MINISTRY OF BUSINESS, INNOVATION & EMPLOYMENT
HĪKINA WHAKATUTUKI

BRIEFING

Thriving City Centre stakeholder meeting 2 April 2026

Date:	31 March 2026	**Priority:**	Medium
Security classification:	In Confidence	**Tracking number:**	BRIEFING-REQ-0030167

Action sought		
	Action sought	**Deadline**
Hon Simeon Brown **Minister for Auckland**	**Note** the contents of this briefing	2 April 2026

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
- ☐ Noted
- ☐ Seen
- ☐ See Minister's Notes
- ☐ Declined
- ☐ Needs change
- ☐ Overtaken by Events
- ☐ Withdrawn

Comments

MINISTRY OF BUSINESS, INNOVATION & EMPLOYMENT
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BRIEFING

Thriving City Centre stakeholder meeting 2 April 2026

Date:	31 March 2026	**Priority:**	Medium
Security classification:	In Confidence	**Tracking number:**	BRIEFING-REQ-0030167

Purpose

To provide you with logistical details and a meeting pack for the Thriving City Centre stakeholder meeting on 2 April 2026.

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

31 / 03 / 2026

Hon Simeon Brown

Minister for Auckland

..... / ..... / .....

Background

1. The most recent City Centre stakeholder meeting was held at the Auckland Business Chamber on 3rd February 2026.

2. At that meeting, it was agreed that the next stakeholder meeting would be held in around 6 weeks, with the cadence to be pushed out in future as progress and programmes are imbedded. Consistent with this approach, the next meeting will be held on Thursday 2 April.

3. Your office is arranging the meeting, with officials assisting as required.

4. The meeting will be held at the MBIE office at 162 Victoria Street West, Auckland City Centre. A map of the location is attached at **Annex One**.

Information to support the meeting

Agenda

5. At the previous meeting, business representatives discussed the importance of activation activities to build vibrancy and economic activity in the central city. There was a strong view expressed that activation actions were urgently needed to ensure that the city made the most of the economic opportunities offered by events such as the recent opening of the New Zealand International Convention Centre and the opening of the City Rail Link later this year.

6. As a consequence, the agenda for the upcoming meeting has been split into two parts. The first part will focus on city centre safety and the second on activation. The officials report back for part one of the agenda will be presented by Pauline McKay from Health New Zealand and will be tightly focussed on recent progress and new initiatives. Police and Auckland Council will also provide short updates, with lead officials from other agencies present in the room to respond to any questions that are raised from the floor.

7. The lead item for the part two discussion on activation will be provided by Auckland Council. Pam Ford, General Manager of Auckland Council's Economic Development Office, will provide a high-level overview of activation activities in the central city, with a particular focus on preparation for the CRL opening. Council advise that further details on specific funding decisions for activation activities will be available for the next Stakeholder meeting.

8. The agenda is attached at **Annex Two**.

Invite list

9. Officials have worked with your office to refine the invite list, which is attached at **Annex Three**.

10. There is an online link available for those who cannot make the meeting in person. Officials providing subject matter support to agency leads will also join online to ensure they are available to respond to questions if required.

Status report and dashboard

11. Officials have maintained a status report of actions in the *Thriving City Centre Action Plan* as well as a dashboard of key city centre safety metrics. You were last provided with versions of these two documents on 18 February 2026 [BRIEFING-REQ-0027750 refers].

12. The updated Status Report and Dashboard are included at **Annex Four** and **Annex Five** respectively**.**

Annexes

Annex One: Meeting location

Annex Two: Invitee list

Annex Three: Agenda

Annex Four: *Thriving City Centre Action Plan* status report

Annex Five: *Thriving City Centre Action Plan* dashboard

Annex One: Meeting location

Physical address:

MBIE

Ground Floor, meeting room LG.6H

Kordia Building

162 Victoria Street West

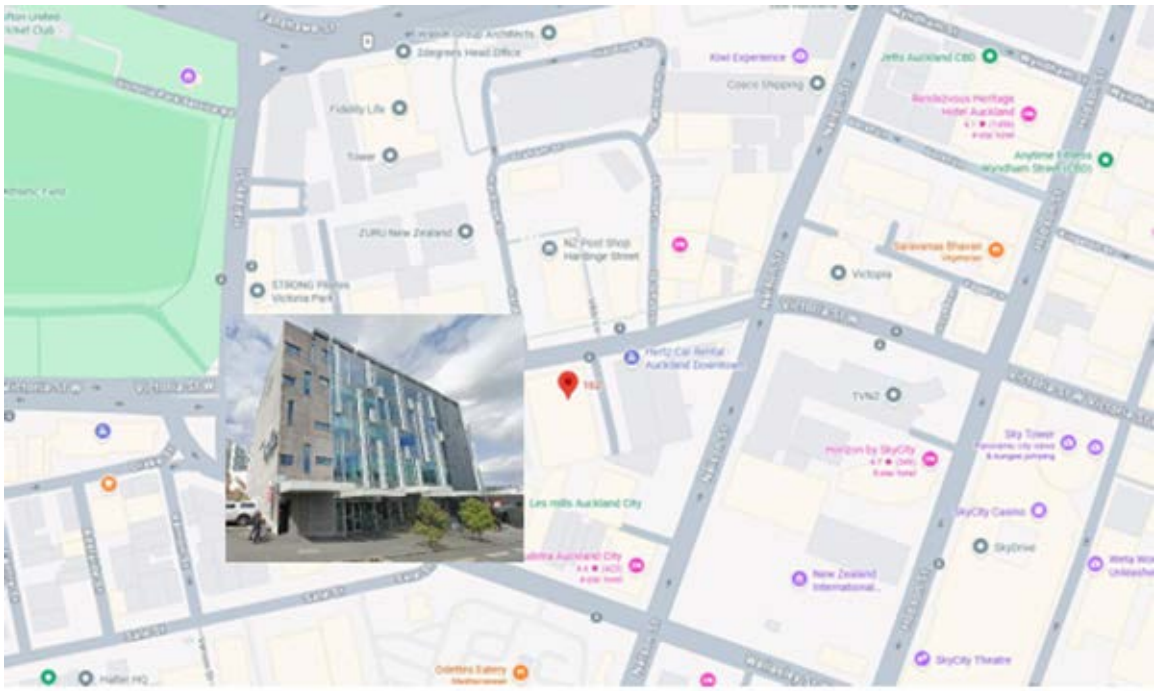
Auckland Central

162 Victoria Street West is located near the Sky Tower, a short walk from Queen Street and the Viaduct. It is located next to the Les Mills gym.

On arrival:

Please report to reception on the ground floor on arrival.

Map:



Annex Two: Invitee list

Ministers/MPs	
Minister for Auckland	Hon Simeon Brown
Minister of Justice	Hon Paul Goldsmith
Minister of Social Development	Hon Louise Upston
Minister of Police	Hon Mark Mitchell
Associate Minister for Housing	Hon Tama Potaka
Minister for Mental Health	Hon Matt Doocey
Auckland Central MP	Chlöe Swarbrick
Government Agencies	
Head of the Auckland Policy Office	Michael Quinn
Health New Zealand Te Whatu Ora	Pauline McKay
Kainga Ora - Te Mātāwai	John Walker
MBIE	Andy Hill
Ministry of Housing and Urban Development	Malo Ah You
Regional Public Service Commissioner	Jules Lynch
Ministry of Social Development	Dan Brunt
New Zealand Police	District Commander Supt Sunny Patel
Oranga Tamariki	Tessa Oaariki
Auckland Council	
Auckland Mayor	Mayor Wayne Brown
Auckland Council	Rachel Kelleher
Auckland Ward Councillor	Julie Fairey
Auckland Ward Councillor	Bo Burns
Waitemata Local Board Chair	Alex Bonham
Business Associations	
Dairy and Business Owners	Sunny Kaushal
Heart of the City	Viv Beck
K Road Business Association	Jamey Holloway
Newmarket Business Association	Mark Knoff-Thomas
Parnell Business Association	Cheryl Adamson
Ponsonby Business Association	Viv Rosenberg
Uptown Business Association	Brent Kennedy
Community Groups	
Akarana Māori Wardens	Jojo Paikea
Auckland City Mission	Helen Robinson
Chair of the Collaborative to end Homelessness	Anne-Marie Searchfield
City Centre Residents Group	Noelene Buckland
Community Housing	Paul Gilberd
Community Patrols NZ	Chris Lawton
Grace Foundation	Ulalei Letele
Kāhui Tū Kaha	Barbara Browne

Kick Back	Aaron Hendry
Ma te Huruhuru	Mahera Maihi
Lifewise / Methodist Mission Northern	Pam Elgar
Tamaki Ki Te Tonga Maori Wardens	Matarora Smith
That's It Property Management Ltd	Jurgen Dentener
Visionwest	Lisa Woolley
Iwi	
Ngati Whatu	Teara Gillman

Annex Three: Agenda

Date and time: Thursday 2 April 2026 3:00-4:00pm

Venue: Meeting room LG.6H, 162 Victoria Street West, Auckland CBD

	Item	**Lead**	**Timing**
Meeting opening			
1.	Introduction	Minister Brown	5 mins
Part One – City Centre Safety			
2.	Agency and Auckland Council updates	Officials	5 mins
3.	Facilitated discussion	Open discussion facilitated by Minister Brown	20 mins
Part Two – City Centre Activation for CRL			
4.	The activation opportunity	Auckland Council Economic Development Office	5 mins
5.	Facilitated discussion	Open discussion facilitated by Minister Brown	20 mins
Meeting close			
6.	Next meeting and close	Minister Brown	5 mins

Annex Four: Status report

Status report on the Thriving City Centre Action Plan – 26 March 2026

INITIATIVE	ACTIONS	LEAD AGENCY	STATUS	UPDATE
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 2025 Extended into 2026	Police and Auckland Council continue coordinated activity across the Auckland city centre, with joint patrols focused on priority locations and peak periods. Feedback from multiple sources, including the NZ Police Ethnic Advisory Board, indicates an improved sense of safety and cleanliness, reflecting the collective effort of multiple agencies. Operation Mahea has now standardised into business-as-usual for Police. Agencies continue to report fewer active hotspot locations in the Auckland city centre, with some displacements observed in neighbouring areas, which is being monitored across adjacent Police districts. Overall, the sustained multi-agency approach continues to support improved public safety outcomes.
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	Ongoing	Work on Pocket Park has been completed, and the focus now is on long-term design for this space.

Safety patrols	a. Explore opportunities for targeted patrols by private sector providers, Māori and Pacific Wardens	Auckland Council	In progress	Engagement with patrol partners is ongoing. Council is not commissioning any additional patrol services at this time. The safety hub on Queens wharf has been refurbished as a downtown base for Council Warden and CPNZ patrols.
Targeted enforcement actions on persistent offending	a. Focus enforcement actions on individuals and locations associated with criminal activity	Police, Auckland Council	In progress	Police and Auckland Council continue targeted enforcement focused on individuals and locations associated with persistent offending in the Auckland city centre. Recent weeks have included serious incidents near the central library, with swift Police arrests followed by increased visibility and engagement to provide reassurance. Council continues complementary compliance activity. Agencies remain focused on monitoring priority locations and responding as required to manage public safety risks.
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	Commenced	Outreach services continue to support Police and Council activity in the Auckland city centre, providing pathways to housing and wellbeing services where appropriate. Kāhui Tū Kaha remains actively involved alongside Compliance Wardens, with several people supported into immediate access transitional accommodation in recent weeks. A small group continues to present complex needs, and Council, HUD, Health and MSD have commenced coordinated work with outreach providers to better focus support and prioritise engagement. Agencies have agreed to ongoing monitoring and strengthened coordination to support improved outcomes for this group.

Review provision of hygiene/laundry/storage services in the city centre	a. Consider alternate sites for service provision	Auckland Council	In progress	Auckland Council considers that these services are currently operating without issue and for limited hours. A key focus is ensuring the surrounding areas are kept free from encampments and are well maintained. Community-led kai services are attracting large levels of uptake from individuals and families experiencing food poverty. Council has no active role in organising or controlling these events but is engaging with service organisers where there are issues that conflict with other activities in the city centre.
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	Commenced	Since November 2025, providers have steadily increased the number of Housing First places across Auckland, progressing from early leasing and tenancies to 198 leases and 186 tenancies as at 25 March 2026. Providers continue sourcing properties from the private rental market to maximise capacity within existing contracts, with 73 tenancies commenced since September 2025. Overall, at 25 March 2026, 423 new tenancies had commenced in Auckland through new leased places, maximising contracts and turnover of existing vacancies. In addition, 150 households who were rough sleeping in Auckland have been housed in temporary accommodation (such as transitional housing) while awaiting social housing or other permanent housing. Outreach activity has supported ongoing engagement with rough sleepers, resulting in a consistent number of identified rough sleepers being connected into Immediate Access housing health and social services and other housing pathways.

				Overall, the initiative has delivered continual growth in available housing and stable progress in placing people into homes.
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	Graffiti reports: • November: 2,074 • December: 2,090 • January: 1,456 • February: 1,974
Expand daytime service provision	a. Provide funding for Day programme b. Provide collocated support services	HUD, Auckland Council MSD	Day programme commenced 1 December 2025 for 5 days per week, rising to 7 days per week from 1 February 2026	Daily attendance at Aro ki te Ha has increased strongly through February and March. From 2 February to 22 March 2026, a total of 1,764 individuals have accessed the day programme. The Auckland City Mission Housing Assistance Centre has since supported over 300 people to access income or housing assistance, with 17 individuals housed to date and 90 added to the Housing Register. Auckland Council has confirmed funding to continue the programme beyond June 2026. Co-located services at HomeGround remain in place, supporting streamlined access to assistance as the programme beds in. Overall, agencies report continued momentum in increasing housing access and sustained placements.

Annex Five: Dashboard

Confidential advice to Government

MINISTRY OF BUSINESS, INNOVATION & EMPLOYMENT
HĪKINA WHAKATUTUKI

Fortnightly Report to the Minister for Auckland
For the period Monday 23 March to Sunday 5 April 2026

Date:	02 April 2026	**Priority:**	Medium
Security classification:	In confidence	**Tracking number:**	BRIEFING-REQ-0030198

Ministers	**Action sought**	**Deadline**
Hon Simeon Brown **Minister for Auckland**	**Note** the contents of this briefing and discuss at the next officials meeting	N/A

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 contributed content
Ministry of Transport and Police

Minister's office to complete:

☐ Approved ☐ Declined
☐ Noted ☐ Needs change
☐ Seen ☐ Overtaken by Events
☐ See Minister's Notes ☐ Withdrawn

Comments

MINISTRY OF BUSINESS, INNOVATION & EMPLOYMENT
HĪKINA WHAKATUTUKI

BRIEFING

Fortnightly Report to the Minister for Auckland
For the period Monday 23 March to Sunday 5 April 2026

Date:	02 April 2026	**Priority:**	Medium
Security classification:	In Confidence	**Tracking number:**	BRIEFING-REQ-0030198

Purpose

To provide you with a fortnightly report for the Auckland Portfolio for the period Monday 23 March to Sunday 5 April 2026.

Recommended action

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

Note the contents of this briefing and discuss at the next officials meeting.

Noted

Michael Quinn
Head of the Auckland Policy Office
02 / 04 / 2026

Hon Simeon Brown
Minister for Auckland
..... / ..... / .....

