

9 October 2024

File Ref: OIARP-1274023063-31441

By email: [REDACTED]

Tēnā koe [REDACTED],

Request for information 2024-237

I refer to your request for information dated 16 September 2024, which was received by Greater Wellington Regional Council (Greater Wellington) on 16 September 2024. You have requested the following:

“Could the following be answered:

- (1) Please supply names of Chairperson and councillors that have had travel paid for by ratepayers since 2022.*
- (2) What was the total cost of this travel.*
- (3) Give the total cost for each person that has had ratepayer funded travel.*
- (4) Please supply the reason itemised per person as to the reason why they were granted ratepayer paid for travel.*
- (5) (a) Please also supply the amount of staff that have had ratepayer funded travel (b) and the reason for travel.”*

Greater Wellington’s response follows:

With regards to parts 1-4, only Councillor Daran Ponter (Chair) and Councillor Thomas Nash have travelled since 2022 at the expense of the ratepayer.

The total travel costs for both Councillors were **\$13,157.69** (incl. GST).

The following table shows the total cost for each of them and their reason for travelling.

Air Travel			
Name and Surname:	Status:	The purpose of travel	Total cost of travel:
PONTER, DARAN MR	Chairperson	CONFERENCE(S) / MEETINGS	\$9,650.74
NASH, THOMAS MR	Councillor	CONFERENCE(S) / MEETINGS	\$1,556.31
Total Air Travel cost:			\$11,207.05

Accommodation			
Name and Surname:	Status:	The purpose of travel	Total cost of travel:
PONTER, DARAN MR	Chairperson	CONFERENCE(S) / MEETINGS	\$1,408.89
NASH, THOMAS MR	Councillor	CONFERENCE(S) / MEETINGS	\$541.75
Total Accommodation cost:			\$1,950.64

With regards to part 5, approximately 58 international journeys have been undertaken since 2022 by staff. This had a cost of **\$68,848.26** (incl. GST) in air travel costs, and **\$29,749.14** in accommodation costs.

Additional costs such as airport transfers has also incurred **\$445.73** (incl. GST). This figure could be slightly higher, but unfortunately, we do not have the ability to accurately filter between costs, such as taxis, that are incurred for international travel use vs local use.

All staff that have undertaken international travel have done so for business purposes, such as attending conferences or training. In a few cases, the reason for travel has been for a client meeting or a client event.

All staff traveling abroad must have written pre-approval from the Chief Executive before any bookings are permitted to be made.

All travel bookings are made using our All of Government (OAG) Travel Management Company (TMC) which ensure minimal personal benefit and better pricing on flights and accommodation.

Each staff member that travels abroad is also able to claim meal allowances for any meals that are not already provided for by the airline, hotel or the conference they are attending. We have set rates for this that cannot be exceeded by staff, they apply regardless of the country they are in.

Breakfast	Lunch	Dinner
Up to NZ\$25 (incl. GST)	Up to NZ\$25 (incl. GST)	Up to NZ\$80 (incl. GST)

Alcohol is a prohibited expense.

We are unable to provide a total cost of meal allowances for staff that have travelled abroad because our filters do not separate these allowances by domestic or international.

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



Alison Trustrum-Rainey

Kaiwhakahaere Matua, Pūtea me ngā Tūraru | Group Manager Finance and Risk