

AUCKLAND/WAIKATO FISH & GAME



Minutes of a Meeting of Council
held at 156 Brymer Road, Rotokauri, Hamilton.
Saturday the 26th July 2025 commencing at 11.00am

PRESENT:

Chairman: G. Annan
Councillor's present in person: D. Cocks, S. Smith, G. Dickey, M. Barker, E. Williamson, O. Kent, N Juby, P. Del.
Staff: D. Klee, D. Lelievre, B. Jarvis-Child(online), A. Daniel
Members of the Public: None

1. APOLOGIES:

T. Clarke, A. Sapich, A. Brown and P. Hardy (DOC representative)
It was moved;

that apologies be accepted.

Smith/Dickey– CARRIED

2. POSSIBLE CONFLICTS OF INTEREST ARISING FROM MEETING AGENDA:

Nil.

3. MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETINGS OF THE 22nd MAY 2025:

It was moved;

that the minutes of the previous meetings of the 22nd May 2025 be accepted as true and correct records.

Cocks/Dell– CARRIED

4. MATTERS ARISING FROM PREVIOUS MINUTES:

The Chair asked for an update on prosecutions. The C.E. replied that staff were making good progress towards internalizing costs associated with the majority of compliance cases in the region. The Region now has an appropriate diversion process in line with best practice and F&G policy. This includes ensuring that diversion payments go to 3rd party. For fishing related offences, payments have gone to the Kaitiakitanga Charitable Trust to help promote at risk youth fishing programs. For Game offences payments have gone to Waikato RiverCare to help fund wetland restoration projects in the region. It was acknowledged that the current diversion process could be drastically simplified with an infringement notice

system, however there were still concerns around the level of the proposed fines and whether these would provide a sufficient disincentive. Councillor Williamson suggested that based on advice he had received from NZC the Infringement notice system is available for staff to use at the moment. The C.E. explained that he thought it had not been formally adopted at present.

It was moved;

that the CE to seek further clarification and request the adoption of an infringement system, with higher levels of fines than those previously mooted.

Cocks/Smith – CARRIED

The Chair requested an update on the situation regarding swan activity around Auckland Airport. The Chief Executive (CE) advised that staff had prepared a report; however, the Airport Authority had expressed concerns about releasing the information publicly. A further site meeting has been proposed. The Chair requested that the report be included in the next agenda. The CE confirmed he would liaise with the Airport Authority to provide further information at that time.

5. CHIEF EXECUTIVE'S BI-MONTHLY REPORT AND FINANCIAL STATEMENTS:

5.1 Bi-monthly Chief Executives Report

Island Block Road Pump Station. Councillor Cocks requested further information regarding the proposal, specifically seeking clarification on the potential hydrological and ecological effects. The Chief Executive (CE) responded that these concerns had been conveyed to the applicant and that additional information had been requested on those matters.

Drift Diving Report: Councillor Juby questioned the significant delay in receiving the report, noting that updating the figures should not take long once the data had been collected. Dr Daniel agreed that the update should only take a few days but explained that he had become occupied with other priorities, particularly compliance activities related to the duck hunting season. The Chief Executive (CE) advised that he would meet with staff to prioritise work streams and ensure that monitoring information is provided to Council in a timely manner moving forward.

Korokanui School Maimai building Competition; Councillor Dickey commended staff for their attendance at, and promotion of, the maimai building competition held at the local school. The Chief Executive (CE) noted that it was an excellent event that successfully engaged the wider community and highlighted strong connections with rural New Zealand and farming communities. Staff are already planning to seek additional sponsorship for next year's competition. The CE also remarked that some of the maimais constructed by the students were more structurally sound than ones he had hunted from in the past.

Kids Fishing event Lake Rotoroa(Hamilton Lake): The Chair commended staff for hosting the recent kids' fishing event at Hamilton Lake. Dr Daniel noted that while attendance was high, with around 100 children participating, the catch rate was low, with only three fish landed. Councillor Juby questioned why there isn't a coarse fish monitoring programme in place, which could help identify sites where children would have a better chance of catching fish. The Chief Executive (CE) explained that staff are still searching for a more suitable

location for future kids' fishing events. Dr Daniel indicated that he would report back with other potential venues. He also noted that one of the key outcomes of the day was the opportunity to build a stronger relationship with Hamilton City Council, who have now agreed to allow Fish & Game to install an interpretive sign at the lake, highlighting the fish species present and tips on how to catch them. Dr Daniel will work with Ms Simmonds to develop a concept design for the sign over the coming weeks, which will then be shared with the Hamilton Anglers Club. The club has also agreed to cover the cost of the sign.

Ranging: Councillor Barker questioned who had access to our ranging plans prior to the season, noting that some details about our intended locations had been publicly disseminated. The Chief Executive responded that only honorary rangers and Department of Conservation (DOC) staff involved in the planning process would have had that information. Any insights into who may have shared the information would be helpful.

Financial Statement: The Chief Executive explained that Council had exceeded the annual budget for maintenance works on Fish & Game land. It was recommended that Council pass a motion to transfer additional funding from the Lower Waikato River Restricted Reserve to cover these overruns.

