

Seventh Meeting of the Poverty and Inequality Commission

Thursday, 19th April 2018

10.30am – 13.30pm

COSLA, Edinburgh

Commission Attendees

Douglas Hamilton, Chair

Kaliani Lyle, Deputy Chair

Naomi Eisenstadt, Deputy Chair

David Eiser

Katie Schmuecker

Sally Witcher

Secretariat Attendees

Katherine Hudson, Secretariat Manager

Michele Barr, Secretariat Administrator

COSLA Attendees (for item 3)

Councillor Elena Whitham, COSLA Community Wellbeing Spokesperson

Robert McGregor, COSLA

Scottish Government Attendees (for item 4)

Kathryn Chisholm, Policy Manager, Social Justice Strategy Unit

Andrew Fraser, Policy Officer, Social Justice Strategy Unit

Apologies: Hugh Foy, Caroline Kennedy

1. Welcome and apologies

Apologies were given for Hugh Foy and Caroline Kennedy. Douglas gave an update on the Commission budget and the secretariat arrangements. The secretariat is in the process of recruiting a part-time analyst.

2. *Every Child Every Chance* - Child Poverty Delivery Plan

The Commission discussed the Scottish Government's Child Poverty Delivery Plan. Commissioners were pleased that the Delivery Plan reflects the structure and key drivers set out by the Commission and noted that there is new action in the plan which could potentially have a significant impact on child poverty (e.g. new income supplement and intensive employment support).

Other aspects of the Delivery Plan that the Commission welcomed included:

- The priority groups identified throughout the Plan
- The cross-government approach, and links with other action plans and strategies
- The attempt to trace through from policy action to impact on the targets and the commitment to looking at what data is needed to measure impact.

The Commission also identified a number of areas where they considered the Delivery Plan could be strengthened, including:

- more clarity about the collective impact of the action
- clarity about which actions were new and which were existing policies
- a clearer indication about how different actions could be linked to delivery greater impact
- further action on housing, quality in early learning and childcare, the longer term drivers of poverty and creating and improving jobs

Douglas Hamilton will share the Commission's feedback with the Cabinet Secretary for Communities Social Security and Equalities at their next meeting on 24 April.

The Commission discussed the request from the Cabinet Secretary for further advice in relation to the Child Poverty Delivery Plan. The Commission agreed that it would be helpful to have a more specific request and also to have a request for advice that covers other aspects of the Commission's remit, beyond child poverty. Douglas Hamilton will raise this at his meeting with the Cabinet Secretary.

3. Discussion with Councillor Elena Whitham, COSLA Community Wellbeing Spokesperson

Councillor Whitham gave an overview of the role local government could play in dealing with poverty and inequality and examples of some of the actions that are already being taken to tackle these issues. The Commission and Cllr Whitham discussed some of the levers that can be used by local government, such as procurement policies, City Region Deals and economic development policies. It was agreed that Commission and COSLA will keep in contact as the Commission develops its work plan.

4. Plans for the Statutory Poverty and Inequality Commission

Kathryn Chisholm and Andrew Fraser from Scottish Government gave an outline of the plans for the new Statutory Commission which commences July 2019. The Commission discussed the proposals and expressed particular concern that the public appointments process should be more accessible and that people with lived experience of poverty should be supported to apply.

It was agreed that the current Commission will prepare a legacy paper for the statutory Commission and that the Commission will invite the Chair of the statutory Commission to attend Commission meetings once appointed.

5. Future work

The Commission discussed plans to develop its work plan. It was agreed that, as well as developing a work plan for the current Commission, this work should identify priorities that can inform the statutory Commission once it is in place. Over the next few months the Commission will carry out a range of engagement activities in order

to identify priorities. These will include a number of roundtable meetings, the Commission's annual meeting, and a consultation. Alongside this work the Commission agreed to explore the potential for a piece of work looking at poverty and inequality and economic development.

It was noted that the Commission's first annual meeting will take place on 21 June. The purpose of the meeting is to enable the Commission to raise awareness of the Commission's work and engage with a wide range of people on priorities for future work. Speakers will include the Poverty Truth Commission, the Resolution Foundation, and Jack Monroe (author of *A Girl Called Jack*).

6. Commissioner updates

Commissioners provided feedback on meetings and events attended.

7. AOB

Date of the next meeting will be 21 June at COSLA, Edinburgh. This will be the Annual Public Meeting.