

Statement of Service Performance

For the Year Ended 31 December 2018

Description of the Trusts' Outcomes

To promote and support the development and enhancement of the South Waikato District by utilising the Trust Fund to generate and provide funding for and by promoting and undertaking high quality projects and activities that involve and/or contribute to the advancement of the economic, development and revitalisation of the community and other charitable purposes.

Quantification of Trusts' Outputs

	Actual 2018	Actual 2017
Number of Community Projects supported	5	0
Number of Feasibility Studies supported	7	5
Number of Training & Education Programs supported	3	2
Number of businesses supported via Incubate Program	8	10
Number of businesses supported via Accelerate Program	8	0
Number of Business Attractions supported	3	0
Number of Business Developments supported	4	1

In 2018 the Trust developed further its key strategic themes and started to align operational direction. These themes are set around job opportunity and funding support and awareness, community improvement and education. These will be reviewed and built on as the Trust tests their effectiveness for its ultimate purpose – to invest for economic and job growth in the South Waikato.

In 2018, SWIFT ran its first large grant advertising round, to establish greater awareness and encourage better connection to the community and identify leverage opportunities. SWIFT made a number of grants to both large and small projects including a community grant of \$110,000 for the Waikato River Trails Bridge which helped unlock further support from MBIE. SWIFT also, along with other agencies, co-funded Blue Pacific Minerals to trial new products with the aim of less nutrients making their way into the regions waterways. Projects like these have huge potential to positively impact the region which heavily relies on the farming and rural sector. We expect to have feedback on the success of the trials in 2019.

SWIFT launched a Small Grants Round (less than \$10K) with fourteen applications. As well as approving successful grants, others were referred to more appropriate SWIFT support channels such as feasibility studies or business coaching.

Feasibility Studies

For both SWIFT and external funding agencies, Feasibility Studies form a necessary part of the assessment and analysis process around potential projects. As SWIFT is working across a multiple number of sectors this often requires specific expertise to undertake the work. The increase in Feasibility Studies undertaken reflects an increased awareness of SWIFT's role, and interest in the region. In 2018, seven studies were supported, and on-going in some cases, in the areas of hospitality, tourism, plastics, modular housing, innovation hub and waste recycling.

Business coaching, Innovation and Training

As well as looking to attract new businesses, a key area of Economic Development is to assist local business, youth and start-ups to build the skills and networks they need to succeed. SWIFT has three core planks in this strategic theme – Business Coaching, Innovation Hub and High School Programs.

SWIFT funded the delivery of Firestation Business Coaching courses in 2018. These courses had previously been successfully delivered in other regions including Taupo & Rotorua. In the Innovation/Incubator space the Trust engaged a Feasibility and business plan for an Innovation Hub in the district. This work will continue into 2019.

SWIFT is also supporting workplace training, to develop youth skills in the region. 'One Chance Program' will take place as a trial to start in February 2019, working alongside the South Waikato Gateway Coordinator.

Business Attraction

Through channels such as the SWIFT website, the management team and boards networks and the Council Business Services team, various inquiries have been followed up on during the year and those that show prospects are continuing into 2019. The inquiries include feedstock business, waste stream recycling and treatment, dairy processing, food manufacture, tyre recycling, building products and residential development.

Significant work went in to producing the South Waikato Prospectus which is a first step in a wider Business Attraction Program. SWIFT is co-funding this program with SWDC and this includes market perception research, development of a business attraction website, marketing program and workshops with key sectors such as internationally linked real estate companies and NZ Trade and Enterprise. This is a major strategic theme for 2019 and builds on interest in affordable land, housing and workforce supply.

Strategic Property Purchases

Working closely with the Council and local Community groups, SWIFT purchased two properties in 2018 in Tokoroa and Putaruru for strategic development. Design concepts and initial engineering and costings have now been done for both sites and progress is well underway in securing anchor tenants and attracting the best businesses to our region. These are expected to have significant impact on the profile of the district and will help lift both these towns and the South Waikato as a whole.

SWIFT is in discussions with developers and local Council to identify other key sites that would ensure availability of industrial, commercial and residential land to underpin the business attraction strategic theme.

SWDC & other key stakeholders

SWIFT recognises that we cannot achieve our purpose solely on our own in most cases. To achieve meaningful and enduring economic development and job growth we are often reliant on strong partnerships to achieve that purpose. Key strategic relationships were further enhanced and new ones initiated. These include working closely with the South Waikato District Council, local industry, the regional economic agency Te Waka, and starting to develop closer relationships with Raukawa Iwi, Government Funding Agencies and education providers.