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Who is accountable in localism?

Findings from theory and practice

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Summary

This review was commissioned by the Arts and Humanities Research Council as part of the cross-council Connected Communities programme. The review aims to provide challenging insights for the Department for Communities and Local Government (CLG) in encouraging and supporting community governance in a context of decentralisation and a wider drive for localism. These ambitions for decentralisation have revived long-standing and fiercely fought arguments about forms of representation and accountability, which are not easily resolved. Such conversations and debates take place in local councils, wards and neighbourhood but are also reflected in academic theory and research.

Making judgements between these different arguments is challenging: they are all recognisable and based on different valid and established theories. This review attempts to set out a way to communicate across these different ways of thinking and practicing governance and accountability. To do this, the report develops a typology of five different understandings, or models, of representation and accountability. The typology is designed as a heuristic, a simplified way of understanding complex ideas. It could have practical use for local authorities as a diagnostic tool.

Figure 1 provides a brief overview of the typology, summarising the core theories and how they operate in practice in each of the five models:

- Model 1 can be seen by decision-making by local elected members in traditional Area Committees.
- Model 2 adds to this with elected members communicating decisions and the reasons for unpopular decisions to citizens.
- Model 3 includes traditional elected-member led decision-making through area Committees as well as consultation and deliberation with citizens.
- Model 4 is seen in decentralised governance structures which consist of elected members and 'community representatives' from interest groups such as a 'BME rep'.
- Model 5 is an asset-based approach, and includes lots of different decentralised activities, co-production, and co-operation.

Figure 1: Typology of representation and accountability

	Model	Theory	How the models operate in decentralised governance structures
Tradition-al	**Model 1**: Representative & responsible government	British Political Tradition or 'Westminster Model'. Representative democracy; elections as selection, reward and sanction	▪ Local elected member-led and controlled/members-only. ▪ Delegation of powers to ward or Area Committees ▪ Citizens have roles as voters, with power to select, and sanction/reward ▪ Little exchange/contact/communication between elections ▪ 'Community leadership' for elected members defined as new roles for ward members
	Model 2: Representative, responsible & responsive government (telling)	Representative democracy which is also responsive, i.e. decisions communicated between elections	▪ As above , but ▪ More emphasis on communicating decisions to constituents between elections ▪ 'Community leadership' defined as ward members communicating decisions and explaining unpopular decisions
	Model 3: Representative, responsible & responsive government (telling and listening)	Representative democracy which is also responsive, and both adapts to, and shapes constituent preferences between elections	▪ As above, but ▪ Preferences of individual citizens also collected, collated and fed-in between elections ▪ Representatives accommodate, adapt or adjust decisions to constituent preferences, and shape citizen preferences ▪ 'Community leadership' defined as ward members gathering and leading public opinion
Border-straddling	**Model 4:** Representative, responsible & responsive governance (interest groups)	Corporate pluralism. Representative democracy supplemented by representation by a range of interest groups	▪ Local elected member-led and controlled governance structures, but could include representations and/or membership from interest groups ▪ Citizens' roles as voters are supplemented by citizens forming and/or aligning with interest groups ▪ Elected representatives welcome representations from interest groups ('community reps') ▪ Community leadership' defined as ward members brokering between representations by interest groups
Comple-mentary	**Model 5:** Polycentric governance	Collaborative governance and asset-based problem-solving	▪ Allows for citizen-led or controlled governance structures ▪ Decision-making authority could be shared across networks ▪ Accountability is not solely through electoral mandate ▪ Citizens and groups of citizens are recognised as 'local experts'. ▪ Can generate consensus for collective action/problem solving, but different views possible within/across different (poly) centres ▪ Overlap with principles and activity of co-production ▪ Co-operative councils

Models 1, 2 and 3 are labelled, 'traditional', in that they only allow electoral accountability in decentralised governance and give primacy to the 'democratic mandate' of local councillors. Model 4 straddles the border between 'traditional' and 'complementary' in beginning to offer partial forms of non-elected accountability. Model 5 is termed, 'complementary' as accountability is not necessarily solely based on electoral means, but also recognises that it is not only possible, but important to bring citizens and communities into governance. Model 5 is also distinct in that its focus moves away from formal decision-making and towards mobilising collective action. Models 2, 3 and 4 offer more 'responsiveness' to citizens from elected representatives through decentralised governance, whereas Model 5 emphasises 'community control' through 'community governance'.

Figure 2 sets out and compares the implications of these different ways of thinking, considering the key aspects of governance:

- **Power**

Models 1, 2 and 3 focus on the delegation of power by citizens to elected representatives through voting. Model 4 acknowledges the presence of competing centres of power and the need to offer 'checks and balances' to the power of elected representatives. Model 5 takes a different view, focusing on 'non-dominating' and 'relational' forms of power as the basis of authority.

- **Transparency**

In Model 1, transparency centres on the past performance and future manifestos of elected representatives. Model 2 demands not only the transparency of individuals but the justification of decisions. Model 3 furthers this demand and requires transparency in the decision-making process through a dialogue between elected representatives and citizens between elections. Model 4 recognises the role of organised interests in this dialogue, but also expects that such interests make transparent their own representative claims. Model 5 makes the transparency of decisions, decision-making processes and the outcomes of those decisions, whichever bodies make them.

- **Role of citizens**

By actively precluding participation beyond voting, the role of citizens is limited in Model 1. Citizens can be mobilised to vote, join political parties or seek election. In Model 2, citizens are expected to vote and to take notice and digest what elected representatives communicate to them. Model 3 is more demanding, requiring citizens to share their opinions and preferences and get involved in dialogue and deliberation. Using flexible and 'light touch' tools, such as social media, can encourage more effective communication and exchange. Model 4 relies on a small group of active and organised citizens to act as the representatives of different interests. Whilst co-option and burnout are risks for citizens here, there is a prospect of forging deeper relationships and also of broadening participation by encouraging turnover and different ways of representing community interests. Model 5 offers the widest variety of roles to citizens as decision-makers and problem-solvers, and uses an asset-based approach.

- **Accountability**

In Model 1, accountability lies with elected representatives and is exercised only through elections. Models 2, 3 and 4 introduce the idea of 'responsiveness' between elections, as an additional form of democratic accountability. There are different definitions of responsiveness; in Model 2 it is about 'telling' or communicating decisions and the reasons for unpopular decisions. Models 3 and 4 are about 'telling and listening', where responsiveness is about making sure that decisions take account of consultation, discussion and 'community reps' views. Models 1, 2 and 3 do not have scope for non-electoral accountability. Model 4 partially introduces this for organised interest groups, but Model 5 suggests that, along with elected representatives, non-elected bodies can be held accountable through the idea of 'relational accountability'.

Figure 2: Comparing the implications of different models

	Power	Transparency	Role and mobilisation of citizens	Accountability
Model 1: Representative/ responsible government	Hierarchical Delegated to representatives by citizens at elections Exercised responsibly by representatives	Past performance and/or future manifestos of representatives and selected candidates for election	Citizens as voters or candidates for election Further participation limited to voter registration and participation drives, joining political parties	Elections only
Model 2: Representative/ responsible/ responsive government (telling)		Focus on decisions of representatives Mechanisms for communicating decisions	Citizens as voters and recipients of information and marketing	Elected representatives communicate decisions taken
Model 3: Representative/ responsible/ responsive government (telling and listening)		Focus on the decisions of representatives Mechanisms for communicating decisions and inviting feedback	Citizens as voters but also express opinions and engage in dialogue and deliberation through offline and online engagement	Elected representatives adjust decision based on understanding of citizen preferences
Model 4: Representative/ responsible/ responsive governance (interest groups)	Competing centres of power provide balance	Focus on the decisions of representatives Mechanisms for lobbying on the basis of wider, organised and representative interests	Citizens as voters but also members of organised interest groups Mobilisation through targeting of specific and relevant groups and lobbying	Elected representatives adjust decisions based on representations from interest groups Non-elected representatives of interest groups required to justify wider representative claims
Model 5: Polycentric governance	Relational and non-dominating	Focus on decisions, decision-making-process and outcomes	Citizens as co-decision makers and problem solvers drawing on local knowledge and experiential expertise Creative mobilisation and support for less-well resourced	Elected representatives: all of the above (Models 1-4) Non-elected representatives have multiple forms of relational accountability

Key messages

- In debates about decentralisation of decision-making and localism, we focus on issues of representation and accountability. This is not only because these are major concerns for central and local government, but also because these issues are the focus for day-to-day, very real local debates.

- Whilst our typology is a necessary simplification of complex debates and challenges, it offers a framework to understand why tensions in local areas about who makes decisions and who is accountable are hard to resolve.

- The typology also helps to explain how and why localism and community action is frustrated when different models are being used or advocated for by different organisations, and even within the same organisations.

- The different models in the typology all have articulate defenders in academic writing and local areas. In one sense, they are equally valid; choosing is an ideological preference.

- Beyond this neutral stance, advocates of Model 5 would say that dominance of traditional ways of thinking about representation and accountability present barriers towards greater community control and decentralisation.

- The typology sets out a radical, yet complementary, way of thinking about representation and accountability in Model 5, 'polycentric government', which offers a way of growing localism by focusing on local and democratic problem-solving and encouraging collaborative action.

- The underlying starting point for Model 5 is that government by itself is no longer the most effective way to solve problems and that it is not only possible, but necessary to bring communities and/or citizens into governance.

- This argument is already familiar from a wider policy stream (including early intervention, localism, community rights, personalisation, co-production and behaviour change) which aims to shift the default in local public service provision towards communities taking action and control of their lives and their local communities.

- These ideas are also emerging in local practice as 'asset-based approaches' which focus on motivating and mobilising communities and enabling them to take control, offering a sharp contrast to 'service dependence' approaches implied in Models 1-4.

- But these ambitions and activity are often limited by existing governance arrangements which can exclude and limit involvement from citizens.

- Our typology offers a heuristic for surfacing implicit models, challenging assumptions, identifying the cause of frustration and mixed messages and addressing the implications and consequences of community governance for representation and accountability

Our policy recommendations are:

- The typology is adapted and used by central and local government as a diagnostic tool to identify which model best fits policy aims, current practice, and goals, and identify where policies might sit within different models in a potentially contradictory way.
- The local government sector should undertake a serious re-examination of its assumptions about traditional models of representation.
- Both central and local government should make their model, or 'offer', explicit and transparent to citizens.
- Central government should incentivise take up of the Localism agenda based on how much progress local authorities have made towards model 5.
- Policies on community governance should be implemented in a complementary way, rather than being posed as alternatives to representative democracy.

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Section One: Introduction

a. Background

This policy review was commissioned by the Arts and Humanities Research Council as part of their ongoing Connected Communities programme, 'a cross-Council programme designed to help us understand the changing nature of communities in their historical and cultural contexts and the role of communities in sustaining and enhancing our quality of life'. It aims to facilitate cross-disciplinary dialogue and debate amongst researchers and other partners within and beyond the Connected Communities Programme. The review team have worked with policy partners and the AHRC to finalise the scope, focus and brief for this policy review, which was conducted between November 2012 and April 2013.

The policy review aimed to provide challenging insights for the Department for Communities and Local Government (CLG) on the theme of 'community governance in a context of decentralisation', focusing on the specific questions:

- Who should be taking decisions and for what?
- And how and to whom are they accountable?

