

Greater Christchurch Partnership Committee
MINUTES ATTACHMENTS

Date: Friday 5 December 2025
Time: 9 am
Venue: Council Chamber, Environment Canterbury,
200 Tuam Street, Christchurch

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Greater Christchurch Partnership

5 December 2025



Focus

1

Your context

2

What you will need to navigate

3

What is important to you and your communities

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1

Your broader context

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Government reforms setting the stage for largest changes to local government since 1989

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Large scale change already underway

Reforms already underway are having large impacts on councils and challenging existing governance, delivery models and council financial sustainability

– Local Water Done Well, Resource Management reform, Going for Housing Growth, Climate Adaptation, building controls changes

Simplifying Local Government proposals further amplify this, adding more challenges to navigate

This process cuts across changes already underway, creating additional challenges to navigate in an already crowded 'change landscape'

Announcements a catalyst for more direct conversations about regional and sub-regional governance

Mayors and councils will need to decide how to respond to the proposals and are a catalyst to have more direct conversations about regional governance and service delivery – this will include needing to have a conversation with mana whenua, Ngāi Tahu, who have distinct Treaty settlement requirements compared to the rest of the country.

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Understanding your neighbours financial context

AVERAGE REAL CAPITAL EXPENDITURE
PER CAPITA (2024 DOLLARS)

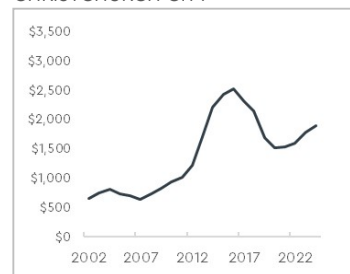
**Benchmarking can offer
insight into how councils
in the region compare.**

While every council is unique, it
can be helpful to understand how
councils in the region compare
financially and the impact that has
on those communities.

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CHRISTCHURCH CITY



KAIKOURA



HURUNUI



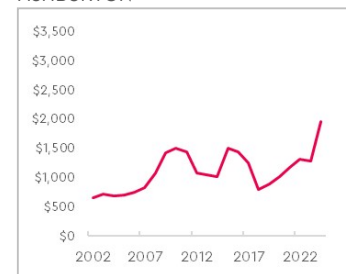
WAIMAKARIRI



SELWYN



ASHBURTON



TIMARU



MACKENZIE



WAITAKI



WAIMATE



Canterbury has diverging trends: business momentum alongside household caution

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- Canterbury businesses are expanding at **twice the national rate**, with confidence sustained across eight consecutive quarters
- International visitor arrivals and spending are **outpacing national growth**, providing a boost to tourism-facing sectors
- **Household spending remains subdued**, with local retail down and cost-of-living pressures continuing to constrain consumers
- Consumer confidence in Canterbury is **improving relative to national trends**, but remains below levels that would indicate widespread optimism

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Greater Christchurch

The Greater Christchurch Spatial Plan projects population growth from approximately 650,000 to 800,000 by 2050, representing a 23% increase concentrated in urban areas and firmly cement Greater Christchurch as New Zealand's second largest urban agglomeration.

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- **Uneven growth distribution:** Growth is not evenly distributed across the partnership area, with major development pressure in the southwest corridor spanning Christchurch and Selwyn boundaries.
- **Infrastructure coordination needs:** The ongoing challenges of land use, land availability, and managing hazard risk were also identified as justification for continued coordination of infrastructure planning across boundaries to support sustainable development patterns and to prevent developer behaviour driving the outcomes as opposed to communities.
- **Service delivery implications:** This growth pressure also creates demands for coordinated service delivery including flow on effect from the Greater Christchurch area impacts areas like Oxford and Amberley and the connection to service delivery across the broader Canterbury region.

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What you will need to navigate

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Three realities will affect your collective ability to navigate through change

1

Broad system changes will have a major impact

Navigate the potential fundamental legislative reform on a compressed timeline while executing business as usual

2

Financial pressures aren't going anywhere

Growing cost pressures and the introduction of rates capping. Credit ratings under pressure as infrastructure investment drives up borrowing.

3

The ability to get stuff done is constrained

Delivering complex change with stretched capacity, competing priorities, and skills gaps.

