

New ways to support economic growth in Waitaki

Consultation Document

Have
your say



Waitaki District Council is proposing to set up a new organisation to drive economic growth in the district. This Economic Development Agency will be set up to implement the Waitaki Economic Development strategy and deliver results. We would like your feedback.

Why are we doing this?

Over many years, Council has invested a lot in economic development, including tourism marketing and promotion.

While economic development staff within Council and from Tourism Waitaki Ltd have achieved a lot in this area, we believe the activity should be delivering better value for ratepayers and more measurable benefits for our community. We want to engage with stakeholders more effectively and form partnerships where appropriate, to increase the benefits from these activities.

The *Uplifting Waitaki: Hāpaitia te Waitaki Economic Development Strategy* was adopted by Council in September 2022. This evidence-based strategy was co-designed with Te Rūnanga o Moeraki with input from local businesses, organisations, and community members.

The strategy is ambitious and aims for growth that is sustainable and inclusive of all the district and its communities. It outlines how the economy

can grow by more than 8% above projected growth in the next ten years if the strategy is fully implemented, creating between \$70 and \$145 million additional GDP and 1350 additional jobs in the district in 2032. A 9% uplift across the well-being dimensions – social, environmental, cultural, and social – is estimated.

The *Uplifting Waitaki: Hāpaitia te Waitaki Economic Development Strategy* can be found on Council's website: www.waitaki.govt.nz/Council/Council-Documents/Plans-Reports-and-Strategies/Our-strategies

Some more important information

Over the page you will see some information on how the Waitaki Economic Development Strategy was developed and an overview of the proposed organisational changes and rationale.

When you are completing your submission, feel free to add extra pages if you wish.

Please also clearly state on the submission form if you wish to speak to your submission. Hearings take place on 15 and 16 May 2023.

If you wish to speak to your submission but you are unable to attend in person, a Zoom link can be provided to allow you to connect to the Council meeting.

Please note that all Council meetings are livestreamed for public viewing and recorded.

Finding information

To view a copy of the *Uplifting Waitaki: Hāpaitia te Waitaki Economic Development Strategy* please go to www.waitaki.govt.nz

You can also get information from

- Our offices in Ōamaru and Palmerston
- Kurow Museum and Information Centre
- Waitaki District Libraries

Key dates

- **Thursday 6 April 2023:**
Consultation opens
- **Sunday 7 May 2023:**
Consultation closes
- **Monday 15 May and Tuesday 16 May:**
Council hears submissions
- **No later than Tuesday 27 June 2023:**
Council adopt the Economic Development operational models.

We want to hear what you think

This is your opportunity to have a say on the proposed changes to Tourism Waitaki Ltd and the Ōamaru Blue Penguin Colony and the recommendation to establish an Economic Development Agency.

How to have your say

Your view is important to us and we encourage you to make a submission:



Do it online

fill in the online form on the consultation page of our website:
www.waitaki.govt.nz/new-ways-to-support-economic-growth



Email your submission

to economicdevelopment@waitaki.govt.nz



Post it

fill in the attached paper form and post it back to us:
Waitaki District Council,
Economic Growth Consultation
Private Bag 50058, Ōamaru 9444



Drop it

to Council offices in
Ōamaru - 20 Thames St, or
Palmerston - 54 Tiverton St,
or Waitaki District Libraries

Drop-in sessions

Come along to one of our drop-in sessions for your chance to ask us questions and tell us what you think!

Palmerston

Waihemo Service Centre - Library
Friday 14 April, 4.00-6.00pm

Ōamaru

Ōamaru Farmers Market
Sundays 16 April & 23 April, 9.30-1.00pm
(open hours)

Kurow

Kurow Information Centre
Friday 21 April, 4.00-6.00pm

What changes are we proposing?

1. Closing Tourism Waitaki Ltd and establishing an Economic Development Agency

We are proposing to establish a new Council Controlled Organisation as an Economic Development Agency to implement the new Strategy and work in partnership with others to support economic development that benefits the community. This new Economic Development Agency would incorporate tourism promotion and destination management, meaning Tourism Waitaki Ltd would be disestablished.

Tourism is a small but important sector in Waitaki's economy accounting for approximately 3% of the district's current GDP. We want visitors to stay longer and spend more while they are here. Developing new products and experiences across the district is a key objective of the visitor programme in the Strategy.