The brief expands on the topic:

> *Taking into account the full range of traditional and new governance roles, this topic would explore innovative approaches to 'local decision-taking' and community governance. It would seek to address the 'who, what and how' questions posed above, as well as issues of 'accountability' including, for example, how fear of accountability might act as a barrier within communities and amongst service providers, and strategies for overcoming issues of accountability.*

b. Methods, approaches and outputs

The reviews are intended to develop insights into the policy issues raised by drawing on inter-disciplinary research and expertise from across the Connected Communities Programme, and other relevant research. The review team undertook a number of activities as part of the review, including:

- rapid synthesis of Connected Communities projects and research outcomes of potential relevance to the topic;

- review of political science, public policy and governance literature;

- informal consultations with fifteen key stakeholders with expertise in community governance[1];

- developing a policy briefing to inform a seminar held on 12 March 2013 as part of the AHRC Connected Communities showcase event;

- a twenty-four hour think-tank, 'Communities taking Control' held at Trafford Hall, home of the National Communities Resource Centre on 21-22 March 2013 which involved nearly 40 people from neighbourhood and community organisations, local government officers and elected members and support and infrastructure organisations[2];

- a networking and feedback event with Connected Communities researchers, aiming to facilitate cross-disciplinary dialogue and debate, held at the University of Birmingham on 25 March 2013.

Our review intends to present a 'simultaneous translation' to encourage sharing and learning from different perspectives:

- To synthesise insights from the Connected Communities programme and wider relevant research to creatively respond to the concerns of policy makers and articulating policy concerns to a multi-disciplinary research community and mapping research insights against them.

- To try to understand and address concerns and barriers experienced by those charged with developing community governance, by exploring these issues in academic research and theory.

- To take concepts and theories from academic research and consider how they could be mobilised into actionable policy recommendations for developing community governance.

c. Context for the policy review

Traditional forms of representative democracy have come under increasing challenge due to falling levels of voting and trust and criticisms about the partiality of representation and limited connectedness between elected members and their constituencies. In response, governments across developed democracies have sought to widen participation, encouraging citizens and communities to shape and influence decision-making which affects their everyday lives.

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[1] All quotes in the report taken from these consultations are anonymised.
[2] All quotes in the report taken from these consultations are anonymised.

The current fiscal context and planned reductions in public spending, along with the drive for localism, have heightened a long-standing interest in decentralisation and community governance. **Decentralisation** means devolving more influence and/or control to wards, neighbourhoods and localities – below the level of the local authority - for public spending and decisions about what happens in local areas. **Community governance** is perceived as a useful means of enabling citizens and communities to influence the decisions and public services which affect their everyday lives, bringing greater 'experiential' expertise into the policy process improving the effectiveness of policy, by making it better informed and encouraging communities to contribute to achievable solutions and improved outcomes. Both offer the possibility of opening up new democratic potentialities and encouraging greater bureaucratic responsiveness. Examples of community governance are found in diverse contexts, across policy fields and with differing institutional forms. Yet, despite a near bewildering array of activity and innovation to support and facilitate community governance, broadening participation through new forms of governance raises a new set of concerns. These tensions centre on the consequences of these non-traditional forms of governance and often non-elected forms of representation for accountability.

d. Challenges for the policy review

Within the broad theme of accountability in community governance in a context of decentralisation, this policy review considered a series of challenges which reflect both contemporary policy concerns and issues of research focus:

- how to identify and de-lineate a shared geographical definition of community whilst ensuring a form of representation which reflects the diversity of that community and has ties of accountability to it.
- how to open up new democratic spaces and opportunities for a meaningful transfer of power whilst avoiding the pitfalls of more traditional forms of representation.
- how to create community governance informed by the local knowledge and experiential expertise from across the community, providing opportunities for engagement tailored to community priorities, without creating a burden for those without the appetite or interest.
- how to encourage local determinism and diversity whilst recognising and addressing the differential capacity of communities.

- how to create scope for more community action by more creatively managing perceived risks for accountability.
- how to effectively encourage and support community governance.

Review team and acknowledgements

The review team was Liz Richardson, University of Manchester and Catherine Durose, University of Birmingham. Matthew Hilton, University of Birmingham acted as a specialist advisor. The team would like to acknowledge the input and project support provided by Caitlin McMullin and Ann Bolstridge, University of Birmingham. The team also want to give particular thanks to the participants involved in a twenty-four hour think-tank, 'Communities taking Control' held at the National Communities Resource Centre on 21-22 March 2013 for their reflections, insights and expertise. The review team would also like to thank those involved in other research events and conversations during the course of the review, including the Big Society and Decentralisation team at the Department for Communities and Local Government for their insightful comments and encouragement. The review team also recognise the support from the Arts and Humanities Research Council's Connected Communities programme and in particular, Sue Hanshaw and the parallel review team from the University of Sheffield, led by Kate Pahl.

Section Two: Models of representation and accountability

a. Purpose of a typology of representation and accountability

There are long-standing arguments about forms of representation, accountability and democracy in politics and governance. These debates are fiercely fought and go back hundreds if not thousands of years. They are not easily resolved, partly because these sets of arguments are keenly felt and evoke powerful emotions. Amongst other writers, political scientists propose different theoretical models about how representation and accountability does, could and should operate. In the context of community governance, these same arguments also take place on a regular basis in local areas, wards and neighbourhoods. Local councillors, council officers, community organisations and individual citizens across the country are engaged in debates that echo those in the academic literature. That such parallel debates about accountability are already taking place offers a starting point for this exercise. This report is an attempt to 'simultaneously translate' between academia, and policy and practice. We hope to offer a framework for different actors in community governance to communicate across different ways of thinking and practising governance and accountability.

We have set out a typology with five sets of understandings of representation and accountability, shown in Figure 1. We compare the implications of each against five key aspects of decentralised governance in Figure 2.

The typology is based on competing but well-established academic theories. Each of these models are also being practiced in local authorities. Or seen from the other perspective, each of the local policy and practice arguments about governance can be traced to a lineage in academic debate.

The typology shows the understandings loosely fall within, and between, the broad headings of 'traditional' and 'complementary'. In one sense, the five different understandings are equally valid; all are underpinned by established, cogently argued and reasoned theories. All take concrete expression in local neighbourhoods. Each has its vocal proponents in each of the academic, policy and practice communities. Adjudicating between the different arguments on accountability in local governance is extremely challenging. These difficulties are partly because they are based on different normative or ideological positions which are not easily amendable to decisive 'evidence' one way or the other. Therefore, one aim in this

report is to present a way of understanding the main types of different theoretical positions, and the governance implications which flow from these, to better understand local disagreements and competing perspectives. The typology shows a simplified way of understanding many rich and nuanced ideas. It is designed as a heuristic, or way of making sense of complexity.

Going beyond a simple explication of the competing positions, we also set out our normative case or the ideological standpoint favoured in this review, which centre on Model 5: complementary and polycentric. We attempt to make the theoretical (if not empirical) case for why local government should re-examine arrangements for decentralised decision-making in favour of multiple and complementary forms of accountability. We argue that the typology reveals the limitations of traditional forms and understandings of accountability. Traditional forms of representation and accountability, such as models 1 and 2, can preclude greater public involvement, and therefore are arguably less effective at resolving local issues. We pose a set of complementary options for accountability in Model 5.

The following sections now set out each of the five models in turn. In describing each model, we first set out a brief overview of the core theories (Figure 1) and then look at the ways that these models operate in practice. We then discuss the implications of each model against key questions for decentralised governance (Figure 2). Finally we consider the application and applicability of the typology.

Figure 1: Typology of Representation and Accountability

	Model	Theory	How the models operate in decentralised governance structures
Tradition-al	**Model 1**: Representative & responsible government	British Political Tradition or 'Westminster Model'. Representative democracy; elections as selection, reward and sanction	▪ Local elected member-led and controlled/members-only. ▪ Delegation of powers to ward or Area Committees ▪ Citizens have roles as voters, with power to select, and sanction/reward ▪ Little exchange/contact/communication between elections ▪ 'Community leadership' for elected members defined as new roles for ward members
	Model 2: Representative, responsible & responsive government (telling)	Representative democracy which is also responsive, i.e. decisions communicated between elections	▪ As above , but ▪ More emphasis on communicating decisions to constituents between elections ▪ 'Community leadership' defined as ward members communicating decisions and explaining unpopular decisions
	Model 3: Representative, responsible & responsive government (telling and listening)	Representative democracy which is also responsive, and both adapts to, and shapes constituent preferences between elections	▪ As above, but ▪ Preferences of individual citizens also collected, collated and fed-in between elections ▪ Representatives accommodate, adapt or adjust decisions to constituent preferences, and shape citizen preferences ▪ 'Community leadership' defined as ward members gathering and leading public opinion
Border-straddling	**Model 4:** Representative, responsible & responsive governance (interest groups)	Corporate pluralism. Representative democracy supplemented by representation by a range of interest groups	▪ Local elected member-led and controlled governance structures, but could include representations and/or membership from interest groups ▪ Citizens' roles as voters supplemented by citizens forming and/or aligning with interest groups ▪ Elected representatives welcome representations from interest groups ('community reps') ▪ Community leadership' defined as ward members brokering between representations by interest groups
Comple-mentary	**Model 5:** Polycentric governance	Collaborative governance and asset-based problem-solving	▪ Allows for citizen-led or controlled governance structures ▪ Decision-making authority could be shared across networks ▪ Accountability is not solely through electoral mandate ▪ Citizens and groups of citizens are recognised as 'local experts'. ▪ Can generate consensus for collective action/problem solving, but different views possible within/across different (poly) centres ▪ Overlap with principles and activity of co-production ▪ Co-operative councils

b. Models of representation and accountability

Model 1. Representative and responsible government

One of the dominant theories underlying traditional concepts of representative democracy is a 'trustee-delegate' model of representation. This model is often traced back to the 18th century writings of Edmund Burke. Through voting, citizens delegate their power to politicians who then act as a trustee of their interests. Accountability is primarily ensured through elections at fixed points in time. Elected representatives are free to make decisions according to their own judgment, at the same time as acting responsibly in what they perceive to be the best interests of their constituents. We categorise this as the **representative** and **responsible** model of decision-making.

1a. Theories underpinning the model

Model 1 offers a standard account of contemporary democratic government, according to which electoral institutions preserve the core principles of a democratic rule by the people (Dahl 1971, 1989). It offers a recognised, well-established and simple to articulate form of accountability that appeals to local government and popular perceptions of how ideal-type democracy works. Indeed, this tradition is so deeply embedded in British thinking about accountability, it is referred to in academic writings as the 'British Political Tradition', and its variant, the 'Westminster Model' (Gamble 1990).

Political theorists have identified a series of ways in which elections create accountability of elected representatives to citizens: by selecting representatives with aligned goals; mandating representatives to carry out their promised programme for the future; and/or to hold representatives accountable for their performance since the preceding election by sanctioning and rewarding according to judged performance (Przeworski, Stokes and Manin 1999; Mansbridge 2003, 2011; Urbinati and Warren 2008). After giving the election mandate, the threat of sanctioning at future elections becomes citizens' primary power resource. Przeworski, Stokes and Manin (1999) maintain that governments are accountable if voters can assess whether they are 'acting in their interest and [can] sanction them appropriately, so that those incumbents who act in the best interests of citizens win re-elections, and those who do not, lose them' (p.40).

Traditional representative democracy is a complex system of government. Theorists observe that it can be both egalitarian and elitist (Manin 1997). 'Egalitarian' in that each citizen contributes equally to the selection of representatives. 'Elitist' in that the selected few have the rights to decide on behalf of the many between elections, and that election processes are selective and partial (Saward 2006). According to Manin (1997), it this capacity to integrate democratic and aristocratic principles that makes representative democracy an attractive system of government.

