

# Local body elections are nigh

*Te Waha Nui* asks Aucklanders what they know about the up-coming elections.

## THE QUESTIONS:

Are you aware the local body elections are coming up?

Do you know who is mayor of Auckland City?

Do you know the names of any of the mayoral candidates?

Any comments about the elections/issues?



**Amanda Bisset, 27,**  
accountant, Avondale.

Amanda knows about the elections, that John Banks is the incumbent and Christine Fletcher is a candidate.

"Roads are a major issue. John Banks is pushing for that. Chris Fletcher's billboards seem more simple and homely. Banks is doing a good job, he's a tough cookie and has his own personality. He gets things done."



**Vikram Sheth, 33,**  
accountant, Mt Roskill.

Vikram knows about the elections and that John Banks is the incumbent. He does not know the names of any of the other candidates.

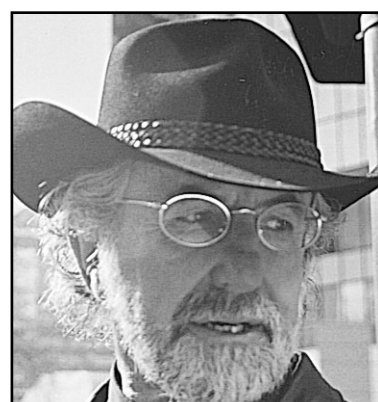
"Immigration. The mayor can help put forward some ideas to parliament to help with this."



**Natasha Smith, 23,**  
architect, Mt Eden.

Natasha knows about the elections and that John Banks is the incumbent. She knows Christine Fletcher is a candidate.

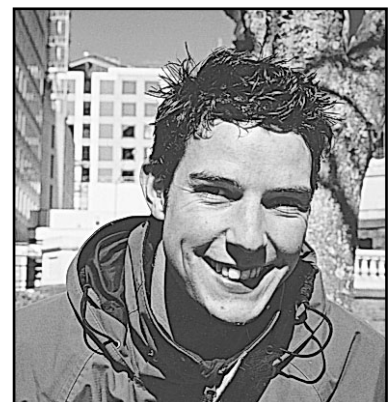
"I'm against the V8 race because of the congestion and the disruption. The amount of effort to set up barricades and the loss of revenue for business is not worth it. What if there is an accident and an ambulance needs to get through? Blocking off main city streets is not a good idea."



**TJ McNamara, 69,**  
teacher, Epsom.

TJ knows about the elections and that John Banks is the incumbent. He knows Christine Fletcher and Bruce Hucker are the candidates.

"The design of inner-city buildings is rubbish – that is the main issue for me. The arts programme needs boosting and there is not enough supervision of language students here."



**Lloyd De Beer, 23,**  
engineer, Herne Bay.

Lloyd knows about the elections and that John Banks is the incumbent. He knows Christine Fletcher is a candidate.

"I think the street car racing is a good thing. I'm not too concerned about the election really. I don't have too many issues."

## Being a mayor is not everyone's cup of tea

by Kate Palmer

Aspiring mayoral candidates around the country are preparing to battle it out to become city leaders.

What kind of lifestyle awaits the winners?

Local Government New Zealand's new mayors president, Basil Morrison, says there is no such thing as a job description for a mayor.

He says the role of the mayor is to represent and be an advocate for the community.

Morrison, on the LGNZ website, says the public sometimes expects the impossible and whatever the council decides – whether the mayor is in favour or not, the mayor is responsible.

"Being a mayor can sometimes mean you are popular one minute and then when heated issues are up the hate mail may start to come in," he says.

Administration officer in the Auckland mayoral office Paul Venbeurden says: "The mayor works seven days a week. That includes early morning meetings through to evening functions and council meetings."

The Auckland mayoral package includes a salary of \$143,382, a full-time chauffeur, two car parks and a travel allowance for visits to Auckland's five sister cities.

In comparison the Hamilton mayor receives \$108,619, a car and car park. A small salary adjustment is made for private car use. The mayor travels once every three years to one of Hamilton's three sister cities.

Les Mills held the office of Auckland mayor for three terms and says while he recalls his mayoralty in a positive light, the number of functions made it difficult to have a home life.

"I would attend at least five functions a day, around 30 a week," he says.

Mills says the mayoralty is a marvellous opportunity to contribute to the city but is also a political management role.

"You have to deal with people with political agendas but that's all part of it. It's a wonderful job and I don't have any regrets. Now I can look back on all the positive things I brought to the city," he says.

Former Hamilton mayor Russ

Rimmington worked seven days a week while in office and says it was extremely difficult to have a home life.

"Last year my wife said that if I was to stand again I'd be doing it on my own. Thinking about it, I'd have the hot tongue at work and the cold shoulder at home – it just didn't seem worth it," he says.

Rimmington says the next mayor will experience some of the most satisfying years of his or her life.

Hamilton City Council finance manager Blair Bowcroft says he doubts any mayor does the job for the salary.

"They would earn triple the salary in the private sector," he says.

Morrison says an effective mayor finds solutions to problems but still keeps harmony between different groups.

Hamilton City Council communication executive Curt Christiansen says the mayor could work 36 hours a day and still have work to do.

"The demands on elected members are quite extraordinary. The public believe they own them and therefore have the right to ring any time of the day or night," he says.



### Mayoral package and campaign spend limits

	Salary	Campaign spend
North Shore	\$99,100	\$60,000
Waitakere	\$114,520	\$60,000
Manukau	\$131,962	\$70,000
Auckland City	\$143,382	\$70,000
Hamilton	\$108,619	\$60,000
Wellington	\$128,384	\$60,000