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## Sector Group Report

On 27 March 2024, the Charities Sector Group met online via Microsoft Teams. Sector leaders and specialist professionals (listed below) met with staff from Charities Services in the Department of Internal Affairs to discuss points of common interest.

The purpose of this document is to communicate some of the points of discussion during the Sector Group meeting and allow members to communicate the discussion to their member organisations.

### Sector Group Sector only discussions

The Sector Co-Chair outlined what the members of the sector discussed during their sector only time.

Members met ahead of the Sector Group meeting to build engagement and raise points for discussion. These discussion points were sent to Co-Chair Andrew Newbery ahead of time and expanded on during the meeting.

The members provided feedback on the Sector Group charter, with particular emphasis on membership. Members asked that the current named member organisations be reviewed to ensure they have a current identified representative. They also sought the addition of new members from demographics under-represented in Sector Group, particularly grassroots and regional organisations. Additionally, members want to ensure any new voices added are supported to actively participate. They also noted that they would like to invite more specialists.

Members discussed adding provisions to the Sector Group Charter for appointing new Co-Chairs a year in advance, so they will be able to work alongside current Co-Chairs and assist in their absence.

The Co-Chairs plan to work together to implement the proposed changes to the charter, which will then be circulated to the rest of the group for final review before signing.

Members confirmed online meetings are still the best way to ensure people are able to attend with minimal barrier of entry but would like to attempt at least one in-person/hybrid meeting per year as it is the best compromise for accessibility.

Members noted that the sector have provided positive feedback on Charities Services resources and urged Charities Services to continue to invest in producing this content.

### Charities Registration Board

Members of the Charities Registration Board (the Board), Gwendoline Keel (the Chair) and Dr Bev Gatenby, joined the meeting and led a discussion on the changes to the Board's current composition, and the proposed principles that have been developed to guide the new objections process. The Chair also gave an overview of how the Board considers legislation in order to achieve its purpose.

Sector Group members provided robust feedback and discussion, and expressed their support of a first principles review of the Charities Act.

Sector Group Members raised concerns around confidentiality during an objection and where it might be appropriate for information to be redacted. Transparency is a key part of the process, and the Board is mindful that objections proceedings are a chance for entities subject to decisions to be able to be heard. The Chair confirmed the Board would look into this, but that the legal requirements may need to be considered on a case-by-case basis.

The group also had a discussion around the role of charities within New Zealand society. While there was no easy answer, the general consensus was that charities should not be viewed as a service delivery arm of government.

The Board asked Sector Group members if they have any thoughts on Statement of Service Performance (SSP) reporting, as some members of the sector have raised concerns around its introduction and whether it could lead to a metric to measure failure. It was noted that SSP is already used for smaller charities. While there were also teething problems when the SSP reporting was introduced, the consensus now is that it is a great chance for charities to tell their story in a meaningful way and is now something most funders look at.

It was also noted that any time reporting standards change auditors find themselves in the position of being both 'regulator' and 'educator' on whether standards are being used correctly. However, this seems to be alleviated when charities have clarity of purpose.

Sector Group members requested Charities Services' briefing to the incoming minister (BIM) be circulated to Sector Group members. Charities Services confirmed this had already been provided as part of an OIA, but that they would re-send it.

The Board confirmed they would be willing to consider any response to the BIM Sector Group members wanted to produce, and the Board always welcomes feedback from the sector.

Both the Board and Sector Group expressed their desire to meet more frequently.

### **Attendees**

**Sector Group Members:** Chris Glaudel (Community Housing Aotearoa), Juliet Chevalier-Watts (University of Waikato), Sarah Doherty (NZ Navigator Charitable Trust), Sue Barker (Charity Law Association of Australia and New Zealand), Jim Datson (Fundraising Institute of New Zealand), Peter Van Hout (Interchurch Bureau), Steven Moe (Parry Field Lawyers), Rahul Watson Govindan (Philanthropy New Zealand), Emma Wethey (Philanthropy New Zealand), Michelle Kitney (Volunteering New Zealand), Ronja Ievers (Hui E! Community Aotearoa)

**Charities Registration Board:** Gwendoline Keel, Dr Bev Gatenby

**DIA Charities Services:** Andrew Newbery, Penelope Cox, Joe Buchanan, Lucy Beeler, Francesca Ephraim, Lex Scott