Council

Tuesday 21 April 2026 at 10.00am

AGENDA

Northland REGIONAL COUNCIL
Te Kaunihera ā rohe o Te Taitokerau

Northland Regional Council Agenda

Meeting to be held in the Bream Tail Beach Pavilion, 1825 Tangaroa Road, Mangawhai Heads on Tuesday 21 April 2026, commencing at 10.00am

Recommendations contained in the council agenda are NOT council decisions. Please refer to council minutes for resolutions.

RĪMITI (Item) **Page**

1.0 NGĀ MAHI WHAKAPAI / HOUSEKEEPING

Key Health and Safety points to note:

- *If the fire alarm goes off – exit down the stairwell to the assembly point which is the visitor carpark.*
- *Earthquakes – drop, cover and hold*
- *Visitors please make sure you have signed in at reception, and that you sign out when you leave. Please wear your name sticker.*
- *The toilets are on the opposite side of the stairwell.*

Please note that the public section of this meeting will be recorded and livestreamed via Youtube to the NRC website. As a participant in the meeting or a member of the public gallery your presence may be recorded. By remaining present at the meeting it is understood your consent is given if your image or voice is broadcast.

Opinions expressed or statements made by individual persons during a meeting are not the opinions or statements of the Northland Regional Council. Council accepts no liability for any opinions or statements made during a meeting.

2.0 KARAKIA TIMATANGA – TAUĀKI Ā ROTO / OPENING KARAKIA

3.0 NGĀ WHAKAPĀHA / APOLOGIES

4.0 NGĀ WHAKAPUAKANGA / DECLARATIONS OF CONFLICTS OF INTEREST

4.0A NGĀ WHAKAAE MINITI ME TE MAHERE MAHI / COUNCIL MINUTES AND ACTION SHEET

5.0 NGĀ WHAKAAE MINITI ME TE MAHERE MAHI / COUNCIL MINUTES AND ACTION SHEET

6.0 NGĀ RIPOATA PUTEA / FINANCIAL REPORTS

ACC - Accident Compensation Corporation
ALGIM - Association of Local Government Information Management
AMA - Aquaculture Management Area
AMP - Asset Management Plan/Activity Management Plan
AP - Annual Plan
BCP – Business Continuity Planning
CAPEX - Capital Expenditure (budget to purchase assets)
CCO – Council Controlled Organisation
CCTO – Council Controlled Trading Organisation
CDEM - Civil Defence Emergency Management
CEG - Co-ordinating Executive Group
CEO - Chief Executive Officer
CIMS - Co-ordinated Incident Management System (emergency management structure)
CMA - Coastal Marine Area
CPCA - Community Pest Control Areas
DOC - Department of Conservation
DP – District Plan
ECAN - Environment Canterbury
EECA - Energy Efficiency Conservation Authority
EF - Environment Fund
EMA - Employers and Manufacturers Association
EOC - Emergency Operations Centre
EPA - Environmental Protection Authority
ETS - Emissions Trading Scheme
FDE - Farm Dairy Effluent
FNDC - Far North District Council
FNHL - Far North Holdings Limited
FPP - First Past the Post
GIS - Geographic Information System
HSWA - Health and Safety at Work Act 2015
IHEMP – Iwi/Hapū Environmental Management Plan
ILGACE - Iwi and Local Government Chief Executives Forum
IRIS - Integrated Regional Information System
JREDC - Joint Regional Economic Development Committee
KDC - Kaipara District Council
KPI - Key Performance Indicator
LAWA – Land, Air, Water Aotearoa
LEA - Local Electoral Act 2001
LGA - Local Government Act 2002
LGNZ - Local Government New Zealand
LGOIMA - Local Government Official Information & Meetings Act 1987
LIDAR – Light detection and ranging
LTP - Long Term Plan
LWDW – Local Waters Done Well
MACC – Multi-Agency Co-ordination Centre
MBIE – Ministry of Business, Innovation & Employment
MFE - Ministry for the Environment
MFL – Māori Freehold Land
MHWS - Mean High Water Springs
MMH - Marsden Maritime Holdings Limited
MNZ - Maritime New Zealand
MOU – Memorandum of Understanding
MTAG - Māori Technical Advisory Group
MWAR - Mana Whakahono Ā Rohe
NCMC - National Crisis Management Centre
NDHB - Northland District Health Board
NEMA – National Emergency Management Agency
NES - National Environmental Standards
NFT – Northland | Forward Together
NGL – Northport Group Limited
NGO - Non-Governmental Organisation
NIF - Northland Intersectoral Forum
NINC - Northland Inc. Limited
NIWA - National Institute of Water and Atmosphere
NPS - National Policy Statement
NPS-FM - National Policy Statement for Freshwater Management
NZCPS - New Zealand Coastal Policy Statement
NZTA –New Zealand Transport Agency
NZTE - New Zealand Trade and Enterprise
NZWWA - New Zealand Water and Wastes Association
OFI - Opportunity for Improvement
OPEX – Operating Expenditures
OSH - Occupational Safety & Health
OTS – Office of Treaty Settlements
PCBU - Person Conducting Business or Undertaking
PPE - Personal Protective Equipment
RAP - Response Action Plan
RBI - Regional Broadband Initiative
RFI - Request for Information
RFP - Request for Proposal
RLTP - Regional Land Transport Plan
RMA - Resource Management Act 1991
RMG - Resource Managers Group (Regional Councils)
RMZ - Riparian Management Zone
ROI - Return on Investment
RP – Regional Plan
RPMP - Regional Pest Management Plan
RPMS - Regional Pest Management Strategy
RPS - Regional Policy Statement
RPTP – Regional Public Transport Plan
RRSAP – Regional Road Safety Action Plan
RSG – Regional Sector Group
RSHL - Regional Software Holdings Ltd
RTC - Regional Transport Committee
RTO - Regional Tourism Organisation
SIG – Special Interest Group
SIPO - Statement of Investment Policy and Objectives
SITREP - Situation Report
SOE - State of Environment (or) State Owned Enterprise
SOI – Statement of Intent
STV - Single Transferable Vote
TAG - Technical Advisory Group
Te Ruarangi – Te Taitokerau Māori & Council Working Party
TKoT - Te Kahu o Taonui
Tier 1 - Site level plan or response for an oil spill
Tier 2 - Regional level plan or response to an oil spill
Tier 3 - National level plan or response to an oil spill
TLA - Territorial Local Authority – City & District Councils
TMP - Treasury Management Plan
TMP - Treasury Management Plan
TOATB – Te Oneroa-Ā-Tohe Board
TOR - Terms of Reference
TPK - Te Puni Kōkiri (Ministry of Māori Development)
TTNEAP – Tai Tokerau Northland Economic Action Plan
TWWAG – Tangata Whenua Water Advisory Group
UNISA - Upper North Island Strategic Alliance
WDC - Whangarei District Council
WSMP - Workplace Safety Management Practices

Northland
REGIONAL COUNCIL
Te Kaunihera ā rohe o Te Taitokerau

Tauāki ā roto

Tēnei au	Here I am
Tēnei mātou	Here we are
He kaikaunihera	Your councillors
He kawenga i ngā whakataunga	The bearers of sound
I ngā tikanga	decision making power
Ki uta, ki tai	Reaching inland and coastal
Kia rewa ai ngā iwi katoa o	To uplift all peoples of
Te Taitokerau	Northland
Haumie hui e	Bring forth unity
TĀIKI E!	Tis Done!

TITLE:	**Public Forum - Presentation by the Bream Bay Guardians Society**
From:	Chris Taylor, Governance Specialist
Authorised by Group Manager:	Bruce Howse, Pou Taumatua – Group Manager Corporate Services, on 13 April 2026

Whakarāpopototanga / Executive summary

Mary Sinclair will be in attendance on behalf of the Bream Bay Guardians Society to present regarding the proposed McCallum Brothers Limited (MBL) FastTrack application. It is noted that a similar presentation was provided to the previous council on 22 April 2025.

The request has been assessed and meets the criteria within Standing Orders (refer to Section 15. 'Public Forums').

The letter requesting to present to council is included as **Attachment One**.

Key components of Standing Orders to note are:

- Standing Order 15.1 'Time limits' *(extract)* – Speakers can speak for up to 5 minutes, or longer at the discretion of the Chairperson. No more than two speakers can speak on behalf of an organisation during a public forum.
- Standing Order 15.3 'Questions at public forums' – At the conclusion of the presentation, with the permission of the Chairperson, elected members may ask questions of speakers. Questions are to be confined to obtaining information or clarification on matters raised by a speaker.
- Standing Order 15.4 'No resolutions' – Following the public forum no debate or decisions will be made at the meeting on issues raised during the forum unless related to items already on the agenda.

Attachments/Ngā tapirihanga

Attachment 1: Attachment Three: Request to present to council ⇩

31 March 2026

Northland Regional Council

Pita Tipene: Cr.Tipene@nrc.govt.nz
Jonathon Gibbard: jong@nrc.govt.nz
Amy McDonald: amym@nrc.govt.nz
John Hunt: Cr.Hunt@nrc.govt.nz
Ruben Wylie: rubenw@nrc.govt.nz

Tēnā koutou katoa

Thank you for your 30 March response to our online meeting last week Ruben.

I am writing on behalf of Bream Bay Guardians to formally raise our concerns regarding the McCallum Brothers Limited (MBL) fast track application for sand extraction in Bream Bay / Te Akau.

We understand that the Fast Track Panel will be appointed, and expected to commence its role in the week of 13 April 2026, and that the Northland Regional Council (Council) will be invited to comment on the MBL sand extraction application on/before 28 April, with a closing date for invited persons/parties comment on 26th May (or close to).

In line with Ruben Wylie response (30 March 2026), and the anticipated Fast Track process, we are seeking the opportunity to present our concerns to Council at the upcoming public meeting on **21st April** with the objective that Council recommend to the Fast Track Convener and the Fast Track Panel that the Bream Bay Guardians be formally recognised as a representative community group, acknowledged as an interested party, and invited to comment on the MBL application.

The concerns that we expect to present would be focused on the environmental and economic impacts of the proposed sand extraction which include:

- Demand for sand in the Auckland market is overstated.
  MBL appears to overestimate market demand for sand and underestimate the supply of sand for Auckland. It also asserts that there is no viable alternative to marine sand to make concrete, a claim that is not supported by the current use of manufactured sand in concrete production in Auckland and supported by extensive international evidence.
- The claimed economic benefits are uncertain.
  The assumptions underlying the projected economic benefits, particularly in terms of carbon credits, cannot be independently verified. Furthermore, the assumption is that existing sand extraction consents will not be renewed.
- The coastal process modelling is unreliable.
  The models relied on to predict coastal processes are questionable in both methodology and spatial coverage of the proposed dredging area. Accordingly, the effects on the coastline remain uncertain.

- Cumulative effects of the proposed consent application alongside the existing Channel Infrastructure consent. The application does not in any way assess the cumulative ecological and sand effects of dredging in the context of two potentially active consents, including the existing consent for the Whangārei Channel Infrastructure project. Those combined effects are therefore unknown.

- Recovery of scallop and crayfish populations is at risk.
  The MPI-enforced ban on fishing for scallops and crayfish has led to signs of recovery in the area, as supported by our ecological evidence. That recovery is almost certainly unsustainable if consent is granted to MBL. MBL ecological evidence on the scallop population is at least 2 years old and therefore is outdated.

Thank you for your consideration.

Ngā mihi nui

Mary Sinclair

Bream Bay Guardians

1210 Cove Road

RD2

Waipu, 0582

marysi@xtra.co.nz

027 2968151

CC:
Malcolm Morrison: Malcolm@malcolmmorrison.co.nz
Gill Webb: webb.gill@mail.com
Tim Mullins: tim@mullins.co.nz
Adam McDonald: adam.mcdonald@lsl.co.nz

TITLE:	**Public Forum - Presentation by the Carbon Neutral NZ Trust**
From:	Chris Taylor, Governance Specialist
Authorised by:	Chris Taylor, Governance Specialist, on 15 April 2026

Whakarāpopototanga / Executive summary

Darleen Tana will be in attendance representing the Carbon Neutral NZ Trust to introduce the following report commissioned by the organisation:

Transforming Wastewater Management for Small Communities in the Far North District of NZ (PDF)

The request has been assessed and meets the criteria within Standing Orders (refer to Section 15. 'Public Forums').

Two key components of Standing Orders to note were detailed in the previous item.

Attachments/Ngā tapirihanga

Nil

TITLE:	**Confirmation of Minutes - 25 March 2026**
From:	Meloney Tupou, Māori Governance and Engagement Support Admin
Authorised by:	Chris Taylor, Governance Specialist, on 15 April 2026

Ngā mahi tūtohutia / Recommendation

That the minutes of the council meeting held on 25 March 2026, be confirmed as a true and correct record and that these be duly authenticated with the Chair's electronic signature.

Attachments/Ngā tapirihanga

Attachment 1: Council Meeting Minutes - 25 March 2026 ⇩

Council Meeting
25 March 2026

Northland Regional Council Minutes

Meeting held in the Council Chamber
36 Water Street, Whangārei
on Wednesday 25 March 2026, commencing at 10.00am

Tuhinga/Present:

Chairperson, Pita Tipene
Deputy Chairperson, Jack Craw
Councillors:
- John Blackwell *(Via audio-visual link)*
- Geoff Crawford *(Via audio-visual link)*
- John Hunt
- Colin Kitchen
- Amy Macdonald
- Arama Morunga

I Tae Mai/In Attendance:

Full Meeting
Independent Risk Advisor
Tāhūhū Rangapū - Chief Executive Officer
Pou Taumatua – GM Corporate Services
Pou Manawhakahaere - GM Strategic Partnerships and Engagement
Pou Whakaritenga - GM Regulatory Services
Group Manager - Community Resilience
Pou Tiaki Taiao - GM Environmental Services
Pou Tiaki Pūtaiao - GM Biosecurity
People and Culture Manager
Translator *(Via audio-visual link)*
Kaiāwhina Tari
Governance Specialist

Part Meeting
WDC Revenue Manager
Independent Tangata Whenua Advisor *(x2. One via audio-visual link)*
Corporate Strategy Manager
Policy and Planning Manager
Governance and Corporate Policy Manager
Strategic Policy Specialist
Land Management Advisor - Technical
Financial Accountant
Principal Advisor
Digital Experience Support

Secretarial Note: The Chair declared the meeting open at 10.00am, noting that the current 'tumultuous world' brought challenges to all. The Chair commenced proceedings with a karakia.

Council Meeting
25 March 2026

Ngā whakapāha/Apologies (Item 1.0)

Moved (Macdonald/Blackwell)

That the apology from Councillor Carr for non-attendance be noted.

Carried

Nga whakapuakanga/Declarations of Conflicts of Interest (Item 2.0)

It was advised that councillors should make declarations item-by-item as the meeting progressed.

Confirmation of Minutes - 18 February 2026 (Item 5.1)

Report from Meloney Tupou, Māori Governance and Engagement Support Admin

Moved (Kitchen/Morunga)

That the minutes of the council meeting held on 18 February 2026, be confirmed as a true and correct record *(subject to the correction of the typo in relation to Item 4.0A)* and that these be duly authenticated with the Chair's electronic signature.

Carried

Receipt of Action Sheet (Item 5.2)

Report from Chris Taylor, Governance Specialist

Moved (Craw/Macdonald)

That the action sheet be received.

Carried

Financial Report to February 2026 (Item 6.1)

Report from Taka Skipwith, Financial Accountant

Moved (Morunga/Craw)

That the report 'Financial Report to February 2026' by Taka Skipwith, Financial Accountant and dated 4 March 2026, be received.

Carried

Secretarial Note:

- *Council's managed funds continued to perform strongly regardless of the transition to a new fund manager. Council had also experienced an improved commercial income.*
- *Reporting in the next financial year would reflect the organisational restructure (in particular changes to Corporate Services and Strategic Partnerships & Engagement).*
- *Whilst there had been a transfer of operating surplus to reserves, council would have the opportunity at the end of the financial year to determine how any surplus would be utilised.*
- *The Executive Leadership Team was currently assessing the impact of fuel increases on service delivery. At such time the business continuity plan was confirmed this would be provided to, and potentially workshopped with, council.*

- *Consideration was also being given to the potential impact of fuel increases on council's investment portfolio. Council's fund manager, Russell Investments, supported the current asset allocation but would monitor the situation closely.*
- *A council workshop was scheduled in April with Russell Investments to consider the SIPO in detail.*
- *Clarification was provided that the delay in capital expenditure for the Joint Emergency Co-ordination Centre reflected the time it took to get complex agreements signed. However the project had now progressed to the detailed design phase.*

Regional Rates Collection - update to 31 December 2025 (Item 6.2)

Report from Simon Crabb, Finance Manager

Moved (Kitchen/Blackwell)

That the report 'Regional Rates Collection - update to 31 December 2025' by Simon Crabb, Finance Manager and dated 10 February 2026, be received.

Carried

Secretarial Note:

- *The WDC Revenue Manager was in attendance to convey trends in rate collection. In summary, affordability was the key issue and 'people are struggling to pay'. WDC was experiencing an increasing number of ratepayers with dishonoured direct debits and seeking payment arrangements. The council was doing its utmost to find flexible arrangements for all ratepayers.*
- *Appreciation was extended to WDC and all the district councils for collecting the regional council's rates on its behalf and their efforts to collect rates and rate arrears.*
- *Whilst the overall rate collection was slightly less than the previous financial year it was 'not significantly different'.*
- *NRC had confirmed a zero percent rate increase through its Annual Plan process to reflect the current cost-of-living pressures on the community.*

Withdrawal of the Planned 2025-26 Funding Contribution from the Managed Investment Fund Portfolio (Item 6.3)

Report from Simon Crabb, Finance Manager

Moved (Morunga/Kitchen)

1. That the report 'Withdrawal of the Planned 2025-26 Funding Contribution from the Managed Investment Fund Portfolio' by Simon Crabb, Finance Manager and dated 20 February 2026, be received.
2. That $2,841,083 is withdrawn in March 2026 from the investment funds recommended by Russell Investments and invested into term deposits maturing in August 2026.

Secretarial Note:

- *Council's managed investment fund portfolio had not achieved sufficient gains to satisfy the recommendation to withdraw $2,841,083 from the investment funds and invest into term deposits; and was unlikely to do so by the end of the month.*
- *It was proposed that a prudent approach would be for council to withdraw the available gains at this time; subject to the approval of council's fund manager.*

An amendment was moved to the second motion (Macdonald/Tipene)

2. That available gains are withdrawn in March 2026 from the investment funds, subject to the advice from Russell Investments, and invested into term deposits maturing in August 2026.

Carried

Secretarial Note: With no further amendments forthcoming the Chair put the substantive motion as follows:

Moved (Craw/Kitchen)

1. That the report 'Withdrawal of the Planned 2025-26 Funding Contribution from the Managed Investment Fund Portfolio' by Simon Crabb, Finance Manager and dated 20 February 2026, be received.
2. That available gains are withdrawn in March 2026 from the investment funds, subject to the advice from Russell Investments, and invested into term deposits maturing in August 2026.

Carried

Local Government reform programme (Item 7.1)

Report from Justin Murfitt, Strategic Policy Specialist and Stephanie Versteeg, Kaitohutohu Matua / Principal Advisor

Moved (Macdonald/Craw)

1. That the report 'Local Government reform programme ' by Justin Murfitt, Strategic Policy Specialist and Stephanie Versteeg, Kaitohutohu Matua / Principal Advisor and dated 19 March 2026, be received.
2. That council approve the establishment of a staged programme for Local Government Reform as set out in this report.
3. That council approves the governance structure set out in this report, including the establishment of a Local Government Reform Steering Group and External Advisory Group.
4. That council endorse the Mayor of Whangārei District Council as Chair of the Local Government Reform Steering Group.
5. That council nominates the Chair and councillors Craw and Crawford as members of the Local Government Reform Steering Group.
6. That council approve the Draft Terms of Reference for the Local Government Reform Governance Steering Group included in **Attachment 1** *(pertaining to Item 7.1 of the 25 March 2026 ordinary council meeting agenda).*
7. That council approve the Draft Terms of Reference for the Local Government Reform External Advisory Group included in **Attachment 2** *(pertaining to Item 7.1 of the 25 March 2026 ordinary council meeting agenda).*
8. That council approve the indicative timeline set out in this report, which subject to detailed planning once the programme is established would enable a new governance structure(s) to be in place for the October 2028 local government election.

9. That council approve the allocation of $31,250, funded from salary savings, to meet the placeholder budget of $125,000 for the Local Government Reform Programme over the remainder of the 2025/26 Financial Year.
10. That council approve allocation of $250,000 to meet the placeholder budget of $1,000,000 in its 2026/27 Annual Plan, noting that this amount is indicative only and subject to further detailed planning and refinement.
11. That council agree to proceed with the proposed programme and to fund a third of the costs, as outlined in this report, rather than a quarter if only three Northland councils are participating.
12. That council agree that the programme approach needs to be reviewed if fewer than three Northland Councils agree to proceed with the programme as proposed.

Carried

Secretarial Note:

- *The Terms of Reference attached to the report incorporated the amendments as workshopped by council; being the WDC Mayor as an observer on the External Advisory Group (not Chair) and the transparent provision of papers from the Governance Steering Group to all elected members. These changes had been shared and were now the 'substantive proposal to all councils'.*
- *Northland would continue 'to be proactive and partner with central government to lead change' and develop a 'by Northland for Northland' solution.*
- *The placeholder budget was an estimate until a detailed analysis was undertaken to progress the proposal.*
- *Appreciation was extended to staff for their 'nimble' response, incorporating the feedback from the council workshop, to inform this 'really significant and complex piece of work'.*
- *The March Northland|Forward Together Strategic Planning Workshop highlighted the clear purpose and alignment of the four Northland councils.*
- *The proposed timeframes were a significant undertaking for the Northland councils and risk management would be critical.*

Approval of updated Delegation Manual (Item 7.2)

Report from Kyla Carlier, Corporate Strategy Manager

Moved (Morunga/Craw)

1. That the report 'Approval of updated Delegation Manual' by Kyla Carlier, Corporate Strategy Manager and dated 23 December 2025, be received.
2. That council approve the inclusion of the proposed unbudgeted expenditure process, as per **Attachment 1** *(pertaining to Item 7.2 of the 25 March 2026 ordinary council meeting agenda)*, in the NRC Delegation Manual.

Carried

Council Meeting
25 March 2026

Adoption of the Statement of Proposal and Draft Dangerous Dams Policy 2026 for consultation (Item 7.3)

Report from Tami Woods, Policy and Planning Manager

Moved (Macdonald/Morunga)

1. That the report 'Adoption of the Statement of Proposal and Draft Dangerous Dams Policy 2026 for consultation' by Tami Woods, Policy and Planning Manager and dated 25 February 2026, be received.

Carried

Secretarial Note:

- *Assurance was provided that through the use of imagery council staff would, in time, detect the construction of any dam that was built in Northland.*
- *Currently nine dams had been assessed as 'high potential impact' in the region.*
- *An engineering assessment included earthquake vulnerability and given Northland was a low seismic risk it was not a significant component of the assessment.*
- *A draft letter to the Minister of Building and Construction had been prepared requesting that Northland be removed from the requirement of an earthquake assessment entirely to reflect the low earthquake risk (in the same manner as the Building Standard Ratings).*
- *Careful consideration would need to be given to the communication material supporting consultation to ensure the proposed policy was clearly explained to the community.*

It was further moved (Macdonald/Kitchen)

2. That council adopts the Statement of Proposal and the Draft Policy on Dangerous Dams, Earthquake-Prone Dams and Flood-Prone Dams 2026 (Dangerous Dams Policy 2026) for the purpose of consultation pursuant to section 162 of the Building Act 2004 and in accordance with Section 83 of the Local Government Act 2002.
3. That council approves public consultation, using the Special Consultative Procedure set out in section 83 of the Local Government Act 2002, between 1 April and 8 May 2026.
4. That council delegates to the Group Manager –Regulatory Services the authority to make any necessary minor formatting typographical and administrative changes to the Statement of Proposal and Draft Policy prior to formal public consultation.

Carried

Secretarial Note: Council supported sending the letter to the Minister of Building and Construction seeking an exemption from earthquake assessments for dams.

Council Meeting
25 March 2026

Regional Software Holdings Limited Statement Of Intent (Item 7.4)

Report from Bruce Howse, Pou Taumatua – Group Manager Corporate Services

Moved (Macdonald/Craw)

1. That the report 'Regional Software Holdings Limited Statement Of Intent' by Bruce Howse, Pou Taumatua – Group Manager Corporate Services and dated 27 February 2026, be received.
2. That council endorse the Draft RSHL SOI 2026-2027 included as **Attachment 1** *(pertaining to Item 7.4 of the 25 March 2026 ordinary council meeting agenda)***.**

Carried

Investment Committee Terms of Reference (Item 7.5)

Report from Chris Taylor, Governance Specialist

Moved (Hunt/Morunga)

1. That the report 'Investment Committee Terms of Reference' by Chris Taylor, Governance Specialist and dated 10 March 2026, be received.
2. That council approves the recommended amendments to the Investment Committee's Terms of Reference included in **Attachment 1** *(pertaining to Item 7.5 of the 25 March 2026 ordinary council meeting agenda)*.

Carried

Chair's Report to Council (Item 8.1)

Report from Rae Hetaraka, Executive Assistant to the Chair

Moved (Tipene/Crawford)

That the report 'Chair's Report to Council' by Rae Hetaraka, Executive Assistant to the Chair and dated 27 February 2026, be received.

Carried

Secretarial Note:

- *Appreciation was extended to the Chair for a 'fulsome report'.*
- *Correction noted to the full name of Georgina **Curtis** - Connelly*

Chief Executive's Report to Council (Item 8.2)

Report from Jonathan Gibbard, Tāhūhū Rangapū - Chief Executive Officer

Moved (Kitchen/Macdonald)

That the report 'Chief Executive's Report to Council' by Jonathan Gibbard, Tāhūhū Rangapū - Chief Executive Officer and dated 2 March 2026, be received.

Carried

Secretarial Note:

- *Appreciation was extended to staff for their presence and support of the NRC display stand at the Northland Field Days.*
- *Concern was raised regarding the ongoing odour issues experienced at Parua Bay due to the Whangārei City Municipal Wastewater Treatment Plant. Assurance was provided that WDC and NRC staff were actively resolving this issue.*
- *Given the recent severe weather events and particularly the impact on Northland's east coast, LIDAR surveys had been conducted as a matter of urgency. Earth Science New Zealand (ESNZ) was currently undertaking the necessary quality checks of the LIDAR data. Once completed, the data would be extrapolated to provide Land Slide Susceptibility Maps which would be available via the NRC website. This was particularly pertinent given Northland was currently experiencing a further extreme weather event.*

Legislative compliance half yearly report July - December 2025 (Item 8.3)

Report from Mandy Tepania, Audit and Assurance Lead

Moved (Macdonald/Hunt)

That the report 'Legislative compliance half yearly report July - December 2025' by Mandy Tepania, Audit and Assurance Lead and dated 9 March 2026, be received.

Carried

Secretarial Note: It was requested that the Memorandum of Understanding between Te Uri o Hau and the Northland Regional Council be included in the list of core legislation.

Receipt of Committee Minutes (Item 9.1)

Report from Chris Taylor, Governance Specialist

Moved (Morunga/Hunt)

That the unconfirmed minutes of the:

- Regional Transport Committee – 9 December 2025
- Regional Transport Committee – 10 February 2026
- Infrastructure Committee – 17 February 2026
- Audit and Risk Committee – 17 February 2026
- Kaipara Moana Remediation Joint Committee – 23 February 2026
- Investment Committee – 3 March 2026

be received.

Carried

Working Party Updates Report (Item 9.2)

Report from Meloney Tupou, Māori Governance and Engagement Support Admin

Moved (Blackwell/Craw)

That the report 'Working Party Updates Report' be received.

Carried

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25 March 2026

Secretarial Note: A correction was noted to the report; the Chair of the Biosecurity and Biodiversity Working Party was Jack Craw (not Crawford).

Kaupapa ā Roto/Business with Public Excluded (Item 10.0)

Moved (Kitchen/Macdonald)

1. That the public be excluded from the proceedings of this meeting to consider confidential matters.

2. That the general subject of the matters to be considered whilst the public is excluded, the reasons for passing this resolution in relation to this matter, and the specific grounds under the Local Government Official Information and Meetings Act 1987 for the passing of this resolution, are as follows:

Item No.	Item Issue	Reasons/Grounds
10.1	Confirmation of Confidential Minutes - 18 February 2026	The public conduct of the proceedings would be likely to result in disclosure of information, as stated in the open section of the meeting.
10.2	Receipt of Confidential Committee Minutes	The public conduct of the proceedings would be likely to result in disclosure of information, as stated in the open section of the meeting.
10.3	Commercial Property Transactions	The public conduct of the proceedings would be likely to result in disclosure of information, the withholding of which is necessary to protect information where the making available of the information would be likely unreasonably to prejudice the commercial position of the person who supplied or who is the subject of the information s7(2)(b)(ii), the withholding of which is necessary to enable council to carry out, without prejudice or disadvantage, commercial activities s7(2)(h) and the withholding of which is necessary to enable council to carry on, without prejudice or disadvantage, negotiations (including commercial and industrial negotiations) s7(2)(i).

3. That the Independent Advisors be permitted to stay during business with the public excluded.

Carried

Open Meeting

Moved (Kitchen/Macdonald)

That the council resumes in open meeting.

Carried

Council Meeting
25 March 2026

Confirming of confidential minutes in open meeting

The confidential resolutions confirmed in open meeting were as follows:

Confirmation of Confidential Minutes - 18 February 2026 (Confidential Item 10.1)

Report from Meloney Tupou, Māori Governance and Engagement Support Admin

Moved (Macdonald/Hunt)

That the confidential minutes of the council meeting held on 18 February 2026, be confirmed as a true and correct record and that these be duly authenticated with the Chair's electronic signature.

Carried

Receipt of Confidential Committee Minutes (Confidential Item 10.2)

Report from Chris Taylor, Governance Specialist

Moved (Craw/Morunga)

That the unconfirmed confidential minutes of the:

- Audit and Risk Committee – 17 February 2026
- Investment Committee – 3 March 2026

be received.

Carried

Whakamutunga (Conclusion)

The Chair concluded the meeting at 11.52am with a karakia.

TITLE:	**Receipt of Action Sheet**
From:	Chris Taylor, Governance Specialist
Authorised by:	Chris Taylor, Governance Specialist, on 13 April 2026

Whakarāpopototanga / Executive summary

The purpose of this report is to enable the meeting to receive the current action sheet.

Nga mahi tutohutia / Recommendation

That the action sheet be received.

Attachments/Ngā tapirihanga

Attachment 1: Council Action Sheet - April 2026 ⇩

Council Actions as at 13/04/2026

Id	Meeting	Target Date	Description	Request Details	Most Recent Comment
8537	Council 25/03/2026	8/04/26	Financial Report to February 2026	That the BCP in relation to fuel increased be provided to, and potentially workshopped with, council.	COMPLETE. Workshopped 14 April 2026.
8541	Council 25/03/2026	8/04/26	Approval of updated Delegation Manual	That Schedule 3 of council's Delegation Manual be updated for the approved process for unbudgeted expenditure.	COMPLETE. Delegation Manual updated.
8542	Council 25/03/2026	8/04/26	Adoption of the Statement of Proposal and Draft Dangerous Dams Policy 2026 for consultation	That the letter be sent to the Minister of Building and Construction requesting that Northland be removed from the requirement of an earthquake assessment entirely to reflect the low earthquake risk (in the same manner as the Building Standard Ratings).	COMPLETE. Letter sent.
8550	Council 25/03/2026	8/04/26	Financial Report to February 2026	That council workshop the SIPO with council's fund manager, Russell Investments, in April.	COMPLETE. Workshop held on 16 April 2026.

TITLE: Financial Report to March 2026

From: Taka Skipwith, Financial Accountant

Authorised by: Bruce Howse, Pou Taumatua – Group Manager Corporate Services, on 15 April 2026

Whakarāpopototanga / Executive summary

This report details the year to date (YTD) financial results for March 2026. The council has achieved a YTD surplus of $3.75m after transfers to and from reserves, which represents a favourable variance of $1.79m compared to the original budgeted of $1.96m. The favourable variance is primarily achieved through salary savings across council. All comparisons in this report are based on the original budget.

Recommendation:

That the report 'Financial Report to March 2026' by Taka Skipwith, Financial Accountant and dated 2 April 2026, be received.

Background/Tuhinga

The operating surplus, before transfers to and from reserves, for the YTD period ending March 2026 is $6.56m, which exceeds the original budget of $2.51m, by $4.05m (refer to **Table 1**). The operating surplus *after* transfers to and from reserves is $3.75m, representing a favourable variance of $1.79m compared to the original budgeted of $1.96m.

Table 1

Operating Statement

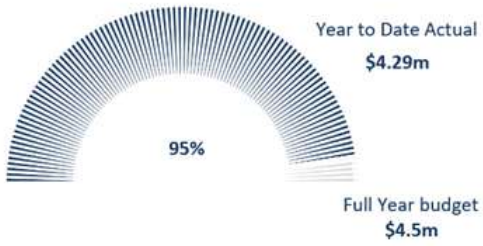
YTD ending March 2026

Total Council	*YTD Actual 2025-26 $000's*	*YTD Original Budget $000's*	*VARIANCE $000's*	*Variance %*	*Full Year Original Budget 2025-26 $000's*	*Full Year Revised Budget 2025-26 $000's*
Operational Revenue						
Rates	$42,842	$42,568	$274	0.6%	$56,758	$56,758
User Fees and Sundry	$6,546	$5,328	$1,218	22.9%	$5,925	$6,015
Grants and Subsidies	$8,707	$8,526	$181	2.1%	$11,132	$12,623
Investment Interest Income	$2,148	$1,981	$167	8.4%	$2,641	$2,683
Investment Property Income	$2,957	$2,561	$396	15.5%	$3,469	$3,496
Managed Funds Gains	$4,288	$2,998	$1,290	43.0%	$4,499	$4,499
Other Gains & Joint Venture Distributions	$5	$0	$5	-	$3,337	$3,337
Total Revenue	**$67,493**	**$63,963**	**$3,530**	**5.5%**	**$87,760**	**$89,409**
Expenditure by Group						
Regulatory Services	$4,402	$4,333	($69)	-1.6%	$5,607	$5,639
Environmental Services	$9,127	$10,401	$1,273	12.2%	$15,040	$14,777
Biosecurity	$11,296	$10,822	($474)	-4.4%	$15,126	$15,785
Strategic Partnership and Engagement	$3,479	$7,820	$4,341	55.5%	$10,819	$5,724
Community Resilience	$12,223	$12,132	($90)	-0.7%	$17,051	$17,461
Corporate Services	$19,021	$14,308	($4,713)	-32.9%	$22,618	$28,345
CEO Office	$1,388	$1,641	$253	15.4%	$2,144	$2,161
Total Expenditure	**$60,935**	**$61,457**	**$522**	**0.8%**	**$88,405**	**$89,892**
Net (Cost)/Surplus of Service before transfer from/(to) Special Reserves	$6,558	$2,506	$4,052	**161.7%**	($645)	($483)
Total Transfers from/(to) Special Reserves	**($2,806)**	**($541)**	**$2,264**	**-418.2%**	**$752**	$590
Net (Cost)/Surplus of Service after transfer from/(to) Special Reserves	**$3,752**	**$1,964**	**$1,788**	**91.0%**	**$107**	**$107**

The contributing factors for the YTD favourable variance are.

YTD Operating Revenue (table 4) favourable variance of $3.53m is 5.5% of the budget and predominantly due to:

- Managed funds remaining ahead of expectations, generating 95% of the full year budget between July 2025 and March 2026.



Managed Fund Gains - % of Full Year Budget

  - Fund performance YTD is $4.29m against a YTD budget of $2.998m, resulting in a YTD favourable variance of $1.29m (Refer to Table3)
  - Gains of $2.08m have been allocated to reinvestment in council reserves, with a further $579k allocated to standard operations, CCO, community support and management fees.
- Commercial property investment income of $396k is attributable to higher-than-expected rental income and,
- Higher than planned cost recovery of $1.15m for the strategic review, KMR and various programmes across council.

YTD Operational Expenditure (table 5) favourable variance of $522k which is 0.8%% of the budget, due to:

- Salary savings across all of council of $1.18m, and is offset by
- Council wide expenditure variances as detailed in **Table 5**.

Net Salary savings across all of council for the YTD is $1.18m, or 4.5% of the YTD budget for salaries and associated costs (refer to **Table 2**). Council's available working capital position is improved because of salary savings. The redirection of $71k from salary savings was approved for the Madagascar Ragwort programme.

Table 2

SALARY VARIANCE	000's
Gross salary variance	$2,009
Add: Annual leave movement	($92)
Less: YTD March 2026 redirected salary savings	($660)
Less: Other employment costs higher than YTD Budget	($78)
NET SALARY VARIANCE	**$1,178**

Reserve Movements (**Table 6**) variance of $2.26m arises from net transfers to reserves of $2.86m compared to a budgeted net transfer to reserves of $541k. The variance is due mainly to.

- Higher than budgeted transferred to the Property Reinvestment Reserve, Regional Project Reserve, the Economic Development Reserve.
- Lower than budgeted transfers from KMR reserves of $684k.
- Transfers from the 2024-25 carry forward provision were ($510k) higher than budgeted due to unknown carry forward provision in the 2025-26 original budget.
- Additional reserves movements listed in table 6.

Capital Expenditure

Capital expenditure YTD is $6.2m and is $1.89m lower than the corresponding budget of $8.12m in March. This is due to

- Flood infrastructure and river projects progressing ahead of budget by ($3.62m), being partially funded by Crown Infrastructure Partnerships. Offset by
- The design and build of the Joint emergency co-ordination centre being $3.1m behind the original budget. Following a revision of the build programme and revision of budget, the variance is reduced to $12k below against a revised budget.
- The Hannah Street Redevelopment is $1.6m behind budget, due to significant changes in the development programme and associated costs. The redevelopment project will not proceed.

