

SCOTTISH FUEL POVERTY ADVISORY PANEL

Minute of Meeting

17 December 2018
(5 of 5, Year 1)

10:30-12:30

Conference Room 2, Victoria Quay, Commercial St., Edinburgh. EH6 6QQ.

MEMBERS IN ATTENDANCE:

Member	Abbreviation	Organisation	Further Information, as relevant
Norrie Kerr	NK	Energy Action Scotland	Deputy Chair, Advisory Panel & Partnership Forum
George Dodds	GD	NHS Health Scotland	Steve Bell has stepped down from the Advisory Panel
Emma Grant McColm	EGM	Citizens Advice Scotland	-
Stewart Wilson	SW	Tighean Innse Gall (TIG)	-
Dan Alchin	DA	Energy UK	Deputising for Lawrence Slade
Mike Campbell	MC	Scottish Association of Landlords (SAL)	-

MEMBERS' APOLOGIES:

Member	Abbreviation	Organisation	Further Information, as relevant
Ann Loughrey	AL	Independent Chair, Advisory Panel & Partnership Forum	-
Kate Morrison	KM	COSLA	On secondment from CAS
Peter Kelly	PK	The Poverty Alliance	-
Sarah Boyack	SB	Scottish Federation of Housing Associations (SFHA)	-
Lawrence Sade	LS	Energy UK	-

SCOTTISH GOVERNMENT OFFICIALS PRESENT:

Name	Abbreviation	Further Information, as relevant
Saskia Kearns	SK	Secretariat, Advisory Panel & Partnership Forum
Ann McKenzie	AMcK	Fuel Poverty Policy Lead
Ailie Clarkson	AC	Communities Analysis Division
Sharon McGuire	SM	Fuel Poverty Policy

Esther Laird	EL	Communities Analysis Division
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1. Welcome (Chair)

- NK welcomes everyone to the fifth meeting of the Advisory Panel, and for the benefit of those deputising for standing Member representatives, invites attendees to provide a short introduction of themselves and their respective organisations.

a) Apologies

- As indicated above.
- NK advised Members that Nicola Dickie has moved post and will no longer be attending on behalf of COSLA; moving forward in the short term Kate Morrison (previously representative for CAS) will be attending on COSLA's behalf, while on secondment. Emma Grant McColm will be representing CAS in Kate's absence during this period.

b) Minute of previous meeting – draft to be approved (Paper 1)

- Members approved draft as written. A summary note to be published online in due course.
- AMCK provided a brief update on progress of the Fuel Poverty Bill, indicating that it was nearing the end of Stage 1 of the Parliamentary scrutiny process. The Minister for Local Government, Housing & Planning would be appearing in front of Committee on 19 December. A Stage 1 Debate would then be held in February 2019, followed by the commencement of Stage 2 and 3. It is anticipated that the Bill will receive Royal Assent in Summer 2019. AMCK highlighted that all minutes of Committee sessions, and responses to the Call for Evidence, are available on the Scottish Parliament's website. NK thanked Members for their input to the Advisory Panel's submission in response to the written Call for Evidence – he advised it is now a case of waiting to hear what response the Committee will issue, and whether this will include any advised amendments to the Bill as drafted.

c) Conflict of Interests – any to declare

- None

2. Fuel Poverty Strategy – Development of Advice

Outcomes Framework

- NK thanked Scottish Government for the work to date in delivering two workshops to Members on the development of a draft Outcomes Framework – he recognised that while the overall end point may have been decided [as reflected in the ambitions set out in the draft Fuel Poverty Strategy and Fuel Poverty Bill], there was flexibility for the Advisory Panel to inform how this is achieved, through informing the outcomes framework.

a) Revised Draft – for review and comment

- SK provided a brief overview of a revised Outcomes Framework, which had been developed as a one-page visual representation of the agreed long-term outcomes and demonstrated their connections to the Scottish Government's National Performance Framework outcomes. SK invited comments from Members – feedback received included:
 - The balance between presenting a high-level, easily accessible framework while still capturing the underlying detail that demonstrates the logical

connections between outcomes over time, and between actions set in the draft strategy and the outcomes framework. GD commented that it would be useful to evidence the cross-policy interactions that contribute to delivery against the high-level outcomes. DA agreed. AMcK suggested that it may be helpful to develop an interactive framework that allowed someone to click on relevant drivers and to then be directed to a more specific logic model that outlined the specific interconnections related to that theme.

