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LGOIMA

When releasing responses to previous LGOIMA requests, names and contact details of individual requestors will be withheld to protect their privacy.

Information requested by the media, lobby groups, public sector organisations and MPs will always be published, while information specific to an individual or their property will not generally be published.

Request from:	New Zealand Taxpayers' Union
Information requested:	Ratepayers report
Response by:	Simon Bastion, Chief Executive

31 January 2024

New Zealand Taxpayers' Union

Via Email: ratepayers.report@taxpayers.org.nz

Dear NZ Taxpayers' Union

Official information request for information for the Ratepayers report.

I refer to your official information request dated 19 December 2023 information from the Ratepayers report.

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.

Please include all residential rates in this calculation, regardless of location, as we are aiming to compare residential rating units (i.e. non-income producing) to non-residential (commercial/rural, income-producing).

\$2,602.08.

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

*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 2022/2023 Financial Year.

\$15,843.38.

3. Personnel

- The total number of staff dismissed due to poor performance.

None.

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

This has been transferred to Destination Westland, Westroads Ltd and WHL, you will hear from the CCO's directly.

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

This information can be found in the Annual Report on the Council's website here: <https://www.westlanddc.govt.nz/media/bgfglrof/annual-report-2022-2023-final-audit-opinion-v-2.pdf>

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

This information can be found in the Annual Report on the Council's website here: <https://www.westlanddc.govt.nz/media/bgfglrof/annual-report-2022-2023-final-audit-opinion-v-2.pdf>

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

The information for Westland District Council can be found in the Annual Report on the Council's website here: <https://www.westlanddc.govt.nz/media/bgfglrof/annual-report-2022-2023-final-audit-opinion-v-2.pdf>

The information for the CCO's will be answer directly.

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

The information for Westland District Council can be found in the Annual Report on the Council's website here: <https://www.westlanddc.govt.nz/media/bgfglrof/annual-report-2022-2023-final-audit-opinion-v-2.pdf>

The information for the CCO's will be answered directly.

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/employees 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.**

13.

- **The ratio of management to total staff numbers.**

1:5.46.

- **The average and median salary of a manager.**

Average \$146,307.00, Median \$140,000.

3.2. Communications

- **The FTE number of communications & marketing staff employed.**

1.

- **The average and median salary of communications & marketing staff.**

This information has been refused under section 7(2)(a) of LGOIMA to protect the privacy of natural persons, including that of deceased natural persons.

3.3. Consultants & contractors

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

\$1,846,692.29.

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

116.

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.

13.84.

- 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 upkeeping and enforcing council functions and income, including parking, democracy services, rates collection, building and planning consents, and health licensing.

38.22.

- 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.

16.00.

4. Audit and Risk Oversight

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

7.

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

6 elected members, 1 independent.

- Is the Chair of the Committee an independent member?

Yes.

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

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?

Yes.

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

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.**

\$0.00.

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

\$47,810.98.

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

\$21,879.23

6. Debt

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

95%.

- **The dollar amount of debt per rating unit**

The information for Westland District Council can be found in the Annual Report on the Council's website here: <https://www.westlanddc.govt.nz/media/bgfglrof/annual-report-2022-2023-final-audit-opinion-v-2.pdf>

- **The dollar amount of interest paid per rating unit**

\$208.99.

There is no charge in supplying this information to you.

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.

Council has adopted a Proactive Release Policy and accordingly may publish LGOIMA responses on the Council Website at <https://www.westlanddc.govt.nz/lgoima-responses>.

The collection and use of personal information by the Westland District Council is regulated by the Privacy Act 2020. Westland District Council's Privacy Statement is available on our website [here](#)

If you wish to discuss this decision with us, please feel free to contact Mary-anne Bell, Business Analyst at LGOIMA@westlanddc.govt.nz, 03 756 9091.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, consisting of several overlapping loops and a long horizontal stroke extending to the right.

Simon Bastion | Chief Executive

SB/MB