

The Oranga Tamariki Commissioning and Investment Plan

Commissioning and investing in children, young people and families who come to our attention

1 October 2025

Purpose

This Commissioning and Investment Plan (the Plan) sets a clear and ambitious pathway towards addressing the issues identified in a number of independent external reports including the Auditor-General's report into Oranga Tamariki procurement and contract management practices.

The Plan involves five broad programmes of work:

1. Finishing 2024/25 contracting activities and putting in place 2025/26 contracts
2. Refreshing the Oranga Tamariki commissioning approach
3. Early Support and Prevention services becoming “social investment ready”
4. Refining the way Oranga Tamariki commissions services
5. Rejuvenating the Oranga Tamariki communications and engagement approach.

Four areas of improvement identified in recent reviews

Strategic procurement and planning

Establish a robust, strategic framework for procurement and contract management, addressing the lack of a comprehensive approach identified in the 2024/25 contracting round.

Create a consistent and predictable contracting process, mitigating issues caused by inadequate planning and late decision-making.

Evidence-based decision-making

Address lack of evidence informing decisions and poor documentation, ensuring decisions are transparent and consider impacts on children and the sector.

Contract management and relationship integrity

Overhaul contract management practices, fostering integrity, transparency, and accountability, and rebuilding trust with providers and partners.

Governance

Establish best practice internal governance arrangements to support better decision-making.

What we are trying to achieve

NEW

- Better understanding of the needs of tamariki, rangatahi and whānau that have come to the attention of Oranga Tamariki, their lived experiences, and their aspirations.
- Outcome and performance measurements that deliver insights about impact and that can shape the co-design of services.
- Clustering and collaboration amongst iwi, non-government and community organisations to deliver services that will ‘shift the dial’ for the tamariki, rangatahi and whānau receiving the services.
- Commissioning and investment processes that are easy to navigate and have clear roles and responsibilities for all parties.
- Greater transparency in procurement, costing and contracting of services.
- Agreements and contracts that treat all parties involved equitably and fairly
- Reduced ‘red tape’ and unnecessary compliance.

Underpinned by the seven principles of relational commissioning

NEW

- Individuals, families, whānau and communities exercise choice.
- Māori-Crown partnerships are at the heart of effective commissioning.
- Commissioning is responsive to the equity of unique and diverse populations.
- The sector works together locally, regionally and nationally.
- Decisions and actions are taken transparently.
- The sector is sustainable.
- The sector is always learning and improving.

Programme 1: Finish 2024/25 contracting and complete extensions to March 2027

UPDATED

1. Complete contract extensions to 31 December 2025

Current status	Proposed next steps
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 238 contracts extending services sent to 194 providers for consideration prior to 30 June 2025 As at 30 September 2025: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 227 signed contracts have been returned 3 contract extensions have been rejected as the provider no longer delivers the service 8 contracts are outstanding – 7 are with Health New Zealand for signing and 1 is being amended to reflect enabling communities' arrangements 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ensure signed contract documents returned from remaining providers

2. Complete contract extensions to 31 March 2027

Current status	Proposed next steps
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Identified providers, services and contracts that expire before or around 31 December 2025 Developed key communications messages 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Distribute pānui to all providers with contracts and/or services ending on 31 December 2025 offering extensions until 31 March 2027 for their consideration Wind down the eight services in a manner consistent with social sector commissioning guidelines Acting CE to approve Funding and Contracting Implementation Plan Complete contract documentation and send to providers for consideration

3. Complete monitoring and initiate evaluation of services

Current status	Proposed next steps
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Launched trial of online self-assessment tool to digitise and streamline care provider self-monitoring Initiated planned evaluations of services 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ensure receipt and review of all provider performance reporting for the year by 10 October 2025

