

Notice is hereby given that an Ordinary meeting of the Great South Joint Shareholders Committee will be held on:

Date: Friday, 19 September 2025  
Time: 9:00 am  
Meeting room: Great South, 143 Spey Street, Invercargill  
Venue:

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## Great South Joint Shareholders Committee Agenda OPEN

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### MEMBERSHIP

Rob Scott, Mayor Southland District Council (Chair)	A class shareholder
Ben Bell, Mayor, Gore District Council	A class shareholder
Nobby Clark, Mayor, Invercargill City Council	A class shareholder
Nicol Horrell, Chair, Environment Southland	A class shareholder
Daryl Haggerty, Acting Chief Executive, Southern Institute of Technology	B class shareholder
Sheree Carey, Chief Executive Officer, Southland Chamber of Commerce	B class shareholder
Mark Paterson, General Manager, Mataura Licensing Trust	B class shareholder
Chris Ramsay, Chief Executive, Invercargill Licensing Trust	B class shareholder
Jackie Flutey, Chief Executive Officer, Community Trust South	Member

## Health and safety

Toilets – The location of the toilets will be advised at the meeting.

Earthquake – Drop, cover and hold applies in this situation and, if necessary, once the shaking has stopped we will evacuate the building to a safe location.

Evacuation – Should there be an evacuation for any reason please exit via the exits indicated at the venue.

Phones – Please turn your mobile devices to silent mode.

Recording - These proceedings may be recorded for the purpose of live video, both live streaming and downloading. By remaining in this meeting, you are consenting to being filmed for viewing by the public.

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1 Apologies

At the close of the agenda no apologies had been received.

2 Leave of absence

At the close of the agenda no requests for leave of absence had been received.

3 Conflict of Interest

Joint Committee members are reminded of the need to be vigilant to stand aside from decision-making when a conflict arises between their role as a member and any private or other external interest they might have.

4 Extraordinary/Urgent Items

To consider, and if thought fit, to pass a resolution to permit the Joint Committee to consider any further items which do not appear on the Agenda of this meeting and/or the meeting to be held with the public excluded.

5 Confirmation of Council Minutes

5.1 Meeting minutes of Great South Joint Shareholders Committee, 08 August 2025

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# Great South Joint Shareholders Committee

## OPEN MINUTES

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Minutes of a meeting of Great South Joint Shareholders Committee held in the Great South, 143 Spey Street, Invercargill on Friday 8 Aug 2025 at 9:03am. (9.03am – 9.37am)

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### PRESENT

#### A class shareholders

Mayor Rob Scott, Southland District Council  
Mayor Ben Bell, Gore District Council  
Mayor Nobby Clark, Invercargill City Council  
Chair Nicol Horrell, Environment Southland

#### B class shareholder

Daryl Haggerty, Acting Chief Executive, Southern Institute of Technology  
Sheree Carey, Chief Executive, Southland Chamber of Commerce (video link)  
Chris Ramsay, Chief Executive, Invercargill Licensing Trust (video link)

#### Member

Jackie Flutey, Chief Executive Officer, Community Trust South

### IN ATTENDANCE

Jeremy McPhail, Environment Southland Councillor  
Sam Rossiter-Stead, GM Community and Engagement, Environment Southland (video link)  
Trudie Hurst, GM Community Engagement and Corporate Services, Invercargill City Council  
Patricia Christie, GM Finance and Administration, Invercargill City Council  
Megan Seator, Policy Advisor, Southland Mayoral Forum  
Cameron McIntosh, Chief Executive, Southland District Council  
Vibhuti Chopra, GM Strategy and Partnerships, Southland District Council  
Fiona Dunlop, Committee Advisor, Southland District Council  
Ian Collier, Board Chair, Great South  
Chami Abeysinghe, Chief Executive, Great South  
Suzanne Hotton, GM Finance, IT and Facilities, Great South

1 Apologies

There were no apologies.

2 Leave of absence

There were no requests for leave of absence.

3 Conflict of Interest

There were no conflicts of interest declared.

