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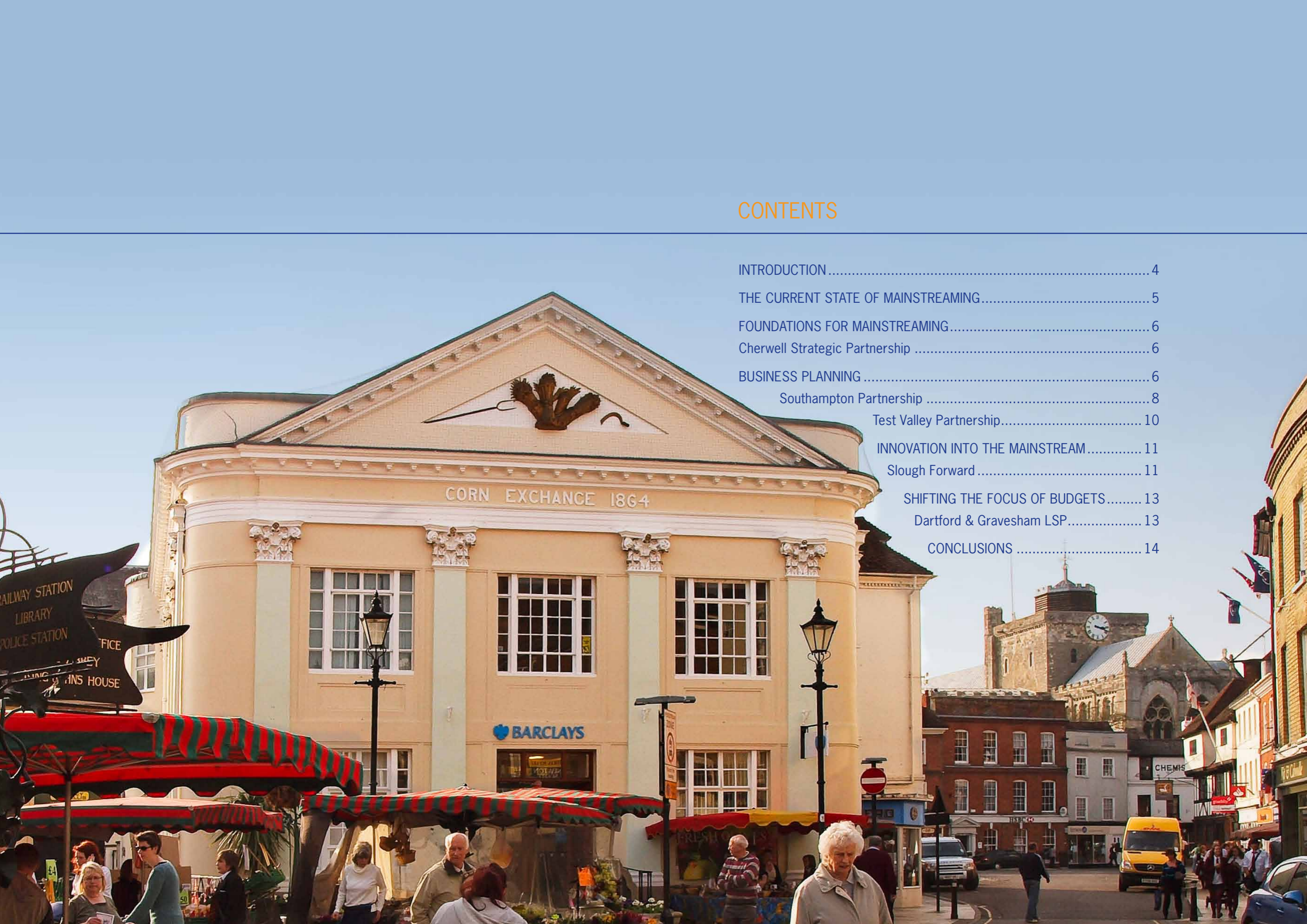


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INFLUENCING MAINSTREAMING RESOURCES THROUGH PARTNERSHIP WORKING



PtP CASE STUDY



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The local partnership landscape may change with the new Conservative and Liberal Democrat Coalition Government. However, it can be assumed that the need for local agencies to work collaboratively to address challenging issues will remain.

