

Kate Ostapowicz

From: Euan Kyle
Sent: Tuesday, 10 November 2020 10:57 AM
To: [REDACTED]
Subject: RE: LGOIMA request
Attachments: Recipients - Any sender_Redacted 2.pdf

10/11/2020

[REDACTED]

Dear [REDACTED]

Request for Information – Local Government Official Information and Meetings Act 1987

We refer to your official information request dated 20 October 2020 for information regarding all correspondence, both internal and external, sent to stuff in response to their article on Wainuiomata North.

The information you have requested is enclosed. However, we have withheld some information under section 7(2)(a) of the LGOIMA to protect the privacy of natural persons, including that of deceased natural persons.

You have the right to seek an investigation and review by the Ombudsman of this decision. Information about how to make a complaint is available at www.ombudsman.parliament.nz or freephone 0800 802 602.

If you wish to discuss this decision with us, please feel free to contact us.

Regards,

Euan Kyle

Senior Advisor, Official Information and Privacy

Hutt City Council, 30 Laings Road, Private Bag 31912, Lower Hutt 5040, New Zealand
T 04 570 6702 W www.huttcity.govt.nz

Euan Kyle

Senior Advisor – OIA & Privacy

Hutt City Council, 30 Laings Road, Private Bag 31912, Lower Hutt 5040, New Zealand
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From: Euan Kyle
Sent: Tuesday, 20 October 2020 12:10 PM
To: [REDACTED]
Subject: RE: LGOIMA request

20/10/2020

[REDACTED]

Dear [REDACTED]

REQUEST FOR INFORMATION - LOCAL GOVERNMENT OFFICIAL INFORMATION AND MEETINGS ACT 1987: ACKNOWLEDGEMENT OF REQUEST

I am writing to acknowledge receipt of your official information request dated 20 October 2020 for information regarding all correspondence, both internal and external, sent to staff in response to their article on Wainuiomata North.

We received your request on 20 October 2020. We will endeavour to respond to your request as soon as possible and in any event no later than 20 working days after the day your request was received. If we are unable to respond to your request by then, we will notify you of an extension of that timeframe.

If any additional factors come to light which are relevant to your request, please do not hesitate to contact us so that these can be taken into account.

Yours sincerely,

Euan Kyle
Senior Advisor, Official Information and Privacy

Hutt City Council, 30 Laings Road, Private Bag 31912, Lower Hutt 5040, New Zealand
T 04 570 6702 W www.huttcity.govt.nz

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From: [REDACTED]
Sent: Tuesday, 20 October 2020 9:56 AM
To: Euan Kyle
Subject: LGOIMA request

<http://www.huttcity.govt.nz/Your-Council/News-and-notice/media-releases/wainuiomata-north-statement-of-clarification/>

Good morning,

Can you please supply me with all correspondence, both internal and external, sent to stuff in response to their article on Wainuiomata North (refer to the attached).

Many thanks,

--
[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

This email is confidential and may contain legally privileged information. If you are not the intended recipient, you must not disclose or use the information contained in it. If you have received this email in error, please notify us immediately by return email and delete the document.

From:
Sent:
To:
Subject:

[REDACTED]
Sunday, 6 September 2020 11:21 AM
Jo Miller
can you check please

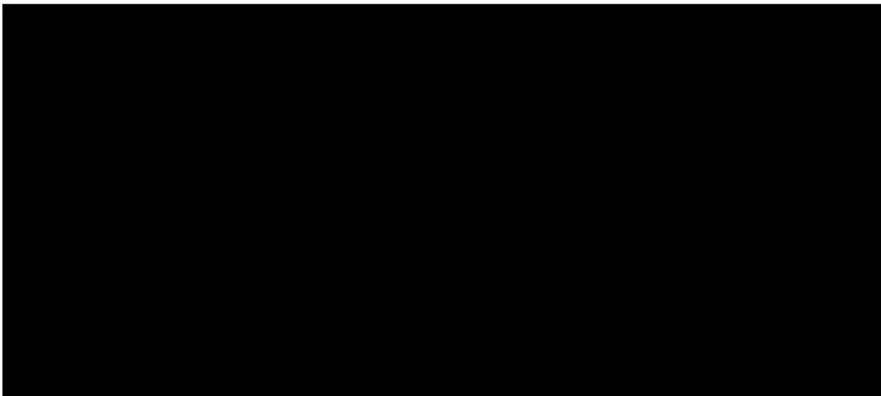
Hi Jo

I am assuming you don't want me to use this quote, or would you rather that?
Just let me know..

Chief executive Jo Milers said she did not shelve the work. "The work was in abeyance before I was even appointed as Chief Executive in February 2019, let alone my arrival in New Zealand and commencing employment in July 2019 ."

Or are you happy for this paragraph to be amended such?

A little more than two months later, three years after the councillors and officers began an exhaustive, public excluded process, producing a 110 page report and timeline for possible district plan changes and a long abeyance on the work, the scheme was finally scrapped and plans publicly released.



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From:
Sent:
To:
Subject:

[REDACTED]
Saturday, 5 September 2020 2:18 PM
Jo Miller
complaint

Dear Jo

Thanks for your calls today. I am unable to contact [REDACTED] but I am aware from an earlier conversation with him that the reason he did not contact you was that you were not in the role at the time and he felt, rightly or wrongly, that you would not be able to discuss this.

[REDACTED] told me he had always intended to talk to you as a follow up. I am advised that your quotes were taken from a video.

In relation to your issue over you not canning the scheme and where [REDACTED] got that information from I am simply unable to reach [REDACTED] so cannot provide detail on that.

You have requested that I divulge whether the senior sources are councillors or staff. I have given consideration to this request as I realise it will be helpful to you as CE in deciding your course of action. However I have decided I am under no obligation to disclose any information in relation to the sources spoken to for this story.

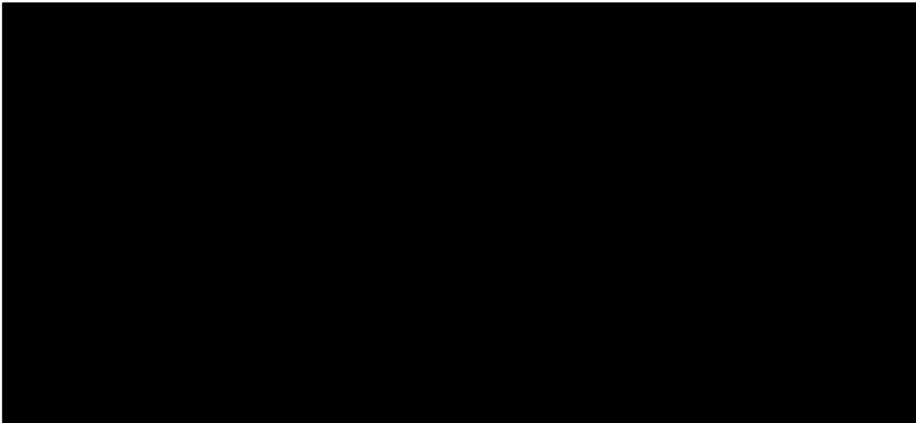
For your information [REDACTED] emailed me this morning with a number of issues with the story, which I have addressed with [REDACTED] and I have made some changes to today's story.

Because I am unable to reach [REDACTED] I will be making no further changes to the story.

However I will make [REDACTED] available to sit down and talk to you and Mayor Barry on Monday if that is convenient with a view to a follow up story.

I am sorry that it has taken a while to come back to you.

Yours sincerely



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[Redacted]

From: [Redacted]
Sent: Friday, 11 September 2020 2:31 PM
To: Jo Miller
Subject: complaint response
Attachments: Miller complaint.pdf; Griffith complaint.pdf

Dear Jo
Please find attached responses to complaints.

Sincerely

[Redacted]

[Redacted]

[Redacted]



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11 September 2020

Jo Miller
Chief Executive
Hutt City Council
Private Bag 31912
Lower Hutt 5040

Dear Jo

COMPLAINT

I write in response to your emails and telephone calls to me about the stories published by the *Dominion Post Weekend* on Mayor Barry's property purchase in 2019 and the events surrounding it. I am including with this letter a copy of my response to the Head of the Mayor's Office, in relation to the complaint received from Mr Griffiths on behalf of the Mayor, as my response will provide further background to the manner in which the stories were approached by our newsroom.

On the morning the stories were published (Saturday, 5 September) you telephoned me to complain that the journalist had not interviewed you for the stories and that you had not "canned" the scheme. I responded by email that afternoon as best I was able given I was unable to contact [REDACTED]. I did, however, make it clear in that email that [REDACTED] did not contact you as you were not in your role at the time of the proposed development and he felt you would not be able to discuss the matter. The quotes that were attributed to you were taken from a video. I indicated that I was unable to investigate your concern that you did not "can" the scheme until I had managed to speak to [REDACTED] and that I was not going to divulge our sources.

On Monday, 7 September you telephoned me in the morning and followed that up with a further email later that afternoon. You sought a full retraction and apology. You mentioned the council would be posting a statement to its website seeking "this". I note the council has now posted its own statement of clarification regarding Wainuiomata North, which opens with the following statement:¹

Over the weekend there has been media coverage by Stuff and the Dominion Post about Wainuiomata North. This media coverage has been inaccurate. Following approaches by Hutt City Council several amendments have been made to the online versions which correct the misinformation in the articles.

¹ <http://www.huttcity.govt.nz/Your-Council/News-and-notice/media-releases/wainuiomata-north-statement-of-clarification>

This statement indicates to me and any reader that the council considers the online version of the stories (as amended) to be accurate.

Your email of 7 September listed four areas of concern. I respond as follows:

1. Background information sent to ██████████ – ██████████ did look at the background information sent to him. It largely pertained to the UGS and the 27ha plan. There was nothing about the post-2016 plans, i.e. the 84ha area comprising a school, commercial centre, etc as these were being discussed in public-excluded workshops and briefings.
2. You did not find out about Cr Barry's house purchase following the September 2019 Council meeting – The stories don't say that you "found out" about the purchase after the meeting, the statement is that you were informed. Given you have said you will not be interviewed on the matter it's difficult to know whether you knew of the situation before the meeting.
3. Various statements attributed to "highly placed sources" – I am not prepared to identify sources. The statements make it clear that the sources are within council.
4. Concerns regarding ██████████ – I have reviewed ██████████ email and there is nothing in that which causes me any concern.

On 9 September I received a further email from you in relation to this matter, which attached a copy of an unsigned statement by Cr Bassett. To be honest, I'm not sure what relevance this statement has as the article refers to Mayor Wallace being informed after the September meeting, not that he was told for the first time.

In light of the above, I have concluded that your complaints are not justified and there is no basis for seeking a full retraction of the stories or an apology. The stories are not materially inaccurate, unfair or unbalanced. As I have indicated on previous occasions, I have invited you to provide a statement in order to address any perceptions of lack of balance but you have repeatedly declined to do so. You have also chosen to issue a statement of clarification on the council's website.

I do, however, consider it is appropriate to publish a correction and clarification in the following terms:

Hutt City Council – A correction and clarification

Last Saturday *Dominion Post Weekend* published stories that referred to the purchase of a property in Upper Fitzherbert Road, Wainuiomata by Lower Hutt Mayor Campbell Barry in February 2019. The stories also referred to the actions taken by Hutt Council Chief Executive Jo Miller after she was informed of the purchase. It was suggested she had "canned" the development as a result of being informed about the purchase.

The circumstances of the purchase were considered controversial by some councillors. In November 2017, as an elected councillor, Mayor Barry attended a council run meeting (to which the public were not invited) that discussed a proposed

development of the area in which the property was situated that was greater in scale than already envisaged by the Council's 2014 Urban Growth Strategy. One of those stories stated that documents and email exchanges showed Mayor Barry was involved in planning for the development, including "public-excluded" briefings, meetings and workshops throughout 2017 and 2018. This was incorrect. Mayor Barry has subsequently confirmed that the event he attended in November 2017 was the only council event he attended in relation to the proposed development. Further, Mayor Barry has clarified that he and his wife were looking across Lower Hutt to purchase a property from November 2017 and unsuccessfully placed offers on two properties in Wainuiomata before placing an offer on the Upper Fitzherbert Road property, which was referred to him by the listing agent. Mayor Barry subsequently advised council officers of the purchase and sought advice on how to manage potential conflicts of interest.

Following the publication of the stories Jo Miller contacted the *Dominion Post Weekend* to confirm she first found out about Mayor Barry's purchase from the commencement of her employment – prior to the Council meeting that took place in September 2019. Ms Miller also disputed she had canned the development, saying work on the project had been put into abeyance at the end of 2018. The plans, that had been worked on for years, were subsequently released by her and that work has now been subsumed into the Wellington Regional Growth Framework which is currently being drawn up and will report to all councils across the region by the end of the year. WRGF will identify all greenfield housing sites across the region.

The correction and clarification also, from my perspective, addresses Mayor Barry's concerns about the stories that he raised with me earlier in the week. I am including a copy of my letter to [REDACTED] of Mayor Barry's office in that regard.

Accordingly, I have arranged for the correction and apology to be published by Stuff as follows:

Online

- As a separate item with its own URL.
- Containing links to the existing online stories (as amended).
- Added a note to the top of the existing online stories referring and linking to the correction and clarification.
- Linking to the correction and clarification from the homepage (stuff.co.nz) under 'editors' picks' for no less than six hours commencing at 5am Saturday September 12 (after which it will be replaced by the normal cycle of news).

In print

- The correction and clarification will be published on page A3 of tomorrow's edition of the *Dominion Post Weekend*.
- Placement in top right hand corner and boxed.

In my view the publication of the correction and clarification in these terms properly addresses the concerns you have raised and fully informs the reader of your position.

Yours sincerely



11 September 2020

[REDACTED]
Hutt City Council
Private Bag 31912
Lower Hutt 5040

Dear [REDACTED]

COMPLAINT

Thank you for your email of 7 September 2020 at 6.10pm. I have now had an opportunity to discuss all of the matters you have raised with [REDACTED].

Before addressing the Mayor's remaining concerns I record that – as you are aware – following your initial complaint on behalf of the Mayor on the morning the print and online versions of the stories were published, I considered the matters you raised on the Mayor's behalf and made a number of changes to the online version of the story and you expressed your appreciation for that later that afternoon. Those changes included amending the headline, removing the photograph of Mayor Barry's property, and clarifying the advice sought in relation to the conflict of interest to ensure the Mayor's position was clear.

The concerns you have raised in your email of 7 September are premised on your assertion that both stories leave readers with the impression Mayor Barry used "inside information" he was aware of as a councillor to purchase a home in an area subject to a future possible plan change. I don't believe the stories convey that impression. I do accept the stories convey the impression there are grounds to believe that may have happened. Our investigation presents the background to the reader and lets them form their own opinion as to what may or may not have happened. Given the public role occupied by the Mayor at the time the issue is clearly a matter of public interest and I don't understand you to dispute that.

You have raised concerns with the articles in terms of accuracy and balance.

In terms of accuracy your primary complaint is that it was misleading to suggest the council was endeavouring to keep the development of the Upper Fitzherbert area secret because the development of that area had been signaled to the public in the Urban Growth Strategy since 2014. It is correct that the UGS referred to the development of that area, but that document also states:

When preparing the draft Urban Growth Strategy, Council reviewed all rural-residential zoned land and remaining undeveloped residential land within the city to assess its suitability for general residential development. Through this process, land around the

lower Upper Fitzherbert Road and Wise Street area in Wainuiomata ... was identified as suitable for moderate to large scale residential development.

Council's original intention was to enable all the land in the Upper Fitzherbert area to be available for Greenfield development – around 60 hectares of land with potential for around 1,500 new dwellings. Many of the existing lifestyle owners objected to completely opening up the area. Council considered their submissions and consequently proposed to make only 27 hectares of land available for development at this stage.

The public was made aware that only 27 hectares of land in the Upper Fitzherbert Road and Wise Street area was being proposed for development. Our understanding is that there was no information released to the public – whether by way of council agenda items or otherwise – that gave any reason to believe the council was proposing to develop more than the original 27 hectares until the plans were made public in December 2019. Accordingly, it is not misleading to say the development being considered by council from 2106 (which was significantly greater than the 27 hectares signaled by the UGS) were kept secret from the public.

