
2016 Elections - Highlights and Issues

File No.: CP2017/03832

Purpose

1. To seek local board input into submissions to the Justice and Electoral Select Committee's "Inquiry into the 2016 local authority elections".

Executive summary

2. This report has been presented to the Governing Body which has agreed that the report will be presented to all local boards for their feedback on submissions to the Justice and Electoral Select Committee's "Inquiry into the 2016 local authority elections".
3. The issues on which submissions might be based are outlined under the heading later in the report "Submission to Justice and Electoral Select Committee on legislative change".
4. Local board comments will be reported back to the Governing Body, to decide the final form of the submission.
5. Planning for the 2016 elections commenced at the end of 2014. Staff presented a report to the Governing Body in March 2015, which set out the areas of focus for achieving outcomes in terms of voter and candidate experiences and turnout.
6. This report:
 - (i) describes initiatives taken in the areas of focus
 - (ii) evaluates the achievement of the outcomes
 - (iii) notes other activities associated with the election, such as inaugural meetings
 - (iv) summarises the budget and forecast expenditure
 - (v) identifies issues for the council to follow up
 - (vi) proposes submissions to make to Parliament's Justice and Electoral Select Committee's "Inquiry into the 2016 local authority elections"
 - (vii) outlines the timetable for the review of representation arrangements leading up to the 2019 elections.
7. The 2016 elections were successful. Particular highlights were:
 - (i) a successful marketing campaign based on the 'showyourlove' brand
 - (ii) innovative approaches to engaging with the community, including through social media, websites and the Love Bus
 - (iii) increased participation in Kids Voting
 - (iv) personal assistance provided to the visually impaired
 - (v) increased turnout over 2013
 - (vi) the elections came within budget.
8. This report is presented to local boards to provide input to a submission to the Select Committee, with the final submission presented back to the Governing Body in May 2017. The submission needs to be lodged by December 2017.

Recommendation

That the Waitematā Local Board:

- a) agree its comments to be reported back to the Governing Body for inclusion in the Auckland Council's submission to the Justice and Electoral Select Committee's "Inquiry into the 2016 local authority elections".

Comments

Strategic approach

9. A report to the Governing Body in March 2015 set out the strategic approach to the 2016 elections. It identified the following areas of focus:

- communications and community engagement
- candidate awareness
- on-line voting
- optimum use of council resources.

Those areas of focus were to deliver the following outcomes:

- an excellent experience for candidates and voters
- a voter turnout of at least 40 per cent
- a candidate-to-member ratio of three
- user-centric, innovative and transparent local body elections.

10. The following sections describe initiatives taken in these areas of focus and the achievement of the outcomes.

Actions taken in areas of focus

Communications and community engagement

11. Voter participation statistics showed that previous participation rates were low among 18 - 39 year olds and this age group was a key focus for the Election Planning Team.

12. Initiatives included:

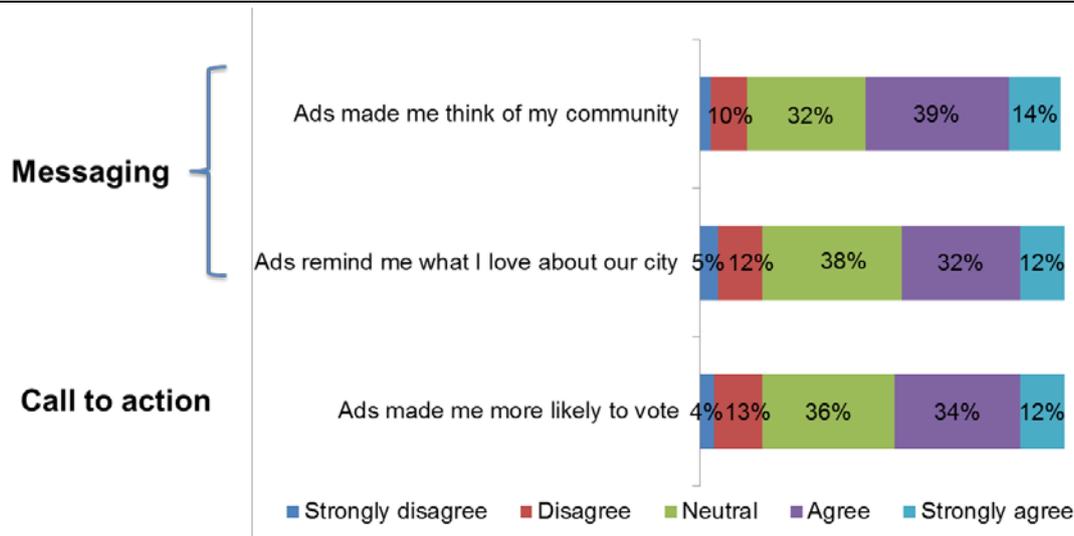
- a comprehensive marketing campaign based on the "showyourlove" brand
- advertising – billboards, adshells, bus backs, press, magazine, radio, digital, ethnic radio and newspapers
- heart ballot boxes
- digital bus shelter voting tallies
- targeted social media: videos and articles via VoteAkl social media sites, Facebook, Instagram, Twitter, YouTube
- "Our Auckland" council's news channel
- Auckland Council channels for posters, such as libraries and service centres
- the Love Bus and community presentations
- showyourlove.co.nz web pages for information about candidates
- Kids Voting programme in schools.

