

Laura Bowman

From: official information
Sent: Thursday, 1 September 2022 2:03 pm
To: 7(2)(a)
Cc: official information
Subject: Final Response: LGOIMA 275389 - 7(2)(a) - All communications by HCC with specified parties in respect to LGNZ declining members of the Tax Payers Union, and any other similar organisation, from attending the conference.
Attachments: HCC 31070222.pdf; LGOIMA 275389 - 7(2)(a) - Final.pdf
Importance: High

Kia Ora,

I refer to your **information request attached**, Hamilton City Council is able to provide the following response.

You Requested:

Please provide copies of all correspondence, file notes, etc, however recorded in relation to:

- a. All advice asked for by Local Government NZ (LGNZ) and provided to LGNZ by HCC in respect of the decision by LGNZ to decline members representing the Tax Payers Union, and any other similar organisation, from attending the recent LGNZ conference in Palmerston North.
- b. Specifically for Chris Milne, a Hutt City Councillor, all advice asked for by LGNZ and provided to LGNZ by HCC that justified the banning of him from the conference based on Stuart Crosby's reported comments "not if he's representing the Taxpayers' Union."
- c. All communications by HCC with any Minister, or members of their staff; and all government officials in respect to LGNZ declining members of the Tax Payers Union, and any other similar organisation, from attending the conference.
- d. All communications by HCC with any Mayors, or members of their staff; and all local government officials in respect to LGNZ declining members of the Tax Payers Union, and any other similar organisation, from attending the conference.
- e. All communications by HCC with any other government official in respect to LGNZ declining members of the Tax Payers Union, and any other similar organisation, from attending the conference.
- f. All communications by HCC with any organisation or person in respect to LGNZ declining members of the Tax Payers Union, and any other similar organisation, from attending the conference.
- g. All communications by HCC with the Tax Payers Union in respect to LGNZ declining members of the Tax Payers Union from attending the conference.
- h. All communications by HCC to any of the entities listed above in respect of HCC processing my request.

Our Response:

Please find attached all correspondence from HCC in relation to the matters you have requested above.

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 or freephone 0800 802 602.

Kind Regards,

Official Information Team
Governance & Assurance Unit | People and Organisational Performance
Email: officialinformation@hcc.govt.nz



Hamilton
City Council
Te kaunihera o Kirikiriroa

Hamilton City Council | Private Bag 3010 | Hamilton 3240 | [Hamilton City Council](#)

-----Original Message-----

From: 7(2)(a)

Sent: Sunday, 31 July 2022 3:49:52 pm

To: info@hcc.govt.nz

Subject: LGOIMA request - HCC

Please see attached. Can you acknowledge receipt, please?

Regards

7(2)(a)

7(2)(a)

7(2)(a)

31 July 2021

Hamilton City Council

Private Bag 3010

Hamilton, 3240

info@hcc.govt.nz

2022 Local Government NZ Conference, Palmerston North

Dear sir/madam

Please treat this as a request to Hamilton City Council (HCC) and the Mayor under the Local Government Official Information and Meetings Act. Please provide copies of all correspondence, file notes, etc, however recorded in relation to:

1. All advice asked for by Local Government NZ (LGNZ) and provided to LGNZ by HCC in respect of the decision by LGNZ to decline members representing the Tax Payers Union, and any other similar organisation, from attending the recent LGNZ conference in Palmerston North.
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4. All communications by HCC with any Mayors, or members of their staff; and all local government officials in respect to LGNZ declining members of the Tax Payers Union, and any other similar organisation, from attending the conference.
5. All communications by HCC with any other government official in respect to LGNZ declining members of the Tax Payers Union, and any other similar organisation, from attending the conference.
6. All communications by HCC with any organisation or person in respect to LGNZ declining members of the Tax Payers Union, and any other similar organisation, from attending the conference.

