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 ppma – the **community** issue



What has community got to do with HR?

Louise Tibbert opens the latest *PPMA Focus* with her reflections on how co-producing solutions is proving the way forward for HR and business

We are all now much more concerned with how we can provide front line services from the 'outside in'. The same has to be true of support services like HR. If we cannot get a clear line of sight from what we are implementing for the business, then we have no place in our organisations. This means we need to understand what the business, community and individual imperatives are and to factor these into our delivery.

Co-production of solutions across public service providers and service users is the way forward and will help us to focus on what really matters to people. Part of the challenge is getting HR and OD professionals close to and embedded in developing the solutions from the outset at the design stages, rather than at implementation.

HR also has a key role to play in using their OD skills outside their own organisational boundaries. Some councils are now using integrated leadership programmes to bring together senior leaders from a range of organisations to focus on how they need to lead collaboratively in the new world, and what this means for their own leadership style and skills. My team are currently working with leaders from across a range of delivery organisations, including health, on a joined up approach that can make a real difference to people, but also reduce costs. A win-win outcome.

In Children's Services there is a significant shift towards prevention and better outcomes for children through family working, using techniques like motivational interviewing. This is about effectively



Louise Tibbert is PPMA President and head of HR & OD at Hertfordshire CC

coaching people to identify their issues and lead them to develop solutions so that they own the need to change, rather than professionals 'telling' them and then designing the 'right' interventions. HR has been doing this for years, albeit not right on the front line of social work, so embedding similar techniques as

part of the line manager's toolkit is pretty straight forward.

One of the biggest impacts that HR can have is developing access to work opportunities and supporting people into work for those that struggle to do this on their own. As corporate parents, councils have a responsibility to those children coming out of the care system – if we do not provide that extra support to help them into training, work and careers, who will? This is rewarding but tough to deliver. It requires joined up support from social workers, youth services, employers and HR professionals – a wraparound approach for each young person.

And finally we need to remember that our workforce is key to understanding and working with our communities. They live locally for the most part. They use and have views

of public services and they probably have ideas about changing things for the better. What more positive way could there be of engaging them and getting their commitment to change? With the pressures on budgets and an increasing lively jobs market, we need to see our people as a very precious asset and take care of them accordingly. We also need to focus on all the workers and volunteers providing services, rather than a parochial view of just those employed by our own organisation.

'Community' can be anything you want it to be but in designing and delivering public services for now and the future, engaging and involving people is the only way forward. To coin an overused phrase from the recent Scottish issue – we are better together. That includes HR and business leaders co-producing solutions.



Sarah Messenger is Head of Workforce for the Local Government Association

Is BCC the new OD?

Sarah Messenger reveals how many local authorities are supplementing the workforce of the future by building community capacity



It will not have escaped anyone working in local government that the world we once knew has changed and the way we provide and deliver services for and in our communities needs a radical shift in everyone's thinking.

The 'everyone' starts with the people receiving the services, the vulnerable, those with greatest need and those who rely on services, like we all do, to keep our society together. It is often a forgotten premise that councils hold communities together to a much greater degree than any other part of the public service and therein lies the challenge. How do we create stronger communities from our current stand point and marry future aspiration with future financial outlook?

Starting with the demands and

needs of service users begins a thought process that looks to create co-produced services that need to reflect the reality of resource base we now have. Shifting the mind sets of users, community leaders, politicians and an existing and future 'workforce' is no easy task.

Yet councils have recognised this and are in part building community capacity (BCC) through a range of initiatives. Whole place community budgets have added a stimulus by necessitating new community based 'thinking'. The practical process needed to do this are the same ones

that HR professionals have used effectively for many years; positive engagement, effective open two-way communication, managing change, training and upskilling people, understanding equalities to foster inclusion, setting a clear shared vision and values.

Since the notion of the now little referred to 'Big Society' there has been a push to look at how local communities through good social networks, peer support and active working with local people can start to shift thinking to create a joined up local approach to services that seeks to connect people together and to create the conditions for happier healthier communities through participation and inclusion.

This is done with a workforce that understands the complexities of change and remains committed, flexible and engaged and is able to place learning and equalities at the heart of everything they do. This isn't about looking for new skills or new values or new ways of working – but about listening, learning and responding with new thinking in an ever changing world.

Pragmatically, good organisational development means creating a workforce that builds effective networks, enhancing skills, learning and team work through shared problem solving and action learning and ensuring inclusivity and equality are paramount.

Change the word organisation to community and look at creating this internal environment in the external community and you start to build capacity.

Two of a kind

Lisa Hooley reports on the establishment of Locality Partnerships in Trafford

Councils and public services are changing. The Government's vision is for individuals and communities to have much greater choice and control and their aim is to devolve power and control to the lowest appropriate level.

The current financial landscape has also provided the catalyst to change the way we work as an organisation, build upon partnership work and embrace active citizenship. This will help to manage demand and reliance on public services and increase resilience. There is a real opportunity for localities to focus on influencing mainstream public service delivery

and spend to benefit the economic, social and environmental well-being of residents at a local level and deliver sustainable communities in Trafford.

In response to these challenges, we have established four Locality Partnerships in Trafford. Made up of Councillors, partners, including the police and health services and Community Ambassadors, their purpose is to:

- Increase resident and community involvement in local democracy, priority setting and decision making, increasing service responsiveness and accountability.
- Increase co-production between communities and organisations.
- Increase volunteering, social cohesion, community capacity and resilience.
- Increase engagement with residents and communities.

