Written evidence to the Inquiry into destitution, asylum and insecure immigration status in Scotland, conducted by the Equalities and Human Rights Committee of the Scottish Parliament

Scottish Refugee Council

1. Scottish Refugee Council is Scotland’s leading refugee rights charity. We work with women, men and children seeking, granted or refused refugee or international protection in Scotland, and:

- offer direct advice services to people seeking asylum and refugees;
- conduct detailed policy work, to influence policy makers in both Scotland and the UK and bring the issues that matter to those seeking refuge in Scotland to the fore;
- produce regular research, co-ordinating both in-house projects and collaborations with leading researchers in the field of asylum;
- support organisations in the community working with, or run by, refugees and asylum seekers, enabling them to have a voice at all levels in Scottish society;
- co-ordinate a variety of arts and cultural events throughout the year including the annual Refugee Festival Scotland celebrations in the summer;
- raise the profile of asylum in Scotland and UK through our communications work, which includes supporting asylum seekers and refugees to have a voice in the media; and
- organise a comprehensive programme of training events for those working with refugees, those with humanitarian protection status, and people seeking asylum.

Destitution is, fundamentally, about human rights not immigration

2. The destitution of those seeking, granted, or refused international protection or of those with insecure immigration status is, before anything else, a matter of human rights. Clearly immigration status is an important factor in destitution in the UK and in Scotland but it is not the only one. International, European and domestic human rights instruments (and their associated monitoring mechanisms) have frequently censured states including the UK, for rendering, inter alia, undocumented migrants or those without requisite legal status, into situations of destitution.

3. Destitution is a violation of the UN’s right to adequate housing. To have no safe shelter prevents the enjoyment of other socio-economic rights. If you are destitute, you are far likelier to be hungry and malnourished and trapped in severe poverty; to be unsafe and vulnerable to exploitation from ‘friends’ or organised crime groups; and to be condemned to suffer worsening mental and physical health. Destitution diminishes those put there. It corrodes dignity. And, if there are no practicable routes out of it, it reduces life to mere existence, at best. Plainly, it is the antitheses of human rights.

4. The UN Special Rapporteur on adequate housing as a component of the right to an adequate standard of living has stated that this right, inter alia, requires that the ‘provision of housing should not be denied to undocumented migrants; even they must be afforded a minimum level of housing assistance that ensures conditions consistent with human dignity’. (para.93, p23) The Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights, in pinpointing that human rights are interdependent, indivisible and interrelated, states that violation of the right to adequate housing affects the enjoyment of a wide range of other human rights. And, that denial of socio-economic rights, such as health or poverty, in turn undermines enjoyment of the right to adequate housing (section C, p9).

We recommend that anti-migrant destitution is embedded into Scotland’s national action plan on
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Destitution is severe, persistent and increasing in Scotland

5. Destitution is deeply harmful. To have no home means having no stability or certainty. Without safe and reliable accommodation and the means to meet essential living needs, people’s mental and physical health deteriorates enormously. Those rendered destitute have to rely on "friends" or charities or, at worst, persistent rough sleeping and are compelled by their predicament to make ‘survival decisions’ that actually are abusive relationships. This includes when women are forced by their predicaments into sexual exploitation ‘in exchange’ for accommodation, or when one is taken by organised criminals who cultivate psychological and financial dependency and exploit ruthlessly. All this causes immense human suffering and undermines community safety in the process.

6. The link between destitution and slavery and trafficking has been recently confirmed by the Independent Anti-Slavery Commissioner in the report he commissioned the homelessness charity, The Passage, to produce: ‘Understanding and responding to modern slavery in the homelessness sector’ (2017) found that ‘homeless people are at risk of being exploited when they are on the streets, and victims of modern slavery are at risk of becoming homeless if no long-term support is provided to them’. The report echoed aspects of the ground-breaking report, Destitution in the UK (2015), commissioned by the Joseph Rowntree Foundation, in terms of the deep vulnerabilities and lack of choice for those destitute, with this predicament compounded by immigration restrictions.

We recommend that the Scottish government commission research on the links between those destitute through asylum and other insecure immigration status with risks and experiences of exploitation including but not limited to that orchestrated by serious and organised crime groups.

