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# Devometrics: How to Measure Decentralisation

## Objective and Subjective Approaches

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The logo for LGiU, consisting of the letters 'L', 'G', 'i', and 'U' in a bold, purple, sans-serif font. The 'i' is lowercase and has a dot above it.

## Introduction

As we discussed in our review paper for this project (Dardanelli and Wright 2021), the existing typologies and indices fall short of satisfactorily capturing the diversity and nuances of the UK's system of territorial governance. To make advances in this endeavour we need to develop measures that satisfy five main requirements highlighted by this review. First, the need to include both local, lower and upper tiers where present, and regional governments. Second, the need to differentiate between units within the same tier, as for example between (lower-tier) districts across the four constituent parts of the UK. Third, the importance of distinguishing between legislation and administration and aiming to measure as accurately as possible their relative weight in shaping policy outcomes. Fourth, the importance of assessing legislative and administrative control in individual policy areas, so as to capture variation across them. Last, but not least, the need to capture the de facto relations between tiers of governments, as distinct from the de jure formal rules supposed to govern them.

In this second paper, we discuss some of the issues we face in addressing these requirements and we propose possible ways of dealing with them, focussing on the policy sphere. We approach the task from two broad perspectives, objective and subjective, to which we devote the next two sections. In the concluding section we summarise our findings and identify potential avenues for further research.

## The objective approach

### ***Method***

What we refer to as the objective approach entails measuring decentralisation by assessing the distribution of powers across government tiers based on publicly available information such as legislation and secondary sources. This entails an assessment of each tier's ability to shape policy outcomes in a given field based on its formal powers. In education, for instance, to what extent are its various aspects such as teachers' pay and school curricula shaped by decision taken by local governments as opposed to central government? In carrying out this assessment, we face three main challenges.

The first challenge is how to classify the universe of public policy into discrete policy categories. Depending on how policies are classified, measures of decentralisation will be different, both for each category and in aggregate. To illustrate some possible choices and their consequences in terms of measurement, we have employed three classifications. The

first one classifies public policy into 11 broad categories: agriculture, culture and leisure, pre-tertiary education, tertiary education, environment, health, law, media, policing, transport, and welfare. Based on the UN and OECD classifications of the functions of government (OECD 2021; UN 2021), these categories are meant to capture the most important fields of public policy across all levels of government, including fields in which regional and local governments play little or no role.<sup>1</sup> The second classification, based on Ladner et al. (2019) and Sellers et al. (2020), focusses on the policy fields in which local governments play a significant role across OECD countries and includes seven categories: pre-tertiary education, health, housing, planning, policing, social services, and transport. The third classification is also focussed on the policy fields in which local governments play a significant role but is specifically tailored to the UK context. It includes 14 categories that are commonly employed to describe the policy responsibilities of local governments in the UK (e.g. Sandford 2020c): arts and recreation, pre-tertiary education, environmental health, fire and rescue, highways, housing, libraries, planning, policing, public health, social services, transport, waste collection, and waste disposal.

The second challenge is represented by the inherent complexity of public policy. This means that, however we classify public policy into distinct categories, any such category will of necessity encompass a range of aspects, each of which has a varying impact on policy outcomes and over which regional and local governments may have different degrees of control. The challenge this complexity presents to measurement efforts can be thought of as a trade-off. On the one hand, complexity could in principle be managed by breaking down each policy area into smaller components and sub-components so as to isolate different aspects and measure their ‘contribution’ to decentralisation as accurately as possible. Doing so, on the other hand, would require working with classification schemes including hundreds of categories, which would make them unwieldy and of limited practical use. Measurement of complex social reality is inevitably an exercise in the reduction of complexity hence measures are inevitably summary indicators. The trade-off is thus one between granularity and usefulness and good measures are those that balance the two effectively. We believe the classification schemes outlined above offer a reasonable balance between granularity and usefulness for our purposes.

The third challenge is how to weigh the role of legislation versus that of implementation in shaping policy outcomes. While legislation sets the fundamental parameters of a given policy, it may leave considerable discretion to local governments on how to implement it, thus allowing

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<sup>1</sup> We leave out fields such as defence and foreign affairs that are typically the exclusive prerogative of central government.

the latter to have a significant impact on the actual policy outcome. We have sought to gauge the implementation autonomy of local governments via a subjective approach, and we report our findings in the second part of this paper. To develop an index based on the objective approach, we have assumed that legislation accounts for two-thirds of a policy outcome and implementation accounts for the remaining third. The government level that holds law-making powers is thus able to shape 67% of a policy outcome and the government level/s responsible for implementation shape/s 33%. Table 1 in appendix 1 details the measurement scheme.

To measure decentralisation across levels, we have adopted a 1-4 weighting system whereby the lowest level – e.g. district/borough councils in England – has a weighting of 4 and the highest level – i.e. the UK government – is weighted 1. We weighted the Welsh, Scottish and Northern Irish governments 2. County councils, the Greater London Authority (GLA) and the Greater Manchester Combined Authority (GMCA)<sup>2</sup> are weighted 3 (Table 2). The greater the role played by lower levels in shaping policy outcomes, the higher the score, hence the more decentralised a given policy is. The index ranges from 0-1, where 0 represent a structure where all legislative and administrative powers are concentrated at the central level and 1 represents a structure where all legislative powers are in the hands of regional governments and all administrative powers are exercised by the lowest tier of local government.<sup>3</sup> Appendix 2 details the scoring of each policy category in each type of government structure.

The individual policy measures obtained can then be further analysed from at least two perspectives. From the perspective of aggregate measures, they can be averaged to obtain a single score for policy decentralisation in each of the seven main types of government structures in the UK. From the perspective of disaggregation and more fine-grained assessment, they can be ‘unpacked’ to analyse the nature of the vertical distribution of powers. A key aspect in this respect is whether a policy is ‘regionalised’ as opposed to ‘localised’. A regionalised policy is one in which power is concentrated at the regional level – i.e. for our purposes, the Scottish, Welsh or Northern Irish governments – whereas a policy can be deemed to be localised if the lowest level plays the main implementation role.

## ***Results***

Tables 3-5 in appendix 1 report the measures obtained by applying the measurement scheme outlined above. Using the first set of policy categories (Policies 1, Table 3) and looking at the

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<sup>2</sup> We include the GMCA as an example of a combined authority but we recognise that it is not fully representative of all combined authorities, given that each of them has its distinct set of powers (Sandford 2019a, 2019b).

<sup>3</sup> The index scores are obtained by normalising the original scores ranging from 150-400.

aggregate scores first, the most centralised government structure, with a score of 0.12, is England 1, i.e. the areas governed at the local level by county and district councils. The low score reflects the fact that county councils have significant powers in these areas, leaving relatively few policy responsibilities under the control of the lowest level. At the other hand of the scale, Scotland is the most decentralised area of the UK, with a score of 0.61. This primarily reflects the extensive law-making powers of the Scottish parliament rather than higher autonomy of the Scottish councils, which appear to be weaker than some of their counterparts elsewhere in the UK. This is particularly the case in Wales, whose overall score, 0.48, is lower than Scotland's primarily due to the Welsh government's lack of law-making powers in justice, media and policing. The Welsh councils themselves, often enjoy more autonomy than their Scottish counterparts, leading to policies such as pre-tertiary education and health scoring as being more decentralised in the former than in the latter. Northern Ireland presents an opposite picture. Its overall score of 0.55, the second highest among the seven types of government structure, reflects the extensive law-making powers of the Northern Ireland Assembly whereas its local councils are the weakest in the UK. On these measures, the three other English structures all score 0.18 but with some notable variation across policy categories, reflecting for instance the fact that the GLA and the GMCA have control over policing<sup>4</sup>, but also that the unitary authorities exercise a wide range of powers at the lowest level of government.

