# A Partnership Framework for Otago's Councils













### Why collaborate regionally?

#### **Regional Approaches**

Tackle shared challenges together and identify opportunities that require scale—things individual councils can't achieve alone.



#### **a** Efficiency

Pool funding, staff, and expertise to maximize value for money across the region.



#### **\*\*\*** Better Coordination

Strengthen relationships with iwi, central government and each other through joint effort.

### Why advocate together?



#### Stronger Voice

When councils speak together, we carry more weight and can better influence national decision-making.

### \*\* Consistency and Clarity

Regional advocacy avoids mixed messages and presents a clear, consistent picture of what Otago needs and what's most important to us.



### \* Requested by Government

Government Ministers and officials seek engagement and perspectives at a regional scale so they can advocate for us in Wellington.

### Boundaries and responsibilities

Regional fora, joint committees and working groups...



...cannot make binding decisions, unless agreed to by individual councils.

...can identify and progress opportunities in councils' shared interest, within given mandates.

...**must** ensure appropriate communication with councils and refer major issues back.

### Partnership framework: introduction

**△ Legal Requirement** Under the Local Government Act 2002, councils in a region must agree protocols for working together

#### Triennial agreement

These protocols are formalised each triennium in the Otago **Local Authorities** Triennial Agreement.



#### Flexible models

Various arrangements can be co-opted for specific issues as needed.

Arrangements for each cross-council forum, joint committee and working group differ according to role, membership, mandate, statutory requirements and support needs.

### Mayors and Councillors



#### **Otago Mayoral Forum**

Provides oversight for communication, coordination and collaboration in the Otago Region.

Mandate: Otago Local Authorities Triennial Agreement

**Membership:** Otago's Mayors and ORC Chair, supported by their chief executives

**Support:** Secretariat hosted at ORC

#### Hui for Otago

<u>Proposed</u> as-needed configuration bringing together all of Otago's elected members on topics of shared interest.

**Mandate:** Otago Local Authorities Triennial Agreement (if progressed) **Membership:** All elected members, with wider attendance possible

Support: Otago Mayoral Forum secretariat

### Statutory joint committees



#### **← Otago Regional Transport Committee**

Responsible for preparing the Otago Regional Land Transport Plan.

Mandate: Land Transport Management Act 2003

**Membership:** Two ORC representatives, one representative from each TA, one Waka Kōtahi representative

**Support:** ORC's Transport team



#### **Otago CDEM Group Joint Committee**

Approves the Otago CDEM Group Plan and provides guidance on civil defence implementation.

**Mandate:** Civil Defence and Emergency Management Act 2002

**Membership:** One elected representation from each Otago local authority, supported by their chief executives

Support: CDEM Otago

### Strategic initiatives and working groups



#### \* Otago Central Lakes Regional Deal Negotiation Committee

Provides direction to inform the negotiation of a Regional Deal between partner councils and Central Government.

**Mandate:** Established via council decisions in June 2025 for a period of 18 months

**Membership:** Two elected members per member council, including CODC and QLDC Mayors and the ORC Chair

Support: QLDC Governance team, Otago Mayoral Forum secretariat

#### Public and Active Transport Advisory Group; Way to Go; Connecting Dunedin

Governance-level advisory groups for Queenstown and Dunedin (public) transport matters.

**Mandate:** Established via council decisions with own terms of reference.

**Membership:** Varies; includes Mayors, elected members and officials. Way to Go and Connecting Dunedin also

involve NZ Transport Agency Waka Kotahi

**Support:** ORC's Transport and Governance teams

### Regional iwi partnerships



#### Te Rōpū Taiao Otago

An Otago Takiwa-wide collective forum to facilitate better mutual understandings between Kāi Tahu ki Otago and the local authorities of Otago.

Mandate: Governance Charter Te Rōpu Taiao Otago

Membership: Rūnaka leaders, Otago's Mayors and ORC Chair, supported by their chief executives

Support: Otago Mayoral Forum secretariat



#### 솞 Te Rōpū Taiao Murihiku

A forum to discuss and progress all aspects of the Charter of Understanding between Murihiku Councils and the four Murihiku Papatipu Rūnanga. ORC, QLDC and CDC are signatories.

Mandate: He Huarahi mō Ngā Uri Whakatupu Charter of Understanding

Membership: Elected representatives from member councils and Murihiku Papatipu Rūnanga

**Support:** Environment Southland

# Working across regions



#### Zone 6

Networking and information-sharing for Otago and Southland.

Mandate: Local Government New Zealand

**Membership:** All elected members within the Zone

**Support:** Each zone elects or appoints a chair for the electoral term; LGNZ and the chair share responsibility for

meetings



#### 💫 Joint Otago and Southland Mayoral Forum and Te Rōpū Taiao

Annual joint meetings for lower South Island Mayoral Forums and both Te Ropū Taiao. Can also convene for specific matters.

