Citizens' Perspectives on Poverty in Edinburgh: Consequences and Solutions

Part 2: A Q Methodology Study
A Report for the Edinburgh Poverty Commission
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Executive Summary

This report presents findings from research conducted in Edinburgh to better understand citizens' awareness of and attitudes towards poverty through examining their understanding of the consequences of poverty for Edinburgh and identifying their preferred solutions for tackling poverty in their city. In February 2020, eight panel sessions were conducted with four groups of Edinburgh citizens:

1. People with no direct experience of poverty
2. People living in poverty, but not living in deprived areas
3. Business leaders and owners of small businesses
4. Statutory service providers and third sector organisations.

Each group met twice, first to consider the 'Consequences of poverty in Edinburgh', and then to identify 'Solutions to tackle poverty in Edinburgh'. Key findings from this study include:

Key consequences of poverty in Edinburgh

- **Edinburgh is a city divided by income and wealth:** Edinburgh is perceived to be a divided city with rich/poor areas; uneven and unjust outcomes from education and employment; and one in which some citizens are familiar with and encounter poverty frequently, while others' lives remains untouched by it.
- **There is a lack of empathy towards poverty in the city:** participants thought there was a lack of awareness of poverty in the city, which led to a lack of empathy towards those experiencing poverty.
- **Poverty is perceived to be an outcome of structural factors rather than personal failings:** those in the city who are struggling to get by are thought to be unable to meet their basic needs due to factors beyond their control, including a lack of educational and employment opportunities.

Key solutions to tackling poverty in Edinburgh

- **Tackling poverty should be focused on enabling and supportive responses, not punitive measures:** responses to poverty need to be co-ordinated and there should be a focus on enabling people to escape poverty by providing opportunities (e.g. training and education), and support that is accessible, sufficient and affordable (e.g. childcare).
- **Employers have a role and responsibility to address poverty in the city:** there should be more employment opportunities in the city that provide wages that enable people to meet their everyday needs and participate in society.
- **Tackling poverty in Edinburgh requires structural changes at a national level:** responses to poverty in Edinburgh also depend on national level responses such as increasing government expenditure on measures to tackle poverty and increasing income from benefits.
- **Localised responses involving or led by communities are required:** people living in poverty should be empowered and listened to in the development of solutions to tackling poverty.

1. Introduction

The Poverty Alliance and the Scottish Poverty and Inequality Research Unit (SPIRU), conducted this research, with the support of the Yunus Centre for Social Business and Health at Glasgow Caledonian University (GCU), on behalf of the Edinburgh Poverty Commission. This is the second stage of a larger research project, which aimed to better understand what the people of Edinburgh think about poverty in their city (McKendrick, 2020). The aim of this study was to explore citizens' awareness of and attitudes towards poverty by examining their understanding of the consequences of poverty for Edinburgh and their preferred solutions for tackling poverty in their city. In February 2020, eight panel sessions were conducted with four groups of Edinburgh's citizens:

> Panel 1: People with no direct experience of poverty
> Panel 2: People in poverty but not living in deprived areas
> Panel 3: Business leaders and owners of small businesses
> Panel 4: Statutory service providers and third sector organisations

Each group met twice, first to consider the 'Consequences of poverty in Edinburgh', and then to identify 'Solutions to tackle poverty in Edinburgh'.

2. Methodology

This research explored the shared viewpoints on 1. Consequences of poverty in Edinburgh and 2. Solutions to tackling poverty in Edinburgh among 21 participants living in Edinburgh. In February 2020, 21 participants took part in one or both sessions on consequences and solutions: seven people with no direct experience of poverty; three people who identified living in poverty but not in deprived areas; five business leaders/small business owners; and six people working in statutory services or for a third sector organisation. Fifteen participants attended both panels.

Q-methodology, an approach used in a wide variety of social, public and health policy areas, was used to explore shared viewpoints (for example, Brown, 1980; van Exel et al., 2015; McHugh et al., 2019). The central element of this approach is that participants were provided with a set of two opinion statements (on consequences of poverty and secondly on solutions to poverty in Edinburgh) and asked to rank these statements with respect to how much each statement was like their own point of view before discussing key issues as a group. Analysis of the individual statement sets enabled the identification of shared viewpoints which are explored in sections 3 and 4 of this report.

Appendix 1 provides a detailed description of the Q-methodology approach adopted in this research, the research process and how the data was analysed.

3. Consequences of Poverty in Edinburgh

3.1 Card-Sort Findings

Participants were asked to rank and then discuss 36 statements (**Appendix 2**) about the potential effects of poverty, each beginning with the phrase "As a result of poverty in Edinburgh…". Three sets of shared viewpoints on the effects of poverty in Edinburgh were identified[1]:

1. An unfair society: structural and financial effects of poverty.
2. Diminished by poverty: impoverished lives and constrained opportunities
3. A divided city: inequality in wealth and opportunities.

Viewpoint 1: An unfair society - structural and financial effects of poverty

In this account poverty is seen as unfair and having generational effects caused by structural and financial issues. Poverty means people have difficulty making ends meet and are unable to afford basic necessities (#24, +4; #31, +4). This makes the lives of people living in poverty more stressful (#14, +5). As a consequence, people living in poverty in the city feel excluded and stereotyped, and have fewer opportunities (#3, +3; #25, +3), which in turn make it more difficult for the next generation to escape poverty (#10, +5; #2, +4; #3, +3; #25, +3). There is a general view that people should not be blamed for their own poverty and a rejection of individual-level explanations of poverty. For example, the notions that people in poverty are more likely to have more children, or are not motivated to improve their situation are rejected (#7, -5; #4, -4); nor is it believed that culture of dependency and addiction will develop in communities where the worst-off live (#33, -2; #18, -2). Participants also do not feel that public money is going to people who did not deserve it (#12, -5).

Participants from across the four panels *defined* Viewpoint 1: three from Panel 1; one from Panel 2; three from Panel 3; and four from Panel 4.

