



Te Rūnanga o NGĀI TAHU

24 July 2026

Peter Kelly
Chief Executive
Central Otago District Council

By email: peter.kelly@codc.govt.nz

Cc: Her Worship Tamah Alley, Mayor of Central Otago (mayor@codc.govt.nz)

Tēnā koe Peter

Re: Treaty Partnership – Local Government

I am writing to follow up on the letter sent to your Mayor by Kaiwhakahaere Justin Tipa on 14 July 2026, which outlined Ngāi Tahu's initial perspectives on the Local Government Head Start process.

As noted in that letter, Te Rūnanga o Ngāi Tahu (TRoNT) and Papatipu Rūnanga have given considerable thought to these reforms. In our view, the reforms present a once-in-a-generation opportunity to modernise our 1989 local government system and design governance and service delivery arrangements that are genuinely fit for the future of South Island communities. Ngāi Tahu strongly supports all regions within our takiwā submitting a compliant Head Start proposal by 9 August. We acknowledge the tight timeframe and appreciate the significant effort already undertaken to engage with communities and work collaboratively across the region.

The four principles that we believe should help guide the development of Head Start proposals:

1. Local government boundaries should align with the Ngāi Tahu takiwā boundary.
2. River catchments should be the primary determinant of unitary council boundaries within the Ngāi Tahu takiwā.
3. A joint Takiwā/ South Island "Centre of Expertise" entity should be established to provide shared back-office and specialist functions on behalf of new unitary councils.
4. Future arrangements should incorporate genuine cooperation between councils and Papatipu Rūnanga.

We would welcome the opportunity to discuss these principles further as your proposal develops, and to hear your Council's views on whether it supports them.

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Please contact Emma Jacka (emma.jacka@ngaitahu.iwi.nz) or Sam Broughton (samuel.broughton@ngaitahu.iwi.nz) to arrange a time for discussion.

Ngā mihi,



Ben Bateman
Chief Executive
Te Rūnanga o Ngāi Tah