

Measuring the Effectiveness of New Zealand's Local Government

Abstract

Local Government New Zealand's recently introduced CouncilMARK™ scheme assesses local councils' effective management of finance and resources, their leadership and their responsiveness to their communities, and enables them to be compared and the prospect for collaboration towards improved performance explored. Other measures of reputation and ratepayer participation suggest that CouncilMARK may be over-emphasising managerial capability relative to stakeholder engagement, which may have implications for the scheme's value if community well-being is introduced as a prominent measure of performance.

Keywords local government, quality enhancement, stakeholder engagement, reputation, localism

Local Government New Zealand (LGNZ) has established a voluntary quality enhancement programme – CouncilMARK – for local authorities in New Zealand. The programme assesses councils' comparative performance in aspects of governance, financial

management, service delivery and asset management, and stakeholder engagement. This article compares the results of this assessment for the participating councils and also discusses the results of another instrument that makes an overall judgement on the sector's reputation.

Taken together, these results reveal an emphasis on assessing managerial activity, with less attention being paid to effective engagement with ratepayers. A reorientation of the programme to better meet current expectations of central government and ratepayers for improved community well-being is suggested.

Setting the scene for a quality enhancement regime

Local governments in New Zealand own \$119 billion in fixed assets, employ 25,000 staff and spend annually nearly \$10 billion (Productivity Commission, 2018, p.4). Seventy-eight local authorities, which vary considerably in size, deliver about 10% of total public services. A small proportion of spending is locally allocated compared to most OECD countries, but many central government services rely strongly on local authorities for delivery. In response to its reputation research (discussed later in this article), Local Government New Zealand developed a 'Local Government Excellence Programme', of which CouncilMARK is a component.

On its website, LGNZ previously identified three issues that needed attention: 'Residents, ratepayers, businesses and central government all expect the best services and value from councils, but most

Table 1: Priorities and performance indicators for CouncilMARK*

Priority areas			
Priority 1: Governance, leadership and strategy†	Priority 2: Financial decision-making and transparency‡	Priority 3: Service delivery and asset management‡	Priority 4: Communicating and engaging with the public and business†
<i>Performance indicators for Priority 1§</i>	<i>Performance indicators for Priority 2§</i>	<i>Performance indicators for Priority 3§</i>	<i>Performance indicators for Priority 4§</i>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Vision, goals and strategy • Professional development for elected members • Performance of elected members • Relationship/culture between elected members and the Chief Executive • Health and Safety Framework • Management • Audit and Risk Committee • Information and Advice 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Financial strategy • Financial data • Risk and control function • Budgeting • Financial control of councils • Transparency 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Aligning services with strategy • Environmental monitoring and reporting • Determining, monitoring and assessing service levels • Service delivery models • Service delivery capability and capacity • Service delivery quality – asset management • Service delivery quality – breakdown of individual services and infrastructure • Policy planning/spatial planning • Compliance with regulatory requirements • Accountability reporting • Capital investment decisions and delivery • Operational risk management 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Communication and engagement strategy • Digital engagement • Reputation • Media • Engagement with iwi/Māori • Engagement with diverse communities • Engagement with the general public • Civil defence and crisis communications • Engagement with business and key stakeholders¶
<p>* From: Draft performance assessment framework for regional councils as at 21 December 2016. This document would have been used by councils participating in the CouncilMARK reports referred to in this paper. Although this document is no longer publicly available, similar information is currently provided in CouncilMARK (2019, pp.23-35)</p> <p>† Consistent with one of the dual roles for local government prescribed in the Local Government Act 2002: 'to enable</p>	<p>democratic local decision making and action by, and on behalf of, communities'</p> <p>‡ Consistent with the other of the dual roles of local government prescribed in the Local Government Act 2002: 'to meet the current and future needs of communities for good-quality local infrastructure, local public services, and performance of regulatory functions in a way that is most cost effective for households and businesses'</p>	<p>§ The framework document suggests documents and other information (including stakeholder interviews) to guide the assessment panel</p> <p>¶ Specifically mentioned are: 'primary sector, industry, residents and environmental organisations'; significant omissions include: community organisations (other than environmental organisations), District Health Boards, and relevant Government ministries, departments and agencies</p>	

of these customers don't believe this happens'; 'Most customers don't fully understand or value what we do for them every day'; and 'However well some councils perform, there are strongly negative perceptions of local government performance, which affects us all.' As solutions to these issues LGNZ suggested that: 'A continuous cycle of performance assessment and improvement ensures a lift in service and value from councils and the sector'; 'LGNZ will provide tools, services and share best practice to help councils lift performance'; 'Igniting a responsive culture improves engagement and accountability for results, taking our customers and communities with us'; and 'A new era of transparency will lift performance and reputation.' Although no

longer readily available online, these aspirations have been recast recently in more corporate terms (CouncilMARK, 2019).

