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Understanding feelings of influence

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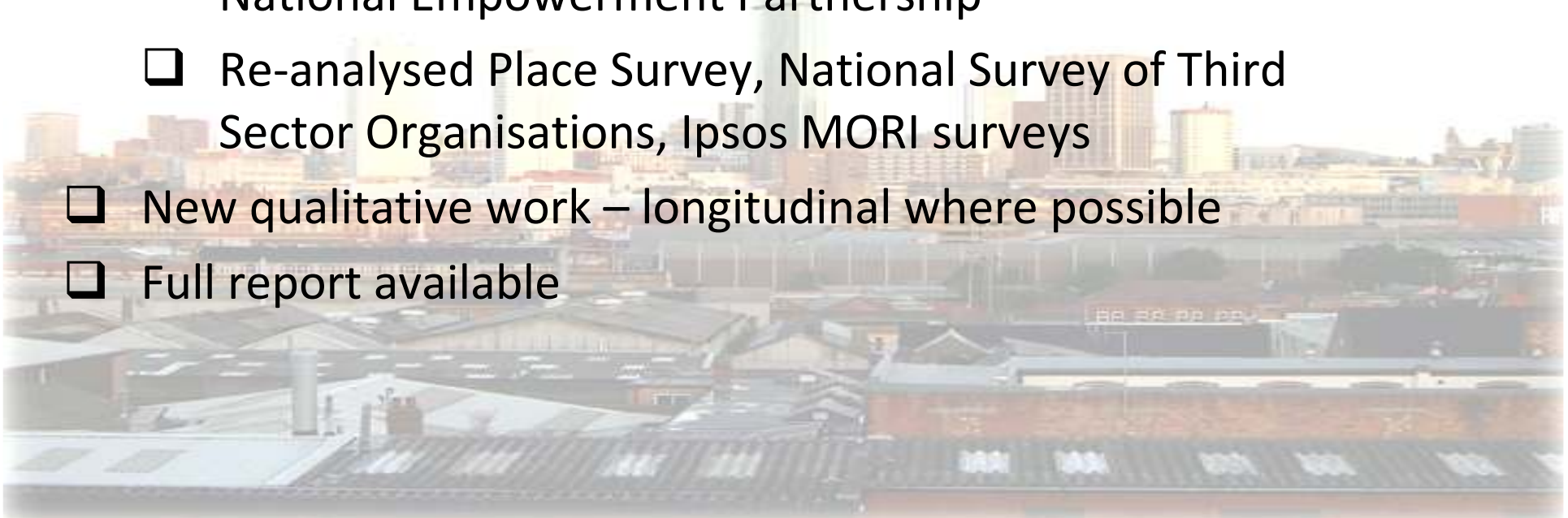




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The Study

- Understanding feelings of influence measure (NI4), the key indicator of “subjective empowerment”
- For Community Development Foundation and National Empowerment Partnership
- Re-analysed Place Survey, National Survey of Third Sector Organisations, Ipsos MORI surveys
- New qualitative work – longitudinal where possible
- Full report available





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NI 4 scores are largely determined by population and place

**We can explain 63% of variation in feelings of
influence knowing only 4 things about area...**

Ethnic diversity (positive)

Level of net international immigration (positive)

Region (North East higher)

How urban the area is (negative)



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**So whatever we do, we can't
affect 2/3 of our NI4 scores!**





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But NI4 still matters and what we do can still make a big difference...





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**‘Involvement in decision making’
does not necessarily
lead to empowerment**





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Involvement in local public services



Already involved (4%)



Want active involvement (5%)

