

## Cabinet Paper material Proactive release

Minister & portfolio Hon David Seymour Associate Minister of Education  
Name of package Appointment to the Early Childhood Education (ECE) funding review Ministerial Advisory Group (MAG)  
Date considered 25 August 2025  
Date of release 2 March 2026

### These documents have been proactively released:

**Appointment to the Early Childhood Education (ECE) funding review  
Ministerial Advisory Group (MAG)**

Date considered: 25 August 2025

Author: Office of the Associate Minister of Education

**Cabinet Business Committee Minute CBC-25-MIN-0039**

Date considered: 25 August 2025

Author: Committee Secretary

### Material redacted

Some deletions have been made from the documents in line with withholding grounds under the Official Information Act 1982. Where information has been withheld, no public interest has been identified that would outweigh the reasons for withholding it.

Some deletions have been made from the documents as the information withheld does not fall within scope of the Minister's portfolio responsibilities, and is not relevant to the proactive release of this material.

You can read the Official Information Act 1982 here:

<http://legislation.govt.nz/act/public/1982/0156/latest/DLM64785.html>

**In Confidence**

Office of the Associate Minister of Education

Cabinet Business Committee

**Appointment to the Early Childhood Education (ECE) funding review Ministerial Advisory Group (MAG)**

**Proposal**

- 1 This paper outlines my intention to appoint Sarah Hogan as a member of the Ministerial Advisory Group (the MAG) for the Early Childhood Education Funding Review
- 2 I propose appointing this member for a 10-month period commencing promptly after this paper has been considered by CBC and Cabinet. The appointment will be contingent on the candidate's successful probity check and conflict of interest enquiry.

**Background**

- 3 In February 2025, the Cabinet Social Outcomes Committee agreed that an ECE Funding Review will be undertaken and noted my intention that a MAG would be used to support this work [SOU-25-MIN-0004].

- 4 Subsequently, in June 2025, I advised the Appointments and Honours Committee of my intention to appoint the following members to the MAG [APH-25-MIN-0095]:

- 4.1 Linda Meade (Chair)
- 4.2 Simon Laube (Member)
- 4.3 Melissa Glew (Member)
- 4.4 Kelly Seaburg (Member)
- 4.5 Dr Kane Meissel (Member)
- 4.6 Dr Michael Fletcher (Member)
- 4.7 Kylie Eagle (Member)

- 5 The role of the MAG is set out in detail in the Terms of Reference for the Review at Annex 1. In brief, the key parts of its role over the next year are to provide me with advice, develop options, undertake public consultation on these options, and submit a final report with recommendations for redesigning the ECE funding system. I expect the MAG to work with sector representatives and independent experts as part of its role.

6 The MAG's advice will focus on proposing changes to the funding system to better support the purposes of ECE and the Government's education and labour market priorities.

7 Dr Michael Fletcher has since resigned from the MAG.

### Comment

8 To ensure the MAG has an appropriate level of economic expertise including an appreciation of the enablers of labour market participation and social investment principles, I intend to appoint Sarah Hogan as a member of the ECE funding review MAG.

9 **Sarah Hogan** (member) will provide the group with significant knowledge and expertise in economic principles and market dynamics. She is currently the Deputy Chief Executive (Wellington) and Principal Economist at NZIER. Sarah's previous experience includes providing economic advice and supporting cost-benefit analysis at the Ministry of Health, developing systematic reviews, cost-effectiveness analysis reports, and health technology assessments for the Canadian, Australian and New Zealand health sectors; and teaching economics at both the tertiary and secondary levels.

10 With this appointment, the MAG will collectively bring:

10.1 knowledge of the ECE Funding system, including ECE funding streams outside of those administered by the Ministry of Education.

10.2 knowledge, experience and expertise in the ECE sector, including experience operating, managing or working in an ECE service.

10.3 knowledge and expertise in economic principles and market dynamics, particularly relating to labour market participation and social investment.

10.4 understanding of key stakeholders within the sector and holding of relationships that can be drawn upon for effective consultation.

10.5 knowledge of ECE pedagogy, research, and data relating to child outcomes.

