



THE POLICY OBSERVATORY

May 2019 NEWSLETTER

WELCOME

Welcome to the May newsletter for The Policy Observatory, which includes an invitation to attend a pre-budget breakfast with the Wellington-based economic consultancy Berl. **Registration for this closes soon.** Email nadine.bowen@berl.co.nz or ph. 04 931 9200 to register.

LIVELY KAI AND KŌRERO: PRE-BUDGET BREAKFAST BRIEFING WITH BERL

Join The Policy Observatory as we host the team from Berl economic consultants for a breakfast presentation and discussion of the 2019 budget.

Where: AUT City Campus, Auckland

When: Monday 20th May, 7:00am-8.30am; presentations from 7.30.

Will the Wellbeing Budget be gazumped by a sombre economic outlook?

Just how bad is the global outlook and what does it mean for NZ? Is the Finance Minister's 'rainy day' surplus sufficient to see us through? What about those in New Zealand who are already struggling? Will wellbeing be parked again as more immediate challenges take priority? And what of the promised transformation to a sustainable, productive, inclusive economy?

News of New Zealand's proposed Wellbeing Budget took the Davos World Economic Forum by storm earlier this year. Members of the political and financial glitterati were enthusiastic. But back home in Aotearoa, as the Minister of Finance prepares to unveil his Wellbeing Budget, the domestic populace shows noticeably less excitement. Will Budget Day fulfil the promise of a new way of assessing economic success?

This event is free of charge but numbers are strictly limited; registration is essential. RSVP to Nadine Bowen by Friday 10 May 2019 nadine.bowen@berl.co.nz or ph. 04 931 9200.



Making sense of the numbers

OBITUARY

Brian Easton has written a warm tribute to Policy Observatory founder Ian Shirley, who died earlier this year. You can read it here: <https://thepolicyobservatory.aut.ac.nz/news/obituary-ian-francis-shirley>

We also have a link to this obituary from the Aotearoa New Zealand Association of Social Workers: <https://anzasw.nz/remembering-professor-ian-shirley/>

From 2020, Massey University will award its top Bachelor of Social Work or Bachelor of Arts (Social Policy) graduate the Ian Shirley Award, established in recognition of Ian's contribution in establishing the discipline of social policy at Massey University and the importance of social policy in social work education.

LOCAL GOVERNMENT WRAP-UP

The Policy Observatory has hosted a number of papers on aspects of local government in New Zealand, and these have now been brought together on one project page:

<https://thepolicyobservatory.aut.ac.nz/publications/local-government-research>

Topics range from evaluating the Auckland Council amalgamation, to questioning the balance between central and local government. The page includes longer reports and shorter Briefing Papers.

A wrap-up of recent pieces was featured in the April edition of *Local Government Magazine*: <https://localgovernmentmag.co.nz/lg-magazine/governance-lg/a-question-of-balance/>

BRIEFING PAPERS

The [Briefing Papers website](#) hosts short policy-related papers. You can subscribe to new posts using an RSS feed, or have them sent to your mailbox.

Dumbing down polytechnics. By David Cooke.

Reforms of vocational education include the announcement of a New Zealand-wide Institute of Skills and Technology to replace existing polytechnics. The Minister's and the Tertiary Education Commission's statements about the future of the sector worry David Cooke. He writes here about

the narrow focus of their vision, which excludes concepts of the public good or public service. While vocational education should be informed by industry, it should not be instructed by it.

<https://briefingpapers.co.nz/dumbing-down-polytechnics>

PODCASTS

The Policy Observatory has a podcast: *The Policy Fix*. The episodes are 15-20 minute interviews with policy experts on their work. We focus on the problems with existing policy, why they matter, and what can be done to fix them. Our first series focused on inequality, and our second focuses on water policy. Check out our podcasts on our website, where you will also find links on how to subscribe.

<https://thepolicyobservatory.aut.ac.nz/thepolicyfix>

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