

**SOCIAL
WELLBEING
BOARD**

13 November 2020

Social Wellbeing Board

**Briefing to the Incoming
Minister**

Hon Carmel Sepuloni

Briefing to the Incoming Minister

Tēnā koe, Minister Sepuloni

Welcome back to your role as Minister responsible for the Social Wellbeing Board (the Board).

The Social Wellbeing Board is a cross-sector group of Chief Executives that oversees work seeking to achieve outcomes beyond the remit of any one agency

Taking a whole of social sector view, the Board takes a people-centred, integrated, sustainable and enduring approach to improve social wellbeing. As part of this approach, the Board makes evidence-informed decisions, shares sector knowledge and experience, monitors and evaluates work, and provides strategic advice to the Social Wellbeing Committee.

The Board's work programme consists of a small number of priority areas where collective action makes the biggest difference for New Zealanders. Currently, these include:

- Governance of the Child and Youth Wellbeing Strategy
- Governance of the Joint Venture for Family Violence and Sexual Violence
- Oversight of the Oranga Tamariki Action Plan
- Providing advice on the Future of Social Sector Commissioning
- Governance of the Resilience to Organised Crime in Communities work programme
- Governance of Place-Based Initiatives in South Auckland and Tairāwhiti
- Governance of the Caring for Communities workstream (formerly the Welfare pillar of the All-of-Government COVID-19 response), and
- Supporting the Cabinet Social Wellbeing Committee to achieve their priorities through the provision of strategic advice.

This briefing introduces you to the Social Wellbeing Board – outlining the role and function of the Board, the role of the Social Wellbeing Agency in supporting the Board, and the Board's existing priorities and areas of focus, including how it is taking an active role in COVID-19 recovery. It also identifies emerging priorities and opportunities where the Board will be seeking guidance from Ministers.

Introducing the Social Wellbeing Board

Role of the Social Wellbeing Board

The Social Wellbeing Board leads a collective approach to social sector policy, implementation, and delivery

The Social Wellbeing Board was established by Cabinet in September 2018, evolving from earlier social sector governance arrangements, including the Social Investment Board, established April 2017, and prior to that, the Social Sector Board.

The Board works on complex issues that require a high degree of integration across agencies and the social sector and advises Ministers on the strategic direction for the social sector. It has also been influential in advising and leading new ways of working across government – most notably, advising for a joint venture model to address family violence and sexual violence (FVSV), as a new way of working which anticipated the changes to the State Sector Act (now the Public Service Act 2020).

The Board's work programme is proposed by the Board and agreed with the Cabinet Social Wellbeing Committee. It does not preclude agencies developing their capability to work together on challenging cross-cutting social sector issues outside the Board's work programme. The Board plays a more strategic role ensuring alignment of effort and advising on any system barriers that Chief Executives may encounter in their collaborative work.

Social Wellbeing Board Chief Executives

- Ministry of Health
 - Oranga Tamariki
 - Ministry of Justice
 - Ministry of Education
 - Ministry of Housing and Urban Development
 - Ministry of Social Development
 - Te Puni Kōkiri
 - New Zealand Police
 - Department of Prime Minister and Cabinet
 - Te Kawa Mataaho Public Service Commission (independent chair)
 - Inland Revenue
- Additional members for FVSV Joint Venture:*
- Accident Compensation Corporation
 - Department of Corrections

Functions of the Social Wellbeing Board

The Social Wellbeing Board's functions reflect its role as lead strategic advisor to Ministers in the social sector

The functions of the Social Wellbeing Board are in its Terms of Reference. The Terms of Reference provides that the Board will achieve its purpose by taking account of Ministerial priorities through:

- **advising the Social Wellbeing Committee** on the strategic direction of social sector policy, optimal resource and budget allocations and reprioritisation within and between departments
- providing agency and sector **leadership for collective efforts on specific areas of cross-agency priority**
- monitoring and evaluating how work streams in the Board's work programme are **performing against agreed wellbeing indicators**
- advising the Social Wellbeing Committee on any changes to policy and/or implementation, recognising trade-offs and dependencies across different components and sectors within the Board's remit
- **developing policy advice informed by best evidence**, drawing on Indicators Aotearoa, the Living Standards Framework and insights into what matters to New Zealanders and their families regarding their social wellbeing
- **sharing sector specific knowledge and expertise** and using Board members' diverse skills and expertise to build collective capability.

