



FAQS

Ngā putuputu pātai

Whakatāne District Council
Local Elections
11 October 2025

STAND *for*
SOMETHING

TŪ TŪTURU

Whakatāne District
Elections 2025

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General information

He taipitopito pōtitanga

Q1: When is the next Whakatāne District Council election?

A1: Election day is Saturday, 11 October 2025 with voting closing at 12 noon. The voting period starts on Tuesday, 9 September 2025.

Q2: Who runs the election?

A2: The electoral officer has full responsibility for running the election.

Q3: What is the name of the electoral officer and Whakatāne District Council's electoral liaison person?

A3: The electoral officer is:

Dale Ofsoke,
Independent Election Services Ltd
Electoral Office: 167 Victoria Street West,
Auckland Central (entrance off Dock Street)
PO Box 5135, Victoria Street West, Akl 1142
Phone: 0800 922 822
Email: dale.ofsoke@electionservices.co.nz

The deputy electoral officer is:
Chirese Viljoen
Manager Governance Services
Whakatāne District Council
Civic Centre, 14 Commerce Street, Whakatāne
Phone: 07 306 0500
Email: chirese.viljoen@whakatane.govt.nz

Q4: What type of electoral system is used?

A4: The FPP (first past the post) electoral system will be used for the Whakatāne District Council and the Bay of Plenty Regional Council elections. For a more detailed explanation of this electoral system, refer [Q58](#).

Q5: What elections can we vote for?

A5: Electors will be able to vote for a mayor, general or Māori ward councillors, community board members, Bay of Plenty Regional Council members, and a poll.

The current structure is:

- mayor (elected 'at large')
- 10 councillors from 6 wards
- 24 community board members

Ward	Councillors
Rangitāiki General	2
Te Urewera General	1
Whakatāne-Ōhope General	4
Rangitāiki Māori	1
Kāpū-te-rangi Māori	1
Toi ki Uta Māori	1

Community Board	Members
Rangitāiki	6
Whakatāne-Ōhope	6
Tāneatua	6
Murupara	6
• Galatea-Waiōhau subdivision (2)	
• Murupara subdivision (3)	
• Te Urewera subdivision (1)	

Electors in the Whakatāne district will be able to vote for the following Bay of Plenty Regional Council members.

Regional Constituency	Councillors
Rangitāiki General	2
Te Urewera General	1
Whakatāne-Ōhope General	4
Rangitāiki Māori	1
Kāpū-te-rangi Māori	1
Toi ki Uta Māori	1

In addition electors will be able to vote on a poll: whether to retain or disestablish the Māori wards for the Whakatāne District Council. The outcome of this binding poll will apply to the 2028 and 2031 triennial elections.

Bay of Plenty Regional Council is not required to hold a referendum on Māori constituencies.

For further information refer to Council's website. whakatane.govt.nz

Q6: What is the difference between Māori and general wards?

A6: Māori ward councillors are elected by those enrolled to vote on the Māori Electoral Roll. Similarly, general ward councillors are elected by those enrolled to vote on the General Electoral Roll.

Q7: What is the role of the mayor, councillors and community board members?

A7: The mayor provides leadership to other elected members of the council and the people living in the district.

This includes:

- presides at council meetings
- establishes council committees
- attends and participates at meetings of committees and working parties
- leads the council and co-ordinates council political activity
- speaks on behalf of the council
- represents the council on related organisations, where appointed
- attends and participates at conferences and seminars
- attends to complaints and enquiries from members of the public
- presides at civic ceremonies
- hosts visiting groups, including overseas delegations
- attends and speaks at local functions, sometimes opening them
- declares a state of civil defence emergency in the district if the need arises.

Mayor and councillors:

- read agenda and other materials before meetings
- participate in strategic and long-term planning for the whole district
- develop policy across a wide range of activities and services
- represent the district at functions as required
- review and develop bylaws for the district
- advocate on a wide range of issues
- coordinate and form partnerships with other spheres of government and other agencies
- participate in the appointment and performance review of the chief executive
- act on all these matters within a legislative and regulatory framework
- set a budget and rates
- monitor the performance of the council organisation.

