

1 December 2025

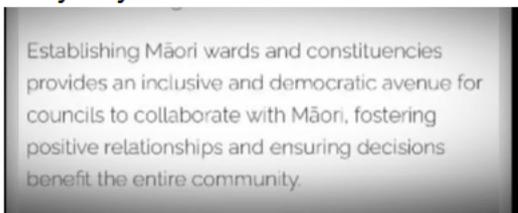
By email to: [REDACTED]

Kia ora [REDACTED]

OFFICIAL INFORMATION ACT REQUEST 2025/74 follow-up

On Tuesday 11 November 2025 you made a further request under the Official Information Act 1982 (the Act):

I make a formal request under the Official Information Act for all communication sent and received by the Electoral Commission and all internal communications in regard the Electoral Commission providing a link on its website to a site promoting the benefits of Maori wards and constituencies during the voting period of the referendum on Maori wards. To be clear my request is for all correspondence and communication, external and internal that led to the decision to provide the link on the Commission's website to a site that promoted Maori wards. In addition, all correspondence and communication, external and internal, that led to the decision to remove the link from the Electoral Commissions website that was promoting Maori wards. I attach a screenshot of the passage on the website that was promoting the benefits of Maori wards and constituencies.



Decision to provide a link

The Commission does not run or oversee local elections. Our role is to make sure people are enrolled to vote and provide each council with up-to-date roll information. We provided information on our website about how and when to enrol for the local elections.

During a local election, we receive a lot of questions from members of the public about the local elections including questions about polls on Māori wards, that need to be directed to local councils, who are responsible for local elections and referendums. To make it easier for people to contact their council for more information, we provide a number of links to www.votelocal.co.nz/ a website maintained by Local Government New Zealand and Taituarā - Local Government Professionals Aotearoa and [Council websites and maps - LGNZ](#).

These sites include detailed information about the local elections and were a single site where electors could find contact information for every council's electoral officer, for example, to arrange a special vote. These sites also contained information on all of the councils that were holding polls on Māori wards, to which we could point people to find out if their council was holding a poll. It is clear by the way we linked to content that it was a link to external sites.

We have taken the same approach for previous local elections. We have also taken this approach for the information we provide on parliamentary elections to parties, candidates, third party promoters and the public, including on how to contact councils about their rules for when and where electoral signs in their area can go up for parliamentary elections.

Our websites link to a number of different external websites, including some websites containing political content, for example, the [Register of Political Parties](#) includes links to party websites. In our view this does not compromise the impartiality and neutrality of the Commission.

As it has been common practice to use links, there are not many documents that relate specifically to a decision to include links. Copies of what we do hold are attached.

Decision to remove the link

You have requested external and internal correspondence regarding the decision to remove the link.

Copies of complaints and responses to complaints are attached.

Erring on the side of caution, following the complaints being made, the Commission removed the specific link that was complained about. We removed links to the vote local and LGNZ websites from the page content of vote.nz and elections.nz for the election. To assist voters, we published a list of local councils and their electoral officer contact details to ensure electors could find this information if they came to the vote.nz website, and our enquiries and community teams could also point voters to their local council to, for example, arrange special votes.

Copies of internal correspondence about the complaints and the decision to remove the link are also attached.

Some personal information such as phone numbers, email addresses and some names have been withheld under section 9(2)(a) of the OIA which relates to the privacy of natural persons. In each case where redactions are made under section 9(2)(a), consideration has been given to and I am satisfied that the reasons for withholding of the information are not outweighed by other considerations which render it desirable in the public interest to make that information available.

In the interests of transparency, we release responses to Official Information Act requests every 3 months. We will publish this response with your personal details redacted.

You have the right under section 28(3) of the Act to make a complaint to the Ombudsman if you are not satisfied with the response to your request. Information about how to do this is available at www.ombudsman.parliament.nz or by phoning 0800 802 602.

Yours sincerely



Kristina Temel
Manager, Legal Regulation and Policy