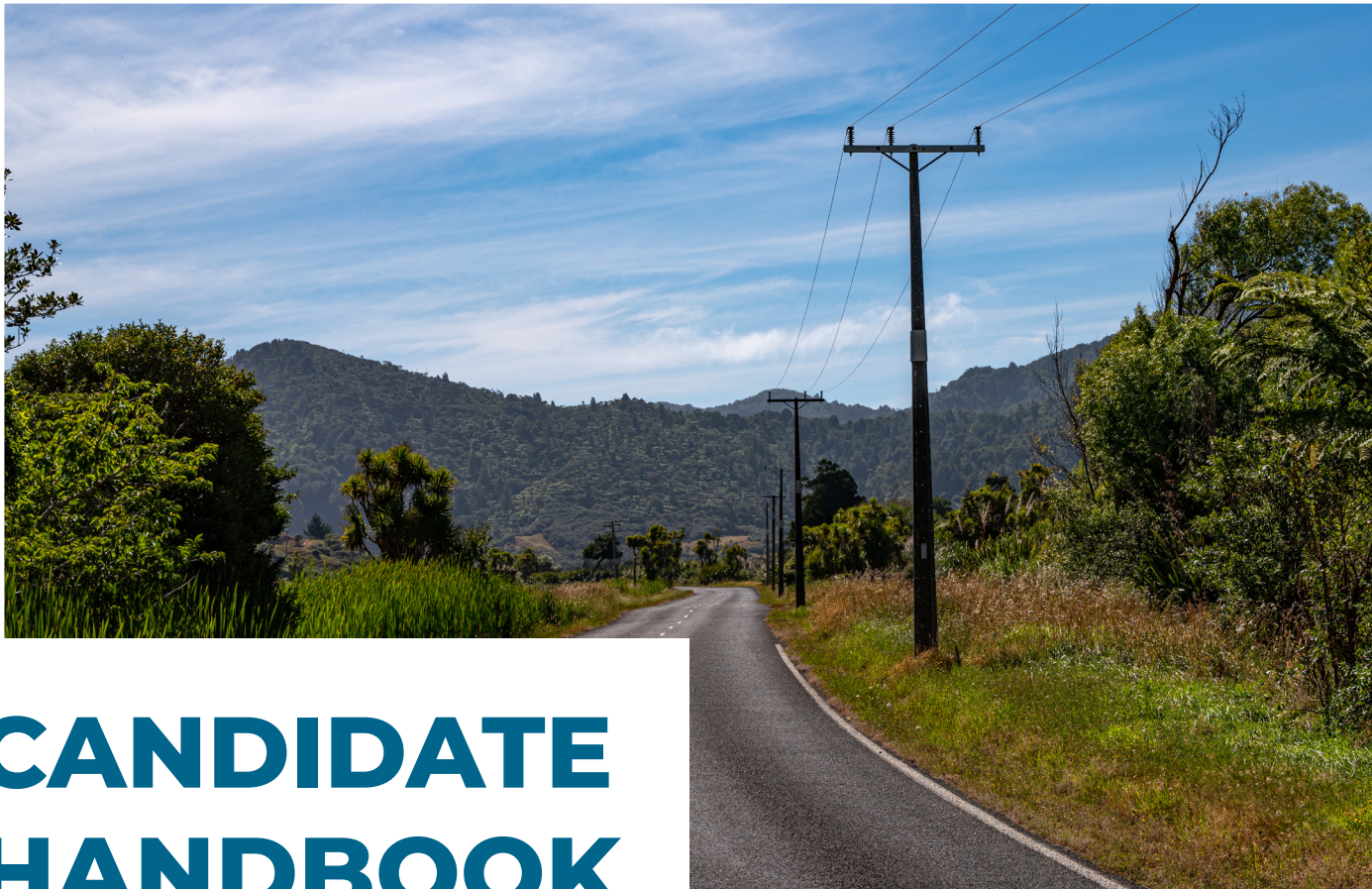


WAITOMO
ENERGY
SERVICES
CUSTOMER
TRUST



CANDIDATE HANDBOOK

2026
Election of Trustees
and Owner's Review Poll



www.wesct.org.nz

July 2026

Disclaimer: Every effort has been made to ensure that the information contained in this handbook is accurate and consistent with the Waitomo Energy Services Customer Trust (WESCT) Deed of Trust. WESCT Trust takes no responsibility for any errors or omissions. It is recommended that candidates obtain a full copy of the Deed which is available online at: wesct.org.nz.