Viewpoint 2: Diminished by poverty – impoverished lives and constrained opportunities

While participants associated with this viewpoint believe that poverty *is* an issue in Edinburgh, they believe that its effects are not spread evenly (#19, +4). Those in poverty have fewer chances in life due to worse living conditions, poorer public services and fewer employment opportunities. While poverty is not visible in the city centre, poorer communities outside the city centre suffer, and tend to be dirty, polluted, lack green space, and have both fewer and lower quality public services (#17, +4; #15, -4; #28, +2; #16, +1). This occurs despite businesses operating and making money in these areas (#36, -3). Businesses in general are thought to lack the incentive to improve pay or working conditions and those in poverty are forced to accept these terms (#26, +3; #22, +2). Precarious and low-paid employment means that those in poverty can find it difficult to make ends meet and may have to go without basic necessities (#24, +5; #31, +3). These hardships make the lives of those in poverty more stressful, and aside from their family, they lack networks that could help them tackle the problems poverty causes (#14, +3; #8, -3; #5, -2; #9, -2).

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[1] As shown in Appendix 6 participants are associated to some extent with all three viewpoints.

Poverty limits the capacity of those that experience it to achieve their full potential (#35, +5; #24, +5). This is not because people in poverty are less motivated to improve their situation, nor inescapably conditioned by the hardships they experience (#4, -5; #34, -4). Rather, it is because they have fewer opportunities and, importantly, are not able to think and plan for the future because they are forced to focus on short-term issues (#6, +4; #25, +2).

There is a general sense that society would like to help those who are worst-off, although better-off citizens are not necessarily more likely to do something to tackle poverty (#23, -5; #1, -4). It is also recognised that it is not only the problems of the worst-off people in society that are focused on and that individuals in poverty are not considered to be underserving of help (#12, -3; 13, -2).

Participants from panels 1, 2 and 4 *defined* Viewpoint 2: two from Panel 1; one from Panel 2; and one from Panel 4.

Viewpoint 3: A divided city - inequality in wealth and opportunities

This account acknowledges that levels of poverty vary across the city, with clear divides between poorer and more affluent areas (#19, +5; #15, +2). This has created division between the rich and poor, with poverty coming to dominate lives in poorer parts of the city, and charities are unable to meet demand due to a lack of resources (#16, +3; #20, +4). For people living in poverty, it is not through a lack of motivation that their situation has not improved (#4, -5) nor is it as a result of focusing on the short-term rather than thinking about the future (#6, -4). Instead, poverty limits opportunities, making it hard for the next generation to escape (#10, +5; #35, +2; #25, +1). People living in poverty struggle with the effects of being labelled, stereotyped and not treated with respect (#2, +4) and find it difficult to meet their basic needs (#31, +4; #24, +3). There is a sense among participants associated with this viewpoint that people who are better-off are not necessarily likely to do something to tackle poverty (#1, 0), although that does not mean that people do not want to pay tax, or feel that money goes to people who do not deserve it (#23, -5; #12, -3).

Participants from panels 1, 2 and 3 *defined* Viewpoint 3: one from Panel 1; one from Panel 2; and one from Panel 3.

Areas of consensus and agreement

While the panels expressed a range of views regarding the consequences of poverty in Edinburgh, there were notable areas of consensus and agreement, particularly in relation to how people living in poverty are viewed and the difficulties they face. There is consensus that individuals in poverty find it difficult to make ends meet (#24), are forced to do without some basic needs (#31), that poverty comes to dominate life in poorer parts of the city (#16), and that it is not due to a lack of motivation that their situation has not improved (#4). There is also agreement that people in poverty who receive money are not undeserving (#12), and participants do not believe that additional funds raised through taxation would be wasted on the poor (#23).

These findings correlate with findings from the *British Social Attitudes* survey (BSA)[2], which found that 60% of people are in favour of the government taxing and spending more (Phillips et al., 2018). On the other hand, our findings diverge from the BSA survey in relation to perceptions of individual motivation: just over two fifths of BSA respondents (43%) agreed that if welfare benefits were not so generous, people would learn to "stand on their own two feet" (Phillips et al., 2018). We also found less punitive views towards poverty among our participants compared to the findings from a qualitative study on attitudes to poverty commissioned by the Joseph Rowntree Foundation (JRF), which found that many people considered those living in poverty to be undeserving of support (Hall et al., 2014).

3.2 Panel Discussion findings

Participants were asked if there were any statements missing from the card-sort - that is, significant aspects of the effects of poverty in Edinburgh on which we did not canvass opinion. Examples from individual panels included: health - in particular mental health - (panels 1, 3, 4); inequality in education (panel 1); the high number of Airbnbs and other short-term lets and their effects on affordable housing in Edinburgh (panel 1); poor maintenance of outside spaces in poorer areas (e.g. rubbish being dumped) (panel 2), and the costs of housing, more generally (panel 4).

Inequality

Participants in all four panels felt that inequality was more of an issue in Edinburgh than in other cities in Scotland. Inequality was a central focus of discussion among those with lived experience of poverty. Participants in this group expressed the opinion that (i) more wealthy people do not want to recognise the level of poverty in the city, and (ii) people are being displaced from their local area due to rising house prices (particularly rental prices). The wealth divide was frequently mentioned. One participant commented:

> I would say in Edinburgh one of the biggest issues is affluence. You're trapped by affluence. Where I stay, we're surrounded by a very affluent area and the minute you try to highlight the issues of poverty, people panic about the prices of their houses, that will impact on the prices of their houses. (Panel 2)

Participants across the panels shared the view that there is a lack of awareness of poverty in the city and a lack of empathy. For example:

> The divisions in wealth feels more applicable to Edinburgh than it may be to Glasgow. If people live in almost separate communities, different parts of the city, different experiences, different educations, one doesn't come across the other. That undermines empathy you require to solve the issue. By the nature of my profession, I've worked with a lot of very affluent people and their stereotyping and lack of empathy for poorer parts of town is astounding. (Panel 4)

In the people living in poverty panel, it was argued that it people "*in the middle*", struggling on low incomes, and in-work, are suffering, as they are not recognised and not getting any financial help from the state.

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[2] The *British Social Attitudes* survey is a longitudinal survey conducted annually exploring what it is like to live in Britain and attitudes to a range of social policy issues. Refer to McKendrick (2020) for a review of how poverty has been covered in this survey.

Participants' views that there is a lack of awareness of poverty in Edinburgh contrast with findings from the survey of public attitudes in the city which found that the vast majority of Edinburgh citizens think it is both 'very important' to tackle poverty in Edinburgh and that there is 'quite a lot' of poverty in the city (81%) (McKendrick, 2020). However, attitudes to poverty vary depending on people's encounters with poverty; the survey also found that those who encounter poverty daily are much more likely than those who do not to perceive that there is a 'quite a lot' of poverty in Edinburgh (91%, compared to 68%).

