

Making a stand made easy

A candidate's guide to the local elections

## Greetings

I congratulate you for thinking about standing in the 2016 local authority elections. Being an elected member is an immensely satisfying role as you will be responsible for making decisions that have a direct impact on the well-being of your community. If you are elected the citizens in your district, city or region will have given you their trust to provide sound and responsible leadership.

By standing for office you will be aware of the important role local government plays in your community. Not only do councils provide a range of local public service and essential infrastructure they also contribute to a strong sense of identity and civic pride and provide opportunities through which communities can debate issues and agree priorities.

As an elected member, whether of a council, local board or a community board, you will be in the public eye. Local residents will look to you for leadership and seek your assistance in addressing local challenges. It is an important role and one that can make a big difference to the lives of the people in your town city or region.

To stand for office you need to be a New Zealand citizen and enrolled on the Parliamentary electoral roll. You also need to be prepared to serve your local community. Elected members take an oath to faithfully, impartially and according to their best skill and judgement, execute and perform their duties in the interests of the community, city, district or region.

LGNZ is committed to ensuring that elected members are supported and equipped to deliver good governance and decision-making. We offer a programme of support for all elected members and should you be successful in the coming election don't hesitate to contact us for information on how we can help you to have a successful and fulfilling career in local politics.

The role of an elected member can be demanding at times, but it is also highly rewarding. I hope this publication gives you valuable information to help you on your way.

If you would like more information please check out our website at [www.lgnz.co.nz](http://www.lgnz.co.nz) or speak to the electoral officer of the council in the area you want to stand in.

Lawrence Yule

President

LGNZ

## What is local government?

Local government is our most basic level of democracy. It provides citizens with the ability to shape their town, city or region and is responsible for the provision of a range of local public services, local infrastructure and local regulatory functions.

The activities of councils, from libraries to local roads and economic development all add to the quality of community life in our community. They play a vital role in enabling towns, cities and regions grow and develop.

There are three types of local authority - territorial authorities, regional councils and unitary councils (which are territorial authorities that also have responsibility for regional council functions). Altogether there are 78 councils in New Zealand, 67 of which are territorial authorities, including the six unitary councils, and 11 are regional councils. Of the territorial authorities 12 are city councils and 55 are district councils.

Many territorial authorities have community boards. Community boards exist to make sure that a community's interests are being adequately represented and to bring decision-making closer to the citizens themselves (depending on the functions and responsibilities delegated to them by the council). Auckland Council has 21 local boards that provide a similar function but with greater decision-making powers than community boards

## What do councils do?

Territorial authorities provide a wide range of functions:

- Local regulatory services such as building control, dog control, liquor licensing, and noise control.
- Civil defence, and emergency management
- Infrastructure services such as roading and public transport, sewerage, drinking water and stormwater;
- Recreation and cultural services
- Libraries
- Cemeteries
- Resource management, including land use planning and development control.

Regional councils manage the natural resources of an area. This includes:

- Biosecurity control (including pest control and noxious plants);
- Resource management (quality of water, soil, coastal planning);
- Flood and river management;
- Civil defence (natural disasters, marine oil spill); and
- Regional transport planning and passenger transport services.

The six unitary authorities have the responsibilities of both territorial authorities and regional councils. They are Auckland Council, Nelson City Council, Tasman District Council, Marlborough District Council, Gisborne District Council and the Chatham Islands Council.

Functions may vary from place to place as councils can transfer activities between territorial and regional councils and many councils have established joint service delivery arrangements.

## The purpose of local government

Local government is the means by which communities make democratic decisions about the way in which their towns, cities and regions work and how they will develop. The Local Government Act 2002 (LGA 2002) provides councils a broad purpose which is to:

- a) enable democratic local decision-making and action by, and on behalf of, communities; and
- b) meet the current and future needs of communities for good quality local infrastructure; local public services; and performance of regulatory functions in a way that is most cost-effective for households and businesses.

The purpose has two parts. The first part emphasises the democratic nature of local government and enables councils to make decisions and undertake services that their communities want and are prepared to pay for. The second part of the purpose requires councils to consider the needs of future generations when making decisions with regard to local services, infrastructure and regulations as well as ensuring that these are provided in a cost effective way.

## How do councils work?

Each district, city or regional council has an elected council or governing body which is ultimately responsible for the performance of the local authority. In districts or cities the governing body will be led by a mayor who is directly elected by all eligible citizens within the area. Regional councils are led by a chairperson who is elected by the members of the regional council's governing body.

