

Hon Karen Chhour, Minister for the Prevention of Family and Sexual Violence

## Te Pūkotahitanga future and funding

**Date:** 21 March 2025

**Reference:** 2025/119694

### Action sought

### Timeframe

<b>Note</b>	the contents of this briefing	ASAP
<b>Direct</b>	officials to draft a Cabinet paper asking to disestablish Te Pūkotahitanga	25 March 2025
<b>Direct</b>	officials to ask Cabinet for approval to repurpose \$0.650 million towards a general advisory group	25 March 2025
<b>Decide</b>	how you want to frame the repurposing request for the remaining \$1.300 million	25 March 2025
<b>Note</b>	next steps and timing	ASAP
<b>Send</b>	the attached letter to co-chairs advising them of your intention to seek Cabinet approval to disestablish the group.	31 March 2025

### Contacts for telephone discussion (if required)

Name	Position	Telephone (work)	First contact
Te Pare Meihana	Director, Māori & Community Partnerships	9(2)(a)	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Manda Grubner	Manager, Māori Outcomes & Partnerships		<input type="checkbox"/>

### Minister's office to complete

<input type="checkbox"/> <b>Noted</b>	<input type="checkbox"/> <b>Approved</b>	<input type="checkbox"/> <b>Overtaken by events</b>
<input type="checkbox"/> <b>Referred to:</b>		
<input type="checkbox"/> <b>Seen</b>	<input type="checkbox"/> <b>Withdrawn</b>	<input type="checkbox"/> <b>Not seen by Minister</b>

### Minister's office comments

## Purpose of this briefing

---

1. This briefing responds to your direction of 18 February 2025 to take steps to disestablish Te Pūkotahitanga tangata whenua Ministerial advisory group (Te Pūkotahitanga). It also provides advice towards your goal of establishing a new advisory group with a broader remit.
2. In addition, this briefing asks you to direct officials to draft a Cabinet paper. This Cabinet paper will seek permission to disestablish Te Pūkotahitanga and repurpose funding that is currently allocated to Te Pūkotahitanga. Part of this funding (\$0.650 million) will support the new advisory group.
3. Finally, you are asked to decide how to repurpose the remaining \$1.300 million. The briefing canvasses the main options and notes some of the main pros and cons for each.

## Overview of Te Pūkotahitanga and recent briefings

---

4. Te Pūkotahitanga was established in 2022 to provide independent advice to the Minister for the Prevention of Family and Sexual Violence with the goal of improving outcomes for Māori. The group is also tasked with monitoring implementation of Te Aorerekura – the National Strategy for Elimination of Family Violence and Sexual Violence (Te Aorerekura).
5. Te Pūkotahitanga is currently funded with \$1.950 million per year from an initiative called *“Building partnerships & collaboration to transform the system: Māori-Crown relationships”*. This initiative is in the *Elimination of Family Violence and Sexual Violence* appropriation within Vote Justice.<sup>1</sup> Te Pūkotahitanga has 11 members<sup>2</sup> whose terms will expire on 30 June 2025.
6. On 12 September 2024, you received a briefing (ref 114723) about how to receive advice reflecting a broader range of experiences and perspectives. Officials presented two main options:
  - a) **Option 1:** retain Te Pūkotahitanga but reduce its size and review the terms of reference.

---

<sup>1</sup> The Chief Executive of Te Puna Aonui is the delegated fund holder and works with Te Pūkotahitanga to allocate, approve and release money.

<sup>2</sup> Dr Maria Baker, Kim Eriksen-Downs, Dr Moana Eruera, Lorraine Hawke, Denise Messiter, Katie Murray, Amokura Panoho (co-chair), Hera Pierce, Tā Mark Solomon, Poata Watene (co-chair), and Professor Denise Wilson.

- b) **Option 2:** dissolve Te Pūkotahitanga and create a new advisory group with repurposed funding.
7. Te Puna Aonui officials recommended Option 1 because we consider it beneficial for this portfolio to have an independent source of advice to improve outcomes for Māori affected by family violence and sexual violence.
  8. In December 2024, officials provided two further aides mémoire (refs 117193 and 117194) with advice about how to implement the two options, and a summary of Te Pūkotahitanga work and outputs. At this time, Treasury also confirmed our original advice that funding must be used for the purpose stated in the original Budget bid. This means Cabinet approval is needed to repurpose current funding and create a general advisory group.
  9. On 18 February 2025, you indicated your decision to pursue Option 2 to dissolve Te Pūkotahitanga and create a new advisory group. You advised officials that you value the experience that the group provides, but you feel the current scope restricts the group's ability to provide the wide range of advice you feel you need.

### **Direct officials to draft a Cabinet paper**

---

10. You are now asked to direct Te Puna Aonui officials to draft a Cabinet paper seeking to disestablish Te Pūkotahitanga. This Cabinet paper will include a dual repurposing request to allow some of the \$1.950 million to fund a general advisory group and some to fund other initiatives.