Dale Ofoske, Returning Officer
Independent Election Services Ltd
Level 2, 198 Federal Street, Auckland 1010
PO Box 5135, Victoria Street West, Auckland 1142
Phone - 0800 922 822
Email - info@electionservices.co.nz
Website - electionservices.co.nz

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Overview

This handbook provides information which may be of interest to you as a candidate in the 2026 Waitomo Energy Services Customer Trust (WESCT) election of trustees.

The WESCT district incorporates all of the Waitomo District Council area, and parts of the Ōtorohanga District Council and the Taupō District Council areas.

Six trustees are required to be on the Trust at any one time according to the Trust's Deed of Trust for a four year term, with three of those trustees to be rotated every two years. An election is required in 2026 for three Trustee positions, by postal and/or online voting.

Voting will take place between Monday 24 August and Thursday 24 September 2026, with the close of voting at 12 noon on Thursday 24 September 2026.

The election will be conducted under the provisions of the Waitomo Energy Services Customer Trust Deed of Trust. Where electoral procedures are silent in the Deed, the provisions of the Local Electoral Act 2001 will be followed.

Key Dates

Thursday 9 July 2026	Nominations open
Thursday 16 July 2026	Potential Trustee information evening (starting 5:30 pm)
Friday 31 July 2026	Nominations close (12-noon)
by 8 August 2026	Candidates' names announced
Wednesday 19 August 2026	Meet the Candidates & Ownership Review Information Evening (starting 5:30pm)
Monday 24 August 2026	Delivery of voting mailers
Thursday 24 September 2026	Close of voting (12-noon) Final results announced (4pm)
Thursday 1 October 2026	Public Declaration of Results

Role of the Trustees

The Lines Company Ltd (TLC) is 100% owned by the Waitomo Energy Services Customer Trust. Trustees act as responsible shareholders of The Lines Company — keeping an eye on how the business is doing and making sure it continues to deliver value for the community.

Trustees are not responsible for the day-to-day management and operations of The Lines Company.



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Key Responsibilities

- Setting out the Trust's expectations for TLC each year through a Letter of Expectation
- Reviewing and giving feedback on TLC's Statement of Corporate Intent
- Monitoring TLC's performance as a business
- Appointing and reviewing TLC's directors and their performance and fees
- Planning for future trustee and director succession
- Holding an Annual Meeting of Beneficiaries to share updates and hear from the community
- Staying informed about industry matters by attending Energy Trust NZ conferences
- Any other duty as set out in the Trust's Deed of Trust

Trustees play a part in promoting a strong, efficient electricity network across the TLC region — encouraging the company to keep delivering reliable service and supporting local success.



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Trustee Remuneration

The Trustees will be entitled to remuneration, including a meeting fee and expenses, of such amounts as the Trustees from time to time determine, paid from the Trust Fund.

The remuneration, meeting fee, and expenses will be reviewed by the Trustees annually. If as a result of the review, there is an increase or decrease, then the amounts payable will be adjusted accordingly.

As an example, in Financial Year 2025 the total trustee remuneration was \$128,632 as follows:

Chair

\$32,835

Deputy Chair

\$21,487

Trustee

\$18,721

The chair and deputy chair roles are paid more to reflect their increased workload. All other Trustees have the same responsibilities.



Candidate Eligibility

Candidates must be enrolled on the Parliamentary Electoral Roll.

1. Candidates must permanently reside in the Waitomo Energy Services Customer Trust area at the time of election or re-election.
2. No director or employee of The Lines Company may stand for election as a WESCT Trustee.
3. Each candidate must be physically and mentally capable of holding the office of Trustee.
4. Retiring trustees may, if they so choose, stand for re-election.
5. Each candidate must be nominated by two beneficiaries of the Trust, other than themselves.
6. Nominators must be beneficiaries of Waitomo Energy Services Customer Trust, which means they must be the named account holder of an electricity account in the WESCT area.