Elected members are responsible for making decisions on matters such as the services the council will provide, the standard they are provided to, how they will be paid for and what bylaws need to be made.

Councils have a chief executive and other staff to provide advice and implement these decisions. The chief executive is the only person directly employed by the council. She/he is responsible for the employment of all other staff. Councils are required to negotiate an annual performance agreement with their chief executives.

Most decisions are made in formally constituted meetings or made under delegation by staff, committees, local boards or community boards. Delegating decisions is a way of managing the workload and ensuring that decisions are made as close as possible to the people affected by those decisions.

## Making decisions

As individuals elected members have very little authority. It is only when acting together with your colleagues that you can implement policies and make a difference. To be effective you need the support of a majority of the members on your council, local board or community board.

The way in which councils make decisions is subject to a number of rules and regulations set out in the LGA 2002 and other statutes. Some of the important ones are:

- Decision-makers must be informed by the views of those affected by the decision
- Decision-makers must consider reasonable practicable options
- Decisions must be made in public unless there are specific grounds for excluding the public
- Decision-making processes must be acknowledge the diverse needs of the community

Application of the rule must be in proportion to the significance of the decision. Each council is required to develop a Significance and Engagement Policy which specifies what matters it will treat as significant.

## Public access

Transparency is one of the fundamental values of good government and both the Local Government Official Information and Meetings Act 1987 (LGOIMA) and the Ombudsmen's Act apply to councils. This means that all business, except when matters of personal or commercial sensitivity are concerned, must be conducted in public. It also means that all information, including information held by elected members in their council role is also public information.

The public is entitled to attend meetings of councils, committees, local boards and community boards, except where the meeting has gone into public excluded. Members can elect to hold workshops to debate and find out more about an issue and these are often held without the public being present, however workshops cannot make decisions.

## How councils are funded

Councils' primary source of funding comes from rates. Rates make up around 60 per cent of all operational expenditure, although this will vary from council to council. Remaining revenue comes from user charges, investment income, regulatory fees and roading subsidies. Councils are required by law to balance their budgets, unless it is prudent not to do so, and borrowing is undertaken to fund capital expenditure.

Councils own assets worth more than \$120 billion and their level of debt is approximately \$10 billion. Councils are required to think of the intergenerational benefits arising from their activities and borrowing to fund assets that have a long life is one way of sharing the cost over the different generations which will benefit.

The critical planning document is the Long Term Plan (LTP). The LTP is reviewed every three years and sets out a council's budget for the next ten years as well as a 30 year infrastructure strategy.

## Council roles: what do they involve?

There are a number of clearly defined elected roles within our local authorities: These are:

- mayors and regional council chairpersons;
- deputy mayors and deputy chairpersons;
- committee and subcommittee members;
- committee chairpersons;
- councillors;
- local board chairpersons;
- local board members;
- Community board chairpersons; and
- Community board members.

## Mayor

Mayors are directly elected by voters in our territorial authorities. The role of mayor is described in the LGA 2002 as being to provide leadership to the other members of the territorial authority and the people in the district of the territorial authority. The mayor is also expected to lead the

development of the territorial authority's plans (including the long-term plan and the annual plan), policies, and budgets for consideration by the members of the territorial authority.

A mayor's job is varied, involving long hours and a wide range of duties, such as chairing meetings, taking a public stand on local issues and being available to constituents. The size of the job differs depending on the size of the district or city with mayors of larger communities working full-time.

The role of mayor does vary between councils. The mayor of Auckland council has a range of executive powers that are not available to other mayors, such as the right to have an independent mayoral office and to appoint their deputy and committee chairs. Some of these roles have been extended to other mayors, such as the ability to appoint a deputy and chairs, but these appointments can be over-turned by their councils.

One of the most challenging aspects of being mayor is ensuring the orderly conduct of business during council meetings. By keeping order and providing sound leadership elected members help ensure the council decision-making process works at its best. The mayor is normally often the spokesperson for the council as well. In addition to these roles, the mayor also fulfils the responsibilities of a Justice of the Peace (while holding office).

### Chairperson of regional council

The chairperson is elected by councillors at the regional council's first meeting following the local authority elections. The chairperson shares the same responsibilities as other members of the council but must also chair council meetings and may have a casting vote. In addition to this the chairperson has a number of other roles, including, the ceremonial head of the council, the presiding member at council meetings and responsibility for ensuring meetings are conducted in an orderly manner.

