

Tropical Depression 05F – January 2026

Recovery Plan

Mā tō tātou takiwā
For our District



Western
Bay of Plenty
District Council

Mayor's Message

Kia ora koutou,

E ngā mana, e ngā reo, e ngā iwi o te rohe, tēnā koutou katoa.

The severe weather event of January 2026 caused significant flooding and landslips which resulted in a deep and lasting impact on people's lives. We recognise the strain this has placed on our people and their livelihoods across our district. I want to acknowledge our tangata whenua and all our affected communities, and the many partners who have stood up and helped one another through these tough times.

In challenging times, the strength of the Western Bay is found in our relationships - in the way we come together, support one another and stay focused on what matters most. Every day, I see that determination reflected in our communities, as well as in the commitment of those working tirelessly to restore services, assess damage and provide assistance to our people.

Recovery is now well underway. It will be coordinated, fair and transparent, guided by the principles of partnership, evidence, and care that shape all our work. We know there is still a long road ahead, but we also know that by standing alongside one another, we will recover with resilience, purpose and confidence in our future.

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Chapter 1 – Purpose

Purpose of the Western Bay District Recovery Plan

The Western Bay District Recovery Plan sets out the steps we will take to support the district's recovery from the severe weather event of January 2026. Many people, communities and organisations are involved in recovery. This plan provides a coordinated framework to guide our efforts and ensure everyone is working toward the same goal.

Aligned with the Long Term Plan, which places community wellbeing, providing well maintained, resilient and effective infrastructure and authentic relationships with Tangata Whenua at the centre of Council's work, this plan outlines the priority areas and actions needed to help our district recover now and over the coming years. It provides a clear approach for how Council will work together with Tangata Whenua, government agencies, community organisations and residents to restore services, support communities and build resilience across the Western Bay District.

Why Prepare a Recovery Plan?

What recovery is

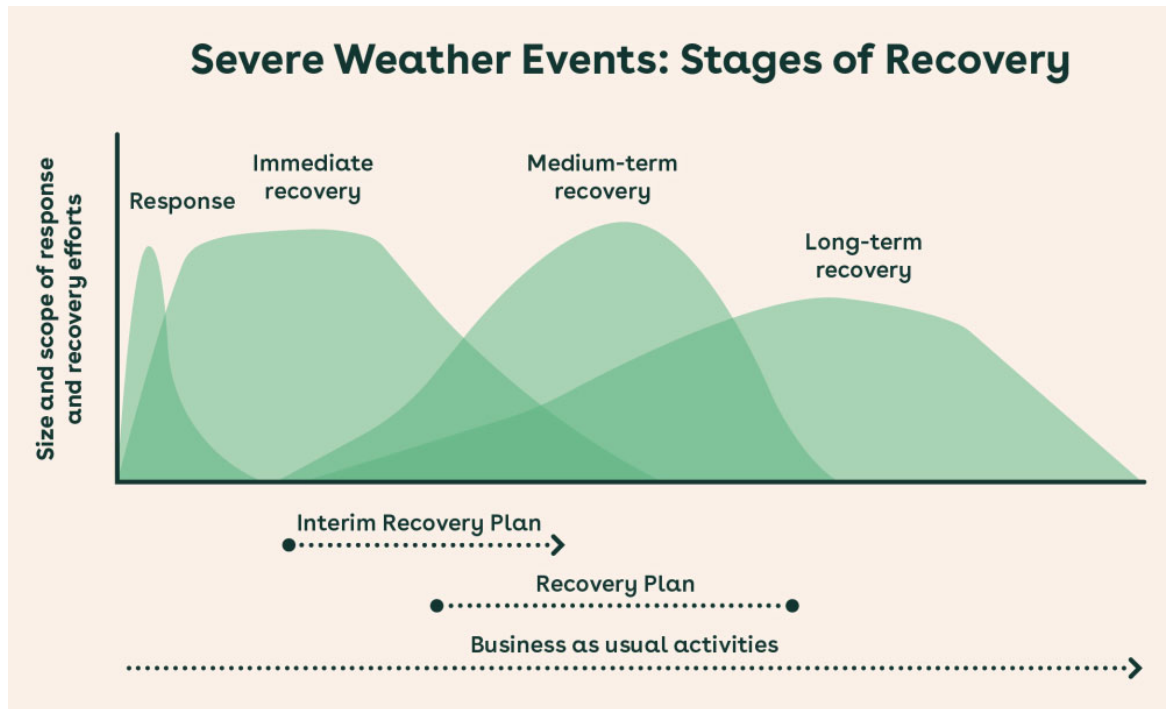
Recovery is the process of helping people, whānau and communities rebuild their lives and wellbeing after a severe event, restoring emotional, social, economic and physical wellbeing – not just fixing damaged infrastructure.

Why we need a Recovery Plan

We prepare a Recovery Plan to give the Western Bay District a clear and coordinated path forward, setting out what needs to happen, who is involved, and how we will support our communities over time. The plan brings together the key actions needed to restore wellbeing, repair infrastructure, care for the environment and steady the local economy, while ensuring Tangata Whenua and community voices help shape decisions. By providing clarity and direction, the Recovery Plan helps our district adapt as needs change, reduces future risks and strengthens long term resilience.

Stages of Recovery

Recovery happens in stages, and each stage requires different types of support. Immediately after an event, the focus is on response – keeping people safe and restoring essential services. As the situation stabilises, work shifts into immediate recovery: reconnecting people with services, repairing urgent damage and understanding community needs. Medium term recovery focuses on restoring infrastructure, stabilising land and supporting community and economic wellbeing. Long term recovery is about building resilience, improving infrastructure and land use, and helping communities adjust to a “new normal.” This Recovery Plan focuses on the medium- and long-term actions needed to help the Western Bay District recover well from the January 2026 event.



Everyone has a role to play in recovery

The Recovery Plan has been prepared by Western Bay of Plenty District Council's Recovery Office and recognises, through its programmes, the many roles our partners and stakeholders are playing, including Tangata Whenua, government agencies and community organisations.

Our Recovery Aim

We restore wellbeing, rebuild key services, and support our communities to come back strong. By working together across the district, we help the Western Bay District recover safely and confidently.

What this Plan does:

This plan provides the strategic framework for coordinated recovery across the Western Bay District. It:

- sets priorities, outcomes and objectives for recovery
- describes the recovery work already underway and the programmes still to come
- outlines governance, decision-making, funding pathways, key risks and performance monitoring
- outlines how Council will decide when dedicated recovery arrangements can wind down and sets the process for moving back into normal day to day services once it is safe and appropriate to do so.

Recovery areas:

The Western Bay District Recovery Plan identifies four areas that guide all recovery activity:

- People and Communities
- Infrastructure
- Working with Tangata Whenua
- Natural and Built Environment

Recovery priorities:

These priorities guide our actions within each outcome area:

- Helping communities lead recovery in their own place
- Fixing and strengthening our roads, services and infrastructure
- Giving people the information and support they need
- Working with Tangata Whenua throughout recovery
- Supporting wellbeing for individuals, whānau, businesses and neighbourhoods
- Monitoring progress to ensure recovery actions are delivered in a timely and effective way

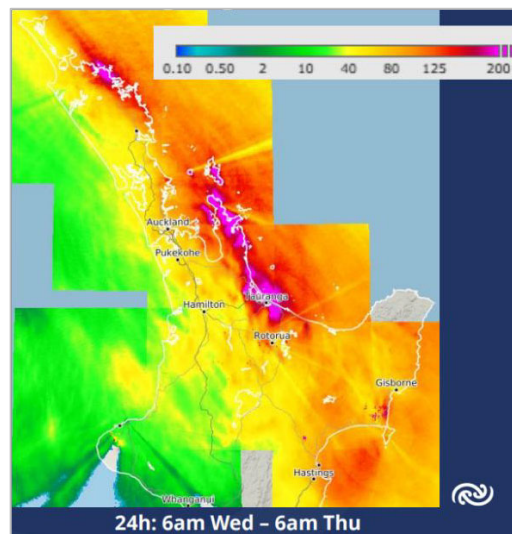
The priorities guide the choices we make and ensure recovery remains focused on what matters most to our communities.

