# Te Kawa Mataaho Report





# Draft Cabinet paper for consultation: "New Zealand's withdrawal from the Open Government Partnership"

Date:	15 October 2024				
To:	Hon Nicola Willis, Minister for the Public Service				
Action Sought:	Approval to consult Due Date 16 October 2024				
Report No:	2024-0332				
Contact:	Hugo Vitalis, Deputy Chief Executive Strategy, Policy and Integrity				
Contact No:	9(2)(a) privacy				
Encl:	Draft Cabinet paper	Priority:	High		
Security Level:	SENSITIVE		,		

# **Purpose**

1. This paper provides you with a draft Cabinet paper "New Zealand's withdrawal from the Open Government Partnership" for ministerial consultation.

# **Background**

- 2. On 8 April 2024, at your request, we provided you with a draft Cabinet paper to progress the option to withdraw from the Open Government Partnership (OGP) (BR2024-0104 refers). With your approval, we consulted with the Department for the Prime Minister and Cabinet (DPMC), Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Trade (MFAT), the Treasury, and Department of Internal Affairs (DIA)/Government Chief Digital Officer (GCDO).
- 3. The draft Cabinet paper (enclosed) reflects feedback from those agencies. Ministerial consultation on the draft Cabinet paper was postponed until after Budget 2024.

# Feedback from agency consultation

- 4. Agency consultation did not highlight any new implications of withdrawal 9(2)(f)(iv) confidentiality of advice
- 5. Based on experience leading OGP Commitments, the GCDO agrees that withdrawal from OGP is a sensible option as it offers limited value, poses high transaction costs and is not prioritised by agencies or Ministers.
- 6. The GCDO also notes that membership of OGP is one of several principles for membership of the Digital Nations, a network of leading digital governments of which New Zealand is a founding member. Should New Zealand withdraw from OGP, 6(a) prejudice security or defence, 9(2)(f)(iv) confidentiality of advice

#### 6(a) prejudice security or defence, 9(2)(f)(iv) confidentiality of advice

- 7. It remains MFAT's view that withdrawal from OGP can be appropriately managed. The Treasury suggested minor changes regarding the OGP appropriation but no other comments. DPMC was informed and indicated no concerns, also noting the Prime Minister's Office had no concerns.
- 8. 9(2)(a) privacy we did not consult with agencies currently delivering OGP national act9(2 plan commitments, initially due to Budget sensitivity and then due to continuing sensitivity around international relationships. However, officials from those agencies contributed to the Commission's review of OGP in late 2023. They noted that OGP does not add value to their work programmes and is poorly aligned to agency priorities, which is reflected in our previous advice (BR2023-0321 refers) and the draft Cabinet paper.

#### Comment

9(2)(f)(iv) confidentiality of ac	dvice, 6(a) prejudice se	curity or defence	

#### OGP National Action Plan 4

14. Of the eight commitments in the current national action plan, one is on track for full delivery, three are expected to partially deliver, two have been slowed/paused and are at risk of non-delivery, and two have stopped with little or no progress made. There is likely to be criticism from civil society stakeholders and the OGP Independent Reporting Mechanism about this lack of overall progress.

# Next steps

15. We have incorporated MFAT and GCDO feedback in the enclosed draft Cabinet paper titled "New Zealand's withdrawal from the Open Government Partnership" [enclosed]. Should you agree to progress consultation with your colleagues, the table below shows three possible 2024 timelines for consultation and Cabinet decision.

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<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>1</sup>The agencies leading action plan commitments are: Public Service Commission, Department of Internal Affairs, Ministry of Business, Innovation and Employment, Ministry of Justice, Serious Fraud Office and Statistics New Zealand.

16. We recommend Timeline 2, 6(a) prejudice security or defence

Activity	Timeline 1 (tight)	Timeline 2 (more flexible)	Timeline 3 (last possible in 2024)
Draft Cabinet paper ready	15 October	15 October	15 October
Agency meeting discussion	16 October	23 October	30 October
Ministerial consultation (two weeks)	16 October to 30 October (includes Labour weekend)	29 October to 11 November	4 November to 15 November
Lodging – EXP and Cabinet	31 October	14 November	5 December
EXP - Expenditure and Regulatory Review Committee	5 November	19 November	10 December
Cabinet	11 November	25 November	16 December
Effective date of OGP withdrawal	18 November	2 December	20 December

- 17. We recommend a decision about withdrawal from OGP is made before 31 December 2024, when National Action Plan 4 is due to finish.
- 18. If Cabinet agrees to withdraw, withdrawal from OGP requires a letter from you to the OGP Support Unit in Washington. We will work with your office to implement decisions and advise relevant stakeholders of the decision.

