

Public Private Partnerships Focus

£500m to be made available for public sector organisations pursuing Relational Partnering approach to property

The MJ Future Forum on 26 March received a major announcement by Public Sector Plc (PSP) to make available via its major funders, Talisman Global Capital, up to £500m for the next tranche of public sector organisations who wish to secure an additional property option and access funding through the application of PSP's governance framework and processes.

PSP, using its unique Relational Partnering approach (where relationships come in advance of commitment), has established 10 pathfinder partnerships who can now access private sector funds to review property and land portfolios, create capital and revenue streams, and regenerate town centres. All of these councils now have an additional option when looking at their strategic land and property opportunities.

These 10 'pathfinder' authorities work collectively as the Local Government Council Consortium Group [CCG] and seek to share knowledge, experience and improvement opportunities collectively for the benefit of the existing and new public sector partners joining the group. Over the last 12 months there has been an increased emphasis on exploring the potential to benefit the existing partnerships through regional collaboration and to provide greater access to the funding by the broader public sector.

This private sector funding is available to unlock the added value of public sector property assets

This private sector funding is available to unlock the added value of public sector property assets. It will provide the investment needed to develop projects and initiatives which generate revenue and capital income and revenue savings from the property portfolios of public bodies. Authorities are under no obligation to commit their property at the outset.

Following the experiences of the pathfinder partnerships, public sector bodies are invited to express an interest by going to www.publicsectorplc.com/eoi where they can see the Funding Prospectus and submit an online form.

Organisations who express an interest can work with the CCG who will share their knowledge in respect of the uses of this hybrid partnering model.

PSP's validation process will be applied to any proposals to demonstrate that they will be commercially viable and as good as, or better than, other conventional options available to the council or organisation. Only then will projects be taken forward by mutual agreement. The investment needed to take projects forward will come from the monies made available.

The expression of interest process commenced on the 26th March and runs through to the end of 2015. Organisations expressing an interest will be contacted with a view to jointly exploring the opportunities available. ■

For more information on this initiative, go to www.publicsectorplc.com/eoi or contact: Mark Hammersley, Corporate Director of Partnerships
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Forward thinking

Local authorities can be the key to helping realise the NHS's 'Five Year Forward View' writes Adam Fineberg

There are wider relevant parts of the health and social care system than made out by the 'Five Year Forward View' which is designed to facilitate more readily managed and potentially take money out of local health systems.

Clearly, there has to be a focus on services, processes, protocols, behaviours, ways of working, systems etc, along with geographical models for delivery and potential consequences

for physical delivery – front doors, one-stop shops etc, which could provide a vision and roadmap for developing community and local provision.

There is also the risk-associated matters to be addressed around budgets, governance, accountabilities, sovereignty, timescales, responsibilities, etc. There will be requirements around these from the CCG, also the local authority.

Then there is the question regarding

Sharing is caring

Imogen Fuller outlines how information sharing is helping provide long-term solutions to youth violence and gang culture

The riots of 2011 firmly placed gang and youth violence in England in the headlines. Since then, there continues to be mainstream interest in these issues and its resolution is a high priority for government and local places.

Many local places are taking a multi-agency approach to tackling youth violence and commissioning activities that divert and prevent young people from becoming engaged in gang culture.

Bringing services together to ensure the best outcomes for their young people and communities relies on effective information sharing – making this an area of interest for the Centre of Excellence for Information Sharing (CEIS), which is working with local places to understand the barriers that prevent effective information sharing and supports them in finding practical solutions to overcome them.

To get under the skin of some of the information sharing issues affecting local areas in tackling gangs and youth violence, the CEIS recently brought together a number of local places, including Waltham Forest, Nottingham and Margate, to discuss the challenges they faced.

The one-day workshop, run in partnership with the cross-government Ending Gang and Youth Violence Programme and Early Intervention Foundation, was attended by 30 professionals from a number of agencies, ranging from the police, through to Jobcentre Plus, and including councils and voluntary sector youth sector providers.

The Ending Gang and Youth Violence programme, led by the Home Office, works with 43 priority areas to help prevent young people getting involved in gangs, help those caught up in them to leave, and enable the police to take tough action against those who refuse support and continue to offend. Priority areas work with the programme's network of more than 80 people with frontline experience of dealing with gangs to develop a co-ordinated response to issues faced on the streets.

Participants at the workshop highlighted that although



many of the issues that cause young people to become involved in gangs and youth violence are individual to the locality, many of the information sharing barriers they face in joining up different services to resolve them are similar.

The mitigation and management of risk by developing as full and as clear a picture as possible of the individuals involved – and the current situation in a local area – was a key topic of discussion amongst attendees.

The attendees felt that in order to provide the most appropriate approach to their individual situations they needed to ensure a comprehensive risk assessment and delivery plan was in place, which relied on all partners' input. However, many were concerned that risk assessments were over-reliant on police data and more work needed to be done to not only change how gang and youth violence is recorded, but create understanding among the key players as to their responsibility in doing this and the benefits that could be gained from doing so.

