

Discussion Document released

A discussion document that will help to shape the new Auckland Council is released by the Auckland Transition Agency (ATA) today.

The document has been circulated to the chief executives and staff of Auckland's existing local government organisations. There are three parts to the document:

- Part 1: a **draft organisational structure** showing the most senior roles in the new council, including proposed groupings of functions under the Interim Chief Executive.
- Part 2: a **draft scope of workforce change** document. This includes some descriptions of the types of roles or functions which may be subject to the greatest and the least degree of change during the transition.
- Part 3: a description of the **draft protocols and processes** to be applied during the transition. This document outlines the draft principles proposed when staff move from jobs with existing local councils to roles with the new Auckland Council and describes how people will be treated when a suitable job is not available.

Key points include:

- The draft organisational structure is designed to promote clear accountability for community outcomes and customer service. Management roles are significant and meaningful, with appropriate spans of control.
- There is a commitment to maintaining or enhancing council service delivery.
- Council staff who deal directly with customers will generally remain in their current locations. It is not intended generally to review staff numbers or roles of people involved in community facilities (such as libraries, parks, and recreational facilities) and community services.
- Strategy, policy and planning functions and corporate services will be reorganised to support the new governance and operational needs. When redundancies occur, they will be managed in accordance with the terms and conditions of employment agreements and legislation.
- The picture presented today in the discussion document is not final. Analysis and design work on the council and on council-controlled organisations (CCOs) is continuing; IT system constraints may impact the timing of some location change.
- There will be opportunities for employees to provide input on service design, development of the resulting staffing plans and their implementation. Mechanisms for this have been established and general comments are welcome to info@ata.govt.nz.

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ATA Executive Chairman Mark Ford said: “We are committed to running fair, transparent processes and are working with existing local government organisations and employees to obtain feedback.”

Following distribution to employees, the discussion document has been posted on the ATA website www.ata.govt.nz – click on Auckland Council.

What is the proposed structure of the Auckland Council?

A proposed operational structure for the new Auckland Council has been circulated today. Reporting to an Interim Chief Executive, there are three main functional groupings:

- Operations (including the delivery of community and customer services).
- Strategy and planning (covering all aspects of council regional planning).
- Finance (including support functions).

In addition to these major groups, specific other functions will report directly to the Interim Chief Executive. These include human resources, communications, risk and emergency management.

The proposed structure is shown in the discussion document which has been distributed to existing local government organisations. It is also available on www.ata.govt.nz – click on Auckland Council.

What are the guiding principles behind this proposed structure?

The following additional principles have been considered in the development of the draft structure for the new Auckland Council:

1. Consistent with the Royal Commission’s recommendations and the Government’s response in its Making Auckland Greater document, the Auckland Council will not simply replicate the current practices or structures within existing councils.
2. The structure will reflect that the governance model will be different from what we have been used to in Auckland. The Auckland Council will be a unitary authority undertaking the role of a regional council and a local council and will have a two-tier governance structure:
 - i. The governing body (Mayor and councillors) and
 - ii. Local boards.

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Decision-making will be shared between the two tiers, which have a complementary relationship. Both are responsible and democratically accountable for the decisions of the Auckland Council with respect to their allocated areas of responsibility.

The Mayor will have specific responsibilities with dedicated resources and budget.

3. The Auckland Council (i.e. the Mayor, councillors and local boards) will have appropriate support to engage with the community.
4. There will be clear linkages and management accountabilities to community outcomes and customer service.
5. The structure will support effective strategic planning and communication linkages between the governing body, local boards, the Auckland Transport Agency, Watercare Services, the Waterfront Development Agency and other CCOs.
6. Where possible, the number of management tiers will be minimised, ensuring that decision-making is at the appropriate level of the structure and that management roles are significant and meaningful, with appropriate spans of control.
7. There will be a small core executive team, both to minimise administrative costs and to ensure clear leadership direction and momentum through the transition.
8. The structure is intended to be easy to understand for staff, citizens, customers and other stakeholders.
9. The intention is to generally maintain the current mix of in-house and outsourced services, subject to the completion of the analysis and design activities within individual ATA work streams.
10. The organisation will allow for the progressive integration of systems and processes over time, while ensuring a focus on maintaining or enhancing service delivery.

What assumptions is the ATA making in planning and managing change?

