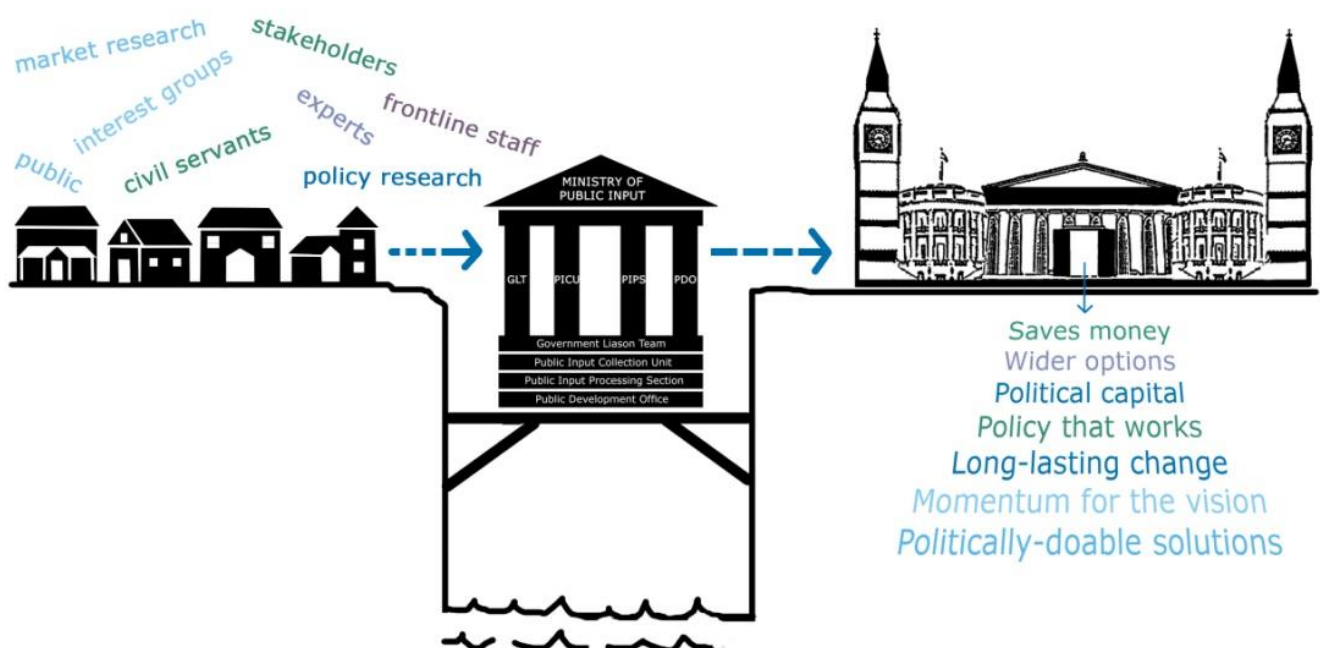


# The Ministry of Public Input: Report and Recommendations for Practice

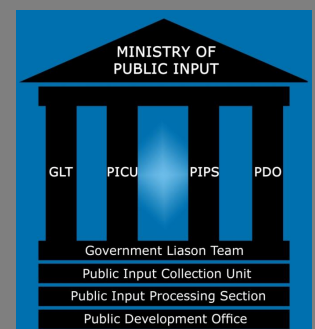


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August 2014

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# Executive Summary

Political leadership is undergoing a profound evolution that changes the role that politicians and the public play in decision making in democracy. Rather than simply waiting for voters to exercise their judgement in elections, political elites now use an increasingly varied range of public input mechanisms including consultation, deliberation, informal meetings, travels out in the field, visits to the frontline and market research to obtain feedback before and after they are elected. Whilst politicians have always solicited public opinion in one form or another, the nature, scale, and purpose of mechanisms that seek citizen involvement in policy making are becoming more diversified and extensive. Government ministers collect different forms of public input at all levels of government, across departments and through their own offices at all stages of the policy process. This expansion and diversification of public input informs and influences our leaders' decisions, and thus has the potential to strengthen citizen voices within the political system, improve policy outcomes and enhance democracy.

However current practice wastes both resources and the hope that public input can enrich democracy. If all the individual public input activities government currently engages in were collated and added up it would demonstrate that a vast amount of money and resources is already spent seeking views from outside government. But it often goes unseen, is uncoordinated, dispersed and unchecked. We need to find a way to ensure this money is spent much more effectively within the realities of government and leadership. Much of the official public input currently collected is organised without decision makers and results in suggestions that are unusable by our leaders because they fail to take into account the realities and constraints that government presents. Political leaders also requires politicians to show vision; to identify and take action on emerging problems and make the final decision after taking into account constraints of government and long-term needs of society, which does not always mean following input from citizens but leading opinion and behaviour change. Public input needs to be integrated within political leadership rather than run on the sidelines to it.

Through an appreciative inquiry analysis of existing academic and practitioner literature on political marketing, e-government, public administration and policy, citizenship, engagement, participation, consultation and leadership and interviews with over 40 practitioners working in, for and outside government, this research has identified ideas on how public input might be integrated into political leadership more effectively in the future.

Appropriate collection of public input is crucial to it producing high quality data that is useful to politicians. A mix of potential groups should be asked to give input, on any issue, using a range of methods but including at least some deliberative approaches, and focus on asking for solutions and priorities not just general demands. To ensure end suggestions are usable by political leaders, background information should be provided, a professional and conversation approach should be taken to proceedings by organisers and participants, and discussion should consider constraints and conflicts, whilst seeking to generate several not sole options for politicians to consider. The timeframe must be quick yet the scale large enough to be considered acceptable data by decision makers, and online methods might help achieve this. Moreover, a

dedicated and appropriately resourced public input staff team or unit needs to be organised within government to ensure public input is collected and reported effectively.

Furthermore, ensuring public input is *processed* appropriately is fundamental to making public input into government effective. A centralised institutional unit of public input needs to be created, to ensure that the results of public input are processed effectively and professionally, disseminated transparently and accessibly, and that high standards are maintained continually, best practice is reflected on and shared, continual learning and innovation occurs, and that staff are well supported and trained – both in the processing and collecting of public input. Politicians need to be involved throughout; public input needs to be collected at a time that is right in terms of their decision making; and the potential for influence needs to be very clear even if it is limited. The public input unit should also communicate public input initiatives and results effectively to media and the public, and co-ordinate and communicate a leadership response to public input so that there is feedback to participants. A Minister for Public Input is also needed to head the public input unit and system so that there is a champion and a figurehead offering support for the importance of integrated public input in government.

Moreover, interviews with 51 government ministers identified that our leaders already find ways around the existing limitations in the way public input is currently collected to ensure they receive constructive and usable input that helps them show leadership and implement legitimised and long-lasting change. These interviews also found that there is a move towards a more deliberative leadership that acknowledges leaders cannot know and do everything by themselves and therefore seeks to utilise a diverse range of input from those outside government. Leaders listen to, engage with, and judge this input carefully; furthermore they also seek to work with the public in identifying solutions before making final decisions which they then explain and justify.

This report argues that we need to develop a permanent government unit to collect, process and communicate ongoing public input such as a Ministry or Commission of Public Input. By improving public input systems; acknowledging the limits of their own power and knowledge; and devolving solution-finding to others, politicians are able to implement policy development that lasts beyond their time in power. Public input is not irreconcilable with political leadership; instead it is an essential step for any government that wishes to achieve significant and positive change.

## About the Author



**Dr Jennifer Lees-Marshment** is a research-driven, practice-oriented political scientist at the University of Auckland who researches the relationship between politicians, government and public opinion, mainly through the field of political marketing, which she has established international expertise in, but more recently she has also examined political leadership and public input. She is author/editor of 13 books including *The Political Marketing Game*, *Political Marketing in Canada*, *The Routledge Handbook of Political Marketing*, *Political Marketing in the US*, *Political Marketing: Principles and Applications 2nd edition* and *The Ministry of Public Input*. In her teaching she seeks to embed transferrable skills and applied work in courses including The Practice of Politics, Political Marketing and Political Management in Government. See [www.lees-marshment.org](http://www.lees-marshment.org) or email [j.lees-marshment@auckland.ac.nz](mailto:j.lees-marshment@auckland.ac.nz) for further details.



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# Section 1: The Problem

## The Gap between the Ideals of Public Input and Realities of Leading in Government

### 1.1 The Expansion and Diversification of Public Input into Government

Political leadership is undergoing a profound evolution that changes the role that politicians and the public play in decision making in democracy. Rather than simply waiting for voters to exercise their judgement at an election, politicians now use an increasingly varied range of public input mechanisms including consultation, deliberation, informal meetings, travels out in the field, visits to the frontline and market research to obtain feedback before and after they are elected. Whilst politicians have always solicited public opinion in one form or another, the nature, scale, and purpose of mechanisms that seek citizen involvement in policy making is becoming more diversified and extensive. Government ministers collect public input at all levels of government, across departments, and through politician's own offices, in many different ways and at all stages of the policy process. Such input is at present uncoordinated, dispersed and often even unseen, but if added together would represent a vast amount of money and resources spent seeking views from outside government. It uses a whole range of terms and concepts.

#### Different forms of Public Input

Advisory committees - Appreciative inquiry-based interviews - Behavioural analysis  
Choice Dialogue - Citizen advisory board - Citizen juries - Citizen panels  
Citizens assembly - Citizens fora - Citizens parliament - Co-creation - Commissions  
Community cabinets - Community meetings - Community visioning  
Consensus conferences - Deliberative polls - Dialogue processes - Discussion paper  
Discussion document - Focus groups - Forums - Ideas factory - Keyboard polling  
Listening exercises - Local parliaments - Mediation - Meetings  
National deliberation days - National issue forums- Neighbourhood initiatives  
Non-binding referenda - Online chat group - Online chats - Online dialogue  
Open hours - Participatory budgeting - Planning cells - Policy advisory group  
Policy research - Polls - Public consultation - Public hearing - Referendum  
Requester Roundtable - Role play - Roundtables - Stakeholder forum  
Study circles Summits - Survey - Televoting - Town hall meetings  
Virtual discussion tables - Vision and scenario development - Webcasts  
Working groups - World Cafe

Furthermore, world leaders and senior politicians are increasingly talking of working in partnership with the public, initiating highly visible public input exercises and conceding they themselves do not have all the answers. President Obama noted that 'government does not have all the answers,' and needs to find new ways of 'tapping the knowledge and experience of ordinary Americans' and that 'the way to solve the problems of the time is by involving the American people in shaping the policies that affect their lives;' Prime Minister Gillard stated that the government was 'eager to tap into' the insights and perspectives of the public; Prime Minister Cameron that 'the old politician knows best system...just doesn't work' and government and the people 'need to we work together to make life better;' and Prime Minister John Key conceded

'we know we don't have all the answers' and that the public and the government need to 'work together.'

## 1.2 Wasted Hope in Current Practice

The expansion and diversification of public input has the potential to inform and influence our leaders' decisions, strengthening citizen voices within the political system and thus improving policy outcomes and enhancing democracy. Nevertheless, a substantial amount of literature details problems in the way government has run public input: there is poor information, biased participation, and standard traditional discourse. Consultation is only done for artificial reasons; for statutory requirements or public relations. Public input has no impact: politicians don't listen to the results. This leads to wasted hope: significant funds, time, resources, staff and energy are often spent in scattered and superficial activity throughout the world, producing data that politicians can rarely use. Not surprisingly, this has limited or negative impact on decision making, disappoints those who participate in public input processes, and damages government-citizen relations. Current practice in public inputs is a waste of resources; and wastes the promise of public input enriching democracy. Public input into government is already happening, but happening badly, so we need to find a way to make this work better and restore the hope raised by the theoretical ideals of public input. Whatever new approach is taken however needs to work within the realities of government and leadership.

## 1.3 The Realities of Leading in Government

To make more progress in practice however, we need to understand why a response to current forms of public input from politicians seems absent; and to do this, understand the nature of government and political leadership itself.