Chapter 2 – What Happened

Impacts of the January 2026 Weather Event

Overview of the Severe Weather Event

A Red Heavy Rain Warning was issued for the Bay of Plenty from the morning of Wednesday 21 January to Thursday 22 January 2026. During this time, the Western Bay of Plenty experienced very heavy rain and strong winds, with many rain gauges recording more than 100mm, and a peak of 395mm over 48 hours in Tuapiro. Some parts of the district received rainfall levels equivalent to a 1-in-100 to 1-in-500 year event.



Radar derived rainfall intensity between 21 and 22 January. Source: MetService

Because of the severe weather, a Local State of Emergency was declared for the Bay of Plenty at 12:42pm on 21 January, and the Western Bay of Plenty District Council's Emergency Operations Centre was activated shortly beforehand.

After this event, the district was impacted by two further significant wet weather events in March and April 2026 which caused additional impacts and compounded issues already affecting communities and infrastructure.

Impacts on People and Property

The intense rainfall caused widespread slips across the district. Tragically, a slip in Welcome Bay resulted in the loss of two lives. Four nearby homes were initially red-stickered, with two later downgraded to yellow after further assessment. In Ōmokoroa, two homes were also red-stickered and have since been reduced to yellow. During and after the event, 52 properties were assessed, with 22 receiving placards.

As a result of the wet weather event in March 2026 a further four properties were yellow-stickered (three Y2 and one Y1), adding to the impacts already being managed

As of 28 May 2026, 20 placards remain in place: 1 red placard, 16 yellow placards (eight Y1 and eight Y2 placards), and three white placards.

What Red, Y1 and Y2 Placards Mean

Placards are safety notices placed on buildings after a natural hazard event to show whether a property can be entered and under what conditions.

Red placard – Do not enter

A Red placard means the building is unsafe to enter. This may be due to structural damage, ongoing land movement, loss of safe access or other serious hazards. Entry is not permitted until further assessments confirm it is safe and any required stabilisation or repairs are completed.

Yellow placard Y1 – Restricted entry with precautions

A Y1 placard means the building can usually be occupied under conditions. There may be limits on access points or areas of the property, requirements to monitor nearby land movement, or temporary utilities restrictions.

Yellow placard Y2 – More restrictive conditions

A Y2 placard means the building has tighter conditions for use. Further assessment, stabilisation or repairs may be needed before full-time occupation is safe.

To help keep people safe and allow assessments to continue, an emergency Building Act designation was put in place for three years. This gives Council temporary powers to restrict access, require evacuations, and carry out building inspections until the risks to private properties have been fully addressed.

Impacts on Infrastructure

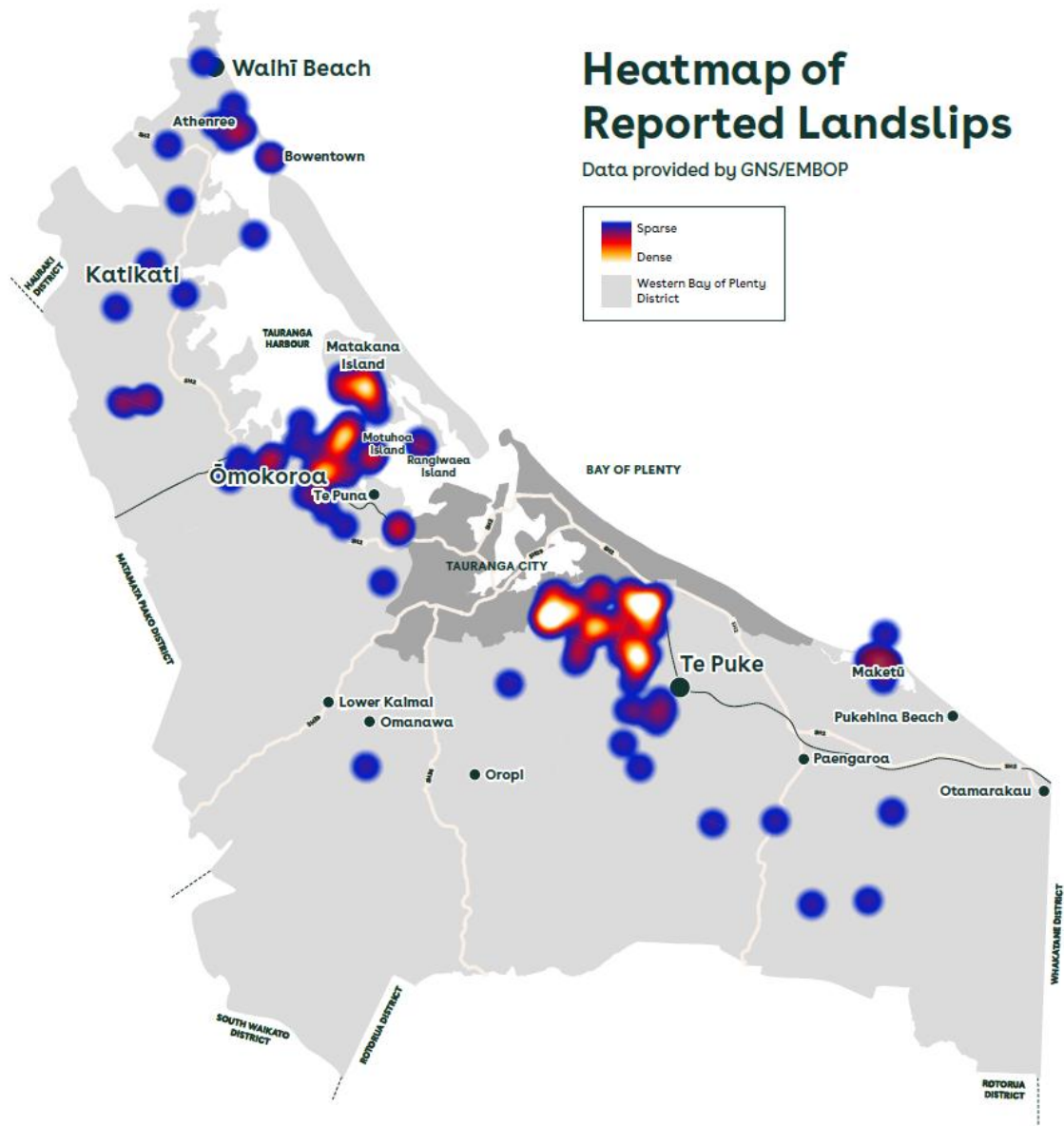
At the peak of the event, 77 roads were closed due to slips, flooding, fallen trees and debris. Council teams worked quickly to restore access, and by 30 January, most roads had reopened. One road remains closed, but residents can still reach their properties. Some routes have suffered significant damage and will require major repairs.

The weather also affected three waters infrastructure. Slips at Waihi Beach damaged access to stormwater ponds and water reservoirs. In Katikati, the wastewater treatment plant was overwhelmed by stormwater, causing partially treated wastewater to overflow into the wetland and harbour.

Impacts on the Environment

Slips have occurred within reserves across the district, causing damage to stormwater pipes, footbridges, public trails and other infrastructure creating a risk to reserves users.

