Far North District Council
Te Kaunihera o Tai Tokerau ki te Raki

HE ARA TĀMATA
CREATING GREAT PLACES
Supporting our people

Lessons Learned from our twin crises

2019/2020 districtwide drought and the 2020 COVID-19 pandemic

The lessons learned report comprises the following sections:

Summary of key events:

- Timeline
- Lines of resilience
- Summary of each crisis

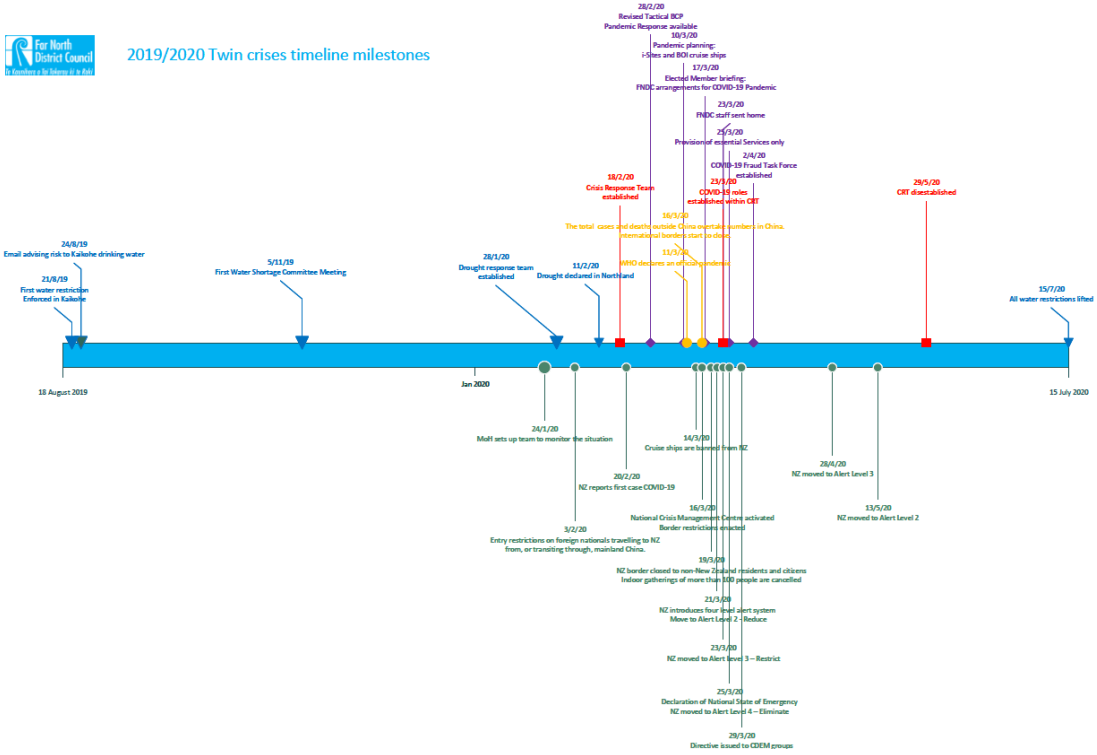
Lessons Learned Workshop Methodology

What did we do well?

Challenges faced

What should we do differently next time?

Summary of key events:



21/08/19 – First water restriction enforced in Kaikohe

24/08/19 – Email advising risk to Kaikohe drinking water

05/11/19 – First Water Shortage Committee Meeting

24/01/20 - New Zealand's Ministry of Health sets up a team to monitor the situation

28/01/20 – Drought response team established

03/02/20 - Entry restrictions on foreign nationals travelling to NZ from, or transiting through, mainland China.

11/02/20 – Drought declared in Northland

18/02/20 – Crisis Response Team established

20/02/20 - NZ reports first case COVID-19

28/02/20 – Revised Tactical Business Continuity Plans for Pandemic Response available

10/03/20 – Pandemic planning: i-Sites and BOI cruise ships

11/03/20 - WHO declares an official pandemic

14 /03/20 - Cruise ships are banned from NZ

16/03/20 – National Crisis Management Centre activated

16/03/20 –Border restrictions enacted

16/03/20 - The total number of cases and deaths outside China has overtaken the total number of cases in China. Germany closes its borders with France, Austria and Switzerland, Canada shuts its borders to foreign nationals except US citizens

17/03/20 – Elected Member briefing: FNDC arrangements for COVID-19 Pandemic

19/03/20 – NZ border closed to non-New Zealand residents and citizens

19/03/20 - Indoor gatherings of more than 100 people are cancelled

21/03/20 - NZ introduces four level alert system immediately moving to Alert Level 2 - Reduce

