

**November 2022**

## **Energy Hardship Expert Panel – Letter from the Chair**

Tēnā koutou katoa

I hope you are all keeping safe and well as we head into the busy, and often stressful time of year. I'm mindful that the summer holiday period can, for some, mean extra expenses with Christmas and childcare and reduced work hours, putting further pressure on household bills.

Energy wellbeing should be a given, not a luxury. And with my four colleagues on the independent Energy Hardship Expert Panel, we are working hard to explore the possible solutions to alleviate energy hardship in our communities. We have made great progress since the Panel was established in September last year, and we remain on track to deliver our advice to government by June 2023.

A lot has happened in the Panel forum since I last provided an update through this e-newsletter.

In my last letter, I talked about the Panel's [outcomes framework](#), which outlines the key issues of energy hardship, our priority outcomes, approach and the foundation principles that underpin our mahi.

We also developed [five kete](#) (baskets) that allow us to focus our work on the five critical areas, and gather information for emerging solutions in each kete. I also shared a [roadmap](#) that plots our upcoming milestones and direction of travel. The roadmap has been updated since I last shared it in June, to better reflect the progress we've made to date.

We are now collaborating with others to deeply examine potential solutions within our five kete. We are listening to, and engaging with, diverse voices, which has been hugely helpful in guiding our thinking. Thank you to those of you who have been involved in these rich and thought-provoking kōrero.

Alongside this, we have commissioned research looking at overseas approaches, and where we need deeper, more detailed analysis for Aotearoa, such as investigating various forms of social retailing.

After this next tranche of work, we are intending to release our findings and solution ideas through a wider engagement programme early in 2023 to test and challenge these ideas and tease out further insights and other perspectives. I will share details of our engagement programme through this e-newsletter.

After reflecting on what we hear from you, we will prepare our final report to present to the government, in line with our terms of reference. I'm confident this collaborative, evidence-based mahi positions us well to develop recommendations and solutions for reducing energy hardship in Aotearoa.

I greatly value your feedback, so please don't hesitate to get in touch with me via the Expert Panel's Secretariat inbox, [energymarkets@mbie.govt.nz](mailto:energymarkets@mbie.govt.nz). And please do forward this letter to others in your network who you think might be interested in hearing about our mahi.

**Keri Brown**

Chair, Energy Hardship Expert Panel