Table 3

Managed Funds

YTD ending March 2026

Total Council	*YTD Actual 2024-25 $000's*	*YTD Original Budget $000's*	*VARIANCE $000's*	*Variance %*	*Full Year Original Budget 2024-25 $000's*	*Full Year Revised Budget 2024-25 $000's*
Represented by:						
Short Term Funds	$130	$293	($164)	-55.9%	$442	$442
Long Term Funds	$4,158	$2,705	$1,454	53.8%	$4,057	$4,057
TOTAL FUND GAINS /(LOSSES) (includes interest from TD's)	**$4,288**	**$2,998**	**$1,290**	**43.0%**	**$4,499**	**$4,499**
Gains transferred From (To) Special Reserves representing reinvestment	($2,087)	($626)	($1,461)	233.4%	($981)	($981)
Gains allocated for budgeted operations, Northland Inc and management fees.	($579)	($664)	$85	-12.8%	$0	$0
GAINS available for general funding	**$1,622**	**$1,708**	**($86)**	**-5.0%**	**$3,518**	**$3,518**

Table 4

Total Council Operational Revenue

YTD ending March 2026

Revenue Type	*Full Year Original Budget 2025-26* FAV / (UNFAV)		*Commentary*
	$ 000's	*%*	
Rates	**$274**	**0.6%**	• Higher than budgeted rates due to an increase in SUIP's between setting the budget and this years rates strike
User Fees and Sundry	**$1,218**	**22.9%**	• Lower than budgeted consent monitoring of ($106k), • Higher than budgeted incident response fees of $159k • Higher than budgeted cost recoveries of $763k primarily for the strategic review of $550k, Madagascar Ragwort, and maritime operations. • KMR recovery costs of $388k (transferred to reserve).
Grants and Subsidies	**$181**	**2.1%**	• Higher than budgeted NZTA Subsidies of $327k, **MPI Subsidies** • Higher than budgeted subsidy of $1080k for the Caulerpa programme (fully expended) • Higher than budgeted funding for Kauri protection programme of $200k (fully expended), offset by • Lower than budgeted funding for Wild Rice national programme of ($261k), and Hill Country erosions funding of ($308k) **MfE Subsidies** •Lower than budgeted subsidies for Land Managements roles of ($71k) due to timing of costs, offset by higher than budgeted subsidies for Marine incursion of $123k and Upper Kawakawa catchment of $32k **Other Subsidies & Grants** • Higher than budgeted subsidy for Flood Resilience Ngā Manga Atawhai of $115k, (fully expended) • Higher than budgeted subsidies for Regional Recovery programme of $99K, *Offset by:* • Lower than budgeted subsidies for Predator Free programmes of ($976k) due to cost matching. **TLA Contributions** • Higher than budgeted contributions for CDEM operations of $57k, and zero carbon transitions of $24k offset by • Lower than budgeted contributions for regional transport programmes of
Investment Interest Income	**$172**	**8.4%**	• Higher than budgeted interest earned on cash, Term Deposits and ASB banking facilities of $234k • Higher than budgeted interest earnt from loans associated with internal borrowings, offset by lower than budgeted interest on joint ventures and regional water storage project of ($68k).
Investment Property Income	**$396**	**15.5%**	• Higher than budgeted rental income from council commercial investment properties.
Managed Funds	**$1,290**	**42.7%**	• Actual YTD to February 2026, council managed funds remained ahead of the year to date. Gains to March 2026 have not been accrued in this reporting period.
Total Revenue	**$3,530**	**5.5%**	

Table 5

Total Council Operational Expenditure

YTD ending March 2026

	Variance to Original Budget					
Group	**FAV/(UNFAV)**		**Commentary**	**Offset BY**		**Not offset**
	000's	**%**		**Subsidies 000's**	**Reserves 000's**	**FAV / (UNFAV) 000's**
Regulatory Services	**($69)**	**-1.6%**	• Lower than budgeted net salaries due to vacancies within the group.			$254
			• Higher than budgeted professional services; consultancy ($79k), and legal costs of ($235k) for compliance monitoring and consent applications,			($314)
			• Higher than budgeted contractors costs.			($13)
			• Other small accumulated variances within the group.			$3
Environmental Services	**$1,273**	**12.2%**	• Lower than budgeted net salaries due to vacancies in group, and positions on hold.			$591
			• Lower than budgeted operational costs for Biodiversity programme.	$28		$107
			• Lower than budgeted costs of Planning and Policy activities.	$13		$99
			• Lower than budgeted operational expenditure for Hill Country Erosion programme of planting and fencing works of $173k, and • Lower than budgeted efunds for multiple funds of$262k • Higher than budgeted grant for Lake Ōmāpere, fully funded by reserves of ($221k)	$108		$152
			• Lower than budgeted contractor and software costs for data management			$37
			• Lower than budgeted operational expenditure for natural resource science programmes, primarily consultancy			$131
			• Other small accumulated variances within the group.			$7
Biosecurity	**($474)**	**-4.4%**	• Lower than budgeted net salaries due to vacancies within the group.			$108
			• Higher than budgeted contractors and consultancy costs for Caulerpa works primarily funded by MPI.	($1,375)		($62)
			• Lower than budgeted expenditure on contractors of $253k, mainly for the Gold Clam, funded by reserves. Which is offset by Deer control costs of ($112k)		$67	$140
			• Higher than budgeted expenditure on fieldwork costs of ($132k), offset by lower than budgeted contractors of $271, and pest control works of $126k for partnership programmes, and efund payments.	$12		$336
			• Lower than budgeted expenditure on operational activities for Te Ha o Tangaroa			$72
			• Lower than budgeted expenditure on contractors and consultants for Predator Free Whangārei, and Pewhairangi, primarily supported by subsidies.			$545
			• Higher than budgeted expenditure on Kauri Protection programmes, partly funded by MPI.	($200)		($124)
			• Other small accumulated variances within the group.			$7
***Strategic Partnership and Engagement**	**$4,341**	**55.5%**	• Lower than budgeted net salaries due to vacancies within the group, in part due to organisational restructure.			$448
			• Lower than budgeted rates collection costs for the group			$67
			• Lower than budgeted operational costs for communications and customer services, and • Lower than budgeted iwi engagement, consultancy costs and council committee costs partially funded by reserves		$116	$132
			• Lower than budgeted **community representation** expenditure $1.36m and **economic development activities** of $2.18m, due to the organisational restructure. Actual costs are now reported within Corporate Services, resulting in an underspend in activities for this group.	$1,149	$251	$2,158
			• Other small accumulated variances within the group.			$20
Community Resilience	**($90)**	**-1%**	• Lower than budgeted net salaries due to vacancies within the group.			$66
			• Higher than budgeted expenditure for climate resilience programme, funded by reserves and share of costs contributions	($23)	($80)	($99)
			• Higher than budgeted expenditure for CDEM operations, primarily for Flood Resilience for Ngā Manga Atawhai ($115) which is fully funded.	($115)		$8
			• Lower than budgeted grants for emergency services, due to the budget reassigned to ***Corporate Services**.		$935	$0
			• Higher than budgeted expenditure on consultants ($166k) and river scheme work programmes ($26k) •	($116)	($80)	($29)
			• Lower than budgeted cost for harbour safety costs including Insurance, pilotage, river channel costs and maintenance.		$33	$194
			• Higher than budgeted expenditure ($791k) for Passenger and regional transport programmes due to timing, funded primarily by funding and reserves. The revised budget variance is ($292k)	($698)	($81)	($12)
			• Other small accumulated variances within the group.			$6
***Corporate Services**	**($4,713)**	**-32.9%**	• Higher than budgeted net salaries within the group, due to the organisational restructure.			($275)
			• Higher than budgeted expenditure on commercial property investments partially offset by $380k collected in commercial rents and cost recoveries.		($71)	($363)
			• Lower than budgeted costs for staff recruitment, training and consultancy for people and culture operational costs.			$142
			• Higher than budgeted council property and operation costs, primarily for head office maintenance.		($5)	($110)
			• Lower than budgeted expenditure on Tu Uru Kahika of $23k, and consultancy for corporate strategy implementation $26k, offset by • Higher than budget emergency services grants previously held in **Community Resilience.**		($354)	($484)
			• Higher than budgeted **community representation** expenditure ($1.11k) and **economic development activities** ($2.10m), due to the organisational restructure. Budgets are within Strategic Partnership and Engagement. Tthe revised budget variances are $89k and $210k respectively.	($1,149)	($1,759)	($289)
			• Other small accumulated variances within the group.			$4
CEO Office	**$253**	**15.4%**	• Lower than budgeted net salaries.			($15)
			• Lower than budgeted consultancy costs for the CEO Group and labour allocation to respective cross council groups.			$266
			• Other small accumulated variances.			$2
Total	**$522**	**0.85%**		**($2,366)**	**($1,028)**	**$3,916**

Impact of the restructure of economic development, community representation programmes and emergency services grants are.

***Corporate Services:** Corporate Services: Of the ($4.71m) unfavourable variance, ($4.11m) or (87%) is attributable to restructuring-related expenditure across the group. When the impact of the restructure is excluded, the revised group variance would be ($599k) unfavourable.

***Strategic Partnership & Engagement:** Of the $4.34m favourable variance, $3.56m (representing 82%) is attributable to restructuring-related expenditure across groups. Excluding the impact of the restructure, the revised group variance would be $782k favourable.

Table 6

Reserve Movement Variance

YTD ending March 2026

Reserve	*Commentary*	*VARIANCE YTD Original 000's*
Transfers from/(to) Special Reserves		
Transfers from/(to) Flood Infrastructure Reserve	Higher than budgeted net transfers to Flood Infrastructure and Rivers Reserve, due to progress on the multiple flood mitigation work programmes, and programmes.	$72
Transfers from/(to) Investment and Growth Reserve	Higher than budgeted net transfers to the Investment and Growth Reserve , due to support to council controlled organisations not yet required.	$119
Transfers from/(to) Property Reinvestment Fund Reserve	Higher than budgeted net gains transferred to reserve	$488
Transfers from/(to) Infrastructure Investment Fund Reserve	Higher than budgeted net gains transferred to reserve	$524
Transfers from/(to) Community Investment Reserve	Higher than budgeted net gains transferred to reserve	$909
Transfers from/(to) Forest Income Equalisation Reserve	Lower than budgeted transfer from the reserve due to lower election related costs	($135)
Transfers from/(to) Approved Carry Forwards General Funds	Higher than budgeted transfers from approved carry forward reserves allocated to Wild Deer, Climate Resilience, Iwi Liaison and Transport	($510)
Transfers from/(to) Whangarei Bus Reserve	Higher than budgeted transfers from the Whangārei Bus Reserve, due to higher than budgeted costs across the transport program.	($765)
Transfers from/(to) Far North Bus Reserve	Higher than budgeted transfers to the Far North Bus Reserve, due to higher than budgeted surplus across the transport program.	$98
Transfers from/(to) Operating Costs Reserve	Lower than budgeted transfers from the Operating Costs mainly due to funding not yet required,	$235
Transfers from/(to) Enterprise System Reserve	Lower than budgeted transfers from the Enterprise Reserve due to lower than planned Software costs.	$194
Transfers from/(to) Kaipara Moana Remediation Reserve	Lower than budgeted transfers from the Kaipara Moana Remediation Reserve due to lower cost for the KMR programme	$684
Transfers from/(to) CDEM Reserve	Higher than budgeted transfer to the CDEM Facilities Reserve due to lower than budgeted interest costs associated with borrowings not yet drawn,	$215
Transfers from/(to) IRIS Next Gen Reserve	Lower than budgeted transfer from the Iris Next gen reserve due to lower project costs.	$196
Transfers from/(to) Biosecurity Pest Incursion Reserve	Higher than budgeted transfer from the Biosecurity reserve due work progressing ahead of budget.	($50)
	Other accumulated variances for council.	($9)

Attachments/Ngā tapirihanga

Nil

TITLE:	**Approval of NRC comments to the Fast Track Expert Panel regarding Bream Bay Sand Extraction application by MBL.**
From:	Ingrid Kuindersma, Senior Policy Planner and Tami Woods, Policy and Planning Manager
Authorised by Group Manager/s:	Ruben Wylie, Pou Tiaki Taiao, on 09 April 2026

Executive summary/Whakarāpopototanga

The Fast-track Approvals Act 2024 (FTA Act) establishes an alternative consenting process for large-scale projects with regional or national benefits, with decisions made by an EPA-appointed expert panel within set statutory timeframes. Public participation is limited; however, the EPA must seek comments from relevant local authorities.

MBL Ltd's application to extract sand at Bream Bay has been lodged with, and accepted into, the Fast-track process. As the proposal is subject to the Regional Plan for Northland, the Northland Regional Council is a relevant authority and may be invited to comment. Once requested, council has up to 20 working days to respond. Given these short timeframes, and the need for full council approval, the purpose of this paper is to seek council approval for comments on the application ahead of the formal request for comment being sought by the expert panel.

Recommendation(s)

1. That the report 'Approval of NRC comments to the Fast-track Expert Panel regarding Bream Bay sand extraction application by MBL.' by Ingrid Kuindersma, Senior Policy Planner and Tami Woods, Policy and Planning Manager and dated 19 March 2026, be received.
2. That council approve the draft comments for Northland Regional Council feedback to the Expert Panel regarding the Fast-track application for sand extraction by MBL.

Options

No.	Option	Advantages	Disadvantages
1	Approve the draft comments to be provided to the EPA.	NRC views on the sand extraction proposal will be presented to the expert panel.	Nil
2	Do not approve the draft comments.	Nil	The expert panel will not be aware of NRC's position.
3	Approve the draft comments subject to amendments agreed to	NRC comments are updated to reflect all the latest considerations from councillors to be	Making amendments the draft comments document will need to be done so via a council resolution on the day.

No.	Option	Advantages	Disadvantages
	by council at the council meeting.	presented to the Expert Panel.	Making any material changes to the document, which may require expert advice, may be challenging.

The staff's recommended option is 1.

Considerations

1. Alignment to council strategic direction - community outcomes

The matters covered in this report relate to the following community outcomes:

☐ Protected and flourishing native life

☐ Safe and resilient transport networks

☐ Meaningful partnerships with tāngata whenua

☐ Efficient, progressive and transparent council systems

☒ Healthy waters, land and air

☒ A sustainable, innovative and equitable economy

☐ Carbon neutral, resilient communities in a changing climate

2. Climate Impact

This report relates to an administrative matter to seek council approval of its comment to the expert panel. While the MBL application may have climate change implications, those considerations will be taken into account by the expert panel.

3. Environmental Impact

This report relates to an administrative matter to seek council approval of its comment to the expert panel. There are potential environmental risks associated with the sand extraction application. The draft comments to the EPA provide some detail on these potential effects as well as the outcomes of the technical peer reviews commissioned by NRC. Approving the comments would allow the expert panel to consider these effects.

4. Community views

There are strong views in the community regarding the sand extraction project. Public protests have been held, and the Whangarei District Council has passed a resolution opposing the project. Opposition has been raised with regard to environmental, cultural and economic aspects of the proposal. An economic assessment has been provided by the Bream Bay Guardians Community group, and it is proposed that NRC include this assessment with the comments to the expert panel. The FTA process limits the ability of community groups/tangata whenua to be engaged in the application. The expert panel has the discretion to determine who is invited to participate in the process and it is not compulsory to include the community groups. NRC's comment is therefore an opportunity to raise matters of concern where groups are not invited to participate directly.

5. **Māori impact statement**

   Some Iwi/hapū have indicated through Cultural Impact Assessments and community forums that they consider the proposal will have negative impacts on tangata whenua values. These concerns have been highlighted in the draft comment which includes a request for the expert panel to give this careful consideration and to decide if additional iwi/hapū should be invited to comment.

6. **Financial implications**

   The nature of the comments does not in itself have financial implications. However, in order to provide informed discussion on the potential effects of the application, NRC has incurred costs associated with contracting external experts in Coastal Processes and Marine Ecology as this expertise was not available in house. There has also been staff time associated with reviewing the application and preparing draft comments

7. **Implementation issues**

   Should council decide not to approve the comments at the April Council meeting, there is a moderate to high risk that council's current meeting schedule will not provide sufficient time to secure approval within the 20 working day deadline.

8. **Significance and engagement**

   In relation to section 79 of the Local Government Act 2002, the decision to provide comment to the expert panel is considered to be of low significance when assessed against council's significance and engagement policy. This does not mean that this matter is not of significance to tāngata whenua and/or individual communities, but that council is able to make decisions relating to this matter without undertaking further consultation or engagement.

9. **Policy, risk management and legislative compliance**

   The FTA Act specifically provides for the expert panel to request comment from relevant local authorities. Approving the draft comment will allow NRC to respond to their request within the required 20 working day timeframe.

Background/Tuhinga

The Fast-track Approvals Act 2024 (FTA Act) provides an alternative pathway for obtaining approval for large-scale development projects considered to have regional or national benefits. Projects that have been accepted into the Fast-track pathway are lodged with the EPA and follow the timeline set out in the Act. The EPA convenes an expert panel to decide on the application and, if granted, any relevant conditions to impose.

MBL Ltd's application to extract sand at Bream Bay has been lodged and accepted by the EPA. There are tight parameters around public participation in the process, with limited opportunities for communities, hapū and iwi involvement. However, one of the requirements is that the EPA seek comments on the application from relevant local authorities. As the activities associated with the sand extraction are subject to the Regional Plan for Northland, NRC is a relevant authority for making comments.

Once invited to comment, there is a maximum of 20 working days to provide comment to the panel. Due to the tight timeframes and the requirement that full council approve the comment, staff are seeking to confirm the comments prior to a formal invitation from the EPA.

A workshop was held on 18 March 2026 to present draft comments to the councillors for discussion, and guidance was sought on any amendments or additions to the document. Staff have incorporated

feedback from that workshop into the draft comments attached as Attachment 1. Key changes to the draft comment as a result of councillor feedback are as follows:

- The draft comment provided by staff at the workshop initially stated that NRC opposed the application. However, workshop discussion directed that this be changed to "unable to support the application". Post workshop councillor discussion has confirmed the majority position of councillors is to maintain the initial proposed draft comment to oppose the application.
- Additional matters in the economic section of the comments have been included, particularly regarding the lack of detail in the application addressing regional or national benefits from the proposed sand extraction and the lack of context on alternative sand supplies.
- Cultural matters were raised as an important consideration given the limited ability for iwi/hapū to have input on Fast Track applications. The concerns raised in the Cultural Impact Assessments have been highlighted and a request that the expert panel consider inviting input from other relevant iwi/hapū as part of their assessment has been added.
- Coastal geomorphology expert Professor Mark Dickson identified the availability of recent bathymetric LiDAR relevant to the Bream Bay area and that this has not been referenced in the application documentation. Availability of this data has been noted in the comment for the panel's consideration.
- Coastal Ecology expert Dr Sharon De Luca highlighted the importance of monitoring to establish good baseline data and to allow an understanding of the impacts of the sand extraction. Following the workshop Dr De Luca has provided a draft monitoring condition and advice note to include in the comments should the panel grant approval. Imposing a shorter consent duration is also raised as a possibility given the uncertainty over the potential effects of sand extraction.

Attachments/Ngā tapirihanga

Attachment 1: Comment on Bream Bay Sand Extraction Application ⇩

Comment on Bream Bay Sand Extraction Application

Attn: **Expert Consenting Panel Bream Bay Sand Extraction Application**
C/- Environmental Protection Authority (EPA)
Private Bag 63002
Waterloo Quay
Wellington 6140

From: Northland Regional Council

Northland Regional Council (NRC) thanks the panel for inviting comment in respect of the Bream Bay Extraction Application by MBL Limited applied for under the Fast-track Approvals Act 2024 (FTA).

Council recognises the significant concerns regarding the proposed sand extraction activity, expressed by iwi, hapū, the local community, and our district council counterparts.

We acknowledge the depth of opposition and emphasise the importance for decision makers to carefully consider these perspectives before making any decisions. We are mindful that processes under the FTA may create a risk that affected community views are not fully considered, especially when they are not provided the opportunity to participate in the decision-making process. Our commentary on the proposed is therefore both from the perspective of council's role in representing the interests of its communities, and from a technical standpoint in our role as a regulatory authority.

Based on the concerns expressed by the communities council represents, the impacts of the proposal on the rights and interest of our Te Tiriti partners, and the uncertainty associated with the impact of the proposal on marine ecology, NRC opposes the proposal.

In order to assist the Expert Panel in considering the application, we have attached technical peer review documents commissioned by NRC regarding Coastal Ecology and Coastal Geomorphology relating to the application. We also attach an economics assessment supplied to council by Bream Bay Guardians Group. That assessment has been reviewed by NRC's in-house economics staff who are of the view that the counter economic argument has merit. However, NRC did not commission a technical peer review of economic matters.

Marine Ecology
Dr Sharon De Luca from Boffa Miskell is an expert in Marine Ecology and has provided a review of a range of ecological issues (Refer Attachment 1).

The initial review by Dr De Luca raised several issues regarding the draft technical reports and these were passed on the MBL Ltd prior to lodgement. The applicants have responded to these comments in Attachment 5 of the substantive application. However, several issues remain from Dr De Luca's perspective.

Dr De Luca's overall conclusion is:

> *"While many matters raised through peer review have been satisfactorily addressed, I retain moderate concern regarding the ecological value assessment and the inadequacy of the control sites, and high concern regarding the adequacy of the proposed monitoring within the sand extraction area. These issues are material to the interpretation of level of effect and warrant careful consideration."*

We urge the panel to consider the points made by Dr De Luca, and to give careful attention to the findings of the marine ecology assessment, particularly the concerns regarding ecological value, the adequacy of control sites, and the robustness of proposed monitoring within the sand extraction area.

Coastal Geomorphology
Professor Mark Dickson from Auckland University is an expert in Coastal Processes and Geomorphology and has provided a review of this aspect of the application (Attachment 2). The initial review by Dr Dickson also raised some issues which were referred to MBL. His review of the substantive application concludes that:

> *"Based on what I have read about the morphodynamic depth of closure and the shoreface shape at Te Ākau Bream Bay, I speculate that to mitigate potential shoreline consequences of sand extraction over a 100-year period, sand extraction might need to occur seaward of the 45-year maximum outer depth of closure calculation, rather than the 45-year average outer depth of closure calculation."*

The review by Dr Dickson underscores the need to give careful consideration to the proposed sand extraction boundary in order to mitigate the impacts of the proposal on the shoreline of Bream Bay. He has also noted that recent bathometric LIDAR is available for the Bream Bay area and this has not been referred to or analysed in the applicant's assessment.

We recommend that the panel seek further independent advice with respect to the adequacy of the proposed mitigation measures because there remains uncertainty as to the potential impacts of the proposal on coastal geomorphology.

Economics
In addition to the reviews engaged by NRC, we have been provided with a review of the applicant's economics assessment commissioned by Bream Bay Guardians (Refer Attachment 3). This review challenges the findings of the MBL Economics report prepared by M. E. Consulting, raising concerns with the methodology and conclusions. We have subsequently had the council's economic advisor review this report and he has concluded that it raises legitimate concerns regarding the economic outcomes.

NRC has not commissioned an independent expert to provide a formal peer review of economic outcomes but considers the evidence provided to date fails to clearly establish the regional or national economic benefits from the application. It also does not clearly set out the availability of alternative sand supplies within the broader context of the Northland and Auckland regions, which we consider to be a critical consideration for determining economic benefit

Given the fundamental importance of economic benefit to the purpose of the Fast Track legislation, we recommend and that the expert panel seek further independent economic advice.

Cultural Impacts
We note iwi and hapū have raised a range of significant concerns in the Cultural Impact Assessments (CIA) provided as part of the application. NRC is aware that a MoU has been agreed between the applicant and Te Parawhau ki Tai. However, we note a number of concerns raised by Patuharakeke and Ngātiwai Trust Board remain unresolved. Patuharakeke for example identify a number of specific cultural impacts on Rangatiratanga and Kitiakitanga. In addition, the CIA prepared by Ngātiwai Trust Board seeks that the application be declined or should it go ahead, be subject to a comprehensive set of cultural mitigation measures.

Although these matters are for the iwi/hapū to articulate, NRC's submission on the Fast Track Approvals Bill pointed to the risks the legislation would create in respect of failing to provide for the protection of the rights and interests of iwi and hapū. We therefore request that the expert panel pay particular attention to concerns raised in the CIAs; and consider whether there may be other iwi/hapū who should be invited to comment in addition to those that have submitted a CIA.

Monitoring and Conditions

While NRC is unable to support the proposal, should the panel approve the application, NRC requests that a robust monitoring regime is put in place by way of consent conditions. Dr De Luca has identified that this is required to establish accurate baseline data, keep track of the scale of effects related to the activity and identify any unanticipated effects.

Monitoring of the benthic environment within the sand extraction area is critical to test the validity of the natural recovery assumptions relied on by MBL. These assumptions form a key component of the effects assessment and require empirical verification.

Monitoring addresses the public and hapū/iwi concerns about damage to the marine environment in the short and long term and provides data to base future decisions on. In particular, Dr De Luca has prepared a memo with a proposed monitoring regime to be included in the Marine Ecology Management Plan condition. A copy of this is included below as Attachment 4.

Given the uncertainty around environmental, cultural and economic/market effects over time, a reduced consent duration is considered appropriate should the consent be granted.

Conclusion

In light of the substantial concerns raised by both independent experts and the local community we oppose the proposed sand extraction activity proposed by MBL Ltd.

The ecological, geomorphological, and economic reviews all highlight uncertainties and risks that have not been adequately addressed. These findings, together with the community's concern about the long-term impacts on Bream Bay, reinforce the need for a precautionary approach when determining the proposal.

Name: Pita Tipene

Title: Chair, Northland Regional Council

Date: # 2026

ATTACHMENT 1 : Marine Ecology Peer Review

Boffa Miskell

Memorandum

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Attention:	Ingrid Kuindersma
Company:	Northland Regional Council (NRC)
Date:	15 September 2025
From:	Dr Sharon De Luca
Message Ref:	Peer Review Proposed McCallum sand mining at Bream Bay
Project No:	BM250630

I have been provided with the following reports by NRC:

1. Bioresearches (2025) Assessment of Ecological Effects. Report for McCallum Bros Limited.
2. Bioresearches (2024) Te ĀKau Bream Bay Sand Area, 2024 Initial Sand Extraction Assessment, February – March 2024. Report for McCallum Bros Limited.
3. NIWA (2025a). Sand extraction in Te Ākau Bream Bay. Potential effects on seabirds and shorebirds. Prepared for McCallum Bros Limited.
4. Boyd (2025). Assessment of Effects on Fish and Fisheries in Te Ākau Bream Bay. Prepared for McCallum Bros Limited.
5. SLR (2025). Te Ākau Bream Bay Sand Extraction. Marine Mammal Environmental Impact Assessment. Prepared for McCallum Bros Limited.
6. SLR (2025). Te Ākau Bream Bay Sand Extraction. Water Quality Assessment of Environmental Effects. Prepared for McCallum Bros Limited.
7. NIWA (2025b) Cup Corals and Schedule 7 of the Fast-track Approvals Act 2024. Prepared for McCallum Bros Limited.

Main points from review of marine ecology

(see Table 1 below for further detail):

1. The assessment states that each ecological feature was assessed using a spreadsheet template by assigning a score based on professional judgement (with justification) to attributes listed in table Why was this spreadsheet not provided in the assessment? Provide please spreadsheet?
2. Statistical design issues:
    a. Bioresearches note that the differences in biota between North and South control areas could make comparing differences over time difficult. How is this mitigated?
    b. Is this difficulty with biota differences addressed with respect to assessing the second stage of the project?

c. At the time of sampling, more replication was suggested to balance the design. Was this done? Please outline the statistical approach as it stands now?

3. Ecological values

a. I agree with ecological values for benthic macrofauna, sharks & rays and marine reptiles. I disagree with the benthic habitat (stated as just fauna in the assessment) has moderate ecological value - I would value it as **high**, given the diverse and abundant benthic invertebrates, presence of protected cup corals, sand grain sizes, low contaminant levels, low degree of modification, few invasive species, water quality high, fish abundance and diversity high (as per EIANZ marine ecological values guidelines).

b. At the ZOI the effect on the benthic habitat is **high** until natural recovery >3 years (needs to be monitored rather than just assumed), and then during recovery probably reduces to **low** if recovery occurring as expected.

c. I disagree with the separate ecological values for fish (just because the fish species are common, and there are no at-risk or declining fish species, doesn't make the values low). The values appropriate for the habitat type, should be at least **moderate** or **high**.

This is supported by The Fish and Fisheries Assessment which states "diverse fish community of Te Akau Bream Bay, comprised of populations of common inshore species, including demersal and pelagic mobile species".

d. Stoney Corals - Bioresearches state that the presence of these solitary stoney corals in the sand extraction area does not increase the ecological value of the site, as they are not complex habitat forming corals. These coral species do not have to be complex habitat forming corals to be ecologically valuable. These corals provide microhabitats for small invertebrates and are important for biodiversity and as indicator species (Holland et al., 2020) and therefore add to the ecological values of the site.

NIWA (2025b) report provides an assessment of cup corals. This report concludes that the sand extraction activity proposed is likely to minor to negligible impact on the populations within Aotoearoa New Zealand of either *Sphenotrocus ralpae* or *Kionotrochus suteri.* I defer to the NIWA report authored by Beaumont as the best available assessment.

I have no review comments on the avifauna, fish and fisheries, nor the marine mammal assessment.

Boffa Miskell

Table 1: Marine Ecology Peer Review

	Review Point	**Question**
Bioresearches (2025) Report Structure (marine values)	Suggest the authors create a table of marine assessment critera from EIANZ 2025 in first column and the assigned ecological value next column, and final column with reference to the paragraph in the ecological assessment and could include mitigation.	Suggest table for clarity is provided.
Bioresearches (2025) Table 1	The first statement says each ecological feature was assessed using a spreadsheet template by assigning a score based on professional judgement (with justification) to attributes listed in table 1. Why was this spreadsheet not provided?	This is a gap in the assessment.
Bioresearches (2025) Page i	0.001% loss of seabed habitat from the sand extraction area.	How is this calculated? At what scale?
Bioresearches (2025) page iii	The differences in biota between N&S control areas, which could make comparing differences over time difficult, stated there are no alternative controls areas are obvious.	Why are alternative control sites not obvious? What has been considered?
		With the proposal to undertake second stage if no significant or unexpected adverse effects arising from the extraction identified through the monitoring programme - is this difficulty in the baseline adequately addressed?
Bioresearches (2025) page 3	At the time of sampling, it was suggested more replication was needed in the control area to balance the statistical design.	Was replication design imbalance addressed?
Bioresearches (2025) Table 1	Please finish the statement about shellfish flesh (9th row)?	Was shellfish flesh tested for contaminants?

Bioreseaches (2025) Section 6, page 58	Ecological Values	Agree with ecological values for benthic macrofauna, sharks & rays and marine reptiles. I disagree with the benthic habitat (stated as just fauna) has moderate ecological value - I would value it as **high**, given the diverse and abundant benthic invertebrates, sand grain sizes, low contaminant levels, low degree of modification, few invasive species, water quality high, fish abundance and diversity high. I disagree with the separate ecological values for fish (just because the fish species are common, and there are no at-risk or declining fish species, doesn't make the values low. It makes the values appropriate for the habitat type, so at least **moderate** or **high**.
Bioreseaches (2025) Section 6, page 58	Ecological Values	At the ZOI the effect on the benthic habitat is **high** until natural recovery >3 years (needs to be monitored rather than just assumed), and then during recovery probably reduces to **low** if recovery occurring as expected.
Bioreseaches (2025) Section 6, page 58	Ecological Values	What is the scale of assessment - the ZOI or Bream Bay or both?
Bioresearches (2024) 3.3	Titled "Surficial Sediment Quality"	Sediment was composited from the dredge tows - 100mm deep sediments were mixed and subsampled – these samples were <u>not</u> surficial – the top 2-3cm is usual for surfical. The top 2-3 cm of sediment is considered the recent deposition, perhaps this part of the report should be re-interpreted as Total Sediment Quality (top 100mm) not Surficial?
Bioreseaches (2024) 2.2.4	sensitive species NIWA (2013)	The reference to NIWA (2013) discusses sensitive benthic <u>communities</u>, which is different to sensitive <u>species.</u> In the EIANZ 2025 (your table 1) criteria the reference is to sensitive versus

		tolerant species, with respect to tolerant to mud and contaminants. Please reframe this discussion to sensitive species not sensitive communities.
Bioreseaches (2024) 3.4.1.1	Diversity and number of individuals (abundance)	Were the North and South control sites assemblages different to each other (as well as difference to the extraction site)?
Bioreseaches (2024)	"previous experience sampling in similar habitats has shown that brachiopods are sometimes found attached to Carrier Shell".	Please give reference
Bioreseaches (2024) 3.4.2.2	"soft shore benthic biota usually between 10-20 taxa per sample"	What was the standard size sample? It is not clear. Were the cup corals identified in drop camera or ponar dredge tows?
Bioreseaches (2024) 3.4.2.3	Shannon Wiener showed high diversity in Bream Bay. Bream Bay has high diversity of taxa (more so than Pakiri) but typical of the Whangarei Heads area.	
Bioreseaches (2024)	Diversity in the northern control area statistically higher than the southern and remote control areas, but mean diversity from all control areas combined were within the range reported from the sand extraction area.	Does this mean the mean diversity of northern control, southern control and remote control areas were not statistically different the mean diversity from the extraction area?
Bioreseaches (2024) Figures G.7 and G.6		I cannot interpret these plots
Bioreseaches (2024) Figure G.4	Control north samples seems to be isolated from the majority of the samples, as does control remote (CR) (less so Control South (CS).	Please discuss these differences in detail.
Bioreseaches (2024) stress in MDS	2D MDS plots with values below 0.15 are generally "good" fit, whereas values above this are not good fits. Almost all the MDS plots produced have stress scores significantly above the value that is considered a good fit to the data.	Discuss the stress in 2D and 3D plots, perhaps in terms of Dugard et al 2010. Please discuss the usefulness of these multivariate plots?

		Are the MDS plots useful in differentiating between groups?
Bioreseaches (2024) Figure 22		What is this figure telling us?
Bioreseaches (2024) Table G.11 and G12		What are these tables telling us?
Bioreseaches (2024) page 49 3.4.2.4.4	There is a statistically different biotic composition between extraction and control areas	How will that be treated in the monitoring?
Bioreseaches (2024) page 50 para 2	The biota communities between extraction and controls could lead to issues comparing differences over time.	What is the solution?
Bioreseaches (2024) page 50 and 51	Corals - Bioresearches state that the presence of these solitary corals does not increase the ecological value of the site, as they are not complex habitat forming corals.	NIWA (2025b) covers cup coral assessment. I disagree that the presence of cup corals do not add to the ecological value of the site.
Bioreseaches (2025) Section 6, page 58	Ecological Values	Agree with ecological values for benthic macrofauna, sharks & rays and marine reptiles. I disagree with the benthic habitat (stated as just fauna) has moderate ecological value - I would value it as **high**, given the diverse and abundant benthic invertebrates, sand grain sizes, low contaminant levels, low degree of modification, few invasive species, water quality high, fish abundance and diversity high. I disagree with the separate ecological values for fish (just because the fish species are common, and there are no at-risk or declining fish species, doesn't make the values low. It makes the values appropriate for the habitat type, so at least **moderate** or **high**.

Bioreseaches (2025) Section 6, page 58	Ecological Values	At the ZOI the effect on the benthic habitat is **high** until natural recovery >3 years (needs to be monitored rather than just assumed), and then during recovery probably reduces to **low** if recovery occurring as expected.
Bioreseaches (2025) Section 6, page 58	Ecological Values	What is the scale of assessment - the ZOI or Bream Bay or both?
Bioreseaches (2025) Section 6, page 59	Monitoring	Higher extraction levels - monitoring and setting of trigger levels to ensure system can cope. Please provide more detail?

Boffa Miskell

Memorandum

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Attention:	Ingrid Kuindersma
Company:	NRC
Date:	26 February 2026
From:	Dr Sharon De Luca (reviewed by Dr Tommaso Alestra)
Message Ref:	Peer Review Responses to MBL Responses to Questions/Queries
Project No:	BM250630

Overall expert conclusion

This memo was prepared after reviewing the replies and revised assessment provided by MBL in response to my peer review outlined in a previous memo (issued on 15 September 2025). While many matters raised through peer review have been satisfactorily addressed, I retain moderate concern regarding the ecological value assessment and the inadequacy of the control sites, and high concern regarding the adequacy of the proposed monitoring within the sand extraction area. These issues are material to the interpretation of level of effect and warrant careful consideration.

1. Benthic habitat and fish ecological values are understated - MODERATE concern

I consider that the ecological values of the benthic invertebrate communities and associated fish assemblages have been understated when evaluated against the EIANZ marine ecological value criteria and broader ecological processes and functions.

In my view, a balanced evaluation of EIANZ marine valuation criteria[1] is required. Relevant criterial for this project include, and are not limited to:

- Abundance and diversity of benthic invertebrates relative to habitat type,
- Sediment grain size and quality,
- Presence of sediment contaminants,
- Invasive species,
- Threatened or at-risk species,
- Fish communities,
- Water quality, and

[1]The EIANZ criteria for soft-sediment marine habitats are not biased (as stated by MBL) to estuaries but include all soft sediment habitats. The marine ecological valuation guidelines have been peer reviewed by marine ecologists from various regional councils and other consultancies. Support of the guidelines was given by all involved.

- Degree of modification.

When these criteria are applied to the data presented, I consider that the benthic habitat ecological values are more appropriately classified as High, rather than Moderate, noting that overall value classification is ultimately a matter of expert judgement based on the EIANZ guidelines.

In addition, the assessment places substantial weight on the conclusion that benthic habitats and associated fauna within the proposed extraction area are of low to moderate ecological value, primarily on the basis that benthic habitats are described as widespread and representative of regional sandy seabed environments, with no rare, threatened, or uniquely distinctive benthic taxa identified. Ecological value is not limited to rarity or uniqueness, and commonality and large habitat size does not necessarily equate to low ecological value. Other key aspects such as functional importance, trophic role, connectivity and contribution to broader ecological processes have not been adequately considered in the assessment.

As for benthic habitats, the ecological values of fish communities have been understated relying solely on the fact that the fish species present are common. I do not agree with the conclusion that fish assemblages have Low ecological value. The fact that species composition and abundances are typical for this habitat type supports, at a minimum, a Moderate ecological value, i.e., common does not equate to low ecological value. Fish also contribute to numerous key ecological processes at the site and in the wider marine environment which have not been adequately considered in the assessment. Further, I think it is inappropriate to separate the assessment of fish community composition from the benthic environment ecological value assessment, as these components are assessed collectively under the EIANZ soft sediment marine ecological value framework, and they are ecologically connected in the near-benthic environment.

Because ecological value is treated as low to moderate in the assessment it is concluded that adverse effects are generally minor to moderate and acceptable. However, if benthic invertebrate/faunal communities and associated fish were assessed as having high ecological value, which I consider to be the appropriate value based on the EIANZ marine ecological valuation guidelines and the information presented in the assessment, the same magnitude of physical disturbance (assessed as low at ZOI and negligible in Bream Bay by MBL) would likely lead to higher levels of effect. It is my opinion that the magnitude of effect should be assessed as moderate[2] (to be confirmed in the annual monitoring of dredged track). Moderate effects are defined by EIANZ as “Loss or alteration one or more key elements/features of the existing baseline conditions such that the post-development character, composition and/or attributes will be partially changed”. In the application, it is anticipated there will be loss/alteration of benthic invertebrate assemblages.

The temporal nature of adverse effects has not been adequately assessed. However, MBL accept the adverse effects on benthic communities would be high. In the short-term (3 years) effects on the benthic community is estimated to cause 14% mortality of benthic biota in 22.5% of the sand extraction area. The recovery period needs monitoring in order to confirm this estimate, as does the composition of the benthic community following dredging.

In summary, the ecological value assessment appears to rely on flawed interpretation of ecological values, emphasising habitat commonality and absence of rare species while giving limited consideration to functional, trophic, and wider scale ecological processes. A more accurate and balanced assessment of ecological values would lead to more precautionary conclusions regarding the level of adverse effects.

2. Differences in benthic biota composition between control and impact sites - MODERATE concern

There are substantive differences in benthic community composition between the northern and southern control sites and the proposed sand extraction area. These pre-existing differences limit the ability to directly compare assemblage composition among sites over time.

[2] Magnitude of effects detailed in Table 12 of the Assessment of Effects on Benthic Communities.

I acknowledge MBL's position that identifying control sites with similar environmental characteristics to the impact area has been difficult, and that control sites are rarely ideal.

Despite this constraint, it remains possible to test hypotheses relating to differences in temporal trends between the impact site and control sites, with respect to diversity and abundance metrics, as well as levels of dissimilarity in community composition. In my opinion, this should be the primary focus of the benthic fauna statistical analyses moving forward.

3. Post disturbance monitoring of benthic habitat within the sand extraction area - HIGH concern

The report places strong emphasis on recovery potential and recolonisation rates to support conclusions of limited long-term effects. Nonetheless, temporary loss of habitat and biota of high ecological value can still constitute a significant adverse effect. The assessment does not make this distinction and only addresses long-term effects.

Within dredge tracks, the benthic community will be subject to at least partial fauna removal, representing a high level of effect, notwithstanding the expectation that effect severity should reduce over time through natural recolonisation.

Monitoring of the benthic environment within the sand extraction area is critical to test the validity of the natural recovery assumptions relied upon by MBL. These assumptions form a key component of the effects assessment and require empirical verification.

I agree that monitoring should be targeted to dredge track locations, rather than relying solely on broader area-wide surveys. In my opinion, monitoring within an active sand extraction area can be appropriately designed to ensure safety and avoid interference with extraction operations.

Benthic monitoring should occur annually of representative dredged areas (at least 10% of dredged tracks, five grab samples per track) dredged in the previous 12 months (Year 1). Year 2 monitoring should occur annually in representative area dredged in the second year plus those sites monitored after Year 1. The year 3 monitoring should occur annually in representative area dredged in the third year plus those sites monitored after Year 1 and Year 2. The monitoring of areas dredged in Year 2 and 3 will require 1 and 2 further years monitoring to comply with the condition that monitoring is undertaken for three years after dredging (Table 1). Control sites should also be monitored with the same replication. This approach allows three years of monitoring data for each of the three years of dredging. In order to understand benthic community recovery, which MBL accept there is a paucity of scientific literature covering this topic, monitoring at Year 1 and Year 2 sites could continue until three years after Year 3 monitoring is completed (optional in Table 1).

Table 1: Proposed schedule for monitoring representative areas[3] within dredged tracks

	March/April after Year 1 dredging (impact and control)	March/April after Year 2 dredging (impact and control)	March/April after Year 3 dredging (impact and control)
Year 1	✓		
Year 2	✓	✓	
Year 3	✓	✓	✓
Year 4	✓ (optional)	✓	✓
Year 5	✓ (optional)	✓ (optional)	✓

Appendix 1: Responses to each item in the peer review questions/issues raised

This section sets out my response to MBL's replies to the peer review comments contained within the Consultation Summary (pages 59–73). My comments focus on whether the responses adequately address the matters raised and whether any residual concerns remain.

Overall, the majority of peer review comments have been adequately addressed. However, several matters remain for which I retain moderate to high residual concern, as set out below.