23/03/20 - NZ moved to Alert Level 3 – Restrict, effective immediately

23/03/20 - COVID-19 roles established within CRT

23/03/20 – FNDC staff sent home

24/03/20 – Epidemic Notice issued

25/03/20 – Declaration of National State of Emergency

25/03/20 – NZ moved to Alert Level 4 – Eliminate

25/03/20 – Provision of essential Services only

29/03/20 – Directive issued to CDEM groups

02/04/20 – COVID-19 Fraud Task Force established

28/04/20 – NZ moved to Alert Level 3

13/05/20 - NZ moved to Alert Level 2

29/05/20 CRT disestablished

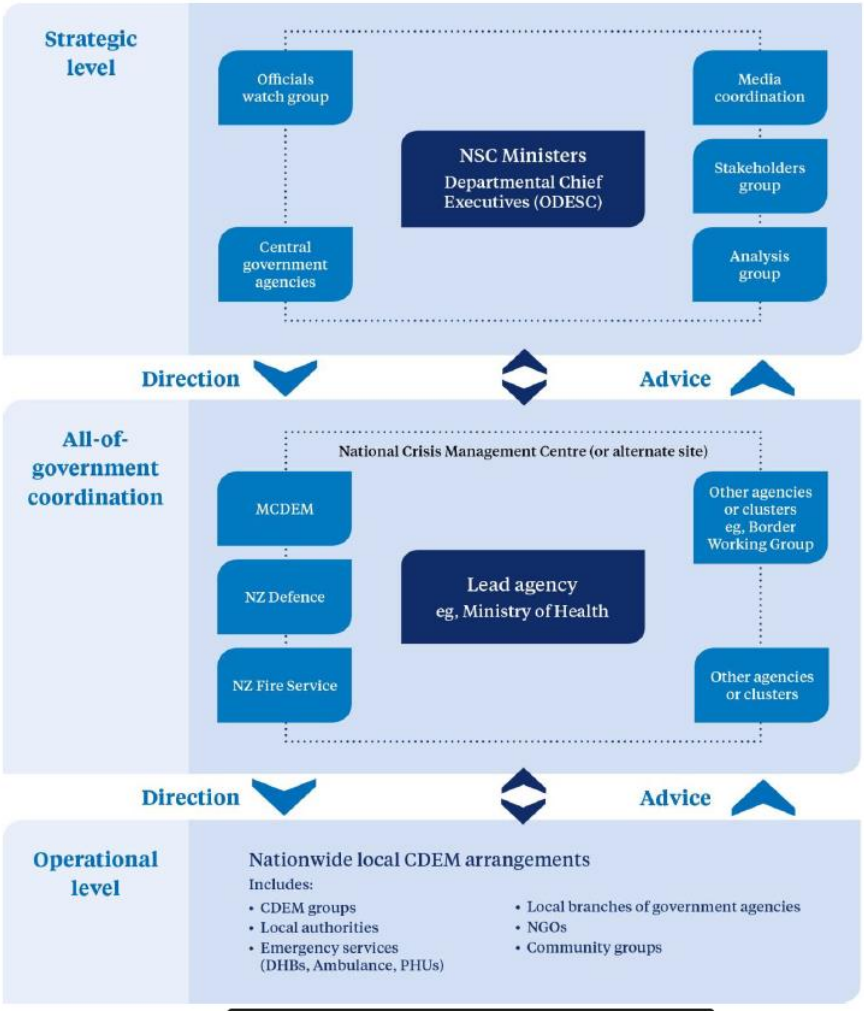
15/07/20 All water restrictions lifted

Lines of resilience

To provide context to the management of the twin crises the roles and responsibilities (or activities) of each distinct group involved is summarised:

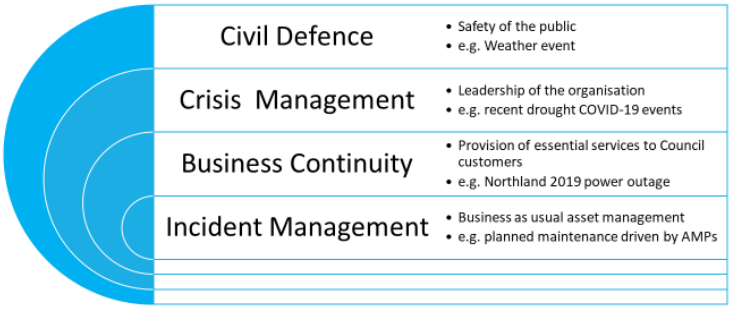
Response Co-ordination

The National Crisis Management Centre (NCMC) was activated on 16 March 2020 to establish and coordinate the all-of-government response to COVID-19. The Ministry of Health led the government's response to a pandemic in New Zealand. The following diagram describes the hierarchy and flow of each government response unit.