1. Auckland Portfolio Priorities

Topic/ Contact person	Comment
Auckland City Centre	
Michael Quinn Head of the APO Privacy of natural persons	**Auckland City Centre Advisory Panel (2026-2028)** The Mayor can establish advisory panels to provide input to Auckland Council decision making. New and returning members across these panels were formally convened on 23 March 2026 for the 2026–2028 term. Of particular relevance to your interest in the performance of Auckland's city centre is the refreshed City Centre Advisory Panel. The panel provides advice to the Mayor, elected members and the council group on the performance, challenges and priorities of the city centre. This includes informing strategic direction, investment decisions and delivery of the City Centre Masterplan, and providing insight into how council actions are impacting activity, investment and liveability in the central city. The panel meets four to five times each year. The panel brings together representatives from business, property, residents, tertiary institutions and social sector organisations. Compared to the previous term (2022-2025), the composition has shifted, with a higher proportion of members from commercial, property and business backgrounds, alongside continued representation from residents and social sector organisations. There is less representation from design, climate and broader civic sectors than previously. This places greater emphasis on the perspectives of those directly involved in, and financially exposed to, the performance of the city centre. This is likely to result in more commercially grounded and delivery focused advice, with a stronger emphasis on activity, investment and outcomes in the city centre. The next step is the appointment of a Chair and Deputy Chair. In the previous term these roles were held by Scott Pritchard (Precinct Properties) and Patrick Reynolds.
Auckland City and Regional Deal	
Michael Quinn Head of the APO Privacy of natural persons	Officials have advised that the Auckland City and Regional Deal will be signed by the Prime Minister and the Mayor of Auckland on Friday 10 April 2026 at GridAKL. Signing the Deal will trigger the next phase of work, including: • Establishing the Auckland Deal Oversight Board within 30 business days • Preparing a detailed Implementation Plan within six months • Establishing steering groups and working committees for priority initiatives Auckland Council has advised DIA that the Mayor, Deputy Mayor and one additional councillor (to be confirmed) will represent the Council on the Deal Responsibility Board, alongside you, the Minister for Local

	Government and the Minister for Infrastructure. The Council has also confirmed that its Chief Executive (Phil Wilson), Executive Officer to the Chief Executive (Lisa Tocker), Director Group Strategy and Chief Executive Office (Max Hardy) and Director Policy Planning and Governance (Megan Tyler) will participate in the Oversight Board, alongside senior officials from DIA, MfE, NIFFCo and the APO. A central government media release has been prepared by DIA officials and is currently with Minister Bishop's office for review. The DIA CRD project team will meet later this month with the senior agency leads in the APO to help map out the key projects and issues. We will provide you with a summary of that work when available.
Auckland Transport CCO	
Karen Lyons Auckland Director MoT Privacy of natural persons	**Auckland Council Transport and Infrastructure Delivery Committee Meeting 24 March 2026** *City Rail Link (CRL)* Auckland Transport and KiwiRail confirmed that station construction and installation works are now largely complete. Test train running has exceeded 18,000 km. The next phase includes trial operations and emergency systems testing with real passengers. The next network-wide test will be carried out in the April school holidays and will include testing of a transitional timetable for day one operations. There will also be a full closure over the Easter and ANZAC public holidays. *Level Crossing Removal Programme Update* Auckland Transport reported that concept design for the Takanini Road Bridges is underway and due for completion by mid-April 2026. Property acquisitions have begun, with eight agreements reached so far of the 23 properties identified. Value for money and potential for urban integration and development are key considerations for both Takanini and any future Western Line upgrades. Auckland Transport highlighted considerations with the 21 Western Line level crossings, including costs ranging from $1 to $5 billion. The balanced approach of separating strategic road crossings and pedestrian crossings is approximately $2.5 to $3 billion. These upgrades are considered a key part of unlocking the full benefits of CRL investment. An initial draft business case is planned for the fourth quarter of 2026. *Auckland Transport Quarterly Performance Report* Auckland Transport have identified that 41 out of 42 Statement of Intent (SOI) deliverables are on track for the period ending 31 December 2025. The special vehicle lanes and dynamic streets and solutions programmes, which were behind in the previous update, have made a good recovery and both programmes are now back on

track, forecast to deliver against (and above) SOI commitments by year end.

The SOI deliverable currently at risk is compliance with signage requirements for Auckland Transport projects lasting more than seven days, at 73%. This metric is about ensuring that all work sites have clear signage to keep customers informed, helping to minimise disruption.

16 out of 24 SOI measures meeting or exceeding target, with one not yet reported this financial year. Seven measures are below the year to date (YTD) target. The measures not being met are summarised in the table below.

Measure	**YTD Target**	**Actual**
Arterial Productivity	30,000	29,042
Public Transport Boardings	52.2 million	44.5 million
Public Transport Utilisation	50%	43.3%
Farebox Recovery Ratio	34.3%	33.1%
Death and Serious Injuries	284	290
Capital Budget Invested	90%	76%
Māori Procurement	3%	2.7%

Authorised Vehicles Only Zone on Queen Street Update

Auckland Transport provided an update to the committee on the proposed city centre transport arrangements for midtown in advance of CRL opening, with a focus on the Authorised Vehicle Only (AVO) trial for Wellesley Street and Queen Street.

November 2025 marked the reopening of the Albert Street corridor and the subsequent rerouting of numerous buses from Queen Street. In April 2026, the first phase of improvements to Wellesley Street will be completed. To support the operational requirements in the area, a decision was made to trial AVO operations for Wellesley Street and Queen Street.

The trial will introduce operating hours of the Wellesley Street bus lanes between Elliot and Queen Streets between 7am-7pm and reduced operating hours of the Queen Street AVO area to 7am-7pm, as compared to a permanent 24/7 AVO currently. This alignment of hours and conditions across Queen and Wellesley Streets provides clarity for drivers in the area. The trial will also include access for Total Mobility registered vehicles to access mobility parking on Queen Street.

Early engagement on this trial was undertaken through 2025 with the City Centre Advisory Panel, elected members (including the Waitematā Local Board), Heart of the City, and Auckland Live. Public consultation occurred over January and February 2026.

Auckland Transport will be evaluating how midtown circulation and access changes are performing across public transport, general traffic

	operations, customer experience, and safety to measure the success of this trial, and may make changes, if needed. *Auckland Council Submission to NZTA on Lane Use and Heavy Vehicle Packages of Land Transport Rules Reform Programme* Auckland Council have indicated that they generally support the proposed Land Transport Rules Reform on Lane Use and Heavy Vehicle Productivity Phase 2. Their key recommendations included: • allowing all cyclists, or those accompanying children 12 and under, to use the pavement; • providing funding for improved cycle infrastructure; • investing in a public education campaign; and • making changes to improve clarity.
Law and Order	
Faga Siaki Director, Tamaki Makaurau Partnerships Police Privacy of natural persons	Two of the largest Pacific events for New Zealand, the Pasifika Festival (14-15 March), and the ASB Secondary Schools 51st Polyfest Competition (18-21 March), have been successfully held in Tāmaki Makaurau. Police estimated more than 80,000 people attended over the six days of these two festivals. Tāmaki Makaurau Police were proud to provide event support to both festivals, and to be part of the Recruitment and Engagement (R&E) space at Polyfest. Staff were canvassed from across the motu, including representatives from North Comms, Enquiries, School Community Officers, Road Policing, Authorised Officers and others. Together, they promoted the core objective of the R&E space: to engage and connect with our communities. Police understands that when community engagement is done well, recruitment is supported; and when communities can see themselves reflected in our diverse Police staff (and feel supported through staff cultural capability), strengthened trust and confidence in Police follows. Engagement was supported by officers running fun activities such as the Pacific Police Va'a, jump test, and push up challenges. The space also provided an opportunity to engage with the community collaboratively, alongside our Pacific Wardens. Fifty potential candidates registered interest in joining Police or enrolling in the pre Police course, exceeding the initial targets of 25. Families were also provided 'Feel Safe, Be Safe' resources in Samoan and Tongan.

2. General Auckland Updates

Topic/ Contact person	Comment
Auckland Transport News	
Karen Lyons Auckland Director MoT Privacy of natural persons	**Fuel Prices** Rising fuel prices remain a key item of discussion in transport news. In addition to the Government's announcement about the new fuel phases, news includes ideas for both individuals and government to manage the crisis. Aucklanders have made their way onto public transport, with Auckland Transport reporting patronage at a seven year high. Auckland Transport is investigating the issue of large commercial vehicles being parked in residential areas in South Auckland, following reports that this is creating a safety hazard for locals. As part of consultation on the Annual Plan, residents of Auckland's inner suburbs were asked for feedback on a proposal that would increase the price of a parking permit from $70 to $114. $114 is what it costs Auckland Transport to process each parking permit request. This remains lower than the $200 charge in Wellington, and similar to the $110 for existing permit holders in Christchurch.
Michael Quinn Head of the APO Privacy of natural persons	**Auckland Rail Network Closures: Days Disrupted** In the context of the Government's fuel resilience planning, fuel supply disruptions will increase demand for public transport in Auckland. You will be aware that the Auckland rail network has planned temporary closures across April 2026 for City Rail Link (CRL) commissioning/timetable trials and other renewals, and station works. The closures are time bound and temporary, with services returning between closure windows. Overall, this includes: • three periods of full network closure (Easter weekend 3 to 6 April; mid-holidays 13 to 15 April; and from 2pm Saturday 25 April through Monday 27 April over the ANZAC weekend. • one period of partial, line-specific disruption during the school holidays (7 to 12 April, with the Eastern Line closed 7 to11 April and the Southern Line closed between Puhinui and Pukekohe 7 to 12 April). In impact terms, the full network closures affect six working days (including two public holidays: Easter Monday and ANZAC Day) and four weekend days (noting the ANZAC Saturday closure starts mid-afternoon) (32% of April). The partial closures span four working days and two weekend days (20% of April).

3. Ministerial items on hand

3.1 Upcoming significant meetings

Date	Meeting Info
Confidentiality	

3.2 Other Ministerial engagements related to Auckland

Date	Minister	Meeting Info
None		

3.3 Upcoming significant media and announcements

Timing	Announcement
None	

3.4 Upcoming briefings and aide memoire

Title	Date to Minister	Action for Minister	Key contact	Summary of paper/comment
Confidentiality			Andy Hill Privacy of natural persons	To provide background information for the meeting
			Andy Hill Privacy of natural persons	To provide background information for the event
			Andy Hill Privacy of natural persons	To provide background information for the event

3.5 Upcoming Cabinet papers

Title	Committee	Expected committee date	Key contact	Summary of paper/comment
None				

3.6 Official Information Act requests (Ministerial and Departmental for consultation)

Due to Minister's office	Statutory due date to requester	Ref	Requester	Organisation	Summary of request
None					

3.7 Ministerial correspondence

None				

3.8 Proactive release

23 February 2026	BRIEFING-REQ-0026972 Proactive release of Auckland Briefings 12 Nov - 31 Dec 2025	Requesting your approval to proactively release, with appropriate redactions, briefings from 12 Nov to 31 Dec 2025. MBIE will release the information on the date your office will advise.
13 March 2026	Proactive release of briefing titles for February 2026	MBIE provided your office with the list of briefing titles for review

3.9 Fast-Track Approvals- Auckland

Project Name	Unique Ref No.	Applicant Organisation	Date Received	Due Date to send Comments
Drury Managed Fill	FTAA-2602-1169	Scarbro Environmental Limited	6 March 2026	7 April 2026

4. Auckland dashboard

Transport environmental scan

Karen Lyons
Auckland Director
MoT
Privacy of natural persons

Public transport patronage update

For the fortnight 2-15 March 2026, public transport patronage totalled 4.3 million boardings across the city's public transport network. 91.8% of boardings in February 2026 were considered to be on-time, ahead of the 89% target. The financial year to date patronage total of 58 million was behind the 60.2 million target.

Patronage increased by 2% for this fortnight compared to the same period last year. Bus and train patronage increased by 2% and 3% respectively, with a slight decline in ferry patronage.

Public transport patronage for the year to 28 February 2026 is 89 million boardings which has increased on the previous year's total of 88.9 million boardings. Across all modes, bus patronage had a small increase, while train and ferry patronage declined.

At 89 million boardings, current annual patronage reaches 95% of Auckland Transport's latest SOI target of 94 million annual public transport boardings for 2025/26. This also represents 86% of the pre-pandemic 12-month public transport patronage level in the year to December 2019 of 103.2 million boardings.

PT fortnightly patronage		
Mode	**02 – 15 March 2026**	**02 – 15 March 2025**
Bus	3,427,252	3,370,762
Rail	722,222	704,509
Ferry	139,366	138,837
Total	**4,288,840**	**4,214,108**

Data: AT Metro daily patronage report.

PT monthly patronage		
Mode	**February 2026**	**February 2025**
Bus	6,129,230	5,889,382
Rail	1,228,115	1,168,569
Ferry	497,602	477,848
Total	**7,854,947**	**7,535,799**

Data: AT Metro monthly patronage report.

PT annual patronage		
Mode	**Year to Feb 28 2026**	**Year to Feb 28 2025**
Bus	70,436,663	69,917,064
Rail	13,650,595	14,069,456
Ferry	4,929,754	4,938,755
Total	**89,017,012**	**88,925,275**

Data: AT Metro monthly patronage report.

NB: Rail and ferry data includes replacement services.

Auckland economic update April 2026	
Andy Hill Director Auckland MBIE Privacy of natural persons	Auckland Council has published its monthly economic update for Auckland. The full report is attached in **Annex One**. Highlights include: • ***Consumer confidence index*** for the March 2026 quarter was 100.7: reversing last quarter's peak; above most of 2022-2025; below 2009-2017 • ***Median house price*** for the month of February 2026 was $1,014,000 (in real* dollars: 6% above last month; 2% below a year ago; 35% below the 2021 record peak; 3% below ten years ago) • ***Number of houses sold*** for the year ended February 2026 was 24,109: fairly flat since July 2025; 32% above the May 2023 trough; 34% below the 2021 peak; a little above mid-2017 to mid-2020 • ***Average weekly rent*** for the month of January 2026 was $674 (in real* dollars: similar to the last six months; 13% below February 2021; same as eleven years ago). For the rest of New Zealand, the figure was $638: the highest since January 2025 (but highly seasonal); 3% below a year ago; the lowest-equal January figure since 2020 • ***Number of new dwellings consented*** in the year ended February 2026 was 15,972: rising steadily since April; 16% above a year ago; 27% below the September 2022 peak; 5% above the 2019 pre-Covid peak • ***Real* value of new non-residential buildings consented*** in the year ended February 2026 was $2,626 million: flat for the last three months; 25% above August's trough; 11% above a year ago; 25% below 2022 and 2019 peaks; 14% above the 2020 trough • ***Real* value of imports by Auckland seaports*** for the year ended February 2026 was $32.4 billion: steadily rising 7% over the last 15 months, still 5% below April 2023, but 21% higher than the 2020 Covid trough. For the rest of New Zealand, the figure was $31.9 billion: mostly slightly above the last two years, 22% above the 2020 trough, and 24% lower than their 2023 post-Covid rebound peak. ***Note: Real dollars/values*** are after adjusting for the effects of inflation each quarter, so a similar 'real' level means that a value rose at a similar rate to inflation.

Annexes

Annex One: Auckland Economic Update April 2026

Report available at:https://knowledgeauckland.org.nz/publications/auckland-economic-update-april-2026/

Report available at:https://knowledgeauckland.org.nz/publications/auckland-economic-update-april-2026/

Report available at:https://knowledgeauckland.org.nz/publications/auckland-economic-update-april-2026/

MINISTRY OF BUSINESS, INNOVATION & EMPLOYMENT
HĪKINA WHAKATUTUKI

BRIEFING

Meeting with Phil Wilson, Chief Executive Auckland Council

Date:	10 April 2026	**Priority:**	Medium
Security classification:	In Confidence	**Tracking number:**	BRIEFING-REQ-0030854

Action sought		
	Action sought	**Deadline**
Hon Simon Watts **Minister for Auckland**	**Note** the contents of this briefing.	13 April 2026

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
- ☐ Noted
- ☐ Seen
- ☐ See Minister's Notes
- ☐ Declined
- ☐ Needs change
- ☐ Overtaken by Events
- ☐ Withdrawn

Comments

MINISTRY OF BUSINESS, INNOVATION & EMPLOYMENT
HĪKINA WHAKATUTUKI

BRIEFING

Meeting with Phil Wilson, Chief Executive Auckland Council

Date:	10 April 2026	**Priority:**	Medium
Security classification:	In Confidence	**Tracking number:**	BRIEFING-REQ-0030854

Purpose

You have an existing relationship with Phil Wilson through your role as Minister for Local Government. This meeting provides an opportunity to signal how you intend to work with Auckland Council as Minister for Auckland.

There are a number of significant issues that could be discussed in detail, including rates capping, development levies, Plan Change 120, transport reforms and broader infrastructure and growth pressures. However, given your new role as Minister for Auckland, we recommend using this meeting to set the tone for the relationship and how you intend to operate across government.

An effective way to do this is to use the Auckland City and Regional Deal as a basis for discussion, focusing on how it will operate as a joint platform between central government and Auckland Council and how it can support a more coordinated and mature approach to delivery.

As Minister for Auckland, you have a coordination role across government, including aligning Ministerial portfolios as these work programmes intersect and move into delivery.

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

10 / 04 / 2026

Hon Simon Watts

Minister for Auckland

..... / ..... / .....

Logistics

1. You are meeting with Phil Wilson (Chief Executive, Auckland Council) at the Auckland Policy Office on Monday 13 April 2026 from 1:40 pm to 2:15 pm. The meeting is scheduled for 35 minutes.

2. A brief biography is attached at **Annex One**.

Background

3. This meeting takes place shortly after the signing of the Auckland City and Regional Deal (the Deal).

4. The Deal establishes a framework for a more coordinated and sustained partnership between central government and Auckland Council, with an expectation of regular engagement, aligned priorities and more integrated delivery over time. It is intended to support a more consistent and constructive working relationship between the parties.

