

# Cover Briefing



**MINISTRY OF SOCIAL  
DEVELOPMENT**  
TE MANATŪ WHAKAHIATO ORA

**Date:** 11 September 2024      **Security Level:** In Confidence  
**To:** Hon Louise Upston, Minister for Child Poverty Reduction  
**File Reference:** REP/24/9/837

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## Draft Cabinet paper: Refreshing the Child and Youth Strategy and associated measures

### Purpose of the report

- 1 This briefing provides you with a first draft of your Cabinet paper (Attachment A) seeking Cabinet approval to the release of the refreshed Child and Youth Strategy (Attachment B).
- 2 The Cabinet paper also provides a report back on reviewing the child poverty targets and measures, notifies Cabinet of your intention to update the Child Poverty Related Indicators (CPRIs), and seeks authorisation to set a poverty persistence target.

### Executive summary


- 3 The draft Child and Youth Strategy (the Strategy) reflects your direction for a short and simple document. We have drafted it as a set of visual A4 slides which set out the key Strategy components, including the vision, outcomes, priorities, and measurement framework.
- 4 The Children's Act 2014 specifies in detail the requirements of what the Strategy must include. To meet all these legislative requirements, the Strategy document will need to include a short section that sets out how it meets each requirement.
- 5 We are currently drafting this additional section with the aim of providing it in the version you receive for ministerial consultation. s 9(2)(h)

- 6 We note you have not yet formally agreed to the two Education CPRIs, as these were subject to discussions with Ministers Stanford and Seymour. We now seek your agreement, through this briefing, to the two Education CPRIs.
- 7 We are seeking your feedback on the draft Cabinet paper and Strategy document, including whether it aligns with your expectations and how you want the Strategy to look (noting the MSD Design team will be updating the visual design). We welcome the opportunity to discuss any feedback you have at our next officials meeting, scheduled for 17 September.
- 8 You will receive a further draft of the Cabinet paper and draft Strategy on 18 September for circulation for ministerial consultation ahead of proposed consideration by the Social Outcomes Committee on 23 October. The draft Strategy is also on the agenda for discussion with your colleagues at the Child and Youth Ministers meeting on 24 September.

## Recommended actions

It is recommended that you:

- 1 **agree** that the two Education Child Poverty Related Indicators are:
  - 1.1 *school attendance*, based on the percentage of students aged 6-16 who are regularly attending school
  - 1.2 *school achievement*, based on the percentage of school leavers at age 17 with NCEA Level 2 or higher as their highest level of attainment
- 2 **agree** to discuss the Cabinet paper and draft Child and Youth Strategy with Child Poverty Reduction officials at your next meeting.



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Hannah Kerr  
Director  
Child Wellbeing and Poverty Reduction Group

11/09/24

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Date



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Hon Louise Upston  
Minister for Child Poverty Reduction



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Date

## **The Cabinet paper covers four key topics in your portfolio**

- 9 This paper meets your request for a single Cabinet paper which covers the key topics under your Child Poverty Reduction portfolio that you want to take to Cabinet.
- 10 As you have directed, the paper:
  - 10.1 seeks Cabinet approval to the refreshed Child and Youth Strategy, including your proposed Strategy priorities and the updated measurement framework
  - 10.2 notifies Cabinet of your intention to adopt five updated Child Poverty Related Indicators (CPRIs) which will also form part of the Strategy measurement framework
  - 10.3 reports back to Cabinet with a review of the targets and measures in the Child Poverty Reduction Act and notifies Cabinet that you will be making material hardship a 'Portfolio Target'
  - 10.4 seeks Cabinet agreement authorising you to set 3-year and 10-year poverty persistence targets once the required data is available from Stats NZ.
- 11 We are currently consulting with agencies on the Cabinet paper and draft Strategy. Agency consultation is due to be completed on 16 September; the next iteration of the paper, which you will receive on 18 September, will incorporate feedback received from agencies.

## **There are some key considerations to bring to your attention**

### **The draft Strategy reflects your direction for a short, simple document but also needs to meet the legislative requirements in the Children's Act**

- 12 We have drafted the refreshed Strategy as a series of visual A4 slides which set out the key components of the Strategy, including the vision, the six outcomes, the three priorities, and the measurement framework.
- 13 We have taken this approach as we consider it the most effective way to communicate your priorities and direction for the refreshed Strategy, while also ensuring the Strategy document is short, simple and easily understandable by the general public.
- 14 While we have kept the refreshed Strategy short, it is important to note that the Children's Act 2014 specifies a number of requirements about what the Strategy and the Strategy document itself must include. For example, alongside the core Strategy components (the outcomes, the measurement framework, and the policies/priorities), the updated Strategy must include how the Government intends to evaluate the effectiveness of the policies. It



must also include an indication of the policies implemented under the previous Strategy as well as any steps taken to evaluate their effectiveness.

