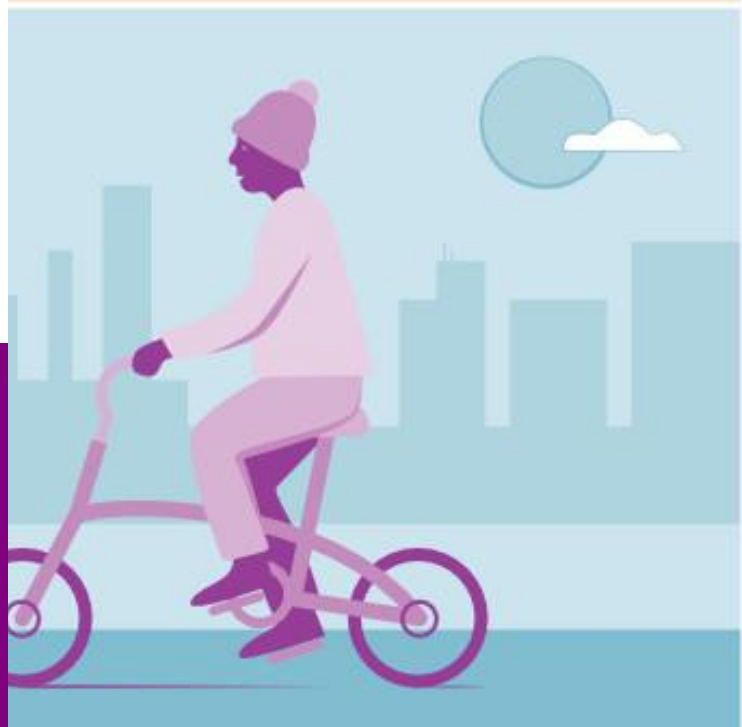




**The Health and
Social Care
Alliance
Scotland
(the ALLIANCE)**



**National Performance Framework Inquiry
Finance & Public Administration Committee
ALLIANCE response**

28 June 2024

Introduction

The Health and Social Care Alliance Scotland (the ALLIANCE) welcomes the opportunity to respond to the Finance and Public Administration Committee's inquiry into the National Performance Framework (NPF). The ALLIANCE responded to the earlier consultation on the National Outcomes review, with a particular focus on the need for a National Outcome on Care, and a reworking of many of the indicators tied to individual Outcomes.

We strongly welcome that the changes proposed by the Scottish Government include acting on the calls for a National Outcome on Care. Changes to the business and economy related Outcomes, creating a "Wellbeing Economy and Fair Work" Outcome are likewise highly positive, helping to refocus the government's economic policies away from solely growth and towards the quality of people's lives.

However, the effectiveness of the National Outcomes will depend significantly on the indicators that are chosen to measure them. At this stage, the Scottish Government have not yet developed or consulted on indicators, limiting our ability to comment fully on what should be in an implementation plan. In addition, more work is necessary to ensure that the National Outcomes are more fully embedded in the Scottish Government's policy development processes and meaningfully inform action, and to promote and communicate the NPF more widely.

Question 1: What are your views of this updated purpose for the National Performance Framework?

The ALLIANCE agree with the updated purpose of the NPF. The wording is more streamlined and accessible than the previous version, whilst keeping the focus firmly on wellbeing. This reflects long-standing and consistent calls from the ALLIANCE to rethink our approach to the economy by moving away from a narrow focus on GDP growth, towards models that support wellbeing and the realisation of human rights.



Question 2: In your view, do the proposed National Outcomes match the purpose of the National Performance Framework? Please explain your answer.

We agree that the National Outcomes align well with the purpose of the NPF, covering the broad range of policy areas necessary to ensure wellbeing and rights. As we will discuss in more detail in our responses to later questions, the lack of an Outcome on Care was a notable omission from the current version of the Outcomes. We are therefore pleased that Care has been proposed as a new Outcome as part of the review.

Question 3: What do you think of the changes being proposed?

The ALLIANCE are part of the “A Scotland That Cares” campaign. This campaign called for a National Outcome on Care in order to recognise the essential role that care, paid and unpaid, plays in our society and economy. We want Scotland to fully value and invest in care because unpaid carers are priceless, care workers deserve proper recognition, and carers should have a voice.

Everyone needs care at some point in this life: as a child, in older age, or due to ill health or disability. The call for a National Outcome on Care encompassed all forms of care. In addition to the significant positive impact of care on people receiving it, helping support them to live their best lives and realise their human rights to health and equal participation in society, care is a benefit to everyone.

