



The Scottish Parliament
Pàrlamaid na h-Alba

Social Justice and Social Security Committee

Shirley-Anne Somerville MSP,
Cabinet Secretary for Social
Justice,
Scottish Government

Social Justice and Social Security Committee
The Scottish Parliament
Edinburgh
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Via email only

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27 September 2023

Dear Cabinet Secretary,

Poverty and Inequality Commission: Appointment of Members

The Committee considered your letter of [14 September](#), concerning the new round of public appointments to the Poverty and Inequality Commission (the Commission), at its meeting on [21 September 2023](#) and agreed the level of scrutiny it wishes to adopt for this process.

It has decided to meet with the Chair of the selection panel and the nominated appointees at a private meeting. Thereafter the Committee will discuss its views in public to inform a report to Parliament. I look forward to notification of the nominees for appointment as set out in the indicative timetable.

Members were also interested in the interim measures being taken due to the recent resignations of the Chair and three Commissioners which, without action, from 11 November 2023 means the Commission would no longer be quorate.

Specifically, Members wish to know what the timescale is for these interim appointments to be made and if the Scottish Government anticipates any involvement of the Committee in these appointments. The Committee would welcome clarity on these issues as soon as possible given the urgency of the appointments and the need for the Committee to plan its work programme.

Also at the meeting, the Committee considered your [response](#) to its letter of [14 September](#), which enquired about the interactions the Scottish Government's Sponsor Team for the Commission had with the three resigning Commissioners.

In that response you acknowledge that consideration must be given to whether this situation could have been avoided. As such, you have asked for officials not involved in the strategic sponsorship role to undertake a robust review of the circumstances that led to these resignations to determine what action, if any, might have resulted in a more positive outcome. Also, you advised a review of the current Framework document is underway and that learning from the wider review will inform a new Framework document due to be in place in November.

The Committee welcomes the actions to be taken and would like to be kept informed of the outcome of the reviews.

Yours sincerely,

Collette Stevenson MSP
Convener
Social Justice and Social Security Committee