



Prime Minister

Minister for Arts, Culture & Heritage

Minister for Child Poverty Reduction

Minister for National Security & Intelligence

06 AUG 2019

Hamish Price
fyi-request-10475-65052139@requests.fyi.org.nz

Ref: PMO 134-2019

Dear Hamish Price

Official Information Act request for all correspondence between the Prime Minister or her Office and Justin Lester

Thank you for your Official Information Act 1982 (the Act) request, received on 6 June 2019. You requested:

"...I request all text messages, emails, and other written correspondence between you and Justin Lester, and your office and Justin Lester, sent or received between your swearing in as minister and today..."

I extended the timeframe on your request under section 15(1) of the Act, as your request required a search through a large amount of information, and also because consultations were needed before making a decision.

Information being released

Please find enclosed the following documents:

Item	Date	Document Description
1.	27 November 2017	Email – Correspondence from Mayor Justin Lester to Right Honourable Jacinda Ardern
2.	30 November 2017	Email – FW: NZ Festival: Te Puni Kōkiri application
3.	28 June 2018	Congratulations card and reply
4.	6 November 2018	Screen shot of text message
5.	1 May 2019	Email - MIN for noting - United Nations Educational Scientific and Cultural Organisation (UNESCO) City of Film

I have decided to release the documents listed above, subject to information being withheld under section 9(2)(a) of the Act, to protect the privacy of individuals.

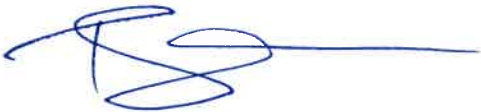
During the period of time covered by your request, there have been substantial staffing changes within the offices supporting Rt Hon Jacinda Ardern, both as Prime Minister and as the Minister for Arts, Culture and Heritage. Any information within the scope of your request that may have been communications with former staff members are no longer held by this

office because it is not the type of information that is required to be retained under the Public Records Act 2005.

In making my decision, I have considered the public interest considerations in section 9(1) of the Act.

You have the right to ask the Ombudsman to investigate and review my decision under section 28(3) of the Act.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in blue ink, consisting of several loops and a long horizontal stroke extending to the right.

Raj Nahna
Chief of Staff

Not relevant to your request

From: s9(2)(a) On Behalf Of Justin Lester
Sent: Monday, 27 November 2017 2:26 PM
To: Rt. Hon Jacinda Ardern <Jacinda.Ardern@parliament.govt.nz>
Cc: Hon Grant Robertson <Grant.Robertson@parliament.govt.nz>; Hon Kelvin Davis <Kelvin.Davis@parliament.govt.nz>; Hon Phil Twyford <Philip.Twyford@parliament.govt.nz>; Hon Nanaia Mahuta <Nanaia.Mahuta@parliament.govt.nz>; Hon Jenny Salesa <Jenny.Salesa@parliament.govt.nz>; Paul Eagle <Paul.Eagle@parliament.govt.nz>; Greg O'Connor <greg.oconnor@parliament.govt.nz>; s9(2)(a)
Subject: Correspondence from Mayor Justin Lester to Right Honourable Jacinda Ardern

Dear Prime Minister

On behalf of Mayor Justin Lester, please find attached correspondence.

Warm regards
s9(2)(a)

Ngā mihi maioha,

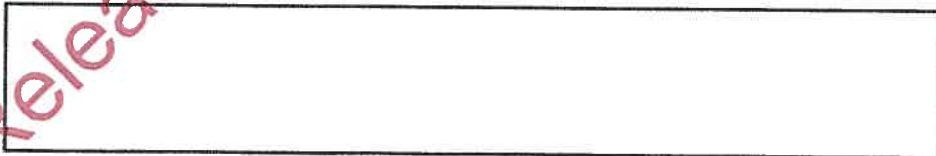
s9(2)(a)

Correspondence and Social Media Coordinator | Office of the Mayor | Wellington City Council

s9(2)(a)

| [W Wellington.govt.nz](http://Wellington.govt.nz) |  | 

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27 November 2017

Absolutely Positively
Wellington City Council
Me Heke Ki Pōneke

Right Honourable Jacinda Ardern
Prime Minister
Executive Wing
Parliament Buildings
Private Bag
WELLINGTON 6011

Dear Prime Minister

BRIEFING TO THE GOVERNMENT

On behalf of Wellington City Council and the people of Wellington, congratulations on your success in the recent election.

