Poverty Leadership Panel

www.povertyleadershippanel.org.uk

Date: 21 August 2014

Agenda item number: 4

Title: Challenging negatives attitudes to poverty – Action Plan progress

Summary: The Panel agreed that at each meeting it would look at one priority theme in more detail. This meeting's priority is challenging negative attitudes to poverty.

Papers relevant for this discussion include:
- overview of progress
- briefing on key findings from staff survey
- campaign framework
- mentoring programme overview
- Information and invitation regarding the Think Yes campaign.

The overview of progress document has specific questions the Panel may want to address in its discussions (in the box 'For Panel's consideration').

This report is for: Discussion.

Recommendation: The Panel:

(i)   notes the progress on the attitudes priority; and
(ii)   considers the questions in the box 'For Panel's consideration'.

Challenge negative attitudes about people in poverty: August 2014

PROGRESS AND ACHIEVEMENTS	CHALLENGES	PARTICIPATION
Over 3,500 staff in Glasgow took part in a survey about their attitudes and understanding of poverty in their work. Respondents included staff from GCC, Wheatley Group (GHA), Police Scotland and Scottish Fire and Rescue. The survey raised awareness of the PLP across the city. Survey results have been shared with individual organisations to inform their staff development programmes. The findings are also being used to help inform a PLP staff messaging campaign. The framework for the staff messaging campaign has been developed following extensive consultation. We are now beginning to discuss how the campaign will be used across a range of organisations.	Agreeing the questions and approach for the staff survey was challenging, however this was delivered within timescale. A number of third sector national charities and organisations have shown an interest in this work stream and significant resource has been deployed in engaging them. However, they have been unable to commit any resources or practical assistance. Each organisation will want to use and integrate the messaging material within existing programmes and structures. We will need to engage with agencies to ensure that the campaign is given the profile required, and to make sure that it is flexible enough to meet a wide range of needs.	A small group has worked together to develop the messaging campaign, made up of people with direct experience of poverty (GHN, GDA, Wee Panel), Wheatley and GCC staff. Another small group worked together to agree the questions and approach to the staff survey. This involved Wheatley Group/ GHA, Glasgow City Council and GCPH. A broad consultative group meets prior to each Panel meeting for a progress report, to agree key messages/ questions to take to the Panel, and to discuss future priorities. This group includes PTC, NHS, GDA, GCPH, PA, GCC, Wee Panel, SRC, GCC.

EQUALITIES AND HUMAN RIGHTS

The staff survey included questions regarding all equalities groups, and collected staff information. The messaging campaign will adopt a human rights based approach.

PRIORITIES NEXT QUARTER	FOR PANEL'S CONSIDERATION
Finalise and launch staff messaging campaign. Launching a senior manager mentoring programme in September. Senior staff will be mentored by people with experience of poverty.	What can the PLP do in response to the survey findings? How do you think the messaging campaign could be embedded in your organisation? Which elements suit your organisation?

Staff Attitude Survey

This provides key findings from a survey undertaken for the Poverty Leadership Panel in June 2014. The survey was carried out to understand the views of staff across the city who work with people who are struggling against poverty. The findings will help shape the Panel's Action Plan for Change, to improve services and ensure that we don't stigmatise people struggling against poverty. It will inform a future messaging campaign, training and other information and supports. The survey was administered anonymously to all staff in Glasgow City Council, Wheatley Group (including GHA), Scottish Fire and Rescue (Glasgow) and Police Scotland (Glasgow).

Key Points

- Most staff roles involved direct contact with members of the public, either face to face or by telephone, indicating a high awareness of the issues people face. Ninety-five percent of staff felt there was either 'quite a lot' or a 'fair amount' of poverty in Glasgow. The majority of staff believed poverty is likely to increase in the next ten years.

- Respondents were asked to agree with statements defining poverty. The majority agreed that people are in poverty if they haven't got enough money to eat and live without getting into debt. Only 34% agreed that people are in poverty if they can afford what they really need but not what other people take for granted. This understanding of poverty creates space for staff to make judgements about people in poverty's personal budgeting and consumer choices, such as purchasing a television.

