

WELLINGTON FISH & GAME COUNCIL

MINUTES OF MEETING OF THE WELLINGTON FISH & GAME COUNCIL, HELD ON TUESDAY 14 OCTOBER 2025 AT 3.10PM AT NGĀ MANU NATURE RESERVE, 74 NGĀ MANU RESERVE ROAD, WAIKANAE

1. **Present:**

Chairman Paul Dewar, Councillors Jennifer Yanko, Terry Inglis, Prof. Stephen Haslett, Richard McIntyre (until 4:30pm), Andrew McGregor, Jim Cook, Damon Taylor, Ben Hancock, Steve Brown.

Video Link: Aaron Passey, Kieran Bell.

In Attendance:

Fish and Game Staff: Phil Teal, Dr Matt Kavermann, Hamish Carnachan

Licence Holders/Public: Malcolm Francis

Welcome and Confirmation of Agenda

Chairman Dewar opened the meeting and welcomed Councillors and staff.

2. **Apologies:**

It was noted that apologies were received from:

Councillor Steve Brown

Staff: Ami Coughlan

It was then moved that

the apologies received be accepted

Ben Hancock/Terry Inglis

Carried

3. **Conflict of Interest**

The Conflicts of Interest Register was discussed. Councillor McIntyre confirmed that he was no longer on the Board of Federated Farmers.

It was moved that

An amendment to the Conflict of Interest Register be noted for Councillor McIntyre to reflect changes that he was no longer the Dairy Chair of Federated Farmers NZ and also on the Board of Federated Farmers NZ.

Jim Cook/Ben Hancock

Carried

Chair Dewar confirmed that there were no specific items that needed additional conflicts of interests to be identified for the current agenda.

Mr Teal confirmed that the current Conflict-of-Interest register, and the Conflict-of-Interest Management Plan would be updated.

4. **Minutes of Previous Meeting of 12 August 2025**

After brief discussion of the draft Minutes of the meeting of the Wellington Fish and Game Council of 12 August 2025 it was moved that

the Minutes of the meeting of the Wellington Fish & Game Council of 12 August 2025 be approved and confirmed as a true and correct record of the proceedings of that meeting.

Jim Cook/Terry Inglis

Carried

5. **Matters Arising:**

Mr Teal referred to the Action List resulting from the 12 August 2025 meeting, noting the following actions that had been progressed:

- Staff were continuing to explore options for managing aggregations of black swan around Lake Wairarapa.
- Wellington Fish and Game Council had sent a letter to NZ Council asking at what stage the information from the Pricing Optimisation Project would be used to review the licence categories for licences and the pricing strategy for those licence categories. It also requested the original briefs of that research that was provided to the provider to define their brief.
- The Game Preserve operator at Lagoon Hill, Martinborough, was informed that Wellington Fish and Game did not have any issues with the operations commencing in April for 2026.

6. **New Zealand Fish and Game Council Business**

Public Excluded Section - Resolution to Exclude the Public – to discuss items relating to the operational models being promoted within the Fish and Game organisation and agreements that were being made within the Fish and Game organisation.

It was moved that

the public be excluded from the following part(s) of the meeting in accordance with LGOIMA s48(1)(a)] of the Local Government Official Information and Meetings Act 1987, and section 9(2) of the Official Information Act 1982 for the reason(s) that the item(s) being considered relate to:

- Reason 1 – protection of privacy of natural persons
- Reason 2 – commercial sensitivity

Paul Dewar/Richard McIntyre

Carried

At 4:00pm it was moved that

the public be readmitted into the meeting

Paul Dewar/Ben Hancock

Carried

The Chairman noted that there were two motions that had resulted from the discussions and would be considered in public session.

It was then moved that

Wellington Fish and Game Council was aware of the North Canterbury ('centralised') staffing proposal and considered that Wellington Council is satisfied with the current governance and management structure and has no

interest in changing the current shared resources arrangement with Taranaki Fish and Game Council.