I am proud to present our briefing to the government. This briefing not only provides you with a high level summary of our work to build the world's most liveable city, but sets out our aspirations for a loveable city.

Wellington, like much of New Zealand, is bursting with opportunities but, again like the rest of the country, also faces challenges. In presenting this briefing, our intention is to share some of the exciting opportunities with you. This council has been elected to deliver against an ambitious programme that secures the recent growth we've experienced, creates an economy that works for everyone and pre-empts the challenges growth has been seen to create elsewhere. We are working hard to achieve this on behalf of Wellingtonians – and all New Zealanders.

Our three top priorities are housing, transport and the proposed movie museum, and we have developed programmes that are ready to go. We want to partner with you to make the Wellington region a success for central New Zealand.

Wellington City Council has a plan to become New Zealand's most 'can-do' local authority. This briefing shows that we are already making good on this, and that there is much more we can achieve working together. With a change in government comes an opportunity for us to work with you to create a platform that cements Wellington as a liveable and loveable city. I will work with you to help solve the problems Wellington - and New Zealand - faces.

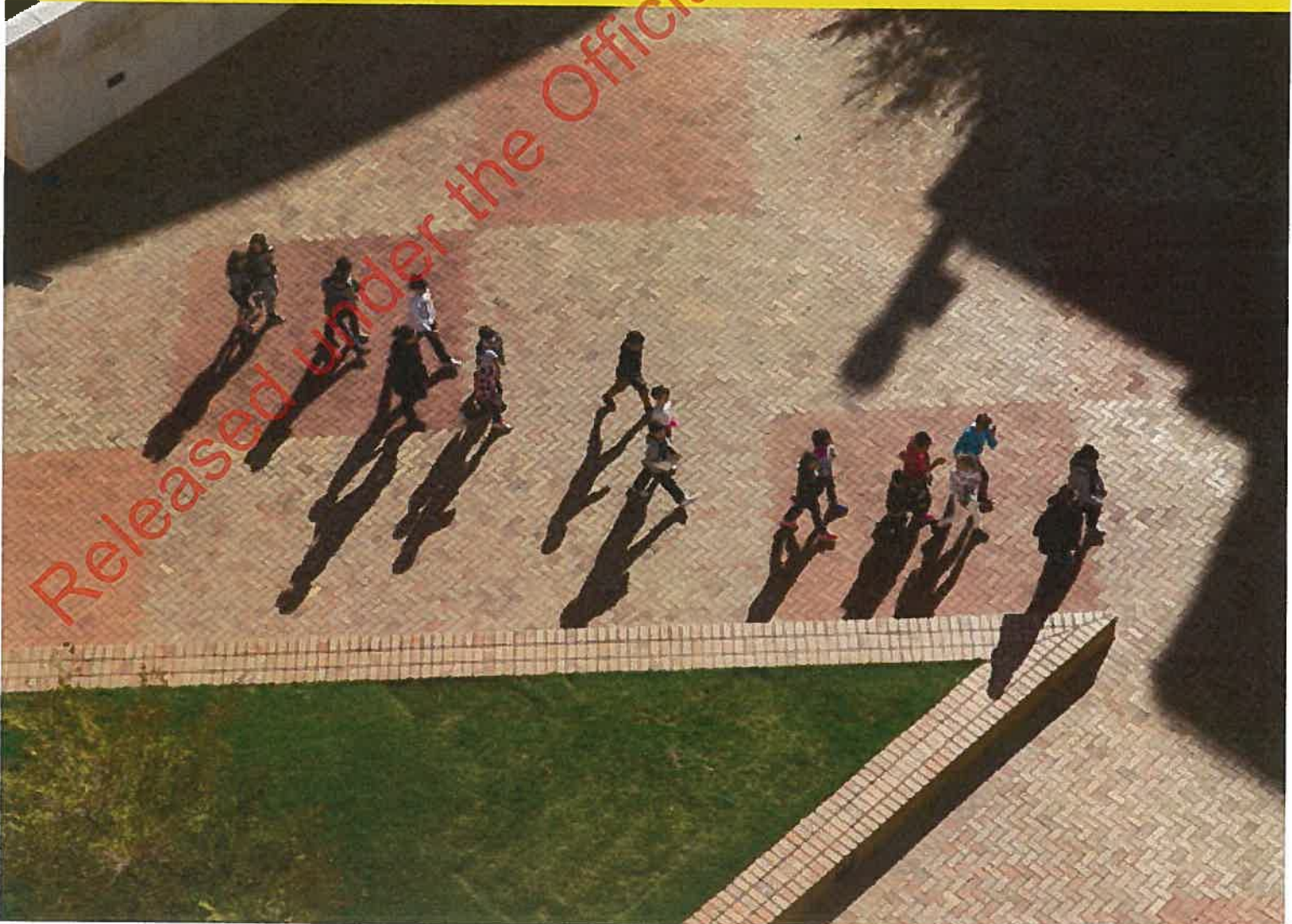
In the past I have had four meetings a year with the Prime Minister and I am hopeful we can continue this policy. If it suits, could your office email my Senior EA, s9(2)(a) at s9(2)(a) to set up a schedule of meetings.

