

UNIVERSITY OF  
BIRMINGHAM

# INLOGOV Informs

Issue 7 - Spring 2015

*News from the Institute of Local Government Studies  
University of Birmingham*



# Welcome

Welcome to the latest edition of INLOGOV Informs.

INLOGOV is celebrating its 50th anniversary – 50 years of inspiring excellence – by creating a record of the many friends of INLOGOV who have worked with us over the years.

INLOGOV supports local government through our research, teaching – both academic and practical - and our consultancy. We are working with a wide range of local authorities to support radical change. Our Blogs and Briefings help to share new approaches to managing change.

In 2012 we published 'The World Will Be Your Oyster?' which analysed the extent to which the Coalition Government's promise of greater localism would deliver any real increases in autonomy for local government. We weren't convinced that the Localism Act would deliver any significant change.

In March last year, the Council of Europe took a similarly critical perspective when it issued a report on the quality of UK local government set against the benchmark of the European Charter of Local Self-Government. It criticised the extent of centralisation in England and the problems of "powers without money". It recommended some radical changes including:

- Recognising local government's important civic leadership and regulatory roles.
- Diversifying the local revenue base away from a dependence on central government funding towards accountability to the local tax payer.
- Recognising the role of politician, promoting their work and the importance of democratically elected institutions.
- Using the collaborative approach often seen in Wales and Scotland as a model for the relationship between central and local government in England.
- Entrenching the principles of local self-government in future legislation and codification of the central-local relationship.

The financial context for local government remains hugely challenging following significant reductions in central government funding. Local government has responded by becoming ever more efficient, by integrating organisations and functions and by better commissioning and procurement. Research suggests that local government has managed to maintain residents' satisfaction with local services throughout this difficult time. However, a point is fast approaching for some councils where incremental changes will no longer be sufficient to bridge the gap between need and resources. This suggests we are entering an era of significant change and radical innovation.

On a personal note, at the end of last year I was very honoured to win a place in LGC 100, LGC's 'Ultimate Local Government Powerlist', at number 45 (you can read more at: <http://www.birmingham.ac.uk/schools/government-society/departments/local-government-studies/news/2014/12/catherine-staite-lgc.aspx> ). This was in recognition of my contribution as a 'thought leader' and INLOGOV's role as 'spiritual home for many chief executives'. Long may it remain so.



A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Catherine Staite".

**Catherine Staite**  
Director of INLOGOV

**50**  
YEARS OF  
INSPIRING  
EXCELLENCE

In each issue, we feature profiles of INLOGOV staff, students, alumni and our associates. Read the profiles below to learn about some of our research interests, teaching, consultancy and collaborative opportunities.

### Chris Lawrence-Pietroni

*INLOGOV Associate*

My work focuses on the intersection between service design, leadership development and community empowerment - areas that were very much to the fore at the recent Inlogov Summer Symposium. Much of my work includes the application of insights drawn from social movements and community organising to achieve sustainable systemic change - understanding 'the system' to include service professionals, managers, politicians, front-line staff, citizens and communities. I'm currently delivering a number of senior leadership development programmes and consulting projects commissioned by the national Systems Leadership Steering Group including the Birmingham Healthy Villages programme.

These are the experiences and frameworks that I bring to my work for Inlogov e.g. as member of the core faculty for the National Graduate Development Programme for Local Government and co-facilitator of Lincolnshire County Council's Senior Leadership Development Programme. Looking ahead I'm excited to have been asked to work on the development of the new Collaborative Leadership element in the Strategic Management programme.



**Bryony Rudkin**  
*INLOGOV MSc  
Student*

Suffolk County  
Council and  
Ipswich Borough  
Council, Culture  
Portfolio

I was drawn to the course by the opportunity to study and to reflect on a political career spanning two decades in an institution as well regarded and resourced as INLOGOV.

I have really enjoyed and benefited from my studies and can't quite imagine I'll be able to stop! The chance to be a student again after 30 years has been life-enhancing and I've greatly valued the excellent teaching, meeting fellow students and the magnificent campus in Birmingham.

### Dr. Stephen Jeffares

*Director of Postgraduate  
Research and author of  
'Interpreting Hashtag Politics:  
Policy Ideas in an Era of Social  
Media'*

**For the last few years** I have been interested in how policy makers deliberately create a label or brand for a policy initiative or idea.

**Never has it been cheaper and easier** to rapidly communicate policy to a wide audience, yet never has it been easier to critique or undermine the initiative. In this game of hashtag politics, for every main initiative we remember, several more wither in this environment. Within minutes of announcing an initiative, jokes and alternative hashtags will circulate and gain momentum.

