

# Major Events Fund (MEF) Policy Review

**Briefing Update**  
**18 March 2025**

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# Background information

- ***Kāpiti Coast Major Events Fund* was established in 2016**  
(outcome of 2015 - 2018 Economic Development Strategy)  
  
*“...to support major events in the Kāpiti Coast District that will help deliver a thriving, vibrant and diverse economy.”*
- ***Kāpiti Coast Major Events Fund Policy* last reviewed 2022**  
(reflecting 2020 - 2023 Economic Development Strategy)
- **MEF aims to support a small number of signature events**  
that deliver long-term economic benefits for the Kāpiti Coast,  
in alignment with the District’s *\*Economic Development Strategy*

*\*On 10 April 2025, SOF will consider the Draft Economic Development Strategy 2025-2027*

# MEF policy objectives

- 1. Contribute to economic development by:**
  - increasing visitation and visitor spend in the district
  - creating a vibrant community attracting people to work & live
- 2. Assist events by encouraging a supportive environment**
- 3. Celebrate our rich culture, natural environment and identity, and highlight opportunities & advantages of the Kāpiti Coast**

# Kāpiti Coast Major Events Fund

- **Up to \$200,000 per annum for *Tier 1 / Tier 2 events* & including up to \*\$50k for *strategic growth events***

*Tier 1 events: More than 10,000 attendees*

*Tier 2 events: Between 2,000 & 10,000 attendees*

*Strategic growth events: Fewer than 2,000 attendees with potential to grow*

*\*This replaced the previous \$25k feasibility fund from 2022*

- **Multi-year funding applications can be made for up to 3 years**
- **MEF applications for 2025/2026 events close 2nd April 2025**  
*SOF will consider Assessment Panel recommendations in June*

# Key MEF eligibility criteria

- **Needs to align with the Economic Development Strategy and Destination Management Plan**
- **Tier 1 event to generate a minimum 10:1 return on Council's investment (ROI) and at least 30% attendance from outside Kāpiti district.** Tier 2 events are a 5:1 ROI and 20% attendance from outside the district.
- **Tier 1 events to attract visitors to stay overnight. Tier 2 events to attract visitors from the Wellington region and surrounding districts - generate media profile for the Kāpiti district**
- **All events must be run by a recognised legal entity** (eg. a business or charity - individuals may not apply)
- **Preference may be given to events which show the potential to be self-sustaining without Council funding in future years.**

# Recent MEF funding – An average ROI of 20:1

EVENT	DESCRIPTION	FUNDING YEARS
<a href="#">Kāpiti Women's Triathlon</a> Sunday 23 February	Women's triathlon and duathlon *Tier 3 strategic growth funding	2023 – 2025 (multi-year funding)
<a href="#">XTERRA Wellington</a> Saturday 8 March	Coastal off-road triathlon, duathlon & trail running experience	2023 – 2025 (multi-year funding)
<a href="#">Otaki Kite Festival</a> Sat & Sun 8–9 March	A fabulous free week-end of kites, family fun, market stalls and entertainment at Ōtaki beach	2023 – 2025 (multi-year funding)
<a href="#">Kāpiti Classic</a> Saturday 22 March	<b>A boutique music concert featuring a legacy international act</b>	<b>2025</b>
<a href="#">Māoriland Film Festival</a> Wed 26 – Sun 30 March	The largest international indigenous film festival in Aotearoa	2023 – 2025 (multi-year funding)
<a href="#">Matariki Ramaroa</a> <a href="#">Matariki on Moana</a>	- <b>Kāpiti Lights Arts Festival is a celebration of Māori New year</b> - <b>Matariki festival in Ōtaki with live music, kapa haka &amp; more</b>	<b>2023</b> <b>2024</b>
<a href="#">Kāpiti Half Marathon</a> Sunday 9 November	Running festival including 21km half marathon, 10 km, 5 km, 2km	2022 – 2024 (multi-year funding)
<a href="#">Kāpiti Food Fair</a> Saturday 6 December	A fun, indulgent and tasty day out for all foodies that fills your life with good friends, good times and good food.	2023 – 2025 (multi-year funding)

# Scope of policy review

- *Is the 2022 policy still ‘fit-for-purpose’?*
- *Does it align with ‘best practice’ & Kāpiti Destination Story?*
- *Recommended changes / improvements?*

## Initial work undertaken to date

- 1. Desktop review:** Looking at what other Councils do
- 2. Stakeholder interviews:** MEF applicants, panellists, events industry

# Approach of other Councils

- **Most Councils provide funding for events, but the criteria are varied**  
Some areas have district-wide funding through their tourism entity
- **Many focus on the community more than economic development**  
Others fund both community and major events from one funding pool
- **City Councils have a larger fund** eg. Tauranga \$400k, Hamilton \$500k  
**Others are much smaller** eg. Horowhenua \$50k
- **Some Councils provide in-house or additional in-kind support**
- **Some Councils have a single fixed application period/s like KCDC**  
others remain open until all funding is allocated, or up to 2-4 rounds a year



# Who we have engaged with so far

- **Several successful MEF applicants**, including event organisers for various sports and cultural events
- **Two MEF assessment panel members**
- **Local and regional representatives from events/tourism industry**
  - Chair of Economic Development Kotahitanga Board (EDKB)
  - Wellington NZ Major Events Fund
  - Kāpiti Business Chamber
- **One interview to be completed** - Chair of the Tourism Board

# Initial findings and insights so far

- **Rising costs to deliver events** in an environment with less funding available and significant increases in costs, such as traffic management
- **Business development support to help events grow** - *Strategic Growth Fund (Tier 3 events)* recipients need additional support
- **Full benefits should be measured beyond just attendance numbers**
- **System and process improvements** could help support the application and assessment phases and experience
- **Applicants need assistance to navigate across different Council functions**, in particular to understand the various consenting/compliance requirements
- **Application and reporting requirements are onerous**

# Next steps

Major Event Funding for 2025/2026 year is underway using the current Policy. Review work will continue to inform funding for 2026/2027. Further work will:

- **Identify feasible process improvements to implement** – for this funding round
- **Analyse initial findings and insights, develop recommendations** (incl. alignment with legal team's current governance best practice work)
- **Re-align MEF policy with refreshed Economic Development Strategy 2025-2027\* and Kāpiti Destination Story**
- **Align MEF policy with the new Economic Development operating model**
- **Consider links to Public Places Bylaw review – to be undertaken in 2026**

*\*On 10 April 2025, SOF will consider the Draft Economic Development Strategy 2025-2027*

# Discussion & Questions