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Kia ora Shane,

1.   Summary of Viewpoint Culture Survey Results 2022

This letter outlines the results of the Auckland Transport (AT) Viewpoint Culture Survey for 2022 and the progress to date over the three surveys undertaken thus far by AT in 2018, 2020 and 2022. This comparison is important to understand the significance of the 2022 results.

This year's survey is AT's third survey, and the results indicate clearly that AT continues to improve markedly. 88% of AT members completed the Viewpoint Survey this year (1675 members), and the results for 2022 show a continued upward trend in all three aspects of the 'How Culture Works' model; Causal Factors , Culture, and the Outcomes of Culture. By way of a quick summary of results I can report the following comparison to 2020:

- •   Constructive Styles have increased by an average of 10.75%ile
- •   Passive Styles have decreased by an average of 14.75%ile
- •   Aggressive Styles have decreased by an average of 16.75%ile
- •   22 of the 31 Causal Factors had statistically significantly positive movements across AT while all of the remaining 9 also moved positively but to a lesser degree, and
- •   11 Outcomes of Culture have significantly improved, with intention to stay the only Outcome to decrease.

Of note within these results is the effective improvement of all of the key leadership causal factor which highlights the buy-in due to effective leadership development initiatives. This is to be commended.

There are, as always, opportunities to be pursued. The results show that the Achievement and Self-actualised styles are still at a lower level. This could be remedied by a focus on a number of key causal factors such as Employee involvement and the Job Design group of factors. Let's look at the detail.

2.   What is Culture?

Culture is the way people in any organisation, team, family unit, etc. **believe** they need to behave to fit in, stay safe and get ahead. The key part of the definition is their belief. For example if members (i.e. employees) believe they will get rewarded for working hard then you will likely see that behaviour, and if they believe that they will be punished for making simple mistakes then you will likely see less effort as the best way to avoid being punished is to not make mistakes and the best way to not make mistakes is to do as little as possible.

Organisational culture can be thought of as a collective mindset of members (or employees) that develops over time and is learnt from the decisions made about how to achieve within the
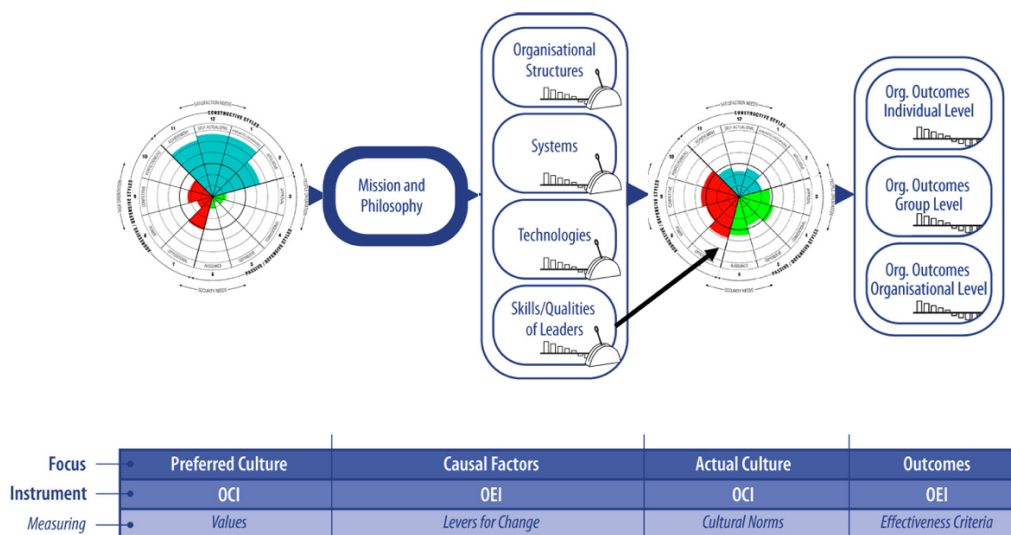
demands and constraints of a system and how members believe they should interact with one another to be successful and survive (be accepted by the group) in their local and organisational environment.

Over time, the beliefs and values may evolve, but they also become progressively more deeply embedded, taken for granted, and not questioned for relevance or current suitability. And therefore, changing the beliefs becomes more difficult.

