

## **Transcript of Heather du Plessis-Allan's interview with Neil Quigley**

Newstalk ZB shortly after 6pm on 22 July 2025

(taken from the audio here [Neil Quigley addresses cost concerns surrounding Waikato med school](#))

The interview was initially about the medical school decision. This transcript picks up several minutes in when the interviewer changes topic"

Q: I need to ask you about something. Did Adrian Orr swear in a meeting with Treasury on 21 February?

A: (Laughs) I wondered if you'd raise that. I don't have any comment about that.

Q: So you're aware of this are you, this news that's broken?

A: I've just heard in the last hour that there is a conversation going on but I'm not part of it, no.

Q: Did he swear in a meeting with Treasury on 21 February?

A: I can't comment on that Heather.

Q: Why can't you comment on it?

A: Well, because that's a matter of privacy that I don't, I don't think I should discuss.

Q: Is that because there is a gag order preventing you from discussing it?

A: No, it's a normal duty that I have.

Q: You just said no, there is no gag order.

A: No, I'm not telling you that. I'm telling you that my normal obligation to preserve the privacy of someone that I work with or who works for me means that I can't comment on things like that. Sorry.

Q: No, that's okay. Did he swear in a meeting with the Finance Minister a few days later?

A: Ah well. I've heard that's been said but I can't comment on that.

Q: Weren't you at that meeting?

A: I was at that meeting, yes.

Q: So did he swear?

A: (Laughs)

Q: Did you send him an email three days after that Neil? Did you send him an email saying "hey, here's a whole bunch of specific and concrete allegations about your behaviour"?

A: Well, see, I can't go into that Heather.

Q: Listen, this gag order may prevent what he did but it doesn't prevent you discussing what you did, which includes sending him this email?

A: It has all been covered by an Official Information Act request. We've responded to that, so that's as far as I can go, and everything I can say and am willing to say we've said in response to the Official Information Act request.

Q: Now Neil, I'm sure it hasn't escaped your attention that I've been quite critical of you for the fact that you have, you have, misrepresented a bunch of facts. Do you have anything to say about that?

A: Well, what do you have in mind in particular?

Q: You said he left for "personal reasons" and it clearly wasn't personal reasons.

A: No, I said he.... That was a misquote by some journalists. That is the problem with journalists reading each others' work. I said that Adrian's resignation was a personal decision.

Q: Yes

A: And it was. At the time we were working through some difficult issues but those issues weren't actually resolved for about a month after Adrian's resignation, that's the Funding Agreement, so I wasn't in a position to go into anything related to that at the time.

Q: Oh, so there was stuff that preceded the Funding Agreement? Is that what you're telling me?

A: No, no, it was all part of the discussion of the Funding Agreement. But it was still ongoing for a long time.

Q: Are you telling me that he quit for the Funding Agreement? Is that why he quit?

A: No, no, I'm just telling you that what we said in our response to the Official Information Act request.

Q: I'm confused now. If he quit because of the Funding Agreement that's not a "personal decision" is it?

A: There's nothing about a difference of view of where we were heading about funding that required his resignation. He could easily have continued and that's why it was a personal decision to resign.

Q: So are you telling me that he didn't actually quit over the Funding Agreement, which we thought he'd quit over?

A: No, no. You're turning what I've said around the wrong way Heather. What I've said is there was a difference of view about the direction we were travelling on the Funding Agreement but that there was nothing about that that required Adrian to resign. He chose to make it a personal decision that he would resign at that point, when we were halfway through the negotiations.

Q: But can you understand our confusion because he quit because of the Funding Agreement right? But you're saying it is a "personal decision". It can't be both. It is one or the other?

A: No, no, it is, it is.

Q: How so?

A: Well, because there was nothing about the funding discussion that required him to resign.

Q: In your opinion.

A: In my opinion, yes.

Q: But he might have thought there was something about it that required him to resign? Are you using "personal decision" because every time someone quits it's ultimately a personal decision?

A: No, but I think it clearly was in this case. That's my view.

Q: Nothing is clear about this at all. Okay, thank you Neil. Appreciate your time, Neil Quigley, Waikato University Vice-Chancellor. (to audience) I'm as confused as you.

ENDS