

REFERENCE

2627219

RELEASE DATE

17 August 2026

SUBJECT

Thank you for your email of 20 July 2026, in which you requested information on the costs associated with abstracting and treating drinking water at NI Water treatment works supplied by Lough Neagh or the River Bann, together with comparative costs for other water treatment works in Northern Ireland.

RESPONSE

The information held by NI Water in relation to parts 1 and 2 of your request is provided at Annex A. This includes the annual costs recorded for the Lough Neagh and Bann based treatment works, together with the corresponding costs for all other NI Water treatment works in Northern Ireland. The information is broken down by financial year and by the cost categories specified in your request.

For part 3 of your request, Annex A provides the expected annual costs recorded by NI Water for the 2026/27 financial year. These figures cover the treatment works supplied by Lough Neagh or the River Bann and the other NI Water treatment works included in the comparative information.

NI Water has consulted the relevant business area and searched the records reasonably likely to contain the requested information. Those enquiries and searches did not identify any recorded annual cost forecasts or estimates held by NI Water for the financial years 2027/28 to 2033/34 when your request was received. NI Water's relevant budgets are currently prepared on an annual basis, and NI Water did not hold the requested figures for those later financial years.

Regulation 12(4)(a) of the EIR provides that a public authority may refuse to disclose information that it did not hold when the request was received. As NI Water did not hold the requested recorded information for 2027/28 to 2033/34 at that time, Regulation 12(4)(a) applies to that part of your request. The EIR does not require NI Water to create new forecasts or estimates in order to respond to a request.

NI Water has applied the presumption in favour of disclosure required by Regulation 12(2) and considered the public interest test under Regulation 12(1)(b). NI Water recognises the public interest in transparency about anticipated expenditure on the abstraction and treatment of drinking water. However, NI Water did not hold the requested recorded information for 2027/28 to 2033/34 when your request was received. There is therefore no recorded information for NI Water to disclose for those years. In these circumstances, the public interest in maintaining the exception outweighs the public interest in disclosure.