

**Minutes of the Ordinary Meeting of the Southland
Regional Council, held in Regional House, corner
North Road and Price Street, Invercargill, on
Wednesday, 24 November 2021, at 10.30 am**



Present:	Chairman N Horrell (Chair)	
	Cr A Baird	
	Cr N Cook	
	Cr L Esler	
	Cr R Guyton	
	Cr L Ludlow	
	Cr L McCallum	
	Cr P McDonald	
	Cr J McPhail	
	Cr B Mager	
	Cr D Stevens	
	Cr E Roy	
In Attendance:	Ms W Falconer (Acting Chief Executive)	
	Ms A Kubrycht (GM, Organisational Development & Transformation)	
	Mr P Hulse (GM, Integrated Catchment Management)	
	Mrs T Hawkins (Chief Financial Officer)	
	Mrs G Jefferies (Communications & Engagement Manager)	
	Mrs F Young (Catchment Integration Manager)	
	Ms J Rees (Principal Advisor)	
	Mr G McMurdo (Acting Compliance Manager)	
	Mrs E Moriarty (Science Manager)	
	Mr B Halligan (Acting Consents Manager)	
	Ms D Ferguson (Team Leader Regulatory)	
	Ms A Meade (Biosecurity & Biodiversity Operations Manager)	
	Mr L Cleaver (Maritime Manager/Harbourmaster)	
	Mr R Strong (Catchment Operations Manager)	
	Mrs J Brown (Democracy Services EA)	

1 Welcome (*Haere mai*)

The Chairman welcomed members to the November meeting of Council and announced the housekeeping requirements for the meeting.

2 Apologies (*Nga Pa Pouri*)

Resolved:

Moved Cr Cook, seconded Cr McCallum, that apologies for absence be accepted on behalf of Cr E Roy.

Carried

3 Recognition of Service/Retirement – Colin Young

At this time the Chairman welcomed Colin Young (Technical Services Engineer) and his wife Margaret, who were attending the meeting via Zoom digital link, and took the opportunity to outline to all Colin's 42 year working history with the organisation. This Friday would see Colin's retirement from his role with Environment Southland.

In thanking Colin for his contribution to the community and the organisation over the years, the Chairman noted that he would "leave a very large hole in the organisation. That he was taking a lot of knowledge away with him", and in particular made reference to the February 2020 floods where his knowledge and confidence in the work behind the design and build of the flood schemes through Mataura, had proven invaluable.

Crs Cook and McCallum also expressed their appreciation of the contribution Colin had made to the organisation, and provided several anecdotes about his time with Council.

Colin thanked the Chairman and Councillors for their words, commenting it had been a privilege to work for the Council. He urged them to "keep up the good work, looking after the community".

4 Declarations of Interest

There were no declarations of interest made to the meeting.

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

There were no Public Forum, Petitions and Deputations.

6 Confirmation of Minutes (*Whakau korero*)

(a) Ordinary Meeting of Council – 13 October 2021

Resolved:

Moved Cr McCallum, seconded Cr McPhail, that the minutes of the Ordinary Meeting of Council held on 13 October 2021 be taken as read and confirmed as a true and correct record.

Carried

(b) Extraordinary Meeting of Council – 3 November 2021

Resolved:

Moved Cr McPhail, seconded Cr Stevens, that the minutes of the Extraordinary Meeting of Council held on 3 November 2021 be taken as read and confirmed as a true and correct record.

Carried

7 Adoption of Committee Resolutions

(a) Strategy and Policy Committee – 3 November 2021

Resolved:

Moved Cr Stevens, seconded Cr Ludlow that the resolutions from the Strategy and Policy Committee meeting held on 3 November 2021 be adopted.

Carried

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

8.1 Supplementary Reports

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

8.2 Other

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

9 Questions (*Patai*)

There were no questions.

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

⇒ Chairman's Report

A report outlining the activities the Chairman had been involved in on behalf of the Council since the last meeting had been circulated with the agenda.

The Chairman highlighted the series of community meetings that were being held at which Council was sharing its science information, including what the gaps that were in that science, and discussing ways forward. He had attended a number of these

meetings, including one with Federated Farmers Executive in recent weeks which had lasted approximately two hours, and the messages had been reasonably well received.

The Chairman noted it was clear from the information available, that collectively, all needed to be working now to make changes, to ensure that the goal of having an environment for our children and grandchildren to live in and enjoy all of the things we had done in the children, with the best freshwater quality and premium products being produced as a result.

