

**WORKING IN PARTNERSHIP**  
**The development of good governance**

**A short study of Sure Start Programmes  
in the North East of England**

**This study was commissioned by**

**The Regional Sure Start Unit  
Government Office North East**

**and conducted by**

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## Introduction

This study set out to describe the development of Sure Start partnerships. In particular the study focussed on issues and questions of the governance of these programmes.

The study explored the essence of partnership from the perspective of sixteen programmes recruited from the first four waves of the Sure Start. The intention was to learn from the experiences of these programmes:

- How governance translates into partnership working?
- What part the boards of partnerships play in the governance of programmes?
- How partnerships separate management and governance?
- What models for governance are being developed?
- What are the common problems or hurdles in the process of development?
- What assistance do partnerships need as they are developing?

We should emphasise that this study was not structured as an in depth piece of research. The results presented here provide a 'snapshot', a description of development, from which we have drawn some conclusions.

Finally, we would like to thank the Chairs and Board Members with their Programme Managers for volunteering and giving their time to this study.

## 1. Background

### Why this study

Suddenly, it seems, we are surrounded by partnerships. But how do we interpret or understand them? There would appear to be lots of mixed messages, ambiguities or contradictions and confusion about the purpose of a partnership – is a partnership about the management or governance of a programme? or do partnerships represent a method of participation and consultation?

Each Sure Start programme has to create a local partnership as determined in Fourth Wave guidance

*“You need to establish a partnership that involves local parents representatives of all the local providers of services... It is particularly important to make sure that parents and community representatives have the opportunity to contribute to the development of your programme”*

The requirements of the partnership are explained as follows:

- *ensure financial regularity, propriety and value for money*
- *provide clear lines of accountability*
- *fully involve stakeholders while making sure no one stakeholder dominates*
- *encourage new ways of working that deliver what parents and children want and need*
- *allow parents to exercise a real voice over what Sure Start provides and to build their own skills by being directly involved*
- *give priority to what’s best for children focusing on the Sure Start objectives and targets.”*

The remaining guidance outlines choices of legal status and defines management arrangements and key roles, for example:

*“A key role in your partnership will be that of lead partner; responsible for the overall delivery of your programme.”*

The requirements are demanding and create potential contradictions, for example: “fully involve stakeholders while making sure no one stakeholder dominates” and “A key role in your partnership will be that of lead partner; responsible for the overall delivery of your programme.”

The development of a partnership from the outside appears to be a challenging task, one that requires confidence and creativity. Or as an Audit Commission paper described it:

*“While partnership working is a potentially powerful tool for tackling difficult policy and operational problems and can be a productive way of achieving more efficient and effective use of scarce resources, the Audit Commission recognises that it is difficult to do well.”<sup>1</sup>*

There is an emerging body of research into partnerships but we wanted to ensure that local experiences and lessons learned from one particular programme were recorded and shared with others.

### Limitations of the study

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<sup>1</sup> A Fruitful Partnership: effective partnership working. Audit Commission 1998

Unfortunately we were unable to implement our initial study design. We had planned to recruit four programmes from each of the first four waves as our sample group. Participating in the study was a 'voluntary' commitment and as you will see in section 3, we ended up with a different balance of programmes. This meant we were unable to compare waves.

Time, as ever, was a major limitation. The scope of the study was limited by the time available. The study is therefore by no means comprehensive. However the exercises undertaken produced a wealth of material which we hope we have done justice to.

Needless to say the study has generated a further set of questions or touched on topics that would benefit from further investigation.

## 2. Some definitions

### What is good governance?

At the moment, governance, as a word has a wide circulation. But what does it actually mean? It is difficult to find a simple definition that fits with non profit distributing organisations.

The dictionary gives us:

- *the act or manner of governing*
- *the office or function of governing*
- *sway, control*

This sounds far distant and conjures up images of empire and colonies. Put more simply from someone within an understanding of the non profit distributing sector.

*“Governance is the issue of ‘who is in charge — ultimately’”<sup>2</sup>*

The definition Governance Works has developed provides a more detailed description:

- **Governance is ... the system through which an organisation sets and safeguards Principles and Values that are embodied in the aims and objectives of the organisation ... It ensures: Accountability and Responsibility for everything**

An understanding of management has developed across non profit distributing organisations and this term has often encompassed functions associated with governance. Some would argue that it is not necessary to separate, the long term wider picture - vision, aims, direction and strategy (governance) from the interpretation of aims, creation of policies and plans (management). However, a lack of governance eventually creates a vacuum as meaning and purpose are obscured or even lost.

Although governance is focussed around the board, we believe that good governance does not rest with this group. It is a system that incorporates the following aspects:

- A formalised structure (this does not necessarily refer to traditional or bureaucratic approaches)
- Concerns “ownership” it is not individually based
- Not just about Boards
- It safe-guards the values, beliefs, principles and purpose
- Has clarity of vision
- “Quality” of content, process and people
- A long-term perspective and a transparent approach

### What is partnership?

Another word being heavily used but without a clear or widely understood definition.

One description of partnerships is:

*“Partnerships are formal or informal arrangements to work together to some joint purpose. ... Where the task is complex and long term it may be necessary to create*

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<sup>2</sup> The Guide to Effective Participation: Partnerships Online Dave Wilcox 2001

*a more formal structure for decision-making .... Partnerships do not have to be equal — but the various parties do need to feel that they are involved to an appropriate degree.”<sup>3</sup>*

The definition of a Sure Start partnership from Sixth Wave guidance provides the following definition ..” *a coalition of partners – the partnership – is collectively responsible for planning and delivering the programme and managing a relatively large sum of government money that will be provided over a period of between seven and ten years.”*

From our work with a range of partnerships Governance Works had adopted the following as a simple definition:

- **Deciding and acting together for collaborative advantage**

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<sup>3</sup> The Guide to Effective Participation: Partnerships Online Dave Wilcox 2001

### 3. The study

#### Who participated and what we did

3.1. The study was designed to capture information from four programmes from each of the first four waves. An invitation was extended to all Partnerships for the Chair or a Board Member together with their Programme Manager as main participants from each programme

3.2. In addition two Strategic Managers, with a role in more than one programme, signed up and participated in the study.

3.3. The final study group was as follows:

	Total number in the region	Actual participants
Wave One	4	3
Wave Two	13	10
Wave Three	5	2
Wave Four	8	1

3.4. Participating programmes shared the following characteristics:

- The annual turnover of each of the partnership was in a range between £1,000,000 and £214,792. The average being £715,547.
- The average number of workers involved in a programme was 24.

This number was most frequently a mixture of those considered direct employees of the programme and workers seconded from other agencies.

Two programmes reported that all their workers were secondees and one programme reported all their workers as direct employees of the partnership.

This was an interesting distinction. In practice the partnerships do not have a legal status and therefore are not employers. All employees are employed through or by other agencies.

- The average number of people involved in each partnership was 22.
- Board Membership ranged from 40 to 8 with an average size of 19 members.
- The majority of board meetings are held either monthly or quarterly
- Board Members are generally nominated or invited.

Four programmes categorised parents as volunteers rather than nominations or invitees. We have assumed they were invited to volunteer.

Of all Board Members 50% were nominated and 35% invited.

- Programmes report a high level of involvement from their Board Members.

58% of all Board Members were reported to be highly involved.

- Board Membership would also appear to be very stable. In the majority of programmes the length of involvement recorded was consistent with the age of the programme. Few members had recently joined their boards.
- In describing the purpose of the board there was an equal division between governance and managing.

Focussing on the vision and long term direction, overseeing and monitoring.

Whilst managing, and implementing the delivery of programmes to targets, making operational decisions.

To summarise, those involved in the study had:

relatively large and stable boards of people nominated by their agencies highly involved in the direction and delivery of programmes with an annual turnover of around £715,000 employing a mixed group of 24 seconded and employed workers.

3.5 We were interested to find out what had prompted people to take part in the study. At the study day the following groups of interests emerged:

- dealing with the complexity of partnership working
- problems, challenges and difficulties, the roller coaster of partnership working
- dealing with power and influence within the partnership
- understanding responsibility within the partnership
- understanding roles and clarifying leadership within a partnership
- growth, development and refocusing of a partnership
- future or emerging issues as a result of partnership working

3.6. The study took place between May and July 2002 and involved the following activities for the chair or board member and Programme Manager.

- completion of a questionnaire that provided some basic information
- attendance at a study day. This day was designed to:

describe characteristics of each phase of partnership development  
describe the development of their partnership through each phases  
identify components of governance  
identify strengths and weaknesses at each phase, and  
suggest what kind of assistance would have been helpful at each phase  
identify the model their partnership was working towards for the future particularly once Sure Start funding has ceased.

- an interview to explore individual perceptions of partnership working and to identify their model of governance.

In addition the whole board or partnership of the participating programmes,

- completed a health check questionnaire to give a more detailed picture of how each partnership is developing. The results of this questionnaire will

be fed back to each of the programmes as recognition of time given to the study.

## 4. Results

### What we found

#### 4.1 Characteristics of each phase

In designing the study we were interested to discover how governance developed through the life of a programme and determined five broad phases in the life cycle of a sure start programme. They were:

Phase		Description
1	<b>Start up</b>	announcement to completion of delivery plan
2	<b>Set up</b>	approval, appointment of staff and establishment of programme within locality, first activities
3	<b>Mid term</b>	fully operational programme
4	<b>Switch over</b>	services being picked up by mainstream or statutory agencies
5	<b>Completion</b>	end of sure start funding

All the participating programmes felt they were in phase three though the Wave 4 programme was at the beginning of this phase whilst the Wave 1 programmes were preparing to move to phase four. Concentrating on the first three phases of development characteristics were identified from the experiences of the group (see Annexe One for full list).

Phase		Characteristics
1	<b>Start up</b>  <i>“muddling along”</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• no planned approach</li> <li>• questionable ownership</li> <li>• working on good will</li> <li>• lack of clarity about membership</li> <li>• not a democratic process</li> <li>• lack of understanding of responsibility</li> <li>• meetings well attended</li> <li>• high on enthusiasm</li> <li>• good co operation</li> <li>• commitment</li> <li>• tensions</li> <li>• scepticism but acceptance</li> <li>• distrust</li> <li>• uncertainty or lack of leadership</li> <li>• vision though not necessarily shared</li> <li>• lack of control</li> </ul>
2	<b>Set up</b>  <i>“fighting for legitimacy”</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• reforming</li> <li>• re stating the vision</li> <li>• development of structure</li> <li>• under ownership or over ownership of plan</li> <li>• decision making</li> <li>• negotiations with agencies</li> <li>• frustration</li> <li>• disillusionment</li> <li>• jostle for power and control</li> <li>• lack of direction</li> <li>• emergence of different agendas</li> <li>• membership more fixed</li> <li>• membership shrinks – disappearance of agency members</li> <li>• anxieties</li> </ul>

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• board owns programme (if no prog manager in post)</li> <li>• board steps back (once prog manager in post)</li> </ul>
3	<p><b>Mid term</b></p> <p><i><b>“all the responsibility none of the power”</b></i></p> <p><i><b>“if its not broke don’t fix it – managers are managing don’t interfere”</b></i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• more developed structure</li> <li>• more inclusive – accepting of suggestions from parents/user</li> <li>• adopting a ‘head in the sand’ approach to the future</li> <li>• constant challenges</li> <li>• clear executive roles</li> <li>• complacency</li> <li>• attention distracted to other new agendas</li> <li>• poor attendance by agency reps</li> <li>• members lack authority to decide</li> <li>• reflecting</li> <li>• less proactive</li> <li>• prog. managers become more accountable with depletion of partnership</li> <li>• learning to adapt to changes in membership</li> <li>• prog. manager making decisions</li> <li>• lack of support</li> </ul>

Phase one was described by several of the group as ‘chaotic’. Large meetings often with “a myriad of people involved but a degree of chance as to who was going to turn up”. The focus was on the prescribed tasks of data collection, consultation, identification of need, recruitment of the ‘right’ mix of people to sign the delivery plan. All driven by a tight timetable of rigid deadlines.