24%

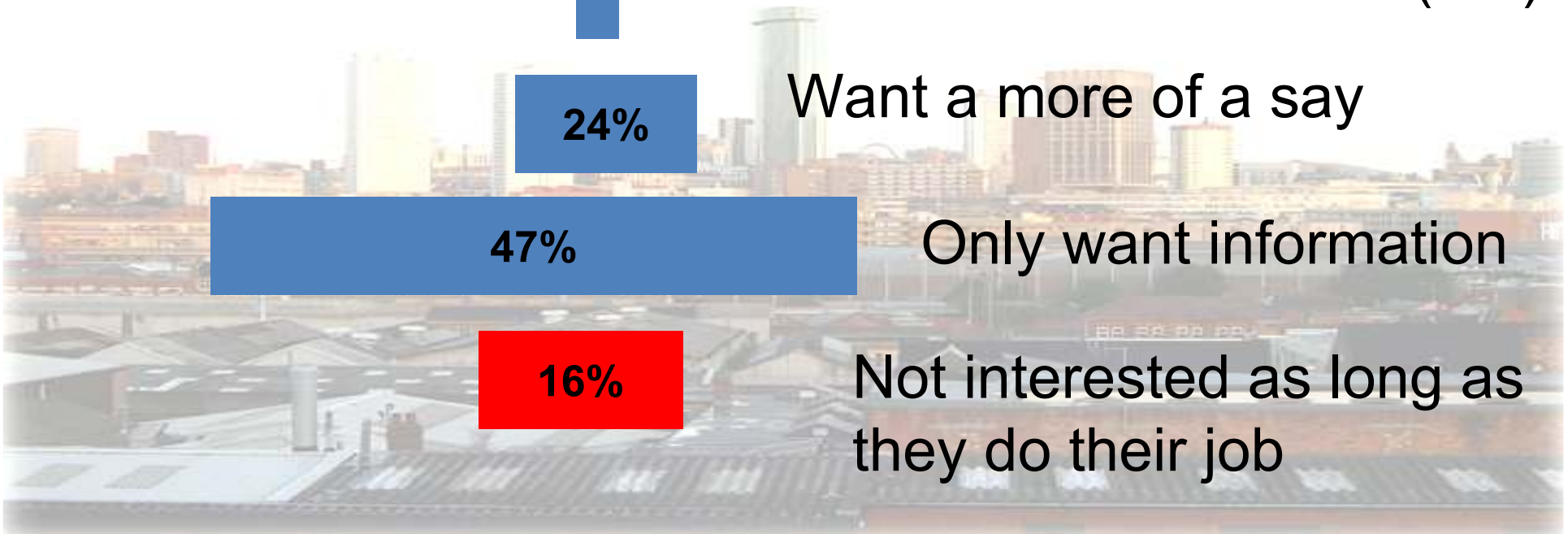
Want a more of a say

47%

Only want information

16%

Not interested as long as they do their job





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There are lots of unhappy involved people...

Involved in decision-making bodies on local issues

Yes

No

15%

85%

6%

CAN
influence
decisions

9%

CANNOT
influence
decisions

NOT a happy group...
- half the level of satisfaction with council, half as likely to feel informed, half as likely to think views sought...



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Involvement is more complex

It's the experience that counts

**The quality of communication and
consultation are key to affecting
feelings of Influence**





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Top factors related to influence...

- ✓ Information provision
- ✓ Sense of being consulted/listened to/acted on
- ✓ Knowing examples where others have influenced things in an area

People *SAY* they don't mind if told they can't get what they want as long as it is explained – closing the feedback loop

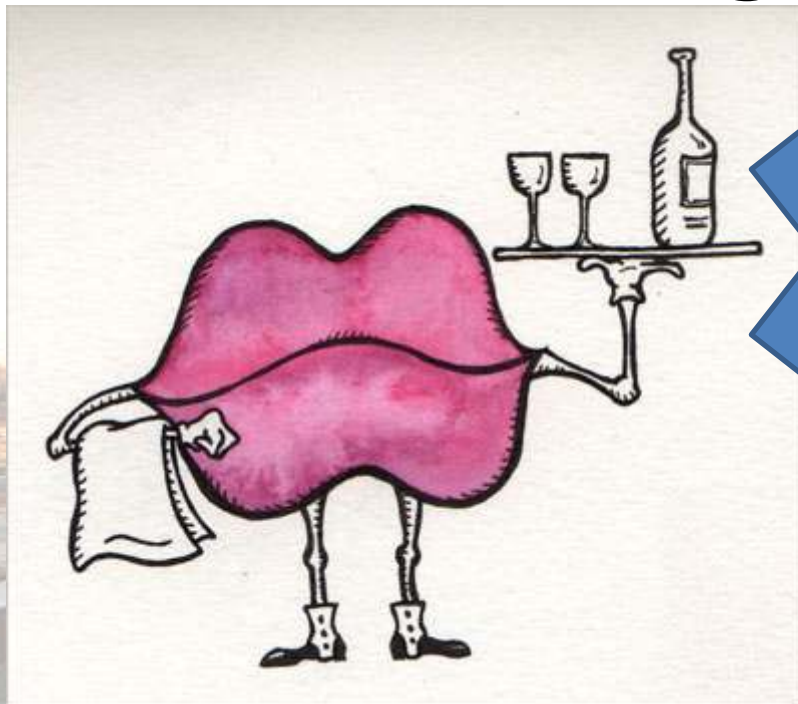
But people also remember “broken promises...”