- Over half of staff felt that poverty could be explained by structural factors such as injustices in society and it being an inevitable part of modern life. A potent message from the PLP to staff could be that poverty is not inevitable and that staff have the power and responsibility to ameliorate it where they can.

- Sixteen per cent of staff believed poverty was caused by 'laziness and lack of willpower' or because people were 'unlucky'. Other attributed causes included family influences and addiction issues. These negative attitudes may be a result of individual observations or perceptions based on current media narratives. They point to a need for a systematic approach to supporting staff, by raising awareness of the underlying determinants of poverty and the impact these have on peoples' life chances.

- Most stated that they would challenge clients and colleagues who discriminate against vulnerable groups, but this is not consistent for all vulnerable groups. Thirteen per cent of staff would not challenge or report people discriminating against those whose first language is not English. Twelve per cent would not challenge or report discrimination against people with addiction issues. This is an important finding when we think of which communities are most likely to experience poverty in Glasgow.

- Staff identified the need for a shared understanding of poverty between all partner organisations and strategic approaches to establishing cross agency and team working. Importantly for the PLP, one-third of respondents favoured hearing or reading about service users' experiences of poverty.

- Awareness of the PLP was very low, with 70% of staff being unaware of its activities.

Responses by organisation

Organisation	Number of responses	Percentage of total	Approximate number of questionnaires issued
Wheatley Group	492	15%	2000
Scottish Fire and Rescue	57	2%	650
Police Scotland	114	4%	3000
Glasgow City Council	2330	72%	20,000
Prefer not to answer	153	5%	
Missing	111	3%	
TOTAL RESPONSES	**3257**	**100%**	

As the response rates varied considerably between organisations, comparisons of responses between organisations to each question will yield skewed results.

Views on how much poverty there is in Glasgow today

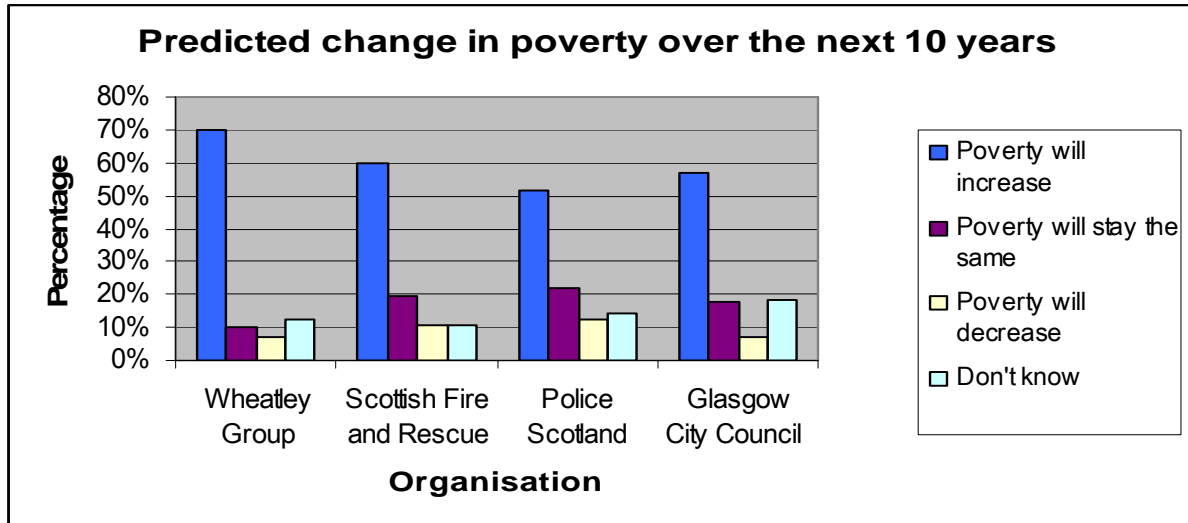Overall, over half of respondents (56%) felt there is "quite a lot" of poverty in Glasgow today.

Quite a lot	1817	56%
A fair amount	1265	39%
Very little	102	3%
None at all	4	0%
Don't know	63	2%
TOTAL	**3251**	**100%**

The British Social Attitudes Survey (2010-11)[1] also found that a similar 58% of people thought there was 'quite a lot' of poverty in Britain in 2009, but in that survey, 39% of the public thought there was 'very little' poverty in Britain. This differs greatly from this survey and the 2013 Glasgow Household Survey[2] where only 3% and 8% respectively believed there is very little poverty in Glasgow.

