

APPG on Poverty: AGM

Tuesday 28th March 2023, 1pm – 2pm

Room N, Portcullis House

Attendees: David Linden MP (Co-Chair), Baroness Ruth Lister (Co-Chair), Robin Millar MP, Afzal Khan MP, Cat Smith MP, Stephen Crabb MP, Allan Dorans MP, Nansi Morgan (Office of David Linden MP), Mina (Office of Afzal Khan MP), and Zhané Edwards (Co-Secretariat, CPAG).

Apologies: Baroness Philippa Stroud, Lyn Brown MP, Tony Lloyd MP, Beth Winter MP, and Rob Donnolly (Co-Secretariat, The Equality Trust).

1) Welcome and introductions by Co-Chair, David Linden MP

2) Election of Co-Chairs and Officers, and approval of the Secretariat

The following parliamentarians were elected as Officers and Co-Chairs:

- David Linden MP (Chair and Registered Contact)
- Baroness Ruth Lister (Co-Chair)
- Afzal Khan MP (Vice-Chair)
- Robin Millar MP (Vice-Chair)
- Cat Smith MP (Vice-Chair)
- Beth Winter MP (Vice-Chair – elected in absentia)
- Baroness Philippa Stroud (Vice-Chair – elected in absentia)
- Tony Lloyd MP - (Vice-Chair – elected in absentia)
- Lyn Brown MP - (Vice-Chair – elected in absentia)

Parliamentarians present approved all Officers and Co-Chairs. All approved of Child Poverty Action Group and The Equality Trust acting jointly as Secretariat of the APPG on Poverty.

3) Approval of the income and expenditure statement

- The total support received by the APPG, either in money or in-kind, did not reach the threshold of £12,500 and so no statement was produced.

4) Discussion of the inadequacy of social security report and approval of recommendations

- It was discussed that there needs to be more quotes from the lived experience witnesses and other quotes written in the evidence submitted.
- The report will focus on inadequacy and mentions of other aspects of the social security system, i.e., take-up, should be removed.
- The APPG acknowledged the government's ambition to fix childcare, and will welcome this in the report, ensuring it is properly funded.
- In relation to the uprating process, the APPG will acknowledge the limitations of the computer system faced by DWP and suggest a workaround.
- Recommendations will be simplified and reordered to make more sense.
- It was noted that inflation for low income groups is not always higher than that of the general population, but only in the case when the inflation of essentials is rising.

- It was suggested that DWP should consider benchmarking against the OBR's low-income inflation index.
- Co-chairs clarified that the independent panel can only recommend benefit rates, and would not be given the remit to decide the levels.
- Co-chairs also asked for the report to better reflect the variety of evidence submitted.
- The introduction will include more about why adequacy matters.

ACTION – Zhané to include IFS' analysis on time needed for benefits to catch-up from sub-inflationary uprating losses.

ACTION – Zhané to read through Officers' comments over email and make edits.

5) Publication of the inadequacy of social security report and timeline

- It was agreed to hope to publish the report w/c 24th April.
- The report will be sent to the Work and Pensions Committee to support their inquiry into the inadequacy of social security.

ACTION – Zhané to send second draft of report to Officers.

6) The Children's Society's co-design project with young people - event proposal

- TCS reached out to the APPG to host a joint event as part of their co-design project with young people on their views on social security.
- TCS suggested there might be a performance as part of the event, however, TCS needs to be aware the event will be taking place in a room in Portcullis House so might not have the space to do so.
- If the event goes ahead, TCS must tell the Secretariat the constituencies of the young people attending, so their MPs can be invited to the event.

ACTION – Zhané to speak with TCS and ask for more details

7) AOB

- Next APPG meeting will be an Officer-only meeting to discuss the future work of the APPG for 2023/24.
- Robin raised issues around whether the welfare state is going in the right direction in terms of preventing poverty. He asked whether the government are tackling poverty in the right way.
- Robin also highlighted whether current poverty measures are working – median income/ relative poverty.
- Ruth clarified there is a difference between poverty measures and definitions of poverty.

ACTION – Ruth to speak with Baroness Philippa Stroud about a presentation to the APPG on the Social Metric Commission's poverty metrics

ACTION – Ruth to send Robin her work on poverty.

ACTION – Zhané/ Rob to liaise with Officers to arrange next APPG meeting.

Meeting closed at 13:30.