

Hon Chris Hipkins MP
Minister for the Public Service
Parliamentary Buildings
WELLINGTON 6160

By email to: c.hipkins@ministers.govt.nz

30 September 2022

Tēnā koe Minister Hipkins,

Open Government – 4th National Action Plan

Thank you for agreeing to meet with civil society organisations to co-create the commitments in the next Open Government Action Plan. We welcome the opportunity to meet with our co-creation partner at this crucial stage of the process so we can work constructively on the issues together. To that end we would suggest keeping officials' representation down to one person, to make a record of the discussion.

We look forward to the opportunity to engage with you, answer questions you might have about the commitments we have proposed, and identify any supporting material that might be helpful for you as you engage with your colleagues. For example:

- the argument used by some agencies – inconsistency with existing policy – misses the point of working in partnership. Co-design of policy inevitably means policy will need to be adapted if the partnership has been effective.
- the old saw about inadequate resources does not carry much weight, particularly as we raised these concerns in [our letter to you of 15 March 2021](#). Any programme with worthwhile commitments will inevitably involve costs. But the proposals we have put forward do not have major resource implications. Our view is that either the costs can be absorbed through reprioritisation of agency baselines, or that the commitments can be considered in the new initiatives round of developing Budget 2023. If necessary, commitment starting dates can be staggered to enable this.

The Open Government Partnership is primarily a vehicle for hope – for a better future through better designed and delivered policies and services. The intended function of being a member of the OGP is to use its values of public participation, access to information and accountability to transform the ways in which government as a whole undertakes its work.

Successive Action Plans have been treated by agencies not as tools to transform how government works with the public and civil society, but as a set of commitments that just need to be ticked off. Ministerial leadership will be needed to change this behaviour.

You have already told us that you want an ambitious plan that will make a difference. We would say that such a plan is essential for OGP in New Zealand to retain any credibility.

We look forward to hearing from you, so we can work together in a genuine partnership to develop an OGP Action Plan that is ambitious and a credit to the Government.

Ngā mihi,



Thomas Beagle
Chairperson
NZ Council for Civil Liberties



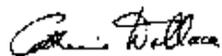
Andrew Cushen
Interim Chief Executive
Internet NZ



Julie Haggie
Chief Executive Officer
Transparency
International



Sacha Green
National Advisor
Citizens Advice Bureau



Cath Wallace
Vice-chair
Environment and Conservation
Organisations of NZ



Maureen Gillon
Committee Member
Trust Democracy



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