Yours sincerely



Justin Lester
Mayor of Wellington

Briefing for Government



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Welcome to Wellington

Our people

Wellington is great for people:

- High quality of life - Consistently, residents view the city as having good or very good quality of life, and this is reflected when it is regularly placed among the world's top 20 cities for liveability.
- Sustainable - we are a compact city and more people here walk, bike or take public transport to work than any other city in NZ. We have the lowest greenhouse gas emissions per person in Australasia.
- Educated - we have more people with a tertiary qualification (38%) than any other city in NZ.
- Low unemployment - our unemployment level is 4.6%, when compared to the NZ average of 4.9%.
- High incomes - we have the highest average income of any city in NZ - \$72,600 vs the NZ average of \$57,780.
- Diverse and open - Wellingtonians are open, welcoming and value diversity. 74% of us agree that cultural diversity makes Wellington a better place - this is higher than other New Zealand cities surveyed.

Our organisation

As of 2017/2018, Wellington City Council:

- Delivers a wide range of more than 400 services to more than 200,000 residents at a cost of \$6.08 per resident per day.
- Employs more than 1760 people, and our CCOs employ over 300 more.
- Invests \$480m in operating costs.
- Invests \$182.5m in capital expenditure.
- Has raised the minimum wage paid to our staff and the staff of our wholly-owned Council Controlled Organisations to the official New Zealand Living Wage, we are also working towards living wage accreditation in this term of Council.

We deliver

In 2013, our city was described as “a city that is failing” and that the government “don’t know how to fix it”. We met that challenge head on.

Our ambitious plan was a bold call to action. We are delivering on a ten year plan that sets aside \$800m for the fair and equitable growth of our city through transformative investments. Amongst other things, we have already:

- Created one of the best tech hubs in New Zealand that is encouraging our strong start up economy and has already become a beacon for innovation and creative tech endeavours.
- Agreed funding for the development of a new convention centre and construction of a purpose built movie museum to create jobs and enhance Wellington’s place as Creative Capital.
- Started to implement better land transport options, including cycleways and we have consulted our residents on options to resolve current and future congestion issues.

And there’s more to come, including:

- The development of proposals to build a new indoor arena in Wellington to put us on the map as a concert and performance destination.
- Proposals to support the extension of Wellington’s airport runway to connect Wellington, more directly with Asia and to the world.
- Proposals for a Miramar Framework to support the growth and development of Miramar as the home of New Zealand’s screen sector.
- Implementation of a one-stop-shop consenting approach, other ways to more effectively respond to development opportunities in our community.

It’s working. The confidence of the city is palpable and the economy is now growing, but this growth remains fragile and we continue to be focused on delivering for the success of our city.

We are focused

Wellington is in a different position to where we were three years ago. As we look to developing our new ten year budget we are considering two questions:

1. **How can we build on our current ten year budget to secure recent growth, and ensure it is growth that benefits all our residents?**
2. **What can we do now to get ahead of the challenges this growth will bring, challenges that are playing out in Auckland, for example?**

This Council will meet those challenges because it’s good for the people of Wellington, and New Zealand. We have agreed a bolder plan of action that will meet these challenges head on and deliver our aspirations for the city.

