

14 June 2023

File Ref: OIAPR-1698849216-8

By email: [REDACTED] [@taxpayers.org.nz](mailto:[REDACTED]@taxpayers.org.nz)

Tēnā koe [REDACTED]

Request for information 2023 - 125

I refer to your request for information dated 16 May 2023, which was received by Greater Wellington Regional Council (Greater Wellington) on 16 May 2023. You have requested the following:

“The Taxpayer’s Union is in the process of collating data for the publishing of its yearly Ratepayer’s Report later this year. Based on data we have sourced from you through LGOIMA requests, we have summarised data that we will publish in the attached council profile. Would it be possible for your council to read and confirm the data that we have sourced, and if there are irregularities, let us know so that we can provide a correction? Similarly, if the data is correct, we would appreciate you letting us know, but if we do not hear a response back we will assume it is correct.”

We would also like to confirm that the figure for contractor/consultant spending includes both CAPEX and OPEX spending. In addition, as the number of commercial rateable units that the Greater Wellington Regional Council utilises has not been included in your OIA response, nor your annual report or plan, we would appreciate your feedback on the answers concerning commercial rates, and debt/interest rates per rating unit.

The council profile for Greater Wellington Regional Council and your OIA response is attached”

Greater Wellington’s response follows:

Thank you for providing us with our profile to review. We have now reviewed it and have identified information that is incorrect or not applicable to a regional council. **Attachment 1** is the profile document with our corrections.

As for contractor/consultant spending, as stated on page 106 of our Annual Report, it is ‘operating expenditure’ (OPEX) only.

As for commercial rates, and debt/interest rates per rating unit, we have populated the document attached.

If you have any concerns with the decision(s) referred to in this letter, you have the right to request an investigation and review by the Ombudsman under section 27(3) of the Local Government Official Information and Meetings Act 1987.

Please note that it is our policy to proactively release our responses to official information requests where possible. Our response to your request will be published shortly on Greater Wellington's website with your personal information removed.

Nāku iti noa, nā



Sue McLean
Kaiwhakahaere Matua Ratonga Rangapū | Group Manager, Corporate Services

Greater Wellington Regional Council

	Current figures to be published	Our Comment (if any)	Council Correction (if any)
Council Profile			
Council type	Regional		
Population served (Stats NZ)	543,500		
Number of households (Stats NZ)	202,047		Households or rateable units? https://www.gw.govt.nz/assets/Documents/2022/12/GW-annual-report-2022_v17.pdf pg. 153 <i>206,440 rateable units (this is the total published from all our Territorial Authority annual reports)</i>
Area (square km)	8094.44		
Average Rates			
Average residential rates	\$653.47		There were approx. 181,058 residential category rateable units. \$354.60 is the average for General rates. General rates is a more fair average to use as all rate payers pay general rates. Targeted rates, which make up the rest of the rates are applied in some areas of the region more than others, so the average is not a good representation. If you use all rates, the regional average would be \$740.20
Average non-residential rates	Refused	Councils do not distinguish enough between units to determine the average rate.	DM – Wellington CBD \$10,155.12 business \$2,219.44 & rural \$539.11, all GST exclusive
Personnel https://www.gw.govt.nz/assets/Documents/2022/12/GW-annual-report-2022_v17.pdf pg. 152			
Full-time Equivalent Staff – Group	913.85		600
Number of performance related dismissals	0		
FTE Staff over \$100,000 – Group	350		262
Proportion of staff earning over \$100,000	54.18%		39.6% <i>This includes the non-full time staff</i>
Staff over \$200,000 – Group	24		
Management FTE	43.00		
Average salary of managers	\$174,817.00		

Greater Wellington Regional Council

	Current figures to be published	Our Comment (if any)	Council Correction (if any)
Median salary of managers	\$161,620.00		
Communications & marketing FTE	16.00		
Average salary of comms staff	\$92,548.00		
Median salary of comms staff	\$95,621.00		
Infrastructure FTE	37.00		
Regulatory FTE	174.00		
Customer service FTE	113.00		
% FTE Core services (Infrastructure, Regulatory & Customer service)	50.16%		
Total expenditure on consultants & contractors	\$74,771,000.00		Stated on page 106 of our Annual Report , it is 'operating expenditure' (OPEX)
Total number of consultants & contractors	Refused	Not held by the council.	
Audit & Risk Committee			
Total number of members	7		
Is there an independent member on the committee?	Yes		
Is there a lawyer with a practising certificate on the committee?	Refused	Records not held by the council.	
Is there an accountant with a practising certificate on the committee?	Refused	Records not held by the council.	
Is the chair an independent member?	Yes		
Is there a code of conduct requiring political neutrality from staff?	Yes		
Payment to Third Parties			
Chamber of Commerce (inc GST)	\$4961.20		
Local Government New Zealand (inc GST)	\$148,390.71		

Greater Wellington Regional Council

	Current figures to be published	Our Comment (if any)	Council Correction (if any)
New Zealand Society of Local Government Managers (inc GST)	\$93,001.81		
Debt			
Net debt % rates income	391.55%		318.6% Calculation based on rates income and total debt per 2021/22 annual report 64% of GW revenue is from other income sources which is higher than most other councils.
Debt per rating unit	No response	Unclear distinguishing of commercial rating units to calculate.	2021/22 \$638.1Million/206,440 = \$3,090.97
Interest paid per rating unit	No response	Unclear distinguishing of commercial rating units to calculate.	2021/22 \$21.3 million /206,440 = \$103.18

PROACTIVE RELEASE