Community board members:

- promote residents' issues and initiatives to the board and the council
- monitor the provision of council services and advocate changes as necessary
- engage in community development activities in conjunction with council officers
- take a proactive stance anticipating strategies and policies that may be needed
- allocate the Community Board Discretionary Fund
- represent the community to other agencies
- promote the role of the community board in the wider community
- work co-operatively with the council.

Candidates

Ngā Kaitono

Q8: I want to be a candidate in these elections. What do I need to do?

A8: You must be a New Zealand citizen and your name must be on the Parliamentary Electoral Roll (anywhere in New Zealand).

When lodging your nomination, proof of citizenship will be required (copy of passport, birth certificate, citizenship certificate). If your name on the Parliamentary Electoral Roll is different from your name on your proof of citizenship, you also need to provide proof of change of name.

You will need to have two electors enrolled on the electoral roll in the area you are standing for to nominate you –

e.g. if you stand for the Te Urewera General Ward, the nominators will need to be enrolled on the electoral roll for that ward. (Note the candidate does not need to reside in the area in which they are standing but that fact will appear in candidate information for electors.)

Candidate campaigning can commence any time prior to the election (no time restriction), but any expenditure made, within or outside the three-month applicable period before election day, must be accounted for.

For information on nomination papers and the candidate information handbook refer [Q25](#).

Q9: How much will it cost me to stand?

A9: You will need to pay a nomination fee of \$200 GST inclusive. This fee applies to each election (position) you stand for.

Your nomination fee can be paid by electronic bank transfer, EFTPOS, credit card or cash.

If you poll greater than 25% of the lowest polling successful candidate you will receive your nomination fee back.

Q10: What qualifications and experience do I need?

A10: Nothing formal. Elected members come from all walks of life and generally have a desire to serve the community.

All (or some) of the following capabilities will be useful in the elected member role:

- quality decision-making
 - political acumen
 - leadership
 - cultural awareness
 - strategic thinking
 - knowledge and understanding of Whakatāne District Council and local government
 - communication and engagement, relationship building and collaboration.
-

Q11: Does a criminal record affect a person standing as a Council candidate?

A11: No, not for the Whakatāne District Council elections.

Q12: How long is the term of an elected member?

A12: Three years.

Q13: Do I need to be resident in the area I am standing for?

A13: No, but you must be on the Parliamentary Electoral Roll (anywhere in New Zealand) and be a New Zealand citizen (by birth or citizenship ceremony). If you don't reside in the area you are standing for, this needs to be disclosed to electors.

The two people who nominate you must be on the electoral roll within the area you are standing for.

Q14: Do I need to be on the Māori Electoral Roll or of Māori descent if I am standing for election in the Māori ward?

A14: No. To be eligible you must be a New Zealand citizen and your name must be on the Parliamentary Electoral Roll (anywhere in New Zealand).

You will need to be nominated by two electors whose names appear on the Māori Electoral Roll within the area of election for which you are standing.

If you are on the Māori Electoral Roll you can stand in a general ward, and will need to be nominated by two electors whose names appear on the General Electoral Roll within the area of election for which you are standing.

Q15: How many positions can I stand for?

A15: You can stand for mayor, a general or Māori ward councillor and a community board member. If you are elected to more than one position you must take the highest ranked position.

You cannot stand for both the Whakatāne District Council and the Bay of Plenty Regional Council.

Q16: Can I withdraw my nomination as a candidate?

A16: Only if it is withdrawn before the close of nominations (noon, Friday, 1 August 2025). You cannot withdraw voluntarily after nominations have closed. If you decide to opt out, your name will still appear on the voting document.

If you do change your mind and decide not to run for election after you have been nominated, let the electoral officer know who will talk through the issues with you.

If you become incapacitated with serious illness or injury and are unlikely to be able to perform the functions and duties if elected to office, an application to withdraw your nomination on those grounds can be made. Verification from a doctor or lawyer about your situation will be required.

Contact the electoral officer if you need more information about this process.

Q17: What is a candidate profile statement?

A17: You may provide a candidate profile statement when you lodge your nomination. This is a statement of up to 150 words containing information about yourself and your policies and intentions if elected to office. The profile statement will be included in the voting packs that all electors receive.