The new Government has agreed that deficit reduction and economic recovery are the most urgent issues facing Britain, and both parties agree that the main burden of reducing the deficit should be borne by reduced spending rather than increased taxes. This means finding smarter ways of working to deliver services at reduced cost, for example by realigning reduced budgets across the local area to maintain maximum impact.

As the Total Place initiative demonstrates, there is a strong case for agencies to work together to identify how they can use their collective resources more effectively and efficiently across the totality of an area. This would reduce overlap and duplication between organisations whilst continuing to deliver high quality services for local people.

Although some local partnerships hold small budgets of their own and/or have influence over non-ringfenced budgets (e.g. the Area Based Grant and Performance Reward Grant), these represent a small percentage of public sector spending in any locality and are time-limited. The more significant savings can only be made by 'mainstreaming' or re-aligning the significantly larger mainstream resources. This approach also leads to a more sustainable approach to service delivery, as it influences longer-term spending plans as opposed to one-off or

short-term pots of funding. However, it requires a sufficiently strong partnership structure and culture to enable tough decisions to be taken.

The case studies in this document illustrate how some partners have accessed and influenced mainstream resources, and what some of the learning points and benefits have been. They also highlight how some partnerships have overcome some of the challenges that mainstreaming poses. This document is not intended as a guide to 'best practice' in mainstreaming. Instead, it aims to draw out some prompts and pointers for how mainstreaming can be taken forward in other partnerships. It focuses on examples from Local Strategic Partnerships (LSPs) across the South East, but the learning can be applied to other types of partnership and other regions.

THE CURRENT STATE OF MAINSTREAMING

Although LSPs have been operating in the south east for nearly a decade, most do not appear to be mainstreaming their priorities. Data from self-assessments carried out by LSPs in 2009¹ suggests that only 16% of LSPs in the south east have 'discussed and influenced the shift of mainstream resources to deliver SCS and LAA priorities'. The majority of LSPs (54%) are talking about mainstreaming, although the remaining LSPs rarely discuss mainstream resources, if at all.

Furthermore, different partners have different interpretations of 'mainstreaming'. For some, it is about aligning business plans and strategies across organisations; for others it means 'bending' mainstream resources towards joint partnership priorities.

The fact that mainstreaming is clearly on the agenda of many LSPs, but is not being delivered on a significant scale in the south east, suggests that barriers to mainstreaming remain.

SUMMARY OF CASE STUDIES

Each case study is a single example of how mainstreaming has been addressed or carried out in the south east. The case studies on Southampton and Test Valley are linked to demonstrate different approaches to business planning:

- **Cherwell Strategic Partnership** has used the refresh of its Sustainable Community Strategy (SCS) to ensure the partnership's priorities are aligned with partners' own service plans.
- **Southampton Partnership** has developed a composite business plan to help all partners to see how they can contribute to the delivery of the shared aims and objectives and to set out the basis for the use of resources.
- In **Test Valley** the LSP has created 14 key strategic objectives ('Joint Areas of Focus') to help partners link the partnership's strategic priorities into their own corporate plans to become the focus of mainstream resources.
- Through **Slough Forward**, an employment project that began as a one-off initiative by LSP partners has become a mainstream service with revenue funding secured, following a strong business case for the benefits of continuing the project.
- Influencing mainstream resources has allowed the **Dartford & Gravesham LSP** to support a redistribution of mainstream health resources in West Kent that more accurately matches resources to acute need.

¹ 2009/10 LSP Improvement Tool; Improvement Network (2009)

CHERWELL STRATEGIC PARTNERSHIP

- 1 One partnership that is talking about mainstreaming is Cherwell Strategic Partnership in Oxfordshire. The partnership officer, Helen Couperthwaite, understands mainstreaming to be 'bringing the activities of the LSP into the day-to-day activities of partners rather than as an add-on. It's actually working together as partners'. Cherwell LSP is at the beginning of the mainstreaming process, which has started with a refresh of its SCS.
- 2 Now that a new SCS has been produced with the involvement of all the partners, there is an agreed plan to work towards, and against which work and resources can be negotiated. Not only is the SCS supported by LSP partners, it also drives at the key objectives of many partners. Within the district council these are filtering into service plans. In Helen's opinion, the district council's corporate plan fully reflects the SCS, which suggests that the LSP's priorities are being successfully integrated into the work of the council.
- 3 However, a solid SCS alone is not enough to lead to mainstreaming. The SCS may reflect the views of partners, but encouraging partners to bend their own resources away from their own business plans and targets and towards the joint priorities of the LSP requires a significant level of trust. This takes time to establish and, although the SCS is a useful tool for providing a focus for the partnership, there is no guaranteed way of getting buy-in to the strategy, particularly when budgets tighten or partners become risk averse. A good level of trust between partners may mean that commitments and joint working are more likely to occur, even when the risks of partnership working and mainstreaming are highest.