Political leadership involves showing vision identifying and taking action on emerging problems; directing society towards a desired cause, change or action; creating and delivering solutions to problems for collective benefit; and making the final decision which can be unpopular after taking into account constraints of government and long-term needs of society. Current public input systems don't make a space for, or even consider, political leadership. This, and the nature of government means there are therefore a number of reasons why politicians don't – or appear not to – listen to public input.

### **Why Politicians don't listen to current forms of Public Input**

1. Politicians are not involved in the public input system
2. Politicians don't see the potential benefit of public input
3. Most public input is unusable for politicians
4. The nature and realities of government hinder integration of public input
5. Politicians are there to make the final decision in a pragmatic sense
6. Public input systems don't make space for political leadership
7. Public input raises questions for the traditional representative role of politicians

The majority of public input events and systems are run independent of politicians, missing them out of the process. As Joe Goldman, Vice President of Citizen Engagement for America Speaks conceded, "a lot of public deliberation practitioners

produce a result and they send their report to the policy maker and that's it." The potential benefits of public input for politicians have not been made clear.

Public input is rarely designed to produce realistic suggestions that politicians can use. The Australian Deputy Prime Minister Wayne Swann cautioned the 2011 Tax Forum that 'everyone here would love to click their fingers and change the whole system all at once, but tax reform isn't like that. Tax reform is about the long, hard slog of tackling one difficult reform after another' (Swan, 2011). It rarely gives politicians an answer or clear outcome and is often too slow to be of use in the fast-paced reality of government. Public input often fails to address issues of interest to politicians. Government also involves managing unpredictable issues such as war and economic turbulence which constrains their ability to respond to public demand. In the report that the Australian Government produced in response to the 2020 Summit Prime Minister Kevin Rudd noted the changed circumstances that Government faced in 2009 as opposed to 2008.

**None of us who gathered at Parliament House for the Summit could have foreseen the severity of the global economic downturn that was even then beginning to develop. As a result of the crisis, the worst since the Great Depression of the 1930s, the world of today looks very different from that of April 2008.**

Australian Government (2009, 1)

Leaders have to consider a range of stakeholders and political factors which makes government decision making challenging. One government staffer explained how 'it's much more complex, and you are overwhelmed with data, and every decision that you face is difficult. Any decision that comes up here has come up here for a reason which is other people have decided they don't want to deal with the decision or they think it's too politically problematic' (UK Government staff 1).

In a pragmatic sense, politicians still need to make the final decision. Even the Organisation for Economic and Co-operative Development's (OECD) guide on public engagement and participation concedes that 'government's task is to govern, to make

**"Here is the difference between everyone else and the final decision-taker. Everyone else can debate and assume; only one person decides...You can't take decisions by vast committees of people. You can debate, discuss and absorb views that way, but you can't run a war, organization or company that way. It just doesn't work."**

Tony Blair, former UK Prime Minister (2010, 404 and 444).

policy - there is no doubt about it. Information, consultation and active participation are not a replacement for government taking initiatives or deciding. Government has a leadership role, and citizens expect government to fulfil - after all, that is why they voted it into office' (2001, 22). Making the final decision is where the potential influence of public input has to end.

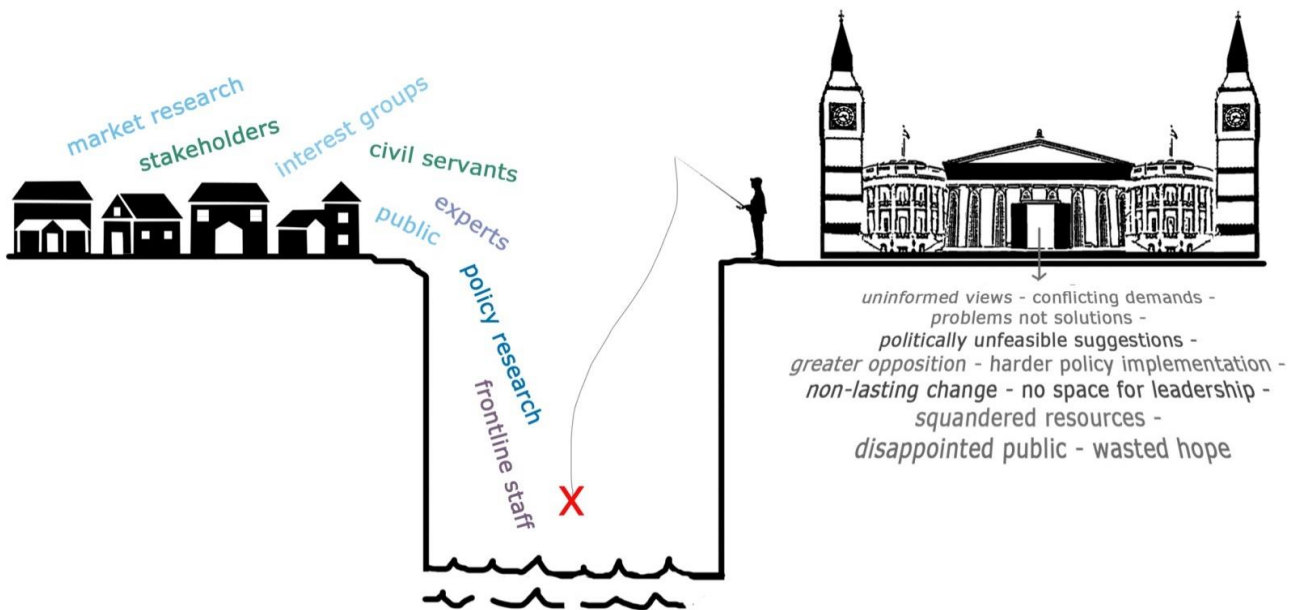
Despite much discussion about the theoretical benefits of public input in government, there has been little thought into how it can work in practice within the current realities of representative democracy and given the need for politicians to show leadership.



## 1.4 The Gap in Existing Academic Research

There is a big gap in existing academic research on the public input and political leadership in government. No one has identified how political leaders can use public input once they receive it within the context of a highly challenging political environment that politicians face once in government, or how they should integrate it into leadership which requires pursuing change and necessary - but not always popular - policies.

### The Current Gap between Public Input and Government





# Section 2: The Research Project

## Integrating Public Input into Political Leadership

### 2.1 The Research Question

Expanded public input into government raises profound practical and democratic questions including:

- ***How can we ensure that high quality and usable public input is gathered, given the public are not aware of the challenges and constraints of government that political leaders have to take account of in power.***
- ***How do we ensure that public input is collected and processed appropriately within the government, given the current practice is hindered by ineffective organisation, resourcing, timing and connection to policy processes.***
- ***What are political leaders supposed to do with that public input, given that elected leaders have to make the final decision and need to exercise political leadership to achieve change and societal process.***

### 2.2 Building the Bridge: the Research Methodology

The research adopted a broad definition of public input: Public input includes market research, policy research, meetings between members of the public and politicians both formal/organised and informal/spontaneous, public letters/emails/calls to politicians, formal consultation including legislative hearings, and deliberative events. Any form of public input that conveys the views, experiences, behaviour and knowledge of those in society who are not elected or unelected figures (i.e. politicians) in government is relevant; therefore the public includes academic experts, policy experts, think tanks, stakeholder/interest groups as well as ordinary members of the public.

The research utilized several methods and approaches and drew on a wide range of sources. This included an analysis of over 200 government, non-governmental and media documents and interviews with practitioners working in, for and outside government in the areas of consultation, market research, policy and strategy, and interviews with ministers/secretaries in the Canadian Federal Government under Stephen Harper, UK Central Government under David Cameron, Australian Federal Government under Kevin Rudd and Julia Gillard, New Zealand Central Government under John Key and the US Federal Government under Barack Obama.

## **Integrating Public Input into Political Leadership Research Methodology**

<b>STAGE 1</b> Review existing literature to identify gap
<b>STAGE 2</b> Adoption of appreciative inquiry approach to identify what might work
<b>STAGE 3</b> Academic literature on how public input might be integrated into political leadership
<b>STAGE 4</b> 40 interviews with practitioners in consultation, market research, policy and strategy
<b>STAGE 5</b> Creation hypotheses for how public input might work in political leadership and government
<b>STAGE 6</b> Discussion at academic-practitioner workshop
<b>STAGE 7</b> Analysis of over 200 practitioner sources (government, non-governmental and media)
<b>STAGE 8</b> 50 interviews with Government Ministers/Secretaries of State
<b>STAGE 9</b> Proposal for the Ministry of Public Input

### **2.3 Core Research Findings**

From the literature and practitioner sources, the research identified ideas for how public input might be integrated into political leadership more effectively in the future.

#### *2.3.1 Collecting public input*

Appropriate collection of public input is crucial to producing high quality data that is useful to politicians. A mix of potential groups should be asked to give input, on any issue, using a range of methods but including at least some deliberative approaches, and focuses on asking for solutions and priorities not just general demands. To ensure end suggestions are usable by political leaders, background information should be provided, a professional and conversational approach should be taken to proceedings by organisers and participants, and discussion should consider constraints and conflicts, whilst seeking to generate several not sole options for politicians to consider. The time frame must be quick yet the scale large enough to be considered acceptable

#### **Principles for Collecting Public Input**

1. Involve a mix of all potential groups (samples of the public, stakeholders including community reps and organised groups, expert publics, professional staff and experts) to encourage open constructive conversation
2. Use a range of methods but some must be deliberative in nature
3. Ask for prioritisation of demands
4. Focus on creating solutions not just gathering demands
5. Use a conversational approach
6. Provide accessible and well-structured background information
7. Ensure end suggestions are potentially usable by politicians by considering constraints and conflicts and suggesting several not just one option
8. Produce timely and useful data for politicians by operating quickly and on a large enough scale, including online
9. Create a dedicated and trained public input staff unit to organize and collect the public input

data by decision makers, and online methods might help achieve that. A dedicated and appropriately resourced public input staff team or unit needs to be organised within government to ensure public input is collected and reported effectively.

### 2.3.2 Processing Public Input

Furthermore, how public input is processed is a fundamental aspect to making public input into government effective. A centralised institutional unit of public input needs to be created, to ensure that the results of public input are processed effectively and professionally, and then disseminated transparently and accessibly, and that high standards are maintained continually, best practice is reflected on and shared, continual learning and innovation occurs, and that staff are well supported and trained – both in the processing and collecting of public input.

Politicians need to be involved throughout; it needs to be done at a time that is right in terms of their decision making; and the potential for influence needs to be very clear even if it is limited.

The public input unit should also communicate public input initiatives and results effectively to media and the public, and co-ordinate and communicate a leadership response to public input so that there is feedback to participants.

A Minister for Public Input is also needed to head the public input unit and system so that there is a champion and a figurehead offering support for the importance of integrated public input in government.

#### **Principles for Processing Public Input**

1. Involve politicians throughout the system of public input
2. Do it at the right time in the policy process
3. Process results effectively with a well-resourced team
4. Disseminate all public input data transparently and accessibly
5. Coordinate and communicate a leadership response to public input with explanations
6. Create a permanent and institutionalized government unit of public input
7. Make it part of - yet independent from – government
8. Create a Minister for Public Input
9. Communicate public input initiatives and results to the public

Interviews with government ministers discovered that ministers prefer to consider a range of inputs from different sources to inform their decision making. Lord McNally, UK Minister of State for Justice recalled how 'policy making is more opened up...there is for a minister a much wider range of well researched information to call on. He or she isn't the prisoner of the department, in a way they were thirty or forty years ago.'

