**All-Party Parliamentary Group on Social Mobility meeting on socioeconomic diversity in the Civil Service**

**Tuesday 26 October 2021**

The All-Party Parliamentary Group (APPG) on Social Mobility was pleased to host a meeting on socioeconomic diversity in the Civil Service with the following panellists:

* Sasha Morgan, Director of the Social Mobility Commission
* Bernadette Kelly CB, Permanent Secretary for the Department for Transport and Civil Service Social Mobility Champion

Chair of the APPG Karyn Smith introduced the session and was joined by co-chairs Baroness Tyler of Enfield and David Johnston MP.

**INTRODUCTORY SPEECHES**

*Sasha Morgan*

Sasha gave an overview of the Social Mobility Commission’s recent report, [Navigating the Labyrinth](https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/navigating-the-labyrinth). She highlighted that many people who enter the Civil Service from lower socio-economic backgrounds often do not go on to progress in their careers in the same way as those from advantaged backgrounds. Sasha discussed the findings of the report and the barriers faced by those from less advantaged backgrounds in navigating the Civil Service. She also outlined the Commission’s action plan for the Civil Service. Sasha’s slides can be accessed [here](https://www.suttontrust.com/wp-content/uploads/2021/11/2021.10.26_Presentation_APPG-final-pack.pdf).

*Bernadette Kelly CB*

Bernadette outlined the work that is taking place in the Civil Service to improve social mobility, including on recruitment practices, fast stream application processes, internship programmes and apprenticeship schemes. She highlighted the importance of progression for those from lower-socio-economic and disadvantaged backgrounds, as well as access to opportunities. She mentioned several actions that the Civil Service is taking to continue the progress made on social mobility, including looking at recruitment practices, focussing on outreach, encouraging active sponsorship, and building more inclusive cultures.

**Q&A**

Following speeches from Sasha and Bernadette, Baroness Tyler of Enfield opened the meeting up to questions.

Questions were first asked by the Co-Chairs of the group, who covered a number of topics including apprenticeships, support and mentorship to navigate the culture, and the impact of Civil Service Social Mobility Champions.

Other areas covered in the discussion included support for those who have not gone to university, and how to mitigate against any risks of moving jobs out of London. A final set of questions were asked on plans for diversity within the fast track scheme, whether there has been any internal pushback within the Civil Service on progress on diversity, and specific issues around disability employment gaps. Baroness Tyler asked a final question on the nature of the civil service and the inner circle of some policy roles, and how the culture has changed in the Civil Service in recent years.

Baroness Tyler then thanked the panellists and closed the meeting.