

One hundred and fortieth meeting of the
New Zealand Fish and Game Council
Wellington
Friday 14 and Saturday 15 February 2020
Commencing 9.25am Friday

PRESENT

NZ Councillors

Noel Birchall, Nigel Juby, Lindsay Lyons (Chair), Greg Duley, Paul Blewman, Paul Shortis, Bill O'Leary, Andy Harris, Roy Knight, Dan Isbister and Colin Weatherall.

In Attendance

Martin Taylor Chief Executive, Carmel Veitch Finance, Jack Kos Policy Advisor, Brian Anderton Senior Communications Advisor, Richie Cosgrove Senior Communications Advisor, Steve Doughty Business Development Manager and Debbie Mair Policy Advisor.

Also Present:

Kym Nairne, Minute Taker

OPEN MEETING

1. Welcome

The Chair opened the meeting at 9.25am, Friday 14 February and extended a welcome to all. Apologies were received from Southland on behalf of Dave Harris, who replaces Chris Owen as the appointee from Southland. The Chair acknowledged the work that Chris put into the organisation, he was very passionate about Fish & Game and was part of the Licencing Committee.

A formal request was asked for to extend the Council's thanks to Chris Owen for his efforts and input into Fish and Game.

Resolved (Bill O'Leary / Noel Birchall)

That the NZ Council formally thank Chris Owen.

The Chair advised that he and the CEO had a two-hour meeting with Strategic Pay yesterday regarding the CEO salary, using the same methodology as Managers.

The Chair advised he had received a call this morning from the Minister and that she may attend the meeting tomorrow with Mervyn English.

Martin introduced a new staff member Debbie Mair who commenced on Monday as Policy Advisor Environmental. Debbie has a Masters in Environmental Science. Martin advised that the two policy roles are still being defined.

2. Apologies

Resolved (Nigel Juby / Dan Isbister)

That the apologies for Dave Harris at the February meeting of New Zealand Fish and Game Council be accepted.

Paul Shortis proposed a resolution that he would like to add two letters (from the 'Staff Collective' and Managers) for discussion on the agenda under standing order 2.3.15,

Resolved (Paul Shortis / Colin Weatherall)

Requested under standing order 2.3.15 add an agenda item which would be the discussion of the correspondence from staff and managers, it cannot be delayed until later meeting because of need to reply and deal in some part with the issues raised by the two groups. There is also other correspondence that has come in subsequent to the preparation of the agenda.

Against: Paul Blewman due to fact hasn't had time to read the letters. **Carried**

Resolved (Paul Shortis / Greg Duley)

That the agenda item added by Paul Shortis be moved to the front of the meeting under clause 2.3.6

Against: Noel Birchall, Lindsay Lyons, Paul Blewman **Carried**

Paul Shortis then moved due to the sensitive nature of the content of those two letters, which created HR issues for the NZC, that the council should move into a Councillor only session to deal with that issue.

Resolved (Paul Shortis / Nigel Juby)

That Council move into a Council only session.

Against: – Paul Blewman, Noel Birchall, Lindsay Lyons **Carried**

10.16am Staff and minute taker left the meeting room and NZC moved into Councillor only.

Minutes for this session were taken by the Chair

11.55am the meeting returned to the Public agenda.

3. Conflicts of Interest Register

Councillors now sign the register and identify whether there were any topics to be discussed at this meeting they perceive to be a potential conflict of interest (COI). A COI sheet was passed around at the meeting for people to note any conflicts with the listed February agenda items. This sheet was to cover both Friday and Saturday's discussions. Greg Duley noted on the sheet that he had a conflict of interest in relation to the "HB Audit".

The Chair requested that the agenda for the next public excluded meeting be a different colour in future.

4. Confirmation of Minutes from the 22 and 24 November 2019 Meeting

Resolved (Colin Birchall / Roy Knight)

That the minutes of the New Zealand Fish and Game Council meeting of 22 and 24 November 2019 be confirmed as a true and correct record.

