

Reference Number: 2024/1150

24 October 2024

[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]

Tēnā koe [REDACTED]

Thank you for email of 11 October 2024 requesting under the Local Government Official Information and Meetings Act 1987 (LGOIMA), information relating to policy on Council workshops and briefings. Please see outlined below a response to each part of your request.

What is your council's current policy in relation to whether elected member workshops and briefings are open to the public?

Elected members workshops and briefings are open to the public, unless a good reason exists for withholding the information in the workshop under section 7 of the Local Government Official Information and Meetings Act 1987 (the Act).

Did your council open up, or is it in the process of opening up, these workshops and briefings to be "open to the public by default" in line with the Ombudsman's recommendations in his "Open for Business" report of October 2023?

Following the release of the Ombudsman's Open for Business report, Horowhenua District Council (the Council) reviewed its practices and made changes to reflect the Ombudsman's recommendation.

If you have opened up, or are intending to open up, these workshops and briefings to the public, how are you doing so? (e.g. internet livestreaming, public attendance in person, after the fact video or audio recordings" etc)

The Council publishes a schedule of workshop topics and their purpose two clear working days before workshops are held. If a workshop is closed to the public, the reason under the Act are set out along with a plain English explanation. The workshops publicised in the Council's Facebook page and its website are open to view in person from the public gallery of the Council chamber, or via live-stream on the Council's YouTube channel. The recording of the workshops that are open to the public are accessible to the public on the Council's YouTube channel. Occasionally, either through a failure of technology, or a meeting is held at a venue other than the Council Chamber an audio recording only will be made available, but where possible the preference is for an audio/video recording.

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 Jacinta Straker (Group Manager Organisation Performance) on jacintas@horowhenua.govt.nz, or LGOIMAOfficer@horowhenua.govt.nz.

Ngā mihi



Ashley Huria
Executive Sponsor