Each partnership has a Chair Team, made up of a Councillor, Community Ambassador and Statutory Partner. Each partnership is developing a common understanding of the



"Essentially, it is my passion for the area that persuaded me to get involved within my locality and become a Community Ambassador. A stronger connected community supported by its services and a passionate third sector will allow us to build a prosperous and sustainable Trafford even with the difficult times that lie ahead".
–Sam Leuty-Milner, Community Ambassador, Sale Locality Partnership

capacity, talent, skills, knowledge, connections, relationships and physical assets in the locality, aligning the data and information with their local knowledge and the

views of local people.

Workshops have taken place and from these, initial themes for the partnerships to focus on are:

- Sale – maximising the economic and health benefits of Sale Town Centre. They are also beginning an innovative Stronger Families pilot project, to develop local sustainability.
- South – isolation of older people. The partnership has successfully bid for funding from Our Place to develop the isolation project. The partnership also led changes to the Voluntary Sector Grants scheme.
- Urmston and Partington – tackling obesity in children and families, and employment and skills – to increase take-up of Community Learning

"From their launch at last year's conference, our Locality Partnerships are steadily establishing themselves, bridging the gap between strategic partners and residents and communities. We are committed to working more closely with local people and see the Locality Partnerships as a place where local people can influence decisions and develop innovative action in partnership with others".

–Councillor Sean Anstee, Leader of Trafford Council

and green space and explore new ways to increase physical activity for hard-to-engage groups.

• Old Trafford and Stretford – child obesity, healthy eating, educational attainment and youth employment. The initial focus has been on making Community Learning more accessible to specific areas of Stretford and exploring the role School Governors can take in promoting healthy eating.

If you are interested in finding out more about Trafford's Locality Partnerships, please contact Adrian Bates, Partnerships Manager at adrian.bates@trafford.gov.uk

Tell us your views



If you have any views about the contents of this focus or ideas for future articles or would like to contribute please email the Editor Dilys Wynn at Dilys.WYNN@gloucestershire.gov.uk

Case Study

One area where the Locality Partnerships have directly influenced public service delivery is with Trafford Council's Voluntary

Sector Grants, which the Council devolved to them. Each partnership was allocated £30,000 and then set local priorities for the grants. The grant allocation process,



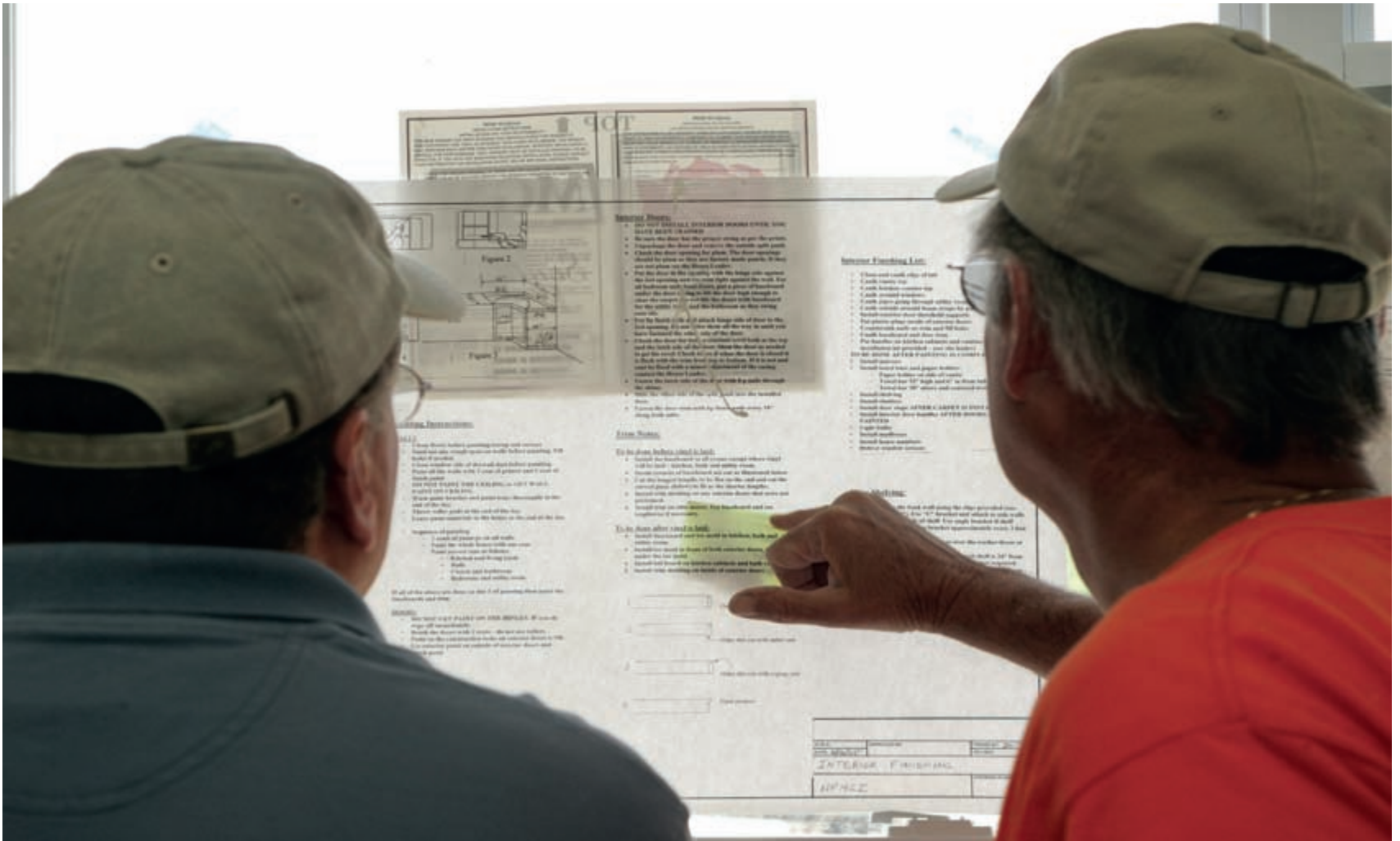
including shortlisting and the voting events, were led by the Locality Partnership.

