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# Countybeacon

**Local Place:** Developing an area based approach to service delivery



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**CCN**  
County Councils Network

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# Local Place:

## Developing an area based approach to service delivery

**Cover image:** East Midlands  
'EMLawShare' members



**Cllr Tim Palmer,**  
CCN Chairman

As we enter a new decade it is clear that the scale of the economic and social challenges facing us means that the public sector needs to find radical new solutions to not only deliver better value for money, but also better local services more tailored to local needs. The economic downturn and the need to reduce the deficit makes this an even more urgent imperative.

CCN supports efforts to consider the totality of public service activity and resource employed in an area and to ensure that the collective effort is orchestrated and applied most efficiently and effectively to the achievement of the outcomes that are most important to that area.

The challenge to our member authorities will be to find smarter ways of working together with partners and communities. We believe that a far greater proportion of the resource that is spent locally should be under local democratic control and direction. Democratically elected local authorities are uniquely placed to “*hold the ring*” of accountability for public services. As leaders of place local authorities should have a key role in determining the priorities of public services locally, including those not currently under direct democratic control. Taking direct responsibility from quangos or other agencies would lead to significant gains in both cost effectiveness and democratic accountability.

Central government is faced with the challenge to step back, to remove unnecessary bureaucratic and legal barriers and achieve a radically more joined up and holistic approach which provides a supportive framework which enables local authorities to deliver real service improvements and efficiencies. They must take a leap of faith and trust localities to deliver outcomes that their communities want to see.

The challenge for society as a whole will be to explore the implicit contract between individuals and the

government, to reconsider expectations about what public goods should be provided by government, and what should be the sphere of individual or collective societal effort.

Rising to those challenges will not be simple, but CCN firmly believes that local government and our member authorities have a major contribution to make to a positive future. CCN member authorities are made up of over 2,500 Local Councillors who together represent almost half of the population of England. Those Local Councillors are local people who come from, live and often work in the communities which elect them. They have a clear connection to the places that they serve and where they and their families also live and use local services.

In the CCN Manifesto we set our belief that a new genuinely area based approach to public services was drastically needed.

#### **Our Manifesto explicitly called for:**

- Recognition that the accountability derived from the local electoral process means that local authorities are uniquely placed to convene and lead partnerships locally;
- A duty on all public bodies to cooperate with the local authority on an area based approach to the delivery of local services to local communities;
- Extension of local democratic influence over other public services operating locally, including Health and Police. This includes extending the commissioning role of local authorities to encompass commissioning for health and social care. We also support the extension of scrutiny to include other public services and utilities;
- A radical reduction in the number of quangos and other agencies and transfer of powers, responsibility and full funding to local government;
- Real commitment across central government to the principles of considering in the round public service activity and resource employed locally, and concerted action by central government to join up policy across Westminster and Whitehall and to streamline and align operating and performance frameworks.

In this Local Place publication we set out our member councils’ achievements to date and, more importantly, their vision for the future delivery of efficient and effective public services which meet the varied needs of the communities we serve.

## My Vision for Public Services



**Dr Andrew Povey,**  
Leader, Surrey County Council

We face major challenges on a scale not seen before. A lot will have to change as a result of the recession and the credit crunch, increasing environmental concerns and the growing issue of how we care for the elderly. The size and complexity of the challenges in the communities we serve and the unprecedented pressures on finances as a result of the economic downturn require new and innovative ways of working across public sector services.

As the new Conservative-Liberal Democrat coalition settles into government, this presents us with an opportunity to radically redesign the way our public services are delivered so they are shaped around the needs of local people, although we can only grasp this opportunity if unnecessary central control is swept away. The constraints of imposed targets and inspection regimes undermine councils' ability to deliver what local people want and there is certainly no reason why Surrey County Council, for example, should be obliged to take notice of them when only 20% of our spending has come through central government.

A single uniform model – a national template for localism – is not workable. Local councils and councillors are connected to the areas they represent in a way that central government is not. Different solutions are required for different areas – what works in Liverpool might not work in Surrey.

That is why I have invited the leaders of the 11 borough and district councils in Surrey to comment on my ideas for the basis of an approach that will work

here, which takes into account the need for local solutions to local problems and the belief that services should be built around people and the places where they live.

My belief is that we already have many examples of strong partnership working in Surrey and should build on them, using the best ideas from the national Total Place pilot scheme to develop a distinctive, appropriate and effective agenda for the county.

In my vision, that means creating a type of public service board that will direct services and spending towards local demand. A single strategic body in each of Surrey's boroughs and districts co-ordinating how public money is spent in each area will be best placed to provide the services that best match residents' needs.

The boards, as community champions, would bring decision-making closer to the individuals, families and places we serve through strong local, focused leadership promoting joined up working and shared solutions. Our collective efforts would give residents a bigger say and make local taxpayers' money go further by ensuring that duplication and overlap between organisations is removed.

