**Notes from 5 November planning meeting for the South West Brisbane Workforce Futures Forum: Version 2**

**Attendees**: Bill Brown(Smith Family); Don Whitehouse(RDA Brisbane); Edwina Gundelach(Skills Queensland); Alex Stanojevic(AIG Group); Carol Webb(DET); Regan Spence(QSA); Judy Robinson, for David Curran(EQ); Julie Bell(Smith Family); Lex Mason(DEEWR); Garry Nelson(DEEWR); Jason Wade(Smith Family);Ross Naidoo (Principal Regional Development Officer, Brisbane Southside, DEEDI: ross.naidoo@deedi.qld.gov.au ));Mike Burris (Deputy State Manager, DEEWR: mike.burris@deewr.com.au )

**Notes from meeting**:

 Don opened the meeting, welcomed the participants and briefly outlined the history and role of RDA-Brisbane as the broker bringing together the community and service providers involved in the delivery of education and training services in the South West Brisbane area; the RDA is committed to the funding of three forums and a long term involvement with the South West Brisbane community.

Bill set the scene for the proposed series of forums that are designed to improve the effectiveness of the delivery of education and training services in the SW Brisbane region, to let all the participants know what each other is doing, and to fill some of the gaps that are obvious in the current situation. Bill spoke about the role of the Smith Family in dealing with the current complex cultural mix with predominant ethnic groups-Polynesians, Africans, Indigenous Australians, and Vietnamese- and the need to involve the total community in the forums. Bill expressed his wish that the series of forums would promote discussions that create a climate for training and education providers to work together, possibly even developing a model that could be duplicated in other challenging, culturally diverse areas such as Zillmere and Redlands. Bill then asked the meeting if the objectives for the forums were clear enough, too broad, or too specific, and what advice could the participants give.

General discussion followed with the following points raised:

* We must not do things to the community, but rather build and empower the community from the inside, with the community taking ownership of the issues raised at the forums.
* We must identify heroes in the community and let them lead.
* There is a skill shortage crisis coming and the opportunity exists for the local community to become job ready ie matching workforce training to community job needs.
* The forums should aim to get runs on the board by working with small groups of people at first (say 10 people).
* We need to find people who can fill the workforce gaps (and want to). The biggest problems in the area are social issues and generational unemployment.
* We need to identify the level of support that is required.
* We need to identify employers who will take on “youth at risk”.
* We need to link agencies to avoid duplication
* On the issue of “job readiness”, the students of Forest Lake are bored. As a result, they are hanging out in the local shopping centres (then causing trouble), dabbling with alcohol and drugs and are involved in vandalism and graffiti.
* The SW Brisbane area is currently over-serviced with service agencies and needs some “social enterprise “models to get kids to engage in education. If young people start working together with shared visions and shared strategies, then they will start to achieve, and their families will follow.

At this point, Bill summarised:

* Residual capability building is important. The forums will need to create a “critical mass” to move forward.
* Need to keep forums “small” to achieve success (not just a talkfest).
* Need to have industry involved to get outcomes. Do not need more services.
* Need to align “enterprise models” with job pathways and accredited training.
* Two indigenous men from the local community are already identified who want to build local community partnerships.
* What industry wants is the same as the education and training providers: employees with the “right” attitude who will stay for the long haul.

Bill then asked: “Who are the key players and what are the key issues?”

* RDA-Brisbane. Committed to managing/funding three forums.
* Bill Kingston: he has access to Energex information regarding 40 job placements and funded training
* Indigenous young people need industry to mentor them and this is challenging because the “head space” of the kids is not there.
* There are issues regarding the quality supply of kids from Forest Lake SHS and Glenala SHS.
* Both Glenala SHS and Forest Lake SHS (?) are national partnership schools with key performance indicators around attainment, transition and VET outcomes.
* QSA has data from the region about student academic achievement.
* Industry people need to be involved in schools and involved in the forums. Key attendees need to be Principals, influential teachers, and local industry people- and they need a key project.
* Job readiness is important because “there is nothing to do in Forest Lake, so they drink.”
* DEEWR can provide data about the 15-24 age group unemployed, and can bring service providers to the table.
* What about the local Chamber of Commerce? Skilling Queenslanders for Work will be involved.
* Griffith University needs to be involved because they are heavily involved in low socio-economic aspiration raising.
* The Police?
* Mike O’Hagan from Mini-Movers could be a worthwhile participant.
* Bill Potter (?)

Bill thanked participants for the input and closed the meeting with the comment that the next tasks were to recognise that:

* The South West Region was a suitable place to test the model that was emerging from the discussion
* The meeting members were committed to providing on-going access to their experience, expertise and information
* The RDA will commence the design process for the initial forum and keep all informed.