

16 November 2022

Hon David Parker  
Minister for the Environment

Kia ora Minister Parker

### **Resource Management Reform**

Congratulations on introducing the Natural and Built Environments and Spatial Planning Bills to the House this week. This is a significant achievement and the culmination of many months of hard work by you and your officials. We're looking forward to engaging in the select committee process and providing feedback on the Bills.

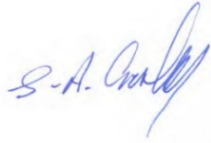
However, our two organisations were disappointed to see comments about councils' planning teams needing to be "tamed" and inferences that council staff are a key factor in frustration with the Resource Management Act. A number of our members have expressed concern that the comments you've made unfairly place responsibility for issues with the current system on council planning staff.

Our organisations' view is that a large number of factors have contributed to issues with the current system over many years. For a long time planners, councils and the public have been left to navigate a complex and often contradictory labyrinth of government policy and legislation. While we recognise that there is a need to improve resource management processes, including to ensure that they're simpler, more efficient and cost-effective, targeting councils' under-resourced and stretched planning departments, who are operating in a complex system, is not going down well with our members. In fact, many councils tell us they are struggling to attract the workforce needed to keep up with the amount of work they're faced with.

Councils will play a critical role in supporting successful transition to and implementation of the new resource management system. LGNZ, Taituarā, our members and the members of the Local Government Steering Group, are keen to continue to work closely with you and your officials to design a comprehensive transition and implementation programme that recognises the significant constraints on councils and their planning departments.

If you have any questions please don't hesitate to contact us.

Ngā mihi nui

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'S.A. Crosby'.

**Stuart Crosby**  
President  
Local Government New Zealand

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Sanchia Jacobs'.

**Sanchia Jacobs**  
President  
Taituarā