Health

Both physical and mental health were regarded as significant adverse consequences of poverty across all panels, with mental health a particular concern. One participant reflected on the connection between poverty and mental health issues, stating that demand on mental health services was increasing, with "*children as young as five, who are, you know, developing anxiety symptoms, and they are usually in the deprived areas… it's having a massive impact because 9 times out of 10 if a child is going to have mental problem as a child they're definitely going to have mental health problem as an adult*" (Panel 1). Mental health was viewed by several participants as interlinked with other issues, particularly homelessness. In the panel with third sector and statutory service employees, concerns were raised that a population of young men in the city were suffering from mental health illness, destitution, and "*with absolutely zero safety net*" were "*off the radar*" in terms of receiving support (Panel 4).

Education Inequality

Discussions in two of the panels (those with no experience of living in poverty, and business leaders) focused on the disparity in education provision and outcomes within the city. Participants focused on the figure of one third of all school children attending private schools in Edinburgh. Business leaders spoke of private education being more "*entrenched*" in Edinburgh than anywhere else in Scotland. There was a shared view that this disparity in educational provision led to long-term inequality in a wider range of outcomes.

4. Solutions to Tackling Poverty in Edinburgh

4.1 Card-Sort Findings

In the second session, participants were asked to rank and reflect upon 46 statements (**Appendix 3**), each beginning with the phrase "Poverty in Edinburgh should be tackled by…". Three sets of shared viewpoints on the solutions to poverty in Edinburgh were identified[3]:

1. Income and Investment: increasing income and investing in people
2. Work-led solutions: bringing people experiencing poverty into Edinburgh's market economy
3. Introduce long-term measures: avoiding short-term fixes to tackle poverty

Viewpoint 1: Income and Investment - increasing income and investing in people

According to this account, the solutions to tackle poverty should not be focused on punishing nor correcting the behaviour of individuals. Rather, poverty in Edinburgh requires structural changes, such as increasing government expenditure on measures to tackle poverty and increasing income from benefits, which could be funded by raising taxes in a fair way (#39, +5; #32, +5; #20, +4; #40, +3). It is not felt that focusing on the personal responsibility of people living in poverty or using the benefits system to encourage people to work would tackle poverty effectively (#19, -4, #16, -4). Instead, poverty should be addressed by improving support and providing opportunities (e.g. in employment, housing and education). Ensuring that employers pay wages that cover people's basic needs and improving the availability of services that reduce household costs and enable them to earn more (such as affordable childcare and free schools meals) would make it possible for people in poverty to take part in society (#30, +4; #10, +2; #2, +2). So too would more education and training opportunities for people living in poverty (#29, +2). Housing should be more affordable to buy or to rent, and homelessness prevented by providing shelter or appropriate housing (#7, +4; #8, +3). Alongside such measures, tackling poverty should involve listening to and acting on the voices of those living in poverty in the city (#38, +4; #37, +3).

Participants from across the four panels *defined* Viewpoint 1: three from Panel 1; one from Panel 2; one from Panel 3; and four from Panel 4.

Viewpoint 2: Work-led solutions - bringing people experiencing poverty into Edinburgh's market economy

Poverty in Edinburgh should be tackled by providing individuals with opportunities and the means to improve their own situation. Providing individuals with more education and training helps those in poverty to access employment if they want a job (#28, +5; 29, +5). While it is not thought necessary to ban zero-hour contracts, employers should provide wages which are high enough to cover basic needs but not so high that, for example, both parents in a family do not have to work (#27, -4; #30, +2; #46, -4). For those who do not want a job, while it is not necessary to increase the level of benefits, benefits should keep up with the rising cost of living, and those who are entitled benefits must be able to receive them (#20, -3; #32, +4; 33, +3). Vulnerable people should also be helped by increasing the availability of, and access to, mental health services and social care, and by providing shelter or other accommodation

[3] As shown in Appendix 6 participants are associated to some extent with all three viewpoints.

to the homeless (#26, +4; #25, +4; #23, +2; #8, +3). Such measures would help people living in poverty to take personal responsibility (#19, +3).

These measures could be introduced by increasing Government spending to tackle poverty, but it is not believed necessary to raise taxes, introduce a tourist tax nor shift resources away from vulnerable groups, such as migrants and asylum seekers, to pay for such measures (#39, +3; #44, -4; #40, -1; #17, -5). Nor is it felt necessary to improve the availability, accessibility and/or affordability of other public or community services and facilities, such as public transport, benefit advice services, community gardens and allotments or the Edinburgh festivals (#11, -3; #3, -4; #9, -5; #34, -2).

Participants from panels 3 and 4 *defined* Viewpoint 2: two from Panel 3; and one from Panel 4.

Viewpoint 3: Introduce long-term measures - avoiding short-term fixes to tackle poverty

Poverty in Edinburgh should be tackled by focusing on long-term measures that will make a substantive difference rather than short-term fixes. Of central importance is the provision of fairer work, which should at the very least pay the minimum amount people need for their basic needs (#30, +5; #46, +1). While jobs should be available to all who want them, these should not be provided through zero-hour contracts, which should be banned (#27, +3; #28, +1). Long-term measures that make it cheaper to live and be healthy will also help those in poverty, such as increasing affordable homes for low income households (#7, +4); providing affordable and accessible childcare (#10, +5); offering more education and training, particularly to parents and children (#22, +3; #29, +4), making more money available for primary health care and reducing the price of healthy food (#24, +4; #5, +4). The city should focus on these longer-term measures, as it will then make it easier for those living in poverty to take responsibility for their own situation (#19, +2). A co-ordinated approach to the delivery of these anti-poverty initiatives between the public, private and third sectors, and increased Government spending, is required to make these policies a reality (#39, +3; #42, +3).

More immediate or short-term measures will not help the fight against poverty, such as the provision of food and clothes banks (#4, -4), providing shelter/housing to people sleeping rough (#8, -3), asking people to volunteer to help those living in poverty (#12, -5) and making affordable, flexible loans available to people (#1, - 5). Similarly, while people should still be able to access their entitled benefits, it is only necessary that benefits keep up with the rising cost of living rather than increasing their general value (#33, +2; #32, +2; #20, -4).