Moving to the second set of policy categories (Policies 2, Table 4), we find the above patterns broadly confirmed but with some significant differences. Most prominently, Wales scores as being more decentralised than Northern Ireland. This is due to the wider administrative powers Welsh councils enjoy across these policy categories compared to the Northern Irish councils, which outweigh the greater legislative and administrative powers in the fields of policing and transport the NI regional institutions have vis-à-vis their Welsh counterparts. Reflecting the generally higher autonomy of the Welsh councils compared to the Scottish councils, Wales scores as being more decentralised than Scotland in most policy fields. It is only Scotland's control over policing that tilts the balance in its favour as the most decentralised area of the UK. The three English structures that had the same aggregate score for the first set of policies now display different scores, with London and Manchester scoring as more decentralised than the areas governed by unitary authorities. This primarily reflects their upper-tier institutions' control over policing and greater powers in the field of transport. Manchester also scores as marginally more decentralised than London, due to the GMCA's powers in the field of health

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<sup>4</sup> As discussed below, we have coded policing as being under central government control in England 1, England 4, and Wales.

and the fact that the Manchester councils have greater powers in planning than the London councils.

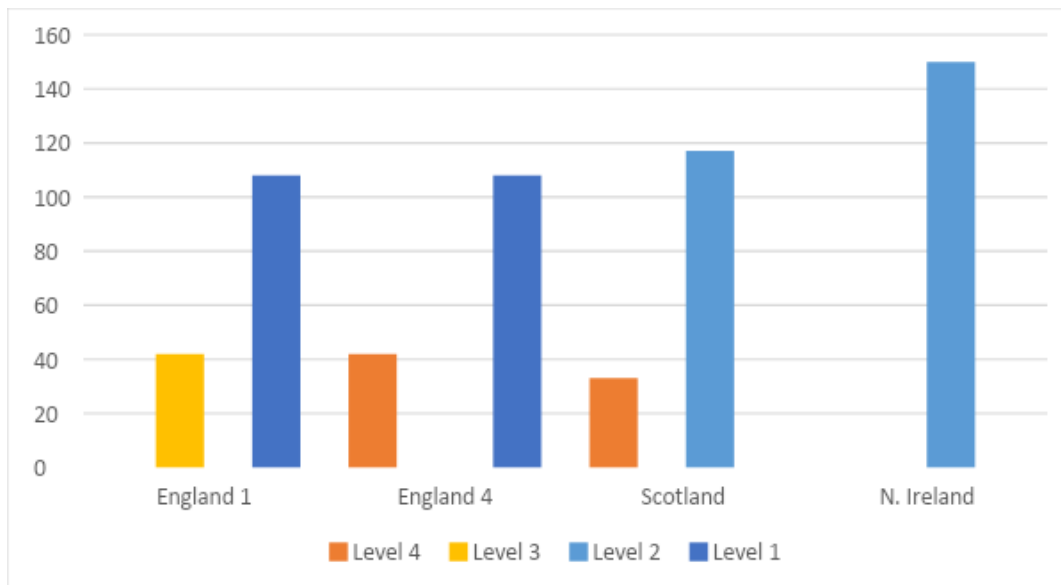
Results for the third set of policies (Policies 3, Table 5) broadly confirm the patterns already observed but, once again, with a degree of noteworthy variation. On the aggregate score, Wales now shows as being level with Scotland as the most decentralised area of the UK. Given the wider range of policy categories, Scotland's marked 'advantage' in policing is compensated by Wales's higher score in fields including education, highways, housing, planning, public health and social services. London now scores as being marginally more decentralised than Manchester, primarily due to the GLA's greater powers in highways and the London councils' greater control over waste disposal.

## ***Discussion***

The 'objective' method we developed appears to deliver results that go some way towards meeting most of the requirements for satisfactory measures of decentralisation we identified at the outset. The method produces individual and aggregate measures that factor in the role of all significant levels of government, both local and regional. It thus captures not only the presence/absence of regional governments and upper-tier local governments but also their different nature. By so doing, it is able to differentiate between, for instance, regional government in Wales and in Northern Ireland, and between county councils in 'England 1' areas versus combined authorities in 'England 3' areas, as well as both of the latter two versus the 'England 4' areas governed by single-tier local governments. The resulting individual and aggregate scores illustrate how much decentralisation varies across different areas of the UK, something that existing indices, which assign to the UK a single score, do not capture. The method also allows us to differentiate between different forms of devolution, particularly the distinction between the devolution of primary law-making powers to the Scottish, Welsh and Northern Irish regional governments, on one side, and the devolution of administrative powers to upper-tier local governments such as the LGA and the combined authorities, on the other. Lastly, the method offers a 'modular' approach to the measurement of decentralisation, yielding indicators of different granularity, from individual policy areas at each level of government to highly aggregate measures across policies and levels. Beyond offering a range of measures of various granularity, this modular approach also enables us to identify distinct models of decentralisation. Northern Ireland thus emerges as a clear example of a 'regionalised' model, where the presence of a powerful regional government and weak local governments concentrates power at the regional level. 'England 4', by contrast, stands out as the opposite, or 'localised', model, characterised as it is by the existence of only two levels of government, where central government monopolises primary law-making powers and a single

tier of local governments controls all decentralised administration. Figure 1 below illustrates the different patterns of distribution of powers using the example of social services.

Figure 1 – Distribution of powers in social services in four areas of the UK



Note: level 4 = lower- or single-tier local governments; level 3 = upper-tier local governments; level 2 = regional governments; level 1 = central government.

While the method, as we have outlined, appears to offer several advantages, it is not, inevitably, free of limitations. Some of them could arguably be overcome by developing the method further and expanding the scope of the measurement exercise. Others are more inherent in the nature of the method, hence would require the latter to be supplemented by other methods for them to be overcome. Four are particularly worth mentioning. The first, and most obvious, is that the index we have developed only measures decentralisation in the policy sphere, hence it only paints a partial picture of decentralisation in its different dimensions. Developing integrated indices for the institutional and fiscal spheres would be the next steps in developing the method. A second, and related, limitation is that, by not including fiscal indicators, the index does not fully capture the extent to which higher levels of government are able to constrain the policy autonomy of lower levels through fiscal instruments. Third, because the index only includes the main tiers of regional and local governments, it does not effectively capture the role played by bodies such as police commissioners and fire and rescue services when these operate outside the main structure of sub-central government, such as in the ‘England 1’ and ‘England 4’ areas. In these cases, we have classified policing and fire and rescue as fully controlled by central government, which arguably does not reflect the



reality on the ground entirely satisfactorily. Lastly, based as it is on the formal powers regional and local governments have, the method is not well suited to capture the autonomy of individual governments when powers are exercised in partnerships with other authorities and/or non-governmental bodies. While the first and the third of these limitations could be overcome by extending the index to include the institutional and fiscal spheres as well as 'intermediate' bodies such as police commissioners, the second and the fourth are arguably more intrinsic to the objective approach on which the index is based. Overcoming them essentially calls for assessing the de facto autonomy sub-central governments have beyond their de jure powers. To do so we need to supplement the objective approach with a subjective one. The following section outlines how we employed such as an approach in this pilot study.

## The subjective approach

### *Method*

A total of ten interviews were conducted between July and November 2021. Most interviewees were at the time of writing serving chief executives of local authorities while others held a senior position at the level immediately below that of the chief executive. Additionally, two interviewees performed a senior role in the Society of Local Authority Chief Executives (SOLACE) and the Northern Ireland Local Government Association (NILGA). Collectively the group had current or past experience at a senior level in English, Scottish and Northern Irish unitary authorities, English county and district councils, and English metropolitan and London boroughs.

All interviewees were assured that they would not be identified by name in any publication using the information collected. Interviewees were asked a series of mainly open-ended questions starting with being asked to give an overall assessment of the extent of policy autonomy exercised by all local authorities where they had worked in a senior role. They were then asked to describe the nature of the constraints local authorities operate within, such as whether they were of a financial or legislative nature, and whether they emanated from Westminster/Whitehall, from other local authorities or, in the case of Scotland and Northern Ireland, from the relevant regional government. Interviewees were then asked to give an assessment of the relative policy autonomy exercised in the specific areas of Education, Libraries, Environment, Planning, Social Care and Transport. They were asked to highlight any examples of a local authority exercising policy autonomy to positive effect. They were also asked to give an assessment of the effect changes in political control have on policy, the rationale behind that line of questioning being that if local authorities are severely constrained

in their policy autonomy then it would matter little which political faction controlled the council. Finally, interviewees were asked to give their view as to how they see the power of different local authorities developing in the future.

