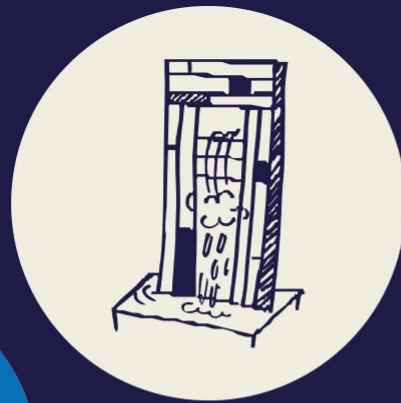


# HAMILTON CITY COUNCIL – STAFF SUBMISSION

## Inquiry into the 2022 Elections

Parliament's Justice Committee



14 February 2023



**Hamilton  
City Council**  
Te kaunihera o Kirikiriroa

## Improving the Wellbeing of Hamiltonians

Hamilton City Council is focused on improving the wellbeing of Hamiltonians through delivering to our five priorities of shaping:

- **A city that's easy to live in**
- **A city where our people thrive**
- **A central city where our people love to be**
- **A fun city with lots to do**
- **A green city**

The topic of this submission is aligned to the priority '**A city where our people thrive**'.

## Council Approval and Reference

This staff submission was approved by Hamilton City Council's Chief Executive on 14 February 2023.

Hamilton City Council Reference D-4568899 - Submission # 719.

It should be noted that the following submission is from staff at Hamilton City Council and does not therefore necessarily represent the views of the Council itself.

## Key Messages

1. We support the Justice Committee's **Inquiry into the 2022 Elections**.
2. We also support the local government sector submission by Taituarā on the Inquiry into the 2022 Elections.
3. We note that the topic of representative democracy is canvassed in the October 2022 draft report on the [Future for Local Government – He mata whāriki, he matawhānu](#), which addresses macro issues in local democracy that are more appropriately dealt with through the wider debate on the future form and function of local government at a political and community level.
4. These macro issues include citizen participation, national versus local administration of elections, the voting age, the term of office of elected members, and the remuneration and benefits available to elected members.
5. These issues were also outlined in detail in Hamilton City Council's 30 June 2022 submission ([refer here](#)) to the Panel for the Future of Local Government Review's first draft report, and will be further reiterated in Council's further submission to the Panel's October 2022 draft report.

## Introduction

6. Hamilton City Council staff appreciate the opportunity to make a submission to the Justice Committee's **Inquiry into the 2022 Elections**.

## Support for the Submission by Taituarā

7. Overall, we support the points and recommendations outlined in the local government sector submission of Taituarā (Local Government Professionals Aotearoa) to the Inquiry into the 2022 Elections on process and legislative changes that would make the administration of elections more efficient and remove ambiguity in some areas.
8. Taituarā's recommendations are reproduced in **Appendix 1** of this submission.

## Future for Local Government Report

9. We note that the topic of representative democracy is canvassed in the October 2022 draft report on the [Future for Local Government – He mata whāriki, he matawhānu](#).
10. **He mata whāriki, he matawhānu** addresses macro issues in local democracy that are more appropriately dealt with through the wider debate on the future form and function of local government at a political and community level.
11. The macro issues identified in **He mata whāriki, he matawhānu** include citizen participation, national versus local administration of elections, the voting age, the term of office of elected members, and the remuneration and benefits available to elected members.
12. These macro issues were also outlined in detail in Hamilton City Council's 30 June 2022 submission ([refer here](#)) to the Panel for the Future of Local Government Review's first draft report.

13. Hamilton City Council is currently developing a further comprehensive submission to the Panel for the Future of Local Government Review's October 2022 draft report. This submission will again cover the macro issues identified previously.

## Further Information and Hearings

14. Should Parliament's Justice Committee require clarification of the submission from Hamilton City Council staff, or additional information, please contact **Michelle Hawthorne** (Governance and Assurance Manager – Governance Unit) on 07 2450008 or email [michelle.hawthorne@hcc.govt.nz](mailto:michelle.hawthorne@hcc.govt.nz) in the first instance.
15. Hamilton City Council representatives **do wish to speak** at the Justice Committee hearings in support of this submission.

