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The Chamber of Commerce submission supports the stated aims of the Bill: “*to create one Auckland, which has strong regional governance, integrated decision making, greater community engagement and improved value for money.”*”

These aims are what Auckland needs, but if the Bill is to deliver the real expectations of Aucklanders the outcome will be:

- Lower rates
- Better service delivery
- An end to political feuding
- Decisive action to address the big issues facing Auckland.

If the Select Committee gets it wrong and Aucklanders are handed a lemon, the blame won't fall on you...

.... the retribution will be directed at the future elected politicians.

When you look at the Bill to see what it does to create one Auckland with integrated decision making and value for money, what we get is a structure made up of two elected groups – the governing body and local boards – and a tier of Council-controlled organisations (CCOs) who will deliver services.

The Bill as drafted lacks clear channels of delegation and accountability between the elected councillors and elected local boards and the unelected CCOs.

That is not a recipe for creating one Auckland with integrated decision making.

Assuming the corporatized model for reforming Auckland is here to stay, our submission, like many others, makes a series of recommendations to address these gaps. They include:

- Making the CCOs clearly accountable to the elected council;
- Providing for the council - with input from local boards - to set the objectives of CCOs;

- Defining the role of the CCOs to give effect to Council's policies, strategies, spatial plan and other plans to drive Auckland forward;
- Requiring CCOs to have a 10-year plan which is agreed to by the Council, and becomes the core of the services delivered by the CCO.
- Setting out these and other requirements of CCOs in a Statement of Intent (SOI) with Auckland Council, and which will be made public.
- Ensuring CCOs report regularly to the Council and their performance is monitored by Council.
- Providing for the Auckland Council to appoint CCO board members.

We note that in the last 48 hours the Auckland Transition Agency has published a discussion document with a similar set of recommendations.

We compliment them for this, despite our strong belief that these provisions and safeguards should have been in the Bill from day one.

Our strong request is that these measures are written into the Bill.

They need to be in the Bill – and not left parked on the sideline in a discussion document – to give Aucklanders a level of comfort that it will be the elected representatives who are controlling Auckland's destiny,.....

.... and not an arms-length corporate structure designed in Wellington and made up of government-appointed people.

If I was Mayor, I wouldn't want to come into office where the structure and processes fail to provide clear authority and delivery mechanisms for implementing the vision and policies I and colleagues have been elected to deliver.

- The Mayor and council should be setting the agenda, making the appointments and deciding what CCOs, if any, should be established to enable and give effect to the Mayoral vision and Council policies, strategies, spatial plan and other activities for driving Auckland forward, improving services and reducing rates.
- An unaccountable arms-length CCO for transport is also unacceptable. Transport - commands 50% of rates revenue.... Transport was the catalyst for the Royal Commission. The accountability for better transport infrastructure and services – for Aucklanders – should rest with the elected politicians
- Another example is the Waterfront Development Agency which is undertaking what should be Council-led process and decisions... in its present form it duplicates Council's planning role.

Similarly, and most important:

- The Economic Development and Tourism Agency – the potential arrow head for Auckland lifting its game and getting into new areas for earning wealth and building Auckland as an attractive, exciting international city....in its present form sits distanced from where it might be giving best effect to a new vision, strategy and direction for a new city.

When we started on the road to create a Super-City, the idea was of creating:

- Something new...
- A city with a new culture and 'can do' attitudes to address the region's big issues...
- Something to provide not just a fresh start but a step up in status to be able to match cities around the world we like to compete with and compare ourselves to.

What we are getting so far is piece-meal legislation that keeps Auckland in the same fragmented framework, with growing concerns that rate payers will end up a lot worse off and services won't improve.

We have gone from one regional council and seven local councils, to one super council, 19 local boards and seven CCOs.

For many local communities, the perception will be that all we have done is take one regional council and seven cities, and given back one council and seven CCOs.

This triangular relationship between the elected Auckland Council, the elected Local Boards and the unelected CCOs risks providing a platform for Auckland's petty politics to continue.

Mr Chairman... Committee members.

Our submission – and now it seems the ATA in its CCO discussion document – submit that the elected representatives - including local boards - should establish the tasks to be performed by the CCOs, and have these tasks clearly spelt out and made accountable in the SOI of each CCO.

If the delegations of CCOs and Local Boards are not clearly spelt out in the legislation, there is, we suggest, a big risk that the Mayor and 20 elected councillors will spend most of their time on local board matters.... and resolving disputes.....

.... at the expense of their primary role to *'think regionally, plan strategically, and act decisively to address the big issues facing Auckland and make the step up in its performance as our only truly global city of scale.'*

This is your primary challenge and also your own self-interest to consider in finalising this important Bill....

... To eliminate from the Bill the potential it is setting up for Auckland's endless conflicts to continue, at the expense of addressing the big issues needing attention to turn Auckland into an outward-looking internationally competitive and attractive city.

(ends)