3 x hui targeting the events sector (open to the public)

## May 2025

- Council workshop
- Wānaka-Upper Clutha Community Board meeting

## June 2025

- Full Council for approval of Policy

*Is there anyone in particular we should consult with?*

# Issues identified beyond the policy

1. Monitoring compliance
2. Consistent and efficient reporting
3. Event bidding
4. Sustainability expectations
5. Fees for event permits





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# QLDC WILDFIRE PROGRAM 2024/25 SEASON

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DECEMBER 2024 PRESENTATION

# QLDC Wildfire Program

The 2024/25 wildfire program includes:

- Total Fire Ban on Te-Taumata-o-Hakitekura Ben Lomond, Te Tapunui Queenstown Hill and Mount Iron Recreation Reserves
- Signage and education
- Activity Controls to Manage Wildfire Risk within Reserves
- Environmental Monitoring Systems
- Wildfire Closure plan

## Fire and Emergency New Zealand (FENZ)

FENZ is the entity mandated to regulate fire safety and fire prevention, and to deliver fire response and suppression.

- FENZ have taken an active role supporting and endorsing QLDC's wildfire 2024/25 program

# QLDC Wildfire Closure plan

In July QLDC completed a review of the 2023/24 wildfire closure plan. The following changes were incorporated into this seasons planning:

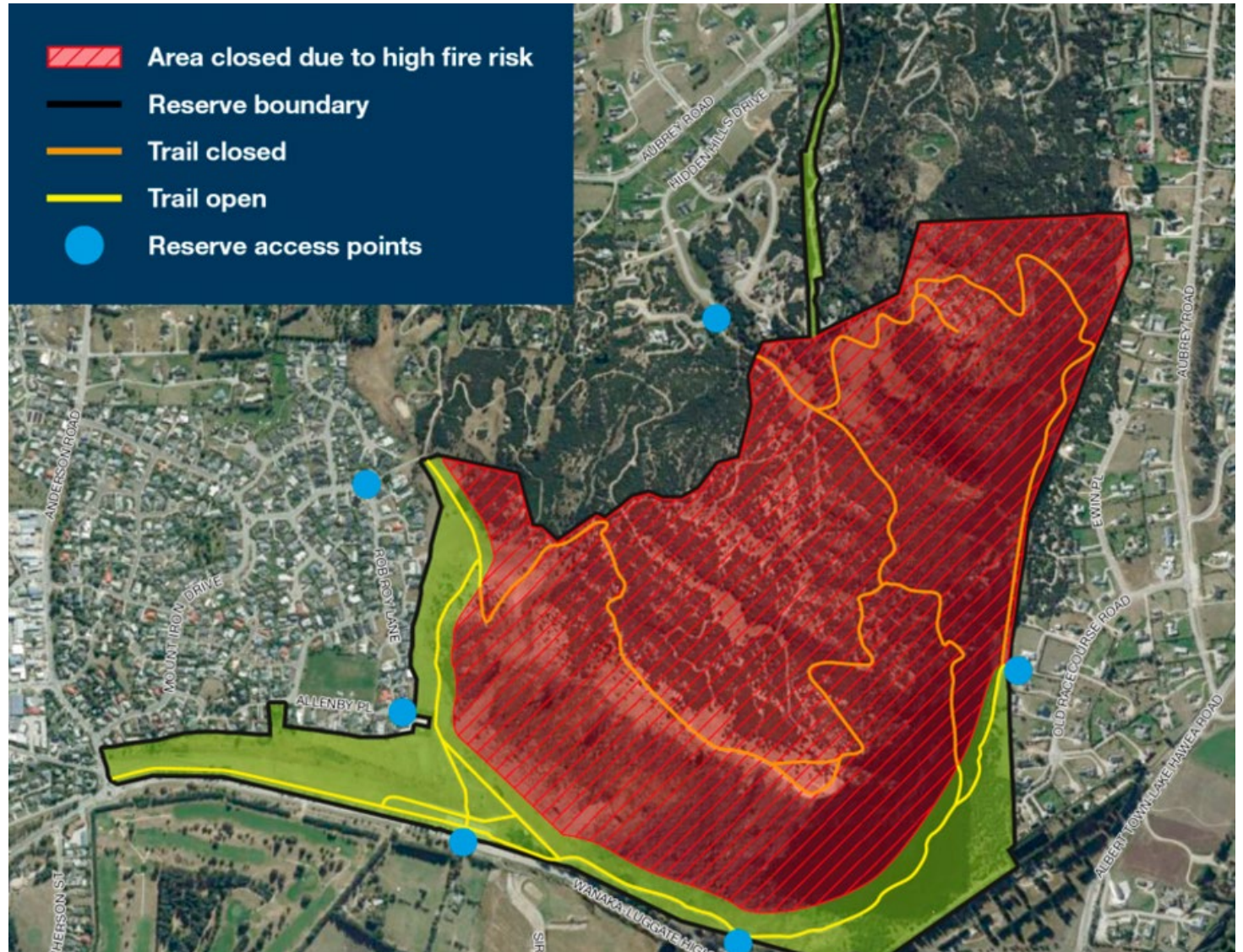
- The closure trigger points were simplified within the plan
- New signage
- Reviewed where reserves are closed or may remain open

