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Anti-poverty activities in a liberal welfare model

Citation for published version:

Bennett, H 2016, Anti-poverty activities in a liberal welfare model: Local levers and multi-level tensions in Glasgow, UK. in H Johansson & A Panican (eds), *Combating Poverty in Local Welfare Systems*. 1 edn, Work and Welfare in Europe, Palgrave Macmillan, pp. 129-154. https://doi.org/10.1057/978-1-137-53190-2_6

Digital Object Identifier (DOI):

[10.1057/978-1-137-53190-2_6](https://doi.org/10.1057/978-1-137-53190-2_6)

Link:

[Link to publication record in Edinburgh Research Explorer](#)

Document Version:

Peer reviewed version

Published In:

Combating Poverty in Local Welfare Systems

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Chapter 6. Anti-poverty activities in a liberal welfare model: Local levers and multi-level tensions in Glasgow, UK

Hayley Bennett, University of Edinburgh

Introduction [A]

The UK is emblematic of a liberal welfare regime model (Arts and Gelissen, 2002; Esping-Andersen, 1990, 1999; Ferragina and Seeleib-Kaise, 2011). This assessment is rarely disputed; UK policy-makers favour neoliberal policies that incorporate market mechanisms and private provision of goods and services. At the same time, social security and minimum income policies are highly centralised and primarily means-tested. From 2010 to 2015, the Conservative-led coalition government escalated the neoliberal agenda under the guise of unavoidable austerity (MacLeavy, 2011), and the Conservative government elected in 2015 seems set to continue in the same vein. Conservative politicians posit that ‘generous’ minimum income policies cause extended experiences of poverty via welfare dependency and claim that ‘it is not enough ... to tackle poverty by income transfer. This tested the socialist view of welfare to destruction’ (Duncan-Smith, 2014). Through a discursive shift towards ideas of workfare and a reduction in the value and accessibility of social security benefits, working-age poverty is being reframed as the outcome of individual life choices.

The UK is the most unequal country in Europe and welfare state retrenchment is highly politicised. GDP per head in the poorest UK regions is lower than any region of France, Germany, Belgium, Holland, Luxembourg, Austria, Ireland, Sweden, Finland or Denmark (Inequality Briefing, 2014). Regional inequality within the UK is also stark; an average

household in the south-east of England has almost twice the amount of wealth of an average household in Scotland (The Equality Trust, 2014). Most of the UK's poorest regions have experienced extensive post-industrial decline. As voting in Britain is heavily influenced by social class, these areas tend to have socialist industrial legacies and left-leaning political actors (Anderson and Heath, 2002). The residents of these areas often elect non-Conservative Party representatives in both local and national elections and, as such, support for a liberal welfare model is not unanimous and often contested. In fact, the politics of local governance in the UK is 'marked by a history of adversarial relationships between the local and central states' (Duncan and Goodwin, 1988, cited in Newman: 2014: 3293). Many local governments (that are struggling to enact austerity cuts) are openly opposed to the Conservative Party's view of welfare provision (WLGA, 2014; Dunleavy et al., 2011). Consequently, studies of the UK welfare state that focus predominately on national policies and activities may neglect important and complex multi-level relations.

This chapter explores how local actors engage in anti-poverty work in a UK city experiencing persistently high levels of poverty and deprivation. The city of Glasgow has been selected as a case study to explore central–local relations, due to its post-industrial heritage, its position within the devolved policy region of Scotland, and its left-leaning political legacy. The city has undergone much economic restructuring since the decline of its main industries in the 1980s, yet it continues to have the highest inactive population of all major UK cities. There are also stubborn issues of inequality, poverty and deprivation (Bennett and Clegg, 2013). As such, it offers an insight into localised welfare provision and post-industrial transformation in a liberal welfare state.

The chapter is based on qualitative research conducted in 2013, involving document analysis, service mapping, and interviews with ten local actors, employed in a range of public and non-public-sector organisations in the city. The chapter begins with a brief outline of the political and administrative arrangement of key welfare services, before discussing the local aspects of welfare provision and the mix of local actors. Through examples of prominent local ideas, local strategies and local activation programmes, I reflect on whether the local welfare system is constrained by, complimentary to, or works against the UK's centralised national welfare policies.

The provision of minimum income and welfare services [A]

With nearly 600,000 residents, the city of Glasgow is the largest city in Scotland. During the 1980s and 1990s, Glasgow experienced significant industrial decline, due to a contraction in shipbuilding and manufacturing that resulted in a major increase in unemployment (Adam et al., 2014). As a post-industrial city there are a range of structural and long-term labour market issues. Whereas cities such as Manchester are similar in regards to size and post-industrial character, labour-market problem pressures in Glasgow are more acute. For example, 23.3 per cent of the working age population in Glasgow are not in the labour market in comparison to only 19.6 per cent in Manchester.

