

Appendix One: Key elements of Social Sector Commissioning

- 1 The key elements and direction of change to be progressed through Social Sector Commissioning are summarised below.
 - 1.1 **System purpose:** Working together to support individuals, families, whānau to live the life they value.
 - 1.2 **Outcome sought:** Better commissioning of social services will contribute to intergenerational wellbeing.
 - 1.3 **Principles** guiding change in the commissioning process:
 - Individuals, families, whānau and communities exercise choice.
 - Māori-Crown partnerships are at the heart of effective commissioning.
 - Commissioning is responsive to the equity of unique and diverse populations.
 - The sector works together locally, regionally, and nationally.
 - The sector is sustainable.
 - Decisions and actions are taken transparently.
 - The sector is always learning and improving.

Relational approach to commissioning:

- 2 In November 2021, Cabinet noted that a fundamental shift in behaviour, practice, and systems is needed to enable a “relational approach to commissioning” that:
 - 2.1 enables trusting, meaningful relationships between government agencies, funders, NGO providers, community representatives
 - 2.2 ensures the preferences and lived experience of individuals, families, whānau and communities influence the design, delivery, and monitoring of support for their wellbeing
 - 2.3 lifts the burden of navigating the complexity of government silos and inconsistent funding practices from individuals, families, whānau and communities.

Figure One on the following page illustrates what a relational approach to commissioning looks like.

- 3 Relational commissioning initiatives are likely to incorporate the following general elements:
 - 3.1 Enable, recognise, and respect the authority of individuals and whānau over their lives to make their own decisions.
 - 3.2 An understanding of how effective the current system is at achieving the purpose and monitoring changes to that over time.
 - 3.3 The flexibility to respond to what matters most to people, family and whānau being support, and do so in ways that works with, and builds on, their gifts, abilities, assets, and resources.
 - 3.4 Allow people to exercise choice and agency over their lives and the support and services they receive.
 - 3.5 Recognise that being connected to, and welcomed into, community and its opportunities are central to what many individuals, families and whānau are seeking.

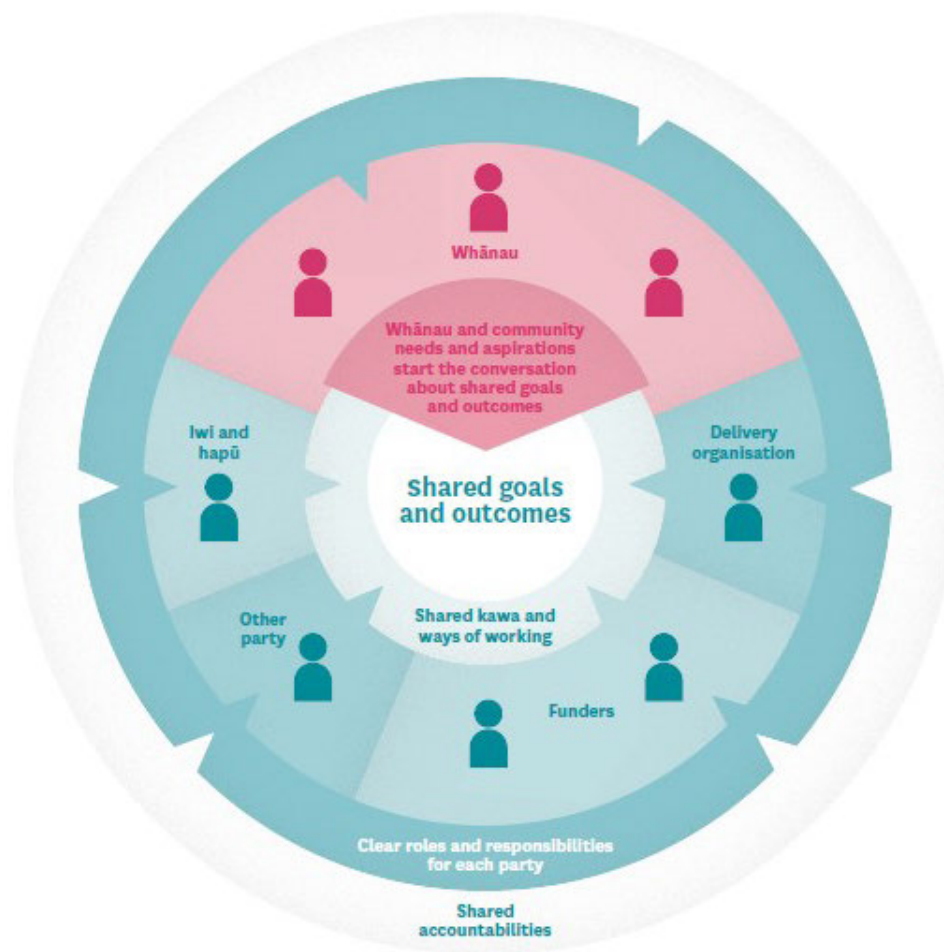


Figure One: A relational approach to commissioning centres on parties working together on shared goals and outcomes

4 Practically, a relational approach means that:

- 4.1 the right parties are brought together from the start – locally, regionally, and nationally, rather than siloed government agencies procuring similar services separately into communities, minimising duplication of effort for providers, creating a shared understanding of the problem upfront and a commitment to working together
- 4.2 time is spent upfront in building relationships and trust by agreeing shared goals, accountabilities, and responsibilities – delivering work programmes efficiently and effectively and incentivising agencies to work together
- 4.3 peoples' lived experience directly shapes the design and delivery of support, rather than pre-determined solutions with limited consultation that feel inflexible and burdensome to the providers who supply them
- 4.4 government workforces spend the majority of their time working together on service quality with individuals, families and whānau, providers and other parties, like local iwi and community leaders, changing the sector's perception that they are risk-averse and focused on contract compliance
- 4.5 consistent with the Data Protection and Use Policy, only information that helps understand the impact of services is collected, and as much as possible is standardised, once by government agencies and shared (with agreement from all parties) to avoid duplication

- 4.6 accountability mechanisms are proportional to contract spend and focus on what matters most to government and the sector, such as outcomes and whether government investment is making a difference for communities
 - 4.7 all parties involved learn through trying new approaches and adapting from experience, updating key activities and agreements as they go along, rather than setting rigid and prescriptive terms that may not suit all communities
 - 4.8 there is knowledge sharing and transparency, enabling better understanding of the overall impact of services delivered on behalf of government.
- 5 Taken together, the successful adoption of the relational approach to commissioning will look like government agencies working together and with the social sector to procure fit for purpose social services that better achieve shared outcomes, consistent and useful data about those outcomes being efficiently collected and shared, and agencies and the sector able to clearly identify and take shared accountability.