

EXPLANATORY NOTE

CHANGES TO FOUNDATION POLICIES

This resolution seeks shareholders' approval for amendments to the Foundation Policies of the Company.

The Foundation Policies of the Company are set out in schedule 1 to the SHA. In summary, as relevant for the proposed resolution, clause 5.1(c) of the SHA provides that neither the Board nor any shareholder shall take or permit any action to cause any alteration to any of the Foundation Policies unless it is approved by Ordinary Resolution of the Company's shareholders.

The proposed changes to the Foundation Policies requiring shareholder approval by Ordinary Resolution relate to a change to the Net Debt / Total Revenue foundation policy financial covenant.

Proposed Change

The proposed change is to increase the Net Debt / Total Revenue foundation policy financial covenant from the current 250% to 280%, which applies to Local Authorities with a long-term credit rating of 'A' equivalent or higher.

However, such Local Authorities will not be required to comply with the revised Net Debt / Total Revenue foundation policy financial covenant until the financial year ending 30 June 2026. Until that date, such Local Authorities must comply with the Net Debt / Total Revenue foundation policy financial covenants set out in the table below:

Alternative Net Debt / Total Revenue Covenant	
Financial Year ending	Net Debt / Total Revenue
30 June 2020	<250%
30 June 2021	<300%
30 June 2022	<300%
30 June 2023	<295%
30 June 2024	<290%
30 June 2025	<285%

Then from the Financial Year ending 30 June 2026 the Net Debt/Total Revenue foundation policy financial covenant will be 280% for such Local Authorities with a long-term credit rating of 'A' equivalent or higher.

The proposed change is to provide greater financial flexibility and borrowing capacity for such Local Authorities as a result of the short-term impacts of COVID-19 and the medium-term structural changes to the local government sector to meet additional demand for infrastructure investment.

Local Authorities are faced with short-term revenue uncertainties as a result of the impact of COVID-19 on the New Zealand economy. This will impact both rates revenue and non-rates revenue for many Local Authorities and a recent Department of Internal Affairs Report projects revenue shortfalls of between 2.3% and 11% in the 2020-21 financial year.¹

The foundation policy and lending policy financial covenants were incorporated into the Foundation Policies in 2011 and have not subsequently been amended. Since 2011, Local Authorities have faced increased borrowing requirements to finance additional infrastructure to meet population growth, climate change and water quality issues. Central Government has also called upon Local Authorities to assist with additional infrastructure investment in the near term as part of the economic relief package post COVID-19.

The proposed changes only apply to Local Authorities with a long-term credit rating of 'A' equivalent or higher. As at 12 May 2020 thirty Local Authorities were required to meet the foundation policy financial

¹ DIA Local Government Sector COVID-19 Financial Implications Report 2 –4 May 2020

covenants. The other thirty-seven Local Authorities are required to meet the more restrictive lending policy financial covenants.

LGFA has undertaken scenario testing to determine the potential additional borrowing as a result of the proposed change to the foundation policy financial covenants and has concluded that the proposed changes do not incur significant additional risk for shareholders or guarantors of LGFA. This is because the probability of a default by a Local Authority remains low and if a default did occur then the probability of recovery of loans owing to LGFA remains high.

LGFA has discussed the proposed changes with both S&P Global Ratings Australia Pty Limited and Fitch Australia Pty Limited who provide a credit rating on LGFA. Both agencies were supportive verbally of the proposed change and S&P Global Ratings Australia Pty Limited provided their support in writing.²

² S&P Global Ratings Bulletin "New Zealand Local Government Funding Agency Ltd Ratings Can Tolerate Higher Council Leverage Limits. 5 May 2020