5. Review of Accumulative Action List from Previous Meetings

Dan Isbister raised that the letter to CSI acknowledging a good performance in the audit, which was decided on at the November meeting, has not been received.

ACTION: Martin to follow up by sending a letter to CSI regarding the audit.

6. Health & Safety Report

A NZ Fish and Game Council health and safety policy was approved in July 2016. This policy is now supported by bi-monthly reporting to Council on health & safety action as recorded by NZ Council staff.

Resolved (Andy Harris / Bill O'Leary)

That the bi-monthly Health & Safety Report for February 2020 be received.

Resolved (Roy Knight / Andy Harris)

To move into a Public Excluded session of the meeting.

11.58am the meeting moved to Public Excluded.

PUBLIC EXCLUDED

To move into a Public Excluded session of the meeting.

Section 48, Local Government Official Information and Meetings Act 1987.

That the public be excluded from the following parts of the proceedings of this meeting, to discuss:

- 7. Confirmation of the Public Excluded Minutes from November 2019**
- 9. Advocacy Report**
- 10. Audits Update**
- 11. Lindis River Appeal**
- 12. Licence Holder Views Research**
- 13. In-house Legal Support**
- 14. Post NPS Freshwater Approach**
- 15. Upland Game Properties (Pheasant Preserves)**
- 16. North Canterbury Assistance**

The general subject of each matter to be considered while the public is excluded, the reason for passing this resolution in relation to each matter and the specific grounds under Section 48(1) of the Local Government Official Information and Meetings Act 1987 for the passing of this resolution are as follows:

GENERAL SUBJECT OF EACH MATTER TO BE CONSIDERED	REASON FOR PASSING THIS RESOLUTION IN RELATION TO EACH MATTER	GROUND(S) UNDER SECTION 48(1) FOR THE PASSING OF THIS RESOLUTION
Information provided in confidence	Good reason to withhold exists under section 9 of the Official Information Act 1982	Section 48(1)(a)(ii)

This resolution is made in reliance on Section 48(1)(a) of the Local Government Official Information and Meetings Act 1987 and the particular interest or interests protected by Section 9 of the Official Information Act 1982 which would be prejudiced by the holding of the whole or relevant part of the proceedings of the meeting in public are as follows:

ITEM	REASON UNDER THE OFFICIAL INFORMATION ACT 1982	SECTION	PLAIN ENGLISH REASON	WHEN REPORT CAN BE RELEASED
XX.	Protect the privacy of natural persons.	Sec. 9(2)(a)	Information provided identifies a particular person or can easily be connected with a particular person.	Once the person to whom the information relates consents to its disclosure.
	Protect information which is subject to an obligation of confidence ... where the making available of the information would be likely to prejudice the supply of similar information, or information from the same source, and it is in the public interest that such information should continue to be supplied	Sec 9(2)(be)(i)	Disclosing the information would jeopardise the relationship with the supplier because the supplier may no longer trust the Council to hold its information in confidence.	Not unless there is a public interest in disclosure of the specific information.

Note

Section 48(4) of the Local Government Official Information and Meetings Act 1987 provides as follows:

“(4) Every resolution to exclude the public shall be put at a time when the meeting is open to the public, and the text of that resolution (or copies thereof):

- (a) Shall be available to any member of the public who is present; and
- (b) Shall form part of the minutes of the Council.”

2.00pm the meeting returned to the Public agenda

Resolutions from Public Excluded

It was agreed in the public excluded session of the meeting that the following resolutions were to be brought forward into the public record.

Agree to bring forward resolutions into public minutes.

- 1. to give North Canterbury up to \$99,000 as a grant and the balance of \$153,000 as a loan to be repaid progressively when their reserves exceed 30%.**
- 2. agree to take this agreement out of public excluded into the public minutes.**

Resolved (Paul Blewman / Nigel Juby)

DECISION PAPERS

17. NZC Governance Training and Support NZC

Chair spoke to the paper saying that regions had benefitted from Governance training and support, and that Graeme Nahkies is an expert in governance and understands Fish and Game. The Chair believed the NZC needs to be demonstrative that we follow good governance.