Question / Comment from Consultation Summary (page 59-73)	**Peer Reviewer further comment**	**Rationale**	**MBL's reply/amendments**	**Residual concerns**
1	MBL did not include an additional column with reference to the paragraph number of the Assessment of Ecological Effects (AEE), also stating mitigation proposed, as requested.	The additional columns would have aided with the clarity of the assessment.	Not supplied by MBL	Low
2	Spreadsheet template assigning score based on professional judgement (with justification) to attributes listed in Table 1.	Spreadsheet not supplied and the "collection of assessments" used instead was not made clear.	MBL removed reference to "spreadsheet" from Table 1, as no formal spreadsheet was used, rather a collection of assessments.	Low
3	Calculation error of area of disturbance of track disturbance compared to area of sand extraction.	Error corrected for each track. However, 3.4km^2 of benthic habitat disturbance (section 6.2.4) per year, of a total of the 15.4km^2 of extraction area is 22.5% of the extraction area. Over three years this is 67.5% of the extraction area. With the proposed increase in volume after three years (subject to no significant adverse effects detected), can	0.001% corrected to 0.135%	Low

		MBL state what is the percentage of habitat disturbed each year at that point?		
4	Differences in biota composition between the N&S control sites could make comparison of differences difficult.	MBL state there are no similar habitats for control sites. I understand control sites are rarely perfect. Generally, I would suggest adding further control sites to get a handle on the spatial diversity of benthic communities. Despite the pre-existing differences between controls and impact site, it is possible to hypothesise that changes in community composition, diversity and abundance will follow different trends at impact and control sites. This should be the focus of the benthic fauna statistical analyses moving forward.	MBL state that it was difficult identifying the two control sites used in the assessment due to lack of appropriately similar sites to the extraction area.	Moderate
5		As above		Moderate
6		As above		Moderate
7	Replication imbalance	Many multivariate data analysis programmes can deal with replication imbalance.	MBL state that Permanova statistical tests can deal with designs that are no balanced.	Low
8	Shellfish flesh testing	Corrected text to refer to sediment contaminant testing.	Shellfish flesh was not analysed.	N/A
9	Ecological Values	I do not agree that there are no suitable criteria in the EIANZ marine value assessment	There are no suitable criteria in the EIANZ marine value assessment guidelines.	Moderate

		guidelines. It is the ecologist's job to determine which EIANZ criteria are relevant to the particular habitat and propose additional criteria if they consider it appropriate. The relevant criteria include abundance and diversity for the habitat type, grain size, sediment contaminants, invasive species, Threatened or At Risk species, water quality, degree of modification. These criteria, in my opinion, place the benthic habitat marine ecological values as High not Moderate. However, this overarching value is down to expert opinion. I would not have separated the fish community composition from the benthic environment ecological value assessment. They are part of the same criteria in the soft sediment marine ecological values criteria, and ecologically connected in the near-benthic environment I disagree that the fish assemblages have Low ecological value, based on the fact that the species and abundances are typical for this type of habitat. In my expert opinion, the fish		

		assemblages being as expected in this region and habitat type warrants at least a Moderate ecological value. I conclude that the ecological values have been valued too low based on the EIANZ criteria and the information presented in the assessment		
10	Monitoring ecological values in the ZOI	The effect within the dredge tracks will be destruction of, at least part of, the benthic community, which is a high level of effect, but in time the effect level will decrease with natural recolonisation. Monitoring of the benthic assemblages with the dredge tracks is essential to test this hypothesis. I agree that the monitoring would need to be targeted to track locations not general area wide survey. Why is recovery monitoring in the active sand extraction area difficult? Monitoring within a recently (e.g. a year after dredging) dredged area can be planned to make sure it can be done in a safe way that does not impinge on the extraction activities.	MBL state adverse effects could be high in the dredged track, but only a [small] proportion (actually 22.5%) of the sand extraction area will be dredged in any one year.	High
11	ZOI	ZOI unclear.	MBL state the scale of assessment is Bream Bay and the ZOI	N/A

12	Trigger level monitoring	9.2 and 9.3 of the benthic community are appropriate	Absolute trigger levels hard to define in a temporally variable habitat.	Low
13	Surficial Sediment Quality		Renamed Seabed Sediment	N/A
14	Sensitive species vs community	It is possible to determine sensitivity/tolerance of species to disturbance from the literature. For example, *Paphies australis* is sensitive to exposure to suspended sediment of 80mg/L over a period of 13 days.	No response	Low
15	Diversity and abundance	There were missing analyses.	Statistical testing between areas has been added	N/A
16	Reference to Carrier Shells	Missing reference.	Reference added	N/A
17	Cup corals	The method of survey was not clear for cup corals.	Clarified found in ponar samples	N/A
18	Bream Bay Shannon-Wiener (SW) diversity	Not clear whether SW was considered high in Bream Bay.	Confirmed SW is High	N/A
19	Diversity statistics	MDS stress not clear.	Clarified	N/A
20	Figures G6 and G7	MDS stress not clear.	MDS plots stress means the graphs were not a good fit. Graphs don't help with understanding.	N/A
21	Use of MDS plots to discriminate groups	Usefulness of MDS plots unclear.	MBL stated MDS plots in the body of the report were useful but the MDS plots in the appendices not so useful.	N/A

ATTACHMENT 2 : Peer Review of coastal geomorphology and coastal processes

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Prepared by
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21 Sept. 25

Dear Ingrid,

Below I have provided a peer review on the application documents relating to coastal geomorphology and coastal processes for the Bream Bay Sand Mining Fast Track Application. I have also provided a mark-up of the report 'Te Akau Bream Bay Sand Extraction: Coastal Process Effects Assessment', which contains additional comments and minor corrections (see 'Te Ākau Bream Bay Coastal Processes AEE - Draft for Consultation (Clean) MD.pdf'). I have consulted the document 'Sand Extraction Operation Plan - Draft for Consultation (Clean).pdf' but have based my review below on the T&T technical report 'Te Akau Bream Bay Sand Extraction: Coastal Process Effects Assessment' which is where my expertise lies.

My comments below represent a peer review of the T&T report and are strictly limited to the potential effects on coastal geomorphology and coastal processes.

Consistency and clarity in terminology

The report requires editing to ensure consistency and clarity in terminology in relation to the shoreface and boundaries between different zones.

Figure E.1-1 refers to the 'upper shoreface', 'lower shoreface' and 'offshore'. The accompanying text within the Executive summary notes that the upper shoreface has dynamic annual-scale changes in bed level and the lower shoreface has 'significant wave induced sediment transport, which is connected to the beach over decadal timescales'. It then refers to an 'offshore zone or continental shelf' that is seaward of the lower shoreface and has 'negligible net wave induced sediment transport'.

Figure E.1-2 usefully provides (i) quantitative delineation of the qualitative boundaries identified in Figure E.1-1, and (ii) further subdivision of the lower shoreface zone. It describes 'zone 1' as the upper shoreface, and the lower shoreface subdivided into zones 2 and 3. For consistency with Figure E.1-1 it would be useful to add to this figure a 'zone 4' which is the 'offshore' shown in Figure E.1-1. This 'offshore' zone 4 could also be added in the bullets below 'Technical assessment' within the Executive summary.

Later in the report (section 5.2) the terms 'outer' and 'inner' shoreface are used. These terms should be removed and replaced with the terms used in the Executive summary. In section 4.3, for clarity, specific mention should be made of zones 1, 2 and 3 in the bullet points.

Distinguishing zonal boundaries – the lower shoreface

There has been discussion within the scientific literature regarding terminology to describe the shoreface. Hamon-Kerivel et al (2020) proposed to standardize definitions as follows: "The shoreface is made up of two morphodynamically distinct units, namely the upper and lower shoreface. They are divided by the [inner] DoC and the outer limit of the lower shoreface is the threshold at which waves start to significantly impact the bottom at the mesoscale. We propose to use the Valiente et al. (2019) depth of transport (DoT) as a calculable boundary for the outer limit of the shoreface at the mesoscale."

The T&T report has adopted, in general terms, the approach put forward by Hamon-Kerivel et al (2020) and Valiente et al. (2019). However, an innovation appears to be the separation of the lower shoreface into two zones comprised of a landward section that has 'frequent sediment transport but negligible profile change', and a seaward section that has 'infrequent sediment transport'. The report should clarify whether previous studies have also made this separation within the lower shoreface zone.

The report usefully derives boundaries between the four zones quantitatively:

- The boundary between zone 1 and zone 2 (i.e. between annually changing profiles within the upper shoreface and decadally changing profiles in the landward part of the lower shoreface) is defined by the inner DoC (depth of closure) calculation (inner Hallermeier equation, eq. 2 p40).
- The boundary between zone 2 and 3 (i.e. between frequent and infrequent sediment transport within the lower shoreface) is defined by the 90th percentile DoT (depth of transport); this approach is based on wave bed shear stress and is described in section 4.2.1.
- The boundary between zone 3 and the offshore zone (zone 4) (i.e. between infrequent and negligible sediment transport) is defined by the 45-year average outer DoC (outer Hallermeier equation, eq. 1 p5 & eq. 3 p41).

The boundary between the upper and lower shoreface (zones 1 and 2) is consistent with other approaches (e.g. Hamon-Kerivel et al 2020). However, definitions of the other boundaries require some further clarification.

The report states within the Executive summary that 'We present two definitions [meaning (1) the DoT and (2) the outer DoC] for the seaward limit for the lower shoreface.' By 'seaward limit of the lower shoreface' the report is referring to the boundary between zone 3 (lower shoreface) and 4 (offshore). But this is not consistent with the bullet points above this text that state that the DoT has been used to separate zones 2 and 3 (i.e. frequent and infrequent sediment transport).

Section 2.1 notes that 'Hamon-Kerivel (2020) adopted the depth of transport (DoT) as the seaward limit for the lower shoreface', apparently referring to the boundary between zones 3 and 4. Fig 9 in the review paper by Hamon-Kerivel et al (2020) [note *et al* is required in the T&T report but is missing] shows the seaward-most boundary (between zones 3 and 4) as DoT, and the boundary between zones 1 and 2 as the [inner] DoC. The T&T report has modified this figure as Figure 2-1 by annotating the DoC as 'inner DoC' and adding 'outer DoC' to the DoT boundary. The T&T report explains (p4) that 'The DoT is the recommended method for defining the seaward limit of the lower shoreface in a recent coastal geomorphology review paper (Hamon-Kerivel, 2020), instead of the outer DoC'. Valiente et al 2019 noted (p71) that the outer DoC

calculation is usually associated with a depth that 'corresponds best with the upper-plane bed limit under extreme wave conditions, or DoT'.

The points above imply that the DoT and outer DoC are two approaches to defining the boundary between zones 3 and 4. Hence, clearer explanation is required as to the basis for using the DoT to subdivide the lower shoreface into two zones (zones 2 and 3) while retaining the outer DoC calculation as the boundary between zones 3 and 4. Some attempts at explanation are provided, for instance: 'In recent literature, this [the DoT method] is interpreted to be a lower shoreface zone of frequent sediment transport and is the preferred definition of the shoreface'. Ultimately, it is not clear exactly how the report has transitioned from having DoT as the boundary between zones 3 and 4 in Figure 2-1 to then moving the DoT boundary landward within the lower shoreface in Figure E.1-2. A further attempt at explanation is provided on p56 (quoted below), but I find the wording confusing. My understanding of the overall approach used by T&T is that the DoT has been used to distinguish *within* the lower shoreface, which is not what is said in the quoted text below. Perhaps there is a difference between the 90th percentile DoT and DoT? The report is not clear about this.

p56 'The DoT method provides a more robust assessment of profile zonation based on wave induced shear stress. Results for Te Ākau Bream Bay show the lower shoreface as being defined by a shear stress threshold that [is] *located landward of the outer DoC. To account for annual variability, climate change and currents, a conservative approach was used to adopt the 90 percentile DoT (p90 DoT) as a definition of the lower shoreface. The p90 DoT point is interpreted as a area of frequent sediment transport, which is useful for interpreting a lower shoreface boundary. The more traditional and conservative definition of the lower shoreface boundary is the mean outer DoC, which was used to inform the offshore boundary at Pākiri.'*

The approach of subdividing the lower shoreface into two zones of frequent and infrequent sediment transport is interesting and potentially useful. However, the report could more clearly explain (a) why it has done this, in the context of the proposed sand extraction, and (b) the exact approach used, and how this differs from what others have done (e.g. Valiente et al 2019 and Hamon-Kerivel et al 2020). The act of identifying two zones within the 'lower shoreface' means that in some places within the report (e.g. the summary Section 4.3) it is unclear whether zone 2 or zone 3 are being referred to, or whether both are being referred to collectively. I was left somewhat unsure about the importance of the distinction between areas of 'frequent' and 'infrequent' wave induced sediment transport.

Distinguishing zonal boundaries – the outer depth of closure

Discussion of the value adopted for outer DoC is provided in section 4.1.3. An argument is made (p44) that the 'long-term average outer DoC appears suitable for informing the seaward limit of the lower surface in the context of a sand extraction effects assessment, as the average value is consistent with changes in profile shape and sediment texture, whereas the annual values are highly sensitive to the extended plateau'. This argument could be challenged on two bases:

1) Strictly speaking, the DoC equation itself is not sensitive to slope (see section below: 'DoC equation sensitivity to slope').

2) It is suggested in Figure 4-3 and within the text, that there is a coarsening of sediment toward the outer DoC, and that this supports the idea that outer DoC is close to the mean outer DoC calculated point because 'lighter grains are more prone to being swept away, with coarser sediments being stranded until extreme events'. Is there a significant change in sediment size? This could be shown with error bars around the sediment size data. Why does Profile 4 not have the same coarsening trend as indicated in Profile 2?

An alternative interpretation of these figures is possible: the figures appear to show coarsening of sediment at distances beyond (seaward) of about 6 km, which also corresponds to an increase in the profile slope. This area is within the proposed extraction area. A scientifically reasonable argument could be made that the outer DoC should be plotted near this area (i.e. about 23-24 m depth) associated with these changes in slope and sediment size. Why is this alternative interpretation less reasonable than using the mean outer DoC?

DoC equation sensitivity to slope

The report notes in section 4.1.3 and in other places, that the outer DoC equation is sensitive 'to the gradual sloping lower shoreface' (p42). It is then argued that 'More investigation is therefore undertaken using the depth of transport method.'

Strictly speaking, it is not correct to say that the DoC equation is directly sensitive to the slope. The equation has terms for wave height and period and grain size and so is sensitive to these variables. It is more correct to say that the output of the equation (i.e. depth) is sensitive to the slope, because a small change in depth on a gentle slope can result in large horizontal distance.

The DoT method, similar to the DoC equations, use wave and sediment characteristics, but adds the influence of tidal currents and more directly evaluates of shear stress mobilises sediments across changing water depths. As explained in section 4.2.3, this method involves 'identifying the depth at which the bed shear stress associated with these wave conditions first exceeds the critical bed shear stress…'. Unless I have misunderstood something, it appears that outputs from the DoT method are sensitive to slope in the same way that outputs from DoC are?

The point above may seem academic, but the report implies that sensitivity to slope is a reason to use DoT. The DoT method is better justified based on its improved physics-based approach and the inclusion of tidal velocities.

Ridges and swales

The ridges and swales shown in Figure 3-6 are interesting morphological features. Further discussion and investigation of these features is necessary. What are the likely formative processes associated with these features? What is their sedimentology and what does this indicate? In the description of subsurface sediment cores (3.5.3) the report notes that 'Facies 2 seabed level is undulating, possibly part of an irregular dune system'. Is this related to the ridges and swales shown in Figure 3-6? Does the existence of a ridge system in the bathymetric survey imply a Holocene sedimentary 'drape' across some pre-existing Pleistocene structure?

A key point here is to distinguish whether these ridges are active or relict features? Are they 'modern' in the sense that they are being actively formed by sediment transport processes, or are they inherited features?

Underprediction of wave height

Comparison of Table 3.8 (modelled waves) and Table 3.9 (measured waves) shows that waves modelled over a 45-year hindcast period are smaller (for the large waves) than those recorded during a 16-year

observation window, and the difference is considerable (e.g. for maximum Hs, 5.85 m at Profile 1 v 7m at Alpha buoy). Figures 3.17 and 3.18 shows how modelled Hs differs from measured Hs.

The model underprediction issue is further highlighted by the extreme event analysis (3.8.3): the 200-year model extreme is smaller than wave heights observed in a 16-year observation window. The report notes that the scatter is large but that 'the average ratio was calculated to be 1.4'.
Given the model underprediction, I concur with the approach taken in the report (p 31) of amplifying model wave heights to calculate DoC and DoT. However, the amplification factor (1.4) should be further justified. Initially I wondered whether the model underprediction might scale with wave height. My back-of-the-envelope calculations based on Figure 3.18 suggest that this is not the case, but I recommend including a plot of underprediction ratio v Hs measured to clarify that. An amplification factor of 1.45 (for instance) instead of 1.4 might have a significant impact of DoC and DoT calculations, so further work justifying this factor and investigating sensitivity is worthwhile. Was any sensitivity testing undertaken on the effect of using 1.4, 1.45 or 1.5 etc for the amplification factor?

The report makes it clear that the inner DoC (section 4.1.1) was calculated with the scaled-up waves, but it is not clear whether the scaled-up waves were used for the outer DoC (4.1.2), and this should be stated.

The report initially implies that the DoT was calculated using unscaled waves (p48): 'This is based on the un-calibrated hindcast, which is a suitable representation of typical conditions by [but] may under-predict extreme events.' It is unclear why the uncalibrated hindcast would have been used for the DoT calculations, because it seems clear that the modelling underpredicts generally, not just the extremes? Later (p50), the report says 'However, the transport values associated with calibrated extreme wave conditions have been factored in the next section to establish the DoT', and this is apparent on p52. Has the initial use of unscaled waves in any way influenced the adopted DoT values? The wording could be tidied up to avoid confusion.

Possibility of shoreward sediment transport across the outer DoC, 'convex' profile and extraction tracks

The section on annual variability (4.1.3) considers a range of possible values for the outer DoC over a 45-year period. In total, '91% of annual outer DoC (5 profiles times 45 years) are landward of the proposed extraction area'. This is usefully plotted in Figure 4-2. The implication of the plot is that under relatively rare conditions some sediments from the exchange area could be transported onto the lower shoreface.

This possibility is discussed in section 5.7: 'Under extreme conditions (e.g. 10-to-100-year return period wave height), there is potential for sediment to be naturally mobilised between the proposed extraction area and lower shoreface.' Within this context I draw attention to a paper not discussed in the report that supports the notion of sediment transport at depth during extreme storms. Keen et al., 2012 note:

- p308 'Observations and modelling of historical severe storms indicate initial thickness on the order of centimetres and horizontal scales of hundreds of kilometres with the thickest beds near the storm centre... They are produced in water depths of 13–100m and consist of mixed resuspended and transported sediment.'
- p298 'Offshore transport is dominant for water deeper than 60m but onshore flow prevails for shallower depths. Onshore transport was also noted at a 15m site with a medium sand bottom by Styles & Glenn (2005). The landward transport is as bed load transported by shoaling swell waves in the absence of strong near-bottom currents.'

A key consideration, therefore, is whether the offshore zone (4), the site of proposed extraction area, represents a site of significant sediment recharge to the lower shoreface.

The report notes that some profiles within the study area have a 'convex bulge' in the lower shoreface. It points out that convex shoreface morphologies might indicate sediment abundance (p12, 65). Is it possible that contemporary onshore sediment transport onto the lower shoreface (i.e. across the boundary between offshore zone 4 and lower shoreface zone 3) is contributing to this convex profile? This seems a key point that could be discussed in more depth within the report. Where does the convexity arise from? Is it an inherited artefact? Are contemporary processes (e.g. storms) maintaining the profile via onshore transport?

The report concludes (p65) that even if there is onshore transport from the extraction zone to the lower shoreface, that 'sufficient sediment will remain in the sediment body. This is attributed to the lower shoreface having a convex profile'. The wording is unclear here. The argument appears to be that the lower shoreface has a lot of sand and can therefore keep recharging the coast, but is that convexity maintained through transport from the offshore area? This section continues to say that 'geotechnical investigations show that mobile sand is present below the extraction area to at least 2 m below current level'. This is confusing. The implication is that the offshore zone has a deep *mobile* layer beneath the surface? Please clarify.

In section 5.4.1, in relation to sand extraction tracks, the report notes that (p63) 'wave induced sediment transport does occur in the extraction zone, with the initiation of sediment motion exceeded for 20-30 days per year, and the initiation of ripple formation occurring for 4-6 days per year. Wave induced currents at the seabed of the proposed extraction area are not sufficient to transport sediment particularly far but are sufficient to smooth out perturbations on the seabed caused by the drag head during larger wave conditions'. The implicit argument here is that the sediment transport is sufficient to obscure excavation tracks, but not of sufficient (onshore) magnitude to be a significant recharge to the lower shoreface. To be more confident in this assertion, some modelling could be undertaken to give a sense that there is enough sediment transport to fill in the tracks, while also quantifying what 'particularly far' means, and demonstrating that the offshore zone is not recharging the lower shoreface.

Buffer distances

Having identified inner Doc, DoT and outer DoC points on each profile (Figure 4-8), it is intuitive that these points would then have been mapped spatially in Figure 4.9 (also E.1-3). However, as explained on p57 a different approach has been taken. The inner DoC points (boundary between zone 1 and 2) lie very close to the 10 m isobath, so the 10 m isobath has been mapped on Figure 4.9. This makes sense. The boundary between zone 2 and 3 (frequent and infrequent sediment transport within the lower shoreface) is taken either as the DoT point, or a minimum distance of 1 km from the inner DoC point (the upper shoreface). There is no explanation/justification for the 1 km buffer adopted. Similarly, the boundary between zones 3 and 4 (lower shoreface and offshore zone) is defined either by the outer DoC point or a minimum distance of 3.5 km from the inner DoC point (the upper shoreface). There is no explanation/justification for the 3.5 km buffer.

A minimum buffer distance of 880 m is referred in the Executive summary, but I could not find any explanation of this distance.

In section 5.3 the sand resource area is said to be the 'seaward extent of the lower shoreface (defined by the 45-yr outer DoC), and the seaward boundary is the depth where practical extraction is readily

achievable, and this is taken to be around the 30 m'. It is not clear how this boundary relates to the buffer distances described above (i.e. how does this relate to the minimum of 3.5 km from the inner DoC?). Similarly, on p66 it is not clear whether the outer DoC is being considered, or the outer DoC plus buffer.

Levels of effects

Section 5.2 and Table 5.1 include references to potential impacts on environmental habitat values. The report is focused on coastal processes and morphology, and I have limited my comments specifically to these geomorphological components. In this regard, Table 5.1 should clarify what physical parameters are being referred to in the table where 'No effect' occurs.

Extraction monitoring

The report provides a commentary around monitoring of the proposed extraction specifically in relation to the effects on coastal processes (such as waves and sediment transport) and coastal geomorphology. A key condition relates to track management (p76): 'MBL are proposing to manage extraction lines to avoid track repetition and have a management plan to avoid repeatedly excavation along the same track. Deep tracks are not formed by a single extraction line and using the proposed extraction method with similar extraction volumes from each of the 77 extraction cells the likelihood of repeated extraction of the same area of seabed is avoided'. Some further information would help provide confidence that this is achievable. For instance, the vertical error of the tracks are given, and it would be useful also to provide the horizontal positional error of the tracks.

Regarding wave conditions, the report notes that 'Given the small magnitude of modelled changes to wave height and direction, the results from the MetOcean Solutions model are interpreted to have a negligible effect on wave transmission to the shoreline in a way that affects coastal processes.' The wave modelling is handled in a separate report that I have not reviewed, but it is apparent that in the T&T report that historic waves are underestimated in the existing modelling. I agree that changes in the order of a cm are likely to have negligible effect on waves, but a few extra sentences of justification/framing would be worthwhile. Given the miss-match between measured and modelled conditions, it is also worthwhile considering whether an additional wave buoy should be deployed to complement the North Port buoys, help improve the modelling, and verify whether the extraction has any impact on wave conditions.

Multibeam surveys are planned to investigate changes in profile shape associated with the extraction. The new publicly available LINZ bathymetric LiDAR will also be a useful reference dataset. In addition to the monitoring proposed, it would be useful to have provision for an additional survey if an extreme storm were to occur during the proposed extraction period.

It is interesting that beach monitoring is not proposed. The report argues that it is unlikely that sand extraction at the proposed area has any connection to the shoreline, and therefore monitoring is not required. But is it impossible? My view is that coastal change trends should be monitored. A significant challenge exists in understanding and distinguishing drivers of secular trends in coastal change, and I appreciate the confusion potentially created by this. For beaches in equilibrium, erosion is the expected outcome of future sea level rise, and there is a risk that any observed erosion due to this effect could be impossible to separate from erosion due to a deficit in the local sediment budget, whether that had arisen from some natural variability in the sediment budget, or artificially from extraction. That said, this issue does not justify a decision to not monitor coastal change trends.

Summary statement

Overall, in my professional opinion, the report has utilised appropriate data and methods to consider the relevant effects on coastal processes and geomorphology related to the proposed activity. The report has a section on potential cumulative effects with climate change that is scientifically sound. Overall, the conclusions reached are supported by the evidence presented, but this statement is made with caveats. I have explained in detail above the most important areas of uncertainty, where further work is required, and where alternative interpretations are possible.

Yours sincerely,

Mark Dickson

References referred to in this review that are not within the T&T report

Keen, T. R., Slingerland, R. L., Bentley, S. J., Furukawa, Y., Teague, W. J., & Dykes, J. D. (2012). Sediment transport on continental shelves: storm bed formation and preservation in heterogeneous sediments. *Sediments, morphology and sedimentary processes on continental shelves: advances in technologies, research, and applications*, 295-310.

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4 March. 26

Dear Ingrid,

Below I provide additional comments concerning attachment 8 relating to coastal geomorphology and coastal processes (T&T report). My comments are limited to the potential effects on coastal geomorphology and coastal processes and are in addition to my earlier review, dated 21 Sept. 25, that T&T have responded to. The additional comments are intended to help NRC understand the closure depth concept in relation to potential shelf-shoreface-beachface sediment transport. I refer below to scientific papers that are not cited in the T&T report. I was prompted to read this work based on the comments in the T&T report on the convexity of the Te Ākau Bream Bay shoreface profile and the presence of shelf bedforms that are not well understood. In addition, I became aware of an alternate method for calculating a 100-year depth of closure (known as the Morphodynamic Depth of Closure) during a conversation with Dr Kinsela, who I met at a conference in February, and here draw attention to papers that describe this useful concept. Collectively these additional comments provide further framing for NRC to consider when evaluating any possible impacts of the proposed extraction on the coastal sand system. Finally, I refer to a new source of data, the New Zealand Coastal LiDAR 1 m DEM that has only recently been published, and which is relevant for the proposal.

Convex profile - shoreface sand supply at geological timescales

Te Ākau Bream Bay is a prograded coastal sand barrier ('barrier' includes the dunes, beach and shoreface). It is similar to prograded sand barriers in eastern Australia that have been studied in more detail than NZ's barrier systems.

The T&T report notes that 'The primary sediment source for the sandy barrier construction and the ebb tide delta at the entrance to Whangarei Harbour has been the nearshore and inner shelf deposits on the floor of Te Ākau Bream Bay (Schofield, 1970)' but that 'The historic sediment supply that formed the coastal system is no longer active and the current sediment budget is considered functionally closed for this assessment, with negligible sediment inputs to the coast or nearshore.' It is important to test the veracity of this assertion.

Some areas of the shoreface profile in Te Ākau Bream Bay are notably convex (T&T report p12): 'The shoreface profile at Te Ākau Bream Bay best fits the 'convex' morphology type from Hamon-Kerivel et

al., (2020), which they interpret as meaning increased sediment abundance when compared to a concave profile.' Over geological time scales, a convex shoreface can be an important driver of subaerial beach barrier progradation. A study of several sites in southeastern Australia (Oliver et al., 2020) suggests that (p13) 'The shoreface appears to be the primary source of sediment promoting shoreline accretion and barrier development in this region' and 'At Pedro Beach the lower shoreface is distinctly convex between ~10 and 30 m water depth (Fig. 8). This disequilibrium profile indicates the potential for onshore sand transport.' In another study of a prograded beach barrier system at Tuncurry, eastern Australia (Kinsela et al., 2016), bathymetric surveys and numerical modelling suggest that a shoreface sand body in 15 to 35 m water depth was primarily (i.e. about 80%) responsible for supplying the beach with the sediment that caused beach barrier progradation over the last 6000 years. They concluded that (p29) 'Sustained shoreface sand supply in response to remnant disequilibrium morphology likely prevails today at imperceptible rates on some southeast Australian beaches, promoting shoreline stability, and potentially moderating initial shoreline response to sea-level rise.'

The implication of the research from eastern Australia is that the convex lower shoreface is often the main source of sediment driving beach progradation (growth) over thousands of years, and that it might also be important for maintaining beach stability in the present day. This might also be true for the similar prograded barrier at Te Ākau Bream Bay.

Onshore sediment transport

Onshore sediment transport from the shoreface has been demonstrated using short-term field measurements and numerical modelling (Aagard, 2014). However, globally there are relatively few datasets that have the resolution required to help constrain the important of onshore transport.

Recent mapping of the shoreface in NSW with bathymetric lidar and multibeam echosounder surveys are beginning to reveal relevant dynamics. For instance, Kinsela et al (2022, p1162) note that at some sites 'the lower shoreface may provide a subtle ongoing sand supply to Perkins Beach that might promote shoreline stability and potentially offset shoreline response to sea level rise'; however, at other sites they suggest 'a shoreface sand supply is unlikely to be active or significant'.

Whether or not the lower shoreface at Te Ākau Bream Bay represents a sand supply to the shoreline is a question of timescale. It is almost certain that over thousands of years (as acknowledged in the T&T report) the shoreface has been a key driver of beach barrier progradation in the region. Similar, at the scale of a single (normal) year it is almost certain that there is insignificant supply from the lower shoreface to the beach. The timescale between these extremes where the shoreface represents an important onshore sediment supply to the beach is not easy to constrain.

The proposal is to extract sand seaward of the lower shoreface on the shelf (or offshore) zone. Hence, it is critical to understand (1) where that boundary occurs, and (2) whether there is sediment transport across that boundary. Unfortunately, our scientific understanding of sediment transport across this boundary is limited.

Shoreface & inner shelf bedforms and sediment transport

Recent bathymetric lidar surveys have revealed asymmetric linear bedforms in 20 to 40 m+ water depths off SE Australia (Kinsela et al., 2023). The ridges lie 1 to 3 m above the seabed, and have a wavelength of 0.5 to 1 km. The proposed extraction area at Te Ākau Bream Bay is in water depths of

about 22 to 34 m and within this area occur ridges with a height above the seafloor of around 2 m and a spacing of about 1.5 km (see T&T report p13).

T&T interpret (p55) the 'convex sections of the lower shoreface and the ridge and swale features along the extraction area boundary are most now likely relict landforms that were formed during times of lower sea level…' and 'Given the wide nature of the lower shoreface, this does not indicate transport from the offshore area to the lower shoreface'.

In contrast, in describing the seafloor ridges in a similar water depth off eastern Australia, Kinsela et al (2023, p408) note 'The sedimentary features identified and described here are the depositional evidence of fluid motions and sediment transport on the dynamic shoreface-inner shelf of the southeast Australian margin. The existence, scale, shape, distribution and complexity of the features was largely unknown prior to recent mapping of the coastal seabed with airborne Lidar.' Their view (p409) is that onshore-directed flows may occur across the shoreface-inner shelf and that these are 'relevant to conceptual and quantitative coastal dynamics and shoreline behaviour models'.

Bathymetric LiDAR is an important new emerging source of data for describing the shoreface and shelf seafloor. LINZ have recently embarked on a programme to map 40% of NZ's coast with this technology https://www.linz.govt.nz/products-services/data/3d-coastal-mapping and data for Bream Bay have now been released as part of 'The New Zealand Coastal LiDAR 1m DEM' (Figure 1). T&T probably did not have access to this dataset at the time of doing their work. The publication date I can see on the LINZ Data Service is last updated 16 Feb 2026. I think this dataset should be consulted as a part of this application.

Potential sediment transport between the inner shelf and shoreface has been suggested in some earlier work. At Fire Island, New York, Schwab et al. (2013) described the dynamic nature of the inner continental shelf, including elongate gravelly bedforms in up to 30-m water depth. They stated (p541): 'It is therefore suggested that onshore flux of modern sediment from the inner continental shelf provides the sediment volume required for the maintenance of island stability.' This conclusion was reached on the basis that the offshore shelf sediment was the only source available to balance the coastal sediment budget. However, they also acknowledged (p539) that '…the physical processes controlling the cross-shelf component of sediment flux remain unknown.'

The role of extreme storms

The research literature on extreme storms is relatively sparse, but observations of sediment transport in great depths have been noted. For instance, an extreme storm in San Diego in 1988, thought to be a 1 in 200 year event, had significant impacts on the seafloor at depths of around 25 m (Dayton et al., 1989).

Near Fire Island, Schwab et al., (2017) described seafloor surveys in a period in which Hurricanes Irene and Sandy occurred. Results (quoted from the abstract) 'demonstrate that storm-induced erosion and sediment transport occurred throughout the study area in water depths up to 30 m' and 'Analyses show that significant storm induced erosion and sediment transport occurs far seaward of the 5 to 9 m depth of closure assumed for Fire Island, where it is thought that an onshore-directed sediment flux from the inner continental shelf to the littoral system is required to balance the coastal sediment budget.'

It is possible that extreme storms can transport sediment landward from the shelf to the lower shoreface, and from the lower shoreface to the upper shoreface.

It has recently been shown, with data from Australia the UK and Mexico (Harley et al., 2022), that during extreme storms, the volume of sediment eroded from beaches and dunes was smaller than the amount of sediment that was added to the upper shoreface, because sediment was transported from the lower shoreface to the upper shoreface. Eventually, the material added from the lower to upper shoreface is available to be reworked onto beaches and dunes. Harley et al., (2022) concluded that the recharge of the upper shoreface (from the lower shoreface) is equivalent to offsetting decades of coastal erosion by future sea level rise.

The closure depth concept

The T&T report correctly explains that 'closure depth' is a concept. Their Figure 2.1 shows that shoreface zonation limits can vary, meaning that the zones extend further seaward with increasing timescale.

The T&T report adopts a decadal scale timescale. The offshore zone (zone 4), where sand extraction is suggested, occurs seaward of a 45-year *average* outer depth of closure calculation. Over the scale of decades, they conclude that this offshore zone does not have functional wave induced sediment exchange with the shoreface. They provide a scientific basis for this conclusion that is reasonable based on current knowledge using the DoT and DoC equations (e.g. Hallermeier). However, some scientists have argued that a computed depth of closure (i.e. using Hallermeier) can be shallower than a physical depth of closure that is inferred from geological evidence (see Ortiz and Ashton, 2016). This makes sense, because the relevant depth of closure increases with the timescale adopted, and geological evidence is integrated over long timescales.

An alternative approach to calculating closure depth is the 'Morphodynamic Depth of Closure' (MDOC) described by Ortiz and Ashton (2016) and applied by Kinsela et al (2022) in eastern Australia context. This approach can be used to represent a 100-year depth of closure.

It would be interesting for T&T to calculate this metric. In eastern Australia, the inner closure depth is calculated at around 10 to 11 m water depth, whereas the regional active shoreface limit that is expected to be active over a 100-year timeframe ranges between about 24 and 30 m water depth (depending on the weighting applied within the MDOC equation) (see Table 2 within Kinsela et al., 2022). These values can be compared with the values obtained by T&T (see Figure 2 below). Of note, the inner closure depth values are similar (10-11 m Australia, 11-13 m Te Ākau Bream Bay), whereas the *average* outer closure depth values for Te Ākau Bream Bay are shallower than those obtained using the morphodynamic depth of closure concept for eastern Australia (see Table 2 within Kinsela et al., 2022 and Figure 2 below).

Kinsela et al. (2022) attempted to assess the part of the shoreface that might be active over multiple centuries by examining the convexity of a selected profile (P2, see p1161). They noted that the upper surface of the convexity (~28 m water depth) is very close to their calculated relevant closure depth value (~27m). They argued that 'This suggests that the upper surface of the convexity is erosional…' and they speculated that '…the lower shoreface may provide a subtle ongoing sand supply to Perkins Beach that might promote shoreline stability and potentially offset shoreline response to sea level rise'.

In Figure 2 I have copied Figure 4.2 from T&T and have roughly superimposed a transparent box at water depth approximately 24 to 30 m, coinciding with a 100-year morphodynamic depth of closure for the east coast of Australia. This zone would be at a different elevation for Te Ākau Bream Bay,

owing to different wave climates (although perhaps not that different, given that the inner depth of closure calculated levels are similar?).

It would be useful for T&T to overlay a 100-year morphodynamic depth of closure for Te Ākau Bream Bay.

It is interesting in Figure 2 that the eastern Australian 100-year closure depth range is similar to (1) the maximum outer depth of closure calculations by T&T, and (2) approximately coincides with the change in offshore slope (the seaward edge of the convexity).

Based on what I have read about the morphodynamic depth of closure and the shoreface shape at Te Ākau Bream Bay, I speculate that to mitigate potential shoreline consequences of sand extraction over a 100-year period, sand extraction might need to occur seaward of the 45-year ***maximum*** outer depth of closure calculation, rather than the 45-year ***average*** outer depth of closure calculation.

Yours sincerely,

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Figure 1 – Screen-shot showing New Zealand Coastal LiDAR 1 m DEM available for download from the LINZ Data Service. Bathymetric LiDAR appear to extend to around 30m water depth.

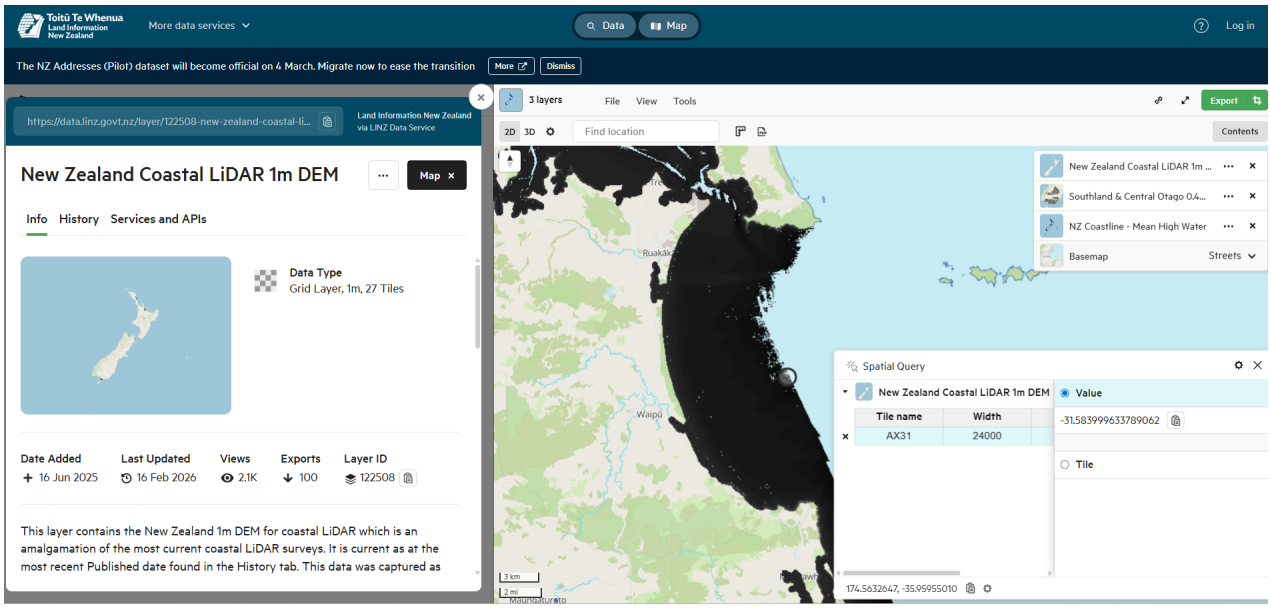
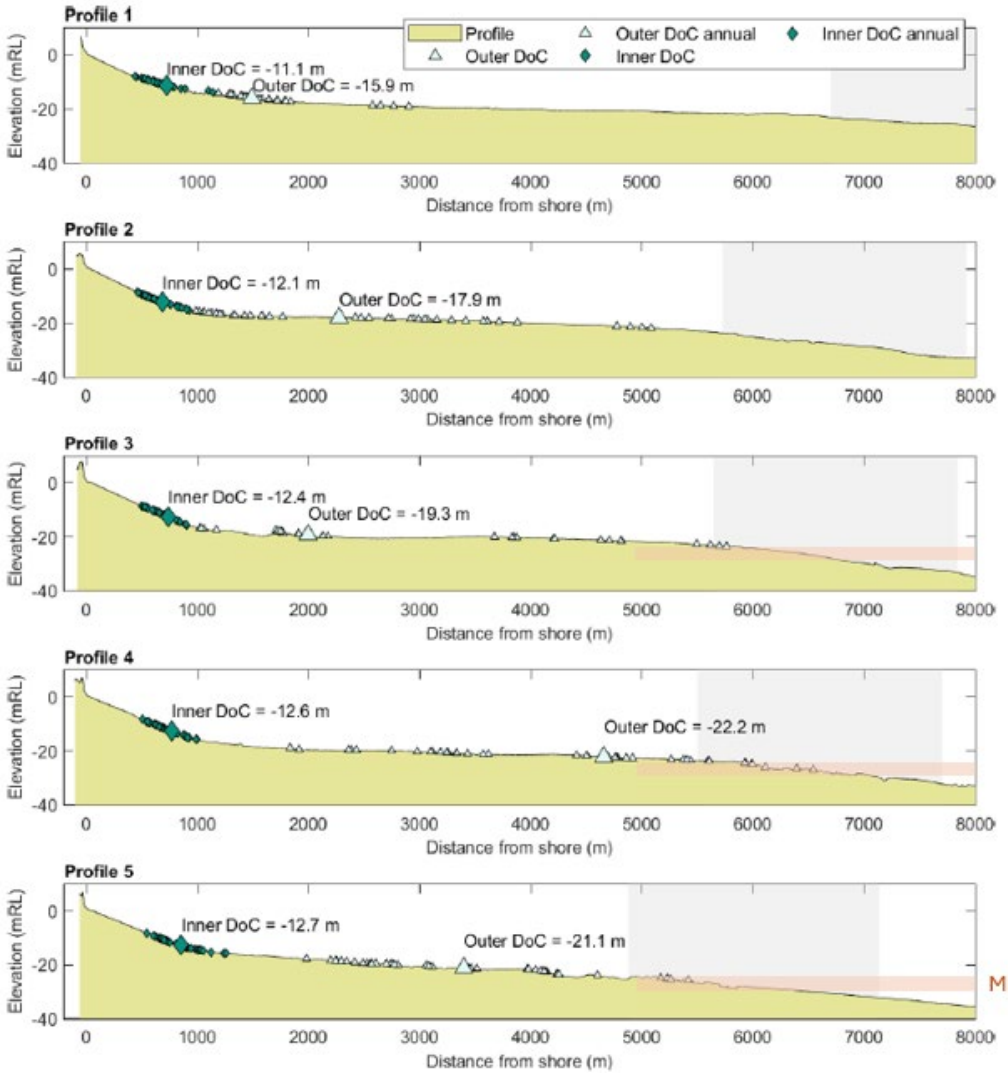


Figure 2 – reproduction of Figure 4.2 in T&T with overlayed level of morphodynamic depth of closure (MDOC) calculated for the east coast of Australia by Kinsela et al., 2022.



