

Standing Together for Waimakariri:

OUR Position on

Open and Transparent Local Government

April 25

At **Standing Together for Waimakariri**, we believe our community deserves a Council that is upfront, accessible, and truly accountable. Transparency should be the norm — not something you have to fight for.

Recent reflections from Chief Ombudsman Peter Boshier highlight a growing problem across the country: a culture of delay, defensiveness, and poor communication when it comes to Official Information Act (OIA) requests. Sadly, we're now starting to see those same patterns emerging here in Waimakariri.

We've noticed increasing delays and a reluctance to provide information — a worrying sign that needs to be addressed. It's important to recognise that when residents feel they have to file OIA requests just to get basic answers, it often reflects a deeper issue: poor communication and a lack of openness in how councils engage with their communities.

We're standing together to change that. If elected, we will drive a culture shift at the Waimakariri District Council — one that puts honesty, clarity, and community first.

Here's what we'll deliver:

- **Proactive Communication**
We'll work to ensure important Council decisions, spending, and project updates are clearly communicated and easy to find — before people have to ask.
- **Fixing the OIA Culture**
We'll push for improved training and stronger internal systems to ensure timely, respectful handling of OIA requests — and we'll hold ourselves and the organisation accountable.
- **Better Everyday Engagement**
We believe strong communication should be the rule, not the exception. We'll support better tools and practices that make it easier for residents to understand and participate in Council matters — so OIA requests become the last resort, not the first step.
- **A New Standard of Openness**
Waimakariri has the opportunity to lead by example. We'll build a council that earns the community's trust — by being transparent, responsive, and genuinely connected.

[Advocating for 'culture change': the Ombudsman endorses strengthening the OIA – Proactively Open](#)