3.   The 'How Culture Works' model

Human Synergistics 'How Culture Works' model shows the cause and effect relationships of how culture is formed and what culture then creates. It is important to understand at a high level the cause and effect relationships that result in performance of any organisation. The diagram below highlights the four major components of the 'How Culture Works' model. The circumplex diagram on the left indicates team member's response to the question "What culture would get the best out of you?" while the circumplex on the right is the answer to "What is the culture as you currently experience it?"

How Culture Works

| Focus	Preferred Culture	Causal Factors	Actual Culture	Outcomes
Instrument	OCI	OEI	OCI	OEI
Measuring	Values	Levers for Change	Cultural Norms	Effectiveness Criteria

The reason for the Actual Culture being different than the Preferred Culture is because of the "way we do things around here" measured by the 31 Causal Factors represented by the five boxes ('Mission and Philosophy', 'Organisation Structures', 'Systems', 'Technologies', and 'Skills/Qualities of Leaders') between the two circumplexes. For culture to be at its most effective these Causal Factors need to be used in a way that allows for beliefs to be optimistic and engaging.

4.   Viewpoint 2022 - Participation

In 2018 AT had an excellent response rate of 80%. This was largely due to significant marketing and leadership effort in encouraging people to participate. In 2020 the participation rate increased to 85% and in 2022 88% of AT team members completed the survey (89% of full-time members). This increase in participation is, I believe, a consequence of people seeing the data from previous surveys being used to effectively address identified issues. This leads to the rational conclusion that to complete the survey is a useful and worthwhile investment in time. The 88% response rate for a large organisation compares very favourably to the response rates of our other clients.

5.   Viewpoint 2022 - Results
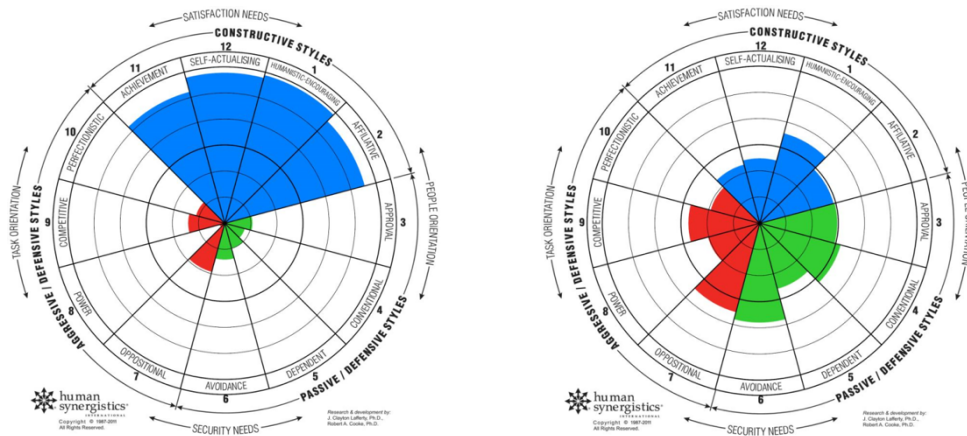
In 2020 56 random members from across AT identified the **Preferred Culture** that would get the best out of them. This result is shown on the left. In the 2022 Viewpoint survey 1675 people responded to the survey and the average result of their feedback is shown on the right and is the **Actual Culture**.

In isolation to previous results, the 2022 Viewpoint results indicate an organisation whose culture is very people focused (Blue styles 1 & 2 and 3-6 green styles). This augers well for building trust and creating a belief amongst members that the 'organisation' cares about them and is interested in their growth and development.

The task styles (Blue 11 & 12 and red 7-10) score lower. This is effective for the red aggressive defensive styles as these styles are destructive if they are too strong and correlate strongly to unsustainable performance. The Task blue are also lower than the People blue and this should be a focus for growth in the next few years.