4 Extraordinary/Urgent Items

There were no Extraordinary/Urgent items.

5 Confirmation of Council Minutes

Resolution

Moved Member Flutey, seconded Mayor Clark

That the Great South Joint Shareholders Committee confirms the minutes of the meeting held on 13 June 2025 as a true and correct record of that meeting.

CARRIED

## Reports

7.1 Letter of Expectation 2026/2027

Record No: R/25/7/35185

Megan Seator Policy Advisor (Southland Mayoral Forum) was in attendance for this item.

The purpose of the report was for the Great South Joint Shareholders Committee to consider the draft Letter of Expectation 2026/2027 and to recommend its endorsement to the Great South shareholders.

(During discussion Gore District Council, Mayor Bell joined the meeting at 9.16am.)

Resolution

Moved Mayor Clark, seconded Member Flutey

That the Great South Joint Shareholders Committee:

- a) **receives the report titled “Letter of Expectation 2026/2027”.**

- b) determines that this matter or decision be recognised as not significant in terms of Section 76 of the Local Government Act 2002.
- c) determines that it has complied with the decision-making provisions of the Local Government Act 2002 to the extent necessary in relation to this decision; and in accordance with Section 79 of the act determines that it does not require further information, further assessment of options or further analysis of costs and benefits or advantages and disadvantages prior to making a decision on this matter.
- d) approves the draft Letter of Expectation 2026/2027 as contained in Attachment A **(of the officer's report)** and recommends that the ~~Council~~ Shareholders and Members, Invercargill City Council, Southland District Council, Gore District Council and Environment Southland approve the Letter of Expectation.
- e) delegates the Chair authority to make any minor changes to the draft Letter of Expectation before it is sent to the Councils based on feedback from meeting.

CARRIED.

7.2 Great South update

Record No: R/25/8/36769

Great South Chief Executive – Chami Abeysinghe and Board Chair Ian Collier were in attendance and presented the item.

Resolution

Moved Mayor Scott, seconded Member Horrell

That the Great South Joint Shareholders Committee:

- a) **receives the report titled "Great South update".**

CARRIED.

The meeting concluded at 9.37am.

CONFIRMED AS A TRUE AND CORRECT RECORD OF A  
MEETING OF THE GREAT SOUTH JOINT  
SHAREHOLDERS COMMITTEE HELD ON FRIDAY 8  
AUGUST 2025.

DATE:.....

CHAIRPERSON:.....



## Great South update

Record no: R/25/9/45739  
Author: Michal Gray, Democracy advisor  
Approved by: Robyn Rout, Governance legal manager

☐ Decision

☐ Recommendation

☒ Information

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Chami Abeysinghe, Chief Executive of Great South, provides the Great South Joint Shareholders Committee the Great South Report contained in Attachment A.

### Recommendation

That the Great South Joint Shareholders Committee:

- a) **receives the report titled “Great South update”.**

### Attachments

A Great South Report 12 September 2025 [↓](#)



To The Joint Shareholder Committee  
Date 12 September 2025

## Great South Report

Author	Chami Abeysinghe, Chief Executive
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### General Overview

The last few weeks have been busy, as Great South continues to work on delivering outcomes against our Statement of Intent. Since the last meeting, there have been a number of achievements that I would like to share with our shareholders.

- **Murihiku Southland Aquaculture Pathway Launch**

Thank you to all our shareholders that were able to make it for the launch event on Tuesday 02 September 2025. We had around 80 attendees and our Guest of Honour, Hon Mark Patterson in his capacity as Associate Minister for Regional Development announced approval for a 2.25M loan to Space Operations New Zealand Ltd., through the Regional Infrastructure Fund (RIF).

The Minister also acknowledged the work we as a region do to progress economic development and applauded our efforts that enabled the Aquaculture Pathway for the region being developed. The Pathway identifies;

- Nine (9) areas of focus
- 5 Goals
- 17 Key actions

At the event, we also launched the Murihiku Aquaculture website, which can be accessed at the following link: <https://murihikuaquaculture.nz/>.

