

**Minutes of a meeting of the Queenstown Lakes District Council Community & Services Committee held in the Council Chambers, 10 Gorge Road on Thursday 21 September 2023 commencing at 1.04 pm.****Present**

Councillor Craig Ferguson (Chair), Councillor Barry Bruce, Councillor Lisa Guy, Councillor Cody Tucker, Councillor Matt Wong.

**In attendance**

Ms Marie Day (Community Partnerships Manager), Mr Luke Place (Senior Policy Advisor), Ms Briana Pringle (Parks and Open Spaces Planning Manager), Ms Jessica Hughes Hutton (Parks and Reserves Planner), Ms Jeannie Galavazi (Senior Parks & Reserves Planner), Mr Lee Rowley (Contract Arborist), Mr Kenneth Bailey (General Manager Community Services), Mr Jon Winterbottom (Governance Team Leader) and Miss Sarah Bradey (Governance Advisor), three members of the public.

Chair Ferguson acknowledged the Cryptosporidium Outbreak, and that staff are trying to remedy the situation.

**Apologies**

There were no apologies.

**Declarations of Conflicts of Interest**

No declarations were made.

**Public Forum**

1. Debby Newsom will be joining online via zoom (National Public Health Service, Te Whatu Ora), topic: Smokefree/Vapefree Policy

Ms Newsom introduced herself and expressed support for the Smokefree Policy as well as for the government's 2025 smokefree policy. Ms Newsom encouraged Queenstown Lakes District Council (QLDC) to promote the benefits of a smokefree and vape free lifestyle. Ms Newsom also emphasised the extent of the litter problem caused by cigarette butts.

*Councillor Tucker joined the meeting at 1:09pm*

2. Jamie Seymour (National Public Health Service, Te Whatu Ora), topic: Smokefree Policy

Ms Seymour outlined her work for the Cancer Prevention Society of Otago and expressed support for QLDC's review of current Smokefree Policy as well as the goal of becoming smokefree by 2025. Ms Seymour commented that while smoking rates are declining, there is a proliferation of vaping. Mr Seymour noted that recent legislative changes have enabled

progress towards the smokefree goal and will lead to major health gains and cost savings. However, she suggested that existing legislation does not cover smokefree outdoor based areas, which provides a space for local councils to contribute with their Smokefree/Vapefree policies. Ms Seymour said that the goal of the smokefree policy is to discourage the use of smoking in these areas using signage and promotion.

Councillor Whitehead asked whether Ms Seymour thinks that a confined review is substantial enough. Ms Seymour answered that this is a first step forward, being mindful and realistic of what council can do now with current resources. This would be the first action in a list of future actions.

### **Matters Lying on the Table**

There were no matters lying on the table.

### **Confirmation of Agenda**

**On the motion of Councillor Bruce and Councillor Wong the Community & Services Committee resolved that the agenda be confirmed without addition or alteration.**

**Motion carried.**

### **Confirmation of Minutes**

**On the motion of Councillor Guy and Councillor Bruce the Community & Services Committee resolved that the agenda be confirmed without addition or alteration.**

**Motion carried.**

#### **1. Arrowtown Tree Removal and Replanting Programme**

A report from Ms Briana Pringle (Parks and Open Spaces Planning Manager) was presented to the Community & Services Committee to consider the staged removal and replacement of wilding trees along Centennial Avenue in Arrowtown.

Ms Pringle presented the report, explaining that they have consulted with the public. Ms Pringle noted that stage one is the furthest away from Arrowtown and that staff are working with the wilding group to see if his work is in the budget for the next three years.

Chair Ferguson thanked staff and commented that he would like to continue strong community engagement throughout the staged removal process.

Councillor Bruce asked whether the trees are going to be removed in blocks or intermittently. Ms Pringle responded that the trees would be removed in the staged sections.

Councillor Whitehead thanked staff for their work.

Councillor Guy supported Councillor Whitehead's statement, and thanked staff for undertaking sufficient community consultation. Councillor Guy then asked how Council goes about finding these types of tree species at the right time. Ms Pringle answered that this will depend on availability. Mr Rowley added that there are two types available currently and indicated that Council will work with the communities and can address this at that time.

**On the motion of Councillor Whitehead and Councillor Guy it was resolved that the Community & Services Committee:**

- 1. Note the contents of this report and;**
- 2. Approve the three-year staged plan for the removal and replacement of wilding trees for the entrance to the Arrowtown along Centennial Avenue; and**
- 3. Agree that the final species selection will be made by Parks Officers.**

**Motion carried.**

## **2. Smoke Free Policy – Issues and Options**

A report from Mr Luke Place (Senior Policy Advisor) was presented to the Community & Services Committee to provide current information on smoking and vaping use in the Queenstown Lakes District (the District) as well as a preliminary assessment of options, their associated costs and benefits, and timing to assist elected members determine how best to proceed with a review of Council's existing 2006 'Smoke-Free Policy in Playgrounds, Sports Fields and Swimming Pools' (2006 Smoke-Free Policy), and recommend an option to proceed with the review of the 2006 Smoke-Free Policy.

