

File ref: IRO-4597

2 June 2015

New Zealand Tax Payers' Union

Via: requests@taxpayers.org.nz

Dear New Zealand Tax Payers' Union

**Request for information relating to the Wellington Tech Hub.**

Thank you for your emails' to the Council received on 4 May 2015 at 1.29 pm and 4.25 pm respectively in which you requested information relating to the Wellington Tech Hub. Your request was forwarded to the Issues Resolution Office to collate and provide a response.

As you asked a number of questions I will address these in the order of your emails'.

**1) "What is the purpose of the tech hub?"**

Please refer to the business case attached as **Appendix 1** and also available on the Council's website via the following link:

<http://wellington.govt.nz/your-council/meetings/committees/economic-growth-and-arts/2015/04/21>

**2) "What will the proposed \$3 million be spent on?"**

Please refer to the business case attached as Appendix 1.

**3) "What are the estimated ongoing costs of the Tech Hub if/when established?"**

Please refer to the business case attached as Appendix 1.

**4) "Which groups will be permitted to use the Tech Hub?"**

The Tech Hub and the programmes that are delivered from it will be accessible to creative, digital and technology businesses. The Tech Hub will also encourage participation from the people, institutions and agencies that support the growth and success of innovative businesses – including tertiary education institutes, business accelerators and incubators, and investors.

**5) “Has the Council been approached by interested groups who might want to use the Tech Hub? If so, who are these groups?”**

As part of the initial development of the Tech Hub proposal, Council officers engaged with a wide range of stakeholders, including researchers, academics, growth businesses, investors and entrepreneurs, around the concept of, and potential demand for, a tech hub. A number of these stakeholders have been identified in the business case; please refer to paragraphs 96-98 for further detail.

BizDojo is funding, and is responsible for, the commercial operation of the Tech Hub physical space. For this reason we are unable to provide information on BizDojo’s commercial engagements with respect to groups interested in using the space.

Council’s engagement with interested groups can be found in the business case.

**6) “Which agency will be used to maintain and oversee the Tech Hub?”**

Wellington City Council has partnered with BizDojo to deliver the Tech Hub. Please refer to the business case for further information.

**7) “Has the council previously undertaken any similar ventures to that of the proposed Tech Hub? If so, what and when were these initiatives undertaken and what was the cost?”**

Wellington City Council has not previously undertaken any similar initiatives to that of the proposed Tech Hub.

**8) “Is it [a] condition that the tenants do not come from existing property providers or commercial landlords?”**

Council is not funding the co-working space of the Tech Hub, nor is it providing subsidies to businesses working in the space. The space will be operated commercially by BizDojo who will be responsible for the lease and operating costs of the entire physical hub space. For this reason, Council will not be placing restrictions on where businesses originate from.

For further information, please refer to the business case

**9) “What is the criteria for space?”**

The space will cater for businesses that range in size from 1-20 people, and will target business from the creative, digital and technology industries.

The Tech Hub does not have a formal set of criteria for the use of the space; however businesses are, and will be, assessed by BizDojo on a case by case basis. This is to ensure that potential residents will benefit from, and contribute to, the Tech Hub’s innovative community.

**10) “Could a political organisation occupy a space?”**

It is not anticipated that hub space will be available to political parties or organisations.

**11) “What are the restrictions on organisations using the space to conduct political activity?”**

Please refer to the answer given to question 10 above.

**12) “We understand ‘wrap-around business guidance and mentoring services’ are available. Please tell us precisely what these are, and the cost?”**

Please refer to the business case attached as Appendix 1.

**13) “We understand that a ‘contestable and extensive RFP process’ has occurred. Please provide us with all documentation related to that”**

Again, please refer to the business case attached as Appendix 1.

In addition, please refer to the Wellington Tech Hub Expression of Interest, attached as **Appendix 2**, and the Wellington Tech Hub Expression of Interest Evaluation Plan attached as **Appendix 3**.

Given negotiations between the Council and BizDojo are still ongoing, under section 7(2)(i) of the Local Government Official Information and Meetings Act 1987 some information has been withheld in order to enable the local authority holding the information to carry on, without prejudice or disadvantage, negotiations (including commercial and industrial negotiations).

If you disagree with the decision to withhold this information, you can apply in writing to the Ombudsman to have the decision investigated and reviewed under section 27 (3) of the Local Government Official Information and Meetings Act 1987.

Yours sincerely



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