...and are suspicious about whether decisions are already made



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Tick-box exercises and lip service are big 'no no's'





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Outcomes are important





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Satisfaction with local councils/ other agencies is other top theme related to feelings of influence

Most powerful impact on feelings of influence...
= where things got done/stopped – or failed to

BUT communities disagreed e.g. re-opening of same local road...
= triumph of local influence AND
= evidence that councils don't listen to residents



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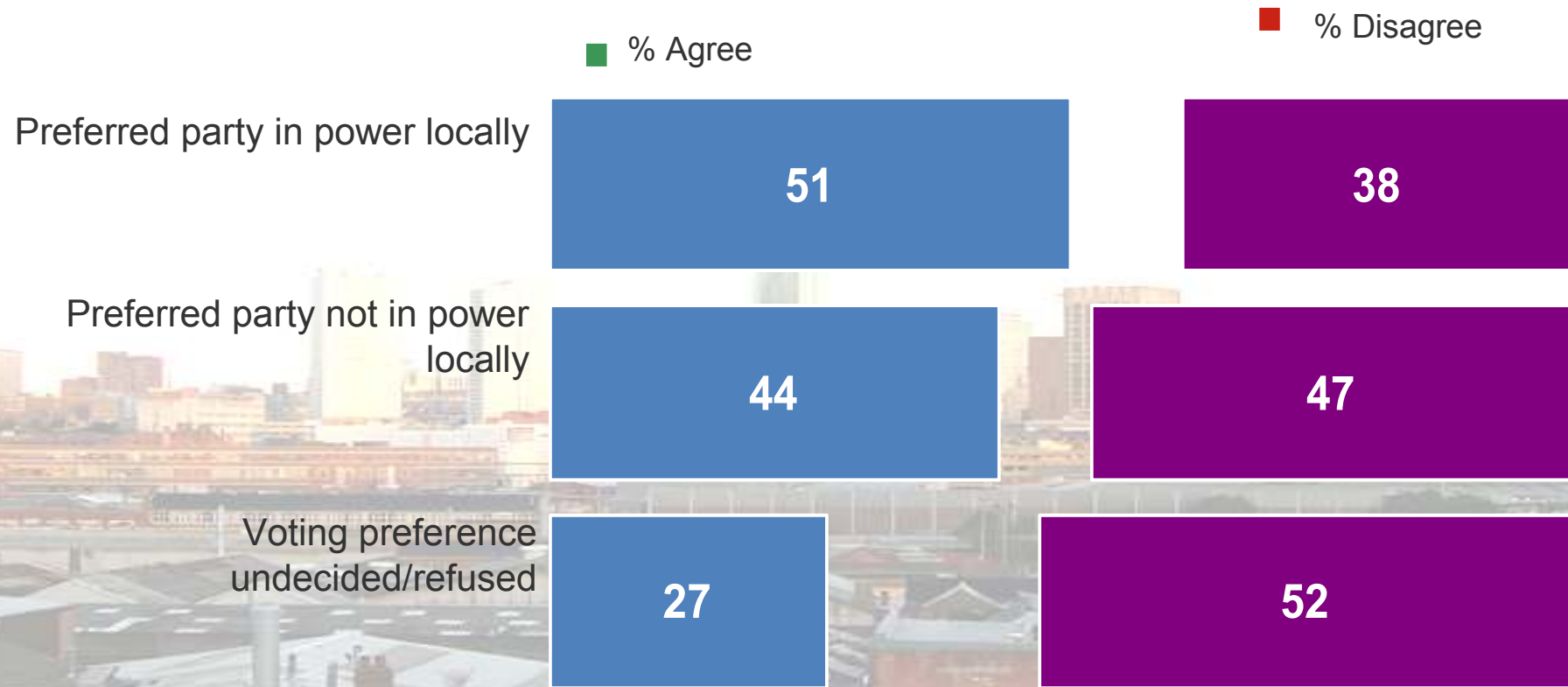
Feelings of influence are also political





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“I can influence decisions affecting my local area”