These qualitative data were then organised in the form of a SWOT analysis of the type commonly used as tool of analysis in a variety of disciplines (Madsen 2016). This enabled an assessment to be made as to the areas in which different types of local authority were strong or weak in terms of policy autonomy, where there exist opportunities to exercise more discretion and where there exist threats to future policy autonomy.

## ***Strengths***

All interviewees felt that every local authority type in England and Scotland possesses a substantial degree of policy discretion in at least some policy areas. Those with knowledge of Northern Ireland local authorities, however, painted a different picture, conveying the impression that local government in that part of the UK is weak in terms of influence on policy outcomes.

Perhaps the most important area of strength related to power over planning applications. Several interviewees highlighted the fact that power over planning is not only important in itself but is important because it allows local authorities to influence policy outcomes in almost any area of policy. This influence is exercised via powers that can be described using the umbrella term 'developer contribution'. These allow local authorities to demand from developers something in return for granting planning permissions. This may be in the form of the local authority levying charges on the developer, but it can also involve the developer being asked to assist with job creation, the building of infrastructure or the provision of education in the local authority area. In England and Wales this power is exercised under section 106 of the 1990 Town and Country Planning Act, while more or less equivalent powers exist in Scotland. As alluded to above, the situation in Northern Ireland is different and will be discussed in the next section.

One interviewee from a London borough highlighted a case where the local authority had obliged a developer to create a mobile construction skills training centre in conjunction with local colleges to address a chronic shortage of skills in the locality. Several interviewees from England (Interviews 3, 7 and 10) emphasised the importance of Section 106 powers, with one stating that the legislation "...gives you the strength to insist on a certain policy direction and gives you a strong negotiating and bargaining position with what are big multi-national organisations" (Interview 7). The same interviewee went on to argue that not enough local

authorities exploit that particular tool. An interviewee from a district council in SE England highlighted the ongoing Thames Gateway Project as an example of how local authorities that have power over planning have in the past, and will in the future, influence policy outcomes via this mechanism (Interview 3).

Another area in which there was a consensus among interviewees that local authorities are able to exercise power over policy is by pursuing an independent borrowing and investment strategy. This allows a local authority to partially free itself from financial constraints on its power to deliver policy outcomes. An interviewee from a Scottish local authority highlighted how the council had issued bonds on the London Stock Exchange to finance capital investment programmes (Interview 1). One senior figure in a London borough council, while citing economic development as being an area where local authorities have a substantial degree of policy autonomy but do not receive statutory funding from central government, pointed out that councils have the capacity to address this problem via seeking investment from outside government (Interview 7).

In addition to planning, another area in which there was widespread agreement that local authorities of all types have a substantial level of discretion is that of libraries (although NI councils were once again an exception). An interviewee from a Scottish council argued that if a local authority wanted to close half of the libraries in its area it could do precisely that (Interview 1), while a senior figure in SOLACE stated that in England, Scotland and Wales councils have "almost complete power" in that policy area (Interview 2).

Answers to the question on the impact political control has on the policies pursued by local authorities were unanimous in stating that it does have a significant effect on policy outcomes. Two Scottish interviewees argued that whether the SNP were in opposition in a council or not affected the extent to which the council was willing to co-operate with initiatives from the SNP administration in Holyrood. Non-SNP councils were more likely to resist what many see as the Scottish Government's centralising agenda, something that we further discuss below (Interviews 1 and 4).

Opinion was however divided on the extent to which the pro/anti-Scottish independence divide impacted upon where Scottish local authorities tended to look for extra funding. One interviewee argued that authorities controlled by unionist parties were more likely than those where the SNP forms part of the administration to look to Westminster for financial assistance (Interview 1), while another stated that "if there is money available, we are going to grab it with both hands" and "we are agnostic where the money is coming from" (Interview 9).

## ***Weaknesses***

The weaknesses of local authority policy autonomy in the UK are most pronounced in the case of Northern Ireland councils. A senior figure in NILGA described the situation as being one of a "parent and child" relationship between the UK government department, the Northern Ireland Office/Executive, and the Northern Irish local authorities. The 2014 Northern Ireland Local Government Act did not confer a comparable level of autonomy on NI councils to that held by councils on the UK mainland. The interviewee argued that this was due to the fragility of the devolved institutions in NI with the assembly having been frequently suspended in recent decades, and a mistrust and misunderstanding of local government in the province on the part of the NI civil service. NI councils largely have no control at all over social care, education, transport, planning or libraries while environment policy has a heavy input from the Northern Ireland Assembly (Interview 8).

The practical effect of this lack of influence is to create a type of policy inertia where there is no local enabler, nobody working close to local communities to facilitate policy action. The same source cited an example where Belfast City Council wanted to introduce city-wide broadband using street lighting infrastructure. The local authority had to seek permission from the Northern Ireland Office to pursue this policy but had to wait three months before it received even an acknowledgment of its request.

Several interviewees with knowledge of Scottish local authorities put forward the view that devolution had led to a reduction in the level of their policy autonomy. Devolution swept up powers previously held by local authorities and granted them to the Scottish Parliament. Whereas councils had previously had control over two thirds of their budget they now have control over only one third (Interview 1). The power Holyrood has to grant listed status to particular buildings was cited by the source as an example of how the devolved government could restrict policy autonomy, decisions on listed status often having the effect of preventing local planning authorities from approving particular developments (Interview 1). The same source argued that in general Holyrood was a more significant constraint on the power of Scottish local authorities than Westminster.

Several interviewees cited the ring fencing of funding from government at UK or devolved level as a significant constraint on the policy discretion of local authorities. One interviewee from Scotland cited funding from the Scottish Government earmarked for employing a specific number of teachers as an example of this. The source cited the example of his own local

authority where there was cross party agreement that the school curriculum could be enhanced by employing fewer teachers. The preferred policy of the local authority would involve teaching some subjects at a smaller number of sites in the local authority area and having students either travel to one of those locations or join the class online. The local authority was in effect prevented from realising the financial benefits of this policy as a result of restrictions imposed by Holyrood (Interview 9).

This type of ring fencing was also cited as a common feature of additional funding granted to local authorities by Westminster in the form of city deals whereby local authorities can submit plans aimed at increasing economic growth in their area in the hope of being granted funding to support those plans (Ward 2020: 5). While local authorities are consulted during the process of setting up this type of deals the final say on precisely what projects should receive money is in the hands of the UK government (Interview 4).

Social care and education were particularly cited as policy areas in which local authorities have limited freedom of action. Despite the fact that social care accounts for around two thirds of the budget of many local authorities, policy autonomy is constrained by extensive statutory regulation and a high degree of policy direction from the centre (Interview 7).

Regarding education it was generally made clear that there is a difference in the level of policy autonomy afforded to Scottish and English councils. In England successive structural reforms implemented from Westminster in recent decades culminating in academisation have dramatically reduced the influence of Local Education Authorities (Interview 5). Policy autonomy is also significantly reduced by the existence of the National Curriculum, the content of which is decided at Westminster level, and other initiatives by the UK government (Interview 7). In contrast, Scottish LEAs retain more power than their English counterparts (Interview 4).

## ***Opportunities***

As discussed above, one of the main areas in which UK local authorities have scope to influence policy outcomes is via the planning process. This provides scope for authorities to both raise additional revenue alongside that raised via council tax and that received from central government. The developer contribution system also enables authorities to influence outcomes in almost any policy area. One interviewee with experience of Scottish island councils highlighted a policy from the pre-devolution era where a developer built on land compulsorily purchased by the local authority who were then able to insist on receiving regular payments in the form of rent and other levies once the development was complete (Interview 1).

One interviewee cited the scope for co-operation between different local authorities as being an opportunity for them to exert influence on central government and deliver policy outcomes (Interview 6). In general, the aspects of local authority power mentioned in the 'strengths' section were cited by interviewees as representing possible future opportunities.