7. One group at acute risk of suffering destitution is women, men and children refused asylum by the UK government and who are no longer entitled or practically able to access publicly-funded assistance. We will focus the rest of this short written evidence on the destitution of those seeking, granted and, in particular, those refused asylum. However, we welcome the committee’s recognition that the risk and reality of destitution is not at all confined to asylum. An increasing number of those with insecure immigration status are suffering destitution, such as women and children survivors of domestic abuse and this includes those from European Economic Area countries, or those not qualifying for access to public funds under the Destitution Domestic Violence concession.

8. The predicaments of destitute women, men and children in Scotland were captured in Trapped: destitution and asylum in Scotland (October 2012). From April 2015 to August 2016, the Destitute Asylum Seeker Service (DASS) has worked with 238 individuals. Over half of the men and women accessing DASS have mental or physical health diagnosis or concerns; 142 were either street homeless, "sofa-surfing", staying with "friends", or in a night-shelter; and one-third are women and two-thirds men. Refugee Survival Trust data from 2011/12 to 2015/16 confirm a steady rise in the number of destitution grants awarded to a predominantly young, male, single and homeless refused asylum seeking population: 485 grants (£31,889) in 2011/12 up to 877 grants (£58,000) in 2015/16. And, British Red Cross (BRC) reported in March 2017 that in 2016 it helped 820 destitute asylum seekers or refugees compared to 326 in 2014.
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**Destitution is built into the UK Government’s asylum system**

9. The risk and reality of destitution is there throughout the UK government’s asylum process. Unless a person is recognised by the Home Office as having particular vulnerabilities they must travel to Asylum Screening Unit in Croydon to enter the asylum procedure. This is despite the Home Office having an extensive network of local and regional offices – including in Glasgow – that will be more accessible for newly arrived destitute women, men and children to register their claim for protection. At best, individuals and families have their own means to make this journey. However, many rely on NGOs and charities, including Scottish Refugee Council, for grants to enable (we hope) safe travel. We suspect some prospective asylum applicants are subject to exploitation, including sexual, to fund travel to access to asylum process in Croydon. **We continue to recommend that local and regional access to the asylum procedure is restored to ensure safety and prevent destitution.**

10. Even after an asylum application is registered, there remains a risk of destitution. The Home Office through its contractor on asylum support – Migrant Help – will pursuant to s95 of the Immigration and Asylum Act 1999 assess whether an applicant is at imminent risk of or would be destitute unless supported by the Home Secretary. If the asylum support application is accepted, then the applicant will be provided under the Asylum Support Regulations 2000 (as amended) with very basic and low levels of financial assistance (£36 per week per adult, which amounts to only ½ of the social security equivalent provisions of income support and job seekers’ allowance as well as to accommodation on a ‘no-choice’ basis. This housing is typically at the lower end of the private rented sector. The Home Office’s outsourced delivery of this public service of housing was subject to severe and widespread criticisms by the Home Affairs Committee, in the report of its inquiry into asylum accommodation (2017), including criticisms of the service’s delivery in Scotland.

11. The greatest risk of destitution faces those who are refused asylum or other protection and who are appeal rights exhausted. Adults refused protection will have 21 days to leave their ‘asylum accommodation’ at which point they will lose any entitlement to financial assistance also. The current situation is slightly better for those who have a dependent (normally a child under 18 at the point of final refusal) as by dint of the dependent / child, they will remain entitled to stay in the accommodation, otherwise children would as a matter of UK policy be rendered destitute or be separated from their parent(s) or care-givers even though no child protection factors are in play. That automatic entitlement for refused asylum-seeking families, however, will be removed when the new and in our opinion, even more harsh asylum support provisions for those refused, through the Immigration Act 2016 take effect across the UK, most likely at the earliest from September 2017. **We recommend that the Scottish government consider the lawfulness of potential impact of these new asylum support arrangements for individuals and families refused asylum, particularly in terms of potential breaches of ECHR Convention rights that may arise from them, as well as in terms of the Home office possibly ‘stepping into the shoes’ of Scottish local authorities in making decisions under Scottish children’s legislation relating to ex-unaccompanied asylum seeking children’s entitlement to accommodation and financial assistance.**

