

# governance

## Governance

Governance of the district relates to representation of the community's views and how these are translated into actions and work programmes of the council. This section outlines the structures and processes that promote the following governance themes:

Representation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ involvement in governance decisions at council, committee and community board level</li> <li>■ advocacy undertaken on behalf of the Rotorua community</li> <li>■ effectiveness of governance structures</li> </ul>
Leadership	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ overview of governance structures and outputs achieved</li> </ul>
Strategic directions	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ strategic community achievements</li> <li>■ setting of strategic platform</li> </ul>

## Background

Local government in the Rotorua District is based on three core premises: transparency, participation and accountability. **Transparency** is achieved through the community being able to clearly see policies, plans and objectives and how they are able to be financed. **Participation** is achieved through consultative community input processes that enable Council to connect with its constituents and interested parties. **Accountability** is achieved through a number of reports, including the Annual Report, which are produced to gauge effectiveness and attainment of targets. The Government's 'watchdog', the Auditor-General, audits both financial and non-financial achievements in the Annual Report, providing both the community and central government with an independent assessment of Council's achievements.

## Role of Council

Council has overall responsibility for:

- Direction and control of the district's activities in a prudent financial manner
- Representing the views of the community in the most effective, strategic, and holistic manner possible
- Laying strategic foundations for the district to grow in a dynamic and enabling manner.

These roles require stewardship of operational policy and strategic direction, including:

- Risk management
- Administration of regulations and bylaws
- Management integration
- Safeguarding public interest, including advocacy.

## Representation

### Electoral System

The system of elected member representation was reviewed for the 2007 elections. There are four wards with three members elected per ward:

- North Ward
- South Ward
- East Ward
- West Ward

Ward boundaries are shown on a following page. Members are remunerated in accordance with the determinations made by the Remuneration Authority.

There is also a Rotorua Lakes Community Board with four members elected and two appointed by Council.

The next elections will be held in October 2010, and the council has resolved to change from a ward based system to electing councillors 'at large' - meaning residents vote for all 12 councillor positions plus the mayor.

## Meetings

Council's current committee structure and meeting arrangements were determined by Council in November 2007, and this structure provides an open and accountable governance system.

## The Mayor

The mayor is an ex-officio member of all council committees, and attends most meetings. The mayor also holds positions on many trusts, community organisations, and community committees, including acting as trustee or board member, committee member, chair and patron. He also hosts many meetings to facilitate community involvement.

The mayor is a Justice of the Peace, and hosts citizenship ceremonies, community awards, Trustpower Spirit of Rotorua Awards, and Young Achievers' Awards. The award ceremonies recognise the important contribution that others make to the Rotorua community.

## Rotorua Lakes Community Board



Front row (left to right): Cr Karen Hunt, Brentleigh Bond, Neil Callaghan  
Back row (left to right): Geoff Palmer, Phillip Karauna, Cr Dave Donaldson

## governance cont.

### Delegation

Not all decisions are made by committees or full council. A number of delegations exist that allow individual elected members, sub-committees, the chief executive and senior management to make certain decisions to allow the smooth and efficient running of day-to-day affairs.

These delegations are documented in Council's policy manual and are subject to review at each triennial election and any other time required.

### Support for Elected Members

Elected members are guided and advised, formally and informally, through a number of mechanisms. The Local Government Act 2002 and other legislation provide the framework within which members are elected and must operate.

Council has adopted a 'Guide to Good Governance', which includes a code of conduct to help ensure transparency and a high standard of behaviour. Model standing orders are also used to guide meeting procedures and assist sound decision making processes.

The Remuneration Authority determines the overall salary pool for the mayor and elected members. How elected members are remunerated from the pool is determined by Council.

Elected members are advised by the chief executive (who may seek additional external advice on matters such as legal opinions) and by staff. Resources are also available from such bodies as Local Government New Zealand (LGNZ), and professional organisations. However, first and foremost, elected members are advised by the community which they represent, through many formal and informal processes.

Members are elected every three years with the last election being in October 2007. Following elections, members undertake a formal induction programme covering their roles and responsibilities, as well as providing a thorough overview of the organisation and its operations.

### Risk Management

The chief executive is responsible for managing organisational risk to ensure the continued provision of services, and to minimise financial impacts on residents.

Council's asset management plans incorporate risk management policies and actions for each of Council's activities. There are established processes for ensuring business continuity in the event of an emergency or disaster. Overall risk management is further supported through regularly reviewed insurance policies.

The Management Team regularly reviews the work of occupational health and safety subcommittees and also ensures staff are familiar with legal compliance matters.

A schedule of members' financial interests is maintained and members are required to declare their interests in any matter being considered by them at meetings, in their roles as elected members.

### Emergency Management

The mayor and appointed members play key roles in Council's civil defence. Along with staff, elected members undertake regular training and participate in civil defence exercises.