Successfully navigating this together will require an integrated response to all three realities

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Government proposals

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Government's proposals impacting core functions

1

New Combined Territory Boards

- Create a Board of Mayors
- Alternative models available:
 - Crown Commissioner (observer only; veto power, majority vote)
 - No CTB and Crown Commissioners appointed
 - Option for a sub-regional CTB

2

Prepare a plan

- Develop a regional reorganisation plan and consult
- assess alternative delivery models against set criteria
- recommend best delivery model
- Minister of Local Government to approve plans if they meet statutory criteria (no referendum)

3

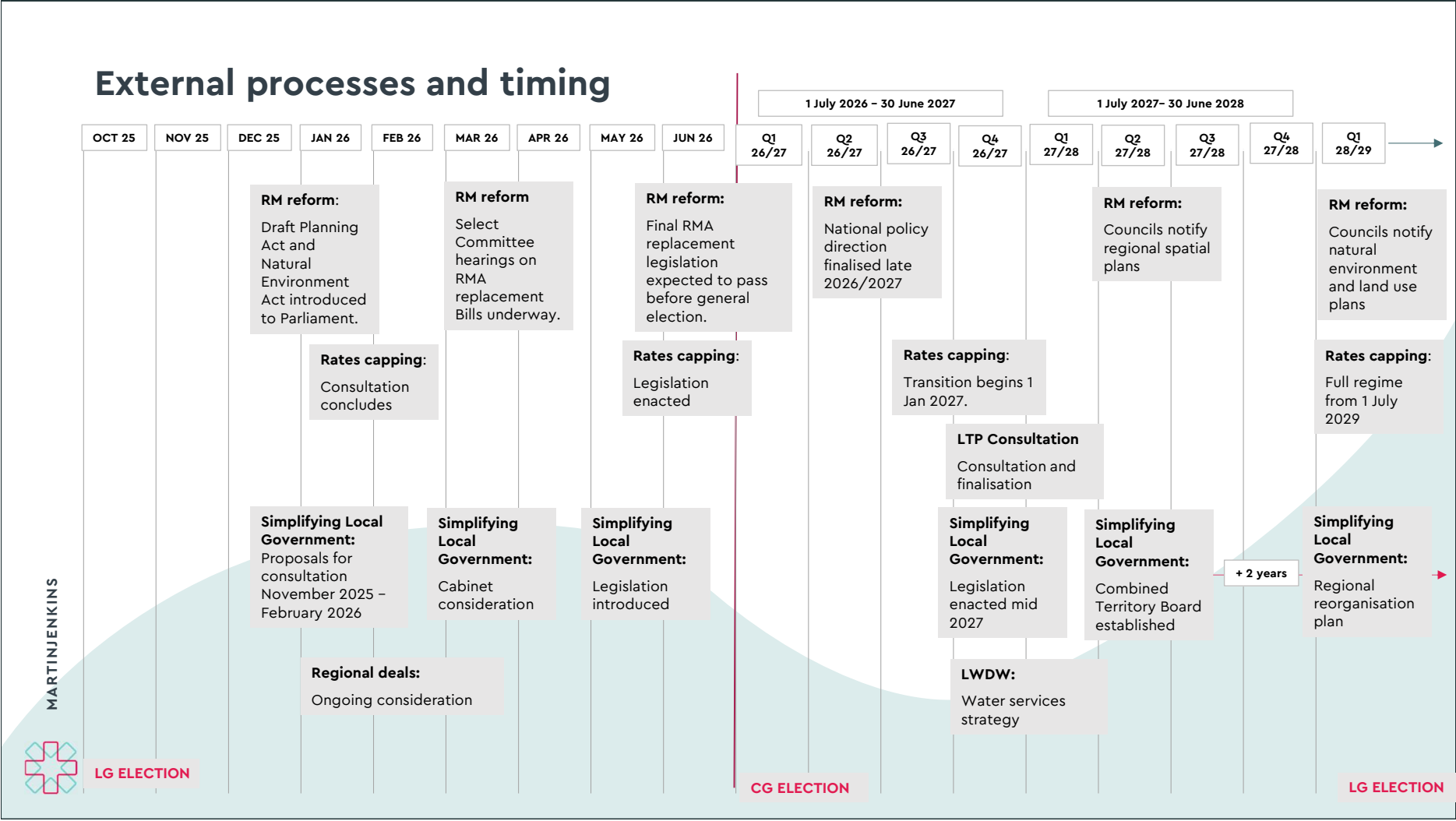
Consider the plan against criteria

- Big picture fit
- Affordable now and into the future
- Better services
- Clear leadership
- Local say
- Treaty arrangements
- Can it be done