Our Priorities

Housing

Every Wellingtonian will have access to a warm, dry, safe place to live.

What are we doing?

It's clear that housing is the biggest challenge facing Wellington. We estimate current undersupply of around 3,900 homes, and this is impacting housing affordability. With strong population growth forecast, without intervention, this will only get worse.

We must try to find and test new, innovative, affordable, and accessible solutions for our city. As a result, next year the Council will be asked to agree to a ten year plan that focuses on addressing housing challenges.

A Mayor's Housing Taskforce was established in October 2016. The purpose was to use the expert knowledge of the building industry, social services, public health sector, central government, and the property industry to address issues from across the whole housing continuum.

We have already agreed to implement a \$5000 rates rebate for first-home-builders to ease the cost burden of building new stock. We are looking at a Wellington Standard to lift the quality of the city's housing and we have already implemented the Wellington Rental Warrant of Fitness.

Our immediate focus remains implementing the Strategic Housing Investment Plan, including building 750 new social and affordable homes in Wellington City. Part of our long-term solution will be to investigate a regional approach to housing, as well as work towards a new partnership agreement with government.

We are also keen to work with the new Housing Commission, and we're a city keen and open to trying new approaches which may include piloting accelerated construction of affordable homes.

Transport

We will make decisions and investments to get Wellington moving.

What are we doing?

Our residents face increasing traffic congestion and unreliable journey times, poor and declining levels of service across transport modes, safety concerns especially for cycling and walking and they have to use a system that is vulnerable to disruption from unplanned events.

We need a solution for everyone, for today and for tomorrow. A successful city will see more people travelling into, out of, and through central Wellington.

Wellington's unique geography, compact city, and small number of transport corridors means transport challenges are complex to solve and trade-offs will be required. However, with the right mix of improvements, we can have a transport system that:

- Enhances the liveability of the central city.
- Provides more affordable, efficient and reliable access for users.
- Reduces reliance on private vehicle travel.
- Improves safety for all users.
- Is adaptable to disruptions and future uncertainty.

We will continue to support work to develop solutions that meets these challenges. As such, we will continue to engage with the Let's Get Wellington Moving project as a means to achieving city solutions that benefit our region.

Our Priorities

Resilience

Wellington and Wellingtonians will be resilient in the face of shocks and stresses.

What are we doing?

Our resilience challenges originate from three big drivers.

Our people

Wellington's population is growing. It is getting older, more diverse and less equitable. Some of our homes, instead of being a source of resilience, are cold, wet and unaffordable. New people are arriving - some will struggle to develop skills and find jobs.

Some of our citizens are disconnected from society, living on the streets at the mercy of their mental health issues or substance addictions. Communities and the public and private sectors must share information, trust one another, and work together more effectively to develop a better resilience culture.

Our land

A significant seismic event is inevitable. Current efforts are focussed on saving lives but our buildings will be damaged and it will take time before we can use them again. Energy, transport, water and telecommunications infrastructure that serves our communities, our Government and our business sectors is centralised and vulnerable.

Central Wellington generates eight percent of national GDP and 48 percent of regional GDP. If the robustness and integration of knowledge, planning and governance in Wellington isn't improved, the consequences could be socially and economically significant.

Our seas

Extreme weather is already affecting our coastline and low-lying parts of the city, damaging seawalls and flooding homes. More intense rain and wind will cause more flooding in our streets, land slips on our hills, damage natural and built assets, and increase maintenance costs. We are yet to understand climate change's physical, financial, cultural and social implications, and how we should adapt.

We have many strengths - including a stunning natural environment and insights from Māori culture on integrating human activities with nature - but we must collaborate within Wellington, New Zealand and even globally to find long-term solutions.

In 2015, Wellington became a partner to the Rockefeller 100 Resilient Cities along with other Australasian cities Melbourne and Christchurch. Our membership of this collection of cities from around the world is helping to inform the development of our thinking while contributing to a global community of resilience practice.

Work is underway as part of the City Reinforced Masonry Buildings project to secure at risk buildings throughout our city. We will prioritise the roll out of accelerometers to key buildings throughout the city to help us respond more quickly and with much greater certainty through more data about the performance of our buildings.

