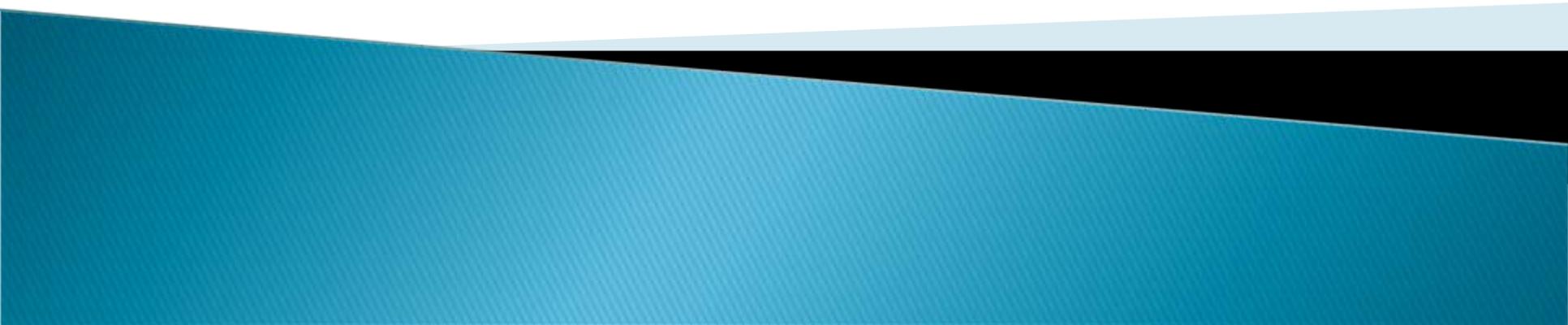


Auckland Governance Reforms: Political Legitimacy, Democratic Accountability and Sustainable Development

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Outline of Argument

Questions:

- ▶ How successful will the Auckland governance reforms be in practice?
 - ▶ What further needs to be done if the hope placed in them is to be fulfilled over time?
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Outline of Argument (cont'd)

- ▶ Design of new Auckland Council and its associated institutions has been influenced by two things:
 - a) Themes of radical change, historical discontinuity, and the centralisation of power
 - b) Sustainable development provisions embedded in legislation

 - ▶ These constitute a given.
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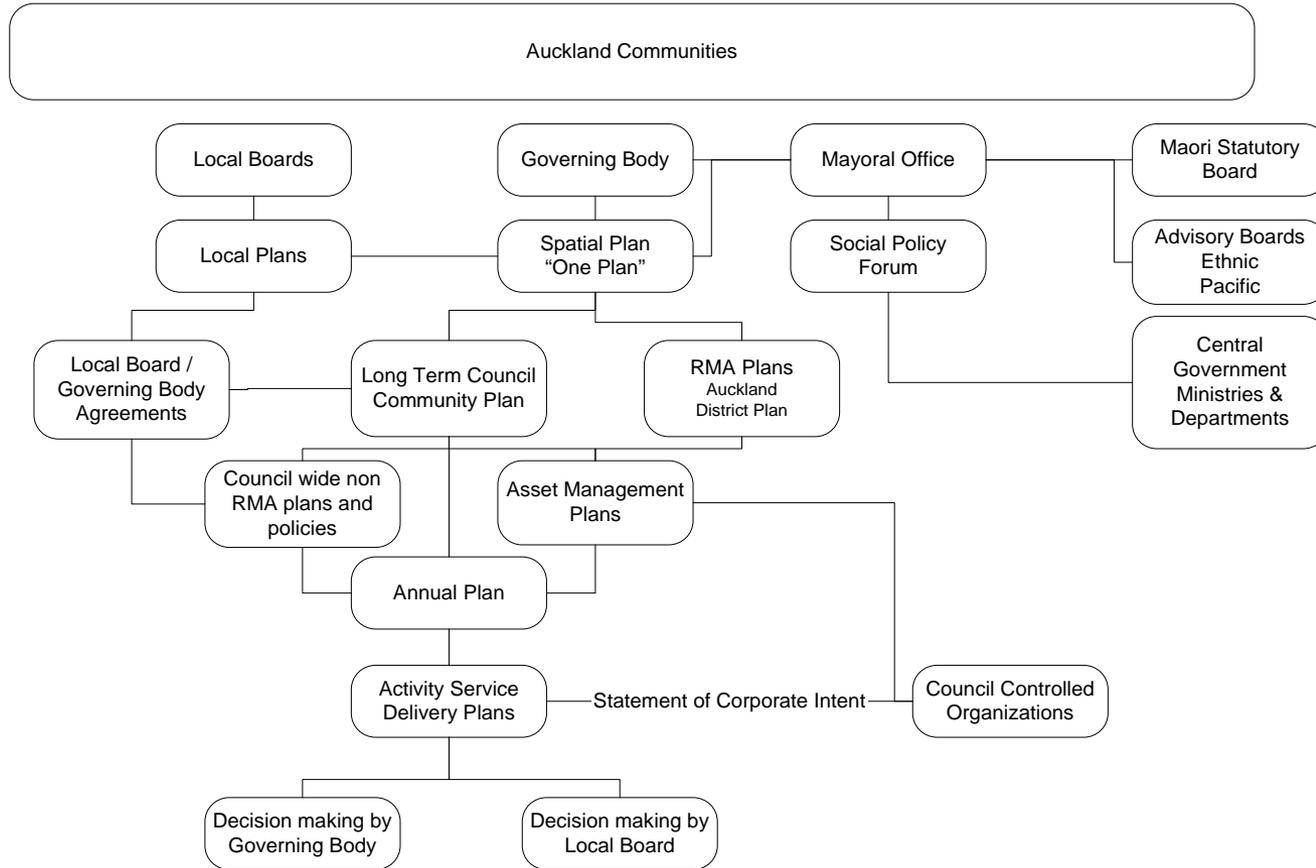
Outline of Argument (cont'd)

