

MEDIA RELEASE

REVEALED: Waipā Council's \$800k PR Machine

MONDAY 9 JUNE 2025

EMBARGOED UNTIL 0500 THURSDAY 12 JUNE 2025

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The Taxpayers' Union can reveal through Local Government and Official Information Act request that the Waipā District Council salary payments for their Communications and Engagement team over 9 months totalled \$799,750.

Internal documents show the Council has issued 66 media releases in just four months, built a new communication strategy, new roles and toolkits for its public image while just 17% of residents believe the Council is acting in their best interests.

Taxpayers' Union Investigations Coordinator Rhys Hurley said:

"Waipā Council isn't listening just lecturing. In just nine months, they've spent nearly \$800,000 on their 12 person comms team. Ratepayers aren't asking for Facebook reels or branded tote bags they want their bins emptied, roads fixed, and rates kept under control."

"While trust in the Council has fallen, their answer has been to hire more PR staff, while core services are being squeezed."

"This isn't community engagement, it's reputation management. Ratepayers are funding a political comms machine that's more interested in shaping perception than delivering outcomes."

"Spending \$800,000 on spin in just nine months while pleading poverty is indefensible with an average rates rise of 14.8 per cent. If Waipā cared about their ratepayers, they'd start by cutting this comms circus."

ENDS

ENQUIRIES:

Rhys Hurley

027 522 9136