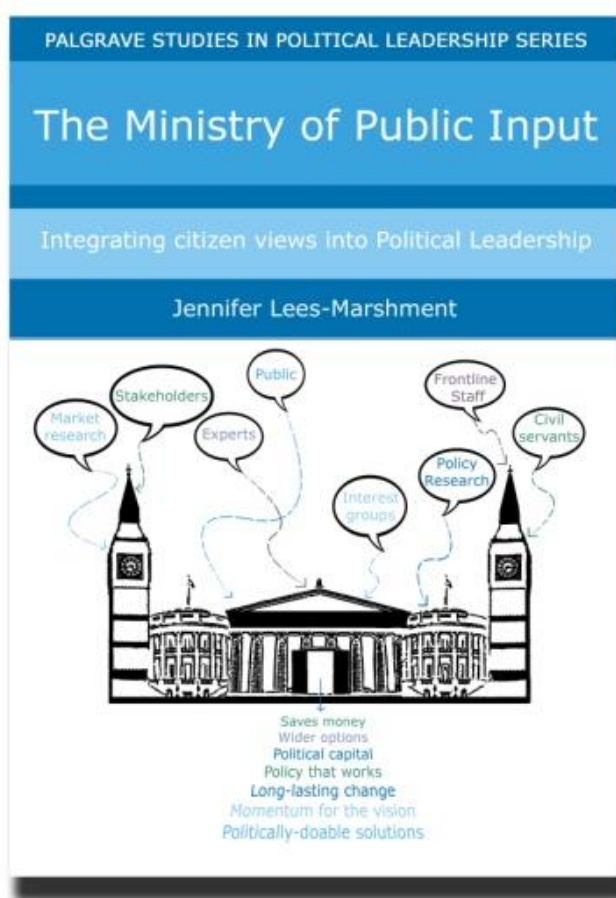
### 2.3.3 Evaluating the quality of public input

The interviews uncovered something very significant not known from existing literature: ministers have developed a range of ways to overcome potential weaknesses in public input. There is another stage of evaluation in between collecting and responding to public input where ministers evaluate the quality, bias and range of

input that they receive; testing it and seeking alternatives where there are gaps, to ensure they are as well informed as possible before they make their decision. Leaders also prefer and seek input with deliberative elements, such as getting people with different perspectives and views in the same room; the value of informal 'behind the scenes' input; going outside the place of government; giving information and constraints and ensuring the process was genuine and transparent.

### 2.3.4 Desirable Future developments

What politicians want to see in future public input systems is greater scope for deliberative government: developments towards a more informed public; more effective processes; space to think before they make their decisions; and grasping of technological capacities to enable this. Whilst politicians discussed a range of leadership styles, the dominant trends were explanatory, careful judgement and those that more directly integrate public input such as consultative and shared power.



## **2.4 Book published from the research**

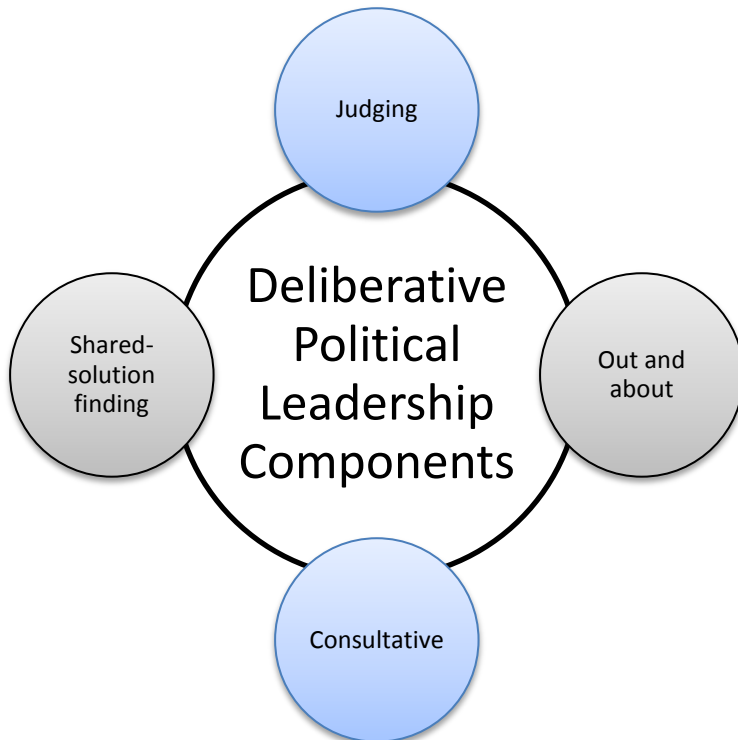
Drawing on these findings, the research created original suggestions that political leaders need to become deliberative political leaders, and create a central government unit to collect and process public input, such as a Ministry or Commission of Public Input. The full research will be published in early 2015 in the book entitled *The Ministry of Public Input: Integrating citizen views into Political Leadership* for the Palgrave Studies in Political Leadership Series, but the next section summarises the core recommendations.

For further details about the book see <http://www.palgrave.com/page/detail/the-ministry-of-public-input-jennifer-lees-marshment/?k=9781137017772>.



# Section 3: Recommendation 1

## Politicians need to become Deliberative Political Leaders



### Key recommendations for political leaders

1. Accept own limited power and knowledge
2. Proactively gather a range of input from different sources
3. Evaluate quality of input before integrating it into decisions
4. Adopt deliberative political leadership incorporating judging, out and about, consultative and shared solution finding
5. Explain and justify decisions in relationship to public input
6. Consider implications for politicians and civil servants

### 3.1 Accept own limited power and knowledge

Political leaders of the 21st century need to become deliberative political leaders. Deliberative political leaders accept they do not know everything and cannot do everything by themselves. As Steven Joyce, New Zealand Minister for Tertiary Education, Skills and Employment put it, 'we're in a different game now...the hierarchies of the western world are much more collapsed.' Chris Evans, former Australian Minister for Immigration and Citizenship, explained that 'ministers have a lot of power [but] the nature of democracy means that they very rarely have control of any particular problem and can't by themselves, or by the virtue of directing government, necessarily solve something.' They also understand the limits of their knowledge and capacity, with Ray La Hood, former US Secretary of Transport saying 'I don't consider myself expert. I'd rather rely on other people and other expertise.' They thus adopt a leadership style that incorporates public input and is more deliberative.

***Deliberative political leaders consider constructive and conversational input from inside and outside government from a diverse range of sources, evaluate the relative quality of such input, and integrate the input into their deliberations on what is the best way forward before making their final decision, which they justify and explain how it relates to the public input.***

### 3.2 Proactively gather a range of input from different sources

Deliberative political leaders proactively gather a wide range of public input from different sources. Ministers receive expertise from outside government via academic experts, think tanks, overseas or through research based advice. Chester Borrows, New Zealand Minister for Courts, noted how his department talked to legal professionals and law societies about potential changes in court procedures as well as NGOs and volunteers about proposals on vulnerable children - they deliberately targeted those who would produce informed responses. Ministers can also meet with a range of professional associations and bodies. Caroline Spelman, former UK Secretary of State for the Environment, notes how it is important to get a 'very wide spectrum of informed opinion, from people who absolutely thought that was the wrong thing to do, to people who absolutely thought that was the right thing to do.' Such input helps to ensure ministers haven't missed anything and that their decision-making is robust.

**"It's important that you try to understand public opinion through a number of different mechanisms. If you just seek it through peak organisations or through one type or form of information collection then there's a risk that the information you're getting is not accurate."**

Jason Clare, former Australian Minister for Home Affairs and Justice

Frontline staff working in the public sector are a useful source of problems and solutions. As former US Acting Deputy Attorney General Gary Grindler noted 'they're dealing with some of these law enforcement problems day to day and have true insight into how to address them.' Civil servants offer high quality impartial advice, access to information, evidence based perspectives and expertise, and ministers can also obtain advice across several government units where relevant. When Brendan O'Connor was Australian Minister of Housing he got advice from treasury on macro developments in the housing market and construction and from Factshare on social impacts of housing shortages; each unit would give different perspectives but such diversity is valuable to a leader wishing to maximise their input before making decisions. Ministers can also get input from organised stakeholders both towards the design and detailed testing of proposals; as well as the personal stories of individual stakeholders.

**"It's got to come from a number of different sources in order to be valid in my view."**

Tony Clement, Canadian Minister for the Federal Economic Development Initiative for Northern Ontario

Formal consultation such as public enquiries and submissions in parliament enable anyone to submit their perspective and provide another chance to check for unintended consequences of proposed policy; even after getting input early in the design and decision stages there can still be perspectives or small details that have been missed. Market research provides more scientific data and offers political leaders a realistic perspective on where the public is at and helps leaders calculate how much to

lead the public in the context of political and government constraints and realities. All of these sources are beneficial and deliberative political leaders need to ensure they draw on as many as possible.

### 3.3 Evaluate quality of input before integrating it into decisions

Deliberative political leaders evaluate the quality of the input before taking it into account, seeking additional inputs where needed. Even where input is more informed, it tends to be slanted in some way. And although formal government consultation is often seen as the democratic pinnacle of public input and has the advantage that it is open for anyone to submit their views, it tends to attract more simplistic views either for or against – and mostly against – a proposition. One way around biases in input is to test the input against other perspectives from those organisations or individuals working or living in the same space or with the same issue. Leaders also need to be aware of potential for gaps for what they are getting or seeing and seeking additional sources of input to address this. They shouldn't just wait for people to come to them but be proactive at seeking new input. As Cheryl Gillan, former Secretary of State for Wales, put it, 'you've always got to be engaged in a bit of lateral thinking and thinking "ok, who else is affected by this? Who else should I be talking to?"'

### 3.4 Adopt deliberative political leadership incorporating judging, out and about, consultative and shared solution finding



3.4.1 Judging: exercise careful judgment by weighing up public input before then deciding what is the best course of action in light of it

Deliberative Political leaders weigh up public input - and other factors - before then deciding, like a judge weighing up the evidence. There isn't a mathematical formula for this but Canadian Minister of State for Social Development Candice Bergen explained the three different factors – personal beliefs, party policy and constituency - that go into her decision making and she has to continually balance them with the weight of each varying according to issue and circumstance. Deliberative political leaders make final decisions after deliberating carefully on a range of options. As Senator Kim Carr, former Australian Minister of Innovation, Science and Research, put it, 'you are a giant sponge as a politician; your job is to soak up information, process it, and order it in a way that makes sense.'

**"You are a very foolish minister that doesn't approach every aspect of departmental activity with an open mind as opposed to an open mouth. I think you have to listen and receive all the information, and then you make your judgement."**

Cheryl Gillan, former Secretary of State for Wales



Academic literature also talks of the need for leaders to be similarly reflective. Pfiffner (2011, 260-1) conducted an analysis of the White House staff under President Obama in his first year as president and concluded that 'careful, and sometimes lengthy, deliberation marked Obama's style of decision making' with his staff and he 'fully examined all serious policy options.' Pitkin (1967 163-4) argues that when elected politicians want to act against public views they needed to 'pause,' reflect and justify the decision and Kane et al (2009, 311) also argue that one option for democratic leadership is for leaders to engage in reflexivity and dialogue.

**“Often there will be different pieces of input and advice that I will weigh up, both in terms of the accuracy of it, and I’ll take a range of factors into account...[and] either make the decision yes or no, or to tweak a decision to slightly change the policy, to decide in certain situations where you have to have courage and you have to say “well I’m going to potentially do something that is different to public opinion, and I’m going to explain why, and I think I’ll win the debate long term.”**

Nikki Kaye, New Zealand Minister of Youth Affairs



3.4.2 Out and about and learning: get out of the office and interact with those on the ground, on the street and working in the front line to inform their decisions

Leaders need to go out of the office and interact with those on the ground, on the street and working in the front line in order to inform their decisions. New Zealand Courts Ministers Chester Borrows put it the most directly - 'if I have a style, it's that I get out and about.' Former Deputy Attorney General Gary Grindler recalled how he and the Attorney General once flew to a centre where young men and women who had experienced a variety of problems in their lives were boarding for a period of time and they had a private conversation with every young man and woman in the class receiving the programme to get their perspective on what was working or needed changing. Politicians need to listen to frontline staff and go to local markets, sports grounds, barbecue's and shops. Just thinking about the issue from different viewpoints was also useful; Borrows explained how he tended 'to elevate the interests of the people with the least equity of arms' so he didn't just listen to judges or lawyers. Paula Bennett, New Zealand Minister for Social Development, took a Green paper on vulnerable children – the children's action plan - on a tour in 2011 to get more people engaged. On the road she met a wide range of people and was able to hear different and unfiltered voices. Such input was 'gold' and sent her in directions she didn't expect to go. Ministers should also seek out those that don't go to government, are not well organised and are under-represented - as former US Deputy Attorney General David Ogden advised, 'try to hear voices that you don't usually hear.'



