

17 March 2025

29 Bowler Avenue, Gore 9710
PO Box 8, Gore 9740

Phone 03 209 0330
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www.goredc.govt.nz

Dear [REDACTED]

Thank you for your request for information under the Local Government Official Information and Meetings Act, received by the Gore District Council on 17 February 2025, asking:

*Wondering who paid for Mr Bell to go to Waitangi meeting
Also who paid for the machine testing trees, were these plus other expenses necessary?*

Travel to Waitangi

Gore District Council Mayor, Mr Ben Bell, is the Otago and Southland (Zone 6) representative on the National Council of Local Government New Zealand. Mr Bell was invited to attend Waitangi during the week of 3 February 2025, in his capacity as the Zone 6 representative.

The Council paid for Mr Bells' flights, all other costs including accommodation and food were met by Local Government New Zealand.

Treetech

The Council periodically undertakes tree surveys. The last tree survey was performed in 2018. This was completed manually by a consultant, with the manual recording process taking two weeks to complete. There were significant gaps in the information collected.

The Council engaged Canterbury tree care company Treetech NZ to undertake the electronic tree surveys because it could be completed in one day and was considerably less expensive than engaging a consultant to complete it manually. Gore District Council is the first New Zealand council to sign up to the system.

The cost to the Council is based on scanning up to 4,000 trees. The reason for undertaking the survey is not only to provide a record of what trees the Council has in the district, but can also enable us to assess tree health, identify vulnerabilities, and determine areas where more canopy coverage is needed. The data we're gathering is a game changer for how we, along with a few other councils across the country evaluate tree health and plan for safer, greener towns/cities.

Further information about the technology is available at www.goredc.govt.nz/council/news.

If you are unsatisfied with the response, you are entitled to lodge a complaint with the Office of the Ombudsmen. You can find more information on its website www.ombudsman.parliament.nz.

If you wish to discuss this response with us, please feel free to contact me on 03 209-0330.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'L. Straith', with a stylized, cursive script.

Lornae Straith
General Manager Corporate Support / Chief Financial Officer