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Local Contributions to Tackling Poverty and Inequality in Scotland

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Introduction

This paper considers the contribution of local action to tackle poverty and inequality in Scotland, specifically, local action at the administrative scale of the local authority.¹ It draws upon various Scottish Government papers and analyses, and this author's reflections on local anti-poverty action in Scotland since the introduction of the Scottish Executive back in 1999. Although this is a focused report, a one-page Executive Summary is provided to convey the key points; this summary is structured into three sections, i.e. Intelligence (what we know), Actions (what we need to do) and Issues (what we need to resolve). The main body of the briefing comprises five substantive sections, three of which are discursive, two of which are empirical. Following the introduction, the role of the local authority in tackling poverty in Scotland is reviewed (section 2), the specific actions and responsibilities are considered (section 3) and the evidence base for understanding local poverty is appraised (section 4). Notwithstanding these limitations, prior to conclusion, the incidence of poverty across (section 5) and within (section 6) local authorities is summarized.

¹This paper aims to complement two other Policy Scotland briefings prepared for the Poverty and Inequality Commission: *What Would Make a Difference for Scotland* (Bramley, 2018) and *Report on the Child Poverty Strategy for Scotland 2014-2017* (Williams et al, 2018). This paper does not duplicate the scene-setting that framed Williams et al's paper and those analytical observations which are pertinent to local action to tackle poverty in Scotland.

Executive Summary

Intelligence: What We Know

- ***An historical juncture.*** The Child Poverty (Scotland) Bill represents a step-change — from expectation to requirement — for local contributions to tackle poverty in Scotland.
- ***Work in progress.*** There have been several recent examples of strategic approaches to tackling poverty at the scale of the Scottish local authority administrative area.
- ***A universal problem.*** Poverty exists in each of Scotland's 32 local authority areas. Every state secondary school and almost every state primary school has a pupil who is eligible for a free school meal on grounds other than age of child.
- ***Poverty is particularly prevalent in some areas.*** Poverty is particularly prevalent in the City of Glasgow, although other local authorities also have a high incidence of poverty. In some pockets of urban Scotland, poverty is experienced by the majority of the population.
- ***Poverty is not a universal experience.*** Just as poverty is experienced differently by different groups, it should be recognized that the problems poverty presents varies across places.

Actions: What We Need to Do

- ***Connect national and local anti-poverty strategies.*** Scotland needs to better understand the net impacts – anticipated and then evidenced - of local action on national outcomes.
- ***Optimise the local evidence-base.*** Although it must be accepted that there are limits to what can be evidenced locally, it is imperative that an agreed framework for measuring poverty locally across Scotland is established.
- ***Learning furth of Scotland.*** The recent experience of local areas in England and Wales in developing strategic approaches to tackling child poverty locally presents a rich resource upon which local agents in Scotland can draw.

- **Facilitate sharing of best practice in developing local strategic approaches to tackling poverty.** Mechanisms must be established or strengthened to allow sharing of best practices across Scottish local authorities.
- **Robust appraisal of local plans.** Mechanisms must be established to ensure scrutiny of local action plans and progress reports.

Issues: What We Need to Resolve

- **Frame the parameters of what is possible.** Although it is accepted that, alone, Scottish local authorities cannot eradicate child poverty locally, more positively, there is a need to ascertain what each could and should achieve.
- **Clarify the strategic focus of local work.** Local plans need to be much clearer in specifying their primary anti-poverty goals, e.g. reducing the numbers living in poverty may not be the primary focus of local actions.
- **Clarifying the role of 'communities of interest' and localities.** Local anti-poverty work is not only framed across whole local authority areas; the respective contributions of other modes of local action need to be considered.
- **Planning to address problems.** A position must be adopted should local work be found to fall short of what is required as performance is reviewed toward 2030.
- **Sustainable Development Goals.** At the outset, it would be useful to establish a wider sense of purpose and to relate local anti-poverty action in Scotland to tackling the SDGs to which Scotland has already committed.

1. Introduction

Poverty has been a national project in Scotland since the inception of the then Scottish Executive in 1999. Each administration has presented its overarching framework to tackle poverty and/or inequality in Scotland, from the Social Justice Milestones of the first administration, the Closing the Opportunity Gap framework of the second administration, Achieving Our Potential of the third administration and the wider National Performance Framework and social policy framework that has provided the

overarching focus for more recent administrations. Although the initial impetus for the Child Poverty Strategy for Scotland was the UK Child Poverty Act 2010, divergence from the UK followed when the Scottish Government committed to a Child Poverty (Scotland) Bill, following the withdrawal of UK Government commitments to its 2010 Act (following a change in government). This policy divergence is significant in terms of tackling the substantive problem of child poverty and in terms of defining an alternative national sense of purpose or position with regard to social justice. However, more pertinent to this paper is that this particular Scottish divergence from UK social policy represents a significant shift in the role of the local in tackling national (Scottish) poverty. In the earliest iterations of the Child Poverty Strategy for Scotland within the framework of the Child Poverty Act 2010, local authorities (and their Community Planning Partnerships) were *expected but not required* to develop local action plans; under the framework of the Child Poverty (Scotland) Bill, requirements are placed upon local authorities. In short, the local is now expected to contribute more to tackling poverty in Scotland.

