MANAWATU DISTRICT COUNCIL

Council

Meeting of 19 November 2025

Business Unit: Community
Date Created: 13 October 2025

CEDA Annual Report 2024 - 2025 9am

Purpose Te Aronga o te Pūrongo

The purpose of this report is to receive the Central Economic Development Agency (CEDA) annual report 01 July 2024 – 30 June 2025.

Recommendations Ngā Tūtohinga

That Council receive the Central Economic Development Agency (CEDA) annual report 01 July 2024 – 30 June 2025.

Report prepared by:
Maree Pritchard
Community Operations Adviser

Approved for submission by:
Lyn Daly
General Manager - Community

1 Background Ngā Kōrero o Muri

1.1 CEDA is a Council Controlled Organisation (CCO) under the Local Government Act 2002 (LGA) and is jointly owned by Manawatū District Council (MDC) and Palmerston North City Council (PNCC).

1.2 For the 2024-25 year, MDC and PNCC as joint shareholders expected CEDA to focus on the delivery of the following core functions and outcomes, as detailed in the Statement of Expectation (SOE) 2024-25 to 2026-27:

- Stimulate inward investment (both national and international), retention and expansion of business in the Manawatū region.
- Developing a talent pipeline.
- Support Domestic visitation and tourism.

1.3 Further to the required core functions and outcomes, the SOE details the shareholder's top priorities as:

- Te Utanganui, Central New Zealand Distribution Hub.
- Strategic oversight and coordination of the Manawatū Food Strategy.
- Promotion and development of key tourism and visitor destinations.
- Inward investment in the Feilding town centre and Palmerston North city centre.

1.4 The full SOE 2024-25 can be viewed here: Final-CEDA-SOE-24-to-27.pdf

1.5 In 2024-25, MDC granted $691,534 and PNCC granted $2,052,000 to CEDA to deliver the core functions listed in 1.2 above.

1.6 The Local Government Act (LGA) requires CCOs to produce an annual report which compares its actual and intended performance (as set out in the Statement of Intent) and audited financial statements.

2 Strategic Fit Te Tautika ki te Rautaki

2.1 The Contract with CEDA contributes to:

- **A place to belong and grow** – CEDA works to enhance regional visibility and promote the Manawatū as a vibrant place to live, work, and visit; and
- **A prosperous and resilient economy** – Stimulation of economic growth through innovation and collaboration and supporting business capability and resilience.

3 Performance for the year 01 July 2024 to 30 June 2025

3.1 CEDA's response to the Statement of Expectations is based around their four strategic objectives:

- **Business:** Attract, retain and develop business and investment in the region.
- **People:** Attract, retain and develop talent in the region.
- **Place:** Profile the region to attract people, business and investment.
- **Partners:** Lead inclusive and sustainable economic development for the region.

3.2 In summary, the Chairperson's and Chief Executive's reports within the Annual Report highlights:

- **A resilient regional economy:** Despite national slowdowns and inflationary pressure challenging and impacting many sectors, the Manawatū economy showed resilience outperforming many other regions due to the diverse economy and long-term investments.
- **A strategic focus:** CEDA maintained momentum toward their Manawatū 2030 vision - New Zealand's most progressive region, working towards building a sustainable, future-focused regional economy centred on agrifood, logistics, and innovation.
- **Showcasing the Manawatū:** positioning Manawatū as a vibrant, connected and future-focused region.

3.3 The key highlights for the year are:

<u>Business:</u>

- Te Utanganui – Central New Zealand Distribution Hub advocacy gaining national visibility and momentum.
- 23 Inward investment activities and opportunities identified, exceeding the performance measure target.
- Manawatū Regional Food Strategy - interactive crop suitability map launched, Food Technology Scholarship fund launched in partnership with Food HQ and LEAN for farms workshop delivered.
- Destination Management Plan progressed - attended travel-trade show TRENZ pitching the region to over 60 travel buyers, and the visitor sector collective established.
- 650 business engagements completed spanning innovation support, regional business partner support, visitor and tourism, primary industries, technology, and distribution and logistics.
- Manawatū Garden Festival bloomed to 20 gardens participating in 2024.
- Over $1million in Callaghan Innovation research and development grants issued.

- Regional Business Partner Programme net promoter score +75 reflected a very high level of satisfaction among the businesses assisted.

- Over $200,000 in capability development support issued.

People:

- Talent work focused on connecting employers with skilled people.

- Strengthening pathways for rangatahi (youth) and graduates, delivered in partnership with industry aligned to workforce needs.

- Supporting rangatahi into employment through the Accelerate Academy (Health) Hauora Wānanga o ngā Rangatahi o Manawatū.

Place:

- 29 new content pieces created and published on ManawatuNZ.co.nz with over 300,000 sessions (website visits).

- Five campaigns were delivered over the year to raise the overall profile of the region along with 49 media features.

Partnerships:

- Four initiatives in support of iwi or mana whenua completed.

- 24 partnership agreements were entered into or in place during the year.