You raise a further concern in relation to the accuracy of the statement that Mayor Barry participated in “a significant amount of work” on the bigger development and attended public-excluded workshops and briefings”. Having spoken to [REDACTED] I understand Mayor Barry confirmed he attended one briefing in November 2017. I accept this should be clarified to make it clear this was the only briefing on the larger proposed development he attended.

I have considered all of your remaining concerns in relation to accuracy and I don't believe they are justified or there is any material inaccuracy that would mislead readers.

The complaint suggests there are accuracy issues with the stories as a result of a “fundamental lack of balance”. I disagree.

At the outset I record that both Mayor Barry and Hutt Chief Executive Jo Miller have declined further interviews, which makes addressing balance issues raised extremely difficult. That said, the stories were not unbalanced. The stories rely heavily on documents supplied by sources.

Mr Wallace was approached because he was mayor at the time and presumably knew a great deal about the proposed development, the process and what was going on. Mr Bassett was approached because he chairs two key committees and would know if the process was indeed confidential and if anyone had declared any conflict. [REDACTED] was approached to verify if Mayor Barry had been at the November 2017 briefing, after he claimed he had been to no briefings at all. Mayor Barry retracted that claim after being presented with Ms Cousins' observations. Mayor Barry declined to be interviewed for the story. [REDACTED] was spoken to, as background. He did not deny that Mayor Barry knew of the larger development proposal but felt his purchase was "not inappropriate". There were many other people spoken to.

I agree that the circumstances regarding the purchase of Mayor Barry's property are relevant and I am happy to clarify those circumstances to our readers. It must, however, be noted that Mayor Barry refused to be interviewed for the story and this information, as well as a number of other explanations, would have been useful prior to publication.

I do not consider the thrust of either story to be unfair, inaccurate, or unbalanced. Whether Mayor Barry obtained confidential information from the briefing he attended in November 2017 and used that information to acquire a property he suspected he would increase in value if the proposed development went ahead is unlikely to be known. However, it is very much in the public interest that the underlying circumstances are disclosed in order that the public can form their own views about the character of those who represent them – this include both Mayor Barry and those who oppose him.

██████████ worked very hard to understand the background and the underlying issues. Mayor Barry's decision to decline to be interviewed was unfortunate, but it was our view that the public interest required the stories to be told.

Your complaint suggests possible resolutions. For the reasons set out above, I do not consider an apology is warranted. I do, however, consider it is appropriate to publish a correction and clarification in the following terms:

Hutt City Council – A correction and clarification

Last Saturday *Dominion Post Weekend* published stories that referred to the purchase of a property in Upper Fitzherbert Road, Wainuiomata by Lower Hutt Mayor Campbell Barry in February 2019. The stories also referred to the actions taken by Hutt Council Chief Executive Jo Miller after she was informed of the purchase. It was suggested she had "canned" the development as a result of being informed about the purchase.

The circumstances of the purchase were considered controversial by some councillors. In November 2017, as an elected councillor, Mayor Barry attended a council run meeting (to which the public were not invited) that discussed a proposed development of the area in which the property was situated that was greater in scale than already envisaged by the Council's 2014 Urban Growth Strategy. One of those stories stated that documents and email exchanges showed Mayor Barry was involved in planning for the development, including "public-excluded" briefings, meetings and workshops throughout 2017 and 2018. This was incorrect. Mayor Barry has subsequently confirmed that the event he attended in November 2017 was the only council event he attended in relation to the proposed development. Further, Mayor Barry has clarified that he and his wife were looking across Lower Hutt to purchase a property from November 2017 and unsuccessfully placed offers on two properties in Wainuiomata before placing an offer on the Upper Fitzherbert Road property, which was referred to him by the listing agent. Mayor Barry subsequently advised council officers of the purchase and sought advice on how to manage potential conflicts of interest.

Following the publication of the stories Jo Miller contacted the *Dominion Post Weekend* to confirm she first found out about Mayor Barry's purchase from the commencement of her employment – prior to the Council meeting that took place in September 2019. Ms Miller also disputed she had canned the development, saying work on the project had been put into abeyance at the end of 2018. The plans, that had been worked on for years, were subsequently released by her and that work has now been subsumed into the Wellington Regional Growth Framework which is currently being

drawn up and will report to all councils across the region by the end of the year. WRGF will identify all greenfield housing sites across the region.

The correction and clarification also, from my perspective, addresses Jo Miller's concerns about the stories that she raised with me earlier in the week. I am including a copy of my letter to Ms Miller in that regard.

Accordingly, I have arranged for the correction and apology to be published by Stuff as follows:

Online

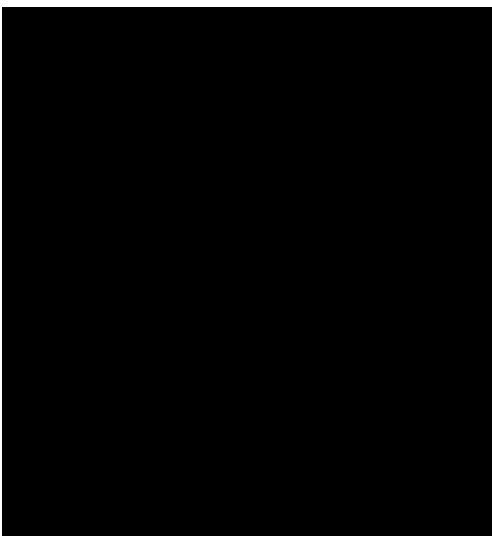
- As a separate item with its own URL.
- Containing links to the existing online stories (as amended).
- Added a note to the top of the existing online stories referring and linking to the correction and clarification.
- Linking to the correction and clarification from the homepage (stuff.co.nz) under 'editors' picks' for no less than six hours commencing at 5am Saturday September 12 (after which it will be replaced by the normal cycle of news).

In print

- The correction and clarification will be published on page A3 of tomorrow's edition of the *Dominion Post Weekend*.
- Placement in top right hand corner and boxed.

In my view the publication of the correction and clarification in these terms properly addresses the concerns you have raised and fully informs the reader of Mayor Barry's position.

Yours sincerely



[REDACTED]

From: [REDACTED]
Sent: Monday, 14 September 2020 9:30 AM
To: Jo Miller
Subject: complaint

Dear Jo,
Thank you for your email on Friday. Given that you have signalled that you are looking at all options I would prefer any further correspondence is by email. If you wish to take your complaint to the Media Council, of which Stuff is a signatory, the details are:
Media Council, PO Box 10 879, Wellington, 6143
or info@mediacouncil.org.nz

Yours sincerely

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]



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From: [REDACTED]
Sent: Sunday, 6 September 2020 12:18 PM
To: Jo Miller
Subject: Re: can you check please

It's just being sorted by the office, I can't do this remotely and it takes a while to load.

On Sun, 6 Sep 2020 at 12:13, Jo Miller <Jo.Miller@huttcity.govt.nz> wrote:

Hi [REDACTED]
I have just visited the app .
It is still showing I believe - here

Lower Hutt Mayor Campbell Barry was involved in "confidential" plans to develop rural Wainuiomata. He bought a sizeable property in the area, months before those plans were made public.
<https://www.stuff.co.nz/dominion-post/300093672/controversy-over-politicians-house-purchase?cid=app-iPhone>

And here :

A prominent Wellington politician's land purchase has potentially undermined a major project to help fix Lower Hutt's housing crisis.
<https://www.stuff.co.nz/national/politics/300093140/the-battle-for-a-slice-of-hutt-paradise?cid=app-iPhone>

Please can you advise. ? Thanks Jo

Ngā mihi nui

Jo Miller
Chief Executive

Hutt City Council, 30 Laings Road Private Bag 31912, Lower Hutt 5010, New Zealand
T 04 570 6773<callto:04%20570%206773> M 027 213 7550<callto:027%20213%207550>
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<[https://urldefense.com/v3/_http://www.huttcity.govt.nz_!!LBk0ZmAmG_H4m2o!_XWBgHWgHeZBerWXEM_I1s8XIuzOzrd8U7IfPySkpr2ZZt8zG6v9C8omMFonBEiG_k7HJcH7_crD\\$](https://urldefense.com/v3/_http://www.huttcity.govt.nz_!!LBk0ZmAmG_H4m2o!_XWBgHWgHeZBerWXEM_I1s8XIuzOzrd8U7IfPySkpr2ZZt8zG6v9C8omMFonBEiG_k7HJcH7_crD$)>

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[cid:hccsmalllogo_12fb0640-f486-4c5a-a775-f4ab1b1dfb5d.jpg]

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immediately. Thank you.

On 6/09/2020, at 12:01 PM, [REDACTED] wrote:

Done. Thank you Jo.
[REDACTED]

On Sun, 6 Sep 2020 at 11:51, Jo Miller <Jo.Miller@huttcity.govt.nz<mailto:Jo.Miller@huttcity.govt.nz>>>
wrote:

Yes with the following amend by adding in “ end of 2018 “ Thank you [REDACTED]
Jo

Ngā mihi nui

Jo Miller
Chief Executive

Hutt City Council, 30 Laings Road Private Bag 31912, Lower Hutt 5010, New Zealand
T 04 570 6773<callto:04%20570%206773> M 027 213 7550<callto:027%20213%207550>
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On 6/09/2020, at 11:49 AM, [REDACTED] <[mailto:\[REDACTED\]](mailto:[REDACTED])> wrote:

Ok so this? I just want to be sure we get it right.

Work on the project was put into abeyance at the end of 2018 and then the plans, that had been worked on for years, were subsequently released by Miller. That work has now been subsumed into the Wellington Regional Growth Framework which is currently being drawn up and will report to all councils across the region by the end of the year . WRGF will identify all greenfield housing sites across the region.

On Sun, 6 Sep 2020 at 11:29, Jo Miller

<Jo.Miller@huttcity.govt.nz<mailto:Jo.Miller@huttcity.govt.nz><mailto:Jo.Miller@huttcity.govt.nz<mailto:Jo.Miller@huttcity.govt.nz>>>> wrote:

Hi [REDACTED]

The second paragraph remains inaccurate as the work has not been scrapped / canned/ shelved . It has been subsumed into the Wellington Regional Growth Framework which is currently being drawn up and will report to all councils across the region by the end of the year . WRGF will identify all greenfield housing sites across the region .

(your reporter was made aware of this and the report to September 2019 council said this)

And no , I don't want to be quoted for the reasons we discussed .

Thanks [REDACTED] . Jo

Ngā mihi nui

Jo Miller
Chief Executive

Hutt City Council, 30 Laings Road Private Bag 31912, Lower Hutt 5010, New Zealand
T 04 570 6773<callto:04%20570%206773> M 027 213 7550<callto:027%20213%207550>
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On 6/09/2020, at 11:21 AM, [REDACTED]

Hi Jo

I am assuming you don't want me to use this quote, or would you rather that?
Just let me know..

Chief executive Jo Milers said she did not shelve the work. "The work was in abeyance before I was even

appointed as Chief Executive in February 2019, let alone my arrival in New Zealand and commencing employment in July 2019 ."

Or are you happy for this paragraph to be amended such?

A little more than two months later, three years after the councillors and officers began an exhaustive, public excluded process, producing a 110 page report and timeline for possible district plan changes and a long abeyance on the work, the scheme was finally scrapped and plans publicly released.

[REDACTED]

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[REDACTED]

Editor in Chief Newsrooms

E

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

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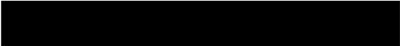
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From: [REDACTED]
Sent: Sunday, 6 September 2020 11:50 AM
To: Jo Miller
Cc: Caryn Ellis
Subject: Re: complaint URGENT

Jo I will take a proper look through all of this material you have provided.
I can meet with you week of 14th but we may struggle to find a spot on the first two days of that week.
Kind regards
[REDACTED]

On Sun, 6 Sep 2020 at 11:24, Jo Miller <Jo.Miller@huttcity.govt.nz> wrote:

One more point [REDACTED].

I mention the reporting in the public domain of matters relating to development land in Wainuiomata. Your journalist was sent all of the following links :

August 1 2017 - City Development Committee -

[https://urldefense.com/v3/_http://infocouncil.huttcity.govt.nz/Open/2017/08/CDC_01082017_AGN_2407_AT_WEB.htm_!!LBk0ZmAmG_H4m2o!9SU38F8TyAgZYupqUFmHdHWid1r0hS1XcFYBlwNv65tpC4UYv5YGOQsAYe5qQIiwkOv35jhGyLbM\\$](https://urldefense.com/v3/_http://infocouncil.huttcity.govt.nz/Open/2017/08/CDC_01082017_AGN_2407_AT_WEB.htm_!!LBk0ZmAmG_H4m2o!9SU38F8TyAgZYupqUFmHdHWid1r0hS1XcFYBlwNv65tpC4UYv5YGOQsAYe5qQIiwkOv35jhGyLbM$)

Under General Manager's Update:

“Urban Growth Strategy Implementation

95. The Urban Growth Strategy 2032 was adopted in 2014.

96. Implementation projects being worked on include:

- Wainuiomata - extension of Wise Street – This work has been undertaken enabling the start of a consented 31 lot private subdivision on one of the landholdings along the extension. Other landholdings along this extension are considering future residential development.
- Upper Fitzherbert, Wainuiomata

Officers have invited Expressions of Interest from selected providers with the skills and experience to prepare a best practice framework for the urban development of Upper Fitzherbert Road, Wainuiomata. Shortlisted respondents will be invited to provide detailed fee proposals.”

November 28 2017 - City Development Committee -

[https://urldefense.com/v3/_http://infocouncil.huttcity.govt.nz/Open/2017/11/CDC_28112017_AGN_2435_AT_WEB.htm_!!LBk0ZmAmG_H4m2o!9SU38F8TyAgZYupqUFmHdHWid1r0hS1XcFYBlwNv65tpC4UYv5YGOQsAYe5qQIiwkOv35osct6Es\\$](https://urldefense.com/v3/_http://infocouncil.huttcity.govt.nz/Open/2017/11/CDC_28112017_AGN_2435_AT_WEB.htm_!!LBk0ZmAmG_H4m2o!9SU38F8TyAgZYupqUFmHdHWid1r0hS1XcFYBlwNv65tpC4UYv5YGOQsAYe5qQIiwkOv35osct6Es$)

“49. Implementation projects being worked on include:

- Wainuiomata - extension of Wise Street – One subdivision consented and houses under construction. Other landholdings along this extension are considering future residential development.
- Upper Fitzherbert, Wainuiomata

Officers have selected a consultant team to prepare a best practice framework for the urban development of Upper Fitzherbert Road, Wainuiomata. This work, when completed, will inform a District Plan change to enable residential development as proposed in the urban Growth strategy 2012 – 2032.”

27 February 2018 - City Development Committee

[https://urldefense.com/v3/_http://infocouncil.huttcity.govt.nz/Open/2018/02/CDC_27022018_AGN_2509_AT_WEB.htm_!!LBk0ZmAmG_H4m2o!9SU38F8TyAgZYupqUFmHdHWid1r0hS1XcFYBlwNv65tpC4UYv5YGOQsAYe5qQIiwkOv35tNHiv6i\\$](https://urldefense.com/v3/_http://infocouncil.huttcity.govt.nz/Open/2018/02/CDC_27022018_AGN_2509_AT_WEB.htm_!!LBk0ZmAmG_H4m2o!9SU38F8TyAgZYupqUFmHdHWid1r0hS1XcFYBlwNv65tpC4UYv5YGOQsAYe5qQIiwkOv35tNHiv6i$)

“42. Implementation projects being worked on include:

· Wainuiomata - extension of Wise Street – One subdivision consented and houses under construction. Other landholdings along this extension are considering future residential development.

· Upper Fitzherbert, Wainuiomata

Officers working with a consultant team undertook a planning exercise in November 2017 to develop a framework for the urban development of Upper Fitzherbert Road, Wainuiomata. This work has just been received in draft form and when completed will inform a District Plan change to enable residential development as proposed in the urban Growth strategy 2012 – 2032. A councilor workshop will be held to go through the report and determine next steps.”

None of this at all is brought out in the story . I am keen to understand this .