**At INLOGOV we're interested in week one** - the first few days - capturing the discussion and exploring any signs of an early shape of the debate. To understand this we need to draw on the advances in online tools for crowdsourcing viewpoints and classifying, categorising and indexing millions of social media items.





## Recent News

Keep up to date with the latest news and events from around the department and the wide-ranging projects our staff and students get involved with by visiting [www.birmingham.ac.uk/inlogov](http://www.birmingham.ac.uk/inlogov)



### 8th GCC Municipal Conference

**Sustainable Municipal Services to Enhance the Quality of Life**  
**8-9 April 2014, Abu Dhabi National Exhibition Centre, UAE**



#### 8th GCC Municipal Conference, Abu Dhabi April 8 – 9 2014

Catherine State was invited by the government of Abu Dhabi to speak at the annual local government conference for the Gulf States on 'Successful Public-Private Collaboration'. The conference also focused on developing sustainable cities and included a visit to Masdar, Abu Dhabi's impressive sustainable development, when Catherine had a chance to ride in a driverless car as well as to explore tranquil streets and open spaces which were 10 degrees cooler than the surrounding area as a result of the application of both old and new cooling technologies.



## Work with the Cabinet Office

Since the start of last year INLOGOV has been contributing to the work of the 'Cabinet Office Major Projects Authority' – a cross government initiative to improve high level, complex project and programme management. To date we have worked supporting more than ten government departments and agencies to help them better understand the complexities of leading and managing programmes around diverse issues such as the 'Olympics Legacy', welfare reform and major national infrastructure issues.

What is emerging so far are new ideas around how to improve the relationships between programme and project sponsors, stakeholders, client organisations and in many cases local authorities involved in delivering such projects. The lessons learned will be of use to local authorities who are applying high level project management to services. A detailed report of the lessons learned will be produced in the near future.

## IRSPM conference 2015, 31 March – 2 April 2015

Work on preparation for our hosting of approximately 550 delegates started last October, and continues. Stephen Jeffares chairs the organising committee, working with College events, marketing and communications staff to deliver a top quality set of facilities and events, while Catherine Needham chairs the scientific committee concerned with selecting panel applications and overseeing paper selection.

Other members of the scientific committee are Catherine Durose (INLOGOV), Helen Dickinson (University of Melbourne), Jean Hartley (Open University), Adina Dudau (Glasgow Caledonian University), Ileana Steccolini (Bocconi University), Susan Phillips (Carleton University), Richard Walker (City University of Hong Kong) and Eric Hans Klijn (IRSPM President).

Together with Chris Skelcher, the conference chair, and Catherine Durose, our four staff form the executive team overseeing the conference.

## Hybrids, hybridity and hype?

This was the issue posed by a recent special issue of the US journal, *The Nonprofit Quarterly*. Many talk about non-profit organisations being hybrids, but what does this mean and what are the implications for staff, volunteers, managers, trustees and users? Chris Skelcher and Steven Rathgeb Smith explore this issue in their contribution 'Hybridity and nonprofit organizations: The research and management challenge' (*Nonprofit Quarterly* 21 (1), pp 80-87).

"In this article, we propose five possible hybrid models that can offer insight into management strategies to cope with the increasingly complex environment facing nonprofits. The study of nonprofit hybrids is important for both scientific and practical reasons. The concept of the "hybrid" organization has become widely accepted in academic circles, but to date has been used largely in a descriptive way and has lacked theoretical purchase. If hybridity is a universal characteristic of nonprofit organizations—as Brandsen, van de Donk, and Putters, as well as Adalbert Evers, argue—then the concept requires researchers to develop a more robust theoretical approach that can be used to guide research and practice in nonprofits.

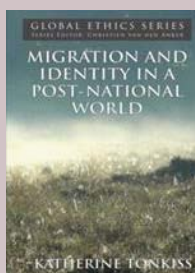
We develop a way forward by using the literature on institutional logics. This offers a fruitful line of inquiry, because it recognizes that many nonprofits embody plural institutional logics, and that latent and overt contestation—in which institutional logics interact with individual and group identity and organizational structuring — can result."

This paper emerged from discussions at the ESRC seminar series on 'Beyond the State: Third Party Government in Comparative Perspective' funded by a grant held by Catherine Durose, Chris Skelcher and Jonathan Justice (University of Delaware), and held during 2012-13.