# Recommended action

We recommend that you:

- a **note** we have provided an updated draft Cabinet paper "New Zealand's withdrawal from the Open Government Partnership" that includes feedback from agency consultation
- b **note** feedback from targeted agency consultation with MFAT, the GCDO/DIA, Treasury and DPMC was that the implications of withdrawal from OGP could be appropriately managed
- 9(2)(f)(iv) confidentiality of advice, 6(a) prejudice security or defence
- d note that, other than targeted consultation noted above, we have not consulted with other agencies due to sensitivity around international relationships, but agency views gathered during our review of OGP are reflected in our previous advice and the draft Cabinet paper

Noted

e **agree** to proceed to ministerial consultation on the paper "New Zealand's withdrawal from the Open Government Partnership" on either

Timeline 1 Agree/disagree

or Timeline 2 Agree/disagree

or Timeline 2 Agree/disagree

f agree to proactively release this briefing once final decisions on OGP membership have been made Agree/disagree

Hon Nicola Willis

Minister for the Public Service

SENSITIVE

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Office of the Minister for the Public Service

Chair, Cabinet Expenditure and Regulatory Review Committee

# NEW ZEALAND'S WITHDRAWAL FROM THE OPEN GOVERNMENT PARTNERSHIP

# Proposal

 I propose New Zealand withdraw from the Open Government Partnership (OGP), effective 2 December 2024.

# Relation to government priorities

 Withdrawing from OGP enables agencies to focus on delivering Government priorities and supports commitments in the coalition agreements between National, ACT and New Zealand First parties to deliver savings in public sector spending by reducing nonessential back-office functions and wasteful spending.

# **Executive Summary**

- This government is committed to strengthening democracy and advancing open, transparent and accountable government. New Zealand has a leading international reputation for open government.
- 4. We have a wide range of tools and initiatives that advance open government. This includes our Official Information Act practices and the proactive release of Cabinet papers, and improvements to stakeholder engagement to better enable public input to policy making and service design. We are also delivering initiatives to enable better digital services and other more customer-centric approaches, and improving public sector performance and accountability.
- Our leading reputation is supported by consistently strong performance in a range of international measures. For example, the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) recently found New Zealanders are far more likely than people in other OECD countries to believe that our political system allows them to have a say in what government does, while Transparency International has ranked New Zealand in the top three least corrupt countries in the world for more than twenty years.<sup>1</sup>
- 6. While this strong performance can be celebrated, we must also demonstrate to New Zealanders that our systems for transparency, accountability and public participation in democracy are effective. I have been clear that agencies are expected to exercise fiscal discipline and that spending on programmes must demonstrate value for money.
- In late 2023, the Public Service Commission (the Commission) reviewed OGP, a nonbinding multi-lateral initiative intended to promote open government, to identify

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<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>1</sup> OECD Drivers of Trust: <a href="https://www.oecd.org/en/publications/2024/07/oecd-survey-on-drivers-of-trust-in-public-institutions-2024-results">https://www.transparency.org/en/cpi/2023</a> and Freedom House: <a href="https://freedomhouse.org/country/new-zealand/freedom-world/2024">https://freedomhouse.org/country/new-zealand/freedom-world/2024</a>

opportunities for improvement. Instead, the review found that the programme offers few benefits, due to:

- 7.1. limited evidence of programme effectiveness,
- 7.2. high transaction costs for Ministers and agencies,
- 7.3. civil society stakeholder dissatisfaction with the current approach and a signal they will not continue participating without more financial investment and Ministerial leadership, and
- 7.4. that balancing OGP expectations for co-creation with our model of Cabinet decision-making and prioritisation poses a fundamental tension for New Zealand.
- Further investment of additional funding or Ministerial time would not improve OGP
  effectiveness or resolve these issues, and does not demonstrate good value for
  money. Remaining in OGP while achieving cost savings is not feasible. I recommend
  New Zealand withdraw from membership of OGP.
- 9. The primary risk of withdrawal is domestic and international criticism. Civil society stakeholders involved in OGP in New Zealand have been effective at advocating for their views using OGP accountability mechanisms and the media. Criticism is likely to focus on a perceived weakening of New Zealand's commitment to open government rather than OGP's lack of effectiveness.
- 10. Officials advise this can be appropriately managed. New Zealand is among the least corrupt countries in the world, is considered leading in access to political rights and civil liberties worldwide and we remain committed to furthering the principles of open government.
- 11. This commitment could be better delivered through our continued participation in the OECD. The OECD's Recommendation of the Council on Open Government and Recommendation of the Council on Public Integrity, to which we adhere as an OECD member, promote the same goals of transparency, accountability and public participation as OGP does. They also offer support to countries around protecting against corruption, developing leadership, measuring effectiveness and building the capability of the public service in support of democracy and inclusive growth. This is more closely aligned to New Zealand's priorities and approach to open government, and withdrawing from OGP would remove unnecessary duplication and reduce costs.

