

## MINUTES OF THE GAME ANIMAL COUNCIL MEETING 16 & 17 NOVEMBER 2022

Held at The Pavilions Hotel, 42 Papanui Road, Merivale, Christchurch

**Present:** Grant Dodson (Chair), Sharon Salmons, Steve McFall, John Cook, Bruce Warburton, Eugene Rewi, Tui Keenan, Kevin Eastwood, Erin Garrick, Peter Swann (zoom)

**In attendance:** Tim Gale (General Manager), Jenny Wotten (Executive Officer), Hayden Cox, Larry Blair (attended for part of the meeting, zoom), Sam Green, Minister's Office (attended for part of the meeting, zoom), Ben Reddiex, DOC, (only in attendance for part of the meeting, zoom). Steve Knight (visitor) attended for part of the meeting. Minister Poto Williams attended for part of the Meeting, via zoom.

- 1. Day one welcome:** Councillor Eugene Rewi welcomed Councillors and staff with an explanation of the training session and an opening karakia.
- 2. Te Tiriti o Waitangi & Tikanga Training Session:** This half day session focussed on Treaty and Tikanga training for Councillors and staff, led by Councillor Eugene Rewi and supported by Councillors Kevin Eastwood, Tui Keenan and Peter Swann. The Council developed and approved a whakataukī which will be incorporated into the Strategic Plan.
3. Training hui closed at 6.05pm. Councillor Eugene Rewi closed the hui with karakia.
- 4. Day two welcome, apologies:** Apologies have been received from Erin Garrick for half the day. Sharon Salmons asked to be excused for a short period. The Chair thanked Councillor Eugene Rewi, and other Councillors who contributed to the training session yesterday. Councillor Tui Keenan opened the meeting with karakia.

**Motion 41/1:** Moved Grant Dodson/Tui Keenan: that apologies are received.

CARRIED

- 5. Chairman's Welcome:** Chairman Grant Dodson welcomed Councillors, staff, contractors and visitor Steve Knight. Grant Dodson welcomed new GAC Policy Advisor Kaylyn Pinney. Grant Dodson remarked on the success of the Sika Show and thanked staff & Councillors who were involved in the planning of this event. Grant also acknowledged Councillor John Cook who was part of the Sika Show planning team.
- 6. Council only session - Environment scan**
- 7. Minister Conference Call preparation:** Discussion about the main points the Council wants to raise with the Minister; continued focus on enduring solutions through game animal management, using the HOSI process as a pathway, restate the GAC preference for a comprehensive WARO Review, see where the AATH Code of Practice is at, access challenges, amongst other issues.
- 8. Address from Minister Poto Williams (Zoom):** Minister Poto Williams was welcomed into the meeting by Chair Grant Dodson. Sam Green (Minister's Office) and Ben Reddiex (DOC) also attended this session via zoom. Councillor Eugene Rewi provided the formal welcome to the Minister and facilitated introductions. The Minister briefly covered concerns the GAC has previously raised with her. The Minister raised the illegal release of pigs and their impact on the environment and TB implications. The GAC does not condone illegal releases.

Grant Dodson said the hunting sector is united and the GAC's relationship with DOC is working well. The GAC is continuing its focus on getting quality and enduring solutions in place for better game animal management. HOSI is one such pathway for achieving this and the Sika Foundation and Fiordland Wapiti Foundation are advanced in this space. The GAC would like to see development of a timeline and path forward toward establishing HOSI, working with the DOC on this.

**ACTION** – Continue to work with DOC and consultant to progress.

Discussion about managing game animals for both their impacts and their values and ensuring good community outcomes with regard to managing numbers, including the utilisation of meat. The Sika Foundation coordinates collection of meat from recreational hunters, to be processed by accredited facilities. Donation projects have recently been challenged by MPI.

**ACTION** – send an email to DOC about the MPI halting venison meat processing and the impact on foodbanks liaise with the Sika Foundation. Kaylyn Pinney is going to outline the process for donations of meat, Grant Dodson suggested a flowchart. Ben Reddiex is doing some work with MPI around meat donations.

