



Media Statement
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GOVERNMENT STILL HAS A LOT TO LEARN ABOUT COLLABORATION WITH COMMUNITIES

Calls from the Tangata Whenua, community and voluntary sector for the Government to build quality, open relationships that recognise and maintain the independence of this important sector appear to have been completely ignored.

Last week, the Community Sector Taskforce, an independent body of leaders within the Sector, called for the Minister for the Community and Voluntary Sector Hon Luamanuvao Winnie Laban to work inclusively and respectfully with the Community Sector Taskforce in the organisation of an inaugural Sector-Government leadership forum.

Instead the Government disregarded this request and rolled ahead with its own plans to organise a steering group to plan the forum.

Yesterday the Co-Chairs of the Community Sector Taskforce met the Steering Group and delivered to the Minister the reaction of the Sector to the Government's recent actions.

At the meeting, Co-Chairs Tony Spelman and Sam Sefuiva informed the Minister that the Tangata Whenua, community and voluntary sector will continue to maintain a strong commitment to working collaboratively for the benefit of communities up and down the country.

"However recent unilateral attempts on the part of Government to control the way the Sector organises and prepares for this forum have the potential to jeopardise the event and its outcomes. If the process to develop relationships is wrong, those relationships are likely to fail," says Mr Spelman.

"The Government Steering Group members at today's meeting were interested to support the work of the Community Sector Taskforce to date and so we are pushing on with the planning on the same basis that was developed and mandated by the Sector on many occasions over the past three years," says Mr Sefuiva.

"Notwithstanding the current difficulties, the Community Sector Taskforce looks forward to the benefits of a new way of working with Government based on the collaborative model of working that we use among ourselves," says Mr Spelman.

ENDS

Community Sector Taskforce



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