

OIR: 2526/457

25 June 2026

[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]

Tēnā koe [REDACTED],

Request for Information under the Local Government Official Information and Meetings Act 1987 (the Act) (the LGOIMA)

Thank you for your email of **15 June 2026** requesting the following information:

I am writing to you under the provisions of the Local Government Official Information and Meetings Act (LGOIMA) 1987, to request any information relating to the statement made by Councillor Cooper at the Council meeting of 11 June 2026 regarding a proposal the CEO had prepared – whether submitted formally to the incoming Council or not – that would have enabled a rates increase ‘at a bit above 5% but that it was the decision of Councillors not to do that’ for the 2026/27 Annual Plan.

- 1. I request all Council documents, including but not limited to: internal Council memoranda, meeting notes, meeting minutes, transcripts, papers, reports and costings about any proposal that would have enabled a rates increase at ‘a bit above 5%’ for the 2026/27 Annual Plan.***

There was no single proposal presented that would have set the rates increase at “a bit above 5%”.

In determining the overall rates revenue increase, the Council followed its standard budget-setting process, including:

- Adjusting budgets to reflect unbudgeted cost pressures
- Developing a range of budget assumptions and potential rates reduction options
- Presenting these options to Councillors through a series of briefings and workshops
- Councillors considering the options and determining which to support.

Please note that any information provided in response to your request may be published on the Council website, with your personal details removed.

In summary, additional unbudgeted costs of \$10.4 million were identified. This increased the projected rates revenue requirement from 7.0% (as signalled in year three of the 2024-34 Long-term Plan) to 8.9%.

A suite of rates reduction options totalling \$2.4 million was then developed by Officers and presented to Councillors. If fully adopted, these options would have reduced the rates increase to 5.7%.

Not all options were supported. Following briefings on 16 and 18 December 2025 and 5 February 2026, Councillors endorsed savings of \$1.9 million, resulting in a final rates revenue increase of 6.5%.

- 2. I also request copies of any documents prepared for the Mayor and/ or some or all Councillors in relation to any such a proposal, including: Council memoranda, meeting minutes, meeting notes, transcripts, papers, and reports. This part of the request also includes any documentation, file notes, meeting minutes or any record whatsoever of any subsequent decision made by Councillors not to progress any such option prepared by the CEO.**

No documents were identified as having been prepared specifically for the Mayor and/or Councillors in relation to such a proposal, other than the slide packs presented at Councillor briefings on 16 and 18 December 2025 and 5 February 2026. These materials record that Councillors provided officers with a “support / not support in principle” steer on options considered.

The briefing materials from 16 and 18 December 2025 and 5 February 2026 (including the live stream video) are available on the Council’s website at this link: [Annual Plan Briefing Materials](#).

Please note that where we have indicated that there are no documents to provide, I am refusing this information under section 17(e) of the LGOIMA, on the basis that the documents alleged to contain the information requested do not exist or, despite reasonable efforts to locate it, cannot be found.

You have the right to request the Ombudsman to review this decision. Complaints can be sent by email to info@ombudsman.parliament.nz, or by post to The Ombudsman, PO Box 10152, Wellington 6143.

Please do not hesitate to get in touch if you require any further clarification or additional information.

Ngā mihi,



Mark de Haast

Group Manager Corporate Services
Te Kaihautū Ratonga Tōpū