

TOP REGIONAL INSIGHTS - CONSULTATION SPOTLIGHT

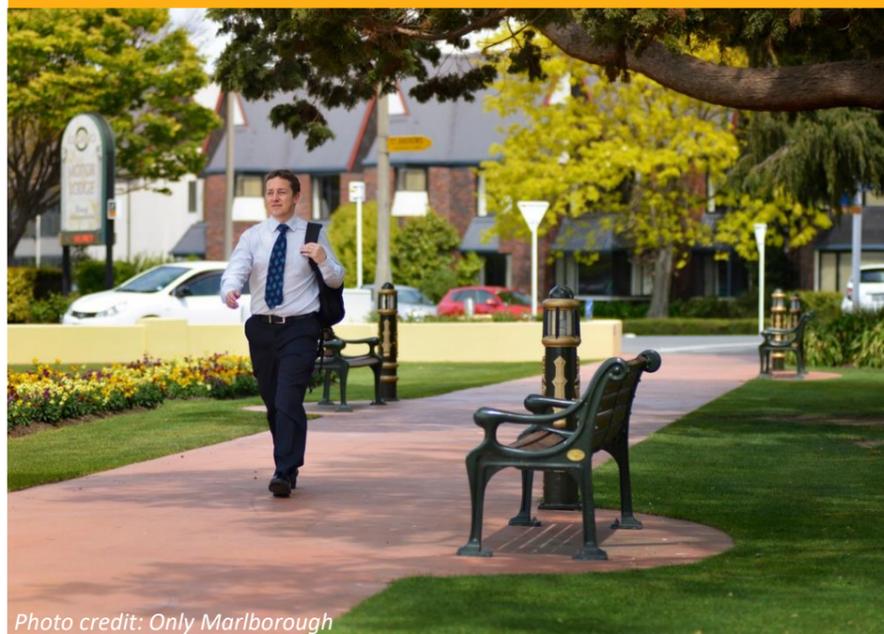


Photo credit: Only Marlborough

The RSLG released a consultation document in February to engage with the community and stakeholders on the Marlborough regional workforce plan (RWP). The consultation was open until 14 March 2022 and a wide range of feedback was received from groups in technology, wine, housing, education, tourism, Māori, central government, aquaculture, business, youth, retail, aviation, forestry, and health.

Overall, the feedback showed that stakeholders support the vision, aspirations, and focus areas proposed for the RWP. They liked the regional story with the supporting data all in one place. Submitters are happy the RSLG is working on these, mainly longstanding, challenges. They value the outputs from the RSLG, such as these Local Insights Reports and the environmental scan, and would like to see more. Many lamented the gaps in Marlborough specific workforce and skills data and information.

Stakeholders asked the RSLG to remain Regional and Strategic. They value the strategic focus of the group and support this work continuing. Some felt that the RSLG was the only group taking a strategic view of these issues and warned against becoming distracted by tactical responses. They also want the group to continue to focus on Marlborough specific challenges and opportunities. They see the role of the group being to facilitate collaboration between stakeholders; conduct ongoing research and provide feedback on the changing landscape of the regional labour market; and provide information on methods to overcome local labour and skills challenges.

CONSULTATION BY THE NUMBERS



12 Workshops to develop the RWP with over 200 workshop participants, delivered in partnership with the Marlborough District Council during engagement on the inaugural Marlborough Economic Wellbeing Strategy.



30 Submitters provided written or verbal feedback on the consultation document.



18 of Marlborough's 28 largest employers with 100+ staff responded to the consultation.



3 Media articles with positive coverage.

CROSS-CUTTING LABOUR MARKET CHALLENGES

Through the consultation feedback we identified five cross-cutting labour market challenges that effect almost all sectors and population groups. Improvements in any one of these areas will have broad benefits for the Marlborough labour market in general.

- 1. Marlborough as an attractive place to live and work.** Marlborough is not always considered an attractive place to live and work, as it has a reputation of being a town people retire to, so it can be difficult to attract younger people. People sometimes move here and are disappointed by the activities and opportunities and leave the region. *"Your consultation document highlights exactly where we falter – regional appeal, supportive infrastructure, community offerings, etc"* – Employer
- 2. Perceptions of industries and careers.** People have poor perceptions about our local industries. This includes perceived low pay, poor working conditions and limited career opportunities. In some cases this also includes perceptions about environmental impacts. *"We need to change the narrative to talk about the opportunities with good, high skills, high paid work."* – Employer
- 3. Connections between schools and industry.** There are poor connections between schools and industry which contribute to our young people not knowing what the career opportunities are in Marlborough. It limits the pathways from school to employment. *"Years 7, 8, 9, 10 should be peak employment exposure before you need to focus on credits and exams."* – Youth workshop
- 4. Career and learning pathways.** Career and learning pathways are not always clear for people looking to enter an industry or even for people currently within the industry. *"We focus intensely in providing entry pathways for youth... but the 'brain drain' occurs often at that early to mid-career level"* – Employer
- 5. Everyone in the region being aware of career and training opportunities.** A large number of people change careers, enter or re-enter the workforce every year. People need to be aware of what opportunities there are in Marlborough both in terms of training and jobs. These people often need to learn while they earn. This will become increasingly important as our industries undergo technological change. *"My concern is that once we attract a well skilled workforce to the area (along with their partners potentially), are we going to be able to sustain their development needs and retain them professionally through future opportunities?"* - Employer

TOP REGIONAL CHALLENGES

- 1. Accommodation and housing.** There was a LOT of feedback about the challenges of accommodation and housing; second only to attraction as an issue. Housing affects employers ability to recruit and retain staff in our priority sectors (machinery operators, mussel processors, aged carers, labourers, etc). It effects the workers essential to our community such as teachers, nurses, and council staff. It is also a constraint on education, training and skills for tertiary students and apprentices.
- 2. Secondary education.** Employers and whanau are concerned about secondary schooling, particularly the low NCEA achievement rates. Currently, 13 percent of students leave school without NCEA level 1, which affects their employability, career and future life outcomes. Going to school elsewhere weakens links to the region which already struggles to retain young people in the workforce. The Te Tatoru o Wairau Marlborough Schools rebuild is seen as a key opportunity.
- 3. Health services.** Access to health services as the population ages is a concern of many. The DHB has said recruitment is the biggest issue across all health professions, with zero applicants for vacancies an increasing trend. DHB projections show another ward will be required at Wairau Hospital by 2035.

We acknowledge the affect that these issues have on our region and will approach them from a skills and labour perspective in the RWP.

OUR FOCUS UNTIL 30
JUNE 2022:

Producing the first Marlborough regional workforce plan.