

**Minutes of the Regional Services Committee  
(Ropu Tiaki Waka-a-Rohe) meeting of the Southland  
Regional Council, held in Regional House, corner North  
Road and Price Street, Invercargill, on Thursday,  
19 March 2020, at 1.30 pm**



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<b>Present:</b>	Cr J McPhail Chairman Horrell Cr L Ludlow Cr L McCallum Cr P McDonald Cr E Roy Cr D Stevens	(Chair)
<b>Also Present:</b>	Mr P Melgren	(Department of Conservation)
<b>In Attendance:</b>	Mr R Phillips Mr J Streat Mr P Haynes Mr D McIntosh Mrs A Henderson Mrs J M Brown	(Chief Executive) (Director, Operations) (Catchment Manager) (Property Officer) (Communications Co-ordinator) (Executive Assistant)

**1 Welcome (*Haere mai*)**

The Chairman welcomed everyone to the first meeting of the Regional Services Committee meeting for 2020.

**2 Apologies (*Nga Pa Pouri*)**

There were no apologies for absence recorded, as all members were present. Cr Esler was an apology for this meeting, but was not recorded as an apology on the day.

**3 Declarations of Interest**

There were no declarations of interest made by any members present.

**4 Public Forum, Petitions and Deputations (*He Huinga tuku korero*)**

There were no public forum, petitions or deputations presented at the meeting.

**5 Confirmation of Minutes (*Whakau korero*) – 14 November 2019**

***Resolved:***

Moved Cr Roy, seconded Cr McCallum, that the minutes of the meeting of the Regional Services Committee, held on 14 November 2020 be confirmed as a true and correct record.

Carried

**6 Notification of Extraordinary and Urgent Business (*He Panui Autaia hei Totoia Pakihi*)**

**6.1 Supplementary Reports**

There were no supplementary reports tabled for inclusion in the agenda.

**6.2 Other**

There were no other items of business raised by Councillors for inclusion in the agenda.

**7 Questions (*Patai*)**

Nil.

**8 Chairman and Councillors' Reports (*Nga Purongo-a-Tumuaki me nga Kaunihera*)**

Cr McPhail updated the meeting on his involvement with the River Liaison Committee Chairs meeting that had been held the previous day. He noted the focus of that meeting had been on scoping the terms of reference and providing direction for the future. He felt that all participants had voiced their opinions, and it had been a constructive meeting.

The meeting had also been supported by the attendance of Regional Forum representatives, who had provided an update on the work of that group. He felt this had helped the Regional Forum members understand that they were hearing from another part of the community.

Cr McDonald noted he and Jonathan Streat had attended a Hedgehope catchment group meeting recently, which had been well attended and good discussion had ensued.

Chairman Horrell advised he had attended the Aparima RLC meeting. Interesting to hear Lloyd McCall, Chairman of Pomahaka speak. The catchment is doing its own water sampling and they had found it powerful in engaging the community and focusing them on potential issues in their own areas. He suggested this could be a good tool going forward. Cr McDonald endorsed these comments, although he noted there were some concerns about how council will use the information/accept it or not, and whether or not it could be used in a regulatory process.

Cr McCallum noted the confusion was that there is community data, consent data, SOE data, but unless they are aligned and giving the same messages at the same levels, they will give conflicting results. It is important to ensure that whatever citizen science is undertaken only enhances the picture. Mr Streat undertook to follow this up.

Cr McPhail advised he had attended the Gore catchment meeting, where discussion had included questions around where Thriving Southland fits into the picture, and their plans for the future. He felt there needed to be more information circulated around this process. Also he advised that with the Maitai catchment group, the information being advised about the \$5,000 funding and how that can be applied for was different to his own understanding. He felt that greater clarity around this needed to be provided to all parties.

## **9 General Manager of Operations' Report – 20/RS/23**

### **⇒ Item 1 – Storage of Baleage in Floodways**

This item provided Council with an update on actions to ensure that baleage is stored outside the floodplain. As a result of the recent flood event in Southland, there had been significant work required to relocate baleage that had been placed within the designated flood inundation areas. Leonie Grace spoke to this item, noting it outlined the approach that will be taken in future with regard to the issue of storage of baleage in floodways.

In addition, it was noted the intention to reintroduce the Flood Bylaw which will restrict where baleage can be stored. The education approach will be extended into the wintering education programme. Cr McCallum noted the discussions that had occurred at the Strategy & Policy Committee meeting the previous day, which had heard feedback on this proposal.

Cr McCallum stressed the need for education to be taken, as he was aware of where a large amount of baleage had been stored; had travelled through his property during the flood event; and had now been returned to its original storage place. This was inappropriate and recognised the need for a strengthened programme.

The meeting agreed the educative approach needed to be continued and re-presented each year, given the constant change in landowners. Connecting this with the winter grazing discussion and the various agencies involved in this area would be a key approach.

