



T: 0300 244 4000

E: scottish.ministers@gov.scot

Douglas Hamilton

Chair of the Poverty and Inequality Commission

Douglas.Hamilton@povertyinequality.scot

Dear Douglas,

21 September 2017

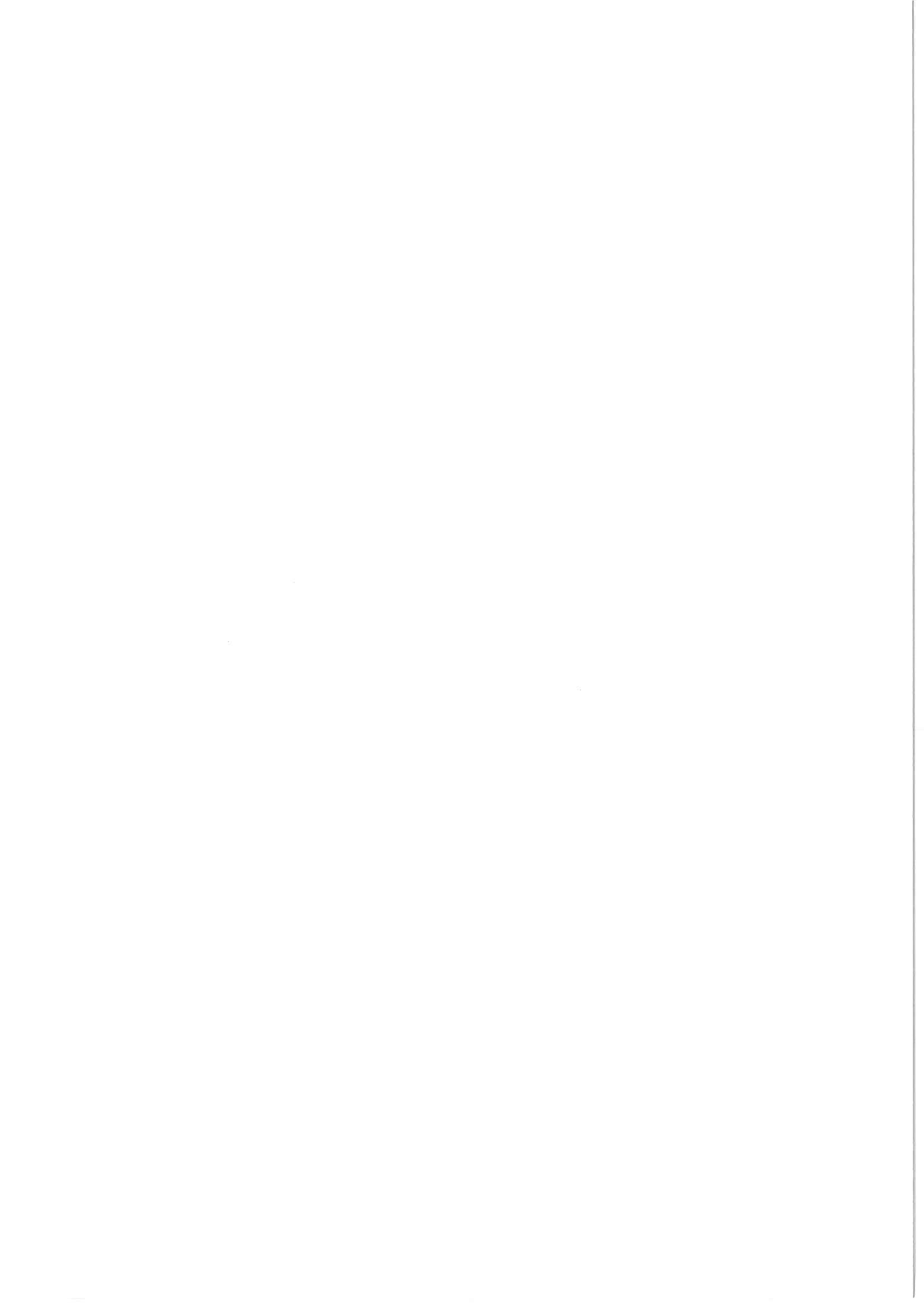
In its June 2017 position paper, the Scottish Government committed to write to you, formally, requesting advice from the Commission on the Child Poverty Delivery Plan, which the Child Poverty (Scotland) Bill currently requires me to publish by April 2018. Therefore, I would like the Commission to provide me with advice on the following issues.

First, tackling child poverty is a cross-portfolio challenge – I would expect every area of government to bring forward strong proposals for our Delivery Plan. With this in mind, I would like the Commission to consider where the Scottish Government could most usefully focus its efforts over the period to 2030. Going forward, the Commission may wish to consider, within portfolios, whether the Scottish Government is using its resources fully and efficiently so as to make a practical difference to alleviating poverty and inequality and if there are duplications or gaps in approaches.

As you know, the Programme for Government (PfG) 2017-18 announced our intention to establish a Tackling Child Poverty Fund, worth £50 million over the period of the first Delivery Plan (to March 2022). PfG also said that we would ask the Commission for its views on where this funding can have the biggest impact at national and local level to make progress towards the 2030 targets set out in the Bill. It would therefore be helpful for the Commission to build this request, and so provide initial thoughts on potential areas or themes for investment, into its advice on the Delivery Plan.

The specific asks related to the Delivery Plan lead on to a second area of focus, namely which significant policy actions over the long-term should government be considering to tackle poverty and inequality more broadly? Specifically, here, I would like the Commission to provide advice on how the system can best be designed in a way that reduces poverty and inequality. For example, what is the potential impact and suitability of using powers to top up benefits, for example child benefit, to alleviate poverty? Are there other approaches we should be considering? Whilst I appreciate that this is a longer-term piece of work, any early thoughts that the Commission has on this would of course be very helpful in preparing for the publication of the first Delivery Plan.






In all that the Commission does, and in providing advice to Scottish Ministers, you will of course wish to take cognisance of the wider context and the extent to which current policies or programmes at other levels of government – UK or Local Authority – contribute to, or mitigate against, our shared ambition to tackle poverty and inequalities in Scotland.

Please note that I will be copying this request to the Convener of the Social Security Committee for information and that items of correspondence to the Committee are published, as a matter of course, on the Scottish Parliament website.

Finally, thank you for all your work to date in setting up the Poverty and Inequality Commission. I realise what a significant task this has been and I am very pleased with progress to date.

Yours sincerely


ANGELA CONSTANCE

