

**Meeting of Cross-Party Group on Industrial Communities in the Scottish Parliament
Wednesday 30 October 2013 at 5.15pm, Committee Room 4 , Scottish Parliament**

Attending Councillors	Attending Officers	Attending MSPs
Bob Young	Ian McDougal Anne Houston Malcolm Leitch Ian McCrory Ian Smith Paul Kane Peter Kelly	Neil Bibby Colin Beattie John Mason

Apologies	
Carole Coull Pauline Douglas Adam Ingram MSP Helen Eadie MSP Councillor Andrew Wood Councillor Derek Rosie Councillor John Dempsey Councillor Heather McVey Councillor Alex Bennet	Councillor William Menzies Mark Griffin MSP Steve Fothergill Dave Parry

1. Attendance and Apologies

Colin Beattie, Vice Convenor, welcomed members to the meeting and confirmed that he would replace Helen Eadie in the chair for this meeting due to Helen being indisposed. Anne Houston read out apologies (above). Minutes were approved.

2. Presentation on Living Wage/Zero Hours contracts - Peter Kelly, Poverty Alliance

Peter began by highlighting that the Poverty Alliance was a collection of organisations who had been campaigning on 'in work' poverty for many years and who launched the Scottish Living Wage campaign in 2007. He gave the group a number of statistics which described the Living Wage issue i.e 20% of UK employees earn less than the Living Wage, 25% of women and 14% of men earn less than the Living Wage with young people being most at risk. In terms of sectors, 67% of people working in the hospitality industry earned less than the Living Wage compared to 2% of people working in public administration. Glasgow City Council were the first Local Authority to implement

the Living Wage in 2007 and have now been followed by the majority of Local Authorities. The Scottish Government have confirmed they are committed to the Living Wage and there has also been buy in from public sector unions, NHS and the Scottish Government to be Living Wage Employers. Peter suggested that the next part of the strategy should be around encouraging private sector employers to sign up and also consider how Scottish Government Procurement Policy can support the Living Wage.

Peter then went on to speak about the impact of Zero Hours contracts on people. He said that some research had highlighted that 200,000 employees were affected however research by the CIPD suggested the figure may be closer to £1million. The figures for people affected in different sectors were as follows; Education (35%), Healthcare (27%) and Homecare (40%). Issues affecting people on Zero Hours contracts included; difficulty in financial planning, difficulty in being able to claim in-work benefits, no sick pay, holiday pay or travel time.

Peter's view was that the Living Wage needed to be seen as part of a package aimed at improving the quality of working conditions including addressing Zero Hours contracts. He also highlighted that the Scottish Affairs Select Committee have recently completed a report on Zero Hours contracts which would be published imminently.

In the following discussion a number of CPG members reported on their own experiences of people who had been subjected to Zero Hours contracts. Key issues that were reported were that people were tied into signed contracts which meant they had to be available for work but where no guarantee of minimum hours was given. It was generally agreed that it may need legislative change to address the issue effectively but also possibly raise the issue with the Scottish Government in terms of procurement policy. Peter confirmed that where Zero Hours contracts were excluded from procurement in London, there have been no legal challenges to date. The question was asked whether people would have their benefits sanctioned if they refused to sign a Zero Hours contract and Peter Kelly agreed to investigate this and get back to Anne with a conclusion.

Colin Beattie thanked Peter for his contribution and confirmed that this was an issue that the Cross Party Group might want to return to at a later date.

3. Future Priorities for the Cross Party Group

Anne led a brief discussion on future priorities of the Cross Party Group. It was agreed that Jobs and Employability should remain the most important priorities for the CPG with speakers being brought in to discuss these and related issues. The severe impact of the decline of the Coal Industry in areas like East Ayrshire was raised and it was suggested by Colin Beattie that it might be helpful to invite Fergus Ewing, Minister for Energy, Enterprise and Tourism to the next CPG to discuss the future of the Coal Industry in Scotland and also to gain some insight into the Scottish Government's policy on Renewable energy and whether this is an area that might benefit Industrial Communities. Colin agreed to invite Fergus Ewing to address the next meeting on 22 January 2014. Other suggestions for future discussion topics for the CPG included Regeneration activities including input from Scottish Enterprise on their efforts to improve the economy and Clyde Gateway Regeneration Company on the role that they are playing in the Regeneration of the East End of Glasgow. It was also suggested that an input from the Scottish Government Regeneration Team would be useful. In addition, it was thought it might be useful for the CPG to consider what are the emerging issues that it would be useful to get an objective briefing on e.g. fracking. Anne agreed to draw up a paper bringing together some of the above suggestions and recommendations.

4. Report on Meeting with Nicola Sturgeon, Deputy First Minister

Anne reported on the meeting which took place with the Deputy First Minister immediately after the last CPG. Most of the members had received a briefing on the meeting which had covered the issues of European Structural Funds Programme and Assisted Areas Map. The next meeting with the Deputy First Minister is scheduled to take place on Wednesday 11th December at 2.30pm. Anne invited CPG members to consider what agenda items would be appropriate to discuss with the DFM at this meeting. It was agreed that it would be appropriate to discuss the continued progress with preparations for the 21014-20 European Structural Funds Programmes and in particular, the spatial targeting of these. In addition, a further discussion around the review of the Assisted Areas Map would be useful. Other suggested items included the refreshed ICA Plan (although it was felt that it may not be ready in time) and the issue of Zero Hours contracts being addressed in Procurement Policy.

5. Date of Next Meeting

Colin Beattie thanked Peter Kelly for his informative presentation and members for their attendance. He confirmed that the next meeting of the CPG would take place on Wednesday 22nd January 2014. Colin also asked that the best wishes of the group be passed to Helen Eadie.