



Meeting of the COVID-19 Ministerial Group

Minute of Decision

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COVID-19 Support for Essential Social Sector Services and Communities

The group of Ministers with Power to Act on COVID-19 matters [CAB-20-MIN-0130] convened on 26 March 2020 at 10.30pm and, in accordance with their Power to Act:

1. **noted** that the Ministry of Social Development and Oranga Tamariki have publicly released guidance on what is an essential social service for the purpose of the government's COVID-19 response Alert Level 4;
2. **noted** that non-government organisations and communities provide essential services that will need to continue now the Government has moved to COVID-19 Alert Level 4;
3. s 9(2)(f)(iv)
 this funding will not meet immediate additional demand and enable providers to adapt their services to adhere to the government's guidance on Alert Level 4;
4. **agreed** to \$16 million to ensure that essential social sector services continue to operate and can meet increased demand during Alert Level 4;
5. **agreed** to \$6 million to support disability sector providers to change how they deliver essential services during COVID-19 Alert Level 4;
6. **agreed** to \$4.8 million to provide community grants or fund innovative community-led solutions to support local resilience;
7. **note** that the Ministry of Social Development will be working to ensure that any services funded are taking steps to ensure that maximum hygiene protocols are in place for essential workers;
8. **noted** that due to the unprecedented nature of COVID-19 and the uncertainty around its impacts over the coming months it is prudent to create a flexible funding mechanism to support communities;

B U D G E T : S E N S I T I V E

9. **agreed** to add the following category to the multi-category appropriation “Community Support Services” to give effect to paragraph 6:

Category title	Category type	Scope
Community Response to Adverse or Emergency Events	Non-Departmental Other Expense	This category is limited to financial support for communities that have been impacted by an adverse or emergency event.

10. **agreed** that any movement of amounts between categories in the above multi-category appropriation must be approved by the Minister for Social Development;
11. **approved** the following changes to appropriations to give effect to paragraphs 4-6 to provide for additional support to communities impacted by COVID-19, with a corresponding impact on the operating balance and net core Crown debt:

Vote Social Development Minister for Social Development	\$m - increase/(decrease)				2023/24 & outyears
	2019/20	2020/21	2021/22	2022/23	
Non-Departmental Output Expenses:					
Community Participation Services	3.000	3.000	-	-	-
Multi-Category Expenses and Capital Expenditure:					
Community Support Services					
Departmental Output Expenses:					
Developing and Managing Community Services (funded by revenue Crown)	0.200	-	-	-	-
Non-Departmental Output Expenses:					
Community Support and Advice	2.65	1.35			
Supporting Victims and Perpetrators of Family and Sexual Violence	7.875	4.125	-	-	-
Non-Departmental Other Expenses:					
Community Responses Adverse or Emergency Events	3.84	0.960	-	-	-
Total Operating	17.565	9.435	-	-	-

12. **agreed** that the proposed changes to appropriations for 2019/20 above be included in the 2019/20 Supplementary Estimates and that, in the interim, the increase be met from Imprest Supply;
13. **agreed** that the expenses incurred under paragraph 11 above will be established outside Budget allowances, with a corresponding impact on the operating balance and net core Crown debt;

14. **agreed** that any underspends with the additional support to communities impacted by COVID-19 as at 30 June 2020 be transferred to the 2020/21 financial year to ensure that funding is available for this purpose;
15. **authorised** the Minister of Finance and the Minister for Social Development to jointly agree the final amount to be transferred, following completion of the 2019/20 audited financial statements of the Ministry of Social Development or beforehand if necessary, with no impact on the operating balance and /or net core Crown debt across the forecast period;
16. **noted** that the Ministry of Social Development will report back to the Minister for Social Development with further advice on the Ministry of Health's criteria and how it will be applied to fund disability providers in the coming weeks;
17. **noted** that the Minister for Social Development will work with colleagues and relevant agencies to consider further services or support that may be required for individuals, families, whānau and communities at risk in both the COVID-19 response and recovery period.

Michael Webster
Secretary of the Cabinet

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