Paul Dewar/Jim Cook

Carried

Chairman Dewar noted that NZ Council would be informed of Wellington Council's position relating to this.

After further discussion it was moved that

Wellington Fish and Game Council write to NZ Council requesting that they provide us with a legal opinion of where the health and safety responsibilities lie (for all governors) with the North Canterbury 'centralised' staffing proposal.

Wellington Fish and Game wish to see detailed cost-benefit analysis, both financial and personnel, that the North Canterbury 'centralised' staffing proposal would have on North Canterbury Fish and Game and NZ Council.

Jennifer Yanko/Ben Hancock

Carried

A. Update from NZ Fish and Game Council Appointee

Councillor Haslett provided a brief overview of the key topics covered at the meeting of NZ Council on 29 and 30 August 2025 (Meeting #176).

- It was noted that the Anglers Notice had been processed and that the Fish and Game notice processing had been included in the agenda for clarity. There was a reminder from the Minister that he had expectations of information to support the regulations in the notices, in terms of population monitoring, consideration of multiple options, and consultation with the wider community, as well as those directly affected.
- Internal Health and Safety Audits: It was confirmed that a Health and Safety audit of Northland Region had been completed, and a verbal summary of the results of this audit was presented to the NZ Council at the August meeting. The proposal was to do three additional Health and Safety audits in West Coast region, North Canterbury region, and Auckland/Waikato region this calendar year.
- Legal analysis of proposed Fish and Game Legislation: NZ Council agreed to fund up to \$15,000 in legal advice to allow an analysis of the implications of the Fish and Game Bill and then enable informed and effective participation at the select committee process.

NZ Council confirmed in principle that funds would be set aside to consider when legislative changes are announced – including advocacy function, Health and Safety, and legal analysis of any changes.

- Research Sub-Committee - Terms of Reference: Discussions were held on the best way to structure the Research Sub-Committee, which also included an idea of creating a research expert panel to provide input into research and monitoring. A paper on this model would be presented at the next New Zealand Council meeting.

Councillor Haslett noted that the Research Sub-Committee is not functioning and is not being serviced by staff (including the NZC COO) in provision of research reports, and is therefore not facilitating the work of the current research committee.

An initial draft of a 'national' mallard monitoring policy was received, but noted that the brief provided to the provider, confirmation of funding (\$50,000) had not been progressed through the Research Sub-Committee as expected – before provision of the supporting report from a provider.

Councillor Haslett expressed his frustration at the lack of response from the staff and chair relating to the research function. This included a wider pattern of operation of poor process of providing reports at the last minute prior to a meeting for consideration of important and material items.

It was agreed that the first course of action was to allow NZ Council to respond to questions posed by Councillor Haslett.

- Budget recommendations: It was confirmed that the Minister for Hunting and Fishing did not approve any increases in the recommended licence fee for the 2025/26 Financial Year. At the August NZ Council meeting, consideration and decisions were made on the resource allocation with it concluded that it would revert back to the baseline 2024/25 budgets, plus an additional 2.5% to allow for inflation.

The budget recommendation was considered with confirmation of a new research position for NZ Council with the money coming out of reserves to fund that.

It was noted that the Minister was aware of the current level of reserves in regions which may be at the expense of putting up licence fees. It was posed that it would be unlikely that the licence fees will increase next year as well - unless the reserves are reduced to a 'reasonable' level.

- Infringement Notice System Implementation: NZ Council had developed a comprehensive Infringement Notice, Compliance, and Enforcement Policy to enable issuing of infringement notices for minor offenses under the Conservation Act 1987 and the Wildlife Act 1953. This draft policy would be consulted with all regions with feedback.
- RMA Fund Update: Auckland/Waikato Fish and Game had requested funding for the renewal of the consents to dam the Whangamarino River. A new resource consent to be half funded by DoC was requested, but the funding (request \$600,000) was not approved, but council requested more information on the budget and risks of the project (including risks of not proceeding with the re-consenting action).

