Equalities and Human Rights Committee

Thursday 2 March 2017

The Scottish Parliament
Pàrlamaid na h-Alba

Thursday 2 March 2017

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EQUALITIES AND HUMAN RIGHTS COMMITTEE
6th Meeting 2017, Session 5

CONVENER

*Christina McKelvie (Hamilton, Larkhall and Stonehouse) (SNP)

DEPUTY CONVENER

*Alex Cole-Hamilton (Edinburgh Western) (LD)

COMMITTEE MEMBERS

*Jeremy Balfour (Lothian) (Con)
*Willie Coffey (Kilmarnock and Irvine Valley) (SNP)
*Mary Fee (West Scotland) (Lab)
*David Torrance (Kirkcaldy) (SNP)
*Annie Wells (Glasgow) (Con)

*attended

THE FOLLOWING ALSO PARTICIPATED:

Colin Lee (CEMVO Scotland)
Rebecca Marek (Coalition for Racial Equality and Rights)
Ann McInnes (BEMIS Scotland)
Rami Ousta (BEMIS Scotland)

CLERK TO THE COMMITTEE

Claire Menzies

LOCATION

The Mary Fairfax Somerville Room (CR2)

Scottish Parliament

Equalities and Human Rights Committee

Thursday 2 March 2017

[The Convener opened the meeting at 09:30]

Decision on Taking Business in Private

The Convener (Christina McKelvie): Good morning and welcome to the sixth meeting in 2017 of the Equalities and Human Rights Committee. I make the usual request that electronic devices be set to flight mode or put on silent.

Under agenda item 1, the committee is invited to decide whether to take item 3 in private. Is the committee content to do that?

Members *indicated agreement.*

Removing Barriers: Race, Ethnicity and Employment

09:31

The Convener: Agenda item 2 is a piece of legacy work on the report of our predecessor committee, the Equal Opportunities Committee, entitled "Removing Barriers: race, ethnicity and employment". We will take evidence from three organisations that have expertise in that area. We are happy to have with us Rebecca Marek, who is the policy and parliamentary officer of the Coalition for Racial Equality and Rights, which is known as CRER; Colin Lee, who is the chief executive of the Council of Ethnic Minority Voluntary Sector Organisations, which is commonly known as CEMVO; Rami Ousta, who is the chief executive of BEMIS; and Ann McInnes, who is the modern apprenticeships programme director at BEMIS. I welcome you all.

In the morning sessions that we held to look at the committee's work programme, Rebecca Marek impressed on us how important this piece of work is, so we are really pleased to be covering it this morning, and we are looking forward to hearing from you.

I will give the three organisations a couple of minutes each to tell us about the work that they do. After that, we will ask questions and we can have a free-flowing conversation about the legacy work and where we should go from here. Rebecca, would you like to kick things off?

Rebecca Marek (Coalition for Racial Equality and Rights): Sure. Thank you for having this scoping session. As the convener said, the work that your predecessor committee undertook in this area was very important, and we are excited to have the opportunity to pick it up and move forward on it.

CRER pushed for the original inquiry because employment is such a significant issue for minority ethnic communities in Scotland. If we want to put a big crack in the barriers to equality that communities face, it is extremely important that we tackle employment. That will lead to improvements in community cohesion and tackle poverty and housing issues—basically, it will open a lot of doors.

In our written submission, we outline some of the limitations of your predecessor committee's inquiry and emphasise that employment is an important area that we must continue to move forward on. We were very impressed by some of the recommendations that the Equal Opportunities Committee made, but it is possible to have the world's best recommendations without their being

implemented or monitored correctly. We would hate it if what is a really good piece of work was to turn into a piece of work that is referenced five years down the line, when we pick up the issue again, because not much has changed. We welcome this scoping session and hope that it will lead to real change for communities.

I am not sure whether the committee knows this, but the report of the McGregor-Smith review on race in the workplace came out earlier this week, and its title is "The time for talking is over. Now is the time to act." That is definitely how CRER feels about the issue. The report summarises a lot of great evidence, pulls together a lot of work that has been done previously and makes some really practical recommendations. We hope that the committee will be able to act rather than just talk about the issue.

The Convener: We had rather hoped that our predecessor committee's report had not been gathering dust on a shelf, but we have had to dust it down and bring it back out.

That is great, Rebecca. We will look for the McGregor-Smith report and take it into account.

Colin Lee (CEMVO Scotland): Thank you for inviting the Council of Ethnic Minority Voluntary Sector Organisations Scotland to give evidence today. I am pleased to be here and to be part of what I hope will be a worthwhile session.

I am sure that you will ask a lot of questions about progress and so on, but we are just at the start of the journey. CEMVO is focused on working with the Scottish Government on the race equality framework for Scotland as a strategic partner. We do a lot of work that covers employability in particular. We have developed an ethnic minority women's network, which has held two or three meetings, and our most recent meeting focused on women and employability given the race equality framework agenda's lens on the issues and barriers that ethnic minority women face. I have the findings and the feedback with me and I can share that with you later.

We also do a lot of work on social enterprise. That fits into the Scottish Government's social enterprise strategy, which came out last year and looks at the next 10 years. A lot of its content looks at equality, too. We support ethnic minority young people to develop social enterprise because that is often the only route into the labour market for them. We also support organisations to develop social enterprise, and that creates jobs and creativity in the sector.

The race equality framework made a recommendation on public appointments, and we have been working with the Scottish Government's public appointments team to look at how we increase ethnic minority representation on public boards. Again, that fits into the work that the Scottish Government is progressing in that area.

We have a race equality mainstreaming programme, through which we support the public sector to try to improve its performance on race equality, and we provide free consultancy support that looks at, for example, workforce development issues. We have come across a lot of issues to do with non-disclosure rates as well as barriers that ethnic minorities face in applications and the success rates of applicants.

We have just started an ethnic minority employability programme for women, which is funded for the next four years through the Big Lottery Fund. The programme has two strands: the first looks at employability and the other one looks at health and wellbeing, which is very much about supporting women who are quite far from the labour market and need to have their confidence and self-esteem built and so on. We are doing a lot of work that touches on the employability side, and I am more than happy to expand on that at some point.

The Convener: You have made lots of points that we will be interested in. When I visited the Amina Muslim women resource centre last year, the women told me that there are multiple barriers to employment and that they face cultural barriers simply because they are women. We are really keen to hear about your work on the women's network and the employability scheme.

Rami—it is nice to see you.

