

Long-term local responses to poverty in the era of perpetual crisis

Local anti-poverty strategies-good practice and effective approaches
report launch - 22nd February 2023

Agenda

- Aims, vision, background (Graham Whitham)
- Findings and recommendations (Penny Rimmer)
- Salford's journey (Shairi Bowes)
- Lessons from Scotland (Stephen Sinclair)
- Q&A – *please put questions in the chat box*
- Next steps (Graham Whitham).



Aims

- To re-energise the conversation around local strategic approaches to addressing poverty and inspire local authorities and partners **across the country** to create or strengthen local anti-poverty strategies.

Please promote today's webinar & report on social media
#AntiPovertyStrategies
@GMPovertyAction



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About GMPA

Our vision is of a Greater Manchester **free from poverty** where all residents can **realise their potential** and **access the benefits** of **living in a diverse and vibrant city region.**

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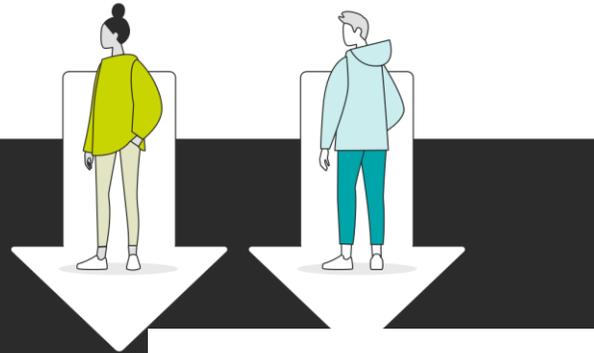


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Poverty isn't a new problem

620,000
people are living
below the poverty
line in Greater
Manchester.



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An estimated 1 in 5 people
live in poverty in the UK

The projected increases in
poverty over the next few years
mean that **action now is more
important than ever**



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Background

- There should be a national mission to end poverty in the UK. Localities would be central to this.
- Since the dismantling of the Child Poverty Act by government, there's been an absence of leadership on poverty in Westminster.
- Challenging for localities to embrace this agenda - national drivers of poverty, funding constraints and lack of direction from central government.
- However, increasingly localities are taking it upon themselves to address poverty – there's much we can do.



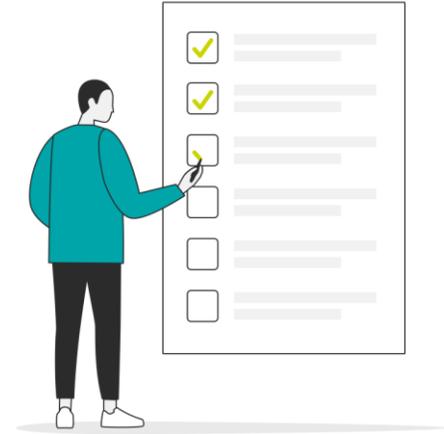
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Knowledge about how best to tackle poverty and inequality by enacting the socio-economic duty is **held by those in communities** who have lived experience of socio-economic disadvantage.



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GMPA's local welfare assistance scheme checklist enables local areas to understand how they can **maximise positive outcomes** for residents through their scheme.



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The Real Living Wage plays a vital role in **addressing low pay and boosting household income.**



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A cash first response to poverty is the best way to support people on low incomes, **maximising dignity, choice and control** when accessing local welfare support.



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Responding to challenges

- Increasingly we've been working with localities across the country on things like adoption of the socio-economic duty and contributing to national policy debates.
- Clear need for locally led approaches – localities seeking guidance, support and sharing of good practice.
- *Local anti-poverty strategies-good practice and effective approaches* responds to that need – enabling localities to take a structured, systematic approach to developing plans to fight poverty locally.