*Closures could be for the entire reserve for a period of days, or for certain parts of reserves, or at peak times of fire risk during the day (often in the afternoons).*



# Mount Iron Reserve

- Last season QLDC closed Mount Iron all reserve area for 3 half days. Generally, there was good adherence to the closure.
- This season safe spaces where people can exit the reserve easily will remain open during a closure.
- DOC will share messaging if the reserve is to be closed.



# Te Tapunui Queenstown Hill Reserve

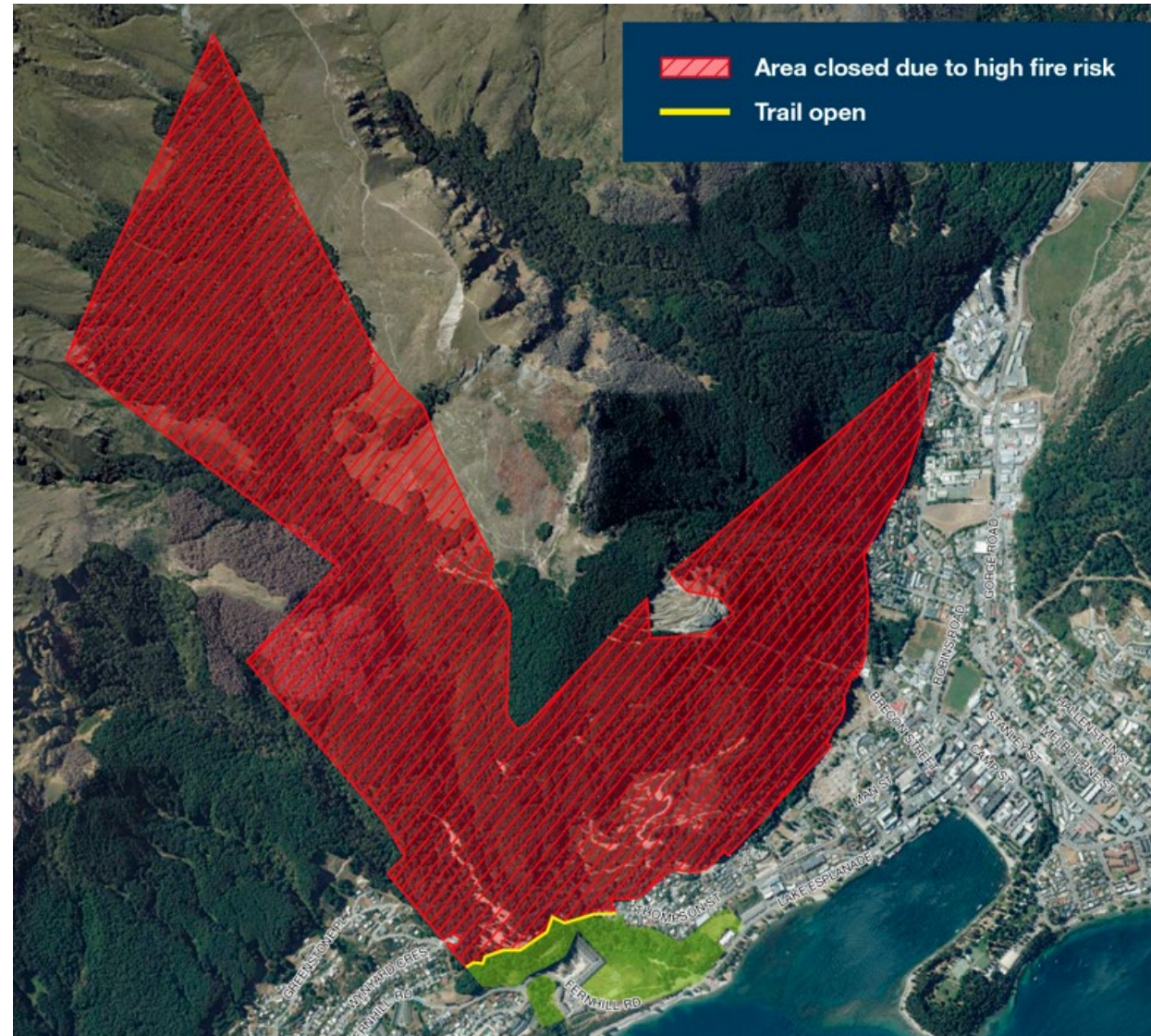
- No closures last season.
- Due to the steep characteristics of the reserve there are no areas which could remain open during a closure.





