



14 July 2022

Tēnā koe

On 16 June 2022, you emailed the Ministry of Social Development (the Ministry) requesting, under the Official Information Act 1982 (the Act), the following information regarding the Work for Families (WFF) Review:

1. *Who is on the review?*
2. *What are the Terms of reference?*
3. *Whose views are included?*
4. *Where is the summary consultation document?*
5. *What are the consulting and reporting timeframes?*
6. *What is the agenda and timing of the first meeting?*

For the sake of clarity, I will address each question in turn.

1. *Who is on the review?*

The Ministry has previously released a list of agencies and key staff involved in the WFF Review. This is available on page 46 at the following link:

www.msd.govt.nz/documents/about-msd-and-our-work/publications-resources/official-information-responses/2021/september/20210916-request-for-information-on-the-review-of-the-current-upcoming-accommodation-supplement-and-on-the-working-for-families-review-that-the-government-has-signaled..pdf

The review is being conducted by agencies, and no external panels have been created to either undertake or support the review in a permanent capacity.

2. *What are the Terms of reference?*

The Ministry has previously released terms of reference for the Governance Group for the review. These are available on page 45 at the link above.

3. *Whose views are included?*

The working group has undertaken an engagement process to support the review, including a targeted phase with key stakeholders and a public consultation process. Targeted consultation was undertaken with stakeholders, including advocacy groups, academics and experts, Māori and iwi representatives, Pacific People representatives, etc.

Information about the engagement process is available on page 80 of the link above.

4. *Where is the summary consultation document?*

Public consultation was undertaken, with submissions invited by email or via survey response. Supporting information was provided on the Ministry's website, available at the following link:

www.msd.govt.nz/documents/about-msd-and-our-work/work-programmes/welfare-overhaul/working-for-families-tax-credits-consultation-guidance-material.pdf.

In addition, please find enclosed a copy of the WFF presentation used in the targeted consultation process.

5. *What are the consulting and reporting timeframes?*

As outlined in the consultation document, written submissions and the online survey were open from 20 April – 31 May 2022. Targeted engagement with stakeholders was undertaken between 10 May and 14 June 2022.

Final advice is due to Ministers later in 2023.

6. *What is the agenda and timing of the first meeting?*

The review has been supported by an inter-agency Governance Group and the first meeting of this group was held on 20 April 2021. Please find the agenda for this meeting enclosed as a separate attachment.

Please note that the agenda includes an earlier draft of the Terms of Reference for the review. The final version is available online, as noted in answer 2 above.

Some information is withheld under section 9(2)(f)(iv) of the Act as it is under active consideration. The release of this information is likely to prejudice the ability of government to consider advice and the wider public interest of effective government would not be served.

Some information is withheld under section 9(2)(g)(i) of the Act to protect the effective conduct of public affairs through the free and frank expression

of opinions. I believe the greater public interest is in the ability of individuals to express opinions in the course of their duty.

Some information is withheld under section 9(2)(a) of the Act in order to protect the privacy of natural persons. The need to protect the privacy of these individuals outweighs any public interest in this information.

We note that you have also requested Minutes from all meetings of the Working for Families Governance Group. These are being prepared for release to you under the Act as a separate response.

The principles and purposes of the Official Information Act 1982 under which you made your request are:

- to create greater openness and transparency about the plans, work and activities of the Government,
- to increase the ability of the public to participate in the making and administration of our laws and policies and
- to lead to greater accountability in the conduct of public affairs.

This Ministry fully supports those principles and purposes. The Ministry therefore intends to make the information contained in this letter and any attached documents available to the wider public. The Ministry will do this by publishing this letter and attachments on the Ministry's website. Your personal details will be deleted, and the Ministry will not publish any information that would identify you as the person who requested the information.

If you wish to discuss this response with us, please feel free to contact OIA_Requests@msd.govt.nz.

If you are not satisfied with this response regarding the Working For Families (WFF) Review, you have the right to seek an investigation and review by the Ombudsman. Information about how to make a complaint is available at www.ombudsman.parliament.nz or 0800 802 602.

Ngā mihi nui



Polly Vowles
Policy Manager
Welfare System and Income Support Policy