The events were a significant success; 930 local people took part, a significant increase from 433 last year. 36 projects were funded and 24 of these came from groups who had not

previously received funding through this scheme. The Locality Partnerships will now take a proactive role in mentoring and supporting the groups to deliver successful projects.



Lisa Hooley is Acting Workforce Strategy and OD Manager at Trafford Council



Our master plan for a more resilient county

Barry Pirie examines the important role HR plays in community engagement in Wiltshire

Volunteering is not a new concept – Volunteers have long played a vital role in supporting a variety of council services, and they have traditionally been drawn from the ranks of retirees looking to support a special cause or interest. However, with the government's focus on the 'Big Society' and community engagement in local services, things have started to change and there has never been a more important time for HR to work creatively with the volunteer workforce.

At Wiltshire Council our vision is to create stronger and more resilient communities. A key priority from our Business Plan is "supporting and empowering communities to do more for themselves". To make this vision a reality the council has developed new ways of working. For example, in 2008 18 community area boards were introduced, which enable local decision making about what services are needed and how they are delivered. The council is also developing award winning community campuses aligned with our community areas – places that the local communities are designing to co-locate public, voluntary and community sector services in one

accessible location to meet the community's needs, and the first campus opened in Corsham in August this year. A key aspect in delivering the campuses is the use of volunteers and community volunteering strategies are being developed to support each campus.

The vision, together with new ways of delivering services, underpins our work in HR and provides a clear focus on the actions we take – by supporting our managers and staff to deliver the services that people want within the new area board and campus frameworks. In order to do this we have developed our People Strategy. It has defined actions to ensure we have the right people, in the right roles, with the right skills and abilities including working with partners and volunteers.

So what have we done?

We have scoped our volunteer workforce and have identified that we currently have 1300 volunteers already contributing to council services in a variety of ways and in some cases ensuring that local services remain open.

We have developed a consistent and planned approach to engaging and managing our voluntary workforce. Working with stakeholders from across the council a range of bespoke policies and procedures and managers guidance about volunteers has been produced. These are all underpinned by the Wiltshire 'promise' which outlines what our

volunteers can expect and how they will be treated.

We have looked more widely at the pool of potential volunteers, in particular considering how volunteering opportunities can help young people to gain work experience from those who are struggling to get a foot on the ladder such as young people who are classified as 'NEET', (not in employment, education or training) engagement with local schools, and all the way through to those attending HE establishments who value a placement in their specialist area.

We are supporting the council's campus programme, for example assisting with the development of new campus community engagement officer roles which will directly impact on the success of the campus by helping the local community to identify its key priorities and engage with the various voluntary and VCS groups in the area.



Barry Pirie is Associate Director, People and Business at Wiltshire Council

We are also developing a new strategy for volunteers as we know this group will become increasingly important as we seek to find ways of delivering services while dealing with budget restraint. Some services are already being maintained and expanded by volunteers. We want to know more about our volunteers – their aspirations and interests and thereby understand how best to engage with this aspect of our workforce.

We understand that all our staff are ambassadors within the communities they work in and so to ensure that everyone is supported in this we have developed a framework for the way in which everyone works called 'the Behaviours Framework'. This framework supports the importance of how we do things as well as what we do and helps us to deliver our values including putting our customers and communities at the heart of everything we do.

We base our performance management and recruitment and selection on the Behaviour's Framework and are developing a new employer value proposition (EVP) to position us as an employer of choice within the local community for potential staff and volunteers. We have also recently launched an on-line self-selection questionnaire as part of our recruitment and selection process, to highlight how our behaviours and values will have impact both internally and externally,

and to allow prospective staff and volunteers to assess and reflect on their fit with the culture of the organisation.

Partnership working is a key aspect of most of the council's services, for example HR have supported joint working with Police and Health to join up and deliver improved services with better outcomes for our customers

We have also been developing a new approach to job design – which is customer focussed and will lead to simplified roles and structures which are more flexible in terms of deployment and will mean that staff can work across the organisation and with partners and volunteers more easily.

What are our next steps?

- Work with colleagues to develop and evaluate the model for campuses – clearly define roles and responsibilities
- Develop the new volunteer strategy – taking into account our corporate, campus and area board approach
- Align our volunteer strategy with workforce planning – making managers more aware of ways to involve volunteers and the community within their services
- Develop our understanding of who, where and why our volunteers are used
- Develop our IT systems to enable our volunteers to have appropriate access – while maintaining security of information.



Sue Edwards is HR Manager Strategy, Devon County Council

In Devon the community capacity building agenda is moving apace. Amongst a number of developments, some senior managers within the County Council have taken on additional roles as Community Leads for specific towns, and I'm one of those managers. The role is broadly defined, but essentially we have each been tasked with helping to facilitate and share in the community dialogue within a particular locality and to lead on issues and challenges that need to be addressed. It's been a really exciting opportunity to get really involved in the community capacity agenda.

A small group of us have volunteered to become involved as Community Leads, which involves an average of one day a week working with our locality. In my case, I am involved with a market town just north of Exeter. I was interested in taking on the role because of the many links with the Council's HR Strategy; our Strategy is intrinsically linked with organisational strategy so it has to reflect the community capacity building agenda and in particular from the perspective of what our workforce can do to make this happen; from acting as our ambassadors, to fully utilising our talents to engage and support the community.