The reason for these results can be seen in the causal factor results shown below. The initial target for causal factors is indicated by the dark line at the 50th%ile. As can be seen there are 20 out of 31 causal factors scoring on or above the benchmark. This compares very well to the average Australasian organisation but at the same time shows the opportunity which exists. Of note are the nine purple scores on the right – these are the Skills and Qualities of Leaders causal factors and all of them are above the line. This is an excellent result. The light blue bars represent Job Design and this is an obvious area of opportunity. Redesigning roles to allow people to be their best will have a very positive impact on the task blue styles, especially Achievement.
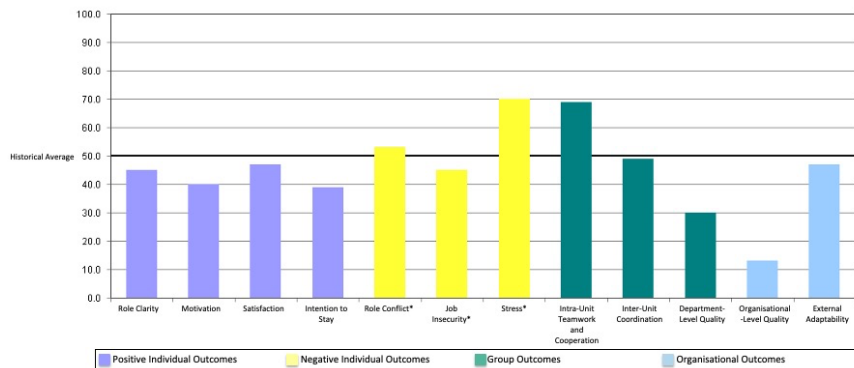

Summary Barchart of Causal Factors (Percentile Scores)
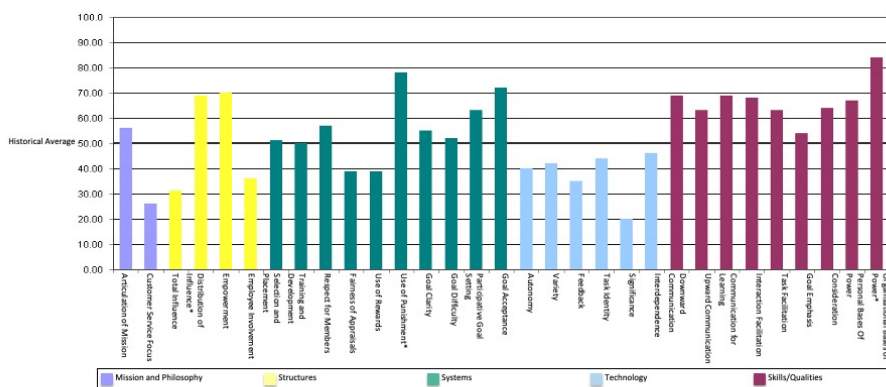
* In the barchart shown above, the scores for distribution of influence, use of punishment, and organisational bases of power were reversed so that higher percentile scores signify more desirable results.

The culture created by these causal factors creates the Outcomes, or in common language, the engagement of members to AT. The Outcome scores can be seen below.

Summary Barchart of Outcomes (Percentile Scores)

* In the Summary Barchart shown above, the scores for negative individual outcomes were reversed so that higher percentile scores signify more desirable results.

The Outcomes benchmark is the same as the causal factors. Ideally we want to be above the dark line on the 50th%ile. The above results show that 3 of the 12 outcomes are above benchmark, and another 6 are above the 40th%ile. These are solid results overall, although the opportunity for improvement is clear. Outcomes are important because they indicate the connection people have with their jobs, their teams and AT as a whole. The only way to improve this connection sustainably is to continue to improve the culture.

6.   Summary of results over time (2018, 2020 and 2022)

To truly grasp the significance of the AT 2022 results they need to be viewed in comparison to the 'benchmark' survey undertaken in 2018. The second survey in 2020 showed an improvement. The improvement in culture can be seen with the three profiles below.

