

**From:** [Official Information](#)  
**To:** [s7\(2\)\(a\) @taxpayers.org.nz](#)  
**Cc:** [Official Information](#)  
**Subject:** Final response - LGOIMA 368350 - **s7(2)(a)** - Christmas LGOIMA  
**Date:** Wednesday, 17 January 2024 2:46:12 pm  
**Attachments:** [image001.png](#)  
[image002.jpg](#)  
[image003.jpg](#)

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Kia ora,

We refer to your information request below. Hamilton City Council provides the following response.

**Your request:**

***End-of-Year Bonuses:***

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

***Presents for Staff:***

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

***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.*
- *Please include a cost breakdown for any Christmas parade last year.*

***Christmas Trees and lights:***

- *Number of Christmas trees purchased and erected, and the cost of these purchases for this year.*
- *Please also include the cost for any Christmas lights for tree and any lights for buildings for this year.*
- *Please also include the cost of both for last year, too.*
- *Please highlight if the council had any left over from last year.*

***Hiring Santa:***

- *Breakdown of costs associated with hiring a Santa, if applicable.*
- *Please also provide this information for last year, too.*

***Christmas Market:***

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

***Christmas Party Supplies:***

- *Please breakdown the amount spent on the following for the years 2022 and 2023:*
  - *Wrapping paper*
  - *Santa hats*
  - *Alcohol for parties*
  - *Party hats*
  - *Christmas crackers*
  - *Christmas cards*

- Christmas decorations

**Christmas Parties:**

- Total expenditure breakdown on Council Christmas parties. Please also include in the breakdown any travel arrangement costs.
- Please include this for last year, also.

**Office Closure:**

- Duration of office closure during the Christmas period for the council generally.
- 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.
- Does the Christmas office closure also affect contractors paid by the council? If not, how much are they being paid over the Christmas break in an hourly rate?

**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?

**Our response:**

1. **End-of-Year Bonuses:**

- Total amount paid in end-of-year bonuses to the CEO this Christmas.
- Total amount paid in bonuses to staff employed by your organization this Christmas.
- Please also provide the same for Christmas 2022.

Hamilton City Council does not provide Christmas bounces.

2. **Presents for Staff:**

- Total expenditure on presents for staff including but not limited to 'secret Santa' etc.
- Please include this cost for last year also.

Hamilton City Council does not provide a budget for 'secret Santa' gifts or other presents. This is at staff personal expense.

3. **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.
- Please include a cost breakdown for any Christmas parade last year.

Hamilton City Council provides \$70,000 of sponsorship funding each year to the Hamilton Christmas Charitable Trust. It is their responsibility to manage the installation and lighting of the Christmas Tree in Garden Place and provide the annual Christmas parade.

4. **Christmas Trees and lights:**

- Number of Christmas trees purchased and erected, and the cost of these

**purchases for this year.**

- **Please also include the cost for any Christmas lights for tree and any lights for buildings for this year.**
- **Please also include the cost of both for last year, too.**
- **Please highlight if the council had any left over from last year.**

Hamilton City Council provides \$70,000 of sponsorship funding each year to the Hamilton Christmas Charitable Trust. It is their responsibility to manage the installation and lighting of the Christmas Tree in Garden Place and provide the annual Christmas parade.

5. **Hiring Santa:**

- **Breakdown of costs associated with hiring a Santa, if applicable.**
- **Please also provide this information for last year, too.**

Hamilton City Council did not hire any 'Santa's'.

6. **Christmas Market:**

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

Hamilton City Council does not run any Christmas markets. People can hire our venues, but Council does not run these markets.

7. **Christmas Party Supplies:**

- **Please breakdown the amount spent on the following for the years 2022 and 2023:**
  - **Wrapping paper**
  - **Santa hats**
  - **Alcohol for parties**
  - **Party hats**
  - **Christmas crackers**
  - **Christmas cards**
  - **Christmas decorations**

Hamilton City Council has not purchased any Christmas supplies. There are Christmas decorations that are stored at some of our offices/locations and reused each year.