LEARNING POINTS

- An SCS that is both supported by LSP members and is reflected by partners own corporate plans can create a foundation for mainstreaming. An SCS 'refresh' keeps strategies relevant to all organisations involved.

SOUTHAMPTON PARTNERSHIP & THE TEST VALLEY PARTNERSHIP

- 4 An LSP should represent the resources available to achieve the vision for the area as set out in the SCS. However, LSPs can be irregular and unwieldy entities that comprise numerous partners sitting on separate boards and sub-boards, often without strong internal communication. Therefore many LSPs experience a need for robust business planning to focus these resources, and to create conditions where the synergies of joint collaboration between partner agencies and between thematic partnerships can be exploited to make the most efficient use of public money.
- 5 For many county and unitary LSPs, the Local Area Agreement (LAA) acts as a stand-in for a formal business plan, as it can guide action and form a basis for performance management. However, as the Portsmouth and Test Valley case studies show, in some cases the LAA is not adequate to cover all the work of the LSP, or the local situation of those at the second-tier. In these cases, some LSPs are producing alternative or additional plans to allow them to get the added value of joint working and to help focus resources.
- 6 The absence of direct links between partners is part of what hinders the integrated working and service delivery that leads to mainstreaming. Both the partnership manager and LSP Executive are in a position to see what every part of the partnership and its members are doing, and to ensure that synergies are exploited and activities joined-up. So there is a need around partnerships for a 'corporate management' overview that can increase the number of direct links between partners and their activities. However, closer partnership working and deeper understanding of what each part of the LSP framework is doing would embed this overview into the partnership itself. For example, in Southampton, the need to embed a culture of partnership working by championing, promoting and raising awareness is vital to facilitate the mainstreaming of the LSP framework across partners. This is as important a challenge as the logistics of mainstreaming specific services (see Southampton case study on p8). Not doing so has the potential to encourage 'silo-partnership' working rather than 'joint partnership' working.
- 7 Presenting priorities in a succinct and consistent format for each theme group can help Delivery Board/LSP Executive members monitor the progress and activity of the wider LSP.

For this purpose a business plan might be a more effective document to measure performance against. It can also fill the gap between the visionary SCS and a narrower list of LAA targets by including initiatives that the partnership is undertaking towards its SCS priorities, but that are not covered by the LAA delivery plan. As such, a separate annual business plan can cover some of the work of the LSP, which falls outside of the LAA but represents significant and exciting partnership working.

- 8 A clear route to mainstreaming the work of LSPs may be through the integration of business or corporate plan priorities into the corresponding plans of partners. However, the Southampton and Test Valley case studies suggest that this should be led by the respective theme groups to avoid the risk of it appearing to be imposed by the council without sensitivity to the operational situation of the theme groups and their members. The Test Valley LSP developed its 'Joint Area of Focus' in close collaboration with theme groups of the LSP, and has seen the integration of action plan priorities into the priorities of partner members (see Test Valley Case Study on p10).
- 9 Producing a clear annual business and action plan can also contribute to transparency and help to explain and illuminate the working of the partnership to those outside of the LSP itself. Publicising the plan helps promote the partnership to other bodies who may not otherwise understand its role and its aims, but could or should be involved in its work. Wider

awareness of the LSP amongst partner agencies, for example amongst staff members who are not directly involved in the LSP, could help to get LAA targets accepted into the plans of these agencies in the future.

LEARNING POINTS

- Effective internal communications are essential for building a strong partnership and efficient joint working - mainstreaming will only occur if partners feel part of the 'club' and know who other partners are and what they are doing.
- Second-tier LSPs do not have their own LAAs, so developing an action plan is one way of ensuring that the LSP's priorities remain a focus for partners. If these priorities are expressed in an agreed format and language that relates to local partners, it is more likely that partners will 'bend' their resources towards local priorities and build them into their business/corporate plans.
- Drawing down LSP business plan priorities into the work plans of individual partners can help encourage the 'bending' of partners' resources towards the achievement of shared partnership priorities. To prevent this being dominated by the local authority, it should be led at operational rather than strategic level.



