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11 June 2018

Bob,

## CONSULTATION ON THE SCOTTISH GOVERNMENT'S DRAFT NATIONAL OUTCOMES

I would like to reiterate my gratitude to the Local Government & Communities Committee for playing a vital coordination role in the scrutiny process of the Scottish Government's draft National Outcomes, which resulted in very helpful recommendations that were published in the inquiry report on 15 May 2018.

The Scottish Government welcomes the Scottish Parliament's and stakeholder involvement in supporting the National Performance Framework (NPF), and we are committed to working together to drive forward the new Framework after its publication on 11 June 2018.

The new NPF will comprise of:

- **Purpose Statement:** setting out the direction and ambition for Scotland
- **Values Statement:** describing the underpinning principles that we share as a nation
- **11 National Outcomes:** describing what the Scottish Government wants to achieve and the kind of Scotland we want to see
- **81 National Indicators:** will enable us to track progress towards the Purpose and National Outcomes.

I enclose the Scottish Government's response to the report, which addresses the specific recommendations made by the Local Government & Communities Committee. I will write to each individual Committee and address their recommendations separately.

**DEREK MACKAY**

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# LOCAL GOVERNMENT & COMMUNITIES COMMITTEE – REPORT ON THE CONSULTATION ON THE SCOTTISH GOVERNMENT’S DRAFT NATIONAL OUTCOMES

## SCOTTISH GOVERNMENT RESPONSE TO LG&C COMMITTEE’S RECOMMENDATIONS

### 1. PURPOSE STATEMENT

The Committee invites the Scottish Government to consider, however, revisiting the wording of its Purpose to separate out the means from the desired ends to more clearly focus on the Scottish Government’s vision for the future of Scotland.

#### ***SG Position:***

The Scottish Government believes that including a statement about the means of achieving a more successful country with opportunities for all of Scotland to flourish is important, and therefore will keep the Purpose put to the Parliament in March. Bringing wellbeing and inclusive economic growth into the Purpose strengthens it, aligning with the ambitions described in our Economic Strategy. This is designed to ensure that our policies give equal prominence to economic, social and environmental issues, with economic growth that is both sustainable and inclusive.

### 2. UN SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT GOALS REPORTING

However, given the Scottish Government’s commitment to the UN SDGs, it is important that progress towards these targets and indicators is measured and reported. We would therefore welcome confirmation from the Scottish Government as to how often they will report against the UN SDGs.

#### ***SG Position:***

We will introduce a new website to help users in adapting to the new National Performance Framework, in particular to understanding the changes in the Indicators and Outcomes, and the changes to the structure of the overall framework. Through this dashboard approach we will also make clear alignments with the UN Sustainable Development Goals.

There will continue to be an annual performance update published alongside the budget. The Scottish Government will use feedback to refine this product for the Parliamentary audience and develop its wider visibility.

### 3. INDICATOR COMPARABILITY OVER TIME

The Committee is aware that, as the NPF is refreshed every 5 years, the range and type of data collected may change during that time as a result of improved data collection or the identification of new more meaningful measures. In those circumstances there is a risk that year on year comparisons may not be achievable. We therefore seek confirmation from the Scottish Government of whether the data provided by the National indicators will remain comparable so that progress against the National Outcomes can be compared year on year.

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### **SG Position:**

Scottish Government's Chief Statistician used five broad principles to assess potential indicators of progress for each of the outcomes:

- Indicators that enable us to measure progress against each Outcome and avoid any major gaps in measures;
- describe differences across Scottish society;
- are underpinned by data that is technically good enough (e.g. is precise enough to identify change, and consistent over time/ between areas);
- use definitions consistent with the UN Sustainable Development Goal indicators; and
- are feasible/affordable, where new data is required.

The starting point for the review of Indicators was the things it was important to measure not necessarily what we could measure immediately. However, many new indicators were from established sources of data that means they already have consistent year on year comparisons. For the indicators which have been dropped from the National Performance Framework, data will continue to be collected. They will continue to be reported on Scotland Performs for the next year. After that, there will be links from Scotland Performs to the relevant published data.

