



7 February 2024

New Zealand Taxpayers Union

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Dear New Zealand Taxpayers Union

Request for Information – Local Government Official Information and Meetings Act (the Act) 1987

We refer to your official information request dated 18 December 2023 for financial information the Council holds for the 2022/2023 financial year.

Answer:

We will answer your questions in turn:

1. Average residential rates

The average **residential** costs of rates and other Council charges, where **average residential costs = $(X + Y) / Z$** . Please ensure that the figures used (*X*, *Y*, and *Z*) are disclosed in the response, where:

X is the total of all rates (general and targeted) charged by the Council to residential rating units;

Y is the total amount of user charges or levies applicable to residential rating units (for example charges relating to metered water, infrastructure contributions, refuse collection, fire protection etc.); and

Z is the number of residential rating units (however defined by the Council) within the Council's district or city. If the Council does not have a classification for residential, please use the closest definition (such as urban).



Please do not include Council charges that are not part of the rates demand (for example retail sales of Council rubbish bags).

If possible, the median residential rates payment by residential units.

Answer: X = \$121,331,148. Y + 0, Z = 39,377 The average residential cost is **\$3,081.27**

2. Average non-residential rates

The average **non-residential** costs of rates and other Council charges, where **average non-residential costs = (X + Y) / Z**. Please ensure that the figures used (X, Y, and Z) are disclosed in the response, where:

X is the total of all rates (general and targeted) charged by the Council to rating units except those defined as residential*;

Y is the total amount of user charges or levies applicable to rating units except those defined as non-residential* (for example, charges related to metered water, infrastructure contributions, refuse collection, fire protection etc); and

Z is the number of rating units except those defined as non-residential* (however defined by the Council) within the Council's district or city. If the Council does not have a classification for non-residential, please use the closest definition (such as commercial).

Please do not include Council charges that are not part of the rates demand (for example, retail sales of Council rubbish bags).

If possible, the median non-residential rates payment for the council.

Answer: X = \$45,044,799, Y = 0, Z = 3,725 The average non-residential cost is **\$12,092.56**

3. Personnel

The total number of staff dismissed due to poor performance.

Answer: No staff have been terminated due to poor performance in 2023.

If applicable, the FTE number of staff employed by council-controlled organisations.

Answer: As at 31 January 2024, 14 FTE (permanent and fixed-term) staff are employed by council-controlled organisations.

If applicable, the total FTE number of staff employed by the council, excluding council-controlled organisations.

Answer: As at 31 Jan 2024, 542.31 FTE (permanent and fixed term) staff are employed by council.

The total number of staff (non-FTE, including casual staff)

Answer: As at 31 Jan 2024, headcount of staff employed by council is 771 (permanent, fixed term and casual)

The total number of staff including those employed by council-controlled organisations receiving remuneration in excess of \$100,000.

Answer: As at 31 January 2024, there are 145 employees receiving remuneration in excess of \$100,00, (including CCOs).

The total number of staff including those employed by council-controlled organisations receiving remuneration in excess of \$200,000.

Answer: As at 31 January 2024, there are 8 employees receiving remuneration in excess of \$200,000 (including CCOs).

3.1. Management

The FTE number of managers employed.

The Taxpayer's Union defines a manager as: any staff member who is responsible for a team of staff, or who has an employee/s reporting to them and organises them to achieve their department's or organisation's specified goal. The Chief Executive team is included in this definition.

Answer: As at 31 January 2024, 115 managers are employed by Council.

The ratio of management to total staff numbers.

Answer: As at 31 January 2024, the management to staff ratio is 0.15:1.

The average and median salary of a manager.

Answer: As at 31 January 2024, the mean average salary of a manager is \$120,407.

The median average salary is \$115,000.

3.2. Communications

The FTE number of communications & marketing staff employed.

Answer: As at 31 January 2024, 8.81 FTE are employed in communications.

The average and median salary of communications & marketing staff.

Answer: As at 31 January 2024, the mean average salary is \$96,336.

The Median Average salary is \$87,120.