### 3.4.3 Consultative: listen to a range of perspectives in participatory dialogue before making decisions

Deliberative political leadership includes being consultative, creating consensus, being inclusive and listening before making decisions. Although there is a need to show a vision and direction, former Canadian Minister for Transport Rob Merrifield argued 'you have to listen before you know where to lead...you know you're a leader when you look over your shoulder and see how many people are following.' New Zealand Deputy Prime Minister Bill English argued that more participative forms of leadership help to build higher levels of trust and former Secretary of State for Wales Cheryl Gillan stated that rather than pursue a dominant imposing leadership style she wanted to take on board other people's opinions and views first which helped to bring people along with decisions.

Academics and practitioners also talk of the need for leaders to be open to change, learning and new ideas (Burkhardt and Glass 2010, 567; Bentley 2003; Lees-Marshment 2009, 215-6). Government consultant John Shewan recalled how when the New Zealand Tax Working Group 'met with the Prime Minister at the end of 2009, there was no way he was going to be increasing GST. And yet, in the February budget they decided they would do that' after reviewing all the evidence and arguments from the workshop group.

**"Obviously it has to be interactive; there have to be discussions, not just sort of formal positions flying around."**

Oliver Letwin, UK Minister for Policy

Moreover, deliberative political leaders also need to seek as many constructive forms of input as possible. Tony Burke, Australian Minister for Sustainability, Environment, Water, Population and Communities, explained that there needs to be acceptance that no one individual or entity can get everything they want and government requires working through the issues and saying 'ok, we're willing to do that within your world too.' He recalled how during one meeting to discuss proposed changes in relation to the Murray-Darling basin people created a cardboard coffin to represent the potential death of their town and even started calling out that he should be put in a coffin - an effective media stunt, but not an effective solution-seeking conversation. Whereas at another meeting the school principle said they were willing to work with him but he

**The most useful public input is participative. By that I mean people taking a role in the decision making which includes responsibility for defending or advocating the result.**

Bill English, New Zealand Deputy Prime Minister

needed to work more with them, and proceeded to explain the different impact of water leaving their areas such as in terms of housing prices and class numbers at the school and how it was really hurting their town, which had much more impact on the minister. Burke recalled that he 'put that speech down to one of the reasons why we went so far in relying on methods other than buy back to try and

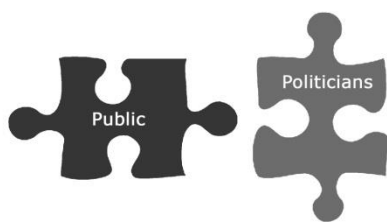
meet the environmental outcome, which ended up costing us a lot more money.’ People can still be assertive and even aggressive but ‘in terms of actually changing a policy course, I think far and away, it’s the conversations where it happens.’

Constructive input comes from participants being aware of the constraints and realities of government; so deliberative processes providing information are needed as are those that outline costs of proposals. Deputy Prime Minister Bill English argued that ordinary people ‘are capable of understanding trade-offs and complexities around public policy issues that affect them’ and can ‘grapple with issues where they lack knowledge if it’s related to their experience.’ It is therefore better to engage them ‘as if they are capable rather than if they are incapable decision makers’ and almost all policy problems are practical and ‘amenable to a conversational mode.’ Individuals who are impacted or might be impacted by government decisions in effect offer a form of expertise through their experience of a problem or service. Leaders can also get people with contrasting views in the same room to discuss an issue. Ray LaHood former Secretary of State for Transport explained this helps to identify priorities and get everyone focused on problem solving; it creates ‘a kind of a common agenda of what the issues are...and then everybody goes to work and solves them.’ It is also

useful for the leaders themselves to get away from government and out in the field. Tony Burke said ‘the conversation changes fundamentally’ when you get outside an office; so whereas you might need to still do big consultation meetings you should also spend ‘time in lounge rooms having cups of tea.’

**“Whatever is conversational is the most valuable. But the conversational nature of it can happen in a whole heap of different ways...whether its peak bodies, whether its individuals you meet on the street, whether it’s people engaging through social media, I think the real impact is made by whether they’re engaging you in a conversation rather than presenting you with a conclusion.”**

Tony Burke, Australian Minister for Sustainability, Environment, Water, Population and Communities



*3.4.4 Shared-solution finding: work in partnership with those outside government to identify solutions; sharing responsibility as well as power with the public*

The role of a deliberative leader becomes more of a facilitator of others to find solutions. Senator Kim Carr mentioned how when he created a pulp and paper industry working group he discovered that the industry spokespeople had never sat around a table together, or used the expertise within universities, or were aware of government resources available to them – so his role was partly a connector and communicator between different groups. Former Transport Secretary Ray LaHood spoke of how they got a range of people from all over the US to attend summits on distracted driving: ‘it was done in a very collaborative way. By engaging people from all over the country in two of these summits...we got input from them about what the problem is, but also about what the solution is.’ In another case after two pipeline

explosions in California and Pennsylvania the department met with citizens and the utility executives and asked them to get involved in finding solutions to improving the safety of these hundred year old pipelines which led to comprehensive pipeline safety legislation.

New Zealand Foreign Minister Murray McCully talked of the importance of connecting and supporting those in business in 'a dialogue that has me trying to help solve some

**The concept of responsibility sharing in animal welfare has been achieved in the UK and basically we set up a board which is part industry, part stakeholder, part politicians, to look at the transition to sharing the cost of animal welfare... You have to be prepared to share power. You have to be prepared to give a bit in order to get a better outcome.**

Caroline Spelman, former UK Secretary of State for the Environment

of their challenges to make it possible for them to solve some of ours' such as working with Air New Zealand to identify any barriers the government needed to work to remove to enable them to build new logistical connections in south-east Asia to then let businesses travel to the region.

**I would always argue the partnership case...individually we can't do much, collectively we can do great things.**

Simon Crean, former Minister for Regional Australia

Such an approach isn't necessarily a partnership in the classic sense of the world – as Social Development Minister Paula Bennett said 'at the end of the day I've got levers in power that they don't have and I bring that to the table', thus it is unequal or differentiated power. But it is co-operative and about working together.

Academic literature also talks of the need for leaders to be facilitative; creating networks of stakeholders, connecting individuals and ideas to solve problems through informed discussion and judgement (Lipman-Blueman 2010, 772-3; Genovese 1994, 24; Cheyne 2004; Sorensen 2006, 104; Klijn and Koppenjan 2000, 385; Hartley and Bennington 2011, 211). The role of the state is evolving to become a coordinator of public input (Gunningham 2009, 165). Booher (2004) notes how the Environmental Protection Agency in the federal US government secured agreement from key stakeholders for the Clean Air Act in 1995 after a collaborative process in which it enabled different stakeholders to negotiate directly with each other rather than individually with government. Facilitative leadership from the EPA was a key factor in securing consensus.

### **3.5 Explain and justify decisions in relationship to public input**

Deliberative political leaders also need to justify final decisions, using explanatory styles of communication, and in particular explain how public input has influenced those decisions. If people understand that there is a logical rationale for the decisions made - even if they don't agree with them – it makes them seem credible and more acceptable. Baroness Neville-Jones, former UK Minister of State for Security & Counter-Terrorism, said 'people are very sensible, they understand that life's a tradeoff...Government makes a mistake when it doesn't stand up and say why and

what it's doing' even in the area of security. Explanations may seem 'really painstaking' but simply grabbing power and saying this is what you were going to do is not enough; 'you've actually got to take people through it.' Explanatory communication helps politicians get support.

### 3.6 Consider implications for politicians and civil servants

A more consultative and deliberative political leadership uses public input to create space for political leadership in a range of ways, such as helping to identify more options and solutions, creating support, legitimacy and momentum, and ensuring the change will be long-lasting and stand the test of time. This new form of leadership in government is however less controllable and linear, and politicians need to be able to cope with uncertainty and be flexible as to the outcomes it may produce. Thus Deputy Prime Minister Bill English concedes that 'it's more challenging of leadership because it's less predictable' and leaders need to have 'the ability to tolerate ambiguity and non-linear processes to get there.' As Simons' (2010, 64) research suggested, community-based leaders such as President Obama are 'able to tolerate the collective anxiety associated with not-knowing, are able to co-exist with uncertainty, to move out from there to connect with others in ever-widening circles and webs of inclusion as part of the complex process involved in taking right action.'

Another implication is that civil servants also need to work in new ways. The desire to open up government bureaucracies works outside standard conceptions and practice in public policy: as Bill English commented, 'it uses frameworks that don't always fit with the mainstream public policy analysis.' Government staff need to initiate more conversational modes of interaction with those outside government, get out of government away from their desk looking at data and get some real-world experience. Minister Judith Collins reported how she had sent some of her staff from the Wellington office 'to go and actually be in the courts, run work in there, go to the

police and work, just to get an idea about what that job actually is, what their issues are.'

**'Well that is what we're doing. It's not the future, it's now. We are doing that increasingly and the departments which have done it have been circulating slideshows explaining what they've done to other departments to try and build up central support to try and persuade other departments they should be doing this; and we've been adjusting the way in which we do formal consultation to reflect the fact that we are encouraging early engagement. There is a huge effort going on at the moment.'**

**Our aim is to make the room for real discussion rather than just the formal process of consultation. Formal consultation still will bring up things which have been ignored and that's useful. But we're placing the emphasis on the pre-discussion**

Oliver Letwin, UK Minister for Policy

This also fits with developments such as open-sourced policy making in the UK, where the civil service produced a reform plan which proposes action to engage in open policy-making. The reform plans talk of the need for more collaborative approaches to its policy making by getting wide public input by "crowdsourcing" questions; using 'Policy Labs' which draw in expertise from a range of people and organisations

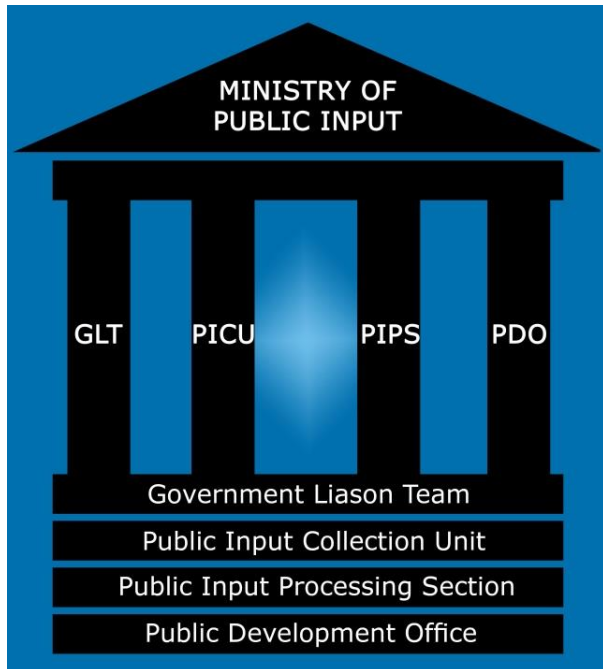
to test new policies before they are implemented; and using web-based tools, platforms, and new media to widen access to policy debates to individuals and organisations not normally involved (UK Government 2012, 14-5).

Given this is a new way of operating in government for both politicians and civil servants, leadership training would be beneficial to help current and future political and public leaders and staff adapt to a new style of working.



## Section 4: Recommendation 2

### Government needs to create an all-of government unit for Public Input



#### Key recommendations for Government

1. Create a Ministry of Public Input
2. Appoint a Minister of Public Input
3. Copy the Electoral Commission model
4. Create four key units within the Ministry of Public Input: Government Liaison Team, Public Input Collection Unit, Public Input Processing Section and Public Development Office
5. Fully train Ministry of Public Input staff, creating a career path for civil servants in public input

#### 4.1 Create a Ministry of Public Input

Given that the research identified a diverse range of ways in which government ministers currently seek and evaluate public input, in effect there is already a ministry of public input – it's just not formalised, centralised or visible. It could also be done so much better, with half the cost and ten times the value, and without relying on ministers to have enough time in their jobs to realise the need and develop the capacity to self-identify appropriate input.