SOUTHAMPTON'S COMPOSITE BUSINESS PLAN

Partnership working in Southampton has benefitted from co-terminosity, a history of positive partnership relations and a number of long-standing challenges with which public agencies have grown familiar. However, whilst partnership working is regarded as 'the way we do business in the city', it is also fair to say that it is not as mainstreamed as it could be. This is probably due to the complexity of the LSP system itself – its structures, plans and activities.

As Strategic Partnership Manager, Henry Pavey, reflects, 'there is still a case of partners being in "partnership-mode" at meetings but naturally defaulting back into "organisational-mode" soon after the respective meeting ends. The Southampton Partnership Delivery Board believes gains are to be made from a move from 'partnership working' to more integration of systems and service delivery so we achieve more for less' (Matthew Greening, Chief Superintendent and Delivery Board member).

To this end the Partnership has developed a Composite Business Plan. This plan is intended as both a 'live' document that can guide partners and thematic partnerships in the production of their action plans, and a reminder for all members of the partnership that they are part of a wide and diverse 'family of partnerships'. Brad Roynon, chair of the Southampton Partnership Delivery Board and Chief Executive of Southampton City Council, believes

an overall plan will benefit the Partnership by 'making sure that all parts of the Southampton Partnership have an opportunity to see and contribute to the delivery of aims and objectives and it supports better cross partnership working.'

The information on each thematic partnership was pulled together by the individual partnership managers, in conjunction with their respective chairs. The LAA Programme Manager inputted information on the LAA priorities and work currently being undertaken by each group, as well as those projected for 2010/11. The final document was signed off by the Delivery Board.

The plan is organised around one-page summaries of the eight thematic partnerships and the Delivery Board: each summary sets out the headline aims and key targets and initiatives for 2010/11. The LAA priorities of each thematic partnership are outlined under a separate annex that references them against the six overarching strategic objectives for Southampton to ensure that the links between action and strategy are clearly established.

The plan also details a range of 'Southampton Partnership Key Initiatives': initiatives being undertaken within the LSP framework where two or more partners come together to deliver something

that cannot be delivered by any single organisation on its own, e.g. the Teenage Pregnancy Action Plan; the Southampton Inter-Generational Network Project; and the Carbon Footprint Project. Therefore, although Southampton's Composite Business Plan was not intended as a performance management framework, it does strengthen lines of accountability between the thematic partnerships and the Delivery Board, as well as raising awareness of a range of activities being undertaken.

Whilst it acts as a functioning annual business plan, it is also outward-facing and presents information on the partnership and its wider context, structure and communication plans. The 2010/11 plan will be circulated widely, both within the partnership and to boards and individuals involved in the city's governance. Small inclusions, such as photographs of and an introduction from each of the thematic partnership chairs, personalise the document and give the partnership a tangibility that may be absent from other strategy documents.

A composite business plan is an inexpensive and replicable tool for LSPs. Henry Pavey of Southampton City Council described business planning as 'a discipline – it's something you would do with a normal business'. This is especially important in times when budgets are shrinking and both councils and partners are having to think more cleverly about how resources are used. As the Chair of the Delivery Board reflects, a business plan 'sets out a basis for the use of resources, which need to be used ever more carefully and in a joined up manner' (Brad Roynon, Delivery Board chair). The risk in times of reduced spending and budget cuts is that partners will retrench and focus their resources on internal activities. By producing an annual work plan with clear goals and promoting that sense of joint responsibility ("we're all in this together"), the partnership is more likely to secure buy-in to joint working and shared cross-cutting priorities are less likely to fall by the wayside.

The 2010/11 Business plan can be viewed online at www.southampton-partnership.com

The Test Valley Partnership has used LSP theme groups as a basis for business planning through their 'Joint Areas of Focus' (JAFs) - 14 key, strategic objectives that the whole LSP is responsible for delivering.

JAFs were a response to the absence of a clear link between the SCS and the objectives of the LSP's eight action groups. To compound this problem, there were no strong horizontal links between each of the action groups, and consequently 'no capacity in the existing structure to reflect cross-cutting issues' (James Moody, Partnership Manager, Test Valley Partnership). As a result, complex issues were being inadequately addressed by groups working around a single theme.

