Response from Scottish Borders CPC

1. **Whether you agree that statutory child poverty targets should be re-introduced for Scotland?**

   The re-introduction of the targets is supported. The framework of a legislative base should be, realistic, practical, achievable, and measureable, without the need for additional bureaucracy or additional administrative burdens if at all possible, using the readily available statistics and information that local Authorities/Health Board/Housing and Third Sector already record.

2. **The appropriateness and scope of the 4 proposed targets.**

   In general we support the appropriateness and scope of the targets. We would welcome further consideration of the issues raised below.

   (a) Who / which agency are the targets “geared” to apply or consider, in that the set targets need a greater degree of clarity.

   (b) The use of “jargon”, does not aid in the clarity of the approach and could lead to confusion.

   (c) Clearer expectations as to what LAs Health Boards etc., would be expected to provide.

   (d) Scenarios would be helpful to clarify any ambiguities in accompanying legislative guidance, would assist.

   (e) The “Poverty Legislation” not to be considered in isolation as it is in effect in application inextricably linked to the “Welfare Bill” and other Equalities Legislation.

   (f) A need to cross refer to the Welfare Reform Health Outcomes Focus Plan (2016)

3. **Whether interim targets are needed.**

   The use of “interim targets” in the overall approach is wise though the targets as previously state should be, realistic, practical, achievable and measureable, with clear guidance as to what is expected, should the targets not be met. Housing colleagues have asked that greater clarity is required as to the basis of expectations from the legislation.

   The idea of a 3-5 year, reporting cycle was considered to be an appropriate length of time, using where possible data being currently recorded.
4. The proposed arrangements for reporting progress towards meeting the targets and how best to hold the Scottish Government to account.

Reporting progress, and other reporting issues, would be best met in a 3/5 yearly term in order to plan and implement. The idea that from the SPICE Briefing that LAs and Health Boards should produce an action plan each year was considered problematic considering resources.

Holding the Scottish Government to account through information/trends gleaned, progress towards targets and transparency of the system might best be undertaken by an independent agency. (See also reply to question 7. Below.)

It is important that the Scottish Government undertook and published Equality Impact Assessments and Poverty Impact Assessments on their own legislation.

5. The responsibility placed on local councils and health boards to make local progress reports.

We feel this is achievable within a 3/5 year timescale


The 37 indicators as detailed in the Annex B of the Scottish Government Child Poverty Measurement Framework are felt to be too numerous and could be reduced.

The use of the “assessed progress” - arrow indicators, for publication of any report is considered a helpful tool.

It is important that there is a clear assessment of improved outcomes for Children and Young People, with clear positive destinations from the legislation.

7. Although not in this Bill, the Scottish Government has committed to establishing a national poverty and inequality commission. What should this commission’s status and powers be in relation to this Bill?

The CPC does not have a consensus view on this issue. Some members consider that a new commission was a necessity, where others feel that the need to have another “quango” did not meet the needs of the overall approach and Equalities and Poverty Reduction should be embedded in all Scottish Government departments.
8. **Any other issues you think are relevant to this Bill.**

Any legislation to deal with “Poverty should not sit in isolation and be clearly linked to the wider welfare agenda.”