



AGENDA

Late Reports

Ordinary Council Meeting

Wednesday, 8 December 2021

Date: Wednesday, 8 December 2021

Time: 10.30 am

**Location: Ngā Hau e Whā, William Fraser Building
1 Dunorling Street, Alexandra**

Due to COVID-19 restrictions and limitations of the physical space, **public access will be available through the livestream and Microsoft Teams.** The link to the livestream will be available on the Central Otago District Council's website.

**Sanchia Jacobs
Chief Executive Officer**

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5 REPORTS

21.9.29 THE NEW COVID-19 PROTECTION FRAMEWORK AND WHAT IT MEANS FOR COUNCIL FACILITIES AND STAFFING

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1. Purpose

To note the decisions made on access to council facilities under the new COVID-19 Protection Framework (the traffic light system).

Recommendations

That the report be received.

2. Discussion

On 3 December 2021, New Zealand moved to the new COVID-19 Protection Framework. This system replaced the alert level system that had been in place since the outbreak of the pandemic in 2019. The Government has now shifted from an elimination strategy to reducing transmission and living with the virus.

The new traffic light system has three settings (green, orange and red), with restrictions increasing as the risk to communities increases. Central Otago, along with the rest of the South Island, has moved to the orange setting. Under the orange setting, people can continue to carry out most of their daily activities, but there are restrictions in place to limit the spread of the virus and protect the community.

As part of the new framework, the 'My Vaccine Pass' has been introduced. At all settings, in particular at red and orange, the vaccine pass enables fully vaccinated people more access to businesses and services than those that are not vaccinated. Also, dependant on the business and the setting level, businesses may be required to close or operate in a contactless way if they choose not to introduce the vaccine pass. While some workers are required to be vaccinated (e.g. health care professionals and teachers), for the bulk of businesses the decision on whether to introduce a vaccine pass sits with them. There are a small number of exceptions where a vaccine pass cannot be required, such as supermarkets, hospitals and police stations.

Under the Health and Safety at Work Act 2015, Central Otago District Council is deemed to be a 'person conducting a business or undertaking' (PCBU). As such, a decision needs to be made on whether to introduce a vaccine pass or not. The authority of the PCBU sits with the chief executive officer. As such, the chief executive officer is required to make a decision on whether to introduce a vaccine pass or not. This paper outlines these decisions for Central Otago District Council and the implications for staff and visitors.

Vaccine Pass Requirement Decisions

On determining whether a vaccine pass is required to enter a council facility, several factors have been weighed up. These include the current risk in the community, the nature of the specific council functions and activity at various council facilities, the opening of domestic

travel on 15 December from areas with the COVID-19 delta strain and that the upcoming school holidays. In considering these factors the chief executive has determined that from 10 December 2021 any person aged over 12 years will be required to show a vaccine pass at any council-operated pool, library or i-SITE. As the Roxburgh Service Centre is a fully integrated facility that includes a library and an i-SITE, people accessing this Centre will need to provide their vaccine pass to access council services such as payment of rates face-to-face. If they do not have a vaccine pass those services can still be accessed face-to-face at other service centres.

All other council-operated facilities will operate under the standard orange settings, with scanning in, the use of face masks and 1 metre distancing required. This is subject to change at any time based on regular risk assessments to ensure the safety of both staff and the community.

The 10 December 2021 date has been chosen to enable the appropriate technology to be put in place, as well as enable members of the community to prepare for this change. Given high rates of vaccination in Central Otago, it is considered that the people in the community that may be negatively impacted is relatively small. This decision is made with the health and safety of the community as a whole in mind.

Staffing considerations

Independent of the decisions outlined above, council has conducted a risk assessment on all roles in the organisation as required under the health and safety legislation. This assessment and its proposed translation into a staff vaccination policy will be consulted with staff from Monday 6 December 2021. A decision on the vaccination policy will be made before the end of the year.

3. Attachments

Nil

Report author:



Sanchia Jacobs
Chief Executive Officer
2/12/2021