

NOTICE OF INTENDED MOTION

Dated: 21 July 2026

For

The Council Meeting of 29 July 2026.

Pursuant to

Standing Order 27.

Background

In December 2023 Mr Terry Hammond, then owner of the Lakeland Queen, submitted a petition to the Infrastructure and Environment Committee chaired by Cr Karen Barker. The petition was rejected on the grounds that it was outside the scope of that committee and also Council.

I laid a complaint with the Ombudsman, believing it to be very much within the scope of this committee and of Council.

On 29 June 2026 the Ombudsman issued his final opinion on my complaint (attached) and found that the petition was within the scope of Council and the decision to decline the petition was unreasonable.

Recommendation

I give notice that I intend to move that:

1. the Ombudsman's letter be received.
2. the Ombudsman's final opinion be accepted.
3. Mr Hammond be invited to attend the next Council meeting and be given 5 minutes to address Council, as he should have been allowed to when he submitted his petition, and to receive a public apology.

MOVED BY

SECONDED BY


.....

Cr Robert Lee

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Doc ID: 22821007

Rich Woodward
Manager Investigations
Office of the Ombudsman

By email:
c/o mel.jagusch@ombudsman.parliament.nz

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Tēnā koe Rich

Complaint from Cr Robert Lee – Decision to decline to hear petition regarding the Lakeland Queen

I acknowledge receipt of your latest correspondence on the 2 June 2026 advising me of the Ombudsman's likely opinion that the original decision to decline to hear the petition was unreasonable.

I have considered the information provided in your letter explaining the reasons for the likely decision and ruling by the Ombudsman. While I do not agree that the decision to decline the original petition was unreasonable, I accept the provisional ruling, given that the petition was resubmitted to Council and accepted; and that significant time and resources have been spent by my staff and staff from your office on this complaint.

I acknowledge also that, given the passage of time, the Ombudsman is unlikely to make any recommendations.

As requested in your latest correspondence we have extended your offer to comment on the preliminary findings to the former Interim Chief Executive Ms Gina Rangi. Her position is as follows:

- 1. The petitioner received my decision and did not at any stage contact me to challenge my reasons. If I had made an error of interpretation, I would have expected the petitioner to inform me.*
- 2. I also offered to provide background information to explain the decisions at the time. The petitioner did not take that up. Again, if I had made an error, I would have expected the petitioner to take up the opportunity and to challenge my decision. He did not.*
- 3. I acknowledge that the incoming chief executive exercised his discretion to allow the petition. While the petition was not eligible under the rules, I appreciate his effort to manage the politics by relaxing the rules on that occasion. That is a political decision which he was entitled to make, but it is not evidence that the earlier decision was incorrect.*

As I have noted in previous correspondence, my staff have spent a significant amount of time responding to multiple requests about this complaint, at a time where our council, like others, is struggling with an enormous workload driven by legislative change. By accepting the provisional ruling by the Ombudsman, I hope that this matter can now be concluded.

Nāku noa, ngā

Andrew Moraes
Chief Executive

Our ref CASE-006387 (GROUND-0006870)
Contact Mel Jagusch
29 June 2026



Cr Robert Lee

By email: [REDACTED]

Tēnā koe Cr Lee

**Final opinion on your complaint against Rotorua Lakes Council
Decision to decline to hear petition regarding the Lakeland Queen**

I write concerning your complaint about the Council's initial decision to decline to hear a petition regarding the Lakeland Queen.

Since the provisional opinion letter sent to you from Rich Woodward on 9 March 2026, we have considered this matter further and had further correspondence with the Council.

The initial decision to refuse the petition was focused on the request for '*provision*' as relating to provision of a jetty and declined for reasons associated with that. However, the background to the petition had also raised concerns about the Council cutting off services - electricity, freshwater, wastewater and fuel – for the Lakeland Queen during the lakefront redevelopment. These matters regarding the provision or restoration of services appear to fall within the Council's terms of reference and do not appear to have been considered in the initial decision. On this basis, I have now formed the final opinion that the initial decision to decline the petition was unreasonable.

Given that matters regarding the Lakeland Queen and the petition have moved on considerably since the decision in question was made, I have not made any recommendations.

I have now concluded my investigation.

Nāku noa, nā

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'John Allen'.

John Allen
Chief Ombudsman