- 15 To meet these legislative requirements, the document will need to include a short section that sets out how the refreshed Strategy meets each requirement under the Children's Act. We propose this will be an additional page at the end of the Strategy, which we consider is the simplest and cleanest approach. The alternative would be to have a second Strategy document detailing the legislative requirements.

- 16 We are currently drafting the additional section covering the legislative requirements with the aim of providing it in the version of the Strategy you will receive to circulate to your colleagues for ministerial consultation.

s 9(2)(h)

- 17 There are also a few other key points to note with the draft Strategy document.

- 17.1 **Design of the Strategy.** While the content of the draft Strategy is well-formulated, the visual design of the document is still in draft.

MSD's design team will be updating the visual design, including branding, and we anticipate having a fully designed draft of the Strategy ready for your consideration in early October. We note your direction for a simple design that is distinct from the previous Government's Strategy.

- 17.2 **Life course diagram.** You will note that this diagram (page 5 of the Strategy) looks different from previous versions which we have provided to you and to Child and Youth Ministers. We have framed the life course diagram in this way as we received strong feedback through consultation that children should be situated within the context of their family, whānau and wider community. Stakeholders also told us the diagram needed to reflect an intergenerational approach.

- 17.3 **Investment principles.** Page 10 of the draft Strategy includes a set of investment principles which would help inform investment and reprioritisation discussions and decisions by agencies and Ministers. This reflects your previous decision that the Strategy should identify a set of investment principles [REP/24/8/758 refers].

- 17.4 **Ministerial Foreword.** We propose the refreshed Strategy include a Ministerial Foreword and we have prepared a draft foreword for your office to review.

## **We seek your formal agreement to the two Education CPRIs**

- 18 On 14 August, we provided you with the provisional set of updated CPRIs [REP/24/7/645 refers]. You have not yet formally agreed to the two Education CPRIs as we had recommended you first discuss the specific measures of school attendance and achievement with the relevant Education Ministers, Hon Stanford and Hon Seymour.
- 19 These discussions happened in the week of 26 August and you subsequently indicated that these Ministers were supportive of two Education CPRIs, set as:
- 19.1 *school attendance*, based on the percentage of students aged 6-16 who are regularly attending school
- 19.2 *school achievement*, based on the percentage of school leavers at age 17 with NCEA Level 2 or higher as their highest level of attainment.
- 20 We have drafted the Cabinet paper on this basis, and now seek your formal agreement, through this briefing, to the Education CPRIs.
- 21 You will note the Cabinet paper includes a recommendation (recommendation 6) seeking agreement that “agencies should be responsible for working together to achieve measurable improvements in the CPRIs over time, as part of making progress towards relevant Government Targets”.
- 22 We have included this recommendation to reflect the discussion at the 1 August Child and Youth Ministers meeting, where you indicated the purpose of the CPRIs is not just to monitor key drivers of long-term disadvantage, but also to support accountability and action to drive improvements in these areas over time.
- 23 We welcome your feedback on whether you want to include this recommendation in the Cabinet paper, noting that your ministerial colleagues and their agencies may also have views.

s 9(2)(f)(iv)

- 24 You are seeking Cabinet’s approval to establish 3-year and 10-year poverty persistence targets once the required baseline data is available. Stats NZ is on track to deliver the data by the end of October 2024.

25 s 9(2)(f)(iv)

26 s 9(2)(f)(iv)

## Next steps

- 27 We would like your feedback on the draft Cabinet paper and Strategy document, including whether it aligns with your expectations and whether there are any changes and/or new information you want us to reflect. We welcome the opportunity to discuss any feedback with you at the next Child Poverty Reduction officials meeting, scheduled for 17 September.
- 28 We will incorporate any feedback you have and any feedback from agency consultation with the aim of providing you with updated drafts on 18 September for approval to circulate for ministerial consultation and to Child and Youth Ministers on 19 September.
- 29 The draft Cabinet paper and Strategy document are on the agenda for discussion at the next Child and Youth Ministers meeting on 24 September, which will fulfil your statutory obligation to consult with children's Ministers and the Minister for Māori Development. This meeting will take place during the ministerial consultation period, which provides the opportunity to test the proposals with your colleagues and to recommend they provide feedback through ministerial consultation.
- 30 Following the end of ministerial consultation on 3 October, we will provide you with an updated Cabinet paper and Strategy document for approval to lodge by 17 October for consideration by the Cabinet Social Outcomes Committee on 23 October.
- 31 We are working with your office on the preferred approach for publication of the Strategy in November, including timing, stakeholder communications and the extent to which you want to announce and publicise the Strategy.

## Attachments

**Attachment A:** Draft Cabinet paper

**Attachment B:** Draft Child and Youth Strategy

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