Glasgow has two highly prominent labour market issues: unemployment and inactivity. The unemployment level peaked in 1992, when the numbers of individuals claiming unemployment benefit in the city reached nearly 50,000. While this figure has reduced over time, and there has been a concerted effort to increase employment levels in the city, issues around poverty and inequality remain and unemployment is higher than the UK average. The

financial crisis impacted an already vulnerable labour market. The unemployment rate rose from 6.5 per cent in 2008 to approximately 12 per cent by 2012. This represents a rapid growth in unemployment, reflecting an increase from 18,400 to over 33,000 unemployed residents in less than four years.

Youth unemployment and youth inactivity rates have also risen, alongside an increase in long-term unemployment, and an increase in the number of individuals in receipt of low pay or reduced working hours (Bennett and Clegg, 2013). Economic inactivity due to poor health is a noticeable feature of Glasgow's problem pressures. In 2012 approximately 32 per cent of the working age population in Glasgow were registered as economically inactive and received health-related benefits or were registered as full-time students (Bennett and Clegg, 2013).

Multiple levels of government are involved in tackling labour market problems and structural challenges. As is the case throughout the UK, local politicians do not have access to the welfare state levers (such as social security or economic policies) to address local economic problems. However, in Glasgow there are also influential political cleavages between the local, devolved, and national layers of government. Notably, Glasgow's residents predominately elect left-wing and Labour Party representation. Glasgow City Council (GCC) has historically been dominated by the Labour Party, although in recent years there has been some competition for traditional Labour Party seats from the Scottish National Party (SNP) and in the most recent general election (2015) the SNP gained 56 out of 59 seats in Scotland. The Labour Party holds a large number of safe parliamentary seats and controls many local governments in post-industrial areas throughout the UK. Currently, this includes much of the

north-east of England, the major cities of Manchester and Liverpool in the north-west of England, and large parts of central Scotland and South Wales. (Coates and Lawler, 2000)

UK minimum income policies are highly centralised. National policy-makers couple social security payments with activation programmes that jobseekers access through Jobcentre Plus. The Department for Work and Pensions (DWP) controls, administers and finances the main working-age benefits –Jobseeker’s Allowance and the Employment Support Allowance (a benefit that supports those with health-related issues) – through Jobcentre Plus. The centralised tax agency (HMRC) also administers a system of tax credits for low-income earners. There are approximately 199,000 recipients of DWP benefits in Glasgow, including 101,000 people of working age and a further 64,600 families in the city receiving tax credits (GWSF, 2013: 1).

Jobcentre Plus employees operate in 17 local offices in Glasgow. Regional and local Jobcentre Plus managers also engage in local partnerships and discussions. However, local offices work to centrally prescribed targets and frontline employees have little autonomy and decision-making powers regarding benefit levels, the conditionality attached to benefit receipt, or the design of the employment support services they deliver. Instead, Jobcentre Plus employees administer and enforce centrally designed contracts between jobseekers and the state in order to regulate job-seeking behaviour. These contracts play a major role in the facilitation of conditionality and sanctioning processes for jobseekers throughout the UK (Wright, 2012).

There are no local actors formally involved in the design and management of the organisational logics and activities of the Department for Work and Pensions or Jobcentre

Plus; these are firmly within the remit of the UK central government. Since 1997, ‘Westminster’ politicians, along with central figures in the Department for Work and Pensions and the treasury, have responsibility for the design of ‘welfare-to-work’ programmes. The Department for Work and Pensions procurement specialists use a competitive quasi-market system to select non-state delivery organisations that operate across the UK. These organisations (known as ‘welfare-to-work’ providers) operate via a target-based rewards system, depending on the number of referrals for persons who then cease to claim out-of-work benefits. Over time, the Department for Work and Pensions has sought to reduce the costs associated with these contracting processes and, in response, has increased the size of contracts and areas that selected providers cover. Thus, large-scale commercial organisations, with little local expertise or connection to local public and non-public organisations, dominate the quasi-market (Bennett, 2011).

In practice, after people have been unemployed for a centrally defined period of time, Jobcentre Plus employees direct these unemployed citizens to a contracted welfare-to-work provider. These jobseekers are often mandated to attend and risk the removal of benefits if they do not participate in the prescribed activities. Local actors have very little discretion and direct influence on the relationships between jobseekers and Jobcentre Plus, or the experience with welfare-to-work providers. Local actors’ lack of influence has not always been a major problem. For a period during the late 1990s and 2000s, the Labour Party was in control of Glasgow City Council, the Scottish government, and the UK government. Thus some areas of anti-poverty policy and activities were more closely aligned (Alcock, 2010). However, due to the highly centralised approach to employment and benefit provision, policy-makers in central departments can terminate or initiate employment programmes relatively quickly. This has been most evident since 2010, when the incoming Conservative-led government

initiated a number of new employment programmes, increased the conditionality of social security provision, and markedly altered the organisational logics and frontline delivery services in Jobcentre Plus offices (Daguerre and Etherington, 2014). These changes, alongside multi-level political opposition, fractured the alignment of public policies and agendas.

