



# Tai Tokerau Māori in Local Government Symposium

## Becoming involved in the electoral process





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Dale Ofsoske, electoral officer



# Background

- Local elections to be held Saturday 12 October 2019
- By postal voting (no online voting option yet)
- Just over 120,000 eligible electors in Tai Tokerau
- Some changes following 2018 representation reviews
- 2016 national average voting only 43% (42% 2013)
- Conducted under legislation (LEA, LER) – lots of do's and don'ts



# Elections required

## What can you stand for?

- Far North District Council (29 positions)
- Whangarei District Council (14 positions)
- Kaipara District Council (9 positions)
- Northland Regional Council (9 positions)
- Northland District Health Board (7 positions)
- Cannot stand for a district council and the regional council
- Can stand for a district or regional council and the district health board



# Elections required

## Each district council elects

- mayor (elected district-wide)
- councillors (from wards)
- community board members (FNDC only - from communities/subdivisions)

## Northland Regional Council

- 9 councillors from 6 constituencies

## Northland District Health Board

- 7 members region-wide, plus 4 appointed by Minister



## Key election dates

- 19 July nominations open
- 16 August nominations close
- 20 September delivery voting packs, voting opens
- 12 October close of voting
- 17 October declaration of results
- 22 October elected members come into office



# Candidate eligibility

- Candidates must be
  - a New Zealand citizen
  - over the age of 18
  - enrolled on any parliamentary electoral roll
- Can stand for multiple positions
  - mayor, council, community board and district health board
  - if elected to mayor, council and community board, take highest position
- Any employee elected as mayor, councillor must resign
- Not apply to community board member or DHB member



# Candidate eligibility

- Elected members (or spouses) with contracts with council
- over \$25,000 (incl GST) in one financial year
- may require approval from the Office of the Auditor-General
- Additional restrictions for NDHB candidates
- clause 17, schedule 2, NZPHDA eg undisclosed bankrupt
- can stand for only one DHB anywhere in NZ





# Nomination process

- Nominations open Friday 19 July
- Nomination papers available from
  - district or regional council offices
  - phoning 0800 922 822
  - respective organization's website
- Cannot nominate yourself
- Need to be nominated by two electors from area (e.g. ward)



# Nomination process

- Each nomination requires
  - nomination paper
  - \$200 (incl GST) deposit
  - 150 word candidate profile statement (English and Māori)
  - recent passport-size colour photo
  - evidence of citizenship
- Candidates can group together to form a 'party' or 'ticket'
- Nominations close noon, Friday 16 August



# Campaigning

- Campaigning can occur anytime (now)
- Candidate information handbooks available
- District council election sign policies applicable
- All election advertisements must show contact details of authorising person
  - signs, notices, pamphlets, webpages, vehicles etc
  - excludes posts, tweets, messages
- Be mindful of election offences



# Campaigning

- Social media great way to campaign (instant, far-reaching, free)
- promote yourself and policies (state policies, run polls, encourage people to vote, key dates, post videos etc)
- council's media channels off-limits (politically neutral)
- cyber-security – keep safe (computers can be hacked)



# Campaign expenditure

- All positions have candidate election expenditure limits
- Based on population size of area
- e.g. FNDC's Te Hiku Ward expenditure limit \$20,000
- Expenditure limits include GST
- Can't add limits together
- Electoral expenses and electoral donation return
- Care to ensure accurate (declaration)



# Electoral roll

- Two electoral rolls compiled
- Resident electoral roll
  - NZ citizen or permanent resident aged 18 or over
  - resided continuously in NZ for one year or more
  - resided at an address for one month or more
  - provided by Electoral Commission
- Ratepayer electoral roll
  - for non-resident ratepayers
  - updated every three years
  - by application, not automatic



# Voting

- Voting period 20 September to 12 October
- Voting packs delivered to electors 20 – 25 September
- Able to campaign up to and including election day
- Special votes available at district council offices
- Candidates not to collect votes from electors
- Voting closes noon, Saturday 12 October



# Results

- Progress results est 2pm election day (98% votes)
- All candidates contacted, media advised
- Preliminary results (100% votes counted) Sunday morning
- All results available on respective websites
- Final results available Thursday 17 October





# Resources

- Candidate Information Handbook
- Electoral legislation
  - Local Electoral Act 2001
  - Local Electoral Regulations 2001
  - [www.legislation.govt.nz](http://www.legislation.govt.nz)
- Attend a council meeting
- Read agendas and minutes available online
- Talk to a council staff member



## Contact us

- Electoral officer for all Tai Tokerau councils:  
Dale Ofsoske  
Independent Election Services Ltd  
Level 2, 198 Federal Street, Auckland  
phone: 0800 922 822  
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