Governments need to develop a permanent, formalised and institutionalized government unit to collect, process and communicate ongoing public input. Public input needs to be a fixed part of government, not just a one off event or website (see Boswell et al 2013, 174; Hartz-Karp and Briand 2009, 128; Ackerman 2003, 459; Andrews et al 2008, 503; Winstanley and Cronin 2012, 22). One of the factors of success in the Ideas Factory run by the Travel Standards Authority within US Homeland Security was 'it's a program, not a website' (Cariola 2010b, slide 37). This builds on the ideas previously put forward by a number of academics for institutionalizing public input in some way, including Ackerman and Fishkin (2004, 25); Held's (2006, 253); Goodin and Niemeyer (2009, 62-3); Goodin (2009, 186) and Blumler and Coleman (2001, 16).

**"Gathering public input should take a relationship based approach, and be constant and on-going. Gathering public input should be a function of all departments and public organisations"**

Participants at academic and practitioner workshop on public input, 2013

Robert Debus, former Australian Home Affairs Minister, expressed admiration for arrangements in Sweden where there would be regular meetings within neighbourhoods throughout the country to talk about public affairs and to pass their views back through a hierarchy to the government. Stockwell Day, former Canadian Minister for International Trade, Emergency Preparedness and Asia-Pacific, expressed the desire for something that was 'orderly, timely, transparent, and respectful' and former Minister of Agriculture Chuck Strahl that whatever form it took it needed to be a 'thoughtful, meaningful process.'

Former Australian Minister of Innovation, Science and Research Senator Kim Carr argued for an extension of his innovation councils as a mechanism to see a range of views tested in peer discussion. Sir Nick Harvey, former UK Minister of State for the Armed Forces, suggested citizens juries or panels are valuable: "buy a few days of people's time and really expose them to the facts and the statistics and the arguments and then really get their responses on an in-depth basis to that, and track that over time.'

**Have all government advisors and officials to work for one department called The Tax Payers Department...if you try and get research or analysis or advice across agency they spend all their time arguing. For instance, within youth justice, you've got CYF (Child, Youth and Family) with huge expertise in delivering youth justice policy and they've got all the figures and not only have they got stats, they've got the anecdotes. But they're not responsible for writing youth justice policy, the Ministry of these institutions. Frequently they are people with law degrees, criminology degrees Justice is. The Ministry of Justice have never worked in. So they've got a lot of learning and academic research...They tell you what they've found or what various studies found. Except that they're a little bit like lawyers in that they argue for the client, one way or the other...If there was some way of having a generic pot where officials weren't fighting then that would be very cool.**

Chester Borrows, New Zealand Minister for the Courts

Of course, the Ministry of Public Input title might seem to take it too far, and Public Input Commission might be a better label. But whatever the unit is called, it needs to be well enough resourced and powerful to ensure the public input system is run appropriately with a dedicated and trained public input staff unit to collect and process the public input. The system of collecting and processing the data from public input is crucial to ensure the input produced is usable by decision makers. Without it, resources expended create wasted hope as they result in data which is not usable for politicians and disappointed participants who feel their efforts have been ignored.

Whilst the unit needs to be created at the top level of government, this doesn't mean all of its activity needs to be located in the capital – indeed there are arguments for holding public input events at local level, with local staff, and for having the processing of results taking place in a geographically separate location given data can be transferred electronically.



## 4.2 Appoint a Minister of Public Input

To ensure such a government unit is properly supported within the overall framework of government, a Minister for Public Input needs to be created to provide a figure head and leadership. A Minister for Public Input is also needed to head the public input unit and system so that there is a champion and a figurehead offering support for the importance of integrated public input in government. A strong theme from interviews with practitioners and the academic literature was that having a champion, especially someone who was a politician, for public input was crucial to its success (see for example Winstanley and Cronin 2012, 27). Lenihan (2012, 144) argues that 'each government should name a minister responsible for public engagement' and include a range of duties such as "representing public engagement at the cabinet table; developing an official policy on public engagement for the government; providing information, support, guidance and expertise to government departments on the development and implementation of public engagement processes, and leading the effort to build capacity within the government; and disseminating what is learned from research and engagement projects and providing public leadership on the topic."

Canada already has a Minister of State for Democratic Reform and the UK a Minister for Civil Society and Minister for Political and Constitutional Reform, so the idea of a Minister for Public Input is not completely implausible.

## 4.3 Copy the Electoral Commission model

Public input therefore needs to be integrated within government for it to be closely enough connected to political leaders to influence decision making. Yet it also needs to be independent enough to offer objective and professional behaviour and processes. Nabatchi and Farrar (2011, 18, 50) found the legislators they interviewed 'overwhelmingly indicated that it would be important for the organizers, conveners, and moderators of a deliberative event not only to be neutral and balanced, but also to be perceived as being neutral and balanced.' All staff involved in running public input need to be neutral, balanced and non-partisan.

An existing model to copy might be the Electoral Commission, which is a central government organisation but somewhat separate, regulates the activity of elected politicians, and operates across the country with 'events' – ballot stations – operated within schools and other community areas. But it is always centrally coordinated/regulated and with results going back to an overall central count. Local and state governments might also create their own public input units.

## 4.4 Create four key units within the Ministry of Public Input: Government Liaison Team, Public Input Collection Unit, Public Input Processing Section and Public Development Office

### *4.4.1 Government Liaison Team (GLT)*

- Gathers politician's input into PIC design
- Receives and distributes reports from PIPS to Government
- Communicates government response to PIPS and beyond

The research made it clear that politicians and government needs to be part of the process, but somewhat separated. The board of technology in Denmark is often cited as one of the more positive examples of government public input and Hendriks (2005, 91, 96) notes how it puts significant effort into fostering regular communication with politicians and parliamentary committees and these relationships have encouraged legislative changes. Treasury staff argued that one of the success factors in the Australian Tax Forum was 'the buy in from the Prime Minister and the Treasurer, who was there the whole time, and a whole bunch of other senior ministers' (Balzary). The Government Liaison Team would liaise with government, gather politician's input into the design and focus on public input and ensure they receive the outputs from the Public input processing section.

It also needs to create a space for leaders to offer an appropriate response. When asked if they could wave a magic wand in how government organised public input, ministers argued that they want enough time and space to reflect on the input they receive. Alan Griffin, former Minister for Veteran Affairs, recalled how 'time's always a difficult thing when you're a minister because there's usually a lot to do...finding time...to actually reflect properly...can be incredibly difficult.' But there is also the need for an intellectual and conceptual 'space' for leadership. Chris Evans, former Australian Minister for Immigration and Citizenship, explained that governments sometimes rule out action on difficult issues 'because they can't withstand the pressure about having been seen to be considering things.' Somehow government needs to be slowed down to enable appropriate time for our leaders to consider the range of input we give them.

The Government Liaison Team would also collect and publicise politician's response to the media and public to contribute to debate about the issues and convey how leaders have considered input.

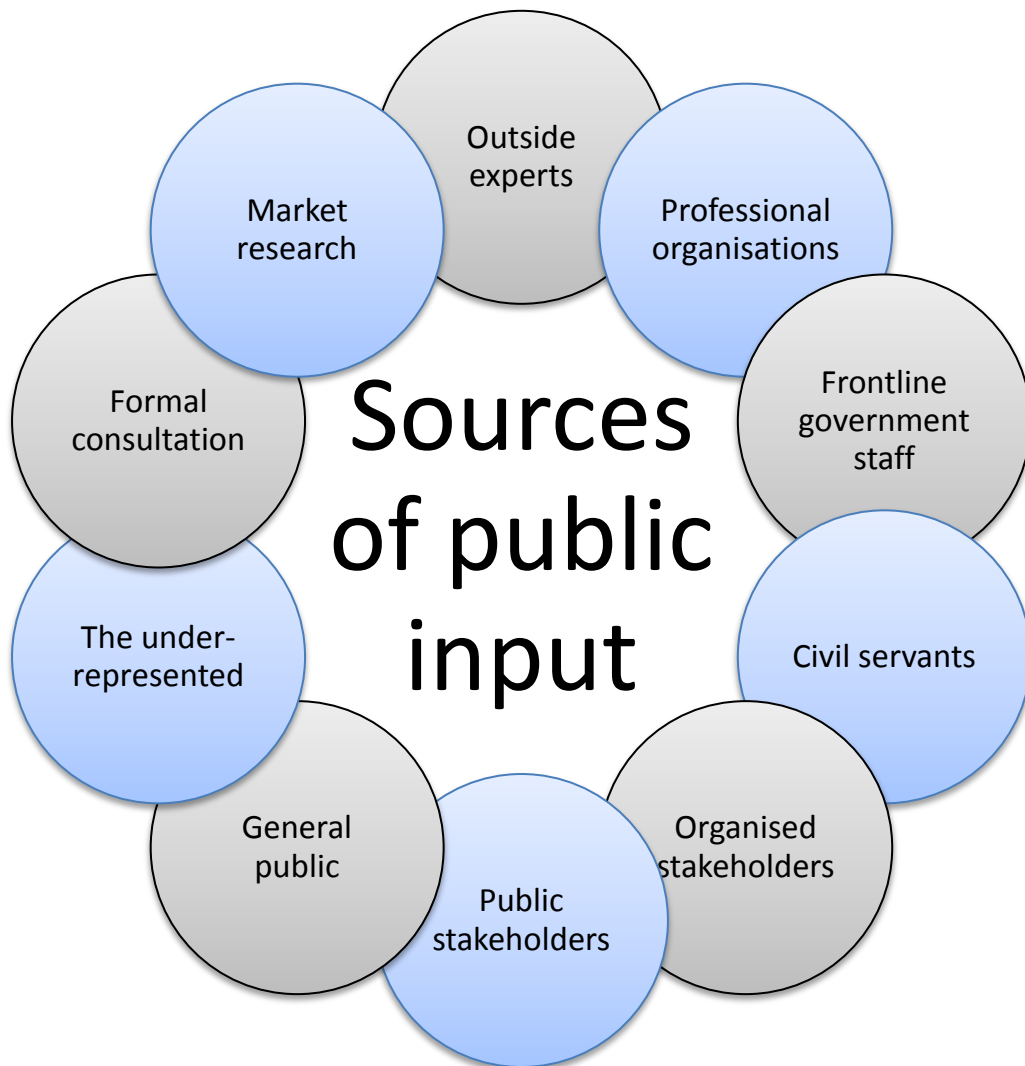
#### 4.4.2 Public Input Collection Unit (PICU)

- ❑ Collects public input from a diverse range of sources
- ❑ Uses a range of methods to create constructive conversation
- ❑ Specifies what is on/off the table
- ❑ Focuses on producing workable solutions
- ❑ Records results accurately and objectively and sends them to PIPS

The Public Input Collection Unit would collect public input according to several core principles and send the data or results to the public input processing section. Participation selection officers in the Public Input Collection Unit would collect public input from a diverse range of sources with a mix of all potential groups.

Staff in the public input collection unit need to make sure that more elite figures, such as experts, professionals and politicians themselves, do not dominate and participants treat each other as equal peers. Objective public input collection staff could help ministers to identify a range of stakeholders, those who they haven't yet heard from, and help ministers forge connections with everyone – as soon as they get in the job, instead of them having to learn this with time on the job. If the unit performs to a high standard, it could over time become relied upon to identify all potential perspectives, this would reduce the need for politicians to expend their own time and

energy self-evaluating public input. But it could still respond to requests from politicians to collect more public input to fill any gaps that emerge over time.



Issue selection strategists in the Public Input Collection Unit would collect public input on any issue including those that are most important to the public, those politicians haven't yet decided on, crisis issues, complex issues and those more manageable. This should be decided in consultation with the government but could also include considering the perspective of those outside government.