We are proud that the pathway developed has been endorsed and supported by industry, our four mayors and Chair, and local iwi with endorsement from Ta Tipene O'Regan. I am also pleased to confirm that an implementation plan has already been developed following the completion of the Aquaculture Pathway, and the team are working on agreed projects now.



**Southland Regional Development Agency**  
143 Spey Street, PO Box 1306, Invercargill 9840, Southland, New Zealand  
Phone +64 3 211 1400 Email [info@greatsouth.nz](mailto:info@greatsouth.nz)

[greatsouth.nz](https://greatsouth.nz)

Following the launch event, I accompanied Minister Mark Patterson and the MBIE Team (Mark and Huia) to meet local businesses including:

- The Southern Dairy Hub – Wallace Town  
We had a good robust discussion with the SDH team, and the minister received an update on the research and development work being carried out at the hub. They also demonstrated how the research has made a material impact on actual working farms. The need for funding was discussed and opportunities through Horizon Europe were identified and will be pursued.
- Blue River Dairy – Invercargill  
The visit to the site was fascinating and the presentation given to the Minister highlighted how progressive this company is. Robert spoke to us about the changes and challenges the company faced in recent times however these all seem to have been overcome. Blue River Dairy has staff from diverse backgrounds. The employee satisfaction and how they have built the culture of the company is to be commended.
- Resolution – Gore  
Paul and Henry and the team from resolution presented and demonstrated the App in use to the Minister. Again, we can be extremely proud of yet another innovation that was born through Southern ingenuity. Resolution has customers across New Zealand and Australia and are venturing further afield to gain new international markets.

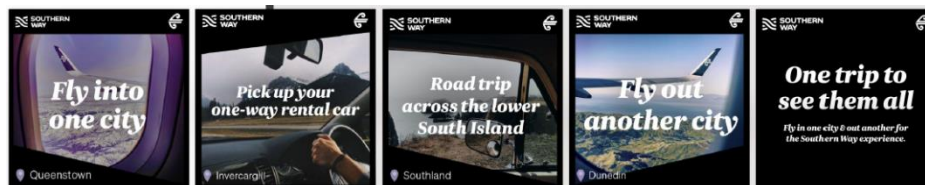
#### • Tourism Acknowledgements

We're excited to announce that the collaborative campaign of the Southern Way with Air New Zealand, "One Trip to See It All", has been named a finalist in two prestigious awards:

- TIA New Zealand Tourism Awards – Tourism Collaboration Award
- Grand Business South Awards – Excellence in Marketing

These nominations are a fantastic recognition of the strength of regional collaboration and a meaningful tribute to the late Graham Budd, former Chief Executive of Great South, whose vision continues to inspire the work done through our business. We'll find out the results in October (TIA) and November (Business South), so fingers crossed!

The Southern Way is a regional partnership between the eight Regional Tourism Organisations (RTOs) in the lower South Island, along with Invercargill, Dunedin, and Queenstown Airports. Together, we work to promote the south as a connected and unforgettable destination.



Furthermore, the work we continue to do with Air NZ and exposing our region through Kia Ora Magazine has paid dividends again, with not one, but two articles being featured in the September edition of the in-flight magazine.

There is a Rakiura feature (as part of the Kia Ora famill we organised in December last year) and a feature on the Southern Way highlighting our Great Rides (Around the Mountains Cycle Trail). You can read the two articles at the links below

Rakiura: <https://kiaora.pressreader.com/kia-ora/20250901/page/82>

Southern Way: <https://kiaora.pressreader.com/kia-ora/20250901/page/34>

- **Ambassador for SIT**

I am pleased to announce that with approval from my Board of Directors, I will take on an ambassador role for SIT to support their International Student recruitment programme. I will represent SIT in India and Sri Lanka and will be away between 01 October to 16 October 2025, both days inclusive.

During my time there, I will be engaging with students, agents and high schools. I will also meet and engage with Education New Zealand and the respective High Commissions in the two countries. Working with the in-country representative, the aim is to reposition SIT as a first choice for international education and thereby boost application numbers and visa approval rates.

