

MINUTES, GAME ANIMAL COUNCIL MEETING, 20 JUNE 2024 – (TEAMS)

Council Members present: Grant Dodson (Chair), Sharon Salmons, Steve McFall, Eugene Rewi, John Cook, Melissa Jackson, Tui Keenan, Peter Swann, Kevin Eastwood, Callum Sheridan and Andrew Simpson.

Also in attendance: Tim Gale (General Manager) Kaylyn Pinney (Policy Advisor), Larry Blair (Hunter Safety and Education Programme Lead), Kim Whitwell (Communications Advisor), Jenny Wotten (Executive Administrator).

- 1. Welcome, Apologies, Karakia:** Karakia to start the meeting - Eugene Rewi.
- 2. Chairman's Welcome & Chairman's Report:** Grant Dodson welcomed Councillors, staff, contractors. Grant Dobson welcomed Kim Whitwell (GAC Communications Advisor) to her first Council Meeting as a new staff member.
- 3. Confirm the Agenda:** the agenda was discussed and confirmed.

Motion 49/1: Moved Grant Dodson/Sharon Salmons: That the revised agenda is confirmed.

CARRIED

4. Council Only Session - Environmental Scan

Motion 49/2: Moved Grant Dodson/Sharon Salmons: That Council moves into committee for the environmental scan agenda item.

CARRIED

Motion 49/3: Moved Grant Dodson/Kevin Eastwood: That Council moves out of committee.

CARRIED

- 5. Conflicts of Interest Register:** Councillors were reminded of the requirement to declare any new conflicts of interest. Code of Conduct is being updated and will include more detailed guidelines on conflicts of interest.

Motion 49/4: Moved Sharon Salmons/Kevin Eastwood: That the updated Conflict of Interest Register is received and noted.

CARRIED

- 6. Conflicts of interest with agenda items:** Councillors were reminded of the requirement to declare any conflicts of interest with the meeting agenda items. Councillor John Cook declared a conflict with all agenda items dealing with the Central North Island Sika Foundation's HOSI proposal development. It was confirmed that Councillor John Cook would be involved in the discussion but leave the room if necessary if there is a vote or any decision making.

Motion 49/5: Moved Sharon Salmons/Kevin Eastwood: That Conflicts of Interest with meeting agenda items are noted.

CARRIED

- 7. Risk Management Register Review:** Management has reviewed the Risk Register and made no changes. Council unanimously noted and accepted the Risk Register.

8. Minutes of Previous Meeting 9 May 2024 and In-Committee Minutes: Tim Gale provided alternative wording at Item 12: Herds of Special Interest immediately under Motion 48/9. The Minutes were approved with this additional wording.

Minutes of Previous In-Committee Minutes 9 May 2024 were taken as read with no changes.

Motion 49/6: Moved Peter Swann/Melissa Jackson: That the Minutes of the 9 May 2024 meeting be accepted as a true and correct record of the meeting. CARRIED

Motion 49/7: Moved Sharon Salmons/Callum Sheridan: That the In Committee Minutes of the 9 May 2024 meeting be accepted as a true and correct record of the meeting. CARRIED

9. Setting the Direction for 2024-25: This discussion comprises three components:

- Statement of Performance Expectations 2024-25 (incorporating Forecast Financial Statements for the financial year ending 30 June 2025)
- Draft Work Plan 2024-25 v1.1
- Draft Budget 2024-25 v1 and v2.

The Statement of Performance Expectations (SPE) reflects our outcome classes, operational areas of focus, performance targets and measures, and forecast financial information for the 2024-2025 financial year. A draft was circulated to Councillors for ‘approval in principle’ on 26 April 2024. The draft was provided to the Minister for Hunting and Fishing (the Minister) on 29 April 2024. The draft was presented to Council at the 9 May 2024 Council meeting for consideration, where it was approved and adopted.

The Minister provided a response to the draft SPE on 20 May 2024 with no new specific recommendations. The Department of Conservation (DOC) also provided feedback to the GAC, and as a result, a minor change was made to the budget. The issue of the potential increase in Councillor’s per diems was raised again – it was noted that the Council has not received any further feedback from DOC or the New Zealand Conservation Authority (NZCA) in this regard.

The draft SPE has been graphically designed with the Chair and Deputy Chair signatures attached for approval on 20 June 2024.

Motion 49/8: Moved Grant Dodson/Andrew Simpson: That the Statement of Performance Expectations 2024-25 (incorporating Forecast Financial Statements for the financial year ending 30 June 2025) is approved and adopted. CARRIED

A draft annual Work Plan 2024-25 was provided to the Council for consideration at the 9 May 2024 meeting where it was approved and adopted. No specific amendments were required by the Council; however, some amendments were made following general discussion at the meeting.

