

**Minutes of a Meeting of the
Marlborough District Council
held in the Council Chambers, 15 Seymour Street, Blenheim
on THURSDAY 16 MAY 2024 commencing at 9.00 am**

Present

The Mayor N P Taylor (in the Chair), Cllrs S R W Adams, J A Arbuckle, S J Arbuckle, J D N Croad, D A Dalliessi, B G Dawson, B A Faulls, M R K Flight, G A Hope, R J Innes, B J Minehan and T P Sowman.

In Attendance

Mr M S Wheeler (Chief Executive), Ms L J Craighead (Parks and Open Spaces Planner), Ms K M Whiteman (Parks and Open Spaces Officer) and Mr M J Porter (Democratic Services Manager).

Karakia

The meeting opened with a karakia.

Apology

Cllrs Faulls/Minehan:

That the apology for lateness (later changed to absence due to the early closing of the meeting) from Cllr A R Burgess be received and sustained.

Carried

Cncl-0524-402 Declaration of Interests -

Members were reminded of the need to be vigilant to stand aside from decision making when a conflict arises between their role as a member and any private or other external interest they might have.

A number of declarations were noted in the agenda:

- The various interests as declared under Minute Nos. Cncl-0424-354.

Cncl-0524-403 Confirmation of Minutes -

The Mayor/Cllr Croad:

That the Minutes of the Council Meeting held on 10 April 2024 (Minute Nos. Cncl-0424-354 to Cncl-0424-365) be taken as read and confirmed.

Carried

Committee Reports

Cncl-0524-404 Assets & Services Committee -

Cllrs Dawson/Dalliessi:

That the Committee report contained within Minute Nos. A&S-0424-366 to A&S-0424-374 be received and the recommendations adopted.

Carried

Cncl-0524-405 Environment & Planning Committee -

Cllrs Hope/Faulls:

That the Committee report contained within Minute Nos. E&P-0424-375 to E&P-0424-386 be received and the recommendations adopted.

Carried

Cncl-0524-406 Economic, Finance & Community Committee -

Clr J Arbuckle stated that the resolution under Minute No. EFC-0424-391 (College Park Lease) should stand as Council has the right to enter into such a agreement with the Boys College Board of Trustees.

Cirs Croad/S Arbuckle:

That the Committee report contained within Minute Nos. EFC-0424-387 to EFC-0424-401 be received and the recommendations adopted.

Carried

Cncl-0524-407 Taylor River Rabbit Control Operation

R510-009-T02-03

Ms Whiteman advised that the purpose of the report was to seek Council approval to operate a rabbit control operation using Pindone (an anticoagulant drug for agricultural use with the full chemical name 2-(2,2-Dimethyl-1-oxopropyl)indane-1,3-dione), along sections of the Taylor River Reserves and adjacent private properties in July 2024 to reduce rabbit numbers in the target area at an estimated cost of \$23,000 (with funding from Taylor River maintenance budgets).

Ms Whiteman and Mr Falconer jointly reported that rabbit populations on sections of the Taylor River are extremely high and a Pindone solution followed up by night shooting was proposed to reduce the numbers to level three on the Modified Maclean Rabbit Infestation Scale.

Members noted that in 2021 Council undertook a rabbit control operation in the Taylor River area south of the Burleigh Bridge using the Rabbit Haemorrhagic Disease Virus – K5 Strain (RHDV1-K5) in response to large numbers of rabbits in the area. Current rabbit counts have indicated the operation was largely unsuccessful with only three less rabbits per kilometre in 2023 from the 2021 counts. In 2023 a night shooting operation, using an approved pest removal operator was conducted over a three month period with the total number of rabbits dispatched being 293. It was noted that shooting alone does not effectively reduce rabbit numbers to an adequate and acceptable level in the long term. The Modified Maclean Rabbit Infestation Scale Level 3 (a recognised scale used by Councils to determine rabbit population levels and regulates both private and public-land areas) has been determined as the highest allowed in New Zealand for rabbits.

Staff reported that resource consent and approval from DOC will be required prior to commencement. A public awareness campaign will be undertaken leading up to the commencement of the operation in consultation with Council's communications team. It was proposed that public areas where the operation is being undertaken will be heavily signposted and it was suggested that all dogs will be required to be on leash or excluded.

Members agreed that lids should be built into each station.

Cirs Croad/Minehan:

That Council approve a rabbit control operation using Pindone along sections of the Taylor River Reserve and adjacent private properties.

Carried

Cncl-0524-408 Notification of Draft Wither Hills Management Plan

R510-014-024-01

Ms Craighead advised that the purpose of the report was to seek approval to notify for public submissions the draft Wither Hills Management Plan (to be notified on Monday 10 June 2024) and to establish a Hearings Panel to consider submissions received on the draft Wither Hills Management Plan. Members also noted the separately attached Draft Wither Hills Management Plan (filed in CM – Record No. 24125321) and the separately attached Background Information (filed in CM – Record No. 24125329)

Ms Craighead reported that the review process commenced in late 2022 with pre-consultation of Council staff, iwi and key stakeholders. From March to May 2023 the public were invited to provide their thoughts on future management of the Park and some specific questions were posed. This process attracted 92 responses, with many useful suggestions and insights considered as part of the plan development process. Three iwi have participated in the review process (Rangitāne o Wairau, Ngāti Rārua and Ngāti Toa Rangatira). Staff and specialist consultants from several Council departments, the Wither Hills Farm Park lessee, representatives

from the QEII National Trust, Department of Conservation (DOC), Fire and Emergency NZ and Walking Access NZ also provided valuable input. Other key stakeholder groups directly consulted included Rotary Clubs of Marlborough and the Marlborough Mountain Bike Club.

Ms Craighead noted that some changes to the Te Reo wording in the draft Wither Hills Management Plan will be made prior to public submission.

The Mayor/Clr Faults:

1. That Council approve the draft Wither Hills Management Plan for the purposes of public submission.
2. That Council confirm a hearing panel consisting of Councillor Dawson as Chair and Councillors Croad and Adams to hear submissions and recommend to Council decisions on those submissions.

Carried

Cncl-0524-409 Decision to Conduct Business with the Public Excluded

The Mayor/Clr Flight:

That the public be excluded from the following parts of the proceedings of this meeting, namely:

- Confirmation of Public Excluded Minutes
- Committee Reports (Public Excluded Sections)

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
Minutes and Committee Reports	As set out in the Minutes	That the public conduct of the relevant part of the proceedings of the meeting would be likely to result in the disclosure of information for which good reason for withholding exists under Section 7 of the Local Government Official Information and Meetings Act 1987.

Carried

The meeting closed with a karakia at 9.18 am.

Confirmed this 24th day of June 2024

**N P TAYLOR
MAYOR**

Record No. 24136266