

Hon Simon Watts

Minister for Building and Construction
Minister of Climate Change
Minister of Local Government
Minister of Revenue
Minister for Auckland



COR3197

Hon Andrew Little
mayor@wcc.govt.nz

Dear Mayor Little

I write to respond to your email of 11 September 2026 regarding the Moa Point Wastewater Treatment Plant Crown Review.

I acknowledge the role Wellington City Council has as a shareholder of Tiaki Wai, and the steps you have outlined that the Council is taking to exercise its shareholder responsibilities.

The Crown Review Team's report identifies a number of longstanding and systemic weaknesses in the governance, asset stewardship, risk management, investment and accountability arrangements for Wellington's water services. It is now for Wellington City Council and Tiaki Wai to consider the report carefully and determine the actions required to address its findings and recommendations.

The Government has set out the statutory framework within which water organisations and their shareholders are expected to operate. It is not the Government's role to prescribe to individual councils the particular arrangements they should put in place to discharge their responsibilities as shareholders. I expect Wellington City Council to use the powers and mechanisms available to it to satisfy itself that Tiaki Wai is being effectively governed and that the issues identified by the Review are being addressed.

In relation to your specific question about the relevant legislative provisions, I refer you to MCERT's factsheet available here: www.mcert.govt.nz/assets/Uploads/Local-government-documents/Guidance/Guidance-and-information-to-support-financial-considerations/LWDW-guidance-Planningreportingand-accountability-for-water-organisations-and-their-shareholders-January-2026.pdf. This guidance explains the accountability framework under the Local Government (Water Services) Act 2025, including the respective roles and responsibilities of water organisations and their council shareholders, and the mechanisms available to shareholders to monitor performance and hold water organisations to account.

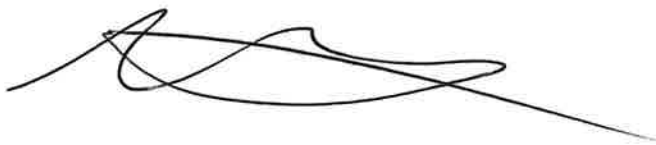
In relation to any additional reporting to the Government, I consider that the information requested under section 257, including the quarterly progress reports, will provide sufficient visibility of the Council's and Tiaki Wai's progress in addressing the Review's recommendations. I would, however, expect the Council to maintain clear and open communication with my officials and to raise any significant issues or developments that arise between reporting periods, rather than waiting for the next quarterly report.

I expect Wellington City Council to continue to exercise its shareholder responsibilities actively and to work with Tiaki Wai to ensure the lessons from the Moa Point incident are addressed.

I am aware that key Council officers did not meet with the Crown Review Team during its investigation. While those officers provided the information requested of them, I do not consider the decision not to engage directly with the Review Team to have been appropriate.

I also expect relevant Council officers to front public engagement on those aspects of the Crown Review Team Report that relate to the Council, particularly where those matters fall within their areas of responsibility, given these are issues for the Council to consider and address.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink, consisting of a series of loops and a long horizontal stroke extending to the right.

Hon Simon Watts
Minister of Local Government