

One-hundred-and-twenty-sixth meeting of the
New Zealand Fish and Game Council
Brentwood Hotel, Wellington
Friday 19 & Saturday 20 May 2017
Commencing 9.05 am

PRESENT

NZ Councillors

Lindsay Lyons (Chairperson), Noel Birchall, Colin Sherrard, Kevin Williams, Andrew Morris, Paul Dixon-Didier, Andy Harris, John Cumberpatch, Matthew Hall, John Jillett and Paul Stenning.

In Attendance

Bryce Johnson (Chief Executive), Don Rood (Communications Manager), Alison Lyall (Finance & Administration Manager), Robert Sowman (Policy & Planning Manager).

Participants

Andrew Wilson, Director, ForeConsulting, Friday 9.10 am – 10.09 am

Doug Stevens, NZFishing.com, Friday 1.35 pm – 3.45 pm

Lou Sanson, DG Conservation, Saturday 11.30 am – 1.05 pm

Chris O'Meara and Marc Flaws (Wellington Fish and Game Councillors), Friday afternoon.

INTRODUCTION

1. Welcome

Lindsay Lyons (Chairperson) welcomed participants to the meeting, making positive comment about the hunting season opening and outlined the schedule for the day, starting with a public excluded session of the meeting. Lindsay acknowledged the services of Andrew Wilson for the public excluded session to assist the Council with its processes in employing a new Chief Executive.

A presentation on Didymo research is to be made by Doug Stevens at 3.30pm Friday afternoon and Lou Sanson is to join the meeting at 11.30 am Saturday in his capacity (under section 26L of the Conservation Act 1986) as Director-General of Conservation who is entitled to attend and speak at any such Fish & Game Council meeting.

2. Apologies

Apologies received for Alan Flynn.

Resolved: (Paul /Dixon-Didier/Colin Sherrard)

That the apology from Alan Flynn for his absence from the May 2017 NZ Council meeting be accepted.

The Council also expressed its best wishes for his wife Kay's speedy recovery.

3. Public Excluded session of the meeting

The public excluded session of the meeting was to be for Councillors only without staff present.

However, the Chairperson asked the Council to accept Robert Sowman's presence to record the minutes of this session.

Resolved: (Kevin Williams/Andrew Morris)

That Robert Sowman remains in the public excluded session part of the meeting as note taker.

9.00 am Resolved (Paul Dixon-Didier/John Jillett)

To move into a Public Excluded session of the meeting

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

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

- a. Executive Committee update.**
- b. NZ Council Chief Executive position**
- c. Councillor's self-appraisal review**
- d. Confirmation of minutes from public-excluded session 25 November 2016.**

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 Consideration of independent external advice	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
	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)(ba)(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.”

10.30 am Resolved (Andrew Morris/Paul Dixon-Didier)

To move out of Public Excluded and back into a Public Session of the Meeting

Morning tea break.

10.40 am. The public session began with NZ Council staff joining the meeting.
The Chairperson welcomed staff to the meeting.

4. Annual Agenda

May annual agenda items requiring NZ Council consideration are the National Budget & Licence Fee Recommendations (item 5.6) and the Anglers’ Notice – issues requiring NZC consideration (item 8.1).

5. Identification of Other Urgent Business and Agreement on Agenda Order

Changes to the order of agenda items were requested as follows to:

- group items 5.3.a with 5.7
- bring financial matters up earlier in the meeting to allow Alison Lyall to leave the meeting after these items were completed.

6. Conflicts of Interest Register

The conflict of interest register was made available with councillors asked to identify those topics to be discussed at this meeting where they perceive a potential conflict may arise and to record these during the meeting. No conflicts were recorded.

However, it was agreed that in future all Councillors should sign the register at each meeting to say they have no conflicts (or identify those they have) rather than the previous way of only signing to record a conflict.

7. Confirmation of Minutes from 24 & 26 March 2017 Meeting

The minutes of the NZ Council meeting held on Friday morning 24 March in Christchurch and Sunday morning 26 March in Timaru were considered. Nothing was identified in the minutes requiring further discussion.

The correct spelling of “Anthony” Morris to Andrew Morris item 6 on page 4 is to be amended.

Resolved: (Paul Dixon-Didier/Paul Stenning)

That the minutes with the above amendment of the New Zealand Fish and Game Council meeting of 24 & 26 March 2017 be confirmed as a true and correct record.

