



BRIEFING

Auckland City Centre Report Back

Date:	4 November 2025	Priority:	High
Security classification:	In Confidence	Tracking number:	BRIEFING-REQ-0023329

Action sought		
	Action sought	Deadline
Hon Simeon Brown Minister for Auckland	Note contents and agree to forward the report to your Ministerial colleagues	10 November 2025

Contact for telephone discussion (if required)			
Name	Position	Telephone	1st contact
Michael Quinn	Head of the Auckland Policy Office	Privacy of natural persons	
Jules Lynch	Auckland Regional Public Service Commissioner		
Andy Hill	Director Auckland		✓

The following departments/agencies have been consulted
The Ministry of Social Development, the Ministry of Housing and Urban Development, and the New Zealand Police

Minister's office to complete:

☐ Approved

☐ Declined

☐ Noted

☐ Needs change

☐ Seen

☐ Overtaken by Events

☐ See Minister's Notes

☐ Withdrawn

Comments



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Purpose

To summarise and confirm the key outcomes of your meeting with Mayor Wayne Brown and regional stakeholders on actions to improve the performance, safety and public confidence of Auckland's city centre.

Executive summary

You met with Mayor Wayne Brown and key Auckland stakeholders on 28 October 2025 to agree on immediate actions to improve the performance and public confidence of Auckland's city centre. The meeting followed direction from Joint Ministers earlier in October to develop practical steps that address homelessness, health and social needs, and behaviour affecting how people use and experience the Auckland city centre.

You and the Mayor agreed to establish a joint City Centre Action Plan to guide this work. The plan will bring together central government, Auckland Council, and other partners to deliver visible improvements over the coming months. It will set out clear accountabilities, measurable results, and a shared governance and delivery structure to ensure stronger coordination and impact.

The action plan will help improve public spaces so they are safe, welcoming and functional, and includes help for those experiencing social and health needs.

You want the action plan to be published within the next fortnight, supported by weekly coordination between senior officials and Auckland Council, and monthly meetings with stakeholders, the Mayor and Ministers.

Recommended action

The Ministry of Business, Innovation and Employment recommends that you:

- a **Note** the contents of this report
- b **Agree** to share this briefing with your Ministerial colleagues

Noted

Agree / Disagree



Michael Quinn

Head of the Auckland Policy Office

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Hon Simeon Brown

Minister for Auckland

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Background

1. On 15 October 2025, Joint Ministers met to discuss the conditions affecting Auckland's city centre and directed officials to develop a suite of practical measures to address visible homelessness, public health and social needs, and behaviour that affects how people use and experience the area.
2. Ministers asked for a clear identification of issues, responsibilities and options for intervention, with the goal of achieving visible improvements within months. Senior officials from central government agencies and Auckland Council drafted an initial set of initiatives and actions which was shared with Ministers.
3. You subsequently met with Mayor Brown, senior Auckland Council officials, representatives of local business associations, and the Chief Executives of Precinct Properties and Cooper and Company (Britomart) on 28 October 2025.

An Auckland City Centre Action Plan

4. At the meeting, you and the Mayor agreed on the need to move quickly to improve how the city centre functions for everyone including for residents, workers, investors, visitors and those needing help. There was a shared understanding that responses must combine stronger on the ground presence with effective support and better coordination between central government, Auckland Council and local partners.
5. It was agreed that the initiatives discussed would form the basis of an Auckland City Centre Action Plan, setting out the immediate and longer-term actions required to improve amenity, safety and wellbeing. The list of draft initiatives discussed at that meeting, updated following feedback at the meeting and subsequent discussion with officials, is included at **Annex One**.
6. The Action Plan will be jointly owned by central government and Auckland Council, and supported by a clear governance and delivery structure to ensure shared responsibility and accountability for outcomes.
7. Both parties agreed that the Action Plan should:
 - a. Establish a joint governance and delivery structure, co-chaired by senior government and Auckland Council officials, with clear lines of accountability and resourcing commitments from both sides.
 - b. Use data and performance reporting to measure tangible progress over time and provide Ministers, the Mayor and stakeholders with evidence of improvement.
 - c. Prioritise coordinated delivery, ensuring that interventions across agencies and Auckland Council are complementary and reinforce shared objectives, as well as avoid unintended consequences.
 - d. Ensure that people who need help are connected quickly to appropriate housing, health and social services.
 - e. Ensure that public spaces are designed to mitigate adverse effects and that relevant agencies such as Police have an opportunity to provide feedback.
 - f. Engage directly with the business community and local partners, recognising their role in maintaining public confidence and contributing to a safer, more welcoming environment.

