



Meeting of the Poverty and Inequality Commission

Thursday 20 January 2022

10:00 – 12:00

Virtual Meeting by Microsoft Teams

Commission attendees

Bill Scott, Chair
Professor Morag Treanor
Yvonne Blake
Douglas White
Linda Bamford
Shona Stephen
Alex Cobham

External attendees

Dr Ruari Sutherland	Supporting Access to Social Security Team Leader, Scottish Government
Jill Gardner	Supporting Access to Social Security Cross-Cutting Policy Manager, Scottish Government
Owen Allen	Winter and Cold Spell Heating Assistance Policy, Senior Policy Adviser, Scottish Government
Ellen Chrystal	Winter Heating Benefits Policy Officer, Scottish Government

Secretariat attendees

Katherine Hudson, Secretariat Manager
Rory Morrison, Analytical Manager
Orlaith McAree, Senior Participation Officer
Michele Barr, Secretariat/Administrator

Apologies

Katie Schmuecker

1. Welcome and apologies

Bill Scott welcomed everyone to the meeting. Apologies were given for Katie Schmuecker.

10:00-11:00

2. Low Income Winter Heating Assistance

Owen Allen provided an overview to Commissioners of the Scottish Government's winter benefits policy and the Low Income Winter Heating Assistance consultation.

Commissioners discussed the consultation and will send any follow up questions to Owen.

3. Discussion: Scottish Government Benefit Take-Up Strategy

Ruari Sutherland provided an overview to the Commissioners of the Scottish Government Benefit take up strategy. Commissioners discussed the strategy and will send any follow up questions to the team.

External attendees left the meeting.

11:00-12:00

4. Update on Child Poverty Advice

Bill Scott provided an update to the Commissioners on meetings he has been attending with Scottish Government about the Commission's child poverty advice. Bill Scott and the experts by experience panel members met with the Cabinet Secretary for Social Justice, Housing and Local Government. Bill Scott and Morag Treanor attended the Scottish Government's Directors Group on Child Poverty and presented the Commission's child poverty advice.

The Commission's child poverty advice to Scottish Government will be published on the Commission website, along with an Easy Read executive summary, on the 25 January. The Good Jobs in Scotland research which was commissioned by the Commission will be published along with the advice on the website. The secretariat will provide social media support when the advice is published. The experts by experience panel members will be asked their views for a future press release.

5. Update on annual Scrutiny Report

Rory Morrison gave an update on the progress of the Commission's annual scrutiny report which had been paused in September 2021. Rory will re-start work on the content and a draft will be shared with Lindsay Graham and Morag Treanor who are leading on the scrutiny work for the Commission. A draft will be taken to the Commission meeting in February, with an aim to publish February/March.

6. Budget/Risk Register/Work Programme

The Commission considered the Commission budget, risk register and work programme. Commissioners provided comments to be updated on the risk register. Commissioners discussed the Commission budget, a revised budget forecast and agreed to notify the Scottish Government of an expected underspend. Katherine Hudson will liaise with the Scottish Government sponsorship team regarding the underspend.

9. AOB

- The Commission noted that the Scottish Government is consulting on *A New Deal for Tenants - Draft Rented Sector Strategy* and agreed that the Commission would work with its experts by experience panel to respond to the consultation.
- The Commission noted a number of other relevant consultations currently taking place:
 - The Resource Spending Review Framework
 - Public sector Equality Duty in Scotland:
 - Data sharing to support early learning and childcare in Scotland
- Bill Scott reported that he had met with Libby Watkinson, Director of Insights & Policy at the Scottish National Investment Bank.
- Commissioners discussed having the next annual public meeting online before the end of March. The Commissioners will send the secretariat suggestions for speakers.
- 2022 has been designated Scotland's Year of Stories and Commissioners discussed if there was something the Commission could do to link with this.
- The next Commission meeting will be on 17 February 2022.