

FIRST MINISTER'S NATIONAL ADVISORY COUNCIL ON WOMEN AND GIRLS (NACWG) CIRCLE MEETING

27 JANUARY 2021

SUMMARY NOTES

Advisory Council Members

Amina Ahmed: Scottish Government Fairer Future Codesign Panel
Kara Brown: Director, Tiny Changes
Tressa Burke: CEO, Glasgow Disability Alliance
Dr Catherine Calderwood: NHS Lothian – apologies
Revati Campbell: Convener of the Scottish Youth Parliament's Equalities and Human Rights Committee
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
Professor Dame Anne Glover: President, Royal Society of Edinburgh - apologies
Dame Katherine Grainger: Chair, UK Women in Sport
Katie Horsburgh: Volunteer Advocate, Girlguiding Scotland
Dr Ima Jackson: NACWG Co-chair and Senior lecturer at Strathclyde University
Baroness Kennedy of the Shaws: QC - apologies
Louise Macdonald OBE: NACWG Co-chair and CEO, Young Scot
Satwat Rehman: CEO, One Parent Families Scotland
Emma Ritch: Executive Director, Engender
Talat Yaqoob: Independent Consultant on Equality and Inclusion, and Co-Founder Women 5050

- Deborah Fulerčík: Scottish Government Secretariat Manager

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

27 January 2020: 10:00-12:00

The Circle session was chaired 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 [2020 Report and Recommendations](#) on the topic of Creating an Intersectional Gender Architecture. 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. Louise outlined the morning programme before setting the wider context of the NACWG and how we have come to the end of our initial three year strategy. She reiterated that the NACWG's focus has been systemic change over the course of this work and that we have worked hard to ensure we are not duplicating work already underway in Scotland. Louise also emphasised that the NACWG's three annual reports and sets of recommendations were designed as a

package to kickstart the systemic change needed, and if taken forward collectively the NACWG believed that this would create a significant shift in the right direction.

Louise then addressed the title of the 2020 Report and Recommendations following some Advisory Council members observing negative comments on social media. She noted "In settling into using the term "Intersectional Gender Architecture", our intent was not to obfuscate – quite the opposite. It was an attempt to be very specific with our language so that we remained focussed on the purpose of this third report – the systems, legislation, agencies and duties, which should be advancing women's equality. Our journey as a Council over the past three years has been moving continually upstream each time – exploring the system which leads to policies being created and approved, which don't work for women and girls; which in turn contribute to creating the conditions for the attitudes and culture which blight their lives in a myriad of ways, every day. So to ensure we were precise and to bring a discipline to our thinking, this is how we described it – it was a helpful way of prompting us to ask ourselves – and the Circle – the question: "but what is it at the heart of the SYSTEM that needs to change to stop this?" But, if that title on the front page is stopping people from engaging with the work – meaning they are not reading the report (even with our description of this within it) - then we need to consider that carefully. We have always been open to learning and to listening – with respect and good faith – so we will talk about this at our meeting this afternoon. In the meantime, we would invite everyone to read the report – in full – and engage with the substance and consider the difference they would make to the lives of everyone in Scotland."

Louise then welcomed and handed over to the First Minister, who gave her initial thoughts on the 2020 recommendations, thanking the NACWG, welcoming the recommendations and advising a full detailed response would follow once due consideration had been applied.

The First Minister pointed out how action was progressing on some of the recommendations from the NACWG's previous two reports and how wider Scottish Government developments are speaking to the wider ambition of gender equality. The First Minister then announced that following extensive consultation, the model for the **Gender Beacon Collaborative** had been agreed. This is a major step in realising this recommendation from our 2018 report. The First Minister also made reference to the recommendation development of the new Equality, Inclusion and Human Rights Directorate – a significant infrastructure shift for the Scottish Government – and the new appointed Director in post, Madhu Malhotra, who was present at the event. She also mentioned how the latest Programme for Government had a large focus of mainstreaming equality and how going forward the Scottish Government would focus on ensuring policy was intersectional. The First Minister ended by thanking the NACWG for this latest set of recommendations, and thanking them and the Circle for all their efforts over the past three years. She also advised that she is looking forward to hearing the NACWG's thoughts on next steps.

