

**FIRST MINISTER'S NATIONAL ADVISORY COUNCIL ON WOMEN AND GIRLS
(NACWG) CIRCLE MEETING – 29 JANUARY 2020 – EDINBURGH
SUMMARY NOTES**

Advisory Council Members

- Amina Ahmed: Scottish Government Fairer Future Codesign Panel
 - Kara Brown: Lead Young Women's Engagement, World YWCA
 - Tressa Burke: CEO, Glasgow Disability Alliance
 - Catherine Calderwood: Chief Medical Officer
 - Sharon Edwards: STUC – apologies
 - Vicky Featherstone: Artistic Director, London's Royal Court Theatre – apologies
 - Jacqui Ferguson: Non-Executive Director, Croda PLC, Engineering UK, Tesco Bank and Wood Plc – apologies
 - Professor Dame Anne Glover: President, Royal Society of Edinburgh
 - Dame Katherine Grainger: Chair, UK Women in Sport
 - Katie Horsburgh: Volunteer Advocate, Girlguiding Scotland
 - Dr Ima Jackson: Independent Co-chair and Senior Lecturer at Glasgow Caledonian University
 - Baroness Kennedy of the Shaws: QC – apologies
 - Louise Macdonald OBE: Independent Co-chair and CEO, Young Scot
 - Satwat Rehman: CEO, One Parent Families Scotland
 - Emma Ritch: Executive Director, Engender
 - Suki Wan: Former Chair, Scottish Youth Parliament – apologies
 - Talat Yaqoob: Director, Equate Scotland and Co-Founder, Women 5050
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- Deborah Fulerčík: Scottish Government Support to NACWG
 - Katherine May: Scottish Government Support to NACWG

**FIRST MINISTER'S NATIONAL ADVISORY COUNCIL ON WOMEN AND GIRLS CIRCLE
SESSION**

**29 January 2020: 10:00-13:30 at the Edinburgh International Conference Centre
(EICC), Cromdale Hall**

The Circle session was opened by Louise Macdonald OBE, Co-Chair of the NACWG, who welcomed everyone and explained the purpose of the event: to celebrate the publication of the [2019 Report and Recommendations](#) on the topic of Gender Equality and Policy Coherence. Louise thanked all attendees for their time and commitment to attend the event. She then thanked Ms McKelvie, Minister for Older People and Equalities for her support and overseeing the implementation of the NACWG's recommendations. She also thanked Ann McKechin, a representative of UN Women UK, for her attendance at the Circle. Louise then moved on to thank everyone who supports these events including Linda Hunter (@LindaStitt), NACWG artist in residence, and the Market Place Holders, encouraging Circle attendees to visit the stalls (at today's Circle was Menopause Café, GirlGuiding Scotland, Sikh Sanjog, Save a Life Scotland and ZeroTolerance).

A short video was played to the audience, which was produced to accompany the 2019 Report and Recommendations and captures engagement with the Circle throughout the year – you can watch it [here](#). You can also watch Louise’s opening address [here](#).

Louise then handed over to Advisory Council members [Katie Horsburgh](#) and [Satwat Rehman](#). They presented the recommendations and provided more detail about what they mean and how they were informed by extensive engagement with the Circle throughout 2019. At the NACWG’s inaugural meeting in December 2017 the Circle resoundingly told the Advisory Council that policy incoherence negatively affected women and girls in Scotland. As the NACWG explored the topic, looking at systems change rather than individual policies, the recommendations naturally built upon those of the 2018 report and the same three pillars of Leadership, Accountability and Creating Conditions. You can watch Katie and Satwat’s speech [here](#) and read the 2019 Report and Recommendations [here](#) where an Easy Read version is also available.

The Circle then heard from [Dr Catherine Calderwood](#), Advisory Council member and Chief Medical Officer for Scotland. She reflected on 2019 and specifically on the impact of the NACWG’s 2018 recommendation to create a ‘world-leading process for complainers of sexual violence’, as she is directly involved in this piece of work. Catherine explained the huge importance of this recommendation, and with the permission of the person involved, shared an impactful account of sexual assault and the invaluable benefits of services which support women and girls in such situations. You can watch Dr Calderwood’s speech [here](#).

Performance – Intercultural Youth Scotland

As always, the performers were exceptional and [Intercultural Youth Scotland](#) delivered a powerful set ranging from spoken word, song, rap and DJ-ing. We’d like to say a huge thank you to Asha, Nisha, Omar, AD3 and Raheel for sharing their lived experience through their emotive and personal performances which captivated the room. You can see IYS’s performance [here](#) and you can watch more of their work on Twitter @InterculturalYS.

