

Topic 3 - Climate resilience and adaptation programme

Recommendation | Ngā tūtohunga

That Kaipara District Council:

- a) Adopts Option 1 (No climate resilience work programme), which was Council's preferred option as set out in the 2024-27 Long-Term Plan consultation document.
- b) Notes that this recommendation does not have any financial impact on rates or debt.

These recommendations do not change what was proposed in the Long-Term Plan 2024-2027 Consultation Documents.

Introduction:

Kaipara District 'Roadmap to Recovery' Long Term Plan 2024-2027 Consultation Document said:

Option 1: No climate resilience work programme.

Option 2: Planning for climate adaptation

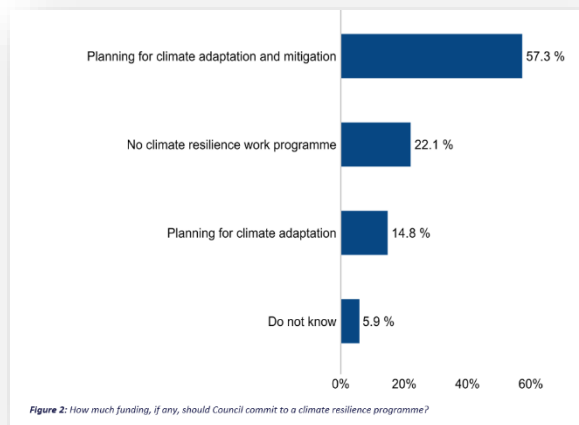
Option 3: Climate adaptation and mitigation planning

Climate resilience and adaptation programme

Submissions are summarised below:

Four hundred and twenty six (426) people responded to this question. Of these, three hundred and sixty seven (367) (86%) were Kaipara residents/ratepayers.

Participants were asked what their preferred option with regards to KDC's climate resilience programme. **Figure** Error! Reference source not found. illustrates the preferred options from participants on how the Council should invest in the climate resilience programme for the next three years. The results show that 22.1% of participants do not support any climate resilience work programme (**option 1**). Among those in favour of the council's climate resilience efforts, 57.3% support planning for climate adaptation and mitigation (**option 3**), while 14.8% support planning exclusively for climate adaptation (**option 2**).



Of the 367 Ratepayer/residents who responded to this question, 59 preferred option 2 - planning for adaptation, 192 preferred option 3 - planning for climate adaptation and mitigation, 91 preferred option 1 - no climate resilience programme.

Therefore 251 or 68% of ratepayer/residents who submitted on the consultation document support some funding to be put towards climate resilience.

How much funding, if any, should Council commit to a climate resilience programme?	Not ratepayer/resident	Ratepayer/resident	Unknown	Total
Planning for climate adaptation and mitigation	95.8% 46	52.3% 192	54.5% 6	57.3% 244
No climate resilience work programme	2.1% 1	24.8% 91	18.2% 2	22.1% 94
Planning for climate adaptation	2.1% 1	16.1% 59	27.3% 3	14.8% 63
Do not know	0% 0	6.8% 25	0% 0	5.9% 25
Total	11.3% 48	86.2% 367	2.6% 11	426

Table 6: How much funding, if any, should council commit to a climate resilience programme? Sorted by whether the respondent is a ratepayer.

Below is an overview of comments received, ordered by the themes most frequently mentioned.

Climate was the theme most mentioned across all submissions received. It was mentioned more often than all other topics and themes including roading and footpaths.

Respondents expressed a strong sentiment regarding the importance of climate resilience. They emphasised the need for proactive planning and investment in infrastructure upgrades, coastal defences, and renewable energy projects. They also highlighted the importance of engaging and educating communities about climate change risks and promoting sustainable practices. Additionally, some respondents mentioned the importance of protecting the environment,

biodiversity and ensuring that decisions are informed by evidence-based research and expert consensus.