Grant Dodson commended the Minister for her address to the New Zealand Deerstalkers' Conference and the constructive dialogue that is happening around Te Ara ki Mua and recognition of game animals as valued introduced species. Grant Dodson restated the GAC's preference for a comprehensive WARO Review as the GAC considers it is important to achieving enduring solutions; WARO has an important role in managing game animal numbers however there are long standing issues to address.

AATH – referring to Subpart 5 of the Act, the AATH Code of Practice (COP) was provided to then Minister Peter Dunne, by the deadline of by 15 December 2014. Discussion on if it is up to date and incorporated into relevant concessions and permits.

**ACTION:** Ben Reddiex advised that the AATH COP has been included into the concessions. Ben Reddiex will send further advice to the GAC.

Discussion about all the projects developing under Te Ara ki Mua and the Aotearoa New Zealand Biodiversity Strategy (ANZBS), (managing game animals for both their impacts and values, refining priorities, maintaining momentum, community-led solutions at place), HOSI, Tahr Plan Implementation Group, Jobs for Nature projects.

The 2022 Sika Show survey has shown us that access is the main issue that impacts recreational hunters.

**ACTION:** GAC to provide a briefing to the Minister on the impact of access issues.

The other top issue arising from the Sika Show survey was how 1080 drops can impact hunters and game animals. The Minister commented on the recent drop of 1080 on Molesworth.

On the issue of Tahr, Grant Dodson commented that good progress has been made with DOC and the Tahr Plan Implementation Group but the significant control that has occurred over the last couple years will have an impact on the number of bull tahr available to all hunters. The control in recent years in conjunction with the re-introduction of international hunters may see increased conflict this

year between recreational hunters, helicopter operators, professional guides and DOC. The Minister asked Ben Reddix for the Department and GAC to stay connected on this matter.

With regard to firearms legislation, Grant Dodson acknowledged the current bill before Parliament, the GAC submission and subsequent GAC appearance before the Justice Select Committee. The GAC is very supportive of the intention to put a pragmatic solution in place to resolve the backlog of licence renewals. Roger Duxfield was commended for his significant contribution to the various firearms forums. The Minister is hoping to join the next Council Meeting in February 2023 in person.

**9. Confirm the agenda:** the agenda was discussed and confirmed with no changes.

<b>Motion 41/2:</b> Moved Grant Dodson/Steve McFall: That the agenda is confirmed.	CARRIED
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**10. Conflict of Interest Register and Risk Register Review:** Councillors were reminded of the requirement to disclose any new conflicts of interest. Management has reviewed the Risk Register and has identified no new significant risks - minor amendments discussed at the August 2022 meeting ratified.

ACTION – Update the Risk Register and note that some of Tim Gale’s workload has been alleviated by the appointment of Policy Advisor.

<b>Motion 41/3:</b> Moved Grant Dodson/Bruce Warburton: That the updated Risk Management Register is received and noted.	CARRIED
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**11. Standing items - Electronic approval of Submissions & correspondence received outside of Meetings.**

<b>Motion 41/4:</b> Moved Grant Dodson/Bruce Warburton: Council ratifies the acceptance of submissions & correspondence circulated & electronically approved by Councillors between meetings.	CARRIED
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**12. Minutes of previous meeting 25 & 26 August 2022:** were taken as read with no alterations.

<b>Motion 41/5:</b> Moved Steve McFall/Bruce Warburton: That the Minutes of the 25 & 26 August 2022 Meeting be accepted as a true and correct record of the meeting.	CARRIED
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**13. Approve Draft Annual Report 2021-22:** The draft Annual Report (minus the Statement of Financial Performance) was provided to Councillors for feedback at the August 2022 Council Meeting. The financial section was still being developed at that stage. At the August meeting, Council received and noted the Draft Annual Report for the year ended 30 June 2022.

