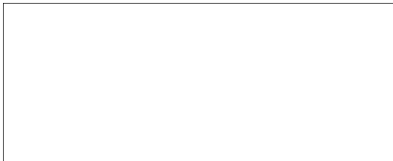




1 March 2017



Request for the report: *Findings of a review into the implementation of the Government's Social Housing Reforms*

Dear

In relation to your request for a copy of the report: *Findings of a review into the implementation of the Government's Social Housing Reforms*, we attach a copy of the report with minor redactions.

The Ministry of Social Development (MSD) has been very appreciative of the independent *Review*. Since the review was carried out, a significant amount of work has been undertaken by all of the relevant agencies to address many of its recommendations, including:

- MSD becoming the lead agency for the Social Housing Reform Programme (SHRP).
- MSD having a designated Deputy Chief Executive for Social Housing, and appointing a new General Manager Strategic Purchasing.
- MSD becoming a more intelligent social housing purchaser, and introducing an investment approach to social housing.
- Extending Income-Related Rent Subsidy (IRRS) payments to community housing providers. And, introducing more flexible funding arrangements to provide more social housing, faster, where it is most needed.
- Strengthening and diversifying the social housing market, now with 42 Community Housing Providers registered.
- MSD issuing its latest Purchasing Strategy which includes its plan to purchase over 6,400 additional social housing places by June 2020 (almost half of these will be one-bedroom properties).
- MSD introducing a broader range of financial assistance and support services to people in need. Such as; Housing Support Products (for example, bond and letting fees), Special Needs Grants (for emergency housing) and Tenancy Reviews. All these have supported hundreds of households to independence which has freed up more social housing places for the people who most need them.
- MSD funding the internationally-acclaimed *Housing First* programme to address chronic homelessness in Auckland Central, West and South.
- Supporting households to relocate from Auckland, where this is the right thing for them.
- Increased supply of emergency/transitional housing, particularly in Auckland.

These are considerable achievements as the *Review* acknowledged that the SHRP is a large-scale and complex reform, being implemented in a challenging context. Indeed, the SHRP constitutes one of the most significant reforms to the social housing sector for decades. Ultimately, the SHRP is a cross-agency work programme aimed at building a fair, efficient and effective social housing system that supports the right people into the right house, for the right duration and cost.

MSD has acknowledged the Review's observations and recommendations, and has significantly re-focused its activities to ensure that it, and all relevant agencies, are working to strengthen the outcomes for those who need safe, secure and stable housing in our communities today.

Some information is withheld under section 9(2)(f)(iv) of the Official Information Act as it is under active consideration. The release of this information is likely to prejudice the quality of information received and the wider public interest of effective government would not be served.

You will note that the names of some individuals are withheld under section 9(2)(a) of the Act in order to protect the privacy of natural persons. The need to protect the privacy of these individuals outweighs any public interest in this information.

Given the high public interest in the government's work in the area of social housing, we will be making this letter and the redacted report publicly available. The Ministry will do this by publishing this letter and report on our website. Your personal details will be deleted and the Ministry will not publish any information that would identify you as the person who requested the information.

You have the right to seek an investigation and review by the Ombudsman of this response. Information about how to make a complaint is available at: www.ombudsman.parliament.nz or 0800 802 602.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Scott Gallacher', with a long horizontal line extending to the right.

Scott Gallacher
Deputy Chief Executive, Social Housing