

12 March 2026

Liam Hehir  
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Our ref: OIA 130056

Tēnā koe Liam

### **Official Information Act request: Law Commission President in 2005**

Thank you for your email of 15 February 2026 to the Ministry of Justice (the Ministry), requesting information under the Official Information Act 1982 (the Act), regarding the appointment of the President of the Law Commission in 2005. Specifically, you requested:

*Under the Official Information Act 1982, I request documents held by the ministry that answer the following question:*

*Was Sir Geoffrey Palmer the only person considered for appointment as President of the Law Commission in 2005 (appointment effective 1 December 2005)?*

*For the avoidance of doubt, please provide any document(s) that record, state or indicate one or more of the following:*

*Whether any other candidate or potential candidate was identified, approached, sounded out, assessed, recommended or put forward for the role (whether informally or formally)*

*Whether the Minister and or Cabinet were advised that Palmer was the only person being considered, or that there were no alternative candidates*

*Any note, briefing, email or submission that records the options considered for the appointment or the process used to identify candidates*

*I do not seek the identity of any other person. Any personal information may be redacted. I seek only confirmation of whether the appointment was rival-free, and the basis on which that conclusion is recorded.*

*To reduce compliance burden, I do not require background material unrelated to candidate consideration (eg general descriptions of the Law Commission's functions), nor copies of publicly available documents such as the Gazette notice. Please provide only the minimum material necessary to answer the question above.*

*If the Ministry holds no documents that speak to whether other candidates were considered, please confirm that fact.*

A response to your request is being prepared. However, the consultations necessary to make a decision on your request are such that a proper response cannot reasonably be

made within the original time limit. Therefore, I am extending the time limit for reply under section 15A(1)(b) of the Act and will respond to you no later than 27 March 2026.

You have the right, under section 28 of the Act, to make a complaint to the Ombudsman about the decision to extend the time for responding to your request. The Office of the Ombudsman may be contacted by phone on 0800 802 602, by email at: [info@ombudsman.parliament.nz](mailto:info@ombudsman.parliament.nz), or via the webform: [Make a complaint \(for members of the public\) | Ombudsman New Zealand](#).

Nāku noa, nā

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Louise Ainsley". The signature is written in a cursive style and is underlined.

Louise Ainsley  
**Manager, Ministerial Services**