The Chairman also highlighted the discussions that had occurred at the Regional Hui on Monday, including local government reform. He felt it was clear that the status quo would not remain, and it had been heartening to hear that a proactive stance was favoured for Southland.

⇒ Councillors' Reports

The following is a summary of the verbal reports received at the meeting.

Cr Esler – had been travelling throughout the province, and noted in particular in the Waiau River area, he had many discussions with farmers and stakeholders, looking at the effect of the reduction in the river flows, which is an ongoing issue for some, in terms of erosion. He had looked at restored whitebait habitat project underway at the mouth of the river, and the work of the QEII Trust. Cr Esler had also participated in the Science & Technology Fair (held on a reduced scale due to COVID-19 impacts) and was pleased to see good participation from regularly contributing schools.

Cr Stevens – highlighted the success of the Community Environment Awards – both the judging which had been held in particularly difficult circumstances, and also the final night. He thanked all staff involved for the tremendous job they had done in pulling everything together. The Awards night itself had been spectacular, and well received. These comments were endorsed by Cr McDonald.

Cr McCallum – noted Council's role was to get out in the community and have meetings, and that more meetings were planned. With the new "Traffic Light" system under COVID-19 rules being implemented, he asked if thought had been given to this. Ms Falconer advised that Council has an Incident Management Team in place considering all of these matters and taking the advice and guidance of Government and the health officials in this regard. It had also taken a business continuity approach to the emerging situation, and was planning for if/when staff or Councillors became sick. She undertook to ensure Councillors were kept apprised of this work.

Cr Guyton commented in this regard that it was important to consider fairness to all, and if people were unable to attend meetings or gatherings because they were unvaccinated, it was important that the information was made available to them, and they were provided an ability to participate in matters that were being consulted on. This point was acknowledged.

11 Staff Report – 20/C/99

⇒ Item 1 – Acting Chief Executive’s Report

The Acting Chief Executive’s report was distributed with the agenda which provided Council with a governance overview of pan-organisational current matters. In speaking to the report Ms Falconer highlighted:

- the successful 25th Community Environment Awards – the success of the event despite the COVID-19 circumstances; the impressive array of winners and high calibre of entries. She noted it was intended to work with some of the Award winners for a longer-term association;
- the advancing appeal work on the proposed Southland Water & Land Plan;
- the Regional Forum – working through economic scenarios;
- the new science strategy to be completed by the year’s end, which will inform Council’s LTP work programme;
- Jobs for Nature – the completion of the diver training and the commencement of the summer season’s work;
- Consents and compliance work programmes and statutory time frames; and that Council was working closely with ORC and ECan to ensure consistency of approach;
- the Bluff Safety management work underway – particularly given the tragic situation that occurred last weekend at Bluff;
- the completion of the Annual Report – which was to be considered by Council at this meeting.

In response to questions from the meeting, Ms Meade advised that the helicopter survey work undertaken in the Ōreti area had been an opportunity taken by the Biosecurity team to share a helicopter with the Catchment team to check for rabbit movement in an area that had not been surveyed for some time.

Cr Baird raised questions around gravel management and the build-up of gravel near major infrastructure. Ramon Strong advised a large amount of work was being done in this area – particularly following floods. The main focus was in the Te Anau Basin; to see how gravel extraction can be utilised as a river management tool. This included ongoing conversations with DOC and F&G staff. This also lead into work in the Aparima – looking at extraction techniques, effectiveness of it on river management and wider ecosystem benefit. There was still much cross-sectional work to be done to better understand the resource and be confident about decisions that are being made.

Cr Baird noted the ICM approach and having other parties doing full reach remediation. He had been pleased to hear DOC was now more supportive of skimming, and leaving a water barrier to prevent predators getting to nesting birds. Mr Strong noted there was a body of work involved in this, but progress was being made where there were catchment wide consents in place. He advised, however that the beach skimming work in the Aparima was more about widening the river fairway. Conversations around this work have been very positive to date.

Cr McCallum raised questions about a bridge in the northern Southland area which appeared to be tied up in “process”. Staff undertook to look into this matter and report back outside of the meeting.

The meeting also briefly discussed:

- anticipated increases in work in the consenting area next year;
- the KiEC taxonomic database and the fact that all regional councils are working closely to ensure alignment of software so that sharing of data can be enabled;
- the Douglas fir plantations causing concern, and the inability of the current framework to address this;
- the fact the NPS Plantation Forestry is an enabling document and has resulted in some plantings occurring in the Maitai. SDC have similar concerns to ES but noted there is limited capacity to deal with this through the consenting process;
- freshwater monitoring results were noted – these matters are to be the subject of a Council workshop scheduled prior to Christmas.

