

Auckland Social Policy Forum Feedback
Ministry of Social Development Regional Policy – Auckland Office
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Feedback to the Minister for Social Development the proposed Auckland Social Policy Forum

This submission is from the Community Waitakere Charitable Trust. We are a charitable trust dedicated to achieving our vision of thriving, connected communities in Waitakere that are based on sustainable principles. We have a twenty five year history of supporting and strengthening community organisations, building and maintaining relationships with central and local government and communities, undertaking and supporting community development initiatives and fostering collaborative actions that achieve our vision.

The values that we hold are:

- To act with integrity
- To support sustainability
- To honour Te Tiriti o Waitangi
- To inspire
- To partner
- To be inclusive

Our organisation is recognised by many as a key linkage between national, regional and local networks. We provide the ‘glue’ that joins diverse community organisations with each other and with local and central government agencies and funders. This function enables the sharing of resources, knowledge and networks across a broad sector.



In this feedback, we draw on our experience of working with the local council, and as a strategic broker between council, community, central government and other stakeholders. One of the manifestations of this mutually respectful relationship is that Waitakere City Council and Community Waitakere have a three-year partnering agreement, identifying shared outcomes and key work priority areas and shared work programme. As part of this agreement, Council provides significant programme funding to Community Waitakere. This 'Waitakere Way' or collaborative method of working that has developed over a long period between the Waitakere City Council, community organisations, local businesses and citizens is renowned nationally and internationally.

From this experience, we offer the following feedback:

1. Attached, please find a research paper commissioned collaboratively by partners of Community Waitakere, developed to support good quality, critical analysis and discussion of the role and potential of the new governance structure in furthering social wellbeing in Auckland. This was then workshopped with Community Waitakere and others, resulting in the final structure proposal attached. This represents a working model for furthering the understanding of how the Social Policy Forum might develop further potential, and we commend it to you. In addition, Community Waitakere would add this feedback:
2. Community Waitakere recommends the Social Policy Forum (SPF) is established as a learning model, with good documentation and iterative systems established as part of the structure. A broad scope and access to the full range of research and synthesis will enable the SPF to develop to its potential over future years of operation. We would also like to acknowledge that some of what we are doing in Auckland is leading the world, so it is worth recording in order to share and disseminate learning about systems, processes, policies and the practice of implementing collaboration among ourselves, and also around the globe.
3. Objectives of the Forum: We recommend amending bullet point 4 to 'clearly identifying the roles and responsibilities Government, Auckland Council and **the Community Sector** have in responding to critical social issues'.
4. Membership of Forum: We recommend Philanthropy be at the table, as another sector with a large spend in the social wellbeing area, and suggest engaging with Philanthropy NZ to discuss this.
5. Activities of forum: Community Waitakere believes there should be a specific bullet added that says: 'Promoting and empowering community voice and participation.' This would ensure a focus on bringing the community voice to the table.
6. One of the first tasks should be simply "Mapping the Spend" on social wellbeing in Auckland so there is an objective picture of what is being done now and what part of the public dollar is funding the work. This also would provide a baseline for future comparison, monitoring and reporting.
7. In terms of models for ways of working as a Forum, and engaging with the community sector, we recommend considering some learnings from the Waitakere Social Wellbeing Collaboration Project. A useful outline of the project's development can be found in 'The Potential of



Partnership' (David Craig and Megan Courtney) – Local Partnerships and Governance – Pp 49-55. This is a tripartite approach to prioritising and aligning investment and activity in social wellbeing across Waitakere City, between Council, Government and Community. This project was a development of the relationships established between the three sectors and recognition of the complexity of the factors brought to bear on social wellbeing. Successful developments included bi-annual production of a Social Wellbeing Report on progress, followed by Social Wellbeing Summits that bring the players together to identify priority action areas for collaborative delivery over the next period.

8. Finally, we would encourage consideration be given to the role of the Forum members in supporting the planning and development of urban environments that support good social wellbeing outcomes. For example, developing principles for development, such as major facilities and childcare being co-located and on public transport routes.

We would be pleased to work with you to contribute to further thinking on these opportunities to really make a difference to Social Wellbeing in Auckland.

We thank you for this invitation for forwarding ideas and working together to do better for the people of Auckland.

Kind Regards,

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