

**OTAGO CENTRAL LAKES REGIONAL DEAL NEGOTIATION COMMITTEE:  
18 JULY 2025**

**Minutes of an extraordinary (inaugural) meeting of the Otago Central Lakes Regional Deal Negotiation Committee held Online on 18 July 2025 at 2.30pm**

**Present (online):**

Central Otago District Council (CODC) Mayor Tamah Alley, CODC Councillor Tracy Paterson, Otago Regional Council (ORC) Chair Gretchen Robertson, ORC Councillor Alexa Forbes, Queenstown Lakes District Council (QLDC) Mayor Glyn Lewers, QLDC Councillor Lyal Cocks

**In attendance (online):**

Mr Peter Kelly (Chief Executive, CODC), Mr Richard Saunders (Chief Executive, ORC), Mr Mike Theelen (Chief Executive, QLDC), Mr Dylan Rushbrook (General Manager Community Vision, CODC), Ms Anita Dawe (General Manager Regional Planning and Transport, ORC), Ms Pennie Pierce (Manager Strategy and Reform, QLDC), Ms Michelle Morss (General Manager Strategy and Policy, QLDC), Ms Anita Vanstone (Strategic Growth Manager), Mr Jon Winterbottom (QLDC Democracy Services Team Leader), Mr Ben Scott (Web and Digital Communications Advisor), and no members of the public or media

**Election of Chair**

Mr Theelen invited the Committee to elect a chair. It was clarified that appointments for Chair and Deputy Chair would be valid until the end of the triennium.

**It was moved (Mayor Lewers, Mayor Alley):**

**That ORC Chair Gretchen Robertson be appointed as Chair of the Otago Central Lakes Regional Deal Negotiation Committee appoint until the end of the current triennium.**

**Motion carried by consensus.**

Newly appointed Chair Robertson gave a karakia and made some introductory comments on this recently formed joint committee.

**Election of a Deputy Chair**

Chair Robertson invited the Committee to elect a deputy chair.

**It was moved (Mayor Alley, Mayor Lewers):**

**That CODC Councillor Tracy Paterson be appointed as Deputy Chair of the Otago Central Lakes Regional Deal Negotiation Committee appoint until the end of the current triennium.**

**Motion carried by consensus.**

**Apologies**

There were no apologies.

**Declarations of Conflict of Interest**

There were no declarations of conflicts of interest.

**Confirmation of Agenda**

**It was moved (Chair Roberston, Mayor Lewers):**

**That the agenda be confirmed without addition or alteration.**

**Motion carried by consensus.**

**1. Joint Committee operations**

A report from Mr Dylan Rushbrook (General Manager Community Vision, CODC), Ms Anita Dawe (General Manager Regional Planning and Transport, ORC), and Ms Pennie Pierce (Manager Strategy and Reform, QLDC) sought to confirm key elements of the operations of the Otago Central Lakes Regional Deal Negotiation Committee.

Pennie Pearce presented the report and officers responded to questions.

The motion was taken in parts.

**It was moved (Chair Robertson, Councillor Cocks):**

**That the Otago Central Lakes Regional Deal Negotiation Committee:**

- 1. Agree** not to appoint a subcommittee at this time.

**Motion carried by consensus.**

**It was moved (Mayor Alley, Councillor Paterson):**

**That the Otago Central Lakes Regional Deal Negotiation Committee:**

- 2. Direct** the Chief Executives to appoint an advisor to provide support, and to take the role of independent negotiator, if required.

**Motion carried by consensus.**

**It was moved (Chair Robertson, Mayor Alley):**

**That the Otago Central Lakes Regional Deal Negotiation Committee:**

- 3. Note** that Committee meetings will be held monthly until December 2025; and
- 4. Note** that Committee workshops be held weekly, as required, between the scheduled meetings until December 2025.

**Motion carried by consensus.**

## **2. Joint Prioritisation for Otago Central Lakes**

A report from Mr Dylan Rushbrook (General Manager Community Vision, CODC), Ms Anita Dawe (General Manager Regional Planning and Transport, ORC), and Ms Pennie Pierce (Manager Strategy and Reform, QLDC) requested that the Committee agree joint prioritisation of the initiatives set out in the Regional Deal Proposal.