The district response and co-ordination is described below:

FNDC LINES OF RESILIENCE



Civil Defence, Northland CDEM Group

CDEM's mission was to provide emergency potable water supplies for communities, whereas the goal of the drought crisis response team was to ensure continuity of reticulated water supply.

- CDEM established temporary emergency water supplies in Kaikohe, Rawene and Kaitaia, in the event of a loss of reticulated water supply in these communities.
- CDEM delivered water to marae and residential addresses across the region, where required.
- CDEM prepared a Rural Water Provision Plan scoping 13 community sites across the district as potential water distribution centres.

On 29 March 2020, the Director and National Controller Civil Defence Emergency Management issued a directive to CDEM Groups:

- All CDEM groups need to activate their CDEM arrangements in support of the response to COVID-19.
- All Group Controllers to support DHB's and PHU's in managing the pandemic in the community. Specifically, in accordance with the roles and responsibilities detailed in the New Zealand Influenza Pandemic Plan.
- Plan and coordinate the provision of household goods and services and other essential items to people who have been displaced or who are sheltering in place.
- Establish a phone number that people can call if they urgently need assistance with access to essential household goods and services.
- Reminder that CDEM Local Controllers are required to follow the direction provided by Group Controllers.

Crisis Management Team

The Strategic Leadership Team convened regularly as the Crisis Management Team to discuss FNDC's response to the drought situation and COVID-19. The Crisis Management Team adopted four key principles: Quick, Calm, Smart, and Courageous.

Crisis Response Team

The crisis response team emerged from the drought response team and the local Incident Management Team for Civil Defence. The CRT formed under the Co-ordinated Incident Management Systems (CIMS) framework to align with other agencies that provided emergency management response such as Northland Civil Defence and Emergency Management (CDEM), New Zealand Police, Fire Emergency New Zealand (FENZ) and Northland District Health Board (NDHB). The use of this framework was to enable unified efforts and improved communication channels, along with enabling a more sustainable response effort.

Team members were seconded from all areas of the organisation. Some team members were CIMs trained. The crisis response team operationalised FNDC response to the drought - the establishment of supplementary water sources – and the business continuity response required to ensure essential services were provided to our communities through alert levels 3 and 4 of the COVID-19 pandemic.

Summary of each crisis:

1. Far North District Drought.

Natural disasters usually announce their arrival as large, sudden events which generate destruction on impact, and then they're gone. Drought is different. It doesn't make a big entrance, the start of a drought might even be mistaken for a bit of a dry spell, and its impact builds over time.

The Glossary of Meteorology defines a drought is 'a period of abnormally dry weather sufficiently prolonged for the lack of water to cause serious hydrologic imbalance in the affected area.' Meteorologists determine the onset and the end of a drought by monitoring meteorological and hydrological variables such as precipitation patterns, soil moisture, and stream flow.

There are four different ways that drought can be defined.

- Meteorological: a measure of departure of precipitation from normal.
- Agricultural: refers to a situation where the amount of moisture in the soil no longer meets the needs of a particular crop.
- Hydrological: occurs when surface and subsurface water supplies are below normal.
- Socioeconomic: occurs when physical water shortages begin to affect people.

2019/2020 the Far North District experienced such a natural disaster, a large-scale adverse drought event. This impacted Council's ability to supply drinking water to communities as the primary source for Kaikohe, Kaitaia, Opononi, Rawene, Kawakawa and Paihia drinking water supplies are unstored surface water takes from local rivers and streams. Kerikeri also relies heavily on surface water as its secondary source. Surface water takes are impacted by droughts and droughts typically cover a large geographic area; not just a single catchment or community. The result is that all the local streams approached their own unique design minimum flow at roughly the same time.

