

8 May 2026

File Ref: OIAPR-1274023063-49714

Miss M Quicken

By email: [fyi-request-34446-f7089c72@requests.fyi.org.nz](mailto:fyi-request-34446-f7089c72@requests.fyi.org.nz)

Tēnā koe Miss Quicken

## **Request for information 2026-162**

I refer to your request for information dated 9 April 2026, which was received by Greater Wellington Regional Council (Greater Wellington) on 9 April 2026. You have requested the following:

*“Dear Wellington Regional Council,*

<https://apc01.safelinks.protection.outlook.com/?url=https%3A%2F%2Fwww.gomedia.co.nz%2Fnews%2Fmetlink-continues-go-medias-advertising-contract&data=05%7C02%7Cinfo%40gw.govt.nz%7C51cfae2591f94223589f08de95e88ec9%7Ccdb5885ea63644b994da82930c096dd6%7C0%7C0%7C639113023256343246%7CUnknown%7CTWFpbGZsb3d8eyJFbXB0eU1hcGkiOnRydWUsIlYiOiIwLjAuMDAwMCIsIlAiOiJXaW4zMilslkFOljoiTWFpbGlldUljoyfQ%3D%3D%7C0%7C%7C%7C&sdata=K72MIZ29G8PPZ9S%2Fibh8MR37E4Hou0mnAm1rZrZpHc4%3D&reserved=0>

<https://apc01.safelinks.protection.outlook.com/?url=https%3A%2F%2Fwww.gets.govt.nz%2FGWRC%2FExternalTenderDetails.htm%3Fid%3D27429219&data=05%7C02%7Cinfo%40gw.govt.nz%7C51cfae2591f94223589f08de95e88ec9%7Ccdb5885ea63644b994da82930c096dd6%7C0%7C0%7C639113023256377334%7CUnknown%7CTWFpbGZsb3d8eyJFbXB0eU1hcGkiOnRydWUsIlYiOiIwLjAuMDAwMCIsIlAiOiJXaW4zMilslkFOljoiTWFpbGlldUljoyfQ%3D%3D%7C0%7C%7C%7C&sdata=a77%2FTviaLpKoPASJUSDn0hv6DU%2FFAacuGHqmk38Alls%3D&reserved=0>

*Reading the latest tender around advertising services, it says:*

*If all rights of renewal exercised (3+2+2), the contract award will generate a minimum \$14m revenue for Greater Wellington Regional Council.*

*Meanwhile the FY2425 revenue was 2.5M for the GRWC aligning to this figure.*

*However I'm left wondering whether the council outsourced in a way that didn't take into account what central government is doing with private share where the council needs to increase the revenue.*

*I would like to understand this contractual arrangement which effectively has provided a monopoly to a single provider with tiny amount of revenue to the council with no room for any competition to do it better.*

*I am also left wondering why business functions are making such decisions monopolizing functions to raise revenues to commercial providers without councilor / democracy oversight.*

*Please provide:*

- A) Current contract with Go Media*
- B) KPIs with Go Media*
- C) Performance report from last FY*

*And relating to democracy engagement, granting an effective monopoly to outside commercial entity*

- D) Public consultancy process that was followed*
- E) Selection criteria for the advertising provider that was followed*
- F) The document that was provided to councilors to make a decision on this outsourcing scheme*
- G) Objections raised by the councilors against the outsourcing scheme*
- H) Objections raised by the public against the outsourcing scheme*

*Additionally around:*

*> Go Media's support for the community helped it win the contract, Gain added.*

*Please provide the I) Benchmark document on Go Media how they won the contract.*

*Quoting:*

*"What appeals to us is how Go Media contributes to sports, arts, and charities; they understand what it means to be part of the community. Together, we will also use our media assets to inspire, promote, and build awareness of what makes the Wellington region a great place to live."*

*I would like to understand the process you undertook to analyze & decide on that."*

## **Greater Wellington’s response follows:**

Your request has been assessed under the Local Government Official Information and Meetings Act 1987 (the Act).

### **Context**

Metlink’s approach to advertising is guided by the Metlink Advertising Policy, which was last reviewed and amended by the Transport Committee on 30 November 2023. The policy sets out the principles, criteria, and exclusions that govern all advertising on Metlink-controlled assets, including buses, trains, and digital kiosks. The review was prompted by the re-tendering of the Metlink media contract and by a Council request to ensure the policy did not unduly constrain opportunities for non-fare revenue growth. As noted in the policy report (found on our Greater Wellington website here- see report 23.567 in the order paper: <https://www.gw.govt.nz/your-region/events-and-meetings/transport-committee-29/>), advertising revenue has grown from \$818,000 in 2020/21 to \$2 million in 2023/24, reflecting the effectiveness of the policy framework in supporting responsible commercial activity.

