



**Title: Meeting with Dr Gordon de Brouwer PSM, Australian Secretary for Public Sector Reform.**

**Date:** 29 July 2022 **Security Level:** IN CONFIDENCE

**Minister:** Hon Chris Hipkins, Minister for the Public Service

**Report No:** 2022/0159

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**Purpose** This aide memoire provides you with background and speaking notes to support your meeting with Dr Gordon de Brouwer PSM, the Australian Secretary for Public Sector Reform.

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**Date of meeting** 2 August 2022

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**Attendees** Dr Gordon de Brouwer, Australian Secretary for Public Sector Reform  
Candice El-Asmar, Dr de Brouwer's Chief of Staff  
Chloe Chadwick, Advisor, Australian Public Service Reform Office

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**Background** Dr Gordon de Brouwer is conducting an informal visit to New Zealand to meet with key people involved in New Zealand's Public Service reforms. The visit is being organised by Te Kawa Mataaho.

Dr de Brouwer has recently been appointed for a two-year term as Australian Secretary for Public Sector Reform, reporting to Senator the Hon Katy Gallagher as Minister for the Public Service. In July 2022 Dr de Brouwer was appointed to jointly conduct the first independent review of the Reserve Bank of Australia, focused on the long-standing inflation target, monetary tools, board structure, accountability and culture. The other reviewers are Canadian central banker Ms Carolyn Wilkins and Australian National University economics professor Renee Fry-McKibbin.

Dr de Brouwer has 35 years of experience in public policy, including as Australian Secretary of the Department of the Environment and Energy and senior roles in the Department of the Prime Minister and Cabinet, the Treasury; Australian National University and the Reserve Bank of Australia. He was also a panel member of the Independent Review of the Australian Public Service (known as the Thodey Review).

A biography of Dr de Brouwer is attached for your information.

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**Interest areas** Dr de Brouwer is seeking your insights and for you to share your experiences of New Zealand's recent public service reforms. He has noted that part of the conversation he will lead with Australian Ministers is about how the possible changes to the Australian Public Service will affect, and better support, them. We understand legislative changes are possible as part of these reforms.



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## *Australian Public Service Reform*

Working in close partnership with the Australian Public Service Commissioners and Public Service Secretaries, Dr de Brouwer will lead and implement a wide range of public sector reforms to support the Government's commitment to building a stronger public service that delivers better outcomes for the community, acts as a model employer and contributes to building a fairer and more inclusive Australia.

In 2019 the Australian Government released a report titled 'Delivering for Australians: A world-class Australian Public Service: The Government's APS reform agenda'. This responded to the Thodey Review, which made 40 recommendations for change across eight domains: delivering better outcomes, transforming for the future, uniting to succeed, partnering for greater impact, embracing digital and data, investing in people to strengthen capability, developing dynamic and responsive organisations, and empowering leaders to make a difference.

The Report also set out the Government at the time's high-level expectations for the public service. These were clear roles and priorities; better services; getting delivery right; connecting the Australian Public Service to all Australians; adapting to change; and reinforcing integrity.

Reform is underway across the Australian public service, building on the foundations of the Review and the Report.

We understand the Public Service Secretary (Chief Executive) appointment process may be considered as part of the Australian Public Service Reforms, and so Dr de Brouwer would be interested in your experience of New Zealand's Public Service Chief Executive appointment process.

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- Congratulations on recent appointments as Secretary for Public Sector Reform and to the panel for the review of the Reserve Bank of Australia.

## *New Zealand's Public Service Reform*

- There are similarities between the Australia's reform agenda and the objectives of New Zealand's reforms, which are underpinned by the Public Service Act.
- As the incoming Minister for the Public Service, I wanted to make our Public Service more modern and citizen focused, to deliver better outcomes and services to all New Zealanders.
- The Act provides a foundation for a Public Service that is unified around a clear constitutional role and includes provisions to support strong system leadership and flexibility.
- It is intended to help the Public Service join up services around New Zealanders' needs, and maintain public trust and confidence in the Public Service.

### **Speaking notes**



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- I also wanted to strengthen the working relationship the Public Service has with Ministers, by making it easier for the Public Service to gear itself towards the Government of the day's priorities and tackle big specific challenges.

#### *A more agile and flexible Public Service*

- The all-of-government COVID-19 response is one example of where the Public Service shifted to deliver at pace, and a lot of thought is being given to how we capture and implement the lessons we learned in doing that, in 'peace time'.
- We are achieving this through new organisational forms and workforce arrangements, the system leadership provisions in our Act, and the work the Public Service Leadership Team is doing to improve their collective operating model.
- We have also established Interdepartmental Chief Executives Boards – and I understand you have met the Chairs of these – which are the equivalent of your Secretaries Boards – to join up public services for New Zealanders.

