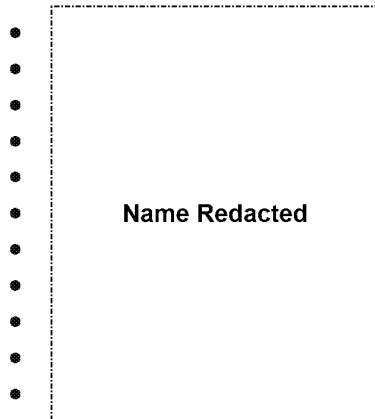


## Covid Group Meeting Notes – Thursday 7<sup>th</sup> October 2021

### Attendees

- Richard Lochhead & Various Scot Gov Officials



### Just Transition & Just Transition Commission

(ask for outline of outline Scottish Government plans for JT and role of new JTC.)

- RL - Just Transition- **NR** continues to be chair First part of the plan- focus on the energy sector
- **NR** - positive response to Just Transition Commission report, however job creation could have been stronger.  
New commission- would want a continuing trade Union role, less academic, more practical role.
- **NR** - important to focus on delivery, empowering the voice of workers  
Worker led Transition is important- workers feel satisfied, not fearful of job security.
- **NR** - disappointed there wasn't a more strategic approach to job creation - years of funding for academia of which none led to substantive job outcomes.
- Engagement with workers/communities really important - important that the new commission is worker led and doesn't become business focused.
- **NR** - important that the Equality impact is assessed.
- RL- noted that the Trade Union movement will continue to have a voice on the Just Transition Commission.  
Will take away points raised around workers voice and equality assessment and have a think about it.  
Hybrid approach would be used- experts brought in at specific times when required.

- **NR** - noted concerns with employers engaging with workers- some way to go with this.

## **Fair Work & public sector funding**

### **Horsecross**

(request Minister to provide update on discussion with Horsecross Arts, depending on response we may need to be disappointed that SG are not in a position to ensure FW is guaranteed when public funding is provided, or we may welcome his update)

- RL- concerns ongoing issue- continuing to work on it. Scot Gov have discussed with Creative Scotland. Next stage- thinking about joint letter from relevant ministers- (very vague )  
Noted that Creative Scotland are dealing with it- would encourage ongoing dialogue between both parties. Noted that Scot Gov can not sort out all industrial disputes and that Creative Scotland will take action on the matter.
- **NR** - Noted Concerns with the timescale for resolution- Wider TU movement very aware of the situation.  
Scot Gov should be able to be more involved-Fair Work issue
- **NR** - Noted that TU side are willing to engage and open discussion's with Horsecross, however Horsecross are not willing to engage, have specifically said that TU's have no place- deliberate attempt to undermine Fair work principles - therefore it's appropriate for the Scot Gov to become involved.  
the outcome of this dispute will be used by the TU movement to measure the effectiveness of Fair work principles so it is important that Scot Gov use influence to resolve.
- **NR** - TU movement do have a strong voice - and will continue to use it and our influence to apply pressure and encourage people to boycott Horsecross until a resolution is found.

### **Rail Sector**

(Significant concern in transport unions, developments in recent days but issues not yet resolved, question the role of **I&S** in applying Fair Work, ask Jackson to input on the lockout of engineers in depots)

- **NR** - noted the concerns with the disputes in the Rail Sector- clash with Fair work principles.  
Noted the anti- trade Union tactics of 5 SNP MSP's
- **NR** - appears to be some movement on **I&S** dispute- will wait for the offer- so not asking for immediate action at the moment.

Noted that the Union decided by legal ballot to take action short of strike, specified and gave correct notice to employer- not challenged, the day before employer questioned one of the restrictions.

**I&S**

sent home a group of workers for not operating plant machinery- the workers were not trained so a Health and Safety issue

The Employer undermined a legitimate action, didn't inform TU that a shop steward was one of the workers locked out of work.

Scot Gov appear to be taking the side of the employer.

Employers are completely ignoring Fair work principles- Scot Gov need to challenge this.

- RL- noted it was a difficult dispute- need for Scot Gov and Transport Minister to reflect and learn lessons.

### **COVID Safety & Impact of ending of Furlough.**

(on-going concerns around workplace safety, while rate is now going in right direction there are still concerns around workplace safety)

employers relying too much on vaccine and dropping other measures eg oil rigs. Ask Minister for update on the end of furlough, impact this has in Scotland and plans for skills or new roles and financial support in Scotland)

- **NR** - noted concerns with Offshore Workers being forced to quarantine for 5 days before working if unvaccinated- not receiving pay during this time.  
Other Health & Safety measures being dropped due to the myth that the vaccine stops the spread of the virus/infection. Employers are developing a dangerous mindset
- **NR**- noted concerns with workers not receiving company sick pay if required to self isolate  
Concerns with doubling violence levels against workers checking COVID passports.
- RL- repeat messaging around employers needing to do the right thing for Public Health.  
Wider Public- need to note the small sacrifice they need to make in regards to vaccination for those who are unable to.  
Will look further into points raised by **NR**
- **NR**- broadly welcome the extension of social care fund.  
Noted workers being pressured to return to work on poorer T's and C's after furlough ends.  
Noted concerns with number of hours worked- lower paid even fewer hours
- RL- will take away comments about social care.  
Noted there was less support for Furlough- would need to wait for latest statistics.  
Labour shortages, impact of brexit- could lead to an increase in unemployment, which was predicted.

Noted whilst NR message is back to offices, Scot Gov message is to remain cautious.