The final Draft Annual Report is now ready for approval by Councillors but cannot be approved by Councillors until the Minister has had the opportunity to consider our Statement of Performance Expectations 2022-23, however, it was agreed that Councillors could approve the final Draft Annual Report ‘in principle’.

ACTION: Follow up the approval in principle of the Annual Report, with full and final approval of the signed (and merged) Annual Report.

It was also agreed that Councillors could approve the Statement of Financial Performance, as contained in the meeting pack. A draft Audit Management Report has been received from Owen McLeod & Co. Chartered Accountants and Auditors and is in the process of being finalised. There were no adverse findings through the audit.

The General Manager is now working with the DOC Governance team on the timing for the Annual Report 2021-22 to be provided to the Minister, tabled in the House and published on the GAC website – at this stage we are on track to meet statutory timeframes for the Annual Report.

<b>Motion 41/6:</b> Moved Grant Dodson/Eugene Rewi: That the Draft Annual Report 2021-22 is approved 'in principle'.	CARRIED
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<b>Motion 41/7:</b> Grant Dodson/Eugene Rewi: That the Statement of Financial Performance 2021-22 is approved.	CARRIED
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**14. Confirm approved Statement of Performance Expectations (SPE) 2022-23:** At the August 2022 Council Meeting, Councillors were provided with the draft Council's SPE 2022-23. At that meeting, the draft Statement of Performance Expectations was approved by Councillors. Since then, following discussions with the DOC Governance Team, the Council has had to make changes to the way it reports expenditure (primarily to remove GST).

An electronic copy of the Council's revised SPE for the period 1 July 2022 to 30 June 2023 was circulated to Councillors on 15 November 2022 and has since been received and approved. The Statement of Performance Expectations 2022-23 was provided to the Minister on 17 November 2022 and is awaiting Ministerial approval.

Statutory Timeframes - The timeframe for completion and adoption of the SPE 2022-23 has been delayed because we received our Letter of Expectations from the Minister on 30 June 2022 (ideally should have been sent to us in March or April) and changes to the draft SPE as recommended by the DOC Governance team.

NOTE: Although the development of the SPE is not reliant on the Letter of Expectations, that letter provided the budget allocations for the next four years. Therefore, it was not considered an effective or efficient use of resources to develop an SPE without a known annual budget.

ACTION - when Councillors approve the SPE (after the Minister provides feedback), they will also be approving the forecast financial statement that they haven't previously seen.

<b>Motion 41/8:</b> Moved Grant Dodson/Eugene Rewi: That the revised Statement of Performance Expectations for the period 1 July 2022 to 30 June 2023, is approved by Council.	CARRIED
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The GAC had previously requested to carry forward unspent funds associated with funding to develop a sustainable funding strategy. DOC Governance recommended the unspent funds be used to engage a consultant to assist the General Manager with Funding Stewardship and Accountability (to help prepare statutory reporting documentation). Hence, the GAC is working through engaging an external advisor to undertake this work and the DOC Governance team have recommended a consultant to do the work. Part of the work will be development of a Reserves Policy.

**15. Annual Governance Review:** Approximately 60% of Councillors have undertaken Annual Governance Training. The GAC will conduct an internal governance performance survey around March/April 2023, followed by another Governance Training session late in 2023. There appears to be little information or resources on government websites or within the DOC Governance Unit.

**ACTION:** Grant Dodson will write to DOC Governance and ask them to develop a checklist or guidelines to allow us to fulfil the expectations outlined in the Minister's Letter of Expectations to undertake an annual board evaluation.

**ACTION:** use that template to do an internal survey in March/April 2023 as to how we can improve.

**16. General Manager's Report, Mid-year Work Plan Review, Quarterly Report:** Tim Gale provided an update and mid-year report on recent activities. The Sika Show was a great event, and it was positive to see the hunting community united and organising new projects. Sika Show visitors were interested in Te Ara Ki Mua and want to see continued momentum. Tim Gale thanked staff and Councillors for their contribution to making the Sika Show weekend a success. A congratulations email has been sent to the Sika Show organisers and the GAC is looking forward to participating again next year.

