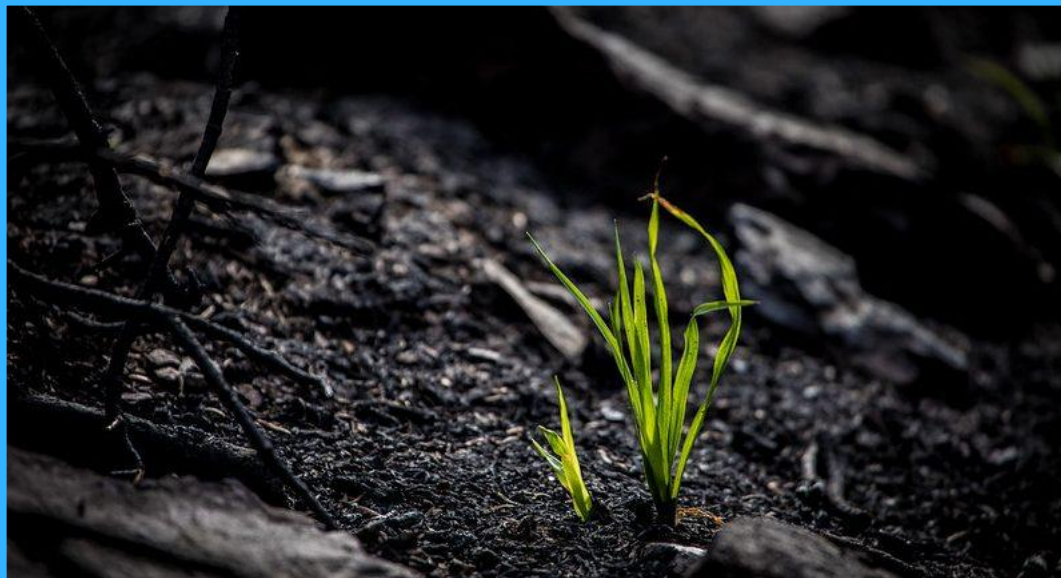


# The days after: are we learning? Are we building back better?



The learning community  
to build back better  
in the days after

June 2021

Benjamin Taylor

# Links from the session

## Our learning community

- Online <https://buildbackbetter.groups.io/>
- WhatsApp  
<https://chat.whatsapp.com/DDXQ8CK6ZPH19Nwh54cORg>

## Session content:

- [Mural board from the session](#)
- [Video from the session \(be prepared to skip chunks at the start and during breakout rooms\)](#)
- [Transcript](#)

**[Sign up for the NEXT SESSION](#)**  
**[7 July 14:20-16:20](#)**

## [London Policy & Strategy Network](#)

- [23 July: Kat Raworth, Doughnut Economics](#)

## [Centre for Public Impact](#)

## [Human Learning Systems](#)

- [Case studies](#)

## [OECD OPSI](#)

- [28 June: Webinar: Acting on Mission-Oriented Innovation: Where next?](#)
- [29 June: Meet-up: Using Innovation Methods for Last-Mile Service Delivery](#)
- [7 July: Webinar: Anticipatory Capacity for Governing Institutions and Technology Policy](#)

# PSTA and RedQuadrant – resources from Benjamin

- [The Adaptive Council](#)
- [Systems leadership and systems change – what are we trying to achieve?](#)
- [Commissioning is dead, long live commissioning](#)
- [Commissioning is an approach to transformation](#)
- [Can commissioning truly start from the assets and capabilities of citizens and communities?](#)
- [Leadership for transformation - ten principles for public service transformation](#)
- [Ten principles - checklist for leaders](#)

Connect at [www.bentaylor.com](http://www.bentaylor.com)

[My personal newsletter](#)

[Join the RedQuadrant toolshed](#)

For support from the Public Service Transformation Academy – email [benjamin.taylor@redquadrant.com](mailto:benjamin.taylor@redquadrant.com)

# The Public Service Transformation Academy

We offer :

- The Tool Shed, Leading Transformation, Enabling Transformation
- Systems Change Framework: identity | intent | illuminate | intervene | innovate
- Place-Based System Leadership Academies
- Public Service Entrepreneurship Academies (Radical Procurement)
- Commissioning Academies
- Transformation Academies
- PSTA newsletter
- RedQuadrant newsletter
- PSTA and STP alumni

## Public Service: State of Transformation

2019

- [report, case studies, and survey \(pdf\)](#)
- [conference: \*helping each other out of crisis\* – full notes and other materials](#)

2018

- [think pieces \(pdf\)](#)
- [case studies \(pdf\)](#)
- [RedQuadrant shadow report – State of Emergency \(pdf\)](#)
- [conference: \*it doesn't have to be this way\* - full notes and other materials](#)

[www.publicservicetransformation.org](http://www.publicservicetransformation.org)



