

From: [BDC Lgoima](#)
To: [REDACTED]
Subject: Official Information Request for Better-Off Funding/Westport Water Critical Work Emails Ref: OIA 033/23
Date: Wednesday, 24 May 2023 4:05:00 pm
Attachments: [OIA 033-23 - Email.pdf](#)
[image002.png](#)

Dear [REDACTED]

We refer to your official information request dated 27 April 2023 wherein you requested the below information:

- Cr Reidy yesterday referred to emails he'd sent which made his position on the Better off funding and Westport water critical work clear.
- Can I please request all emails sent by Cr Reidy to council staff and/or the mayor regarding the agenda for yesterday's meeting?

The information you have requested is attached and below

Some information has been redacted on the grounds of protecting privacy (s7(2)(a)) and information that is subject to an obligation of confidence and releasing it would be likely to prejudice the supply of similar information (s7(2)(c)(i)).

The email provided under this request contains questions posed to the Mayor. For completeness it is noted that the Mayor responded to these questions as follows:

"The Mayor has received the same briefing and level of detail as Councillors, timing wise I think it was a matter of a few days before the heads up workshop, I was advised of the need to re-allocate the better off funding.

The critical elements of the Westport water woes has crystallised over the past few weeks but the context is based on the Feb 2022 weather event as subsequent events causing damage that is making the system extremely difficult to manage, unreliable and expensive etc. This has been well briefed to Councillors over previous few months, including a site visit. What has changed the past month is that I have suggested we need to look at ways to fund the initial stages ourselves (e.g. get on with some of the job) because we have been pitching this critical work package to government for most of the past year without success. I think it is untenable for us to continue with a "no water" risk without at least starting to de-risk this. This has been the impetus of the work Bob Dickson has been doing to manage the town through potential "no water" scenarios and is what has informed some of the critical spend suggested.

(XXXXXXXXXXXX), I'm happy for us to advocate to DIA for that funding to remain, however if that isn't going to succeed then Council needs to decide what it wants to do. That is the intention of tomorrow.

I have not seen nor been a party to any negotiations or applications to DIA other than what has been resolved by Council.

I agree with your questions as they will provide clarity, however if the narrative as I've

been advised (xxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxx) is correct then Councillors need to be prepared to discuss the alternatives.”

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

If you wish to discuss this decision with us, please feel free to contact the Buller District Council by return email to lgoima@bdc.govt.nz.

Please note that it is our policy to proactively release our responses to official information requests where possible. Our response to your request will be published shortly at <https://bullerdc.govt.nz/district-council/your-council/request-for-official-information/responses-to-lgoima-requests/> with your personal information removed.

Kind regards

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On 25/04/2023, at 21:14, Councillor Colin Reidy <Colin.Reidy@bdc.govt.nz> wrote:

Hello all, and yes - I am not happy.

I have time lined events since the announcement of the two better-off funding tranches and note several observations, among them;

1. The May 22 workshop to discuss options identified by the SLT for tranche 1 funding included a comment by the acting chair that a paper had to come to the June 22 meeting for ratification because it was election year with the possibility of a different council composition. (The Mayor delegated Chair function at the time as he was simultaneously involved with other activity).
2. The rationale behind the June 20, 2022, cut-off could be many. Final date for applications was 30 September 2022. I have since however been able to formulate my own view regarding this comment.
3. The News ran a story 7 February 2023 which reported that all nine funding applications had been approved by DIA late last year - ie late 2022. This information was provided by BDC under a LGOIMA request
4. The last time there was any mention of tranche 1 funding by BDC was at the June 22 council meeting. There has been no mention in any subsequent meeting agenda that I am able to identify - happy to be corrected, however.
5. In April 2023, Central Government advised that the proposed tranche 2 funding had been cancelled.
6. During a water workshop April 19, councillors were verbally advised that the Waimangaroa funding application had been rejected
7. Based upon the email below, it appears the Mayor was aware of the change in DIA's original approval
8. Agenda item 5.4 for the April council meeting, second paragraph, ".....chosen initiatives originally approved by Council and DIA for the tranche 1 funding.....". The accompanying table has no description for the Waimangaroa project and advises that this has been deemed ineligible, (note the table included with the June 2022 agenda did not include a description also)
9. Agenda item 12 from the June 2022 council meeting detailed the resilience options available for the Westport water supply. An investment priority schedule was included with this paper
10. Agenda item 6 for the April 2023 meeting includes reference to the schedule mentioned in 9 above. Item 6.2, third paragraph advises "Staff have added an urgent requirement phase....."

Questions

1. Was the Mayor fully conversant with the "state of play" regarding the nine approvals?
2. When was the Mayor made aware that the Waimangaroa project had subsequently been declined?
3. Why have these critical needs not been reported to council in prior months?
4. Why have these "critical needs" suddenly been identified upon the announcement that tranche 2 funding had been cancelled?

I note Toni O has requested copies of the correspondence relating to the Waimangaroa project.

I want to view all the paperwork associated with the original applications and the subsequent approvals. This can be loaded into Diligent under the Elected Members tab,



The above may be viewed as "operational". I view the matter as "financial governance".



Haste makes waste - ie rushing things leads to mistakes or poor results. I do not want to see NZD750k fulfilling that description.

Colin

Colin Reidy | Councillor
Email Colin.Reidy@bdc.govt.nz

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