A trustee shall cease to hold office if such Trustee:

- becomes mentally incapable;
- becomes bankrupt or enters into a composition or assignment for the benefit of his or her creditors;
- is absent without leave from three consecutive ordinary meetings of the Trustees;
- is convicted of any indictable offence.

Potential Trustee Information Evening

The Trust will be holding a Potential Trustee Information Evening where existing Trustees will provide a background of what their role entails.

When: Thursday, 16 July 2026, starting at 5:30 pm

Venue: Railway Building No 3, 190 Rora Street, Te Kūiti



THURSDAY
16TH JULY

Meet the Candidates Evening

An opportunity for electors to learn more about the candidates has been arranged. This is a great opportunity for campaigning and we thoroughly recommend that candidates attend.

When: Wednesday 19 August 2026, starting at 5:30pm

Venue: Railway Building No 3, 190 Rora Street, Te Kūiti

Each candidate who attends will be expected to speak for up to 3 minutes. They will not be questioned directly by attendees; however, there will be 1:1 questions from those attending.

Other events may be arranged by interest groups. If you mark your details as private, we will not release them to media or anyone who wants to organise an event.



If you wish
for your contact details
to be released to anyone
planning such an event,
be sure to mark your contact
details as **PUBLIC** or **MEDIA**.

Nominations

Nomination key dates

A public notice calling for nominations will be published on or before Wednesday 8 July 2026

Nominations open on Thursday 9 July 2026 and close at 12 noon on Friday 31 July 2026.

Please do not leave lodging your nomination to the last minute.

Should a nomination form be lodged late on the morning nominations close, and be incorrectly completed or ineligible nominators be provided, there may be insufficient time to correct the situation and the nomination form could be invalidated.

Candidates will be announced by public notice on or before Saturday 8 August 2026.

Availability of nomination papers

Each nomination must be made on the appropriate official nomination form which will be available from Thursday 9 July 2026:

Printed nomination forms will also be available from:

- by downloading printable or interactive form from: <https://www.wesct.org.nz/elections/>
- by emailing the returning office on nominations@electionservices.co.nz;
- by phoning the returning office on 0800 922 822 to have one posted or emailed to you.

Completing your nomination form

The candidate must complete and sign the front page of the nomination form to indicate their consent to stand as a candidate for the Waitomo Energy Services Customer Trust election.

Each nomination form must be completed and signed by two nominators, who are beneficiaries of the Trust and are eligible electors, enrolled on the Parliamentary Electoral Roll.

A candidate may not nominate themselves for office.

If a candidate is commonly known in the community by a slightly different name (eg. Edward Smith is commonly known as Ted Smith) and has been known by this name for at least the last six months (to the satisfaction of the Returning Officer), the commonly known name may appear on the voting document.

Candidates are not permitted to use official titles or ranks as part of their name on the voting document. The use of degrees or qualifications are not permitted on the voting document before or after a candidate's name.

The use of titles or ranks, and qualifications may instead be included as part of the 200 word candidate profile statement.

Candidates do not have to pay a nomination deposit for this election.

Candidate profile statement

Candidates must provide the Returning Officer with a candidate profile statement when submitting their nomination

The candidate profile statement will be available on WESCT website and included with the voting documentation sent to each elector.

This statement **must not exceed 200 words** and should contain information about the candidate, their qualifications and skills applicable to the position for which they are standing and their policies/intentions if elected. The candidate profile statement **must be true** and **accurate** and the returning officer is not required to verify or investigate any information included in this statement.

Candidate profile statements must not be:

- Untrue
- Defamatory
- Slanderous
- Offensive
- Abusive



The Returning Officer may request that a candidate profile statement is amended in consultation with the candidate.

Candidate photo

Candidates are recommended to provide a passport style, colour photo with their nomination.

Photos will be cropped to show head and shoulders only, and no other people or pets are allowed.

