



AHM News

AS 2016 DRAWS TO A CLOSE WE REFLECT ON THE YEAR THAT WAS

The year started out with such great promise - new legislation was being trumpeted for both the resource management and local government sectors. However, it was not long after the introduction of the Resource Legislation Amendment Bill and the Local Government Amendment Bill that the criticisms started rolling in. “Draconian”, “death of democracy” and “central government power grab” were the catch cry of opponents, with supporters also critical of the Bills as not going far enough and being “mere tinkering”.

It is therefore unsurprising that the Select Committee report back dates for both Bills have been pushed out – ostensibly to allow further work to be done in response to submissions, but also perhaps to allow time to garner support from political partners. Both Bills are now due to be reported back in the first half of 2017. However, we suspect that with 2017 being an election year, and with all the political changes of late (John Key resignation, Government reshuffle), the Bills may be placed on the back burner until well after the election.

2016 is also notable for the completion of the Auckland Unitary Plan process, a mammoth task which involved replacing all the Auckland regional and district planning documents with just one plan. After more than three years of work, the plan finally became operative in part on 15 November 2016 – in part because there are still a relatively large number of appeals to work through.

Another notable development this year was the introduction of a National Policy Statement on Urban Development Capacity which, while introduced in October, only recently came into force on 1 December 2016. One of the key drivers for its introduction was to help cool the runaway housing markets in Auckland and elsewhere in New Zealand by ensuring there is a sufficient supply of land. It is too soon to know whether the NPS will be effective in that regard and how the Courts will approach its interpretation. It will certainly be something to watch for in 2017.

There have also been a tranche of interesting cases this year which have (amongst other things) refined and clarified the Courts’ approaches to the Supreme Court’s 2014 decision in *King Salmon*, and have confirmed the Council’s right to fluoridate water.

2017 looks set to be another interesting year for the environmental and public law sectors whichever way the political winds blow!



AHM TEAM CHANGES

We have had a few changes to our team recently.

Departures...

Jenny Steves, our office manager for the last eight years, has retired to travel the world and spend some more time with her grandchildren. We thank her for all hard work and wish her all the very best for this exciting new chapter in her life.

The call of the stage has finally proved too strong to resist for one of our solicitors, Phoebe Mason. Phoebe, who has been with us since she graduated over three years ago, has decided it is now or never, and is off to pursue her passion for acting. With her determination and talent we know Phoebe will be one to watch.

Promotions...

Jenny's departure has created an opportunity for another one of our team to take a step up. We are pleased to announce that Angela Stones, who has been our receptionist and all round administrator extraordinaire for the last six years, has agreed to take on the office manager role.

Additions...

We have a new solicitor, Rowan Ashton, starting with us in February. Rowan comes to us after obtaining some fantastic experience in a local barrister's chambers. As well as the law, Rowan is passionate about music, and is a member of an Auckland based rock band. We look forward to welcoming Rowan to the team.

With Angela taking on the office manager role, we have also employed a new receptionist, Helen Hogan, to take her place. Helen has some fantastic experience from a variety of different roles in a number of different countries. We are very much looking forward to having Helen join the team in January.



CHRISTMAS CLOSE DOWN

Our office will close at 12:00pm on Thursday 22 December 2016 and reopen at 8:30am on Monday 9 January 2017. For any urgent matters that arise during the close down period please call either Helen Atkins on 021 405 464 or Vicki Morrison-Shaw on 0275 720 883.

We wish you all a safe and happy holiday period and we look forward to working with you again in 2017. From all the team at Atkins Holm Majurey.

Questions, comments and further information

If you have any questions, comments or would like any further information on any of the matters in this newsletter, please contact the authors:

Helen Atkins PH 09 304 0421

Email helen.atkins@ahmlaw.nz

Vicki Morrison-Shaw PH 09 304 0422

Email vicki.morrison-shaw@ahmlaw.nz

Nicole Buxeda PH 09 304 0429

Email nicole.buxeda@ahmlaw.nz

We welcome your feedback!

If you know someone who might be interested in reading this report, please feel free to pass it along.

Atkins Holm Majurey produces a regular newsletter with updates on matters of legal interest. If you are not currently subscribed and wish to receive future newsletters straight delivered straight to your inbox, please click [this link](#) or email reception@ahmlaw.nz. You can choose to unsubscribe at any time.

