



**TE KAHU O TAONU**

*Me mahi tahi tātou*

**26 AUGUST 2022**

## **MEDIA RELEASE**

### **NORTHLAND COUNCILS INCONSISTENT WORKING WITH IWI FOR BETTER OFF FUNDING**

Te Kahū o Taonui (Tai Tokerau Iwi Leadership Group) met with the leadership of Far North District Council, Whangārei District Council, Kaipara District Council and Northland Regional Council on Tuesday 23 August where Te Kahū o Taonui (TKOT) put forward its concerns to the group regarding the inconsistent engagement by Councils of the North with Iwi.

Better Off package is a new investment offered by the government for local government to support community wellbeing.

#### **The objective of the Better Off Funding is:**

1. Supporting communities to transition to a sustainable and low-emissions economy, including **by building resilience to climate change and natural hazards**
2. Delivering infrastructure and/or services that:
  - **Enable housing development and growth**, with a focus on brownfield and infill development opportunities where those are available
3. **Support local place-making and improvements in community wellbeing**

Huhana Lyndon, Raukura CEO of Ngātiwai Trust Board shares 'Better Off Funding provides clear expectations on how councils are to work with Māori impacted by the proposed projects, that includes hapū, iwi and post settlement governance entities.' Lyndon explains 'the government clearly tells councils they must: engage early, provide information and keep us informed, hear our concerns and our aspirations. Councils are meant to plan with us and share decision making. This has not occurred'.

The government is providing substantial investment into the North through better off funding:

- FNDC \$35mil
- WDC \$37.93mil
- KDC \$16.14mil

'Councils have known since April this year of the opportunity to engage with hapū and iwi for Better Off Funding, however most Councils of the North have largely ignored iwi voice in the planning and decision making process' says Lyndon.

We recognise our Kaipara whanaunga have had the opportunity to be a part of funding discussions, and this morning Whangārei District Council voted in favour of allocating 4mil into a contestable fund for Kaupapa Māori Wellbeing Projects, and other smaller projects which have haukāinga input. However, we support the local concerns from our hapū that Whangārei District Council did not honour the intentions of the Better Off Funding in terms of Māori engagement.

Te Kahū o Taonui CEOs expressed their frustration to the leadership of Northland Councils at the Tuesday meeting held and intend to take these concerns to Minister Nanaia Mahuta.

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