Western Bay of Plenty District areas impacted



What we heard from our Community

Pathways to Recovery

Through recent community meetings “Pathways to Recovery” events, residents shared the wide-ranging impacts they are experiencing following the January 2026 weather event. People described significant damage to homes, land, roads and local businesses, along with the emotional strain of displacement and ongoing uncertainty. Many do not yet know the full extent of land movement around their properties and asked for clear guidance on what to expect next.

Our community told us they need clear information, faster communication, and practical support to deal with slips, road disruptions, insurance challenges and ongoing stress. People want agencies to work together, repairs to be prioritised, and long term solutions that make their homes, land and communities safer and more resilient.

Residents told us they need better clarity about who is responsible for repairing slips, river blockages, fallen trees and damage involving multiple landowners or public agencies. Road access and safety were raised repeatedly, with particular concern for Te Puke Quarry Road, Waitao Road, Reid Road, Harbour View Road and Rocky Cutting Road. People asked for both long term repairs and quicker short-term fixes such as clearing vegetation, installing mirrors on blind corners and maintaining culverts.

Some households remain displaced and are facing financial pressure while paying rent elsewhere or living with friends. People asked for temporary accommodation options close to home, and some raised questions about whether voluntary buy-out pathways might be needed for properties that may not be safe to rebuild on. Insurance challenges were also a significant theme, with residents describing slow processes, uncertainty and difficulty navigating claims. Many welcomed support from Recovery Navigators and the New Zealand Claims Resolution Service.

Mental wellbeing was another common concern, with residents describing stress, fatigue and anxiety about future weather events. People asked for continued access to support, including mental health services, Rural Support Trust, and practical help from community organisations.

Residents also spoke about the need for stronger coordination across councils and agencies, especially where responsibilities overlap for rivers, forestry impacts, drainage and road networks. They highlighted the value of local knowledge and community capability, including the work of volunteer groups such as the Waitao Land Care Group and Project Parore, and want these strengths better integrated into recovery.

Overall, the community asked for clear communication, practical action, and a commitment to long term resilience planning. People emphasised that they want to work alongside Council and each other to address both the immediate impacts and the wider land stability and environmental challenges facing their communities.

Chapter 3 – How we will work

Recovery from a severe weather event or natural disaster can be long and complex. This Recovery Plan helps ensure we stay focused on what matters most, invest in the right areas, and prioritise actions at each stage of recovery. Our approach is guided by four core principles that reflect what is important to the Western Bay of Plenty District.

Our Recovery Principles

The following principles will drive the recovery and our actions:

- *Community centred recovery*
 - We listen to our communities and act on what matters to them. We communicate openly, enable community led solutions where we can, and support wellbeing across our district.
- *Safety led, evidence driven*
 - We put people's safety first. We use expert engineering, building safety, environmental and other technical advice to guide our actions and prevent further harm, especially in public places and on damaged land.
- *Planning with tomorrow in mind*
 - We use recovery to understand future risk and incorporate any future planning. Where feasible and supported by the community, we improve infrastructure and land use, support climate adaptation, protect ecosystems, and uphold the mauri of the environment.
- *Working with Tangata Whenua*
 - We plan and make decisions alongside iwi, hapū and marae. We value mātauranga Māori, uphold tikanga and kaitiakitanga, and make decisions about land and the environment together.

How the Recovery Plan Works

This Recovery Plan brings together the work needed to support individuals, whānau, communities, the natural environment and the local economy. Each part of the plan has its own focus, but all recovery areas are interconnected and designed to work as one coordinated effort.

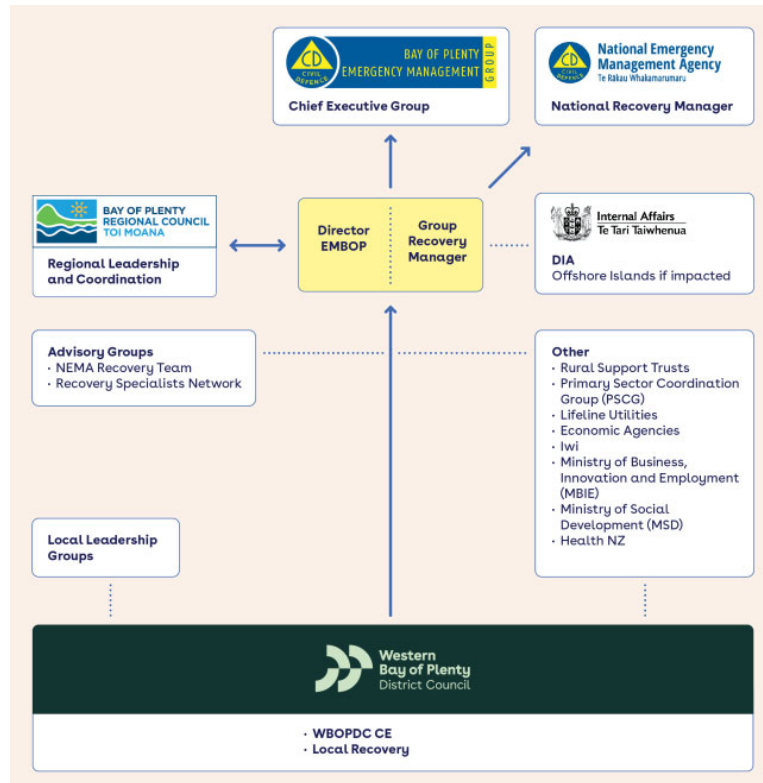
The Four Recovery Areas

- **People and Communities** – supporting individuals, whānau, neighbourhoods and businesses to recover and stay connected.
- **Infrastructure** – restoring roads, three waters and essential services, while planning for safer and more resilient systems.
- **Working with Tangata Whenua** – ensuring iwi and hapū perspectives, mātauranga Māori and cultural values guide decisions.
- **Natural and Built Environment** – stabilising land, repairing damage, protecting cultural and ecological sites and reducing long-term risk.

Each recovery area includes objectives, key programmes and a small number of key performance indicators to track progress. Together, they form a pathway from immediate recovery needs through to long term resilience for the district.

Roles in Recovery

This diagram shows how recovery roles and responsibilities are organised across local, regional and national levels, and how Western Bay of Plenty District Council works alongside partners during recovery.



Tangata Whenua Involvement

Engagement with iwi and hapū is a priority for Council and is something we are working hard to properly provide for in the emergency management space. Recent events have provided insights into areas for improvement and we are working alongside iwi and hapū to achieve these.

An Iwi-led Recovery Plan is also being prepared that sets out what recovery looks like for the iwi and hapū of Ngāi Te Rangī, Ngāti Ranginui and Ngāti Pukenga which covers both WBOPDC and TCC area and what actions are needed from a Tauranga Moana iwi perspective. Tauranga Moana iwi seek that recovery planning reflects iwi values, cultural context and the multiple impacted rohe and hapū. The Council Recovery Office will consider and work through the actions in the Iwi-led Recovery Plan into our recovery areas.

The Tauranga Moana Iwi Recovery Plan does not cover the entirety of the Western Bay of Plenty; this Western Bay of Plenty District Recovery Plan includes ways for iwi and hapū to be involved in recovery across all affected areas. Much of the district-wide impact will involve Council working directly with landowners and working with marae communities recovering from landslide, flooding and ongoing land movement.

Working with our sector groups

We will work closely with our sector groups throughout recovery to make sure support reaches the people and businesses who need it most. This includes collaborating with primary sector organisations, business associations, social and community services, rural support networks, lifeline utilities, and health and welfare providers. These groups bring specialist knowledge, established relationships and practical experience that help us understand local needs, coordinate assistance and deliver targeted support. By sharing information, planning together and maintaining regular communication, we can resolve issues quickly, avoid duplication, and ensure that recovery actions are effective, timely and well connected across the district.