5. This year will see a number of major policy and delivery programmes progress across different stages, from implementation through to consultation and legislative development. These include Plan Change 120, the opening of the City Rail Link and resource management reforms. They also include changes to Auckland transport governance, the development of a 30 year transport strategy and a joint spatial plan, further work on time of use charging, and legislation relating to development levies and rates capping.

6. These programmes are significant for Auckland Council and will require close coordination between central government and the Council as they progress, particularly as they begin to intersect.

7. As Minister for Auckland, alongside your Local Government responsibilities, you are positioned to play a central role in aligning these strands of work and supporting delivery.

8. Phil Wilson has led Auckland Council's engagement on the Deal and is likely to be focused on how it is translated into delivery, including the development of the Implementation Plan required within six months of signing.

Discussion

9. Given the breadth of issues currently in play, this meeting provides an opportunity to focus less on individual policy matters and more on how central government and Auckland Council will work together over the coming period.

10. Meeting with the Chief Executive provides an opportunity to engage at a system level and cut through political positioning, with a focus on how the relationship will operate in practice. The discussion should centre on how the Auckland City and Regional Deal can be used as a platform to support this, including how central government and Auckland Council align priorities, coordinate activity and maintain momentum as major programmes move into delivery. This reinforces your role in ensuring central government presents a coherent and coordinated approach to Auckland.

11. This is reinforced by a number of changes across the system, including senior leadership changes in key government agencies and the establishment of the Ministry of Cities, Environment, Regions and Transport. Together, these create an opportunity to reshape how central government engages with Auckland Council.

12. This includes establishing pace and early momentum, identifying where progress can be made in the near term, and where early Ministerial attention will be most useful. It also

includes maintaining focus as the Deal's Implementation Plan is developed and agreeing what effective coordination should look like in practice over the next 12 months.

13. It will also be useful to understand Phil Wilson's perspective on what has previously limited progress between central government and Auckland Council, and what could be done differently to support more timely and coordinated delivery, including where clearer direction or intervention from Ministers would be most useful.

14. Time permitting, the discussion may extend to specific priority areas, including city centre safety, the opening of the City Rail Link, the alignment of transport and spatial planning, housing and growth settings, and any financial and delivery pressures facing Auckland Council.

Risks and mitigations

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

Communications/Media

16. No media are attending the meeting.

Contacts

Name	Position / organisation	Telephone
Phil Wilson	Chief Executive, Auckland Council	Privacy of natural persons
Kerry Harrington	Phil Wilson's Executive Assistant	

Annex One: Biography



Phil Wilson, Chief Executive, Auckland Council

Phil Wilson is Chief Executive of Auckland Council. He has spent most of his career in local government, with senior leadership roles across human resources, strategy, communications and governance.

Phil's previous roles include Human Resources General Manager, Chief Advisor to Manukau City Council, Chief of Staff to the Mayor of Auckland, and Director of Governance and CCO Partnerships. He is also a former board member and President of Taituarā, the national professional body for local government leaders.

MINISTRY OF BUSINESS, INNOVATION & EMPLOYMENT
HĪKINA WHAKATUTUKI

BRIEFING

Meeting with Carrie Hurihanganui, Chief Executive Auckland Airport

Date:	10 April 2026	**Priority:**	Medium
Security classification:	In Confidence	**Tracking number:**	BRIEFING-REQ-0030852

Action sought		
	Action sought	**Deadline**
Hon Simon Watts **Minister for Auckland**	**Note** the contents of this briefing.	13 April 2026

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
- ☐ Noted
- ☐ Seen
- ☐ See Minister's Notes
- ☐ Declined
- ☐ Needs change
- ☐ Overtaken by Events
- ☐ Withdrawn

Comments

MINISTRY OF BUSINESS, INNOVATION & EMPLOYMENT
HĪKINA WHAKATUTUKI

BRIEFING

Meeting with Carrie Hurihanganui, Chief Executive Auckland Airport

Date:	10 April 2026	**Priority:**	Medium
Security classification:	In Confidence	**Tracking number:**	BRIEFING-REQ-0030852

Purpose

You have invited Carrie Hurihanganui to meet with you at the Auckland Policy Office on Monday 13 April 2026 from 1:00 pm to 1:30 pm.

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

10 / 04 / 2026

Hon Simon Watts

Minister for Auckland

..... / ..... / .....

Logistics

1. You are meeting with Carrie Hurihanganui at the Auckland Policy Office on Monday 13 April 2026 from 1:00 pm to 1:30 pm. A brief biography is attached at **Annex One**.
2. Carrie has indicated that she would like to provide you with:
    a. An update on Auckland Airport's infrastructure programme and what it means for Auckland, including ground transport
    b. An update on the fuel situation
3. Background information on Auckland Airport's infrastructure programme, including ground transport is included below.
4. We understand that you are aware of issues relating to fuel stock pressures.

Background

5. Auckland Airport is one of New Zealand's most strategically significant infrastructure assets and serves as the country's primary international gateway. It handles approximately 90 percent of the nation's overseas visitors, placing it at the core of New Zealand's international connectivity and economic activity.
6. The airport sits within a 1,500-hectare precinct that encompasses aeronautical operations, logistics hubs, commercial and industrial developments, and retail and hospitality facilities. This wider precinct is structured into three designated sub-precincts: the Core Sub-precinct, which contains the runways, terminals and aviation support operations; the Gateway Sub-precinct, which enables commercial and industrial development linked to aviation activity; and the Coastal Sub-precinct, which supports marine-related airport operations while recognising important environmental and cultural values.

Auckland Airport Precinct is undergoing significant redevelopment

7. The airport is currently undergoing its most significant redevelopment since its opening 60 years ago. This transformation is guided by the Auckland Airport Master Plan 2025, which provides a long-term vision extending to the late 2040s. The plan reflects major infrastructure upgrades, including 400,000 square metres of improvements across the airfield, terminals, and transport systems.
8. Designed around flexible five-year planning horizons, the Master Plan positions the airport to meet rising aviation demand while allowing adaptation to evolving factors such as technological change, customer expectations, climate resilience and sustainability requirements. As part of the long-range development strategy, the precinct plans for a future northern runway, expanded apron capacity and improved ground transport access. Projections indicate that in twenty years, the airport could accommodate around 38 million passengers annually, more than double the current volume.

The Auckland airport precinct makes a significant contribution to the regional and national economy

9. The economic significance of the Auckland Airport precinct is substantial at both regional and national levels. The airport currently connects around 18.5 million travellers per year to more than 60 domestic and international destinations, playing a significant role in tourism and business travel nationally. The airport also handles around $26 billion worth of freight each year, making it not only New Zealand's largest airfreight gateway but also the country's third-largest trade port overall. Its aeronautical activity includes more than 150,000 aircraft movements annually, supporting both passenger services and freight operations.

10. Employment within the precinct ranges between 20,000 and 25,000 people across aeronautical, logistics, commercial, retail and hospitality roles, reflecting the scale of economic activity embedded in the site. In total, the airport precinct contributes approximately $35.1 billion in national economic output, underlining its fundamental contribution to New Zealand's trade networks and wider economic resilience.

Auckland City and Regional Deal

11. The Auckland City and Regional Deal (the Deal) was signed by the Prime Minister and Mayor of Auckland on Friday 10 April 2026. It identifies Priority Growth Areas where commitment is made for the Crown and Auckland Council (the Partners) to work together to pursue urban development and growth objectives of the Deal in specific growth areas. One of the four areas specified is the Auckland Airport Precinct.

12. The specific commitment includes the Partners working with Auckland Airport to prepare a development and investment plan in the Airport precinct, seeking to improve surface access to the precinct and noting its importance as a major trade, freight and industrial employment hub. Initial priorities include improving freight and people access to the Airport, as well as appropriate funding and financing tools available for these projects.

13. Auckland Airport regards strong, reliable transport connections between the airport precinct and the city centre as essential to Auckland's long-term economic performance, visitor experience and global competitiveness. The airport has consistently emphasised that increasing congestion on the southern motorway network and key arterial routes presents a growing constraint as passenger volumes continue to recover and grow. From the airport's perspective, surface access is a system-wide issue rather than a site-specific one, requiring coordinated action across central government, Auckland Council and NZTA.

14. The airport has publicly positioned itself in favour of scalable rapid-transit options that can improve journey reliability and mode share quickly. In this context, the Airport to Botany bus rapid transit corridor is viewed by the airport as the most realistic next step in strengthening public transport connectivity to and from the airport.

15. Within the airport precinct, Auckland Airport continues to invest in ground-transport infrastructure to improve efficiency and resilience. This includes upgraded terminal forecourts, transport hubs that prioritise buses and shared vehicles, improved traffic circulation, and measures to better separate private, commercial and public transport movements. The airport considers these investments are complementary to mass-transit initiatives, ensuring that essential services can operate reliably as demand intensifies.

Risks and mitigations

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

Communications/Media

17. No media are attending the meeting.

Contacts

Name	Position / organisation	Telephone
Carrie Hurihanganui	Chief Executive, Auckland Airport	Privacy of natural persons

Annex One: Biography



Carrie Hurihanganui, Chief Executive Officer, Auckland Airport

Carrie has held the role of Chief Executive at Auckland Airport since February 2022. She brings more than 25 years of operational and leadership experience in the aviation sector.

Prior to joining Auckland Airport, she spent over two decades at Air New Zealand, progressing through a wide range of operational and leadership roles before becoming Chief Operating Officer. In that capacity, she oversaw customer experience transformation, global team leadership across 16 countries and major operational functions.

She has also held senior executive roles outside aviation, including at National Australia Bank, where she served as Executive General Manager of Customer Experience.

MINISTRY OF BUSINESS, INNOVATION & EMPLOYMENT
HĪKINA WHAKATUTUKI

EVENT BRIEFING

Meeting with the Employers and Manufacturers Association

Date:	10 April 2026	**Priority:**	Medium
Security classification:	In Confidence	**Tracking number:**	BRIEFING-REQ-0030851

Action sought		
	Action sought	**Deadline**
Hon Simon Watts **Minister for Auckland**	**Note** the contents of this briefing	13 April 2026

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

The following departments/agencies have been consulted

Minister's office to complete:

- ☐ Approved
- ☐ Noted
- ☐ Seen
- ☐ See Minister's Notes
- ☐ Declined
- ☐ Needs change
- ☐ Overtaken by Events
- ☐ Withdrawn

Comments

MINISTRY OF BUSINESS, INNOVATION & EMPLOYMENT
HĪKINA WHAKATUTUKI

EVENT BRIEFING

Meeting with the Employers and Manufacturers Association

Date:	10 April 2026	**Priority:**	Medium
Security classification:	In Confidence	**Tracking number:**	BRIEFING-REQ-0030851

Purpose

You are meeting with the Employers and Manufacturers Association (EMA) at the Auckland Policy Office on Monday 13 April 2026 from 12:30 pm to 1:00 pm.

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

10 / 04 / 2026

Hon Simon Watts

Minister for Auckland

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Logistics

1. You are meeting with John Fraser-Mackenzie (EMA Chief Executive) and Alan McDonald (EMA Head of Advocacy, Strategy and Finance) at the Auckland Policy Office on Monday 13 April 2026 from 1:00 pm to 1:30 pm.
2. The meeting is an opportunity for you to meet with the EMA leadership in your new capacity as the Minister for Auckland. As such there is no formal agenda or discussion topics for the meeting.
3. Brief biographies are attached at **Annex One**.

Background

4. The Employers and Manufacturers Association (EMA) is New Zealand's largest business association. Established in 1886, EMA provides business services to over 76,000 member companies located across Northland, Auckland, Waikato and the Bay of Plenty.
5. Business services EMA provides to its members includes Advocacy Services, Exporting Services, Membership Rewards, Member Briefings, Conferences and Events, Manufacturing Services, Training & Development, Legal Services and Consulting, Advice Line and Advisory Support, and access to Members Only Resources. It also provides members with free employment advice, quarterly market briefings, law guides, advice on export opportunities and targeted business training.
6. While EMA membership is constrained to the top half of the North Island, it has a national reach through its longstanding association with a national network that includes Business NZ, Business Central, Business Canterbury and Business South.
7. EMA is a member of the Tāmaki Makaurau Business Network[1] that is convened by MBIE. The network meets monthly to discuss issues and opportunities facing the Auckland business community. The section below summarises recent items raised by EMA through that forum.

Discussion topics likely to be raised

8. EMA consistently frames Auckland as New Zealand’s primary productivity engine and argues that regulatory complexity, infrastructure constraints and persistent cost pressures are undermining business confidence and economic growth. EMA’s advocacy is largely pragmatic in tone, emphasising clarity, consistency and delivery. It positions itself as broadly supportive of reform direction but is concerned that fragmented settings at national and local level are compounding costs for Auckland businesses at a time when confidence remains fragile.
9. Overall, EMA’s Auckland advocacy positions consistently stress the need for better coordination between central and local government and improved sequencing of reform and infrastructure delivery. EMA is signalling that while businesses broadly support reform direction, ongoing complexity and inconsistency risk further undermining confidence at a critical point as major infrastructure investments come online.
10. Below is a summary of recent positions EMA has advocated for.

[1] The Tāmaki Makaurau Business Network includes Chief Executives and senior representatives from Auckland Business Chamber, Employers and Manufacturers Association, Whāriki Māori Business Network, Pacific Business Trust, Auckland Council Economic Development Unit, Heart of the City, RetailNZ and the Travel Agents Association.

Auckland City and Regional Deal

11. Given the recent signing of the Auckland City and Regional Deal, EMA are likely to discuss opportunities for business as the Deal is implemented. EMA's advocacy aligns closely with the stated goals for City and Regional Deals (economic growth, productivity, infrastructure delivery, asset optimisation etc.) and they have expressed support for an Auckland Deal.

12. EMA has consistently promoted the opportunity for closer engagement with the business community under the Deal framework and have expressed frustration at what they perceive as a lack of transparency as the Deal has been developed, and at the time it has taken for it to be completed and signed.

Transport, Congestion and Productivity

13. EMA continues to advocate strongly for the introduction of time-of-use or congestion charging in Auckland. It presents congestion charging as a productivity and efficiency tool rather than a revenue mechanism, arguing that congestion imposes significant economic costs on Auckland firms, particularly those reliant on freight, trades and service vehicles. EMA has linked this position to the need to maximise the return on investment from major infrastructure, including the City Rail Link, and has argued that without demand management the productivity benefits of new transport infrastructure will be muted.

Retail and Trading Regulation

14. EMA has also been vocal on regulatory inconsistency affecting retail and hospitality businesses, most recently in relation to Easter Sunday trading rules. In April 2026, EMA described current trading settings as confusing and inconsistent, highlighting anomalies where some Auckland suburbs are permitted to open while neighbouring areas are not. It argues that these inconsistencies create compliance risks, distort competition within Auckland, and undermine business certainty. EMA is calling for national standardisation and reform of the Shop Trading Hours Act to remove local variation.

Business Confidence and Cost Pressures

15. Business confidence and cost pressures remain a central theme in EMA's Auckland commentary. In early April 2026, EMA warned that fuel supply disruption and cost volatility were already affecting confidence among Auckland businesses, particularly in transport-intensive sectors such as logistics, construction and manufacturing. EMA noted that the impact on sentiment was occurring even before significant supply constraints had materialised, reflecting heightened sensitivity among firms operating in Auckland's high-cost environment.

Employment Relations and Dispute Resolution

16. EMA has called for urgent regulation of employment advocates, citing increased volumes of disputes in Auckland and pressure on mediation and Employment Relations Authority processes. It argues that current settings increase cost, delay and uncertainty for Auckland employers, with disproportionate effects on small and medium-sized enterprises that lack in-house legal capability.

Health and Safety Reform

17. EMA acknowledges progress but maintains that compliance burden remains significant for Auckland-based employers, particularly in construction, manufacturing and logistics. EMA is seeking clearer and more proportionate regulation that better reflects operational realities and reduces unnecessary process requirements without weakening worker protections.

Risks and mitigations

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

Communications/Media

19. No media are attending the meeting.

Contacts

Name	Position / organisation	Telephone
Alan McDonald	Head of Advocacy, Strategy and Finance, EMA	Privacy of natural persons

ANNEX ONE: Biographies

	**John Fraser-Mackenzie, Chief Executive, EMA** John was appointed the Chief Executive for the EMA in June 2024. As the Chief Executive, his focus is on increasing the prosperity of New Zealand through better business. John has significant senior leadership and commercial experience prior to joining the EMA including private sector finance roles at HJ Heinz, Goodman Fielder NZ and Metro Performance Glass.
	**Alan McDonald, Head of Advocacy, Strategy and Finance, EMA** Alan has worked at the EMA for 9 years. As Head of Advocacy, Strategy and Finance he is responsible for campaigns to lobby central and local government in support of New Zealand businesses. Key areas of interest include employment relations legislation, resource management system reform, the provision of critical infrastructure to lead and support business development, skills and training, immigration, local and central government business related issues, health and safety/ACC legislation and creating support for our exporters.