8. Review of Accumulative Action List from Previous Meetings

The accumulative action items lists those resolutions from past meetings yet to be achieved or completed. Points were clarified with discussion resulting on some items. These included:

- Item 17 for March 2017 and the Ngai Tahu discussion paper on game bird management.
- Item 11 for November 2016. The magazine contract for services is in progress. Indemnity cover is to be provided for the Chairperson, Chief Executive and Communications Manager.

Further discussion is to be held with Hunting & Fishing over its involvement with an insert to the magazine.

9. Environmental Scan

This item is intended to last 30 minutes and allows councillors to raise or comment on recent media issues or matters of interest to Fish & Game occurring in the regions. Subjects discussed at this May meeting included:

- Application for the Ministry for the Environment's Freshwater Improvement Fund to remove trout from selected waterways. This action highlights the need for consultation with Fish and Game.
- A new American invention utilising a hydraulic pump to lift fish up over high barriers such as dam walls offers potential for existing dams.
- Plastic in the environment. There is growing public concern over the amount of plastic in the environment. Fish and Game to promote recovery of shell cases along with the promotion of hunter ethics. It was agreed to consult with regions, outlining NZ Council's intention to pursue this matter.
- Irrigation expansion. Publicity to redirect Government money in this area into water quality recovery is growing, but irrigation expansion remains an issue for Fish and Game.
- North Canterbury is opening its new office building in August with the PM to officiate.

10. NZ Council 2016/17 Bi-Monthly Financial Report No. 3

Report No 3 records the NZ Council being 67% through the year with expenditure at 57.41% of budget.

Holiday pay was considered with the suggestion that it be provided as actuals bi-monthly. Staff to look at what is involved and whether this is a simple task or not?

Resolved: (Andrew Morris/John Jillett)

That the Financial Report No. 3 to 30 April 2017 be accepted.

11. Fish & Game NZ Finance Report

This item provides an update on expenditure by all thirteen Fish and Game Councils as at 30 April 2017 being 67% through the financial year.

This is the coordinated compilation of information from the regions. It is not something the National office has control over and requires constant prompts to managers to assemble this information in time for the agenda mail out.

It was agreed to remove column of "Accounting basis" showing (A or C) in the F&GNZ Finance spreadsheet

Resolved: (Paul Stenning/John Cumberpatch)

That the National Finance Report to 30 April 2017 be received.

12. RM/Legal Update Report

The RM/Legal updates report provides details from the RM project manager on approved sums and spending to date of RM legal projects from around the country. There were discussions and verbal updates provided on some cases.

The issue of completed projects and the need to monitor implementation of agreed conditions continues to be as aspect of concern for Fish and Game and needing further attention by managers.

Further information was provided on the Kai Iwi Lakes Management Plan in Northland. The NZ Council Chief Executive went to Northland to participate in discussions on the Plan. Fish and Game is to set out its position in a letter to the Kaipara District Council and via a press release.

The Oreti mountain cycleway decision has resulted in a good outcome for Fish and Game. Having support from the NZ Council and neighbouring Otago Fish and Game Council was appreciated and helped Southland Fish and Game present its case. The current status of actual expenditure is missing from the Update Report.

Discussion followed on the One Plan outcome and the prospect of dealing with unlawful resource consents and how these are managed. The costs settlement has been paid to Fish and Game.

Lake Waikare & Whangamarino Wetland weir in relation to sediment remains a point of difference to be settled.

Resolved: (Kevin Williams/John Cumberpatch)

That the May 2017 RM/legal update report be received.

13. Legal Funding Applications

One legal case for funding from the national RM/Legal fund has been submitted for NZ Council endorsement at this May meeting.

The Kye Burn catchment group consent (representing over 20 individual water takes) is likely to be a precedent setting case for the transition from mining privileges (which uniquely allocate water in Otago at present until 2021) to RMA resource consents. This is the first contested group consent, so it will set the scene for the 400 odd mining privileges to follow across about half a dozen rivers in Otago.

Resolved: (Paul Stenning/Andrew Morris)

That, subject to recommendations by the Fish & Game managers, the application from Otago Fish and Game Council Reserves for the Kye Burn Catchment Group Consent is approved for payment from the 2016/17 financial year.

Two further applications for legal funding should have been listed here. These involve:

- Reference on page 66 to funding for staff to attend RM related events – totals \$10,000
- Ruataniwha Water Storage Scheme and Plan Change costs of \$45,000. This is recognised as an urgent matter to allow Fish and Game to participate in Environment Court declaration proceedings.

