

Environmental Implementation Committee MINUTES

Minutes of an ordinary meeting of the Environmental Implementation Committee held in the Council Chamber, Level 2 Philip Laing House, 144 Rattray Street, Dunedin on Thursday 2 February 2023, commencing at 9:20 AM.

PRESENT

Cr Bryan Scott *(Co-Chairperson)*
Cr Kate Wilson *(Co-Chairperson)*
Cr Alexa Forbes
Cr Gary Kelliher
Cr Michael Laws (electronically)
Cr Kevin Malcolm
Cr Lloyd McCall
Cr Tim Mephram
Cr Andrew Noone
Cr Gretchen Robertson
Cr Alan Somerville
Cr Elliot Weir

IN ATTENDANCE

Co-Chairperson Kate Wilson welcomed Councillors, members of the public and staff to the meeting at 9:20 am. Staff present included Anita Dawe (GM Policy and Science), Gavin Palmer (GM Operations), Richard Saunders (GM Regulatory and Communications), Amanda Vercoe (GM Governance, Culture and Customer), Liz Spector (Governance Support), Andrea Howard, Libby Caldwell, Gavin Udy, Murray Boardman, and Sarah Irvine.

1. APOLOGIES

There were no apologies. Co-Chair Wilson noted Cr Elliot Weir would join the meeting shortly. She also noted Cr Laws had joined the meeting electronically.

2. PUBLIC FORUM

No public forum was held.

3. CONFIRMATION OF AGENDA

The agenda was confirmed as published.

4. CONFLICT OF INTEREST

No conflicts of interest were advised.

5. MATTERS FOR CONSIDERATION

5.1. Rabbit Monitoring

The report was provided to detail findings of two external reviews of current ORC rabbit monitoring methodologies and tools, and progress with actions arising from those reviews. Libby Caldwell (Manager Environmental Implementation), Sarah Irvine (Biosecurity Specialist) and Gavin Palmer (GM Operations) were present to respond to questions about the report. Gavin Udy (Project Delivery Specialist), Murray Boardman (Performance and Delivery Specialist), John Parkes (Kurahaupo Consulting), Hannah Palmer (Place Group Environmental Planning), and Janine Duckworth (Landcare Research) were present electronically.

Cr Elliot Weir joined the meeting at 9:25 a.m.

Following Councillor questions and a discussion of the findings, Cr Wilson moved the recommendations:

Resolution EIC23-101: Cr Wilson Moved, Cr Robertson Seconded

That the Environmental Implementation Committee:

- 1) **Notes** this report.
- 2) **Endorses** the approach being taken to measure the effectiveness of the ORC sustained control programme for feral rabbits.

MOTION CARRIED

5.2. National Wilding Conifer Control Programme

The report was provided to update the Committee on central government's scheduled reduction of funding for the National Wilding Conifer Control Programme and to obtain an endorsement to support Te Uru Kahika in advocacy for continued central government funding of the programme. Gavin Palmer (GM Operations), Libby Caldwell (Manager Environmental Implementation) and Gavin Udy (Project Delivery Specialist, National Programmes) were available to respond to questions about the report.

Councillors expressed concerns over the withdrawal of funding which could negatively impact the gains made in the reduction of wilding conifers. Richard Saunders (GM Regulatory and Comms) noted challenges were presented by the proximity of the funding reductions to LTP

processes which could cause problems for regional councils across the country. He said it was important to work with those groups to lobby MPI to request reconsideration of the timing of this planned funding reduction.

Following further discussion of the report, Cr Malcolm moved:

Resolution EIC23-102: Cr Malcolm Moved, Cr Weir Seconded

That the Environmental Implementation Committee:

- 1) **Notes** this report.
- 2) **Notes** the significant reduction in National Wilding Conifer Control Programme funding from 2023-24 onwards.
- 3) **Endorses** ORC's support of Te Uru Kahika in advocacy for continued central government funding of the National Wilding Conifer Control Programme.

MOTION CARRIED

5.3. Biosecurity Operational Plan 23/24

An Operational Plan is required under Section 100B of the Biosecurity Act 1993 to detail the nature and scope of activities the Council intends to undertake in the annual implementation of the Regional Pest Management Plan. For reasons of efficiency, the Operational Plan aligns with Council's financial year (1 July to 30 June). The Operational Plan details the range of activities undertaken by Council on the implementation of pest control across the five management programmes. The proposed Operational Plan continues the commitment of the biosecurity work as approved in the ORC 2021-31 Long Term Plan. This report presented the draft Plan for Committee recommendation to Council.

Gavin Palmer (GM Operations), Libby Caldwell (Manager Environmental Implementation), Gavin Udy (Project Delivery Specialist - National Programmes) and Murray Boardman (Performance and Delivery Specialist) were available to respond to questions about the report.

Following questions and debate, it was moved:

Resolution EIC23-103: Cr Wilson Moved, Cr Robertson Seconded

That the Environmental Implementation Committee:

- 1) **Notes** this report.
- 2) **Recommends Council approval of the Otago Regional Council's Regional Pest Management Plan 2023-2024 Biosecurity Operational Plan and authorises the Chief Executive to make minor subsequent changes and error corrections to the 2023-2024 Biosecurity Operational Plan in consultation with the Co-Chairs of the Environmental Implementation Committee.**
- 3) **Notes** that a copy of the Otago Regional Council's Regional Pest Management Plan 2023-2024 Biosecurity Operational Plan will be provided to the Minister for Biosecurity.
- 4) **Notes** that staff will report back to Council any response from the Minister for Biosecurity.

MOTION CARRIED

Following from a discussion conducted during the Rabbit Monitoring report, Cr Kelliher further moved:

Resolution EIC23-104: Cr Kelliher Moved, Cr Malcolm Seconded

That the Environmental Implementation Committee recommends Council:

- 1) **Consider** the advice of Janine Duckworth (Landcare Research) that ORC staff investigate the process required to have RHDV removed from the National Unwanted Organism list.

MOTION CARRIED

5.4. ECO Fund - Funding available, criteria and assessment panel for March 2023 round

This report was provided to obtain a recommendation for approval for funding available for Incentives Funding and minor changes to ECO Fund processes and administration (including revised Terms and Conditions) for the March 2023 round; and request a new ECO Fund Councillor assessment panel be convened for the new Council triennium. Gavin Palmer (GM Operations) and Libby Caldwell (Manager Environmental Implementation) were available to respond to questions.

Cr Alan Somerville said he was pleased to be appointed chair of the panel and said a rotation of different Councillors appointed to the panel was a positive idea. He suggested Crs Forbes and Wilson be appointed for the first round. Following a discussion, it was moved:

Resolution EIC23-105: Cr Weir Moved, Cr Malcolm Seconded

That the Environmental Implementation Committee:

- 1) **Notes** this report.
- 2) **Recommends Council approval of** the funding available including changes to Incentives Funding allocations outlined in Table 1 for the March 2023 round (Option 2).
- 3) **Recommends Council approval of** revised assessment criteria and Terms and Conditions outlined in Table 3 and Attachments 1, 3 and 4 for the March 2023 round (Option 2).
- 4) **Appoints** Cr Wilson and Cr Forbes to join Cr Somerville (Chair) to form the ECO Fund assessment panel for the first year of the 2022-2025 triennium.

MOTION CARRIED

6. CLOSURE

There was no further business and Co-Chair Wilson declared the meeting closed at 10:50 a.m.



Co-Chairperson

11/05/2023

Date