Theme	Subtheme	Frequency
TOPIC 3. CLIMATE RESILIENCE		1,088
	Focus on climate adaptation and resilience	182
	Climate and emergency policy/planning required	164
	Adaptation is cheaper than response	150
	Increase engagement with/input from the community	149
	Focus on climate mitigation as well	145
	Climate change action required at a local level	144
	Standardised reporting required	133
	Investment necessary for future generations	10
	Climate change is not a concern/do not fund	3
	Support having no dedicated climate work programme	3
	Planning needs to consider disabled people	2
	Climate resilience is BAU/no fund required	1
	Complete Ruawai adaptation work	1
	Increase budget beyond proposed amounts	1

Kaipara Climate Action Inc 'bulk' submissions are summarised below:

149 submissions were received. 98% of the Kaipara Climate Action submissions were made by individuals. 75% identified as Kaipara District ratepayers/residents.

Kaipara Climate Action Inc. submitted in favour of Option 3: Planning for climate adaptation and mitigation, which involves spending \$700,000 across 2024-2027 applied to general rates.

The key reasons cited for supporting Option 3 include:

- 1) Resilience work is linked to emissions reduction and adaptation work. It is important to keep options open and stay adaptable.
- 2) While central government might provide some funding, local government needs to lead climate action at a local level.
- 3) KDC is responsible for the current and future wellbeing of their people and places. Adaptation planning is a key part of this.
- 4) Central government has made it clear that councils should be planning for climate change (see the National Emissions Reduction Plan).
- 5) This option would bring KDC's climate response in line with other councils and allow for community engagement.
- 6) Measuring and reporting on emissions is an important part of any climate response.

Additional comments emphasised that climate change is already impacting the Kaipara district and more severe weather events are expected in the future. Planning and funding are needed now to mitigate risks and impacts.

Options and Assessments

Option	Advantages	Disadvantages
<p>Option 1: No dedicated climate resilience work programme.</p>	<p>No immediate financial cost/rates burden to Council and the community.</p> <p>Meets our legislative requirements (as there are no legislative requirements for Councils to have a 'stand-alone' climate resilience work programme).</p> <p>Provides Council with an opportunity to get our house in order and with our limited budget and resources, focus on recovery for the next 3 years, which will give us the best chance of getting our roads and critical infrastructure back up and operating to the standards that our community expect.</p> <p>Will allow time for Central Government to make decisions on how responsibility for climate adaptation will be allocated between central and local government, and to provide resourcing and direction in the climate resilience space.</p> <p>The District Plan review (which is underway and subject to formal statutory processes once notified), will involve regard being had to the Emissions Reduction Plan and National Adaptation Plan prepared under the Climate Change Response Act 2002, as well as the effects of climate change in land use planning decisions.</p> <p>A climate resilience work programme, including climate adaptation planning can be</p>	<p>May reduce opportunities to secure Central Government or Regional Council funding for climate resilience.</p> <p>Does not meet the expectations of the majority of submitters who provided feedback into the LTP process and may lead to a perception that Council is not showing long-term strategic leadership.</p> <p>No further work will be done to develop the Ruawai Adaptive Pathways pilot programme (could be seen as a missed opportunity and a waste of time/effort).</p> <p>May limit Council's ability to adequately plan for increasing natural hazards or cope with change because of limited staff and resources.</p>

		<p>considered in the preparation of the next Long-Term Plan, after council and community has more certainty from central government about adaptation planning requirements – including legislation and funding arrangements.</p>	
	<p>Option 2: Planning for climate adaptation (\$500,000 across 3 years)</p>	<p>Would see the Ruawai Adaptive Pathways pilot plan completed and would see the commencement of a major community adaptation planning process.</p> <p>Would enable Council to show greater leadership in the climate adaptation space.</p> <p>May enable Council to be eligible for funding from central and/or regional government.</p>	<p>An immediate financial impact on ratepayers and would likely result in a rates rise.</p> <p>Will require Council to re-establish a team to lead this work.</p> <p>May mean that other critical operational work programmes would need to cease/pause, to focus on climate adaptation planning.</p> <p>Could duplicate the work that Northland Regional Council are doing/planning to do.</p> <p>Any outputs from community adaptation planning would need to be incorporated into the district plan in order to influence land use planning – timing and sequencing could be a challenge.</p>
	<p>Option 3: Climate adaptation and mitigation planning (\$700,000 across 3 years)</p>	<p>Would see the Ruawai Adaptive Pathways pilot plan completed and would see the commencement on a major community adaptation planning process.</p> <p>Completes work started through previous LTP cycle relating to embedding climate change into Council processes, including</p>	<p>Has the largest rates impact and largest amount of resource required – KDC staff, community and finances. Many respondents have informed Council that the proposed rates rise is already too high. Implementing this option would add to this</p>

