



SMART TRANSFORMATION

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Smart Transformation Advisory Council (STAC) Meeting – Moranbah

18 June 2024 – Meeting 24

Attendees

Vaughn Abrahms

Brianna Baggow

Jasmine Cadd

Ash Dowd

Carolyn Fritz

Angela Petersen

Michelle Pole

Amanda Raymond

Melissa Westcott

Guests

Mel Comerford, Ch'care Leadership Alliance

Declan Baggow

Secretariat

Mitchell Innes (Facilitator)

Melanie Stott

Apologies

Nil

MEETING NOTES

- Meeting commenced at 12.08pm.

MINUTES

- Minutes from Meeting 23 were moved by Carolyn Fritz, seconded by Ash Dowd and approved by all.

AROUND THE GROUNDS – OPEN DISCUSSION

- CF raised the recent publicity for the new Parenthood (lobby group) policy of highly subsidised childcare: "I thought wow, that's a step forward."

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- BB wanted to acknowledge that the Golf Club got rammed by a stolen car; general discussion of that shocking act of crime. JC heard it was a stolen rental car. Brief discussion of crime and policing.

ACTION LIST AND COMMUNICATIONS

- Database has had a slight increase to 318 subscribers after completion of the audit, while the website numbers are up by 23% for the past two months. Distribution of the April Transformer resulted in a big spike, with other spikes relating to social media posts about the Volunteering Project.
- Engagement highlights included a Greater Whitsunday Stakeholder Advisory Committee meeting and an IRC teleconference in April, meetings with NQPHN, QRC, the Regional Housing Alliance, the Local Jobs Program Taskforce and MHHS in May, as well as IRC and Education Queensland meetings in June.
- June's local media featured the Childcare Project, while the Volunteering Project will feature in July.
- Actions from previous minutes:
 - MC speaking at today's meeting.
 - STACs met with new Councillors and new Mayor to reinforce the STAC's views on housing.
 - MI confirmed list of five new clubs for the Volunteer Project video shoot in May.

ROADMAP PROJECT UPDATES

- Digital Connectivity – while the new infrastructure is switched on and a stakeholder celebration held, STAC members keen to remain involved, lobbying for NBN connection while also continuing to monitor GW3's regional efforts. MW said there is definitely better connectivity in certain parts of town, compared to what it was. MP said it used to be that students were kicked off the internet from one classroom to another, but that no longer happens. BB suggested we action to "keep in touch with what's happening in the regions". STAC members agreed yes, they support staying in touch with GW3 and continuing to lobby Telstra (*see Actions*).
- Volunteering Project – TV campaign is still running; Phase Two of the project is underway with a second round of videos shot with five new clubs in May, to be rolled out later this month.
- 4IR Skills & Training – the Careers Navigator position is finishing up this month; the YAC also toured Goonyella Riverside Mine, with a tour of Sondella planned for July.

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- Childcare – agenda item.
- Outback Futures – MI gave the meeting a quick rundown of what is happening with that project in Dysart. MW said any ‘ask’ to IRC needs to be in by September. General discussion between MW, AD and BB about funding including mental health funding etc. AD asked about charity money raised over the last few years from the Mayor’s Ball – where is it and when is it available?
- Innovation Project – MI said REFF funding projects will be revealed by the government over the next five months in the lead-up to the election.
- Housing – agenda item.
- Community Services Advocacy – conversations are ongoing with Education Queensland about further community support to provide attraction and retention for teachers. New staff are arriving, however three teachers are leaving Dysart High School at the end of this term (21 June). General discussion about what effect this will have.

YOUTH ADVISORY COUNCIL

- YAC – Re recent Goonyella tour, VA said they were “a good bunch of kids and hopefully they put their hats in the ring for apprenticeships if that’s what they want.” MI said the Goonyella tour was a “really positive day” with a tour of Sondella planned for July. Programs for Years 8 and 9 students being planned by MI for August.
- MI explained the recent YAC survey results, including confirmation from YAC members that they speak to up to 20 fellow non-YAC students about the information they learn from the YAC after each meeting (35% speak to 5-20 and 65% speak to 1-5); MI said this shows the word of the program is spread via face-to-face interactions. General discussion of university plans including options for a building in Clermont and a satellite campus/office in Moranbah, as well as further YAC survey results showing the large number of high school students who want to study at or close to home, not in Brisbane or Mackay. CF said, “And then we don’t lose them.”

CHILDCARE PROJECT UPDATE – Mel Comerford, Childcare Leadership Alliance

- Mel Comerford presented to the STAC members, thanking them for supporting the CLA for the past two years. The CLA began operations in July 2022, funded by BMA within the pilot regions of Moranbah and Dysart. The objective remains to ensure that quality childcare can occur in the regions. “The phone rings up to 40 times a week with people asking about childcare, and people won’t move here if they can’t get childcare,” Mel said.
- “The two-year pilot has been a wonderful success, we’ve learnt a lot.”