13. The Election Team tested the "showyourlove" brand with audiences. Feedback, particularly from young people, has been very positive. Wellington City Council also developed its own brand, using our 'love' concept. Auckland Council and Wellington City Council experienced greater increases over 2013 turnouts than other metropolitan councils.

14. The Love Bus provided a visual reminder of the elections. It stopped at various locations where people gathered, such as at malls, and staff engaged with passers-by.

15. An engagement programme included making presentations to community groups:

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- 80 events including: 22 Love Bus events, 11 English for Speakers of Other Languages (ESOL) events, 22 community presentations (total attendance at these presentations was approximately 800), three meetings or informal chats, five information stalls
 - 10 of these events were run in conjunction with the Electoral Commission
 - sessions were facilitated by the deaf community, Disability Network NZ, Tongan and Samoan churches and Korean Youth Leadership Institute independent of council support
 - 24 engagement sessions included an interpreter for at least one language; interpreters for eight different languages, including New Zealand sign language, were used
 - groups reached included faith communities (Jewish, Muslim), Rainbow communities, Youth, Korean, Chinese, African, Indian, Tongan, Samoan, Sri Lankan, Somalian, Ethiopian, Rwandan, Filipino, West Indian, Burmese, Cambodian and Japanese
 - all advisory panels contributed to the elections programme
 - engagement activities and events were run in 15 of the 21 local board areas
 - approximately 24,000 Aucklanders were reached by engagement activities.
16. The showyourlove.co.nz website provided information about candidates for voters. People often state, when asked in surveys, the reason they do not vote is they lack information about candidates. This website was planned very carefully to ensure that council did not provide any candidate with an electoral advantage. All candidates were given the same opportunity to provide information in addition to the information in their candidate profile statements.
17. A survey conducted after the 2016 elections gauged the effectiveness of these initiatives. The sample size was 1,259 people.
18. Awareness and likelihood of voting:
- awareness of the elections rose from 83 per cent before the campaign to 93 per cent following the campaign
 - before the election, 75 per cent intended to vote but after the election only 63 per cent (of the survey sample) actually voted
 - of the 35 per cent who did not vote, 56 per cent intended to vote but did not
 - reasons given for not voting by the 35 per cent who did not vote include:
 - don't know anything about the candidates (25 per cent)
 - don't know enough about the policies (22 per cent)
 - did not know when voting finished, missed deadline (18 per cent)
 - forgot to vote (18 per cent)
 - can't work out who to vote for (16 per cent)
 - not interested in politics or politicians (14 per cent)
 - didn't think vote would make a difference (11 per cent)
 - couldn't be bothered voting (11 per cent)
 - too much effort to select the candidate (10 per cent)
 - had other commitments during that time (10 per cent).
19. Effectiveness of messaging:
- 53 per cent said the ads made them think of their community
 - 44 per cent said the ads reminded them of what they love about their city
 - 46 per cent said the ads made them more likely to vote.