It was agreed to deal with the first under Staff Development Grants but resolve their approval here and to recognise the urgency of the second by suspending the Standing Orders to allow discussion and a resolution to be taken at this meeting.

Resolved (Matthew Hall/John Jillett)

1. **Agree to approve the costs of Tony Hawker's visit to USA to investigate irrigation and fish screens, from the RM/Legal fund up to \$7,000.00.**
2. **Agree to supplement Peter Wilson's 2016/17 Staff Development Grant to cover accommodation and expenses. This is to be paid from RM/Legal fund up to \$3,000.00.**

Resolved (Colin Sherrard/Andrew Harris)

Agree to suspend Standing Orders to consider an urgent item on the Ruataniwha Water Storage Scheme that had not been included as an agenda item.

Resolved (Noel Birchall/Paul Stenning)

That the NZ Council agrees to provide the sum of \$45,000 towards the costs of bringing declaration proceedings regarding the Ruataniwha Water Storage Scheme and Hawke's Bay Regional Council's Plan Change 6.

14. Exceptional Expenditure from Otago Reserves

There are situations which may arise where a council has unavoidable, unforeseen or emergency additional (capital or expense) costs which have not been considered and approved within the budget round. This application is presented to managers via a managers meeting, email circulation or telephone conference, depending on the urgency. After consideration by managers, the NZ Council consider the recommendation. Where approved, the extraordinary funding for expenditure is normally provided from regional reserves (where these are adequate to cover the expense).

This reactivated application for funding from Otago reserves is a roll-over of an application in April 2014 and which NZC approved in May 2014 but which was not drawn down for reasons explained in the application.

May 2014: Extraordinary Expenditure Application from Otago Fish and Game Council

Resolved (Dave Witherow/Aaron Wakeford)

That the NZ Council support Otago's Exceptional Expenditure of \$50,000 from Otago Reserves.

The application by Otago Fish and Game Council arrived late due to illness of the Otago Chief Executive. Consultation with regional managers occurred at the time the NZ Council May agenda was being distributed.

Resolved: (Andrew Morris/Noel Birchall)

That subject to the collective advice from managers the NZ Council approve the application by Otago Fish and Game Council for funding (for the purpose of supporting minimum and residual flow setting) from the Otago Council's Reserves to the sum of \$50,000.

15. Research Programme for 2017/18

The New Zealand Fish and Game Council has a statutory responsibility to undertake research to promote the management of sports fish and game (s26(1)(c) Conservation Act 1987). The Fish & Game research process begins in November each year with invitations to identify research for management need. Proposals are considered and prioritised in February with full proposals submitted to the meeting of managers in April and endorsed by the NZ Council in May.

The proposed Fish and Game Public Good PhD project by Humphrey Walker was discussed with the need argued for additional funding over that recommended by managers of \$5,000 a year for three years. The new amount proposed is \$10,000 in year one and \$12,000 in subsequent two years to underwrite the project (\$34,000 over three years).

It was noted if the \$10,000 is included in the first year for the Public Good project and the remaining \$24,000 were carried over to its subsequent years, this would allow the Research Fund to remain within \$100,000.

Resolved: (Paul Stenning/Paul Dixon-Didier)

That the NZ Council

- 1. Note that \$34,000 goes towards game research in the 2017/18 financial year.**
- 2. Approve the four research projects listed in the May 2017 agenda to be funded for a total of \$95,000 in the 2017/18 financial year.**
- 3. Approve \$10,000 for Public Good research by Humphrey Walker from the current year's research budget, and the \$24,000 remaining allocation for the Public Good project to come from the Research Programmes' 2018/19 and 2019/20 financial years.**

Lunch break 12.30 pm.

1.20 pm Afternoon session.

Chris O'Meara (Wellington Fish and Game Councillor) joined the meeting as a member of the public.

16. Staff Development Grant

A staff development grant of \$10,000 is available annually for Fish and Game staff to apply for support from the organisation for national and international study, work experience or participation in events or conferences. There have been three applications for the 2017 grant and recognition that a previous grant was approved without sufficient funding to cover accommodation and expenses while overseas.

One of the staff development grant applicants from Tony Hawker and an adjustment to a previous grant awarded to Peter Wilson was dealt with under item 13 – RM/Legal applications above as both involved subjects of resource management.