Chapter 4 – Recovery Areas

The recovery areas in this plan provide a high-level picture of the work needed to support the Western Bay of Plenty District after the recent severe weather event. They are intentionally broad because recovery is complex and interconnected. Decisions made in one area, such as restoring access, repairing land, or supporting affected communities, will influence outcomes across the whole district. These areas help ensure the People and Communities, Working with Tangata Whenua, Infrastructure, and Natural and Built Environment workstreams stay aligned and provide joined up support.

Rather than setting detailed solutions at this early stage, the plan gives a shared direction so Council, Tangata Whenua, partners and communities can move forward with clarity and flexibility as new information becomes available. Timing and funding for many of these actions will be considered through future Council planning processes, including the Long-Term Plan 2027 to 2037.

To understand how recovery is tracking across the Western Bay District, we have identified a small number of key performance indicators, supported by specific actions and measures, for each recovery area. Together, these show whether recovery actions are supporting people, restoring services, strengthening partnerships, and improving the safety and resilience of our district.

The actions and measures will be reviewed and refined as recovery progresses and more information becomes available, ensuring they continue to reflect recovery priorities and community needs. The KPIs, actions and measures are outlined in Appendix 1.

People and Communities

This recovery area reflects our community-centred principle. Our focus is on helping individuals, whānau, businesses and neighbourhoods stay connected, supported and informed throughout recovery. We work with communities to understand what matters most to them and enable local solutions that strengthen wellbeing and resilience.

Outcome: Individuals, whānau, businesses and communities are supported, connected, and able to help shape their own recovery

Objectives:

- Provide accessible welfare, psychosocial and practical support across the district.
- Maintain clear, regular, plain-language communication that keeps people informed.
- Enable community led initiatives by providing tools and practical support, and strengthen outreach and local connections, including strong relationships with marae.
- Reduce barriers for vulnerable groups and ensure support is fair and accessible.

Key Programmes

These key programmes set out how we will achieve the objectives for this recovery area:

- Psychosocial support including the Recovery Navigation service for individualised support
- Placemaking initiatives that strengthen belonging and connection
- Community readiness and resilience planning
- Consider practical support to affected businesses, including advice, potential funding options, and workforce help.
- Bring together the primary sector, industry groups, iwi and hapū land trusts, and government agencies to deliver coordinated economic recovery and resilience support.
- Consider the availability of rates relief in accordance with Council Policy.
- Administer the Mayoral Relief Fund to provide targeted financial assistance to individuals, families, community groups, and organisations most impacted, supporting immediate relief and early recovery needs
- Establishing a Memorandum of Understanding with geotechnical providers to formalise collaboration, support information sharing, and strengthen technical assurance.

Implementation programme:

Many of the People and Communities programmes are already underway, and others will progress as the needs of individuals, whānau, businesses and communities become clearer. Some activities can be delivered through existing budgets, while others will require future funding decisions through the Long Term Plan 2027 to 2037 or support from external agencies. This flexible approach allows Council and partners to respond to community needs as they emerge and to adjust the pace and sequencing of work over time.

Infrastructure

This recovery area is guided by our safety led, evidence driven and planning with tomorrow in mind principles. It focuses on restoring roads, three waters and essential services quickly and safely, while rebuilding them to better withstand future events and reduce long term risk.

Outcome: We restore services quickly and safely while considering opportunities to rebuild to better withstand future events.

Objectives:

- Carry out infrastructure assessments and clearly communicate what we find, what will happen next, and expected timeframes.
- Restore roading, three waters, and safe access routes as quickly as possible.
- Rebuild infrastructure to enhance resilience standards and reduce natural hazard risks where it is viable to do so.
- Use specialist engineering, geotechnical, environmental and mātauranga advice to guide decisions.
- Coordinate sequencing with Waka Kotahi, lifeline utilities, contractors and partners to deliver work efficiently.
- Embed the principles that consider climate adaptation, and risk reduction into planning and decision making.

Key Programmes

These key programmes set out how we will achieve the objectives for this recovery area:

- Bringing together a district wide register of damage.
- Developing early and more detailed cost estimates to help guide planning, prioritisation and future funding decisions.
- Identifying and progressing funding opportunities with national agencies, including Waka Kotahi, the Ministry for the Environment and central government recovery programmes.
- Carrying out repairs and improvements and where possible to better withstand future events.
- Delivering infrastructure recovery through Council's standard systems and tools, including the Project Management Framework, Procurement Framework and corporate delivery systems with regular progress reporting through Pulse and oversight via the Projects and Monitoring Committee, to ensure consistency, transparency and effective governance.

Implementation programme:

Several Infrastructure programmes have already begun, particularly those focused on immediate safety, access and stabilisation. Further work will continue as assessments are completed, specialist advice is received and the needs of affected areas become clearer. Infrastructure recovery will be planned, managed and reported through Council's established project and procurement frameworks and delivery tools.

Some projects are funded or can be delivered within existing budgets, while others will depend on funding decisions through the Long Term Plan 2027 to 2037 and applications to external partners such as Waka Kotahi and central government. Timing will vary according to the scale and urgency of repairs and the readiness of communities, sites and availability of contractors.

Working with Tangata Whenua

This recovery area aligns directly with our Working with Tangata Whenua principle. We work alongside iwi, hapū, marae and Māori organisations to ensure mātauranga Māori, tikanga and kaitiakitanga guide recovery planning, land and environmental decisions, cultural site protection, and long-term resilience efforts.

Outcome: We work alongside iwi, hapū and marae, reflecting mātauranga Māori, tikanga, and kaitiakitanga in all recovery decisions.

Objectives:

- Build agreed arrangements with Tangata Whenua so their information, perspectives, and advice meaningfully informs recovery planning and land and environmental decisions
- Embed mātauranga Māori, tikanga and kaitiakitanga into recovery projects, priorities, and trade-offs.
- Support the recovery and resilience of marae, hapū and iwi providers/services.

Key Programmes

These key programmes set out how we will achieve the objectives for this recovery area:

- Continuing targeted engagement in Welcome Bay, where impacts were severe and the needs of marae, hapū and whānau are complex.
- Work with the emergency management team to support the development of a Marae Resilience Framework that strengthens marae facilities, grows welfare capability and supports coordinated multi-agency assistance for marae.
- Working with multiple agencies to ensure support is culturally aligned, coordinated and responsive to Tangata Whenua needs.
- Working with iwi and hapū throughout the recovery process, ensuring mātauranga Māori and local priorities guide decisions.

Implementation programme:

Many actions in this area, including engagement with iwi and hapu and support for Marae, are already in progress and will continue to evolve as Tangata Whenua identify their priorities for recovery. Some initiatives can be supported through existing budgets, while others will require funding decisions through the Long Term Plan 2027 to 2037 or through external recovery funding. Timing will depend on the needs and availability of marae, hapu and iwi partners, and on the sequencing of shared recovery work across agencies.

Natural and Built Environment

This recovery area supports planning with tomorrow in mind and working with Tangata Whenua principles. It focuses on stabilising land, reducing natural hazard risks, restoring ecosystems, and caring for culturally significant sites, guided by both environmental science and mātauranga Māori.

Outcome: Our land, homes and infrastructure are safe and resilient, and our natural environment is renewed in a way that supports people, places and future generations.

Objectives:

- Carry out and communicate rapid building assessments.
- Assess, prioritise and remediate public land slips.
- Protect and support ecosystems, waterways and culturally significant sites during recovery works.
- Support a coordinated cross agency approach to assess and consider how to sustainably manage natural land after disasters to support rapid recovery and long term resilience.

