

Security Classification – Budget Sensitive

Office of the Minister for Child Poverty Reduction

Office of the Minister for Children

Chair, Cabinet Social Wellbeing Committee

CHILD WELLBEING STRATEGY WORK PROGRAMME AND BUDGET IMPLICATIONS

Proposal

1. This paper provides an update on the development of New Zealand's first Child Wellbeing Strategy, including initial policy work and public engagement; signals potential implications for Budget 2019; and seeks Cabinet agreement to the ongoing work proposed in the six initial focus areas.

Executive Summary

2. The Child Poverty Reduction Bill, currently before select committee, requires the Government to adopt a Child Wellbeing Strategy within 12 months of the enactment of the Bill. The Strategy will be required to apply to children and young people up to the age of 18, and young adults up to age 25 who are transitioning from State care. The Bill defines a "child" in these terms.
3. In May 2018, Cabinet:
 - 3.1. agreed to a broad framing of child wellbeing, draft proposals for a vision statement, a set of outcomes sought for all children based on five wellbeing domains (safety, security, connectedness, wellness and development), and an indicative list of 16 focus areas to inform the initial Child Wellbeing Strategy;
 - 3.2. agreed that initial policy work be progressed in a smaller group of six focus areas where there is strong evidence that addressing these issues will have significant positive impacts, and greater focus is warranted beyond the current policy work programme;
 - 3.3. invited us to report back to Cabinet in September 2018 with a summary of feedback from public engagement to date and advice on the draft wellbeing framework, and on a final set of initial focus areas and the potential implications for Budget 2019.

Engagement to date and insights gathered


4. Since May, officials have undertaken a formative stage of engagement with interested stakeholder groups, including children and young people, both to share thinking on the possible content and areas of focus for the Child Wellbeing Strategy, and to test engagement approaches. A formal and more comprehensive public engagement process will take place over the September to December 2018 period.

5. Stakeholders to date have been very supportive of the concept of a Child Wellbeing Strategy, seeing it as an important opportunity to significantly improve the lives of children and their families. The feedback received suggests that the draft approach taken to framing child wellbeing is generally encompassing of the issues that stakeholders would anticipate being covered in a strategy. At the same time, people have identified potential refinements to the wellbeing framework and/or areas that should be added or given greater emphasis, including:
 - 5.1. better reflecting Te Ao Māori, the important contexts of family, whānau and culture in children’s lives and the importance of love and of play;
 - 5.2. better communicating the framework in ways that are accessible and empowering for children and young people; and
 - 5.3. the possibility of adding to or amending some of the draft wellbeing domains and focus areas, for example a new domain for children’s agency and voice.
6. Officials have revised the wellbeing outcomes framework to reflect the key feedback received through the formative engagement period, together with input from members of the Child Wellbeing Strategy Reference Group and comments received via the Ministerial and cross-party consultation processes. The revised framework will be tested with children and young people, iwi and Māori, including whānau, and other stakeholders, as part of the broader engagement approach.
7. In addition, we will be adopting the working title “Child and Youth Wellbeing Strategy” for the purposes of public engagement, to make explicit the inclusion of young people and those young adults who have been in statutory care.

The six initial focus areas

8. The first Child Wellbeing Strategy will set a direction for transformation of the system for supporting child wellbeing, identifying the key shifts required and establishing a clear roadmap for Government.
9. Early analysis, together with stakeholder feedback to date, indicates that the six initial focus areas for policy work identified by Cabinet in May are appropriate.

10. s9(2)(f)(iv)



11. Early work has also helped to set the direction for a medium-term cross-agency programme of work focused on systemic transformation. Subsequent activity is likely to focus on developing in detail the key steps required, drawing on the expertise and experience of multiple stakeholders. From the outset, this will include looking for opportunities to work differently with stakeholders in the policy development and design process.
12. We are seeking Cabinet agreement for:
 - 12.1. officials to continue to progress short-term policy work on the six initial focus areas to help inform the first Child Wellbeing Strategy and Budget 2019 (as appropriate);
 - 12.2. short-term policy work on the remaining 10 focus areas (agreed by Cabinet in May 2018) to centre on identifying current activity and, where necessary, amending or merging some of these focus areas as well as commissioning work to address critical gaps;
 - 12.3. officials to continue to develop and refine the medium-term, cross-agency work signalled for the six initial focus areas, building on insights from public engagement, new evidence and data, and the findings from innovative community approaches.