# Te-Taumata-o-Hakitekura Ben Lomond Reserve

- No closures last season
- Safe spaces where people can exit the reserve easily will remain open during a closure this season.
- Please note that the Skyline Enterprises lease has a specific fire plan endorsed and supported by FENZ.



# Te-Taumata-o-Hakitekura Ben Lomond Commercial Stakeholder Group

- In June 2024 the ‘Stakeholders’ presented the ‘Wildfire Readiness Plan’ to QLDC, the plan identified actions to **remove** the wildfire risk from lease areas.
- The plan was presented to a Council workshop in July 2024.
- QLDC responded formally to Skyline Enterprises about the ‘Wildfire Readiness Plan’ in October 2024
- QLDC are yet to understand if Skyline will progress with the implementation of the ‘Wildfire Readiness Plan’.
- A FENZ wildfire expert visited the reserve on the 4<sup>th</sup> December 2024 to review the Wildfire Readiness Plan. The report on the finding will be shared with the Stakeholders and QLDC in late December.

# Te-Taumata-o-Hakitekura Ben Lomond Stakeholder plan for the 2024/25 wildfire season



- The Stakeholders presented a comprehensive 'Wildfire Management Plan' to FENZ and QLDC for the 2024/25 season. The plan allows the stakeholders to operate at a reduced capacity when the Reserve is closed.
- FENZ support and endorse the plan, as an effective and sustainable way to mitigate current wildfire risk in the commercial use area.
- Stakeholders have entered into the plan voluntarily.
- FENZ will take a leadership role in determining how risk is to be managed in that area and will assist the Stakeholders to monitor and review their wildfire risk controls during the season.
- Plan will be continually reviewed by all parties.