Louise thanked the First Minister and before moving onto the next agenda item a short video was played to the audience, which was [produced to accompany the 2020 Report and Recommendations](#) (1:08s).

Following this Louise handed over to NACWG members Revati Campbell and Satwat Rehman who presented the recommendations, providing more detail about what they mean and how they were informed by engagement with the Circle throughout 2020. At the NACWG's inaugural meeting in December 2017 the Circle resoundingly told the Advisory Council that aspects of the gender architecture in Scotland didn't work for all women and girls. As the NACWG explored the topic, with a focus on system change, the recommendations naturally developed into the usual three pillars of Leadership, Accountability and Creating Conditions. You can read the 2020 Report and Recommendations [here](#) and an Easy Read version of it [here](#).

Performance – Purple Poncho Players

A short pre-recorded video from the Glasgow Disability Alliance's Purple Poncho Players (PPP) was played. PPP use music, comedy and drama to depict the lives of disabled people and their families for audiences of policy makers, service designers, elected members and third sector organisations. The PPP performance highlighted real life experiences of disabled women affected by COVID, lockdowns and the inequalities which have been supercharged for disabled women creating a "Triple Whammy" of barriers and impact. It highlighted how disabled women are amongst those at the sharpest end of inequalities and eroded human rights.

Louise thanked everyone involved in the production of the video before moving on to discuss NACWG next steps with the Circle. She began by reflecting again on the systemic change focus of the NACWG over the past three years and of the importance of tackling the inequality at this level, to ensure change was built in to the infrastructure of our society. She also reflected on the Scottish Government's response to the previous two reports – all recommendations accepted, even those reserved matters, in principle. She went on to explain how this initial three years had been designed as a package, with each year building on the other. How the NACWG believe that, if these recommendations are taken forward with drive and collective commitment, then this will be a kick-start in a positive direction to the systemic change required. Louise also pointed out how due to the magnitude of the NACWG recommendations, it takes time to scope, plan and implement them, but that we are seeing movement – the earlier announcement from the First Minister regarding the Gender Beacon Collaborative (GBC) being a working example of this. The fact that we are seeing movement of such a substantial recommendation is incredible and the GBC will go a long way to tackling workplace inequality and helping women in work and the businesses they work for.

Louise also emphasised that, even though we have come to the end of the NACWG's initial three year strategy and are seeing movement in development of recommendations, the NACWG do not think the job is done and are planning how accountability and scrutiny can be built into the next steps plan. Louise thanked the Circle for providing their thoughts on what the NACWG should do next and advised that they are also considering how further involvement and building on commitments from the Circle can be featured. Louise advised that the Circle would be kept up to date with developments.

The Circle then broke into facilitated discussion groups, to explore what members or their organisations could do to help realise the 2020 recommendations and to have a further opportunity to discuss their thoughts on what the NACWG should do next.

Following these discussions, our youngest members Amina, Katie and Revati had the final words for the day, thanking everyone for joining and marking the launch of the final report and recommendations of the NACWG's initial three year strategy.

FIRST MINISTER'S NATIONAL ADVISORY COUNCIL ON WOMEN AND GIRLS MEETING – ZOOM – 13:00-15:00

Following a lunch break the NACWG convened for our meeting and Co-Chair Dr Ima Jackson chaired proceedings. NACWG members spent time to debrief following the morning event, and the rest of the meeting was dedicated to the development of our next steps plan for the First Minister. The plan at this stage to submit and publish a Next Steps report to the First Minister ahead of the pre-election period and it is at this point that the Advisory Council will step down until a decision on a way forward has been made.