

Chair's Report 12/08/2026

Within our Committee and looking forward at all the “Head winds” facing us we need to get the right balance between Economic Growth and Resilience. We also need to be clear what we mean, otherwise we will forever be talking at cross purposes amongst each other and to the wider community

Our Staff have some excellent papers for us to ponder on – and they will challenge [in a healthy way] what we are trying to achieve.

The Energy Forum was a very successful, productive event and was a great opportunity to mix and wrestle with other people's concepts and ideas. It did also highlight as our Chair, Warren Maher articulated well, that while we can do the hard graft to produce good data, we [WRC] aren't mandated [nor is anyone in the Waikato] to be “Flag Bearers” for the benefit of the Greater Waikato Region. This in itself gives more reason for us to fight hard for “one homogenous Region” and perhaps for us to unashamedly push for Unity and Regional focus, even at this early stage of the process of LG reform.

We are well blessed with a lot of excellent work by the Team on Regional Resilience. It is the definition of and enactment Resilience that we need to grapple with. For me it is for us to be prepared and ready to take on anything just as in a Game of Netball or Rugby....and always to have a fall-back position as in defence tactics, from which to move forward again.

The formation of a Regional Economic Development Strategy Steering Group Advisory Panel is only one of our building blocks of a series of initiatives. We will also reach out to those big and small players in the Regional “Money Making” interface across the Region. I implore you to “absorb” Tariq's diagram on page 39 as it shows very graphically the many engine houses of the Waikato Economy. And while Resilience is critical, we need to enable and empower these diverse “engine houses”, not tomorrow or next year, but now, to pay for the things we want and need.