

10 May 2023

Oliver Bryan
Taxpayers Union

s 7(2)(a)

Tēnā koe Oliver

Request for Information pursuant to the Local Government Official Information and Meetings Act 1987 (LGOIMA)

Thank you for your correspondence of 11 April 2023, in which you have requested the following official information:

- *“Does your council provide office space to a Union? If yes, which Union is it and do they pay for the office space? If yes, how much does the Union pay for the office space? If no, what is the rental value of the office space given to Union?”*
- *Please provide us with your council’s current working from home policy.*
- *How much does the council pay to rent its offices?*
- *What is the current staffing occupancy level of your offices? This relates to working from home versus staff in the office.*
- *How much has the council spent on stationery in the last 12 months? Please provide a breakdown of costs.*
- *How much does the council spend on newspaper and magazine subscriptions? Please provide a breakdown of costs”.*

Answers to each of these questions are provided below.

- Hutt City Council does not provide office space to a union.
- Hutt City Council’s Flexible Working Policy is attached.
- Rental paid for the four rented sites is \$41,142.25 per month (excluding GST). Although the Council uses many different offices, most of the office space is owned by the Council.
- Hutt City Council does not maintain staff occupancy information, however we currently have about 260 staff based at Laings Road, Lower Hutt, and about 220 desks.
- Hutt City Council has spent \$57,958.72 (excluding GST) on stationery in the last 12 months, being from 1 April 2022 to 31 March 2023. This covers pens, pencils, booklets and other similar material. We are unable to break down this expenditure into types of stationery as this information is not centrally recorded.

- Our finance system groups all books, magazines, newspapers and periodicals into a single account so no meaningful breakdown can be provided for newspaper and magazine subscriptions. However, the following split can be made:

Type	Cost (GST excl)	Period
Office Newspapers	\$1,901.36	1 April 2022 to 31 March 2023
Library Newspaper and Magazines	\$89,672.72	1 April 2022 to 31 March 2023


This split is on the basis that this request is primarily related to 'Office Space' whereas the majority of Hutt City Council's costs of newspapers and magazines relates to library services offered to the community.

Where the information you requested is not able to be provided by Hutt City Council in the format or breakdown you require, your request for that information is refused under section 17(g) of the LGOIMA. This is on the grounds that the information you have requested is not held by the Council in that format or breakdown and we have no reason to believe this is held by any other agency.

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

Please note that this letter may be published on the Council's website.

Nāku noa, nā



Susan Sales

Senior Advisor, Official Information and Privacy

FLEXIBLE WORK POLICY

CONTENTS

1. Purpose	2
2. Our Commitment	2
3. Flexible Work Options	3
4. Flexible Work Requests	4
5. References	5
6. Delegations	5

Released under the Local Government Official Information and Meetings Act

1. PURPOSE

Hutt City Council is committed to providing a positive experience for people through a workplace that enables you to thrive. The world is fast paced and constantly changing and we need to embrace this for the opportunities it can provide.

Our Flexible Work Policy aims to enable an improved work life balance and lets you be fully present when working as you can balance your needs between home and work. Accommodating a range of ways to work is part of our commitment to valuing our people and creating and maintaining a culture of trust and accountability. Adaptable approaches to flexible work also supports our commitment to working collaboratively and achieving results together across Council, while supporting the wellbeing of our people.

2. OUR COMMITMENT

Our approach to flexible work is broad, promoting choice for people so that flexibility is usually accessible in some way for all, in balance with business requirements. Any arrangements need to be considered in the broader context of the team and customer needs and our guiding principles of:

- Fairness and equity
- Flexibility
- Trust and accountability

Flexible working is about a mind-set where we understand and appreciate that we can work in a variety of ways and be successful. We encourage you to work how and where you can best deliver the required outcomes based on the needs of Council, alongside your needs and preferences. Service requirements must be a key factor at all times.

Workplace for us can mean any number of settings – it could be an office space, it could be working from home or another location, it may mean differing work schedules or include a range of physical work set ups – team spaces, collaboration areas, quiet spots or whatever it may take to get the right work done in the right way with the right people coming together.

Our technology and work tools are designed to enable flexible work and you will be provided with the essential tools that enable you to work in flexible ways wherever possible.

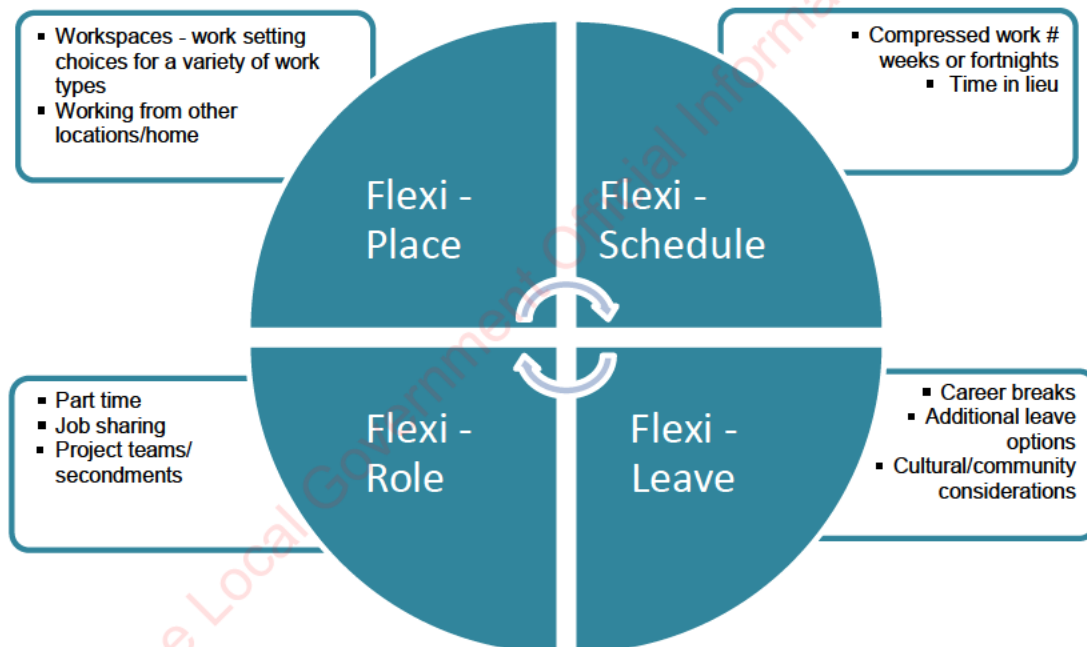
We take a performance approach with clear, monitored and measured accountabilities so that you're clear on the outcomes you're accountable for regardless of the ways in which work is done.