Rami Ousta (BEMIS Scotland): Good morning. Same here.

The Convener: It is good to have you here. Will you give us a wee overview of your organisation's work before we move on to ask Ann McInnes to provide information on the specific project that she is working on?

Rami Ousta: Sure. I will talk in general terms for two minutes before commenting on today's topic. As an umbrella organisation, we work within three overarching objectives. The focus is on race equality rather than just racism and discrimination.

The first objective is what we call capacity building. Everyone talks about capacity building—it has become like chewing gum—but for us its rationale and context is about enabling active democratic participation by underrepresented community groups that are always under the radar. In that context, our success rate in Scotland is second to none. The diversity of the groups that we work with reflects the diversity of Scotland. The idea is not just to help those groups but to empower them and enable them to function through being able to serve their own communities and work directly with policy makers. Various

programmes come under that overarching objective, but I will not bore you with those.

The second objective is to influence policy wishes. We, too, are a strategic partner with the Scottish Government and we have been active in feeding into the race equality framework and helping other stakeholders to collaborate on it. We do that proactively; we do not wait for a policy to come up and react by shouting and screaming about it. We are always ahead of the game through research work and intelligence, which we utilise through our established networks across Scotland from the grass-roots communities and stakeholders.

The third area of our work is what we call active citizenship and democratic participation. That enables all stakeholders and minorities to view themselves in the context of being active citizens of Scotland and not just of their local communities. The biggest mistake that we have made in Scotland in the past 30 or 40 years has been to unconsciously encourage minorities to view their ethnicity or religion above their citizenship. The programme is focused on enabling minorities to view themselves, and to be treated, as active citizens of Scotland who participate in all aspects of Scottish life. Our ethnicity and diversity is respected and nobody has stopped us living here, but when we see a barrier that affects that active participation role, we intervene in order to enable people in the communities to function as active citizens of Scotland.

We welcome the speedy response from the new committee and we support its change of name and focus. We are aware that changes have occurred since the report was published, but it is important to remember that the recommendations are still valid and that we need to work on them by adding different dimensions. One thing that I would like to see is that, rather than going back and pointing fingers in the context of racism, discrimination and everything else, we revisit the recommendations in the report and check them in relation to race equality, which, obviously, involves all the stakeholders. That is a very important area.

One of the main areas that we work on is modern apprenticeships. We have heard a lot about the underrepresentation of minorities in that context, and on the role of Skills Development Scotland. For the past 16 months, we have been working extensively on modern apprenticeships. New facts are coming up, and there are new areas of support that should be addressed by the committee and by the recommendations. In our opinion, it would be a big mistake just to point a finger at SDS, throw the blame at it and think that it is for that organisation to sort it out. It does not work like that. I think that you will be interested to

hear about the areas that we are progressing in relation to modern apprenticeships.

The Convener: That is a good segue into hearing from Ann McInnes, who can tell us about the work that she is doing on modern apprenticeships.

Ann McInnes (BEMIS Scotland): Thank you for hearing evidence from us this morning. The project has been running for nearly two years, and we have worked with nearly 3,000 young people and their families across Scotland to look at and develop some understanding of the reasons why young people from minority ethnic backgrounds are not choosing to look at modern apprenticeships as a career pathway. We have done a lot of work with SDS and its marketing team, and we have had focus groups of both parents and young people, in which they looked at some of the promotional material, including the myworldofwork.co.uk and apprenticeships.scot websites, to say whether they are attractive, what we could do differently and what language we could use.

Some of the early learning from the programme came from looking at language. There was a big focus on the "earn while you learn" approach, and we discovered early on that that was a switch-off rather than a switch-on, so SDS has moved much more positively towards careers language, qualifications language and professional language, which is much more in tune with higher and further education. That has worked incredibly well.

We have also worked with the Department for Work and Pensions, Education Scotland and local schools that have quite high numbers of minority ethnic pupils on their rolls, in order to build their understanding of what the MA offer now is and what the Scottish apprenticeships are all about, including the foundation and graduate levels. That has worked really well, too.

One thing that we did early on was to look at how widely the Scottish credit and qualifications framework was used, and we found that it was not as widely used as we would like. In conversations with young people who were planning their careers with their families, we learned that it is important that they understand how the qualifications framework works.

We have worked tirelessly with young people, constantly checking with them what we can do differently; we have worked with employers in small and medium-sized enterprises including very small independent ethnic minority employers who had not really looked at any of the public funding that is available to help them to grow their businesses; and we have worked with larger employers, such as Lloyds Bank, on how we can

make their employment offer more attractive to underrepresented groups.

That has been the focus of our work. To date, we have put in about 511 new applications. The conversion rate is not as high as we would like it to be, but there is still a lot of work to be done with employers—we are not even two years in yet.

09:45

We are talking about changing the culture of options. Traditionally, people from minority ethnic families viewed further and higher education as part of a positive progression into professional employment. With the changes around Scottish apprenticeships, we now know that a fundamental route is being missed. We need to work with employers to ensure that they understand how they can reach into the communities and advertise themselves in a way that attracts new people and new talent into their businesses. We have done lots of work with Police Scotland, the Scottish Fire and Rescue Service, the Scottish Ambulance Service and the national health service, because they have a lot of new apprentices coming on board, and that is working really well.

One thing that we always say is that we want to make people curious to find out more. We are not saying that people should do modern apprenticeships instead of further or higher education; we are saying that families need the information that enables them to make informed choices and that they can do that only if the employers and the national training providers get their marketing right so that the options are attractive to people and they can see the real career opportunities that are available.

The Convener: It sounds like a lot of work is going on, and it sounds spot on. We will come back to you on that.

Members are waiting to ask questions. Alex Cole-Hamilton has first dibs this week.

Alex Cole-Hamilton (Edinburgh Western) (LD): Good morning. Thank you for the comprehensive digest that you have given us of your work. You should be proud of what you are doing.

Reading the submissions, I was struck by some of the references to previous efforts that have been made at the policy level to conquer discrimination in employment and the disadvantage that people from ethnic minority communities face. I was reminded of the adage that culture eats strategy for breakfast because the strategies had not succeeded in breaking down some of those barriers. In most organisations, companies and businesses, the culture is maintained first and foremost by the governance of that organisation—the board and the senior management.

My colleagues and I are all familiar with the disadvantage that we have in Scotland in terms of female representation in the governance of organisations, but I am less aware of the disproportionate disadvantage that we have in terms of ethnic minority representation in governance. Can you reflect on how the picture looks and what efforts are in place to build ethnic minority representation on management boards, and how, as policy makers, we might help in that regard?