If we could meet this week at whatever time , I will make myself available as will Mayor Barry .

Thanks Jo

Ngā mihi nui

Jo Miller

Chief Executive

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On 6/09/2020, at 10:57 AM, Jo Miller <Jo.Miller@huttcity.govt.nz> wrote:

Dear [REDACTED]

Thanks for your reply .

I'm happy for you to use anything from my earlier email to help you make your reporting less misleading . I won't though , provide a statement . The reason for this is there are a whole heap more inaccuracies in the piece insofar as it relates to me , and a statement simply correcting one part , by inference leaves the other parts as accepted . That's not how I work .

For example , it is categorically untrue to state that I was made aware of Mayor Barry's house purchase

after a September 2019 council meeting . I had knowledge of it from the start of my employment , and know that one of your unnamed sources who is a current councillor was making an issue with it as direct retaliation for what he claimed was an injustice against him and was talking to journalists last August about this . I assumed this was just the nasty politics that happens around election time . I had rather hoped we had moved on.

I've also had an email from my the [REDACTED] which is worrying insofar as it relates to your journalist's inquiries and approach . I will happily share with you in person . If I were you I would want to see it .

I would also refer you to this

<https://i.stuff.co.nz/dominion-post/news/86403745/lower-hutt-mayor-rekindles-debate-over-building-more-houses-in-rural-wainuiomata>

Note the main source for this Stuff article is the main one for your Saturday story too. Not so secret information I would suggest .

And a whole heap of reporting in the public domain about this issue which your journalist was pointed towards and yet chose to make no reference to . This should be a cause for concern , and I would have thought should beg a number of questions for you .

The issue of balance regarding senior sources [REDACTED] remains a key issue . It is vital to know whether "concerns " about standards are governance or staff sources . It affects the veracity of the story and the professionalism of my own actions . I checked out from the very start whether there was an issue that I needed to be concerned about relating to this property purchase. All my inquiries led me to conclude there was not . I had cause to revisit this in October last year , and undertook further inquiries . Those inquiries confirmed my earlier view .

I am no one's patsy [REDACTED] - be that Ex Mayor Wallace , current Mayor Barry or anyone else for that matter . I am twenty five year's experienced public servant , with a reputation for dealing with dysfunctional governance , corruption and poor governance . Without fear or favour . I've been called on by national government to go in and sort things out in local governments who have lost their way.

If things are wrong , I call them out . Sometimes at personal cost . The standards you are prepared to walk by are the standards you are prepared to accept . I don't walk by poor ethical behaviour .

I really would encourage you to meet with me to discuss this .

In the meantime , please do whatever necessary to remove references to me which are causing me harm and damage .

Happy to discuss .

Thank you

Jo Miller

Ngā mihi nui

Jo Miller

Chief Executive

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On 6/09/2020, at 9:52 AM, [REDACTED] wrote:

Dear Jo,

Can you please forward me a statement from you regarding the project being in abeyance and clarifying your position that you did not 'can' the project. I will then ensure that the story is amended.

[REDACTED] is trying to reach deputy mayor Bassett for confirmation but he is not answering his phone. I'm keen to clear this up for you but rather than just take your words from our email exchange would prefer a statement.

Yours sincerely

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

On Sat, 5 Sep 2020 at 20:09, Jo Miller <Jo.Miller@huttcity.govt.nz<mailto:Jo.Miller@huttcity.govt.nz>>>> wrote:

Dear [REDACTED]

I don't have a reply to my earlier email to you and I've just checked Stuff. Nothing has changed .

You are now on notice that as a result of the sloppy , inaccurate reporting insofar as it relates to my alleged " shelving " of work that simply did not happen , a local lawyer has written far and wide calling for a disciplinary investigation into my conduct . This is distressing and it is causing harm to my reputation .

Please amend your misleading and materially inaccurate article forthwith .

It is entirely irrelevant that your reporter is somewhat remarkably uncontactable on the very day a major story breaks . You have my word and you should act . A word with former deputy mayor Bassett would confirm that the work was stopped around the time I said it was , if my refuse to accept my word .

I have no intention of giving your journalist further copy on Monday. I would be delighted to meet you

both to discuss a prominent retraction and apology .

Please reply immediately .

Thank you .

Jo Miller

Ngā mihi nui

Jo Miller
Chief Executive

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On 5/09/2020, at 2:53 PM, Jo Miller <Jo.Miller@huttcity.govt.nz<mailto:Jo.Miller@huttcity.govt.nz>>>
wrote:

Dear [REDACTED]

Thank you for your reply , which doesn't go far enough I'm afraid . I would like you to reconsider your position upon receipt of this email.

You have a live story on your website, prominent in your newspaper on a day where it has the most readership which significantly misrepresents me . This is damaging to my reputation and credibility and has been published without any reference to me whatsoever.

Put simply , it's not good enough for poor and inaccurate reporting to remain online simply because you can't locate your journalist .

The piece conflates timelines at pages 5 and 8 .

It states that I canned / shelved work . This is simply untrue . That work was in abeyance before I was even appointed as Chief Executive in February 2019 , let alone my arrival in New Zealand and commencing employment in July 2019 .

How “officials “ or “Mayor Wallace “ or unnamed “ councillors “ can be shocked and surprised at something I didn’t do , and which actually went on hold many months before I arrived here is beyond me. The most basic of homework by your journalist , and typical journalistic practice would have made this dichotomy self evident .

The other issue as to not explaining whether the senior sources referred to are political or officer go to balance . I had cause in October 2019 to check whether the former CE had concerns about this issue . He said not. I checked with other staff who confirmed that position . I have today spoken to our former chief planner who also confirmed there was not an issue from his point of view. He will be providing me with a statement in writing.

So as I see it , you are choosing to leave up and unbalanced in relation to that point , and a materially inaccurate and misleading article as it relates to me . That choice is causing harm .

I invite you to reconsider your position on both issues and amend / withdraw in part your pieces accordingly .

I look forward to hearing from you . Jo Miller

From: [REDACTED]

Date: 5 September 2020 at 2:18:48 PM NZST

To: Jo Miller <Jo.Miller@huttcity.govt.nz<mailto:Jo.Miller@huttcity.govt.nz>>

Subject: complaint

Dear Jo

Thanks for your calls today. I am unable to contact [REDACTED] but I am aware from an earlier conversation with him that the reason he did not contact you was that you were not in the role at the time and he felt, rightly or wrongly, that you would not be able to discuss this.

[REDACTED] told me he had always intended to talk to you as a follow up. I am advised that your quotes were taken from a video.

In relation to your issue over you not canning the scheme and where [REDACTED] got that information from I am simply unable to reach [REDACTED] so cannot provide detail on that.

You have requested that I divulge whether the senior sources are councillors or staff. I have given consideration to this request as I realise it will be helpful to you as CE in deciding your course of action. However I have decided I am under no obligation to disclose any information in relation to the sources spoken to for this story.

For your information [REDACTED] emailed me this morning with a number of issues with the story, which I have addressed with [REDACTED] and I have made some changes to today's story.

Because I am unable to reach [REDACTED] I will be making no further changes to the story.

However I will make [REDACTED] available to sit down and talk to you and Mayor Barry on Monday if that is convenient with a view to a follow up story.

I am sorry that it has taken a while to come back to you.

Yours sincerely

[REDACTED]

--

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

PO Box 3740 Wellington 6140

[\[https://sites.google.com/a/fairfaxmedia.co.nz/emailsignatures/_/rsrc/1517430356648/corporate---stuff/Stuff-Neighbourly.jpg\]](https://sites.google.com/a/fairfaxmedia.co.nz/emailsignatures/_/rsrc/1517430356648/corporate---stuff/Stuff-Neighbourly.jpg)

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[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

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[REDACTED]

From: [REDACTED]
Sent: Wednesday, 9 September 2020 10:05 AM
To: Jo Miller
Subject: Re: Enquiring about progress

Dear Jo

Thanks for your email. I have undertaken to review yours and Mayor Barry's extensive complaint. Please be assured I am doing this thoroughly and will come back to you this week.

Yours sincerely
[REDACTED]

On Wed, 9 Sep 2020 at 07:41, Jo Miller <Jo.Miller@huttcity.govt.nz> wrote:

Dear [REDACTED]

I'm enquiring about progress on our complaint please . I do want to resolve this ASAP.

I am attaching a copy of the statement Cr David Bassett sent to your journalist in the course of your journalist's somewhat limited enquiries. You will see that even on your journalist's own insubstantial assessment , he has managed to produce a story that refers to Mayor Wallace and I being made aware of a matter in late September yet one of his own key sources refers to Mayor Wallace being made aware by the source in July / August . I am aware Cr Bassett and your journalist spoke a number of times .

I also understand that your reporter was in touch with Cr Bassett on Saturday (when I understood your reporter was uncontactable) . It took till Sunday afternoon for matters to be corrected and then only one because of the alleged unavailability of your reporter .

[REDACTED] I believe I have given you more than enough evidence to satisfy you that the stories you published were fundamentally flawed , remain fundamentally flawed and that the conduct of your journalist leaves much to be desired . Despite all of that and the harm that continues to be caused by these stories remain live and uncorrected . When might we discuss retraction and apology please ?

Kind regards Jo

Ngā mihi nui
Jo Miller
Chief Executive

Hutt City Council, 30 Laings Road, Private Bag 31912, Lower Hutt 5010, New Zealand
T04 570 6773 M 027 213 7550

W[https://urldefense.com/v3/](https://urldefense.com/v3/http://www.huttcity.govt.nz/!!LBk0ZmAmG_H4m2o!9fbsn32lhm2CjUOuTXRFmeDro7ZpUovptmKC0qX1zIY9BpGUomx04tLv2QaML1GypeD_EGHZHtam$) <http://www.huttcity.govt.nz> ;!!LBk0ZmAmG_H4m2o!9fbsn32lhm2CjUOuTXRFmeDro7ZpUovptmKC0qX1zIY9BpGUomx04tLv2QaML1GypeD_EGHZHtam\$

Follow me on Twitter : @jomillernz

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[REDACTED]



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Grace Christison

From: [REDACTED]
Sent: Tuesday, 8 September 2020 4:45 PM
To: Jo Miller
Subject: Re: FW: This weekend's Dominion Post , Stuff, calling things out and a plea .
Attachments: image003.png

Hi Jo,

Greatly appreciated your email, and for clearing the 'muddy waters'.

Regards
[REDACTED]

On Mon, 7 Sep 2020, 12:50 PM Jo Miller, <Jo.Miller@huttcity.govt.nz> wrote:

Kia ora

Please see below email which I sent to the Mayor and Councillors in light of the recent articles in the Dominion Post/Stuff.

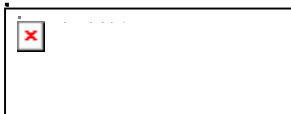
Sharing with you fyi.

Ngā mihi nui

Jo Miller | Chief Executive
Tumu Whakarae



Hutt City Council
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Private Bag 31912
Lower Hutt 5010, New Zealand
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www.huttcity.govt.nz



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From: Jo Miller
Sent: Sunday, 6 September 2020 6:33 PM
To: __Mayor & Councillors
Subject: This weekend's Dominion Post, Stuff, calling things out and a plea.

Dear Mayor and Councillors

It's been quite a weekend as I'm sure you can imagine, and full on work wise dealing with the Dom Post, Stuff, managing stakeholders and giving assurance.

I send this email without having consulted anyone, but I know I must send it. Ive had a saying my whole life - learned when I was growing up "The standards you are prepared to walk by are the standards you are prepared to accept. " And as Edmund Burke famously said, "All it takes for evil to prosper is for good people to stand by and do nothing. "I'm not prepared to do nothing. And I know that most of you won't either.

I don't want to start my new working week without setting my thoughts out to you. And I will end with a plea that I hope that everyone can sign up to without exception.

I started at Hutt City Council on 1 July last year. You have all seen my commentary on my last year and my reflections three months in which described a council that at times was weaponised, and a council where staff did not feel safe to speak truth to power. Of course, a fierce election campaign was being fought, and as an experienced CE, I know how these things work and how swords and cudgels drawn in battle are usually sheathed in the ensuing peace. Even if that is done with a grimace ! The weapons have largely been laid down, but we see them surface every now and again. This weekend has been the prime example of this.

I need to state on the record that I am nobody's patsy - not current politicians nor previous ones. I am my own woman. What I have to go on is my professionalism and my record. It's not my job to account for things that happened before I arrived here, though I do have to account for matters that are brought to my attention.

I will though, say what I see and call matters out without fear or favour, no matter how hard people might try to stop me (and there has been a bit of that lately). Of course, most of the time there's no need to do call things out - good standards prevail, and when mistakes are made, lessons are learned, apologies given and we move on. That applies equally to governance as it does to operations.

What we have here is of a different order. It needs to stop.

Let's go back to that mayor and council election last year. One of the things that was swirling round in mid August and September was the issue of then Cr Barry's house purchase in Wainuiomata earlier in the year. A member of the public made a complaint to the OaG effectively alleging insider dealing, and the OaG referred that to the SFO as being the right jurisdiction. SFO made their inquiries and found there was nothing for them to investigate. Two sets of journalists were tipped off about the complaint and made enquiries of the Council via the media team and my office.

I know that the member of public making the complaint, and bringing it to the attention of the press was aided by a person who was and remains a councillor. I know because that person told me so and as early as 20 August 2019 is on record as asking me "whether the media has contacted you about Campbell and Wainuiomata land" .

So you will see from this a major inaccuracy in the Stuff /Dom Post report. I wasn't informed after 17 September council meeting about the house purchase, I knew way before, as did Mayor Wallace who I had briefed about the existence of the complaint and whom I advised to stay away from it because I knew it was made / encouraged in bad faith. Whether Mayor Wallace was aware of the complaint from elsewhere I do not know. I am only going to make reference to things within my knowledge.

I haven't done anything about this in all the time since then. I've let it lie hoping it was gone in the election. But it hasn't gone, it has cropped up from time to time . A small overly vocal, dispossessed minority of people are still fighting last year's battles. This is getting in the way of running this city and enabling all of our people to thrive. I wouldn't be raising this matter now, but for the events of this last week and the damage that is being done - not to Mayor Barry or me, but to this city, the one we are all here to serve.

I did of course make my own enquiries last year about the house purchase both during the election campaign and once again in November to see whether there was any cause for concern. First of all I looked at what was in the public domain. There's quite a lot, starting with Mayor Wallace discussing this matter way back in 2016 in Stuff.

<https://www.stuff.co.nz/dominion-post/news/86403745/lower-hutt-mayor-rekindles-debate-over-building-more-houses-in-rural-wainuiomata>

I also took a look at info council to see what had been reported and when and what was in the public domain. I have copied in the links below for your information.

February 2018: http://infocouncil.huttcity.govt.nz/Open/2018/02/CDC_27022018_AGN_2509_AT_WEB.htm

November

2017: http://infocouncil.huttcity.govt.nz/RedirectToDoc.aspx?URL=Open/2017/11/CDC_28112017_AGN_2435_AT_WEB.htm

August

2017: http://infocouncil.huttcity.govt.nz/RedirectToDoc.aspx?URL=Open/2017/08/CDC_01082017_AGN_2407_AT_WEB.htm

We supplied all off these links to journalists last year, and it's probably why they decided not to run a story. They didn't see a story. We supplied all of these links to the journalist asking questions this week, but he did not appear interested. He certainly didn't report on them. From all of this, you can see that Upper Fitzherbert as a potential development area was no secret.

As last year's election campaign ensued, the number of questions being asked about Wainuiomata North was unusual. I and other officers were concerned that we were being asked questions for the purposes of a political campaign and required every request in writing with reasons. Those requests and our answers were copied to Wainuiomata ward councillors to prevent any improper electoral conduct. I will release all of that correspondence into the public domain later this week.

As well as looking at what was in the public domain about Upper Fitzherbert, I checked in November of last year whether any of the then senior leadership team or former members of the senior leadership team I could contact plus all of the staff involved in the Wainuiomata Development framework and general counsel had any governance / ethics concerns regarding then Cr Barry's house purchase. They did not.

