

Feedback received on Discussion Document

More than 700 submissions have been received on the Discussion Document – Organisational Structure and Staff Transition that was released by the Auckland Transition Agency (ATA) on 2 November 2009.

The submissions – totalling 1.5 million words – were collated into 3,300 individual issues, themes and recommendations. These – and the ATA's responses – are included in a new document Feedback and Decisions – Organisational Structure and Staff Transition which is released by the ATA today.

ATA Executive Chairman Mark Ford said: "We are grateful to those individuals and organisations that took the time to offer their feedback. A number of the issues have been reflected in changes we have made in relation to the draft organisational structure for tiers 1 to 3 of the new organisation. Others relate to issues below the senior management level and these will be addressed at a later stage. All of the feedback is presently being analysed and will inform the ongoing design and strategy work continuing through the ATA work streams."

Copies of the document were sent to council chief executives for circulation to staff and to employees of their council-controlled organisations. Additionally it will be available on the ATA website www.ata.govt.nz – click on Auckland Council.

Feedback related to the proposed structure of the Auckland Transport Agency and on the recruitment and job-matching proposal released by the ATA will be reviewed in the New Year.

Proposed structure for council-controlled organisations (CCOs) of the Auckland Council

A Cabinet paper containing proposals for the structure of council-controlled organisations (CCOs) for the Auckland Council was released on 3 December 2009. The proposed CCOs are:

- 1 Regional Transport Authority*
- 2 Watercare Services Limited*
- 3 Waterfront Development Agency*
- 4 Economic Development, Tourism and Events Agency
- 5 Property Holdings and Development
- 6 Major Regional Facilities
- 7 Council Investments

*These CCOs have previously been approved by Cabinet or are legislated for

A diagram showing the proposed CCO framework and giving examples of existing entities that could form part of new CCOs is available on the ATA website www.ata.govt.nz – click on Auckland Council.

The Government's decision document and supporting Cabinet papers may be accessed at Department of Internal Affairs website – click on http://www.dia.govt.nz/diawebsite.nsf/wpg_URL/Legislative-Reviews-Royal-Commission-on-Auckland-Governance-Index?OpenDocument

Work stream updates

Property

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A stock take of the primary office accommodation utilised by the existing councils has been undertaken to provide a starting point for change planning. This focuses on general office accommodation and excludes specialist accommodation associated with activities which are unlikely to change – such as libraries, stadiums and art galleries.

Existing primary office accommodation is almost fully utilised and careful planning will be required to re-allocate the existing accommodation to meet the organisational requirements of the new council and to implement any required location changes with a minimum of disruption to ongoing service provision.

CCOs, trusts and investments

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As noted above, the Cabinet has approved the ATA's proposed structure for council-controlled organisations (CCOs). This includes seven CCOs, a council committee and an advisory board. Further work is now under way. Legal work is required to ensure that any special funding arrangements or functions of the organisations continue following CCO changes.

Finance and treasury

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In addition to the eight project areas already underway, the workload of the finance and treasury team continues to grow as we become involved in CCO planning. The Integrated Treasury Group (ITG) is now meeting on a regular basis. A request for proposal (RFP) for a wholesale and/or retail bond issue in early 2010, out of the Auckland City Council as the conduit borrower, will be the first visible output from the ITG. The appointment of a Treasury adviser with responsibility for portfolio structure, hedging strategy and treasury policy, will be made shortly. An RFP for the appointment of a transactional bank is being prepared for despatch in February 2010. The decision has been taken that a complete switch of all transactional banking to a single bank is not feasible by 1 November 2010 and a staged implementation is planned.

Human resources

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In addition to collecting and collating feedback on the Discussion Document described above, a proposal outlining the recruitment process for senior positions within the new organisations has been prepared and released for feedback, and a briefing has been held with 250 senior council and CCO managers. Council staff have been acting as ATA liaison people in this feedback process to very good effect. The projects required to establish the Auckland Council HR function, including the formation of the recruitment team, have been documented. Planning associated with the establishment of each project is being finalised. Data analysis on terms and conditions is progressing well.

Legal

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Work is continuing on the legal work stream, including interaction with other work streams. Work on three projects continues: legal function, which includes defining the nature, scope and design of the legal function for the Auckland Council and major CCOs; the development of a litigation register of current matters; and the development of a contracts register. Some work is being undertaken jointly with the finance and treasury work stream.

