

UWS-Oxfam Partnership Policy Forum – 27th March 2019, The Lighthouse, Glasgow

Your Money's Worth: How would you spend Scotland's Budget to tackle poverty?

On 27th March, the Oxfam-UWS Partnership, alongside the Poverty and Inequality Commission and The Poverty Alliance, hosted a policy forum on how the Scottish Budget could be better used to tackle poverty. The event brought together anti-poverty campaigners, those with lived experience, those involved in service delivery, and the participants of Oxfam's Future Skills programme, to engage in participative workshops and explore how spending decisions could be made more inclusive and transparent.

This event report does not attempt to serve as a verbatim note of discussions and instead focuses on capturing some of the key points made during the discussions at the Policy Forum.

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About the event partners

UWS-Oxfam Partnership

Since its launch in 2012 the [Partnership](#) between Oxfam and UWS has brought together the academic expertise from the university and the social justice and advocacy strengths of Oxfam Scotland, to critically examine the impact of public policies on equality, sustainability and poverty in Scotland.

The Partnership's Policy Forum regularly invites stakeholders to discuss and challenge existing ideas and policies. In recent years, this has included forums on: decent work; business and the Sustainable Development Goals; and trade unions in the past, present and future.

Poverty and Inequality Commission

The Poverty and Inequality Commission was established by Scottish Ministers, initially until 30 June 2019. From July 2019 a statutory Poverty and Inequality Commission will be established through the Child Poverty (Scotland) Act. The Commission's main role is to provide independent advice to Scottish Ministers on reducing poverty and inequality in Scotland and to scrutinise the progress that is being made.

The Commission is made up of seven members who bring a mix of expertise from policy, practice, research and direct lived experience. Each Commissioner has been appointed as an individual, not as a representative of a particular organisation or interest group.

Poverty Alliance

The Poverty Alliance is a membership organisation with a range of varied experience in addressing issues related to poverty and social exclusion. Its membership is made up of a wide range of organisations including grassroots community groups, individuals facing poverty, voluntary organisations, statutory organisations, policy makers and academics.

The aims of the event

The aims of the event were threefold:

1. To inform the Poverty and Inequality Commission's response to Scottish Ministers in relation to the Scottish Budget, future spending decisions and the role that they can play in reducing poverty and inequality in Scotland;
2. To inform recommendations around how the Budget could be made more accessible to all stakeholders (including those with direct and indirect experiences of poverty) and to increase the transparency and accountability of the Budget process;
3. To empower participants with improved knowledge and understanding of the Budget and the budgeting process in order that they can better participate in future debate pertaining to the Scottish Budget.

Opening presentations

Douglas Hamilton, Chair of the Poverty and Inequality Commission, introduced the event and set out the aims and agenda for the day:

We want to know how people think the government should spend money to tackle poverty. We are going to ask you during this event to think about how you would spend an imaginary extra £100 million on tackling poverty. We have a number of ideas that we want you to think about and decide how important you think they are. We are going to use this information to tell the Government this is how you think it should be spending money. Events like this aren't common so we also want to know what you think about your experience today, so have set aside time at the end to discuss that.

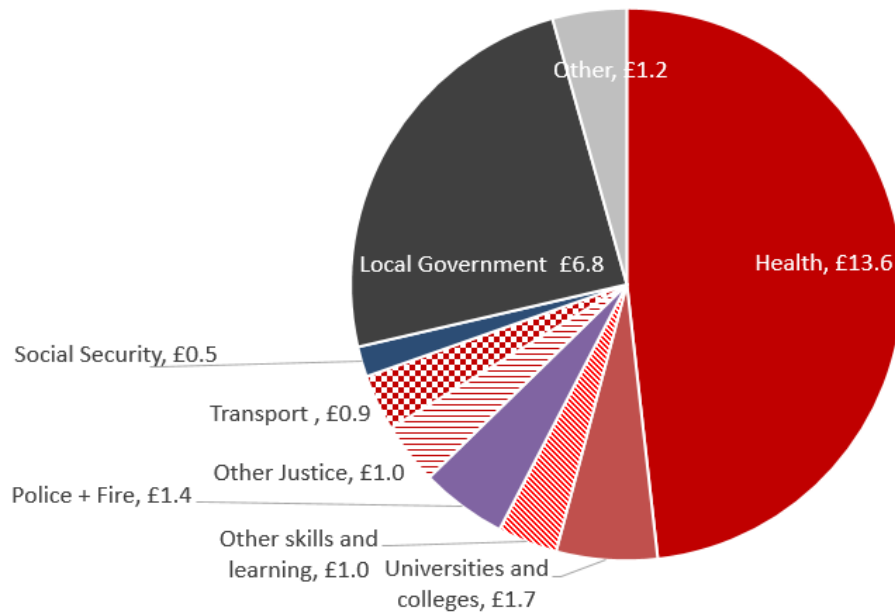
Jamie Livingstone, Head of Oxfam Scotland, gave a welcome on behalf of the UWS-Oxfam Partnership, linking the event with the poverty and inequality statistics published the same week:

This event couldn't be more timely: tomorrow the most recent poverty and inequality statistics will be released, which lay bare the scale of the problem. But what these figures tell us is that if we're going to tackle Scotland's poverty problem, then we can't think of it in isolation. As poverty levels have risen, so too has economic inequality. We know these challenges are deeply linked: we can't seek to tackle poverty without also reducing the gap between rich and poor.

We know that too often, too few voices are heard in debates around how Scotland's resources should be spent. And today's event tries to address that imbalance.

