

**APPG on Poverty and Inequality  
Inaugural Meeting**

27 November 2024 - 10.30am - 11.00am  
Portcullis House Room 0

**Attendees:** Afzal Khan MP, Andrew Lewin MP, Baroness Lister, Bobby Dean MP, Brian Leishman MP, Chris Vince MP, David Taylor MP, Emma Foody MP, Gordon McKee MP, Graeme Downie MP, Gurinder Singh Josan MP, Ian Byrne MP, Imogen Walker MP, Jake Richards MP, Jim Dickson MP, Laurence Turner MP, Lewis Atkinson MP, Mark Ferguson MP, Matthew Patrick MP, Melaine Ward MP, Neil Duncan-Jordan MP, Patrick Hurley MP, Polly Billington MP, Rebecca Long Bailey MP, Richard Baker MP, Sean Woodcock MP and Sian Berry MP

**Also in attendance:** Priya Sahni-Nicholas - Equality Trust (Secretariat) and Rob Donnelly - Equality Trust (Secretariat)

### **1) Election of Officers**

Afzal Khan MP chaired this portion of the meeting.

The following were unanimously elected as Chair, Co-Chair and Officer:

- Sian Berry MP - Chair and Registered Contact
- Baroness Lister - Co-Chair
- Baroness Stroud - Officer (elected in absentia)

Sian Berry MP took over as chair of the meeting.

Rebecca Long Bailey MP and Mark Ferguson MP put themselves forward for the vacant Officer role.

- Rebecca Long Bailey MP was nominated by Sian Berry MP and seconded by Ian Byrne MP
- Mark Ferguson MP was nominated by Gurinder Singh Josan MP and seconded by Imogen Walker MP
- An election was held by a show of hands - Mark Ferguson MP received 19 votes and Rebecca Long Bailey received 6 votes
- Mark Ferguson MP was duly elected to the Officer role.

### **2) Discussion on priorities for the year ahead**

A broad discussion was had on which areas of work the APPG should focus on in the year ahead.

- Baroness Lister mentioned that the Work and Pensions Select Committee is currently leading an inquiry into pensioner poverty titled [Pensioner Poverty: challenges and mitigations inquiry](#). The APPG had previously considered holding an inquiry into pensioner poverty.
- Baroness Lister also mentioned that the group could hold a meeting on the potential impact of the implementation of socioeconomic duty (SED) which the government has committed to enacting in this parliament.
- Baroness Lister also suggested holding a session on the Household Support Fund (HSF) as well as an inquiry into poverty, inequality and a just transition and a more immediate shorter inquiry on poverty, inequality and disability to feed into the work on next Spring's Green Paper on disability benefits reform.
- Neil Duncan Jordan MP raised the possibility of the group hosting a pensioner poverty task force.
- Mark Ferguson MP mentioned holding an inquiry on intergenerational poverty.
- Polly Billington MP is the chair of the APPG on Renewable and Sustainable Energy and raised that energy costs are one of the main drivers of poverty in the UK and this should be taken into account in the group's work.
- A discussion was had on rural poverty and how rural communities are often left out of conversations about poverty and inequality.
- Laurence Turner MP raised the issue of how poverty is measured and how the ONS is working to improve this and ensuring that the poorest households are included in poverty statistics.
- Priya Sahni-Nicholas - Equality Trust (Secretariat) raised that the Equality Trust and the APPG on Poverty (in the previous Parliament) have worked closely with the APLE Collective (Addressing Poverty through Lived Experience) on devising community led priorities for the APPG. The APLE Collective suggested that the APPG carry out a review of how the Department for Work and Pensions administers the benefit systems and the APPG should work with groups such as the APLE Collective to ensure that those with lived experience of the social security system are at the centre of the review. Another issue they raised was work around removing standing charges from energy bills.
- Sian Berry MP agreed on the importance of the APPG centring the voices of those with lived experience and welcomed the fact that the Equality Trust have a range of contacts who can support the group on this.
- Baroness Lister mentioned that the government's child poverty task force has made a concerted effort to heavily involve those with lived experience of poverty.
- Mark Ferguson MP raised the issue of Universal Credit and how children who grow up in families in receipt of Universal Credit then transition into being single Universal Credit claimants when they become adults and the effects that this change can have.
- Bobby Dean MP raised the issue of the lower rate of Universal Credit for under 25s and the disproportionate impact this has on care leavers and there is often an assumption that those under the age of 25 are able to fall back on parents/guardians for financial support.

- It was agreed that the Chairs and Officers will get together and discuss a work plan for the year ahead.

### **3) AOB**

- Baroness Lister raised that the APPG on Migration is writing a letter to ministers in the Home Office and the Department of Work and Pension asking for a meeting to discuss a joint report which the APPG (as the APPG on Poverty) published with the APPG on Migration in the last Parliament titled [The Effects of UK Immigration, Asylum and Refugee Policy on Poverty](#). The objective of the meeting is to discuss the recommendations of the report with government ministers. Members agreed that Chairs and Officers should sign the joint letter.

### **Action Points**

- Secretariat to check on the status of APPG on Universal Credit and APPG on Fuel Poverty.
- Secretariat to arrange a meeting with Co-Chairs and Officers to decide upon a work schedule for the year ahead.