

**22 April 2021**

**Tauranga**

### **Government Ministers join forces with SmartGrowth Leadership**

SmartGrowth, the group bringing together Tauranga and Western Bay of Plenty councils, iwi, community and business organisations and key government agencies, has today announced its membership will include central government representation.

Ministers Hon Nanaia Mahuta and Hon Dr Megan Woods were present for the inaugural SmartGrowth Leadership Joint Committee meeting and signing ceremony held in Tauranga today, where it was announced that Government ministers, or their appointees, will sit on the SmartGrowth Leadership Group Joint Committee and will have full voting rights alongside local members.

Western Bay of Plenty Mayor Garry Webber said it is one of the few times that central government has partnered with local government in this way.

“SmartGrowth is bringing together the key players from our region to partner with government as we collectively look to tackle issues and work on providing solutions,” he said.

“Having Ministers at the decision-making table with regional leaders is significant.

“It will ensure we are aligned and working together to best manage growth for our communities, with a shared understanding of our region’s needs including housing, transport, access to education and environmental matters.”

Mayor Webber, who is Deputy Chair of the SmartGrowth Leadership Group, said that as one of the fastest growing regions in the country, the western Bay of Plenty has many opportunities and challenges to face.

“We thank Ministers and their officials for their foresight in joining the SmartGrowth Leadership Group Joint Committee,” he said.

SmartGrowth provides a unified vision, direction and voice for the future of the Tauranga and Western Bay of Plenty regions. The Leadership Group is responsible for implementing the SmartGrowth Strategy and Implementation Plan on behalf of ratepayers in the Tauranga, Western Bay of Plenty, and Bay of Plenty Regional Council areas.

The inaugural Leadership Group Committee today also voted unanimously to appoint Peter Winder as the committee’s independent Chairperson, effective immediately.

Mr Winder brings a wealth of local government, consulting, advising and leadership experience. He is a previous Chief Executive of Auckland Regional Council, Chief Executive of Local Government New

Zealand, Commissioner and Crown Manager at Kaipara District Council, and Chair of the Review and Observer Team at Tauranga City Council.

“This is an important position for the Bay of Plenty region and today’s meeting with central Government is a key milestone,” Mr Winder said.

“We have set our direction and focus areas for the SmartGrowth Leadership Group, and in the coming weeks I will be meeting with our key stakeholders across the district to align our expectations and work programme.”

Mayor Webber confirmed that the SmartGrowth Leadership Group Joint Committee will continue to meet quarterly to discuss its progress in advancing the social, economic, environmental, and cultural well-being of the western Bay of Plenty.

“It is an exciting time, but there is a lot of work ahead.”

For more information, visit [smartgrowthbop.org.nz](http://smartgrowthbop.org.nz)

**ENDS**

**Media contacts:**

Peter Winder, Independent Chair +64 21 657 048

Garry Webber, Deputy Chair +64 270 3971

**Notes to Editors**

*Full membership of the SmartGrowth Leadership Group Committee is attached.*

## SmartGrowth Leadership Group

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### Committee Members

<b>Independent Chairperson:</b>	<b>Peter Winder</b>
Bay of Plenty Regional Council:	Chairman Cr Doug Leeder Cr Jane Nees Cr Stuart Crosby Cr Andrew von Dadelszen (alternate)
Tauranga City Council Commissioners	Anne Tolley (Chair) Stephen Selwood Bill Wasley Shad Rolleston (alternate)
Western Bay of Plenty District Council:	Mayor Garry Webber Deputy Mayor Cr John Scrimgeour Cr Don Thwaites No alternate appointed
Tangata Whenua Representatives:	Kevin Tohiariki Irene Walker Matire Duncan Puhirake Ihaka
Bay of Plenty District Health Board:	Ron Scott (Non-voting)
Minister for Local Government:	Hon Nanaia Mahuta
Minister for Housing and Urban Development	Hon Dr Megan Woods
Minister for Local Government Alternate:	Richard Ward
Waka Kotahi:	David Speirs (Non-voting)
Waka Kotahi Alternate:	Cole O'Keefe
Quorum:	11
Meeting Frequency:	Quarterly