Participants from panels 1 and 2 *defined* Viewpoint 3: two from Panel 1; and one from Panel 2.

Areas of consensus and agreement

While there were diverse views on how poverty should be tackled in Edinburgh, several points of consensus and agreement can be identified, particularly in relation to ensuring that people receive the benefits to which they are entitled (#33) and that poverty should be tackled by improving support for particular vulnerable groups, such as disabled people, ex-offenders, or people with poor mental health (#23). Participants also agreed that poverty should not be tackled by shifting resources away from migrants and asylum seekers to support Scottish/British citizens (#17). Participants were fairly neutral about an approach to tackling poverty based on challenging negative stereotypes of people living in poverty (#13), or about supporting industries, companies or sectors that can provide decent, well-paid jobs (#31).

Participants' views mirror findings from the *British Social Attitudes* survey in relation to increasing support for vulnerable individuals. For example, in 2017, 78% people thought that the government should spend more on carers and 67% thought that the government should spend more on disabled people who cannot work (Phillips et al., 2018). On the other hand, there is a divergence in relation to views on migrants: greater empathy expressed towards migrants and asylum seekers by our research participants contrasts with the 24% of British people who think that EU migrants should only have access to benefits after three years, and the further 30% who think that these should only be accessed after five years or more (Ford and Heath, 2014).

Participants in this research felt strongly that people should receive the benefits they are entitled to. Other Scottish research has evidenced significant barriers that make it difficult for people to claim benefits to which they are entitled, including a lack of support available to claimants, a lack of guidance and information available to individuals concerning the benefits that they are eligible to claim, and unfair treatment within the system (Inglis et al., 2019).

4.2 Panel Discussion Findings

Participants were asked if there were any statements missing from the card-sort – that is, other solutions to poverty in Edinburgh that we did not mention. Examples from individual panels included: more 'community link workers' (panel 1); providing more education/training opportunities (panel 1); tackling inequality from a young age (panel 2); introducing a universal basic income (panels 2, 3); addressing negative attitudes to poverty, and a focus on more diverse employment areas/sectors (both panel 3).

Favoured solutions to tackling poverty in Edinburgh included:

Including people living in poverty in decision-making: Ensuring the voices of people living in poverty contribute to local and city-wide decision-making was a key theme across the panels. In the panel with third sector and public services employees, it was felt that poorer communities are disempowered and are not engaged in decision about how things are done in their communities. For example, it was reported that they are not consulted when new buildings are constructed removing what little green space exists.

Tackling attitudes and lack of awareness of poverty: The business leaders' discussion on solutions focused on addressing attitudes to poverty in the city. For example, a specific solution provided was greater training and awareness about poverty in the city across employment sectors and in education. One business leader stated:

> I think it's about the education side of it. If you don't see it then you don't know that there is something to help then I think its convincing more people of the need to tackle poverty. (Panel 3)

Positive examples of poverty awareness training being conducted with teachers in the city was highlighted:

> … there is training for teachers in Edinburgh called 'One in Five' that's an in-service session on poverty so that teachers can recognise the symptoms of poverty. There is also practical things about how we do survive on this budget and things like that. (Panel 3)

Employment: In the business leaders' panel, participants felt that zero-hours contracts should not necessarily be banned as, when used correctly, they have benefits in terms of flexibility for workers (e.g. students). However, participants felt that employers need to take more responsibility to ensure that employees on zero-hour contracts have more rights (e.g. providing more notice about shifts). In contrast, people living in poverty felt strongly that zero-hour contracts *should* be banned. One participant stated: "*How are people on these contracts supposed to get a mortgage? Often people have to work a certain number of hours to even get a lease.*" (Panel 2)

Tourism: In the panel with business leaders, discussion around tourism focussed on both the benefits and negative impact for the city as a whole. There were mixed feelings about whether a tourist tax would impact positively on poverty in the city. Participants believed that any tourist tax would have to be transparent in terms of how it is used to help communities. There was also some concern that it might be off putting for tourists. Views on implementing a tourist tax were also mixed in the panel involving people with no direct experience of poverty. Some supported in the idea in principle, but others pointed to the fact that tourism is a key industry in Edinburgh and the city should not deter tourists. One participant felt that more could be done in Edinburgh to improve employment opportunities in the tourism sector:

> We don't educate kids at school that they can work in the tourism industry, there's opportunities there to develop massively and be - Edinburgh has the chance to be one of the greatest tourist destinations on the planet if it's done properly. (Panel 1)

Others felt concerned that policy makers in the city do not realise the negative impacts of tourism upon those who live in the city (particularly during the festival season) and the high costs of activities for citizens.

Co-ordination of services: Improving co-ordination of services emerged as key theme in the panel discussions. For example, in the panel with people with no direct experience of living in poverty, when participants were asked if they thought that anything was missing from the card-sorts, the idea of a 'community link warden' was discussed - a place "*where relationships and trust can really be built*" (Panel 1). Participants described the benefits of community-based approaches, such as Community Renewal[4], but argued that increased co-ordination of services within the city is required, particularly sharing of networks and contacts. One participant stated that whoever the single point of contact might be needs to be in a position of power to be able to able to influence decision-making:

> That person who is that central point of contact needs to have some sort of authority (some power) so if somebody's coming in saying (this has been cut my benefits have been cut) these question they should be able to there should be somebody within each community area that can phone up whatever organisation and say right we are stopping all this eh you are trying this person. (Panel 1)

Panel representativeness

Each of the panels were asked to estimate the extent to which they thought their views would be representative of (i) those from their group (e.g. employment, friends, family), and (ii) wider society. Most participants felt that their own views would be shared by like-minded friends, family and

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[4] Community Renewal is a Scottish charity that works in small neighbourhoods and housing estates to improve the wellbeing of families and communities and increase the employment rate in these communities.

colleagues; but, on the whole, would not be representative of others in the city. One participant from the panel of people with no direct experience of living in poverty stated that people in the city might have a certain level of awareness, but do not understand the "*nuances of what it actually means to be in poverty*" as a result of an assumption that poverty cannot be that bad in Edinburgh (Panel 1).