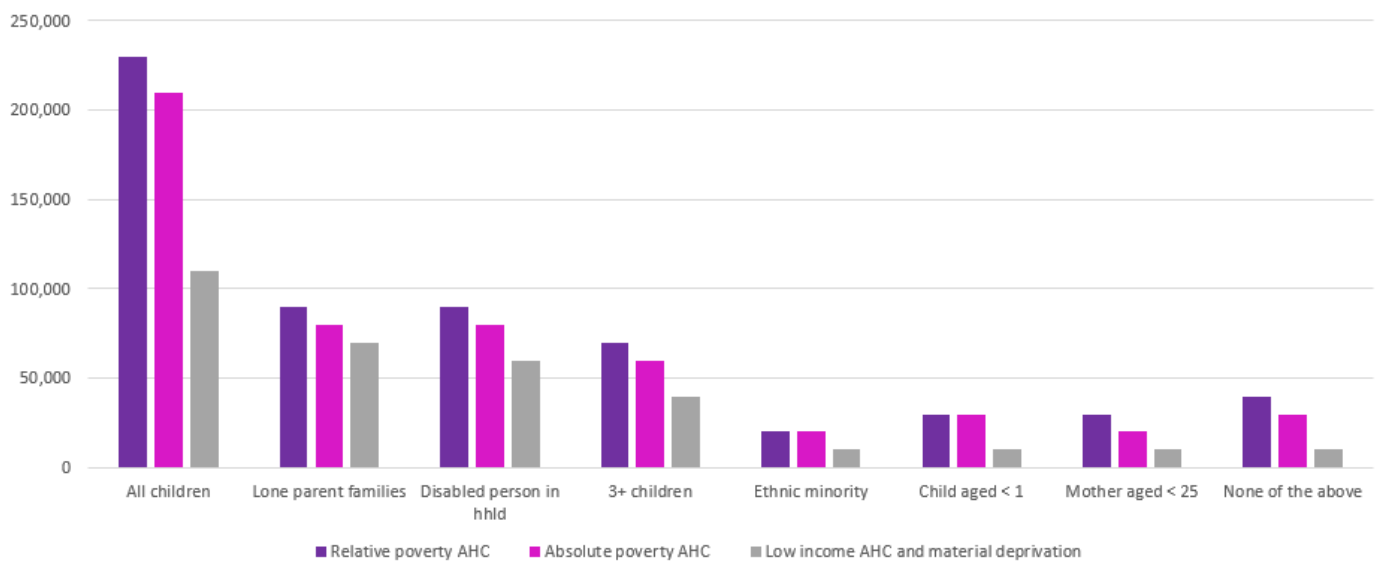
David Eiser, Research Fellow at the Fraser of Allander Institute and one of the Poverty and Inequality Commissioners, gave an overview of the Budget process, where Scotland gets its money and what it is spent on.

£28bn day-to-day spending on public services:



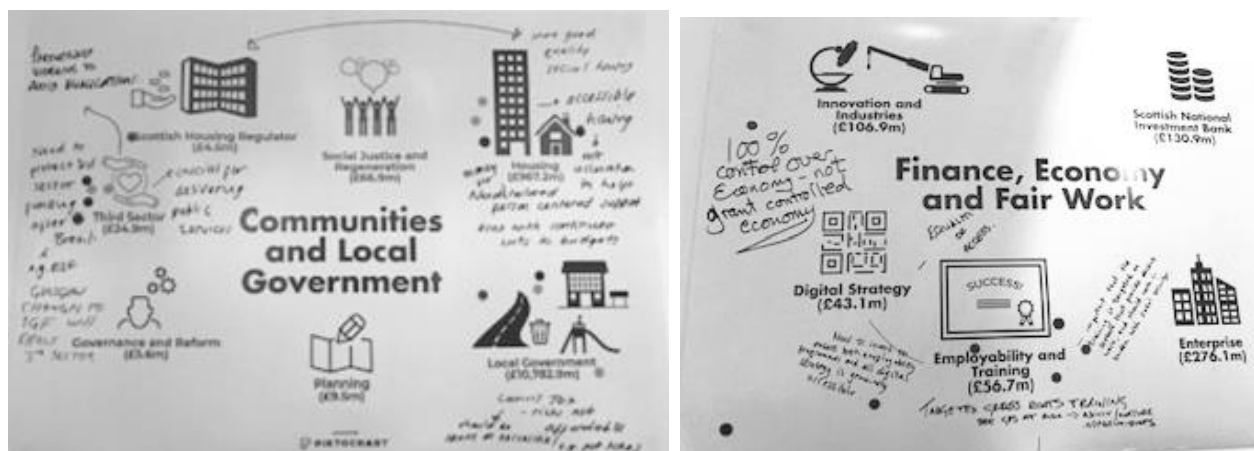
Emma Congreve, Senior Economist at JRF, presented analysis of the groups most affected by poverty in Scotland and how this relates to the Budget:

Who are most affected?



Group activity 1: Budget graffiti – how would *you* spend Scotland's Budget

Following the opening presentations, participants were asked to reflect on what they had heard and move around the room to write their ideas on posters representing how the Scottish Budget is currently spent.



The objectives of this exercise were to introduce people to the full Budget and the areas that money is spent on, and to get their initial thoughts on what they would prioritise.

Ten A1 size posters representing different Budget portfolios were stuck to the walls at different 'stations' around the room. Each poster had images representing different spending within that portfolio, with a caption and detail of the actual spend.