The chairperson advocates on behalf of the regional community by promoting and representing its interests and providing leadership and feedback to fellow elected members. In addition to these roles the chairperson also fulfils the responsibilities of a Justice of the Peace (while holding office).

### Councillor

The role of councillor can, at times, be very demanding. You will have to balance a number of competing interests and wear a number of hats, as councillors can be required to act simultaneously as community leaders, representatives and community board members. The role and responsibilities of a councillor fall into two main categories:

- being a member of the governing body of the council; and
- being an elected representative of the community.

For the three year term councillors need to juggle work, the community's demands, their own priorities, the policies of their political team (if they have one) and the challenges facing their council.

Being a councillor is a very public role. Whenever councillors appear in public, even though it may not be in an official capacity, they are usually regarded as a councillor and judged accordingly. This is not a 9 to 5 job.

### Local board members

Established under the governance arrangements for Auckland, local boards have a significant and wide-ranging role. They make decisions on a range of local government matters at the local level,

provide local leadership and build strong local communities. Local Boards will provide important local input into region-wide strategies and plans.

Local boards also have an important role in the Auckland Council's planning process. Every three years local boards prepare a plan that informs the Auckland Council's Long Term Plan. Based on its local board plan each board negotiates, annually, an agreement with the governing body on the delivery and funding of services in the local area.

### Community board members

Many councils have community boards, which are elected in tandem with the election of the mayor and councillors. The role of community board members will vary depending on the level of responsibility delegated to them by their parent council. At the least community boards make recommendations to councils on policies, bylaws, and strategies reflecting the views of the communities they represent.

The primary role of a community board member is to represent and advocate for the interests of their communities, liaise with community organisations and government departments and maintain an overview of the local services provided by the council. Community boards can also make written and oral submissions to council on various issues.

### As an elected member what will I be doing?

Elected members have two broad roles, a representative role and a governance role, however the amount of time spent on each will vary depending upon the particular role you have been elected to. Governing body members, such as mayors and councillors, will spend a significant amount of time on governance issues, as they have the overall responsibility for the performance of the council organisation. Local and community board members will spend more of their time on representation matters and less on their governance role, depending upon their relative delegations.

### Exercising your governance role

Governing body members, in particular, will be concerned with the overall performance of the council organisation, the degree to which it meets its statutory obligations, fulfils community expectations and looks after its assets. The role includes:

- planning and policy making
- making decisions on the allocation of resources;
- ensuring council is fulfilling its regulatory functions in an appropriate manner;
- adopting a Long Term Plan that sets out how you will meet community expectations and exercise responsible stewardship of the community's assets;
- overseeing the strategic direction of the district, city or region and
- reviewing the council's performance.

### Exercising your representation role

In your representative role you will be expected to speak on behalf of individuals and organisations in your community and this may include people who didn't vote for you. You won't be able to please all the people all of the time but you must still represent their views, even though you may not in the end support them. This is because you will often be making decisions that take into account the wider context, such as the needs of future generations (and this may not please everyone in your community) or the district as a whole. Representing citizens in your community goes beyond simply being an advocate. It involves forming relationships, consulting and empowering groups and

organisations. Being a good communicator and listening to people is clearly important. This role involves:

- representing the interests of the residents and ratepayers;
- providing leadership and guidance to the community;
- facilitating communication between the council and the community; and
- promoting the overall interests of the council to external stakeholders

### Putting the needs of the district, city or region first

Elected members must act in the interest of the total district, city, region or community in which they stood, not just a particular ward or constituency. This is reinforced by the oath that you will have to agree to shortly after being elected:

*I, [full name of mayor, councillor or board member], declare that I will faithfully and impartially, and according to the best of my skill and judgment, execute and perform, in the best interests of [name of region, district, city, local or community board], the powers, authorities, and duties vested in or imposed upon me as a member of the [name of local authority] by virtue of the Local Government Act 2002, the Local Government Official Information and Meetings Act 1987, or any other Act.*

The oath identifies the need for elected members to use their best skill and judgment and to perform in the best interests of the whole community, not just the ward from which they were elected. Successful elected members manage to balance both their responsibility to raise issues affecting their wards or constituencies while making decisions on behalf of the interests of the total community, and future generations.

### Being a successful candidate

Most local elections involve a competition and this is a sign of a healthy democracy. One of the most important challenges facing a candidate is to successfully promote themselves and their platforms to their community – whether this is a ward, a constituency or an at-large election. Being a successful candidate involves selling your self and your policies.

