



Cabinet

Minute of Decision

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An Independent Review into the Sustainability of Disability Support Services Administered by Whaikaha – Ministry of Disabled People

Portfolio **Disability Issues**

On 29 April 2024, Cabinet:

- 1 **noted** that Whaikaha – Ministry of Disabled People (the Ministry) has a dual mandate to improve outcomes for disabled people by leading cross-government strategic policy advice while also delivering and transforming Disability Support Services (DSS);
- 2 **noted** that the Ministry has limited levers to address the significant risks arising from the increasing cost pressures on DSS that, while longstanding, have become more visible since its establishment;
- 3 **agreed** to establish an independent review to provide advice on DSS administered by the Ministry, focused on two questions:
 - 3.1 what actions should be taken immediately in the 2024/2025 financial year to better manage the increasing cost pressures;
 - 3.2 what should be done to ensure the future sustainability of DSS;
- 4 **noted** that the independent review will report back on the immediate actions question six weeks after its establishment, and on the future sustainability question 14 weeks after its establishment;
- 5 **agreed** that the independent review will be supported by a Secretariat hosted by the Public Service Commission (PSC), with resource also provided by the Treasury and the Ministry of Social Development (MSD);
- 6 **agreed** to the initial Terms of Reference for the independent review, attached as Appendix Five to the paper under CAB-24-SUB-0141;
- 7 **authorised** the Minister for Disability Issues and Minister for Social Development and Employment to implement the independent review, including:
 - 7.1 appointing an independent panel made up of a lead reviewer and two advisors, and determining their remuneration;
 - 7.2 a Secretariat of officials to support the independent review;

- 7.3 making minor amendments to the Terms of Reference, where necessary, to ensure best and timely advice is provided;
- 7.4 any other related matters for the well-functioning of the independent review;
- 8 **noted** that the Minister for Disability Issues and the Minister for Social Development and Employment will seek agreement from the Cabinet Social Outcomes Committee (SOU) to amendments to the Terms of Reference that go beyond those authorised in paragraph 7.3 above, and for any significant extension in timeframe;
- 9 **directed** the Ministry to meet the costs for the independent review, including the lead reviewer and their two advisors, from its baseline;
- 10 **directed** the PSC, Treasury, and MSD to meet the costs of the Secretariat from their baselines;
- 11 **directed** the Ministry and agencies with joint work programmes or whose systems interact with the Ministry, including the Ministries of Social Development, Health, and Education, the Department of Corrections, Health New Zealand – Te Whatu Ora and Oranga Tamariki – Ministry for Children, to support the work of the reviewer and provide assistance as requested;
- 12 **invited** the Minister for Disability Issues and the Minister for Social Development and Employment to provide updates to SOU, in consultation with relevant Ministers, following progress and reports of the independent review.

Rachel Hayward
Secretary of the Cabinet