

# Cross-Party Group on Poverty

26<sup>th</sup> June 2023 10am-11am

Minute

Present:

MSPs

Pam Duncan Glancy MSP, Beatrice Wishart MSP, Paul O’Kane MSP

Invited guests

Ellie Wagstaff, Hannah MacCulloch

Non-MSP Group Members

Ashley Mclean (PA), Ruth Boyle (PA), Jaynie Mitchell, Sarah Rogers - Families Outside, Thomas Mulvey (Marie Curie), Danielle Ramage, Susan McKellar, Hanna McCulloch, Maddy Kirkman, Craig Samuel, Susan Lyons, Paul Spicker, David Kelly (CTA), Tara Lillis (NASUWT), Emma Jackson (Christians Against Poverty), Glen Nixon, Lorna Kettles, David Petrie, Lynda Perkins, Jayne Jones, Jamie Simpson, Catriona Melville, Maria Marshall, Gemma Richardson, Bill Scott, Keith Robson, Robert McGeachy, Ellie Wagstaff, Lucy Higginson, Louise Brady, Stephen Sinclair, Laura Robertson, Selma Augestad, Annie McCormack, Marie Ward, Jill Marchbank, Zahada Safdar, Eileen Cawley, Calum Mackay, Kim Dams, Davie Donaldson, Jennifer Forsyth, Tom Ockendon, David Stewart

Apologies

Monica Lennon MSP

Agenda item 1: Introduction and new convenor

**Beatrice Wishart MSP (BW)** opens the call by noting that, due to a change in portfolio, Pam Duncan Glancy MSP is not able to continue in the role of Convenor of the CPG on Poverty. Thanks her for her service to the CPG and, in particular, her work on the inquiry into poverty-related stigma.

Paul O’Kane MSP (POK) has indicated that he would like to assume the role of Convenor of the CPG on Poverty. Beatrice proposes POK who is confirmed as new convenor.

Notes that Jen Gracie, Scottish Federation of Housing Associations, was due to speak this morning but had to send her apologies. Introduces guest speakers for today's session:

Ellie Wagstaff is the Senior Policy Manager at Marie Curie and is responsible for leading Marie Curie Scotland's policy development and public affairs activity to support its work on end of life, with a particular focus on poverty, health inequalities and inequities, and support for carers of terminally ill people.

Hanna McCulloch, is National Coordinator for Local Action on Child Poverty with the Improvement Service. She supports local authorities, health boards and their community planning partners in their work to tackle child poverty.

## Agenda item 2: Ellie Wagstaff, Senior Policy Manager, Marie Curie

### *Palliative and end of life care in rural settings*

Palliative care supports people living with a terminal illness. Scotland has an ageing population, with people living longer and with more complex conditions. By 2040, 10,000 more people will be dying with palliative care needs and two thirds of these will be dying in community settings (eg homes, hospices and nursing homes).

Undertook research with Loughborough University looking at poverty at the end of life, found that 8,200 people experience poverty at the end of life each year in Scotland.

Being terminally ill can substantially increase risk of poverty through increased cost of living (particularly through energy costs) and loss of income. Average cost of terminal illness per year between £12k and £16k per person

Working age people with dependent children more likely to experience poverty at end of life – and women more likely than men. Issues exacerbated in rural areas by distance from key services, poor energy efficiency in homes and existing levels of poverty.

What needs to happen:

- Sustainable funding in community palliative care settings to reflect population health needs;
- Sustainable transport infrastructure to support access to palliative support;

- Targeted Scottish and UK government financial support with energy costs for terminally ill people which reflects their locality

## Agenda item 3: Hanna McCulloch, National Coordinator for Local Action on Child Poverty with the Improvement Service

Improvement Service have been working with ten Local Authority areas in remote, rural and island settings to understand the particular barriers those areas face in

Local Authorities are required to use data and local intelligence to inform their annual **child poverty action reports**. It has become apparent that these are particularly challenging in remote rural and island authorities – often with less resource and different barriers.