E3M

**TSIP** | The Social Innovation Partnership

brownejacobson  
public sector lawyers

**Basis.**  
Changing the Change

CHAMPIONING  
VOLUNTARY  
ACTION  
**NCO**

**nesta**

**Alliance  
for Useful  
Evidence**

Delivering the



Cabinet Office

Commissioning Academy

On behalf of and through



Civil Service

*Leadership Academy*



Civil Service Learning



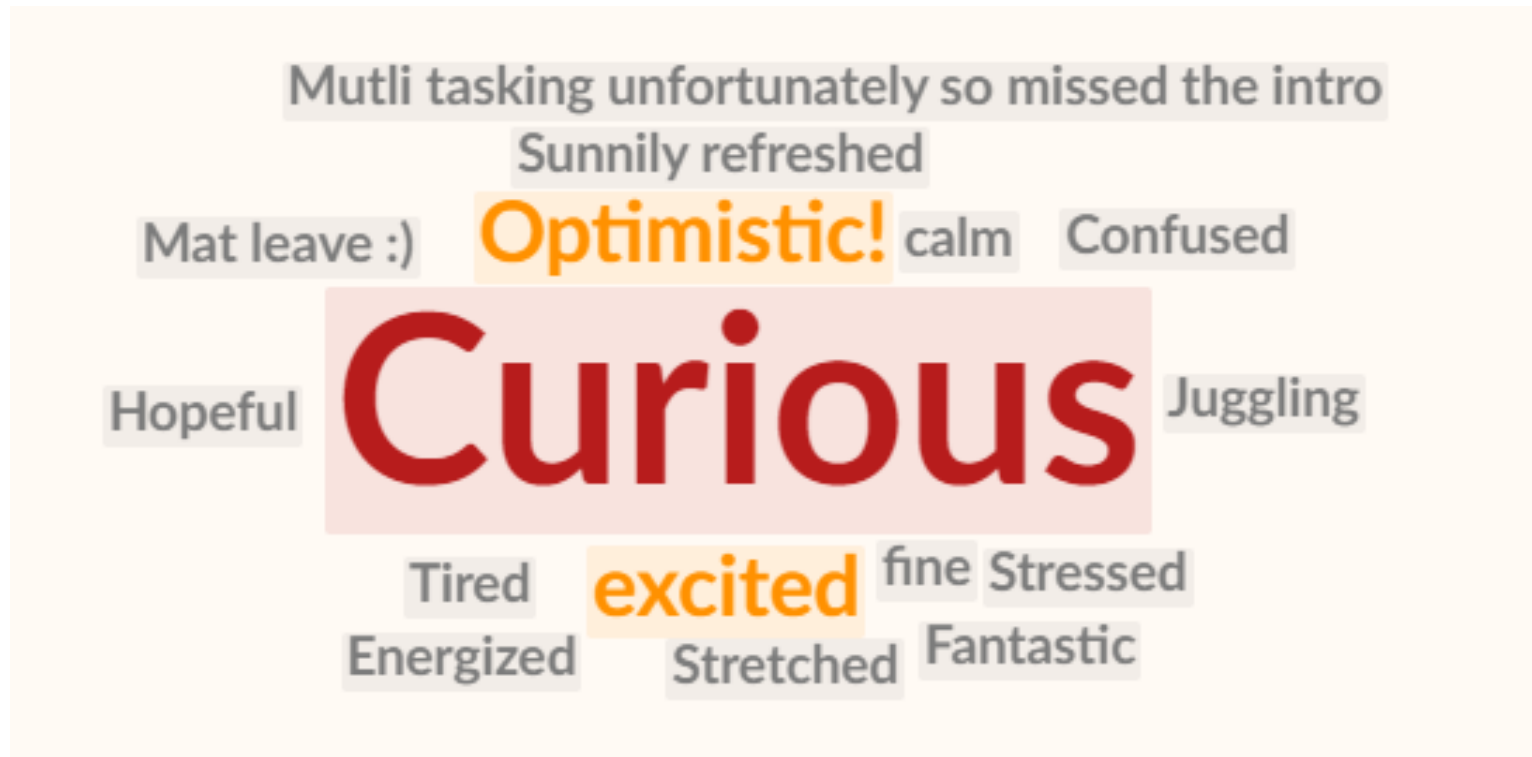
Department for  
Digital, Culture,  
Media & Sport

# CHECKING IN

# Why is it important for you to be here?

- To find an inspiring network of peers
- We're acting on a hypothesis that we can learn from one another to improve what we do...
- Trying to network a bit with other folks committed to building back better, and actually working the problem.
- important to be here to learn from the collective experiences of what happens next....
- sometime to reflect on what the future could be & how I help the organisation get there
- I am here because wanted to learn new ways of engaging with other participants, networking
- To learn from people who come from different walks of life and perspectives, that's often where I find we can innovate
- To find energy and motivation
- common base variety base to learn listen share
- The topic really sounded very interesting and I wanted to hear what other people are doing to build on assets people have and get motivated and inspired to do what I do!
- I am here because the formal systems are not necessarily navigable and I am restless to find new ways to think and work to bring about a fairer, thriving, sustainable life for people. I am coaching leaders to find the space of the pitch where they can work with personal agency.

# Temperature check: one word arrivals





# One sign of a positive future you've seen recently

- More people reflecting and thinking about what they want the future to be
- New voices emerging
- our VCS colleagues talking about bridging between pandemic response and getting back tackling systemic issues.
- Coming together
- people caring for others
- Community response to pandemic such as mutual aid groups, food projects and consensus that there is a lot more that people can do for one another without being dependent on services
- Changing the way we're changing
- My local litter picking and general neighbourhood improvement linking the old and new communities in LBBD
- Toby Lowe's Human Learning Systems launch last week
- People appreciating the outdoors freely
- More groups showing interest in people focused business ?
- Exciting stuff in empty shops
- Youth assembly of young people sharing their hopes
- More wildlife around
- The informal feedback from the events research :)
- The sun
- Enthusiastic colleagues
- Happy people in street
- A shift in mindset - positively
- Considerate people everywhere
- Neighbourhood Democracy Movement

# Agenda

- Temperature check(in) and the community exercise
- Our journey
  - Challenges, scenarios, three horizons, sensemaking, the Adaptive Council
  - Where are we at? Reflections on our journey – what can we say about what we said?
- How it feels:
  - Mourn and moan – what are we sad or unhappy about, now?
  - “Pessimism of the intellect” – what are the challenges we face?
- Break
- Looking to the future:
  - Celebrate good times – what are we glad about?
  - “Optimism of the will” – what are our hopes?
  - Determinations – what are we gonna do?
- Mentions of other work
- Checkout – what energy are we leaving with?

