Hon Chris Bishop

Attorney-General
Minister of Housing
Minister for Infrastructure
Minister Responsible for RMA Reform
Minister of Transport
Associate Minister of Finance

OIA26-CB255

Daran Ponter
Chair
Greater Wellington Regional Council
By email: Daran.Ponter@gw.govt.nz

Dear Daran,

Thank you for your email of 15 October 2026 requesting the following information under the Official Information Act 1982 (the Act):

> *Please provide, under the Official Information Act, all correspondence, including Cabinet papers and draft cabinet papers, briefings, letters, emails, texts and What's App communications between Cabinet Ministers and MCERT, amongst Cabinet Ministers and between Cabinet Ministers and under-secretaries, and between Ministers, under-secretaries and Federated Farmers:*
> - *for the period 1 September 2026 to 13 October 2026*
> - *related to the Government's Simplifying Local Government proposals, the submissions received from Local Government in response to that proposal, and the consideration by government (MCERT/DIA and Minister) of those proposals.*

The Minister of Local Government, Hon Simon Watts, also received your request and is responding separately. His response addresses the substantive material relating to the Simplifying Local Government proposals, including Cabinet papers, briefings and other material that is also held by my office. To avoid unnecessarily duplicating material, I refer you to his response.

For completeness, I do not hold any correspondence between myself and Federated Farmers within the scope of your request, and have not identified any additional recorded information that is not also held by Minister Watts' office.

I recall discussing the Head Start / Simplifying Local Government proposals informally with Ministerial colleagues, including Under-Secretaries and Ministers both inside and outside Cabinet, during the period covered by your request. These discussions were not recorded, and I do not hold records of them. Given the frequency and nature of informal discussions between Ministers, I am also unable to identify or recall every instance in which the proposals may have been discussed.

To the extent your request seeks records of those discussions, this part of your request is refused under section 18(e) of the Act, as the documents alleged to contain the information requested do not exist or cannot be found.

Private Bag 18041, Parliament Buildings, Wellington 6160, New Zealand | +64 4 817 6802 | c.bishop@ministers.govt.nz

If you have any concerns with this response to you, you have the right to seek an investigation and review of it by the Ombudsman, in accordance with section 28(3) of the Act. The relevant details can be found on the Ombudsman's website at: *www.ombudsman.parliament.nz/.*

Yours sincerely,



Hon Chris Bishop
Minister Responsible for RMA Reform