**How to make a submission on the Long-term Plan and Annual Plan – it’s easy!**

*Otago Regional Council (ORC) cares for Otago’s environment. We’re responsible for managing the region’s natural resources on behalf of our community.*

*Our Long-term Plan (LTP) sets out what we plan to do and how this will be paid for over the next 10 years and are prepared every three years. Our Annual Plans provide a process for ORC and our community to review the detailed budgets contained in the LTP. If significant changes are occurring in the Annual Plan (AP) from what was stated in the LTP we will formally consult with you (including submissions and public hearings).*

*We want your feedback and encourage you to get involved. It’s as easy as filling in a submission form and telling us what you think.*

**Why submit?**

When we consult with you it’s your chance to have your say. Make the most of this opportunity to tell us what you think about the proposed plan.

There will probably be things that you agree with, and things you don’t agree with. We want to hear about both of these, so we know if we’re on the right track.

**Why is it important?**

We want you to get involved because everything we do is for the future of Otago. When we know what you think, we can do a better job of looking after the region’s natural resources of land, water and air.

What we do impacts on you and the LTP and AP need to be a collaboration between the council, community, partners and stakeholders to make sure we all get the best outcomes.

**How do I make a submission?**

A submission form is similar to a feedback form. There are options you can choose from, and a section where you can say what you want. You can tell us about anything in the LTP or AP, not just the options we’ve specifically asked you for feedback about.

**How do I write a good submission?**

Tell us why the issue matters to you and what change or action you want to see. You don’t need a deep understanding of an issue to have an opinion on it and you don’t need to use technical language to tell us what you think.

It makes it easier for us to summarise your submission if you can tell us clearly what your thoughts are. Using subheadings and bullet points can help if you’re writing about different topics.

**Will other people see my submission?**

All submissions, including the name and town of the submitter, are publicly available. This is a requirement under the Local Government Act 2002.

**What is a hearing?**

A hearing is when you can come and speak about your submission if you want to. The hearing panel is made up of councillors and/or independent commissioners. They will listen to arguments for and against a topic proposed in the LTP or AP.

**If I write a submission do I need to speak at a hearing?**

No. Your submission will be considered if you speak at a hearing or not, but you’re welcome to speak to the councillors about what is important to you. There is a space on the submission form where you can tell us if you want to speak at a hearing so let us know if you do and we’ll be in touch.

**What do I need to prepare if I’m speaking at a hearing?**

At the hearing you’ll have the chance to expand on the points you made in your submission. You’ll be given a day and time to speak to the councillors (the hearing panel). You will be provided 10 minutes to speak. Please show up early and stick to the time limit you have been given. You can join the hearing online if you can’t come in person. Know your topic well because you might be asked questions by the councillors if they want to find out more information.

Hearings sound daunting but they’re not. Anyone is welcome to speak to their submission, and hearings are public so you can come along and watch other people who are speaking at the hearing. You can stay for as little or as long as you want.