13. s9(2)(f)(iv)

Background

14. The Child Poverty Reduction Bill is due to be reported back to the House in October 2018. The Bill requires the development of a Government strategy for improving child wellbeing, to be published within 12 months of the enactment of the legislation. The Minister for Child Poverty Reduction and Minister for Children are jointly responsible for overseeing the development of the Child Wellbeing Strategy [CBC-17-MIN-0048 refers].
15. In May 2018, we obtained Cabinet agreement to the broad framing of child wellbeing, draft proposals for a vision statement, a set of outcomes sought for all children, and an indicative list of 16 focus areas for further policy work to inform the initial Child Wellbeing Strategy¹. These were to be tested through public engagement [CAB-18-MIN-0208 refers]. The draft framework for child wellbeing that was approved by Cabinet in May is attached at Appendix A.
16. At the same time, Cabinet directed that cross-agency exploratory policy work be undertaken on six of the 16 focus areas:
 - 16.1. Child poverty is reduced, in line with the Government's intermediate and ten-year targets

¹ The Child Poverty Reduction legislation requires the strategy to be reviewed every three years.

- 16.2. Children experience optimal development in their first 1000 days: safe and positive pregnancy, birth and parenting (conception to around two years)
- 16.3. Children are thriving socially, emotionally and developmentally in the early years (two to six years)
- 16.4. Children are safe and nurtured, in their whānau and their homes
- 16.5. Children's mental wellbeing is supported
- 16.6. Children are free from racism, discrimination and stigma.
17. Two of these initial focus areas support the wellbeing of infants and young children, reflecting the critical importance of the early years of child development. However, the combination of priorities is intended to promote the wellbeing of all children and young people. We note that the focus area "Children's mental wellbeing is supported" is likely to have particular relevance for teenagers.
18. Initial policy work in these six areas is intended to help inform possible Budget 2019 considerations and the development of the first Child Wellbeing Strategy. The six initial focus areas were selected on the basis of our current evidence base; particularly where there is strong evidence that addressing these issues will have significant positive impacts, both on child wellbeing in the here and now, and on longer term life-course wellbeing; and greater focus is warranted beyond the current policy work programme.
19. The emphasis on these six areas is not intended to diminish activity in the remaining 10 focus areas or to detract from efforts elsewhere to improve universal service delivery settings (such as compulsory schooling and primary health care).
20. Cabinet also invited us to report back in September 2018 with a summary of feedback from public engagement to date and advice on:
- 20.1. the proposed framing of wellbeing, the vision statement, outcomes framework, and the long-list of (16) focus areas for ongoing work; and
- 20.2. a final set of initial focus areas, and the potential implications for Budget 2019 and the development of the first Child Wellbeing Strategy.
21. This paper responds to Cabinet's invitation. It summarises early stakeholder feedback and refinements to the framing of child wellbeing, to provide the basis for further public engagement. It also provides early advice on the six initial focus areas in the context of Budget 2019 and seeks agreement to further short and medium-term policy work in these areas.

Approach to public engagement

22. The development of the Child Wellbeing Strategy will be informed by the insights of children and young people, their families, those working directly with them, and the wider public. The Child Poverty Reduction Bill includes a minimum legislative requirement for consultation with children, Iwi and Māori organisations. Ahead of more substantial and structured engagement, officials undertook some initial engagement

with interested stakeholder groups over the May to July period, both to share thinking on the possible content and areas of focus for the Child Wellbeing Strategy and to test engagement approaches.

