

## **Tamaki Samoan Collective Meeting – 3<sup>rd</sup> May 2017**

All Present:

Tamaki Samoan Collective: Teleiai Edwin Puni (Chair Pacific Leadership Forum), Rev Setefano, Dr Puni, various church leaders and representatives from educational, health, social service providers, youth sectors & local residents

TRC – John Robertson & John Holyoake

ADHB – Camille Gheerbrant

MTLB Board Members: Josephine Bartley (Chair 1), Chris Makoare (Chair 2), Debbie Burrows, Nerissa Henry, Alan Verrall

MTLB Staff: Ossie Manukuo, Shirley Coutts, Leora Hirsh, Tracey Freeman

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The meeting was opened with a hymn and prayer.

Introductions and acknowledgements were made to all MTLB Board members, TRC, ADHB and Samoan Church leaders and representatives from various organisations. The majority of members from the Pacific Leaders Forum that were attending either live or work in Maungakiekie.

Teleiai (Chair of the meeting) introduced the chosen theme of the meeting - “Tatupu” Samoan word for rebirth, regrowth, regeneration of the Samoan people. The purpose of the gathering was to provide an opportunity for Samoan Pacific leaders to communicate their issues/concerns/aspirations in their own voice and not through and/or as interpreted by someone else.

Attendees acknowledged that this was an auspicious event as this was the first official meeting of the Pacific Leaders Forum and the Auckland Council. There was a desire to continue to build this relationship in a meaningful way and a willingness to be part of the solution to the problems that will be identified.

### Discussion of Issues / Concerns / Aspirations of Pacific peoples:

It was noted in opening remarks by the Chair that Pacific peoples are amongst some of the poorest in New Zealand. The desire of the group is to address barriers to progress, to advocate for regeneration and work collaboratively with Council and other agencies on solutions. How can we get Pacific residents of Maungakiekie-Tamaki to lead/be an example of the regrowth?

### **Barriers to progress for Pacific peoples in Auckland include:**

#### **1. Lack of participation / Pacific community engagement needs to be done well**

There is a disconnect between people and agencies. Reaching out through meetings like this is an attempt to try and overcome this barrier.

Engagement with Pacific community needs to be done properly. We speak for ourselves.

Let's do it together, don't do it for us. We want to participate in the actions coming out of the meetings. The relationship goes both ways. When groups call a meeting, it needs to be well-attended by Council. Council shouldn't just prioritise attendance at its own events. This meeting is a good example.

## **2. Welfare of Pacific Islanders**

There is no dignity in living in a garage or being unemployed. Auckland *Tāmaki Makaurau* is supposed to be a place desired by many. For those with poor welfare, it is a place to be survived.

## **3. Affordable housing / housing ownership**

How can they be involved in housing ownership schemes? Housing is unchartered territory for some. We need a housing provider that has a heart for the Pacific. There is only 1 registered Pacific housing provider. Many social services groups are open to being part of the solution.

## **4. Youth**

How can we keep them in school, furthering their education and securing their future? A lot of kids are coming through with problems. Those dropping out of school, when asked why, often say they hate school or dislike teachers. Solutions start in the home. We need to understand the underlying issues and work to solve those e.g. parents cannot afford uniforms, school fees, shoes, etc; this can be made worse when housing costs and increases in costs of living. One family was recently told their rent would be increased from 80p/week to 300p/week. How do we help those families address those issues?

## **5. Health issues (including mental health)**

Glen Innes, Panmure & Eastern Corridor is considered the 'Hot Pot' for conditions. The main problem is due to the condition of social housing. Many residents need to travel to the city or Greenlane to receive treatment – there's nothing local. There are some community-owned initiatives being taken to try and help combat these eg Walking Samoans. Keen interest on community gardens but need land/space.

Mental health – stress of poverty, unemployment, poor health & poor housing is a mental problem. How can we overcome these issues?

## **6. Job creation**

How can unemployment within the community be combatted?