12. For individuals refused asylum and appeal rights exhausted but who satisfy one of the criteria under s4 Immigration and Asylum Act 1999 (and the associated 2005 regulations) there is very limited subsistence assistance and accommodation provided. However, entry to s4 support is difficult as demonstrated recently in this case. There are five grounds for assistance with the two
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most common that one is trying to obtain the requisite travel document to facilitate departure from the UK but doesn’t have it and that one is unable to travel from the UK due to a physical impediment or for some other medical reason, which is the issue in the above case. Even if successful, this is very basic financial support. The key and stigmatising difference between s4 and s95 support is that s4 remains a cashless form of support with funds uploaded onto a payment card. A small number of refused asylum seeking families are on s4 support. This financial support is meant to cover ‘essential living needs’. It has been subject to successful legal challenges, albeit with limited impact on rates of support. There are new legal cases, in Birmingham and in Glasgow, ongoing. At best s4 prevents destitution but nothing more, leaving its recipients in severe poverty, to existence and ‘survival decisions’ rather than life and choice, and often in deepening social isolation and mental ill-health.

13. One of the other routes back into asylum support is when someone has been refused asylum but they are seeking to re-access the asylum procedure through submission of fresh representations. If these are rejected, then the applicant will almost certainly return to or be rendered destitute. However, if accepted by the Home Office, then they may amount to either a new asylum application (in which case they should be eligible for s95 basic subsistence and ‘asylum accommodation’) or in some cases to a rapid grant of refugee or some other form of protection. As mentioned in this joint written evidence, on average 15-20% of fresh claims ultimately provide a route to such protection. However, since January 2015, unless exceptional circumstances are deemed by the Home Office to apply, all prospective fresh representation applicants (who almost by definition are destitute and have been dispersed across the UK) can only re-access the asylum procedure by travelling and physically presenting their papers at the Home Office in Liverpool. For the same reasons that we critique the ‘Croydon-only’ requirement for new asylum applications we urge the UK government to restore local and regional access for those wishing to re-enter the asylum procedure.

14. And, quite perversely, the risk of destitution is real and persistent even for those granted refugee or other forms of international protection. Those recognised as requiring such status are required to vacate their ‘asylum accommodation’ after 28 days and access, inter alia, housing and social security. However, persistently and at very high levels, new refugees experience destitution between the expiration of the 28-day ‘move-on’ and accessing housing and other social policy entitlements in the UK and including in Scotland. So, for example, the evaluation of the Scottish Refugee Integration Service (2016) found that ‘the great majority of new refugees experience homelessness: 84% of refugees who accessed the service presented as homeless to the local authority when their asylum support ended’ as well as that ‘ongoing delays in initial access to benefits has meant that the 28 day ‘move-on’ period after refugee status is granted is clearly insufficient for most refugees to avoid destitution but make a transition to mainstream welfare support [and] … refugees experience acute periods of destitution and prolonged period of living on low income’ (p6).

Practically accessible advocacy service essential to prevent or less asylum destitution

15. Underlying this constant, acute risk of destitution and, indeed, compounding it, is the lack of awareness and, in particular, advocacy provision for a group of vulnerable people newly arrived or unfamiliar with where they are and how to get support. They will have little sources of social connections, many won’t have the requisite levels of English and for those seeking or refused protection especially, they will desperately need practically accessible, face-to-face and specialist help so they can start to access entitlements and make informed choices and, of course, access,
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navigate or re-access a bureaucratic asylum decision-making process. However, since April 2014, UK government-funded provision for asylum seekers has prohibited its contractor, Migrant Help, from providing any advocacy or practical evidence gathering assistance, with 1:1 face-to-face contact and outreach very rare. Scottish Refugee Council knows from 15 years of working with dispersed asylum seekers that what they really need are precisely those services that the UK government’s ‘advice on the asylum process’ and ‘financial asylum support’ contracts have removed. **We recommend that funding is developed in Scotland to invest in an asylum advocacy service that provides holistic interventions and early intervention to prevent or lessen, inter alia, the risk of destitution for asylum seekers in Scotland.**

16. It is our experience that what has replaced the pre-2014 advocacy model is a predominantly web-based and call-centre approach – ‘advice at a distance and no-advocacy’ – when what is essential for many women, men and children seeking protection, is ‘advice and advocacy close-up’ so to build a relationship with advisors who can provide real-time support and advocacy. Practically accessible advocacy not only has essential humanitarian benefits by preventing destitution by ensuring that UK and Scottish legislative entitlements are accessed, but in so doing such advocacy prevent far costlier crisis-need interventions later e.g. a NHS A&E or emergency psychological intervention or, as is frequently the case now, NGOs and the community and faith sectors stepping in to provide unfunded but essential crisis assistance. The work of the Scottish Refugee Integration Service, the **Family Key-work Service**, and the **Destitute Asylum Seekers Service** demonstrate the preventative and humanitarian benefits of practically accessible, real-time advocacy for those granted, seeking or refused protection. But with the exception of the Family Key-work Service (whose funding is uncertain beyond this month) none of these services are publicly funded or have long-term funding assurances. There is very little prospect of the UK government restoring advocacy despite specialist advocacy, for those seeking and refused asylum; this is despite such being a crystal clear way to, inter alia, prevent or significantly mitigate the risks of destitution.