Cycles of continuous improvement are often an outcome of a quality assurance system and LGNZ's aspiration for this to occur as a result of CouncilMARK is reasonable. Whether CouncilMARK can influence the reputation of councils – currently assessed through the New Zealand Local Government Survey – is less certain. The methodologies and results of the two assessment components in the Excellence Programme – CouncilMARK and the Local Government Survey – are discussed in this article.

Involvement by councils in the CouncilMARK scheme is voluntary, with

21 councils originally committed to the principles of the scheme through being 'foundation members'; a few of these were involved in a pilot scheme. Although 28 councils are currently participating, a challenge for LGNZ will be to raise this participation rate: LGNZ has yet to convince the more than 30 other potential participating councils of the value of CouncilMARK in demonstrating their commitment to the continuous improvement of their management and governance procedures and systems. Presumably with that in mind, LGNZ indicated in the position description for the programme manager of CouncilMARK that the appointee would spearhead a marketing and promotion campaign.

Table 2: Ranking for priority areas for city, district and regional councils participating in CouncilMARK, arranged in order of scores

Priority areas								
Leading Locally (LL)		Investing Money Well (IMW)		Delivering What's Important (DWI)		Listening and Responding (LAR)		
8	Hauraki District Council	8	Dunedin City Council	7	Greater Wellington Regional Council	8	Greater Wellington Regional Council	
	Waimakariri District Council		Waikato Regional Council		Hauraki District Council		Hauraki District Council	
7	Environment Canterbury		Greater Wellington Regional Council	7	6	7	Central Hawke's Bay District Council	
	Hastings District Council	Matamata-Piako District Council	Dunedin City Council				Dunedin City Council	
6	Napier City Council	Napier City Council	6	5	6	Hastings District Council	Hastings District Council	
	Central Hawke's Bay District Council	Rangitikei District Council				Napier City Council	New Plymouth District Council	New Plymouth District Council
	Dunedin City Council	Waimakariri District Council				Ruapehu District Council	Porirua City Council	Porirua City Council
	Greater Wellington Regional Council	Environment Canterbury				South Taranaki District Council	Queenstown Lakes District Council	Queenstown Lakes District Council
	New Plymouth District Council	Hastings District Council				Waimakariri District Council	Ruapehu District Council	Ruapehu District Council
	Waikato Regional Council	New Plymouth District Council				Masterton District Council	Waimakariri District Council	Waimakariri District Council
	South Taranaki District Council	Porirua City Council				Matamata-Piako District Council	Far North District Council	Far North District Council
	Masterton District Council	Queenstown Lakes District Council				Nelson City Council	Matamata-Piako District Council	Matamata-Piako District Council
	Matamata-Piako District Council	South Taranaki District Council				New Plymouth District Council	Napier City Council	Napier City Council
	Porirua City Council	Tararua District Council				Rangitikei District Council	Tararua District Council	Tararua District Council
5	Queenstown Lakes District Council	Taupō District Council	5	4	5	Waikato Regional Council	Taupō District Council	Taupō District Council
	Rangitikei District Council	Far North District Council				Whakātane District Council	Whakātane District Council	
	Tararua District Council	Hauraki District Council				Environment Canterbury	Whakātane District Council	
	Taupō District Council	Horowhenua District Council				Horowhenua District Council	Horowhenua District Council	
	Upper Hutt City Council	Mackenzie District Council				Mackenzie District Council	Mackenzie District Council	
4	Far North District Council	Masterton District Council	4	3	4	Masterton District Council	Masterton District Council	Masterton District Council
	Horowhenua District Council	Whakatāne District Council				Whakatāne District Council	Whakatāne District Council	
	Mackenzie District Council	Central Hawke's Bay District Council				Horowhenua District Council	Horowhenua District Council	
	Nelson City Council	Nelson City Council				Mackenzie District Council	Mackenzie District Council	
	Ruapehu District Council	Upper Hutt City Council				Porirua City Council	Porirua City Council	
3	Whakatāne District Council	Wairoa District Council	3	3	3	Queenstown Lakes District Council	Queenstown Lakes District Council	Queenstown Lakes District Council
	Wairoa District Council	Ruapehu District Council				Central Hawke's Bay District Council	Central Hawke's Bay District Council	

