

# Wellington City Council's Long-term Plan 2024 – 2034

## E tū Musicians' Union Submission

E tū Musicians' Union is a diverse collective of musicians from across Aotearoa's musical landscape. Our vision for Pōneke is of a city where live music is valued and given the space to thrive, as we believe that music is integral to the well-being of the city and its people. We recognise that Wellington City Council supports a variety of opportunities for musicians in Pōneke including; Gardens Magic, Cuba Dupa, Jim Beam Homegrown festival, Aotearoa New Zealand Festival of the Arts and Newtown Festival – in addition to being a core funder of Orchestra Wellington and Wellington Partner to the New Zealand Symphony Orchestra.

We agree with Wellington City Council that Pōneke should be a *creative capital where people and nature thrive*. We also recognise the importance of nurturing and growing the local arts sector in order to support cultural wellbeing.

### Our Submission

Our submission to Wellington City Council's Tō mātou mahere ngahuru tau; Long-term Plan 2024 – 2034 asks for the following:

- **That Wellington City Council commits to increasing their minimum fees for contracted musicians to a rate that reflects the Living Wage.**
- **That Wellington City Council commits to meeting with a Musicians Advisory Group three times per year.**
- **That Wellington City Council commits to increasing its support of new and existing opportunities for Pōneke based musicians to achieve sustainable creative careers.**

### E tū Musicians' Union

E tū is a democratic union representing tens of thousands of people who work in Aviation, Communications, Community Support, Engineering, Infrastructure & Extractions, Manufacturing & Food, and Public & Commercial Services. E tū Musicians' Union is the union for all musicians in Aotearoa, representing everyone from independent musicians, to headline acts, to players in the New Zealand Symphony and other orchestras.

### Proposals for Tō mātou mahere ngahuru tau, Wellington City Council's Long-term Plan 2024 – 2034

- **That Wellington City Council commits to increasing their minimum fees for contracted musicians to reflect the Living Wage.**

In 2022, the Wellington City Council implemented a 'benchmark' rate for musicians performing at WCC events. This was set at \$250 per 4-hour call. This was calculated on the basis of a rate of \$62.50 per hour to include: soundcheck, a 1-hour break, 1.5-hour performance, and pack out time<sup>i</sup>. So far, this has only been consistently applied to the Gardens Magic concert series.

However, we have found that musicians on average work for more than 4 hours for a single performance when factoring in administrative time, rehearsing, travel, pack in and out, sound check, and the performance time itself<sup>ii</sup>. Additionally, musicians bring with them considerable experience, skills, and specialist equipment.

We therefore ask that Wellington City Council commits to reaching an agreement with E tū Musicians' Union representatives on fees that reflect fair pay for musicians at all council events before the booking for

summer 2024-2025 programming begins. This agreement would also include a plan for these rates to increase annually with CPI.

The new rate negotiated would be proposed as a floor, not a ceiling. Musicians contracted by Wellington City Council would still be able to negotiate their fees with Wellington City Council to make sure these fees adequately reflect their experience.

- **That Wellington City Council commits to meeting with a Musicians Advisory Group three times per year.**

The musicians who live and work in Pōneke would like to engage regularly in a reciprocal relationship with Wellington City Council via a Musician's Advisory Group. This long-term commitment is an important forum for musicians to raise concerns and issues that they perceive are preventing local music from flourishing in our city.

E tū Musicians' Union representatives will take the lead in forming the Musicians' Advisory Group, taking measures to ensure that this is a diverse group of Pōneke based musicians that reflects the local music scene.

This group will ensure that musicians have a voice in shaping and implementing the council's strategy for a vibrant, creative capital. The Musician's Advisory Group would advise Wellington City Council on their arts policy and plans to develop and sustain Wellington's claim as capital of the arts in Aotearoa. This group will also advocate for the fair pay and conditions of musicians contracted by WCC.

- **That Wellington City Council commits to increasing its support of both new and existing opportunities for Pōneke based musicians to achieve sustainable creative careers.**

We recognise that existing opportunities for musicians in Wellington need increased support, whilst new opportunities need to be developed for local musicians to achieve sustainable creative careers.

Therefore, we call on Wellington City Council to commit to valuing and protecting live music in the city centre. We ask that live music is prioritised and protected in the City Centre Zone, and that music venues are protected against noise complaints within reasonable hours.

We also ask that Wellington City Council invests in the development of new opportunities for musicians in Pōneke. This may include the exploration of:

- Long-term grants for music venues to pay musicians Living Wage
- Advocacy for local music to be used in films, programmes, and games produced in Pōneke
- Review of council managed venues: to increase number of WCC owned and run venues, to be used at least 4 times a week, core venue staff to be employed permanently, not casually, concessionary hire rates for day-time rehearsals and shows by Aotearoa musicians.

We also recognise that in order for Pōneke-based musicians to achieve sustainable creative careers, Wellington City Council has to commit to building a Wellington that is affordable and liveable for *everyone*. This means building affordable housing so that musicians are able to afford to live in the city, while still having enough time to create music.

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<sup>i</sup> <https://wellington.govt.nz/-/media/your-council/about-the-council/dealing-with-the-council/files/official-information/2024/irc-5867-gardens-magic.pdf?la=en&hash=3100C5FA95FFDC6771C085C43B733764A8B0EB56>

<sup>ii</sup> This number of hours reflects up to 3 hours of performance, at least 1 hour of set up and soundcheck, 1 hour of pack down, 2 hours of rehearsal, 2 hours of travel either side of the performance, 1 hour of travel either side of rehearsal, and at least 2 hours of individual practice and administration. REFERENCE TO BE REPLACED WITH QUANTATIVE RESEARCH