

Super city jobs for Brown's campaign allies

By JONATHAN MARSHALL

KEY PLAYERS from within Auckland mayor Len Brown's campaign team are likely to be given top super city jobs tomorrow.

The *Sunday Star-Times* has learnt that Richard Jeffrey, Counties Manukau Pacific Trust chief executive, is likely to become director of Auckland Tourism, Events and Economic Development Ltd, a council-controlled organisation (CCO).

Brown's campaign manager, Connor Roberts, confirmed Jeffrey was involved in "advice and strategy" during the recent mayoral campaign. He is also understood to have been a donor – both financially and in services – to Brown's 2007 campaign fund.

Roberts said he could not say whether Jeffrey donated towards the 2010 campaign, for which Brown is yet to file his donor return form.

Jeffrey, who is in England and did not respond to *Star-Times* inquiries, was involved in booking tenor Geoffrey Knight, the singer who performed at the September 2009 Volare dinner Brown attended with a number of guests and charged to his mayoral credit card, to play at Manukau's TelstraClear Pacific Events Centre.

Meanwhile, another person

COUNCIL JOB FOLLOWS REDUNDANCY

The former boss of Papakura District Council has been given a senior role in Auckland mayor Len Brown's office – weeks after leaving her last job with redundancy of \$209,730.

The payout for Theresa Stratton when her council was amalgamated with the new Auckland Council comprised 20 weeks' remuneration, worth \$105,628, and payment in lieu of notice totalling \$104,102.

Stratton began working for Brown on Wednesday at his Auckland Town Hall office as a senior adviser in the area of "long-term planning". In May, Stratton declined to comment when asked by reporters about her plans after Papakura District Council closed its doors.

Brown's chief of staff, Phil Wilson, said the issue of whether she would repay her redundancy now she was back working for a council was

expected to secure a CCO directorship tomorrow is Pauline Winter, who Roberts confirmed was a member of Brown's campaign team. Winter, a public sector high-flyer, has been short-listed for the Auckland Council Investments Ltd CCO.

She has worked as a board member and commissioner for

"private and confidential". "Her recruitment and employment are in keeping with best practice in this area and follow the letter of the law."

Local Government Minister Rodney Hide said it was up to Auckland Council to determine whether she should pay back her redundancy. "We worked hard to ensure no double-dipping on redundancy. It was never envisaged the mayor would appoint someone who had been paid redundancy."

Auckland Council chief executive Doug McKay said it was a matter for Brown to deal with, but if Stratton had been appointed outside of the mayor's office, it would be his business and the money would be paid back.

He said a number of staff in Stratton's position had done exactly that.

– Jonathan Marshall

a number of government bodies.

Dr Graham Bush, of Auckland University's political studies department, told the *Star-Times* the string of new CCOs could see the replication of what has been happening in central politics for years, whereby donors and campaign team members were

"rewarded" with top jobs.

He said before the introduction of CCOs there was little room for "thank-you tokens" in local body politics.

But Bush said the fact Brown trusted these people in his campaign means he probably thinks them good options for the important CCO roles.

Former Labour Party president Mike Williams has been shortlisted for the Auckland Transport CCO directorship and former Papakura mayor John Robertson is up for the Regional Facilities Auckland CCO.

It was revealed last weekend that former Manukau City chief executive Leigh Auton had been shortlisted for the Auckland Council Property Ltd CCO. Auton was instrumental in defending Brown during the scandal this year around the mayor's personal use of his council credit card.

Brown's former Manukau deputy mayor, Gary Troup, is also up for the Regional Facilities Auckland CCO.

A spokesman for Brown said the mayor would not comment on the CCO appointments ahead of tomorrow's committee meeting, which will be held behind closed doors. An inquiry, sparked by Brown, is underway at Auckland Council into how the shortlist for the CCO directors was leaked.