

Cross-Party Group on Wellbeing Economy

Wednesday, 1st of March, 6:30-8:00 pm

Meeting topic: The upcoming review of the National Outcomes: What needs to change and how can we influence it?

Minutes

Present

MSPs

Paul McLennan MSP, Maggie Chapman MSP

Invited Guests

Helen Bolland, Vikki Manson, Shumela Ahmed, Emma Sedgewick

Non-MSP Group Members

Ben Thurman and Hannah Paylor (Carnegie UK), Lewis Ryder-Jones (Oxfam Scotland), David Somervell (Scottish Communities Climate Action Network), Rachel Searle (Foundation Scotland), Yve Barry (Scottish Women's Budget Group), Louise Davies (Scotland's International Development Alliance), Lukas Bunse (WEAll Scotland).

Apologies

Nikki Bridle, Sarah Deas, Ariane Burgess MSP, Michelle Thomson, Merle Palmer, Tom Sneddon

Welcome

Welcome from Paul McLennan MSP, convenor of the Cross Party Group on Wellbeing Economy.

Approval of last meeting's minutes

Maggie Chapman MSP proposed to approve the minutes from the meeting on the 7th of December as accurate, seconded by Lewis Ryder-Jones and approved without objection.

A new, dedicated care outcome for the National Performance Framework

Presentation by Lewis Ryder-Jones, Oxfam UK

What is the background to the campaign?

- Care is currently undervalued and under rewarded in Scotland.
- The campaign aims
 - o to change that by embedding a new outcome on care in the national outcomes set out in the National Performance Framework.
 - o to lock in the newly appreciation of care developed in the pandemic
- The issues facing carers are broader than one type of care and broader than one organisation. Therefore the campaign seeks to bring together a large range of organisations and individuals.
- The topic of care is closely related to issues of gender, poverty, and many others.
- Oxfam sees valuing care as a key part of addressing poverty.

What is the National Performance Framework (NPF)?

- NPF was established in 2007 and has gone through 3 iterations of review since.
- It describes the kind of Scotland we want to create and is meant to act as a compass for all policy and spending decisions, but in practice it is often not used that way at the moment.
- It is meant as a guide for all public bodies, not just central government.
- But carers are invisible within this framework
- Campaign supporters think that it does get lost by being implied in several of the other outcomes and that including a dedicated outcome will improve visibility of care.
- In line with the Community Empowerment Act the national outcomes need to be reviewed every 5 years and the next review will be starting this month (March 2023).

What is the campaign proposing?

- Core of campaign consists of five organisations, including Oxfam Scotland, Carers Scotland, Scottish Care, One Parent Families Scotland and the Scottish Women's Budget group.
- Published report in 2021 with the University of the West of Scotland to explore a blueprint of what a new national outcome could look like.
- Report suggests national outcome to be: "We fully value and invest in those experiencing care and all those providing it".
- It also suggests for the outcome to be supported by 7 beacon indicators

- The quality of life of carers, care workers and those experiencing care
- The quality of care for all
- The financial wellbeing of carers, care workers and those experiencing care
- The voice and influence of carers, care workers and those experiencing care
- Access to education and training
- The adequacy of funding for care
- The job quality of care workers
- The blueprint needs more research, but the indicators have been developed with input from carers
- The campaign is related to several policy areas – e.g. National Care Service, Scottish Child Payment, but the experience is that focus on care is often too shallow and slow and gets deprioritised against other issues
- Creating a new national outcome is not a substitute for other remedial action, but it would support such actions by stretching ambition in policy decisions and make it easier to hold the government to account using the new indicators

What has happened in the campaign so far?

- So far the focus of the campaign has been on getting other organisations to support it and various assets are available to help organisations support the campaign.
- The campaign has got written support from the Conservatives, Greens and Labour parties.
- It has developed a tool to make it easy for individuals to send a letter to all party leaders expressing their support.
- 55+ organisations back the campaign

Next steps:

- There will be a parliamentary reception on Tuesday, the 7th of March
- There is ongoing work on a “cheat sheet” for backers to add something on the need for a national outcome on care in their own responses to the consultation that will be happening as part of the review in the coming months.
- Draft outcomes are likely to be published early 2024, which will be followed by a consultation period in parliament of 40 days before new outcomes are finalised.

Discussion

Question: The website offers opportunity for organisations and individuals. Are you getting tractions with signing up individuals and is there anything we can do to support that?

- There are some individual signing up but it is just a trickle. If you support the campaign, please sign up yourself and get your friends and family to do it. The campaign is glad for any help organisations can provide.
- The broad definition of care adopted makes it very relevant to a lot of people if we can get the word out.
- Rachel will mention the campaign to the Funders Forum.

Question: Do you have a sense of how the 7 beacon indicators work together? Are they all equally important or is there room for prioritisation? How can we get cross party support?

- Beacon indicators probably need more refining, but many existing indicators in NPF are often very ill thought out.
- Review of the national outcomes does not reach down to level of indicators, which are set by the Scottish Government. A Wellbeing & Sustainable Development bill might be able to address this gap.
- The proposed beacon indicators are not perfect, but they describe the breadth of issues that any indicators sets need to capture to be successful.