One of the most common reasons people use for not voting is a lack of knowledge about who the candidates are and what they stand for. So making it easy for local residents to understand your position on issues is critical to success.

In the past candidates held meetings on street corners and in community halls. These are all important but today people get their information from a much wider range of sources. In many parts of New Zealand a social media presence will be critical as many voters use online devices to search for information on candidates in their areas. A Facebook page, for example, provides an easy way of communicating key messages about your self, why you wish to stand for public office and what your vision for the future of your community is. Many successful candidates, such as President Obama, have found tools like Twitter to be a very helpful way of communicating to voters – particularly younger voters.

There are many methods of campaigning, including:

- telephoning people you know;
- distributing leaflets and pamphlets;
- doorknocking;



- making contact with local organisations;
- meeting people in public areas like shopping centres;
- preparing articles for local newspapers;
- paying for press advertisements;
- providing a profile of your background to the local paper;
- addressing public meetings; and
- giving interviews to local radio stations
- Creating an online presence.

There are a number of rules that must be observed once you start campaigning, such as not exceeding the expenditure limit on advertising and keeping track of all your expenses, as you will need to submit them after the completion of the campaign if you are successful. There are also rules that apply to signage, where and when signs can be erected and authorisation. It is very important to talk to your local electoral officer to find out what the obligations are in your local area.

Remember to be positive. Voters like candidates who can communicate a vision for the future of their communities but are also realistic enough to know that promises must also be affordable.

## Day-to-day life of an elected member

Life as an elected member is largely dictated by the frequency of meetings and the time taken to prepare for them. At times the sheer volume of business papers may seem daunting although councils are increasingly turning to new technology to reduce the paper burden.

In addition there are always informal duties such as interviewing constituents, talking to the media, attending functions and speaking engagements.

It is essential that people in the community have an opportunity to contribute their views and ideas to council discussions. Elected members are expected to be accessible and will spend a lot of time meeting with community representatives. Even more time will be spent reading and responding to correspondence from local citizens and groups. Some of the work may impact on an elected member's personal or family life, such as phone calls at odd hours and meetings after hours.

## How much does an elected member get paid?

As an elected member you will be classified as self employed. You will need to pay ACC levies from your own income but you can reclaim some expenses from IRD. Elected members receive salaries that vary depending on the size of each council. The agency responsible for setting salaries is the Remuneration Authority. Remuneration for each elected member is based on the population the council represents and its annual expenditure and is adjusted annually, based on changes to population and expenditure. As an elected member you cannot decline to accept your salary. Some expenses, such as mileage, are also paid. See [www.remauthority.govt.nz](http://www.remauthority.govt.nz) for more information.

## How much time is involved?

Time commitments vary markedly depending on the position you are elected to. Many mayors find that the commitment is fulltime. Most councils have monthly or six weekly meeting cycles with councillors often placed on council committees. The amount of time per week that an elected member spends on council duties will depend on the number of responsibilities they have in their role and the size of the council.

The amount of time per week that a local board member in Auckland spends on local board duties will partly depend on the population the board represents. Many local board members will spend on

average 20 hours a week on board activities. Chairs, for example, have to officiate at civic functions, such as citizenship ceremonies as well as other local board duties. Local boards have regular meetings and may choose to set up local board committees.

The work of community board members will also vary according to the size and population of their community and the range of delegated functions they are responsible for. Community board chairpersons can expect to work up to 20 hours a week while community board members might work up to 10 hours a week.

Elected members are expected to be accessible to all members of their communities and should expect to spend a lot of time meeting with local organisations, such as neighbourhood associations and business organisations.

## Skills and qualities of effective elected members

Being an effective member means being able to use a broad range of skills and competencies. These include:

### Competencies

**Time Management:** Time is your single most important resource and if your role as an elected member is to sit well with your personal life you will need to be good at prioritising. Make lists, delegate the small stuff and ensure you set aside regular time for reading around policy issues. Planning ahead is essential.

**Reading and analysis:** as an elected member you will receive a substantial amount of advice and background reports. Learning to read quickly, focus on the matters that are most important and relevant, and being confident to seek clarification if you cannot understand matters is a key to success.

**Asking tough questions:** Don't be afraid to ask questions as it is only by asking challenging questions that the truth will often come out. If you are to properly represent your community and provide good governance then you need to be sure that the advice you receive is fit for purpose.