There was little room to develop a shared understanding or interpretation of what the Sure Start vision and aims were all about and many statutory agencies (especially in the earlier Waves 1 and 2) *“displayed a hostility to the process”* and an *“anxiety to the newness of multi agency working”*. As a consequence varied *“perceptions and misconceptions”* developed.

The deadline for delivery of the plan created an absolute conclusion to phase one and some programmes reflected on the effect of the gap between presentation of delivery plan and approval. Though meetings continued without the task focus and urgency created by the delivery plan schedule, disillusionment began to appear, energy was dissipated and a fragmentation of the embryonic partnership group crept in.

Hence phase two was dominated not only by a sense of relief but also by rebuilding and creating a partnership structure. It is at this phase that questions or issues of governance of the programme began to be addressed. The boards or partnership groups concentrated on recruitment and selection of workers, the implementation and implications of any capital developments, promotion and publicity, and began to look at terms of reference or constitutions for the partnership.

Phase three is described as being much more settled *“busy but not frenzied”*. Many of the topics that were being dealt with during phase two continue to provide a focus of attention; the negotiation of terms and conditions of employment across the different professional groups seconded to the programmes, capital developments, relationships and protocols between agencies on the sharing of information, *“dealing with differences in culture and ethos, stereotypes, preconceptions amongst (particularly) statutory agencies. However in addition the focus shifted to the “development and delivery of responsive services”*.

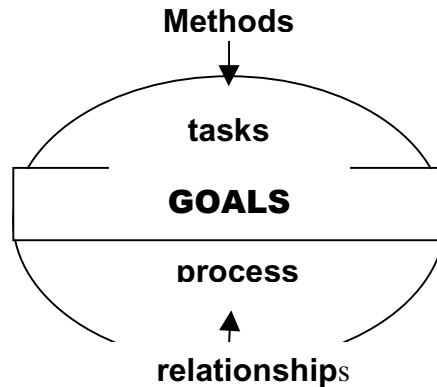
This phase contained a more developed structure to support the programme. Terms of reference and constitutions had been adopted by many of the programmes. However membership caused some concern. Many programmes reported the *“absence of agency reps”*, the impact of re organisation (in health agencies), *“additional Sure Start programmes, other new agendas and strategic bodies”*. There was a recognition that *“people in power had their attention distracted to other agendas and new initiatives”*. As a consequence a tension between local and wider or strategic agendas was emerging and there was an absence of real planning for the next phase of development, *“we know the words mainstreaming and reshaping but there is no sense of how to achieve it.”*

The characteristics described for each of the phases were not dissimilar to Tuckman’s Group Development Theory.

Group development				Sure Start programmes
Tuckman stage	Task behaviour	Relationship behaviour	General theme	
1. Forming	Orientation	Dependency	Awareness	1. Start Up
2. Storming	Resistance	Hostility	Conflict	2. Set up
3. Norming	Communication	Cohesion	Co operation	3. Mid term
4. Performing	Problem Solving	Inter-dependence	Productivity	4. Switch over
5. Adjourning	Termination	Disengagement	Separation	5. Completion

The process of group development essentially relies on four elements; task, process, relationships and methods. These elements were evident in the description of each of the phases though the approach to development varied between the programmes. Some were focussed on relationships and the

process of achieving goals whilst others were focussed on tasks necessary to achieve the goals.



## 4.2 Components for governance

To understand the development of governance further the study group was asked to identify which components or elements of governance were evident at each phase. For a more detailed list of the content for each components see Annexe Two.

Each programme was presented with a list of eight key components, as follows:

- 1 Relationship with constituency and stakeholders
- 2 Knowledge and understanding of the Board's role, responsibilities and how organisations work
- 3 Good systems and methods for communicating with a wide range of people
- 4 Process and ability to manage the managers
- 5 Process and ability to recruit and select the right people to implement plans
- 6 Ability to manage themselves as a Board
- 7 Systems and an understanding of financial planning and control
- 8 Ability to think and act strategically for the achievement of longer term outcomes

The programmes reported a patchy development of these components through phases one and two. Though most programmes could identify something from each of the components they were not necessarily effectively developed within the partnership, for example:

- Systems for financial planning and control are a necessary part of the production of a delivery plan. However for the majority of programmes the systems rest with the accountable body. Several programmes reported the difficulty of negotiating a system that provided the partnership with information it needed in a way that could be understood.
- Process and ability to recruit and select the right people. Most of the agencies involved in the partnerships have systems for recruitment and selection. Many of the managers involved were well trained and experienced at undertaking these tasks. However this is not the same as having the skills embedded in the partnership. It is also clear that differences between the

agencies in the field of employment, from recruitment and selection onwards, created tensions at a management level.

There were some gaps. The programmes reported very low competence or an absence of the following;

- Good systems and methods for communicating with a wide range of people
- Process and ability to manage the managers
- Process and ability to recruit and select the right people to implement plans
- Ability to manage themselves as a Board
- Ability to think and act strategically for the achievement of longer term outcomes

By phase three the programmes were clearly developing more of the necessary systems, structures and skills within the partnership.

Indeed Wave one programmes were able to identify all the components, though were slightly weaker in two areas:

- Process and ability to manage the managers
- Ability to think and act strategically for the achievement of longer term outcomes

Waves two, three and four were less well developed. Identifying weaker areas in:

- Knowledge and understanding of the Board's role, responsibilities and how organisations work
- Process and ability to manage the managers

And more of a gap around:

- Ability to manage themselves as a Board
- Ability to think and act strategically for the achievement of longer term outcomes

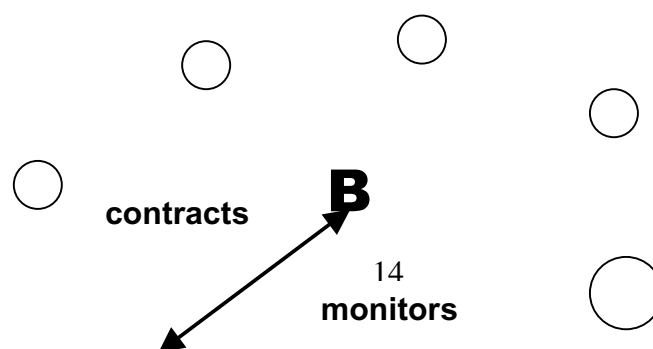
### 4.3 Models of governance

From the study day it became clear that a number of different models of governance existed. Each model was 'under construction', there was recognition that programmes were learning how to structure their governance, and that this was another process they were involved in.

Six different models were identified and each programme was asked to select the model closest to their programme. Unsurprisingly the majority of programmes had difficulty selecting only one. Elements of more than one could be identified in most of the programmes. Only five of the programmes defined themselves with a single model.

The models can be described as follows:

#### 1. A contracts approach



In this approach the board is the partnership. Made up of key representatives (as prescribed by Sure Start guidance) of agencies delivering services to young children and their families within the locality, community groups and individual users (parents).

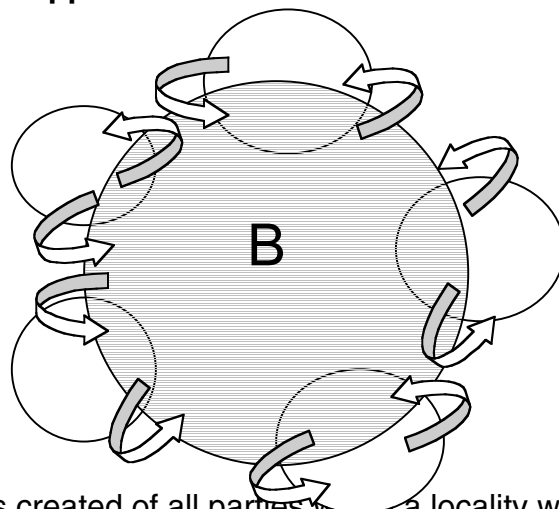
The board, supplied with information and after consultation with local users, determines which activities or services will be required to meet the objectives and 'contracts' with providers to deliver those services. In addition to services directed at young children and their families there maybe services to assist the board in it's role e.g. consultation or research. The Programme Manager manages the process and the board monitors the results.

There is not necessarily any connection between the providers though some providers may also have a seat on the board. The board may set up sub groups to tackle specific tasks/ topics e.g. capital development and to carry out management functions e.g. employment and staffing.

In the first instance Board Members or agencies will have been invited to join by the Lead Agent responsible for establishing the partnership. Invited agencies nominating an appropriate manager to the role. As the model (and programme) develops a constitution identifying membership with a method for nominations/election/selection is also developed.

Decision making and responsibility clearly lie with the board. There is an external accountable body (usually the local authority) with responsibility for ensuring financial probity.

## 2. A managerial approach



A partnership is created of all parties within a locality with an interest in actively developing a programme of work for young children and their families.

Each of the partners has a stake in the outcomes of the programme and will have a responsibility for managing a particular activity or service.

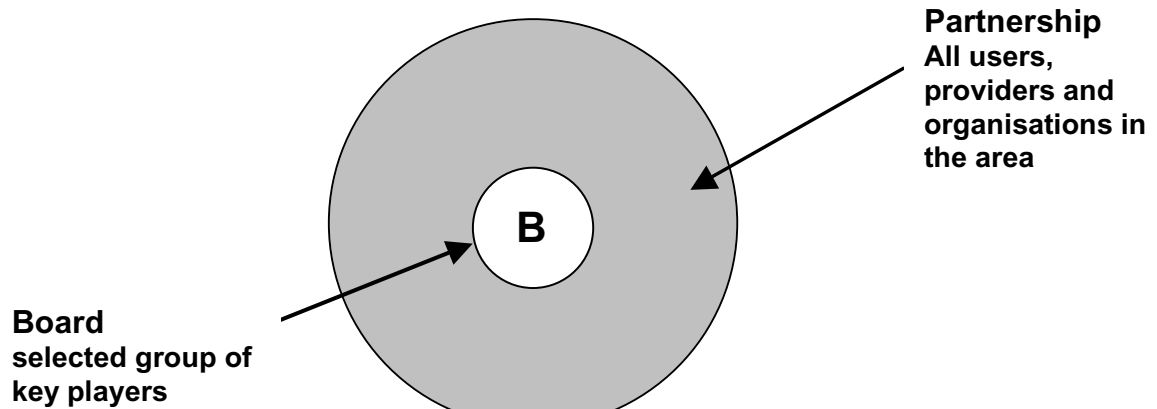
The majority of partners will already be providers of services within the locality and they engage with the partnership as a way of achieving their own (agencies) goals. Members are selected because they are managers of a service or activity. Each partner therefore has a dual role; manager of an activity/ service and independent board member.

All decisions rest with the board though sub groups exist to tackle specific topics e.g. capital development, consultation. The Programme Manager (and team) may develop additional activities or services and ensure the co ordination of services/ activities. The board monitors progress towards objectives.

### **3. The 'fried egg' approach**

The 'full' partnership is 'open' to anyone within the locality with a stake in the outcomes of the programme. The Lead Agent (and after initial phase Programme Manager) have responsibility for identifying and inviting people to attend Partnership meetings and much time is spent ensuring active participation by those invited to attend.

Membership includes all agencies responsible for or actually delivering services to young children and their families, other initiatives, community groups and users of services. This includes those that are delivering Sure Start activities/services and those that are not. This is often a very large group, can be up to 80 members (though the average would appear to be around 22). Consequently the Lead Agent and Programme Manager have considerable responsibility and authority particularly in the early phases.



The group emerges a board (initially a steering group) often made up of key agencies and individual users. To ensure that board meetings are efficient and effective, considerable work is undertaken around meetings by the Lead Agent and Programme Manager. Terms of reference or Partnership Agreements are recognised as being essential to the smooth running of the partnership and its board.