The primary goal of the Child Poverty (Scotland) Bill is the eradication of child poverty in Scotland by 2030. Although it might be argued that local authorities can only make a limited contribution to directly addressing this goal, this is not to suggest that there is little that can be contributed locally to achieve national goals in Scotland. Indeed, as will be discussed, the Child Poverty Strategy for Scotland articulates a broader set of anti-poverty objectives, which necessitate the involvement of local authorities, given their statutory responsibilities.

The brief for this paper is to focus on local action at the administrative scale of the local authority. However, it should be acknowledged that other local work to tackle poverty in Scotland is also being pursued at present. First, there are examples of more localized community strategies to tackle poverty, some of which is celebrated in the annual awards of the Scottish Urban Regeneration Forum (SURF), with the merits of this work being extolled by Community Development Scotland. Second, there have been some notable contributions by ‘communities of interest’, articulating what could and should be achieved by practitioners working in their professional field. Most significantly, the EIS has championed the role of educational professionals in tackling poverty in schools,

resulting in their Face Up to Child Poverty publication offering guidance on everyday anti-poverty practices. Of course, these 'local' contributions can be incorporated within local- authority wide strategies, as the driver at this geographical scale is the Community Planning Partnership — the collective of key local agents delivering services to the wider public within the administrative boundaries of a local authority.

The main body of the briefing comprises five substantive sections, the first three of which are discursive. Following this introduction, the role of the local authority in tackling poverty in Scotland is reviewed (section 2), before the specific actions and responsibilities are considered (section 3) and then the evidence base for understanding local poverty is appraised (section 3). Notwithstanding these limitations, and prior to conclusion, the incidence of poverty across (section 4) and within (section 5) local authorities is summarized.

2. Aspirations: Local Authority and Anti-Poverty Policy and Strategy in Scotland

Key Points

- There is a long-standing tradition in Scotland of local work to tackle poverty and conditions that are associated with poverty.
- The Child Poverty Strategy for Scotland (arising from the UK Child Poverty Act 2010) and the Child Poverty (Scotland) Bill of 2017 have heightened the importance in Scotland of local authority-wide strategic approaches to tackle poverty in recent years
- There are different ways in which local anti-poverty work can relate to national anti-poverty objectives.

In recent years, a number of Scottish local authorities have undertaken strategic reviews of their role in tackling poverty, achieving fairness or promoting social justice, with many using local commissions to review, engage and appraise, in advance of strategies being formulated. Although general mechanisms such as Local Outcome

Improvement Plans (and formerly Single Outcome Agreements) have been used as the mechanism through which these are formulated and although this strengthening of local determination of priorities is consistent with broader concerns with community empowerment in Scotland, a key driver for much (although not all) of this local work has been the acknowledged role of the contribution that local interventions can make to tackling child poverty. As noted in the introduction, in Scotland, the role of local action to tackle child poverty has been further strengthened in the approach that is envisaged in the Child Poverty (Scotland) Bill 2017 (requirement), when compared to the approach that was adopted in the Child Poverty Strategy for Scotland in response to the UK Child Poverty Act 2010 (self determination, but with expectation).

However, it should be acknowledged that there is a longstanding tradition of local anti-poverty work in Scotland that stretches back for almost fifty years. Many major urban policy initiatives in the UK have involved local work to tackle poverty and regenerate communities. Local anti-poverty work is not new. It can be traced back to the Urban Programme of the late 1960s and has included large scale projects such as the Glasgow Eastern Area Renewal (GEAR) scheme of the 1970s, local enterprise companies of the 1980s, Social Inclusion Partnerships (SIPS) introduced in the late 1990s and the targeted local interventions that were part of the Closing the Opportunity Gap strategy of the Noughties.

It is not always clearly understood how local anti-poverty work aligns with national objectives. Local anti-poverty work is often initiated through national strategies. Many 'local' anti-poverty strategies are funded and follow programme objectives that are set at the national level. Here, local anti-poverty work is, in effect, used as a means to achieve national level objectives. In Scotland, the 'national' dimension to local anti-poverty work sometimes pertains to the UK (e.g. the pilot scheme to reconfigure welfare in Glasgow, local implementation of the various New Deals of New Labour). At other times, the national is 'Scotland' (e.g. the local work that was undertaken to meet the Social Justice Milestones of the first Scottish Government administration, or the local work that was pursued through the Fairer Scotland Fund). At the current time, the National Performance Framework provides an overarching goal for local anti-poverty work and the outcomes approach (of LOIPs, formerly Single Outcome Agreements)

provide a means for directly articulating how the local priorities of CPPs relate to the national goals of Scotland.

On reflection, local anti-poverty work can relate to national anti-poverty strategy in three ways:

1. *Local strategies are used to achieve national goals.* As discussed in the previous paragraph and working on the assumption that the sum of the parts (local interventions) equals the whole (national target). In turn, these local strategies are of two sub-types:
 - a) *Where the programme goals are established centrally.* For example, Closing the Opportunity Gap (CtOG), where local work was carefully targeted as part of a (Scottish) national strategy. Here, there is more central control over 'local' anti-poverty work, e.g. Target A sought to 'reduce the number of workless people dependent on DWP benefits in Glasgow, North & South Lanarkshire, Renfrewshire & Inverclyde, Dundee, and West Dunbartonshire by 2007 and by 2010'. However, CtOG was very much a centrally-directed national strategy, belonging to the then Scottish Executive. The role of the 'local' is best characterised as a local delivery agent, rather than a partner, with the Scottish Executive retaining control over what was delivered, resource allocation and progress monitoring.
 - b) *Where the programme goals are established locally.* For example, Local Outcome Improvement Plans / Single Outcome Agreements afford local Community Planning Partnerships the scope to set their own local priorities on the understanding that these will contribute to achieving National targets. Here, there is more local control over strategy, although the over-arching objective is to contribute to the national purpose .

