



Kāpuia

Ministerial Advisory Group on the Government Response to the
Royal Commission of Inquiry on the terrorist attack on Christchurch mosques

Kāpuia Advice: 2021/01

30 July 2021

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

E Te Minita, Tēnā Koe,

The Government's current community consultations

Thank you for joining Kāpuia at its second hui on 28 July. Kāpuia valued the opportunity to hear from you on the Government's expectations of our roopu. It also considered it was an important and timely opportunity to raise with you concerns the roopu had regarding current community consultation processes, especially those relating to social cohesion and incitement. At the conclusion of its hui, Kāpuia determined to advise you formally of its concerns.

From widespread discussions with their communities, the firm view of Kāpuia is that the Government current consultations on social cohesion and incitement are not operating effectively. Kāpuia identified a number of contributing factors to this, including:

- The timeframe for the two consultations were too short, especially given the extensive interest of numerous community groups, organisations and the public generally in these subject matters.
- Social cohesion in New Zealand is a particular example of where the future state should be identified from the ground up, especially as many of the actions will lie in communities as well as with the Government.
- Both consultations are of real interest to many faith, ethnic and other communities, but few umbrella organisations have been effectively engaged or even invited to participate.
- Many of the consultation meetings are being held at times when people who are working or studying are not able to attend (for example, many meetings have been held 10am-1pm on weekdays). Kāpuia does not consider this represents authentic consultation.
- The community meetings were only held in four major centres, with Christchurch the only South Island location.
- The meetings have not been in locations where people are naturally gathering (for example temple or mosque, university, local council buildings), making it more difficult for communities to participate.
- The consultation material, especially the incitement material, is difficult to understand. It has not been translated widely enough into other languages, and more non-written material is required to support engagement (such as animations and verbal messages that can be shared within communities).

Kāpuia recommends the Government extends the timeframe for the current consultations on social cohesion and incitement from 6 August 2021, for a minimum of an additional month.

Kāpuia also recommends that the above concerns regarding those consultation processes be addressed, so the extended engagement reaches more people and communities.

Kāpuia also wants to take this opportunity to raise a number of concerns that have been growing in communities about consultation processes more generally.

Firstly, government engagement with communities needs to move from imparting information to involvement and collaboration, if it is to be genuine consultation. The International Association for Public Participation (IAP2) spectrum for public participation provides advice on these different forms of engagement and participation in decision-making, and this spectrum was specifically identified in Recommendation 38 of the Royal Commission of Inquiry on the terrorist attack on the Christchurch Mosques report. This move will be important if the Government actually wants to build bridges with communities, as the social cohesion consultation material indicates.

Secondly, engagement with communities should better consider times and places that will work for communities and the public to actually engage.

Thirdly, feedback loops must be built in to engagement processes so communities know what happened with their contributions. This is important as it affects their views on whether or not it was worth their time engaging and if should they engage in consultation processes again in the future. Feedback is critical to building communities trust and confidence in government agencies.

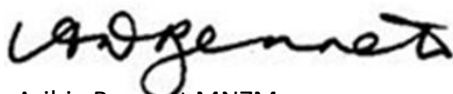
Fourthly, the Government needs better processes to guide its consultation practices. From the perspective of communities, there is –

- no comprehensive list for government agencies of the communities that could or should be consulted (and how they should best be consulted);
- no coordination across government agencies of the timing of consultations (which would minimise the requirements yet maximise the benefits of community engagement, but also to ensure that largely volunteer organisations are not swamped with multiple uncoordinated consultation requests at the same time); and
- no effective sharing of the results of engagement between government agencies (so different agencies are going out to communities asking similar questions but not reflecting information that has already been provided by communities).

Kāpuia considers it is important that the Government addresses these widely-held community concerns on government engagement, so the Response to the Report of the Royal Commission of Inquiry can be effective and can constructively engage people living in New Zealand in the societal changes that should occur. We also consider that other government consultations, including on its extensive reform programmes, would benefit if these matters were addressed.

Thank you for the opportunity to present this advice to you. We look forward to your response.

Ngā mihi



Arihia Bennett MNZM

Chair

Kāpuia