Groups were asked to travel around the room, discussing the different portfolios and use the marker pens to add their ideas about where and how they would spend money to the posters.

Following this, participants were asked to prioritise – as individuals - which were the most important areas to them by 'voting' with three sticky dots.

The following table summarises the notes on each of the posters and the number of votes each portfolio received in the voting exercise.

Portfolio	Notes	Votes
Climate Change and Land Reform	• Re-use • Raising awareness of recycling • Education awareness • Local environment • Scottish Water – how does it work? • Radical analysis – move away from just profit assumptions	2 votes
Finance, Economy and Fair Work	• Digital strategy – equality of access • Need to invest to ensure both employability programmes and all digital strategy are genuinely accessible • Employability and training – important that the training is targeted on sectors that provide decent work, and should work in tandem with social security • Targeted grassroots training • 100% control over economy not grant controlled economy • Living Wage Jobs • Flexible working for lone parents	14 votes – particularly around Citizens Basic Income and Employability and Training

	• Universal Income for all – to be supplemented by work or disability/age premiums • Question the assumptions – income base/size of Budget • Start early – wealth tax? Land Value Tax? Increase Inheritance Tax • Incrementalism – very programme-based Budgeting • People's Bank	
Rural Economy	• Rural services – broadband provision • Rural Economy Enterprise – Prioritise business/development models with better social justice/equality outcomes • Land reform – local production for local markets • Food security – invest in local production • Improving transport services • Very small local authority – very local • People's bank to steer investment/development • Superfast Broadband still not available equally – remote and rural locations last to receive • Rural housing issues need attention/priority	3 votes – two of which on rural housing issues
Transport, Infrastructure and Connectivity	• Concessionary bus fares and bus services – money should be capped per individual company as many are scamming this scheme and thereby scamming us all. • Less money on concessionary fares, it is not targeted • Rail services – public ownership needed • Public transport – services should be linked – ferry, rail, busses, underground, local transport • Build things = jobs; repair things = jobs • Busses too expensive • Digital inclusion training • Cities/investment – money to towns, not just focussed on cities (made up of small towns) • Concessionary fares for the young • Free bus for under 18s • Why are we spending so much on rail services when the services are privatised? Public money going to private providers! • Free public transport for all • Community transport • Many bus companies only doing part routes so people have to bus hop – more issues – causes health and wellbeing issue.	10 votes – particularly around concessionary travel
Education and Skills	• Learning opportunities throughout life, not just for the young • University 3rd Age; support disabled to retrain • Invest in political and social education in primary schools • Higher education and skills and training should be linked services • Skills and training – more rigidity in monitoring actual delivery and who is paid to deliver • More on children and families; more on early learning; more on skills and training; less on higher education • More for schools up to age 18.	33 votes – grouped around children and families and early learning and childcare

	• Mega apprenticeships for young people in sustainable technology, house building, capturing renewable energy, conservation • New national curriculum to support young people's understanding of public services, democracy and education on Budgeting and living	
Justice	• Rehab centres as well as prisons – treat problem not just outcomes • Radical public health analysis of offending and justice and radical responses. • Safer and stronger communities – this would impact police and prison, courts and offender services • More police on the streets • No sanctions = no appeals = save money • No criminal record caused by debt e.g. TV licence • Free lawyer • More on prospect to work with offenders on release • Police more accessible in terms of offices • Offenders families living on less income • Make a custodial sentence unattractive • Funding for organisations to work with ex-offenders • Too many luxuries in jail • More funds for employability for offenders	17 votes – grouped around Legal Aid
Health and Sport	• Sport Scotland and Active Healthy Lives preventative (very important) • [Indicating health and social care and early years] Different transition periods but similar issues (income) • Prevention – more training for health professionals on prevention rather than just illness • Pre-conception and pre-birth – re-establish clinics supporting families • Health visitors – back to GPs rather than social work • Subsidised low cost milk and vitamins – subsidised formula milk, need more for fruit and veg. • Long term conditions • Look at new models of care • Integrative care, integrative medicine • Need additional fund to help people self-manage • Health and wellbeing hubs in every community • Social prescribing • Pay taxi costs to get to hospital – they will pay for mileage if you have a car but can't afford a car. Some people therefore use an ambulance which costs more. • Too much power at present as part of the new GP contract to receptionists who are arguably not trained to identify red flags • More investment in holistic care that looks at people physically, psychologically, emotionally, spiritually. • End post code lottery, end territorial boards. Currently have national 'hospital or sickness service' rather than national 'health' service • Employers' responsibility for occupational health – workers' rights.	17 votes, grouped around Mental Health, Early Years and Care

