



Minutes of a meeting of the  
Implementation Committee held in the  
Council Chamber on Wednesday 14 October 2020, commencing  
at 9:00 am

**Membership**

Cr Carmen Hope (Co-Chair)  
Cr Bryan Scott (Co-Chair)  
Cr Hilary Calvert  
Cr Michael Deaker  
Cr Alexa Forbes  
Hon Cr Marian Hobbs  
Cr Gary Kelliher  
Cr Michael Laws  
Cr Kevin Malcolm  
Cr Andrew Noone  
Cr Gretchen Robertson  
Cr Kate Wilson

**Welcome**

Co-Chair Scott welcomed Councillors, members of the public and staff to the meeting at 9:00 a.m.

Staff present included: Sarah Gardner (Chief Executive), Nick Donnelly (GM Corporate Services), Gavin Palmer (GM Operations), Amanda Vercoe (Executive Advisor), Richard Saunders (GM Regulatory), Ryan Tippet (Media Communications Lead), Liz Spector (Committee Secretary), Andrea Howard (Manager Biosecurity and Rural Liaison) and Richard Lord (Team Leader Biosecurity and Biodiversity).

*For our future*

## **1. APOLOGIES**

### **Resolution**

*That the apologies for Cr Laws be accepted.*

Moved: Cr Hope

Seconded: Cr Wilson

CARRIED

## **2. CONFIRMATION OF AGENDA**

The agenda was confirmed as published.

## **3. CONFLICT OF INTEREST**

No conflicts of interest were advised.

## **4. PUBLIC FORUM**

There were no requests to address the Committee.

## **5. CONFIRMATION OF MINUTES**

There are no previous minutes of the Implementation Committee.

## **6. ACTIONS**

There are no outstanding actions of the Implementation Committee.

## **7. MATTERS FOR COUNCIL DECISION**

### **7.1. Biosecurity Implementation Improvement Update - Pest Management**

*Cr Calvert left the meeting at 09:52 am.*

*Cr Calvert returned to the meeting at 9:55 am.*

This report was provided to update the Committee on the programme of change underway for the ORC's biosecurity function through a range of business improvement initiatives. Progress in implementing new rabbit management initiatives under the Regional Pest Management Plan 2019-2029 includes better engagement with specific communities, tangible solutions to facilitate rabbit control in problematic peri-urban areas and stepped up monitoring and compliance programmes.

A decision was also sought on future ownership and use of ORC's rabbit control assets. The ORC owns rabbit control assets retained from its former Regional Services function which ended in 2015. Public input was sought on what do with the idle equipment and the site in which it is stored. A survey was added to the ORC website and 160 submissions were received. Submitters were overwhelmingly in favour (71% for each question) of Council retaining the rabbit control assets and the building in which they are housed.

Gavin Palmer (GM Operations), Andrea Howard (Manager Biosecurity and Rural Liaison) and Richard Lord (Team Leader Biosecurity and Biodiversity) were present to speak to the report and respond to questions. Co-Chair Scott summarised the paper and indicated that he wanted to consider options for the future of the ORC rabbit control assets in a separate motion.

After a lengthy discussion, Cr Wilson moved:

## **Resolution**

*That the Committee:*

- 1) **Receives** this report.
- 2) **Notes** the recent development and implementation of a programme of work to deliver on Council's feral rabbit responsibilities under the previously approved Regional Pest Management Plan, Operational Plan.
- 3) **Notes** progress made in developing a revised inspection and compliance approach.
- 4) **Notes** increased operational focus on land occupier compliance including land owned or controlled by the Crown, Crown agencies and local authorities.
- 5) **Notes** progress made by the Otago Regional Council to establish and implement a model to support small-scale landowner led rabbit control operations.
- 6) **Notes** the range of business improvements made to the rabbit programme, and wider Biosecurity function, to order to achieve the objectives of the Regional Pest Management Plan, Operational Plan and better meet community expectations.
- 7) **Notes** the planned recruitment of three additional fixed-term positions within the Biosecurity team, two of which will focus exclusively on ORC's Regional Pest Management Plan - Rabbit Programme.
- 8) **Notes** that detailed resourcing required to better deliver a comprehensive rabbit management programme aligned to Council's responsibilities under the Regional Pest Management Plan and communities' expectations will be presented as part of the forthcoming Long-Term Plan 2021-2031 development process.

Moved: Cr Wilson

Seconded: Cr Noone

CARRIED

A discussion was then conducted about which option was preferred to deal with the idle rabbit control assets. After a debate, it was determined to eliminate staff option 1, which was to dispose of all the assets via tender because it did not account for the views received in the survey submissions. After debate, the group suggested staff come back with a paper detailing pros and cons of Option 2, to rationalise and retain the assets, and Option 3, to rationalise and lease the assets for further determination.

## **Resolution**

*That the Committee:*

- 1) **Affirms** options 2 or 3 when considering the future use of ORC rabbit control assets.

Moved: Cr Calvert

Seconded: Cr Forbes

CARRIED

## 8. MATTERS FOR NOTING

### 8.1. Catchment Support Advisory Group Report Back

The report was provided to the Committee to update on activities of the Catchment Support Advisory Group. This Group was established to provide advice to Council on the best way for ORC to support the ongoing work of catchment groups to maintain and improve water quality in Otago. The Advisory Group met four times since July 2020, developing a set of working principles and an approach to allocate the funding set aside in this year's budget to support local groups to improve water quality.

Co-Chair Carmen Hope took over chairing duties for the remainder of the meeting. Gavin Palmer (GM Operations) and Andrea Howard (Manager Biosecurity and Rural Liaison) were present to speak to the report and respond to questions.

After questions and discussion on the report, Cr Wilson moved:

#### Resolution

*That the Committee:*

- 1) **Receives** this report.
- 2) **Notes** the previously approved allocation of \$200,000 in the 2020/2021 financial year to fund the development of an umbrella entity and to support co-ordination and administrative roles that facilitate 'on the ground' action to improve water quality in the region's water bodies.
- 3) **Notes, with thanks,** that the Catchment Support Advisory Group has completed its work and has now disbanded.
- 4) **Notes** that Council will be asked to nominate representatives for the new Otago Catchment Communities governance board.
- 5) **Endorses** establishing a Memorandum of Understanding between the Otago Regional Council and the umbrella entity, once formed, detailing ongoing partnership and collaboration roles and responsibilities.
- 6) **Notes** that, once formed, a funding agreement will be established with the umbrella entity detailing payments, deliverables and reporting requirements.
- 7) **Notes** that a longer-term budget for supporting the region's Catchment Groups will be presented as part of the forthcoming Long-Term Plan 2021-2031 development process.

Moved: Cr Wilson  
Seconded: Cr Malcolm  
CARRIED

## 9. CLOSURE

There was no further business and Co-Chair Hope declared the meeting closed at 10:15 a.m.

  
\_\_\_\_\_  
Co-Chairperson

10 March 2021

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Date