3. FLEXIBLE WORK OPTIONS

Our approach to flexible work is underpinned by a commitment to being open to possibilities. We recognise that there is no one size fits all with different people and organisational areas needing different things at different times.

People may consider flexible work options that span differences in place, role, schedule or time off. This might include informal options that can be agreed with your manager such as working from home under the 'remote working guidelines' or flexible hours on an ad-hoc basis. It may also include more formal options such as compressed hours and changes to work patterns including working from home arrangements in excess of what's available under the remote working guidelines.

Below are some examples of the flexibility we can provide however it doesn't stop you from suggesting other options for consideration:



Full time staff are generally required to work between the hours of 10am and 2pm, with flexibility within the non-core hours at the beginning and end of the day. This flexibility doesn't apply to rostered staff.

Compressed hours

If you have a compressed working hours' arrangement, you'll need to consider which day you will have off as there are Holidays Act implications. It is not possible to work compressed hours by taking out all rest and meal breaks in a day. Our commitment to health and safety means that you need to take a minimum break of 30 minutes for every five hours worked.

4. FLEXIBLE WORK REQUESTS

You have the right to request flexible working under the Employment Relations Amendment Act 2014. We understand that flexible and inclusive work practices are important for attracting and retaining talent, as well as allowing people to thrive.

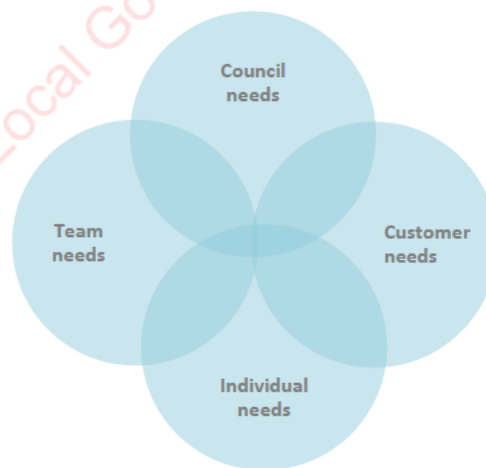
We encourage you to have discussions with your manager if you have a flexible way of working you wish to explore. We encourage open conversations and working collaboratively when exploring flexible preferences and needs.

Informal ad hoc situations where you may require flexibility on a one-off occasion such as needing to stay later or arrive earlier than usual, can be arranged informally with your manager on a case by case basis.

If you have approval to work remotely under the 'remote working guidelines' you will not be required to submit a formal flexible work request. Flexible work requests apply to arrangements that fall outside of what's provided for in the guidelines.

All formal requests need to be put in writing to your Manager so that it's clear what's being requested. Managers are required to respond in writing no later than one month after having received the request. You'll need to complete the Flexible Work Request form which is available on the intranet.

All requests will be considered individually and supported by a commitment to finding solutions together where possible. As part of considering the request it may be helpful for you and your manager to meet and discuss your request.



Agreed requests

All formal requests for flexible arrangements will be confirmed in writing. Where any change involves a variation to working hours, days or other relevant terms and conditions, you will get a letter specifying the variation, commencement date, and end date (if applicable) for agreement.

Informal arrangements should be captured in an email to ensure clarity of what's been agreed. It is typical to agree a trial period to ensure the arrangement works well for all parties. With the principle of

flexibility in mind, it may be necessary to change an agreed variation for flexible work if it is not working effectively, there is a change in circumstances, or duties of your or your work group.

Requests not able to be accommodated

Sometimes it may not be reasonably possible to agree a request. One example of this would be where agreeing the request may impact council's ability to meet customer service needs. If this is the case your manager will advise you of the reason and will work with you to consider any other alternatives where applicable.

Review of Outcome

If a manager has determined that a flexible request cannot be accommodated, you can seek a review of the outcome by discussing in the first instance with your HR Business Partner.

5. REFERENCES

Related policies, procedures and legislation include:

- Flexible Work – Managers Guide
- Flexible Work - Staff Guide
- Remote Working Guidelines
- Working from Home Assessment Tool
- Parental Leave Policy
- Leave Policy
- Code of Conduct
- Health & Safety Policy
- Parental Leave and Employment Protection Act 1987 (and its amendments).
- Employment Relations Act 2000 (and its amendments).

6. DELEGATIONS

Requiring Director Approval:

- Leave without pay (in excess of one month)
- Special leave

Requiring Business Unit Lead Approval:

- Considering formal requests for flexible working arrangements

Requiring Manager's Approval:

- Considering informal requests for flexible working arrangements