These updates were incorporated in version 1.1 and include:

- Interpreting and summarising the Council priorities (p 8).
- Included ‘Parliamentary Hunt’ (p 23).
- Amendments to ‘Liaise to improve hunting opportunities and raise awareness’ (p 26).
- Formatting corrections.

Melissa Jackson queried the process for individual Councillors to provide feedback. Tim Gale advised that staff had recently circulated the Annual Council Evaluation to Councillors. Survey information will be collated and circulated. Councillors are also welcome to provide feedback to the Chair on a one-on-one basis.

ACTION: Include information about the process for the Annual Council Evaluation and results on the agenda for the 2 August 2024 Council Meeting, so planning can begin for it to be worked through at the November 2024 Strategy Meeting. It was noted that we will potentially have new Councillors by then, so it is important for Councillors to be made aware of the annual and ongoing process for providing governance feedback through the Evaluation Survey.

ACTION: It was suggested that a future agenda item be included for each meeting, considering future strategies (incorporate this idea for discussion at the November 2024 Strategy Meeting also). Add this item to the agenda for the August 2024 Council meeting to feed through to the November Council Meeting.

It was suggested that the Council considers engaging an expert to canvass future funding options, within the GAC mandate.

Motion 49/9: Moved Melissa Jackson/Tui Keenan: That the annual Work Plan 2024-25, version 1.1 is approved and adopted. CARRIED

A draft Budget (v1) was provided to the Council for consideration at the 9 May 2024 meeting where it was approved and adopted. Reflecting the Government's commitment to financial austerity, the Council requested an alternative budget (v2) be presented at the 20 June 2024 meeting, presenting the option to reduce Council meeting costs through moving one in-person Council meeting online. The draft budgets v1 and v2 were provided for Councillors.

Motion 49/10: Moved Melissa Jackson/Tui Keenan: That the Budget v2 is approved and adopted. CARRIED

ACTION: Discussion about whether the GAC has one or two online meetings in the next financial year. Tim Gale will send out another email to delve further into this with some costs around it.

10. Herds of Special Interest (HOSI) – Central North Island Sika Foundation HOSI Proposal Evaluation for Part A: HOSI Idea:

The purpose of this agenda item is to outline the results and recommendations from the Central North Island Sika Foundation (CNISF) HOSI Evaluation Subcommittee and seek Council approval to endorse the progression of the Sika HOSI Proposal – Part A submission to full HOSI proposal development.

The draft best practice HOSI designation process developed with DOC, sets out a Council decision point to endorse full development of a proposal. To enable Council decision making, the proposer is requested to complete and submit the *HOSI template - Part A HOSI Idea*, developed in collaboration with DOC, to the Council for consideration.

Full HOSI proposal development will require significant resources from the Council and other involved parties as it is a complex process that includes collaboration, consultation and

engagement and ensuring the full requirements of the GAC Act 2013 are met. Therefore, a robust preliminary Council evaluation is required. To this effect, Council approved piloting the *HOSI Proposal Evaluation for Part A: HOSI Idea* in the May 2024 Council meeting (Motion 48/9) using the *Central North Island Sika Foundation HOSI Proposal - Part A* as a case study.

The CNISF HOSI Evaluation Subcommittee has completed the Sika HOSI Proposal Evaluation for Part A: HOSI Idea and the results and recommendations have been provided.

It was recommended that Council:

- Receives the results and recommendations from the Evaluation Committee for the Sika HOSI Proposal Evaluation for Part A: HOSI Idea.
- Endorses progression of the Sika HOSI Proposal – Part A submission to full HOSI proposal development, as per the Committee’s Recommendation.
- Notes Committee recommendations for revising the evaluation document / process and proposal development process; being the management structure, and cost benefit work are undertaken as a first priority in full proposal development.

GAC staff would like to hold another workshop, similar to the one held in December 2023 to ensure Councillors are familiar with the process. Chairman Grant Dodson endorsed this course of action saying that when the workshop was held, Councillors didn’t fully appreciate the complexity of the process.

One Council member expressed some concern with the current HOSI Subcommittee process and that there was no formal Terms of Reference for the Subcommittee and no formal minutes were kept of the meeting held on 9 June 2024. There was also concern expressed about the proposed method of scoring the HOSI proposal. It was suggested that further work take place to strengthen the GAC framework and documentation.

Chair Grant Dodson advised that these first early steps are fundamentally about considering whether the proposed HOSI meeting the initial criteria of are (1) the animals are of special interest to hunters and (2) can the herd be managed for hunting purposes. If the answer to both is yes, then we can proceed to the next steps as outlined in the HOSI Proposal Development Project Pathway document (June 2024). This would entail the GAC socialising a proposed update letter to DOC and the Minister, prior to meeting with DOC and the Sika Foundation, as agreed, on 5 July 2024.