Your candidate statement can be submitted in both Māori and English, but the information contained in each language must be substantially consistent. Each language has to be within a 150-word limit.

In addition, your candidate profile statement must state whether or not your principal place of residence is in the area you are seeking election, e.g., 'My principal place of residence is in the Toi ki Uta Māori Ward', or 'My principal place of residence is not in the Toi ki Uta Māori Ward'. This is not part of the 150-word limit.

Your profile statement must be true and accurate. The electoral officer is not required to verify or investigate any information included in your statement.

Your profile can include a recent passport size and style colour photograph (taken in the last 12 months).

Refer to the Local Electoral Act 2001, section 61 for more information.

Q18: When is the campaign period?

A18: Election campaigning can start at any time before the election and continue up to and including election day.

Refer [Q67](#) for information on campaign signage.

Q19: How much can I spend on my campaign?

A19: There is a limit on what you can spend on your campaign and it relates to the population of the area you are standing for.

The maximum amount that can be spent by a candidate cannot exceed the limits set out in this table:

Local government area population	Expenditure limit
Up to 4,999	\$3,500
5,000 – 9,999	\$7,000
10,000 – 19,999	\$14,000
20,000 – 39,999	\$20,000
40,000 – 59,999	\$30,000
60,000 – 79,999	\$40,000
80,000 – 99,999	\$50,000
100,000 – 149,999	\$55,000
150,000 – 249,999	\$60,000
250,000 – 999,999	\$70,000
1,000,000 or more	\$100,000*

* plus 50 cents for each elector

For example, a candidate for councillor of Rangitāiki General Ward (which has a population in the range of 5,000 – 9,999) can spend up to \$7,000 inclusive of GST.

If you stand for more than one position, the amount you can spend is the highest amount for one position. You cannot add positions together to allow you to spend more than the limit.

Please note any expenditure made by a candidate for an election campaign is funded by the candidate and is not refundable by Council to the candidate.

All candidates are required to lodge an Electoral Donations and Expenses Return within 55 days after the day on which the successful candidates are declared to be elected (by 11 December 2025).

If a candidate is outside New Zealand on this day, the return must be filed within 76 days after the day on which the successful candidates are declared to be elected.

If a return is not submitted within the required time period, the non-return will be advised to the New Zealand Police for enforcement.

If a candidate is eligible for a refund of the nomination fee, the return needs to be received before the fee is refunded.

Q20: Can I raise campaign funds from donations, and can I claim expenses?

A20: Yes, you can raise funds and claim expenses from your campaign. There is very specific legislation about donations and expenses which you need to abide by. For more information go to **Local Electoral Act 2001, sections 103A – 112F.**

Q21: Can people already elected onto Whakatāne District Council use Council resources to campaign?

A21: No, elected members cannot use Council resources for their campaigns.

Q22: Are there any rules about using social media?

A22: Yes. Councils have policies or guidelines for web and social media use related to campaigning. They will not permit Council social media pages to be used by anyone (candidates or members of the public) for electioneering or campaigning in the three months before election day. This includes tagging Council in social media posts. Council monitors its online sites and take down any campaign related posts.

Q23: Can I help people vote or collect their voting documents to send in?

A23: No, it is an offence (carrying a fine of up to \$5,000 if convicted) to interfere in any way with an elector with the intention of influencing or advising the elector as to how they should vote. Candidates or their assistants should not collect voting documents from electors. Each elector should post or deliver their own voting document to the electoral officer. Candidates and their assistants should be particularly careful if campaigning occurs in facilities such as rest homes or hospitals.

Q24: When do nominations open and close?

A24: Nominations open on Friday, 4 July 2025 and close at 12 noon on Friday, 1 August 2025.

It is strongly recommended that candidates do not leave lodgement of their nomination until the last day. There may be insufficient time to rectify any error with the nomination, if lodgement occurs on Friday, 1 August 2025.

Q25: Where can I obtain a nomination paper?