**Relationship building:** Productive relationships are so-called because they produce results. Everyone can benefit from smart networking. It may mean building relationships with people outside your usual set and spending more time with people who may have points of view quite different from your own.

**Influencing and negotiating:** To win hearts and minds and get things done, you need to promote trust. Establishing a track record of meeting commitments is vital. Being a team player is also helpful as it is easier to sell your idea to people who feel you have their interests at heart as well as your own.

**Relations with the media:** You will need to work with the media at some stage. Think of the media as an opportunity to put your point of view across. Remember, their role is to get a story – often the more contentious the better – so be prepared to handle provocation without getting rattled.

### Behaviours

Councils are required to adopt a Code of Conduct which sets out standards for the conduct of elected members (having a Code is optional for community boards).

**Impartial:** You were voted into local government on the understanding that you will use the powers of office to act in the best interests of your community. Because elected members are often active in many parts of their community they may, from time to time, face situations where they might have a potential conflict of interest. If you feel this might apply to you don't hesitate to let the chairperson of the meeting know as soon as possible.

**The public interest:** Your mandate is to take the interests of the "whole" community into account, to reflect the wishes of most, rather than a sole group or special interest faction. You should always listen carefully to all advice and weigh up all pros and cons before making recommendations or decisions, in order to make sure everyone gets a hearing and "fair go".

**Temperate:** The saying "play the ball not the person" applies in debate. Elected members should always attempt to argue the issue and facts under discussion rather than attack the competence, personality or ethics of the opposition.

**Prudent and Responsible:** Elected members should work to promote issues or actions they believe are in the public good across a range of considerations – ethical and financial. Sustainability is crucial to prudent decision-making. Elected members should be prepared to defend their decisions as sustainable as well as financially prudent.

**Open and Sincere:** To maintain public trust in the integrity of the democratic process, elected members should be proactive in giving out information about council decisions and activities. An elected member's words and actions need to be a sincere representation of their purpose to promote issues or actions that they believe are right for the public good.

### Professional development opportunities

LGNZ, through its KnowHow professional development programme provides a wide range of training opportunities for elected members. These are designed to strengthen competencies and bring all elected members up to speed with the requirements of office. Visit [www.lgnz.co.nz](http://www.lgnz.co.nz) for more information.

## Nomination requirements

If you are interested in standing for election you need to meet the following requirements and complete the nomination process.

### What are the requirements to stand?

To be eligible to stand for election you do not need any special qualifications. You must be a New Zealand citizen and enrolled on the parliamentary electoral roll (anywhere in New Zealand) and have lived at your current address for at least one month. You do not need to live in the area in which you wish to stand.

- You can stand for any of the following:
- your local council (mayor, councillor);
- local board (if established);
- community board (if established);
- your regional council;
- your district health board; and
- district licensing trust (if established).

## Combinations allowed

Because of issues, such as conflict of interest, there are some positions that you cannot stand for at the same time and there are some positions where you can stand for more than one, but will have to relinquish one if elected to both.

- You can stand for your local council (including a local board or community board) and for a district health board at the same time.
- You can stand for regional council and a district health board at the same time.
- You can stand for mayor and for council at the same time, but if you are elected to both you must relinquish your position of councillor which is then filled by the next highest polling candidate.
- You can stand for election for both a local council and a local board or community board at the same time, but if you are elected to both you must vacate your position on the local board or community board.
- You cannot stand for both a regional council and a local council or community board position in the same region.
- You cannot stand for election in more than one ward or constituency, if the council elects its members under the ward system.
- You cannot stand as both a ward candidate and an at-large candidate. If the council elects some of its members under the ward system and some under the at-large system.
- You cannot stand for more than one constituency.

You may stand for election if you are an employee of a council. However, if you are elected as a councillor or local board member in the local authority for which you work, you must resign your position as an employee before taking up your position as an elected member. This does not apply to council employees elected to Community Boards.

If you are employed you may need to talk to your employer about your intentions to stand for election including the implications of being successful. In some instances you may need to take leave from work while you campaign.

(At the time of publication it is possible to stand and be elected to more than one local board, however we expect this to change before the 2016 election. If you are thinking of standing for more than one local board, please check with your electoral officer first).

## What is the nomination process?

You will need two people to nominate you (on the official nomination form) and send your completed form to your council's electoral officer. You must consent to your nomination going forward (by signing the nomination form) and you cannot nominate yourself. Those who nominate you must be over 18 years old and enrolled to vote in the area you wish to stand in. When you send in the nomination form you will need to pay a \$200 (incl. GST) deposit.