For me it's been a real eye opener.



Within HR we can spend much of our time talking to people within the organisation and it's easy to lose sight of the people who are at the heart of the Council; our communities. I've learnt a lot more about the functions of the Council, how we interlink with other authorities and organisations within the local area and how all of that impacts on local communities. This can only be helpful for me, and for the wider understanding of the HR function.

My locality has been producing a Neighbourhood Plan, and I am a member of the Steering Group. There is a lot of frustration about the layers of local government and it has been a challenge to navigate through this. I'm mindful that when working within the community there is always a local "history" to take into account, and relationships to be negotiated, which can help or hinder progress.

However, my involvement has highlighted the level of commitment, experience and skills within the community and the importance of the Council's leadership role.

It's certainly not been easy taking on this additional role, as with most local authorities our resources are diminishing and it's hard to juggle this with the day job, given that there is no funding or backfill available. But it has to be said that the knowledge, experience and skills I've gained make it worthwhile. I now better understand the future delivery of services, which is invaluable when it comes to determining the future structure of the Council, the skills our workforce will need and how we can lead and support communities. This is immensely valuable as a senior manager and as an HR professional.

The Community Lead roles are just one element of the Council's work on

community capacity building. We are also working with the Cabinet Office and Office for Public Management (OPM) on the *Delivering Differently* programme which involves working in three communities in Devon to explore new service delivery options. The Council also has strong links with the Association of Directors of Environment, Economy, Planning and Transport (ADEPT), which utilises the place-based approach.

Devon recognises that it needs to strengthen the connectivity between internal and external capacity and development and we are exploring ways of moving this forward, including working further with ADEPT, OPM and the PPMA. With 92% of our workforce living within Devon the Council is keen to harness that internal resource to promote the agenda, further engage with communities, ensure

staff can signpost to information/services and gain staff intelligence on the area they live and work within. The Council also recognises that it needs to review its commissioning strategies to ensure that it can also influence those people who may not be directly employed by the Council but have a role to play – a developing area as the Council moves closer to a commissioning model.

The Council took a risk in appointing to the Community Lead roles, but so far the feedback has been positive. Undoubtedly some things will work and some won't, and of course the roles have developed differently in the different localities, which each have their own requirements and character. The current economic climate and the necessity to radically change our delivery model has provided an opportunity to really help lead and shape the future of services.

A real learning curve...

Kerry Furness ponders how systems leadership is supporting the building of local community capacity and involvement

Within the public sector we continue to face dealing with some of the most intractable issues, many of which have no easy solutions. To meet this challenge, there is an increasing focus around leadership that operates across local systems rather than within organisations. There is recognition that we need to have stronger and more connected local leadership to tackle these issues. This means engaging both our employees and our communities – with each other. We need to better equip our leaders to achieve even more involvement of people using services, carers and providers in the design and delivery of those services.

Sometimes – as we found on the Aspley estate in Nottingham – this means taking a 'one-street-at-a-time' approach that recognises the value of community and team spirit;

by giving people the tools to help themselves.

Bringing together leaders, informally, from the public sector, wider organisations and communities will be critical to achieving our future aspirations. What better way to achieve this by the use of collaborative learning to support stronger relationships, which in turn can lead to positive changes in how we deliver services with our communities? These opportunities will give leaders new perspectives around how to influence beyond their formal organisation.

Working together, they can create a safe learning environment for innovation and risk-taking in cross-sector virtual leadership teams. Alongside this, they have the opportunity to build more self-awareness, to enable personal change and improvement. These different ways of working require



Kerry Furness is PPMA OD Policy Lead, and OD Manager, Norfolk County Council

the building of stronger coalitions, informal networks and new relationships. This type of leadership requires a strong organisational development mindset and skills, in order to support collective work with communities to achieve transformation.

There are many good examples of local systems leadership activities both nationally and locally – see the Leadership Centre's *Future Vision* programme. This renewed vigour around this investment in leaders is likely to be critical to our future success. Its strength is in the fact that the development work is rooted in doing real work across the sector

with our communities. And before the cynics and doom and gloom merchants throw up their hands and roll their eyes with cries of "not more training programmes" – let's be clear. This is learning together that sits at the heart of service provision, not in a classroom. It's dealing with real issues out on the pitch, identified by the participants, not just stuff on the sidelines – where decisions are made, actions taken and results lived with. And yes going forward we will need to assess the impact of this investment on tangible outcomes for citizens – however this takes time, and with many innovations not all projects will necessarily bear fruit!

Illustrating how this can work in practice, in 2013 Norfolk CC was part of the pilot of the local version of the Cabinet Office's national Commissioning Academy. Many of our commissioners were all seeking to solve the same problem: how to square off reduced budgets and growing demand while retaining the quality and outcomes that really matter. Senior managers from health, police and local government relished the opportunity to develop new joined up solutions to these challenges, working through an

intensive development journey. The leaders have come together and are implementing place-based 100 day plans – working both within small geographic communities and across the county. Early feedback from participants has been that the experience was "rewarding and enriching, allowing time to reflect on how different agencies can work together differently on complex problems and potentially make a real difference". Our aim: to create a sustainable local community of learning and practice in which those creating, delivering and using commissioned services can learn from and share with colleagues from across the many facets of the commissioning landscape. The next phase aims to bring together a range of providers of services in Norfolk – through collaborative learning; to shape and change together how we commission locally.

