



Cabinet Social Outcomes Committee

Minute of Decision

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New Zealand Sign Language (NZSL) Strategy: Approval to Release

Portfolio Disability Issues

On 5 November 2025, the Cabinet Social Outcomes Committee:

- 1 **noted** that the first New Zealand Sign Language (NZSL) Strategy expired in 2023;
- 2 **noted** that in March 2025, the Cabinet Social Outcomes Committee (SOU) approved public consultation on a draft NZSL Strategy, and invited the Minister for Disability Issues (the Minister) to report back to seek approval for the NZSL Board to release the final Strategy [SOU-25-MIN-0031];
- 3 **noted** that the NZSL Strategy has a 10-year timeframe from 2026-2036;
- 4 **approved** the NZSL Strategy (the Strategy) attached to the submission under SOU-25-SUB-0148 for public release;
- 5 **noted** that the Minister intends to release the Strategy with the NZSL Board during the week of 17-21 November 2025;
- 6 **noted** that, following the release of the final NZSL Strategy, the Ministry of Disabled People will work with the NZSL Board, relevant government departments and agencies, and stakeholders to develop NZSL action plans, and an NZSL indicator framework;
- 7 **directed** government departments and agencies to work with the Ministry of Disabled People to develop the NZSL action plans and the NZSL indicator framework;
- 8 **noted** that the Minister will approve an initial NZSL action plan for release in April 2026, as part of work to celebrate the 20th anniversary of NZSL becoming an official language;
- 9 **agreed** that, as part of the actions under the NZSL Strategy, government departments will be required to develop NZSL capability plans, and report on their progress annually to the NZSL Board;
- 10 **noted** that in March 2025, SOU also agreed that:
 - 10.1 government agencies will report on NZSL use or service availability in their annual reports;
 - 10.2 the Minister for Disability Issues would report back to Cabinet on a yearly basis on progress on delivering the NZSL Strategy;

[SOU-25-MIN-0031]

- 11 **authorised** the Ministry of Disabled People to make any minor editorial or design changes required to the NZSL Strategy prior to its release.

Sam Moffett
Committee Secretary

Present:

Hon Nicola Willis
Hon Chris Bishop
Hon Erica Stanford
Hon Louise Upston (Chair)
Hon Dr Shane Reti
Hon Mark Mitchell
Hon Tama Potaka
Hon Nicole McKee
Hon Casey Costello
Hon Karen Chhour
Hon Penny Simmonds
Hon Scott Simpson

Officials present from:

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