

Reference: 20200203

9 July 2020



Dear 

Thank you for your Official Information Act request, received on 28 May 2020. You requested the following:

Regarding the ring-fenced funding query, last year at the Budget lock-up I was given a figure by a Treasury official. Presumably, then, that was a provisional figure subject to confirmation against the DHBs' annual plan. Is there is a similar readily available figure for 2020/21 that I could have? If not then please regard that request as per the OIA.

On 24 June 2020, I wrote to you advising that I had decided to extend the time limit for deciding on your request by an additional 10 working days due to consultations needed.

Information to be withheld

The ring-fenced expenditure is still under active consideration by Ministry of Health. Therefore I have decided to withhold this information under section 9(2)(f)(iv) of the Official Information Act – to maintain the current constitutional conventions protecting the confidentiality of advice tendered by Ministers and officials.

As you noted, ring-fenced mental health expenditure is subject to finalisation of 2020/21 District Health Board Annual Plans. I understand last year you received the equivalent expected ring-fenced figure at the Budget 2019 lock-up. On reflection, the Government had grounds last year to withhold this figure under active consideration but did not exercise these grounds.

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

This reply addresses the information you requested. You have the right to ask the Ombudsman to investigate and review my decision.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Jess Hewat', written in a cursive style.

Jess Hewat
Manager, Health & ACC