#### *Putting New Zealanders at the heart of everything we do*

- Your reform agenda also emphasises putting citizens at the heart of the Australian Public Service's work and improving integration of advice and coordination of delivery.
- This was a goal we shared, and our commitments to facilitate active citizenship and open government, and increase diversity and inclusion, are set out in our Public Service Act.

#### *Open Government*

- A few weeks ago, New Zealand Public Service Commission staff met with senior officials from the Queensland Government to discuss New Zealand's proactive release of Cabinet material. This included David Mackie, Director-General Department of Justice and State Attorney-General.
- The discussion covered the development of New Zealand's proactive release culture and practice over time, lessons learned, publishing locations, reporting, due diligence considerations and free and frank advice

#### *Integrity and ethics*

- Reinforcing institutional integrity and ethics was also important for us. Our Public Service Act includes a new purpose statement, principles and spirit of service clause.
- Enshrining these principles in legislation means the Public Service shares a common set of objectives and ways of working in its pursuit of better outcomes and services for New Zealand – it also asserts and affirms their importance to our system of government.



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- But the purpose, principles and values are more than this.
  - What came through in public consultation is that they should articulate the aspiration that promotes the ideal of public service and what it means to be a public servant (e.g. 'spirit of service to the community').

*Possible questions*

- What are the next steps of the Australian reforms?
- What are the key challenges you see in your reforms?

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**Attachments**

- Biography of Dr de Brouwer.
- Runsheet for Dr de Brouwer's visit.

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**Author**

Reid Walters, Senior Executive Assistant to the Deputy Public Service Commissioner

**Manager**

Alastair Hill, Deputy Commissioner and Chief of Staff



## Dr Gordon de Brouwer, PSM



Gordon de Brouwer is Secretary for Public Sector Reform, a two-year position appointed by the Prime Minister to lead and implement public sector reform, working closely with the Public Service Commissioner and reporting to the Minister for the Public Service. He was also appointed in July 2022 to be a panel member of Review of the Reserve Bank of Australia.

Before starting his appointment on 1 July 2022, Gordon was Professor of Economics, jointly appointed to the Crawford School of Public Policy and College of Business and Economics. He is committed to public value, high-quality policy and implementation, and effective government.

Gordon has 35 years' experience in public policy and administration in Australia, including as Secretary of the Department of the Environment and Energy (2013-17) and senior roles in the Department of the Prime Minister and Cabinet (including Associate Secretary of Domestic Policy Group and G20 Sherpa, 2008-13), Treasury (2002-08), ANU (Professor of Economics, 2000-02) and the Reserve Bank of Australia (1991-99).

Before returning to the public service, Gordon was a Director of the Australian Nuclear Science and Technology Organisation (ANSTO) (including Chair of the Risk and Audit Committee) and the Committee for the Economic Development of Australia (CEDA). He was a member of the Advisory Board of the Nature Conservancy Australia and the Reef Resilience and Adaptation Program. He was National President of the Institute of Public Administration Australia, Chair of the Australian National Committee of the Pacific Economic Cooperation Council (AusPECC), a facilitator in Jeff Whalan Learning Groups for senior public servants in Australia and New Zealand, and a senior advisor in the Economics Program at the Center for Strategic and International Studies, Washington. D.C.

Gordon has a PhD in economics from the Australian National University. He was awarded a Public Service Medal and made a Knight in France's Legion of Honour for his work on G20 and public service.



## Runsheet

| VISIT DETAILS                |   |
|------------------------------|---|
| <b>Date/Time</b>             | 10. 30am Monday 1 August to 2.30pm Tuesday 2 August 2022  |
| <b>Location</b>              | Te Kawa Mataaho Public Service Commission   |
| <b>Attendees</b>             | Dr Gordon de Brouwer PSM, Secretary for Public Sector Reform  |
|                              | Candice El-Asmar, Chief of Staff  |
|                              | Chloe Chadwick, Adviser, APS Reform Office  |
| <b>Te Kawa Mataaho leads</b> | Alastair Hill, Deputy-Commissioner and Chief of Staff<br>021 530 468  |
|                              | Reid Walters, Senior Executive Assistant<br>021 589 284   |
|                              | Emma Shaw, Principal Advisor<br>021 578 715 and 021 268 0028  |
| LOGISTICAL RUNSHEET          |   |
| TIME                         | ITEM  |
| <b>Monday 1 August 2022</b>  |   |
| <b>9.30am</b>                | <b>Mr Christian Hawkesby, Deputy Governor, Reserve Bank of New Zealand</b>  |
| <b>10.00am</b>               | <b>Mr Peter Hughes CNZM, Public Service Commissioner, Head of Service</b><br><br>Proposed topics: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ New Zealand's Public Service Act reforms</li> <li>○ Australian Public Service Reform Reference Group experience</li> </ul> |