[1] British Social Attitudes Survey 28. http://ir2.flife.de/data/natcen-social-research/igb_html/pdf/1000001_e.pdf
[2] Glasgow Household Survey 2014. http://www.glasgow.gov.uk/CHttpHandler.ashx?id=20438&p=0

Most expect poverty to increase over the next 10 years

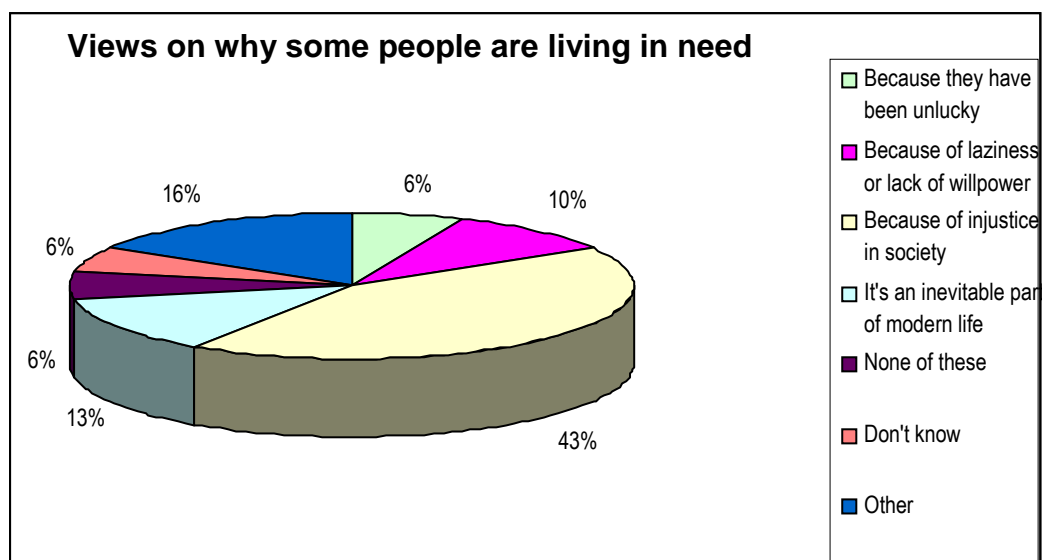## Predicted change in poverty over the next 10 years

Attitudes to poverty

Staff were offered three statements defining poverty and asked for their agreement or disagreement with each. Thirty-four per cent of staff agreed that people are in poverty if they can afford what they really need but not what other people take for granted; 66% agreed that people who have 'enough money to eat and live but not enough to buy other things they need' are in poverty; and the majority (89%) agreed that people are in poverty if they have not got enough money to eat and live without getting into debt.
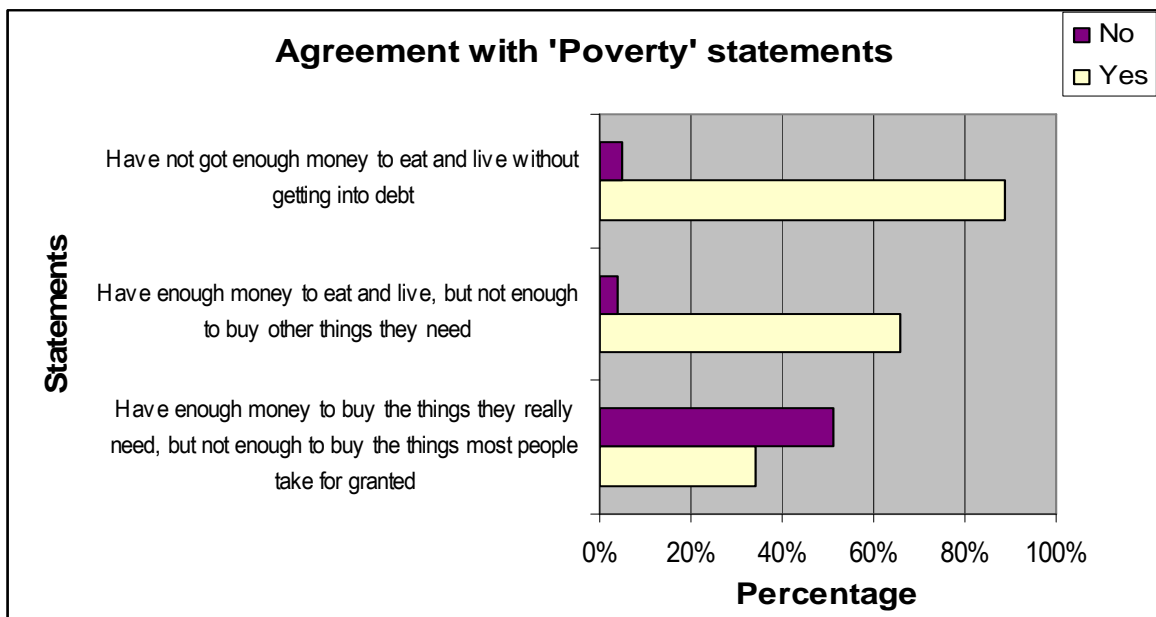
Perceived causes of poverty