### **Seek Cabinet approval to repurpose \$0.650 million to establish a general advisory group**

---

11. Te Puna Aonui officials consider \$0.650 million per year would be sufficient to fund a general advisory group.<sup>3</sup> 9(2)(f)(iv)  
9(2)(f)(iv)

12. 9(2)(f)(iv)

---

9(2)(f)(iv)

9(2)(f)(iv)

13. The Cabinet paper will need a strong rationale for repurposing existing funding towards a general advisory group. The previous group was established with a specific purpose – to strengthen Māori-Crown partnerships. Without this, Cabinet may ask for the funding to be returned as baseline savings.
14. The rationale could focus on the ways in which a general advisory group could support the portfolio's strategic interagency approach by representing a range of different perspectives and lived experience. This could be achieved by  
9(2)(f)(iv)
15. 9(2)(f)(iv)
16. Repurposing \$0.650 million towards a general advisory group would leave approximately \$1.300 million to be repurposed towards other activities.

### Options for repurposing the remaining \$1.300 million

17. At the officials' meeting on 3 March 2025, you asked for advice about repurposing the remaining funding. You also asked what Action Plan initiatives are underfunded and where outcomes could be significantly improved with additional investment. The following table gives you some options to consider.

#	Repurposing request	Pros	Cons
1	Put funding into the general <i>Elimination of Family Violence and Sexual Violence</i> appropriation within Vote Justice.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Provides flexibility for the business unit to meet emerging or unexpected needs.</li> <li>Can be responsive to Government direction and priorities that might change over time.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Appropriation performance is assessed via Estimates and Supplementary Estimates. These measures assess performance of the business unit and IEB but don't measure outcomes for people affected by family violence and sexual violence.</li> </ul>

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Funding might be used for short term priorities not long-term strategic shifts.</li> </ul>
2	<p>Establish a responsive, population-specific, needs-based investment fund. Needs would be raised by providers and partners, and then assessed and addressed proactively by the business unit.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• This supports a needs-based approach to funding that can achieve strategic goals and work to effect longer-term change.</li> <li>• Would be informed by evidence.</li> <li>• Aligns with the social investment approach.</li> </ul>
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The amount of money is not significant, which means opportunities for change might be limited.</li> <li>• Has the potential to be administratively burdensome but this could be mitigated in design of the fund.</li> </ul>
3	<p>Increase investment into the delivery of Action Plan initiatives <b>(recommended)</b>. Examples of how this could be invested are: expansion of the specialist outreach services pilot in one or two areas; expansion of the pilot to test the consistent high-risk process; or other support for multi-agency responses.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Responds to current funding and service gaps.</li> <li>• Could accelerate delivery of current Action Plan deliverables.</li> <li>• Potential to increase the number of actions achieved in the current parliamentary term through increased investment.</li> <li>• There's an opportunity to support outcomes for Māori, which would help mitigate risk (see paragraphs 21-23).</li> <li>• Stronger evidence base for successful models that iwi and community providers are already utilising.</li> <li>• A 'best practice' evidence repository can inform decisions about further investment and scaling up of approaches.</li> </ul>
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• To avoid long-term funding dependency on Te Puna Aonui to support service delivery, we will need to ensure that once we've tested and proven these concepts and approaches, we take a strategic systems-view to assess the case for change across the FVSV sector.</li> </ul>

18. Te Puna Aonui recommends **Option 3**, which will increase investment in the delivery of key Action Plan initiatives. This could include a targeted focus on



groups that were identified in the Action Plan as experiencing disproportionate rates of family violence and sexual violence.

19. In 2024/25, Te Puna Aonui allocated \$4.600 million for strengthening multi-agency responses. Of this, \$2.500 million is earmarked for investment in communities and localities; the rest is for internal resource to support this work.
20. In line with Option 3, this envelope could be increased by \$1.300 million to support **one** of the following initiatives.
  - a) **Specialist outreach:** We currently have invested in specialist outreach in two locations. Increased investment here would enable us to extend this investment into a further two locations. A broader testing of Specialist Outreach programmes across additional locations would increase our evidence base for embedding consistent solutions across the country and support a greater number of people experiencing family violence.
  - b) **A consistent approach to managing high risk:** Te Puna Aonui will be piloting this approach in key locations. Increased investment in this work would support an expansion of this pilot. This would enable us to increase our understanding of how this consistent approach is working to manage high risk in different locations, settings (urban/rural) and contexts (iwi and community providers and the different kinds of multi-agency responses).
  - c) **Nationally consistent risk assessment methods:** The Family Violence Risk and Safety Framework<sup>4</sup> was published on 14 March 2025, and the second Action Plan has set goals for nationally consistent risk assessment. Extra funding would support rollout and implementation of this framework and risk management.