12.	9(2)(f)(iv) confidentiality of advice, 6(a) prejudice security or defence				

13. This proposal has financial implications. The annual membership subscription will be disestablished, delivering savings. While this proposal will not directly remove costs from agency baselines, withdrawal will enable agencies to refocus resources on Government priorities. The cost of OGP to agencies is collectively estimated at

between \$1 million and \$1.5 million per annum. An appropriation of \$0.2 million per annum is administered by the Commission for an OGP annual membership subscription.

14. If Cabinet agrees to withdraw from OGP, I will notify the OGP Support Unit in writing. The OGP work programme, including delivery of the fourth National Action Plan (NAP4), will stop by 31 December 2024.

# Background

- OGP is a non-binding multilateral initiative of over seventy countries that promotes 15. open government: access to government information, civic participation, integrity of government and technology for openness and accountability. OGP is managed by the OGP Support Unit (a not-for-profit organisation based in the United States) with oversight from an international Steering Committee. I lead New Zealand's participation in OGP, with system support from the Commission.<sup>2</sup>
- 16. New Zealand joined OGP in 2014, after an invitation by Rt Hon Francis Maude (then United Kingdom Minister of State and OGP co-Chair). Cabinet noted that membership complemented New Zealand's reputation for integrity, openness and lack of corruption and supported its leadership role internationally in transparency and open government. The first action plan drew largely from the Better Public Services programme to avoid duplication of effort (ERD Min (13) 9/1 refers). New Zealand has produced four action plans. NAP4 was agreed by the previous Government and is due to end 31 December 2024 (SWC-22-MIN-0228 refers).
- 17. OGP is only one of a wide range of tools and initiatives driving open government in New Zealand. Other examples include a requirement to foster open government in the Public Service Act 2020 and Official Information Act 1982 practices and the proactive release of Cabinet papers. It also includes improvements to stakeholder engagement to better enable public input to policy making and service design. We are also delivering counter-fraud and anti-corruption work programme, initiatives to enable better digital services and other more customer-centric approaches, and improving public sector performance and accountability.

# **Analysis**

In 2023, the Commission reviewed New Zealand's approach to OGP to identify 18. potential improvements before the next biennial cycle of action plan development (due in 2024/25).3 New Zealand's approach to OGP aligns with comparable jurisdictions and OGP minimum requirements, but there is little evidence of effectiveness.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>2</sup> OGP members are required to endorse the Open Government Declaration and produce national action plans on two- or four-yearly cycles. Action plans include "commitments" to strengthen open government. OGP rules require governments to co-create commitments with the public and civil society organisations. OGP guidance encourages countries to have a multistakeholder forum to support ongoing dialogue between government and civil society.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>3</sup> The review included a detailed survey of seventeen OGP member countries, discussions with officials in five comparable OGP member jurisdictions, analysis and assessment of OGP national action plans, evaluation reports and academic literature. Workshops were held with New Zealand civil society stakeholders and agency officials.

There is limited evidence of OGP's effectiveness, internationally or in New Zealand

- 19. By OGP's own measures, a third of all action plan commitments are not implemented. Of those implemented, 80% do not significantly change government practices.<sup>4</sup>
- 20. As Table 1 shows, only one of the 23 commitments in New Zealand's first three action plans was rated by OGP as having a major impact on open government once implemented. The rest were assessed as having marginal or no impact. New Zealand maintained its leading ranking in the Transparency International Corruption Perceptions Index in the same period.

