

Making Sense

Understanding the drivers
of variation in spend on
Children's Services

Edwina Grant, OBE

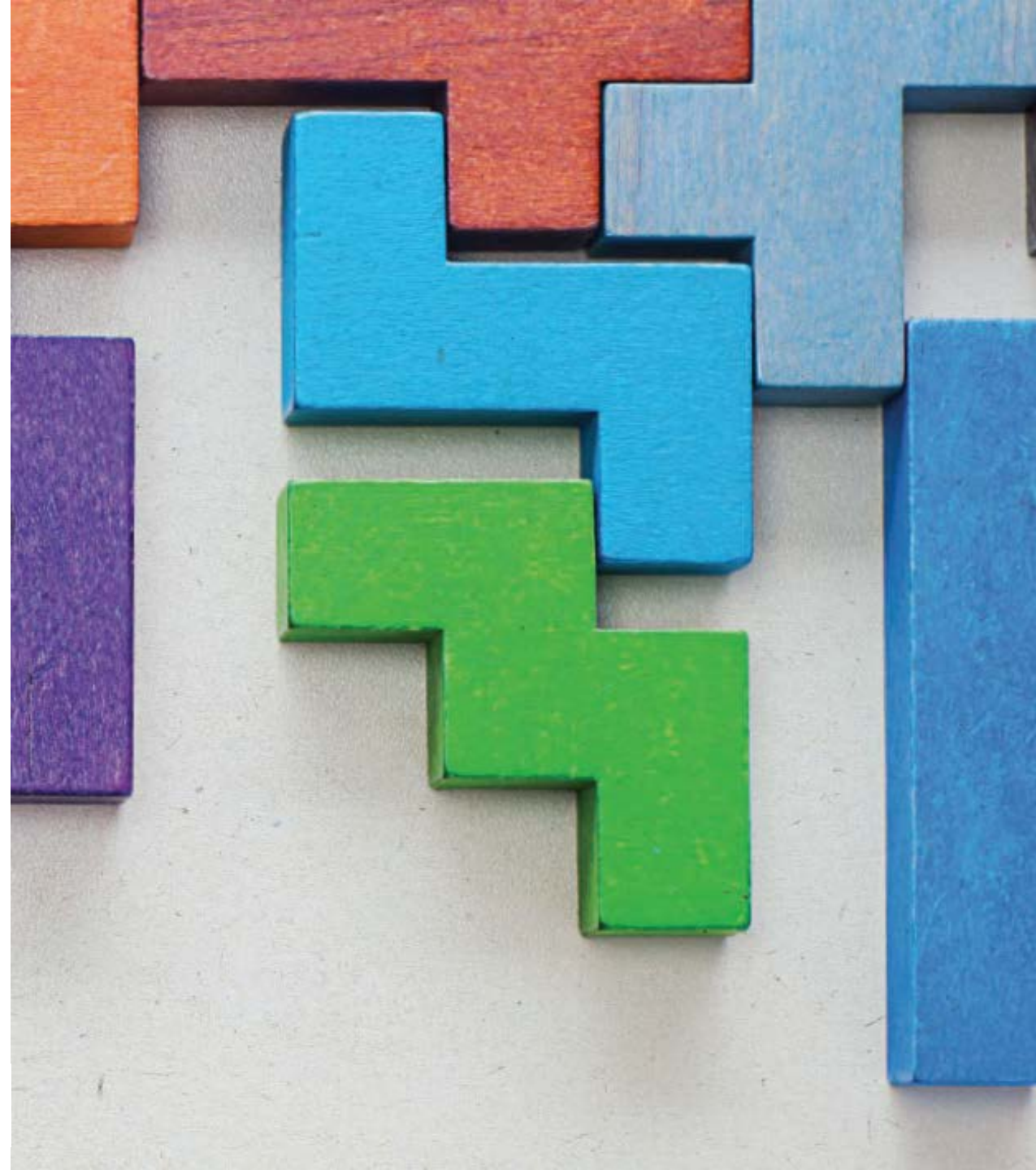
National Childrens Advisor, LGA

Luke Tregidgo

Programme Lead, Newton



NEWTON



£2billion

Funding shortfall by the year 2020.