The deposit may be refunded depending on how many votes you receive in the election and the particular type of election. The deposit is refunded if the number of votes you receive is greater than 25 per cent of the lowest successful candidate for that particular election (for First Past the Post elections) or greater than 25 per cent of the final quota as determined in the last iteration (for Single Transferable Voting elections).

When you submit your nomination forms you can also provide the electoral officer with a recent photograph of yourself and a 150 word profile statement. These will be published in a booklet and sent out with the voting documents.

Nominations open on Friday 15 July 2016. Nomination forms will be available from your local council's electoral office.

### Will a criminal conviction affect my being an elected member?

A criminal conviction will not usually affect your nomination. The only exception to this is that people currently serving a prison term of three years or more cannot stand.

If you are elected and subsequently convicted of an offence punishable by imprisonment for two years or more, you automatically lose office. However, if you are planning to stand for a district health board position, there are additional restrictions (see clause 17, schedule 2, New Zealand Public Health and Disability Act 2000).

To be eligible to stand for election you do not need any special qualifications.

### How does the electoral process work?

The local government elections will be conducted under the provisions of the Local Electoral Act 2001, the Local Electoral Regulations 2001, the Local Government Act 2002, the New Zealand Public Health and Disability Act 2000 and their amendments. Most local government elections are conducted using the "First Past the Post" system (FPP) so the candidate with the highest number of votes wins. This year six councils, in addition to all 20 district health boards, will use the Single Transferable Voting system (STV).

Elections for all local authorities throughout New Zealand are held every three years and are all conducted by postal vote. This year the day of the election is Saturday 8 October 2016 and all votes have to be received by 12 noon on that date.

Your council will have an electoral officer to run the election. This person is often a council employee, although many councils employ contractors to conduct their elections. Sitting elected members and anyone standing for election cannot be an electoral officer.

People who are enrolled to vote by Friday 12 August 2016 will be sent their voting papers in the mail. An enrolment campaign will run from early July to late August to encourage people to enrol, check or update their enrolment details. Enrolment forms are available from the elections website [www.elections.org.nz](http://www.elections.org.nz) by the elector free texting their name and address to 3676, from PostShops or by calling 0800 ENROL NOW (0800 36 76 56).

People can also check their details and enrol online at the website.

Voting documents will be sent to all eligible voters by post from Friday 16 September 2016. Voters will have three weeks to complete and return their voting documents. Completed voting documents must be returned to the electoral officer by 12 noon on Saturday 8 October 2016.

A polling place for the issuing of special voting documents and for the receiving of completed voting documents will be available from Friday 16 September 2016 to 12 noon Saturday 12 October 2016. Contact your local council for information on local polling places.

Preliminary results will be announced by the electoral officer as soon as practicable after voting closes, to be followed by the official results within a few days. The electoral officer will also write to all candidates once the final election result is known. The term of office is for three years.

Successful elected members take up office on the day after the official declaration is publicly notified. However, before they can make any decisions, elected members must swear an oath of office (see the declaration). The oath for mayor and councillors is made at the first meeting of the new council and the oath for board members at the first meeting of the community or local board. This meeting is usually held within two weeks of the official declaration of election results.

## Key dates

15 July	Candidate nominations open and roll opens for public inspection
15 July to 12 August at midday	Receipt of candidate nominations
12 August at midday	Candidate nominations close and roll closes
17 August	Public notice of candidate's names
16 - to 21 September	Voting documents delivered
13 September - 5 October	Special voting period
16 September to 8 October	Progressive roll scrutiny, special voting, early processing
8 October midday	Election day – voting closes midday
8 October from midday	Preliminary results
13 – 19 October	Declaration of results
October/November	Elected members' swearing in ceremonies

## How do I find out more?

If you would like to find out more information about your councils consider looking at its annual plan or Long Term Plan. These documents show what the council is doing and what it plans to do over the next ten years. The council's annual report is also helpful as it will provide details on how the council performed over the previous year, both financial and non-financial performance. These documents are available on your council's website or in the local library.

Also on the website will be the council's 30 year Infrastructure Strategy and its Governance Statement. The Infrastructure Strategy will give you an insight into the state of the council's infrastructure and what renewals and replacements will be required over the next three decades. The Governance Statement explains how a council works.

