

# ‘WHEN TOMORROW COMES’

The future of local public services

## Introduction

This paper presents a review of literature from research undertaken at the University of Birmingham and other selected sources, addressing questions under three key themes examined by the Policy Commission:

1. The role of behaviour change in local public services
2. Redesigning public service relationships
3. Reproducing success and mitigating failure

## Theme One: The role of behaviour change in local public services

***Q1. What kinds of behaviour change are being proposed and what areas of research are drawn on to explain and justify their selection at different levels of policy:***

***i. From more to less 'risky' behaviour to reduce pressure on local public services in later life e.g. smoking cessation, alcohol reduction?***

The Institute for Government with the Cabinet Office (2010) developed a checklist for policy-makers with reference to behavioural economic theory being able 'change or shape our behaviour' (2010, p. 7). By incorporating seven effects which all humans are influenced by, consciously or unconsciously, it is argued that policy-making through acknowledging the possibility of behaviour changes through these effects could change individual conduct in relation to three areas: 'anti-social behaviour, pro-social behaviour [...]and health and prosperous lifestyles' (2010, p.8). By considering the 'messenger, incentives, norms, defaults, salience, priming, affect, commitments and ego' (2010, p.8) relating to 'action,' it would be possible to subtly change the behaviour of a substantial number of people. The premise is based on Kahnemann's & Tversky (1974) *Heuristics and Biases*, which argued that people do not make decisions based on sustained cognitive effort and instead rely on heuristics to provide effective short-cuts to provide solutions (i.e. availability heuristic (something you experienced relevant to the decision to be made) and the representativeness heuristic (the situation represented something which you or others known to you had experienced)).

Careful management of policy choices by government, given that *'government influences behaviour no matter what it does'* (2010, p.16), should thus result in shifts in heuristic 'automatic' behaviour with the added benefit of doing so incurring *'little cost'* (2010, p.16) in comparison to more interventionist approaches. In terms of reducing risky behaviour to reduce pressure on local public services, 'nudge' theory, a term more commonly employed by marketers, could be harnessed to prevent socially irresponsible behaviour or stimulate citizens to make more pro-social choices in everyday decisions.

The IFG (2010) referred to the seven effects in relation to specific cases where subtle changes could be made in order to induce the biggest impact. For example, Strathclyde Police challenged the 'social norms' of gang membership by applying the concept to investigating offenses (i.e. if one gang member committed an offence, all the peers of the gang were investigated on wider issues) (2010, p.31). Given that messengers are important in making automatic decisions, gang-deterrence classes for young people were used in a London Borough and delivered by a former gang member to highlight the risks involved. (2010, p.32) Positive incentives could be given to promote pro-social behaviour amongst young people (2010, p.32), increasing default security on products to prevent theft (2010, p.33) and making activities such as community punishments more visible (with fluorescent jackets) (2010, p.33) could all lead to positive shifts in population behaviour.

In terms of health and well-being, messenger effects were in evidence with anti-smoking campaigns featuring children delivering the message to their parents, gym-memberships could be changed so as to provide incentives for regular exercise (i.e. failure to show up results in increased costs), workplace smoking bans can change social norms and lead to higher quitting rates (2010, p.44) and signing 'no gambling' contracts can lead to commitment effects reducing the possibility of continuance (2010, p.45).

The report goes on to argue there are limits in applying these types of theories to gain practical outcomes, especially if framed in such a way as to appear explicitly paternalistic. The research cites Gillian Norton highlighting a paradox of the problem: *'talking about behaviour change is a sure fire way of making sure it doesn't happen'* (2010, p.63). Especially

in controversial issues of moulding behaviour, the public may fundamentally disagree over any attempts to intervene. However, the report argues that it may be necessary for the government to intervene in issues *'despite public opposition, since public opinion may actually shift in response to the introduction to the policy'* (2010, p.63). The research highlights three factors which would need to be assessed to begin to justify intervention: *'who the policy affects, what type of behaviour is intended and how the change will be accomplished'* (2010, p.64). In terms of 'who,' the government should take steps to ensure that they are aware of possible *'charges of discrimination or intolerance'* (2010, p.64) in reference to whose behaviour they seek to change and perhaps focus on citizens' perceptions of *whose* behaviour should be changed, i.e. *'people have a strong instinct for reciprocity [...] those who have received certain benefits from state action should act in certain ways, which may require changes in behaviour'* (2010, p.64). Equally 'what type' of behaviour to be changed should also be considered, in terms of *'harm and benefit to self and others'* (2010, p.64). The method of government action in terms of 'how' behaviour should be changed is also important and should not violate complete freedom of action (*'any action which reduces the "right to be wrong" will be very controversial'* (2010, p.64)) or appear too surreptitious; *'people have a strong dislike being "tricked"'* (2010, p.64).

Thus in terms of policy-making, whilst government *'will always be shaping choices [...] whether they like it or not'* (2010, p.73), the role of the policy-maker will be balanced between *'shaping influences around us to maximise the public and private good, whilst also leaving as much choice in the hands of citizens as possible'* (2010, p.73). Given that the approach concludes that *'public permission matters'* (2010, p.73) in terms of shaping behaviour, policy-makers should take care to act as *'brokers of public views and interests around the ecology of behaviour'* (2010, p.74).'

Evidence submitted to the House of Lords Science and Technology Committee on Behaviour Change by Rasul & Mohnen (2010) indicated where the concepts behind behaviour change could be applied in order to reduce pressure on public services in both the short and long term. For example; altering social norms through legislation and advertising has been proven to work in important examples; *'the smoking ban in public areas is an example of a successful policy which has changed the social norm. The social acceptance of smoking has*

*been reduced thereby reducing the amount people smoke in private too. Compulsory seatbelt use has also been a successful intervention. Although received with much opposition, this policy is now considered socially acceptable and has permanently altered the social norm'* (2010, p.512).

Rasul & Mohnen (2010) also provide a case study of how policy incorporating theories of 'behaviour change' could reduce the pressure on public services caused by obesity. For example, one method *'could use our loss aversion as an incentive for weight loss. One study asked some participants to deposit money into an account, which was returned to them if they met weight loss goals. After seven months, this group showed significant weight loss compared to the control group'* (2010, p.525). Another method, with relevance for young people, could be setting 'defaults' for people: *'healthy default schemes appear to give the right "nudge" without restricting the freedom of choice of customers. Setting a healthy default meal with the option of changing for a less healthy meal has been evaluated. In the school setting, it has shown some success. [An] intervention was conducted in 56 schools over a 2-year period. Five consecutive days of school menu, recipe, and vendor product information were collected from intervention and control schools to assess the nutrient content of school menus as offered. There was a significantly greater mean reduction in the percentage of calories from total fat and saturated fat in intervention compared with control schools from baseline to follow-up'* (2010, p.526-527). Further evidence of success relates to pricing and availability behaviour nudges: *'adjusting [fatty foods] relative price and availability has been considered. Many countries already apply sales tax to particular items but not others with health concern in mind. In France for instance, sweets, chocolates, margarine and vegetable fat attract VAT of 20.6% whilst other foods attract VAT of only 5.5'* (2010, p.527). In terms of combination policies, there is sustained evidence to indicate that behaviour change could work in reducing risky behaviour which, in turn, would reduce pressure on public services in the future.

Burgess (2010) argues that policy regarding alcohol consumption in the UK has always been characterised as a *'problem of health, championed by leading medics [...] Initiatives are characteristically framed around risk and harm; safety is the watchword'* (2010, p.14). However, because policies are often framed around the health problems associated with

alcohol consumption, it has usually been the older alcohol consumers more concerned with changing their individual habits to prevent ill-health. Thus policy designed to warn of health implications of excessive alcohol consumption could likely fail in respect to reducing pressure on public services in the case of young people: *'the medical establishment's drive against alcohol remains constrained by the limits of [the] harm-based argument. Risk does not concern making an open case for reducing drinking; instead that statistics will "speak for themselves," scaring individuals into behavioural change. The problem remains that statistics for alcohol-related deaths not only sound modest but are long term and remote from young people'* (2010, p.15). In the incoming central government's plans surrounding 'libertarian paternalist' approaches to challenge behaviour, *'nudge initiatives'* (2010, p.17) are being raised to counter risky behaviour in such a way to reframe the activities: *'If you want to reduce alcohol consumption [...] don't dwell on the bad news that everybody is drinking too much, emphasise instead that most people only have a few drinks a week. Psychology tells us that behaviour will then follow the assumed norm, and more people will stick to lower consumption'* (2010, p.17). Given that the aim of these types of 'reframing behaviour' are based on *'behavioural economics [which is] instrumentally based on psychology'* (2010, p.18) there are limitations and *'weak claims that we will at least be nudged from within a range of chosen options'* (2010, p.18). Thus Burgess argues that types of reframing to 'nudge' people into certain courses of action or *"paternalist manipulation," is no more likely to create a new sense of responsibility within society than trying to scare people with statistical probabilities of what may befall them lest they fail to heed the evidence'* (2010, p.18).

Stoker & Moseley (2010) argue that previous governments have relied on a simplistic view of human rationality to achieve 'goals' which focus on 'self-interest' and individual maximisation of rewards. However, Stoker & Moseley (2010) argue that *'evidence suggests that people do not always respond in this "perfectly rational" way. By narrowly focusing on people as self-interested calculators policy makers may overlook other factors and motivations that could drive their behaviour'* (2010, p.11). They argue, instead, that *'given what we know about peoples' mixed motivation, cognitive limits and variable social framing of situations, to assume that they will react in a predictable way to policy interventions and incentives simply as a result of their rationality and self-interestedness is incongruous*

*tending towards absurd'* (2010, p.15). There are also limits to how much behaviour change can achieve when people are directly challenged on their activities *'psychological processes account for the hidden costs of stimulating behaviour through external incentives and constraints. When people feel that they are being controlled, especially through intensive oversight and regulation, they may feel impelled to forego intrinsic motivation because the external framework is so overwhelming that it makes maintaining an intrinsic motivation pointless'* (2010, p.19).

Stoker & Moseley (2010) warn the IFG and Cabinet Office (2010) that despite *'the attraction of Nudge approaches and other related tools [in] demanding only relatively modest changes for potentially big pay-offs'* (2010, p.22) there are problems in fully understanding how policy can shape behaviour: *'there is currently a gap between our understanding of general social and psychological processes and capacity to ensure that these insights become effective tools for social engineering'* (2010, p.22). The report presents an alternative set of 'nudges' which they believe have a better understanding of microfoundational behaviour and thus could result in policies which deliver results: *'framing, persuasion, socialization and bricolage'* (2010, p.23). Thus in order to successfully harness behaviour change Stoker & Moseley (2010) argue that:

*'A greater comprehension of cognitive pathways, social norms and moral motivations should join with a continuing understanding of instrumental factors in shaping government policy-making [...] Given the demands of co-production and the limits to available finance it could be argued that a shift to a more subtle range of interventions is essential to the future of public services. Our caution rests not so much over the ethical or political issues thrown up by such a development but on two other factors. First it is recognition that we are only in the foothills as social scientists in understanding how to translate a general understanding of social process into viable social engineering interventions and that we need more research and work to clarify what works and to what extent and in what circumstances. Second we think that there is a danger that top-down forms of intervention to shift social behaviour will overwhelm more bottom-up approaches [...] Bottom-up approaches demand a*

*greater culture change from government but may enable the tackling of issues that top-down nudging strategies will not be able to grasp.'*

(2010, p.23)

A serious consequence of misunderstanding a problem and taking a top-down rather than a bottom-up approach can be represented by a study conducted into alcohol and young people. Szmigin,<sup>1</sup> Griffin, Mistral, Bengry-Howell, Weale & Hackley (2008) undertook a study to understand the reasons behind 'binge-drinking' and this resulted in finding out some of the underlying reasons which drove this anti-social choice. The research found that young people often drank to excess for fun but was a form of 'managed pleasure' and prompted the researchers to come up with a more '*nuanced consideration of the notion of 'binge drinking'*' (2008, p. 365). For example: '*the impact of alcohol on the inner and outer body is significant in why people drink. In participants' accounts motives for drinking and getting drunk were constituted almost entirely positively. They include, having fun, conforming to peer group norms, letting yourself go, forgetting the frustrations of the day and helping self-confidence in a social situation [...] bolstered by a marketing ideology of 'having a good time'*' (2008, p.365). Thus binge drinking was not a 'problem' for young people in the context of being a 'managed pursuit' balancing '*discipline with hedonism*' (2008, p.365). In terms of public health and social policy, policymakers would need to understand the microfoundations of behaviour documented in empirical work, such as that presented by Szmigin et al. (2008), to be able to successfully tackle problems which need resolution (i.e. policy-makers would need to acknowledge individual levels of behaviour such as these to be able to successfully manage the problem. *We need to know 'X' for Y to work.*) For example:

