



Policy on the appointment of non-elected members to independent advisory groups

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independent advisory groups

Date adopted by Council: 13 November 2007

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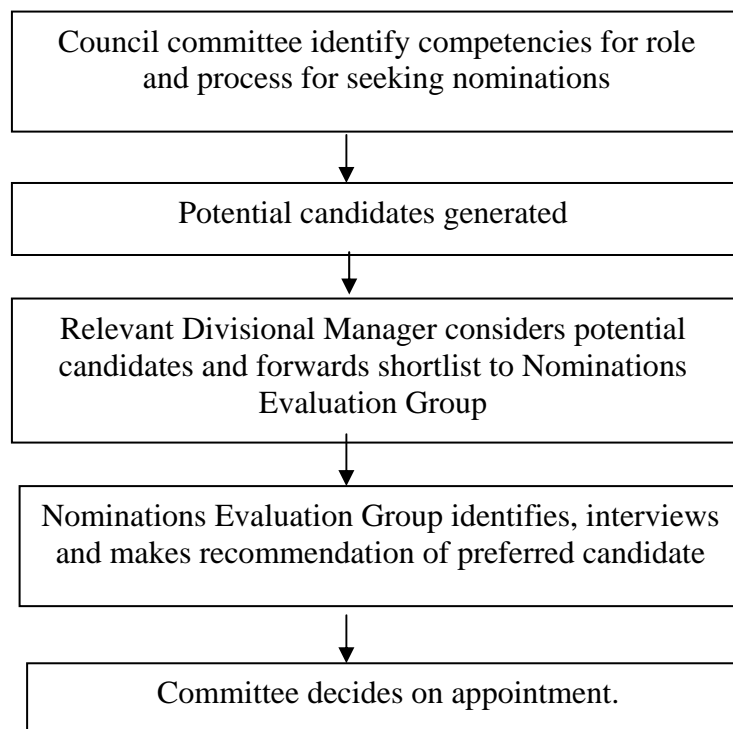
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1. Background

Advisory groups may be set up for a variety of reasons, typically to advise a committee or subcommittee on a particular issue or represent certain interests.

Subject to any applicable Terms of Reference, resolution or statutory direction, the following generic process should be followed in appointing non-elected members to advisory groups.

2. Outline of generic process



Depending on the procedure adopted for seeking nominations, it may be possible for an appointments process to be worked through within a six week period between Council or committee meetings. If seeking nominations by way of public notice, it is likely that the process could not be completed within a single meeting cycle.

3. Clarity of purpose of appointment and competencies (skills and experience) sought

Consideration of the key purposes of current advisory groups would assist in identifying non-elected members who have the skills, attributes or knowledge that would assist the work of the advisory group. These include:

- representing the views of the wider regional community;

- representing a specific district's view;
- representing the views of a specific user group;
- representing an iwi or hapu view;
- representing a territorial authority's view;
- specific technical knowledge or skills relevant to the body; and
- providing the group to which they are appointed with an independent view.

These matters would be considered by the relevant committee to ensure that those with knowledge of the competencies sought are formulating the criteria relevant to the proposed appointment.

4. Identification of candidates

The significance of the appointment will determine which of the following avenues should be used to generate candidates:

- public advertisement;
- approaching government agencies (e.g. Crown Company Monitoring Advisory Unit, Ministry of Women's Affairs, Department of Internal Affairs (Ethnic Affairs), Ministry of Pacific Island Affairs, Te Puni Kokiri, Ministry of Consumer Affairs) for nominations from their candidate databases;
- recruitment agencies;
- Councillor or officer referrals; and
- inviting nominations from the region's territorial authorities.

Where the purpose of the appointment is to have a member who represents the views of the wider regional community, a specific regional community or who is appointed to provide an independent view, a public advertisement should be published, advising that non-elected members are being sought. The public advertisement should include the purpose of the appointment and any necessary competencies that the appointee(s) should possess.

Where the purpose of the appointment is to have a member who represents the views of a territorial authority, government department, iwi¹ or hapu, or specific interest group, the relevant organisation(s) would be asked to nominate a person whom they believe has the desired attributes to fulfil the purpose of the role.

¹ The Council does not make appointments to Ara Tahi, the inter-iwi representative group. Each of the region's seven iwi appoints two mandated representatives to Ara Tahi.

In both cases, nominations could also come forward from members of the entity, and could also be generated from relevant databases.

Decisions on the nominations process to be applied should be made by a committee and need to be mindful of the competencies sought and the desirability of achieving diversity in representation in order to achieve a good pool of high quality candidates.

5. Evaluating candidates and identification of preferred candidate

The relevant Divisional Manager receives candidate applications and develops a shortlist of candidates (say 4-5 candidates per position) for consideration by a Nominations Evaluation Group.

The Nominations Evaluation Group should comprise the Chairperson of the relevant Council committee, a committee member, and the relevant Divisional Manager.

As well as bearing in mind the required attributes for the particular role, the Nominations Evaluation Group may also consider:

- competence;
- level of expertise;
- ability to analyse, question and apply judgement;
- ability to maintain an open mind;
- level of local knowledge;
- links into the community and willingness to utilise those links;
- integrity; and
- ability to devote time and attention to the group.

The Nominations Evaluation Group would identify and interview the preferred candidate. Based on this process, it would prepare a report for the relevant committee outlining its recommendations.

6. Committee decision

The relevant committee then makes decisions on appointments to advisory groups.

Reports recommending appointments should usually be considered in a public excluded portion of a committee meeting.

Section 48 of the Local Government Official Information and Meetings Act 1987 (LGOIMA) states that the public may be excluded from the whole or any part of a meeting when, amongst other things, “the public conduct of the whole or the relevant part of the proceedings of the meeting would

be likely to result in the disclosure of information for which good reason for withholding would exist". LGOIMA states that good reason will exist when it is necessary to protect the privacy of natural persons.

While there is not an obligation to consider appointments in a public excluded session it will usually be the most prudent thing to do. It is important that applicants are confident that their privacy will not be compromised during the appointment process.

7. Remuneration

Unless otherwise resolved by Council, no Council remuneration is available to non-elected members of advisory groups.