Rousseau famously maintained that citizens voted them slaves on election day. Representatives are acknowledged as the guarantors of citizens' best interests, which may be at odds with citizens' perceptions and preferences: 'since objective interest is different from subjective preference, representatives are not bounded by instructions from the represented at a particular point in time' (Esaiasson and Narud 2013). One theorist has argued that the concept of a trustee:

> particularly a Burkean trustee, implies a hierarchy in which the representative has more wisdom, intelligence, or prudence than the voter… The word [trustee] strongly connotes an agent who knows better than the principal what is in the principal's interest. Burke himself, like many of his peers, had reservations regarding the capacities of "the people." He famously called one group [of citizens] "a swinish multitude" (Herzog 1998, 508–14) cited in Mansbridge 2011).

Model 1 means that there can be 'gaps' in descriptive representation in decentralised decision-making structures. Conventional understandings of representative democracy, consider representation to be more or less adequate depending on how well the opinions or preferences or beliefs are reflected: 'Personal characteristics of the representatives barely figure in this- except perhaps as an after-the-event grumble about the poor quality of our politicians.' (Phillips 1995). Phillips challenges these dominant understandings of a 'politics of ideas' with a 'politics of presence'. She says that once difference is conceived in relation to those groups' experiences and identities, it is far harder to meet demands for political inclusion without also including the members of such groups (Phillips 1995).

One writer has put the case in a more hard hitting way, saying that: 'it is simply unfair and unjust for white, middle-class, middle aged, able-bodied, heterosexual, professional men to

dominate positions of political power and decision-making.' (Lovenduski, 2012, see also Durose et al 2011).

However, 'descriptive representation is not popular among normative theorists [who reject it] relatively summarily [e.g.]: "No one would argue that morons should be represented by morons"' (Pennock 1979, cited in Mansbridge 1999: 629). Supporters of descriptive representation counter these arguments, saying it is about the inclusion of the previously marginalised, disadvantaged and excluded (Young, 1990), rather than with microcosmic representation per se. Mansbridge (1999) states that: 'constitutional designers' should 'institute policies to promote selective descriptive representation' under specific conditions, including where there is mistrust between disadvantaged and advantaged groups and when there has been past discrimination against disadvantaged groups.

1b. How the model operates in practice

A traditional trustee-delegate model of representative democracy has very particular implications for community governance. In model 1's traditional understanding of democratic accountability, the primary role for citizens is as voters who are actively precluded from any direct involvement in decision-making. This perspective was illustrated by one comment from our interviewees: "If people want to run the [borough], we'd encourage them to be a local councillor". 'Community governance' is here therefore a misnomer for decentralised and/or devolved arrangements in this model. More appropriate terms are 'localised governance', or more strictly speaking, 'decentralised or devolved decision-making'. Devolved decision-making takes place at a locality, ward or neighbourhood level by ward members, through formally delegated legal structures of the local authority: i.e. area or ward committees with a membership of, and decision-making by local elected members only. There was a rapid increase in the creation of such Area Committees from the 1980s onwards, and most local authorities now have these structures.

Accountability of elected representatives to constituents is solely through elections; this idea is largely what is being referred to by local government councillors and officers in their mantra of the 'democratic mandate'. One interviewee described how a Government programme to encourage devolved budgets was caught up in local debates about the problem of handing over decisions about resource allocation to people who were not local councillors. Proposals in one area for a radical and innovative local public services board, made up of non-elected professionals from the public, voluntary and private sectors, designed to make

more efficient use of public money were hampered because they did not meet the core principle that: "if you don't like what has been decided, you should be able to vote them out." However, some in the research were sceptical about the notion that elections are effective as a sanction and reward for incumbents' performance, joking that in some wards particular political parties could put forward 'a donkey' as a candidate and they would be elected. There are severe differentials between higher and lower income groups in model 1, for example in electoral turnouts. More broadly, other research has found a rise to three-quarters in the proportion of the public saying that the system of governing needs 'a great deal' or 'quite a lot' of improvement, up from a previous trend level of about two-thirds (Hansard 2012). This suggests that policy-makers should not rest comfortably on a simple Model 1 approach if they are also interested in improving citizen perceptions of and trust in democratic institutions.

There is little or no activity between elections to consult or involve citizens in local decision-making. Where there are differences of opinion between constituents and elected representatives, politicians chose their own views over those of 'the public', arguing that they are being 'responsible'. By which they mean, that they take into account the strategic interests of the authority, of which constituents might not be as aware. Modern debates over Burkean models take the form of arguments between those who see this as the fairest way to do politics, versus those who feel that 'we know best' form of decision-making is overly paternalistic.

Decentralisation of the 'British Political Tradition' or 'Westminster model' involves replicating decision-making structures at a lower spatial scale than the central Executive. Many in local government have talked about the need for stronger 'community leadership' by local councillors. 'Community leadership' in local government terms has many meanings. In Model 1 terms, 'community leadership' is about creating local structures – such as Area Committees - where front-line or backbench (non-Executive) local councillors have scope to fulfil their roles as trustees and responsible representatives. Therefore, understanding this model also helps to explain some of the criticisms of devolved and decentralised decision-making as simply creating 'mini Town Halls' in areas or wards (Lowndes and Sullivan 2008).

For local authorities looking for new ways to solve complex issues in localities, wards and neighbourhoods, Model 1 does not offer ways to mobilise citizen contributions to problem-

solving. Seeing governance as about formal decision-making often goes along with a model of service delivery and problem-solving that presumes neighbourhood solutions will be provided by something that elected representatives decide, not by communities using their own assets. Some have argued that this leads to a 'dependency' model of service provision. As one think-tank participant put it: "they are trying to turn people into service junkies"; he argued that agencies do not recognise where people are trying to find their own solutions to problems and are engaged in self-help.

For its other critics, local governance based on Model 1 also simply replicates at a local level some of the classic problems with traditional representative democracy. These problems include the lack of inclusion of minority interests. Whilst acknowledging that, when asked for ideas, more descriptive representation is not an idea mentioned spontaneously by the public (Hansard 2012), it is well established that there is under-representation of minority groups in politics, including the 'pale, male and stale' profile of local councillors. In terms of the selective and partial nature of Model 1 and insufficient inclusion of minority interests, Area Committees, made up of existing local councillors, cannot easily be made more inclusive without much more thoroughgoing changes to the recruitment and selection of candidates for local election.

Other problems are that the ideals of responsible representation are not always fully upheld. One of the more controversial areas where decentralised decision-making has been accused of not acting 'responsibly' or in the best interests of the electorate is in the allocation of resources. At the think-tank, one person asked: "how do you stop ward budgets becoming 're-elect me' funds. If you hold power at the centre and give out sweeties, then councillors will misbehave."

Model 2. Representative, responsible, and responsive government (telling)

The definition of accountability described in Model 1 focuses on elections as the primary mechanism for citizen control of their representatives. Elections allow citizens to select representatives, give them a mandate for future programmes, and punish or reward at fixed points in time for past performance. Model 2 adds the idea of 'responsiveness' to representative and responsible governance to create the categorisation of Model 2 as **representative, responsible and responsive government (telling)**. Responsiveness is defined in Model 2 as elected members communicating decisions and reasons for unpopular

decisions to citizens.

2a. Theories underpinning the model

'Between-election democracy' (Esaiasson and Narud 2013) introduces the concept of responsiveness to citizens *between elections* to the traditional 'Westminster model' of representative and responsible decision-making. Many conceptualisations of representative democracy hold responsiveness to be a core value (for example, Pitkin 1967; Dahl 1971). In Model 2, the definition of responsiveness requires communication of decisions made by representatives to citizens, but it does not mean that representatives need to change their decisions or accommodate citizens' views. This perspective is illustrated by Hanna Pitkin's influential definition: "Representation here means acting in the interest of the represented, in a manner responsive to them" (1967: 209). The definition implies that elected representatives are free to decide what is in the best interests of the represented, as long as they explain themselves. Pitkin ascribes representatives the freedom to go against public opinion but also the duty to give convincing accounts of their actions:

> The representatives must not be found persistently at odds with the wishes of the represented without good reason in terms of their interest, without a good explanation of why their wishes are not in accord with their interest (1967:209-10).

2b. How the model operates in practice

In other primary research, local councillors in different parts of England were asked about their definitions of responsiveness and accountability (Richardson 2013). In principle, those elected representatives agreed with Pitkin's theory. For example, local elected members warned against the idea that all minority interests can be incorporated into democratic representation, and argued that:

> you can't have total democracy. We don't want to be run by all the activist groups out there. Part of our job is to say no. The Government tells us to bring people in more, but it's a very delicate business balancing needs and priorities. We need to be free to make decisions. People can be free to say their opinions, but we need to decide.

A definition of responsiveness as communication, not accommodation, to public views has several implications. The key inference is that representatives need to be acutely aware of what public views are in order to send timely messages when their choices go against the majority public view. What is transparent here are the results of decisions, after the event. Publically going against the majority view for some greater public or common good is a courageous idea. Some local politicians find it extremely hard to do in practice, preferring to keep their heads below the parapet to avoid potentially vote-losing debates (Richardson 2012).

In Model 2 terms, discussion of the commonly used term 'community leadership' in local government here also means that councillors speak up in public for unpopular decisions, and engage in controversial local debates. Theory here implies that the well-established and mature work on communications and marketing in local government is a key way forward. Responsiveness in Pitkin's model demands a sophisticated ability by local politicians to put across clear messages effectively to the electorate about potentially controversial decisions in neighbourhoods. In many authorities corporate (central) level communications are relatively well advanced; this is sometimes replicated at a locality, ward and/or neighbourhood level. But more could be done on ward members' communications strategies, whether these are face-to-face, online, or written. For example, in the last few years, many local councils have made progress on creating individual websites for councillors. More advanced work includes councillors writing their own blogs as ward members (separate to their electoral campaigning). In one local authority example, electronic communication resulted in local members being able to increase citizen satisfaction with the process by which a tough decision was made: a swimming pool still closed and residents remained opposed to the decision, but there were positive improvements to citizens' perception of the transparency of the decision. In other councils, local elected members have strengthened their face-to-face communications with citizens.

Some local government Scrutiny Committee or Panel activities could also be understood as delivering Model 2 forms of accountability. Take the cases of representatives of the majority group neglecting to explain unpopular decisions or cases where opposition members feel decisions have been made that go against residents' interests but residents are unaware or seemingly unconcerned. Scrutiny would then attempt to re-open these cases and at the very least attempt to get the administration to justify its decisions. A small number of English

authorities have operated Scrutiny Reviews through Area Committees, suggesting operational possibilities for model 2 in decentralised decision-making.

Some argue that opinion polls suggest citizens have a strong preference for Model 2. For example the Hansard Society Audit of Political Engagement in 2012 found that although 56% of the public believe in the efficacy of local activity, only two-fifths (38%) say they are willing to be involved in local decision-making, and this was a lower figure than in previous Audits. The biggest change from previous years was the rise in the proportion of the public saying they do not wish to be involved 'at all', a rise to 25% from below a fifth (Hansard Society 2012). Model 2 has the potential to strengthen transparency in local governance processes and decisions, as the swimming pool example illustrates. However, the same issues identified for model 1 remain.

Model 3. Representative, responsible, and responsive government (telling and listening)

Traditional theories of democratic accountability lead to Models 1 and 2 where decentralised or devolved decision-making which is an 'elected members-only' zone. In neither model do decision-makers need to consult with citizens on decision-making. However, in a large number of local authorities, there is growing interest from local elected members and officers in how to supplement and complement member-led devolved decision-making with citizen engagement, including those authorities which are firmly wedded to traditional understandings of democratic accountability. Is this a contradiction? Not if different definitions of responsiveness are used. Model 3 is also categorised as **representative, responsible, and responsive (telling and listening),** but here the definition of responsiveness changes. Responsiveness in Model 3 is defined as representatives accommodating, adapting or adjusting decisions to constituents' preferences and public opinion between elections, but also helping to shape public opinion. The concept of responsiveness as an accommodation of public opinion suggests that the democratic mandate through elections is too blunt an instrument to help elected representatives fully understand the interests of those they represent. Electoral signals and broad voter support for manifestos need to be supplemented by more sophisticated and detailed information about public opinion for in-depth decision-making.