A25: From 4 July 2025 nominations can be completed and submitted online at: esp.electionservices.co.nz/lge2025/WK

Nomination papers will also be posted on request by phoning 0800 922 822 and are available in hard copy at the following Council locations:

- Whakatāne District Council, 14 Commerce Street, Whakatāne
- Murupara Library & Service Centre, Civic Square, 48 Pine Drive, Murupara
- Edgecumbe Library, 38 College Road, Edgecumbe
- Ōhope Library, 4 Harbour Road, Ōhope
- Whakatāne Library and Exhibition Centre (Te Kōputu a te whanga a Toi), 49 Kākahoroa Drive, Whakatāne.

A candidate information handbook will be available in May 2025.

Enrolment Whakaurunga

Q26: Where can I view the electoral roll that will be used for this election?

A26: The preliminary electoral roll will be available for public inspection for a one-month period from Friday, 4 July 2025 to Friday, 1 August 2025.

The preliminary electoral roll will be available for inspection at:

- Whakatāne District Council, 14 Commerce Street, Whakatāne
- Murupara Library & Service Centre, Civic Square, 48 Pine Drive, Murupara
- Edgecumbe Library, 38 College Road, Edgecumbe
- Ōhope Library, 4 Harbour Road, Ōhope
- Whakatāne Library and Exhibition Centre (Te Kōputu a te whanga a Toi), 49 Kākahoroa Drive, Whakatāne

Q27. How do I enrol to vote in these elections?

A27. Is this your main place of residence?

Yes > Have you lived at your current address for more than one month?

Yes > Are you on the Parliamentary Electoral Roll at your current address in the Whakatāne District Council area?

Yes > You will automatically appear on the electoral roll that is used for these elections.

OR

Is this your main place of residence?

Yes > Are you on the Parliamentary Electoral Roll at an address in the Whakatāne District Council area?

No or Don't Know

> You need to complete an enrolment form with the Electoral Commission for this. You can either:

> enrol online or download a form at vote.nz

> or telephone the Electoral Commission 0800 36 76 56 to request a form in the post with a return envelope.

OR

Is this your main place of residence?

No > Are you on the Parliamentary Electoral Roll at an address in another district?

Yes > If you own a property in a different district to your main residence, you may be able to enrol as a nonresident ratepayer elector. (Refer to ratepayer enrolment advice in [Q32](#) and [Q33](#)).

Q28: I am a student and spend my time in different places. Where should I enrol?

A28: You should enrol where you spend the greater part of your time.

Q29: I turn 18 on election day. Can I vote?

A29: Yes, but you need to make sure you have enrolled which you can do provisionally from the age of 17 and it automatically changes when you turn 18.

You will also need to apply for a special vote during the voting period (Tuesday, 9 September 2025 to 12 noon, Saturday, 11 October 2025).

For special vote availability, see [Q49](#).

Q30: I am a New Zealand Māori; do I need to enrol on the Māori roll?

A30: Not necessarily. If you are enrolling for the first time you can decide whether you want to go on the Parliamentary Māori Electoral Roll or the Parliamentary General Electoral Roll by signing the appropriate panel on the parliamentary elector enrolment form.

If a person is enrolled on the Māori Electoral Roll, that person will be able to vote for the mayor 'at large', the Māori ward councillors, the community board members (if applicable), and the regional Māori constituency councillor.

If a person is enrolled on the General Electoral Roll, that person will be able to vote for the mayor 'at large', the respective general ward councillors, the community board members (if applicable) and the respective regional generalconstituency members.

Q31: How do I know whether I am enrolled?

A31: The Electoral Commission will be undertaking a roll update campaign from 1 April 2025 for the Parliamentary Electoral Roll which forms the basis of the electoral roll for the Whakatāne District Council elections.

If you do not receive a letter in the post after 9 June 2025 the chances are you are not enrolled, or your details are incorrect. You will then need to complete a Parliamentary Electoral Roll enrolment form.

If you have recently changed address, you will need to update your address details at Electoral Commission's website [vote.nz](#).

You can check to see if you are enrolled at [vote.nz](#) or by phoning 0800 36 76 56.

Q32: I own a business in the Whakatāne District Council area and pay rates, but I don't live in the Whakatāne District Council area. Do I get a say in the Whakatāne District Council elections?