Combating poverty at local level [A]

Central departments are responsible for the policy content and delivery mechanisms for most key areas of welfare state services. Glasgow City Council delivers a number of (broadly speaking) anti-poverty or welfare services. These include administering housing benefit, providing a small number of passported benefits (for example, free school meals), and managing some discretionary payments for residents with specialist care needs. These activities often take place within nationally defined frameworks and, as it is the Scottish government that defines local government budgets, these services operate within strict financial limits (Bennett and Clegg, 2013). Without fiscal autonomy, Glasgow City Council has little formal room for manoeuvre with regard to anti-poverty policies such as minimum income levels, the administration of social security payments and the associated activation programmes.

Despite the highly centralised nature of welfare provision, Glasgow has been the recipient of many national economic development initiatives targeting specific geographical areas of deprivation. There are a plethora of national and regional policies and funding sources (all of which change regularly over time) (Hills and Stewart, 2005). For example, between 1997 and 2010, local actors accessed finance and resources through the previous Labour government's

urban policies, local welfare initiatives and social inclusion agenda that targeted specific groups and/or neighbourhoods with high levels of disadvantage (Lupton et al., 2013) The presence of previous initiatives is an important aspect in the development of Glasgow's local welfare system, due to the influence on relationships, existence of many non-state organisations and the high profile nature of the work that they do.

The devolved Scottish Parliament also supports local economic development initiatives and provides funding for specific employment-support programmes. Health policy is a devolved function and as such, much local anti-poverty work in Glasgow is possible through Scottish health initiatives and funding (Audit Scotland 2012; Coalter et al., 2000). Similarly, as central Scotland has EU Objective 1 status, local actors create and deliver small-scale and Glasgow-specific initiatives using EU funding. Through a variety of government schemes, Glasgow has received government assistance for economic development, job creation and for active labour market policies continually since the 1980s. These agendas are also an important aspect of the local welfare system, since local actors are able to access a broad range of resources to deliver projects, or develop partnerships, which enable them to create local innovations and relationships. Consequently, locally led anti-poverty activities and programmes in Glasgow are multi-faceted, cut across numerous policy fields and are often difficult to map.

Civil society organisations [A]

From our study it is evident that anti-poverty initiatives involve a diverse collection of actors, notably many different kinds of civil society or third-sector organisations (TSO). According to the Scottish Charity Register (OSCR, 2015), approximately 32 per cent of all TSOs

registered in Glasgow are engaged in, broadly speaking, anti-poverty activities, spending over £365 million in 2013/2014 alone. There are numerous types of organisations, ranging from very small, neighbourhood volunteer-led charities, to large public-service delivery TSOs with turnovers in excess of £10 million per annum. The composition of TSOs and the role they play in the local welfare system is somewhat complex as many operate at multiple scales or deliver a broad range of services supported by multiple funders. There are also many different types of activities, ranging from emergency provision of housing and food to formal public-service contracts. I crudely group Glasgow's third-sector organisations into four categories below and in Table 6.1.

First, there are religious and faith-based organisations engaged in poverty alleviation work. The Roman Catholic archdiocese of Glasgow is the largest religious charity registered in the city, but there are also many active Protestant churches and charities working in particular neighbourhoods and at city level. A small number of minority-faith organisations are also involved in the delivery of services targeting distinctive minority-ethnic groups or religious backgrounds. Second, there are organisations that specifically seek to help residents experiencing poverty to access minimum income or improve financial literacy. Third, there are service delivery organisations (mainly social enterprises) that deliver marketised public services, arguably acting as, 'instruments of privatisation' (Anheier, 2004: 4). Many of these organisations compete to secure contracts to deliver broad welfare services such as care homes, housing, health services and employment support. Finally some third-sector organisations in Glasgow focus on delivering employment-support initiatives and job creation schemes. Their existence is often directly aligned to previous government initiatives and European funding schemes. For example, between 2007 and 2013, the third sector in

Glasgow received over £16 million from the European Social Fund for the delivery of additional employment and training programmes (Bennett and Clegg, 2013: 74).

INSERT TABLE 6.1 ABOUT HERE

A third-sector organisation's activities may extend across more than one typology and we find that many in Glasgow are permanently in flux, having varied income streams, areas of activities, partners and competitors. The city is also home to many third-sector partnerships, umbrella groups and communities of action where organisations come together and discuss issues or future work areas. Such mechanisms contribute to and shape the local welfare system. It is highly unlikely that there is another city within the UK where socio-economic factors, multi-level public policy agendas and funding arrangement are combined in this way to create an identical environment and grouping of third-sector organisations.

A complex and multi-scalar local welfare system [A]

Most local actors are engaged in activities that weave together disparate policy agendas. Partnerships and strategies that bring together a range of actors are therefore popular and our respondents perceive partnership working as an important tool for addressing the multifaceted causes (and outcomes) of poverty:

The challenge facing Glasgow's public, private and third-sector partners, particularly in the current context, is to ensure that Glasgow's unacceptable levels of poverty and inequality are addressed effectively. This will only be achieved by partners working together with those experiencing poverty, towards a shared vision (Glasgow City Council, 2013c: 2).

