

In Confidence

Office of the Minister for Social Development

Chair, Cabinet Appointments and Honours Committee

WELFARE EXPERT ADVISORY GROUP: APPOINTMENT OF CHAIR

Proposal

- 1 This paper outlines my intention to appoint Professor Cynthia (Cindy) Kiro as the Chair of the Welfare Expert Advisory Group for a term of nine months, commencing on 20 March 2018 and expiring on 21 December 2018.
- 2 I have submitted a companion paper to the Cabinet Social Wellbeing Committee, seeking agreement in principle to the proposed scope and phased approach to the welfare overhaul.

The Government has committed to an overhaul of the welfare system

- 3 The Government, with its coalition and confidence and supply partners, is committed to overhauling the welfare system to ensure it is accessible and fair for all New Zealanders.
- 4 The welfare overhaul will be undertaken in two phases:
 - Phase One: advising Ministers on priorities for reform of the welfare system
 - Phase Two: delivering advice to Ministers on how to achieve those priorities.
- 5 Phase one of the welfare overhaul will be led by a group of external experts, the Welfare Expert Advisory Group (WEAG). The WEAG will have eleven members, including the Chair. It will operate for nine months, ending on Friday 21 December 2018.
- 6 This paper notes my intention to appoint the Chair for the WEAG.
- 7 A current draft of the Terms of Reference for the welfare overhaul and the WEAG is attached as an appendix to this paper. I will report back in April 2018 to confirm the appointment of remaining members of the WEAG and seek agreement to the final Terms of Reference.

Appointment of the Chair of the Welfare Expert Advisory Group

- 8 I intend to appoint Professor Cynthia (Cindy) Kiro as the Chair for the WEAG. Details of the skills and experience that Professor Kiro would bring to the WEAG are contained in the Candidate CV Form attached to this paper, and are summarised below.

- 9 Professor Kiro is a well-known New Zealand public health academic. She has extensive experience working in roles to improve outcomes for the New Zealand population, including as former Children's Commissioner and the former head of the School of Public Health at Massey University. Professor Kiro has held many senior roles in the health sector, academia and community organisations - straddling social work, public health and education.
- 10 Professor Kiro will be unavailable to act as Chair over August – September 2018. During this time, my intention is that one of the WEAG members will act as Chair. The process for this will be outlined in the final Terms of Reference.

Representativeness of appointment

- 11 I intend to work closely with Professor Kiro and Ministerial and cross-Party colleagues to identify the remaining candidates for appointment to the WEAG. My expectation is that the WEAG will appropriately represent the community in terms of gender, age, ethnicity, and an appropriate mix of skills and experience, including experience with the welfare system.
- 12 The WEAG will have the ability to establish advisory groups to provide specialist perspectives to their work.

Remuneration

- 13 The Board is classified as a Group 4 Level 1 Governance Board under the Cabinet Fees Framework.
- 14 The fee for the Chair is \$1,062 per day, which is consistent with the Cabinet Fees Framework.

Appointment process and consultation

- 15 I can confirm that an appropriate process has been followed in selecting the proposed appointee, in terms of the State Services Commission appointment guidelines. I have undertaken Ministerial and cross-Party consultation, informed by consideration of the scope of the overhaul and the skills that will be required by members of the WEAG.

Term of Appointment

- 16 Professor Kiro will be appointed for a period of nine months, commencing on 20 March 2018 and expiring on 21 December 2018.
- 17 My intention is that the WEAG will operate between March – December 2018, to lead advice to Ministers on phase one of the overhaul. At the end of phase one, there will be a further decision for Cabinet as to whether the WEAG is extended, or a new group is formed to lead phase two of the welfare overhaul.

Conflicts of interest

- 18 Possible conflicts of interest have been identified:

- Member of the candidate's immediate family is a doctor for the Auckland City Mission

9(2)(a)

- Member of the candidate's immediate family has accessed Studylink assistance
- National Hauora Trust has a Waitangi Tribunal Kaupapa Claim, Wai 2687 for Primary Care for Māori.

- 19 At the outset, I note that the WEAG is intended to be an advisory body and will have no decision-making powers or rights.
- 20 I expect that the WEAG will put in place appropriate procedures, including a register of interests, to ensure that any potential conflicts of interest that may arise are identified and managed effectively.
- 21 Additionally, Professor Kiro has committed to take additional steps to manage these conflicts, for example, by avoiding discussing the overhaul with family members who may have an interest.

Timing and Publicity

- 22 I intend to issue a press release announcing the appointment of the Chair.
- 23 Following Cabinet agreement, I will make further announcements on the Terms of Reference for the welfare overhaul and the full membership of the WEAG.

Recommendation

- 24 The Minister for Social Development recommends that the Committee:
- 24.1 note that the Government has committed to an overhaul of the welfare system
- 24.2 note I have submitted a companion paper to the Cabinet Social Wellbeing Committee, seeking agreement to the proposed scope and phased approach to the welfare overhaul
- 24.3 note my intention to appoint Professor Cindy Kiro as the Chair of the Welfare Expert Advisory Group for a term of nine months, commencing on 20 March 2018 and expiring on 21 December 2018
- 24.4 note the appointment of Professor Kiro as Chair is subject to Cabinet agreement to the companion paper establishing the Welfare Expert Advisory Group
- 24.5 note that Professor Kiro's fees will be paid in line with the Cabinet Fees Framework

24.6 note I will seek Cabinet agreement to the final Terms of Reference and appointment of other members of the Welfare Expert Advisory Group, following further engagement with the Chair.

Authorised for lodgement

Hon Carmel Sepuloni

Minister for Social Development