It was then moved that

Council receives a report from the Wellington region appointee to NZ Council on the NZ Council business for the previous period, including meetings and key issues and outcomes.

Jim Cook/Jennifer Yanko

Carried

B. Metrics for Fish and Game Consolidated Reports:

Council considered the metrics proposed for the consolidated annual reporting and noted that these needed to be fit for purpose. They also discussed the need that they are relatively easy to obtain or could be contributed through metrics derived from existing monitoring work programmes undertaken by regions to provide information and measures.

Council considered there needed to be confirmation of the purpose of the consolidated report - whether it has a PR or operational function for auditing. Discussion ensued on the what survey metrics are used by other organisations – and the purpose of those metrics, a list of key indicators, and their audience (e.g. credence to outcomes to Minister, stable licence holders, statutory obligations of outcome reporting (audit focus), identifying efficiencies, and timing.

It was confirmed that the draft metrics were developed by NZC staff with no input or consultation of regional staff.

7. Public Forum

Malcolm Francis expressed his concern for the decrease in the number of fish in recent years in the Waikanae River from the local perspective – which was reflected in the reduced level of local angler use. He noted that the lack of gravel removal to maintain pools had affected the trout habitat and carrying capacity for the numbers of fish. He considered this had added to the apathy of local anglers in the for fishing with the result that anglers were looking further afield for angling opportunities.

Mr Francis expressed his concern for the future and direction of the Fish and Game system – and wanted the principal focus to be maintaining opportunities for future generations moving forward rather than continued internal political focus

Councillor McIntyre left the meeting at 4:30 p.m.

8. Regional Governance – Chairman’s Report

A. Regional Governance

Chairman Dewar provided a brief overview on regional governance matters in the previous period relating to Wellington region. There were no specific issues that needed to be highlighted that were relevant to governance functions but provided an overview of key operational outcomes. He noted that focus had been on governance issues in NZ Council and the anticipated changes in the proposed legislation discussions.

After brief further discussion it was moved

that the Chairman's verbal report on regional governance issues be received.

Damon Taylor/Jennifer Yanko

Carried

B. Draft Meeting Schedule

Council considered the draft meeting schedule noting that this is being considered prior to being provided with NZ Council's schedule (which it should align with). It was confirmed that the exact meeting dates and locations can be changed as long as there was enough public notice given.

It was then moved that

Council approves the draft meeting schedule for 2026, which will be confirmed at the December 2025 meeting of Wellington Council.

Terry Inglis/Jim Cook

Carried

9. Inter-regional Business - Governance

A. Regional Chairs' Forum Update

Chairman Dewar confirmed that there had not been any meetings of the Chair Forum in the last two months. It was considered that there would be a meeting once the proposed legislative changes were released.

B. Shared Resources Update

Chairman Dewar provided a brief update on the operations of the shared resources arrangements between Wellington and Taranaki Fish and Game Councils – which was working well with no material issues that needed to be brought to the attention of governors.

It was then moved that

Council receives the update report presented the Chairman on Inter-regional Business – Governance for the previous period since the last meeting of Council.

Jim Cook/Ben Hancock

Carried

10. Proposed Fish and Game Legislative Changes

Council considered the proposed legislative changes with a view to developing a response once the draft legislation is released or tabled at the first reading in Parliament. There was discussion on the anticipated date of release of the draft legislation as it had earlier been indicated that it was likely to be late October to early November (which was imminent). Council discussed whether it was appropriate for Wellington Council to submit or not – given that a submission was being prepared by NZ Council? Chairman Dewar confirmed that he had been advised that it was appropriate to submit as an individual Council and recommended this be pursued.

Dr Kavermann noted that the wider organisational RM team have highlighted some issues (based on the Appendix 1 of the Ministerial briefing of the legislative review) and this could provide the basis for a submission by Wellington Council (as well as NZ Council).

