

SOCIAL RENEWAL – ADDRESSING LOW INCOME POLICY CIRCLE TERMS OF REFERENCE

Background

On 9 June 2020, the Cabinet Secretary for Communities and Local Government and the Cabinet Secretary for Social Security and Older People announced the creation of a Social Renewal Advisory Board.

The Board aims to build on the shifts in policy and practice seen as a result of working across portfolios and in partnership with frontline service deliverers in local government, the third sector and communities throughout the pandemic and to bank the policy and practice shifts seen in the response to COVID-19. Utilising current practice and knowledge, members will do so with an emphasis on delivering equality and social justice. The Board will focus on reducing poverty and disadvantage, embedding a human-rights based approach and advancing equality.

A series of ‘policy circles’ will sit under the board and will each be tasked to work at pace on recommendations and solutions. The circles are as follows:

- Age and Disability
- Financial Security
- Food
- Addressing low income
- Community-led and place based renewal
- Housing System
- Third Sector
- Communities and Volunteering
- Cross-Cutting Delivery

Remit

Addressing Low Income Policy Circle members are tasked with developing proposals and recommendations to tackle and reduce levels of poverty in Scotland for consideration by the Social Renewal Advisory Board and following this by Scottish Ministers.

It is for members to identify the specific areas of focus within this broad remit, aligning with other policy circles and the principles outlined at Annex A.

The group should consider:

- What elements of the pre-Covid approach need to be prioritised and strengthened to ‘build forward’ better in a way that can lift people out of poverty?
- What practice, developed through the crisis response, needs to be preserved and embedded moving forward?
- What are the gaps in this support and what additional interventions are required?

An outline representing how the Circle will interact with the board and advisory members is set out at Annex B.

Anticipated outputs

Group outputs are set across two key stages:

- Stage 1 – development of initial recommendations to influence the Scottish Government’s Programme for Government for the coming year. These recommendations should be provided to the board by the end of the first week in August and should seek to identify immediate opportunities to address low income;
- Stage 2 - recommendations to influence longer term action, for example to influence thinking around the measures needed for the second Tackling Child Poverty Delivery Plan [2022-26] or Fairer Scotland Action Plan for the next Parliamentary term. These are to be provided to the Board for consideration by mid-November.

A final report from the Social Renewal Advisory Board will be published or follow shortly after this work completes, capturing the range of recommendations made.

Membership and role of members

The Addressing Low Income Circle will be chaired by Bill Scot, chair of the Poverty and Inequality Commission. The circle will comprise of members of the Poverty and Inequality Commission who will be joined by members of the Social Renewal Advisory Board, to provide input and ensure effective working across all circles, and the co-chair of the Scottish Leaders Forum action group on child poverty, to enable effective working with this cross sectoral working group. These individuals will be full members of the group, and therefore have input to endorse, or otherwise, specific recommendations. If supplementary members disagree with key recommendations, this should be reflected appropriately within any reports to the Board.

Representatives will join meetings from COSLA, Public Health Scotland and the Scottish Government in an advisory capacity only to support the development of thinking and recommendations. Dependent on staff availability and the focus of discussion advisory members may be subject to change and it is not expected that the same individual will attend each meeting. However, attendees will ensure that they liaise with their colleagues prior to, and after, each meeting to ensure consistency of advice and support.

Members joining in an advisory capacity are unable to endorse or otherwise ask for the non-inclusion of specific recommendations, however can provide advice and input to help the shaping of recommendations.

Other members could also be co-opted on as the circle deems appropriate.

Group membership is outlined at Annex C.

Alignment with other Circles

In developing recommendations for action it is clear that there will be overlap in interests between this group and other circles established. Social Renewal Advisory Board members, the secretariat and Scottish Government advisory officials will work to ensure coordination.

Schedule of meetings

The group will meet twice prior to making initial recommendations to the Social Renewal Advisory Board on emerging policy proposals for Programme for Government – these will likely be finalised through correspondence owing to time constraints. It is anticipated that the group members, including those in an advisory capacity will attend as many meetings as possible, and will as necessary agree recommendations through correspondence.

