

Independent Review of Adult Social Care in Scotland

Note of meeting – 7 January 2021 – 9:00 – 11:00

Present – via MS Teams	
Chair	Derek Feeley
Advisory Panel Members	Malcolm Chisholm
	Stuart Currie
	Anna Dixon
	Caroline Gardner
	Göran Henriks
	Ian Welsh
	Jim Elder-Woodward
Scottish Government Attendees	Alison Taylor Christina Naismith Paul Leak Lorraine Davidson Secretariat support
Apologies	
1) Welcome and Introductions	
Mr Feeley welcomed the panel and offered his congratulations to both Caroline Gardner and Anna Dixon for their inclusion on the New Year's Honours list.	
2) Minute of last meeting – 17 December 2020 (IRASC (043))	
The minutes of the previous meeting were signed off with the inclusion of an emailed amendment from Cllr Currie.	
3) Discussion on Finance	
<p>My Feeley suggested that the conversation around finance in this meeting could be broadly split into three sections:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) To review the proposed areas for investment the panel would like to recommend. 2) How to position the case for those investments. 3) Review the options for revenue generation. <p>He noted that colleagues in Revenue Scotland had only just got back with their comments on the briefing paper – Funding Options (IRASC (048)), and that more in depth discussion could be taken in writing with the aim to return to it at next week's meeting.</p> <p>Mr Feeley laid out the estimated and projected costs to some of their proposed recommendations around charging, unmet need, the Independent Living Fund and the Real Living Wage. He also proposed a discussion on accommodation costs in care homes and variation in spend across Scotland, opening up the floor to open discussion from the panel members.</p> <p>Mr Chisholm proposed prioritising the investment recommendations as full funding would not be immediately available, and proposed that ending charging for non-residential care and the reopening the Independent Living Fund as immediate priorities.</p>	

He stated that reopening the Independent Living Fund as a first step would be broadly welcomed, as a precursor to future developments to the fund that the panel might recommend.

Mr Feeley agreed that it was important that the Report addressed how its recommendations might be phased in over time.

Cllr Currie also agreed that recommendations for investment would need to be phased in but warned against the dangers of triaging in that it would be impossible to please all people, and that good work could be lost in trying to defend recommendations that may take years to implement. He supported prioritising an end to charging for non-residential care, noting where there would be pushback, as discussion within Local Authorities was always about how much to charge, not whether charges should exist. His concerns about reopening the Independent Living Fund as a first step were about available funding and he stressed the importance of Fair Work, recognising the value of the workforce and the Living Wage.

Ms Gardner also supported the abolishing of charges as a priority for reasons of principle, equity and making straightforward the access to services that people need. She agreed that the Fair Work agenda was important, stating the value of a properly supported workforce. She also thought that the Independent Living Fund was less urgent and would be dealt with differently if other recommendations were implemented well, and that an end to charging and Fair Work changes could positively affect the whole system, reaching more people.

Ms Dixon expressed the difficulty of prioritising when all the issues were so important, but added her support to the Living Wage, noting both the economic argument of local economy spend and a better supported service. She expressed some ambivalence over recommending an end to charging as it doesn't address unmet need, and that those eligible people who have 'co-payments' are at least receiving care, while it may be better to prioritise those who are not, but who are in danger of moving to needing crisis care. She stated there was a strong argument to be made to getting some care to more people before making it free for those already in the system.

Mr Feeley asked that the panel concentrate on how any additional investment might be introduced into the system over a period of time rather than picking and choosing amongst recommendations. He made a quality and financial argument for reopening the Independent Living Fund as a specialised national service for people with highly complex needs as this was where it has a good track record. Mr Leak gave statistics on how many people who are currently receiving care packages would be eligible via the threshold sum if the Independent Living Fund was reopened.

There followed a discussion on recommendations for Fair Work, fair pay for social care support, and the trade union call for a national job evaluation scheme including a skills development context. Mr Elder-Woodward agreed on the need to properly award the different levels of skill within the workforce.

Mr Feeley supported Mr Henrik's point of not losing sight of ensuring they were investing in things that are about outcomes for people, equity and equality, and that the finance section of the report had to be fully integrated into the direction of travel of the report.

Ms Dixon spoke about unpaid carers - family members – and the not yet visible financial implication of carer blind needs assessment, including the need to compensate for current unpaid family care. She pointed out how projections show a huge gap opening up in availability of family care due to smaller families, less proximate living of family members and higher participation of women in the labour market.

Mr Elder-Woodward pointed out that investment in childcare is seen as an investment in the social infrastructure of society in Scotland and he would like to see the same argument being made for adult social care. Mr Feeley agreed there were economic, social and citizen benefits to be considered and pointed out reports that were particularly helpful.

Action: Secretariat to recirculate recommended reading from Scottish Women's Budget Group and Social Justice and Fairness Commission to panel.

Mr Feeley then moved discussion on to accommodation costs in care homes, referencing different modelling to redistribute costs including raising the floor on contributions or capping lifetime costs, a future move away from residential care homes to extra care housing and alternatives, the interface with free personal and nursing care, wealth and inheritance taxes and the scope of the Review recommendations.

Mr Feeley confirmed with the secretariat that they were in a position to draft the chapter on finance including his recommendations and ensuring that this integrated with the rest of the Report.

Ms Gardner and Cllr Currie highlighted prevention as a theme that needed strengthened in the Report as well as the cost of funding failure, waste and duplication in the current system.

Discussion moved to options in revenue raising, prompting a wide ranging discussion on what the review could say including; local versus national taxation, reserved tax matters, the benefits and pitfalls of hard and soft hypothecation, intergenerational fairness with consideration of working age taxes versus wealth taxes, geographical variation in spend on social care and total budgets. The panel were wary of letting a potential tax raise be the headline that came out of the report, overshadowing the Human Rights aims, it's recommendations and that revenue raising decisions should be left to the democratic process.

Mr Feeley told the panel that the publishers required a first draft of the report week beginning 11 January, and he felt they were on track to deliver. Ms Gardner asked for comment on how coherent the written comments from panel members were as a group. Mr Feeley felt there had been significant consensus, and that the majority of suggestions could be incorporated. There followed discussion on specifics of the written report in terms of presentational work, themes and points that needed to be emphasised, specific language and storytelling.

Action: Secretariat to circulate revised draft of the report, inviting comment, with an aim to sign off at the next meeting.

Ms Davidson shared an update on the filming and editing of the short film being made to support the report.

Action: Secretariat to share an edit of the short film that accompanies the report.

Background Briefing

4. Briefing – Analysis to explore unmet need for Social Care (IRASC (045))
5. Financial Briefing – Real Living Wage, Charging and Free Personal and Nursing Care (IRASC (046))
6. Briefing – Independent Living Fund (IRASC (047))
7. Background Briefing from Mr Elder-Woodward – Whatever happened to the human altruism gene? A service user's view of the Welfare Reform Bill
8. Briefing – Funding Options (IRASC (048))

All Papers circulated by Alison Taylor, 29 December 2020 and 7 January 2021.

9) Agenda items for meeting on 14/01/2021

- Finalising the Draft Report
- Comments on the short film accompanying the Report

10) Future Meeting Dates

1	Thursday 14 January 2021	9:00am – 11:00am
2	Thursday 21 January 2021	9:00am – 11:00am