

TITLE: Water Resilience Fund - Criteria, Process and LTP Year 1 Allocation

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Authorised by Group Manager/s: Victoria Harwood, Pou Tiaki Hapori - GM Community Resilience, on

Executive summary/Whakarāpopototanga

The Northland Regional Council established a Water Resilience Fund in its Long Term Plan 2021-31. The Water Resilience Fund provides \$500,000 per year to support improving water resilience infrastructure (water tanks and associated treatment and plumbing) for vulnerable communities via grants to community linked providers.

This report recommends criteria and process for making Water Resilience Fund grant allocations and makes recommendations for the grant allocations for 2021-22 FY. These recommendations have been made based on the guidance provided by Council at the Council workshop (15 December, 2021) on this matter.

Recommendations are made to allocate a total of \$477,600, being 95.5% of the first years Fund budget to two water resilience improvement projects:

- To Te Rūnanga o Whaingaroa : up to \$330,000 for Tūtū Te Wai.
- To Te Kotahitanga E Mahi Kaha Trust: up to \$150,000 for Waikotihe Puna and Te Kotahitanga Marae and Community Water Proposal.

These projects will provide water infrastructure including water collection and storage tanks, filters and associated plumbing to improve the water resilience and alleviate water poverty for some 110 households, three marae and a kohanga reo.

Recommendation(s)

1. That the report 'Water Resilience Fund - Criteria, Process and LTP Year 1 Allocation' by Tony Phipps, (contracted advisor) and dated 22 February 2022, be received.
2. That the Council adopt the criteria and process for making Water Resilience Fund grant allocations as set out and recommended in this report.
3. That the Council make the following Water Resilience Fund grants for the 2021-22 FY:
 - To Te Rūnanga o Whaingaroa : up to \$330,000 for Tūtū Te Wai.
 - To Te Kotahitanga E Mahi Kaha Trust: up to \$150,000 for Waikotihe Puna and Te Kotahitanga Marae and Community Water Proposal.

Options

No.	Option	Advantages	Disadvantages
1	As recommended.	Efficient and effective process that makes best use of existing information and learnings from the 2019-20	Some potential projects may be missed due to the process not including a

		drought and collective advice from the Te Tai Tokerau Water Resilience Working Group. Minimises the amount of work on applications for projects that would not be able to be funded.	formal public application process.
2	Including a public expressions of interest/application process. (This option will be re-considered for possible inclusion in the process for future years.)	Likely to get more potential projects.	Work and resources applied to projects that do not receive grants. A lengthier more costly process.

Considerations

1. Environmental Impact

The projects funded by the Water Resilience Fund grants recommended will significantly improve the water resilience and overall resilience of the recipient communities, reduce their need for emergency water supplies and improve their health and wellbeing.

There are no adverse environmental impacts expected from the recommendations.

2. Community views

The Water Resilience Fund was established through the Long Term Plan 2021-31 public process with community views on the Fund proposal and kaupapa being sort and considered by Council. The recommended criteria are strongly aligned to the kaupapa of the Fund and the process includes receiving advice from the Te Tai Tokerau Water Resilience Working Group.

3. Māori impact statement

The Water Resilience Fund was widely supported by Maori through the Long Term Plan process and the most water short predominantly Maori communities will benefit from the Water Resilience Fund grants. The grant allocation process includes advice from the Te Tai Tokerau Water Resilience Working Group which includes iwi representatives.

4. Financial implications

The total of the recommended grants, \$477,600, represents 95.5% of the Water Resilience Fund for the 2021-22 FY provided for in the Long Term Plan 2021-31. The remaining \$22,400 (4.5%) and any grant funds not fully utilised will remain in a Water Resilience Fund reserve for re-allocation.

5. Implementation issues

Once the Council has made the grants, implementation of the individual water resilience improvement projects is the responsibility of the grantees. While the grantees have been selected as capable providers, this is the first year of the Fund and these are the first projects

of this kind. As the first grants have been made with less than half the FY left and with pandemic impacts including possible material supply delays and shortages, there is some risk that these first projects may not be completed within the FY. However, as it is intended to make grant payments in advance to enable the grantee/providers to purchase materials which are the largest cost components of these projects, it is likely that all payments of the allocated grants will be made before the end of the FY.

6. Significance and engagement

7. Policy, risk management and legislative compliance

The recommendations present no known significant policy or legislation compliance risks for Council. The Council is making grants to trustworthy and capable providers based on advice from a regional water resilience working group with wide and specialist representation. Responsibility for the management of operational risks and compliance is with the grantees.

