

Priority High

THE DEPARTMENT OF INTERNAL AFFAIRS

Te Tari Taiwhenua

Local Government Briefing

Hon Rodney Hide
Minister of Local Government

Copy to: Hon John Carter
Associate Minister of Local Government

Title: Possible candidates for Environment Canterbury commissioners

Date: 8 March 2010

Key issues

Possible candidates to be Environment Canterbury commissioners

Action sought

Indicate preferred candidates

Timeframe

As soon as possible

Contact for telephone discussion (if required)

Name	Position	Telephone		Suggested first contact
		direct line	after hours	
Antony Moss	Manager (Regulatory Policy)	494 0636	027 476 0361	
Peter Hodge	Senior Policy Analyst	495 7212		✓

Return to: Peter Hodge

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Purpose

1. This briefing asks you to indicate your preferred candidates for possible appointment as Environment Canterbury (ECan) commissioners (**Annex 1**).

Process for appointing commissioners

2. On 8 March 2010 Cabinet will consider a proposal from the Minister for the Environment to appoint five commissioners to govern ECan until the October 2013 election.
3. If Cabinet approves this approach, you and the Minister for the Environment ("joint Ministers") will appoint the commissioners, including the chairperson and deputy chairperson.
4. Joint appointment reflects your interests as Minister of Local Government in ensuring that intervention in ECan's affairs is successful. Success will depend primarily on the quality of the commissioners. You are best placed to ensure that people with appropriate local government-related expertise and experience are appointed.
5. The provisional timetable for appointment is as follows:
 - 31 March: joint Ministers take a paper to the Cabinet Appointments and Honours Committee (APH), seeking approval of commissioners;
 - 6 April: Cabinet confirms APH's decision;
 - 8 April: a Gazette notice announces the appointment of commissioners and disestablishment of the elected council;
 - April / early May: the commissioners start work [date to be confirmed].

Next step - shortlist of candidates

6. The Department and the Ministry for the Environment will draw up a short list of candidates and gauge their availability and fees. We will then report to joint Ministers seeking a final decision on candidates.
7. At this stage we ask you to indicate your preferred candidates from the list in Annex 1, and advise us of any other people you consider would be suitable.

Comment

8. The commissioners' primary task will be to govern ECan. They will need to quickly familiarise themselves with the Council's business and deal immediately with the annual plan, budget and rates for 2010/11. They will have to start working on the strategic issues identified in the ECan review team's report, e.g., the lack of an operative resource management policy and planning framework.
9. The commissioners may also be required to initiate a review of ECan, in particular its planning and consenting functions, and later decide on ECan's future direction.
10. It is crucial therefore that some commissioners have extensive experience of governing or managing a local authority, preferably in situations where a change in strategic direction and organisation was required.
11. ^

The chairperson

12. The chairperson will need to provide strong leadership to the Council, drive a complex process of change, and work successfully with other high-profile individuals and leaders (such as Ministers, mayors).
13. You may wish to consider whether the chairperson should be a nationally recognised leader with a track record of major achievements. Suitable candidates could include:
The chairperson would not necessarily need to work full-time, especially if backed by a full-time deputy chairperson who is an experienced local government operator.

Recommendations

14. The recommendations are that you:
 - a. **indicate** your preferred candidates for Environment Canterbury commissioners at Annex 1;
 - b. **suggest** any additional preferred candidates.



Marilyn Little
Director Policy
Local Government and Community Branch

Noted

seen by the Hon Rodney Hide

Hon Rodney Hide
Minister of Local Government

1 / 2010