Support from Social Wellbeing Agency

The Social Wellbeing Agency – Toi Hau Tāngata (SWA) provides support and advice to the Social Wellbeing Board in carrying out its functions

SWA services the Board with secretariat support and policy advice and works with the Social Wellbeing Board on how an improving social wellbeing approach contributes to the broader system and how it should be implemented. The role of SWA includes:

- supporting the Social Wellbeing Board through strengthened secretariat support and policy advice
- providing cross-social system advice on issues that fall across or between agency responsibilities, in partnership with social sector agencies
- facilitating, on behalf of all agencies, cross-cutting pieces of work
- creating insights, tools and practices that improve cross-system decision making and ultimately social wellbeing.

Existing priorities and areas of focus

Collective action to improve wellbeing

The Social Wellbeing Board's priorities are areas where collective action is needed to improve outcomes and make the biggest difference for New Zealanders

Strategic advice on cross-cutting issues

The Board directly supports the Cabinet Social Wellbeing Committee to achieve their priorities through the provision of strategic advice on cross-cutting issues.

Governance of Child and Youth Wellbeing Strategy

New Zealand's first Child and Youth Wellbeing Strategy and its accompanying programme of action was launched in August 2019. It sets out a shared understanding of what is important for child and youth wellbeing, government's actions to achieve this, and a framework to align the work of government and others. The Strategy is intended to transform the way Ministers and agencies work together to improve the wellbeing of children and young people.

Since its launch, the Strategy has become embedded into the core work of social sector agencies and has driven collaborative cross-government efforts in key areas of policy and service development and Budget prioritisation. A number of agencies and Crown entities have already incorporated elements of the Strategy's framework into their strategic planning. It is important to build on these gains and increase collective efforts, across government and beyond, if we are to achieve transformative and lasting change for children and young people.

By July 2021, all central government agencies are expected to align to the outcomes of the Strategy as reflected in their strategic policy, planning and funding decisions. You will play an important leadership role with your Ministerial colleagues by advancing wellbeing outcomes for children and young people in all relevant government activity.

Governance of Family Violence and Sexual Violence (FVSV) Joint Venture

In 2018 Cabinet established a Joint Venture of ten government agencies to lead a whole-of-government response to family violence and sexual violence (FVSV). This response creates a single point of responsibility and leadership, that has a shared commitment to significantly reduce FVSV and champion improved wellbeing, through a system view across government.

Significantly reducing family violence and sexual violence is essential for achieving greater intergenerational wellbeing. We know that this approach will allow individuals, whānau, families and communities to live safe, connected, healthy and full lives for generations to come. The wellbeing approach is strengthened by taking a community-led, whānau-centred approach that involves those affected by family violence and sexual violence in shaping the decisions that impact on their lives.

The Joint Venture is mandated to partner with Māori to deliver these shared goals, as underpinned by Te Tiriti o Waitangi/ the Treaty of Waitangi, and the Crown's obligations to uphold mana motuhake. This whole-of-government response also actively seeks to include, and partner with, communities, organisations, academia and other agencies to achieve these goals.

Supporting alignment of effort

The Social Wellbeing Board has a strategic role ensuring alignment of effort where necessary across areas of work involving multiple agencies

Oversight of the Oranga Tamariki Action Plan

The Children's Act requires children's agency Chief Executives to develop and publish an Action Plan that sets out how they are going to work together to achieve the Act's requirements, including the Child and Youth Wellbeing Strategy's wellbeing outcomes for children and young people. The Action Plan cohort includes children and young people who are at risk of being involved with, already involved with, or have been involved with our care and protection and youth justice systems (Action Plan populations).

The Action Plan intends to create the cross-agency accountability required to work together to promote the best interests and holistic wellbeing of New Zealand's most at risk groups of children and young people. Children's agencies must then jointly report annually (on a date set by the plan Minister) to Government and the public on their progress on the Action Plan.

Governance of the Resilience to Organised Crime in Communities work programme

The Resilience to Organised Crime in Communities work programme (ROCC), agreed by Cabinet in September 2019 and led by Police, is a key element of the broader response to organised crime. ROCC recognises organised crime as a social and a criminal justice issue. ROCC is community-focused and led, combining social intervention with enforcement activity to simultaneously address the harms and drivers of organised crime.

ROCC agency partners, iwi, and communities build community resilience and respond to organised crime and the associated harm from drugs, particularly methamphetamine. Drawing on existing governance and leadership ROCC seeks to increase wellbeing services prior and sustain support following enforcement action, to ensure continuing and growing resilience. ROCC's initial regional focus is in Hawke's Bay and Tairāwhiti with funding from the Provincial Growth and Proceeds of Crime funds. This combined wellbeing and criminal justice response will become increasingly important as we face the social and economic impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic.