This programme aligns with the work Great South does with workforce development and business support and diversification that is identified in our SOL. As you will recall, Great South has already established the 'Get a Life, Get Southland' campaign and with Beyond 2025, Murihiku Southland Destination Strategy, 4<sup>th</sup> Energy Strategy, Infometrics modelling, and more recently the Murihiku Southland Aquaculture Pathway, we know what skills are needed for our region. As an ambassador for SIT, I will advocate for students and/or spouses that have the skills we are looking for supporting our regional development goals.

- **Southland Youth Futures – Great South Vocational Excellence Awards**

Yesterday, the Southland Youth Futures team celebrated 21 of our most promising rangatahi engaged in vocational training through our schools. Great South repurposed left over PGF (Provincial Growth Funds) money to create these Vocational Excellence Awards. We also received financial support from NZAS and Fonterra. We were extremely grateful to Joc O'Donnell who was our guest speaker at the event, delivering a motivational speech to the award recipients.

The recipients were nominated from their schools as being a top vocational student and had demonstrated excellence in work-based learning, all with an aim to enter a vocational pathway. Students were assessed by an industry-based panel using criteria that included professionalism, adaptability, initiative, vocational engagement, and skill development.

The celebrations started with students taking on activities at Adventure Southland. The students took on high ropes, the giant swing, ultimate archery - and even enjoyed a taste of Popeyes.

This could not have taken place, had it not been for the amazing sponsors that made this day possible. These include; New Zealand Aluminium Smelter, Fonterra Careers, Mitre 10 MEGA Invercargill, MITO New Zealand, NZ Safety Blackwoods, Building and Construction Industry Training Organisation and Radcliffe Electrical.

In addition to prize money and a certificate, every recipient also received a goody bag full of supplies from our sponsors.

- **Best Wishes**

We would like to take this opportunity to wish both Nicol Horrell and Nobby Clark the very best of luck in their retirement. Both have been in public service for many years, and their contributions and commitment to make our region a better place has been greatly valued. On a personal note, I would like to thank them for their guidance and advice given to me, and for the confidence placed in Great South.

We wish you both well, and trust you will keep in touch.

- **Environment Southland**

We'd also like to acknowledge Wilma Falconer who left her role as Chief Executive of Environment Southland, at the end of August 2025. Representing Great South, I attended her farewell and thanked Wilma for her leadership over her tenure. I have valued the frank and honest conversations we have had in the past and know that her and her husband Brett will enjoy their time in Europe.

We are also extremely excited about the MoU that Environment Southland and Great South have signed that outlines our agreement to progress opportunities to work together more cohesively. We look forward to this MoU coming into effect as it will enable Great South to support Environment Southland as needed.

Finally, we would like to wish Rob Philips the very best of luck as he starts as the Acting Chief Executive of the regional council. We look forward to working closely with Rob and strengthening the relationships we have with the entire team at Environment Southland.

- **Upcoming Priorities**

- 2026/26 FY Letter of Expectation
- Planning for induction of new Councillors in February 2026
- Annual Report and completion of the audit. Preparing for our AGM in November



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## Letter of Expectation 2026/2027

Record no: R/25/9/45475

Author: Michal Gray, Democracy advisor

Approved by: Vibhuti Chopra, Group Manager Strategy and Partnerships/Acting Chief Executive

☒ Decision

☐ Recommendation

☐ Information

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### Purpose

- 1 The purpose of this report is for the Great South Joint Shareholders Committee (the committee) to approve the final letter of expectation (LOE) 2026/2027.

### Executive summary

- 2 This report has been prepared by Michal Gray, Democracy Advisor (Southland District Council) and Megan Seator, Policy Advisor (Southland Mayoral Forum).
- 3 The Local Government Act allows for shareholders of a council controlled organisation to communicate their expectations to support the development of a statement of intent.
- 4 A draft LOE was provided to the committee where it was recommended to be approved by individual shareholders.
- 5 By the date of the meeting it is expected that all council shareholders will have approved the draft LOE. The final LOE is now being presented to the committee for approval before being provided by Great South.