In response to the question about why some people are living in need, the most common response (43%) was "because of injustice in society".   This is higher than the percentage of residents in the Glasgow Household Survey (40%) who selected this explanation, but lower than the findings of the 2013 NHS Greater Glasgow and Clyde survey[3] in which 55% of NHS staff believed that living in need is a result of injustice in society.

Views on why some people are living in need

16%   6%   6%   6%   13%   43%   10%

Legend:
- Because they have been unlucky
- Because of laziness or lack of willpower
- Because of injustice in society
- It's an inevitable part of modern life
- None of these
- Don't know
- Other

13% thought that living in need was "an inevitable part of modern life". Therefore, the combined proportion of staff choosing this option and "injustice in society", both of which are considered to be "social" explanations of poverty, arising from social, economic and political factors, was over half (56%). Only 16% chose the two more "individual" explanations of why people live in need, i.e. "laziness and lack of willpower" (10%) and "unlucky" (6%).

Lower percentages of respondents in the "All in" PLP survey of service users[4] (9%) and this staff survey (10%) thought that "laziness and lack of willpower" was a factor in determining need, compared to 21% of residents in the Glasgow Household Survey and 25% of British Social Attitude survey participants.

In the 'other' category, a range of comments were provided which related to both the structural and individual explanations of poverty. For instance:

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[3] A Fairer NHS Staff Survey March 2013.
http://library.nhsggc.org.uk/mediaAssets/library/A+Fairer+NHS+Staff+Survey+2013+FINAL[1].pdf
[4] 'All In', Report of Findings, Flash Survey 2, April 2014.
http://www.povertyleadershippanel.org.uk/sites/povertyleadershippanel.org.uk/files/Item4c_Poverty%20Survey%202%20April%202014.pdf

- Too complex to attribute to one cause (10%);

    "I believe everyone has individual circumstances - so while some people do not want to work, this is not true of everyone living in poverty. Often there are a set of circumstances rather than just one factor leading to a family living in poverty".

- Combination of some or all of the survey choices (10%);

    "There are different ways that people can end up living in poverty. Some are through changes in circumstances like losing a job, marriage breakdowns and there are those that are raised in an environment where personal improvement is not encouraged and poverty is seen as the norm".

- Generational patterns/family influences (10%);

    "Because of a culture of self-entitlement passed down from generation to generation, people believe the state owes them a living and don't take responsibility for their own actions".

- Lack of employment/low pay (9%);

    "Unemployment levels, and lack of relevant skills for current employment opportunities".

- Government policy/welfare state (9%);

    ''Lack of genuine political will to tackle the issues of poverty, with little collective push from society in general".

- Lack of education/resources (8%);

    "Because there is a lack of opportunity for many people who live in deprived areas. Education is not equally available".

- Health/addiction issues (8%).

    "I believe addictions to drugs, gambling, nicotine (to a lesser extent) and the consequences of excessive borrowing to be factors. Obviously the lack of gainful employment opportunities is a huge factor in addition to the above".

There were also general comments related to the social and structural determinants of poverty:

    ''Due to the multi-dimensional and persistent impact of deprivation and social inequality.'