Unpaid care, provided by an estimated 839,000¹ adults and 29,000² young carers, would cost an estimated £10.9 billion each year to replace³. Paid care work is also a major source of employment, with social care alone already employing over 208,000⁴ workers. Despite this, care is systemically undervalued and as a result chronically underfunded. The gendered nature of care, and the undervaluing of care, must be recognised too, with women estimated to make up 70% of unpaid carers⁵, 80%⁶ of adult social care staff, and 96%⁷ of childcare staff. The unequal distribution of care work,



combined with undervaluation, limits women’s economic prosperity and undermines their health and wellbeing.

We therefore strongly welcome that the Scottish Government has proposed such an Outcome, and that it includes recognition for the economic value of unpaid care and an aspiration to ensure nobody providing care experiences poverty. Embedding care within the NPF in this way is an important step towards ensuring that care is fully valued in Scotland. It is essential that this Outcome is supplemented by indicators that allow effective monitoring of the state of care in Scotland, and is properly accounted for in all aspects of government planning and budgeting.

Similarly, we welcome the consolidation of the current “Economy” and “Fair Work and Business” Outcomes into a single “Wellbeing Economy and Fair Work” Outcome, which emphasises that “investing in a strong wellbeing economy can drive economic prosperity”. In our response to the consultation on the National Outcomes review⁸, we had called for the principles of the Wellbeing Economy to be integrated into the National Outcomes. Putting wellbeing at the centre of the economy is a necessary step towards a fairer, more equitable society, as simplistic measures such as GDP growth tell us little to nothing about the quality of people’s lives and public services.

We also welcome the expanded title for the “Equality and Human Rights” Outcome, which reflects the true scope of the relevant policy areas. However, whilst a standalone Outcome relating to rights is important, human rights must be embedded throughout all Outcomes and the NPF more broadly. In our response to the consultation⁹ we called for human rights to be mainstreamed and at the centre of both decision making and monitoring processes. We believe that there is work yet to be done to deliver on joined-up human rights policy across the Scottish Government, and to firmly embed rights within the government’s ways of working.

We had also called for the National Outcome relating to poverty to explicitly reference social security, which is lacking in the current version of the NPF.



The inclusion of language that recognises social security as a route out of poverty in the reformulated “Reduce Poverty” National Outcome is positive. Similarly, we had suggested that the Outcome on the Environment should include reference to air quality, given the negative implications for health of air pollution. As such, we welcome the addition of language referring to “unpolluted air” within the definition of this Outcome.

We agree with the proposal to emphasise the importance of mental health within the National Outcome on Health. Nonetheless, in advance of the indicators being developed, we would re-emphasise the point made in our initial consultation response that we do not believe an explicit “healthy weight” indicator is a useful measurement, contributing to unhelpful and stigmatising approaches to weight and health.

Although the ALLIANCE did not directly refer to these areas in our consultation response, we agree with the addition of Outcomes on “Housing” and “Climate Action”, as well as the changes to the Outcomes on “Children and Young People” and “Education and Learning”. We believe these to both broaden and strengthen the NPF’s relevance to policymaking in Scotland.

Question 5: What are your views on the Scottish Government’s consultation on the proposed National Outcomes?

As referenced in our responses to other questions, the ALLIANCE submitted a response to the Scottish Government’s consultation on the review of the National Outcomes. As one of the major changes the Scottish Government have proposed, a National Outcome on Care, reflects calls made by the ALLIANCE and many other organisations, we feel that consultation input was taken seriously and has clearly shaped government policy.

A large proportion of our response related to the indicators for each National Outcome. At this point in the process, before a revised set of indicators have been published, it is not possible to say whether that aspect



of the consultation has been similarly meaningful. We look forward to the Scottish Government publishing their proposed indicators in the near future and will engage positively with any resulting consultation.

Question 6: How do you think the proposed National Outcomes will impact on inequality?

In principle, the National Outcomes have the potential to make a significant contribution to tackling inequalities. The ambitions within most, if not all, Outcomes would help to address a range of inequalities, including economic, health, gender and racial inequalities. Some Outcomes are especially relevant to reducing inequalities, including “Equality and Human Rights” and “Reduce Poverty”. If the National Outcomes are used to meaningfully inform policymaking, then they provide a solid basis for action.