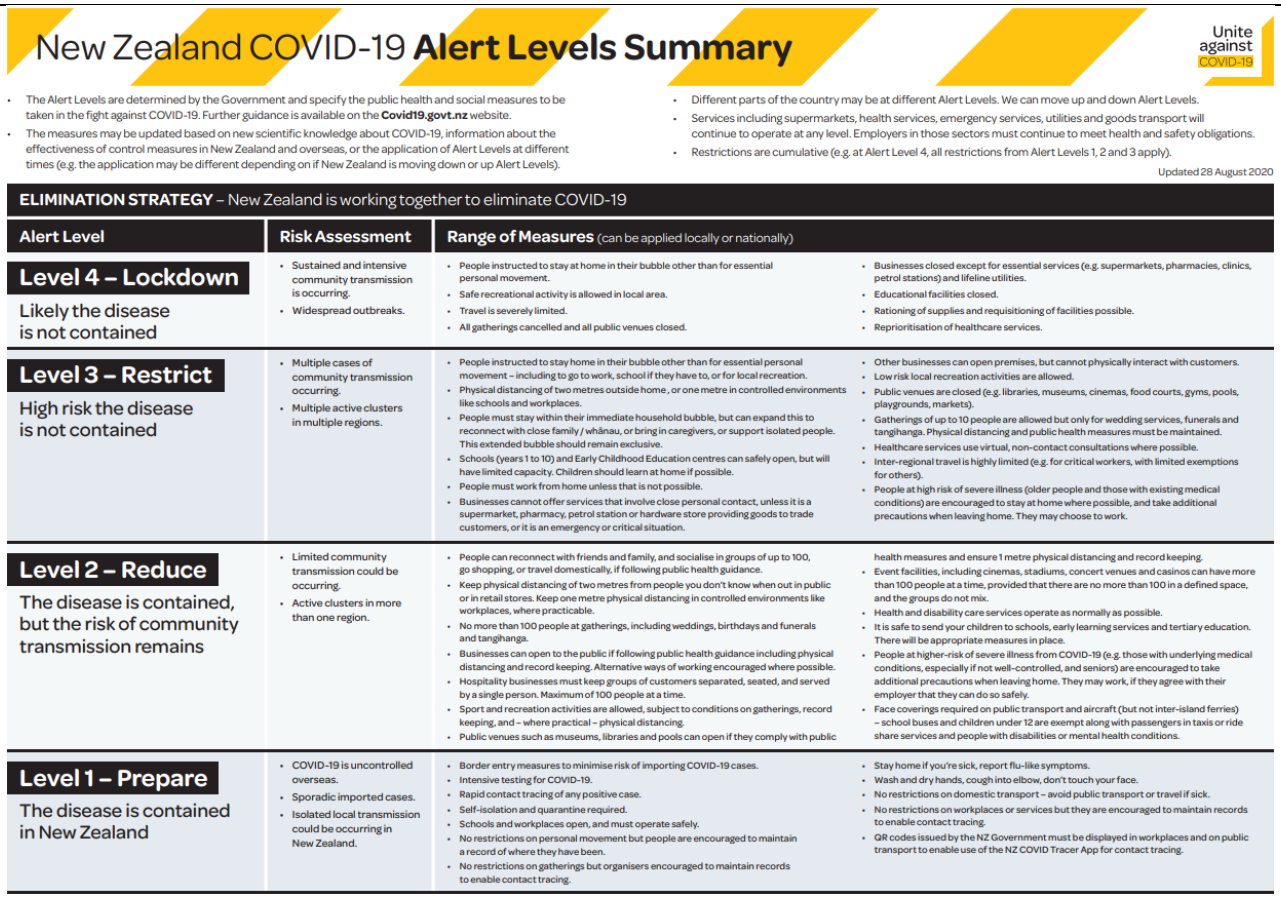
The goal of the drought crisis response was to ensure continuity of reticulated water supply where as CDEM's mission was to provide emergency potable water supplies for communities.

2. COVID-19 Pandemic

Coronaviruses are a large family of viruses which may cause illness in animals or humans. In humans, several coronaviruses are known to cause respiratory infections ranging from the common cold to more severe diseases such as Middle East Respiratory Syndrome (MERS) and Severe Acute Respiratory Syndrome (SARS). The most recently discovered coronavirus causes coronavirus disease COVID-19.

COVID-19 is the infectious disease caused by the most recently discovered coronavirus. This new virus and disease were unknown before the outbreak began in Wuhan, China, in December 2019. This virus is responsible for the current pandemic (global outbreak) of a disease to which no one has immunity, there are currently no vaccines and treatment options are limited. A major focus of the response is on reducing transmission, case detection and contact tracing.

FNDC COVID-19 pandemic response was informed through the Alert System which was introduced in March 2020 to manage and minimise the risk of COVID-19 in New Zealand. The system helps people, and organisations, understand the current level of risk and the restrictions that legally must be followed:



New Zealand COVID-19 **Alert Levels Summary**

Unite against COVID-19

- The Alert Levels are determined by the Government and specify the public health and social measures to be taken in the fight against COVID-19. Further guidance is available on the **Covid19.govt.nz** website.
- The measures may be updated based on new scientific knowledge about COVID-19, information about the effectiveness of control measures in New Zealand and overseas, or the application of Alert Levels at different times (e.g. the application may be different depending on if New Zealand is moving down or up Alert Levels).
- Different parts of the country may be at different Alert Levels. We can move up and down Alert Levels.
- Services including supermarkets, health services, emergency services, utilities and goods transport will continue to operate at any level. Employers in those sectors must continue to meet health and safety obligations.
- Restrictions are cumulative (e.g. at Alert Level 4, all restrictions from Alert Levels 1, 2 and 3 apply).

