

SCOTTISH FUEL POVERTY ADVISORY  
PANEL – NEW PANEL MEMBER  
RECRUITMENT INFORMATION SESSION  
– 12 AUGUST 10:00-11:00 AM



# Running order

1. Secretariat Introductions
2. Background to the Panel and its remit
3. The Panel's work
4. Question and answer session



## Secretariat – what we do

- Support the Panel to produce their advice and to influence through stakeholder engagement, evidence-building and logistics
- Managing corporate governance



# FUEL POVERTY (FP) LEGISLATION

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FP (Targets, Definition and Strategy) (Scotland) Act 2019

– sets out the FP targets, the 4 FP drivers, the definition of FP, the requirement for a FP Strategy, the creation of a Fuel Poverty Advisory Panel and its role

FP Act 2019 (Scottish Fuel Poverty Advisory Panel and Consequential Amendments) – sets out the shape and membership terms of the Panel

Heat Networks Scotland Act 2021 – gives the Panel a role in the consenting provisions for heat networks

# FP Act 2019 – Scotland's Fuel Poverty Targets





# FP Act 2019 – Fuel Poverty Drivers

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High Energy  
Prices



Poor energy  
efficiency of  
the home



Low  
incomes



How energy  
is used in  
the home



# FP Act 2019 – Scotland's Fuel Poverty Definition

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Households should be able to afford the heating and electricity needed for a decent quality of life. Once a household has paid for its housing, it is in fuel poverty if it needs more than 10% of its remaining income to pay for its energy needs, and if this then leaves the household in poverty.

See – [definition explained](#) for more detail



FP Act 2019 – The Panel is an independent statutory body

Panel Role – 2019 FP Act (conseq. Regs) – statutory role in relation to fuel poverty.

- Commenting on Scottish Ministers progress on FP targets.
- Advising Scottish Ministers on how Scottish Government policies and programmes are addressing the four drivers of fuel poverty



# FP Act 2019 – The Panel is an independent statutory body

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## Panel Role - Fuel Poverty Strategy 2021

- Supporting an evidence-based approach to fuel poverty which puts those with lived experience at its centre.
- Advising on the delivery of the Fuel Poverty Strategy, including on the mechanism for how the strategy-delivery is monitored and evaluated.
- Championing and fostering a collaborative approach to addressing fuel poverty across Scotland.
- Advising Scottish Ministers on the impact of new evidence, technologies, and opportunities to tackle fuel poverty.



# FP Act 2019 – The Panel is an independent statutory body

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## The Panel's role

1. Scrutinise
2. Advise
3. Influence and advocate



# Examples of the Panel's advice

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Recommendations for a flexible energy discount mechanism  
(aka social tariff)

Advice on the Scottish Government's Fuel Poverty Strategy

Initial advice



# FP Act 2019 – The Panel is an independent statutory body

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1. Background to current Panel
2. The Panel's Strategic Plan – 2024-2027
3. The Panel's current Workplan – 2025-2026



# Social Research

- Goal two of the Panel's Strategic Plan 2024-2027 states that  
  
“We will be informed by evidence from a wide range of sources  
and  
stakeholders, including those with lived experience and the  
organisations that support them.”
- Panel research activities are supported by the Panel's Analytical Manager, Roanna Sefton – a Government Social Research (GSR) Badged Researcher.



# Research example one: in-house literature review and roundtable on fuel poverty funding

- A key theme for the Panel's 2024-2025 workplan was the Scottish fuel poverty funding landscape.
- To support the Panel's knowledge in this area the Analytical manager undertook a literature review summarising support available for both individuals and organisations, including budget and spending figures where available, and any published evaluation.
- This work was supplemented by a Analytical Manager chaired roundtable on crisis funding.
- This work informed the Panel's Principles and Recommendations on the Fuel Poverty Funding Landscape, which were submitted to Scottish Ministers in November 2024.



# Research example two: commissioned focus groups

- Another of the Panel's key themes for 2024-2025 was rural fuel poverty.
- To bring lived experience insights to this topic, the Panel used their small research budget to commission fuel poverty advice organisations Allenergy, Scarf and Tighean Innse Gall (TIG) to carry out focus groups with people experiencing fuel poverty in rural and remote Scotland.
- In total 81 participants took part in 12 focus groups in Aberdeenshire, Perth and Kinross, Highland, Argyll and Bute, and the Western Isles.
- These findings will help inform the Panel's continued focus on rural fuel poverty, specifically their upcoming work on solutions.



# Research example three: collaborations with academic institutions

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- The Panel value collaboration with academic institutions, in particular fostering connections with established and new fuel poverty researchers.
- In 2024-2025 Panel members provided external supervisory oversight to two MSc student dissertations on fuel poverty related topics.
- The Panel also engaged in interviews and requests for support for postgraduate and undergraduate students.
- The Panel has also previously commissioned MSc students to undertake work for them, including a literature review on the unintended consequences of decarbonisation technologies for fuel poverty outcomes.



# Q & A



## **Question 1**

If you are a researcher, how does that role intersect with your work on the Scottish Fuel Poverty Advisory Panel and your own research activities?

## **Answer 1**

Roanna Sefton (Analytical Manager) said The Scottish Fuel Poverty Advisory Panel works collectively to develop and agree on a shared opinion, but Members are still free to hold and express their own professional views outside of that process.



## Question 2

What criteria or profile are you looking for in candidates for the panel?

## Answer 2

Vanessa Inman (Public Appointments) said you'll need to meet at least one of the priority criteria, which highlight the most important experience or background the Recruitment Panel is looking for. We ask candidates to select at least one, but you can confirm if you have evidence for both priority criteria if applicable. Details on how to do this are in the pack. In addition, you must meet all the essential criteria outlined in the pack. There are two priority criteria and five essential criteria in total. Your application should provide evidence against each relevant criterion. The applicant pack includes a helpful table examples of indicators in the middle column, and in the right-hand column you'll see the maximum word limit for each example, which is 300 words and when each criterion will be assessed.



