Otago Regional Council

Council
MINUTES

Minutes of an ordinary meeting of the Otago Regional Council held in the Otago Regional Council Chamber, Aonui, 180 High Street, Dunedin on Wednesday 28 October 2026, commencing at 10:30 am

PRESENT

Cr Hilary Calvert	*(Chair)*
Cr Kevin Malcolm	*(Deputy Chair)*
Cr Robbie Byars	
Cr Chanel Gardner	
Cr Neil Gillespie	
Cr Matt Hollyer	
Cr Gary Kelliher	
Cr Michael Laws	*(online)*
Cr Andrew Noone	
Cr Gretchen Robertson	
Cr Alan Somerville	
Cr Kate Wilson	

1. WELCOME

Cr Byars said a reflection to open the meeting. Chair Calvert welcomed Councillors, members of the public and staff to the meeting at 10:30 am. Staff present included Richard Saunders (Chief Executive), Anita Dawe (GM Regional Planning and Transport), Nick Donnelly (GM Finance), Tom Dyer (GM Science and Resilience), Joanna Gilroy (GM Environmental Delivery), Tami Sargeant (GM People and Corporate), Amanda Vercoe (GM Strategy and Customer, Deputy CE), Cara Jordan (Governance Support), Dianne Railton (Team Leader Governance), Kylie Darragh (Governance Support).

2. APOLOGIES

There were no apologies for this meeting.

3. PUBLIC FORUM

3.1. Cat Dillon, online, spoke on behalf of Wai Wanaka on alpine lakes research funding, there was an opportunity for questions, the Chair thanked Cat for attending.

3.2. Kim Schiller, online, Project Bruce, spoke on the Balclutha to Dunedin bus service, there was an opportunity for questions, the Chair thanked Kim for attending.

3.3. Linda Moore, Clutha Development Inc, spoke on the Balclutha to Dunedin bus service, there was an opportunity for questions, and the Chair thanked Linda for attending.

3.4. Paul Kavanagh, online, Southern Lakes Sanctuary, spoke on restoring biodiversity through predator control, there was an opportunity for questions, the Chair thanked Paul for attending.

3.5. Rhys Millar, Predator Free Dunedin, spoke on the Large-scale Environment Fund, there was an opportunity for questions, the Chair thanked Rhys for attending.

4. CONFIRMATION OF AGENDA

Cr Wilson Moved, Cr Somerville seconded

That the supplementary paper "Decision on changes to Dunedin Bus Timetables" be accepted to the agenda and heard as matter 11.8.

MOTION CARRIED

5. DECLARATIONS OF INTERESTS

Councillors were reminded of the need to stand aside if a conflict of interest arises. Cr Hollyer noted that he would sit back from the table for matter 11.2 Large-scale Environment Fund.

6. PRESENTATIONS

6.1. The Otago Southland Helicopter Rescue Trust presented their Annual Report Representing the Trust was Stephen Woodhead (Trustee), Vivienne Seaton (Secretary / Manager) and Graeme Gale (Managing Director). There was an opportunity for questions from Councillors, the Chair thanked the Trust for attending.

6.2. Otago Catchments Community Inc. presented their Annual Report. Representing the OCC was Hanna Stalker (OCC Chairperson) and Craig Simpson (OCC Regional Manager) . There was an opportunity for questions on the report, the Chair thanked the OCC for attending.

7. CONFIRMATION OF MINUTES

Resolution: Cr Hollyer Moved, Cr Somerville Seconded

That the minutes of the Council meeting held on 23 September 2026, and the Extraordinary Council meeting of 7 October 2026 be confirmed as a true and accurate record.

MOTION CARRIED

8. ACTIONS (STATUS OF COUNCIL RESOLUTIONS)

Open actions from resolutions of the Council were reviewed.

9. CHAIRPERSON'S AND CHIEF EXECUTIVE'S REPORTS

9.1. Chairperson's Report

Chair Calvert was available to respond to questions on the report.

Resolution: Cr Noone Moved, Cr Byars Seconded

That the report be noted.

MOTION CARRIED

Cr Gardner left the meeting at 12:37 pm.
Cr Gardner returned to the meeting at 12:39 pm.
Cr Laws left the meeting at 12:40 pm.
Cr Laws returned to the meeting at 12:43 pm.

9.2. Chief Executive's Report

Richard Saunders (Chief Executive) was available to respond to questions on the report.

Resolution: Cr Hollyer Moved, Cr Gillespie Seconded

That the report be noted.

MOTION CARRIED

At 12:46 Cr Robertson Moved, Cr Gardner Seconded

That Council adjourn until 1:15 pm.