A specific opportunity that several interviewees from Scotland cited was the current desire of the UK government to supply funding directly to Scottish local authorities without the involvement of Holyrood, characterised by one interviewee as the "UK government trying to be our friend" (Interview 9). A recurring theme among Scottish interviewees was the importance the question of Scottish independence has to the current conduct of local government in Scotland. Westminster and Holyrood appear to be competing with one another to be seen as the body delivering the most significant investment in Scottish localities. One interviewee with experience of local government in England as well as Scotland described how negotiations to deliver a city deal for one Scottish city took far longer than the comparable process in an English unitary authority because London and Holyrood both wanted to be seen as the source of most of the money. Projects in particular policy areas were included in the overall deal solely to ensure an equal balance of funding between central and devolved government (Interview 4).

The current weakness of local government in Northern Ireland led one interviewee to argue that almost any reform of local government in the province would represent an opportunity. It could scarcely make local authorities weaker, so would be more likely to make them stronger (Interview 8). In that example the future of local government policy autonomy lies largely in the hands of higher-level governments – i.e. either UK or Scottish/Welsh/Northern Irish – and it is from those sources that the possible threats to local government discussed in the next section largely emanate.

## ***Threats***

One interviewee with experience of both English and Scottish authorities argued that the policy autonomy of local government largely depends on how it is perceived by higher-level governments. They cited the Blair government as being one that was keen to involve local government in setting national policy priorities, whereas subsequent Conservative administrations were more interested in directing local authorities. They went on to argue that while the current SNP administration at Holyrood is not quite in the latter category, it gets very close to it (Interview 4). This view of Holyrood as being a threat to the autonomy of Scottish councils was a universal theme in interviews with all those with experience of local government in that part of the UK

Plans for a national care service for Scotland and centralisation of education provision were cited as examples of Holyrood seeking to diminish the role of Scottish local authorities. The same interviewee was of the view that the SNP administration was trying to cover up its true intentions by using the rhetoric of local empowerment alongside policy initiatives that do not merit that description. The interviewee spoke of the Scottish government "bypassing local government and handing out sweeties to local community groups". This characterisation referred to small scale initiatives funded by money the community group in question was already in a position to apply for (Interview 1).

Another Scottish interviewee backed up this view stating that with these initiatives and the frequent ring fencing of Holyrood funding "we risk becoming agents of the [Scottish] government" and that the "tentacles of the Scottish government are all over us" (Interview 9). Another Scottish interviewer recounted how on one occasion a senior figure in the Holyrood government had attempted to influence the appointment of a new director of education for the local authority (Interview 4).

Interviewees from all parts of the UK agreed that the policy discretion of local authorities was in no small part determined by decisions taken at central or devolved level. However only when interviewees addressed the situation in Scotland did, they convey some sense of a developing existential crisis. The widespread perception was of a currently dominant administration at Holyrood wanting to largely emasculate local government.

## *Discussion*

The findings detailed here indicate several strengths of the subjective approach to measuring decentralisation and illustrate how they complement the findings yielded by the objective approach. Some of these findings confirm the patterns emerging from the index, notably the heavily 'regionalised' nature of Northern Ireland and the existence of pressures in the same direction in Scotland. Others, such as the high degree of councils' autonomy in the field of libraries suggest that legislation may shape policy outcomes to a greater extent in some sectors than in others, calling for greater sensitivity to variation across policies. Yet others reveal important aspects not detected by the objective approach. The policy autonomy afforded by the developer contribution system, in particular, underscores the importance of assessing de facto autonomy based on practitioners' perspective of their real margin for manoeuvre, which may cut cross the boundaries between distinct policy fields.

This has also implications for how we measure the autonomy of upper- and lower-tier local governments in 'England 1' areas. While, from an objective perspective, the counties appear



to possess more significant powers by virtue of their role in education and social care (as well as transport), these are fields in which interviewees tended to emphasise how constrained councils are rather than how much autonomy they can exercise. By contrast, districts' ability to exploit the developer contribution system, as outlined above, grants them more significant autonomy than may appear from an objective approach.

The extent to which councils can use planning to pursue wider policy objectives deserves further research. A significant aspect, in particular, is what factors influence their relative ability to utilise policy tools that at least one interviewee felt were currently under used. It would be legitimate to expect some areas to be of more interest to developers than others with local authorities in the more desirable areas consequently having more scope to influence policy outcomes in this way. It may well be noteworthy that of the three examples of successful use of the developer contribution system highlighted in this investigation two were in London and the surrounding area while the other was in a part of Scotland that benefits from being close to the North Sea oil fields. The possibility that there may be some territorial variation in the relative usefulness of the policy tools related to planning points to the need to be sensitive to potential asymmetries in de facto autonomy. By employing a subjective approach, we are better able to factor in such asymmetries in our measurement.

Responses from Scotland also suggest interesting decentralisation dynamics across the state, regional, and local levels. Devolution shifted powers down from the state to the regional level, but, according to our interviewees, the Scottish government appears intent on centralising powers up from the local level, leading to a heavily 'regionalised' structure closer to the Northern Irish situation. On the other hand, the emerging pattern involving Westminster and Holyrood seeking to influence the Scottish independence debate by competing to be seen as the most generous benefactor to local councils may offer the latter a way of resisting such centralising drive. The degree to which the SNP administration in Holyrood really is as hostile to local autonomy as suggested, and, if so, why this is the case, as well as the significance of direct UK-Scottish councils relations merit further investigation.

## Conclusion

In this paper we have explored complementary approaches to the measurement of decentralisation across policy fields and areas of the UK. Employing an objective approach based on publicly available information on formal powers we have developed an integrated index of policy decentralisation for seven areas of the UK characterised by different types of vertical government structure. The index is able successfully to capture important dimensions of policy decentralisation as well as differences across government structures. It is



nonetheless limited in its ability to gauge the de facto autonomy local government possess given its emphasis on formal powers in the face of complex realities on the ground. To overcome some of these limitations, we have supplemented the index with a series of interviews with senior policy makers in local government, who have provided a subjective perspective on the actual policy autonomy their authorities are able to exercise. Combining the two approaches thus appears to offer the best prospect of reaping the benefits of quantification while being sensitive to the nuances of multi-faceted social processes. Further development of these approaches along the lines we have sketched in this paper appears to offer the most promising rewards in advancing the measurement of decentralisation and by so doing enhancing our understanding of how best to govern a country's territory.

### Acknowledgements

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## Appendix 1 – Index

**Table 1 – Measurement scheme**

Legislation		Administration
100	Full powers	50
83	Major powers	42
67	Substantial powers	33
50	Significant powers	25
33	Modest powers	17
17	Minor powers	8
0	No powers	0

**Table 2 – Types of vertical government structure**

England 1	England 2	England 3	England 4	Wales	Scotland	N. Ireland	Weighting
UK govt	UK govt	UK govt	UK govt	UK govt	UK govt	UK govt	1
				Welsh govt	Scottish govt	NI govt	2
Counties	GLA	GMCA					3
Districts	Boroughs	Boroughs	Unitary auth.	Councils	Councils	Councils	4

**Table 3 – Policies 1**

	<b>P1.1</b>	<b>P1.2</b>	<b>P1.3</b>	<b>P1.4</b>	<b>P1.5</b>	<b>P1.6</b>	<b>P1.7</b>	<b>P1.8</b>	<b>P1.9</b>	<b>P1.10</b>	<b>P1.11</b>	Mean
<b>England 1</b>	0	0.34	0.34	0	0.23	0.16	0	0	0	0.14	0.14	<b>0.12</b>
<b>England 2</b>	0	0.36	0.34	0	0.46	0.16	0	0	0.40	0.36	0.20	<b>0.18</b>
<b>England 3</b>	0	0.40	0.50	0.06	0.27	0.23	0	0	0.40	0.36	0.20	<b>0.18</b>
<b>England 4</b>	0	0.40	0.50	0	0.40	0.10	0	0	0	0.20	0.20	<b>0.18</b>
<b>Wales</b>	0.50	0.70	0.94	0.60	0.80	0.60	0	0	0	0.60	0.54	<b>0.48</b>
<b>Scotland</b>	0.60	0.70	0.86	0.60	0.80	0.53	0.50	0.20	0.60	0.67	0.60	<b>0.61</b>
<b>N. Ireland</b>	0.60	0.70	0.60	0.60	0.80	0.60	0.50	0.20	0.60	0.50	0.40	<b>0.55</b>

Note: P1.1: Agriculture; P1.2: Culture & leisure; P1.3: Pre-tertiary education; P1.4: Tertiary education; P1.5: Environment; P1.6: Health; P1.7: Justice; P1.8: Media; P1.9: Policing; P1.10: Transport, P1.11: Welfare.

