



Cabinet Social Outcomes Committee

Minute of Decision

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Next Steps on Government Response to the Dame Karen Poutasi Review

Portfolio **Child Poverty Reduction**

On 10 December 2025, the Cabinet Social Outcomes Committee:

1 **noted** that in September 2025, Cabinet agreed to accept all recommendations from the report by Dame Karen Poutasi on the *Joint Review into the Children's Sector: Identification and response to suspected abuse* (the Poutasi Review) [CAB-25-MIN-0330];

2 **noted** that several Poutasi Review recommendations can be implemented within baselines,
s 9(2)(f)(iv)

3 s 9(2)(f)(iv)

Identifying and responding to the needs of children (recommendations 1, 2 and 6)

4 **agreed** to establish an in-person interagency hub from January 2026 to improve identification and assessment of the needs of dependent children whose sole parent or carer is remanded in custody and/or sentenced to imprisonment;

5 s 9(2)(f)(iv)

Sharing information on safety and wellbeing concerns (recommendation 7)

6 **noted** that Regional Public Service Leadership Groups are communicating clear expectations for information-sharing and guidance on doing so safely to their networks;

Mandatory child protection training and reporting (recommendations 8, 9, and 13)

7 **agreed** that foundational mandatory child protection training be initially rolled out through an electronic prototype, starting with a subset of approximately 500 core children's workers, as defined in the Children's Act 2014, from January 2026;

8 **noted** that the foundational child protection training described in paragraph 7 above would include identifying signs of all types of abuse and neglect, and information-sharing where there are concerns about the safety of a child;

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s 9(2)(f)(iv)

Multi-agency teams to prevent and respond to harm (recommendation 3)

- 10 **noted** that the immediate focus for implementing Poutasi Review recommendation 3 is on strengthening child safety within existing multi-agency responses s 9(2)(f)(iv), across the family violence and child protection systems;

Linking medical records and Child Protection Protocol (recommendations 4 and 5)

- 11 **noted** that linking medical records is part of Health New Zealand's existing electronic investment programme, subject to Health New Zealand funding allocation;
- 12 **noted** that Health New Zealand has agreed to join the Child Protection Protocol in a leadership and governance capacity initially, s 9(2)(f)(iv)

Strengthening oversight of ECE services' child protection policies (recommendation 10)

- 13 **noted** that changes to the Early Childhood Education (ECE) licensing criteria will help strengthen oversight of ECE services' Child Protection Policies;

Strengthening collective accountability for child safety (recommendation 12)

- 14 **noted** that children's agencies have up-to-date child protection policies s 9(2)(f)(iv)

Tom Kelly
Committee Secretary

Present:

Hon David Seymour
Hon Nicola Willis
Hon Erica Stanford
Hon Paul Goldsmith
Hon Louise Upston (Chair)
Hon Dr Shane Reti
Hon Tama Potaka
Hon Nicole McKee
Hon Karen Chhour
Hon Penny Simmonds
Hon Nicola Grigg
Hon Scott Simpson

Officials present from:

Officials Committee for SOU
Office of the Prime Minister
Office of the Minister of Education