

Open Government Partnership New Zealand

National Action Plan 2018-2020

Progress report for: Jul 2019 – Sep 2019

Commitment 5: Public participation in policy development




Lead agency: The Department of the Prime Minister and Cabinet (DPMC)

Objective: DPMC will assist the New Zealand public sector to develop a deeper and more consistent understanding of what good engagement with the public means (right across the International Association of Public Participation's spectrum of public participation).




Ambition: New Zealanders increasingly experience a timelier and collaborative approach to public participation when policies are developed, and consider their concerns, diversity of views, life experience, and time are valued in the policy process.

Improvements in public participation can result in better design of policy and services, and increase their legitimacy. Improving public participation requires an informed approach to applying public participation methods throughout the policy development process. Developing a deeper understanding of what good engagement looks like and providing guidance about best practice methods across government, will achieve a more consistent and coherent approach to public participation.

OGP values: Civic participation

Milestones		Progress
1	<p>Extend existing Policy Method's Toolbox public participation guidance to include a decision tool that will assist agencies and Ministers to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Choose the appropriate engagement approach on the public participation spectrum when they tackle a specific policy or service design issue Understand the characteristics and enablers of effective public participation at whichever point on the spectrum they choose Ensure that the engagement approaches selected appropriately include and reflect the diversity of those interested and affected by the policies. <p><i>Start/End dates: October 2018/March 2020</i></p>	
2	<p>Develop and share recent case studies documenting New Zealand innovation success stories in public participation in the policy development process</p> <p><i>Start/End dates: October 2018/March 2020</i></p>	
3	<p>Identify a 'live' policy issue in which to trial public engagement in policy development that is higher on the public participation spectrum than inform or consult, as a demonstration project</p> <p><i>Start/End dates: October 2018/March 2020</i></p>	

4	Widely disseminate the results of the above actions <i>Start/End dates: March 2020/June 2020</i>	N/A
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Progress key:  some delays  underway  Completed

WHAT WE HAVE BEEN DOING

In the period since the last report until 30 September 2019, the Policy Project (the team within DPMC responsible for Commitment 5) has:

- Completed the last stage of the selection process for the live demonstration project. The Child and Youth Wellbeing Strategy (the Strategy) – and relevant projects under the strategy – has now been selected.
- Informed relevant Ministers and government agency teams, and commenced observation of the live demonstration project and relevant engagement approaches under the Strategy.
- Prepared a preliminary summary of insights gained from meetings with key stakeholders in public, private and community sectors, to assist the project team to develop the detailed design of next steps and approaches to implement Commitment 5 and include diverse voices.
- (With the Auckland Co-Design Lab) analysed the key insights and themes of the initial July discovery workshops with policy practitioners. Prepared a high level summary of information and insights (conversation tracker) to be published online.
- Held debriefs on discovery workshops and draft literature review with IAP2 trainer and workshop presenter Anne Pattillo and Auckland Co-design Lab to identify learnings and opportunities for the design phase.
- Identified and confirmed the main case studies that will be used of innovation success stories in public participation in the policy development process.
- Finalised the domestic and international literature survey on guidance on public participation in government policy development, for release online with the quarterly report.
- Worked with Anne Pattillo, engagement specialist, to begin planning the design phase.

HOW WE ARE INCLUDING DIVERSE VOICES

We are continuing discussions with engagement specialists to identify engagement approaches that will include diverse voices and will maximise public engagement within available resources.

We will also be canvassing central government agencies to identify recent engagements that have captured diverse voices in policy-making.

HOW WE ARE KEEPING DIVERSE COMMUNITIES INFORMED

We have identified approaches to diversity and inclusion through the review of the international literature on citizen engagement.

We will begin involving diverse communities as we plan and implement the design phase.

WHAT'S NEXT?

In the quarter ending 31 Dec 2019, we will focus on:

- Identifying a group of advisers (within government and engagement/co-design experts) to assist with the development of the guidance, testing of content, and processes used for engagement with stakeholders.
- Undertaking design workshops with policy practitioners to test a draft of the guidance.
- Conducting engagement with diverse communities and their representatives.
 - Input will be obtained through interviews with individuals and holding small focus groups (arranged through agencies and organisations who are involved with diverse groups or represent them).
 - Initially this will be on their experiences with and expectations of engagement with government on policy issues and how to improve this.
 - Later they will have the opportunity to engage on the content of the draft guidance.
 - This engagement may also include involving stakeholders who have recently engaged with government agencies.
 - Information will also be collected from diverse groups and their wider networks through an online survey, including surveying the people on the OGP email list held by SSC (who have previously been involved with developing the OGP 2018-2020 National Action Plan).
- Holding meetings with officials working on projects identified under the Child and Youth Wellbeing Strategy as part of our work observing the engagement process and outcomes. Continuing to document that work to contribute to the 'live' demonstration project milestone.
- Continuing work to produce case studies that can be published online within the Policy Methods Toolbox, and then can be referenced in the guidance.

LINKS – EVIDENCE OF PROGRESS AND MILESTONES ACHIEVED

1. Conversation tracker recording the discovery phase engagement workshops with policy practitioners held on 9 and 10 July 2019.
2. Literature review: *Guidance on public participation in government policy development: what can NZ learn from the international and domestic literature on public participation and community engagement?*