Ms Falconer also noted that this week was the last week for the payment of Council’s rates, which had been a major focus for the finance team during the past month. Currently 10% of total properties will be on the direct debit payment system, which was a significant increase on past years; approximately a quarter of whom have opted for the three payment system.

Resolved:

Moved Cr Cook, seconded Cr McCallum, that Council note the report, and the delegation of the role of Chief Executive to Wilma Falconer (General Manager, Strategy Planning & Engagement) for the period 8.00 am on Monday, 26 October 2021 until 8.00 am on Monday, 6 December 2021.

Carried

⇒ Item 2 – Adoption of 2020/21 Annual Report and Summary

Council was asked to adopt the 2020/21 Annual Report and Annual Report Summary. In speaking to the documents that had been presented to the meeting, Ms Falconer noted that the draft Annual Report had been worked through in detail by the Organisational Performance & Audit Committee, which had recommended its adoption by full Council. She also advised that the document had been referred to Council’s partner, Te Ao Marama Inc, and the following changes were also asked to be considered by Council today:

- page 4 – macrons to be included on appropriate words
- last bullet point to be amended to read “...and policy plan development”
- page 5 – second bullet point reworded to read “contributing funding for a Kaitohutohu position” which reflects the position and changed funding arrangements;
- page 97 – change title “Iwi liaison” to “Te Rōpu Taiao”.

It was noted that Council had previously asked if there could be a statement provided from Te Ao Marama Inc in the report, and also a request regarding Councillor meeting attendance. These matters will be addressed in future reporting – there had not been time to include them in this year's report.

Changes made in the Chairman and Chief Executive's report were also highlighted to the meeting. Cr McCallum asked that when changes of these sort are made to future documentation, if yellow highlighting could be provided, to make it easier to find the changes – particularly when the documentation was large. This was agreed.

Cr McCallum also suggested that discussion about preparation of the Annual Report for the coming year should be commencing now. He noted the changes Councillors were wanting to make, citing the Queenstown document as an example. Mrs Hawkins agreed to take those points on board, and noted that there was a new standard of Auditors measures, which specifically set out greater expectations around measuring of performance and how it is displayed, to be implemented. These changes would also bring consistency of reporting across all Councils.

Cr Baird noted that Council has one of the strongest balance sheets the organisation has ever had; its cash position has never been stronger. This was thanks to the staff and central Government for the funding of projects. Although Council had lost a lot of revenue from the lack of cruise ship visits, it had gained other revenue sources which helped to keep the organisation in good shape.

The meeting was also reminded of the need for the Chair to sign the letter of representation, which had been appended to the staff report.

Resolved:

Moved Cr Ludlow, seconded Cr Baird, that Council, having considered the content of the Draft Annual Report for 2020/21 and Draft Annual Report Summary for 2020/21, and having obtained further information and explanations as required:

- (1) pursuant to Section 98, Local Government Act 2002, adopts the Annual Report for 2020/21, and the Annual Report Summary for 2020/21 (including the amendments as discussed today);**
- (2) request the Chairman and Chief Executive to sign the financial statements and associated documents for forwarding to the auditors.**

Carried

⇒ **Item 3 – Te Puka Rakiura Trust Predator Free Rakiura Project**

This item was presented for Council to decide whether a member of Council or the Executive Leadership team should be nominated for the position of Trustee on the Te Puka Rakiura Trust, as the Environment Southland representative.

In response to questions posed by the meeting, staff advised that reporting back on the work of the Trust would occur at both a staff and Councillor level (if a Councillor was appointed to this role) depending on the matters being discussed at the time. Staff would report back on engagement in terms of the community and the Trustee would report back on the governance matters and anything directly affecting Environment Southland. This reporting would largely occur through the Regional Services Committee. Ms Falconer noted that the broader level of Trustee reporting to Council did need to be addressed, as Council was involved in a number of Trusts (Waituna, Mid Dome Wilding Trees Charitable Trust, etc).

Cr McDonald noted the appointments to this Trust from other organisations appeared to be largely from the management teams, and he felt ES should adopt a similar approach. The Chairman noted the Chief Executive, (who has a national role in the biodiversity area) had expressed an interest in the role, but Council needed to ensure it was appointing the best person for the task.

The meeting discussed who the independent Trustees would be that were to be adopted; whether the Trustee appointment should be a role within Council or an individually named person. Ultimately it was agreed the Chief Executive had the right background and experience for appointment to this role.

Resolved:

Moved Chairman Horrell, seconded Cr Esler, that Council appoint Rob Phillips (Chief Executive) as the Environment Southland representative as a trustee on the Te Puka Rakiura Trust.