Chairman Dewar reminded Council that submissions from governors as individuals needed to be clearly articulated to the Select Committee in any submissions – and not be seen as a representative of ‘the Council.’

The timing of the release of the draft legislation was discussed, and it was agreed to send the NZ Council Chair a letter to confirm that if any draft legislation is released to NZ Council, that this be provided to regions immediately on receipt. This was to avoid relying on the assumption that it would be distributed to all Fish & Game councils at the same time.

It was also agreed that NZ Council be requested to send all information relating to additional analysis from internal processes/analyses and proposed external providers be forwarded to regions immediately once available. Council discussed how and who would be involved in the internal organisational analyses – given that regional operational staff would be better placed to know the impacts of legislative changes – so both perspectives needed to be incorporated.

Chairman Dewar noted that he had been advised that the length of time to make a submission might be truncated – especially if legislation is considered under ‘urgency’ in Parliament. As such there would likely be an urgent meeting of governors called at that time to consider the finalisation of a submission.

Discussion ensued on how licence holders would be informed and encouraged to be engaged in the process.

Council considered that it was preferable that regional submissions align with NZ Council positions in any submission – but there was no clear process to implement this approach.

11. Project Reports for the 2024/2025 Financial Year

Mr Teal provided a brief overview of the purpose and the iterative changes that had been undertaken in generating the project reports for the year - to reflect both the outputs and anticipated outcomes. This should also provide an easier audit process and clarity and transparency of what has been undertaken. This information can also be summarised and distributed to license holders to outline the activities that are undertaken each year and provide better understanding of what we do as a council.

It was moved that

staff be congratulated on the excellent reports which summarises an outstanding amount and quality of work by such a small dedicated team.

Steve Haslett/Jennifer Yanko

Carried

Council briefly discussed the reports and sought clarifications as appropriate.

Dr Kavermann highlighted the project involving defining spawning habitat and noted that there was variable knowledge in areas such as eastern Wairarapa that will likely be a focus of investigation next year.

Dr Kavermann referred to the Game Bird Population Monitoring Assessment Project Report which indicated mallard numbers were in a 'normal season conditions' range with a "moderate population." He further noted that 96% of hunters have indicated in surveys that they would be satisfied with a 10-bird limit.

Council McGregor noted that some hunters would say that there are not that many birds around from their experience – but noted that the management objective is to achieve a stable population across the region.

After further discussion it was moved that

the Project Reports for the 2024/2025 Financial Year be received and accepted.

Terry Inglis/Jim Cook

Carried

Chairman Dewar reiterated earlier comments and resolution on the excellent reports and the quality of the output and thanked the staff for their efforts (Councillors concurred).

12. Draft 2025/2026 Annual Budget and Operational Work Plan

Council considered the draft budget for 2025/2026 and the associated draft Operational Work Plan following minor amendments that were made following the NZ Council's confirmation of allocation of resources. There was discussion on how to deal with any increase in costs above-based funding, and confirmed consideration of the use of regional reserves to cover cost increases - should a shortfall result.

It was then moved that

the budget for the 2025/26 Financial Year as presented be approved and adopted, and the Operational Work Plan for that financial year be approved and adopted.

Jim Cook/Ben Hancock

Carried

13. Strategic Matters

A. Risk Management Review

Mr Teal outlined the risk register of issues facing Wellington Fish and Game (as had been undertaken by Taranaki region) which broadly categorised risks based on likelihood of occurring and degree of impact. Council discussed key issues including the level of influence that Council has in managing these risks.

Concerns were raised about how regional funding would be set under a zero-based budgeting approach without a transparent budgeting policy. Although some allocation principles were outlined—core activities, hunter and angler activity, and special business plans—it remained unclear how these would affect existing base

funding. Chairman Dewar emphasised that the key risk is who controls and applies the allocation process, as it could place final funding decisions with the NZ Council. Further clarification is needed on whether allocations will be determined by NZC councillors or through a staff-driven implementation of budget policy.