Questions: How would it all be financed if we have an economy based on Wellbeing. Government is currently relying on a lot of free labour from families, because the carers allowance is very low. Where in economy would that money come from? Especially from a disabled perspective the cost of living crisis is hitting hard at the moment? How would we make sure that the new outcome feeds through into policymaking?

- There is room to raise revenue through more progressive taxation on income and wealth in Scotland and the UK. Oxfam has proposals on how that could work.
- Getting the desired impact from the outcome will be a slow process and we need get private businesses on board to do things differently.
- Currently the NPF is referenced as an add-on but not used policy making to set priorities, because we are missing good guidance and tools and there is not sufficient teeth in the Community Empowerment Act to make it an obligation for public bodies.
- Parliament could also do more, for examples committees could be more proactive in examining progress towards a wellbeing economy
- We have to get to a point where policymakers start from the NPF, rather than look at it as an afterthought.

Question: How are you getting the views of young carers and looked after kids? They are currently not often heard, even though number is large.

- Currently working with Carers Trust Scotland who are doing a lot of work in that area.

3 Next Steps for the National Performance Framework

Presentation from Hannah Paylor and Ben Thurman, Carnegie UK

Background?

- There are lots currently lots of opportunities coming up in Scotland to establish wellbeing at the centre of decision making, such as the review of the national outcomes in the National Performance Frameworks and the Wellbeing & Sustainable Development Bill.
- Carnegie UK has developed a briefing to set out 5 steps on how to embed wellbeing more deeply into decision making in Scotland.

What is collective wellbeing?

- SEED framework – includes social, economic, environmental and democratic wellbeing and we need to find the right balance between them.

What is the Carnegie UK approach to making change happen:

- Tackle issues that threaten aspects of wellbeing
 - o For example tackle online harm or the cost of living crisis
- Put wellbeing at the heart of decision-making
 - o Would like to see a joined-up wellbeing approach to government that allows partners to collaborate effectively

Opportunities in Scotland

- The NPF has been around in its current form for 5 years, but is falling behind in implementations.
- Recent report by the Finance and Public Administration Committee has found large gaps.
- Review of NPF outcomes is starting on the 14th of March.
- Sarah Boyack MSP is currently consulting on members bill on Wellbeing & Sustainable Development.

5 steps of what Scotland can do

1 Let people have their say

- The people of Scotland must shape how and what the Framework measures, whether that's our quality of work or levels of poverty. That means raising the profile of the tool and providing financial resources to get the views of citizens.
- There are concerns that the NPF outcomes review will not do that adequately.
- There are lots of great examples internationally on how to achieve more engagement, including through postcards, mini publics, or targeted approaches like the poverty truth commission.

2 Framework needs to guide decisions on policy and spending

- Problems evidenced by Scotland's Wellbeing Framework should guide funding decisions. For example, if the Framework identifies a drop in the measures that relate to the National Outcome on communities that should lead to action and funding to address this problem.

- New Zealand is already doing that well and using its framework to identify where people are falling behind and then allocate funding accordingly.

3 Deliver new laws to protect wellbeing

- Current laws to make public bodies respond to the goals (National Outcomes) in the National Performance Framework aren't working. That's why Ministers must deliver on their commitment for a Wellbeing and Sustainable Development Bill.
- There is a W&SD bill in the program for government and Sarah Boyack's members bill can be an opportunity to embed wellbeing in policy making
- Such a bill should:
 - o Provide clear and unified vision of what public services should be working towards
 - o Strengthen wording to give stronger duties to deliver wellbeing, e.g. include duty to "promote" sustainable development
 - o Create Future Generations Commissioner to push this agenda forward and create accountability. The commissioner in Wales has shown what kind of good impact it can have.

4 Provide clarity for the public sector

- The Scottish government should help everyone involved in delivering public services to rise to the challenge through clear guidance, meaningful incentives and formal evaluation, before the revised National Outcomes are issued.
- There are examples of other governments who have done that to provide the scaffolding for public bodies to put wellbeing at the heart of decision making. For example New Zealand has changed its public finance manual, Wales has defined 5 principles that set out how public sector should go about implementing sustainability.

5 Make wellbeing everybody's business

- The National Performance Framework started life as a tool to measure how government was delivering. While elected politicians should be held accountable for the performance of public services, delivering a more successful Scotland will require the efforts of the state, business and charities.
- The Scottish Government must lead new ways of working that bring partners together to make improving wellbeing everyone's business, starting with an open and honest conversation about how we are doing and what needs to change to make life better for us all.

What can we do right now?

- Complete Sarah Boyack's Wellbeing and Sustainable Development Bill Consultation (see links below)
- Contribute to the review of national outcomes
- Get in touch with Carnegie UK if you would like any help or more information

Discussion

Question: How can we get this into the parliamentary process. Have you had thoughts on engaging the committees? Or maybe do round tables?