## **4. INDICATORS ON PUBLIC SERVICE QUALITY**

The Committee seeks reassurance from the Scottish Government that high quality public services will continue to be a national priority. The Committee would welcome some further details on how progress against this previous National Outcome will continue to be measured and evaluated.

### **SG Position:**

The Scottish Government has a continued focus on improving the quality of public services in Scotland. This is a means by which we will achieve our Purpose and National Outcomes. A significant number of measures capture quality in public services (for example the indicator "quality of public services", "quality of healthcare experience") or outcomes from public services (for example "educational attainment", or "crime victimisation").

## **5. REPORTING ON DROPPED INDICATORS**

We welcome the Cabinet Secretary's confirmation that indicators and outcomes that no longer form part of the NPF will continue to be measured and reported on. The Committee therefore requests information on where those indicators and outcomes will be reported and suggest that there is clear signposting on Scotland Performs to where progress against the indicators and outcomes can continue to be found.

### **SG Position:**

For the indicators which have been dropped from the National Performance Framework, data will continue to be collected. The indicators will continue to be reported on Scotland

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Performs for the next year. After that, there will be links from Scotland Performs to the relevant published data.

## **6. EMBEDDING OUTCOMES APPROACH**

The Committee welcomes the Cabinet Secretary's commitment to ensure that the NPF is fully embedded throughout the public sector. However, we request further information on how this will be monitored and reported on an ongoing basis.

### ***SG Position:***

The Scottish Government is committed to fully embedding the NPF throughout the public sector. It is in the process to set up a governance structure and work programme appropriate to the scale of the task. Importantly, it recognises the scope and spirit of the NPF as a Scotland wide performance framework and a platform for collaboration which means that progress can only be delivered through working in partnership. The Scottish Government will work with its public sector partners to raise awareness of the NPF ambition, to exchange best practice for delivering outcomes and devise a system of reporting which is fit for purpose and ensures joint buy in. Some of the reporting architecture is already in place. For example, Community Planning Partnerships have produced Local Outcome Improvement Plans, which set out local outcomes they and partner bodies will prioritise for improvement. These local outcomes should be consistent with our National Outcomes. The Community Empowerment (Scotland) Act 2015 requires CPPs to produce annual reports which inform their communities of progress made towards these local outcomes.

## **7. PARLIAMENTARY SCRUTINY APPROACH**

The Committee recommends that the Scottish Government takes steps to extend the timescale for the Parliamentary scrutiny of the next draft National Performance Framework so that Committees are able to conduct a more in depth scrutiny of the revised National Outcomes and the consultation undertaken to produce them.

### ***SG Position:***

The Community Empowerment Act provides that the draft National Outcomes must be laid in Parliament for a period of 40 days and along with a report on the consultation. This takes place under Rule 17.5 Consulting the Parliament, of the Scottish Parliament's Standing Orders. The National Outcomes cannot be published until after the 40 day period. However, ahead of the next review of National Outcomes under the Community Empowerment Act, the Government will review arrangements for consulting Parliament.

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19 June 2018

## CONSULTATION ON THE SCOTTISH GOVERNMENT'S DRAFT NATIONAL OUTCOMES

Bob,

You asked for further information about one recommendation from the Local Government and Communities Committee report (para 28), namely *"We seek a response from the Scottish Government on whether future consultations on the National Outcomes will provide for greater involvement of civic society organisations and Community Planning Partnerships"*.

Apologies for not covering this in my original response. We involved the Open Government network and many community planning partners from around Scotland in the recent National Performance Framework review. However, we will learn from how this review went, and have the ambition to be even more comprehensive in stakeholder engagement in the next review of National Outcomes. As such, the committee's suggestions are a very helpful contribution for when we start planning the next review.



**DEREK MACKAY**

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