Mr Teal reported no change in the risk level for H5N1 avian influenza, noting that incursions are more likely over summer. Councillor Inglis asked about contingencies if HPAI H5N1 became endemic with it noted that the current plan is to allow waterfowl hunting unless waterfowl populations could not sustain harvest, and noted that no alternative or temporary funding sources had been confirmed. Dr Kavermann added that Fish & Game is well placed to monitor waterfowl and contribute to a wider response, with potential funding available to investigate waterfowl as a likely internal transmission vector.

14. Policy and Legislation

A. Arms Act Review

Mr Teal gave an overview of the Arms Act Review, noting that the Government was intending to provide draft legislation to rewrite the Arms Act 1983 before the end of the 2025 calendar year.

B. Wildlife Act Review

Mr Teal confirmed that there had been no update from the DoC as to the priority or timetable, or the anticipated timetable of the Wildlife Act Review. There was some anticipation of a substantial review of the Act, and it was confirmed that DoC were actively progressing this review.

C. Resource Management Act Review

The Government has announced the third tranche of RM reforms replacing the Resource Management Act with two new laws - the Natural Environment Act and the Planning Act - to separate land-use planning from natural resource management. The reforms also aim to reduce the need for resource consents by expanding permitted activities approach, alongside increased compliance monitoring. It is anticipated that these replacement Bills will be lodged in Parliament by the end of the calendar year.

The RM Team co-ordinated a submission on the consultations on National Direction (due 27 July 2025) – essentially National Policy Statements relating It was still anticipated that the Government would introduce two new Bills to Parliament before the end of the calendar year to replace the RMA - the Natural Environment Act and the Planning Act.

D. Organisational Policies – Health and Safety and Wellbeing Policy

Mr Teal provided an overview of the draft Health and Safety and Wellbeing Policy and the need to update and review of the Health and Safety and Wellbeing Policy and introduced the draft policy for consideration. He noted that the policy more clearly states what the governance role is: to be familiar with, ensure appropriate processes, understand general hazards and risks, and ensure the health, safety, and

well-being function is resourced appropriately. Management's roles is to provide, integrate, identify, assess, and control, maintain, record, and investigate. It was noted that for section 6 of the policy it should state that the outcomes that the processes seek to achieve are listed – rather than Council will achieve such. will achieve.

After further discussion it was moved that

Council adopt the draft Health and Safety and Wellbeing Policy as amended

Jim Cook/Steve Haslett

Carried

E. Organisational Policies – Compliance Policy, Infringement Notice Procedures.

Mr Teal noted that NZ Council was consulting with regions on the implementation aspects of infringement notice procedures, with one of the purposes being not to clog up the court system. Discussions ensued on the overall concept of using infringement notices as a compliance tool, but acknowledged that this was not part of the consultation. The potential downside of an infringement notice system is that the chances of identifying alleged offenders is low and therefore the deterrent value (even if the infringement fine is around \$400) of such will need to be substantial.

F. Organisational Policies – Employer Contribution to KiwiSaver – Remuneration Policy

Mr Teal outlined that there is currently no explicit policy on the level of KiwiSaver Employer contributions:

- a. **Employer Contribution KiwiSaver for Employees under 65 and registered for Kiwisaver:** After discussion, Council agreed that the employer contribution should be the minimum as required by legislation - currently 3% (noting that this will be amended in April 2025 to 3.5%).
- b. **Employer Contribution Kiwisaver for Employees Over 65 and registered for KiwiSaver:** After discussion, Council agreed with the principle that the Employers contribution component would be retained for those employees over 65 years of age (if they are still contributing to the KiwiSaver programme).

Further clarification was provided for unique situations required by legislation.