	• Currently Minister says that they give money to health boards and it is up to them what they do with it – so make health Minister more accountable. • Better transition services, e.g. young to adult services, independent into care • More focus on prevention • More spent on mental health • Lack of accountability – health and social care – tracking the money. • Need to spend more on preventative activities – especially pre-and post-natal support. • Need greater investment in mental health. [The rise in mental health issues was seen to stem from rising conditionality and sanctions in benefits which is leading to suicide often].	
Culture, Tourism and External Affairs	• Transport costs are a barrier – not free, and routes don't go to museums and other places of interest. • We should protect free museum access for everyone – we pay tax, we should get free access. But should non-residents pay? Or be encouraged to donate? No. • We need to treasure our history and teach about it • Lack of confidence in the money being spent well across the Budget • You need to spend money to attract tourists, but who gets the rewards? Business – too much tax avoidance, would a tourist tax put people off coming to Scotland? • Spend less on culture tourism and major events and divert to local services instead – we need to reprioritise. • “Thriving places” – language not correct – areas are struggling – be honest – these areas need to be inspired not misled, there is a difference between Govan and Partick.	No votes
Communities and Local Government	• Third sector – partnership working to avoid duplication • Third sector crucial for delivering services • Need to protect third sector after Brexit • More good quality social housing, accessible housing, money for need/tailored person centred support, issues with continued cuts to Budgets • Council tax rises not affordable – should be spent on necessities • Voluntary sector rarely comes up in discussions – but impact on some people e.g. disabled service users – money not coming through – Budgets not keeping up with inflation. • Protection in local government • Need health and wellbeing hubs in every high street in communities, taking it away from current ‘sick’ services – should be more encompassing and holistic. • Next generation housing provision for young people – seems to be nothing.	22 votes, grouped around Third Sector, Housing, and Local Government
Social Security and Older People	• Rates too low – it's like the Titanic, there aren't enough lifeboats – increase the whole portfolio. • Universal Credit is a nightmare, especially payment in arrears, leading to rent arrears and have to claim Discretionary Housing Payments; also, childcare payments should be upfront in Universal Credit	12 votes

	• Scottish Welfare Fund – revamp of referral and access to fund. • Scottish Welfare Fund – local or national? Why do some councils <i>underspend</i> the SWF? • Ill health and disability benefits – independent assessment • A quarter of households live in fuel poverty leading to six deaths every year in winter. • High costs of electricity and gas – Warm Home Discount doesn't come until March, should be paid upfront • Best Start Grant limited to under-fives, we need more support for families with older children. • Groups who should receive support: working parents need help with housing costs; disabled people who can't work; more for carers – they save lives in the long term; more support for parents who don't want to work in first five years of their children's lives, needs more respect. • Heating costs – setting up Scottish Government energy company • New fairer Housing Benefit for private rented sector • UC – disabled people in work equivalent of disability in WTC	
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Group activity 2: Weighing up the options

The second group exercise asked people to 'spend' an imaginary extra £100 million to tackle poverty by choosing between eight different options or designing their own 'wildcard' options. The purpose of this exercise was to gain a clearer understanding of what kinds of spend participants would prioritise, and the types of criteria that matter to people in making these decisions. For example, we wanted to know whether participants would choose options such as cash benefits which would immediately increase people's incomes but only by a small margin or choose to spend on something that might take longer but be preventative in the longer term. The exercise also encouraged people to think about which groups they would prioritise.

Each table had eight sheets of paper with different options for spending money on them. These outlined what the option was, how much it would cost, what it would do and who it would help.

Option 1

Give money to **everyone** who is living in poverty

How much would this cost?

£100 million

£50 million

Everyone who is living in poverty gets an extra £100 a year

Everyone who is living in poverty gets an extra £50 a year

Who would this help?

Everyone in poverty

Ethnic Minorities

Men and Women

Families and children

Disabled people

Older people

Young people

Option 1: Give money to everyone who is living in poverty	
<u>How much this would cost</u> £100 million – Everyone who is living in poverty gets an extra £100 a year £50 million – Everyone who is living in poverty gets an extra £50 a year	<u>Who would this help?</u> • Everyone in Poverty • Ethnic minorities • Men and Women • Disabled people • Older people • Families and children • Young people
<u>Notes from table discussions:</u> Group 1: • Drops in the ocean. No! Group 2: • Being poor is expensive • This is not enough money to help Group 3: • £100 million not sufficient... but could have impact • Too arbitrary • Could have multiplier effect • Would invest £12 million Group 4: • £100 per year not much difference Group 5: • Like universal policies rather than targeted, but £100m isn't enough to do anything meaningful that is universal. • Like Citizens Basic Income, but would be very expensive. To make it meaningful, would need to be at least £20 per week to each household. Group 6: • Where do you draw the line? • Likely to be political opposition • Not enough to make a difference • Won't change anything • Questions around sustainability and whether it could lead dependency syndrome • Stigma re. 'handouts'	

- Tax credits felt universal - and that was felt to be positive
- Shouldn't it be more targeted towards people in the deepest poverty?

Group 7

- Money not enough to make a difference, would be 'a sticking plaster'.
- Questioned whether people should be given direct payments or should receive some sort of voucher.
- Consensus not reached as recognised the stigma of voucher schemes.
- Questioned how easy it would be to administer and the eligibility of people.
- Would like to look at taxation and encouraging business to pay more tax to pay for this

Group 8

- Too little to make a difference

Option 2: Give money to children who are living in poverty

How much this would cost

£100 million – Every child who is living in poverty gets an extra £434 a year (paid to the household)

£50 million – Every child who is living in poverty gets an extra £217 a year (paid to the household)

Who would this help?

- Families and children

Notes from table discussions:

Group 1:

- Still drops in the ocean

Group 2:

[No comments]

Group 3:

- Collective investment in young people
- Need to ensure spent on children. (but we would expect it to be) especially if given to mother
- Could make a very positive impact at that level
- More money going to larger families, who are more likely to be experiencing poverty
- Would invest £23 million

Group 4:

- £400 per year not a lot, but it would benefit some of us.
- Maybe better to invest in childcare
- Maybe free breakfast – for everyone, even if parents working. Or free lunch for all children. Remove stigma – take away means testing.

Group 5:

- To spend £100m on this option would be £8 per week; to spend £50m would mean £4 per week...
- This is per child meaning that it would particularly benefit large families.
- This is a favourite option, would invest £50m in this.