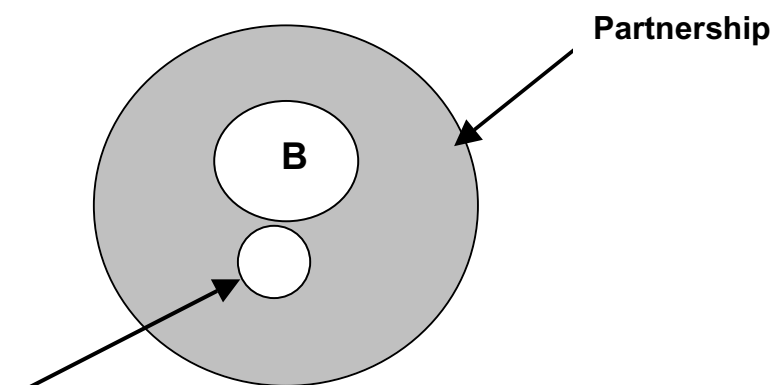
Decisions are made by the board on options presented either from the Lead Agent, Programme Manager or any of a number of sub groups set up to focus on separate topics e.g. parental involvement, capital development, evaluation.

#### 4. The 'key hole' (1) approach

The 'full' partnership is 'open' to anyone within a locality with an interest in services for young children and their families.

A board is created from the membership however, in this approach, the board is considered too large for effective decision making and selects/agrees the membership of a smaller executive group of between 15 and 19 members (in a few cases this is a much smaller group of around 8 members). This group has delegated powers to enable it to make decisions on behalf of the board and often focuses on the operational management of the programme. The Lead Agent and Programme Manager are members of the executive group. The executive group may set up sub groups focussing on specific tasks or topics e.g. capital development, parents or family meetings.

The executive reports to the board and responsibility remains with the 'full' partnership.



**5. The ‘keyhole’ (2) approach**

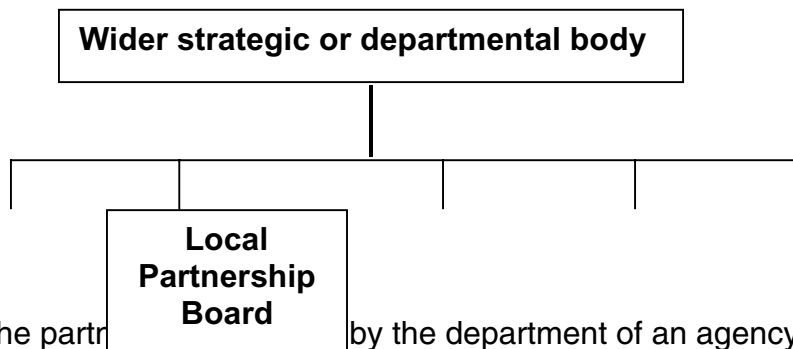
The ‘full’ partnership is ‘open’ to anyone within the locality with a stake in the outcomes of the programme. The Lead Agent (and after initial phase Programme Manager) have responsibility for identifying and inviting people to attend partnership meetings.

A board is established from partnership members with specific responsibility to make decisions on behalf of the partnership. The selected members are usually from the key statutory agencies responsible for the delivery of services. The board reports back to the ‘full’ partnership

However the board is considered too large to deal with the implications of decisions made and consequently a smaller executive group is selected with a remit to focus on the implementation of decisions. This group often has a management role. The Lead Agent and Programme Manager are members of this executive group.

The board monitors progress towards objectives. The ‘full’ partnership gets involved in discussion about the delivery of services, changes to plans. In effect they act as an ongoing consultative group.

**6. A representational approach**



The partnership is established by the department of an agency or by a strategic body. The department or strategic body has responsibility for a wide range of services based either on a geographic area or topic.

The partnership, slots into the structure of the ‘parent’ body as a sub committee reporting to a (wider) committee/ partnership.

Membership is defined by the department or strategic body based on representation of different interests involving young children and their families. Membership is extended to include users of services (parents) and other groups or initiatives with an interest.

The ‘parent’ body gives delegated authority for decision making to the partnership. But ultimate responsibility rests with the ‘parent’ body.

The descriptions above attempt to summarise the models that are in development. There are aspects of each of the models that need further clarification to achieve full understanding of how governance is being developed. There are three aspects in particular where there were outstanding questions.

Each of the models contain within them a parents network, forum, or meeting. Whilst it is clear that there is a requirement and commitment to ensuring user or parental involvement in the governance of the programmes the role of these groups was not always clear.

Each of the models was clearly influenced by a series of external and internal factors. One of the internal factors was leadership. Each programme has a Lead Agent responsible for establishing the partnership. Their understanding and views about the long term have a clear impact on the design of a partnership. In addition Programme Managers play an important role in the development of partnership models and in some cases the chair of a partnership (where it is not or no longer the Lead Agent and the Accountable body) can also play a leadership role. Externally the partnership takes a Lead from the Sure Start Unit and more recently from Strategic Managers (with a role in more than one Sure Start Partnership) and other agencies with a responsibility for the delivery of services to young children and their families. Clearly leadership is important in the development of partnership models but is an area that is often overlooked.

Finally there was a question of ownership. Who owns the partnership and the programme? Is it the Sure Start Unit or the government - the funding body that has determined the objectives and targets to be met? Is it the Lead Agent and Accountable body that have a legal responsibility for the outcome of the programme? Is it the agencies delivering the services on behalf of the Sure Start partnership? Or is it the users the parents and families benefiting from the service? The answer is probably a combination of all or some of these. The combination varies as demonstrated by the governance models being developed. However there are likely to be different attitudes towards the development of governance and inevitable tensions between the 'owners' e.g. who's vision is the partnership working towards? Currently the question of ownership in each of the programmes, is 'left hanging' and needs further exploration.

The table below shows how the models were distributed.

<b>Models</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>6</b>
Primary	1	3	2	5	0	5
Secondary	1	7	1	1	1	1

The most common models were the representational and the small executive models combined with elements of the managerial model.

Interestingly the approaches identified and described bear some relation to the models of governance being developed by Chris Cornforth, Open University Business School<sup>4</sup>.

- |                             |                           |                                     |
|-----------------------------|---------------------------|-------------------------------------|
| 1 The Contracts approach    | is closely related to the | Compliance Model                    |
| 2 A Managerial approach     |                           | Stewardship or<br>Partnership Model |
| 3. The Fried Egg            |                           | Stakeholder Model                   |
| 4. The Keyhole 1            |                           | Democratic Model                    |
| 5. The Keyhole 2            |                           | Co-optation Model                   |
| 6. The Representative Model |                           | Democratic Model                    |

The most common approaches to governance (whilst with different structures, 4 and 6 above) derive from a democratic model and this is consistent with our findings about the perceptions of partnership and governance.

To explore further the approaches to governance each programme was asked to identify where ultimate responsibility was placed. This again was a difficult question to answer, though only three possibilities emerged many people had difficulty deciding which of these related to their situation. In the majority of cases by phase three there is a separation between decision making for the direction of the programme as a whole and operational management. However ultimate responsibility does not appear to be well defined. It is therefore perceived to rest with everybody including the Programme Managers.

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<sup>4</sup> Understanding the governance of public and non-profit organisations: Multiple Perspectives and Paradoxes: Chris Cornforth: Open University Business School: July 2002

The responses to the question of ultimate responsibility are recorded below

	Partnership (large group)	Board / Executive/ Sub group	Accountable body/ Lead Agent
Wave 1	1	2	0
Wave 2	5	1	4
Wave 3	1	0	1
Wave 4	0	0	1

The partnership (that wider and larger group) with the accountable body and/or Lead Agent were considered (almost) equally as holding ultimate responsibility. Though the reason for this is probably best summed up by two of the participants. *“Responsibility lies with partnership steered by the accountable body/ Lead Agent”* and *“Responsibility lies with partnership but as the legal body ultimate responsibility rests with accountable body”*.

#### 4.4 The future of the partnerships

The phases in the life cycle of a programme reflect the development of activity. Similarly approaches to governance adapt to the demands of the programme. For example at the study day the pictures and characteristics created for phase one of each programme most closely relate to the fried egg approach to governance. Very few partnerships maintained that approach once operational.

This poses a question for the future or, phase five, completion, (the withdrawal of Sure Start money). All programmes have a 7 – 10 year life span. Long term vision of the partnership will have an impact on decisions made about development from now until completion.

Determining the long term view of the partnership was another difficult question. Most partnerships were unclear about what will happen in phase five. A few (2) had a long term view and were beginning to create a strategy. Several found it impossible to identify any option while others identified a variety of different possibilities. Only three of the partnerships have a clear idea and plans in place for long term development.

Clearly external factors were influencing views and discussions about the future. The introduction of LSP's (Local Strategic Partnerships) and Neighbourhood Renewal were cited a reasons for finding it difficult to grapple with this question. As were the increasing number of sure start programmes within an area and the employment of strategic managers. Whilst these present interesting new dynamics which need to be factored into future decisions they were presented as reasons that prevented decision making by the partnerships.

The question of the future highlights the lack of strategic thinking evident in the partnerships.

#### The options given

- the Partnership will become the operational arm of a Strategic Partnership
- the Partnership will become an independent organisation
- the Partnership will be merged with another Partnership or agency

- the Partnership will cease to exist as all the services will be integrated into other agencies
- the Partnership will continue in a similar fashion to the current model
- the Partnership will be amalgamated with another Sure Start Programme and become ... (one of the above)

**Additional options identified**

- “the partnership may be integrated into another regeneration initiative”
- “the partnership as it stands dissolves as the various agencies take back their workers but not the new services developed”

**And one dream or wish**

- “A Children’s Department encompassing all age groups (0 – 4, 5 – 12, adolescents, youth offending) that employs people from different disciplines and includes parents in the management of services delivered.”

For those that were able to answer this question the following were seen as the most likely future outcomes.

- the Partnership will be the operational arm of a Strategic Partnership 8
- the Partnership will become an independent organisation 1
- the Partnership will be merged with another Partnership or agency 1

**4.5 Strengths and weaknesses**

The strengths and weaknesses identified were consistent both with characteristics identified for each of the three phases and with the components of governance identified by each of the programmes. Interestingly there was very little duplication particularly amongst the strengths listed. (For complete list see Annexe Three)

In phase one – start up, the strengths reflect individual contribution, for example; personalities and experience, champion in corporate structure, strong chair, long term strategic thinking, project management.

While the strengths identified for phase two concentrate more on the development of the partnership as a group for example; team building, decision making, inter personal relationships, better listening.

And in phase three there is a sense of the partnerships being much more grounded or as one manager put it ‘*blossoming*’ for example;. parents using and steering services, ability to reflect, acknowledge and make changes, coherence and trust.

By comparison the weaknesses were more focussed. At phase one they concerned power and the ‘top down approach’, understanding and language, blockages, barriers and multiple agendas.

For phase two a much smaller list was created but for many programmes the weaknesses of phase one continued into phase two.

By phase three the weaknesses were clearly the loss of key people and the lack of strategy.

#### 4.6 Perceptions of partnership working

The interpretation of governance, and the development of models or visions for the future rely heavily on the individuals involved. To complete the study an exercise designed to explore perceptions and attitudes towards partnership working and governance was included. This involved an interview with the Chair (or a Board Member) and the Programme Manager of each of the partnerships in the study (the same people who had attended the study day). It was unfortunate that diary constraints made it impossible to meet with all the pairs. Four of the interviews were carried out with the Programme Manager alone.

During the interview participants identified a preferred way of working and then were asked to expand on this by answering the question; why (the selected way) as opposed to (their opposite). This produced a set of constructs that were analysed to produce the model below. (The method is explained in detail below). The process is oppositional and therefore produces polarised views. These views are not absolute but are formed in relation to an individual's own experience or understanding, as illustrated by a conversation between the Red Queen and Alice ...

*"When you say, "hill" the queen interrupted "I could show you hills, in comparison with which you'd call that a valley."<sup>5</sup>*

The model provides a picture of how partnership working is perceived by those closely involved. Individual attitudes and perceptions influence the development of these structures. By understanding more about the way people perceive partnership working, forces for and blockages to development can be more easily identified.

We have already recognised that partnership working is still in the 'early days'. This also means that people involved are 'new to' or 'less experienced' at working as partners. Many of the constructs identified were based on aspirations or idealistic views of partnership, they are conceptual rather than actual.

##### 4.6.1 Eliciting Constructs associated with Partnership Working

A semi-structured Interview technique was used to explore attitudes to 'partnership'. The method used was 'laddering and pyramiding'. This uses George Kelly's<sup>6</sup> ideas of hierarchical construing to elicit sets of 'higher order constructs by progressively asking the question, 'Why is that important?' (laddering). It also enables the elicitation of lower order constructs using the question, 'In what way?'