- If an employee joined KiwiSaver before first of July 2019, and is within their five-year, quote, lock-in, unquote, period after turning 65 - the employer must continue to make compulsory contributions, and the employee must continue to contribute.
 - The employer contribution component will be retained for those employees over 65 years of age and are still contributing to a KiwiSaver programme if it is specified in the employment contract.
- c. **Provision For Employee Contributions to Be Considered as Part of the Total Remuneration:** The KiwiSaver Act 2006 allows employment agreements to offset the employer's minimum 3% contribution against the employee's gross pay, provided the agreement includes a 'total

remuneration' clause. An employee may agree to receive the compulsory employer contribution as part of a higher total remuneration rather than a separate salary payment.

It was then moved that

Council agrees to the amendments of the Remuneration Policy regarding Kiwisaver Employer contributions.

Paul Dewar/Jim Cook

Carried

15. Health and Safety Report

A. Health and Safety Report for July and August 2025

Mr Teal provided a brief overview of the Health and Safety report for July and August 2025 – noting that there had been no accidents or notable incidents are reported that are required to be brought to the attention of Council. He further noted that regular discussions on health and safety topics are undertaken at weekly staff meetings. After consideration and discussion of the Health and Safety Report, it was moved that

Council to receive staff report on Health and Safety for July and August 2025

Terry Inglis/Damon Taylor

Carried

B. Health and Safety Act Review

The review of the Health and Safety Act is being undertaken by Government to clarify the different responsibilities and liabilities of governors (Board) and management, and also to clarify the responsibilities and liabilities of landowners for recreational users on their property. It is expected that the legislation would be introduced to Parliament by the end of the calendar year.

C. Hazard Identification, Assessment, and Response

Mr Teal provided a brief update of the process to identify hazards, assess risk, and promote control responses – using a contemporary approach by categorising the risks into 'risk categories'. He provided an overview of the staff risk assessment matrix which classified the risks into level of consequence and their likelihood of occurrence. He presented a table that was the result of the process Taranaki staff had completed - which had similar risk profiles to Wellington. He then outlined the risk categories that Central South Island region had provided in their response which then leads to job safety assessment and risk registers.

Mr Teal confirmed that Wellington region staff would be progressing this in due course - ensuring involvement of employees in identifying and implementing responses to risk management.

16. Species Management

A. Preliminary Consideration of Game Regulations

Discussion ensued on the potential changes being considered for the 2026 Game Regulations and to provide an opportunity to request specific further information.

Dr Kavermann outlined the specific options being considered for black swan management - which would be considered at the December Council meeting. He outlined the goal for the harvest of black swan for 2026 Game Season given the numbers in the central New Zealand were high – including options of increasing bag limits, extending the season, and the use of resources relating to managing the numbers.

Councillor McGregor provided an overview of the practical implications for regulation effectiveness - increasing limit sizes to maximise opportunity is only likely to be effective if conditions are ideal on Lake Wairarapa sites. He considered that it is important to give hunters the opportunity to harvest the numbers if we are considering reducing the overall population, rather than taking other active control measures. He further considered the potential benefits in an 'organised hunting' event – similar to what was undertaken in the mid-2000s for goose hunting – which proved popular amongst the hunting fraternity at the time.

B. Research

Mr Teal noted that a scientific paper written by Ami Coughlan and Dr Adam Canning had recently been published on the influence of rainbow trout on dwarf galaxiid habitat preferences. This is the first of two papers relating to the studies undertaken by Amy and Adam - the second paper has been submitted to a scientific journal.

C. Fish Eradication Proposal at Kapiti Site.

Dr Kavermann provided an overview of a fish eradication proposal being proposed by DoC using rotenone near Paraparaumu – which focused on the removal of koi carp and goldfish. Council briefly discussed the issue and considered that as it didn't involve sports fish that Fish and Game had no issues with the project proceeding. It was agreed that Wellington Fish and Game Council would provide a letter of support to DOC for the use of rotenone to eradicate koi carp at that site.

