

8. 11. 2001

REPORT OF THE ELECTORAL OFFICER

1. TRIENNIAL ELECTIONS - 13 OCTOBER 2001

1. SUCCESSFUL CANDIDATES

I wish to report that the following candidates were declared elected at the 2001 Christchurch City elections:

MAYOR MOORE, Garry (Christchurch 2021 – The Positive Choice)

COUNCILLORS

Burwood Ward EVANS, Carole (Independent)
SHERIFF, Gail (Independent)

Fendalton Ward STEWART, Barbara (Independent Citizens)
WRIGHT, Ron (Independent Citizens)

Ferrymead Ward BAKER, Erin (Independent for Christchurch 2021)
COX, David (Independent)

Hagley Ward CRIGHTON, Anna (Labour for Christchurch 2021)
O'ROURKE, Denis (Labour for Christchurch 2021)

Heathcote Ward WELLS, Sue (Independent Citizens)
ALPERS, Oscar (Independent for Christchurch 2021)

Papanui Ward CONDON, Graham (Independent for Christchurch 2021)
WITHERS, Norm (Independent Citizens)

Pegasus Ward WILLIAMS, Chrissie (Labour for Christchurch 2021)
JAMES, Alister (Labour for Christchurch 2021)

Riccarton Ward BROUGHTON, Helen (Independent Citizens)
AUSTIN, Paddy (Independent for Christchurch 2021)

Shirley Ward STONHILL, Ingrid (Labour for Christchurch 2021)
EVANS, Megan (Labour for Christchurch 2021)

Spreydon Ward CORBETT, Barry (Independent Citizens)
ANDERTON, Carole (Alliance for Christchurch 2021)

Waimairi Ward BUCK, Sally (The Positive One Who Gets It Done)
HARROW, Pat (Independent Citizens)

Wigram Ward GANDA, Ishwar (Labour for Christchurch 2021)
KEAST, Lesley (Labour for Christchurch 2021)

2. COMMUNITY BOARDS

Burwood/Pegasus Community Board

Burwood BURT, Glenda Florence (Independent)
ROWLANDS, Don (Labour for Christchurch 2021)
HAMMOND, Carmen (Labour for Christchurch 2021)

Pegasus KELLAWAY, Caroline (Labour for Christchurch 2021)
LEA, Andrew (Labour for Christchurch 2021)
ANDREWS, Bob (Independent Citizens)

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Fendalton/Waimairi Community Board

Fendalton	CARTER, Val (Independent Citizens) KUNNEN, Mark (Independent Citizens) HAMPTON, George (Independent Citizens)
Waimairi	WALL, Mike (Independent Citizens) COLLEY, Cheryl (Independent Citizens) KU, Yiyi (Independent Citizens)

Hagley/Ferrymead Community Board

Hagley	TODD, Bob (Labour for Christchurch 2021) JOHANSON, Yani (Labour for Christchurch 2021) CAMERON, Rod (Independent)
Ferrymead	FREEMAN, John (Labour for Christchurch 2021) RUTLAND, Linda (Labour for Christchurch 2021) SMITH, Dr Brendan (Independent Citizens)

Riccarton/Wigram Community Board

Riccarton	BROUGHTON, Helen (Independent Citizens) LALOLI, Peter (Independent Citizens) BENNETT, Dr Neville (Independent for Christchurch 2021)
Wigram	MORA, Mike (Labour for Christchurch 2021) SHEARING, Bob (Independent Citizens) CUMMINGS, Ken (Independent Citizens)

Shirley/Papanui Community Board

Shirley	CARROLL, Anne (Labour for Christchurch 2021) WRIGHT, Steve (Labour for Christchurch 2021) BOOTH, Robin (True Independent)
Papanui	PALMER, Yvonne (Independent) BARRY, Myra (Independent for Christchurch 2021) HILLS, Dennis (Independent for Christchurch 2021)

Spreydon/Heathcote Community Board

Spreydon	CLEARWATER, Phil (Alliance for Christchurch 2021) ANDERTON, Carole (Alliance for Christchurch 2021) MAUNSELL, Elizabeth (Alliance for Christchurch 2021)
Heathcote	ALPERS, Oscar (Independent for Christchurch 2021) GILL, Sonia (Independent Citizens) CARTER, Lynda (Alliance for Christchurch 2021)

VACANCIES AND CANDIDATES

Attached as Appendix A is the official declaration showing the number of votes received by each candidate.

Elections were also held for the following additional Christchurch City issues:

Canterbury Regional Council

Election of eight Christchurch City members, with two members being elected to represent each of the following Christchurch constituencies:

Christchurch North	Christchurch South
Christchurch East	Christchurch West

Canterbury District Health Board

Election of five Christchurch City members of the Canterbury District Health Board.