Local anti-poverty strategies-good practice and effective approaches

Findings and recommendations - Penny Rimmer, Policy Officer,
penny@gmpovertyaction.org

22nd February 2023

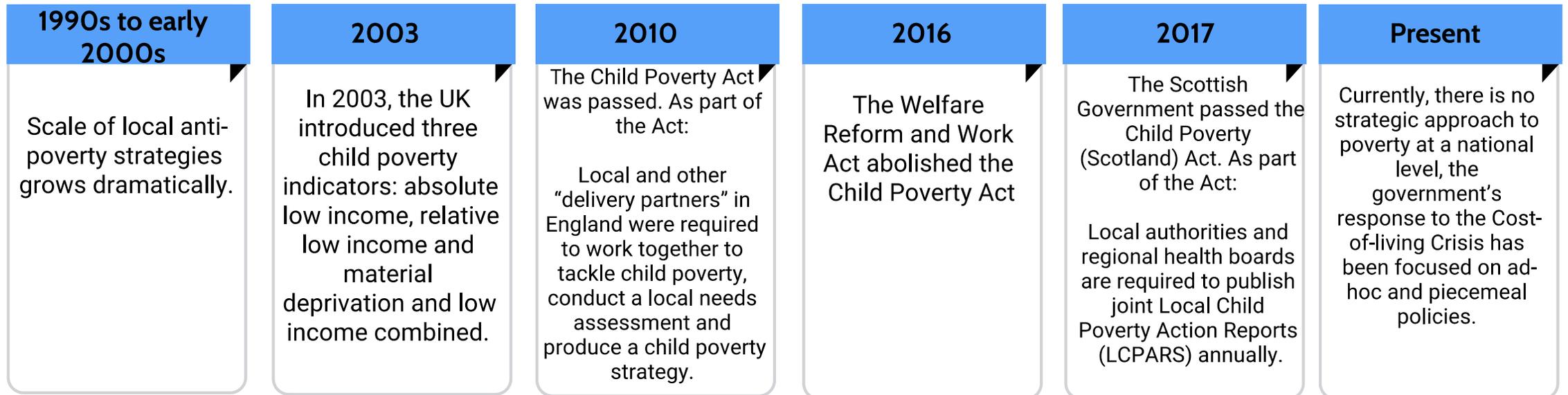
Outline

- Overview of policy context
- Project summary
- What is a local anti-poverty strategy?
- Why bother?
- Methodology
- Findings
- Recommendations
- Conclusion



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Overview of policy context



Project summary

What is a good anti-poverty strategy and how can local authorities and their partners develop and implement an anti-poverty strategy in a way that maximises its effectiveness?

The research had three aims:

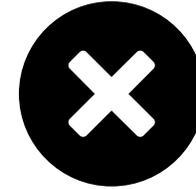
- Highlight anti-poverty strategies that are in place across the county that we have identified as being good practice: Salford City, Rother District, East Devon District, Cambridge City, Leicester City and Scottish Borders.
- Identify the key elements of a good local anti-poverty strategy, from scope and design to aims and measures of success.
- Develop a framework for local authorities and partners who are seeking to implement or enhance a local anti-poverty strategy.



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What is a local anti-poverty strategy?

- Identifies key issues and sets out priorities for action
- Committed to cultural change
- Reinforces and links to existing strategies
- Based on multi-stakeholder partnerships
- A long-term vision and action plan



- List of existing initiatives that a local authority has undertaken to address poverty
- Shelved internal document

Why bother?

A strategic approach provides local public bodies with a clear sense of direction to take action to address poverty.



Clear objectives



**Improves
coordination**



**Increases
accountability**

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Methodology

Secondary research

Literature review exploring some of the key elements relating to a strategic approach to tackling poverty.

Semi-structured interviews

Semi-structured interviews with councillors and policy officers from each of the six case studies.

Expert panel discussions

Two 'expert panel discussions' with 'poverty experts' from across the UK.

Focus group

A focus group conducted with people with lived experience of poverty from different boroughs across Greater Manchester.



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Case study selection

The six case studies have been selected on three primary considerations.

- Aimed to ensure there was a geographical spread across the UK.
- Assessed against literature review criteria.
- Overarching strategy focus.

Figure 1: Case study selection

| Case Study | Region | Type of Council | Geographic Area | Majority Party | Child Poverty Rate (Relative AHC) Average UK Child Poverty Rate is 27% | Unemployment Rate Average UK Unemployment Rate is 3.8% | Index of Multiple Deprivation: Rand of Average Score (1 = Most Deprived, 317 = Least Deprived) | Estimated % of Households experiencing struggle with food insecurity |
|-----------------------------|------------------------|---------------------------|-----------------|--|---|---|---|--|
| Salford City Council | North West England | Metropolitan City Council | Urban | Labour | 32.5% | 5.3% | 18 | 9.6% |
| East Devon District Council | South West England | District Council | Rural | Independent | 22% | 2.7% | 244 | 8.2% |
| Cambridge City Council | East of England | District Council | Urban | Labour | 22.6% | 3% | 210 | 4.4% |
| Scottish Borders | South East Scotland | Scottish Council | Rural | Conservative/Independent coalition | 21% | 3.4% | - | 8.2% |
| Rother District Council | East Sussex, England | District Council | Suburban | Rother Alliance (mixture of Independent, Liberal Democrat, Labour and Green Party Councillors) | 47.2% | 4.2% | 139 | 7.1% |
| Leicester City Council | East Midlands, England | Unitary Authority | Urban | Labour | 38.2% | 4.7% | 32 | 11.5% |