		<p>reinstating GHG emissions accounting and reporting.</p> <p>Provides direct funds and tools allocated to local businesses and communities to support their own sustainability and resilience effort.</p> <p>May enable Council to be eligible for funding from central and/or regional government and would provide Kaipara with a stronger regional voice and influence on climate adaptation and mitigation.</p>	<p>burden in a recessionary environment.</p> <p>Will require Council to re-establish a team to lead this work.</p> <p>May mean that other critical operational Council work programmes would need to cease/pause, to focus on climate adaptation and mitigation planning.</p> <p>Could duplicate the work that Northland Regional Council are doing/planning to do regarding climate adaptation and mitigation. Kaipara ratepayers already fund the NRC.</p>
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Significance and engagement

The decisions or matters of this report (in the context of staff recommendations) are considered to have a moderate degree of significance in accordance with Council’s Significance and Engagement Policy (given the community interests expressed in the submissions and the number of submissions on this topic). However, the Council has consulted on the Long-Term Plan using the special consultative procedure (as modified by section 93A LGA), which included the opportunity for submitters to speak to their submissions at public hearings. The community has had the opportunity to express their views and preferences in relation to this matter, and the Council will be able to consider them before adopting the LTP.

Additionally, the question of how much funding, if any, should Council commit to a climate resilience work programme was a key matter in the LTP Consultation Document – see Topic 3 of the submission form. The consultation document also outlined that Option 1 (no climate resilience work programme) was Council’s preferred option.

Impact of recommendation on the LTP (financial and non-financial)

This recommendation does not change/impact what was proposed in the Long-Term Plan 2024-2027 Consultation Document.

Fit with Long Term Plan

These recommendations are consistent with what the Council proposed as the council’s preferred option in the Long -Term Plan 2024-2027 Consultation Document.

Policy Implications

Consultation policies – It is not considered that there are any direct implications arising from this recommendation. It is noted that Councils must, as part of their long-term plan, prepare and adopt an Infrastructure Strategy¹. One of the requirements of this strategy is to outline how the Council intends to manage its infrastructure assets, taking into account the need to ‘provide for the resilience of infrastructure assets by identifying and managing risks relating to natural hazards and by making appropriate financial provision for these risks’. It is considered that the Infrastructure Strategy, alongside our Activity Management Plans (specifically the Stormwater and Flood Protection and Land Drainage Activity Management Plans) achieves this.

It is also noted that there is no legislative requirement in the Local Government Act 2002 or the Climate Change Response Act 2002 for Councils to develop a bespoke climate resilience work-programme². While there are some contexts in which the council must have regard to the National Adaptation Plan, prepared under the Climate Change Response Act 2002 (district planning processes under the Resource Management Act), this requirement does not apply to long-term plans prepared under the Local Government Act 2002.

Conclusion drawn

This Long-Term Plan is focused on recovery from the extreme weather events in 2023, noting that our district was significantly affected by these events. We suffered major, long-lasting damage to our critical infrastructure and roading network – estimated costs to repair our local roading network alone are approximately \$34 million. The significant impact to our district (and other districts) resulted in Central Government passing the Severe Weather Emergency Recovery Act, which allowed Kaipara (alongside seven other Councils across the country) to adopt a three-year long-term plan with a focus on recovery.