*'From a public health perspective we should also consider the different nature of the key discourses drawn on by young people and those who are concerned to change their behaviour. While social bodies concerned with health and education often present one type of behaviour as leading to particular outcomes, in contrast, a discourse of compatibility presents a range of different and apparently contradictory*

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*possibilities of life which have to be managed; 'Discipline and hedonism are no longer seen as incompatible'*  
(2008, p.365)

***ii. From 'passive' to 'active' citizenship to change relationship between citizen and local state in a context of resource constraint, e.g. volunteering to run local libraries, youth groups etc?***

Cahn's (2007) concept of time-banking tapped into the idea of utilising the 'core economy' in the U.S. to improve active citizenship. The idea focused on the concept of helping others using the concept of reciprocity: *'We need to rethink how we go about helping others. We need to ask them to give back in some way, not necessarily to us, but to someone else. Some of you may have seen or heard about the movie Pay it Forward. It's that idea. We can always pay it back because there is always someone else out there we can help'* (2007, p.5). Examples included *'young people who have committed offenses are helping out on a community bus, ensuring that young people with learning difficulties get to school safely [...] youth who have been in serious trouble helping local fire fighters to distribute fire alarms and teach fire prevention to local residents'* (2007, p.6). However, the concept of time-banking extends to wider forms of active citizenship without the use of financial reciprocation, instead relying on more nuanced forms of payment: *'Time Dollars or Time Credits are the currency that Time Banks use to reflect the work [...] even if we don't have "real money" to pay them. [...] Timebanking has been used in the UK to cover the services involved in a wedding, a funeral and in the US for a child birth by midwives. We are talking about hundreds of thousands of hours of real work paid for with Time Credits, provided by people whom the economists don't consider to be in the work force'* (2007, p.4). A practical example of non-financial reciprocation was given using the story of a young girl who collected rubbish in the streets who was rewarded with dance lessons as a consequence of her collecting sufficient 'time-credits' (2007, p.4).

Cahn (2007) argues that the concept of time-banking helps to build social capital without the need for substantial financial resources, other than the utilisation of the current assets

and the skills of the core economy. Cahn cites an example of time-banking experiences which built social capital: *'families [...] who formed a Time Bank [...] are now teaching each other about everything from health and diabetes to how to become a citizen. They are now engaged in voting registration and turning out the vote. They earn Time Credits and the health clinic provides some funding for monthly socials and pot lucks [...] families are developing a knowledge of how to cook healthy meals and are exercising together to lose weight or to control diabetes (2007, p.6).*

Cotterill & Richardson (2009) undertook an experiment to discover how willing people would be to move from 'passive' to 'active' citizenship through contact with individuals who had been in touch with their local councils in relation to authority functions. In the experiment, there was a willingness shown by some people to become more involved in improving their neighbourhood: *'30 callers said they would like to get involved in improving the neighbourhood [...] research participants were equally split between female and male and just over half were Asian: there were 7 white men, 7 white women, 8 Asian men and 8 Asian women. 60 per cent of participants had children living in their household; 37 per cent were under 35; 70 per cent were working or self-employed.'* (2009, p.11) It was also found that people who hadn't had a background in active citizenship were willing to get involved with participating in activities: *'one person who was a school governor, a few who had been officers for local community groups and half had given unpaid help to someone other than a relative in the past year [...] But [...] there were 5 people who had not undertaken any civic activity in the last year other than eco behaviour like recycling and picking up litter'* (2009, p.11). However when intention was linked to action, there was little enthusiasm from the majority of research respondents to turn their initial interest into active citizenship: *'of the thirty who showed initial interest, when asked 6-8 weeks later, ten were still hoping to get involved in local activity: the initial enthusiasm of most of the participants was not translated into action'* (2009, p.14). However the results of the study, which is to be replicated, did demonstrate a willingness of a wide-range of people to become more involved in active citizenship: *'volunteers included young people, [...] and people without a strong background of civic activity'* (2009, p.15).

In terms of boosting low-level active citizenship there is evidence that the forms of communicating with people (i.e. post, telephone, internet, face-to-face) will affect how willing they are to undertake pro-social activities such as voting. For example, Rasul & Mohnen (2010) report that *'face-to-face contact was found to have a highly significant effect (increasing turnout by around 10 to 15%). This meant that despite its relatively high cost, face-to-face contact was ultimately highly cost-effective relative to other means of boosting turnout'* (2010, p.520). In terms of more pro-social engagement and reducing pressure on public services, a local authority used the behavioural nudge of 'salience' to highlight the problems of littering and discourage anti-social behaviour: *'the London Borough of Southwark designed two campaigns: 'Bin it to win it' was a lottery where contestant simply had to throw their litter into litter bins to enter the contest. 'Stalking Litter' was a campaign where actors wearing giant litter costumes would create scenes in the street to attract attention [...] Both approaches were designed to raise awareness to the problem by using salience. [...] Citizen satisfaction on the street cleanliness increased'* (2010, p.520). Further evidence of behavioural nudges, already used across countries such as Norway, showed that 'loss aversion' could also be successfully used to promote pro-social behaviour: *'Reverse Vending Machines are devices that accept empty containers and can return money to the user. An additional voucher has been offered as an incentive for people to recycle using these machines. These financial incentives exploit the loss aversion of consumers. Evaluation based on the experience of other countries using these schemes showed that they increase return rates and that they may also help the reduction in littering'* (2010, p.521).

Singh (2010) argues that the current financial crisis offers an opportunity to the government to *'build the capabilities of groups and individuals to contribute meaningfully [and create] user-driven approaches to services'* (2010, p.8). To do so, Singh (2010) argues that there should be a more collaborative approach to commissioning local services which are not bound by strictures to reflect only large service providers offering their services on the basis of low prices. Instead, there should be a push towards more active civil society and more user-centred commissioning in places such as *'a network of co-commissioning hubs'* (2010, p.9) which would be *'focussed on civil society organisations, [who] would use the resources of the hub as a base to form consortia and bid for services. Through shared support from a*

*broader group of civil society actors, the hub would broaden the resources and funding available to civil society organisations and their increasingly cash-strapped support agencies by acting as a shop window, a design exchange for service co-creators, personal budgeters and community activists, and a reputable brand that levers in funding and support'* (2010, p.9). Further practical suggestions include the development of local skills exchanges and *'crowdsourcing-type exercises to determine skill sets [which] would include an open source framework web portal for resources exchange to enable commissioners and service users to identify local opportunities, which co-commissioning hubs or local councils could then customise'* (2010, p.9).

Another suggestion from Singh (2010) was that co-production should become more visible and this could be achieved through *'local challenge competitions to co-produce public services and create social capital and grass roots interest, along the lines of NESTA's Big Green Challenge'* (2010, p.10). In order to *'secure the mass local economy that we [would] need to provide cashflow and lever in private funding to underpin work'* (2010, p.13), Singh (2010) advocates the introduction of a Big Society Bank to *'to finance a stronger civil society'* (2010, p.10.) The Big Society Bank would *'give a short-term boost to the social investment marketplace through investing in local financing models, such as evolved City Life bonds for local infrastructure projects or even co-commissioning hubs themselves, which can offer return based upon the public service contracts and grants they bring in'* (2010, p.10).

### **iii. From 'individual' to 'collective' local action to ensure that the contributions of citizens at local level can impact upon local outcomes at a larger scale and in more sustainable organisational structures and processes?**

Bovaird & Loeffler (2008) conducted research within five EU countries to identify and evaluate the levels of individual-level co-production and collective co-production. The research discovered that *'citizens are most willing to make a contribution towards improving public services when it involves them in relatively little effort and when they do not have to work closely with other citizens or professionals in the government'* (2008, p.2). In terms of moving away from individual co-production (passive citizenship), which mostly confers benefits to the co-producer, it was argued that there would need to be active

*‘encouragement given to mechanisms which led to more collective co-production’ (2008, p.3). One of the reasons behind the lack of collective co-production was that its absence could have been less to do with the citizen ‘failing’ but instead ‘not all professionals working in public services were prepared yet to give service users a more active role. Third sector organisations were potentially more likely to share this perspective’ (2008, p.2).*

**Q2. Whose behaviour needs to change – are there particular target groups, who are they, what is the rationale and evidence-base for their selection, how are young people expected to change, how are adults and local institutions expected to change to achieve a more appropriate relationship with young people, how much change is enough, how will change be sustained?**

Whilst not highlighting that children and young people’s behaviours needed to change any more pressingly than other groups of society, the IFG (2010) report that shaping the behaviours of some groups is more politically acceptable than others. For instance, using the example of *‘acceptable behaviour contracts (ABCs)’* (2010, p.67), it was seen as more palatable and acceptable to grant these to children and young people between the ages of 10-17 in order to reduce anti-social behaviour. Despite increasingly being introduced to some adults, the report draws contrast with applying them to specific groups of the adult population: *‘Consider the controversy if ABCs had targeted particular groups of adults: “Single Parent acceptable behaviour contracts”’* (2010, p.67).

		Hypothetical policies			
		Acceptable Behaviour Contracts	“Adult Acceptable Behaviour Contracts”	“Adult Acceptable Eating Contracts”	“Priming for Acceptable Adult Eating”
Dimensions of controversy	Who	Children	Adults	Adults	Adults
	What	Harm to others (anti-social behaviour)	Harm to others (anti-social behaviour)	Benefits to self (healthy eating)	Benefits to self (healthy eating)
	How	Commitment	Commitment	Commitment	Priming

Less controversial
  More controversial

Table 1: Illustrations of Potential Controversy over Targeting Groups (Taken from IFG, 2010, p.68)

As seen in the table above, there are limits to introducing behaviour-changing policies in reference to targeted groups. With children '*[who] are usually seen as not wholly capable of making effective decisions about their own welfare*' (2010, p.64), it is seen as much less controversial to introduce measures to protect others (from children) and protect children themselves, whereas with adults, it is much more controversial to mandate change where behaviour is seen to relate to the self (given that adults reason that they are more capable to make decisions for their own welfare).

University of Birmingham researchers Prior, Farrow & Paris (2006) undertook a study of anti-social behaviour with some anti-social behaviour officers of a local authority. Within this, they noted the use of acceptable-behaviour contracts (as described above) in relation to anti-social behaviour in communities and reported that this first stage of acknowledging a problem with some young people and committing a young person to a, less anti- and more pro-social, behavioural action plan had been vitally important and had worked in most cases:

*'Whilst the ABC process is voluntary, and in itself cannot be legally enforced, officers saw it as a highly effective mechanism for working with young people. As one officer described it (although several others made similar comments), an ABC offers a means of pointing out quite dramatically to a young person what the impact of their behaviour is on others and the potential consequences for themselves; where successful, it provides for intervention at an early stage in what could otherwise become a pattern of behaviour leading to criminality, thus keeping the young person out of the criminal justice system and avoiding the social impacts of longer term offending. It was also noted that the ABC process [was] a good vehicle for inter-agency co-operation, being especially popular with the police.'*

(2006, p.11)

**Q3. What factors make young people feel responsible for themselves, their area, their services and the social fabric of their community and (how) can these attributes be generated?**

Boyle, Slay & Stephens (2010) cite the example of Envision, who cooperate with local schools in London, Leeds and Birmingham *‘to work with young people on environmental, community and social initiatives – not in the traditional volunteering model but with a genuine sense of collaboration and control’* (2010, p.18). The scheme gives young people the opportunity to actually make decisions: *‘they have the opportunity to [...] develop the strategy and direction of the organisation, they, along with others are involved in hiring new staff, making decisions about marketing, designing flyers and delivering workshops’* (2010, p.18). The collaboration is also horizontally organised, ensuring that students are the equal heart of the projects undertaken: *‘Envision staff view their users as equal partners, and are trained to harness the knowledge, energy and enthusiasm of young people and support them in turning their ideas into practical projects which benefit the young people and the local community’* (2010, p.18).