2018   2020   2022
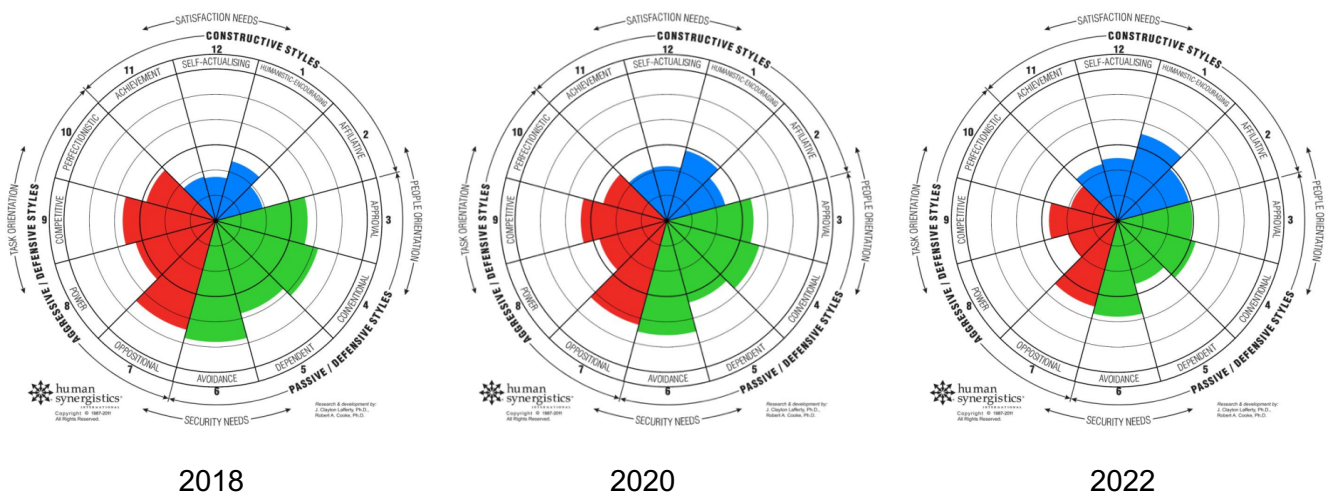
The Constructive Blue styles have grown significantly, while every Passive (green) and Aggressive (red) style has decreased significantly. These results show a significant shift in mindset of the employees of AT. In 2018 the mindset was one of 'protect yourself' and 'dominate others to get ahead'. The 2022 results show more focus on teamwork and personal growth.

Again, by way of a quick summary of results I can report the following comparison over the three and a half years between 2022 and 2018:

- Constructive Styles have increased by an average of 19.75%ile
- Passive Styles have decreased by an average of 21.75%ile
- Aggressive Styles have decreased by an average of 24%ile
- 24 of the 31 Causal Factors had statistically significantly positive movements across AT while 4 of the remaining 7 also moved positively, and
- 11 Outcomes of Culture have significantly improved

Culture Change and Gaps by OCI Style

Listed below are **2018, 2022,** and **Ideal** percentile scores for the 12 styles measured by the OCI. Positive **Change** and **Gap** scores for the Constructive styles and negative scores for the Defensive styles are desirable. **Change** scores in the desired direction are checked (✓) with significance levels denoted by asterisks.
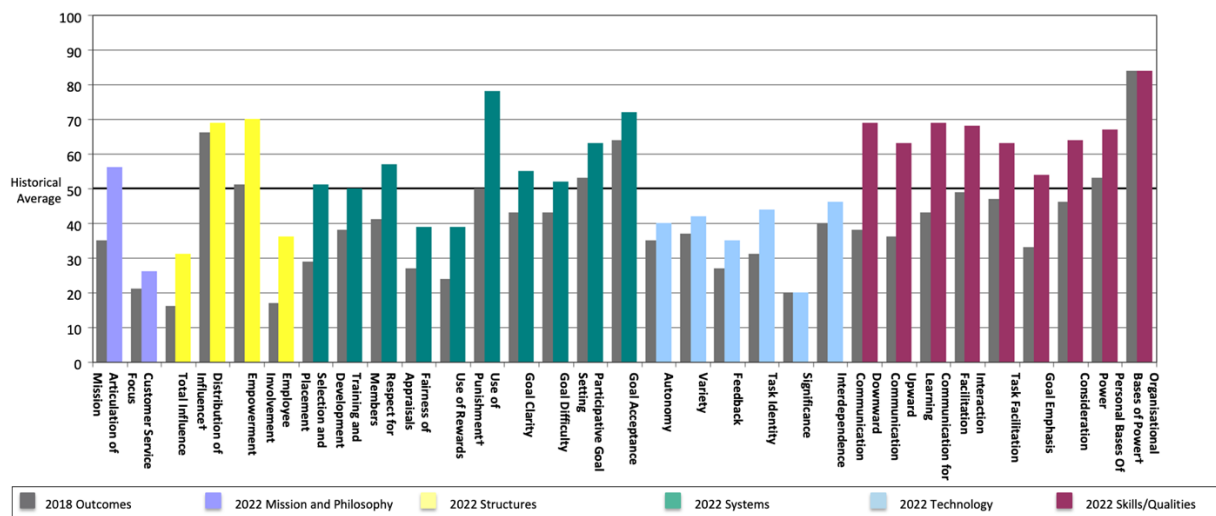
Note: Percentile scores potentially range from 1 to 99.

