

30 September 2020

Official Information Request 8140007149
(Please quote this in any correspondence)

S7(2)(a) Privacy

Dear S7(2)(a)

Local Government Official Information and Meetings Act 1987

Re: Late-Payment Fees - Rates

I refer to your email, which we received on 3 August 2020, and clarified on 10 August 2020, requesting information about late-payment fees (regarding rates). We wrote to you on 3 September to extend our time frame for response and I apologise for the delay.

The specific details of your request and our response is below.

1. The total number of households who were late on a scheduled rates payment, and accordingly had/have to pay a late-payment fee, between 1 March 2020 and 1 August 2020 (inclusive).

We reach out to ratepayers early to help find solutions for their rates payments and have a number of measures in place to help Aucklanders facing hardship. These measures included an option to defer outstanding rate invoices for the final quarter of 2019/2020. We have an additional \$50 million set aside in our recent Emergency Budget 2020/2021 to support those in need of rates relief following the impact of COVID-19 on Aucklanders.

The timeframe you have requested falls within the due dates of instalments 3 and 4. The table below includes total rating units subject to late payment fees for these periods. It does not include ratepayers who opted to defer their rates invoice or have opted into the COVID-19 rates postponement scheme, neither of which attract penalty payments.

	Number of rating units that incurred a penalty	Total number of rating units for 2019/2020
Instalment 3	44,188	558,743
Instalment 4	47,337	558,743

2. The percentage increase/decrease of number of households late on a scheduled rates payment, and accordingly had/have to pay a late-payment fee, between the periods of 1 March 2019 to 1 August 2019 (inclusive) and 1 March 2020 to 1 August 2020 (inclusive).

The timeframe you have requested falls within the due dates of instalments 3 and 4. The below table outlines the number of rating units which deferred payments in 2018/2019 compared to 2019/2020.

	Number of rating units that incurred a penalty		Total number of rating units (in year)
	Instalment 3	Instalment 4	
2018/2019	45,315	47,856	552,545
2019/2020	44,188	47,337	558,743
Difference	-2.5%	-1.1%	

3. The total amount collected, or projected to be collected, from late-payment fees for the period of 1 March 2020 to 1 August 2020 (inclusive).

The rates penalty revenue projected for the period between 1 March 2020 and 1 August 2020 was \$7.4 million. The rates penalty revenue received from 1 March 2020 to 31 July 2020 was \$6,681,316.99.

The period consists of instalments 3 and 4 penalty amounts.

Please note that applications for the COVID-19 Rates Postponement scheme is open until 31 December 2020 and can be applied to all ratings invoiced from Q3 2019/2020 for ratepayers who meet the criteria.

The decision by Auckland Council to release the information contained in this response was made by Group Treasurer John Bishop.

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

If you have any further queries, please contact me on 09 301 0101 quoting official information request number 8140007149.

Yours sincerely

S7(2)(a) Privacy

Samantha Sinclair
Privacy & LGOIMA Business Partner
Democracy Services