

Smart Waikato & Research Awards

TO Economic Development Committee Workshop
FROM Marlene Perry - Community Development Officer
DATE 20 October 2014
SUBJECT **Smart Waikato & Research Awards**

1 Purpose of Report

To provide the Economic Development Committee with an introduction to Smart Waikato and Wintec Research. Their focus is Youth Employment, Business Capability and Training.

2 Background

Smart Waikato - Mary Jensen (Regional Manager of Smart Waikato Trust)

Smart Waikato Trust was formed in 2009 with a view to create better linkages between education and the workplace. Stakeholders include Waikato Secondary Schools, Tertiary Education and Waikato Employers. Smart Waikato is best known for its Principal for the Day project and coordination of the Lion Foundation Young Enterprise Scheme in the region.

Future Force is a magazine which is distributed free to High School Students in the Waikato, there is a Future Force Action Network (FAN) which is free to join and aims to build and grow the region's workforce by connecting educators, youth and employers providing best practice work-transition support and resources and encouraging employers to offer more workplace opportunities to youth. TCDC has joined the network and the CDO & Thames Community Board Member Lester Yates has attended an employer's evening in Matamata. Staff will be attending an Employers Best Practice Workshop on 31st October at Matamata District Council as part of the FAN network.

Smart Waikato completed a Youth Employment Survey in the last quarter of 2012 which was published in 2013: which showed that 42% of the 280 Waikato employer respondents had zero 15-24 year old employees and over half of the respondents did not offer work experience to young people, 82% didn't offer internships, 20% only offered apprenticeships, 91% did not employ cadets and that referrals were the most popular recruitment tool. Post this research - which is an interesting read, Smart Waikato has formed a series of tools to help employers understand the different types of work offers they can engage young people in, and best practice methods of working with young people.

Wintec (Waikato Institute of Technology) Research - Mariana van der Walt, Director of Research

Wintec's research team helps customers overcome their research and development (R&D) hurdles. Through applied research Wintec provides real-world solutions to industry partners' real-world market needs. Wintec doesn't compete with Universities or Crown Research Institutes', instead it is able to work with them to help resolve R&D solutions. Wintec has an Eco Village at Rotokauri Campus which gives live output readings of how five houses are being used by Apprentices during their block courses - the 'living sustainably' project has been measuring water, gas, heating, insulation, etc., to create the best and most cost effective environment for retrofitting houses: <http://sustainableliving.wintecresearch.com/> As CDO I have instigated many free vouchers for schools and not for profit organisation on the Coromandel. Wintec is very interested in energy conservation and works closely with EECA.

3 Discussion

To work with Smart Waikato to explore Coromandel friendly ways of encouraging employers to offer gateway, work experience, internships, cadetships, apprenticeships and employment to under 25 year olds in our District.

To work with Wintec Research to define research opportunities which will support business growth on the Coromandel. Especially around what the Coromandel imports and exports and are there business opportunities in the 'gap'

4 Suggested Resolution(s)

That the Economic Development Committee Workshop:

1. Receives the report.