Background/Tuhinga

The Water Resilience Fund

As part of its response to the severe 2019-20 drought and the lack of water resilience and water poverty exposed, the Northland Regional Council established a Water Resilience Fund in its Long Term Plan 2021-31. The Water Resilience Fund provides \$500,000 per year to support improving water resilience infrastructure (water tanks and associated treatment and plumbing) for vulnerable communities via grants to community linked providers.

This report recommends criteria and process for making Water Resilience Fund grant allocations and makes recommendations for the grant allocations for 2021-22 FY. These recommendations have been made based on the guidance provided by Council at the Council workshop (15 December, 2021) on this matter.

Criteria for Eligible Projects to Receive Water Resilience Fund Grants

The following recommended criteria for eligibility for Water Resilience Fund grants were developed to align with the kaupapa of the Fund and on advice from the Te Tai Tokerau Water Resilience Working Group (TTWRWG: has mandate to co-ordinate and advise, with representation from iwi, central and local government) :

Criteria

1. The project will substantially improve water resilience of a community including households, that are not on an existing public water supply.
2. The benefitting community is identified as suffering from chronic water shortages and water poverty, and is housing or serving vulnerable people: elders, Kaumatua and Kuia, supporting unwell or disabled whanau, high number of whanau including tamariki.
3. Inadequate or poor state of water infrastructure is a primary cause of the water shortages.
4. Deliverability of solutions including infrastructure (tanks, treatment and associated plumbing).
5. The project provider (grantee) is trustworthy and capable with strong community links.

Process for Identifying and Selecting Projects for Water Resilience Fund

Year 1; 2021-22

The process for identifying and selection of projects for Water Resilience Fund grants for this first year of the Fund used the above criteria and was based on information and learning from the 2019-

20 drought and using the collective knowledge and advice of the Te Tai Tokerau Water Resilience Working Group (TTWRWG).as follows:

1. Referring to Te Tai Tokerau Water Resilience Working Group for advice and support.
2. Based on list of potential projects compiled during and following 2019-20 drought response and applying the Criteria for Eligible Projects to Receive Water Resilience Fund Grants.
3. Identify potential projects and providers* (TTWRWG/NRC).
4. Seek detailed proposals (NRC).
5. Evaluate (NRC/TTWRWG) and refine projects (NRC/provider).
6. Allocate and pay grants (NRC).

(*Excluding projects or components of projects with, or more closely aligned to, other funding eg. Puna Wai Ora (Te Hiku) or Kainga Rua (TPK).)

Years 2-3; 2022-24

Before considering potential projects for grants in years 2 and 3 of the Fund it is proposed to review the above process and advise on and recommend any improvements. The review will include the consideration of the merits of adding a public expressions of interest/application process. It is proposed to seek advice from TTWRWG on improving the process and report to Council for consideration, then proceed to use the revised process to provide recommendations for allocating the grants for years 2 and 3 before the start of year 2 (July 2022).

Water Resilience Fund Grant Allocations for 2021-22.

Following the above process it is recommended that Water Resilience Fund grants for 2021-22 are made to:

Te Rūnanga o Whaingaroa, Tūtū Te Wai project: up to \$327,600 (ex GST).

Project summary:

- Improving water resilience to some eight Whaingaroa communities, including 95 homes and two marae and benefitting 350 people.
- Prioritisation based on Te Rūnanga O Whaingaroa and connected social services data and knowledge of community.
- Providing tanks, water treatment and associated plumbing and minor repairs.
- Provider: Te Rūnanga O Whaingaroa, a mandated Iwi organisation, experienced and trusted community services provider with good project management capability and access to contractors.
- Project cost: Total \$327,600 (ex GST), proposed in three tranches.

Te Kotahitanga E Mahi Kaha Trust: Waikotihe Puna and Te Kotahitanga Marae and Community Water Proposal: up to \$150,000 (ex GST).

Project Summary:

- Improving water resilience to a community immediately SW of Kaikohe, including 15 homes and a marae, church and kohanga reo.
- Prioritisation based on local knowledge of community and participation in the 2019-20 drought response.

- Providing tanks, water treatment and associated plumbing and minor repairs.
- Provider: Te Kotahitanga E Mahi Kaha Trust, experienced and trusted community services provider with recent water tank project experience and access to contractors.
- Project cost: Estimate \$150,000 (ex GST).

The recommended grants total \$477,600 (95.5%) of the 2021-22 Fund, leaving \$22,400 (4.5%) as yet unallocated. A further recommendation will be made on the allocation of the remaining amount, either for a grant to a small-scale project being investigated, or to put in reserve to be added to the following year grants.

Attachments/Ngā tapirihanga

Nil