Key Programmes

These key programmes set out how we will achieve the objectives for this recovery area:

- Working directly with affected property owners to make sure they have the information and support they need.
- Communicate information on building safety, geotechnical matters, mātauranga, repair and rebuild pathways, and caring for rivers and streams.
- Provide landowners and local businesses with information on long term resilience and adaptation, including planting, land management and future land use options.
- Provide regulatory direction that helps people move safely through building, land management, and environmental repair processes.

Implementation programme:

Work to assess and remediate high risk areas, support property owners and protect natural and cultural sites is already underway, with further actions to be delivered as information becomes available and community needs change. Some programmes can be progressed with existing funding, while others will rely on future funding decisions through the Long-Term Plan 2027 to 2037 or applications to regional and central government. Timing will reflect site conditions, safety considerations, seasonal factors and the needs of affected landowners and communities.

Chapter 5 – Enablers and Key Risks

Governance and Decision-Making

Recovery will be guided by Council's Executive Leadership Team (ELT). This means recovery is overseen by the same senior leaders who already manage Council services and decisions, helping ensure recovery work is well coordinated, accountable and aligned with community priorities.

The Recovery Office is responsible for coordinating and delivering recovery work across the district. It operates within Council's normal decision-making arrangements so that day-to-day decisions can be made quickly, while still being well managed.

The Executive Leadership Team provides oversight of recovery priorities, progress and risks, and makes sure recovery work meets funding, legal and policy requirements. Decisions that are significant, sensitive, or likely to have a major impact on communities will be escalated to the Chief Executive or Council for consideration where appropriate.

This approach helps ensure recovery is transparent, well governed and responsive, while allowing flexibility to adapt as community needs and recovery priorities change.

Recovery governance structure

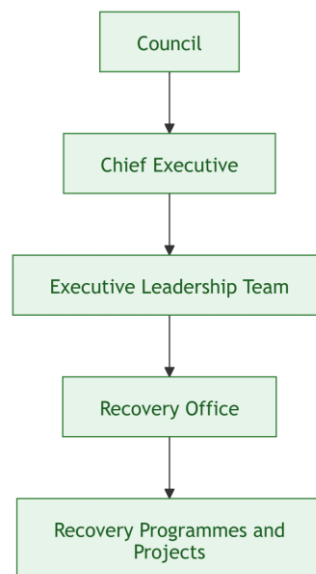


Figure: How recovery is governed and delivered

Council provides oversight, the Chief Executive and Executive Leadership Team guide recovery, and the Recovery Office coordinates and delivers recovery programmes and projects across the district.

Communications and Engagement

Recovery activity will be supported by the Communications and Engagement team within Western Bay of Plenty District Council. A Communications and Engagement Plan will guide how we keep people across the district informed and involved, including iwi and hapū, community groups, lifeline utilities, and the business and primary sectors. The

plan will support two-way engagement that values local knowledge, strengthens partnerships, and helps shape recovery decisions.

Clear, consistent and timely public information remains critical to supporting affected communities throughout recovery. Our approach will focus on providing accessible, plain-language information so people understand what is happening, what it means for them, and what to expect next.

Key Risks

Recovery work involves ongoing risks and challenges arising both from the impacts of the severe weather event and from the transition out of emergency response. Risks are actively monitored, reviewed and managed through a living recovery risk register, which is updated as conditions change and new information emerges.

For the purposes of this plan, the table below outlines the current key risks that may affect the timing, cost or delivery of recovery activities, along with the actions in place to manage them. These reflect both emerging risks and issues already being experienced by affected communities and across the recovery work programme.

Risk	What this could mean	How we will manage it
Fuel supply pressures	Rising fuel costs or shortages could slow machinery intensive work such as road repairs and slip removal.	Monitor supply, adjust work sequencing if needed, and stay in close contact with contractors.
Contractor availability	High demand for specialist contractors across the region may delay assessments and repairs.	Plan work carefully, use multiple supplier councils and agencies
Competing regional priorities	Other major recovery programmes may draw on the same workforce, materials and funding.	Maintain strong cross agency coordination and escalate timing issues early.
Changing community needs	As assessments progress, some areas may require more work or a change in priority.	Continue outreach, use Navigator insights and adjust programmes as new information emerges.
Ongoing land movement	Slopes and high-risk areas may continue to move during wet weather, causing safety concerns or further damage.	Complete geotechnical assessments, apply risk mapping and put temporary access controls in place where needed.
Financial pressures on Council	Recovery costs may exceed existing budgets and require reprioritisation.	Track recovery costs, seek central government support and integrate requirements into the Long Term Plan 2027–2037.

Potential failure to meet community expectations	Delays in recovery work, limited resources, or communication gaps may lead to frustration or loss of trust, especially where communities expect quick updates or visible progress.	Provide clear and regular communication, set realistic timeframes, be transparent about constraints, and maintain strong engagement with affected communities, iwi and hapū.
Further adverse weather events during recovery	Additional financial pressure, delays to recovery activities, constraints on staff and contractor resources, and disruption to business-as-usual operations, potentially resulting in project delays and reduced levels of service.	Ongoing monitoring of resource capacity, forward planning for future events, maintaining emergency management capability through staff training, and timely, effective internal and external communications.
Litigation Risk	Cost, time, reputational impact, and disruption associated with defending claims.	Identifying properties, hazards, and decisions with potential legal implications. Escalating emerging risks through governance and assurance processes. Clear, defensible decision-making Active risk management Clear communication

Chapter 6 – Next Steps and Exit Strategy

Next Steps

In the coming months we will focus on completing engagement with all affected households and placarded properties, strengthening support for complex cases and providing clear guidance on safety, access and building assessments. We will continue to work closely with hapū and marae through co-design workshops, establish a coordinated presence in the most affected areas and maintain strong information flow with iwi. At the same time, we will finalise the Infrastructure Damage Register, progress funding applications to government agencies and confirm the sequencing of priority repairs so work can begin as soon as resources allow. These early actions will help stabilise immediate risks and set up the longer-term recovery work for the district.

Exit Strategy

When Recovery Transitions to Business as Usual

An exit strategy will be developed once it becomes clear that dedicated recovery arrangements are no longer required, and that recovery activity can be safely transitioned back into the normal business of the organisations best placed to lead it. This may include Council, iwi organisations, regional council, government agencies, and other public sector or community partners. Ongoing monitoring and reporting throughout recovery will help identify when this point has been reached.

What the Exit Strategy Includes

The exit strategy will set out how Western Bay of Plenty District Council and partner agencies will continue supporting communities, land, infrastructure, and the local economy once the formal recovery structure winds down.

The exit strategy will include:

- Identifying any long-term assistance that will still be required, including for communities, infrastructure, natural environments, and local businesses.
- A clear transition plan so remaining recovery work is handed over to the appropriate organisation's business as usual – whether Council, Iwi organisations, Regional Council or partner agencies.
- How planning, reporting and monitoring will continue, including how progress updates will be provided to elected members, Tangata Whenua, partners, and the public.
- How public information and communications will be managed once formal recovery structures close, ensuring continuity and transparency.
- Opportunities for communities, iwi and hapū to discuss unresolved issues, raise emerging concerns, and continue participating in shaping local recovery and resilience.
- Any changes needed to organisational arrangements, including whether specialised recovery groups or functions should continue or be integrated elsewhere in Council.

- A debriefing and review process, including formal after-action reviews, lessons learned, and how those lessons will be applied to improve future readiness and emergency planning.

The exit strategy will also confirm ownership of any recovery work that remains incomplete and outline the pathway for its ongoing delivery. This helps ensure recovery work continues smoothly, that momentum is not lost, and that information, systems and resources remain accessible to support future events.

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Appendix 1: Key Performance Indicators

The following key performance indicators, associated actions and measures set out how we will track progress across each recovery area. They are directly linked to the objectives in this plan and provide a consistent way to understand whether recovery activities are supporting people, restoring services and strengthening long-term resilience across the Western Bay District.