Group 6:

- Will the money go to benefit the children – concerns around misuse of alcohol and drugs – who decides and how would they be held accountable for their decisions?
- Would a voucher system be better? – Issues around dignity, lack of trust, personal responsibility.
- Put money towards meals in schools etc.
- People with children get money now, but poverty still exists
- Personal responsibility must come with accountability – how?

- Put through local councils instead?

Group 7

- Not enough money.
- How would they spend it – would it be spent on the children?
- Previous reduction in poverty was seen with child tax credits so what about something like this again?
- If there was more money available then yes

Group 8

- Some thought this was too little to make a difference, others disagreed but would be keen to see measures take to ensure this goes to the child rather than the parents.

Option 3: Set up a programme to help parents get jobs

How much this would cost

£50 million – Would help 25,000 people get a job

£10 million would help 5,000 people get a job

£5 million would help 3,000

Who would this help?

- Families and children
- Women

Notes from table discussions:

Group 1:

- Doubt would deliver sustainable, quality jobs

Group 2:

[No comments]

Group 3:

- Programmes have to be accessible for disabled parents (currently no resources for people with visual impairments)
- Works out as £2000 per job. Would we be better giving people £2,000 to help them get a job?
- Importance of Access to Work
- But Access to Work not available before you get a job
- Job search doesn't make people more employable
- What type of jobs? They have to be decent jobs.
- Would invest £4 million

Group 4:

- Support for women going back into work has been cut back. People have to ask for support & what support there is – isn't realistic. So people don't access support.
- Going in to work is a huge barrier for women with childcare – not enough 'in-work' support to deal with the transition (e.g. benefits stop but rent still due 95% parents want to work but it's too difficult (decent work issue)
- Role for organisations like One Parent Families or job centre to provide support. Phone support not suitable, also on time face-to-face to support needed.

Group 5:

- What does "get help" actually mean?
- Are there 25,000 jobs actually available?
- Need childcare FIRST
- Employability support and Jobcentre need to be less pushy! Need to help people to choose the right career, not just a job. About sustainability.

Group 6:

- Quite a bit of support for this option
- Employability lifts people out of poverty
- Quality of jobs also important
- Training courses
- Suitable childcare would need to be available too.
- Needs to be linked to wider policies e.g. Living Wage.
- Are the jobs available?

Group 7

- Questions whether this takes you out of poverty – work is no guarantee these days.
- More important to have living wage and the unions need to play a role in this.
- In rural areas this would be a drop in the ocean.
- What would be better would be to use the money for economic development to create jobs

Group 8

- Supportive but only if it led to long term work
- Some concern that existing programmes incentivise providers to take a short term approach to placing people in unsustainable work.

Option 4: Build more affordable homes

How much this would cost

£100 million – this would build 1,700 more homes

£50 million – this would build 850 more homes

Who would this help?

- Could help all types of people who need affordable homes

Notes from table discussions:

Group 1:

- Build more social rented housing.
- Best if linked to training/employment for poor young people

Group 2:

- Build more affordable homes that meet people's needs. Housing is a human right not a driver for excessive profit.
- Invest in community housing, cooperative construction
- Present and future generations
- Planning condition; type of home; local not national developers

Group 3:

- What is the definition of affordable?
- Promotion of warm homes scheme
- Should help all areas of Scotland. Shortage of affordable housing everywhere
- Affordable also needs to include energy costs
- Could leverage a lot more £.
- Would invest £9 million

Group 4:

- Homes not seen as having an impact. Are the houses sold? Home ownership not a realistic option. What is "affordable" e.g. GCC some rents higher than private landlords'. Rents go up, running a home very stressful to deal with all the issues e.g. rent, Council Tax etc.
- Rent keeps going up, puts off work because can't afford rent through wages.
- Housing Associations – gave tenants option of how to pay rent, but those with Housing Benefit can pick the option that won't be suitable for those in work.

- Having too complex, very different for those on benefits to people in employment. It creates poor areas with people stuck in bad areas and can't afford to take work or to move. Housing Benefit system works against work.

Group 5:

- Who is building these homes? Job creation?
- 1,700 is too few homes! How would we prioritise?

Group 6:

- People already get Housing Benefit
- Recognition of huge pressures on social housing
- Also needs accessible homes for asylum seekers
- Lower housing costs will ease living costs
- People should have free homes
- Homelessness...

Group 7

- This is a long term necessity and there are not currently enough affordable homes.
- Important to consider rural areas here
- This is important as it reduces household costs
- Feel that already investing in this quite heavily

Group 8

- 'affordable' in the sense of to buy, or in the sense of social-rented.
- Both thought to be important.
- However, thought investment would take a long time to impact poverty, so weren't so sure about it as a priority.

Option 5: Free bus travel for young people

How much this would cost

£23 million – would provide free bus travel for all young people living in poverty

Who would this help?

- Young people

Notes from table discussions:

Group 1:

- No. Too hard to administrate. A good idea, but not our priority.

Group 2:

- Should be universal
- But who will get the money from subsidies (shareholders?)

Group 3:

- Risk is that it could be used a lot and putting more pressure on services
- Should be expanded to everyone on low incomes or accessing social security
- Would help young people who have lower social security entitlements and lower pay
- Transport very unaffordable, would particularly help women especially (especially parents).
- Would invest £13 million

Group 4:

- 5 year olds to 30 year olds should get free travel. Available to everyone in poverty, those on benefits and also low income workless. Need to avoid stigma – same bus pass as everyone else. Free travel would help people go into work.