Updated 28 August 2020

ELIMINATION STRATEGY – New Zealand is working together to eliminate COVID-19

Alert Level	Risk Assessment	Range of Measures (can be applied locally or nationally)	
Level 4 – Lockdown Likely the disease is not contained	• Sustained and intensive community transmission is occurring. • Widespread outbreaks.	• People instructed to stay at home in their bubble other than for essential personal movement. • Safe recreational activity is allowed in local area. • Travel is severely limited. • All gatherings cancelled and all public venues closed.	• Businesses closed except for essential services (e.g. supermarkets, pharmacies, clinics, petrol stations) and lifeline utilities. • Educational facilities closed. • Rationing of supplies and requisitioning of facilities possible. • Reprioritisation of healthcare services.
Level 3 – Restrict High risk the disease is not contained	• Multiple cases of community transmission occurring. • Multiple active clusters in multiple regions.	• People instructed to stay home in their bubble other than for essential personal movement – including to go to work, school if they have to, or for local recreation. • Physical distancing of two metres outside home , or one metre in controlled environments like schools and workplaces. • People must stay within their immediate household bubble, but can expand this to reconnect with close family / whānau, or bring in caregivers, or support isolated people. This extended bubble should remain exclusive. • Schools (years 1 to 10) and Early Childhood Education centres can safely open, but will have limited capacity. Children should learn at home if possible. • People must work from home unless that is not possible. • Businesses cannot offer services that involve close personal contact, unless it is a supermarket, pharmacy, petrol station or hardware store providing goods to trade customers, or it is an emergency or critical situation.	• Other businesses can open premises, but cannot physically interact with customers. • Low risk local recreation activities are allowed. • Public venues are closed (e.g. libraries, museums, cinemas, food courts, gyms, pools, playgrounds, markets). • Gatherings of up to 10 people are allowed but only for wedding services, funerals and tangihanga. Physical distancing and public health measures must be maintained. • Healthcare services use virtual, non-contact consultations where possible. • Inter-regional travel is highly limited (e.g. for critical workers, with limited exemptions for others). • People at high risk of severe illness (older people and those with existing medical conditions) are encouraged to stay at home where possible, and take additional precautions when leaving home. They may choose to work.
Level 2 – Reduce The disease is contained, but the risk of community transmission remains	• Limited community transmission could be occurring. • Active clusters in more than one region.	• People can reconnect with friends and family, and socialise in groups of up to 100, go shopping, or travel domestically, if following public health guidance. • Keep physical distancing of two metres from people you don't know when out in public or in retail stores. Keep one metre physical distancing in controlled environments like workplaces, where practicable. • No more than 100 people at gatherings, including weddings, birthdays and funerals and tangihanga. • Businesses can open to the public if following public health guidance including physical distancing and record keeping. Alternative ways of working encouraged where possible. • Hospitality businesses must keep groups of customers separated, seated, and served by a single person. Maximum of 100 people at a time. • Sport and recreation activities are allowed, subject to conditions on gatherings, record keeping, and – where practical – physical distancing. • Public venues such as museums, libraries and pools can open if they comply with public	health measures and ensure 1 metre physical distancing and record keeping. • Event facilities, including cinemas, stadiums, concert venues and casinos can have more than 100 people at a time, provided that there are no more than 100 in a defined space, and the groups do not mix. • Health and disability care services operate as normally as possible. • It is safe to send your children to schools, early learning services and tertiary education. There will be appropriate measures in place. • People at higher-risk of severe illness from COVID-19 (e.g. those with underlying medical conditions, especially if not well-controlled, and seniors) are encouraged to take additional precautions when leaving home. They may work, if they agree with their employer that they can do so safely. • Face coverings required on public transport and aircraft (but not inter-island ferries) – school buses and children under 12 are exempt along with passengers in taxis or ride share services and people with disabilities or mental health conditions.
Level 1 – Prepare The disease is contained in New Zealand	• COVID-19 is uncontrolled overseas. • Sporadic imported cases. • Isolated local transmission could be occurring in New Zealand.	• Border entry measures to minimise risk of importing COVID-19 cases. • Intensive testing for COVID-19. • Rapid contact tracing of any positive case. • Self-isolation and quarantine required. • Schools and workplaces open, and must operate safely. • No restrictions on personal movement but people are encouraged to maintain a record of where they have been. • No restrictions on gatherings but organisers encouraged to maintain records to enable contact tracing.	• Stay home if you're sick, report flu-like symptoms. • Wash and dry hands, cough into elbow, don't touch your face. • No restrictions on domestic transport – avoid public transport or travel if sick. • No restrictions on workplaces or services but they are encouraged to maintain records to enable contact tracing. • QR codes issued by the NZ Government must be displayed in workplaces and on public transport to enable use of the NZ COVID Tracer App for contact tracing.

