



Minutes of an extraordinary meeting of Council held in the
Council Chamber at Level 2 Philip Laing House, 144 Rattray
Street, Dunedin on
Wednesday 8 July 2020 at 9:00 am

Membership

Hon Marian Hobbs

(Chair)

Cr Michael Laws

(Deputy Chairperson)

Cr Hilary Calvert

Cr Michael Deaker

Cr Alexa Forbes

Cr Carmen Hope

Cr Gary Kelliher

Cr Kevin Malcolm

Cr Andrew Noone

Cr Gretchen Robertson

Cr Bryan Scott

Cr Kate Wilson

Welcome

Deputy Chairperson Laws welcomed Councillors, members of the public and staff to the meeting at 09:02 am.

For our future

1. APOLOGIES

There were no apologies.

2. ATTENDANCE

Sarah Gardner	<i>(Chief Executive)</i>
Nick Donnelly	<i>(General Manager Corporate Services and CFO)</i>
Gavin Palmer	<i>(General Manager Operations)</i>
Sally Giddens	<i>(General Manager People, Culture and Communications)</i>
Richard Saunders	<i>(General Manager Regulatory)</i>
Gwyneth Elsum	<i>(General Manager Policy, Strategy and Science)</i>
Amanda Vercoe	<i>(Executive Advisor)</i>
Liz Spector	<i>(Committee Secretary)</i>

Also present were Eleanor Ross (Manager Communications Channels) and Ryan Tippet (Media Communications Lead).

3. CONFIRMATION OF AGENDA

The agenda was confirmed as published.

4. CONFLICT OF INTEREST

No conflicts of interest were advised.

5. PUBLIC FORUM

No public forum was held.

6. MATTERS FOR COUNCIL DECISION

6.1. Consider removal of Chairperson

Cr Laws opened discussion on the request to remove the Chairperson. Cr Laws read the motion that had been submitted via email from Cr Calvert and seconded by Cr Kelliher, which stated that "the Council removes the Hon Marian Hobbs from the Office of Chairperson of the Otago Regional Council". Cr Laws said he would enforce the 5-minute speaking rule as provided in Standing Orders, but asked that Cr Hobbs be allowed to speak to the motion immediately following the mover and seconder as well as last. The Councillors agreed to this.

Cr Laws then asked Cr Calvert if she wished to speak to the motion as she was the mover. Cr Calvert said the Councillors were elected by the people of Otago and in accepting their roles, and they agreed to work for the region using their best skills and judgements. She said those Councillors are given the authority to choose a leader from one of their own and said she would prefer that Cr Andrew Noone be elected Chairperson. She said she understood Cr Noone was prepared to put his name forward for the role. Cr Laws asked the motion seconder, Cr Kelliher to speak to the motion.

Cr Kelliher said although disappointed to do so, he supported the motion to replace the Chairperson. He said his reasons had nothing to do with water, but with governance and he would also support Cr Noone who he hopes will get the Council back on track.

Cr Laws then asked Cr Hobbs if she would like to speak to the motion. She said she would and said it was her hope that the Council continue the work on water quality. She said she had

asked for a response from the nine Councillors who had signed the letter requesting her removal, but as no responses were given, she could only surmise why. She said indications were that some thought she was too aligned to Central Government, some were concerned over her conversations with MfE about the possibility of commissioners being put in place, and some were concerned she was too close to ORC staff, and she had even heard rumours that some felt she was too old for the job. After speaking for her allotted five minutes, Cr Laws asked if she would like additional time and she said she would. Cr Laws asked the Councillors if they would approve granting Cr Hobbs additional time and it was agreed. Cr Malcolm said he did not agree and asked that his disagreement be noted. Cr Hobbs then continued speaking to the motion and ended by encouraging the Councillors to meet their promise to Minister Parker to notify the Regional Policy Statement before the end of the year. She also asked Cr Laws to withdraw his defamation case against local environmentalists and lead the charge to rebuild a unified rural community in Central Otago.

