

Social Mobility Commission Board Meeting Minutes

12:00-16:00, Tuesday 18 December
Room 2.14, Sanctuary Buildings

Attendees: Commissioners

Dame Martina Milburn (Chair)
Alastair da Costa
Pippa Dunn
Sam Friedman
Harvey Matthewson
Farrah Storr
Jody Walker
Sandra Wallace
Liz Williams
Sammy Wright
Members of the Secretariat

Apologies: Saeed Atcha, Steven Cooper, Jessica Oghenegweke.

1. The Chair welcomed attendees to the first meeting of the new Commission Board and emphasised that the Commission should consider its future focus as its approach could be very broad. It was therefore necessary to narrow its focus given limited resources, bearing in mind the Education Select Committee's report, and the Commission's interactions with the Committee since then. The Commission's next appearance before the Committee was likely to be in Spring/Summer.

Year One priorities

2. The Board had a broad discussion about the Commission's impact and potential areas of focus. The Commission agreed that they should continue with the great work of the previous Commission in influencing and placing social mobility on the political and mainstream agenda, whilst recognising that the social mobility landscape is crowded and they should be careful not stray into areas beyond its remit.

3. To help frame the Commission's strategic priorities, the Secretariat presented an analysis of the Commission's past recommendations from its five State of the Nation reports and Time for Change document. This covered 188 recommendations focusing on a range of issues and directed at businesses, stakeholders, central and local government and the third sector. The new Board would need to consider whether they wanted to revive any of the past recommendations that had not been acted upon and take them forward. They also considered how to learn from the evaluation of impact from which previous recommendations were implemented.

4. The outcome was that they decided:

- **Secretariat to circulate to Board members the analysis of recommendations**
- **Secretariat should put a note to the Board for their decision on suggested recommendations for the 2018-19 annual report**
- **Secretariat should provide a map of the main players within the social mobility space and set out the key pieces of legislation.**

Item 2 – 6 month Forward Look and research publications pipeline.

5. The Board had a discussion about the content of upcoming reports which were complete and underway, and were asked to agree next steps. The outcome was that on:

- **Adults Skills**: The Adults skills budget from government had declined rapidly over time and had a huge impact on people from disadvantaged backgrounds and those with low skills. Following discussion, **the Board agreed that the report should be published in January.**
- **Employer research and toolkit**: This report examined issues such as the impact of socio economic diversity on business or individual performance, it also provided a toolkit for employers to support their work in this space. Following discussion **the Board agreed Secretariat would consider how to engage employers further and agree the publication strategy following this.**
- **Disability report**: This report is currently underway. It will look at the links between social mobility and the different types of disabilities including mental health. The research is exploratory. The findings will inform the Board's decision on whether the Commission should delve deeper into some of the issues identified. The report should be ready by end March. Following discussion, **the Board agreed that the report should be considered for publication in May.**
- **Elitist Britain**: This report was drafted internally in 2017. The Commission has partnered with Sutton Trust who are updating the data. The report highlights the numbers of privately educated people in top professional jobs. Sutton Trust are leading on launch arrangements but this is likely to be April. **Following discussion, the Board agreed that Secretariat should consider the media strategy and branding for this research.**
- **Extra-curricular activities/soft skills**: **The Board agreed that this report should be published in late June/early July.**
- **Strategic Priorities and Apprenticeship Tool**: **The Chair proposed that these reports be published later in the year and discuss further in its January meeting.**
- **The Chair also asked Commissioners to consider whether they wanted to get involved in other aspects of the reports and were also asked to**

contact Secretariat if they wanted to be involved in any strands of media work.

- Secretariat offered to talk through any of the reports with Commissioners ahead of the next meeting.
- Alternative media, such as digital media and bloggers, should be considered in reaching new audiences through our reports.

Item 3 - 2018-19 Annual Report – Board Paper C

6. There was a discussion about the broad structure of this year's annual report. Secretariat reminded the Board that the core purpose of the Commission's annual report is to assess progress on social mobility. The approach to the assessment could be handled in different ways. Last year's report focused on geography but it would be difficult to adopt a geographical approach for this year as it would be challenging to demonstrate real change given the incremental nature of the data – the geographical approach had been intended to be used every two years. Increasingly, the Commission have been using case studies to showcase good practice. Following discussion **the Board agreed that this year's report should follow the life stage approach i.e. early years, schools, higher education, future education and apprenticeships, working lives, with a chapter assessing progress in Scotland and Wales.**

AOB

7. Future **Board meeting dates**: Commissioners were asked to respond to Secretariat on the Board meeting dates circulated. It was noted that February meeting was proposed to be held regionally. Commissioners to confirm their availability for the three proposed dates.

8. **Social media**: Secretariat to work on plans for the annual report and discuss at the next Board meeting.