Score = 1	Score = 2	Score = 3	Score = 4	Score = 5	Score = 6	Score = 7	Score = 8	Score = 9
Description: Struggling	Description: Under-performing	Description: Areas for improvement	Description: Variable	Description: Competent	Description: More than competent	Description: Performing well	Description: Standout	Description: Exemplary

Table 3: Overall CouncilMARK scores, and type of council

Overall rating*		Type of council‡			
		RE	LM	SM/LP	SP/RU
AA	Greater Wellington Regional Council (Y2)†	•			
	Waimakariri District Council (Y1)			•	
A	Dunedin City Council		•		
	Hastings District Council (Y1)			•	
	Hauraki District Council				•
	Napier City Council (P)			•	
	Waikato Regional Council (Y1)	•			
	Environment Canterbury (Y2)	•			
BBB	Matamata-Piako District Council (P)			•	
	New Plymouth District Council			•	
	Porirua City Council (P)			•	
	Queenstown Lakes District Council (P)			•	
	South Taranaki District Council (Y1)				•
	Taupō District Council (Y2)				•
	Central Hawke's Bay District Council (Y2)				•
	Masterton District Council (Y1)				•
BB	Nelson City Council (Y1)			•	
	Rangitīkei District Council (Y1)				•
	Ruapehu District Council (P)				•
	Tararua District Council (Y2)				•
	Upper Hutt City Council (Y2)			•	
	Whakatāne District Council (Y1)				•
	Far North District Council (Y1)			•	
	Horowhenua District Council (P)			•	
B	Mackenzie District Council (Y2)				•
	Wairoa District Council (Y1)				•

*Ratings:

C	CC	CCC	B	BB	BBB	A	AA	AAA
Description:								
Under-performing	Areas of improvement (more than 2 areas)	Areas of improvement (2 areas)	Areas of improvement (1 area)	Competent	Some areas of strength; overall competent	Some areas of strength and leadership	Strong grades in most priority areas	Exemplary

† Council involvement in CouncilMARK: (P), council involved in pilot programme; (Y1), council involved in first year of implementation; (Y2), council involved in second year of implementation

‡ LGNZ distinguishes the following types of council: RE, regional; LM, Large metro; SM/LP, Small metro and large provincial; SP/RU, Small provincial and rural

Figure 1: Stakeholder orientation score vs management orientation score for CouncilMARK participants

		Number of councils								
		3.5	4.0	4.5	5.0	5.5	6.0	6.5	7.0	7.5
Stakeholder-orientated score (LL+LAR)/2	8.0						1			
	7.5							1		1
	7.0						1			
	6.5	1				1		1	1	
	6.0				2		1			1
	5.5			1		2	2			
	5.0			2	2		1			
	4.5			3						
	4.0			1						
		3.5	4.0	4.5	5.0	5.5	6.0	6.5	7.0	7.5
Management-orientated score (IMW+DWI)/2										

CouncilMARK: the process

CouncilMARK is a scheme wherein a team of external assessors rate the ability of local government councils to meet government compliance requirements and provide services to the communities they serve.

The scheme identifies four ‘priority areas’ or ‘pillars’, which are simplified on LGNZ’s website: the priority ‘Governance, leadership and strategy’ is referred to on the website as ‘Leading locally’ (abbreviated here as *LL*); ‘Financial decision-making and transparency’ is referred to on the website as ‘Investing money well’ (*IMW*); ‘Service delivery and asset management’ is referred to on the website as ‘Delivering what’s important’ (*DWI*); and ‘Communicating and engaging with the public and business’ is referred to on the website as ‘Listening and responding’ (*LAR*). Underpinned by performance indicators (Table 1), these priority areas are assigned a grading during the assessment process, which can be graded and scored, as shown later in Table 2. The average of the scores of these priority areas defines the rating for the council’s overall performance (see Table 3).

