

21 November

Adam Irish
Via FYI website

Dear Adam,

Further to my email dated 16 November 2023 in which I advised your request had been granted, I am now able to provide you with a formal response to your questions.

In your email dated 4 October 2024 you asked a number of questions in respect of the Town Hall and any involvement by the Mayor.

I will address your questions in the order of your email.

1) "...how many quotes have been sought for the claimed additional spend of \$330m for the Wellington Town hall? Was this quote from the current contractor and how many other quotes have been sought. Was any of the contractors or consulting firms involved in the town hall earthquake strengthening project from the lets get Wellington moving project. How can the public have trust and confidence that the Wellington Council has robust procurement processes in place. Has the council been proactive and sought other quotes."

The recent cost forecast for the Town Hall project is based on an impartial and objective assessment provided by the Project Quantity Surveyor accounting the project scope and risk. The estimates were also reviewed by an independent reviewer RCP.

The forecast \$329.1m value is derived from a combination of two key components: the costs incurred to date and projections of future work planned. In the circumstance that the scope of any existing supplier needs to be varied, there are contract provisions / conditions in place with all those suppliers to ensure that any changes are addressed methodically and conform with contractual requirements. In the circumstance that new suppliers need to be procured for any elements of works, Council procurement processes will be adhered to.

The Town Hall Project and Let's Get Wellington Programme are separate and unrelated initiatives with no contractual or commercial interrelationships between. As each initiative requires construction industry services required to support delivery, there is a possibility that some suppliers may have an involvement in both initiatives.

Competitive processes have been undertaken in the sourcing of suppliers for the Townhall project. Further information relating to how the Council approaches procurement of products and services is available on the Council's website via the following link: [About the Council - Selling your products and services to the Council - Wellington City Council](#)

2) "Are any of the Mayor's friends or associates connected to or consulting for the project or involved as contractors in anyway for the town hall project?"

To the Best of the Mayor's knowledge, no friends or associates are connected to this project.

3) "Does the Mayor have any declared conflicts of interest?"

As per the Code of Conduct for Elected Members, all members are required to comply with the provisions of the Local Authorities (Members ' Interests) Act 1968, and within 30 days of a triennial election complete a declaration of interests.

The Code of Conduct is available on the Council's website and can be accessed via the following link: [Code of Conduct for Elected Members \(wellington.govt.nz\)](https://www.wellington.govt.nz/code-of-conduct-for-elected-members)

A copy of the Mayor's declared pecuniary interests can be accessed via the following link: [summary-of-pecuniary-interests-mayor-whanau.pdf \(wellington.govt.nz\)](https://www.wellington.govt.nz/summary-of-pecuniary-interests-mayor-whanau.pdf)

In addition, elected members are required to declare any conflict of interest in respect of the issues being tabled and discussed at Council meetings.

4) "What anti-corruption policies does the council have in place?"

The Council's Audit and Risk Committee oversees the work of the Council in discharging its responsibilities in the areas of risk management, statutory reporting, internal and external audit and assurance, monitoring of compliance with laws and regulations, including health and safety.

Further information relating to the Audit and Risk Committee is available on the Council's website and can be accessed via the following links:

[Meetings - Audit and Risk Committee - Wellington City Council](https://www.wellington.govt.nz/meetings-audit-and-risk-committee)

[tor-2022-2025-audit-and-risk-committee.pdf \(wellington.govt.nz\)](https://www.wellington.govt.nz/tor-2022-2025-audit-and-risk-committee.pdf)

In addition, the Council is also subject to the Protected Disclosures Act 2000.

A copy of the Council's Protected Disclosures Policy is attached and the Act can be accessed via the following link: [Protected Disclosures Act 2000 No 7 \(as at 01 July 2022\), Public Act Contents – New Zealand Legislation](https://www.legislation.govt.nz/act/public/2000/007/1.2.2000)

5) "What body does the Mayor's spending need to pass through to be approved?"

If I have understood your question correctly, then I can advise that the Mayor does not make spending decisions on behalf of the Council as spending decisions are approved by either the full Council or Committee's with delegated authority.

I can advise that approval of the Mayor's expenses is set out in the Delegations Policy and "The Mayor's expense claims are approved by the Chief Strategy and Governance Officer, and periodically reviewed by Assurance."

Whilst there is also a Mayoral Relief Fund of \$20,000, this fund is administered by the Wellington City Mission. Further information is available on the Council's website via the following link: [Community support - Mayoral Relief Fund - Wellington City Council](#)

6) "Does the mayor get to decide on travel spend or is there independent oversight?"

I can advise that Mayoral international air travel is subject to approval in advance by the Council. Please refer to paragraph 24 of the Elected Member Allowance and Entitlements Policy: [Elected Member Allowances and Entitlements Policy \(wellington.govt.nz\)](#)

In addition, the Chief Executive officer in consultation with the deputy mayor has the authority to approve international travel for the mayor and/or elected members where an invitation is received and there is no travel cost to the Council. (see page 32 of [Agenda of Te Kaunihera o Pōneke | Council - Wednesday, 16 November 2022 \(wellington.govt.nz\)](#))

7) "How is procurement managed to ensure no kickbacks, vested interests or conflicts of interests are occurring?"

Please find attached a copy of the Council's Operational Procurement Policy.

Kind regards

Ian Hunter
Senior Advisor, Official Information