Base: 1,003 British adults, Fieldwork 25-27 September 2009



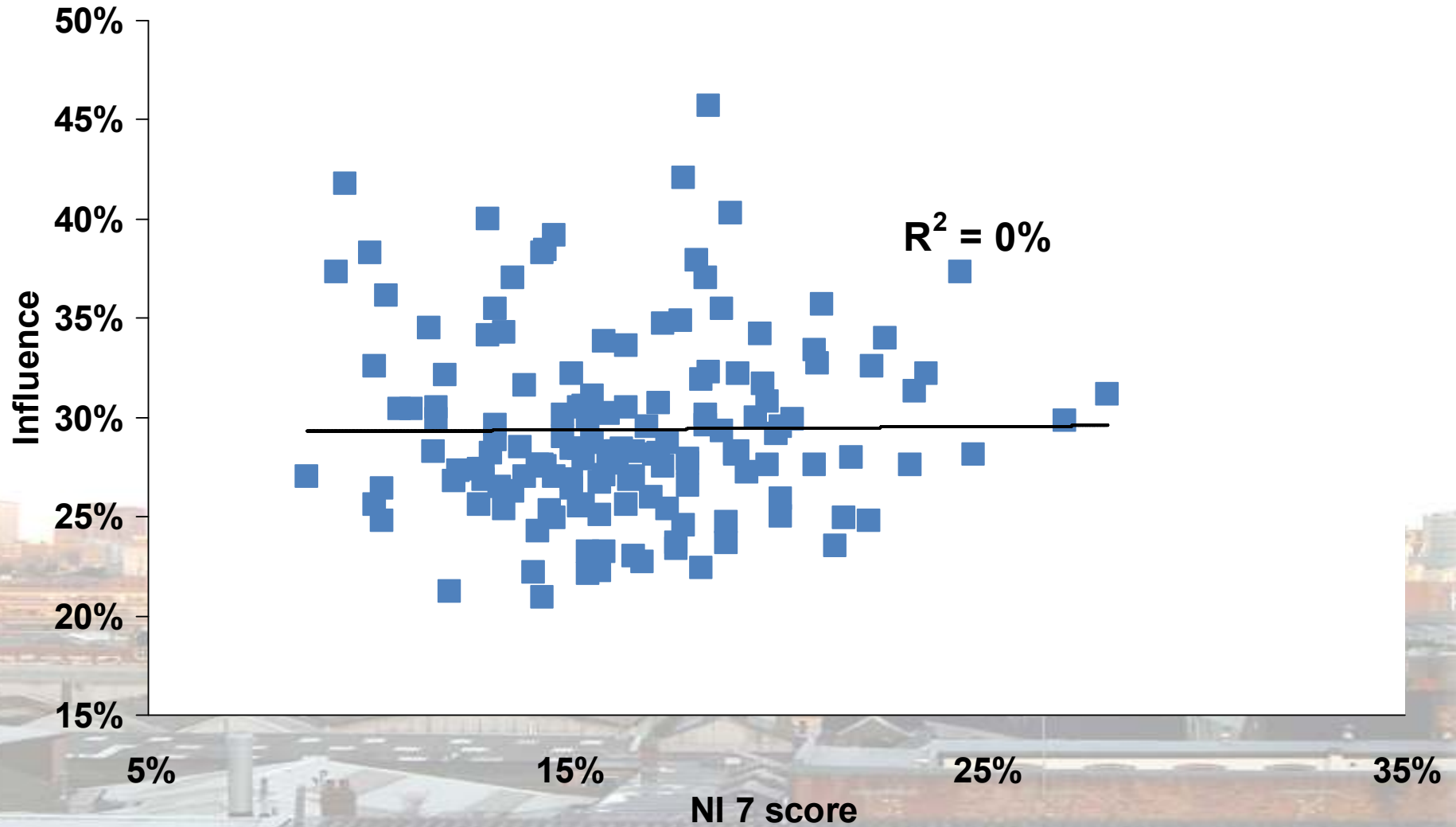
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Does a thriving supported Third Sector drive feelings of influence?





from community to policy





from community to policy

Stronger drivers of feelings of influence

Weaker drivers of feelings of influence

Feeling informed and consulted

Outcomes from specific incidents – direct experience or through friends/family/media

Attitudes to council/local agencies

Diversity/ in-migration (positive)

Experience of complaint handling and responsiveness of public services

Being Urban (negative)

Feeling part of community

Region

Attitude to political party in power locally

Involvement in decision making

Underlying values



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