Case study overview



Salford City

- In 2021, working with organisations including GMPA, the council refreshed its second four-year Tackling Poverty Strategy as one of the three interlinked strategies launched under the ‘Salford Way’.

Rother District

- In response to growing poverty levels in a number of localities in Rother, the council committed to developing an anti-poverty strategy as part of the council’s corporate plan 2020 to 2027.

East Devon District

- The anti-poverty strategy is a three-year strategy from 2021 to 2024, which is accompanied by an action plan. The strategy is embedded in the council’s plan for 2021 to 2023, where it is set out as one of the priority actions in the council’s priority one: better homes and communities for all.

Cambridge City

- The Corporate plan 2022-27 sets out the council’s four key priorities, priority two ‘tackling poverty and inequality and helping people in the greatest need’ outlines the council’s anti-poverty strategy and accompanying action plan for 2020 to 2023.

Leicester City

- When the City Mayor was re-elected in 2019, the Mayor’s vision set out a number of pledges to fulfil ambitions to improve the city region. Under the ‘A fair city’ pledge was a commitment to ‘fight against austerity’ and develop an anti-poverty strategy in the first year of the new term.

Scottish Borders

- In September 2020, three councillors brought a motion forward to the Scottish Borders council to develop an anti-poverty strategy and action plan.

Focus group findings

5 key themes emerged

1

Access to council services

"You don't get to know about [the support schemes] until someone tells you about it or someone's claimed it already. The services that are there, they won't tell you what you're allowed to claim or access".

2

Experience of stigma and discrimination

"The shame of being in poverty, that stigma that's attached to it, I think the council needs to break that down and not make people feel like they're a worthless part of society or beggars or inferior.... They make you feel like you can't get that help and that you're begging".

3

A lack of coordination between a range of services

"I certainly feel there needs to be a co-ordinated response, people working together. I mean I've heard a lot about people going from one agency to another and having to chase around to get answers to questions".

4

Focus on the long term

"I think preventative work should be the order of the day and whenever possible early intervention should be a top priority".

5

Meaningful co-production

"What we really needed is for people to stop making decisions for areas where they've not lived. The council needs to speak to people who live there to actually understand what issues there are."



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Framework for an effective local anti-poverty strategy

12 key recommendations



- ✓ Define poverty and its drivers
- ✓ Political and officer leadership
- ✓ Focus on prevention, reduction and mitigation
- ✓ Prioritisation
- ✓ Partnership working
- ✓ Lived experience engagement and co-production
- ✓ Reinforcing and aligning with existing strategies
- ✓ Governance
- ✓ Action plan
- ✓ Adopt the socio-economic duty
- ✓ Adaptability
- ✓ Monitoring and evaluation

What is the framework?

The key elements identified are to be used as the basis for developing and/or enhancing local anti-poverty strategies.

This recognises that a local place-based approach is needed and that existing context, such as levels of poverty and deprivation, local demographics and the nature of existing partnership working across agencies are among a range of factors that will shape how an anti-poverty is formulated and how it will operate in practice.



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Development



Define poverty and its drivers

Local authorities need to adopt a relative definition of poverty and identify the drivers of poverty (using appropriate and available metrics).



Focus on prevention, reduction, and mitigation

A medium and long-term perspective is needed that includes actions that prevent and reduce the root causes of poverty.



Prioritisation

Local authorities need to be clear about what the strategy is seeking to achieve and how actions will be achieved.



Lived experience engagement and co-production

An anti-poverty strategy should be developed with people with lived experience of poverty to challenge the existing ways of working and ensure that anti-poverty efforts are centred around the needs of the community.



Delivery



Political and officer leadership

Active committed leadership on poverty (politically and officially) is required to drive change and coordinate strategic and policy responses.



