



**WHANGANUI
DISTRICT COUNCIL**
Te Kaunihera a Rohe o Whanganui



14 July 2022

MEDIA RELEASE

Stand for Your Community

Whanganui District Council is asking residents to consider standing for their community in this year's local elections, with candidate nominations opening on Friday, 15 July 2022.

A campaign to encourage potential candidates to stand for council will run for four weeks until nominations close at noon on Friday, 12 August. Voting in the local elections will take place from 16 September to 8 October with the roles of Mayor, twelve seats on council and seven community board members to be decided via postal vote.

Whanganui District Council Deputy Electoral Officer Kate Barnes says the Electoral Commission has sent out enrolment confirmation packs in the mail to everyone on the electoral roll.

"Making sure you are enrolled is an important first step to be ready to vote, or stand for council in October.

"If you haven't received a pack yet it means you either aren't on the electoral roll, or your address needs updating. It's really important to be enrolled before 12 August to avoid having to do a special vote."

She says, "People who have changed address recently or those in temporary housing situations like student flats might have missed out on an enrolment pack if they haven't kept their details up to date. If you know of someone who might be in this position, have a word and see if they need help to get sorted.

"If you have received an enrolment pack but your details are incorrect you can update your details online or make changes on the form and send it back," says Kate Barnes.

Whanganui District Council chief executive David Langford says the role of an elected member is challenging but can be incredibly rewarding.

"One of the most important functions of our elected members is to help create a vision that guides what we do into the future. Our local body elections are a fantastic opportunity for us to come together as a community and explore and debate what it is we want from our future."

He says, "The last few years have been really challenging for our community as we've dealt with Covid. The cost of living is rising, we're experiencing a housing shortage and flooding and coastal erosion have been accelerated by climate change."

But despite challenges, David Langford says he remains "really optimistic for our future."

“The council’s investing in major infrastructure projects that are going to help drive our economy forward. We’re working with multiple government agencies to help address the housing shortage and we also have a really unique opportunity in front of us to embrace the Te Awa Tupua values, recognise the special role that the river plays in giving us our sense of identity and live up to our responsibility to look after the Awa.”

“If you’re thinking of running as a candidate in the local body elections, my challenge to you is to get out there. Speak to the community, speak to your friends and whānau. Find out what it is they want for the future of Whanganui – and then campaign on the strength of your vision.”

If you’re voting, he says, “Challenge your candidates. Make sure that their vision of the future matches what you want for your future and your children’s future.”

To be eligible to stand for election in Whanganui, a candidate must be a New Zealand citizen, on the electoral roll (18 years or older) and be nominated by two people who are also enrolled to vote in Whanganui.

Prospective candidates can find out more about what it takes to be an effective elected member and make their nominations online at www.votewhanganui.nz. People can also drop into the council at 101 Guyton Street and ask to speak to the elections team.

An elections centre will be open from Wednesday, 20 July at Community House on Ridgway Street for people to pop in and find out more about the election process. The elections team will also be out and about at local events over the coming weeks answering questions and helping people to enrol.

Anyone interested in standing for council is invited to attend a candidate information evening in the Council Chamber at 101 Guyton Street from 5.30pm on Monday, 1 August 2022.

More information about the election and standing for local office can be found at www.votewhanganui.nz.

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Contact:
Sarah Pomeroy
Communications and Marketing Manager
Whanganui District Council
027 550 2469

Key Dates

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| 15 July | Candidate nominations open |
| 1 August | Candidate information evening held at Council Chamber |
| 12 August | The full list of candidates standing in the election will be announced |
| 16-21 September | Voting papers will be sent out to enrolled voters |
| 8 October | Voting closes and initial results will be published later on in the day. Final results are available between this date and October 13. |