23. Engagement in this period has included the following groups: attendees at the *'Weaving our Strengths'* Symposium hosted by the JR McKenzie Trust, the Office of the Commissioner for Children and Inspiring Communities; stakeholders attending a series of Oranga Tamariki—Ministry for Children regional hui; members of the New Zealand Council of Christian Social Services policy forum; attendees at the New Zealand Child and Youth Epidemiology National Conference; the Halberg Youth Council; a group of community stakeholders facilitated by Wesley Community Action and a group of Whānau Ora navigators and whānau members, facilitated by Te Pou Matakana.
24. Officials have also discussed the draft child wellbeing outcomes framework (Appendix A) with the Child Wellbeing Strategy Reference Group (a group consisting of several experts set up to advise officials), the departmental science advisors, the Ministerial Advisory Group on the Early Learning Ten Year Strategic Plan (reporting to the Minister of Education), and the Disability Rights Commissioner.
25. In addition:
 - 25.1. the Office for the Children's Commissioner has supported this work by conducting an initial engagement exercise with 237 children and young people to gather their views on wellbeing: what supports a good life, what gets in the way of having a good life and what would make the most difference. Feedback was received through an online survey, two focus groups and two one-to-one interviews; and
 - 25.2. the Minister for Children and officials received feedback on the draft child wellbeing framework from the Minister of Education's Youth Advisory Panel.
26. Although these formative engagements were limited in scope and number, they have provided valuable early feedback on the approach so far, and informed the development of a more comprehensive engagement plan to be rolled out over the remainder of the calendar year. This plan was signed off by joint Ministers together with portfolio Ministers and the Ministers for Crown/Māori Relations, Māori Development and Whānau Ora in August 2018.
27. Public engagement will take place over the September to December 2018 period, utilising a range of approaches including face-to-face meetings, social media channels and an online survey. The aim is to ensure that there is an appropriate balance of targeted consultation with key stakeholder groups, including children and young people, Iwi and Māori organisations, and whānau, while also providing an opportunity for any interested individual or group to have their say.
28. The engagement approach will take into account the other child, youth and wellbeing-related engagement processes occurring across the social sector at the moment. Where possible, officials will look to draw from or build on those processes.

Summary of stakeholder feedback to date

29. To date, stakeholders have been very supportive of the concept of a Child Wellbeing Strategy, seeing it as an important opportunity to significantly improve the lives of children and their families. This is consistent with submissions made to the Social Services and Community Select Committee on the Child Poverty Reduction Bill.
30. Key themes raised by children and young people in the initial engagement conducted by the Office of the Children's Commissioner were:
 - 30.1. my wellbeing is interwoven with the wellbeing of my whānau;
 - 30.2. child poverty should be eradicated, not reduced;
 - 30.3. I need people to have time for me;
 - 30.4. education can have big impacts on me; and
 - 30.5. I want to be respected and valued for who I am.
31. This initial engagement also raised two additional matters of importance to children and young people that are not well reflected in the current 16 focus areas:
 - 31.1. a focus on equality and social justice to enable change; and
 - 31.2. access to affordable "fun", i.e. play and outdoor opportunities.
32. Overall feedback from stakeholders on specific components of the draft framework is summarised as follows:
 - 32.1. stakeholders have indicated support for framing 'wellbeing' as a multi-faceted, holistic concept. The five wellbeing domains (safety, security, connectedness, wellness and development) capture many of the factors people consider most important, but there are some additional concepts, such as children's agency and voice, that may not be adequately represented;
 - 32.2. suggestions for expressing some concepts, including the domain names, in ways that are more appropriate and accessible, more positive and empowering, and that better specify the aspirations we have for children and young people;
 - 32.3. the 16 proposed focus areas have not been extensively tested. Feedback to date suggests that they capture the vast majority of key issues of interest and concern to those consulted, but there are some additional ideas coming through, such as ensuring good and affordable sport, recreational opportunities and libraries;
 - 32.4. emerging themes highlight the importance of adequate income and secure housing as the foundations of child and family wellbeing ("ensuring that all children have the basics");
 - 32.5. the need to address family violence and to support mental health are two other areas that have been raised as being of particular concern (with some noting a bi-directional relationship between these issues and poverty);

- 32.6. the need to ensure the framework is clearly communicated to apply to young people – the word “children” is not necessarily understood to include teenagers;
- 32.7. stakeholders have identified the need for government services to operate in a joined-up way to respond more effectively to the needs of individuals and families; and
- 32.8. the roles of family, whānau, communities (including groups and churches) and NGOs have been highlighted as critical to the achievement of enhanced child wellbeing.