Growth

Our economy will deliver better jobs and more income for our people.

What are we doing?

Our economy is currently performing well, but this recent success is still fragile. Our GDP growth over the last two years has averaged 1.9%, below the New Zealand average of 2.5%.

Though Wellington offers outstanding quality of life, its economy has considerable untapped potential. A stronger economy means jobs, prosperity and more opportunities for all Wellington's residents.

While our affluence as a city continues to strengthen on the back of our significant programme of investment it needs to be fair and not everyone is sharing in the benefits. Homelessness and street begging has seen a sharp increase in recent years.

Our new ten year budget will build on the success of the platform we've built and address the challenges our people face:

- Making all residents more prosperous, so they can reach their potential and live enjoyable and fulfilling lives.
 - Providing a wider range of opportunities so residents have a choice of jobs and opportunities.
 - Attracting new skilled migrants to live, work and establish businesses in the city.
 - Providing more entertainment and leisure opportunities and a wider range of attractions.
 - Releasing capital to invest in a higher quality of life for all, a stronger environment and increasing the city's capital value.
- We are committed to playing our part not only as an organisation with the tools to drive growth but as a significant employer. We have progressively increased rates of pay for our lowest paid staff to now match the living wage and we have done this for both our directly employed staff and those employed by our wholly-owned Council Controlled Organisations and we will continue to advocate for other employers to do the same.

Our Priorities

Culture

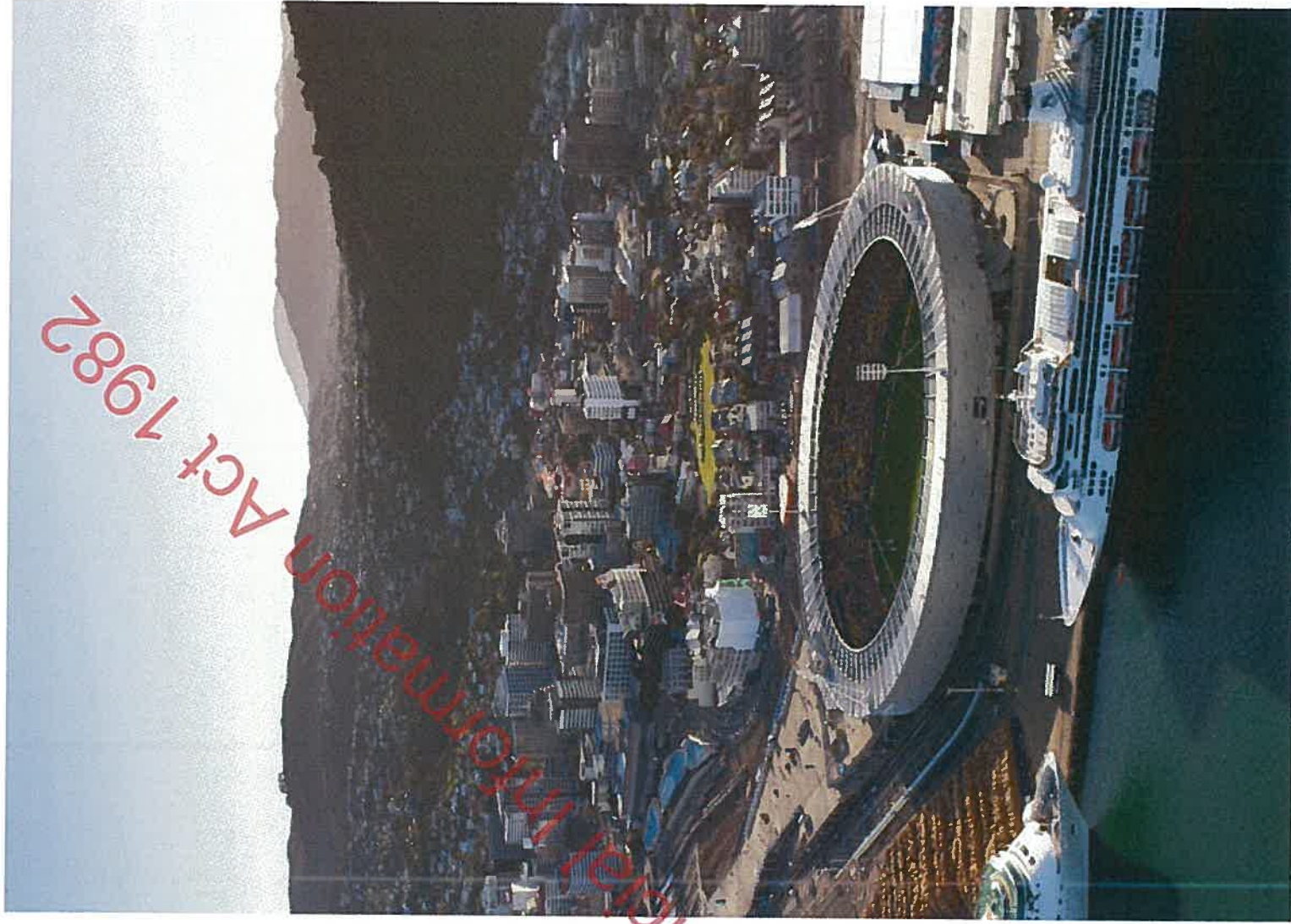
We will implement a plan that will cement Wellington's position as New Zealand's Capital of Culture and help us compete and become a cultural destination for the world.