**Dispersal and destitution can be prevented and mitigated through joined-up devolved services**

17. Given the risk of destitution is built into the asylum process itself, it follows that any dispersal of women, men and children to countries or local authority areas also, sadly, means the dispersal of potential destitution for the substantial numbers of those who are initially or completely refused refugee or other protection by the UK government. So, whilst dispersal of asylum seekers has in Scotland, been largely confined to Glasgow, the Home office are anxious to widen dispersal to other parts of Scotland, for the reasons set out in our written evidence to the Home affairs committee’s inquiry into asylum accommodation. Scottish Refugee Council is clear that any future widening asylum dispersal needs to proceed through the primary relationship between the Scottish and UK governments, as was intended when the dispersal scheme was created in the Immigration and Asylum Act 1999. This would reflect that nearly all of the services for the reception and integration of asylum seekers (and unaccompanied children) dispersed to Scotland are devolved to the competence of the Scottish parliament and ministers. These include legal aid and representation; health, including psychological trauma; regulation of housing; schools, colleges and universities; children’s and social work services; community planning; violence against women and girls; and justice. Then, community cohesion, which is affected by all the above competences and services.
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18. Scottish public authorities are funded by the Scottish government to deliver public services. The services they provide reflect the service and budget priorities agreed by the Scottish government and not the Home Office. These public bodies are accountable to Scottish ministers and the Scottish parliament. Asylum dispersal (and potential destitution) is a policy field where Scottish Ministers have some statutory and policy locus. This is evident through the locus for Scottish Ministers at s101(7) Immigration and Asylum Act 1999, the concordat (annex C), and in the sense that the competences for the reception and integration of those dispersed are, by and large, in the legislative or executive competence of the Scottish parliament and Scottish ministers. Scottish public authorities are ‘de facto’ impacted upon by any asylum dispersal (and potential destitution) in their areas or sectors. This has impacts on budgets. One impact is of course destitution. Some of the asylum seekers dispersed will be refused protection by the UK. They are at high risk of destitution. This risk will increase more when the asylum support changes in the Immigration Act 2016 take effect, affecting individuals and families and children. and which destitution may create particular risks towards if not prevented and mitigated effectively in Scotland. These conditions point towards the imperative of a cross-cutting Scottish strategy to mitigate and prevent migrant destitution.

19. Such a strategy should connect with other relevant policies: notably the ‘New Scots’ refugee integration strategy but also Scotland’s National Action Plan on human rights, Getting it Right for Every Child (GIRFEC), anti-trafficking and exploitation strategy, work on violence against women and girls, access to legal advice and aid, and homelessness and health strategies also, especially in terms of mental health. In particular, the recommended anti-migrant destitution strategy should draw upon the ‘trauma-informed care’ model with refugees developed by the NHS Glasgow Psychological Trauma Service (the ‘Anchor’ service). We recommend a cross-cutting anti-migrant destitution strategy. This can be the vehicle for Scotland filling its response gap on this, in relation to the destitution of those refused asylum and appeal rights exhausted as well as those with insecure immigration status.

Scotland’s response gap on destitution in asylum and insecure immigration status

20. One factor behind insecure immigration status is having a NRPF condition. These conditions apply to those refused asylum and appeal rights exhausted who no asylum support entitlement but who are fearful or unable to return to their country of origin and the human rights abuse or persecution or re-trafficking that may entail. They are categorised by the UK government as "over-stayers" with NRPF. Significantly, over the past three years around 15-20% have been recognised as needing protection after a fresh claim for asylum. Many others fall into despair living in destitution trapped between absolute poverty here or the same or worse in their country of origin.