At 6:00pm the meeting adjourned for dinner and reconvened at 6:40pm

17. Habitat Advocacy and Management

Mr Teal provided a brief overview of activity for Habitat Advocacy:

A. Regional Planning advocacy

Mr Teal provided an overview of the regional planning advocacy outlining that Horizons Regional Council had paused work on the Regional Plan changes with the deadline now set at September 2027.

He further noted that there's been no progress on the Plan Change 2 to Horizons One Plan in the Environment Court case. The case had adjourned in August 2024 and no further communications had been received since from the Environment Court.

The hearings for the Greater Wellington Regional Council (GWRC) Natural Resources Plan (Regional Plan) Plan Change 1 have been paused by the GWRC Council until national directions have been considered by the Minister, which is intended to be released in early 2026.

B. Resource Consent Advocacy.

Mr Teal provided a brief overview of the Territorial Local Authorities in the Horizons and Greater Wellington regional areas and their responses to management approaches and funding models for the management of municipal water. The proposed arrangements have been finalised, and any proposals being sent to the Department of Internal Affairs for final approval.

C. Habitat Enhancement Projects

Mr Teal provided a brief overview of the advice a support of applications to Game Bird Habitat Trust – staff to act as referee when and where appropriate.

18. Participation

Mr Teal provided a brief overview of activity for participation function and licence holder communications and engagement:

A. Information to Clients

- 2025/2026 Fish Season Magazine distributed
- E-Newsletter —weekly Fishing Season updates

Mr Teal provided an overview of information to clients, including the 2025/2026 Fish magazine, which had been distributed to all previous season licence holders. He noted the readership details for magazines in New Zealand from the Roy Morgan Readership Survey, which had Fish & Game New Zealand magazine featuring very prominently at number four in the top 10 cross-platform audience, print and digital.

Council discussed the importance of the magazine as a tangible quality communication channel and that licence holders get when they as part of their licence purchase. It was noted that even if the total cost for the magazine is \$5 per unit, it is still of value to have the interaction with licence holders.

Mr Teal provided a quick overview of the email campaign calendar for September 2025 to August 2026, outlining the key email contacts anticipated.

19. Public Awareness/Communications

Mr Teal provided a brief overview of recent activity related to the public awareness and communications function:

A. Iwi Engagement

Mr Teal confirmed that there had been some iwi engagement with Ngati Toa organising workshops on the Porirua Harbour Accord.

B. Communication

Mr Teal noted communications were mainly related to licence holders as required.

20. Licence Sales and Licence Management System

A. Fish Licence Sales Update – until 31 August 2025

Mr Teal provided a brief overview of fish licence sales for the 2024/2025 Fishing Season up until the end of August 2025:

- LEQ sales down compared to previous year by 4.1%

After brief discussion it was moved that

Council receive Licence Sales Report for 2024/2025 Fishing Season YTD (up to 31 August 2025)

Ben Hancock/Jim Cook

Carried

B. Game Licence Sales Update – until 31 August 2025

Mr Teal provided a brief summary of the Game licence sales for the 2025 Game Season up until 31 August 2025.

- LEQ sales similar to previous year

After brief discussion it was moved that

Council receive Licence Sales Report for 2025 Game Season YTD (up to 31 August 2025)

Ben Hancock/Jennifer Yanko

Carried

C. Licence Management System – July and August 2025

Mr Teal provided an overview of the Licencing Management System Monthly Performance Reports for July 2025 and August 2025 noting that the provider was performing well with no issues of continuity of service, and that a list of bugs and fixes required under the agreed contract had been progressed.

He further noted that the Wellington, that regional Fish and Game Councils are signatories to the agreement to ESL to provide services, to manage electronic licence sales (Public Online and Agent Online), and data capture. He confirmed that the contract had been extended for two years and was now valid until 31 August 2027. Mr Teal noted that consideration for scoping and developing a RFP (Request For Proposal) for the next iteration of the licence management system and associated software support, including CRM function, customer relationship s-management software, digital license, and fish and game app would be considered in the next financial year. It was then moved

Council receives the update report for July and August 2025 for performance of provider of services to manage the licensing platform and database management.