20. 21 per cent used the web and social media for information about the elections – mostly the Auckland Council website.
21. Of those who intended to vote but did not vote, 25 per cent said on-line or app based voting would encourage them to vote.
22. 74 per cent said they would prefer on-line voting over postal voting with 18 per cent preferring postal voting; those who preferred on-line voting were spread amongst all age groups but were mainly in the younger age groups.
23. The Kids Voting programme was an on-line voting experience for students. Students cannot legally take part in the actual election, but Kids Voting creates awareness of the elections which often flows from the participating students to their families. The Election Team prepared teaching kits class teachers could use to explain how council works. There was a hypothetical referendum question that students voted on using the STV voting system. 11,730 students and 56 schools registered to take part, compared with 8,319 students and 44 schools in 2013. 4,748 students from 41 schools actually voted. The lessons provided to the schools by the Election Team were:
 - an introduction to Auckland Council
 - an introduction to elections and voting
 - a real world on-line referendum case study
 - Local boards, wards and local issues
 - researching candidates.

Candidate awareness of election information

24. The council's website provided information for candidates. This included:
 - candidate information handbook
 - candidate audio booklet
 - FAQs
 - research material
 - how to be nominated
 - election timetable
 - video explaining Auckland Council
 - posters on all Auckland Council channels
 - ads in newspapers
 - radio
 - digital ads.

25. The Election Team focused on on-line content over hard copy booklets. It did not hold candidate information evenings following the experience in 2013 of twenty-eight information evenings gathering only small attendance.
26. Wellington City Council publicised community-based candidate meetings on its website which people apparently found useful. The council could consider this for 2019.

On-line voting

27. Prior to the elections, the Associate Minister of Local Government announced that trials for on-line voting would not take place for the 2016 elections.
28. The community expects to have an on-line option, provided concerns about the security of on-line voting are addressed. In the post-election awareness survey, 74 per cent said they would prefer on-line voting over postal voting.
29. The Finance and Performance Committee resolved in December 2016 to request the Minister of Local Government to explore a pilot trial of an electronic voting system including for by-elections.

Optimum use of council resources

30. Key areas of the council involved in the elections were:
 - Democracy Services and Communications and Engagement
 - libraries and service centres held election information, received nominations and issued special votes
 - communications staff undertook advertising, branding, web content, social media with assistance from the design studio
 - bylaws compliance staff enforced the Auckland Transport Elections Signs Bylaw
 - Legal Services provided legal advice when required
 - Research and Evaluation (RIMU) staff provided advice on demographic data and undertook research for the report on the order of names.
31. Elections planning staff worked closely with the Electoral Commission, Local Government New Zealand (LGNZ) and the Society of Local Government Managers (SOLGM).
32. Council's election services provider (Independent Election Services Ltd) was based in the central business area, in Anzac Avenue, and was the main central city office. Staff later provided limited services at the Bledisloe service centre in response to demand.

Achievement of outcomes

33. The desired outcomes were:
 - an excellent experience for candidates and voters
 - a voter turnout of at least 40 per cent
 - a candidate-to-member ratio of three
 - user-centric, innovative and transparent local body elections.

Candidate experience

34. For the first time, the council conducted an on-line survey of candidates. 150 candidates took part. This feedback shows a positive candidate experience.
35. Key findings were:
 - 76 per cent said it was easy, or very easy, to find information
 - 88 per cent said that overall they could access the information they needed
 - 87 per cent said they used resources on the Auckland Council website
 - 83 per cent were aware of the "Love your Auckland – stand for council" campaign
 - 80 per cent contributed to their information on the showyourlove.co.nz website

- 50 per cent said this was their first time standing for elected office with Auckland Council and 50 per cent said it was not their first time.

36. The Election Team has noted some candidate issues for following up or improvement:

- (i) a couple of candidates were nominated for positions for which they did not intend to stand. In one case a number of candidates on the one ticket arrived at a service centre together, creating increased demand on staff at the last minute. In the future, the Election Team will co-ordinate with ticket campaign managers to help manage the processing of nominations and will provide additional briefings to staff helping at service centres. Legislative change to allow electronic submission of nominations to improve these processes will be sought.
- (ii) there was a question whether a Samoan matai title could be used on the nomination form. The legislation prohibits “titles” but does not define “title”. The Electoral Officer, after receiving legal and cultural advice, allowed matai “titles” on the basis they were used more like names than titles. It would be helpful to have legislative guidance on this.
- (iii) some candidates expressed concern about the requirement to state in the profile statement whether they lived in the area for which they were standing. The council previously submitted in opposition to this requirement.

