

LGOIMA

When releasing responses to previous LGOIMA requests, names of individual requestors may be withheld to protect their privacy.

Information requested by the media, from public sector organisations and MPs will always be published while information specific to an individual or their property will not generally be published.

**Request
from:**

- For:**
1. Annual membership costs of Local Government NZ Association.
 2. Mayor's involvement with the Vital Voices International Fellowship.
 3. Mayoral Travel and LGNZ matters
-

**Response
by:**

Pat Dougherty
Chief Executive



Ref: SR 2012604

Civic House, 110 Trafalgar Street
PO Box 645, Nelson 7040, New Zealand

4 May 2020

P (03) 546 0200
E pat.dougherty@ncc.govt.nz
nelson.govt.nz

[Redacted]

Dear [Redacted]

LGNZ Costs

Thank you for your email of 20 April 2020 regarding the membership costs of Local Government New Zealand.

You requested:

"Please may I be informed of the total annual cost paid by Nelson City Council for membership of Local Government New Zealand Association."

All councils in New Zealand are members of Local Government New Zealand.

I can confirm that the membership costs for Local Government New Zealand (LGNZ) the period 1 April 2019 to 31 March 2020 were \$52,246.32 excluding GST. The membership subscription costs are worked out pro rata, and the amount we pay is based on our population.

Membership of LGNZ provides Nelson City Council with:

- Advocacy on behalf of the local government sector
- Advice and counsel
- Advocacy, stakeholder and media communications
- Policy development and analysis
- Research
- Webinars, workshops, and seminars on particular work programme issues
- Administration of National Council, National Council Committees, Sector and Zone meetings and LGNZ advisory and working groups

LGNZ is an organisation that improves the efficiency of local government by coordinating responses and addressing issues that affect the sector. This reduces the workload of individual councils.

Internal Document ID: A2379483

If you are not satisfied with our response regarding the membership costs of , you have the right to seek an investigation and review by the Ombudsman of this response. Information about how to make a complaint is available at www.ombudsman.parliament.nz or Freephone 0800 802 602.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Pat Dougherty', written in a cursive style.

Pat Dougherty
Chief Executive



Ref: SR 2012201

Civic House, 110 Trafalgar Street
PO Box 645, Nelson 7040, New Zealand

6 May 2020

P (03) 546 0200
E pat.dougherty@ncc.govt.nz
nelson.govt.nz

[Redacted]

Dear [Redacted]

International Fellowship

Many thanks for your email of 12 March 2020 requesting information relating to the Mayor's involvement with the Vital Voices International Fellowship.

You requested:

1. *"Knowing she'd won the fellowship, she structured the council's committees so as to minimize her own involvement, thereby placing a greater load on her appointed chairmen and on all councillors. In prior times, committee placements were apportioned- each Councillor on only three committees. However, to accommodate her absences, every Councillor has been appointed to all committees. From a practical perspective that's unrealistically demanding, and elementally unworkable as a managerial structure. Is that not a cost to Nelson ratepayers?"*

Section 41A of the Local Government Act 2002 provides the Mayor with a discretionary power to establish Committees and to appoint Committee chairpersons.

Following the Local Government Election in 2019, at the Council Meeting held on 31 October 2019, the Mayor chose not to invoke the use of these mayoral powers. Instead, Mayor Reese sought the support of Council for the establishment of five committees of the whole, with the membership for each committee including all elected members. This was to ensure that there was the opportunity for all members to provide input to all Council decision making.

At the same time, the delegations to committees were increased. It was expected that this would improve the efficiency with more decisions being made by committees with less recommendations to Council.

The establishment of the committees of the whole was supported and approved unanimously by the newly elected members.

It should be noted that the Mayor is a member of every committee of Council, as provided for in Section 41A of the Local Government Act 2002 and Nelson City Council

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Standing Orders. Therefore the Mayor continues to provide input to all matters being considered by Council and committees.

Committees of the whole is a well-established committee structure model that is used by other councils around the country. There are no cost implications as a result of committees of the whole being the chosen governance model.

2. *"Attending the Clinton Foundation fellowship has removed her from her civic duties for 10 days already, and she'll be absent 20 more days' during the rest of her term. Is that absence not a cost to Nelson ratepayers?"*

The Mayor is not attending the Clinton Foundation Fellowship. Her involvement is with the Vital Voices International Fellowship.

