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Aide-mémoire

Date:	13 March 2025
For:	Hon Matt Doocey, Acting Minister for Disability Issues
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Cabinet Talking points: New Zealand Disability Strategy refresh – approval for approach and consultation

Purpose

To provide talking points to support the paper on the Disability Strategy you are taking to Cabinet on behalf of the Minister for Disability Issues on Monday 17 March 2025.

Advice

- 1 The paper was approved by Cabinet Social Outcomes Committee (SOU) on 11 March [SOU-25-MIN-0017 refers].
- 2 Suggested talking points to support the introduction and discussion of the paper at Cabinet are attached.
- 3 SOU authorised the Ministerial Disability Leadership Group and the Minister of Justice to approve the draft Strategy for public consultation later in 2025, as recommended. SOU also noted that the Minister for Disability Issues will report back to SOU if there are any aspects of the draft Strategy that could be particularly significant or controversial [SOU-25-MIN-0017 refers].

Context

- 4 The New Zealand Disability Strategy (the Strategy) sets direction for government actions to improve the lives of disabled people in New Zealand. The current Strategy expires in 2026.

- 5 It is proposed that the Ministerial Disability Leadership Group (the Group) oversee the development of the Strategy. The Group was re-established in November 2024 to drive and coordinate cross-Government work to improve outcomes for disabled people.
- 6 The Group meets quarterly, and core members include the Ministers of/for Disability Issues, Social Development and Employment, Housing, Health, Education, Local Government, and Children. At the Group's meeting in March 2025, it was agreed the Minister for ACC would be added as a core member. Other Ministers will be invited to attend meetings as required.
- 7 The Minister for Disability Issues intends to develop a Strategy that:
 - 7.1 Has a clear vision and principles to guide government decisions.
 - 7.2 Is action-focused, with deliverables that will benefit disabled people over a five-year period between 2026 and 2031.
 - 7.3 Prioritises Outcome Areas which are important to disabled people and their families and reflect key priorities for Government and associated Targets: Education, Employment, Health, Housing and Justice.
 - 7.4 Is developed based on a mixed model approach where Government sets the priority outcome areas, and the disability community informs the activities and measures under these areas through community consultation and Working Groups made up of officials, disabled people, and sector experts.
- 8 The Ministry of Disabled People has started planning for engagement and consultation with the disability community while Cabinet considers the proposed approach. With Hon Upston's agreement, we have:
 - 8.1 Had early discussions with key stakeholder groups on the proposed high-level approach to refreshing the Strategy (subject to Cabinet decisions)
 - 8.2 Sought Expressions of Interest from the disability community to be part of Working Groups on the proposed Strategy Outcome Areas.
- 9 Following the discussion at SOU, the Ministry will ensure that the Terms of Reference for the working groups clearly reflect the expectation that working groups will propose tangible, pragmatic, and achievable steps that can be taken to improve outcomes for disabled people.

Talking points for Disability Strategy Cabinet paper

Introduction

- As Acting Minister for Disability Issues, on behalf of Hon Louise Upston, I recommend that Cabinet confirm Cabinet Social Outcome Committee's decisions in respect of the Disability Strategy Refresh - Approval for Approach and Consultation.
- This is an opportunity to outline our commitment to and priorities for improving the lives of disabled people, who make up 17 percent of our population.

Strategy approach and outcomes

- Over the course of this year, the Minister for Disability Issues intends to develop a Strategy that focuses on tangible, measurable deliverables or actions which will benefit disabled people over the next five years. The new Strategy would commence in 2026.
- The Strategy is proposed to include an overarching vision and principles, and deliverables in five key Outcome Areas: Education, Employment, Health, Housing and Justice. These areas align with our priorities and Government Targets.

Engagement and consultation

- SOU also approved the proposed approach to engagement and consultation. It is recommended that the Strategy be developed by officials in consultation with disabled people's representative groups.
- Proposed deliverables against the five Outcome Areas would be developed by working groups made up of officials, disability community representatives, and sector experts. The terms of reference for these groups will reflect the expectation that they propose tangible, pragmatic, and achievable steps that can be taken to improve outcomes for disabled people.

Role of the Ministerial Disability Leadership Group

- The Ministerial Disability Leadership Group will oversee the Strategy's development and progress. SOU authorised this Group and the Minister of Justice to approve the draft Strategy prior to public consultation later in 2025.
- However, if any aspects of the draft Strategy are significant or controversial, the Minister will report back to Cabinet prior to public consultation.

Next steps

- Following consideration by the Ministerial Disability Leadership Group over the course of this year, the Minister for Disability Issues will report back to Cabinet by November 2025 to seek your approval of the final Disability Strategy.

End

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