5. Conclusion and Recommendations

These findings are consistent with the conclusions drawn in earlier Edinburgh Poverty Commission reports (Edinburgh Poverty Commission 2018, 2019a, 2019b, 2019c; Robertson, 2019). These reports suggest that there is public support for several measures, which could help reduce poverty in Edinburgh. However, we also extend and deepen the understanding of poverty in Edinburgh through this report.

There is a strong view that Edinburgh is a city divided by wealth and income inequalities; this troubles its residents. Poverty is accepted as a genuine problem in this wealthy city, albeit not one which is always visible in every neighbourhood. The hidden geography of poverty to some in Edinburgh is thought to weaken sympathy and undermine collective commitment to tackle it. Set against this, participants expressed strong support for action to make Edinburgh a more inclusive city.

The research canvassed opinion on those actions that are within the power of the city to deliver. Several of these actions are best delivered in partnership across public, private and community sectors; for some, the public sector is best placed to provide leadership in progressing co-ordinated actions.

It is evident that that there is little appetite among Edinburgh residents for punitive measures intended to punish those living in poverty and to compel them to undertake pre-determined actions thought by others to enable them to improve their own circumstances. Instead, Edinburgh citizens favour providing support which increases opportunities available to those in poverty, such as enhanced training, higher wages, better working conditions and local services, which improve quality of life.

There is also support for ensuring that people experiencing poverty and disadvantaged communities should be central to developing effective responses to poverty in Edinburgh. Although these findings show that Edinburgh is regarded as a divided city, those who participated in this study did not regard those experiencing poverty as helpless 'Others'. Rather, they are viewed as fellow citizens struggling in difficult circumstances who deserve help. In this sense, there is a basis for building a more united city, which shares its prosperity more equitably.

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Appendix 1: Methodology

Q-methodology approach

Q-methodology is a well-established mixed-methodology (combining quantitative and qualitative techniques) for studying 'subjectivity' e.g. values, views, attitudes and beliefs (Watts and Stenner, 2012). While it has been used in a wide variety of social, public and health policy areas (for example, Brown, 1980; van Exel et al., 2015; McHugh et al., 2019), it has not been used to examine attitudes to poverty in the UK. The central features of a Q-methodology study involve participants ranking a set of statements onto a grid (a card-sort), a data reduction technique (by-person factor analysis) is then used to identify patterns of similarity between these card-sorts to produce a smaller number of shared views. The four main stages of the research process are described in the following sections.

1. Generation of statement sets
2. Selection of a sample of participants
3. Data collection
4. Data analysis and interpretation

The Statement Sets

Statement sets comprise subjective views on the topic in question. Appropriate sources where discussions and views are expressed on the topic are identified, e.g. interview transcripts, survey findings, commentary on social media, etc. from which a long list of statements is generated. The next step is to select a representative sample of all the possible subjective views that could exist on the topic by removing repetition and ensuring coverage and balance of issues.

In this study, the research team generated two sets of statements of opinion, i.e. (i) one on 'Consequences of poverty in Edinburgh'; and (ii) one on 'Solutions to tackling poverty in Edinburgh'. Statements were drawn from a range of sources, including findings from research on the lived experiences of poverty in Edinburgh (Robertson, 2019), responses to consultations conducted by the Edinburgh Poverty Commission (Edinburgh Poverty Commission, 2019a), and from open-ended responses provided by Edinburgh citizens in the stage one survey (McKendrick, 2020). After, the initial long list of statements was reviewed and filtered down to smaller set of statements by removing duplicates, merging statements and referring to theory. These smaller statement sets were piloted with SPIRU students. Following feedback and discussions among the research team, a set of 36 statements on 'Consequences' and 46 statements on 'Solutions' were selected (Appendices 2 and 3). Statements were designed to form a complete sentence with a standard prefix, i.e. "As a result of poverty in Edinburgh…" ('Consequences') or "Poverty in Edinburgh should be tackled by…" ('Solutions').

Recruitment and Participant Sample

Q methodology uses qualitative sampling techniques to identify individuals who may each be expected to hold distinct and rich views on the topic in question. In this study, we used purposive sampling to identify candidates who matched the profile of the groups the Edinburgh Poverty Commission asked us to engage (listed in the Introduction).

The majority of participants were recruited having completed the survey on attitudes toward poverty in Edinburgh, which comprised the first stage of this research (McKendrick, 2020). Among the questions

asked in the survey were ones which ascertained survey respondents' (i) current and prior experience of living with poverty; (ii) their employment status; and (iii) their postcode, from which it was possible to identify if they lived in one of Scotland's 20% Most Deprived Areas, according to the Scottish Index of Multiple Deprivation (Scottish Government, 2020). Participants for the business panel were recruited via Poverty Alliance contacts.

Participants were invited to take part in two panels in February 2020. We aimed to recruit 6 - 8 participants for each panel. In total, 21 participants took part in one or both of the panels: seven people with no direct experience of poverty; three people who identified living in poverty but not in deprived areas; five business leaders/small business owners; and six people working in statutory services or for a third sector organisation. Fifteen participants attended both panels.

Data collection

Each of the eight panel sessions comprised three parts.

1. Individual card-sorts. Two members of the research team facilitated each panel session and provided standardised, step-by-step instructions to participants on how to complete the card-sort. For each group, the 'Consequences' card-sort was undertaken in the first panel session and the 'Solutions' card-sort was completed in the second panel session. Following an introduction to the study, participants were presented with a statement set (a deck of cards – see **Appendix 4**), and were first asked to consider each statement in turn and to place it in one of three piles: 'like my point of view', 'neutral' and 'unlike my point of view'. Participants were then provided with a quasi-normal shaped grid (**Appendix 5**) that corresponded to each statement set, and asked to rank each statement on a 11-point scale from 'most like their view' (+5 on the grid) to 'most unlike their view' (-5) working their way column by column from the extreme ends of the grid towards the centre.
2. Individual questionnaire. Following each card-sort, participants self-completed a short questionnaire, which asked them to provide general comments about their views for each card-sort and to reflect on why they had chosen to place statements at the extreme ends of their grid, i.e. (those 'most like' and 'most unlike' their point of view).
3. Group discussion. The final stage of each panel session was a group discussion among participants, facilitated by the research team. In the first panel, the discussions explored the consequences of poverty in Edinburgh; participants were asked to discuss their perceptions of the main effects of poverty in the city, reflecting on the decisions (card placements) that they made in their individual card-sorts. In the second panel (on solutions to tackling poverty in Edinburgh), participants were asked to discuss how poverty could be solved in the city, again reflecting on the decisions (card placements) that they had made in their individual card-sorts. Each discussion was recorded and transcribed for analysis.

