

OTAGO REGIONAL COUNCIL

Minutes of an Ordinary meeting of the Council held in the Council Chamber, 70 Stafford Street, Dunedin on Wednesday 25 March 2015 commencing at 1.00 pm

Present:

- Cr Stephen Woodhead (Chairperson)
- Cr Graeme Bell
- Cr Doug Brown
- Cr Louise Croot MNZM
- Cr Michael Deaker
- Cr Gerrard Eckhoff
- Cr Gary Kelliher
- Cr Trevor Kempton
- Cr Sam Neill
- Cr Bryan Scott
- Cr David Shepherd

Apologies:

Cr Gretchen Robertson
The apology was accepted on the motion of Crs Woodhead and Bell.

Leave of Absence:

Cr Robertson – Request for Leave of Absence
The request for Leave of Absence was approved on the motion of Crs Shepherd and Croot.

In attendance:

- Peter Bodeker
- Wayne Scott
- Jeff Donaldson
- Jane Leahy
- Fraser McRae
- Gavin Palmer
- Janet Favel

CONFIRMATION OF AGENDA

There were no changes to the agenda.

MINUTES

The public and in committee sections of the minutes of the meeting held on 11 February 2014, having been circulated, were adopted on the motion of Crs Croot and Bell.

Matters arising from the minutes

There were no matters arising from the minutes.

PART A – CHAIRPERSON’S AND CHIEF EXECUTIVE’S REPORTS

Item 1

2015/0825 **Chairperson’s report.** Chair, 17/3/15

The Chairperson reported on his activities for the period to 17 March 2015. He commented further on the following matters:

- RSG meeting – Minister Nick Smith spoke about the RMA reforms, noting the addition of natural hazards to Part II. He also spoke about changes to plan change and consent hearings. The role of elected members in finalising Plans was to be elevated, the Environment Court would be excluded from the process, and there would be more involvement of affected parties. There was concern that Councillors could be excluded from panels for publicly notified consents.
- The Iwi leaders forum was gathering momentum, and discussions were being held with Government about the future of water; Government acknowledged that iwi had significant rights and interests around water, but did not have an ownership or veto right.
- LAWF was to be continued, and had been given more power.

In response to a question about the Mayoral Forum meeting, Cr Woodhead explained that the Otago Museum funding review was commissioned by the DCC. There were longstanding challenges with the existing funding agreement. Cr Woodhead commented that the discussion was about the fairness of the existing funding agreement, it was not generated by the Museum asking for more funds. It was noted that district involvement in the Museum was required by legislation, and it was considered that the matter should be discussed at a Council workshop.

It was noted that an update on the Otago Rural Fire Authority had been presented to the Mayoral Forum, and a question was raised as to whether Councillors would receive a copy of the review. Mr Bodeker explained that he sat as an observer on the authority and could report on the meetings if Council wished. He noted that ORC was an interested party, but was not a funder or a stakeholder.

In response to a question about the RMA reform, Mr McRae confirmed that Sections 6 and 7 were to be amalgamated. The reason for requiring publicly appointed commissioners for consent hearings had not been made clear by Government, and the additional cost of this for applicants was noted. It was pointed out that the use of independent hearing commissioners would reduce the need for elected members to undertake the training.

It was noted that a report on CDEMG activity for the six months to December 2014 was presented to the Mayoral Forum, and it was requested that CDEMG reports be made available to Councillors. Mr Bodeker explained that ORC had a functional responsibility and provided services through one staff member, with another to be appointed. He also commented that the hazards work undertaken by ORC was integral to CDEM work. Cr Woodhead advised that minutes and reports could be circulated but they would not be open to discussion by Council. He reiterated that the Group, not ORC, was responsible for CDEMG activities, and the Group was responsible to the individual organisations who appointed the members. This organisational structure was set out in legislation. Information was requested on councillors' CDEM responsibilities, and the changed Otago CDEM structure.

It was suggested that an approach be made to Government for assistance for Otago from the national clean up fund for riparian planting. Mr Bodeker was to follow this up.

Item 2

2015/0829 **Chief Executive's Report.** CE, 18/3/15

The Chief Executive reported on his activities for the period to 18 March 2015.

Favourable comment was made on the LTP consultation document. Mr Bodeker confirmed that the document would be available online and in hard copy, and would be notified as widely as possible.

Unavailability of pindone and opposition to 1080 in relation to rabbit control were discussed. Mr Donaldson advised that consideration was being given to importing RHD as a biocide.

The installation of a recording site in the Kauru River to monitor flows that supported an endangered galaxiid species was noted. Mr Bodeker explained that DoC considered this a rare site, and the monitor was installed to determine the minimum flow needed to maintain the habitat.

Cr Woodhead moved
Cr Kelliher seconded

That the Chair's and Chief Executive's reports be noted.

Motion carried

PART B – RECOMMENDATIONS

Item 3

2015/0702 **Wallabies in Otago.** DEMO, 27/2/15

The report noted the potential of wallabies to cause significant adverse environment effects should feral populations establish in Otago, and reported on sightings and sign of the animals in Otago. The development of a comprehensive pro-active wallaby incursion response was recommended.