An enhanced framework to support further public engagement

33. While the feedback received suggested that the approach taken to framing child wellbeing was generally positive, a range of suggestions for refinement were made. These can be summarised as a need to:
 - 33.1. ensure that the framing better reflects Te Ao Māori (the Māori world view);
 - 33.2. highlight the importance of whakapapa, culture and identity – “kids knowing who they are and where they come from”;
 - 33.3. place a stronger emphasis on the child in the broader context of family and whānau;
 - 33.4. acknowledge and make visible the importance of love in a child’s life;
 - 33.5. highlight the importance of play and “letting kids be kids”;
 - 33.6. recognise the central role of education in children’s lives – school is not just the place where children are educated but is also where friends are and has the potential to be hugely positive, but can also be damaging if affected by bullying and negative peer influences;
 - 33.7. consider adding to or amending some of the draft domains and focus areas – for example adding a further domain relating to children’s agency and voice; and
 - 33.8. review the terminology used for the domains and focus areas to ensure it is easily understood and resonates positively with a wide range of New Zealanders, including children themselves.
34. We note that the wellbeing framework, as agreed by Cabinet in May (Appendix A) is a complex and policy-oriented document. Officials have subsequently revised it to reflect the key feedback received through the formative engagement period, together with input from members of the Child Wellbeing Strategy Reference Group and comments received via the Ministerial and cross-party consultation processes.
35. The revised framework (Appendix B) is more aspirational, outcomes-focused and uses people-oriented language, reflecting the importance of love, trust and care. The wording is intended to be more accessible to children and young people and to resonate with as many New Zealanders as possible. The visual presentation conveys a stronger sense of the child in the context of family, whānau and community, and reflects New Zealand’s Māori culture and heritage.

36. We intend to use the revised wellbeing framework as the basis for planned public engagement through the September to December period, allowing for further testing with children and young people, Iwi and Māori, including whānau, and other stakeholders. Appropriate language and formats will be adopted for the different audiences engaged with. It is vital that the framework resonates with Māori, and also appropriately reflects the reality of our culturally diverse society. To aid this, Te Reo Māori language translations of the name of the Strategy and the five wellbeing domains will be incorporated.
37. Feedback from the engagement process, together with any recommended amendments to the final framing of child wellbeing, will be reported to us early in the New Year.
38. As mentioned above, early feedback also indicated a perception that the scope of this work is limited to younger children and, as such, will not address the interests of young people. The Child Poverty Reduction Bill defines a child as a person up to the age of 18 years and, in the case of young adults transitioning from the care of Oranga Tamariki—Ministry for Children, up to the age of 25 years. For the purposes of public engagement, the Strategy will be referred to by the working title “Child and Youth Wellbeing Strategy”, to explicitly reflect the inclusion of young people, and those young adults who have been in statutory care. The final name to be used for the published Strategy will be determined by Ministers early next year, at the conclusion of public engagement.

