

MEDIA RELEASE

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For immediate release

Who's
putting local
issues on
the national
agenda?

**We are.
LGNZ.**

Online voting trials available for 2016 local government elections

Local Government New Zealand (LGNZ) is putting its support behind councils looking at trialling online voting in the 2016 local body elections.

The Associate Minister of Local Government, Hon Louise Upston, confirmed last week that a small number of local authorities will shortly be able to undertake a trial of online voting at the 2016 elections.

Costs of the trials are to be met by local councils and councils need an endorsement that the trial councils' assurance plans are fit for purpose by the Government's Chief Information Officer.

Councils will need to determine, in consultation with an online voting provider, the costs and practicalities of taking part in the trial, register their interest with LGNZ and prepare a submission for consideration by a panel of Mayors convened by LGNZ. The panel will make recommendations to the Associate Minister of Local Government.

LGNZ President Lawrence Yule says that online voting can streamline the voting process.

"The local government sector is interested in being able to offer citizens the choice to vote online," Mr Yule says.

"It is easier for many people in the community including those with disabilities and in some cities, online voting has increased the number of people taking part in local body elections."

LGNZ will be holding a briefing on online voting on 5 June that will offer more information to interested councils and inform them of the timeframe for applying.

ends

For more information, please contact LGNZ's Director of Advocacy, Helen Mexted on 029 924 1221 or email helen.mexted@lgnz.co.nz

About LGNZ and local government in New Zealand

Local Government New Zealand (LGNZ) is the peak body representing New Zealand's 78 local, regional and unitary authorities. LGNZ advocates for local democracy, develops local government policy, and promotes best practice and excellence in leadership, governance and service delivery. Through its work strengthening sector capability, LGNZ contributes to the economic success and vibrancy of communities and the nation.

The local government sector plays an important role. In addition to giving citizens a say in how their communities are run, councils own a broad range of community assets worth more than \$120 billion. These include 90 per cent of New Zealand's road network, the bulk of the country's water and waste water networks, and libraries, recreation and community facilities. Council expenditure is approximately \$8.5 billion dollars, representing approximately 4 per cent of Gross Domestic Product and 11 per cent of all public expenditure.

For more information visit www.lgnz.co.nz.