Kaipara’s economy has also been hit hard, both from the recent severe weather events (which have been particularly hard on farmers and others in the primary sector) but also the recessive economic conditions we are facing. Knowing that our communities are feeling the pinch, Council has really looked at every opportunity to keep the potential rates rise as low as possible for the upcoming three-year period.

Not having a dedicated (funded) climate adaptation or climate mitigation work programme for the next three years does not mean that Council won’t be doing anything in the climate adaptation space. In fact, Council is committed to a considerable programme of work relating to climate adaptation and resilience. We coordinate land drainage works across a network of 30 land drainage districts of various sizes, with the largest of these being the Raupo drainage district. All landowners within the Raupo Land Drainage scheme pay targeted rates towards maintaining the scheme and the rest of the network is funded via rates. Our land drainage network is maintained through: weed spraying, drain clearance, floodgate and stopbank maintenance.

¹ Section 101B Local Government Act 2002

² Under section 52N of the Climate Change Response Act 2002, the council when making decisions may, but is not required, to take into account the 2050 target for net zero greenhouse gas emissions (other than biogenic methane), the emissions budget, and the emissions reduction plan.

We also provide flood protection through various drainage system stopbanks and floodgates, monitor rivers for tidal and stormwater levels during weather events and warn of potential flooding. We will continue to build the defences needed across the district for flood protection and to improve resilience to natural hazard events.

Additionally, funding from external sources is utilised where there is a project or activity that meets the criteria of the available fund and an application to the fund is successful. Several recovery projects are now being funded or part-funded this way and we will continue to monitor possible external sources of funds as they become available. An example of external funding is the Local Government Flood Resilience Co-investment fund. This initiative provides funding for Crown co-investment with local authorities in areas impacted by the recent North Island weather events, to support the proactive management of climate-exacerbated flood risk. Council has been successful in securing over \$3 million from this fund, which is being used to improve climatic resilience around the district. Projects covered by this fund include various stopbank repairs, Awakino river mouth clearing and Awakino railway embankment stabilisation.

Council is currently undertaking reviews of both our Operative District Plan and our Environmental Engineering Standards. Climatic considerations, including the potential impacts on natural hazard events are key matters relating to land use and development, including zoning of land. Climate change and climate resilience will therefore be factored into these regulatory planning documents. Once publicly notified, the new District Plan will be subject to statutory consultation processes, and anyone will have the ability to lodge submissions into this process.

It is noted that all Activity Management Plans (source documents for the LTP) include a discussion around the question, “How is climate resilience being considered?”. These Activity Management Plans show that climate resilience (adaptation and mitigation) is being embedded within our work programmes. For example, the roading and footpaths activity profile outlines that climate mitigation is being achieved through creating shared paths and walking connections to promote mode shifts. It shows that climate adaptation is being undertaken through a strategic planned programme of actual and potential land instability slip solutions (retaining walls for example) and resilience and reliability improvements for State Highway and flood zone diversion routes.

Additionally, the Northland Regional Council (NRC) has considerable climate-related policy and work programmes currently in place, including modelling of river flooding and areas susceptible to coastal inundation. It is considered prudent to improve our collaboration and data sharing with the NRC, who are taking a regional lead in the climate adaptation and planning space, especially for the next three years while Kaipara focuses on recovery works and the legislatively required Kaipara District Plan review.

It is important to acknowledge all submitters who responded to the consultation document and while it is not a numbers game, of the 192 residents/ratepayer responses who preferred option 3, 149 responses were from the ‘Kaipara Climate Action Inc’. That left 43 other resident/ratepayer respondents who preferred option 3. It is noted that we received 91 individual responses from resident/ratepayers who showed a preference for Option 1 – no climate resilience work programme.

For the reasons outlined above, it is recommended that for this recovery focused long-term plan, Council adopts Option 1 (no dedicated climate resilience work programme), which will also assist with keeping the rates rise as low as possible. It is noted that this important issue can (and will be) reconsidered through the development of the next long-term plan.