

QLDC Council
23 April 2020

Report for Agenda Item | Rīpoata moto e Rāraki take 5

Department: Corporate Services

Title | Taitara: COVID-19 Recovery Approach

PURPOSE OF THE REPORT | TE TAKE MŌ TE PŪRONGO

The purpose of this report is to provide a high-level overview of the recovery approach being undertaken in response to COVID-19.

RECOMMENDATION | NGĀ TŪTOHUNGA

- 1 That Council **notes** the contents of the report.

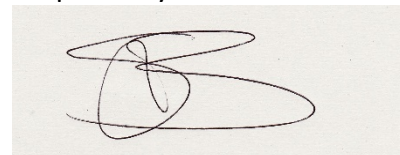
Prepared by:



Name: Michelle Morss
Title: **Deputy Recovery Manager**
(Strategy and Development
Manager - Corporate Services)

16/04/2020

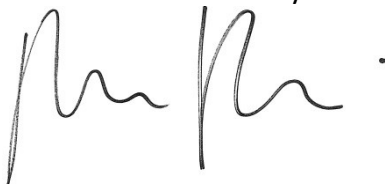
Prepared by:



Name: Stephen Batstone
Title: **Recovery Manager**
(Strategy and Asset Planning
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Infrastructure)

16/04/2020

Reviewed and Authorised by:



Name: Meaghan Miller
Title: **General Manager Corporate Services**

16/04/2020

CONTEXT | HOROPAKI

- 1 In late 2019, cases of a novel coronavirus were reported in Wuhan, China, which rapidly spread to other countries during January and February of 2020. New Zealand experienced its first case on 28 February 2020, with the World Health Organisation declaring a pandemic on 11 March 2020.
- 2 QLDC activated its Emergency Operations Centre (EOC) in a monitoring capacity in support of the Southern District Health Board (SDHB) on 14 March 2020 and the first positive case in the district was confirmed on 15 March 2020. The EOC was fully activated and the Recovery Team activated as part of that development. The Recovery Manager reports to the Controller within the structure.
- 3 The QLDC Recovery Team prepared an initial Recovery Action Plan on 17 March (attached as Attachment A). This addressed initial ideas, structures and approach; a more detailed iteration is currently being prepared.
- 4 On 23 March 2020 New Zealand moved into Alert Level 3, moving to Alert Level 4 (lockdown) 48 hours later. On 25 March 2020 a State of National Emergency was declared, which has been repeatedly extended and remained in place at the time of writing this report (16 April 2020).
- 5 New Zealand currently has 1,386 positive cases, of which 213 are within the SDHB area. This is the highest number of cases across all DHBs and is also the highest number of positive cases per headcount of population. Cases within the district represent a disproportionately high figure of 40%.
- 6 Whilst this clearly poses significant immediate challenges for the EOC response in supporting the healthcare agencies, the focus of the Recovery Team is on short, medium and long-term implications of COVID-19 that do not relate to healthcare treatment of the disease.
- 7 Recovery is a term with specific meaning in the civil defence structure. Recovery is “the co-ordinated efforts and processes to bring about the immediate, medium and long term holistic regeneration and enhancement of a community following an emergency” (CDEM Act 2002). Recovery should:
 - support cultural and physical well-being of individuals and communities
 - Minimise the escalation of the consequences of the disaster
 - Reduce future exposure to hazards and their associate risks – i.e. build resilience
 - Take opportunities to regenerate and enhance communities in ways that will meet future needs (across the social, economic, natural and built environments).
- 8 Furthermore, Recovery Managers obtain specific powers during any Transition Phase when moving from Response to Recovery. At this stage, it is unclear if any such Transition Phase would be instituted at a national, regional or local level. Further definition is being sought via the CDEM structures.

- 9 As a tourism-dominated economy, the district has been severely negatively impacted by COVID-19. Westpac has recently forecast a contraction in offshore visitor spending of \$12B in 2020, and \$5B in 2021¹. The significant reduction of international visitor numbers, and the potential recessionary effects on domestic visitors, places numerous local businesses at risk. This could create unemployment that will be disproportionate to the district’s population – even accounting for the effect that visitors increase average daily population by a significant margin. Over 50% of all jobs in the district are in tourism, food, accommodation or construction sectors², all of which will be severely impacted by COVID-19.
- 10 The effects of this are already being felt in parts of the community, with over 3,000 people registering for welfare support via the EOC under CDEM funding mechanisms. It is anticipated that as the district exits the national emergency, it will be experiencing a far higher, immediate requirement for social and economic support than other parts of the country. Furthermore, the district is home to high numbers of migrant workers, many of whom are not able to claim financial support from the Ministry for Social Development under the terms of their visas. QLDC Mayor Jim Boulton has raised this issue with Central Government to highlight the potential of a significant humanitarian crisis, although this enormous challenge remains unresolved.