Partnership working

An anti-poverty strategy requires buy-in from local stakeholders to achieve its aims and objectives.



Reinforcing and aligning with existing strategies

Tackling poverty needs to be incorporated within existing strategies rather than operating as 'ad-hoc' to existing commitments and services.



Action plan

Accompanying an anti-poverty strategy should be a high-level action plan that details who is responsible for the delivery of the actions, timelines and milestones and associated outcomes.

Accountability



Governance

Anti-poverty strategies should be subject to both internal and external governance.



Monitoring and evaluation

Local authorities and partners need to identify a clear set of metrics (quantitative and qualitative) against which progress on tackling poverty can be tracked. Working collaboratively to identify data and evidence gaps and addressing these together.



Adopt the socio-economic duty

To support the effectiveness of an anti-poverty strategy, local authorities should voluntarily adopt the socio-economic duty.



Adaptability

An anti-poverty strategy cannot “standstill”, for it to serve its purpose it should be viewed as adaptable, rather than a collection of actions that should be rigidly adhered to.

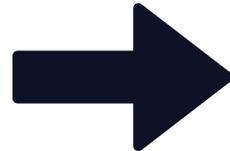
Summary

Carefully planned and implemented anti-poverty strategies can help make a difference in local communities when pragmatic and action oriented.

Tackling poverty is everybody's business.

A strategy needs to be flexible and open to change

From less of



To more of

Working in isolation
Crisis responses
A stalemate

Working collaboratively with local partners
Sustainable responses
Making progress

Moving forward



There is considerable scope for further research in this area.

At GMPA, we are conducting research into the policies that sit underneath a local anti-poverty strategy.



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Salford City Council

Tackling Poverty and Inequality



No one left behind: A strategy to prevent and reduce poverty in Salford

- Strengthening coordination of anti-poverty work across the city
- Bringing together public bodies, the VCSE sector and other partners to tackle poverty, recognising it needs a full-city approach and as much partnership working as possible
- Building a robust understanding of poverty at localised levels and using this to inform service delivery and identify emerging issues
- Empowering individuals and communities to recognise poverty as a societal rather than individual problem and ensure communities feel part of the solution
- Furthering the use of innovative solutions to ensure all service delivery is inclusive and tailored to local needs

Our vision is to make Salford a fairer and more inclusive place where everyone can reach their full potential and live prosperous and fulfilling lives free from poverty and inequality.

Tackling Inequalities.

The
Salford
Way.

Identifying our **Strategic Priorities**

- Priority one: Supporting people who are struggling in poverty now
- Priority two: Preventing people from falling into poverty in the first place
- Priority three: Influencing the Government and other national organisations

Salford's development of our own definition of poverty:

“Poverty applies to anyone who is denied, through low income or lack of resources, the opportunity to participate fully in the life of the community and have quality access to education, healthcare and leisure activities, as well as the necessities of life including good housing and adequate food and clothing”

Our priorities

1.

Preventing people from falling into poverty:

Ensuring we maximise the financial resources of households in the city by boosting the number of (and access to) good quality jobs, improving pay and employment standards, tackling health inequalities, improving skills, increasing access to welfare rights and debt advice, promoting saving through the Credit Union, and providing genuinely affordable social housing.



2.

Provide targeted support for people struggling in poverty:

Ensuring that we do all we can to support people who may need extra help from time to time - whether that is to put food on the table, pay their rent or council tax, or heat their home. No one should ever have to face those choices alone.



3.

Campaigning for long term change in Government policies and practices:

Ensuring we influence the poverty debate at a regional and national level, working with the Salford Anti-Poverty Taskforce, partners, trade unions, and local charities to build the evidence base for change and campaign for a fairer deal for local people.



Together, these priorities put poverty prevention and reduction at the heart of all our work and will play a crucial role in the city's wider efforts to reduce inequality and improve the overall health and wellbeing of our local population.

Developing our Strategy

- Building an achievable plan around our identified strategic priorities, continuing the co-production aspect with the people of Salford and partners
- Working with services/organisations to understand their focus within the anti-poverty work and how these align with high-level strategic priorities
- Embedding a focus within each of our strategic priorities around specific actions in relation to different areas of work such as employment, education and housing to take a wholesale approach, recognising no one action alone is enough to tackle poverty
- Ensuring we lay out key strategic mechanisms within our plan that can contribute to tackling poverty in Salford. For instance, specific actions around implementation of the Socio-Economic Duty and building our evidence base of quantitative and qualitative data.