Other respondents related it to 'individual' explanations

''In my broad experience the vast amount of unemployable persons who spend a lifetime on benefits are extremely well looked after…they have expensive phone contracts, motability cars, large 3D televisions, Sky contracts and spend a great deal of their benefits on alcohol and drugs''.

Experiences of dealing directly with people living in need

The key issues with staff reported as being raised by clients or members of the public relate to benefits issues (56%), unemployment (50%) and stress and anxiety as a result of finance or employment (50%).

Staff responses to discrimination

Over 50% of staff indicated that they would challenge customers/ clients who say something discriminatory. Staff were less likely, however to challenge discrimination against 'people with addiction issues' (13%) and 'people who's first language is not English' (12%).

In terms of staff responses to colleagues who say something discriminatory, higher percentages reported challenging colleagues in relation to people with physical and learning disabilities, those with mental health difficulties and older people. In common with challenging clients, staff were slightly less likely to challenge colleagues' discrimination against people with addiction issues (10%) and people whose first language is not English (8%). They were also less likely to challenge colleagues about discrimination against people living in poverty (8%) and people with another religion/belief (8%).
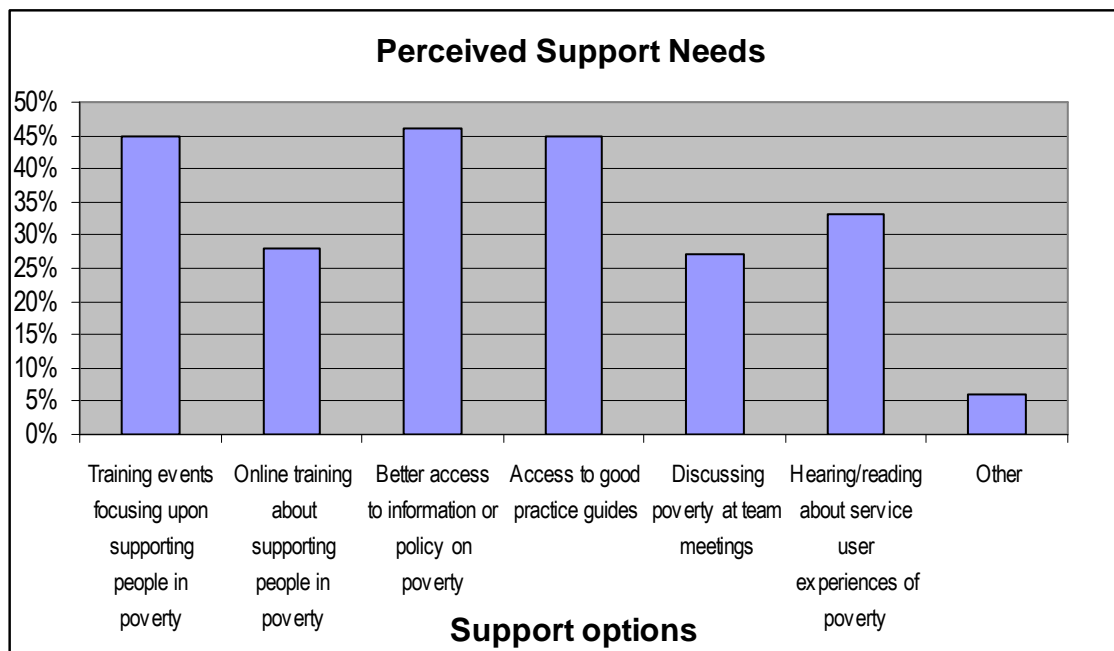
Improving responses to people in need and those suffering discrimination

Participants were asked how confident they feel when assisting people with a range of protected characteristics. The highest confidence levels were reported for older people, people with another religion/belief and Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual and Transgender people. (And yet fewer respondents would challenge discrimination against people with another religion or belief. Around one-quarter of staff reported being very confident with all equalities groups, except for those whose first language is not English (17%).

The main groups for whom staff were 'Not very confident' dealing with were people whose first language is not English (19%); people with mental health difficulties (17%); people with addiction issues (15%); and people with learning disabilities (13%).

