

Minutes of Meeting on Monday, 30th and 31st August 2023

Venue: Longman House, Inverness,

Time: 12:00 pm – 6:00 pm and 08:30 am – 13:30 pm

Type: in-person

ATTENDEES:

Panel: Matthew Cole (Chair), Margaret Corrigan, Kirsten Jenkins and Alister Steele

External Attendees: Highland Council, Ali Energy, Changeworks, Red Chair Highland, Kyle of Sutherland Development Trust and HIHAWW

Secretariat: Philippa Brosnan, Fran Eatwell-Roberts & Patricia Melvin

Apologies: Fraser Stewart

AGENDA ITEM 1: Welcome

Matt welcomed everyone to the meeting. He noted how positive it was for the Panel to be in the North of Scotland- hearing, among others, from local communities, including those with lived experience of fuel poverty. Matt outlined the busy 2-day agenda ahead, mainly involving time for speaking to external stakeholders, with Panel meeting items to be discussed in the margins.

AGENDA ITEM 2: Stakeholder meeting

Most of the two days was spent engaging with the following stakeholders:

- Local people with lived experience of fuel poverty
- Highland Council
- Ali Energy
- Changeworks
- Red Chair Highland
- Kyle of Sutherland Development Trust
- HEEHAW

The key messages the panel heard where:

- OfGem not recognising there is a Rural issue.
- Lack of long-term funding
- Health Outcomes
- Suppliers need to be held accountable
- Higher Costs of Living Rural
- Debt
- Rationing of heating or not heating at all
- Housing Conditions
- Net Zero and fuel Poverty agenda not aligned

AGENDA ITEM 3: Social Tariff

The Panel reviewed their draft Social Tariff paper, discussed refinements, and agreed the final version.

AGENDA ITEM 4: Sign off of Panel meeting minutes

The Panel agreed and signed of the minute of their last meeting on the 27th of June 2023.

AGENDA ITEM 6: AOB

UK board apprenticeship scheme – Philippa provided an update on the recruitment schedule: applications close in the second week of October, with matches to boards taking place soon afterwards. The Secretariat have tweeted about it in support of the recruitment campaign.

Gypsy traveller Engagement – Trisha noted the opportunity to attend and/or input questions to the Gypsy/Traveller Listening Communities. The Panel agreed that the Secretariat attend the next session and feedback to the Panel.

Energy Action Scotland (EAS) – the Panel has received an invitation to lead a workshop at EAS annual conference. This is the 40th anniversary year of Energy Action Scotland, Scotland's national fuel poverty charity, and the theme for the conference is Leadership for Fuel Poor Households. The Panel are keen to attend and will try to do so en masse.

Warm Homes Prescription Trial Evaluation - Catapult Energy Pilot – Evaluation session taking place on the 7th of September. Panel agreed that Philippa attends and feeds back, potentially making connections in Aberdeen for engagement at a future Panel meeting.

Analytical Manager – the Panel thanked Fran for his significant contribution in his short time in the Secretariat and wished him well in his new post. Philippa will work to replace Fran as soon as possible.

Items not discussed – due to the focus on stakeholder engagement, the Panel did not have time to discuss several items – these will be carried forward to the next meeting.

Next Panel date and venue – The panel discussed the options on where to hold next Panel meeting. The Panel agreed that the 3rd of October meeting will be held in Glasgow.