Tackling Inequalities.

**The
Salford
Way.**

Key Points as Work Progresses:

- Ensuring objective and external scrutiny for a city-wide approach
- Continuing to communicate progress for effective partnership working
- Being open to new recommendations for delivery of the strategy
- Embedding socio-economic consideration throughout all work
- Keeping co-production at the heart of what we do
- Prioritisation of prevention, reduction and mitigation

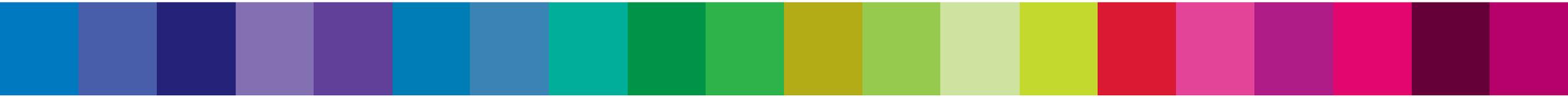
Tackling Inequalities.

**The
Salford
Way.**

Long-term local responses to poverty in the era of perpetual crisis

Developing effective local anti-poverty strategies
Greater Manchester Poverty Action

22nd February 2023



Lessons from Scotland

Stephen Sinclair



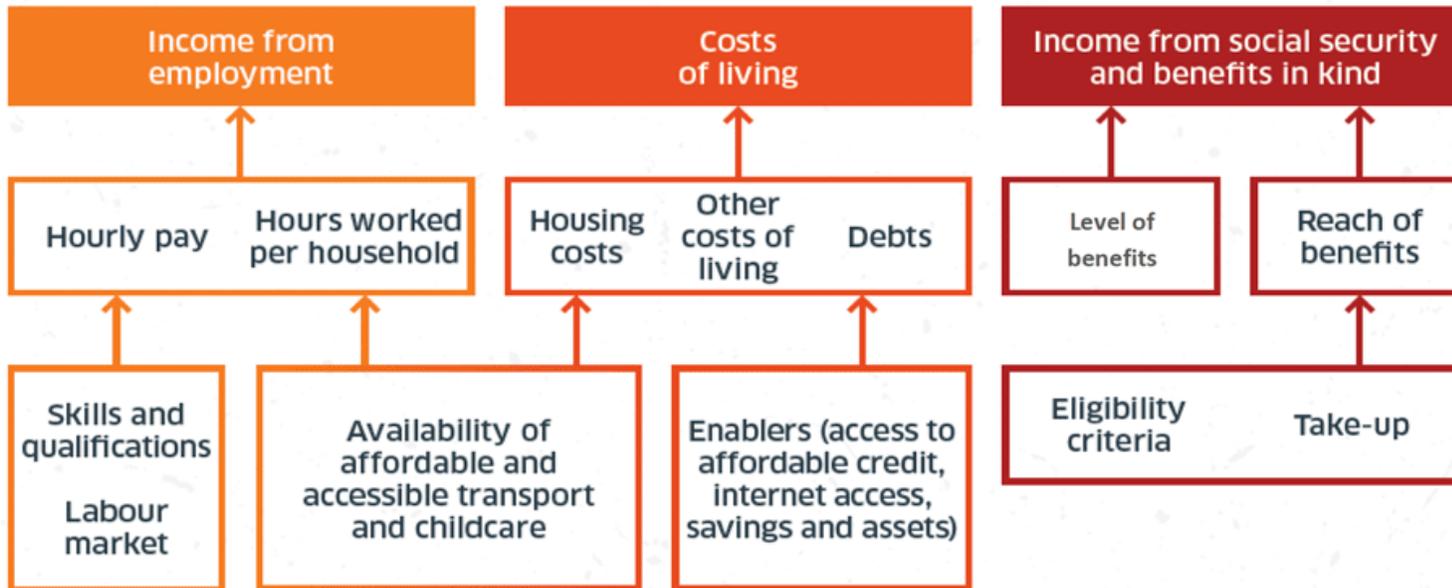
Structure

- **Background: Child Poverty (Scotland) Act 2017**
- **Local Authority and Health Board Duties**
- **Practice lessons from Scotland**
 - **Strategic focus and prioritisation**
 - **Partnership working**
 - **Local intelligence**
 - **Engaging experts by experience**
 - **Under-developed actions and step change**
- **Final remarks**