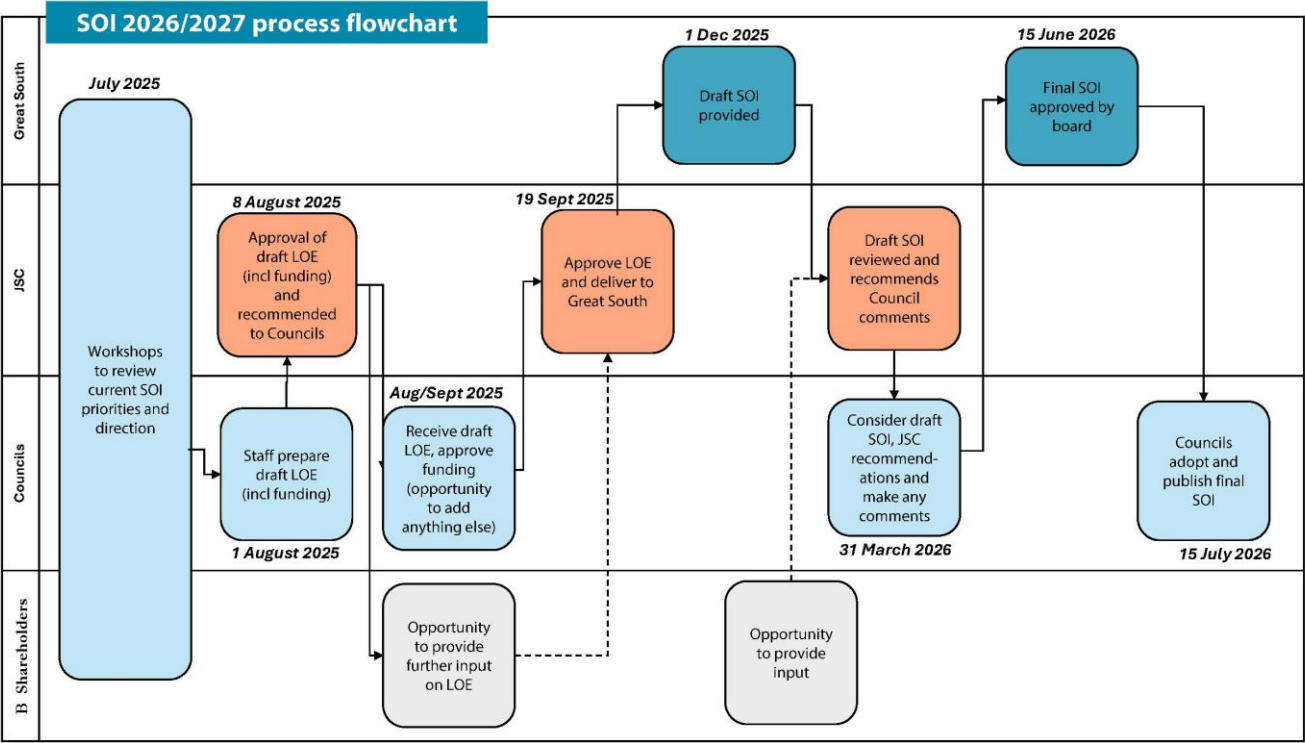
### Recommendation

That the Great South Joint Shareholders Committee:

- a) **receives the report titled “Letter of Expectation 2026/2027”.**
- b) determines that this matter or decision be recognised as not significant in terms of Section 76 of the Local Government Act 2002.
- c) determines that it has complied with the decision-making provisions of the Local Government Act 2002 to the extent necessary in relation to this decision; and in accordance with Section 79 of the act determines that it does not require further information, further assessment of options or further analysis of costs and benefits or advantages and disadvantages prior to making a decision on this matter.
- d) approves the final Letter of Expectation 2026/2027 contained as Attachment A to this report.