ATTACHMENT 3 : Review of economic outcomes

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12 February 2025

Kia ora

Bream Bay Sand Extraction: Assessment of Economic Effects

My name is Hayden Green. For over twenty years, I have worked as an economist across the Asia-Pacific, advising on competition and regulatory matters. Seven years ago, I founded Axiom Economics (see here), which, under my leadership, has become one of Australasia's leading economic consultancies. Throughout my career, I have prepared numerous expert reports, provided sworn testimony in high-stakes commercial mediations and arbitrations, and reviewed hundreds of economic assessments – including cost-benefit analyses. I am regarded as one of New Zealand's leading experts in this field.[1]

I also live in Bream Bay. When I saw news of recent protests against McCallum Brothers Limited's (MBL's) fast-tracked proposal to extract 8.45 to 9 million cubic metres of sand from Bream Bay's seabed (see here), I took notice. Until then, I confess that I had not paid much attention to the issue, but my curiosity was piqued. I soon found myself reviewing the materials on MBL's website. That led me to an economic assessment prepared by Market Economics (see here). I read it carefully – and I was not impressed. In my opinion, the report provides no credible indication of the proposal's likely economic impacts.

1. Overview of biggest shortcomings

I have no objection in principle to mining ventures being granted resource consents and I harbour no animus towards mining businesses; in fact, I have previously advised one of the largest mining companies in the world. However, consents should only be granted when the benefits clearly outweigh the adverse impacts. Market Economics fails to establish this for MBL's proposal. The economic analysis contained in Market Economics' report is manifestly inadequate and deeply flawed. I provide a more fulsome account of the litany of shortcomings below but, in brief, the biggest problems are:

- The analysis rests entirely on the assumption that if sand is not extracted from Bream Bay, an equivalent volume would be sourced from the Kaipara Harbour seabed (the "counterfactual" scenario). This dismisses viable, sustainable land-based alternatives, such as quarry-manufactured sand, despite ample evidence supporting their feasibility.
- If the true counterfactual involved these land-based alternatives, Market Economics' entire analysis would collapse completely, because it would be based on the wrong comparison, rendering its conclusions irrelevant.

[1] For example, I was recently recognised by Lexology Index (formerly Who's Who Legal) as a 2025 'Global Elite Thought Leader' amongst competition economists.

- Even setting aside this fundamental issue, the analysis is opaque, non-replicable, and riddled with errors and omissions – many of which substantially overstate the claimed economic benefits while understating or ignoring the proposal's costs. Consequently, the net benefit estimates are unreliable, regardless of the "counterfactual".
- Even if Market Economics' analysis were taken at face value, any cost savings may accrue primarily to MBL, rather than benefiting Aucklanders or Northlanders at large. It is doubtful that this represents the type of 'economic benefit' Parliament intended when enacting the Fast Track legislation.

In short, Market Economics' estimates are unreliable and provide no sound basis for concluding that the project would deliver a net benefit. I see no reasonable grounds for the adjudicating panel to approve the proposal under these circumstances. The following overview highlights the report's key shortcomings. While not exhaustive, it demonstrates why the claimed economic benefits cannot be trusted. I offer these views in my personal capacity and have not been compensated for my time.

2. The appropriate counterfactual

The conventional approach to assessing economic impacts is to compare the expected benefits if a proposal proceeds (the 'factual') with what would occur if it does not (the 'counterfactual'). The difference between these scenarios represents the proposal's estimated net economic impact. This method helps isolate the true effects by accounting for factors that would happen regardless (i.e., in 'both states of the world'), ensuring a more accurate assessment of costs, benefits and overall economic welfare.

It is important to specify the factual and counterfactual scenarios appropriately. If the counterfactual is not properly specified, the estimated impacts of a proposal can become skewed, leading to misleading conclusions. An inappropriate counterfactual contaminates the entire analysis, rendering all subsequent calculations, assumptions and recommendations unreliable. In short, a flawed starting point results in flawed results, undermining the validity of the exercise. In this case:

- If the proposal proceeds (the '**factual**'), it is assumed that MBL would extract 8.45 to 9 million cubic meters of marine sand from Bream Bay over 35 years. That sand would apparently be used to make concrete for Auckland construction projects.
- Market Economics assumes that if the proposal *does not* proceed (the '**counterfactual**'), the same volume of marine sand would instead come from existing mining operations in the Kaipara and be delivered by truck – a straightforward one-for-one replacement.

While the factual scenario is straightforward, the counterfactual assumed by Market Economics is much more contentious. In the Environment Court's July 2023 ruling on MBL's appeal concerning the Mangawhai-Pākiri embayment (the final judgment is available here), the three economists involved agreed that the Kaipara source was the "most probable alternative" to Pakiri sand.[2] Market Economics has adopted the same counterfactual here and essentially 're-run' all the same analyses. In my view, this is a questionable approach that could undermine the validity of its entire report.

[2] Paragraph 428 of the judgment.

2.1 Other potential sources of sand

While I am not an expert in the economics of sand sourcing, there are legitimate reasons to doubt the counterfactual assumed by Market Economics, especially in light of recent developments. Kaipara-based marine sand no longer appears to be the only viable alternative – if it ever truly was. For instance, in late 2024, fast-track approval was granted for a proposal to extract up to 300,000m^3 of sand per year (for up to 35 years) from land-based sand mining operations in Te Arai, near Wellsford (see: here). This exceeds the ~240,000m^3 that MBL would be taking from Bream Bay each year.

This potential additional source was not considered by Market Economics, which is understandable, given the fast-track application was lodged two months *after* the publication of its report. There have also been some important developments in sand manufacturing – including as recently as the last few days. Manufactured sand differs from natural sand in that it is produced by crushing rocks or gravel into sand-sized particles, rather than being extracted from rivers, lakes or beaches. Market Economics had this to say about it in its May report (see page 7):

> *"Manufactured sand is often raised as a potential alternative to natural sand. Bringing a new product to the market is normally subject to tests to ensure that the alternative meets all the necessary requirements, and to understand/uncover any limitations and nuances. Some of the proponents of manufactured sand have been operating since 2007. However, there is limited evidence of the market taking up manufactured sand as a mainstream option and substitute for natural sand. While manufactured sand is promoted as a possible alternative, it remains in the testing and piloting stages. There are no clear market signals that users (demand) are accepting this new technology and manufactured sand remains a speculative option."*

This statement has not aged well. In February last year, Kaipara Limited launched a manufactured sand plant at Brookby Quarry near Whitford in East Auckland (see here).[3] The company aimed to produce 300,000 tonnes per year, a target it announced earlier this month it has successfully hit, while meeting client specifications. Kaipara now plans to expand production to 500,000 tonnes annually.[4] For context, this is significantly more than the ~380,000 tonnes per year that MBL would be supplying from Bream Bay.

To borrow a phrase from Market Economics, this is a "clear market signal" that customers are embracing this technology. The global trend further supports this point: Japan has long utilised manufactured sand and is successfully transitioning away from marine sand. Similarly, countries such as Singapore, Australia, the Netherlands, and the United Arab Emirates are increasingly adopting manufactured sand as a sustainable, environmentally friendly alternative. These local and international examples strongly indicate that manufactured sand is both viable and sustainable.

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[3] Kayasand operates a comparable facility in the Waikato (see here) that has started supplying sand into the Auckland market. Kayasand also operates a commercial plant in Australia that has produced over 500,000 tonnes of manufactured sand for the Sydney and Illawarra markets as a replacement for dwindling natural sand supplies in that area.

[4] In an affidavit attached to Market Economics' report, Mr. Patrick Bridgeman, CEO of Bridgeman Concrete, stated that the company's experience with manufactured sand had been "unsatisfactory" (see paragraph 17). This claim is difficult to reconcile with Kaipara Limited's recent decision to nearly double its production capacity. It seems unlikely the company would make such an investment if the product were genuinely "unsatisfactory."

Ironically, the main barrier to greater local investment in this technology could well be the continued availability of large volumes of marine sand via long-term resource consents. While the private cost of seabed extraction may be lower than quarry-based manufacturing, once the full range of negative externalities – including adverse environmental impacts – are factored in, manufactured sand could easily be the more cost-effective and socially beneficial option.[5] Declining this application may consequently serve as a catalyst for additional investment and expansion.

The approval process that MBL is currently navigating is specifically designed to interrogate these matters by assessing both private and public costs and benefits in detail. Market Economics' choice of counterfactual prevented a fulsome analysis from being performed. While that decision may have been defensible at the time, it is now clear that other viable sources of supply exist and must be considered. The fact that many of these are land-based has significant implications for the cost-benefit calculus, which I explore below.

More broadly, the seemingly abundant supply from alternative sources undermines the popular narrative that Bream Bay sand is urgently needed to address a looming shortage. I have seen no compelling evidence to suggest such a deficit exists – especially given the recent developments discussed above. I am not certain of the legal implications under the relevant framework, but if its overarching purpose is to fast-track projects badly needed to deliver substantial economic benefits, it is hard to see how MBL's proposal qualifies.

2.2 Potential implications

If alternative land-based sources of supply are feasible – which now appears to be the case – this fundamentally undermines Market Economics' analysis. Its calculations rely on the assumption that all Bream Bay volumes would be replaced by marine sand from the Kaipara. Most of the estimated cost savings stem from the allegedly reduced trucking distances if the sand were sourced from Bream Bay. For example, Market Economics assumes that this would result in:

- **Direct transport cost savings**, since trucking sand over the distances in question is said to be more expensive than shipping by barge (though it has not provided a reliable estimate of those purported savings).
- **Carbon emission savings** from reduced trucking and cement manufacturing (which, in reality, would likely be offset by increased emissions from other sectors through the operation of the Emissions Trading Scheme, resulting in zero savings).
- **Avoided social costs** in the form of reduced road deaths and injuries, which are tied to distance travelled (though Market Economics fails to account for many other relevant social costs that would weigh against the proposal).

[5] For example, suppose the private cost of manufacturing a tonne of sand at a quarry and delivering it to a concrete plant in Auckland is $60 (using a simple round number). And suppose the private cost of delivering a tonne of sand from the seabed of Bream Bay to the same concrete plant is $50, but this comes with an additional $25 in negative externalities (e.g., environmental damage). In this simple scenario, unless those negative externalities are accounted for, the sand would be supplied from Bream Bay, despite the total economic cost being higher ($75 for dredged sand versus $60 for manufactured sand).

As I will detail in sections 3 and 4 (and allude to in the bullets above), Market Economics has not performed any of these calculations properly, making its results unreliable. Serious as these issues are, they become secondary if the counterfactual is flawed. For instance, if Bream Bay volumes would be replaced by land-based alternatives *closer* to concrete plants than Helensville, all the estimated cost savings would diminish or vanish entirely. A plethora of other adverse impacts would also need to be examined, including:

- **Environmental degradation:** sand mining can harm sea floors, erodes coastal protections, and creates plumes that could damage fish populations, surf breaks and the overall marine ecosystem.
- **Impact on local fisheries:** The destruction of marine habitats would negatively impact the ability of locals to fish and feed their whānau, undermining a traditional and culturally significant activity.
- **Threat to tourism:** The degradation of beaches and marine life could diminish Bream Bay's appeal as a tourist destination, leading to fewer visitors and economic losses for local businesses.
- **The opportunity cost of land:** MBL's sand depot would occupy valuable waterfront space in a prime location that could support a wide range of productive uses – these opportunity costs are higher than for almost any other location in the country.
- **Adverse impacts from traffic**: Additional truck movements in Auckland's busy downtown precinct contribute to congestion and noise – already significant problems – and increase the risks of road-related deaths and injuries.[6]

Market Economics does not consider these matters at all in its report. It may have assumed – without explicitly stating so – that the adverse impacts would cancel each other out if marine sand were extracted from either Bream Bay or the Kaipara. In other words, the (unspoken) arithmetic might have been: "The harm to marine life caused by sand mining in Bream Bay would be no worse than the harm in the Kaipara, so the net cost is zero." I am not convinced that such a simplistic assumption is justifiable, even within the narrow confines of Market Economics' counterfactual.[7]

And Market Economics' approach is plainly wrong if the alternative to Bream Bay sand includes land-based sources of supply – a scenario that seems increasingly plausible given recent developments. While I cannot comment on the exact magnitude of the adverse impacts of sand mining compared to land-based alternatives, it cannot reasonably be denied that those potential costs exist and could be substantial. After all, if such activities are truly costless, why are they being steadily phased out in locations across the globe?

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6 These risks depend not just on the distance travelled (in the manner assumed by Market Economics) but also on the environment. A 30-tonne truck driving through a dense urban area filled with traffic and pedestrians poses a far greater danger than in sparsely populated industrial or rural settings.

7 I see no reason to believe that the adverse costs of sand mining would be identical if an equivalent volume of marine sand were extracted from the Kaipara. It would be highly coincidental if that were the case. Market Economics does not attempt this admittedly difficult (and rather grim) calculation, which represents yet another critical gap in its analysis.

For these reasons, I believe there is a strong case for dismissing the Market Economics report in its entirety, due to the application of an inappropriate counterfactual. The notion that Bream Bay sand would be entirely replaced by Kaipara sand has become increasingly tenuous over time. Furthermore, as I will detail in sections 3 and 4, even if Market Economics' counterfactual were valid, its estimated cost savings would remain unreliable due to more specific errors. In either case, the report offers little to no probative value.

3. Transport cost savings

Most of Market Economics' estimated economic benefits ($197 million of $266.5 million) stem from avoided transport costs. MBL plans to transport Bream Bay sand to its Ports of Auckland depot by barge, before trucking it to concrete plants across Auckland. As discussed already, Market Economics assumes that in the counterfactual scenario, an equivalent volume of sand would be trucked from the Winstone/Atlas yards in Helensville (Kaipara) – presumably directly to concrete plants throughout the region.

Transporting sand by barge from Bream Bay, then by truck, is said to be cheaper than trucking it from Helensville. That may be true, but Market Economics' analysis neither proves the point nor offers a reliable estimate of the actual cost savings. Its $197 million estimate is based on a strikingly brief assessment, lacking detail and explanation. Absent those crucial details it is impossible to know if the calculation has been performed robustly, or if the purported savings have been overstated.

3.1 What should be done

To illustrate the shortcomings in Market Economics' methodology (or lack thereof), it is helpful to briefly outline how transport cost differentials *should* be estimated. This involves a complex, multi-layered calculation. The first step is to identify the sand's delivery points and transport routes, including travel distances. While the origins – Bream Bay and Helensville – are clear, the destinations and specific routes are not.

In the factual scenario, sand would be transported by barge from Bream Bay to Ports of Auckland, then distributed by truck to concrete plants across the city. A key question is whether MBL knows where the sand will go:

- **If MBL plans to store the sand separately at the port for delivery to specific plants** (e.g., under long-term supply contracts), transport costs could be estimated with reasonable accuracy (at least over the course of those agreements).
- **If the sand is mixed with other sources upon arrival**, tracking its end use becomes impossible. More likely, MBL may simply not know which plants will purchase the sand, requiring assumptions to be made about its final destinations.[8]

The latter scenario seems far more probable. It is unlikely that MBL knows with certainty which plants would purchase the Bream Bay sand over the 35-year consent period or has secured long-term supply contracts, given that the resource consent is pending. This

[8] A reasonable assumption could be that Bream Bay sand follows the same distribution pattern as MBL's other sand. For instance, if Plant A buys 50%, Plant B 30%, and Plant C 20%, the same proportions might apply.

uncertainty necessitates multiple assumptions about the sand's destinations – assumptions that should be clearly stated, sensitivity tested and justified.

Regardless of MBL's knowledge of final destinations, calculating total transport costs remains complex. It involves multiple routes, plant locations and distances. These costs must then be compared with the analogous costs of trucking an equivalent volume of sand from Helensville (Market Economics' counterfactual). Even if the final destinations were identical, the different origin would require a separate cost matrix. In reality, the destinations would likely differ, further complicating the analysis.

I expect there might also be significant year-to-year variations in the volumes produced by and delivered to each concrete plant. Those fluctuations could depend on, among other things, the location and timing of major construction projects.[9] Robust transport cost savings estimates may therefore require geographically specific demand forecasts of where concrete will be needed. Estimates for the whole of Auckland may lack the necessary granularity to produce reliable results.

Reliable cost savings can only be assessed after rigorously calculating and comparing total costs for both scenarios over time, accounting for potential year-on-year fluctuations. Such an assessment should be detailed, with clear explanations of key steps, assumptions and supporting logic. A technical appendix with spreadsheets and further modelling details may also be necessary. The analysis should be transparent and replicable to allow proper scrutiny. Market Economics' analysis meets none of these basic standards. It is inadequate for its intended purpose.

3.2 Market Economics provides no methodology

Market Economics' assessment of direct transport cost savings is limited to just three paragraphs. It presents six figures, but these are merely headline results with no explanation of the methodology behind them. If detailed workings exist elsewhere, I have been unable to find them. If this brief assessment constitutes the entirety of the analysis, that is extraordinary. For the reasons outlined earlier, this is not an exercise that can be properly conducted – let alone explained – in three *pages*, much less three *paragraphs*. No details are provided on even the most basic elements of the calculations, including (but not limited to):

- The assumed destinations of the sand in both the factual and counterfactual scenarios, particularly if these differ.
- The volumes of sand assumed to be transported to those destinations over the 35-year period (rather than a single total for all of Auckland, which lacks meaningful detail).
- The basis for the assumed trucking cost of 27c/tonne/km; notably, the "industry information" cited (see page 16) is not disclosed.
- The approach to calculating cost savings over 35 years, including assumptions about any changes in key variables.

[9] By way of comparison, the quantity of electricity generated by specific plants in New Zealand's wholesale market depends on the amount demanded and the locations of final customers. This varies from year to year, reflecting changes in the overall demand profile.

This is not a methodology. It is simply a set of conclusions with no transparency around how they were derived. The reader is expected to accept the results at face value, without any means to verify or scrutinise them. This is unacceptable and falls well short of the minimum standard required in comparable contexts. If such an opaque approach were presented in an expert economic report before the High Court or a regulatory agency like the Commerce Commission, I am confident it would be dismissed outright – and rightly so. This lack of transparency should, on its own, be grounds for disqualification.

3.3 Market Economics' track record

Market Economics' past track record on this subject provides no confidence that the headline figures have been calculated using an appropriate methodology. For instance, in 2019, it was commissioned by MBL to assess, among other things, the transport cost savings from the Mangawhai-Pākiri embayment proposal (see: here). The only difference was that the sand was to be shipped by barge from Mangawhai rather than Bream Bay. As I noted earlier, Market Economics' approach in that earlier engagement appears to be largely identical to what it is employing now.

That methodology used in 2019 bears no resemblance to the robust approach I outlined above. Instead, it is alarmingly brief, crudely simplistic and fundamentally flawed. Market Economics estimated that barging sand from Mangawhai instead of trucking it from Helensville (the assumed counterfactual) would save between $132m to $165m between 2023 and 2043. Key assumptions underpinning those calculations included:

- Each truck carries an average of 30 tonnes of sand.
- It costs 17 cents to move a tonne of sand 1km.
- Therefore, it costs $5.10 to move a truckload of sand 1km (17 cents/tonne x 30 tonnes).

This $5.10 cost figure was then applied to a distance measure to estimate the total transport/trucking cost savings. It is at this point that Market Economics' calculation went seriously off track. For reasons that are hard to fathom, it assumed the transport cost saving was equivalent to the cost of trucking sand 55 km from Helensville to Ports of Auckland – a sum of $280.50 per trip ($5.10/km x 55km). This figure was then extrapolated over the total Pakiri tonnage, with minor adjustments, to produce a range of $132m to $165m.

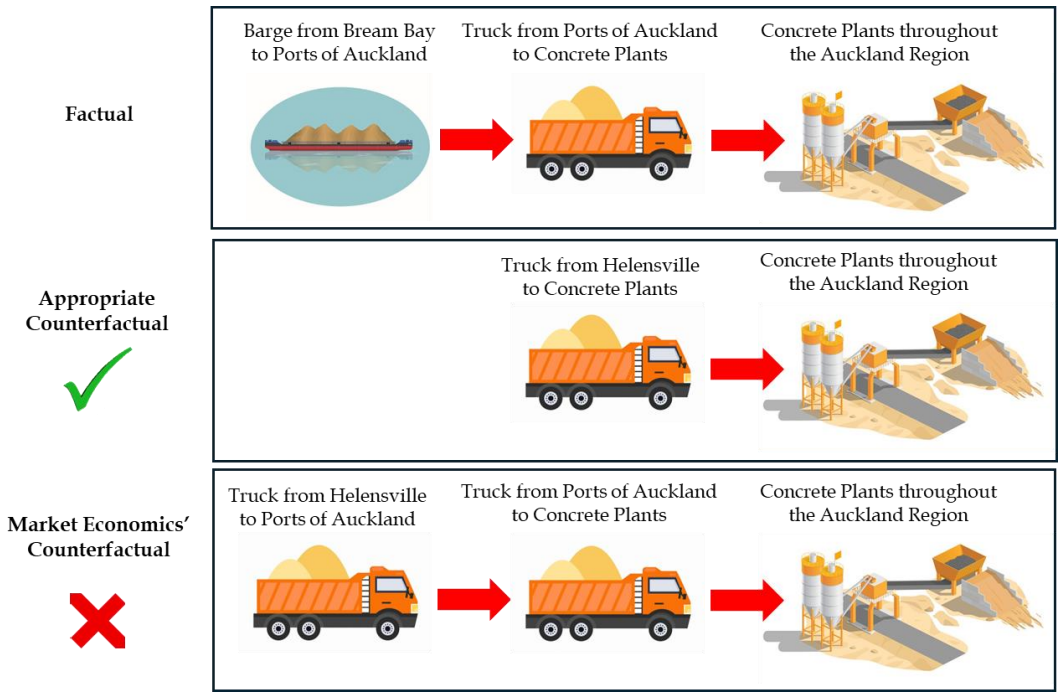
In other words, Market Economics' methodology assumed that, in the counterfactual scenario, trucks would first transport sand from the Winstone/Atlas depot in Helensville to the port – the same intermediary point used for barge deliveries from Mangawhai. From that common waystation, trucks would then deliver sand to its final destinations (i.e., concrete plants), effectively nullifying any delivery cost difference between the factual and counterfactual scenarios for this 'final leg.'

The only difference between the two scenarios, then, was the cost of transporting sand from Helensville to the port under the counterfactual ($280.50 per trip). But this raises an obvious question: why would trucks leaving Helensville carrying sand first travel to the port before heading to their final destinations? The answer is simple: they would not. Those trips would never occur. I cannot comprehend what Market Economics was thinking when it framed the comparison in this way. It is nonsensical.

As Figure 3.1 illustrates (and as the methodology I outlined earlier demonstrates), the *appropriate* comparison should have been between the cost of delivering sand by barge, then truck to concrete plants (the factual), and the cost of delivering sand directly from Helensville to the plants. These concrete plants are spread across Auckland: from Manukau, Penrose, Albany and Henderson, among other locations.

Some of these plants are closer to Helensville than others, which would reduce the transport cost savings. In certain cases – such as the Henderson and Albany plants – it may even be cheaper to truck sand directly from Helensville than to transport it from Bream Bay. As I outlined earlier, accounting for these complexities requires a careful, detailed calculation. Market Economics' approach, however, was nothing of the sort. It instead involved an analysis utterly lacking in logic.

Figure 3.1: Market Economics' flawed 2019 comparison



In my view, this completely undermines the integrity of the estimates in Market Economics' 2019 analysis. Those figures were meaningless because the methodology was comparing the wrong things. While the opacity of the more recent assessment prevents a definitive conclusion, the serious flaws in the earlier analysis raise an obvious question: how can the panel be confident that Market Economics has not made an error of similar magnitude in its calculations for the Bream Bay proposal? For example:

- **What if** it has simply reused its 2019 framework and again, wrongly, assumed that deliveries from Helensville would be routed via the port?
- **What if** it has unrealistically assumed that all Bream Bay sand would go to the Penrose concrete plant, artificially inflating any transport cost savings?

- **What if** the undisclosed "industry information" underpinning its assumed per-kilometre cost savings is fundamentally flawed—information we cannot verify because it has not been disclosed?
- **What if** it has failed to account for potential changes in transport infrastructure, traffic conditions or fuel costs over the period (e.g., electric trucks may become popular – perhaps ubiquitous), which could significantly alter cost estimates?
- **What if** it has largely ignored potential year-on-year fluctuations in demand and any effects on sand transport patterns, instead relying on a snapshot of current or near-term demand, calculating a present-day saving and applying a discount rate?

The answer is clear: the panel has no way of knowing if the claimed savings are credible or reliable. With no methodology provided – only headline results – these estimates cannot be properly tested. Given the scale of Market Economics' recent errors on similar matters, there is no basis to assume the results stem from a robust analysis. If anything, the opposite is more likely. It is therefore unreasonable to place any confidence in the estimated transport cost savings. They are wholly unreliable.

Finally, it is critical to note that Market Economics' assessment is built on the assumption that, in the counterfactual, marine sand would be trucked from Helensville. Even if the analysis were methodologically sound – which we have no way of knowing – it would still be irrelevant if that counterfactual is flawed. For example, if a significant share of Bream Bay marine sand were replaced with manufactured sand, it could dramatically alter the transport cost analysis – potentially reversing the supposed cost savings altogether.

3.4 Beneficiaries of the alleged cost savings

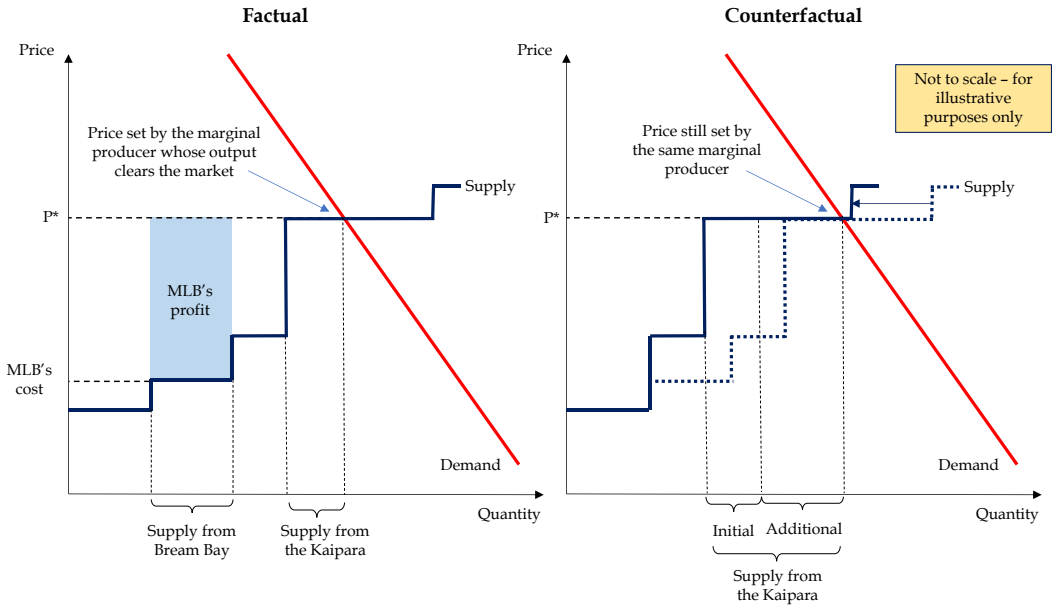
For the reasons outlined above, the $197 million transport cost saving attributed to the MBL proposal cannot be relied upon. This does not mean that no savings exist, but there is no way to determine their magnitude – or whether they are substantial – based on the work performed to date. But, for the sake of argument, suppose significant savings would materialise if the proposal proceeded (which, to be clear, has not been demonstrated). Who would actually benefit from them?

This depends on whether any transport cost savings would translate into lower sand prices, which, in turn, hinges on the identity of the marginal producer. In most competitive markets, the market-clearing price is set by the marginal producer – the last (and most expensive) supplier needed to meet demand. Lower-cost producers supply first but, as demand rises, higher-cost producers are required and the market price adjusts to cover their costs, ensuring all supply is sold and demand is met. Lower-cost producers ('infra-marginal' suppliers) consequently earn greater profits as the market price increases.

I have not analysed the supply and demand dynamics for sand, so I cannot offer an informed view on who the marginal producers would be in the factual and counterfactual scenarios. However, Market Economics appears to believe that the marginal units would come from the Kaipara in each instance. I infer this from the fact that its analysis makes no mention of potential price reductions or their downstream effects, either qualitatively or quantitatively. Its estimate of economic benefit is simply equal to the transport cost saving – no more.

If that assumption is correct—and, to be clear, I have not conducted this analysis—it would mean that any transport cost savings achieved by shipping sand from Bream Bay would not affect Auckland's sand prices. As Figure 3.2 illustrates, the market price (P*) would be set in both scenarios by the cost of supplying sand from the Kaipara and would therefore remain unchanged in Market Economics' factual and counterfactual analyses. This would have substantial ramifications for the distribution of any economic benefits.

Figure 3.2: The price is set by the marginal producer



For example, if Kaipara sand is the marginal source of supply in both the factual and counterfactual scenarios, the MBL proposal would have no impact on the price or volume of concrete used in Auckland construction projects. The same structures would be built in the same places at the same times. There may be some resilience benefits from adding another source of supply but, other than that, Aucklanders would be no better off and Northlanders would almost certainly be worse off.

The key difference between the two scenarios is that, in the factual, MBL would capture the entirety of any direct transport cost savings (as shown in Figure 3.2 above), making it the chief – or sole – beneficiary. Economists often adopt a dispassionate view of distributional effects – treating a dollar in the hands of a large corporation as equivalent to a dollar in the hands of a consumer. However, I doubt this is the kind of 'economic benefit' Parliament intended to promote when it enacted the Fast Track legislation.

4. Emissions and social costs

Market Economics also claims that the MBL proposal would reduce carbon emissions, road deaths and injuries compared to its counterfactual. Each of these estimates is directly tied to the distance travelled: fewer kilometres of sand transported by truck result in lower emissions and a reduced risk of road-related fatalities and injuries. This means these

estimates are plagued by the same issues that undermined the transport cost savings calculation. To briefly recap, Market Economics' distance calculations:

- are not explained at all in its report, leaving no way to verify whether they were performed correctly; and
- if based on a methodology as flawed as that employed in its 2019 report (see explanation in section 3.3) would be entirely unreliable.

In other words, the same flaws that undermine the reliability of the transport cost estimates also disqualify the environmental and social cost figures. Moreover, the emissions component faces another major problem. New Zealand operates a binding emissions trading scheme (ETS) with a cap-and-trade mechanism (an overview is available here), and the transport sector is a mandatory participant. Under the ETS, businesses must buy and surrender New Zealand Units (NZUs) before emitting carbon – one NZU allows for the emission of one tonne of carbon.

If the transport sector's emissions are reduced in the way Market Economics suggests, it would result in fewer NZUs being required for that purpose, thus freeing up those units for use by other sectors. In practice, this likely means that any emissions reductions resulting from the proposal would be offset by other businesses acquiring the surplus NZUs and increasing their emissions by the same amount. The net result would be zero net impact on overall emissions. This is a core feature of the 'trading' aspect of the ETS.

The only way that overall emissions would fall is if the New Zealand Government tightened the emissions cap, but it is unrealistic to connect MBL's proposal to such broad national policy changes. There could also be an impact on the price of NZUs, which would create downstream effects, but none of this is considered in Market Economics' simplistic calculation. This suggests a fundamental misunderstanding of the economics of emissions abatement under a cap-and-trade framework.

The same problem afflicts Market Economics' estimate of the cost of additional emissions from cement production. Like the transport sector, cement manufacturing is subject to the ETS. Hence, even if these additional emissions were avoided under the factual scenario, the surplus NZUs would likely be traded, leading to increased emissions elsewhere. As a result, all the emissions-related cost savings presented by Market Economics are entirely illusory, with the true figure likely being zero.

Market Economics also overlooks clear differences in the opportunity cost of land. As noted in section 2.2, MBL's sand depot would occupy valuable waterfront space in a prime location that could support a wide range of productive uses, such as hotels, restaurants and other commercial activities. Downtown Auckland's waterfront real estate is among the most desirable in the country, making the opportunity cost of such use substantial. In comparison, expanding a depot in, say, Helensville would have a negligible opportunity cost, reflecting the stark difference in land values. This holds true for nearly any activity, given the unique value of prime waterfront real estate.

The report also ignores other critical social costs tied to expanding a sand depot in Auckland's busy central city. Increased truck movements would worsen congestion and noise – already significant problems in the CBD. It would also increase the likelihood of

road-related deaths and injuries. These risks depend not just on the distance travelled (in the manner assumed by Market Economics) but also on the environment. A 30-tonne truck driving through a dense urban area filled with traffic and pedestrians poses a far greater danger than in sparsely populated industrial or rural settings.[10]

None of these crucial factors are mentioned in the Market Economics report, nor is there any attempt to quantify their impacts. The counterfactual scenario also has a crucial bearing on these costs. As noted earlier, if manufactured sand were to replace some or all of the Bream Bay marine sand – a plausible outcome – it could significantly reduce transport distances and the reliance on trucking. This shift would likely reduce road-related harm and lessen (perhaps even eliminate) the impacts on Auckland's waterfront precinct.

5. Conclusion

In my view, the economic benefits assessment provided by Market Economics does not provide a sufficient basis to conclude that MBL's proposal would deliver significant national or regional benefits that outweigh the associated costs:

- The entire analysis is built on the assumption that the alternative to sourcing sand from Bream Bay would be to extract an equivalent volume from the Kaipara harbour seabed. However, this assumption is becoming increasingly tenuous. It is now clear that a variety of abundant land-based alternatives could fill part – or all – of that gap.
- If the true counterfactual involved these land-based alternatives, Market Economics' entire analysis would collapse completely, because it would be based on the wrong comparison, rendering its conclusions irrelevant.
- Even disregarding this broader issue, the analysis is opaque, cannot be replicated, and contains several serious errors – many of which serve to significantly overstate the potential cost savings. Therefore, regardless of the chosen counterfactual, the benefit estimates are completely unreliable.
- Even if Market Economics' analysis were taken at face value, any cost savings may accrue primarily to MBL, rather than benefiting Aucklanders or Northlanders at large. It is doubtful that this represents the type of 'economic benefit' Parliament intended when enacting the Fast Track legislation.

In short, the economic analysis is manifestly inadequate and demonstrably flawed in several key respects. Given these deficiencies, I fail to see how the adjudicating panel could reasonably conclude that the proposal should be approved.

Yours sincerely

Hayden Green
BCom (Hons), BCom, LLB (Hons)

[10] Tragically, as recently as last week, a pedestrian was killed on the Strand in Parnell by a truck that, based on the photos in the article, appears to be a container rig from the port (see: here).

ATTACHMENT 4 : Sand Mining Bream Bay - monitoring condition

Memorandum

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Attention:	Ingrid Kuindersma
Company:	NRC
Date:	01/04/2025
From:	Dr Sharon De Luca
Message Ref:	Sand Mining Bream Bay – monitoring condition
Project No:	BM250630

Below is my proposed monitoring methodology. I thought a condition requiring a Marine Ecology Management Plan could refer to this memo (date and title) instead of putting all this detail into the condition.

Benthic Ecological Monitoring Bream Bay

The purpose of the monitoring programme is to test the assumptions outlined in the AEE in relation to effects on benthic invertebrates and sediment grain size within the dredging area compared to the northern, southern and remote control areas (see Figure 1 of the AEE (Bioresearches (2025)). The monitoring shall be detailed in a Marine Ecology Management Plan.

Despite the control sites not having the same environmental conditions (including habitat type and community composition) as the dredging area (Bioresearches (2025)), it remains possible to test hypotheses relating to differences in temporal trends between the impact site and control sites, with respect to diversity and abundance metrics, as well as levels of dissimilarity in community composition.

Year 1 post dredging – Annual Monitoring

In year 1, the annual benthic habitat monitoring shall be carried out at 10 representative sites within the sand extraction area that have been dredged in the previous 12 months (Year 1 dredging sites), and at 10 sites within each control site. Monitoring will involve sampling of:

1. Benthic infauna – sampled at 10 sites within the dredging area and each control site (northern, southern and remote control) with five ponar grab samples[1] collected per site (40 sites and 200 grab samples in total – 50 from the dredging area and 50 from each control site).
2. Epibenthos – sampled by photographing the seabed within a 0.5 m × 0.5 m quadrat immediately adjacent to each grab location within the dredging area and each control site[2] (40 quadrats will be photographed in the dredging area and at each control site –(200 photographs in total).

In addition, towed camera video footage of each dredged track will be collected within the sand extraction area and along comparable lengths of seabed at the control sites to provide a broader characterisation of the benthic environment.

3. Sediment grain size – composite surface sediment (top 5cm) samples shall be collected from each of the 10 sites monitored within the dredged area and each of the northern, southern and remote control sites (40 samples in total) and analysed for sediment grain size composition.

Post dredging Year 2 – Annual Monitoring

In year 2, the annual benthic habitat monitoring of infauna, epibenthos and sediment grain size will be repeated at the Year 1 dredging sites, and an additional 10 sites (dredged in the previous 12 months) will be established (Year 2 dredging sites). Monitoring will be repeated also at the control sites within the northern, southern and remote control areas.

For the Year 1 dredging sites and for the control sites, the location of the 10 sites will be the same as in year 1, while sampling locations for ponar grab samples within each site will be randomly allocated.

In total, 200 ponar grab samples will be collected in year 2, plus 200 quadrat photographs, as well as video footage from Year 1 and Year 2 dredging sites and from the northern and southern control areas.

Post dredging Year 3 – Annual Monitoring

In year 3, the annual benthic habitat monitoring of infauna, epibenthos and sediment grain size will be repeated at the Year 1 and Year 2 dredging sites, and an additional 10 sites (dredged in the previous 12 months) will be established (Year 3 dredging sites). Monitoring will be repeated also at the control sites within the northern and southern control areas.

For the Year 1 and Year 2 dredging sites and for the control sites, the location of the 10 sites within each of the two control areas will be the same as in year 1, while sampling locations for ponar grab samples within each site, will be randomly allocated.

In total, 250 ponar grab samples will be collected in year 3, plus 250 quadrat photographs, as well as video footage from Year 1, Year 2 and Year 3 dredging sites and from the northern and southern control areas.

Post dredging Year 4 and 5 – Annual Monitoring

The Year 2 and Year 3 dredging sites will require 1 and 2 further years of monitoring respectively to comply with the condition that monitoring is undertaken for three years after dredging (Table 1). Monitoring in year 4 and 5 will also continue at the control sites. In order to better understand benthic community recovery, which MBL accept is poorly documented in the scientific literature, monitoring of the Year 1 and Year 2 dredging sites could continue beyond the three-year consent requirement (noted as “optional” in Table 1).

[1] Following the QA/QC protocol previously used for this project. A standard Ponar Grab sampler with a sample area of 250mm x 285mm and depth of 100mm, with sample volume 1-4L samples shall be used. Samples shall be sieved using a 1mm mesh, and the remaining contents stored in >80% ethanol until processed by a qualified taxonomist.

[2] Photographs will be analysed by a qualified benthic ecologist to quantify the abundance of the benthic organisms visible in each image.

Table 1: Proposed schedule for monitoring dredging and control sites.

	North and South Control sites	Year 1 dredging sites	Year 2 dredging sites	Year 3 dredging sites
Year 1	✓	✓		
Year 2	✓	✓	✓	
Year 3	✓	✓	✓	✓
Year 4	✓	✓ (optional)	✓	✓
Year 5	✓	✓ (optional)	✓ (optional)	✓

Data analyses

Following each round of annual monitoring, benthic community (infauna and epibenthos) and sediment grain size composition data will be graphed and analysed using a combination of univariate and multivariate techniques to assess:

- Recovery at the dredging sites relative to baseline conditions (testing whether impacted communities are returning to their own pre-dredging state)
- Recovery at the dredging sites relative to controls (testing whether the dissimilarity between dredging and control sites is returning to pre-dredging levels)

These analyses will characterise patterns of recovery relative to baseline conditions and to background natural variability across the wider area (quantified by monitoring temporal trends at the control sites).