These measures will be reviewed and refined as recovery progresses and more information becomes available, to ensure they remain relevant and reflect changing priorities and community needs.

Recovery Area	Outcome	Key Performance Indicators (KPIs)	Actions	Measures
People and Communities	Individuals, whānau, businesses and communities are supported, connected, and able to help shape their own recovery	People can access the welfare, psychosocial and practical support they need in a timely and fair way	- Establish a Navigator service to provide a single point of contact for complex cases. - System improvements or bottlenecks identified, - Support Whanau when dealing with the multitude of agencies.	100% of all affected people are supported and/or referred to appropriate agency by June 2026
		Recovery information is clear, regular and easy to understand, keeping communities informed about what is happening and what to expect.	Develop a Communication Plan that sets out regular communication with affected parties and the wider community, including WBOP staff.	KPIs in the Communication plan are achieved.
		Communities are supported to lead local recovery initiatives, strengthening participation, local solutions and connections including with marae.	Proactively seek initiatives from the community, including Marae, to recover and support affected communities.	By January 2027, establish a structured engagement process with marae and community organisations, resulting in at least 5 community-led recovery initiatives.
		Businesses and the primary sector receive coordinated practical support that helps them remain	Establish sector groups based on the community need, including coordination with Rural Support Trust, Welfare	By June 2026, establish and convene at least three sector-based recovery meetings.

		open, adapt and recover confidently.	and wellbeing support and regulatory support	
Infrastructure	We restore services quickly and safely while considering opportunities to rebuild to better withstand future events.	Infrastructure assessments are completed and communicated so communities understand what was found, next steps and expected timeframes.	• Prioritise all roading repairs, providing communities with an understanding of when their road will be repaired. • Ensure the community understand any delays to work program • Ensure all communication can be understood by the community (i.e. no technical terms)	• By July 2026, publish and maintain a prioritised roading recovery programme for all affected routes, including indicative repair timeframes, and provide plain-language updates at least monthly (or when delays occur) explaining progress and reasons for any changes, ensuring communications are accessible and free of technical terminology
		Roading, water services and safe access routes are restored as quickly and safely as possible to support everyday movement and access.	• Coordinate infrastructure recovery with funders (Waka Kotahi and NEMA). • Ensure access routes for isolated properties are prioritised • Monitor temporary and permanent solution.	• By July 2026, coordinate infrastructure recovery delivery through agreed funding and delivery schedules, and monitor all temporary and permanent access solutions monthly, with progress and changes reported through regular recovery updates
		Rebuild decisions consistently use specialist engineering, geotechnical, environmental and mātauranga Māori advice and consider opportunities for resilience and risk reduction.	• All building rebuild projects are supported and directed to specialists for technical information required for building consents. • Any rebuild of council infrastructure also considers Maori Advice as per KPI below.	• Any building work is compliant with regulatory requirements.

		Infrastructure work is well coordinated with Waka Kotahi, utilities, contractors and partners to minimise delays and disruption.	- Coordinate infrastructure recovery with funders (Waka Kotahi and NEMA). - Ensure access routes for isolated properties are prioritised - Monitor temporary and permanent solution.	By July 2026, coordinate infrastructure recovery delivery through agreed funding and delivery schedules, and monitor all temporary and permanent access solutions monthly, with progress and changes reported through regular recovery updates
Working with Tangata Whenua We work alongside iwi, hapū and marae, reflecting mātauranga Māori, tikanga, and kaitiakitanga in all recovery decisions.		Iwi and hapū perspectives and priorities meaningfully shape recovery planning, decision making and implementation.	- Recovery team co-ordinate with iwi to ensure that we support the implementation where possible and ensure any KPI's that fall out of the iwi recovery plan are implanted where possible. - Ensure iwi/hapu representatives are part of Strategic and Project Scoping.	- Engagement activities are recorded. - Work with iwi to support delivery of agreed actions from iwi recovery plans where practicable,
		Mātauranga Māori, tikanga and kaitiakitanga are embedded in recovery projects, site management and environmental decisions.	Prior to commencement of individual projects, a hui is arranged to establish which project require in-depth culture input. Cultural Practices to support positive outcome should be incorporated into projects.	Cultural practices applied, feedback from iwi partners is sought and recorded.
		Marae, hapū and iwi providers receive the support needed to recover, adapt and strengthen long-term resilience.	- In the first instance assist and strengthen Maraes that activated in the January event. - Develop a framework that results in better alignment before and during an event.	- By June 2026, prioritise support to all marae that activated during the January event, providing targeted recovery assistance, - By December 2026 develop and implement a marae coordination framework that improves

				alignment between Council, marae, and partner agencies before and during future emergency events.
		Agencies coordinate effectively to deliver culturally aligned recovery support that reflects local tikanga and values.	- Continually monitor and advocate for cultural values and if possible, respond otherwise refer to BAU for wider Western Bay DC and iwi conversations - Facilitate joint agency hui with iwi	- Cultural values are documented and advocated for in 100% of relevant Emergency Management activities, with all matters outside remit referred to the appropriate Western Bay DC or iwi BAU forum - Facilitate a minimum of two joint agency hui with iwi per year, with agreed actions recorded and followed up within three months of each hui.
Natural and Built Environment	Our land, homes and infrastructure are safe and resilient, and our natural environment is renewed in a way that supports people, places and future generations.	High-risk land, slips and affected buildings are rapidly assessed, prioritised and communicated so communities understand risks and next steps.	- Undertake assessments of all known properties. - Establish MOU with Geo technical engineers to support property owners at a discount price.	- By May 2026, 100% of all properties assessed and placards issued if appropriate. - By End April 2026 MOU with Geo Technical engineers actioned.
		Whānau displaced from placarded or damaged properties are supported in their pathway back to safe, permanent accommodation.	- Establish a Navigator service to provide a single point of contact for complex cases. - System improvements or bottlenecks identified, - Support Whanau when dealing with the multitude of agencies.	100% of all affected people are supported and/or referred to appropriate agency by June 2026.

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		Damaged land, public spaces and priority sites are remediated and stabilised in a safe, timely and coordinated manner.	• Prioritise works based on risk and community impact. • Align works with environmental recovery.	• By June 2027, prioritise recovery works using an agreed risk- and impact-based prioritisation framework, ensuring that 100% of recovery projects are assessed against safety, access, and community impact criteria, with prioritisation decisions documented and reviewed at least quarterly.
		Ecosystems, waterways and culturally significant sites are protected and supported during recovery works.	• Regulatory process followed	• Monitored through regulatory process
		Environmental recovery and land management are coordinated across agencies to support rapid recovery and long-term resilience.	• Ensure best practise when remediating sites, particularly in relation to waterways	• By June 2026 establish regular catch ups with BOPRC land Management team to provide support as required.

Appendix 2: Recovery Funding Strategy and Work Programme

Recovery Funding Strategy

The Western Bay of Plenty District Council Recovery Plan identifies a range of activities required to respond to the damage caused by the January and March 2026 severe weather events.

These activities span immediate response and repairs, medium-term recovery, and longer-term resilience outcomes. Delivering this programme will require a mix of funding approaches and sources that reflect the scale, location, and nature of impact across the district.

Recovery funding decisions will be made through established Council governance and decision-making processes, with clear accountability, transparency, and alignment to statutory obligations. Funding will be prioritised to support life safety, essential services, and equitable recovery outcomes, while balancing affordability, risk, and intergenerational impacts.

Council will continue to work closely with central government agencies to access financial assistance and practical support where available. These partnerships will play an important role in supporting community wellbeing, infrastructure recovery, and longer-term resilience.

Locally administered funds, including the Mayoral Relief Fund and the Western Bay Emergency Response Fund, have provided flexible, community-focused support to residents, businesses, marae, and community organisations where other funding mechanisms are not available or are subject to eligibility constraints.