A32: Yes, subject to being eligible as a non-resident ratepayer elector and becoming enrolled.

A non-resident ratepayer enrolment form is available at:

- online portal [ratepayer.co.nz](#)
- download at [whakatane.govt.nz](#)
- by phoning 0800 922 822.

The non-resident ratepayer enrolment form should be submitted to the electoral officer by Friday, 1 August 2025 (in order to receive an ordinary vote), and no later than Friday, 10 October 2025 (in order to receive a special vote).

Q33: I own a property in the Whakatāne District Council area, but it is not my fulltime residence. How do I get on the Non-Resident Ratepayer Roll?

A33: Is your name on the rates notice?

Yes > You may be eligible to be on the ratepayer electoral roll. Go to ratepayer.co.nz to complete a ratepayer enrolment online, or contact the electoral office on 0800 922 822 and request a ratepayer enrolment form.

This should be submitted to the electoral officer or an electoral official by Friday, 1 August 2025 in order to receive an ordinary vote, and no later than Friday, 10 October 2025 in order to receive a special vote.

If it is easier you can call at a special voting venue during the voting period (Tuesday, 9 September 2025 to 12 noon Saturday, 11 October 2025) and complete the ratepayer enrolment form and have your special vote at the same time.

For special vote availability, see [Q49](#).

In no case does this allow you to have two votes at any election.

Or

Is your name on the rates notice?

No > You may not be eligible to be on the ratepayer electoral roll.

Go to ratepayer.co.nz to check your eligibility or contact the electoral office on 0800 922 822.

Q35: My partner received a voting document, but I haven't received mine. What should I do?

A35: Is it *before* Monday, 22 September 2025 and you believe you are correctly registered on the electoral roll?

Yes > Please wait until the mail has been delivered on Monday, 22 September 2025. If your voting document is not received, then please call the electoral office on 0800 922 822 and request a special vote.

OR

Is it *after* Monday, 22 September 2025 and you believe you are correctly registered on electoral roll?

Yes > You will need to apply for a special vote. For special vote availability, see [Q49](#).

Q36: I didn't receive my voting document, so I called and got a special vote. Now I have two voting documents. Which one should I use?

A36: Use the original one and destroy the special vote.

Q37: I received a voting document for a member of my family (e.g. child, parent) and have Power of Attorney for that person. Can I vote on behalf of that person?

A37: No, you are not allowed to vote on behalf of that person as Attorney.

Q38: I received a voting document for a member of my family (e.g. child, parent) who does not live at my address or is incapable of voting. What should I do with the voting document?

A38: If they are overseas, you could post it to the person or destroy it if that is not practicable. If it is for a person who is cognitively impaired, for example someone who is living with advanced dementia, please destroy it by ripping/cutting it up. You cannot vote on their behalf unless directly instructed by them.

Voting Ngā Pōti

Q34: Is it a postal vote and will I be sent my voting documents in the mail?

A34: All local authority elections will be conducted by postal vote.

Voting documents will be delivered by post between Tuesday, 9 September 2025 and Monday, 22 September 2025.

There is no online voting option available.

Q39: I received a voting document that does not belong to me and I don't know this person or where this person has gone. What should I do with the voting document?

A39: Write GNA (Gone No Address) on the envelope and put it back in the mail.

Q40: What is that barcode that I can see through the return envelope or on the front of the voting document?

A40: It is a legal requirement to scan the barcode and mark the electoral roll to indicate the person has voted. This is to ensure that we do not receive two votes from the same person.

Q41: How do you ensure the secrecy of my vote?

A41: Returned envelopes containing a voting document cannot be opened until there is a justice of the peace (JP) present. The JP is required to sign off that the processes used by the electoral officer meet the legal requirements.

Note that the voter's name is not shown on the voting document.

When the envelope is opened the only thing the electoral office is looking for is that the vote for each election is valid.

This means that we are making sure that the voter's intention is clear and the voter has not ticked or marked more candidates than the number of vacancies.

Q42: Do I have to vote? I don't know any of these candidates.

A42: No, you don't have to vote, but we do encourage you to vote and exercise your democratic right.

You don't have to vote in all elections. But your vote is important because the people elected will be responsible for making decisions about what happens in your community for the next three years.

