Officials Group

MEETING MINUTES

Monday 6 August 2018, 10am – 11am
Rm 10.2 State Services Commission
Reserve Bank, No.2 The Terrace

Officials Group participants	Keitha Booth (OGP IRM); Michelle Groves, Jonathan Robinson (Parliamentary Counsel Office – PCO); Rex Drummond, Christine Bennett (Department of Internal Affairs - DIA); Jocelyn Morrison, Adam Brown (Stats NZ); Andrew Blazey, Apurva Mahire (Treasury); Erik Koed, Helen Moody, Amy Allison, Larry Fergusson (State Services Commission - SSC)
Apologies	Catherine Williams (SSC)

Agenda #	Topic
1	Welcome

Amy Allison as Chair welcomed everyone and outlined the purpose of the Independent Reporting Mechanism (IRM) discussion.

Agenda #	Topic
2	Close-out of National Action Plan 2016-18

Discussion and questions with Keitha Booth on each of the commitments to assist with the review of New Zealand's performance to close out of the second National Action Plan.

Keitha Booth introduced herself and provided a brief overview of her role for Open Government Partnership (OGP) International. She also provided an overview of her deliberation, including how the Action Plan was developed. She confirmed that her approach included feedback on commitments from New Zealanders, conducting interviews and desk top research.

She explained that the IRM Reporting process looks at progress since the IRM Mid-term Assessment, in particular :

- consultation with civil society
- commitment implementation
- impact on openness - whether or not there was significant improvement.

Ms Booth discussed the timeframes to produce her report on the OGP National Action Plan 2016-18. This includes circulation amongst her OGP International colleagues, and then submitting the report to the independent review panel. It is the intention of OGP International to have the Final Assessment report back to SSC for comment by 1 December.

Ms Booth had specific queries related to each commitment and sought answers to her questions from the Officials Group.

Commitment 1: Open Budget

Question: Will the results of the Open Data survey (for Budget 2018) be published online?

Answer: The Treasury indicated that the results could be published online. They agreed to do so with added information for context.

Question: Has the Open Budget Data survey been publicised because neither she nor anyone in the civil society network or anyone she interviewed for the Plan had heard of it?

Answer: The Treasury indicated that it would have been issued through the RSS newsfeed, which follows the current format to other releases. People can subscribe to the newsfeed.

Commitment 2: Improving official information practices

Question: Has the Official Information Act (OIA) Forum been passed to another agency to organise?

Answer: SSC has set up a cross-agency group to collectively input into the delivery of the OIA Forum and development practices. SSC is part of the group and maintains leadership. The purpose is to embed the practice across the public sector and tap into the collective expertise across government. The next OIA Forum is scheduled for 20 August and the topic is Proactive Release, over 100 people have expressed interest to attend. Another OIA Forum is currently being scheduled for end of October/early November.

Question: Have Ministers confirmed the provisions around proactive release of information?

Answer: Yes. The provisions around proactive release are in the Cabinet Manual and these were unchanged with the change of government.

SSC has supported agencies and provided written guidelines to strengthen practice in proactive release of OIA response.

Commitment 3: Improving open data access and principles

Question: Is there a final date for consultation?

Answer: No date has been set for final consultation.

Commitment 4: Tracking progress and outcomes of open government data release

Question: There is a content strategy being promised, what is the progress on this?

Answer: Content strategy is currently under development, and a governance group will need to be formed with DIA for sign-off purposes.

Question: The draft review does not address questions of the Open Data Charter principles; milestone two only sets them out, how is this being managed?

Answer: The Cabinet paper sets out that the principles would work alongside each other and how they work together. There is some more work to be done, in particular, around educating agencies with a focus on data. This is currently not at the top of the priority list.

Commitment 5: Ongoing engagement for OGP

Question: Has there been a successful funding bid for the next steps of this commitment?

Answer: The bid for additional funding was not successful and DIA's Government Chief Digital Officer (GCDO) portfolio intends to progress and connect with digital inclusion work within baselines.

Commitment 6: Improving access to legislation

Question: Would the secondary legislation go up on the PCO website?

Answer: Yes. In the long term, all information will be in one place on the PCO website to make it easily accessible. As an interim measure the secondary list is on the website with a link directly to

agencies' websites. There is a great deal of work underway to prepare the website and requesting agencies to provide the list of all their secondary legislation. Thought will also be given to how legislation is presented on the website alongside the empowering provisions on what it relates to.

Commitment 7: Improving policy practices

SSC provided an update as there was no representative from Department of the Prime Minister and Cabinet (DPMC). The OGP Expert Advisory Panel met with DPMC officials regarding the toolkit to test it amongst community as was suggested in the IRM Mid-Term Assessment. The feedback from the Panel was the toolkit as designed was fine for what it was, however they wanted to see more work on how it was embedded and grown throughout the community.

There was some general discussion about the next steps on the National Action Plan 2018-20. SSC will provide Ms Booth with answers outside of the meeting around:

- the numbers of attendees at the public workshops
- the consistent and common description of the Government in an MMP context.

3	Wrap up

Amy thanked everyone for their attendance and the work being carried out.