MOTION CARRIED

10. RECOMMENDATIONS ADOPTED AT COMMITTEE MEETINGS

10.1. Recommendations of the Audit and Risk Committee

Resolution CM26-251: Cr Malcolm Moved, Cr Gardner Seconded

That the Council adopts the recommendation of the 25 September 2026 Audit and Risk Committee.

MOTION CARRIED

Cr Laws returned to the meeting at 1:21 pm.

11. MATTERS FOR CONSIDERATION

11.1. Annual Report 2025/26 - Adoption

[YouTube 2:58] This report sought to adopt Council's Annual Report 2025-2026 for the period 1 July 2025 to 30 June 2026. Cr Malcolm, Portfolio Lead, introduced the paper. Sarah Munro (Group Financial Controller) and Nick Donnelly (General Manager Finance) were available to respond to questions on the report.

Resolution CM26-252: Cr Malcolm Moved, Cr Gardner Seconded
That the Council:

1) ***Receives*** *this report.*
2) ***Approves*** *the amendment to the report in Note 33 Contingent Liabilities for Risk Pool.*
3) ***Approves*** *and adopts the Annual Report for the year ended 30 June 2026.*
4) ***Authorises*** *the Chairperson and Chief Executive to sign the Annual Report 2025-2026 and Representation Letter on behalf of Council.*

MOTION CARRIED

11.2. Large-scale Environment Fund

[YouTube 3:03] This report sought Council decisions on funding applications from Southern Lakes Sanctuary and Predator Free Dunedin through the Large-scale Environmental Fund. Both applications exceed the Governance Group's delegated funding threshold and have therefore been referred to Council for consideration against the approved eligibility and assessment criteria and within the fund's available budget. Cr Gardner, Portfolio Lead, introduced the paper. Richard Saunders (Chief Executive) was available to respond to questions on the report. Cr Hollyer sat back from the table due to a conflict of interest.

Resolution CM26-253: Cr Robertson Moved, Cr Malcolm Seconded
That the Council:

1) ***Notes*** *that the Large-scale Environmental Fund Governance Group assessed the Southern Lakes Sanctuary and Predator Free Dunedin applications against the approved framework and recommends that Council approve both applications for the full amounts requested. The funding decisions have been referred to Council because the requests exceed the Group's delegated authority.*
2) ***Approves*** *funding of $600,000 per year for three years, totalling $1.8 million excluding GST, for the Southern Lakes Sanctuary proposal, subject to a three-year funding agreement, agreed annual work programmes and budgets, defined deliverables and measures, staged payments, confirmation of co-investment and reporting requirements.*
3) ***Approves*** *funding of $500,000 per year for three years, totalling $1.5 million excluding GST, for the Predator Free Dunedin proposal, subject to a three-year funding agreement, agreed annual work programmes and budgets, defined deliverables and measures, staged payments, confirmation of co-investment and reporting requirements.*
4) ***Delegates*** *to the Chief Executive authority to finalise and execute a funding agreement for any project approved by Council, including annual work programmes and budgets, conditions, milestones, measures, staged payments, co-investment requirements and reporting, and to defer or adjust later-year payments where delivery, financial performance, programme viability or co-investment is not satisfactory, provided any material reduction in outcomes, major change in scope or request for additional Council funding is referred back to Council.*
5) ***Supports*** *Southern Lakes Sanctuary and Predator Free Dunedin pursuing the regional collaboration opportunity described in this report, where Council approves funding for both projects, within the scope and capacity of their approved agreements. No additional Council funding is sought for this opportunity, and any separate new programme or activity outside the approved scopes will require a separate proposal and approval process.*

MOTION CARRIED
Cr Hollyer abstained from the vote.

11.3. Balclutha to Dunedin Public Transport Investigations

[YouTube 4:09] This paper reported on the ORC Annual Plan 2025/26 direction to investigate public transport options for connecting Balclutha to Dunedin including consideration of Dunedin Airport. Cr Hollyer, Portfolio Lead, introduced the paper. Robyn Hyde (Transport Planning Lead), Jack Cowie (Transport Planner) and Anita Dawe (GM Regional Planning and Transport) were available to respond to questions on the report.

Resolution CM26-254: Cr Hollyer Moved, Cr Wilson Seconded

That the Council:

1) ***Notes*** *this report and the accompanying technical note "Balclutha to Dunedin bus service investigation, October 2026" [Attachment 1 of the report].*
2) ***Notes*** *the completion of the investigation into public transport options connecting Balclutha and Dunedin including consideration of Dunedin Airport as requested in the Annual Plan 2025/26.*
3) ***Requests*** *that staff prepare further information to enable Council to consider the Balclutha to Dunedin Public Transport Service proposal as part of Long-Term Plan considerations.*

MOTION CARRIED

11.4. Annual Compliance Report 2025-2026

[YouTube 4:39] This report provides the Council with the ORC Annual Compliance Monitoring Report for the 2025/26 financial year. Cr Noone, Portfolio Lead, introduced the paper. Simon Wilson (Manager Compliance) Eve Aitken (Team Leader Compliance) and Jo Gilroy (GM Environmental Delivery) were available to respond to questions on the report.

