Dear Derek Mitchell,

**Hidden Lives – New Beginnings: destitution, asylum and insecure immigration status in Scotland**

I am writing to establish the progress being made by the CoSLA Strategic Migration Partnership in addressing the Committee’s recommendations at paragraphs 140 and 179 of our report which relate to public authority guidance.

Recommendation 19 (para 140) concerned updating the Establishing Migrants’ Access to Benefits and Local Authority Services guidance. You said in your letter that you would “continue to work with COSLA to identify what further support local authorities require to support those with NRPF [No Recourse to Public Funds], including considering if existing guidance should be updated”.

Recommendation 23 (para 179) was about the level of misunderstanding around the role and application of human rights assessments. We asked for the CoSLA guidance, ‘Establishing Migrants’ Access to Benefits and Local Authority Services’ to be updated accordingly and for an update within three months from the publication of our report.

We understand from the Scottish Government’s response to our report on 21 July 2017 that CoSLA and the Scottish Government are working to identify what further
support local authorities require to support those with No Recourse to Public Funds, including considering if existing guidance should be updated. It would be helpful to know when a decision will be reached on updating the guidance and what additional support has been identified for local authorities. We have also written to the Scottish Government on the same points.

I look forward to hearing from you as your work on addressing our recommendations progresses. A response by the end of the year would be appreciated as we look to consider our follow-up work in this area in the New Year.

Yours sincerely,

Christina McKelvie MSP
Convener
Equalities and Human Rights Committee