Photos may be sent in **hard copy** or via **email**.

If sending a hard copy:

- only send a genuine photograph — ie: no photocopies, desktop printed or from previously printed material such as a magazine.
- do not write on the back of the photo.
- enclose the photo into a zip lock bag and staple the bag (only) to the nomination form
- Please note, photographs will not be returned.

If sending an electronic copy:

- Send via email to nominations@electionservices.co.nz.
- Do not embed the image into the email message or in a Word doc.
- For best results photographs should be saved in a high resolution image file, eg: JPEG.
- The image file should be attached to the email and sent together with the nomination.

Candidate Photos are not mandatory and where not available, it will be noted that the Candidate did not provide a photo, on the candidate profile.

Return of nomination form

Nomination forms must be in the hands of the returning officer or an electoral official not later than 12 noon on Friday 31 July 2026.



**LATE NOMINATIONS
WILL NOT BE
ACCEPTED**

Completed nomination forms can be scanned and emailed to:

nominations@electionservices.co.nz

or posted in time to be received no later than 12 noon, Friday 31 July 2026 to:

The Returning Officer
Waitomo Energy Services Customer Trust
PO Box 5135
Victoria Street West
Auckland 1142.

All nomination materials (nomination form, candidate profile statement and photo) should be lodged together.

A receipt will be issued to acknowledge that a nomination has been received. This receipt does not constitute acknowledgement that the nomination paper is in order.

Once lodged, nomination forms are checked to ensure the candidate and nominators are eligible and that all sections of the nomination paper have been completed correctly.

The lodgement of nomination materials should not be left to the last minute. Should a nomination form be lodged late on the morning nominations close, and be incorrectly completed or ineligible nominators are provided, there may be insufficient time to correct the situation and the nomination paper could be invalidated.

After the close of nominations

Once nominations have closed, a list of valid candidates will be provided to the Waitomo Energy Services Customer Trust.

A public notice advising of the valid candidate names will be published in the King Country News on either Thursday 6 August or Thursday 13th August 2026.

A candidate can withdraw from the election at any time. However, if a candidate withdraws from the election after the close of nominations, it may not be possible to remove their name from the official voting materials (voting document and candidate statements). Any votes received for a candidate who has withdrawn but whose name still appears on the voting document will be disregarded.

If at the time nominations close, there is three or less nominations, the Returning Officer will publicly declare those candidates duly elected. Any vacancies remaining unfilled will be extra-ordinary vacancies. An extra-ordinary vacancy must be filled, and by resolution of the Trustees may be filled by appointment of an eligible person.

Nominating Offences

It is an offence punishable on conviction to a fine not exceeding \$2,000 for any person who:

- consents to being nominated as a candidate for the Trust Board knowing that he or she is incapable under any Act of holding that office; or
- signs a nomination paper to nominate a candidate who is, to the knowledge of the person signing, incapable under any Act of holding that office.

Campaigning

Election campaigning can commence any time and may continue up to and including election day. This includes election advertising on advertisements (any media), websites, door knocking and social media posts.

However, the locations and periods of display of election signs/hoardings, posters or vehicle signage, depend on the territorial authority you are campaigning in.

Each Council in the Trust area has different requirements, bylaws and policies for the display of election signs, and if erecting election signs, candidates are encouraged to familiarise themselves with the relevant council rules. Councils' policy on election signs are summarised in this handbook (refer page 11).

Election advertising, using any media (including leaflets, broadcasting, social media & signage), must identify the true name and contact details of the candidate or their agent.

The authorisation statement must contain:

The true name
of the person
authorising the
advertising.



at least one of these

an email address

a post office box number

a residential or business
address;

a phone number

or

a link to a
page on an
internet site,*
if the page
contains one
or more of the
contact details
to the left.
A QR code is not
sufficient for the
link.

For social media these details should be included on a profile picture, or within the bio section of a page. For example: 'All content/images contained on this social media page/channel are authorised by [name], [contact details]'.

For further information refer Local Electoral Act 2001, Section 113 (2)(b).