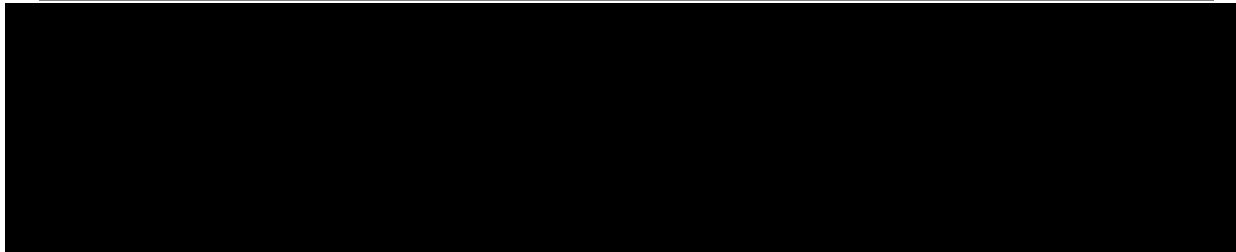
7. All communications by HCC with the Tax Payers Union in respect to LGNZ declining members of the Tax Payers Union from attending the conference.
8. All communications by HCC to any of the entities listed above in respect of HCC processing my request.

Regards

7(2)(a)

A large black rectangular redaction box covering the signature and name of the sender.

From: [Rochelle Miller](#)
To: [Tatiana Taunoa](#)
Cc: [Frances Cox-Wright](#); [James Clarke](#)
Subject: Fwd: Invitation to Mayors re Three Waters
Date: Friday, 19 August 2022 1:45:34 pm



Rochelle Miller
Executive Assistant to Mayor Paula Southgate
Hamilton City Council

From: [REDACTED]@taxpayers.org.nz
Sent: Tuesday, May 31, 2022 4:54:39 PM
To: Rochelle Miller <Rochelle.Miller@hcc.govt.nz>
Subject: FW: Invitation to Mayors re Three Waters



Good afternoon Rochelle, if you could please note the below as an invitation, that would be appreciated. The Hamilton event is on 30 June, exact time and location TBC. We will be in touch closer to the date with details.

From: [REDACTED]
Sent: Tuesday, 31 May 2022 4:49 PM
To: [REDACTED]@taxpayers.org.nz
Cc: [REDACTED]@taxpayers.org.nz; [REDACTED]@taxpayers.org.nz
Subject: Invitation to Mayors re Three Waters

Dear Mayor,

As you'll likely be aware, the Taxpayers' Union has been vocal on the issue of Three Waters. Primarily we oppose the Government's proposed reforms from the economic and democratic accountability perspectives; we do not believe the proposed structures will result in more effective, efficient, and transparent/accountable water services. Right now just shy of 100,000 New Zealanders have signed [the Stop Three Waters petition](#), and you may have seen our television advertising and signage up and down the country.

This morning we announced a nationwide roadshow tour to hear and highlight the concerns of local leaders and ratepayers opposed to the Government's proposed Three Waters regime. We are emailing to invite you to attend our event when our staff and volunteers visit your local community.

Our first stop is in Christchurch this Friday, with stops at 39 local centres in total across five weeks. We're asking you as a local civic leader to come along and voice your concerns.

Details of the events are available and will be updated at www.3WatersRoadshow.nz. Of course, feel free to come along to more than one event in or around your city or district. A number of North Island precise times and places are still being confirmed.

Our "Stop Three Waters" branded campervan and will be distributing bumper stickers, banners, and t-shirts. You are welcome to use our PA system to address gathered ratepayers - in fact, we would love to get you on tape for our social media networks, and email list of 180,000 subscribed supporters.

We're also asking you to sign our Community Leaders' Appeal which reads: "*We call on the Prime Minister to protect local democracy and stop Three Waters.*"

Of course, the campervan and signage will make great photos for your social media. If you have not yet publicly opposed Three Waters, we would welcome you attend to explain your position.

So we are all on the same page: the "Stop Three Waters" roadshow is not an 'anti-Government', anti-Labour, or anti-council campaign. As you can see from the wording of the proposed "Community Leaders' Appeal", the focus in on localism and democracy is consistent with the concerns so many councils and councillors have expressed publicly.

If you have any questions feel free to reply to this email or call me directly on [REDACTED]. Alternatively, [REDACTED] is coordinating the on-ground logistics for this project. [REDACTED] is available on [REDACTED]. [REDACTED], our [REDACTED] Manager, is on [REDACTED].

For once we are really looking forward to highlighting some of the good work being done by councils around the country, and working with you to protect and promote democracy and local control. If we can get you on tape (perhaps in front of your local water infrastructure?) to discuss your views on Three Waters, we'd love to make it happen.

We look forward to hopefully working with you on this important matter.