The Convener: Colin Lee referred specifically to that issue in his opening remarks, so he might want to answer first.

Colin Lee: As I highlighted earlier, in the past year or so, we have been doing quite a bit of work with the Scottish Government's public appointments team and with the Commissioner for Ethical Standards in Public Life in Scotland.

The statistics that have been provided by the Scottish Government and the commissioner's office suggest that the current level of 4 per cent is not too bad; it reflects the census figures. We should not rest on our laurels, however. The process is always evolving and members of committees and so on come and go, which means that the figure will decrease and—hopefully—increase.

We should not just think about ethnicity because, obviously, there is a lot of intersectionality—there are ethnic minority people who are women and others are disabled and so on. We are keen to focus on that diversity.

The work that we have been doing has focused on supporting ethnic minority people who seriously want to apply for public appointments but are unable to deal with the final hurdle. We explain a bit about the application process and discuss what the role actually involves. We do not want to hide the fact that the roles are a lot more involved than people might think that they are, so we get ethnic minority people who are currently public appointees to act as mentors, explain their roles and give people an awareness of the barriers that exist, as well as what they have gained personally from the appointment.

We have also been looking at the competency approach that is taken in the application process, which is pretty difficult for a lot of ethnic minority people—I am referring particularly to those who do not have English as their first language rather than fourth or fifth-generation people, although they, too, struggle to be successful.

We should not forget that some of the 4 per cent hold two or three public appointments at the same

time—they have already got through the door. We want to encourage new entrants or people who have no experience of public appointments and are really keen. We want to increase the 4 per cent figure to something more meaningful.

The Scottish Government's recent statistics show that although there have been quite a few ethnic minority applicants in the past year, their success rate has been very low. That seems to be a stumbling block. We are considering having dialogue with the public appointments team to look at how we deal with people from ethnic minority backgrounds who have applied previously but have not been successful. We would like them to get a bit more support so that they can get over the final hurdle. I am talking about help with things such as interview skills, the application form and how they can present themselves better in applications and at the interview stage. We are considering a lot of work.

What you say about governance is important, especially when it comes to people who manage public bodies. We need to think about how we can get ethnic minority people in particular involved in governance issues so that they can raise race equality as an issue and look at employability issues. We are trying to establish an ethnic minority public appointees network—we have already had three or four meetings—to enable existing public appointees to come together, share experiences and look at peer support. It might even involve mentoring potential future public appointees. We are looking at how we can develop a support structure. We find that ethnic minority public appointees feel a bit isolated because, in the majority of cases, they will be the only ethnic minority representative. We are considering how we can support them and retain them on boards. The work that we are doing on that fits into the work that we are doing on the race equality framework with the Scottish Government equality unit.

Alex Cole-Hamilton: Thank you. That was a very comprehensive and illuminating answer.

My second and final question spins out of the fact that, when it comes to what we know about governance, you said that we had really good statistics, but the data that is collected on employability in ethnic minority communities in general seems sketchier. How can we measure the extent of hidden unemployment? We know that, globally, there is a level of hidden unemployment that we find it difficult to calibrate. Are there particular factors that make it even harder to understand the unemployment picture in ethnic minority communities?

Colin Lee: The Scottish Government is looking at how it can improve the statistics. About two weeks ago, a meeting was held to look at how to improve Government and public body statistics on employability and a raft of other key areas that are relevant to race, such as health and housing. Not just on employment but across the board, the situation is a bit of a maze. Many of the statistics come from Westminster and, as they are collected on a United Kingdom-wide basis, it is quite hard to disentangle from them what is happening in a Scottish context.

As I highlighted, we have been working with the public sector on our race equality mainstreaming programme, which we undertake as a delivery partner of the Scottish Government's equality unit. The problem is not with ethnic minority applications. Some statistical work might need to be done to look at which communities are applying more for jobs in public bodies. For example, there might be more applications from Asian people than from Chinese people. The statistics on that are very clear, and clarifying that might help with targeting recruitment at particular communities.

The number of applications from ethnic minority communities to some public bodies is quite good, but the success rate is very poor—that comes through quite clearly. The gathering of statistics is improving because it is now easier to ask applicants about their ethnicity, but it is still a struggle with the existing workforce. Non-disclosure rates are still high and, in my experience of working across public bodies, an underlying issue is that there is a lot of suspicion among the existing workforce.

The report contains a lot of recommendations about increasing employment and so on among ethnic minority communities, but, until we know what the baseline is, we do not know where we are going to make progress in the next five to 10 years. That information is, therefore, important. We can have as many reviews as we want but, in five or 10 years, unless we know the baseline figure not just for the public sector but for the private sector, we will not know whether we are making progress through the policies and actions that we are developing.

We do not know the statistics on hidden unemployment although, from research, we know that there are high unemployment rates among ethnic minority communities and that there is a lack of support for ethnic minority communities— there is no specialist agency that provides support to ethnic minority people any more. Meridian used to support ethnic minority women, but it disappeared many years ago and there is no such agency in Edinburgh, although there is Skillnet. There is a real gap in specialised support for communities, and the mainstream organisations are not really allowing access for ethnic minority communities. There is certainly a lot of work to be done.

The Convener: Rebecca Marek is nodding.

Rebecca Marek: In 2014, CRER did some research for our report "The State of the Nation: Race and Racism in Scotland—Employment". We found that the number of non-white applicants exceeds the number of white applicants who apply for public sector jobs but that only 17.7 per cent of non-white people who were interviewed for local authority jobs were appointed compared to 31.9 per cent of white interviewees. That led to a situation in which 7.1 per cent of all white applicants for public sector posts went on to be appointed but only 4.4 per cent of non-white applicants went on to be appointed. We will look to do similar work when the new information from the public sector equality duty comes out in April.

We stress that we cannot take a body's, an organisation's or a company's commitment to diversity seriously unless its data collection and scrutiny measures are transparent. We need to be a bit stricter in how we look at what kind of data is produced and monitored and, more importantly, how it is used. The public sector equality duty requires public bodies to publish information about their workforce and shortlisting of applications, but it also requires them to use that data, and that is where we see a lack. Organisations are putting out the information but not making clear how they are using it, which affects the situation across the board.