The assessment is undertaken by a panel whose draft report is provided to the council for comment, with the final report being reviewed and released by an ‘independent assessment board’ comprising a chairperson and two other members with corporate management backgrounds (CouncilMARK, 2019, p.15). As expected, some councils have been pleased with their

ratings (e.g. Hauraki District Council: see Local Government New Zealand, 2019); others less so (e.g. New Plymouth District Council: see Persico, 2019). Although there is no formal requirement to address recommendations and suggestions made in the report, some councils choose to do so. The overall process is typical of the traditional non-financial audits that are input-driven or process-driven, rather than of more contemporary output/outcome-focused evaluations.

CouncilMARK: the results

The presentation of the CouncilMARK data on LGNZ’s website is in alphabetical order of councils. While this arrangement readily enables ratepayers and customers to look at the scores of ‘their’ council, it does not facilitate comparison between them. If it is truly the intention of LGNZ that the public does ‘browse councils’ programme gradings across the country’ (LGNZ, n.d.-a), then it may have been more helpful to have presented the information in a way that facilitates such comparison. Examples of such a format are the Tertiary Education Commission’s performance ratings for educational success criteria of institutes of technology (e.g. Tertiary Education Commission, 2015), and the Ministry of Health’s portrayal of health outcomes achieved by district health boards (e.g. Ministry of Health, 2011). This type of format is used in Table 2 to display the scores for *LL*, *IMW*, *DWI* and *LAR*, as well as in Table 3 to show the overall score

for the 26 councils for which results were available at March 2019.

The distribution of scores for the priority areas in Table 2 suggests that the scheme may provide opportunities for the enhancement of performance through the sharing of best practice across all councils, considered by LGNZ to be a potential benefit of CouncilMARK. For *IMW* and *DWI* the regional councils do score slightly higher than the district councils, and so there might be some opportunity for the former to share experience of these areas with the latter. However, for *DWI* such activity is likely to be constrained because the matters of importance for district councils are likely to be very different from matters of importance for regional councils. No participating council is said to be ‘underperforming’, but no council is rated ‘exemplary’ either. While Table 3 suggests that the rating for overall performance has a tendency to increase for councils that serve larger communities, the currently small data set means that such a relationship may not be representative of all councils.

CouncilMARK was developed before the current emphasis of government on ‘promot[ing] the social, economic, environmental, and cultural well-being of communities’, proposed in the Local Government (Community Well-being) Amendment Bill 2018. Similar provisions had been included in its predecessor act (the Local Government Act 2002), but were subsequently removed by a National-led government (Grimes, 2019). Even though

Table 4: Perceptions of public and business about importance and performance of councils

Perception of importance of council	Public	Business
Inferred high importance in daily life	44%*	-
Inferred high importance of local government and services to business	-	55%*
Inferred high importance of the collective effort of local government for the prosperity and well-being of New Zealand	77%	85%
Perception of performance of council	Public	Business
Improved performance over last three years	32%	31%
Steady performance/unsure over last three years	54%	50%
Worse performance over last three years	14%	19%

* A diagram in the 2017 survey report implies that these percentages can be compared; in fact, slightly different questions are asked of both groups of participants, which means that strictly speaking the results cannot be compared

Figure 2: Association of the factors for reputation index with ratings for CouncilMARK priority areas and their contributions to a 'reputation index'

Year	Factors for Local Government Survey's reputation index			Reputation index*
	Performance (P)	Leadership (L)	Communication (C)	
2014	28%	26%	32%	28.9%
2017	27%	26%	30%	27.9%
	61%‡	60%‡	68%‡	63%‡
	Competent	Competent	More than competent	Competent
	5.5†	5.4†	6.1†	5.7†
	(IMW + DWI)/2	LL	LAR	Average for CouncilMARK
	Priority areas for CouncilMARK			

* Calculated in the Local Government Survey as $(0.38 * P) + (0.32 * L) + (0.31 * C)$, where component P is Performance; L, Leadership; C, Communication

† Average of score for CouncilMARK priority areas, calculated from priority areas in Table 2

‡ Calculated as average score * 100/9; 9 is the maximum – and so far unattained – score in CouncilMARK assessments, being equivalent to a rating of 'exemplary'

'well-being' was not a legislative requirement at the time of the CouncilMARK assessment, councils may have continued to include well-being in their discussions of aspirations for their city, district or region, and in their strategic planning processes. For these councils well-being would be expected to be reflected in their performance assessment framework (LGNZ, n.d.-b) as well as the CouncilMARK assessments.

