

MANAGEMENT AND STAFF

OUR MANAGEMENT STRUCTURE

The mayor and councillors employ and delegate the management and delivery of Council services to the chief executive.

The chief executive has the delegated authority to manage Wellington City Council under approved annual and long term plans, legislation, policies and guidelines.

The chief executive is responsible for the efficient and effective implementation of the Council's decisions within agreed parameters. The chief executive employs the Council's 1535 staff to help with these responsibilities.

The chief executive is also responsible for providing advice to the elected council before decisions are made.

The chief executive is responsible for providing the mayor and councillors with independent and impartial advice. All advice is tested amongst council staff and reviewed by management board (see opposite) to ensure all realistic options have been considered and any risks have been identified and assessed before the advice is presented to the mayor and councillors for further consideration and decision.

The chief executive is also responsible for ensuring the Council has effective systems to monitor financial and service level performance and recommend changes where appropriate.

The chief executive's performance is monitored by the Council's Performance Review Committee.

The committee is chaired by the mayor and includes four councillors. The Committee meets regularly to review the chief executive's performance. Garry Poole has been the Wellington City Council's chief executive for nine years. See the notes to the financial statements on page 155 for details of the chief executive's remuneration package.

A management board supports the chief executive in leading our staff.

During the year the management board is made up of the chief executive and 14 senior managers. The board's structure reflects the full breadth of council activities. This ensures that all points of view are considered before advice is given and operational decisions made.

The opposite table shows the management board structure as at 30 June 2007.

DELEGATIONS AND CONTROLS

Authority to act and commit funding is delegated to the most appropriate level in the organisation.

Each person making a decision or committing funds is accountable for his or her actions.

Our policies governing delegated decision-making are described in a Delegations Manual/Standard.

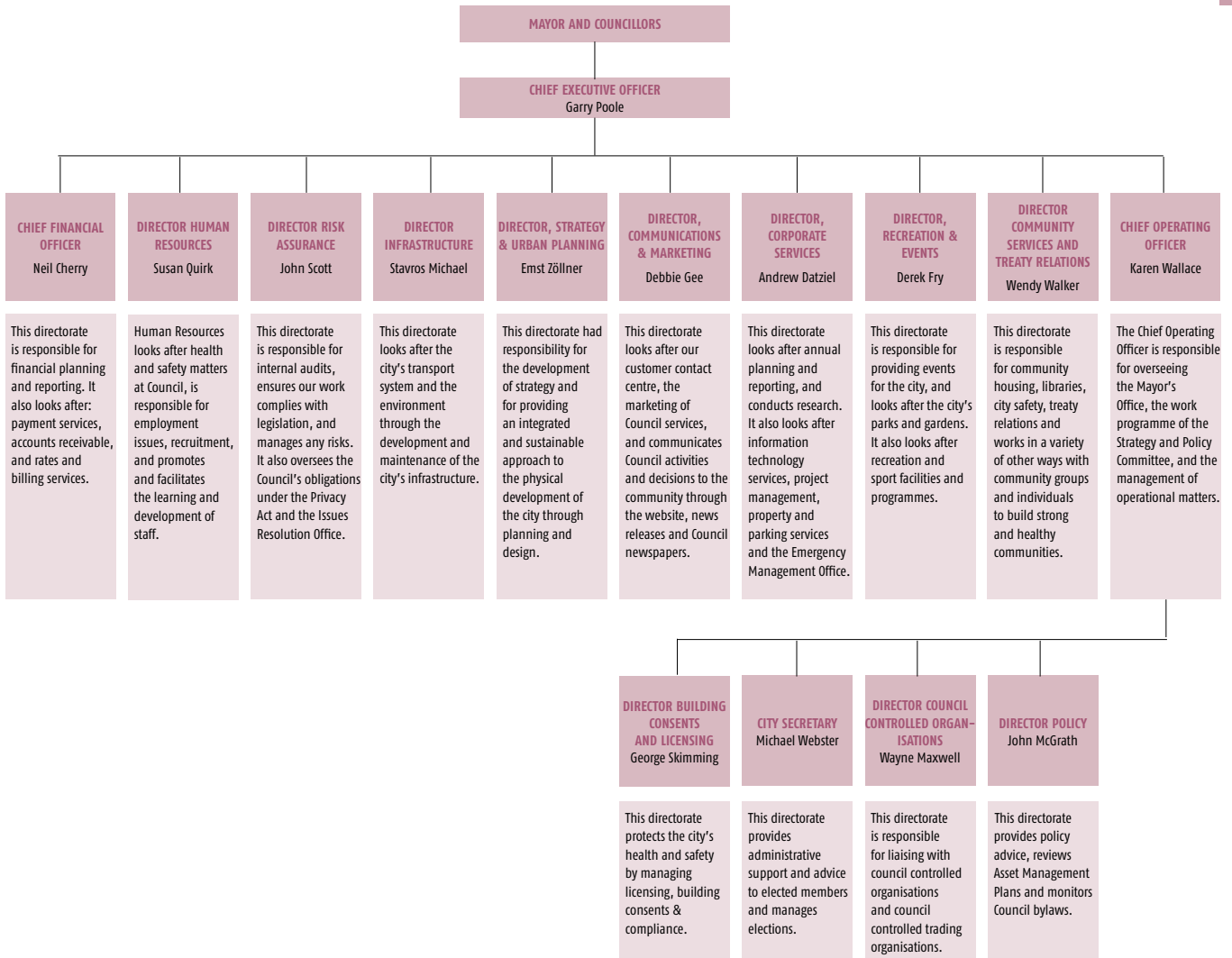
A Delegations Schedule describes the limits of delegated authority in detail for each of the eight levels of authority in the organisation.

