



**Te Tari Taiwhenua
Internal Affairs**

13 August 2020

Marty Grenfell
Chief Executive
Tauranga City Council
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Tēnā koe Marty,

I am writing to you following concerns raised through recent media articles and correspondence received by us regarding significant conflict among elected representatives at Tauranga City Council (the Council).

It is disappointing to note the poor conduct of elected representatives behind the scenes, and that this is conveyed to the public through social media and news channels. It is not apparent if there is any willingness to resolve these conflicts. This does not give confidence that the Council can resolve its differences and represent its community with unified leadership.

The Council is experiencing an important period of growth. Significant Government investment in the region has put a spotlight on the Crown's Urban Growth Partnership in the Western Bay of Plenty through the SmartGrowth programme. The Council is expected to provide strong, unified governance and leadership to deliver the anticipated social and economic outcomes of this investment.

In advising the Minister of Local Government on action she may need to take pursuant to Part 10 of the Local Government Act 2002, I require assurance and evidence that the Council is taking proactive steps to restore trust and confidence in its ability to meet the Crown's expectations of a high-performing Council. Specifically, I request:

- an independent evaluation of the current standard of governance performance by elected representatives against the expectations set out in the Council's Code of Conduct, particularly section 5 *Relationships* and section 6 *Media and Social Media*;
- a summary of the key issues that elected representatives agree are impacting the Council's performance;
- a clear plan on how the Council will address the issues, including a timeline and framework for how success will be measured; and
- a summary of key decisions that the Council needs to make through to 30 June 2021 to deliver the 2021-2031 Long-Term Plan and SmartGrowth objectives.

In considering how to address my concerns, I encourage you to seek high-quality, independent advice to guide and support the Council through this process. I would appreciate a response by Friday 21 August 2020 on how the Council will achieve this outcome.

Should you have any questions regarding this request, please contact me at Anita.Balakrishnan@dia.govt.nz, or Richard Hardie, Manager Operational Policy, at Richard.Hardie@dia.govt.nz or 027 540 6014.

Heoi anō

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Anita Balakrishnan', written in a cursive style.

Anita Balakrishnan

Director Ministerial Advice, Monitoring, and Operations
Policy, Regulation, and Communities Branch