

Social Mobility Commission brought into heart of government



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Social mobility is to be put at the heart of the government's levelling up agenda with new structures to ensure that policies are delivered to help the most disadvantaged communities.

The Social Mobility Commission is to be brought more closely into the centre of Whitehall to help inform and advise on the new, changing agenda in the light of the pandemic and our exit from the European Union.

The commission, which will continue as an independent arms-length body, is to join the Cabinet Office to advise Liz Truss, the Minister for Women and Equalities.

It will also work closely with other equality bodies covering race, disability and gender.

It will continue to help inform policies to support regions most affected by the pandemic including areas in the north east and north west, but also other social mobility coldspots in areas in the south.

Many of these were recently identified in our recent report, the Long Shadow of Deprivation.

The commission, co-chaired by Steven Cooper and Sandra Wallace, which currently sits within the Department for Education has long argued that it should have a more prominent place at the heart of Whitehall as much of its work cuts across several departments.

In its report earlier this year – Monitoring Social Mobility: 2013 to 2020 – the commission also pressed for a dedicated policy

unit at the centre, based in the Cabinet Office or Downing Street.

It argued that there needed to be much more coordination across Whitehall on tackling social inequality and a new unit to help deliver policy.

The commission will work with policy officials in the Cabinet Office while the unit is being set up to help drive through policy recommendations and make action happen on the ground.

Steven Cooper and Sandra Wallace, co-chairs of the Social Mobility Commission said: “We are delighted that the prime minister has backed our proposal for a greater focus on social mobility at the heart of Whitehall.

“We look forward to helping drive the levelling up agenda in the regions whilst continuing our important research work and delivery programmes with key partners such as major employers. We value our independence and will continue to be a big voice advocating for progress and change.”

The commission is an advisory non-departmental public body established under the Life Chances Act 2010. It has a duty to assess progress on improving social mobility, provide published advice to ministers, and carry out social mobility advocacy.

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