8. **Christmas Parties:**

- **Total expenditure breakdown on Council Christmas parties. Please also include in the breakdown any travel arrangement costs.**
- **Please include this for last year**

The external cost to host the end of year staff Christmas party was \$25,516.

9. **Office Closure:**

- **Duration of office closure during the Christmas period for the council generally.**
- **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.
- Does the Christmas office closure also affect contractors paid by the council? If not, how much are they being paid over the Christmas break in an hourly rate?

Hamilton City Council's office shut down was from 3pm on the 22 December 2023 till Monday 8 January 2024. Staff who are required to operate our facilities and infrastructure (e.g. zoo, pools, water and wastewater treatment plants) are not part of the shutdown. CE Lance Vervoort, Andrew Parsons, David Bryant, Louise Lukin, Sean Hickey took an additional week from the shut down period. For the avoidance of doubt, staff affected by the shut down are required to use their Annual leave for the non-statutory days during this period.

Our contractors go into our emergency After Hours process that is standard through out the whole year, they get called to attend emergencies only. Their rates are set in their contract as the normal emergency after hours call out fee. It is not different during Christmas.

#### 10. 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?

Hamilton City Council did not make any parking fine increases over the Christmas period.

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.

**Ngaa mihi  
Keeley Faulkner**

**Official Information Coordinator**

Governance & Assurance Team | Business Services

Email: [officialinformation@hcc.govt.nz](mailto:officialinformation@hcc.govt.nz)



**Hamilton City Council | Private Bag 3010 | Hamilton 3240 | [www.hamilton.govt.nz](http://www.hamilton.govt.nz)**



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*I support flexibility at work. While it suits me to send this email now, I don't expect a response outside of your own working hours.*

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

**From:** [s7\(2\)\(a\)@taxpayers.org.nz](#)

**Sent:** Thursday, 7 December 2023 8:59:01 am

**To:**

**Subject:** christmasLGOIMA

Dear Sir/Madam,

This is a request for official information under the Local Government Official Information and Meeting Act 1987 relating to council Christmas expenditure.

We request the following information:

**End-of-Year Bonuses:**

- Total amount paid in end-of-year bonuses to the CEO this Christmas.
- Total amount paid in bonuses to staff employed by your organization this Christmas.
- Please also provide the same for Christmas 2022.

**Presents for Staff:**

- Total expenditure on presents for staff including but not limited to 'secret Santa' etc.
- Please include this cost for last year also.

**Christmas Parade:**

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**Christmas Party Supplies:**

- Please breakdown the amount spent on the following for the years 2022 and 2023:
  - Wrapping paper

- Santa hats
- Alcohol for parties
- Party hats
- Christmas crackers
- Christmas cards
- Christmas decorations

**Christmas Parties:**

- Total expenditure breakdown on Council Christmas parties. Please also include in the breakdown any travel arrangement costs.
- Please include this for last year, also.

**Office Closure:**

- Duration of office closure during the Christmas period for the council generally.
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**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?

We do not wish to cause unnecessary expense or burden on your agency. If clarification of any of our requests is needed please call or email. Likewise, if a request proves unnecessarily burdensome in form and we are likely to be able to adjust it to be more specific or better suited to your information systems without losing the benefit of what is sought, please also get in touch. If there is likely to be a delay in being able to assemble or provide some of the information requested, please provide the rest of the information as it becomes available.

To avoid unnecessary printing and postage costs, we ask that you send a confirmation of receipt, the response and any other correspondence related to this request to **s7(2)(a) [@taxpayers.org.nz](mailto:@taxpayers.org.nz)**. Please include the following reference in the subject line: **christmasLGOIMA**

Do let me know if you need anything.

Yours faithfully,

**s7(2)(a)**

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| New Zealand Taxpayers' Union | Auckland Ratepayers' Alliance

**s7(2)(a)** [taxpayers.org.nz](http://taxpayers.org.nz)

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