Background

- 6 In accordance with Schedule 8 from the Local Government Act 2002, council-controlled organisations (CCO) such as the Southland Regional Development Agency Ltd (Great South) are required to submit a Statement of Intent (SOI) to its shareholders on an annual basis. The SOI outlines the strategic direction and priorities of the CCO for following year. A letter of expectation (LOE) may be provided to the CCO by the shareholders to provide guidance and direction as the CCO prepares its SOI.
- 7 The process for the development of the SOI 2026/2027 is outlined below:



- 8 In July 2025 Great South reached out to councils to offer workshops to go over the regional priorities and council-specific workstreams outlined in the current SOI. For reference, the regional priorities were originally informed by the August 2023 strategic workshop and subsequent LOE which intended to provide strategic direction for a three-year period.
- 9 This three-year strategic direction was implemented to ensure alignment to councils' long-term plans and provide certainty for the operations of Great South (note: the 2026/2027 year is the third and final year of the three-year strategic cycle).
- 10 Between the three-year strategic direction cycles, the annual LOE process provides for the reconfirmation of the work programme and allows for minor changes, if required.
- 11 Staff prepared the draft LOE based on the current regional priorities, the activities in the current SOI, and the outcomes of the July council workshops. This was subsequently provided to the Committee at their meeting on 8 August 2025 which was recommended for endorsement by the shareholders individually.



### Shareholder endorsement

- 12 Invercargill City Council, Gore District Council, Community Trust South, Invercargill Licensing Trust, and the Southland Chamber of Commerce have approved the draft LOE.
- 13 Southland District Council has also approved the draft LOE, with the addition that Southland District Council sees an avenue for Great South to support the Local Government Commission's work around the future of local government in Southland, if required, and if it fits within existing budgets and without affecting other priorities.
- 14 Environment Southland are considering the draft LOE at their meeting on 17 September 2025 and staff will provide a verbal update at the meeting.
- 15 Staff note that the shareholders approved a version of the draft LOE that did not include Southland District Council's addition.
- 16 The final LOE being presented for approval is contained in attachment A and includes the additional request by Southland District Council.

### Factors to consider

#### Legal and statutory requirements

- 17 Under section 64B of the Local Government Act 2002, shareholders of a council-controlled organisation (CCO) may provide a statement of their expectations.

#### Community views

- 18 No specific community views have been sought in relation to this matter, but each council's long-term plan has undergone a thorough extensive engagement.

#### Costs and funding

- 19 Costs and funding have been outlined in the draft LOE.

#### Policy implications

- 20 Staff note that shareholders approved a version of the draft LOE that did not include Southland District Council's addition which may have policy implications which may be contrary to some shareholders delegations and expected governance practices.

### Analysis of Options

#### Option 1 – Approves the final Great South letter of expectation 2026/2027

<i>Advantages</i>	<i>Disadvantages</i>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• The LOE conveys the expectations of the shareholders to Great South to support the preparation of the SOI.</li><li>• There will be no delays in the process.</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• There may be concerns with other shareholders regarding the inclusion of Southland District Council's addition.</li></ul>

Option 2 – Does not approve the final Great South letter of expectation 2026/2027

<i>Advantages</i>	<i>Disadvantages</i>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• An opportunity will be available for all shareholders to consider Southland District Council's addition.</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Delays in the process resulting increased pressure on Great South to deliver within timeframes.</li></ul>

Assessment of significance

- 21 This matter may be considered significant for some shareholders determined by their respective significance and engagement policy.

Recommended option

Staff recommend option 1 – approves the final Great South Letter of Expectation 2026/2027. Consideration may be given to Southland District Council's addition.

Next steps

- 22 The Chair of the Committee will sign off the final LOE and it will be provided to the Chair and Chief Executive of Great South.

Attachments

- A Final Great South Letter of Expectation 2026/2027 [↓](#)



19 September 2025

Ian Collier  
Great South  
PO Box 1306  
Invercargill 9840

Dear Ian

### **Great South Letter of Expectation 2026-2027**

#### **Introduction**

I'm writing to you on behalf of the Great South Joint Shareholders as Chair of the Joint Shareholders Committee.