It must be acknowledged however that delivery against the National Outcomes and the NPF is reliant on the government dedicating sufficient resources to doing so. As discussed in our response to other questions there is a widespread feeling that an “implementation gap” exists in Scotland between laudable policy objectives and delivery on the ground. If the ambitions and aspirations represented by the National Outcomes are not matched with action and funding, then their impact on reducing inequalities will unfortunately be limited.

Question 7: Do you think the proposed National Outcomes align with the UN Sustainable Development Goals? Please explain your answer.

Overall, we consider the National Outcomes to align well with the UN Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). In many cases, there are one-to-one relations between the two: for example the National Outcome on “Wellbeing Economy and Fair Work” is a close parallel with the SDG on “Decent Work and Economic Growth”. Similarly, Outcomes on Health and Education correspond directly to SDGs on “Good Health and Wellbeing” and “Quality Education”. Alignment with the SDGs is useful, as it connects a distinct Scottish framework to wider international action, recognising Scotland as just one contributor to a global effort.



However, it could be argued that some of the National Outcomes are slightly less ambitious in their formulation than the equivalent SDGs. Whereas the proposed revised National Outcomes include “Reduce Poverty”, the corresponding SDG is “No Poverty”. It is possible that the Scottish Government is being realistic in its ambitions, recognising that it is not possible to eradicate poverty purely through action in devolved areas, with powers over large aspects of social security for example remaining with the UK Government. Nonetheless, this difference is notable when comparing the National Outcomes and SDGs directly.

Question 8: To what extent do the proposed National Outcomes support joined-up policy making in Scotland?

The ALLIANCE believe there is significant potential for the refreshed National Outcomes, as a comprehensive framework for what is important for the wellbeing of people across Scotland, to support joined-up policymaking. That potential can only be realised by the Scottish Government making a concerted effort to firmly embed the NPF and the National Outcomes in decision-making at all levels. In our earlier consultation response, we echoed comments from the Scottish Council on Voluntary Organisations (SCVO) related to the need to address the implementation gap between policy intentions and experiences on the ground¹⁰.

We also noted that awareness and understanding of the National Outcomes was not particularly widespread outwith the Scottish Government. We heard that some of our members were unsure about how they related to policy development and service delivery. Although the National Outcomes are only intended to guide the public sector, given their nature as long-term vision for Scotland it is important that they are accessible and also widely understood across the third and private sectors. Especially where the public sector may be commissioning services from the third or private sectors, a clear understanding of the National Outcomes will be necessary to ensure that those services contribute to achieving them.



Question 9: What should the implementation plan contain to make sure that the National Outcomes are used in decision-making.

The implementation plan should outline what actions are necessary for the Scottish Government to further embed the use of the National Outcomes within its own work. For example, it should ensure that all Scottish Government legislation, strategies and related publications outline how they will contribute to achieving the National Outcomes, as well as how that contribution will be measured and the government held accountable. It is important that both the National Outcomes and the measuring indicators are appropriately aligned with and consider the range of other Scottish Government aspirations and targets, including in relation to climate action and child poverty.

The effectiveness of the National Outcomes will depend substantially on the indicators that the Scottish Government uses to measure them. Whilst we recognise the development of indicators must follow on from parliamentary approval of the National Outcomes, it makes commenting on a possible implementation plan slightly more difficult, as the exact shape of the plan will depend on the indicators chosen.

The ALLIANCE recommend that the implementation plan include a clear focus on realising human rights and improving the quality of rights related data collection. In our response to the Scottish Government's consultation¹¹, we noted our concern that the indicators relating to the Outcome on Human Rights were not particularly meaningful measurements, relating more to subjective judgements on public service delivery, and were lacking an indicator relating to discrimination. We also feel that they were focussed primarily on civil and political rights, with limited consideration given to economic, social and cultural rights.

Given the Scottish Government's intention to incorporate a number of international human rights treaties directly into Scots Law, consideration should be given to indicators that relate to more quantifiable aspects of



public service delivery. Ensuring that incorporation is having a meaningful impact on people's rights will require comprehensive, intersectional data gathering and analysis, and how that data may be used to gauge progress on the national outcomes should be accounted for in developing the upcoming Human Rights Bill.

With regards to human rights in general, the Scottish Government should account for the recommendations and actions within SNAP 2: Scotland's second National Human Rights Action Plan¹². In particular, the action "Develop and maintain an accessible tracker tool to measure, monitor and support the implementation of international treaty body and Universal Periodic Review (UPR) recommendations" is of clear relevance to the National Outcomes, as such a tracker would likely enable measurements related to a range of outcomes.