We all recognise that it is critical that public sector leadership needs to use its collective skills, knowledge and resources to enable communities to identify and address their own problems – learning together is a powerful tool to do things differently.

Making the right connections

Liz Goold and Ron Francis discuss capacity-building across communities, organisations and systems



Capacity-building is high on the agenda for local authorities and their public sector partners. Most agree that new skills are needed to meet the challenges of rising demand and shrinking budgets, and that this requires shifts in mind-sets, behaviours, relationships and ways of working. Most organisations also realise that we can't just reinforce that capacity in isolation – it needs strengthening within and between organisations, and within communities themselves.

Less clear, however, is how these different dimensions of capacity-building inform each other. Capacity-building in communities tends to be the domain of community engagement and community development teams, while internal capacity building and organisational development (OD) is seen as the territory of OD and HR teams. Meanwhile, the growing interest in developing systems leadership

across systems is only now moving beyond senior leadership. Yet in an age when co-production between citizens and services is also so high on the agenda, shouldn't we be making stronger connections between our efforts to build capacity 'out there' in communities, 'in here' within public services and across whole systems? What might this mean for the role and practice of OD/HR and Engagement practitioners, along with those in Democratic Services?

OPM, together with OD and HR colleagues have begun a series of conversations through the PPMA regional networks to explore these questions as part of an action research inquiry, sharing positive examples and challenges to stimulate good practice in service of communities and citizens.

We know there are good examples to be shared. In one council, for instance, restorative justice principles

used in communities are now being applied within HR, Highways and Schools, helping staff to move from a 'delivering for' to a 'working with' mind-set. Large group methods like Future Search have been transferred from an area leadership programme for commissioners to a process for shaping a community vision in a locality. Elsewhere, a council is exploring how the local knowledge and contacts of its own staff can be harnessed to help build a network of rural community champions.

We want to explore further how different players such as OD/HR leads, Engagement teams and Democratic Services make these connections

happen. So what else would it mean to have a more connected approach to capacity-building? Based on initial conversations and our own experience, we can already make some suggestions:

- OD/HR, Democratic Services and Engagement leads can proactively connect their work, knitting together learning from different parts of the system to inform strategic conversations at the top table, and using OD methods to change traditional approaches to public engagement and consultation.
- OD strategy can put the development of citizens and communities at its centre as a visible

thread running through any culture change, leadership development programmes and competency frameworks.

- All leaders inside the council, in partner bodies and in communities, can be encouraged to use a systems thinking perspective to understand what goes on in the locality
- Elected members can be equipped with capacity-building skills to support their community leadership role in unlocking local capacity.
- Practice share sessions and action learning sets can be used to bring people together across Engagement, Democratic Services, OD/HR teams – and across organisations – to share learning and plan activity together.
- Working with real community/systems challenges in a real place can enable staff and citizens to make connections, generate ideas and learn new skills together, using approaches such as Ideas Farms and Local Vision projects.

Our approaches to capacity building need to be connected if we are going to support sustainable change across systems. If you're already making this work, or have ideas you would like to share, we would love you to hear from you.



Liz Goold is a Senior Fellow at OPM specialising in OD and systems leadership



Rob Francis is a Fellow at OPM specialising in OD and community capacity building

Upskilling communities to transform lives

Angela Probert reveals how Nottingham City Council has worked directly local residents to make improvements to their community

Nothing is achieved in isolation. As Local Authorities, we are used to working in partnership across the public, private and third sectors. But, so often, we can fail to work in partnership with the very people whose lives we are trying to improve: our citizens.

Sometimes – as we found on the Aspley estate in Nottingham – this means taking a 'one-street-at-a-time' approach that recognises the value of community and team spirit; by giving people the tools to help themselves.

Aspley Community Taking Control
The Aspley Community Taking Control project identified a single street as an anti-social hotspot, and asked young people to take an active role in improving their neighbourhood by cleaning and painting. This meant: our tools, but their hard work.

In return, we supported the young people with careers advice and applications to become apprentices: ranging from plumbing and bricklaying to public transport and caretaking. Not just one young person from that hotspot – but all of them...

As Aspley Ward Councillor Carole McCulloch explained: "The young people were brilliant. They all rose to the challenge together – as a group of friends.

"They were expected to work hard, turn up punctually and work well within a team. We then followed this up with mentoring and guidance for the apprenticeship interviews – even to the point of buying shirts and ties for them."

So far, 18 young people from Aspley have found work in apprenticeships. This has been an incredibly positive experience in Aspley, which contains the highest number of families being worked with by Nottingham's Priority Families Programme – part of the national Troubled Families Initiative to target support to families with the most complex problems.

Apprenticeships

In fact, the experience was such a positive one – for the young people and

for the council – that the scheme has been rolled out across Nottingham in a drive to recruit more apprentices aged 16-24 in 'clean and green' services.

In March this year, 50 apprentices were taken on in our Neighbourhood Services; eight were from Aspley; 11 were directly supported by the Priority Families Programme.

Recognising that some of the apprentices needed additional support, a mentor – Dennis Horvath – was assigned to guide them through the application process, preparation and training. He now gives ongoing support.

Dennis explained: "The apprentices have managers, but I'm here to support them with personal issues – or any questions they might have. This is a huge transition for them: they need to think about going to bed, getting up, perhaps the kind of working routine that the rest of us are used to, but because of the generations of unemployment they have grown up with, they've never really experienced before."

In the first six months of the programme, all but one of the young people have fully engaged and kept up with their apprenticeship. The scheme was also named Best Employment and Equality Initiative at the Association for Public Service Excellence (APSE) Awards held in Nottingham in September.

