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Clare Adamson MSP
Convener
Social Security Committee
The Scottish Parliament
EDINBURGH
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15th December 2017

Dear Clare,

As you will be aware, the Child Poverty (Scotland) Bill was passed on 8 November with unanimous, cross-party support. This landmark legislation establishes Scotland as the only part of the UK with ambitious statutory income targets for the eradication of child poverty.

One of the key provisions in the Bill is the introduction of a duty on Scottish Ministers to publish a Delivery Plan at regular intervals between 2018 and 2030, setting out the actions the Scottish Government will take to meet the targets the Bill enshrines in statute. The Bill requires that the first of these must be published before 1 April 2018. I am clear that our Delivery Plans must be bold and creative, looking at fresh approaches and solutions to eradicating child poverty.

My officials are taking forward a programme of engagement on priorities for the Delivery Plan, including with organisations representing parents, children and young people, and those living in poverty, as well as groups of parents, children and young people themselves, particularly those with lived experience. We are also engaging with equalities organisations representing the various protected characteristics.

The views of Members of the Scottish Parliament are, of course, absolutely vital in the development of the Delivery Plan, and I am writing to you as the Convenor of a Committee with a strong interest in the child poverty agenda to invite you to submit views on priorities for the Plan.

The Child Poverty (Scotland) Bill sets out a number of areas which the Scottish Government must consider when preparing a Delivery Plan:

- The provision of financial support for children and parents
- Children living in households whose income is adversely affected, or whose expenditure is increased, because a member of the household has one or more protected characteristics
- Supporting local authorities to consider the automatic payment of benefits and support
- The provision and accessibility of information, advice and assistance to parents in relation to social security matters, income maximisation and financial support
- Education and, in particular, closing the attainment gap
- Availability and affordability of housing
- Availability and affordability of childcare
- Facilitation of the employment of parents (with remuneration enough to secure an adequate standard of living) and supporting the development of employment-related skills of parents
- Physical and mental health
- Children living in single-parent households
- Arrangements for setting the amount of revenue support grant payable to each local authority in order to ensure that resources are targeted for the purpose of contributing to the meeting of the child poverty targets

The Bill also has a provision which states that the Delivery Plans may include other such information about child poverty as Scottish Ministers consider appropriate.

In particular, I would welcome the views of your Committee on:

- whether there are major challenges or policies we should be looking at which aren't represented on this list;
- within this list (and any additional areas added) what should the Scottish Government's priorities be in terms of tackling and ultimately eliminating child poverty, and
- what potential roles should there be for agencies outwith the Scottish Government e.g. employers, UK Government, local authorities etc.?

I should be grateful if you could provide any views in writing to me by **31 January 2018**, to allow your input to be fed into the process of drafting the Delivery Plan. If there are any matters you would welcome a discussion on, please contact my office and I will accommodate a meeting if at all possible.

yours sincerely



ANGELA CONSTANCE