Starting with the concept of partnership working, the interviewer created a dichotomy by asking the question 'As opposed to what?' This question helped to define what the respondent meant by 'Partnership' and identified an alternative model of working against which constructs could be put into context. Alternative models of working varied from the general ('Autocratic', 'Politically influenced', 'Dictatorship') to the specific ('One agency commissioning/subcontracting').

<sup>5</sup> Alice Through The Looking Glass. Lewis Carroll

<sup>6</sup> Theory of Personality: George Kelly: 1955

Once an alternative model was established, the interviewer asked, 'Which model is the preferred way of working?'

12 of the respondents identified Partnership as the preferred model of working, while 4 identified alternative models. These were:

- Quango with Regional Sublets
- New Community-led Independent Organisation
- Community Grouping Organisation
- Individual Independent Manager Allocating

Having established the alternative to partnership, the interview was conducted by asking a repeated set of questions, beginning with, 'Why do you choose x way of working in preference to y?' The answer to this provided part of the first construct, for example: 'Because working in Partnership means we are focused on achieving the same things.'

To create an alternative pole to this, the interviewer would ask, 'As opposed to what?' or 'What is the opposite to this?' In this example, the answer was 'drifting'.

The first elicited construct then was 'focused on achieving the same things vs drifting.'

This was then used as the basis of the next question. First, the interviewer established which was the preferred pole: 'Which would you prefer, to be focused on achieving the same things or to be drifting?' In this case, the answer was 'focussed on achieving the same things.' The interviewer then asked, 'Why? Why is it important to you to be focused on achieving the same things?'

The answer to this forms part of the second construct: 'Because this leads to consensus on outcomes.' (The opposite of which is 'imposed outcomes'.)

This process is known as 'laddering' as it elicits increasingly 'higher order' constructs. When this process was exhausted, the interviewer turned to 'lower order' constructs by asking the question 'How? How would you achieve this?' As this can lead to a number of different subordinate constructs, this can create a map which is pyramid shaped, hence 'pyramidding'. So the statement,

'Partnership is about a whole new way of looking at the world, with people at the centre'

was 'pyramided' to produce:

'It's about how can we... rather than why we can't...'

'It's about how to engage – get people to determine how to change as opposed to telling people how.'

'This needs time for people to get to know each other, instead of a lack of time.'

'You also need a focus and structures from parents talking until there is a solution – a pow-wow as opposed to just voting.'

'This needs patience.'

And so on...

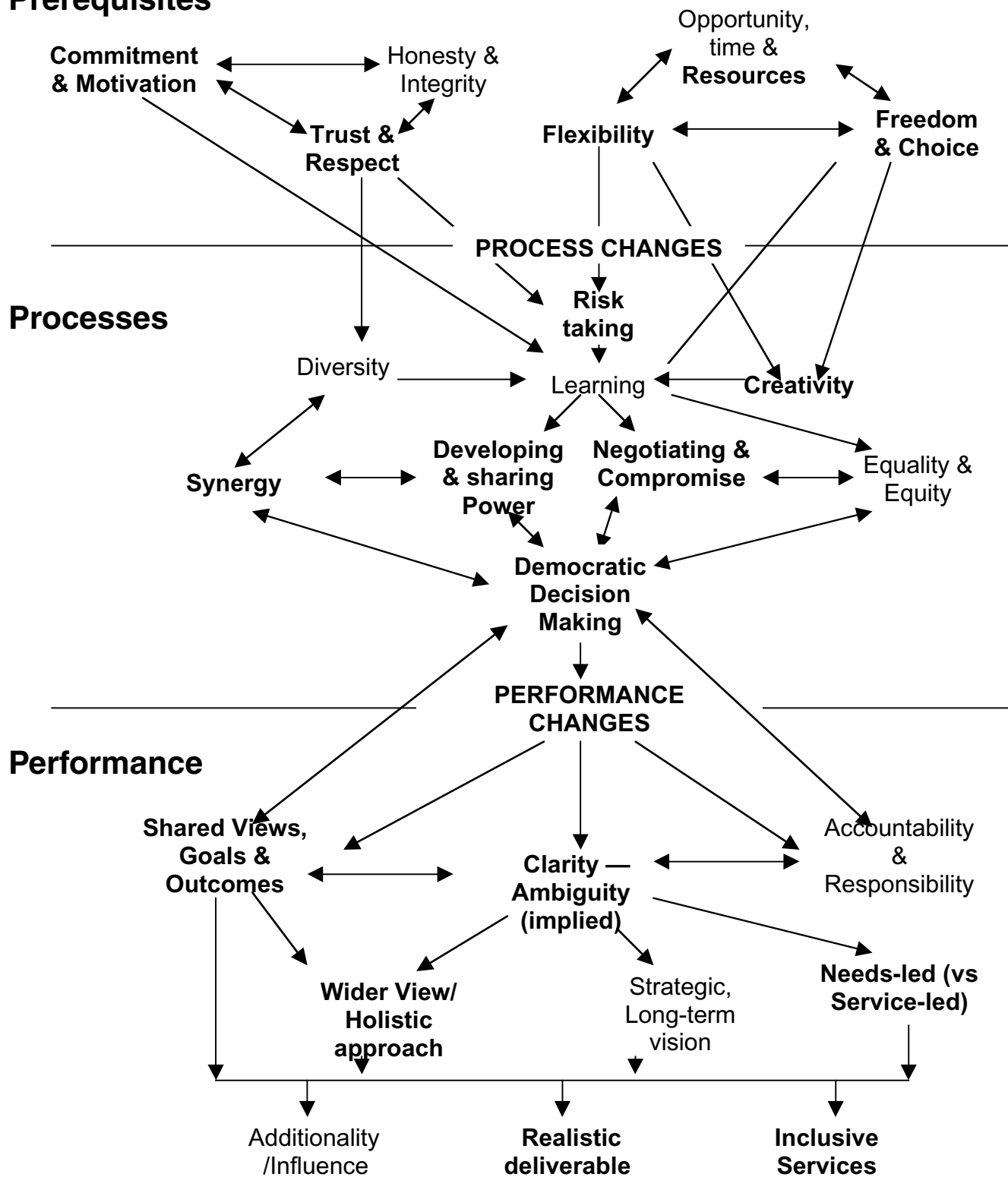
The result was a rich collection of ordered constructs, obtained in a relatively short space of time. These were analysed to identify common 'clusters' of constructs, producing the following table:

## Common Constructs associated with Partnership

	Responses	%responses	respondents	%respondents
Change/Experiment/Innovate	20	8%	10	83%
Shared views/goals/outcomes	15	6%	10	83%
Consensus/democracy/representation/ownership	29	12%	9	75%
Comittment/motivation	14	6%	9	75%
Realistic/deliverable	10	4%	8	67%
Freedom/choice	11	4%	7	58%
Resource/synergy/working together	16	7%	7	58%
power	8	3%	7	58%
Needs led/service led	10	4%	7	58%
Risk taking/failure/blame	9	4%	7	58%
Trust/respect	10	4%	7	58%
Creativity/outside the box	8	3%	7	58%
Rich/holistic/wider view	9	4%	7	58%
Inclusive	9	4%	7	58%
Negotiation/Compromise	7	3%	6	50%
Carity	9	4%	6	50%
Flexible	7	3%	6	50%
Accountability/responsibility	5	2%	5	42%
Learning	9	4%	5	42%
Strategic/long term	7	3%	5	42%
Diversity/different views	7	3%	4	33%
Equality/equity	7	3%	4	33%
Additionality/influence	4	2%	4	33%
Opportunities	3	1%	3	25%
Honesty/integrity	2	1%	2	17%
<b>Total</b>	<b>245</b>		<b>12</b>	

This immediately shows that the most commonly held constructs were about change, sharing a vision, democratic decision-making and commitment. Individual 'construct maps' showed the implied relationships between construct pairs. These were used to develop a model of developing partnership working, shown below:

**Prerequisites**



(items in bold represent constructs identified by >50% of respondents)

#### 4.6.2 Explanation

The model is an attempt to structure the key constructs surrounding Partnership working into a coherent set of related elements. Broadly, the constructs elicited fall into three distinct, but overlapping groups; prerequisites, processes and performance.

##### Prerequisites

Firstly there are constructs about the elements that need to be in place as *prerequisites* for partnerships to work. These may or may not be accessible at the start of the process of building a partnership; the process itself will help to generate or reinforce these elements. There are three main clusters that form the underlying basis for this group:

- Honesty and Integrity, also linked with openness and open-mindedness;
- Commitment and Motivation, linked with believing in the cause, having vision and excitement.
- Freedom to operate and Opportunities, together with available resources, including the time needed to work on building relationships and developing structures;

From the first two clusters, we can derive **trust** as a 'second order' construct. The relationship is two-way; as trust develops, people are likely to be more open and honest with each other and more committed to working together. From the third cluster, we can derive **flexibility** and **freedom/choice**. Trust, freedom and flexibility are important components of the ability/willingness to create change. This was a key construct among those favouring partnership working and creates the bridge between prerequisite and process. Ability and willingness to change are prerequisites; change itself is part of a process. One respondent identified the continuous process of change, which seemed particularly significant to this model.

##### Processes

The change process is both underpinned by and itself reinforces three pathways of constructs. The first relates to the process of working together and incorporates encouraging and using **diversity**; listening to and encouraging different viewpoints. This creates **synergy** by which the whole becomes more than the sum of its parts. The second is **risk taking** which allows experimentation and hence **learning** to take place. Learning is a 'linking construct', which enables the development of **power** and leads to negotiation as the preferred style of decision making, based on an **equitable and equal** relationship.. The third pathway is through **creativity**, which feeds into learning.

These are important steps towards developing a democratic style of working. They also release energy, which powers the process of change. There is a clear link, for example between synergy and the creation of new resources; new information and knowledge, more time available through more efficient working and not having to reinvent the wheel. The combination of creative approaches, risk taking and learning has its roots in the prerequisites of permission to work differently and flexibility. There is an important 'feedback loop' from learning into ability to change; change feeds more change.

##### Performance

The development of a democratic style of decision-making is a key component of most respondents' construct maps of partnership. We believe

this forms an important link, between the changes relating to process and those that relate to performance. Once the partnership is operating democratically, it can begin to take decisions that represent the views of its members and harness their knowledge, commitment and energy. In short, this is what enables the partnership to develop and share its **power**. The relationships between democratic decision-making and the associated constructs of synergy, power, negotiation and compromise and equality and equity are shown as two-headed arrows. This indicates the two-way nature of the relationships; not only are these components of democracy, they are strengthened by the exercise of democratic decision-making.

Along with democracy comes **accountability and responsibility**. Democratic working also creates a **shared vision** that unites the partnership to common goals and outcomes. Key to both of these elements is the concept of **clarity**. This is where opinion divides; some respondents saw lack of clarity as a feature of their partnership. Conversely, a feature of non-partnership working, where decisions are imposed or taken by a small executive can be characterised as having clear processes and lines of accountability. Hierarchical organisations generally have clear lines of command where the relationship between decision-making and actions are clearly understood. On the other hand partnerships have more complex decision making structures, there is more emphasis on consultation and consensus and actions are negotiated rather than imposed. This adds time to the process, which is reflected in some respondents' maps.

The increased flexibility available to partnership implies ambiguity. Things are not decided in a pre-determined, formulaic way, but are arrived at through a more organic process. We would argue that a key skill for partnership working is the ability to manage this ambiguity. This seems to be an issue some partnerships are struggling with.

Key outcomes for partnerships are represented here in two tiers. The first tier contains 'enabling outcomes'. These are outcomes of the process of working together and represent styles of work, values and beliefs, rather than tangibles. These enable the partnership to deliver services that are congruent to their principles:

- Wider view and a holistic approach
- Strategic, long-term vision
- Needs-led responses (as opposed to service-led)

The 'bottom line' outcomes are more tangible and measurable;

- **Additionality:** the ability to influence other services and the wider system
- **Realistic deliverable services,** based on an analysis of need and an accurate assessment of what the partnership can deliver
- **Inclusive services** that work locally, involve local people and users/beneficiaries through genuine consultation, participation and power sharing.