**Table 4 – Policies 2**

	<b>P2.1</b>	<b>P2.2</b>	<b>P2.3</b>	<b>P2.4</b>	<b>P2.5</b>	<b>P2.6</b>	<b>P2.7</b>	Mean
<b>England 1</b>	0.34	0.16	0.60	0.44	0	0.34	0.14	<b>0.29</b>
<b>England 2</b>	0.50	0.16	0.57	0.40	0.40	0.50	0.36	<b>0.41</b>
<b>England 3</b>	0.50	0.23	0.57	0.46	0.40	0.50	0.36	<b>0.43</b>
<b>England 4</b>	0.50	0.20	0.60	0.50	0	0.50	0.20	<b>0.36</b>
<b>Wales</b>	0.94	0.60	0.94	0.86	0	0.94	0.57	<b>0.69</b>
<b>Scotland</b>	0.86	0.60	0.86	0.74	0.60	0.86	0.60	<b>0.73</b>
<b>N. Ireland</b>	0.60	0.60	0.60	0.74	0.60	0.60	0.53	<b>0.61</b>

Note: P2.1: Pre-tertiary education; P2.2: Health; P2.3: Housing; P2.4: Planning; P2.5: Policing; P2.6: Social services; P2.7: Transport.

**Table 5 – Policies 3**

	<b>P3.1</b>	<b>P3.2</b>	<b>P3.3</b>	<b>P3.4</b>	<b>P3.5</b>	<b>P3.6</b>	<b>P3.7</b>	<b>P3.8</b>	<b>P3.9</b>	<b>P3.10</b>	<b>P3.11</b>	<b>P3.12</b>	<b>P3.13</b>	<b>P3.14</b>	Mean
<b>E1</b>	0.34	0.34	0.60	0	0.26	0.60	0.26	0.46	0	0.06	0.34	0.14	0.60	0.34	<b>0.31</b>
<b>E2</b>	0.36	0.50	0.60	0.40	0.53	0.57	0.40	0.40	0.40	0.16	0.50	0.36	0.60	0.50	<b>0.45</b>
<b>E3</b>	0.40	0.50	0.60	0.40	0.40	0.57	0.40	0.46	0.40	0.10	0.50	0.36	0.60	0.34	<b>0.43</b>
<b>E4</b>	0.40	0.50	0.60	0	0.40	0.60	0.40	0.50	0	0.10	0.50	0.20	0.60	0.50	<b>0.38</b>
<b>W</b>	0.70	0.94	1	0.60	0.86	0.94	0.70	0.86	0	0.66	0.94	0.57	1	0.84	<b>0.76</b>
<b>S</b>	0.70	0.86	1	0.60	0.74	0.86	0.70	0.74	0.60	0.60	0.86	0.60	1	0.84	<b>0.76</b>
<b>NI</b>	0.70	0.60	1	0.60	0.60	0.60	0.50	0.74	0.60	0.60	0.60	0.53	1	1	<b>0.69</b>

Note: P3.1: Arts & recreation; P3.2: Pre-tertiary education; P3.3: Environmental health; P3.4: Fire & rescue; P3.5: Highways; P3.6: Housing; P3.7: Libraries; P3.8: Planning; P3.9: Policing; P3.10: Public health; P3.11: Social services; P3.12: Transport; P3.13: Waste collection; P3.14: Waste disposal.

## Appendix 2 – Scoring policy de/centralisation

### S1 – England 1 (Non-metro county + district councils)

#### 1.1 Non-metropolitan county councils

##### 1.1.1 Policies 1

County councils have no powers in *agriculture* (P1.1), *tertiary education* (P1.4), *justice* (P1.7), *media* (P1.8), and *policing* (P1.9). They have minor administrative powers in *health* (P1.6), as regards public health. They have modest administrative powers in *culture and leisure* (P1.2), as regards arts & recreation, libraries, and museums and galleries; *environment* (P1.5), as regards waste disposal; *transport* (P1.10), as regards highways, bus passenger transport, and transport planning; and *welfare* (P1.11), as regards social services. They have major administrative powers in *pre-tertiary education* (P1.3) (Wilson and Game 2011: 128-50; Sandford 2020c: 5, 7, 20).

##### 1.1.2 Policies 2

County councils have no powers in *housing* (P2.3) and *policing* (P2.5). They have minor administrative powers in *health* (P2.2), as regards public health. They have modest administrative powers in *planning* (P2.4), as regards strategic planning, and *transport* (P2.7), as regards highways, bus passenger transport, and transport planning. They have major administrative powers in *pre-tertiary education* (P2.1) and *social services* (P2.6) (Wilson and Game 2011: 128-50; Sandford 2020c: 5, 7, 20).

##### 1.1.3 Policies 3

County councils have no powers in *environmental health* (P3.3), *fire & rescue* (P3.4), *housing* (P3.6), *policing* (P3.9) and *waste collection* (P3.13). They have minor administrative powers in *planning* (P3.8), as regards strategic planning, and *public health* (P3.10). They have modest administrative powers in *arts & recreation* (P3.1) and *transport* (P3.12), as regards bus passenger transport and transport planning. They have substantial administrative powers in *highways* (P3.5) and *libraries* (P3.7). They have major administrative powers in *pre-tertiary education* (P3.2), *social services* (P3.11) and *waste disposal* (P3.14) (Wilson and Game 2011: 128-50; Sandford 2020c: 5, 7, 20).

## 1.2 Non-metropolitan district councils

### 1.2.1 Policies 1

District councils have no powers in *agriculture* (P1.1), *pre-tertiary education* (P1.3), *tertiary education* (P1.4), *justice* (P1.7), *media* (P1.8), *policing* (P1.9), *transport* (P1.10) and *welfare* (P1.11). They have minor administrative powers in *environment* (P1.5), as regards waste collection, and *health* (P1.6), as regards environmental health. They have modest administrative powers in *culture and leisure* (P1.2), as regards arts and recreation, (Wilson and Game 2011: 128-50; Sandford 2020c: 5, 7, 20).

### 1.2.2 Policies 2

District councils have no powers in *pre-tertiary education* (P2.1), *policing* (P2.5), *social services* (P2.6) and *transport* (P2.7). They have minor administrative powers in *health* (P2.2), as regards environmental health. They have significant administrative powers in *planning* (P2.4). They have full administrative powers in *housing* (P2.3) (Wilson and Game 2011: 128-50; Sandford 2020c: 5, 7, 20).

### 1.2.3 Policies 3

District councils have no powers in *pre-tertiary education* (P3.2), *fire & rescue* (P3.4), *highways* (P3.5), *libraries* (P3.7), *policing* (P3.9), *public health* (P3.10), *social services* (P3.11), *transport* (P3.12) and *waste disposal* (P3.14). They have modest administrative powers in *arts & recreation* (P3.1). They have substantial administrative powers in *planning* (P3.8). They have full administrative powers in *environmental health* (P3.3), *housing* (P3.6), and *waste collection* (P3.13) (Wilson and Game 2011: 128-50; Sandford 2020c: 5, 7, 20).

## S2. England 2 (Greater London Authority + London borough councils)

### 2.1 Greater London Authority

#### 2.1.1 Policies 1

The GLA has no effective powers in *agriculture* (P1.1), *pre-tertiary education* (P 1.3), *tertiary education* (P1.4), *justice* (P1.7), *media* (P1.8) and *welfare* (P1.11). It has minor administrative powers in *culture and leisure* (P1.2), *environment* (P1.5), and *health* (P1.6). It has substantial administrative powers in *transport* (P1.10). It has full administrative powers in *policing* (P1.9) (Wilson and Game 2011: 128-50; Sandford 2018: 23-4).

### **2.1.2 Policies 2**

The GLA has no powers in *pre-tertiary education* (P2.1) and *social services* (P2.6). It has minor administrative powers in *health* (P2.2) and *housing* (P2.3). It has significant administrative powers in *planning* (P2.4). It has substantial administrative powers in *transport* (P2.7). It has full administrative powers in *policing* (P2.5) (Wilson and Game 2011: 128-50; Sandford 2018: 23-4).