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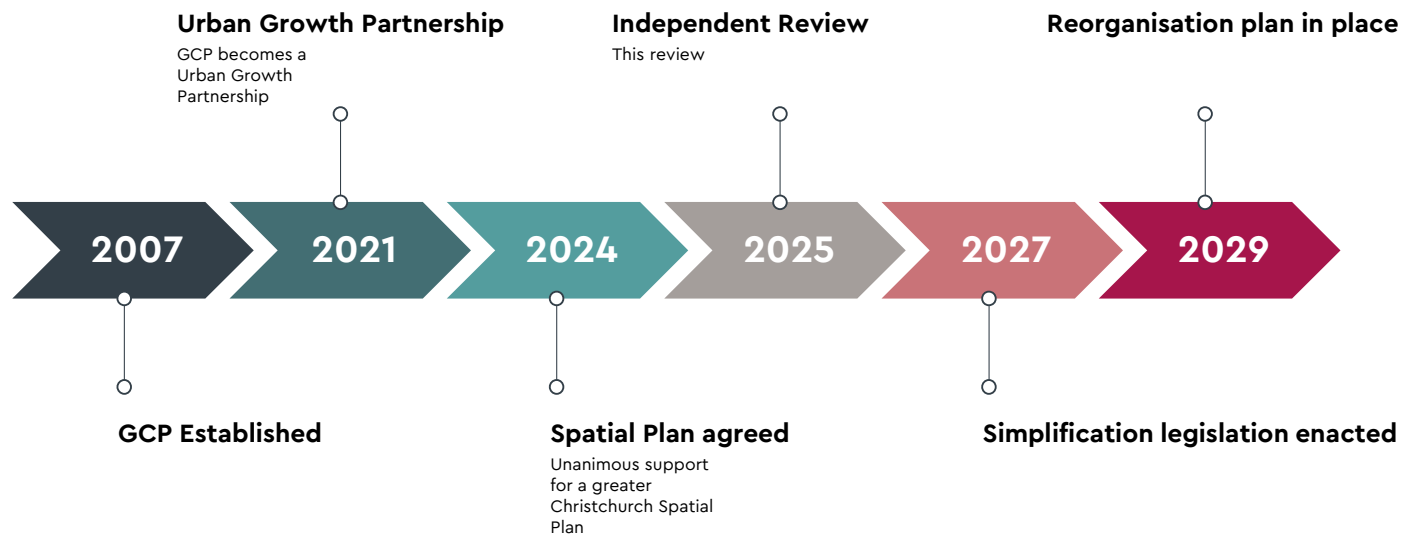


Independent review findings

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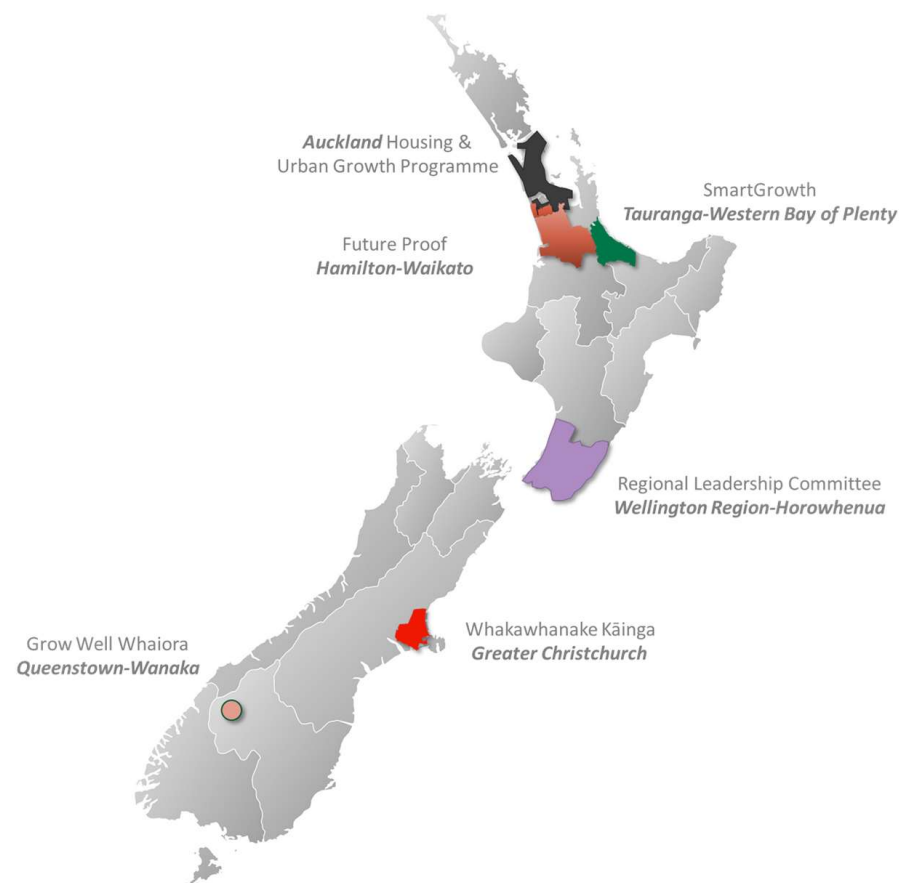
GCPs journey