No decision.

18. Strategic Planning Day

It was decided to hold the joint meeting with Managers on Friday 17 April (NZ Council commencing at 9am, joined by Managers at 10am), the Strategic Planning Day on Saturday 18 April and NZ Council meeting on Sunday 19 April. It was suggested that Graeme Nahkies be asked to facilitate the day.

Resolved (Paul Shortis / Paul Blewman)

Agree to hold a Strategic Meeting on Saturday 18 April with an external facilitator.

19. Independent Strategic Review

Deferred to after strategic planning day.

20. R3: Reversing Declining Licence Sales Considerations

Item 1 Website Redevelopment

Steve spoke to this report and provided a detailed background on the status of the current website. The current platform Silverstripe 3, will come off support in mid-2021, with no migration path to the next version. There is a need for better integration to enable improved and simplified process of communication. And to give licence holders what research says they are looking for from the website.

There was also discussion about why NZ Council was being asked to approve an amount of only \$20,000. Steve responded that this is what is required to develop a detailed road map on what is required before going to market. It was also noted that if the NZC did not want to spend the \$150k on a new website at a later date then they should not agree to the \$20k to develop the road map.

Resolved (Greg Duley / Andy Harris)

Agree to spend \$20,000 in this financial year to develop website roadmap and RFP.

Item 2 – Recruitment, retention and reactivation – national consistent branding of fishing events.

Steve spoke to his report covering the logo development, branding, trademarking, domain registration, and website module for promotion and registration, to bring all events and workshops together with consistent branding centralised but regional in its operation.

Resolved: (Noel Birchall / Paul Shortis)

Agree in principle with the project, the brand and associated costs to proceed with regional consultation.

Afternoon Tea Break at 2:55pm

Meeting recommenced at 3.12pm

21. Promoting Public Access

Jack spoke to his paper to bring the promotion of public access and the opposition to exclusive capture to the fore of Fish and Game's advocacy.

Resolved (Andy Harris / Dan Isbister)

- 1. To oppose exclusive capture on all lakes, rivers, streams and wetlands.**
- 2. For NZC staff to develop a long-term strategy to promoting public access and addressing exclusive capture to present at the April NZ Council meeting.**

22. Non-Resident Angler Donation Program

Steve spoke to his report around the opportunity for a small group of non-resident anglers to contribute to the work of Fish and Game beyond the price of a non-resident licence. Feedback on the proposal from within the industry has received very positive response with Lodge and Guide buy-in. He explained the options outlined in his report being, the Heritage Fishing Licence, exclusive prints and gold and platinum pins.

Resolved (Paul Blewman / Nigel Juby)

Agree to the spend \$9,950 to get the donation scheme underway.

23. North Island Comms position

The CEO was seeking support to take a full time communications position for the North Island through to the contestable funding bid round. The CEO noted a part-time North Island Comms Advisor didn't really work and noted two-thirds of the population are in the North Island we need to promote angling and game bird hunting to support and increase licence sales. Nigel Juby said that Auckland/Waikato did not want more licence sales as they were at full capacity.

Resolved (Paul Shortis / Roy Knight)

Agree to take a contestable funding bid for the 2020 – 2021 financial year to employ and equip a full-time North Island Communications Adviser to support and coordinate media activities of the North Island Fish & Game regions.

24. Approach to Research Program

Jack spoke to his paper which operationalises the NZ Council's statutory role to set the organisations research priorities. He noted there had quite a bit of communication between Phil Teal and Rasmus Gabrielsson in writing this paper. The aim was for the NZC to set the research objectives and for a reference group to propose how to do this in the most effective way. The proposed reference group was Jack Kos, Phil Teal and Rasmus Gabrielsson.

Paul Shortis noted he would like to this group tasked with looking to source external research funds. Noel confirmed that all research applications would still be required to go through the current research application process.