Background: Child Poverty (Scotland) Act, 2017

- Four 2030 targets (interim income targets for April 2023):
 - Relative poverty: <10% (interim target <18%)
 - Absolute poverty: <5% (interim target <14%)
 - Combined low income + material deprivation: <5% (interim target <8%)
 - Persistent poverty: <5% (interim target <8%)



Local Authority and Health Board Duties

- Annual joint Local Child Poverty Action Reports (LCPARs)
- Outcomes-based rather than prescriptive approach
- LCPARs address three questions:
 - i. What is known about local child poverty?
 - ii. What policy changes are required?
 - iii. How will effects be measured?
- Clear 'line of sight' to 3 child poverty drivers
- Six Priority Groups make up >90% of children experiencing poverty

Lone
Parents
36% of
children
in relative
poverty

Disabled
30% of
children
in relative
poverty

3+
Children
30% of
children
in relative
poverty

Minority
Ethnic
37% of
children
in relative
poverty

Youngest
Child Aged <1
32% of
children
in relative
poverty

Mothers
Aged <25
44% of
children
in relative
poverty



Strategic Focus and Prioritisation

- Focus on key issues where local action can be effective, e.g.
 - Improving employment access - affordable / flexible childcare, transport
 - Income maximisation and improved benefit uptake (automation where possible)
 - Effective signposting to money advice - locating support in accessible settings
- Apply a 'child poverty lens'
- Reflect and learn from practice



Partnership Working

- **Scottish Government: ‘a key function of the LCPAR process is building connections at local level’**
- **Value-added of collaboration demonstrated by:**
 - **clear roles for partners involved in strategic planning and implementing actions**
 - **senior figures committed to the ‘national mission’**
 - **governance arrangements and oversight systems which prioritise child poverty**
- **Integrated services and ‘whole system approach’**
- **‘No wrong door’ and ‘Every contact counts’, i.e.**
 - **No expertise needed to navigate a complex system to access support services**
 - **No disjointed services which do not communicate with each other**
 - **No need to provide same information repeatedly**
- **Inverclyde Council / Public Health Scotland: mapping local service contacts**



Local Data and Intelligence

- Robust local level data is a challenge - but necessary to target action and monitor impact
- Intelligence and understanding is what matters, not necessarily 'hard' figures
- Combining multiple local data sources can provide new insights, e.g. free school meals eligibility, Council Tax Reduction applications, Budgeting Loans, foodbank referrals
- (Complicated) data-sharing regulations and processes involved
- Data pooling can facilitate benefit automation
- Good LCPARs show how data and intelligence inform policy