Even in public bodies in which the minority ethnic proportion of the workforce is quite good, the figure drops off the higher you go in the company leadership. That is why we were happy that the Equal Opportunities Committee's report referenced the importance of involving the leaders of public bodies and private sector groups and the Government in setting the course, being active role models and illuminating best practice. Transparency is an important thing to highlight. If the only statistic that an organisation puts out is the proportion of its workforce who come from minority ethnic communities but all those jobs are at a lower level or an entry level, it is not as equal as it could be.

10:00

The Convener: We will drill down into underemployment; no doubt colleagues will have a few questions about that.

Rami Ousta: I want to make a combined comment on the previous two questions on the culture, health, research and appointments to public bodies. We approached them a few years back with a structures programme and the possibility of deploying positive action to enhance participation by minorities in that setting. The culture that has been held historically has not been held on purpose; there is just a closed structure. That did not work.

We need to work on creating a cultural shift in the minorities. We keep unconsciously portraying and deploying to our young generation and talented people the culture of grievance and everything being controlled by discrimination. That is putting people off and creating an established attitude towards how they perceive their lives.

On public appointments, we come across very talented and amazing young people, but they lack confidence and knowledge for that setting. I am happy to say that my daughter was recently appointed to a public body—I think that that was last week. That was nothing to do with me or any of us; she took the initiative herself and went through the whole process. There are hundreds of such people. We just need to give them the opportunity or let them believe in themselves and their abilities. It is a matter of competence. We should not expect to make changes or allow people to be there just for the sake of it, as that could be damaging.

I go back to data collection, which is still an issue. Some recommendations in the report still stand. A more robust approach is needed by the committee now, but that has to happen in a collaborative setting. I believe that there is a freeze on recruitment or employment in public bodies for the coming period, so it will be hard to measure what is changing or happening.

I know that the committee is now fed up with me, but I draw its attention to one other issue. When we talk about ethnicity or race, it is important for us to have a clear definition. I know that different ethnicities have different experiences, but it is time that the committee issued a structured definition of ethnicities so that 32 local authorities stop collecting their data using different perceptions. I think that we said in our submission for the report that a local authority reported an ethnicity representation of 3.1 per cent, although that was 13 point something per cent in its area. The issue of data collection has to be noticed, please.

The Convener: You can see all the nodding heads, so you have agreement.

Mary Fee (West Scotland) (Lab): Rami Ousta and Rebecca Marek have kind of answered the question that I was going to ask, which was about data collection. The report recommended that the Government should continue

"to work with the EHRC to promote the importance of the collection of equality data and to encourage public bodies to share best practice"

and that

"urgent consideration should be given to issues relating to ethnicity disclosure".

Is there any evidence that there has been any increase in data collection? Has there been any increase in the quality of data collection? Do you have any evidence that the data that has been collected has been used?

I am concerned that although there may be a lot of data out there, nothing is done with it once it has been collected. We will not change anything unless we use the data to build different recruitment and employment practices and do a number of different things.

Rami Ousta: That is a very good point, which takes me back to what I said earlier. A unified definition of ethnicity and a unified understanding of how data should be collected in that context would ensure that all 32 local authorities deploy the same system, and we would be able to get more information about what is happening. If each local authority produces its own data in a certain context, interpretation of that data will be more important than the data itself. How it is interpreted is open to exploitation by certain groups, and that is a risk. We should ask for the data to be defined in certain legal ways. It should not be about a philosophy that says that an ethnic minority is this or that; the law should say what ethnicity is, and the data should be collected in that context.

We encourage the committee to produce something to advance the recommendation to ensure that local authorities and other stakeholders adhere to that approach. As has been said, there is the risk of misinterpreting the data or each stakeholder interpreting it a certain way in their own community.

The committee will be aware of the United Kingdom effort to have a national audit on equality, including race equality. BEMIS was represented in London when that was setting out the way that it would collect data. It was scary. Scotland should be aware of that, and wary of it. The way that they were pushing for data to be collected and analysed could result in very risky situations for race equality and the whole community, including Asians, here in Scotland.

When we submitted an outline report to the Government, my staff had to sign a statement of confidentiality, which is not a practice that we are used to. I will not reveal any confidential information, but the way that that national race equality audit is happening in the UK is contradictory to how we have been working in Scotland, and, regarding data collection, it would be very wise for the Government to pay attention to the objective behind it.

Colin Lee: Mary Fee raised a good point. As I highlighted, a couple of weeks ago the Scottish Government started to look at how data collection could be improved. In the meeting, we were looking at where there were data gaps. We do not know where that will take us, so maybe in a few years' time we should monitor that.

However, it is not just about what the Government does, as people have highlighted; it is about what public bodies, local authorities, health boards and others do as well. From my experience of providing support to public bodies in the mainstreaming programme, a lot of the time the quality of data is not very good—there are a lot of gaps. Many bodies collect data for the sake of it, as Mary Fee said, and they do not use it to plan their strategy or inform how it fits into things such as the equality outcomes, equality strategies and mainstreaming. That could be very much improved.

As an organisation, we try to provide guidance and support on how organisations can improve collection of data and use it to inform equality decisions; for example, by determining whether they are actually hitting targets for ethnic minority recruitment in particular communities, and looking at success rates of attracting ethnic minority applicants. As was quite rightly said, it is questionable whether organisations are doing that, and it needs to be done.

We were also involved in discussions about the national audit that the UK is doing. It was worrying, purely because at that time they were just talking about a portal for feeding through equality data that we can access for statistics. We felt that a lot of it is not really relevant for Scotland, unless we can tease out some of the data that we can actually use in Scotland. I certainly think that data collection in Scotland can be improved, so that it can be used for strategic development purposes in relation to equality.

Mary Fee: When you say that the quality of data collection is not good, is that because organisations do not think that it is important, do not understand its importance or do not give it enough priority?

Colin Lee: It is all three.

Mary Fee: Okay.

Colin Lee: That is the simple answer.

Mary Fee: Thank you.

Colin Lee: Organisations pay lip service—because the legislation is there, they have to collect the data. Some authorities do it purely as a tick-box exercise. That relates to your first point.

In answer to your second point, when organisations collect data they find it quite difficult to think through what use the statistics that they gather are for them. For example, they always

struggle with workforce data. It is important for them to know what their starting point is, in terms of their existing workforce, so that they can decide how they can increase ethnic minority representation. A lot of the equality outcomes that we see are: "We want to increase employability within our workforce for ethnic communities", but how do organisations know that they are being successful? How do they measure that unless they know what their existing workforce is?

