Far North District Council
Te Kaunihera o 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:

Subject: Thank you!!! Civil Defence & FNDC

Kia ora koutou,

Just a follow up email expressing how thankful we are for the labour & resources provided by Civil Defence and the FNDC. Our last roll out of Manaaki kai packs that we sent out was an even bigger undertaking than what we did 2 weeks ago. We packed the equivalent of 3200 manaaki (care) kai (food) packs (ie 1600 packs for 2 weeks of kai) and had these packs collected & delivered by the individual takiwa (area) groups. This is almost 150 more than the 3060 on our last run through. On top of that we rebagged (double bagged as some broke on our last run through) bulk flour, bulk rice and bulk rolled oats. This made it an even bigger undertaking than last time.

Each manaaki kai pack contained:
2x cans spaghetti, 1x can sardines, 1x can corned beef, 1kg of Kumara, 1kg of potatoes, 0.5kg of onions, 0.5kg carrots, 500g of rice, 1kg of flour, 750g of rice, 2x bars of soap, 3x instant noodles, 250g of butter, 1x 1L bottle of water, 2x bags of chips.

Below is a summary of how the resources supplied by you have been utilised this week:
1x 2.5 Tonne forklift - Again the forklift has been such a wonderful help for us at this time. Ive loosely calculated that having the forklift would have easily saved 270 hours of loading & unloading pallets alone. This would be on top of all the mahi that was done by the FNDC, Civil Defence and THOON kaimahi.
2x Pallet jacks - The pallet jacks would have easily saved another 200-400 hours of moving bulk and packed food items.
Labour - Once again the labour provided us with such wonderful help in the work we have done. The 3x building inspectors (Greg, Barry and Brendan) were particularly outstanding in their work ethic, motivation, attitude, desire to help and just good gentlemen to be around. I'd work with them on any project in the future at the drop of a hat. The particular tasks that the labour help were most useful on were:

- double bagging 1600x 1kg bags of flour, 1600x 750g doubl bagging the rice. Note that the double bagging effectively bagging work that we did last time.
- packing the individual kai packs
- cleaning up and packing down of empty boxes, pallets and

Labour & Vehicles - One of the FNDC trucks was used to return th RSA in Kaikohe to Dagaville.

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

Thank you once again for all of your support

Arama Prime
Logistics Manager - (Covid 19 Supply & Distribution)
Te Hau Ora O Ngāpuhi

Subject: THANK YOU RE: FNDC / N Inc business support partnership

Hello FNDC team,

I would like to extend a huge thank you to FNDC for the support that has been able to provide to the Northland Inc Covid Business support activity.

support of our activities and businesses in the Far North has been really appreciated and has contributed to delivering a significant impact in a very short period of time. I have attached a summary document that overviews what we have been able to achieve in 8 weeks. For context, Northland Inc's typical annual engagement is 230 businesses and we have supported 590 in 8 weeks.

It's been great to have the additional support and I look forward to this paving the way for more collaborative delivery between our organisations in the future.

Finally, , thank you for your enthusiasm and diligence in joining our team. You came up to speed quickly and the feedback I have had on your performance has been very heartening. I appreciate your support and hope that you enjoyed your time in the BIG team, and would be very happy to have you continue if this was deemed appropriate 😊

Have a great afternoon all,
Cheers,
Joseph.

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.