Government actions included:

- An Epidemic Notice - this is a public policy tool to help Government agencies respond swiftly and effectively in a rapidly evolving situation. On 24 March 2020, the Prime Minister issued an Epidemic Notice under section 5 of the Epidemic Preparedness Act 2006. This was based on advice received from the Director-General of Health in response to the increasingly complex and far-reaching response to COVID-19. This notice enables the use of special powers in legislation. This notice lasts for three months unless the Government chooses to lift it earlier and has been extended.
- On 25 March 2020 12:21pm, a nationwide state of national emergency was declared under section 66 of the Civil Defence Emergency Management Act 2002. This was declared because of the unprecedented nature of this global pandemic and to ensure the government has all the powers it needs to slow the spread of COVID-19 and reduce its impact.
- On 27 April 2020, a Health Act Order came into effect. The Health Act Order outlines the functions around isolation or quarantine requirements, essential personal movement or recreation, infection control measure requirements for premises and the ability to close non-compliant premises and prohibitions on gatherings.
- The COVID-19 Public Health Response Act 2020 was passed as standalone legislation to provide a different legal framework for responding to COVID-19. The Act allows the Minister of Health (or the Director-General of Health in specified circumstances) to make orders under section 11 to give effect to the public health response to COVID-19 in New Zealand.

Lessons Learned Workshop Methodology	Three groups of staff (CMT, CRT and supporting staff), totalling 33, participated in separate Lessons Learned bespoke workshops based on an agile six step framework: 1. What did we do well? 2. What's held us back? 3. Categorise the challenges 4. Identify the biggest issues/challenges which held us back. 5. Prioritise these challenges 6. Formulate the improvement challenge as "how might we" opportunity questions. To ensure the integrity and transparency of the outcomes the workshops design incorporates the following important principals: • Together alone – to remove bias • Tangible is more important than discussion • Everything is anonymous – this again removes bias and allows participants to be more adventurous • Getting started is more important than being right • The workshop design allows for innovation.
What did we do well?	**What did we do well?** The key theme which came through the sessions was the willingness of everyone to do their best for our community. This is best represented through the two entries into the ALGIM 2020 special awards where we were placed second in the "Supportive Team, all of Council" award and third in the fast-tracked project award for our #DigitalDemocracy entry. Within each of the sessions different aspects of what went well were identified, reflective of the focus of each group to the twin crises.

Far North District Council
Te Kaunihera a Tai Tokerau ki te Raki

Supporting Our People

FNDC Supportive Team Award Entry

HE ARA TĀMATA
CREATING GREAT PLACES
Supporting our people

The northernmost territorial authority of New Zealand is a growing district of 68,500 with a high level of deprivation and a high number of over 65's. It is a district where distance, affordability and connectivity are all barriers.

This is the story of the willingness of everybody to go the extra mile. Of how our Council team of near 400 supported our people through the twin crises of drought and the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic. A remarkable team of caring dedicated people who stayed with the plan but used our can-do initiative to innovate how we support each other and our communities, of how, together, we all made a difference.

It's an incredible account of how our rapidly distributed team of 400, from Te Kao to Dunedin, were provided with the tools to seamlessly deliver essential services. A team who participated in our 'who is your #2' campaign to ensure continuity and contingency planning, with #2's proactively stepping into and practicing their cover role; and who kept on putting their hand up to be deployed where they were able to make a difference, with cross team collaboration and volunteering the norm.

Supporting our people also equalled long kind conversations with our customers to understand how we could help them - no better demonstrated than the initiative taken by three staff to proactively contact 1108 customers, who usually paid their rates but had missed their May rate instalment, to work out individual plans to avoid costly penalties.

We are a progressive Council living our mission:

"Creating Great Places, Supporting Our People."