# WHAT WE LEARNED FROM COVID-19

- Fast crises and heroism; slow crises and viability
- The power of people and the train from Washington
- The Deadening Cascade of Legibility and Rewilding Public Services

# The journey of the group

- focus on 'what will we face in the days after' – appreciating the multivarious and overlapping challenges
- scenario development to consider the possibilities of what will result... which was not immediately inspiring
- open space development of key focus areas – from new forms of leadership, to the revolutionising of adult social care commissioning
- digging into the scenarios and asking 'what do we want our new future to be'?
- third horizon thinking to consider what potential realities we can spot and seek to bring through into the new world identifying the prospects for radical rebuilding in the days after,
- and developing a full vision on 'what we want to be valued' in the days after
- identifying barriers to the achievement of the vision – and how we can model and share these values, and the shared collaborative learning process which led to them
- along with 'spin-off' events on post-crisis communications, 'five worlds' for place-based working, and deep engagement – connecting, reflecting, sensemaking
- we also participated in the OECD Observatory for Public Sector Innovation's Government After Shock event in November

# THE BIG UNRULY LIST

Multiple issues in multiple dimensions

Terrible crisis, and significant death and trauma.

*Potentially* a better world – there will be things within this crisis which massively advance all our policy goals, things that damage our policy goals, and things which may cause us to rethink them.

Massive significance for how we work as an organisation and how we work in the world

**Technical area**

- Issue areas
- Digital / technology
- Property
- Operating approach external (opening hours, safety etc)
- Operating approach internal (hours, pay and reward, recognition etc)
- Ways of working (internal) – interaction of work, family, community, working from home
- Culture
- Governance
- Partner relationships
- Community relationships
- Finance
- Leadership
- Management

**Issue areas:**

- Safety at work
- Trust and compliance
- Trauma, bereavement, guilt, and flare-ups/crises
- Managing teams and individuals
- Learning
- Fairness, equality, inclusion
- Control and structures
- Business continuity and crisis management
- Workforce changes (early retirement, emerging new leaders etc)
- External communications (social media etc)
- Informal networks
- Fraud and error
- Recognition, reward, ceremony
- Service backlogs
- Evaluation and judgement (of each other, and externally)

**Service areas/policy-level issues:**

- Trauma-aware schools
- Education in general
- Rethinking nursing care and homes
- Rethinking families
- Rethinking communities

- Dealing with abuse and domestic violence differently?
  - Support to business
- All of which have implications which wash back into corporate considerations, especially:**
- Mental health
  - Localism/centralism/place – and ‘postcode lotteries’
  - Inequality
  - Relative pay for ‘essential workers’
  - Supply chains

**New governance**

- What will our governance approach look like?
- Changed role of councillors?
- Does ‘austerity’ ‘just come back’?

**What will be called for?**

- New capabilities – distributing leadership... but learning from own practice and others, not from ‘experts’ or ‘case studies’
- Processing time and space – personal, team, learning from our responses
- Ability to process and manage change in our understanding of our purpose

- Re-evaluate ‘high potential’ people based on experience? (Implications of that)
- Re-evaluate equality, diversity, and inclusion based on experience?
- Truth and reconciliation
- Ceremony and memorialisation (culturally very significant)
- Art
- Group differentiation – functional sub-grouping
- Big role for honest conversations and the five key practices
- The return of T-groups
- Innovation and creativity is what we are selling – risk appetite and value-adding governance and hierarchy
- Work through and renegotiate policies, guidance, controls, and roles
- Get whole groups to do sense-making around this
- FutureSearch
- Action learning sets
- Scenario planning



**What will we be dealing with?**

**Work is different now**

- Experience of new ways of working – in spades – but differential and complex impacts – flexible hours – work/life integration – need new guidance one being human and professional – what do we keep and what do we role back? Home not safe and enabling for all – how do we account for this?
- Remote meetings including council meetings (though this is, oddly, temporary legislation)
- Business continuity and crisis management lessons
- Interaction of work, family, community
- People reassessing their lives and careers
- Early retirements and other significant impacts
- Digital has massively accelerated...
- Open use of social media... for now

**Emotions**

- Dealing directly with bereavement

- Managing trauma, guilt, and distress – in the work and in personal lives
- General process of transitioning from adrenaline-driven crisis management mode to a ‘new normal’

**Course corrections**

- There will be fraud and error across many systems, and unfortunately there will also be abuse and domestic violence to deal with
- Post-mortem – mutual evaluation and judgement – could spill over into blame and acrimony
- At the same time – legal liability, public inquiry, blame

**Getting back to... what?**

- Re-establishing boundaries and norms – conflicting dynamics (some will be ‘back to the old desk’ and familiarity/ some will have ‘sat it out’ / while others ‘grew wings’ and discovered new capabilities, thrived) – people have gone out of their comfort zone and enjoyed it – hard to put back in the box – what does it look like and how do you start

framing it?

- Pressure to deal with backlogs – marriages, registration of births, commemoration ceremonies, mental health, other social care issues
- Very different experiences and dynamics in different parts of the organisation (Bins – short staffed, danger, Traffic – spike in crime, Temporary mortuaries, Registration of deaths)
- Re-setting the culture – who do you reward? Who do you reprimand? What you reward... heros... rewarding ‘heroic effort’ ... Boris Johnson... honours list... DO you also reward the silent people... And what you let people get away with... fraud, error, taking advantage...
- Re-introducing the role of governance – councillors sidelined etc
- What do we do about annual performance reviews?!

**The direct legacy of the crisis response**

- Public service integration
- Development of informal

networks – how not to crush these?

