

How does  
neighbourhood working  
become part of the wider  
culture of the local  
~~authority~~ public sector?

Ideas and challenges

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# Scoping paper: what rings true in Birmingham?

- Yes, its about culture, process *and* structure - interdependent
- Yes, it's about working with a mixture of hierarchical, egalitarian, individualistic and fatalistic world views
- Yes, change requires trust
- How useful is the check list?

# Neighbourhood working

- What's the big idea?
  - Co-production: “getting it”
  - Why neighbourhoods matter
  - Focus on outcomes/results – trust
- Ideas and challenges in Birmingham:
  - Structural and process change
  - Cultural change
- Applying the checklist

# What's the big idea?

- Co-production:
  - From delivering services to customers to creating outcomes with citizens
  - Outcomes not service outputs – join up and hybridize
  - Engagement and empowerment – as individuals and communities
- Implications
  - Partnerships
  - Neighbourhood focus
  - Openness to service reform

# Neighbourhoods

- Engagement is practical
- Shared “issues space” is significant
- The more local the focus the easier it is to “join up” – the less local the easier it is to think in terms of institutional boundaries

# Outcomes not outputs

- Focus is on community needs and wants, not pre-defined service functions

“we collect refuse as part of a complex effort to create and maintain a clean city”  
not “we collect refuse because we’ve always done it”

- Also relates to how trust is generated – concentrate on results and deliver them

# Structural Change

- Crucial to cultural change because it frames the expectations of the organisation(s)
- Devolution in Birmingham – provided a framework for neighbourhood working
  - 10 constituency offices – focus on local services and issues
  - Constituency partnerships
  - Directors skills set
- Stimulus to cultural change – job roles interaction and local focus
- Neighbourhood managers

# Culture change

- Horizontal learning – peer to peer
- Guide neighbourhoods – 3 in Birmingham but “grow your own”
- Residents for Regeneration – resident university
- Community empowerment networks
- Neighbourhood Academy
  - Partnership of neighbourhoods, agencies and university
  - Learning through doing
- Link to other change programmes

# Challenges

- Members
  - How to engage
  - Suspicion of partnerships and empowerment – parallel worlds
- Linking in to regional/government programmes – should it all be local?
- Outcome focus – ensuring capacity building and infrastructure are seen as part of delivery – long term focus and funding challenges
- Creating cultural change not just new cultural “enclaves”
- Business transformation – different focus

# Applying the checklist

- Focus on partnerships, not just local authority – need to look at cultures in other agencies
- Need to look at structures as well as cultures – are they supportive?
- Particular focus on members and how council relates to partnerships
- Explicit “audit” or more subtle process?  
Focus at local level?