Group 5:

- Free or cheaper travel for working age in poverty
- >60s concessionary travel, perhaps should be used for people in poverty instead.
- If 'young people' includes school-age children, this would help parents too.

Group 6:

- Fares are high – limits movement
- Should there be a poverty focus instead of targeting this at all young people?
- What age? Can kids travel without parents? All family?
- If a household is in poverty, it may not be the young person who needs free travel

Group 7:

- Questioned why young people?
- Would be difficult to administer and define eligibility

Group 8

- Supportive as would give access to jobs and training.
- But important that bus companies could not 'scam' the scheme (view that bus providers deliberately make some routes very expensive so as to be able to reclaim through concessionary fares scheme).

Option 6: Programme to help more disabled people get jobs

How much this would cost

£10 million – would help 5,000 people get a job

£5 million – would help 3,000 people get jobs

Who would this help?

- Disabled people

Notes from table discussions:

Group 1:

[No comments]

Group 2:

- What kind of jobs? What kind of salary? What kind of conditions?
- Should be funded from mainstream Budgets

Group 3:

- Figure wouldn't scratch the surface of what is needed.
- Assistive technology etc. all hugely expensive
- Needs to be personalised
- Giving money to wrong people to deliver employability services
- Is it agency or employers?
- Would invest £12 million

Group 4:

- Don't know many disabled so feel don't know enough about this. Suggest subsidies would help people.

Group 5:

- What actions are employers taking? Would this be focussed on the individual or on encouraging employers to take action?

Group 6:

There was instinctive support for this policy based on giving everyone a fair chance

Group 7

- Previous programmes like this have worked well
- There should be a law for each company to employ a certain number of people with disabilities
- Combine this with investments in individuals
- Provide support across the lifespan, not just young people

Option 7: Fund a local neighbourhood organisation to help people living in poverty by providing them with help and advice

How much this would cost

£1 million – would help people in one neighbourhood area

Who would this help?

- Everyone who lived in the area
- Potential to help more people if it is a success and is then used in other places

Notes from table discussions:

Group 1:

- Actually much less needed. £0.2 million per organisation.

Group 2:

- First put in place funding for social work/social care services.
- £1 million doesn't seem realistic! It is to be run by volunteers?

Group 3:

- Would help people access their rights but has to be in addition to other actions.
- £1 million would be a lot in local area.
- Would invest £7 million

Group 4:

- Already exists to some extent, this *does* work

Group 5:

[No comments]

Group 6:

- Income max services already exist in many places but concerns around a lack of resource for them.
- Other local services also exist – is this needed?
- What does this involve?
- Which neighbourhood?

Group 7:

- There are so many local services that it can be difficult to know where to go
- Needs to be person-centred
- Involving people with lived experience further up the chain

Option 8: Provide childcare to families

How much this would cost

£50 million would provide childcare for 15,000 childcare

£10 million would provide childcare for 3000 children

Who would this help?

- Families and children
- Women

Notes from table discussions:

Group 1:

- Already happening?
- £25 million for 0-3 year group

Group 2:

- Parents should be supported and allowed to raise their own children.
- Childcare staff need better wages and recognition of the importance of role.
- Would also help men and society more generally.
- Smash patriarchy

Group 3:

[No comments]

Group 4:

- Totally agree with this. As single parents can't go into work without childcare. Support this option.

Group 5:

- Would disproportionately help women, but not only women.
- Needs to be school-aged children and after school clubs, not just nurseries.
- This is a favourite option because childcare is needed to support routes into work.
- Would invest £50 million in this option.

Group 6:

- Accessibility of childcare big issue – needs to be available 6-8pm.
- Should it be free or subsidised? A feeling from some that parents should contribute.
- There are 250,000 people in poverty, this would only provide childcare for 15,000 children.

Group 7:

- This should be a priority.
- Allows both parents to work – need to also look at after school clubs
- 25 million invested

Group 8

- Supportive of this but also recognised that looking after children at home was a valid lifestyle choice

Other options developed by groups:

	Option A	Option B	Option C
Group 1	Invest in mental health prevention and treatment – particularly for children and young people. Invest in education. £100 million – 10,000 treatments. More people, if used for confidence building in schools Would help: - Young people - Everyone in the longer term - Families Would invest: £10 million	Wider Budget transition fund – modelling for future spend for mainstream Budgets Example: £10 million New model for criminal justice – restorative justice and rehabilitation. Would help: Largely poorer communities. Would invest: £25 million	Education for policy makers and civil servants provided by neighbourhood/community organisations Would help: - People in poverty, their organisations, - Policy makers and civil servants - Society Would invest: £5 million
Group 2	Let's review tax to make sure corporations aren't paying less (% wise) than people in poverty It would increase sense of fairness. It would provide more for "the poor"	End sanctions; end two child limit and benefit cap and universal credit What is it costing in human and economic costs? Would help all of us.	
Group 3	Invest in social care (will reduce strain on health service and help people in need) Would help people with disabilities.	Tackling private rented sector e.g. maximum ceiling on rent. Would help everyone on low incomes.	