To help you get to know about the candidates:

- candidate meetings may be held in your community and by attending you can find out what policies the different candidates are advocating for;
 - a candidate profile booklet comes with the voting document and this will include a photo and a statement from each candidate if these have been provided. This information will also be available on the Council's website ([whakatane.govt.nz](https://www.whakatane.govt.nz)) after nominations close (expected 8 August 2025);
 - candidates may have their own website, social media page(s), videos, advertise in local newspapers or send out information to letterboxes in your area;
 - local media are likely to cover information about the election.
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Q43: Do I have to post my voting document back?

A43: You can post it but make sure you have it in the mail by Tuesday, 7 October 2025 to ensure it gets back to us in time (by 12 noon Saturday, 11 October 2025).

You can also hand deliver your voting document to a ballot box during the voting period (Tuesday, 9 September 2025 to 12 noon Saturday, 11 October 2025).

For ballot box locations refer [Q48](#).

Q44: I have lost my return envelope. What shall I do?

A44: You can use an envelope of your own and put the return address and Replypaid number on it.

You will not need to put a stamp on the envelope if you write the Replypaid number on the envelope and post it in New Zealand.

Replypaid number 471
The Electoral Office
Whakatāne District Council
PO Box 5135
Victoria Street West
Auckland 1142

Q45: I am on the Unpublished Parliamentary Roll and I want a special vote. What should I do?

A45: You will need to apply for a special vote. For special vote availability, refer [Q49](#).

Q46: I didn't receive my voting document. How do I obtain a special vote?

A46: Are you on the Parliamentary Electoral Roll for the address you want to vote for?

Yes > You will need to apply for a special vote. For special vote availability, refer [Q49](#).

OR

Are you on the Parliamentary Electoral Roll for the address you want to vote for?

No/Don't Know

> If you are not enrolled or not enrolled correctly on the Parliamentary Electoral Roll, you will need to complete an enrolment form for this. You can enrol or update your details online at [vote.nz](#) using your New Zealand driver licence, New Zealand passport or RealMe verified identity.

Alternatively, you can download an enrolment update form and return it by uploading it to the enrolment team at [vote.nz/upload](#), or request one to be mailed to you with a return envelope.

For any queries regarding enrolling on the residential roll, email: enquiries@elections.govt.nz.

This form needs to be with the Electoral Commission before close of business Friday, 10 October 2025.

You will need to apply for a special vote. For special vote availability, refer [Q49](#).

Q47: I spoiled my voting documents/I have made a mistake on my documents. What can I do?

A47: If you can amend it so that your voting intention is clear, then do so.

If necessary, we can issue you with a special vote (for special vote availability, refer [Q49](#)), but this will take time and require you to complete a statutory declaration.

Q48: Where are ballot boxes located?

A48: You can drop your vote into a ballot box at:

- Whakatāne District Council, Commerce Street, Whakatāne
- Murupara Library & Service Centre, Civic Square, 48 Pine Drive, Murupara
- Edgecumbe Library, 38 College Road, Edgecumbe
- Ōhope Library, 4 Harbour Road, Ōhope
- Whakatāne Library and Exhibition Centre (Te Kōputu a te whanga a Toi), 49 Kākahoroa Drive, Whakatāne

For special votes, refer [Q49](#).

Q49: Where can I have a special vote?

A49: Special votes can be obtained from:

- Whakatāne District Council, 14 Commerce Street, Whakatāne
- Murupara Library & Service Centre, Civic Square, 48 Pine Drive, Murupara
- the electoral office by phoning 0800 922 822.

All special votes need to be completed and returned to the electoral officer or an electoral official (at any of the above locations) by 12-noon Saturday, 11 October 2025. If posting, send by Tuesday, 7 October 2025 to ensure it gets back to the Electoral Office in time.

Q50: I am going away and will not be here when the voting documents are posted out. What should I do?

A50: You will need to apply for a special vote.

For special vote availability, see [Q49](#).

Q51: Do I have to vote in all elections for the maximum number of candidates permitted? Will my votes be counted if I don't vote for the maximum number of candidates permitted in all the elections on my voting document?