Input designers in the Public Input Collection Unit should seek and organise public input in various forms using a range of methods, but particularly those that create open, constructive conversation that is deliberative in nature. Other methods to measure current views or behaviour such as policy behavioural research and market research will be continued alongside conversational forms. But within the overall public input collected with different perspectives and positions people need to be brought together in the same room to engage in conversational discussion - a dialogue with listening as well as talking on all sides. It isn't just about ensuring people have their say or providing another forum for politicians to give a speech.

The organizers of the Australian Tax Forum wanted to ensure the audience had a participatory role and so looked to a more conversational approach. Therefore people came out of it feeling like they had had the opportunity to put their particular

perspective – ‘whether they be from business or unions or whatever.’ But they did so ‘in conversations with others that perhaps who had different views in front of the Prime Minister, the Treasurer and other senior Ministers in Government’ (Balzary).

Input should also include informal discussion behind the scenes/not in public/media view and outside the place of government. People are also more co-operative behind the scenes than in full public view and smaller informal meetings are more useful in identifying what was really happening – as former Deputy Attorney General David Ogden put it, they are about ‘trying to drill down to what’s authentic.’

The potential influence of the public input needs to be clear, with transparency about what is no longer up for discussion, so as to manage expectations of the outcome. Focus discussion on what is left to debate. Many ministers raised the issue that false public input is problematic and thus it is better to be transparent about what options are on or off the table because they have a preferred option or there isn’t the money for something.

At the New Zealand Job Summit Key noted that government faced constraints that would influence its’ ability to respond because some proposals ‘might require the passage of legislation or the release of new funds in the Government’s May Budget. Some will need to be looked at more closely, and may require more work and refinement before the Government can act’ (Key 2009). Similarly the Australian tax

**“I can't promise you that all the proposals generated will make the cut. It would be irresponsible of me to do so.”**  
John Key, New Zealand Prime Minister

forum reminded participants of the need to ensure proposals were affordable: ‘contributors need to consider how their proposals can be implemented in a manner that is fiscally sustainable’ (Australian Treasury, 2011). Even – and perhaps especially - if the potential impact on decisions is very limited, this should be made clear.

The focus of discussion needs to be on creating solutions not just gathering demands; and thus identifying several options for politicians to consider. It has to be made clear that the aim is to identify solutions not just air the problem. The TSA recalled that if somebody submitted something that was a pure rant or a question they pulled it down.

To achieve this, information about constraints and costs needs to be included in the conversation to ensure end suggestions are potentially usable by politicians. Policy information has to be presented in a comprehensible way. US engagement practitioner Gail Leftwich-Kitch noted that background material needs to be presented at ‘newspaper reading level’ that also includes consideration of the trade-offs and different options. It gives participants a context so they can start to make informed comments.

**‘It’s Ideas Factory... it’s not a Complaint factory’**  
Anonymous 1

Results also need to be obtained quickly yet be of enough size to be reliable to be of use in government decision making, taking the opportunities afforded by technological developments for online methods.

Data on public input has to be large enough to be credible. This can be challenging given the qualitative nature of some forms of public input, but practitioners have argued that it needs to be big enough to create pressure on politicians to consider it and it is possible to run events on a small scale but then combine the understanding from each event to create sizable data. America Speaks' 21st Century Town Meetings used a methodology which collects input from small groups via networked laptops and individualized keypad polling that then feeds into large-group sharing and decision-making. Interactive television connects participants across states and regions; views are submitted over the internet at the same time and viewers could watch proceedings from their home (America Speaks, 2010). This is a way to make small big; by collating ideas from small groups and communicating it online or via television (see Bingham 2006, 818). Joe Goldman noted how technology enables results to be immediately available even when it's a national level discussion and to analyse results according to regions and demographics.

UK Minister of Policy Oliver Letwin reported that the UK Government using online means of conversations early in the policy making process, such as in the Red Tape Challenge, which used a range of methods to try to find out which parts of thousands of regulations should be discarded or changed. They put everything that was to be considered online and synthesised all the comments and ideas in an interactive process before creating proposals for what to do. Tony Clement, Canadian Minister for the Federal Economic Development Initiative for Northern Ontario, argued that online and crowd-sourcing mechanisms would move decision making away from 'bureaucrat X14 on tenth floor of an office building in Ottawa.'

#### 4.4.3 Public Input Processing Section (PIPS)

- ❑ Run by a properly resourced team to process public input data
- ❑ Analyses and produces report on public input events
- ❑ Sends a report for politicians to the Government Liaison Team
- ❑ Disseminates event reports and wide range of other inputs openly
- ❑ Disseminates the government/leadership response to public input

The Public input processing section would analyse and disseminate the results of public input to the public but also to the government. The processing team would work with the Government Liaison Team to ensure politicians get the results, and in time to prepare a response.

Public input processing needs to be properly resourced, with a dedicated team of staff equipped in terms of time, training and funds to process and present the results appropriately. This may mean reducing funds spent on collection to create enough to process input. One of the positive examples of public input processing is the US Travel Standard Authority's Ideas Factory because it had a dedicated team analysing the results and connecting elites (including government staff and politicians) and public. Ideas submitted were fully reviewed by experts on the team, they considered the legal, health and safety and financial aspects of the suggestion and the best were then sent to the program subject matter expert and offices for a detailed evaluation. Proper time was expended reviewing the input in an 'organization wide process' (Cariola 2010a), connecting the public input with decision makers.

All public input that is collected by government using public funds needs to be disseminated transparently and accessibly, such as on a website. This should include the results of public input events, but also all other forms of input including market research, policy research, statistics and research into public behaviour and trends, formal hearings, submissions and so on. The views in such materiality would be varied and contradictory, of course, but there would be no harm in such differences. Indeed showing the public and media and other elites that views and suggestions are varied and contradictory would be beneficial to help everyone understand that public input is not uniform and decision makers have to consider conflicting advice.

Workshop participants argued strongly in favour of this, arguing that 'any public engagement needs to be visible and transparent.' Showing the public the results of their input would encourage future participation, and indicate that the government values input and cares about what the public has to say. Currently public input is not transparent or is disconnected, so everything that goes on is somewhat hidden, which can cause distrust. Transparent reporting would enable participants to see their feedback written up and acknowledged – even celebrated. A synthesis and collation of public input results on different issues would create a more informative, rich and deliberative resource. Data could be shown over time – there could be 'shared data so that people can see what has previously been submitted' and the system could 'aggregate data and information from a range of consultation processes' (Lees-Marshment 2013). As Barrett et al (2012, 200) argued public input becoming an effective part of government 'depends not only on the empowerment, embeddedness, and legitimacy of deliberative civic engagement but also on how the outcomes of these processes are synthesized, made accessible, and fed into policy making.'

The results of new public input also needs to be reported directly to political leaders. Some of this happens already, in other cases public input processes are disconnected from decision makers. The TSA presented briefings to the senior leadership team about progress (Cariola 2010a). Workshop participants argued that you need good staff to process and distil input to make it accessible to politicians, and results need to be presented in a meaningful way, with decision makers involved in interpreting the results directly.



Existing government work which puts details of consultations and other data online can be built on. Much consists of lists of data reports and needs to be less prosaic and more user friendly, but it demonstrates how government data can be made public:

- [www.consultingcanadians.gc.ca](http://www.consultingcanadians.gc.ca) - a Canadian Government website dedicated to consulting with Canadians
- <http://newzealand.govt.nz/participate/have-your-say/consultations/> - the New Zealand Government list as part of their website
- [www.data.gov.uk](http://www.data.gov.uk) - the UK Government's public list of information/data sets as part of the transparency part of open government partnership

The international Open Government Partnership creates a supportive context for this development.

**In the Red Tape Challenge...we have devised a whole series of methods to try to find out which parts of this apparatus are needed, which parts need changing, which parts need abolishing and so on...We have established over several years now a website where we put everything that we're going to be thinking about. And people have the opportunity to dump stuff on us in this website. And all the comments and ideas are then brought together when we start considering between the centre and departments what we're going to amend or scrap or whatever in these regulations. So this is a hugely interactive process. We have then also brought in all sorts of outsiders to help us - champions in discussions with departments - so that there's somebody who's expert in there with us. So that's just one example amongst many over the last few years where we've been using an entirely new sort of thinking. Now that's before, long long before you get to any formal consultative process...It's hugely part of the process and it's going on on a massive scale.'**

Oliver Letwin, UK Minister for Policy

More specific public input initiatives such as the Tax Working Group in New Zealand have featured a wider range of material online, including meeting notes, briefing documents, policy research as well as reports on public input. The Australian Productivity Commission (2012) noted how the advice it gave to government was put online along with 'the information and analysis on which it is based,' draft reports and preliminary findings. Non-government examples can also be drawn upon for ideas, such as the 2009 Citizens Parliament held in Australia by a non-governmental organisation, who created a website ([www.citizensparliament.org.au](http://www.citizensparliament.org.au)) that provided a comprehensive resource for participants, media and the public, including a range of sources - background reading, podcasts, articles, a discussion forum and a secure online deliberation platform for registered participants (newDemocracy, 2009b, 25).

Part of the public input system needs to be dedicated to coordinating and communicating a response from political leaders to public input, especially when dedicated public input events are held. The Public input processing section will communicate a leadership response from the Government Liaison Team to help political leaders explain how public input relates to their decisions. Ministers note the need to convey that they have considered public input. This doesn't mean government should pretend to do everything suggested, but instead explain their reasons for their

decision in relation to various inputs (see Lukensmeyer et al 2011, 47). Engagement consultant Anne Pattillo noted how when they did report back from public input processes and return to communities several times they found participants returned because elites 'told us how what we said and did impacted your decision.'

There are a range of examples of central government already doing this. Cariola (2010b, slide 35) argued that one key aspect of success with the TSA's Ideas Factory was that they reported back, with an explanation. They also said why ideas could not be implemented. The Environmental Protection Agency effectively responds to citizen input by directly responding to each of the five most popular proposals on the Open EPA site (Lukensmeyer et al 2011, 39). NASA responded to ideas gathered via the agency's Ideascale site with some specificity: they classified submitted ideas into one of four categories: things we can do; things we do or have done; things we cannot do and unclear or off-topic. Those ideas placed under 'things we can do' were tagged to specific topic areas (such as education, public affairs, NASA spinoff, etc.)' and a report of ideas was delivered to the corresponding NASA office (quoted by Lukensmeyer et al 2011, 42).

In the report that the Australian Department of the Prime Minister and Cabinet in Australia produced in response to the 2020 Summit Prime Minister Kevin Rudd argued that the Summit influenced the government 'in many ways...in some cases it has led directly to new actions – in others it has subtly changed priorities across different policy areas' (Australian Government 2009, 1-2). He lists a range of actions taken in response to the summit, including undertaking a major review of Australia's Future Tax System; a reform of collaboration with the states and territories; release of a Carbon Pollution Reduction Scheme and a major new white paper on Homelessness. He also lists future action on initiatives proposed by the Summit. The report that the Australian Department of the Prime Minister and Cabinet in Australia produced in response to the 2020 Summit is an example of how governments can provide feedback to public input events (Australian Government 2009). In the report they categorise ideas into four groups: key ideas being taken forward by the government; ideas the government will consider further; ideas others may progress and ideas with no further action at this time. This will be a new part of government communication that is important for both the integrity of the public input system and the reputation of political leaders.

#### 4.4.4 Public Development Office (PDO)

- ❑ Trains the public to develop skills and capacity to give high quality solution-oriented input
- ❑ Creates a range of roles for the public to play in the public input system
- ❑ Fosters a more mature attitude towards political leaders and government

The Public Development Office works on initiatives to develop the capacity of the public to contribute high quality input into government that is informed and objective and thus useful to political leaders. They engage in training and developing the skills of public, creating a range of roles for the public to play in the public input system, enabling the public to help design, produce and deliver solutions to problems and



fostering a more mature and positive attitude towards political leaders and government.

Part of the electoral commission's role is to encourage people to vote, and developing the public to a place where they can offer the most useful public input should also be part of a public input ministry or commission. The interviews with ministers during this research identified a strong belief in the perspective of ordinary people, or those on the ground, or affected by a problem, to contribute to finding solutions. The potential is already there to be built on. But ministers also spoke of the desire to see a more informed and understanding public who could engage in effective dialogue with the government. They also want a public that thinks more long-term. Any biases or interests from those outside government giving input into it should also be declared.

