

How Council is managed

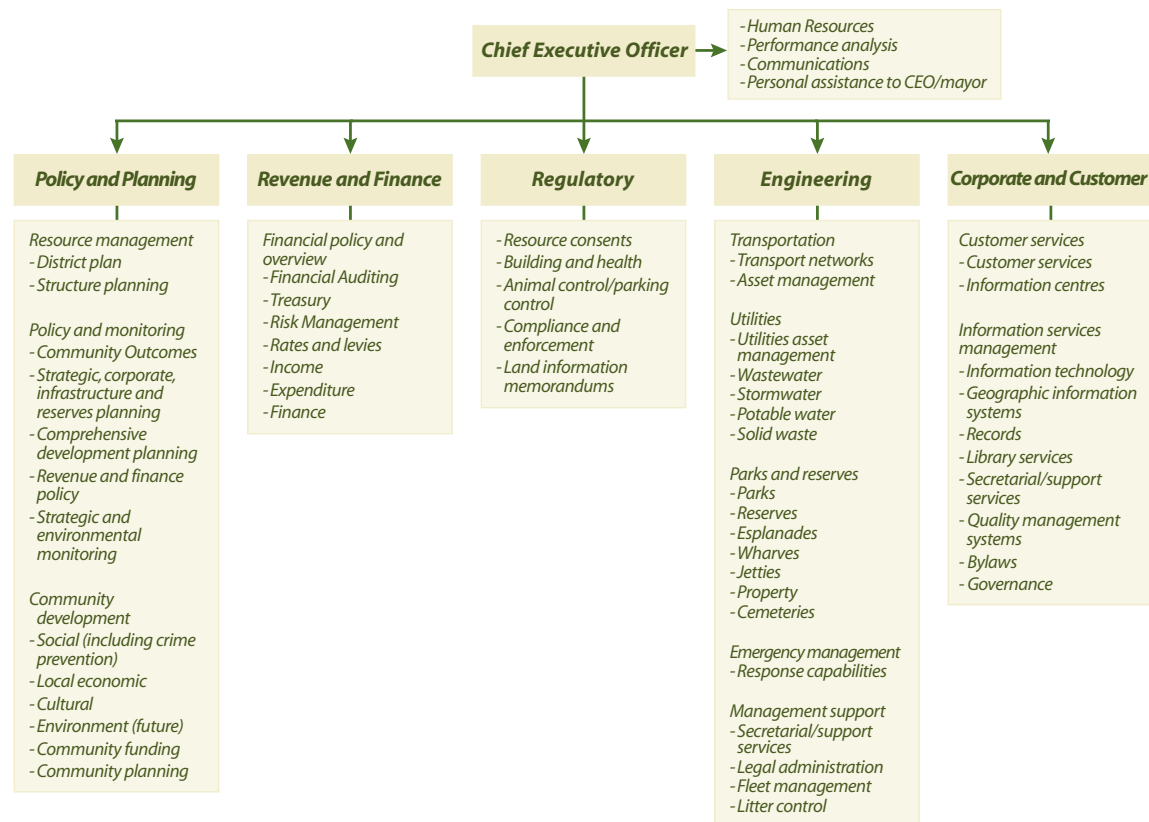
Corporate overview

Council's general management function coordinates activities described in previous chapters and the many internal services which keep the organisation operating on a daily basis.

Underpinning this function is a "best value" operating approach that aims to optimise the cost, time and quality components of customer service delivery. This approach is driven by an ISO 9001 certified quality management system and a range of initiatives that keep the organisation focussed on ongoing performance improvement.

While our operating systems and processes lie at the heart of our business it is the expertise of our staff that ensure these systems and processes deliver the right result at the right time to our customers. These staff, many of whom are regarded as industry leaders, work across six operating groups to deliver best value service to Council's customers and stakeholders.

The following chart is an overview of Council's Organisational Structure and associated services.



Operational functions

Council's day-to-day activities are carried out by six operations groups:

- CEO
- Engineering
- Regulatory
- Policy and Planning
- Revenue and Finance
- Corporate and Customer.

CEO

In addition to being accountable to Council for the day-to-day running of operations the CEO has a support team which is responsible for managing a range of internal activities. These activities include mayoral support, human resources, performance management and corporate communications.

Engineering

This group focuses on transportation, utilities, parks and property and emergency management. It works seamlessly with other operations groups to ensure projects in the Long Term Plan are achieved.

