

HOT COUNCILS CRITERIA

These were the criteria used for the Hot Councils Awards 2004 and which will form the basis of the next Awards in 2008. Local body councillors are urged to take these benchmarks into account when considering actions and expenditure on behalf of constituents.

Rating (25 points)

- Rates per capita 2003/04 (6 points) – the lower the better. The Forum advocates a lower rates burden.
- Forecast increase in rates per capita 2003/04-2005/06 (4 points) – the lower the better. The Forum advocates a lower rates burden.
- Rates as a percent of total revenue 2003/04 (5 points) – the lower the better. The Forum advocates a greater use of user charges as opposed to rates.
- General rate differential business versus residential (6 points) – the lower the better. The Forum advocates lower business differentials.
- Uniform annual general charge (4 points) – the higher the better. The Forum advocates the use of uniform charges for council services that benefit all ratepayers equally.

Spending and Revenue (20 points)

- Operating spending per capita 2003/04 (6 points) – the lower the better. The Forum advocates for councils to concentrate on core activities.
- Forecast increase in operating spending per capita 2003/04-2005/06 (4 points) – the lower the better. The Forum advocates spending discipline for councils.
- Operating revenue per capita 2003/04 (6 points) – the lower the better. The Forum advocates for councils to concentrate on core activities and a lower rates burden.
- Forecast increase in operating revenue per capita 2003/04-2005/06 (4 points) – the lower the better. The Forum advocates revenue a lower rates burden.

RMA (20 points)

- Percentage of resource consent applications notified 2001/02 (4 points) – the lower the better. The Forum advocates the notification of only those applications that would have a significant impact.
- Percentage of notified land use consents processed in time 2001/02 (3 points) – the higher the better. The Forum advocates that councils efficiently discharge their RMA obligations in a timely fashion.
- Percentage of non-notified land use consents processed in time 2001/02 (3 points) – the higher the better. The Forum advocates that councils efficiently discharge their RMA obligations in a timely fashion.
- Percentage of consents where further information is sought 2001/02 (5 points) – the lower the better. The Forum advocates that councils efficiently discharge their RMA obligations in a timely fashion.
- Council checks applications for consistency within one day (1 point) – ‘yes’ 1, ‘no’ 0. The Forum advocates that councils efficiently discharge their RMA obligations in a timely fashion.

- Council formally receives applications within one day (1 point) – ‘yes’ 1, ‘no’ 0. The Forum advocates that councils efficiently discharge their RMA obligations in a timely fashion.
- Council does not reset the time limit clock to zero on receipt of further information (1 point) – ‘yes’ 1, ‘no’ 0. The Forum advocates that councils efficiently discharge their RMA obligations in a timely fashion.
- 2001/02 survey responses audited by Audit NZ (2 points) – ‘yes’ 2, ‘no’ 0. The Forum advocates the use of an objective agency to assure the accuracy of local government survey responses.
- 2001/02 survey responses not audited by Audit NZ but earlier survey responses audited (1 point) – ‘yes’ 1, ‘no’ 0. The Forum advocates the use of an objective agency to assure the accuracy of local government survey responses.

Democracy (10 points)

- STV or FPP for 2004 elections (2 points) – ‘FPP’ 2, ‘STV’ 0. The Forum advocates the continued use of the FPP electoral system.
- Number of council members 2001 (3 points) – lower the better. The Forum advocates smaller, more business-like councils.
- Overall voter turnout 2001 elections (3 points) – higher the better. The Forum advocates public participation in local government.
- 2003/04 annual plan on council website (2 points) – ‘yes’ 2, ‘no’ 0. The Forum advocates greater public accessibility of council accountability documents.

Audit Reports (point deductions)

- Points deducted for non-standard audit reports issued for 2001/02 annual reports (-5 points). The Forum advocates adherence to Audit requirements.
- Points deducted for late adoption of 2001/02 annual reports (-5 points). The Forum advocates adherence to Audit requirements.

The ranking sheet showing councils’ performance against the above criteria for the 2004 Hot Councils Awards is on:

<http://www.businessnz.org.nz/file/710/Hot%20councils%20full%20ranking%20list.pdf>