Academics argue that over the long-term, social, intellectual and political capital can be created. It takes time to build skills but it will happen (Innes and Booher 2004, 428; Andrews et al 2008, 502; Stewart 2007 and Andersson). And practitioners contend that everyone is capable of offering useful input. Edward Andersson from Involve noted that once people get over the more typical resentment/demand voicing 'they can have very reasoned discussions.'

John Shewan who was involved in the New Zealand Tax Forum noted how by reaching out to the public they had been able to stimulate higher level discussion. Because tax hits the public 'in the pocket on a day to day basis, they are intimately linked to the issue.' When the issues were explained comprehensively the public was able to understand the trade offs and complexities.

**"One of the highlights for me was when I was out at a restaurant in Wellington on a Saturday and I heard a table next to me, a group of three couples talking about tax stuff...One couple were saying "oh I think it's a good idea, I would sooner pay a little more GST, and less personal income tax", another couple quite vociferously disagreed. But they were debating the issues in an intelligent way and they concluded that there was no right or wrong answer, which was correct."**

John Shewan, government consultant and member of the New Zealand Tax Working Group

Citizens act with responsibility in other areas such as the media, professional occupations and party organizations. The public, once a passive audience, is increasingly producing the media rather than just watching it; citizens have more rights and a greater role in health-care, the law and schools; and volunteers are being granted more leadership roles and access to data within political parties and advocacy organisations they once reserved for the elite. Such opportunities are also being extended to government, as Obama created a governmental version of the 2008 campaign called Organising for America; partisan public involvement carried on into working with politicians in power with those involved in the campaign becoming 'excited by' getting into 'the legislative process' which empowered volunteers as 'local leaders...making their own agendas, they're making their own plans, taking our nation priorities and wrapping their own strategies around them' (Anonymous 3).

Another way to stimulate higher quality input is to offer a range of ways for the public to get involved to suit their lifestyle circumstances from low to high involvement, varying in terms of responsibility and frequency. Charities have long offered different levels of membership in terms of money and time and worked to move low involvers

to higher levels of activity and donation in the long-term. At the high end, participation in public input processes might be compulsory like jury duty (newDemocracy, b). But there must also be other less extensive ways to be involved. As Anne Pattillo argued, 'the challenge is how we help the public give effect to their ownership responsibility in a way that reflects the fact that they have a life and that they have more immediate management roles...in the care of their own children. And the management of their own jobs. And the balance of their exercise and all of these things.' Public input should not just be about asking them what they want from government, but what the solution is and how they can help provide it.

**"If we actually start all of this from the premise that people who actually own both the problem and the solution are the public. Then that relieves the burden from leaders to be both the identifiers of problems and the creators of solutions."**

Anne Pattillo, New Zealand Engagement practitioner

The public needs to mature to a position in which, as their own role in government increases and expands, they understand and accept that the leaders role will shrink.

#### **4.5 Fully train Ministry of Public Input staff, creating a career path for civil servants in public input**

Government staff involved in the public input ministry will need training as the different roles require new skills and public input work becomes a career path in its own right or as a preparation to being a civil servant in other issue/policy focused government departments (Winstanley and Cronin 2012, 24; Lukensmeyer et al 2011, 9). The OECD (2001, 44) notes the importance of staff training and support from senior leadership; training is vital and without it 'activities to strengthening government-citizen relations cannot go ahead.'



## Section 5: The Rationale for a Ministry of Public Input

A government organisation to run public input effectively would undoubtedly produce superior data to what is currently collected; it will be more timely, focused, constructive; processed appropriately; and communicated to the politicians who want to consider it and public who have generated it. An effective public input system produces a wide range of benefits for politicians in positions of power: not just democratic ideals, but pragmatic support for ministers who want to show leadership.

High quality public input generates a wider range of possible actions for politicians (see Bingham 2006, 823; Klin and Koppenjan 2000, 379 and Innes and Booher 2004, 429). The general public are more open to change and think outside the box; Deputy Prime Minister Bill English argued that 'people who aren't constrained by the need to perpetuate the institution they know have much greater degrees of freedom of how they think about ideas.' Public input also improves policy outcomes by integrating on the ground knowledge politicians do not have that makes policies more workable (Acheson and Williamson 2007, 37-38; Bochel 2006, 14; Burby 2003 and Weale 2007, 125). Many ministers spoke of how public input had told them something surprising, that they didn't expect, where there were unintended consequences, or where policy needed to be tweaked.

Public input identifies where opposition is due to misinformation and thus more of a debate and more information might change views. Deliberative events help identify possible paths for leaders to take and but still take the public with them and so does market research: as one practitioner put it, 'collaborative action is trying to find a place where either most people are going to be happy, or they can see that by giving something up they're going to get something different' (Johnston). Academic literature argues that conversation enables all views to be heard, for ideas to be shared, and encourage compromises, enabling solutions to emerge even on complex, uncertain, contested or controversial issues (Irvin and Stansbury 2004, 57; OECD 2001, 97; newDemocracy, a; Booher 2004 and Johnson 2011, 152). Government reports on public input events note that they created common ground, agreement about major challenges despite diversity and across political divides (The New Zealand Government 2009, 16; Swan 2011b and Australia Government 2008, 3-4). Public input also helps to find a way forward on emotive issues where there are polarized positions such as abortion or war; for example peace polls in the Northern Ireland

**If you have groups, who have an interest in a particular policy, and you give them access to your thinking and you're prepared to modify your thinking based on any valid contributions that they make, then they may well come out and defend it, because it becomes their document, and their position as well. And I think that's a great model for the future...metaphorically it is getting their fingerprints all over the document...So, in terms of recommendations and how to proceed, that's the strongest one I can give. Give some people a stake in the policy and they will join you in defending it.**

Craig Emerson, former Australia Minister for Competition Policy & Consumer Affairs

peace process helped to identify potential agreement between elites and mass opinion (Irwin 2012). Public input that helps to find politically-doable solutions is clearly valuable to political leaders.

Ministers also noted that input from sources such as stakeholders can in turn help create public support; it gets issues on the agenda, galvanises interest, encourages the community to understand why a new course of action would be worthwhile and helps to gather elite support within government and opposition.

**“You know what it also does? When you give people a stake in, not only identifying the problem, but solving the problem, then you really get the kind of action that you need when you’ve defined the solution...it gives people a stake in saying ‘hey, we helped solve this problem. And here’s the solution.’ And many of these people are the ones who carry out the solution.”**

Ray LaHood, former US Secretary of State for Transport

Public input in government also helps to achieve actual, desired change – everything leaders also want – as by involving people in identifying the solution it also creates buy in and ownership. It enables leaders to remind them that they were involved in the decision making and so they couldn’t now abandon the outcome and thus gave a broader legitimacy.

**“That is the other aspect of why political leaders will find it worth investing in these participative processes. And that is that they have much greater legitimacy in the broader political environment than sitting in your office listening to policy analysts. That’s no longer regarded as legitimacy when the results of it mean change that may be a bit difficult.”**

Bill English, New Zealand Deputy Prime Minister

Effective public input can stimulate policy change: former Transport Secretary Ray LaHood recalled how the US Transport Department ran two distracted driving summits at a time when the issue had never been on the agenda and no action had been taken and succeeded in moving from a situation where only eighteen states had passed laws to where forty two states had passed legislation. Such ministerial perspectives are backed up by the academic and practitioner literature (OECD 2001, 20; Burby 2003, 34; Bichard 1998, 330; IAP2 2008, 3; Lees-Marshment 2013; Hartz-Karp and Briand 2009, 133).

Effective public input also increases the chance that any change politicians create will be accepted and won’t be reneged on by a future government. Simon Crean, former Minister for Regional Australia, articulated this point most effectively, by noting that changes he had enacted that involve public input had ‘stood the test of time. They haven’t been unpicked.’ Public ownership is important to achieve long-term change beyond the time when the individual minister holds a position in power.

**“If the community doesn’t own this thing I will come and go. So yes I’ve shown the leadership to get it going, I push it, I’m important. But I will be gone and they will be far more important than I am. So they’ll fondly think of me perhaps, you know one day, or perhaps not as it is politics, but unless they are completely brought into it, and now are owning it on the ground, it’s only another fancy piece of paper.”**

Paula Bennett, New Zealand Social Development Minister

It produces change that lasts beyond the leader themselves. Input into policy making can also create support for an overall vision, a key role for leadership. Anne Pattillo suggested that public input can help create ‘momentum...shifts in understanding...it’s not a static process of we’re going to find the right answer, then we’ll have a think, then we’ll do an implementation...problem solving requires momentum.’ Leadership that integrates public input helps to generate trust which in turn enables politicians to enact further change in the future. Deputy Prime Minister Bill English explained that a more participative course builds higher levels of trust through the process which ‘earns you the right to do more’; and Monte Solberg, former Canadian Minister for Citizenship & Immigration, talked of how the Canadian Government had built up ‘some good capital to draw on when it comes to these kinds of issues.’ Whilst superior forms of public input may seem costly they are cost-effective overall.

**“If you want to compare cost and complexity there’s been billions wasted on high level broad based strategic consultation with the public where the public knew it was pointless and the bureaucracy designed it to be so. So I wouldn’t regard the participative version of consultation is necessarily more costly than the very wasteful apparently cheaper version.”**

Bill English, Deputy Prime Minister - and also Finance Minister

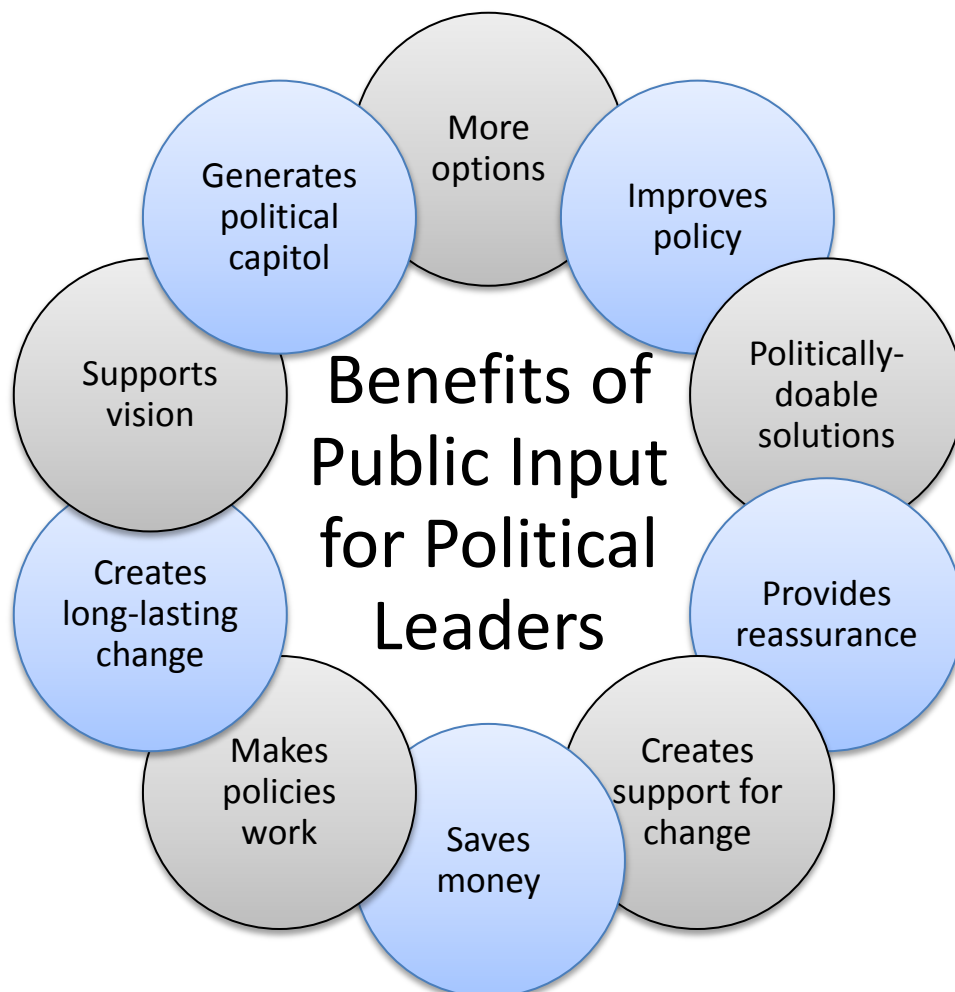


## Section 6: Conclusion

Not only does public input not destroy political leadership, if it is collected, processed and utilized appropriately in a way that is integrated with leadership vision and deliberative judgment it can help politicians working in a challenging, constrained and complex environment find the space for political leadership.