However, a genuinely local approach in a county of more than 1.1 million residents may mean different things to each of Surrey's 11 districts and boroughs. So I have asked my fellow Surrey leaders to give their comments on my 'draft ideas' as a starting point for debate on agreeing a shared set of principles to guide us.

To stretch our thinking as we come to a consensus on these principles, Surrey, under the leadership of the Surrey Strategic Partnership (SSP), is already working with other public sector organisations to explore the opportunities available through a 'whole area' approach.

The SSP is piloting the development of Total Place in four areas with a higher level of need (Stanwell in Spelthorne, Maybury and Sheerwater in Woking, Westborough in Guildford and Merstham in Reigate and Banstead) with the aim of exploring the untapped potential that exists to make improvements through better co-ordination of services.

Meanwhile, pilots are being set up with Mole Valley District Council and Woking Borough Council. Surrey's Mole Valley local committee is looking in detail at strengthening joint working with the district council while Woking Borough Council is analysing what all public sector bodies are doing in the area now and are likely to do in the future.

With so much feedback to come from these pilots and discussions, it is right to keep an open mind about the shape of things to come beyond the central idea of a strategic board for each area. However, uppermost in my thoughts is that strong leadership of place, coupled

with encouraging and helping people to take more personal responsibility for their communities, is the way to provide better services at less cost.

For more information, please contact the Leader's Office on **0208 541 8003**.

Nottinghamshire

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## The joy of sharing



**Above:** EMLawShare members

In 2006, an invitation from 18 local authorities in the East Midlands to tender for outsourced legal services attracted the interest of almost 100 UK law firms. Today EMLawShare has 50 members spread over an area the size of Belgium and is the largest consortium of its kind.

Despite this staggering growth, the guiding principles of securing value for money and encouraging knowledge sharing through networking and training – reducing duplication – remain the same. This also reflects the main aim of the Total Place agenda; to reduce cost and improve service through the

collective and collaborative efforts of local authorities. EMLawShare strives to fundamentally change behaviours and revolutionise the way in which legal services are purchased and advice is sought by those working in local authorities.

Since it was launched in 2009, Total Place has been a catalyst for much needed debate about public sector spending, but it has also been tainted with misunderstanding and scepticism. As efforts continue to get over 100 initiatives off the ground, sceptics are standing ready to scrutinise the results in search of bottom line savings. Ambitious plans for sharing information and training under the EMLawShare umbrella echo the sentiment of the Total Place agenda, but what the first four years of the consortium have taught us is that evolution doesn't happen overnight. A significant change in behaviour comes not ahead of, but in the wake of a continued effort to educate those involved as to the benefits of embracing a new way of thinking and working.

Back in 2006, Nottinghamshire County Council had its own partnership arrangement with two private sector providers. There were no doubt significant savings to be made from pooling purchasing power and reducing duplication of work carried out across local authorities; the question was how to do it. Alongside Stuart Leslie, Chief Legal Officer of Derby City Council; Sara Goodwin, Head of Law and Scrutiny Services at Bassetlaw District Council and John McElvaney, Deputy County Secretary of Derbyshire County Council, I created EMLawShare. Members include county councils, unitaries, districts, fire and rescue and police authorities and on 1 April 2010, the second round of four year contracts were awarded to five private sector law firms.

Our own calculations show that EMLawShare has already delivered up to £4m worth of savings. Joint procurement and reduced rates through a competitive tendering process has, by itself, produced vast savings but it is in the provision of value added services where the consortium really excels. Provided at no cost or a fraction of their usual price, the panel firms Weightmans, DLA Piper, Freeth Cartwright, Anthony Collins and Browne Jacobson offer our members a range of services including a comprehensive training programme.

Less easy to quantify, but no less important in judging the effectiveness of EMLawShare are the savings made by members through networking and sharing of knowledge. Significant legal issues affect public bodies across the board and one recent example was in respect of equal pay. Through EM LawShare, members shared ideas and advice about how it had been addressed within their own authorities – providing vital information about what had or had not worked. If professional advice was sought, it was only required once instead of 50 calls for private legal advice being made.

We now hope to expand the membership and encourage Primary Care Trusts to join up whilst we work at the same time to expand the provider panel so that members can instruct barristers as well as solicitors. Moving forwards, the aim of EM LawShare is for our members to treat it not simply as a joint procurement exercise. It is so much more than that and the way in which our members communicate and share ideas will form the centrepiece of our development over the next 12 to 18 months.

Whatever Total Place ends up being called and regardless of which governance arrangements are put in place, at its heart is an agenda to create seamless public services; avoiding duplication of effort and thereby ensuring the best possible outcomes for customers at an affordable price. EMLawShare already operates on those exact principles - proving the theory that you really can get more for less.