Voter experience

37. The awareness survey showed that voters used on-line tools to find out about voting and about candidates.

38. Issues which negatively affected the experience of voters (some outside the control of council):

- (i) a small number of voters in one area did not receive voting documents. The Electoral Officer received about 90 applications for special votes from voters in that area.
- (ii) voters outside the area during the voting period either could not vote or had to apply for a special vote. An example was a voter who was overseas and who had arranged for a special vote to be posted to them but who could not meet the deadline for posting it back from overseas. An ability to supply the voting documents electronically would assist
- (iii) an issue which continues to affect the voter experience is the mixture of different voting systems on the one voting document and different orders of candidate names.

39. Ten staff volunteered to assist blind people with their voting. This was arranged in partnership with the Blind Foundation and the volunteers were trained and made declarations as electoral officials. The volunteers visited voters at their residences and help them mark their voting documents. The Auckland Branch of Blind Citizens NZ wrote an appreciative letter to the mayor and chief executive.

Voter turnout

40. The council aimed for a 40 per cent turnout. The turnout was 38.5 per cent, an increase of 3.7 per cent over the 2013 turnout.

41. Across all of New Zealand, there was a slight increase over 2013:

	2010	2013	2016	Change %
National voter turnout %	49.0	41.3	42.0	+0.7

42. Across metropolitan councils, Auckland and Wellington achieved the two highest increases:

Voter turnout % - Metro	2010	2013	2016	Change %
Auckland	51.0	34.9	38.5	+3.7
Christchurch City	52.2	42.9	38.3	-4.6
Dunedin City	53.0	43.1	45.2	+2.1
Hamilton City	37.8	38.3	33.6	-4.7
Hutt City Council	40.4	36.6	37.8	+1.2
Nelson City	52.2	52.2	52.1	-0.1
Palmerston North City	43.2	38.7	39.1	0.4
Porirua City	39.1	36.6	38.0	+1.5
Tauranga City	43.8	37.8	38.0	+0.2
Upper Hutt City	44.3	40.8	41.0	+0.2
Wellington City	40.0	41.5	45.6	+4.1
Total	45.0	38.0	39.3	+1.3

Candidate to member ratio

43. The target was three candidates per position.
44. There were 19 candidates for mayor. In 10 out of 13 electoral ward issues for councillors, the ratio of candidates to positions was 3 to 1, or greater.
45. There were 32 local board electoral issues (there are 21 local boards but elections in some local board areas are on a subdivision basis). In 9, the ratio of candidates to positions was 3 to 1 or greater. For a local board that is not divided into subdivisions, it is harder to achieve the ratio because the number of positions is greater.
46. Overall, there were 468 candidates for 170 positions, which is a ratio of 2.8 to 1.

User-centric, innovative and transparent local body elections

47. The key 'users' in an election are the candidates and the voters. Feedback shows:
- candidates got the information they needed
 - compared to previous elections voters could find out more about candidates, through the "showyourlove" website
48. Assistance was provided to voters who were blind. Blind Citizens NZ communicated its appreciation back to the council.
49. The report details above a number of innovative activities such as the Love Bus and Heart Ballot Boxes.
50. Aspirations to have on-line voting were not met. There is a need to provide a user-friendly option for voters who do not use postal services. Voters who are not in the area during the voting period also have issues. If a voter is overseas, by the time voting documents have been posted to them (if they have a reliable postal address) there is not sufficient time to post them back. The ability to download blank forms, and to scan and email completed forms, should be investigated.
51. For candidates, there is only the one option of paper-based nomination forms. Submitting nominations electronically needs to be investigated.
52. The communications and community awareness programmes were innovative and received positive feedback, as noted above under "Communications and Community Engagement".

53. Ensuring candidates and voters had sufficient information assisted the transparency of the elections.

Other activities relating to the elections

54. The Executive Leadership Team adopted a staff policy around political neutrality and involvement in the election process outside of work hours. The Governing Body adopted an elected members' policy dealing with issues such as the use of council resources by incumbent members. The policy required close management of council communications during the sensitive period and a panel met weekly to monitor this.
55. Council staff enforced the Auckland Transport Election Sign Bylaw and dealt with 162 complaints. Earlier in the year there was media coverage about the use of commercial billboards. This will be addressed in a review of the Auckland Transport bylaw.
56. Following each election there are a number of activities arranged for elected members:
- (i) induction sessions for members
 - (ii) refreshing the technology provided to members
 - (iii) powhiri for all members
 - (iv) inaugural meetings of the governing body and the local boards at which members make their statutory declarations.