	Would invest £6 million.	Would invest £9 million.	
Group 5	Spend more money on employment conditions = increased sustainability of employment. Insecure work a particular issue.	Make it easier for people to get solar power = reduce energy costs in the long term	Invest in social services – especially in areas of high deprivation. Targeted support. Ask social work if they had extra resources what would they do with it.
Group 6	Media project – challenging narratives. National advertising campaign, people in poverty, people not in poverty. Would invest £3 million		
Group 7	Economic development – this is what is needed rather than employment support programmes. Specific mention of rural areas and the issues around superfast broadband. Simple things like this can make a big difference £50 million	Early education – helps in the development of future skills £25 million	
Group 8	Free formula milk for families with children <1yr and in receipt of CB	Provision of free healthy/sporty after school activities	More breakfast clubs Better quality healthier free school meals

Summary:

Participants fed back to the room their decisions about how they would spend the imaginary £100 million. The key message that came back from the table discussions is that £100 million did not feel like enough to make the impact that participants wanted to make, especially if it was spent on cash benefits to increase household' incomes.

There were mixed views on employability option. Some groups were critical, arguing that helping people into jobs didn't necessarily mean that they would be good quality sustainable jobs, and others said that investing in childcare was a better use of funds than investing in employability programmes, as lack of affordable childcare is a key barrier to work, especially for women. Other groups were more positive and expressed support for employability focused policies if they are combined with policies to ensure decent work.

The affordable homes option received mixed feedback, but many were concerned about how affordable these homes would be for people in poverty, and who would be profiting from the investment.

Childcare was a popular option with many feeling that it was an important route into work, particularly for some of those more at risk of poverty (e.g. single parents, women). It was also felt to play an important role in improving outcomes for children.

There were lots of other ideas suggested, beyond the eight options suggested, but people felt it was hard to spend the imaginary resources on these options without having them costed.

Different groups took different approaches to spending the £100 million. Some pooled their resources on few options, and others opted to divide the Budget across all eight options. There was no single approach that emerged, except that option one – cash benefits for all in poverty – tended to be the least popular because of the small sums involved. Meanwhile, option 8, providing childcare attracted the most investment.

Some of the Budget decisions made by groups were as follows:

Group 2:

Option 2: Would invest £52 million

Option 4: would invest £25 million (but only if *social* housing as did not like the definition of affordable housing)

Option 5: Would invest £23 million

Group 3:

Option 1: Would invest £12 million

Option 2: Would invest £23 million

Option 3: Would invest £4 million

Option 4: Would invest £9 million

Option 5: Would invest £13 million

Option 6: Would invest £12 million

Option 7: Would invest £7 million

Option A: Would invest £6 million

Option B: Would invest £9 million

Group 4:

Option 3 and Option 8 – both most helpful to change lives.

Would invest $\frac{3}{4}$ on option 8 (£75m)

Would invest $\frac{1}{4}$ option 3 (£25m) – only if transitional support for in-work families bridge gap between ending benefits and pay starting.

Group 5:

Option 2: Would invest £50 million

Option 8: Would invest £50 million

Group 7:

Option 8: Would invest £25 million

New option on economic development: would invest £50 million

New option on early education: would invest £25 million

A number of participants fed back that the exercise had given them some insight into how difficult these decisions could be, and how different groups might prioritise different kinds of expenditure.

Group discussion 3: Open Government

The last group discussion of the day was designed to evaluate the day, thinking about what worked well, what worked less well and why. The purpose was also to gather participants' views on how the Budget process could be made more transparent and easier to engage with, and to explore how the Poverty and Inequality Commission could do to facilitate engagement in the Budget process in future.

Discussion questions:

Discussion questions 1: Evaluating the event

- What worked well today and what worked less well? Why?
 - How well pitched were the exercises?
 - Was the content easy to understand?
 - Did you wish you had more information? Less information?
- If we were going to do a similar event in future, what would you keep the same and what would you do differently?

Discussion questions 2: Budget transparency

- What more could the Government do to make the Budget a more transparent and accessible process for you and/or the people you work with?
- How could we reach a wider audience to engage in this topic?
- What else should the Government be considering in their Budget decisions?

Group 1

Discussion Question 1: Evaluating Event

What worked well?

- Good initial presentation to set scene.
- But some more detail would help develop understanding, including key changes in recent years
- Some common areas of priority emerged

What worked less well?

- Tried to squeeze too much in. overall was a bit ambitious
- Not enough understanding for informed discussion
- Discussion too technical – poverty is a political issue and need to discuss interests/power etc.
- Didn't discuss income / tax etc. – just spend

Do differently in future?

- Also discuss what/ who to stop spending on
- A hard and difficult discussion to order – learn from first attempt

Discussion Question 2: Budget Transparency

Need transparency, not just how much spent on X – but why? Who is able to shape spending decisions positively and negatively, who benefits?

Group 2

Discussion questions 1: Evaluating the event

- Presentations: There was good information given at the start and it was probably enough. Was sceptical about Fraser of Allander Institute but presentation was good

- Posters: Were good enough to inform. Would like this information to be available more widely – the public don't get told where the money goes and it is really hard to find it, particularly if not computer literate.
- Probably not enough time as only go to one, but got good discussion out of it.
- General: Discussions on table made me question previous understanding on how progressive Scotland actually is in practice.
- Would like materials sent out so they can be used elsewhere by participants

Discussion questions 2: Budget transparency

- Government structure is all too far away. Need much more organic and in touch local systems – more MSPs so there can be good dialogue and fewer constituents per MSP?
- Communication into the system is ineffective, disconnected and confusing.
- We'd like more input on the Scotland we want to be – it feels like it could be so much better.
- More events like this needed to educate – and more representatives of government needed. How can people be expected to feed in to community Budgeting etc. if they don't understand the context.

Group 3

Discussion questions 1: Evaluating the event

- First group exercise worked well but some topics missed due to structure
- By its nature the event was restricted by not considering how we could create more money to spend.
- Poster section quite confusing, took a while to get into.
- Difficult to hear, could have had more handouts
- Discussions in activity 2 were very good. For people with visual impairments, it would be helpful to have information in advance - helpful both ways: able to contribute more.
- Should hold in community-based, local venues – localised basis.
- Smaller tables preferable.