**Written by: Jayne Francis-Ward**, Assistant Chief Executive of Nottinghamshire County Council and the architect of EMLawShare  
**[jayne.francis-ward@nottsc.gov.uk](mailto:jayne.francis-ward@nottsc.gov.uk)**  
With input from **John Riddell**, Partner in the Local Government Team of EM LawShare panel firm Weightmans LLP  
**[john.riddell@weightmans.com](mailto:john.riddell@weightmans.com)**

Cambridgeshire

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## Making Cambridgeshire Count - from Cambridgeshire Together

When in November 2009 Cambridgeshire Together were first invited to write for County Beacon about Making Cambridgeshire Count (MCC), it was early days for the initiative. We didn't say much about where MCC was going, because it was changing every day.

Since then, so much has happened. Over 200 people from across the public sector have directly engaged with MCC. Six enquiries produced 14 project proposals around a range of issues facing the county. And we've been shortlisted for the MJ Awards for Total Place Achievement of the Year.



We are now moving into Phase 2 of MCC, with eight projects covering a broad range of topics. Some projects will directly impact on local residents; for example 'Tackling Domestic Abuse' will join up and simplify access to services for victims, who currently experience a confusing system pushing them from one organisation to another. Our Public Services Redesign and Sharing Services projects will blur the boundaries between our organisations, providing accessible services to everyone in the most efficient and effective way possible.

All of the projects will engage directly with local people as they continue, using residents' views to shape services – and gathering the views of employees at all levels of each organisation on what they think will work best. We believe that residents shouldn't have to become experts in the system to access high quality services – those services should be flexible and respond to their needs.



While many other 'Total Place' programmes focused on finances, when we started MCC we realised that, for Cambridgeshire at least, there were two other areas

that were just as important – changing the culture of our organisations and partnership and finding new ways of meeting our communities’ needs. MCC has led to an increased focus across our organisations on doing what matters to local people, with many enquiries working with local people to gather their experiences. One carried out on-street interviews asking how people felt about their dealings with councils. Another visited families to ask how they were treated; and one visited migrant workers to understand the difficulties that they had in engaging with public services

It hasn’t always been easy, and we haven’t always agreed on the right way forward. Some partners have stepped back from MCC. We have adopted a flexible approach, supporting partners that have stepped back from MCC but trusting those organisations that want to continue to move on and deliver the transformation we all know we need.



Our strong belief is that we all need to work together as public, private and voluntary sectors to make Cambridgeshire a great place to call home. As a public sector, we know that we will have to make our contribution to achieving that vision with at least a 20% reduction in resources. Our Leaders and Chief Officers see Making Cambridgeshire Count as being a central part of our plan to manage that.

This means doing the right thing at the right geographic level. It means local solutions for local challenges, building trust so that individual organisations can be given the space and support to fulfil their own organisational accountabilities, and working collaboratively with the right organisations at the right time and in the right way. It also means moving away from our current models of partnership working, to a model where we work more flexibly, innovatively and locally with lean and efficient partnerships commissioned on a task and finish basis to improve outcomes, release efficiencies or redesign services.

But the real purpose of MCC is to change the way we lead, the way we think and the way we design and co-design services with and for our communities. Why? So that we make Cambridgeshire a great place to call

home, and meet the financial challenges head on. The eight projects represent a fraction of what's really happening in terms of effective collaboration across the county. To quote one of our public sector Leaders, if MCC works, everything will be better... not just the 8 projects.

This article has been provided by Cambridgeshire Together. For more information on Making Cambridgeshire Count, please contact **Adrian Smith** at Cambridgeshire County Council, at [adrian.smith@cambridgeshire.gov.uk](mailto:adrian.smith@cambridgeshire.gov.uk)

Kent

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## Total Place: The Gateway approach – Kent County Council

What is the top priority for local government? Is it high quality public services or getting good value for the taxpayer? A good case could be made for both. So how about trying to do both at once?

One of the flagship projects for Kent County Council, as it looks to build on Total Place ideals, is called Gateway.

Gateway is a bright, town centre-based, customer-friendly way of improving both efficiency and the way services are offered to the public.

Each uses its high-footfall, retail-style location to excellent effect – putting access to local councils at the heart of the community they serve. It brings this access together with voluntary and community organisations, health and social care (among others) under one roof. The result is almost like a shopping centre of public services – all more interested in how they can serve the customer than who they represent.

The beauty of Gateway is this one-place approach. Working at a Gateway means an acute awareness of

the services there. Those who greet customers know how to direct them if they have a benefits query – and if, for example, that query has something to do with social care, they can point that customer across the room to a social care member of staff.



For the customer, it means no more shuffling from building to building across town and back again. There are free web access computers, meeting rooms, private interview facilities and cash payment machines. It can mean walking in to a Gateway for one reason and walking out finding that three other things have been dealt with.

It means fewer phone calls or visits, fewer processes and fewer transactions – a desire that is also being carried across to a single access point for phone and web. This Gateway approach means that people can choose whichever way they are most comfortable with to get the access they need – face to face, by phone or through the web.

The seven Gateways in Kent include two with libraries, one with a Post Office, one in a major shopping centre and another at a castle. Thanet District Council, which shares a Gateway in Margate, has predicted that it will save £250,000 a year as a result.