Yours faithfully



**Lance Vervoort**  
**CHIEF EXECUTIVE**

# Appendix 1

## Recommendations from the Submission by Taituarā to the Inquiry into the 2022 Elections

### Citizen participation

1. Agree that declining citizen participation and engagement is an issue of equal concern for both central and local government.

### Election promotion and communications

2. Agree that there should be a multi-media national communications and engagement campaign designed to build awareness of local elections and understanding of how to vote.
3. Agree that the campaign should continue to be part funded by central government.

### Civics education

4. Agree that New Zealand undertake foundational research in the state of civic awareness and knowledge both in school-level students and in adults.
5. Agree that the Government conduct an inquiry into the role of civics education in the curriculum and effective teaching and learning of civic education.

### Social media

6. Agree that the definition of advertisement in the Local Electoral Act be amended to include advertisements in any medium.
7. Agree that the expression of personal political views on the internet be expressly excluded from the definition of electoral advertisement.

### Campaign expenditure limits

8. Agree that the Local Electoral Act be amended to allow setting of campaign expenditure limits by regulation.

### Pre-election reports

9. Agree that all local authorities be permitted to use annual plan estimates for the financial year preceding the election date in their pre-election reports.

### Postal voting

10. Note the ongoing issues with postal voting as a means of delivering local elections.

### Online voting

11. Agree that central and local government periodically review the security, technical feasibility, and public support for online voting.

### Advance booth voting

12. Agree that central government work with local government to bring about a trial of advance booth voting.

### Overseas votes

13. Agree that the law be amended to allow for electronic transmission of special votes to and from voters who will be overseas during the election period. This should also be considered for voters with high access needs.

### Collection of votes

14. Agree that councils providing vote collection boxes and voting in community venues be required to

publish a list of dates and venues on the council website by the opening of voting.

#### Ratepayer enrolment

15. Agree that section 27 of the Local Government Rating Act 2002 be amended to place the ability of local authorities to access rating data to administer the ratepayer franchise beyond doubt.
16. Agree that that regulations 15 and 17 be reviewed for consistency with a ratepayer's ability to remove themselves from the franchise.

#### Centralised delivery of local elections

17. Agree that central and local government jointly develop proposals for centralised delivery of some or all of local electoral functions and consider these proposals alongside the status quo.

#### Foreign influence

18. Agree that the security agencies be provided the financial and other resources necessary to support local authorities in identifying and mitigating risks of undue foreign influence in the local democratic processes.

#### Voting age

19. Agree that any lowering of the voting age should be accompanied by an expansion of civics education in early secondary schools.

#### Citizenship of candidates

20. Agree that section 55 of the Local Electoral Act be amended to require candidates to furnish proof of New Zealand citizenship.

#### Candidate photos

21. Agree that section 61 of the Local Electoral Act be amended by specifying a period within which any candidate photo must have been taken.

#### Honorifics in foreign languages

22. Agree that further research on the status of foreign language honorifics be undertaken.

#### Order of candidate names on ballot papers

23. Agree that random ordering of candidate names on ballot papers be made mandatory and that this would not extend to candidate profile booklets.

#### Unpublished roll

24. Agree that each local authority's electoral officer and other sworn staff be given access to the unpublished roll.
25. Agree that each local authority's electoral officer and other sworn staff be provided with the protection of having their names on the unpublished roll, should they desire it.

#### Supplementary rolls

26. Agree that the Electoral Act be amended to require supply of a supplementary roll to each local authority electoral officer before polling day.
27. Agree that each local authority electoral officer should be provided with access to the deletions file.

#### Local Authority Members' Interests Act 1968

28. Agree that the \$25,000 limit on elected member contracts with their local authority be reviewed and updated.
29. Agree that the Local Authority Members' Interests Act 1968 be amended to allow the limit on elected member contracts with their local authority to be reviewed in line with inflation.

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