Thank you for another productive year supporting our region. I would like to formally acknowledge the great work that your team has done, which was recently summed up perfectly by the Associate Regional Development Minister, Mark Patterson:

*"During my time in politics I have always enjoyed my engagement with the Southland community. The local politics is fought tough, but when it matters everyone comes together for the greater good of Southland. You do the work internally and come together with a compelling plan for central government. In my experience, no province in New Zealand is as cohesive as Southland.*

*I have always been impressed by the work done by Great South as the regional economic development agency. It is the gold standard by which I measure other provinces.*

*The agency's track record of bringing together business, iwi and local government, as well as identifying regional opportunities around a cohesive strategy, is second to none. It hasn't hit a home run every time but that is expected. There is always risk and reward balance required."*

As we navigate through the continuum of change, it is comforting to know that as a Region we have a plan, and that we are all working together in the collective interest of Southland.

**Legislative background**

This letter of expectation (LOE) is written in accordance of s64B of the Local Government Act (LGA). While not mandatory, the delivery of LOEs to council-controlled organisations (CCO) is regarded as best practice. It provides guidance and direction to CCOs from their shareholders prior to preparation of their annual the statement of intent (SOI).

As you are aware, under s64(2) the purpose of a statement of intent is to:

- Publicly state the activities and intentions of the CCO for the year, and the objectives to which those activities will contribute;
- An opportunity for shareholders to influence the direction of the entity; and
- Provide a basis for the entity's governing body to be accountable to the shareholders for the entity's performance.

**Regional priorities**

In August 2023, Great South hosted a strategic planning workshop with its shareholders and board to gain collective agreement on long-term priorities for the region and Great South's activities. It was subsequently agreed and noted that the on the following regional strategic areas:

- Regional development leadership
- Business support & diversification
- Regional Promotion
- Net Zero Southland

In additionally, Great South will support a number of key enablers identified in the Beyond 2025 Southland Plan as being key to Southland's growth and sustainability, specifically:

- Data
- Housing
- Aquaculture
- Energy
- Forestry

Since these regional priorities were agreed in 2023, I note the new addition of *agriculture* to this list, as outlined in the Great South Statement of Intent 2025/2026.

**Individual Shareholder Priorities**

Priorities specific to each shareholder remain unchanged and have been previously outlined within the Great South Statement of Intent 2025/2026, with the exception of:

- a) Invercargill City Council, as a part of their contract funding, requests that Great South progress (in order of priority):

- Product packaging and capability development for tourism operators in Bluff;
- The development and sharing of the Motupōhue Bluff story as part of the Murihiku Southland story;
- Projects 8, 20, and 7 of Te Taurapa o Te Waka – Bluff Hill Experience.

b) The Southland Business Chamber suggests ongoing advocacy and discussions with stakeholders regarding transport connectivity with Southland. This encompasses both destination management related to domestic air travel, and industry growth and export opportunities supported by freight rail and roading.

#### Funding

	Total
Invercargill City Council	\$2,038,412
Southland District Council	\$1,296,827
Gore District Council	\$256,250
Environment Southland	\$213,850
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$3,805,339</b>

*\*Please note that the table above is LTP budgeted funding and may be subject to variation through the local government annual plan process.*

#### Local Government Commission Investigation

Southland District Council sees an avenue for Great South to support the Local Government Commission's work around the future of local government in Southland, if required, and if it fits within Great South's existing budgets and without affecting other priorities.

**Commented [MS1]:** Additional paragraph from Southland District Council

#### Next steps

On receipt of this LOE, the JSC requests that the Board provides a draft SOI by 1 December 2025. The JSC will then obtain input from shareholders, and provide joint feedback to you by 31 March 2026. This feedback will inform the final SOI which is expected to be received by June 2026.

Yours sincerely

Mayor Rob Scott  
**Chair - Great South Joint Shareholders Committee**

cc: Chami Abeysinghe, Great South

