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**Collette Stevenson MSP**

Convener  
Social Justice and Social Security Committee

By Email: [SJSS.committee@Parliament.Scot](mailto:SJSS.committee@Parliament.Scot)

25 October 2024

Dear Convener,

Thank you for your letter of 10 October 2024 following the call for views from the joint committee inquiry into the proposed National Outcomes. This work and your feedback will be invaluable as the Scottish Government plans and implements the next iteration of the National Performance Framework (NPF).

The review is an opportunity to look afresh at how the NPF supports longer-term strategy within Government and across Scotland to improve the lives of the people of Scotland now and in the future.

**National Outcomes**

As the evidence you received highlights, many of the National Outcomes are interconnected. I welcome the support shown through the call for evidence for the proposed new outcomes on care and housing, and the helpful way in which the Committee has drawn together the linkages between these areas and poverty. I fully agree that work to eradicate poverty must cut across these areas and beyond. I also note the Committee's conclusions about the importance of considering the varying experiences of poverty faced by different groups of people.

You touched on a number of specific outcomes and this feedback, building on the input received through our own consultation, will be valuable as we finalise our national outcomes. However, I am reassured that there is a lot of common ground between the evidence you have received and our proposed national outcomes.

As your letter highlights, the experience of people requiring and working within care are central to our Care outcome – recognising that everyone needs care at some point in their life, while ensuring the sector provides fair work and dignified, respectful care to all who need it.

The intrinsic link between housing and poverty was reflected in our recent Programme for Government, and our Housing outcome further sets out our vision for a housing system that

meets everyone's needs, providing varied housing tenures across the country, tackling homelessness and the causes of homelessness. Similarly, our Equality and Human Rights outcome reflects the important role that building a society on fairness, dignity, equality, and respect will have in achieving our outcomes – a view I note was shared by evidence you received.

### **Poverty reduction and Scottish Government spend**

I appreciate the Committee's comments around more clearly linking the budget process and the Programme for Government to the National Outcomes. I agree that while this is a Framework for the whole of Scotland, the Government has a visible leadership role to play in ensuring the NPF is adopted across the country. Our implementation plan, and the process to develop and deliver it, will reflect that bringing our shared national outcomes to life will require collective action across local and national government, the third sector, and business.

### **Next steps**

Once again, I appreciate the Committee highlighting key findings from within the call for views that relate to your remit and drawing together further evidence from your recent workstreams.

I note your findings have also been shared with the Finance and Public Administration Committee. We look forward to the Committee's forthcoming report on the inquiry and having the opportunity to discuss its findings, including topics covered by your letter, in the parliamentary debate which will follow.

The timetable for publishing the agreed National Outcomes, the associated Implementation Plan, and the National Indicators will be confirmed following conclusion of the inquiry.

Yours sincerely,

**SHIRLEY-ANNE SOMERVILLE**