- MC indicated that showing the connection between contextual layers in the framework was beneficial – landlords tend to be concerned about EPC standards without recognising the wider context within which energy efficiency work sits. The diagram helps demonstrate this.
- EG suggested it might be useful to delineate outcomes according to whether they touch on reserved or devolved policy issues – again, this could be explored through a tiered, interactive framework. DA agreed this would be more appropriate to avoid the framework becoming complicated.
- Discussion was had on how the new framework could link in with any associated monitoring and reporting process to be developed. AC commented that the outcomes need to be agreed first to inform what the monitoring and reporting process will focus on. EGM pointed out that some of the outcomes will require measuring subjective factors – NK recognised there was a need to be cautious and not to assign causality related to subjective factors where this could not be evidenced directly. Instead, recognition should be given to the extent to which different factors contribute to an overall outcome. AMcK agreed and indicated that previous monitoring and reporting processes for fuel poverty did not attempt to make any value judgement on whether or not the activities reported on were actually making a positive impact. It will be important to then be able to link previous activities with a forward look but this is hard to do. AMcK emphasised that this work must not place additional burdens on local and third sector organisations – there is a need to avoid duplication of monitoring and reporting requirements across government programmes.
- GD argued that less focus should be given to trying to identify and monitor specific health outcomes – instead recognition should be given to the fact that, long term, work to tackle fuel poverty through addressing all four drivers will contribute positively to improved health. In this way, work should focus on understanding outcomes related to the drivers of fuel poverty – and in turn, poor health – such as income inequalities. For example, if it doesn't already, the SHCS could include a question to ask participants if they worry about paying their fuel bills – over time a change in responses could be used to infer a change in feelings. GD went on to highlight to Members that work is on-going to develop the new Public Health Scotland organisation, and a key focus of this is on reducing inequalities. GD suggested now is the moment to have a conversation between relevant parties involved in this work and fuel poverty to ensure connections are being made.
- AC confirmed the SHCS does include questions on managing financially but that the wording of the questions is open to amendments if appropriate. EG suggested that there are different generational attitudes towards certain terms and their meaning, such as “managing financially”, which need to be unpicked.
- SW reminded Members that the work undertaken in rural areas with Care and Repair has attempted to capture more subjective outcomes and that it could be useful to refer back to this work moving forward. Monitoring of impacts, or outcomes, was conducted relatively soon after intervention but with an intention to revisit in the future. SM suggested that “improvement methodology” requires a baseline to be established against which future

- measures of progress can be compared – but it is important that open questions are carefully developed to ensure measurability.
- DA suggested that if any Scottish specific breakdown of relevant energy market data from Ofgem was going to be required, now would be the moment to engage with Ofgem on this.
 - EGM proposed that the wording in the new revised outcomes framework was not as specific as in the previous draft version circulated and that it would be helpful to retain some of this specificity, as well as provision of definitions or meanings of terminology used. EGM provided some examples of where the language could be revised. SM recognised the point being made but also highlighted that the language must be realistic – AMcK clarified that the outcomes framework must align with other programmes, such as Energy Efficient Scotland, and must be something that Ministers can commit to. Having said this, AMcK acknowledged that there was a piece of work to review the draft framework against existing programmes to remove any ambiguity and to ensure a consistent read across.
- Overall Members agreed the new framework diagram was an improvement and should be developed further.

