

Waikerie First campaign gathers momentum

Last week the Waikerie District Development Committee Chairman, Alan Hillier and Deputy Chairman, Errol Matschoss along with Mark and Connie Woodberry of Regional Breakthroughs met with Brian Cunningham, the Chief Executive of the SA Department of Trade and Economic Development (DTED) to discuss the Waikerie First Campaign.

Mr. Hillier said after the meeting. "It was a great opportunity for us to let Mr. Cunningham know that the community in the Waikerie district is prepared to do the hard work to address the challenges we face and that we plan to make sure Waikerie has not only a secure future but a great one." He went on to say that, "I think it was important that we didn't go there to complain but to share our positive message and it was clear Mr. Cunningham appreciated our approach."

The WDDC, with the assistance

of Regional Breakthroughs is working on a formal paper for DTED outlining what we have done so far and ideas on how we can be supported to move forward.

"We have a history of rising to our best during adversity," said Mr. Hillier. "After the floods of 1956 Waikerie demonstrated its

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entrepreneurial spirit and rebuilt Waikerie through the leadership of the community. Although this time it is the lack of water that has created the need, once again the community is taking the lead."

Waikerie First Working Groups will be meeting over the next weeks to consolidate planning and to begin putting the many good ideas generated so far into action. Anyone interested in being part of the campaign are invited to contact one of

the WDDC members to let them know.

Don't forget the Waikerie Airport Hangar Ball on Saturday, May 23 to formally launch the Waikerie First Campaign. See the Hangar Ball flyers for further details. Ticket sales are available through The River News, Errol Matschoss Motors, Sutton Ford and Agri-Tech.

On Friday and Saturday of this week, a team from Flinders University will be visiting Waikerie and Barmera. Professor Andrew Beer is bringing his regional development students to the area and later in the year they will be writing papers on the towns and will share the results with the communities.

Mr. Hillier said "We hope to show them how Waikerie is dealing with its challenges."

For further information about the Waikerie First Campaign contact Alan Hillier on 0418 839 646.