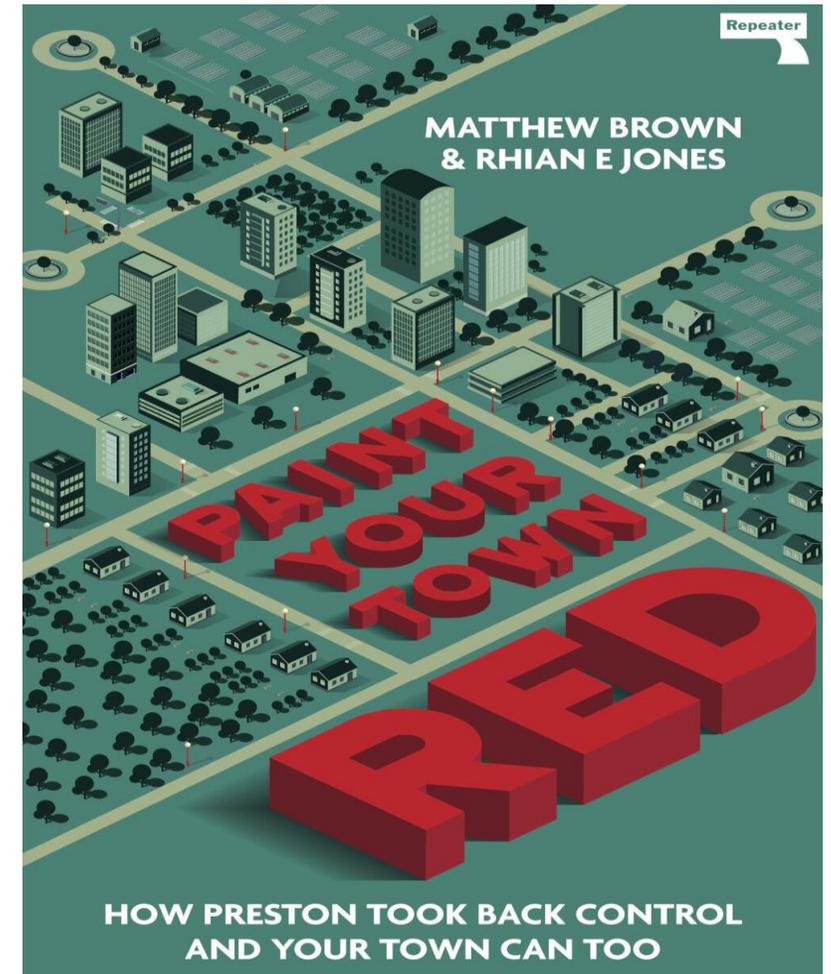
Engaging Expert by Experience

- Learning from those with experience of poverty is essential to understand issues, e.g. barriers to employment and accessing services
- Valuable insights also gathered from frontline service providers