And the Delegations Register – which is required under legislation – lists Council officers and their individual levels of delegated authority. It consists of a file of signed delegation of authority letters and any other signed authorisation to individual officers.

To ensure the details are kept current, the register is reviewed and updated regularly as people join and leave the organisation. Delegations are automatically revoked when people leave or change their position.

A financial management information system is used to monitor spending decisions.

Under this system, all transactions can be accounted for and allocated to a cost centre. The system automatically refers transactions, i.e. purchase orders, to someone with the appropriate cost centre/delegation level for approval and authorisation.



Council activities are subject to both internal and external audit.

Our risk assurance team works to ensure that risk management and internal control systems are soundly based and operate effectively. The director of this team reports directly to the chief executive.

The Council's Audit and Risk Management Subcommittee is responsible for reviewing the adequacy of our financial management and reporting, internal control systems, risk management processes and compliance with legislative requirements. The subcommittee is made up of four elected members and two external members. It meets quarterly and receives reports from the risk assurance team and the Council's external auditors. It questions officers about any issues that have been raised in those reports and the measures taken to address them.



OUR ROLE

The skills required to manage the city are enormously varied.

The Council is one of the city's largest employers: from policy advisers and planners to park rangers and engineers, map makers and dog handlers, life guards, zookeepers and accountants – the skills required to deliver on our role are many and diverse.

The interests of our staff don't end with their professional role at Council – we're also parents and sportspeople and budding artists. We're all part of the wider community, which keeps us motivated – it makes us work together to improve the quality of life for all Wellingtonians.

Our services depend on a wide range of people working together.

Take the many events that the city offers. Each involves extensive planning and preparation. In addition to bringing the performers and volunteers together, there's a venue, funding and sponsorship to secure. There's advertising, catering contracts, sound and lighting equipment to arrange and many other things that go on behind the scenes. On occasions there are road closures and parking to manage, even building consents to be issued for temporary structures. And there's always the clean-up. All this can't be done by one person – it's often our staff from across the organisation that provide or facilitate these services.

This requires a common understanding of what the organisation aims to achieve.

We aim to build a strong culture in the organisation. Our foundation values of integrity and respect provide the platform on which we conduct our business. They are integral to the way that we interact both internally and in our dealings with the community. We want staff to be respected in the community and proud to work at the Council.

We also encourage our staff to demonstrate the personal values of commitment, competence, and confidence. Our organisational values of working together, delivering, taking pride, being enterprising, and taking responsibility are about us playing our part to deliver the elected Council's vision for the city.

We encourage our staff to use discretion and to be innovative.

Implementing policies or projects will often throw up challenges that require our staff to adapt – to find ways to address the challenges within the parameters that have been set by the elected council. The greening of the quays project is one example of where officers achieved this during the year.

The concept of creating a boulevard of pohutukawa along Aotea Quay was agreed by the Council. Their objective was to soften the six lanes of concrete, providing a stronger sense of connection between the CBD and waterfront. The challenge for our staff was to provide a suitable environment for tree growth while maintaining the structural integrity of the road. Pohutukawa roots are sturdy and as they grow are known to crack road surfaces.

HANDLING COMPLAINTS

We are committed to listening to residents' concerns.

Complaints are received by staff in our telephone call centre, investigated and then resolved. The majority of enquiries are dealt with this way.

If someone is dissatisfied with our response to a complaint, it can be considered by our Issues Resolution Office.

The office acts as a last port of call for people who feel their enquiry or complaint about Council services has not been resolved to their satisfaction. Although the investigating staff in the Issues Resolutions Office are employees of the Council, their role is independent of any department. This makes the complaint process as objective as it can possibly be.

During 2006/07, the office received 116 complaints from the public.

These complaints covered issues such as building and resource consents, parking tickets, rubbish and recycling collections, dog control, rates billing, and maintenance of footpaths, streetlights, road signs, drains and other infrastructure.

Of the 116, a total of 30 were found to be justified.

Of these, 15 complaints were justified as a result of poor customer service, and another 15 complaints were justified on the basis that the Council's decision was unfair, inequitable or incorrect because it did not follow stated Council policy. Three are still being investigated and the remaining 83 complaints were not considered to be justified.