Cost of the election

57. Summary of budget and expenditure:

Budget	Planned	Actual (at 31/01/17)	Forecast	Comments
Election Services - IES	\$4,893,000	\$4,515,500	\$4,653,490	Amount payable to IES as per contract plus a 10 per cent buffer for variable costs to be determined at wash-up in Feb '17, Whilst costs are currently forecast to arrive over contract amount, these are expected to be within budget (including buffer).
Communications & Engagement (internal charge)	\$1,221,000	\$1,160,960	\$1,221,498	Expected to meet budget once final costs are confirmed.
Staff	\$620,000	\$659,637	\$669,637	Slight over-spend in staff due to increased programme scope and staff turnover.
Kids Voting	\$50,000	\$49,424	\$49,424	Steering Group approved exceeding budget for increased number of participating schools and students. This includes \$30,000 for IES for on-line voting capability.
Community Engagement	\$40,000	\$27,441	\$27,441	Initial Elections budget had no allocation for Community Engagement hence in 2016 \$40k was reallocated from other items. Under-spend here due to final budget being confirmed after a lower cost engagement schedule was already planned. \$10k for translations and accessibility was covered by C&E budget.
Governing Body Inaugural Meeting	\$57,000	\$49,661	\$52,697	Initial budget had allocated \$81,000 for post-election costs of which specifics were not known to Elections team. This was reduced to cover Inaugural Meeting only and then further to fund Community Engagement. In 2013, Inaugural Meeting cost was \$57,000.
Local board inaugural meetings	\$129,300	\$97,921	\$129,300	The budgets for travel and equipment hireage were not fully utilised.

Budget	Planned	Actual (at 31/01/17)	Forecast	Comments
Research	\$20,000	\$6,404	\$8,700	This amount was reduced from \$30,000 to fund Community Engagement.
Pre-election IES, DDB & Buzz	\$0	\$48,980	\$48,980	Unplanned costs for development of elections strategy were funded by Democracy Services in 2015.
Miscellaneous	\$0	\$9,244	\$9,244	Includes judicial recount, costs associated with services at libraries and service centres, other programme-wide costs and office expenses.
Recoveries - DHBs & LTs	-\$1,500,000	-\$622,500	-\$1,517,964	Full recoverable amount will be determined at wash-up in February 2017. Current estimates expect to meet planned amount.
Total	\$5,530,300	\$6,002,672	\$5,352,447	Overall budget under-spend expected once wash-up is confirmed in February 2017.

58. The costs of the Howick by-election (\$104,000) will be absorbed in the budget if possible.

Issues to progress further

Howick by-election

59. A member of the Howick Local Board resigned at the inaugural meeting of the board. The council held a by-election at a cost of \$104,000, which the Finance and Performance Committee has approved as unbudgeted expenditure. The committee considered the council should have the option of appointing to a vacancy that occurs within six months of an election and that the council should have the option of conducting a by-election on-line. The committee resolved:

“That the Finance and Performance Committee:

...

- c) agree that the Mayor will write to the Minister of Local Government requesting, among other amendments to the Local Electoral Act 2001 necessary to improve the conduct of local elections, an amendment to section 117 to allow a local authority using the first past the post electoral system to determine by resolution whether to fill an extraordinary vacancy which occurs up to six months after the previous triennial local government election either by appointing the highest polling unsuccessful candidate from the previous triennial local government election, or by holding a by-election.*
- d) request the Minister of Local Government to explore a pilot-trial of an electronic voting system including by-elections.”*

(Resolution number FIN/2016/1)

60. Both of these issues are discussed further in this report.

On-line voting

61. Survey results show the community prefers on-line voting. The government previously established a working party which made recommendations for a staged approach with trials in 2016. The government supported this and set out the requirements to be met for a council to establish a trial. Auckland Council was considered to be too large for a trial and was not eligible. In April 2016 the Associate Minister of Local Government announced the trial would not proceed as requirements had not been met.

62. The government wants local government to lead on-line voting, subject to its requirements being met. LGNZ should co-ordinate the local government sector’s development of on-line

voting and Mayor Goff and Councillor Hulse will be pursuing this with the Local Government New Zealand National Council.