MINISTRY OF BUSINESS, INNOVATION & EMPLOYMENT
HĪKINA WHAKATUTUKI

BRIEFING

Eden Park Foundation Agreement: Media Event Colin Maiden Park

Date:	13 April 2026	**Priority:**	Medium
Security classification:	In Confidence	**Tracking number:**	BRIEFING-REQ-0030938

Action sought		
	Action sought	**Deadline**
Hon Simon Watts **Minister for Auckland**	**Note** the contents of this briefing.	14 April 2026

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
Ministry of Culture and Heritage

Minister's office to complete:

- ☐ Approved
- ☐ Noted
- ☐ Seen
- ☐ See Minister's Notes
- ☐ Declined
- ☐ Needs change
- ☐ Overtaken by Events
- ☐ Withdrawn

Comments

MINISTRY OF BUSINESS, INNOVATION & EMPLOYMENT
HĪKINA WHAKATUTUKI

BRIEFING

Eden Park Foundation Agreement: Media Event Colin Maiden Park

Date:	13 April 2026	**Priority:**	Medium
Security classification:	In Confidence	**Tracking number:**	BRIEFING-REQ-0030938

Purpose

You are attending a photo opportunity at Colin Maiden Park to mark the signing of the Foundation Agreement relating to Eden Park and the redevelopment of cricket facilities.

This briefing provides a short reminder of the context, outlines what the event represents and sets out key messages and responses in case of media engagement. A run sheet is included to support your participation on the day.

This event is a visible step in delivering the Auckland City and Deal which you helped announce last Friday (10 April 2026) and its focus on economic growth, major events and tourism.

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

13 / 04 / 2026

Hon Simon Watts

Minister for Auckland

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Logistics

1. You will attend a photo opportunity at the Auckland University Cricket Club pavilion at Colin Maiden Park, alongside Minister Mitchell and representatives from Auckland Council, Eden Park Trust Board, Auckland Cricket and Auckland Rugby.

2. VIPs will be met on arrival and escorted into the venue. The event will include brief formalities, followed by a primary photo opportunity and optional media interviews.

3. Media are expected to attend. While no formal speaking role is scheduled, you may be asked to provide comment. Minister Mitchell's attendance may be subject to competing priorities relating to Cyclone Vaianu.

4. The Foundation Agreement media release will be embargoed until 3:00pm to allow inclusion of imagery from the event.

5. Key attendees:

    - Hon Mark Mitchell - Minister for Sport and Recreation
    - Councillor Desley Simpson - Deputy Mayor, Auckland Council
    - Simon Bridges - Chair, Eden Park Trust Board
    - Brendon Gibson - Chair, Auckland Cricket
    - Brent Metson - Chair, Auckland Rugby

6. You are not scheduled to speak, however you should be prepared to provide brief remarks if requested.

Background

7. Eden Park is the only venue in New Zealand capable of hosting the largest sporting and entertainment events and holds significant cultural, economic and reputational value. It operates within a wider Auckland stadium network that includes Go Media Stadium, North Harbour Stadium and Western Springs Stadium.

8. The Foundation Agreement is an early deliverable under the Auckland City and Regional Deal, which establishes a long-term partnership to unlock Auckland's economic potential, including through major events and improved use of strategic assets such as Eden Park.

9. In March 2025, Auckland Council endorsed Eden Park's staged redevelopment as the preferred option for Auckland's main stadium. Since then, the Crown, Council, Eden Park Trust Board, Auckland Cricket and Auckland Rugby have worked together to develop a future model for Eden Park, with the Foundation Agreement representing the first milestone.

10. The current model does not allow optimal use of Eden Park. Legacy rights held by Auckland Cricket and Auckland Rugby constrain the ability to host major events, while financial pressures and wider system issues limit long term sustainability. The current arrangements are widely seen as not serving Eden Park, its users, or Auckland's long-term interests.

11. The Government has already taken steps to unlock Eden Park's potential by easing planning restrictions, enabling the stadium to host more concerts and major events. The Foundation Agreement helps enable consideration of structural constraints to fully unlock that potential.

12. The agreement provides an interim step. Auckland Cricket has agreed not to enforce its preferential use rights until the end of the 2027/28 season, creating a two-year window in

which Eden Park can host more major events. In parallel, a process is underway to resolve long term governance, ownership and structural arrangements.

13. The redevelopment of Colin Maiden Park is a key enabler. Auckland Cricket will relocate its domestic and high-performance operations to a dedicated facility. The Crown is contributing $5 million, matched by Auckland Council, to support this transition.

14. Work is already underway. A governance group has been established to oversee delivery, with site mobilisation planned from late April and early turf works commencing shortly. The main oval and embankments are expected to be substantially complete by the end of 2026, with facilities targeted to support the 2026/27 cricket season.

Next Phase

15. The signing of the Foundation Agreement marks the practical completion of the first stage of work on Eden Park, which has to date been led by the Ministry for Culture and Heritage.

16. The next stage will focus on developing a long-term solution. This includes assessing the value and nature of Auckland Cricket and Auckland Rugby's interests in Eden Park, progressing options for future governance and ownership arrangements, and considering the redevelopment potential of the stadium precinct.

17. This work could also consider how Eden Park can contribute to a wider urban precinct, including opportunities associated with the increased public transport connectivity through the opening of the City Rail Link and the broader development of the Kingsland area.

18. Confidential advice to Government

Risks and mitigations

19. There is a risk of questions around public funding or the temporary nature of the arrangement.

20. These can be addressed by emphasising that the current model limits Eden Park's ability to generate value, and that this investment supports a stronger long-term outcome for both cricket and major events.

Communications/Media

21. Media have been invited. At the time of writing this report we do not have information on which media will attend.

22. Messaging should focus on progress, practical action and economic outcomes.

Contacts

Name	Position / organisation	Telephone
Santha Brown	Programme Manager, Auckland Council	Privacy of natural persons

Annex One: Attendees

	**Desley Simpson, Deputy Mayor** Desley is an Auckland Councillor representing the Orakei Ward. Prior to that she was Orakei's Local Board chair, a role she held for six years since the formation of Auckland Council in 2010.
	**Simon Bridges, Chair Eden Park Trust Board** Simon is a former lawyer and politician, having been a senior Cabinet Minister and Leader of the Opposition. Now based in Auckland, Simon is CEO of the Auckland Chamber of Commerce, independent chair of the CC Group of Companies and chair of NZTA Waka Kotahi. Simon was appointed Chair of Eden Park Trust Board in April 2025.
	**Brendon Gibson, Chair Auckland Cricket** Brendon is a Partner at Calibre Partners, which is a restructuring, turnaround and business advisory specialist. Brendon is the Deputy Chair of the Board of Trustees of Sacred Heart College. He was appointed Director of Auckland Cricket in November 2019 and Chair in November 2021.
	**Brent Metson, Chair Auckland Rugby** Brent was elected in Chair in 2023. He was previously the Chair of the Auckland Rugby Council of Delegates.

Annex Two: Event Runsheet

The venue for this event is Auckland University Cricket Club, Merton Road, Glen Innes, Auckland 1006.

Attendees will be met in the carpark and welcomed into the venue.

Time	Activity
12.00pm	VIP arrivals
12.15pm	Brief formalities (Brendan Gibson, Desley Simpson)
12.25pm	Primary photo opportunity
12.30pm	Media interviews as required
12.30pm	On-ground activities: drills/ games with ACES and HEARTS and junior players
12.45pm	VIPS welcome to remain as available or depart from this time

Free and frank opinions

MINISTRY OF BUSINESS, INNOVATION & EMPLOYMENT
HĪKINA WHAKATUTUKI

BRIEFING

Transporting Auckland Forward Report

Date:	13 April 2026	**Priority:**	Medium
Security classification:	In Confidence	**Tracking number:**	BRIEFING-REQ-0030985

Action sought		
	Action sought	**Deadline**
Hon Simon Watts **Minister for Auckland**	**Note** the contents of this report	20 April 2026

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
- ☐ Noted
- ☐ Seen
- ☐ See Minister's Notes
- ☐ Declined
- ☐ Needs change
- ☐ Overtaken by Events
- ☐ Withdrawn

Comments

MINISTRY OF BUSINESS, INNOVATION & EMPLOYMENT
HĪKINA WHAKATUTUKI

BRIEFING

Transporting Auckland Forward Report

Date:	13 April 2026	**Priority:**	Medium
Security classification:	In Confidence	**Tracking number:**	BRIEFING-REQ-0030985

Purpose

To provide an overview of the key messages from the *Transporting Auckland Forward* report which has been released to media and key stakeholders.

You may be asked to comment.

Executive summary

The *Transporting Auckland Forward* report reinforces that Auckland's transport challenges are well understood, but progress is constrained by fragmented decision-making and a lack of delivery focus. It calls for a shift from further analysis to execution, with stronger alignment between transport, housing and growth.

The report frames Auckland as a national economic priority and supports a broader mix of funding tools, including user pays and value capture. Its core messages are broadly aligned with the Government's direction, particularly the focus on delivery, funding reform and coordination.

Recommended action

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

a **Note** the contents of this report.

Noted



Michael Quinn

Head of the Auckland Policy Office

13 / 04 / 2026

Hon Simon Watts

Minister for Auckland

..... / ..... / .....

Background

1. The attached report is the output of a March 2026 Auckland Transport Summit convened by Infrastructure New Zealand and the Committee for Auckland. It brought together over 60 senior leaders from across central and local government, infrastructure providers, developers and the business community.

2. Attendees included the Mayor of Auckland, the former Minister for Auckland, and Members of Parliament Chlöe Swarbrick, Shanan Halbert and Simon Court in their infrastructure spokesperson roles.

3. It reflects a cross-sector perspective rather than the views of any particular group.

4. The report is intended to influence debate ahead of the next election, with a particular focus on securing stronger commitment to transport investment, funding reform and delivery in Auckland.

Content of the report

5. The report's central argument is that Auckland does not lack strategies, plans or evidence. Instead, it argues that progress is constrained by fragmented decision-making, inconsistent priorities and a lack of sustained delivery focus.

6. It positions Auckland's transport system as a national economic issue, noting that constraints on connectivity and network performance are limiting productivity, growth and the city's role as New Zealand's primary gateway.

7. A consistent theme throughout is the need to move from further analysis to execution. The report emphasises that there is already a strong evidence base and broad agreement on priorities, and that the focus should now be on implementation.

8. The report identifies three broad areas of focus:

    a. Making better use of existing infrastructure, particularly the rail network and City Rail Link, through targeted improvements, optimisation and demand management tools such as time-of-use charging.

    b. Progressing priority corridors and connections, including rapid transit expansion, improved airport access and stronger cross-city links to support growth and connectivity.

    c. Planning for longer-term strategic investments, such as an additional harbour crossing and more integrated spatial and transport planning to support future growth.

9. The report places particular emphasis on funding reform. It advocates for a broader mix of funding tools, including user-pays mechanisms such as congestion charging, value capture, local funding sources and central government investment aligned to national benefits. The underlying principle is that funding should be aligned with those who benefit from infrastructure investment.

10. It also highlights the need for stronger alignment between transport, housing and land use decisions, particularly to ensure that growth is supported by infrastructure and that investments such as the City Rail Link are fully realised.

11. Finally, the report calls for a stronger partnership between central government and Auckland Council. It argues that the current model places significant decision-making and funding control in Wellington, while leaving delivery pressures with Auckland, and that this imbalance is no longer sustainable.

Public commentary

12. The report has been circulated to media and may attract media attention. If you are asked to comment publicly, we recommend you:

Free and frank opinions

13. A copy of the report is attached (Annex One).

Annexes

Annex One: Transporting Auckland Forward

Annex One: Transporting Auckland Forward Report

Report available at: https://infrastructure.org.nz/wp-content/uploads/2026/04/Transporting-Auckland-Forward-Report-1.04.26.pdf

MINISTRY OF BUSINESS, INNOVATION & EMPLOYMENT
HĪKINA WHAKATUTUKI

Fortnightly Report to the Minister for Auckland
For the period Monday 6 April to Sunday 19 April 2026

Date:	16 April 2026	**Priority:**	Medium
Security classification:	In confidence	**Tracking number:**	BRIEFING-REQ-0030993

Ministers	**Action sought**	**Deadline**
Hon Simon Watts **Minister for Auckland**	**Note** the contents of this briefing and discuss at the next officials meeting	N/A

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 contributed content
Ministry of Transport, Police and Department of Internal Affairs

Minister's office to complete:

- ☐ Approved
- ☐ Noted
- ☐ Seen
- ☐ See Minister's Notes
- ☐ Declined
- ☐ Needs change
- ☐ Overtaken by Events
- ☐ Withdrawn

Comments

MINISTRY OF BUSINESS, INNOVATION & EMPLOYMENT
HĪKINA WHAKATUTUKI

BRIEFING

Fortnightly Report to the Minister for Auckland
For the period Monday 6 April to Sunday 19 April 2026

Date:	16 April 2026	**Priority:**	Medium
Security classification:	In Confidence	**Tracking number:**	BRIEFING-REQ-0030993

Purpose

To provide you with a fortnightly report for the Auckland Portfolio for the period Monday 6 April to Sunday 19 April 2026.

Recommended action

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

Note the contents of this briefing and discuss at the next officials meeting.

Noted

Michael Quinn
Head of the Auckland Policy Office
16 / 04 / 2026

Hon Simon Watts
Minister for Auckland
..... / ..... / .....

1. Auckland Portfolio Priorities

Topic/ Contact person	Comment
Auckland City Centre	
Michael Quinn Head of the APO Privacy of natural persons	Auckland Council undertakes a daily rough sleeper count across key areas of the city centre. While the count does not cover the entire city centre, it provides a useful indicator and is shared with the APO to help inform the multi-agency City Centre project. The reporting period runs from Wednesday to Tuesday, producing a seven-day average. For the seven-day period ending Wednesday 15 April, the average count was 25 visible rough sleepers. This sits within the usual observed range of 21 to 25, although at the upper end of that range. Daily average: 25 Wednesday 8 April: 23 Thursday 9 April: 23 Friday 10 April: 30 Saturday 11 April: 23 Sunday 12 April: 17 Monday 13 April: 23 Tuesday 14 April: 34
Auckland City and Regional Deal	
Michael Quinn Head of the APO Privacy of natural persons	The Auckland Policy Office Leadership Team, comprising senior Auckland based staff from core APO agencies, met with the DIA City and Regional Deal team on 16 April to discuss the next steps for implementing the Auckland Deal. DIA is developing an agency engagement process for May to help shape the development of the implementation plan. Under the agreement, this plan is to be developed within the first six months of the Deal being signed. We emphasised that the Auckland Deal will be a central pillar for your work as Minister for Auckland, and that you and Auckland Council will be looking to move quickly into the next phase with clear momentum. We also noted that implementation arrangements should reflect Auckland's particular circumstances. This includes your Auckland portfolio responsibilities, the established cross agency leadership and coordination platform within the APO, strong senior agency networks already operating in Auckland, and a well engaged business community that is keen to contribute. Several significant work programmes are already under way or in development and can be progressed while implementation arrangements are developed. These include the transport reforms, the location of the NZIAT innovation hub at GRIDAKL, the regional spatial plan and Drury as a priority growth area. Other initiatives will depend on decisions by portfolio Ministers and agencies as new priorities are

	set. We will keep you informed of developments and identify any issues or opportunities that may require your attention.
Auckland Transport News	
Karen Lyons Auckland Director MoT Privacy of natural persons	The Mayor of Auckland, Wayne Brown, has called for further promotion of public transport as a way to navigate the fuel crisis. He highlighted the $50 fare cap and how affordable that was compared to fuel. He also suggested the Government could provide funding to lower the cap to $40 while fuel prices are high. While it is too early to see trends on an annual basis, and patronage does typically rise in March, public transport patronage in the period 20 March to 2 April 2026 is up 7% on the period (9-22 February 2026), prior to the start of the conflict in the Middle East. In early April 2026, Infrastructure New Zealand and Committee for Auckland released “Transporting Auckland Forward: A Call to Action”. This is the output of a transport summit held in March attended by around 60 Auckland leaders across the public and private sector. The summit was opened by the previous Minister for Auckland and Mayor Brown. The report does not contain new insights but is a useful summary and calls for stronger political commitment, clearer alignment on priorities and faster delivery. The issues traversed in the report will be picked up in 30-year transport plan for Auckland work as part of the reforms provided for in the Local Government (Auckland Council) (Transport Governance) Amendment Bill.
Law and Order	
Faga Siaki Director, Tamaki Makaurau Partnerships Police Privacy of natural persons	Auckland Police’s Iwi and Community Partnership Emergency Management Co-ordinators supported Auckland Emergency Management and the Auckland Transport Operations Centre throughout the week of 6 April and into the weekend during the preparation, response, and recovery phases for the severe weather event Cyclone Vaianu. Other agency partners included those from Fire and Emergency New Zealand, St John Ambulance and New Zealand Defence Force. All agencies contributed to ensuring the preservation of life and maintenance of critical services. Support for community wellbeing was maintained across Tamaki Makaurau. Additional highlights for Auckland Police’s Iwi and Partnership team included, for example, supporting the Unitec Pre-Police Course at the Mt Albert Campus; and facilitating a West Auckland Driver Licence Workshop: • The Unitec Pre-police course supports the Police Recruitment team to prepare potential police applicants for the physical and mental challenges of policing, including fitness sessions. Auckland Police have been able to reinforce the standards expected and contribute to a positive and supportive environment where the students push themselves while also encouraging each other.