Checklist of areas of improvement identified in recent reviews



Strategic procurement and planning



Evidence-based decision making



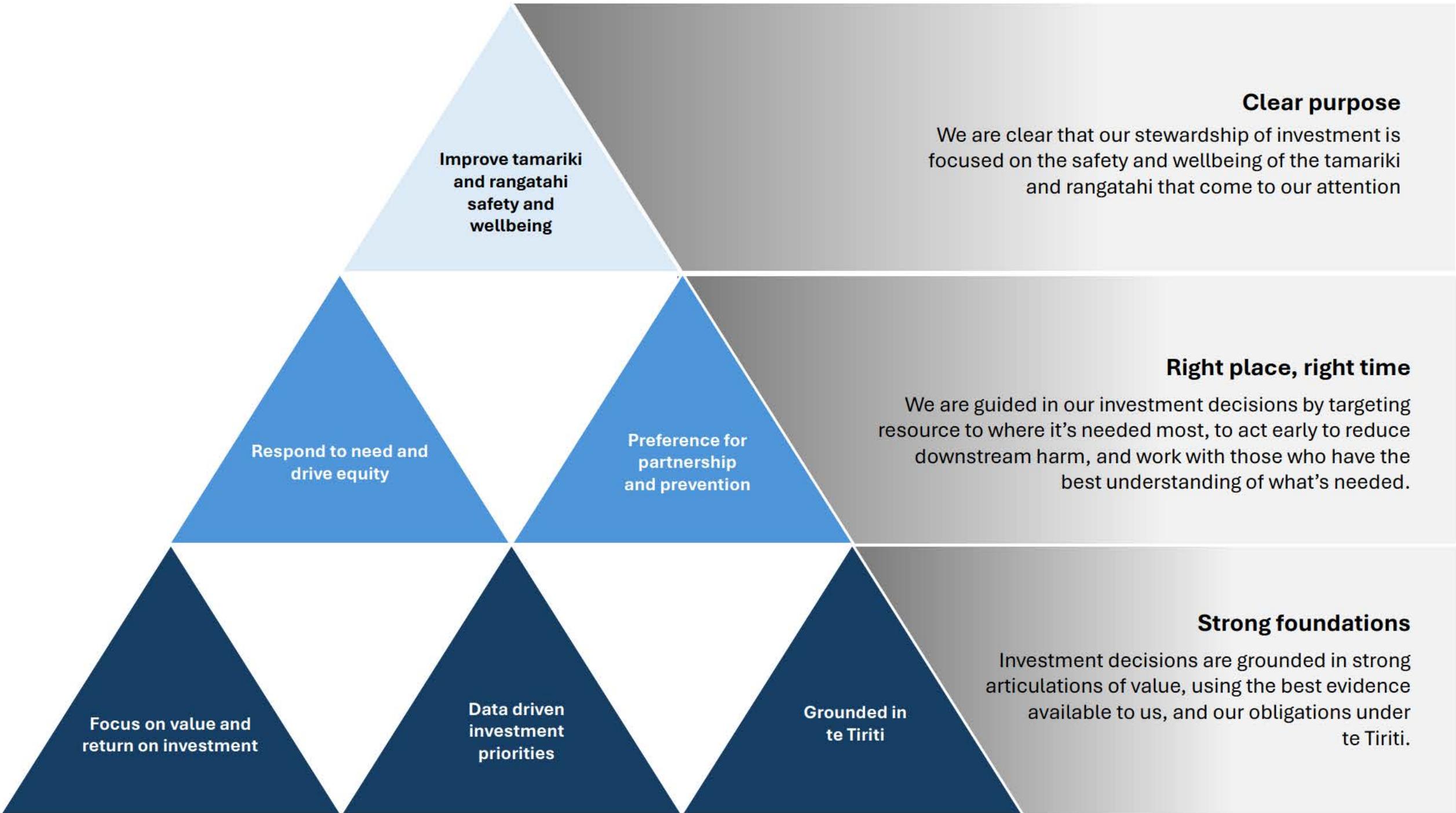
Contract management and relationship integrity



Governance

Principles to guide investment decisions

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Five priority cohorts for investment