21. It is important to note that NRPF derives its meaning only in terms of "public funds" in the Immigration Rules and from nowhere else. The Immigration Rules are the executive policy of the Home Secretary detailing the circumstances where leave to enter or remain in the UK will be conferred on a person subject to immigration control. The definition of "subject to immigration control" is set out at s115 (9) Immigration and Asylum Act 1999. It applies to persons that require leave to enter or remain in the UK but who do not have it and those with such leave but it is subject to a NRPF condition. As noted above, NRPF applies to those persons deemed as "subject to immigration control".
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22. **s115 (1) of the 1999 Act** sets out the public funds that persons "subject to immigration control" are excluded from receiving. This exclusion was extended by **Schedule 3 to the Nationality, Immigration and Asylum Act 2002**, with further restrictions being added to that Schedule since 2002, including for example the Scottish Welfare Fund in 2015. Through both s115 (1) and Schedule 3 those "subject to immigration control" have been denied entitlement to most social security benefits, local authority housing and homelessness assistance.

23. Nothing else, though, constitutes "public funds". Other monies derived from public expenditure and used to support those subject to immigration control are not a "public fund" within the meaning of the Immigration Rules or s115(1) in the 1999 Act or Schedule 3 to the 2002 Act. Immigration may be reserved to the competence of the UK parliament and ministers but much of the legislation and policies for those subject to NRPF are in the competence of the Scottish parliament and ministers, for example, social care, preventing and responding to violence against women, children’s services, and housing.

24. Furthermore, it is Scottish local authorities that are responsible for the administration and decision-making in NRPF cases. This is not only in respect of assessing whether an applicant has a NRPF condition or what their destitution, health and other needs are. Scottish local authorities must also act compatibly with the Human Rights Act 1998 and, in public administrative law terms, ensure that their decision-making must be reasonable, rational and proportionate and is not arbitrary but flows from an agreed policy or procedure.

25. Even if a person is subject to s115 (9) and therefore prohibited from accessing "public funds" set out via s115 (1) in the 1999 Act or through Schedule 3 to the 2002 legislation, Scottish local authorities must still ensure that any decision they make to withdraw or refuse support to a person does not breach Convention human rights, particularly Article 3: "prohibition on torture or inhuman or degrading treatment or punishment" or Article 8: "respect for private and family life". And, for EEA nationals and their family members that such a decision does not breach their rights under the European Community treaties.

Human rights assessments

26. In such cases, Scottish local authorities must have and then implement a human rights assessment procedure. This procedure reflects the proactive duties in human rights legislation, the purpose of which are to prevent the risk of breaches occurring. The human rights assessment may be undertaken in conjunction with or after other needs assessments but it must be done. If it is not done the local authority leaves itself vulnerable to a successful public administrative law challenge, most likely through a judicial review that a decision to withdraw or refuse support was irrational or disproportionate. A human rights assessment should also underscore other assessments, notably "child in need" assessments in cases where the NRPF condition applies to the parents in families.

27. Such "child in need assessments" should be done by local authorities pursuant to **s22 Children (Scotland) Act 1995** that they safeguard and promote the wellbeing of a "child in need" in their area. As s22 to a child is not a "public fund" it is a critical route to prevent destitution of children (and families) with NRPF conditions. Because the intent of s22 is to secure the best interests of the child.

This is in line with the UK government's obligations under the United Nations Convention on the
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Rights of the Child (UNCRC), in particular the four guiding principles of the convention. Unless safeguarding or care considerations suggest otherwise, s22 support and services - including accommodation - should be directed to keeping the child with and not separated from his or her family. Article 9 of the UNCRC states that children have the right to remain with their parents unless doing so would be harmful to them.

28. We would have grave concerns about any restrictive and potentially inappropriate interpretation of s22 that, as such, separates children from their parent(s), when there are no safeguarding or care reasons justifying that separation. We are aware of cases and recent media reports, for example refugee families told their children must go into care to get help that appear to document this apparent change in practice around s22. This may be a breach of the child’s rights under Article 9 of the UNCRC. In that press article, Phil Arnold, head of refugee services in Scotland for British Red Cross said:

"In our experience social services have used section 22 of the Children (Scotland) Act [1995] to provide accommodation and financial assistance to families as a unit in order to prevent the destitution of the children within the family. Recently, we have supported families to seek support from social services and families have been advised that the only type of support they were willing to provide was to take the children into care, despite there being no concerns about the care provided to the children by their parents."