Confirmation of the six initial focus areas

39. The Ministers of Education, Health, Justice and Social Development have agreed to work with us to lead or co-lead work on each of the six focus areas identified as the starting point for exploratory policy work (listed at paragraph 16). Ministers and their respective Chief Executives have committed to identifying and aligning portfolio activities to the focus areas, and ensuring adequate resourcing is available to support this critical work.
40. Early analysis, together with consideration of the stakeholder feedback to date, indicates the six initial focus areas identified for policy attention under the work programme are appropriate. We know that there is potential to deliver transformative system-level change in these areas, resulting in tangible improvements in child wellbeing. We therefore do not recommend any changes to the six initial focus areas at this point in time.
41. We note that there are clear overlaps in the areas of interest to the child wellbeing work and other major policy reviews commissioned by the Government, in particular: the work of the Welfare Expert Advisory Group (WEAG); education sector reviews of NCEA and Tomorrow’s Schools; the development of a new Early Learning Strategy; the Government Inquiry into Mental Health and Addiction; and the review of Whānau Ora. Officials have sought to raise awareness of the development of the Child Wellbeing Strategy with the groups leading these reviews, and will look for opportunities to align activity in these areas.

Policy work programme in the six initial focus areas

42. Early effort in the six initial focus areas has concentrated on developing a clearer picture of the issues that impact on child wellbeing, the roles that government currently plays to support children and their families, and the strengths, gaps and limitations of existing interventions and service delivery approaches. s9(2)(f)(iv)
43. Officials have developed a cross-agency, multi-year work programme that seeks to address the underlying factors that impact on wellbeing (such as poverty and mental health), while also transforming the way that children and families are supported across the broader social sector. Planned activity incorporates a focus on preventative and early intervention strategies in a range of areas including improved early support for families and whānau s9(2)(f)(iv)
44. Meeting the child poverty reduction targets is at the core of the work to enhance child wellbeing and achieve the vision of the Child Wellbeing Strategy. Child poverty is influenced by multiple factors, including the outcomes of welfare, labour market, housing, taxation, health and wider social policies, many of which are under active review at present. s9(2)(f)(iv)
45. Other work will concentrate on transforming the approach to the provision of broader social supports to children and their families. This will include:
- 45.1. a focus on the pre-natal through to approximately age six cohort, recognising the vital importance of the early years developmentally, and in laying the foundations for future wellbeing;
 - 45.2. work to enhance services for school-age children and teenagers; this will be advanced through the “Children are safe and nurtured” and “Children’s mental wellbeing is supported” focus areas in particular;
 - 45.3. work to address the “Children are free from racism, discrimination and stigma” focus area, which will be determined by initial policy scoping work currently being commissioned.
46. The first Child Wellbeing Strategy will set the direction for this transformation, identifying the key shifts required and establishing a clear roadmap for Government. Subsequent activity is likely to focus on developing in detail the key steps required, drawing on the expertise and experience of multiple stakeholders. From the outset, this will include looking for opportunities to work differently with stakeholders in the policy development and design processes. In addition, officials are investigating options for supporting innovation and research.
47. We are also keenly aware of the importance of the Crown’s obligations under the Treaty of Waitangi in the context of this work. There is an intention that the work reflect

a commitment to the Treaty partnership, particularly through the process of engagement, development and focus of the Strategy, and required progress reporting. Officials from Te Puni Kōkiri and the Crown Māori Relations Unit (in the Ministry of Justice) are providing important support to the work in this regard, to help ensure sufficient focus on whānau and tamariki Māori, good engagement with Māori and Iwi in the development of the Strategy, and to draw on insights from engagement on the review of Whānau Ora.