In line with our response to a previous question, given their purpose the National Outcomes and the NPF need to be treated as more than simply an internal framework for public sector use. The implementation plan should therefore include actions relating to promoting the National Outcomes, and developing resources and materials that can be used to raise awareness and understanding in other sectors and by the general public.

About the ALLIANCE

The Health and Social Care Alliance Scotland (the ALLIANCE) is the national third sector intermediary for health and social care, bringing together a diverse range of people and organisations who share our vision, which is a Scotland where everyone has a strong voice and enjoys their right to live well with dignity and respect.

We are a strategic partner of the Scottish Government and have close working relationships with many NHS Boards, academic institutions and key organisations spanning health, social care, housing and digital technology.



Our purpose is to improve the wellbeing of people and communities across Scotland. We bring together the expertise of people with lived experience, the third sector, and organisations across health and social care to inform policy, practice and service delivery. Together our voice is stronger and we use it to make meaningful change at the local and national level.

The ALLIANCE has a strong and diverse membership of over 3,500 organisations and individuals. Our broad range of programmes and activities deliver support, research and policy development, digital innovation and knowledge sharing. We manage funding and spotlight innovative projects; working with our members and partners to ensure lived experience and third sector expertise is listened to and acted upon by informing national policy and campaigns, and putting people at the centre of designing support and services.

We aim to:

- Ensure disabled people, people with long term conditions and unpaid carers voices, expertise and rights drive policy and sit at the heart of design, delivery and improvement of support and services.
- Support transformational change that works with individual and community assets, helping people to live well, supporting human rights, self management, co-production and independent living.
- Champion and support the third sector as a vital strategic and delivery partner, and foster cross-sector understanding and partnership.

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¹ Scottish Government, 'National Care Service - Fairer Scotland Duty Assessment' (June 2022), available at: <https://www.gov.scot/publications/national-care-service-fairer-scotland-duty-assessment/documents/>

² Scottish Government, 'National Care Service – Child Rights and Wellbeing Impact Assessment' (June 2022), available at: <https://www.gov.scot/publications/national-care-service-child-rights-wellbeing-impact-assessment/documents/>

³ Carers Scotland, 'State of Caring in Scotland 2022' (November 2022), available at: <https://www.carersuk.org/reports/state-of-caring-in-scotland-2022/#:~:text=The%202022%20State%20of%20Caring,size%20in%20the%20survey's%20history.>

⁴ Scottish Social Services Council, 'Scottish Social Service Sector: Report on 2021 Workforce Data' (August 2022) , available at: <https://data.sssc.uk.com/data-publications/22-workforce-data-report/295-scottish-social-service-sector-report-on-2021-workforce-data>

⁵ Scottish Government, 'Carers Census, Scotland, 2019-20 and 2020-21' (December 2021), available at: <https://www.gov.scot/publications/carers-census-scotland-2019-20-2020-21/pages/5/#:~:text=Around%207%20in%2010%20carers,of%20unpaid%20carers%20were%20female>

⁶ Scottish Government, 'National Care Service adult social care workforce: evidence' (June 2022), available at: <https://www.gov.scot/publications/national-care-service-adult-social-care-workforce-scotland/documents/>

⁷ Scottish Government, 'A Blueprint for 2020: Expansion of Early Learning and Childcare in Scotland Consultation' (March 2020), available at: <https://www.gov.scot/publications/blueprint-2020-expansion-early-learning-childcare-scotland-consultation/pages/5/>

⁸ The ALLIANCE, 'ALLIANCE responds to National Outcomes review 2023' (June 2023), available at: <https://www.alliance-scotland.org.uk/blog/news/alliance-respond-to-national-outcomes-review-2023/>

⁹ As above.



¹⁰ SCVO, “Review of National Outcomes 2023 - SCVO response to call for evidence” (June 2023), available at: <https://scvo.scot/p/60157/2023/06/12/review-of-national-outcomes-2023-scvo-response-to-call-for-evidence>

¹¹ The ALLIANCE, ‘ALLIANCE responds to National Outcomes review 2023’ (June 2023), available at: <https://www.alliance-scotland.org.uk/blog/news/alliance-respond-to-national-outcomes-review-2023/>

¹² SNAP 2, ‘Scotland’s second National Human Rights Action Plan (2023-2030)’ April 2023, available at: <https://www.snaprights.info/wp-content/uploads/2023/03/SNAP-2-March-2023-FINAL-PDF.pdf>