Providing advice on the Future of Social Sector Commissioning

An effective and sustainable social sector is central to improving wellbeing across New Zealand communities. Government agencies, Non-Government Organisations (NGOs), philanthropic funders and communities all share the common goal of improving wellbeing and equity of outcomes for individuals, families, whānau and communities.

The Future of Social Sector Commissioning programme is working to improve the Government's commissioning of social services and lead a collective effort to delivering a more effective and sustainable social sector. It is focused on moving towards sustainable funding models and recognising the ability for communities and iwi to successfully design local solutions to local issues.

Active role in COVID-19 recovery

The Social Wellbeing Board is taking an active role in repositioning its work programme for COVID-19 recovery

Minimising the impact of FVSV during the COVID-19 response

Experience and evidence from both overseas and within New Zealand demonstrated very clearly that FVSV tend to increase during and immediately after a substantial crisis. COVID-19 created the conditions for an increase in FVSV to occur. The immediate Joint Venture response in that period was to implement the government's commitment to ensuring that people could access the help and support they needed right from the outset of the COVID-19 Alert period.

The Joint Venture took a systemic and proactive approach to leading the government's response to minimising the impact of FVSV as part of the COVID-19 pandemic response. The Joint Venture model was at the very heart of enabling a COVID-19 response to move quickly and with the precision and coherence across government that can only come from a joined-up response.

Repositioning the first Oranga Tamariki Action Plan

In response to COVID-19, the Minister for Children agreed that the Action Plan should be have a COVID-19 recovery focus. Repositioning of the Action Plan will help ensure it captures an understanding of the impact on, and addresses the recovery of, children and young people with greater needs.

Overseeing Caring for our Communities COVID-19 workstream

The Caring for Communities programme within the COVID-19 All-of-Government Response Group was established to better understand and focus on New Zealand's most vulnerable communities and to ensure that services were provided to them, even during full lockdown. A programme team with staff from up to 12 agencies (depending on what Alert Levels were in operation) worked to a Chief Executive Governance Group chaired by the Chief Executive of the Ministry for Social Development (including the embedded Programme Lead) overseen by the Social Wellbeing Board.

The programme scaled down in June and up again in August when Alert Levels were raised. The programme scaled down considerably in mid-September but is able to scale up again within the COVID-19 All-of-Government Response Group in the event of future re-emergence of COVID-19 in any region. The ongoing role of the programme is to act as a connection point and 'clearing house' to support agencies, regions, and communities by working across the public service.

Emerging priorities and opportunities

The Social Wellbeing Board actively revisits its priorities and will seek guidance from Ministers on emerging priorities and opportunities for the Board

Advising Ministers on the strategic direction for COVID-19 Recovery

Over \$50 billion of new funding was announced in Budget 2020 to support New Zealand through the COVID-19 response and recovery. In the social sector, funding will deal with immediate issues, while also being available to be targeted at transformational improvement across the sector.

The Social Wellbeing Board has a role setting and driving strategic opportunities from COVID-19 response and recovery funding for the social sector. It would be supported by Treasury and the Social Wellbeing Agency to ensure good visibility across spending of COVID-19 Response and Recovery Funding.

The Board also has a role deriving lessons from the COVID-19 response and recovery activities across the social sector. This includes taking stock of activities and understanding different approaches (particularly variation in local engagement), monitoring what's worked well but also identifying areas for improvement.

Planning for medium term coordinated investment

Programme funding across the social sector is often time limited, despite the issues and opportunities being addressed extending beyond the Budget cycle. This can create funding cliffs and does not support longer term planning for improving social wellbeing or good commissioning of services.

The Social Wellbeing Board sees an opportunity for it to take a strategic view of investment across the social sector over the medium term, understanding the fiscal environment and identifying areas where a coordinated investment approach would be beneficial. With Treasury expecting a weaker medium-term outlook due to COVID-19 (PREFU forecast), stronger coordination can support Ministers to identify opportunities for reprioritisation.

Supporting locally led approaches through better regional partnerships

COVID-19 drove home the importance of community-level responses. Across the social sector, outcomes are realised through services delivered by Māori and iwi, non-governmental and community organisations, as well as by government agencies. Community responses build on the strengths and characteristics of a community, strengthen partnership with Māori and facilitate integrated service provision.

There is an opportunity for the Social Wellbeing Board to support better outcomes with a focus on how government is working in partnership at the regional level to empower communities. This opportunity would be supported through a more granular view of service provision and outcomes.

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