- **Te Ara ki Mua** - progress is outlined in the mid-year Work Plan review.
- **External Engagements:** Tim Gale has engaged extensively with stakeholder organisations since August 2022, including attending a Kea discussion and information session in September, Tahr Planning and Implementation Liaison Group in September, Tahr Foundation AGM in September, Health and Safety Wellbeing Summit, Hutt Valley NZDA meeting in October, Southland Conservation Board meeting in October, Predator Free Rakiura (PFR) meeting in October, New Zealand Professional Hunting Guides Association executive meeting and AGM in October, NZDA Waikato Branch meeting in October, Sika Show in October, Safari Club International New Zealand Chapter AGM in October, NZDA Auckland Branch meeting in November, Rangitahi-Molesworth Management Plan Hui in November and a Funding Stewardship & Accountability meeting.
- **HOSI process** – development of process is underway
- **Establishing Hunter-Led management program for MU1** – see mid-year Work Plan review.
- **Tahr Control Operational Plan 2022/23** - The next tahr control operational plan requires submissions usually around the end of January. There is a zoom meeting booked to provide information to assist submission development in December. Longer term planning has been pushed out to March 2023.
- **Whakatipu white-tailed deer and Dart/Caples 1080 operation** - Ongoing liaison with the Department has resulted in the use of Orillion Prodeer deer repellent in the upcoming 1080 operation over 20,000 ha of the 22,000 ha of public conservation land white-tailed deer habitat being exposed. However, Prodeer was not found to be effective at repelling captive white-tailed deer from the consumption of non-toxic RS5 cereal baits. As such, there is concern that wild white-tailed deer may still suffer significant mortality.
- **Remote Experience Zone (REZ)** – Sika Management, Tim Gale, Kaylyn Pinney and John Cook had input to this discussion.
- **Update on the Hunter Safety & Education Programme (Better Hunting):** The core of our Hunting Essentials learning course is drafted, and initial module reviews with NZDA are near completion. Work has started on the Firearms safety course. The technical architecture of the Better Hunting

learning platform, assessment and certification functionality has been drafted and is functional. Ngāi Tūhoe have responded to our request for input, and we had a hui over Zoom. Upcoming work focusses on platform user experience improvements, firearm course/module development, consultations and review, photo and video work to finish the Hunting Essentials modules in preparation for pilot testing modules.

- **Submissions** - Submissions are outlined in mid-year Work Plan review and Standing Items. Correspondence to and from the GAC was also briefly discussed.
- **Research:** The GAC has embarked on a project *to research the current context on deer meat recovery associated with deer management activity*, including development of a final report that supports consideration of key factors for decision-making in future deer management operations. The final draft report, Wild Deer Management and Meat Recovery has been provided to Councillors for information.
- **Mid-Year 2022-23 Work Plan Review:** Tim Gale provided context for the mid-year review. Councillors received and noted the mid-year 2022-23 Work Plan Review. Councillors had nothing new to add to key workstreams for consideration.
- **Quarterly Reporting:** Tim Gale outlined the process for Quarterly Reporting to DOC and how this is now tied to quarterly funding. Tim Gale would like to see the GAC using some type of SharePoint for sharing documentation and expects progress towards this will require a proper review of our ICT needs. Tim Gale thanked Councillors and contractors for their input during the past 3 months and for providing constructive feedback and input to the review of the Strategic Plan.

<p><b>Motion 41/9:</b> Moved Sharon Salmons/Tui Keenan: That Council receives and notes the November 2022 General Manager’s Report, Mid-Year 2022-23 Work Plan Review, Quarterly Performance Report – Q1 2022-23 and approves the recommendations.</p>	<p>CARRIED</p>
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- 17. Development of ‘officer on duty’ and other range users online training:** The NZDA has put forward a proposal for the development of an online ‘Officer on Duty’ eLearning training tutorial. It was recommended that Council receives and approves an online range ‘Officer on Duty’ eLearning development task to the Hunter Safety and Education programme work schedule.