29. A human rights assessment has been recognised by the courts as a legal document in NRPF cases. This is especially in cases of refused asylum seekers who by definition have claimed to have fled persecution in their countries of origin on Refugee Convention grounds but that claim has not been accepted by the UK government. A human rights assessment is necessary as the question of whether it is lawful in Convention human rights terms to return someone to their country of origin is inseparable, in NRPF/refused asylum cases, from the question of whether it is lawful to refuse or withdraw local authority support from them if that is the only source of publicly-funded assistance they have left open to them.

30. It is of course in the best interests of Scottish local authorities that their decisions are lawful. We suggest that decisions to withdraw or refuse support to an individual or family refused asylum and appeal rights exhausted with a NRPF condition and no other options for publicly-funded assistance, may not be lawful in so far as it is not backed up by a human rights assessment. Such an assessment must be reasoned and transparent in terms of why the individual or family (a) can avoid destitution by returning to their country of origin, (b) that there are no legal or practical barriers to return, and (c) if returned their human rights won’t be breached. If an assessment cannot justify a withdrawal or refusal, support should follow, as not to will probably breach certain Convention human rights.

Freedom of information requests to Scottish local authorities

31. In July 2016, requests were sent to Scotland’s 32 local authorities under the Freedom of Information (Scotland) Act 2002. The objective was to learn more about existing awareness, policy and procedure, and any statistics in Scottish councils around NRPF cases including the place of
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human rights assessments in these matters. 3 requests for information were made: (a) a copy of your policy or procedure on No Recourse to Public Funds (NRPF); (b) a copy of your policy or procedure for conducting human rights assessments for deciding whether to support persons’ subject to immigration control who have a NRPF condition; and (c) any statistics on numbers of applications made and decisions reached on these from persons’ subject to immigration control who have a NRPF condition, for year end March 2016?

32. To date, 30 of the local authorities answered the 3 questions and 2 have not yet responded. Of the 30 that have provided information by late 2016:

(a) None had a dedicated policy or procedure on NRPF but 3 were drafting them;
(b) 4 mentioned NRPF in certain policy areas and 1 had integrated it across the key areas;
(c) 1 local authority mentioned the CoSLA strategic migration partnership guidance (2012);
(d) None had an operational human rights assessment tool but 2 were drafting them;
(e) 1 stated it embedded human rights assessment into other needs assessment tools;
(f) 10 stated they had received applications from persons with a NRPF condition;
(g) Statistics provided was incomplete and it was difficult to draw conclusions from these.

33. These results indicate low awareness of NRPF and human rights assessments, limited policy and procedure, and a lack of robust statistics. In so far as these translate into practice, this may carry significant legal risk for local authorities, not to mention the women, men and children whose only source of support may be denied to them. The legal risk is public administrative law challenges to decisions, such as judicial review and / or on Convention human rights grounds in so far as decisions breach Article 3, Article 8 or Article 6.

34. Decisions to provide (or not) support to those with a NRPF condition could hardly be more significant: they may mean housing and protection or destitution and exploitation. It is in the interests of all parties, therefore, that decisions in NRPF cases in Scotland are made against a clear, well-understood and humane anti-destitution standard developed here in Scotland reflecting Scottish parliament legislation and Scottish ministers’ policy. These must include human rights assessment and be implemented by involving those personally affected and to promote consistently reasoned, transparent and therefore lawful decisions.

35. The guidance in Scotland is from CoSLA strategic migration partnership - Establishing migrants’ access to benefits and local authority services in Scotland (March 2012). We suggest that this is updated. One concern is that in its advice to local authorities on human rights assessment of whether to provide support or not in NRPF cases, it focuses on what no support would mean in terms of a human rights breach in the UK, and does not consider risks that may be faced if returned. The No Recourse to Public Funds Network in England - Practice guidance for local authorities assessing and supporting adults who have No Recourse to Public Funds (April 2016) - advises that assessing risk (and possible breaches) on return is integral to human rights assessments and to inform decisions on support.

36. The need for such a national NPRF standard and human rights assessment tool, ideally as part of the recommended Scottish strategy to prevent and mitigate migrant destitution has been given further impetus considering two recent developments, both of which may increase destitution of
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refused asylum seekers across Scotland. The first is the Home Office’s unprecedented drive to persuade (and if need be seeking to enforce) asylum dispersal on Scottish local authority areas; Glasgow being the only such dispersal area at present. The second is the impending asylum support regime referred to at different points of this submission, for individuals and families refused asylum, that is due to be introduced throughout the UK via Immigration Act 2016 regulations at the earliest, this September.

Scottish Refugee Council
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