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GCP and Urban Growth Partnerships



3



Key findings: Past performance & current challenges

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- The GCP has demonstrated **impressive effectiveness during crisis response and strategic planning phases**, particularly earthquake recovery coordination and delivery of the Greater Christchurch Spatial Plan.
- **Political confidence in the Partnership has declined**, with decision-making processes becoming slow and consensus-driven rather than strategically focused.
- **Implementation of the spatial plan remains challenging** due to regulatory translation gaps, resource constraints, and limited authority for driving delivery.
- **Multiple stakeholders questioned the Partnership's current purpose**, with changing Government policy environments creating additional uncertainty about collaborative approaches.
- **The Partnership has shifted from strategic leadership to operational coordination, losing the strategic edge that was more characteristic of its most effective periods.**

Key findings: Future considerations

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- **The GCP requires structural and operational changes to maintain relevance** and effectiveness in addressing greater Christchurch's evolving strategic challenges.
- The review provides the analysis and options necessary for informed decision-making. However, **success depends on a collective political leadership commitment to collaborative and partnership models, including with mana whenua and government agencies.**
- **Care needs to be taken on the future of the GCP and its relationship to urban growth partnerships.** Central Government has positioned urban growth partnerships as a key mechanism for achieving coordinated urban development outcomes across New Zealand in the near term.
- **These issues and preferred partnership model are best determined by Partners in the context of the next triennium** of Councils and will require a high degree of buy in as to the strategic (and connected) challenges faced in greater Christchurch.



Form follows function

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Start with purpose: Institutional structures should be shaped by what the organisation needs to achieve, not by convention or copying others. When you begin with outcomes—what services or purposes the institution must deliver—you can design governance and operations that actually support those goals.

Avoid inherited constraints: Institutions often inherit structures that then limit what they can do.