These are some of the extraordinary efforts made to support our people:

- we established two new teams, the Crisis Management and Crisis Response Teams to ensure a whole of organisation response. These teams met daily
- following Level 4 lockdown announcement we migrated 400 staff into Working from Home in 48 hours – Council operations continued
- quickly established the COVID-19 rates relief policy, processes, and media campaign
- caring for our people is part of our DNA – we established a welfare programme to support our vulnerable people, including our Housing for the Elderly tenants
- a team member drove to Auckland to pick up mailed rate payments
- staff relocated their families/homes into areas with internet connectivity so they could keep on working
- teams, such as the service centre staff, asked to use the time to be upskilled so they continued to provide value. The service centre team completed a 'Request for Service' lean waste project.

The Digital Information Services team pivoted to provide helping hands:

- working with providers to overcome the districts internet connectivity barrier procuring and delivering 4G modems or mobile phones with data connections
- deploying a team of three to deliver whatever was needed to keep our dispersed team working– driving from Pukenui to Whangarei, Opononi to Paihia three days each week
- with our sites closed homes were repurposed into workplaces, with one team members home transforming into an inward goods depot
- mobilising our Data Insights and Programme Delivery team as additional Service Desk support, talking staff through hardware set up and connectivity solutions
- designing and establishing a new process to digitise and deliver our mail
- they even watered the plants.

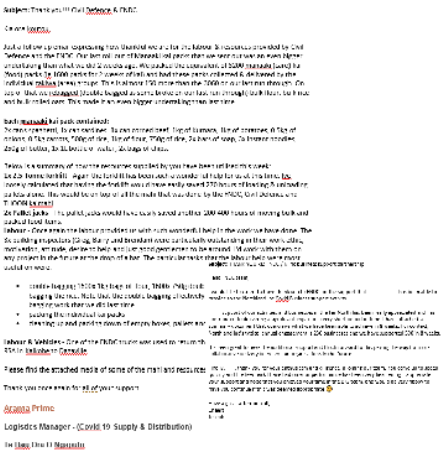
This remarkable team of 5 staff:

- cleared 4989 IT tickets between 25 March – 30 June
- enabled 9000 Teams meetings between April and June.

Many everyday heroes volunteered their helping hands to support the wellbeing of our communities through initiatives such as:

- Te Hau Ora O Ngāpuhi: with the creation and distribution of manaaki kai packs and water
- Civil Defence: through the distribution of essential supplies
- Northland Inc: staffing for business support
- Salvation Army: for the distribution of food parcels across the region
- Red Cross: for the delivery of meals on wheels

These efforts have been recognised by our communities:



Please find the attached media of some of the mahi and resources

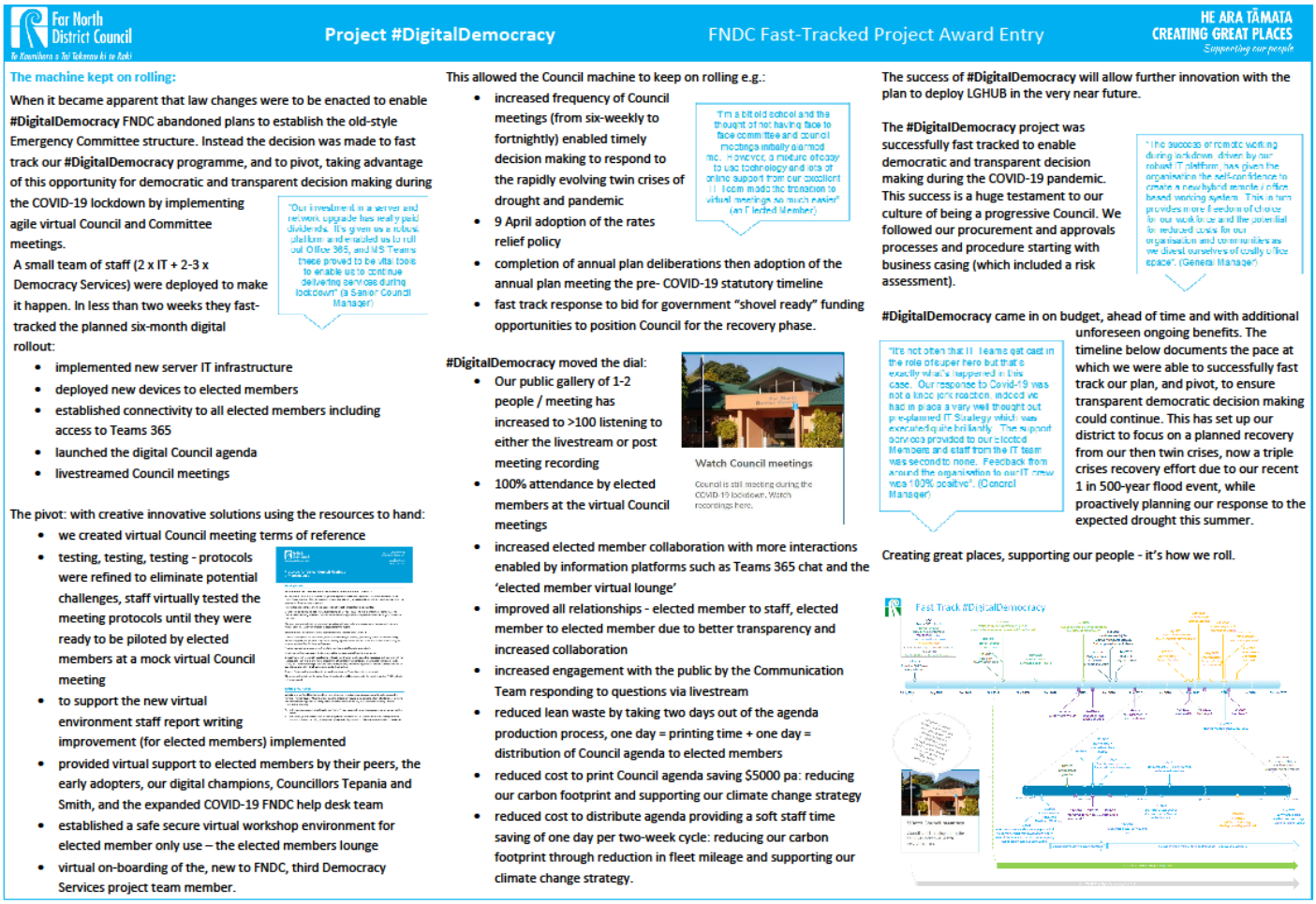
Thank you once again for all of your support

