

17 February 2016

Mr Gavin Millar

By email: fyi-request-3567-a1621275@requests.fyi.org.nz

Dear Mr Millar

Local Government Official Information and Meetings Act 1987: Request for information

I refer to your email dated 21/01/2016 requesting information on Results and Costs of Surveys conducted on Bus Usage. Specifically, you have asked:

1. In the years since 2014 can you please provide any available breakdowns of costs incurred during the collection of information or surveying regarding the use of bus routes. I am particularly interested in seeing money spent contracting third parties to conduct this research but any breakdowns of internal resources would be greatly appreciated.
2. In the years since 2014 please provide the results of all research conducted by Environment Canterbury or 3rd parties on your behalf into bus usage, patterns and behaviour. I am interested both in any summary information or reports that have been created but also any collated data that Environment Canterbury holds.
3. In the years since 2014 what information on individuals has been provided to 3rd party companies regarding Metrocard holders or their usage?

Your request has been referred to me to reply.

Results of all research conducted by Environment Canterbury, or 3rd parties on your behalf, into bus usage, patterns and behaviour and their costs.

Environment Canterbury currently conducts at least two annual surveys.

Metro Users Survey (*Total yearly cost \$41,187.70*)

This is done every year to help understand the level of satisfaction with the network, who is using the network and how users view the services provided. The survey shows the satisfaction with each provider but not in enough detail for it to be considered commercially sensitive. This report is provided to the operators each year and most of the questions within the survey are an NZTA requirement and must be reported to them every year.

Mystery Shopper (Total yearly cost \$89,930.04)

This is carried out each month and the results are used for the balanced score card. The balanced score card is an incentive/payment system established to ensure, through partnership with the Service Provider, the Council receives excellent service delivery on its public transport contracts.

Community Satisfaction with the Passenger Transport System (Total yearly cost \$13,052.50)

Since 2003 external research company Opinions have provided a report to determine the extent to which community needs are being met by the passenger transport system.

Information on individuals provided to 3rd party companies regarding Metrocard holders or their usage

In terms of providing third parties with Metro card users individual and personal details, since 2014 we have only provided Research First with details of former metro card users. Principles 10 and 11 of the Privacy Act 1993 make provision for the use and disclosure of personal details for research purposes. The survey was conducted to determine why those particular users had stopped using the bus and to inform potential service changes that might make the service, for those customers, a future transport option.

We also provide information to the police to assist with investigations.

Information is also, on occasion, provided to parents regarding their child's trip history.

With regard to your request to identify internal costs associated with the collection of these reports we are unable to provide this level of detail in any accurate way. This is due to the structure of our internal cost codes and the range of people involved, in the analysis, review, and formalisation of these reports.

Withholding

In your request you have sought a copy of all research undertaken since 2014. In late 2015 we undertook a survey of lapsed Metrocard holders, as noted above, to ascertain why they had stopped using the service. This company, as you are aware, was Research First.

At this stage the results of this survey is being withheld pursuant to section 7 (2) (c) of the Local Government Official Information and Meetings Act 1987. This is due to the draft state the research is currently in. The report is still being reviewed to ensure it is accurate and complete. As this information is also still subject to an obligation of confidence, it must be assessed to determine whether disclosure of the information would be likely to otherwise damage the public interest and if so, whether there are public interest considerations in releasing it.

We have considered that it would be likely to damage the public interest if it was released and it transpired to be inaccurate or incomplete. However, once the review

has been completed we will be releasing this through a future Council meeting to the public. At this stage, this research has cost \$18,075 plus GST.

Should you require any further information or clarification, please do not hesitate to contact Sharon Clough in the first instance sharon.clough@ecan.govt.nz or 03365 3828.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'DR', is positioned above the printed name.

Don Rule
Chief Operating Officer