3a. Theories underpinning the model

In the academic literature, Pitkin's idea of responsiveness as communication, used in Model 2, has been critiqued by others who argue that responsiveness is a mutual process of adjustment between representatives and the represented. In Model 3, elected representatives adjust their preferences to the public's views, but also help to shape public opinion. Representation between elections in this model is seen as a dynamic relationship involving a variety of interactions that may take place between representatives and represented. Responsiveness demands the existence of a dynamic 'two-way' relationship, underpinned by communication and mutual influence, with information exchange as a critical element (e.g. see Soroka and Wlezien 2010). The lack of sophistication in electoral signals to representatives when addressing detailed and specific local issues between the four-year electoral cycle means that citizen engagement methods are needed: 'Elected representatives are left to rely on other means (polls, advice, focus groups, letters, petitions, and the like) to guess what voters intend them to represent' (Urbinati and Warren 2008: 402).

Some writers offer a framework to understand how politicians both lead and follow public opinion. Bertelli and John (2012) put forward an innovative analogy of the stock market to explain the dynamic process and interactions between politicians' policy agendas and public opinion. They position different policy choices as sets of stocks and shares. In their analogy, decision-makers 'invest' in a 'portfolio' of policy areas which voters as buyers in a market then place a value on, with canny investors reaping the electoral rewards. From a different ideological standpoint to Bertelli and John, Mansbridge (2003) argues that a forward-looking "anticipatory representation" allows representatives to change (and potentially manipulate) voter preferences. Similarly, Disch (2011: 103) concludes that 'there is an emerging consensus that political representation need not and cannot take [voter] preferences as its starting place and ground'. These representation theorists advance a dynamic understanding of the representative relationship in which representatives take an active role in shaping (or trying to shape) citizen preferences and views.

3b. How the model operates in practice

There are serious questions over the extent to which responsiveness is an empirical reality in local areas. Moves by different central administrations to offer conditional guarantees of some form of response to local petitions could be understood in this context. It is also still unclear whether politicians are equally responsive to people and groups with lower resources

(Gilens 2005; Bartels 2008; Enns and Wlezien 2011). There is also lower popular support for Model 3 than Model 2 as we saw for example in the Hansard Audit of Political Engagement.

Despite this, elements of Model 3 can be seen in operation in some local authorities. While Model 2 involved 'telling', Model 3 is about 'telling and listening'. While continuing to focus on Area Committees and delegated powers and structures at ward level, in those places there is also a desire to strengthen the role of citizen preferences in decision-making. 'Community leadership' here means that local councillors make efforts to gather additional information about public opinion. For example, in one area: "the ward plans take local views into account…there are more responsive services if they listen at a local level and get citizens involved." In another local authority in 2013, elected members and officers conducted local 'engagement days' to ask constituents about their views of the ward and public sector priorities for the local area. This was a new activity for local councillors in some of the pilot wards (although consultation and research have been conducted in the area previously, and members already conduct political campaigning and election canvassing). In a different authority, elected members are trying out new forms of community engagement using social media; including, mobilising citizens to attend meetings by giving notice of events through a Facebook events page. Twitter is also being used, and tweets with a nominated hashtag have been allowed as formal evidence in decision-making by councillors (e.g. Scrutiny Inquiries). In the think-tank, we heard from another authority which introduced a new approach in late 2011, with informal public meetings replacing old-style Area Committee meetings. The new meetings are seen as a 'brand new approach' to identify and shape local priorities in Neighbourhood Plans. This process has been a 'steep learning curve'. Meetings are now interactive, held in the evening, and only last for one hour. Citizens can pop in and out with direct access to councillors, with discussion not limited to a pre-set agenda, and people do not have to post questions in advance, or "put their hand up to speak. They can talk about anything at all that they want". Other significant changes include the use of visual displays rather than formal presentations and reports, and user-friendly feedback on the Plans:

> We don't use the council's project management framework, which is made for developing missiles or something. This is A3, it's done in PowerPoint and has pictures on it. It tells you how much we've spent and how much is left. It tells you how to get involved, who the people are. We're trying to make it so that any random person could go onto the website or ring us up and find out exactly what it

is that we're doing.

Seeing community consultation and engagement as a Model 3 activity, precluded in Models 1 and 2, helps us to understand why doing such seeming basics as community consultation can feel like a major development for some authorities and why some elected representatives may not have done these things before in their wards. Consulting communities on their views is a big change in thinking for some elected representatives. But Model 3 goes further and suggests that some of citizens' preferences, are not fixed but, are open to be shaped by elected representatives. This suggestion is not an abstract academic point. Consulting people is fine if their views can be accommodated. But what happens if citizens' preferences seem to be strongly opposed to politicians' preferences?

For example, a 'no' campaign to new development. Seeing 'no' as a fixed preference leaves local councillors with only two choices: go against public opinion, or accept that desired schemes will not take place. This is a sub-optimal outcome for many decisions. Alternatively, understanding responsiveness as a process of dialogue and mutual adjustment of preferences opens up scope for deliberation in local governance[3]. Therefore, 'community leadership' in Model 3 involves consultation *and* deliberation. However, there are relatively few examples of deliberation in decentralised decision-making. Part of what blocks progress towards more deliberative approaches is a lingering view of the public as Burke's 'swinish multitude' (described in Model 1) with low capacity to make meaningful contributions to decision-making. There continue to be concerns from elected representatives about whether people can take part in sensible, mature or strategic debates (Fischer 2000, Richardson and Le Grand 2002, Collins and Evans 2007). The public's views can sometimes appear confused, contradictory or just plain daft. Therefore, it is easy for moves towards Model 3 to get derailed, and for authorities to slip back into the comfort zones of Models 1 or 2.

Model 4. Representative, responsible, and responsive governance (interest groups)

Model 3 sets up 'representative, responsible and responsive governance' as a series of interactions between elected representatives and the represented, ideally resulting in mutual adjustment of preferences for the common good. It focuses on individual voter preferences

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[3] see Involve (2013) for a longer discussion of deliberation on controversial decisions about science and technology such as wind farms, GM crops etc.

and public opinion as an aggregation of individuals' views. Model 4 is also **representative, responsible, and responsive governance (interest groups)**, but responsiveness now includes specific groupings of public opinion, organised by communities of interest. Models 1,2 and 3 are necessarily geographically based, as they focus on voters in wards. Model 4 starts to add communities of interest that cut across geographies.

4a. Theories underpinning the model

Theories put forward in Model 4 can be broadly characterised as both 'pluralism' and 'corporatism' or some blend of the two (e.g. 'corporate pluralism'). In our typology, what makes Model 4 different to Model 3, is an attempt to show that in addition to individual opinions, some citizens also form lobby groups based on shared interests. In simple terms, 'pluralism', 'corporatism' or 'corporate pluralism', all mean that elected representatives take account of claims made by interest groups. Elected representatives can then accommodate and adapt decisions based on selected interests, as well as brokering and negotiating between competing interests. Including the notion of 'special interest groups', also picks up on the discussion about the 'politics of presence' in Model 1. Only this time it is not about political representatives being descriptively representative, but making 'present' non-elected minority voices.

At the core, what unites theories of pluralism and corporatism is the degree to which representations from interest groups are seen as being included in decision-making structures and processes, including 'community representatives' where they can claim to 'represent' a particular interest group or community of interest. Advocates of the benefits of the broad category of Model 4 argue it is necessary because electoral representation suffers from information deficits (as we saw in Model 3), increased segmentation of interests or issues and a proliferation of claims and claimants: '… insofar as electoral representation works, it does so in conjunction with a rich fabric of representative claimants and advocacy within society (Urbinati and Warren 2008: 402). Others have said that interest groups 'have the potential to compensate for electoral inflexibilities—providing high levels of targeted, information-rich representation.' (Disch 2011). An ever-expanding plurality of democratic spaces and plurality of perspectives in an increasingly diverse society, and insensitivities in electoral systems makes responsiveness to organised groups and garnering their insights a necessity for democratic representatives.

Interest groups have varying degrees of formal and informal non-electoral accountability. This "proliferation of representative claims […] cannot be tested by election' (Disch 2011). The academic literature suggests that in the dialogue between representatives and the represented, representatives should prioritise lobbying by groups which can make formal or informal claims to represent a wider constituency (Mansbridge 2003: 524). Saward has argued that these sorts of representatives and representations are legitimised by a process of 'claims-making'. Those who consciously claim to represent others in this way bring constituencies into being through that claim (Saward 2006).

Another key argument for Model 4 is that in conventional representative democracy, some minority groups and/or interests are not fully included in decision-making. One influential academic talks about 'threshold representation' (Kymlicka 1995), where under-represented minorities are given additional protection to reach a minimum threshold for their voices to be adequately heard, for example, through having guaranteed seats on decision-making bodies. Responsiveness is underpinned by equality of treatment of interest groups in a pluralist system. Some writers have argued that interests are better protected when they are represented by those who share experiences and where members of groups are present (e.g. see Young 1990; Phillips 1995).

There are several debates in the literature around Model 4. The first is a critique of traditional pluralism. One ideal-type of pluralism - often associated with the work of Robert Dahl (1961;1989) - paints a picture of a healthy set of competing interests, organised into lobby groups with equal and open access to policy-making, making equally powerful representations to welcoming but neutral elected representatives. Neo-pluralism and elite theory suggests that this picture is wrong, as some groups are more powerful than others. A second debate is based on the idea of 'hyper-pluralism'. Hyper-pluralism is a critique which goes beyond the idea in elitist or neo-pluralist theory that some politicians are captured by sectional interests, or that some lobby groups are more powerful than others. Hyper-pluralism argues that there are simply too many interests, which are too fragmented, for the system to deal with effectively. This theory concedes that pluralist democracies do reasonably well most of them time, but can break down: 'hyperpluralism of fragmented interest representation too often leads to unacceptable levels of conflict, [policy] stalemate and suboptimal policies' (Sirianni 2009, 16).

This picture of an explosion of overly fragmented interests is reinforced by the wealth of academic debate about how to define 'community'. Many have made the point that community is a highly contested concept which is socially constructed (Bertotti, Jamal and Harden 2011), changes over time and depending which policy agenda or discipline is used (Crow and Mah 2011), and is also affected by migration (Robinson and Walshaw 2011), transnational and diasporic connections (Blunt et al 2011), interactions, and fluidity of networks. People have multiple overlapping identities, affiliations and loyalties, so in decentralised decision-making, it can be hard to identify clear or tidy sets of interests in a specific neighbourhood.

A third debate offers a different critique of pluralism. Corporatism broadly argues that interest groups do not simply make ad hoc lobbies from outside the policy process. Instead, corporate pluralism shows how there is continuous, structured participation of organised interests in the policymaking process. Selected interest groups no longer compete but are included in more closed official decision-making systems:

> Corporatism can be defined as a system of interest representation in which the constituent units are organised into a limited number of singular, compulsory, non-competitive, hierarchically ordered and functionally differentiated categories, recognised or licensed (if not created) by the state and granted a deliberate representational monopoly within their respective categories in exchange for observing certain controls on their selection of leaders and articulation of demands and supports. (Schmitter 1979, 13)

4b. How the model operates in practice

The more pluralist end of Model 4 is recognisable in the informal communications and relationships that local councillors have with a range of lobby groups in their wards and areas. One interviewee in our project described how minority interests intersected with decision-making by elected representatives in Area Committees: "Our engagement framework is like a rubix cube across policy themes, wards and areas, and equalities groups".