Table 1: Summary view of independent assessments of open government

OGP member (selected countries)	Delivered OGP commitments, plans ending 2012-2022 inclusive*	Proportion of delivered commitments with marginal / no impact on opening government	Proportion of delivered commitments with major / outstanding impact on opening government	Transparency International Corruptions Perception Index rank (2012 2023)
Australia	23	70%	17%	7 14
Canada	44	61%	23%	9 12
Finland	29	79%	21%	1 2
Ireland	46	74%	26%	25 11
New Zealand	23	70%	4%	1 3
Norway	40	88%	3%	7 4
Philippines	46	59%	28%	105 115
United Kingdom	54	61%	31%	17 20
United States	84	77%	19%	19 24

<sup>\* &#</sup>x27;Delivered' includes commitments with completion status of 'limited', 'substantial' or 'complete'. These countries recorded 538 commitments 2012-2022, of which 389 were delivered in part or full.

Sources: <a href="https://www.opengovpartnership.org/open-data/">https://www.opengovpartnership.org/open-data/</a> and <a href="https://www.transparency.org/en/cpi/">https://www.transparency.org/en/cpi/</a>

There are substantial ongoing costs for OGP participation and action plan delivery

- 21. The direct costs of OGP, a \$0.2 million per annum membership subscription, are funded through a standalone appropriation administered by the Commission. The Commission has also absorbed coordination and delivery costs within its baseline.
- 22. Agencies are expected to absorb the costs of engaging on, developing and delivering action plan commitments within their baselines. These costs vary by agency but are collectively estimated at between \$1 million and \$1.5 million per annum.

OGP's one-size-fits-all approach increases programme transaction costs

23. OGP processes do not fully recognise New Zealand's context for open government. The Commission has previously raised concerns with the OGP Support Unit about shifts in their strategic focus, definition of co-creation and 'one-size-fits-all' approach.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>4</sup> OGP (2021): https://www.opengovpartnership.org/wp-content/uploads/2021/11/Vital-Signs Executive-Summary.pdf

- 24. Despite significant effort and investment by officials (and members of the expert advisory panel supporting OGP) into creating face-to-face and digital opportunities for participation, public and civil society engagement with OGP has been very low.
- 25. New Zealand has a wide range of existing approaches for stakeholder engagement and public input to policy making and service design. OGP processes require extensive and specific engagement over and above existing mechanisms. This increases transaction costs for Ministers and agencies.

#### Stakeholders have been dissatisfied for some time

- 26. Civil society stakeholders have expressed frustration and dissatisfaction with New Zealand's OGP approach. Some have withdrawn their support, while others have signalled that they will do so unless there is a change to the current approach. They have asked for:
  - 26.1. Increased direct involvement of Ministers (with some believing they should be co-creating commitments directly with Ministers rather than officials),
  - 26.2. Dedicated funding for OGP commitments, and
  - 26.3. More ambitious action plan commitments, going beyond alignment with Government priorities and agency work programmes.
- 27. Balancing these expectations with our model of Cabinet decision-making and prioritisation poses a fundamental tension for New Zealand's membership of OGP.
- 28. Most civil society stakeholders involved in OGP represent small constituencies and do not hold a broad public mandate. If not managed well, the OGP process risks elevating the voice of a small number of individuals to Ministers.
- Officials advise that stakeholder requests for significant additional investment and more Ministerial leadership and time would not fully address concerns or improve OGP's effectiveness.

# Remaining in OGP is not a viable alternative to withdrawal

30. I have been clear that agencies are expected to exercise fiscal discipline and that spending on programmes must demonstrate value for money. Officials considered a range of options for change and improvement. The review made it apparent that continuing with the status quo or remaining in OGP while achieving cost savings are not viable options. Given the limited evidence of effectiveness, further investment does not demonstrate good value for money.

# OECD membership offers a value for money alternative to OGP

31. The OECD's Recommendation of the Council on Open Government and Recommendation of the Council on Public Integrity, to which we adhere as an OECD member, promote the same goals of transparency, accountability and public participation as OGP does, but also offer support to countries around protecting against corruption, developing leadership, measuring effectiveness and building the capability of the public service in support of democracy and inclusive economic growth.

32. This approach is more closely aligned to New Zealand's priorities and approach to open government and offers better value for money. The OECD's channels and initiatives offer a more appropriate, whole-of-government opportunity to continue driving our commitment to openness, effectiveness and accountability while reducing duplication of effort and reduce costs.

# Risks of withdrawal from OGP

- 33. The primary risk of withdrawal is domestic and international criticism. This is likely to focus on a perceived weakening of New Zealand's commitment to open government rather than OGP's lack of effectiveness.
- 34. New Zealand has a strong international reputation as an open and transparent democracy and consistently performs well in a range of international measures. For example, New Zealanders are far more likely than people in other OECD countries to share optimism that our political system allows them to have a say in what government does, New Zealand is among the least corrupt countries in the world and is considered leading in access to political rights and civil liberties worldwide.<sup>5</sup>
- 35. New Zealand remains committed to furthering the principles of open government, with a focus on delivering it through continued participation in the OECD.

