

How to manage complex social system – Local Strategic Partnerships as an illustrative example.

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Local Strategic Partnerships

Local Strategic Partnerships -What is an LSP

Local Strategic Partnerships (LSPs) are non-statutory, multi-agency partnerships, which matches local authority boundaries. LSPs bring together at a local level the different parts of the public, private, community and voluntary sectors; allowing different initiatives and services to support one another so that they can work together more effectively.

What will LSPs do and how will they operate?

Local partners will decide the full range of work of their LSP. To begin with, core tasks will be to:

- prepare and implement a **community strategy** for the area, identify and deliver the most important things which need to be done, keep track of progress, and keep it up-to-date;
- bring together local **plans, partnerships and initiatives** to provide a forum through which mainstream public service providers (local authorities, the police, health services, central government agencies and so on) work effectively together to meet local needs and priorities;
- work with local authorities that are developing a local **public service agreement** (PSA) to help devise and then meet suitable targets;
- develop and deliver a **local neighbourhood renewal strategy** to secure more jobs, better education, improved health, reduced crime, and better housing, closing the gap between deprived neighbourhoods and the rest and contributing to the national targets to tackle deprivation

LSP Targets

Jobs / Worklessness

Employment rate of disadvantaged areas
Employment rate of lone parents
Employment rate of ethnic minorities
Employment rate of those aged 50 and over (to 69)
Employment rate of those with lowest qualifications
Self-employment rates in the 15% most deprived wards in England
Productivity of rural areas
Regional Economic Performance

Crime

Crime: overall level
Crime: High crime areas
Crime: overall vehicle crime
Crime: overall burglary
Crime: overall robberies

Education

Education: England GCSEs pass rate A*-C
Primary education: English and maths level 4
Secondary education: English, maths, science, and ICT level 5
Percentage of schools in England where 30% of pupils are achieving 5+ GCSEs grade A*-C
Percentage of schools where 65% or more of pupils reached level 4 Key Stage 2
Percentage of schools where 50% or more of pupils reached level 5 Key Stage 3

Health

Circulatory disease mortality rates
Cancer mortality rates
Suicide mortality rates
Smoking rates
Life expectancy: male
Life expectancy: female
Teenage pregnancy rates
Infant mortality
Overall road accident casualties
Road accident casualties: people killed and seriously injured
Road accident casualties: children killed and seriously injured
Accidental Dwelling Fire Deaths
Deliberate fires in England

Housing and the Environment

Vulnerable households / non-decent housing
Non-decent social housing
Housing: large scale voluntary transfer
Liveability: i) % unacceptable litter
Liveability: ii) Abandoned vehicles
Liveability: iii) Green Flag Awards
Liveability: v) % poor environment
Liveability: vi) % satisfied with parks
Liveability: vii) % households satisfied with local environment

Complexity Translation

Localities (the areas of local authorities) are complex systems. The task of the Local Strategic Partnership is to engender a phase shift in the character of particular local complex systems in order to transform the quality of that system for the better - to move the local system to a preferred location in the available state space.

First Order Problems which arise from 'Simple Thinking'

1. Targets – defined in terms of a whole set of single indicators measured at a continuous level with objectives set in terms of change in each single indicator – the definition and measurement issue.
2. Assumption of common interest of all social groups in the locality in achieving the same general outcome – the political issue: not for dealing with here but fundamental.

Second Order Problems which arise from simple thinking

1. Failure to recognize that the changes that matter are changes kind. Fiddling around (in every sense) with single indicators instead of searching for control parameters.
2. The possibility or even probability of single issue interventions making things worse – going the wrong way.

The Complex alternative

1. Recognize that single measures are useful traces of the system as a whole but only that . We have to use them taken together – we have to classify.
2. If you want to go there, I wouldn't start from here – the issue of path dependence.
3. Near Neighbours married with Comparative methods – finding out what works for us.

Tools for Identifying Control Parameters

1. Classification – use descriptive indices to identify what kind of place you are. Try cluster analysis.
2. Identify who is in the same cluster – same type as you – but doing better.
3. Comparison – qualitative and quantitative – learn how to use Qualitative Comparative Analysis - find out what they are doing differently.
4. For QCA see:
<http://www.u.arizona.edu/~cragin/>