Carried

⇒ **Item 4 – Councillors' Meeting Schedule – October 2021 to Year End**

Council approval of the meeting schedule, which had been circulated with the agenda, was sought. In addition to the items listed, the following changes were noted:

- the AGM of the Southland Heritage & Building Preservation Trust is to be added (attended by Cr Ludlow);
- Council workshop – Coastal Plan – coast and hazard changes is replaced by a Council workshop – science/water matters
- A mid-term review (facilitated by Graeme Nahkies) has been rescheduled from earlier in the year to Monday, 6 December 2021
- Bluff Museum Trust Board meeting scheduled for 29 November 2021, at 9.00 am, attended by Crs Esler and Cook.

Resolved

Moved Cr Baird, seconded Cr McCallum, that note the planned meetings and:

- (1) appoint members to represent Council at the meetings marked on the schedule;**
- (2) pay meeting fees and/or allowances in accordance with its policy and detailed on the schedule.**

Carried

⇒ **Item 5 – Consultation on Managing our Wetlands**

This item was provided to inform Council of the resultant submission to the Ministry for the Environment on “Managing our Wetlands”, which had been finalised subsequent to the last meeting

Resolved:

Moved Cr Cook, seconded Cr McPhail, that Council note the report.

Carried

⇒ **Item 6 – Reporting of Commitments entered into above Delegated Authority**

The purpose of this item was to advise Council of contracts entered into which commit Council to expenditure above the delegated authority provided to staff, as required by Council’s Delegations Manual.

Resolved:

Moved Cr Cook, seconded Cr Baird, that Council note the report, and the contracts entered into on behalf of Council, associated with the Stead Street Pump Station Replacement, the Waiau River Flood Damage repairs, the Boundary Creek stopbank construction, and the High Value Area Service Contracts from February through to October 2021.

Carried

⇒ **Item 7 – Common Seal**

This item reported on the documents to which the Common Seal has been applied under approved authorisation.

Resolved:

Moved Cr McCallum, seconded Cr McPhail, that Council note the list of documents to which the Common Seal has been affixed under approved authorisation.

Carried

11 Extraordinary and Urgent Business

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

12 Public Excluded Business

Resolved:

Moved Cr Stevens, seconded Cr Baird, that in accordance with section 48(1) of the Local Government Official Information and Meetings Act 1987 and the particular interest/s protected by section 6 or section 7 of that Act (or sections 6, 7 or 9 of the Official Information Act 1982, as the case may be), the public be excluded from the following parts of the proceedings of this meeting, namely:

- ⇒ Confirmation of minutes of the Ordinary meeting of Council – 13 October 2021
- ⇒ Adoption of Committee resolutions from the Strategy & Policy Committee meeting – 3 November 2021
- ⇒ Item 8 – Makarewa River Bank Erosion, Wallacetown
- ⇒ Item 9 – Divisional Update

The general subject of the matters to be considered while the public is excluded, the reason for passing this resolution in relation to the matter, and the specific grounds for excluding the public, as specified by Section 48(1) of the Local Government Official Information and Meetings Act 1987, are set out below:

<i>General Subject Matter</i>	<i>Reason for Passing the Resolution</i>	<i>Grounds under S. 48(1)</i>
⇒ Confirmation of minutes of the Ordinary meeting of Council – 13 October 2021.	The matter is subject to proceedings in the Environment Court, and Council is authorised to deliberate in private	S.48(1)(d) as qualified by S.48(2)(a)(i)
	To prevent the disclosure or use of official information for improper gain or advantage.	S.7(2)(j)
	To protect the privacy of	S.7(2)(a)

	natural persons, including that of deceased natural persons.	
	To carry on without prejudice or disadvantage, negotiations (including commercial and industrial negotiations).	S.7(2)(i) S.7(2)(j)
⇒ Adoption of Committee resolutions from the Strategy & Policy Committee meeting – 3 November 2021	The matter is subject to proceedings in the Environment Court, and Council is authorised to deliberate in private.	S.48(1)(d) as qualified by S.48(2)(a)(i)
⇒ Item 8 – Makarewa River Bank Erosion, Wallacetown	Enable any local authority holding the information to carry out, without prejudice or disadvantage, commercial activities.	S.7(2)(h)
⇒ Item 9 – Divisional update	To prevent the disclosure or use of official information for improper gain or advantage.	S.7(2)(j)

Carried

Resumed in Open Meeting

Termination

There being no further business, the meeting closed at 12.18 pm.