# Domestic implications

- 36. Civil society stakeholders involved in OGP in New Zealand have been effective at advocating for their views using OGP accountability mechanisms and the media. They have undertaken direct engagement with OGP global leaders and ambassadors.
- 37. Just prior to the 2023 general election, civil society stakeholders surveyed six political parties asking them to confirm their support for New Zealand's membership of OGP. All parties, including coalition partners, responded yes to three questions on continuing membership, showing leadership and appropriately resourcing OGP.<sup>6</sup> The Commission's review of effectiveness, which explored strategic and operational challenges of OGP more deeply, had not been completed at the time.

# International implications

38. MFAT was consulted on the potential implications of withdrawal from OGP for New Zealand's international reputation and relationships. Their initial views were reflected in the Commission's advice to me in February 2024 when they were consulted on this

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<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>5</sup> OECD Drivers of Trust: <a href="https://www.oecd.org/en/publications/2024/07/oecd-survey-on-drivers-of-trust-in-public-institutions-2024-results">https://www.trust-in-public-institutions-2024-results</a> eeb36452.html, Transparency International: <a href="https://www.transparency.org/en/cpi/2023">https://freedomhouse.org/country/new-zealand/freedom-world/2024</a>

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>6</sup> The survey contained three questions: their support for New Zealand to remain a member of the Partnership, that their cabinet would support strong ministerial leadership during the co-creation of Open Government Action Plan commitments and that their government would support the effective delivery of commitments, ensuring that they are appropriately resourced. See Transparency International NZ: <a href="https://www.transparency.org.nz/blog/parliamentary-parties-express-support-for-the-ogp">https://www.transparency.org.nz/blog/parliamentary-parties-express-support-for-the-ogp</a>. On 18 October 2023, a *Business Desk* news alert email reported OGP was the type of programme officials would propose ending as a cost cutting measure and civil society stakeholders had sought reassurance this would not occur.

proposal. They advised that while there may be bilateral risks associated with withdrawal, as with an exit from any grouping, these can be appropriately managed.

- 39. Two OECD members have recently withdrawn from OGP, while others have failed to meet minimum requirements and been placed under 'Procedural Review' by the OGP Support Unit.<sup>7</sup> Luxembourg withdrew in 2022 and Hungary in 2016, noting OGP's processes were not well aligned to their government operations. Their withdrawal from OGP was publicly acknowledged by the OGP Support Unit but received little media coverage or other commentary.
- 40. If Cabinet agrees to withdraw, MFAT will manage bilateral communications about the decision as a courtesy to relevant international partners.

6(a) prejudice security or defence, 9(2)(f)(iv) confi	identialit	y of adv	vice		

42. Based on experience leading commitments under the third and fourth national action plans, the GCDO agrees that OGP is not considered a high priority by agencies, has high transaction costs but limited impact on open government in New Zealand and does not reflect the wide range of existing approaches that support open government. The GCDO agrees that withdrawal from OGP is a sensible solution.

43.	43. 9(2)(f)(iv) confidentiality of advice, 6(a) prejudice security or defence			

# Implementation

- 44. If Cabinet agrees to this proposal, I will implement withdrawal from OGP by notifying Cabinet's decision in a letter to the OGP Support Unit.
- 45. If Cabinet agrees to withdraw, I expect agencies to stop work on the OGP by 31 December 2024, when NAP4 is due to be completed.

9(2)(f)(iv) confidentiality of advice, 6(a) prejudice security or defence

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>7</sup> If countries are placed under 'Procedural Review', the OGP Support Unit may withdraw them if they fail to meet minimum requirements for three consecutive cycles: <a href="https://www.opengovpartnership.org/procedural-review/">https://www.opengovpartnership.org/procedural-review/</a>. In recent years this has included Norway (for failing to deliver an action plan on time) and the United Kingdom (for failing to meet minimum cocreation requirements). Norway: <a href="https://www.opengovpartnership.org/wp-content/uploads/2023/04/Norway Resolution-by-CS-Subcommittee">https://www.opengovpartnership.org/wp-content/uploads/2023/04/Norway Resolution-by-CS-Subcommittee</a> 20230414.pdf, United Kingdom: <a href="https://www.opengovpartnership.org/wp-content/uploads/2022/12/UK-Procedural-Review-Resolution-December-2022-CS-approved-Dec-20-2022.pdf">https://www.opengovpartnership.org/wp-content/uploads/2022/12/UK-Procedural-Review-Resolution-December-2022-CS-approved-Dec-20-2022.pdf</a>

