

7 May 2021

Waitaki District Council
Private Bag 50058
Ōamaru

By email to: consult@waitaki.govt.nz

E te Koromatua, ngā Kaikaunihera mā, tēnā koutou katoa

Submission to: Waitaki District Council
Subject: Waitaki Long-Term Plan 2021-2031 (the Plan)
From: Creative New Zealand

1. Creative New Zealand welcomes the opportunity to make a submission on Waitaki District Council's long-term plan. Arts, culture and creativity are an important part of developing strong and prosperous towns, and cohesive and healthy communities. We encourage Council to recognise the essential role arts and culture play in the wellbeing of its residents in its decision-making.
2. We'd be happy to discuss this submission with you further. The key contact person for matters relating to this submission is:
Name: David Pannett
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Key Points

3. **It's great to see Council's recognition of the four wellbeings and its commitment to fostering liveable communities reflected through the Long-Term Plan.** The arts community in Waitaki are well placed to help Council deliver important wellbeing outcomes through their work and activity in the District.
4. The Waitaki District has an increasingly diverse population, and is home to one of the country's fastest growing Pasifika populations. **We encourage Council to consider how investment in arts and cultural activity can deliver social and cultural wellbeing outcomes to its communities** and promote strong, cohesive communities in the District.
5. **As Council explores ways to increase tourism following COVID-19, we encourage it to consider how to make the most of the District's unique arts, culture and heritage assets,** such as the Ōamaru Opera House, Victorian Precinct and Steampunk HQ. There's a strong

opportunity for Council to work with the arts community to make Waitaki an even more vibrant and attractive place to live and visit.

Draft Long-Term Plan 2021–2031

Community Outcomes and Strategic Priorities

6. The Plan outlines 11 community outcomes. We note that the arts community are particularly well-placed to help Council to deliver to a number of these outcomes, and encourage Council to recognise the strong contribution that investing in arts and culture makes to the following outcomes in particular.
 - *Attractive to new opportunities* – artistic and cultural activity create vibrant places to live, support tourism and contribute to education and skills development
 - *Foster a diverse and resilient economy* – artistic and cultural activity have a strong ‘multiplier effect’ and attract economic activity
 - *Enable safe and healthy communities* – participating in arts and cultural activity contributes to our health and wellbeing, and can increase community cooperation
 - *Connected and inclusive communities* – participating in arts and cultural activities builds resilient communities and increases social cohesion by helping individuals to develop networks and find a sense of belonging
 - *Promoting a greater voice for Waitaki* – artistic and cultural activity is a gathering place and a connector for many communities, and artistic expression is a powerful way to amplify diverse voices
 - *Celebration of our community identity* – artistic and cultural activity give expression to cultural identity and allow us to tell the unique stories of who we are
 - *Community facilities and services that we are proud of* – artistic and cultural activity can play a major role in placemaking and rejuvenation to create attractive spaces to visit and promote a sense of pride.
7. The Waitaki District population is increasing in size and diversity. Māori and Pasifika populations are growing particularly rapidly in the region, and we note that Waitaki is home to one of New Zealand’s largest populations of Pacific peoples per capita, and one of the fastest growing Pasifika populations in the country. It will therefore be crucial for Council to consider how the needs of its communities are changing as it plans for the future.
8. We encourage Council to consider how providing opportunities to engage in arts and cultural activity can deliver social and cultural wellbeing outcomes to diverse communities, and provide a platform for engaging with these communities and better understanding their needs. For example:
 - 66 percent of New Zealanders say they learn about different cultures through the arts
 - 71 percent of Māori agree that ngā toi Māori is an important way of connecting with their culture/identity, and 77 percent of Pacific peoples say that Pacific arts are an important way of connecting with their culture/identity
 - 72 percent of New Zealanders agree the arts should reflect New Zealand’s cultural diversity¹

¹ *New Zealanders and the arts: Ko Aotearoa me ōna toi* (2020). Creative New Zealand.

- refugees and asylum seekers have reported that engagement with the arts following their displacement supported them to create new support networks and develop practical skills useful in finding work.²

COVID-19 Recovery

9. It's great to see Council has already introduced a Community Resilience Fund to aid the community's COVID-19 recovery. The fund's focus on increasing social cohesion, community resilience and wellbeing are strongly aligned with the outcomes delivered by many arts and cultural groups and organisations. Therefore we encourage Council to consider:
 - how it can ensure a proportion of this funding is directed to arts and culture groups, who were particularly affected by loss of revenue and cancellations during COVID
 - how it might develop this fund to provide more long-term support, and deliver to its community outcomes of 'connective and inclusive communities' and 'a diverse and resilient economy'.
10. It's also positive to see Council considering tourism as a part of its COVID-19 recovery. The Waitaki district has a number of unique arts, culture and heritage assets, and we see a strong opportunity for Council to work with the arts community to make Waitaki an even more vibrant and attractive place to live and visit. We encourage Council to work with the arts community, business owners and tourism authorities to promote strong existing assets such as the Ōamaru Opera House, Victorian Precinct and Steampunk Headquarters, and develop strategies to increase visitor numbers.

Proposals

11. We welcome Council's proposal to develop an indoor sports and events centre in Ōamaru, in response to community consultation. As plans for the centre progress, we encourage Council to continue seeking perspectives from the range of communities that could benefit from these facilities. We encourage Council to think about:
 - whether the centre could support the arts community (eg, could an indoor multi-court space function as a multipurpose space used for rehearsals or performing arts events?)
 - how multipurpose facilities could provide more people with opportunities to engage with and participate in arts and culture, which has similar benefits to sport for communities' physical and mental wellbeing.

Funding and Policies

12. We're glad to support the Creative Communities Scheme administered by Waitaki District Council. In light of the District's diversifying population, we encourage Council to ensure the Creative Communities Scheme assessment panel is reflective of Waitaki's communities. We'd strongly encourage Council to ensure there is at least one Pasifika representative on this panel.

² *What is the evidence on the role of the arts in improving health and well-being? A scoping review* (2019). World Health Organisation.

Concluding Points

13. Artists and creative practitioners are particularly skilled at designing and delivering innovative, strategic and cost-effective solutions, and we encourage Council to consider how arts communities can help realise and implement your long-term plan.

Creative New Zealand's interest in the arts in Waitaki

14. Creative New Zealand is the arts development agency of Aotearoa, responsible for delivering government support for the arts. We're an autonomous Crown entity continued under the Arts Council of New Zealand Toi Aotearoa Act 2014. Our legislative purpose is to encourage, promote, and support the arts in New Zealand for the benefit of all New Zealanders.
15. We recognise the importance of the wider Otago community to the arts in New Zealand. For arts that are delivered in the Otago region, **\$2.53 million** of direct financial support was provided in 2019/20. Our overall support includes the funding of individual arts projects as well as arts and cultural organisations.
16. Under the Creative Communities Scheme, we also fund territorial authorities directly to support local arts activities. Funding provided to Waitaki District Council under the Scheme totalled **\$28,380** in 2019/20.
17. Thank you again for the opportunity to comment. Please feel free to contact me if you have any questions or if you wish to discuss this submission further (my contact details are at the start of the submission).

Ngā mihi rārau ki a koutou katoa, nā



David Pannett
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Pou Whakahaere Matua, Rautaki me te Tūhono