Key to this is the concept of power. Working together would seem to generate more energy, which is released through democratic decision-making process. Coupled with the availability of resources, permission to work flexibly and the development of creative approaches, this leads to the development of learning and reinforces power. It is the way in which this power is used that determines whether the outcomes are congruent with the partnership ethos.

The interesting question this raises is how successful partnerships use their power to influence agencies and systems, to create needs-led services and, importantly, to include and empower its users and other local people.

#### 4.6.3 Dissenting views

Four respondents indicated that partnership was not their preferred way of working. It may be worthwhile to deal with these as separate case studies, as they each raise different issues.

#### 1. Quango with regional sublets

The construct map arising from this respondent is interesting in that it mirrors closely the typical response from those favouring partnership working. The common constructs were:

- Taking risks
- Needs-led
- Freedom to choose
- Learning organisation
- Devolved responsibility
- Freedom
- Flexibility
- (Fosters) creativity
- User choice and responsibility
- User involvement in planning
- Experiment
- Power
- Resources/Budget

By comparison, partnerships were seen as short term, service led, working to ensure safety (no risk taking), not learning, constrained by legislation and statutory duties, procedurally driven with rigid rules, hierarchical with permission obtained from above, bureaucratic, with limited involvement of users. This appears totally at odds with the way most partnerships see themselves. Either these respondents have an inaccurate view of partnership working or their view is that they are working to the same approaches, but more successfully. (One of the features of this approach to mapping constructs is that it elicits at either/or answers rather than more of/less of responses. This can have the effect of polarising views. 'If we are free to experiment then the alternative is constrained and stuck'.)

The evidence of different construing is rather limited. Constructs particular to this respondent are:

- Specific objectives vs Overall targets
- National vision and targets vs Competing demands of different agencies
- Sanctions = rewards vs Money taken away/star ratings
- Universal vs Targeted
- Preventative vision vs Chasing after the event has happened

These seem to imply that the partnership model is more constrained by external factors. This includes the competing demands of different agencies and the framework imposed by the central administration of Sure Start. It is possible then that the key to the way in which partnership is viewed is that these constraints prevent it from operating in a flexible, needs-led, inclusive way. The idea that agencies will follow their own agenda is not borne out by the responses from those favouring partnership work; in fact the opposite view

is prevalent, that partnership members are allowed to act outside agency boundaries.

## 2. New Community-led Independent Organisation

Again this respondent's map reflects some key constructs identified by partnerships:

- Defining and understanding needs vs lack of understanding of local need;
- Power for parents/users vs Agency driven
- Process of participation vs Tokenistic
- Truly representative vs Individual representation
- Participation (in debate) vs Given information
- (Part of) decision-making process vs Doing things to people
- Delivering changes that are sustainable vs Not making an impact
- Broad community involvement vs Narrowly defined
- Long term investment of time vs Time limited commitment
- Local people reshaping services vs Agency led agendas
- Making links between strategy and delivery on the ground vs Don't know what impact is on the ground
- Flexibility vs Closely defined
- Trial and error vs Formula
- Learning from practice vs Reinventing the wheel
- Links to wider changes vs Change to existing practice
- Ownership of outcomes vs Decisions in a vacuum
- Resources (available) vs Money as a driver

Key to the differences seem to be the degree to which this approach is in touch with local community needs and how it involves local people in decision making. An implied criticism of partnerships (as in the case of the previous respondent) is the extent to which they are externally driven.

## 3. Community Grouping Association

Again there are a large number of constructs which closely match those identified by partnerships:

- Democratic – shared vision, collective leadership vs Autocratic/plutocratic – imposed vision, dictatorship
- Delegated responsibility – ownership vs Centrally held responsibility – disenfranchised
- Innovative (opportunities) vs Traditional
- Respect vs condescension
- More local people vs No local people
- Community led vs Organisationally led
- Needs led vs Tunnel vision
- Tailored service vs Service led
- Collective (group) vs Individualistic
- Listening vs Ignoring
- Shared decision-making vs Dictatorial
- Active ownership vs Irrelevant

This respondent clearly has the most polarised views, describing partnerships as dictatorships and irrelevant to local needs and concerns! Clearly, this respondent sees the strengths of the organisation's approach as lying in its close links with the community and

its ability to involve local people. By comparison partnerships seem more remote and, again, centrally driven.

#### **4. Individual independent manager allocating**

This seems to be materially different in its approach to the above models. The overlap of construing with respondents favouring partnerships is less defined:

- Evidence based vs What is best for the organisation/partner
- Parental involvement through research (long term) vs Parents involved through the Board – instantaneous feedback
- Wider range/broader spectrum of opinion vs Focused on fewer people

The implication here is that a research approach creates a more accurate assessment of need, involves parents more significantly and uses a broader spectrum of opinion. The constructs which discriminate this approach from partnerships are more to do with clarity and efficiency:

- Accountable directly to government department vs Unaccountable (Note NOT accountable to local people/users!)
- Rational approach, defined decisions vs Irrational approach, board as a rubber stamp
- Clear responsibility and accountability vs Unclear
- Less costly/quicker vs Costly/time consuming
- Clean line structure vs Organisational chaos
- Contracts with existing agencies = no employment process necessary vs Employment processes complicated
- Very clear power vs Unclear where the power lies

The lack of democratic process and the service – led approach are seen as positives;

- Flat playing field – one person making decisions vs Set agendas and many organisations have to be involved in everything
- No issue of leadership vs Relationship between board and manager – issue of leadership
- Build on existing services vs Starting brand new services

Here, the benefits of the collective approach appear to be subsumed by the simplicity and clarity of a singular decision making structure. The implication is that involving many organisations in decision-making not only ‘muddies the water’ but also means that decisions will be driven by agency agendas. A service-led approach (albeit based on research and evidence) is more efficient than starting new services.

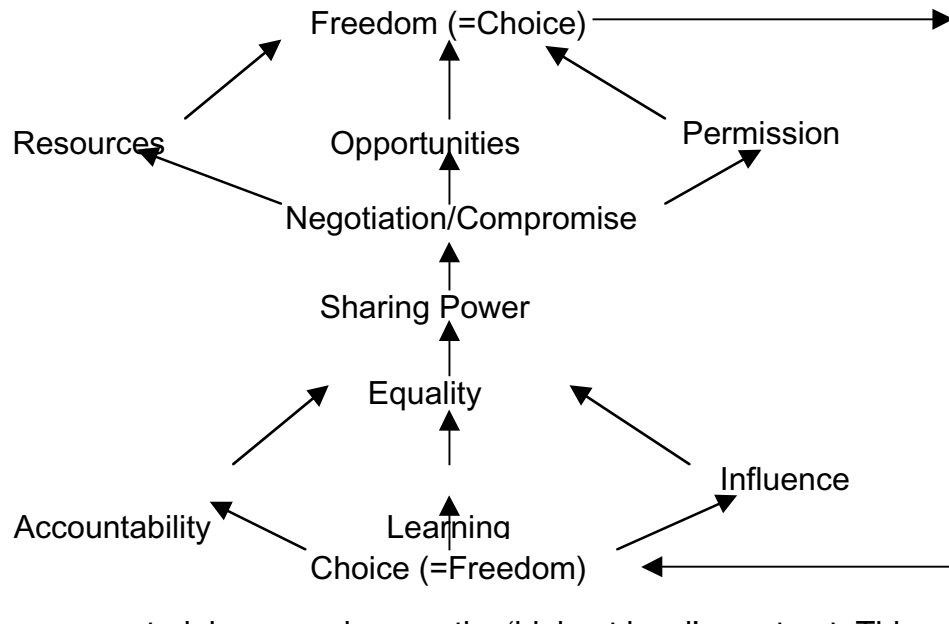
This respondent clearly stands apart from the others; this is a different approach and seems less concerned with the principles of providing a democratic, inclusive service and more about pragmatism and value for money.

#### **4.6.4 Circularity**

This method did not create nicely ordered, consistent construct maps. Instead we have been presented with what seems to be a jumble of constructs, whose interrelation varies enormously between respondents. It is against this backdrop that we attempted to impose some order by suggesting relationships between the most commonly expressed constructs presented to us.

In addition, there was evidence of 'circular construing' in most, if not all the responses. The same (or similar) construct appeared at different points in the construct map, as shown by the following four examples:

**A: Freedom and Choice (Respondent 1)**



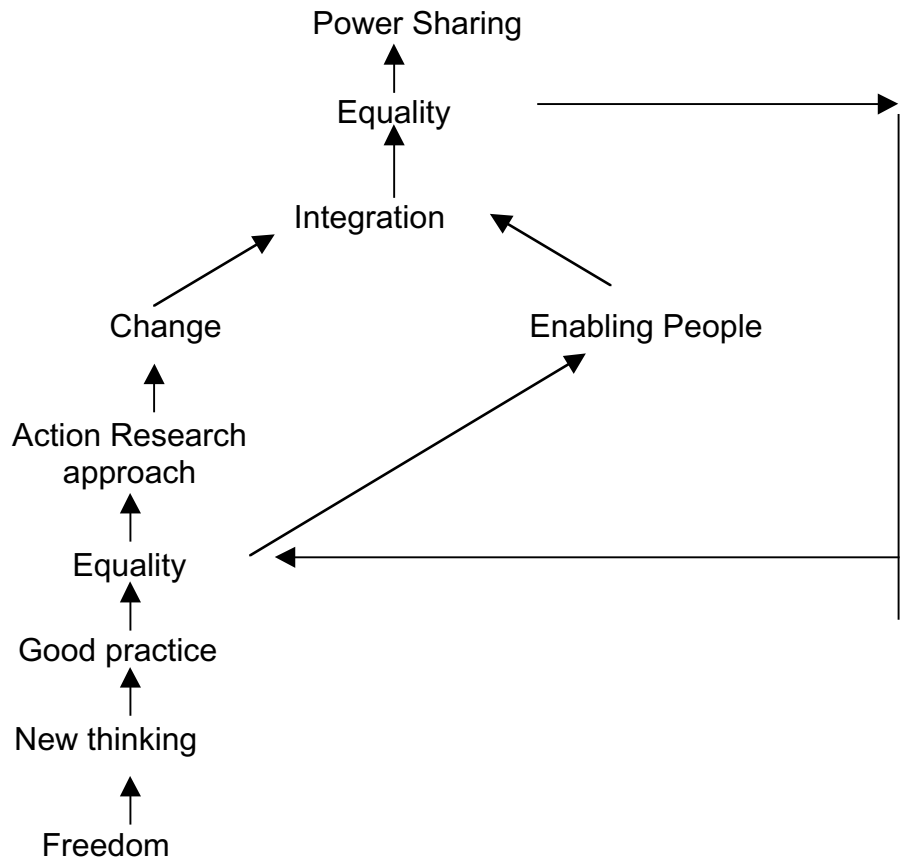
Here, **freedom** vs constraining was given as the ‘highest level’ construct. This seemed to flow from **resources** (resourced vs under-resourced), **permission** (to do things differently vs expected to toe the agency line) and **opportunities** (vs No Choice – Restrictive). This respondent clearly links choice, by implication, to Freedom.

These three ‘second level’ constructs flow from **negotiation/compromise** (vs confrontation), which, in turn comes from **sharing power** (vs imbalance of Power). This seems to imply that negotiation, necessary for the development of freedom of choice, cannot take place in an environment where there is an imbalance of power. Power sharing is based on **equality** (vs unfairness). This seems to be associated with three constructs: face to face **accountability** (vs hiding behind bureaucracy); **learning** and gaining knowledge (vs continuing in the same way); and Spreading benefits wider, **influencing** communities and agencies (vs service in a box led). The implication here is that the status quo is bureaucratic and service-led and does not foster equality.

The prerequisite for changing the status quo? **choice** (vs paucity of choice), that is, Freedom to change. So Freedom is seen as both a prerequisite to change and the result of change itself. Put another way, freedom begets freedom, in the same way that change begets more change! What is interesting is the path taken in the thought processes that explain this circular relationship.