£299 - £805

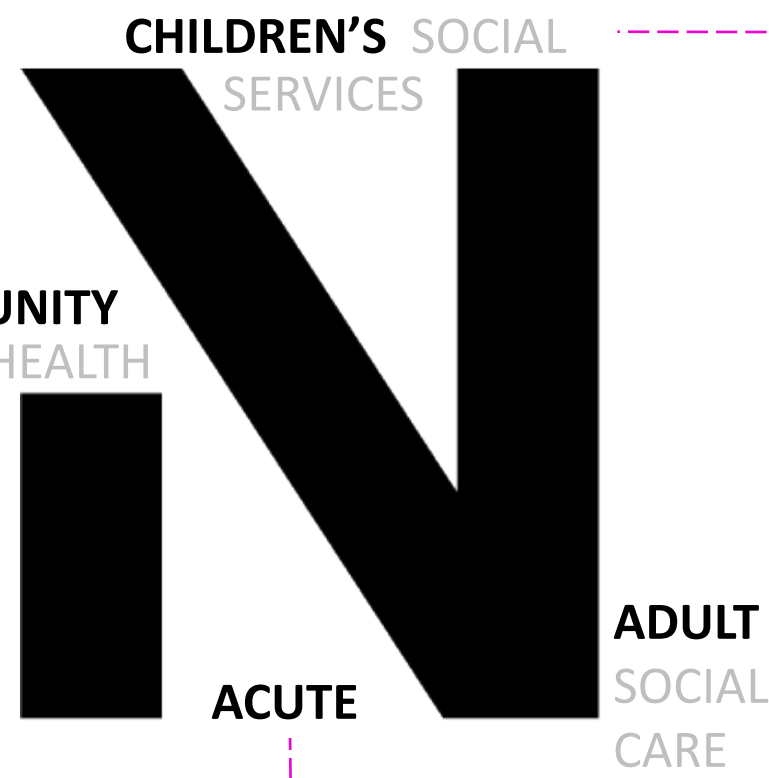
Variation in spend for same outcomes.

Newton commissioned to answer the question:

**What drives variation in spend on
Children's Services between authorities?**



NATIONALLY



Part 1: national analysis of demographic, economic and geographic factors



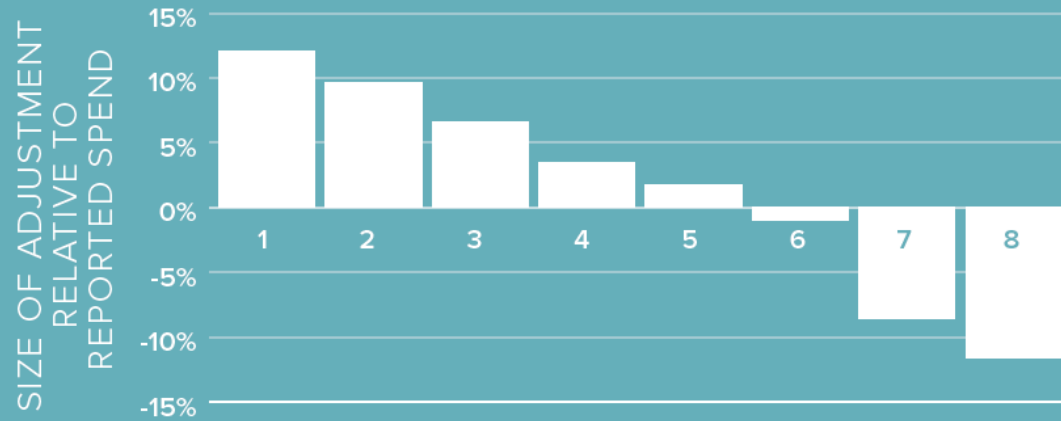
Five factors largely outside of councils' control account for half of all variation in spend on children's services

Interactive heatmaps available at www.childspendvariation.report

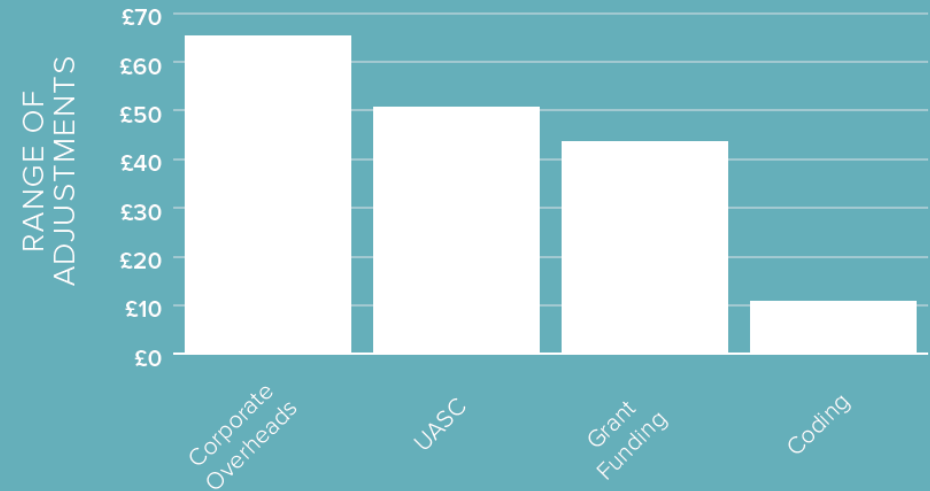
- 1. Deprivation**
- 2. Population size 0-25**
- 3. Disposable household income**
- 4. Unemployment**
- 5. Crime**

Part 2: in-depth work with eight councils to understand local factors

ADJUSTMENT FROM REPORTED NET SPEND TO COMPARABLE NET SPEND



VARIATION CAUSED BY EACH FACTOR



Reported to comparable spend varied by up to 12%

Part 2: in-depth work with eight councils to understand local factors



13% of spend variation comes from differences in practice and processes within control of councils

1. Different approaches to avoiding the need to bring children into care

2. Ensuring timely work with children and families to avoid drift

3. Consistent application of threshold at child in need level

What next?