### **2.1.3 Policies 3**

The GLA has no powers in *pre-tertiary education* (P3.2), *environmental health* (P3.3), *libraries* (P3.7), *social services* (P3.11), *waste collection* (P3.13) and *waste disposal* (P3.14). It has minor administrative powers in *arts & recreation* (P3.1), *housing* (P3.6) and *public health* (P3.10). It has modest administrative powers in *highways* (P3.5). It has significant administrative powers in *planning* (P3.8). It has substantial administrative powers in *transport* (P3.12). It has full administrative powers in *fire & rescue* (P3.4) and *policing* (P3.9) (Wilson and Game 2011: 128-50; Sandford 2018: 23-4).

## **2.2 London borough councils**

### **2.2.1 Policies 1**

The LBCs have no powers in *agriculture* (P1.1), *tertiary education* (P1.4), *justice* (P1.7), *media* (P1.8), and *policing* (P1.9). They have minor administrative powers in *health* (P1.6), as regards environmental health and public health, and *transport* (P1.10). They have modest administrative powers in *welfare* (P1.11), as regards social services. They have significant administrative powers in *culture and leisure* (P1.2), as regards arts and recreation, libraries, and museums and galleries. They have substantial administrative powers in *environment* (P1.5), as regards waste collection and disposal. They have major administrative powers in



*pre-tertiary education* (P1.3) (Wilson and Game 2011: 128-50; Sandford 2020c: 5, 7, 20; Sandford 2021).

### **2.2.2 Policies 2**

The LBCs have no powers in *policing* (P2.5). They have minor administrative powers in *health* (P2.2), as regards environmental health and public health, and *transport* (P2.7). They have modest administrative powers in *planning* (P2.4). They have major administrative powers in *pre-tertiary education* (P2.1), *housing* (P2.3) and *social services* (P2.6) (Wilson and Game 2011: 128-50; Sandford 2020c: 5, 7, 20; Sandford 2021).

### **2.2.3 Policies 3**

The LBCs have no powers in *fire & rescue* (P3.4) and *policing* (P3.9). They have minor administrative powers in *public health* (P3.10) and *transport* (P3.12). They have modest administrative powers in *planning* (P3.8). They have significant administrative powers in *arts & recreation* (P3.1). They have substantial administrative powers in *highways* (P3.5) and *libraries* (P3.7). They have major administrative powers in *pre-tertiary education* (P3.2), *housing* (P3.6), *social services* (P3.11) and *waste disposal* (P3.14). They have full administrative powers in *environmental health* (P3.3) and *waste collection* (P3.13) (Wilson and Game 2011: 128-50; Sandford 2020c: 5, 7, 20; Sandford 2021).

## **S3. England 3 (Greater Manchester combined authority + metropolitan district councils)**

### **3.1 Greater Manchester combined authority**

#### **3.1.1 Policies 1**

The GMCA has no powers in *agriculture* (P1.1), *culture and leisure* (P1.2), *pre-tertiary education* (P1.3), *justice* (P1.7), *media* (P1.8) and *welfare* (P1.11). It has minor administrative powers in *tertiary education* (P1.4), as regards further education, and *environment* (P1.5), regarding carbon reduction measures. It has modest administrative powers in *health* (P1.6). It has substantial administrative powers in *transport* (P1.10). It has full administrative powers in *policing* (P1.9) (Wilson and Game 2011: 128-50; Sandford 2019b: 6; Sandford 2020b: 18-20).

### 3.1.2 Policies 2

The GMCA has no powers in *pre-tertiary education* (P2.1) and *social services* (P2.6). It has minor administrative powers in *housing* (P2.3) and *planning* (P2.4). It has modest administrative powers in *health* (P2.2). It has substantial administrative powers in *transport* (P2.7). It has full administrative powers in *policing* (P2.5) (Wilson and Game 2011: 128-50; Sandford 2019b: 6; Sandford 2020b: 18-20).

### 3.1.3 Policies 3

The GMCA has no powers in *arts & recreation* (P3.1), *pre-tertiary education* (P3.2), *environmental health* (P3.3), *highways* (P3.5), *libraries* (P3.7), *public health* (P3.10), *social services* (P3.11) and *waste collection* (P3.13). It has minor administrative powers in *housing* (P3.6) and *planning* (P3.8). It has substantial administrative powers in *transport* (P3.12). It has major administrative powers in *waste disposal* (P3.14). It has full administrative powers in *fire & rescue* (P3.4) and *policing* (P3.9) (Wilson and Game 2011: 128-50; Sandford 2019b: 6; Sandford 2020b: 18-20).

## 3.2 Metropolitan district councils

### 3.2.1 Policies 1

The metropolitan district councils members of the GMCA have no powers in *agriculture* (P1.1), *tertiary education* (P1.4), *justice* (P1.7), *media* (P1.8), and *policing* (P1.9). They have minor administrative powers in *health* (P1.6), as regards environmental health and public health, and *transport* (P1.10). They have modest administrative powers in *environment* (P1.5), as regards waste collection. They have substantial administrative powers in *culture and leisure* (P1.2), as regards arts and recreation, libraries, and museums and galleries; and *welfare* (P1.11), as regards social services. They have major administrative powers in *pre-tertiary education* (P1.3) (Wilson and Game 2011: 128-50; Sandford 2019b: 6; Sandford 2020b: 18-20; Sandford 2020c: 5, 7, 20).

### 3.2.2 Policies 2

The metropolitan district councils members of the GMCA have no powers in *policing* (P2.5). They have minor administrative powers in *health* (P2.2), as regards environmental health and public health, and *transport* (P2.7). They have substantial administrative powers in *planning*

(P2.4). They have major administrative powers in *pre-tertiary education* (P2.1), *housing* (P2.3) and *social services* (P2.6) (Wilson and Game 2011: 128-50; Sandford 2019b: 6; Sandford 2020b: 18-20; Sandford 2020c: 5, 7, 20).

### **3.2.3 Policies 3**

The metropolitan district councils members of the GMCA have no powers in *fire & rescue* (P3.4), *policing* (P3.9) and *waste disposal* (P3.14). They have minor administrative powers in *public health* (P3.10) and *transport* (P3.12). They have substantial administrative powers in *arts & recreation* (P3.1), *highways* (P3.5), *libraries* (P3.7) and *planning* (P3.8). They have major administrative powers in *pre-tertiary education* (P3.2), *housing* (P3.6) and *social services* (P3.11). They have full administrative powers in *environmental health* (P3.3) and *waste collection* (P3.13) (Wilson and Game 2011: 128-50; Sandford 2019b: 6; Sandford 2020b: 18-20; Sandford 2020c: 5, 7, 20).

## **S4. England 4 (Unitary authorities)**

### **4.1 Policies 1**

Unitary authorities have no powers in *agriculture* (P1.1), *tertiary education* (P1.4), *justice* (P1.7), *media* (P1.8), and *policing* (P1.9). They have minor administrative powers in *health* (P1.6), as regards environmental health and public health. They have modest administrative powers in *transport* (P1.10), as regards highways, bus passenger transport, and transport planning; and *welfare* (P1.11), as regards social services. They have substantial administrative powers in *culture and leisure* (P1.2), as regards arts and recreation, libraries, and museums and galleries; and *environment* (P1.5), as regards waste collection and disposal. They have major administrative powers in *pre-tertiary education* (P1.3) (Wilson and Game 2011: 128-50; Sandford 2020c: 5, 7, 20; Sandford 2021).

### **4.2 Policies 2**

Unitary authorities have no powers in *policing* (P2.5). They have modest administrative powers in *health* (P2.2), as regards environmental health and public health, and *transport* (P2.7), as regards highways, bus passenger transport, and transport planning. They have major administrative powers in *pre-tertiary education* (P2.1), *planning* (P2.4) and *social services* (P2.6). They have full administrative powers in *housing* (P2.3) (Wilson and Game 2011: 128-50; Sandford 2020c: 5, 7, 20; Sandford 2021).