Each panel lasted up to two hours.

Analysis

Data analysis comprised two stages.

1. Specifying factors through quantitative and qualitative data analysis (shared viewpoints)
2. Interpreting factors through expert interpretation of quantitative and qualitative data

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Each dataset – 'Consequences' and 'Solutions' – was analysed independently using a dedicated Q methodology software package – KADE (Banasick, 2019). Principal component analysis (PCA) was followed by Varimax rotation to identify a small number of shared viewpoints (factors) based on the correlations between participants' card-sorts. Quantitative and qualitative criteria were used to select factor solutions:

- factors had at least two *defining* card-sorts i.e. card-sorts have a significant association (p<0.01) with a factor;
- the factor loading (the correlation coefficient between the card-sort and a factor) accounts for the majority of common variance[5];
- the factors are interpretable and represent a coherent point of view, assessed by interpreting the factor arrays[6] for each factor and referring to the self-complete questionnaires[7].

The aim of factor interpretation is to holistically describe each factor (shared viewpoint) from the selected factor solution through reference to the placement of statements on the factor arrays. Interpretation is aided by paying particular attention to *characterising, distinguishing* and *consensus* statements (described below) and referring, and drawing on responses, to the self-complete questionnaires of those participants with *defining* card-sorts:

- Characterising statements are those that participants feel most strongly about and are placed at the extreme ends of the grids e.g. -5, -4, +4 and +5 positions.
- Distinguishing statements are those statements whose placement on the grid differs from that in other factors in a way that is measured to be statistically significantly different (p<0.01); these highlight statements, which are specifically important for that shared viewpoint, as they are placed differently than in the other factors.
- Consensus statements are statements that are *not* placed statistically significantly differently (p>0.05) between any pairs of factors; these highlight statements, which are placed similarly across different factors.

Group discussions were transcribed and analysed thematically by two members of the research team.

Results

In total, 21 participants took part in one or both panels: five identified as having no experience of living in poverty (panel 1); three had experience of poverty but were not currently living in a deprived area (panel 2); three were business leaders (panel 3); and four employed by a third sector organisation or statutory service (panel 4). In total, 15 participants attended both panels. Analysis was based on 19 and 17 participants, respectively, for 'Consequences' and 'Solutions' (see **Appendix 6**).

Throughout the report (in sections 3.1 and 4.1 in particular), we used the notation "hashtag number" (e.g. #24) and provide the grid position (e.g. +4) of the statement. In the main body of the report, these

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[5] The proportion of a card-sort's variance that is accounted for by a factor solution.
[6] These are idealised card-sorts which represent how a participant with a 100% correlation with a factor would have sorted the statements.
[7] While these data were collected, it could not be utilised during analysis and interpretation as it was securely stored at Glasgow Caledonian University campus; access to workplace restrictions, introduced in response to the COVID-19 outbreak, prevented us from accessing it, at the point of data analysis.

serve as shorthand for the evidence reported in Appendix 1 and 2. For example, '#24, +4' for the 'Consequences of poverty' card-sort means that for the factor in question statement 24 appeared in position +4 of the grid.

Limitations

All research has its limitations. The key limitations of this research are as follows:

1. A lack of diversity of participants who took part in the panels: most of the participants in panel 1 worked in either statutory services or for the third sector and so were similar to the participants in panel 4.
2. A small sample of panel participants: only 15 participants attended both panels and this fairly small sample size is recognised when we draw conclusions.

Appendix 2: 'Consequences' Statements and Factor Scores

#	As a result of poverty in Edinburgh . . .	F1	F2	F3
1	…better off citizens are more likely to do something to tackle poverty	-4	-4	0*

2	… those in poverty are labelled, stereotyped, humiliated and not treated with respect	4	0*	4
3	… those in poverty feel like they are excluded from the rest of society	3*	-1	1
4	*… those in poverty are less motivated to improve their situation*	*-4*	*-5*	*-5*
5	… those in poverty develop support networks to tackle problems caused by poverty	-1	-2	0
6	… those in poverty focus on short-term issues rather than thinking about the future	0*	4*	-4*
7	… those in poverty are more likely to have more children	-5	-1	-3
8	… those in poverty become disconnected from their families	-1	-3	-3
9	… those in poverty become more reliant on others for support	0	-2	-1
10	… it makes it harder for the next generation to escape poverty	5	1*	5
11	… the city becomes a more dangerous place	-3*	0	0
12	… money goes to people who do not deserve it	-5	-3	-3
13	… money goes to people who do not deserve it	-4	-2	-2
14	… the lives of those in poverty are more stressful	5	3	-1*
15	… poverty becomes more visible in the city centre	-1*	-4*	2*
16	*… poverty comes to dominate life in poorer parts of the city*	*1*	*1*	*3*
17	… poorer communities tend to be dirty, polluted, lack greenspace or in poor condition	-2	4*	-4
18	… a culture of dependency grows in communities where the worst-off in society live	-2	1*	-1
19	… the city becomes more divided between rich and poor	1	4	5
20	… charities lack the resources to meet demand	0	0	4
21	… Council cuts hit the worst-off communities hardest	2*	-1	0
22	… employers have no incentive to improve pay or working conditions	-3*	2	3
23	… more people do not want to pay tax, as they think their money will be wasted on the poor	-3*	-5	-5
24	*… those in poverty find it difficult to make ends meet*	*4*	*5*	*3*
25	… those in poverty have fewer opportunities	3	2	1
26	… those in poverty are more likely to accept poorer pay and working conditions	0	3*	-1
27	… those in poverty do not have savings or resources	2*	0*	-2*
28	… the quality and range of public services in poorer areas gets worse	0	2	0
29	*… it becomes more difficult to support groups with specialist needs*	*0*	*1*	*1*
30	*… there is more demand for temporary accommodation*	*1*	*0*	*0*
31	*… people in poverty are doing without basic necessities*	*4*	*3*	*4*
32	… people in poverty are not able to afford things that make life more enjoyable	2	-1	2
33	… people in poverty become dependent on drugs, alcohol or other addictive substances/habits	-2	0*	-4
34	… the lives of those in poverty are strongly shaped by what is available in their neighbourhood	1*	-4*	-2
35	… those in poverty do not achieve their full potential	3	5	2
36	… businesses find it difficult to make money in poorer parts of the city	-1	-3	1

*Indicates distinguishing statements at p<0.01. Italics indicate consensus statements non-significant at p>0.05.