They have numbers in terms of ethnicity, but they do not have information about the kind of jobs that people have. We know that very few ethnic minority people are in senior management roles, for example. A lot of the data does not tell us about the existing workforce in terms of grades, the kind of work that people do and the level at which people are working within the organisation.

More importantly, that information does not tell those organisations whether they will achieve their outcomes over the next four or five years. Organisations need to look at a whole layer of issues to do with what the data should be telling them.

Rebecca Marek: The issue of non-disclosure relates to the issue of leadership that we spoke about earlier. A minority ethnic person in a public sector organisation might already be in the minority, and they might perceive their workplace as a bit hostile and be a bit nervous, so I can understand where the non-disclosure rates come from. A major factor in the high rate of non-disclosure is that public bodies do not make it clear what they intend to use the data for. If it is made clear to employees that the data will be used to put together a plan for improving representation or to consider ways in which to better support the workforce, non-disclosure rates might be higher. However, if the point of disclosing ethnicity is just so that it can go into a report that no one will really look at for another two and half or five years, I can see why the rate is low.

We have some council workforce profiles for 2016-17, and that data shows that the non-disclosure rate is still about 26 per cent, which is pretty significant. That clouds the data and makes it difficult to look at it and tease out the issues more. The public sector equality duties have been around for five years, and I think that people now know that they have to collect data. We have to change the conversation so that it is about how the organisations are going to use data. If they think about it that way, employees will be more willing to disclose and there will be pressure from the employees on the leaders of organisations and public bodies to ensure that all the data that is collected is used.

Mary Fee: Rami Ousta might want to answer my next question, which follows on from something that Rebecca Marek and Colin Lee said. It almost seems as if the data is collected in isolation from everything else and just kind of sits there. Organisations and employers collect it, but they do not link it to recruitment, employment and training. Is that a fair comment?

Rami Ousta: Yes, in most instances.

I would like to give an example that relates to the discussion about what the data is used for and why it is collected. I am not making an accusation, but we were approached by Police Scotland when it was developing data collection in relation to stop and search situations. In the structure that the police provided to us, they proposed to give police officers the authority to guess people's ethnicity. We were shocked to hear that and we said that it was not acceptable. We would not allow it, because there is a process to go through, in addition to informing people why the data is collected and building confidence with the community. It is the responsibility of not only the stakeholder but all of us to educate the communities about data collection. Police Scotland contacted the Equality and Human Rights Commission, which confirmed our attitude that we would not accept that kind of data collection by guessing a person's ethnicity and then producing outcomes and procedures on that basis.

To be fair, the other side of the story is that, when we work with Skills Development Scotland, it is very active, although it needs help from groups such as ours to gather data, analyse it and identify where the gaps are and where more investment is needed.

I have another example on data collection that I would like to share with you. We had a big event with Glasgow City Council for modern apprenticeships and youth, with 400 young people coming through the doors. On that day, we wanted to collect data, but not by asking the young people to tick a box. We asked the young people to identify their ethnicity, and the outcome was amazing—I think that 84 per cent identified themselves as Scottish, although we know from their names that they were from ethnic minorities. This is not really about employment, but we should build in that approach and encourage our youth to give their identity in terms of the way that they feel rather than impose it on them or pigeonhole them by giving them boxes to tick.

I agree with my colleagues that the way that public bodies collect data is just for the sake of it and that they do not analyse it or invest in more positive action schemes. There should be a collaborative approach. Some stakeholders such as the Scottish Prison Service put up their hands and say, "Can you help us, because we have underrepresentation in a certain area?" and they

are sometimes shocked when there are accusations that they have been racist. That is not the right attitude.

If a stakeholder puts their hands up and says, "We are struggling in this area," and asks us to look at their data, we should be able to advise and work with them and reinterpret the data. We are discovering again and again that data is submitted to the Government to serve a specific aim or goal rather than to allow a proper interpretation of it. That is a serious issue that we should be aware of.

10:15

The Convener: I might be able to bring Mary Fee in again a bit later, if she wants, but Jeremy Balfour will ask the next question.

Jeremy Balfour (Lothian) (Con): I have a couple of questions. Reflecting on the previous committee's recommendations, which ones do we need to push the hardest, and which would make the biggest difference?

I am quite new to this, so if you look back over a five or 10-year period, are things getting better? Have they improved, are they about the same, or have they got worse?

Rebecca Marek: It is hard to pick just one recommendation, but one that might have wide-ranging effects is the one that

"any work undertaken by the Scottish Government to raise public bodies' awareness on racial equality issues ... should promote"

a variety of suggestions, including

"The use of open recruitment ... diverse interview panels ... equality-related questions in interviews and consistent ... post-interview feedback".

When we consider rates of application, rates of shortlisting and rates of job acceptances, there is quite a drop-off when you get to the shortlisting and interview stages. Studies have shown that even having a minority ethnic person on a panel can make a big difference. There seems to be a barrier at the point of asking people for feedback.

Research that was conducted by the DWP in 2009—I think that the study was UK-wide—examined application rates to public bodies and how many more applications a minority ethnic applicant had to submit before they were accepted versus people in other groups. I would be happy to send that information to the committee.

With regard to whether things are getting better, it will be easier to answer that question in April, when we get the public sector equality data back. If we reference the council data that we have from 2016-17, the overall reported black and minority ethnic workforce increased by 0.1 per cent on the previous year. That is not much, and it could be

argued that it could easily be accounted for by more people moving to this area. Looking at migration patterns, with more people moving to the city, and young people reaching employability age and so on, we can say that pretty soon, we will fall back, unless we make marked progress. An increase of 0.1 per cent every year is not great—it means that it would take us quite a while to get to an equitable sum. With the best will in the world, we will not see much progress unless the situation is monitored and there is enforcement and encouragement, as well as leadership from the top. Nothing will change unless we stop letting unconscious bias be unconscious.

Colin Lee: To answer your first question, I would highlight two particular areas. There is a recommendation about focusing on "gender specific employability schemes". There is a big gap there. Statistics show that a lot more men than women are involved in employability programmes and so on. That came through in our ethnic minority women network event. A lot of women felt that there needed to be a lot more specialised employability schemes for ethnic minority women, for cultural and religious reasons. They felt that, because of those issues, they could not get involved in a lot of the employability programmes. That is a big area of focus that drove us to develop some work on securing Big Lottery funding for projects to support women in employment. That is one way to improve the situation for women from ethnic minority communities.