- 2) *Local strategies are used to complement and extend the goals of national strategies.* There is scope for local anti-poverty work to tackle aspects of poverty that are not prioritised or even acknowledged in national strategy. This may arise from a problem that is particularly local (e.g. environmental degradation)

or a policy area which is the responsibility of local authorities (e.g. public service provision).

- 3) *Local strategies are implemented in the absence of a national strategy.* Strathclyde Regional Council's Social Strategy for the Eighties (and then Nineties) was an innovative approach to tackling multiple deprivation based on the identification of Areas for Priority Treatment (APTs). The Strategy largely grew in response to the lack of UK national government support to tackle social problems in the west of Scotland's most deprived areas. In effect, this local strategy was 'oppositional' to the national 'approach' (non-engagement in anti-poverty activity) at the time.

3. Levers: Local Authority Operations and their Anti-Poverty Impact

Key Points

- Whether or not a strategic approach is adopted and whether or not the problem of local poverty is recognized, the actions and decisions of local authorities and Community Planning Partnerships play a critical role in supporting people experiencing poverty and enhancing their quality of life.
- There is a need to set achievable goals for local anti-poverty work that is based on what can be achieved with local tools and resources.
- Eradicating child poverty locally is admirable, but not necessarily the primary contribution of local anti-poverty activity.
- Levers need not only be targeted at people experiencing poverty to be effective; however, it is important to appraise whether universal offerings are progressive in their net impact.
- The ability of local levers to be deployed is more restricted in these times of budgetary constraint for Scottish local authorities.

Local government has been responsible for the frontline delivery of many key services that have protected the quality of life of children/people living in poverty and sought to

avail them of the opportunities that would enable them to live a life beyond poverty in adulthood. Although not always specifically presented as anti-poverty interventions, a host of services including, but not limited to, free school meals, free access to swimming in the school holidays, subsidised provision of sporting and community facilities, school education and social services support for at-risk children, are examples of services which provide the backbone of extra-familial support for children living in poverty in Scotland.

Notwithstanding the level of support that is routinely provided to children (including, and sometimes specifically provided to, those children living in poverty, systematic reviews of the extent to which local Community Planning Partnerships (CPPs) in Scotland focus on tackling child poverty through LOIPs (formerly SOAs) have found evidence of a lack of recognition and reflection on this as anti-poverty work. This points to the need for local partners to articulate much more clearly the nature of their role in tackling child poverty. This may now be addressed as CPPs face up to the challenge of thinking strategically about their local work to tackle child poverty.

It is of the utmost importance that ambitiously achievable goals are set for local anti-poverty work. Many of the levers for tackling poverty rest outwith the control of local areas — for example, taxation and welfare are the responsibility of the UK and Scottish Governments. Furthermore, restrictions on local government revenue raising and national determination of local spending may limit what can be achieved locally. However, this should not be used as an argument against local anti-poverty work. Rather, it presents a challenge — the task of articulating what can be achieved by local anti-poverty work. In particular, local anti-poverty activity should be valued for its work in reducing the negative effects of poverty and enabling people to prepare themselves to live a life free of poverty. These are realistic goals for a local anti-poverty strategy. To seek to eradicate local poverty completely is laudable but unrealistic as the primary function of a local strategy and could only serve to demoralise in the longer term.

There is a need for local anti-poverty strategies to appraise the blend of overarching goals that comprise their work. The second iteration of the Child Poverty Strategy for Scotland (2014-2017) comprises three elements, i.e. maximising household resources

(continuation from first Strategy); improving children’s wellbeing and life chances (an adaption with an additional wellbeing focus); and striving to ensure that children from low income households live in well-designed sustainable places (a sharpening of focus for the ‘area’ dimension). Respectively, these are described as a focus on Pockets, Prospects and Places. The same principles underpin the first iteration of the Strategy, but a new outcomes-focused framework has been adopted. As before, local authorities have a key role to play in delivering actions to achieve the desired outcomes.

Thinking more directly about exactly what local authorities might then contribute to anti-poverty work, these three approaches can be conceived thus:

- 1) First, tackling child poverty may imply *‘increasing the income that is available to protect children from poverty’*. This could be achieved in various ways, i.e. (i) through increasing the value of welfare benefits; (ii) through taking steps to increase the earnings of parents/carers from the labour market; and even, in theory, this could also be achieved (iii) through taking steps to increase the income that is directly received by children (through earnings and/or welfare benefits paid directly to them). This is broadly consistent with the ‘Pockets’ approach in the Child Poverty Strategy for Scotland. Although there are important local actions that can reduce the burden of low income, it must be acknowledged that local action is subsidiary to national decision-making.
- 2) Second, tackling child poverty may imply, *‘ensuring that social protection measures are available to support the standard of living and protect the quality of life of children living in poverty’*. Tackling child poverty is not only concerned to remove children from living in poverty. Some organisations and professionals are best placed to tackle the consequences of family poverty to ensure that its adverse effects are minimised. Such work can be wide-ranging in focus and can involve direct provision of education, housing, leisure and sport, social work services, personal development services, environmental services and basic needs (food, clothing). Much of this is clearly within the remit of local government in Scotland. This embraces, but is not limited to, the ‘Places’ focus of the Child Poverty Strategy for Scotland.
- 3) Finally, tackling child poverty may imply, *‘ensuring that social protection measures are available to break the inter-generational transmission of poverty — to ensure that*

children living in poverty do not grow up to be the next generation of adults living in poverty'. A subtle shift of emphasis in social protection measures is to cast these interventions as 'investment' strategies to maximise opportunities for children currently living in poverty in order to minimise future problems. The focus is less concerned with contemporary well-being, as with the development and future of children currently living in poverty, and with the efficient deployment of collective resources. As above, this embraces but is not limited to, one of the key elements of the current Child Poverty Strategy for Scotland — in this instance, the 'Prospects' focus.

There is a need for local work to be clear about what constitutes an anti-poverty intervention, as opposed to a general deliverable (perhaps a statutory responsibility) from which people experiencing poverty benefit. Different mechanisms can be deployed locally to reach people experiencing poverty:

- *Services that are targeted specifically at people living in poverty.* Typically, these are 'passported' local benefits, such as school clothing grants and low/no cost leisure.
- *Services that are introduced with the aim of benefitting people living in poverty, but which are made available to all to heighten the likelihood of the service reaching those living in poverty.* This thinking framed the introduction of free school meals to those in Primary 1-3 in Scotland.

However, it is the third offering that is most challenging for those devising local strategic approaches to tackling poverty:

- *Services that may benefit people living in poverty, but no more (and on occasion maybe less) than those who do not live in poverty.* Typically, this is the core offering of local services.

Although such services may benefit people experiencing poverty, there is a need to critically appraise whether these can be considered anti-poverty interventions when the purpose is broader than tackling poverty and there is a possibility that those experiencing poverty are less likely to benefit (perhaps as a result of the hidden costs of

participation). It is entirely reasonable that to be considered an intervention to tackle child poverty, there needs to be an explicit targeting of the intervention at children, or at families with children. Although this will mean that the range of anti-poverty interventions that are in place and that will actually impact on children will be underestimated, it could be argued that as these positive impacts of generic interventions are inadvertent (or at least secondary impacts), this is a valid position to adopt.

In a similar vein, each particular intervention may tackle child poverty in different ways. For example, the goal that 'All children will have access to quality care and early learning before entering school', is first and foremost a social protection strategy in that it ensures that a key service is available to young people in poverty that would not otherwise be available if services had to be accessed via an unsubsidized open market. However, this also ensures that children living in poverty have access to learning opportunities at a time in life when the foundations for later success are established. Such early intervention might also be viewed as a social investment that will increase the chances of contemporary children living in poverty avoiding poverty in later years.

Similarly, provision of daycare is also a key requirement if the labour market participation of parents (particularly mothers) is to be facilitated, which in turn, is presented as the primary means through which contemporary child poverty is to be averted. In this way, provision of daycare might also be viewed as a strategy to increase family income. Clearly, the impact of anti-poverty interventions can be far-ranging. Nevertheless, each intervention has a central and primary goal that can and should be acknowledged.

It must also be acknowledged that recent reductions in capacity (workforce) within Scottish local authorities may have resulted in a loss of expertise among those most directly involved in local anti-poverty work. Similarly, constraints on local authority budgets limit the bounds of what is possible.

4. Information for a Change: Local Evidence of Poverty in Scotland

Key Points

- Scotland is well served with national data on poverty and with local data on concentrations of multiple deprivation across Scotland.
- Scotland has estimates, but does not have reliable data on the local incidence of poverty across Scotland.
- Several options are available, with some being developed as experimental statistics, to provide local insight into the local distribution of poverty and datazone and local authority scales of analysis.
- Notwithstanding the challenges in using local data to understand the micro-geography of poverty, some understanding of local poverty has been gleaned in recent years through careful data interpretation.
- Those responsible for designing local anti-poverty strategies face a challenge to ensure that their interventions reach those they target, as only delivering in the most deprived areas means that the majority of people experiencing poverty are beyond reach.
- Poverty profiling is necessary as poverty affects different communities of interest in different ways — local poverty presents in many ways across Scotland.
- The introduction in the Scottish Household Survey of a suite of multiple deprivation indicators presents the opportunity for easily replicable work at the local level to benchmark one key aspect of poverty against Scottish (or local authority) norms.

Scotland is well served with regular and reliable information on national levels of poverty in Scotland. The annual report of poverty and income inequality describes the risk of poverty across the generations and occasional reports explore risk rates and prevalence of poverty in greater detail among key sub-populations. The regularity and consistency of the annual report has provided confidence in poverty data for Scotland as a whole. Similarly, the Scottish Index of Multiple Deprivation, now in its fifth iteration and published every three-to-four years has encouraged a sense that we are able to

robustly identify the location of the small area concentrations of multiple deprivation in Scotland. Data from both tools are widely used by experts and non-experts alike in Scotland.