- Integration with community
- Community development / tension with public service changes
- Changed context – austerity?
- Clearly, learning opportunities abound!

**Opportunities:**

- Dialogic OD – naming things shapes the conversation
- Coherence of the organisation – and the sector
- Find networks which operate across/outside the boundaries of the organisation and work with them

**Major risks:**

- Bureaucratic overload if decisions are referred upwards
- Lack of organisational coherence if decisions are made locally
- Focus on organisational boundaries – lose coherence with place and your environmental communities
- Destruction of informal networks

# The crisis

- ‘Unfreezing’ and innovation – loosening or removal of:
  - Boundaries (organisational, sector, hierarchical level) and
  - Constraints (hierarchy, governance, risk)
- Real insight and learning about what can be achieved
- Desire to maintain this agility and effectiveness
- Realised we had had gaps in our understanding that we didn’t even know about
  - Communities, dependence and independence
  - Need to blend traditional analytic data with ‘warm’ or ‘thick’ data (the human stories of peoples’ lives) for insight
- Funding temporarily a bit increased – but still a huge huge problem
- Rise of mutualism, community power, and self-help (with some tension – different layers, different speeds, ‘heroic’ actions ‘delivering results’)
- Leaders need to deal with the tension between change that is top-down and bottom-up, and find ways for both approaches to work together.
- Mixed economies of public service delivery by all sectors deepened.



# Economy, environment, social

- Increased
  - Demand for environmental and social justice
  - Inequality and vulnerability – ‘keyworkers’ and supply chains
  - Status and riches / gig economy and zero-rights employment
  - Polarisation, uncertainty, awareness of climate breakdown
  - Challenges around housing, social care, retirement costs
  - Social atomisation
- Mixed but heavy impact on the economy and ‘high streets’
- Acceleration of ‘digital’ for access to services, efficiency (including automation), and mobile and flexible working
- A crisis of meaning and trust
- Accelerated need to work in different ways to cope with complexity – reduced capacity and breathing space to do so

# Our situation (end 2020)

- Exhaustion and weariness – recent heroic efforts, the long-term impacts of austerity, and bereavement and trauma from the pandemic
- Expect more extreme workforce dynamics, and new emerging leaders.
- Possible polarisation: safety and normality vs flexibility and change?
- Plus ‘total storm’ in 2021 impacting local government:
  - Local government reform and devolution
  - New procurement laws and approaches
  - Clinical Care Groups, Public Health, ‘national care service’
  - Further waves and winter season
  - Complete overhaul of planning system
  - Risk / uncertainty of no-deal crash-out “Brexit”;
  - Completely reshaping estates and working patterns
  - Commercial investment and commerciality
  - Overwhelming budget pressures

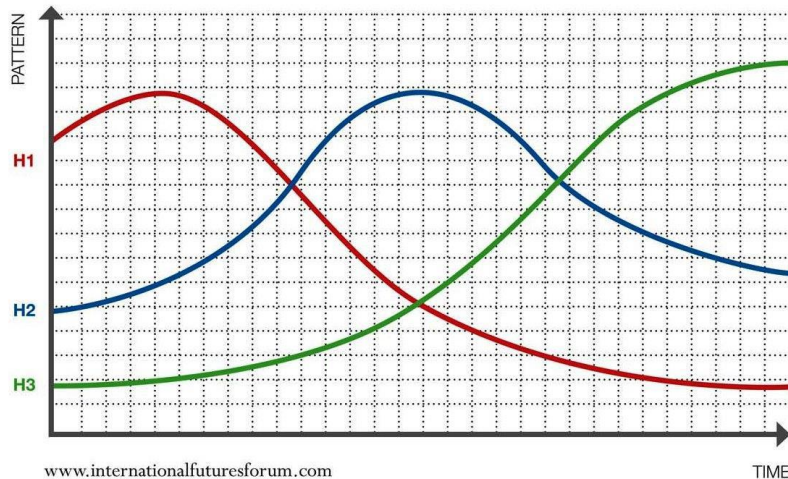
# FINDING NEW FUTURES

# Three horizons

# Triple loop learning



Three Horizons



- Changing what we do
- Changing how we think about what we do
- Changing our identity

'The old is dying and the new cannot be born... In this interregnum, all kinds of morbid symptoms appear.' Gramsci

'Acceptable ideas are competent no more, but competent ideas are not yet acceptable. This is a dilemma of our time' Stafford Beer

# Scenario planning

Big government and no awareness of interdependencies



Anarchy and awareness of interdependencies (climate and community)

# What are the most surprising / interesting implications?

## Where do we see the potential for horizons one, two and three?

- I've never thought of myself as an anarchist before but it's looking better than the alternatives
- Big opportunity for anarchy - in the true sense of the word
- most interesting implication: the interconnectedness of it all
- Implications for horizon 1 - our existing ways of structuring, organising and thinking about the world are totally falling apart, but we'll keep trying the same
- Horizon 3: Its going to take some careful positioning to argue for further change.
- Horizon 2: we're moving along this path, with some of the changes that have already happened.  
Part of BBB is about to avoiding an investment bubble outcome.
- Horizon 1: suspect it will significantly propped up by a desire by many to go back to how things were.
- Similar perspectives from a wide range of people. Economic issues are going to hit some communities harder as they are already struggling.
- If people don't want things to go back to the old ways, I think they might have to fight for it.
- Surprising that anarchy is accepted as a possibility
- Implications: the importance of networks like this
- Surprising and interesting that ideas about anarchism weren't immediately dismissed.
- Horizon 2 requires a collective intelligence
- Most interesting and potential is the conscious choices that will be made to direct H1-2-3
- Implications for horizon 2 - play to enable new ways of thinking and mutual learning will be essential to shift the conceptual blockages to 'giving up control'