Cr Laws then asked if any other Councillors wished to speak to the motion. Cr Deaker acknowledged the challenges that Cr Hobbs had taken on by agreeing to be Chair. He thanked her for all of the work she had put into the role, but said ultimately he supported the motion. Cr Forbes spoke to the motion. She said with Cr Hobbs as Chairperson, ORC was provided the opportunity to fast track environmental policy through her connections and capabilities. She said Cr Hobbs had been selfless in continuing with her work on water and urged the Councillors to find a way forward. Cr Scott also spoke against the motion. He said the role of Chairperson is challenging, particularly in these challenging environmental and economic times. He thanked Cr Hobbs for her achievements which included working constructively with staff, endeavouring to work with many stakeholders, and embracing the treaty obligations with iwi partners. Cr Robertson then spoke to the motion. She thanked Cr Hobbs for putting a renewed focus on the work ORC is undertaking. She said it is a challenging time for regional councils across New Zealand. Cr Robertson noted there are many different skills around the Council table and said the Councillors need to learn to work as a team to make lasting change. She said she would support Cr Noone if he were elected Chairperson as he would be a uniting influence. She also stated she hoped diversity will continue to be embraced around the table, including retaining women in key leadership roles. No other Councillors requested to speak to the motion.

Cr Laws then spoke. He said he rejected the view that Council is ignoring national standards and proposed a better way to implement policy less divisively. He urged inclusivity in partnering to improve the environment and said the work over the next two years would govern the next two decades. Cr Laws said the job of the Chairperson is to work with all of council and the others around the table can make this happen.

Cr Hobbs was granted a final speaking time. She noted frustrations by some of the Councillors that ORC policy work continued through the pandemic shutdown, however, she said she also had many reasons to stop engaging during that time, but she never stopped working for the environment. She said she would continue to fight against those who thought they owned the water and land and who felt they had no responsibility to others for what they did on their own land.

Cr Laws then put the motion:

Resolution

That the Council

1) **Removes** the Hon. Marian Hobbs from the Office of Chairperson of the Otago Regional Council.

Moved: Cr Calvert
Seconded: Cr Kelliher
CARRIED 9 - 2 (1 abstention)

Cr Scott called for a division. The results were:

FOR: Cr Calvert, Cr Deaker, Cr Hope, Cr Kelliher, Cr Laws, Cr Malcolm, Cr Noone, Cr Robertson, Cr Wilson
AGAINST: Cr Forbes, Cr Scott
ABSTAIN: Cr Hobbs

Several members of the public then began protesting loudly and refused to quiet down upon request of the Deputy Chairperson. Cr Laws moved to adjourn the meeting and Cr Wilson seconded the motion. The motion carried and the meeting was adjourned at 9:36 a.m. to allow time for the chamber to be cleared.

Cr Laws called the meeting back into session at 9:48 a.m.

6.2. Voting System for Election of Chairperson

Cr Laws asked for a motion to select a voting option to elect a Chairperson. Cr Wilson moved option A.

Resolution

That the Council:

- 1) **Resolves Voting System A** for the election or appointment of chairperson, defined by the Local Government Act 2002.
- 2) **Agrees** that in the event of a tie under voting system A, the candidate to be excluded from the next round of voting shall be resolved by lot as described in paragraph 5

Moved: Cr Wilson
Seconded: Cr Calvert
CARRIED

6.3. Election of Chairperson

Cr Deaker nominated Cr Noone to be Chairperson of the Otago Regional Council and Cr Malcolm seconded the motion. No further nominations were received. Cr Laws asked if there were questions for Cr Noone prior to the vote. Cr Hobbs asked that Cr Noone commit to getting the Regional Policy Statement through prior to the end of the year. Cr Noone said he was committed to the statement made to Minister Parker. Cr Scott asked Cr Noone for assurance that he would continue working with the community on the work to improve water

quality in the region and Cr Noone said he would. Cr Forbes asked if Cr Noone would continue to give a voice to iwi, local residents, environmentalists, and anyone concerned about water quality and land in Otago. Cr Noone said he would.

There were no further questions for Cr Noone and Cr Laws put the motion.

Resolution


That Cr Andrew Noone be elected Chairperson of the Otago Regional Council.

Moved: Cr Deaker
Seconded: Cr Malcolm
CARRIED

Cr Noone read the Chairperson's Declaration and his signature was witnessed by Chief Executive Gardner and Cr Noone took the chair. He thanked the Councillors for their vote of confidence and said he would work to ensure the Councillors worked as a team, taking into account each of their strengths. He said robust debate would make for stronger decisions and looked forward to the future work of the Council.

7. CLOSURE

There was no further business and Chairperson Noone declared the meeting closed at 10:04 am.


Chairperson Andrew Noone

22 July 2020
Date