

Meeting of the Poverty and Inequality Commission

Thursday 31 October 2019

10:00am – 2:00pm

Queens Cross Housing Association, Glasgow

Commission Attendees

Bill Scott, Chair

Commissioners

Shona Stephen

Professor Morag Treanor

Lindsay Graham

Linda Bamford

Douglas White

Yvonne Blake

Alex Cobham

Scottish Government

Susan Gilroy, Social Justice Strategy Unit, Scottish Government

Observing Meeting

Gillian McMahon, Mary's Meals

Apologies

Emma Congreve

Secretariat Attendees

Katherine Hudson, Secretariat Manager

Katherine Myant, Analytical Manager

Michele Barr, Secretariat/Administrator

1. Welcome and apologies

Bill Scott welcomed everyone to the meeting. Apologies were given for Emma Congreve. Bill Scott explained that Gillian McMahon from Mary's Meals would be joining and observing the meeting later.

2. Poverty and Inequality Commission Framework Document

Susan Gilroy from the Scottish Government gave an update to the Commissioners on the Framework Document, which sets out the respective roles and responsibilities of the Commission, the Scottish Ministers and Sponsor team. The Commission had the

opportunity to ask questions and asked that Data Protection be reflected in the document once details clarified by Scottish Government and the Commission. The Framework Document will be sent to the Cabinet Secretary for Communities and Government for approval and then published on the Poverty and Inequality and Scottish Government websites.

3. Local Child Poverty Action Reports

Katherine Myant gave an update on the scrutiny of the local child poverty action reports and provided the Commission with a draft report. Commissioners gave feedback on the report and suggested amendments. A final report will be circulated around the Commission. The report will be published at the end of November and shared with Scottish Government, COSLA and national partners group for information.

4. Principles

Katherine Hudson introduced a draft set of Principles which sets out what is important to the Commission and how it wants to work. These had been subject to previous discussions by the Commission. The Commissioners provided amendments and agreed the Principles should be published on the Commission website. A final set of principles will be circulated to the Commission. The Commission also agreed that the section on 'What We Do' on the Commission's website should make reference to the Scottish Government's National Performance Framework.

5. Work Plan and Priorities

Year 1 Exploratory Work

Katherine Hudson gave an overview of the Commission's Work Plan and Priorities paper. This paper sets out the priorities identified by the Commission and how the Commission will approach its work plan. The Commissioners were content with the approach and agreed some short-term areas of action that could be incorporated into this year's work plan.

A meeting will be arranged for Bill Scott and the Chair of the Social Security Committee to discuss the inquiry into benefit take-up which the Scottish Parliament Social Security Committee has undertaken and how future work by the Commission on benefit take-up can best fit with this.

The Commission agreed to hold exploratory sessions on tax and benefits, in-work poverty, the well-being economy and children's rights, and to extend the timings of the regular Commission meetings and have extra meetings at the end of January and March. Commission members volunteered to introduce and chair discussions at particular sessions at future meetings.

The Commission agreed to carry out a literature/evidence review on intersectional inequalities as part of its work. This will look at what is known about intersectional inequalities in Scotland, and what data and evidence is available in Scotland to support the Commission in taking an intersectional approach to poverty and inequality. The secretariat will further develop the specification for this work and proceed with commissioning the review. Alex Cobham and Morag Treanor agreed to support this work.

Scrutiny Work

Katherine Myant gave an overview of the potential scrutiny work the Commission could undertake until autumn 2020. The Commissioners agreed that the Commission should produce an Annual Scrutiny report, with the first report in autumn 2020. Bill Scott and Morag Treanor will lead on this work for the Commission.

Other Opportunities

The Commission agreed to develop guidance on how best to involve people with direct lived experience of poverty. This piece of research should be co-produced with people with lived experience and will be put out to tender. The Commission agreed that the specification should require that people with lived experience should be paid for their input and that the work should include a focus on building capacity. The guidance will be presented to the Commission by the end of May 2020.

6. Dignity and Respect in Public Services Report

Katherine Myant gave an overview to the Commission of the Dignity and Respect in Public Services report which was carried out by the previous Commission. The Commission agreed that the work would be published on the Commission website as a blog post and shared with Scottish Government.

7. Communication Guidelines

Katherine Hudson presented the draft communication guidelines for the Commission. The guidelines were agreed by the Commission subject to some minor amendments. The secretariat will check pre-election guidance for public bodies with Scottish Government and share this with the Commissioners.

8. Risk Register and finance update

The Risk Register paper and update on the budget were discussed by the Commission. The secretariat will provide the Commission with a paper at each meeting detailing the latest risk assessment and the latest finance information.

9. Letter from Minister for Local Government, Housing and Planning in response to the Commission's report on Housing Wealth Inequality

The Commissioners discussed the letter from the Minister. It was considered that there could be more focus on the wider role of housing in tackling poverty.

10. Any other business

- The next meeting will be on the 19 December in Edinburgh.
- Members of the Commission will meet with Young Scot to speak about the work they are doing around the Young Scot Card.