## Risks and issues with disestablishing Te Pūkotahitanga

---

21. There are two significant risks with the decision to disestablish Te Pūkotahitanga. The first is how the decision will be received by iwi, hapū, whānau and hapori Māori, and tangata Tiriti – and the enduring consequences for Māori-Crown relations.
22. In the briefing on 12 September 2024 ('Te Pūkotahitanga – Purpose and scope', ref 114723), Te Puna Aonui outlined these risks.

*Te Pūkotahitanga is one of the ways in which the Crown gives effect to Te Tiriti o Waitangi; any changes to its focus – especially without good reason – will likely be seen as undermining the*

---

<sup>4</sup> <https://tepunaaonui.govt.nz/assets/workforce-frameworks/risk-and-safety-practice-framework-web-version.pdf>.

*Crown's Te Tiriti obligations and jeopardising the Māori-Crown partnership.*

*Officials also note the tangible way in which Te Pūkotahitanga contributes to the first Te Aorerekura Action Plan (Action 8: Establish a Tangata Whenua Ministerial Advisory Group) and supports Shift 2: Towards mobilising communities. This shift identifies the need to establish foundational and sustainable relationships with tangata whenua, and make commissioning decisions grounded in Te Tiriti.*

23. As mentioned, Te Pūkotahitanga is currently funded from an initiative called “Building partnerships & collaboration to transform the system: Māori-Crown relationships”. This funding was specifically approved to foster the relationship between Māori and the Crown. The parameters of this funding also recognise the disproportionate rates of family violence and sexual violence experienced by whānau Māori. Given the shift in focus you are seeking, we recommend you seek support from your Ministerial colleagues before presenting the paper to Cabinet. Te Puna Aonui will provide you with communications support for announcing any decisions.
24. At a regional level, Te Puna Aonui has relationships with iwi and hapū who are involved in the delivery of prevention and crisis response services. Many of the current Family Violence providers are led by iwi or hapū who are working constructively with Police and other agencies in their locality. Independent of Ministerial decisions, Te Puna Aonui business unit will maintain and strengthen its relationships with iwi and hapū across the country in support of the second Action Plan and improving outcomes for Māori.
25. The second significant risk of disestablishing Te Pūkotahitanga is that Cabinet does not approve your request to repurpose the funding – either towards a general advisory group or towards any other initiatives. This could mean up to \$1.950 million per year gets removed from the *Elimination of Family Violence and Sexual Violence* appropriation within Vote Justice.
26. Please also note that the pre-Budget moratorium means Cabinet does not consider papers with financial implications from 14 April to 22 May 2025. Te Puna Aonui will aim to lodge any Cabinet paper in late May 2025. This means there could be at least six months without any advisory group due to the time required to establish a new advisory group, develop terms of reference, and advertise for and appoint new members.

## Next steps

27. It is not possible to formally disestablish Te Pūkōtahitanga until Cabinet has given approval. Officials, therefore, recommend a three-phased approach to disestablishing the group and establishing a new general advisory group:
- meet with co-chairs at the earliest opportunity to advise them of your intentions and acknowledge their contributions to date
  - formally write to the co-chairs and other members to communicate your intentions to seek Cabinet approval to disestablish the group (we have **attached** a draft letter you can use for this)
  - following decisions from Cabinet, send another letter to co-chairs and members to formally communicate the outcome.
28. Te Puna Aonui employs two FTE to perform secretariat functions for Te Pūkōtahitanga. <sup>9(2)(a)</sup>  
<sup>9(2)(a)</sup>

## Decisions sought

After considering the contents of this briefing, including the options for dual repurposing, please indicate your preferences below.

- Direct** officials to draft a Cabinet paper seeking agreement to disestablish Te Pūkōtahitanga. YES/NO
- Direct** officials to ask Cabinet for agreement to repurpose \$0.650 million towards a general advisory group. YES/NO
- Direct** officials to ask Cabinet for agreement to repurpose \$1.300 million towards: **CIRCLE**
  - Option 1:** put funding to the general *Elimination of Family Violence and Sexual Violence* appropriation within Vote Justice.
  - Option 2:** establish a needs-based investment fund to support delivery of the second Action Plan.
  - Option 3:** increase investment in the delivery of Action Plan initiatives.
- Send** the attached letter to Te Pūkōtahitanga co-chairs advising them of your intentions to seek Cabinet approval to disestablish the group. YES/NO





---

Emma Powell  
**Chief Executive, Te Puna Aonui**

**Attachment:** Draft letter for co-chairs advising your intention to seek Cabinet approval to disestablish Te Pūkōtahitanga.

APPROVED/SEEN/NOT AGREED



---

Hon Karen Chhour  
**Minister for the Prevention of Family and Sexual Violence**  
Date:    /    /2025

Noted by the Office as signed 24 March 2025