Regards,

[REDACTED]

New Zealand Taxpayers' Union Inc. | Main +64 4 282 0300 | Level 4, 117 Lambton Quay, Wellington | PO Box 10518, The Terrace, Wellington | www.taxpayers.org.nz

Auckland Ratepayers' Alliance | Main +64 9 281 5172 | CCHQ, Level 14, 41 Shortland Street, Auckland 1010 | PO Box 133099, Eastridge, Auckland | www.ratepayers.nz

We stand for Lower Taxes, Less Waste, and More Transparency across all levels of government. If you like what we do, join the [Taxpayers' Union](http://www.taxpayers.org.nz) or the [Auckland Ratepayers' Alliance](http://www.ratepayers.nz).

From: [Rochelle Miller](#)
To: [Tatiana Taunoa](#)
Cc: [Frances Cox-Wright](#); [James Clarke](#)
Subject: Fwd: BANNED: LGNZ ban us from "future of local government" conferenc
Date: Friday, 19 August 2022 1:48:09 pm

And this one.

Regards,


Rochelle Miller
Executive Assistant to Mayor Paula Southgate
Hamilton City Council

From: Rochelle Miller
Sent: Thursday, July 21, 2022 11:09:16 AM
To: James Clarke <James.Clarke@hcc.govt.nz>
Subject: Fwd: BANNED: LGNZ ban us from 'future of local government' conferenc

Fyi

Regards,

Rochelle Miller
Executive Assistant to Mayor Paula Southgate
Hamilton City Council

From: [REDACTED] 
Sent: Wednesday, July 20, 2022 7:58 PM
To: Paula Southgate <paula.southgate@council.hcc.govt.nz>
Subject: Fwd: BANNED: LGNZ ban us from 'future of local government' conference


Hi Paula,
Please see email below, the action in this email is totally against Democracy.
Please read it.

Regards

[REDACTED] 

Mobile [REDACTED]

Begin forwarded message:

From: [REDACTED] <[REDACTED]@taxpayers.org.nz>
Date: 20 July 2022 at 5:25:28 PM NZST
To: [REDACTED] 
Subject: BANNED: LGNZ ban us from 'future of local government' conference

Banned by LGNZ



Dear [REDACTED]



I can't believe I'm writing this – we've been banned from the Local Government New Zealand conference on "the future of local government" that opened this afternoon in Palmerston North. **And LGNZ has even banned you!**

Late yesterday, the Taxpayers' Union was notified by LGNZ that our registration for the conference had been revoked and we were no longer welcome.

That's 180,000 registered supporters like you, our staff, and board members – **LGNZ has said that no one from or representing the Taxpayers' Union is permitted to attend.**

We asked whether Chris Milne, a sitting City Councillor who is on our Board could go – LGNZ doubled down and said, "*not if he's representing the Taxpayers' Union*".



I've never been banned from anything!

LGNZ banner



I called Stuart Crosby, LGNZ's President, to ask what his concern was. While I'm all for humorous stunts outside an event, or holding politicians to account, the idea that we'd storm the stage, or disrupt the event is ridiculous. We wanted to listen to the Minister of Local

Government and all of the other speakers about their 'vision' for local government, Three Waters, and the other agenda items.

To our astonishment, the justification for the banning was that "the Taxpayers' Union has previously criticised LGNZ". The President of LGNZ said that we are not welcome because "we don't trust what you might say" about the event.

In short, without any appreciation of the irony, LGNZ is gathering together 400 stakeholders to discuss 'the future of local government', democracy, diversity, and Three Waters – but won't allow groups who disagree with them or the Government!

The ban applies to the Taxpayers' Union, our supporters, and even our Ratepayers' Alliance off-shoots in Auckland and Tauranga. That means no ratepayer groups will be at the event.

Remember, LGNZ is 100% funded by ratepayer and taxpayer money! They are the same group who were in the media just this morning calling for more diversity in local government.

Yes, we *have* criticised LGNZ in the past – we've criticised them for being politically biased, and un-transparent! Talk about proving the point...

Apparently, the 'future of local democracy' won't include you!



the context of all this is that Stuart Crosby and LGNZ have taken money from the Government to promote Nanaia Mahuta's Three Waters regime. He signed the infamous [Heads of Agreement / Three Waters Partnership](#) behind the backs of his own members. So the obvious question is, **did the Beehive lean on LGNZ to ensure we couldn't be there?**

Democracy's future is worth fighting for



the events of the last 24 hours illustrate why we must not let local government become the vehicle of an unelected ivory tower elite. If LGNZ – tasked with promoting local democracy – is banning ratepayer voices from discussions on proposed changes to local government, what trust do you have that ratepayers will be a part of the results?