A further challenge to achieving this is created by the large geographic areas over which gangs can operate, and the artificial administrative boundaries that separate services. These boundaries cause some local places to only look at the immediate vicinity in which they are working – although a one-size-fits all approach won't

the main integration thrust of the NHS. What is integration? Is it across or within organisations and/or people, outcome-centred? Also, where is it relevant? Is it something, to use old vocabulary, for 'mainstreaming', 'across the piece, place'?

Integration is a necessity in order to achieve efficiencies and enhanced outcomes on an ongoing basis. Integration has to be addressed in terms of service design (through strategic

commissioning) and delivery, ways of working, workforce development, delivery models, and geographies of delivery.

The wider relevant parts of the health and social care system have all in their ways over the years been addressing these issues through regeneration programmes, SureStart, Children's Centres, Safer Neighbourhoods, Neighbourhood Management and the 'Troubled Families' programme.

The challenge now is to cross-fertilise the learning from different parts of the system to try and make integrated local working a reality across the whole range of formal and informal public, private and voluntary provision in the place. This is the only way to improve outcomes and achieve ongoing efficiencies. ▶

Adam Fineberg is an innovation and change advisor

Customer experience or customer expectation?

With Phil Ruston, Serco's Business Development Director

The need to deliver a positive customer experience is posing some very real challenges right across the public sector. But why? Have we really forgotten what customer service is for?



It's not so much a case of good and bad customer service in either the public or private sector. The most important consideration is how customer experience or service compares with an organisation's core service objectives and the expectations of its service users.

Google, for example, only engages through the web – there's no phone number to be found anywhere. And you would not expect to be given silver cutlery in a fast food restaurant. In such cases, an organisation's service offer and the expectations of users are already clear from the outset, so customer experience is not adversely affected by such limitations. Similarly, it's not realistic for a council to empty refuse bins twice in one week or pay staff twice in a month in an effort to improve customer experience. So any steps to maximise customer experience and service also needs to match the broader aims and priorities of an organisation.

Customer experience can be unpredictable and very challenging to get right. But it doesn't need to be all encompassing, highly technical or costly

Yes, customer experience can be unpredictable and very challenging to get right. But it doesn't need to be all encompassing, highly technical or costly. Whether you are a public or private sector organisation, your approach to customer service will make a difference to the people you engage with and your staff. Make sure they both know your core service objectives, measure and monitor perceptions, and then invest and partner appropriately to actually meet the outcomes you've promised to deliver.

And insight is the key here. With greater customer insight, a more responsive, adaptable and suitable approach can be designed and delivered. Without it, how do you know what your customer expects and what you need to provide? Only then can a council truly plan ahead with confidence, harness capabilities within the broader local community and manage the inevitable spikes, risks and shifting priorities that will always arise. Such customer insight and demographic awareness will also help to inform those preventative measures that can help to determine which joint service offers need to be provided.

This – combined with the latest technology and digital engagement tools – should incorporate proper customer journey mapping and pathways including health, police, probation service, community care and so on.

Insight and innovation is essential to ensure councils deliver excellent customer experiences – but so is managing customer expectations. ■

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solve information-sharing challenges, taking a more joined-up approach with neighbouring areas could create a more comprehensive information base, enabling a more appropriate, risk-assessed approach to be developed.

The participants then discussed which providers were best positioned to enrich the information they have available to mitigate risk. The value of information held by the education and children's services was highlighted by many and all the attendees flagged the need for stronger and broader links with the health sector.

However, it was recognised that there are significant complexities around working with the health profession, including how information is logged – particularly how knife injuries are reported – and the difference in working cultures, influenced by changing structures – making engagement difficult.

Although A&E departments hold the key to some significant information, providers from across the health profession can enrich the picture and much earlier with what they know, well before a situation reaches crisis point. Some of the local places involved in the workshop highlighted the high number of vulnerable people, such as those with mental health needs, who are either involved with or at risk from gangs and the value GPs and mental

health workers have in understanding the extent of this to plan and commission activity to intervene early.

There was a real desire by all who attended the workshop for earlier sharing of health information when placing a young person who is at risk from or involved in youth violence – for example when a vulnerable young person is placed in a children's home or an ex-offender is placed back into a community. Health records providing information at this point in time would enable needs and risks to be assessed and early referrals to support services made.

In addition, other common issues included understanding and fears around the quality of data provided by partners and the responsibility placed on partners to ensure its accuracy. Above all, the event uncovered a real willingness of all involved to overcome the barriers they highlighted to ensure young people's involvement in gangs and violence is eradicated.

Findings from the event will now be used to inform ongoing work by the CEIS in local places and with policy makers.

Find out more at: www.informationsharing.org.uk ▶

Imogen Fuller is engagement manager at the Centre of Excellence for Information Sharing (CEIS)