However, the wide variation in organisational types and activities makes coordination complex. Both national and devolved governments support local coordination and have previously funded city-based programmes to encourage relationship-building and networking. For example, under the former Labour government, Glasgow was the location of Social Inclusion Partnerships, Working for Communities programme, the Multiple Provider Employment Zone and a Health Action Zone. All of these initiatives involved partnerships, working to reduce poverty in the city, albeit through different policy streams. Glasgow was also one of 15 areas across the UK selected to take part in the Department for Work and Pensions' City Strategy Initiative (abolished in 2010) that sought to engage residents in training and work-related preparation and simultaneously rationalise the welfare to work landscape (Adam et al., 2014: 27). Glasgow has also received much support for economic development partnerships. This includes a recent UK and Scottish government City Region initiative that incorporates economic development and labour market programmes in the Greater Glasgow area.

Partnerships that address issues of poverty are not limited to economic development or activation actors. The Community Planning Partnership (CPP) is currently the main multi-agency coordination strategy in the city. Through the local government in Scotland Act 2003, the Scottish government legally requires all local governments to create a CPP and to coordinate the delivery of public services. In every CPP public agencies (police service, fire service, local government, NHS) must work with communities, businesses and third-sector organisations to organise the delivery of public services and create single outcome agreements. While the partnership format is a legal requirement (and thus not an organic or unique product of the local welfare system), according to Kenway et al. (2015) the Scottish

government's 2013 guidance for CPPs rarely mentions poverty and there is little pressure from the Scottish government to compel local governments to prioritise tackling poverty. Despite this, much of the work of Glasgow's CPP focuses extensively on issues of poverty and deprivation. For example, Glasgow's CPP activities include establishing a Tackling Poverty Working Group comprising of CPP representatives and city residents who experience poverty, the production of a financial inclusion strategy to coordinate the city's financial advice services and a Tackling Poverty Together Framework to coordinate local activities. As such, whilst the partnership mechanism is enforced by the Scottish government, the objectives and priorities reflect local pressures, politics and concerns.

Our interviewees perceive the Community Planning Partnership as a means to align strategies and philosophies and thus improve the delivery of anti-poverty services in the city, as one respondent states:

The Community Planning Partnership at its best is as the place where different partners interface with one another about how they can genuinely do things together... [it is] obviously a pretty seminal place to think about tackling poverty
(Community Planning Partnership board member, 22 July 2013)

Many respondents claim that they participate in the Community Planning Partnership in order to address the city's problem pressures. Their participation is underpinned by a belief that the local system, even with limited policy-making and fiscal powers, can create 'levers' for anti-poverty work. As many of the actors have little influence on the social security system, there is a desire to use local organisations to alleviate poverty. Along with the creation of the aforementioned strategies and initiatives, this is also being achieved through influencing

partners' organisational behaviour in terms of employment, recruitment and service provision (Glasgow City Council, 2013c).

Many public sector organisations and political parties in Scotland and Glasgow City Council are continuing with a relatively orthodox economic development and regeneration approach to tackling poverty. However, while disparate actors do seek to work together on anti-poverty strategies in the city, some civil society and political actors propose or support an 'alternative economic strategy' and criticise the economic development and regeneration approach to poverty alleviation. It is, however, unlikely that the city can operate according to a different economic model within the current policy architecture of the UK welfare state, since local actors do not control social security policies and employment laws. As such, many of these actors' chief contributions is limited to driving the burgeoning anti-poverty debates and influencing established public actors to take up a more participatory approach to service design and governance.

In sum, while the Community Planning Partnership is a key part of the local welfare system and a key partnership mechanism it comprises an 'eclectic mix of public, private, voluntary and community agencies' (McGarvey, 2011: 162). As such, negotiations and tensions exist regarding the design and administration of conflicting approaches to poverty alleviation. Nevertheless, the high profile given to anti-poverty strategies in the Community Planning Partnership stands in stark contrast to the dominant discourse of welfare contraction from the UK government. As outlined in detail in the following section, we find that all local actors, even those that may disagree at times around the table, are united in their opposition to the welfare reforms of the UK government and in their efforts to tackle poverty in the city.

Three local strategies that contrast with central regulation [A]

We find three contrasting strategies in the local welfare system: conflicting approaches to participation and actor involvement (like including citizens in service design), contradicting activities that intentionally go against the right-wing national welfare and social security policies and finally, competing activation and employment programmes that are knowingly running parallel to national welfare-to-work programmes.

Local ideas: Participatory approach (conflicting) [B]

Glasgow's location within the devolved Scottish context is hugely important. The Scottish government seeks to reform public services through what they consider to be a distinctively 'Scottish approach' based on bottom-up reforms, increased community involvement and the integration of services between the public, private and third sector to prevent social ills (such as poverty). The 2011 report by the Scottish government's public service commission, (known as the Christie Commission) best exemplifies such views declaring a vision that public services 'are delivered in partnership, involving local communities, their democratic representatives and the third sector' in order to tackle social deprivation and so-called 'wicked issues' (Christie, 2011: 81).