	• The West Auckland Driver Licence Workshop supports community, including rangatahi, to progress toward obtaining their learner or restricted driver licence. The workshop provided information on the driver licensing process, legal responsibilities, and road safety expectations, while addressing common barriers such as access, confidence, and understanding of requirements. It was delivered to 23 people in a supportive and culturally responsive environment, and aimed to increase licence uptake, promote safer driving behaviours, and improve access to community, education, and employment opportunities. Additional highlights for Auckland Police's Ethnic Responsiveness team included, for example, supporting the North Harbour Pasifika Hauora Collective Youth Sports Day; and recording prevention videos for the Recognised Seasonal Employer (RSE) Scheme: • The sports day was a community-focused event to promote physical activity, wellbeing, and positive engagement among Pasifika rangatahi on 7 April. The event was in partnership with Harbour Sports, North Harbour Pasifika Hauora Collective, and Auckland University of Technology. The day emphasised participation over competition, welcoming all ability levels and encouraging teamwork, respect, and enjoyment. The event served as a platform to strengthen connections between Pasifika youth, community partners, and local services, highlighting positive pathways and role modelling. More than 60 rangatahi participated in this year's event. • The videos for the RSE Scheme were recorded in several Pacific and Ethnic languages for workers across New Zealand. This work is a collaboration between the Police, MBIE, Ministry of Health and the community to spread safety and prevention messages to help New Zealand's RSE employees understand the law, their rights and safety while working in New Zealand under the scheme.

2. General Auckland Updates

Topic/ Contact person	Comment
Letter to Ministers and Auckland work programme report back	
Andy Hill Director Auckland MBIE Privacy of natural persons	At the Auckland officials meeting on 15 April 2026, you indicated that you wished to write to your Ministerial colleagues to remind them of your role as Minister for Auckland. In particular, you wished to reenforce that you have a Cabinet mandate to seek information on central government Auckland-related initiatives directly from relevant agencies, to fulfil the advocacy and coordination roles of the Auckland portfolio and meet Cabinet report back commitments [ECO-25-MIN-0068 refers].

	The Cabinet report back refers to Cabinet's invitation to the Minister for Auckland to report back to relevant Ministers …. at least once every six months on the cross-government work programme in Auckland [ECO-25-MIN-0068 refers]. We recommend that your letter serves the dual purpose of reminding your colleagues of your Cabinet mandate as well as providing them with the central government work programme for Auckland. A draft letter is attached at **Annex One**. We have provided two views of the Auckland work programme. The first covers the six-month period from 1 July 2025 to 31 December 2026 (attached at **Annex Two**) and the second is an indicative, forward looking view covering the period 1 January 2026 to 31 December 2026 (attached at **Annex Three**). These two reports are a continuation of the series commenced under the previous Minister for Auckland. Pending your approval of the content, we are having the two work programme reports put into a designed format to maximise their impact and value. We will provide these formatted versions to your office to accompany the letter that is provided to Ministers.
Changes to future fortnightly report format	
Andy Hill Director Auckland MBIE Privacy of natural persons	At our first Auckland Officials meeting, you confirmed that you wish to receive fortnightly reports for your Auckland portfolio, with the understanding that any pressing issues that arise between reports will be raised directly and promptly with your office. You have also confirmed that formal Officials meetings will be held fortnightly in a cadence aligned with the fortnightly report. Informal meetings in alternate weeks will be held if required. The existing structure of the fortnightly report is organised around the priorities of the previous Minister for Auckland plus items of general interest and specific updates on transport and water reform. We propose that we continue to provide you with items of general Auckland interest and specific updates on transport. We understand that, as Minister for Local Government you are regularly updated on water reform, so we do not propose to replicate that in your Auckland report. In terms of your priorities, we understand that you would like to receive regular updates on: • Auckland City and Regional Deal • City Rail Link • Move-on orders • New Zealand Institute of Advanced Technology • Queens Wharf and Cloud negotiation We have requested updates on these topics but as they were not available for this report, we will move to the updated format for the next fortnight.

	In this report we have endeavoured to mirror the sections of your other portfolio reports that provide you with the status of briefings that have requested, upcoming meetings, OIA requests and Ministerial responses etc. We would welcome your feedback on any further changes to the format and content of these reports.
Boil water notice	
Lori Hand Executive Director Water Services Reform DIA Privacy of natural persons	On Monday evening 6 April 2025 Watercare issued a boil water notice for parts of Hillsborough, Mt Roskill, Royal Oak and Three Kings as E. coli was detected in a routine drinking water sample. Tankers were made available, and support was provided to those unable to boil water. The notice was lifted on Wednesday morning 8 April 2025 after further testing confirmed that the result was a false positive and that there was no contamination. The issue was caused by a specific water quality monitoring tap which has now been replaced and retested.
Confidential advice to Government	
Karen Lyons Auckland Director MoT Privacy of natural persons	Confidential advice to Government

Confidential advice to Government

	Confidential advice to Government

3. Auckland dashboard

Transport environmental scan	
Karen Lyons Auckland Director MoT Privacy of natural persons	**Public transport patronage update** For the fortnight 23 March – 5 April 2026, public transport patronage totalled 3.8 million boardings across the city's public transport network. 91.8% of boardings in February 2026 were considered to be on time, ahead of the 89% target. The financial year to date patronage total of 58 million was behind the 60.2 million target. Patronage declined by 2% for this fortnight compared to the same period last year, likely due to an earlier Easter period. Patronage declined across all modes, with train patronage declining the most at 9%, likely due to the rail close down from the 1 April 2026. Public transport patronage for the year to 28 February 2026 is 89 million boardings which has increased on the previous year's total of 88.9 million boardings. Across all modes, bus patronage had a small increase, while train and ferry patronage declined. At 89 million boardings, current annual patronage reaches 95% of Auckland Transport's latest SOI target of 94 million annual public transport boardings for 2025/26. This also represents 86% of the pre-pandemic 12-month public transport patronage level in the year to December 2019 of 103.2 million boardings.

PT fortnightly patronage		
Mode	**23 March – 05 April 2026**	**23 March – 05 April 2025**
Bus	3,108,036	3,129,353
Rail	611,800	675,479
Ferry	115,760	120,921
Total	**3,835,596**	**3,925,753**

Data: AT Metro daily patronage report.

PT monthly patronage		
Mode	**February 2026**	**February 2025**
Bus	6,129,230	5,889,382
Rail	1,228,115	1,168,569
Ferry	497,602	477,848
Total	**7,854,947**	**7,535,799**

Data: AT Metro monthly patronage report.

PT annual patronage

Mode	Year to Feb 28 2026	Year to Feb 28 2025
Bus	70,436,663	69,917,064
Rail	13,650,595	14,069,456
Ferry	4,929,754	4,938,755
Total	**89,017,012**	**88,925,275**

Data: AT Metro monthly patronage report.

NB: Rail and ferry data includes replacement services.

4. Ministerial items on hand

3.1 Upcoming Cabinet papers

Title	Committee	Expected committee date	Key contact	Summary of paper/comment
None				

3.2 Upcoming briefings and aide memoire

Title	Date to Minister	Action for Minister	Key contact	Summary of paper/comment
None				

3.3 Upcoming meetings/ events

Date	Meeting Info
Friday, 24 April 2026 4:00 pm-4:30 pm	Meeting with Desley Simpson

3.4 Other Ministerial engagements related to Auckland

Date	Minister	Meeting Info
None		

3.5 Official Information Act requests (Ministerial and Departmental for consultation)

Due to Minister's office	Statutory due date to requester	Ref	Requester	Organisation	Summary of request
None					

3.6 Upcoming significant media and announcements

Timing	Announcement
None	

3.7 Ministerial correspondence

None				

3.8 Proactive release

23 February 2026	BRIEFING-REQ-0026972 Proactive release of Auckland Briefings 12 Nov - 31 Dec 2025	Requesting your approval to proactively release, with appropriate redactions, briefings from 12 Nov to 31 Dec 2025. MBIE will release the information on the date your office will advise.
13 March 2026	Proactive release of briefing titles for February 2026	MBIE provided your office with the list of briefing titles for review
15 April 2026	Proactive release of briefing titles for March 2026	MBIE provided your office with the list of briefing titles for review

3.9 Fast-Track Approvals- Auckland

Project Name	Unique Ref No.	Applicant Organisation	Date Received	Due Date to send Comments
None				

Annexes

Annex One: Draft Letter to Ministers

Annex Two: Draft Auckland Consolidated Central Government work programme 1 July 2025 - 31 Dec 2025

Annex Three: Draft Auckland Consolidated Central Government work programme 1 January 2026 - 31 Dec 2026

Annex One: Draft Letter to Ministers

Hon Simon Watts

Minister of Climate Change
Minister of Local Government
Minister of Revenue
Minister for Auckland

Confidential advice to Government

[redacted]

Private Bag 18041, Parliament Buildings, Wellington 6160, New Zealand | +64 4 817 6814 | s.watts@ministers.govt.nz

Annex Two: Draft Auckland Consolidated Central Government work programme 1 July 2025 - 31 Dec 2025

Confidential advice to Government

Confidential advice to Government

Confidential advice to Government

Confidential advice to Government

Confidential advice to Government

Confidential advice to Government

Confidential advice to Government

Confidential advice to Government

DRAFT

Annex Three: Draft Auckland Consolidated Central Government work programme 1 January 2026 - 31 Dec 2026

Confidential advice to Government

Confidential advice to Government

Confidential advice to Government

Confidential advice to Government

Confidential advice to Government

Confidential advice to Government

Confidential advice to Government

Confidential advice to Government

MINISTRY OF BUSINESS, INNOVATION & EMPLOYMENT
HĪKINA WHAKATUTUKI

AIDE MEMOIRE

Update on move-on orders

Date:	21 April 2026	**Priority:**	Medium
Security classification:	In Confidence	**Tracking number:**	BRIEFING-REQ-0031623

Information for Minister(s)
Hon Simon Watts **Minister for Auckland**

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

The following departments/agencies have been consulted

Minister's office to complete:

- ☐ Approved
- ☐ Noted
- ☐ Seen
- ☐ See Minister's Notes
- ☐ Declined
- ☐ Needs change
- ☐ Overtaken by Events
- ☐ Withdrawn

Comments

MINISTRY OF BUSINESS, INNOVATION & EMPLOYMENT
HĪKINA WHAKATUTUKI

AIDE MEMOIRE

Update on move-on orders

Date:	21 April 2026	**Priority:**	Medium
Security classification:	In Confidence	**Tracking number:**	BRIEFING-REQ-0031623

Purpose

To provide you with an update on the status of the move-on orders and a draft letter to the Minister of Justice, copied to the Minister of Police, expressing your support for the timely introduction of the new powers.

Michael Quinn

Head of the Auckland Policy Office

21 / 04 / 2026

Background

1. At your meeting with Auckland officials on Wednesday 15 April 2026, you requested a draft letter to the Minister of Justice, copied to the Minister of Police, expressing your support for the timely introduction of move-on orders.
2. Subsequent to that meeting, we have engaged with the Ministry of Justice (MOJ) to determine the status of this work and opportunities for you to engage with it.

Status of the move-on orders work programme

3. We are advised that Minister Goldsmith is progressing the legislation providing Police with move-on order powers at pace. He is aiming to take a paper to Cabinet next month (May 2026) seeking approval to introduce the Summary Offences (Move-on Orders) Amendment Bill.
4. Ministerial consultation on the draft LEG paper is being undertaken this week, providing you and your Office with the opportunity to review progress and detail of the proposed approach.
5. Free and frank opinions MOJ is working with relevant agencies to advance the legislation and to plan for its implementation. However, the exact timing of the Bill is not yet settled or public.

Public perceptions

6. As you are aware, the previous Minister for Auckland engaged with an Auckland stakeholder group to understand and address issues related to rough sleeping, anti-social behaviour and negative perceptions of safety in the city centre. The stakeholder group includes key social service providers and business representatives.
7. While Minister Goldsmith's proposal is a nation-wide initiative, it was announced in Auckland and has a clear connection to the city centre safety work initiated by Ministers. It has been discussed formally and informally with the Auckland stakeholder group and opinion is mixed on the efficacy of the proposals.
8. Auckland homelessness and social service providers have been quoted or paraphrased in media reporting as strongly opposed to the move-on orders. These groups argue the policy would displace rather than reduce homelessness and make it harder for people to access Auckland-based services available in the central city.
9. Central city business groups have different perspectives depending on their location and operating environment. Heart of the City is generally supportive of the proposals, viewing move on orders as a potentially useful additional tool to respond to persistent disorder and improve public confidence in the city centre. Viv Beck, Heart of the City CEO, has also emphasised the need for a broader approach that combines effective enforcement with longer term social and health support for vulnerable people, including access to appropriate support services.
10. However, both the Karangahape Road and Uptown Business Improvement Districts have publicly opposed providing Police with move-on powers. These groups have expressed concern that the new powers could displace rough sleepers and those exhibiting anti-social behaviour into neighbouring areas, exacerbating existing issues and undermining community safety and cohesion.
11. We note that there will be an opportunity for interested parties and stakeholders to engage on the proposal at Select Committee. The opinions noted above will be expected to be aired publicly as the move-on order legislation is progressed.

Next steps

12. The further information now available on the status of the work programme, including the current Ministerial consultation process, may address the matters you raised at your meeting with your officials last week. However, should you still wish to write to the Minister of Justice, a draft letter is attached at **Annex One** for your consideration.

Annex One: Draft letter to the Minister of Justice

MINISTRY OF BUSINESS, INNOVATION & EMPLOYMENT
HĪKINA WHAKATUTUKI

EVENT BRIEFING

Meeting with Deputy Mayor of Auckland, Desley Simpson

To:	**Hon Simon Watts,** Minister for Auckland		
Date:	24 April 2026	**Time:**	4:00- 4:30 pm
Security classification:	**In Confidence**	**Tracking number:**	BRIEFING-REQ-0031519

Purpose

You are meeting with Deputy Mayor and Ōrākei Ward Councillor Desley Simpson on Friday 24 April 2026 from 4:00 pm to 4:30 pm. This briefing provides background and key contextual information to support that discussion.

Logistics

1. You are meeting with Deputy Mayor Desley Simpson on Friday 24 April 2026 from 4:00 pm to 4:30 pm. A brief biography is attached at **Annex One**.
2. The meeting will take place at Akarana Eatery, 8/10 Tamaki Drive, Orakei, Auckland. We are advised that there is ample parking available at the venue.
3. You have a prior engagement with the Tamaki Makaurau Business Network at the Auckland Policy Office from 2:30 pm to 3:30 pm.

Issues and opportunities likely to be raised

4. The Deputy Mayor has indicated that she would like to take the opportunity to welcome you into the role of Minister for Auckland. She seeks to proactively build a strong relationship to deliver positive outcomes and progress for Aucklanders and New Zealanders, together.
5. With that in mind, the meeting is an opportunity to discuss early implementation of the recently signed Auckland City and Regional Deal (the Deal), your shared governance roles, and expectations for strong Auckland-based leadership from both elected leaders and central government agencies.
6. The Deputy Mayor may also raise the upcoming opening of the City Rail Link (CRL) and the importance of coordinated activation activity around that milestone, Confidential advice to Government
7. The issues likely to be discussed underscore the importance of strong, aligned leadership under the Deal at an early stage of implementation. The CRL opening provides a major shared success that can be leveraged to reinforce confidence in Auckland's future, while the Confidential advice to highlights the risks of misalignment in areas where the Deal anticipates joint planning and delivery. This meeting provides a timely opportunity to reinforce shared expectations about partnership and Auckland-based leadership, consistent with the Deal agreement.
8. Further information on each topic is provided below and suggested discussion prompts are attached at **Annex Two**.