*p≤.05; **p ≤.01; ***p ≤.001 (Calculated on raw scores).

	Past	→	*Present*	→	*Future*
	2018 %ile	Change	2022 %ile	Gap	Ideal %ile
Constructive					
Humanistic-Encouraging	36	+28***✓	64	-34	98
Affiliative	24	+24***✓	48	-47	95
Achievement	22	+11***✓	33	-59	92
Self-Actualising	21	+16***✓	37	-60	97
Passive/Defensive					
Approval	66	-17***✓	49	+38	11
Conventional	78	-23***✓	55	+47	8
Dependent	70	-30***✓	40	+30	10
Avoidance	87	-17***✓	70	+54	16
Aggressive/Defensive					
Oppositional	82	-19***✓	63	+39	24
Power	57	-31***✓	26	+24	2
Competitive	67	-24***✓	43	+27	16
Perfectionistic	46	-22***✓	24	+12	12

The total change over 2018-2022 can be seen in the table above.

The change in the culture results has been brought about by a change in approach by the employees of AT, especially leaders. The causal factors results graph below shows the development in the use of causal factors between 2018 and 2022.

Change in Causal Factors over Time

† In the barchart shown above, the scores for distribution of influence, use of punishment, and organisational bases of power were reversed so that higher percentile scores signify more desirable results.

The grey bars represent the original benchmark survey from 2018, while the coloured bars represent the 2022 survey results. The significant increase in effective use of the causal factors is obvious. It must be pointed out that the change in use of the casual factors over

time, to this degree, must be intentional and is due to the projects and work undertaken across the organisation to improve their use. As stated earlier the light blue bars representing Job Design are a obvious opportunity, but the work undertaken in improving leadership mindsets and behaviour as represented by the purple bars on the right has been extremely effective – keep up the great work in this space.

When you impact positively on culture you will impact positively on Outcomes, or how connected members are – this is how it works. The positive movement of AT outcomes can be clearly seen below. As there is a direct correlation between Outcomes and Performance it is clear to see that AT has enhanced its performance opportunities immensely.

Change in Outcomes over Time
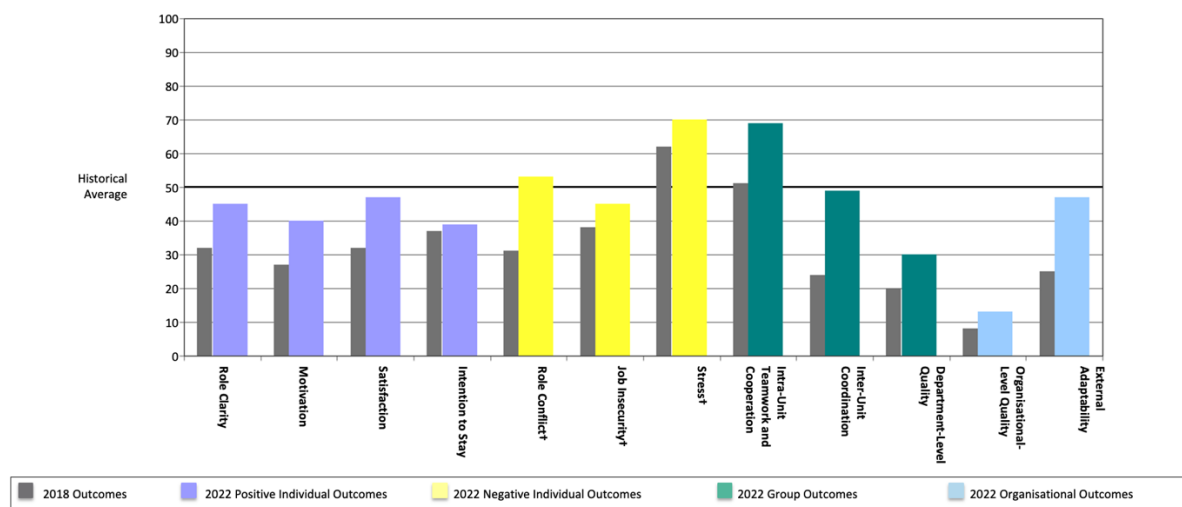
	2018 Outcomes	2022 Positive Individual Outcomes	2022 Negative Individual Outcomes	2022 Group Outcomes	2022 Organisational Outcomes