Planned meetings of the Addressing Low Income Circle are:

- Thursday 9th July: meeting one (initial recommendations)
- Thursday 23rd July: meeting two (initial recommendations)
- Thursday 6th August: meeting three (longer term recommendations)

It is anticipated that following initial recommendations the circle will move to monthly meetings.

The Circle will be drawn to a close in November.

Information Sharing

Data or information shared between circle members and advisory officials will be treated as confidential and not shared further unless otherwise agreed.

If information held is subject to Freedom of Information request this should be notified to the Poverty and Inequality Commission secretariat for awareness.

The Poverty and Inequality Commission will publish minutes and a final report, detailing recommendations, as per current arrangements.

July 2020

The following principles have been agreed by the Social Renewal Advisory Board and should be considered in the development of proposals and recommendations.

The Social Renewal programme will be:

- **underpinned by a clearly articulated vision** - we are ambitious about this work delivering a clearly set out policy platform for a more equal, prosperous and socially-just Scotland for the post-COVID period. We will focus on making progress across the outcomes in the National Performance Framework, with a particular focus on equality, social justice and human rights
- **participative, and informed by a wide range of stakeholders, including people with lived experience** – we are in a good position to draw on intelligence and expertise from across sectors and communities. Our work will be strongly informed by people with lived experience and by other perspectives that can often be overlooked. All policies must build on the experience and expertise of people, including those with protected characteristics
- **informed by data and evidence** – we will demonstrate, across the Scottish Government's response to social renewal, a deep understanding of unequal impacts, based on a clear evidence base. We will hold on to what we already know about the drivers of poverty and inequality in shaping our response to socio-economic insecurity
- **guided by the place principle** – we will ensure that the actions we take are those that are the most relevant for each place – that what is done in a place is for the benefit of all the people in that place. This must take into account inequalities within places and recognise that outcomes and solutions may be variable or different across Scotland. Our measure of success will be the combined impact of working collaboratively across policy silos and organisational boundaries towards a common purpose
- **mindful of the financial position** – we will ensure that new policy and practice proposals reflect the financial realities of our times and offer savings wherever possible, reducing expenditure while building on Christie Commission principles, notably preventative approaches
- **sustainable over the long-term** – we will ensure that policy and practice proposals are long-term solutions that consider the root causes of inequality, rather than 'quick fixes'. We will also look to ensure that public-spending programmes across government become more orientated around furthering equality, delivering social justice and safeguarding rights
- **with equality and human rights embedded throughout**, so that across the work of the Board and each of the policy circles, there is a structured approach to considering how issues and proposed response will impact differently for those who share one or more protected characteristics. This includes age, disability, gender and race but we also need to be cognisant of the impact of intersectionality and take this into account. There should also be consideration of how human rights are impacted and how they can be progressively realised, through the work of the Board and circle