Response variables for the statistical analyses may include:

- Univariate diversity metrics (e.g, abundance, richness, Shannon-Wiener diversity)
- Measures of dissimilarity (e.g, Bray-Curtis dissimilarity)
- Abundance of key taxa or functional groups
- Multivariate community composition (e.g. using PRIMER)
- Abundance of individual sediment fractions and/or multivariate grain size composition.

The relationship between benthic community structure and sediment grain size may also be explored to assess the extent to which observed biological changes are associated with changes in sediment characteristics.

Data analyses results may inform recommendations for monitoring beyond Year 3 and 5.

TITLE: Efficiency and effectiveness review of council functions

From: Kyla Carlier, Corporate Strategy Manager

Authorised by Group Manager/s: Bruce Howse, Pou Taumatua – Group Manager Corporate Services, on 01 April 2026

Executive summary/Whakarāpopototanga

This report seeks council approval to proceed with an externally facilitated efficiency and effectiveness review of council functions.

At a workshop held on 1 April 2026, council provided direction to proceed with a staged review approach, commencing with four priority activities, using a consistent assessment framework. A streamlined procurement approach is proposed for this work, in an effort to enable the work to be carried out in time to be aligned with the Long Term Plan (LTP) process.

This report gives effect to that direction and seeks approval for expenditure of up to $200,000 to undertake the review.

Recommendations

1. That the report 'Efficiency and effectiveness review of council functions' by Kyla Carlier, Corporate Strategy Manager and dated 1 April 2026, be received.
2. That expenditure of up to $200,000 (excluding GST) be approved to undertake an externally facilitated efficiency and effectiveness review of council functions, in accordance with the approach outlined in this report, to be funded from existing salary savings.

Options

No.	Option	Advantages	Disadvantages
1	Do not proceed with an efficiency and effectiveness review at this time	• No immediate cost incurred. • Avoids potential duplication with future central government reform activity. • Does not place additional demands on staff capacity in the short term.	• Missed opportunity to inform LTP decisions with independent, evidence-based analysis. • Reduces council's ability to proactively identify efficiency or service level opportunities and prepare for potential future local government reform.
2	Undertake a full efficiency and effectiveness review of all council functions	• Comprehensive coverage across all activities. • Provides a single, complete baseline assessment for council.	• High cost and time commitment, likely exceeding available budget and timeframe.

No.	Option	Advantages	Disadvantages
		• Potentially supports longer-term reform readiness.	• Increased risk that findings are overtaken by reform or LTP decisions. • Reduced depth and usefulness due to breadth of scope within available resources.
3	Proceed with a staged, targeted efficiency and effectiveness review, commencing with priority functions	• Focuses effort where the greatest strategic and financial benefit is expected. • Keeps cost within an approved range. • Enables development of a consistent framework that can be reused over time. • Provides timely insights to inform the Long Term Plan and prepare for potential future local government reform. • Aligns with council direction and balances pace, depth, and risk.	• Does not provide immediate coverage of all council functions. • Subsequent phases would require further council decisions to proceed.

The staff's recommended option is Option 3: Proceed with a staged, targeted efficiency and effectiveness review, commencing with priority functions

Considerations

1. Alignment to council strategic direction - community outcomes

The matters covered in this report relate to the following community outcomes:

☐ Protected and flourishing native life

☐ Healthy waters, land and air

☐ Safe and resilient transport networks

☐ A sustainable, innovative and equitable economy

☐ Meaningful partnerships with tāngata whenua

☐ Carbon neutral, resilient communities in a changing climate

☒ Efficient, progressive and transparent council systems

2. Climate Impact

There are no direct climate impacts arising from the decision to undertake the review. However, the inclusion of catchment management and flood risk management within Phase One is expected to support improved understanding of how effectively these functions are contributing to climate resilience and adaptation outcomes over time.

3. Environmental Impact

There are no immediate environmental impacts associated with undertaking the review. The findings may, however, inform future decisions that improve environmental outcomes by identifying opportunities for more effective delivery of environmentally focused functions, including biosecurity and catchment management.

4. Community views

No formal community consultation has been undertaken in relation to this decision, as the report relates to internal assessment and improvement of council functions. Community views on service levels and outcomes will continue to be sought through established LTP and statutory consultation processes, informed by the review findings where relevant.

5. Māori impact statement

The proposed review does not directly impact Māori, however it has the potential to influence future service design and delivery. The framework and review approach will acknowledge statutory obligations and partnership considerations, including where activities interact with Te Tiriti o Waitangi responsibilities. Future decisions arising from the review will be assessed for Māori impacts as appropriate.

6. Financial implications

The review will involve expenditure of up to $200,000, with the final amount dependent on procurement outcomes. Funding is proposed to be met from existing salary savings, enabling the work to proceed without requiring additional budget allocation through the Annual Plan or impacting planned operational expenditure.

7. Implementation issues

Key implementation considerations include staff availability, data quality, and provider capacity. These risks are mitigated through a targeted, staged approach, a clear assessment framework, and engagement with experienced providers. While every effort will be made to align procurement timing and delivery milestones with LTP timeframes, there may be some impact depending on staff and provider capacity.

8. Significance and engagement

This decision is assessed as low significance under the Significance and Engagement Policy, as it relates to internal process improvement and does not directly change service levels or funding.

9. Policy, risk management and legislative compliance

The proposed procurement will be undertaken in accordance with Council's Procurement Policy. The review supports good governance and risk management by strengthening Council's understanding of efficiency, effectiveness, and value for money. There are no legislative compliance issues arising directly from this decision.

Background/Tuhinga

Council has expressed a desire to better understand how effectively and efficiently council functions are being delivered, including whether current service levels remain appropriate, where there may be duplication or inefficiencies, and where opportunities exist to improve value for money.

At a workshop held on 1 April 2026, council provided direction to proceed with a staged efficiency and effectiveness review, commencing with a targeted Phase One review of priority activities. council also directed that the review be externally facilitated using a consistent assessment framework, that a streamlined procurement process be undertaken in accordance with Council policy, and that findings be aligned with the Long Term Plan (LTP) process.

The purpose of the review is to support informed, evidence-based decision-making by providing a clear assessment of how selected council functions are performing, what statutory and service obligations apply, how resources are currently deployed, and where opportunities exist to improve efficiency, effectiveness, or delivery models. The review is intended to provide a robust evidence base to inform service level and investment decisions through the LTP.

Efficiency and effectiveness was defined in the workshop as follows, which will be provided to the successful provider for their assessment and use as they see fit:

- Effectiveness relates to doing the right things — achieving intended outcomes and meeting statutory responsibilities.
- Efficiency relates to doing things right — delivering outcomes in the simplest and most cost-effective way while maintaining service quality.

The review will assess both dimensions, recognising that functions may be effective but inefficient, or efficient but ineffective.

Should council wish to do so, the review can be undertaken in stages. An initial stage will establish a single, consistent assessment framework to be applied across all activities. This framework will define evaluation criteria, templates, rating scales, and decision tools, ensuring consistency and comparability and allowing the framework to be reused for future reviews.

The framework will then be applied to Phase One activities, as directed by council, in the following priority order:

1. Biosecurity
2. Catchment Management
3. Flood Risk Management
4. Corporate Services

These activities have been selected due to their strategic importance, financial materiality, and relevance to upcoming LTP decisions. The review will be carried out in consultation with staff and senior leadership to ensure appropriate context, data availability, and understanding of interdependencies across functions.

The procurement process will focus on delivery of a concise set of findings covering statutory requirements and minimum service levels, current efficiency and effectiveness, resourcing profiles (including cost, FTE, and workload), opportunities for improved delivery or value for money, potential alternative delivery models, and options for service level change.

A streamlined procurement process will be undertaken in accordance with Council's Procurement Policy, with proposals invited from PwC, BDO, and Tuhura Partners, all of whom have relevant

experience in local government efficiency and effectiveness reviews. It is noted that Deloitte was initially approached but is unable to participate due to its role as council's external auditor.

Limiting procurement to these providers is considered appropriate given the specialist nature of the work, prior market engagement, and the need to maintain momentum and timeliness.

The review is expected to cost up to $200,000, with the final amount to be confirmed through procurement. Council have provided direction that this cost is to be kept as low as possible while still enabling a review that can deliver what is sought.

The expenditure is proposed to be funded from existing salary savings, enabling the work to proceed without requiring additional budget allocation through the Annual Plan or impacting planned operational expenditure.

Subject to provider availability, procurement is expected to occur in May 2026, with the review undertaken across June and July 2026. This timing is intended to ensure findings are available to inform LTP deliberations during August to October 2026.

Consistent with council's direction, the results of the review will also be shared with other Northland councils through the Northland Mayoral Forum, supporting transparency, collaboration, and a coordinated regional approach where appropriate.

Attachments/Ngā tapirihanga

Nil

TITLE: Northland Inc Limited: Draft Statement of Intent 2026/27 - Proposed shareholder comments

From: Darryl Jones, Economist and Codie Mcintyre, Economic Policy Advisor

Authorised by Group Manager/s: Bruce Howse, Pou Taumatua – Group Manager Corporate Services, on 14 April 2026

Executive summary/Whakarāpopototanga

The purpose of this report is to obtain council's decision on the proposed shareholder comments to be provided to the Joint Regional Economic Development Committee (Joint Committee) for their consideration at their meeting on Friday 24 April 2026 as they finalise shareholder comments on Northland Inc's draft Statement of Intent (SOI) 2026/27 on behalf of all shareholder councils.

The proposed shareholder comments are based on the discussion that took place at the council workshop on 17 March. These have been broken into two: those relating to council's own Key Performance Indicator (KPI): that Northland Inc's annual statement of intent contains at least one KPI relating to supporting businesses transition to net zero-carbon (**Attachment 2**) and the remaining points raised (**Attachment 1**).

During council's workshop discussion on 17 March, several points were raised where common consensus was reached. These are contained in Attachment 1. The discussion also traversed the issue of council's own KPI of including in Northland Inc's SOI a KPI relating to supporting businesses transition to net zero-carbon. A variety of views were expressed as to whether council should propose shareholder comments to the Joint Committee for their consideration on this matter.

Staff recommend that council agree that both sets of proposed shareholder comments be provided through to the Joint Committee for their consideration.

Recommendation(s)

1. That the report 'Northland Inc Limited: Draft Statement of Intent 2026/27 - Proposed shareholder comments' by Darryl Jones, Economist and Codie Mcintyre, Economic Policy Advisor and dated 10 April 2026, be received.
2. That the proposed shareholder comments as set out in Attachment 1 to this agenda item be provided to the Joint Regional Economic Development Committee for their consideration at their meeting on 24 April 2026.
3. That the proposed shareholder comments as set out in Attachment 2 to this agenda item, specifically associated with a Key Performance Indicator relating to supporting businesses transition to net zero carbon, be provided to the Joint Regional Economic Development Committee for their consideration at their meeting on 24 April 2026.

Options

No.	Option	Advantages	Disadvantages
1	Agree to provide the Joint Committee with the proposed shareholder	Council activity engages in the SOI development process as a shareholder of Northland Inc	The proposed shareholder comment as set out in Attachment 2 will place addition

	comments as set out in both Attachments 1 and 2	Includes a proposed shareholder comment which supports one of council's own KPIs	resourcing pressure on Northland Inc, reversing a decision made by the Joint Committee last year to remove
2	Agree to provide the Joint Committee with the proposed shareholder comments as set out in Attachment 1 only	Council activity engages in the SOI development process as a shareholder of Northland Inc	Doesn't include a proposed shareholder comment which supports one of council's own KPIs
3	Don't agree to provide the Joint Committee with the proposed shareholder comments as set out in Attachments 1 and 2	None	Miss an opportunity to have input into the process of shareholder comments provided to Northland Inc

The staff's recommended option is option 1, to provide both attachments of proposed shareholder comments to the Joint Committee for their consideration. It's important to note that the Joint Committee has been provided delegated authority to provide shareholder comments back to Northland Inc on the draft SOI on behalf of all four shareholder councils. Council's comments will therefore be considered alongside those of the other three shareholder councils.

Considerations

1. Alignment to council strategic direction - community outcomes

The matters covered in this report relate to the following community outcomes:

☐ Protected and flourishing native life

☐ Healthy waters, land and air

☐ Safe and resilient transport networks

☒ A sustainable, innovative and equitable economy

☐ Meaningful partnerships with tāngata whenua

☐ Carbon neutral, resilient communities in a changing climate

☐ Efficient, progressive and transparent council systems

2. Climate Impact

The main climate impact associated with this decision is whether council wishes to support or not its current Long Term Plan (LTP) KPI that Northland Inc's annual statement of intent contains at least one KPI relating to supporting businesses transition to net zero-carbon. Not including a proposed shareholder comment relating to this will mean council will not achieve this LTP KPI. However, including a proposed shareholder comment relating to this does not necessary mean that this LTP KPI will be achieved because the final decision on shareholder comments provided to Northland Inc is the responsibility of the Joint Committee.

3. Environmental Impact

There are no environmental risks or impacts that need to be considered in making this decision.

4. Community views

There are no community views associated with this that council needs to be aware of.

5. Māori impact statement

The proposed shareholder comments support the work of Northland Inc in the activity of Māori economic development.

6. Financial implications

At the time of writing this report there are no known financial implications of this decision.

7. Implementation issues

Council's agreed suggested comments will be provided to the Joint Committee for their consideration at their meeting on Friday 24 April 2026.

8. Significance and engagement

In relation to section 79 of the Local Government Act of the Local Government Act 2002, this decision is considered to be low significance when assess against council's significant and engagement policy because it is a administrative matter. This does not mean that this matter is not of significance to tangata whenua and/or individual communities, but that council is able to make decisions relating to this matter without undertaking further consultation or engagement.

9. Policy, risk management and legislative compliance

Making this decision is consistent with the role of council as a shareholder of Northland Inc and the terms of reference of the Joint Committee.

Background/Tuhinga

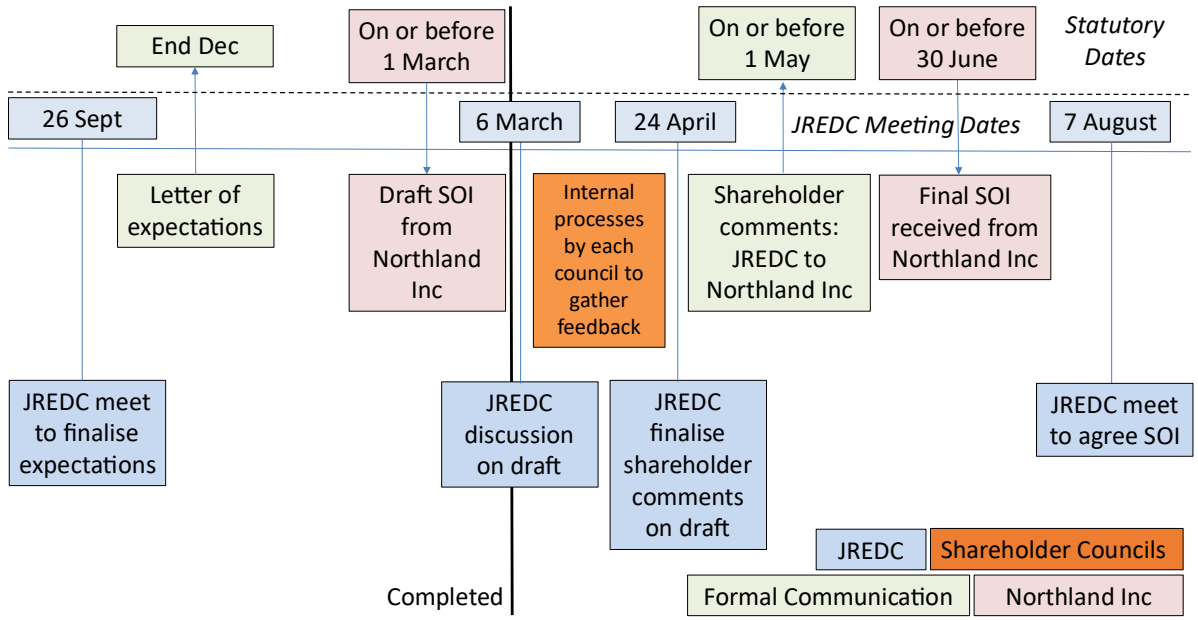
Council discussed Northland Inc's draft Statement of Intent 2026/27 at its workshop on 17 March 2026 as part of its review of the document as a shareholder of Northland Inc. Figure 1 outlines the process being undertaken to develop Northland Inc's SOI 2026/27.

JREDC received and briefly discussed the draft SOI 2026/27 at its meeting on Friday 6 March 2026. The process is now in the phase shown by the orange box in Figure 1, i.e. each individual council is undertaking its own internal processes of gathering feedback on the draft SOI (if any).

Feedback from all four councils will be considered by the JREDC at its meeting on Friday 24 April, with the legislative requirement to provide shareholder comment back to Northland Inc by 1 May.

The Joint Committee is responsible for providing the formal shareholder comments back to Northland Inc. Council's proposed shareholder comments, set out in Attachments 1 and 2, are part of the feedback received by the Joint Committee from the four shareholder councils.

Figure 1. Process for developing Northland Inc's SOI 2026/27



Attachments/Ngā tapirihanga

Attachment 1: Proposed shareholder comments excluding climate change related comment ⇩

Attachment 2: Proposed shareholder comment relating to climate change ⇩

Attachment 1

Northland Inc draft Statement of Intent 2026/27

Proposed shareholder comments from Northland Regional Council to the Joint Regional Economic Development Committee

Section 2 Vision and Mission (p.6)

The mission statement references "… improving the prosperity, wellness and ***equity*** of Te Tai Tokerau Northland." (emphasis added). This is supported.

However, in the document there is very little reference as to how "equity" will be improved through Northland Inc's activities. Some ratepayers who have engaged with elected members have indicated that they struggle to understand how Northland Inc's activities provide a return to their communities. Consider how equity can be given a stronger emphasis in the SOI document and activities undertaken.

Section 3. Organisational objectives, activities and key performance indicators

Strategic Pou 2. The Primary Sector – Tuputupu Grow Northland (p.10)

The primary sector is critical to Northland's economy. Activities in the Primary Sector Pou should be shaped around regional coordination, cross sector facilitation, value added industry development, and enabling land use transformation, rather than duplicating services already provided by organisations that levy farmers directly. Collaboration with partners such as the Te Tai Tokerau Water Trust, for example, in exploring and trialling land use opportunities enabled by new water infrastructure, are areas where Northland Inc can play a unique and enabling role in regional development.

Enabler 1. Advocacy and Brand (p.16)

Te Rerenga is identified in the Introduction section of the SOI as setting the "long-term intergenerational vision for a sustainable, innovative and prosperous economy focussing on the wellbeing of people, the economy and the environment." In this enabler section, Northland Inc identifies that leading the implementation of Te Rerenga is one the five activities that it will undertake.

Council supports Northland Inc taking a lead role in implementing Te Rerenga. Given the significant investment made in developing Te Rerenga by a range of stakeholders including the shareholder councils, the strategy risks becoming underutilised or effectively "sitting on the shelf" if no organisation is clearly accountable for its implementation. Northland Inc is the logical place for this leadership to sit, although council recognises that Northland Inc cannot do it on its own.

Enabler 2. Māori Economic Development (p.18)

Council supports the "regional aspiration to establish an equitable economic platform .... (that) enables whānau, hapū and iwi to be economically secure and to grow their wealth." What is unclear is whether Northland Inc is implementing this in practice by engaging meaningfully across all these levels of the Māori economy, or how their work programme accounts for their distinct roles, priorities and aspirations.

It would therefore be helpful to: (a) rethink the description of the activities to reflect this; and (b) consider providing some additional information breaking down the high level KPI into these different groups, e.g., like how additional information (by TA and industry) are provided for the first two KPIs for Strategic Pou 4 Innovation and Enterprise.

In relation to the first KPI, a definition of what "activity supported" means needs to be provided. This is a very broad phrase that makes it difficult to assess progress in supporting Māori to achieve their outcomes and aspirations. A more tangible or specific verb may be more helpful.

In relation to the second KPI, it would be good to ensure that the measurement of "satisfaction" is directly linked back to the objective, i.e., did engagement with Northland Inc improve the capacity and capability of those partnered with.

A minor drafting issue: replace "principals" with "principles" of Te Tiriti o Waitangi.

Enabler 3. Environmental Sustainability (p.20)

Like the point made in relation to the first Māori Economic Development KPI, the KPI for Enabler 3 is very broad and high-level and does not clearly identify what level or type of activity Northland Inc will deliver, nor what the impact is.

Northland Inc should consider developing a more specific and measurable KPI to provide greater clarity on Northland Inc's role, help shareholders understand what actions will be prioritised, and better demonstrate how the enabler contributes to the region's broader environmental objectives.

Northland Inc, could for example, align a KPI with an existing sustainability accreditation system, e.g. number of businesses helped to achieve X standard in Y system. This would provide a structured, efficient, and robust approach for businesses to pursue. It also means those businesses get an opportunity to gain an official accreditation tick for their efforts to become more sustainable.

Section 10. Prospective statement of financial performance (p.29)

The table provides a particular breakdown of income and expenditure, i.e. by Business as Usual (BAU), Strategic Projects and Ngawha Innovation and Enterprise Park (NIEP). While this is useful, it does not provide shareholders with clarity on how funding is being

allocated across the four priority areas (pou) and six enablers outlined in section 3 of the SOI (pp7-24).

Consequently, a breakdown of income and expenditure by the ten activities would greatly assist shareholders in understanding where Northland Inc is directing its operational effort, how this aligns with the expectations set through the SOI process, and how competing priorities, such as Tuputupu/Grow Northland, Te Rerenga implementation, and other economic development initiatives, are being balanced within a finite funding envelope.

Specifically, what would be very helpful is to have a split of income by source, and expenditure by broad category, for each of the ten activities listed in the SOI. At the minimum, a split showing CCO Opex income (i.e. funding provided by councils through the IGR) and total income (i.e. will show the level of additional funding from third parties) across the ten activities. It would be good to have this breakdown for the last three years, i.e. 2024/25 actual, 2025/26 budgeted, 2026/27 proposed.

Attachment 2

Northland Inc draft Statement of Intent 2026/27

Proposed shareholder comments from Northland Regional Council to the Joint Regional Economic Development Committee

Enabler 3. Environmental Sustainability (p.20)

Council has set itself a KPI which states: Northland Inc's annual statement of intent contains at least one KPI relating to supporting businesses transition to net zero-carbon. Both the current SOI 2025/26 and the draft SOI 2026/27 do not have such a KPI in place, although the SOI 2024/25 did have two.[1]

One of the nine targets set by central government to focus the public sector is to reduce greenhouse gas emissions, specifically be on track to meet New Zealand's 2050 net zero climate change targets, with total net emissions of no more than 290 megatonnes from 2022 to 2025 and 305 megatonnes from 2026 to 2030.

Council requests that the JREDC consider asking Northland Inc to reinsert a KPI like that which was included in the SOI 2024/25. Given the current fuel crisis, it might be appropriate to frame the KPI along the lines of assisting businesses take action to reduce fossil fuel energy consumption or dependence. Such a target would not only help meet an environmental outcome (reducing emissions) but also an economic one (improving profitability).

[1] Number of Northland businesses taking action to reduce their emissions.
Number of Northland businesses supported to meet climate adaption targets set by central government.

TITLE: Appointments to the Members' Expenses and Allowances Panel

From: Chris Taylor, Governance Specialist

Authorised by Group Manager: Bruce Howse, Pou Taumatua – Group Manager Corporate Services, on 14 April 2026

Executive summary/Whakarāpopototanga

The NRC Elected Members' Expenses and Allowances Policy details the expenses and allowances that are available to councillors. The Policy is based on the fundamental principle that 'elected members should not incur personal expense in the performance of their representational or governance functions and that fair and reasonable expenses incurred in the course of their representational or governance functions should be reimbursed by the council.' (Section 2.2 of the Policy).

The current Elected Members' Expenses and Allowances Policy (the Policy) details the process for the approval of expenses, which can involve the Members' Expenses and Allowances Panel (MEAP).

This report seeks the appointment of three councillors to the Panel.

Recommendations:

1. That the report 'Appointments to the Members' Expenses and Allowances Panel' by Chris Taylor, Governance Specialist and dated 8 April 2026, be received.

2. That Councillor _____, Councillor _____ and Councillor _____ be appointed to the Members' Expenses and Allowances Panel in accordance with Section 2.8 of the Elected Members' Expenses and Allowances Policy.

Options

No.	Option	Advantages	Disadvantages
1	Appoint members to the Members' Expenses and Allowances Panel.	• Ensures the necessary provisions are in place to give effect to the Elected Members and Allowances Policy.	• None – apparent.
2	Do not appoint members to the Members' Expenses and Allowances Panel.	• None – apparent.	• Does not ensure the necessary provisions are in place to give effect to the Elected Members and Allowances Policy.

Staff support Option 1 as for council to appoint its representatives on the Members and Allowances Panel.

Considerations

Being an administrative matter, climate impact, environmental impact and Māori impact statement are not specifically relevant.

1. **Community views**

   There are no known community views on this matter. However, it is assumed that the base principle that elected members should be fairly reimbursed for undertaking their governance role would be supported.

2. **Financial implications**

   None identified.

3. **Implementation issues**

   Nil

4. **Significance and engagement**

   In relation to section 79 of the Local Government Act 2002, this decision is considered to be of low significance when assessed against council's Significance and Engagement Policy because it is an administrative matter and part of council's day to day activities. This does not mean that this matter is not of significance to tangata whenua and/or individual communities, but that council is able to make decisions relating to this matter without undertaking further consultation or engagement.

5. **Policy, risk management and legislative compliance**

   Schedule 7 Section 6(1) of the Local Government Act 2002 is relevant and stipulates that the Remuneration Authority sets the remuneration, allowances and expenses payable to elected members. The detail is contained within latest Local Government Members Determination (accessible using the following link:

   https://www.legislation.govt.nz/secondary-legislation/pco-drafted/2025/140/en/latest/#LMS1451080

Background/Tuhinga

The current NRC Elected Members' Expenses and Allowances Policy can be viewed using the following link:

https://www.nrc.govt.nz/media/cb1fybe0/elected-members-expenses-and-allowances-policy-current-version-december-2025.pdf

The Policy must give effect to the latest Local Government Members Determination issued by the Remuneration Authority; being the statutory body to set remuneration, expenses and allowances for elected members. This is in accordance with Schedule 7 Section 6(1), Schedule 7 of the Local Government Act 2002 a follows:

6 Remuneration Authority to determine remuneration

(1) The Remuneration Authority must determine the remuneration, allowances, and expenses payable to—

(a) mayors, deputy mayors, chairpersons, deputy chairpersons, and members of local authorities:

(b) chairpersons of committees of local authorities:

(c) chairpersons and members of community boards:

(d) chairpersons of committees of community boards:

(e) chairpersons and members of local boards:

(f) chairpersons of committees of local boards:

(g) *[Repealed]*

The current mediation process for expense claims (as detailed in Section 2.8 of the Policy) states:

2.8 Mediation process for expense claims

Each triennium council will formally appoint three councillors to the Members Expenses and Allowances Panel (MEAP). The membership of MEAP is for the duration of the triennium unless council formally resolves otherwise. For the avoidance of doubt the Chair of council cannot be a member of MEAP.

In the event an elected member challenges a ruling under Section 2.7a or Section 2.7b of the Policy:

- *a. The matter will be referred to (MEAP) for a determination.*
- *b. If the elected member challenging a ruling is a member of MEAP they must withdraw from the decision making process (Section 2.8a above).*
- *c. If MEAP cannot reach a unanimous decision then the original ruling under Section 2.7a or Section 2.7b remains in effect.*

It is requested that council confirm the members of MEAP to give effect to the Policy.

Attachments/Ngā tapirihanga

Nil

TITLE:	**Health and Safety report for January to March 2026 quarter**
From:	Tamsin Sutherland, Health and Safety Advisor and Shane Cleary, People and Culture Manager
Authorised by Group Manager/s:	Bruce Howse, Pou Taumatua – Group Manager Corporate Services, on 14 April 2026

Whakarāpopototanga / Executive summary

This report is to inform the council of the activity in Health and Safety for the period January to March 2026.

An overview/summary of the report includes:

- A summary of the events, investigations and outcomes that have occurred in this quarter
- Overall numbers of incidents/hazards have declined slightly
- Speeding events remain low in comparison to historical trends
- Mentally healthy work was the Health and Safety Committee focus for this quarter
- Summary of the current work programme for the health and safety team

Ngā mahi tūtohutia / Recommendation

That the report 'Health and Safety report for January to March 2026 quarter' by Tamsin Sutherland, Health and Safety Advisor and Shane Cleary, People and Culture Manager and dated 2 April 2026, be received.

Background/Tuhinga

Background/Tuhinga

1. Health and safety performance

A summary of the health and safety performance for the financial year to date by quarter is shown in Table 1 below.

- The number of completed health and safety (H&S) inductions for new staff in the January to March 2026 quarter was 93% within the target 2 working days. The staff member missed was taken to an alternative office as part of the CDEM response on day 2 of their new role.

- Training during the third quarter of 2025/26 included garmin user training, manual handling, first aid, de-escalation courses for field and office staff, defensive driver and 4WD training. New hazardous substance inventory manager training has been developed and rolled out to staff who manage hazardous substance storage.

- The focus on critical risks from the Health and Safety Committee initiative focussed on mentally healthy work this quarter. This involved ensuring that staff have a common

understanding of what mentally healthy work means, identifying suitable controls, confirming the controls in the hazard register. A policy is being developed to manage psychosocial risks.

- Lead Indicators for health and safety performance, as well as continuing to report on lag indicators are monitored. See Table 1 for a summary of the tracking of these indicators.

	Lead Indicators reporting	Period			Previous Year
	Lead Indicator	**Jul-Sept 2025**	**Oct-Dec 2025**	**Jan-Mar 2026**	**FYE 24/25**
1	Number of new tasks with risk assessment completed	3	0	1	2
2	number of high risk tasks reviewed in past 12 months	1	4	9	16
3	% of planned workplace inspections completed	100%	none planned	90	93%
4	No of health and safety training completions in this quarter	106	162	122	511
5	No of health and safety audits undertaken (not inc contractor audits)	9	6	10	27
6	% of H&S inductions completed in first 2 days	97%	100%	93%	96%
7	Health monitoring vaccine programmes completed YTD	4	7	4	102
8	Health monitoring programmes completed YTD	14	19	8	121
	Lag indicators				
9	Audit/investigation corrective actions identified	42	20	45	134
10	Number of speed events	9	19	8	51
11	Number of vehicle events	27	25	8	54
12	Number of contractor accident/incident reports	4	3	2	16
13	Incident investigations	84	90	75	320
14	Incident investigations by year to date	84	174	249	333
15	% of recommendations from workplace inspections/risk assessment implemented within timeframe	65%	65%	60%	

Table 1: Lead and lag indicator reporting for 2025/26 financial year to date, compared to last financial year totals

There were no long term injuries at work during this quarter. Health and Safety and Human Resources support staff who are returning to work from any injury (home or workplace) or surgery. National research shows outcomes from managed recovery at work significantly shorten recovery duration and provide better wellbeing outcomes for staff. Clearer guidance to support staff who need a supported return to work has been created.

2. Risk management

The top cause for reported incidents for the January to March quarter was office environment incidents (14 incidents for the quarter). This includes a number of discomfort reports from working in a modern space environment where the desk is not pre-set for an individual's comfort, the chairs may not be an ideal fit, screen adjustment is being improved and several desk heights will be available moving forward.

Aggressive people incidents (13) and animal incidents (13) were significant features in this quarter. Staff encountered some aggressive behaviour during the summer events season, but the Regulatory Services team receive the most abuse in the course of their compliance work. Animal encounters were mostly wasp stings (2 involved multiple stings on an individual), but also included leech bites, eel bites, dogs acting aggressively and stock on the road.

There is an increasing trend of encounters with aggressive people evident across the three quarters of this year to date (Q1 4; Q2 11; Q3 13). More staff are working in the field during the summer months so this seasonal variation, with a peak in summer, is typical. More incident reports have been received for the year to date in 2025-2026 than were received in the previous financial year. This may be a result of increased aggression, but is likely in part due to increased awareness and a clearer process for staff to escalate (instead of tolerate) aggressive behaviour over the past 12 months.

Vehicle incidents (8) and vehicle speeding (8) were still evident this quarter. Staff are now receiving individualised driving performance reports, which acknowledge excellent driving as well as highlight where more care is needed.

Defensive driver training has been very well received by staff in the past 18 months. Staff avoiding a number of other driver's accidents has been attributed to the skills gained during this training.

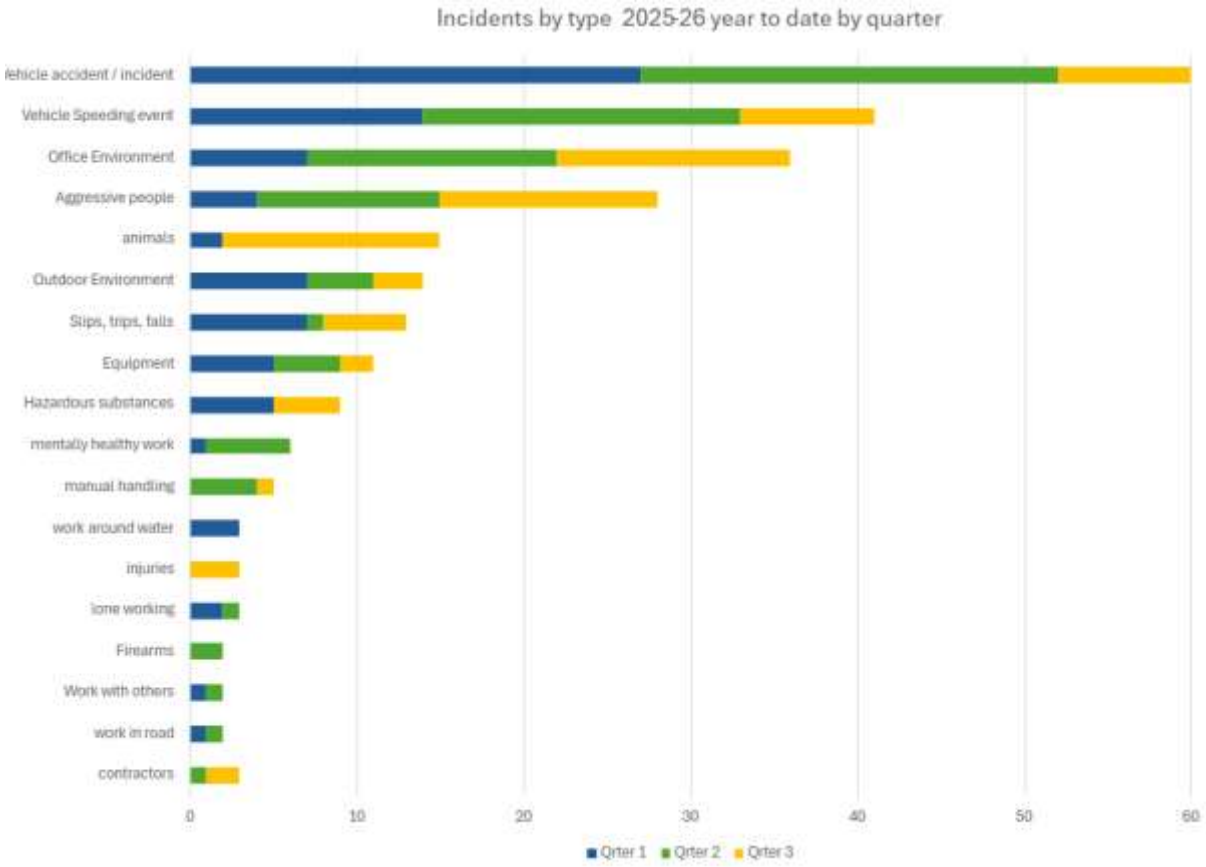


Figure 1: Health and safety event reports categorised by type for the 2025-56 year to date by quarter – note driving includes near misses whilst driving and vehicle damage, but excludes speeding identified in ERoad which is shown as speeding events

3. Injuries, incidents, and hazards

80 incidents were reported by staff for the quarter January to March 2026. The focus on reporting incidents and near misses, not just injuries continues to provide an increase in reports made, and provide insight into the real risks our staff face. Near miss reports provide an opportunity to prevent harm before it occurs.

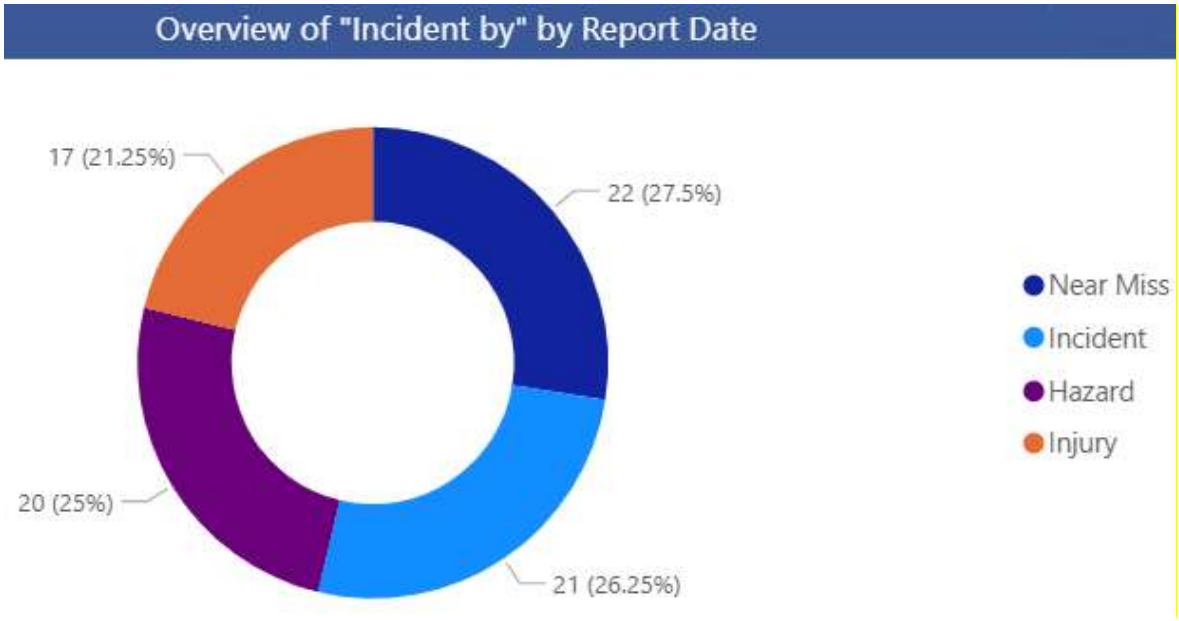


Figure 2: Number of hazard and injury/incident related events compared to near misses reported for the January to March 2026 quarter

4. Health and Safety communications review

NRC staff often work remotely and in isolated areas where no other support can be reasonably anticipated. It is essential that staff are provided with effective means of communication, including in areas with limited cell phone coverage. Historically we have relied on Garmin units to provide this coverage. However, the units are problematic in that they are not intuitive to use, there are significant delays in signal reception, and in reality, they are not well used.

We are currently investigating a more fit-for-purpose solution to the isolated and remote worker issue. This is likely to be a blend of satellite cell phone service, personal locator apps and beacons, and the continuation of ERoad vehicle tracking. This project has been delayed by delays of the provider launch of satellite connectivity.

The buddy system

Streamlined forms for the buddy system, allowing tracking for lone or remote workers were launched in November 2025. Issues with user licences and permissions configuration with the existing software are limiting the completion of this project, this work is in progress with IT. A Before You Go may represent an individual staff member or a group of staff working together who are using the same vehicle.

In the period 10 November to 31 December, staff completed the following safety surveys.

Safety Check form used	Number completed 10 Nov – 31 Dec 2025	Number completed 1 Jan – 31 Mar 2026	Identified it unsafe to proceed with planned work
Before You Go	658	1351	n/a
Take 5	535	1056	8

Table 2: the number of safety forms completed by staff after the amendment to the forms in a partial second quarter of 2025-26 compared to the third quarter of this year. Also shows the number of times it was assessed as unsafe to proceed with work as planned due to conditions on site.

On 8 occasions the on-site Take 5! risk assessment identified that it was not safe for staff to continue the planned work in the current environmental conditions. In a further 20 cases, staff identified that additional controls were needed to address site conditions so work could continue safely.

The data from the Take 5! and Before You Go forms also identifies how many critical risks our staff are working with in the field. In the majority of cases (57%) staff are lone working.

