SOU-26-MIN-0081

Cabinet Social Outcomes Committee

Minute of Decision

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Strengthening Disability Support Services: Five-year Programme of Improvements and Extending the Legislative Framework

Portfolio **Disability Issues**

On 16 September 2026, the Cabinet Social Outcomes Committee:

1 **noted** that a legislative framework for the Ministry of Social Development's Disability Support Services (DSS) is being established in two phases;

2 **noted** that Cabinet agreed to the Disability Support Services Bill (since enacted as the Disability Support Services Act 2026 (the Act)), which sets a foundational legislative framework for DSS-funded disability support services, as phase 1 [CAB-26-MIN-0115 and LEG-26-MIN-0083];

3 **noted** that work on the phase 2 legislative programme to develop amendments to the Act will have the objectives of:

3.1 promoting the dignity and safety of system users, including identifying benefits, protections, and responsibilities (e.g. complaints processes, and or establishing and/or clarifying duty of care (e.g. in safeguarding and oversight processes));

3.2 reinforcing the gains made in organisation and system capability improvements, which underpin the strategic direction for DSS and its funded disability support (e.g. in commissioning and procurement);

3.3 providing powers or other measures for DSS to carry out its mandated functions (e.g. where DSS relies on operational policy and/or contracts and which leaves DSS open to challenge) or to clarify roles and responsibilities (e.g. employment-related matters);

4 **agreed** to the scope of the phase 2 legislative work programme that will be explored by officials, as set out in Appendix 1 to the paper under SOU-26-SUB-0081;

5 **invited** the Minister for Disability Issues to report back to the Cabinet Social Outcomes Committee in early 2027 with advice on:

5.1 initial policy decisions on potential amendments to the Act, including opportunities for consultation with disabled people and their families/whānau and carers;

5.2 a discussion document to support community consultation in 2027 to inform potential legislative amendments; and

5.3 a high-level roadmap for the improvement of DSS-funded disability support services over the following five years.

Tom Kelly
Committee Secretary

Present:
Hon David Seymour
Rt Hon Winston Peters
Hon Simeon Brown
Hon Paul Goldsmith
Hon Louise Upston (Chair)
Hon Tama Potaka
Hon Nicole McKee
Hon Casey Costello
Hon Matt Doocey
Hon Nicola Grigg
Hon Scott Simpson
Hon Karen Chhour

Officials present from:
Officials Committee for SOU