- Carnegie UK has engaged with the Finance and Public Administration committee on the NPF enquiry
- There will be a drop-in session in parliament for Sarah Boyack's W &SD bill in May

Question: I agree that policy is not joined up. It looks like the proposed National Care Service is planning to centralise things even more. Can someone explain a bit more about how this relates to the talk on care?

- National Care Service Bill has just been paused until June
- It would be interesting to think about how that process might have been done differently if we had a new outcome and stronger legislative duties and support. In this scenario that outcome on care should then be the starting point for reforming the care service.

Question: How can we get failure demand and preventative spend on the political agenda, which is always difficult? How we can look at that? What lessons have we been learning?

- We have been trying to solve that since the Christie Commission.
- We should see a future generations commissioner as an investment that will reduce future harms and costs. The Future Generations Commissioner in Wales has been good at highlighting that we need short and long-term solutions to cost of living crisis to make sure it does not happen again.
- Carnegie UK has done some polling on cost of living crisis and its impact on 4 dimensions of wellbeing. The long-term impact on social wellbeing of people being stuck in their cold homes has come out very strong

Question: How do you see budgeting process fitting into the work you are doing? If we do not have resources to address problems it can be an issue.

- NPF could be a transformative tool but unless you link it to spending decisions it is just a pretty petal on the wall.
- Carnegie would like to see NPF better linked to budgeting decisions and has been working with North of Tyne Combined Authority helping them to be able to use the work the authority has been doing on developing wellbeing goals into budget decisions.

Question for everyone: Where would like to see Scotland in terms of Wellbeing Economy in three years time? What is your wishlist? Answers from the room:

- We would like to see progress towards the 5 steps outlined above, there is a lot of talk and it would be nice to see some action.
- Wellbeing Economy approach to Scotland should be inclusive for everybody and we would like to see much wider multi-method engagement of the public throughout Scotland.
- We see so many communities that are getting on with it and building local wellbeing economies, sometimes at hyperlocal level, paying fair wages, procuring locally, motoring on. That is not the case everywhere, of course, but there are lots of good examples. But those communities that are working for a better future are often quite far from national and regional power and

administration (and might not want to be any closer). Can we somehow bridge that gap in three years? We need to work harder to do that.

- For example Dunbar is trying to do a solar wind farm and there is lots of other projects. We need to give communities support and capacity to do these kind of things.
- Nicola Sturgeon's ted talk was a long time ago. The pendulum that Margaret Thatcher has pushed one way (i.e. focus on markets) might be slowly swinging back. Is there a way that we can call a spade a spade and be clear that markets are not a good mechanism for satisfying needs?
- Lots of politicians support a Wellbeing Economy, but they don't know what that means in practice. We need to build that capacity.
- Have you linked up with National Transformation program on trauma informed practice? We need to engage with seldom heard voices on our concepts. The way we move towards trauma-informed practice could be key driver for WE agenda, especially for people who are reluctant to engage with the government. There is lots of work going on in Scotland and it really joins up for me with the Wellbeing Economy agenda.
- We would like to see that any type of decision making is informed by gender budgeting analysis, so that this becomes the norm in practical use.

Questions. It can be difficult to engage seldom-heard voices? How have you been working on that?

- It is a gross failure of democracy that some people are included in decision making and some people are not. In Carnegie's work in North of Tyne Combined Authority we went to places to engage with seldom heard voices and get voices into decisions that are not usually heard. We found some anger from people feeling that they get asked but then nothing changes.
- We have a vision that Scotland everyone is treated with passion and kindness
- Interesting quote: "Building relationships is a roast dinner not a microwave dinner"

4 Next steps and action points

If you support the "A Scotland that Cares" campaign, please sign up as individuals and also get your organisation to sign up:

<https://ascotlandthatcares.org/>

If you support the ideas in the Wellbeing and Sustainable Development Bill, please respond to Sarah Boyack's consultation. Deadline is the 24th of March. A "cheat sheet" and example by Carnegie UK will be circulated via email and is also in the links below.

<https://sarahboyack.com/wellbeing-and-sustainable-development-bill/>

Please respond to the consultation of the National Performance Framework when it opens next week.

Paul will ask for a timeline on the Wellbeing and Sustainable Development Bill.

The next meeting of the group will likely be on Wednesday, the 7th of June. More details will be circulated.

Useful links:

“Cheat sheet” for the W&SD bill consultation

<https://www.intdevalliance.scot/resources/responding-wellbeing-and-sustainable-development-scotland-bill-consultation>

Carnegie UK example response to the W&SD bill consultation

<https://www.carnegieuktrust.org.uk/publications/submission-from-carnegie-uk-backing-wellbeing-and-sustainable-development-bill/>

Carnegie UK briefing on 5 Steps for the NPF

<https://www.carnegieuktrust.org.uk/publications/national-performance-framework-next-steps/>

Report by the Finance and Public Administration Committee on the National Performance Framework

<https://digitalpublications.parliament.scot/Committees/Report/FPA/2022/10/3/a3dd32cb-f846-42db-ada6-11f7e3da9390>