Recovery funding is expected to be sourced from a combination of existing Council budgets, reprioritisation of work programmes, external funding contributions, insurance recoveries (where applicable), and future Council decisions through Annual Plan or Long-Term Plan processes. The availability and conditions of external funding will influence recovery sequencing and delivery, and Council will continue to explore all available funding pathways to ensure recovery is fair, transparent, and financially sustainable.

Council is not a guarantor of private property interests and does not act as an insurer of first or last resort. Recovery actions related to private property will therefore focus on risk management, information provision, planning tools, and enabling informed decision-making rather than direct financial compensation.

Where damage to Council-owned assets has occurred, some costs may be offset through insurance recoveries. However, assets must be restored in accordance with current standards and best practice, which may require enhanced resilience outcomes.

Where funding gaps or changes in scope arise, these will be managed through formal prioritisation, staged delivery, and future Council decisions via Annual Plan and Long-Term Plan processes.

Financial Risk and Uncertainty

Risk Description	Likelihood	Consequence	Risk Rating	Mitigation / Management Approach
Recovery scope and cost estimates increase as investigations progress (e.g. geotechnical, asset condition)	Medium	High	High	Stage delivery of recovery works; progressively refine cost estimates; prioritise works based on risk and criticality; provide regular financial reporting to Council
Delay or uncertainty in external funding approvals (e.g. NZTA)	Medium	High	High	Maintain active engagement with funding agencies; sequence works aligned to funding certainty; manage interim cashflow carefully; escalate material funding risks to Council
External funding does not cover full recovery or resilience costs	Medium	Medium-High	Medium-High	Explore multiple funding pathways; consider reprioritisation of work programmes; assess funding implications through Annual Plan and Long-Term Plan processes
Insurance recoveries are delayed, disputed, or lower than anticipated	Low-Medium	Medium	Medium	Maintain ongoing engagement with insurers; ensure robust documentation and claims management; avoid reliance on insurance recoveries for critical works timing
Resilience upgrades required to meet current standards exceed available budgets	Medium	High	High	Apply risk-based prioritisation; phase resilience improvements; seek external funding opportunities; report funding gaps through governance and planning processes
Additional severe weather events occur during recovery, increasing damage and costs	Medium	High	High	Adopt adaptive and staged recovery planning; implement temporary risk mitigation measures; regularly review recovery priorities and contingencies
Reprioritisation of existing programmes impacts BAU service levels	Medium	Medium	Medium	Clearly communicate trade-offs; monitor impacts on levels of service; align reprioritisation decisions with Council strategy and risk appetite

WBOPDC Recovery Programme of Works

This table provides a consolidated recovery programme of works across all workstreams, including phasing, indicative leads,

	Immediate (0–6 months)	Medium-term (6–24 months)	Long-term (24+ months)
People & Communities	Recovery navigation and case management; welfare coordination; Mayoral Relief Fund administration; recovery communications	Community- and marae-led recovery initiatives; ongoing support	Strengthened community resilience and preparedness; long-term resilience
Infrastructure	Infrastructure damage assessments; emergency access restoration; temporary repairs	Permanent repairs and rebuild of roading and three waters; funding delivery and project sequencing	Infrastructure upgrades for resilience and climate adaptation
Working with Tangata Whenua	Engagement with iwi and hapū; targeted marae recovery support; early input into recovery decisions	Integration of mātauranga Māori and tikanga into recovery projects; marae resilience frameworks	Enduring iwi partnerships; iwi-led resilience and adaptation initiatives
Natural & Built Environment	Land and building safety assessments; placarding; geotechnical advice pathways	Land and slip stabilisation; housing and displacement pathways; environmental remediation	Land use adaptation; hazard risk reduction; long-term environmental resilience

Recovery Manager	Infrastructure Lead	Building Lead
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Financial Impacts

<u>Department</u>	<u>Description</u>	<u>Estimated Cost</u>	<u>Council Share</u>	<u>NZTA share /Other Claims/Donations</u>
Recovery Office	Navigators, Recovery Support, Iwi Liaison, Building Inspector	\$500,000	\$500,000	
Response Cost	January & March EOC	\$86,345	\$71,345	\$15,000
	Donations Distributed	\$219,395	\$219,395	\$219,395
Waters	Stormwater project – Waterview Terrace Omokoroa – SW outlet pipe slip Waters Project – Dudley Vercoe, Te Puke Slip that has put water pipe at risk. (Relocating the pipe)	\$2,075,000	\$2,075,000	
Reserves	Kaiate Falls Scenic Reserve (Notes the estimated costs may mean the project is not feasible. Further investigation on project scope required. (\$4,290,000) Waitekohekohe Reserve 4x Landslips (\$85,000)	\$4,375,000	\$4,375,000	
Transportation	Initial response, recovery management and 34 project sites. Some will receive NZTA subsidy for Emergency Works and some sites do not. Some sites may be submitted for NZTA resilience funding at a later date	\$21,332,167	\$8,574,495.00	\$12,757,672
Total Recovery Estimate:		\$28,587,907	\$15,595,840	\$12,992,067

Funding Options

Option 1: Contingency Fund

The Council's Contingency Fund balance is \$9.2 million.

Funding the emergency works from this source would fully exhaust the Contingency Fund.

Advantages

Immediate and straightforward

No additional borrowing costs

Ensures works are funded without delay

Disadvantages

Leaves Council with no contingency for future emergencies

Reduces financial resilience and flexibility

Option 2: Fund from Current Account

The shortfall could be temporarily funded via the current account.

Advantages

Avoids immediate use of reserves

Provides short-term liquidity

Disadvantages

Impacts cash flow

May affect Council's ability to meet other commitments

Not a sustainable long-term solution

Option 3: Insurance Claim (If Eligible)

Some emergency works may qualify under Council's insurance policies.

Advantages

Reduces direct cost to Council

Preserves reserves and cash balances

Disadvantages

Eligibility and claim acceptance are uncertain

Time delays before any reimbursement

Excesses and exclusions may still leave a residual shortfall

Option 4: Borrowing (Loans)

Council could raise debt to fund the shortfall.

Advantages

Spreads the cost over time

Preserves contingency and cash balances

Disadvantages

Increases Council debt levels

Ongoing interest and repayment obligations

May reduce future borrowing capacity

Option 5: Do Nothing / Defer Repairs and Reprioritise Projects

Council may choose not to fund the emergency works and either:

- Leave assets in a damaged state, or
- Defer works and redirect funding from other projects.

Advantages

No immediate financial outlay

Disadvantages

Ongoing health and safety risks

Potential asset failure and increased future costs

Reputational, legal, and compliance risks

Delays or cancellation of other Council priorities

Appendix 3: Strategic, Policy and Legislative context

Strategic and Policy Context

Strategic Context

This Recovery Plan does not operate in isolation. This section demonstrates strategic alignment with other plans and agencies. Local government plays a crucial role in recovery, working alongside iwi, hapū, central government agencies and other organisations, in the recovery process.

