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Chamber, Council forge three-year partnership to boost regional business growth

The Waikato Chamber of Commerce and South Waikato District Council have announced a three-year partnership to strengthen business connectivity and economic prosperity and resilience across the district.

The collaboration will see a dedicated part-time Chamber staff member based in the South Waikato to deliver networking opportunities, export support, and advocacy services to local businesses.

The partnership will mean Chamber members in South Waikato will gain access to networking events connecting local enterprises with regional and international markets, export document certification services, advocacy on issues impacting businesses, and learning opportunities.

Waikato Chamber of Commerce CEO Don Good emphasised the strategic importance of the initiative.

“This partnership builds on our successful 2024 launch in South Waikato, where we saw strong demand for better regional connections. By stationing Chamber expertise locally, we’re breaking down barriers for businesses to thrive in global markets while amplifying their voices on issues that matter to them.

“It opens doors for South Waikato companies to tap into our networks and access practical tools, whether it’s cutting export paperwork delays or connecting manufacturers with offshore buyers.”

South Waikato District Council CEO Susan Law highlighted the alignment with Long-Term Plan community goals.

“Investing in business capability is critical for our district’s intergenerational prosperity. Through this collaboration, we’re ensuring our employers have the tools and networks to scale sustainably and create high-value jobs.

“By co-locating Chamber expertise in our district, we’re making it easier for businesses to focus on growth while we handle the connectivity and compliance.”

The initiative expands on prior collaborations between the Chamber and South Waikato entities like the South Waikato Investment Fund Trust (SWIFT), such as the recent Chamber-led networking events in Tokoroa, featuring leaders such as David Hallett from Company-X, TJ Asiata from LM4 Group, and Better Eggs CEO Gareth van der Hayden, which demonstrated the district's appetite for cross-sector collaboration.

SWIFT will provide a pro bono desk for the Chamber for the first year.

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