# Project Tohu Coronet – uncontrolled burn

- > FENZ reported that an uncontrolled burn entered the Project Tohu Coronet site in Oct 24
- > In Nov 24 FENZ returned to the site as the fire had spread up the slope due to high winds.
- > For 3 weeks FENZ worked dampening hot spots across the site with a digger and ground crews.
- > At the end of Nov FENZ stood down their resources. FENZ will continue to monitor the site over the next few months to confirm if the fire out.
- > FENZ have put in place a prohibited fire zone across the area
- > The fire has not effected the Project Tohu work program



# Questions?



# Draft Annual Plan 2025/26

Indicative funding analysis & community engagement

Tuesday 17<sup>th</sup> December 2024

# Agenda

- Timeline
- LTP year 2 & Key financial assumptions
- Operating expenses – Cost pressures
- Opportunities
- Proposed Fees & Charges Policy changes
- Capex – current year 2024/25 reforecast and draft CAPEX 2025/26
- Proposed community engagement approach
- LTP 27-37 engagement build up
- Next steps

# Timeline

Council workshop

Council workshop

Council workshop

Council meeting to adopt Fees & Charges for consultation

Formal consultation on Fees and Charges

Hearings & Deliberations

Draft Annual Plan 2025-2026 presented to Council for adoption

Adopted Annual Plan 2025-2026 published on external channels

Nov

Dec

Jan

Feb

Mar

Apr

May

Jun

July

Communication and Engagement Approach

User fees and charges review & planning

Capex review & planning

Opex and salary & wages review & planning

Fees and charges Statement of Proposal drafted

Fees & Charges Submissions review & analysis

Annual Plan drafted

Annual Plan finalisation



# Year 2 LTP (2025/26)

Financial Year End 30 June	2024/25	2025/26	2026/27	2027/28	2028/29	2029/30	2030/31	2031/32	2032/33	2033/34
Net Rates Increase (after growth)	15.8%	13.5%	11.6%	8.5%	11.1%	5.1%	2.7%	3.4%	2.3%	1.3%
Gross Rates Increase (before growth)	19.6%	17.5%	15.5%	12.3%	15.0%	8.8%	6.3%	7.0%	5.9%	4.9%
Limit	20.0%	20.0%	16.0%	16.0%	16.0%	10.0%	10.0%	10.0%	10.0%	10.0%
Rating Unit Projections	33,823	34,727	35,863	36,999	38,135	39,271	40,406	41,542	42,678	43,814

- Initial 2025/26 Annual Plan based on current business settings has Rates increase of 19.2% (after growth)
- Focus is on reducing proposed rates to the forecast 2025 figure of 13.5% (after growth)

# LTP High level key financial assumptions

## **Year 2 LTP (2025/26) includes the following:**

- Inflation based on BERL rates
- Growth factor of 4%
- Fees & charges include CPI increases

# Operating expenses – cost pressures

Various external cost pressures have been identified for 2025/26, including:

- Central Govt impact
  - Waste minimisation fees diversion - Unique Emissions Factor (UEF)
  - Reduction in NZTA subsidies
  - Potential water levy from water regulators (Taumata Arowai / Commerce Commission)
- Weather related events
- Supplier contract increases
- Salary & Wages for example living wage increase and parental leave
- Increase in Councillor remuneration pool

*General Managers and their teams are working through strategies to absorb these additional costs, to enable delivery of YR2 LTP 2024-2034 on budget, and within indicated rates increase of 13.5% (e.g. Further internal review and budget refinement including professional services etc.)*

# Opportunities

A not-exhaustive list of savings will review -

- Investigate Property sales
- Increase parking revenue to recover costs / provide fair access to parking:
  - Increasing period of paid parking to include 6-9pm
  - Introducing paid parking throughout Queenstown and Wanaka CBD
  - Reviewing and increasing off-street parking charges
  - Other?
- Inflation added to Development Contribution (DC) charges
- DIA led review of DC models and revised LGA provisions
- Savings re interest rate reduction on loans
- Use different inflation rates from BERL
- Increase Council borrowing limit with LGFA to provide headroom
- Internal service costs (as above)

# Proposed Fees & Charges Policy changes

CPI increase for all other fees & charges as per LTP Year 2 with some exceptions e.g. Planning and Development fees, rounding

Potential fee increases that may be above CPI increase:

