



Cabinet Business Committee

Minute of Decision

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Oranga Tamariki and Social Investment Agency Review of Oranga Tamariki Early Support and Prevention Funding and Services

Portfolios **Social Investment / Children**

On 7 April 2026, the Cabinet Business Committee:

Background

- 1 **noted** that in October 2025, the Cabinet Social Outcomes Committee:
 - 1.1 noted that five large programmes totalling approximately \$126 million, together with one large national provider, are prioritised for review;
 - 1.2 invited the Minister for Social Investment and the Minister for Children to jointly report back on this work by 30 March 2026;

[SOU-25-MIN-0133]
- 2 **noted** that the Social Investment Fund is shared social sector architecture intended to invest in improving long-term outcomes across multiple portfolios, particularly for children, young people, and families experiencing persistent disadvantage;
- 3 **noted** that the review criteria (approved by Cabinet in April 2024, and subsequently refined by Oranga Tamariki and the Social Investment Agency, with further refinement informed by provider feedback) recognised that each programme needed to demonstrate:
 - 3.1 reach – which children, young people and families are receiving support from each programme and the outcomes that are being generated across different portfolios;
 - 3.2 impact – how effective the programme is;
 - 3.3 value for money – what is the cost per participant, and is there evidence of avoided future harm or cost;
 - 3.4 operational factors – including how the programme:
 - 3.4.1 supports the statutory duties of the Chief Executive of Oranga Tamariki;
 - 3.4.2 maintains priority referral pathways and service continuity;

- 3.4.3 can be legally given effect and the statutory decision-making framework to apply to transferred services;
 - 3.4.4 financial implications have been assessed for any transfer;
 - 3.4.5 aligns with existing cross-agency work;
- 4 **noted** that the specific small investments linked to Oranga Tamariki Enabling Communities initiatives, or already progressing through the Social Investment Fund contract consolidation pathway, have been excluded from the review;

Gateway and Targeted Support Post-Gateway

- 5 **noted** that Gateway and Targeted Support Post-Gateway programmes reach children and young people on the cusp of, or in the care of, Oranga Tamariki or youth justice, and contribute to multiple portfolio outcomes, while their impact requires better outcome and performance measurement;

Strengthening Families, Family Start and Workers in Schools

- 6 **noted** that Strengthening Families, Family Start, and the suite of Workers in Schools (Social Workers in Schools, Youth Workers in Secondary Schools and Multi-Agency Support Services in Secondary Schools) programmes:
- 6.1 mainly reach children and young people who have not come to the attention of Oranga Tamariki, but are experiencing early risk factors to their safety and wellbeing requiring targeted supports;
 - 6.2 contribute to multiple portfolio outcomes;
 - 6.3 have limited good-quality quantitative data on impact, although providers regularly report about micro-impacts that are not seen in the quantitative and population level data;

s9(2)(ba)(i) & s9(2)(j) **a large national provider**

- 7 **noted** that the programmes delivered by s9(2)(ba)(i) & s9(2)(j)
- 7.1 reach children and young people experiencing high risks to safety and wellbeing, including those on the cusp of care and youth justice;
 - 7.2 has data demonstrating consistent improvements in mental health, emotional regulation, family communication, and increased school engagement;

8 s9(2)(ba)(i) & s9(2)(j)

Next Steps

- 9 **noted** that the responsible Ministers have endorsed the redesigned Gateway Assessment service, and agencies are working to test and implement this new model (which will need to include a strengthened focus on outcome measurement), as a key focus area under the Oranga Tamariki System Action Plan;

- 10 **directed** Oranga Tamariki, the Ministry of Education, Ministry of Health, and Health New Zealand to report back to responsible portfolio Ministers by 26 February 2027 on the Gateway and Post-Gateway programme, including the progress of national improvements to address coverage, consent processes, contractual arrangements, outcome measurement and quality;
- 11 **agreed** to retarget and redesign Strengthening Families, Family Start and the Workers in Schools suite of programmes to more effectively achieve a range of outcomes and to ensure those outcomes are visible to relevant portfolio Ministers;
- 12 **agreed** to transfer Strengthening Families, Family Start and the Workers in Schools suite of programmes so that they can be commissioned more effectively, subject to further advice on a transition and implementation plan for each transfer;
- 13 **directed** Oranga Tamariki and Te Puni Kōkiri to report back to responsible portfolio Ministers by 26 February 2027 on the transition and implementation plan for transfer of the Strengthening Families programme and funding for delivery via the Whānau Ora Commissioning Agencies;
- 14 **directed** Oranga Tamariki and the Social Investment Agency to report back to responsible portfolio Ministers by 26 February 2027 on a transition and implementation plan for the transfer of the Family Start programme and funding to the Social Investment Fund, including how the funding will be better targeted and considered alongside other services delivered in the first 2000 days;
- 15 **directed** Oranga Tamariki, the Ministry of Education, Ministry of Health, and Health New Zealand to report back to responsible portfolio Ministers by 31 August 2027 on a transition and implementation plan for the transfer of the Workers in Schools suite of programmes and funding, including how these programmes will be redesigned and better targeted;
- 16 **agreed** that the redesign and transition and implementation plans referred to in paragraph 13-15 will need to include the operational matters set out in paragraph 3.4;
- 17 **noted** that during the redesign and transition periods Oranga Tamariki will remain the commissioning agency for all services;
- 18 **authorised** responsible portfolio Ministers to confirm the detailed scale and scope of the redesign, and timing of any transition and implementation;
- 19 **authorised** the Minister for Children, Minister of Finance, and responsible portfolio Ministers to agree any subsequent transfers of programmes and Vote funding after transition and implementation plans have been developed and agreed;
- 20 **directed** Oranga Tamariki and the Social Investment Agency to report back to the Minister for Social Investment and Minister for Children by 31 July 2026 with the proposed approach for Phase two of this review, comprising approximately \$113 million of 760 contracted early support and prevention services across roughly 200 providers;

Financial implications

21 s9(2)(ba)(i) & s9(2)(j)

[Redacted]

s9(2)(ba)(i) & s9(2)(j)

[Redacted]

22 s9(2)(f)(iv)

[Redacted]

Jenny Vickers
Committee Secretary

Present:

Rt Hon Christopher Luxon (Chair)
Hon David Seymour
Hon Nicola Willis
Hon Chris Bishop
Hon Simeon Brown
Hon Erica Stanford
Hon Paul Goldsmith
Hon Louise Upston
Hon Casey Costello
Hon Simon Watts
Hon Chris Penk
Hon Karen Chhour

Officials present from:

Department of the Prime Minister and Cabinet