

Transition Planning for two councils involved in a voluntary amalgamation

This brief paper sets out in broad terms a transition plan/framework for councils to move forward with once a merger proposal has been made. It is in five parts:

1. Purpose and needs
2. Role of the Transition Committee (TC) and guiding principles
3. The four pillars of change
4. Transition framework
5. Transition governance structure.

1. Purpose and Needs

The purpose is to transition the two Councils to create a single council by [a date].

The main needs of the parties are:

- That we are treated as equitable partners
- That the Mayors and General Managers of the councils are involved in shaping the future
- There is limited disruption to decision-making
- Costs associated with preparation for amalgamation are reimbursed
- The community does not lose a voice
- The process is seen as fair.

2. Responsibilities of the Transition Committee and Guiding Principles

The Transition Committee is responsible for overseeing the planning and implementation of reform prior to the new council being established. The TC is also responsible for reporting progress to the State government and communities of Council A and Council B. Meetings are to be held monthly and will be chaired by an independent chairperson, and will function on a consensus model. Other key responsibilities include:

- Represent the interests of residents in undertaking the amalgamation program
- Act as a conduit to Council A and Council B
- Consider and endorse a change management strategy that addresses the major organisational and strategic risks
- Review and endorse an organisation and governance structure for the reform process as well as for the new entity
- Ensure the delivery of key strategic deliverables is on track
- Provide guidance and, where required, take decisions and resolve disputes.

The guiding principles for the Committee are to:

- Embrace the opportunity to create a new local government business model
- Make it easy to do business with local government
- Engage the community
- Deliver open and transparent communication
- Increase local government sustainability.

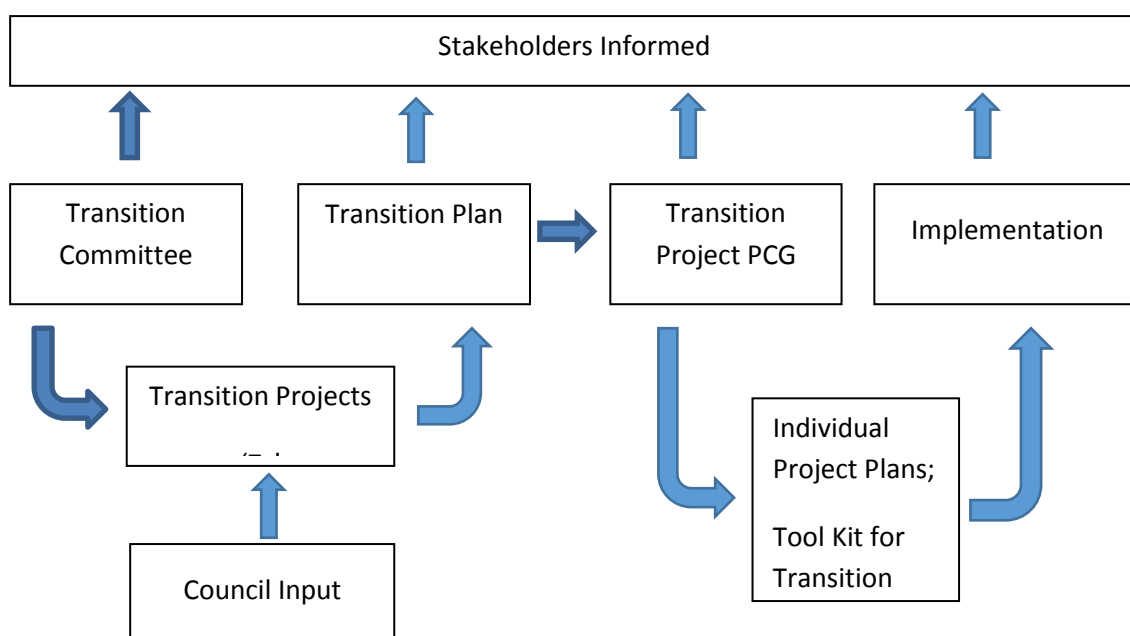
3. Four Pillars of Change

The transition to a new entity is supported by early joint work on four main pillars:

1. A new entity Strategic Plan
2. Cultural alignment
3. Caring for staff
4. Services offered by the joined up entity.

4. Transition Framework

The diagram below sets out the major areas of action required to get to the stage of execution of the merger.



5. Transition Governance Structure

A **Leadership Team (LT)** will report progress to the Transition Committee (TC) and relay TC directions to the Reform Program Office, Program Managers and Project Leaders.

Key responsibilities include:

- Ensure appropriate management of the Transition Program
- Ensure appropriate resources are engaged to deliver the program
- Ensure a system is developed to effectively monitor the progress of implementation and that reform status reports are prepared and provided to the TC
- Provide guidance and support to the Program Managers and Project Leaders and, where required, take decisions and resolve disputes.

The Transition Project Team (TPT) will facilitate project management processes, procedures and outcomes throughout the Transition Program.

Key responsibilities include:

- Implement the systems, processes and resources required to deliver the transition to the new entity
- Manage governance arrangements, reporting structures and cost reporting systems
- Provide for consistent planning, delivery and reporting across all projects
- Coordinate all aspects of the overall reform process to ensure individual projects are delivered within approved time, scope, risk and budget parameters
- Support the governance and administration of the TC and LT
- Provide guidance and support to the Project Managers
- Ensure relevant stakeholders are identified and appropriately engaged throughout the program.