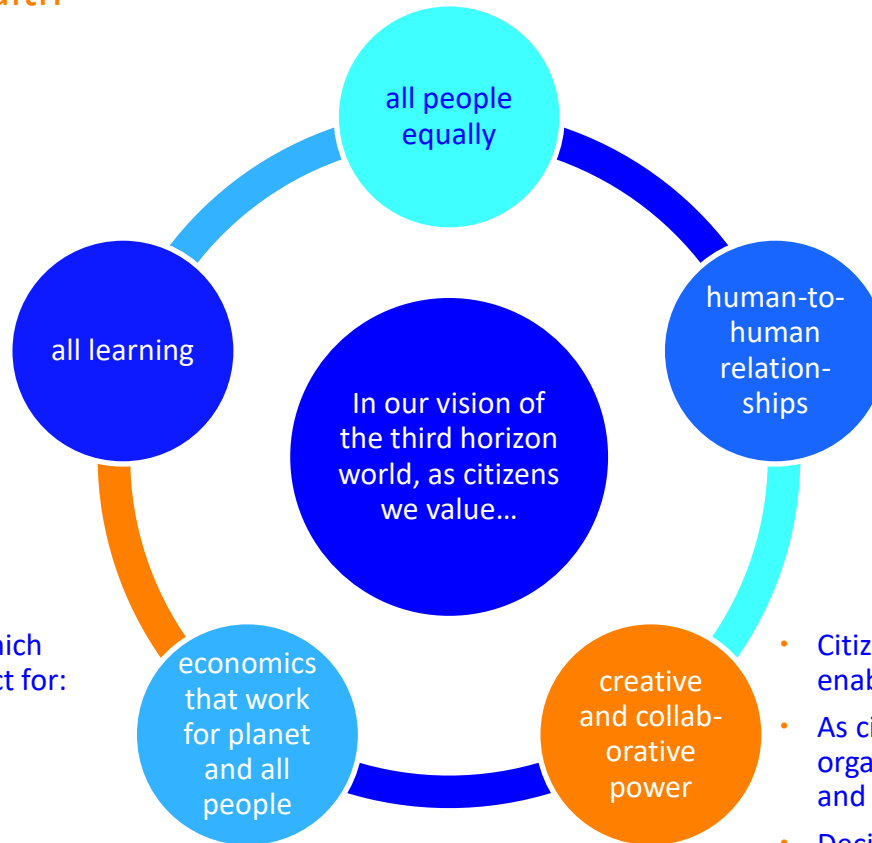
# OUR VISION FOR THE DAYS AFTER – ‘WE ARE ALL CITIZENS’

# 'We are all citizens'

- A vision about what we value
- Underpinned by the ethics that emerge through diverse interactions in good faith

- As people we are valued because we are people. Each of us is respected and our humanity is acknowledged
- We have agency over our own lives
- We all, as citizens, proceed on the basis of empathy and kindness
- Each of us has access to the resources and support we need to live our lives in a way that makes sense to us

- Learning is valued, supported, expected, and recognised...
- and is ongoing, productively challenging, and leads to mutual change



- I listen to others and others listen to me so that we all have a voice
- We have human to human relationships not just role to role
- A culture of seeking perspectives other than our own

A values-based economy which meets needs and has respect for:

- diversity
- interdependence
- equity
- all geographic scales (local to global)
- with the nature and role of money reframed

- Citizens have sovereignty supported and enabled by government
- As citizens we have sovereignty to organise ourselves, embracing diversity and multiple ways of knowing
- Decision-making is based on transparent process in a learning loop around values (for example as citizens we address equality and equitable distribution of wealth)



# Thoughts on the vision



# Barriers



# Actions





# Why is it important for you to progress this vision?

- There is a clear need for change - some green shoots being seen through Covid response and a good time for a rethink and momentum.
- because relationship and collaboration between peers, underpins addressing the challenges we face on this planet
- Putting values into action and to counter act the insidious tendrils of neo fascist forces in government
- Because it is part of the conversation that is needed to change the context of our living
- Its right ( consistent with my values, anyway)
- Humanity and compassion
- Because I'm aware enough to see the state we're in and naive enough to believe we can change it.
- compelled to be involved, cannot not be
- positive future aspiration

# What crossroads are we at right now?

- What next? And how to get there?
- the choice to change or not. Each of us living this vision will create ripples
- tackling inequalities and exploitation of vulnerable and disempowered people is at a crossroads
- Unpicking the future of this process from the future of this group
- Springing back or starting to make progress.
- if the executive agencies are scared to come and have this conversation openly and honestly - is there a way to create a safe place where they would feel safe to engage.
- Power structures and diversion
- Not so much a crossroads as a precipice.
- opening out the discourse, resisting instituting unhelpful boundaries
- crossroads - how to take forward as a group - can we make more use of each other as a group/network

# ADAPTIVE PUBLIC SERVICES

# Our approach

There is a crisis of uncertainty in measurement, targeting, payment-by-results, and existing forms of management. And there are tensions and polarities between:

- command-and-control and more enabling, empowering, collaborative ways of working;
- different layers and types of public services and civil society (devolution tensions at all levels);
- a model in which there is a strong distinction between the provider of services and the receiver, and one in which we're all equal citizens; and
- increased focus on structures while increasingly recognising the overwhelming importance of culture.

Organisations must manage and balance these tensions to survive and thrive.

# Demands and requirements

1. A need to be 'insight led', with hard analytic data and warm local, human knowledge able to be used together flexibly in uncertain situations;
2. An acceleration of the need to work in different ways to cope with complexity;
3. Economic development in a truly complex and unpredictable world, with local and global highly blended;
4. Digital acceleration, in terms of both internal working and customer access;
5. Deep uncertainty which can unleash creativity but could equally lead to despair;
6. Increasingly dynamic tensions among staff and in terms of expectations of employees and organisation;
7. The need for recognition of change and transition for employees; and
8. The certainty that the future will remain turbulent, uncertain, ambiguous, and likely to throw up completely novel situations.



