

Profile 2019

Auckland Local Committee Election

Barry Thomas
Brown Watch - Auckland City Station



- Joined the NZ Fire Service in 2003 as a Firefighter.
- Became Secretary of the Gisborne Local in 2010

Successfully applied for an SO role in Auckland City in December 2018 (my 2 youngest children commenced study at AUT in the City).

My interest in Unionism was about representing the underdog, the bullied and the disenfranchised. That has always been my interest. I had no intention of standing in this election, but upon reflection, I believe I can bring an independent perspective to some of the challenges that face the Auckland Local. Many of the legends about living and working in Auckland I have found to be true. I have also found the JAFAs I work with to be welcoming, hard-working and passionate Firefighters no different to our other members around the country.

If elected I will work to add value to the committee and maintain a balanced, independent viewpoint. In saying that I am a firm believer in Union activism being as grass root based as possible, in our context as Firefighters, every watch, every station, every area should have a Union point of contact, passing and collating information up to the Local and down to the members.

My thoughts on the last years issue between the NZPFU and the Auckland Local? I believe this was a tragedy all round, and managed poorly. Coming to Auckland I did not know John well, and have only met Sulu since starting in Auckland. I have found them to be passionate, committed and vocal representatives for Auckland. Like many I have spoken to up here I hope the issues have been laid to rest and we can reset our priorities and get on with business. I also hope that with Watties employment it will herald a new beginning for transparency, openness and real engagement with all our members.