Auckland City and Regional Deal – context and governance

9. The Auckland Deal was signed on 10 April 2026 and establishes a ten-year partnership between Central Government and Auckland Council to drive economic growth, enable housing supply, and coordinate long-term infrastructure investment. The agreement places particular emphasis on regular political engagement, integrated planning, and place-based delivery in priority growth areas, reflecting Auckland's role as New Zealand's largest city and primary global gateway.

10. Under the Deal, you and the Deputy Mayor are identified as Responsible Ministers and Councillors. In this capacity, you share responsibility for providing strategic oversight of the Deal, exercising collective leadership to ensure delivery of agreed outcomes, resolving issues escalated through governance arrangements, and meeting at least every six months to review progress. Formal governance is supported by an Auckland Deal Oversight Board comprising senior Auckland Council executives and senior central government officials, including the Head of the Auckland Policy Office, alongside steering groups and working committees for specific initiatives.

11. The Agreement recognises Auckland's unique scale and complexity and explicitly supports Auckland-specific approaches rather than a one-size-fits-all model. There is an opportunity in this meeting to align with the Deputy Mayor on how political leadership and agency leadership will operate in practice during the early implementation phase. This could include support for Auckland-based officials from relevant central government agencies working closely with Auckland Council to implement the Deal and demonstrate strong capability and leadership in Auckland.

City Rail Link – significance of the opening and activation opportunities

12. The opening of the City Rail Link is likely to be raised as a key milestone for Auckland. The CRL is New Zealand's largest transport infrastructure project and represents a transformative investment in Auckland's public transport network. It comprises a 3.45-kilometre twin-tunnel rail link connecting Waitematā (Britomart) and Maungawhau (Mt Eden) stations, with new underground stations at Waitematā, Karanga-a-Hape and Te Waihorotiu.

13. The project has a total budget of $5.644 billion and is jointly funded by the Crown and Auckland Council on a 50/50 basis. It is now well advanced in testing and commissioning and is on track to open in the second half of 2026, subject to final safety certification. Once operational, the CRL is expected to significantly improve access to employment and education, reduce road congestion, and enable a doubling of rail capacity through Auckland's city centre, supporting further commercial and residential development around station precincts.

14. The transition from construction to operation also presents an important opportunity for the city. Major construction disruption has now largely ended, Confidential advice to Government

15. The Deputy Mayor may wish to discuss the importance of coordinated activation activity around the CRL opening, including events, place-making initiatives, and consistent public messaging that reinforces confidence in the city centre and aligns with the wider city centre revitalisation commitments set out in the Auckland Deal.

Confidential advice to Government

Risks and mitigations

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

Communications/Media

20. No media are attending the meeting.

Contacts

Name	Position / organisation	Telephone
Desley Simpson	Auckland Deputy Mayor and Ōrākei Ward Councillor	Privacy of natural persons

Annexes

Annex One: Biography

Annex Two: Discussion prompts

Annex One: Biography



Desley Simpson, Deputy Mayor of Auckland

Desley Simpson is the Deputy Mayor of Auckland and Councillor for the Ōrākei Ward. First elected to Auckland Council in 2016, she has held key leadership roles, including chairing the Finance and Performance Committee and driving major infrastructure and efficiency initiatives. Known for her collaborative approach and strong advocacy for Auckland communities, Desley has championed transport, water quality, and urban development projects. She was appointed Deputy Mayor in 2022 by Mayor Wayne Brown.

Annex Two: Discussion prompts

Free and frank opinions

MINISTRY OF BUSINESS, INNOVATION & EMPLOYMENT
HĪKINA WHAKATUTUKI

MEETING BRIEFING

Meeting with the Tāmaki Makaurau Business Network

To:	**Hon Simon Watts,** Minister for Auckland		
Date:	24 April 2026	**Time:**	2:30 – 3:30 pm
Security classification:	**In Confidence**	**Tracking number:**	BRIEFING-REQ-0031520

Purpose

To provide you with background and key contextual information to support your meeting with the Tāmaki Makaurau Business Network on Friday 24 April 2026 from 2:30 pm to 3:30 pm at the Auckland Policy Office.

Background

1. The Tāmaki Makaurau Business Network (the Network) was established to provide a unified voice for the Auckland business community into central government. The Network is jointly convened by MBIE and the Apo and meets regularly with Ministers and officials from other agencies to discuss initiatives that impact businesses across Auckland.

2. Membership includes chief executives and senior representatives from the Auckland Business Chamber, the Employers and Manufacturers Association (EMA), Whāriki Māori Business Network, Pacific Business Trust, Retail New Zealand, Heart of the City, Travel Agents Association New Zealand, Committee for Auckland and Auckland Council's Economic Development Unit. Taken together, the associations represent a significant proportion of businesses across the region. The Network is co-chaired by a business and central government representative. Viv Beck, Chief Executive of Heart of the City, is the business co-chair and Michael Quinn, Head of the APO, is the central government co-chair. Short biographies of business members are attached at **Annex One**.

3. The Network meets monthly to discuss issues and opportunities for the Auckland business community. Recent discussions have focussed on the role of the Network and how it can leverage its significant combined membership, particularly across Auckland's SME community, to influence positive outcomes for the city and sector. While these discussions are ongoing, the Network values the opportunity to engage with you as Minister for Auckland. They see themselves as advocates for their combined membership and are seeking opportunities to not just inform you of the challenges and opportunities facing Auckland businesses, but to influence government decision making that impacts their members. Members know each other well and discussions are typically open a free flowing.

4. For you, the Network provides an opportunity to engage with representatives of a broad range of business across Auckland. Collectively, they are a valuable source of information on

opportunities and challenges facing Auckland's business community and a useful sounding board for you as Minister for Auckland to 'take the pulse' of business sentiment in the city.

5. The previous Minister for Auckland agreed, diary permitting, to meet quarterly with the Network with his most recent meeting taking place on 23 September 2025. You have indicated that you wish to continue with these quarterly meetings.

Meeting format

6. As this is your first meeting with the Network, it would be useful to introduce yourself and your focus for the portfolio for the remainder of the current parliamentary term. You have indicated to officials that you are focussed on being visible and active in the portfolio for the 200 days leading into the election and that the Auckland City and Regional Deal will be the central pilar of your engagement with the portfolio. Your enthusiasm and action orientated approach to the Auckland portfolio will be well received.

7. Providing each member of the Network with an opportunity to introduce themselves would be a good way for you to understand the business communities each member represents. Asking each member to identify one or two key areas that they would like the government to focus on will be a useful exercise.

8. A suggested agenda is included at **Annex Two**.

Discussion topics

9. The Network have a broad range of interests, but likely discussion topics are included below, along with suggestions for your opening and closing remarks.

Introductory remarks

10. Your introductory remarks are an opportunity for you to acknowledge the significance of Auckland to the national economy and the importance of the city's business leaders in delivering economic growth, both regionally and nationally.

11. You have recently received the consolidated central government work programme in Auckland [BRIEFING-REQ-0030993 refers]. While acknowledging economic headwinds, you may wish to note the breadth of government work that is underway across the city.

12. It may also be valuable to remind the Network of your role as both an advocate for Auckland in Cabinet as well as coordinating government initiatives and investment in the city. They would welcome your acknowledgment of the value in hearing directly from the Network on opportunities for government and business to collectively unlock economic growth opportunities in Auckland.

Specific topic areas likely to be raised

Leveraging the opening of CRL

13. While the network remains concerned that the date of the CRL opening has yet to be made public, they would welcome the opportunity to engage positively on how the business

community can assist in maximising the opportunity that the opening presents to showcase and activate the Auckland city centre.

14. You have recently received a briefing from the Ministry of Transport on CRL [BRIEFING-OC260300 refers] includes an update on the timing and readiness of the CRL.

15. You may wish to ask the Network what type of activation or maximisation of the CRL opening they envision and how the business community can contribute to driving that effort.

Business engagement in City and Regional Deals

16. The Network have been positive about the opportunity that a City and Regional Deal (CRD) represents for the city, and some of the membership (notably the Committee for Auckland, EMA and Auckland Chamber) were involved in advising the initial Auckland Council proposal.

17. However, they have expressed some concern that the CRD has been progressed with limited engagement with the business sector. They would welcome an opportunity to support discussions to ensure that their membership is best placed to support delivery of economic growth outcomes.

18. You may wish to acknowledge the important role the sector will play in delivery of any Auckland Deal, noting the 10-30 year time horizon of the CRD framework.

Major events

19. The Network are strong advocates for major events in Auckland and support enduring funding arrangements to enable an ongoing pipeline of events. They support the Mayor's proposal for an accommodation levy and have expressed disappointment at delays to progressing this work.

20. The announcement by Minister Upston and the Prime Minister of additional short-term funding for major events was welcomed, alongside the widening of the scope, scale and frequency of events at Eden Park. You may also wish to acknowledge the importance of Auckland as our international gateway and as our largest population base for attracting and delivering events at scale.

21. We understand the Confidential advice to Government decision may have been made public ahead of this meeting. If that is the case, the Network will likely express their disappointment at this decision, referencing previous frustration at the decision not to fund the Americas Cup defence in Auckland.

22. Reactive talking points Confidential advice to Government will be provided to your office.

Closing remarks

23. As noted, the TMBN seeks a more active role in supporting you as the voice of the Auckland Business Community. The breadth of membership (size, sector etc.) and the ongoing commitment by members to the Network over a number of years, suggests that there is value in ongoing engagement.

24. You have agreed to meet with the Network on a quarterly basis.

Annexes

Annex One: Biographies
Annex Two: Agenda

Annex One: Biographies

	**Viv Beck, Chief Executive, Heart of the City** Viv has been Chief Executive of HOTC since 2015 and the business co-Chair of the TMBN since July 2024. She has had a diverse career spanning the public, private and not-for-profit sectors. Viv's previous roles have included governance and senior corporate roles, leading a medium-sized design and print agency; and involvement with start-ups. Viv is a strong advocate for city centre safety and was instrumental in establishing a Queen's Wharf Safety Hub for the FIFA Women's World Cup.
	**Simon Bridges, Chief Executive, Auckland Business Chamber** Simon has been Chief Executive of the Auckland Business Chamber since July 2022. Prior to this, he was the Member of Parliament for Tauranga for over 13 years. While in Parliament he was leader of the National Party from 2018-2020 and in the previous National-led government served as a Minister across numerous portfolios including Economic Development. Before entering politics, Simon was a Crown Prosecutor and Litigation Lawyer.
	**Pam Ford, Director Economic Development, Tātaki Auckland Unlimited** Pam leads the Economic Development group at Tātaki Auckland Unlimited, the region's cultural and economic development agency. Pam has worked in economic development and international trade and investment since 2001, with roles in both central and local government. Prior to this, she worked as an international marketing professional in the private and not for profit sectors. Pam received the Economic Development New Zealand (EDNZ) Commendation for Distinguished Service Award in 2018 and was Chair of EDNZ from 2019-2023.

	**Heta Hudson, Chair, Whāriki** Heta has been Chair of Whāriki, the Māori business association, since 2017 and is a Director of Ngati Awa Group Holdings Ltd. He is a partner at Findex and has established his own business support practice, Kākano Advisory. Heta works with a broad range of businesses from iwi organisations to SMEs. His focus is on export development, Māori business development, project facilitation (particularly in relation to joint ventures with Māori organisations) and business planning.
	**Mary Los'e, Chief Executive Officer, Pacific Business Trust** Mary joined the Pacific Business Trust as CEO in February 2023 and is working to establish the Trust as the Pacific Economic Development Agency. Mary has a background in communications and has worked in both government and business.
	**Alan McDonald, Head of Advocacy, Strategy and Finance at the EMA** Alan has worked at the EMA for 9 years. As Head of Advocacy, Strategy and Finance he is responsible for campaigns to lobby central and local government in support of New Zealand businesses. Key areas of interest include employment relations legislation, resource management system reform, the provision of critical infrastructure to lead and support business development, skills and training, immigration, local and central government business related issues, health and safety/ACC legislation and creating support for our exporters.
	**Carolyn Young, Chief Executive, Retail New Zealand** Carolyn has been CE at Retail NZ since July 2023. Prior to joining Retail NZ, Carolyn had a career in sports administration including leadership of Special Olympic New Zealand and Netball Central Zone. Carolyn is based in Wellington. Her priorities for Retail NZ include supporting the sector through challenging economic conditions and advocating for measures to address retail crime.

	**Rupert Hodson, Executive Director, Committee for Auckland** Rupert has stepped into the newly created role of Executive Director for the Committee for Auckland, to lead the organisation. He is on a 12-month secondment from BECA, where Rupert was the Regional Manager for Northern New Zealand.
	**Julie White, Chief Executive Office, Travel Agents' Association of New Zealand (TAANZ)** Julie stepped into the role as CEO of TAANZ in September last year. As the head of the TAANZ, she leads in advocating for New Zealand travel agents, promoting professionalism and supporting the growth and sustainability of the travel industry. Prior to her current role, she was the Chief Executive of Hospitality New Zealand. She has over 20 years of experience across the hospitality sector, including agency management, hotel operations and broader industry advocacy.

Annex Two: Agenda

Auckland Policy Office, Level 7/ 167B Victoria Street West Auckland City
Friday 24 September 2026
2:30 pm – 3:30 pm

TMBN attendees:

- Alan McDonald (EMA)
- Andy Hill (MBIE) - Convenor
- Carolyn Young (Retail NZ)
- Josh Beddell (Auckland Business Chamber)
- Julie White (TAANZ)
- Mary Los'e (Pacific Business Trust)
- Michael Quinn - Co-Chair (APO)
- Pam Ford (Auckland Council)
- Rupert Hodson (Committee for Auckland)

Apologies:

- Simon Bridges (Auckland Business Chamber)
- Viv Beck - Co-Chair (Hearty of the City)

Agenda

	Item	**Speaker(s)**
1.	Welcome	Michael Quinn
2.	Introductory remarks on the Auckland Portfolio	Hon Simon Watts
3.	Introduction to the Network	Alan McDonald
4.	Round table introductions and top of mind challenges and opportunities	All
5.	Next steps and close	Hon Simon Watts

MINISTRY OF BUSINESS, INNOVATION & EMPLOYMENT
HĪKINA WHAKATUTUKI

EVENT BRIEFING

Upcoming City Rail Link events

To:	**Hon Simon Watts,** Minister for Auckland		
Partners meeting date:	29 April 2026	**Time:**	12:00 pm – 12:45 pm
Site visit date:	1 May 2026	**Time:**	7:30 am – 8:45 am
Security classification:	**In Confidence**	**Tracking number:**	BRIEFING-REQ-0031708

Purpose

You have two upcoming City Rail Link (CRL) related events:

a. a meeting with senior representatives from the CRL partners on 29 April 2026 from 12:00 pm to 12:45 pm; and

b. a guided site tour of the new Te Waihorotiu underground station, alongside other Auckland electorate and list Members of Parliament, on 1 May from 7:30 am to 8:45 am.

This briefing provides context and key messages for the two events.

Background

Logistics for the meeting with CRL partners

1. You have an online meeting with the following senior representatives from Auckland Council, Auckland Transport, KiwiRail and the Ministry of Transport from 12:00 pm – 12: 45 pm on Wednesday 29 April, 2026.
   a. Auckland Council: Barry Potter, Director Resilience & Infrastructure
   b. Auckland Transport: Dean Kimpton, Outgoing CEO (finishes his role 30 April)
      Stacey van der Putten, Interim CEO (for 18 months commencing 1 May 2026)
   c. KiwiRail: Dave Gordon, Chief Metro and Capital Programme Officer
2. Karen Lyons, Director Auckland from the Ministry of Transport will also be attending.

Logistics for the site visit

3. The visit will take place on Friday 1 May from 7:30 am to approximately 8:45 am, beginning with a short safety and readiness briefing at the Link Alliance office on Wellesley Street West, followed by a guided tour of Te Waihorotiu Station.
4. Auckland Transport is hosting the visit with support from KiwiRail and City Rail Link Limited, and senior representatives from each organisation will attend and lead the tour. You will be accompanied by a number of other Auckland-based MPs from across parties.
5. The stated purpose of the visit is to deepen awareness about CRL and the benefits to different parts of Auckland. It is an opportunity for attendees to share information about CRL to their own

channels. You will be given a short briefing alongside other MPs about project readiness, with the majority of the visit being a tour through Te Waihorotiu Station

6. No formal speaking role is scheduled, although there will be opportunities for informal discussion with project leaders and for photographs within the station environment. Media are not invited, but photography is encouraged for Ministerial and parliamentary channels.
7. As Te Waihorotiu Station remains an active construction site, you are requested to wear closed toe flat shoes, long pants, and long sleeve shirt. You will be provided with a high-vis vest to wear.