Mr Luke Place and Ms Marie Day presented the report noting that the combined review approach is set out in table 2 of the attachments.

Councillor Wong asked whether option 3 has a significant cost. Mr Place answered that it takes time to consider community engagement and external experts. Mr Place indicated that this would be an intensive engagement and that a reasonable number of resources would be required. Ms Day noted that costs are around engagement and would mostly relate to the vaping business since vaping is still popular whereas smoking is in decline. Ms Day added that

research around vaping and smoking is required and that, until Council understood this research, officers would not have the exact cost.

Councillor Whitehead asked about the review cycle. Ms Day said that this will have a three-year review cycle and that Council would look at this with the central government. Ms Day noted that every council is required to come up with their own decisions around this.

Chair Ferguson commented that it was interesting to learn about lithium batteries from vaping and their impact on the environment. Chair Ferguson added that there is a desire around the table to see something in this space and be as active as we can be.

Councillor Whitehead thanked Ms Seymour as a strong advocate in the Bylaw review, which greatly assisted the Committee in its review.

Councillor Guy commented that as the goal is to smoke-free by 2025, Council needs vape deterrents in place during the transition. She noted an example of a vaper turning to cigarettes when vape was unavailable on holiday and requested that staff consider the unintended consequences, particularly on young people, of becoming smokefree.

**On the motion of Councillor Bruce and Councillor Tucker it was resolved that the Community & Services Committee:**

- 1. Note the contents of this report.**
- 2. Confirm the commencement of a confined review (Option 2 set out in Table 4 in the agenda) of the 2006 'Smoke-Free Policy in Playgrounds, Sports Fields, and Swimming Pools'.**

**Motion carried.**

### **3. Tree Policy Review**

A report by Jessica Hughes Hutton (Parks and Reserves Planner) was presented to the Community & Services Committee to present the draft Tree Policy 2023 before seeking public feedback.

Ms Jessica Hughes Hutton, Mr Lee Rowley, and Ms Jeannie Galavazi presented the report and answered questions.

Ms Hughes Hutton indicated that the Tree Policy was adopted in August 2022 in which it was outlined that a review would be reported back in 12 months' time. Ms Hughes Hutton said that the review is going well, with no fundamental changes required, adding that it would be addressing areas that needed further clarification and would aim to make the

policy easier to understand. Ms Hughes Hutton indicated that her team would like to take the Draft Tree Policy out to the public for consultation.

Chair Ferguson commented on the Tree Policy and thanked staff.

Councillor Whitehead said the draft policy is less confusing and makes it easier for those who are not across the jargon. Councillor Whitehead then asked staff to comment on the i-Tree application.

Mr Rowley explained that Council currently uses STEM (Standard Tree Evaluation Method) to calculate the value of trees in the district, which he suggested is good for valuing mature heritage trees but not so much for smaller trees, or capturing ecological services such as carbon sequestration, stormwater mitigation and air pollution removal. Mr Rowley noted that Council is moving toward an i-Tree and Melbourne Urban Forest tree valuation method. These give monetary value to trees, while i-Tree captures the ecological services value. Mr Rowley commented that this is a more modern peer-reviewed application backed by a lot of research and noted that Christchurch and Wellington are also moving towards the i-Tree and Melbourne method, supported by the New Zealand Arboriculture industry.

Councillor Whitehead asked about the timeframe for implementing this. Mr Rowley shared his expectation that Council could start looking at this in the next 12 months and noted that Council is currently trialing the valuation tool to see how it works. He added that timeframe will likely be based on how long it takes for the policy work to be completed and adopted. Ms Galavazi commented that a timeframe is based on what Council does with the valuation, noting that this is a journey and that the policy will take time to be adopted.

Councillor Wong thanked staff and commented that it is great to see the changes and difficult points being resolved.

Chair Ferguson asked how Council was doing in relation to the policy of planting two trees for every one tree removed.

Mr Rowley said that Council is planting 300 trees this season (noting that they will be in the ground by end of October) and is looking to plant more trees in the autumn. He noted that twice as many trees are being replanted as have been removed. Mr Rowley indicated that all applications that go out are only approved on the basis that two trees are planted in its place. Mr Rowley highlighted some cases in which one tree has been removed and 100 native trees are (or will be) planted, and, as such, it is likely that Council is exceeding the goal.

Mr Baliey mentioned that the staff have been working with the community on this issue, emphasising the quality of the data that the team has put together and the energy that the team has injected into this area.

Councillor Guy spoke positively about the carbon accounting and the fact that the review process enabled Council to develop a good understanding of the big picture when it comes to trees in the district.

**On the motion of Councillor Wong and Councillor Whitehead  
it was resolved that the Community & Services Committee:**

- 1. Note the contents of this report and;**
- 2. Approve the draft Tree Policy 2023 for public feedback.**

**Motion carried.**

*The meeting concluded at 1:42pm.*

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

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**CHAIR**

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**DATE**