The 14 JAFs were identified in consultation with the LSP Board and members of the action groups. Partnership Manager, James Moody, was aiming for 'a common language, not a narrow set of targets'. The 14 areas identified struck a balance between being strategic and being understood and supported by the action groups who would have to translate them into work on the ground.

For county or unitary authority LSPs, LAAs are a way of measuring whether the LSP is moving towards achieving its SCS priorities. A problem faced by LSPs in second-tier local authority areas is how to translate their SCS into action without an LAA to structure planning and delivery. JAFs help to do this by linking the focus of operation to the strategic priorities of the LSP.

Most significantly for mainstreaming is the 'common language' created by JAFs, which enables partners to transplant these priorities into their own corporate plans and for them to become the focus of mainstream resources. By strengthening horizontal relationships between the action groups, JAFs aim to enable a multi-agency focus on cross-cutting issues, which is more effective and efficient than a single agency approach and more likely to be sustained in the long-term.

More detail can be found on the PtP website - www.progressthroughpartnership.org.uk/test_valley_print_1_.pdf



SLOUGH FORWARD

- 10 Partnerships can act as incubators of new and innovative projects. A project might be run by two or more partners on an informal or short-term basis, but this serves as a trial to test the benefits of new initiatives without organisations committing long-term funding to a project. If the project proves successful, the partners may wish to make the case for continuing funding by allocating mainstream budgets to the project from within their organisations.
- 11 The Lone Parent Project was set up in 2005 by Slough Borough Council's economic development team and Jobcentre Plus under a negotiated Local Public Service Agreement (LPSA) relating to worklessness amongst lone parents. The service offers one-to-one or group sessions that support lone parents getting into sustainable employment. Amongst other issues this includes help with applications and job searching, practice interviews and confidence building. One year later, and after the introduction of the LAA system, it was aligned with National Indicator (NI) 152: employment for working age people on out of work benefits. After three years it had met its targets of getting 45 lone parents into employment, and received further funding through the Performance Reward Grant. This was re-invested into the continuation of the project for a further three years.
- 12 The project met a particular need in the area, unmet by other services, and demand continued despite its time-limited funding. In response to the threat of the project closing down, the council argued for mainstream funding to be used as a new way of funding the project and allowing it to continue. In early 2010, it was agreed that the project would be funded in the longer-term through mainstream local authority budgets and this change is now being implemented.
- 13 The project is run by Slough Council, in close collaboration with Jobcentre Plus who see the council as providing the service as an intermediary. This is an informal arrangement that benefits from the strong relationship that exists between the two organisations, and it is not intended that mainstreaming will formalise this.

MAKING THE CASE FOR MAINSTREAMING

- 14 In 2009 a growth bid was made around this service area and within it a request was made for mainstream resources to continue the Lone Parent Project. A strong case was made for

the project to continue, based on a solid evidence base. The project itself was making savings on welfare bills, and it was estimated that in 2008/9 alone the 30 lone parents who gained employment through the scheme represented a saving of over £400,000 in income support. Although this is not a saving that the local area will directly benefit from, in the climate of reduced public spending and a greater demand for welfare there is a strong case for resourcing projects that are making savings.

- 15 Slough's Economic Policy Development Officer, Shabnam Ali, feels that the effects of the recession were a key driver for this project becoming on-going work, because of its target group. In her view, the lone parent cohort are especially vulnerable in a limited job market as they often have fewer formal qualifications, fewer employment skills and less experience of employment. Following the recession, job markets have become more competitive, and lone parents can become excluded.
- 16 The knock-on effects of unemployment amongst lone parents are not limited to economic exclusion; they also have a particular impact on outcomes for children and young people. For example, children of parents in employment generally achieve higher standards at school than those of unemployed parents. Also, in households reliant on a single wage, employment can mean the difference between bringing up a child above or below the poverty line. This means that a range of partners have an interest in increasing the number of lone parents in employment: Jobcentre Plus, health services, children's services and education, as well as the economic development team at Slough all benefit from the work of the Lone Parent Project.