Nicky Dawson, Priority Families Programme Co-ordinator in Nottingham, said: "These apprentices

are doing an amazing job of rising to the challenge of their new work and training. It is vital that we not only support families to make changes in their lives, but also provide support to sustain these changes."

It's clear that a 'one-size-fits-all' approach to improving lives is never going to recognise the individuality of our neighbourhoods... and, indeed, of our citizens. A blanket approach to transformation cannot focus

the necessary support, mentoring and training needed to give our communities the skills to change their lives.

It's great to make a difference in one person's life. But changing a whole street can have an even bigger – and longer-lasting – impact on the wider community.

And what's our role in this, as local authorities? Simple: facilitator and mentor.

Case Study

Jacob Deverill, 19, from Aspley, is one of the new apprentices



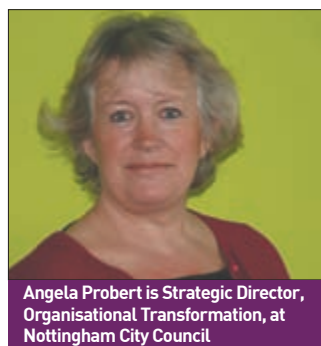
"I was involved in the original community clean-up. I used to hang around on the streets, not really doing anything, and one day we were approached and asked if we wanted to help tidy up the area with litter picking and painting. I really enjoyed it; it felt good. It was a chance to show people that we weren't just lads who

hang around. They all saw the improvements we had made.

"Cllr McCulloch then told us about the apprenticeship scheme – all my mates are now on it with me. The work has been really interesting. I do grass cutting and litter picking and have been involved with big events in Nottingham, like the Splendour music festival and the Caribbean Carnival.

"I've been all over Nottingham. I grew up on an estate and I've now been to parts of the city I never even knew existed.

"Our mentor has been brilliant. He's always there for us and helps us with issues outside of work that might be affecting us. It's that kind of support that has made a big difference.



Angela Probert is Strategic Director, Organisational Transformation, at Nottingham City Council



Where the Community Comes First

Julie Towers takes a look at the cultural transformation that has gradually turned Haringey into a community-focused, talent-producing council

Haringey Council set itself a challenging ambition – ‘by the age of 20, a child born in the borough today will have a quality of life and access to the same level of opportunity that is at least equal to the best in London’.

Haringey Council embarked upon a change programme spearheaded by the Leader and new Chief Executive to deliver an all-encompassing cultural transformation to develop, retain and attract talent who would help them deliver on this ambition.

The change programme was centred wholly on delivering improved outcomes for the community and defined what and how the Council needed to be as an organisation and how leaders would lead, manage and behave. New leadership qualities and employer brand made clear that it was the communities’ voice that counted. The Council then went on to promote the qualities and measure managers against them in order to ensure that they were equipped to deliver upon the Council’s four priorities.

The objective for the programme was clear: Ensure Haringey has now, and for the future, the most appropriately skilled and talented senior management team to lead the Council to deliver the transformation.

The programme involved:

- Establishing the new culture, leadership qualities and behaviours required for Haringey in the future.
- Establishing a new set of demanding leadership qualities
- Delivering culturally immersed development centres for 120 managers
- Providing diagnostic development reports for each manager on their personal performance and potential
- Developing new recruitment and selection practices and standards

Over 120 managers attended a development centre and received a feedback report, coached feedback and had a development plan created to help them reach their maximum potential.

And through one-to-one support from their line managers,



the development actions (self and organisational) are being implemented. The feedback from the centres has informed the design of the management development programme, and the talent management and succession planning strategy.

In parallel, Penna launched a recruitment programme to attract new talent to existing vacancies and newly created roles. This included

- producing:
- A new employer value proposition and communication tools
 - A bespoke microsite (www.haringeyambition.co.uk)
 - An online Self Selection Questionnaire (for managers to assess themselves against the new leadership qualities)
 - Online application and supportive candidate management process.
 - A selection assessment centre

“Working in partnership with Penna has enabled the organisation to move at pace to recalibrate what good leadership looks like. This is a vital building block in setting the right leadership tone and shaping the leadership task for the future”.
–Jacquie McGeachie, Assistant Director of HR and OD

designed to mirror ‘A Day in the Life of a Haringey Manager’.

Haringey are now clear on the talent and potential talent they have in their current management cohort and have a tailored recruitment and selection programme that gives a clear picture of what it’s like to work in Haringey and the community focus, and directly assesses the leadership qualities of future hires to succeed in it.

22 new recruits are now working successfully alongside retained high performing managers and making the difference in and for the community of Haringey.

Julie Towers is Managing Director (Recruitment Solutions) at Penna

Stronger together

Justine Brooksbank and Marie-Ann Jackson spotlight the work of The Stronger Communities Initiative in North Yorkshire

An ambitious programme has been launched by North Yorkshire CC to support communities to play a greater role in the delivery of services. Building on recent success that saw the Council, working alongside its community sector partners, to develop a number of community libraries across the county, this programme seeks to increase resilience within local communities and offers opportunities, through working together, to design and develop services to meet local needs.

Faced with increasing budgetary pressures, the council acknowledges it will no longer be able to support the full range of universal services such as libraries, transport, youth clubs and some social care services to the level it has in the past; however it also understands that these are much valued services and is working with the community and voluntary sector to ensure they have the skills, capacity and support that enables them to take a greater role in managing and delivering a range of services.

A new Stronger Communities team has been appointed to work with local residents, community groups and other partners from the public and private sectors across North Yorkshire to identify opportunities to co-produce a range of local support and services aimed at improving the well-being of people of all ages. Community groups are being encouraged to

work together, maximising the use of buildings, assets and volunteers in order to create a focal point and increased resilience.