Because of the lower return rate experienced in Auckland City, this year's Christchurch City elections proved to be the largest in New Zealand, as the following statistics show:

	Christchurch	Auckland
Number of electors on rolls	227,793	253,681
Number of voting documents returned	110,068	108,626
Percentage of electors who voted	48.32%	42.82%

3. CANDIDATES ELECTED TO BOTH COUNCIL AND A COMMUNITY BOARD

The following candidates have been elected to both the Council and a Community Board:

Candidate	Elected to
Oscar Alpers	Spreydon/Heathcote Community Board (Heathcote Ward)
Carole Anderton	Spreydon/Heathcote Community Board (Spreydon Ward)
Helen Broughton	Riccarton/Wigram Community Board (Riccarton Ward)

4. ELECTORAL ROLLS

4.1 Residential Electors

The residential electoral rolls used for local authority elections are drawn from the Parliamentary rolls, utilising data supplied to each local authority by the Electoral Enrolment Centre in Wellington. The Electoral Enrolment Centre undertook a national campaign earlier this year to ensure that the rolls were as up to date as possible for the local body elections, sending individual letters to each elector to ensure that their details were correct, and encouraging the enrolment of other persons not previously enrolled.

As at 31 August 2001, the number of residential electors enrolled in each ward was:

Burwood Ward	-	20,785
Fendalton Ward	-	19,702
Ferrymead Ward	-	20,138
Hagley Ward	-	16,584
Heathcote Ward	-	20,218
Papanui Ward	-	20,519
Pegasus Ward	-	16,271
Riccarton Ward	-	19,802
Shirley Ward	-	17,798
Spreydon Ward	-	18,021
Waimairi Ward	-	18,711
Wigram Ward	-	19,244
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		227,793

This represents an increase of 4,142 in the number of electors on the residential electors' roll for the 1998 elections.

4.2 Ratepayer Electors

The franchise also extends to:

- persons owning property in the city, but residing elsewhere;
- corporate bodies (who are entitled to appoint a "nominal occupier");

- persons living within the city who own other city property in other communities elsewhere to their place of residence (electors in this category being entitled to claim additional Community Board votes only).

Persons and organisations in this category are not automatically sent voting documents. Instead, they must make application for enrolment on the ratepayer electoral roll. Only 289 persons were enrolled as ratepayer electors for this year's elections. Of these, 212 electors (or 73%) voted.

5. **INFORMAL VOTES/UNEXERCISED VOTES**

A vote for any particular issue is deemed to be informal if:

1. The voter's intention is not clear.
2. The issue has been left completely blank.

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 percentage of informal votes recorded for each issue is set out below:

Issue	Percentage of Informal Votes
Mayor	1.86%
City Council	2.55%
Community Boards	4.42%
Regional Council	7.75%
District Health Board	8.66%

In all cases, votes have been allowed where the voter's intention is clear, notwithstanding that they have marked the voting paper in a different way to that prescribed.

6. **PROCESSING OF VOTING DOCUMENTS ON RECEIPT**

I would like to thank the Council for allowing me to utilise the provisions of the Local Electoral Act 2001, permitting the processing of the voting documents throughout the polling period. The resulting financial and logistical advantages proved to be enormous. Apart from the fact that I was able to release the preliminary election results at 4.20pm (much earlier than in previous elections), there should also be an attendant reduction in the cost of the election.

7. **ROLL SCRUTINY, PRELIMINARY COUNT AND OFFICIAL COUNT**

7.1 **Roll Scrutiny**

This process involves marking electors' names off the roll as the voting documents are returned, to ensure that no elector votes more than once (this could occur through, for instance, an elector exercising an ordinary vote and then also exercising a special vote). This part of the election process is carried out electronically, by passing an electronic wand across the bar code shown on the returned voting document. This is done through the window of the return envelope, and the envelopes are not opened nor the voting documents extracted until after the roll scrutiny has been completed.

7.2 **Preliminary Count**

Because of my ability to undertake early processing of the returned voting documents, the votes cast by electors were able to be electronically recorded as the voting documents were returned throughout the whole of the polling period.

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After the return envelopes had been put through the roll scrutiny process, they were then opened and the voting documents extracted, after which they were assembled in batches of 25, with an accompanying cover sheet. The votes cast within that batch were then recorded electronically, with the completed batches then being handed to another staff member, who then repeated the process. The software automatically disclosed any variations between the first and the second parts of this process, with any apparent discrepancies being resolved at that point.

The preliminary election results were released at 4.20pm on election day. The official count started on Monday 15 October and was finished on Thursday 18 October, with the declaration of the results of the official count being made in the Christchurch Press on Tuesday 23 October 2001.

The official count involved an examination of the declarations accompanying the returned special voting documents, to ascertain whether or not the special votes in question could be allowed. Many of these declarations were required to be referred to the Co-ordinating Registrar of Parliamentary Electors, to establish whether or not the special voter had made application to enrol as a parliamentary elector after the close of the roll on 31 August, but before polling day.

All the candidates who were successful in the preliminary count were declared elected as a result of the official count.

8. SPECIAL VOTERS

Special voting documents and accompanying special voting declarations were issued to 1,153 persons. Of these, 860 special voting documents were completed and returned prior to the close of the poll, with 572 special voting documents being subsequently allowed and included in the official count.