Resolved: (Kevin Williams/Andrew Morris)

That the NZ Council:

- 1. Agree to support both Ian Hadland's and Rudi Hoetjes' applications for \$5,012.00 and \$6,900.00 respectively in the 2017/18 financial year.**
- 2. Agree that future payment of known costs (with receipts provided) is to be accepted in advance of the event, rather than held until a report is provided by the grantee afterwards. An advance payment for as yet unknown costs would also be considered on individual merit.**

Doug Stevens, of NZFishing.com, arrived to the meeting at 1.35pm. Doug made a presentation to the NZ Council on Didymo research later in the afternoon.

17. National budget and Licence Fee Recommendations

Section 26Q(1)(d)(ii) of the Conservation Act 1987 requires the recommendation of appropriate licence fees to recover costs attributable to the management of sports fish and game and game bird habitat stamp fees. All Fish and Game Councils use a common budget and financial model. Each council must apply to the 13 councils collectively (through the meeting of managers) for any additional funding to cover unavoidable cost increases or necessary new projects for which funding cannot be found within their core (bulk) budget. These budgets and new contestable fund applications of the 13 councils are first considered by a meeting of managers in April. Managers' recommendations are then considered by the NZ Council in May, which makes an interim decision, about which it then consults the 12 regional Fish and Game Councils. After considering the views and recommendations of the regional councils, the NZ Council makes its recommendation in July to the Minister of Conservation about the appropriate fee for fishing and hunting licences in the new financial year.

The NZ Council considered the recommendation from the April meeting of managers (\$2.00 increase to Fish & no increase to Game) and agreed to include a \$1.00 increase to the Adult Whole Season Game licence as well.

An increase of \$2.00 on the Adult Whole Season Fish licence and an increase of \$1.00 on the Adult Whole Season Game licence would provide \$755,517 to be allocated across contestable fund items and RM/Legal costs.

Regional managers are to be consulted on the amendment to Northland's reserves to cover its contestable fund items.

Resolved: (Colin Sherrard/Andy Harris)

- 1. That NZ Council confirm the 2017/18 Contestable Funding allocations as recommended by managers.**
- 2. That for the purpose of consultation with regional Fish and Game Councils, the NZ Council recommend a 2017/18 adult whole season sports fish licence of \$127 and an adult whole season game licence of \$94 (including a \$3 fee for the Game Bird Habitat Stamp) inclusive of GST.**
- 3. That following consultation with regional Fish and Game Councils, the NZ Council holds a telephone conference at 7.00pm (to be confirmed) Wednesday 21st June to set licence fees for 2017/18.**

Marc Flaws (Wellington Fish and Game Councillor) arrived at 1.55 pm to attend the meeting as a member of the public.

18. F&GNZ National Financial Review Committee update

Councillor Matthew Hall as convenor of the Financial Review Committee provided an update on progress with the review and the status of the recommendations adopted at the previous meeting. It was noted the Committee has not met in the interval since the last NZ Council meeting. The Committee, formed in November 2013, comprises Matthew Hall (convenor), John Cumberpatch, Alison Lyall, Jay Graybill, Carmel Veitch, Dean Kelly and Rod Cullinane.

The topic of shared accounting practices was discussed and the efficiencies that could be made. It was agreed to continue this discussion at later meetings.

Resolved: (Noel Birchall/John Cumberpatch)

That the update on the National Financial Review be received.

19. Formation of a NZ Council Audit Working Party

In July 2016 the NZ Council resolved to set up an audit working group including representation from regional councils to establish templates and protocols in order that the NZ Council can complete audits according to the Act. Section 26C(1)(j) of the Conservation Act 1987 requires the NZ Council “to audit the activities of Fish and Game Councils”. This item was considered at the April meeting of managers with names being proposed for consideration.

It was noted that the Office of the Auditor General has recently visited the Central South Island and Auckland/Waikato Fish and Game Councils. The associated report following those visits may offer an opportunity to take this inquiry and develop elements to audit or respond further by way of a protocol for future inquiries.

The Chief Executive was asked to explore who in the external community provides advice on designing audit processes and what could be involved.

The subject is to be discussed further at the July meeting.

20. Salmon symposium update

At the March 2017 meeting, NZ Council recognised lower numbers of fishing licences being sold in some regions, notably in the North Canterbury Fish and Game Council region, reflected at least in part by the absence of good salmon runs. It was suggested at that meeting that it would be good to look at causes for this decline. It has been some time since Fish and Game held its last salmon symposium and it should consider inviting top speakers and look at the salmon fishery as a whole. Councillor Matthew Hall as convenor of the Salmon Symposium Committee provided an update on progress with this event.

