

STAFF REPORT

TO: Mayor and Councillors
FROM: Electoral Officer
REFERENCE: E307
DATE: 13 October 2010
SUBJECT: 2010 Triennial Elections – Report RCN10-10-01

The 2010 Triennial Elections were conducted under the Local Electoral Act 2001 and the Local Electoral Regulations 2001.

The following details are now provided for Councillors' information.

ELECTORAL ROLL

Residential Electoral Roll

The residential electoral roll received from the Electoral Roll Centre consisted of 33,589 residential electors (ie people who are registered as parliamentary electors and reside in the Tasman District). The corresponding figures for previous elections were: 1995 = 25,739, 1998 = 27,543, 2001 = 28,787, 2004 = 30,947 and 2007 = 32,038.

Ratepayer Electoral Rolls

The ratepayer electoral roll consists of people who reside outside the District who have enrolled or been nominated as an elector in respect of a property within the District. There were 184 on the ratepayer roll compared with 227 in 2007.

VOTING PAPERS

The number of voting papers issued to residential and ratepayer electors and the returns for each election was as follows:

Election	Papers Issued		Papers Returned		% Returned	
	2007	2010	2007	2010	2007	2010
Mayor	32,265	33,755	17,232	16,930	53.41%	50.15%
Golden Bay Ward	3,602	3,737	2,236	2,346	62.08%	62.78%
Lakes/Murchison Ward	2,300	2,433	1,016	1,088	44.17%	44.72%
Motueka Ward	7,589	7,898	4,128	3,928	54.39%	49.73%
Moutere/Waimea Ward	8,139	8,695	4,173	3,942	51.27%	45.34%
Richmond Ward	10,635	11,010	5,679	5,590	53.40%	50.77%

The voter turnout for the last five elections is shown below

1998	64.0%
2001	58.9%
2004	51.26%
2007	53.41%
2010	50.15%

PRINTING

All voting papers, envelopes and profile statements were produced by Datam (a Datamail company in Christchurch) and as part of this process all voting papers were sorted by computer into postal order. At the last minute some of the printing did transfer to Wellington as a result of the Canterbury earthquake.

PROGRESSIVE PROCESSING

The counting of voting papers was contracted out to Electionz.com, a Christchurch company, who were also doing similar work for 34 other local authorities.

All issues were counted twice during the three weeks up to election day which meant that on election day we only had to process the papers hand delivered up to 12 noon. This included the clearing of boxes at all Council's offices and then transporting them

to Christchurch as soon as possible after 12.00 noon. This worked very successfully with the progressive results being emailed to all candidates and the media soon after 2.30 pm and the preliminary count being completed soon after 6.00 pm.

The final result was received on Tuesday 12 October.

RETURN OF ENVELOPES

Papers were delivered from Friday 17 September 2010 and were returned as follows:

First Week	2004	2007	2010
Monday	371	-	84
Tuesday	1 701	2 164	2 576
Wednesday	1 412	1 400	16
Thursday	1 146	1 090	1 697
Friday	898	745	2 002
Week 1 Total	5 528	5 399	6 375
Second Week			
Monday	1 488	1 259	2
Tuesday	1 145	1 202	803
Wednesday	863	864	2,347
Thursday	831	677	695
Friday	596	760	40
Week 2 Total	4 923	4 762	3 887
Final Week			
Monday	912	1 064	1 297
Tuesday	865	1 197	1 263
Wednesday	823	988	1 072
Thursday	774	1 211	1 223
Friday	893	1 390	582
Saturday	1 146	1 221	1 195
Week 3 Total	5 413	7 071	6 632
Total Returns	15 864 (51.2%)	17 232 (53.4%)	16 894 (50.02%)

NZ Post provided an excellent service for the return voting papers and even ensured all papers posted up to 4.00 pm on Friday 8 October were delivered to Electionz.com by 6.00 am on Election Day.

SPECIAL VOTES

A total of 149 special votes were issued and of these 119 were completed and returned with 109 voting papers being subsequently allowed and included in the official count.

DISTRICT HEALTH BOARD

For the fourth time the District Health Board (DHB) Elections were conducted in conjunction with the local authority elections although our role with this was relatively minor as the Board is now elected at large (no constituencies) and therefore all nominations etc were handled by Nelson City Council's Electoral Officer and this was contracted out to Warwick Lampp of Electionz.com.

The issue electors experienced in past elections with having to tick one paper and rank in order the other, did not appear to have caused as much confusion this time, however, there were still many blank DHB voting papers, but this is more likely to be a result of not knowing the candidates or having little interest in this election.

PUBLICATION OF FINAL RESULTS

The final results were published in The Nelson Mail on Wednesday 13 October 2010 and a copy of these are attached.

INFORMAL VOTES/UNEXERCISED VOTES

For the second time the informal votes (those where the voter's intention is not clear) and the blank votes (where issues are left completely blank) were recorded separately.

Historically, many electors have always chosen to limit their votes to those issues in which they are interested, or where they know the candidates.

The attached copy of the final results shows the number of informals and blanks for each issue.

The following were the number of blank voting papers for each issue for both the 2007 and 2010 elections:

	2007	2010
Mayoralty	225	322
Golden Bay	6	8
Moutere/Waimea	66	92
Motueka	30	19
Richmond	111	101
Motueka Community Board	119	124

COSTS

As charges are still coming to hand, it will be some time before the final cost of the election is known although this final cost is expected to be within the original

estimate. Costs will also be offset by a contribution from the Nelson Marlborough District Health Board.

CONCLUSION

The 2010 Triennial Elections went very smoothly and contracting out the Progressive Counting of votes meant that the pressures normally associated with counting and Election Day were minimal and the results were produced in a timely manner.

Finally I would like to thank all the staff who helped in any way with the election for the excellent work they did and in particular Sandra Hartley for accepting greater responsibilities and ensuring the election went smoothly.

L L Kennedy
Electoral Officer

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