

Policy Commission explores the role of 'behaviour change' in local public services

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The University of Birmingham and Demos Policy Commission on 'The future of local public services in a 'big society'" held its second workshop on 17 February at the University of Birmingham.

The workshop brought the commissioners together with other experts from academia, policy and practice to explore current policy and research thinking about the idea of changing citizens' behaviour in different areas of social and personal life, and to consider some of the questions that interventions designed to change behavior raise for the respective roles of the state, local services, individuals and families. The workshop reviewed a range of approaches to behavior change and their applicability to local public services, paying particular attention to the role of 'nudge'. Participants debated whether and how the reductions in public spending, the changes to local public service provision and the increased focus on 'self-help' will generate new approaches to change behavior. They also explored what could be learned from current practice about how behavior change worked in different policy and service areas, and the particular implications for changing young people's behaviour as citizens and service users.

A full report of the workshop is available on the [Policy Commission website \(http://www.birmingham.ac.uk/research/impact/policy-commissions/public-services/workshops.aspx\)](http://www.birmingham.ac.uk/research/impact/policy-commissions/public-services/workshops.aspx).

Previous workshops explored:

- [How public service relationships will need to be redesigned to meet future needs \(/schools/government-society/departments/local-government-studies/news/2011/01/policy-commission-explores-public-service-relationships-redesigned.aspx\)](/schools/government-society/departments/local-government-studies/news/2011/01/policy-commission-explores-public-service-relationships-redesigned.aspx)

The Policy Commission's next workshop on Thursday 10 March [explores the role of the third sector and the local state in the future delivery of public services \(/schools/government-society/departments/local-government-studies/news/2011/03/policy-commission-future-public-services.aspx\)](/schools/government-society/departments/local-government-studies/news/2011/03/policy-commission-future-public-services.aspx).

If you would like to make a contribution to this workshop or to the commission's work more widely please get in touch with Professor Helen Sullivan who is leading this Policy Commission for the University.

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