Actions for Follow Up:

- Scottish Government to review the current draft outcomes framework to ensure alignment of terminology with associated government programmes – a revised draft to be circulated to Members by Friday 21 December 2018.
- Members should send any proposals for revising the language within the draft framework to Scottish Government officials, no later than Friday 11 January 2019.

3. Advisory Panel Remit – Review of Responsibilities (Chair)

a) Responsibility: SWG & RFPTF Recommendations (Paper 2)

- NK referred Members to Paper 2 – he reminded Members that as per the Terms of Reference of the Advisory Panel, they have responsibility for monitoring progress against the 109 recommendations provided to Scottish Government in 2016 by the Scottish Fuel Poverty Strategic Working Group and the Rural Fuel Poverty Taskforce. NK indicated that a number of the recommendations made were directed to Scottish Government, and were in within the gift of Scottish Ministers to deliver. Paper 2 shows that a majority of recommendations have been progressed, or relate to policy issues that Scottish Government is already planning action on. There are 22 recommendations that require to be delivered by other organisations such as Ofgem.
- NK invited AMcK to provide a brief overview of progress to date on those recommendations the Scottish Government has been able to address directly, or seek to influence as appropriate.
- *Overview of Progress (SG)* – AMcK summarised as follows:
 - Strategy – immediate action has been taken by Scottish Government to introduce the Fuel Poverty Bill, which includes a revised definition of fuel poverty, and to publish a Draft Fuel Poverty Strategy. The strategy is draft only at this stage – a final strategy will be published within one year of Section 3 of the Bill being enacted. This will allow it to take account of any feedback from the Parliamentary process.
 - Incomes – Scottish Government is taking action now to increase incomes through delivery of the new Social Security Agency and through Energy

Efficient Scotland, via work to improve skills supply chains. Home Energy Scotland has formed a partnership with the new Social Security Agency to ensure referrals to HES for additional support can be made for relevant individuals in need. This approach will be mainstreamed across all HES advice centres. Feedback on the partnership has already been received, evidencing that it is working well. HES continues to work with many local organisations to ensure referral pathways exist where effective – there is a feedback loop built in to allow those making referrals to follow up on progress or advice received by the individual, and to consider appropriate next steps. SW commented it is important to ensure continuity of understanding across HES advisors, particularly given the staff turnover.

- Energy Costs – A wide range of issues are reflected in the recommendations related to affordability of energy, including: advice on the approach to be adopted in the Scottish Energy Strategy in particular related to local energy systems development; advice on energy tariff switching; energy market regulation; smart meter use; and district heating schemes. Scottish Government is developing regulations around Local Heat & Energy Efficiency Strategies and district heating. Early next year the Scottish Government will launch a call for evidence on low carbon heat, with a specific focus on off-gas areas. The public energy company will also link to tackling fuel poverty – to be discussed further at the Partnership Forum meeting following this meeting.
 - Energy Performance – a lot of work is being taken forward to address this driver of fuel poverty, including setting of standards and regulations as part of Energy Efficient Scotland, which outlines a vision for 2040 to improve the energy efficiency of all buildings (domestic and non-domestic) in Scotland. We have listened to stakeholder feedback concerning the urban/rural split and have uplifted our grant funding for rural areas under our Home Energy Efficiency Programmes. Support is provided based on an assessment of need. New measures have also been introduced under Warmer Homes Scotland that will be particularly beneficial for those living in rural areas.
 - Energy Use – we recognise “how energy is used in the home” as a fourth driver of fuel poverty, and will place people at the centre of policy development moving forward. We are developing a partnership approach, as set out in the Draft Fuel Poverty Strategy. HES has undertaken a mapping of all partnerships and engagement across Scotland, and from this EST are producing monthly newsletters on partnerships. The HES Homecare pilot launched in 2017 – as part of testing provision of high-quality, in-home, locally delivered holistic support to fuel poor households – and will now be mainstreamed to all HES centres from 2019/20.
 - Accountability & Scrutiny – the new governance framework put in place to include the Advisory Panel and Partnership Forum addresses many of recommendations made concerning this topic. Work will commence shortly on developing the monitoring and reporting process to accompany the Fuel Poverty Bill and final fuel poverty strategy. Ministers held a cross-portfolio summit in late 2017 to recognise the contribution and need for cross-policy support to tackle fuel poverty.
- *Taking forward monitoring & reporting (Chair)*
 - NK thanked Ann and summarised that good progress was being made against the recommendations.
 - NK indicated that it is a big ask of the Advisory Panel to take forward monitoring against all recommendations – he indicated it may be appropriate to delegate this responsibility to the Partnership Forum. This would provide the forum with a concrete piece of work to engage with, while the Advisory