In addition to the Local Electoral Act 2001, campaign advertisements are subject to the Advertising Standards Authority (ASA) Code, which is accessible online at [asa.co.nz /codes/codes/advertising-standards-code/](https://asa.co.nz/codes/codes/advertising-standards-code/)

No election material can contain:

- any untrue statement;
- defamatory statements or images of any candidate (for example under the Defamation Act 1992);
- an imitation voting document, especially which has the names of the candidates with any direction or indication as to the candidate a person should vote for, or in any way contains such direction or indication likely to influence the voter.

Voting documents should not be collected from electors by candidates or their assistants.

Each elector should post or deliver their own voting document to the returning officer. This also applies to resthomes and hospitals — voting documents should not be collected from elderly or infirm electors by candidates or their assistants.

Candidates commit an offence of treating if during, before or after their campaign they directly or indirectly give, provide or pay for meals, drink or entertainment with the purpose of influencing that voter.

Candidates should be aware that it is an offence (carrying a fine of up to \$5,000, if convicted) to interfere in any way with an elector with the intention of influencing or advising that elector as to how they should vote. Candidates and their assistants should be mindful of this particularly if campaigning occurs in rest homes or hospitals.

Use of Trust Resources

All candidates are **NOT** permitted to use for their campaign any Waitomo Energy Services Customer Trust (WESCT) or The Lines Company (TLC) resources to promote their own election.

These resources may include, but are not limited to:

- use of WESCT or TLC logos or branding on any campaign material;
- use of staff employed by WESCT or TLC;
- WESCT or TLC office equipment (photocopiers, cellphones, computers, vehicles, etc);
- WESCT or TLC social media platforms;
- WESCT or TLC events, such as grant recipient events.

If you are unsure, please contact the Electoral Office on info@electionservices.co.nz.



CURRENT TRUSTEES

Current Trustees who are standing for re-election must be especially vigilant not to use their position to gain an advantage over other candidates.

Whilst carrying out business as usual, it is imperative that trustees ensure that they DO NOT use any trust events (e.g., grant recipient events, or media coverage) as a platform for campaigning.

Social media

Social media can be a useful tool for candidates for campaigning purposes and electioneering.

The Trust's social media channels are Trust resources and must remain politically neutral at all times. The Trust may promote elections and the importance of voting but will not associate these posts with any candidates.

The Trust's social media accounts will not follow any candidates. This may result in your account being unfollowed.

The Trust's social media accounts are not permitted to be used as a communications channel by anyone (candidates or members of the public) for promotion, electioneering or campaigning.

Candidates should not post on the Trust's social media channels, nor should they comment on, share or otherwise use the Trust's social media channels for electioneering. You may not rate, review, check-in or tag the Trust's social media channels in your own posts or comments.

Meet the Candidates Evening

Meet the Candidates Evening is another opportunity to campaign. For more information refer page 5.



Election Signs & Hoardings

Election signs can be referred to as hoardings, posters, signs or other similar types of promotion that are used to display information relating to the election of a candidate(s) or promotions of issues relating to a poll.

Election signs may be erected up to three months before the election, but must be covered or removed by midnight before Election day, i.e. Thursday 30 July 2026 at 11:59pm latest.

It is a requirement of the Local Electoral Act 2001 that election signs must clearly display the name and a contact method of the candidate or persons authorising the sign on the front face of the sign, large enough to read if standing in front of sign. QR codes are not sufficient for this purpose. (refer page 9)

Election signs are generally not allowed on public land, check with the relevant Council for any exceptions.

Key points

For public safety reasons, the following recommendations should also be complied with.

- Election signs must not obstruct or be likely to obstruct a driver's view of any corner, bend intersection, vehicular crossing, traffic sign or traffic signal.
- Illuminated, animated or flashing signs are generally not permitted, but if allowed shall not constitute a nuisance to adjoining dwellings or other activities, or a hazard or distraction to vehicular traffic.
- Signs should be securely braced from the ground up to carry wind loads for the duration of the election.
- Candidates should use wooden rather than metal supports & check for underground services before digging.
- Candidates should regularly (daily if possible), monitor all their election signs with the view to reinstating any vandalised or storm damaged signs.