# Cost-of-living implications

46. There are no cost-of-living implications of withdrawal from OGP.

# Financial implications

- 47. Withdrawal will deliver cost savings. If Cabinet agrees to withdraw from OGP, the appropriation administered by the Commission for OGP annual membership subscriptions will be disestablished. This will achieve cost savings of \$0.2 million per annum, which was submitted as part of the Commission's cost savings proposal.
- 48. Stopping the OGP work programme will enable agencies to refocus resources on Government priorities. The current commitment, absorbed in agency baselines, is estimated at between \$1 million and \$1.5 million per annum.

# Legislative implications and impact analysis

49. This proposal has no legislative implications. A regulatory impact analysis is not required.

# Population and human rights implications

50. This proposal has no human rights or population implications.

# Use of external resources

51. In February 2023, the Commission followed government procurement rules to select Allen + Clarke to undertake research with international and domestic stakeholders into different models of multi-stakeholder forums, contributing to the Commission's broader review of OGP. External resource was used to allow civil society and other stakeholders to be candid in their reflections, since Commission officials provide system support. The professional fee for two consultants was \$37,136.53.

#### Consultation

- 52. MFAT, DIA and Treasury were consulted on this paper. DPMC was informed.
- 53. Agencies leading OGP action plan commitments contributed feedback and opportunities for improvement during the Commission's review in late 2023. This included: the Commission, Ministry of Business, Innovation and Employment, Ministry of Justice, Serious Fraud Office, DIA and Statistics New Zealand. Officials from agencies previously involved in OGP delivery and other open government initiatives also contributed feedback in the same review: Department for the Prime Minister and Cabinet, the Treasury and Parliamentary Counsel Office.
- 54. Their feedback was reflected in the Commission's advice and this paper, but they were not explicitly consulted on this paper due to sensitivity around New Zealand's international relationships.
- 55. Civil society stakeholders contributed feedback and opportunities for improvement during the Commission's review in late 2023. They were clear about the challenges New Zealand faces and advocated for increased Ministerial leadership and time and additional dedicated financial investment. They have not been consulted on this paper.

# Communications

- 56. As noted above, there is a risk of critical publicity around a decision to withdraw. I plan to proactively release advice and other information relating to the decision, including a letter to the OGP Support Unit notifying withdrawal, but not otherwise announce the decision.
- 57. If Cabinet agrees to this proposal, I expect the Commission to work closely with MFAT and GCDO around proactive release of this decision and related advice and provide information for specific audiences if requested.

# **Proactive Release**

58. I plan to proactively release this paper in accordance with the agreed approach to proactive release, with any redactions in line with the Official Information Act 1982.



#### Recommendations

The Minister for the Public Service recommends that the Committee:

- note that in September 2013 Cabinet agreed that New Zealand should join the Open Government Partnership (OGP) as part of our broader approach to advancing open government (ERD Min (13) 9/1 refers)
- 2. **note** this government is committed to strengthening democracy and advancing open, transparent and accountable government
- 3. **note** New Zealand has a leading international reputation for open government, advanced by a wide range of tools and initiatives
- note that officials have reviewed OGP, consider it ineffective for achieving the goals
  of open government in New Zealand, and recommend New Zealand withdraw because
  it does not offer value for money
- note that withdrawal from OGP presents some risks of domestic and international criticism and risks for bilateral relationships, but officials advise these can be managed, including through continued participation in the OECD
- 6. 9(2)(f)(iv) confidentiality of advice, 6(a) prejudice security or defence
- 7. **note** that withdrawal will result in \$0.2 million per annum of reduced OGP expenditure
- note that in addition to reduced expenditure, it is estimated that at least \$1 to 1.5
  million worth of Public Service department time and resources per annum will no
  longer be directed to this work
- 9. **agree** that New Zealand withdraw from the Open Government Partnership with effect 2 December 2024
- 10. **agree** the OGP work programme, including delivery of National Action Plan 4, stop by 31 December 2024
- 11. **note** the Minister for the Public Service will write to the OGP Support Unit notifying the decision to withdraw from membership of OGP.

Authorised for lodgement

Hon Nicola Willis

Minister for the Public Service