## INLOGOV Summer symposium 12– 13 June 2014

In the summer of 2014, INLOGOV brought together distinguished UK and international academics with leaders in the field of local government to share ideas about how we can address the major challenges faced by local government in the current climate. Rob Whiteman (Chief Executive Cifpa) and Daniel Goodwin (former Executive Director, Finance and Policy LGA) launched proceedings with a provocative discussion on 'local government at the crossroads'. Over two days discussion focussed on 'commercialism and commercialisation', 'the strengthening of democracy' and 'demand management'. Various blogs from the event can be found at:

[inlogov.com/category/summer-symposium/](http://inlogov.com/category/summer-symposium/)



## Migration, Citizenship and Diversity

The UK has a long and rich history of migration; indeed, many cities are now characterised as 'superdiverse',

denoting the scale of migration and the diversity of countries of origin and types of migration present in those receiving communities. Less diverse communities have also recently been affected by migration particularly as a result of new channels from the EU. As such, migration is an important issue for local and national governments alike. In particular, local authorities must deliver services for rapidly changing communities, while at the same time managing the community cohesion challenges which can accompany population change. In her recent book, *Migration and Identity in a Post-National World* (published 2013, Palgrave Macmillan), Katherine Tonkiss considers how local authorities in rural areas can mitigate cohesion challenges during periods of new migration, and casts this within a theoretical examination of national identity and citizenship. At the national level, Katherine is also leading research to examine citizenship testing policy change, and the role of civil society organisations in the migration policy-making process; and is co-leading an international network of scholars interested in forms of 'noncitizenship' with Dr. Tendayi Bloom of the United Nations University Institute on Globalisation, Culture and Mobility in Barcelona.

## ESRC Festival of Social Sciences, 'Legislate' Workshop



At this ESRC festival of social sciences workshop held in November, sixth form students from across the West Midlands had an opportunity to work with academics from INLOGOV, POLSIS, and civil servants from the Cabinet Office, to take an in-depth look at the legislative process and critically think about how it might be improved. Highlights of the day included playing 'Legislate?!', a board game developed by the Cabinet Office which enabled students to take a 'bright idea' through the policy-making process – to the point of implementation. The session concluded with a lively discussion and the provision of a political perspective from Gisela Stuart MP.

The photograph above shows students from The Sixth Form College, Solihull, playing 'Legislate?!'.

## Successful vivas

Dumisani Jantjies, viva date 10 March 2014, completed 25 April 2014.

*The Analysis of Performance Accountability in the North West and Gauteng Provinces in South Africa.*

Sungwon Lee, viva date 29 May 2014, completed 16 June 2014.

*The relationship between fiscal expenditure and quality of life.*

Marilyn Merriam, viva date 30 April 2014, completed 13 June 2014. *Volunteering and the criminal justice system.*

## Recent INLOGOV publications

Bottom, K. and Reiser, M. (2014) 'Still want to party? An assessment of party-politicization in directly-elected mayoral authorities in England and Germany's North Rhine-Westphalia' *Public Money & Management* 34 (5).

Bovaird, T. Willis, M. And Briggs I. (2014 early view online) 'Strategic commissioning for local public services: service improvement cycle or just going round in circles?' *Local Government Studies* 40 (4).

Bovaird, T. (2014 early view online) 'Efficiency in third sector partnerships for delivering local government services: the role of economies of scale scope and learning' *Public Management Review* (online from 1 July 2014).

Durose, C. Justice, J. and Skelcher, C. (early view 2014) 'Governing at arm's length: eroding or enhancing democracy?' *Policy & Politics*.

Jeffares, S. Klijn, E.H. Twist, M.J.W. Van der Steen M. Public Managers (2014 early view online) 'Media Influence And Governance: Three Research Traditions Empirically Explored' *Administration & Society*.

Rathgeb-Smith, S. and Skelcher, C. (2014) 'Hybridity and Nonprofit Organizations: Next Questions' *The Nonprofit Quarterly* 21 (1).

Flinders, M. Dommett, K. and Tonkiss, K. (2014) 'Bonfires and barbecues: coalition governance and the politics of quango reform' *Contemporary British History* 28 (1).



## 21st Century Public Servant



Public services are going through major changes in response to a range of issues such as cuts to budgets, increased localisation, greater demands for service user voice and control, increased public expectations and a mixed economy of welfare provision. **The 21st Century Public Servant** report <https://21stcenturypublicservant.files.wordpress.com/2014/09/21-century-report-281014.pdf> which was launched at the **Ikon Gallery in November as part of the ESRC Festival of Social Science**, looks at the skills, values and identities of the future public service workforce, and how best to address key challenges. The Chief Executive of Birmingham City Council, Mark Rogers, and Chief Superintendent from West Midlands Police, Sally Bournier, were among the public service leaders who attended the event and gave their support to the research findings.

