

Ninth Meeting of the Poverty and Inequality Commission

**Thursday 23 August 2018
10.30am – 13.30pm
COSLA, Edinburgh**

Commission Attendees

Douglas Hamilton, Chair
Naomi Eisenstadt, Deputy Chair
David Eiser
Katie Schmuecker
Sally Witcher

Apologies: Hugh Foy, Caroline Kennedy, Kaliani Lyle

Secretariat Attendees

Katherine Hudson, Secretariat Manager
Katherine Myant, Analytical Manager

1. Welcome and apologies

Apologies were given for Hugh Foy, Caroline Kennedy and Kaliani Lyle. Douglas welcomed Katherine Myant who has joined the Commission secretariat as Analytical Manager.

2. Advocacy

a. Priority issues and feedback from the public meeting

Douglas Hamilton introduced a paper on priority issues for the Commission's advocacy work. He noted that it had been developed using feedback from the Commission's round table meetings, feedback from the Commission's public meeting and evidence from the review carried out by Professor John McKendrick of the views and experiences of people with lived experience of poverty and inequality. The paper set out immediate priorities for the current Commission to work on along with a framework of potential priorities for the future statutory Commission. This was structured around the themes of wealth inequalities, household income and household expenditure. Douglas noted that the Commission would invite feedback from stakeholders on the priorities and that the intention was that there would be a live and ongoing dialogue, allowing priorities to be added to or amended over time.

The Commission agreed to focus on housing wealth inequalities and transport as its priority issues over the next year. It was agreed that scoping papers on these issues would be brought to the next Commission meeting. The Commission identified in-

work poverty as a priority in relation to household income, but did not agree a specific issue to focus on. It was noted there was already a lot of work being carried out by other organisations and groups around issues such as the roll out of Universal Credit and in-work poverty and that the Commission would have a keen focus on the development of the income supplement as part of its scrutiny role. It was agreed that the Commission would invite feedback from stakeholders on where the Commission can add most value and revisit this early next year.

The Commission agreed that the secretariat would circulate a priorities paper to stakeholders that would set out the priorities alongside the other work the Commission is doing on scrutiny and advice to Scottish Government.

The Commission also discussed the Commission's public meeting that took place in June. It was agreed that the secretariat would ask for feedback from attendees when the priorities paper was sent out.

b. Inclusive Growth proposal

David Eiser introduced the Inclusive Growth proposal which had been developed by a sub-group of Commissioners following a discussion about poverty and inequality and economic development at the last Commission meeting. The paper set out a specification for research to examine what difference the adoption of 'inclusive growth' is making to policy design and delivery in Scotland; and to draw lessons from other countries about how 'inclusive growth' can be operationalised in practice. The research will be commissioned from an external organisation.

The Commission noted that the research specification did not allow for the views of people with lived experience of poverty and inequality to be included, primarily because the research questions were framed around the impact of 'inclusive growth' on policy design and therefore offered limited opportunities for meaningful participation. It was agreed that the Commission should consider whether complementary work was required around what 'inclusive growth' means and whether it is being achieved from the perspective of those with lived experience of poverty and inequality. The Commission agreed that, subject to minor amendments identified by the Commission, the secretariat should go ahead and begin the commissioning process for the research.

3. Scrutiny

a. Scrutiny function

Katherine Myant introduced a paper which outlined proposals for the Commission's scrutiny work over the next year. This focused on four areas:

- Progress on the recommendations from the reports of Naomi Eisenstadt, the First Minister's Independent Advisor on Poverty and Inequality
- The Scottish Budget
- Monitoring progress on *Every Child, Every Chance*, the Child Poverty Delivery Plan
- Statistics on poverty and inequality in Scotland

The paper proposed that these be treated as four separate projects, resulting in four published reports, rather than the Commission publishing one overall scrutiny report a year. This will result in a more continuous programme of scrutiny throughout the year. Further work will be undertaken to develop the detail of the scrutiny approach.

The Commission agreed the proposed framework for scrutiny and noted that it would be important to include qualitative data from people with lived experience along with the statistical data.

b. UN rapporteur on Human Rights and Extreme Poverty

Katherine Hudson introduced a paper on the proposed visit to the UK by the UN Special Rapporteur on Human Rights and Extreme Poverty and the call for submissions to the Special Rapporteur ahead of the visit. The Commission agreed that the secretariat should draft a submission that covered:

- The Commission's role
- The levers that the Scottish Government has to tackle poverty in the context of Devolution
- The principles set out in the Commission's advice on the Child Poverty Delivery Plan
- The importance of involving people with lived experience in the Special Rapporteur's visit and suggested stakeholders that the Special Rapporteur should engage with in order access people with lived experience.

The submission will be circulated to Commissioners for comment.

4. Advice

a. Advice on school holidays

Douglas Hamilton introduced a paper setting out the Commission's work and initial conclusions on what could be done to meet the needs of families over the school holidays. This work had been led by a sub-group of Commissioners and was undertaken in response to a request from the Scottish Government for the Commission to consider the role of local authorities, social enterprise and the third sector in providing after school and holiday care and responding to school holiday food insecurity, and how commitments on these issues could best be delivered to complement each other. Douglas set out that the next step would be to set up a round table discussion with key stakeholders and parents or carers to test the assumptions and conclusions set out in the paper.

The Commission agreed that the paper identified the right issues but asked that more specific recommendations be developed that could be tested at the round table discussion. The Commission also recommended that additional round table discussions be held with parents or carers with lived experience of these issues.

5. Other issues

a. Meetings with Scottish Government Ministers

Douglas Hamilton gave the Commissioners an update on recent meetings with the Cabinet Secretary for Communities and Local Government, the Cabinet Secretary for Social Security and Older People and the Minister for Local Government, Housing and Planning.

b. Communications support

The Commission agreed to extend the contract with 3x1 to provide communications support until end June 2019.

c. Update on recruitment to statutory Poverty and Inequality Commission

The Commission noted a written update provided by the Scottish Government on recruitment to the statutory Poverty and Inequality Commission which indicated that the recruitment of the Chair would be likely to commence in September. Commissioners agreed to share the advert through their networks once it was published.

6. Any other business

The Commission briefly discussed opportunities to engage with Challenge Poverty Week and it was agreed that the secretariat would explore this further. Commissioners shared details of relevant meetings and events they had attended or were due to attend.

Date of the next meeting will be 25 October 2018.