Another important area is procurement. There is a recommendation to encourage

"the use of public sector procurement contracts",

which is a good way to improve the job situation in various communities. At the moment, we are working in partnership with Keep Scotland Beautiful to encourage access to the climate challenge fund, which is a Scottish Government tender. That tender originally came out for 2008 to 2012. Only four ethnic minority organisations applied to that particular fund, through which about £40 million was distributed. We raised that with the Government when the invitation to tender went out again in 2012-13. It is important that the Scottish Government took note and put a measurable target in the tender process that 15 per cent of applications had to come from ethnic minority organisations or those with other protected characteristics, but particularly ethnic minorities. Rather than just saying that applications should come from those groups, a measurable target was put in. That encouraged a lot of bodies that were looking to apply, including Keep Scotland Beautiful, to develop partnerships with us in order to achieve that target by my organisation providing

support for applications, raising awareness and giving post-application support to a lot of groups.

Since then, from 2012 to the present, over 150 applications have been submitted from ethnic communities; 68 projects have been successful, which translates into £7.9 million for the sector. That has created 200 jobs and 500 volunteer positions. The impact is not just about the funding stream; those organisations created jobs out of that opportunity and they engaged not only on climate change policy but on other policies relating to health and so on.

The important lesson to learn is that that could be replicated in other tendering processes, funding agreements and service level agreements locally and nationally. All it takes is for public bodies and the Scottish Government to put a measurable target in all their contracts. That will stimulate and facilitate a lot of mainstream organisations' developing meaningful partnerships with ethnic minority organisations to help them to deliver the target.

What normally happens is that mainstream organisations are great at getting that kind of funding and then they go to ethnic minority organisations and say, "Can you help us?", but they do not give them appropriate resources. If there is a target, they will give resources to ethnic minority organisations to help to meet that target and, hopefully, some jobs will come out of that. That is a key thing and a lesson that can be learnt. Measurable targets in tender and funding agreements will help public bodies to address the public sector duty of fostering good relations, which is also very important. It is a win-win situation.

On the question about whether things have improved, I agree with Rebecca Marek's point. We are looking at April for the equality outcomes and mainstreaming report. That is when we will see whether there has been any progress on outcomes and any change. To be fair and realistic, we suspect that there will not have been, so it is important that the work that is starting now in relation to the race equality framework for Scotland and other Scottish Government initiatives looks at the monitoring of those measurable targets. It is really important to have the baseline statistics first, because then we will know in five or 10 years whether we have made progress.

It is not fair to say that no public bodies use the statistics—some do. Maybe we have been generalising, but a lot do not use statistics to inform their future direction and strategies. Follow-up sessions such as this are great, but in time it would be very useful to call in some public bodies—you could make a random pick of organisations from particular sectors—and ask them directly about what progress they have made. That is more important than just considering stakeholders such as us and the Scottish Government. We and the Government can do only so much, but the autonomous public bodies should also be accountable and should be brought in to give evidence to the committee.

The Convener: We are talking here about statistical analysis, the outcomes, the agreements, procurement and so on, but Ann McInnes is working right at the front line. In relation to Jeremy Balfour's question, you are about two years into your project—have you seen any progress?

Ann McInnes: I see a massive amount of progress because we are joining up the conversations. In the past, I have often seen various public services trying to fix things on their own. Sharing learning about what works out in the field means that organisations start to have the same conversations.

For example, Skills Development Scotland has brought in its equalities action plan for all its national training providers, so the progress that they have made is regularly measured. That has been fabulous, because it has meant that everyone has had the same conversation about how things can be done, who needs to be spoken to, and how to work with the sector or with organisations such as ours to make things happen. Because we have included Education Scotland and schools, conversations happen much earlier.

We found, when young people were making their subject choices, that some wanted to move into the national health service, for example, but no one had had a conversation with them about their needing science qualifications. Therefore, when they made their choices, they excluded themselves from moving into the career that they wanted to go into. Introducing things such as the SCQF and getting teachers and pastoral staff—as well as the career information, advice and guidance staff, who have a fairly large remit in schools—to talk about such things makes a massive difference. Young people then start to think about careers much earlier. That has had a dramatic impact.

When we do our data analysis, we can see that more young people are applying for jobs. We are now looking at the data to see the conversion rates for that. In year 1 and midway through year 2 of our project, we have looked at the barriers in the community and we have encouraged national training providers and public services to gather information on who applied for jobs and where they got to and to feed it back to us so that we can analyse which part the young people are falling down at. It is then about putting in processes to support young people on employability and

interview skills, for example, and looking to see whether that has made a difference.

We are working with employers to see whether things in their interview panels and procedures are sifting out young people for specific reasons, and whether they are culturally sensitive reasons. Employers might look for eye contact, for example. For a lot of our young people, things such as eye contact and shaking hands are quite difficult. We have to teach them how to do those things. By gathering data and sifting through it to see where each area falls, we can provide models and solutions and give them to national training providers, employers and public services to say, "Let's tweak some things and see whether that makes a difference for young people in gaining successful careers."

Jeremy Balfour: Is there any evidence on particular ethnic minorities who have religious practices that might go against the normal working pattern? Have people been discriminated against because of their religious views? They might have to worship at specific times. Have people been put off from going into employment because they thought that it would affect their faith?

Ann McInnes: Some young people will not go into gaming and gambling jobs, for example, because of their religious beliefs.

Jeremy Balfour: Is there any evidence of employers discriminating against people because of their religious beliefs?

Ann McInnes: No. I have not found any. We also have to work with communities to help them to understand how different employers can make the job fit them.

Jeremy Balfour: Thank you.

10:30

Willie Coffey (Kilmarnock and Irvine Valley) (SNP): Hello, everybody. I must admit that, when I listened to the beginning of the discussion, I was a bit depressed to think about the progress that might have been made. However, from the answers to Jeremy Balfour, there seem to be examples of good progress. In particular, I refer to Colin Lee's example of the 200 or so jobs that were created through an initiative and to Ann McInnes's example of progress.

All the recommendations that our predecessor committee made in last year's report say that one group should work with another group, but that will not guarantee a successful outcome. Working together does not necessarily result in the step changes that we want to be made.

The discussion has covered gathering data and the use of baselines. What mixture do we need?

The report is quite good, but it takes us only so far. How will we know five years down the road—the period that Rebecca Marek mentioned in her opening remarks—that we are genuinely making the progress across the board that we hope to achieve? Is it a case of collecting the right statistics and data or of changing the culture in ethnic groups, as Rami Ousta said? Do we need a mixture of both? Should there be more emphasis on one than on the other?