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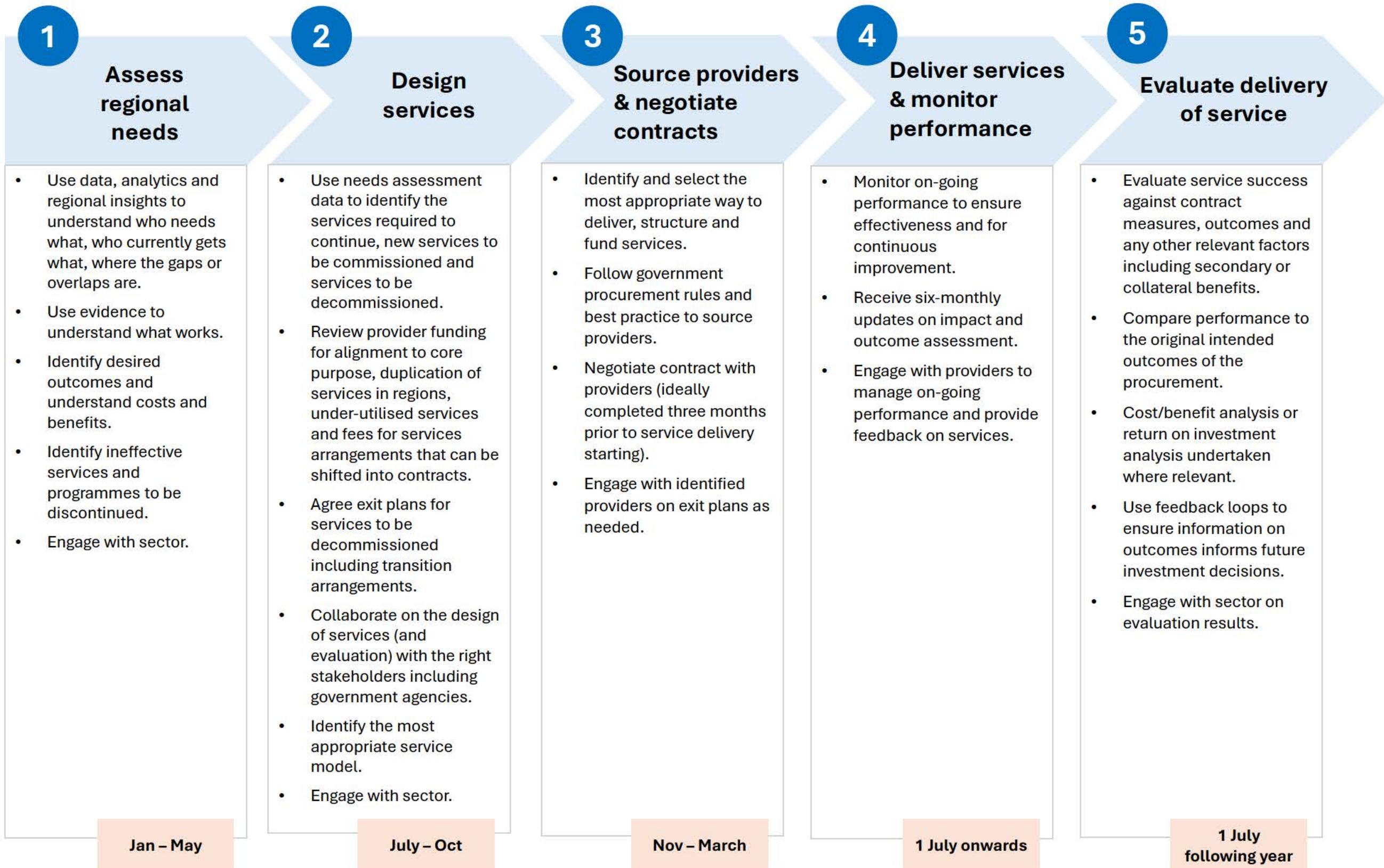
Five initial priority investment cohorts have been identified:

1. Youth Justice Cohort
2. Care Population Cohort
3. Family Group Conference Cohort
4. Transitioning from Custody to Adulthood
5. Targeted Early Risk Cohorts (early support and prevention) particularly children that have had interactions with Oranga Tamariki:
 - as an infant under one
 - with multiple investigations and reports of concern
 - with high complex needs.