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- MD when the CLA started there were 56 staff vacancies, and the lack of available childcare was impacting every business in town, including schools, services and companies. This was also impacting children's learning and development.
- Project update: Over the past two years, the CLA has tested three local, domestic and international recruitment campaigns, and by far the most successful has been the international campaign. The problem has been sourcing accommodation for the new staff.
- Two sponsoring entities in Moranbah are Simply Sunshine and Moranbah Early Learning Centre, and now Lady Gowrie in Dysart. MW said the addition of Lady Gowrie "deserves a round of applause."
- In Moranbah, 27 educators have been engaged at a cost of about \$900K; with childcare centres renting and furnishing a total of 21 houses and units for these staff members. "Simply Sunshine has now hit an occupancy rate of 96%, and they are starting to see the revenue benefits of that."
- Another five educators are on the way right now. CF asked if there was housing for them, and MC said they are currently looking for an additional six houses to rent.
- "We have halved the waitlist in Moranbah from over 300 to 150, but we are seeing it climb again at the moment."
- There are still vacancies for 29 more educators: 19 in Dysart and 10 in Moranbah, which is about an additional \$1M in funding required.
- The CLA will be partnering with BMA for two more years and is also looking at 'place-based funding'. "The confidence they've put into the centres, along with BMA, is amazing and we are very grateful."
- MC said she's very proud to be a finalist in the Queensland Mining Awards, with BMA, noting there has also been a significant uplift in the quality of childcare as well.
- MC said the educators are here for four years before they can apply for residency, and they may have better retention if they bring younger families.
- MC said a possible future retention strategy is to make home ownership easier for them, as home ownership is out of their reach in their home countries.
- MC said some family daycare centres are charging up to \$190 per day, but they have longer and more flexible hours. There are also issues with the minimum staff salary for international workers; they are required by law to be paid more than local childcare workers.
- STAC members to have more conversations about why other companies aren't supporting the CLA and fixing childcare in Moranbah and Dysart.

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HOUSING PROJECT UPDATE

- Recap of former IAHT meeting outcomes: ST invited into IAHT Board etc.
- Conversations were really positive in April, May and June, with a review into the IAHT being 'scoped' and the new Mayor committing to respond within six weeks at the recent meeting with ST.
- GWC progress includes: a regional lobbying strategy including a housing grant for all new builds (not just first homebuyers), regional targets within all new housing funding rounds, social housing (a roadmap to achieve targets), and incentives for retirement living and aged care solutions.
- MW confirmed that the Grosvenor housing estate is about to come up for sale. AD questioned what impact that might have on housing prices?
- CF said it's important to have the planned review of IAHT to have some clear direction.
- MW said there is a public misconception that the Mills Ave development is Housing Commission but it's not – they are going into the IAHT pool. "We are discussing at the next meeting to use these for businesses and service workers to ensure those properties stay linked to essential services and businesses in town."
- MW also said there are plans for another 8 or 9 low income units being built in another part of town, and they will also be for low-income people.
- MI said next move is to present to IAHT on 3 July; CF said her "calendar is clear". MI to confirm details (*see Actions*).
- JC asked about how staff are being housed for the hospital development. MP also said she has 6.5 classrooms being built as well, and the construction firm has hired a number of houses to share across their workforce.
- MI mentioned meeting with Opposition Housing spokesperson Tim Mander tomorrow; it was also noted that Housing Minister Meaghan Scanlon has not yet responded since the Community Cabinet meeting with Ash Dowd.

VOLUNTEERING PROJECT

- Ten new videos are being edited from five video shoots with five clubs/community organisations in May.
- MI said the new videos will align with the categories and issues noted from the original survey results.
- Review of new material: one draft video was played to the STAC and the reception was positive.

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BMA REVIEW – SMART TRANSFORMATION

- JC told the meeting there will be a BMA review of Smart Transformation, and there will be an opportunity for BMA to engage with everybody in the next couple of months.
- There is funding through to June 2025 currently, but this is a “good opportunity to measure success and the Smart Transformation project as a whole, including long-term success versus immediate success, to help tell that really positive story.”
- An external reviewer will be conducting the review in the next few months, and will be speaking to STAC members and stakeholders.
- MI said any gaps identified in the review can be considered for addition to the STAC review for 2025.
- BB said, “it was more about (4)IR when I came onboard, and now it’s really evolved.”
- CF told the meeting she’s now feeding the Smart Transformation roadmaps to the Isaac Chamber of Commerce, and summed up: “Many groups are now engaging with us, through the facilitator.”

ACTIONS – MORANBAH

- MI to follow up on further lobbying efforts with Telstra and the NBN after STAC members agreed yes, they support staying in touch with GW3 and continuing to lobby Telstra.
- MI to discuss IRC’s September deadline for any future funding requirements with Outback Futures, as noted by MW.
- MI to send STAC members the details of the renewable energy workshop.
- MI to confirm details of next IAHT meeting planned for 3 July with CF and other STAC members.

NEXT MEETING DATE

Tuesday 13 August, 12pm. CF gave notice that she will be in Canada for the August meeting.

Meeting closed at 2.07pm.

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