This week's Stuff/ Dom Post referred to me canning/shelving Wainuiomata growth plan work. This is simply untrue. Work on Wainuiomata North Development Framework was paused when Cr Bassett was chairing City Development Cttee at the end of 2018. The work was then subsumed into the Wellington Regional Growth Strategy as the September 2019 council report and minute show. See here : http://infocouncil.huttcity.govt.nz/Open/2019/09/HCC_17092019_MIN_2653_AT.htm. Mayor Wallace will have known all of this as the Council's representative on Wellington Regional Strategy Committee.

You can see from this then, more material inaccuracy in the Stuff / Dom Post article, and about which I understand you have received correspondence urging an investigation into my behaviour.

Stuff have today corrected both stories in that regard. See here : <https://www.stuff.co.nz/dominion-post/300093672/controversy-over-politicians-house-purchase>

And also corrected here : <https://www.stuff.co.nz/dominion-post/news/86403745/lower-hutt-mayor-rekindles-debate-over-building-more-houses-in-rural-wainuiomata>

I am at a loss as to why in the original Stuff / Dom Post articles it is said that "senior officials " were "shocked" and 'surprised " at a "cavalier" unilateral action in canning / shelving work - action I simply did not take. At best, those who were shocked and surprised at action I did not take are misremembering. At worst, it is something more poisonous.

The Editor of Stuff so far has declined to confirm whether the senior officials referred to in the (now corrected) article are those charged with governance or staff. From my own (99% complete) enquiries, I do not believe this makes reference to any current staff members, nor any previous staff members who were responsible for the planning and strategy functions.

I did publish all Wainuiomata North Development Framework documents back in December 2019, and emailed all of you on 20 December to explain that. This was part of my commitment, and the desire of this council to move from a position of secrecy to openness. As you know, new council has a procedure for publishing briefing papers etc. so we can be more open and transparent. The Wellington Regional Growth Strategy is in development, aided by a regional members workshop held pre - Covid at the Events Centre. Many of you attended. That WRGF that is due to come to councils in the region by the end of the year will identify all greenfield development sites across the region.

As you can deduce from all of the above, this weekend's reporting leaves a lot to be desired in terms of accuracy. I have been in dialogue with the Editor over the weekend and some, though not enough, corrections have been made. It is inexcusable that basic journalistic practice has not been followed. For example, just in my own case, knowledge, actions and motives have been attributed to me without any contact with me by the journalist.

The Editor will be meeting with me and Mayor Barry to discuss retraction etc. In view of the appalling inaccuracies in both stories, the Editor has agreed not to publish either story in the Hutt News.

I have mentioned that I have spent a fair portion of this weekend on stakeholder management with more to do. That included briefing the Department for Internal Affairs who are assured by our approach at this stage .

I would say that staff dealing with this issue this week have lost around three to four working days, and there is more energy to be spent. Energy that could be spent on furthering the fortunes of this city and its people is being diverted to countering nasty personal attacks. It is not good enough. Those who are responsible need to stop, whether they are up front fighting these wars, playing through the hands of others or mixing things out of plain sight. If we continue in this manner our city and its people will suffer.

So I end with a plea. To those engaging in this behaviour, stop it right now. To others, let's call it out for what it is. Standing by won't do. We can't change our past, but we can change our future. Let us work together to be the change we want to see.

Yours ever, Jo

Footnote: I am going to forward a copy of this email to all those named in the Dom Post / Stuff article, to the staff who have had to work on this last week and this weekend, to CLT, and to stakeholders I have had to manage / assure this weekend.

Ngā mihi nui

Jo Miller

Chief Executive

Hutt City Council, 30 Laings Road Private Bag 31912, Lower Hutt 5010, New Zealand

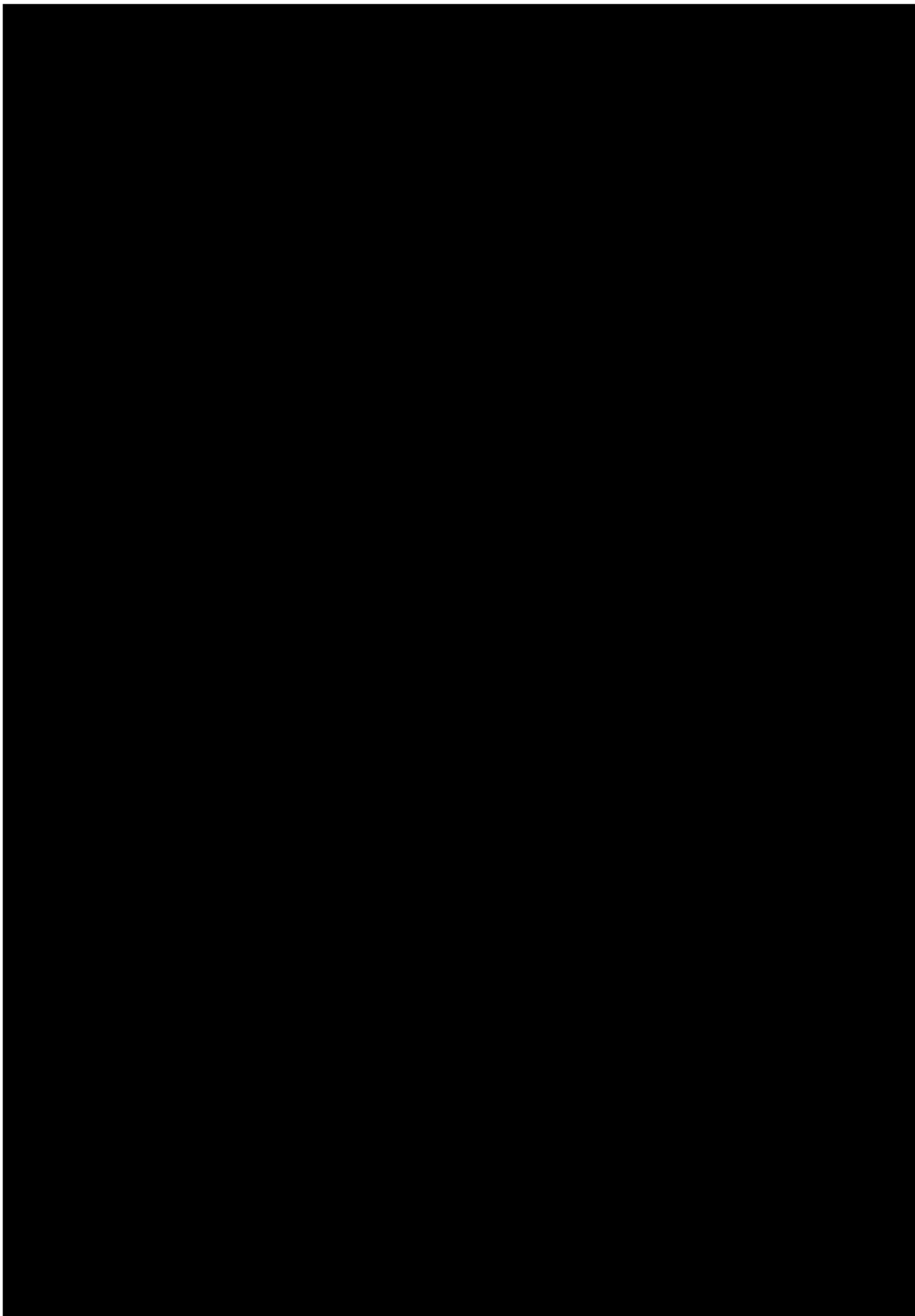
T [04 570 6773](tel:045706773) M [027 213 7550](tel:0272137550)

W www.huttcity.govt.nz

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Grace Christison

From: [REDACTED]
Sent: Friday, 11 September 2020 3:11 PM
To: Jo Miller
Subject: Out of Office Re: complaint response

I am on leave today. If you have a news tip please contact stuff-newsdirectors@stuff.co.nz

Many thanks

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

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[REDACTED]

From: [REDACTED]
Sent: Wednesday, 9 September 2020 9:44 AM
To: Jo Miller
Subject: RE: Information on press stories over the weekend.

Hi Jo,

Happy to meet with you. I must say I am better in the afternoon if that suits and anytime from next week on except for 25th September as leaving town that day.

Cheers [REDACTED]

-----Original Message-----

From: Jo Miller <Jo.Miller@huttcity.govt.nz>
Sent: Tuesday, 8 September 2020 9:22 AM
To: [REDACTED]
Subject: Fwd: Information on press stories over the weekend.

Hi [REDACTED]

Many thanks for your really helpful reply yesterday . I didn't doubt that your own involvement was only ever factual.

You will see below an email I sent to senior staff last night (and also to elected members) . It includes a link to a statement on our website which sets out everything we know about Wainui North , what was in the public domain when etc .

I thought you might like to see it .

My email of Sunday evening appears to have hit the right chord with most - inside and outside the council there is broad recognition that fighting yesterday's battles gets us nowhere and does rates payers a great disservice .

It's not a universally held view though ! No doubt with all of your service you will have seen this come and go in cycles . I am not finding it easy to deal with some of this and would welcome your advice . I was struck through our interactions by your guardianship of standards as your own person rather than adherence to any faction .

Last time we had a cup of tea and a scone it was your shout in Maungaraki. Can I tempt you to tea and scone again , my turn , where I could get the benefit of your wisdom and experience? I would really appreciate it if you are able .

Kind regards , Jo

Begin forwarded message:

From: Jo Miller <Jo.Miller@huttcity.govt.nz>
Date: 7 September 2020 at 6:06:04 PM NZST
To: __Divisional Managers <DivisionalManagers@huttcity.govt.nz>, __CLT <CLT@huttcity.govt.nz>
Subject: Information on press stories over the weekend.

Kia ora

Some of you may have seen articles in the Dom Post or Stuff over the weekend which refer to then Cr Barry's purchase of his family home in Wainuiomata back in early 2019. (Don't worry about reading them – you've missed nothing).

We were first approached about this story in August/September last year during a hard fought election campaign. A complaint had been made via the Office of the Auditor General to the Serious Fraud Office and the matter was not taken further. In fact there was no case to answer. The press were alerted to the story and decided not to pursue it after making enquiries of our media team and elsewhere. I also conducted my own enquiries and did not find any cause for concern.

From this you can see that the stories this weekend are not new.

I'm sad that a set of destructive behaviours by a very small minority of people pursuing their own personal agendas causes stories like this to appear, damaging our reputation, taking away our focus from serving our people and limiting progress.

Over the course of the weekend the News Editor made significant changes to the articles following our complaints. This is because the articles included content that misrepresented the Council's involvement in Wainuiomata North, Mayor Barry's actions and my own. Conversations are ongoing with the News Editor and the Dom Post has confirmed it is reviewing our complaint.

In the meantime we have published a statement of clarification to our website. Please share this with your staff as needed.

<http://www.huttcity.govt.nz/Your-Council/News-and-notice/media-releases/wainuiomata-north-statement-of-clarification/>

If there is anything you would like to discuss with me or if you need to know anything more please get in touch.

Ngā mihi nui

Jo

Sent from my iPad

Ngā mihi nui

Jo Miller
Chief Executive

Hutt City Council, 30 Laings Road Private Bag 31912, Lower Hutt 5010, New Zealand T 04 570 6773<callto:04%20570%206773> M 027 213 7550<callto:027%20213%207550> W www.huttcity.govt.nz<<http://www.huttcity.govt.nz>>

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Grace Christison

From: [REDACTED]
Sent: Friday, 4 September 2020 12:32 PM
To: Campbell Barry
Subject: Re: Purchase of land in Wainuiomata North

Ok, just to confirm, are you saying there is no phone interview at 1pm, as was previously arranged?

On Fri, 4 Sep 2020 at 11:21, Campbell Barry <Campbell.Barry@huttcity.govt.nz> wrote:
Hi [REDACTED],

Lovely to meet you this morning.

I understand [REDACTED] has provided you with additional information. This includes Council reports, and the Urban Growth Strategy, as well as legal advice.

The Mayor has requested you email through any questions you have, along with a deadline. We will provide a written response.

If you would like to discuss, my details are below.

Thanks,

From: [REDACTED]
Sent: 03 September 2020 11:01
To: Campbell Barry
Subject: Purchase of land in Wainuiomata North

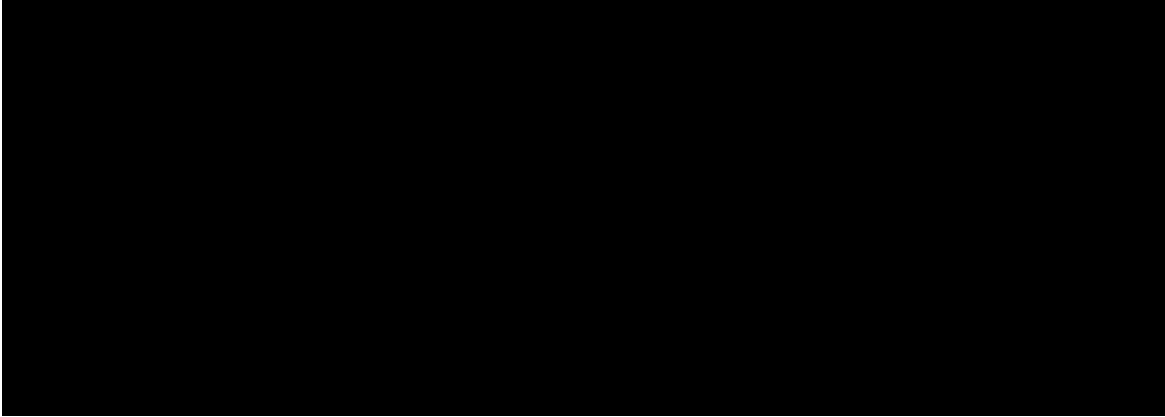
Hi Campbell, how are you doing? I've left a text message on your phone but thought I would follow up with an email. Keen to speak with you this afternoon about a story we are running in the next day or two, about your purchase of [REDACTED]. Would it be possible to arrange a time for a chat this afternoon. Obviously the story needs your input and we are very keen to get that. Let me know what time suits. Cheers

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[[https://urldefense.com/v3/https://images.squarespace-cdn.com/content/v1/5aa419bf372b960ebbd1dcb5/1522088700118-2YTF1M18YTS21R3O6LLF/ke17ZwdGBToddI8pDm48kE9wcpPw4M-wH3AZo4iHCxdZw-zPPgdn4jUwVcJE1ZvWQUxwkmyExglNqGp0IvTJZUJFbgE-7XRK3dMEBRBhUpyqMo3jzJhLqXTCrPyqviB5SzVjmx-pv85f-M_Jdr_KRaYSt9QKtBurW2k6SsGnias/StuffDompost-logo.jpg**Ahttps://*advertise.stuff.co.nz/wp-content/uploads/2019/01/Neighbourly_logo.png :XVsv!!LBk0ZmAmG_H4m2o!_ahjV0kg_ksrWeRtSa_xy3PjI0kVOqr_ftLpcC1YHoH9COsNutkLKJt9SdhmpEmyhJvPNUc\\$](https://urldefense.com/v3/https://images.squarespace-cdn.com/content/v1/5aa419bf372b960ebbd1dcb5/1522088700118-2YTF1M18YTS21R3O6LLF/ke17ZwdGBToddI8pDm48kE9wcpPw4M-wH3AZo4iHCxdZw-zPPgdn4jUwVcJE1ZvWQUxwkmyExglNqGp0IvTJZUJFbgE-7XRK3dMEBRBhUpyqMo3jzJhLqXTCrPyqviB5SzVjmx-pv85f-M_Jdr_KRaYSt9QKtBurW2k6SsGnias/StuffDompost-logo.jpg**Ahttps://*advertise.stuff.co.nz/wp-content/uploads/2019/01/Neighbourly_logo.png :XVsv!!LBk0ZmAmG_H4m2o!_ahjV0kg_ksrWeRtSa_xy3PjI0kVOqr_ftLpcC1YHoH9COsNutkLKJt9SdhmpEmyhJvPNUc$)]

[REDACTED]

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[REDACTED]

From: [REDACTED]
Sent: Friday, 4 September 2020 12:58 PM
To: Campbell Barry; Jarred Griffiths
Subject: Re: Purchase of land in Wainuiomata North

Ok, here are the questions I need answered. Can you get the answers back to me by 4pm today:

- 1) The plans the council started to put together after 2016 were a major expansion of its previously public interest in Wainui North. They were very different plans to those in the Urban Growth Strategy 2012-2032. Were you aware of those new plans? If not, why not?
- 2) You say you did not attend any workshops, briefings or meetings on the development of Wainui North after 2016. Is that right? At least one councillor said you were there at the briefing that followed the Nov 23, 2017 briefing, which featured detailed maps and other slides. The councillor even spoke to you about the plans. Is that councillor mistaken, not telling the truth?
- 3) Surely it's almost unbelievable that one of just two Wainui ward councillors would not know about major plans in his area. If that is the case, what do you say to your constituents?
- 4) At what point and why did you decide you wanted to buy [REDACTED]
- 5) If, as you claim, you knew nothing about the development plans post 2016 and did not attend any meetings or briefings, why did you seek legal advice about a possible conflict of interest from the HCC counsel? What was the nature of that advice?
- 6) Did you inform, at any time, the council of the property you had purchased in an area it was looking to develop? Did you declare any conflict of interest in any council discussions?
- 7) When development of Wainui North and council secrecy around it was raised by a public submitter in the Sept 2019 ordinary council meeting (this is on video), and responded to by chief executive Jo Miller, why did you say nothing about the property you had purchased in that area just a few months before?
- 8) In an email exchange between an Upper Fitzherbert Rd resident and the council about possible street lighting, you respond to the council officer saying timing is not right for work in the area, given major developments planned in the area, developments you now claim to have known nothing about. How can you explain that?
- 9) If that land is rezoned, as was the plan in the Wainui North Development Framework, your property will be worth millions of dollars. Were you aware of that possibility when you purchased the property? Is that not a conflict of interest?
- 10) It appears that your purchase may have played a part in halting development of that area. What are your thoughts on that?

