

**To:** Social Justice and Social Security Committee  
The Scottish Parliament  
Edinburgh  
EH99 1SP

**Date:** 18<sup>th</sup> August 2023

Dear Convener

**Response to letter of 6 July 2023 regarding reappointment to the Poverty and Inequality Commission.**

Thank you for your letter of 6 July 2023 regarding reappointment to the Poverty and Inequality Commission. Apologies for the delay in my response. The last few weeks have been an extremely stressful and anxious period as I and my fellow Commissioners were not aware that our Chair had nominated us for reappointment.

Our engagement with the Chair to recover this difficult situation has resulted in a loss of confidence and trust in the Chair. After several subsequent meetings with our Sponsor Team, and due to the professionally compromised and untenable situation we were put in, my fellow commissioners and I tendered our resignations to the Cabinet Secretary for Social Justice on the 9<sup>th</sup> August 2023.

These resignations have been accepted albeit with the caveat that we must work our three months' notice period. In the interest of transparency please find below the reason given by the Cabinet Secretary in her letter to us on 16 August 2023:

*“Whilst I appreciate that you wish to resign with immediate effect I am afraid that I cannot release you and your fellow commissioners immediately as doing so would be willingly placing Scottish Ministers in breach of the Child Poverty (Scotland) Act 2017 as amended by the Public Services Reform (Poverty and Inequality Commission) Order 2018, which states that the Commission must have a minimum of 4 and a maximum of 8 members in addition to a Chair”*

I would like to thank you and the members of the Social Justice and Social Security Committee for making time in your busy agenda to discuss reappointments to the Commission and I apologise for any inconvenience.

Yours Sincerely

Shona Stephen  
Commissioner  
Poverty and Inequality Commission