Hill, Russell & Brewis (2009) reported that young people were keen to be active citizens and become involved with volunteering for a range of reasons including *“helping people out”, ‘being a good citizen’, and ‘a good way to get new skills and experience’* (2009, p.4-5). Their own literature review discovered that the *‘majority of 18-24 year olds felt that a society with voluntary workers is a caring society and that voluntary workers offer something that [could not] be provided by professionals. Volunteers were seen as more committed than paid staff, but young people were less likely than other age groups to see volunteers as qualified, competent and professional’* (2009, p.5). The research cited Ellis (2004) who discovered that young people had a range of motivations for becoming involved in volunteering:

*‘Five broad categories of motivation for volunteering have been identified among young people: personal feelings (e.g. satisfaction, feel good), personal needs (e.g. pastime, relationships), altruism, experience (e.g. skills and work prospects) and personal inducements (e.g. qualifications)’*

(Ellis (2004) cited by Hill et al. (2009), p.7)

In terms of routes into volunteering, it was found that most young people preferred direct face-to-face contact or recommendations from family and friends and were most likely to become involved through schools and colleges offering the opportunities to them. However, it was also noted that *'young people have argued that while schools are an important tool for promoting volunteering, volunteering should not be controlled and solely led by the school'* (2009, p.9).

In terms of inducing young people to volunteer through the instrument of financial rewards, the report had evidence to argue that young people did not believe that this was an acceptable route for stimulating interest: *'young people felt strongly that cash should not be offered since it could have a detrimental effect on the motivations of volunteers. However, this may not be the case for all young people and there is a big difference between a financial inducement for getting involved and an on-going financial support arrangement between organisation and volunteer'* (2009, p.11).

Whilst the report covered most aspects of volunteering within the young people's age-group, the research argued that more data was needed on how organisations used volunteers and the outcomes of the projects: *'although the perceptions of young people regarding volunteering have been explored in detail, the attitudes of volunteer-involving organisations remain under researched. In particular there is a lack of information about how organisations involve, support and value young volunteers. More research is also needed into the impact that young volunteers have on these organisations and those who use their services'* (2009, p.26).

The IPPR (2008) published a report approaching the evidence about how to prevent youth crime. Within this work, the IPPR came to a number of conclusions of how to better integrate those young people most likely to become involved in crime into more pro-social behaviour. One of the recommendations was to introduce more extra-curricular activities, more widely and more evenly across the country; *'extra-curricular activities for all young people should be provided in every local area, with funding sources for structured extra-curricular activities consolidated into one fund'* (2008, p.61). In studying the provision of Girl Guide groups and Cadet groups they discovered that provision was patchy in disadvantaged



areas and in places where successful, more advantaged children were atop of the 'waiting lists' to be accepted: *'it is morally wrong that the majority of limited resource currently goes to more advantaged young people'* (2010, p.61).

The IPPR (2008) were also keen to express that these organisations were not necessarily a panacea for discouraging anti-social behaviour and encouraging pro-social behaviour without guidelines and structure for their operation that could give young people activities that were relevant and engaging:

*'...these activities would need to have the characteristics that we know are important in improving emotional and social development in young people. In other words, they need to be purposeful, with opportunities for progression and to take on more responsibility, provide consistency and be regularly attended. The evidence cited within this report is that children develop morally and socially via engagement in democratically structured play and activity, but they also need opportunities to progress, and to understand and engage in purposeful activities that encourage progression. Activities would therefore need to be accredited as fulfilling a minimum number of set criteria'*

(2008, p.61)

A team of researchers at the University of Birmingham, O'Toole, Lister, Marshal, Jones & McDonagh (2003) argue that the ways of measuring political participation amongst young people is flawed in approach and thus makes conclusions relating to a *'moral panics over youth political apathy'* (2003, p.59). For example, surveys often report that *'this generation [of CYP] is an 'apolitical generation' [...] additionally, they claim that young people are increasingly unwilling to participate in social or community activism'* (2003, p.48-49) and CYP tend to *'view citizenship in terms of being the right sort of person, rather than doing anything specific, and are more concerned with rights than duties'* (2003, p.49). However, O'Toole et al. (2003) believe that through the use of, currently under-utilised, qualitative research, children and young people will be more likely found interested and engaged with politics and public services but not within *'[the] narrow definition of politics [usually given to] respondents'* (2003, p.58) in quantitative research. The result of qualitative research

projects suggest that *'young people remain broadly interested in politics, but are disillusioned with, and alienated from, formal politics. This gap between interest and participation needs to be more fully understood. This can be achieved only by investigating: how young people perceive and experience politics [...] such an understanding is clearly crucial for any attempt to re-engage young people in mainstream politics'* (2003, p.59). Particular forms of qualitative research relevant to discovering the political engagement of young people are advocated to be group interviews and individual interviews with the use of images to *'to stimulate discussion of the political'* (2003, p.57) without *'imposing a definition of the political on the respondents'* (2003, p.57).

In further work, O'Toole & Gale (2009) undertook a study of ethnic minority young people's political engagement in Bradford and Birmingham and discovered that CYP from these groups were actively engaged in politics in more distinctive ways than previously thought: *'in terms of a move towards more personal, interpersonal, reflexive, DIY and more informal political action [which] help us to understand the fluid and often ad hoc engagement that many activists had with conventional political organizations and institutions'* (2009, p.141). Children and young people from ethnic minority groups were involved in *'glocal political engagement'* (2009, p.141) where *'young people's reception of a wide range of media and communication sources enabled by new technologies, [...] permitted activists to engage in global issues directly through blogging, e-campaigns and website production'* (2009, p.141).

Sandford, Duncombe & Armour (2008) undertook a study into two privately-funded projects which sought to engage disaffected or disadvantaged young people in physical activities and sports. It was found that both of these projects, run respectively by Sky and HSBC, *'had a positive impact on the behaviour and attendance of large numbers of pupils [at schools], and that engagement in lessons and relationships with both teachers and peers had improved and [could be] sustained'* (2008, p.419). The results were tempered with a conclusion that *'that impacts [were] highly individualised and context-specific in many cases, and that positive impact [was] more likely to be sustained when some or all of the following project features [were] in place: effective matching of pupil needs with the specific project objectives; locating project activities outside of the 'normal' school context; working closely with pupils to choose activities, set targets and review progress; establishing positive*

*relationships between project leaders/supporters (mentors) and pupils; and giving pupils the opportunity to work with and for others'* (2008, p.419). In terms of 'sport' or 'physical activity' itself improving the behaviour and success for disadvantaged or disaffected young people, it was seen that it might not have been the activity but the social impact of association. For example, whilst it was sport and physical activity which defined the projects – *'it was clear that success was not an inherent feature of the activities themselves; rather it was achieved where a series of other factors were in place [...] social interaction and the establishment of positive relationships amongst pupils and between pupils and adults are key factors within this process'* (2008, p.430).

There was evidence that these privately-funded sports projects did deliver some pro-social outcomes and teachers, specifically relating to the Sky-funded project, reported that there was an increased uptake in extracurricular activities and involvement in projects beyond the school as a result of student participation in such a project (2003, Table 7, p.430). The teacher's reported these activities as justifications for reporting *'sustained improvements shown by pupils'* (2008, p.430).

The YJB (2008) took an overarching view of the literature on engaging young people and moving them away from anti-social behaviour and reported on some of the policies and programmes that were run to make young people feel responsible for themselves and their communities. The concept of youth working, in general, is that it is *'preventative and diversionary. By engaging young people in activity that has an informal and moral education agenda, youth work prevents problems emerging by providing young people with a source of support in personal and social development'* (2008, p.41).

Research on the outcomes of various types of activities is present in academic debates but the YJB (2008) report that *'there is little research evidence on the features of practice that engage young people within these interventions. Engagement is not an end in itself; as an analogy, a teacher who engages a class still has to teach them. In order to achieve positive outcomes, young people need to be engaged within interventions, but also across them through holistic programmes for change'* (2008, p.54). However there are examples of how activities such as sport and arts programmes lead to positive behaviour and pro-social

outcomes. For example, in relation to sport, some research has shown very positive impacts: *'there are studies that have highlighted the role of sports and activity interventions as a means by which to engage young people in relationships for change, and therefore we suggest that they are likely to be features of effective multimodal programmes'* (2008, p.37). Equally, arts programmes are also diversionary and can change behaviours: *'the evaluation [of the arts programme] reported reduced incidents of misbehaviour or rule breaking amongst participants during the length of the programme (according to institutional records), as well as reduced recidivism in a six-month follow-up study'* (2010, p.40).

Fundamentally, the YJB (2008) argue that youth work to prevent anti-social behaviour and thus potentially increase pro-social behaviour needed to deal with both elements of 'change': *'there are two identifiable elements to the educative change that youth work aims to support: primary change – changes in attitudes and behaviour [and] consequential change – change that stems from primary changes, for example reengaging with education following changes in attitudes to learning'* (2008, p.41).

#### **Q4. What tools, training and resources do young people need in order to be effective as active citizens?**

Davies (2006) argues that education plays a fundamental role in developing children and young people into active citizens. With specific reference to the government's involvement relating to 'citizenship' education, Davies (2006) argues that *'young people in the UK leave school with an inadequate understanding of their current economic system, and they know even less about the economic alternatives among which they, as citizens, could choose'* (2006, p.22) and thus *'teaching students how to evaluate alternative modes of economic engagement (through the market, government, social organizations, etc.) is the most appropriate basis for the economic elements in citizenship education'* (2006, p.17). Economic education is seen as necessity for creating active citizenship. For example, Davies (2006) posits some reasons why it is necessary that 'economic education' would benefit young people and their future role as active citizens:

*'it would be better for citizens as a whole if those engaged in non-parliamentary political action are reasonably well informed about economic consequences of their actions [...] If citizens find it difficult to identify, let alone understand, economic policies pursued by governments [...], it is hard to see how they can exert meaningful influence [...] and it is reasonable to be concerned about citizens' willingness to support each other financially. An assumption that this willingness will always be absent limits the alternatives that may be debated in society. When compounded by individuals' lack of understanding of how their economic well-being is related to the well-being of others ([...] economic migration), dysfunctional social outcomes are predictable.'*

(2006, p.18-19)

One of the recommendations of Davies (2006) was to suggest that the more economics-focused citizenship education in the UK should be given a similar status to other subjects due to the *'substantial non-private benefits of citizenship education'* (2006, p.27). Given the subject's lack of inclusion in creating league tables and teachers being graded (for career-progression) on other subjects, citizenship education in the UK relies heavily on *'professional motivation of governors and teachers'* (2006, p.27) alone.

An alternative view on education equipping children and young people for active citizenship is provided by Ecclestone & Hayes (2009) who argue that the function of education is becoming increasingly centred around emotional well-being, without a fully understood basis for its inclusion in so much educational discourse and it's *'implications [...] for the aspirations of liberal humanist education'* (2009, p.371). They argue that *'a welfare-oriented remit replaces liberal humanist aspirations with interventions based on humanistic counselling. [...] characterised as 'humanitarian' because supporters aim to redress perceived transgressions of children's rights through, for example, traditional assessment practices that deny children voice and participation, and thereby, their right to well-being'* (2009, p.383). This shift to *'humanitarian learning'* (2009, p.383) supported, in large part, by *'academics in positive psychology departments, education departments and research centres in well-being, private consultancy firms, children's charities and campaigning organisations, local authority psychologists, private therapists and psychologists'* (2009, p.385) who tend to

argue that *'learning a body of worthwhile, inspiring knowledge as a route into a world outside oneself, [...] and perhaps aspiring to excel in those goals, are irrelevant and oppressive'* (2009, p.384). This belief, perpetuated by *'adults fear[ing] that stressed-out, disaffected young people cannot cope with and will not tolerate a traditional subject-based curriculum'* (2009, p.385), leads to *'an unchallenged orthodoxy that children and young people want a personally relevant, 'engaging' education where adults and peers listen and affirm them. This view presents subject disciplines and knowledge as reactionary, irrelevant and oppressive [and] encourages assumptions that topics [...] can only be engaging if they relate directly to the self and its feelings about life and the world'* (2009, p.385).