Similarly the figures that you quote regarding absences of 10 and 20 days are not correct.

I can confirm that the Mayor was away for a total of five working days in November 2019 whilst attending the international fellowship. The Mayor continued her Council work responsibilities and was in touch via email and phone during this period.

At this stage due to Covid-19 disruptions, it is unlikely that the Mayor will be away for any further days this year

As the Mayor works remotely whilst attending the international fellowship and continues to fulfil her duties during her time out of the country, there is no cost to the ratepayer.

Being accepted onto this prestigious programme reflects well on the Mayor and on Nelson City Council. I have no doubt the Council and community will benefit from her involvement in this programme.

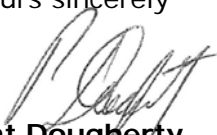
3. *"She's remunerated at around \$410 per day. If remunerated for those 30 days of absence- roughly \$12,300- wouldn't that be a cost to Nelson ratepayers?"*

As detailed in my response to the previous question, Mayor Reese continued to work whilst she was away in November 2019.

As someone who works closely with the Mayor I can attest to her high work ethic. I can assure you the ratepayers at Nelson get very good value for money from their mayor.

If you are not satisfied with my response regarding the Mayor's involvement with the Vital Voices International Fellowship, you have the right to seek an investigation and review by the Ombudsman of this response. Information about how to make a complaint is available at www.ombudsman.parliament.nz or Freephone 0800 802 602.

Yours sincerely



Pat Dougherty
Chief Executive



Ref: SR 2012496

Civic House, 110 Trafalgar Street
PO Box 645, Nelson 7040, New Zealand

4 May 2020

P (03) 546 0200
E pat.dougherty@ncc.govt.nz
nelson.govt.nz

[Redacted]

Dear [Redacted]

Mayoral travel and LGNZ matters

Many thanks for your email of 19 April 2020 requesting information relating to Mayoral travel and LGNZ matters.

You requested:

"Please may I be informed as to:

1. *How many times has Mayor Reece travelled out of Nelson since the election on 12 October 2019?"*

I can confirm that Mayor Reese has travelled out of Nelson on nine occasions since the Local Government Election on 12 October 2019.

During this travel, the Mayor was out of the city for a total of 13 ½ working days. Of those, eight and a half days were spent attending meetings related to Council business and for five working days, the Mayor was in attendance at a Vital Voices Fellowship conference. While the Mayor was out of the city, she continued to work on Nelson City Council matters, phone calls, emails and meeting preparation. The Mayor often attends Council appointments and meetings in the afternoon and evenings prior to or on return from work related travel.

2. *"How many of those occasions were for the purpose of visiting either the premises of, or personnel connected with, Local Government New Zealand?"*

Six of these trips were for the purposes of attending Local Government New Zealand (LGNZ) related meetings. Two of the meetings were related to post-election Mayor/Chairs Induction Meetings that were arranged by LGNZ, two were related to attendance at LGNZ National Council meetings, as the Mayor is a member of the LGNZ National Council and two were attendance at other LGNZ meetings which the Mayor is a member of and is required to attend as part of her Mayoral responsibilities.

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3. *"Were those trips funded by Nelson City Council or by Local Government NZ?"*

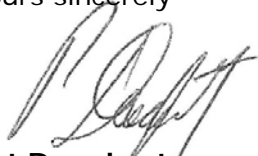
LGNZ funded attendance at the National Council meetings. The other LGNZ trips were funded by Nelson City Council.

4. *"Is Mayor Reece intending to seek election for the presidency of Local Government NZ when the current president retires in July - taking into account the commitments she expressed so frequently, prior to her election, of 100% of her efforts being put into Nelson?"*

The Mayor has made no decision on this matter at this time.

If you are not satisfied with our response regarding the Mayoral travel and LGNZ matters, you have the right to seek an investigation and review by the Ombudsman of this response. Information about how to make a complaint is available at www.ombudsman.parliament.nz or Freephone 0800 802 602.

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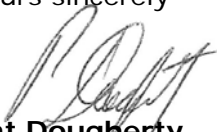
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