Support needs

When asked to choose from a range of options that would help them support people in poverty, the three most popular options were better access to information or policy on poverty (46%); training events (45%) and access to good practice guides (45%). One-third of respondents also favoured hearing or reading about service-users' experiences of poverty.

Perceived Support Needs

A bar chart titled "Perceived Support Needs" with y-axis showing percentages from 0% to 50% in 5% increments, x-axis labeled "Support options":

- Training events focusing upon supporting people in poverty: 45%
- Online training about supporting people in poverty: 28%
- Better access to information or policy on poverty: 46%
- Access to good practice guides: 45%
- Discussing poverty at team meetings: 27%
- Hearing/reading about service user experiences of poverty: 33%
- Other: 6%

A number of 'other' suggestions can be grouped around:

- A shared understanding of poverty between organisations and partners

  "Listening and understanding from people who actually experience poverty first hand".

- Strategic approaches to dealing with poverty in the form of more and better holistic, cross-team and cross agency working

  "Being able to participate in sessions where experienced team members demonstrate how to support people (in poverty)".

- Access to information for signposting people to appropriate services

  "The ability to refer a person to an organisation that could actually provide that person with financial, physical and emotional support".

Awareness of the Poverty Leadership Panel

The awareness of the PLP's work was very low, with 70% of staff being unaware of it.

Further Information

The full report by Lynn Naven, Glasgow Centre for Population Health, is available at www.povertyleadershippanel.org.uk

Attitudes to Poverty – Staff Messaging Campaign Framework

PLP
POVERTY LEADERSHIP PANEL

Services

Attitudes

'People Make Glasgow'

'Poverty in Glasgow Affects Us All'

'Make poverty a thing of the past'

'All In' – you can make a difference'

How can you improve services?

What is your attitude to poverty?

Human Rights Approach

Customer Satisfaction
Better personalised service

Improved Knowledge
Myth Busting

Themes
It could be you (CPAG video & discussion point)
In my shoes (training game)
Building Rapport (checklist)
Personal Poverty Pledge

Themes
Statistics around benefits (poster)
In-work poverty (JRF video)
Personal choices (poster)
Scale of poverty (stick your labels video & poster)
Budget choices(poster)

Poverty Leadership Panel Mentoring Scheme

The Poverty Truth Commission is facilitating a senior leaders mentoring programme for the Poverty Leadership Panel.

Senior leaders will have the opportunity to be mentored by someone who has direct experience of struggling with poverty. This mentoring relationship will support their development as effective leaders.

Between four and six mentoring relationships will be supported in a programme that will run from autumn 2014 for a six month period.

The programme will include:

- An opening session (probably half day) where people would be introduced to the programme and the people they would be working with
- 4 – 6 sessions with each pair
- A closing session (again a half day) in which people would share something of what they had learnt and how they would aim to take this learning forward.

Panel members are asked to consider if they would like to take part in the programme.

Making homes and lives better

Think Yes Campaign and the PLP

'Think Yes' is an award-winning culture change programme where frontline staff are trusted to make decisions and design services tailored to individual customers.

Wheatley Housing Group's 'Think Yes' ethos is that there is 'no universal customer – no universal solution'. Services are designed at the point of request from the customer. A flat structure supports first-point-of-contact decision making. Small, generic housing officer patches enable a case-management approach, rather than process-focused service delivery. The housing officer is empowered to draw down wrap-around services including debt advice, fuel advice, tenancy support and employability services.

WHG has seen significant increases in customer satisfaction as a result of this programme.

Here is one of our success stories:-

> When a customer called in to end her tenancy, housing officer Dan Blake did all he could to find out why. He discovered that the tenant had lost her job and her self-esteem as a result of cancer treatment and extensive surgery. The tenant didn't want to go out, couldn't work and was terrified of the cancer returning. The only thing she had left was her home, which she loved. But she felt it would be better to move in with her mother. Dan used the 'Home Comforts' furniture service to make her house into a home, got her into training to help her boost her confidence and make new friends and makes regular visits to the tenant to make sure she's seeing her doctor and psychologist. Think Yes means we don't give up on our customers.

Click here to watch a Think Yes video

Panel members are asked whether they're interested in attending a breakfast seminar to discuss how the principles of Think Yes could be used in other organisations, with a view to improving services received by people in poverty in Glasgow.