Aranoa Prime

Logisdcs Manager - (Covid 19 Supply & Distribution)

And then the rain came down!

Our team of 400 continue their work 'Supporting our People' with the recent third crisis this year, a 1 in 500 flood event.



Challenges faced: Formulated as 'How might we…' opportunity questions.	**Identifying the challenges, steps 2 through 6.** "Together alone", anonymously and without discussion workshop participants then workshopped "what held them back." There was a group discussion to analysis the identified issues. The group then identified their biggest challenges. These were then worked up into "how might we" opportunity questions which capture the outputs from steps two through six. Three major themes emerge from the analysis of the "How might we…" opportunity questions: 1. How might we provide effective management of a coordinated response (roles and responsibilities)? 2. How might we effectively and efficiently engage with staff while ensuring their health, safety and wellbeing? 3. How might staff effectively and efficiently engage with our organisation? Within each of these three themes specific challenges are identified. By theme these challenges, in descending order of priority, are: 1. How might we provide effective management of a coordinated response (roles and responsibilities): • How might we activate an effective and efficient response with everyone understanding what they are there for?

	• Provide clarity of our roles and responsibilities, and those of CDEM; and how we all connect to work together with multi agencies involved in the civil defence emergency? This includes key messages and direction of communications from agencies. • How might we follow a co-ordinated incident management system? • How might we adopt the CIMS structure for CDEM events, crisis response and business continuity? • How might we ensure timely prioritised flow of information and advice for reporting and decision making? • How might we recognize the additional responsibilities and effort a staff member does when involved in a crisis as part of that formal incident team (CIMs or otherwise)? • How might we improve the FNDC / CDEM relationship? 2. How might we effectively and efficiently engage with staff while ensuring their health, safety and wellbeing): • How might we survey staff to understand number of staff who did not have daily contact from their line managers and to assess the leadership to understand depth of this issue and why this happened? • How might we provide better mental -health and wellbeing support? • How might we ensure policies and procedures are adhered to ensure the health and wellbeing of our staff are maintained? And that these staff have the appropriate authority and agreement as to what happens to their BAU responsibilities during the secondment. 3. How might staff effectively and efficiently engage with our organisation? • How might we reduce connectivity difficulties? • How might we manage meetings and emails when working remotely? • How might we plan work where multiple teams are involved, where there may be bottlenecks to match work to team capacity and skill sets? • How might we use our digital tools more effectively?
What should we do differently next time?	How might we provide effective management of a coordinated response (roles and responsibilities)? The majority of these issues will be addressed in the review of the business continuity arrangements and are addressed within the terms of reference now in place for the COVID-19 Crisis Response Team (our planned response to co-ordinate the implementation of organisation operational plans as required to meet the measures we need to take at COVID Alert levels 3 and 4). How might we effectively and efficiently engage with staff while ensuring their health, safety and wellbeing? These challenges will need to be addressed by both the leadership team and the People and Capability team. How might staff effectively and efficiently engage with our organisation? The enabling and operating protocols designed by the Great workplaces initiative will address the majority of these challenges.