48. The overarching work programme in each of the six initial focus areas is summarised in Table One, below:

Table One: Child Wellbeing Strategy short and medium-term work programme

Initial focus area	Short-term policy work (to June 2019)	Medium-term policy work programme (1 to 5 years)
<p>Child poverty is reduced</p>	<p>Analysis of:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • data to assess current incomes for those in poverty • what is needed to meet Government's child poverty targets <p>s9(2)(f)(iv)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • assessment of the impact of earnings policies (including minimum wage) on child poverty. <p>s9(2)(f)(iv)</p>	<p>Consideration of a broader range of policy settings including: child care, child support, debt, and the costs of health and education.</p> <p>To meet the long-term target, a significant degree of transformation will be required across the economy, labour market and the housing market, alongside work to address broader social factors. Medium-term work will include the development of advice on the nature of, and approach to, this transformative change.</p>
<p>Children are thriving (2 to 6 years)</p>	<p>Work to understand current government supports for parents, including services offered, coverage and investment.</p> <p>Identification of opportunities for short-term improvements in parenting supports, as well as planning broader medium-term policy work.</p> <p>s9(2)(f)(iv)</p>	<p>Development of a combined programme of work [to be undertaken jointly with the 'children are safe and nurtured' and 'first 1000 days' focus areas].</p> <p>This work will focus on identifying the key elements of <i>transformative system change</i> to support young children (pre-natal to 6 years), their parents and families.</p> <p>It will draw on local and international evidence bases, feedback from public engagement, the experience of government and non-government providers, and the expertise of the departmental science advisors to identify: the core elements of good-practice interventions/approaches; the opportunities to enact transformative change; and the development of a critical pathway.</p> <p>This analysis will establish a prioritised action plan for change over a two to five-year period.</p>

<p>The first 1000 days</p>	<p>s9(2)(f)(iv)</p> <p>Investigating the potential to co-invest with the Southern Initiative and Next Foundation to design and test new ways of building local capacity and reducing the weight of toxic stress on families with young children. (This work will include testing the extent to which this work aligns with Whānau Ora and other approaches).</p>	<p>Work alongside community-based initiatives to identify opportunities to support innovative approaches.</p> <p>Grow knowledge base of 'what works' through looking for opportunities to partner with, or otherwise work alongside innovative community-led approaches. This work will inform medium-term transformative approaches (as noted above).</p>
<p>Children are safe and nurtured</p>	<p>Significant changes to the Oranga Tamariki operating model as required by legislation from July 2019, to fulfil the commitment to transformative changes started with the establishment of the Ministry last year.</p> <p>s9(2)(f)(iv)</p>	<p>Ongoing significant changes to the Oranga Tamariki operating model as required by legislation from July 2019.</p> <p>Cross-agency work to identify better supports for <u>all</u> children with early risk factors – not just those at risk of harm. [Note there will be synergies with the 0-6 work outlined above].</p>
<p>Children's mental wellbeing is supported</p>	<p>Develop understanding of the current state, including identification of current inequities, system pressures and issues.</p> <p>Identification of the core elements of a transformed approach and change levers.</p> <p>This work is linked to preparation for findings of the Inquiry into Mental Health and Addiction, s9(2)(f)(iv)</p>	<p>Development of a transformed approach to mental wellbeing for New Zealand (including children and young people) in response to findings of the Inquiry into Mental Health and Addiction.</p>
<p>Children are free from racism, discrimination and stigma</p>	<p>Build an evidence base and an analytical framework – working alongside frontline experts, academics and other agencies. Tackling racism, discrimination and stigma has not been done before in a comprehensive way across government.</p> <p>Identify opportunities and targets for change.</p>	<p>To be determined, based on the outcomes of early exploratory work, including, for example, further investigations of systemic and structural discrimination.</p>

Implications for Budget 2019

49. We have identified key areas of focus for a potential package of Budget 2019 initiatives, to be progressed under the auspices of the Child Wellbeing Strategy. s9(2)(f)(iv)

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Released by the Office of the Minister for Child Poverty Reduction

Advancing the remaining 10 focus areas

56. The remaining 10 focus areas agreed by Cabinet canvass a wide range of issues, including improved opportunities and outcomes for disabled children, healthy lifestyles, safety (accident prevention), housing affordability, quality and stability, cultural identity, opportunities for civic engagement and positive interactions with peers.
57. While work on these areas is not currently being progressed within the child wellbeing work programme, there is active and, in some cases, significant policy work occurring under existing work programmes. For example, one of the 10 remaining focus areas is “Children and whānau live in affordable, quality housing” (noting that housing affordability is being considered through the “Reducing child poverty” priority focus area). s9(2)(f)(iv)
58. Given the level of cross-agency resourcing required to support proposed Budget 2019 initiatives, together with work to develop the longer-term approaches in the six initial focus areas, we anticipate that work under the Strategy work programme in the remaining focus areas will be lighter touch in the first instance. Initial efforts will focus on understanding the work that agencies have underway that is relevant to these focus areas, and its likely impact on child wellbeing. This will enable us to tell a coherent story about the Government’s efforts across the full range of areas that will be covered in the first Child Wellbeing Strategy. Where necessary, additional work will be commissioned to address critical identified gaps.
59. We will also be reflecting on whether there are any amendments we can make to the 10 remaining focus areas to address gaps identified in consultation or, if appropriate, to merge existing focus areas.