BENEFITS

- 17 The major benefit of mainstreaming is that what was previously a time-limited project has now become a service that is permanently available to lone parents in Slough.
- 18 The project is growing (at any one time it has approximately 200 Lone Parents on the caseload) and mainstreaming will allow this growth to continue.
- 19 There will be less pressure on agencies that provide services for lone parents or handle worklessness, as the project is now a single point of focus for lone parent referrals. The service is now a clear 'destination' where lone parents can get employment support, and it now has sustainable funding rather than being reliant on time-limited grant funding. Focused referrals to the

SHIFTING THE FOCUS OF BUDGETS

service are channelled through a user-tracker system used by a number of frontline service providers in the area. This system includes a directory of services and providers to which clients can be referred. As a permanent project, the Lone Parent Project will be on this system, so it is more likely that a client coming into contact with another agency will be referred to the service if their needs require it. Had it remained a short-term project, it would not be part of this directory and therefore not be as well known or as well used.

- 20 The Lone Parent Project is at the beginning of the mainstreaming process and so any cashable savings have not yet been evidenced. However the partnership between the organisations means that premises can be shared (e.g. running job surgeries out of Jobcentre Plus), and it is expected that efficiencies will be gained through joint working by staff. One example is Jobcentre Plus advisors being able to refer the lone parents they advise straight to the borough council's Lone Parent Project officer. This minimises the time spent targeting potential users of the service by the specialist Lone Parent Project advisor and enables them to spend more time with clients. This provides a better service for the client by reducing the time that referrals take, and is a more efficient use of the time of the staff employed by the job centre and the project. For Jobcentre Plus, the connection with this project helps them to meet internal targets regarding lone parents without duplicating services available locally.

RISKS

- 21 Mainstreaming is expected to bring a stricter discipline to working with partners, and a renegotiation of performance targets. When the project was externally funded, the targets attached to it were very clear and they applied to both partners. As a mainstreamed service, Shabnam Ali expects the performance targets to be 'less about tangible targets and more about outcomes'. In practice this means a shift from measurable targets, such as getting a particular number of lone parents into work, to capacity- and confidence-building of individuals to make them feel valued and believe they can do it.
- 22 This can be interpreted as both a benefit and a risk. It is now up to the local authority and Jobcentre Plus to set their own targets to reflect the focus they think will provide the best service for lone parents. This is a positive opportunity to create targets that reflect their vision for the service, and to ensure

that all of the organisations involved in the service contribute to setting targets of which they feel a sense of ownership.

- 23 On the other hand, the change of focus also risks fostering a perception that the project is underperforming. For example, when the project was externally funded, it successfully achieved its target of getting 45 lone parents in jobs. With a new focus, the service might not be producing the same tangible results and so might be perceived as less successful. This is likely to be exacerbated by the economic climate, which has enlarged the problem of worklessness amongst lone parents. These two factors together may give the impression that the newly mainstreamed service is not operating as effectively as it did when externally-funded, when it is actually just operating differently.
- 24 The project received confirmation that it would be supported with mainstream funds in early 2010. The detail of the changes to the service and what this will mean for both the local authority and Jobcentre Plus are being decided in early spring. Both partners felt that any difficulties encountered would be best dealt with through open communications. Colleagues in Slough BC anticipate that any serious issues arising between the partners, such as underperformance, will be raised within the structure of the LSP, which has always been the reference point for performance management of the project. Likewise, External Partnership Manager for Jobcentre Plus, Linda Evans, was confident that any issues that arise would be dealt with, thanks to the close relationship that has developed between the council and Jobcentre Plus: 'We have a strong relationship with the local authority – we meet at least weekly.'

LEARNING POINTS

- LSPs can bring partners together for one-off projects, which if proved successful can make a compelling case for mainstreaming.
- Where informal agreements already exist between members of an LSP, mainstreaming does not necessarily have to formalise these arrangements. However a strong relationship must exist between partners to ensure that a mainstreamed project continues to pursue a mutual interest.
- Mainstreaming might allow or require projects to change in focus.

