



## **Meeting of the Poverty and Inequality Commission**

**Thursday 23 April 2020**

**10am – 12pm**

**Virtual Meeting by Zoom video communications**

### **Commission Attendees**

Bill Scott, Chair

### **Commissioners**

Shona Stephen

Professor Morag Treanor

Yvonne Blake

Linda Bamford

Katie Schmuecker

Alex Cobham

Douglas White

Lindsay Graham

### **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.

## **2. Update from Covid-19 Response Working Group**

Bill Scott updated the Commissioners on the progress of the working group. The working group had collated information from community organisations about the challenges they were facing in emergency food provision during the crisis. This was written up into a briefing and sent to the Cabinet Secretary for Communities and Local Government. It was also published on the Commission's website. The Commission discussed the Cabinet Secretary's letter of response to the briefing, which included an invite for a regular meeting to discuss food insecurity.

The working group plan to follow-up on their food insecurity briefing and are also interested in considering how the Scottish Welfare Fund is working in practice and the provision of free school meals.

### **3. Update on scrutiny of Tackling Child Poverty Delivery Plan**

Katherine Hudson updated the Commissioners on the progress of the Scottish Government Child Poverty Delivery Plan. The Commission is waiting for progress updates from the Scottish Government in order to carry out its scrutiny. Scottish Ministers are considering whether to delay publication until later in the year.

### **4. Strategic Plan**

Katherine Hudson introduced a paper on the suggested approach for the Commissions strategic plan for the next few months. The Commission will look at the longer term impacts of the Covid-19 crisis in relation to child poverty (where it has statutory duties) and wider poverty and inequality. The Commission agreed to the proposal and the themes proposed of Work and Earnings, Social Security, Housing Costs and Costs of living. Commissioners agreed to the suggested online roundtable inviting leads from other organisations. Morag Treanor asked that the invite should be extended to universities and Lindsay Graham asked the Commissioners to think about how the Commission could involve people with lived experience and young people.

The Commission secretariat have been in contact with the UK Social Mobility Commission to explore joint working with the Commission. Commissioners agreed to explore joint working. The secretariat will set up a meeting with Bill Scott and the Chair of the Social Mobility Commission. The secretariat will check if there are any precedents of Commissions working together.

### **5. Australian COVID19 Management & Operational Plan for People with Disability**

Alex Cobham introduced to the Commissioner the Australian governments paper on COVID19 Management & Operational Plan for People with Disabilities. The Commissioners agreed this issue was already being addressed in other ways by Scottish Government and there would not be a role for the Commission, but that the Commission would make sure that it involved Disabled People's Organisations in gathering evidence for the Commission's work.

### **6. AOB**

- The next Commission meeting will be on the 21 May
- Douglas White to circulate information on Digital Inclusion programme to Commissioners