

Trapski/Brash Report on Local Government Options released

The Trapski/Brash report into Local Government Options for Northland has been released to the public this week following discussion on the topic at last week's Northland Mayoral Forum.

Updated: 25/02/2011 5:24 p.m.

Two reports were received by project manager Paul Dell late last year and it was agreed that all four councils involved (Whangarei, Far North and Kaipara Districts and the Northland Regional Council) would be given time to examine the documents before general release. Each commissioner presented their own report, but the two are being released under one cover.

Sir Peter Trapski and Dr Don Brash agree on many points but in their conclusions, Sir Peter favours the single unitary authority model while Dr Brash favours two authorities.

The two commissioners did agree on a number of issues including community boards to ensure strong community representation if new authorities were created; council-controlled organisations to look after infrastructure like roads, sewerage systems and water supply; and a mix of shared services between councils.

Both said the review is timely and that the investment to date has not been wasted, as the McKinlay report (Local Government Options for Northland) addressed many of the issues facing the region and the work will act as a strong building block for future discussions. They also agreed that change was unlikely to occur as a direct result of the community calling for it, as residents and ratepayers overall showed little interest in the matter.

Mr Dell said that the Minister for Local Government, Rodney Hide, had sent a signal that discussion on local government in New Zealand from a first principles basis was required and would hopefully start this year. "The work that has been done will mean Northland is well placed to participate in the discussions. In the meantime Sir Peter has noted that Northland councils need to work more closely together. This might

include exploring shared services, for example.” Mr Dell noted that this aspect was discussed recently at the last Northland Mayoral Forum.

Aside from studying the report and considering its findings and recommendations, Mr Dell says the Northland councils are unlikely to take any action on it in the near future.

 [Read the Trapski Brash report here.](#)

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[Link to PDF of The Trapski/Brash report](#)