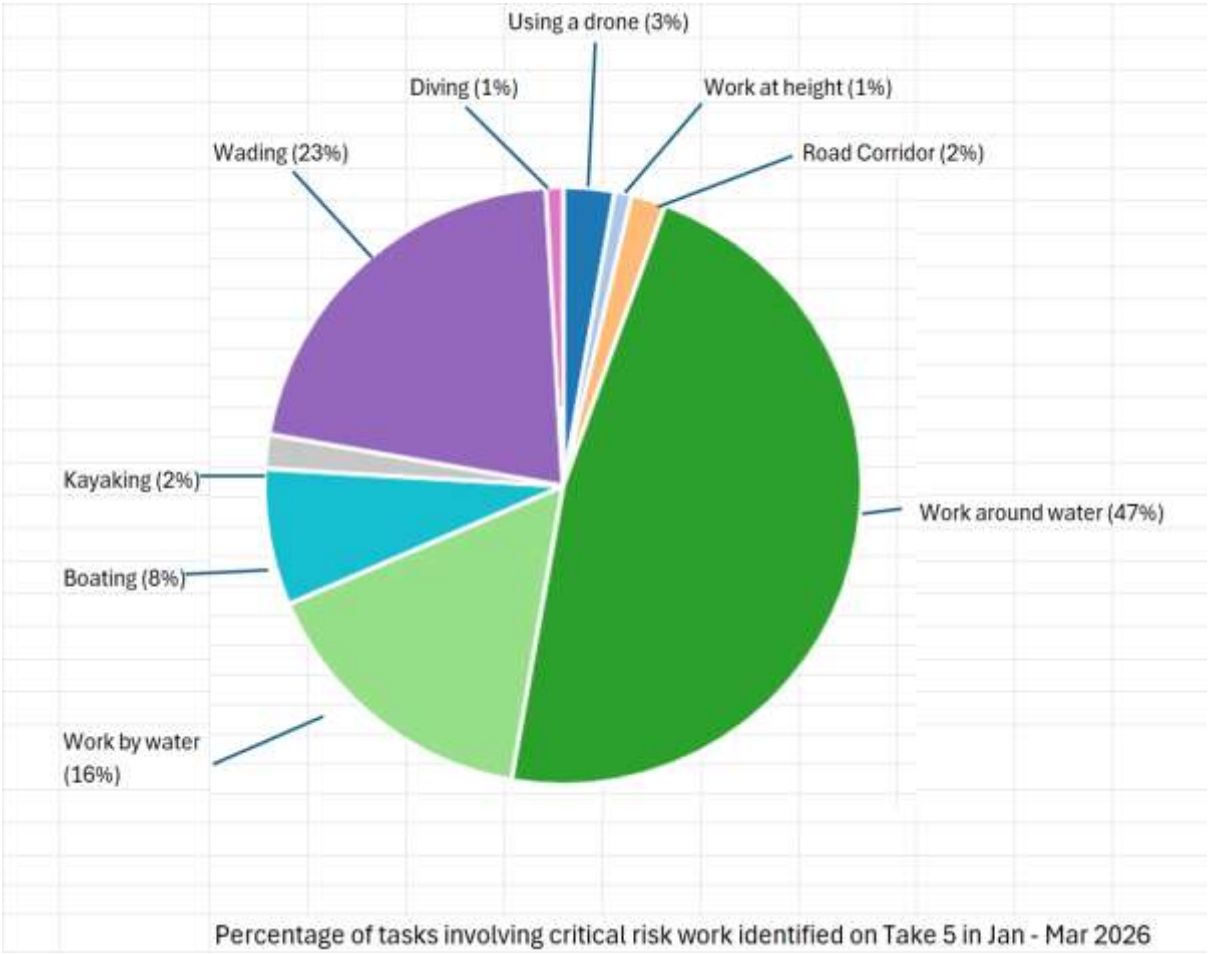


Figure 3: The percentage of work carried out in the January to March 2026 quarter that included critical risk activities, data from Before You Go and Take 5! forms

Use of body cameras at NRC

We have three different types of body camera in use in different settings. These are used by Regulatory Services and Customer services primarily for personal protection. Body cameras are also used by the Maritime team for evidential purposes. The use of body cameras is covered under the Capturing Images, Footage and Audio Policy, and using body cameras and emergency response for customer services procedures.

5. Health and safety work programme

Events of interest

Note: the events of interest only detail high risk events, or events which affect large groups of people.

The following events are events of interest from the quarter January to March 2026.

- Aggressive people incidents dominated this quarter. This may reflect increased communication to staff regarding reporting unacceptable behaviour, and improved awareness that there is a low threshold for tolerating abuse of staff.
- Reports relating office discomfort have increased this quarter. This is largely related to staff identifying concerns in the modern workspace environment. Although the number of standing desks has not decreased, some staff have struggled to get access to a standing desk. Chairs are not necessarily a good fit for every individual. A standard desk height does not work for taller staff. A range of solutions have been identified for these issues, and staff are being encouraged to report any discomfort from their desk set up.
- The Civil Defence Emergency Management Emergency Coordination Centre was activated twice in this quarter, with two red weather warning events. During these events staff were advised to work from home where possible. Council offices were closed to discourage the public from driving through the extreme weather to visit the offices. All services were available with staff working from home.
- During CDEM responses, fatigue quickly becomes an issue with specialist staff working long hours for the emergency event. Guidance on managing fatigue has been clarified, and during the March event, additional support staff from other regions was requested early to assist in managing fatigue for NRC staff.

6. Legislative changes

The Health and Safety at Work Amendment Bill has had a first reading in parliament. At the time of writing, the proposal is in review by Select Committee with a lot of feedback from submitters. The Bill in its current form would have significant impacts on health and safety requirements for contractors working with NRC. The proposed changes would create a two tier system, where PCBUs with fewer than 20 employees are exempted requirements under the Act. For example, they would not need to maintain documented health and safety systems, or consider risks aside from specified ‘critical risks’. Psychosocial harm is a notable omission from the critical risk list. Under the proposed amendment bill smaller PCBU contractors would not be required to consider aggression to their staff. It will be more difficult for NRC to confirm contractors have considered all risks if they are not required to document their processes.

Attachments/Ngā tapirihanga

Nil

TITLE:	**Chair's Report to Council**
From:	Rae Hetaraka, Executive Assistant to the Chair
Authorised by Group Manager/s:	Pita Tipene, Chair of council, on 14 April 2026

Purpose of Report

This report is to receive information from the Chair on strategic issues, meetings/events attended, and correspondence sent for the month of March 2026.

Ngā mahi tūtohutia / Recommendation

That the report 'Chair's Report to Council' by Rae Hetaraka, Executive Assistant to the Chair and dated 31 March 2026, be received.

Meetings/events attended

During this period, I attended the following meetings/events/functions:

1. Acciona New Zealand

I met with some of the management of Acciona on Tuesday 17th March in Whangarei. The Acciona team included Craig Fletcher, Antony de Pont (Senior Commercial Manager) and Tracy Davis, Cultural Advisor and Māori Outcomes Lead.

The purpose of the meeting was to introduce Acciona and discuss key infrastructural projects such as the proposed Northland Energy Bridge. Acciona invited me to the meeting more in my role with Nga Iwi o Te Tai Tokerau.

Acciona is an international infrastructure developer based in Spain. They are involved in major construction projects around the globe. Acciona Construction is their major project delivery arm in major transport infrastructure, ports, renewables, energy etc.

2. LGNZ Zone One Meeting

Our Zone One meeting was hosted by the Far North District Council at their Council Chambers in Kaikohe on Thursday 19th March.

We were joined at the meeting by LGNZ reps led by Craig Little, Mayor of Wairoa District Council and Amanda Wells.

Vanessa Blacklock of DIA also attended who provided an update on developments around the major reforms currently upon us.

3. Northland Forward Together

Our team of Councillors attended the Northland Forward Together, hosted by the Far North District Council at their Council Chambers in Kaikohe on Thursday 19th March. Our team included Councillors Craw, Carr and Kitchen and myself who were there in person and other councillors on-line.

Key agenda items included:

- Overview of developments since December (CEO Forum and Mayoral Forum reform discussions). Note - approval of the Triennial Agreement and specifics for Northland| Forward Together. Note – 6th March 2026 Mayoral Forum approval of Northland | Forward Together Work Programme.
- Workshopping the vision, objectives, and Northland| Forward Together priorities for the 2025–28 triennium for refresh of Northland| Forward Together Agreement to ensure it remains fit for purpose under (a) Resource Management Reforms, (b) Simplifying Local Government Reforms and (c) Infrastructure and affordability pressure.
- Update on simplifying local government reforms and local waters are done well.

4. Kiwi Release

On Monday 23rd March, I travelled to Langs Beach and Waorahi Reserve for a kiwi release kaupapa. I was joined by Cr John Hunt, along with our staff led by Don McKenzie.

There was a large crowd present, including many children, to witness the release of three kiwi originating from Ngāti Hine. Those gathered also had the privilege of learning from kiwi expert Todd Hamilton of Backyard Kiwi.

Acknowledgement was made to Bruce Copeland, who purchased the 200 hectares to ensure it remained as a forest, as well as the Piroa Trust, which supports these initiatives.

The NRC was consistently acknowledged for the great work undertaken under the Kiwi kaupapa, with Rolf Fuchs in particular receiving high praise.

5. BECA

I was invited by Beca to attend the Northland Leaders Forum held on Wednesday 25th March at their Porowini Ave offices and I attended despite the inclement weather.

It was great to join local civic leaders and businesses, using the opportunity to engage with one another, share what was front of mind, and importantly look to work together for the betterment of Northland.

Key topics covered were the roading/infrastructure projects, Northport expansion, an energy hub at Ruakākā and renewed optimism in the forestry sector.

The main speaker was Alan McDonald, EMA Head of Advocacy and Strategy.

6. Ballance Farm Awards

On the evening of Wednesday 25th March, along with Jack Craw, I attended the Ballance Farm Environment Awards held at the Semenoff stadium.

Organised annually by the New Zealand Farm Environment Trust, the BFEA programme highlights outstanding farming systems, showcases great practice and shares real-world stories of environmental sustainability and innovation across Aotearoa. Jack and I awarded the Northland Regional Council Water Quality Enhancement Award.

This Award recognises initiatives taken to protect and enhance water quality and biodiversity values within the water that flows through and from the property. This includes initiatives limiting pollutant inputs into the water through good land management practices. For example, soil conservation, wetland protection and enhancement as well as implementing riparian management practices.

The winner of this award was Wiroa Horticulture led by Alan Dobbie. Wiroa Horticulture claimed a number of the awards including the Supreme Award, incidentally, won by Cr Geoff Crawford and his wife Jo back in 2022. The Wiroa Trust is located in Kerikeri and specialises in Gold and Red kiwifruit.

7. Minister for Emergency Management and Recovery

Mark Mitchell visited the Whangārei District Council on Thursday 26th March. The Minister was preparing for potentially damaging storms that were forecast to hit Northland later that afternoon.

The Minister met with our CDEM team led by Cr Colin Kitchen and was fully briefed on the potential storm including our readiness. While the potential damaging effects of that storm didn't eventuate, we appreciated that the Minister was connecting with our teams.

8. Taiwan Trade Mission Delegation

I accompanied a delegation from Taiwan from Saturday 28th – Tuesday 30th March. Key members of the delegation had hosted me for a week in their country late last year. The delegation was hosted by our Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Trade.

The mission focused on:

- Sustainable Tourism: Experts in high-value cultural heritage publishing, luxury indigenous hospitality management, and regional tourism revitalization.

- Agri-horticulture: Specialists in organic farming, indigenous wild vegetable restoration, and high-value agricultural branding (including coffee and biological technology).

- Renewable Energy & Sustainable Development: Consultants with extensive experience in industrial energy needs and land governance, focusing on integrating indigenous values with sustainable development.

The mission was welcomed at the Orakei marae at Bastion Point and hosted by Ngati Whatua Orakei, who own significant land holdings in the central Auckland CBD.

We travelled to Hamilton and were hosted by Waikato-Tainui who highlighted their strategies and gave us a tour of their Inland Super Hub; a key integrated industrial and logistics hub, Te Awa - The Base Retailing and Shopping Malls, Hotels etc.

We were hosted in Taupo by Opepe Farm; a large Beef and Sheep demonstration farm that integrates geothermal energy with agricultural production.

We also visited the Tauhara Geothermal Power Station located north of Taupo. Previously known as Tauhara 2, the project was developed by Contact Energy and Tauhara Moana Trust and opened in November 2024. At its peak it can produce up to 174 megawatts of electricity, enough to power about 200,000 homes.

In these photos I am with two of our Taiwanese manuhiri at the Tauhara Geothermal Power station and Craig West, CEO of Tainui Group Holdings; the commercial arm of Waikato-Tainui.

9. Regional Council Chairs Meeting

On Thursday 2nd April, I attended the Regional Chairs meeting in Wellington. Cr John Hunt was in Wellington on other business so I invited him to join us for a short while.

The focus of the meeting was to raise our gaze beyond immediate turbulence and design the next version of “how we lead” including future sector positioning - what we want the regional sector to be in 2–3 years; coalitions and relationships and whether we are unifying or diverging in messaging and structure.

10. Minister Shane Jones at Northport

On Friday 10th April, I travelled out to Northport with Bruce Howse for the meeting with Shane Jones and other key leaders to discuss strategic kaupapa aligned to our shareholding in Northport. Geoff Crawford also joined us having only just arrived back in the country from Japan.

The various parties represented at the meeting are responsible for investment in key pieces of enabling transport infrastructure around Marsden Point. The intent of the meeting was to establish a more coordinated, cross-agency approach for unlocking the Northport-Marsden Point Energy and Logistics Precinct.

The meeting was also an opportunity to clarify the enabling infrastructure requirements, roles and responsibilities, and the sequencing needed to provide certainty for private and public sector investment and to accelerate nationally significant economic opportunities.

Geoff, Bruce and I de-briefed immediately after that meeting at the Marina restaurant, and all agreed that it was a very positive, proactive and purposeful meeting. In particular, we highlighted next steps and being focused and decisive about coordinating our collective efforts in advancing the kaupapa. Next steps will be coordinated through the Kanoa office.

Correspondence

During March I sent out the following correspondence:

Date	Addressed To	Subject
10 March 2026	Hon Dr Shane Reti	Support for Clean Vessell Plan
10 March 2026	Hon David Seymour	Support for Clean Vessell Plan
10 March 2026	Hon Mark Mitchell	Support for Clean Vessell Plan
10 March 2026	MP Grant McCallum	Support for Clean Vessell Plan
24 March 2026	Primary Production Select Committee	Invitation to visit Northland – Field Trip on the Impacts of Madagascar Ragwort

Attachments/Ngā tapirihanga

Nil

TITLE: Chief Executive's Report to Council

From: Jonathan Gibbard, Tāhūhū Rangapū - Chief Executive Officer

Authorised by Group Manager/s: Jonathan Gibbard, Tāhūhū Rangapū - Chief Executive Officer, on 14 April 2026

Ngā mahi tūtohutia / Recommendation

That the report 'Chief Executive's Report to Council' by Jonathan Gibbard, Tāhūhū Rangapū - Chief Executive Officer and dated 30 March 2026, be received.

8.3.1 HIGHLIGHTS

Civil Defence Emergency Management

Weather Impacts, Response and Recovery

March was characterised by renewed severe weather activity across Te Taitokerau, resulting in multiple Emergency Operations Centre (EOC) activations and two State of Local Emergency declarations (Whangārei District and Far North District). These events occurred while recovery from the January 2026 severe weather event remains ongoing, placing sustained pressure on local and regional emergency management capability.

On 26 March, MetService Red Severe Weather Warnings triggered coordinated responses across the region. Significant flooding occurred, particularly in the Far North, with record river flows recorded in the Awanui catchment. While impacts varied across districts, the March event reinforced ongoing challenges associated with cumulative weather impacts, floodplain vulnerability, and the increasing frequency of high-intensity rain events.

Emergency Coordination Centre (ECC) arrangements were stood up to support district responses as required, alongside continued recovery coordination from January. Recovery activity is now running concurrently with response readiness for further weather events, underscoring the importance of cross-council coordination and staff resilience.

8.3.2 PROTECTED AND FLOURISHING NATIVE LIFE

INCURSIONS

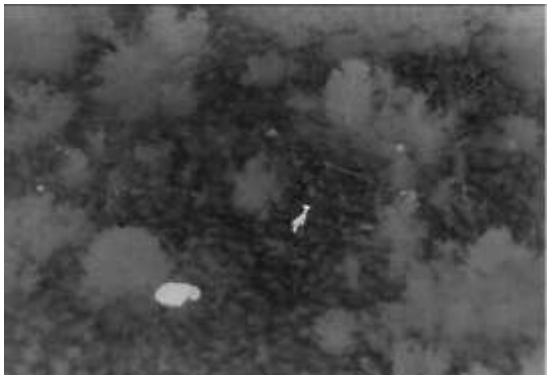
Sika Eradication Project

Work to understand if the eradication of sika from Russell can be confirmed is underway. This phase is called "validation" and focuses on collecting camera and ground survey search data using trained detector dogs to try and locate any remaining animals that may have been missed or locating their sign. To mark this milestone in the project a pōwhiri was held at Te Rawhiti Marae to introduce the new contractors involved in this work, providing an opportunity to connect and share kai together. Before field activities began, a blessing was held at the entrance to the Russell/Ngaiotonga Maunga to acknowledge the significance of the area and mark the start of this work.

Wild Deer Free Tai Tokerau

Thermal drone surveillance is underway during the roar period when stags are less wary and sometimes approach deer farms in search of hinds. These surveys prioritise deer farms near native bush to assist in locating wild deer that may be present outside of fences but close to the boundary fence. A deer has already been detected outside the fence (see image below) and steps are now being taken to remove this animal.

NRC Staff & Contractors reviewing Sika Project information on site.



Deer outside the farm boundary detected using thermal drone surveillance

PARTNERSHIPS

Piroa Brynderwyns Kiwi Release

Bruce and Janine Copeland meet Hinekiuta the kiwi, held by Todd Hamilton (Photo: Malcolm Pullman)

On 23 March, three juvenile Northland brown kiwi were successfully translocated and released into Te Waorahi, a regenerating native forest located behind Langs Beach within the Piroa–Brynderwyns High Value Area. This landscape is recognised for its ecological significance and is supported by the Northland Regional Council through its High Value Area (HVA) programme. The kiwi, two females and one male aged approximately two to three years, were gifted by Ngāti Hine and raised from chicks on Matakohe–Limestone Island, a predator-free kiwi creche. Their release occurred at dusk and was formally acknowledged through a pōwhiri involving mana whenua, landowners, community conservation groups, and agency partners, reflecting the collaborative governance and delivery model underpinning biodiversity restoration in the area. The Northland Regional Council was also represented at the event by Chair Pita Tipene and Councillor John Hunt, demonstrating council's support for hapū- and community-led conservation initiatives within the HVA.

Partnerships officer, Councillor John Hunt and Chair Pita Tipene in the background.

The release event brought together four hapū, Patuharakeke, Te Uri o Hau, Te Parawhau and Ngāti Hine, demonstrating a shared commitment to restoring taonga species and strengthening cultural and ecological connections to whenua. Each kiwi was named by Mana Whenua, reinforcing the species' cultural significance and the role of mātauranga Māori in contemporary conservation practice. Kōrero shared during the pōwhiri linked present-day predator control programmes with ancestral management traditions, highlighting a continuity of kaitiakitanga over multiple generations. The release also marked a key outcome for landowners who purchased the site to enable long-term ecological restoration rather than subdivision, supporting both biodiversity outcomes and reconnection between mana whenua and whenua.

The translocation forms part of the Piroa Conservation Trust's wider programme to restore kiwi populations and associated ecosystems across the Piroa–Brynderwyns Hills, with ongoing pest control and monitoring aimed at establishing a self-sustaining kiwi population across the High Value Area.

NRC -Te Aupōuri visit

Te Rūnanga Nui o Te Aupōuri has a long-standing commitment to enhancing the taiao across their rohe, which includes the ecologically and culturally significant Kokota Sandspit and Te Ārai Reserve. Their kaupapa is focused on restoring these environments toward their pre-settlement condition, supporting healthy waterways and resilient populations of native species. Over the past four years, the Northland Regional Council has been proud to support this mahi, initially through the Community Pest Control Area (CPCA) programme and, more recently, through the Mid and Far North Partnerships Fund. The project is currently in the second year of a five-year funding agreement. Council investment has helped build capacity and enabled the Rūnanga to leverage additional funding from multiple agencies to fully resource the programme. Key activities include pest animal and weed management, ecological monitoring, integration of mātauranga Māori, workforce training, and meaningful community and whānau engagement, including education and advocacy for culturally significant wāhi tapu.

Staff from land management, biosecurity and the māori relationship teams were hosted by Te Aupōuri and visited key restoration projects. The Taiao restoration team above have planted the margins of Lake Whahakari (in the background) with the aim of restoring water quality and halting the damaging effects of pine plantations which once grew up to the lake edge.

MARINE BIOSECURITY

Invasive Seagrass

A seagrass sample was recently collected by a contractor during a sediment survey within an enclosed area of Marsden Cove Marina. The sample was initially analysed by Earth Sciences New Zealand (ESNZ), with formal identification now confirming the species as *Halophila decipiens*, a small tropical seagrass not previously recorded in this location. ESNZ subsequently undertook dive surveys to determine the extent of the incursion. The infestation is largely confined to the enclosed Stage 2 basin of the marina, where coverage is extensive, with a smaller patch identified in Stage 1. At this stage, no seagrass has been detected outside the marina. While the lock system provides some level

of containment, regular water exchange and vessel movements mean there remains a potential pathway for spread.

The Ministry for Primary Industries (MPI) has completed an initial risk assessment and considers the risk of adverse effects to be low. *Halophila decipiens* is a fast-colonising species found naturally in warmer regions, but it is not widely recognised as a highly invasive species globally. The main uncertainty is how it may interact with New Zealand's only native seagrass species, which plays an important ecological role in coastal habitats. MPI is progressing this matter quickly and has begun engaging with Patuharakeke on response options. Early intervention is being considered, particularly targeting the smaller infestation in Stage 1 to prevent further spread.

Seagrass (*Halophila decipiens).*

Wetland Training

Eighteen council staff from land management, compliance, biosecurity, partnerships and education teams took part in the annual Wetland Training Course run by wetland experts in the Biodiversity Team. The programme combined classroom learning, plant identification and field-based practise tailored to the needs of the staff who attended. Students developed practical skills in identifying Northland wetland types, using mapping as a tool to assess wetlands before a field visit, recognising characteristic species, and applying national wetland delineation methods. This course creates a strong foundation for increasing capability across the council for wetland related work.

Students undertaking a wetland delineation plot in the field.

The NRC herbarium is a good tool to help students learn to identify wetland plants

Fish of the Year

Following passionate advocacy by council staff, a committed radio campaign by More FM, a promise of the Northland Taniwha renaming themselves for the 2026 season, and the Northland public getting in behind the rare Northland Mudfish, it won the New Zealand Fish of the Year. It was the smallest fish to ever win, the first freshwater fish and threatened species; huge achievement for a generally unknown freshwater fish found only in wetlands within a 25km radius of Lake Ōmāpere.

The competition is run by the Mountains to Sea Trust and provides a fun platform to highlight our freshwater and marine fishes and the challenges they face.

Acoustic long-tailed bat survey

There is currently only one site in Taitokerau that is receiving bat-specific predator control to halt the rapid decline of this critically threatened species in our region. A month-long acoustic long-tailed bat survey was delivered in the Pīroa-Brnderwyns conservation area in collaboration with the Piroa Conservation Trust, Patuharakeke, landowners and several ecology consultants. If bats are present at this site in adequate levels, it could become a priority site for recovery efforts. Data is still to be analysed.

Fisheries New Zealand consultation on proposed temporary pāua closure at Tauroa Peninsula Northland

Fisheries New Zealand recently undertook consultation on a proposal to implement a temporary closure of pāua harvesting at Tauroa Peninsula, Northland, under sections 186A and 186B of the Fisheries Act 1996. The proposal has been requested by Ahipara Takiwa (including Roma Marae, Ahipara Marae, associated hapū, and community members) to support the recovery of depleted pāua stocks and to recognise customary management practices. The proposed closure would apply for up to two years, prohibit the taking of pāua within a defined coastal area, align with an existing customary rāhui, and would not allow customary authorisations during the closure period, with the intention of enabling stock recovery and improving long-term availability.

The consultation was targeted at affected tangata whenua and fishing interests only.

8.3.3 HEALTHY WATERS, LAND AND AIR

Our Changing World Interview

Council's senior coastal resource scientist was interviewed by Dr Clair Concannon of Our Changing World, a science podcast on Radio New Zealand, about plastic pollution in our marine environment. The coastal monitoring team manages an ongoing project using Littatrap devices to capture litter that would otherwise wash into stormwater drains and discharge to harbours and open coastal areas. The project is helping to quantify plastic pollution and supports educational drives. The podcast can be streamed at the following link: https://www.rnz.co.nz/podcast/ourchangingworld

Dune lake update

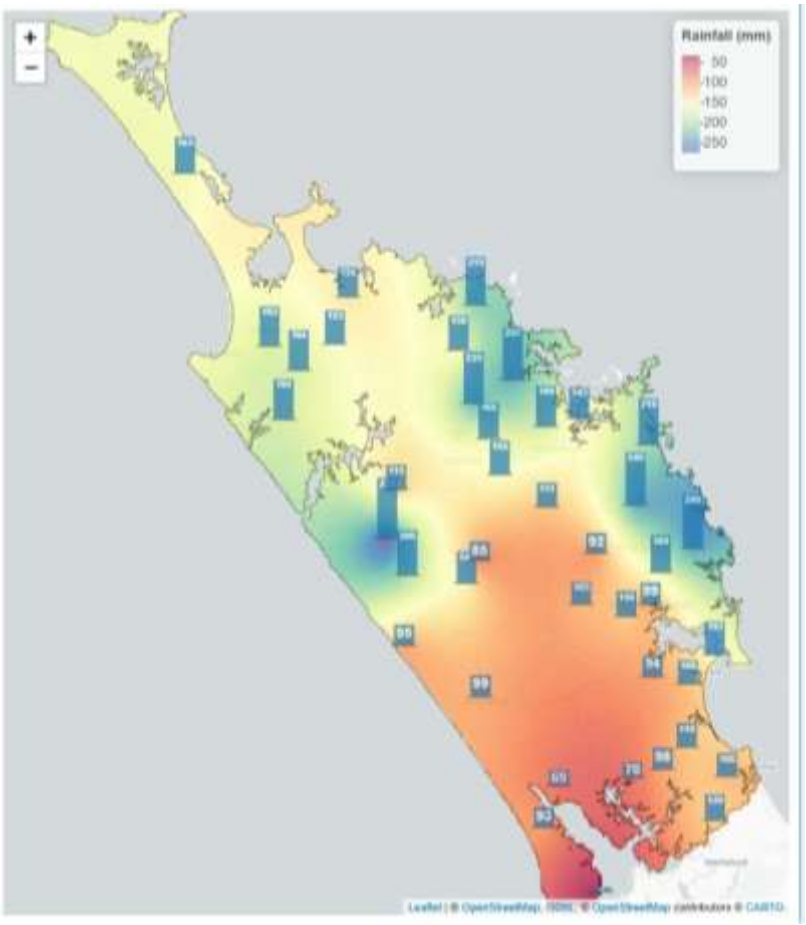
Hornwort was controlled in two dune lakes in the far north in March. A drone was used to apply the herbicide over Lakes Waikanae and Mt Camel North. Controlling hornwort is done to ensure the lakes do not flip into an algal dominated state, which often occurs if weeds are left untreated. Algal dominated lakes have reduced habitat quality, and hence less biodiversity that can live in and around the lakes.

A drone in operation above Lake Waikanae in the Far North, applying herbicide to control the invasive lake plant hornwort.

Hydrology update

On 25 March, a Red Heavy Rain Warning was issued for Eastern Northland, covering areas from Doubtless Bay to Whangārei. The warning was in effect for 36 hours from 25 March to 27 March. Forecast rainfall totals of 270–320 mm were expected, with peak intensities increasing to 25–40 mm per hour from Thursday afternoon and possible thunderstorms. The warning highlighted a significant threat to life due to dangerous river conditions, major flooding, slips, travel disruption, impassable roads and potential isolation of communities. Residents were advised to avoid travel and floodwaters, be prepared to self-evacuate if necessary and expect possible power and communication outages.

The on-call Hydrology flood duty team monitored the rainfall and river levels around the clock for the region throughout this event, updating CDEM, attending multi agency briefings, and providing a steady stream of river level status updates through to CDEM whenever river levels were likely to, or had exceeded river level alert and warning thresholds for flooding.



A map of the region with rainfall totals recorded at NRC's rainfall recording stations during the event

The rainfall was primarily concentrated in the North and North East of the region. The highest rainfall totals were recorded at the Waimamaku at Wekaweka Road station with 275mm, the Ngunguru at Dugmores Rock station with 245mm and the Whakapara at Puhipuhi station with 239.5mm. Many rivers across Northland rose above Flood Alert and Warning levels in the East Coast, Mid and Far North.

Current Legal Proceedings

Department	Description	Status
Consent decision appeal	New groundwater take at Tautoro (south of Kaikohe) for irrigation of a proposed avocado orchard	One appeal was received from Te Riingi Marae. Environment Court assisted mediation was held on 21 October 2025. The applicant and appellant are in discussions to resolve the appeal, if possible. Update on progress provided to the Court on 30 March 2026. This update also requested that a final update on progress be provided on 11 May 2026, and if appeal cannot be resolved, then request for a Court hearing date will be made by 9 June 2026. Parties await Court confirmation of proposed reporting timeframes.

Consents Update

During March 2026, a total of 72 Decisions were issued. These decisions comprised:

• Coastal Permits	12
• Coastal Discharge Permits	4
• Air Discharge Permits	1
• Land Discharge Permits	2
• Water Discharge Permits	5
• Land Use Consents	32
• Water Takes	7
• Bore Consents	9

Twenty-three applications were received in March 2026.

Of the 92 applications in progress at the end of March 2026:

- 25 were received more than 12 months ago;
- 22 were received between 6 and 12 months ago (most awaiting further information from the applicant);
- 45 less than 6 months.

Appointment of Hearing Commissioners

- No commissioners were appointed in March 2026.

Consents Decisions and Progress on Notified Applications in Process, Objections and Appeals

The current level of notified application processing activities at the end of March 2026 is *(by number)*:

• Applications Publicly/Limited Notified During Previous Month	1
• Progress on Applications Previously Notified	4
• Appeals/Objections	1

Compliance Monitoring

The results of compliance monitoring for March 2026 (and year-to-date figures) are summarised in the following table and discussed below.

Classification	Total	Full compliance	Low risk non-compliance	Moderate non-compliance	Significant non-compliance
Air Discharge	17	16	1	0	0
Coastal Discharge	15	10	1	4	0
Coastal Permit	126	88	0	38	0
FDE - Discharge permit	62	62	0	0	0
Land Discharge	47	31	7	9	0
Land Use Consent	56	49	4	1	2
NES-F	16	6	1	9	0
Water Discharge	60	31	6	22	1
Water Permit	14	13	1	0	0
Water Take	88	59	20	9	0
Total	**501**	**365**	**41**	**92**	**3**
Percentage		**72.9%**	**8.2%**	**18.4%**	**0.6%**
Year to date	**4000**	**3008**	**428**	**490**	**74**
Percentage		**75.2%**	**10.7%**	**12.3%**	**1.9%**

Municipal wastewater treatment plant compliance/enforcement

WWTP/Consent Status	Compliance for last 12 months	Compliance for last 3 months	Enforcement Action/Response
Kaiwaka Expires 2049			Under AN (issued in August 2025) Significant and moderate non-compliance for wetland overflowing and short circuiting. Most recent results compliant.
Hihi Expired 2022 (replacement consent being processed)			Ammoniacal nitrogen and E. coli exceeding RC limits.
Hikurangi Expired June 2025 (replacement consent application being processed)			Under AN TSS, BOD5 and E. coli results above RC limits for 90th percentile due to historic results. Only 90th percentile for E.coli now exceeding.
Paihia Expires 2034			Under AN Moderate non-compliances due to ammoniacal nitrogen exceeding RC limits for 90th percentile. Some results missing and meter not working.

WWTP/Consent Status	Compliance for last 12 months	Compliance for last 3 months	Enforcement Action/Response
Whatuwhiwhi Expires November 2025 (replacement consent application being processed)			Moderate non-compliances for TSS exceeding RC limits. Self-monitoring not being undertaken in accordance with consent requirements. FNDC exploring options for plant upgrade alongside consent renewal.
Taipā Expires 2029			Moderate non-compliances for FC exceeding 85th percentile and TN exceeding RC limits. Electrocoagulation trial being set up. FNDC committed to land-based discharge by 2027.
Opononi & Ōmāpere Expires 2028 (s139C RMA extension)			<u>Under ANs</u> Moderate non-compliances for BOD, ammoniacal nitrogen, E. coli, and TSS. Baffle curtains recently installed and further remediation measure planned.
Rāwene Expired 2023 (replacement consent being processed)			TSS and FC exceeded 90th percentile consent limits. Total ammoniacal nitrogen exceeded median consent limit. FNDC working on remedial plan.
Kohukohu Expires 2026 (s139C RMA extension)			<u>Under AN</u> FC and ammoniacal nitrogen exceed consent limits. Discharge volumes have also exceeded RC limits on some occasions. Some remedial actions have been undertaken, including installation of baffle curtains.
Russell Expired 30 April 2024 (replacement consent being processed)			<u>Under AN</u> Reporting requirements outstanding and volume of leachate discharged to plant exceeded consent limits. FNDC investigating leachate rates and mitigation strategies. Awaiting further updates.
Kaikohe Expired 2021 (replacement consent being processed but also listed Fast-track proposal)			<u>Under AN</u> Self-monitoring data missing or not reported correctly. E.coli exceeded median limit.
Ahipara Expires 2033			<u>Under ANs</u> (reissued in September 2022). None currently.

WWTP/Consent Status	Compliance for last 12 months	Compliance for last 3 months	Enforcement Action/Response
Kaitāia Expired 2021 (decision on replacement consent due soon)			Under AN (for reticulation overflows). Ongoing works on reticulation system. Some sample results missing. RC limits exceeded for percentiles of F-specific bacteriophage.
Kawakawa Expires 2036			E. coli spikes on two occasions have caused exceedance in percentile limits. Cause of spikes fixed and E. coli levels have returned to normal. BOD and TSS have exceeded 90th percentile limits due to spike in November.
Ruakākā Expires 2046			None currently.
Waipū Expires 2030			Discharge volume exceeded consent limit on multiple occasions. WDC undertaking remedial action. The purpose of the last site inspection was to check if a specific activity authorised by the consent had been implemented. The activity had not been implemented but as the activity was not mandatory, the associated consent conditions were deemed to be "not exercised" – denoted by the grey shading.
Ngunguru Expires 2035			Exceedance of 95th percentile for TSS.
Tutukaka Expires 2054			None currently.
Kāeo Expired 2022 (replacement consent being processed)			Several water quality parameters exceeded consent limits (temperature and microcystis cell count) in January. February and March results compliant.
Te Kōpuru Expires 2044			Low risk non-compliance for discharge flow meter not working.

WWTP/Consent Status	Compliance for last 12 months	Compliance for last 3 months	Enforcement Action/Response
Whangārei City Expires 2045			Under AN for odour from plant. Additional odour controls being implemented. Low risk non-compliance for offensive or objectionable odour at time of site visit. Reticulation issues relating to the Whangarei Heads line and pump stations is being managed. Investigations for long term remediation are underway. Further information is available from WDC website. Recent maintenance was undertaken on the Pārua Bay pump station. WDC has been requested to provide an update on the long-term solution to problem.
Rangiputa Expires 2032			None currently.
Dargaville Expires 2043			Under ANs None currently.
Maungaturoto Expires 2032			Under AN; IN issued September 2024 No issues currently.
Kerikeri Expires 2036			None currently.
Mangawhai Expires 2042			Under ANs Enforcement relates to odour. None currently.
Ōākura Expires 2025			None currently.

WWTP/Consent Status	Compliance for last 12 months	Compliance for last 3 months	Enforcement Action/Response
Portland Expires 2054			None currently.
Glinks Gully Expires 2034			None currently.
Waiotira Expires 2030			None currently.
Compliance Status			
Not exercised in the period			
Full compliance			
Low risk non-compliance			
Moderate non-compliance			
Significant non-compliance			

Court Cases Update

Litigation	Next Court Event/Action
Enforcement Order and Prosecution Environment Court Earthworks and vegetation removal in a wetland	NRC approved the Remediation and Mitigation Plan which was a requirement of the Enforcement Orders (issued on 20 January 2025). Some requirements of the Enforcement Orders have not been met by the defendant. Charges for prosecution served on defendants on 25 July 2025. Outcome of the pre-trial hearing held on 1 December 2025 found the defendants are eligible for jury trial. The next case review hearing is 28 April 2026 in Whangarei District Court.

Litigation	Next Court Event/Action
Interim Enforcement Orders Environment Court Discharge to air from the manufacturing of Asphalt and open burning	On 23 June 2025, the parties filed and served a joint memorandum advising that the respondents plan to dismantle and remove the asphalt plant from the site permanently and are no longer pursuing a resource (RC) consent for bitumen batching activities on the site. The respondents requested additional time to complete the dismantling process. A joint memorandum was filed on 27 February 2026. Parties agreed to leave the undertaking in place until either a RC for the plant operation is granted or the plant is dismantled.
Abatement notice appeal Operation of pyrolysis plant without resource consent.	Three parties issued abatement notices in November 2025 appealed the notices. A joint memorandum was filed in court on 30 January 2026. The memo advised the court that the parties have been engaging in constructive resolution discussions. The court issued a Minute on 18 March 2026 regarding the parties seeking a declaration as to whether the Appellants' pyrolysis plant is a permitted activity under the Regional Plan for Northland. The Minute included timetabling directions to parties to file evidence. An online hearing is set down for 5 June 2026.
Interim Injunction (Civil Matter) **Māori Land Court** Encroachment and damage of Māori land by neighbour's earthworks	The Māori Land Court requested the NRC to participate in the proceedings as a Third Party. There was not enough time at the initial hearing of the matter for the presiding judge to rule on the matter. However, he granted an interim injunction restricting the neighbour's earthworks in the vicinity of the contested land boundary and gave directions regarding further evidence filing. The parties exchanged their further evidence for the further hearing of the matter which was scheduled for 27 March 2026 but has been postponed to allow settlements discussions between the parties. The Applicant is required to report to the Court on 26 June 2026 regarding the outcome of the discussions.

KAIPARA MOANA REMEDIATION
Key Performance Indicators

The information shown below reflects the formal KMR Key Performance Indicators, as required under the Deed of Funding with the Crown. We will continue to report monthly on these indicators, which are common across all *Jobs for Nature* investments.

As at end March 2026 KMR has delivered the following results on the ground:

Nature & Resilience

- 2.97 million plants in the ground or contracted to plant
- 1,827 hectares planted or contracted, or regenerating into native forest
- 1,166 km of fencing completed or contracted – the same distance as to Coromandel and back.

- Over 151,000 hectares managed under KMR plans

Jobs & Skills

- $31 million invested in restoration projects
- 53 local businesses and nurseries accredited to supply KMR
- Over 472,000 hours of new work created – a year's work for over 287 people (**end March*)
- 282 people trained and mentored, many from local iwi/hapū, to advise on project design and delivery (**end March*)

(**Data collated at each quarter end*)

Participation

- 1,513 landowners have expressed interest in KMR
- 975 plans have been completed with landowners
- 168 more plans are in development
- 142 group-led projects led by hapū, marae, community groups, catchment groups and other collectives.

Impact monitoring and reporting

1. KMR's recognition as an exemplar case study at last month's launch of the Aotearoa Circle's "Natural Infrastructure Plan" has produced further opportunities for collaboration. We were pleased to be invited to connect with some of the team from Zealandia Consulting while they have been visiting their clients and projects in Te Tai Tokerau and share ideas about how their expertise and networks may assist with KMR's focus over the next phase of our programme journey.

2. Building on KMR's previous successful involvement as an applicant in the Sustainable Business Awards, we shall be meeting again this month with the Sustainable Business Network to discuss their invitation for KMR to be featured at their annual symposium in August.

3. In late March the KMR Leadership Team were able to meet with Ministry of Primary Industries (MPI) representatives to further understand their funding criteria for catchment collectives and navigate how KMR and other parties contribute to the jigsaw of multiple agency funding opportunities. Unfortunately, the scheduled MPI / NZ Landcare Trust community catchment hui last month was moved to online only, due to the severe weather conditions that day. Whilst an online hui was restrictive to the free flow of ideas and views, it was successful in imparting new information to community catchment representatives to gain an understanding of MPI funding criteria and set the scene for a new kanohi ki te kanohi hui on 30 April. KMR is also keen to hear from catchment communities on how they envisage proposed new catchment structures, and where KMR could provide support.

Outcomes monitoring and reporting

1. With the data collected last month on plant survival rates across a selection of monitored sites, we are now taking a deep dive to produce an analysis of the findings to test whether there are statistically significant differences in height and vigour across species, plots, and sites. This will help determine if species perform differently at different sites and plots, and

to understand if additional environmental factors (e.g., soil type, moisture, temperature) influence plant growth and survival. The final report will produce recommendations based on trends observed in the data and build the KMR knowledge base for sediment reduction planning.