The new team has dedicated Delivery Managers for each of the 7 district areas in the county who will help the voluntary sector to access the full range of support being offered including the transfer of assets & buildings into community ownership, some start-up grants, ICT equipment and services, training and on-going specialist advice, support and development. Encouraging the active participation of residents in their local communities through volunteering will not only help to ensure valued services continue to be provided at a very local level but will also help to reduce social isolation, improve physical and mental well-being and will provide opportunities for learning and skills development.



Another important area is encouraging our own employees to get involved with the initiative. Around 85% of employees live within the County boundary with coverage of every village and community, which means they are a huge potential resource if we can engage them in this work.

The NYCC HR team are working

with colleagues on a number of initiatives

- Locality based internal internet forums to give staff information and input on what is going on in their community and to collect local intelligence from staff on community resources, activity and capacity. We want all our staff to be informed and involved and online forums from November will start this. We have pulled information on where staff live from the HR/Payroll system and will auto include staff in an internet community forum based on where they live.
- Campaigns to promote the opportunities and benefits of volunteering to staff so they can be advocates for the county councils approach in their local communities
- The chance for staff to undertake some voluntary work in their community during work time in areas where local communities need

support. This will start on a pilot basis for 3 geographic areas where communities are keen to get started. In this way we provide access to a resource and capacity at an early stage when we think they will really need it. We are developing a matching process and again will involve staff in this through the online forums. The principle is that staff in (initially pilot areas) can have a day’s worth of time to spend supporting community provision in targeted activities and they will link with the Delivery Manager for their area to see what volunteering is need which matches their skills and availability.- Opportunities for staff due to retire to become involved in local community work before they finish work during work time on the same basis as above. Obviously the hope here is that these staff will continue once they have finished work when they will have more time to be involved.



Justine Brooksbank is Assistant Chief Executive (Business Support), at Yorkshire County Council



Marie-Ann Jackson is Head of the Stronger Communities Programme, North Yorkshire County Council

Playing a Blinder!

Rafaella Goodby outlines how Birmingham City Council has been celebrating community collaboration

Birmingham has been a place of Big Conversations recently and not only as *Peaky Blinders* has premiered and people across the country try to conquer the 'melodic sing song tones' of a proper Brummie accent! In HR we have been helping lead a series of staff consultation events asking over 1000 employees their views on the Council's future purpose (where are we going), people (what skills and behaviours do our future staff need) and pathway (how are we going to get there?). The themes coming out of these conversations are wide and varied and will form the basis of a rethought employee journey and refreshed workforce strategy.

A key message coming out of the hundreds of flip charts, and thousands of post it notes, was reconnecting our purpose and focussing our work on the citizen. The Brummies are talking the language of communities and in particular about how they can Stand up for Birmingham and work with our citizens on innovative and creative new ways of working.



A key part of the plan for the 'Future City Council' is managing demand for services, by encouraging and supporting individuals, community groups and voluntary organisations to play a bigger role in delivering services. This will require a shift in behaviour, attitudes and culture across the city as well as within the city council.

Therefore, the very clear message we want to put out is that we must come together as a city to tackle this challenge. 'Standing Up For Birmingham' is a campaign for that unity and sense of purpose.

In Human Resources and OD we have been keen to start recognising and rewarding the innovative examples of where our staff are working more closely with communities and partners to deliver services in a different way. Our annual employee awards event, The Chamberlain Awards, has a new category this year to recognise where employees are Standing up for Birmingham.

The hotly contested finalists' projects have recently been announced and the winner will be crowned at the sponsored awards ceremony on 7th November.

Karen Spence and John Mole from Erdington District / New Heights Community project – for establishing a hub in the heart of Kingstanding and securing more than £25m in external funding to

improve the lives of the people in need in Birmingham. This included access to youth clubs, drug and alcohol intervention, training and job support and other services for parents and older people.

The Local Enterprise Partnership Executive team were nominated

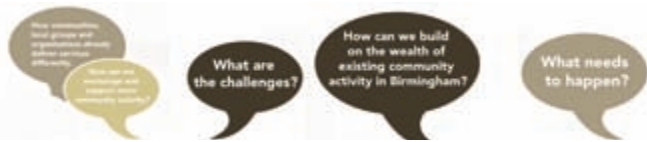
for the development and delivery of funding submissions for the Local Growth Fund that supported investment, job creation, skills and education programmes.

The Selly Oak Scaffolding Support programme was nominated for enabling community groups to provide local services that were previously managed by the Council. Amongst many successes this led to the development of the Brandwood Time Bank and a local community development trust.

You can read more about the projects soon on www.chamberlainawards.co.uk or follow @su4brum on twitter for latest news on people working across boundaries for the good of the City and to hear how our Big Conversations turn in to action. You might even spot a *Peaky Blinder*.



Rafaella Goodby is Head of OD & Well Being at Birmingham City Council



Bubbling up!

Keith Townsend discusses what Ealing LBC is doing to build community capacity, through engaging residents and businesses to get more involved in delivering services

A recent MORI poll indicated that a massive 86% believe that we should get more involved in helping to improve local areas.

Our big idea is to work out how we can help residents and local businesses to do just that and to take ownership of their street and neighbourhood and care for it. Ultimately the concept is to create a borough-wide approach to help manage and potentially reduce demand for services.

I believe councils could exploit their knowledge and position to radically change attitudes and behaviours to help transform and care for public spaces, be they

streets, parks or any land for that matter. Our challenge is to build on some fantastic projects and use innovative techniques such as behavioural insight alongside clever volunteering approaches, exploiting technology and social media.