What are we doing?

Wellington faces increased competition to our reputation as a cultural capital. We are about to embark on a decade of culture that will emphasise and enhance the city's unique creative strengths. This coordinated programme will be built around our existing and new opportunities, and will help the city compete on a global scale.

This programme of infrastructure, art, events, theatre, urban design and festivals that will ensure all residents can experience the city's cultural offering. We are already developing a large-scale annual cultural celebration of Matariki.

A flagship proposal is the construction of the unique Movie Museum and Convention Centre, highlighting and supporting our creative sectors. This is part of a wider programme of investment into our events and culture infrastructure that will amount to over \$500m in the coming ten years.



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Working together

- We want to engage with you.
- We want to share our vision with you.
- We want to work with you to help solve New Zealand's problems.

Through this document we have raised some areas where we would like to have a further conversation, so we can help you to do more.

We are not asking for new funding, but for some flexibilities and freedoms to deliver more for the people of Wellington and to help New Zealand.

We would like to create a framework to structure this conversation and to help take a holistic approach.

Working together we can create an even better, more liveable, loveable and more remarkable city, that benefits the people of Wellington and New Zealand.

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From: s9(2)(a)
To: s9(2)(a)
Subject: FW: NZ Festival: Te Puni Kokiri application
Date: Thursday, 30 November 2017 8:51:30 AM
Attachments: [image001.jpg](#)

From: Justin Lester [mailto:mayor@wcc.govt.nz]
Sent: Thursday, 30 November 2017 8:46 AM
To: Hon Nanaia Mahuta
Cc: Rt. Hon Jacinda Ardern; Hon Grant Robertson
Subject: NZ Festival: Te Puni Kokiri application

Morena Nanaia

Thank you for taking the time to meet with me a few weeks ago on Local Government issues in Wellington.

Separately, I wanted to write to you as the Minister for Maori Development with responsibility for Te Puni Kokiri.

I'm a Board Member on the NZ Festival: <https://www.festival.co.nz/>

The Festival, New Zealand's premiere Arts Festival is taking place from 23 February – 18 March 2018.

The signature event in this year's festival is *A Waka Odyssey*:
<https://www.festival.co.nz/2018/events/a-waka-odyssey/>

The Waka Odyssey event is about New Zealand awakening its voyaging past, our place in the Pacific today and a way to a better future.

The Festival has applied for \$250,000 to Te Puni Kokiri for funding support to allow the event to proceed. I wouldn't usually write to follow up about the application, but the Festival Directors have become very nervous. Could you please advise if there any issues with the application.

Wellington City Council is the major sponsor of the Festival and is contributing \$400,000 this year to Waka Odyssey and approximately \$1.7m to the Festival programme.

I've cc'd PM Jacinda Ardern as the Minister for Arts Culture and Heritage and Assoc. Minister Grant Robertson.

Thank you for your time.