Voter participation

63. In order to prepare for the 2019 elections a voter participation project has been established. The main aims of the project are to reduce barriers to participation, encourage diversity and increase awareness and understanding of council and local elections.
64. The planning team for the 2016 elections has now completed its task and has been disbanded, however a position of Senior Advisor, Voter Participation, has been established within Democracy Services to provide continuity between the work that was carried out for the 2016 elections and the engagement that needs to occur for the 2019 elections.

Research on order of names

65. An analysis of the 2010 and 2013 election results was undertaken so that the council could decide whether the order of names on voting documents should be alphabetical or random. Further research will be undertaken and provided to the council when it next makes a decision on the order of names.

Review of Auckland Transport Election Signs Bylaw

66. Auckland Transport has undertaken to review the bylaw. The review will take place in time for implementation for the 2017 parliamentary election.

Submission to Justice and Electoral Select Committee on legislative change

67. The Justice and Electoral Select Committee conduct an enquiry following each election. Submissions on the inquiry into the 2016 elections will close in December 2017.
68. This report seeks input from local boards for the submission, particularly on the following issues. A proposed submission will be reported to the governing body later in 2017.
 - (i) Matai names

The Local Electoral Act 2001 prohibits the use of official titles when listing candidate names on the voting document. Names that can be used include a registered name or a name by which the candidate has been commonly known for the six months prior to an election. Although sometimes referred to as 'matai titles', legal advice provided to staff is that these are more in the nature of names than of a title denoting the holding of some sort of office. To avoid doubt, the legislation should give guidance.
 - (ii) Vacancies occurring within six months of an election

Since the 2016 elections were held, three vacancies have occurred – Auckland (resignation of local board member), Bay of Plenty Regional Council (death) and Waikato Regional Council (death). When considering the budget for the Howick by-election, the governing body resolved to seek a law change allowing a local authority using the first past the post electoral system to appoint the highest polling unsuccessful candidate to a vacancy occurring within six months of an election.
 - (iii) Legal requirement for candidate to state whether residing in area

Some candidates complained about this requirement. The council has previously submitted in opposition to it and may consider doing so again. Following the 2013 elections, the select committee recommended that the requirement be removed and noted that candidates for parliamentary elections did not have to make a similar statement. However, it has not yet been removed.
 - (iv) Timing of school holidays

The school holidays overlap with the postal voting period. Many people go out of the area during school holidays and do not vote. Currently local government elections are on the second Saturday in October. Moving election day to the first Saturday in October would provide one week before election day that would not overlap with school holidays. This still gives time to adopt the annual report and it provides an additional week between the elections and the end of the year for the new council to attend to business, such as a draft annual plan.

- (v) Electronic transmission of voting documents to and from voters overseas

Voters who are overseas during the postal voting period often do not have enough time to post back voting documents prior to election day, after receiving their voting documents in the post. The select committee has previously recommended electronic transmission. The government has supported sending blank voting documents electronically but has opposed the return of completed votes electronically. On-line voting would also solve this issue.

- (vi) Electoral Officer to have access to the supplementary roll

The processing of special votes relies on the Electoral Commission checking that voters are on the electoral roll. If the EO had access to the supplementary roll, the EO could do this, with the potential to speed up the counting of special votes. This has previously been supported by the select committee and the government.

- (vii) Access to data associated with electoral roll

It is a concern that local government election turnouts are low. Having access to statistical data associated with the electoral roll, such as age groups of electors, would be helpful when planning election awareness campaigns. Currently the Electoral Act only allows this information to be supplied for research into scientific or health matters.

- (viii) Electronic nominations and candidate profile statements.

The option to submit nominations electronically would benefit the candidate experience and it would lead to more accurate representation of candidate profile statements. Currently there are over 600 profile statements to be typed, from copy supplied by candidates, and then proof-read. Occasionally this leads to mistakes.

- (ix) Legislative confirmation that local authorities may promote elections

Legislation should give a clear mandate to local authorities to promote elections. This is to avoid any uncertainty about public funds being used for election promotion purposes.

- (x) Time period for printing electoral rolls

Electoral rolls were not printed in time for the start of candidate nominations because the legislated time period is too short. Extend time period for printing. This corrects a previous change to timeframes which shortened the time for printing the rolls.

- (xi) Electronic access to electoral rolls for election staff

When processing candidate nominations, staff at service centres need to check whether nominators are on the electoral roll for the specified area. They may only have one hard-copy version to share between staff processing nominations for different candidates. It would be more efficient to access the current roll electronically.