Panel could maintain oversight. The Partnership Forum would have the option to invite guest speakers from relevant organisations, or government officials, to probe progress as appropriate, and to develop an understanding of what action can or cannot be pursued against those recommendations recognised as the responsibility of other bodies (not Scottish Government) to deliver.

- NK invited views from Members on this proposal.
 - ERM approved of the suggestion, commenting that the Partnership Forum Members bring a lot of insight on reserved issues. SW also approved.
 - AMcK suggested that Members could take ownership over specific recommendations [that related to their respective organisation's responsibilities] and report back – ownership to deliver would be important to avoid the responsibility not being taken forward.
 - DA commented that over half of the “RED” status recommendations being discussed had already been completed.
- NK concluded Members agreed to put the proposal to the Partnership Forum.
- DA proposed that the Partnership Forum be asked to consider which of the recommendations under consideration had already been delivered, and to then set out how it as a group proposed taking action to address the remaining ones.
- NK indicated it would be necessary to approach delivering through the Partnership Forum taking a whole group, and a sub-group approach, ensuring that all Members had a role to play.
- AMcK asked whether one individual Member should be appointed in the Partnership Forum to lead on this responsibility – NK agreed that this would be appropriate, and committed to identify who this would be.
- As an aside, EGM asked AMcK to provide a brief description of the “energy costs advice” that HES currently provides. AMcK indicated this was primarily related to support on energy tariff switching.

Actions for Follow Up:

- Advisory Panel to invite the Partnership Forum to take on ownership of the responsibility to monitor progress against the SWG & RFPTF recommendations, in particular concerning those that sit with other bodies (not Scottish Government) to deliver.
 - Deputy Chair to consider and identify a suitable Member of the Partnership Forum to take a lead role in ensuring that the Partnership Forum fulfils this delegated responsibility.
- Members to contact Ann McKenzie if they have any ideas for new partnership opportunities that could be explored with HES.

b) Annual Progress Report to Ministers – to agree approach

- NK indicated that the Chair is required to provide an Annual Report to Ministers on the work of the Advisory Panel and Partnership Forum over the last 12 months. This report is not for public consumption, and should be drafted through collaboration across Members. The report should summarise what Members feel has been achieved by the groups, what lessons have been learnt, and what they as a group feel next steps should be in taking forward the fuel poverty agenda. NK further indicated that the report should be concise.