In addition to the aggregate measures of poverty, each iteration of Scotland's anti-poverty/social justice strategies has been underpinned by more detailed indicators of particular drivers or aspects of poverty. Most notably, a Child Poverty Measurement Framework was introduced for the second iteration of the Child Poverty Strategy for Scotland, which reviews performance for 37 dimensions against a 2014 baseline, drawing from a range of datasets. However, once more, not all of these key performance indicators is available at the local authority, let alone the locality level.

On the other hand, there are many different ways in which local poverty can be estimated in Scotland, some of which are already used, and all of which have their particular strengths and weaknesses, i.e.:

- Everyday local knowledge
- Local area modelling
- Identifying local clusters of 'at-risk populations'
- Identifying local clusters of 'welfare benefit recipients'
- Identifying local clusters of 'service users'
- Identifying local clusters of 'material deprivation'
- Identifying local clusters of 'fuel poverty' (or other consumption indicators)
- Profiling local income
- Using the Scottish Index of Multiple Deprivation (or multi-indicator sets)

A key point to note is that different approaches to estimating poverty may be more appropriate for some purposes, rather than others. For example, entitlement to a free school meal (an example of a passported benefit to welfare recipients) is an appropriate indicator to use when profiling poverty for secondary school populations. Although it is fit for this purpose, it is less reliable as an indicator for specific neighbourhoods, given that secondary school populations are typically drawn from multiple neighbourhoods.

The micro-geography of poverty, both urban and rural, has become clearer through time. Although the broad geographical patterns of affluence and poverty are common knowledge, micro-level data have improved in recent years, enabling analysts to better assess the *relative* standing among deprived areas and to pinpoint the scale of the problem for smaller geographical areas. The key driver for improving our understanding of the character of local deprivation has been the introduction of the Scottish Index of Multiple Deprivation, which allows for micro-areas of between 500 and 1000 people in Scotland, to be ranked from 'best' to 'worst'. It is now possible to assess with a little manipulation, for example, whether Glasgow's deprivation is greater in Castlemilk, Pollock, Easterhouse or Drumchapel, and which small areas within these large estates are relatively more deprived. It must be emphasised that although there is an income deprivation domain within the SIMD (which approximates local poverty), the overall index has a focus that extends beyond poverty.

Living in poverty is not the same as living in a deprived area. Understanding this is important in the Scottish context, given the widespread use of the Scottish Index of Multiple Deprivation (which defines small area concentrations of multiple deprivation). Multiple deprivation is used to describe the situation when individuals, households or collections of people in small geographical areas are deprived of a range of conditions at the same time, for example, they are deprived of adequate housing, education and employment. As multiple deprivation in Scotland is an area measure, not all people residing in multiply deprived areas will live in poverty. Similarly, many people living in poverty will not be residing in multiply deprived areas. To illustrate the point, Table 1.1 of the most recent report of the SIMD compares the number of income deprived people with the number of people living in the 15% most deprived datazones in Scotland. This suggests that:

- Only one-third of the population living in multiply deprived areas experience income deprivation (31.3%, or 232,050 people);
- Two thirds of those experiencing income deprivation live outwith a multiply deprived area (66.7%, or 468,430 people);

- A small proportion of Scotland's total population both live in a multiply deprived area and experience income deprivation (4.4%, or 232,050 people).

Put simply, the majority of people experiencing poverty in Scotland do not live in multiply deprived areas. If universal provision is not to be used as a means for service delivery, then those responsible for designing local anti-poverty strategies face a challenge to ensure that their interventions reach those they target, as only delivering in the most deprived areas means that the majority of people experiencing poverty are beyond reach. Indeed, in some parts of rural Scotland, targeting small areas of deprivation to reach people experiencing poverty is ineffective.

'Local' has tended to reflect the areas for which data are available. Quantitative evidence has been an important tool in local anti poverty work, both as a means to identify problem areas and as a means to monitor whether progress is being made. As a result, local areas tend to reflect the availability of local data. With the growing availability of ever more localised data, there is now greater potential for small community-based local anti-poverty strategies. However, although smaller-scale data are available, there may be limits to how far data can be used to profile the problem and evidence change. For example, some coherent communities are described by more than one datazone. This is a minor inconvenience when the solution is to aggregate data for larger neighbourhoods that comprise several discrete datazones. However, for smaller communities — particularly small rural communities — community profiles can be lost within a datazone that includes their area and neighbouring areas. For example, the island of Colonsay is subsumed within a larger datazone that includes Colonsay and Jura and some other smaller isles to the north of Jura.

Poverty profiling is necessary as poverty affects different communities of interest in different ways. Without such variation, there would only be the need for a national poverty profile and a national strategy to tackle poverty. The concept of a 'poverty profile' is not commonplace. Many so-called 'local poverty profiles' are very similar to what others may describe as 'community needs assessments' or 'community area profiles'. It is inconceivable that such community profiles would not include information on poverty (or wealth). Similarly, it is to be expected that a 'poverty profile' will include

wider contextual information on the community of which it is part. However, there should be five key differences in approach:

- The poverty profile should be situated in the context of policy to tackle poverty.
- The poverty profile should convey an understanding of the causes of poverty for the community of interest.
- All key poverty data should be included in the poverty profile.
- Only the most relevant contextual data should be included in the poverty profile.
- The poverty profile should lead to clear recommendations on what must be done to tackle poverty in that community.

