



Otago  
Regional  
Council

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## Environmental Science and Policy Committee MINUTES

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**Minutes of an ordinary meeting of the Environmental Policy and Science Committee held in the Wānaka Lakes Centre, 89 Ardmore Street, Wānaka on Wednesday 11 October 2023, commencing at 1:00 PM.**

**PRESENT**

Cr Lloyd McCall *(Chairperson)*  
Mr Edward Ellison (online)  
Cr Alexa Forbes  
Cr Gary Kelliher  
Cr Kevin Malcolm (online)  
Cr Tim Mephram  
Cr Andrew Noone  
Cr Gretchen Robertson  
Cr Bryan Scott  
Cr Alan Somerville  
Cr Elliot Weir (online)  
Cr Kate Wilson

## **1. WELCOME**

Chairperson Cr Lloyd McCall welcomed Councillors, Iwi Representative Mr Edward Ellison, members of the public and staff to the meeting at 1:00PM and said a karakia. Staff present included Richard Saunders, (Chief Executive), Nick Donnelly, online (GM Corporate Services), Anita Dawe (GM Policy and Science), Gavin Palmer (GM Operations), Amanda Vercoe (GM Governance, Culture and Customer), Tom Dyer (Manager, Science) Kate Pettit, online (Senior Advisor, Strategic Engagement) Kylie Darragh (Governance Support)

## **2. APOLOGIES**

**Resolution: Cr McCall Moved, Cr Noone Seconded:**

*That the apologies for Cr Weir, for lateness, are accepted. Apologies for Karen Coutts and Cr Michael Laws are accepted.*

**MOTION CARRIED**

## **3. PUBLIC FORUM**

**Cr Wilson Moved, Cr Forbes Seconded:**

*That the time of Public Forum be extended to allow for speakers to have up to 15 minutes each*

**MOTION CARRIED**

Mandy Bell and Cat Dillon spoke on Wai Wānaka and place-based research Te Taiao. There was an opportunity for questions and Chair Cr McCall thanked Mandy and Cat for attending.

Tom Kay and Chelsea McGaw - Forest and Bird (online) spoke on river behavior and nature-based decision making over hard engineering strategies. There was an opportunity for questions and Chair Cr McCall thanked Tom and Chelsea for attending and providing resources to the committee on their work.

Wānaka Catchment Group, Ayla Meikle, Chris Arbuckle, and Randall Aspinall spoke to the Committee on the freshwater farm improvement project they are working through. There was an opportunity for questions and Chair Cr McCall thanked the group for attending.

Michaela Blacklock and Matt Hollyer spoke on a proposed Wanaka/Queenstown conservation alliance. There was an opportunity for questions and Chair Cr McCall thanked Michaela and Matt for attending.

Paul Kavanagh presented on the Southern Lakes Sanctuary. There was an opportunity for questions and Chair Cr McCall thanked Paul for attending.

Nancy Latham spoke to the committee on Friends of Bullock Creek. There was an opportunity for questions and Chair Cr McCall thanked Nancy for attending.

On the conclusion of the Public Forum Chair Cr McCall moved for a short adjournment at 2:37PM until 2:55PM.

## **4. CONFIRMATION OF AGENDA**

**It was Moved by Cr Wilson, Seconded by Cr Noone:**

*That the agenda be confirmed as published.*

**MOTION CARRIED**

## 5. DECLARATIONS OF INTERESTS

Councillors were reminded by Chair Cr McCall to consider their conflicts of interest if any arise during the meeting.

## 6. PRESENTATION

**New and Emerging Technology** - Eve Bruhns (Environmental Monitoring Manager) & Nick Boyens (Environmental Monitoring Network Lead) presented for 30 Minutes.

Eve discussed the State of Environment monitoring which includes data collection across water quantity, water quality, air quality, biomonitoring, and biodiversity. Data collected during SOE (State of the Environment) monitoring is accessible through the Environmental Data Portal. Nick spoke on the efficiencies and safety considerations relative to new monitoring technologies. The focus is on keeping staff safer by using technology which minimises the requirement to work in the water during higher flow events while also improving the efficacy and accuracy of the data collection.

Some sites are in very isolated areas with extreme weather conditions, which require specialised equipment for monitoring – an overview of this equipment was provided.

There was an opportunity for Councillors to ask questions and Chair Cr McCall thanked both for attending.

## 7. CONFIRMATION OF MINUTES

**Resolution ESP23-115: Cr Wilson Moved, Cr Somerville Seconded**

*That the minutes of the Environmental Science & Policy Committee meeting held on 29 June 2023 be received and confirmed as a true and accurate record.*

**MOTION CARRIED**

It was noted that the Air Plan Issues and Options paper is now to be returned to Council early next year (ESP23-112).

## 8. MATTERS FOR CONSIDERATION

### 8.1. Regional Threat Assessment of Bat Species in Otago

This paper provided an overview of the development of regional threat classifications, and examples from other regions where regional conservation statuses have added values to national assessments and included details of the first regional conservation status for bat species in the Otago region.

Tom Dyer was available to answer questions on the report in Scott Javie's absence. This report will be followed up by two more, in the new year, they will be more substantial as they include a broader range of species. There was an opportunity for Councillors to ask questions.

**Resolution ESP23-116: Cr Forbes Moved, Cr Somerville Seconded**

*That the Environmental Science and Policy Committee:*

1. **Notes** this report.
2. **Notes** that regional threat assessment for other (taxonomic) groups will continue as part of the biodiversity work programme.

**MOTION CARRIED**

## 12. CLOSURE

Councillor McCall said a karakia and the meeting was closed at 4:27pm



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Chairperson

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13/12/2023

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Date