**Q5. What tools, training and resources do different groups of adults (e.g. teachers, youth services staff, and health and social care staff) need in order to support young people to be effective as active citizens?**

The NEF (2009) developed a co-production self-assessment framework founded on the four principles of effective co-production: *'valuing children and young people as assets, celebrating children and young people's contribution, reciprocal working and growing social networks'* (NEF, 2009, p.8). This framework was established in order that professionals could successfully monitor and evaluate *'the way in which they work on a regular basis'* (NEF, 2009, p.2) to ensure professionals *'put mechanisms in place to encourage children's active participation and engagement in service delivery'* (NEF, 2009, p.2).

The DfES Innovation Unit (2004) produced a report advocating the benefits of personalisation in education and the need to shift some responsibilities from professionals to service users in terms of how children want to learn. As part of this, there was an expectation that the professionals would need to adapt their approaches to working with service-users:

*'Users should not be utterly dependent upon the judgements of professionals; they can question, challenge and deliberate with them. Nor are users mere consumers, choosing between different packages offered to them; they should be more*

*intimately involved in [...] coproducing the service they want. Through participation users have greater voice in shaping the service but this is exercised where it counts, where services are designed and delivered. Service users can only change their role in the service script, however, if professionals alter theirs. Professionals have to become advisers, advocates, solutions assemblers, brokers. The role of professionals in participative services is often not to provide solutions directly, but to help clients find the best way to solve their problems themselves.'* (2004, p.15)

The aim of this personalisation would be to make parents and children more responsible for guiding learning and a reduced responsibility for teaching professionals in '*designing the script:*' (2010, p.16)

*'It is not designed to turn children and parents into consumers of education. The aim is to promote personal development through self-realisation, self-enhancement and self-development. The child/learner should be seen as active, responsible and self motivated: a co-author of the script which determines how education is delivered. [...] [A teacher's] key role would be less about standing at the front 'delivering', and more about working with students to facilitate their learning. Ultimately, teachers will need to help students make the best possible choices – and that will involve new skills such as brokering, advocacy and advice'*  
(2010, p.18).

The IPPR (2008) noted that parents involved in young people's socialisation had a responsibility to provide 'order' to ensure that children and young people engaged in more pro-social activities: '*research consistently shows that the role of the wider community and other adults in socialising young people is vital to their behaviour and well-being*' (2008, p.62). The role that adults and their own networks play in socialising children was also seen to be vitally important:

*'...where adults are willing and able to actively participate in maintaining order and acceptable behaviour in their communities, children's behaviour benefits hugely. Parenting is also improved when local networks of parents can agree*

*on what behaviours are acceptable and researchers believe this to be due to the confidence that individual parents can gain from the support of other adults in the community and the way in which young people then perceive messages from an older generation – as being messages, rather than unreasonable expectations of their own parents.'*

(2008, p.63)

However the report also notes how difficult it would be to legislate and thus control the operations of '*local cultures*' (2008, p.63) in such a way to encourage this to happen more widely.

In Sandford, Armour & Stanton's (2010) study of informal education provided through volunteers (in relation to the privately funded sports projects mentioned above), it was argued that '*non-teacher adults can positively influence young people's learning and development [...] mentors who are interested and enthusiastic are more likely to effect positive outcomes, and significant learning can all occur outside of formal school structures and result from day-to-day interactions/experiences*' (2010, p.148). However 'informal educators' or mentors who are volunteers are currently not used to their full capability at the moment and '*questions remain about how best to optimize the opportunity*' (2010, p.149) to use informal educators to improve outcomes for disaffected young people. For example, '*mentors experience[d] role ambiguity and [had] difficulty negotiating boundaries within mentoring relationships*' (2010, p.148) in relation to the HSBC sports project. The solutions advocated by Sandford et al. (2010) involved:

*'...establishing a defined mentor role, linking mentoring more closely with the practices of informal education, ensuring that mentors are keen and committed to the process, and ensuring there is detailed mentor preparation. Indeed, one of the mentors engaged in the HSBC/OB project became fully committed to the youth mentoring process. He read additional material (on IE and the philosophy of education and mentoring), communicated with school staff, made frequent visits to schools, and organized follow-up activities for pupils. He became convinced of the*



*need for mentors to maintain contact with the young people ("it is all-important") and to retain the momentum generated during the activity weeks.'*  
(2010, p.149)

**Q6. What will the investment in behaviour change (reducing risky behaviour and increasing civic activism) cost? Where will funding come from? How can the value of that investment be assessed e.g. in services not required?**

Pugh, Davies and Adnett (2006) report the differences between the government contracting state-provided education between the 'for-profit' and 'non-for-profit' providers (such as faith schools), giving evidence to support a conclusion for *'the proposition that there is a value-added premium to [not-for-profit] faith schools, [with caution] in interpreting the implications of this finding. Unless there are currently constraints on the emergence of faith schools, we would expect that their expansion would only raise overall performance if there were an increase in the proportion of the population sharing these providers' core values'* (2006, p.30). Their reasoning for more value-added outcomes relating to not-for-profit schools (such as faith schools) was based on the idea that *'in so far as not-for-profit organizations are viewed as 'a source of social capital within a particular locality' (Killerby, 2003, p. 86) we might anticipate additional spillover benefits as outsiders [might] also view the additional outcomes as positive'* (2003, p.30-31). This *pro-social* aspect was, however, tempered with the conclusion that there might be possible long-term consequences of faith-schools, such as divisiveness:

*'...these potential net benefits must be weighed against potential losses arising from the nature of social capital formation in faith schools. Formation of strong-ties social capital stores up two problems for the future. First, human and social capital formation are intimately connected with the formation of power relations in society and the creation of strong-ties creates the risk that the possessors of this capital will either exclude others from power or will themselves be excluded from power in the future. Second, the more schools generate strong-ties social capital, the more that mutual understanding and tolerance in society is likely to be compromised. The risks*

*here in terms of disturbing social cohesiveness, political stability and economic efficiency are potentially very great.'*

(2006, p.31)

**Q7. What are the potential and limits of behaviour change: is it appropriate for some local public services and not others; what kinds of behaviour change work with young people and in which service areas?**

University of Birmingham researchers Goodson, Phillimore, Black, Jones, Lutz, Tice, Williams & Decanantan (2005) undertook a study of new migrant communities in the West Midlands and reported on some of the activities to help young people including; *'the opportunities created by [a] befriending project for unaccompanied [asylum seeking] minors to learn about British culture and behavioural norms through their British counterparts'* (2005, p.112). The BUMP project referred to *'spoke specifically about their desire to do more lobbying work and to roll its service out across the region in order to meet needs of unaccompanied asylum seeking children in other parts of the West Midlands such as Stoke and Coventry'* (2005, p.117).

A study by the 2020 Public Services Trust (2010a) discovered that people were wary but often welcoming of changes to public service provision in relation to *'co-operative ownership and control of services'* (2010a, p.26). Chief amongst the reactions, in a study which incorporated the views of some young people, was that co-operative ownership of services was relevant to some public services but not others:

*'Co-operatives are viewed as most desirable for non-core services and for services where local variation based on an understanding of the community's needs is perceived as important. This includes the children's centre example [provided in focus-group discussion] alongside other local services such as community centres or leisure services. Many express concerns that 'managers' or 'government' do not really understand the specific needs of individuals and communities. Formalising the involvement of workers, users and local people through a co-operative with real decision-making power is seen as a positive step towards ensuring services are*

*delivered with a better understanding of the needs and circumstances of local people. Having said that, other participants feel that frontline workers, users and local people should not be responsible for running services themselves, provided they have an opportunity for their views to be heard and taken into account when decisions are made.'* (2010a, p.26)

In a second report from the 2020 Public Services Trust (2010b), more emphasis was placed on a tighter definition of where behaviour change could happen in tandem with expectations of what the state's role was:

*'Our deliberative research shows that the public want the relationship between public service user and provider to be 'supportive' when it comes to the co-creation of positive outcomes, and that a supportive relationship has three distinct but complementary roles for the state in relation to the citizen. • The state should enable • The state should encourage • And, in circumstances where these actions are not enough to bring about socially desirable behaviours, the state should enforce (but only as a last resort)'* (2010, p.28)

The tighter definition of expectations were laid out in the report as the 'state as enabler' in such a way to enable through information and enable through devolving budgets and responsibility (2010, p.28-29). In terms of enable through the provision of information, the research reported that *'most public service users want to feel informed about and able to influence particular services that they use – an example of them wanting to be enabled to play the role of 'adult'. They want to know how to contact the relevant service provider, how to access accurate information about that provider and want to have a feeling of agency – all of which enable the user to interact more positively with the service'* (2010, p.28). In terms of devolving finance and responsibility, people were more circumspect and gave conditions of when this would be appropriate (given limitations of knowledge and experience):

*'Our qualitative research suggests people have greater enthusiasm for decision-making where they feel confident making the decision in question. Generally this is in*

*situations where they can draw on personal experience, they are thinking about issues which affect them directly, and/or in which they may have a personal interest. In contrast, for decisions outside of this 'comfort zone' there is more 'fear' or uncertainty about the legitimacy of exercising control.'* (2010, p.29)

Kenny (2010) writes that the recent public service consumerist focus has done a certain amount for improving choices for individuals in terms of service provision but has run the risk of *'diverting attention from a recognition of the multiplicity of points where collective agency from below can be exercised and tapped within the system of public services, including on issues of ownership, governance, relationships with practitioners, and campaigns for greater transparency and accountability'* (2010, p.11). Thus the question for Kenny (2010) was whether the focus on 'consumer-citizens' has negatively impacted the civic culture:

*'...the question is whether the actions of self-interested individuals can, in certain conditions, help promote a civic disposition. In contemporary terms, this requires us to consider whether it is possible to connect people's identities as consumers with their capacities as citizens. After two decades of watching the effects and power of consumerism, our answer to this should surely be: "sometimes, yes, but all the time, no".*

(2010, p.12)

Kenny (2010) reports that given the evidence of a reduction in active citizenship in the UK at present, the 'behavioural change' thesis adopted by the incoming government may not be a panacea for redesigning all public services and it is the public perceptions that need to be challenged rather than through 'clever' policy design:

*'The apparent waning of the disposition to commit to civic initiatives is one reason why some politicians have leaped with gusto upon the idea of 'Nudge' propounded by Thaler and Sunstein (2008) and other behavioural economists. Their focus upon the expert manipulation of the environment in which individual choices are made, appeals both because of its apparently realistic tailoring to the culture of*

*instrumentalism, and since it offers politicians technocratic means of evading the complexities and obduracy of public opinion. Interesting and potentially innovative as some of the initiatives it has promoted may be – for instance the new Personal Accounts system for pensions which will make ‘opting in’ the default position – ‘Nudge’ represents a tactical retreat, not a new pathway, from a civic perspective. The contradictory character of public perceptions needs to be engaged and challenged, not bypassed through clever policy design. ‘Nudge’ backs off from the task of re-animating a civic perspective in contemporary culture.’ (2010, p.17)*

In terms of practical policy measures such as increasing the levels of co-production to tap into the *‘subterranean streams of civic endeavour and commitment that flow, often out of sight, through many different communities in Britain’* (2010, p.18), there needs to be an acknowledgement that *‘co-production faces some difficult challenges before it can be regarded as a generalisable approach to public service reform. The inequitable distribution of resources, time and skills within and between communities is a significant obstacle to any approach that rewards or requires greater community involvement’* (2010, p.18).

Some areas noted to be able to benefit are initiatives which involve specific and stepwise goals: *‘we should pay particular attention to those innovations that establish a virtuous circle linking instrumental goals – a reduction in crime in a particular geographical area – and the achievement of civic effects – people on an estate coming to know each other better. A relatively low cost, but highly effective, instance of this kind of circle is the ‘walking bus’ phenomenon, in which parents arrange to share responsibility for walking children in a particular neighbourhood to school’* (2010, p.19).

