

To: Forum for Empowering our Communities Thematic Board

On: 1 February 2017

Report by:

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TITLE:

Fairer Scotland Action Plan

1. Summary

- 1.1 This report notes the launch of the Fairer Scotland Action Plan (attached).

2. Recommendations

- 2.1 That the members note the content of the report.
- 2.2 That the members consider group or individual responses to the Plan as appropriate.

3. Background

- 3.1 The Fairer Scotland Action Plan is a first government response to the Fairer Scotland conversation and a range of wider sources. It outlines 50 actions aiming to help tackle poverty, reduce inequality and build a fairer and more inclusive Scotland.
- 3.2 The Fairer Scotland Action Plan is built on five high-level ambitions for the period to 2030:
- A Fairer Scotland For All
 - Ending Child Poverty
 - A Strong Start For All Young People
 - Fairer Working Lives
 - A Thriving Third Age

A copy of the Fairer Scotland Action Plan can be downloaded at:
<http://www.gov.scot/Publications/2016/10/9964>

- 3.3 Within the Plan are 50 fairness actions for this parliamentary term and commitments from a range of organisations from across the UK.

4 The Fairer Scotland Conversation

- 4.1 The Fairer Scotland conversation started with a simple question: 'What matters to you about fairness and social justice in Scotland?' Seven thousand people took part in public events and local discussions - many engaged online, with around 17,500 visitors to the Fairer Scotland social media platforms.
- 4.2 In March 2016, the ideas from the conversations were summarised in an interim report, and then summarised in five initial themes:
- **Work and living standards** - Addressing poverty is seen as key to creating a fairer Scotland, with agreement that society should do everything it can to end poverty in all its forms.
 - **Homes and communities** - Affordability and access to housing, taking action on private sector rent levels and helping lower income households to buy their own home are key areas for the plan.
 - **Early years, education and health** - Childcare is a key issue for the strategy as is nutrition and access to healthy food for children. Mental health is another important focus, with a strong argument for mental health services to have the same priority as physical health services.
 - **Community participation and public services** - Public involvement in democracy is important with a call for better opportunities for local people to play a part in decisions that affect them and their communities.
 - **Respect and dignity** - Respect and dignity emerged as strong themes in terms of how people are treated by public services and, in particular, the social security system. Greater representation of women across society and reducing the gender pay gap is another key issue. Promotion of LGBTI issues across society is proposed in order to generate greater awareness. The issue of care for older people is also recognised as important as is the issue of loneliness and the need to address social isolation among older people.

5 Next Steps

- 5.1 In regards the delivery of this plan Scottish Government have agreed to issue a progress report by the end of 2019, setting out what has been achieved. A follow up Citizens Forum will take place in the second half of this parliament, inviting many of those who took part in the previous conversations to help identify new areas of focus.

- 5.2 The Scottish Government is keen to hear back from local organisations regards making Scotland a fairer place – information can be sent directly to fairer@gov.scot. Follow @scotgovfairer for updates

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