Resolved (Paul Blewman / Roy Knight)

- 1. That the New Zealand Fish and Game Council should set the Fish and Game research priorities, having regard to the broader needs of the organisation.**
- 2. That a reference group be established comprising Rasmus Gabrielsson, Phil Teal and Jack Kós to provide advice to the Council on research priorities and processes.**

25. Research Applications

Resolved (Dan Isbister / Paul Blewman)

Need to defer until NZ Council have finalised the strategic approach.

26. Application for Legal/RMA Funding

There were no applications for legal or RMA funding.

27. NZ Council Financial Report

The purpose of this paper is to update the NZ Council on the financial position to month ended 31 December 2019. We are 33% through our year and everything is within budget.

Resolved (Noel Birchall / Paul Blewman)

That the Financial Report as at 31 December 2019 be accepted.

28. National Fish and Game Financial Report

This provides an update on the YTD expenditure by Fish and Game Councils against the budgets through the financial year. It gives a snapshot of where Councils are at. Overall the combined Councils are sitting at 29% of the total budget spent. Most regions are working within budget. The question was raised if the Strategic Finance Committee was looking at reserves other than liquid reserves such as assets, it was responded that it is being worked on, the challenge being not only understanding those assets but understanding how you treat those assets.

Resolved (Colin Weatherall / Dan Isbister)

That the National Financial Report as at 31 December 2019 be accepted.

29. Non-Resident Licence Income

The purpose of this paper is to set out the possible options around non-resident licence income in terms of the organisations overall budget.

Paul Shortis on behalf of the Strategic Finance Committee said their recommendation was the funds to simply go into dedicated funds within the region towards fishing until NZC further identify where the revenue is generated.

It was noted by the CEO and Carmel that the organisation expects to generate around \$400k of income in the next financial year from non-resident income and if this was bought into the general budget would preclude or lower the need to increase the licence fee next year. It was also noted that around \$800k was held in regional reserves, in the current financial year, from non-resident licence income.

It was stated the letter from the Minister confirms we can handle the income in any way we like and it would make sense that all of that non-residence licence should be going into general licence income. Another councillor noted from a region with non-resident reserves, he could never support it going into the overall general budget. Another councillor said the reserve gave flexibility for his region at an operational level for unexpected expenditure. It was also noted that the money has been growing and it has hardly been spent.

Action: Paul Shortis undertakes to report back from the Strategic Finance Committee asap.

Resolved (Dan Isbister / Roy Knight)

Agree to the status quo with the non-resident income going into each region's reserves until the Strategic Finance Committee reports back.

Debbie Mair left the meeting.

30. 2018/2019 Regional Budget Variance Analysis

The purpose of this paper is to compare the regions budget against the actual spend for 31 August, overall Fish and Game made a budgeted loss.

Of approved budgets 96% budgets were spent.

Resolved (Paul Blewman / Paul Shortis)

Agree that the report is accepted.

The meeting concluded at 4.45pm for the day.

Saturday 15 February 2020

The meeting recommenced at 9.05am.

The Chair opened the meeting at 9.05am and welcomed the Conservation Minister, Hon Eugenie Sage MP, who introduced Mervyn English standing in for the Director-General of DOC.

The Minister led a general discussion.

The Minister and Mervyn English left at 10.15am, and the meeting went into morning tea break.

The meeting recommenced at 10.45am.

Resolved (Roy Knight / Andy Harris)

That the meeting move into a Councillor Only at 10.45am.

The meeting moved back into Public session at 11.44am

31. Infringement Fines Process Next Steps

The CE spoke to this paper. Following on from agreement in the last meeting, it has been suggested that we ask the Minister to approve our Infringement Fines Process.

Resolved (Colin Weatherall / Paul Blewman)

Agree to send in our Infringement Fine Policy to the Minister for approval.

32. Correspondence to be considered

Letter from Strato Cotsilinis, Chairman Wellington Fish and Game Council regarding clarification on the NZ Fish and Game's position.

Paul Shortis declared a conflict of interest in this matter.

Resolved (Nigel Juby / Roy Knight)

That the NZ Council agree to send a letter to Strato Cotsilinis saying we agree to disagree and the issues will be addressed as part of wider strategic planning.

