



Andrew Riddell
fyi-request-28219-624830a6@requests.fyi.org.nz

Dear Andrew,

Your Official Information Act 1982 request, reference OIA24-347

I am responding to your email of 27 August 2024 requesting the following under the Official Information Act 1982 (the Act):

“Do you have, or have you had, a local government technical advisory group set up? If so, when was it set up, who are the members, what are its terms of reference, what specific matters have you asked for advice on, and what reports or communications have you received from that group. If it no longer operates when did the group end.”

On 19 September 2024, you were advised that the due date had been extended to 10 October 2024 under section 15A(1)(b) of the Act.

Response

On 12 February 2024, I established a Technical Advisory Group (TAG) to provide expert advice on the implementation of Local Water Done Well. It concluded its work on 16 August 2024. Information about membership and terms of reference for the Local Water Done Well TAG can be found at: www.dia.govt.nz/Water-Services-Policy-Technical-Advisory-Group.

As a part of the terms of reference, the focus of the TAG was to provide advice and assurance on:

- vehicles, mechanisms, and policy and legislative settings that enable councils to appropriately cost recover and access long-term debt to fund inter-generational water infrastructure;
- options for an appropriate model to provide financial independence for Watercare from Auckland Council in the first instance; and
- options for the transitional and future economic regulatory environment.

The TAG worked closely with the Department of Internal Affairs (the Department) and this interaction was incorporated into various briefings that I received from the Department. Many of these documents have already been proactively released and can be found at: www.dia.govt.nz/Proactive-Release#LG.

If you would like to request under the Act any additional information on the TAG that the Department holds, you can email oia@dia.govt.nz.

I am interpreting your request for reports or communications to be reports or communications sent directly from the TAG. There are 31 documents that fall within the scope of this part of your request. A list of these can be found at **Table one**.

I am releasing in full 10 documents and partially releasing 19 documents. Some information has been withheld from those 21 documents under the following sections of the Act:

- 9(2)(a), to protect the privacy of natural persons;
- 9(2)(f)(iv), to maintain the confidentiality of advice tendered by Ministers of the Crown and officials; and
- 9(2)(g)(i), to maintain the effective conduct of public affairs through the free and frank expression of opinions by or between or to Ministers of the Crown or members of an organisation or officers and employees of any public service agency or organisation in the course of their duty.

These documents are attached as **Appendix A**. Additionally, some information has been redacted as it falls outside the scope of your request.

I am withholding two documents under the following sections of the Act:

- 9(2)(a);
- 9(2)(f)(iv); and
- 9(2)(g)(i).

Additionally, some of the information in these documents falls outside the scope of your request.

Accessing the Ombudsman

You have the right, under section 28 of the Official Information Act, to seek a review of this decision by the Office of the Ombudsman. The postal address of the Office of the Ombudsman is PO Box 10152, Wellington. Alternatively, you can phone 0800 802 602 or email info@ombudsman.parliament.govt.nz.

Thank you for writing.

Yours sincerely,



Hon Simeon Brown
Minister of Local Government

Table one: Documents in scope

#	Document name	Document date	Release or withhold	Reason for withholding
1	[Email] Weekly update from TAG – update 1, 9 February 2024	9 February 2024	Partially released	Out of scope
2	Second weekly update for the Minister of Local Government	16 February 2024	Partially released	9(2)(g)(i)
3	Third weekly update for the Minister of Local Government	23 February 2024	Released in full	-
4	Fourth weekly update for the Minister of Local Government	1 March 2024	Partially released	9(2)(a)
5	Fifth weekly update for the Minister of Local Government	8 March 2024	Released in full	-
6	Sixth weekly update for the Minister of Local Government	15 March 2024	Partially released	9(2)(g)(i)
7	Seventh weekly update for the Minister of Local Government	22 March 2024	Partially released	9(2)(f)(iv)
8	Eighth weekly update for the Minister of Local Government	28 March 2024	Released in full	-
9	Ninth weekly update for the Minister of Local Government	5 April 2024	Partially released	9(2)(g)(i)
10	Tenth weekly update for the Minister of Local Government	12 April 2024	Partially released	9(2)(g)(i)
11	Eleventh weekly update for the Minister of Local Government	19 April 2024	Partially released	9(2)(g)(i)
12	Twelfth weekly update for the Minister of Local Government	26 April 2024	Partially released	9(2)(f)(iv)
13	Twelfth [thirteenth] weekly update for the Minister of Local Government	3 May 2024	Partially released	9(2)(g)(i)
14	[Email] Update on progress with Economic Regulation	6 May 2024	Partially released	Out of scope
15	[Email] RE: Assistance and intervention briefing	7 May 2024	Withheld	9(2)(a) 9(2)(f)(iv) 9(2)(g)(i) Out of scope
16	Fourteenth weekly update for the Minister of Local Government	10 May 2024	Released in full	-
17	Fifteenth weekly update for the Minister of Local Government	17 May 2024	Partially released	9(2)(f)(iv) 9(2)(g)(i)
18	Annex 1-TAG Chair comments	17 May 2024	Withheld	9(2)(f)(iv) 9(2)(g)(i)
19	Sixteenth weekly update for the Minister of Local Government	24 May 2024	Partially released	9(2)(f)(iv) 9(2)(g)(i)

#	Document name	Document date	Release or withhold	Reason for withholding
20	Seventeenth weekly update for the Minister of Local Government	31 May 2024	Partially released	9(2)(g)(i)
21	Eighteenth weekly update for the Minister of Local Government	7 June 2024	Partially released	-
22	[Email] LWDW TAG – proposed extension of term	12 June 2024	Partially released	Out of scope
23	Nineteenth weekly update for the Minister of Local Government	14 June 2024	Partially released	9(2)(g)(i)
24	Twentieth weekly update for the Minister of Local Government	21 June 2024	Released in full	-
25	Twenty-first weekly update for the Minister of Local Government	28 June 2024	Partially released	9(2)(f)(iv)
26	Twenty-second weekly update for the Minister of Local Government	5 July 2024	Partially released	9(2)(f)(iv)
27	Twenty-third weekly update for the Minister of Local Government	15 July 2024	Released in full	-
28	Twenty-fourth weekly update for the Minister of Local Government	19 July 2024	Released in full	-
29	Twenty-fifth weekly update for the Minister of Local Government	29 July 2024	Partially released	-
30	[Attachment] Twenty-sixth weekly update for the Minister of Local Government	2 August 2024	Released in full	-
31	[Email] FW: TAG Chair offer to discuss any questions/issues		Partially released	9(2)(a) Out of scope