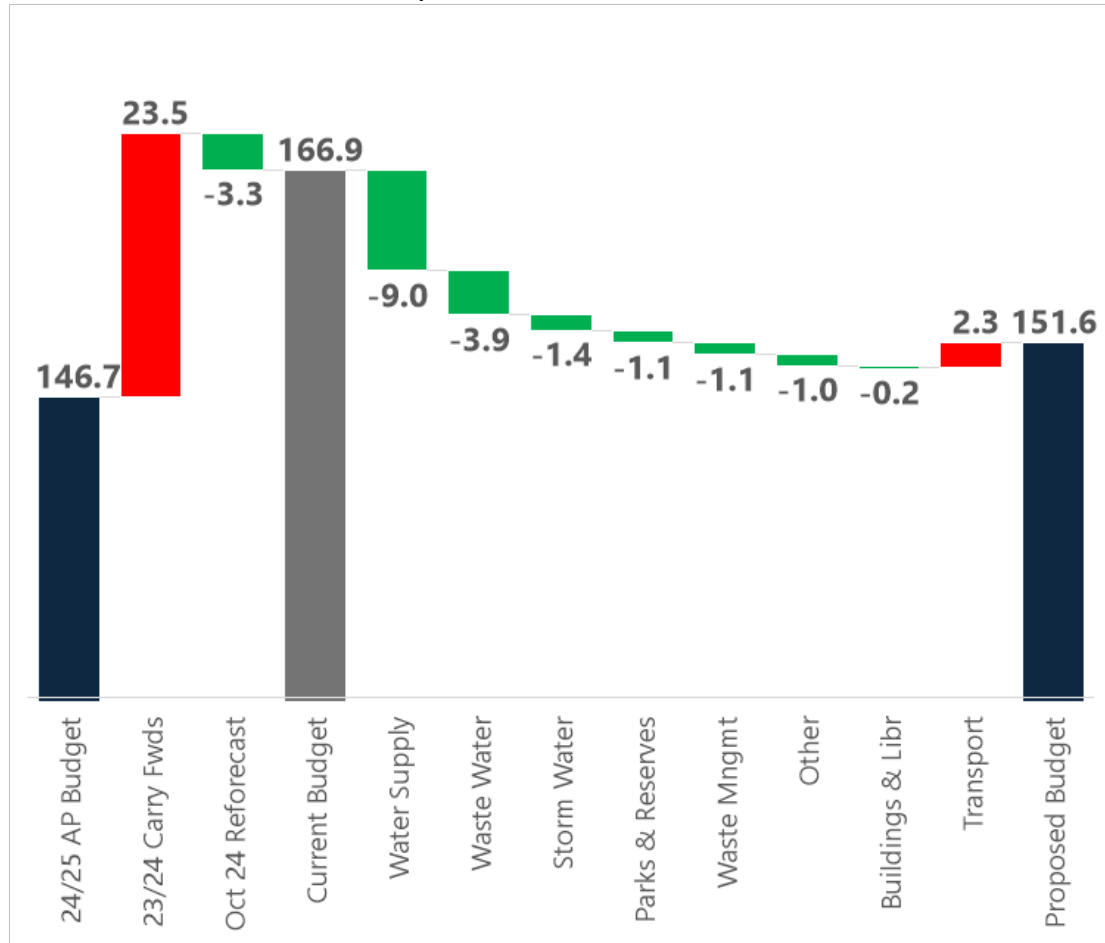
- Proposed new fee charge for issuing Event Permits (currently no fee for this)

Other:

- Checking the Revenue and Financing Policy compliance against these decisions
- Increased management of bad debts to reduce exposure – chasing outstanding fee income (planning and building) and rates arrears