Rami Ousta: That is a good question. I am glad that you picked up on that point.

To come back to Jeremy Balfour's question about which of its predecessor committee's recommendations the committee should push hardest on, the report recommended that

"the Scottish Government reflects on the links between disability, poverty and ethnicity".

That seems to be high on the agenda when the discussion takes place, but then the focus on it seems to dwindle. Another area that needs further focus is how ethnic minority employers participate in the recruitment side.

Modern apprenticeships are relevant to your question. Historically, we thrived on the idea that ethnic minority communities are underrepresented in modern apprenticeships because there is discrimination. We were always led to believe that young ethnic minority people were not interested in apprenticeships or that their parents did not care about apprenticeships. We have worked on the issue for the past 18 months. Through the project, we have witnessed a dramatic increase in ethnic minority parents pushing for their children to pursue a career option through a modern apprenticeship. The young people have moved beyond viewing a modern apprenticeship as being at the lower end of their aspirations or expectations. Those details must be acknowledged.

How did that happen? Did it happen just by imposing policy and stuff on SDS? No—it happened as a result of our collaboration not just with SDS but with the training providers. The training providers have a responsibility and a duty, but they do not have the knowledge or the expertise, while the minorities do not have the confidence to engage with them in that context. Through linking the training providers, the employers, the communities and stakeholders such as us, an impact has been achieved, which is now filtering down. If the MA programme were judged on the basis of the progress that has been made from last year to now, we would do it an injustice. Now that we have established the infrastructure, we can understand the impact. Once there is an awareness among the minorities of the impact, the parents push.

On the day that I mentioned, 400 ethnic minority young people came to pursue aspects of modern apprenticeships at the level of their expectations. How did that happen? It happened by creating a cultural shift. Our organisation and all the communities that we work with are fed up with the culture of being viewed as just the disadvantaged—the poor souls—and with the culture of grievances against the employer. Equally, we cannot say that the responsibility to progress race equality is just the responsibility of BEMIS, CRER, CEMVO, the equality unit or SDS; it is the responsibility of all of us collectively. That is when the co-operation and collaboration happen. I agree that that does not happen smoothly all the time. There are a lot of differences in strategic thinking, but now we have a responsibility for Scotland. This is not about our organisations or us as individuals; it is about what we can change for Scotland.

The communities in the sector—let us please move beyond the perception of ethnicity as involving one or two groups, because there is a diversity of ethnic minorities—have a positive approach. That is evident in the multicultural programme that we deliver every year, whereby those groups participate in all national events in Scotland. We created a cultural shift to enable them to understand that they are part of Scotland and that those celebrations are for them. We now see them leading on things themselves.

I would like to say a bit about how we create cultural shift. In the past, we had a project that was about addressing lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender ethnic minority needs within the equality framework. We initiated that because the LGBT people would say, "Race? It's nothing to do with us," and the race people would say, "LGBT— wow! Nobody talks about it." We were brave to initiate a project with the Equality Network. When we started it—trust me—we were abused left, right and centre by various stakeholders. One year down the line, the same stakeholders have signed up to providing equality support for everybody through the infrastructure networks.

Now we have more and more ethnic minority LGBT people who are open, reaching out for their rights and participating in all aspects. Similarly, the other stakeholders are equally open to providing the equality support for them.

That is what we mean by a culture shift. We are not changing the world; we are creating a culture shift where minority equality is not only for race—it is for everybody. We should understand that the way in which that applies here also applies there.

In the employment setting, what we are witnessing with the youth, the training provider approach, SDS and the parents is something that we have to develop and report on. We are happy to share that with you, because it is not fair for the Government just to assign targets to a public body to achieve. In the process of getting to a target, we find out about gaps and opportunities that nobody has addressed before. Rather than being judged by targets, we need to reflect on the findings to develop more and better strategic recommendations.

Willie Coffey: Wow. That is so important; I am impressed with that.

The Convener: Colin Lee has something to add to that.

Colin Lee: How do we know that we have made progress is a good question that we keep asking ourselves. We have been in the sector for a long time, and many strategies come and go. The key to it is always data; unless we know what the baseline is, we do not know what progress we make. Unless we improve that, not just with the Government but with public bodies and so forth, we will never know whether we have made progress. That is the simple answer.

We have a different view of the blame game. We cannot see the ethnic communities as a whole and say that they all feel victimised and the culture is to blame, in terms of poor communities. We do not share that view at all. That situation would not come about if they did not experience institutional racism and racism. We would love to shift the culture among communities, but it is not about that. Some of it has to be about working positively with them to engage a bit better, but a lot of discrimination certainly goes on that creates that climate, and the work is about how we address the lack of progress among public bodies and others on, in this instance, employment. There is a lot of experience out there of how people experience discrimination and racism at all levels; it would be great to capture some of those case studies. We know of a public body that had 60 applicants from ethnic minority communities and none was successful, purely because of the selection criteria, because there was a typing test.

On the culture itself, some work has to be done in communities, but the driver here is working with the public bodies and improving their game. The Scottish Government should take more leadership. In the past year, through the recommendations of the committee, the Government has taken on a lot of initiatives such as the fair work convention and race equality framework, the Scottish labour market strategy and the social enterprise strategy, which is all great—it is the start of the journey. The next phase is where we will be in the next 10, 15 or 20 years; the key is how can we know that we are going to be successful in five, 10 or 20 years unless we know what our starting point is, here today. Statistics and data are very much the key to that. The answer to the question is always what

our starting point is. Unless we know that, we will come back here in five or 10 years' time and have the same conversation, to be honest. Nothing has really progressed. That is what has been happening in the past 15, 20 or 30 years; there have been great strategies, but nothing really concrete has come from them.

Willie Coffey: Does Rebecca Marek have anything further to add?

Rebecca Marek: I definitely echo a lot of what Colin Lee has said. Better, robust data collection needs to come first. For public bodies, the data needs to be compiled in a central place where the public can view it easily and not have to sift through 150 reports to find out what the situation is; we can get better at that.

I spoke earlier about data collection being the first step, but then we have to talk about how we are going to use the data. We need to build in better enforcement practices, better accountability measures and greater awareness in public bodies and private sector employers, and there needs to be adequate pressure from the committee, from the Scottish Government and from the public to make sure that the data is used and interpreted in the right way and that the practices that have been put in have been examined.