In this study we find that, partly encouraged by this socio-political context at the Scottish level, but also by the local desires to tackle persistent poverty problems, some third-sector organisations in Glasgow are increasingly demanding access to the local policy-making space and are able to exert influence over local strategies. Local civil society organisations that are highly active and engaged in participatory projects, are embedding (often innovative) ideas of participatory governance in local strategies. For example, in 2010 The Poverty Truth

Commission organised a two-year project bringing together Scotland's civic leaders with local people who were experiencing poverty using the tag line, 'Nothing about us without us is for us.' It was designed and led by Faith in Scotland, a charity supported by the Church of Scotland and involved facilitating meetings between a range of organisations and individuals involved in anti-poverty work with residents who experience poverty to build communication, knowledge and empathy. Similarly, the Poverty Alliance, an issue-based third-sector organisation, designed a participatory project from 2010 (and repeated at the beginning of 2015) called 'Stick your labels' to explore issues of stigma and discrimination. It also involved people with direct experience of poverty working alongside state representatives and employees. As a result, local government and political actors who are locked out of the national debates and decision-making are able to use and support third-sector actors to develop welfare approaches that contrast from the national institutional logic.

Ideas of participatory governance are prominent in much of the anti-poverty debates in Glasgow. The Leader of Glasgow City Council (and the local branch of the Scottish Labour Party) made a commitment to focus on anti-poverty activities involving a participatory approach. In 2013 Glasgow City Council established a Poverty Leadership Panel, co-chaired by the Leader of the Council and a person with direct experience of living in poverty. The panel comprises representatives from a range of public, private and third-sector organisations, acting as a 'clearing house' (Kenway et al., 2015: 26) by meeting to discuss anti-poverty initiatives in the city. This has, for example, included the production of appeals packs for citizens affected by national welfare reform policies and the employment of Tackling Poverty Assistants who 'talk to local people about their experiences and feed this into the Action Plan' (Glasgow City Council, 2013: 7). While the Poverty Leadership Panel echoes the participatory and democratic vision of the burgeoning Fairness Commission initiatives taking

place in other large post-industrial cities (Bunyan and Diamond, 2014), the centrality of Glasgow's panel to the work of the council, the strong presence of third-sector organisations and the extent to which the work of the panel goes beyond data collection to influence the activities of a range of actors ensures that this panel reflects Glasgow's local welfare values.

Local political and third-sector actors are also engaged in developing and promoting practical economic ideas in the locality. This includes a large campaign to encourage local employers to pay a living wage to employees in the city. Similarly, Glasgow City Council officers and Scottish government employees have adapted procurement policies to include community benefit clauses in public service contracts (Sacchetti et al., 2012). These local anti-poverty ideas conflict with the dominant policies at the national level by emphasising job creation and state involvement in the labour market. However, such efforts are not accompanied by regulatory powers and as such they are unable to substantially modify the Glasgow's labour market (particularly the issues of low pay and low demand). Instead, these ideas are somewhat limited to the discursive domain of anti-poverty activities.

Local strategies: Income maximisation (contradicting) [B]

Unable to implement and fund cash transfers, local actors (Glasgow City Council, a range of third-sector organisations, units within the NHS and housing associations) provide welfare rights advice to support the take up of national entitlements. Such activities are part of a formal and long-term 'income maximisation' approach (Scott and Mooney, 2009). Although some have claimed that this policy 'is no longer one which is practical, nor desirable' (Adam et al., 2014: 30) we find that many actors within Glasgow continue to perform activities and work together to support individuals to receive benefits. For example, Glasgow City Council

financially supports a Welfare Rights and Money Advice Service and employs welfare rights officers to provide information. In 2013 this service supported over 4,000 residents in appeals processes and claims that annual representation at tribunals ‘generates or protects in the region of £7 million in benefits’ (Glasgow City Council, 2013b, no pagination). Third-sector organisations, such as Citizens Advice Scotland and a number of local actors (as part of their recent efforts to work together), also provide income maximisation support including benefit entitlement information. Similarly, housing associations and NHS Greater Glasgow all direct services users towards financial management services, including social security advice.

We find three main reasons why local actors adopt an income maximisation approach and design services that conflict with the UK central government efforts to reduce access to social security payments. First, high poverty rates create major problems for local actors, particularly those delivering health and education services. If residents do not receive minimum income payments, (or, for example, are made homeless because they cannot pay rent) the work of health professionals and those employed in the delivery of other public services (such as childcare) are negatively affected. Costs may increase and service provision may become more problematic as service users and residents face harsher and more complex daily lives. Second, as the local authority is not directly responsible for funding social security payments, income maximisation activities assist individuals to receive their state entitlements without any major cost to local budgets. Finally, in a post-industrial labour market with high rates of unemployment and a shortage of employment opportunities, income maximisation is framed as a local economic issue. Many local actors (Glasgow City Council but also the Scottish government and many third-sector organisations) view benefit entitlements as financial input to the local economy (Glasgow Council for the Voluntary

Sector, 2010; Rights Advice Scotland, 2010). This view is a significant feature of the central–local relations in the UK system, within the context of struggling local economies.