Measuring improvements in child wellbeing and data availability

60. The development and use of measures to track progress in improving children’s wellbeing is a requirement under the Child Poverty Reduction Bill. Work is underway to identify a set of outcome measures (indicators) to provide a comprehensive picture of child wellbeing. This work will draw on and link into other data and measurement work across government, including the Living Standards Framework, Indicators Aotearoa New Zealand and the Lifetime Wellbeing Model.
61. Understanding the progress of the Strategy is dependent on the availability of high-quality and accessible data relevant to child wellbeing. Data shortcomings have been identified by multiple agencies as an important issue that impedes decision-making at both a policy and a service delivery level. A cross-agency working group is working to

identify gaps in current data, agree on a shared minimum data set focused on child wellbeing, and to integrate approaches to address gaps.

Publication of the first Child Wellbeing Strategy

62. s9(2)(f)(iv)

Consultation

63. The following agencies were consulted in the development of this paper: the Ministries of Education, Health, Justice, Social Development; the Ministry for Pacific Peoples; the Ministry for Women; the Office of the Commissioner for Children; Oranga Tamariki—Ministry for Children; Police; the Social Investment Agency; the State Services Commission; Statistics New Zealand; Te Puni Kōkiri; and the Treasury. The Department of the Prime Minister and Cabinet (Prime Minister) was informed.

Financial Implications

64. There are no immediate financial implications arising from the contents of this paper. The ongoing strategy development is likely to have significant fiscal impacts that will be addressed through Budget 2019 and subsequent Budget processes.

Legislative Implications

65. There are no legislative implications arising from the content of this paper.

Impact Analysis

66. An impact statement or impact analysis is not required.

Human Rights

67. Proposals developed as part of the Child Wellbeing Strategy will need to be consistent with the New Zealand Bill of Rights Act 1990, the Human Rights Act 1993 and with New Zealand's commitments to the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child 1989.

Gender Implications

68. Efforts to improve child wellbeing are likely to have positive benefits for many women, who are more likely to be the primary caregivers for children and young people. Benefits may be realised in the form of efforts to improve the wellbeing of new mothers, support for parenting more generally, and through addressing child poverty.

69. Transgender children and young people, and those with diverse gender identities, can have particular wellbeing needs and face poor outcomes in some areas, including mental health. The focus of the Child Wellbeing Strategy on improving the wellbeing of children with greater needs will help to address the disparities experienced by transgender and other gender-diverse children and young people.

Disability Perspective

70. Improving opportunities and outcomes for disabled children has been identified as one of the 16 proposed focus areas for the development of the Child Wellbeing Strategy. The interests and needs of disabled children and of children of disabled parents will also be considered within each of the other focus areas; for example in relation to access to social housing and education, and consideration given to the reasons why disability may be linked to poverty. There is a paucity of data about disabled children, and efforts to improve the quality and breadth of data relevant to child wellbeing will include a focus on this group.

Publicity

71. A communications strategy will be developed to support the public engagement phase of this work.

Proactive Release

72. We intend that this Cabinet paper be proactively released subject to any redactions appropriate under the Official Information Act 1982; for example in relation to Budget proposals.

