

13 October 2023

[REDACTED]

Dear [REDACTED]

Official information Request: Rating Review – Rural Rates (breakdown)

I am writing to you in response to your request received 9 October 2023 for information relating to the Rating Review:

I support the Federated Farmers' submission regarding a full rates review for rural landholders. As rural families we are disproportionately charged rates versus the urban population of the South Wairarapa.

We get very little in return for our increasing rates bill and this is crippling farmers and their families. If we are expected to pay the current charges and the forever increasing rates we should have functioning roads as a minimum. Infrastructure that supports the rural businesses and the families that run them should be the absolute minimum we can expect. I would like to see a breakdown of exactly what our rural rates are spent on.

We have assessed your request under the Local Government Official Information and Meetings Act 1987 (LGOIMA). I have received information to provide the following response:

It is noted that Federated Farmers commended the SWDC conducting a rating model review in their 2023/24 Annual Plan submission. We have not yet received a submission from Federated Farmers, but will add your comments to theirs when we do.

The breakdown of what activities are funded from the general rates (UAGC and General Rate) versus targeted rates and/or other income sources can be seen in Appendix One of the Statement of Proposal, the Funding Needs Analysis, along with Council's rationale for the split of where each activity is funded from. Please refer to the last three pages of the document which can be found here:

<https://swdc.govt.nz/wp-content/uploads/Final-SoP-and-Draft-Policies-for-Consultation.pdf>

Activities deemed to have a benefit to the whole district are funded from general rates on all rateable properties. Activities deemed to have benefit to part of the district are funded from fees, charges, and targeted rates.

Please note that it is our policy to proactively release our responses to official information requests where possible. Our response to your request will be published shortly on our website, with your personal information removed.

We acknowledge this response has taken time due to our current volume of work, if you have further questions, you are welcome to raise them in your submission or at the hearing.

You have a right to request a review by the Ombudsman on this response. Further information about this process can be found on <https://www.ombudsman.parliament.nz/what-ombudsman-can-help/complaints-about-government-agencies/how-make-complaint> or email info@ombudsman.parliament.nz

Kind Regards

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

Amanda Bradley
General Manager, Policy and Governance Team