

Attendance

Daniel Johnson MSP (Chair), Kezia Dugdale MSP, Nick Bibby, Ciaran McDonald, David Waite, Grace O’Keefe, Peter Clark, Michael Keating, Rebekah Widdowfield, Stuart Fancey, Alison Elliot, Niall Kerr, Sara Davidson, Iain Shearer

Apologies

Richard Leonard MSP, Jackie Baillie MSP, Fiona Barlow

1.0 Introductions and Welcome

DJ welcomed the group and invited those present to introduce themselves. He explained that, as this was the AGM, there would be some administrative business in addition to the topic of the meeting.

2.0 Minutes of the Last Meetings

2.1 Minutes of 20 September 2017 (Attached)
Agreed without changes.

2.2 Minutes of 13 December 2017 (Attached)
Agreed without changes.

3.0 AGM

3.1 Election of Office Bearers

3.1.1 Convenor

Daniel Johnson was nominated by Nick Bibby and seconded by Rebekah Widdowfield. There being no other nominations, he was elected unopposed.

3.1.2 Deputy Convenor

Andy Wightman was nominated by Daniel Johnson and seconded by Stuart Fancey. There being no other nominations, he was elected unopposed.

3.1.3 Secretary

Nick Bibby was nominated by Daniel Johnson and seconded by Rebekah Widdowfield. There being no other nominations, he was elected unopposed.

3.2 Membership

The following existing and new members were all agreed:

MSP Members

- Daniel Johnson MSP
- Andy Wightman MSP

- Jackie Baillie MSP
- Alex Cole Hamilton MSP
- Kezia Dugdale MSP
- Richard Leonard MSP

Individual Members

- Mark Diffley

Institutional Members

- Campaign for Social Science
- AQMEN (Applied Quantitative Methods Network)
- Centre for Remote and Rural Studies
- SKaPE – Centre for Science, Knowledge and Policy
- Academy of Government
- Centre on Constitutional Change
- Fraser of Allander institute
- Institute for Social Policy, Housing and Equalities Research
- International Public Policy Institute
- Ipsos MORI Scotland
- Policy Scotland
- Public Service and Governance Research Group
- SRUC Rural Policy Centre
- ScotCen
- What Works Scotland
- Young Academy of Scotland

Proposed Members

- Royal Society of Edinburgh
- Scottish Funding Council
- Universities Scotland
- Joseph Rowntree Foundation
- Centre for Energy Policy
- Scottish Graduate School on Social Science

3.3 Review of activities, 2017-18 (attached)

21 June 2017: The Group heard presentations from Profs Rebecca Kay (Glasgow) and David Bell (Stirling). Prof Bell provided an overview of statistics relating to migration and answered questions about the impact of migrants on public services and how that could be measured. Prof Kay discussed her research into the social support offered to migrants in Scotland and answered questions on the same topic.

20 September 2017: The Group heard presentations from Profs Glen Bramley (Heriot Watt) and Kenneth Gibb (Glasgow) into issues relating to poverty and housing in Scotland. Prof Bramley discussed the political and policy climate in Scotland for addressing poverty and housing pressure and

current definitional models. Prof Gibb highlighted that policy errors, such as the bedroom tax, had coincided with a reduction in analytical capacity in government. He gave members details of the new UK Collaborative Centre for Housing Evidence, which he leads and which aims to improve the evidence base

13 December 2017: The Group heard presentations from Prof Joyce Tait (Edinburgh) and Dr Anne Smith (Glasgow Caledonian). Dr Smith discussed the role of the individual and community in creating cultures of innovation and answered questions about how Scotland could better encourage communities to learn from good practice. Prof Tait discussed the impact of regulatory frameworks on emerging industries and how these, in turn, relate to engendering innovation.

3.4 Topics of interest for the year ahead

The group suggested a number of topics, including federalism, local government, wellness, and the use of statistics. The secretary was asked to investigate.

4.0 Presentations

4.1 Ian Shearer, Consumer Futures Unit

Ian explained that the Consumer Futures Unit (CFU) was part of the Citizens Advice Bureaux and that it was one of the largest consumers of applied research in Scotland. CFU focusses on water, energy and postal services. It had used this project to test out deliberative methods, further details of which were made available in a report.

He then highlighted policy recommendations resulting from the research which are contained in the attached slides.

1.1 Sara Davidson, Ipsos MORI

Sara introduced the group to the data, saying that 56% of people had given a great deal of thought to the issue of energy efficiency but that, while there was a sense that prices were too high, reducing consumption was not seen as a pressing consideration. Participants also highlighted that technological change meant that there could be an 'infinite cycle' of home improvements.

The most popular incentive (see slides) were the reductions in Council Tax, particularly the option of \$500 in one year. There was, conversely, Very strong opposition to any regulations or fines.

1.2 Questions and Discussion

DJ asked about counter0intuitive decisions with respondents arguing against measures that would save them money. KD asked about the use of existing powers. AE asked about whether participants persuaded each other.

5.0 A.O.C.B.

There was no AOCB.