All of this provides the better quality public services by giving the public access to many services in one place – putting less of a burden on the customer. What about the value for money? In an immediate sense this comes simply from having fewer front desks or reception areas in fewer buildings.

Tanya Oliver, Director of Strategic Development and Public Access at Kent County Council, said: *“In a way, Gateway is a small scale model of the whole Total Place ethos. Using people and places as the focus is what Total Place is all about. With Gateway, this ideal is put into practice through a single building offering services from many organisations. It also takes the principles of public and voluntary sector partnership and puts them into practice.*

*“It is something that would not be possible without a lot of joint working. Kent County Council could not do this alone and the partnerships – the relationships with district and borough councils, health and voluntary*

*organisations – are something we are all immensely proud of.”*

Importantly, the Gateway model and the relationships that have come with it are also at the heart of other work that follows Total Place principles.

An asset management scheme is bringing public sector organisations together to help reduce the annual £300m cost to the public purse of the buildings they use. This radical effort will ask a lot of those organisations but, by building on the relationships that are already in place, the savings could be significant.

From a whole county to a single ward, the total benefits can be seen for the whole place.

For more information please contact **Tanya Oliver** on **08458 247247**

Warwickshire

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## Total Place CSW leads the way in improving frontline services

Councils are facing lengthy periods of spending constraints yet public expectations remain high.

Now more than ever we need to find new ways of maintaining services through efficiency savings and by working together, the sub-region of Coventry, Solihull and Warwickshire is determined to secure improved outcomes, at less cost – without losing vital services for residents.

Mike Attwood, CSW Total Place Director said: *“Coventry, Solihull and Warwickshire spend an average of £6.2 billion on public services each year and reductions in these budgets are inevitable. The challenge for us and our partners is work on how to best join our resources so that vital public services can be protected despite those spending cuts.*

*“Total Place is a strong catalyst for public sector leaders to collaborate and make a difference. We each need to support and challenge our own organisation and to hear uncomfortable feedback from the public about how they experience our services. By breaking down boundaries between us we can improve services and give taxpayers better value for money.”*

## **More freedom from Central Government**

For the past eight months, Coventry, Solihull and Warwickshire Councils (CSW) have been working together on a Total Place approach to find out how money could be better spent in their area. Focusing on improving services for children and young people – the councils looked at new and innovative ways of working together more effectively to reshape services, improve the quality of life for local people and deliver better value for money. They each wanted to understand why the public sector is so complex, why so many agencies seemingly offer similar services, and why they are not joined up in a way that would benefit residents.

By listening to frontline staff and customers, CSW learnt there were clear duplications of effort and barriers such as a lack of information sharing and IT, inflexible incentives for partnerships, separate regulations and inspection, that if removed would reduce costs and improve outcomes.

As a result of this they called on Whitehall to devolve the sub region’s £1.8bn children’s services budget to the locality – believing that local councils are better placed to assess local needs – and a concordat between central and local government was proposed, asking for freedoms and flexibilities in return for savings.

Director of Total Place for CSW, Mike Attwood said: *“Overall we intend to improve the way in which £1.8bn of the £6.2bn public spend in the sub-region can be deployed. This means our local councils would regain control of nearly £2bn worth of children’s services, including schools funding.”*

He added: *“The case studies we have looked at have given us an insight into what does and doesn’t work and has helped us find areas where we can improve – but the real work on broadening out an understanding of the possibilities to consumers, patients, communities and staff will take some time.”*

## **What Next?**

Coventry, Solihull and Warwickshire Councils are adopting the Total Place approach as a practical solution to the challenges posed by the economic environment, and over the next months will be exploring further potential for joined up working, where it makes sense and adds real value to residents.

The councils are adopting an ‘invest to save’ approach, i.e. spending more money on supporting young

children might mean reducing expenditure on more intensive support at school later on.

Programme Manager Cat Parker said: *“As we move into a new phase and start to understand how these workstreams will operate we will be looking to each area’s Children’s Trust to steer the direction and oversee progress. This will give each area an opportunity to learn from the best of what we do across the sub-region and maximise the money we spend on children, young people and their families.”*

*“We are at the stage where we have started uncovering the barriers to better working across the system, and understanding what improved services would look like. In some cases this might be about removing duplication of effort, in others targeting services to those most in need, and in some cases listening more closely to the views of those who use the services.”*

Like everywhere else in the country, Coventry, Solihull and Warwickshire is in a position where it faces an unprecedented squeeze on public spending.

However the sub-region offers a unique building block that is big enough to share strategic direction and costs but also small enough for local councils to gain from greater independence, public accountability and have business aspirations of their own.

Ultimately by adopting the Total Place approach, Coventry, Solihull and Warwickshire can work together to make huge savings without cutting frontline services – revolutionising the way councils do things.

