

Kaikōura District Council Media Release: 18 April 2018

Partnership, innovation and excellence recognised as Kaikōura District Council wins big at the SOLGM Awards 2018

Earlier this month Kaikōura District Council won two awards at the 2018 Society of Local Government Managers Excellence Awards.

One award was for the harbour remediation project, the other for a project which brought local businesses together to provide catering for the North Canterbury Transport Infrastructure Recovery (NCTIR) workers village residents called 'The Hospo Project: feeding the village people'.

Mayor Winston Gray was exceptionally proud of the joint achievements the awards represent "both projects are great examples of Council and business working with community to create positive and problem solving solutions, as well as social and financial opportunity and prosperity. We are all proud of the projects, the people who helped make them a reality and the awards they won."

"Each person and organisation involved in the projects helped turn a negative situation into one of opportunity and empowerment for our community. Thank you to everyone involved for your hard work and dedication," says Mayor Gray.

'The Hospo Project' won the Giblin Group Innovation in Council-Community Relations Award, which recognises initiatives showing community engagement and empowerment in an innovative way. The multi-million dollar contract saw local businesses working with NCTIR, NZ Transport Agency, KiwiRail, Compass and Kaikōura District Council to provide catering to up to 300 workers helping to rebuild the road and rail corridor after the 2016 earthquakes.

NCTIR Project Director Brian Kirtlan says the transport recovery Alliance, who employed more than 1700 workers at its peak, prioritised working closely with the Kaikoura community to ensure the project directly supported economic and social recovery through a 'locals first' approach. "In partnering with Kaikoura District Council and the team at Compass we were able to really achieve meaningful outcomes we were looking for."

The judges commented, "The Hospo Project is a unique, agile Council/community collaboration that supports the local economy and community while meeting the needs of the workforce engaged in the recovery. The Council was able to use the project to provide practical help to local business while providing meaningful, focussed work for them. Those in post emergency situations could take much from this pragmatic approach."

Mel Skinner, Economic Recovery lead at Kaikōura District Council said, "The Hopso Project created a system in which business and community worked toward a common vision and goal - a clear demonstration of what we are trying to achieve in economic development."

"This contract allowed businesses to remain open and retain staff. This in turn, encouraged residents to stay in the community. It kept business owners engaged and motivated, and the implementation of the project saw an immediate reduction in concerns about loss of market, cash flow, funding and isolation-even with the road being closed north and south of Kaikōura."

"The positive results of the project could not have been achieved by one or even a handful of individual organisations involved - it was about working together."

“Sustainable economic development is not only about financial gains, but about how we support the development of our community.” says Skinner.

The second award winning project was the Harbour Remediation Project which won the BERL Award for Collaborative Government Action. The project was a collaboration between Kaikoura District Council, Environment Canterbury, Te Runanga o Ngai Tahu, Te Rununga o Kaikōura, Whale Watch Kaikōura, Dolphin Encounter Kaikōura, NCTIR and MCDEM.

Kaikoura District Council CEO Angela Oosthuizen said, “the harbour is a critical asset to the Kaikoura community for work and play. The earthquake lifted the seabed significantly and made the old wharf unusable. 4% of all whale watching and dolphin watching nationally happens in Kaikoura and fishing is a significant contributor to our local economy, so getting the harbour back up and running was a massive boost for our marine industries.”

“The harbour rebuild project was completed on time one year and one day after the earthquake and came in close to budget. Together Council and local operators contributed just over \$1 million. Exceptional project management from the North Canterbury Transport Infrastructure Rebuild team came together with a genuine spirit of partnership to make this happen. The rebuild also included adding enhancements like a tender jetty for cruise ships and future proofing for larger operator boats and I couldn’t be more pleased with how it all turned out.”

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