

AUCKLAND UNITARY PLAN INDEPENDENT HEARINGS PANEL

Te Paepae Kaiwawao Motuhake o te Mahere Kotahitanga o Tāmaki Makaurau

FACT SHEET

Fact Sheet 2 - Pre-hearing meetings

Date: 10 August 2015

This fact sheet has been developed to assist those participating in the hearings process for the Proposed Auckland Unitary Plan (the Plan). Please note that it is only a summary of the information contained in the Auckland Unitary Plan Hearing Procedures document. Please refer to the Procedures document at www.aupihp.govt.nz for more detail.

The hearings process is a requirement of the Local Government (Auckland Transitional Provisions) Act 2010 (LGATPA) and will be carried out by an independent hearings panel that has been appointed by the Minister for the Environment and the Minister of Conservation.

The use of pre-hearing meetings, expert conferences and mediation is an important feature of the Unitary Plan process. The aim is to clarify or work through issues in a more collaborative and less formal way than is possible in a hearing. This is expected to result in better solutions and to reduce the time required in formal hearings.

This fact sheet provides information on the **pre-hearing meetings**.

What is the purpose of a pre-hearing meeting?

A pre-hearing meeting is the first step in the process to clarify and resolve issues before a hearing takes place. The purpose of the meeting is to agree what the issues are and how they will be dealt with. The issues and the proposed pathways are set out in the Parties and Issues report for the hearing topic.

Pre-hearing meetings are open to members of the public (including the media) to attend although only the submitters have the right to speak.

How will I know about a pre-hearing meeting?

If you have said on your submission that you wish to be heard, you will receive a notice of the meeting with a link to the Parties and Issues Report at least **ten working days** before the pre-hearing meeting. You can also check the details of any pre-hearing meetings on the [hearings](#) page of the website.

Do I need to attend a pre-hearing meeting?

If you agree with the Parties and Issues report **you do not need to come to the pre-hearing meeting**. However you should check if you need to provide any information to the hearing administrator prior to the pre-hearing.

What information may I need to provide before the pre-hearing meeting?

You may need to provide information to the hearing administrator before the pre-hearing meeting to:

- Register your expert witnesses, if you have any;
- Apply for extra speaking time at the hearing;
- Request a reallocation of a submission point to a different topic (if you think your submission point has been allocated to the wrong hearing topic).

Use the "Submitter Information for Pre-Hearing Meeting" form under "Hearing Schedule Documents" on the hearings page to do any of these tasks. Return it to the hearing administrator by the RSVP date for the pre-hearing meeting.

Why are some people required to come?

The Panel may require a person to attend a pre-hearing meeting to clarify something in their submission or where the Panel thinks this person could help to reach an outcome. You will receive a letter from the Panel advising you that you are required to attend. If you are required to attend it is important that you do so or you may lose the right to take part in the rest of the process.

If you have been required by the Panel to attend a pre-hearing meeting and fail to do so without reasonable excuse, then the Panel may decide not to consider your submission. This would mean that you could no longer be directly involved in the hearing process, including the appeals once the hearings have finished. However, if the Panel declines to consider your submission you have the right to object to the Panel.

What do I do at a pre-hearing meeting?

If you decide to attend the pre-hearing meeting you will be asked to say what you disagree with in the Parties and Issues report and give your views on the process for hearing your issues.

If someone else is coming to the pre-hearing meeting to represent you, please make sure they have full authority to act on your behalf.

It may be useful to have a copy of your submission and any other information that supports your submission. This can include any notes from other meetings that you may have had with other parties (including council officers).

How will a pre-hearing meeting be run?

Although not as formal as a public hearing, there will be an agenda and there will be a Chair who will run the meeting. The Chair will be a member of the Panel or someone appointed by the Panel. A record will be kept of the discussion and any decisions and actions agreed to.

Most pre-hearing meetings will be held at level 16, 205 Queen Street, Central Auckland. Meetings with a large number of people may be held at other locations. Your notice of the pre-hearing meeting will tell you the date, time and where it will be held.

If you have any questions about a pre-hearing meeting please contact the hearing administrator whose name and contact details will be in your notice.

What happens after a pre-hearing meeting?

When the pre-hearing meeting has finished, the Chair will prepare a report of the outcomes of the meeting. This report will be available on the [hearings page](#) as soon as possible after the pre-hearing meeting. The Parties and Issues report will be updated to show what happened at the meeting.

If there are other steps before the hearing (e.g. mediation) you will be contacted by the panel office to invite you to attend.