# Adaptive public services

## Twelve aspects

## Challenges

### Demands

Deep uncertainty  
– Creativity?  
Despair?

Economic  
development in  
a complex and  
unpredictable  
'glocal' world

Dynamics  
tensions  
between staff

Our 'service  
provision'  
models are  
inherently  
problematic

New expectations  
of employees and  
organisations

Need to recognise  
change and  
transition

Accelerated need to  
work in different  
ways to cope with  
complexity

Need to be  
insight-led

The future  
will remain  
turbulent,  
uncertain,  
ambiguous  
and novel

Offer a new  
flexible  
employment  
approach

Embrace  
'municipal  
entrepreneurial  
-ism'

Balance deep  
technical skills,  
emergence, and  
collaboration

Work across  
boundaries

Systems  
thinking and  
complexity  
navigation

Intentionally  
shape culture  
and identity

Generate rich,  
multi-level  
learning from  
action

Act as equal  
citizens

Be highly  
engaged with  
adult  
development

Effective, open  
governance

Being  
trustworthy

Insight-led  
understanding

Risk of crash-out,  
no-deal "Brexit"

Local  
government  
reform and  
devolution

Complete  
overhaul of the  
planning system

Procurement law  
re-write?

Complete  
reshaping of  
estates

CCGs abolished?  
National care  
service?

Toughened  
rules on  
commercial  
investment

Public Health  
England?

Fraud, error,  
public inquiries

Overwhelming  
budget pressures

Vaccine roll-out

Future pandemic  
spikes

Move to fully  
flexible working

Underpinned by the ethics that emerge  
through diverse interactions in good faith

# Comments from meeting chat /1

- Please can LBBD share info on linking old and new communities as am very interested in this!  
([CLlr.S.conway@barnet.gov.Uk](mailto:CLlr.S.conway@barnet.gov.Uk))
- Some of those scenarios were positively apocalyptic ...
- they could be the basis of Mad Max (post pandemic) - the movie
- What we REALLY need are positive visions of life after Apocalypse. As the saying goes, "where there is no vision, the people perish" - and we need a better vision than a self-fulfilling Mad Max prophecy
- Interesting corollary- in military air operations, one is always working on 3 "air plans" - one for the current day, that people are flying, and the next two days' plans
- where is one of self-organizing transformation BEFORE things fall apart?
- Interesting to look back at those scenarios, feels like we are in the Sound and Fury quadrant more than anywhere else?
- crisis mappers & voluntary response, the maker movement, social enterprise - don't seem to fit into any of those four scenarios
- @Miles I think that was the Peace, Man one - the different economy growing bottom up?
- that seemed to be growing out collapse, or did I miss it before the slide went away?
- of course, most of you are in the UK - more positive view of the role of government - on this side of the pond, it seems like social entrepreneurship, and cooperatives are the only areas that aren't gridlocked
- Where are you, Miles?
- Captures our lived experience. Very rich and meaningful reflections and insights.....very valuable
- Acton, MA - North of Boston.
- Thank you!
- ...there's something in here about behaviours and example, I think.
- Lottery numbers next, David!
- I think back to the early environmental movement - when folks were out starting recycling programs, cleaning up rivers, getting out in front of things. Now we're back to folks marching in the streets calling on the government to do something, rather than rolling up their sleeves and getting to work.
- Felt that we are very much at crossroads and the difficulty in deciding which is the best route to take can be paralyzing.
- A lot of what you're talking about Miles is happening in my bit of the UK at very localised level.
- I've kind of concluded that what's missing is vision that people can aim at. Back in the day, the Whole Earth Catalog provided a lot of that, along with "access to tools." (coincidentally, I'm working on trying to put together the equivalent of a Whole Earth Catalog for a Green New Deal)

# Comments from meeting chat /2

- That's so powerful Ann, in terms of behaviours. There's something about how we share the stories of people (including ourselves!) using those behaviours to bring hope and optimism
- Question about other countries' experiences is a good one - are they very different? Things haven't changed yet as much as we thought they would - but maybe apocalypse is still to come?
- officialdom doesn't know how to connect to bottom-up possibilities - 'parallel universes'
- I don't think we're going to see economic or state collapse as the scenarios envisaged (despite the fact that in some ways it's needed)
- Tension between recognising that citizens have changed a lot for the better in comparison to pre-pandemic, but the challenges and trauma society faces is so great that that change can feel very small
- What are the timescales for each of the three horizons - thought we were gearing up for recovery last summer but then second wave put plans on hold
- When do we become the hopeful disruption that is needed?
- maybe the pandemic wasn't the apocalypse? the apocalypse could be a slow burn crisis if we don't learn from the lessons of the last year
- could you consider reading them out and then we write ?
- how do we harness the energy and compassion on show during the pandemic - when people come out of lock down with high degrees of exhaustion and relief
- what can we do to ensure we keep what's good?
- Maybe not as bad as some thought, but the legacy doesn't seem to be following...
- An observation that I'm feeling more and more strongly is that I have more agency outside of the system than within it !
- so much still resonates
- lack of shared vision
- @jane eckford: you may have already seen this article but I think there are some parallels to what you describe! <https://nour-sidawi.medium.com/learning-from-the-places-where-informal-and-formal-change-activity-meet-part-one-9ff7bb247a9b>
- The apocalypse hasn't hit us yet ...
- There is a reluctance to maintain the advantages we have gained & the quicker ways of working which have been effective; reluctance to change for the better?? A bad sign.
- There's a lot of despondency here- sad for losses, aware of missed opportunities, exhaustion
- disconnect between actions/decisions/awareness of many of those with power and effective community activity
- Has it been a missed opportunity?