If you would like more information on how the First Past the Post (FPP) or Single Transferable Voting (STV) systems work please check the Department of Internal Affairs' website at [www.dia.govt.nz](http://www.dia.govt.nz). For information on all councils check out the local councils' site at [www.localcouncils.govt.nz](http://www.localcouncils.govt.nz)

Remember to check you local council's website for further information on the election. Links to council websites are below.

Ashburton District Council <a href="http://www.ashburtondc.govt.nz">www.ashburtondc.govt.nz</a>	Kaikoura District Council <a href="http://www.kaikoura.govt.nz">www.kaikoura.govt.nz</a>	South Waikato District Council <a href="http://www.swktodc.govt.nz">www.swktodc.govt.nz</a>
Auckland Council <a href="http://www.aucklandcouncil.govt.nz">www.aucklandcouncil.govt.nz</a>	Kaipara District Council <a href="http://www.kaipara.govt.nz">www.kaipara.govt.nz</a>	South Wairarapa District Council <a href="http://www.southwaikato.govt.nz">www.southwaikato.govt.nz</a>
Bay of Plenty Regional Council <a href="http://www.boprc.govt.nz">www.boprc.govt.nz</a>	Kapiti Coast District Council <a href="http://www.kapiticoast.govt.nz">www.kapiticoast.govt.nz</a>	Southland District Council <a href="http://www.southlanddc.govt.nz">www.southlanddc.govt.nz</a>
Buller District Council <a href="http://www.bullerdc.govt.nz">www.bullerdc.govt.nz</a>	Kawerau District Council <a href="http://www.kaweraudc.govt.nz">www.kaweraudc.govt.nz</a>	Stratford District Council <a href="http://www.stratford.govt.nz">www.stratford.govt.nz</a>