### 4.3 Policies 3

Unitary authorities have no powers in *fire & rescue* (P3.4) and *policing* (P3.9). They have minor administrative powers in *public health* (P3.10). They have modest administrative powers in *transport* (P3.12), as regards bus passenger transport and transport planning. They have substantial administrative powers in *arts & recreation* (P3.1), *highways* (P3.5) and *libraries* (P3.7). They have major administrative powers in *pre-tertiary education* (P3.2), *planning* (P3.8), *social services* (P3.11) and *waste disposal* (P3.14). They have full administrative powers in *environmental health* (P3.3), *housing* (P3.6) and *waste collection* (P3.13) (Wilson and Game 2011: 128-50; Sandford 2020c: 5, 7, 20; Sandford 2021).

## S5. Wales (Welsh Parliament and Government + principal councils)

### 5.1 Welsh Parliament and Government

#### 5.1.1 Policies 1

The Welsh Parliament and Government have no legislative powers in *justice* (P1.7), *media* (P1.8) and *policing* (P1.9). They have substantial legislative powers in *transport* (P1.10) and *welfare* (P1.11). They have major legislative powers in *agriculture* (P1.1), *culture and leisure* (P1.2), *environment* (P1.5) and *health* (P1.6). They have full legislative powers in *pre-tertiary education* (P1.3) and *tertiary education* (P1.4) (Torrance 2019: 17-9, 31-42; Torrance 2020b: 5; SC 2021).

They have no administrative powers in *justice* (P1.7), *media* (P1.8) and *policing* (P1.9). They have minor administrative powers in *pre-tertiary education* (P1.3). They have modest administrative powers in *culture and leisure* (P1.2), *environment* (P1.5) and *welfare* (P1.11). They have substantial administrative powers in and *transport* (P1.10). They have major administrative powers in *agriculture* (P1.1) and *health* (P1.6). They have full administrative powers in *tertiary education* (P1.4) (Torrance 2019: 13-6, 31-42; Torrance 2020b: 5; SC 2021; WLGA 2021).

#### 5.1.2 Policies 2

The Welsh Parliament and Government have no legislative powers in *policing* (P2.5). They have substantial legislative powers in *transport* (P2.7). They have major legislative powers in *health* (P2.2). They have full legislative powers in *pre-tertiary education* (P2.1), *housing* (P2.3), *planning* (P2.4) and *social services* (P2.6) (Torrance 2019: 17-9, 31-42; Torrance 2020b: 5; SC 2021)

They have no administrative powers in *policing* (P2.5). They have minor administrative powers in *pre-tertiary education* (P2.1), *housing* (P2.3) and *social services* (P2.6). They have modest administrative powers in *planning* (P2.4). They have significant administrative powers in *transport* (P2.7). They have major administrative powers in *health* (P2.2) (Torrance 2019: 17-9, 31-42; Torrance 2020b: 5; SC 2021; WLGA 2021).

### 5.1.3 Policies 3

The Welsh Parliament and Government have no legislative powers in *policing* (P3.9). They have significant legislative powers in *transport* (P3.12). They have major legislative powers in *arts & recreation* (P3.1) and *libraries* (P3.7). They have full legislative powers in *pre-tertiary education* (P3.2), *environmental health* (P3.3), *fire & rescue* (P3.4), *highways* (P3.5), *housing* (P3.6), *planning* (P3.8), *public health* (P3.10), *social services* (P3.11), *waste collection* (P3.13) and *waste disposal* (P3.14) (Torrance 2019: 17-9, 31-42; Torrance 2020b: 5; SC 2021).

They have no administrative powers in *environmental health* (P3.3), *policing* (P3.9), *waste collection* (P3.13) and *waste disposal* (P3.14). They have minor administrative powers in *pre-tertiary education* (P3.2), *housing* (P3.6) and *social services* (P3.11). They have modest administrative powers in *arts & recreation* (P3.1), *highways* (P3.5), *libraries* (P3.7) and *planning* (P3.8). They have significant administrative powers in *transport* (P3.12). They have major administrative powers in *public health* (P3.10). They have full administrative powers in *fire & rescue* (P3.4) (Torrance 2019: 17-9, 31-42; Torrance 2020b: 5; SC 2021; WLGA 2021).

## 5.2 Principal councils

### 5.2.1 Policies 1

The principal councils have no powers in *agriculture* (P1.1), *tertiary education* (P1.4), *justice* (P1.7), *media* (P1.8) and *policing* (P1.9). They have minor administrative powers in *health* (P1.6), as regards environmental health and public health. They have modest administrative

powers in *transport* (P1.10), as regards highways, public transport, and transport planning; and *welfare* (P1.11), as regards social services. They have significant administrative powers in *culture and leisure* (P1.2), as regards arts and recreation, libraries, and museums. They have substantial administrative powers in *environment* (P1.5), as regards waste collection and disposal. They have major administrative powers in *pre-tertiary education* (P1.3) (WLGA 2021).

### **5.2.2 Policies 2**

The principal councils have no powers in *policing* (P2.5). They have minor administrative powers in *health* (P2.2), as regards environmental health and public health. They have modest administrative powers in *transport* (P2.7), as regards highways, public transport, and transport planning. They have substantial administrative powers in *planning* (P2.4). They have major administrative powers in *pre-tertiary education* (P2.1), *housing* (P2.3) and *social services* (P2.6) (WLGA 2021).

### **5.2.3 Policies 3**

The principal councils have no powers in *fire & rescue* (P3.4) and *policing* (P3.9). They have minor administrative powers in *public health* (P3.10). They have modest administrative powers in *transport* (P3.12), as regards public transport and transport planning. They have significant administrative powers in *arts & recreation* (P3.1) and *libraries* (P3.7). They have substantial administrative powers in *highways* (P3.5) and *planning* (P3.8). They have major administrative powers in *pre-tertiary education* (P3.2), *housing* (P3.6), *social services* (P3.11) and *waste disposal* (P3.14). They have full administrative powers in *environmental health* (P3.3) and *waste collection* (P3.13) (WLGA 2021).

## **S6. Scotland (Scottish Parliament and Government + councils)**

### **6.1 Scottish Parliament and Government**

#### **6.1.1 Policies 1**

The Scottish Parliament and Government have modest legislative powers in *media* (P1.8). They have substantial legislative powers in *welfare* (P1.11). They have major legislative powers in *culture and leisure* (P1.2), *environment* (P1.5), *health* (P1.6), *justice* (P1.7) and

*transport* (P1.10). They have full legislative powers in *agriculture* (P1.1), *pre-tertiary education* (P1.3), *tertiary education* (P1.4) and *policing* (P1.9) (Torrance 2019: 13-6, 31-42; Torrance 2020c: 5-6; Campbell and Burrowes 2016: 11; Mitchell 2021).

They have modest administrative powers in *culture and leisure* (P1.2), *pre-tertiary education* (P1.3), *environment* (P1.5) and *media* (P1.8). They have substantial administrative powers in *transport* (P1.10) and *welfare* (P1.11). They have major administrative powers in *justice* (P1.7). They have full administrative powers in *agriculture* (P1.1), *tertiary education* (P1.4), *health* (P1.6) and *policing* (P1.9) (Torrance 2019: 13-6, 31-42; Torrance 2020c: 5-6; Campbell and Burrowes 2016: 11; Mitchell 2021).

### **6.1.2 Policies 2**

The Scottish Parliament and Government have major legislative powers in *transport* (P2.7). They have full legislative powers in *pre-tertiary education* (P2.1), *health* (P2.2), *housing* (P2.3), *planning* (P2.4), *policing* (P2.5) and *social services* (P2.6) (Torrance 2019: 13-6, 31-42; Torrance 2020c: 5-6; Campbell and Burrowes 2016: 11; Mitchell 2021).

They have modest administrative powers in *pre-tertiary education* (P2.1), *housing* (P2.3) and *social services* (P2.6). They have substantial administrative powers in *planning* (P2.4). They have major administrative powers in *transport* (P2.7). They have full administrative powers in *health* (P2.2) and *policing* (P2.5) (Torrance 2019: 13-6, 31-42; Torrance 2020c: 5-6; Campbell and Burrowes 2016: 11; Mitchell 2021).