DARTFORD & GRAVESHAM LSP

- 25 NHS West Kent was established in 2006/7 through the merger of three existing PCTs: Dartford, Gravesham and Swanley PCT, Maidstone Weald PCT and South West Kent PCT. Despite each individual trust serving communities with different levels of need, the health budget of the new body was allocated across the six borough councils it covered without a revised need-assessment. Since this meant that funding 'per patient' was effectively lower in boroughs of acute need than in areas without such high demand for services, inequalities emerged within NHS West Kent's service area.
- 26 Through the Health & Wellbeing subgroups of the Dartford and Gravesham LSP, representatives of Dartford Borough Council and the NHS came together to discuss ways to redress this problem.
- 27 The argument for allocating mainstream budgets through needs-assessment seemed clear. The LSP Partnership Manager (Adrian Gowan) and the Assistant Director for Public Health Medicine within the NHS West Kent (Jessica Mookherjee) worked to review the current needs and unmet needs for health services in Dartford. This involved the production of an in-depth profile of health inequalities for the areas to evidence the rationale for re-distributing funding. This evidence was then taken through the council's scrutiny system with the support of the LSP manager. The decision to re-allocate funding based on the evidence of health inequalities was approved by the NHS's Health Overview Strategy Team and board and the change took effect from the financial year 2009/10.
- 28 The process of creating the health inequality profile for West Kent not only highlighted the differences between boroughs, but also the variation of services and need within Dartford itself. This prompted the borough council to look within its own services and see how, jointly with the NHS, it could act to make lasting changes to health in the area. Improvements made to encourage use of the borough's leisure services are just one example of how the borough council is addressing obesity in the borough, in combination with the work funded by NHS West Kent with the re-distributed budgets. Arguing for the re-allocation of funding to tackle inequality ensured that inequalities were taken seriously by both partners, and a commitment was made to addressing the health inequalities of the borough.

BENEFITS

- 29 Almost a year on, the borough is starting to see the improvements brought by extra resources. Two important issues for the area - levels of teenage pregnancy and childhood obesity - are starting to decrease. These two issues in particular have benefited from new ways of working, particularly by the NHS which now has specific teams focusing on issues and areas that show a concentration of need. A full progress report in the new financial year will show exactly what has been gained from the new funding regime.

CHALLENGES

- 30 Although the case for re-distributing the funds of the NHS was well evidenced, it was inevitably an unpopular decision among those boroughs whose health funding was reduced as a result. In particular this affected Tunbridge Wells. Jessica Mookherjee, of NHS West Kent, took the lead for the NHS in these changes. She thinks that managing the relationship between NHS West Kent and these boroughs can only be done with through a 'challenging and honest dialogue' about resourcing with service providers and users in the area - 'this is the reality, tell us what you think'. One year after the change to budgets was made the impact on Dartford has been positive, but dealing with the impact of the changes on other boroughs is on-going, and may take longer to work through.

LEARNING POINTS

- Use the scrutiny process of the local authority to give weight to arguments for change
- Accompany changes to budgets with changes in action plans. The local authority was open to making changes to their work programme alongside the NHS's changes to budgets, and this intensified impact.
- Mainstreaming can have significant political effects. A solid evidence base and rationale for change combined with a willingness to discuss the decision made can help maintain relationships.

CONCLUSIONS

- 31 These case studies provide some examples of mainstreaming from partnerships across the south east. They show how the idea of 'mainstreaming' has been interpreted by partnerships and how it is being used to connect the resources of local agencies with the identified priorities for the local area. Many of these examples are in their early days and the next few years will show whether their efforts have allowed them to achieve more for less.
- 32 These examples all show the centrality of a strong partnership in influencing mainstream budgets and resources. In Dartford & Gravesham frank and honest discussion between the local authority and the NHS has allowed sensitive issues of health inequality to be addressed with bold action by both partners. In Slough, the joint targeting of a cohort by two partners has produced mutual benefits and the success of this joint working is allowing the project to continue as part of the mainstream offer of the local authority. However, these relationships take time and work to develop. Southampton's corporate management team is working with the LSP to build an awareness of the wider partnership and what each

part of the LSP does. Only when the partnership has internal coherence and each partner understands both their own and other partners' roles can they focus their own resources on the partnership's priorities and find new ways of working together that add value to local services.

- 33 Cherwell, Southampton and Test Valley LSPs have all shown how plans and strategies can help prompt and clarify decisions about mainstreaming. However, the examples show that these documents need to be relevant to the partnership, which might mean refreshing and re-assessing the local priorities (through the SCS), or creating a new way of business planning.
- 34 Finally, both the Slough and Dartford & Gravesham studies demonstrate that mainstreaming will only take place if robust evidence is available to justify change. The 'bending' of mainstream resources inevitably means that resources in some areas will be reallocated to others, and any organisation arguing for re-focusing mainstream resources will need to be ready to demonstrate why this would be a better use of public money.



PHOTO CREDITS

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