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MEDIA RELEASE

ORC to consult on Lake Wakatipu public ferry service trial

Thursday 9 April 2020

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The consultation is part of the Annual Plan 2020-21 process and will inform targeted rates in the coming year.

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The Otago Regional Council (ORC) will open online consultation on a proposed 18-month trial of a public service water ferry on Lake Wakatipu on April 14th. Councillors approved the proposal for consultation at a teleconferenced meeting today.

The consultation is needed to identify a community preference for how the trial is funded through targeted rates.

ORC Transport Manager Garry Maloney said that, much like the Orbus public transport network, the funding for a ferry service might come from targeted rates with support from central and local government.

“It’s more important than ever that Queenstown Lakes residents have their say on the proposal.

“When we consulted on a change to our Regional Public Transport Plan to enable us to trial a ferry service at the start of the year, there was overwhelming support for it from Queenstown residents.

“However, this is a very different conversation now where we get into the detail. We are also doing so under a very different context, given the Covid-19 crisis and its particular impact on

Queenstown ratepayers, so it's essential that we get a clear direction from the community on the next steps for the ferry proposal," Mr Maloney said.

The proposed ferry service will initially be a trial. It is likely to use the existing routes, stops and timetable, plus three additional services to fill the current gaps in the timetable. ORC is looking at a fare reduction for multi-trip users to a fare around \$4 per trip.

Councillors also voted today to add a question to the consultation seeking public feedback on a preferred timeframe for commencement of the trial service, due to the possible impact of Covid-19 on the proposed January 2021 start date.

"As this is a trial, we'll be able to evaluate patronage and feedback to change the service if needed and evaluate pricing models and infrastructure for a potential permanent subsidised public Wakatipu Ferry Service," Mr Maloney said.

The targeted rate options are as follows:

Option 1 – ORC's preferred option

Existing public transport benefit zone where ferries are part of the integrated public transport network and benefit residents in Queenstown.

For a residential property valued at CV \$0.7m, the annual increase would be approximately \$3.75 and for a commercial property valued at CV \$5m, the annual increase would be approximately \$53.61.

Option 2

A new Wakatipu Ferry zone for those located closest to the ferry service, where ferries are seen to benefit those directly around the lake edge, and Frankton / CBD.

For a residential property valued at CV \$0.7m, the annual increase would be approximately \$8.87 and for a commercial property in the zone valued at CV \$5m, the annual increase would be approximately \$126.73.

Option 3

Sub-regional QLDC zone, where all residents in the district benefit from the associated tourism and commuter provision.

For a residential property valued at CV \$0.7m, the annual increase would be approximately \$2.62 and for a commercial property in the zone valued at CV \$5m, the annual increase would be approximately \$16.98.

Further details about the proposed service and funding options, and instructions on how to make a submission, will be available at <https://yoursay.orc.govt.nz/> from April 14.

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