In addition:

- Signs must not exceed 3m² in area and only one sign is permitted for each candidate per site.
- Signs may only be affixed to moving vehicles if the primary purpose of that vehicle is not advertising.
- Signs should not be affixed to any tree, or public street furniture, e.g. bus shelters, light/signage poles.
- Signs should not be placed under the drip line of protected trees.
- The grassed area damaged by the hoardings/signs i.e. support holes, should be reinstated.
- Candidates seeking to erect signs on private property are advised to seek the permission of both landowner and any tenant of the property. Signs on private land must still comply with the relevant District Plan.



Who to contact

Each Council in the Trust area has different requirements, bylaws and policies for the erection of election hoardings. The decision of the Council's chief executive, compliance officer or delegated staff is final.

Councils reserve the right to remove non-complying signs, and may charge either the candidate or the landowner a reasonable fee for storing and removal costs before they can be collected.

Candidates must comply with the relevant Territorial Authority (Council) rules when erecting election signs, as outlined on the websites of each respective organisation, ie:

Waitomo District Council area	www.waitomo.govt.nz	Phone: (0800) 932 4357
Taupō District Council area	www.taupodc.govt.nz	Phone: (0800) 275 832
Ōtorohanga District Council area	www.otodc.govt.nz	Phone: (0800) 734 000
State Highways	www.nzta.govt.nz	environmentalplanning@nzta.govt.nz

If in doubt, contact the compliance officer on the above phone numbers.

If the content of the sign is defamatory to any person or organisation, not authorised by the candidate or agent does not contain the authorisation statement, photograph the offending sign and seek guidance from the electoral office by email to info@electionservices.co.nz.



Voting and Roll

The voting period is from **Monday 24 August 2026 to 12 noon, Thursday 24 September 2026.**

- The Waitomo Energy Services Customer Trust (WESCT) elections will be conducted by postal and online voting using a First-Past-the-Post electoral system.
- Voting packs are distributed to all beneficiaries on the final electoral roll from Monday 24 Aug 2026.
- The WESCT Trust Deed permits voting by way of a duly appointed Power of Attorney.

Roll of Beneficiaries

The electoral roll will consist of those eligible to vote in the Waitomo Energy Services Customer Trust elections, being all beneficiaries of the Trust over the age of 18. Beneficiaries are any person who owns or uses an ICP within the District which is connected to The Lines Company's distribution network or energy supply company, and who is liable in terms of a contract with The Lines Company or energy retailer for payment of any amount for the conveyance of electricity.

If two or more persons together own or use an ICP, those persons together shall be deemed to be one beneficiary for the purposes of voting and voting rights will fall to the person named first in the records of these companies.

Each beneficiary is entitled to one vote for each ICP that beneficiary owns or uses.

Any alterations to the electoral roll should be made in writing to Waitomo Energy Services Customer Trust - info@wesct.org.nz.

The Final Electoral Roll contains the details used for issuing voting documents. The Final Electoral Roll will be produced once the Preliminary Electoral Roll closes on Friday 31 July 2026.

Ordinary Voting

All beneficiaries on the final electoral roll will be sent a voting pack including a candidate directory and ReplyPaid envelope by post. Each voting document will also include a set of unique online voting credentials and a URL for the purpose of online voting if the elector wishes to vote online.

Each elector, after receiving their postal voting document, can either complete it, seal it in the return Replypaid envelope, and post it to the returning office, or follow the instructions to cast their vote online.

Voting documents cannot be collected by candidates or their assistants.

Replacement Votes

There will be no special votes in this election as the Beneficiary Roll will be closed.

Replacement ordinary votes will be available for those beneficiaries who request one because either:

- they have not received their voting pack in the mail by Monday 31 August 2026; or
- they have damaged or lost a voting document previously posted to them; or
- they have requested in writing to the Trust not to have their name listed on the final roll.

Replacement ordinary votes can be requested by:

- phoning or emailing the Returning Office: 0800 922 822 or info@electionservices.co.nz; or
- emailing the Trust office: info@wesct.org.nz.

