

6 March 2025

File Ref: OIAPR-1274023063-36005

██████████
NZ Taxpayers' Union
By email: ██████████@taxpayers.org.nz

Tēnā koe ██████████

Request for information 2025-035

I refer to your request for information dated 18 February 2025, which was received by Greater Wellington Regional Council (Greater Wellington) on 18 February 2025. You have requested the following:

“The total cost of all investigations into avoiding/ignoring a referendum on Māori Wards in 2025 under the Local Government (Electoral Legislation and Māori Wards and Māori Constituencies) Amendment Bill.

-Please provide a total cost break down over the last two calendar years.

The total staff hours spent investigating options to avoid a referendum on Māori Wards in 2025 and 2024.

The outcome of any investigations to avoid a referendum on Māori Wards in 2025.

-This can include but is not limited to: reports, emails, consultations and consultant work.

Any planned advertising surrounding the referendum in the lead up to the 2025 local elections.

-Please include budgeted costs, any examples of completed adverts, correspondence and any council minutes on the decision to do this.”

Greater Wellington's response follows:

The total cost of all investigations into avoiding/ignoring a referendum on Māori Wards in 2025 under the Local Government (Electoral Legislation and Māori Wards and Māori Constituencies) Amendment Bill. -Please provide a total cost break down over the last two calendar years.

No relevant costs have been incurred, as no investigations have been undertaken by Greater Wellington into avoiding/ignoring a poll of electors in relation to Greater Wellington's Māori Constituency.

The total staff hours spent investigating options to avoid a referendum on Māori Wards in 2025 and 2024

No relevant staff hours have been incurred, as no time has been spent on investigating options to avoid a referendum.

The outcome of any investigations to avoid a referendum on Māori Wards in 2025. -This can include but is not limited to: reports, emails, consultations and consultant work.

No investigations have been undertaken. Therefore, we are refusing this part of your request under section 17(g) of the Local Government Information and Meetings Act (the Act) as the information requested is not held by Greater Wellington and we have no grounds for believing that the information is either held by another local authority or a department or Minister of the Crown or organisation or connected more closely with the functions of another local authority or a department or Minister of the Crown or organisation.

Any planned advertising surrounding the referendum in the lead up to the 2025 local elections. -Please include budgeted costs, any examples of completed adverts, correspondence and any council minutes on the decision to do this.

Greater Wellington will be conducting a neutral elector awareness campaign for the 2025 Greater Wellington elections and the Māori Constituency poll. This is consistent with the statutory requirement, in section 42(2)(da) of the Local Government Act 2002, for the Chief Executive to facilitate and foster representative and substantial elector participation in elections and polls held under the Local Electoral Act 2001. The "Vote" element of the campaign will encourage all electors to exercise their democratic right to vote in their Greater Wellington constituency election and in the Māori Constituency poll. The 2024/25 budget for the neutral elector awareness campaign is \$50,000 (GST excl.). Within the budget the funding allocated for the "Vote" component of the neutral elector awareness campaign has not been separately quantified.

There are no completed advertisements, correspondence related to them or Council minutes approving any election advertising. We are refusing this part of your request under section 17(e)

of the Act that the documents alleged to contain the information does not exist or, despite reasonable efforts locate is, cannot be found.

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 appropriate. Our response to your request will be published shortly on Greater Wellington's website with your personal information removed.

Nāku iti noa, nā



Luke Troy

Kaiwhakahaere Matua Rautaki | Group Manager Strategy