



Information briefing

8 February 2017

Auckland local government reorganisation process

The Local Government Commission Chief Executive Suzanne Doig and Auckland Lead Advisor Renata Sain will attend the Hauraki Gulf Forum on 20 February 2017 to provide a verbal briefing on the current Auckland local government reorganisation process and provide members with an opportunity to ask questions.

The role of the Local Government Commission

The Commission is an independent statutory body with two main roles:

- It makes decisions in relation to how local authorities should be structured in response to applications for change by any person, body or group.
- It makes determinations where an appeal has been made against council decisions on representation arrangements.

The Commission also has a role in promoting good practice in local government. It places great emphasis on working collaboratively with communities and councils to come up with local solutions to local government issues.

Background on the proposed Auckland reorganisation process

In November 2013, the Commission received a reorganisation application from the Northern Action Group – a community group from North Rodney. The application made under Schedule 3 of the Local Government Act 2002 proposed the constitution of a North Rodney Unitary Council separate from the Auckland Council. In August 2015, the Commission agreed to assess the application.

In December 2015, the Commission received a reorganisation application from Our Waiheke – a group of residents and ratepayers of Waiheke Island. The application proposed a unitary authority for Waiheke separate from the Auckland Council. The Commission determined to treat the Waiheke application as an alternative application to the proposed reorganisation process initiated by the North Rodney application. This means that the whole Auckland Council region needs to be considered as the affected area when the Commission assesses the applications.

In April 2016, as per Schedule 3 of the Local Government Act 2002, the Commission called for other alternative applications from the public and received a significant number of applications (all of which were to carry equal status during the next phase of the process). The Commission then undertook a public engagement programme from September to December 2016 to provide the Auckland community, particularly people from Rodney and Waiheke Island, with an opportunity to provide feedback on local government arrangements and performance in Auckland.

Next steps

The Commission is required to identify a number of potential options that could be considered for potential reorganisation of Auckland – this includes maintaining the status quo. The Commission must then consider which of these options, if any at all, are ‘reasonably practical options’ as set out in Schedule 3 of the Local Government Act 2002. This includes considering whether any new council arrangements would sufficiently support statutory duties and comprise distinct communities of interest. More detailed economic analysis will then need to be completed on the options that are identified as reasonably practicable.

This process will allow the Local Government Commissioners to decide on the reasonably practicable options for local government in Auckland. If there is more than one option following this analysis, then Commissioners will make a decision on the preferred option. This decision is likely to be made in the second half of 2017. If the preferred option is not the status quo, the Commission will develop a draft proposal around the preferred option and a public consultation will be held.

Appendix A provides a summary of the Auckland reorganisation process.

Appendix A. Auckland reorganisation process

