**Experts by Experience Panel Group Agreement**

We will:

**1. Start meetings with a check-in to see how everyone is doing and to check if any adjustments need to be made.**

**2. Make sure there are comfort breaks during meetings.**

**3. Be respectful and non-judgemental in response to what others are saying, and their beliefs, even if we don't agree with them.**

People have had different experiences and will think and feel differently about things we are discussing. These different views are valid and welcome, though they can be respectfully challenged.

**4. Listen when someone is sharing and ensure that only one person talks at a time.**

**5. Make sure everyone is able to contribute.**

It is important that people manage how much they are speaking. Silences are okay and can allow quieter people to speak up.

**6. Be conscious of time - help stick to it, or negotiate for more.**

Where a person or persons are dominating in a discussion it is the facilitator's job to interrupt them and move things along.

**7. Make sure meetings are a confidential space.**

Personal experiences and opinions that people share shouldn't be repeated outside of a meeting.

There are two reasons we might share somebody's story outwith the Commission:

- when a Panel member has said its okay.

- when a Panel member or somebody else is at risk of harm (in this case, we will always seek to speak to the Panel member about this first).

**8. Avoid using mobile phones during meetings where possible.**

If we are accessing the meeting on our phone, this is okay, of course. If you need to use it for something important, this is okay too, but please let the group know.

**9. Look after ourselves.**

If we need to go to the toilet, eat, drink or take a break, that's fine. Where possible, we will tell somebody from the Commission if we are leaving so they know we are okay.

**10. Say 'yes' when we mean 'yes' and 'no' when we mean 'no'.**

We should never feel like we need to agree (or disagree) to anything where we don't want to. Although it is not always easy, we should feel free disagree with others and say no when we want to.

**11. Tell somebody if we can’t take part in a meeting or other Panel activities.**

There may many reasons that somebody might struggle to take part in Panel activities over the life of the Panel. We don't need to say why but, where possible, we will tell somebody from the Commission if we won't be able to attend a meeting or if we can’t participate in other Panel activities.

**12. Reach out for support.**

If the activities of the Panel ever have a negative impact, we can ask for support from the Commission or explain what we are finding difficult.

**13. Use our judgement if talking about the Commission and the Panel in person or online (e.g on social media, websites, blogs), and avoid discussing information that hasn’t yet been made public.**

Instead of talking about the specifics of what the Panel has been discussing or what other people have shared, Panel members could speak generally about Panel activities. For example, rather than talking about specific recommendations that the Panel might want to make, a Panel member could say that the group have been discussing the role of social security in addressing child poverty.

**14. Respect other people's boundaries.**

Different people like to set limits (emotional, mental, physical) between themselves and other people. For example, some Panel members might be interested in communicating outside the Panel activities, while others would prefer not to. It is important to respect the limits that people set to keep themselves safe and well.

**15. Make sure that we review and update this document when there is agreement from all Panel members.**