A way of representing the current emphasis on communities and their well-being in the councils participating in CouncilMARK is to consider the rankings of the average of the management-orientated scores (i.e. $[IMW + DWI]/2$) and the average of the stakeholder-orientated scores ($[LL + LAR]/2$). Figure

1 shows that ten councils are more stakeholder orientated than management orientated (i.e. the data points are above the dark grey band); six councils are more management orientated than stakeholder orientated (i.e. the data points are below the dark grey band; while ten councils are comparably management orientated and stakeholder orientated (i.e. the data points are along the dark grey band). Using this approach, Central Hawke's Bay District Council has the highest stakeholder orientation, while Waikato Regional Council has the highest management orientation. It might be anticipated that councils with higher stakeholder orientation scores might be more amenable to the introduction of greater

participatory local government ('localism' as described in McKinlay, 2019) envisaged in the revision of the Local Government Act.

The 'Listening and responding' measure is expected to be of particular interest to ratepayers, and this is one 'priority area' for which a complementary measure is available, as is discussed in the next section.

Reputation index from local government surveys

Complementing CouncilMARK, LGNZ contracted the market research agency Colmar Brunton to conduct a local government survey in 2014 and 2017 (see Local Government New Zealand, 2017),

in which representatives of the public and businesses across the country were interviewed. Although the sample size was stated as statistically valid – around 2,500 from the public and 400–600 businesses, giving levels of confidence of $\pm 2\%$ and $\pm 4.9\%$ respectively – the known variability of local council activities casts doubt on whether a single survey across the country is likely to yield results pertinent to any particular council. This type of survey would be more usefully undertaken by individual councils, as indeed some councils do already. As an example, Waikato Regional Council notes that there have been ‘Poorer perceptions of community engagement – [shown as a] decrease in the percentage of Waikato survey respondents who agreed that the public has an influence over the decisions their local Council makes (down from 62% in 2006 to 36% in 2018)’ (Waikato Regional Council, 2018, p.3).

Both the 2014 and 2017 surveys record that the public and businesses have different perceptions of the relative importance of the areas on which councils should focus, but these are unranked and so cannot be compared. The surveys also identified that businesses recognise to a greater extent than the public that councils have a greater part to play in everyday life and contribute to national prosperity and well-being, although the perceptions of these groups of overall council performance show little difference (Table 4). It is not possible from the information provided in the report to determine a helpful measure of the satisfaction with council performance, partly because the report uses a ‘net satisfaction’ measure, calculated as the difference between the percentages of those satisfied and those dissatisfied, but these percentages are not included in the report.

The report of the 2017 Local Government Survey concludes by outlining the development of a reputation index, asserting that ‘[p]ositive reputation is achieved when an organisation’s leadership, service provision and communications work in unison and the organisation is seen to do the right things, for the right reasons, in the right way’. The report notes that the reputation index is strongly influenced by performance, leadership, and

communication and interaction, although neither the score for each of these factors is determined nor the rationale for the weightings of the factors to obtain the index is provided. Although the report recognises, ‘The overall reputation of local government remains relatively low with a score of 28 [out of 100]. This is consistent with 2014 (a score of 29), and the one point difference is not meaningful. As in 2014, the public continues to have a better view of local government compared with businesses’, it does not provide any information to support the asserted difference in perceptions between businesses and the public (Local Government New Zealand, 2017, p.16).

The factors contributing to the reputation index – ‘performance’, ‘leadership’ and ‘communication and interaction’ – can be associated with the ‘priority areas’ discussed for CouncilMARK – ‘investing money well’ combined with ‘delivering what’s important’, ‘leading locally’ and ‘listening and responding’, respectively, as shown in the lower part of Figure 2. The comparison of scores and calculated reputation index in Figure 2 indicates that the CouncilMARK assessors are more positive about councils’ performance than the reputation index suggests would be the perception of ratepayers.

