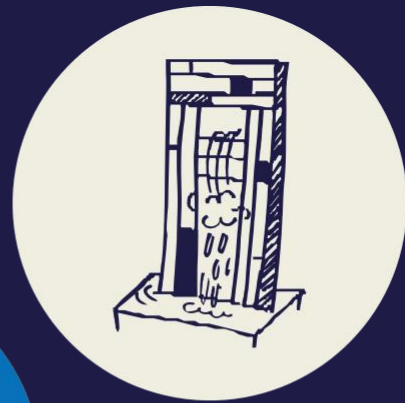


# HAMILTON CITY COUNCIL – STAFF SUBMISSION

## The Election Access Fund

Electoral Commission



11 August 2022



**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 11 August 2022.

Hamilton City Council Reference D-4321159 - Submission # 699.

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

## Key Messages and Recommendations

1. Hamilton City Council staff support the **Election Access Fund's** purpose and proposals.
2. The Electoral Commission should extend the Fund's provisions to include those with disabilities seeking selection to be a candidate, and campaigning as a candidate in local authority elections.
3. We also request that any policy development consider the need for funding and practical arrangements required once a disabled candidate is elected.
4. We support establishment of a Steering Group by the Electoral Commission that is responsible for developing and setting up key aspects of the Election Access Fund e.g., developing policies and processes for ongoing administration of the Fund, including receiving and assessing applications.
5. Given the range and diversity of issues for disabled people, we would ideally like to see more than one disabled person on the Steering Group.

## Introduction

6. Hamilton City Council staff appreciate the opportunity to make a submission to the Electoral Commission on the **Election Access Fund**.
7. Overall, we support the purpose and proposals outlined in the Election Access Fund to support disabled people to stand as candidates in parliamentary general elections and by-elections.
8. This will assist in reducing cost barriers faced by disabled people by covering disability-related costs which non-disabled candidates do not face.

## Extend Fund to Candidates in Local Authority Elections

9. While Hamilton City Council staff are fully supportive of the Election Fund being established, we recommend that the Electoral Commission extend the Fund's provisions to include disabled candidates who wish to seek election in local authority elections i.e., the Fund to cover expenses for those disabled people seeking selection to be a candidate, and campaigning as a candidate.
10. We note that expenses incurred could cover aspects such as paying for a support person, sign language interpreters, or accessible transport to events or meetings.
11. We also request that any policy development consider the need for funding and practical arrangements required once a disabled candidate is elected. For example, funds or allowances through the Remuneration Authority to cover accommodations required for their specific needs; funding for the local authority to ensure equal access and participation in all democratic processes, meetings, etc.

## Steering Group to Establish the Election Access Fund

12. We support the establishment of a Steering Group (comprising senior staff from the Electoral Commission, an advisor from the Office for Disability Issues and a member from the Disabled People's Organisations Coalition) by the Electoral Commission that is responsible for setting up the key aspects of the Election Access Fund. However, given the range and diversity of issues for disabled people, we would ideally like to see more than one disabled person on the Steering Group.

13. We note that this initial stage in the process will include developing policies and processes, consultation, raising awareness, providing information in alternate formats, and setting up processes for ongoing administration of the Fund, including receiving and assessing applications.

## Further Information and Opportunity to Discuss our Submission

14. Should the Electoral Commission require clarification of the submission from Hamilton City Council staff, or additional information, please contact **Rebecca Whitehead** (Unit Director - Community Services) on 027 808 6392 or email [rebecca.whitehead@hcc.govt.nz](mailto:rebecca.whitehead@hcc.govt.nz) in the first instance.
15. Hamilton City Council staff would welcome the opportunity to discuss the content of this submission in more detail with the Electoral Commission.

Yours faithfully



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

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