

Response to LGOIMA request from the Taxpayers' Union

15 December 2023

Dear Oliver

Thank you for your request for information received on Thursday 7 December. Below are your questions and the Gore District Council's response in bold:

End-of-Year Bonuses:

- Total amount paid in end-of-year bonuses to the CEO this Christmas - **\$0**
- Total amount paid in bonuses to staff employed by your organization this Christmas - **\$0**
- Please also provide the same for Christmas 2022 – **as above**.

Presents for Staff:

- Total expenditure on presents for staff including but not limited to 'secret Santa' etc - **\$0**.
- Please include this cost for last year also – **as above**.

Christmas Parade:

- Total expenditure breakdown on any Christmas parade hosted or funded by the Council this year. This should also include road closure impact assessments where possible – **the Council has organised Gore's Santa Parade for over 10 years. This year we had about 40 floats involving schools, businesses, community groups and clubs. The estimated final cost is \$8,765 (GST exclusive)**.
- Please include a cost breakdown for any Christmas parade last year - **\$5,009 GST exclusive**.

Christmas Trees and lights:

- Number of Christmas trees purchased and erected, and the cost of these purchases for this year - **0**.
- Please also include the cost for any Christmas lights for tree and any lights for buildings for this year – **the Council put lights on the Wellingtonian tree on our public gardens. The cost to put the lights up and take them down is about \$3628 ex GST (this is based on last year's costs as we haven't received this year's invoice)**
- Please also include the cost of both for last year, too – **N/A**.
- Please highlight if the council had any left over from last year – **N/A**.

Hiring Santa:

- Breakdown of costs associated with hiring a Santa, if applicable - **\$0. One of our staff fills the role of Santa Claus without charge. He is part of the parade and sits in Santa's Grotto at our Christmas Carnival. The Council owns a Santa Claus costume, brought several years ago**.
- Please also provide this information for last year, too – **as above**.

Christmas Market:

- Breakdown of costs associated with running/hosting/sponsoring a Christmas market, if applicable - **\$0**.
- Please provide this information for last year, too – **as above**.

Christmas Party Supplies:

- Please breakdown the amount spent on the following for the years 2022 and 2023:
 - Wrapping paper - **\$0**
 - Santa hats - **\$0**
 - Alcohol for parties - **\$0**
 - Party hats - **\$0**
 - Christmas crackers - **\$0**
 - Christmas cards - **\$3 (2022) and \$381 (2023 for mayor's Xmas cards, which includes postage)**
 - Christmas decorations - **\$0**

Christmas Parties:

- Total expenditure breakdown on Council Christmas parties. Please also include in the breakdown any travel arrangement costs. **The Council's social club hosts a Christmas party for all staff in late November. Approved budget was:**

2023

- **\$1831 food**
- **\$250 venue hire**

- Please include this for last year, also.

2022

- **\$1325 food**
- **\$172.50 venue hire**

Office Closure:

- Duration of office closure during the Christmas period for the council generally – **20 December to 8 January**
- Please specify how many managers and senior executive staff are taking more hours/days out of office than is blanket across the council for the Christmas period - **leave entitlements for staff as per their contracts will not be disclosed under Section 7(2)(a) to protect their privacy.**
- Does the Christmas office closure also affect contactors paid by the council? If not, how much are they being paid over the Christmas break in an hourly rate? – **Contractors are only paid for work done.**

Fines:

- Does the council have any plans to increase fines for parking offences or any other offences during the Christmas period?
 - If so, which fines are increasing, why and what revenue is expected to be raised?
The Council does not increase fines for parking offences over the festive season. In fact, we offer free parking days, in conjunction with retailers, to encourage people to shop local.

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 <http://www.ombudsman.parliament.nz>

Kind regards



Sonia Gerken
GM Communications / Customer Support