

## Independent Review of Adult Social Care in Scotland

Note of meeting – 21 January 2021 – 9:00 – 11:00

<b>Present – via MS Teams</b>	
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 The full secretariat support team
Apologies	
<b>1) Welcome and Introductions</b>	
<p>Mr Feeley welcomed the panel to the final meeting of the Independent Review of Adult Social Care Advisory Panel and reported that the Cabinet Secretary for Health and Sport, Ms Jeane Freeman, would like to have a conversation with the panel after the publication of the report.</p> <p><i><b>Action:</b> Secretariat to arrange a date for Ms Freeman to meet with the panel.</i></p>	
<b>2) Minute of last meeting – 14 January 2021 (IRASC (051))</b>	
The minutes of the previous meeting were signed off without amendment.	
<b>3) Discussion on Report</b>	
<p>Mr Feeley introduced today's discussion as an exploration of messaging and presentation around the report. He confirmed he was on track to submit the report to Ms Freeman on 29 January and noted that the latest version of the report circulated to the panel was close to final, though there were a few tweaks being made to how it looked. He then drew the panel's attention to where changes had been made, referring them to some potential issues around social work, particularly looking at how to ensure there is no fragmentation of services between children's, adult care and criminal justice, and referred to work being done in these other strands of social work. He noted that a further in-depth examination of the role of social work and the best way to structure it was needed, and as such the adult social care report has identified it as a challenge rather than tried to come up with a definitive solution.</p> <p>Cllr Currie welcomed this approach, identifying some current issues facing social work including portability, assessments, budgetary constraints. The secretariat confirmed that there is work underway through the Office of the Chief Social Work Advisor looking at how to avoid social work being fragmented.</p> <p>Mr Feeley noted that the report was embargoed until it was published, and that that date was to be determined by Ms Freeman. He advised this was the process for other independent reviews. At this point he expected there to be media interest and a round of interviews but he did not intend to give a press conference. On being asked by the</p>	

panel for guidance on whether they were able to express views if they were approached, Mr Feeley assured them they should feel free to comment. He noted that if the media in England picked up the report as a talking point in reference to the social care system there that Ms Dixon would be best qualified to talk to them. She welcomed that opportunity.

On being asked by Mr Henriks what happened after publication Mr Feeley explained some potential further steps including, parliamentary time for debate, pre-existing parliamentary committee work on social care and how the recommendations of the report might be incorporated into manifestos in the run up to the election in May.

Mr Henriks described the report as “A lighthouse, bringing direction”. He then asked about strategies to help stakeholders begin to respond to the report, backed up by Ms Dixon asking about briefings for stakeholders, and the importance of the support of those who had been part of the engagement process. Mr Feeley confirmed there was a stakeholder plan, including follow-up meetings with some of the organisations who contributed to the report and that much of the following discussion was to feed into this process.

Cllr Currie asked about expectations around timetable, the political process and implementation of recommendations. Mr Feeley responded that he could not anticipate ahead of the Cabinet Secretary’s response and that decisions about timing are for her and government in consultation with other parties. He noted the report was clear that some areas required legislation and therefore time, but that there were other recommendations that could be almost immediately implemented given sufficient political will. Reference was made to both the timing of the Scottish Parliamentary budget on 28 January and the short period before political parties would be publishing their manifestos.

Mr Feeley referred the panel to the 5 questions he had identified and circulated in advance of the meeting.

1. What are the two or three headline messages that you would like to see?
2. What are the presentational risks from your perspective?
3. What should we say about what is in the report from the point of view of the various groups of people who need social care support - e.g. for older people, for disabled people etc.
4. What should we say about what the report means for the range of providers - e.g. for care homes, for the 3rd sector, for local government?
5. What should we say about why change is required?

On the question of headline messages Ms Gardner wanted to stress that adult social care is not about them **and** us; that this is not about someone else, it is about all of us, you, your family and your neighbours. Mr Chisholm felt messaging had to start with what social care is, and that this definition had to be reset for many people. He identified human rights, collaborative commissioning and investment as his key issues but recognised that while they would land well with stakeholders they were not necessarily great headings in terms of popular messaging with the wider public.

