

11 September 2026

Dear [REDACTED],

Local Government Official Information Request

Thank you for your request for information from Council. All requests to the Council for information are required to be considered in accordance with the Local Government Official Information and Meetings Act 1987 (LGOIMA). More information about how the Council handles LGOIMA requests can be found in the Council's LGOIMA Request Policy which is available on the Council's website [LGOIMA Request Policy: Rangitikei District Council](#)

Your request for information was received on 18 August 2026 and requested information about Cost associated with the Headstart local government initiative. Your questions and our response can be found below:

I am interested in costs from 5 May 2026 until the date that your response was provided to the Government.

Question 1:

What was the total cost to the Council for all activities and work undertaken to develop and finalise its response to the Government's Head Start local government initiative? For clarification purposes, this request is for the total cost or the best estimate of the total cost to Council of the Head Start initiative. Point 2-5 below are for components of this total.

Response:

The cost provided is a rough estimate of the cost of staff time and consultancy costs for the Head Start.

Total cost (staff time and consultant costs): \$104,700.74 excluding GST.

Note: this cost estimate does not account for the time elected members (including the Mayor) spent on the initiative.

Question 2:

What consultants and contractors were engaged to advise or provided information or analysis for the Council's response to Head Start and what was the cost of each provider's services? What were the titles of any reports provided by these consultants or contractors?

Response:

Morrison Low Advisory was contracted to provide advice to Council's response. This included Rangitikei specific work, as well as share of regional work that was completed.

Links to these reports are provided below

[Head Start Options Rangitikei District Council July 2026](#)

Horizons Unitary Council report available at the bottom of this page - [Simplifying Local Government | Horizons Regional Council](#)

Making this place home.

External consultant costs: \$55,700.74 excluding GST.

Horizons Regional Council also provided district information packages. These were provided to Rangitikei District Council at no cost.

[Simplifying Local Government | Horizons Regional Council](#)

Question 3:

What was the total cost to the Council for informing or consulting with local communities and how much was spent on surveys, advertising, information publications (flyers, pamphlets, etc.), public meetings, websites and other such activities.

Response:

Most of the costs for our community engagement was staff time. Council is unable to easily estimate the cost of staff time associated specifically for the engagement we undertook with our community however this time was included in our response to Question 1.

Printing and advertising costs (in house printing and newspaper advertising): Estimated at \$820.

Question 4:

What was the total cost of any extraordinary or special council meetings or workshops held regarding Head Start or the Council's response to it?

Response:

Council did not hold any extraordinary Council meetings on the Head Start initiative. The decision to not put in a Head Start proposal was made at the 30 July 2026 Council meeting which also considered other agenda items.

The following Council workshops included an item about Head Start:

- 23 July 2026
- 1 July 2026
- 25 June 2026
- 11 June 2026
- 21 May 2026

Workshop agendas and notes are available online - [Meetings - Council Workshop](#)

Council is unable to accurately estimate the cost of staff attendance at the parts of these workshops that focused on the Head Start process.

Question 5:

What other costs were incurred by the Council under this initiative and what was the value of those costs?

Response:

There were no other costs incurred by Council.

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

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 at [RDC Official Information - Proactive Release](#) with your personal information removed.

If you wish to discuss this decision with us, please feel free to email lgoima@rangitikei.govt.nz.

Yours sincerely,

LGOIMA Officer
Rangitikei District Council