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|-----------------------|--|
| <p><b>12.45pm</b></p> | <p><i>Lunch break</i></p> <p><i>Light lunch will be provided</i></p>   |
| <p><b>1.45pm</b></p>  | <p><b>Ms Debbie Power, Secretary for Social Development</b></p> <p>Proposed topics:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Regional Public Service</li> </ul>  |
| <p><b>2.30pm</b></p>  | <p><b>Dr Caralee McLiesh, Secretary to the Treasury</b></p> <p><b>Mr Struan Little, Deputy Chief Executive and Deputy Secretary, Budget and Public Investment</b></p> <p>Proposed topic:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Wellbeing Budget</li> </ul>  |
| <p>3.30pm</p>         | <p><i>Afternoon tea</i></p> <p><i>Coffee, tea, and lights refreshments</i></p>   |
| <p><b>3.45pm</b></p>  | <p><b>Mr Hugo Vitalis PSM, Deputy Commissioner, Integrity, Ethnicity and Standards</b></p> <p><b>Ms Hannah Cameron, Deputy Commissioner, Strategy and Policy</b></p> <p><b>Professor Rodney Scott, Chief Advisor Policy and Research</b></p> <p>Hannah, Hugo and Rodney led the consultation, development and passage of the Public Service Act 2020 through Parliament. Proposed topics:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Public Service Act development and architecture</li> <li>○ Implementation of the new Act – purpose, principles and values</li> <li>○ Evidence base for New Zealand’s reform programme</li> <li>○ Making connections with relevant academics in New Zealand</li> </ul> <p>Advising other jurisdictions, for example the UK Cabinet and special Committees on their Public Service reform agenda.</p> |
| <p>5.15pm</p>         | <p><i>Day ends</i></p>   |
| <p><b>7.00pm</b></p>  | <p><b>Dinner with Australian High Commissioner, HE Ms Harinder Sidhu</b></p> <p><i>Location: Australian Residence, 15 Butavas Street, Khandallah, Wellington</i></p>   |



| <b>Tuesday 2 August 2022</b> |  |
|------------------------------|--|
| <b>9.00am</b>                | <p><b>Mr Peter Mersi, Commissioner for Inland Revenue</b></p> <p>Proposed topics:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Service delivery – putting people and business at the centre and working in partnership with the community</li> <li>○ Lessons learned from the IRD’s transformation programme and open data work</li> </ul>   |
| <b>9.30am</b>                | <p><b>Mr Peter Hughes CNZM, Public Service Commissioner, Head of Service</b></p> <p>Proposed topics:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ New Zealand’s Public Service Act reforms</li> <li>○ Australian Public Service Reform Reference Group experience</li> </ul>   |
| <b>10.30am</b>               | <p><i>Morning tea</i></p> <p><i>Coffee, tea, and lights refreshments</i></p>   |
| <b>11.00am</b>               | <p><b>Ms Christine Stevenson, Comptroller of Customs New Zealand</b></p> <p><b>Ms Vicky Robertson, Secretary for the Environment</b></p> <p><b>Mr Andrew Kibblewhite, Secretary for Justice</b></p> <p>Proposed topic:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Interdepartmental Executive Boards (attendees are chairs of the Border Executive Board, Climate Change Chief Executives Board, and the Executive Board for the Elimination of Family Violence and Sexual Violence Board respectively)</li> </ul> |
| <b>12.00am</b>               | <p><i>Travel to Parliament buildings, proceed through security.</i></p>  |
| <b>12.15pm</b>               | <p><b>Meeting with Hon Chris Hipkins, Minister for the Public Service</b></p> <p><i>Location: Parliament Buildings</i></p> <p>Proposed topic:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Leadership and implementation of Public Service reforms</li> </ul>  |
| <b>12.45pm</b>               | <p><i>Travel to lunch</i></p> <p><i>Location: The Wellington Club, 88 The Terrace, Wellington – meet in ground floor foyer</i></p>   |



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| <b>1.00pm</b> | <b>Lunch with Helene Quilter QSO and Heather Baggott</b><br><br>Helene Quilter QSO is a statutory Deputy Public Service Commissioner with particular responsibility for statutory appointments of Public Service secretaries and chief executives. Heather Baggott is also a statutory Deputy Public Service Commissioner and a Deputy Commissioner, Leadership, Diversity and Inclusion with particular responsibility for leading work on the Maori-Crown Relationship and diversity and inclusion programmes. Ms Baggott is currently the Acting Chief Executive for the Ministry of Culture and Heritage.<br><br>Proposed topics: <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>○ Public Service Chief Executive appointments and performance management</li><li>○ Diversity and inclusion in the public service</li></ul> |
| <b>2.15pm</b> | <i>Schedule ends</i><br><br><i>Depart for Wellington airport</i>   |