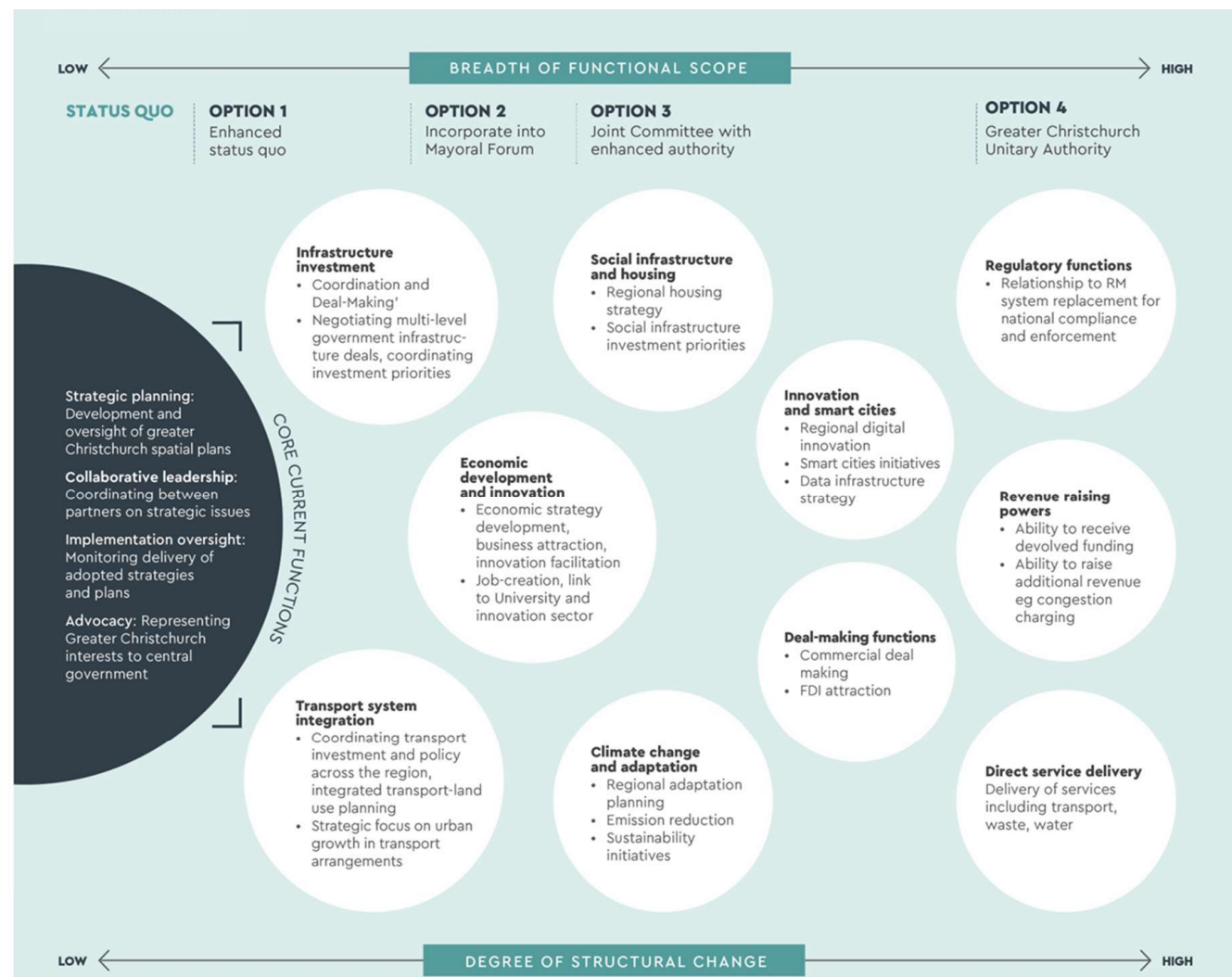
Better fit: Different functions need different forms. Commercial activities require different governance than regulatory functions; service delivery differs from policy work. A one-size-fits-all approach typically serves nothing well.

Efficiency: When form follows function, you're more likely to avoid duplication, unclear accountabilities, or mismatches between who decides and who's responsible.

Table 1: Broad functional models

MODEL	FUNCTIONS
Strategic planning coordination	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Spatial plan implementation and monitoring Strategic planning as key coordination mechanism Multi-level government alignment Flexible cooperation in spatial structures
Urban partnership deal-making model	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Infrastructure funding and financing coordination Economic development interventions Multi-level government deal negotiation Governance reform and institutional innovation
Integrated urban model	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> All current functions plus climate coordination, social infrastructure Regional service coordination (not always direct delivery) Enhanced economic development and innovation functions Multi-sectoral partnership management

Source: Adapted from OECD Materials



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**What is important
to you and your
communities?**

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Some observations

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- The **announcements are a catalyst to have more direct conversations** about future governance arrangements of both GCP and the wider region
- Proposals aren't fully formed but the **direction of travel is unlikely to change** following consultation
- It is timely it wants to advance work on sub-regional and regional governance – two years is not long; **start now to determine own destiny**
- **Carefully consider the process** given demands on already stretched elected members and council officers

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Discussion points

How does the GCP want to shape the outcome of the review within the wider process?

- Swim with or against the current?
- Respond collectively or individually?
- Take the discussion forward in GCP, Mayoral Forum or both?
- Advance work now or wait until process is clearer?
- What work do you want to commission now to inform decisions early next year and in what context?



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