**Mandate:** See previous slides **Membership:** See previous slides

Support: Otago Mayoral Forum secretariat; Southland Mayoral Forum secretariat (Invercargill City Council)

### Executive partnerships



#### Otago Chief Executives Forum

An established collegial partnership and key enabler for the Otago Mayoral Forum and wider regional collaboration.

**Mandate:** Otago Local Authorities Triennial Agreement

**Membership:** Otago Council Chief Executives **Support:** Otago Mayoral Forum secretariat



#### **CDEM Coordinating Executive Group**

Provides advice to and implements decisions of the CDEM Joint Committee.

**Mandate:** Civil Defence Emergency Management Act 2002

Membership: Otago Council Chief Executives, CDEM Otago Group Controller/Manager, Senior members of NZ Police, FENZ, Te Whatu Ora Southern, MSD, NEMA, St John, Moeraki Rūnanga, Te Rūnanga ō Ōtakou, and Kati Huirapa Rūnaka ki Puketeraki.

Support: Emergency Management Otago

# Staff partnerships

#### **Cross-council working groups**

Staff may form cross-council working groups to discuss regional issues and, where relevant, progress joint work programmes or collaborative projects. These groups also enable staff to share knowledge and expertise across councils. Established groups include:

- Ctago Regional Economic Development Working Group
- کے Otago Waste Network
- Otago Biodiversity Forum
- S Otago Climate Officers' Group

Mandate: A terms of reference for each group is to be reviewed periodically by the Otago Chief Executives Forum

**Membership:** As relevant

Support: Staff-led, with support from a 'CE lead' appointed by the Otago Chief Executives Forum.

### Resourcing

#### Otago's cross-council framework depends on everyone.

There's specific support from two staff:



Key support for the Otago Mayoral Forum, Otago Chief Executives Forum and cross-council collaboration in Otago.

Role established: 2019 Employer: ORC Funding: Regional rates

#### Otago Regional Waste Officer

Dedicated role to address regional waste management and minimisation challenges across Otago's councils.

Role established: 2024

**Employer:** DCC, with deskspace at CODC **Funding:** Jointly-funded by all Councils

## Summary of Otago's regional groups

Three levels of regional collaboration working together



Mayoral Forum

**Joint Committees** 

Hui for Otago

### Staff

Chief Executives Forum

CDEM Executive Group

**Working Groups** 

#### Wider

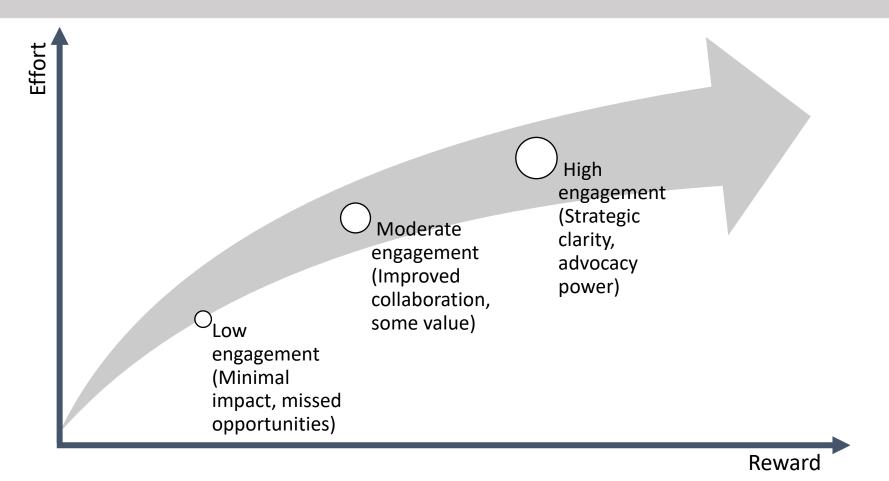
Te Rōpū Taiao (x2)

Joint meetings

Zone 6

### Next steps: return on investment

The rewards from working together increase with participation and commitment.



## Next steps: Determining focus areas

A new triennium is a fresh start. We can target our joint efforts where they matter most.

#### Proposed process:

**Step 1:** Secretariat, staff working groups and Otago CE Forum to develop a 'long list' of matters that could benefit from regional attention, with brief commentary.



**Step 2:** Mayoral Forum to confirm a set of regional outcomes and focus areas and a direction of travel for each. Note: 'focus areas' refer to broad issues, not projects or programmes.



**Step 3**: Mayoral Forum is responsible for monitoring focus areas, ensuring that the wider framework is doing what it can to address the issue.