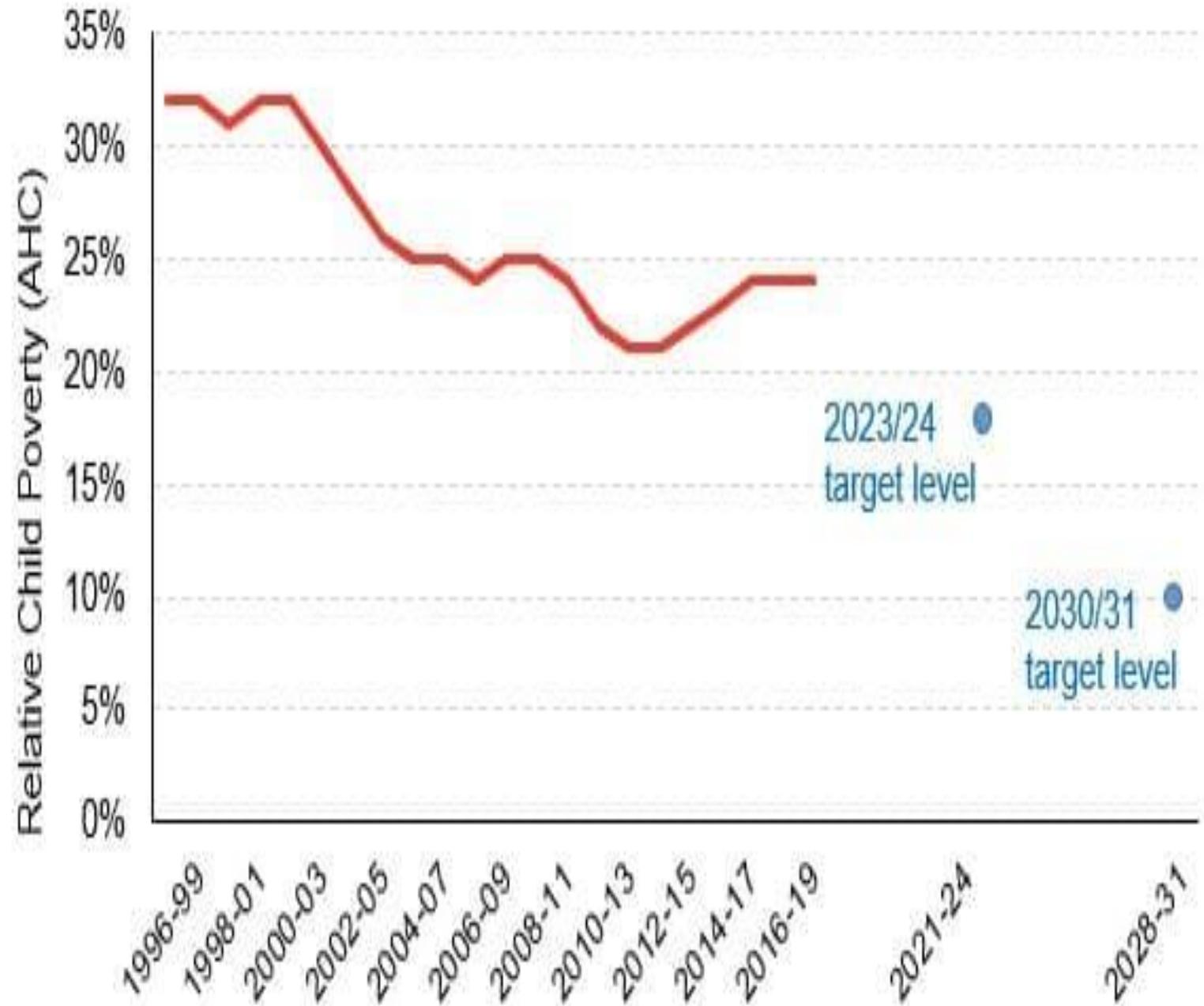
Under-developed Actions and Step Change

- Important power and policy areas still not full involved: housing, transport, regeneration
- Community Wealth Building may address this...?
- ‘Step change’ required:
 - pooling organisations’ budgets and staff
 - devolving budgets and decision-making to front line
 - redesigning services around users’ needs rather than departments / service areas
 - co-producing and designing services with service users



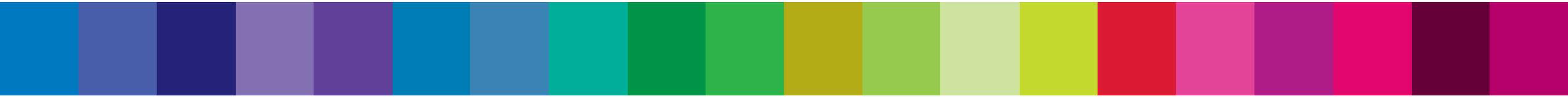
Final Points

- Meeting targets looks daunting
- Practical hope is required: realistically deliverable actions
- The 'spirit of administration' really matters
- Respectful and non-stigmatising makes a positive impact



Thank you for listening

stephen.sinclair@gcu.ac.uk



Brighter futures begin with GCU



Any questions?

Next steps

Other GMMPA resources

- Socio-economic duty guide
- Cash-first & other local welfare provision recommendations
- Money Advice Referral Tools
- GM Living Wage Campaign
- GM Poverty Monitor.



Ways to work with and support GMPA

Become a Principal Partner:

- Support the work of GMPA at an enhanced level
- Contribute to the sustainability of the organisation
- Share our vision of a Greater Manchester free from poverty
- Join our Advisory Group

Donate:

- One-off or monthly options
- Quick and easy – BACS transfer, bankcard, PayPal
- Support us to grow our work and achieve our vision
- Strengthen our work and respond to the growing cost-of-living crisis
- Go to the GMPA website

For every £1 invested in GMPA by our Principal Partners, **we bring in an additional £6** of funding and in-kind contributions to support our work.



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Current Principal Partners



"Kellogg's has a long history of investing in the community so as a food company based in Greater Manchester since 1938, we are proud to support the work of GMPA through becoming a Principal Partner. Our focus is to help address food insecurity by providing food to people in need and supporting breakfast programmes for children. We welcome the work GMPA is doing to coordinate the GM Food Poverty Alliance and support the long-term aim of eradicating food poverty in the region."

Kate Prince, Senior Manager,
ESG for Europe
Kellogg Company



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Work with us

Consultancy work for GMCA, GM NHS & advisory support to councils across the country.

- Anti-poverty network, anti-poverty strategy development and implementation & socio-economic duty adoption and implementation.
- Lived experience engagement.
- Money Advice Referral Tools.
- Training.
- Specific policy responses: E.g. HSF/local welfare provision.

Contact: Graham, graham@gmpovertyaction.org.



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Contact us/ download the report

The report is available at: <https://www.gmpovertyaction.org/local-anti-poverty-strategies/>

- Full report.
- Executive summary, framework and individual case studies.
- Webinar recording and slides.

Contact: Laura (Senior Policy and Research Advisor), laura@gmpovertyaction.org and Penny (Policy Officer) on penny@gmpovertyaction.org.



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Lastly

Thank you !

**Please share the report with colleagues & on social
media #AntiPovertyStrategies**

@GMPovertyAction

**[https://www.gmpovertyaction.org/local-anti-poverty-
strategies/](https://www.gmpovertyaction.org/local-anti-poverty-strategies/)**



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