Five step process to commission services

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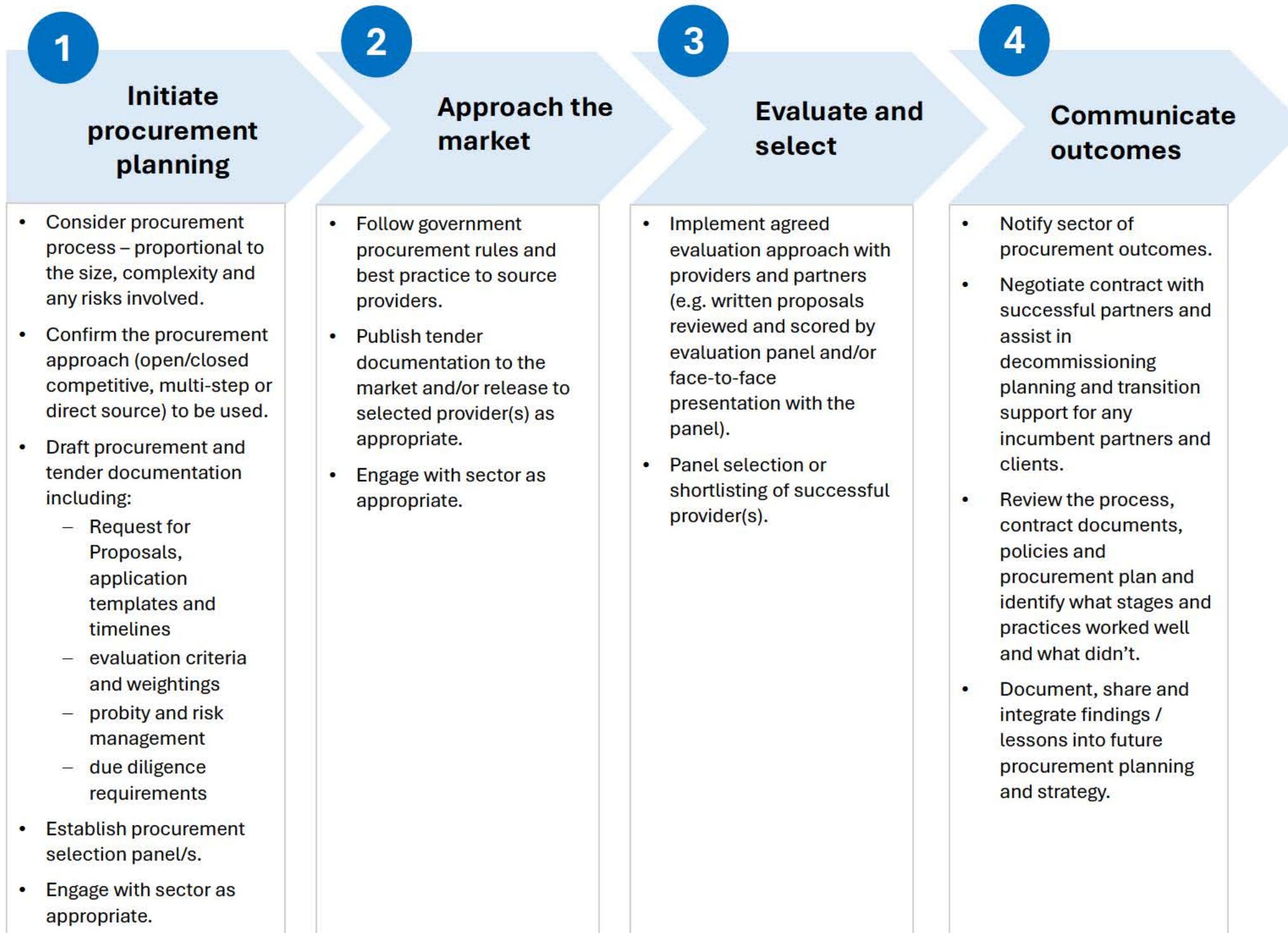
Best practice commissioning requires starting the process 18 months prior to the services being delivered or decommissioned



Four step procurement process

Unpacking step 3 of the process to commission services

NEW



Timelines for procurement methodologies

NEW

Direct source process (1 to 2 months)

- Plan the procurement approach – 2 to 4 weeks
- Approach selected provider/partner with proposal request – 2 weeks
- Evaluate and select – 1 to 2 weeks depending on agreed presentation method (i.e. written, face-to-face or both, if required) and a regional or national approach
- Communicate outcomes – 1 week

Closed competitive process (3 to 4 months)

- Plan the procurement approach – 4 weeks
- Approach selected providers/partners – 4 weeks (Rules do not apply but ensuring sufficient time is necessary)
- Evaluate and select – between 4 to 8 weeks depending on agreed presentation method (i.e. written, face-to-face or both) and regional or national approach
- Communicate outcomes – 2 weeks

Multi-step open then closed process (4 to 5 months)

- Plan the procurement approach – 4 weeks
- Approach the market
 - Step 1 (open) – 3 weeks (Rules stipulate 13 days)
 - Evaluate Step 1 (closed) – 3 weeks to read and score written proposals, shortlist
- Approach shortlisted providers/partners
 - Step 2 (closed) – 3 weeks (Rules stipulate 15 days)
 - Evaluate and select - between 2 to 4 weeks depending on agreed presentation method (i.e. written, face-to-face or both) and a regional or national approach
- Communicate outcomes – 2 weeks

Open competitive process (3 to 6 months)

- Plan the procurement approach – 4 to 8 weeks depending on the scale and scope (regional vs national)
- Approach the market – 4 weeks (Rules stipulate a minimum time period of 18 business days)
- Evaluate and select – between 4 to 8 weeks depending on agreed presentation method (i.e. written, face-to-face or both) and a regional or national approach
- Communicate outcomes – 2 weeks