Thanks, again very keen to include your answers in our story, so they need to be back by 4pm, at the latest.

On Fri, 4 Sep 2020 at 12:31, [REDACTED] wrote:

Ok, just to confirm, are you saying there is no phone interview at 1pm, as was previously arranged?

On Fri, 4 Sep 2020 at 11:21, Campbell Barry <Campbell.Barry@huttcity.govt.nz> wrote:

Hi [REDACTED],

Lovely to meet you this morning.

I understand Caryn Ellis has provided you with additional information. This includes Council reports, and the Urban Growth Strategy, as well as legal advice.

The Mayor has requested you email through any questions you have, along with a deadline. We will provide a written response.

If you would like to discuss, my details are below.

Thanks,

From: [REDACTED]
Sent: 03 September 2020 11:01
To: Campbell Barry
Subject: Purchase of land in Wainuiomata North

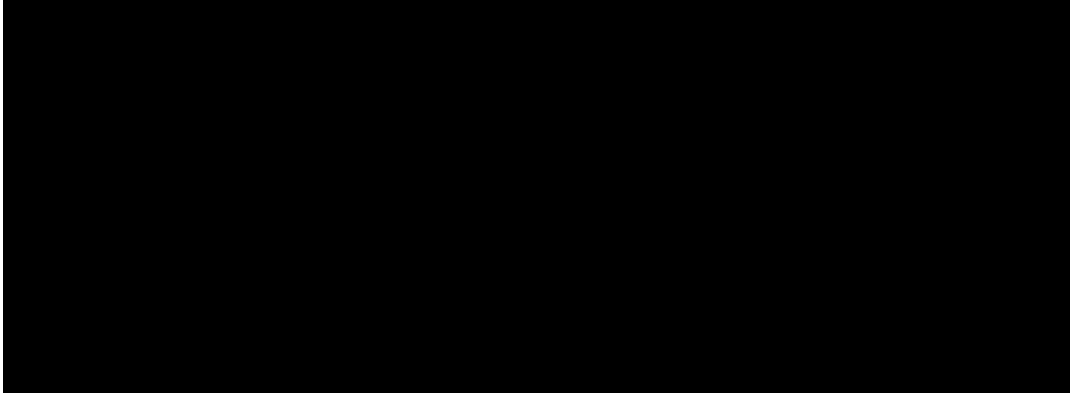
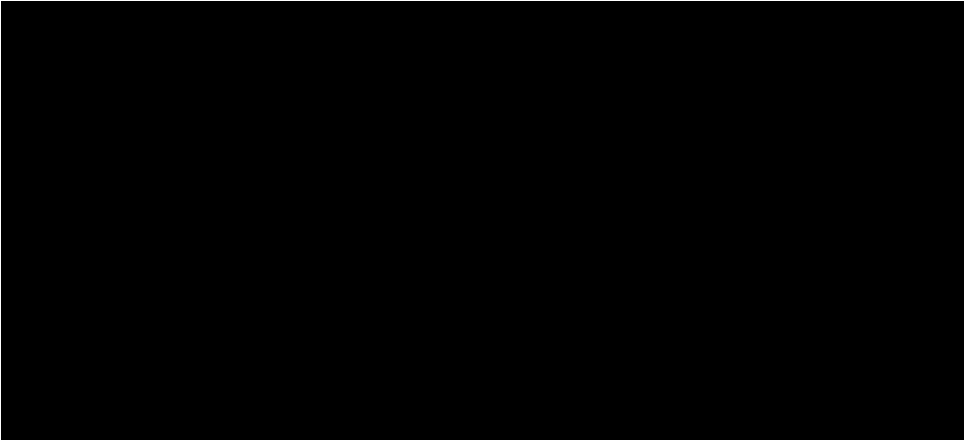
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[REDACTED]

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[Redacted]

From: [Redacted]
Sent: Wednesday, 9 September 2020 7:43 AM
To: Jo Miller
Subject: RE: This weekend's Dominion Post , Stuff, calling things out and a plea .

Hi Joe

Wow, and I thought I had just run through a hailstorm. That's the good thing about meeting face to face and getting to know the character of the person. There is a good saying "get facts not opinions". So when you read something in the press which refers to someone you know you can ascertain when something doesn't ring true.

I am attending the SOLGM Summit on the Tuesday of next week, hope to see you there.

Take care.

[Redacted]

[Redacted]

-----Original Message-----

From: Jo Miller <Jo.Miller@huttcity.govt.nz>
Sent: Tuesday, 8 September 2020 5:01 PM
To: [Redacted]
Subject: Fwd: This weekend's Dominion Post , Stuff, calling things out and a plea .

Ngā mihi nui

Jo Miller
Chief Executive

Hutt City Council, 30 Laings Road Private Bag 31912, Lower Hutt 5010, New Zealand T 04 570 6773<callto:04%20570%206773> M 027 213 7550<callto:027%20213%207550> W
www.huttcity.govt.nz<http://www.huttcity.govt.nz>

Follow me on Twitter : @jomillernz<https://twitter.com/jomillernz>

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Afternoon [Redacted]

I don't know if you saw this weekend's Dom Post or Stuff . Grossly inaccurate reporting and some destructive behaviour by one or two malcontents.

Dom Post currently reviewing our complaint .

See below for my email to mayor and councillors , setting out the real story and calling poor behaviour out .

Wanted to let you know as a key stakeholder . Please give me a call if you wools like to discuss anything . Kind regards Jo

From: Jo Miller <Jo.Miller@huttcity.govt.nz>

Date: 6 September 2020 at 6:33:03 PM NZST

To: __Mayor & Councillors <__Mayor&Councillors@huttcity.govt.nz>

Subject: This weekend's Dominion Post , Stuff, calling things out and a plea .

Dear Mayor and Councillors

It's been quite a weekend as I'm sure you can imagine , and full on work wise dealing with the Dom Post, Stuff, managing stakeholders and giving assurance .

I send this email without having consulted anyone, but I know I must send it . Ive had a saying my whole life - learned when I was growing up "The standards you are prepared to walk by are the standards you are prepared to accept . " And as Edmund Burke famously said , "All it takes for evil to prosper is for good people to stand by and do nothing . "I'm not prepared to do nothing . And I know that most of you won't either .

I don't want to start my new working week without setting my thoughts out to you . And I will end with a plea that I hope that everyone can sign up to without exception .

I started at Hutt City Council on 1 July last year . You have all seen my commentary on my last year and my reflections three months in which described a council that at times was weaponised , and a council where staff did not feel safe to speak truth to power . Of course , a fierce election campaign was being fought , and as an experienced CE, I know how these things work and how swords and cudgels drawn in battle are usually sheathed in the ensuing peace . Even if that is done with a grimace ! The weapons have largely been laid down, but we see them surface every now and again . This weekend has been the prime example of this.

I need to state on the record that I am nobody's patsy- not current politicians nor previous ones. I am my own woman . What I have to go on is my professionalism and my record. It's not my job to account for things that happened before I arrived here, though I do have to account for matters that are brought to my attention .

I will though, say what I see and call matters out without fear or favour , no matter how hard people might try to stop me (and there has been a bit of that lately). Of course, most of the time there's no need to do call things out - good standards prevail , and when mistakes are made, lessons are learned , apologies given and we move on. That applies equally to governance as it does to operations.

What we have here is of a different order. It needs to stop.

Let's go back to that mayor and council election last year. One of the things that was swirling round in mid August and September was the issue of then Cr Barry's house purchase in Wainuiomata Earlier in the year . A member of the public made a complaint to the OaG effectively alleging insider dealing , and the OaG referred that to SFO as being the right jurisdiction . SFO made their inquiries and found there was nothing for them to investigate . Two sets of journalists were tipped off about the complaint and made enquiries of the Council via the media team and my office .

I know that the member of public making the complaint , and bringing it to the attention of the press was aided by a person who was and remains a councillor. I know because that person told me so and as early as 20 August 2019 is on record as asking me "whether the media has contacted you about Campbell and Wainuiomata land" .

So you will see from this a major inaccuracy in the Stuff /Dom Post report . I wasn't informed after 17 September council meeting about the house purchase , I knew way before, as did Mayor Wallace who I had briefed about the existence of the complaint and whom I advised to stay away from it because I knew it was made / encouraged in bad faith . Whether Mayor Wallace was aware of the complaint from elsewhere I do not know. I am only going to make reference to things within my knowledge .

I haven't done anything about this in all the time since then. I've let it lie hoping it was gone in the election. But it hasn't gone, it has cropped up from time to time . A small overly vocal, dispossessed minority of people are still fighting last year's battles . This is getting in the way of running this city and enabling all of our people to thrive . I wouldn't be raising this matter now, but for the events of this last week and the damage that is being done - not to Mayor Barry or me, but to this city, the one we are all here to serve .

I did of course make my own enquiries last year about the house purchase both during the election campaign and once again in November to see whether there was any cause for concern. First of all I looked at what was in the public domain . There's quite a lot, starting with Mayor Wallace discussing this matter way back in 2016 in Stuff.

<https://www.stuff.co.nz/dominion-post/news/86403745/lower-hutt-mayor-rekindles-debate-over-building-more-houses-in-rural-wainuiomata>

I also took a look at info council to see what had been reported and when and what was in the public domain . I have copied in the links below for your information .

February 2018: http://infocouncil.huttcity.govt.nz/Open/2018/02/CDC_27022018_AGN_2509_AT_WEB.htm

November 2017:

http://infocouncil.huttcity.govt.nz/RedirectToDoc.aspx?URL=Open/2017/11/CDC_28112017_AGN_2435_AT_WEB.htm

August 2017:

http://infocouncil.huttcity.govt.nz/RedirectToDoc.aspx?URL=Open/2017/08/CDC_01082017_AGN_2407_AT_WEB.htm

We supplied all off these links to journalists last year ,and it's probably why they decided not to run a story . They didn't see a story . We supplied all of these links to the journalist asking questions this week , but he did not appear interested . He certainly didn't report on them . From all of this , you can see that Upper Fitzherbert as a potential development area was no secret .

As last year's election campaign ensued , the number of questions being asked about Wainuiomata North was unusual . I and other officers were concerned that we were being asked questions for the purposes of a political campaign and required every request in writing with reasons. Those requests and our answers were copied to Wainuiomata ward councillors to prevent any improper electoral conduct . I will release all of that correspondence into the public domain later this week .

As well as looking at what was in the public domain about Upper Fitzherbert , I checked in November of last year whether any of the then senior leadership team or former members of the senior leadership team I could contact plus all of the staff involved in the Wainuiomata Development framework and general counsel had any governance / ethics concerns regarding then Cr Barry's house purchase. They did not .

This week's Stuff/ Dom Post referred to me canning/shelving Wainuiomata growth plan work. This is simply untrue . Work on Wainuiomata North Development Framework was paused when Cr Bassett was chairing City Development Cttee at the end of 2018. The work was then subsumed into the Wellington Regional Growth Strategy

as the September 2019 council report and minute show . See here : http://infocouncil.huttcity.govt.nz/Open/2019/09/HCC_17092019_MIN_2653_AT.htm<http://infocouncil.huttcity.govt.nz/Open/2019/09/HCC_17092019_MIN_2653_AT.htm>. Mayor Wallace will have known all of this as the Council's representative on Wellington Regional Strategy Committee .

You can see from this then , more material inaccuracy in the Stuff / Dom Post article , and about which I understand you have received correspondence urging an investigation into my behaviour .

Stuff have today corrected both stories in that regard . See here : <https://www.stuff.co.nz/dominion-post/300093672/controversy-over-politicians-house-purchase><<https://www.stuff.co.nz/dominion-post/300093672/controversy-over-politicians-house-purchase>>
And also corrected here : <https://www.stuff.co.nz/dominion-post/news/86403745/lower-hutt-mayor-rekindles-debate-over-building-more-houses-in-rural-wainuiomata><<https://www.stuff.co.nz/dominion-post/news/86403745/lower-hutt-mayor-rekindles-debate-over-building-more-houses-in-rural-wainuiomata>>

I am at a loss as to why in the original Stuff / Dom Post articles it is said that “senior officials “ were “shocked” and ‘surprised “ at a “cavalier” unilateral action in canning / shelving work - action I simply did not take. At best , those who were shocked and surprised at action I did not take are misremembering . At worst, it is something more poisonous .

The Editor of Stuff so far has declined to confirm whether the senior officials referred to in the (now corrected) article are those charged with governance or staff. From my own (99% complete) enquiries , I do not believe this makes reference to any current staff members, nor any previous staff members who were responsible for the planning and strategy functions.

I did publish all Wainuiomata North Development Framework documents back in December 2019, and emailed all of you on 20 December to explain that. This was part of my commitment , and the desire of this council to move from a position of secrecy to openness . As you know, new council has a procedure for publishing briefing papers etc. so we can be more open and transparent . The Wellington Regional Growth Strategy is in development , aided by a regional members workshop held pre - Covid at the Events Centre . Many of you attended . That WRGF that is due to come to councils in the region by the end of the year will identify all greenfield development sites across the region .

As you can deduce from all of the above , this weekend's reporting leaves a lot to be desired in terms of accuracy . I have been in dialogue with the Editor over the weekend and some , though not enough , corrections have been made. It is inexcusable that basic journalistic practice has not been followed . For example, just in my own case, knowledge , actions and motives have been attributed to me without any contact with me by the journalist.

The Editor will be meeting with me and Mayor Barry to discuss retraction etc. In view of the appalling inaccuracies in both stories, the Editor has agreed not to publish either story in the Hutt News.

I have mentioned that I have spent a fair portion of this weekend on stakeholder management with more to do. That included briefing the Department for Internal Affairs who are assured by our approach at this stage .

I would say that staff dealing with this issue this week have lost around three to four working days , and there is more energy to be spent . Energy that could be spent on furthering the fortunes of this city and its people is being diverted to countering nasty personal attacks. It is not good enough . Those who are responsible need to stop, whether they are up front fighting these wars, playing through the hands of others or mixing things out of plain sight. If we continue in this manner our city and its people will suffer .

So I end with a plea. To those engaging in this behaviour , stop it right now. To others , let's call it out for what it is . Standing by won't do. We can't change our past, but we can change our future . Let us work together to be the change we want to see.

Yours ever, Jo

Footnote : I am going to forward a copy of this email to all those named in the Dom Post / Stuff article , to the staff who have had to work on this last week and this weekend , to CLT, and to stakeholders I have had to manage / assure this weekend .