- (xii) Close of voting time

Extend voting later into the last day and create one full 'voting day'. The Electoral Officer received 18,000 votes on the Saturday morning via our ballot boxes. Extra time on the final Saturday would give voters more time to vote and could help turn the final Saturday into a voting day celebration.

- (xiii) Discourage inappropriate use of elections

There were 19 candidates for mayor. Clearly some of these had no chance of being elected but presumably used the opportunity to promote their cause. Consideration could be given as whether this is an issue that needs to be addressed.

(xiv) Separation of DHB elections.

A variety of election issues on the one voting document together with different voting systems and ordering of names confuses voters. It would be better to hold DHB elections on a separate time, for example a separate year, or with the parliamentary elections. However, this would increase the cost of an election to Auckland Council, which currently receives \$1.5 million in recoveries from DHBs and Licensing Trusts.

(xv) Candidate information in different languages

Candidate profile statements are limited to 150 words. If a candidate profile statement is provided in English and Māori, then each version may have 150 words as Māori is an official language. If a candidate profile statement includes English and a language other than Māori it is limited to 150 words in total. Consideration could be given to other options for candidates to provide information in languages relevant to their constituents.

(xvi) Consistency between Electoral Regulations and Local Electoral Regulations

The Electoral Regulations include provisions that would be helpful to local elections such as:

- Telephone dictation for voters with disabilities
- Receipt of special votes electronically.

(xvii) Relationship with Electoral Commission

Some voters, confused about who was responsible for running the council elections, contacted the Electoral Commission. The Electoral Commission typically referred callers to the council and enquirers ended up calling the council call centre only to be referred on to Independent Election Services. There should be consideration to jointly promoting awareness about who enquirers should contact with queries about local elections. This does not require a legislative change but could be implemented through Local Government New Zealand.

Timetable for 2019 elections

Electoral system

69. If the council wishes to change the electoral system from First Past the Post to Single Transferable Vote, a resolution is required by 12 September 2017. Such a resolution might then be subject to a petition for a poll. Alternatively the council could conduct a poll.

Māori wards

70. If the council wishes to establish Māori wards, a resolution is required by 23 November 2017. Such a resolution might then be subject to a petition for a poll. Alternatively the council could conduct a poll.

Review of representation arrangements

71. The council is required to review:
- whether the election of councillors is on a ward basis or at large and, for each local board, whether election of board members is on a subdivision basis or at large
 - the number of members in each local board within a minimum of five and a maximum of twelve
 - if there are wards or subdivisions, what the boundaries are and how many members there are in each

- the names of wards, subdivisions and local boards.

72. Unlike other councils, the council cannot review the number of members of the Governing Body because the legislation sets this at 20 members.

73. The statutory timetable for the review is:

Due dates	Requirement
No earlier than 1 March 2018	A council resolution setting out the council's initial proposal
Within 14 days of resolution but no later than 8 September 2018	Public notice of the resolution, providing at least one month for submissions
Within 6 weeks of close of submissions	The initial proposal may be amended after considering submissions. Public notice of the final proposal
20 December 2018	Appeals from those who submitted on the initial proposal and fresh objections to any amendments are received
15 January 2019	Appeals and objections are forwarded to the Local Government Commission
11 April 2019	Appeals and objections are determined by the Local Government Commission, which may conduct hearings in order to do this

74. The review will be conducted as one component of the wider governance framework review reported to the Governing Body last December. The Governing Body established a political working party comprising 7 governing body members and 7 local board members.

Consideration

Local board views and implications

75. The report is being presented to all local boards for their views, before being presented back to the Governing Body to finalise a submission to the select committee.

Māori impact statement

76. Initiatives that encourage the community to engage with elections will have a positive impact on Māori. There are activities associated with elections that are particularly significant to mana whenua, such as the pōwhiri to welcome all elected members following the elections.

77. The survey of candidates asked candidates to identify their ethnicities. Ten per cent of candidates were Māori, compared to 9 per cent of the total Auckland population. As a result of the election, 7 per cent of elected members are Māori (115 of 170 elected members replied to the survey).

78. There will be an opportunity to consider the establishment of Māori wards for the 2019 elections.

Implementation

79. This report will be presented to local boards for their comments, to be included in a report back to the Governing Body so that the Governing Body can finalise its submission to the select committee.

Attachments

There are no attachments for this report.

Signatories

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