Cllr Currie highlighted that the report was not a response to Covid-19, that the issues and concerns it addresses existed before the pandemic, and it would be

disappointing if the pandemic became the narrative. He identified investment as important and the message that these changes could make a difference to the lives of individuals.

Ms Dixon agreed with the need to lead with the personal human argument of the right to a good life. She referenced the message of “a time to be bold” and warned against softening the arguments being made. She also referenced some of the strong language in the report about chasms and gaps and that headlines should be strong in that the current system is failing people and it needs to change.

Mr Elder-Woodward identified the human rights based approach as being key and wanted it to be recognised that the report valued listening to the voice of lived experience.

Mr Henriks made a point of talking to people, not just professionals and the need for the narrative not to become too academic in presentation.

Mr Feeley thanked the panel for the useful steer in terms of what to prioritise and elevate in messaging and moved on to survey the panel on presentational risks.

Ms Dixon identified the danger that the recommendations were not seen as radical enough or that change was not happening quickly enough. She thought the public were likely to question how investment could be afforded with the economy on its knees and that there would be questions about centralisation. Cllr Currie identified centralisation versus localism, local government versus a national approach and proximity to the publication of the Scottish budget as presentational risks. He thought the biggest risk was around expectations on delivery and pace of change and highlighted the likely responses from local government about finance, investment and the practical reality of delivering change. He also warned against becoming bogged down by talk about commissioning and structures rather than the message about that individuals cared about – the services they would receive.

Mr Chisholm also talked about expectations around centralisation, finance and the budget, and added the expectation from some quarters that this was to be a report about care homes. Mr Feeley observed that there was also a converse concern that the review would focus too much on care homes, but given the events of the last year there may be criticism that the report doesn't focus enough on that sector. Ms Gardner said she felt the report struck the right balance and recognised that there were many more older people who did not or should not need to live in a care home if they got the right support at home.

Mr Elder-Woodward made several points including a parallel that could be drawn between the pandemic and the birth of the NHS just after World War 2 when the economy was weak; emphasising the narrative that social care is a waste of money if it creates walls; stressing that social care needs to promote citizenship; and the need to be prepared for the impact on local authorities. Cllr Currie agreed that there was a danger that Local Government and the social care workforce may feel let down by a narrative that says what has been done is not good enough. Mr Feeley recognised this and said he had worked to ensure that blame was removed from the report; that failings were with the system, not the people; and that there was recognition and celebration of what the social care workforce had done.

Mr Feeley stated they had already touched on his third and fourth points about what was in the report for different care groups and the range of different providers. He asked if there were any more specific or nuanced points to be made here. Discussion followed on the chapter on commissioning and how that would land with the range of providers. It was noted that many of the recommendations were developed from the work and contributions of provider organisations. In reference to managing people's expectations Mr Feeley noted this was brought up often in engagement sessions and he had tried to be clear that it had taken 60 years for the system to get to this point and that the report contains the work of at least the lifetime of a parliament.

Mr Feeley turned to his final question about what they should say about why change is required, noting he was keen not to sugar-coat the current situation but without assigning blame.

Mr Feeley made the analogy of social care not as a super tanker that needs to be turned round, but as a flotilla of small boats that need manoeuvred to get them all heading in the same direction and came back to Mr Henriks vision of the report as a lighthouse pointing the way.

Final points on messaging were made by Mr Elder-Woodward on social care as an investment in society as a whole and Mr Welsh on pitching the reform of adult social care to Scotland in 2021 as a world class, leading edge solution to an intractable problem, and that the report's notion of a social covenant and citizenship had a particularly Scottish resonance.

Mr Feeley thanked the panel for these points and said he would get to work, with the help of the secretariat, on pulling together a set of talking points for reference and circulate to the panel. He also suggested resending the reference fact sheet sent out at one of their first meetings.

**Action:** *Secretariat to assist Mr Feeley in drafting a set of references and talking points for the panel.*

**Action:** *Secretariat to recirculate fact sheet on adult social care in Scotland.*

Mr Feeley ended by giving his heartfelt thanks to the panel for the insight and wisdom they contributed to the review, stating it had been a real pleasure to work with each of them. He reminded them they would shortly have a final chance to meet as a group along with Ms Freeman.