

15 December 2023

Rhys Hurley  
New Zealand Taxpayers' Union  
Via email

Email: [rhys@taxpayers.org.nz](mailto:rhys@taxpayers.org.nz)

Kia ora

**REQUEST FOR INFORMATION UNDER THE LOCAL GOVERNMENT OFFICIAL INFORMATION AND MEETINGS ACT  
1987 (LGOIMA) – WATERCARE APP**

**Your request**

On 17 November 2023, we received your request for information via Auckland Council. In particular, your request was as follows:

*This is a request for clarification of official information under the under the Local Government Official Information and Meetings Act 1987 in relation to the Watercare app.*

*We request the following information:*

- *The total cost of developing the app including staff hours, contracts, hireage and anything related to the development costs.*
- *The total cost of marketing including staff hours, posters, billboards or anything relevant to marketing*
- *The total cost of maintaining the app including contractors, staffing or any other relevant cost.*
- *How many downloads has the app had since it was launched?*
- *What is the average visited time on the app per day?*
- *If known please state how much has been paid overall for the app and how much of this was paid by Watercare and Auckland Council.*

*We do not wish to cause unnecessary expense or burden for your agency. Should clarification be required, please call or email. Similarly, if a request proves unnecessarily burdensome in form and we are likely to be able to adjust that request to be more specific or better suited to your information systems without losing the benefit of what is sought, please get in touch. If there is likely to be a delay in the assembly or provision of some of the information requested, please provide the balance as it becomes available.*

*In any place where possible, data that can be presented in an excel format is preferred to other methods of presentation e.g. PDF.*

*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 email address. Please refer to "App" in the subject line.*

Best  
Rhys Hurley

## Our response

We provide our response below in the order of your email.

***The total cost of developing the app including staff hours, contracts, hireage and anything related to the development costs.***

\$3,335,521.08. Please see below tables for further information.

[illegible]

Labour Breakdown			
Sum of Cost Amount			
Task	First Name	Last Name	Total
00.10.03 - Digital - INIT-290 - Smart Meter Mobile-App (Walking Skeleton)			990.00
			15,235.00
			6,562.50
			5,175.00
			4,030.00
			15,730.00
00.10.03 - Digital - INIT-290 - Smart Meter Mobile-App (Walking Skeleton) Total			47,722.50
00.10.03 - Digital - INIT-291 - Smart Meter Mobile-App (Pilot)			2,557.50
			25,977.60
			71.88
			26,290.00
			30,121.88
			20,185.00
			47,080.00
			127,170.00
			11,250.00
00.10.03 - Digital - INIT-291 - Smart Meter Mobile-App (Pilot) Total			290,703.85
00.10.03 - Digital - INIT-292 - Smart Meter Mobile-App (MLP Build)			151,882.50
			700.00
00.10.03 - Digital - INIT-292 - Smart Meter Mobile-App (MLP Build) Total			152,582.50
Grand Total			491,008.85

Where necessary, private information has been withheld under LGOIMA on the basis that its withholding is necessary to protect the privacy of natural persons in accordance with section 7(2)(a) of the Local Government Official Information and Meetings Act 1987.

***The total cost of marketing including staff hours, posters, billboards or anything relevant to marketing***

The total cost of marketing over the past year was \$29,747. A breakdown of the costs is set out below.

Collateral – spring campaign	Costs (approx.)
Artwork including bill insert, website, email banners, bill bubbles and e-tiles, etc	\$1,500
Social media ads (spring promo)	\$3,610
Bill insert mailing (November)	\$3,666
Prizes for external spring promo (3x \$500 gift cards)	\$1,500
Prize for internal promo (\$500 gift card)	\$500
Bill bubbles and e-tiles	\$2,000
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$12,166</b>

Smart meter collateral	Costs (approx.)
Design of new smart meter customer artwork including A4 flyer, market banners, tiles for website, and updating existing Welcome Pack brochures, contractor drop cards, understanding your bill letters, etc	\$2,665
Mailing house set up costs for smart meter customer comms journey	\$13,306
Prizes for internal competition - 10x \$100 gift cards for trial for feedback	\$1,000
Social media posts	\$610
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$17,581</b>

Note, the purpose of the smart meter journey communications was to communicate the benefits of the smart meter, changes to customers' bills and any connectivity issues for some. There is a mention of the app, however, its sole purpose wasn't to promote it.

***The total cost of maintaining the app including contractors, staffing or any other relevant cost.***

Maintenance is fully outsourced at a cost of approximately \$213,300.00 per annum.

***How many downloads has the app had since it was launched?***

Version 1.0 (smart meter customers) of the app was launched on 5 December 2022. Version 2.0 (mechanical meter customers) of the app was launched on 20 April 2023. 56,681 downloads as of 15 December 2023.

***What is the average visited time on the app per day?***

Unfortunately, the app does not report on visited time per day. Accordingly, we do not hold the data for average visited time on the app per day. We must therefore decline this part of the request under s17(e) LGOIMA, as the information does not exist.

***If known please state how much has been paid overall for the app and how much of this was paid by Watercare and Auckland Council.***

\$3,335,521.08 plus \$213,300 support for 2023, was paid for by Watercare. Note, these numbers do not include the marketing cost as detailed above.

Nothing has been paid by Auckland Council.

#### **Further options**

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.

Yours sincerely



Brent Evans  
**Acting Chief Customer Officer**