1. Corporate services to the organisations (including services to the governance body and local boards) will be re-organised and located to align with the new governance and operational structures and to meet the needs of the Auckland Council, the Auckland Transport Agency, the Waterfront Development Agency, the expanded Watercare, and any other CCOs.
2. Where there are no systems constraints the aim will be to complete these reorganisations before 1 November 2010, with effect either before or from that date. Services in this category are likely to include strategy, policy and planning functions; Maori Relations; HR (subject to reviewing payroll and HRIS dependent operations); Democracy Services; Communications and Public Affairs; Project Management (including PMO services); Property; Treasury; Procurement, Legal services; Risk and Assurance; Chief Executive/Mayoral Office services; and executive group support staff.

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3. Where there are systems constraints, any change to staffing arrangements will be dependent on the timeframe for consolidating systems. Services in this category are likely to include HR roles dependent upon payroll and/or HRIS systems; call centres; information systems services; planning, consenting and regulatory services, finance functions including rating, collections and payment functions. Particular priority will be given to systems changes required for the separation of transport functions and the integration of water and wastewater services.
 4. The ATA does not intend generally to review staff numbers or roles of staff whose jobs are specific to particular community facilities such as libraries, parks and recreational facilities.
 5. The ATA does not intend generally to review staff numbers or roles of staff whose jobs are specific to particular operational work in community services such as social housing; local community development and funding; youth, safety and other community programmes and initiatives; and local events; or in infrastructural services such as stormwater, transport and water services. However where this work is located may change.
 6. Staff who deal directly with customers will generally remain in their current locations. This includes customer services and regulatory services staff. There may be some aggregation of processing and specialist functions within the region.
 7. As noted above, staff whose primary functions relate to strategy, policy and planning are likely to be involved in significant change as these functions will generally be centralised.
 8. Where staff are being brought together into a centralised or otherwise substantially reorganised function, the norm will be to transfer all current staff into the function with appointment in alternative positions or redundancy generally only considered where there is a duplication of responsibility. This is most likely an issue at supervisory/management and administrative support levels. The change process for most staff in such reorganisations is likely to involve changes in job descriptions and/or location and/or reporting line.
 9. Some corporate advisory services to functions within the organisation may be provided by staff located with the function they are advising – such as HR and finance advisory services and communications support. As well as the staff whose role is directly related to local board support there will also be staff from other functions assigned to provide support to the local boards.
 10. Where staff roles may fit with more than of the organisations involved, every effort will be made to align the timing of transition processes so that the greatest possible range of options is available to those affected.
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How will change be managed?

Decisions relating to staffing will reflect the commitment to maintain or improve current service levels and activities. Change will be managed in a consistent, fair and transparent way. A prudent approach will be taken to staff reduction where services are reorganised to minimise the loss of institutional knowledge and skills and to maintain staffing flexibility where this may be required by the new organisations.

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The individual impact of staff reductions will be minimised wherever possible by the use of less disruptive approaches, such as attrition, appointment in alternative roles, and voluntary redundancy.

As much information as practicable will be communicated in a clear and timely way so that those affected by change can make informed decision and that current employers are able to meet their responsibilities to staff through the change process. There will be opportunities for employees to provide input on service design, development of the resulting staffing plans and their implementation.

There will be a process and time for affected staff to respond to ATA change proposals with an employment impact. Systems and the associated staff will only be moved when necessary. Regard will be had to employment agreements and the obligations of existing local government organisations under them, and maximum possible support will be given to all employees affected by change.

Transition timeframe and timeline

The protocols and processes established by the ATA for the transition of staff in the new organisational structure have been developed to apply to change that will be commenced and/or completed before 1 November 2010 or by the Auckland Council and other organisations in a transition period following 1 November 2010.

Date/Timeframe	Activity
2 - 26 November 2009	Discussion document process
26 November 2009	Closing date for comment on discussion document
Later in November 2009	Development of process for recruitment of new executive team positions and opportunity for staff to have input
26 November to mid-December 2009	Review draft organisational structure and draft protocols and processes for staff transition in light of feedback
Mid-December 2009 or January 2010	Decisions and release of revised organisational structure and protocols and processes for staff transition followed by confirmation of which functions will be the subject of an ATA-led change process
January/February 2010	Map all existing employees to the relevant place in the new organisational structure, so that their future employment can either be confirmed without change or identified as subject to a potential change
February 2010	Recruitment to new executive group roles starts
January/February 2010 to 1 November 2010 and beyond	<p>First specific workforce change proposals developed. Each specific proposal will be developed within work streams, followed by a process involving staff impacted by the change proposal before final decisions are made. This process is subject to the guiding principles.</p> <p>Development of recommendations regarding post 1 November reorganisation of functions, systems and processes, including handing over the associated change process for post 1 November to the relevant organisation.</p> <p>Working towards the harmonisation of terms and conditions of employment within the Auckland Council and CCOs through agreement by the parties to collective and individual agreements.</p>