Ngā mihi nui

Jo Miller
Chief Executive

Hutt City Council, 30 Laings Road Private Bag 31912, Lower Hutt 5010, New Zealand T 04 570 6773<callto:04%20570%206773> M 027 213 7550<callto:027%20213%207550> W
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[REDACTED]

From: [REDACTED]
Sent: Monday, 7 September 2020 1:14 PM
To: Jo Miller
Subject: RE: This weekend's Dominion Post , Stuff, calling things out and a plea .

Hello Jo

Thank you for your call and also the email below.

Loss of trust and confidence in Council, whether elected members or officials, is a very serious risk. The consequences of this start with multi-faceted reputational damage, then continue to potential breaches of financial covenants and commitments, before ending with DIA stepping in under the Local Government Act if not resolved. One only needs to consider what is happening to Tauranga and Invercargill City Councils right now due to the inability to resolve personal differences impacting on their effectiveness as elected governors and custodians of the futures of the citizens and ratepayers they serve.

I welcome a further discussion in my capacity as the Independent Chair of the Audit & Risk Committee so that I can support you and your Council to move ahead quickly and with purpose.

This is an LTP year and that in itself requires collaboration, co-operation and commitment to deliver. DIA will not hesitate to act if they have cause for concern that your Council may fail to deliver the legislatively required LTP. As you will appreciate, failure to deliver the LTP would also mean that the Council is unable to strike it's rates for 2021/2022 resulting in an automatic breach of financial covenants to its bankers, LGFA and bondholders.

Kind regards, [REDACTED]

-----Original Message-----

From: Jo Miller <Jo.Miller@huttcity.govt.nz>
Sent: Monday, 7 September 2020 12:50 PM
To: [REDACTED]
Subject: Fwd: This weekend's Dominion Post , Stuff, calling things out and a plea .

Dear [REDACTED]

Thank you for catching up just now. We discussed the press issues of the weekend . Please see my email of last night to Mayor and Councillors. I also sent to key stakeholders - DIA , IWI ,Chamber of Commerce plus key staff etc. I have received a large number of positive replies including from the majority, though not all councillors .

There is a set of destructive behaviours by a very very small minority that is I believe the biggest risk to progress that we face as a city . They continue to fight yesterday's battles . We know what is happening elsewhere in the country when that happens .

I am concerned about this and would welcome a discussion with you . I will book something in.

If you have any queries , please do not hesitate to contact me.

Kind regards, JO

Sent from my iPad

From: Jo Miller

Sent: Sunday, 6 September 2020 6:33 PM

To: __Mayor & Councillors

Subject: This weekend's Dominion Post, Stuff, calling things out and a plea.

Dear Mayor and Councillors

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Yours ever, Jo

Footnote: I am going to forward a copy of this email to all those named in the Dom Post / Stuff article, to the staff who have had to work on this last week and this weekend, to CLT, and to stakeholders I have had to manage / assure this weekend.

Ngā mihi nui

Jo Miller

Chief Executive

Hutt City Council, 30 Laings Road Private Bag 31912, Lower Hutt 5010, New Zealand T 04 570 6773<callto:04%20570%206773> M 027 213 7550<callto:027%20213%207550> W
www.huttcity.govt.nz<http://www.huttcity.govt.nz>

Follow me on Twitter : @jomillernz<https://twitter.com/jomillernz>

[cid:hccsmalllogo_12fb0640-f486-4c5a-a775-f4ab1b1dfb5d.jpg]

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[Redacted]

From: [Redacted]
Sent: Monday, 7 September 2020 1:02 PM
To: Jo Miller
Subject: RE: This weekend's Dominion Post , Stuff, calling things out and a plea .

Kia ora Jo,

Many thanks for sharing.

Hopefully (but not holding my breath) the Editor will also take the reporter to task for not doing their due diligence on the story.

Disappointing that this is going on the Hutt – it's bad enough that Wellington City Council has it's internal issues aired in public without the Hutt Council being brought into question by a few rat bags out for their own purposes.

Kia kaha

[Redacted]

[Redacted]

From: [Redacted] On Behalf Of Jo Miller
Sent: Monday, 7 September 2020 12:50 PM
To: [Redacted]

Subject: FW: This weekend's Dominion Post , Stuff, calling things out and a plea .

Kia ora

Please see below email which I sent to the Mayor and Councillors in light of the recent articles in the Dominion Post/Stuff.

Sharing with you fyi.

Ngā mihi nui

Jo Miller | Chief Executive
Tumu Whakarae



Hutt City Council

30 Laings Road
Private Bag 31912
Lower Hutt 5010, New Zealand
T 04 570 66773 M 027 213 7550
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From: Jo Miller
Sent: Sunday, 6 September 2020 6:33 PM
To: __Mayor & Councillors
Subject: This weekend's Dominion Post, Stuff, calling things out and a plea.

Dear Mayor and Councillors

It's been quite a weekend as I'm sure you can imagine, and full on work wise dealing with the Dom Post, Stuff, managing stakeholders and giving assurance.

I send this email without having consulted anyone, but I know I must send it. Ive had a saying my whole life - learned when I was growing up "The standards you are prepared to walk by are the standards you are prepared to accept. " And as Edmund Burke famously said, "All it takes for evil to prosper is for good people to stand by and do nothing. "I'm not prepared to do nothing. And I know that most of you won't either.

I don't want to start my new working week without setting my thoughts out to you. And I will end with a plea that I hope that everyone can sign up to without exception.

I started at Hutt City Council on 1 July last year. You have all seen my commentary on my last year and my reflections three months in which described a council that at times was weaponised, and a council where staff did not feel safe to speak truth to power. Of course, a fierce election campaign was being fought, and as an

experienced CE, I know how these things work and how swords and cudgels drawn in battle are usually sheathed in the ensuing peace. Even if that is done with a grimace ! The weapons have largely been laid down, but we see them surface every now and again. This weekend has been the prime example of this.

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I will though, say what I see and call matters out without fear or favour, no matter how hard people might try to stop me (and there has been a bit of that lately). Of course, most of the time there's no need to do call things out - good standards prevail, and when mistakes are made, lessons are learned, apologies given and we move on. That applies equally to governance as it does to operations.

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[REDACTED]

From: [REDACTED]
Sent: Monday, 7 September 2020 1:00 PM
To: Jo Miller
Subject: RE: This weekend's Dominion Post , Stuff, calling things out and a plea .

Thanks Jo,

Just to let you know had a phone call from the media asking me to confirm I had attended the Dowse briefing as well as Cls Briggs and Barry which I did adding that I had spoken to them at the end of the seminar.

Cheers [REDACTED]

-----Original Message-----

From: Jo Miller <Jo.Miller@huttcity.govt.nz>
Sent: Monday, 7 September 2020 6:35 AM
To: [REDACTED]
Subject: Fwd: This weekend's Dominion Post , Stuff, calling things out and a plea .

Good morning [REDACTED]

I hope you are well . I've thought of you often this last year and was sad we didn't get to meet again after the election . I'm glad though , you got your travel in before the skies temporarily closed.

Please see below an email I sent to Mayor and Councillors last night in response to this weekend's Dom Post story . I said I would also send it to everyone named in the Dom Post article , so I'm sending this to you at the email address I have .

[REDACTED]
Kind regards , Jo Miller.

Begin forwarded message:

From: Jo Miller <Jo.Miller@huttcity.govt.nz>
Date: 6 September 2020 at 6:33:03 PM NZST
To: __Mayor & Councillors <__Mayor&Councillors@huttcity.govt.nz>
Subject: This weekend's Dominion Post , Stuff, calling things out and a plea .

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Yours ever, Jo

Footnote: I am going to forward a copy of this email to all those named in the Dom Post / Stuff article, to the staff who have had to work on this last week and this weekend, to CLT, and to stakeholders I have had to manage / assure this weekend.

Ngā mihi nui

Jo Miller
Chief Executive

Hutt City Council, 30 Laings Road Private Bag 31912, Lower Hutt 5010, New Zealand T 04 570 6773<callto:04%20570%206773> M 027 213 7550<callto:027%20213%207550> W
www.huttcity.govt.nz<http://www.huttcity.govt.nz>

Follow me on Twitter : @jomillernz<https://twitter.com/jomillernz>

[cid:hccsmalllogo_12fb0640-f486-4c5a-a775-f4ab1b1dfb5d.jpg]

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[REDACTED]

From: [REDACTED]
Sent: Monday, 7 September 2020 11:51 AM
To: Jo Miller
Subject: RE: This weekend's Dominion Post , Stuff, calling things out and a plea .

Tena koe Jo very will covered appreciated the email and here to support you Na [REDACTED]

-----Original Message-----

From: Jo Miller <Jo.Miller@huttcity.govt.nz>
Sent: Sunday, September 6, 2020 8:05 PM
To: [REDACTED]
Subject: Fwd: This weekend's Dominion Post , Stuff, calling things out and a plea .

Dear [REDACTED]
No doubt you have seen the articles in Dom Post -Stuff Please see the email below I have sent to Mayor and Councillors which should set the matter straight . Please call if you have any queries .
Kind regards Jo

Begin forwarded message:

From: Jo Miller <Jo.Miller@huttcity.govt.nz>
Date: 6 September 2020 at 6:33:03 PM NZST
To: __Mayor & Councillors <__Mayor&Councillors@huttcity.govt.nz>
Subject: This weekend's Dominion Post , Stuff, calling things out and a plea .

Dear Mayor and Councillors

It's been quite a weekend as I'm sure you can imagine , and full on work wise dealing with the Dom Post, Stuff, managing stakeholders and giving assurance .

I send this email without having consulted anyone, but I know I must send it . Ive had a saying my whole life - learned when I was growing up "The standards you are prepared to walk by are the standards you are prepared to accept . " And as Edmund Burke famously said , "All it takes for evil to prosper is for good people to stand by and do nothing . "I'm not prepared to do nothing . And I know that most of you won't either .

I don't want to start my new working week without setting my thoughts out to you . And I will end with a plea that I hope that everyone can sign up to without exception .

I started at Hutt City Council on 1 July last year . You have all seen my commentary on my last year and my reflections three months in which described a council that at times was weaponised , and a council where staff did not feel safe to speak truth to power . Of course , a fierce election campaign was being fought , and as an experienced CE, I know how these things work and how swords and cudgels drawn in battle are usually sheathed in the ensuing peace . Even if that is done with a grimace ! The weapons have largely been laid down, but we see them surface every now and again . This weekend has been the prime example of this.

I need to state on the record that I am nobody's patsy- not current politicians nor previous ones. I am my own woman . What I have to go on is my professionalism and my record. It's not my job to account for things that happened before I arrived here, though I do have to account for matters that are brought to my attention .

I will though, say what I see and call matters out without fear or favour , no matter how hard people might try to stop me (and there has been a bit of that lately). Of course, most of the time there's no need to do call things out - good standards prevail , and when mistakes are made, lessons are learned , apologies given and we move on. That applies equally to governance as it does to operations.

What we have here is of a different order. It needs to stop.

Let's go back to that mayor and council election last year. One of the things that was swirling round in mid August and September was the issue of then Cr Barry's house purchase in Wainuiomata Earlier in the year . A member of the public made a complaint to the OaG effectively alleging insider dealing , and the OaG referred that to SFO as being the right jurisdiction . SFO made their inquiries and found there was nothing for them to investigate . Two sets of journalists were tipped off about the complaint and made enquiries of the Council via the media team and my office .

I know that the member of public making the complaint , and bringing it to the attention of the press was aided by a person who was and remains a councillor. I know because that person told me so and as early as 20 August 2019 is on record as asking me "whether the media has contacted you about Campbell and Wainuiomata land" .

So you will see from this a major inaccuracy in the Stuff /Dom Post report . I wasn't informed after 17 September council meeting about the house purchase , I knew way before, as did Mayor Wallace who I had briefed about the existence of the complaint and whom I advised to stay away from it because I knew it was made / encouraged in bad faith . Whether Mayor Wallace was aware of the complaint from elsewhere I do not know. I am only going to make reference to things within my knowledge .

I haven't done anything about this in all the time since then. I've let it lie hoping it was gone in the election. But it hasn't gone, it has cropped up from time to time . A small overly vocal, dispossessed minority of people are still fighting last year's battles . This is getting in the way of running this city and enabling all of our people to thrive . I wouldn't be raising this matter now, but for the events of this last week and the damage that is being done - not to Mayor Barry or me, but to this city, the one we are all here to serve .

I did of course make my own enquiries last year about the house purchase both during the election campaign and once again in November to see whether there was any cause for concern. First of all I looked at what was in the public domain . There's quite a lot, starting with Mayor Wallace discussing this matter way back in 2016 in Stuff.

<https://www.stuff.co.nz/dominion-post/news/86403745/lower-hutt-mayor-rekindles-debate-over-building-more-houses-in-rural-wainuiomata>

I also took a look at info council to see what had been reported and when and what was in the public domain . I have copied in the links below for your information .

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http://infocouncil.huttcity.govt.nz/RedirectToDoc.aspx?URL=Open/2017/11/CDC_28112017_AGN_2435_AT_WEB.htm

August 2017:

http://infocouncil.huttcity.govt.nz/RedirectToDoc.aspx?URL=Open/2017/08/CDC_01082017_AGN_2407_AT_WEB.htm

We supplied all off these links to journalists last year ,and it's probably why they decided not to run a story . They didn't see a story . We supplied all of these links to the journalist asking questions this week , but he did not appear interested . He certainly didn't report on them . From all of this , you can see that Upper Fitzherbert as a potential development area was no secret .

As last year's election campaign ensued , the number of questions being asked about Wainuiomata North was unusual . I and other officers were concerned that we were being asked questions for the purposes of a political campaign and required every request in writing with reasons. Those requests and our answers were copied to Wainuiomata ward councillors to prevent any improper electoral conduct . I will release all of that correspondence into the public domain later this week .

As well as looking at what was in the public domain about Upper Fitzherbert , I checked in November of last year whether any of the then senior leadership team or former members of the senior leadership team I could contact plus all of the staff involved in the Wainuiomata Development framework and general counsel had any governance / ethics concerns regarding then Cr Barry's house purchase. They did not .

This week's Stuff/ Dom Post referred to me canning/shelving Wainuiomata growth plan work. This is simply untrue . Work on Wainuiomata North Development Framework was paused when Cr Bassett was chairing City Development Cttee at the end of 2018. The work was then subsumed into the Wellington Regional Growth Strategy as the September 2019 council report and minute show . See here : http://infocouncil.huttcity.govt.nz/Open/2019/09/HCC_17092019_MIN_2653_AT.htm<http://infocouncil.huttcity.govt.nz/Open/2019/09/HCC_17092019_MIN_2653_AT.htm>. Mayor Wallace will have known all of this as the Council's representative on Wellington Regional Strategy Committee .

You can see from this then , more material inaccuracy in the Stuff / Dom Post article , and about which I understand you have received correspondence urging an investigation into my behaviour .

Stuff have today corrected both stories in that regard . See here : <https://www.stuff.co.nz/dominion-post/300093672/controversy-over-politicians-house-purchase><<https://www.stuff.co.nz/dominion-post/300093672/controversy-over-politicians-house-purchase>>
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Yours ever, Jo

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Ngā mihi nui

Jo Miller
Chief Executive

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[Redacted]

From: [Redacted]
Sent: Monday, 7 September 2020 12:59 PM
To: Jo Miller
Subject: RE: This weekend's Dominion Post , Stuff, calling things out and a plea .

Thanks Jo. I appreciate you sending me this and strongly support the approach you are taking in confronting this sort of behaviour. Let me know if you think there is anything I can do to help. Regards, [Redacted]

[Redacted]

The information contained in this email is confidential and intended for the addressee only. If you are not the intended recipient, you are asked to respect that confidentiality by destroying this email and do not disclose, copy or make use of its contents. Your assistance is appreciated.

[Redacted]

From: [Redacted] **On Behalf Of** Jo Miller
Sent: Monday, 7 September 2020 10:48 am
To: [Redacted]
Subject: FW: This weekend's Dominion Post , Stuff, calling things out and a plea .

