

## Media Release

26 September 2019

### Annual Report 2018/19 highlights growth and investment in Kaipara

Investment and increased growth in Kaipara are two of the highlights in Kaipara District Council's 2018/19 Annual Report, which was adopted by Council at its meeting today.

The year saw \$28.24 million allocated to establish Kaipara Kickstart. The Provincial Growth Fund and the New Zealand Transport Agency's National Land Transport Fund provided most of the funding, with Kaipara District Council contributing \$1 million. Kaipara Kickstart incorporates three distinct but linked projects that use Kaipara's natural assets to lift the district: improving roading across Kaipara, using wharves for water-based transport in Kaipara Harbour, and using Kaipara's productive soils for growing high-value food crops.

"Kaipara Kickstart is a sign of central government investment in the stability and potential of our district. This funding enables us to start some exciting work as part of our commitment to grow our communities and prepare for the future," said Kaipara Mayor Dr Jason Smith.

Growth in building consents and subdivisions was higher than expected, resulting in greater income from financial and development contributions. Income from these sources has risen rapidly in the last few years, from \$950,000 in 2013/14 to \$3.9 million in 2018/19.

Council invested \$14.4 million in capital works to improve the district's roads, including resurfacing 51 kilometres of sealed roads, metalling 43.2 kilometres of unsealed roads, and continuing the roll-out of LED streetlights. In addition, Council completed a \$1.2 million project to better manage stormwater and reduce the effects of flooding on low-lying properties in Quail Way, Mangawhai.

Chief Executive Louise Miller said Council had achieved a marked improvement in customer service this year.

"Our focus on providing better customer service has helped us achieve a seven per cent rise in resident satisfaction in our Customer Perception Survey this year, which is great to see," she said.

"We've created a new website, reduced call waiting times, and launched new online tools to update our communities about what's important to them and seek people's input.

“I’m also very proud that we were the first council to achieve full marks in Food Agency Accreditation to certify food businesses in the district.”

Ms Miller said Council was working alongside communities to help them grow and thrive. In 2018/19, Council awarded \$300,000 of grants funding for community projects and made \$300,000 available for community reserve projects. It also led public governance training workshops and community conversations about how best to support community-led projects.

The independently-audited Annual Report shows that Council has reduced debt by \$1 million in the past year to \$45 million, down from \$76 million in 2013/14. Some additional loans for capital works were not taken up as early as planned, and interest costs were therefore lower than predicted.

The Annual Report 2018/19 will be available on the [Annual Report](#) page of Council’s website from Tuesday 1 October.

**ENDS**

*For more information contact Trish Hayward, Communications Advisor, on [thayward@kaipara.govt.nz](mailto:thayward@kaipara.govt.nz).*