REPORTS RECEIVED

33. Sub-committee reports (oral)

The NZ Council's National Licensing, Remuneration, Strategic Finance and National Sea-run Salmon sub-committees reported on progress made since the last meeting.

Respective Chairs (or Council representative) of the sub-committees spoke to the respective reports summarising activities of the committees since the last NZ Council meeting.

Strategic Finance Review - Paul Shortis they would prepare a report to be circulated prior to the April meeting. The committee was making good progress. Reserves and Trusts is proving an interesting challenge there are seven or eight different types of reserves around the country.

Remuneration Sub-Committee - Colin reported met last year and due to meet again soon. Have progressed the review generally. We've got a Strategic Pay report which will table at next sub-committee meeting.

National Sea-run Salmon - Roy reported last meeting they went through hundreds of questions on sea-run and categorised actions to be taken, those to be reviewed and those where no action is to be taken. That is leading onto an open night for symposium update, a night for people to come and see the updates, what has been achieved and have the opportunity to ask questions.

National Licensing – Noel said the committee had not met since the last meeting and the CEO had been working on getting the draft contract to a position where the committee can review it. Meeting set for March.

Resolved (Paul Blewman / Greg Duley)

That Dan Isbister is appointed to the sub-committee in the short term.

34. CE and Staff Activity report

A question was raised about the background to Robert's replacement.

The CEO gave the background that the need for the position was established by the Fore Consulting office review in 2016 and had formed part of a NZC budget following a contestable funding bid, which then came through into the NZ Council budget. He referred councillors to the March and April finance reports for 2018 where the surplus in the salary line was noted due to the position being vacant. It was pointed out that there was agreed from the NZC we needed two policy positions in order to have the capacity to review and update our internal policy and that was one of the Deb's key deliverables.

A question was raised on the progress of the Guides Licence, Jack replied he was working with DOC policy staff and hoped to be putting it forward in the next few months. Jack noted the Guide Association are onboard. The aim was to have it in place for the 2021 season.

35. RM/legal Update

There was one correction to the report, the CSI Bowyers Stream was settled out of Court.

36. Research Programme Update

Jack spoke to the report which is a copy of update received. It was pointed out that some coordinators are no longer with the organisation. It was advised that Adam is

keen to have his name on the papers and continue to get that project completed. There was discussion about the minimal response from the regions and the importance of them responding as a determining factor in making the right decisions for them.

There was a discussion about Mallard Research Projects, what is happening with the projects, priorities, the value of the research, and what is needed to know around mallards.

37. Licence Sales Reports

Steve spoke to the report showing the year to date trend. This is not an analysis report but a trend in the figures. Further analysis continues to be necessary. Revenue has increased marginally but participation has gone down significantly. Shorter-term licence sales are up, whole season licence sales are showing a negative trend. It was noted that R3 is not a short-term solution, if we adopt R3 now in terms of operation work plans in the regions we should start to see a shift in 3 – 5 years.

38. Correspondence Record

Correspondence

A question was raised relating to an OIA request about advertising from Gun City. The CE advised that they have taken multiple pages in the magazine this year and the background is that the catalogue space was completely sold to Hunting and Fishing after months of negotiation.

There was discussion around the Jet Boat MOU following an opinion piece tabled. The Jet Boat Association based in Canterbury has less than 25% of people involved in jet boating.

39. NZ Council Annual Agenda

Noted

39.1 Interim Executive

Resolved (Paul Shortis / Greg Duley)
Appoint Paul Shortis as an interim member of the Executive Committee until the next meeting

Resolved (Dan Isbister / Colin Weatherall)
Appoint Bill O’Leary as an interim member of the Executive Committee until the next meeting

40. CLOSING MEETING

There being no further business, the Chair declared the meeting closed at 1.15pm Saturday 15 February 2020.

Confirmed:

Date:/...../2020

Next meeting the one hundred and forty-first to be held 17 and 19 April 2020 in Wellington