

The role and powers of the Mayor and Chief Executive

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Introduction

- Mayor of Auckland
- Additional mayoral powers
- Mayor elected at large
- Vision and leadership
- Council planning
- Effective engagement
- Appointments
- Mayoral Office
- Chief Executive Officer

Mayor of Auckland

- Mayor's role:
 - Articulate and promote a vision
 - Provide leadership
 - Lead the development of plans, policies and budgets
 - Ensure effective engagement
- Mayor's powers
 - Engagement with the people
 - Appointments and committees
 - Establish an appropriately staffed office

Additional mayoral powers

- ‘Weak’ versus ‘strong’ mayoral model
- New York, Chicago, London
- Royal Commission recommended a ‘middle’ path
 - Mayor has some additional powers, but must obtain majority support in the Council
- Recommendations largely followed in Local Government (Auckland Council) Act 2009

Mayor elected at large

- Royal Commission proposed mayor be elected at large under 'first-past-the-post'
 - Contrast with chair of regional councils
 - Advantages and disadvantages
 - Single Transferable Vote
 - Mayoral platform or manifesto
 - 'Weak' mayor model

Vision and leadership

- Mayor to be 'vision holder' for the region
- Vision should be a 'nuts and bolts' manifesto
 - <http://www.johnbanks.co.nz/>
 - <http://www.lenbrownformayor.co.nz/>
- Duty to act faithfully and impartially

- Inclusive and participatory leadership
- Experience of Mayor Dick Hubbard
- Obligations of councillors (Statute or Guidelines)

Council planning

- Mayor to lead the development of plans, policies and budgets
- Consideration by the governing body
- Mayor's role should not be undertaken in isolation from the Council and its resources

- Guidance would be useful

Effective engagement

- Youth, other age-groups, ethnic communities and other communities of interest
- Royal Commission's recommendations
 - Mayor's days
 - State of the Region address
 - Monthly meetings with chairpersons of local boards
 - Quarterly plenary meetings of all elected members and Members of Parliament

Appointments

- Royal Commission recommendations
 - Mayor to choose deputy mayor and committee chairs
 - Build a team of trusted individuals
 - Parallel with Cabinet portfolios
- Experience of Mayor Dick Hubbard
- Select Committee adopted Commission's recommendations

Mayoral office

- Royal Commission recommendations
 - Properly resourced mayoral office, with personal advisers
 - To operate in similar way to the personal advisers of Cabinet Ministers
 - Independent advice within a set budget
- Select Committee
 - 0.2% budget – \$2-3 million
 - Employ independent advisers and contracted specialist advice
- Tension between mayoral office and management
- Role of office during election campaign

Role of chief executive officer

- Leader of the management arm of the Auckland Council
- Local Government Act 2002 (s 42(2))
- Overall responsibility for all staff (including mayoral staff and those perhaps dedicated to a local board)
- Specific local board responsibilities
- ‘Conflict of interest’

Conclusions

- Superhuman - SuperMayor
- Is the role and are the powers equal to the job?
- Middle road, but still 'weak' mayor model
- Should the role and responsibilities of Councillors be set out in the statute or in guidelines?
- Guidance needed for chief executive in their mutual obligations to the mayor, governing body and local boards