8.3.4 SAFE AND RESILIENT TRANSPORT NETWORKS

Maritime

There were 13 maritime incidents reported in March, the majority related to floating debris such as large logs creating navigational hazards and vessels sinking/ taking on water which resulted from the severe weather event.

11 cruise ships visited the Bay of Islands as scheduled with no cancellations. Anthem of the Seas was unable to tender due to weather, but arrived and departed after a short stay due to some issues with passengers onboard. 1 derelict vessel was removed from a mooring area in Whangarei and sent for disposal.

Servicing of aids to navigation continued as usual, though the vandalism and theft of equipment from the leads on Veronica Channel for the second time this year was disappointing.

Transport

Draft Regional Public Transport Plan 2026 – 2036 (RPTP)

Work has continued on the draft RPTP, design and formatting are being worked on to ensure a reader-friendly format ahead of public release. On completion, the Draft RPTP will be presented to Council with a recommendation that it be released to the Regional Transport Committee, Far North, Whangarei and Kaipara District Councils and NZTA for comment and input. Following this step, staff will present a finalised RPTP to Council requesting that it be released for public consultation.

Regional Land Transport Plan 2027/2033 (RLTP)

At the time of compiling this report, no formal notification has been received on the release of the Draft Government Policy Statement on Land Transport 2027, or the NZTA compilation guidelines for the RLTP.

An Expression of Interest was placed on GETS seeking the services of a suitable party to undertake the Investment Logic Mapping workshops with the Regional Transport Committe to agree on the regions transport infrastructure and service Objectives, Problems and Benefits for the 2027/2033 funding period.

Transport Operations

Link Service Tenders

CityLink/School Tender Update

The CityLink/SchoolLink tender documentation with the draft contract is now complete, with all clauses aligned to internal requirements and NZTA expectations.

Updated timetables have had to be prepared as part of this process as the increased traffic congestion in some areas has led to the existing running times not being met. Options include three additional peak buses to cover extra running times for he CityLink and Schoollink services, an additional peak bus on the Kamo to Whangarei service and implementation of a hospital shuttle service from Rose Street bus station. The full tender package will be ready for release within the coming weeks.

Hokianga Link

The Hokianga Link Request for Tenders closed on 31 March with one submission received. Staff are now completing the evaluation process and preparing the recommendation for approval.

The Far North Link, Mid North Link, Hikurangi Link, Bream Bay Link

The documentation for the remaining tenders is nearing completion.

National Fuel Supply Situation

Staff are working closely with bus operators and NZTA on this matter. To date, no formal information has been received from the Government or NZTA regarding any financial assistance to cover the increase in diesel costs, what stages of remedial action will be undertaken for each level of criticality and if contracted bus services will be deemed as essential services.

Staff are working with the operators on the development of a phased service reduction plan that can be activated if required. This framework prioritises core routes, peak time capacity, and essential travel needs, while allowing lower demand or less critical services to be reduced gradually and in a controlled, transparent manner. Operators are currently reviewing their fleet fuel resilience and providing operational input into the phasing approach.

Pending the receipt of notification from NZTA as to what, if any, financial assistance will be provided to cover Cost Price Indexes increases, staff are unable to accurately determine the financial impact on Council at this time.

Whangarei Hospital Bus route – scoping

Transport staff have scoped a proposed Whangarei Hospital route focusing on travel times and suitable bus stop locations. The information will support future planning should this service be developed for both hospital staff and the public.

Total Mobility Scheme

Eyed Solutions (ESL) agreement - Ridewise
Staff continue to represent the smaller regions nationally on the Ridewise Steering Group, which oversees the electronic ticketing system use on the Total Mobility Scheme. There had been background work with NZTA on potentially going out to procure a new system, however, NZTA want to undertake further due-diligence on the project so it was agreed by all parties that the contract for the current provider be extended a further two years.

Total mobility Trips and client travel for March 2026:

- Whangarei – 1,984 clients undertaking 4,711 trips
- Far North – 480 clients undertaking 323 trips

8.3.5 A SUSTAINABLE, INNOVATIVE AND EQUITABLE ECONOMY

Fraud, Corruption and Dishonesty Statement

There are no new fraud investigations to report or any new incidents or suspected incidents of fraud at this time.

Finance

The financial report for March was not available at the time of writing due to time constraints arising from the Easter holiday period.

On 31 March 2026, Council received a shareholder loan repayment from Northport Group Limited totalling $2.46 million (m), comprising a principal repayment of $1.68m and an interest payment of $791 thousand. Including the September 2025 distribution, total receipts from Northport Group Limited for the 2025/26 financial year were $5.44m, marginally exceeding the budget requirement of $5.25m.

The ongoing conflict in Iran continues to pose an external financial risk due to increased volatility in the global energy markets and disruptions to key oil supply routes. This uncertainty has contributed to heightened volatility across global financial markets. In response, and as part of a deliberate strategy to derisk the council's investment portfolio, $2.50m of gains earned to date was withdrawn from the managed funds during March 2026. This withdrawal was executed in accordance with advice from, and supported by, Russell Investments. These funds have subsequently been placed into term deposits, with maturity dates aligned to the August 2026 council meeting.

Regional Economic Development

Follow up actions from the JREDC included a letter from JREDC Chair Crawford to WDC Mayor Ken Couper regarding funding into the Investment Growth Reserve for 2026/27, and a long term commitment to joint ownership of Northland Inc in the LTP 2027-37

Feedback was provided on the draft Northland Infrastructure Plan being developed in Beca. An updated draft will be provided to the next JREDC on 24 April for their feedback and a plan for further engagement will be agreed.

Assistance was provided to JREDC Chair Geoff Crawford for his speech at the Ngāti Hine pre-kiwifruit harvest karakia event on Friday 13 March. Chair Crawford's speech was supported by a media release and a social media post.

Economic Development Funding

A council workshop with Te Tai Tokeraru Water Trust (TTTWT) was held provide an update on Trust activities including progress to completion of construction and additional funding received from the Regional Infrastructure Fund (RIF). Staff have commenced work with the Trust on revising the funding agreement for the Mid North Water Scheme to provide for an earlier payback of council's investment.

Work continues with TTTWT, Northland Inc and other parties on research and co-funding opportunities to support the commercial uptake of water from the Kaipara Water Company.

Economic Information

The March edition of the Northland Economic Quarterly e-newsletter was distributed on 31 March 2025 and is available online at Economic quarterly - Northland Regional Council - Economic quarterly | March 2026 - Northland Regional Council. This edition covered the topics of retail spending, changes in the forestry sector, details about GDP growth in Northland and renewable energy developments.

Discussions were held with Te Puni Kokiri regional economic development staff and Te Hiku Iwi development Trust representatives on Northland economic data and information availability, including the Regional Economic Profile produced by Infometrics.

As part of council's annual subscription service, a meeting was held with Brad Olsen, Chief Executive, Infometrics to discuss council data requirements and future developments by Infometrics.

Northland Inc

Northland Inc hosted a workshop in partnership with MBIE Innovation Services (formally Callaghan Innovation) to educate local businesses on the benefits of, and how to apply for the Research & Development Tax Incentive (RDTI). More than a dozen Northland businesses joined to explore how the programme works and ask practical questions about whether their projects might qualify for a tax credit equal to 15% of eligible R&D expenditure.

In mid-March, the Tuputupu Grow Northland team held four workshops around the region (Ngāwhā, Kaitaia, Mangawhai, Whangārei) in partnership with Ministry for Primary Industries, New Zealand Trade and Enterprise, Horticulture New Zealand, and NorthChamber to to explain requirements, services and support available to growers who are exploring export opportunities. The workshops

covered MPI requirements for food and fibre products, an overview of the NZGAP food certification programme, requirements for preparation to export, and what agency and community support is available in Northland. The sessions were well attended and provided a platform for growers and producers to learn and share their stories in practical, in-person settings.

A Trade Marketing Manager represented Northland at the Regional Tourism New Zealand Inbound Trade Event in Auckland in early March. The two-day event allowed 160 members of New Zealand's inbound travel trade industry to connect and collaborate with regional tourism organisations, where new and upcoming tourism developments for each region were shared, creating fresh sales opportunities for travel trade representatives - ultimately supporting visitation into Northland.

International trade marketing was also a focus in March, with the Trade Marketing Manager attending the Tourism New Zealand Regional Showcase in Sydney, meeting with 26 key Australian travel providers where she showcased the Northland region and new tourism products. She then undertook frontline training of 26 travel trade staff in the Gold Coast in partnership with Tātaki Auckland Unlimited, promoting the Northland region alongside Auckland as a gateway for international visitors. With Australia still New Zealand's largest visitor market (accounting for 44% of international visitors each year, and Australian arrivals up 39% from 2019), these international trade engagements are an important way to showcase Northland as a visitor destination to travel trade agents.

8.3.6 MEANINGFUL PARTNERSHIPS WITH TĀNGATA WHENUA

Kohatutaka Bioblitz

The Kohatutaka Bioblitz with Te Hauora o Ninihi Trust had teams on the whenua conducting biodiversity surveys based on local priorities. This included pekapeka (bats), plants in the ngahere, mokomoko (lizards), wetland manu (birds) and installing permanent plots in the Kaipeha repo (the 10th top wetland in Taitokerau) for long term wetland condition monitoring. These plots will be jointly assessed with mana whenua every five years as part of the NRC wetland SOE monitoring programme. Threats and pressures for key ecosystems in the Kohatutaka rohe were also identified. The results from the bioblitz will provide baseline data to inform ongoing taiao protection and restoration work led by mana whenua in the Ōtaua catchment, as well as support future funding applications through identification of threatened and taonga species and ecosystems.

NRC, Northland Forest Managers and Te Hauora o Ninihi kaimahi learn to survey for pekapeka using acoustic devices.

The team admires an impressive rākau and endemic giraffe weevil.

Te Hauora o Ninihi kaimahi record data from Kaipeha wetland plots.

Tangata Whenua Environmental Management Fund

TWEMF is a funding programme that supports iwi and hapū-led environmental monitoring projects, recognising the role of tāngata whenua as kaitiaki and partners in environmental stewardship.

A total of 18 Tangata Whenua Environmental Monitoring Fund applications were received this period, each valued at $20,000, a total of $360,000 over-subscribed in support for iwi and hapū-led

initiatives. Three Iwi Hapu Environmental Management Plans (IHEMP) and projects have been completed, and a total of 10 TWEMF have been proposed to be approved for funding.

Rahui Tapu - Health and Safety Capability Building

Council continue to support Te Uri Hikihiki, and Te Whānau Whero within the Rāhui Tapu kaupapa through health and safety wānanga facilitated by our Kaiwhakahaere Moana Ora in collaboration with WorkSafe, Maritime NZ, Site Safety, and iwi representatives. These sessions ensure compliance, strengthen sector knowledge, and provide a platform for sharing current issues affecting hapū and iwi operations.

Iwi Engagement and Relationship Strengthening

Strengthening our partnership with Te Roroa by supporting the induction of their new Chief Executive, Darren Beaty, ensuring continuity in our relationship and maintaining iwi priorities at the centre of NRC's work programmes.

Kauri Ora Collaboration

The Kauri Ora team continues its partnership with Te Roroa to combat kauri dieback, working alongside scientists and technical specialists. This collaboration supports both mātauranga Māori and scientific approaches to protect kauri ecosystems and only heightens the importance of kaitiaki work and the need for close alignment across NRC workstreams.

Rangatahi Development

Council continues to support the development of rangatahi capability by creating opportunities for young people, all nominated by their iwi to participate in professional spaces. This enables rangatahi to contribute their perspectives and build confidence in regional decision-making environments.

Additional members of Te Mahuri o Te Taiao have been inducted and onboarded to continue the distribution of Foundation North funds across the Kaipara region. This kaupapa is steadily growing in the background, with council increasingly providing support to strengthen its development and connect the group with other like-minded initiatives and settings.

A key strength of this work is our coordinated approach as this is not a standalone council initiative, but a partnership where rangatahi remain grounded in their iwi and hapū spaces, carving out the work needed for their communities and whenua, with council walking alongside them to support and enable their aspirations.

Severe Weather Response – Hapū and Iwi Coordination

With continued external pressures and the ongoing environmental impacts affecting Taitokerau, our region has once again been struck by severe weather events. In response, many of our Tiriti Partnerships and engagement team have been redeployed, supporting hapū outside of standard working hours, reflecting the scale and urgency of community need. It is important to acknowledge that haukāinga continue to face these pressures daily, often carrying the immediate response burden long before agencies arrive.

8.3.7 CARBON NEUTRAL, RESILIENT COMMUNITIES IN A CHANGING CLIMATE

Natural Hazards

Landslide Mapping

Aerial Survey have completed the collection of orthographic aerial photographs and LiDAR from the part of the region effected by January's rainfall event. These are currently being processed and will then be used by Earth Science NZ to map the landslide triggered by this rainfall.

Both the aerial photography and LiDAR will be hosted by Land Information New Zealand which means they will be available for councils, lifelines, iwi/hapu and the community.

Orthographic aerial photograph of Oakura showing landslides on the hills to the west of the settlement.

Whangarei Urban Flood Strategy

The consultants on the Whangarei Urban Flood Strategy have begun to identify and model possible mitigation options, looking at how they interact and the costs vs benefits. The project team will be workshopping pathways with the council in April.

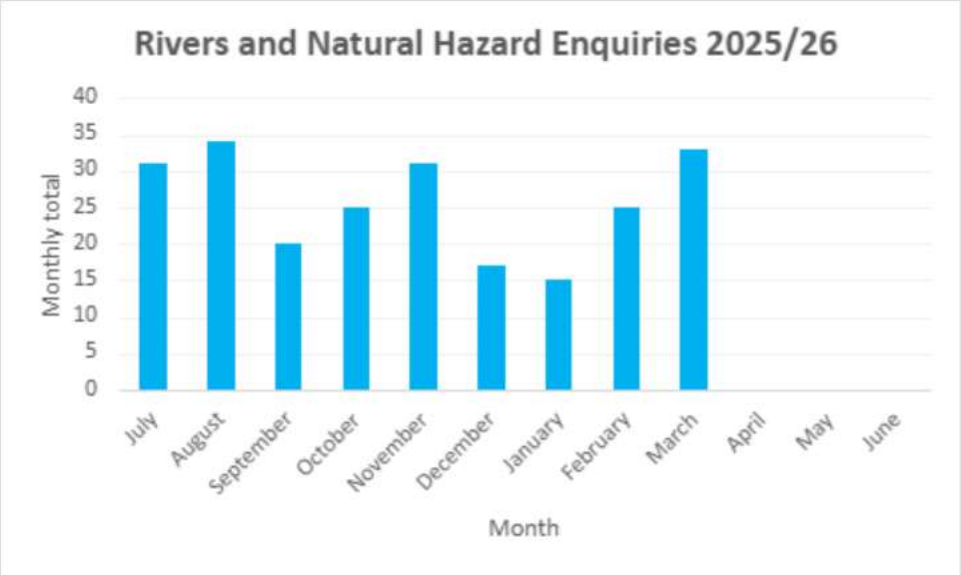
Early Flood Forecast System

NRC are tendering for the next steps of the early Flood Forecasting System, extending the rainfall forecasting and including five additional rivers. The tender closes in mid-April with a cross-council team established to review the tenders and identify a preferred consultant.

The January and March rainfall events have provided a good opportunity to test the system with staff able to access the system and run flood forecasts for the Waitangi catchment, our test catchment.

Natural Hazard enquires

In March, the team received 33 enquiries, bring a total of 231 enquires in the year to date. Most enquiries continue to be property flood level data, and we are investigating ways this information can be shared with the public reducing the query burden on staff.



Rivers

26 March 2026 Flood Event:

The 26 March 2026 rain event produced the highest flows on record at Awanui School Cut gauge at 413 cubic meters per second (cms) almost double the 1958 event of 220 cms which caused wide-spread flooding to Kaitaia Township. While some overtopping occured on both the Awanui River and Whangatane Spillway this was in areas that works have not been completed. The team (contractors and quarry) worked over Easter weekend to repair a slip that developed after this record flow weakend a stopbank.

Whirinaki

Local hapu report that this was not as big as the 1999 flood, however several homes were flooded and some red-stickered - this highlights the managed retreat option and that this should be the long-term goal. We have also surveyed over 200 flood levels in Kaitaia and Whirinaki and staff have marked other flood levels around Northland to help with future calibration and verification.

Awanui - Lower Whangatane Spillway

Enabling work progressed on Lower Whangatane Spillway Setback Tranche 2 with the team sealing the site ready for winter following the 26 March flood.

NIFF Programme

Mangamuka Marae flood protection works are now compelete, only final fencing remaining. The extra capacity from the flood work was welcomed relief.

Otiria Swale

Work is underway with approximately 20% of the swale being complete. More rubbish has been encountered, this is being “raked” sorted and disposed at a landfill.

Kaeo Stage 2 Flood Infrastructure Project

Earthworks continue to progress, however the rain and archaeological finds have continued to delay the work. Its likely that the site will need to be closed down over winter and works completed in the spring.

LTP Business Case

Awanui Lower Stopbank Assessment and Options:

Modelling work has been scoped and is underway for the coastal stopbank set-back options developed. NRC will be sharing costs with The Nature Conservancy (TNC) regarding the modelling.

TNC have funds for modelling and if the modelling shows favourable environmental benefits, TNC may fund other work. Staff have developed a plan for conditional and conventional surveys of the banks to feed into the the model asumptions.

Kerikeri Flood Mitigation Options:

Hydraulic modelling is underway; the options include Cross-Catchment flows, targeted channel improvement and K3A detention dam. Staff have met with the 2 x landowners that the dam footprint is located. NRC is investigating the most effective way to enable Geotech testing.

Tauranga Bay Flood Mitigation:

Staff set out the proposed stopbank alignment ahead of the Tauranga Bay Community Association Easter AGM. Staff attended the Easter AGM and presented the proposed flood mitigation options about 26 people attended and good support from the group. The peer review is underway with geotech testing and modelling.

Dargaville Flood Risk Assessment and Options:

Staff have engaged a hydraulic modelling consultant to progress this work, we expect priliminary results late April. A conditional assessmet of the Flood Wall is scheulded for later in April.

Community Engagement and Capability Development

Across the region, engagement with community response groups, marae, iwi, and vulnerable communities continued, with a strong focus on incorporating recent event learnings into planning and preparedness. Reviews of response plans were supported for the Northland Fijian Community, Rawene and Te Rāwhiti communities, alongside ongoing marae preparedness work.

Operational readiness activity included EOC exercises, equipment recommissioning following activations, Starlink testing, and continued roll-out of regional CIMS and functional role training. Applications are now open, and courses scheduled, for further regionally facilitated training through May.

Lifelines and Infrastructure Resilience

The Northland Lifelines Group met on 6 March, with a focus on climate adaptation, infrastructure resilience and emerging risks. Councils are advancing coordinated climate adaptation pilots in Whangārei and the Far North, supported by iwi engagement and shared data tools. Lifeline utilities were encouraged to align risk assessments and investment planning to support long-term resilience and recovery.

Work continues to consolidate and update the Northland Lifelines Infrastructure Resilience Plan, incorporating new hazard data (including wildfire and liquefaction) and strengthening alignment with emerging risks such as cyber threats and forthcoming emergency management legislation**.**

8.3.8 EFFICIENT, PROGRESSIVE AND TRANSPARENT COUNCIL SYSTEMS

Whangarei Future Development Strategy

At the recent New Zealand Planning Institute Conference, national awards for Planning Best Practice were presented. Whangarei District Council and Northland Regional Council were Highly Commended in the category of Strategic or Non-Statutory Planning for the joint preparation of the Whangarei Future Development Strategy. Congratulations also to our colleagues at Far North District Council who won the category for the Kerikeri-Waipapa Spatial Plan.

Community Engagement

Media and reputation

Six media releases were issued during March to local and national outlets, with five out of six (83%) receiving pickup. Additional activity included three media briefs and responses to 22 media enquiries.

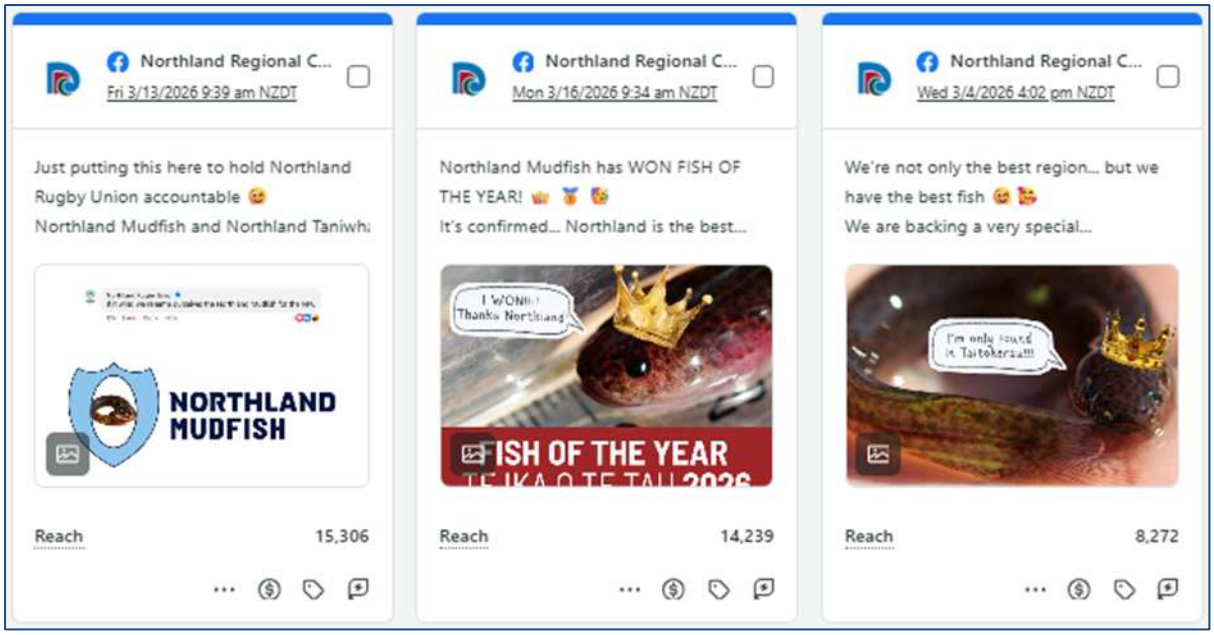
Media monitoring recorded 91 mentions, covering a wide range of council functions. The dominant driver of coverage during March was severe weather, flooding and emergency response.

Digital engagement

Engagement across NRC's digital channels eased in March following the exceptionally high activity levels in February, which were driven by Waitangi commemorations and Field Days. Despite this, overall reach continued to grow, with total social impressions increasing by nearly 50% month-on-month and the total audience growing by 1%.

Our content supporting the national Fish of the Year campaign featured among the top three performing posts for March and helped lift the profile of the Northland mudfish – and, with the support of local radio - went on to win the 2026 title.

The campaign raised awareness of this threatened freshwater species and positioned biodiversity and wetland protection within a positive, community-led national conversation.



A short-form video explaining the 0% rates increase also performed above industry engagement benchmarks and generated largely positive sentiment.

Website traffic increased by 17% compared with February, driven by heightened public interest in recent weather events – with the Kaeo webcam and the Environmental Data Hub the most visited pages, alongside ongoing interest in Madagascar ragwort information.

Several targeted e-newsletters were distributed during the month, including the quarterly Economic Update, Ngā karere o Te Raki, and an education-focused Moth Plant Competition EDM, which achieved a particularly strong 51.7% open rate, indicating high engagement from core audiences.

Digital engagement snapshot

Metric	Feb 2026	Change since last period
Total audience (social)	24,799	+1% audience growth
Net audience growth (social)	247	↓154.7%
Published posts	69	122 in February
Impressions	917,683	↑49.7 (from 612,818)
Engagements (social)	10,352	↓76.8% (from 44,639)
Engagement rate (per impression)	1.1%	(7.3% in February)
Video views	36,324	↓69.6% (from 120,353)
Website visits (nrc.govt.nz)	75,224	+17.0% (from 55,783)
Top website pages (by views)	Kaeo webcam	15,930
	Environmental Data Hub	12,625
	Webcams	7,249
	Madagascar ragwort – A major threat to pastoral farming	5,723
eNews subscribers (cumulative)	6,250	No change
Subscribed web alerts (cumulative)	1,899	Up from 1,869

Campaigns and business support

The Community Engagement team provided strategic communications and coordination support across a range of priority council initiatives this month. This included:

- Coordination, writing and editing support for two council submissions to the Taituarā Local Government Excellence Awards, recognising council leadership in community engagement (Whirinaki Managed Retreat Project) and Māori–council partnerships (Rāhui Tapu Marine Protected Areas).
- Working in partnership with Whangarei District Council and Far North District Council to plan and implement multi-faceted promotional strategy for Coastal Conversations events that support communities to understand the coastal issues they face and how to adapt.
- Coordinating attendance from multiple business units for the Funky Fish competition, enabling Biosecurity teams to engage directly with the Whangārei Heads community. This included support for Predator Free, Marine and Moana Ora teams to deliver interactive education focused on pest control, marine pests and marine protection rules.
- During the March severe weather event, the team supported the Civil Defence response, contributing to coordinated public information and digital communications.
- The Community Engagement team also provided end-to-end campaign and project support for the Moth Plant Competition, including marketing, digital promotion and community engagement to encourage participation and awareness of this biosecurity issue.
- Madagascar ragwort: Digital and regional print advertising is now well established, delivering nearly 895,000 impressions, 10,100+ clicks, and 7,700 website sessions to date, supported by regional newspaper advertising. Additional digital placements and rural signage are rolling out.

Ballance Farm Environment Awards

Alan Dobbie of Wiroa Horticulture (Kerikeri) has been named the 2026 Northland Regional Supreme Winner, also receiving the Northland Regional Council Water Quality Enhancement Award and three additional awards. A winners' field day on 6 May will showcase Wiroa's transition from dairying to a high-performing kiwifruit orchard producing 450,000 trays annually, alongside improved biodiversity outcomes.

Tū i te Ora Scholarship

Applications are now open for the 2026 Tū i te Ora Scholarship. Four scholarship packages are available, each offering $5,000 to support study costs, along with a paid, full-time work experience opportunity in one of the following areas: Te Tiriti Partnerships & Engagement, Climate Action, Biodiversity & Science, or Rivers and Natural Hazards / Civil Defence. More information: https://www.nrc.govt.nz/scholarship

Education

The Education team delivered a range of place-based and curriculum-aligned learning activities across the region, supporting environmental literacy, practical skills development and kaitiakitanga. A Far North Wai Fencing workshop brought together 35 senior students from four schools for NCEA-aligned training, combining theory and hands-on learning around fencing waterways, riparian management and water quality outcomes, delivered in partnership with industry and land management experts.

Wai Fencing students get their knots and ties right before constructing a new fence.

Small groups work well in Wai Fencing theory sessions.

A two-day Waiarohia Stream source-to-sea programme engaged five Whangārei schools in freshwater, biodiversity and mātauranga Māori learning, combining environmental science with cultural knowledge and hands-on restoration activities. The programme strengthened student understanding of biosecurity, freshwater health and river systems through a te ao Māori lens.

Students were horrified at the number of baby bats found inside a feral cat.

Environmental stewardship milestones were also celebrated, including the five-year oxygen weed-free anniversary of Lake Ngatu, with 115 students from Paparore School participating in interactive freshwater, biosecurity and kauri protection activities alongside council and DOC staff.

Students 'built' a lake at the freshwater plants rotation.

'Who dirtied the water?' was an engaging water quality activity.

In Kerikeri, a Seaweek littatrap installation supported practical learning about waste pathways from land to sea, with plans to expand this initiative to additional schools.

Corporate Strategy

Council's programme and project system, WayPoint, continues to be embedded across the organisation to support activity reviews, project and programme reporting, and improved linkages between activities, cost centres, risks, and performance measures.

Reporting and dashboard development is progressing, including timesheet and resident survey dashboards, and work is underway to strengthen forecasting and improve clarity around coding and allocation.

Governance and democratic services continue to support a significant programme of council and committee business, including preparation of agendas, minutes, workshops, and follow-up actions across council, CE Forum and Mayoral Forum meetings.

Long Term Plan and Annual Plan development is progressing with project planning, continued activity review work, background analysis, audit planning, and preparation of supporting papers. Drafting of the zero-percent increase Annual Plan 2026/27 continues.

Council's internal policy, process and system improvement programme continues, including policy updates, Promapp rationalisation and clean-out, preparation for procurement to replace current process management tools, and ongoing legislative compliance reporting and risk framework development. Improvements across contract management, risk, LGOIMA and internal systems are progressing as resourcing allows, with a focus on refining tools, clarifying processes, and lifting organisational maturity over time.

People & Culture

People and Culture activity over the last quarter remained steady, with staff turnover holding at approximately 12.5%. From 1 April 2026, statutory employment changes, including an increase to the adult minimum wage to $23.95 per hour and an increase in default KiwiSaver employee and employer contribution rates to 3.5%.

Training activity during the quarter focused on Conflict of Interest, with this training made available to all staff. Work also progressed across several organisational priorities, including confirmation of organisational values, and bedding in of the Modern Workspaces project.

Health & Safety

Health and safety performance continues to be consistent, with ongoing incident reporting providing visibility of organisational trends and supporting the continuation of the council's safety culture. A sustained emphasis remains on 'Work as Done' audits with contractors and volunteers, reinforcing alignment between documented processes and the reality of how work is undertaken on site.

Information Service and Technology

Operations

- The mobile phone refresh programme is complete, with the laptop programme remain on track for completion at the end of April 2026. GIS system integration updates are 80% complete. The remainder are dependant on further system upgrades and are scheduled for completion in June. Recruitment is progressing for the vacant Application Support Analyst role.
- There were eight upgrades to technology systems successfully implemented during March 2026.
- Rationalisation of security products continues following the successful transition to new security operations centre complete. We remain in a period of hyper-care, with a strong focus on managing the increased cyber activity and attacks observed over the past month.

- Monthly cyber statistics for March taken from our firewall for malware and network attacks illustrate the importance and effectiveness of our security software.

Data and Information

- Increased focus on GIS tickets over the past two months has led to a reduction in outstanding work, with particular progress across maritime and land management areas. Work on the integration design of GIS to the new asset management system continues. An upgrade was completed to modernise IRIS and SharePoint document-integration functionality prior to discontinuation by Microsoft in April.
- Work to clear the backlog of physical record archiving from modern workspaces project is ongoing.
- The procurement plan for the Approach to AI Adoption has been approved, and work is now underway to be completed by June.
- AI Adoption Discovery - The procurement approach has been approved, and an information response pack outlining the project scope has been issued to shortlisted suppliers. Responses are due in late April.

Technology Projects

Project Axis - Implementation of new Asset Management and Human Resource systems

- Assets - Progress is positive with Univerus allocating a solely dedicated consultant to our project team. Configuration of work orders has progressed well. The next steps will focus on the mobile app and demonstration sessions with the three initial internal teams (Maritime, Hydrology, and Information Technology). The priority for April is to finalise the work-order processes for these business units before moving into full system testing in the test environment.
- Human Resource Information System (HRIS) - Progress remains high with timelines on track. Configuration of the performance module is complete and has been deployed to production. Work is progressing at pace on the learning module, and the team is scheduled to begin configuring the onboarding module in April.

IRIS Next Generation

A collaborative initiative involving ten regional councils working with Regional Software Holdings Limited and Datacom to deliver a modern software platform to councils. The software facilitates a wide range of activities, including customer and community engagement, environmental stewardship and regulatory functions and incorporates both an online customer support portal and a mobile application for field staff.

Sector Programme - Otago Regional Council is the first to implement the new Datascape system and is acting as the pilot site, with support from other councils. The pilot is expected to resume in mid-May. The delay will affect Otago's go-live date, which is still to be confirmed. For the remaining

regional councils—Waikato, Bay of Plenty, followed by Taranaki—the programme is aiming to maintain the original late-2027 timeline.

NRC continues to support the pilot, working with Otago teams and contributing expertise to planning and review activities while awaiting the pilot's restart.

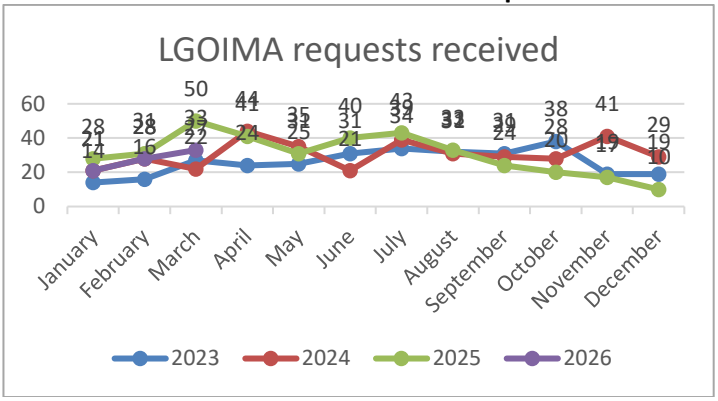
NRC Project - Work continues to build a clear picture of the current operating model—how NRC uses IRIS and other systems to deliver services. Because system use varies across teams, a current-state blueprint is required to inform review and improvement. This will help identify opportunities to standardise IRIS use, apply consistent good-practice models, and strengthen data use.

This work supports the 'ready early' strategy by reducing risk, smoothing workload, and enabling early improvements ahead of implementation. Early engagement also gives teams visibility of the future-state solution and supports a no-surprises approach. Progress remains steady.

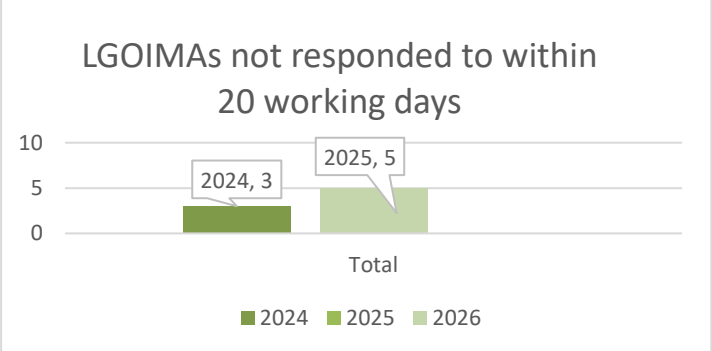
Property

- The Whangarei HQ Office lift replacement project schedule extension has been reduced. Lift commissioning and lift services are expected to resume earlier than the current mid-May 2026 timeframe.
- Procurement documents for the demolition of FENZ buildings to make way for the Multi-Agency Emergency Coordination Centre (MACC) are being prepared. The MACC resource consent application has been submitted, and design work is currently being undertaken to support a building consent application submission later this calendar year.
- The NZ Police are utilising council's vacant properties at 16 Reyburn Street and Fertilizer Road, Whangārei for personnel and dog training purposes.

Local Government Official Information Requests



In March 2026 we received 33 LGOIMA requests, 17 less than March 2025.



All LGOIMA requests for March 2026 were responded to within the required timeframe.

Attachments/Ngā tapirihanga

Nil

TITLE:	**Quarterly People and Culture Report**
From:	Kayla Ludlow, Human Resources Advisor and Shane Cleary, People and Culture Manager
Authorised by Group Manager/s:	Bruce Howse, Pou Taumatua – Group Manager Corporate Services, on 15 April 2026

Whakarāpopototanga / Executive summary

This report is to inform council of high-level activity within People and Culture for the January – March 2026 quarter, including updates on recruitment, learning and development and leave balance tracking.

Ngā mahi tūtohutia / Recommendation

That the report 'Quarterly People and Culture Report' by Kayla Ludlow, Human Resources Advisor and Shane Cleary, People and Culture Manager and dated 8 April 2026, be received.

Background/Tuhinga

Overview

This quarter we have seen a decline in our FTE for the months of February and March 2026. This will be due to our Tū i te ora Scholarship and Summer Interns finishing their fixed term contracts. This drop can also be attributed to the increase in turnover.

Turnover has increased in January 2026 to 13.49%, and February to 13.82%, dropping back to 11.79% in March 2026.

It is normal for hours and costs associated with sick leave to be down in January. This is due to public holidays and council leave days. There was an increase in February and a larger increase in March 2026. In the January to March quarter last year we saw the same pattern, but hours and costs were significantly less.

Annual leave entitlement hours normally decline over the summer months which is evident over this quarter. The costs have decreased, this is due to the new reporting method. The costs should have reduced slightly from the last quarter due to annual leave balances being taken.

It is normal to see an increase in the Alternative Lieu days as there was a number of days these could be accrued over summer, this is similar to the pattern we saw in the same quarter in 2025.

		Month 1	MONTH 2	MONTH 3	MONTH 4	Month 5	Month 6	Month 7	Month 8	Month 9		
		Jul-25	Aug-25	Sept-25	Oct-25	Nov-25	Dec-25	Jan-26	Feb-26	Mar-26	MONTHLY DATA TREND	12 MONTH AVERAGE & AVERAGE TREND*
STAFFING	FTE	334	334	335	338	348	346	345	335	334		339.5
	All Staff Headcount	347	348	350	353	364	361	360	350	350		352.0
	Permanent Staff Headcount*	309	312	313	315	315	311	310	308	311		309.6
	FTE Turnover (last 12 months)	10.02%	12.03%	11.96%	11.91%	11.86%	12.50%	13.49%	13.82%	11.79%		11.4%
	Promotions / Higher Duties	5	1	1	1	0	2	0	2	3		1.4
	Internal Movements / Secondments	3	3	1	0	2	1	1	0	0		1.4
L&D	% of Staff Attended Training*	16.8%	8.1%	14.9%	12.7%	8.3%	3.8%	7.2%	23.9%	44.6%		15.2%
	Training Cost Per Person	$ 50.00	$ -	$ 220.00	$ -	$ 241.21	$ -	$ -	$ -	$ -		107.18
LEAVE TRACKING	Paid Sick Leave Taken (days)	278.0	190.0	244.0	168.6	120.0	178.1	112.7	202.8	251.5		186.6
	Sick Leave Cost	$98,973	$71,075	$95,534	$68,455	$44,730	$66,120	$39,208	$59,732	$86,108		$67,791
	Annual Leave Entitlement	6561	6815	6833	6496	6898	6439	6013	6106	6382		6423
	Annual Entitlement Cost	$2,558,211	$2,655,283	$2,654,985	$2,530,993	$2,689,335	$2,508,785	$1,968,294	$1,916,505	$1,916,815		$2,208,255
	Alternative Days Balance (Lieu)	191.1	183.5	167.8	149.1	143.4	133.4	183.8	211.2	186.1		176.0
	Alternative Days Cost (Lieu)*	$78,956	$75,162	$68,118	$63,491	$57,179	$55,453	$74,197	$83,994	$83,994		$79,918
	Flexi Time Balance	496.5	532.3	580.4	510.9	591.5	536.4	504.5	579.0	600.1		547.6

*__FY Average Trend__ arrows refer to the previous months 12 Month Average figures and compares them to the current 12 Month Average figures.
*__Permanent Staff Headcount__ added for clarification as the FTE figure includes fixed term staff as well.
*__Vacancies Listed and Vacancies Filled__ includes fixed term staff, cadets, students and internal staff movements. Does not include roles re-advertised
*__Training__ in this instance refers only to courses that the HR team co-ordinates
*__Alternative Days Cost (Lieu)__ is calculated according to individual staff salaries.

Note: This quarter we have amended the way we report the leave cost information. (highlighted in yellow). Previously, the leave hours (accrued and taken) were multiplied by the hourly rate. Moving forward, to ensure more accurate reporting, we will be using the leave liability costs provided by the Finance team. This data aligns with the last payroll period in the month, so may not include the full months information, this will then be included in the following report as the data will be collected after the date paid.