Councillors had a robust discussion about the complexity of the documentation, the various roles and responsibilities of the GAC, DOC and the Minister, the potential roadblocks and reviews, whether the HOSI is credible and doable, herd management plan, managing the risks and implications, and what our preliminary analysis has shown. Councillor Callum Sheridan said that even though the Subcommittee didn’t currently have consensus and formally present to the Council, the majority of the Subcommittee members have agreed to proceed to the next level and he doesn’t want to see the Council getting ‘stuck in the weeds’ with this current step. There is currently enough momentum and goodwill to proceed, and this is in line with what the Minister wishes. Communication between staff and Councillors can be improved and the Subcommittee process could be improved with a Terms of Reference.

ACTIONS: Rather than approving the current resolution as outlined in Council Paper 49CP/02, the Subcommittee will meet again on 24 June 2024 and make their resolutions and recommendations to Council and suggestions for refinement and improving the process in the future. Chair Grant Dodson will also participate as a moderator in the Subcommittee meeting again, (to help work through any differences that exist and therefore has an important role at the meeting). A letter is then provided to DOC as a draft, before 5 July. The CNISF HOSI Evaluation Subcommittee for the Sika HOSI Proposal Evaluation for Part A: HOSI Idea will then be approved by email outside of the Council meeting process.

ACTION: CNISF HOSI Subcommittee meeting Monday 24 June at 5pm, Jenny Wotten to send Teams invitation.

Tim Gale thanked everyone for their input thus far.

11. Te Kāhui Māori Subcommittee - Terms of Reference: At the 22 & 23 February 2024 Council Meeting, Councillors queried the composition of Te Kāhui Māori Subcommittee and whether there were any Terms of Reference (TOR) for the group. Te Kāhui Māori Subcommittee have now provided their proposed TOR for full Council consideration. Steve McFall asked if any Council member can attend any meetings, which it was confirmed as being welcomed minutes to be taken of meetings and report back to full Council.

Motion 49/11: Moved Andrew Simpson/Grant Dodson: That the Council approves Te Kāhui Māori Subcommittee's Terms of Reference. CARRIED

12. General Manager's Report: Tim Gale presented his General Manager's report covering:

- Meeting the Statement of Performance Expectations 2023-24 targets
- External engagements
- FWF legal case
- Tahr management
- Aerial 1080 operations
- Staff remuneration pay schedule and payment dates

Tim Gale thanked staff for their support in helping achieve targets. Larry Blair with his work to deliver Better Hunting has overachieved set targets.

Motion 49/12: Moved Grant Dodson/Peter Swann: That the Council receives and notes the General Manager's report – June 2024. CARRIED

13. Financial Reporting & Variances: Tim Gale presented to Council on the financial performance and position of Council for the 2023-24 financial year and income and expenditure versus budget for the period 1 July 2023 – 30 April 2024. The GAC have now received the last Jobs for Nature payment, invoiced in February 2024.

Motion 49/13: Moved Eugene Rewi/Melissa Jackson: That the Council receives and adopts the Financial & Variances Report for the period 1 July – 30 April 2024. CARRIED

14. Update Sensitive Expenditure Policy – v1.1: It is proposed to amend the policy in accordance with the Auditor-General's guidelines regarding limited circumstances where the Council can

pay for alcohol, in specific circumstances, and supported by appropriate documentation and the reasons for the entertainment and hospitality.

Amending the Sensitive Expenditure Policy is considered to be the most transparent way of enabling the Council to pay for the alcohol component of the upcoming Ten-Year Anniversary celebration on 1 August 2024.

Motion 49/14: Moved Melissa Jackson/Sharon Salmons: That Council approves changes to the GAC's Sensitive Expenditure Policy (v1.1), in accordance with the Auditor-General's guidelines re: general prohibition on organisations paying for alcohol, except in specific circumstances and within prescribed limits; and supported by appropriate documentation and the reasons for the entertainment and hospitality. CARRIED

15. Action items and matters arising: Councillors considered the list of action items and progress made against each. Recognition award to be presented at the Ten-Year Anniversary event. Discussion about what the award might look like.

ACTION: formalise the composition and role of the Finance subcommittee.

16. Standing items – Electronic approval of submissions & correspondence received outside of meetings: Council discussion about documents finalised and approved between meetings.

17. General business: Farewell to Steve McFall, special mihi to him for his significant contribution over 10 years and guidance and all the best for the future.

18. Meeting review & close: Councillor Eugene Rewi provided feedback on how the Council had performed over the half day meeting. Achieved everything on the agenda, some items took longer than others, spent time in governance mode, time discipline was good, respectful but challenging hui today – mana enhancing. What could be done better, subcommittee response should be as a consensus or outline the conflicts.

Karakia to close the meeting – Eugene Rewi. The meeting closed at 11.40am. Next meeting is on 2 August 2024.