Appendix 3: 'Solutions' Statements and Factor Scores

#	Poverty in Edinburgh should be tackled by . . .	F1	F2	F3
1	…making it possible for people in need to access affordable, flexible loans when they need them	-2	-1	-5*
2	…ensuring that free meals are available to children during the holidays	2	-1	0
3	…expanding access to community gardens and allotments to allow people to grow their own foods	-3	-4	-1*
4	…providing food and clothes banks for people in need	-2	0	-4*
5	…reducing the cost of health food	-1	-2	4*
6	*…cutting the cost of fuel to heat homes*	*0*	*0*	*0*
7	…making it more affordable for low income households to buy or rent housing	4	0*	4
8	….providing shelter or housing to people sleeping rough on the streets	3	3	-3*
9	….making Edinburgh festivals more accessible to low-income households	-3	-5	-1*
10	….providing affordable and accessible childcare	2	1	5*
11	…increasing the availability of public transport and making it more affordable	0	-3*	0
12	….asking more people to volunteer to help those living in poverty	-4	-2	-5
13	*….challenging negative stereotypes towards people living in poverty*	*2*	*0*	*0*
14	…convincing more people of the need to tackle poverty	1	0	-3*
15	…cracking down on people pretending to be in poverty	-5	-2*	-4
16	…using the benefits system to encourage people to work and/or study	-4*	1*	-2*
17	…shifting resources away from migrants and asylum seekers to support Scottish/British citizens	-5	-5	-4
18	….encouraging people living in poverty to feel better about themselves	-2	1	-1
19	…helping people living in poverty to take personal responsibility for themselves	-4*	3	2
20	…increasing the level of benefits	4*	-3	-4
21	…tackling the culture of dependency on benefits	-4*	-1	-2
22	…teaching parents and children essential life skills, such as how to cook affordable meals or manage a budget	-2*	2	3
23	*…improving support for vulnerable individuals, such as disabled people, ex-offenders or people with poor mental health*	*2*	*2*	*1*
24	…making more funding available for good primary health care, such as GP surgeries or community pharmcists, in poor areas	0	0	4
25	…increasing the availability of, and access to, social care services in poor areas	1	4*	-1
26	…increasing the availability of, and access to, mental health services in poor areas	1	4	1
27	…banning zero hours contracts	1	-4*	3
28	…making sure that everyone who wants a job can get a job	0	5*	1
29	…providing more education and training opportunities for people living in poverty	2*	5	4
30	…making sure employers pay a wage that means it's possible to cover basic needs and take part in society	4	2	5
31	*…supporting industries, companies or sectors that can provide decent, well-paid jobs*	*-1*	*-1*	*-1*
32	…making sure welfare benefits keep up with the rising cost of living	5	4	2
33	*…ensuring that everyone who is entitled to benefits receives them*	*3*	*3*	*2*
34	…increasing the availbility of benefits advice services	0	-2	-2
35	…providing longer-term funding for charities, local groups and community enterprises who support people experiencing poverty	1	2	-2
36	…helping communities to own land, buildings or other assets in their community	-2	-3	-3
37	…ensuring that poorer communities have a say in decisions that will affect them	3*	1	-2
38	…listening to and acting on the concerns of people living in poverty	4	4	0*

| 39	…increasing Government spending to tackle poverty	5*	3	3
40	…raising taxes fairly to generate funds to tackle poverty	3*	-1	0
41	…targeting resources to ensure that only low income households benefit	-3	-3	-3
42	…coordinating anti-poverty initatives across the public, private and third sectors	0	2	3
43	…creating a single point of contact to signpost those in need to the most appropriate services	-1	1	2
44	…introducing a tourist tax to raise funds to tackle poverty	-1	-4*	1
45	…finding more ways for people from different groups of different communities in society to mix together	-3	-2	2*
46	…making work pay so both parents don't have to work	-1	-4*	1

*Indicates distinguishing statements at p<0.01. Italics indicate consensus statements non-significant at p>0.05.

Appendix 4: Sample of Card-sort Cards
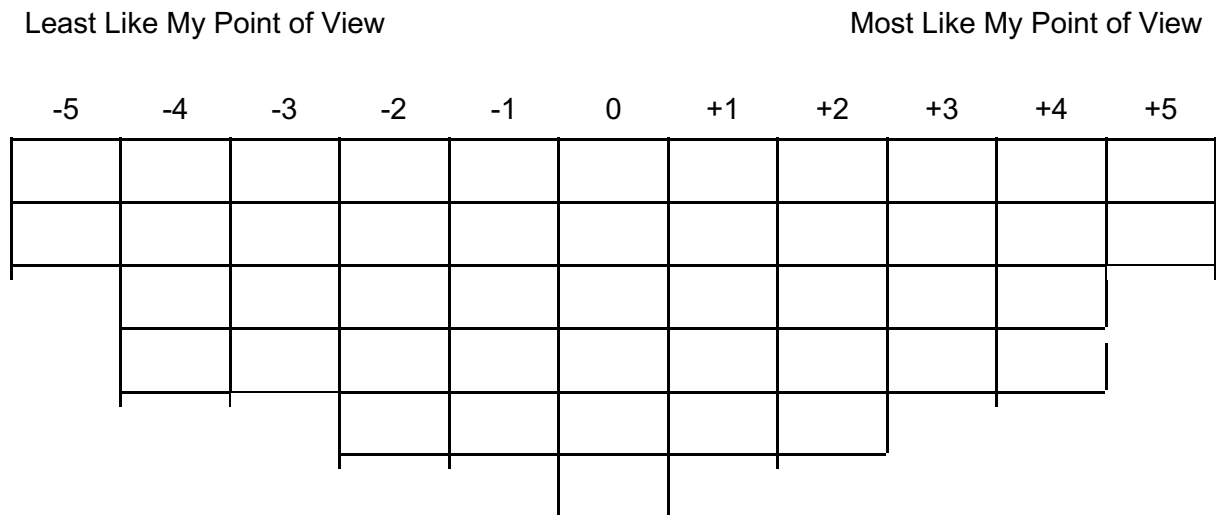
1 ... better-off citizens are more likely to do something to tackle poverty	**2** ... those in poverty are labelled, stereotyped, humiliated and not treated with respect
3 ... those in poverty feel like they are excluded from the rest of society	**4** ... those in poverty are less motivated to improve their situation
5 ... those in poverty develop support networks to tackle problems caused by poverty	**6** ... those in poverty focus on short-term issues rather than thinking about the future
7 ... those in poverty are more likely to have more children	**8** ... those in poverty become disconnected from their families