- Transportation deals with the delivery of roads, walkways, cycleways and public transport infrastructure. It includes the maintenance of the District's roading network through a performance based contract with In³Roads. This area will continue to be challenged in delivering additional seal extension works and outcomes from key strategy studies (e.g. stormwater, walkways and cycleways, unformed roads).

- Utilities deliver quality water supplies as well as wastewater, stormwater and solid waste disposal services to the community. The team is currently focused on delivering the Omokoroa community wastewater scheme, the Pongakawa water treatment plant and ongoing development of stormwater infrastructure.

- Parks and properties management includes community facilities, (pensioner housing, cemeteries, and community halls), recreation reserves and facilities (motorcamps, reserves, swimming pools, etc) and coastal marine structures (wharfs, jetties etc). In addition to maintaining and developing the reserves contained in reserve management plans, there will be an additional focus on developing the Huharua Harbour Park and TECT All Terrain Park.

- Emergency management focuses on civil defence and rural fire services in the Western Bay - Tauranga subregion.

Regulatory

This group delivers quality, cost effective regulatory services that meet Council's statutory and legislative responsibilities. Delivery of these services varies in accordance with environmental and economic factors and involves a combination of in-house and external service delivery, which includes other public agencies.

While the activities are funded by a mix of user fees and rates, the group is challenged by the need to increase income streams through the addition of new products and services, to ensure cost increases are absorbed without relying entirely on annual fee increases. Many regulatory services are subject to variations in demand and this requirement to add new products is particularly relevant in times of economic downturn and low building activity.

The use of technology will provide opportunities and challenges for the group over the next three years. In some areas changes are being driven externally (such as land information and the abolition of non-electronic scheme plans), in others it will be a necessity for ongoing performance improvement in service delivery.

Another specific challenge for the group involves the building sub-activity area achieving external accreditation as a Building Consent Authority over the next three years.

Policy and Planning

The group provides planning and policy advice to Council on strategic, reserves, resource management and infrastructural matters, and facilitates a programme of long-term planning for individual communities. It also researches and manages demographic and monitoring information in relation to the measurement of Community Outcomes and District Plan matters. Council's community development programme (which includes community service delivery contracts and grants) is implemented by the group's community development team.

With the District experiencing sustained growth, the group continues to respond with policy and planning programmes to ensure development does not overwhelm community capacity from the perspectives of land use and affordability. An increased emphasis over the next three years on long-term planning with individual communities will provide a tool for the community, Council and other government and non government agencies to deliver appropriate and affordable outcomes. The monitoring programme is evolving and will be fully developed during the term of the 2006/2016 Long Term Plan. The community development team will continue to assist the progress of long-term community plans, and implement programmes aimed at helping communities to help themselves.

Revenue and Finance

This group provides financial management and reporting to Council through four functions:

- Financial management and reporting includes completion of reports for external and internal purposes, as well as assistance with budget preparation and monitoring.*
- Accounting includes the collection of rates and ensuring payments of services rented to Council.*
- Treasury is responsible for the management of Council's internal and external debt and uses hedging instruments to ensure that market fluctuations are minimised over time.*
- Risk management ensures all organisational risks are identified, mitigated or managed in a consistent manner.*

The group's focus over the next three years is to ensure that internal systems are appropriate for all customers. In addition, the group will work on improving the efficient payment of amounts due from and to Council. The group will also be raising and monitoring a significant amount of new debt to fund infrastructure. Financial reporting will also change over time with the implementation of new international financial reporting standards and further development of best practice.

Corporate and Customer

The group's primary focus is the collection, storage, use and dissemination of information, Council's governance activities, the interface between operations and elected members, and quality management systems.

A continued focus on the smart use of technology ensures Council uses best practice business processes and provides user friendly access to information and services.

A new electronic document management system is the heart of our record-keeping capability and aims to capture as many documents electronically as it can. Our customer and library services cater for the information needs of residents and ratepayers, including property and other information held by Council as well as recreational and reference material for pleasure or business needs. The group also handles all telephone and service enquiries and records and monitors responses to customer service requests.

Future projects include providing customers with electronic access to all property and asset files, enhancing Council's web site through the likes of interactive pages so customers can make business transactions on-line, upgrading business applications to provide more efficient service, an improved library management system and ongoing review of customer service standards to improve performance.