In Ealing we're fortunate to have many residents and businesses that are passionate about their areas and willing to volunteer. The challenge is how to harness this at a time when we're reducing cost by 40% or more and do it across an entire London Borough of 340,000 residents.

We think it's time for a fresh approach and different thinking. Step forward Bubble.



Keith Townsend is Executive Director of Environment and Customer Services at Ealing LBC

Bubble aims to bring together people, projects and funding to enable the sharing of ideas and resources; finding ways to connect likeminded neighbours and businesses into doing something good in their area. We're looking to tap into and build up community goodwill and energy to enable people to help themselves.

It could be something small like helping an elderly neighbour put their bins out each week or something larger like organising a clear up of an area or park. Most of all it's about connecting people. It will

help anyone looking to get involved with something already happening, anyone hoping to start something new, anyone with some spare time to help someone else, or anyone looking for some help themselves.

We think we're onto something potentially huge – we know that 32% of our residents told us that they had volunteered last year. We've got a thriving group of Community Champions acting as Tree Wardens, Park Champions, and reporting on environmental and highway issues. We've got very active ward forums and we know that there are numerous grants and funds that we could exploit.

Our challenge has been to join all of these initiatives, projects and energy together where a wider audience can take part.

We've developed a microsite at that is filled with ideas to stimulate people's imaginations. We've even got a crowdfunding website supported by tech company Spacehive, where anyone can set up and promote a project and pledge small donations to achieve a bigger total. We're leading by example by

using this platform to generate interest and support for projects and to bid for money. Residents are being asked for their ideas on how unloved spaces could be transformed. Our businesses that benefit from improved shopping parades are being asked to contribute some added value, based on a local project where traders and residents got together and transformed an area of neglected, derelict land.

Our intention with Bubble is to get as many people involved as possible. We're going to use social media to spread the word and get people talking to each other. We want the conversation to move from "what's the council going to do about that..." to "the council helped us to do that for ourselves..."

We're not doing this alone. We've just kicked-off a connected project, supported by demand management experts from consultancy firm Impower, to reduce demand for environmental services. It's called High Waste Creators but that's another story.



Julie Towers shares the learning from their recent Best Practice Workshop

In our most recent Penna Best Practice Workshop we shared an insight into the five authorities shortlisted for 2014 MJ Senior Management Team of the year. Cheshire West and Chester, East Riding of Yorkshire and the winner, Derby City Council, talked personally about their approach to building management capacity and capability and outlined what their senior management teams had done to improve their organisation's performance.

The 30 workshop delegates included local authority HR/OD and Transformation leaders and so we were able to triangulate the shortlisted Council's experience with a wider group – and it quickly became clear that success in leadership and organisational development was not down to 'rocket science' but good old common sense and management basics. But it was also evident that knowing about the basics and doing them were two very different things!

So here's a flavour of the key issues all organisations were experiencing and what they agreed were the key to success in terms of delivering on the highly challenging financial change agenda needed to sustain local government:

1. Retention was a challenge for all organisations, particularly at service head level – with fewer employees connected by moral purpose and social outcomes how would



retention need to change? 45% of CEO's in our recent survey said that they were losing good employees as better pay and reward were being found elsewhere.

2. There was still a view that in order to make significant change you needed to replace people if they were not on board (particularly those in senior leadership) or more increasingly there was emphasis on 'changing' through development and cultural immersion to get different outcomes in performance.

3. Most organisations were spending time thinking about what the real and perceived culture was and how they addressed it – did function follow form; structure follow strategy, behaviour follow values?

4. Things are going to get tougher – how do you deliver a step up in performance from that already experienced?

5. There had still only been very few compulsory redundancies in the room...are we geared up for this inevitable next wave of change?

6. There was a need to recalibrate management skills, e.g. many would be managing at distance due to new flexible working arrangements. Is this something we need to train and develop managers



Julie Towers is managing director (recruitment solutions) at Penna

to do and how do we measure their performance and outcomes in the future?

7. With flexible working and increased access to technology what role can e-learning and e-management play in driving forward change?

8. Increased emphasis on role modelling – leading by real example (applying consequence management and 'do what I do, not what I say') – some were struggling to get the consistency!

9. The heightened pressure on finances and the need for more rapid change and commerciality was putting increased pressure on the leadership team and CEO and lead politicians to be more front and central and lead the change. Is heroic leadership back?

10. Good change was made through increased engagement, focus

groups, research, work groups, matrix working etc. – but learning was not to have too many and create an industry.

11. Don't forget the value of awards and recognition at all times – 'well done' as well as 'not good enough' needed to be heard.

12. Most councils were putting more emphasis on distributed and devolved leadership and an increasing drive for commerciality.

13. How do we support risk, truthfully – can we live with it with high levels of public scrutiny and accountability? Is there still appetite for scapegoats?

14. Do we need separation in legal entity and reward to create the freedom to be commercial, e.g. social enterprise?

15. Contribution-led reward schemes were on the increase and a mix of both financial and non-financial rewards being introduced and considered.

16. Well managed councils recognised that everything done by managers in the organisation is a lever and opportunity to change culture – the truths and the myths. A very welcomed return for strong OD skills.

17. Whilst clear and connected and a reinforced story/narrative was central to all good councils, there was a need to ensure the policies and tools underpinned the message, otherwise it became rhetoric.

18. Reducing demand was identified by all as the new mission, and that it was harder than managing demand – so needed creative and innovative thinking – perhaps different people/skills and approaches?

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