

# OPEN GOVERNMENT PARTNERSHIP

## NEW ZEALAND

### Commitment 1: Open Budget

**Date:** March to May 2017

**Lead agency:** The Treasury

*To promote public discussion/debate and participation through accessibility of the budget and include relevant groups outside of government in the formative phase of the Budget, ensuring they are informed about the process and issues.*

#### WHAT HAVE WE BEEN DOING?

- We have engaged Colmar Brunton to undertake stakeholder research, which was completed in May with 34 interviews taking place (meeting the first milestone in the Commitment).
- Nine stakeholder categories were established: Media, industry representatives, analysts, financial organisations, academia, international organisations, iwi, social and community services and professional networks.
- Interviews were spread across the stakeholder categories :
  - 5 media
  - 4 industry representatives
  - 3 analysts
  - 2 financial organisations
  - 3 academia
  - 2 international groups
  - 4 iwi groups
  - 6 social and community services
  - 5 professional networks.
- Overall themes are that stakeholders think New Zealand has one of the most transparent and open budgets, although more information on trends and context would be helpful. Some stakeholders are unsure about how they engage in the budget process but there are contrasting views about whether the budget audience should target the public directly or reach out via intermediaries like the media.
- Work continues on the data availability project with source data now populating the new database.
- A new “plain English” document is planned as part of Budget 2017.

- Ben Fowkes (UK Commercial Director at Delib, a provider of online engagement tools) presented at the Treasury in March on current Budget Simulators around the world along with other digital democracy tools (see links below).

## LINKS

<http://www.delib.net/>

Australian Treasury Citizen Space: <https://consult.treasury.gov.au/>

Liverpool budget Demo: <https://demo4.budgetsimulator.com/>

Spending Challenge: <http://webarchive.nationalarchives.gov.uk>

## WHAT'S NEXT?

- Finalising (and publishing) the report on stakeholder engagement and developing an action plan in response.
- Engaging with Statistics New Zealand on the open data framework in preparation for publishing budget data
- Agreeing the 2017/18 workplan to ensure momentum on the Commitment is maintained