Kenny’s (2010) overall argument is that there needs to be more focus on establishing (or renewing) a ‘civic culture’ rather than relying on expected behavioural changes and nudging obedience to more pro-social behaviour without consideration of wider challenges: *‘in a context when the deficiencies of the classical liberal approach to citizenship are ever more apparent, those committed to developing public services that are more resilient, democratic and responsive, as well as cost-efficient, need to start fleshing out a civic perspective pertinent for our times. This major enterprise is likely to involve a mixture of tasks, including:*

*the posing of important questions about our motivations and capacities; the articulation of powerful collective aspirations; and the development of a critical yardstick with which to evaluate policy proposals and initiatives’ (2010, p.21)*

**Q8. What might be the theoretical and practical tensions? Is there a tension between ‘nudge’ approaches to local public services and the principles of local democracy and citizenship?**

Kenny (2010) reports that delivering a localist agenda with aspects of nudge theory and elements of encouraging behaviour change should be carefully planned out, as engagement, up till now, has been limited in even the lowest-levels of civic engagement (elections, contact with politicians et al.):

*‘Before wholly endorsing the localist case for civic renewal, however, we should recall the very low rate of participation in local elections, and the impact of the forces of apathy and indifference that are undermining local public life as well as national politics. There are good reasons to think that an emphasis upon ‘the local’ is necessary, but not sufficient, in relation to civic virtue. This is because the contemporary demand for welfare and security, the desire for more opportunities for self-government, and the interest in a renewed sense of reciprocity, are bound to spill beyond the boundaries associated with the locality. These resonant values point instead toward a civically inclined politics that seeks to change the relationship between locality and centre, not to promote the sovereignty of one over the other. The devolution of significant decision-making and budgetary powers, promised by all the main parties [...] is bound to require a robust centre. This will be needed to oversee local authority performance, as well as forms of accountability and redress, and to take the strategic decisions that local government cannot.’*

(2010, p.20)

## Theme Two: Redesigning public service relationships

**Q1. What are the core expectations that young people, as citizens, should have of local government and local public services? What are they prepared to contribute, in terms of involvement time, commitment, and willingness to contribute financial (fees and charges, taxes, etc.)?**

Barnardos (2006) reported that they had changed their procedures relating to how different generations engage with volunteering and mentoring, reflecting the fact that older people *'tended to stay longer'* (2006, p.4) alongside developing *"fixed term" volunteering for young people'* (2006, p.4) who were perhaps less likely to remain and contribute over longer periods.

Boyle, Slay & Stephens (2010) cite the example of RockCorps which seeks to reward young people who donate four hours of their time to volunteering work with free tickets to music concerts. In 2009, this involved *'5,000 young people dedicating over 21,000 hours of time, which benefitted 41 different charities'* (2010, p.11). One of the advantages of this model was seen to be equity as *'all types of people can become contributors, and has involved people from across the socio-economic spectrum. You can only attend a concert if you have dedicated time to a RockCorps project meaning that a reciprocal mechanism supports the entire process'* (2010, p.11).

In terms of contributing time, Hill, Russell & Brewis (2009) report that young people are willing to volunteer, without requiring payment and motivated only by such opportunities to gain new skills, to be altruistic in the community or gain qualifications. Their report notes that *'much research also confirms the transformational benefits of volunteering for young people, with the actual undertaking of voluntary activity exceeding the expectations of those who participated in it. Participation has been recognised by many young volunteers as being enjoyable, boosting self-esteem, increasing the awareness of community and diversity and as having an impact on socio-political views'* (2009, p.14)

**Q2. What kinds of relationships do young citizens want with local public service professionals? Is there a significant group of young people who seek and are prepared to take joint responsibility for the outcomes of local public services? Is there a significant group of young people who will only engage with local public services as a 'last resort', when all other support structures have failed?**

Barnardos Cymru (2005) undertook a study within schools in Swansea (children aged between 6-11) and concluded that children needed to be involved in community initiatives as *'they have a very strong sense of their own community and a detailed knowledge about what happens [...] at a street to street level, but do not seem to participate within it. Children inhabit micro communities [...] and so community initiatives for children need to occur on a street to street level'* (2005, p.33). However children were not engaged with public services in such a way to impact outcomes: *'only 5 children out of 60 knew what the council did'* (2005, p.35) and thus the report argued that *'it was vital that children were supported to come up with their own ideas and opinions rather than being presented with a narrow list of options created by adults'* (2005, p.35). For example, children came up with ideas surrounding local traffic measures, transport, community safety and the provision of play spaces. However, in order for them to want to be involving in decision-making surrounding public services, Barnardos Cymru (2005) stressed that children's ideas needed to be acted upon for them to want to make a difference in the first place: *'If they see no action from their involvement they are unlikely to want to participate in future initiatives. This suggests that fast action is needed when children are consulted and asked to participate in planning initiatives. They are unlikely to want to participate in long term strategies if short term strategies seem to take too long'* (2005, p.35).

The Electoral Commission (2004) report that apathy amongst young people, in relation to public services, is not the main problem relating to young people's lack of engagement with politics and government. For example, the report cites that *'83% of 18-24 year olds say they are very/fairly interested in social issues where they live [...] 68% of 18-24 year olds are interested in local issues [...] the majority of young people are 'keen to play their part in their local communities'* (2004, p.10). However when referring to the lowest-levels of active citizenship *'the story is different when it comes to 'politics' (and voting)'* (2004, p.11). The



problem identified with voting was down to levels of trust in politicians (in general) affecting young people's belief that they could individually influence behaviour: *'politics' is closely identified with politicians, whom almost one in five 16-24 year olds (19%) would not trust at all, and almost one in two (47%) 'not very much' [...] People see politics as something that other people do, or as a system with which they are neither particularly engaged nor enamoured'* (2004, p.12). The report cites some earlier research which concluded to *'challenge the idea, often recorded in the press, that the UK's young people are uninvolved, uncaring and uninterested in society'* (2004, p.13) because it was found, in reference to more active forms of citizenship, that *'young [people] (18-25) were no less engaged in these forms of activities than older people'* (2004, p.13).

Given the lack of engagement in low-level active citizenship exhibited by some young people, the Electoral Commission go on to cite research conducted by the Children and Young People's Unit (2002) on alternative ways of encouraging politicians to communicate with, but more importantly involve young people in political processes and public service provision: *'talk to them in a language they can understand – simple, clear, basic, understandable; talk to them directly, regularly and in their own environments – not just at election times and face-to-face, not through a leaflet; listen and respond to their concerns – 'don't lecture us and don't assume we have no opinions or you know what we think'; respect their diversity – and recognise that there is a need to find new ways of reaching out to groups of young people'* (2004, pg. 15).

### **Q3. How can young citizens be involved in service redesign initiatives? Which mechanisms work well in which circumstances?**

Barnardos (2004) conducted a wide consultation with children and young people on the topics relating to politicians and governments, well-being, safety, opportunities and communities given *'increasing recognition that encouraging the participation of children and young people could: help to provide safe and effective services, assist children in the development of their own citizenship skills and provide valuable insight for policy makers at local, national and UK-wide level'* (2004, p.3). The consultation built on previous smaller studies of the opinions of children and young people and showed a demonstrable interest in

public services from people aged between 6 and 22. Their conclusion evaluated that the keen interest shown in the topics documented that not only did CYP have *'opinions about these things [...] but also have ideas, based on their own experiences, on what works in addressing the things that concern us all'* (2004, p.21).

Boyle, Slay & Stephens (2010) cite examples of young people's co-production activity such as the Learning to Lead programme which *'provides a forum for young people to take a central role in their education and communities, and supports them in identifying what they are passionate about and enables them to use their skills to act upon it'* (2010, p.8). The most important factor about these types of schemes, whether school councils, school community councils or student groups is their *'independence in their activities and management. [...] Students are trusted to plan and manage their activities with a high degree of autonomy'* (2010, p.8). In this manner, participants report that one of the cornerstones of the scheme's success is its efficacy in being able to get things done: *"We don't just have our say and then nothing happens [...] We turn our plans into action"* (2010, p.8).

A team of academics, including Natasha Macnab from the University of Birmingham, isolated some concerns relating to accessing hard-to-reach vulnerable young people who could be reliant on public services in the future. Macnab, Visser & Daniels (2007) argue that there are challenges involved in *'identifying young people aged 14–16 years who were emotionally vulnerable and not in receipt of educational provision'* (2007, p.142). In terms of locating 'who' fits within the categories was a primary challenge, followed by gaining access through 'gatekeepers' who had the power to refuse access to vulnerable young people on the basis of *'further disturbing troubled young people'* (2007, p.144) or education professional's concerns (local authority, in this case) about the *'research compromising the children's service and consequential resource implications to the services that cater for these young people'* (2007, p.144). Also important were challenges relating to consent and 'informed' consent and thus the competence of young people to 'give consent': *'a key factor of a young person's competence relates to when and whether children become sufficiently 'aware' to be able to give their consent freely and autonomously'* (2007, p.145). Overall the researchers concluded that there were a number of substantial and serious challenges

which prevented research or receiving information from vulnerable young people aged between 14 and 16. In their summary, they present the key problems:

*'...data on those who were emotionally vulnerable and missing were not obtainable, not only partly because of the imprecise definition of 'emotionally vulnerable' and unreliable statistics and information, but also mainly because of the ethical issues arising in gaining access from the gatekeepers. The ethical complications involved in trying to research this area had far-reaching consequences: in the short term the research team were unable to complete the aims of the study. In the long term there may be consequences for representing the views of these young people. The process of approaching gatekeepers is not always a straightforward venture; it can be a convoluted task that demands persistence and tenacity. The study was thwarted on a number of occasions by gatekeepers restricting access to much needed information'* (2007, p.146).

The LGA & NYA (2008) provide evidence of young people being involved with local public services through the scrutiny of decisions made by local authorities. For example, in Norfolk there is a youth scrutiny panel which looks at the decisions made by the county, but is also involved in some pre-scrutiny of decisions relating to young people:

*'The Norfolk Youth Scrutiny Panel is run by the Active Citizenship Team. [it] consists of 20 core members representative of the county, including members from Connexions Youth Council, Norfolk Youth Parliament, and others including the 'In Care Council'. Strongly supported by Norfolk County Council, the panel is designed to scrutinise the decisions of the county council and is young people led, with support from youth workers. It intends to focus on scrutinising youth service budgets and positive activities for young people. [...] The panel has highlighted transport and improvements in Sex and Relationships Education as important issues for young people. Consequently the panel is working with the council to produce young people friendly SRE guidance, and examining the possibility of subsidising public transport'* (2008, p.15)

In another example at Redbridge a similar 'youth panel' scheme was in operation with a more diverse membership, which instead focused on promoting pro-social behaviour through some incentivisation of providing qualifications (through training) which resulted in a project which raised money for charities:

*'In Redbridge, 31 young people currently make up the Youth Opportunity Fund panel, which includes young people from LGBT groups, gypsies and traveller communities, Eastern European communities, young parents and carers, and those not in education, employment or training. Panel members intend [...] to increase this number to 60 [...] All panel members receive ten hours of training over three nights, covering budget management, needs analysis, monitoring, inspection, evaluation and recording outcomes. [...] Using a £5,000 YOF grant, ten groups of young people, representing the whole borough, organised a theatre production. Three hundred tickets were sold [...] and all money raised was donated to charity. All the young people involved received AQA accreditation in live performance skills.'*

(2008, p.15)

In terms of allocating individual budgets to young people to spend on public services for children and young people, the research conducted by LGA & NYA (2008) reported that ten councils out of a sample of thirty-three authorities used specific funds and allocated resources directly to CYP for decision-making in the local community. Within the first six authorities:

*'...young people were reported to control a total of £120,000. This consisted of grants to YouthBanks of £50,000 and £10,000 in two authorities, £25,000 allocated to a young mayor programme, and budgets of £20,000, £10,000 and £5,000 managed by youth councils or similar bodies. A further four authorities reported that young people exercised choice over a total of £517,500.'*

(2008, p.14)

Whilst some authorities restricted children and young people's decision-making around certain areas, it was reported by LGA & NYA (2008) that one authority out of their sample

involved CYP in decisions surrounding neighbourhood regeneration; where children and young people had an opportunity to decide what projects should be chosen in their area:

*'Newcastle-upon-Tyne is the only local authority in the national Participatory Budgeting pilot programme to have a specific focus on children and young people. Supported by the city's Investing in Children coordinator, U Decide has been used to identify ways children and young people can be involved in decisions on mainstream funding. Through schools and community projects, over 3,000 young people - five per cent of the city population – voted on priorities for the process in the [...] financial year. Over 300 children and young people attended events to see different ideas presented and vote for the best ideas or projects, which then receive funding to go ahead. Projects proposed [were] checked prior to the event to ensure they [could] be supported by the authority. Children and young people are involved in organising the events as well as taking part in them.'*

(2010, p.21)

LGA & NYA (2008) reported that the inclusion of CYP in decision-making surrounding regeneration had been a success and CYP *'feedback [had] been uniformly positive, and the process [had] provided evidence that young people [made] good decisions when given responsibilities for funding on issues that affect them'* (2010, p.22).

