

## **ELECTION PROTOCOLS FOR STAFF**

With the Porirua City Council elections taking place on 12 October this year there are a number of protocols to guide staff in their dealings with elected members and the public in the pre-election period (the three months before election day) which starts on Saturday 13 July.

### **What this means for you**

You should remain politically neutral in all your dealings with elected members and the public, particularly in the pre-election period. That means not aligning yourself with or demonstrably supporting a candidate, whether a current or aspiring elected member. This could result in allegations of bias, potentially causing serious problems for you and the Council.

You have the same rights of free speech as other members of the public and are entitled to your own political views, membership of a political party and may stand for political office. However, it is important you avoid attributing your opinions as being representative of the Council.

In particular, you must not make comment to the media (including via social media e.g. Facebook) about election matters. Any media queries are to go through the Council's communications protocols.

### **Political campaigns**

You should not take part in any activity related to the election campaign of a current or aspiring elected member. This includes attending private campaign strategy meetings, involvement in public meetings (unless competing candidates are involved) and taking part in any activity that could be seen to be a campaign activity.

### **Standing for political office**

You may stand for election but should discuss this with your manager first. It is possible a conflict of interest could arise, either during a campaign or afterwards if elected, and workflows may be affected.

The Chief Executive will assess each case on its merits and will consult with you to make a decision promptly.

If elected to the Porirua City Council, you will be required by the Local Government Act 2002 to resign as an employee before taking up the position of councillor.

### **Use of council resources**

If standing for political office you may not use council time or resources of any kind for campaigning purposes. This includes internet, email, telephones, stationery, photocopiers, stamps, business cards and Council venues.

### **Council information**

The mayor and appropriate councillors will continue to communicate matters of Council business to the public. Where information is supplied by the Council to a candidate for campaign purposes, the information should be made available to other candidates on request.