For more information, please contact **Gereint Stoneman**, Corporate Planning Manager, Warwickshire County Council: **01926 412378**.

## Total Place Pilot Success

Since the Total Place pilot, partners in Bedfordshire including Central Bedfordshire and Luton Borough Council have been developing more than 50 proposals which aim to cut crime and improve the welfare benefits system in Bedfordshire and Luton.

Central Bedfordshire and Luton have been one of 13 Total Place pilots across the country, set up to transform public services through improved working between central and local government agencies. The initiative has been looking at a 'whole area' approach to public services, to identify how both councils can lead better services at less cost. Partners in Luton and Bedfordshire adopted the theme 'from dependence to self-reliance', focusing on streamlining the benefits system and improving offender management.

Delivering better value for money services Councillor Richard Stay, Deputy Leader of Central Bedfordshire Council, said: *"This ambitious and challenging programme is bringing together elements of central government and local agencies within a place, aiming to achieve three key things:*

- 1** *To create service transformations that can improve the experience of local residents and deliver better value;*
- 2** *To deliver early efficiencies to validate the work; and*
- 3** *To develop a body of knowledge about how more effective cross agency working delivers the above.*

*"The Total Place report for Central Bedfordshire and Luton, published in February 2010, has identified 50 proposals and many of these service improvements are available locally, at little or no additional cost. Other improvements may require further investment, with some being rolled out nationally or requiring central government involvement or even legislative change. However big or small, these changes will demonstrate a commitment to achieve radical change as the pilot seeks to help improve the experience for service users."*



**Above:** Cllr Richard Stay, Deputy Leader of Central Bedfordshire Council

Cllr Robin Harris, Deputy Leader of Luton Borough Council, added: *"Rapid progress was made within extremely tight timescales. In November we set up an intensive schedule of workshops involving more than 250 stakeholders to consider and re-design services as our customers would like them. The workshops looked at how we could improve the customer experience, and the subsequent efficiencies that could be achieved through delivering these changes."*

### The findings

- The welfare benefits system is complex and full of duplication
- Nearly a third of local Citizens' Advice Bureaux time is spent helping people understand what they are entitled to and how to complete forms
- Claimants answer the same questions in at least two different benefit offices and face delays before getting any money
- High marginal tax rates mean that benefit is cut between 60p to 90p for every £1 earned over a basic needs allowance. This actively discourages many people from coming off benefit and returning to work
- Streamlining administration and simplifying the benefits system will speed up benefit payments to those in need, enable them to re-enter work more easily and cut the cost of providing and administering benefits
- Ultimately we will be looking at how we encourage people away from and off benefits and into gainful employment. But the streamlining of the current system, for those entitled to some form of benefit, is the first phase of the work

### Making real changes

Cllr Stay added: *"This pilot has really demonstrated the way forward for us and we intend to make it real and meaningful. It is vital we get the process off the ground and start making real changes."*

*"Local authorities are facing huge economic challenges, so there has never been a more important time to start reviewing our ways of working together. We know that there is going to be less money available for public services and we have a duty to make what resources we do have go a lot further before we consider what it is we stop doing."*

## Tackling the problem

There are a range of steps we are taking to tackle the problems highlighted in the report:

### Access to Benefits

- Access to benefits could remove many of the hurdles that discourage people from coming off benefits and getting into work. We are therefore looking at creating a single triage 'gateway' for claimants. Initial customer assessment will signpost them to appropriate services and co-ordination of support services.
- Creating single teams to visit vulnerable people will help to cut multiple visits by all agencies, including a single fraud and compliance team.
- Electronic customer document and data sharing between Council Tax Benefits Offices and JobCentre Plus and co-locating customer contact to community hubs.

We will be developing a far simpler process for claiming benefits to speed up payments and greatly reduce administration costs, errors and fraud. It will also be fundamental to establish a single benefit assessment process.

### Integrated Offender Management

- Current procedures for dealing with offenders are expensive and often completely fail to break the cycle of re-offending.
- A mere two per cent of persistent offenders are responsible for almost a third of crime committed in our area, mainly burglaries and car theft.
- The average cost of dealing with these offenders is around £500,000 each per year.
- Over eight out of ten of these have a drug dependency.

Ultimately, we need to provide support at critical stages of the journey through the system for these offenders. This will enable them to break out of the cycle of re-offending, potentially saving the above amount for every repeat offender.

### Our vision

Cllr Harris said, that: *"Our ultimate vision for the benefits system is one that is simplified, coherent and cost-effective and helps people into work. It must be built around customers, it will help them receive their*

*entitlements more easily, but at the same time help tackle underlying problems and assist self-reliance rather than dependency. It will remove many of the systemic disincentives to coming off benefits and returning to employment."*

Stakeholders across Bedfordshire and Luton are in agreement that working together to join up processes and improve partnership working is the only way forward as we enter these challenging economic times. By simply working together on the pilot Total Place project, partners including Central Bedfordshire and Luton Borough Council have proved that we can streamline services and reduce paper work. The future of local government will be about all of us working together to save money and increase the quality of services for those we serve.