Kia ora [Redacted]

Please see the below email which I sent to Mayor and Councillors in light of the articles in the Dominion Post/Stuff.

Sharing with you fyi.

Ngā mihi nui

Jo Miller | Chief Executive
Tumu Whakarae



Hutt City Council
30 Laings Road
Private Bag 31912
Lower Hutt 5010, New Zealand
T 04 570 66773 M 027 213
7550
www.huttcity.govt.nz



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To: __Mayor & Councillors
Subject: This weekend's Dominion Post, Stuff, calling things out and a plea.

Dear Mayor and Councillors

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I send this email without having consulted anyone, but I know I must send it. I've had a saying my whole life - learned when I was young - "The standards you are prepared to walk by are the standards you are prepared to accept." And as Edmund Burke famously said, "The only good that takes for evil to prosper is for good people to stand by and do nothing." I'm not prepared to do nothing. And I know that most people are not either.

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correspondence urging an investigation into my behaviour.

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So I end with a plea. To those engaging in this behaviour, stop it right now. To others, let’s call it out for what it is. Standing by. We can’t change our past, but we can change our future. Let us work together to be the change we want to see.

Yours ever, Jo

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Ngā mihi nui

Jo Miller
Chief Executive

Hutt City Council, 30 Laings Road Private Bag 31912, Lower Hutt 5010, New Zealand
T [04 570 6773](tel:045706773) M [027 213 7550](tel:0272137550)
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Follow me on Twitter : [@jomillernz](https://twitter.com/jomillernz)



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[REDACTED]

From: [REDACTED]
Sent: Monday, 7 September 2020 9:51 AM
To: Jo Miller
Cc: [REDACTED]
Subject: Re: This weekend's Dominion Post , Stuff, calling things out and a plea .

Hi Jo

Thank you for the thorough, timely and well communicated explanation of the situation.

I am completely confident that this entire episode is a political manoeuvre that lacks any substance or concern worthy of further time being wasted investigating.

I wholeheartedly agree with your plea.

Regards

[REDACTED]

Sent from my iPad

> On 6/09/2020, at 8:01 PM, Jo Miller <Jo.Miller@huttcity.govt.nz> wrote:

>

> Dear [REDACTED], thanks for taking the call yesterday . Please see below

> my email to mayor and councillors which I hope sets the matter

> straight . Happy to pass to other chamber board members if you think

> appropriate . Thanks Jo

>

>

> Begin forwarded message:

>

> From: Jo Miller <Jo.Miller@huttcity.govt.nz>

> Date: 6 September 2020 at 6:33:03 PM NZST

> To: __Mayor & Councillors <__Mayor&Councillors@huttcity.govt.nz>

> Subject: This weekend's Dominion Post , Stuff, calling things out and a plea .

>

>

>

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>

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> I also took a look at info council to see what had been reported and when and what was in the public domain . I have copied in the links below for your information .

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>

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> February 2018:
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>
> November 2017:
> http://infocouncil.huttcity.govt.nz/RedirectToDoc.aspx?URL=Open/2017/1/CDC_28112017_AGN_2435_AT_WEB.htm
>
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> I have mentioned that I have spent a fair portion of this weekend on stakeholder management with more to do. That included briefing the Department for Internal Affairs who are assured by our approach at this stage .

>

> I would say that staff dealing with this issue this week have lost around three to four working days , and there is more energy to be spent . Energy that could be spent on furthering the fortunes of this city and its people is being diverted to countering nasty personal attacks. It is not good enough . Those who are responsible need to stop, whether they are up front fighting these wars, playing through the hands of others or mixing things out of plain sight. If we continue in this manner our city and its people will suffer .

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> So I end with a plea. To those engaging in this behaviour , stop it right now. To others , let's call it out for what it is . Standing by won't do. We can't change our past, but we can change our future . Let us work together to be the change we want to see.

>

> Yours ever, Jo

>

>

> Footnote : I am going to forward a copy of this email to all those named in the Dom Post / Stuff article , to the staff who have had to work on this last week and this weekend , to CLT, and to stakeholders I have had to manage / assure this weekend .

>

> Ngā mihi nui

>

> Jo Miller

> Chief Executive

>

> Hutt City Council, 30 Laings Road Private Bag 31912, Lower Hutt 5010,

> New Zealand T 04 570 6773<callto:04%20570%206773> M 027 213

> 7550<callto:027%20213%207550> W

> www.huttcity.govt.nz<http://www.huttcity.govt.nz>

>

> Follow me on Twitter : @jomillernz<https://twitter.com/jomillernz>

>

> [cid:hccsmalllogo_12fb0640-f486-4c5a-a775-f4ab1b1dfb5d.jpg]

>

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[REDACTED]

From: [REDACTED]
Sent: Monday, 7 September 2020 8:00 AM
To: Jo Miller
Subject: RE: This weekend's Dominion Post , Stuff, calling things out and a plea .

Morena Jo
No need to apologise given the below.
I did want to talk to you about whether you thought it was a good idea (and would be prepared to act as a co-sponsor) for a Regional (CEO sponsored) initiative around the future of local government (the so called parallel workstream of the 3 water review).
I think the sector should be leading this and that it is something you and I are probably both very passionate about.

I'd love a call when you have time, and fully understand that the is much on your plate, not least after the weekend's events.

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

-----Original Message-----
From: Jo Miller <Jo.Miller@huttcity.govt.nz>
Sent: Sunday, 6 September 2020 8:06 PM
To: [REDACTED]
Subject: Fwd: This weekend's Dominion Post , Stuff, calling things out and a plea .

Kia Ora [REDACTED]
Sorry I wasn't with you on Friday . Set out below is why ! Speak soon . Jo

Begin forwarded message:

From: Jo Miller <Jo.Miller@huttcity.govt.nz>
Date: 6 September 2020 at 6:33:03 PM NZST
To: __Mayor & Councillors <__Mayor&Councillors@huttcity.govt.nz>
Subject: This weekend's Dominion Post , Stuff, calling things out and a plea .

Dear Mayor and Councillors

It's been quite a weekend as I'm sure you can imagine , and full on work wise dealing with the Dom Post, Stuff, managing stakeholders and giving assurance .

I send this email without having consulted anyone, but I know I must send it . Ive had a saying my whole life - learned when I was growing up "The standards you are prepared to walk by are the standards you are prepared to

accept . “ And as Edmund Burke famously said , “All it takes for evil to prosper is for good people to stand by and do nothing . “I’m not prepared to do nothing . And I know that most of you won’t either .

I don’t want to start my new working week without setting my thoughts out to you . And I will end with a plea that I hope that everyone can sign up to without exception .

I started at Hutt City Council on 1 July last year . You have all seen my commentary on my last year and my reflections three months in which described a council that at times was weaponised , and a council where staff did not feel safe to speak truth to power . Of course , a fierce election campaign was being fought , and as an experienced CE, I know how these things work and how swords and cudgels drawn in battle are usually sheathed in the ensuing peace . Even if that is done with a grimace ! The weapons have largely been laid down, but we see them surface every now and again . This weekend has been the prime example of this.

I need to state on the record that I am nobody’s patsy- not current politicians nor previous ones. I am my own woman . What I have to go on is my professionalism and my record. It’s not my job to account for things that happened before I arrived here, though I do have to account for matters that are brought to my attention .

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What we have here is of a different order. It needs to stop.

Let’s go back to that mayor and council election last year. One of the things that was swirling round in mid August and September was the issue of then Cr Barry’s house purchase in Wainuiomata Earlier in the year . A member of the public made a complaint to the OaG effectively alleging insider dealing , and the OaG referred that to SFO as being the right jurisdiction . SFO made their inquiries and found there was nothing for them to investigate . Two sets of journalists were tipped off about the complaint and made enquiries of the Council via the media team and my office .

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Yours ever, Jo

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Ngā mihi nui

Jo Miller
Chief Executive

Hutt City Council, 30 Laings Road Private Bag 31912, Lower Hutt 5010, New Zealand T 04 570 6773<callto:04%20570%206773> M 027 213 7550<callto:027%20213%207550> W www.huttcity.govt.nz<http://www.huttcity.govt.nz>

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not the intended recipient, you are notified that any use, copying or distribution of this e-mail message is prohibited. If you have received this e-mail message in error, please notify the sender immediately. Thank you.

[REDACTED]

From: [REDACTED]
Sent: Monday, 7 September 2020 7:38 AM
To: Jo Miller
Cc: [REDACTED]
Subject: Re: This weekend's Dominion Post , Stuff, calling things out and a plea .

Thanks Jo will do - reckon you could with [REDACTED] (you may have already) and other CEs in the region.

Get [Outlook for iOS](#)

From: Jo Miller <Jo.Miller@huttcity.govt.nz>
Sent: Sunday, September 6, 2020 7:40:05 PM
To: [REDACTED]
Cc: [REDACTED]
Subject: Re: This weekend's Dominion Post , Stuff, calling things out and a plea .

Thanks [REDACTED]
Please all of you share with whom ever you need to. Do you think I should share with other CEs ?

Ngā mihi nui
Jo Miller
Chief Executive

Hutt City Council, 30 Laings Road, Private Bag 31912, Lower Hutt 5010, New Zealand
T04 570 6773 M 027 213 7550
Wwww.huttcity.govt.nz
Follow me on Twitter : @jomillernz

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> On 6/09/2020, at 7:38 PM, Barbara McKerrow <Barbara.Mckerrow@wcc.govt.nz> wrote:

>
> Kia ora Jo
>
> That is a strong and to the point message which I admire. You have clearly had a very challenging week and weekend. Would you mind if I share this with my ELT? Anything I can do to put a stop to unhelpful speculation I will do.

>
> Kia kaha

>
> [REDACTED]

> -----Original Message-----

> From: Jo Miller <Jo.Miller@huttcity.govt.nz>

> Sent: 06 September 2020 19:01

> To: [REDACTED]

> Subject: Fwd: This weekend's Dominion Post , Stuff, calling things out and a plea .

>
> Dear Colleagues

> I'm sorry I wasn't with you on Friday . You have I know seen Saturday's papers which you will have guessed is the reason why . After a work weekend , with some changes made to the press as per below , I set out my thoughts to elected members I wanted to share it with you also .

> Thanks as ever for your friendship and support .

> Jo

>

>

> Begin forwarded message:

>

> From: Jo Miller <Jo.Miller@huttcity.govt.nz>

> Date: 6 September 2020 at 6:33:03 PM NZST

> To: __Mayor & Councillors <__Mayor&Councillors@huttcity.govt.nz>

> Subject: This weekend's Dominion Post , Stuff, calling things out and a plea .

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> I would say that staff dealing with this issue this week have lost around three to four working days , and there is more energy to be spent . Energy that could be spent on furthering the fortunes of this city and its people is being diverted to countering nasty personal attacks. It is not good enough . Those who are responsible need to stop, whether they are up front fighting these wars, playing through the hands of others or mixing things out of plain sight. If we continue in this manner our city and its people will suffer .
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> So I end with a plea. To those engaging in this behaviour , stop it right now. To others , let’s call it out for what it is . Standing by won’t do. We can’t change our past, but we can change our future . Let us work together to be the change we want to see.
>
> Yours ever, Jo
>
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> Footnote : I am going to forward a copy of this email to all those named in the Dom Post / Stuff article , to the staff who have had to work on this last week and this weekend , to CLT, and to stakeholders I have had to manage / assure this weekend .
>
> Ngā mihi nui

>
> Jo Miller
> Chief Executive
>
> Hutt City Council, 30 Laings Road Private Bag 31912, Lower Hutt 5010, New Zealand T 04 570
6773<callto:04%20570%206773> M 027 213 7550<callto:027%20213%207550> W
www.huttcity.govt.nz<<http://www.huttcity.govt.nz>>
>
> Follow me on Twitter : @jomillernz<<https://twitter.com/jomillernz>>
>
> [cid:hccsmalllogo_12fb0640-f486-4c5a-a775-f4ab1b1dfb5d.jpg]
>
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the intended recipient, you are notified that any use, copying or distribution of this e-mail message is prohibited. If
you have received this e-mail message in error, please notify the sender immediately. Thank you.

[REDACTED]

From: [REDACTED]
Sent: Sunday, 6 September 2020 8:27 PM
To: Jo Miller
Subject: Re: This weekend's Dominion Post , Stuff, calling things out and a plea .

Kia ora Jo

Thank you for your email happy to have a coffee soon.

Nga Mihi [REDACTED]

> On 6/09/2020, at 8:04 PM, Jo Miller <Jo.Miller@huttcity.govt.nz> wrote:

>

> Dear [REDACTED]

> No doubt you have seen the articles in Dom Post -Stuff Please see the

> email below I have sent to Mayor and Councillors which should set the matter straight . Please call if you have any queries .

> Kind regards Jo

>

>

> Begin forwarded message:

>

> From: Jo Miller <Jo.Miller@huttcity.govt.nz>

> Date: 6 September 2020 at 6:33:03 PM NZST

> To: __Mayor & Councillors <__Mayor&Councillors@huttcity.govt.nz>

> Subject: This weekend's Dominion Post , Stuff, calling things out and a plea .

>

>

>

> Dear Mayor and Councillors

>

> It's been quite a weekend as I'm sure you can imagine , and full on work wise dealing with the Dom Post, Stuff, managing stakeholders and giving assurance .

>

> I send this email without having consulted anyone, but I know I must send it . Ive had a saying my whole life - learned when I was growing up "The standards you are prepared to walk by are the standards you are prepared to accept . " And as Edmund Burke famously said , "All it takes for evil to prosper is for good people to stand by and do nothing . "I'm not prepared to do nothing . And I know that most of you won't either .

>

> I don't want to start my new working week without setting my thoughts out to you . And I will end with a plea that I hope that everyone can sign up to without exception .

>

> I started at Hutt City Council on 1 July last year . You have all seen my commentary on my last year and my reflections three months in which described a council that at times was weaponised , and a council where staff did not feel safe to speak truth to power . Of course , a fierce election campaign was being fought , and as an experienced CE, I know how these things work and how swords and cudgels drawn in battle are usually sheathed in the ensuing peace . Even if that is done with a grimace ! The weapons have largely been laid down, but we see them surface every now and again . This weekend has been the prime example of this.

>

> I need to state on the record that I am nobody's patsy- not current politicians nor previous ones. I am my own woman . What I have to go on is my professionalism and my record. It's not my job to account for things that happened before I arrived here, though I do have to account for matters that are brought to my attention .

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> I will though, say what I see and call matters out without fear or favour , no matter how hard people might try to stop me (and there has been a bit of that lately). Of course, most of the time there's no need to do call things out - good standards prevail , and when mistakes are made, lessons are learned , apologies given and we move on. That applies equally to governance as it does to operations.

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> What we have here is of a different order. It needs to stop.

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> Let's go back to that mayor and council election last year. One of the things that was swirling round in mid August and September was the issue of then Cr Barry's house purchase in Wainuiomata Earlier in the year . A member of the public made a complaint to the OaG effectively alleging insider dealing , and the OaG referred that to SFO as being the right jurisdiction . SFO made their inquiries and found there was nothing for them to investigate . Two sets of journalists were tipped off about the complaint and made enquiries of the Council via the media team and my office .

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> I know that the member of public making the complaint , and bringing it to the attention of the press was aided by a person who was and remains a councillor. I know because that person told me so and as early as 20 August 2019 is on record as asking me "whether the media has contacted you about Campbell and Wainuiomata land" .

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> I haven't done anything about this in all the time since then. I've let it lie hoping it was gone in the election. But it hasn't gone, it has cropped up from time to time . A small overly vocal, dispossessed minority of people are still fighting last year's battles . This is getting in the way of running this city and enabling all of our people to thrive . I wouldn't be raising this matter now, but for the events of this last week and the damage that is being done - not to Mayor Barry or me, but to this city, the one we are all here to serve .

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> Ngā mihi nui

>

> Jo Miller

> Chief Executive

>

> Hutt City Council, 30 Laings Road Private Bag 31912, Lower Hutt 5010,

> New Zealand T 04 570 6773<callto:04%20570%206773> M 027 213

> 7550<callto:027%20213%207550> W

> www.huttcity.govt.nz<http://www.huttcity.govt.nz>

>

> Follow me on Twitter : @jomillernz<https://twitter.com/jomillernz>

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[REDACTED]

From: [REDACTED]
Sent: Sunday, 6 September 2020 7:38 PM
To: Jo Miller; [REDACTED]
Subject: RE: This weekend's Dominion Post , Stuff, calling things out and a plea .