The morning speeches were incredibly helpful in preparing the Circle for the table discussions. Katie and Satwat’s speech marked a key milestone for the NACWG as they enter the final year of their initial three year strategy, as did Dr Calderwood’s reflections on 2019, which demonstrated the huge impact that the Circle and the NACWG are having on the advancement of gender equality in Scotland. While lived experience is at the heart of the NACWG’s Report and Recommendations, IYS’s performance reminded the Circle of the importance of committing to this ambitious agenda for Scotland and making gender inequality a historical curiosity. All of this helped prepare the Circle for the [table discussions](#) where the NACWG asked what we can all commit to in response to the 2019 recommendations.

Keynote speaker – First Minister

The final speaker of the event was the First Minister who gave her initial thoughts on the 2019 Report and Recommendations. She advised that a full and considered response would follow in due course, but in the interim she endorsed all of the recommendations and

announced that she immediately accepted the recommendation to upgrade the Scottish Government Equality Unit to a standalone Equality, Human Rights and Inclusion Directorate. This announcement was met by applause from the room and marks an important change to the Scottish Government's infrastructure; demonstrating the commitment to embed and mainstream equality and from our perspective, embed a better gender focus.

The First Minister also accepted the recommendation to set up a Senior Officials and Leaders Group – with the caveat that the model is to be worked on and agreed – but another equally important infrastructural change in the Scottish Government.

Looking ahead to 2020 and the annual topic **Creating an Intersectional Gender Architecture – the status of women in Scotland, structures and intersectionality...** the First Minister reflected on the intersections of gender inequality and expressed her enthusiasm for the year ahead, noting that this is a very important topic for the NACWG to consider. She then announced a significant and exciting change for 2020, that [Dr Ima Jackson](#) has been invited – and accepted – to join the NACWG and co-chair for 2020 leading on an important piece of work on intersectional participation. The First Minister answered a few questions from the Circle ranging from specifically Scottish and gendered social issues to questions about how Scotland can better protect disabled women and girls when often they are hit hardest by austerity and benefit cuts. You can watch the First Minister's speech [here](#) and see the Q&A session at 21.11.



From left to right: Dr Ima Jackson, Co-Chair of the NACWG, First Minister, Nicola Sturgeon, Louise Macdonald OBE, Co-Chair of the NACWG.

The First Minister invited Dr Ima Jackson to the stage and she introduced herself, talking about her background and extensive work with People of Colour and migrants in Scotland and her focus on creating the infrastructural change or instigating the development that is needed in Scotland. Ima expressed her excitement to see how the year unfolds and thanked

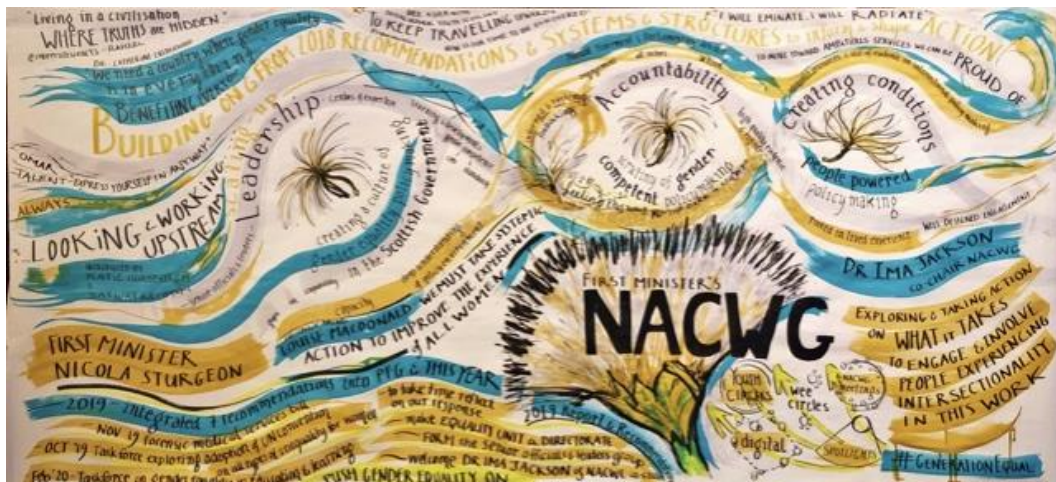
the First Minister, Louise Macdonald and the Circle. The NACWG are delighted to welcome Dr Ima Jackson to the Advisory Council and look forward to working with her in 2020.

You can watch Ima's speech and the closing remarks [here](#).

2020 Circle Events

In 2020 the Advisory Council will be exploring the topic **Creating an Intersectional Gender Architecture – the status of women in Scotland, structures and intersectionality...** with the Circle. There will be three participation events throughout the year and we'd be delighted to see you there. The dates for Circle events in 2020 are:

- **Wednesday 25 March, Aberdeen**
- **Wednesday 24 June, Glasgow**
- **Wednesday 23 September, Edinburgh**



Linda Hunter (@LindaStitt), NACWG artist in residence.