11 A curriculum vitae (CV) form for this appointee is included in Annex 2. I am satisfied that the appointee described above will contribute to a well-balanced MAG that brings an appropriate range of skills and experience.

### Representativeness of appointment

12 With this new appointment, I consider that the MAG will have the depth of skills and experience to provide me with advice on how to redesign the ECE funding system. While there are some limits to the level of representation a MAG of this size allows for, I believe the group is comprised of a balanced mix of skills, experience and knowledge.

- 13 Just as importantly, I expect the MAG to undertake thorough and wide-ranging consultation of its proposals to ensure these are made with a deep understanding of relevant perspectives.

### **Remuneration**

- 14 The MAG is a Group 4 Level 2 body under the Cabinet Fees Framework (CO (22) 2 refers). The relevant fee range is \$429 - \$974 per day for a Chair and \$319 - \$616 per day for members.
- 15 In line with the Fees Framework, the fees have been set at \$974 per day for the Chair, and \$616 per day for members, plus reasonable and actual expenses.

### **Appointment process and consultation**

- 16 I confirm that the appropriate process has been followed in selecting the proposed appointee with reference to the Public Service Commission guidance on appointments. I consider the MAG provides the appropriate mix of expertise required to undertake the work.
- 17 Two potential candidates were shortlisted in consultation with me and the preferred candidate was then approached to gauge their interest and availability.

### **Conflicts of interest and probity checks**

- 18 The potential for conflicts of interest were examined for the proposed appointee. The following manageable conflicts were identified:
- 18.1 Sarah is currently employed by the NZ Institute of Economic Research (NZIER) as Deputy Chief Executive & Principal Economist. NZIER undertakes economics consulting projects for a wide range of clients, including private sector clients and public sector agencies. Occasionally NZIER has provided consulting services to the Ministry of Education, Tertiary Education Commission, and others in the education sector. NZIER has also completed internally funded research on various aspects of education economics as part of its Public Good Programme.
- 18.2 Sarah is also a Board member for ADHD New Zealand and Acorn Neurodiversity. These roles are unpaid and involve governance of the two organisations working towards (amongst other objectives) improving the New Zealand education system for children with ADHD, autism, and other neurodevelopmental conditions.
- 19 If conflicts arise, these will be managed through a declaration to the Chair and other MAG members and potentially by stepping out of discussions.
- 20 A probity check is currently underway for the appointee. The appointment will not be finalised until this probity check has been carried out in accordance with the Public Service Commission appointment guidelines.

**Communications**

- 21 This appointment will be communicated on the MAG's official web page after Cabinet confirmation, and once the member has been notified, likely in early September 2025.

**Recommendation**

- 1 It is recommended that the Committee note my intention to:
- 1.1 appoint Sarah Hogan as a member of the ECE funding review MAG for an initial term of 10 months beginning September 2025. This appointment is subject to the satisfactory completion of a probity check.

Authorised for lodgement.

Hon David Seymour

Associate Minister of Education



# Cabinet Business Committee

## Minute of Decision

---

*This document contains information for the New Zealand Cabinet. It must be treated in confidence and handled in accordance with any security classification, or other endorsement. The information can only be released, including under the Official Information Act 1982, by persons with the appropriate authority.*

---

### Early Childhood Education Funding Review Ministerial Advisory Group: Appointment

**Portfolio**                      **Associate Education**

On 25 August 2025, the Cabinet Business Committee:

- 1        **noted** that the Associate Minister of Education intends to appoint Sarah Hogan as a member of the Ministerial Advisory Group for the Early Childhood Education Funding Review, for a 10-month term commencing on the date of appointment.

Jenny Vickers  
Committee Secretary

---

**Present:**

Rt Hon Christopher Luxon  
Hon David Seymour  
Rt Hon Winston Peters  
Hon Nicola Willis  
Hon Chris Bishop  
Hon Brooke van Velden  
Hon Shane Jones  
Hon Erica Stanford  
Hon Paul Goldsmith  
Hon Judith Collins KC  
Hon Nicole McKee