Positively, the recent inclusion of a suite of multiple deprivation indicators in the Scottish Household Survey has not only provided data that provides insight into one dimension of poverty across local authorities in Scotland, it also offers the possibility for local area replication of that tool to compare local ‘multiple deprivation’ against that in Scotland as a whole. These data are briefly discussed in the section that follows.

5. Evidence (1) Meso-Level: Poverty Across Scotland's 32 Local Authorities/CPPs

Key Points

- Significant numbers of people are living with poverty in each of Scotland’s 32 local authority areas.
- Poverty is particularly concentrated in the city and ex-industrialised local authorities in west central Scotland.
- Some parts of Scotland are already achieving some of the national targets for levels of child poverty set forth in the Child Poverty (Scotland) Bill.
- Working to tackle child poverty should not only be the preserve (or priority) of local authorities in which the incidence of child poverty is highest.

Significant numbers of people are living with poverty in each of Scotland's 32 local authority areas. When the Scottish Government estimated the incidence of poverty in Scottish local authorities back in 2010 (using the Scottish Household Survey), it found that even in the part of Scotland that was thought to have the lowest levels (East Renfrewshire), one in every seven households was living in poverty (see Table 1 at the end of the paper).

In September 2015, HM Revenue and Customs released its latest estimate of the proportion of children living in low-income families. Effectively, this is a local estimate of child poverty, which provides data for datazones and local authorities in Scotland. Once again, these data suggest that poverty is a problem the length and breadth of Scotland. There are only six local authorities in Scotland which currently meet the targets set in the Child Poverty (Scotland) Bill, i.e. less than 10% of children are estimated to be living in relative low income poverty in Shetland Islands (6.5%), Orkney Islands (7.2%), Aberdeenshire (7.3%), East Renfrewshire (8.6%), East Dunbartonshire (9%) and Eileanan an Iar (9.3%). More generally at the scale of the local authority, there are seven local authorities in Scotland in which more than one in five children are currently living in poverty, i.e. East Ayrshire (21.2%), Clackmannanshire (21.6%), Inverclyde (23%), West Dunbartonshire (23.7%), Dundee (23.4%), North Ayrshire (24.4%) and Glasgow (29.3%) (see Table 2 at the end of the paper).

In 2017, the Scottish Government released experimental statistics to estimate the incidence of child poverty and multiple deprivation combined, one of the four indicators of child poverty used in the 2017 Bill. As reported in Table 3 of this paper, these results on "children in families with limited resources across Scotland 2014-2016" largely reinforces our existing understanding of the meso-level geographies of poverty across Scotland. Notwithstanding the 'experimental' nature of these statistics, interestingly, in this scheme, local authorities are classified into one of three types.

- Glasgow – area in which children are more likely to live in families with limited resources compared to the whole of Scotland

- Five areas (Moray, Shetland Isles, East Renfrewshire, East Lothian and Aberdeenshire) in which children are less likely to live in families compared to the whole of Scotland
- All other local authorities

Interestingly, early work to introduce a strategic approach to tackling child poverty in Scotland is not only limited to those areas with the highest concentrations of child poverty. Notably, Aberdeenshire (estimated to have the lowest proportion of ‘children living in families with limited resources’) has specified tackling child poverty to be one of its priorities in its Local Outcome Improvement Plan.

6. Evidence 2) Micro-Level: Poverty Within Scotland's 32 Local Authorities/CPPs

Key Points

- Scotland's poverty has tended to affect the same groups of people in the same places through the years
- Examples can be found of local neighbourhoods whose poverty profile has changed through time
- Poverty is widely distributed across Scotland
- Intense pockets of poverty can be found in even the most affluent areas in Scotland

Scotland's poverty has tended to affect the same groups of people in the same places through the years. In every one of Scotland's large towns and cities, there are local areas that are synonymous with poverty and deprivation, e.g. Craigneuk in Airdrie, Wester Hailes in Edinburgh and so on. These same areas have tended to be the focus for successive regeneration, social strategy and anti-poverty programmes. Yet sustained activity has not led to the eradication of poverty in these places.

Although it would be misleading to claim that poverty is ‘everywhere’ in Scotland, the evidence suggests that it is far more widespread than might be expected. For example, income deprivation is one of the seven issues that contribute to the Scottish Index of Multiple Deprivation (SIMD). Although ‘income deprivation’, as defined in the SIMD, is likely to underestimate the number of people living in poverty, it is closely related to it. It is significant that in the previous iteration of SIMD (2012) only two of the 6505 datazones in Scotland were reported to have no-one living with income deprivation (both of which were in the city of Aberdeen). This suggests that even in most of the affluent neighbourhoods in Scotland, there are some people who are living on an income that means that they are not able to afford what the majority of people in Scotland would agree that the majority of people in Scotland should be able to afford. At the other extreme, it was estimated that there were seven datazones in Scotland in which the majority of people were income deprived (5 in Glasgow, 1 in Renfrewshire and 1 in East Ayrshire).

In urban areas, poverty is concentrated locally. This is well established and the geography of affluence and poverty is commonly understood. The language used to describe area-types on the ground can be demeaning and often smacks of povertyism, e.g. places experiencing poverty tend to be known as deprived areas in the media and decision-making circles, or as ‘rough estates’, ‘jungles’, ‘Beirut’ and other such pejorative terms in everyday language.