<p> Carterton District Council  <a href="http://www.cartertondc.co.nz">www.cartertondc.co.nz</a>  Central Hawke's Bay District Council  <a href="http://www.chbdc.govt.nz">www.chbdc.govt.nz</a>  Central Otago District Council  <a href="http://www.codc.govt.nz">www.codc.govt.nz</a>  Chatham Islands Council  <a href="http://www.cic.govt.nz">www.cic.govt.nz</a>  Dunedin City Council  <a href="http://www.dunedin.govt.nz">www.dunedin.govt.nz</a>  Environment Southland  <a href="http://www.es.govt.nz">www.es.govt.nz</a>  Far North District Council  <a href="http://www.fndc.govt.nz">www.fndc.govt.nz</a>  Gisborne District Council  <a href="http://www.gdc.govt.nz">www.gdc.govt.nz</a>  Gore District Council  <a href="http://www.goredc.govt.nz">www.goredc.govt.nz</a>  Greater Wellington Regional Council  <a href="http://www.gw.govt.nz">www.gw.govt.nz</a>  Grey District Council  <a href="http://www.greydc.govt.nz">www.greydc.govt.nz</a>  Hamilton City Council  <a href="http://www.hamilton.co.nz">www.hamilton.co.nz</a>  Christchurch City Council  <a href="http://www.ccc.govt.nz">www.ccc.govt.nz</a>  Clutha District Council  <a href="http://www.cluthadc.govt.nz">www.cluthadc.govt.nz</a>  Hastings District Council  <a href="http://www.hastingsdc.govt.nz">www.hastingsdc.govt.nz</a>  Hauraki District Council  <a href="http://www.hauraki-dc.govt.nz">www.hauraki-dc.govt.nz</a>  Hawke's Bay Regional Council  <a href="http://www.hbrc.govt.nz">www.hbrc.govt.nz</a>  Horizons Regional Council  <a href="http://www.horizons.govt.nz">www.horizons.govt.nz</a>  Horowhenua District Council  <a href="http://www.horowhenua.govt.nz">www.horowhenua.govt.nz</a>  Hurunui District Council  <a href="http://www.hurunui.govt.nz">www.hurunui.govt.nz</a>  Hutt City Council  <a href="http://www.huttcity.govt.nz">www.huttcity.govt.nz</a>  Invercargill City Council  <a href="http://www.icc.govt.nz">www.icc.govt.nz</a> </p>	<p> Mackenzie District Council  <a href="http://www.mackenzie.govt.nz">www.mackenzie.govt.nz</a>  Manawatu District Council  <a href="http://www.manawatu.govt.nz">www.manawatu.govt.nz</a>  Marlborough District Council  <a href="http://www.mdc.govt.nz">www.mdc.govt.nz</a>  Masterton District Council  <a href="http://www.mstn.govt.nz">www.mstn.govt.nz</a>  Matamata-Piako District Council  <a href="http://www.mpdc.govt.nz">www.mpdc.govt.nz</a>  Napier City Council  <a href="http://www.napier.govt.nz">www.napier.govt.nz</a>  Nelson City Council  <a href="http://www.ncc.govt.nz">www.ncc.govt.nz</a>  New Plymouth District Council  <a href="http://www.newplymouthnz.com">www.newplymouthnz.com</a>  Northland Regional Council  <a href="http://www.nrc.govt.nz">www.nrc.govt.nz</a>  Opotiki District Council  <a href="http://www.odc.govt.nz">www.odc.govt.nz</a>  Otago Regional Council  <a href="http://www.orc.govt.nz">www.orc.govt.nz</a>  Otorohanga District Council  <a href="http://www.otodc.govt.nz">www.otodc.govt.nz</a>  Palmerston North City Council  <a href="http://www.pncc.govt.nz">www.pncc.govt.nz</a>  Porirua City Council  <a href="http://www.pcc.govt.nz">www.pcc.govt.nz</a>  Queenstown Lakes District Council  <a href="http://www.qldc.govt.nz">www.qldc.govt.nz</a>  Rangitikei District Council  <a href="http://www.rangitikei.govt.nz">www.rangitikei.govt.nz</a>  Rotorua Lakes Council  <a href="http://www.rdc.govt.nz">www.rdc.govt.nz</a>  Ruapehu District Council  <a href="http://www.ruapehudc.govt.nz">www.ruapehudc.govt.nz</a>  Selwyn District Council  <a href="http://www.selwyn.govt.nz">www.selwyn.govt.nz</a>  Taupo District Council  <a href="http://www.taupo.govt.nz">www.taupo.govt.nz</a>  Tauranga City Council  <a href="http://www.tauranga.govt.nz">www.tauranga.govt.nz</a>  South Taranaki District Council  <a href="http://www.southtaranaki.com">www.southtaranaki.com</a> </p>	<p> Taranaki Regional Council  <a href="http://www.trc.govt.nz">www.trc.govt.nz</a>  Taranua District Council  <a href="http://www.taranuadc.govt.nz">www.taranuadc.govt.nz</a>  Tasman District Council  <a href="http://www.tasman.govt.nz">www.tasman.govt.nz</a>  Thames-Coromandel District Council  <a href="http://www.tcdc.govt.nz">www.tcdc.govt.nz</a>  Timaru District Council  <a href="http://www.timaru.govt.nz">www.timaru.govt.nz</a>  Upper Hutt City Council  <a href="http://www.upperhuttcity.com">www.upperhuttcity.com</a>  Waikato District Council  <a href="http://www.waikatodistrict.govt.nz">www.waikatodistrict.govt.nz</a>  Waikato Region Council  <a href="http://www.waikatoregion.govt.nz">www.waikatoregion.govt.nz</a>  Waimakariri District Council  <a href="http://www.waimakariri.govt.nz">www.waimakariri.govt.nz</a>  Waimate District Council  <a href="http://www.waimatedc.govt.nz">www.waimatedc.govt.nz</a>  Waipa District Council  <a href="http://www.waipadc.govt.nz">www.waipadc.govt.nz</a>  Wairoa District Council  <a href="http://www.wairoadc.govt.nz">www.wairoadc.govt.nz</a>  Waitaki District Council  <a href="http://www.waitaki.govt.nz">www.waitaki.govt.nz</a>  Waitomo District Council  <a href="http://www.waitomo.govt.nz">www.waitomo.govt.nz</a>  Wanganui District Council  <a href="http://www.wanganui.govt.nz">www.wanganui.govt.nz</a>  Wellington City Council  <a href="http://www.wellington.govt.nz">www.wellington.govt.nz</a>  West Coast Regional Council  <a href="http://www.wcrc.govt.nz">www.wcrc.govt.nz</a>  Western Bay of Plenty District Council  <a href="http://www.westernbay.govt.nz">www.westernbay.govt.nz</a>  Westland District Council  <a href="http://www.westland.govt.nz">www.westland.govt.nz</a>  Whakatane District Council  <a href="http://www.whakatane.govt.nz">www.whakatane.govt.nz</a>  Whangarei District Council  <a href="http://www.wdc.govt.nz">www.wdc.govt.nz</a> </p>
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