**B: Power sharing (respondent 10)**

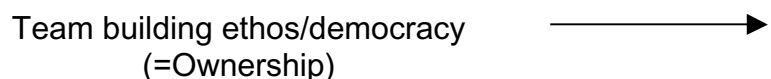
Sharing Power, which appeared in the above example, was displayed in the following circular construing:

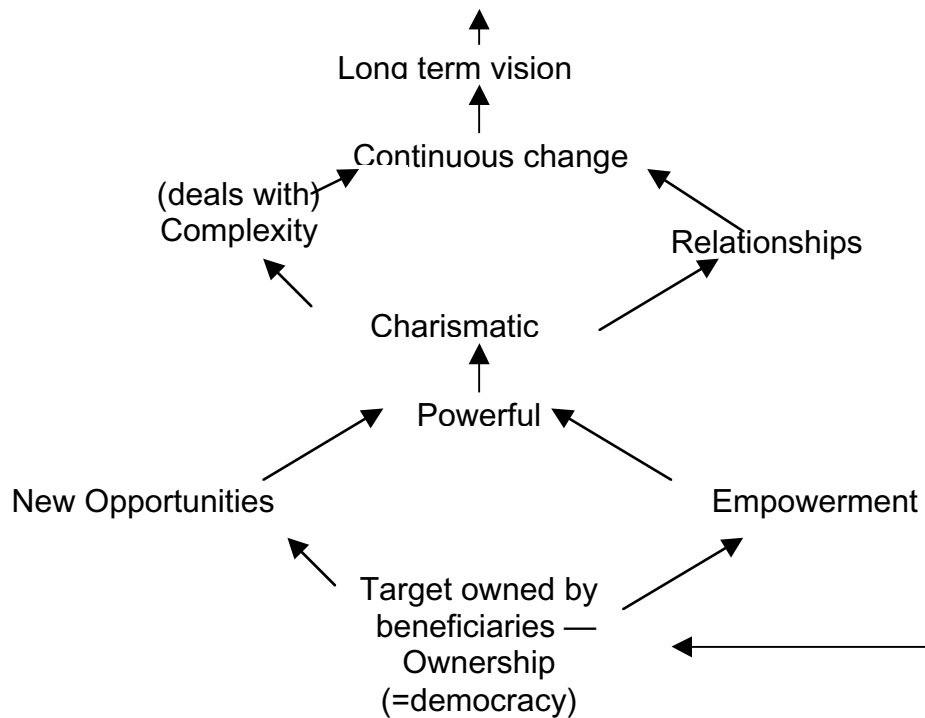


Here is an interesting progression. The construct **power sharing** (vs power imposed) is seen as flowing from a social (vs medical) model of intervention that was associated with ‘living out values’ rather than imposing decisions. This was seen as flowing from **equity** (where each person’s decision is equal). In shorthand, this represents the equality-power sharing link we saw above.

The prerequisite for Equality here is seen as **integration** (vs segregation) which comes from **empowerment** – enabling people through skilling them to make decisions (vs de-skilling – disempowerment) and **change** (vs stagnation) itself, supported through an **action research approach** – ‘living and breathing so we change it’ (vs waiting – randomised control – controlled). These are underpinned by **equality**, although the respondent adds there is a danger that it can be tokenistic. So the act of empowering people and action research creates an integrative or inclusive approach, which feeds the sense of equality, necessary for empowerment and change through action research. In common with the previous example, Equality is seen to flow from good practice and new thinking, (both of which are seen as in opposition to the ‘scientific approach’). This requires Freedom to make decisions (as opposed to the decisions being down to one person and dictated). So, as before, freedom leads to equality, which leads to Power sharing.

**C: Democratic decision making (respondent 13)**





We may be stretching a point here, ..... Democracy is about wider ownership. Here, the respondents' highest-level construct is Team building ethos/**democracy** (vs individuality/ autocratic) This is underpinned by a **long term vision** (vs short-termism/stasis) based on continuous **change** (vs rigidity). This is aided by '**charismatic leadership**' (vs dogma) that supports **relationships** (vs isolation) and deals with **complexity** (vs simplification). This has echoes of the 'scientific approach' mentioned in the above example – simplification in this case could be seen as reductionism, whereas the 'real' situation is more complex and requires leadership skills to manage the ambiguities that arise.

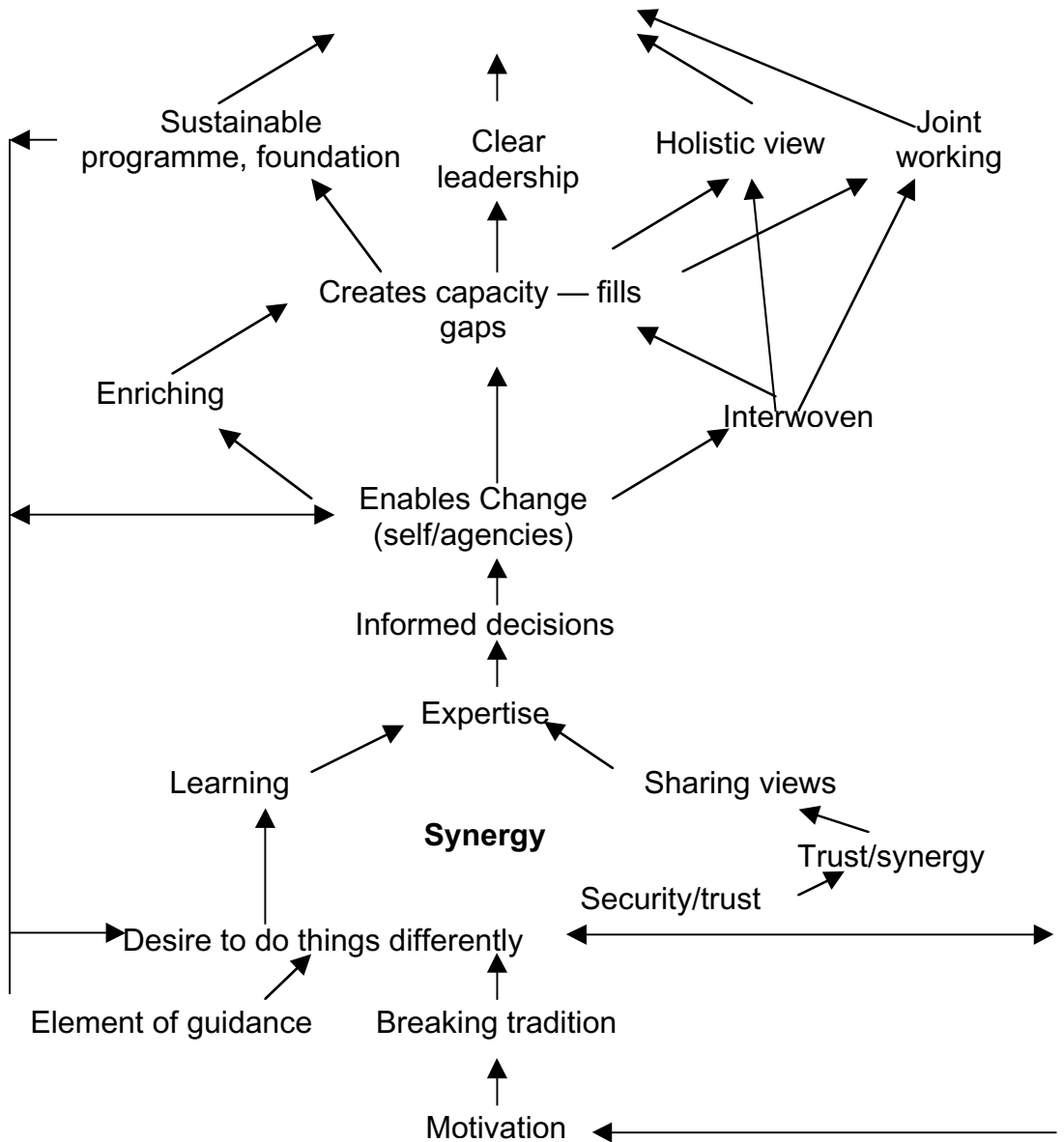
This is underpinned by **power** (vs powerless) achieved through **empowerment** (vs oppression) and developing new **opportunities** (vs repeating restricted options) through which power can be expressed. This concept, too, has echoes in the previous models. Here Empowerment and Opportunity are seen as flowing from **ownership** of (vs imposed) targets. So, Ownership is a starting point and an end point in itself. What is important is the development and sharing of power and the process of change.

**D: Motivation (respondent 12)**

All the above models are examples of a change process. The three emergent keys to enabling change can be seen as freedom to choose, equality and power sharing, and ownership of the outcomes (or targets for change). Motivation can be seen as the driver in the process. The desire to bring about changes and a commitment to the course of action required to bring about changes requires motivation. This example shows how motivation itself can also be derived from the change process.



# WORKING IN PARTNERSHIP



Not one loop, but two double loops! This shows the intricate relationship between motivation – desire to change – and change itself. **commitment** (vs disinterested) is seen by this respondent as a ‘high-level’ construct, flowing from a shared vision, shared beliefs and understanding (vs tunnel vision). The foundation for change is supplied by a **sustainable** programme (vs disintegrate at the end). It is this sustainability which is partly underpinning the commitment to change, along with **clear leadership**, (vs chaos – directed isolation), an **holistic view** (vs single minded, insular) and **joint working** (vs single minded, independent). Again we see the importance of leadership and the concept of synergy through working together with enabling leadership.

**Capacity** for change (and to sustain the changes) is about interlinking and ‘filling the gaps’. This is underpinned by an **enriching** (vs restrictive) and **interwoven** (vs control) approach. The changes required to bring about this new approach are based on **informed decision making** (vs not being part of the decision making process – directing) supported by **expertise**, the transfer of knowledge and experience (vs limited field of work), which comes from **learning** and **sharing views** – ‘lots of people looking at the same thing’ (vs complacency). This, then is the link between working together and creating capacity – the **synergy**. Working together requires **trust** (vs distrust) and a **desire** to do things differently (vs fear of change). Here we close both the ‘motivation loop’ and the ‘change loop’ together!

Underpinning the whole approach is an element of **guidance** (leadership) (vs strong control), **breaking traditional ways** of doing things (vs inflexible) and **security**, feeding **trust** (vs rigidity, restricted). The impetus to create the break with tradition is provided by motivation (vs lack of purpose).

So, here we see motivation as a sense of purpose, creating a desire for change and underpinning the process of forging working relationships that release synergy and create synergy. This leads to a sustainable plan, which creates commitment to change. Motivation and Commitment as both prerequisite and product of the process of working together.

The examples show that developing an understanding partnership working does not have a clear progression. What is described is more like a ‘soup’, the more you work at it or in it! the clearer the elements of the soup become. Partnership working it would seem does not have a clear path or route map.

## 5. Identified needs and suggestions

In planning this study an assumption was made that different needs would be evident for each of the different phases. The findings tell us that there were several needs that appropriate to more than one phase. (for a complete breakdown of needs see annex four)

- legal advice
- access to expertise for capital development
- more assistance for development of boards

In addition from discussion and interviews the following needs were also identified:

- Workers and partners need to understand the change process
- Low level of board development – to make these complex structures work requires intensive and clear systems for development
- Demand for more guidance and direction on the overall vision and purpose of Sure Start
- Assistance from the regional unit with the mainstreaming agenda. In particular to influence key agencies in their response to mainstreaming.

The following methods for delivery of assistance were mentioned:

Training   Mentoring   Information   Support   Expert Advice

## 6. Main conclusions

This study set out to find out how governance was being interpreted and implemented and as a result to identify learning for future programmes and partnerships. Our findings along with needs and suggestions identified by the participating programmes are outlined above. This section deals with some of the additional information gathered throughout the study, highlighting key issues or questions for the development of governance.

The development of governance as described by Partnerships in the study was an evolving and dynamic process. Partnership working in the public sector is still in its infancy, though more common since the introduction of Wave One programmes (Nov. 1999 - Jan. 2000). This means that partners and organisations are still determining what it means whilst leaning how to go about it.