Mr Street noted some good examples had been shown at the liaison committee meetings where the flood warning system was used where people understood the timeframes they had and moved baleage when they knew the rivers were rising. All were reminded that it was not an ES responsibility to gather up baleage that had been spread during a flood – it was a farmer responsibility. There is also information available on the Dairy NZ website about how damaged baleage can be used.

**Resolved:**

**Moved Cr Roy, seconded Cr McCallum, that Council note the education and awareness campaign for storing baleage, including the extent of inundation areas around the main rivers.**

**Carried**

⇒ **Item 2 – Biosecurity and Land and Water Services Surveys**

This report updated Council on the findings from recent public surveys relating to the Southland Biosecurity Strategy 2019-2024 Objectives and the Land and Water Services Team objectives in the 2018-2028 Long-term Plan.

Leonie Grace and Alex Loimaranta spoke to the survey report that had been provided to the meeting.

Cr McCallum suggested that trends from these surveys would be useful in the future, to allow an assessment of where further work was required/assess the success of the council's programmes. It was noted that the Biosecurity team have undertaken these surveys for some years now, but this was the first time the LAWS team had been involved.

Cr Roy felt there was some confusion around who monitors who in regard to the biosecurity responsibilities. Mr Street provided a brief outline, and noted that if necessary there could be a further more detailed workshop held.

1. Border – central government responsibility
2. Regional pest – local government responsibility
3. Incidents – shared responsibility between central and local government.
4. MPI responsibility for ensuring no incursions and for ensuring adequate monitoring is undertaken by territorial authorities.

**Resolved:**

**Moved Chairman Horrell, seconded Cr Ludlow, that Council note the findings of the results as baseline information to build on as the Southland Biosecurity Strategy 2019-2024 and Long-term Plan progress.**

**Carried**

**⇒ Item 3 – Floodway land Management – Annual Budget 2020/21**

Council was asked to note the proposed 2020/21 annual budget for capital works and expenditure associated with the Floodway Land Lease Districts.

Mr McIntosh advised that his budget was initially prepared in November, but had recently been reviewed in light of the recent global situation. As a result, a new budget and information had been tabled for the meeting today and had been circulated prior to the meeting, electronically, to Councillors.

Cr McCallum felt that the budget presented did not provide sufficient detail. He felt there was a need to understand the difference between capital and normal repairs/maintenance.

Mr Streat suggested the conversations around the use of capital etc should form part of the lease land review. The purpose of today's item was to indicate what the proposed budget looked like for the forthcoming year, and showed the change in approach that was being taken in the coming year. He noted that this would be submitted for final approval by Council via the Annual Plan process. Chairman Horrell felt the breakdown of reserves in the lease area would be helpful going forward.

Cr McPhail noted the work occurring via the lease land review. The first budget indicated a significant sum would be spent on repairs and maintenance, but this was no longer occurring, and wondered if that suggested it was not required. He felt Councillors needed a greater understanding of the approach that was being taken. Further it would be helpful to understand what impacts the changes in leases that had occurred, would have on this.

Cr McCallum suggested that the lease land subcommittee could have a more in-depth look at this matter, and provide more input to Council. Mr Streat advised that some matters were being deferred; how this related to various leases could be considered at another time. This was still a work in progress and may yet change again – it was about keeping the Committee in the loop of the thinking.

**Resolved:****Moved Chairman Horrell, seconded Cr Ludlow, that Council:**

- (1) note the proposed 2020/21 annual budget for capital works and expenditure associated with the Floodway Land Lease Districts;**
- (2) note that the proposed 2020/21 annual budgets for Floodway Land Lease Districts will come back to the Council for inclusion in the Annual Plan and budget setting programme during January/February 2020.**

**Carried**
**⇒ Item 4 – Catchment Operations Work Programme**

This item was provided to allow staff to verbally update Councillors on the Maitua River February 2020 flood event, and the Waiau River October/November 2019 flood event.

Mr Haynes reported on the impacts of the two flood events in recent months, a summary of which follows:

- all work has been prioritised – Maitua lone 64 jobs – based on risk, which includes stopbank replacements and rebuilding, rock work and protection. Three staff are working in this area full time, and they are finding more and more work all the time;
- in the Waiau, this event was October/November – works prioritised and programme identified for dealing with this over the next four years. Two key works of top priority, involving a consent to replace a stopbank that was washed away. Consent has been obtained due to the need for realignment. The rest of the work is largely rock work.
- the Oreti has 27 jobs identified, including rock work, some stopbank work in the Five Rivers area (Lumsden). They are being repaired currently, and then focusing on the remaining tasks.