## **7. Housing challenge**

Housing needs to be looked at in its entirety, not just about rent/mortgage. Create affordable housing for healthy living, but not just housing, to include an economic zone with educational facilities and a local church for people to attend, this will help to keep youth engaged in the church, and off the streets. A bakery would be well received as it creates jobs for the community too.

### **The requests/needs identified to Council and partners were:**

#### **1. Community gardens**

Pacific Gardeners Club want to have their own piece of land for various gardening initiatives.

#### **2. Walking Samoans / winter gear**

Walking Samoans requested some help towards purchase of warm jackets & shoes for use by walkers during the colder months. They are also seeking support for a local venue they can use when it rains and they are unable to do the regular scheduled walk.

#### **3. Car wash activity / advice needed**

A church youth group has been prevented from doing car washes at a specific location. They think this might be due to location or do they require a permit? The car wash activity was being done as a fundraiser for young churchgoers and the activity was designed to keep young people engaged in an activity on the weekend instead of being idle. What locations can they continue to have this at?

**4. Local hub for Specialist Medical Services**

Provide specialist medical services that is accessible locally, whereby residents are not required to travel too far.

**5. Land for church and other social infrastructure (to support housing developments)**

Can establish a local church for people to attend, this will help to keep youth engaged and off the streets.

**6. Land for a 'marae'**

Currently there is no specific location where the Samoan community can come together.

**7. Build a long standing relationship with the Local Board, stakeholders and partners – request for a quarterly meeting**

Want to collectively help each other to achieve more, building a strong community.

Chris Makoare of MTLB responded by saying that there are major issues around housing. Panuku currently tasked with disposing of some land no longer needed by Council. Chris advised that any groups looking for funding can apply for grants to assist them, also the Board will look at ways to assist the various groups in how they can access the funds needed. Chris also mentioned that the Walking Samoans must look after themselves, and the Board will do its best to align the group with someone who can assist them in meeting their need for warm jackets and shoes.

John Robertson of TRC explained how TRC works and that the government and Auckland Council own TRC. TRC is responsible for the plans and strategies that take place within the Tamaki area. The TRC is special in that it's the only one within New Zealand that has the mandate it has to regenerate and help with various projects within the Tamaki area.

John went on to acknowledge the leadership within the group and commented on how passionate the Samoan community is about various issues and wanting to resolve them. The older Samoan group was also acknowledged for their contribution specifically in the manufacturing industry within the area some time back.

We have a wonderful community, great Local Board, and TRC helping in housing renewal, with 2,800 homes currently being owned by TRC.

TRC's agenda is to:

- Facilitate economic development: jobs, construction, rebuilding houses
- Employment initiatives
- Training programmes
- Placemaking: parks that work, support good community enterprise
- Social transformation: rejuvenate community, education from start of life through schooling, to tertiary education and then jobs.

John Holyoake added that the Samoan people's concerns have been heard, and that with partnering, together we can get things right.

Camille Gheerbrant of ADHB responded with explaining that the key focus for ADHB is the Tamaki Health & Wellbeing project. Camille acknowledged the work that is being done by the Pacific Practice in the Tamaki region.

The DHB recognises the lack of communication amongst the agencies and want to bridge the gap. When looking at mental health, they are taking into consideration the entire wellbeing of the person. It starts with community and sees a great opportunity to work together.

Josephine Bartley of MTLB addressed the group by expressing her thanks for raising these issues with the Board. Josephine asked to leave these issues with the Board to give them an opportunity to speak with the mayor and other members of council on some of the issues raised to try and help to come to a resolution.

Josephine explained that some of the issues raised are very easy to fix, and some of them are much more complicated, but will look at various avenues to help with things like supplying of jackets, access to a hall, etc. In the medium term to address the gardens, etc, but the bigger issues will require a more long term solution.

In conclusion, Teleiai expressed great interest in meeting further with TRC, and to have another meeting with the MTLB Board members either quarterly/six monthly to continue to build relationships.

The meeting drew to a close with a hymn and prayer.