# Comments from meeting chat /3

- much will depend on how the govt manages finances here on in...
- Leadership, system and structures to match the creativity and collaboration
- @Jon, nothing to worry about then...!
- Glad we have outlined how to be on your earlier slides
- It's weirdly comforting to know it's not just me that feels this way & wants things to be different
- We need to focus on infrastructure that helps us look out for each other - across organisations and different sectors - that's the precondition for us to be able to focus on the long term
- Actions being dictated by structures
- ... and the structures not being fit for purpose!
- we have to keep emphasising whole systems, co-production, Keynesian economics,
- While we still need to improve how we gather and work with data, we also need to move to a model of working better on people's stories and lived experience. People feeling resilient and able to manage their own issues / access the right level of support is much more important than tickboxes.
- and science based policy
- We don't know what the lessons are that need to be learned, at the time when they are most needed to restore and redesign services
- So much "lack of" ...
- the pull of the old normal will be stronger than anticipated either due to absence of vision of alternative or sense that the old normal is equivalent to the end of the pandemic
- The path dependency is a really big challenge - people will want to go back to the familiar, but we can't afford it and we learnt new things during the pandemic which show how things could be better
- Solidarity is more possible than ever....
- Do we think (and do) enough about what kind of world are we leaving for my nephews / niece / your children / future generations?
- a strong fatalism that we believe that we can't make things better..we are stuck with systems that don't work, a lack of money, total exhaustion, out of ideas, etc
- warm thanks
- it is going to be a bumpy ride
- Yes. We know what "not" to do but do we know what to do!!!
- And how and why.
- harness the sense of 'we have been through so much' - lets work TOGETHER - as we can through this together..

# Comments from meeting chat /4

- Frankly, I really felt the points about wanting to reward people but funding not being there. After a year spent frantically trying to get PPE for our borough, coordinating food parcels and building up support, my team has even less capacity to do the same work now and all on the same wage, whereas I've seen my partner in the private sector take new career opportunities which has hugely increased her salary. Sorry to moan but it has made me slightly bitter, and I can't imagine how people actually on the frontline of this would feel!!
- Build Back Together
- It's a good point - the private sector is dependant on there being a functioning society who have jobs and stable work to spend on their products. They need to contribute to creating that
- I'm stealing your phrase Jane - we need to develop the communities of like minded people to understand "How we can be human"
- Build forward together - less back
- agreed seth
- I love that!
- should made it 2h30 like I knew we needed! LOL
- apologies, I need to leave. I would be happy to get the recording if that's ok. Thanks.
- Flourish Forward Fairly (Cormac Russell)
- Sessions going really well, very good flow!
- Agree a follow up would be good
- Proposed follow-up: 14:20 on 7 July
- Followup sounds good - also sending out slides, summary of this meeting, as well as setting up an email list or forum for continuing this session asynchronously.
- Have found these sessions incredibly valuable
- Noel can you please send the link along to that event?
- Noel please drop a link in the chat - @Magdalena and @Heather also!
- London Policy & Strategy Network next event
- <https://www.eventbrite.co.uk/e/can-london-live-in-the-doughnut-bringing-doughnut-economics-to-life-tickets-158095300299>
- This learning community has an offline community: <https://buildbackbetter.groups.io/> There is a mailing list, wiki etc Also a WhatsApp Group: <https://chat.whatsapp.com/DDXQ8CK6ZPH19Nwh54cORg>
- Human Learning Systems <https://www.humanlearning.systems/join-community/>
- @Heather, Noel, Magdalena can you send me one or two slides or text to share so I can circulate all the notes etc ASAP?
- OECD OPSI:
- 28 June: Webinar: Acting on Mission-Oriented Innovation: Where next? <https://bit.ly/2SiKynX>
- 29 June: Meet-up: Using Innovation Methods for Last-Mile Service Delivery <https://bit.ly/3529KBZ>

# Comments from meeting chat /5

- 7 July: Webinar: Anticipatory Capacity for Governing Institutions and Technology Policy  
<https://bit.ly/33YINhL>
- Website: [www.oecd-opsi.org](http://www.oecd-opsi.org) (innovation focused resources)
- Sorry I have to leave for another meeting now. Very engaging session. Thanks
- Shameless plug: I'm gearing up civic.net - an attempt to do an up-to-date version of the Whole Earth Catalog - focusing on case studies, visions, and "access to tools" for achieving a green new deal. contact me if you have case studies to share! [mfidelman@meetinghouse.net](mailto:mfidelman@meetinghouse.net)
- ...not everyone has the same amount of and notion of agency. How do we develop hope & opportunity for those that feel they have none? ...Education?
- the answer, on this side of the pond, would be... call a town meeting
- Community Power model sounds exciting!
- I'll do some Twitter intros, Noel!
- I agree with Ann - do we educate people to conform or to contribute? to have hope and capacity to role model shared values.
- The thing that I am most happy about is that We asked all the right questions about the possibility of a new future.
- please go to [slido.com](https://www.slido.com) with code #daysafter and answer the 'check out' survey questions please!
- I love the 'first dancer on the hill approach'; when we start the dance others will join, might not be who we expect, or as quickly as we would like.
- What might be the shape of our new togetherness?
- The second thing I am happy about is that we have met each other and introduced other people to the debate and together we can still shine a light on this
- I think there is a lot of opportunity everywhere to start with Asset Based Community Development(ABCD) where the communities drive the development process from the bottom up
- Sorry I have to go now - great session!
- have a look at the work we are doing at People's Powerhouse for the north.
- How do we find and release the energy to sustain the momentum....the backdrop being the exhaustion being felt across the public/community sector?
- Great point Miles
- 10 things to do to harness the spirit of 2020
- Much appreciate the thought that went into designing this session - refreshing to be in such an interactive conversation!