Pennie Pearce presented the report and officers responded to questions.

The Committee discussed the prioritisation that had been agreed at a recent QLDC Council Meeting. Members informally agreed to amend the resolution to specify the following prioritisation (highest priority being for items earlier on the list): Capturing Value; Transform Transport; Electrify Otago Central Lakes; Private Investment, Public Health; Visitors and Investors.

**It was moved (Mayor Lewers, Councillors Forbes):**

**That the Otago Central Lakes Regional Deal Negotiation Committee:**

- 1. Note** the priority ranking agreed by Queenstown Lakes District Council (QLDC), at the Council meeting on 26 June 2025; and
- 2. Agree** a joint priority ranking for Otago Central Lakes – being 1. Capturing Value, 2. Transform Transport, 3. Electrify Otago Central Lake, 4. Private Investment, Public Health; 5. Visitors and Investors –to be used to inform negotiations with central government.

**Motion carried unanimously.**

### Resolution to Exclude the Public

It was moved (Councillor Cocks, Chair Robertson):

That the Otago Central Lakes Regional Negotiation Committee resolve that the public be excluded from the following parts of the meeting.

Motion carried by consensus.

### Recommendation to Exclude the Public

It was recommended that the public be excluded from the following parts of the meeting:

The general subject of each matter to be considered whilst the public is excluded, the reason for passing this resolution in relation to each matter, and the specific grounds under Section 48(1) of the Local Government Information and Meetings Act 1987 for the passing of this resolution is as follows:

#### Public Excluded Agenda Items:

Item 3: Update on negotiation progress

Item 4: Legal Advice: Confidentiality

Item 3: Update on negotiation progress	<p>That the public conduct of the whole or the relevant part of the proceedings of the meeting would be likely to result in the disclosure of information where the withholding of information is necessary to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• enable any local authority holding the information to carry out, without prejudice or disadvantage, negotiations (including commercial and industrial negotiations).</li></ul> <p><i>Reason for recommendation</i></p> <p>The agreement of City and Regional Deal for Otago Central Lakes is in the public interest as it is premised on delivering improved economic, environmental and social outcomes for the community. Premature release of information could result in public commentary about ongoing negotiations that disadvantages the councils in that negotiating process. This could include the termination of the negotiation process resulting in no City and Regional Deal being agreed for the Otago Central Lakes. This information needs to be withheld to protect the ability to agree a City and Regional Deal and achieve these outcomes for the community.</p> <p>While there is public interest in the development of a Regional Deal, this is outweighed by the interest in holding these discussions with the public excluded to ensure that the councils' position is not disadvantaged and to protect the integrity of the negotiations.</p>	Section 7(2)(i)
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<p>Item 4: Legal Advice: Confidentiality</p>	<p>That the public conduct of the whole or the relevant part of the proceedings of the meeting would be likely to result in the disclosure of information where the withholding of information is necessary to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• to maintain legal professional privilege</li> </ul> <p><i>Reason for recommendation</i></p> <p>The agreement of City and Regional Deal for Otago Central Lakes is in the public interest as it is premised on delivering improved economic, environmental and social outcome for the community. While the Act includes a public interest test, the threshold to override privilege is very high. The legal advice does not reveal misconduct or urgent public risk and releasing it could undermine trust and future negotiations. Therefore, the public interest in disclosure does not clearly outweigh the need to protect privileged legal communications.</p>	<p>Section 7(2)(g)</p>
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**This recommendation was made in reliance on Section 48(1)(a) of the Local Government Official Information and Meetings Act 1987 and the particular interest or interests protected by Section 6 or Section 7 of that Act or Section 6 or Section 7 or Section 9 of the Official Information Act 1982 as the case may require, which would be prejudiced by the holding of the whole or the relevant part of the proceedings of the meeting in public are as shown above with respect to each item.**

*The meeting went into public excluded at 3.16pm*

*The meeting came out of public excluded and concluded at 3.52pm*

**Confirmed as a true and correct record:**

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**CHAIR**

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**D A T E**