

Unconfirmed Minutes of the Fish and Game NZ, Southland Region council meeting held at the Southland Fish and Game Offices, 17 Eye Street, Invercargill on 25th September 2025, commencing at 6.00pm.

Present:

Dave MacGregor
Lyndon Norman
Craig Horrell
Bruce Diprose

Mike Turner
Mike Hartstonge
Dave Harris

In Attendance

Steve McCartney (minutes).

Members of the public: Gherhard Urs

1 Welcome:

The Chairman opened the meeting at 6.08pm and welcomed those in attendance.

2 Apologies:

Cyril Gilroy - lateness

Resolved D Harris/M Hartstonge where considered that apologies be accepted. Carried.

3 Declarations of Interest:

The individual member declaration of conflicts of interest with any item on the agenda had been circulated to members before the start of the meeting.
Any conflicts were noted by the Chairman.

4 Confirmation of Minutes.

The minutes of the public meeting held 31st July 2025 were considered.

Resolved M Hartstonge/C Horrell that the minutes of the public meeting held 31 July 2025 were taken as read and were a true and correct record. Carried.

5 Notices of Motion

Health & Safety Report.

The Council Health & Safety report for the period was attached to the agenda for consideration. All known hazards were listed in the Southland Health & Safety Plan. Health and Safety Policy also included. Cr Hartstonge recommended that a H & S presentation be made for honorary rangers.

Resolved D Harris/M Hartstonge: That the Health and Safety Report and amendments be received and accepted. Carried.

D. MacGregor 29/1/26¹

Powers of the executive

Traditionally, the executive managed the Manager's performance (including ensuring the completion by the Manager of staff annual reviews), any disciplinary matters, urgent media requests.

General discussion and acceptance that the executive need to bring a greater focus on their responsibilities.

Resolved D MacGregor/L Norman to accept the above powers as responsibilities of the executive and to report activities undertaken by the executive to Council. Carried.

Vehicle Signage and Email.

Discussion re NZC and other unspecified regions use .org extension under the one subscription, with the thought being to join this and save SFGC \$232/mth being the cost SFGC currently pay to run our own email.co.nz extension. Steve raised a question as to who manages access to the server that stores the .org.nz data with the suggestion that it can be accessed by people outside of SFGC. Equally our current subscription is for Microsoft 365 business provides access to Outlook, Word, Excel. Powerpoint etc with the same question re who has access to apply. Cr MacGregor to raise these questions with Ritchie Cosgrove.

Vehicle signage requirements are to be addressed by Adrienne and Jill at NZC.

Environment Southland Awards evening

To be attended by Dave MacGregor and his wife, Lyndon and partner, Adrian and Lesley from Otago.

Corina Jordan

Carina joined the meeting to outline her shared role with NZC & GAC.

Her role for NZC is to help it through the reform process. Focus is at strategic level and political aspects, plus projects that are nationally important to Fish and Game – Fish farming (trout), water conservation orders, RMA reform processes. Also to introduce fit for purpose licencing and CRM system.

Brief discussion on meeting with Jason Herrick. Access sign boycott to be lifted. Steve raised the matter of Federated farmers to pay for the \$1000's of stolen signs, many of which were removed from public land and are the property of Southland Fish and Game. None have been returned to SFGC. Cr Macgregor to speak to Herrick to issue comms on the signs to let all know that the access signs are SFGC property and not to be removed.

Access over public road/Dillon property.

Discussion around public road access to river only goes so far as Dillon now has a LINZ lease/right to occupy meaning vehicle access stops at part way down road and then walking access only to river.

Resolved M Hartstonge/L Norman, D Harris against, to abide by this new arrangement. Carried. Dave – to make/amend this motion

Celebrety Weekend Duck Hunt

Cr MacGregor raised the idea of arranging a duck hunting event/s inviting local personalities/F & G management/MP's/VIP's etc to share in the experience. Aim to cover cost (unknown) through communication with politicians & R3 budget, with the Managers approval.

Staff Report

No matters raised.

Resolved D Harris/D Macgregor that the council accept the Staff report as presented. Carried

Southland Water and land Plan Court Proceedings

Resolved C Horrell/L Norman that the Council withdraw from the court proceedings. Carried

Correspondence for information

- Policy on special licences and template. Discussion around providing licences for events where a commercial element exists. Cr Hartstonge mentioned creating a template for a special game licence and requests staff to create same for next meeting.
- Staff concerns re Family Fishing licence. Main issue is mandatory addition of child/grandchild, in particular those without children. Cr Harris suggested NZC produce more publicity around this aspect of the terms and conditions. To seek clarification regarding listing the same children on both a parents and grandparents' licence, similarly for caregivers/guardians. Cr Hartstonge is wanting know if F & G have adopted the definition of a family from the DOC/Taupo terms and conditions.
- MOU SFGC, DOC, Te Runaka o Oraka-Aparima. Accepted as presented subject to any changes.

Financial reports

No matters raised.

Resolved D Harris/D MacGregor to accept financial reports as presented. Carried.

NZC update.

Councillor's MacGregor, Hartstonge and Harris attended the last meeting. D Harris advised discussions held on fishing regulations for next season. Budgets approved. Email update sent to councillors by NZC Chair.

Resolved D Harris/M Hartstonge to move meeting into public excluded. Carried.

Minutes from the public excluded portion of the meeting held on 25 September 2025 that Council voted to move out of public excluded at their next meeting held on 27 November 2025:

Sally Gepp email:

Discussed email from Sally Gepp which was forwarded to Cr Macgregor by Jacob. Council acknowledged that the timing of the media release could have been better managed however attempts were made to ensure it only went out after necessary notification had been completed. It appears there was a misstep at this point. Council did not accept the suggestion that members were critical of the money spent or that we did not appreciate the efforts the staff and Sally put in to the case.

Motion put by Cr Harris/Cr Hartstonge that council note and receive the email and the chair to contact Sally and explain our position. Approved by all.

Bill Jarvie retirement/fishing licence:

Discussed Bill's retirement and the recent confusion around provision of his fishing licence for this season. Agreed that Bill had had a distinguished career with the organisation and that we would like to assist with keeping him being able to hunt and fish.

Motion put by Cr Hartstonge/Cr Harris that Southland Fish and game provide Bill with complimentary fishing and gamebird licences for a period of five years in recognition of his exemplary service. Approved by all.

North Canterbury proposal:

Cr Harris spoke on this and raised his concerns with it and that it has not yet been successfully implemented by NZC. There is still a lot of grey to be worked through and the jury is out at this stage. We are going to observe the roll out with much interest. It is not ruled in or out at this stage.

New Zealand Council audit:

Discussed the recent challenges we have encountered in trying to access information around the organisation's operation and that the more we look the more we are finding of concern. Agreed that as we are not fulltime and we do not necessarily have all of the required expertise to ask the appropriate questions that we look to engage the NZC to conduct an audit of our functions. This was deemed better than simply having an accounting firm do it on one aspect as they could look at more than just the financial side and could bring in their wider knowledge of the legislation that we work under and our regional responsibilities.

Motion put by Cr Macgregor/Cr Diprose that we approach the NZC regarding the potential for them to carry out an audit of all our functions. Approved by all. Cr Hartstonge abstained from this vote.