In recent years, income maximisation and financial inclusion activities have been increasingly engaged in appealing against Job Centre Plus sanctioning decisions. Between October 2012 and June 2013, it administered nearly 124,000 sanctions on Jobseeker's Allowance claimants in Scotland, of which over 37,000 (30 per cent) were made in the Greater Glasgow area alone (Department of Work and Pensions, 2013). There is also an intense concern about UK central government reforms, as it is estimated that the far-reaching reforms to housing payments, unemployment benefit, incapacity benefits, child benefit and tax credits will take more than £1.6 billion per year out of the Scottish economy.

Furthermore, data suggests that Glasgow will experience the biggest impact of welfare reform in Scotland; 12 wards figure prominently among the list of the most affected places in Scotland and the city will experience a decline in social security payments of £259 million per year (Beatty and Fothergill, 2014).

National reforms therefore drastically affect the levels of financial support for individuals. These also affect the activities of local actors (mainly in social work, housing and financial inclusion teams) who are finding new ways to manage services and collaborate with the national systems. There is also an increase in demand for local activation schemes. Glasgow City Council has introduced a number of organisational systems to understand the impact of welfare reform on its organisational activities and also on residents. Similarly, Glasgow Housing Association and civil society groups are concerned about the impact of welfare reform on individuals. Many organisations in Glasgow have actively lobbied against national UK reforms and are starting to support legal aid services and benefit appeals processes. In

this illustration, we see the temporal nature of relationships and alignments; local relationships that may otherwise be fragmented or tension-laden are temporarily united in response to a competing and threatening ideological agenda from the UK government.

Local programmes (competing) [B]

Despite the visibility of income maximisation work, we also find that many local actors are also engaged in activation and employment support initiatives that operate outside of the Department for Work and Pension's central activation programmes. In recent years some units within Glasgow City Council and employment-focused third-sector organisations have sought to develop local services to help individuals to move into the labour market. While these services often provide advice, training and work-related courses (such as CV preparation), NHS and health-focused actors are also developing innovative projects services, such as joining midwifery services up with employment advice (Bennett and Clegg, 2013). Most local activation activities are funded via other public sector agencies (such as devolved government skills and training agency) or through specialist EU or charitable funds targeting specific groups (such as young people, or lone parents).

Third-sector organisations play a major role in local employment programmes. Over the last 15 years, Glasgow City Council (along with other local actors) has created two employment-focused organisations: Glasgow Works and Jobs and Business Glasgow, offering a variety of activation services. Historically, both organisations focused on the provision of training and job placement, with an emphasis more recently on job matching and work experience with Glasgow employers. There is often a work first element to some of the provision, yet both agencies also engage in job creation programmes and temporary employment initiatives (such

as a project providing young people with apprenticeships and a Glasgow Guarantee job guarantee scheme). The scope and funding of their work is noteworthy: in 2012/2013 Jobs and Business Glasgow managed 48 projects and reported a total income of £30 million (Jobs and Business Glasgow, 2013). The European Social Fund is a substantial source of income, providing over £15 million for Jobs and Business Glasgow's employment and activation initiatives (Bennett and Clegg, 2013).

We find in this study that the existence of such activities reflects historical EU funding patterns and local political pressures to provide support to unemployed residents. Notably, recent reforms to Jobs and Business Glasgow have reduced the provision of 'enabling' services. Such local activities may be an outcome of 'austerity localism' (Featherstone et al., 2012) as local actors seek to replace and improve central activation services.

Deliberate decoupling? [A]

So far our discussions outline the importance of policies, actors and political agendas that operate outside of the city for framing and shaping the development of anti-poverty activities in Glasgow's local welfare system. While there is a tendency to try and work with external agendas at certain times (for example, by bidding for pilot project funding), there are also times when it appears that the local public and third-sector actors deliberately distance their work from that of competing agendas. For example, the UK Conservative-led coalition government introduced the aforementioned Work Programme in 2010, with the aim of amalgamating a number of existing programmes. This programme provided an opportunity to shift the payment model further towards a payment-by-results approach. Through a raft of changes, Department of Work and Pensions, policy-makers also increased the size and value

of contracts and created a system that shifted the risk and decision-making role from the state to non-state actors in the market. These reforms led to a decrease in the involvement of local actors (and local Jobcentre Plus offices) in the procurement process and have reduced the participation of third-sector organisations in frontline delivery in Glasgow (Heins and Bennett, 2015). Local actors have very little involvement in how the Work Programme is designed and who delivers it (unless they are formally subcontracted into the prime providers' supply chain). Whereas many public and third-sector local actors previously worked alongside delivery organisations involved in preceding welfare-to-work programmes, they perceive the Work Programme to be 'non-local' and operating outside of embedded local 'expert' strategies. The Work Programme is therefore detached from local employment programme activities.