Discussion about the proposal – Councillors were keen to clarify whether the proposal fits within the GAC’s legislated mandate or our Jobs for Nature project, who the responsibility for it lies, whether the NZ Police will develop something similar, the risks and opportunities, whether the GAC is qualified to produce such training, how the certification relates to the NZ Police’s Range Training Manual, how would the GAC get the NZ Police to certify the quality of the certification, would it be incorporated into the Police Registry, who keeps the register of who has done the training and who is obligated to ensure regulations are met and other such matters. There was no clear consensus other than that the GAC could have a role to help with the development, and the GAC’s role would be much clearer if we had a written request from the NZ Police for the GAC to develop this.

Grant Dodson raised this issue later in the meeting with Roger Duxfield who has been the GAC’s representative on the Firearms Community Advisory Forum. Roger Duxfield suggested that the Council should wait until the new NZ Police Firearms entity is up and running. If the GAC is to be involved there would need to be a budget associated with it and the Police are already putting out quite a bit of material in this area. The GAC can assist Police with it but don’t necessarily have to divert resources to do the work just yet. This was discussed when Roger Duxfield and Tim Gale met with NZDA recently.

The new Firearms entity will engage with the GAC directly. It was agreed that the GAC should defer a decision on this proposal until the new NZ Police entity is established and see what potentially new developments are planned and engage directly with the new entity.

- 18. White-tailed deer Oban - Rakiura-Stewart Island:** Kaylyn Pinney outlined a proposal to provide sustainable deer population management options in/near and around the Oban township that accommodate stakeholder values, support local economy and provide beneficial environmental outcomes. Discussion regarding the proposal and deer management on Rakiura-Stewart Island.

**ACTION -** Kaylyn Pinney to design an engagement strategy for establishing local stakeholder deer management aspirations and view on the application of various deer population management tools at place.

**Motion 41/10:** Moved Sharon Salmons/Kevin Eastwood: That Council receives and notes the recommendations on deer on Oban- Rakiura and Stewart Islands. The Council approved recommendation 1 to design an engagement strategy. CARRIED

- 19. Financial Reporting:** Councillors were provided with a Financial Reporting and Variances paper, the Profit and Loss report (ended 31 October 2022), Balance Sheet (as at 31 October 2022). Slightly over budget on some areas but historically we see lower expenses over Christmas and April which should even out costs. Discussion followed. Sika Show also donated \$5,000 to the GAC from the Heads Competition at the Sika Show.

**Motion 41/11:** Moved Eugene Rewi/Bruce Warburton: That Council receives and notes the Financial Reports and Variances Report November 2022, the Profit & Loss Report (ended 31 October 2022), and the Balance Sheet (as at 31 October 2022). CARRIED

- 20. Matters arising, Action items and Appointment of Deputy Chair:** Grant proposed that Eugene Rewi is appointed as Māori Advisor & Tikanga Advisor for the Council and Sharon Salmons is appointed as Deputy Chair. Formal name for Māori subcommittee suggested and approved 'Te kahui Māori sub-committee'. A preference was expressed to take some future GAC Meetings out into the regions. Councillors were advised of progress against action items arising from the previous Minutes.

**Motion 41/12:** Moved Grant Dodson/Steve McFall: That Council approves the nomination of Eugene Rewi as the Chair of Te kahui Māori sub-committee to the Council and the Māori Advisor and Tikanga Advisor for the Council. CARRIED

**Motion 41/13:** Moved Grant Dodson/Bruce Warburton: That Council approves the nomination of Sharon Salmons as Deputy Chair. CARRIED

Review of Strategic Plan - Tim Gale and Hayden Cox worked on a draft version in late August, following the GAC meeting. It was circulated to Councillors on 30 August for their input. Tim Gale and Hayden Cox provided an update on where the Strategic Plan update is at. The draft will be recirculated to Councillors shortly, for approval.