Discussion questions 2: Budget transparency

- Make the Budget into much more accessible form. Often seems deliberately obtuse – even MSPs don't understand it
- About language as well as format
- Need to consider how information is provided to different groups
- Community discussions to take place as part of Budget process
- People who have power over Budget process have to give it up.
- Can't get bogged down in numbers – have to seek to influence principles
- Government has to commit to taking evidence on board.
- Budget process not transparent – establish Budget panels like the Social Security experience panels.

Group 4:

[No notes available as group had to leave the event early]

Group 5:

Discussion questions 1: Evaluating the event

- Exercise 1 – needed more time for initial exercise. Ended up working individually rather than in groups.
- Not everyone got a chance to see the posters of most importance to them.
- Interesting to see what different parts of the Budget get.
- Second exercise showed how difficult Budget decisions are.
- Would like to see more information

- Would be valuable to be able to cost the wildcard options that people have come up with
- Would be interesting to look at who that money is going to, for example the salaries for managers and chief executives.
- Could have spent all morning on the first activity – could have extended the whole event.

Discussion questions 2: Budget transparency

- Some appetite for a series of events – skilling people to do this properly
- How could the Budget be made more transparent?
- Would like to know how much money there is to divvy up altogether and what that resource is spent on.
- Dedicated web page with accessible content like videos
- Billboards
- News – too political. Difficult to understand.
- Would be beneficial to have a webpage that details spending for specific public sector organisations so that can then fully call them to account at meetings, annual reviews or if writing to them or taking a public petition to Scottish Parliament petitions committee
- Social media campaign about the Budget to explain Budget expenditure
- Useful for people who are wanting to be involved with participatory Budgeting in their communities to be able to come to workshops such as this in order to be more knowledgeable.

Group 6:

Discussion questions 1: Evaluating the event

- Budget options and counters – good
- First session with walls did not work so well – mobility and numbers
- Good materials and facilitators supported good discussion
- Opening talks prepared us well for the workshops – but would have been good if scripts were provided to give figures etc. from people at the other end – even a case study
- Good balance of information
- Not clear on actions
- Felt a realistic model for participatory Budgeting

Discussion questions 2: Budget transparency

- When given an opportunity to engage, people will open eyes to the challenges of prioritising, realise it is easy to criticise
- Find out about other people's situations.
- Distance from decision makers to people's lives
- Community building role
- Media has a role to play in engaging the public in this.

Group 7

Discussion Question 1: Evaluating Event

What worked well

- The Boards activity was difficult to understand at first but made me think about things
- The activity was good and was really good to hear the feedback from other groups.

What did not work so well

Walls were confusing – not enough time to do it all, maybe there were too many

Do differently in future

- Invite people from the public sector to hear views. E.g. really important for them to hear stories like the woman who goes to Morrison's at 8pm to buy cheaper bread.
- Seeing the impact of this will be important

Discussion Question 2: Budget Transparency

Important the SG does not go the same way as local authorities in their participatory budgeting. "same suits, making the same decisions in the same ways. There is no transparency"

Summary and close

The Chair closed the event by highlighting some themes that had emerged from the days' discussions and reiterating that the outputs from the workshop would inform the Poverty and Inequality Commission's advice to Ministers.

Professor Chik Collins of the University of the West of Scotland offered some closing remarks:

This Policy Forum today has seen the meeting of four organisations in a novel constellation: the University of the West of Scotland which has a strong tradition of empowering the local community through teaching but also through research; Oxfam, who have brought their campaigning and policy experience; the Poverty Alliance, who have connected us with their networks of anti-poverty activists; and the Commission, who provide a direct route to policy makers, to inform what they could and should do with regards to the continuing – and, quite frankly, appalling – levels of poverty and inequality in Scotland.

When the Partnership first launched in 2012, our Policy Forums were about bringing together local grassroots and community groups with the aim to have them tell us what our research priorities should be. These events the rudder which guides the ship, if you like. Over the years there has been a shift away from this audience to a more academic and policy professional audience. These occasions offered other – and also very valuable – kinds of insights. But today it was good to see the Partnership go back to its roots, providing a platform for what seem to me more seldom-heard voices. I think this is something we should embrace and cultivate in the coming months and years.

Attendee list

X14 Delegates	No organisation/lived experience of poverty
X2 Delegates	Clydebank Community Resource Centre
X5 Delegates	One Parent Families Scotland
X3 Delegates	Poverty Alliance Community Activists Advisory Group
X3 Delegates	Citizens Advice
X6 Delegates	Other organisations such as HIS, Inverclyde Council, Energy Action Scotland, Inclusion Scotland, Tea in the Pot and PSOS

Staff and facilitators present on the day:

Douglas Hamilton	Commissioner - Poverty and Inequality Commission
David Eiser	Commissioner - Poverty and Inequality Commission
Katherine Myant	Poverty and Inequality Commission
Michelle Barr	Poverty and Inequality Commission
Chik Collins	University of the West of Scotland
Hartwig Pautz	University of the West of Scotland
Rhiannon Sims	Oxfam Scotland
Suzanne Crimin	Oxfam Scotland
Jamie Livingstone	Oxfam Scotland
Tanya Wisely	Oxfam Scotland
Neil Cowan	Poverty Alliance
Emma Congreve	Joseph Rowntree Foundation