

25 February 2013

Policy Group  
Police National Headquarters  
PO Box 3017   
Wellington 6140

Dear Sir/Madam

You are seeking views on the possible introduction of charges for certain Police services on a cost recovery basis. The discussion document notes that cost recovery may be appropriate for certain services where there is a largely private benefit to the user or beneficiary of the service, as opposed to the general public.

Social Service Providers Aotearoa (SSPA) is a peak body representing some 230 or so Non-Government Organisation (NGO) social service providers who are co-funded by the Ministry of Social Development (MSD) and private sources to provide a range of services for children and whānau with acute vulnerabilities, see [www.sspa.org.nz](http://www.sspa.org.nz).

It is a Ministry of Social Development (MSD) contract requirement that all employees, Board members and volunteers undertake a police vetting process to help minimise public harm and material externalities. MSD thus makes such vetting non-rival and non-exclusive for our members i.e. the service takes on the nature of public goods. As such our view is that the cost for Police vetting services for Section 396 and 403 providers should be borne by general taxation via Vote: Social Development.

Further Section 396 and 403 providers do not operate in a full cost recovery environment; MSD does not fund at full cost and the remainder of operating costs is met through fund raising i.e. cake stalls, charity events etc. In the current fiscal environment it would seem disingenuous to place further costs on NGOs who provide essential services to the most vulnerable children and whanau, given the limited ability for NGOs to increase revenue or reduce costs, being funded at below 100 % and the very uneven treatment of “public goods” across all votes.

Yours sincerely

Maggy Tai Rakena

Chair

SSPA

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