- g. The Action Plan be published within the next fortnight, to provide transparency and maintain momentum.
- 8. You and the Mayor also agreed that senior officials from government and Auckland Council will meet weekly, at a minimum, to drive implementation, remove barriers and sustain pace.
- 9. The broader group of government, Council and stakeholder representatives will meet monthly for the time being, with other Ministers invited to attend.
- 10. The Mayor signalled his willingness to consider new or altered bylaws. He invited agencies and key stakeholders to inform him of any changes to bylaw settings for consideration.

Other related areas of activity

- 11. Officials from social agencies advise that there is existing activity occurring across their respective agencies, including particular the recent social housing announcements to reduce rough sleeping. Officials from HUD and MSD will work with providers to progress actions within existing contracting parameters.
- 12. Provider meetings are in progress to ensure transparency for frontline service providers and to allocate resources as needed for immediate actions. Engaging service providers early is important, as their involvement is necessary for effective implementation of the Action Plan.
- 13. You are also aware of the work being progressed by the Justice Sector and we recommend you seek regular updates from the Minister of Justice.

Next steps

- 14. Following your meeting, officials from central government and Auckland Council are preparing the draft City Centre Action Plan for your and the Mayor's consideration. The plan will incorporate the agreed initiatives, identify leads and delivery timeframes, and outline how progress will be tracked and reported.
- 15. A senior officials group, co-chaired by government officials and Auckland Council, has begun coordinating implementation and establishing supporting workstreams.
- 16. A further briefing detailing the draft Action Plan, governance and delivery arrangements, and any issues requiring Ministerial direction will be provided to you for review, ahead of the public release of the agreed Action Plan in the next fortnight.
- 17. We will also work with your office to confirm the date of the next Auckland City Centre stakeholder meeting so that invitations can be sent and an agenda confirmed.
- 18. At that stage, we recommend you share this briefing with your Ministerial colleagues including;
 - a. Minister of Housing, Hon Chris Bishop;
 - b. Minister of Justice, Hon Paul Goldsmith;
 - c. Minister of Social Development & Employment, Hon Louise Upston
 - d. Minister of Police, Hon Mark Mitchell
 - e. Associate Minister of Housing, Hon Tama Potaka;
 - f. Minister for Mental Health, Hon Matt Doocey

Annexes

Annex One: Draft list of initiatives.

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INITIATIVE	ACTIONS	LEAD AGENCY	STATUS	NOTES
Safety and Compliance Measures				
Increase Police and Council presence in key areas to reduce harm, antisocial behaviour and improve public safety	a. Short term increased Police visibility in the central city b. Police and Council patrols focused on known 'hotspots' c. Police focus on enforcement of drug and alcohol laws	Police, Auckland Council	Commenced on 14 October. Duration 5-6 weeks.	Police and Council staff will undertake a focussed programme of joint patrols throughout the city centre taking a low tolerance approach to anti-social behaviour. Council safety wardens are able to ensure any remedial action (removal of litter/encampments is promptly actioned by its maintenance contractors).
Support safer public spaces through environment design improvements	a. Implement redesign of Pocket Park (corner of Queen Street and Fort Street) b. Consider redesign of identified public 'hot spots'	Auckland Council	In progress.	Auckland Council are making improvements including improving seating and reducing attractiveness for criminal behaviour. Police are engaging with Council on interventions they consider necessary to reduce opportunities for criminal activity, particularly drug dealing and drug use.
Safety patrols	a. Explore opportunities for targeted patrols by private sector providers, Māori and Pacific Wardens	Auckland Council	In discussion.	Funded by targeted rates and Auckland Council.
Targeted enforcement actions on persistent offending	a. Focus enforcement actions on individuals and locations associated with criminal activity	Police, Auckland Council	In discussion.	For example, addressing verbal abuse, drug and alcohol use, intimidating behaviour etc.
Social Assistance				
Enable support services to accompany Police, facilitating immediate referral for specific needs (mental health, drug and alcohol addiction, Temporary Housing)	a. Outreach teams accompany Police patrols, with office support available for immediate referrals to services	Shared responsibility	In discussion.	This is an initiative that has been used previously. Current intent is to build up to 3 days per week.
Review provision of hygiene/laundry/storage services in the city centre	a. Consider alternate sites for service provision	Auckland Council	In progress.	The facilities currently provided at Sturdee Street will be discontinued will building works commence at the Downtown Carpark site. Auckland Council will engage with other service providers to look at how and where these services are being offered.
Provide additional housing options for rough sleepers	a. An additional 207 Housing First places (Auckland wide) b. Improved vacancy management of Housing First places within existing provision	HUD HUD	Contracted and delivery to commence November 2025.	
Ensure city centre remains well managed and welcoming	a. Regular and consistent graffiti removal b. Rubbish collection to a high and regular standard	Auckland Council	Ongoing.	Core Council responsibility.
Negotiations				



BRIEFING

Meeting with Viv Beck

Date:	12 November 2025	Priority:	Medium
Security classification:	In Confidence	Tracking number:	BRIEFING-REQ-0023675