† In the Summary Barchart shown above, the scores for negative individual outcomes were reversed so that higher percentile scores signify more desirable results.
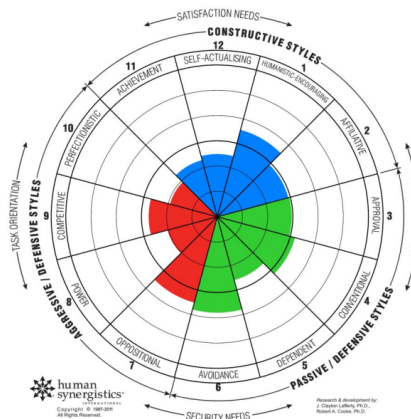
The changes indicated are significant, and while there are still many opportunities for improvement, it is clear that current strategies driving change are effective.   The reduction in mixed messages (role conflict) and the increases in teamwork and inter-unit coordination would be extremely effective performance improvement outcomes.

7.   Benchmarking AT's culture

When we compare AT results for 2022 against the average profiles of Australasian organisations we can see that AT results have moved from well below the average to better than average. While the results look similar we can see that AT OCI results score better in every style and in some cases significantly better, especially Humanistic encouraging, affiliative, power and perfectionistic. This is because when we compare causal factor results with the average (shown below) we can see there are also significant differences, especially with the leadership causal factors.
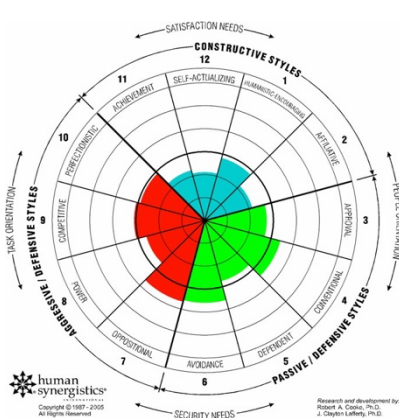
Australasian Average   Auckland Transport 2022
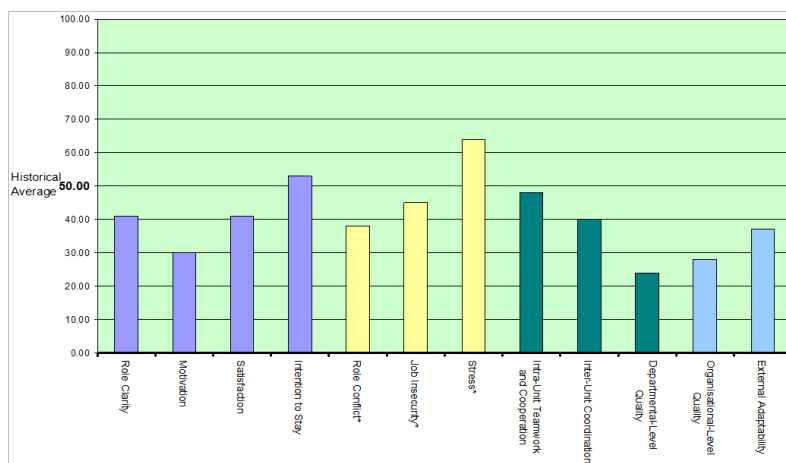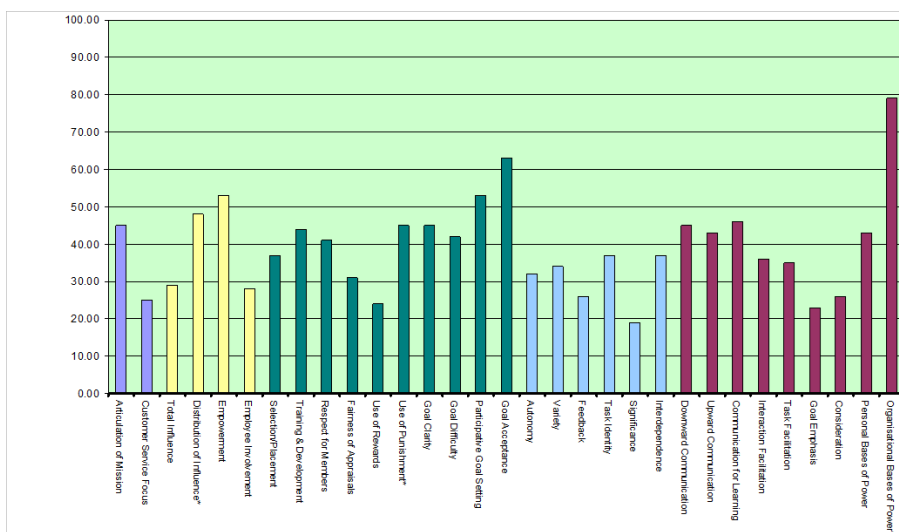
5. A view of opportunities and risks going forward