The new Economic Development Agency would manage tourism and four other interconnected programmes collectively to enable more effective use of resources. Developing "The Waitaki Story" as

an overarching umbrella proposition for the district will link all the work.

"The Waitaki Story" will include promotion of the district to visitors and to people who live and work here; place-based development in the district and our main settlements; and realising the benefits of the to-be-confirmed designations of UNESCO Global Geopark and NZ Heritage National Landmark Status.

A Governance Group is proposed to support an enabling, partnership approach with iwi, local businesses, and stakeholders. The proposed Governance Group would include multi-sector representation (including Council) and a mix of 'fit for purpose' skills and experience. The Group would oversee the establishment of the new Economic Development Agency and empower it to deliver, ensuring the Waitaki Economic Development Strategy is implemented as quickly as possible to secure early wins and build momentum.

2. Investigating Partnership opportunities to grow the Ōamaru Blue Penguin Colony as a cornerstone attraction

Tourism Waitaki Ltd currently operates the Ōamaru Blue Penguin Colony and leases the business premises from Council which owns the land. The Penguin Colony is a cornerstone attraction in Ōamaru supporting overnight stays and visitor spend in the district. It is well known as a flagship sustainable tourism experience with conservation, scientific research, and protection of Kororā/ little blue penguins key to its success. Importantly, it started life as a community-led initiative to protect the little blue penguins.

The operation of the Penguin Colony became a business unit of Tourism Waitaki in 2013 and they share marketing, management, and finance resources. Previously the Penguin Colony was owned by Council and it had a dedicated manager and marketing specialist alongside an environmental scientist. Pre-COVID, it was achieving a profit of around \$500,000 annually which supported tourism marketing and promotion of the district.

Both the Waitaki Destination Management Plan and the Waitaki Economic Development strategy propose product development opportunities for the Colony to improve the visitor experience and ensure ongoing investment in the conservation, environmental and scientific research work being done.

Council believes that investigating a partnership approach for the Penguin Colony is likely to deliver the optimum outcomes for both the Colony and the community. This includes ecological, environmental and economic benefits for Waitaki. If a suitable new partner is found, that may result in a Joint Venture. Whilst the details of what that Joint Venture might look like would need to be worked out, Council **does not** propose to sell the land on which the Ōamaru Blue Penguin Colony sits and sees this as a key asset that should remain with the Council on behalf of the community.

The ideal JV partner will have knowledge and skills in developing visitor experiences and the ability to leverage wider contacts in the tourist industry. It will be important that any new partner holds values that align with the Council and local community, for example, valuing the environmental conservation that the Penguin Colony delivers; seeking to secure visitors that value what the people of Waitaki value; and recognising the role of the community in the development of the Penguin Colony and their sense of ownership of the facility. The partner will likely also have access to capital and will be prepared to invest for long-term benefit. The Penguin Colony would form part of wider tourism-based attractions (along with the Geopark etc) across the district and region.

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SUBMISSION FORM

Have
your say



Please get your feedback in by 5pm, Sunday 7 May 2023

Fill in our online feedback form at www.waitaki.govt.nz/new-ways-to-support-economic-growth - you can upload any extra documents and attachments to the online form or

Email: economicdevelopment@waitaki.govt.nz

Post: Economic Development, Waitaki District Council, Private Bag 50058, Ōamaru 9444

Deliver: Drop it off at any Council office or district library

Your contact details: (please print clearly)

Full name:

Organisation (if applicable):

Postal address:

Email: Phone:

Do you wish to speak in support of your submission at the hearing?

☐

Yes

☐

No

If you choose 'yes', we'll be in touch to arrange a time. Hearings can be in person or online via Zoom. Hearings will be live-streamed.

1. Do you agree with the proposal to close Tourism Waitaki Ltd and set up an Economic Development Agency which includes management and promotion of the Tourism sector?

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Yes

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No

Comments

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2. Do you want us to investigate partnership opportunities to increase the community benefits of the Ōamaru Blue Penguin Colony as a cornerstone attraction for the district?

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Yes

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No

Comments

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Need more room? You can add extra pages if there is not enough space on this form.

Points to remember when giving us your feedback:

- Please note that all submissions are public documents and will be made available on Council's website with the names of submitters included in accordance with our Privacy Policy which can be found on our website www.waitaki.govt.nz.
- Submissions accompanied by multiple signatures or as a petition will be processed as a single submission.