City Rail Link overview

8. You recently received a briefing from the Ministry of Transport providing an overview of CRL [BRIEFING OC260300 refers]. Key points are summarised below for your reference.
9. CRL is New Zealand's largest transport infrastructure project and represents a transformative investment in Auckland's public transport network. The project consists of a 3.45 kilometre twin-tunnel rail link connecting Waitematā Station at Britomart with the existing Maungawhau Station, and includes three new underground stations at Te Waihorotiu, Karanga-a-Hape, and Maungawhau. Delivery of the project is overseen by City Rail Link Limited, a Crown Schedule 4A company with joint ownership by the Crown and Auckland Council, reflecting the shared interest in the project's success.
10. The CRL project is now well advanced and has entered the testing and commissioning phase, with a focus on safety, reliability, and system integration across stations, tunnels, and rail infrastructure. Emergency services exercises are underway to support final safety sign-off, and code compliance certification for the stations is expected to be completed in mid-2026. The project remains within its approved funding envelope of $5.644 billion and is on track to open in the second half of 2026, with the final opening date to be confirmed once certification is complete.

About the events

Meeting with CRL partners

11. At your meeting last week with the Tāmaki Makaurau Business Network, members expressed their collective frustration that the opening date of CRL has yet to be confirmed. The business community is extremely positive about the opportunity that CRL represents for greater vibrancy and economic opportunities, particularly in the central city. However, they are concerned that the ongoing delay in announcing the opening date is limiting the time available to effectively plan opening events.
12. Whilst the CRL partner agencies are rightfully focused on ensuring an operational success, other partners, including the business community, are planning to leverage the benefits of the day one opening plan, and are keen to get greater visibility of the wider activation plans and how they can participate.
13. This meeting is an opportunity for you to meet directly with the relevant agencies to understand the status of CRL delivery and the issues around confirmation of an opening date. It will allow you to communicate the concerns of the business community and their willingness to engage with and support activation activities, provided they have sufficient lead in time.

Site visit

14. The site visit provides an opportunity to see first-hand the scale and quality of the infrastructure that will soon begin serving Aucklanders and visitors.
15. Once operational, the CRL is expected to double the capacity of Auckland's commuter rail network, significantly reduce travel times, and improve access to employment, education, and

the city centre. The project is also central to enabling more intensive development around station precincts and supporting broader urban renewal and economic activity.

16. The visit supports your role as Minister for Auckland and complements broader Government interests in infrastructure delivery, city productivity, and economic growth

17. No media are expected to attend the visit. If asked to comment informally, you may wish to focus your messaging on the progress made, the transition from construction to operations, and the tangible benefits the CRL will deliver for Auckland and New Zealand. Emphasis can be placed on collaboration between central and local government and the role of the CRL in supporting a more productive, connected and sustainable city.

Annexes

Annex One: CRL partner meeting biographies
Annex Two: Site visit attendees

Annex One: CRL partner meeting biographies

	**Barry Potter, Director Resilience & Infrastructure, Auckland Council** Barry Potter was appointed Director Resilience and Infrastructure in 2024. He leads critical services including Auckland Emergency Management, flood resilience and recovery, engineering assets, waste solutions, building consents, city centre programmes and the council's sponsorship role for the City Rail Link. Barry previously served as Director of Infrastructure and Environmental Services and has been with Auckland Council since 2015. He is an experienced civil engineer and infrastructure leader, with earlier senior roles at GHD in New Zealand, Asia and the Pacific.
	**Dean Kimpton, Outgoing CEO, Auckland Transport** Dean Kimpton is the outgoing Chief Executive of Auckland Transport, having led the organisation from April 2023 to May 2026 during a period of significant operational delivery and institutional change. Dean previously served as Chief Operating Officer at Auckland Council and has held senior leadership roles across infrastructure, engineering and local government.
	**Stacey van der Putten, Incoming CEO, Auckland Transport** Stacey van der Putten is the incoming Chief Executive of Auckland Transport, appointed to lead the organisation through a period of transition and reform from May 2026. An experienced public transport leader, she has served Auckland Transport since 2017 in a range of senior roles, most recently as Director of Public Transport and Active Modes. Prior to joining Auckland Transport, Stacey spent more than 16 years in senior leadership roles across the private sector, including public housing, healthcare, construction and defence.
	**Dave Gordon, Chief Metro and Capital Programme Officer, KiwiRail** David is the executive accountable for KiwiRail's strategic capital projects, the operation of the Metro Networks and group asset management. David joined KiwiRail in 2007 when he began working on the Wellington Regional Rail Programme as Project Director. At KiwiRail he has held roles with accountabilities in Network Control, Engineering, Property and Asset Management. Before joining KiwiRail, he worked as a consultant in the transport infrastructure business, was Planning and Development head for Wellington International Airport and a Senior Manager in the strategy consulting team of Ernst and Young.

Annex Two: Site visit attendees

Senior leaders from Auckland Transport, KiwiRail, and City Rail Link Ltd will attend and lead the visit.

Other MPs who have RSVP'd include:

- Arena Williams (Labour – Manurewa)
- Carlos Cheung (National – Mt Roskill)
- Chlöe Swarbrick (Green – Auckland Central)
- Dan Bidois (National – Northcote)
- Lawrence Xu-Nan (Green – List)
- Melissa Lee (National – List)
- Paul Goldsmith (National – List, and Minister)
- Shanan Halbert (Labour – List)
- Simon Court (Act – List, and Under-Secretary)

MINISTRY OF BUSINESS, INNOVATION & EMPLOYMENT
HĪKINA WHAKATUTUKI

AIDE MEMOIRE

Major events funding for Auckland

Date:	30 April 2026	**Priority:**	Medium
Security classification:	In Confidence	**Tracking number:**	BRIEFING-REQ-0032200

Information for Minister(s)
Hon Simon Watts **Minister for Auckland**

Contact for telephone discussion (if required)			
Name	**Position**	**Telephone**	**1st contact**
Andy Hill	Director Auckland	Privacy of natural persons	✓

The following departments/agencies have been consulted
New Zealand Major Events (MBIE)

Minister's office to complete:

- ☐ Approved
- ☐ Noted
- ☐ Seen
- ☐ See Minister's Notes
- ☐ Declined
- ☐ Needs change
- ☐ Overtaken by Events
- ☐ Withdrawn

Comments

MINISTRY OF BUSINESS, INNOVATION & EMPLOYMENT
HĪKINA WHAKATUTUKI

AIDE MEMOIRE

Major events funding for Auckland

Date:	30 April 2026	**Priority:**	Medium
Security classification:	In Confidence	**Tracking number:**	BRIEFING-REQ-0032200

Purpose

To provide you with background information on the funds available to support major events in Auckland, and the quantum that has been spent in Auckland (with Wellington and Christchurch as comparators) in this term of government.



Andy Hill

Director Auckland, MBIE

30 / 04 / 2026

Funding for major events

1. There are three funding streams available for major events in Auckland:

2. The **Major Events Fund (MEF)** is a central government fund administered by MBIE through New Zealand Major Events. It supports nationally significant events that deliver strategic benefits for New Zealand, including economic benefits, particularly through international visitation and global profile. The fund is contestable, and investment decisions are made by the Minister for Tourism and Hospitality following an assessment by MBIE against criteria. MEF criteria requires that events receive support from local government, which can be a mix of cash and in-kind. MEF investment is commonly used to support large international sporting and cultural events hosted in Auckland with nationwide benefits.

3. The **Events Boost Fund (EBF)** is a short term, contestable central government fund. It aims to increase international visitation and drive short term economic activity, while also generating international exposure that promotes New Zealand as an events and tourism destination and stimulates long term economic growth. Confidential advice to Government, demonstrate strong delivery capability and Confidential advice to Government, which in Auckland is typically provided or endorsed through Tātaki Auckland Unlimited.

4. The **Events Attraction Package (EAP)** is an invitation only central government investment programme aimed at securing large scale "showstopper" events such as major concerts, global sports competitions, and internationally significant cultural events in 2026 and in 2027 if scheduling requires. It complements, rather than replaces, support from the Major Events Fund and is curated to achieve a balanced national portfolio of high impact events. Funding decisions are made by the Minister for Tourism and Hospitality and Minister of Finance following advice from an independent panel.

5. In practice, Auckland hosted events often draw on a combination of central government funding through MEF, EBF, or EAP, alongside local investment coordinated by Tātaki Auckland Unlimited, to attract, secure and grow events delivered in the region.

Summary of investments in Auckland

6. The attached spreadsheet (**Annex One**) summarises event investment into Auckland, Wellington and Christchurch have been included as a comparator.

7. Confidential advice to Government

8. Please note that individual amounts for the EBF have not yet been released. New Zealand Major Events are also unable to provide detail on investment amounts for the Events Attraction Package (EAP) as these are commercially sensitive but note that Linkin Park, FIFA World Series and the NZ International Football Festival have been supported through the EAP with more to come.

Annexes

Annex One: Summary of Event Investment in Auckland, Wellington and Christchurch

Annex One: Summary of Event Investment in Auckland, Wellington and Christchurch

Auckland		Christchurch		Wellington		Various cities	
MEF							
Event		**Event**		**Event**		**Event**	
Global Youth Sevens 2023	115,000	Feast Matariki 2023	100,000	Kia Mau 2025	70,000	Women's British and Irish Lions Tour	3,900,000
Global Youth Sevens 2024	115,000	Feast Matariki 2024	100,000			Doc Edge: Life Unscripted Festival 2024	100,000
Global Youth Sevens 2025	115,000	Tirama Mai 2024	100,000	Women's Amateur Asia Pacific Championship 2026	400,000	Doc Edge: Life Unscripted Festival 2025	100,000
Hockey Masters World Cup 2024	100,000	NZ Sail Grand Prix (NZ SailGP) 2023	1,350,000	Confidential advice to Government			
Rainbow Games 2024	897,000	NZ Sail Grand Prix (NZ SailGP) 2024	1,350,000				
World Choir Games 2024	7,018,475	Netball Fast5 World Series 2024	350,000				
Pasfika Festival 2024	100,000						
Festival of Weightlifting 2024	100,000	Crankworx Summer Series Christchurch 2024	750,000				
New Zealand Sail Grand Prix (NZ SailGP) 2025	1,350,000	Crankworx Summer Series Christchurch 2025	750,000				
New Zealand Sail Grand Prix (NZ SailGP) 2026	2,340,000	Crankworx Summer Series Christchurch 2026	750,000				
World Dance Crew Championships 2025	750,000	Crankworx Summer Series Christchurch 2027	750,000				
ASB Polyfest 2025	100,000	World Buskers Festival 2025	100,000				
Pasifika Festival 2025	100,000	World Buskers Festival 2026	100,000				
State of Origin	Confidential advice	World Buskers Festival 2027					
		Christchurch Supercars Championship 2026	1,300,000				
The Ocean Race - Auckland Stopover 2027	4,000,000	Christchurch Supercars Championship 2027	1,000,000				
ASB Polyfest 2026	100,000	Christchurch Supercars Championship 2028	1,000,000				
Confidential advice to Government		Confidential advice to Government					
ASB Polyfest 2027							
ILCA Sailing Worlds Champs 2028	Confidential advice to Government						
Confidential advice to Government							
	Confidential advice to Government						4,100,000
EAP							
Linkin Park concert				Ultra Music Festival		Robbie Williams concert	
FIFA World Series				Event (not announced)			
NZ International Football Festival - Tottenham Hotspur vs Auckland FC							
Event (not announced)							
Funding is commercially sensitive	--		--		--		--
EBF							
Forever Tomorrow: Chinese Art Now	Confidential advice to Government	Once In A Lifetime - SIX60 & Synthony	Confidential advice to Government	The Faultline	Confidential advice to Government	WXV Black Ferns v France	Confidential advice to Government
2026 New Zealand Track and Field Championship		Autumn Super Season 2026		World of Wearable Art (WOW) Show		& Juliet - the musical	
Auckland Wooden Boat Festival		ON SHOW - Spring		VISA Wellington on a Plate - International Chef Collab		New Zealand Fashion Week (Cluster) and Christchurch Spring Fashion Festival 2026	
Auckland Writers Festival Waituhi o Tāmaki				Beervana		Confidential advice to Government	
UNESCO City of Music Cluster				Confidential advice to Government			
FIH Nations Cup				Loemis Festival			
AUCKLAND TOTAL		**CHRISTCHURCH TOTAL**		**WELLINGTON TOTAL**		**VARIOUS CITIES (includes Auckland)**	

MINISTRY OF BUSINESS, INNOVATION & EMPLOYMENT
HĪKINA WHAKATUTUKI

BRIEFING

City Rail Link Governance Options

Date:	30 April 2026	**Priority:**	Medium
Security classification:	In Confidence	**Tracking number:**	BRIEFING-REQ-0032203

Action sought		
	Action sought	**Deadline**
Hon Simon Watts **Minister for Auckland**	**Note** contents of this report	1 May 2026

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
None – note comment on consultation with the Ministry of Transport in the Executive Summary.

Minister's office to complete:

- ☐ Approved
- ☐ Noted
- ☐ Seen
- ☐ See Minister's Notes
- ☐ Declined
- ☐ Needs change
- ☐ Overtaken by Events
- ☐ Withdrawn

Comments

MINISTRY OF BUSINESS, INNOVATION & EMPLOYMENT
HĪKINA WHAKATUTUKI

BRIEFING

City Rail Link Governance Options

Date:	30 April 2026	**Priority:**	Medium
Security classification:	In Confidence	**Tracking number:**	BRIEFING-REQ-0032203

Purpose

This briefing provides preliminary advice on how you could participate in the City Rail Link (CRL) Sponsors Forum and the practical options available.

Executive summary

You asked how you might be added to the Sponsors Forum. Our preliminary assessment is that there are three main ways this could occur.

- Option 1: You could be added alongside the Minister of Finance and the Minister of Transport. This would increase Crown Ministerial participation from two to three.
- Option 2: You could substitute for, alternate with or replace one of the existing Ministers, keeping Crown representation at two Ministers.
- Option 3: The current membership could remain unchanged, with you supported through information sharing or other participation arrangements.

The 2017 CRL Sponsors Agreement is framed around two Sponsors, being the Crown and Auckland Council. It also establishes a Sponsors' Forum with one representative from each Sponsor, while allowing each Sponsor to appoint, replace or nominate alternative representatives. On a preliminary reading, this suggests there may be flexibility within the current framework regarding who may represent the Crown.

While the formal agreement refers to one representative from each Sponsor, the current Sponsors Forum is broader in practice, involving two Ministers for the Crown and two representatives from Auckland Council.

The best option is likely to depend on what you want to achieve:

- If the priority is formal participation in the existing group, Options 1 or 2 may be more relevant.
- If the priority is visibility, influence and involvement in the next phase of the project, Option 3 may achieve much of that without changing the current structure.

An alternative way forward is to use your position as a key Minister on the Auckland City and Regional Deal to pursue your objectives. This option may still require information from the CRL project, currently only available to the Sponsors.

This note has been prepared from publicly available documents. We have not spoken with the Ministry of Transport or Auckland Council, so as not to prejudice any options or next steps you may wish to consider.

A draft letter to the Minister of Finance and Minister of Transport has been attached for your consideration should you wish to raise the matter directly with them.

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

30 / April / 2026

Hon Simon Watts

Minister for Auckland

..... / ..... / .....

Background

1. You asked how you could become more involved in the CRL project at a governance level, in support of your responsibilities as Minister for Auckland.

2. In particular, you asked about the CRL Sponsors Forum, how these arrangements currently operate, and what options may exist for you to participate more directly in the next phase of the project.

3. This briefing responds to that request and outlines the main participation options, together with practical considerations relevant to each option.

Current governance structure

The current governance structure

4. Based on the publicly available Sponsors Agreement (30 June 2017 – refer **Annex Three**), the legal Sponsors are Auckland Council and the Crown. The Crown is recorded as acting through the Minister of Finance and the Minister of Transport.

5. The agreement therefore distinguishes between the legal Sponsor (the Crown) and the Ministers who represent Crown interests within those arrangements.

6. The 2017 agreement establishes a Sponsors' Forum. References now appear to be made to a Sponsors Group. It is not yet clear whether these are the same body operating under updated terminology, or whether governance arrangements have evolved over time. For the purposes of this report, we are treating them as the same entity.

7. Schedule 2, Part A states that:

    - Crown and Council are to have equal representation
    - the Forum is to comprise one representative from each Sponsor
    - each Sponsor may appoint a representative
    - each Sponsor may replace its representative from time to time by written notice
    - where a representative is unavailable, an alternative may be appointed.