**Q4. What are the implications of new public service relationships for public service professionals? What kind of training do they need, what roles do they play? What support do they need to develop new/different relationships with citizens?**

Boyle, Slay and Stephens (2010) argue that a major problem in introducing new public service relationships is that traditional top-down relationships have depended on *'strictly defined job descriptions that inhibit engagement with activities outside the normal professional remit'* (2010, p.32). However, examples cited by Boyle et al. (2010) in a GP surgery shows that regular clinicians were willing to go beyond their roles and remit to provide more engagement: *'The doctors at Paxton Green have adapted their attitudes to patients and their behaviour [...] in ways that might be seen by others as community*

*development work or social care'* (2010, p.32). Another more significant, problem identified was that the sharing of responsibility between public service professionals and the public in a climate of *'a growing culture of safeguarding, blame and risk aversion'* (2010, p.32) was dangerous because of a fear *'that ordinary members of the public couldn't be trusted to make sensible decisions and that it was therefore too risky to share responsibility with them'* (2010, p.32).

**Q5. Will the reductions in public spending, the changes to local public service provision and the increased focus on 'self-help' generate a 'new kind of volunteer'? What are the implications of this for third sector organisations – how will it affect how they are organised, recruit and train, reward and retain volunteers?**

The personalisation agenda, given the advent of personal budgets and user-control over expenditure, for people using mental health services, those with learning disabilities and the physically disabled, will have a pronounced impact on third sector organisations according to a University of Birmingham report by Dickinson & Glasby (2010). Evidence sourced by Dickinson & Glasby (2010) showed that demand for third-sector provision, in terms of residential care, could drop as a result of the personalisation agenda: *'[research] found that of 30 people with learning disabilities [...] ten were in residential care at the start of the process and all moved out of this setting. Nine of these went into their own homes and one returned to their family. The use of day care also fell from around 4.5 days per person per week on average to 3.5. There was a significant increase in the number of people who employed personal assistants, from eight before the introduction of personal budgets to 22 after'* (2010, p.15). Furthermore, other research found that *'those in receipt of an individual budget still demanded traditional 'mainstream' services, but a large number also spent their budget (or part of it) in very different ways on things like arts materials, skip hire, photography classes, and driving lessons'* (2010, p.15).

In terms of financing, Dickinson & Glasby (2010) report that the move from collective purchasing to micro-commissioning will affect how third-sector organisations operate: *'the shift from block to spot purchasing might pose some difficulties to those third sector providers who rely on wholesale contracts with local statutory bodies. This does not mean*

*necessarily that these providers will lose service users, but that they will have to contract in different ways'* (2010, p.17). Because of individual provision of services, another problem highlighted was that of non-payment: *'[non-payment] would be inevitable and so would need to be factored into overall costs of services'* (2010, p.18).

Relating to an administrative burden for third-sector organisations, Dickinson & Glasby (2010) report that there could be an increased need for back office support given the increase in individualised services: *'there might be an increase in transaction costs as providers are required to invoice micro-commissioners or local authorities on an individual basis'* (2010, p.19). A more fundamental loss might occur relating to the workforce of third-sector organisations as research had shown that *'as a significant proportion of individuals have chosen to employ a personal assistant rather than accessing more traditional services [...] this potentially poses a problem to third-sector providers as they might lose existing staff members'* (2010, p.19). Dickinson & Glasby (2010) argue that *'personalisation might mean that individuals seek to make all the efficiency savings that they can, so rather than go through individual service providers or agencies which have their associated overheads, they might choose to employ individuals directly'* (2010, p.19).

Dickinson & Glasby (2010) also argue that third-sector organisations might to consider marketing more strongly, as the increase in individualised choice means less guaranteed income: *'it will likely no longer be sufficient simply to be on the preferred supplier list of the local authority to ensure that providers are able to maintain a level of business [...] providers will need to go beyond this and seek new forms of marketing'* (2010, p.20). The report also argues that given the intended absence of local authorities as budget holders for service provision, the relationships between third-sector organisations and local authorities may cease to be as strong, given the lack interaction between the two (2010, p.20). More significant as a long-term consideration would be the problem of competition between third-sector providers: *'given that there will likely be greater competition between providers will this make them less likely to share innovative practices with other providers?'* (2010, p.20).

The University of Birmingham Institute of Local Government Studies (INLOGOV) working with the LGIU (2008) undertook a study in seventeen local authorities to look at the role of commissioning young people's activities. It was found that a number of local authorities engaged with young people in the process of commissioning in the following ways: *'In planning and making decisions about commissioning and service procurement, in stimulating the demand side of the market by being enabled to make informed choices to access services [and] In monitoring and evaluating the quality and outcomes of service provision.'* (2008, p.3). Whilst authorities acknowledged that they need to do more in order to involve young people in commissioning before they could say *'they [were] involving young people sufficiently in designing their commissioning processes'* (2008, p.3), the report recognised that the authorities at least had tried a *'variety of imaginative ways [for] young people [to] influence commissioning decisions'* (2008, p.3). Some children and young people were also wary of how much decision-making they actually took part in, relating to outcomes that they desired, with some research indicating that *'some young people drew attention to limitations in their decision making roles, from not being involved in setting up the commissioning model to questioning whether senior staff and councillors took their views seriously in practice'* (2008, p.3). However, most CYP were 'determined' to make it work.

**Q6. What evidence is there on the likely costs of local public services which embody greater engagement with young people?**

Research conducted by HSMC at the University of Birmingham (HSMC 2010) has advocated a more personalised pathway for disabled children and their families and moving them from being *'passive recipients of support'* (HSMC 2010, p.5) towards being *'micro-commissioners of their own support [and] towards a more citizenship-based approach'* (HSMC 2010, p.6). The move towards *'family leadership, a curriculum for citizenship, co-ordinated expert support and integrated individual budgets'* (HSMC 2010, p.50-52) that no public sector organisation has tried before would also be financially viable given that *'it will cost the system no more, it will make better use of existing resources and it may even reduce some costs (particularly the demand for expensive residential schools)'* (HSMC 2010, p.54). This personalisation approach was argued to be more efficient since it allowed *'entitlements and*



*administrative systems to be streamlined and simplified, and professional expertise [would] be better focused'* (HSMC 2010, p.53).

The NYA (2010) believes that the new agenda for public service provision along with the financial climate shouldn't necessarily mean that youth services and youth working will become too expensive to manage and the NYA (2010) made a series of suggestions of how to improve the effectiveness and efficiency of the sector. For example: *'by separating the universal activity based offer to young people and supporting communities to deliver this to their young people it will be possible to target the time and skills of professional staff to the young people who need it most. Targeted support can be provided via the non-statutory sector in a more efficient and effective way, although the sector may require support for its non-front line services, such as back office, data collection, workforce development and contract business support systems in a joined up way across providers to maximise efficiencies'* (2010, p.7). The paper also argued that money should be diverted away from capital projects or building-related expenses in order for *'more targeted and detached work [in] engaging with young people in their own environment. [...] One solution may be to explore supporting communities and young people themselves to take on buildings as social enterprises using their capital value to raise revenue, and seeking support in managing and developing them effectively with the support and expertise of local business'* (2010, p.7).

It is also possible to improve youth services without the need for substantial additional financial resources and, instead, engaging with young people themselves can result in better outcomes: *'engaging young people themselves in making realistic decisions about the priorities for local service delivery is key. [...] all provision is improved if decision-makers involve young people in the decision making process. Ofsted research found that the highest performing youth services had prioritised involving young people in decision-making, planning and evaluating services'* (2010, p.7).

**Q7. How can new service relationships and organisations be funded? What is the role of the private sector through CSR? What are the implications of these funding patterns for local government?**

Flatters and Willmott (2009) report that there is likely to be severe cost pressures between today and 2020, likely brought on by, in part, by increasing citizen expectations of public services: *'standards of service that were deemed acceptable 10 years ago are no longer good enough. There is no reason to assume that this trend of rising expectations will change'* (2009, p.40). They give examples of changes in demographics to illustrate how the changing population will need to be reflected in ever-adapting service provision: *'there is likely to be significant growth in the number of young children in the population by 2020 and this will place additional pressure on the education budget'* (2009, p.42).

More generally for local government, the report gives three examples of areas of service provision which are likely to require increased resources as time progresses: health, child poverty and social care. In terms of health, the increasing number of older people will impact the levels of service provision required: *'Three out of every five people aged over 60 in England currently suffer from a long-term condition, and as the population ages, this proportion is likely to rise. [It is] estimated that the UK economy stands to lose £16 billion over the next 10 years through premature deaths due to heart disease, stroke and diabetes'* (2009, p.43). However, the overall cost of public health problems could be tackled in the future through active policy action now: *'policy-prompted behavioural change could precipitate massive public benefit and also long-term savings on primary, secondary and tertiary care'* (2010, p.44). In terms of child poverty, whilst a number of children have been brought out of poverty since 1998, the requirements to maintain this are difficult: *'without any new policies this trend will reverse leaving 3.1million children in poverty by 2020'* (2009, p.43). In terms of social care provision, beyond the demographic changes, the results of a recent review of service provision, if implemented, would increase the costs to the taxpayer of the next two decades: *'If the [Wanless] Review's recommendation of a partnership model was implemented (guaranteeing a minimum level of care in a universal system, and requiring some form of contribution from users), this would be more expensive than the*

*current means-tested system of social care (up to 2% of GDP by 2026, approximately £29 billion) (2010, p.43).*

**Q8. How can public service commissioners and providers (in all sectors) best manage the risks involved in giving greater roles to young people in designing and running their own local public services?**

Cumming et al. (2009) argue that outcome-based commissioning is the way forward for public service provision, in order to mitigate the possibility of risks and improve the end-result for all users and producers of services. The application of the idea involves *'transferring responsibility for the achievement of outcome goals to a delivery agency, whether public, private or voluntary, and holding this agent firmly to account for these outcomes'* (2009, p.12). The importance of outcome-based commissioning in the present fiscal climate was highlighted by the report, the authors argue that *'outcome commissioning ensures that providers pursue the outcomes that are important to users rather than [...] outputs that may not ultimately lead to outcomes [...] [it] creates powerful incentives so that the most important goal of providers is to deliver the outcomes specified by commissioners [...] and by paying for outcomes rather than prescribing processes, commissioners give providers flexibility to use the inputs that work best, the incentive to innovate to improve quality and value for money and the scope to personalise services for individual users to improve the service experience and use resources more effectively'* (2010, p.28).

### Theme Three: Reproducing success and mitigating failure

#### **Q1. How are 'success' and 'failure' within service delivery perceived and identified, and how might multiple views be accommodated?**

Boyle, Slay & Stephens (2010) argue that co-production of services is effectively held back by the lack of quantifiable success that can be taken from schemes: *'funders and commissioners [...] tend to look for specific objectives and pre-determined outputs generated from a narrow range of anticipated activities and evidenced by limited indicators of success'* (2010, p.28). Whereas the focus of the measurement of success should be approached very differently from the start about what co-production projects are actually meant to achieve: *'commissioning routinely focuses on what people can't do, and what types of services are required to meet a need, instead of working with people to build on their existing capabilities and develop solutions – beyond conventional 'services' – that enable individuals to gain the support they want'* (2010, p.29).