3.3. Consultants & contractors

Total expenditure on consultants and contractors. Please ensure that this includes CAPEX and OPEX spending.

Answer: This part of your request is refused under section 17(e) of the Act, the information requested does not exist or, despite reasonable efforts to locate it, cannot be found.

Total number of consultants and contractors paid. Please note that this refers to companies/entities, rather than total employees.

Answer: This part of your request is refused under section 17(e) of the Act, the information requested does not exist or, despite reasonable efforts to locate it, cannot be found.

3.4. Core services

The FTE number of staff employed to work on the delivery and/or maintenance of local infrastructure.

The Taxpayer's Union defines Infrastructure FTE as hours worked by staff who are directly responsible for maintaining council assets and services, including physical involvement in environmental services, stormwater, roading, water supply, wastewater, and solid waste management.

Answer: As at 31 January 2024, 52.23 FTE are employed in maintaining council assets and services. Teams included in these numbers are: Climate & Solid Waste, Water, Trade Waste, Transport and Assets & Facilities.

The FTE number of staff employed to provide regulatory functions.

The Taxpayer's Union defines Regulatory FTE as hours worked by staff who are directly responsible for upkeep and enforcing council functions and income, including parking, democracy services, rates collection, building and planning consents, and health licensing.

Answer: As at 31 January 2024, 116.41 FTE are employed in regulatory functions. Teams included in these numbers are: Parking Services, Rates, Building Consents, Planning, Environmental Health and Animal Services.

The FTE number of staff employed in customer-facing roles.

The Taxpayer's Union defines Customer Service FTE as hours worked by staff who are directly responsible for communicating and providing aid for members of the public, such as at libraries, pools, art galleries, venues and events and customer services, whether in person or by phone.

Answer: As at 31 January 2024, 174.06 FTE are employed in customer-facing roles. Teams included in these numbers are: Aquatics & fitness suites, museums, libraries / hubs, contact centre and front counter and the bookings function.

4. Audit and Risk Oversight

How many members are on the Council's Audit and Risk Committee (or equivalent)?

Answer: Council's Audit and Risk Subcommittee has six members, including an independent chair.

Of those members, how many are elected and how many are independent of the council?

Answer: Five members are elected, and the independent chair is appointed.

Is the Chair of the Committee an independent member?

Answer: As indicated above, the chair is independent.

Does the Council have a lawyer (with a current practising certificate) on the Committee?

Answer: No.

Does the Council have an accountant (with a current practising certificate or a full member of the Chartered Accountants Australia and New Zealand) on the Committee?

Answer: Yes, one elected member is a member of the Chartered Accountants Australia New Zealand. The independent chair is a member of the Certified Practising Accountants of Australia.

Does the Council have a code of conduct requiring political neutrality from Council staff?

Answer: Yes.

5. Payments to third parties

The total payments made by the Council (or any council-controlled organisation) to any Chamber of Commerce, including GST.

Answer: The Council made \$321,707.36 in payments to the Hutt Valley Chamber of Commerce in the 2022/2023 financial year. This amount includes one-off project costs of \$138,000.

The total payments made by the Council (or any council-controlled organisation) to Local Government New Zealand (LGNZ), including GST.

Answer: The Council made \$98,243.69 in payments to Local Government New Zealand in the 2022/2023 financial year.

The total payments made by the Council (or any council-controlled organisation) to the New Zealand Society of Local Government Managers (SOLGM), including GST.

Answer: The Council made \$68,492.63 in payments to the New Zealand of Local Government Managers in the 2022/2023 financial year.

6. Debt

Net debt (total for the council) as a percent of rates income

Answer: 218.8%

The dollar amount of debt per rating unit

Answer: \$7,244.88

The dollar amount of interest paid per rating unit

Answer: \$264.39

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.

Please note that this response to your information request may be published on Hutt City Council's website. Please refer to the following link: www.huttcity.govt.nz/council/contactus/make-an-official-information-act-request/proactive-releases

Yours sincerely

Philip Rossiter

Senior Advisor, Official Information and Privacy