A draft paper on the ‘Salmon Symposium – 2017’ was circulated by Councillor Hall at the meeting, outlining the reasons why a symposium is needed. A meeting of CSI and North Canterbury Council interests will enable the formalising of this event. It is anticipated that the symposium can be organised to take place in August 2017.

A formal structure and content will be reported at the NZ Council meeting in July.

Resolved: (Paul Stenning/John Jillett)

That the update report on a salmon symposium be received.

21. Governors’ Forum July 2018 – outcomes from the last Forum & agreed new content

In March 2017, the NZ Council resolved to hold a Governors’ Forum in July 2018 with details for this to be finalised at the May 2017 meeting. The May discussion would include an update of actions taken from the last Forum.

The last Forum was held in Wellington on Saturday 22 November 2014. The arrangements in 2014 provided for the participating regional chairman and managers to fly into Wellington on Friday afternoon, the day of the NZ Council meeting, join the Council for dinner that evening, meet as a Forum on the Saturday and depart that same afternoon. It was agreed to follow a similar schedule for 2018 but have Forum members arrive Saturday morning and stay over after the Forum to allow for ongoing informal discussion.

It was noted that a useful contribution could be made by David McNabb, CEO of Field and Game Australia on Australian issues that will have future relevance to New Zealand.

Resolved: (Andrew Morris/Colin Sherrard)

1. That the theme of the Forum be “Future Proofing Fish and Game”.
2. That the date of the Forum be Saturday 21 July 2018.
3. That participants fly into Wellington on Saturday morning, Forum that day and dinner Saturday night with departure Sunday.
4. That a facilitator be utilised for the event. A proposed person is Andrew Wilson of Fore Consulting.

3.05pm: Presentation by Doug Stevens

22. Investigations into the potential use of phosphorus for the control of blooms of *Didymosphenia geminata*

Research into Didymo as to why it has flourished in some waters and not others has been ongoing for some time. Dr Cathy Kilroy from NIWA has been central in this work. Recent findings by Dr Kilroy indicate the Didymo will bloom when the level of dissolved reactive phosphorus (DRP) is below 2 parts per billion. The North Island with its predominately volcanic soils has naturally occurring levels of DRP much higher than this and in some areas is as high as 68 parts per billion.

Doug Stevens of nzfishing.com is seeking NZ Council support for anglers to be asked to donate money towards this research when applying for future fishing licences. The question raised was whether this is a Fish and Game Council responsibility? The subject is recognised as warranting support but not necessarily through a tick-box on the licence application.

More investigation of other fund generating options is needed. One suggestion was the creation of a “Give a little” page to raise some money. Other ideas include approaching Lottery’s Commission, energy and irrigation companies, etc. The question of whether it should involve a charitable trust was also raised. Fish and Game does not offer that status.

Discussion with the Waiiau Trust to explore whether this could be investigated at a local level was suggested as a good place to start.

The legality of a “tick-box” on licence applications as a generator of donations needs to be looked at, regardless of whether it is used for this reason or any other.

It was agreed Doug Stevens’ paper should be circulated to Fish and Game Councils for their information and suggestions.

Resolved: (Paul Dixon-Didier/Paul Stenning)

That Doug Stevens’ Didymo paper be received.

23. Use of Lead-Shot in Sub Gauge Shotguns

The NZ Council wrote to the Minister of Conservation on 7 December 2016 with recommendations resulting from consultation with regional Fish and Game Councils. These recommendations proposed that the sub-gauge exemption for the use of lead shot within 200 metres of open water be removed over a four year phase-out programme. The Minister has since replied accepting four of the Council’s recommendations, asking for one to be amended to target “land managed by DOC or Fish and Game”. She declined to accept an exemption on medical grounds or the need to consider a lead shot ban to apply wider than that of game licence holders.

It was recognised that a communication strategy needs to be developed in consultation with the Department of Conservation.