### 6.1 Issues of governance in partnerships

To summarise, partnership working would benefit from:

1. Understanding the process for growing or establishing a partnership or board – systems thinking and organisational development would be helpful tools – see section 6.3.
2. The opportunity for board and partnership to discuss and debate in detail their understanding of what the programmes are about, in order to develop a shared language, direction and eventually strategy – see section 6.4.
3. Clear leadership and good understanding of various roles that partners or collaborators can play – see section 6.6
4. The skills and ability to manage and work with ambiguity and to work as agents for change – see section 6.2
5. A careful identification of the skills, abilities, experiences and knowledge expected of Board Members along with a process for developing these – see section 6.5
6. An opportunity to get to know other partners - time to build relationships – see section 6.7
7. A comprehensive board and governance development programme – see section 6.8

### 6.2 The search for clarity

Many of those participating in the study were struggling to understand what they were involved in. There was a call for 'clarity' from several of the managers.

Amongst the study group there was some keen debate about the interpretation of the Sure Start Unit's aims, objectives and targets.

"To work with parents-to-be, parents and children to promote the physical, intellectual and social development of babies and young children – particularly

those who are disadvantaged – so that they flourish at home and when they get to school, and thereby break the cycle of disadvantage for the current generation of young children.” Delivering Sure Start: Planning Pack: Fourth Wave edition:

The overall aim presented less of a problem for participants than the targets and requirements which were seen as both prescriptive and confusing.

*“Is it about -*

- evidence based practice*
- mainstreaming*
- putting parents in the driving seat by giving them real choice*
- improving children’s chances in life and as they go to school”*

or

- disadvantage and poverty*
- local involvement in decision making*
- different ways of delivering services”*

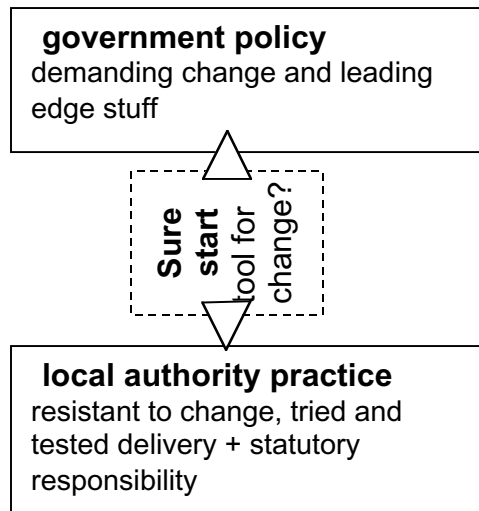
Each list of phrases presents a different philosophy and approach to the work.

Within the Sure Start messages there is a potential for contradiction. As pointed out by some in the study group:

*“The delivery of services to meet local needs - versus/plus - influencing existing service delivery, mainstreaming/reshaping, is contradictory or ambiguous and can lead to conflict.”*

A different view and one that was shared by others was that the detail didn’t really matter, the partnerships were involved *“as ‘catalysts for change’ (the particular change is not defined or agreed) therefore partnerships will be disruptive and cut across static agencies.”*

As a consequence of this uncertainty some of the Board Members and workers felt that programmes were trapped in what was described as a 'treacle vat' or 'a pincer movement' between



Or as described by another participant, Sure Start challenges traditional service delivery through *“bureaucratic systems that are based on economic arguments and reinforced by professional boundaries. A tension is created as you can’t ignore, indeed partnerships are required to influence, these systems.”*

The feeling of being trapped between two positions was clearly demonstrated through the interviews into perceptions of partnership. The interviews allowed a glimpse of the complexity of the emerging systems. These new systems are described as working towards a democratic framework that shares power in order to deliver services congruent with the principles of;

- a wider view and a holistic approach
- strategic, long term vision with
- needs led responses

The process of partnership creation as described by our study group is one of flexibility. In fact many of the participants were highly motivated, even passionate about the opportunity to work ‘out of the box’. However, flexibility does not bring with it certainty or tight definitions. It presents partners with ambiguity.

- **A key skill for partnership work is the ability to manage and work with ambiguity.**

### 6.3 What is a partnership?

Although for the majority of the study group, partnership was a preferred method of working, there was within the group a variety of views of what a partnership actually is.

Partnerships are often treated as independent organisations with their own identities, systems and structures but this raises questions about the nature of their independence.

Partnerships are actually made up of many representatives or agencies. The power of the partnership lies in the relationships created between these partners. So a partnership does not conform to the usual understanding of organisations. They are better described as systems for networking collaborators towards a shared purpose.

The point was made several times that *“a partnership is not a legal entity”*, and when asked where ultimate responsibility rested, almost half of the study group identified the accountable body because of its legal status.

Some people were conscious of the power and influence exercised by the accountable body/Lead Agent particularly where the partnership was viewed as a short term project to be managed (see also 6.5).

Personal experience and understanding of different organisational forms was often limited to, project management or a ‘trading umbrella’, where the same players sit around a table to discuss a common issue and attempt to negotiate.

It would seem this is common to other partnerships *“The groups... needed to see themselves and act as innovators, not a negotiation forum where interests were traded and deals done.”*<sup>7</sup>.

Amongst the study group there was little experience of what is involved in creating or growing a new system or ‘organisational framework’. Partners in the main come from traditional bureaucratic agencies, the majority of Programme Managers had either been employed by those departments/agencies or previously employed in hierarchically driven projects. Those required to interpret partnership working, as identified in other reports need *“to go beyond lead organisations, joint working and integration projects. They are in the business of creating ‘virtual organisations’ and old models are not well suited for this task.”*<sup>8</sup>

- **It would be helpful if those engaged in establishing Partnerships had a broader understanding of organisational frameworks and developmental processes. This could be an area for shared learning or mentoring.**

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<sup>7</sup> e-Partnerships, the age of modernisation and inclusion, Sue Stirling: June 2001

<sup>8</sup> “ “ “ “ “

## 6.4 Culture Clash

Just as the search for clarity was a returning theme so was the clash of cultures as experienced by the Sure Start Partnerships.

*“Sure Start is seen as risky, experimental and fast moving whilst the agencies that make up the partnership and deliver services are bureaucratic and slow moving”.*

From the interviews we would describe this clash as being between the loose and tight structures.

<b>Loose</b>	<b>Tight</b>
• ambiguous	• rigid
• flexible	• hierarchical
• fluid	• ordered

Many examples were provided of where this had occurred starting with, “A lack of clarity or expectation and understanding between the cultures” to, “Rules that prevent partners from sharing information for example the interpretation of Caldecot.”

And finally the clash of cultures was experienced by workers. As most partnerships do not have an independent legal structure, all workers are seconded to the Sure Start programme. Which means that Sure Start can be seen by workers, as a separate project or piece of work to be serviced rather than joined.

Sure Start workers professional backgrounds and employing agency provided protection and identity. Some workers were very fearful of letting go of their professional base which meant “*questions like who has the right status to manage who arise.*” Even at phase three one participant explained, “*Workers continue to work separately – hang on to their professional practice, procedures, terms and conditions of service. Trying to create a shared set is impossible!*” Some people thought this attitude was reinforced by “*not knowing what the long term game plan is*”.

These ‘Cultural Collisions’ are well summed up in the e-Partnerships study “*Partnerships which move beyond the more traditional ‘better management’ remit, deal in Hot Products.... These hot products become rapidly chilled when brought into the ‘cold climate’ of organisations whose main purpose is the smooth and standardised delivery of services.*”<sup>9</sup>

To break down the boundaries and create new understanding takes time and a willingness to learn.

*“Partnership working is complex, dependent both on the history, geography, identity of the area and on the vision, skills and behaviour of key individuals. It is through collaborative working and shared experience that partners learn to work together. Both local partners and central government need to value and make time for shared learning.”*<sup>10</sup>

- **It is essential that partnerships create time and space away from detailed decision making or planning agendas to learn together and in this way begin to create their own culture. A starting point might be the development of a long term strategy.**

<sup>9</sup> Partnerships, the age of modernisation and inclusion, June 2001

<sup>10</sup> Collaboration and Co-ordination in Area-Based Initiatives: Research report: DETR May 2002

## 6.5 Membership of boards and partnerships

Membership of the majority of partnerships follows the Sure Start Guidance *“You need to establish a partnership that involves local parents and representatives of all the local providers of services for young children and their families.”* Delivering Sure Start: Fourth Wave edition. In addition to parents, there is an expectation that key agencies, health, education, social services will all be members from the outset. Members are generally recruited by the Lead Agent or Programme Manager. For agencies this frequently means that a manager is allocated the task of ‘attending’ the partnership on behalf of the department.

Although we found that membership of the partnership boards was quite stable and that the majority of members were actively involved, the experiences of some of the programmes suggested that the wrong people had been allocated by their agencies as members of boards.

For the first three waves there was an attempt at phase one to engage ‘Directors’ of services to the boards. They were selected for their position and ‘power’ within their agencies, with a view to the objective of mainstreaming or reshaping existing services and, as a demonstration of their commitment to the agreement to ‘pick up’ parts of the budget at the conclusion of Sure Start funding.

However they were generally unable to sustain an involvement in the development of the partnership and nominated a more junior manager to join the board. Two new issues then emerged. Firstly the nominated manager did not have sufficient delegated authority to act as a board member. As a consequence decision making often became an unclear protracted process. Secondly the manager as a result of their own position and experiences did not see themselves in the role as Board Members and tended to treat the programme as a short term project to be managed. (see above 6.2)

Other programmes had experienced difficulty in engaging the main agencies as active partners because of the fear of having to pick up service delivery and a financial ‘ticket’ at the end of the life of the Sure Start programme.

Senior managers and Directors continue to be listed as members of Partnerships. However by phase three, the majority of programmes found that membership was depleted as these managers turned their attention to other priorities. Two reasons were offered for the disengagement. Firstly there was a view that once the ‘division of the spoils’, the final dividing of Sure Start resources had been achieved Senior Managers lost interest. An alternative view was that their absence could be explained by the increase in the number of partnerships they were required to attend.

There is a clear requirement for local parents to be involved in the partnership, not only is this part of the delivery plan but there is also a target that specifies *“All Sure Start programmes to have parent representation on the local programme board”*. Parental membership always comes high up the list of achievements (see Strengths and Weaknesses, Annexe Three). Some of the programmes now have or are about to have parents in the role of chairperson of the board/partnership, demonstrating a commitment to the process of involving this group.

Parents come to the partnership process for entirely different reasons than other members, with different perceptions and without a set of 'organisational politics', baggage or experience. It was therefore difficult for them to engage in a large proportion of what was played out during phases one and two.

From a parents perspective these phases were described as '*dominated by the suits*'. Statements like this seem to be interpreted as professional workers and other partners using a language and creating a presence, symbolised through their dress code, that excludes users/parents. Whilst the effect is to exclude this group, the assumption behind this interpretation is that professional workers or managers know what they are doing. As we have so far discussed this may well be a misconception.

Fundamental to partnership working is the relationships formed between partners. The prerequisites for partnership working identified through the interviews were for commitment and motivation, honesty and integrity, trust and respect, these with freedom and choice, opportunity, time and resources, flexibility create a basis for change.

- **There are real dilemmas in trying to attract or locate a diverse membership that can achieve these qualities. However the membership needs to be recruited with this in mind rather than being left to chance.**

## 6.6 Leadership

In unpacking some of the constructs associated with democratic decision making and motivation in the model we find that clear and charismatic leadership plays an important part in partnership working.

There is an inherent tension between the concept of strong leadership and democratic control. In the context of partnership working participants are describing a leadership style that is appropriate to the development of shared power from a broad based mandate. The introduction of strong leadership can help to create clarity and strengthen the ability of a partnership to deal with long term strategic planning.

It was evident from the interviews and the study days that several of the Board Members/Chairs nominated/allocated by their agency and many of the Programme Managers adopted a strong leadership role within their partnership. They demonstrated a passion and vision for what they were trying to achieve. This individual contribution was one of the strengths identified with phase one, continuing into the developmental phase two and is consistent with group development.

