



20. 12. 2002  
(RECONVENED FROM 12.12.2002)

## SUPPLEMENTARY REPORT OF THE ELECTORAL OFFICER

### PART A - MATTERS REQUIRING A COUNCIL DECISION

#### 1. ELECTORAL SYSTEM POLL: USE OF POSTAL VOTING AND PROGRESSIVE PROCESSING

<b>Officer responsible</b> Electoral Officer	<b>Author</b> Max Robertson, DDI 941-8533
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The purpose of this report is to seek approval for the use of postal voting for the forthcoming electoral system poll, and for the progressive processing of the returned voting documents used at the poll.

#### VOTING METHODS

Section 36 of the Local Electoral Act 2001 provides that every election or poll conducted for a local authority must be conducted using one or more methods of voting adopted by resolution of the local authority. The Local Electoral Regulations 2001 provide that the voting methods that may be used at any election or poll are:

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

#### EARLY PROCESSING

Section 79 of the Local Electoral Act 2001 permits a local authority to process (but not count) returned voting documents over the voting period.

Early processing of voting documents was introduced for the 1998 Christchurch City elections (but restricted to the 84 hours before the close of voting) and was used very successfully throughout the country. Because of the success of early processing in 1998 and the benefits which early processing provides, the early processing period was subsequently increased to the whole three week voting period now provided under the current legislation. The immediate benefit of adopting early processing is that much, if not all, of the cumbersome and time-consuming task of extracting and checking the voting documents is undertaken progressively over the three week voting period (under strict security and under the supervision of a Justice of the Peace). This means a quicker and more accurate result may be achieved on polling day.

**Recommendation:** That the Christchurch City Council resolve:

1. That postal voting be used for the forthcoming electoral system poll to be held in Christchurch, with voting closing on 12 noon on polling day, Saturday 5 April 2003.
2. That the returned voting documents for the poll be processed during the voting period, such early processing to be undertaken in accordance with section 79 of the Local Electoral Act 2001; the Local Electoral Regulations 2001 and the Society of Local Government Managers' Code of Best Practice.

CONSIDERED THIS 20TH DAY OF DECEMBER 2002

MAYOR