

2 June 2022

New Zealand Taxpayers' Union

s7(2)(a)

Tēnā koe

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

We refer to your official information request dated 3 May 2022 for your Ratepayers' Report for the 2020/21 financial year, as follows:

*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).*

*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 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 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).*

*Please ensure that this definition matches that used to calculate average residential rates so that the respective X values of both requests add up to total rates income for the 2020/2021 Financial Year.*

### 3. Personnel

- a. The total number of staff dismissed due to poor performance.
- b. If applicable, the FTE number of staff employed by council-controlled organisations.
- c. The total number of staff including those employed by council-controlled organisations receiving remuneration in excess of \$100,000.
- d. The total number of staff including those employed by council-controlled organisations receiving remuneration in excess of \$200,000.

### 4. Audit and Risk Oversight

- a. How many members are on the Council's Audit and Risk Committee (or equivalent)?
- b. Does the Council have independent members on the Committee?
- c. Is the Chair of the Committee an independent member?
- d. Does the Council have a lawyer (with a current practising certificate) on the Committee?
- e. Does the Council have an accountant (with a current practising certificate) on the Committee?
- f. Does the Council have a code of conduct requiring political neutrality from Council staff?

### 5. Payments to third parties

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

Our response to the above questions are provided below:

## **1 & 2 Average Residential and Non-Residential Rates**

The average rating information is attached as an appendix to this correspondence.

## **3 Personnel**

- a. There were no cases of dismissal due to poor performance.
- b. This information is reported on pages 147-148 of the Hutt City Council's 2020-2021 annual report. The columns labelled 'Group' are combined figures for Hutt City Council and its Council Controlled Organisation, while columns labelled 'Council' only apply to the Hutt City Council.
- c. See b. above
- d. See b. above

The 2020-2021 Annual Report is available on the Hutt City Council's public internet site, here: [https://hccpublicdocs.azurewebsites.net/api/download/f603074e9b7f4a4e9b1b54b330ca1a96\\_CM9-WE/08182f6312242a014a6b8ce50c5857497eec](https://hccpublicdocs.azurewebsites.net/api/download/f603074e9b7f4a4e9b1b54b330ca1a96_CM9-WE/08182f6312242a014a6b8ce50c5857497eec)

## **4 Audit and Risk Oversight**

- a. Six elected members and one independent member are appointed to Council's Audit and Risk Subcommittee.
- b. Yes (see a. above).
- c. Yes.
- d. No.
- e. Yes.

- f. Political neutrality is a requirement for staff working at Hutt City Council. It is embodied in the Council's Code of Conduct under its other stipulations, for example, the need for impartiality. Other Council documents (for example, staff electoral protocols) specifically refer to political neutrality.

**5 Payments to third parties (GST inclusive)**

- a. \$161,998.20 to Chamber of Commerce
- b. \$86,844.52 to Local Government New Zealand
- c. \$70,124.25 to New Zealand Society of Local Government Managers

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](http://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**

Encl:  
Residential and Non-Residential Rates

**Question 1 - 2020 2021 Average Residential Rates**

Taxpayers Union Official Information Request		Hutt City Council Rates	
The average residential costs of Council charges for the 2020/2021 year calculated using:			
Average Residential costs = (X+Y)/Z			
X	Total of all Residential Rates		97,704,335
Y	Total of User Charges		-
Z	Total Number of residential rating units	Rating Units	37,177
	Average Residential Costs		2,628.09

**Question 2 - 2020-2021 Average Non-Residential Rates**

Taxpayers Union Official Information Request			
The average non-residential cost of Council rates for the 2020-2021 year calculated using:			
Average Non-Residential costs = (X+Y)/Z			
X	Total of all Non-Residential Rates (General and Targeted)		37,732,744.98
Y	Total of User Charges		-
Z	Total Number of residential properties	Rating Units	3,532
	Average Non-Residential Costs		10,683.11

Released under the Local Government Official Information and Meetings Act