### **6.1.3 Policies 3**

The Scottish Parliament and Government have major legislative powers in *arts & recreation* (P3.1), *libraries* (P3.7) and *transport* (P3.12). They have full legislative powers in *pre-tertiary education* (P3.2), *environmental health* (P3.3), *fire & rescue* (P3.4), *highways* (P3.5), *housing* (P3.6), *planning* (P3.8), *policing* (P3.9), *public health* (P3.10), *social services* (P3.11), *waste collection* (P3.13) and *waste disposal* (P3.14) (Torrance 2019: 13-6, 31-42; Torrance 2020c: 5-6; Campbell and Burrowes 2016: 11; Mitchell 2021).

They have no administrative powers in *environmental health* (P3.3), *waste collection* (P3.13) and *waste disposal* (P3.14). They have modest administrative powers in *arts & recreation* (P3.1), *pre-tertiary education* (P3.2), *housing* (P3.6), *libraries* (P3.7) and *social services* (P3.11). They have substantial administrative powers in *highways* (P3.5) and *planning* (P3.8).



They have major administrative powers in *transport* (P3.12). They have full administrative powers in *fire & rescue* (P3.4), *policing* (P3.9) and *public health* (P3.10) (Torrance 2019: 13-6, 31-42; Torrance 2020c: 5-6; Campbell and Burrowes 2016: 11; Mitchell 2021).

## 6.2 Councils

### 6.2.1 Policies 1

The councils have no powers in *agriculture* (P1.1), *tertiary education* (P1.4), *health* (P1.6), *justice* (P1.7), *media* (P1.8), and *policing* (P1.9). They have modest administrative powers in *transport* (P1.10), as regards in particular roads and public transport; and *welfare* (P1.11), as regards social services. They have significant administrative powers in *culture and leisure* (P1.2), as regards museums, galleries, monuments, and sports centres. They have substantial administrative powers in *pre-tertiary education* (P1.3) and *environment* (P1.5), as regards waste collection and disposal (Campbell and Burrowes 2016: 11; Butcher 2017: 4-10; Mitchell 2021).

### 6.2.2 Policies 2

The councils have no powers in *health* (P2.2) and *policing* (P2.5). They have minor administrative powers in *transport* (P2.7). They have modest administrative powers in *planning* (P2.4). They have substantial administrative powers in *pre-tertiary education* (P2.1), *housing* (P2.3) and *social services* (P2.6) (Campbell and Burrowes 2016: 11; Butcher 2017: 4-10; Mitchell 2021).

### 6.2.3 Policies 3

The councils have no powers in *fire & rescue* (P3.4), *policing* (P3.9) and *public health* (P3.10). They have minor administrative powers in *transport* (P3.12), as regards public transport. They have modest administrative powers in *highways* (P3.5) and *planning* (P3.8). They have significant administrative powers in *arts & recreation* (P3.1) and *libraries* (P3.7). They have substantial administrative powers in *pre-tertiary education* (P3.2), *housing* (P3.6) and *social services* (P3.11). They have major administrative powers in *waste disposal* (P3.14). They have full administrative powers in *environmental health* (P3.3) and *waste collection* (P3.13) (Campbell and Burrowes 2016: 11; Butcher 2017: 4-10; Mitchell 2021).



## **S7. Northern Ireland** (Northern Ireland Assembly and Executive + districts)

### **7.1 Northern Ireland Assembly and Executive**

#### **7.1.1 Policies 1**

The Northern Ireland Assembly and Executive have modest legislative powers in *media* (P1.8). They have substantial legislative powers in *welfare* (P1.11). They have major legislative powers in *culture and leisure* (P1.2), *environment* (P1.5), *health* (P1.6), *justice* (P1.7) and *transport* (P1.10). They have full legislative powers in *agriculture* (P1.1), *pre-tertiary education* (P1.3), *tertiary education* (P1.4) and *policing* (P1.9) (Torrance 2019: 20-1, 31-42; Torrance 2020a: 5-7; Carmichael 2021).

They have modest administrative powers in *culture and leisure* (P1.2), *environment* (P1.5) and *media* (P1.8). They have substantial administrative powers in *welfare* (P1.11). They have major administrative powers in *health* (P1.6), *justice* (P1.7) and *transport* (P1.10). They have full administrative powers in *agriculture* (P1.1), *pre-tertiary education* (P1.3), *tertiary education* (P1.4) and *policing* (P1.9) (Torrance 2019: 20-1, 31-42; Torrance 2020a: 5-7; NID 2021; Carmichael 2021).

#### **7.1.2 Policies 2**

The Northern Ireland Assembly and Executive have major legislative powers in *health* (P2.2) and *transport* (P2.7). They have full legislative powers in *pre-tertiary education* (P2.1), *housing* (P2.3), *planning* (P2.4), *policing* (P2.5) and *social services* (P2.6) (Torrance 2019: 20-1, 31-42; Torrance 2020a: 5-7; Carmichael 2021).

They have substantial administrative powers in *planning* (P2.4). They have major administrative powers in *health* (P2.2). They have full administrative powers in *pre-tertiary education* (P2.1), *housing* (P2.3), *policing* (P2.5), *social services* (P2.6) and *transport* (P2.7). (Torrance 2019: 20-1, 31-42; Torrance 2020a: 5-7; NID 2021; Carmichael 2021).

#### **7.1.3 Policies 3**

The Northern Ireland Assembly and Executive have major legislative powers in *arts & recreation* (P3.1), *libraries* (P3.7) and *transport* (P3.12). They have full legislative powers in *pre-tertiary education* (P3.2), *environmental health* (P3.3), *fire & rescue* (P3.4), *highways*

(P3.5), *housing* (P3.6), *planning* (P3.8), *policing* (P3.9), *public health* (P3.10), *social services* (P3.11), *waste collection* (P3.13) and *waste disposal* (P3.14) (Torrance 2019: 20-1, 31-42; Torrance 2020a: 5-7; NID 2021; Carmichael 2021).

They have no administrative powers in *environmental health* (P3.3), *waste collection* (P3.13) and *waste disposal* (P3.14). They have modest administrative powers in *arts & recreation* (P3.1). They have substantial administrative powers in *planning* (P3.8). They have major administrative powers in *libraries* (P3.7). They have full administrative powers in *pre-tertiary education* (P3.2), *fire & rescue* (P3.4), *highways* (P3.5), *housing* (P3.6), *policing* (P3.9), *public health* (P3.10), *social services* (P3.11) and *transport* (P3.12) (Torrance 2019: 20-1, 31-42; Torrance 2020a: 5-7; NID 2021; Carmichael 2021).

## 7.2 Local councils

### 7.2.1 Policies 1

The local councils have no powers in *agriculture* (P1.1), *pre-tertiary education* (P1.3), *tertiary education* (P1.4), *justice* (P1.7), *media* (P1.8), *policing* (P1.9), *transport* (P1.10) and *welfare* (P1.11). They have minor administrative powers in *health* (P1.6), as regards environmental health. They have significant administrative powers in *culture & leisure* (P1.2). They have substantial administrative powers in *environment* (P1.5), as regards waste collection and disposal (NID 2021; Carmichael 2021).

### 7.2.2 Policies 2

The local councils have no powers in *pre-tertiary education* (P2.1), *housing* (P2.3), *policing* (P2.5), *social services* (P2.6) and *transport* (P2.7). They have minor administrative powers in *health* (P2.2), as regards environmental health. They have modest administrative powers in *planning* (P2.4) (NID 2021; Carmichael 2021).

### 7.2.3 Policies 3

The local councils have no powers in *pre-tertiary education* (P3.2), *fire & rescue* (P3.4), *highways* (P3.5), *housing* (P3.6), *libraries* (P3.7), *policing* (P3.9), *public health* (P3.10), *social services* (P3.11) and *transport* (P3.12). They have modest administrative powers in *planning* (P3.8). They have significant administrative powers in *arts & recreation* (P3.1). They have full

administrative powers in *environmental health* (P3.3), *waste collection* (P3.13) and *waste disposal* (P3.14) (NID 2021; Carmichael 2021).

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## About the Local Democracy Research Centre

The LGIU's Local Democracy Research Centre brings together experts from local government and academia to do practical research on some of the key challenges for local democracy around the World.

We are developing a broad, international programme that engages universities and local authorities to develop new ideas and approaches for governance, municipalism and citizen participation.