

12 April 2023

Hon Dr Duncan Webb  
Minister of Commerce and Consumer Affairs  
Parliament Buildings  
**Wellington**

By email to: [Duncan.Webb@parliament.govt.nz](mailto:Duncan.Webb@parliament.govt.nz)

cc: [sophie.duddumpudi@mbie.govt.nz](mailto:sophie.duddumpudi@mbie.govt.nz)  
[rose.davies@parliament.govt.nz](mailto:rose.davies@parliament.govt.nz)

Dear Minister

### **Te Ara Ahunga Ora Retirement Commission's Response to the Annual Letter of Expectations**

Thank you for your letter dated 29 March 2023. I note your portfolio priorities and appreciate that you see the work of Te Ara Ahunga Ora as an essential complement.

I have considered your letter against our draft Statement of Intent (SOI), and the draft Statement of Performance Expectations (SPE) 2023/24, which is currently with MBIE for comment, and believe they are well-aligned.

We are especially interested in the outcomes from the stocktake of how Government currently invests in financial capability and where greater synergies can be built.

We see our work playing an important role supporting the Government's focus on helping New Zealanders navigate the cost-of-living challenges by providing trusted and impartial information they can trust around managing their money.

Our draft SPE proposes a planned deficit against the prior year as we invest more in Māori development, research, and increasing our efforts leading the National Strategy for Financial Capability. We are also investing in more marketing resources into building stronger awareness for Sorted in a tough environment. While this will go some way to achieving this, we know we are competing against a private market with far more resources.

We are making a small addition to our SOI to incorporate the development of a new Rautaki Māori which will be a cornerstone of both our cultural capability journey and our services to Māori stakeholders.

I note your specific expectations of the Commission and confirm that these all align with our work programme, and we will work carefully to meet them as best as we are able.

Our proposed key deliverables for the year ahead are summarised below:

### **Retirement Income**

- Conduct research and analysis on retirement income policy.
- Establish a Māori advisory rōpū to develop policy options that would better support Māori.

### **Retirement Villages**

- Support the Ministry of Housing and Urban Development as they lead the full review of retirement villages legislation and policy that I called for in 2021 after reviewing the issues.
- Monitor complaints made to retirement villages and report on trends and formal complaints raised.
- Conduct an annual investigation relating to retirement villages.

### **Financial Wellbeing**

- Grow brand awareness for Sorted and execute new initiatives for Sorted priority audiences, including for Māori.
- Grow the use of Te whai hua – kia ora, Sorted in Schools.
- Host a National Strategy for Financial Capability conference to bring the disparate parts of the sector together.

I have recently appointed a Chief Operating Officer who will assume many of my operational activities now the organisation is working well. This small structural separation will bolster the Commission's resilience and enable me, with a small advisory board, to think more deeply about the difficult economic issues facing New Zealanders over the next decades and what appropriate policy responses might look like. As discussed with your predecessor I will be moving to a four-day week in June.

I will update you on our progress through our quarterly reports to MBIE and our own quarterly meetings.

I look forward to our first meeting on 9 May and discussing any remaining questions you may have.

Yours sincerely



Jane Wrightson

**Mana Ahungarua / Retirement Commissioner**