Many of the study group recognised that risky, flexible partnerships, "*working on a wing and a prayer*" as one participant described it, demands "*a good advocate at a senior level*". Others identified the need for champions or drivers all of which suggests there is a need for leaders rather than managers.

- **Recognition of the role of leadership within partnerships along with a development of the skills for enabling leaders would assist the development of partnership working.**

## 6.7 Governance under development

Governance is all about vision, long term change, outcomes.

Many of the words associated with governance - ownership, accountability, leadership, direction, strategy - are there in principle. However they do not have a particularly strong meaning in the context of the governance of a partnership. They are understood as they relate to an agency, department or community organisation but have not been translated or interpreted into the context of partnership – that loose network of collaborators. For example, if we take leadership. It is understood from the perspective of being lead within a tight structure rather than leading within a loose structure.

Elements of the components of governance appeared at each phase of development and by phase three it was clear that the partnership boards were more confident in their governance role. However, our question about the long term future of the partnerships highlighted the fragility of this development. Only a few held a long term view with a strategy to match. The majority had no idea and several characterised phase three as adopting a *'head in the sand'* approach to the future.

The weakest areas, consistent across the phases of development were:

- ability to think and act strategically for the achievement of longer term outcomes
- ability to manage themselves as a board
- ability to manage the managers

Governance is integral to all the areas discussed so far. However there is a particularly close relationship between the first two – the search for clarity and what is partnership. There is a 'chicken or egg' – which comes first – debate here. Does achieving an understanding of partnership come before an understanding of what the programmes are all about, or vice versa? We would say that it needs to be approached as a 'both and', the topics are so interrelated that it is impossible to separate the questions. However what is also clear is that this can not be achieved simply through monthly meetings, as highlighted in the recent research report from DETR: *"The speed at which localities can develop effective new ways of working in partnership has been underestimated and the time needed should be thought through carefully.... There remains a major need for capacity building – in the statutory sector as much as in the voluntary/community sector – if collaborative working is to become a reality."*<sup>11</sup>

- **Partnerships need 'ring fenced' time that is devoted to the development of a joint understanding of governance within their particular context.**

## 6.8 Board development

The majority of programmes started with a steering group, or partnership that evolved into a board. At phase one along the demanding timescale, tasks and size of the group, combined to create an extremely complex set of dynamics. To achieve the task to producing a delivery plan required strong leadership and meant that the board was directed. The board at phase one can appear to be little more than a 'token' gesture.

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<sup>11</sup> Collaboration and Co-ordination in Area-Based Initiatives. DETR May 2002

Participants in the study identified phase three, when things are more settled, as being the time when board development really began.

The study highlights the importance of board development within the context of partnership working. Many programmes have included training days for their Board Members. However there did not appear to be much opportunity for a developmental programme and as a consequence the ability of the board to manage itself remained a weaker area.

- **Included within the 'ring fenced' time devoted to developing an understanding of governance should be a programme for board development.**

## **ANNEXES TO REPORT**

**Annexe One: Characteristics of the first three phases**

**Annexe Two: Components of governance**

**Annexe Three: Strengths and weaknesses**

**Annexe Four: Identified needs**

**Annexe One Characteristics**

<p><b>STAGE ONE - START UP</b> Announcement to completion of delivery plan</p>	<p><b>SET UP</b> Approval, appointment of staff and establishment of programme within locality, first activities</p>	<p><b>MID TERM</b> Fully operational programme</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• No planned approach for selection of lead agent / accountable body</li> <li>• Lack of governance</li> <li>• Ownership by agencies questionable</li> <li>• No clear membership</li> <li>• Good attendance at meetings</li> <li>• Not a democratic process</li> <li>• Lack of understanding of responsibility</li> <li>• Willing involvement</li> <li>• Optimism</li> <li>• Enthusiasm</li> <li>• Stretched</li> <li>• High energy</li> <li>• Lack of leadership</li> <li>• Challenging to individuals and organisations</li> <li>• Partnership an illusion</li> <li>• Scepticism</li> <li>• Acceptance</li> <li>• Lack of clarity</li> <li>• Working on good will</li> <li>• Anxieties</li> <li>• Forward thinking – action person</li> <li>• Commitment</li> <li>• Support</li> <li>• Sure Start a priority</li> <li>• Vision</li> <li>• Dedication</li> <li>• Co operation</li> <li>• Planning</li> <li>• Decision Making</li> <li>• Distrust</li> <li>• Tension</li> <li>• Learning</li> <li>• Control kept by accountable body</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Relief</li> <li>• Reinforcement of enthusiasm</li> <li>• Reforming</li> <li>• Re stating the vision</li> <li>• Disappearance of people from agencies</li> <li>• Partnership begins to shrink</li> <li>• Board have ownership of programme especially if prog. manager not in post</li> <li>• With appointment of prog manager board take step back (or disappear)</li> <li>• First development of a structure</li> <li>• Under ownership or over ownership of the plan</li> <li>• Decisions</li> <li>• Negotiations</li> <li>• Operational issues dominate</li> <li>• Define more fixed membership board /partnership</li> <li>• Multiple agendas – individual/ organisational/ political / community dynamic</li> <li>• discovery of the potential conflicts between agents</li> <li>• Lack of direction</li> <li>• Frustration</li> <li>• Bureaucracy</li> <li>• Detachment</li> <li>• Disillusionment</li> <li>• Jostle for power and control</li> <li>• Anxieties</li> <li>• Commitment</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Developed structure</li> <li>• Head in sand approach to the future</li> <li>• Constant challenges</li> <li>• Dealing with differences and professional boundaries</li> <li>• More inclusive - accepting of parent led changes</li> <li>• Learning to adapt to change in partnership membership</li> <li>• Complacency</li> <li>• People on power distracted to other new agendas/ initiatives of people in power</li> <li>• Poor attendance by agency reps</li> <li>• Partnership members lack authority to act/ decide</li> <li>• Questioning</li> <li>• Reflection</li> <li>• Continued challenges for multi agency working</li> <li>• Prog managers become more accountable as partnership is depletion</li> <li>• Slow action on decisions made</li> <li>• Less proactive</li> <li>• Prog manager making decisions</li> <li>• Lack of support</li> </ul>

## Annexe Two      Components for good governance

TOPIC	CONTENT
<b>CONSTITUENCY &amp; STAKEHOLDERS</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• relating to your audience/ membership/ users/ ...</li> <li>• listening</li> <li>• interpreting</li> <li>• checking/ consulting</li> <li>• accounting to</li> <li>• relationship building</li> </ul>
<b>KNOWLEDGE &amp; UNDERSTANDING</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• constitutions and legal framework</li> <li>• legal responsibility</li> <li>• accountability</li> <li>• finances</li> <li>• policies &amp; procedures</li> </ul>
<b>VERBAL COMMUNICATION SKILLS</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• listening</li> <li>• asking questions</li> <li>• summarising</li> <li>• assertiveness</li> <li>• selling</li> </ul>
<b>MANAGING THE MANAGERS</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• supervision</li> <li>• appraisal</li> <li>• boundaries</li> <li>• relationships</li> </ul>
<b>RECRUITMENT &amp; SELECTION</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• job descriptions and person specification</li> <li>• process that demonstrates equality of opportunity</li> <li>• interviews</li> <li>• induction</li> </ul>
<b>MANAGING THE BOARD</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• leadership</li> <li>• membership</li> <li>• time</li> <li>• sharing responsibility</li> <li>• review</li> </ul>
<b>FINANCIAL PLANNING &amp; CONTROL</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• forecasts</li> <li>• budgeting</li> <li>• reading reports/ management accounts</li> <li>• assets</li> </ul>
<b>THINKING &amp; ACTING STRATEGICALLY</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• planning – vision, aims *objectives</li> <li>• knowledge of the environment – wider picture</li> <li>• managing risks – weighing things up</li> <li>• monitoring</li> <li>• developing the organisation</li> </ul>

## Annexe Three Strengths and Weaknesses

	STAGE ONE	STAGE TWO	STAGE THREE
<b>STRENGTHS</b>			
Wave 1	<p>Strong chair insisted on parents input</p> <p>Good relationship/ input from stakeholders</p> <p>Systems for undertaking and implementing financial control</p> <p>Process for managing the manager</p> <p>Process for recruitment and selection of staff</p> <p>Ability to manage themselves as a board</p>	<p>Commitment to new initiative</p> <p>Interesting</p>	<p>Staff more accessible</p> <p>Working well together</p> <p>Seeing something from the hard work</p> <p>Parents using and steering services</p> <p>Trust</p> <p>Strong relationship with constituency</p>
Wave 2	<p>Empowering parents</p> <p>Generating equal stakes</p> <p>Creation of vision</p> <p>Personalities and experiences of other partnerships</p> <p>Commitment of corporate world</p> <p>Champion in corporate structure</p> <p>Flexible / change</p> <p>Long term and strategic thinking demonstrated through individuals involved</p> <p>Project Management</p> <p>Everyone willing to contribute</p>	<p>Team building</p> <p>Partnership agreement on language – listening to different views</p> <p>Decision making</p> <p>Better understanding of SS</p> <p>On surface everything OK</p> <p>Good inter personal relationships</p> <p>Good will – wanting it to work</p> <p>Sense of humour</p> <p>Continual involvement of individuals</p> <p>More inclusive – roles better understood</p> <p>More managerial</p>	<p>Ability to reflect on partnership and make changes e.g. to chair</p> <p>Ability to acknowledge development of new opportunities and to compromise</p> <p>Blossoming</p> <p>More coherent</p> <p>Recognition and power</p>

	Diversity of membership Commitment/ energy Vision	Better listening	
Wave 3	Community involvement Speculation Member commitment Stubbornness Parents Some Early staff	Team	
<b>WEAKNESSES</b>			
Wave 1	Being pulled along by social services, health and Barnardos  Well meaning but token participation by parents	Time consuming Overwhelming Jargon	Core group smaller Some partners not around Understanding of boards role and responsibilities Ability to think and act strategically
Wave 2	Sure Start left 'open' – no protection for staff as no legal entity No project manager Tested out delivery plan Community gatekeepers Battle for control and power Negotiations and verbal agreements about power and authority between agencies No power sharing Lack of common language – jargon Lack of parental understanding Parents represented but not participating Lack of direction around governance	No strategic planning re membership Dividing line between parents and agencies	Poor agency representation Parents questioning the role of partnership Parents concerned about lack of representation by agencies Gatekeeper fall out

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>= struggle</li> <li>One dimensional</li> <li>Exclusive</li> <li>Stakeholders at odds</li> <li>Top down</li> <li>Directed by agencies</li> <li>Agencies see the money not the process</li> </ul>		
Wave 3	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Lack of time</li> <li>Lack of trust</li> <li>Vested interests</li> <li>Own agendas</li> <li>Suspicion of sure start</li> <li>Short term gains</li> <li>Project mentality</li> <li>Perceived top down approach</li> <li>Staff appointments</li> <li>Premises</li> <li>Rampant individuals</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Delay of capital</li> <li>Lack of trust</li> <li>Vested interests</li> <li>Own agendas</li> <li>Suspicion of sure start</li> <li>Short term gains</li> <li>Project mentality</li> <li>Perceived top down approach</li> <li>Staff appointments</li> <li>Premises</li> </ul>	

**Annexe Four Identified needs**

Phase one	Phase two	Phase three
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Key support people there at key times</li> <li>• Non partisan role to steer the process</li> <li>• legal advice on governance</li> <li>• input from sure start unit on 'ability to manage themselves as board</li> <li>• information on expectations for parents involved e.g. time commitment</li> <li>• clarity on objectives</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Legal framework early on</li> <li>• Framework of Risk Management</li> <li>• guidance on terms of reference for boards</li> <li>• more support from outside for boards as they develop their role and ability to manage themselves</li> <li>• more guidance</li> <li>• support and guidance</li> <li>• information from sure start</li> <li>• regional support from SS</li> <li>• admin support</li> <li>• practical support for parents e.g. recruitment skills</li> <li>• Access expertise for capital development</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Support for capital development</li> <li>• Support and advice for capital build (and at earlier stages)</li> <li>• more training for boards to develop the ability to manage themselves</li> <li>• mentors from agencies on SS</li> </ul>



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RESEARCH

