

12 March 2024

File Ref: OIAPR-1274023063-25575

[REDACTED]

Tēnā koe [REDACTED]

### **Request for information 2024-026**

I refer to your request for information dated 26 February 2024, which was received by Greater Wellington Regional Council (Greater Wellington) on 26 February 2024. You have requested the following:

*"We request the following information:*

- The total cost of this gimmick [loaded Snapper cards sent to incoming Members of Parliament] by the council including media advising, planning, and cost of cards and money uploaded. Please include this as an overall total and a cost breakdown.*
- The advice provided to council on this idea including anything already publicly available.*
- Who made and was involved in this decision including staff, management and elected representatives.*
- The total uptake of MPs who have taken these snapper cards"*

### **Greater Wellington's response follows:**

*The total cost of this gimmick by the council including media advising, planning, and cost of cards and money uploaded. Please include this as an overall total and a cost breakdown.*

Each Snapper card sent to Members of Parliament (MP) was loaded with \$20. The Snapper card, letter and brochure on the Airport Express were mailed to all 123 incoming MPs (Wellington addresses) following the 2023 elections. These were sent in A4 envelopes.

Please see below the cost breakdown:

- \$100 for envelopes
- \$11 for postage
- \$3,300 for Snapper cards and loaded balance for each

The total cost was \$3,411 exclusive of GST. All other costs were related to staff time and are not included in this breakdown. There was no paid advertising.

Sending out the Snapper cards and the media release generated the equivalent of \$19,000 of paid media placement, promoting sustainable public transport and the Airport Express Service. Please see **Attachment 1** for a breakdown of this.

***The advice provided to council on this idea including anything already publicly available.***

Advice was provided by the Principal Advisor to the Chair of the Council (Cr. Ponter) on the concept and the draft content of the letter. The Head of Customer Engagement drafted a media release for the Chair's approval, which was approved by the Group Manager Metlink. Metlink provided advice on how to link a Snapper card to an MP's Purchasing Card, which was included in the letter. To reiterate the message (take the Airport Express service instead of a taxi), the letters were posted on the Greater Wellington advocacy page.

***Who made and was involved in this decision including staff, management and elected representatives.***

The idea was that of Cr. Ponter and it was discussed and approved informally (verbally) with the Chair of the Transport Committee, the Chief Executive, the Group Manager Metlink, and the Principal Advisor to the Chair and Chief Executive. The cost was funded from the Chief Executive's budget and the media release was approved by the Group Manager Metlink.

Please see **Attachment 2** which includes the only written correspondence we have related to the decision-making process between Greater Wellington staff and Cr. Ponter.

***The total uptake of MPs who have taken these snapper cards***

In Metlink's media release on this matter, we advised we would not track the usage of these cards. Snapper cards are registered by the individual using them, which in this case is each of the MPs.

Cards cannot be tracked until the user registers them with Snapper. Therefore, some MPs may not have registered against the Snapper card and may not have been able to be tracked regardless.

For the MPs who may have registered against the provided Snapper card, this information is considered to be personal information and it is held by Snapper. Metlink does not have access to this data and would not seek to access this data given the privacy implications. It is also not data we would expect to receive from Snapper.

We therefore refuse this part of your request under section 17(g) of the Local Government Official Information and Meetings Act 1987 (the Act) in that the information requested is not held by the local authority and the person dealing with the request has no grounds for believing that the information is either—

- (i) held by another local authority or a department or Minister of the Crown or organisation; or
- (ii) connected more closely with the functions of another local authority, or a department or Minister of the Crown or organisation.

When refusing under this section of the Act we are required to consider consulting the requestor. We have considered this and do not believe consulting with you will change our decision to refuse to provide this information.

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 Act.

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 on Greater Wellington's website with your personal information removed.

Nāku iti noa, nā



**Samantha Gain**

Kaiwhakahaere Matua Waka-ā-atea | Group Manager Metlink