

1 April 2021

[REDACTED]  
[REDACTED]

Dear [REDACTED],

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

We refer to your official information request dated 1 March 2021.

Two emails are being released in response to this request, please find them attached. We are withholding the individual's personal email address and a persons name under section 7(2)(a) of the LGOIMA to protect the privacy of natural persons. There is no correspondence from lawyers to include in the response.

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](http://www.ombudsman.parliament.nz) or freephone 0800 802 602.

Please note that this letter (with your personal details removed) may be published on the Council's website.

Yours sincerely,

Euan Kyle

Corporate Information Manager

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**From:** Jo Miller  
**Sent:** Thursday, 30 April 2020 7:17 AM  
**To:** Tony Stallinger  
**Cc:** Campbell Barry  
**Subject:** Re: My recent email

Dear Tony

Thank you for your email , which leaves me perplexed .

I'm afraid for me it doesn't clarify anything or allay concern in fact the revisiting of events makes things very confused .

In your email response to my cease and desist letter to you ( which clearly still stands ) , you robustly stated that you had been very restrained in your contacts with the media . Specifically , you stated that you had contact with senior staff from LGNZ who , in the course of your contact (and unsolicited you said ) suggested you take stronger action than you did .

I'm a straightforward woman . Either there was contact with senior LGNZ staff or there wasn't . Either there was an exchange during contact with you which encouraged you to take the action you did or there was not.

Which of these is it to be Tony ? And if these conversations / contact took place , you will remember who they were with and what it was that left you suitably encouraged .

If the conversations and contact didn't take place with senior LGNZ staff , that begs the question how you could say there was such a state of affairs ? That's not a clarification, it's a U Turn .

Please can you now clarify exactly what your position is please ?

There is no need to collude with 7(2)(a) on this . I will share your email with him and ask him some specific questions too .

I look forward to hearing from you .  
Thanks Jo

Ngā mihi nui  
Jo Miller  
Chief Executive

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**From:** Jo Miller  
**Sent:** Saturday, 18 April 2020 12:55 PM  
**To:** 7(2)(a)  
**Cc:** Jo Miller  
**Subject:** Your Hutt Radio comments and follow up written note, published online

Dear Tony

**Your Hutt Radio comments and follow up written note, published online**

As you'll appreciate my number one priority at the moment is managing our essential services and welfare response during COVID-19. The health and wellbeing of council staff is a high priority as is serving Mayor and councillors. Many members of our community are struggling financially and with numerous and significant social challenges for themselves and their whanau at this time of great uncertainty.

In response Council has made a number of decisions and developed new initiatives and packages to help our community. This includes proposals to reduce the proposed rates increase to just above the rate of inflation and a one-year budget. This leaves us with significant gaps in meeting the aspirations of our community and in our city's core infrastructure that will need to be addressed in the medium term. The team is working hard to address this with the objective being to support economic recovery and ensure that our city and all of its people can thrive.

As such, I would not normally divert my attention from these serious matters to address the actions of a former incumbent of the post I now hold. That said, I am left with no alternative having read your paper published online and listened to your interview on Hutt Radio which covers a wide-range of management issues which I am perplexed about.

In your interview you provide commentary on the financial analysis undertaken by my staff, challenge assumptions built into budgets and you comment specifically on staffing matters including my new management structure. In my experience, and those of other highly credible SOLGM CEO's I have consulted with, this is highly unusual practice for a former chief executive who I assume wants to hold themselves to a high level of professional and ethical practice.

It's disappointing that you did not approach me for comment to raise any concerns before making public comments. I take this to be a deliberate step by you to undermine me and council employees. At a professional and ethical level this is extraordinary. As a reminder the comments you made included referring to a presentation to Council as "completely misleading", "fundamentally flawed" and with the

purpose of justifying “massive rates increases and [blaming] them on past financial management”. These allegations are false , without merit and cannot go unanswered.

You should be aware that I take this matter very seriously .I expect an assurance that you cease and desist from making further defamatory statements about me . Please treat this email as notice that I reserve my rights to address your unwarranted and defamatory attack upon me which is damaging to the well-founded reputation I have established over many years .

At no time have I gone on the record, as you have, to criticise you, your leadership or your financial management. You, however, made the decision to be interviewed on radio openly disparaging me and the practices of my staff, many of whom had previously expressed their respect for you as a professional accountant and their former leader. This has left many confused and an apology from you to me and by inference them, would be one course of action you could take immediately to address your erroneous actions and assumptions.

I await your response.

Sincerely

Jo Miller

Ngā mihi nui

**Jo Miller**

Chief Executive

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