Although poverty tends to be enduring and persistent, some local areas which have been synonymous with poverty have changed through time. Comprehensive regeneration strategies are transforming the built environment in areas such as the Gorbals in Glasgow. More subtle are changes in population composition that change the character of local poverty. For example, notwithstanding the lower levels of life expectancy in the Calton area of Glasgow, out-migration of family households over the years has meant that Calton’s local poverty is more strongly characterised by poverty among older people. On the other hand, in-migration of migrant populations from Eastern Europe has lent a stronger ethnic character to the poverty that is now being experienced in the Govanhill area of Glasgow. Local poverty can persist, *yet change in character*, through time.

Even within those local authorities with the lowest levels of child poverty in Scotland, there are pockets of intense child poverty in which more than one in every four children are living in poverty, i.e. the datazones with the highest levels of child poverty in each of these local authorities are, respectively, Lerwick South (26.2%), West Kirkwall (25.8%), Peterhead Harbour (31.5%), Arthurlie and Dovecothall (54.9%), Hillhead (36.9%) and Stornoway west (27.1%). At the other end of the spectrum, there are almost 100 datazones in Scotland in which the majority of children are estimated to be living in child poverty, with child poverty in one datazone in Glasgow (within North Barlanark and Easterhouse South) estimated at 72%.

7. Conclusion: Why Local Action to Tackle Poverty Matters

Without question, responsibility for the most powerful tools to alleviate child poverty in Scotland rests with the UK Government. Taxation, tax credits and welfare are the primary means through which low incomes can be protected and progressive social transfers maximised to ameliorate, if not eradicate, child poverty in Scotland. Although the devolution settlement of 1998 most certainly placed limitations on what Scotland could do to tackle child poverty, Scottish decision-making is far from inconsequential. The devolution settlement accorded government in Scotland with specific responsibilities to deliver many of the key services that ameliorate the impact of child poverty, tackle its root causes and prepare the conditions necessary for children to leave behind poverty as they enter adulthood, e.g. education and training, social work, transport, health and sports and the arts. Indeed, the extension to Scotland of control over some aspects of social security and the enhancement of tax-raising powers and the possibility of enhanced responsibilities post-Brexit, both further extend what can be achieved by the Scottish Government.

There are three main reasons why tackling local poverty is important. First, an overarching and strategic approach to tackling local poverty would maximize resource efficiency. This is particularly appealing when pressure is being placed on public spending. There are potential cost savings to be found by identifying who is best placed

to deliver support (rather than duplicating effort). Furthermore, a strategic approach would minimize the likelihood of unintended consequences, in that these could be identified (and then removed) to ensure that all local action is working toward the common goal of tackling poverty. Second, as the Scottish Government acknowledges in the Child Poverty Strategy for Scotland, some aspects of poverty are best tackled through local action. Finally, it is widely acknowledged by poverty analysts that poverty should be 'everybody's business', i.e. poverty can only be tackled if society acknowledges that it has a shared problem that must be addressed. Focusing anti-poverty work at the local level heightens the visibility of the problem and increases opportunities to gain public support for action to tackle poverty.

However, this paper concludes with three challenges that must be addressed. First, the focus on CPP/local authority scale does not acknowledge the value of more localised work. Although much work is being undertaken in communities, this tends either to take the form of an isolated community-led project or a community intervention that is part of a wider local authority led programme. There is scope for more integrated and overarching local anti poverty strategies that are conceived, designed, implemented and managed at the community scale.

Second, although there is merit in permitting Scottish local authorities the latitude to formulate a strategy that best fits their needs, there is also much to be gained by Scotland-wide articulation of overarching principles that underpin each. This is not alien to Scotland; on the contrary, the devolution of more powers over social security in Scotland was framed by the introduction of five principles for social security in Scotland, the likes of which might usefully establish a clearer national sense of purpose for the local anti-poverty work that is required in the years ahead.

Finally, this is an opportunity that to be grasped will require tightly focused strategies to tackle child poverty in Scotland. Notwithstanding the limits to what Scotland can achieve without the levers of tax, tax credits and social security, Scotland can ensure that the scale of progress in tackling child poverty is greater than that of other UK regions using the tools at its disposal to greatest effect. For example, Scotland must: focus on increasing the range of flexible work opportunities to support parents to enter,

sustain and progress in the workplace; take steps to ensure that work pays; provide a whole-year childcare support structure (tackling the problem of provision in the school holidays); and to sharpen the focus on local government as a provider of critical services to support the contemporary quality of life of children, to protect them from deprivation and to equip them with the competencies and skills to lead poverty-free lives as adults.