Nga mihi

Justin

J002110-mayors-email-signature

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s9(2)(a)



Dear Jacinda & Clarke,

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a dream is on the way...

the very sweetest of all

*

*

congratulations

*

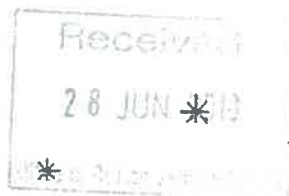
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*

Wishing you the very best on Neve's arrival,

Justin, Liz,

s9(2)(a)



Released under the Official Information Act 1982

C/o Justin Lester
101 Wakefield St
Wellington



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fA142456

28 June 2018

Justin, Liz, s9(2)(a) Lester
c/- Mayor Justin Lester
101 Wakefield Street
WELLINGTON

Dear Justin, Liz, s9(2)(a) Lester

Thank you so much for your card congratulating Jacinda and Clarke on the birth of their baby daughter, Neve.

I will pass it to the Prime Minister and I know she will appreciate your very kind thoughts.

Best wishes

s9(2)(a)
Correspondence Manager

Released under the Official Information Act 1982

fA142456

28 June 2018

Justin, Liz, s9(2)(a) Lester
c/- Mayor Justin Lester
101 Wakefield Street
WELLINGTON

Dear Justin, Liz, s9(2)(a) Lester

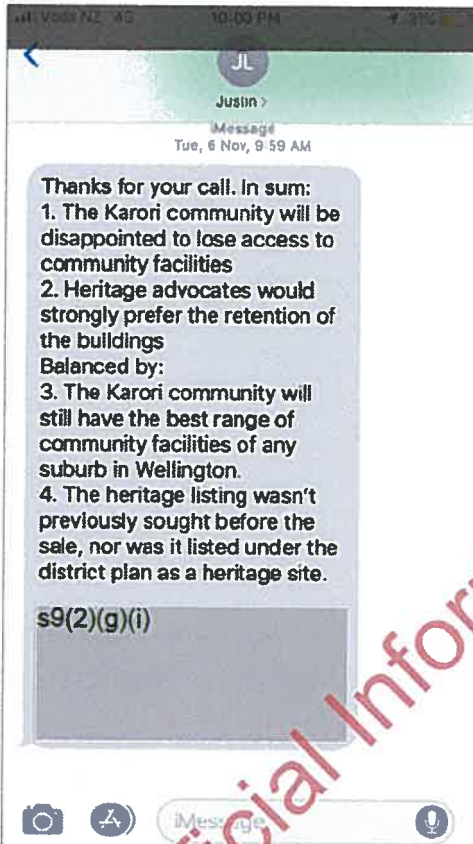
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I will pass it to the Prime Minister and I know she will appreciate your very kind thoughts.

Best wishes

s9(2)(a)
Correspondence Manager

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From: s9(2)(a)
To: [Ministerial and OIA Enquiries](#)
Cc: s9(2)(a)
Subject: MIN for noting - United Nations Educational Scientific and Cultural Organisation (UNESCO) City of Film
Attachments: [image001.jpg](#)
[image002.jpg](#)
[24042019160230-0001.pdf](#)

Hi there,

MIN for noting please. This may generate action in the future, but we are awaiting an update from Mayor Lester.

Cheers

s9(2)(a)

s9(2)(a)

| Private Secretary - Arts, Culture and Heritage

Office of Rt Hon Jacinda Ardern | Minister for Arts, Culture and Heritage

s9(2)(a)

From: s9(2)(a)

Sent: Wednesday, 1 May 2019 11:54 AM

To: 'mayor@wcc.govt.nz' <mayor@wcc.govt.nz>

Subject: RE: United Nations Educational Scientific and Cultural Organisation (UNESCO) City of Film

Kia ora Mayor Lester,

On behalf of Rt Hon Jacinda Ardern, Minister for Arts, Culture and Heritage, thank you for your letter of 24 April regarding Wellington's application to become an UNESCO City of Film.

Your letter will be provided to the Minister for her information.

We look forward to receiving an update in due course.