- ▶ The creation of something new will generate new energies and connections, simply because it is new.
- ▶ BUT success will depend in part on the linked achievement of political legitimacy, democratic accountability, and sustainable development.
- ▶ Opinion or research?
- ▶ Success will not occur naturally. Effort and action need to reflect cross disciplinary insights, theoretically based understanding, and the exercise of practical and political wisdom (Aristotle's *phronesis* and *politike*) about what works and what doesn't work

Outline of Argument (cont'd)

- ▶ Chances for success will be enhanced by adopting an ethical framework based on an inclusive common good for the region and a commitment to narrowing inequalities.
 - ▶ They will also be enhanced by building a good quality political network, rather than rigidly adhering to a formal wiring diagram.
 - ▶ Higher level frameworks dealing with issues, values, and relationships can be employed to guide and assess continuing transitions to a more sustainable region
 - ▶ Six further things then need to be done if opportunities are to be grasped and success achieved.
 - ▶ Conclusion
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Auckland Council



Auckland Council Planning Framework

Sustainable Development Provisions

Local Government Act 2002 and subsequent amendments

- ▶ opportunities for Maori to contribute to council decision-making processes
 - ▶ power of general competence
 - ▶ local democracy and public participation
 - ▶ sustainable development and the four community well-beings, social, economic, environmental and cultural
 - ▶ Long Term Council Community Plan
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Sustainable Development Provisions (cont'd)

Section 14(1)(b)

‘in taking a sustainable development approach, a local authority should take into account –

- i. the social, economic, and cultural well-being of people and communities; and
 - ii. the need to maintain and enhance the quality of the environment; and
 - iii. the reasonably foreseeable needs of future generations
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Critical Connections

- ▶ Success of reforms will depend among other things on how political legitimacy, democratic accountability, and sustainable development are achieved together in practice.
- ▶ They are autonomous in terms of their essential characteristics, but are integrally related as links in a chain.
- ▶ Each will be difficult to achieve without the others.

Comparison: Nicholas Stern on climate change



Some Challenges

- ▶ The new spatial plan
 - ▶ The Council Controlled Organisations
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Frameworks: Issues, Values and Relationships

1. Complexity, uncertainty, diversity and change are part of the region's fabric.
 2. Three specific historical challenges.
 3. Ethical perspectives:
 - need for inclusive common good approach to the region, that encompasses sub-regional and local well-being
 - commitment to narrowing inequalities through social inclusion and broadening the mainstream
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Frameworks: Issues, Values and Relationships (cont'd)

4. The quality of relationships can be used to assess the institutional design of the new governance arrangements and processes and to suggest how they may work more effectively.
5. Auckland is New Zealand's only global city – region of scale. Needs to continue to build relationships with
 - other international cities
 - central government
 - other parts of New Zealand
 - different sections of the city – region itself

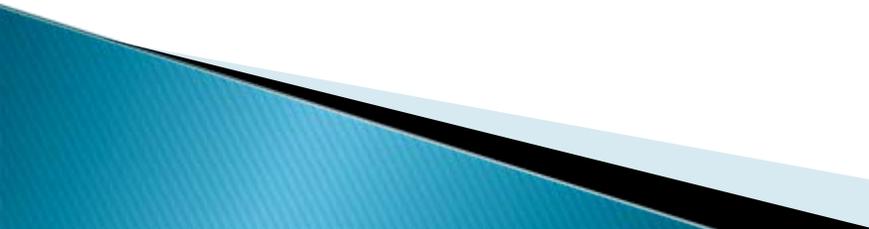
Frameworks: Issues, Values and Relationships (cont'd)

6. It also needs to foster relationships between the public sector, business, and civil society
 7. Local government cannot and should not do everything. That means fostering partnerships fit for purpose.
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What Then Needs To Be Done?

1. Focus on how to begin growing the legitimacy of the Auckland Council, its local boards and associated institutions
 2. Align the new political network towards democratic accountability and sustainable development through its transitional and other stages, and introduce political auditing as part of the process.
 3. Make the structures and processes congruent with and responsive to the browning of Auckland.
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What Needs To Be Done? (cont'd)

4. Modify the plethora of plans characteristic of Auckland's existing local and regional governance, in order to allow more nimble, responsive, and rapid responses to situations involving complexity, uncertainty, diversity and change.
 5. The Council Controlled Organisations need to serve the Auckland Council and the region's communities, rather than vice-versa. The reduction of the scope and duties of Auckland Transport is an urgent legislative priority.
 6. Pursue a robust community development approach and apply it to the different levels of the region, including communities, geographical areas, interest groups, and to local and regional political institutions.
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Conclusion

- ▶ Any questions?