Towards the end of last year, the commission on parliamentary reform talked about how to shift an institution's culture in order to make it more diverse and inclusive. What has stuck with me from the session is that, sometimes, the culture does not change first. Sometimes, the practices must change before the culture changes to fit those practices. We echo that sentiment.

I definitely agree with Colin Lee's point that you cannot turn a blind eye to the effects of institutional racism and its impact on underemployment and unemployment. If you get to the heart of that matter and talk about how to address it in public bodies and make changes in the ways we have talked about—by having more diverse interview panels, speaking about equality during interviews, monitoring and analysing every step of the way and putting in practices that stop bias—the culture changes will flow from those actions.

It is important that we talk about supply-side issues and the measures that we need to put in place, especially to help new or migrant communities. We also need to talk about how that works on the other side. For example, people who have been born, raised and educated in Scotland are still facing difficulties in getting jobs despite having better than normal qualifications. Why is that? We argue that we must look at racism in employment practices to be able to speak to the issue a bit better. We will be able to tell whether we are making any progress by monitoring, using the data and holding bodies to account.

Rami Ousta: I want to make a clarification. Maybe if I were to start saying that everything is racist and discriminatory, I would get more applause, but I am not interested in that. The whole idea is that we acknowledge there is racism—no one is disputing that that is happening—so the issue from our perspective is how we deal with it strategically and operationally. Do we just continue asking for data and say that we will sort out the discrimination until the point at which racism is no longer happening?

A lot has happened in Scotland in this area. We work all over Europe and we can say that, in general, the ethnic minority and race equality setting in Scotland is well advanced compared with other European countries. What does that mean? It does not mean that the situation is ideal or that everything is perfect; rather, it means that we are ready to start questioning how to advance equality in other areas.

We talk about the concept of minorities having to play a role. We must face that issue. It is not about the Government and public bodies having to do this or that. We are fed up being asked questions about what the Government has done for us over the past 20 years. Instead, let us look at what we have done with the Government and for our communities.

You will see from my submission to the predecessor committee—and nothing has changed—that we do not take it that there is recorded or noted institutional discrimination. There are incidents here and there but, I say again, it would be unfair to our public bodies to classify them as institutionally racist. We meet various public bodies and other stakeholders. When they have put up their hands to say, "Can you work with us on these areas?", they have been slapped down and told, "You are racists." As a culture, we have to move beyond that context.

If, for example, 60 or even 120 people from ethnic minorities apply to a public body, it does not matter if they do not have the competences. We should work with those people to build their competences and skills and to get them out of the culture of thinking that, if they have not been successful, it has to be because of discrimination or racism. We have to take responsibility.

Last time, I rejected institutional discrimination and colleagues said that I am apologetic. Maybe I am—not to the Government or to the stakeholders, but to my community and to the communities that we are allowing to live without support and as victims. We leave them to have grievances and to moan, rather than empowering them and showing them how to build their skills

and knowledge and bringing them closer to the stakeholders. That is the way forward; that is what we call active citizenship.

We know that racism and discrimination exist— we do not disagree with anyone about that. There are areas in which we can tackle, move and progress that discrimination. That brings me on to the issue of cultural shift. There are case studies of minorities advancing their communities beyond expectation. It is time that we created a cultural shift and for people to stop viewing minorities only in terms of their ethnicity and for us to view ourselves in the role that we play and the opportunities that are available in Scotland.

Our sector has a responsibility to invest in minority communities and to get them out of the fear of grievance. If, in bringing up my daughter, I were to say to her, "Don't try. You won't get it; there is discrimination there", of course she would be fearful. I say, "Let them thrive!"

Some people say that I am speaking like this because I have never experienced racism. My house was attacked at 2 o'clock in the morning and our car was smashed to pieces. The police caught the person responsible. I would never go in and say that it is okay and we should let it go. I would say that it should go to court because that would mean that the person would never do it again.

10:45

We need to teach our communities a culture of citizenship. I hear a lot of people say that the NHS is rubbish, for example. It is time to say to those people, when the NHS has a consultation, "Please come and have a say. Say what is concerning you." It is time to say to them that they should be active and participate—we call it democratic participation. It is time to say to them that, when they have an appointment with a doctor, they should go and not skip it. That is the culture that we have to start building in our communities to address some of the issues.

The Convener: We are almost up against the clock, but I see that Colin Lee is keen to come in.

Colin Lee: I have to come back on some of those points. It is not a blame game. We cannot say that there is institutional racism and there is nothing that we can do about it. Through the years, communities have wanted to get involved. We cannot just plant the seeds without watering and nurturing them. Communities cannot flourish and grow unless we examine the structures that exist. Through the years, communities have engaged and there have been non-meaningful conversations.

It is not a blame game. It is not about people being active citizens alone. Yes, they have to be involved, but there is apathy purely because the structures that have been in place have not been able to break down the barrier. We all know that problems exist so we have to work with the structures to ensure that communities can engage meaningfully and get involved in employment or other matters.

We cannot say, "It is your fault because you are ethnic. Stop moaning," but that is what we are really saying. It is not about communities moaning; it is about admitting that we are not making progress so we have to do some work with institutions. We are not saying that it is your fault; we are saying that you need to do better, so that communities can have the confidence to get engaged, and to show that there is progress on employment and that the barriers have been changed.

That is a totally different perspective from what has been highlighted. It is a different approach to race equality, to be honest.

The Convener: That is the reason why we wanted you all at the table. We know that you all have different experiences and all those experiences are valid and important to the work that we are doing. We thank you for that.

We are right up against the clock. Do any of my colleagues have anything quick to say?

Willie Coffey: As I opened this part of the discussion with a question, I want to put on record how thankful I am to have the witnesses with us. I am impressed with the commitment, dedication and passion that they show on the issues. We are in good hands. I thank them very much for saying what they said.

The Convener: I thank the witnesses very much for coming along. We have pages and pages of notes and lots of action points. They have pointed us in the right direction from all their respective corners. We are very grateful for that. Willie Coffey summed it up.

We will continue the conversation and, if the witnesses go away and think of something that they should have said, they should come back to us. We are keen to hear from them. We will get back to them about some of the information for which we are looking, some of the reporting work that they are doing and perhaps their understanding of the data when it is released in April 2017, which is only a few weeks away. It would be good to get a paragraph or a page of their thoughts on that because it will give us a bang up-to-date position—I say to Colin Lee that it will give us a baseline. That would be helpful and gratefully received.

We move to item 3, which we will take in private.   10:49

Meeting continued in private until 11:20.

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