A more corporatist approach can be seen by looking at other decentralised governance structures than 'elected-member only' Area Committees. Some of the structures that were created in local government in recent years – various multi-agency and multi-sector

partnerships, voluntary sector forums etc – can be seen as corporate pluralism in action. Local government since the 1960s and 70s has had very close relationships with interest groups (Stoker and Wilson 1991).

Corporate pluralism is recognisable in governance structures with nominated memberships for those chosen to represent specific constituencies or selected special interest groups – the 'BME rep', 'voluntary sector rep', 'youth rep', 'business association rep' and so on. In local work on the 'Prevent' agenda on religious extremism and counter-terrorism policy, a similar model was used with key individuals, or 'connectors' bridging the divide between community members and the those in authority. Connectors utilised their role as local leaders to represent their communities externally, and drew on their role as local 'experts' to influence policies and programmes locally (Spalek 2011). In some authorities, elected members are decentralising the old centralised configurations of corporatist relationships (e.g. strategic-level Local Strategic Partnerships) to bring them more directly under the remit of decentralised and member-led structures. For example, in one authority, there have been pilot projects in a small number of wards to develop 'Community Boards' which include a wider range of partners, including community members, and other public service providers, with local councillors chairing those structures.

Model 4 suggests an alternative definition of 'community leadership' as a brokerage and facilitation role to mediate between interest groups, even nurturing new community representatives and bringing forward interest groups to fill gaps in minority representation. It implies that community governance, even within a traditional model, should actively welcome representations by a wide range of lobby groups. As in the academic literature, in places where this operates, some local councillors welcome corporate pluralism as a mechanism for inclusive representation and more effective representative democracy.

However, critiques in the literature parallel growing criticism of model 4 approaches in practice. Academic theories of elitism challenge pluralist idealism by showing the proliferation of powerful elite lobby groups and special interests which are seen as having a dominant and occasionally negative effect on politics. No wonder then that in community governance, there are serious concerns by elected representatives to avoid local decisions being 'hijacked' by 'vested interests', such as specific ethnic groups or specific neighbourhoods arguing for resources. But also no wonder that citizens make accusations

that local decisions have been influenced by vested interests and 'backhanders' e.g. residential developers. Not all challenges to neo-pluralism were about under-the-counter deals. One think-tank participant described how formal procurement processes favoured larger and more powerful organisations:

> the unwashed are not invited to the big boys' meetings to decide multi-million pound contracts […] Two sorts of town hall meetings, take your pick: first, for residents – tea and biscuits, a polite welcome and handshake, and photo with councillor. Up to £2000 for good practice schemes; second, local planning with the council, housing associations, government agencies, large private sector contractors: strategy, big talk, etc. multi-million pound projects, residents absent or not invited.

At the corporatist end of the spectrum, the literature now focuses on how out-moded these ideas appear to be, for example in the field of industrial relations. Similarly, the old-style 'mini-LSPs' and corporatist infrastructure of centralised and decentralised multi-sector forums in local government are increasingly being unpicked and dismantled. Some of the disillusionment of those in local government with these arrangements centres on the difficulties of substantiating the claims being made by interest groups and 'community representatives'. Saward and Mansbridge's advice to prioritise groups which can claim to represent wider constituencies has been extremely hard to put into practice. In the think-tank, one authority described how their new locality partnerships were being implemented in 2013. The structures will develop neighbourhood plans, and ultimately have control over devolved budgets. They will be made up of one third elected members, one third community ambassadors, and one third relevant agencies. Community ambassadors are being selected by an application process which illustrates how they are attempting to overcome these practical difficulties:

> We've gone out and we've tried to get new community ambassadors. We've got a lot of our 'usual suspects', with many connections and many hats, but we're also trying to get new people. […] People came up to me and [asked], "Is so-and-so going to be on that partnership?" "Well I don't know, because there's an application process. A panel will decide on the merits of everybody who applies. So people have got to come forward and say what skills they've got and we'll try

and bring together a decent group of people that are going to represent that locality well.

Some authorities which try to be Model 3-responsive to the mass of citizens have been over-reliant on Model 4-style contact with established groups and community 'representatives'. This is frustrating for elected representatives, who then wonder why they keep seeing the 'usual suspects'. In the majority of local areas, elected representatives have, at some point, put a challenge back to special interest groups to justify themselves, explain their links to members, and counter arguments that they act not as channels for voice but as 'gatekeepers' to communities (Pearce 2011).

Community representatives have been equally dissatisfied with these arrangements. Some residents put themselves forward, imaging a Model 3 of widespread engagement with different individuals. Instead, they are unwittingly placed in a Model 4 situation by local authorities, who then accuse those residents of being un-representative. Some citizens do consciously see themselves as Model 4 interest group representatives, but are unhappy about the corporatist arrangements in place. For example, one study of the involvement of third sector representatives in healthcare (Lim, Annandale and Ruzza 2011) showed these interest groups felt that local authority's selection of representatives was often based on political expediency rather than the best interests of the communities involved, and interest group representatives felt that without real decision-making power, they were being used as a PR exercise for the council.

These challenges to corporate pluralism – about how far representatives of interest groups can justify their claims to represent wider constituencies, and how they are selected - are partly linked to the hyper-pluralist critique. The rich fabric of proliferating claims and ever expanding spaces for voice start to create an unmanageable number of lobbies from increasingly fragmented sets of interests. Under these conditions, for example, it no longer makes sense to have one representative for a large number of different minority ethnic communities, themselves possibly internally divided. Interviewees in our research pointed to further problems which could be seen as part of hyper-pluralism. One argued that the notion of communities of interest was increasingly meaningless as a way to understand citizens' identities, interests and preferences.

Model 5. Polycentric governance

Models 1 to 3 in the typology are termed 'traditional' in that they only allow electoral accountability in decentralised governance: the 'democratic mandate' of local councillors. Model 4 straddles the border between traditional and complementary models, as it starts to introduce partial forms of non-electoral accountability. Model 5 is termed complementary, as accountability is not necessarily solely based on electoral means. Its focus moves away from decision-making through elected representatives and towards other forms of decision-making.

But there is another way in which Model 5 is also fundamentally distinct from Models 1 to 4: it also moves away from formal decision-making and towards collaborative action. Model 5 is also the only one in the typology that is about 'community governance' which offers more control to communities, rather than decentralised governance in Models 1 to 4 which offer more responsiveness to citizens from elected representatives. It focuses on lots of different centres of citizen-led action, which could be seen as 'communities of issue', where people come together to take their own action to sort out issues of common concern, in contrast to the communities of interest in Model 4.

The name given to this model in our typology is **polycentrism.** The terms used by different writers in this broad set of ideas also include collaborative governance, collective or democratic problem solving, self-government, and polycentric-models of governance.

5a. Theories underpinning the model

The underlying starting point for Model 5 is that government by itself is no longer the most effective way to resolve problems:

> Most modern economic theory describes a world presided over by a government… and see this world through government's eyes. The government is supposed to have the responsibility, the will and the power to re-structure society… Private individuals, in contrast, are credited with little or no ability to solve collective problems among themselves. This makes for a distorted view of some important issues' (Sugden 1986 cited in Ostrom 1993, 226).

The principle of polycentrism (E. Ostrom, 1990; V. Ostrom, 1989) is a system of governance has 'many centres of decision-making which are formally independent of each

other' (V. Ostrom et al, 1961). Polycentrism provides a framework for designing governing arrangements that explicitly take account of variations in economies of scale, in groups' preferences and interests, and in the interactions among multiple groups and publics, needs and preferences, and activities (V. Ostrom, 1989). Instead of old-style government, collaborative governance or democratic problem solving involves multiple networks and players. As pointed out in the well-known work by Lester Salamon: "Crucial elements of public authority are shared with..non-governmental..actors..in complex collaborative systems" which are effective through networks, partnership, negotiation and persuasion (2002). Other writers have talked about 'complex value creation networks' (Agranoff 2007). Taking this argument one step further, in the US, a large body of work has looked at how government might actually get in the way, acting a civic *dis*abler (see Sirianni 2009, 8). These writers propose collaborative governance, democratic network governance, self-government, and/or co-production as alternatives.

The aims of governance are also changed; governance is as much about 'democratic problem solving' and mobilising citizen assets as it is about formal decision-making. For the first time in this typology, there is the possibility of citizen-led or controlled decentralised governance. One implication is that it is both possible, and necessary, to bring communities and/or citizens into governance (Sirianni 2009). Mobilisation of citizen assets is about outcomes: legitimacy of decisions; consensus on common or public good in controversial decisions; overcoming divisions in communities; enabling change to be delivered. Nobel Prize winner Elinor Ostrom (1990) used empirical work examining common pool resources, such as limited water supplies in developing nations to demonstrate that self-governing arrangements govern shared resources more efficiently and sustainably than larger, more distant public governments.

Polycentrism underpins ideas of co-production. At its most radical, co-production can involve the transformation of the way in which local public services are commissioned, designed, delivered and assessed (Governance International/ LGIU 2012, 10). Challenging traditional relationships of power, control and expertise, local public services are instead seen as the 'joint product of the activities of both citizens and government' (Sharp 1980, 110). Transformative co-production relies on citizens and professionals challenging their perceptions of themselves, their role and of each other (Bradwell and Marr 2008, Conroy et al 2012).

A branch of relevant theories help to resolve ambiguities over citizens' roles. Writers describe how, in the context of collective problem-solving, individual (self-selected) citizens are no longer seen as pseudo- or quasi-'representatives', open to the classic challenges. Rather than local 'representation', local people act as experts or groups of experts with 'local knowledge' (Yanow 2004; Durose 2009). Barnes et al (2008) differentiate between citizen governance which draws on 'local representation' that which draws on 'local knowledge' and recognises the 'experiential expertise' or 'lived expertise' of citizens and communities. 'Authenticity' is a means of gleaning wider community voices in decision-making and research (Chapman and Lowndes 2009). Saward (2006) has proposed exploring non-elected forms of representation to give the potential for deeper roots to the community, expertise and special credentials, and opening up to wider interests and new voices. Decision-making is participatory based on commonsense and 'practical reason' (Sanderson 2002: 19) of those involved in the policy process, where: 'usable knowledge […] owe[s] its ..truth [or] status..to common sense, causal empiricism, or thoughtful speculation and analysis' (Lindblom and Cohen 1979). This basic premise, that citizens have something useful and sensible to say in decision-making, is also consistent with the deliberative approaches described in Model 3.

Instead of the 'diseconomies of scale' of 'one size fits all', community governance brings in local expertise which is often highly localised. A plurality of organisations and activity also reduces risk and builds resilience (O'Donovan and Rubbra 2012). Polycentric governance also suggests way that Localism can be grown rather than 'scaled up'. People are well aware of the ironies of attempts to 'roll out' a large scale programme of local tailoring. Polycentrism instead fits with 'mass localism', where instead of a 'bewildering' proliferation of competing interests, there is a proliferation of collaborative problem solving:

> Government should resist the temptation to scale successful community innovation. Successive governments have simultaneously accepted that 'one size does not fit all' and yet at the same time been obsessed with finding successful models and 'rolling them out'. Mass Localism represents a different approach: enabling local innovation to flourish and celebrating diversity of provision' (Bunt and Harris 2010)

5b. How the model operates in practice

Successive governments have used the rhetoric of Model 5, where community governance opens up new spaces for public action and the practice of citizenship (Brannan et al 2006). As the current UK Communities Secretary asserted, "We want to make sure people can take control and take responsibility... Solving problems and taking action for themselves" (Pickles 2010). In policy terms, the citizen is no longer the passive recipient of the benefits of decisions made by others, but rather, an active part of a common solution to social problems (Durose et al 2009).