8. On a preliminary reading, this suggests the agreement provides flexibility over who represents each Sponsor.

9. While the formal agreement refers to one representative from each Sponsor, the current Sponsors Forum is broader in practice, involving two Ministers for the Crown and two representatives from Auckland Council.

Understanding why the arrangements were set this way

10. The governance model was developed before the establishment of the Minister for Auckland portfolio. In that context, it was reasonable that the Crown's interests were represented through the Ministers of Finance and Transport, reflecting the project's focus at the time on major transport delivery, funding commitments and construction risk.

11. That original framing does not necessarily determine future arrangements. The more relevant considerations now are the terms of the signed agreements, any subsequent decisions, current portfolio responsibilities and whether updated representation settings would be helpful.

12. With the project now substantially complete, key delivery risks increasingly reduced, and the focus moving toward operations, there may be an opportunity to consider whether Ministerial representation should evolve to reflect the next phase of the project. That next phase is likely to place greater emphasis on activation, integration with the city centre, customer experience and wider economic and urban development outcomes.

13. At the same time, the Crown's investment remains significant and financial oversight responsibilities may still be relevant through the final stages of the project and transition to operations. Transport oversight also remains central as the project moves into service readiness and operational integration.

14. The key question for you is what options are available under the current arrangements and whether they would be useful.

Options to achieve your objectives

15. We have identified the following options based on the information available and without consulting the Ministry of Transport or Auckland Council. The options are unlikely to require a Cabinet approval.

Option 1: Be added alongside the existing Ministers

16. You could join the current group while the existing Ministers remain. This would mean Crown Ministerial participation increases from two Ministers to three.

17. This may provide direct involvement without displacing existing Ministers. It may, however, raise questions about the overall balance of representation and whether Auckland Council would wish to consider its own participation arrangements.

18. It may also require consideration of how official support would operate across three Ministerial offices, noting Treasury and transport agencies currently play established roles in monitoring, assurance and advice to their respective Ministers.

Option 2: Substitute for, alternate with or replace an existing Minister

19. You could become one of the Ministers on the group by substituting for, alternating with, or replacing one of the current Ministers. This would keep Crown participation at two Ministers and preserve the current overall size of the group.

20. This may be a cleaner structural option if there is support for representation to evolve as the project moves into its next phase.

21. In practice, any such option would need to consider that financial oversight responsibilities may remain relevant for the Minister of Finance, and transport oversight remains central for the Minister of Transport as the project approaches operations.

22. It would also be important to consider what official advisory and monitoring support would be required if Ministerial representation changed.

Option 3: Keep the group unchanged but increase your involvement through alternative processes

23. The current membership could remain unchanged, with you involved through separate arrangements. This could include:

    - receiving papers
    - consultation on key issues
    - attendance at relevant meetings

- involvement in discussions on activation, benefits realisation, and wider Auckland outcomes

24. This may achieve many of the practical benefits of participation without changing the current structure. It would also allow existing monitoring, assurance and advisory arrangements to continue while creating scope for your portfolio interests to be reflected in the next phase of the project.

25. A table summarising these options is attached at **Annex One.**

Matching the preferred option to your objectives

26. The most suitable option is likely to depend on the role you want to play in the next phase of the project.

27. If your priority is to hold a formal place within the existing governance group, Options 1 or 2 are likely to be the most relevant. Option 1 would add you alongside the current Ministers, while Option 2 would retain the current size of the group by changing how Crown representation is allocated.

28. If your priority is to help shape the next phase of the project as it moves toward operations, the focus is likely to shift increasingly toward activation, city centre readiness, customer experience, economic opportunities, and wider city centre and urban outcomes. In that context, any of the three options could be relevant, depending on the level of formal involvement sought.

29. If your priority is influence, visibility and practical involvement without changing the current governance structure, Option 3 may offer the most straightforward path. It could enable engagement on matters relevant to your portfolio while allowing existing governance and advisory arrangements to continue.

30. You may also have a separate lever through your role in the governance of the Auckland City and Regional Deal, including the city centre as a priority precinct development opportunity. While this is less developed as a direct mechanism for influencing City Rail Link outcomes, it may provide a complementary pathway that could be explored. Depending on the level of information or influence sought, this may still need to be complemented by access to information, engagement or decisions currently available through the CRL Sponsors Forum.

Next steps

31. Before any approach is made, you may wish to clarify several practical matters:

- Whether any later amendments, side arrangements or updated governance protocols have been agreed since the 2017 Sponsors Agreement that would assist you in your considerations

- What decisions or responsibilities remain live for the Sponsors Group as the project moves from construction toward operations and whether these are relevant to your objectives

- Whether changes to participation arrangements would be best considered within the current governance model or as part of the next phase governance arrangements or alternative forums such as the City and Regional Deal

- Given the co-sponsorship nature of the arrangements, when any change should be discussed with Auckland Council

32. Notwithstanding those points, we have included a draft letter to the Minister of Finance and Minister of Transport for your consideration (**Annex Two**)

Annexes

Annex One: Options

Annex Two: Draft letter to the Ministers of Finance and Transport

Annex Three: CRL Sponsors Agreement (2017)

Annex One: Options

	What it means	Effect on current membership	Main advantages	Main considerations
Option 1 Add alongside existing Ministers	You join the current group while the existing Ministers remain.	Crown participation increases from two Ministers to three. Auckland Council may also increase its representation.	Direct formal participation without displacing existing Ministers.	May raise questions about balance of representation. Auckland Council may wish to consider its own representation. Official support arrangements across three Ministerial offices will need to be considered.
Option 2 Substitute for, alternative with, or replace an existing Minister	You become one of the Crown Ministers on the group for all meetings, selected meetings or relevant matters.	Crown participation remains at two Ministers. Overall size of the group remains unchanged.	Provides formal participation while preserving the current structure. May align representation with the next phase of the project.	Financial oversight may remain relevant for the Minister of Finance. Transport oversight remains central for the Minister of Transport. Official advisory and monitoring support would need to be considered.
Option 3 Keep the group unchanged but increase involvement through information flows and briefings	Membership stays the same, but you are involved through separate arrangements.	No formal change to group membership or representation	Can provide visibility, influence and involvement without changing governance settings. Allows current monitoring and advisory arrangements to continue.	Influence may depend on the quality of information sharing and consultation arrangements. Formal decision making would remain with existing members.
Alternative Use Auckland CRD Governance as an alternative pathway	Use your role in the Auckland CRD to help shape matters connected to the CRL, including city centre activation and wider economic and urban outcomes.	No change to the CRL Sponsors Forum	Uses existing Ministerial levers linked to Auckland outcomes. Can connect CRL with city centre development and key CRL corridors, activation and broader urban and economic priorities.	This would be a less direct route into CRL matters. It may still require access to information, engagement or decisions currently available only through the CRL Sponsors Forum. The concept may require further development in practice.

Annex Two: Draft letter to the Ministers of Finance and Transport

Confidential advice to Government

Annex Three: CRL Sponsors Agreement (2017)

Note this is the publicly available Sponsors Agreement with redactions.

MINISTRY OF BUSINESS, INNOVATION & EMPLOYMENT
HĪKINA WHAKATUTUKI

EVENT BRIEFING

Meeting with Mark Thomas, Serviceworks & Smart Cities Council

To:	**Hon Simon Watts,** Minister for Auckland		
Date:	4 May 2026	**Time:**	4.45 pm – 5.30 pm
Security classification:	**In Confidence**	**Tracking number:**	BRIEFING-REQ-0032114

Purpose

To provide information to support your meeting with Mark Thomas on Monday 4 May 2026 at 4.45pm to 5.30pm. The meeting will take place at the Auckland Policy Office.

Background

1. The discussion is expected to focus on the Auckland City and Regional Deal (CRD), practical initiatives you could champion in your role as Minister for Auckland, place-based productivity and the Government's wider economic agenda, the current state of Auckland, and future engagement with Auckland's business community.
2. The meeting is an opportunity to discuss how you can support practical progress on Auckland priorities, hear external perspectives on delivery and build a constructive relationship with an influential Auckland stakeholder.
3. Mark is a well-connected Auckland business and civic figure with interests in urban development, economic growth, smart cities and Auckland's long-term competitiveness.
4. He is active across business and civic networks and engages in public discussion on Auckland's future direction. His views may also reflect wider sentiment across parts of Auckland's leadership community.
5. The meeting is expected to be practical and forward looking, with an emphasis on delivery, institutional effectiveness and opportunities for Ministerial leadership.

Topics for discussion

6. We anticipate Mark will discuss the following issues:

Achieving traction on the Auckland City and Regional Deal

7. The signing of the Auckland CRD was an important milestone. Attention is now shifting to implementation and whether the Deal can produce visible and credible progress in the near term. There is likely to be strong stakeholder interest in practical outcomes rather than process.

8. As with many partnership agreements, early momentum will be important to avoid perceptions that progress has slowed after signing.

9. External stakeholders generally support the ambition of the Deal but want to see pace, accountability and tangible delivery. There is a view that confidence will depend on whether early progress can be demonstrated.

10. You could acknowledge that implementation is now the priority, and that Ministers expect agencies to work collaboratively and with urgency. This discussion may also help identify where external stakeholders see the greatest opportunities or barriers.

Priority growth areas and place-based partnerships

11. The Auckland Deal identifies four initial growth areas intended to demonstrate coordinated, place-based delivery between central government, Auckland Council and delivery partners. These areas combine transport, housing, infrastructure, investment and economic development objectives, and provide an opportunity to translate the Deal into visible action.

12. The four identified areas are:

    - Drury: a coordinated growth strategy supported by transport links, schools, health infrastructure, industrial development and partnership with private developers and iwi.

    - Maungawhau, Kingsland and Morningside CRL Growth Corridor: transit-oriented intensification around new rail stations, level crossing removals, redevelopment opportunities and a wider Eden Park precinct strategy.

    - Auckland City Centre: a refreshed city centre action plan linked to CRL opening, revitalisation, public realm renewal, waterfront transformation, office to residential conversion and stronger city centre safety and wellbeing outcomes.

    - Auckland Airport Precinct: improved freight and passenger access to New Zealand's primary international gateway and major logistics hub, including surface access improvements and supporting infrastructure.

13. These areas are likely to be viewed by Mark as the clearest opportunity to show the Deal is changing how government and council work together. They offer visible projects, geographic focus and clearer accountability than a solely policy-based programme.

14. You may wish to explore which areas are most ready to progress, what barriers need to be removed, and whether existing governance arrangements are sufficient to maintain pace and coordination.

Public transparency and demonstrating progress

15. Mark may raise opportunities for more visible public reporting on Deal progress, including dashboards or other tools used overseas to track delivery milestones and commitments. Stakeholders are likely to see transparency as a way to build confidence, maintain momentum and demonstrate accountability.

16. You may wish to note that public reporting can be valuable where it is credible, practical and jointly supported by the parties. Any future approach would need to focus on meaningful progress rather than administrative process.

How government is showing up in Auckland

17. A broader discussion may cover how central government engages in Auckland, including ministerial visibility, agency coordination, responsiveness, pace of decision making, consistency of messages and relationships with Auckland institutions.

18. Some stakeholders consider that Auckland benefits when government engagement is visible, coordinated and strategically focused. There can also be concern when engagement appears fragmented or transactional or viewed solely through a Wellington centric lens.

19. Stakeholder perceptions formed through trusted external networks can materially influence wider confidence in the government's Auckland agenda. The discussion may include direct views on where current arrangements are working well and where they are not.

20. Discussion is expected to include how a stronger horizontal, place-based lens could support national business, infrastructure, innovation and productivity priorities. This may also include the role of MCERT and MBIE in supporting genuinely place based implementation.

21. You may wish to invite candid feedback on what is working well, where improvements are needed and what would make the greatest practical difference.

Auckland innovation and technology opportunity

22. Mark may wish to discuss Auckland's innovation ecosystem and the role of groups such as the Auckland Tech Alliance in supporting growth, productivity, exports and investment.

23. Auckland's performance has an outsized impact on national growth, productivity and investor confidence. Its technology sector is widely seen as an important contributor to future economic opportunities.

24. You could discuss barriers to growth, talent and skills needs, investment attraction and how government can better partner with the sector to support economic outcome

Biographies



Mark Thomas

Mark is an Auckland business and civic leader with interests spanning urban development, smart cities, innovation and economic competitiveness. He is well connected across business, community and public sector networks, and is an active contributor to discussions on Auckland's economic future and the role of government in the region.

MINISTRY OF BUSINESS, INNOVATION & EMPLOYMENT
HĪKINA WHAKATUTUKI

AIDE MEMOIRE

Unemployment statistics by Auckland area and demographics

Date:	30 April 2026	**Priority:**	Medium
Security classification:	In Confidence	**Tracking number:**	BRIEFING-REQ-0032176

Information for Minister(s)
Hon Simon Watts **Minister for Auckland**

Contact for telephone discussion (if required)			
Name	**Position**	**Telephone**	**1st contact**
Andy Hill	Director Auckland	Privacy of natural persons	✓

The following departments/agencies have been consulted

Minister's office to complete:

- ☐ Approved
- ☐ Noted
- ☐ Seen
- ☐ See Minister's Notes
- ☐ Declined
- ☐ Needs change
- ☐ Overtaken by Events
- ☐ Withdrawn

Comments

MINISTRY OF BUSINESS, INNOVATION & EMPLOYMENT
HĪKINA WHAKATUTUKI

AIDE MEMOIRE

Unemployment statistics by Auckland area and demographics

Date:	30 April 2026	**Priority:**	Medium
Security classification:	In Confidence	**Tracking number:**	BRIEFING-REQ-0032176

Purpose

To provide you with unemployment statistics for Auckland, broken down by area and demographics.



Andy Hill

Director Auckland, MBIE

30 / 04 / 2026

Background

1. At your recent meeting with the Tāmaki Makaurau Business Network, unemployment was discussed, with a particular focus on the situation for Māori and Pacific communities in South Auckland.

2. This briefing summarises key findings from Auckland Council's Auckland Regional Household Labour Force Survey (HLFS) overview for the quarter and year ended December 2025, which draws on Stats NZ Household Labour Force Survey data. It provides the most robust picture of unemployment trends across Auckland areas and population groups.

Summary

3. Unemployment in Auckland continued to rise through 2025. The unemployment rate averaged 6.3 per cent over the year ended December 2025, up from 5.0 per cent the previous year, and increased to 6.4 per cent in the December quarter. This represents the second highest level since 2015 and equates to approximately 67,000 unemployed Aucklanders. The increase reflects a broader softening in labour market conditions following several years of exceptionally high employment participation.

4. Age remains the strongest differentiator of unemployment outcomes. Young Aucklanders experienced the highest rates, with unemployment at 28.6 per cent for those aged 15 to 19 and 12.9 per cent for those aged 20 to 24. While unemployment also increased for all older age groups, rates remained comparatively low for people aged 40 to 54 at 4.0 per cent and those aged 55 and over at 3.3 per cent, indicating that labour market pressure is most acute for younger cohorts.

5. There are persistent and widening disparities by ethnicity. Māori unemployment rose sharply to an annual average of 14.2 per cent and Pacific unemployment to 12.6 per cent, both well above the Auckland average. Asian unemployment increased to 5.4 per cent, while European unemployment remained lowest at 4.3 per cent. These patterns align closely with differences in labour force participation, which is lowest for Māori and Pacific peoples despite long-term improvements.

6. Geographically, youth labour market pressure is concentrated in South Auckland. While the HLFS is not designed to produce full unemployment rates by local board, young people not in employment, education, or training (NEET) rates provide a strong proxy for localised employment stress among young people. The Southern Initiative area[1] recorded a youth NEET rate of 24.1 per cent, double the rest of Auckland at 12.1 per cent. Within this area, Ōtara-Papatoetoe, Manurewa, Māngere-Ōtāhuhu and Papakura consistently recorded the highest NEET rates.

7. Overall, the data indicate that Auckland's rising unemployment is being unevenly experienced, with younger people, Māori and Pacific communities, and South Auckland areas facing the greatest labour market pressure. While overall participation remains historically high, the report highlights increasing risks of longer-term disconnection for these groups if economic conditions continue to soften.

8. A copy of the report is included at **Annex One.**

[1] The Southern Initiative was established by Auckland Council for four local board areas in South Auckland. The area is made up of the Māngere-Ōtāhuhu, Ōtara-Papatoetoe, Manurewa, and Papakura Local Board areas.

Annexes

Annex One: Auckland Regional Household Labour Force Survey: Quarterly overview as at December 2025

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Report available at: https://knowledgeauckland.org.nz/publications/auckland-regional-household-labour-force-survey-quarterly-overview-as-at-december-2025/

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