



GROUP 7 – EXPLANATORY NOTE AND JAMBOARDS

1. Explanatory note on Group 7's topic

EXPLANATORY NOTE FOR GROUP 7

What topic will we discuss?

This group will be invited to consider recommendations on the following topic, which relates to part of vision element F:

improved income through a realistic living wage to ensure a better standard of living and opportunities for all

The other part of vision element F on training and support will be considered in groups 5 and 6 who are looking at improving life chances and standards of living for young people and adults respectively through action on education, training and support.

What is the task and process we will go through?

Notes 1 and 2 explain how recommendations will be prepared and provide a worked example. You will review the summary of evidence in the explanatory note and the weekend 6 jam boards and identify the 2-3 areas you want to focus on to develop recommendations. You will then prepare the text of draft recommendations and accompanying information to be included in the final report.

Recommendations should be about either:

- Remit Q 2: how we overcome the challenges facing Scotland and the world
- Remit Q 3: what further information citizens need to take informed decisions

And they should also be supported by evidence: And they should also be supported by evidence:

- Given by or discussed with experts
- From the Assembly process and the experience of participation
- From 'lived experience' of members, shared and discussed over the course of the Assembly

Summary of the Assembly evidence on the issue

The following aspects of the Assembly journey may be relevant when considering recommendations in this area.

1. In weekend 1 you learned about Scotland's demographics, including varying educational qualification levels, geographical inequalities and the impact of this on life chances.
2. The importance of access to education and fair employment to our wellbeing and happiness were discussed in weekend 2.



3. In weekends 3 and 4 you learned about a wide range of policy issues around a sustainable country and tax and finances. In weekend 3 you heard about wealth inequalities and poverty in Scotland; different economic models, including the idea of a wellbeing economy. Speakers covered ideas such as promoting fair work opportunities and a more inclusive economy, which could protect lower earners' incomes. In Weekend 4, you learned about Scotland's finances and tax including ideas to protect lower earners' incomes, such as taxing wealth more fairly, and the use of taxes to encourage fair work.
4. During those weekends, you then worked together to identify priorities areas for actions. Those relating to fair work are listed below and summarised in the annex:
 - To re-shape employment regulations such as abolishing zero-hours contracts and private employment agencies and to ensure everyone has good and fair work that meets their needs and invests in their development
 - To get rid of zero-hours contracts and implement the living wage
5. Finally, in weekend 5 you learned about the impact of COVID on jobs and the economy, including how the pandemic's disproportionate impact on certain job sectors and groups in society such as low income households, young people and women. Experts spoke about how we can respond to the pandemic, such as ways to ensure fairer work through the protection of incomes of lower earners, and through fairer taxation. Commentators also advocated for fair work for a fair wage, including ideas around guarantee or universal basic income.

Constitutional implications

Education and skills are devolved matters while many powers relating to employment legislation such as zero hours contracts and the minimum wage are reserved matters and therefore would require UK-wide action. During the Assembly, you heard that some action is already taken directly in Scotland, for example, investment in skills and using public procurement processes to encourage the payment of a living wage.

The Scottish Government and Parliament could take action in this area where any proposed arrangements applied to devolved matters. Should any recommendations cover reserved matters you may wish to consider whether the evidence supports any constitutional change. For further detail on reserved and devolved matters, please see Professor Nicola McEwen's factsheet [here](#).

Action in hand

- The Scottish Government's Programme for Government 2020-21 includes
 - a commitment to focus funding on employment with good wages and the aim to work with employers to expand payment of the real Living Wage, targeting 25,000 additional workers receiving payment.
 - a national mission to create new jobs, good jobs and green jobs
 - creating a Green jobs fund, investing alongside a range of sectors - such as manufacturing, tech, and land based organisations - to support new and increased opportunities for green job creation across Scotland.



- Scottish Government published a Fair Work Action Plan in February 2019 setting out measures to support employers to embed fairer working practices, including a benchmarking tool, a refreshed Scottish Business Pledge aligned to Fair Work principles and committed to an international Fair Work Summit.

Annex: Relevant priorities for action/findings from Weekend 3 and 4

Weekend 3

Priority area of action	To re-shape employment regulations such as abolishing zero-hours contracts and private employment agencies and to ensure everyone has good and fair work that meets their needs and invests in their development
Positive impact this would make	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Improved mental health and wellbeing • Financial Stability • Benefit to the economy (tax income) • People more committed to the workplace (happier and productive) • Work-life balance • Happier and more productive • Companies sign up to • Confidence for disabled people
Hard choices and trade-offs	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Resistance from companies that are used to having a flexible and exploited workforce • Perhaps some companies may go out of business • Enforcement and policing could be difficult • Reshaping laws and regulations (quickly)

Weekend 4

The finding that we agree is important in considering Scotland's finances and tax choices is....	To get rid of zero-hours contracts and implement the living wage
Reasons	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. It would give hope and confidence 2. It would reduce the number of people who need top-up benefits and incentivise people into employment 3. It would increase income tax revenue



2. Jamboards from Weekend 6 on the topic being considered by Group 7

(F) In order to achieve a better standard of living and opportunities for all we must invest in accessible, relevant training, support and improved income through a realistic living wage (from area of consensus: Protecting the incomes of lower earners)



What is at the heart of it? What are you really trying to say to Scotland your vision for the country is?

**Better
standard
of living
for all**

**Improving
income for
low-paid
workers**

**Better
information
and support,
and training**

**Honesty and
transparency
in
Government,
and fairness in
sanctions**

**Q: Who should
be
accountable?**

**Individuals re
moving on or
progressing**

**More
accountability
of
Government**



Recommendations about improved income through a realistic living wage to ensure a better standard of living and opportunities for all

Universal basic income

Overwhelming
supportive empirical
evidence: UBI helps
with employment,
access to education
and housing

The Health & Social
Care Bill model:
Scotland's version
amounts to c.£5bn
but it will cost less to
give everyone in
Scotland UBI. The
remaining can be
invested in health and
social care

Focus on
income and
how we can
achieve living
wage

Priority is the living
wage and
companies being
held accountable for
the way they treat
people
(wage/contracts)

Other

End zero
hours
contracts