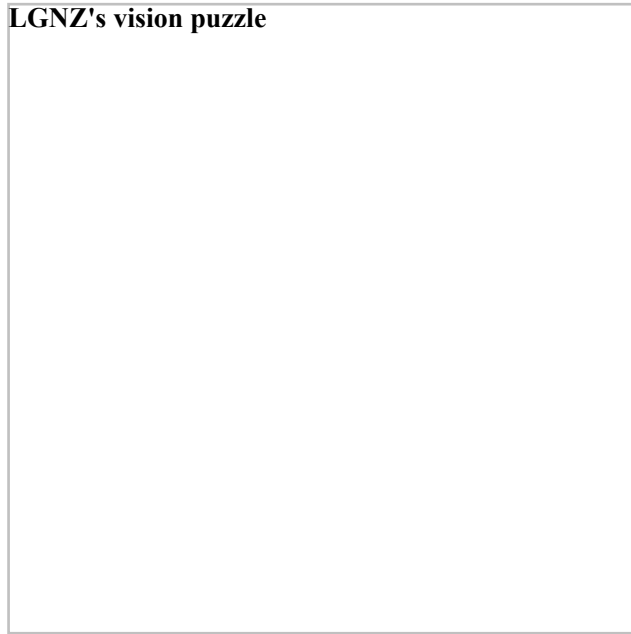
[So I am emailing to ask you to speak up for democratic control and accountability.](#)

If you agree that democracy should include those who disagree with the government and their sock puppet groups like LGNZ, [please take a moment to send an email to those who made this outrageous decision.](#)

Tell the LGNZ President, Council, and the mayors that ratepayers like you should be at the table of these discussions. Local democracy shouldn't be limited to a special club of people and organisations that the elite happen to agree with.

The team worked overnight and most of today to create an email tool to make contacting the LGNZ leadership easy. [They are relying on you to deliver the message at www.BannedByLGNZ.nz](#)

LGNZ's vision puzzle



>>> Tell LGNZ how you feel about being among those banned from the 'future of local government' conference <<<

In my eight years working for the Taxpayers' Union I've seen plenty of underhanded tactics from politicians. But this one certainly takes the cake.

On Three Waters the Government has attempted to buy council support (there's another "b" word for that...), engaged in a disinformation advertising campaign, and tried to smear those opposing the expensive and anti-democratic water reforms as 'racist'.

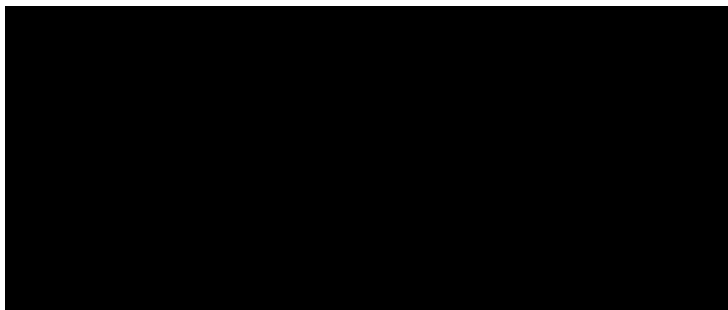
But LGNZ's silencing of the dissenting voice of ratepayers shows that despite what LGNZ says, they don't care for democracy at all. [They only care for democracy if you're on their side!](#)

This certainly seems to contradict the LGNZ website that says: *"Our vision is for Aotearoa New Zealand to be the most active and inclusive local democracy in the world."*

New Zealanders should not have to worry that if they criticise the policies and actions of the Government and affiliated organisations they will be banned from Government-sponsored events.

[The future of local democracy relies on robust debate and the accountability of elected officials and public servants to ratepayers. Click here to tell them that.](#)

Thank you for your support.



New Zealand Taxpayers' Union.

New Zealand Taxpayers' Union Inc. · 117 Lambton Quay, Level 4, Wellington 6011, New Zealand
This email was sent to k.wright@xtra.co.nz. To change your email preferences, [click here](#).