The solution was to strengthen the trench in the narrow median strip with concrete structural beams and line this with a polyurethane membrane. A special soil mix was then created to provide sufficient volume and nutrients to ensure the growth of the trees. These innovations by our staff meant the project was completed on time, within budget and with minimal disruption to traffic flow.

We're public servants – we work for the community – as such it's critical that we maintain our integrity and impartiality.

Our staff commit to a Code of Conduct which describes the standard of behaviour expected of them. It highlights best practices in relation to communications with elected members, participation in public bodies, and handling electronic media and information.

Our staff must also observe the principle of political neutrality and avoid conflicts of interest in all official dealings. The code outlines steps for addressing any potential conflicts before they arise.

VALUING OUR STAFF

To achieve the best results we can for Wellington, we need the best people involved.

We aim for a stable, highly qualified workforce. The Council is a large employer, with 1074 full-time staff and 461 part-time staff. The workforce is multicultural and evenly split between genders. The average age is 39, and the average length of service is 6.8 years.

Our permanent turnover continues to be high at 21.2%. This reflects increased demand for skilled staff in an era of low unemployment.

	2002/03	2003/04	2004/05	2005/06	2006/07
New staff	199	192	204	340	342
Resignations	184	201	273	297	326
Total staff numbers	1435	1426	1443	1487	1535
Total staff turnover	15%	14%	18%	21%	21%

Investing in our staff is critical to our success.

To help staff reach their potential we encourage ongoing learning and development. We do this by ensuring training is available for individuals and business units. Learning and development is linked to our goals and priorities and development opportunities are regularly reviewed and improved to meet individual, team and the organisation's needs.

Leadership development is also a key focus. Our practice is not to wait for leaders to appear, but identify leadership potential and develop these individuals.

We are also an accredited member of the Investors in People (IIP) standard – an international standard for people management and development.

The office also dealt with complaints to the Privacy Commissioner and the Ombudsman.

The Council received more than 280 formal requests for information under the Local Government Official Information and Meetings Act and the Privacy Act. One case was referred to the Ombudsman's office about the Council's handling of official information and resulted in the Council having to supply further information. One case was referred to the Privacy Commissioner. In that case, the Council had to correct the personal information it held.

To help staff reach their potential we also encourage balanced, healthy lifestyles.

We support staff leisure and recreational activities such as dragon boating, netball, soccer and basketball. These activities help to promote health and wellbeing, keep morale high, and foster good relationships and communication between Council business units.

We also support staff social groups and activities. These have high levels of participation from across the organisation – more than 500 staff take part in Council social activities every year. These range from informal social get-togethers to more formal meetings and discussion. Groups include the Maori staff network (whanau group), a dance club, the staff club and a gay and lesbian network.

We also provide staff training in Maori language and tikanga (traditions).

Training is also provided in cultural awareness to enhance our capacity to deliver effective services for Maori and make informed decisions on issues which affect Maori. This includes a customised course for the migrant and refugee work experience group.

We provide equal employment opportunities to ensure that everyone has the same chance to share in the success of the organisation.

Equal employment opportunities ensure that everyone has the same chance to share in the success of the organisation. It ensures that the workforce is diverse, flexible, skilled, in touch with the needs of Wellington's people, and able to provide quality service. In 2006/07 we maintained our membership of the EEO Trust and the Employers Group and participated in the annual benchmarking diversity survey.

As part of our commitment, we provided work experience for 19 refugees and migrants who had been unable to find work.

Participants in the work experience programme were matched to placements at a variety of sites throughout the Council. Over the year we had 18 participants (two carried over to 2007) with 13 moving into full-time positions, one gaining a scholarship, one returning home and another moving overseas. This was a fantastic result and we are setting up another programme for the coming year.

The success of the programme, run in partnership with the Ministry of Social Development and Work and Income, has drawn attention throughout New Zealand. We have been presented with an award from the Race Relations Commissioner in recognition of this work and other councils have shown an interest in running similar programmes.



HEALTH AND SAFETY

We promote a work culture that is safety-conscious and complies with the Health and Safety in Employment Act.

During 2006/07, over 400 staff attended one of our health and safety related courses. These included: drug and alcohol awareness for employees; contractor health and safety management; dealing with difficult situations course; management of stress in the workplace course; and workplace first aid courses.

We have an occupational health team that offer workplace assessments for new employees working on personal computers, and annual health checks for employees at risk of hearing loss and for employees suffering discomfort. More than 400 employees were provided with health and heart checks during the year.

We're one of six local authorities in the Accident Compensation Corporation (ACC) Partnership Programme.

This programme allows eligible employers to take full responsibility for the rehabilitation of any employee who suffers a workplace injury. Employers in the programme are effectively agreeing to act on behalf of ACC in their own workplace. In each of the six years we have been in the programme we have been able to provide injured employees with a comprehensive rehabilitation programme that exceeds normal ACC entitlements, while still making considerable savings compared to the costs we would bear if we were not in the programme. Our health and safety management systems are audited every year by ACC and in 2007 we achieved Tertiary Status - the highest level.