# Comments from meeting chat /6

- 10 things to do to harness the spirit of 2020 - Like that from Jon Harvey
- +1 on harnessing the Spirit of 2020 (and trying to clarify what lessons we have learned)
- stories of the coalitions of the willing that exist
- Will do Jane! I'd like to hear more about the local initiatives and developing networks around them, developing new ones and hearing lived experience through this... Happy to collect if people have contacts?
- you might enjoy some of these case studies @Roger!  
<https://www.humanlearning.systems/case-studies/>
- I like that really a lot Roger!
- Have to go now - interesting session!
- thanks Magdalena!
- very cathartic, thanks!! And energising to know there are good people out there - like minded and like hearted!
- thanks Benjamin
- Brilliant, thought provoking, dismaying, hopeful and excited for a positive next session!
- Excellent session, Benjamin. thank you for your chairmanship and the participation of colleagues near and far. Thank you.
- Thanks, Benjamin! It's good to be back :-)
- Thank you Benjamin was really energising and very interesting! mycelial networks!
- well done Benjamin
- Great event - kudos everyone!
- fungi!! yes - read the most amazing book on fungi: entangled life
- Merlin Sheldrake rocks
- Very interesting and comforting - Thank you Benjamin!
- The Mushroom at The End of the World - Alice Tsing

# SO WHAT, AND NOW WHAT?

One area of focus for the next session that could turn the dial a bit?



# Retrospective

{ getting better  
quickly }

Went well?	Could be better
Aha moment - key insight	Something you'll do

# What went really well today?

- Great format for collaborative thinking
- breakout discussions
- Breakout sessions
- Facilitation and fluid participation
- I think this was great.
- Seeing interesting people with common interests
- Excellent flow and use of different methods to facilitate interactions
- having a chance to think and reflect, connecting to like minded people
- interaction
- Lots of time to discuss and share feelings/experiences. Good structure.
- Acting together at pace, despite joining from broad backgrounds
- Great interaction
- meeting and chatting with others
- Really good group with lots of new refreshing people

# What could be better another time?

- A bit more time on the positive stuff!
- I am still struggling with the technical exploration at the same time as listening and contributing, I seem to miss doing all three, if i try to do all three.
- More time, more voices
- No suggestions
- More again. But also some interim email/forum conversation, maybe ad hoc working groups, or birds-of-a-feather groups. Kind of the way tech conferences are organized, or the Internet.
- more time!
- The community exercise is getting a bit boring for me, and on this occasion, stole time that might have been better allocated to other things.
- Focus on next steps and actions
- It would be good to spend more time on the hopeful aide of the exercises
- a little more time!
- Less activity in the same time
- Skip first bit, replace w a more collective gathering step
- More time on the positives
- Not enough time

# A moment of insight

- Oh shit: the mismatch between the entrenched faith in "how we do things" in service land (with associated structures, governance and power arrangements) and the effectiveness of fluid self-organising community activity (when it works).
- Key insight: the end of COVID support in October is going to trigger multiple problems for many people...this is largely predictable and apparently not being planned for.
- connecting the visioning to everyday reality - how will it become more than aspirational.
- Interesting & confirmatory, the power of people & the need for grass root growth
- The aha! Was how 'shared' our experience has been.
- Oh shit moment - God, there is a lot to do!
- How many people showed up, and had interesting
- We need to learn how to navigate and embrace ambiguity - and create time for thinking amidst all the rush in our lives
- recognising it has been a bit shit the last year. Also the feeling of being bound by the system - is exacerbated by our belief in the system
- spirit of 2020
- Be more Noel! There are good and energetic people and networks out there
- Just how gloomy the original scenarios were!
- Remind people to listen and share role of making group inclusive
- That we are all in this together
- That there is no cage.

# What's something you will do as a result of today?

- Find out more about the Community of Power in GM
- come back next time. Great discussions
- Spend some time learning about the various groups / organisations
- Dig deep and find the energy and resourcefulness to invest in the positives.
- Keep going with my own work, stay plugged into this group.
- Investigate the resources mentioned in the talks
- Get in touch with Kat on GM Community Power
- Be hopeful in how to talk about our recovery, actions, hopes, acknowledge the crappyness, think more about how to move forward given the tensions and different pulls
- write something about the Spirit of 2020
- Look at the OECD toolkits
- Design more interactive events and conversations
- Think about the human lens
- Share our stories more
- Tear down the cage

# How, if at all, should we continue? Anything else?

- I think that periodic events like that one continue to have great value in weaving new connections and holding onto to the inspiration of others.
- yes Roger, lets build a compendium of stories about what is actually happening differently
- Next meeting in 2 weeks, keep the conversation going!
- We should continue to meet and inspire; focus on common opportunities; grow the network and drive positive change.
- Meet again in two weeks
- Nurture ongoing connections, relationships, communications - an email list, a wiki, a facebook group, a video hangout - places to connect & collaborate.
- Agree with Miles. Finding common themes of interest is a good way forward.
- Thematic sessions - spotlight on a particular project
- love the opportunity for these workshops
- open a shared jamboard?
- Keep community developing....we have an identity?
- Definitely continue as a forum

# Temperature check: one word as you're leaving

Comforted  
Enthused Uncaged! Hopeful  
Stimulated still excited! Uplifted  
**Encouraged.**  
Stirred revitalised engaged  
like-hearted!  
Re-energised!

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# Always happy to talk!

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