

Reference Number: 2024/1110

1 July 2024

[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]

Tēnā Koe [REDACTED]

Thank you for email of 7 June 2024 requesting under the Local Government Official Information and Meetings Act 1987 (LGOIMA), information relating to community funding. Please see outlined below a response to each part of your request.

Could you provide information on the funding details for the 2023 Diwali celebration held in Levin?

Horowhenua District Council proudly partnered with community organisers to celebrate Diwali in November 2023. Council was approached by community organisers who requested support from the Council Events Team in hosting Levin's Diwali celebration. Our involvement is consistent with other community partner events, ensuring events are well organised and creating opportunities for the community. This is dependent on the available resource.

Additionally, the organisers of Diwali applied for funding from the Creative Communities NZ Scheme and were awarded \$2,300.00. This grant is funded by Creative New Zealand (an external funding scheme) and allocated by our independent Creative Communities Committee.

Council's contribution towards the event was an \$5,721.09 (excluding GST) which went towards lighting, hireage, venue and entertainment costs.

The Community Centre and Libraries team also celebrated Diwali at Te Takeretanga o Kura-hau-pō and Te Awahou Nieuwe Stroom as part of their annual event programming. They arranged entertainment which cost \$380.00 (including GST).

Additionally, I'm interested in understanding the council's perspective on Diwali: is it considered a comprehensive Indian festival or primarily recognized as a religious observance?

Council's perspective is to respond to community interest and support events that contribute to the priorities of Council and in this particular instance, creating a sense of belonging to a section of our community, contributing to the vibrancy of our District. Due to the success of the event and feedback received from the community, Council has plans to support the organisers to celebrate Diwali in 2024.

Furthermore, with the changing demographics within the Horowhenua council, particularly the growing presence of South Indian communities and their affiliated associations, does the council have plans to initiate hearings or discussions concerning this demographic transition in the future? Specifically, I'm curious if there are plans to engage with these communities to gain a better understanding of their culture and celebrations, considering that many South Indians also celebrate the festival of Onam, which is not solely religious but inclusive of all participants.

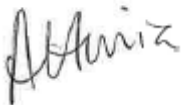
At this current point in time, Horowhenua District Council has had no requests or plans to enter into discussions specifically concerning South Indian communities. The Council celebrates diversity and has funding avenues that encourage community groups to celebrate their identity and cultures and share them with the wider community. Anyone who would like to put on an event that celebrates their culture is welcome to apply for funding via our website www.horowhenua.govt.nz noting that our next funding round opens on 1 August 2024.

You are entitled to seek an investigation and review by the Office of the Ombudsman. Information about how to make a complaint is available at www.ombudsman.parliament.nz or freephone 0800 802 602.

Horowhenua District Council publishes responses to Local Government Official Information and Meetings Act 1987 (LGOIMA) requests that we consider to be of wider public interest, or which relate to a subject that has been widely requested. To protect your privacy, we will not generally publish personal information about you, or information that identifies you. We will publish the LGOIMA response along with a summary of the request on our website. Requests and responses may be paraphrased.

If you would like to discuss this decision or any of the information provided as part of this request, please contact Brent Harvey (Group Manager Community Experience and Services) on brenth@horowhenua.govt.nz or LGOIMAOfficer@horowhenua.govt.nz

Ngā mihi



Ashley Huria
Executive Sponsor