Resolution CM26-255: Cr Noone Moved, Cr Malcolm Seconded

That the Council:

1) ***Approves*** *the ORC Annual Compliance Monitoring Report 2025/26FY*
2) ***Delegates*** *to the Chief Executive, the power to approve minor editorial changes to the Annual Compliance Monitoring Report 2025/26FY subsequent to this meeting to correct any errors or readability.*

MOTION CARRIED

At 3:12 pm Cr Wilson Moved, Cr Somerville Seconded

That Council adjourn until 3:25 pm.

MOTION CARRIED

Cr Laws left the meeting at 3:25 pm.

Cr Hollyer left the meeting at 3:44 pm.

Cr Hollyer returned to the meeting at 3:45 pm.

11.5. Issues and Opportunities for Managing the Otago Coast

[YouTube 5:05] The purpose of this report was to provide Council with:

a. the Otago Coast Engagement Report which synthesises engagement feedback on Coastal Issues and Opportunities in Otago, and
b. the Otago Coast Issues and Opportunities Report, which summarises ORC's knowledge about issues affecting Otago's Coast, and identifies the opportunities for future management frameworks.

Cr Kate Wilson, Portfolio Lead, introduced the paper. Tom De Pelsemaeker (Team Leader

Freshwater and Land Policy & Planning), James Adams (Senior Policy Analyst), Amy Young (Senior Policy Analyst) and Anita Dawe (GM Regional Planning and Transport) were available to respond to questions on the report.

Resolution CM26-256: Cr Wilson Moved, Cr Gillespie Seconded
That the Council:
***1) Notes** this paper*
***2) Adopts** the Otago Coast Engagement Report and Otago Coast Issues and Opportunities Report, as a foundation to inform future regulatory and non-regulatory coastal management.*
MOTION CARRIED
Cr Byars and Cr Kelliher voted against.

Cr Gillespie left the meeting at 4:05 pm.
Cr Gillespie returned to the meeting at 4:06 pm.

11.6. Drinking Water Sources in Otago

[YouTube 5:26] This report introduced an outline of the Water Services Act 2021 as it applies to the Otago Regional Council, present the Drinking Water Sources in Otago Report dated September 2026 for the period 1 January 2025 to 31 December 2025, and demonstrated how ORC is meeting its obligations under the Water Services Act 2021 to share, publish and report on the quality and quantity of source water for drinking. Cr Robertson, Portfolio Lead, introduced the paper. Helen Trotter (Water Quality Scientist), Amir Levy (Groundwater Scientist) and Ben Mackey (Manager Science) were available to respond to questions on the report.

Resolution CM26-257: Cr Robertson Moved, Cr Somerville Seconded
That the Council:
***1) Notes** this report.*
MOTION CARRIED

11.7. Treasury Management Policy Review

[YouTube 5:54] This paper sought to adopt an updated Treasury Management Policy and Statement of Investment Policy and Objectives following review of those documents by the Audit and Risk Committee. Cr Malcolm, Co-Chair of Audit and Risk Committee, introduced the paper. Richard Saunders (Chief Executive) was available to respond to questions on the report.

Resolution CM26-258: Cr Malcolm Moved, Cr Gardner Seconded
That the Council:
***1) Notes** this report and the attached Draft Treasury Management Policy and Draft Statement of Investment Policy and Objectives.*
***2) Approves** the changes that have been made to the documents.*
***3) Adopts** the Draft Treasury Management Policy and Draft Statement of Investment Policies and Objectives.*
MOTION CARRIED

11.8. Changes to Dunedin Bus Timetables

[YouTube 5:58] This paper noted the issues arising following widespread Dunedin network changes introduced on 1 October 2026 and sought Council's endorsement for the process to appropriately review and respond to the feedback received. Cr Somerville, Portfolio Lead, introduced the paper. Anita Dawe (GM Regional Planning and Transport) was available to respond to questions on the report.

Resolution CM26-259: Cr Somerville Moved, Cr Hollyer Seconded

That the Council:

1) ***Notes** this report.*
2) ***Notes** that an external consultant has been engaged to support a rapid review of the Dunedin network changes.*
3) ***Notes** that a small number of priority changes will be made to early morning services to reinstate previous levels of service where these changes can be delivered within approved budgets.*
4) ***Notes** that a further paper will be brought to Council with options for resolving the issues identified*

MOTION CARRIED

12. NOTICES OF MOTION

None received.

13. CLOSURE

There was no further business, and Chair Calvert declared the meeting closed at 4:36 pm.



_____ 18 November 2026

Chairperson Date