# Capex – current year 2024/25 reforecast

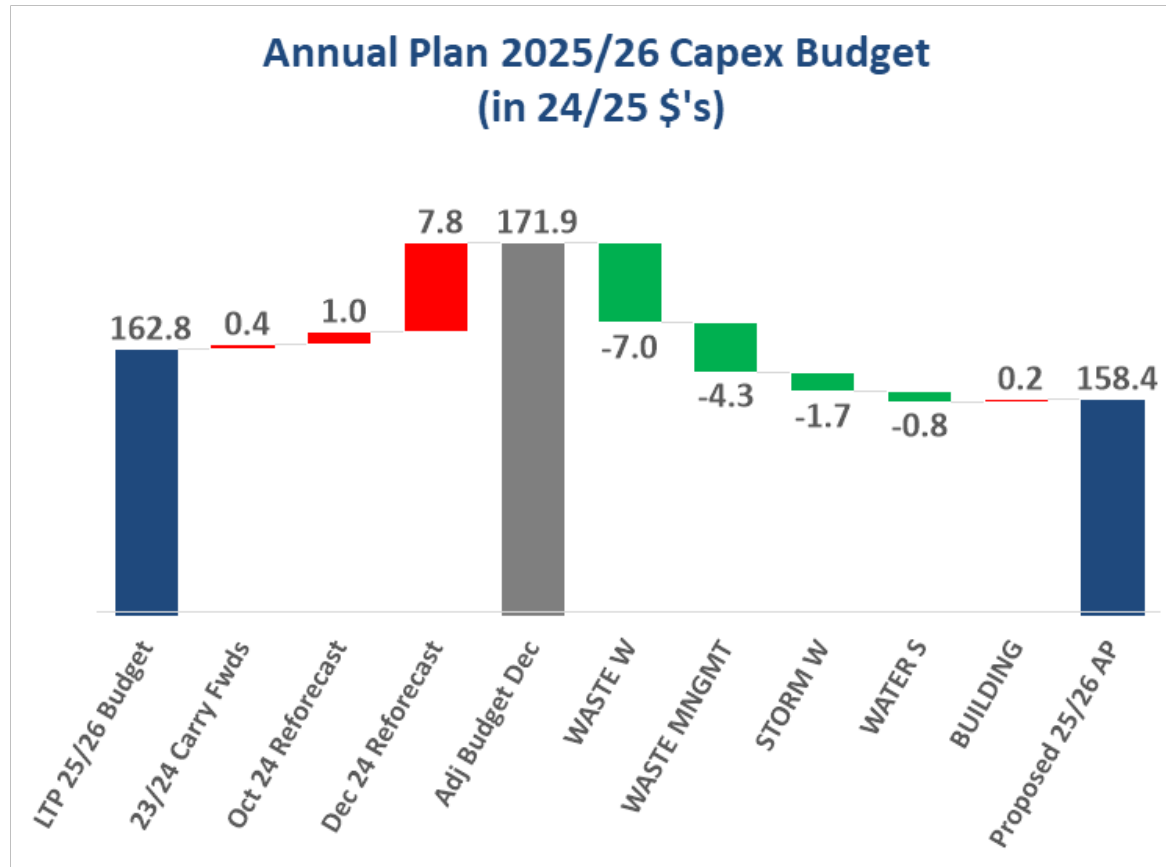
24/25 Capital Reforecast December 2024- \$M



**TOTAL reduction of \$15.4M favourable to 2024/25 budgets**

- **WATER SUPPLY** reduction of **\$9.0M** - Reflect revised project delivery timelines including deferrals of \$4.0M for Compliance Response UV Treatment, \$3.1M for Kingston New WS Scheme, and \$0.9M for Hāwea Level of Service Improvements. \$2.1M deferral for Hāwea Water Supply Demand Management relates to a forecast delivery surplus.
- **WASTE WATER** reduction of **\$3.9M** - Reflect revised project delivery timelines including deferrals of \$2.0M for Project Pure Aeration Grid Renewal, \$1.9m for CBD to Frankton Reticulation and \$1.7M for Upper Clutha Conveyance Scheme. Offset with brought forwards of \$1.2M for Hanley's Farm Pump Station and \$492k for Shotover Disposal Field.
- **STORM WATER** reduction of **\$1.4M** - Predominantly due to a deferral of \$1.3M for Kingston Storm Water Scheme.
- **PARKS & RESERVES** reduction of **\$1.1M** ' Includes a deferral of \$0.6M for Coronet Forest in line with the agreed contract schedule and \$0.5M for Rockfall Mitigation design.
- **WASTE MANAGEMENT** reduction of **\$1.1M** - Includes deferral of \$1.0M for New Waste Facilities based on current design programme.
- **OTHER** reduction of **\$1.0M** - Deferrals of \$500k for Whakatipu Priority Growth Areas and \$123k for Procurement Systems along with \$340k reallocated towards SH6/6A Storm Water upgrades
- **BUILDINGS & LIBRARIES** reduction of **\$0.2M** ' Deferrals of \$155k for Queenstown Bay Masterplan and \$50k for Libraries Digital Repository. Plus minor transfers.
- **TRANSPORT** reduction of **\$2.3M** Predominantly transfers between transport projects to maximise subsidies including \$1.1M from the Transport Choices fund towards Wānaka School to Pool Active Travel and Arthurs Point to CBD Active Travel. Plus \$195k for the recently announced additional NZTA funding towards Crown Range Resilience.