Mr Streat advised that staff would be going back to a number of river liaison committees to refine the lists of works and the budget proposals, over the next few weeks. Some jobs are coming in that may go up the priority list because farmers had only just notified them. It is hoped this work will be completed by the end of April. The information from that will shape how the budgets are cast going forward. It is anticipated the costs will be spread over more than one year. In the meantime, interim budgets have been approved. It was noted that this also aligned with insurance discussions that were occurring.

Cr Stevens asked how easy would it be to go ahead and do gravel extraction, noting that some of the gravel bars were having a huge impact. Mr Haynes advised that in some areas there were existing consents (Whitestone and Upukerora for example) and in other areas there were not. This would be addressed, but it would require survey work to be completed.

Cr McDonald asked if contractors had been contacted with regards to their plans in relation to COVID-19 and whether they would continue to operate. Mr Haynes confirmed that all had said they would have back-up processes in place, but if they were not able to, then the Council's own Business Continuity Plan would need to address it. It was also noted that Council had been supported in this area by secondments from Greater Wellington and Hawkes Bay Regional Council.

Cr McCallum asked what the "repeatability" factor had been assessed for this flood, and the timeframes over which another flood event could be handled. Mr Haynes advised that with the way the system operated, another event could be handled now. But there was still a lot more work to be done.

Mr Streat noted it was not about the percentage of work that was done, it was about ensuring the integrity of the system was maintained, and the ES response had been focused on this as its goal. Rock work and river bank works related to managing future and longer term changes.

***Resolved:***

**Moved Cr McCallum, seconded Cr Stevens, that Council note the update on the Catchment Operations Work Programmes.**

**Carried**

⇒ **Item 5 – Contracts and Progress on Works**

This item updated Councillors on contracts and progress on works entered into by the Catchment Operations Division during the period 1 October to 31 December 2019.

Cr Stevens noted a query he had received from a ratepayer about who had responsibility for addressing gorse and broom on stopbanks that prevent the area being grazed. Mr Haynes noted this was a landowner responsibility and the new Asset Management Engineer would be dealing with this.

***Resolved:***

**Moved Chairman Horrell, seconded Cr McCallum, that Council note the update on the Contracts and Progress on Works.**

**Carried**

## ⇒ Item 6 – Lease Inspection Reports

Appended to the agenda were the quarterly lease inspection reports, which, amongst other things, indicated that there were no compliance issues for Council to consider.

Mr McIntosh referred to two particular lessees who were new to the Council when they had taken on leases in November. The flood event meant their properties were underwater during this event, and he noted the whole experienced had clearly made them aware of what the flood is like and what can happen in the lower Maitua.

Cr McCallum referred to page 29 and asked about the intentions re development of this block of land. Staff advised that it was not intended that this land be developed further. There are some red tussock paddocks next door which were under reserve status, but the intention was a status quo situation.

### **Resolved:**

**Moved Cr Stevens, seconded Cr Ludlow, that Council receive the December 2019 quarter of the Lease Inspection Reports.**

Carried

## ⇒ Item 7 – Property Working Party

Appended to the agenda were the minutes of the Property working Party meeting, held on 29 November 2019, for the information of Council.

### **Resolved:**

**Moved Cr McCallum, seconded Cr McPhail, that Council note the minutes of the Property Working Party meeting held on 29 November 2019.**

Carried

## 10 Extraordinary and Urgent Business (*Panui Autaia hei Totoia Pakihi*)

There was no extraordinary or urgent business considered by the meeting.

## 11 Public Excluded Business (*He hui Pakihi e hara mo te iwi*)

There was no public excluded business considered by the meeting.



## Termination

Prior to the meeting being terminated, the Chairman provided Mr Melgren (Department of Conservation) with an opportunity to update the meeting on work in his area. The following is a summary of that report.

- 7 year old sea lion pupped at Kaka Point – both were accidentally killed both by a local
- substantial damage to Great Walks and huts through the flood events in both Fiordland and Murihiku
- 1080 monitoring in Hokonuis – mohua survived very well
- 12 keas and 6 have died from 1080 poisoning. New situation.
- side effect from the floods has been a huge reduction in revenue
- COVID-19 impact on tourism are evident
- weed work has stopped because of the flood event in some areas.
- hoiho monitoring at Port Pegasus indicated only two nests compared to 20 nests – not a good situation. Anticipate it is something in the marine environment impacting
- large number of 1080 operations and large amount of monitoring, and good results – knocked possums over in some areas, rats also dropping in numbers, but the impact on the keas has not been a good outcome.
- provided a brief update on activity under the Predator Free Auckland Islands programme, where he noted good progress was being made.
- Mr Melgren undertook to provide information to Cr Roy about proposals with regard to the Routeburn and Kepler tracks.
- Reported that concession monitoring being undertaken in the Catlins
- There is also a need to look at where things will be at when we “get out the other side” of COVID-19;

There being no further business, the meeting closed at 2.43 pm.