Programme 2: Refresh the Oranga Tamariki commissioning approach



- 1. Oranga Tamariki and the Social Investment Agency jointly report to Ministers in Oct 2025 on:**
- a) **new strategic approach to commissioning**
 - b) **funding requirements beyond 31 December 2025**
 - c) **the approach to early support and prevention services that may transition to the Social Investment Agency**

Current status	Proposed next steps
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Completed 24 engagements with partners and providers • Ministers considered advice at Child and Youth Ministers meeting on 16 September 2025 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Cabinet considers advice on 13 October 2025 • Communicate decisions post Cabinet consideration

- 2. Oranga Tamariki reports to the Minister for Children in Nov 2026 that assesses services, funding requirements, service design and options for decommissioning services for the Oranga Tamariki 2027/28 contracting cycle**

Current status	Proposed next steps
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Started Step 1 of commissioning and investment approach – regional needs assessment • Completed 21 regional engagements to test needs data at regional level 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Continue developing needs assessment material to be tested at regional level in October / November 2025 • Identify services required to continue, services to be decommissioned and new services to be commissioned for 1 July 2026 to 30 June 2027 by end of December 2025

Checklist of areas of improvement identified in recent reviews			
Strategic procurement and planning	Evidence-based decision making	Contract management and relationship integrity	Governance

Programme 3: Early Support and Prevention services becoming “social investment ready”

NEW

1. Oranga Tamariki and the Social Investment Agency jointly report to Ministers in March 2026 on:
 - a) the reach and impact of five large programmes and one large national provider
 - b) how the chief executive’s statutory duties under the Oranga Tamariki Act, Care of Children Act or the National Care Standards Regulations can be exercised if services are invested in by other government agencies other than Oranga Tamariki
 - c) impact assessments on service continuity, sector workforce capability, referral pathways, and data reporting
 - d) the phasing of possible transfers of services or funding to the Social Investment Fund or another government agency from 1 July 2027, or earlier if possible, including:
 - i. transition planning to preserve expertise, financial viability assessments for providers, and coordination with other agencies
 - ii. enabling provider capacity to be built towards social investment standards.

2. Oranga Tamariki and the Social Investment Agency jointly report to Ministers in February 2027 on:
 - a) the rest of the Early Support and Prevention programmes on the matters described in a) to e) above.

Checklist of areas of improvement identified in recent reviews

 Strategic procurement and planning

 Evidence-based decision making

 Contract management and relationship integrity

 Governance

Programme 4: Refine the way Oranga Tamariki commissions services

UPDATED

Oranga Tamariki will improve its systems and processes including by:

1. Mapping current end-to-end commissioning & investment systems and processes and realign
2. Developing, publishing and implementing an Investment Strategy and 4-year Procurement Plan
3. Improving outcome and performance measures for services
4. Reviewing the Oranga Tamariki contract framework in collaboration with the government social sector and NZ government procurement office (including service design & procurement processes, etc.)
5. Improving understanding of reach and impact of services
6. Improving the quality of, and access to, Oranga Tamariki data on delivery, insights and outcomes for children
7. Revising and refining internal guidance

Current status	Proposed next steps
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Planning underway to map current Oranga Tamariki end-to-end commissioning & investment processes and review processes etc. • Oranga Tamariki presented paper on contract framework issues to Social Sector DCE Commissioning & Procurement group 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Complete planning to refine way Oranga Tamariki commissions services by early Q2 FY2025/26 • Prepare draft Procurement Plan for testing during regional engagement scheduled for late Q2 FY2025/26 • Testing draft mapping of end-to-end commissioning and investment processes and reviewing processes with regions and externally by the end of Q2 FY2025/26 • Initiate work plan for developing Investment Strategy, outcome and performance measures by end of Q2 FY2025/26

Checklist of areas of improvement identified in recent reviews

 Strategic procurement and planning

 Evidence-based decision making

 Contract management and relationship integrity

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Programme 5: Rejuvenate communications and engagement

UPDATED

We will develop a comprehensive communications and engagement plan that includes:

- regular pānui / newsletters
- regional engagement meetings across the country [Q1 and Q3]
- online hui for all providers [Q2 and Q4]
- utilising surveys to seek views
- setting up reference groups to test ideas, as required
- utilising other provider comms channels (e.g. SSPA)
- comprehensive set of provider Q&As that are regularly updated.

Checklist of areas of improvement identified in recent reviews



Strategic procurement and planning



Evidence-based decision making



Contract management and relationship integrity



Governance