**Monitoring the implementation of the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child**

**UMG-DCE Social Sector Deputy Chief Executives Engagement process**

**Between: Social Sector Deputy Chief Executives**

**And: UNCROC Monitoring Group**

**Date: [to add]**

*Purpose of SS DCEs-UMG engagement*

1. The Social Sector Deputy Chief Executives (SS DCEs) and the UNCROC Monitoring Group (UMG) share a common goal of improving the lives and upholding the rights of children in New Zealand. The SS DCEs seek to make progress for children by coordinating services across government agencies. The UMG seeks to make progress by monitoring the implementation of the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child.
2. The SS DCEs are the New Zealand Government’s UNCROC co-ordinating mechanism. The two groups meet regularly to support the SS DCEs to fulfil the Government’s obligations, and to inform the UMG’s monitoring.
3. The purpose of this document is to formalise the regular engagement process between the SS DCEs and the UMG.

*Principles of SS DCEs-UMG engagement*

1. Engagement between the SS DCEs and the UMG will be grounded in the following principles:
   1. Partnership: the SS DCEs and the UMG will work constructively together to advance shared objectives
   2. Good faith: the SS DCEs and the UMG will act with honesty and integrity in all interactions
   3. No surprises: the SS DCEs and the UMG will promptly inform each other of matters of significance, especially when these may be controversial
   4. Openness: subject to legal requirements, the SS DCEs and the UMG will share any information relevant to the purpose of the engagement process either at own motion or on request, and will openly consider all information shared
   5. Best interests of the child: in accordance with UNCROC, the SS DCEs and the UMG will give primary consideration to the best interests of the child when working together.

*The SS DCEs-UMG engagement process*

1. It is proposed that the current engagement process between the SS DCEs and the UMG is formalised as follows:
2. The SS DCEs and UMG will meet a minimum of twice per year. The SS DCEs or the UMG may request to meet more frequently due to issues that may arise, such as relevant changes to legislation and policy or UN reporting requirements.
3. The Ministry of Social Development (MSD) and the Office of the Children’s Commissioner (OCC), in their respective capacities as the co-ordinating agencies of the SS DCEs and UMG, will meet on a monthly basis in order to:
4. Track the progress of matters arising from the SS DCEs UMG meetings, including an update of related work programme items;
5. Agree on an agenda for upcoming SS DCEs and UMG meeting
6. Identify any new issues that may arise for placement on the agenda.
7. MSD will arrange the time and dates for the meetings and circulate the agenda, and any documents that are tabled for discussion or consideration, amongst the SS DCEs and UMG representatives and other meeting attendees.

*Duration, review, amendment and cessation*

1. The above engagement process will continue, as a matter of course, through each UNCROC periodic reporting cycle.
2. Should either the UMG or the SS DCEs wish to review, amend or cease this engagement process they will inform the other party of their position, via MSD and OCC, with at least three months notice prior to the following SS DCEs UMG meeting.
3. The party initiating consideration of any review, amendment or cessation of the engagement process will provide written reasons for their position. The matter will then be discussed by the parties at the next scheduled SS DCEs UMG meeting. No decision may be made to review, amend or cease the engagement process prior to this discussion having taken place.

*SS DCEs UMG relationship protocols*

1. MSD will minute each SS DCEs UMG meeting and will circulate draft minutes to participants for confirmation/approval after each meeting.
2. Any items for discussion or circulation that are subject to confidentiality shall be clearly identified by the party raising that item and subject to the standard protocols [NOTE: possibly set out these protocols in an annexure].
3. All dealings between SS DCEs and UMG, and their respective co-ordinating agencies MSD and OCC, will be conducted in good faith and on a “no surprises” basis.
4. Any action by the SS DCEs or UMG members that is inconsistent with the principles of good faith and “no surprises”, or breaches an obligation of confidentiality per clause 9, may give rise for grounds to review, amend or cease the engagement process, as set out in clauses 5-7.