

First Minister's National Advisory Council on Women and Girls

Phase Two Terms of Reference

Vision

1. The First Minister's National Advisory Council on Women and Girls ("NACWG") provides advice and challenge to the First Minister on how Scotland can become a truly equal society where all women and girls can reach their true potential.

Background

2. The Scottish Government's Programme for Government 2016-17: A Plan for Scotland included a pledge to establish a First Minister's Advisory Council on Women and Girls to help drive forward action to tackle gender inequality.
3. Phase one NACWG commenced in December 2017 and worked with stakeholders with an interest in gender equality – "the Circle" - to agree a work plan and to explore annual topics. A package of recommendations was delivered to the First Minister via three annual reports¹.

Phase Two NACWG

4. Phase two NACWG will focus on the outputs of phase one – the package of recommendations – and apply an accountability and scrutiny model to monitor them as they are implemented, ensuring they are competently delivered to make a positive difference for women in Scotland. The NACWG retains the ability to make additional recommendations and consider any other relevant issues that it considers necessary.
5. The role of the NACWG is advisory – it is not a decision-making or policy-setting group. It has no statutory powers. However, it will focus on evidence, expertise and influence to generate change.
6. Evidence and insight will be gathered and discussions recorded. This will lead to challenges for action, based on the experience and expertise of the Members. These will be shared with the First Minister and publicly available on the NACWG website – offering the opportunity for stakeholders and others to use them to take action and campaign for change.
7. Phase two will include a lived expertise review group to ensure that the work of the NACWG is informed by, and co-produced with, women from marginalised communities. Membership of this group will be drawn from third sector service users and community groups. This group will be provided with

¹ National Advisory Council on Women and Girls 2018 Report and Recommendations, January 2019, URL: <https://onescotland.org/nacwg-news/2018-first-report-and-recommendations/>; National Advisory Council on Women and Girls 2019 Report and Recommendations, January 2020, URL: <https://onescotland.org/nacwg-news/2019-report-and-recommendations/>; National Advisory Council on Women and Girls 2020 Report and Recommendations, January 2021, URL: <https://onescotland.org/nacwg-news/2020-report-and-recommendations/>.

remuneration for their expertise, capacity building and support. This group will inform the delivery of recommendations from phase one and may opt to produce research or reports on chosen topics.

NACWG Membership

8. Members of the NACWG for phase two have been chosen with respect to their strong gender competence along with their knowledge, skill and experience of accountability and scrutiny of both policy and delivery. All core members of the NACWG will be women and girls aged 15+. All people, regardless of their gender identity will continue to be encouraged to participate in the NACWG's work through the Circle.

Role of the NACWG

9. The role of the NACWG is to:
 - Play a key leadership role in raising our awareness as a nation of gender inequality and the wide range of related issues experienced by women and girls in Scotland today;
 - Act as a champion for positive progress and policies where these are making a meaningful difference to women and girls' lives, and encouraging Scotland to build on any success to become a beacon for gender equality;
 - Scrutinise the delivery of phase one recommendations using an accountability model to determine the impact for women and girls. Review policy work across Scottish Government's directorates, where appropriate, to assess the extent of intersectional understanding and gender competent delivery;
 - Act as a catalyst for change by providing a challenging voice to the First Minister and her team, where there are gaps in the work being undertaken to address gender inequality or where progress is not effecting real change; and
 - Provide advice, support, and challenge to the First Minister with the objective of realising the shared goal of equality for women and girls in every community across Scotland.

In fulfilling this role it will seek to positively influence policy and decision making and service delivery across sectors.

The NACWG will be responsible for setting its own agenda and business, including the model it wishes to adopt, based on available evidence about women and girl's equality in Scotland and beyond – drawn from primary and secondary research and insight from communities and stakeholders. The NACWG will be able to request the collection or commissioning of new data and analysis in discussion with the secretariat (see below).

Length of Appointment

10. It is anticipated that the second phase of the NACWG will be between three and three and a half years, at the end of which point it will report to the First Minister on the effectiveness of phase one recommendations and whether any further work is required.
11. Members shall be invited to serve for 4 years, commencing on 21 March 2022 and ending on 20 March 2026.
12. Members can end their membership of the NACWG at any time, by writing to the co-Chairs of the NACWG and the Scottish Government Secretariat.

Frequency of Meetings

13. The NACWG will meet over the course of the year and it is anticipated that a programme of participation will be taken forward to support meetings. Scottish Government will provide updates on recommendation implementation for the NACWG in good time ahead of meetings, to allow a period of questions to be asked, and invite any officials they wish to attend the upcoming meeting, to discuss recommendation implementation further. The NACWG will agree and publish a work plan that documents in detail their approach.
14. The NACWG may choose to hold meetings virtually, in person, or adopting a hybrid approach, with a view to supporting Members' participation.
15. It is anticipated that the NACWG will undertake a programme of work in between meetings and members may be invited to participate in other ad-hoc engagements and events if they wish – however, there is no formal expectation for members to “represent” the NACWG or attend any events outwith the main sessions.

Stakeholder and Digital Engagement

16. Engagement will continue with the Circle who will be asked to share how they are creating change based on the recommendation package developed in NACWG phase one. This will be an important component in assessing the success of phase one.
17. Digital engagement will continue in a slightly revised format, ensuring the public are kept up to date with the work of the NACWG and also better understand what the recommendations developed in phase one mean to them.

Secretariat

18. The Scottish Government will provide secretariat to the NACWG and other administrative, analytical, digital and communications support as required.

Role of the co-Chairs

19. The Independent co-Chairs of the NACWG are responsible for leading meetings of the NACWG and for setting the strategic direction and business of the NACWG in discussion with Members and the First Minister.
20. The NACWG will formally report directly to the First Minister.

Transparency

21. Minutes and papers of the NACWG will be published on the NACWG website.

Remuneration and Budget

22. Members are remunerated for their time spent working on the NACWG, including their attendance at meetings, in line with Scottish Government Public Sector Pay Policy 2021-22, and this is at the rate of £300 per day for Co-Chairs (max 30 days per annum) and £200 per day for members (max 18 days per annum). Members will also be reimbursed for travel and accommodation expenses incurred in attending meetings of the NACWG and other ad-hoc events or engagements associated with the NACWG. All expenses will be reimbursed in line with Scottish Government Travel and Subsistence policy. The annual budget of the NACWG is £300,000 in 2022/23 and will be reviewed annually.

Annual Report

23. The NACWG will prepare an annual report (and further briefings, as required) which will be submitted to the First Minister, summarising its work over the preceding year and advising on suggested action that Scotland should undertake in seeking to become a leader in gender equality.