The policy also recognises the broader social and community outcomes delivered through Metlink’s media partner. For example, the “Good Impressions” programme enables advertisers to donate advertising impressions to community organisations, including environmental and kaupapa Māori groups. The policy report notes that these initiatives “give advertisers the opportunity to build up free advertising slots... for one of their ‘Good Impressions Partner Organisations’,” supporting wellbeing, environmental, and social outcomes across the region.

The amended policy also clarifies the treatment of specific advertising categories, including occasional food and beverage products and products considered harmful to the environment. These changes ensure alignment with Advertising Standards Authority requirements and Metlink’s brand values, while enabling modest revenue growth—estimated at \$20,000 per annum initially, increasing to \$70,000 per annum over the 7-year contract term.

Overall, the Advertising Policy provides the framework within which Metlink’s advertising contract operates, ensuring that commercial arrangements such as the contract with Go Media are consistent with Council values, regulatory requirements, and the objective of supporting the affordability of public transport.

### **A. Current contract with Go Media**

Please refer to **attachment 1** which contains a copy of the executed agreement with Go Media.

You will note that we have elected to withhold certain information in the contract in accordance with the Section 7 of the Act on the following grounds:

- 7(2)(a) in order to protect the privacy of natural persons, including that of deceased natural persons.
- 7(2)(b)(ii) in that the release of the information would be likely unreasonably to prejudice the commercial position of the person who supplied or who is the subject of the information.

We have withheld commercial information that we believe would unreasonably prejudice the commercial position of Go Media. This is because the contract contains commercially sensitive information relating to Go Media and its business operations.

When we withhold information under these sections, we are required to consider the public interest in this information. We have considered this and do not believe that the interest in the information outweighs our decision to withhold the information.

Where redactions are made on the document, the grounds for the redaction is included on the attachment.

## **B. KPIs with Go Media**

KPIs are contained within the executed agreement with Go Media (**attachment 1**).

These are sitting at the Appendix from pages 68-70. For the revenue figures related to KPIs, these are mentioned in the Schedule 1 business plan and budget, however, are redacted as noted above.

## **C. Performance report from last FY**

The reports contain commercially sensitive information supplied by, or relating to, Go Media and its business operations. This includes information such as client-related material, industry data, competitor-related information, and other material concerning Go Media's commercial position. We are therefore also withholding this information under Section 7(2)(b)(ii) of the Act. Again, we have considered the public interest in the release of this information, and we do not believe the public interest outweighs our decision to withhold.

**D. Public consultation process that was followed**

No public consultation process was undertaken in relation to the procurement of this contract. The appointment of an advertising services provider was an operational procurement process, rather than a matter that required public consultation.

**E. Selection criteria for the advertising provider that was followed**

The Request for Proposal (RFP) was openly advertised on the New Zealand Government Electronic Tenders Service (GETS). Refer to **attachment 2** for a copy of the GETS tender notice which includes the evaluation criteria.

**F. The document that was provided to councillors to make a decision on this outsourcing scheme**

This matter did not go to Council for their decision. Refer to **attachment 3** which contains a memo that was provided to the Chief Executive for approval.

**G. Objections raised by councillors against the outsourcing scheme**

This matter did not go to Council for their decision. No objections were raised by councillors that we are aware of.

**H. Objections raised by the public against the outsourcing scheme**

No public consultation was undertaken on the matter. We are not aware of any objections raised by the public. Therefore, this part of your request is refused under section 17(e) of the Act in that the document alleged to contain the information requested does not exist or, despite reasonable efforts to locate it, cannot be found. When refusing under this section we are required to consider consulting the requester. We have considered this and do not believe that consulting with you would change our response to this part of your request.

**I. “Benchmark document” on how Go Media won the contract**

The evaluation of proposals formed part of the procurement process, and the relevant procurement and evaluation material we hold is attached (**attachment 2** as noted above).

If you have any concerns with the decision(s) referred to in this letter, you have the right to request an investigation and review by the Ombudsman under section 27(3) of the Act.

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

Nāku iti noa, nā

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'Samantha Gain', with a small dash at the end.

**Samantha Gain**

Kaiwhakahaere Matua Waka-ā-atea | Group Manager Metlink