Model 5 theories are echoed in emerging ideas in local areas. In one study of neighbourhood working, respondents summed it up neatly: "no single body can hope to represent the full range of interests in a neighbourhood, so you can't devolve to one single body. We need other forms of representation, particularly for powerless groups" (Richardson 2012). In the think-tank, a senior councillor for one large metropolitan authority summed up why what we refer to as Model 5 approaches might be needed:

> There's uncertainty and complexity and that the more we recognise that, the more we need to work together. There isn't one individual or one group that holds all the knowledge needed, we need a new honesty and respect. We need to bring in different types of expertise, whether that be technological or from communities. Many councillors and officers don't live in the localities they work in.

A group of local authorities are moving towards a model of co-operation as co-operative councils. One very simple proposal from the think-tank was that a co-operative (Model 5) council could be judged if when citizens came forward with a good idea, "the council said 'how can we help you?'!". A practical example of local thinking is the proposal for 'self-renovating neighbourhoods', put forward by Locality, as one of our interviewees described: "regeneration hasn't worked, [a] more radical [solution] is how people renovate their own spaces, without [regeneration] becoming distanced and detached [from communities]"[4]. Some possible examples of polycentrism, include community organising, Big Local, neighbourhood planning, and a wide range of community-led and neighbourhood-focused initiatives. Just taking Big Local, the core ideas of collaborative problem solving, local

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[4] http://locality.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/Creative-Regeneration-Oct-11.pdf ;
http://jesssteele.wordpress.com/2012/11/08/self-renovating-neighbourhoods/

tailoring, and citizens as local experts are all specified in the criteria: Big Local Partnerships can be set up in any number of ways to take account of local circumstances and interests within general principles and membership criteria, including having a resident majority on partnerships who must be individual members in their own right, rather than formally representing the interests of other organisations.

Think-tank participants discussed other ways to see what would be called Model 5 in our typology through the idea of 'asset-based' approaches, which contrast to the 'service dependence' approaches seen in Model 1:

> For most people in this country, a public service is something they'd rather stay away from […] we over-emphasise the role that services play in our lives. […] people are doing it for themselves, in every house, in every kitchen, in every park, wherever. […] it's not just in rich communities […] poor communities have their way of sorting things. I'm not saying it's fair. I'm not saying it's equal. But if we forget that people have their own ways of sorting things out and we think that we all kind of look to the state to sort stuff out for us, well, I'm sorry, I think the closest was something like East Germany, and I don't want to live in East Germany. In the end East Germans didn't want to live in East Germany. […] we live in a democracy where we do things, the starting point should be that we do things for ourselves. I think we're in danger sometimes of overstating the role of the state and seeing the assets, the only important assets in cities, towns and villages that we live in, as being the physical assets that belong to the local authority or the church. The really, really important assets in the city, the town, the village, are ourselves and the links that we've got with each other.

In our think-tank event, we heard about many examples of communities trying to have more control, which offer a positive vision of what potential could be mobilised. For example, a community land trust and co-operative in a low income area in Liverpool:

> over the last three years [we have worked on] a small-scale community let scheme which proposes the mixed use of [a redeveloped] bakery and two adjacent houses as a community-led business and a community-owned affordable housing scheme. We're looking at it as a community hub but also a viable business idea.

The ideas in Model 5 academic writings echo some of the comments made by practitioners and policy-makers in our interviews:

> We're interested in getting stuff done, it's not just about people expressing themselves, it's not just about finding people who represent their communities, but who can use that to an end.

> Think about how you want to use the expertise of communities; what are the experts in? Their expertise lies in the service they receive themselves, the experience, what it feels like and whether it really works.

> The principle of self-organisation is key; we believe people have a right to self-organise.

> It's more interesting when communities have the freedom to set their own boundaries. It's not a child-adult relationship.

> I prefer to talk about coproduction rather than governance… active involvement is more helpful for public services than people sitting on committees deciding how cash is spent….our goal is for people to help design and deliver services alongside the public sector…how do we help people so we don't incur expensive services that people don't wasn't… by listening we change things….not by handing over decisions to other people about spending.

In the think-tank, we heard about a practical example of citizens acting as local experts: "we need to listen to and support community networks, 'residents know best'." The illustration of this was a Facebook page set up initially to discuss a series of sex attacks in the area. 600 people signed up in a week, and this has acted as a starting point for many more projects including work with young people by a local resident who had been long-term unemployed. One local councillor told us about a social enterprise they and other elected members had been involved in setting up, alongside the existing governance structures, because they saw this as a more effective, efficient and fleet-footed way to get things done in the ward:

in [managing budget reductions in the authority], what we are trying to do is we are trying to unravel cold congealed spaghetti of years and years and years of people building horrendous structures. We knew that doing something about it with the cold, congealed spaghetti was going to be a bit of a nightmare. So, what we've actually done is we've set up a social enterprise. That is the big message for the big council – let it go, because there are other people out there that can do loads more for loads less. That's how we all survive together.

Although some of the academic literature in this field emphasises the potential for consensus-building and overcoming divisions, Model 5 does not imply a false dream of total agreement in community governance. As one think-tank participant put it: "Everyone is on a different journey. Conflict is inevitable, we need to bring it out, develop a reconciliation, pretending we have consensus will get us nowhere." Having multiple – poly- centres of activity means that different views are possible within and across different centres.

On the downside, polycentric models can lack popularity with elected representatives where those models are posed, or seen, as substituting for representative democracy, rather than complementing it. People talked about local government officers and councillors feeling insecure about the community control agenda. In current and past national programmes, local authorities have felt initiatives bypassed them. Model 5 can feel like a threat, and in some instances be designed as a threat to existing power structures. Model 5 presents a deep challenge to dominant traditional models of representation, but do not mean that elected representatives' democratic mandate is denied. There are very few UK examples of where local authorities have created (or even attempted to create) a workable and fully complementary model 5. Such an approach could involve local councillors deciding the overall strategic frameworks for a vision for areas and outcomes, equity and the inclusion of minority interests. Their roles might include orchestrating collaboration and brokering relationships, building network capacity and activating problem-solving networks, and mobilising and aligning strategic resources. But the experiences in local areas, at their worst, have been of clashes between strategic and local priorities, as explained by one think-tank participant:

There's a 'top-down' approach and there's a 'bottom-up' approach. The two seem to be different parts of a magnet that seem to repel themselves. The communities

from the bottom-up have been promised so much in the past, or they have the ideas but it becomes what *they* want, not what communities want.

Even for those who are broadly in favour of Model 5, there are concerns about differential capacity. One of the most heated conversations at the think-tank was over fairness in community governance and decentralisation. There was a degree of consensus that the current situation was already unfair, for example needs-based allocations. The group pointed to an acceptance that outcomes may not always exactly equal, using the parable of the prodigal son, and saying: "If you want to go total bottom up, communities taking control, then you have to accept that it's not always fair". Definitions of fairness are "contested" and "in the eye of the beholder". Within this, new approaches were needed to increase equity, however that was defined. There were many different views, but one possible area of agreement was that the focus should be on equality of opportunity within locally determined diversity of governance: "Give people a chance, getting it right, getting it wrong". There were recommendations to "work out the answer to the question with the community". "Recognise that one size won't fit all". "There is diversity in all communities".

One analogy for equality of opportunity was the idea of going to the supermarket, with the first proposal being: "Each community has to make its own choice, 'don't tell me what to put in my supermarket trolley'". But it needs to be an informed choice, opportunities for learning, access to support." Counter-arguments pointed to gaps in equality of opportunity which would need to be bridged: "people don't always have information to make informed choices but also options aren't always available e.g. you do not have a car to get to supermarket. The corner shop only sells frozen pizzas and no apples." Therefore, "all people should be supported to participate" and "redress the gaps to support capacity". Fairness – seen as equality of opportunity - is about access to information and power and "how the space is framed" which is shaped locally; "and this might involve the 'state' making a clear offer to communities." "Tackling [fairness] is about targeting the gaps rather than treating everyone the same (you need monitoring to be able to identify those gaps)". In written feedback, one group of participants advocated for:

- Local councillors cover all areas, and need to put into effect a (new to some) role of facilitating and supporting community action and decision-making;

- Where there isn't enough resource to provide support to all, targeted support should be provided to areas with least of own resources i.e. most deprived;
- Role of councils now is not about commissioning services 'fairly', but providing support to local communities where needed to co-produce their own services.

Across the participants there was an emphasis on shared learning across areas as one of the ways to strengthen equality of opportunity: "Learning from each other is good."

Model 5 is also a challenge for those involved in trying to self-govern, or solve problems collectively, or create value through networks, or collaborate in governance – or whatever phrase is used:

[what is] difficult is trusting ourselves, that we can do it. Individuals trusting each other. And I think the powers that be trusting us as a community to be able to do it, to pull it through. [what is difficult is] politics, like local politics on the ground. […] what we have found out is what we need is patience, endurance, humour, fun, lots of self responsibility, and joy. I think it's really important for us to be actively creating rather than just passively resisting and to be ambitious. So this is our dream. This is how we wish it will look like one day.

Section Three: Comparison of models, and implications

The five different models in the typology have different implications for how key aspects of governance are handled. Figure 3 shows the implications against the following questions and criteria:

   a. What is the nature of power in the model?
   b. What needs to be transparent?
   c. What roles are open to citizens, and what are the implications for mobilisation strategies?
   d. How does accountability take place?

a. What is the nature of power in the model?

Models 1 to 3 are based on hierarchical power held by elected representatives. This power is exercised responsibly, but lies firmly with local councillors, having been handed over to them by citizens through elections. Power is something that politicians have over decisions. It is a zero-sum game; you either have power, or someone else has. Power exists for the taking, it cannot be shared, or jointly created. If power is an 'either/or', the best that could be achieved is that power is visible, rather than hidden or manipulative (Lukes 2005). Model 4 slightly modifies this view as it includes competing centres of power which should then provide checks and balances.

Model 5 has a very different notion of power as a 'positive sum' game (Clegg 1989), nicely paraphrased by a respondent in one study of neighbourhood governance: "You get more power by giving it away" (Richardson 2012). Power is now seen, not as an indivisible thing to be given, or taken, but instead is the property of relationships between people. Alternative ideas of relational forms of power match some community activists' conceptualisations of power. Instead of being hierarchical, they are what one writer has called 'non-dominating' forms (Pearce 2011), including cooperation, listening, sharing and enabling. These forms are often at odds with the more dominating forms of power exercised within local institutions. As Pearce notes, "Such a form of [non-dominating] power would

	Power	Transparency	Role and mobilisation of citizens	Accountability
Figure 2: Comparing the implications of different models				
Model 1: Representative/ responsible government	Hierarchical Delegated to representatives by citizens at elections Exercised responsibly by representatives	Past performance and/or future manifestos of representatives and selected candidates for election	Citizens as voters or candidates for election Further participation limited to voter registration and participation drives, joining political parties	Elections only
Model 2: Representative/ responsible/ responsive government (telling)		Focus on decisions of representatives Mechanisms for communicating decisions	Citizens as voters and recipients of information and marketing	Elected representatives communicate decisions taken
Model 3: Representative/ responsible/ responsive government (telling and listening)		Focus on the decisions of representatives Mechanisms for communicating decisions and inviting feedback	Citizens as voters but also express opinions and engage in dialogue and deliberation through offline and online engagement	Elected representatives adjust decision based on understanding of citizen preferences
Model 4: Representative/ responsible/ responsive governance (interest groups)	Competing centres of power provide balance	Focus on the decisions of representatives Mechanisms for lobbying on the basis of wider, organised and representative interests	Citizens as voters but also members of organised interest groups Mobilisation through targeting of specific and relevant groups and lobbying	Elected representatives adjust decisions based on representations from interest groups Non-elected representatives of interest groups required to justify wider representative claims
Model 5: Polycentric governance	Relational and non-dominating	Focus on decisions, decision-making-process and outcomes	Citizens as co-decision makers and problem solvers drawing on local knowledge and experiential expertise Creative mobilisation and support for less-well resourced	Elected representatives: all of the above (Models 1-4) Non-elected representatives have multiple forms of relational accountability

generate its own authority to build social orders based on values and norms which encourage people to find their own place in the world and to act for the good of all." (page no.). In the think-tank, one participant talked about exactly these ideas of power as an 'us and them' situation: "What do we mean when we say them and us? Who is 'us', who is 'we'? I'm struggling with that. When we're talking about assets, whose assets are they?". They used a analogy for ways that communities are seen in some places by those in charge which was of a slave plantation with workers and overseers. Another participant pointed to the way we phrase discussions about transfer of greater control to communities: "what can we have; what will you allow us to have. It's almost like a 'servant and master' relationship". This matches these arguments about the dominating nature of some forms of power, and echoes the comments about parent-child relationships. Other thinkers have proposed an adult-to-adult relationship between public services, local authorities and citizens (RSA 2010).

