

26 May 2022

Groundswell NZ  
[hello@groundswell.org.nz](mailto:hello@groundswell.org.nz)

Dear [REDACTED]

**LOCAL GOVERNMENT OFFICIAL INFORMATION AND MEETINGS ACT Request: 2022-33**

Thank you for your request letter of 5 May 2022 to the Carterton District Council, attached as **Appendix A**.

Your request has been considered under the Local Government Official Information and Meeting Act 1987 (the Act).

My response to your request is provided in the order number below.

**1. Has the Council adopted a position on the Three Waters policy?**

No, the Council did not adopt a position on the Three Waters policy.

**a. If so, what motion or motions were agreed to?**

There was no motion or motions agreed to for the reason that the Council did not adopt a position on the Three Waters policy.

**b. If so, how did each member of the Council vote on the motion or motions?**

For the reason above, no member of the Council voted on the motion or motions.

**2. Has the Council voted on whether to join the Communities 4 Local Democracy?**

No, the Council did not vote to join the Communities 4 Local Democracy.

**a. If so, what motion or motions were voted on?**

There was no motion or motions voted by Council.

**b. If so, how did each member of the Council vote on the motion or motions?**

No member of Council voted on the motion or motions.

Please note, the Council now proactively publishes LGOIMA responses on our website. As such, we may publish this response on our website after five working days. Your name and contact details will be removed.

Thank you again for your letter. You have the right to ask an Ombudsman to review this decision. You can do this by writing to [info@ombudsman.parliament.nz](mailto:info@ombudsman.parliament.nz) or Office of the Ombudsman, PO Box 10152, Wellington 6143.

Yours sincerely



Geoff Hamilton  
Chief Executive  
Carterton District Council

RELEASED UNDER LGOIMA

Groundswell NZ

[hello@groundswell.org.nz](mailto:hello@groundswell.org.nz)

5 May 2022

Geoff Hamilton

Chief Executive

Carterton District Council

By email: [geoffh@cdc.govt.nz](mailto:geoffh@cdc.govt.nz)

Dear Chief Executive,

### **Three Waters position and Communities 4 Local Democracy**

We write to you regarding the Carterton District Council's position on the Government's Three Waters policy and relationship with Communities 4 Local Democracy.

Please circulate this letter to all elected members of the Council.

Groundswell NZ is gravely concerned about the Government's Three Waters proposal and is committed to fighting this ill-conceived and unworkable policy.

The consistent position of Groundswell NZ has been that each council should undertake a referendum of their residents on the Three Waters proposal, as the vital water infrastructure assets built up over decades by ratepayers should not be handed over to another body without a clear and local democratic mandate. Even with the Government making their Three Waters proposal mandatory for councils, each council should only take a position that is consistent with the views of their residents.

We applaud those councils who have joined Communities 4 Local Democracy for standing united with their communities in opposing the governments Three Waters proposal. However, it is disappointing that many councils have still not joined in support of this fight for local democracy. We request that your Council join Communities 4 Local Democracy.

We also request the following information:

1. Has the Council adopted a position on the Three Waters policy?
  - a. If so, what motion or motions were agreed to?
  - b. If so, how did each member of the Council vote on the motion or motions?
2. Has the Council voted on whether to join the Communities 4 Local Democracy?
  - a. If so, what motion or motions were voted on?
  - b. If so, how did each member of the Council vote on the motion or motions?

If the Council will not offer the information by way of a timely response, please consider this a request under the Local Government Official Information and Meetings Act 1987.

We will be using the information provided as part of a nationwide campaign to seek representation that accurately and faithfully acts in the best interests of people and communities.

We are also concerned about Local Government New Zealand's (LGNZ) failure to act in the best interests of councils and communities. In their 2020 and 2021 annual reports, LGNZ stated that their role is to *“Support and advocate for 78 councils across New Zealand, ensuring the needs and priorities of their communities and residents are heard loud and clear at the highest levels of central government”* and that *“Protecting and enhancing local democracy is paramount”*.

By signing the Three Waters Heads of Agreement with the Government, including agreeing to not actively oppose an “all in” legislated approach to Three Waters in clause 4.3(c)(iii), LGNZ has failed in their obligation to advocate for councils and their communities and residents.

Ratepayers fund LGNZ to advocate in their interest to the tune of \$4 million each year. Given their failure to do so, we request all councils cease this funding, which would be better spent on the infrastructure needs of our communities. We congratulate Timaru District Council who have already taken this clear stand in support of local democracy.

In summary, we are requesting that the Council:

1. Withdraw funding from LGNZ
2. Hold a referendum on the Three Waters policy.

Yours sincerely,



Groundswell NZ