A51: You can vote for as many candidates as you want to but not more than the number of positions available on the voting document. So, if you are electing one ward councillor then you can vote for one candidate. For FPP you tick the candidate you want to elect.

You can decide not to vote for one or more of the different elections on your voting document. This does not invalidate votes for other elections on your voting document.

For more information about FPP refer [Q58](#).

Q52: Why can't I vote for a certain candidate who is standing for a different ward or other election?

A52: You can only vote for the elections relevant to the area in which you live or the electoral roll you are on.

You cannot vote for a candidate who is standing for example in another ward, because you are not an elector in that other ward.

Similarly, you cannot vote for a candidate who is standing in a general ward if you are on the Maori Electoral Roll and voting for the Maori ward.

Q53: Why are my partner's document and mine different? There are more/less things to vote for, or the list of candidates is different.

A53: Depending on which electoral roll you are on (Maori or general), your voting entitlements may differ from others in your household.

In addition, the candidates' names, for both the Whakatane District Council and the Bay of Plenty Regional Council elections, are listed randomly.

For any other differences you will need to call the electoral office on 0800 922 822.

Q54: I have received two voting documents. What shall I do?

A54: You will need to call the electoral office on 0800 922 822.

Q55: Do the staff working on the election know who I voted for?

A55: No, your vote remains secret under the required separate roll scrutiny and vote counting procedures.

Q56: Can I help someone fill out their voting document?

A56: Under the **Local Electoral Act 2001**, you cannot interfere with or influence any person as to how they should vote.

An elector who is physically impaired, visually impaired or for whom English is a second language, can direct a person to assist them to vote. The person assisting must only act as directed by the elector.

Telephone voting will be available for electors with disabilities. To access this service, electors will need to call the electoral office on 0800 922 822.

Q57: What happens to all the voting documents after the elections?

A57: They are delivered to the Whakatane District Court and kept for 21 days after public notice is given declaring the result of the election, so that the Court can access them should there be any application for a recount or petition for inquiry.

After this time, or the completion of any recount or enquiry, the Court is responsible for destroying them.

Q58: What is FPP and how do I vote in an FPP election?

A58: FPP stands for first past the post voting system and is used for the Whakatane District Council, and the Bay of Plenty Regional Council elections.

The candidate or candidates that get the most votes win.

You should mark those you want to vote for with a tick in the circle. Do not vote for more than the number of candidates shown in the instructions on your voting document.

Q59: What is STV and how do I vote in an STV election?

A59: The STV electoral system is not currently used for either the Whakatane District Council nor the Bay of Plenty Regional Council.

STV stands for single transferable voting and is a preferential system of voting where you can rank as few or as many candidates as you like.

For more information about STV, go to stv.govt.nz.

Election results

Ngā hua pōtitanga

Q60: When will we know the results of the election?

A60: Progress results will be announced on the afternoon of election day, Saturday, 11 October 2025.

Preliminary results will be announced on Sunday, 12 October 2025, once all votes received at the council offices (up until 12 noon on election day) have been delivered to the electoral office in Auckland and processed.

The official results will be announced when special votes have been checked and included in the final result, expected to be Friday, 17 October 2025.

Q61: How will I find out the results?

A61: Candidates:
Progress and preliminary results will be advised once the results are known, on Saturday, 11 and Sunday, 12 October respectively. This may be by email or by phone.

Voters:
Progress and preliminary results will be released to the media and placed on the council's website whakatane.govt.nz once they are known, on Saturday, 11 and Sunday, 12 October respectively.

Q62: What do I need to do if I want to challenge the results of the election?

A62: Under legislation a candidate may challenge the official results through either a judicial recount or a judicial inquiry. A candidate will have to file an application in the District Court and pay an application fee of \$750.

A candidate may wish to call the electoral office on 0800 922 822 to discuss this.

Members

Ngā Mema

Q63: When do elected members take up their roles?

A63: Elected members take up office the day after the official results have been declared by public notice. However, members cannot act until they have sworn the oath of office which is usually at the first meeting of the council.

This first meeting is usually held as soon as practicable after the official results are published.

Q64: Who are elected members responsible to?

