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Chair
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WREDA Statement of Intent (SOI) 2017-2020

Dear Peter

Following the Wellington Regional Strategy's recent meeting I have noted below the matters raised by the Committee in respect of WREDA's draft SOI.

1. While SOIs generally focus more on the "What" and less on the "How", there were a number of instances where the Letter of Expectations (LoE) did request specific actions, including:
 - Growing the visitor economy.
 - What actions need to be taken to put in place a programme of inward investment, particularly in tourism?
 - Growing science, technology, innovation companies.
 - Actions that contribute to a "step change" in skilled migrants, particularly in the tech sector.
 - Actions to address skills shortages through skills and workforce development.

The final SOI should contain brief outlines on the specific actions that are planned to be undertaken in the areas noted above.

2. The SOI forecasts increases in visitor spend by \$600m over the next 3 years, a growth rate of 27%. What are the estimated increases in the number of jobs created by this additional spend?
3. The number of jobs successfully attracted to Wellington falls from the current year's forecast of 130 to 120 in 2017/18 and falling to 50 in 2018/19. The increase of 120 in 2017/18 is due entirely to increases in staff at Concentrix. Therefore, apart from this there are no additional jobs attracted in 2017/18. The Committee expects that the targets in the SOI would assume that there would be increases in the targets for jobs attracted over and above the Concentrix jobs.

4. The continued development and delivery of Major Events (including new events) is noted in the LoE, this should be reflected in increases in both attendances and the economic returns targets in the SOI.
5. A listing of the Major Events for 2017/18 could be noted in the final SOI.
6. The source of the performance measures should be noted - for example, the Department of Statistics.
7. The 2017/18 year is the third and final year of the international student programme. Is the programme going to continue or be replaced? If it is not replaced, will this have an impact on international student numbers?
8. The programmes undertaken by Creative HQ could be expanded in the final SOI, as they are only mentioned in passing.
9. There needs to be better metrics regarding the performance of Creative HQ. Currently they are limited to the investment portfolio value and investments raised re the Lighting Lab programme (both of which are static) and the commercialisation of revenue from commercial services.
10. Delivering the benefits and efficiencies from WREDA being one organisation to create a project fund is noted in the SOI, but there is no mention of the timing and the dollars that may be available.
11. The Regional Business Partner Programme is a contract with Government related to the number of businesses supported through government programmes. Of greater relevance to the WRS is the outcome for Wellington of any such support, and details about this should be included. For example, exports won, level of R&D grants attracted, investment attracted, additional staff employed. These align better with the Key Goals stated in the SOI.
12. In the Attract Business and Investment section there needs to be further detail on what specific "support" is to be provided and the "value-add" of WREDA involvement.
13. One of WREDA's aims is to be the go-to organisation for trade growth, yet there are no specific references to helping grow exports (apart from Tourism). New revenue generation from exports is a performance indicator in the regional strategy and specific activities in this area would be expected.
14. There are some targets which are not particularly ambitious, in particular:
 - Long-term migration, which is static at current levels (although these are at historically high levels)
 - Media programme, visitor attraction stories are below the current year's SOI
 - Investments raised re the Lighting Lab programme are only a third of the targets set in the current SOI.
15. An additional performance measure should be the number of Australian visitors arriving via Wellington Airport. This is an important and early indicator of the success or otherwise of WREDA's Australian marketing.

16. WREDA's vision is;

To be the most prosperous, liveable and vibrant region in Australasia by 2025

The final SOI should include discussion on how progress against the vision will be measured.

The Committee next meets on 30 May and the Committee would appreciate having WREDA's final SOI to discuss at this meeting.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be 'JL', written in a cursive style.

Justin Lester
Chair
Wellington Regional Strategy Committee

cc: Chris Whelan chris.whelan@wellingtonnz.com