Table 1: Percentage of households in relative poverty in Scottish local authorities: 2002 to 2008 (*estimated by Scottish Government in 2010*)

	2002 to 2005	2003 to 2006	2004 to 2007	2005 to 2008	Estimated 95% CI +/- % points
Aberdeen City	14	15	14	15	1.8
Aberdeenshire	15	15	16	16	1.7
Angus	18	18	19	20	2.7
Argyll & Bute	21	20	19	20	2.8
Clackmannanshire	19	17	18	18	2.7
Dumfries & Galloway	17	19	20	22	2.3
Dundee City	26	25	24	24	2.6
East Ayrshire	20	19	19	18	2.7
East Dunbartonshire	14	15	15	16	2.6
East Lothian	16	19	20	20	2.8
East Renfrewshire	13	14	14	14	2.6
Edinburgh, City of	16	17	18	19	1.3
Eilean Siar;	23	23	22	25	3.1
Falkirk	17	19	20	20	2.4
Fife	19	20	20	21	1.5
Glasgow City	22	23	22	23	1.3
Highland	16	16	16	17	1.8
Inverclyde	23	22	24	21	3.1
Midlothian	15	16	16	16	2.7

Moray	20	20	21	21	2.8
North Ayrshire	22	23	22	23	2.7
North Lanarkshire	19	19	20	20	1.6
Orkney Islands	21	21	20	21	2.8
Perth & Kinross	14	16	15	16	2.3
Renfrewshire	19	20	18	17	2.2
Scottish Borders	17	17	17	18	2.5
Shetland Islands	20	18	15	15	2.6
South Ayrshire	18	20	21	22	2.8
South Lanarkshire	17	18	19	20	1.7
Stirling	15	17	18	18	2.6
West Dunbartonshire	18	20	19	20	3
West Lothian	18	16	16	16	2.2
SCOTLAND	18	19	19	19	0.4

Table 2: Percentage of children in low income families, 2013 (estimated by HMRC in 2015)

Local Authority	% of children in low-income families
Aberdeen City	12.5%
Aberdeenshire	7.3%
Angus	12.9%
Argyll and Bute	12.5%
Scottish Borders	12.3%
Clackmannanshire	21.6%
West Dunbartonshire	23.7%
Dumfries and Galloway	15.6%
Dundee City	23.4%
East Ayrshire	21.2%
East Dunbartonshire	9.0%
East Lothian	12.9%
East Renfrewshire	8.6%
Edinburgh, City of	15.8%
Falkirk	16.5%
Fife	18.4%
Glasgow City	29.3%
Highland	12.5%
Inverclyde	23.0%
Midlothian	17.0%
Moray	10.4%
North Ayrshire	24.4%
North Lanarkshire	19.6%
Orkney Islands	7.2%
Perth and Kinross	10.9%
Renfrewshire	17.6%
Shetland Islands	6.5%
South Ayrshire	17.2%
South Lanarkshire	16.6%
Stirling	12.2%
West Lothian	15.9%
Eileanan an Iar	9.3%

Table 3: Percentage of children who live in families with limited resources, by council area (Scottish Government, 2017)

Council	After housing costs			Before housing costs			Base
	%	95% C.I. lower limit	95% C.I. upper limit	%	95% C.I. lower limit	95% C.I. upper limit	
Aberdeen City	26.9	14.1	39.7	16.8	5.5	28.1	59
Aberdeenshire	5.3	0.5	10.1	5.3	0.5	10.1	71
Angus	20.3	8.1	32.5	20.3	8.1	32.5	68
Argyll & Bute	12.1	1.6	22.6	12.1	1.6	22.6	46
Clackmannanshire	18.3	6.7	29.8	18.9	7.2	30.5	68
Dumfries & Galloway	18.5	7.1	29.9	11.5	2.6	20.4	55
Dundee City	26.4	14.7	38.2	23.1	11.8	34.4	64
East Ayrshire	15.6	5.1	26.1	14.2	4.0	24.4	51
East Dunbartonshire	11.0	1.1	20.9	11.0	1.1	20.9	69
East Lothian	8.0	2.1	13.9	5.7	0.6	10.7	84
East Renfrewshire	8.1	2.1	14.2	4.8	0.2	9.4	73
City of Edinburgh	14.1	7.9	20.2	11.6	6.0	17.2	151
Na h-Eileanan an Iar	23.2	9.2	37.2	18.1	4.8	31.4	63
Falkirk	26.7	13.5	40.0	22.4	9.3	35.5	67
Fife	24.1	15.5	32.7	21.9	13.5	30.2	129
Glasgow City	40.9	33.4	48.4	37.1	29.7	44.5	202
Highland	16.3	6.3	26.2	15.8	6.1	25.6	72
Inverclyde	18.1	8.4	27.7	14.8	6.1	23.5	60
Midlothian	10.3	1.4	19.1	9.3	0.4	18.2	63
Moray	10.1	2.6	17.6	6.3	0.7	11.9	65
North Ayrshire	25.7	14.3	37.0	19.8	9.7	30.0	65

North Lanarkshire	21.2	13.5	28.9	22.4	14.6	30.3	139
Orkney Islands	18.6	3.2	34.0	13.9	0.0	28.7	50
Perth & Kinross	16.0	5.8	26.3	16.7	6.4	27.1	65
Renfrewshire	15.7	6.2	25.2	10.8	2.5	19.2	65
Scottish Borders	24.4	10.9	37.9	23.0	9.6	36.4	55
Shetland Islands	8.7	2.4	15.1	9.4	2.9	15.8	75
South Ayrshire	29.2	15.7	42.7	25.2	12.0	38.5	58
South Lanarkshire	18.1	9.1	27.0	15.0	6.9	23.2	89
Stirling	12.2	3.8	20.6	11.5	3.1	19.8	63
West Dunbartonshire	25.1	12.3	37.9	24.4	11.9	37.0	55
West Lothian	16.7	5.4	28.0	15.3	4.2	26.5	65
Scotland	20.4	18.4	22.4	18.0	16.1	19.9	2424