



# WAIKATO MAYORAL FORUM

**February 2017**

SUBJECT: Outcomes of Waikato Mayoral Forum meeting held 20 February 2017.

This report summarises the main discussions and outcomes of the forum's first meeting of calendar 2017 held at Waikato Regional Council's Hamilton offices.

- 1. Future collaboration opportunities** – With the forum's collaboration bearing fruit in such processes as Waikato Means Business, the Waikato Plan joint committee and discussions on a waters CCO, the forum is particularly focused on future collaboration opportunities over 2016-19. "Top priorities for regional facilities" and "aligned planning" have been identified as two potential key areas for co-operation, said a report to the meeting. The Local Government Commission has cited the Waikato as a leading example when it comes to council collaborative working arrangements in New Zealand. The meeting agreed that council CEOs would organise a strategic review to identify future regional strategic collaboration opportunities. In the meantime the forum's roading and policy & bylaws working groups are due to carry on.
- 2. Waikato Means Business update** – The meeting received a report on the implementation of the Waikato Means Business (WMB) economic development strategy, being overseen by a business-led steering group after being initiated by the forum. The key local government funder is currently Waikato Regional Council. A measure of the workstream's success and getting buy-in from others is that other agencies have been providing even more funding than the regional council for implementation activities. The meeting heard there is potential over time to integrate the way the implementation of the WMB strategy and the yet-to-be-finalised Waikato Plan is carried out. Seven priority projects are underway. The Waikato has now been included in the Government's regional growth programme, a sign of confidence in the region's strategy and approach to economic development. A senior Government official has been appointed to act as a regional liaison for economic development matters. Work is underway on the 2017-18 implementation plan. A potential new area for WMB work in 2017-18 is around an economic development action plan for southern Waikato.
- 3. Waikato Plan implementation structures** – A report on potential governance structures for a new joint committee to implement the Waikato Plan was considered. The current Plan joint committee was due to consider signing off the draft Plan on Monday 27 February. The forum agreed with recommendations that there should be five local government representatives on any new implementation committee, including one each from the regional council, Hamilton City Council, the Future Proof group of councils, the eastern Waikato group of councils and the southern Waikato group of councils. Advice to the meeting was that the Plan was non-statutory but the way it had been put together through extensive collaboration gave it added weight. The Plan is designed to help the region speak with one voice, particularly in dealings with central Government.
- 4. UNISA** – Discussion over a report on the Upper North Island Strategic Alliance (UNISA) saw a motion passed supporting Waikato District Council being included in UNISA. The Alliance currently involves the Northland, Waikato and Bay of Plenty regional Councils; Auckland Council; Whangarei District Council; and the Hamilton and Tauranga city councils. The

meeting heard Waikato District hadn't been included for historical reasons but forum leaders felt it merited inclusion. UNISA responds to and manages a range of inter-regional and inter-metropolitan issues. It is due to look closely at ports – including inland ports in the Waikato – over the next year. This is likely to include consideration of how best to work with central Government on ports.

- 5. Tyres** – The forum received a briefing on issues related to the management of end-of-life tyres in the region. Key concerns are a need to find a national approach to the storage and disposal of old tyres, and to find new end uses for them. A National Environmental Standard for tyres is under consideration. Waikato Regional Council has been working with others at a national level on the issues. The forum passed a motion supporting the approach the regional council and others are taking to find solutions.

Alan Livingston  
Chair  
Waikato Mayoral Forum