Collective problem-solving in Model 5 is not about making or selection a decision from a menu of optional items but clustered activities with relationship-building at the centre. Collaboration implies a focus on building relationships, producing trust and legitimacy through working together, and re-conceiving power as relational – 'power with' rather than 'power over' (Follett 1924). Trust can be seen as hard currency in many forms of partnership. It can be based on very distant relationships between unknown parties, or on direct personal relationships, as described in the interviews:

> Being accountable, it's based on trust. In order to achieve that trust, the community have to be at the centre of everything. You need to be honest with the community. You need to listen to the community. You need to support community projects and you need to use some of the local networks we've been talking about. You need to work to a vision, but that vision is based on one that comes from the community.

One think-tank participant's solution to mistrust was the very Ostrom-like advice for those involved to have: "willingness towards mutually supportive pursuit of common purpose". Relationship building and trust might be hard currency, but it is hard to build policy around these ideas. In practical terms, relationship building, listening not telling and facilitating not dominating are all skills that elected members would need, but are not the conventional skills

used in traditional local politics. More importantly, the challenge for elected members is share power, without feeling like they are 'giving up' their main leverage and source of authority.

b. What needs to be transparent?

Transparency in Model 1 focuses on the past performance of sitting representatives, and the future manifestos of sitting representatives and candidates for election, rather than the decisions taken in Area Committees. No requirements are implied by this model to publicise the work of Area Committees, other than as a vote-winning tactic during campaigning. For some community organisations involved in local activity, this can lead to some cynicism about local councillors' primary interest being photo-opportunities and credit-claiming for neighbourhood improvements. This view partly helps to explain the inaccessibility of the work of decentralised structures in some authorities, in terms of physical inaccessibility (meetings held in Town Halls, questions from members of the public must be submitted in writing in advance), accessibility of information including style (e.g. formal minutes of meetings posted on a special section of council websites). As we saw, Model 2 suggests a need for greater transparency of decisions taken by elected members in decentralised decision-making, and the justifications of those decisions.

Demands in Model 3 for two-way interactions between representatives and the represented require transparency of the decision-making process: including, mechanisms for citizens to express their views and to influence decisions made by local councillors, as well as the results of citizen feedback and impacts of that on decisions. Model 4 adds to this as there is suggested that a healthy pluralist system would enable competition and open access by interest groups by making transparent ways to lobby politicians. In addition, the interest groups themselves should make transparent the basis of their claims to represent wider constituencies. Model 5 also has full transparency of decision-making processes and decisions, as well as the results of decisions (outcomes) for the area. What is different in this case is that all relevant bodies involved in community governance are subject to demands for transparency.

There was support for greater transparency in community governance from the literature, interviews. Fung, Graham and Weil have run the Transparency Policy Project in the US which advocates for disclosure systems with open public data as a potentially powerful

policy instrument to replace standard regulation (giving examples from health and safety fields), while warning of the perils of poorly chosen or handled systems (REF). Our interviewees said: "You can see what has happened throughout the process. Transparency is of the *decisions* not the decision-makers. If it is open how decisions were made, and the outcomes, it is open to challenge." There were examples from programmes such as Community First where accountability was defined as transparency about information on what money has been spent on what, which appears on a website.

There are new technologies being designed which could make transparency in decentralised decision-making (across Models 3, 4 and 5) more meaningful (Cinderby et al 2011; Woodcock et al 2011). For example, CommunityViz in the US uses GIS (Geographical Information Systems) to help planning decisions through 3D visualisations, scenarios, and policy simulations including budget and land-use modelling. MapLocal is a Smartphone app which provides a tool for mapping community assets and contributing to neighbourhood planning by tapping into local knowledge and community creativity (Jones et al 2012).

c. What roles are open to citizens, and what are the implications for mobilisation strategies?

One of the challenges in community governance is in designing opportunities that allow community members to take part without being prohibitively burdensome. The demands made on citizens vary depending on the model. Each model also has different implications for mobilisation strategies to simulate and support citizens to take up those roles.

In Model 1, citizens are voters and the further participation in decentralised decision-making is actively precluded. Model 1 is least burdensome, as it primarily requires citizens to vote in local elections. In reality, low electoral turnouts suggest this requires more effective mobilisation than currently exists. 'Get Out the Vote' (GOTV) campaigns in the US and the UK have shown to produce increases in turnout. Other activities citizens could undertake in Model 1 include joining political parties and standing as candidates for local election.

Other than voting, Model 2 demands little more of citizens than that they take notice of, understand and digest communications to them by elected representatives. Representatives can increase the chances of this happening by improving the effectiveness of their communications.

Model 3 is more demanding of citizen capacity, as it requires people to give their opinions, express and articulate preferences, but also be involved in dialogue and deliberation. But, this need not be a time-intensive or expensive exercise involving only a small number of participants. The social media examples given in the discussion of Model 3 illustrate light-touch, flexible, accessible and modern ways that citizens and local councillors can engage in a two-way dialogue. Previous work has shown that large-scale online deliberations can be managed reasonably successfully (John et al 2011). Local authorities can help mobilise people by asking meaningful, relevant and sophisticated new questions where the answers are not already known, and by delivering on their promise to be responsive by accommodating, adjusting or adapting decisions in response, and by engaging in mature dialogue and deliberation.

Model 4 relies on a small number of citizens, acting as interest group representatives, giving greater levels of contributions, with all the concomitant problems of burn out. Another risk is that of co-option, with both types of representatives becoming too cosy in corporatist arrangements – in whatever the decentralised equivalents are of the 1970s 'beer and sandwiches' relationships between trade unions and central government. There are trade-offs between possible strategies to address these problems. One strategy is to accept the burden falls on a small number and accept this as a downside of the greater benefits of establishing deeper relationships over a period of time. In interviews for the project, one respondent said: "Community governance needs continuity and consistency. Capacity does not grow on trees". An alternative strategy would be to identify the widest range of groups possible, and bring in new faces: "[one solution to the problems of co-option is] high turnover". Community First panels plan to regularly 'refresh' panel memberships, similarly with Big Local membership of the Big Local Partnership is reviewed at least once a year.

A third option is to 'make present' the interests of minority groups without their physical presence, in an 'asynchronous' or virtual way. For example in one authority, DVDs of people from under-represented and minority backgrounds were used by local councillors in Area Boards (John et al 2011). Mobilisation in Model 4 also implies that elected representatives would identify the communities of interest in their patch, for example by mapping groups where this information is not known, and work to bring forward representatives from under-represented minority groups where there were gaps.

Model 5 offers the widest variety of roles to citizens as joint decision-makers, and collaborative problem-solvers. It is therefore the model that demands most of citizens as local experts offering their experiential expertise. Ways to give life to these roles for citizens include 'customer stories' and mystery shopping used in co-design processes (e.g. see Design Council 2013, Coles-Kemp 2013a, b). One authority trained community volunteers as co-researchers with the role of formulating the research questions, created the research design, conducted fieldwork, and did the data analysis themselves, with support from an academic and local council officers. The researchers were able to gather in-depth and previously unavailable qualitative data on the highly sensible and personal topic of alcohol harm in a deprived neighbourhood. For example they asked people to share a secret about alcohol by adapting an approach used in the now international 'Post Secret' project which has had over half a million responses[5]. Several interviewees and think-tank participants suggested wider use of social media to mobilise people, with examples of a JRF digital inclusion project at Derwenthorpe, and the effective use of Facebook to mobilise community-led action in Big Local areas and by housing association residents. One group had raised £18 000 through a crowd-sourcing campaign.

Beyond specific methods and technologies, there were some broader messages on mobilisation from the research. One piece of advice was to re-frame 'the ask' made of citizens, away from the concept of volunteering to something more asset-based:

> When you ask someone if they want to volunteer, they say no, because they associate the word 'volunteer' with neediness. When you ask someone, "Do you want to tutor some kids down the road, and teach them English?" they might say yes. So it's a transfer of skills, actually. The word volunteer [is] stigmatised at the moment.

Another piece of advice was to look at what citizens wanted to do across a broad range of participation, not what policy-makers wanted them to do: "Look at what does motivate people; harness what they want out of the process". Closely linked to this point was the advice to make participation fun and human (Durose et al 2013). There were also different

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[5] www.postsecret.com

sorts of (non-financial) incentives, including micro-volunteering schemes, timebanking, match-making schemes which broker between potential volunteers and organisations needing extra help, particularly specialist skills, and general infrastructure support. These are also ways of overcoming some of the issues with differential capacity between neighbourhoods and citizens with higher and lower resources. Examples of schemes include NESTA-supported projects like Give What You're Good At, iReach, which aims to be 'match.com' for charities and volunteers and The Amazings, where retired people pass on their skills.

In the think-tank we heard about some good examples of support for community groups in different places, including Greater Manchester Council for Voluntary Organisations (helping smaller voluntary organisations bid for contracts by becoming 'tender-ready' and forming consortia), Oxfam GB Routes to Solidarity (supporting BME women's groups), volunteer-run social media surgeries through One Blackpool, the National Communities Resource Centre (offering community training), National Association of Neighbourhood Management (advice on community governance and networking/peer-learning), the Co-op Hub (supporting the development of co-ops and mutuals), East Midlands Tenant Participation Forum (working with social housing tenants), Cumbria Youth Alliance (developing an infrastructure organisation for youth work), and Europia (using creative mobilisation techniques with marginalised communities, such as migrants from Eastern Europe).

There were other examples of support available e.g. funding websites, community grants e.g. from Tesco, CVS media training, help from universities and local authority-wide forums and CVS. People made the point that some of the funding for this infrastructure has been severely cut. Also many front-line workers who were previously dedicated to community action and governance have either gone or been re-deployed. However, the existing organisations and their ideas are also ways to make sure that communities can 'fill their own supermarket trolleys' and make choices about getting involved in governance while trying to make sure those with fewer resources are not left too far behind. Community First is focused on areas of low social capital as a deliberate choice to increase social action in areas with low civic capacity. Fair Share Trust Local Panels were also targeted on areas which by proxy had under-developed civic infrastructure. One interviewee argued that: "Lack of skills in disadvantaged areas is NOT an argument against decentralisation – those areas potentially have the most to gain from decentralisation".

d. How does accountability take place?