Resolved: (Paul Stenning/John Cumberpatch)

That

- 1. A phasing-out over a four year period be introduced effective from 1 September 2017 for the use of lead shot for waterfowl hunting in guns of a bore less than 10 or 12 gauge, with the exclusion for .410 shotguns still to apply.**
- 2. Year one (1 Sept 2017 to 31 August 2018) of the phase out period be no change in the 2018 game regulations due to the potential impact on importers and retailers of shotgun ammunition. Year one would be used for educating hunters of the decision and its implications.**
- 3. Year two (1 Sept 2018 to 31 August 2019) would be optional, meaning hunters using sub-gauge shotguns would be encouraged to comply but that this would not be enforced. The existing ban on use of lead for 12 gauge guns would continue to be enforced.**
- 4. Year three (1 Sept 2019 to 31 August 2020) would apply on all open water on land managed by DOC or Fish and Game**
- 5. Year four (from 1 Sept 2020 onwards) would be a complete ban on the use of lead for all waterfowl hunting over water (with the exemption for .410 shotguns still to apply).**

24. Health & Safety Report

Health and Safety plans were distributed in May 2016 to all Fish and Game Councils complete with appendices and hazard registers. These have since been customised for each council and are now being implemented and reported on at each Council meeting.

At the last meeting in March 2017 the NZ Council asked for some timeframes to be put on the landlord to have earthquake related matters fixed at the NZ Council office. It was also agreed that insurance cover needs further investigation to access whether adequate cover is provided. This is to be discussed under item 7.5 at this May meeting. It was also recognised that the whole area of risk management is something all councils should have covered. This would involve data security, insurance etc. The subject was discussed with managers in April with all agreeing to progress a risk management plan based on an introductory plan submitted by the NZ Council Policy & Planning Manager.

Resolved: (/Noel Birchall/Kevin Williams)

That the Health & Safety report for May 2017 be received.

25. Insurance Policy

At its March 2017 meeting, the NZ Council raised concern over the need to see and be made aware of what insurance cover is provided and whether this provides adequate cover. The NZ Council currently has an insurance package that covers material damage and business interruption. It also includes public, statutory and employer's liability cover plus a natural disaster charge.

There needs to be a conversation with someone knowledgeable in this subject to make sure the cover is adequate. The same question should also be asked of whether other Fish and Game Councils are similarly covered?

A question was raised about the need to check whether private vehicle use and the Game Bird Habitat art work is covered by the current insurance policy, which is to be investigated.

26. NZ Council Theft & Fraud Prevention Policy

The NZ Council has a responsibility to prevent and detect the theft and fraudulent actions by people employed or contracted by the NZ Council. The NZ Council therefore requires the Chief Executive to establish systems and procedures to guard against the actions of theft and fraud and for such actions to be reported to the Council Chairperson as prescribed in the procedures. The original policy was approved and adopted in March 2007. A revised policy is now being proposed.

The policy date on the revised paper needs to be updated to show 19 May 2017 and paragraph 9 deleted.

With these amendments, the policy paper is to be circulated to regional managers, urging them to update or introduce their own policy.

Resolved: (Matthew Hall/Colin Sherrard)

- 1. That the NZ Council Theft & Fraud Prevention Policy be approved and circulated to all staff.**
- 2. That the paper be circulated to regions urging them to update their own policies.**

27. Anglers Notice – Issues requiring NZC consideration

Regional Fish and Game Councils under 26Q(i)(b)(iii) of the Conservation Act 1987 are to formulate and recommend to the New Zealand Fish and Game Council conditions for the sports fishing and game seasons. Where such recommendations involve ethical consideration or significant changes to the Notice they should be discussed nationally (those involving population and harvest controls of a local nature should be dealt with regionally). For the coming 2017/18 fishing season, nothing has been identified requiring national consideration.

Resolved: (Andrew Morris/John Jillett)

That the Anglers Notice Issues report for 2017 be received.

The subject of a trout reserve designation being developed for sports fish was outlined and discussed. The merits of this and how it might differ from current closed waters warranted further thought.

The Friday meeting closed at 5.25 pm.

Saturday morning 20 May 2017

The meeting reconvened at 8.00 am

Issues for discussion with the DG were considered in advance of the meeting scheduled with him at 11.30 am. Those issues raised included:

- Didymo
- Carp
- 1080
- Proposed biodiversity policy statement – to recognise and respect valued introduced species.

28. Operational Report

The bi-monthly operational report was considered with questions raised mainly for information. Questions raised under various project headings were answered or the point queried was explained. Discussion occurred on the following projects:

Project 1260: NZ Game Bird Habitat Trust Board

Letters of appointment were sent out to Board members on 19 April 2017.

Project 1330: Angler & Hunter Participation

Performance of the Overseas Investment Office is of concern. It was agreed Fish and Game should write to the relevant Minister to highlight the need to consult with Fish and Game and other relevant statutory bodies under the “sensitive lands” provisions.