Boyle et al. (2010) further argue that projects involving co-production are not necessarily able to be rated according to some tangible dimensions of success because of the complex nature of their roles: *'many examples [of] co-production can have a preventative effect. Capturing and accounting for this is challenging, particularly when the benefits may be experienced by a number of different stakeholders'* (2010, p.30).

#### **Q2. What evidence is there of the impact of self-help and self-organising activities in contributing to the improvement of outcomes for young people in local areas?**

The NEF (2009) cite two case studies where there was evidence of self-organised activities resulting in improving outcomes for young people in specific geographic areas. On a housing estate in Glyncoch there was a time-banking project for youth founded on the principle that *'every hour that participants gave to the youth group and the wider community, they earned a onetime credit. These credits were used [for] youth trips and [...] activities'* (NEF, 2009, p.4). The results of the project included a number of schemes including *'environmental projects, peer-learning projects (e.g., sexual health sessions), the development of an arson*

*DVD [...] and supporting community groups'* (NEF, 2009, p.4). The further case study was reported in a school-setting in Somerset where students were organised together to generate ideas into how the school could improve. The outcomes focused on student's abilities to lead: *'team working, agenda planning, goal setting, budgeting, the distinction between governance, management and action, and the meaning of accountability, transparency, and responsibility'* (NEF, 2009, p.4).

**Q3. Is there any evidence of the impact of third sector service provision in terms of VfM, quality of provision, equality of access and user experience? How could that evidence be collected? How would it be used by decision makers and service planners? What evidence is there on how this impact compares with impacts of similar initiatives in public or private sectors?**

The Foyer Federation (2010), an organisation which *'develops and encourages new approaches to supporting young people at risk as they make their transition to adulthood'* (2010, p.33), reports that the *"Big Society" agenda presents a real opportunity to empower VCS organisations to deliver work-readiness programmes and employability schemes'* (2010, p.10) given the high level of NEETS in the UK. The report argues that the organisation's *'Working Assets programme' is a good example of this but there are several similar schemes being offered elsewhere'* (2010, p.38). The Working Assets programme is *'designed to examine employability issues faced by young people'* (2010, p.35) in order *'to adopt a new response to young people's experience of disadvantage'* (2010, p.35). The organisation does this in the following way:

*'...the underlying premise of the programme is the idea of an aspirational 'deal' between young people and their communities: young people must express the way in which they can find an employable role in their community; the community must enable access for young people to contribute their talents, efforts and energies.'*  
(2010, p.35)

The first Working Assets project was conducted with the Axiom Housing Association in Peterborough and involved the following:

*'...a 'Dragon's Den'-style selection process in which young people were invited to pitch to a panel their ideas for projects that they believed could help improve their local communities. Young people were encouraged to draw upon their own experiences and to identify ideas that would impact upon the skills, resources and opportunities available to them. [...] Peterborough Foyer's community garden project was chosen as the pilot. Following the selection, a project team was chosen and Foyer residents were invited to help put together an action plan. The project was overseen by a support worker [...] to help empower young people participating in the project. Team building and mentoring sessions were then introduced to help Foyer residents build their confidence and sustain their levels of motivation. The Foyer Federation worked with staff at Peterborough Foyer, developing the support and training services that the Foyer offers so as to ensure that residents on the project had the requisite documentation, knowledge and job searching skills needed to prepare for future employment. The young people participating in the pilot were asked to keep a pilot diary – reflecting on their own learning and skills development. A work-readiness template was then developed in collaboration with residents involved in the project and a training session was undertaken to enable the Foyer to incorporate a positive, asset-building (an asset training model was designed and developed by the Foyer Federation) focus into its work and services.'*

(2010, p.36)

The Foyer Federation (2010) recommends that the future agenda provides an ideal opportunity for voluntary and third-sector bodies to contribute their expertise, specialist skills and focus to help boost the outcomes for young people. To do this, the organisation recommends that *'the new Government should ensure that VCS organisations have the upfront financial resources they need to develop, improve, provide and replicate such services [and] allowing accredited organisations better access to funding streams such as those provided by the Big Society Bank would be fundamental to achieving this aim* (2010, p.38). Specific non-financial recommendations included possible 'actions' such as when young people come into contact with state support services and are lacking in *'basic capabilities and life skills'* (2010, p.38), the state should make these young people undertake

a 'basic 'capabilities test', in which they are assessed for social and work-readiness skills. Those young people who are found to be lacking such skills should be fast-tracked to specialist service providers like Foyers, so that they may benefit from work-readiness programmes and employability schemes like the Working Assets programme' (2010, p.38). Whilst third-sector providers acknowledge that they are best placed for this work, the private sector can offer practical work experiences but with pre-requisites of important third-sector support: 'in order that young people are ready to benefit from work experience opportunities, more needs to be done to improve their skills and capabilities (2010, p.38).

Macmillan (2010) of the TSRC argues that there is a wealth of evidence from staff of TSOs in academic and practitioner research but less empirical evidence from actual service users, volunteers and trustees of these organisations, thus, '*far less research attention has been given to the nature of the services commissioned, whether new commissioning processes are leading to service improvement, and fundamentally what difference services make*' (2010, p.25-26). Macmillan's (2010) own research indicates that there is a '*need for a more differentiated research agenda, involving comparisons between different parts of the third sector, operating across different geographies and between different policy or service fields*' (2010, p.26).

Macmillan (2010) highlights five key areas where research has not, so far, focused upon, relating to TSO organisations and the outcomes that they contribute to. For example the changing agenda of public service provision '*commissioning models, personalisation and co-production – how different approaches to commissioning (in different service areas, such as health, employment services and services for children and young people, or across different geographical areas and scales) are impacting on TSOs and the services they provide* (2010, p.26). Furthermore there is a need to assess the relationships built between TSOs to identify patterns of inter-organisation operation: '*further research is needed into the various drivers, obstacles and resistances involved in enhancing collaborative inter-organisational working. This would include comparative study of the extent and manner in which policy-makers in different fields and organisations encourage collaboration, partnership and reconfigured services*' (2010, p.26).

More general concerns were highlighted around whether locality matters for TSOs; *'whether the 'proximity' of local service providers (understood here as closeness to users, local knowledge, and a sense of local ownership or affiliation) really matters in service delivery, compared with issues around scale, capacity and efficiency'* (2010, p.27). The final two concerns about a lack of research incorporated *'whether delivering public services under contract serves strengthen[ed] the longer term sustainability and resilience of TSOs'* (2010, p.27) and *'whether and how prized aspects of third sector work, including mission, independence and influence, are enhanced or compromised by TSO involvement in public service delivery'* (2010, p.28).

Similarly, Westall (2009) proposes that there needs to be much more research into the concept of 'value' of TSOs in less economic terms and more to do with the provision of 'full value' instead of 'added value' given the *'current technocratic and narrow understandings of 'value' in relation to the third sector'* (2010, p.11). Thus there is a need to *'investigate all the dimensions of 'values' created, embodied, and core to mission and beliefs'* (2009, p.11) in third sector organisations.

#### **Q4. How can evidence of success be disseminated effectively? What are effective learning mechanisms and how can they be used?**

The IPPR (2006) produced a report on outcomes and activities of children and young people which concluded that more needed to be done by government to improve life chances and give greater opportunities for young people in the future. As part of this, one of their recommendations sets involved guidelines to government to improve dissemination of best practice in relation to volunteering, active citizenship and third-sector involvement as a counter to *'young people who do not have access to the factors that develop their non-cognitive abilities [...] and spend more time with deviant peers or under the unmediated influence of the media [...] while their better socialised peers will increasingly succeed'* (2006, p.11)

*'The DfES should provide an annual report for head teachers of best voluntary sector practice in each area. DfES should map the provision of local services provide through*



*the voluntary sector, which would also enable policymakers to identify gaps in provision. A National Innovation Start-up Fund should be set up to support the development of charities that work to develop young people's personal and social skills as well as those that intervene in schools to set up conflict resolution schemes DfES should offer to match funding for schools that have employed intervention schemes that have been evaluated to set criteria.'*

(2006, p.14)

**Q5. What is the evidence on scaling up successful local projects? In what circumstances can we transfer 'what works' from one place to another and when is adaption required?**

Boyle, Slay and Stephens (2010) argue that scaling up local co-production projects is inherently difficult because of the nature of some schemes being very personalised or localised to particular groups, areas or people. Thus it is argued that *'exact replication or duplication of a model can lead to failure. It is not possible for co-produced services to be blue-printed and exported to other areas. [Projects] are a product of the particular assets and resources that are found among the people and places directly involved'* (2010, p.32). However that is not to say that nationwide replication of local co-production projects have not been successful. For example, the Envision and 'Learning to Lead' projects (referred to previously) were tailored to the requirements of individual locations whilst retaining *'key ingredients [...], the overall structure and principles remain the same, but the individual activities and processes are often completely different. This local shaping of activity develops a vital local ownership which seems important to successful co-production'* (2010, p.31). Boyle et al. (2010) cite the example of Barack Obama's family nurse partnerships which are to be rolled out nationwide and *'will require strict adherence to the principles which have made it so successful as a local model, such as the guideline that nurses do not work with more than 25 families at one time, and the focus on building each family's individual capabilities'* (2010, p.31-32). In summary, Boyle et al. (2010) conclude that co-production projects to be scaled up require *'a need to clarify their own 'theory of change' and the key ingredients that make their approaches work'* (2010, p.32).

Little (2010) writing for DEMOS, argues that there is a difficulty of getting ‘evidence-based programmes,’ relating to children and young people, into the ‘systems’ of central / local government: *‘we now have decades of research demonstrating very impressive results for a wide variety of interventions in multiple fields. There are no magic bullets; none of these interventions works for everyone, and when they do work they most often produce moderate rather than transformative change. But we now have a solid and growing evidence base for what to do about many serious problems. We don’t use it. We know that our public systems aren’t producing the results we want; we know that there are tools that could lead to better results; why aren’t those tools taken up by systems?’* (2010, p.9). At times there is evidence of successful scaling up of evidence-based programmes relating to children’s public service provision, but these are few and far between: *‘the emergence of Headstart in the USA and children’s centres, formerly Sure Start Local Partnerships, in the UK are good examples from recent history [These] are now fully integrated into children’s services and there is reasonable if mixed evidence that they contribute to child wellbeing’* (2010, p.52). However, there are concerns that evidence-based programmes may not be suited to large-scale roll-outs, due to their successes being based on purely local action: *‘we may find that most of these products cannot be taken to scale. Maybe the extent of adaptations to make them viable within children’s services systems will eliminate their effectiveness? Perhaps they will all be absorbed into professional training? Or possibly it will be found that some of the system reform efforts [...] will lead to much more widespread improvements in the well-being of children than can be achieved via evidence based programmes?’* (2010, p.56).

Rasul & Mohnen (2010) argue that there needs to be a ‘gold standard’ of empirical testing for introducing policies based on changing behaviour of service-users. There should be a similar pattern followed (experiments followed by a pilot showing empirical evidence of possible success) in order to ensure that projects could be scaled up when required:

*‘[There should be a requirement that] interventions [should] be designed [to] have in-built methods of evaluation. The gold standard would be to design and implement policies using field experiments in which slightly different policies are randomly assigned to otherwise similar groups of individuals. Such an approach can identify the causal impact of the policy and potentially the underlying mechanisms*

*behind why it did or did not succeed. The establishment of such a credible evidence base is essential to ensuring the public understand the consequences of behavioural change interventions, and that policy makers learn from interventions. [...] In some cases, this evidence base from a field experiment might best be implemented through a pilot study. The results of the intervention can then be used to predict what would occur if the policy were to be scaled-up. The empirical methods needed to accurately predict what would occur if the policy were to be scaled-up need to be able to take account of two important differences between politic studies and nationwide or larger scale interventions.'* (2010, p.516)

**Q6. What is meant by 'market failure' and 'government failure'? Is there a risk that the 'Big Society' will lead to 'localist failure'? Is there a need for 'safety net' planning?**

The shift towards the use of 'nudge theory' as a mechanism for behaviour modification '*on the grounds that it has greater legitimacy than coercive regulation, and also that it is a more effective instrument for changing people's behaviour*' (Horton 2009, p.296) is considered by Horton (2009) to be equally, if not more so, likely to result in policy failure because of the probable tendency of 'government failure.' For example, if government has failed with coercive regulations to amend behaviour, how sure can a government be of success if shifting the burden of responsibility onto individual, local action:

*'...they say they favour nudges over commands because of government fallibility: for government, the risks of mistake, bias and overreaching are real and sometimes serious. However if nudging is more potent than regulatory alternatives, then presumably government fallibility makes the use of nudging more dangerous rather than less.'* (Horton 2009, p.297)

It thus follows that government, in trying to ensure there is less top-down control of actions through legislation, there could be a clear increased risk of individual failure as a result of government negligence to regulate behaviour. Furthermore, there is also an added layer of bureaucracy in the need for regulating service providers through '*secondary legislation*' (2009, p.297). For example '*if government fallibility is a reason for preferring nudges to*

*regulations, why assume the results of government regulating nudgers [service providers / businesses] would be any more successful than attempts to regulate consumers directly?’* (2009, p.297). Horton (2009) argues that Thaler and Sunstein’s (2008) conception of the nudge-the-nudgers ‘safety net’ to prevent *‘adverse outcomes that may arise from an individual’s own voluntary actions’* (2009, p.297) is *‘still a pyramid with benign government sitting at the top’* (2009, p.297) which does not fit with their *‘deregulatory rhetoric’* (2009, p.297) and through the acknowledgment of fallibility, makes failure a surely more likely scenario.