In summary, Model 1 accountability is through the 'democratic mandate', and only this, with accountability of local councillors to constituents limited to elections. Models 2, 3 and 4 introduce the idea of 'responsiveness' as a form of democratic accountability. This adds another element to democratic accountability, which is now (in theory) based on both the democratic mandate through elections, plus additional activity by local councillors between elections. In the case of Model 2, responsiveness involves communicating decisions and greater transparency of decision-making. For Models 3 and 4, responsiveness is about refining decisions based on preferences and deliberating with individual citizens and communities of interest.

Models 1 to 3 do not have scope for non-electoral accountability. Model 4 includes partial forms of non-electoral accountability of organised interest groups. Model 5 suggests that, as well as accountability of elected representatives ,(as given primacy in Models 1 to 4), non-elected bodies can be held accountable. Using the example of community policing in Chicago, Archon Fung (2001) describes how community-based groups are given autonomy over how to tackle policing issues. What the local government does is to set the framework for accountability by specifying the broad outcomes that the groups should achieve. He terms this 'accountable autonomy'. In this work, Fung describes a process in Chicago where there has been neighbourhood decentralisation in community policing which brings together schools, front-line workers and citizens to deliberate. These groups are: "autonomous in the sense that they set and implement, through deliberative processes, the specific ends and means toward broad public aims such as school improvement and public safety." To overcome some of the risks of localism, including: "domination or capture by powerful factions or persons in small groups, the paralysis of local groups due to conflictual deadlock, and their lack of capacity and sophistication […] and pervasive inequality and conflict", he shows how the process is held accountable to central managers who monitor performance outcomes, exert sanctions or intervention in the case of failure, as well as offering external support.

Emerging thinking on the political left in ideas of a 'relational state' (Cooke and Muir 2012) proposes similar ideas about citizens having more control over their lives, more decentralisation, and 'institutional pluralism', or what we refer to as Model 5 polycentrism.

In this is the idea of 'relational accountability', for example 360-degree appraisals' of front-line staff, so that performance is judged with reference to a range of stakeholders, including service users. This matches some of the literature discussed earlier. One thinker argues that relational accountability can be operated by: "reframing outcome-based targets to focus on more relational goals (Cooke and Muir 2012): 'This could include levels of user satisfaction or direct measures of associational life, such as the number of visits an elderly person has received from neighbours or relatives'.

Moves towards co-operatives and mutuals in public services are possibly a practical expression of 'relational accountability'. One innovative example is Rochdale Boroughwide Housing, which has staff and tenants as members of the co-operative. Another community organisation, based in a Neighbourhood Community Budget area, has created a wholly new organisational structure which combines a Community Development Trust with a Co-operative. In a polycentric Model 5 world, these organisational forms offer a vehicle for collective problem solving as well as a way of ensuring wide accountability.

Section Four: Application and applicability of the models

Under this heading, we discuss two issues: how far representation is the main debate in Localism; whether our typology works in messy and complex real-life situations and whether there is ever a single model at work in areas and organisations.

a.. How far is accountability the primary issue?

We focus on representation and accountability, not only because these are major concerns for central government Localism policies, but also because these debates come up so often in day-to-day local conversations. Some of the examples from the think-tank illustrate how seemingly abstract debates about theories of democracy and power have a real impact in neighbourhoods. Perhaps, people do not use the same language, but the arguments going on in local areas are the same as in the literature (and vice versa).

But not everything is about models of representation and accountability. Some barriers to greater community control and decentralisation are much more prosaic than ideological battles over democracy. One think-tank participant described barriers to communities having more control in neighbourhoods including: "Process and timescales that dispirit and destroy motivation towards innovation and taking upon the business of making sustainable change". Another issue is the lack of awareness of local authorities of policy and legislation. One community group in the think-tank has now successfully used one of the new Community Rights. But when they contacted the council, officers in the small district council were unclear of the newly introduced legislation:

> the day that [the Right] actually came into being in autumn 2012, I rang up the local authority and said I wanted to register our church hall as an asset of community value, which is part of the Community Right to Bid. At which point, I discovered that nobody in [X] Council understood what I was on about.

A larger-scale challenge was that unless areas have an economic purpose, neighbourhoods will be set up to fail: "Governance alone cannot ensure the viability of places: I think you can't talk about community without the challenge of economic purpose." Another challenge raised in the think-tank was the importance of recognising citizens' past experiences of attempts at engagement, contested decisions, or broken promises:

Our barriers seem to be apathy in the community. People have been promised so much in the past by local authority, housing and even the Government then let down in a sense. So people don't believe anything is going to happen positively until they see changes.

One person said that "past bad experiences" meant that what looked like apathy was in some cases "antipathy!" Another communities experiences of Government programmes had left: "a community fairly angry, very separated and very disillusioned. So not very trusting into any sort of schemes or things that might happen." In another example, the last minute withdrawal of a housing association from a contract for job training for young people left the voluntary organisation surprised, but not the young people: "the young people we work with, and who were potentially going to get a job, were not surprised, they'd been let down before […] that's what happens. They let you down with no conscience."

b. How far does the real world reflect a simplified typology?

The typology offers five basic models therefore it is necessarily a crude simplification of how things happen in the real world. These sorts of simplifications can be useful as mental maps, or rules of thumb – known as heuristics – and ways to make sense of the rich complexity of real life. We have tried to select theories that were sufficiently distinct, and lead to the most directly mutually incompatible ways of practically doing Localism. Reality usually shows that neat lines on tables are actually very blurred.

However, what our project identified as a more salient problem was where there are conflicting models being used in the same organisation, authority or area. Citizens, officers and councillors trying to deliver Localism can be frustrated when they encounter these inconsistencies in policy in organisations. For example, it is possible to see some central government policies as Model 5, but others as Model 3. There are isolated examples of positive moves to counter inconsistencies, for example, one authority has an asset transfer which can be used if there are barriers raised by specific council departments to asset transfer.

However, the experience of groups in the think-tank was of very mixed messages:

How many council leaders/ cabinets and chief execs/ directors have really got the message of the change in paradigm from councils as service providers to councils

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as empowering co-production? And are committed to it?

In some of the authorities, there was a 'catch-22' situation where top-level commitment to the principles of decentralisation were not backed up by a firm offer or strategic direction about devolving power or what the council were willing to devolve. Those involved described as a 'chicken and egg' situation where authorities asked the community what level of responsibility and influence they wanted, only for the community to ask what was on offer: "Our situation, asking people what they'd like to take over... But what are you offering then? Oh, we won't tell them that until they say what they want. Who's going to play first?"

In another authority which is part of the Neighbourhood Community Budget pilots, there were similarly frustrating mixed messages from the authority over devolved decision-making and asset transfer. The authority has approached a community organisation as a vehicle for the NCB:

> The issues we've found are that although the statutory bodies, the community budgeting organisations, supported the idea of setting up [the community organisation] and paid for the registration of it to incorporate, when I said, "Could we have some funding for the first year because we'll need to do some admin?" They said no. And they then criticised us when it was rather slow. So I said, "Well you didn't let us have any money." And they said, "Well no, we think you should do it with volunteers." One resisted the temptation to say, "Are you all volunteers at the council, then?" We said to the statutory bodies, "We want to come and meet you so that we can understand what you're doing in this community budgeting project. Will you write a sort of prospectus of what your offer is? What are you saying to the community that you will do? What budgets will you allow them to influence?" The document we got back was a page and a half of what they wanted [our organisation] to do. There wasn't a single thing about what they were going to do. Nor was there any attempt to put it into language, into plain English. It feels like there's a very steep learning curve for them. There's certainly a steep learning curve for people in the community.

This big issue of a lack of a clear devolution offer have been compounded by smaller instances of a lack of support for an asset transfer. After being handed a building with an

estimated £30 000 worth of repairs needed, the community organisation spent their own reserves and fundraised for refurbishment. The authority then refused to re-connect the building to the council-owned supply in the next door building, and have since complained that other organisations are being charged to use the transferred facility.

One group wanted to take over a building that had previously been used by play services and SureStart. They said that their 'biggest ups and downs' had been 'working with the council', because not all individual officers and councillors were supportive, and the two key council departments involved operated on different models, one being very supportive and actively engaged in negotiating an asset transfer, the other department was against the transfer. And there was a similar position with elected representatives:

> We've got a very supportive local councillor who's fortunately a cabinet support member, but the lead councillor, when we tried to get a meeting with her, she kind of blanked us. So again, we've got to try and find the roots in between those we can work with and get some mileage out of it. […] I think that's one of the big problems, those people who don't get it. We've got to work with those who do and those who don't. Politically, [the] Council do want to move towards a co-operative council model. In some areas, some departments, they're actually doing asset transfer. Others I don't think have ever heard of it. Or if they have, they certainly would want to stamp on it straight away. I think that's really our challenge, is how to find the right people to work with, the political levers, so we can actually say, "We are up for this"

Section Five: Conclusions and policy recommendations

Specific implications and practical suggestions for how power, accountability, transparency and citizen mobilisation are handled in each of the five models in this typology are outlined in section three. Beyond this, how might this work be useful to central and local policy-makers? We had two aims in this report.

Our first aim was to outline different models of representation and accountability in the typology. A typology is a crude simplification, but which acts as a heuristic – or 'rule of thumb' - to aid policy formation. The aim here was not to judge one model better than another, simply to surface which model is in operation in particular places and policies. This is useful because:

- Acknowledging that there are competing models in the world, supported by arguments in the theory, opens up local conversations about community governance. In some places, those conversations are currently closed down, or differences of opinions never resolved, because of a view that there is just a single model of accountability (the dominant model being Model 1 of accountability as the 'democratic mandate').

- Making different models of representation and accountability explicit does not typically happen in policies on decentralised decision-making. The 'offer' is not clear. Therefore, making the model or offer more explicit means policy is more open to debate. It could also help pinpoint policy contradictions at central or local level, within organisations as a result of competing models being used.

- Clarifying what those different models might be, however crudely, offers policy-makers a range of options and choices.

- Understanding what was the desired model or policy would allow local councillors to strengthen their roles as community leaders, according to the model they are operating.

- Understanding what model an authority is using in its policies could also help citizens make judgements about their tactics when dealing with local decision-makers, depending on what definition of responsiveness is being used.

Our second aim was to make the case in favour of Model 5 complementary polycentric forms of community governance. We went beyond a neutral examination of the five different models to set out a case for Model 5. Localism offers significant opportunities for an expansion of polycentrism. Community governance proper is as much about collective problem solving and mobilising citizen assets as it is about formal decision-making. Where citizen assets are more effectively mobilised the prizes could be substantial – greater legitimacy of decisions; stronger consensus on common or public good in controversial decisions; overcoming divisions in communities; enabling change to be delivered. Local government potentially could play roles as a civic 'enabler' or 'ensuring council' (APSE 2012) to:

- Orchestrate collaboration and broker relationships
- Build network capacity and activate problem-solving networks
- Mobilise and align strategic resources
- Set frameworks for the inclusion of under-represented and minority interests
- Set and monitor criteria for relational accountability and accountable autonomy.

Potentially, this puts local government in the lead role as initiators and facilitators of Model 5 governance, if they can be convinced of the benefits of the approach. To enable this to happen, it may first be necessary to win policy-makers over to new ways of doing decentralised decision-making.

Our policy recommendations are:

- The typology is adapted and used by central and local government as a diagnostic tool to identify which model best fits policy aims, current practice, and goals, and identify where policies might sit within different models in a potentially contradictory way.

- The local government sector undertake a serious re-examination of its assumptions about traditional models of representation.

- Both central and local government should make their model, or 'offer', explicit and transparent to citizens.

- Central government should incentivise take up of the Localism agenda based on how much progress local authorities have made towards model 5.

- Policies on community governance should be implemented in a complementary way, rather than being posed as alternatives to representative democracy.

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