Local employment programmes have not always been decoupled from national agendas and there are specific reasons why the Work Programme is not aligned with local activities. First, under the neoliberal premise that profit-making encourages efficiency savings, the Work Programme contracts are designed to allow each delivery organisation to make a profit. Glasgow City Council, NHS and third-sector organisation respondents acknowledged that many local actors (themselves included) may be unable (or unwilling) to use their scarce local resources to support national policies and private sector companies to make profits. Similarly, local political and anti-poverty actors have very little political incentive to support the effective delivery of the Work Programme: it is a cornerstone in the Conservative party agenda and (due to increased conditionality and workfare functions) is also the most market-oriented of all of the UK's welfare-to-work programmes to date. The competing political agendas over welfare provision create multi-level tensions and divide service provision at city level. As one respondent states:

It is quite messy, the level of harmony between UK-Scottish-local-government policy is very low at the moment ... If you track it back over the years [it has been] high because when Glasgow Works started we had three Labour administrations and now you have a local Labour, a SNP Scottish and a Conservative-led coalition at the UK level. So there is little political communication between the three on these issues (Senior employee, public sector organisation, 29 July 2013).

Second, respondents emphasise technical and administrative rules that create subsequent delivery tensions with Work Programme providers. Largely this is because Work Programme providers cannot access Scottish government employment-focused resources or Glasgow City Council's EU-funded services. Interview respondents claim that the Scottish government instructs local governments that EU funding cannot be used to supplement the Work Programme service users since the UK government pays commercial providers to cover all support requirements (Bennett and Clegg, 2013). Consequently, Glasgow's jobseekers cannot receive support on a local employment programme while they are mandated onto the Work Programme. For these reasons, there are noticeable differences with regards to the design and purpose of local and national initiatives, as summarised in Table 6.2.

INSERT TABLE 6.2 ABOUT HERE

In practice, the mismatch between national and local activation approaches is highly visible. Local Jobcentre Plus offices and local actors who deliver (broadly speaking) welfare services, refer suitable residents to local employment provision. Once the individual becomes eligible

for Work Programme provision, he/she is no longer eligible for local activation schemes or some financial support projects. Similarly, a long-term unemployed person may be able to (re-)access local activation provision once he/she is completed their mandated time on the Work Programme. Therefore, since 2010, separate activation services for people experiencing poverty in the city have existed. These services represent a semi-opposing tier of active labour-market activities (that are not accounted for in traditional studies of UK activation programmes) that are increasingly embedded into important anti-poverty city-strategies, while national welfare-to-work programmes are increasingly decoupled.

Conclusion [A]

Central UK policies to combat poverty combine minimum income payments with activation services. Under the remit of the Department for Work and Pensions, both of these welfare functions are centralised and allow little, if any, local differentiation and discretion for local actors. However, in Glasgow, we find that this national agenda exists alongside the activities of local actors, creating a complex system of local welfare and anti-poverty initiatives. There is a strong anti-poverty consensus among local actors and a commitment to develop partnership working, referral systems and cultural reform to meet the needs of those living in poverty in the city. Glasgow City Council plays a major role in the local welfare system in terms of its priorities around economic development and the provision of public services and employment support. While there are some wider ideological tensions between the council and prevalent civil society groups with regard to economic development and inequality, there are efforts to work together to deliver local pragmatic responses to socio-economic difficulties. More recently these priorities include increasing participatory mechanisms and

encouraging residents experiencing poverty to take part in local decision-making and strategic planning.

The local welfare system is constituted of a multifarious set of actors that negotiate, manage and create 'levers' to influence anti-poverty work in the city. Alongside reflective anti-poverty discussions, partnership working and resource-sharing are essential components in the local welfare system. By navigating the complex multi-level policy streams of national, regional and local governments, local actors develop local strategies to tackle poverty.

Through these strategies, we see that local initiatives not only build upon UK central policy streams but, as discussed throughout this chapter, may contrast with national intentions.

Discussed as three strategies (competing, conflicting and challenging), local actors are responding to national policies, creating advice and support services to those affected by welfare reforms and providing local activation programmes to support residents into work. At times, local activities are operating semi-autonomously to the central system. However, without access to the welfare state controls, these are the main levers through which local actors seek to tackle poverty.

In Glasgow there are a plethora of public, private and third-sector organisations. Many are multi-scalar in nature, working outside of the city; others are clearly demarcated as local branches of national institutions and many more are purely Glasgow-centric. Within the multi-level political context, there are difficulties aligning competing and (sometimes) hostile agendas regarding welfare provision and anti-poverty. As illustrated in the asynchronous design of the Work Programme, there are evident tensions between the competing policy agendas and the impact of the top-down nature of the UK's welfare-to-work system. For example, Work Programme providers are not involved in the Community Planning

Partnership or the city-wide anti-poverty strategies. These organisations are clearly outside the local system, despite their position as the organisation (along with Jobcentre Plus) through which the formal systems of activation and benefit provision are joined for individuals in need of the UK social security safety net. A summary of the main features of the local welfare system, central governance arrangements and the role of third-sector actors are summarised in Table 6.3.

