

Hon Andrew Little

Minister of Health
Minister Responsible for the GCSEB
Minister Responsible for the NZSIS
Minister for Treaty of Waitangi Negotiations
Minister Responsible for Pike River Re-entry

Lead Coordination Minister for the Government's Response to the Royal Commission's Report into the Terrorist Attack on the Christchurch Mosques



12 OCT 2021

Arihia Bennett MNZM
Chair, Kāpuia
By email: rosalind.plimmer@dpmc.govt.nz

Your Ref: Kāpuia Advice: 2021/02
Our Ref: AL MIN 21-038

Tēnā koe Arihia

Thank you for your letter of 16 September 2021 regarding the Government's draft work programme. Your letter followed Kāpuia's third hui held on 9 September 2021 in which you considered, amongst other things, a draft work programme and a community engagement checklist prepared by the Department of the Prime Minister and Cabinet (DPMC). I appreciated the opportunity to be a part of some of these discussions and to engage with you on the Government's response so far.

DPMC will revise the checklist to make it fit for the New Zealand context, taking into account your feedback.

In your letter, you raised a number of queries and made some observations on the draft work programme, which have been valuable. As you have noted, Kāpuia's kaupapa is integral to supporting the Government's decision making and, in turn, making Aotearoa New Zealand a safer and more inclusive place for everyone. Kāpuia's Terms of Reference gives the roopu an advisory role specifically noting that "a full Royal Commission response implementation work programme will not be agreed until Ministers can review initial advice from the Group".

I acknowledge the questions you have raised in relation to the work programme and the Government's objectives and success measures for the response. I will provide some insights on those questions in this letter; however, I would note that I am looking to Kāpuia for advice on these issues. It is your advice, together with advice from officials and feedback from the various public engagements underway, that will help the Government decide on an appropriate programme for the implementation, monitoring and evaluation of a successful response.

To achieve the Government's vision for a diverse, inclusive and safe New Zealand, the Government has agreed to a set of principles that have guided the response so far. In addition to informing our approach, these principles can also inform the impacts we intend to have through this response. I fully agree with Kāpuia's advice on the need for a comprehensive monitoring framework with a range of indicators to measure success on the response to the Royal Commission's report. I have instructed officials to continue working on the development of a framework and I look forward to engaging with Kāpuia on this.

While the Royal Commission's report makes a number of recommendations for implementation, it does not in my view recommend priorities. What is outlined at section 6.2 (page 765) of the report is guidance and acknowledgement that some recommendations will be easier and faster than others. The Government's efforts so far have included an important focus on the delivery and implementation of recommendations relating to supporting whānau, witnesses and survivors and coordinating and informing a longer term all of government response, and were informed by Cabinet decisions on short-term priorities in March 2021. This work has included:

- Establishing the Collective Impact Board in response to recommendation 25;
- Developing the Kaiwhakaoranga Specialist Case Management Service in response to recommendation 26;
- Establishing the Ministry for Ethnic Communities in response to recommendation 30;
- Ensuring a Minister is given responsibility and accountability to lead and coordinate the response in response to recommendation 43; and
- Establishing Kāpuia, an Implementation Oversight Advisory Group, in response to recommendation 44.

The work currently underway has also focused on creating opportunities to increase public understanding of extremism and terrorism in New Zealand, fostering richer public discussions and funding independent research on these issues. Establishing the National Centre of Excellence for Preventing and Countering Violent Extremism and facilitating the inaugural counter terrorism hui are further examples of how the Government has delivered on the advice in section 6.2 (page 765) of the report.

This initial focus on support, coordination and fostering public discussions has enabled the Government to now be in the position where a longer-term approach can continue. We are now looking to Kāpuia's advice to shape the medium-to long-term programme of work that will deliver a safer and more inclusive New Zealand for everyone.

I acknowledge and welcome your considered advice on ensuring the implementation of the Government's response is adequately funded. As you have seen from the draft work programme, there are a number of initiatives underway. I agree that ensuring these initiatives are adequately funded will be critical to delivering on the Government's vision for a safer and more inclusive Aotearoa New Zealand. Delivering an effective response requires investment in initiatives across government that together will deliver the holistic response that is needed to address violent extremism and foster an inclusive society.

However, where budget allocations are concerned, there will always be competing priorities and the funding of these initiatives, like any other, will be considered by Government in that context. As the Lead Coordination Minister for the Government's response, I will maintain an oversight of any budget bids for these initiatives and work closely with my colleagues to ensure these initiatives can be adequately resourced. The Budget is only one avenue for funding initiatives like those proposed in the work programme and agencies will be exploring all avenues to ensure this work programme can be adequately funded.

To ensure we maintain bi-partisan support for the work programme, I will be ensuring a briefing is provided to the opposition parties on the progress to date and the work programme. I am also committed to creating opportunities for opposition parties to participate constructively in the response and participate, as observers, in Kāpuia's hui going forward. Opposition members were also present at He Whenua Taurikura – the hui on countering terrorism and violent extremism – and community hui we held around the country in January and February of this year. I hope that, collectively, these processes will ensure opposition parties are informed and garner bi-partisan support for the work programme.

Lastly, building community engagement and consultation capabilities across government will continue to be a key focus for us as we advance this work. As you have rightly noted, there is still room for improvement in community consultation processes and there is a need for greater diversity in the public sector. I hope the establishment of the Ethnic Communities' Graduate Programme by the Ministry for Ethnic Communities, and steps being taken by Te Kawa Maataho – Public Service Commission to increase diversity and build engagement

capability will support diverse voices and experiences to be heard in government. While these steps are just the beginning, they have begun to pave the way for change.

Nāku noa, nā

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to be 'A Little', written over a vertical line.

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