Appendix 5: Card-sort Diagrams

'Causes': 'As a result of poverty in Edinburgh…'

Least Like My Point of View   Most Like My Point of View

-5	-4	-3	-2	-1	0	+1	+2	+3	+4	+5
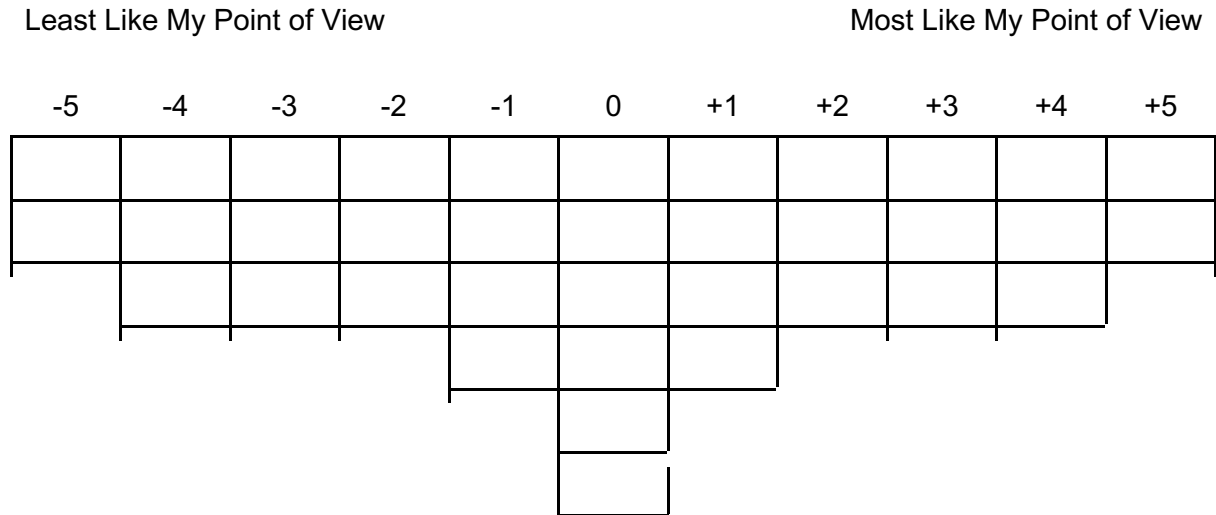
'Solutions': 'Poverty in Edinburgh should be tackled by…'

Least Like My Point of View   Most Like My Point of View

-5	-4	-3	-2	-1	0	+1	+2	+3	+4	+5

Appendix 6: Participant and Factor Loadings

Respondent ID*	'Consequences'			'Solutions'		
	Factor 1	Factor 2	Factor 3	Factor 1	Factor 2	Factor 3
P1-R1	**0.7017X**	0.2993	0.4144	**0.6464X**	**0.4511**	0.0653
P1-R2	**0.5106**	0.1173	**0.5875X**			
P1-R3	**0.6714X**	0.2757	0.1977	**0.4613X**	-0.0373	0.3481
P1-R4	**0.5796X**	0.1109	**0.5074**	**0.7294X**	0.3798	0.2707
P1-R5	0.2064	**0.5894X**	0.3846	**0.5388**	0.0403	**0.561X**
P1-R6	**0.4373**	**0.5086**	0.3586	-0.0043	**0.3999**	**0.6047X**
P1-R7	**0.4686**	**0.5965X**	0.2814			
P2-R1	**0.7164X**	0.3052	-0.0617	0.1349	0.0774	**0.7628X**
P2-R2	-0.0634	0.2106	**0.7903X**	0.1752	0.1493	**0.6333X**
P2-R3	-0.0097	**0.8683X**	0.0794	**0.5823X**	0.2899	0.1714
P3-R1	**0.5709X**	**0.5179**	-0.0009	0.2532	**0.6903X**	0.2697
P3-R2	**0.8396X**	-0.0006	0.2043			
P3-R3	**0.6945X**	0.4236	0.3313	**0.79X**	0.1512	0.023
P3-R4	**0.4904**	0.1678	**0.613X**	0.5475	**0.5295**	0.1791
P3-R5				0.2568	**0.7482X**	-0.0748
P4-R1	0.3927	**0.4986X**	0.2374			
P4-R2	**0.7692X**	**0.5084**	0.0707	**0.6911X**	**0.384**	0.2832
P4-R3	**0.7588X**	0.2574	0.3095	**0.834X**	0.0394	0.1778
P4-R4	**0.8021X**	0.1648	0.3664	**0.7452X**	0.0782	0.355
P4-R5	**0.5847X**	**0.5224**	0.102	**0.7874X**	0.1941	-0.0374
P4-R6				0.029	**0.7982X**	0.2676
%Explained Variance	35	18	14	31	16	14

The factor loadings of *defining* card-sorts are indicated with an X. These loadings meet the following two criteria: (i) the loading are significant (p<0.01). The significance level is calculated as 2.58*(SE). SE represents standard error that is defined as $1/\sqrt{N}$ where N is the number of statements in the statement set. For 'Consequences', 2.58*(SE) = 2.58 $(1/\sqrt{36})$ = 0.43. For 'Solutions', 2.58*(SE) = 2.58 $(1/\sqrt{46})$ = 0.3804. ii) the factor loading 'explains' more than half of the common variance. Significant factor loadings are shown in bold.

*Respondent ID signifies the panel each participant attended and their participant number. For example, P1-R1 refers to respondent 1 from panel 1 ('People in Edinburgh with no direct experience of poverty'). P1 = People in Edinburgh with no direct experience of poverty, P2 = People in poverty but not living in deprived parts of the city, P3 = Business leaders and small business owners and P4 = Statutory service providers and third sector organisations.