Kind regards

s9(2)(a)

s9(2)(a)

| Private Secretary - Arts, Culture and Heritage

Office of Rt Hon Jacinda Ardern | Minister for Arts, Culture and Heritage

s9(2)(a)

From: Justin Lester [<mailto:mayor@wcc.govt.nz>]

Sent: Tuesday, 30 April 2019 1:20 PM

To: Rt. Hon Jacinda Ardern <Jacinda.Ardern@parliament.govt.nz>

Subject: United Nations Educational Scientific and Cultural Organisation (UNESCO) City of Film

Kia ora Prime Minister

Please see the attached for your information.

Nga mihi
Justin

Justin Lester

Mayor of Wellington | Wellington City Council

E mayor@wcc.govt.nz | W wellington.govt.nz |  

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24 April 2019

Rt Hon Jacinda Ardern
Minister for Arts, Culture and Heritage
Prime Minister
Parliament Buildings
jacinda.ardern@parliament.govt.nz

Dear Prime Minister

United Nations Educational Scientific and Cultural Organisation (UNESCO) City of Film

I am writing to inform you of an initiative which is well under way for Wellington: our Council is working with our screen industry and cultural sector partners across the wider Wellington region to submit an application to become a United Nations Educational Scientific and Cultural Organisation (UNESCO) City of Film. If successful, Wellington will join Dunedin, as New Zealand's City of Literature, and Auckland, as our City of Music, to become one of over 180 cities world-wide that are members of UNESCO's Creative Cities Network.

Wellington is a city of film-makers and film-lovers. Many film producers, directors and crew have made our city their home while developing and using their skills across New Zealand and offshore. In 1941, the National Film Unit was established in Wellington and soon after, the Pacific Film Unit kickstarted an independent feature film industry. In 1975, Avalon became a prime studio facility for New Zealand produced television and film.

Wellington continued to nurture the sector through the renaissance of NZ feature films in the 1970s and 1980s, the international acclaim of the 1990s and more recently in riding a 'digital wave' as commercials, domestic and international films have been attracted to the city, along with associated businesses providing technical support, digital expertise, goods and services, and tourism.

Our screen and digital sector is now crucial to our regional economy, generating just on \$705M pa and 2,500 jobs in 2017. Specifically, Wellington is New Zealand's top earner for post-production (\$449M in 2017).

Victoria University, Massey University's College of Creative Arts and Te Auaha continue to grow their partnerships in the city, and with the industry in Miramar, providing study and practice in the creative and technical domains so critical to the new careers in screen, media, gaming and technical research. Capital E is also partnering with schools and the industry to deliver curriculum-linked screen, audio and digital experiences that 'ignite and fuel the creative spark' to support children and young people become 'confident, capable, creative citizens' of the future.

Further north, Māoriland in Otaki is providing an impetus to Māori film-making, fostering rangatahi creative skills, host of an annual week-long Festival of Māori, Pacific and international film and new media and linking with indigenous film-makers world-wide.

Our city also hosts screen organisations with a national reach: the New Zealand Film Commission, Ngā Taonga Sound and Vision and the NZ International Film Festivals Trust. We partner with the diplomatic community to present country specific film festivals both in Wellington and nationwide. We work with the cultural sector to add a screen dimension to many arts events, festivals and other occasions.

Achieving UNESCO City of Film status will acknowledge and celebrate the integral part that screen plays both in our economy and the pulse of our city's creative heart, but we have much to learn and much to share. Becoming a City of Film will provide an impetus to step up our efforts, to build on our strong vibrant screen platform within the city and, through the Creative Cities Network, to extend our engagement internationally, particularly in the Asia-Pacific region.

Late last year we consulted the UNESCO National Commission in New Zealand about the viability of our proposal and received a positive and helpful response. Applications are now open with a due date of 30 June.

As part of that process we have been asked to present a near final draft to the National Commission for consideration at its 8 May meeting. Our submission will include letters of endorsement from partners and stakeholders. Should our submission receive endorsement by the UNESCO National Commission in NZ, we would like to request a supporting letter from your office to accompany our application.

We are currently talking with the National Commission about the protocols that would need to be managed for that to occur. I will keep you informed of the outcome of that discussion.

Yours sincerely



Justin Lester
Mayor of Wellington

cc: Hon Grant Robertson, Associate Minister for Arts, Culture and Heritage
Hon Carmel Sepuloni, Associate Minister for Arts, Culture and Heritage
Hon Jenny Salesa, Associate Minister of Education