During 2017 and 2018 there was extensive media coverage of activities in which the performance, leadership or communication of local body staff and elected councillors are likely to have been damaging to the individual and collective reputation of councils, four examples of which are given below:

- Environment Canterbury initiated no prosecutions resulting from reported incidents of stock in waterways since 2016 (Tyson and Eppel, 2016a, 2016b), but the council prosecuted itself for pollution in March 2018 (Lee, 2018).
- Hastings District Council and the Hawke’s Bay Regional Council were both criticised in the formal government inquiry following contamination of public water supply in Havelock North causing illness and death in mid-2017 (Government Inquiry into Havelock North Drinking Water, 2017).

- Greater Wellington Regional Council’s reform of bus routes and timetables, compounded by new contracts with bus companies and agreements with unions, and exacerbated by poorly conceived and managed post-implementation communication with ratepayers (from July 2018), caused chaos on the city streets and intense public opprobrium (some of which was incorrectly directed at the Wellington City Council). An independent review of the process drew attention to a lack of staff capability at the regional council (George, 2018; LEK Consulting, 2018).
- Radio New Zealand in August 2018 reported that Auckland Council had misinterpreted its own planning rules for heritage areas, and was requiring property owners to reapply for consents already issued for renovations and development (RNZ, 2018).

Conclusion

CouncilMARK is focused on inputs and processes, with the indicators suggestive of a tick-box approach to assessing performance. Moreover, its involvement of external stakeholders in the process appears limited. It could be argued that much of priority area 2 is essentially material routinely presented in annual reports and is of less value to the objectives of CouncilMARK than matters which more directly affect ratepayers, citizens, and those providing services to a council or undertaking business and community functions in the area of a council’s jurisdiction.

The distribution of scores for the priority areas and the overall grades suggest possibilities for using CouncilMARK in sharing best practice. However, there may also be benefit in reviewing the individual reports generated in the process on a regular basis with a view to seeking common themes and issues prevailing across councils and using these as an insight into the future prospects for the improvement of the performance of councils. This resembles the financial management comparisons currently undertaken by the Office of the Auditor-General in respect of councils’ annual reports (e.g. Controller and Auditor-

General, 2018). However, in order to ensure that such a process complemented rather than duplicated the work of the Office of the Auditor-General, the process would need to focus on non-financial and engagement-related metrics.

Overall, CouncilMARK implies that engagement with citizens – the clients and customers who are surely councils' most important stakeholders – is 'more than competent'. However, this is not consistent with the low public response via submissions to annual and long-term community plans. For the 17 councils participating in the CouncilMARK scheme for which information was available as at January 2019, on the outcomes of consultation in respect of the most recent long-term council community plan, the number of submissions received by a council ranges from 125 (to the Rangitikei District Council) to 1,125 (to the Hastings District Council); the average number of submissions was 444. As a percentage of the population served by councils, the lowest submission rate is 0.08% (to the Waikato Regional Council) and the highest submission rate is 1.6% (to the Ruapehu

District Council); the average submission rate is a mere 0.94%. Such a competence rating in CouncilMARK ignores the lack of publicly available information about the fate of those submissions that are made and it is not consistent with the poor reputation index derived from the more customer-focused Local Government Survey.

Although the Local Government Survey is targeted at two important stakeholders (the public and business), its nationwide scope is too broad for its results to be meaningful to individual councils. Rather than continuing with this measure, LGNZ could encourage individual councils to develop a reputation index – compiled in a standardised way – which could be used both as a key performance indicator and as a complement to the CouncilMARK rating for 'listening and responding'.

A reorientation of the CouncilMARK priority areas (and the key performance indicators that underpin them) to better reflect outcomes of significance to stakeholders might enhance uptake of the scheme by councils and increase the perceived value of the assessment to

stakeholders. Such changes are reflective of innovative thinking elsewhere (Needham and Mangan, 2018). They might also make the scheme more relevant to the expectations of central government for New Zealand's local government to restore a focus on community well-being (Grimes, 2019; McKinlay, 2019), for which the priorities for the 2019 'well-being' budget (Robertson, 2018) have been declared to be:

- creating opportunities for productive businesses, regions, iwi and others to transition to a sustainable and low-emissions economy;
- supporting a thriving nation in the digital age through innovation and social and economic opportunities;
- lifting Māori and Pasifika incomes, skills and opportunities;
- reducing child poverty and improving child well-being, including addressing family violence; and
- supporting mental well-being for all New Zealanders, with a special focus on under 24-year-olds.

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