3.4 A narrative summary of CEDA's work on each of the strategic objectives is detailed on pages 11-13 (Business), 14-15 (People), 16-20 (Place) and 21-23 (Partners) of the Annual Report.

3.5 A more specific assessment of CEDA's service performance against the SOI targets for each of the strategic objectives is detailed on pages 29 – 36 of the Annual Report.

3.6 The regions performance against a series of quantitative monitoring indicators is detailed on page 37 of the Annual Report. While several are awaiting up to-date data, the results reflect the challenging economic environment identified in the introductory reports from the CEDA Chairperson and Chief Executive.

4 Financial performance for the year 01 July 2024 to 30 June 2025

4.1 CEDA's financial performance is detailed at pages 43-60 of the Annual Report.

4.2 CEDA achieved a modest operating surplus, indicating sound financial management and efficient use of shareholder funds for the 2024-25 year with a $118,874 surplus against a budgeted $11,088 deficit.

4.3 CEDA finished the 2024-25 year with total equity of $748,604 against a budget of $713,139.

4.4 The 2024-25 Annual Report includes an independent auditor's report at pages 61-62.

5 Risk Assessment Te Arotake Tūraru

5.1 CEDA's overall risk exposure is low, with effective controls in place and no material breaches or incidents reported during 2024-25.

5.2 CEDA 2024–25 – Key Organisational Risks and Mitigations identified:

Risk	Outline	Mitigation
Funding Dependence	CEDA relies heavily on core funding from PNCC and MDC. Any reduction or delay could impact programmes and service delivery.	Pursuing alternative revenue through government contracts and partnerships; regular budget monitoring; maintaining prudent reserves to manage short-term shortfalls.
Economic Volatility	National and global uncertainties (inflation, interest rates, supply chain disruptions) could reduce business confidence and investment levels in the region.	Flexible programme design allowing for quick response; close monitoring with business networks and agencies; promoting diversification across sectors such as agrifood, logistics, and tourism.
Workforce and Skills Shortages	Persistent skill gaps across priority sectors (construction, logistics, agrifood) constrain regional economic growth and investment readiness.	Working with key industry sectors, e.g. health; partnering with education and training providers; running targeted annual campaigns to attract workers.
Climate and Sustainability Challenges	Growing expectation for economic development to align with climate resilience and sustainability goals.	Embedding sustainability criteria in all projects; supporting low-emission and green innovation initiatives; collaborating with councils, iwi, and industry on climate adaptation.
Reputation and Stakeholder Confidence	Shareholders and the public expect measurable outcomes and value for money from CEDA's activities.	Enhanced KPI framework and transparent reporting; biennial stakeholder surveys and case studies; proactive communication on impact and outcomes.

6 Health, safety and wellbeing

6.1 As part of due diligence and Council's prioritisation for our CCOs to comply with Health and Safety legislation, CEDA has provided the following update on Health, Safety and Wellbeing.

6.2 CEDA report on their Health, Safety and Wellbeing on page 42, stating "Health, safety and wellbeing are mutual objectives for everyone who works, visits, or has business with CEDA. We are committed to the health and safety of all workers, visitors, partners and business community by undertaking all reasonably practical measures to provide a safe working environment, and business premise.

We believe that creating and maintaining a healthy work environment is a shared responsibility where both employees and employers have roles and responsibilities, including the maintenance of a balance between work and non-work activities through communication and cooperation, and a flexible working framework to support the wellbeing of the team."

6.3 CEDA has a Health, Safety and Wellness policy in place that is regularly reported on and reviewed by the Board, and the leadership team have a standing agenda item at their weekly meetings.

6.4 CEDA has an Audit and Risk Committee and an organisational risk register that is monitored regularly which includes wellness of the team.

6.5 "Workleap OfficeVibe" is used to keep an awareness of how the team are travelling across 10 metrics including wellness, satisfaction, and alignment with the organisation. Workleap OfficeVibe provides a net promoter score and CEDA has had this in place for a number of years.

7 Engagement Te Whakapānga

Significance of Decision

7.1 The Council's Significance and Engagement Policy is not triggered by matters discussed in this report. No stakeholder engagement is required.

Māori and Cultural Engagement

7.2 There are no known cultural considerations associated with the matters addressed in this report. No specific engagement with Māori or other ethnicity groups is necessary.

Community Engagement

7.3 There are no consultation requirements as a result of this report.

8 Operational Implications Ngā Pānga Whakahaere

8.1 There are no operational implications with this report.

9 Financial Implications Ngā Pānga Ahumoni

9.1 There are no financial implications with this report.

10 Statutory Requirements Ngā Here ā-Ture

10.1 Under the Local Government Act 2002, section 69 titles "Financial Statement's and auditor's report":

(1) A report must include (a) audited consolidated financial statements for that financial year and (b) an auditor's report on those financial statements.

(2) The audited financial statements must be prepared in accordance with generally accepted accounting practice.

11 Next Steps Te Kokenga

11.1 CEDA to prepare a Statement of Intent for 2026-27.

12 Attachments Ngā Āpitihanga

- CEDA Annual Report 2024-25.