It was moved;

that the Chief Executive can transfer up to \$25,000 from the Lower Waikato River Restricted Reserve to cover budget overruns for habitat works done on council land.

Juby /Smith – CARRIED

It was moved;

that the Chief Executive's Bimonthly Report and Financial Statements be accepted.

Cocks/Smith – CARRIED

The meeting rose for lunch at 12.10pm and reconvened at 12.55pm

6. MAPPING PRESENTATION BEAU JARVIS-CHILD

Mr Jarvis-Child presented to Council on the work he has been undertaking to improve access and regulation information for licence holders, aligning with Council's strategic priorities. He has developed a highly functional system by creating shapefiles for all the Auckland Waikato fisheries. This data is presented user-friendly interface.

In addition, Mr Jarvis-Child has convened a committee of regional representatives to advance a national mapping project, with the aim of developing a national dataset required to service a map for the whole of New Zealand.

The presentation was very well received by councillors, and the Chair thanked Mr Jarvis-Child for his excellent work on the project.

7. INCOMING COUNCIL CORRESPONDENCE:

Fish and Game Reform. The council went through the schedule of legislative amendments and provided comprehensive feedback on each subject.

It was moved;

That the Chief Executive draft a letter to the Minister on behalf of the Council, incorporating the feedback provided by Council, and circulate it via email to Councillors for approval prior to sending it to the Minister and all Fish & Game Regions.

Williamson /Cocks – CARRIED

Ms Lelievre left the meeting at 2.18pm

8. OUTGOING COUNCIL CORRESPONDENCE:

The feedback to the New Zealand Council on the draft policies, submitted following the May meeting, was included in the agenda for the public record. This feedback had been reviewed and approved by Council prior to being sent.

9. DRIFT DIVE AND SPAWNING AND STOCKING RECOMMENDATIONS REPORT

Dr Daniels reports were discussed by Council, Dr Daniel explained the rationale for the recommendation to cease stocking into waterways where natural spawning is occurring, due to the potential deleterious effects on natural recruitment. The Chair thanked Dr Daniel for his reports.

It was moved;

That the Council supports the recommendation in the reports and stocking of hatchery fish at Lake Arapuni be paused for a period of five years, during which time staff will continue to monitor catch rates and gather angler feedback. At the end of this period, Council will re-evaluate its decision regarding the stocking programme.

Cocks /Juby – CARRIED

The CE explained that Fish were already pre ordered for the 25/26 financial year and therefore the moratorium would not be activated until 2027 with a re-evaluation in 2031.

10. OSH REPORT

The July 2025 OSH report was tabled.

Councillor Juby asked whether tailgate forms were still being used by staff, noting that only three had been included in the OSH report. The Chief Executive confirmed that they were still in use but explained that, at times, forms were not uploaded to SharePoint in time to be included in meeting agendas.

Further progress had been made with Track Me, which will provide an integrated, app-based system and enable a transition away from paper-based processes. While there will be some initial time costs involved in entering all the region's activities and risk matrices into the app, once completed, all pre-field trip assessments will be conducted and logged electronically.

It was moved;
that the OSH report for July 2025 is accepted.

Dickey/Del – CARRIED

11. NZC UPDATE AND EMAILS SENT BY NZC CHAIR BARRIE BARNES

NZC appointee Councillor Williamson tabled two emails sent by the Chair of the New Zealand Council (NZC). He expressed concern that these emails were further examples of poor governance practices by the NZC Chair. His concerns specifically related to the dissemination of information regarding a decision by the Central South Island (CSI) Council to replace their NZC appointee.

Councillor Juby noted his understanding that the discussion and decision had taken place during a publicly excluded session of the CSI Council. Councillors agreed that, if this was the case, it would be highly inappropriate for the NZC Chair to provide commentary on the matter — particularly to offer his own rationale and interpretation of why the decision was made.

The second email concerned correspondence from the NZC Chair to the Chair of the Southland Council, in which pressure was placed on the Southland Chair to prevent his manager from attending an upcoming managers' meeting. The email also suggested that the Southland Council should consider taking action against the manager under his employment agreement, due to comments the manager had made in the media. Councillors agreed that this behaviour appeared highly inappropriate and inconsistent with the governance mandate of the NZC Chair.

Councillors considered that there was a need to seek advice on the appropriateness of the NZC Chair's actions, noting that this did not appear to be an isolated incident. Council recommended that the Chair and Chief Executive draft an email to NZC, addressed to their Governance Advisor, seeking a formal response on these matters and clarification on what recourse, if any, should be taken.

It was moved;

That the Chief Executive and Chair draft an email to the New Zealand Council, addressed to Governance Advisor Graham Nhakis, outlining the Council's concerns and seeking a formal response regarding the appropriateness of the NZC Chair's correspondence. Should such advice not be forthcoming, or in the Chair's view not adequately address the concerns raised, further independent advice is to be sought.

Juby/Smith – CARRIED

12. GENERAL BUSINESS:

Nil

The meeting closed at 3.48pm