Replacement ordinary votes will be sent by email, or by post if requested in writing. Candidate profile statements will be available on the online voting platform for electors who receive their voting paper via email.

Vote Processing

Early Processing

The processing of returned votes will be carried out at the returning office (Independent Election Services Ltd) in Auckland.

Under the Waitomo Energy Services Customer Trust's Deed of Trust, returned votes are able to be opened and processed during all or part of the voting period prior to the close of voting. The early processing of votes involves the following functions:

- roll scrutiny
- opening of envelopes
- extracting of votes
- scanning and vote data capturing

No tallying of votes is undertaken until after the close of voting (12 noon, Thursday 24 September 2026).



The early processing functions are undertaken with strict security measures.

Scrutineers

Candidates may appoint scrutineers to oversee the electronic capture of all valid votes and the preliminary count (after the close of voting).

Each candidate may appoint one scrutineer to witness the above process.

A scrutineer cannot be:

- a candidate;
- a Trustee or employee of the Trust; or
- under the age of 18 years.

Each scrutineer must be appointed by a candidate, such appointment to be in writing to the Returning Officer.

A copy of this form may be downloaded from the WESCT website or photocopied from the back of this book.

The letter of appointment must be received by the returning officer no later than midday Wednesday 23 September 2026.

Each appointed scrutineer must report initially to the returning officer, where a declaration pledging not to disclose any information coming to their knowledge, will need to be signed and a name tag issued. When departing the premises, scrutineers are to return their name tag to the returning officer.

The role of the scrutineers is to ensure that election procedures are undertaken correctly and that the counting of votes is done fairly and reasonably.

Mobile phones, food and drink are prohibited within the secure area where the count will take place.

Further instructions are provided to scrutineers once they have been appointed.



Owners Review Poll

Key message

Every six years the Trust will conduct a poll in accordance with the second schedule of the Waitomo Energy Services Customer Trust's Deed of Trust.

A poll will take place concurrently with the 2026 election.

This poll is to determine:

- whether Beneficiaries prefer Shares to continue to be held by the Trust; or
- whether Beneficiaries prefer Shares (or the proceeds of their sale) be transferred to beneficiaries, or to local authorities or to any particular Beneficiary nominated by the Trustees.

One month prior to the election day, the Trust shall prepare and publish a report setting out:

- an analysis of the performance of the Trust to the date of the report together with the advantages and disadvantages of continued Trust ownership of the Shares; and
- the advantages and disadvantages of a transfer of the Shares to Beneficiaries or to Local Authorities or a sale of the Shares and a transfer of the proceeds to Beneficiaries or to Local Authorities; and
- any comments by the Directors of The Lines Company and related energy supply companies as to the most appropriate form of ownership of the Shares.

This report shall be available online at wesct.org.nz/elections/

The results of this poll will be determined by means of a simple majority.



Results

The counting of votes will commence from 12 noon, Friday 24 September 2026 at the returning office, Level 2, 198 Federal Street, Auckland Central 1010.

Results will be available once all votes have been received and processed. This is expected to be around 4pm on Thursday 24 September 2026.

The results of the poll will also be announced at this time.

Candidates will be advised of the final results by phone or email once available.

Final results will be placed on the Trust's website: wesct.org.nz/election.

Declaration of Results

A public notice (Declaration of Results) will appear in the King Country News on Thursday 1 October 2026.



Map of Trust's boundaries



Notes



TRUSTEE ELECTION

Thursday 24 September 2026

APPOINTMENT OF SCRUTINEER

The Electoral Officer
Waitomo Energy Services Customer Trust
C/- Independent Election Services Ltd
PO Box 5135
Victoria Street West
Auckland 1142

Email: info@electionservices.co.nz

I _____, a candidate for the office of
Waitomo Energy Services Customer Trust, trustee for the election being on Thursday, 24 September 2026,
do hereby appoint _____ as my scrutineer.

Signature of candidate

Date

NOTE: This letter must be returned to the Returning Officer or deputy Returning Officer no later than 12-midday on Wednesday 23 September 2026.