- 21. Update on the process of establishing the Hunter-led management program for MU1:** Geoff Kerr addressed Council and provided the background, context and the timeframes. The working group (GAC

representatives are Geoff Kerr and Garry Ottmann) have been working towards establishment of a community agreement by June 2023, as required in the Tahr Control Operational Plan 2022/23. The GAC has established a strong working relationship with te runanga o Ngai Tahu, te runanga o Arowhenua and DOC representatives.

The Steering Group recently approved a whakatakanga (mission statement): Hunter -led management will “enhance the mauri, prioritise mahingakai and hunting qualities through the tahr management tikanga”.

A set of draft working objectives has been provided to Ben Reddiex (DOC) and Kara Edwards of Ngai Tahu for feedback on the appropriateness of the proposed objectives as the basis for the community agreement. The working group invested considerable effort to test opportunities to recover meat from DOC control operations in MU1, but this was not feasible given the short planning horizon and current market conditions. The working group provided advice on where and when official control and AATH offset operations occurred in MU1. DOC have issued AATH concessions, however there is no ability to control where the AATH operators hunt or how many tahr they harvest from MU1. The long-term success of hunter-led management will require buy-in from AATH operators. The GAC will take the lead in liaising with the AATH sector. Grant Dodson thanked both Geoff Kerr and Garry Ottmann for their work and for this update.

**22. Firearms update:** Roger Duxfield met with Range Certification group on 16 December 2022. The new NZ Police 'Firearms Safety Authority' business entity 'opens for business' on 30 November 2022. Brief appearance at Select Committee with Grant Dodson, submissions had good content. Discussion about new and (extended) expired licences and processes, NZ Police automatic card readers, reprinting of licences with new expiry date, bell curve to hit next year so long delays anticipated once that happens, Police recruitment, Range Inspectors. Tim Gale thanked Roger for all his work for the GAC and NZ Police, good impact and huge volunteer effort, looking after the interests of the hunting community.

**ACTION:** Roger Duxfield said DOC have just released a new concession document and that the GAC AATH COP has been included. The GAC to follow up with Ben Reddiex.

**23. Sika Show wrap up and planning:** Grant Dodson led the discussion about the 2022 Sika Show and planning for the 2023 Sika Show. Discussion about the launch of the hunter safety program, Sika Show survey, engagement with hunters.

**24. General Business:**

**Credit card limits:** Grant Dodson led a discussion about current credit card spending limits. They are considered inadequate at times and staff have had to pay for expenses themselves and seek reimbursement. Grant Dodson recommended an increased limit of \$5000 each, for Tim Gale and Jenny Wotten. Councillors agreed and also recommended a new credit card for Kaylyn Pinney with a credit limit of \$2,000.

<p><b>Motion 41/14:</b> Moved Grant Dodson/Sharon Salmons: That Council approves the increase in credit card limit for Tim Gale and Jenny Wotten to \$5,000 and that Kaylyn Pinney is approved to have a new credit card with a limit of \$2,000.</p>	<p>CARRIED</p>
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ACTION: Paperwork to increase the spending limits on credit cards was brought to the meeting and signed by bank signatories.

**Meeting planning:** as previously agreed, dates are 16 & 17 February 2023, 15 & 16 June 2023, 17 & 18 August 2023 and 9 & 10 November 2023. The April 2023 meeting will probably be by Zoom.

**Meeting Review by Sharon Salmons:** Sharon provided feedback on how the Council performed during this meeting. Grant Dodson and Sharon Salmons remarked on the heavy workload of the General Manager and staff and encouraged them to take some well-earned rest over the Christmas period.

Visitor Steve Knight provided a brief introduction about himself and the intentions of WithWild.

**Next Meeting:** Pre meeting dinner on 15 February 2023, Meeting date is 16 February 2023, venue is Deerstalkers House, Wellington.

Closing karakia by Eugene Rewi. Meeting closed at 3.35pm.