The report, written by Catherine Mangan (Inlogov) and Catherine Needham (Health Services Management Centre), was the culmination of a one year Knowledge Exchange project funded by the Economic and Social Research Council (ESRC) in partnership with Birmingham City Council and the University of Birmingham's Public Service Academy. The research incorporated a literature review and 40 interviews with people working in local government and national stakeholder organisations which support public services. Key findings demonstrate that future public services need a fleet-of-foot worker, who manages a portfolio career and an emotionally rich engagement with citizens at the same time as exercising personal development and self-care. However this is a composite profile, illuminating a series of working practices rather than providing a blueprint for a single heroic worker. Progress towards this profile is likely to be achieved through personal reflection, internal organisational dialogue, external networking and peer learning.

The project team are working with practitioners in a range of public service organisations to explore how to apply the findings to workforce development strategies. Debate and commentary on the research can be found on the project blog: <http://21stcenturypublicservant.wordpress.com/blog/> or on Twitter using the hashtag #21Cps.

## Solace Summit, 15 – 17 October 2014

INLOGOV enjoyed good representation at the recent Solace Summit. With Guy Clifton (Grant Thornton), Catherine State presented work on the future shape of local government launching findings from the recent '2020 Vision' research programme – for more information please visit <http://www.grant-thornton.co.uk/2020-vision/>

In the context of Solace's 2013 report on skills for leadership 'Asking the Right Questions' Catherine also presented on a panel with Kim Ryley (Interim Executive, Solace Enterprises) and Robert J. O'Neill Jr. (Executive Director ICMA) that reflected on the response to this report. Catherine's three part blog entitled 'preaching to the choir' can be found at the following link <http://inlogov.com/tag/preaching-to-the-choir-blog-series/>

## Distance Learning Masters Programmes

From 2015, Inlogov will be offering a distance learning Masters, enabling people to study public administration through a series of online modules. Combining a residential element with high quality electronic learning resources, this is an exciting innovation. The programme will be highly flexible to allow people to log on and learn at the time most convenient to them, so that they can fit learning around work and family commitments.

The teaching content will bring together up-to-date research on public administration with some of the practical challenges and dilemmas associated with being a public manager. The programme will provide a rich and varied content that will be of interest to home and international students.

## INLOGOV Programmes

At INLOGOV, we offer a range of postgraduate degree programmes, at Masters, Diploma and Certificate levels, we also offer study opportunities for research degrees (MPhil or PhD). We have a wide range of Executive Professional development options from degrees to accredited short courses and seminars.

Choose between a single 20-credit, postgraduate module (5 days attendance); a Postgraduate Certificate comprising three modules (15 days attendance); a Postgraduate Diploma comprising six modules (30 days attendance), or a Masters Degree comprising six modules and a dissertation.

**For further information, please visit**  
[www.birmingham.ac.uk/inlogov](http://www.birmingham.ac.uk/inlogov)

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## Executive Programme in Strategic Commissioning (5 day course)

16-18 June and 13, 14 July 2015

This Executive Programme in Strategic Commissioning focuses directly on the current challenge of coping with public service funding cuts at a time of rising service needs and expectations and considers issues such as:

- Structures and models for strategic commissioning
- Shaping more successful communities and improved outcomes
- Integration across all public services
- Monitoring and evaluating of outcomes
- Driving organisational and partnership performance
- Improving procurement
- Making the most of alternative methods of service delivery
- Harnessing user and community co-production

### Accreditation

Delegates can, if they wish, register towards a postgraduate certificate accreditation (20 credits) and complete two assignments.

### Course convenors

Ian Briggs and Professor Tony Bovaird

The Module will also draw on the skills and experience of other members of INLOGOV staff as appropriate.

### Fees and booking

£975 plus £300 for optional postgraduate accreditation. Accommodation costs available on request. This course is VAT exempt.

### Book online at:

[www.birmingham.ac.uk/schools/government-society/departments/local-government-studies/events/accredited-short-courses/forms/06-16-strategic-commissioning.aspx](http://www.birmingham.ac.uk/schools/government-society/departments/local-government-studies/events/accredited-short-courses/forms/06-16-strategic-commissioning.aspx)

### Learn more

To discuss the course content in more detail or to book and reserve places on this module please contact:

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Or visit: [www.birmingham.ac.uk/inlogov](http://www.birmingham.ac.uk/inlogov)