For more information contact  
**Emma Gorrige 0300 300 6247**  
**Emma.gorrige**  
**@centralbedfordshire.gov.uk**

Worcestershire

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## Total Worcestershire

The Worcestershire approach to Total Place has attracted a great deal of attention recently, mainly thanks to its guiding force known as the Shenstone Group.

Twenty-six leaders from across all sectors came together to form the Shenstone Group, named after the location of the first meeting. The group includes political leaders, public sector chief executives, senior business leaders, key members of the voluntary and community sector and leaders of civil society.

*"The Shenstone Group is ahead of the game," said Paul Walker, the Managing Director of Malvern Instruments Ltd, a private sector partner in the group. "Local leaders took the responsibility to work together before Total Place came into being, making Worcestershire a front-runner for the country."*

The group's stated aims were ambitious, to say the least: to improve people's quality of life; to strengthen civil society; to enhance economic prospects; to address the 'wicked issues' that no single sector can tackle alone, to boost partnership working and to position Worcestershire for the next decade and beyond.

Following this philosophy, the Shenstone Group played a key role in the Total Place process by identifying the Total Place themed pilot projects. It also acted as a critical friend to the project teams working on Total Place and brought a genuine cross-sector perspective to the Total Place projects.

Total Place, of course, ran the risk of becoming an initiative that focussed heavily on producing a report rather than delivering genuine achievements. The group was determined to ensure that public sector partners looked beyond the short-term submission to Government and remained focused on the people of Worcestershire.

One of the most impressive sessions of the Shenstone Group was when its members split into smaller groups and spent half a day in five neighbourhoods with some of the greatest social and economic challenges in the county. They met front-line staff, community leaders and local residents and, as a result, were better able to challenge public sector conventions.

Practical implementations of the group's goals so far include a comprehensive database of all publicly-owned buildings in the county, allowing Worcestershire's public sector to move towards a single rationalised public estate with all of the associated opportunities for improving services and reducing costs.

The group has also developed a protocol for coordinating budget planning and public expenditure changes across the public sector agencies. It has developed a 'Terms of Engagement' agreement to help avoid the risks of 'cost shunting', inadvertently negating other partners' plans, and any potential for cumulative impact of separate decisions impacting adversely on individual communities or the local economy – which couldn't be more topical, given the current state of public sector finances.



**Above:** Worcestershire's Shenstone Group in action

The current phase of the Shenstone Group's programme comes to an end in July 2010. However, its members are committed to providing a lasting legacy for Worcestershire. Current ideas being discussed include a Public Services Board, new models and accountabilities for greater devolved central resources to local areas, building on the public sector budget protocol, making a long-term commitment to a sustainable approach to Total Place, implementing the Total Place pilot theme project proposals and adopting the culture and practices of Total Place on a broad range of projects. Areas of highest need and young people not in education, employment or training (NEETs) are high on the agenda.

*"The legacy of the Shenstone Group will be a more cohesive, effective and efficient county, with decisions taken for the good of all," said Dr Bryan Smith OBE, Chair of NHS Worcestershire.* There will be more opportunities to share ideas, resources and challenges. The Worcestershire of the future will be something to be proud of, thanks to the imagination and innovation shown by the leaders of today."

For more information, please contact **Roger Britton** on **01905 766214** or at **rbritton@worcestershire.gov.uk**

Dorset

Countybeacon

## Bournemouth, Dorset and Poole Total Place Project

### Services and Support for Older People

For many, Dorset seems like an idyllic rural and coastal county – the ideal place to come on holiday or to work and live.

But like anywhere it has its particular challenges and an ageing population is one of them.

Recent figures show that more than 27 per cent of the sub-region's population is over retirement age

compared with the national average of 18.7 per cent. The Dorset population is predicted to increase by 3.2% by 2013 and by 13.2% by 2028, with the proportion of older people growing much faster to a predicted 40,000 by 2025.

For this reason the Bournemouth, Dorset and Poole sub-region focused their Total Place pilot on the ambitious and nationally important theme of services and support for older people.

The pilot aimed to show that by working with partners from across the sub-region in a whole system approach we could improve outcomes for older people at less cost by reshaping secondary care and community services, investing in well-being and prevention and providing more integrated services.

We know from local and national research that older people want to remain independent and at home for as long as possible. But we also know that in Bournemouth, Dorset and Poole many older people (65+) end up in hospital without needing to be there. This means a considerable inefficiency in the use of our resources and does not lead to the best experience for older people.

The partnership included Dorset County Council, Borough of Poole and Bournemouth Borough Unitary Councils, the six district/borough councils of the Dorset county area, NHS Dorset and NHS Bournemouth and Poole, Dorset Fire and Rescue Service, Dorset Police, three umbrella organisations representing the third sector as well as older people themselves and specific third sector organisations including Age Concern Bournemouth and Help and Care.

