

Chair
Cabinet

BETTER PUBLIC SERVICES ADVISORY GROUP REPORT

Proposal

- 1 This paper seeks agreement to note the Better Public Services Advisory Group's (Advisory Group) report and the accompanying set of proposed result areas prepared by the Office of the Prime Minister (PMO). If agreed, the proposed result areas will be further refined by Ministers and chief executives for a substantive report to Cabinet on the Advisory Group's recommendations on 25 January 2012. The Prime Minister intends to announce the finalised results following this meeting.

Background

- 2 The Advisory Group was set up in May 2011 [APH (11) 58] to provide advice to the State Services Ministerial Group, chaired by the Deputy Prime Minister [Cab (11) 1/29 refers]. The Advisory Group, chaired by the Chief Executive of the Department of the Prime Minister and Cabinet, completed its report in late November and submitted it to the Prime Minister and Deputy Prime Minister. The Advisory Group's terms of reference continue through to March 2012.

Comment

- 3 We have now received the Advisory Group's report and attach it for your consideration. There is much to commend - it presents a high level overview of how the State sector can become more efficient, effective, and more responsive to citizens and businesses. It includes a series of actionable recommendations which, taken together, will offer significant gains for New Zealand. If taken forward, this will be the first substantial reform of the State sector since the late 1980's.
- 4 In our view, the Advisory Group's recommendations present a pathway for reform that is both reasonable and achievable. Given this is the start of a new term of government, and based on the National Party's campaign for better public services, the timing is ideal to consider this report.
- 5 The Advisory Group essentially recommends that the Government's priorities be developed into a small number of tangible, measureable and challenging results that cross agency, and potentially Ministerial, responsibilities. The accompanying table from the PMO sets out some proposed result areas for government focused on a small number of difficult challenges that cut across agency boundaries. These will need to be further developed into achievable, robust, and measurable stretch results. Public

service resources would then be arranged to optimise the delivery of those results - in a much more timely and collaborative way, with appropriate accountability. This will require new governance models and a new, more modern, leadership culture.

- 6 A particular highlight of the Advisory Group's process was their positive engagement with public service chief executives. They successfully tested more effectively working across agency boundaries to deliver results and to raise the preparedness of these leaders for change.

Consultation

- 7 This paper has been prepared by DPMC in consultation with Treasury and the State Services Commission as partner agencies supporting the Better Public Services Advisory Group.

Financial implications

- 8 There are no immediate financial implications from this paper.

Human rights implications

- 9 This work has no human rights issues.

Legislative implications

- 10 Changes may be needed to the core State sector legislation (State Sector Act, Public Finance Act and the Crown Entities Act) to reflect the full range of proposals in the Advisory Group's report.

Regulatory impact and business compliance cost statement

- 11 Regulatory impact analysis requirements do not apply at this time.

Gender implications

- 12 This work has no gender implications.

Disability perspective

- 13 This work has no implication for disability issues.


Publicity

- 14 We propose the Better Public Services programme is referenced in the Speech from the Throne. A more substantive speech on a results focus will be made by the Prime Minister in the New Year, with the Advisory Group's report made publicly available following this speech.

Recommendations

- 15 It is recommended that Ministers:

- 1 **note** the Better Public Services Advisory Group established in May 2011 to provide advice to the State Services Ministerial Group, has now completed its report and submitted it to the Prime Minister and Deputy Prime Minister;
- 2 **note** the content of the Advisory Group's report;
- 3 **note** the draft result areas prepared by the Office of the Prime Minister;
- 4 **direct** the Department of the Prime Minister and Cabinet to prepare advice for Cabinet on the 25th January 2012 on a proposed response to the Advisory Group's report;
- 5 **direct** the Department of the Prime Minister and Cabinet to incorporate in this advice consideration from Ministers and chief executives with responsibilities in the proposed result areas.



John Key
Prime Minister



Bill English
Deputy Prime Minister

The Draft Result Areas paper referred to in this Cabinet paper has been withheld under s9(2)(g)(i)