

Reference: 20220173

07 June 2022

Dear [REDACTED]

Thank you for your Official Information Act (OIA) request, received on 10 May 2022. You requested:

*All Treasury advice to Ministers or other agencies or documents more generally that consider whether the Three Waters reforms should include or consider a provision for buying water assets from local councils?*

*Please also include any such advice or documents provided when the Three Waters process was still a “review”, prior to July 1, 2020. For clarity my request is not limited to this “review” period and also covers the post July 1, 2020 period when the programme is called Three Waters reform.*

*My request includes, but is not limited to, any consideration that the \$2.5b 'no worse off' and 'better off' funding (\$1b from the Crown, and the remaining \$1.5b to be raised against the proposed new water entities in or after 2024) should or could be considered a purchase price for the council's water assets?*

### **Information publicly available**

The Treasury has previously released advice regarding Three Waters. This information is published on the Treasury's website and can be found at the following link:

<https://www.treasury.govt.nz/publications/oia-response/information-relating-three-waters-reform-proposals-oia-20210476>.

Accordingly, I have refused this part of your request under section 18(d) of the OIA: *the information requested is or will soon be publicly available.*

Some relevant information has been removed from documents and should continue to be withheld under the OIA, on the grounds described in the documents.

The Department of Internal Affairs has also made information relating to your request publicly available on their website. This information can be found at the following link: <https://www.dia.govt.nz/Three-waters-review>

### **Information to be withheld**

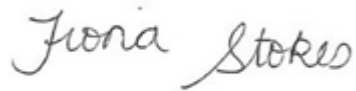
There are additional documents covered by your request that I have decided to withhold in full under the following section of the OIA: 9(2)(g)(i) – *to maintain the effective conduct of public affairs through the free and frank expression of opinions.*

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

Please note that this letter (with your personal details removed) and enclosed documents may be published on the Treasury website.

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 cursive script that reads "Fiona Stokes".

Fiona Stokes  
**Manager, National Infrastructure Unit**