Jennifer Yanko/Terry Inglis

Carried

D. Cost of Sales - Agent Commission

A brief discussion was held on the cost of sales for licence sales, including the quantum of licence agent commission. Mr Teal outlined the main costs associated with paying commission to licence agents (5% commission for agents) - with the

total for all NZ being \$379,900 for fish and game licences for 2024/2025 financial year.

A brief discussion was held on:

- the value of agents interacting with customers as the primary interface,
- dealing with traditional licensed holder buying habits,
- Taupo Fishery had moved to selling licences online only,
- The promotions undertaken by a licence agents can be substantial such as "free" giveaway, reducing the perceived impact of licence prices.

It was considered that the benefits to Fish and Game of selling licences via licence agents needs to be weighed up against the costs – and the context of benefits to the agents by increasing foot traffic into the retail store. It was further considered that any change in commission rate would have to be nationwide, particularly with the additional proposals in the legislation with a nation-wide licence sales approach being coordinated by NZ Council. After further discussion it was agreed that Councillor Brown be involved in leading the discussions at the next available meeting.

21. Operational Summary 1 July 2025 to 31 August 2025

After discussion and clarification it was moved

Council to receive the staff report on Operational Summary for July and August 2025.

Terry Inglis/Ben Hancock

Carried

22. Financial Statements to 31 August 2025 and Financial Transactions for July and August 2025

After discussion it was moved that

Council receive Financial Statements for Year-to-Date for the 2024/2025 Financial Year –Income Statement up to end August 2025 and Financial Transactions for July and August 2025.

Terry Inglis/Jim Cook

Carried

Mr Teal confirmed that he was still looking at options for leasing alternative office premises.

Mr Teal confirmed the capital expenditure in the previous period - that the vehicle replacement approved by Council had been ordered, and would be delivered in the near future.

He also noted that the computer upgrades which, that were required and approved by Council were progressing.

23. Correspondence

There were no additional specific items of correspondence that had not already been addressed in the meeting.

No media items required a specific response, but noting;

- Item noting Horticulture NZ's push for more permissive vegetable-growing rules.
- A Newsroom article by David Williams covered efforts to modernise Fish & Game and the recent legislative review. The article highlighted communications between the NZ Council Chair and the Minister about national cost-optimisation using zero-based budgeting. The Chair defended a more centralised North Canterbury model, criticising high overheads, an overweight senior management layer, and noting that 60% of licence revenue goes to salaries (\$1.5m to upper management).
- Brief discussion occurred on farmers' contributions to wetland improvements.

24. Recognition Awards

Councillors were requested to bring forward names of those contributors to the management or governance of the fish and game resource that were worthy of specific recognition.

After discussion, it was agreed to recognise the contributions of Malcolm Francis and his governance contributions. Chairman Dewar presented Mr Francis with a medal acknowledging his contribution [acclamation].

24. Conservation Board Liaison

Discussion ensued on the potential discussion points that could be a focus for attendance at the next Conservation Board meeting scheduled.

Mr Teal noted there had been no formal engagement with the Conservation Board over the preceding period.

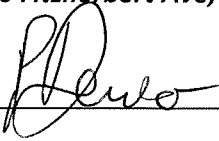
He noted that Jim Cook had been notified that he had not been appointed to the Wellington Conservation Board.

25. General Business

Councillor McGregor reiterated that the benefits of inclusion in social media of the activities undertaken by Fish and Game, particularly on Facebook. He considered there this needs to be promoted on these channels - as it is a cost-effective way of showing value to licence holders and the activities that we undertake.

There were no further specific items of general business, the meeting closed at 7.25pm.

**Next Meeting to be held: Tuesday, 9 December 2025 at Distinction Hotel
Coachman, 140 Fitzherbert Ave, Palmerston North at 3.00pm.**

Chairman  Date _____