Resolved (Kevin Williams/John Jillett)

That the Chief Executive write to the Minister responsible for the Overseas Investment Office highlighting the need to consult Fish and Game under the ‘sensitive lands’ provision of the Overseas Investment Act.

It was also agreed advice on anti-hunting protests to North Canterbury hunters warranted being provided to all regions.

Project 1410: Public Awareness

Progress on the idea of a Future Generation Commission is gaining increasing support. A gathering of like-minded people is being organised to promote the idea further.

Project 1815: Elections

It was agreed to make the election register a required entry for the coming fish and next game season in anticipation of creating an electors roll for the elections in October 2018.

Project 1870: Public awareness and support

NZ Councillors acknowledged the merit in receiving a PDF copy of agenda papers for the meeting of managers. This provided an insight and useful information on what goes before managers and the decisions they are recommended to make.

Resolved (Paul Stenning/Andy Harris)

That the distribution of the meeting of managers agenda continues to be circulated to NZ Councillors for information.

Resolved: (Noel Birchall/Colin Sherrard)

That the Operational Report for May 2017 be received.

29. NZ Council 2017/18 Business Plan

This business plan sets out the proposed outputs of the NZ Council Office and National Fish and Game Projects for the financial year 1 September to 31 August. Unlike Regional Fish & Game Councils, the NZ Council is not required by legislation to produce an Operational Work Plan. This Business Plan is, therefore, an internal document that forms part of the annual contract between the Council and the Chief Executive on outputs to be achieved, when they will be achieved, and the cost of achieving them.

The draft plan submitted for this May meeting includes one ‘new’ entry (project 1145: Coarse fishing opportunities) and four National Projects are dependent on contestable funding:

1. Project 1330: Sponsor TV series \$20,000
2. Project 1625: Licence management of data analysis \$4,860
3. Project 1820: Develop strategy for marketing \$41,000
4. Project 1821: National Financial Review \$9,000

The contestable funded projects do not become a formal part of the plan until the 2017/18 licence fees are approved by the Minister of Conservation.

It was recognised there is a need to promote the public benefits of what Fish and Game does. This is the ‘champion of the public interest’ but to also highlight the work Fish and Game does in the interest of anglers and hunters that also benefit other users or use of the resource and its habitat.

Resolved: (Andrew Morris/Paul Stenning)

That the NZ Council

- 1. Note that the Business Plan has two sets of projects and budgets – NZ Council and National Projects.**
- 2. Agree to accept the revised draft Business Plan in May for interim-approval, to be confirmed as a final plan at the July NZ Council meeting once licence fees, and hence contestable fund projects, have been approved by the Minister.**
- 3. Agree to provide an opportunity to further review the 2017/18 NZ Council Business Plan following the November 2017 strategic planning discussion.**

30. Research Programme update

Each approved research project is required to provide an update on the project, project manager, sum and date approved, the amount yet to be drawn down, an indicative date for completion, plus a paragraph summarising the project’s recent activity/findings. There was general debate on some projects but no issues were raised.

It was agreed to adjust the sum yet to be drawn listed in the report to show where no money has been spent and for this to be the same figure as the sum approved.

More clarification is needed on what the actual situation is financially with the research programme. Some projects appear to be inactive and the funding might be eligible to be returned to the fund. This was a similar issue with the RM/Legal report and a similar solution should be provided for research.

It was agreed to find out the current state of projects 38 and 41 with the expectation of writing these off if no activity is occurring in this area.

Results and updates of research should to be shared more widely. Licence holders are asking to see results of the mallard research in particular and it remains unclear where to look to find this.

The question was raised as to how NZ Council might influence or promote a research proposal. It was recognised that this would best be identified during the NZ Council’s November strategic planning session and put forward with other proposals that go to the meeting of managers in February.

Resolved: (Noel Birchall/John Jillett)

That this May 2017 Research Programme update report be received.

31. National Licence Sales and Analysis update

Data being reported is from YTD (1 September 2016 to 9 May) licence sales performance comparisons between the two completed financial years (2015/16 and 2016/17) by licence sales performance by sales channel and category, and LEQ targets with actual totals and total licence income. Overall nationally, sales are down compared to the same date last year, but more so with fish licence sales (1,891 down) than game (320 down). Revenue wise this represents \$164,439 less at this time than the year before.