9. CHRISTCHURCH CITY VOTING STATISTICS

	1989	1992	1995	1998	2001
Electors on Rolls	200,915	208,533	215,621	223,832	227,793
Voters	121,680	105,982	107,450	116,511	110,068
Percentage Voted	60.56%	50.82%	49.83%	52.05%	48.32%

The percentage of electors returning voting documents varied considerably between wards, with a low of 35% being recorded in the Hagley Ward, compared with a high of 56% in the Waimairi Ward.

Immediately following the elections the City Manager, in consultation with me, commissioned a telephone-based survey to ask people who voted what the main reasons were for them exercising their vote, and asking those people who didn't vote the main reasons why not. This survey is supported by the Local Government Commission and Department of Internal Affairs, and is being undertaken in association with Alan McRobie, a political scientist who is regarded as the national specialist in this type of electoral research.

10. COSTS

As many charges are not yet to hand, it will be some time yet before the final cost of the elections is known. Although some additional costs will be incurred through the requirement to provide candidate profile booklets, these will be largely offset by contributions towards the election costs by both the Canterbury Regional Council and the Canterbury District Health Board. At this stage, I expect the net cost of the elections to be within the budget provision of \$554,500.

11. **COMPLIANCE WITH LEGISLATION**

The two Justices of the Peace who were appointed to observe the processing on receipt of the returned voting documents have both signed certificates confirming that they were satisfied that the relevant sections of the legislation were complied with in full.

12. **NEW LEGISLATION**

Following extensive consultation with the local government sector at both elected member and officer level, some significant changes to local election procedures were introduced earlier this year, via the Local Electoral Act 2001 and the Local Electoral Regulations 2001. This new legislation has proved to be good in parts, and not so good in others. Some aspects of the new Act and regulations will need to be addressed via amendments prior to the next elections. Some of the more important changes resulting from this new legislation are set out below, with my accompanying comments:

12.1 **Early Processing of Returned Voting Documents**

The ability to open the voting documents and record the individual votes cast throughout the whole of the voting period proved to be a success, both in Christchurch and throughout New Zealand. Despite some earlier reservations, I am unaware of any instances where problems have occurred with this process, and I would strongly recommend that this Council support the use of early processing at future elections.

12.2 **Extension of Voting Period**

Formerly, the voting period was limited to two weeks where postal voting was employed. At elected member workshops held in the course of framing the new legislation, there seemed to be elected member support for the voting period to be extended to three weeks, one of the principal arguments for this being that the school holidays fell within part of the two-week voting period, when some families were away. Despite the longer voting period, most areas experienced a reduction rather than an increase in voting returns. On balance, I would support a return to a shorter two-week voting period when the legislation is reviewed.

12.3 **Candidate Profile Statements**

Despite some earlier reservations, the ability to include booklets containing photographs and profile statements of individual candidates proved to be a success. Many electors have stated that they found the booklets to be a great help when deciding who to vote for.

12.4 **Inclusion of Official Titles or Ranks in Names Shown on Voting Documents**

For the first time, candidates were able to request the inclusion of official titles or ranks in their name on the voting documents. For instance, a candidate who was normally entitled to be addressed as "Doctor" could request that this be included in their name on the voting document.

This provision will be reconsidered in the course of the post-election review of the legislation to be conducted in liaison with the Department of Internal Affairs, and it is possible that it will be replaced with an absolute prohibition on the inclusion of any such ranks or titles, similar to a provision in the Electoral Act which specifically precludes their use in Parliamentary elections.

12.5 Electoral Expenses

For the first time, limits were imposed on the amount of money candidates could spend on their campaigns, with candidates being required to submit returns of such expenditure within 55 days of the official declaration of the result of the election.

All candidates have been reminded of the need to submit their returns by no later than Monday 17 December 2001.

13. OTHER ISSUES TO BE ADDRESSED PRIOR TO THE 2004 ELECTIONS

Several related issues will need to be addressed by the Council prior to the next elections, ie:

13.1 Ward and Community Boundaries

The present ward and community boundaries will again need to be reviewed, as part of the triennial review required to be carried out by the Council under the provisions of the Local Government Act 1974.

13.2 Electoral Systems

Next year, the Council is required to consider whether to retain the present first past the post method of voting, or whether instead to introduce single transferable voting (STV). Irrespective of any decision which the Council may reach on this issue, there is provision in the Local Electoral Act for a poll of electors to be demanded on the electoral system to be employed in future elections. This will be the subject of a report to the Council early next year.

13.3 Voting Methods

Prior to the next elections, the Council must also decide which voting method is to be used in 2004. The voting methods that may be used are:

- (a) Postal voting; or
- (b) Booth voting; or
- (c) A combination of booth voting and postal voting.

13.4 Order of Candidates' Names on Voting Documents

In future, a local authority may decide, by resolution, whether the names under which candidates are seeking election are to be arranged on the voting document in one of the following orders:

- Alphabetical order of surname
- Pseudo-random order (ie, where the candidates' names are all placed in a hat, and then printed on the voting documents in the order in which they are drawn out of the hat)
- Random order (ie, where the names are allocated by the computer in random order on each separate voting document, so that the names are shown in a different order on each document)

In the absence of any Council resolution, the candidates' names must be arranged in alphabetical order of surname.