### Question 3

Could you expand on how the Scottish Fuel Poverty Advisory Panel's work connects with other Scottish Government targets that overlap with fuel poverty issues, particularly the child poverty targets and the decarbonisation targets?

### Answer 3

Philippa Brosnan (Head of Secretariat) said there are clearly strong connections between the three sets of statutory targets you've mentioned. However, I think it's fair to say there isn't complete clarity on how they interlink, and this is something which the Scottish Fuel Poverty Advisory Panel has reflected on.



## Question 4

Regarding those two priority criteria for the role, do they reflect the Scottish Fuel Poverty Advisory Panel's ongoing priorities, or are they more about addressing specific gaps that these two new roles are intended to fill?

## Answer 4

Philippa Brosnan (Head of Secretariat) said it's a bit of both. For example, one area mentioned earlier from the Scottish Fuel Poverty Advisory Panel's current workplan is considering fuel poverty through a public health lens, which explains the interest in health expertise. There's also a strong role which Local Authorities have in fuel poverty mitigation at a local authority level, which is another area of focus. The rationale for these criteria is to support ongoing work, but also, it's about looking at the current Scottish Fuel Poverty Advisory Panel and the Scottish Fuel Poverty Advisory Panel identifying where it might want to strengthen expertise or plan for succession so that these strengths can be maintained.



## Question 5

What level of public health knowledge or expertise are you looking for in this role, for example?

## Answer 5

Vanessa Inman (Public Appointments) said the criteria was developed by the Recruitment Panel, and the wording in the pack reflects what skills, knowledge and experience is being sought. It's not meant to be restrictive, it's about having a public health frame of reference, which could come from many different types of experience. It's difficult to narrow it down to one specific background, other than bringing a public health, perspective along with relevant skills, knowledge, and experience. These could come from a wide range of roles within public health, or, for the other priority criterion, local authority or housing, and the Recruitment Panel wouldn't want to exclude strong candidates by being overly prescriptive.



## Question 6

In terms of the practicalities of how the Scottish Fuel Poverty Advisory Panel operates; the role involves a commitment of around 12 days per year. Does that time mainly cover Scottish Fuel Poverty Advisory Panel meetings? Also, how are the Scottish Fuel Poverty Advisory Panel's reports produced? Is this primarily led by the Secretariat with input from Scottish Fuel Poverty Advisory Panel members, or are Scottish Fuel Poverty Advisory Panel Members directly involved?

## Answer 6

Philippa Brosnan (Head of Secretariat) said there's a mix of approaches, and it can vary depending on the topic. Sometimes, the Scottish Fuel Poverty Advisory Panel has in-depth discussions to inform their key points, and then the Secretariat builds a draft around these key points. On evidence-specific questions, for example, the Secretariat might prepare briefings, or the Analytical Manager might conduct additional research to support the Panel's work.



## Answer 6 continued

Another approach might be for more conceptual or “thinking” pieces, that the Scottish Fuel Poverty Advisory Panel Members themselves may take a more active role in drafting. How involved they are can also depend on individual preferences, their workload, and their day jobs. The current Scottish Fuel Poverty Advisory Panel Members are very flexible and respectful of each other’s professional and personal commitments, which has worked well to date.

Regarding the 12-day commitment, that includes both meeting time and preparation. The Secretariat works with the Scottish Fuel Poverty Advisory Panel Chair to agree on the agenda and produces papers to support discussions, which means Panel Members spend a fair amount of time reading ahead of meetings. After meetings, Panel Members are frequently asked to provide comments on drafts.

Beyond meetings, Panel Members also contribute by giving conference presentations, participating in working groups, or engaging with other initiatives-- such as involvement in the ministerial working group on social tariffs. So, the workload is split across different types of activities, not just the Scottish Fuel Poverty Advisory Panel meetings themselves.



## Question 7

Public health covers a broad range of areas. Are we able to bring in or request additional expert advice if we encounter topics outside our own expertise? In such cases, can the Scottish Fuel Poverty Advisory Panel invite others to provide input or speak on those specific issues?

## Answer 7

Philippa Brosnan (Head of Secretariat) said yes, absolutely - the Scottish Fuel Poverty Advisory Panel does bring in additional expertise when needed. The Scottish Fuel Poverty Advisory Panel habitually engages widely because it's a fundamental part of its role to seek and test views across the fuel poverty landscape.

Another important aspect is tapping into existing networks. If you work in areas like health or housing, for example, you're likely have access to a strong network. Beyond that, the essential criteria emphasise skills like strategic thinking, which means you don't have to be an expert on every topic. Instead, it's about having the critical thinking ability to connect different areas and contribute your perspective.



## **Answer 7 continued**

Of course, any decision to bring in outside experts would be discussed with fellow Scottish Fuel Poverty Advisory Panel Members to ensure everyone is comfortable with it. Often, the Secretariat will handle reaching out to external experts on behalf of the Scottish Fuel Poverty Advisory Panel. So yes, engaging others to provide input is a common and supported practice.

## **Additional information**

If you have any questions on the Public Appointment process, please don't hesitate to email us at [Public.appointments@gov.scot](mailto:Public.appointments@gov.scot). Any questions on understanding the criteria can be passed to the Recruitment Panel anonymously.

Also, if you'd like to follow up with the Secretariat, we would be happy to talk to you. You can email [enquiries@fuelpovertypanel.scot](mailto:enquiries@fuelpovertypanel.scot).

**Applications close on the 1st of September.**