

**QUESTION NO 15**

**By Councillor Rust for answer by the  
Convener of the Transport and  
Environment Committee at a meeting  
of the Council on 24 June 2021**

On the Spaces for People: Moving Forward section on the council website the Council makes the following statement: *"There is a notable difference in the general level of support and opposition between the market research and survey responses from residents. The market research is more representative of the views of residents as participants are a statistically representative sample of opinions based on Edinburgh's population demographic. The online survey were 'self-selecting' responses so are not statistically representative."*

On point 4.17 in the report to the Transport and Environment Committee: *"Potential retention of Spaces for People measures"* it is stated: *"It is worth noting that in previous cases where consultation and market research has been carried out on the same topic, for example 20mph speed limits, a similar pattern was observed, with much higher levels of opposition in consultation results compared with answers to market research."*

**Question** (1) It is a concerning trend that there are a number of examples where consultation and market research finding differ so significantly. However, it is always known that consultations are 'self-selecting' responses, therefore why was the consultation launched at a cost of £50,000 if it was felt that the 'self-selecting' responses would not be appropriate for gathering public opinion?

**Answer** (1)

**Question** (2) Has it been considered that market research respondents 'self-select' when they apply to join panels in the first place, and then they also 'self-select' as when invited to participate, they make a choice whether to participate or not?

**Answer** (2)

**Question** (3) Are people paid to give their opinion now more valued than individual residents giving their time to share their opinion on a matter that directly impacts them?

**Answer** (3)

**(4)** Has the Council considered that it could be the market research being flawed in some way that is leading to the significant mismatch in findings alongside the consultations?

**(4)**