



Poverty and Inequality Commission Priorities and Work Plan

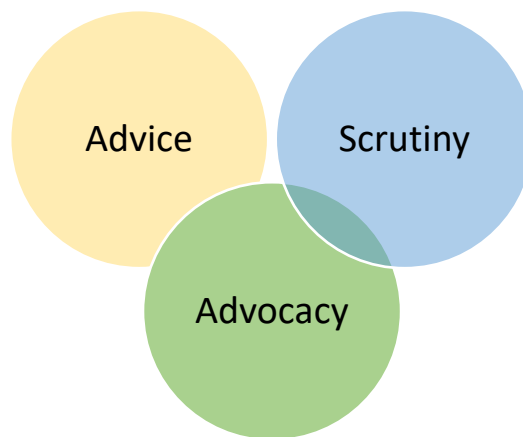
Introduction

The Poverty and Inequality Commission was set up to:

- provide advice to Scottish Ministers (**advice**)
- make sure Scottish Ministers are doing things to reduce poverty and inequality and see whether it is working (**scrutiny**)
- identify other things that can be done to reduce poverty and inequality and work with Scottish Government, businesses and voluntary organisations on these things (**advocacy**)

The Commission's Work Plan 2018-2019

The Commission's work plan describes the work that the Commission will do up until the end of June 2019. It covers the three things the Commission was set up to do: *advice*, *scrutiny* and *advocacy*.



Advice

Scottish Ministers can ask the Commission for advice on issues about poverty and inequality. At the moment the Commission is working on advice for the Scottish Government on food, childcare and activities during the school holidays. We will publish all the Commission's advice on the Commission's website.

Scrutiny

The Commission will publish reports looking what difference the work that the Scottish Government is doing is making to poverty and inequality in Scotland. This will include looking at how the Scottish Government is spending its money through the Scottish Budget and what the Scottish Government is doing to reduce child poverty in Scotland.

Advocacy

The Commission has worked with lots of people with an interest in poverty and inequality to decide what the most important things are for the Commission to look at it for this part of our work plan. We asked people about issues relating to wealth, household income and household spending.

The Commission agreed that whatever priorities were identified we would look at how people's experiences and needs might be different depending on factors such as age, gender, disability, ethnicity and where they live.

We had meetings with people who know about these issues, including people with lived experience of poverty and inequality and people who have experience of these issues because of the work that they do. We also asked a researcher to look at reports and research from the last ten years which asked people with lived experience of poverty and inequality about their experiences and ideas and to tell us what the main things were that they said. You can find out more about what people told us and our research on our website.

From this work we identified **two priorities** for the Commission's work up until the end of June 2019: **housing wealth inequalities** and **transport**.

Housing wealth inequalities



Housing wealth is the wealth that you have if you own, or own part of, the house or flat that you live in. It also includes the wealth that people have if they own more than one house or flat. Housing wealth inequalities is about the gap between those who have the most housing wealth and those who have the least, or none at all. In Scotland the richest 10% of households have nearly eight times as much housing wealth as the bottom 50% of households.

Housing wealth inequalities matter because they can make private rents more expensive and stop people who would like to buy their own home from being able to afford it. When people inherit housing wealth it can also increase the gap between those who have wealth and those who do not.

The Commission will do work to understand more about housing wealth inequalities in Scotland and what could be done to reduce the inequality.

Transport



Transport - including buses, trains, or cars – can be expensive and sometimes it is not regular enough, does not go to the places that people need to go, or is not accessible to disabled people. People need transport to be able to do things like get to work, school or college, go shopping, visit friends or do activities. The Commission will look at what could be done to reduce costs and improve availability and accessibility of transport for people on low incomes.

Other work



In-work poverty was also talked about a lot in the Commission’s meetings. In-work poverty is where people are working but not earning enough money to take them out of poverty. This can be because of low pay, not getting enough hours of work or getting different hours of work each week. There are already lots of organisations who are doing work about in-work poverty **so the Commission would welcome your ideas on what it would be most useful for the Commission to do on in-work poverty.**



The Commission is also doing some research looking at ‘**inclusive growth**’. ‘Inclusive growth’ is where businesses grow and new businesses are set up in a way that allows people to share more fairly in the money and opportunities that are created. The Scottish Government wants to have inclusive growth in Scotland. The research will look at what difference this is making in Scotland and whether we can learn from other countries about what works.

Poverty and Inequality Commission Future Priorities

As well as housing wealth and transport people told us about other things that they thought were important. We can't do work on them all this year but these are things that the Poverty and Inequality Commission may look at in the future:

Wealth Inequalities	Rural wealth inequalities Savings Inheritance Profit sharing
Household Income	Training and progression in work Information and advice Low pay and low hours Income adequacy/ Minimum Income Standard New Scottish social security powers
Household expenditure	Childcare Digital access – to services online Role of public services (such as leisure centres or libraries) in reducing costs Affordable credit
Other Issues	Stigma Mental Health Income supplement Universal Basic Income

Next steps

The Commission would like to hear what you think about its priorities. **We would like to hear whether you agree with our priorities, whether there are important areas that we have missed or priorities that we should look at before others.**

Please send your feedback to info@povertyinequality.scot

For more information about the Commission's work visit our website
www.povertyinequality.scot