

18 June 2025

File Ref: 2025-171

By email: [REDACTED]

Tēnā koe [REDACTED]

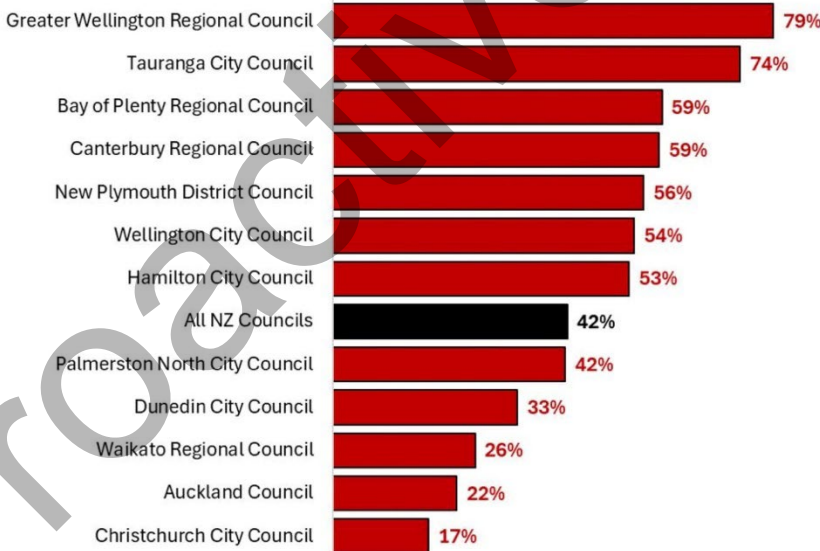
### Request for information 2025-171

I refer to your request for information dated Tuesday 3 June 2025, which was received by Greater Wellington Regional Council (Greater Wellington) on Tuesday 3 June 2025. You have requested the following:

*“According to this graph staff costs at greater wgn council has increased by 79 Percent since 2019 can you explain why.*

#### Increase in annual employee costs at NZ councils

2019 - 2024



Source: Stats NZ. Years ending June. Plot by @charteddaily

### Greater Wellington's response follows:

This amount is the increase in Greater Wellington's employee benefit costs between the 2018/19 annual report and 2023/24 annual report.

	2018/19	2023/24	Increase %
<b>Annual Report employee benefit costs</b>	\$48,556,000	\$87,151,000	79.49%

The increase is due to both increases in average employee remuneration costs and increases in employee headcount over these five years.

Average fixed remuneration (this includes base salary, employer superannuation contribution, and the value of other benefits we provide) per employee has increased approximately 23% over this five-year period. This is comparable to the Consumer Price Index (CPI) increase of 23% and wage inflation of 28%, according to the Reserve Bank, over the same period (Q2 2019 to Q2 2024).

Employee headcount at Greater Wellington increased from 531 to 782 over this five-year period. This is an increase of 47% or 251 employees. Of these, 49 employees are either partially or fully funded by external agencies including positions for Predator Free Wellington, RiverLink, Wellington Regional Leadership Committee and Wellington Transport Analytics Unit, amongst others.

Greater Wellington's headcount has increased to meet the objectives set out in its Long Term Plan. Expenditure on employee benefit costs have stayed proportional to total operating expenditure (OPEX) at around 14% - 14.5% as per the below table. The exceptions of 2018/19 and 2019/20 are due to additional project costs over those two financial years.

	Financial Year							
	2016/17	2017/18	2018/19	2019/20	2020/21	2021/22	2022/23	2023/24
<b>Employee benefit costs</b>	\$42,498,000	\$46,118,000	\$48,556,000	\$55,884,000	\$61,868,000	\$67,660,000	\$75,145,000	\$87,151,000
<b>Total operating expenditure</b>	\$295,470,000	\$312,844,000	\$388,716,000	\$438,006,000	\$435,178,000	\$473,381,000	\$524,266,000	\$613,556,000
<b>% of OPEX spent on employee costs</b>	14.38%	14.74%	12.49%	12.76%	14.22%	14.29%	14.33%	14.20%

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

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'Nicky Chilton', with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

Nicky Chilton

Kaiwhakahaere Matua Whakamāhorahora | Group Manager People & Culture

Proactive Release