



CORE GROUP MINUTES 10 MARCH 2011

Present

Mayors Dale Williams (Chair), Bryan Cadogan, Frana Cardno, Jenny Rowan, John Forbes, Kelvin Coe, Les Probert, Malcolm Campbell and Deputy Mayor Penny Hulse.

MTFJ – Jan Francis, Bry Kopu, Annette Smithard

LGNZ – Mariska Wouters

Apologies

Mayors Alistair Sowman, Brendan Duffy, Jono Naylor, Kevin Winters, Len Brown, Tony Bonne, Wayne Guppy and Lawrence Yule.

MINISTERS MEETING

Present

Mayors Dale Williams (Chair), Bryan Cadogan, Frana Cardno, Jenny Rowan, John Forbes, Kelvin Coe, Les Probert, Malcolm Campbell and Deputy Mayor Penny Hulse.

MTFJ – Jan Francis, Bry Kopu, Annette Smithard.

LGNZ – Mariska Wouters

Officials – Jon Saunders, Zoe Griffiths, Felicity Bolen, Damian Edwards, plus Christina Connolly and Holly Ford from the Ministers office.

Ministers – Minister Paula Bennett.

The Minister acknowledged the Mayors and noted the agenda items. She then described the Youth Pipeline work and handed out an A3 paper showing the current status of young people in education (copies available from Jan). She noted the Government's interest in the youth guarantee and the desire to make sure all policy work contributed to this, hence the slowing of the work on Youth Transitions. A focus was to keep young people at school. There may be need for legislative change to ensure information could be shared across sectors and agencies. There were difficulties around how the funding followed the young person and the Government wanted to ensure they were providing the right incentive to achieve the best outcome.

Mayor Dale Williams asked what the role for the Taskforce was in this, given the work that had been put into Youth Transitions. What is the relationship between this work and Youth Transitions and what was the future of that work in the short/medium term?

The Minister replied that she wanted to maintain the relationship but needed to slow down the work and make sure her decisions were evidence based. Existing Youth Transition service contracts would be rolled over for a further year.

Mayor Frana Cardno said that while acknowledging she was happy that contracts were to continue, she noted that providers needed more certainty and stability so they could plan and

retain their staff. The Minister replied that she was hopeful that the contracts would be for longer terms in the future.

Mayor Jenny Rowan asked what was to happen to the work the Taskforce had spent the last year developing to implementation stage.

The Minister replied that they were getting closer with education to allow the passing of information to providers and that they wanted this to happen nationally but may need to change the law. A shift in attitude was needed but that Connections was critical as was working better with alternative education.

Mayor Jenny Rowan again asked where this left the Taskforce, in relation to the partnership with Government, given that Officials had not contacted the Taskforce to inform on changes. The Minister challenged the Mayors as to what they brought to the table and what she obtained for the grant provided, adding that the Taskforce appeared to be a lobby group for pet projects.

Mayor Dale Williams responded with disappointment noting that the Taskforce represented all but three of the country's sixty-seven Mayors and brought substantial resources, networks and passion to the issue. He stated that the Taskforce was concerned as to what was best for our young people who needed opportunities and work in their communities. Mayors worked at the local level and were held accountable for their actions by the community.

Deputy Mayor Penny Hulse reiterated that local government was accountable and solution focused.

The Minister noted the proposal from the Taskforce to deliver Youth Transitions noting that the Government could set objectives and offer contracts and that the door was still open for this.

Jan Francis noted that the Taskforce had not asked for a contract but had agreed that this was possible if it would enable the Connections process to begin in the next financial year. This was clearly now not possible and the Taskforce was not interested in being a contract holder.

The Minister said the Connections model was not off the table but obviously would not be in operation in the next financial year. She noted that all the components were there and some of the infrastructure. However she noted a priority was the funding model for schools which would change. But also noting this Government loves flexibility and wanted quick wins as well as long-term strategies and work on outcomes. She was also keen to look at work on measuring success in different ways.

Mayor Dale Williams asked what the proposed timeframe was and the Minister said the Youth Pipeline work would be completed by the end of April but that some information needed to be provided by the 22nd March for the Cabinet Committee in April. She would contact Dale then to discuss the timeline.

TASKFORCE MEETING

Mayors met to discuss the Ministers information and to decide on the next course of action. They were extremely disappointed in the response from the Minister and the disrespect with which they had been treated. However they are still committed to the transition process and also to ensuring jobs were created in their communities. It was agreed that the Taskforce would concentrate on the issues raised by individual Mayors and work on the regional and national forums which were planned. They would also work with new Mayors to ensure they

were able to participate and make a difference in their communities. Bry Kopu noted that there was also an opportunity with Whanau Ora which the Taskforce could pursue.

Finance

The financial report was accepted

Moved – John Forbes

Seconded – Kelvin Coe

Carried

INZONE

It was agreed to support INZONE kiosks in Kapiti and Greymouth.

Moved – Frana Cardno

Seconded – Malcolm Campbell

Christchurch Earthquake

The Taskforce has been collating information for the Minister about people leaving Christchurch and relocating elsewhere. Mayors noted that the information they could give was not really accurate but rather anecdotal and general observations. We will continue to update weekly but will let the Minister know that more accurate data could be gathered from Red Cross, WINZ and Civil Defence.

Balclutha Forum

Bryan, Dale and Bry reported on the forum which had given Bryan some clear information and direction. There were clear differences between the various groups and the young people were difficult to engage. The regional agency representatives didn't really understand the local and needed to spend more time in the smaller communities in their regions. Bry will follow up with Bryan.

Rangatahi Leadership Programme

Dale reported on the latest hui which was a training session for the Mayors and was very well received. There are now 18 Mayors signed up to the programme. This could add real capacity to communities and was a real low cost investment.

PARTNERS MEETING

EDANZ

Samantha Seath reported on the work of EDANZ noting that the role was to connect regions and areas together with a particular focus on sector development e.g. Food Innovation network which had hubs in Auckland, Hamilton, Palmerston North and Christchurch.

There is also a regional partner network with NZTE, Ministry of Science and Innovation. There were a number of advisers on the ground to find business who need help to grow within the growth sectors.

There are grants available for cooperative ventures e.g Chambers of Commerce and EDA's. Looking at models that can work in other areas too. There are still many businesses in Christchurch where export orders are being filled. The Canterbury Development Corporation is working on a joint venture with the Employers Chamber of Commerce – *Recover Canterbury*.

The general emphasis is to grow business to grow jobs which requires capital and often support for businesses to understand what business growth is. The escalator programme has training to get businesses ready for investors. EDANZ runs these with funding from NZTE. NZTE funds 50% of the training for businesses.

All EDA's are on the data base and it is possible to send information out to all Mayors. ***Jan will liaise with Samantha*** to ensure information is disseminated.

Council of Trade Unions

Peter Conway reported on the Government response to Christchurch which he said has been impressive, particularly the job loss cover which was announced almost immediately following the earthquake. The CTU is working with agencies looking at existing programmes and recommending they need to scale up for Christchurch. At this time however the union's capacity is reduced while the need has increased. There is a need to focus on skills, youth and jobs. MSD needed to focus on the 6,000 businesses that had applied for business support. There is also activity in the Industry Training Sector with discussion around reducing the number of ITO's to around eight. Nothing specific has happened yet.

There is a lot of insecurity among workers with unemployment at 6.8% and rises in cost of living.

Peter voiced the CTU's disappointment in the results from the Job Summit and the work of the Welfare Working Group.

He suggested that the Core Group should ask to be briefed by the Productivity Commissioner, Murray Sherwin. ***Jan to follow up.***