Project has taken a design based approach to this issue to tackle complexity – gathering everyone around the table to define the problem, develop prototypes and test and learn.

There were four workshops in 2022 identifying four key barriers:

1. *Lack of reliable and up to date sub local authority level data relevant to Child Poverty*

Use of 'data zones' which show concentrations of child poverty are not useful in rural settings as they identify very broad areas which are not useful for targeting.

Project compiled examples of how data is being used well – eg Scottish Borders have identified a child poverty index, layering various data sources together to get a more granular picture of the location of need.

Argyll and Bute have an approach to identifying households in financial need who are not accessing support, and then targeting support at primary school catchment areas.

Examples of uses of data to understand how to deliver solutions – e.g, work in Edinburgh and South East City region undertook exercise mapping the use of public transport uses to help re-design transport services and help employers better understand their catchment area for recruitment.

2. *Data sharing*

Hey challenge around when it is legitimate under GDPR for local authorities to connect up various data sources in order to help target households with support. is when is it legitimate to use that data to help target households.

Working with SAVI – group of GDPR experts from English and Scottish local authorities to map out the potential uses of data to reach an independent conclusion.

*3. Inability to understand variations in cost of living within and across Local Authorities*

Most local measures are income based. They may take into account housing costs but don't take account of wider costs. Need to come to a more granular way of understanding cost of living in specific places rather than just 'remote rural'. Should Scottish child payment vary, for example?

*4. Difficulty engaging with people with lived experience of poverty*

Potentially more stigma experienced in smaller communities – people don't want to make themselves known as experiencing poverty. There are also practical barriers to engagement.

## Agenda item 5: Q&A

**David Kelly – Director of Scotland, Community Transport Association**

asked how we address some of the challenges around transport in rural areas. Community transport can be a useful resource, but local groups on the whole don't receive grant funding from e.g, health and social care and it is difficult to run sustainably on volunteer basis

**Ellie Wagstaff** suggested expanded routes could be useful as well as thinking about where the biggest population health needs are.

**Hannah McCulloch** –the piece of work in south east of Scotland allowed them to identify wasted services so they could reallocate resources to where it was needed

**Jamie Mithcell, Coalition of Carers in Scotland** – has there been any work to quantify impact of disability, including on carers, or on the variety of charging policies across Scotland and how this impacts people?

**Ellie Wagstaff** – data question will be key to unlocking that, noted there is still a lot of work to do. The data Marie Curie have is specifically focused on the terminally ill not disability.

**Paul O'Kane MSP** – noted that data which reflects concentration of poverty rather than focuses on prevalence of poverty has an urban bias and asked what role auto enrollment can play in addressing access to benefits.

**Hannah McCulloch** – Auto-enrollment is always a better option where it's possible, but there's a lot of variety locally in terms of practice – there are pockets of good practice but people don't want to share it because they don't know how it sits in relation to GDPR. Need clarity from information commissioner. And, there will still always be value in reaching out to people to address specific needs.

**David Eyre** – asked about data in relation to intersectionality – eg race, ethnicity and LGBTQI+

**Ellie Wagstaff** – data not collected particularly well for minorities groups, would have to come back on the wider picture. Marie Curie have done some research more generally on terminal illness and LGBTQI+

**Bill Scott** – a lot of households don't take up Free School Meals because of stigma, particularly in affluent areas. So we need sharing of data to look at difference between entitlement and take up rates, to target benefit take up campaigns.

**Beatrice Wishart** corroborated this from experience in Shetland

**Hannah McCulloch** – looked at encouraging data sharing between social security Scotland and local authorities to address this, but GDPR prevented it.

**Susan Mackella, Scottish Women's Convention** highlighted the role of stigma and discrimination as well as unintended consequences where good policies aimed at supporting people can actually push people into poverty owing to complexity of interrelated benefits etc.

**Hannah McCulloch** – work to mitigate this challenge in some schools in Scotland through employing income maximization advisor to support parents to access entitlements.

**BW closes.**

**Notes that next meeting will be on Wednesday September 6<sup>th</sup> between 6PM and 7.30PM.**