Resolved: (John Jillett/Andrew Morris)

That the May 2017 licence sales tables and analysis update report be received.

32. Political Party Questions

Fish and Game utilises the Special Edition Fish Magazine that comes out in August prior to a General Election with an article on political questions and answers from the political parties. Discussion followed suggested questions put forward by staff that will be asked to all political parties present in the current Parliament. The commitment given from staff is to write up the background behind each question and that these then go out to NZ Council inviting them to select their top six. Urgency was accepted in getting feedback as soon as possible to meet magazine production deadlines.

33. Correspondence

A correspondence schedule of mail received during the period was received. No correspondence was tabled for NZ Council consideration. A letter was noted from the Office of the Ombudsman on the conclusion of an OIA complaint. The discussion that followed led the NZ Council to agree to invite the Office of the Privacy Commissioner to a further meeting of the Council.

34. Tourism – Opportunities and Threats

Visitor arrivals to New Zealand are expected to grow 4.8 per cent a year, reaching 4.9 million visitors in 2023 (from 3.5 million in 2016). Most of this forecasted growth is expected to come from holidaymakers and those visiting friends and relatives. Australia is New Zealand's largest visitor market, providing more than 1.4 million visitors in 2016. The forecasts show that this market will continue to grow by 25 per cent by 2023. Another key market for New Zealand is China, and our tourism forecasts predict that China will become New Zealand's largest market in terms of expenditure during the forecast period.

These same visitor markets create demand especially for sports fishing (Australian's buying non-resident licences and Chinese visitors tending more towards day - charter boat – licences), but with a growing Australian and US demand for game licences.

Discussion on this subject was interrupted with the arrival of the Director-General. However, he commenced his presentation to the NZ Council with how the department itself is having to grapple with tourist numbers and the demand they place on Conservation infrastructure.

Resolved: (Andrew Morris/Paul Dixon-Didier)

That the subject of international visitor participation in sports fishing and game bird hunting become an item for discussion at the next Governors' Forum.

Lou Sanson arrived 11.25 am Saturday.

35. Relationship meeting with DG Conservation

The Director-General of Conservation (DG) or his or her representative (under section 26L of the Conservation Act 1986) is entitled to attend and speak at any such Fish & Game Council meeting. This tends not to be a regular occurrence at every meeting. However the current DG has attended a number of NZ Council meetings and spoken in a free and frank manner on a range of subjects including increasing tourism numbers, with a large component coming to see attractions within the land administered by DOC.

The quality of experience influences access and management of great walks.

Motor homes and freedom campers have become a major users of camp sites and place pressure on infrastructure.

The DG believed that ultimately NZ needs to go to high value tourism and introduce a border tax. However, such a tax is unlikely under the current Executive Council.

Biodiversity: Battle for Birds has been highly successful. Predator Free NZ is a significant umbrella driving this programme.

Mt Taranaki has benefited from a double drop programme of 1080. The emphasis is now on keeping pests out.

The big unknowns are what happens when you take out particular pests. Further work needs to follow in this area.

Environmental Science Budget: The current science system is too much in favour of what scientists want to do, rather than what management needs. The department is working with MPI to influence the direction of the Forestry Environmental Standard (as did Fish and Game). DOC is also working with others, such as MBIE and its lakes programme.

Freshwater: Lake Heron has been seen as a conservation success. DOC focus is now moving more into the McKenzie. As a result of recent land sales, there is a major look by Government at the OIO and the need to protect sensitive lands.

Living Waters has a focus on five catchments and includes restoration work in the Waituna Creek, sediment traps in two Waikato peat lakes and the Hikurangi catchment.

The DG acknowledged the importance of ongoing research into Didymo and was supportive of Fish and Game's concerns.

Duck banding authority is deserving of a letter to the Director General explaining the frustration for Fish & Game as the agency responsible for sports fish and game. This area of delegated authority has been raised for some time without being resolved.

NZ Councillors were urged to view the D-G Direct: An update from Lou Sanson <https://blog.doc.govt.nz/2017/05/12/d-g-direct-may/> This newsletter provides a regular update of Lou's and DOC's activity and events.

36. Urgent General Business

No additional general business was discussed.

Closing Remarks

The Chairperson thanked Lou Sanson for giving up his Saturday to attend this meeting and sharing many insights into the issues faced by the department. Council and staff were also thanked for their support.

There being no further business, the meeting was declared closed at 1.05 pm Saturday 20 May 2017.

Confirmed:

Date:/...../2017