Communications and public affairs

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Work on the service delivery of the communications and public affairs function of the Auckland Council continues. Work stream projects with outputs for Day 1 or earlier are under way. These are: internal communications, external communications, channels, media, consultation and engagement, identity and business continuity. The internal communications project includes the preparation of a draft internal communications plan for first 100 days of the new council. The channels project includes reviewing council communications channels (such as the various in-house newspapers produced by existing councils) and contributing to the Auckland Council website project, in conjunction with the customer services and IT teams.

Governance

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In addition to the organisational design project, work is now under way in four key areas: Mayor and council set-up; local boards; elections and delegations. Additionally an advisory group has been established for the work stream project coordination. Initial work has commenced on scoping arrangements for the inaugural meeting of the council on 1 November 2010, which will include the swearing in of the mayor, councillors and possibly local board members. Joint work is occurring between the local boards project and the planning and reporting project to assess the practical implications of developing plans and budgets for the governing body and local boards.

Business processes and systems

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Work continues on the verification of the solutions required in the financial consolidation, reporting and planning functions, together with the core finance/HR/payroll solution. Projects teams continue to develop the scope of delivery and the associated project plans/business cases for the following systems: website; network and telephony integration; email integration; records management; GIS consolidation; talent management; IS service delivery. All system changes need to be completed by August 2010 to give sufficient time for testing and staff training.

Community services

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Work is focused in four project areas: the civil defence/emergency management and rural fire transition project; the community service transition project; the libraries one card project; and the Maori and council transition project. There is considerable liaison between work streams to address overlaps. In the last few weeks a list of organisations provided with funding support from existing local councils across the region has been finalised. There has been continued liaison with special interest groups including: the Arts Alliance, the Recreation and Sport Organisations, Disability Providers Network, WaterSafe, ASB Community Trust, Charities Commission, Age Concern, CAB Association and other community service providers. A presentation has been made to the Regional Senior Police Board of Management on community services, the continuance of significant community safety initiatives, and regulatory matters such as liquor licensing and controls.

There is continuing work with Government officials developing the operational framework for the proposed Social Issues Forum to be chaired by the Hon Paula Bennett, Minister of Social Development. This is a critical piece of work which is facilitating future strategic alliances between central government and the Auckland Council. Special attention is being given to governance and management structures for the delivery of emergency management and civil defence arrangements. The Hon John Carter, Minister of Civil Defence and Emergency Management, and his Director of Civil Defence John Hamilton are maintaining a close interest in this work.

Customer services

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All customer service projects are now underway and include establishing a website and call centre and a business continuation project which ensures all other customer channels such as mail, email and face-to-face communications are effective from Day 1. In addition we are looking at how customers can make transactions when they are away from the location nearest their home and this will involve selecting a bank to take payments on behalf of the Auckland Council. Other projects include setting up a complaints process that will be consistent across the new council, establishing key performance indicators for customer service and working on the new structure for customer services beyond day one. All projects are currently on track.

Regulatory servicesheather.harris@ata.govt.nz

Work is being accelerated to achieve consistent forms and templates across all areas of regulatory activity, focusing in particular on those forms that are customer-facing. We have completed work on building, licensing, resource management forms, and have submitted these for legal review. Work on regulatory charges is under way and we are initiating a working group to look at the future preparation of Land Information Memoranda. In future, these will need to include regional as well as territorial authority information. Provision needs to be made to collect regional information accurately and efficiently, without slippage in LIM delivery timeframes.

Planning and policycraig.shearer@ata.govt.nz

Work to align policy and planning functions continues. This includes the role and relationships of key documents such as the spatial plan, the infrastructure investment plan, the LTCCP, local board plans and the single RMA plan. The draft policy development programme will be used to achieve alignment of the CCO planning programme with regional strategy. Work on research and monitoring functions that may be aggregated is also under way.

Economic developmentcraig.shearer@ata.govt.nz

This work stream continues to progress. A proposed high-level structure for council-controlled organisations (CCOs) released by the Cabinet includes economic development. It is anticipated this will include the functions of tourism, mega and major events and economic development delivery. Work has commenced with central government to discuss the best relationship between central government, the Auckland Council and its CCO. This work will advance with the development of priorities for Auckland within central government's Economic Growth Agenda due for release early in 2010.

Environmental serviceskerry.connolly@ata.govt.nz

Environmental services includes activities in the following areas: stormwater; solid waste; contaminated land; hazardous substances; water quality and bathing water quality; harbourmaster; biosecurity; natural and physical resource management (including pollution, natural and cultural heritage, conservation and biodiversity, and environmental and sustainability programmes). Project managers have been appointed, mostly using council staff, and project plans for all areas have been completed. Information from the discovery process has been analysed and evaluated and the project teams are now involved in the strategy and design phase of the process.