Recommendations

73. The Minister for Child Poverty Reduction and the Minister for Children recommend that the Committee:
 1. **Note** that in May 2018, Cabinet agreed to the broad framing of child wellbeing for the purposes of public engagement, including a draft vision statement, a set of outcomes and an indicative list of 16 focus areas for further policy work [CAB-18-MIN-0208];
 2. **Note** that Cabinet also directed the Department of the Prime Minister and Cabinet to coordinate exploratory policy work on six initial focus areas to help inform Budget 2019 considerations and the possible content of the first Child Wellbeing Strategy;
 3. **Note** that Cabinet also invited the Minister for Child Poverty Reduction and the Minister for Children to report to Cabinet in September 2018 with a summary of feedback from public engagement to date and advice on:
 - 3.1. the proposed framing of wellbeing, the vision statement, outcomes framework, and the long list of 16 focus areas for ongoing work; and
 - 3.2. a final set of initial focus areas, and the potential implications for Budget 2019 and the development of the first Child Wellbeing Strategy;

Engagement

4. **Note** that officials have undertaken formative engagement with interested stakeholder groups over the May to July period, to share thinking on the possible content and areas of focus for the Child Wellbeing Strategy and to test engagement approaches;

5. **Note** that a plan for a formal and more comprehensive public engagement process was approved by lead Ministers with portfolio Ministers and the Ministers for Crown/Māori Relations, Māori Development and Whānau Ora in August 2018, and will be rolled out over the remainder of the calendar year;

Framing of child wellbeing

6. **Note** that early, formative engagement suggests that the draft framing of child wellbeing is generally encompassing of the issues that stakeholders would anticipate being covered in a Strategy;
7. **Note** that feedback also suggested that the framing could be strengthened in a number of other areas, including:
 - 7.1. better reflecting Te Ao Māori, the important contexts of family, whānau and culture in children's lives and the importance of love and of play;
 - 7.2. better communicating the framework in ways that are accessible and empowering for children; and
 - 7.3. considering the possibility of adding to or amending some of the draft domains and focus areas;
8. **Note** that the wellbeing framework has been revised to reflect key aspects of the feedback and the revised version (Appendix B) will be proactively tested through the formal public engagement process;
9. **Note** that for the purposes of public engagement, the working title "Child and Youth Wellbeing Strategy" will be used to explicitly reflect the inclusion of young people, and those young adults who have been in statutory care, with the final name to be used for the published Strategy to be determined by Ministers in early 2019, at the conclusion of public engagement;

Confirmation of the six areas of initial policy focus

10. **Note** that the Ministers of Education, Health, Justice and Social Development have agreed to work with us to lead or co-lead work on each of the six initial focus areas;
11. **Note** that officials from Te Puni Kōkiri and the Crown Māori Relations Unit are providing important support to the work to help ensure sufficient focus on whānau and tamariki Māori, good engagement with Māori in the development of the Strategy and to draw on insights from the review of Whānau Ora;
12. **Note** that early analysis, together with stakeholder feedback to date, indicates that the six initial focus areas identified for policy attention are appropriate;
13. **Agree** that officials continue to progress short-term policy work on the six initial focus areas to help inform the first Child Wellbeing Strategy and Budget 2019 (as appropriate);
14. **Agree** that for the purposes of the first Child Wellbeing Strategy, short-term policy work on the remaining 10 focus areas focus on identifying current activity and, where

necessary, amending or merging some of these focus areas as well as commissioning work to address critical gaps;

Medium-term work programme

15. **Note** that real and sustained change will be realised through a medium-term programme of work focused on systemic transformation;
16. **Agree** that officials continue to develop and refine the medium-term, cross-agency work signalled on the six initial focus areas;
17. **Note** that this medium-term work programme is likely to evolve to:
 - 17.1. include the other areas of focus in outyears; and
 - 17.2. build on insights from public engagement, new evidence and data and the findings from innovative community approaches;

Implications for Budget 2019

18. s9(2)(f)(iv) 

Publication of the first Child Wellbeing Strategy

19. s9(2)(f)(iv) 

Authorised for lodgement

Rt Hon Jacinda Ardern
Minister for Child Poverty Reduction

Hon Tracey Martin
Minister for Children