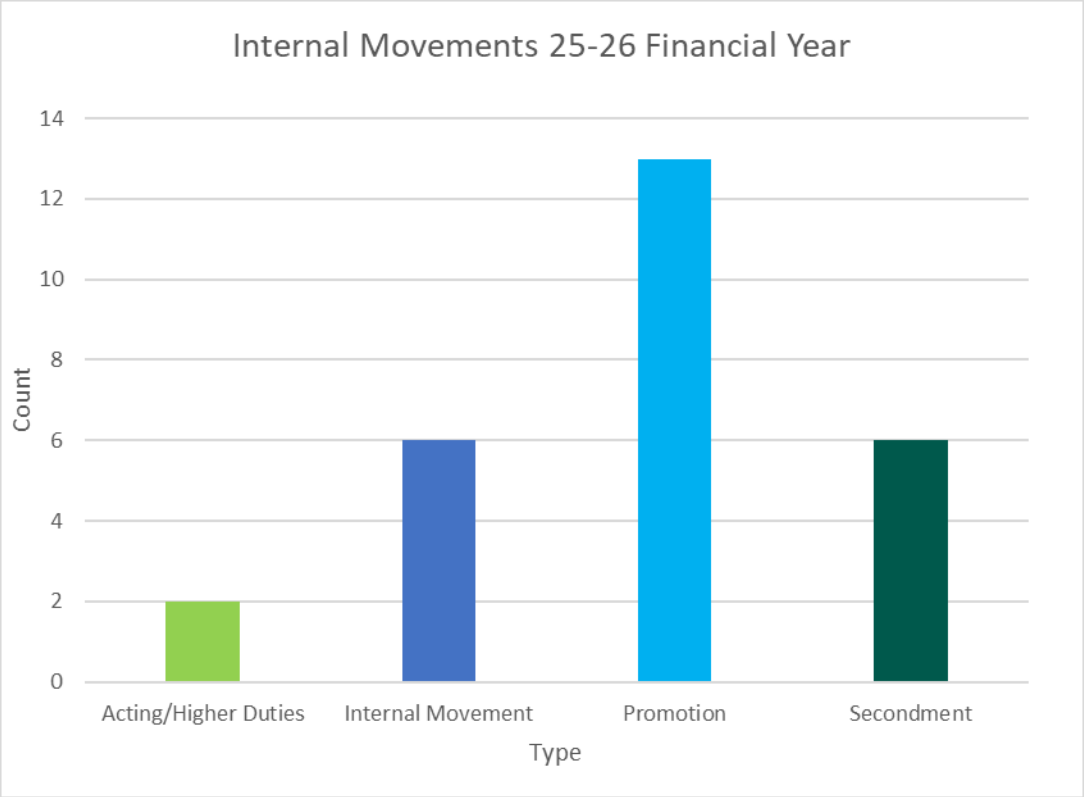
Recruitment

For the January to March quarter, we have had a number of internal appointments and role changes, which has opened up opportunities for back fill positions. These movements have also allowed several staff members to step into manager roles supporting both their professional growth and our leadership capability. In addition, we have had a small number of staff retire which has resulted in further vacancies being advertised, contributing to a dynamic and evolving workforce landscape. Work has also begun on the Tū i te ora scholarship process for 2026 which this year will see 5 scholarship/internship opportunities offered to students who whakapapa to Taitokerau.

	Jul 2025	Aug 2025	Sep 2025	Oct 2025	Nov 2025	Dec 2025	Jan 2026	Feb 2026	Mar 2026
Requisitions Created	7	8	13	4	4	12	1	4	7
Vacancies Filled (Offer Accepted)	9	9	3	8	11	3	3	7	8
Open Vacancies	20	17	23	21	18	22	15	19	17
Average Time to Fill (weeks)	8.3	7.5	8.9	8.1	7.1	8.1	8.0	8.0	10.0

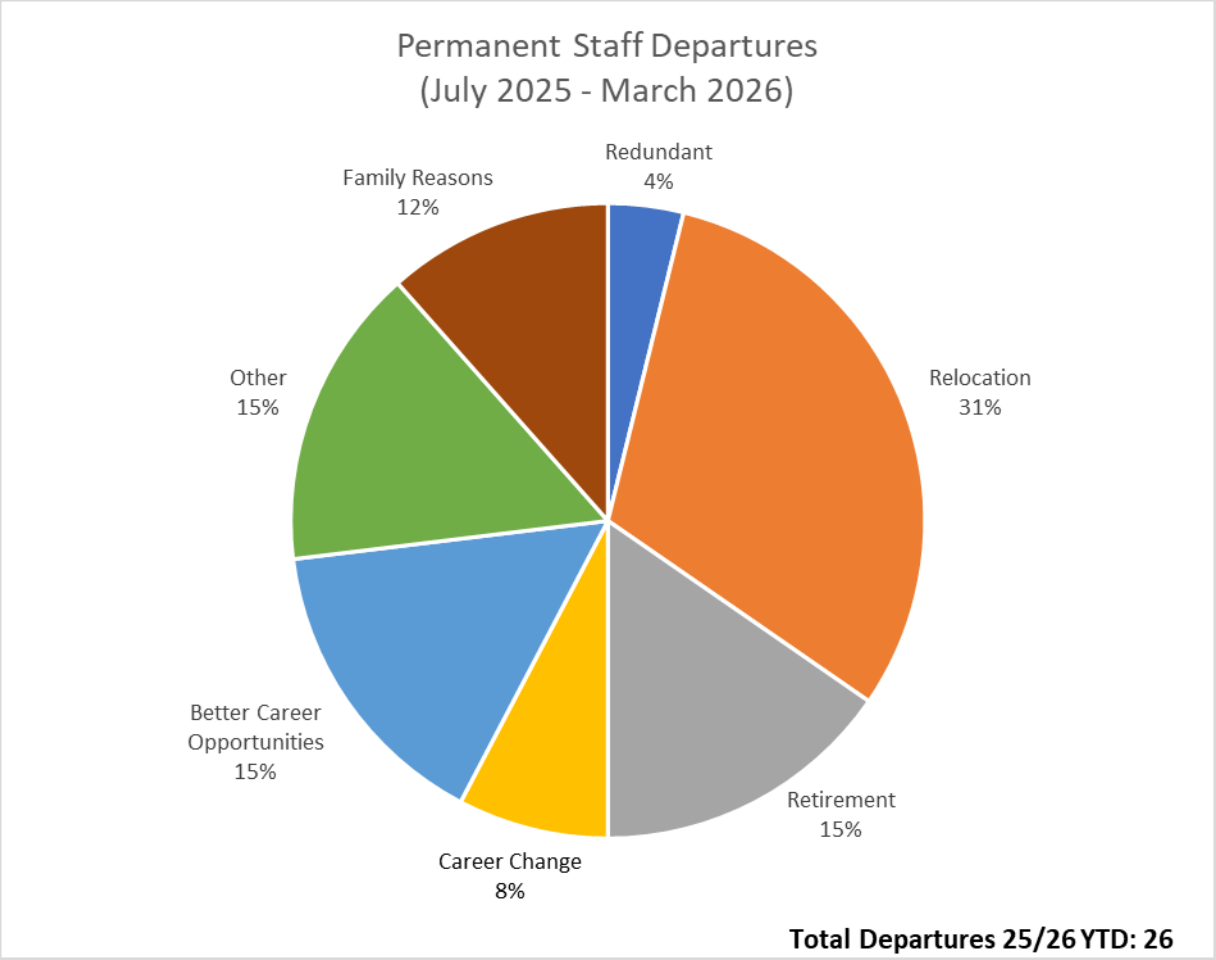
The average time to fill remained consistent across January and February 2026, with a rise to an average of 10 weeks to fill in March. This is a result of two particular positions which were advertised for a longer period of time to take into account the Christmas and New Year period.

Internal Movements



This quarter there has been an increase in promotions, with two internal promotions in February and three in March. We had one secondment in January.

Turnover



There has been an increase in our turnover this quarter, with January 2026 sitting at 13.49% and February sitting at 13.82%. This did rate did lower in March, dropping back to 11.49%.

The potential Local Government Reform could be a contributing factor among those who have left in the past quarter. However, it can be normal to see a rise in turnover after the Christmas and New Year periods as staff reevaluate. In the January to March 2025 quarter, this was not so evident as our turnover rates were lower with 7.86% for January 2025, 7.80% for February 2025 and 9.15% for March 2025.

This quarter, nine staff depart from Northland Regional Council. We had three staff members relocate to another region. We had one staff member in each of the following categories, retirement, career change, better career opportunities, and family reasons. We also had two staff members leave which we have categorized as other.

Training

This quarter we have seen an increase in the training offered and staff trained. March was the biggest training month with 17 sessions held and 149 staff attendees. Sessions included:

- AI Awareness Training
- MS Teams and Meeting Rooms Workshop
- Management Training – Communication
- Conflicts of Interest Training
- Process Manager Introduction

- Planning for Retirement
- Psychological Safety for Managers
- Contract Management
- Courageous Conversations
- Te Whāriki Level 1

This quarter we rolled out an organisational wide Conflicts of Interest training that began in February. A Courageous Conversations training was also developed and facilitated for those staff on the Emerging Leaders pathway in March.

Appraisals

Annual appraisals for all staff were opened in March, 95% of the organisation have completed their appraisals during this time.

Gender Pay Report

A Gender Pay Report will be published for the organisation next quarter so staff are able to see what our gender pay gaps look like across the organisation and by grade.

Remuneration Review

The team are preparing for the remuneration review which will be a large focus area for the next quarter.

ELMO System

The ELMO system implementation is ongoing, the Performance module is now complete and will be used when the organisation starts goal setting next quarter. The Learning Module is currently a focus and the team are about to start on the Onboarding module.

Attachments/Ngā tapirihanga

Nil

TITLE:	**Receipt of Committee Minutes**
From:	Meloney Tupou, Māori Governance and Engagement Support Admin
Authorised by Group Manager/s:	Auriole Ruka, Pou Manawhakahaere - Strategic Partnerships and Engagement, on 15 April 2026

Ngā mahi tūtohutia / Recommendation

That the unconfirmed minutes of the:

- Civil Defence Emergency Management – 3 March 2026
- Joint Regional Economic Development Committee – 6 March 2026 and
- Te Oneroa-a-Tōhe Board Minutes – 20 March 2026

be received.

Attachments/Ngā tapirihanga

Attachment 1: CDEM Minutes ⇩

Attachment 2: JREDC Minutes ⇩

Attachment 3: TOATB Minutes ⇩

Civil Defence Emergency Management Group Meeting Minutes

Meeting held in the Council Chamber
36 Water Street, Whangārei
on Tuesday 3 March 2026, commencing at 1:00 pm - 2:30 pm

Tuhinga/Present:

Chairperson - NRC Councillor, Colin Kitchen
Deputy Chair - FNDC Councillor, Kelly Stratford (online)
WDC Mayor, Ken Couper (left 2.37pm)
KDC Councillor, Gordon Lambeth
NEMA Representative, Shona Morgan
FENZ Representative, Wipari Henwood
NZ Police Representative, Matthew Srhoj (left 2.36pm)

I Tae Mai/In Attendance:

Full Meeting
FNDC CE Guy Holroyd (online – left 2.51pm)
FNDC GM Community & Engagement, Ruben Garcia
NRC CE, Jono Gibbard (online)
NRC GM Community Resilience, Louisa Gritt
NRC CDEM Manager, Damian Rio
NRC Emergency Management Partnership Manager, Brendon Gray
NRC Governance Manager, Jane Hickmott (online)
Emergency Management Response Specialist, Jenny Calder
NRC Welfare Specialist, Kylie Cox
NRC Emergency Management Specialist, Tony Devanney
NRC Emergency Management Specialist, Laura Exton
NRC Emergency Management Specialist, Kori Puckey (online)
NRC Emergency Management Specialist, Bill Hutchinson (online)
NRC Emergency Management Specialist, Rongomaiwahine Glassie (online)
Emergency Management Specialist – Lifelines, James Harvey (online)
Emergency Management Communications Specialist, Zach Woods – (online)
Medical Officer of Health, Dr David Sinclair
FNDC Contractor, Alistair Wells (online)
KDC Group Controller, Alastair Dunlop (online)
KDC Local Controller, Jack Rudolph (online)

Part Meeting
KDC Alternate Member Snow Tane (left 2.37pm)
NRC Alternate member Arama Morunga
WDC Alternate member Nicholas Connop (left 2.24pm)
NRC Chairman, Pita Tipene (left 1.18pm)
WDC GM Community Services, Victoria Harwood (left 2.38pm)
NRC Monitoring Manager, Jason Donaghy
NRC Kai Whiri Iwituna – Senior Catchment Advisor, Chantez Connor-Kingi
NRC Natural Hazards Specialist, Sarah Gauden-Ing

The Chair declared the meeting open at 1pm with Karakia by Wipari.

Civil Defence Emergency Management Group Meeting
3 March 2026

Ngā Mahi Whakapai/Housekeeping (Item 1.0)

Ngā whakapahā/Apologies (Item 2.0)

There were no apologies.

Secretarial note: apologies noted for the record for the following non-members: CEG Chair – WDC CE Simon Weston, Deputy CEG Chair – KDC CE Jason Marris, KDC Interim CE – Michael Day, FNDC Mayor Moko Tepania, Papanui Polamalu

Receipt of Supplementary Agenda Item (Item 2.0A)

Report from Louisa Gritt, GM Community Resilience

Moved (Stratford/Couper)

> That as permitted under section 46A(7) of the Local Government Official Information and Meetings Act 1987 the supplementary report be received.

Carried
Secretarial notes: The supplementary agenda item is number 8.6

Nga whakapuakanga/Declarations of Conflicts of Interest (Item 3.0)

It was advised that members should make declarations item-by-item as the meeting progressed.

Confirmation of Minutes - 9 December 2025 (Item 4.1)

Report from Haylee Labelle, Personal Assistant Community Resilience

Moved (Lambeth/Kitchen)

> That the minutes of the Civil Defence Emergency Management Group meeting held on 9 December 2025, be confirmed as a true and correct record and that these be duly authenticated by the Chair.

Carried
Secretarial notes: The chair took the opportunity to acknowledge the exceptional resilience and preparedness of staff, agencies and local communities during the January weather event, with civil defence centres and Maraes activating quickly to support affected whanau. Emergency services were recognised for their professionalism and seamless cooperation with councils and community response groups. Discussed the ongoing recovery phase, emphasising the importance of strong communication and community-led resilience. It was noted that while immediate lessons are being gathered, a more comprehensive review will occur once the situation stabilises.

Receipt of Action Sheet (Item 5.1)

Report from Haylee Labelle, Personal Assistant Community Resilience

Moved (Couper/Stratford)

> That the action sheet be received.

Carried

Civil Defence Emergency Management Group Meeting
3 March 2026

National Emergency Management Agency Update (Item 6.1)

Report from Shona Morgan, NEMA Representative - Senior Regional Emergency Management Advisor

Moved (Couper/Kitchen)

That the report 'National Emergency Management Agency Update' by Shona Morgan, NEMA Representative - Senior Regional Emergency Management Advisor and dated 13 February 2026 be received.

Carried
Secretarial notes: Hon Chris Penk is visiting Northland next week. Members were informed that a formal announcement regarding government contributions to mayoral relief funds would be made shortly. Mayor Couper reported initial funding received and anticipation for further government support.
Actions:

1. **NEMA Representative to send an email to FNDC Representative summarising the mayoral relief fund information provided at the meeting.**

Membership and appointments – Northland CDEM Group (Item 7.1)

Report from Damian Rio, CDEM Emergency Manager and Kylie Cox, Welfare Coordination Group Representative

Moved (Stratford/Couper)

1. That the report 'Membership and appointments – Northland CDEM Group' by Damian Rio, CDEM Emergency Manager and Kylie Cox, Welfare Coordination Group Representative and dated, 23 February 2026 be received.
2. That CDEM note the resignations of Health New Zealand representative – Sarah Boniface.
3. That CDEM note the stepping down of iwi representative Snow Tane from CEG.

Carried
Secretarial notes: The committee acknowledged the effort and contributions of Snow Tane in the iwi space for CEG.

Actions:

1. **CDEM Manager to draft letter of appreciation to Snow Tane for contributions to the CEG as iwi representative**

CDEM Group Plan Delivery (Item 7.2)

Report from Damian Rio, CDEM Emergency Manager

Moved (Kitchen/Stratford)

1. That the report 'CDEM Group Plan Delivery' by Damian Rio, CDEM Emergency Manager and dated 17 February 2026, be received.
2. That the Northland CDEM Joint Committee note the additional information requested by the Coordinating Executive Group to enable more effective oversight of the operational delivery of the Northland CDEM Group plan.

Carried

Secretarial notes: Concerns were raised about KPIS added operationally and not in collaboration with governance. Members want to ensure that collaboration occurs on the next group plan KPIs. Understands that they are operational but believes in working together on the work programme and KPIs.
CDEM manager confirmed that the drafted timeline includes governance and agency workshops with key partners, community consultation and NEMA assessment before sign off by the CDEM and it is sent to the Minister.

CDEM Finance Report (Item 7.3)

Report from Tony Devanney, Emergency Management Specialist

Moved (Stratford/Couper)

That the report 'CDEM Finance Report' by Tony Devanney, Emergency Management Specialist and dated 19 February 2026, be received.

Carried
Secretarial notes: Explained the three budgets: Total civil defence budget (funded by targeted rates and service level agreements), CEG and Joint Committee administrative budget (district councils contribute), and reserve fund budget (used for projects like tsunami sirens). Positive variances were noted due to recovery funding rollovers, but a deficit is expected next year.

Cr Stratford raised concerns about the lack of detail regarding the MACC, questioning where council contributions are held and how progress is reported. It was clarified that the project is managed by NRC's property team and will be reported through different processes, with a commitment to provide financial updates at governance level.

Future financial reports will be more spreadsheet-based and less narrative, providing clearer tracking of each budget. The group agreed to include MACC project funding details at the next meeting for improved transparency.

Actions:

1. **Financial information for the MACC and to be included in the finance update to Governance**

Section 17a Review Update (Item 7.4)

Report from Damian Rio, CDEM Emergency Manager

Moved (Couper/Stratford)

1. That the report 'Section 17a Review Update' by Damian Rio, CDEM Emergency Manager and dated 2 February 2026, be received.
2. That the Northland CDEM Group Joint Committee note the recommendations arising from the *Northland CDEM Group Capability Assessment Report (September 2025)*.
3. That the Northland CDEM Group Joint Committee endorse the implementation plan incorporating short-, medium- and long-term actions as outlined in this report. (Attachment 1).
4. Request an independent review to be undertaken of the response and transition to recovery of the severe weather event January 2026

5. Request that the outcomes of the independent review are used in conjunction with the Section 17a review recommendations in the decision making for future CDEM funding and structure arrangements in Northland

The motion was lost

Moved (Kitchen/Couper)

1. That the report 'Section 17a Review Update' by Damian Rio, CDEM Emergency Manager and dated 2 February 2026, be received.
2. That the Northland CDEM Group Joint Committee note the recommendations arising from the Northland CDEM Group Capability Assessment Report (September 2025).
3. That the Northland CDEM Group Joint Committee approve a staged, flexible implementation plan incorporating short-, medium- and long-term actions as outlined in this report. (Attachment 1).

Carried

Secretarial notes: Discussed the findings and recommendations of the Section 17A review, focusing on capability gaps, governance roles, operational leadership, and the endorsement of an implementation plan with short, medium, and long-term actions.

CDEM Manager summarised the Section 17A review, noting strengths in community preparedness and public information, but identifying gaps in recovery, response, operational leadership, and integration of iwi and communities. Twelve recommendations were developed, spanning effective response, community resilience, and governance.

Mayor Couper proposed an independent review of the severe weather event response and transition to recovery, but concerns were raised about funding and the value added compared to internal reviews. The motion for an independent review was not supported, with the group opting to continue internal review processes and escalate recommendations to the Mayoral forum as needed.

Cr Stratford requested improved reporting from local councils on progress towards operational readiness and resilience goals, including business continuity and emergency preparedness. CDEM Manager confirmed that enhanced internal reporting and community consultation are part of the review's recommendations.

Agency Updates (Item 8.1)

Report from Haylee Labelle, Personal Assistant Community Resilience

Moved (Lambeth/Couper)

That the verbal updates from FENZ, Police and any other agencies, be received

Carried

Secretarial notes: David Sinclair introduced himself as the Medical Officer of Health at Te Whatu Ora. Explained his role in emergency management and the importance of post-event health communication, especially regarding flooding and related health risks. He is based both here and in Auckland. The CEG contact continues to be Paula Martin and Callum Chapman is temporarily covering the vacancy left by Sarah Boniface.

FENZ reported ongoing restructuring, removal of regional structure, and industrial action with support gained to extend the one-hour stoppages on Mondays and Fridays. Raised concern about

potential vegetation fires with the current weather. Mentioned efforts to build capability in the Far North, including challenges faced by the Kaikohe Brigade in terms of response times. New station being built in Paparoa and Karikari (amalgamating Rangiputa). They will be moving in April for the MACC build.

Police highlighted ongoing partnership with FENZ and LandSAR, coordination for large weather events, and challenges in mid-north staffing. Updates included priorities set by the commissioner, new targets for trust and confidence, youth offending reduction, and retail crime resolution. Mentioned the Move-on orders announced last week and noted WDC are having a task force meeting to discuss.

Actions

1. **Police/CDEM to connect offline to review the contact group information as Matt was missed from important information circulated.**

CEG Chair Report (Item 8.2)

Report from Damian Rio, CDEM Emergency Manager

Moved (Lambeth/Couper)

That the report 'CEG Chair Report' by Damian Rio, dated 13 February 2026 be received.

Carried

Secretarial notes: The report highlights how important the reduction and readiness phase is and how much work is going on in this space. A debrief from the January weather event will be undertaken and a report will be shared at the April CEG meeting with recommendations. Noted that WDC is in recovery and will be for some time.

Actions:

1. **A request for additional rain gauges in Mokau Marae and Wainui to improve data collection and support for affected communities to be passed to NRC Hydrology team**

Emergency Management Bill Submission - Retrospective Approval (Item 8.3)

Report from Damian Rio, CDEM Emergency Manager

Moved (Stratford/Lambeth)

1. That the report 'Emergency Management Bill Submission - Retrospective Approval' by Damian Rio, CDEM Emergency Manager and dated 16 February 2026, be received.
2. That That the Northland CDEM Group Joint Committee retrospectively approve the attached submission on the Emergency Management (EM) Bill (No2).

Carried

Secretarial notes: Satisfaction with the process and the staff's efforts was expressed.

Community Response Planning and Marae Preparedness Planning (Item 8.4)

Report from Damian Rio, CDEM Emergency Manager;

Moved (Kitchen/Lambeth)

That the report 'Community Response Planning and Marae Preparedness Planning' by Damian Rio, CDEM Emergency Manager and dated 13 February 2026, be received.

Carried

Secretarial notes: Highlighted the significant activation of Marae during the recent weather event, with 81 marae trained personnel supporting over 180 Marae in the region. The importance of familiar faces and community trust was emphasised.
Challenges faced by Marae in meeting compliance requirements for water, evacuation, building fitness, and insurance were discussed, with suggestions to reduce compliance costs to facilitate their role as welfare centres.
Acknowledged the extra workload on council staff following events, noting the importance of community response plans and the leadership shown by Northland in this area.

Landslide Assessments - Correspondence (Item 8.5)

Report from Damian Rio, CDEM Emergency Manager and Jane Hickmott, Governance and Policy Manager

Moved (Couper/Stratford)

1. That the report 'Landslide Assessments - Correspondence' by Damian Rio, CDEM Emergency Manager and Jane Hickmott, Governance and Policy Manager and dated 16 February 2026, be received and noted.

Carried

January 2026 Severe Weather Event - Landslip Risk (Item 8.6)

Report from Jason Donaghy, Natural Resources Monitoring Manager

Moved (Couper/Kitchen)

That the report 'January 2026 Severe Weather Event - Landslip Risk' by Jason Donaghy, Natural Resources Monitoring Manager and dated 26 February 2026, be received.

Carried

Secretarial notes: Described the sequence and intensity of the January storms, noting unprecedented rainfall and its role in triggering widespread landslides. Comparisons were made to previous cyclones, highlighting the severity of the event.

Aerial surveys were conducted with local kaitiaki, capturing imagery and identifying hazards. Geotechnical experts reviewed the data, prioritising properties at risk and informing recovery actions. Discussed the importance of rapid intelligence gathering, including the use of LiDAR and community-submitted photos, and the challenges of verifying geotechnical risks in Northland due to limited expertise.

Recommendations included building community resilience in areas prone to repeat landslides, improving preparedness planning with Marae, and deploying more rain gauges to enhance data collection and event confirmation.

Actions:

1. **NRC Secretariat to circulate the presentation slideshow from the January 2026 Severe Weather Event – Landslip Risk**

Civil Defence Emergency Management Group Meeting
3 March 2026

Whakamutunga (Conclusion)

The meeting concluded at 2.53pm with karakia by Wipari.

Joint Regional Economic Development Committee Minutes

Meeting held in the Whangarei District Council
Te Iwitahi, 9 Rust Avenue, Whangārei
on Friday 6 March 2026, commencing at 10:00 am

Tuhinga/Present:

Chair (NRC Councillor) Geoff Crawford
Deputy Chair (KDC Deputy Mayor) Gordon Lambeth
KDC Councillor Craig Jepson
NRC Chair Pita Tipene *(Via audio-visual link)*
WDC Mayor Ken Couper
WDC Deputy Mayor Scott McKenzie
FNDC Councillor John Vujcich *(Via audio-visual link)*
FNDC Councillor Rachel Baucke (part meeting)

I Tae Mai/In Attendance:

Full Meeting
FNDC Mayor Moko Tepania
NRC Councillor John Hunt

NRC GM Corporate Services
NRC Economist
NRC Economic Policy Advisor
NRC Administration
NRC Councillor John Hunt
NRC Chief Executive Officer
KDC Chief Executive Officer
FNDC Deputy Mayor
FNDC Chief Executive Officer
FNDC GM Planning and Policy
FNDC Principal Advisor – Strategic Relationships
Northland Inc Chief Executive
Northland Inc Chair
Northland Inc Head of Investment
Northland Inc Head of Finance & Corporate Services
Northland Inc Head of Kaupapa Māori, Enterprise and Innovation
Northland Inc Acting Head of Destination
Northland Inc Head of Strategic Communications *(Via audio-visual link)*
WDC Economic Development Facilitator

Part Meeting
WDC GM Transport and Community Infrastructure
WDC GM Planning and Development
Beca Northland Branch Manager, Technical Director Planning
Beca Technical Director – Economic Development Advisory *(Via audio-visual link)*
Infometrics, Chief Executive and Principal Economist

Joint Regional Economic Development Committee
6 March 2026

The Chair declared the meeting open at 10am.

Ngā Mahi Whakapai/Housekeeping (Item 1.0)

Ngā whakapahā/Apologies (Item 2.0)

Confirmation of Minutes - Extraordinary Joint Economic Development Committee Minutes (Item 4.1)

Report from Rae Hetaraka, Executive Assistant to the Chair

Moved (Vujcich/[illegible]wford)

That the minutes of the Extraordinary meeting held on 22 December 2025, be confirmed as a true and correct record.

Carried

Secretarial Note: ***The following update to the Secretarial Note for agenda item 5.2 of the Minutes of the Extraordinary meeting held on 22 December 2025 was made:*** *Gordon Lambeth was duly nominated and received a seconder for the position of Deputy Chair. Although John Vujcich was nominated, the nomination did not receive a seconder. As only one valid nomination was before the Committee, the Chair declared Gordon Lambeth elected to the position of Deputy Chair of the Joint Regional Economic Development Committee.*

Northland Inc Limited - Impact Report (Item 5.1)

Report from Darryl Jones, Economist and Codie Mcintyre, Economic Policy Advisor

Moved (Crawford/Vujcich)

1. That the report 'Northland Inc Limited - Impact Report' by Darryl Jones, Economist and Codie Mcintyre, Economic Policy Advisor and dated 2 March 2026, be received.
2. That the Impact Report be provided to each of the four shareholder councils of Northland Inc Limited to assist with development of their respective Long Term Plans 2027-2037.

Moved (Crawford/Lambeth)

3. That a letter be sent to Whangarei District Council (WDC) requesting them to use the Impact Report to review their funding contribution to the Investment and Growth Reserve (IGR) for 2026/27 in line with the letter received from the Mayor of WDC dated 15 August 2025.

Carried

Joint Regional Economic Development Committee
6 March 2026

Northland Inc Limited: Reporting Against Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) on the Statement of Intent 2025/26 including Half-Year Financials and Quarterly Highlights (Item 5.2)

Report from Codie Mcintyre, Economic Policy Advisor and Darryl Jones, Economist

Moved (McKenzie/Tipene)

That the report 'Northland Inc Limited: Reporting Against Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) on the Statement of Intent 2025/26 including Half-Year Financials and Quarterly Highlights' by Codie Mcintyre, Economic Policy Advisor and Darryl Jones, Economist and dated 12 February 2026, be received.

Carried

Te Rerenga: Taitokerau Northland Economic Wellbeing Pathway - Progress Update (Item 5.3)

Report from Codie Mcintyre, Economic Policy Advisor and Darryl Jones, Economist

Moved (Tipene/Vujcich)

1. That the report 'Te Rerenga: Taitokerau Northland Economic Wellbeing Pathway - Progress Update' by Codie Mcintyre, Economic Policy Advisor and Darryl Jones, Economist and dated 2 March 2026, be received.
2. That Northland Inc be requested to provide written comment by 31 March 2026 on:
    a. Whether they have capacity and capability to lead out the implementation of Te Rerenga, and
    b. The level of priority implementing Te Rerenga has in comparison to their other activities / work programmes.

Carried

Northland Inc Limited: Statement of Intent 2026/27 - Draft received from Northland Inc (Item 5.4)

Report from Codie Mcintyre, Economic Policy Advisor and Darryl Jones, Economist

Moved (Crawford/Couper)

That the report 'Northland Inc Limited: Statement of Intent 2026/27 - Draft received from Northland Inc' by Codie Mcintyre, Economic Policy Advisor and Darryl Jones, Economist and dated 11 February 2026, be received.

Carried

Northland Inc Limited: Directors - Appointment for term commencing 1 July 2026 (Item 5.5)

Report from Codie Mcintyre, Economic Policy Advisor and Darryl Jones, Economist

Moved (Tipene/Vujcich)

1. That the report 'Northland Inc Limited: Directors - Appointment for term commencing 1 July 2026 ' by Codie Mcintyre, Economic Policy Advisor and Darryl Jones, Economist and dated 13 February 2026, be received.
2. That Suzanne Duncan be reappointed to the Board of Northland Inc Limited for a term of three years beginning 1 July 2026.
3. That Michael Lightfoot be reappointed to the Board of Northland Inc Limited for a term of two years beginning 1 July 2026.

Carried

Annual Work Plan 2026 (Item 5.6)

Report from Codie Mcintyre, Economic Policy Advisor and Darryl Jones, Economist

Moved (Couper/Crawford)

1. That the report 'Annual Work Plan 2026' by Codie Mcintyre, Economic Policy Advisor and Darryl Jones, Economist and dated 25 February 2026, be received.
2. That the Joint Regional Economic Development Committee agrees to the Annual Work Plan 2026 as set out in Attachment 1 to this report.

Carried

Northland Infrastructure Plan - Update (Item 5.7)

Report from Codie Mcintyre, Economic Policy Advisor and Darryl Jones, Economist

Moved (Lambeth/Vujcich)

That the report 'Northland Infrastructure Plan - Update' by Codie Mcintyre, Economic Policy Advisor and Darryl Jones, Economist and dated 18 February 2026, be received.

Carried

Lake Ōmāpere Project - Briefing for Joint Committee (Item 5.8)

Report from Darryl Jones, Economist and Codie Mcintyre, Economic Policy Advisor

Moved (Crawford/Vujcich)

That the report 'Lake Ōmāpere Project - Briefing for Joint Committee' by Darryl Jones, Economist and Codie Mcintyre, Economic Policy Advisor and dated 25 February 2026, be received.

Carried

Joint Regional Economic Development Committee
6 March 2026

Regional Infrastructure Fund - Update on projects (Item 5.9)

Report from Darryl Jones, Economist and Codie Mcintyre, Economic Policy Advisor

Moved (Vujcich/Couper)

That the report 'Regional Infrastructure Fund - Update on projects' by Darryl Jones, Economist and Codie Mcintyre, Economic Policy Advisor and dated 25 February 2026, be received.

Carried

Economic Update - Infometrics Regional Economic Profile 2025 (Item 5.10)

Report from Codie Mcintyre, Economic Policy Advisor and Darryl Jones, Economist

Moved (McKenzie/Vujcich)

That the report 'Economic Update - Infometrics Regional Economic Profile 2025' by Codie Mcintyre, Economic Policy Advisor and Darryl Jones, Economist and dated 13 February 2026, be received.

Carried

Whakamutunga (Conclusion)

The meeting concluded at 1pm.

Te Oneroa-a-Tōhe Board
20 March 2026

Ngā Miniti o Te Poari o Te Oneroa-a-Tōhe
Te Oneroa-A-Tōhe Board Minutes

Meeting held in the Banquet Room, Te Ahu Centre
cnr State Highway 1 & Matthews Ave, Kaitaia
on Friday 20 March 2026, commencing at 10:00 am

Tuhinga (Present):

Chairperson, Lisa McNab	Te Rūnanga o Te Rarawa
Hilda Halkyard-Harawira	Far North District Council
Abbey Brown	Ngāti Kuri Trust Board *(via audio visual link)*
Harata Brown	Te Aupōuri
Cr Arama Morunga	Northland Regional Council *(Via audio-visual link)*

Huihuinga i te wahanga (Part Meeting)

Mayor Moko Tepania	North District Council *(Via audio-visual link)*

I Tae Mai (In Attendance):

Huihuinga i te katoa (Full Meeting)

George Riley	Te Rūnanga o Te Rarawa
Auriole Ruka	NRC Pou Manawhakahaere - Strategic Partnerships and Engagement
Ruben Wylie	NRC Pou Tiaki Taiao – GM Environmental Services
Kim Peita	NRC Te Tiriti Partnerships and Engagement Manager
Meloney Tupou	NRC Te Tiriti Partnerships and Engagement Kaiāwhina
Sandra Harris	NRC Personal Assistant - Environmental Services

The Chair declared the meeting open at Personal Assistant - Environmental Services.

Karakia Timatanga and Whakatau

Ngā Mahi Whakapai/Housekeeping (Item 1.0)

Ngā whakapahā/Apologies (Item 2.0)

There were no apologies.

Secretarial Note: Councillor Colin Kitchen sent a message during the meeting; however, it was not seen by the meeting secretary until after the meeting had concluded.

Te Oneroa-a-Tōhe Board
20 March 2026

Nga whakapuakanga (Declarations of Conflicts of Interest)

It was advised that members should make declarations item-by-item as the meeting progressed.

Confirmation of Minutes - 19 December 2025 (Item 4.1)

Report from Meloney Tupou, Māori Governance and Engagement Support Admin

Moved (Halkyard-Harawira/Brown)

That the minutes of Te Oneroa-a-Tōhe meeting held on 19 December 2025, be confirmed as a true and correct record.

Carried.

Financial Report (Item 5.1)

Report from Meloney Tupou, Māori Governance and Engagement Support Admin

Moved (Brown/Morunga)

That the report 'Financial Report' by Meloney Tupou, Māori Governance and Engagement Support Admin and dated 6 March 2026, be received.

Carried.
ACTION:

Funding Strategy for Board Activities - TSG is to bring back recommendations on key work programmes, including indicative costs, for endorsement.

Responsibilities

- **FNDC - is responsible for leading BAU support for the Board, with support provided by NRC**
- **TSG - to ensure both Councils are fully briefed and have a shared, clear understanding of the long-term funding of the Beach Board financials, enabling effective collaboration and alignment with the Board's aspirations.**

Communications approach - Te Oneroa a Tōhe Board (Item 5.2)

Report from Trish Hayward, Communications Partner

Moved (McNab/Halkyard-Harawira)

1. That the report 'Communications approach - Te Oneroa a Tōhe Board' by Trish Hayward, Communications Partner and dated 12 March 2026, be received.
2. That the Board consider and confirm the BMP objectives that it would like to serve as a focus for communications.
3. That the Board consider and advise the level of impact and resourcing for communications.

Carried.

Te Oneroa-a-Tōhe Board
20 March 2026

Secretariat Note:
Resourcing was identified as a critical consideration and will be incorporated into financial planning.

ACTION:
FNDC and NRC Communications Teams to work with existing high-impact networks on Te Oneroa-a-Tōhe to support, uplift, and deliver actions identified in the Rautaki.

May Meeting:
The Communications Teams will provide advice on key messaging.

Beach Management Plan Update (Item 5.3)

Report from Auriole Ruka, Pou Manawhakahaere - Strategic Partnerships and Engagement

Moved (Halkyard-Harawira/Brown)

That the report 'Beach Management Plan Update' by Auriole Ruka, Pou Manawhakahaere - Strategic Partnerships and Engagement and dated 6 March 2026, be received.

Carried.

Action:

Sites of Significance – correct names of sites

Technical Steering Group – members confirmed. Ngaitakoto to confirm TSG member.

General Business (Item 5.4)

Report from Auriole Ruka, Pou Manawhakahaere - Strategic Partnerships and Engagement and Kim Peita, Māori Relationships Manager

The Board is advised that correspondence has been received since the previous meeting for information.

This includes:

- General correspondence received by the Secretariat and circulated to members where appropriate; and
- A letter from Blowkart, received in relation to activities at Te Oneroa-a-Tōhe.

The correspondence is provided for Board awareness only. No decisions are sought at this stage. Any matters requiring response or further consideration will be brought back to the Board through a formal report if required.

Te Oneroa-a-Tōhe Board
20 March 2026

Kaupapa ā Roto/Business with Public Excluded (Item 6.0)

Ngā mahi tūtohutia / Recommendations

1. That the public be excluded from the proceedings of this meeting to consider confidential matters.
2. That the general subject of the matters to be considered whilst the public is excluded, the reasons for passing this resolution in relation to this matter, and the specific grounds under the Local Government Official Information and Meetings Act 1987 for the passing of this resolution, are as follows:

Item No.	Item Issue	Reasons/Grounds
6.1	Confidential Report on Ngā Puāwaitanga o Te Oneroa a Tōhe Plan and Budget (2025-2026)	The public conduct of the proceedings would be likely to result in disclosure of information, as stated in the open section of the meeting -.

Whakamoemiti whakamutunga: The meeting concluded at 12.50pm.

TITLE: Working Party Updates Report

From: Meloney Tupou, Māori Governance and Engagement Support Admin

Authorised by Group Manager/s: Auriole Ruka, Pou Manawhakahaere - Strategic Partnerships and Engagement, on date 15 April 2026

Ngā mahi tūtohutia / Recommendation

That the report 'Working Party Updates Report' be received.

Kaihu River Working Group (Cr John Blackwell)

The Kaihu River Working Party met on 31 March 2026. The topics for discussion included:

- Terms of Reference
- Work Plan
- LTP Dargaville Flood Risk Mitigation Project

Following discussion, the Kaihu River Working Group provided advice on the following next steps:

- NRC Natural Hazards Officer to send the final NRC resource consent (machine cleaning) to KDC for their final decision on whether to waive their consent requirement once received.
- NRC Natural Hazards officer to lower the height of the drone fly over internally as it was difficult to identify the weeds from the footage.
- The group agreed to allocate an additional $3,000 to $3,500 to complete California Bulrush spraying up to the bridge
- The group agreed to allocate additional funding of up to $15,000 for Manchurian wild rice grass control (this is to include planned water testing costs)

Te Ruarangi (Co-Chairs Cr Arama Morunga and Nyze Manuel, Te Rūnanga o Whaingaroa)

Te Ruarangi Working Party (Te Ruarangi) met on 12 March 2026. The topics for discussion included:

- Draft Terms of Reference
- Wānanga Waiora and Climate Change Summit 2026

Following discussion, Te Ruarangi provided advice on the following next steps:

- The Draft Terms of Reference were not endorsed. The draft is to be referred back to the Review Group to incorporate feedback, refine the document, and address identified gaps. A revised draft is to be brought back to the next formal Te Ruarangi meeting with the intention of endorsement.
- Te Ruarangi endorsed the proposed two-day Wānanga Waiora and Climate Change Summit 2026 programme, subject to the Māori Technical Advisory Group (MTAG) working with the operational team to progress refinements, logistics, and strengthen alignment with Tāiki ē, noting the programme will not return to Te Ruarangi provided alignment with Tāiki ē is maintained.

- Additionally, that further work be undertaken with MTAG to consider the scope and focus of a proposed economics-focused wānanga (Ōhanga), to be informed by learnings from the two-day Wānanga Waiora and Climate Change Summit 2026.

TITLE: Business with the Public Excluded

Whakarāpopototanga / Executive Summary

The purpose of this report is to recommend that the public be excluded from the proceedings of this meeting to consider the confidential matters detailed below for the reasons given.

Ngā mahi tūtohutia / Recommendations

1. That the public be excluded from the proceedings of this meeting to consider confidential matters.
2. That the general subject of the matters to be considered whilst the public is excluded, the reasons for passing this resolution in relation to this matter, and the specific grounds under the Local Government Official Information and Meetings Act 1987 for the passing of this resolution, are as follows:

Item No.	Item Issue	Reasons/Grounds
10.1	Confirmation of Confidential Minutes - 25 March 2026	The public conduct of the proceedings would be likely to result in disclosure of information, as stated in the open section of the meeting -.
10.2	Receipt of Confidential Committee Minutes	The public conduct of the proceedings would be likely to result in disclosure of information, as stated in the open section of the meeting -.
10.3	Northport Group Limited Debt Refinancing	The public conduct of the proceedings would be likely to result in disclosure of information, the withholding of which is necessary to enable council to carry out, without prejudice or disadvantage, commercial activities s7(2)(h).

3. That the Independent Advisors be permitted to stay during business with the public excluded.

Considerations

1. Significance and Engagement

This is a procedural matter required by law. Hence when assessed against council policy is deemed to be of low significance.

2. Policy and Legislative Compliance

The report complies with the provisions to exclude the public from the whole or any part of the proceedings of any meeting as detailed in sections 47 and 48 of the Local Government Official Information Act 1987.

3. Other Considerations

Being a purely administrative matter; Climate Impact, Environmental Impact, Community Views, Māori Impact Statement, Financial Implications, and Implementation Issues are not applicable.