

**From:** [Neil Engelbrecht](#)  
**To:** [REDACTED]  
**Cc:** [BDC Lgoima](#); [Douglas Marshall](#)  
**Subject:** Official information request for Annual Survey of Coast Councils Ref: OIA 108/23  
**Date:** Friday, 8 December 2023 1:54:40 pm  
**Attachments:** [image003.png](#)

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Dear [REDACTED]

We refer to your official information request dated 25 October 2023 for the annual survey for West Coast councils.

The information you have requested is below marked in red:

*I request the following information under the Local Government Official Information and Meetings Act.*

**Please note that our annual report audit has not been completed, and the answers below is based on our current draft Annual Report numbers.**

1. *The remuneration of your council's mayor/chair for 2022/23. - **\$106,526***
2. *All ratepayer-funded expenses which are not part of the remuneration package for your mayor/chair for 2022/23 including: travel, vehicle, fuel, accommodation, food/beverages, conference fees, phone, membership fees (eg Koru Club). Please list individual items/events separately so it's clear where costs have been incurred.*
  - **Travel and accommodation - \$6,652.80**
  - **Conference fees - \$4,129.84**
  - **Communication - \$1,400**
  - **Mileage - \$5,320.80**
  - **Total = \$17,503.44**
3. *The remuneration package for your council's chief executive for 2022/23.*
  - **Total CEO remuneration - \$256,896.15**
4. *The current remuneration package for your council's chief executive if it has changed since June 30, 2023. - **\$260,100***
5. *All ratepayer funded expenses which are not part of the remuneration package for your council's chief executive for 2022/23 including: travel, vehicle, fuel, accommodation, food/beverages, conference fees, phone, membership fees (eg Koru Club, professional organisations). Please list individual items/events separately so it's clear where costs have been incurred.*
  - **Travel - \$1,406.62**
  - **Fuel - \$295.72**
  - **Food/Bev - \$316.39**
  - **Total - \$1,756.51**
6. *Does your mayor/chair and/or chief executive have a council credit card. If so, what rules*

*apply to its use?*

- **The CEO does not have a credit card. BDC has a credit card, used for once off expenditure, this gets approved by the chair of Audit and Risk committee, or if not available by the Mayor or Deputy Mayor. (Expenditure will include online subscriptions, travel and accommodation, etc. where a credit card is required to make the purchase/booking).**

7. *What was the number of FTE staff employed by your council at June 30, 2023?* – **73 – Reason for decrease from prior year is due to flood recovery staff who were on a fixed term contract in line with external funding being received for them, they have finished their contract.**
8. *What were your council's total staff costs for the year ended June 30, 2023?* - **\$7,752,000 (Rounded to nearest \$000)**
9. *What percentage did staff costs comprise of your council's operating spending?* – **16.37% (Being \$7,752,000 (Staff costs)/\$47,351,000 (Total expenditure))**
10. *What was the average cost per FTE employee?* - **\$106,191.80 (Being \$7,752,000 (staff costs)/73 (FTE nr))**
11. *How many staff were employed in each salary band?*
  - **0 - \$59,999 – 51**
  - **\$60,000 - \$79,999 – 15**
  - **\$80,000 - \$99,999 – 12**
  - **\$100,000 - \$139,999 – 8**
  - **\$160,000 - \$219,999 – 6**

**The salary bands include all staff positions, not the FTE equivalent.**

12. *Please supply your council's legal expenses for 2022/23 and what the expenses related to.- Bundle together*
  - **Mayor Defamation case - \$19,660**
  - **Commercial contracts - \$58,565**
  - **Land, License, consents and lease related fees - \$84,790**
  - **National transition unit legal fees - \$7,851**
  - **Employment and bylaw advice - \$22,150**
  - **Audit confirmation and lawyers fees - \$ 3,534**
  - **Restraining order and trespassing - \$17,907**
  - **Rates assessments complaints and related advice - \$5,052**
  - **Other legal fees - \$7,302**
  - **Total - \$226,811**
13. *How much did the legal expenses comprise of your council's operating expenses (and what was the operating cost)?* – **0.48% (being \$227,000 (Legal)/\$47,351,000 (Total OPEX))**

14. *What was the average cost per rateable property of your council's legal bills? - \$29.83 (Being \$226,811.09 (Legal fees)/7603 (Rateable properties))*

15. *How much did your council pay for professional public/relations communications advice in 2022/23?*

**Council engaged contractors to assist where permanent staff role was not filled. They assisted with tasks such as website, flood recovery communications, waste minimisation projects, and some key water infrastructure projects such as the Reefton Chlorination project. This was not additional public relations communications advice, it was for routine matters.**

16. *To whom was this advice provided – councillors, staff or both – and in what form (eg written report, workshop)?*

**As above, no professional public/relations communications advice in 2022/23**

17. *How much has your council paid for professional public relations/communications advice since June 30, 2023*

**Council engaged contractors to assist where permanent staff role was not filled. They assisted with tasks such as website, speed management and waste management. This was not additional public relations communications advice, it was for routine matters.**

**Advice with letters relating to media publications and communication with the media – Provided to staff**

18. *To whom was this advice provided, and in what form (eg written report, workshop)?*

**As above, no professional public/relations communications advice.**

You have the right to seek an investigation and review by the Ombudsman of this decision. Information about how to make a complaint is available at [www.ombudsman.parliament.nz](http://www.ombudsman.parliament.nz) or freephone 0800 802 602.

If you wish to discuss this decision with us, please feel free to contact the Buller District Council by return email to [lgoima@bdc.govt.nz](mailto:lgoima@bdc.govt.nz).

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 at <https://bullerdc.govt.nz/district-council/your-council/request-for-official-information/responses-to-lgoima-requests/> with your personal information removed.

Kind regards

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