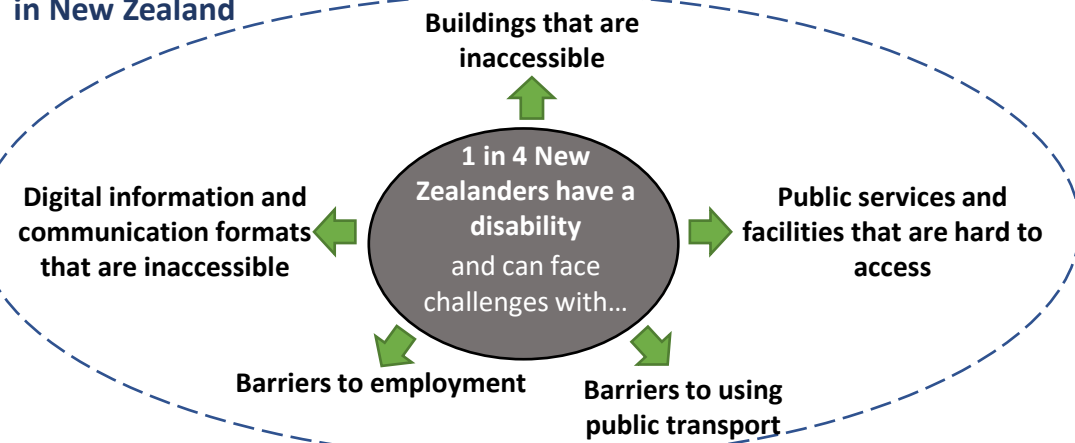


Update on Accelerating Accessibility

It is well established that change is needed to improve accessibility in New Zealand



Currently, there is no coordinated, effective system to remove or reduce accessibility barriers that disabled people face across society

The existing accessibility system has a number of issues:

- No single point of leadership driving change
- Knowledge and awareness of accessibility in New Zealand is unevenly understood, distributed and applied
- There are limited channels for people experiencing accessibility barriers to bring these to the attention of decision makers
- Policies, services and buildings are designed by people unaware of the accessibility barriers people face
- Existing accessibility regulations and obligations on those responsible for preventing accessibility barriers is fragmented and not consistently applied

In June 2020, Cabinet agreed to officials developing further work on a legislative framework and other mechanisms for accelerating accessibility, broadly endorsing that...

A new accelerating accessibility system needs to....



Provide enhanced system leadership & accountability

Will ensure a clear focus and drive to address systemic accessibility issues



Create clear processes for considering & removing barriers

Will enable a consistent and effective approach to removing accessibility barriers, including new accessibility regulations or standards to drive change



Incorporate the voice of expertise

Will allow those with expertise - disabled people, the community, the private sector and government - to all play a role in shaping the accessibility system



Build knowledge of accessibility barriers

Will help individuals and organisations to understand their rights and obligations around accessibility measures

While ensuring that it does so in ways that are....



Flexible and progressive

Will allow governments to set priorities to resource accessibility measures and ensure that obligated parties have time to meet measures & can do so in innovative ways



Transparent, consistent, equitable

A system must bring all New Zealanders on the accessibility journey, be consistent with Te Tiriti o Waitangi & the UNCRPD, and ensure predictable and consistent accessibility outcomes for obligated parties



Universal

An accessibility system must be able to influence and change behaviours towards accessibility across all of society



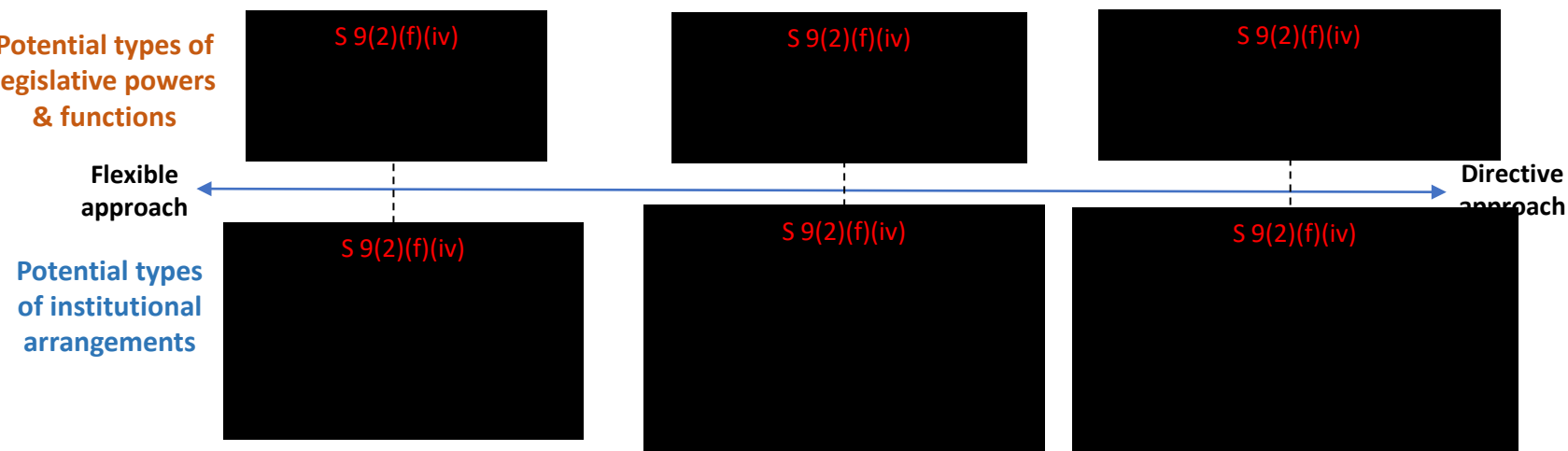
Inclusive & easy to use

Disabled people must be involved in all aspects of decision making to ensure the system is robust, while also ensuring that the system is user friendly

My officials have been working in partnership with the Access Alliance and have identified a range of approaches for how this new system could work

I am aware that any approach to legislation needs to find a balance between creating powers and functions that:

- Allows a flexible and innovative approach to realising accessibility outcomes, including different transition arrangements for accessibility measures to be realised over time **while**;
- Providing a directive approach to ensure that groups in both the public sector and wider civil society prioritise and act on accessibility barriers.



I will seek Cabinet agreement to a complete policy proposal in September

- I had intended to present a complete policy proposal in May, however I consider it necessary that more time is spent undertaking careful and thorough analysis of the legislative approach.
- New accelerating accessibility legislation is a once in a life time opportunity. Time taken now to work through the legislative implications will ensure that legislation delivers a more inclusive and accessible Aotearoa.
- Considering this approach in September will ensure that a new accessibility system is considered in conjunction with the work being undertaken around the broader transformation of Disability Support Services.
- My officials will consult with key stakeholders across the public sector, business and wider community over the next few months to ensure that the final policy approach is robust.