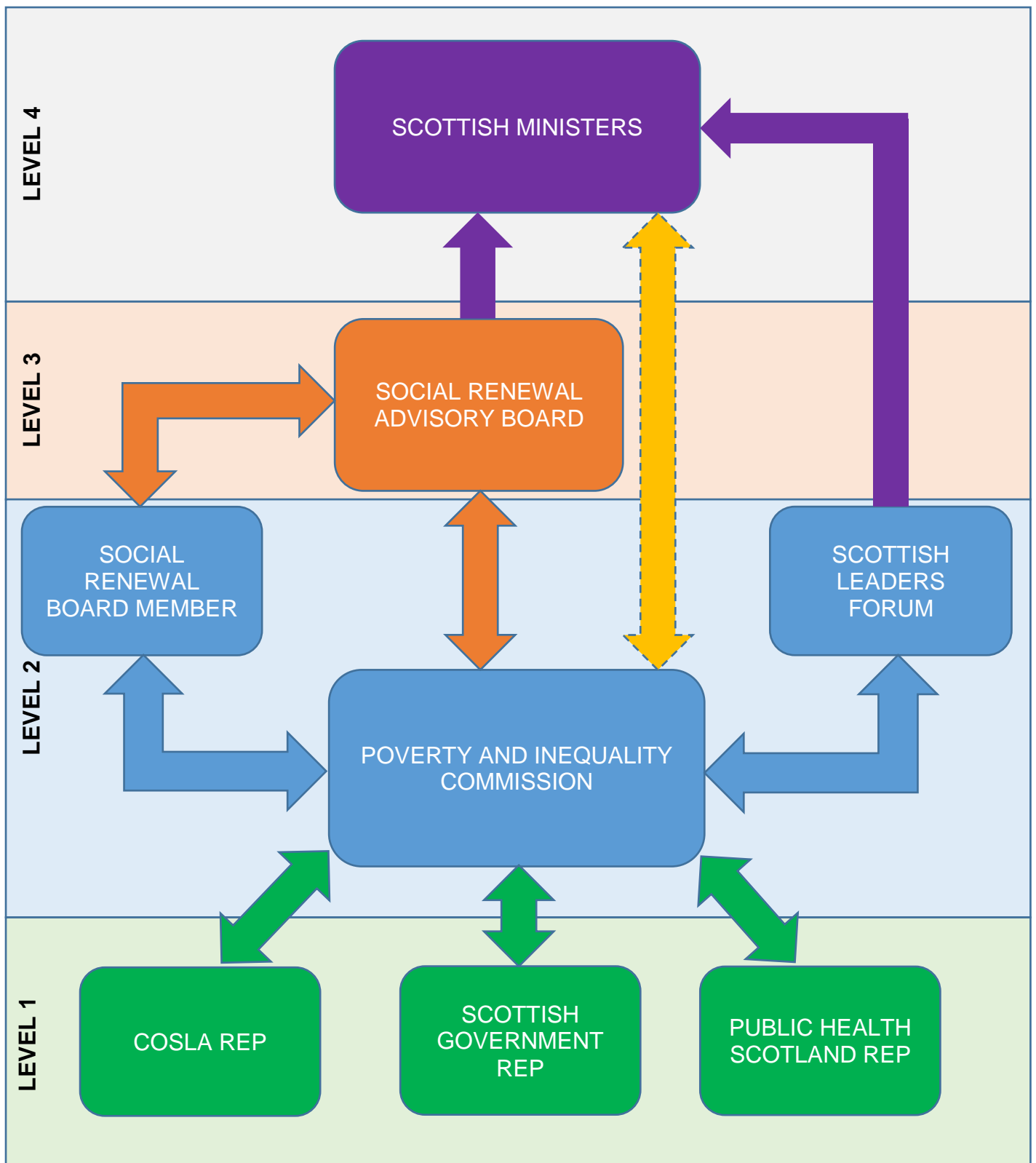
SOCIAL RENEWAL STRUCTURE

Annex B

As outlined below the Poverty and Inequality Commission, in forming the 'addressing low income circle' will:

- Provide recommendations to the Social Renewal Advisory Board;
- Receive advice from representative officials in COSLA, PHS and SG;
- Provide their recommendations and advice to Scottish Ministers.

The Advisory Board will consider inputs from all circles and make recommendations to Ministers



Group members include existing members of the Poverty and Inequality Commission, supplemented by Social Renewal Advisory Board members and the co-chair of the Scottish Leaders Forum action group on child poverty.

Group members

Bill Scott – Chair (Poverty and Inequality Commission)

Alex Cobham – Poverty and Inequality Commission

Douglas White – Poverty and Inequality Commission

Katie Schmuecker – Poverty and Inequality Commission

Linda Bamford – Poverty and Inequality Commission

Lindsay Graham – Poverty and Inequality Commission

Professor Morag Treanor – Poverty and Inequality Commission

Shona Stephen – Poverty and Inequality Commission

Yvonne Blake – Poverty and Inequality Commission

Emma Ritch – Social Renewal Advisory Board (Engender)

Satwat Rehman - Social Renewal Advisory Board (One Parent Families Scotland)

Jennifer Davidson – Scottish Leaders Forum Action Group on Child Poverty (CELCIS)

Advisory members:

Andrew Fraser – Scottish Government (Social Justice Strategy)

Ann McKenzie – Scottish Government (Social Justice Strategy)

Dawn Abell – Scottish Government (Reserved Benefits Unit)

Kerry McKenzie – Public Health Scotland

Matthew Sweeney - COSLA

Robert McGregor - COSLA