# Capex – Year 2 (proposed 25/26 annual plan)



Capital Expenditure – AP25/26 Budget decrease of **\$13.6M** favourable to \$158.4M

- **WASTE WATER** decrease of **\$7.0M** - Due to deferrals of \$0.2M for Frankton Beach to Shotover Conveyance, \$0.6M for Southwest Wanaka Conveyance Scheme and \$5.1M for Upper Clutha Conveyance Scheme to reflect latest project forecast. \$1.1M deferral for Project Shotover Stage 3 reflecting likely project surplus on completion.
- **WASTE MANAGEMENT** decrease of **\$4.3m** - New Waste facilities \$4.8M from Y2 to Y6, better reflecting revised project delivery timing.
- **STORM WATER** decrease of **\$1.7M** - Rockabilly Gully Erosion Protection \$2.0M deferral Y2 to 3 and to align with latest project forecast. \$0.3M new funding required for State highway 6/6a improvements (to leverage delivery opportunity available through NZTA's intersection upgrade) alongside \$0.4m added to Y1 in the December reforecast.
- **WATER SUPPLY** decrease of **\$0.8M** - Deferrals of \$0.25M for Beacon Point Supply Upgrades and \$0.6m for Hawea Scheme Upgrades phasing based on latest cashflow.
- **BUILDING** Increase of **\$0.2M** - Wanaka Airport Renewals brought forward to respond to CAA qualification directive.
- **TRANSPORT** - Note there is a separate Transport Funding options report going to Council in December discusses adjustments to 1 to 3 that will need to be reflected. It is expected that the budgets will remain within the existing funding envelope.

# Proposed community engagement approach

- With no material / significant changes there is no requirement to consult (LGA 2002 s95(2A))
  - No ability to make material / significant changes
  - Short timeframe since the LTP was consulted on and adopted – little has changed in the messaging, e.g. focus on the basics / must do
  - Multiple other consultation processes anticipated around this time
- Community update campaign (January – June)
  - Signal this “no consultation process”, how this differs from what people normally see, and why its different this time
  - Provide an update on progress against key programmes of work and investment
  - Signal (late April) visibility of the proposed plan on the website
- User fees and charges will be a separate SCP



# LTP engagement build up

- Plan to begin an extended Long Term Plan 2027-37 pre-engagement process toward the end of 2025 (post-election) that will evolve over the development of the plan.
- Acknowledges that submitters often bring ideas and proposals through the formal consultation period that cannot be responded to. This is an opportunity to surface and respond to those sooner.
- Also intended to help shape strategic priorities from the outset.
- Further information will be provided in the new year.

# Next steps

- 11 February: Next Council workshop to present proposed changes to fees and charges and updated financial analysis for 2025-2026
- End of February–early March: Additional Council workshop, if needed
- 20 March: Council meeting to adopt fees & charges for consultation
- 21 March-30 April: Formal consultation on fees and charges
- 27–29 May: Hearings & deliberations on fees and charges
- 26 June: Draft Annual Plan 2025-2026 presented to Council for adoption
- By 31 July: Adopted Annual Plan 2025-2026 published on external channels