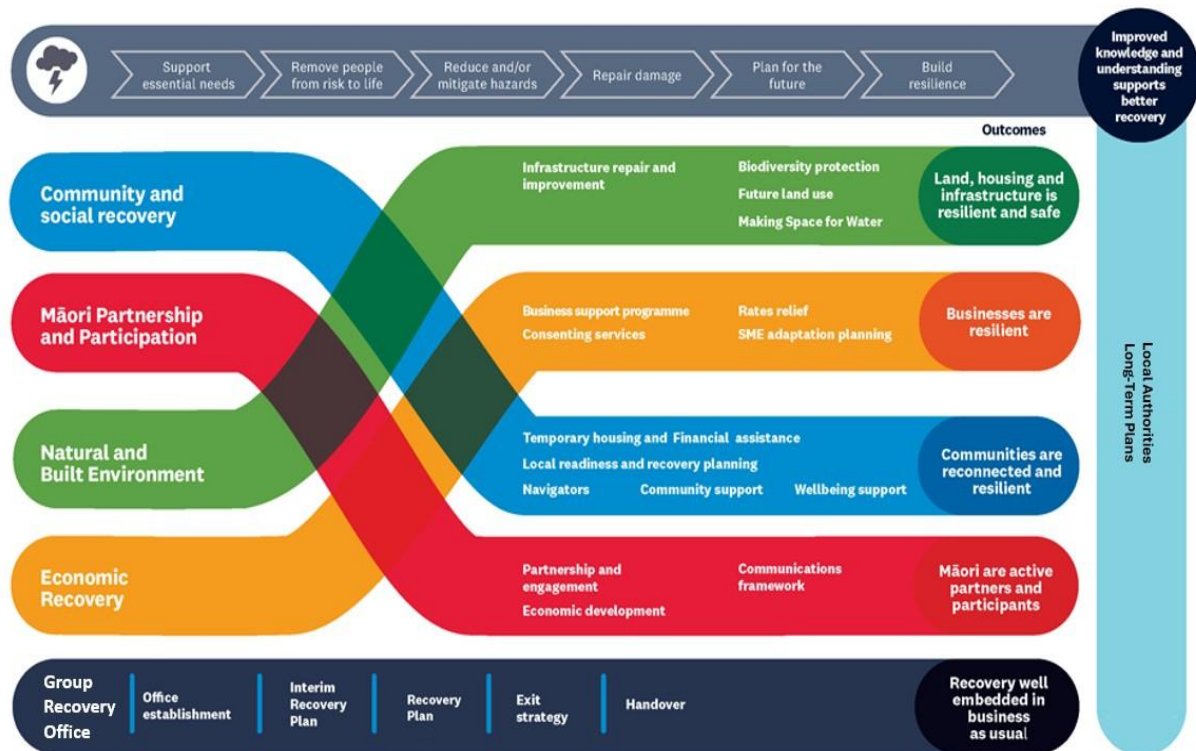
How this Recovery Plan links to Council's Strategic Framework

Our Recovery Plan supports the Western Bay District 's strategic framework in the Long Term Plan 2024–2034. Recovery actions are organised so they advance Council's strategic priorities (empowering communities, growing authentic Te Tiriti-based relationships, providing resilient infrastructure, enabling housing and responding to climate change) and contribute to the District's community outcomes (healthy, safe lifestyles; vibrant communities; effective and inclusive leadership; a clean, valued environment; a thriving economy; authentic Te Tiriti relationships).

Bay of Plenty CDEM Group Recovery Focus Areas

The following figure outlines the integrated Bay of Plenty CDEM Group approach for recovery: activities that tie back to key Group recovery vision, outcomes, and activities resulting from an emergency event, and then connects to future Bay of Plenty Local Authorities long term plans.

Figure 1 – BOP CDEM Group Recovery Focus areas



There are programmes of work underway that relate to the severe weather event and recovery. The key programmes of work are summarised below.

Natural Hazard Mapping

Council has been building its understanding of natural hazards for more than three decades, including hazards related to flooding, coastal inundation, coastal erosion, landslides, liquefaction tsunami and seismic activity. This work involves ongoing research, hazard mapping, technical assessments and long-term planning to understand where risks exist and how they may change over time. These assessments help inform decisions about land use, infrastructure investment and community planning so that people, property and the environment are better protected. Council has legal responsibilities to identify, manage and reduce natural hazard risks under legislation such as the Resource Management Act, the Civil Defence Emergency Management Act, the Building Act and the Local Government Act.

Alongside this technical work, Council provides public information on natural hazards, and works with partner agencies on climate change adaptation and future hazard scenarios. This includes collaborative work through regional programmes, infrastructure risk assessments, and community engagement to support informed decision making. This wider programme of natural hazard work sits alongside the Recovery Plan and helps ensure the district is better prepared for future events.

Spatial Plans

Council is carrying out significant spatial planning across the district to guide how some of our larger settlement areas grow over at least the next thirty years. This includes developing spatial plans such as the Te Puke Spatial Plan, the Waihi Beach, Athenree and Bowentown Spatial Plan, the Katikati Spatial Plan, and the Te Puna and Minden Spatial Plan. These plans help identify future population growth and the land, infrastructure and community services needed to support thriving and well-connected places. They bring together information about housing, transport, constraints such as protected features, highly productive land and natural hazards, open space, sites and areas of significance to Māori, community facilities and economic development so Council and the community can make informed decisions about where and how development should occur.

Spatial planning also plays an important role in supporting climate change adaptation and ensuring that new development is located where long-term risks can be managed. Together, this spatial planning programme provides long-term direction for the district and complements the recovery work by helping build safer, more resilient communities for the future.

Legislation and Plans that guide recovery

Recovery in the Western Bay District is guided by national and regional legislation and planning frameworks that outline how councils must identify natural hazards, reduce risk, support community wellbeing and plan for long term resilience

Strategic documents	Description	Relevance to Western Bay District recovery
Civil Defence Emergency Management Act 2002 (CDEM)	Provides the legal basis for managing hazards in a way that protects people, property and the environment.	WBOPDC and BOPRC are members of the Bay of Plenty CDEM Group, which is responsible for hazard management, readiness, response and recovery planning.
National Civil Defence Emergency Management Strategy	Sets national goals for building Aotearoa's ability to recover from emergencies.	Emphasises effective recovery planning and strong agency capability, which guides our local recovery approach.
Bay of Plenty Civil Defence Emergency Management Group Plan 2024–2029	Outlines how the region prepares for and manages emergencies.	Sets recovery objectives for coordination, capability, integration and timely community information.
Bay of Plenty Recovery Planning Framework 2025	Regional framework for strengthening recovery and resilience planning.	Supports WBOPDC's recovery approach and aligns local actions with regional expectations.
Local Government Act (LGA)	Sets Council's purpose and responsibilities for community wellbeing and infrastructure.	Requires Council to consider natural hazard mitigation as part of core services.
Local Government Official Information and Meetings Amendment Act 2023	Ensures public access to information held by local authorities.	Land Information Memoranda are required to provide information known to Council about natural hazards to inform prospective landowners of risk.

Building Act 2004	Regulates building work to ensure people can use buildings safely.	Requires land and building works to be protected from, and to not worsen, natural hazards.
Local Government Official Information and Meetings Amendment Act 2023	Ensures public access to information held by local authorities.	Land Information Memoranda are required to provide information known to Council about natural hazards to inform prospective landowners of risk.
Resource Management Act 1991 (RMA)	Main environmental law governing natural and physical resource management.	Requires councils to manage natural hazard risk and reduce exposure where possible.
New Zealand Coastal Policy Statement (NZCPS)	National direction that all relevant councils must follow.	Requires councils to map and manage risks of coastal hazards.
Bay of Plenty Regional Policy Statement (RPS)	Regional direction that all councils must follow.	Requires a risk-based approach to natural hazards and reducing high hazard risk to tolerable levels.
Western Bay District Plan	Local planning rules for land use and development.	Guides how hazard risk is managed for both existing and future development and applies to any recovery works involving land use or building changes.

Project: Recovery Programme Date: Fri 8/05/26	Task		Project Summary		Manual Task		Start-only		Deadline
	Split		Inactive Task		Duration-only		Finish-only		Progress
	Milestone		Inactive Milestone		Manual Summary Rollup		External Tasks		Manual Progress
	Summary		Inactive Summary		Manual Summary		External Milestone		