Working with such a range of partners proved to be challenging but led to deep, meaningful and worthwhile collaborative work, sharing of ideas and good practice.

Driven by recognition of the important role that early intervention, well-being and prevention can play in the wider system, the pilot suggested radical shifts in investment to ensure we could reduce the number of older people who fall into secondary care when it could be avoided.

Encouraged to set ambitious goals and propositions, the project team critically challenged what local public agencies were already planning. They looked at:

- Designing a neighbourhood management model and approach, including existing projects and possible multi-agency teams;
- Enhancing community development services and developing an effective, targeted and joined up approach to commissioning well-being services;
- Producing a more effective model for providing and delivering advice and information and exploring better use of home care services;

- Re-engineering primary health and social care delivery, including community-based treatment services, integrated personal budgets, admission avoidance schemes, re-ablement and the role of GPs.
- Reshaping and commissioning reduced secondary care services.

Chairman of the Total Place Project Board David Jenkins, Chief Executive of Dorset County Council, said: *"The approach showed what could be achieved by taking a very wide perspective on the totality of public service expenditure and activity on services for older people."*



*"Initiatives such as our Partnerships for Older People project show the benefit of community-based activities run by older people themselves, and funded jointly by local authorities and the NHS, in not only improving the quality of people's lives but reducing the extent and cost of hospital admissions."*

*"The challenge now is to take forward this whole community approach to develop and put in place new service approaches across organisational divides and budgets."*

For more information, please contact **Chris Kippax**, Project Manager on **01305 216634**

## Leicester and Leicestershire Total Place Pilot

Geography is a major factor in Leicester and Leicestershire's inter-dependency. The journey to work area of the city covers most of the county and many agencies, including police and health, work across the whole sub region. There is a clear need to work together to achieve the improvements to services and quality of life that both councils want.

Sub regional collaboration has been extended. We have agreed an MAA and introduced an economic development company – Prospect LeicesterShire. With partner agencies, we have also introduced a Leadership in Partnership Programme, delivered by Warwick University Business School, to ensure our future senior officers are well placed to work together in leading public service improvements. This is part of our response to the national challenge of recruiting a new breed of public sector manager into the future.

Public spending pressures mean more innovation, very clear and evidenced priorities and more efficient and effective delivery to meet challenging improvement targets. The philosophy behind Total Place has our full support and we were very willing to be part of the national programme that allowed us collectively to demonstrate where and how we can be even more effective with more flexibility and local control.

We chose two themes: drugs and alcohol and access to services.

Drugs and alcohol is a gap in our current programme of service improvement projects. It is also an issue where the service pressures and costs fall across a range of agencies and settings – acute health services, A and E, police cells, unrest in city and town centres and neighbourhoods, family problems, mental health problems, crime and unemployment. There is consequently a high probability that people's needs are not fully understood or addressed in the most effective way. Total Place will help us understand and identify

costs and measures that can improve outcomes for local people while making efficiency savings.

A finding of the county CAA area assessment was that we are behind some others in providing people with access to services as a whole rather than as separate agencies. We agreed and wanted to use Total Place to help prepare an improvement plan quickly. We also found that the pattern of access is not either readily understood by our citizens or likely to be affordable in the future. In the city, we know that too much of our crime has a direct link to alcohol misuse and the CAA identifies this. Total Place will help us tackle improvements to preventative services.

What did we find? The count indicated that the costs of the many local public agencies just being in business varies from 3% - 12% of budget and the total is estimated to be around £200million. We questioned if this can be afforded in future, identified long funding trails from national government to the front line and are examining further the costs lost to service delivery through these processes. We have also questioned whether we can afford to fund so many 'middle men'.

We have assessed progress in meeting the 9.3% efficiency target included in our MAA – the only one to have such a target. While year 1 targets have been met, future years look more difficult. We've challenged ourselves to do more and have developed a more formal sub region wide partnership efficiency programme to:

- Co-ordinate budget savings across agencies to avoid cost-shunting
- Challenge 'back-office' efficiency projects – can they be widened to achieve greater savings?
- Extend the Total Place approach to other multi agency service areas to seek improved outcomes at lower cost

We have also used the outcomes of work which estimates the obligatory collection of performance management information and of inspection activity this year is costing local agencies over £7million to fuel the debate about the excessive burden.

The drugs and alcohol work focused on several areas:

- Reducing alcohol availability by seeking national action on minimum unit pricing, stronger licensing, restricting marketing at young people and testing opportunities for local action on licensing and 'happy hours'.
- A national and local prevention agenda to reduce the negative consequences and associated costs of alcohol and drug misuse, including investigating social marketing solutions to discourage young people's misuse.
- Better targeting of resources using pooled budgets (which may require the removal of national

ringfencing) and joint commissioning via a joint Drug and Alcohol Integrated Commissioning Strategy. This will take a whole systems approach addressing the range of needs of misusers from early interventions to treatment provision for dependant misusers.