The report identified the extent of the wallaby problem in Otago, discussed possible shared services with ECan, and noted the involvement of MPI. Mr Donaldson commented that there were also problems with dama wallaby in the North Island. He saw two options for Council to consider: prepare a strategy, or carry out full eradication over three years. Wallabies were recognised as a pest in the Council's Pest Management Strategy.

Preventive measures such as nets and gates at the Aviemore and Benmore dams were discussed. It was noted that there was a containment zone in South Canterbury but wallaby were still entering Otago. There had been incidents of people setting up hunting populations and a query was raised as to how that could be controlled. Mr Donaldson commented that the Wildlife Act used to cover wallabies but did not now.

Mr Donaldson advised that there was provision in the LTP for monitoring and inspections only.

Cr Woodhead commented that wallabies were a significant pest and difficult to control, noting that it would be almost impossible to eradicate them once they got established. The draft strategy was to be completed before the end of this financial year.

A letter was to be sent to the Chair of ECan acknowledging ORC's concern over the wallaby situation.

Cr Deaker moved
Cr Kelliher seconded

1. *That this report be received.*
2. *That a comprehensive pro-active wallaby incursion response, control and surveillance strategy, including funding implications and communications plan, be drafted for Council consideration.*

Motion carried

PART C – ITEMS FOR NOTING

Item 4
2015/0815 **Financial Report.** DCS, 19/3/15

The report provided information in respect of the overall Council finances for the eight months to 28 February 2015.

Cr Croot moved
Cr Shepherd seconded

That the report be received.

Motion carried

Item 5
2015/0827 **Documents for Seal.** DCS, 18/3/15

The report listed documents signed under the Council's seal.

Cr Woodhead moved
Cr Kelliher seconded

That the report be noted.

Motion carried

Item 6 **Reports from Councillors**

Cr Kelliher - TBFree Otago Committee and Otago Levy consultation public meeting 12 February 2015

Cr Kelliher's report was circulated, and it was noted that Otago had eight TB-infected herds. The upcoming TBFree funding review was noted, and comment was made that the Otago levy was crucial to TBFree in Otago. The meeting had noted that Regional Services had pulled out of contract work, and the professionalism and quality of their work was commended.

The level of infection in Otago's dairy herds was discussed, and comment was made that this seemed to be a rising trend. Cr Kelliher commented that investigations were being carried out to determine why the disease was recurring in some areas, mostly on the east coast.

Cr Scott – forestry research

Cr Scott had attended a meeting held by forestry interest groups to discuss future forestry research. The group had carried out significant research into water quality monitoring, riparian resilience, port logistics, security of logs on trucks, and wilding conifer control.

Cr Croot – LGNZ workshop on 3 Waters

Cr Croot had attended a 3 Waters workshop (potable, waste, and storm) presented by LGNZ. There was a push to have a national water body, funded by local government, which she felt would not achieve much.

Crs Neill and Kempton - Harington Point breakwater committee

The meeting was also attended by DCC councillors and staff, and its purpose was to keep DCC and ORC informed. Support, not funding, was sought. It was noted that Port Otago was a substantial funder.

Cr Kempton –

Southland Te Roopu Taiao meeting

Cr Kempton had represented ORC at a Te Roopu Taiao meeting in Invercargill. The meeting comprised Southland runanga and TLAs and Environment Southland (ES). ES was undertaking studies to establish natural water baselines.

RLTP hearings

There was favourable comment from ES on the combined hearings process, and it was useful to have an NZTA staff member on the panel. There was particular interest from submitters in the harbour cycleway. The Plan would become operative in July.

Cr Brown – Lower Waitaki River Scheme Liaison Committee

Cr Brown had attended the Committee's 11 February meeting. He was disappointed that little progress was made at the meeting, and noted that investigations into ways to improve funding were still being carried out.

Cr Woodhead noted that Murihiku was to give a presentation to ORC, date to be confirmed.

PART D – MINUTES OF MEETINGS

- Item 7 **Recommendations of the Communications Committee meeting** held on 11 March 2015, for adoption

Cr Kempton moved
Cr Scott seconded

That the recommendations of the Communications Committee meeting held on 11 March 2015 be adopted.

Motion carried

- Item 8 **Recommendations of the Finance and Corporate Committee meeting** held on 11 March 2015, for adoption

Cr Shepherd moved
Cr Kelliher seconded

That the recommendations of the Finance and Corporate Committee meeting held on 11 March 2015 be adopted.

Motion carried

- Item 9 **Recommendations of the Policy Committee meeting** held on 11 March 2015, for adoption

Cr Deaker moved
Cr Neill seconded

That the recommendations of the Policy Committee meeting held on 11 March 2015 be adopted.

Motion carried

- Item 10 **Recommendations of the Regulatory Committee meeting** held on 11 March 2015, for adoption

Cr Neill moved
Cr Croot seconded

That the recommendations of the Regulatory Committee meeting held on 11 March 2015 be adopted.

Motion carried

The meeting closed at 2.27 pm



Chairperson