There is, in effect, already an unseen ministry of public input working in our governments. To help it realize its full potential – as well as that of ideals in political theory and public administration - we need to bring it into the open, set it free to work universally, allocate resources centrally, and ensure all activity meets core principles.

Creating a new government unit would not require lots of new money – the money is already in the system. No one has totalled it up because the activity is so dispersed between different government departments and ministries, across different types of staff, ad hoc events, and includes costs currently accounted to communication, management, policy and market research. This money could be identified and rediverted to a centralised unit. Half of the overall budget could be spent for double the impact if channelled into one unit that can collect and process input more effectively and to a higher standard for all areas of government. Once the infrastructure and staff training was in place, the budget could then be reduced overall.



By doing so we will restore hope to the promise of a stronger partnership between citizens and elites that current activity raises but falls short on, in a way that fits with a future of dispersed and changeable power, flexible positions of influence, and interchangeable roles as elite/mass public or leader/follower. Public input in government achieves actual, desired change – everything leaders themselves want – as by involving people in identifying the solution. In many ways, by acknowledging the limits of their own power and knowledge, and devolving creation and delivery of the solution to others, politicians achieve true political leadership – leadership that lasts, way beyond their particular time in power. Therefore, public input is not irreconcilable with political leadership in government - it is actually an essential activity for effective political leaders.

## List of interviews

### Ministers and secretaries interviewed from the Rudd/Gillard, Harper, Key, Cameron and Obama governments 2013-2014

1. Alan Griffin, former Australian Minister for Veteran Affairs
2. Andrew Mitchell, former UK Secretary of State for International Development
3. Baroness Pauline Neville-Jones, former UK Minister of State for Security & Counter-Terrorism
4. Brendan O'Connor, former Australian Minister for Immigration and citizenship; Employment Participation; Home Affairs; Homelessness/Housing; Small Business; Humane Services; Justice; and Privacy
5. Caroline Spelman, former UK Secretary of State for the Environment, Food and Rural Affairs
6. Cheryl Gillan, former UK Secretary of State for Wales
7. Chris Evans, Former Australian Minister for Immigration and Citizenship; and Tertiary Education, Skills, Science and Research
8. Chuck Strahl, former Canadian Minister of Agriculture and Agri-Food, Minister of Indian Affairs and Northern Development, Minister of Transport, Infrastructure and Communities and Minister for the Canadian Wheat Board.
9. Craig Emerson, former Australia Minister for Competition Policy & Consumer Affairs; Small Business, Independent Contractors & the Service Economy; and Trade & Competitiveness
10. David Emerson, former Canadian Minister of International Trade; Minister of Foreign Affairs; and Minister for the Pacific Gateway and the Vancouver-Whistler Olympics
11. David Ogden, former US Deputy Attorney General
12. Gary Grindler former US acting Deputy Attorney General
13. Jason Clare, former Australian Minister for Home Affairs and Justice, and Defence Material
14. Jean-Pierre Blackburn, former Canadian Minister of Veteran's Affairs; National Revenue; and Minister of State for Federal Economic Development; and Agriculture
15. John Banks, New Zealand Minister for Regulatory Reform and Small Business
16. John Boscawen, former New Zealand Minister of Consumer Affairs
17. Lindsay Tanner, Former Australian Minister for Finance and Deregulation
18. Lord David Howell Former UK Minister of State (Foreign and Commonwealth Office)
19. Lord Stephen Green, UK Minister of State For Trade and Investment
20. Lord Tom McNally UK Minister of State (Justice)
21. Minister Bill English, Deputy Prime Minister of New Zealand and New Zealand Minister of Finance
22. Minister Candice Bergen, Canadian Minister of State for Social Development
23. Minister Chester Borrows, New Zealand Minister for Courts
24. Minister Craig Foss, New Zealand Minister of Commerce, Minister of Broadcasting and Minister of Consumer Affairs and former Minister for Civil Defence, Racing and Senior citizens
25. Minister Jonathan Coleman, New Zealand Minister of Defence and Minister of State Services and former Immigration Minister and Broadcasting Minister
26. Minister Judith Collins, New Zealand Minister of Justice, Minister for ACC, Minister for Ethnic Affairs and former Minister for the Police, Corrections and Veterans Affairs



27. Minister Michael Woodhouse, New Zealand Minister for Veterans Affairs and Immigration
28. Minister Murray McCully, New Zealand Minister for Foreign Affairs
29. Minister Nikki Kaye, New Zealand Minister for Food Safety, Minister of Civil Defence and Minister of Youth Affairs
30. Minister Oliver Letwin, UK Minister for Policy
31. Minister Paula Bennett, New Zealand Minister for Social Development and Youth Affairs/Employment
32. Minister Pita Sharples, New Zealand Minister for Maori Affairs
33. Minister Simon Bridges, New Zealand Energy and Resources and Minister of Labour and former Minister of Consumer Affairs
34. Minister Steven Joyce, New Zealand Minister for Tertiary Education, Skills and Employment
35. Minister Tony Burke, Australian Minister for Sustainability, Environment, Water, Population and Communities
36. Minister Tony Clement, Canadian Minister for the Federal Economic Development Initiative for Northern Ontario and former Minister of Health and Minister of Industry
37. Monte Solberg, former Canadian Minister for Citizenship & Immigration; and for Human Resources and Skills Development
38. Peter Kent, former Canadian Minister of State for Foreign Affairs and Minister of the Environment
39. Ray La Hood, former US Secretary of Transport
40. Rob Merrifield, former Canadian Minister for Transport
41. Robert Debus, Former Australian Minister for Home Affairs
42. Robert McClelland, former Australian Attorney-General; Minister for Emergency Management; Homelessness; and Housing
43. Rodney Hide, former New Zealand Minister for Local Government and Regulatory Reform
44. Secretary Vincent Cable, UK Secretary of State for Business Innovation and Skills
45. Senator Kim Carr, former Australian Minister of Innovation, Science and Research; and Human Services
46. Sharon Bird, former Australian Minister for Higher Education and Skills
47. Simon Crean, former Australian Minister for Regional Australia, Regional Development and Local Government
48. Sir Gerald Howarth, former UK Minister for International Security Strategy
49. Sir Nick Harvey, former UK Minister of State for the Armed Forces
50. Steven Fletcher, former Canadian Minister for Democratic Reform and Transport
51. Stockwell Day, former Canadian Minister for International Trade, Emergency Preparedness and Asia-Pacific

## **Practitioner Interviews**

1. Andersson, Edward (2010) Deputy Director, Involve interviewed at Involve's offices, Tuesday 23 March 2010, London.
2. Anonymous 1 (2010) Interviewed 31 August Washington DC
3. Anonymous 2 (2010) interviewed 31 August Washington DC
4. Anonymous 3 (2010) interviewed 25 August Washington DC
5. Antioch, Gerry (2012), Australian Treasury, interviewed over the phone, April 4
6. Balzary, Mary (2012), Australian Treasury, interviewed over the phone, April 4
7. Banks, Simon (2012) Hawker Brittain, Canberra and former Rudd advisor, Canberra 24 February
8. Butler, Gareth (2006), Deputy Editor of the UK BBC Politics Show, interviewed

- 18th of April in London.
9. Carter, Matt (2007), Former UK Labour General Secretary and Managing Director London branch of Penn, Schoen and Berland Associates, interviewed 7th September, PSB London.
  10. Diamond, Patrick (2010) Special advisor Policy and Strategy in the UK PMO's (Prime Minister's Office) No 10 Downing Street under Gordon Brown, interviewed 24 March 2010 at No 10 Downing Street, London
  11. Evershed, Alexandra (2009), Ipsos-Reid, interviewed in Ottawa, Canada, 29 May.
  12. Farrar, David (2012) Advisor/market researcher for the NZ National Party, interviewed over phone 9 March
  13. Finney, Charles (2012) Saunders and Unsworth, interview 15 February in Wellington
  14. Gill, Mark (2007), Former Head of Political Research at Ipsos Mori, current Director of Woodnewton associates, UK, interviewed in London 5 September.
  15. Glover, David (2007), Gravitas research, New Zealand, interviewed 10th August, Auckland, New Zealand.
  16. Goldman, Joe (2010) Vice President of Citizen Engagement, America Speaks, interviewed in Washington, 24 August 2010
  17. Gould, Phillip (2007), Labour strategist/pollster and advisor to the Blair New Labour opposition and government, interviewed 10th September in his residence in London.
  18. Henley, Geoff (2012) Network Communication. 14 February Wellington.
  19. Hockley, Andrew (2012) Executive coordinator of the strategic policy and implementation group, Department of the Prime Minister & Cabinet, Canberra, 22 February.
  20. Johnston, Doris (2012) Department of Conservation, Wellington, 15 February
  21. Leach, Jimmy (2010) Head of Digital Engagement for the UK FCO (Foreign and Commonwealth office) & former Head of digital for No 10 Downing Street, interviewed at the FCO 23 March, London.
  22. Leftwich Kitch, Gail (2010) Executive Director of By the People interviewed 31 August 2010 Washington DC.
  23. Levin, Ben (2008), Former delivery staff in provincial governments in Canada, interviewed in Auckland, January.
  24. Martin, Doug (2012) Consultant at Martin Jenkins, interviewed 13 February in Wellington.
  25. Mehta, Parag (2009), The Office of the Public Liaison Presidential Transition Team, interviewed after the 2008 Presidential campaign and transition, over the phone 29 January 2009.
  26. McCully, Murray (2012) Minister for Foreign Affairs, New Zealand Government, Executive Wing Parliament Building Wellington 14 February.
  27. Mellman, Mark (2007), Kerry 2004 campaign advisor and senatorial advisor, interviewed in Washington DC, October.
  28. Morrison, Al (2012) DG, Department of Conservation, Wellington, 15 February
  29. Munro, Mike (2006), Former Chief Press Secretary for Prime Minister Helen Clark, Wellington, New Zealand, 28th November.
  30. NZ Government Staff 1 (2012) interviewed 13 February in Wellington
  31. NZ Government staff 2 (2012) interviewed 14 February in Wellington
  32. Pattillo, Anne (2009), Pattillo consulting, New Zealand, interviewed over the phone 4 February.
  33. Pattillo, Anne (2012), Pattillo Consulting, Interviewed in Wellington 17 February
  34. Reece, Nicholas (2012) Director of Strategy, Office of the Hon Julia Gillard MP, Prime Minister of Australia, Prime Minister's Office Parliament House Canberra, 21 February.

35. Rogers, Chad (2009), Former Senior Advisor to Nova Scotia Premier John Hamm, providing strategic planning and communications advice to the Premier and cabinet from 1999 to 2003, currently a Principle in Navigator Ltd, interviewed in Toronto Canada, 19 May.
36. Rosenberg, Simon (2007), New Democrat Network, interviewed in Washington DC, October.
37. Shewan, John (2012) Chairman Price Waterhouse Coopers 14 February Wellington New Zealand
38. Suggate, Diana (2012) Department of Internal Affairs New Zealand, over the phone 5 March
39. UK Government staff 1 (2010) interviewed Tuesday 23 March, 2010 London.
40. UK Government staff 2 (2010) interviewed Friday 26 March 2010, London
41. Utting, John (2008), UMR pollster Australia, interviewed in Bondi beach, Sydney, February.
42. Williams, Roger (2010) Head of Marketing and Digital, Scottish Government, interviewed Tuesday 30 March 2010, St Andrews House.

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## Further information

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