- A review of the night time economy and associated costs to the community of alcohol and drug misuse, including mapping the consequential costs and identifying good practice improvement initiatives seen to work elsewhere.
- A review of the potential for an interagency service within local emergency departments to provide specialist care and access to integrated services

The work on access to services focused on:

- Agreeing a common approach to agency websites including style, methods of searching, payments bookings and other core functionality
- Consolidating existing customer access point clusters with a new neutrally-branded approach based on services provided, user groups, and location.
- Aligning existing customer services centres, allowing collaborative management of peak demand periods and consistent opening hours
- Providing a co-ordinated approach of outreach activity across the agencies
- Aligning service and customer data management approaches to allow, where appropriate, the sharing of data across agencies
- Aligning processes and technology to allow greater flexibility of joint front office activity

The changes that can be implemented locally will be included in our partnership efficiency programme to ensure they are implemented effectively. We are encouraged that Government across Departments seems to be ready to consider the national changes that will be required.



David Parsons, Leader of Leicestershire County Council, said: *"Place-based budgeting has demonstrated that local organisations can take steps to improve services, save money and boost quality of life for residents if Government removes the barriers that prevent local innovation.*

*"Just over £6billion was spent in Leicester and Leicestershire during 2007/08 and through the Total Place pilot, we've shown that with more flexibility and local control, a greater proportion would reach front line services, where it is needed most.*

*"I hope the new Government will accept that a locality approach through place based budgeting will provide better services at less cost."*

For more information, please contact **Andy Robinson**, Assistant Chief Executive, Leicestershire County Council: **0116 305 7017**; e-mail: **andy.robinson@leics.gov.uk**.

Durham

Countybeacon

## Durham Total Place Pilot

In Durham the focus of our Total Place work has been on housing in relation to regeneration because we see a high quality, improved housing offer as fundamental to our ambition to regenerate parts of the county. We have developed proposals for a new collaborative way of working with developers and housing providers and six business cases to address specific areas and issues.

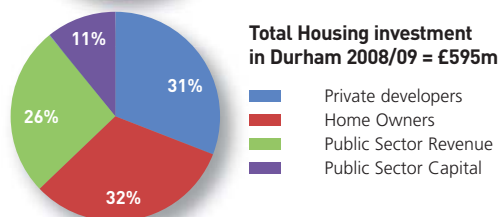
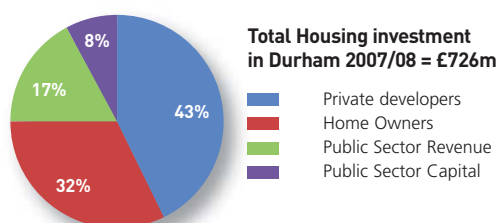
Many of the proposals are specifically aimed at improving services and quality of life for local residents concerning energy efficiency, home adaptations, access to employment and training, rationalising social housing provision and tackling poor quality private rented homes. We also intend, via a project management approach, to develop an exemplar Local Development Framework document. In addition, the plan is to set up a new partnership for housing-led regeneration with the aim of a collective approach to accessing funding streams in the public and private sectors and coordinating the investment across the county.

**See our key messages overleaf**

## Durham Total Place Pilot: The Key Messages

### What we have found 2008/09

- Overall level of investment down by £128m to £595m
- 41% fall in private developer investment
- Level of private investment by private homeowners reduced by £40m (17%)



- 19 funding sources locally for housing investment into County Durham
- Over 100 spending programmes in relation to housing and regeneration delivering in localities funded by government – about half of which have delivered spend in Durham in 2008/09
- 48,000 social rented properties in County Durham managed and/or owned by 32 different landlords
- Overriding need to harness the private pound

### Benefits and efficiencies

#### Indicative Savings

- £18 – 30million potential indicative savings identified in Durham
- Up to £475 million nationally in relation to Energy Efficiency

### Durham Recommendations

- **Local action:**
  - A new partnership for housing-led regeneration
  - Rationalising across Social Housing Providers
  - Improve access to local employment and training

- **Local and Central Government in partnership:**
  - Simplified Investment and Funding 'Total Capital'
  - An enabling planning framework
- **Central Government:**
  - To address gaps in the current system of Home Adaptations
  - A less complex Energy Efficiency process
  - Link benefit payments to home conditions/standards
- **Improving process and systems:**
  - Local control and influence
  - Place based focus
  - Streamline funding
  - Simplify performance and monitoring frameworks
- **Improving Quality of life:**
  - Consultation  
Listening better / Involving earlier
  - Customer perspective vital
  - Total Place perspective vital
  - Information access and sharing

### Asks of Whitehall

- Continue to support work on exemplar planning processes
- Develop a response to the challenge to rationalise capital funding streams 'Total Capital and Total Assets'
- Support for Energy Efficiency pilot exercise

For more information, please contact  
**Jan Hillary: [jan.hillary@durham.gov.uk](mailto:jan.hillary@durham.gov.uk)**



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