John, Smith & Stoker (2009) argue that nudge needs to shift from the *‘individualising focus stemming from its support in behavioural economics and psychology’* (2009, p.369) in order to pay more *‘attention to the way that collective and institutional settings help determine the success or failure of a nudge’* (2009, p.369). As a result of the individualist focus, nudging may fail to take heed of other factors; *‘a nudge to encourage recycling in a stable, well-to-do neighbourhood might not work so well in a mobile or disadvantaged community’* (2009, p.369). Furthermore, nudging citizens does not address *‘the fundamental problems and as such [...] arguably generates fairly modest outcomes’* (2009, p.368). Nudge theory relies on assumptions that *‘individuals are fixed in their preferences and in the way they make decisions’* (2009, p.366) without educating citizens of the reasons for their actions, which have been deliberately manipulated by *‘paternalistic experts, steering citizens down paths’* (2009, p.366), and as such, nudge may often require perpetuation to deliver the same results over time: *‘the state needs to get the messages right and provide low-level incentives and costs to promote the right kind of behaviour; although it may require frequent and repeated application to be effective’* (2009, p.367).

Wilby (2010) argues that the types of paternal libertarianism engendered in nudge theory and the shift from government regulation to self-regulation places responsibility for action squarely on individuals without giving credence to how contexts and application may impact outcomes and thus leaves open the possibility of abject failure in various instances, due to a lack of significance placed on underlying problems:

*'It discusses not the merits of privatising social security, but the best way of doing it. It considers why Americans aren't saving more for their retirement, without mentioning that, for the majority, real wages haven't risen in a decade. The premise is that if people act against their own best interest – by using drugs, eating junk, failing to save or taking out loans they can't repay – it is because of their individual behavioural flaws, not because of poverty, inequality or lack of hope.'*

(Wilby 2010)

**Q7. What evidence is there of failure of self-help and self-organising initiatives in communities and neighbourhoods in relation to specific services and in relation to specific groups?**

Boyle, Slay & Stephens (2010) cited an example of Scallywags, a self-organised initiative for childcare in London, which faced constant regulatory pressure to conform to standards: *'It seems to involve ordinary parents to an extent that some officials might believe is dangerous. Are the children safe? Are the parents sufficiently professional to be able to challenge children and educate them?'* (2010, p.11). In the end, after closure and conforming to regulations, the initiative was able to continue but posed wider and important questions such as *'will it put so much pressure on reciprocal models of co-production to conform that it eventually drives them out?'* (2010, p.11). This was not only an issue for the childcare initiative itself but also relating to the food provision: *'concerns about safety mean that preprepared meals provided in bulk are seen to be preferable to parents actively contributing the foods that are homemade'* (2010, p.29). Thus regulatory challenges in relation to the very young needed to be overcome or managed through compromise, as was the case with the Scallywags initiative.

**Q8. How can we learn from 'failures' of third sector service delivery, including organisational closure, financial problems, contractual default, mission drift, and so on?**

Scott (2010), as part of a TSRC project, undertook a case study of a failing third sector organisation to develop a framework of how to measure failure in third-sector organisations. The research was well placed as a 'black box' exercise (2010, pg.1) because

the failed TSO's *'life and death had become more available for post mortems because of the twin coincidence of two pre-crash research exercises and continued (if limited) contact with a reasonably well-placed survivor'* (2010, p.19) The case study research, focused around 'EA' in 'Steeltown,' argued that one of the first lessons from failure of a TSO was that *'a greater degree of realism, was surely the lesson, in assessing the financial sustainability of agencies such as EA'* (2010, p.17). The need was also stressed for *'greater attention [...] paid to the potential 'warning signs', before any crisis is reached. [...] [Using an] aeronautical metaphor, it is not so much about brief displays with oxygen masks and inflatable life-jackets and more about the training, de-briefing and re-training of pilots and cabin crew before any crash occurs'* (2010, p.18). One of the problems inherent with third-sector organisations is what Scott (2010) refers to as the 'Double Halo effect' of assessing organisational competence: *'In the first instance policy elites, both in government and the third sector, have prioritised the use of positive pictures of voluntary and community activities. When instances of unwitting incompetence, deliberate malpractice or just plain 'bad luck' arise, these are often explained via references to individual and exceptional behaviour rather than in relation to systemic and recurrent influences'* (2010, p.3). This preconception about third-sector organisations *'can be distracting [...] because they take too complacent or too crisis-oriented a view'* (2010, p.18).

Recommendations based on what can be learnt from the case study include more disclosure from third sector organisations: *'smaller organisations such as EA could operate more informally with non-managerial consultants/mentors, who could facilitate at least partial disclosure. The problem for researchers is they need to get close enough for long enough to build at least partial or fragmentary trust'* (2010, p.18). Furthermore, disclosure requires some form of *'diagnosis [...] The DTA have drawn up a framework of 'traffic-lights' to encourage collective discussion of mutually agreed early warning signs'* (2010, p.18). Scott (2010) further argues that third-sector organisations need *'stories of failure [which] are sufficiently sensitive to the realities of the people charged with carrying complex, contradictory everyday life forward'* (2010, p.18). Scott (2010) concludes with a recommendation that third-sector organisations require a 'Failure Policy' which *'would need to include a statement of underlying purposes. For example, in the event of organisational decline/signs of failing systems, are responses to be framed by resuscitation principles and*

*skills or those of the abattoir? In other words, instead of proceeding to liquidation could greater energies have been invested in retaining the Hall [an EA asset] for public use?’ (2010, p.18)*

**Q9. What is the role of local government and local politicians in promoting civic activism whilst also safeguarding public safety, accountability and value for money in public services?**

Blond (2009) advocates the use of civic companies at a local tier in order to *‘generate a radically flatter management structure in the public sector [that] removes the artificial distinction between management and professionals’* (2009, p.34). In creating an ‘ownership state,’ Blond believes that giving frontline workers in the public sector a stake in their roles and creating civil associations at ‘group level’ would lead to *‘true leadership by frontline employees and real engagement by users of public services’* (2009, p.30). A benefit of these local civil associations would be efficiency: *‘it enables the sector to avoid the costs and downside of contracts, compliance and auditing’* (2009, p.31). In time, these associations could also be owned by the public service users themselves to ensure public involvement and investment and allow for *‘co-production of the services they receive’* (2009, p.38). This level of involvement at a local level ensures that the public themselves are invested in the issues that matter to both clients and frontline workers: *‘The right of the public to co-own their services is a powerful way to ensure their voices are heard, and in turn makes them more likely to engage with issues (such as healthy living or selfcare) that affect the effectiveness of the organisation that they now co-own’* (2009, p.32).

Charteris et al. (2010) report that more needs to be done to ensure local authorities are engaging with communities in such a way to *‘move from consultation to joint design and decision making with local people and, increasingly, joint delivery’* (2010, p.54). The report cites two examples which show evidence of authorities working with rather than on behalf of the population, firstly, in Wiltshire

*‘...the new unitary council has established a system of local area boards, bringing together local people, local politicians and partner organisations. A formal part of the*

*council's decision-making structures, the boards are beginning to have a real influence on council policy in areas such as youth services, libraries and transport. Over 4,000 people have been engaged in three rounds of meetings over the last 18 months' (2010, p.54).*

Secondly, the report cites a positive impact created by Tower Hamlets use of participatory budgeting, which involved a number of people in making decisions rather than asking them for contributions in consultation: *'The You Decide program [...] lets local residents vote on the allocation of over £2m to local priorities. Reflecting the need to engage communities of interests as well as neighbourhoods, an additional [...] event has been organised for young people'* (2010, p.54).

Capital Ambition (2010) report that there are a number of things which local authorities need to consider in order to harness the possibilities of behaviour change and 'nudge' theory to give practical and tangible outcomes for all involved; including the reduction of anti-social behaviour and the promotion of pro-social behaviour. The Capital Ambition (2010) guidelines included:

- *'be clear and specific about your behavioural goal to enable precision in your approach*
- *understand the behaviours. Consider social factors and drivers at the individual level, including public attitudes, beliefs, motivations, barriers, and current and desired behaviours. Consider competing influencers. Interventions adopted should build on these insights*
- *use key insights and segmentation models to develop targeted approaches*
- *draw on all the interventions available to you. Develop an intervention mix combining tools from across the policy and communications spectrum to tackle the various social and individual drivers that result in the target behaviour. Use evidence available from theory and practice to support you*
- *be clear about what your organisation can do as well as what others are doing, and ensure staff at all levels of the organisation are engaged in designing the intervention*
- *work with partners and across sectors in designing and implementing programmes – evidence shows this makes interventions more successful*
- *work with those whose behaviour is being targeted to design the approach, and sustain the dialogue in trialling and refining approaches*
- *make sure that staff have the appropriate knowledge, skills and capacity to engage with people in delivering the initiative [...]*



- *accept that the outcomes of behaviour change interventions are difficult to predict and that there is a need to take risks and to pilot new ideas*
- *accept that securing behaviour change is a long-term process rather than a single event*
- *ensure you have political and strategic buy-in, to provide leadership, articulate key messages, and lead on bringing consent and legitimacy to the behaviour change intervention*
- *make sure that 'success' is defined and evaluation is built into the design as early as possible'*

(2010, p.17)

Capital Ambition (2010) also provided some examples of success where local authorities had successfully engaged with communities to generate behavioural change and positive outcomes. For example, they cite the example of the London Borough of Barnet who commissioned a TSO to go out and meet with residents face-to-face in order to raise perceptions of green issues by showing people thermal images of their homes and demonstrating new technology, which showed how people were using energy, in order to affect change in resident behaviour through the means of loss aversion (2010, p.22). The report also gave the example of the London Borough of Richmond-upon-Thames, who sought to increase the number of young people involved in sports activities and thus took a multi-pronged approach to increasing participation for both short-term and long-term effects: *'the intention here was to give young people an opportunity to try different sports, and if they showed promise, to link them with clubs so they could carry on. The programme set out to identify talent in six sports (athletics, canoeing, cycling, gymnastics, rowing and swimming). Support continued once people were identified as talented through master classes, mentoring, performance assessment and meeting elite athletes'* (2010, p.27). Through the use of seeds of initial encouragement, the council ensured that young people could develop a long-term interest in participating in sports activities: *'for each sport, the council identified a local sports club as partner. Then they paid for free 'taster' sessions and follow-on talent sessions for promising youngsters. This was supported by some professional coaching and performance, assessment. In 2008, 47 young people took part in this of which 25 were identified as talented, 12 joined the club and one has been identified as a potential Olympic athlete'* (2010, p.27). The results of the study showed that children and young people were more successfully sustained in sporting activities both within and outside of formal education. There was an *'increase in sport at school – up from 66 per cent in 2004 to*

*94 per cent in 2008 [and an] increase in participation in sport out of school – up from 17 per cent in 2004 to 51 per cent in 2008’ (2010, p.27).*

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