ANALYSIS AND ADVICE | TATĀRITANGA ME NGĀ TOHUTOHU

- 11 Previous examples of recovery management relate to natural disasters where a large component of the work has been a requirement to physically rebuild and make a specific geographic location resilient. Recovery in the context of a global pandemic has a much different balance between the direct damage caused by the “event” (impact on public health) and the indirect economic and social effects that resulted, primarily from the policy actions of national and global governments.
- 12 Recovery within the context of a global pandemic is a different proposition that will require local knowledge, regional collaboration, national support and international understanding. For example, and unlike other natural hazard events, our ability to recover will, for some time, be strongly influenced by policy decisions and consumer preferences outside New Zealand.
- 13 Recovery is also not an initiative that sits within one organisation. It requires inter-sectoral collaboration, the empowerment of grass-roots initiatives and the appropriate channelling of good ideas. There is a natural tension in recovery initiatives between the desire to rebuild the familiar, with the desire to rebuild better. A successful recovery approach will seek to balance and satisfy both.
- 14 Equally recovery is not the prerogative of one agency or group. While Council is charged with a clear recovery role under the CDEM legislation that recovery work is also complemented by the initiatives of groups and individuals, such as those being led by the Mayor, other key leaders in our communities, the chambers and motivated groups across

¹ <https://www.westpac.co.nz/assets/Business/Economic-Updates/2020/Bulletins-2020/Tourism-Bulletin-April-2020-Westpac-NZ.pdf>

² Infometrics 2019 data

the district and country. Similarly, recovery is not a single agreed pathway; it happens through a multitude of channels. The Canterbury earthquake demonstrated that while CERA led the crown recovery the efforts of business groups, community groups, Councils, social agencies etc. all contributed and strengthened the recovery pathway. Recovery science tells us that recovery up is stronger than recovery down, so the range of ideas, discussion and action across multiple frameworks is vital and healthy

- 15 There are a number of key learnings from recovery research that will be relevant during the development of the next Recovery Action Plan (RAP). The RAP will focus on the economic, social, environmental and cultural wellbeing of the district. Research shows that the reduction of uncertainty and the maintenance of pace in the recovery process will be key to its success. Essentially, Recovery requires leadership, a clear vision, a management structure, resources, an appetite for pace and a compelling story to tell.
- 16 Vision Beyond 2050 continues to provide strong, clear direction within the context of Recovery. Retaining that strategic course will enable Recovery work to complement and align with existing plans and strategies, most notably the Climate Action Plan and the development of the Spatial Plan. The three principles of Whaiora (Grow Well) will underpin the work of the Recovery Team – resilience, sustainability and wellbeing.
- 17 QLDC has responded quickly in developing its initial Recovery Team. The Recovery Team consists of a Recovery Manager (Steve Batstone), Deputy Recovery Manager and Planning (Michelle Morss), Economic Recovery (Peter Harris), Community Recovery (Marie Day), Infrastructure (Caroline Dumas), Climate Action (Katherine Durman), Finance (Paddy Cribb), Data and Intelligence (Katherine Davies) and Team Support (Lyndal Blatch). The Team will be agile to changing requirements, building collaborative internal and external working groups to address particular issues and problems.
- 18 The role of the Recovery Team is to:
 - Plan for the social and economic recovery of the district in pursuit of Vision Beyond 2050 in the RAP.
 - Implement key initiatives via a network of key partners, groups and leaders.
 - Supporting a network of collaboration between government, charities, businesses, community groups and the public.
 - Ensure the flow of reliable information and data.
 - Build a strong relationship with the EOC to ensure consistency of approach, evolution and consistency.
 - Managing key stakeholders and key risks.
 - Ensuring the flow of funding and resources to deliver the RAP.
 - Embed Recovery activity in the day-to-day work of QLDC as appropriate.
 - Monitoring, evaluating and reporting on progress.
- 19 The Recovery Team has already made considerable process in establishing structures, funding opportunities, relationships and processes that need to be adhered to. Work already underway includes:

Planning

- Development of the next RAP, structures for delivery and governance. Identify optimum way to engage community and local leaders.
- Development of a medium-long term welfare model (in partnership with the EOC).
- Exploration of projects that will offer significant social, environmental and economic value to the district.

Finance and Infrastructure

- Application to Crown Infrastructure Partners for 'shovel ready' projects - \$70m (decision expected early May).
- Application to MBIE for labour market support and Queenstown Town Centre streetscape projects - \$20m (decision pending).
- Rapid assessment of impact on rates, leases and concessions income for QLDC.

Relationships and Monitoring

- Development of a Stakeholder Management, Communications and Engagement Plan.
- Establishment of a business recovery group in partnership with the Chambers, Regional Tourism Organisations and MBIE.
- Establishment of a weekly update meeting with MSD and MBIE.
- Advocacy to government re migrant worker situation.
- Development of regular data and intelligence report for all agencies and partners. Identification of data gaps and future scenario requirements.

20 The next significant milestone for the Recovery Team will be the development of the RAP and the governance structures for the programme. The development of this will require a systematic approach to assessing ideas, concepts and priorities. This framework will be developed in a collaborative, yet fast-paced format, engaging with a diverse and creative range of people. A regular format and structure for updating elected members and the public will be finalised soon.

21 This report is provided for noting. Accordingly, there is no need to assess the reasonably practicable options as required by section 77 of the Local Government Act 2002.

CONSULTATION PROCESS | HĀTEPE MATAPAKI:

> SIGNIFICANCE AND ENGAGEMENT | TE WHAKAMAHI I KĀ WHAKAARO HIRAKA

22 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. This update is not inconsistent with existing policy and Strategy. It aligns to the Vision Beyond 2050 statements and the 10-Year Plan insofar as is possible.

- 23 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.
- 24 Public consultation has not been undertaken on the matter, but will be included in the RAP ongoing.

> MĀORI CONSULTATION | IWI RŪNANGA

Initial discussion has been undertaken with Maree Kleinlangevelsloo of Aukaha, and Dean Whaanga of Te Aō Marama to determine the level of iwi involvement in the Recovery Team’s work. This dialogue is ongoing and will be included in the RAP ongoing.

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

25 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	17 March 2020 Recovery Action Plan
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