Action sought		
	Action sought	Deadline
Hon Simeon Brown Minister for Auckland	Note the contents of this briefing.	14 November 2025

Contact for telephone discussion (if required)			
Name	Position	Telephone	1st contact
Michael Quinn	Head of the Auckland Policy Office	Privacy of natural persons	
Andy Hill	Director Auckland		✓

The following departments/agencies have been consulted

Minister's office to complete:

☐ Approved

☐ Declined

☐ Noted

☐ Needs change

☐ Seen

☐ Overtaken by Events

☐ See Minister's Notes

☐ Withdrawn

Comments



BRIEFING

Meeting with Viv Beck

Date:	12 November 2025	Priority:	Medium
Security classification:	In Confidence	Tracking number:	BRIEFING-REQ-0023675

Purpose

You have invited Viv Beck to meet with you at the Auckland Policy Office on Friday 14 November 2025 from 10:10 am to 10:40 am.

This briefing provides logistical details and background information for the meeting.

Recommended action

The Ministry of Business, Innovation and Employment recommends that you:

- a **Note** the contents of this briefing

Noted

Michael Quinn

Head of the Auckland Policy Office

12 / 11 / 2025

Hon Simeon Brown

Minister for Auckland

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Logistics

1. You are meeting with Viv Beck at the Auckland Policy Office on Friday 14 November 2025 from 10:10 am to 10:40 am.

Issues and opportunities likely to be raised

2. You have had several recent engagements with Viv including your meeting with:
 - a. her and Minister Bishop on 8 August 2025 [BRIEFING-REQ-0018781 refers];
 - b. the Tāmaki Makaurau Business Network that she co-chairs on 23 September 2025 [BRIEFING-REQ-0021118 refers]; and
 - c. the Mayor of Auckland, business leaders and central and local government officials to discuss the state of the Auckland central city on 28 October 2025 [BRIEFING-REQ-0023329 refers].
3. Across these engagements, Viv has been consistent in raising concerns about the economic challenges faced by the central city business owners that she represents. As you are aware, her focus is on the negative impact on economic activity caused by homelessness and antisocial behaviour on central city streets.
4. Viv has indicated that she will provide you with an update on city centre preparedness for economic opportunities in 2006 - specifically the upcoming summer period, the opening of the New Zealand International Convention Centre and the opening of the City Rail Link. While she sees a significant opportunity for further investment in the city centre, she is concerned that this is undermined by the area being unsafe and unwelcoming.
5. Following the public release of the Heart of the City survey of central city business sentiment, business owners and the wider public have reached out to her to share their stories of encountering antisocial behaviour. Viv will likely use these experiences to reinforce her advocacy for urgent action to address homelessness and antisocial behaviour.

Suggested approach

Action plan for the city centre

6. While Viv is aware of your interest in, and advocacy for, the central city, she remains concerned about what action is being taken to address her concerns. While Viv acknowledges the programme of work you are leading, she remains committed to pushing for further action by central and local government, including through her social and mainstream media channels.
7. At the meeting on 28 October, the draft action plan was tabled with Viv and others in attendance. It may be opportune for you to talk her through the latest iteration that was shared with your office on 11 November 2025.

Business support for action

8. While the action plan largely covers government actions, the business community (developers, business owners and business operators) also have a role to play in supporting actions to ensure the city centre is inviting and vibrant. This could include, for example, ensuring that businesses support Council's regular rubbish collections¹, minimise vacant retail and office tenancies and support meeting CPTED standards in their buildings and

¹ Some business leaders have noted that a number of businesses are not complying with Auckland Council's scheduled rubbish collection times, with bags being placed out early and contributing to litter and a general lack of cleanliness in the city centre.

adjacent areas. You may wish to discuss how Viv and her membership can support these types of initiatives.

Revised public narrative for the city centre

9. Viv has consistently highlighted the economic challenges facing the city centre and the need for stronger action. While these concerns remain valid, continued emphasis on homelessness and safety issues risks entrenching negative perceptions. With the joint government and Auckland Council action plan now underway, the focus should turn toward visible progress and renewed public confidence.
10. Heart of the City has an important role in this next phase, helping to amplify improvements, support business and community partners, and promote a more confident and solutions focused message. This will be central to restoring activity and optimism in the city centre while ensuring advocacy remains aligned with the broader joint work programme.
11. You may wish to confirm with Viv that while she can still emphasis challenges facing the city centre, there is now a structure where those observations can be channelled without compromising the appeal of the city centre.

Risks and mitigations

12. We have not identified any risks associated with this event.

Communications/Media

13. No media are attending the meeting.

Contacts

Name	Position / organisation	Telephone
Viv Beck	Chief Executive, Heart of the City	Privacy of natural persons