

Chair of the Poverty and Inequality Commission
Bill Scott



E: William.scott@povertyinequality.scot

Benny Higgins
Chair, Advisory Group on Economic Recovery

By email

29 May 2020

Dear Benny,

Thank you for your letter dated 20th May 2020 requesting our knowledge and insights to inform the recommendations of the Advisory Group on Economic Recovery. The actions that Scotland takes now to emerge from lockdown and recover the economy will have a fundamental impact on poverty and inequality in the future. Unless addressing poverty and inequality is at the heart of the recovery there is a strong likelihood that inequalities will be exacerbated by the way the economy is rebuilt.

I have worked with the other eight members of the Poverty and Inequality Commission to provide a response to the questions you have posed. This response is attached.

The timescale for providing our thoughts was understandably tight. This has meant we have not had time to engage more widely to inform our response. One of the key principles to which we work is to aim to amplify the voices of those who are not often heard, for example those with direct lived experience of poverty. We have unfortunately not been able to do this on this occasion. You will see from our response that this is a key consideration for us and we are concerned that lived experience is not playing an integral role in developing the recommendations of the Advisory Group. I note from your letter that the Advisory Group has targeted programmes of engagement with businesses and unions. I would urge you to widen this out to include the third sector, communities and people with lived experience of poverty.

I wish you luck in developing recommendations for the Scottish Government. Now is the time to be bold, innovative and ambitious. Wellbeing and an inclusive economy need to be a core part of the approach to recovery. Only then can we truly hope to build back better and realise the Scottish Government's ambition of a fairer, greener and more inclusive economy.

Finally, I confirm that we are happy for this response to be published under the name of the Poverty and Inequality Commission. We also intend to publish on our website.

Bill Scott.

Bill Scott
Chair of Poverty and Inequality Commission