A64: Ultimately the elected members are responsible to the local community. The Minister of Local Government and the Auditor-General do have a role in ensuring that Council follows the law.

Q65: Do elected members get paid and, if so, how much?

A65: The Remuneration Authority sets a Remuneration pool. The newly elected council will decide how to apply the pool of funding. Some expenses are also reimbursed.

As an indication, the remuneration as of 24 July 2024 was:

Office	Annual Remuneration
Mayor	\$148,267
Deputy Mayor	\$74,615
Committee Chair	\$57,346
Deputy Committee Chair	\$47,832
Councillor (with no additional responsibilities)	\$45,628
Councillor (minimum allowable remuneration)	\$38,965

Community Board	Annual Remuneration
Murupara Chairperson	\$8,866
Murupara member	\$4,433
Rangitaiki Chairperson	\$11,500
Rangitāiki member	\$5,750
Tāneatua Chairperson	\$8,866
Tāneatua member	\$4,433
Whakatāne-Ōhope Chairperson	\$19,226
Whakatane-Ōhope member	\$9,613

*Local Government Members (2024/25)
Determination 2024, Schedule of Remuneration-part 2*

For further information on remuneration refer to: remauthority.govt.nz

Q66: Would being an elected member take up much time?

A66: Being an elected member is a busy job that often involves meetings, events and speaking with community members outside of normal business hours. Flexibility and the ability to prioritise and manage time effectively are essential. This includes balancing a high volume of reading, paperwork and emails with a schedule of meetings and public commitments.

As a consequence, the mayor is considered a full-time job and councillors are generally part-time jobs.

Q67: How many elected members are there?

A67: The Whakatāne District Council will be made up of:

- mayor (elected 'at large')
- 10 councillors (from 6 wards)
- 24 members (from 4 community boards)

Refer [Q5](#) for more information.

Election signs *Ngā Tohu Pōtitanga*

Q68: What are the requirements for election signs?

A68: Rules relating to local election signs are found in legislation, bylaws and policies.

Local Electoral Act 2001:

All election material, including signs and hoardings, must show an authorisation statement (name and contact details of the candidate or the candidate's agent). Not to do so is an electoral offence.

Refer to the [Local Electoral Act 2001, section 113](#).

State Highway corridors:

Candidates must obtain permission from the New Zealand Transport Agency Waka Kotahi (NZTA) if they wish to erect election signs on a state highway road reserve or visible from a state highway. See NZTA's [election signage requirements](#).

Local Authority:

Whakatāne District Council is responsible for regulating when, where and how signs can be displayed in the district.

A summary of Council's electoral signage rules are listed overpage.

Use non-metallic stakes only to erect signs, please ensure you are aware of any services that may be underground before you dig.

For further information relating to council's election sign policy refer to [Whakatāne District Council Local Election Signage Rules](#).

Q69: I have a complaint about the electoral signage. What should I do?

A69: If the signs don't have the required authorisation on them, call the electoral office on 0800 922 822.

If the signs are located where they should not be, or have been pulled over or damaged, call the Council on 07 306 0500.

WHAKATĀNE DISTRICT COUNCIL LOCAL ELECTION SIGNAGE RULES

Time

Election signs may be displayed for up to eight weeks before the day of the local election.

Signs must be removed within three days of the election.

Size and design

The maximum permitted face surface area of any sign is 3m².

Signs must be competently constructed and comply with the NZ Building Code where necessary.

Signs must not be rotating, flashing, reflective or illuminated.

Placement

Signs advertising a candidate standing for election can only be displayed on private property and must have landowner permission.

Signs are not permitted on council roads, council reserves or any other council property.

Signs located next to a State Highway must have a minimum lettering height of 120mm where the speed limit is less than 70km/h; and 160mm where the speed limit is 70km/h or greater, and must have permission from NZTA.

Signs must not be placed within 15m of a traffic safety or directional sign.

Signs must not obstruct driver visibility along the road, at intersections or driveways, or at a railway level crossing.

Removal of signs

Signs must be well maintained. Council will remove poorly maintained signs or signs which may present a danger to road users or the general public. Council staff will remove signs from Council roads and property. NZTA staff will remove signs from State Highways.