Kia ora Jo

That is a strong and to the point message which I admire. You have clearly had a very challenging week and weekend. Would you mind if I share this with my ELT? Anything I can do to put a stop to unhelpful speculation I will do.

Kia kaha

[REDACTED]

-----Original Message-----

From: Jo Miller <Jo.Miller@huttcity.govt.nz>

Sent: 06 September 2020 19:01

To: [REDACTED]

Subject: Fwd: This weekend's Dominion Post , Stuff, calling things out and a plea .

Dear Colleagues

I'm sorry I wasn't with you on Friday . You have I know seen Saturday's papers which you will have guessed is the reason why . After a work weekend , with some changes made to the press as per below , I set out my thoughts to elected members I wanted to share it with you also .

Thanks as ever for your friendship and support .

Jo

Begin forwarded message:

From: Jo Miller <Jo.Miller@huttcity.govt.nz>

Date: 6 September 2020 at 6:33:03 PM NZST

To: __Mayor & Councillors <__Mayor&Councillors@huttcity.govt.nz>

Subject: This weekend's Dominion Post , Stuff, calling things out and a plea .

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And also corrected here : <https://www.stuff.co.nz/dominion-post/news/86403745/lower-hutt-mayor-rekindles-debate-over-building-more-houses-in-rural-wainuiomata><<https://www.stuff.co.nz/dominion-post/news/86403745/lower-hutt-mayor-rekindles-debate-over-building-more-houses-in-rural-wainuiomata>>

I am at a loss as to why in the original Stuff / Dom Post articles it is said that "senior officials " were "shocked" and 'surprised " at a "cavalier" unilateral action in canning / shelving work - action I simply did not take. At best , those who were shocked and surprised at action I did not take are misremembering . At worst, it is something more poisonous .

The Editor of Stuff so far has declined to confirm whether the senior officials referred to in the (now corrected) article are those charged with governance or staff. From my own (99% complete) enquiries , I do not believe this makes reference to any current staff members, nor any previous staff members who were responsible for the planning and strategy functions.

I did publish all Wainuiomata North Development Framework documents back in December 2019, and emailed all of you on 20 December to explain that. This was part of my commitment , and the desire of this council to move from a position of secrecy to openness . As you know, new council has a procedure for publishing briefing papers etc. so we can be more open and transparent . The Wellington Regional Growth Strategy is in development , aided by a regional members workshop held pre - Covid at the Events Centre . Many of you attended . That WRGF that is due to come to councils in the region by the end of the year will identify all greenfield development sites across the region .

As you can deduce from all of the above , this weekend's reporting leaves a lot to be desired in terms of accuracy . I have been in dialogue with the Editor over the weekend and some , though not enough , corrections have been made. It is inexcusable that basic journalistic practice has not been followed . For example, just in my own case, knowledge , actions and motives have been attributed to me without any contact with me by the journalist.

The Editor will be meeting with me and Mayor Barry to discuss retraction etc. In view of the appalling inaccuracies in both stories, the Editor has agreed not to publish either story in the Hutt News.

I have mentioned that I have spent a fair portion of this weekend on stakeholder management with more to do. That included briefing the Department for Internal Affairs who are assured by our approach at this stage .

I would say that staff dealing with this issue this week have lost around three to four working days , and there is more energy to be spent . Energy that could be spent on furthering the fortunes of this city and its people is being diverted to countering nasty personal attacks. It is not good enough . Those who are responsible need to stop, whether they are up front fighting these wars, playing through the hands of others or mixing things out of plain sight. If we continue in this manner our city and its people will suffer .

So I end with a plea. To those engaging in this behaviour , stop it right now. To others , let's call it out for what it is . Standing by won't do. We can't change our past, but we can change our future . Let us work together to be the change we want to see.

Yours ever, Jo

Footnote : I am going to forward a copy of this email to all those named in the Dom Post / Stuff article , to the staff who have had to work on this last week and this weekend , to CLT, and to stakeholders I have had to manage / assure this weekend .

Ngā mihi nui

Jo Miller
Chief Executive

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[REDACTED]

From: [REDACTED]
Sent: Monday, 7 September 2020 5:58 PM
To: Jo Miller
Subject: Re: Wainuiomata North stories - [REDACTED] will send plus will attach [REDACTED]'s email

Hi Jo
Thanks for your email. I will review and come back to you.
In terms of your website statement you can say.
The Dominion Post has confirmed it is reviewing our complaint.
I understand a separate complaint is coming from the mayor's office and once received that will also be reviewed.

[REDACTED]

On Mon, 7 Sep 2020 at 15:39, Jo Miller <Jo.Miller@huttcity.govt.nz> wrote:

Hi [REDACTED]

As discussed on the phone this morning I am seeking a full retraction of the stories, and an apology with similar prominence to the placement of the stories in your newspaper and online. Later today, we will be posting a statement to our website noting we are seeking this, so it would be really helpful if we could have your response by close of business today please.

1. Background information sent to [REDACTED]

Some relevant extracts from publically available papers were sent to [REDACTED] in separate emails on Friday (attached). Information on the Wellington Regional Growth Framework was also sent to him. None of this information was reflected in the article and this also contributed to the lack of balance in the article.

2. There are still incorrect statements in the articles. Specifically, I did not find out about Cr Barry's (as he was then) house purchase following the September Council meeting.

Incorrect referencing of September 2019 meeting - www.stuff.co.nz/national/politics/300093140/the-battle-for-a-slice-of-hutt-paradise

“It was immediately after that meeting that both Miller and Wallace were informed that Barry had bought a property in the area being considered for development, while being involved in confidential discussions about the plans.”

3. I remain concerned regarding the following statement (refer <https://www.stuff.co.nz/dominion-post/300093672/controversy-over-politicians-house-purchase>)

“Despite that conclusion, highly placed sources within the council believe Barry’s actions were “very serious”, had “significant implications in terms of the council’s decision-making processes” and fell “well short of the threshold required by elected officials”.

And

“Those sources also believe the SFO’s ruling ignores the efforts the council made to keep planning secret, until it was ready to present the plans to the public.”

I am unclear as to whether these sources are officers (current or past) or members. As I have said I checked with all staff and I have rechecked and found there were no concerns expressed to me. Since the stories have been published I also need to account to funders, and governing and monitoring bodies explaining these articles and it is difficult to do so when I do not know if the sources are my own staff and whether they are still employed here. This is a matter of trust and confidence in the organisation and as Chief Executive it is crucial that I have this information. Whilst this issue goes to lack of balance in your stories, the failure to differentiate is significantly increasing harm and reputation.

4. Concerns regarding [REDACTED] (attachment)

As well as my own concerns which I have expressed to you, I have attached an email from our former [REDACTED] who was interviewed by [REDACTED] for the stories. This email raises a number of concerns which I will leave with you. If you determine that you share my concerns one of the ways this can be managed is through an apology to Hutt City Council.

I look forward to your response to the above matters.

Sincerely

Jo Miller | Chief Executive
Tumu Whakarae

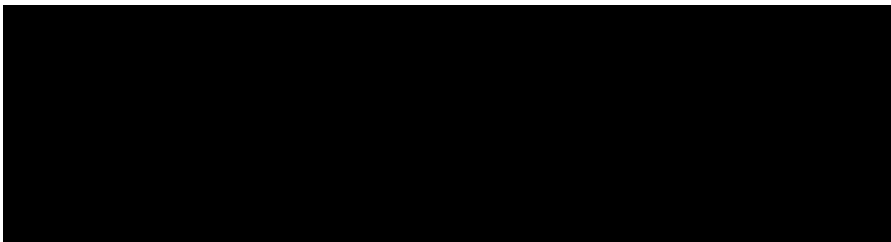


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[REDACTED]

From: [REDACTED]
Sent: Saturday, 5 September 2020 4:13 PM
To: Jo Miller; Helen Oram
Subject: Wainui North

Hi Jo and [REDACTED]

Further to our discussion earlier this afternoon, I confirm I was telephoned on 2 September by Dominion Post journalist [REDACTED] regarding Wainuiomata North. [REDACTED] said the call was off the record and he would not use my name or quote me in his article. He was extremely persistent in trying to push me to agree that Campbell Barry had acted on inside information in his purchase of a property in Wainuiomata North. [REDACTED] was clearly looking for support for a position he had already adopted. I repeatedly told him that the fact Wainuiomata North would become urbanised was widespread public knowledge including through HCC's Urban Growth Strategy. In reference to acting on inside information I told him "I don't think there's anything in it". (I had a similar phone call with [REDACTED] several months ago, although he said he did not recall it, so it may have been with some other Dominion Post/Stuff journalist).

My recollection is that the notion of implementing Council's Urban Growth Strategy programme by looking at Wainuiomata North in a structured way arose from discussions between [REDACTED]. [REDACTED] was closely involved in working with developers who were continuing to develop residentially zoned land in the Wise St area. [REDACTED] was concerned with the likelihood that uncoordinated development would lead to piecemeal roading and stormwater management solutions that would constrain further development on adjacent land and lead to poor outcomes. [REDACTED] agreed that having some sort of development framework reflecting good urban design and coordinated infrastructure provision would be useful to provide the basis for an enabling district plan change for the area. We regarded the project as being on the existing work programme, so senior management and Councillors would be kept informed but no additional approvals were required to move forward.

[REDACTED] worked up a brief and engaged consultants. I discussed the project with the District Plan Committee and [REDACTED] likewise with the City Development Committee. I've had a quick look at public meeting agendas just now and found the following on the progression of what became known as the Wainuiomata North Development Framework - see table below.

<u>District Plan Committee 26 July 2017</u> Urban Development, Upper Fitzherbert Road, Wainuiomata <i>42. Officers have invited Expressions of Interest from selected providers with the skills and experience to prepare a best practice framework for the urban development of Upper Fitzherbert Road, Wainuiomata.</i> <i>43. Shortlisted respondents will be invited to provide detailed fee proposals.</i>	First mention to District Plan Committee
<u>City Development Committee 1 August 2017</u> <i>Urban Growth Strategy Implementation</i> <i>95. The Urban Growth Strategy 2032 was adopted in 2014.</i> <i>96. Implementation projects being worked on include:</i>	First mention to City Development Committee

<p>·Wainuiomata - extension of Wise Street – This work has been undertaken enabling the start of a consented 31 lot private subdivision on one of the landholdings along the extension. Other landholdings along this extension are considering future residential development.</p> <p>·Upper Fitzherbert, Wainuiomata</p> <p>Officers have invited Expressions of Interest from selected providers with the skills and experience to prepare a best practice framework for the urban development of Upper Fitzherbert Road, Wainuiomata.</p> <p>Shortlisted respondents will be invited to provide detailed fee proposals.</p>	
<p><u>District Plan Committee 20 September 2017</u></p> <p>Urban Development, Upper Fitzherbert Road, Wainuiomata</p> <p>43. Staff have about to engage a consultant to prepare a best practice framework for the urban development of Upper Fitzherbert Road, Wainuiomata.</p>	
<p><u>City Development Committee 26 September 2017</u></p> <p>42. Implementation projects being worked on include:</p> <p>·Wainuiomata - extension of Wise Street – One subdivision consented and houses under construction. Other landholdings along this extension are considering future residential development.</p> <p>·Upper Fitzherbert, Wainuiomata</p> <p>Officers have selected a consultant team to prepare a best practice framework for the urban development of Upper Fitzherbert Road, Wainuiomata. This work, when completed, will inform a District Plan change to enable residential development as proposed in the urban Growth strategy 2012 – 2032.</p>	
<p><u>District Plan Committee 24 November 2017</u></p> <p>Urban Development, Upper Fitzherbert Road, Wainuiomata</p> <p>44. Staff have engaged a consultant to prepare a best practice framework for the urban development of Upper Fitzherbert Road, Wainuiomata.</p>	
<p><u>City Development Committee 28 November 2017</u></p> <p>49. Implementation projects being worked on include:</p> <p>·Wainuiomata - extension of Wise Street – One subdivision</p>	

<p><i>consented and houses under construction. Other landholdings along this extension are considering future residential development.</i></p> <p><i>·Upper Fitzherbert, Wainuiomata</i></p> <p><i>Officers have selected a consultant team to prepare a best practice framework for the urban development of Upper Fitzherbert Road, Wainuiomata. This work, when completed, will inform a District Plan change to enable residential development as proposed in the urban Growth strategy 2012 – 2032.</i></p>	
<p><u>City Development Committee 27 February 2018</u></p> <p>42. <i>Implementation projects being worked on include:</i></p> <p><i>·Wainuiomata - extension of Wise Street – One subdivision consented and houses under construction. Other landholdings along this extension are considering future residential development.</i></p> <p><i>·Upper Fitzherbert, Wainuiomata</i></p> <p><i>Officers working with a consultant team undertook a planning exercise in November 2017 to develop a framework for the urban development of Upper Fitzherbert Road, Wainuiomata. This work has just been received in draft form and when completed will inform a District Plan change to enable residential development as proposed in the urban Growth strategy 2012 – 2032. A councilor workshop will be held to go through the report and determine next steps.</i></p>	
<p><u>District Plan Committee 18 April 2018</u></p> <p>Upcoming Work</p> <p>77. <i>As well as upcoming District Plan projects arising from Riverlink, the NPSUDC and the National Planning Standards, there are likely to be projects on the near horizon addressing the Wainuiomata North Structure Plan, heritage buildings, natural hazards, greenfield development areas, the Lower Hutt CBD, Naenae and Wainuiomata centre rejuvenation, large lot residential and rural zones.</i></p> <p>78. <i>The Committee may wish to consider whether the current levels of resourcing are able to deliver its higher priorities in the short term.</i></p>	
<p>City Development Committee agenda of 1 May 2018</p>	<p>Project not mentioned</p>
<p>District Plan Committee meeting of 1 September 2018</p>	<p>Project not mentioned</p>
<p>City Development Committee 5 March 2019</p>	

City Development Committee – Work Programme – March 2019

Description	Author	Cycle 2 2019	Cycle 3 2019	Cycle 4 2019
GMs' Report		x	x	x
Activity Report: City Growth and Sustainability – City Development		x		
International Relations Six Month Update		x		
Hutt Valley Tennis Centre		x		
Urban Growth Strategy – Wainuiomata North Development Framework			x	
Jackson Street Programme 12 Month Update				x
Technology Valley Six Month Update				x
Hutt Valley Chamber of Commerce Six Month Update				x
Seaview Business Association 12 Month Update				x

City Development Committee – Work Programme – April 2019

Description	Author	Cycle 3 2019	Cycle 4 2019
GMs' Report		x	x
Urban Growth Strategy – Wainuiomata North Development Framework		x	

City Development Committee – Work Programme – July 2019

Description	Author	Cycle 4 2019
GMs' Report		x
Recommendations from the District Plan Subcommittee		x
Urban Growth Strategy – Wainuiomata North Development Framework		x

City Development Committee – Work Programme – September 2019

Description	Author	Pending
GMs' Report		x
Proposed New Street Name: Subdivision of 1041A High Street, Avalon		x
Proposed New Street Name: Subdivision of 38 Manor Park Road, Lower Hutt		x
Review of Reserved Street Names		x
Temporary Road Closure reports		x
Urban Growth Strategy – Wainuiomata North Development Framework		x

You'll see from the above that the project was parked some time in mid 2018, well before your arrival at Hutt City. It was not discussed again as a district plan project although, as I just learned, it continued to be listed in the 'Work Programme' table of City Development.

I don't recall exactly when the Councillor workshop referred to in the CDC 27 Feb took place but I think it would have been February, March or April 2018. There will be a record in your system.

I think the reasons for the project being parked included:

- Political sensitivity about another potentially controversial district plan project (SNAs and PC43 were in progress)
- Concern about the cost of 3-waters infrastructure.

I hope that helps a little. Feel free to get in touch if you need to.

Regards

[Redacted]

[Redacted]

[Redacted]