- AMcK commented that as part of this discussion she would be keen for Members to also consider what they feel the Advisory Panel's Year 2 Work-Plan should include – Members are invited to reflect on whether the work of the group to date has met their expectations, and is there anything that can be redeveloped moving forward? The group needs to evolve over time, how the group functions and what it does takes time to get right. But the focus is on continuing to improve how the groups operate. NK suggested, as an example, Members may wish to consider how the Advisory Panel can best develop an understanding of work underway on-the-ground with households – this might include inviting guest speakers to every second meeting to present on key issues of interest. Alternatively, it may mean using individual meetings to focus on one specific driver of fuel poverty and to conduct a deep dive to enhance understanding of the interconnections.
- GD proposed that whatever the Advisory Panel determines appropriate to take forward should align with what expectations Ministers hold for the role and function of the group – the Advisory Panel should help inform the overall structure of the narrative for discussions between the Chair and the Minister, to embed the notion of inequality as part of the wider context within which tackling fuel poverty sits. In this way, the Advisory Panel's Annual Report could look at identifying what its work has contributed towards in terms of mitigating negative effects of inequality, and identifying future change or interventions required.
- NK highlighted it is likely the Minister will want to come to a meeting of the Advisory Panel to discuss the Annual Report once received.
- GD indicated that the Minister likes measurable outcomes. EGM asked what can be defined as "measurable" in this context? NK acknowledged that some of the longer term impacts that sit underneath some of the actions being taken forward on fuel poverty may not be evident now, but will show improvements over time. The Annual Report needs to provide the Minister with something he can use or say with regards what has changed.

Actions for Follow Up:

- GD to provide a draft outline of how he would suggest the Annual Report should look, to be sent to the Chair / Deputy Chair for consideration.
- Chair / Deputy Chair to draft lead in to the Annual Report – Members to collaboratively contribute to drafting of the body of the report. A first draft to be developed by the end of January 2019.

4. AOB

[NB: the order of Items (4) (a) and (b) was reversed]

a) Year 2 Meeting Schedule – Summer Non-Central Belt Venue

- NK reminded Members that indicative dates for the Year 2 meeting schedule have been issued, but that these are flexible and can be changed depending on the number of Members available to attend. NK invited Members to let the Secretariat know if there are specific dates they cannot make. Consideration will then be given to whether or not a date needs to be changed. Members should note that in general any one meeting should include only 1-2 deputies at most.
- NK indicated that as per the agreement of the Advisory Panel, the Summer meeting will be held in a non-central belt location. One option is to visit the Pitlochry Dam = SSE have a visitors centre on site that describes energy provision to the glens. Colleagues from SSE or SSEN could be invited to provide a presentation of their work.

b) Energy Credit Summit – reflections

- NK provided a brief overview of the history leading up to Ms McKelvie MSP hosting an Energy Credit Summit – in November a summit was held to bring together the Big 6 energy suppliers to identify progress to date in adopting / promoting the quick credit voucher scheme. At the time, ScottishPower and Npower had committed to and were delivering. EGM provided a short overview of CAS' perspective on this initiative, as co-deliverer of the recent summit – EGM indicated that CAS is keen to expand the debate beyond provision of quick energy credit vouchers, to link this approach with a more holistic advice system for those in need. CAS will be organising a follow up event and will be engaging with Ofgem to consider what more can be done regarding ECO and Warm Homes Discount as part of increasing incomes of vulnerable households.
- DA commented that Ofgem will not be able to say much in this regard as it is obligated to deliver on UK Government policies – the conversation should really be with Scottish Government.
- NK asked whether tapping into food banks in this way is really the right approach – is it the right time to be opening up a conversation with vulnerable households about their energy costs? NK further raised the point regarding where responsibility for addressing emergency support provision lies – many who attend food banks are there as a result of having been sanctioned under the UK Government's Universal Credit scheme. Should energy suppliers be considered responsible and required to mitigate for such negative consequences of government policy?
- EGM indicated that moving forward ScottishPower would be working with CAS to roll out provision of quick energy credit vouchers at ten Citizens Advice Bureaus – this will be pilot with the option to mainstream. AMcK asked if a referral mechanism to HES could be built into this offering.
- DA commented that if this approach is going to be pursued the conversation should be expanded beyond just the Big 6 energy suppliers.

Actions for Follow Up:

- Members to notify the Secretariat as soon as possible if there are specific Year 2 proposed meeting dates they cannot make – notifications invited no later than Friday 11 January 2019.
- Members to send any ideas for a non-central belt meeting location in Summer 2019 to the Secretariat, no later than end January 2019.