INSERT TABLE 6.3 ABOUT HERE

Glasgow's local welfare system includes many public and non-public organisations with long histories of anti-poverty initiatives, however the climate of austerity clearly provides the backdrop for some of the most recent anti-poverty initiatives. The 'austerity politics' of the UK Conservative-led coalition government (the Conservative Party was again in office after the 2015 general election) heavily influences the cooperation of different actors within the city and the Scottish government's increasing emphasis on participatory mechanisms has arguably influenced the manner in which anti-poverty and anti-welfare reform agendas are developed and played out. The extent to which the local welfare system is unique is somewhat debatable. On the one hand, there are many large left-wing cities with similar economic legacies and problems (including welfare reform issues) that share a similar antagonism with national UK government (Newman, 2014; Beatty and Fothergill, 2014). Yet, on the other hand, there is a political context that is distinctively situated, that is, the increasing political tension between the Labour Party and the Scottish National Party in which the city of Glasgow has become a key battleground in local and national elections. Campaigns notably concentrate on issues of poverty, welfare and deprivation. If we add to this the historical development of numerous types of public and non-public actors, (including

their relationships, processes of engagement and funding arrangements) it becomes clear that there are few other cities within the UK where such factors combine within the local welfare system to produce the range and scope of anti-poverty activities we see in Glasgow.

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Table 6.1 Four broad types of TSOs in Glasgow

	Religious	Problem Pressure	Social Enterprises	Employment Support focussed
Description	Churches (numerous denominations) 200 + organisations, Over £68m	Local offices in areas of need, some national charities with local fractions 60+ , combined expenditure £43m	Former public services contracted to ‘new’ organisations. Many multi-scalar, (difficult to attribute expenditure)	Developed due to unemployment problems and funds for initiatives. 185+, combined expenditure of £127m
Key actors	Roman Catholic archdiocese is largest religious charity expenditure of £26m.	Glasgow Advice Service (£14m) and Legal Services Agency (£17m)	Housing Associations are largest with turnover of £2.3m	Hugely different sizes and turnovers. Largest JBG £29m)
Main activities	Emergency food and housing.	Money advice, legal aid, financial management, etc.	Housing, health services, social care, employment support,	Employment support, CV prep, job coaching, some training, job creation programmes
Funding	Some government contract, charitable donations.	Many receive local, regional, national state funding	Central, regional and local government contracts	EU funds, government funding, charitable sources.

Source: Author’s own based on Scottish Charity Register data. Expenditure data is in sterling and for the accounting period 2013/2014.

Table 6.2 Local versus national approaches to activation

<i>Central liberal agenda since 2010 (DWP and JCP)</i>		<i>City-level response</i>	<i>Local actors</i>
Over-arching political perspective and policy design	Sanctioning and benefit withdrawal	Appeal sanctions, fund legal support, inform residents of new processes.	Citizens Advice Scotland, TSOs, GCC, NHS, Housing Associations, welfare rights network (+ Scottish Government)
	Low financial levels of MIP (to dissuade welfare dependency)	No top up of state cash transfers but focus on benefit entitlement and ‘income maximisation’ strategies	
	Very limited human development and training	Local training programmes, some work-first & jobsearch support	GCC, Glasgow Works, Jobs and Business Glasgow, large TSOs, Housing Associations, NHS (+ Scottish Government)
	Basic employment advice and job search functions (Work Programme)	Separate basic employment advice and job search functions (replicated for some people, also locally defined priority groups).	
Delivery approach	Low front line discretion and automated technocratic processes in JCP	People focussed case management programmes, social work integration for some residents	GCC, employment focussed TSOs, problem pressure organisations, TSOs for specialist groups, charities (+ Scottish Government)
	Workfirst, short term	Long term training, education and support programmes, particularly TSO led programmes	
	Target based contracts with Work Programme providers	Predominately commissioned projects, some management by objectives.	

Table 6.3 Glasgow's local welfare system

<i>Key aspects</i>	<i>Local features</i>
Capacity of local governments in the areas of MIS/social assistance	Limited financial capacity. Extensive administrative and professional capacity for welfare rights
Status of the poverty issue in local politics	Highly politicized, prominent issue
Structure and function of the local MIS/social assistance system	No local autonomy within national frames, yet parallel local sub-system systems for unemployment support
Coordination between MIS and other services	Extensive local activation services, dual levels of coordination; extensive coordination by local actors, de-coupling with national activation programmes
Main role(s) for local TSOs in local strategies against poverty and social exclusion	Diverse and vast; mainly as a complement to public, increasingly used to replace public services, some provide emergency relief, very strong local mobilization with regard to poverty issue
Participatory governance arrangements with local CSOs	Few and strong
Partnership governance arrangements with local CSOs	Numerous and strong