5a. Opportunities

There are two types of opportunities – content and process. On content the results identify a number of key areas for focus:

- **Employee Involvement.** It is important that this factor be improved. People are the lifeblood of any organisation and make the difference. While people will be interested

in others points of view they will act with passion on their own conclusions. The best way to achieve this is by involving them in decisions and discussions that will impact them.

- **Job Design.** Often seen as a dark art and an area that you can take and leave, it's not. Job design has a direct impact upon motivation. A well designed job which allows for the right levels of autonomy and ability to perform makes people feel significant. A job that allows people to receive feedback directly so they may self-adjust their performance is very powerful in allowing people to do their best – every day.
- **Use of Rewards and Fairness of Appraisals.** These causal factors are powerful feedback mechanisms that allow people to know how they are doing, be recognised for a job well done and/or their efforts, and to know that someone cares about what they do. They are key for ensuring reciprocity of excellent work, and to grow people.

5b.   Processes

- **Continued Leadership Training in Culture.** Leaders are no different to other people – they will do what they are comfortable doing. To get leaders more comfortable to act on culture opportunities, they need to know what it is, how it comes about, and how they can influence it.
- **Communicate, Communicate, Communicate.** Socialising what you want constantly, telling stories about wins, being optimistic is paramount to continuing the journey. Voids in communication are filled by pessimistic and negative dialogue. AT must ensure that most of the water cooler conversations are about positive stories, not the negative ones. To do this you must keep socialising your positive intentions and highlight how people can get involved and what they can do.
- **Ask, listen, learn, act.** The day of leaders being the expert in everything are long gone. Nothing shows respect for another human being more than asking their opinion on something important. Leaders must continue to ask, listen, learn and then act. The theory is called adaptive leadership.

6.   Conclusion

The AT results for Viewpoint 2022 are undoubtedly great results. AT is a large complex local government organisation. The improvement in results shown by the three surveys would be welcomed by any organisation, but within the context of AT's environment and amidst the difficulties placed on all organisations by Covid, the results attained are excellent.

The results are in fact of case study quality, and I would like to invite AT to work with us to develop a case study of some depth to highlight the fantastic progress made to date, and to understand what factors contributed to such a positive shift. The case study will be used to cement learnings within AT while also identifying through reflections continued opportunities to keep learning and growing AT. It would also be used to demonstrate to other public sector and commercial organisations across New Zealand and Australasia what can be achieved with the right focus, effort and commitment.

There is still work to be done. The results to date outline a below average to good journey, while the next few years should focus on a good to great journey. To support this and maintain momentum I have a few recommendations:

- Ensure smooth transitions to new managers – new joiners and newly promoted managers need to understand the priority of the AT culture journey.
- Keep socialising intentions and plans – be as transparent as possible and celebrate successes (such as these results).
- Employee involvement is key – change done with people is more effective than change done to people.
- Ask, listen, learn, act – make sure leaders do the first two steps.

- Spread the thinking to cover all stakeholders – not just staff. AT culture is impacted by a raft of external stakeholders – how can some (if not all) be involved to some degree to better impact the culture.
- Culture is everybody's responsibility – you're not stuck in traffic; you are the traffic!

Yours sincerely,

Neil McGregor