

WIRRAL COUNCIL

COUNCIL EXCELLENCE OVERVIEW & SCRUTINY COMMITTEE – 21st SEPTEMBER 2010

TOTAL PLACE

1. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

- 1.1. The report provides a briefing note for Members as requested on the Total Place pilot that was conducted across 13 pilot areas between April 2009 and March 2010. It also provides some commentary on what is likely to be its successor, Placed Based or 'Community Budgets'.
- 1.2. "Total Place" was a Communities and Local Government pilot programme that looked at how public money was spent in a local area and how it could be used more efficiently to improve local services.
- 1.3. 13 areas¹ were chosen by the former Communities Secretary Hazel Blears to pilot the initiative following trials in Cumbria and Birmingham. The pilots identified and mapped levels of public spending across a specific theme of work in their area and explored ways to overcome organisational and cultural barriers to improvement.
- 1.4. Following the pilots, Government proposed greater freedoms and devolution of powers. However, these powers were to be reserved for 'high performing' local authorities.
- 1.5. With the change of Government in May 2010, Total Place looks set to evolve into something termed, 'Community Budgets' where there appears to be more emphasis on de-ringfencing funding and providing greater powers of autonomy for all local authorities.

2. TOTAL PLACE CHRONOLOGY

Apr 2009 – Total Place was launched during the April 2009 Budget Report. 13 pilot areas identified to examine spending and efficiencies across individual themes within each area.

Oct 2009 – Interim findings were published during the Pre-Budget Report.

Feb 2010 – Individual pilots reported their final findings.

Mar 2010 – Summary Report published jointly by HM Treasury and the Department for Communities and Local Government.

May 2010 – Change of Government

¹ Birmingham; Bradford; Central Bedfordshire & Luton; Coventry, Solihull & Warwickshire; Croydon; Dorset, Poole & Bournemouth; Durham; Kent; Leicestershire & Leicester City; Lewisham; Manchester City Region & Warrington; South Tyneside, Gateshead & Sunderland; Worcestershire. The details of the 13 pilot areas individual themes can be found at Appendix 1.

Jul 2010 – Eric Pickle’s speech alludes to opportunities and shortcomings of Total Place and indicates that its branding will change to ‘Community Budgets’.

3. SUMMARY OF TOTAL PLACE: A whole area approach to public services

- 3.1. *Total Place: A whole area approach to public services* was published, March 2010 and represented the final report of the Treasury and Communities and Local Government on the Total Place pilot.
- 3.2. Total Place set a new direction for local public services. It demonstrated what could be gained from public authorities putting the citizen at the heart of service design and working together to improve outcomes and eliminate waste and duplication.
- 3.3. The report presented a positive appraisal of the scope of the project and outputs achieved:

“The Total Place approach has been developed over twelve months through the work of 63 local authorities, 34 Primary Care Trusts, 12 fire authorities, 13 police authorities, and a wide range of third sector organisations and service delivery bodies. The 13 pilots serve a combined population of more than 11 million people. Collectively, thousands of public servants from across England have contributed to the work, analysis and understanding which drives these propositions”.

- 3.4. The pilots demonstrated that there are real service improvements and savings to be made from this way of working. The report suggests that 2% savings would be realistically achievable using this approach.
- 3.5. However, there are a number of factors that will effect this:
- a) Each Total Place pilot focused on a specific theme within their area. The “2%” savings would potentially be achieved across the theme, e.g. alcohol and drug abuse rather than across the budget of the local authority.
 - b) All of the initiatives outlined within Total Place have incurred initial investment and set-up costs. £5million was spent across the 13 pilot areas and *“thousands of public servants from across England”* were involved - all of which took resources away from front-line service delivery for the duration of the pilot at a time when public sector spending is under pressure to identify savings.
- 3.6. The report suggests that the new ways of working pioneered by leading local areas could be replicated everywhere by:
- Starting from the citizen’s viewpoint to break down organisational and service silos which cause confusion, create wasteful burdens of data collection and management on the frontline, and which contribute to poor alignment of services
 - Providing strong local, collective and focused leadership which supports joined up working and shared solutions to problems with citizens at the heart of service design

4. PROPOSED NEW FREEDOMS

- 4.1. The report suggested that Central Government would look at providing freedoms under two headings: 'The Single Offer' and 'The Innovative Policy Offer'.
- 4.2. The Single Offer represented the main thrust of the freedoms and opportunities that Total Place was to provide and was reserved for 'high performing places'. This offer was to give places a range of freedoms (freedoms from central performance and financial control as well as freedoms and incentives for local collaboration) for working in partnership with central government to co-design services and arrangements to deliver greater transparency, efficiency and value for the citizen and the public purse.
- 4.3. The Innovative Policy Offer recognised that a much wider group of local authorities and their partners have real strengths in delivery of services within a particular policy area. This offer would have devolved responsibility to places within an agreed delivery theme. Local authorities and their partners would co-design this offer comprising freedoms similar to those for the Single Offer but linked only to an agreed policy area, e.g. community safety.
- 4.4. Both offers came with a very explicit expectation of identifying potential savings across the partnership.
- 4.5. The 'Innovative Policy Offer' would have provided Wirral with an opportunity to access some of the greater freedoms offered by Total Place.

5. TOTAL PLACE – WHAT NEXT?

- 5.1. The report identified that much more still needed to be done to identify solutions to efficient and effective service delivery following the Total Place pilots. Actions identified in the report included:
 - Extended field trials to tackle chronic alcohol and drug misuse; working with local areas including Leicester and Leicestershire, Birmingham and South Tyneside and its partners
 - Work with a small number of local areas to co-design approaches to worklessness. This included local authority and Jobcentre Plus joint working on information, advice and one-stop shops to improve customer services.
- 5.2. We are uncertain whether these activities got underway. However, the examples sited from the Total Place pilots highlight the sustained effort necessary to continually improve services and that Total Place is not a 'one off' exercise.
- 5.3. The Department for Communities and Local Government has not provided any detailed update on "Total Place" since the election. In a recent speech by the Secretary of State², July 2010, Mr Pickles referred to place based area budgets or community budgets and implies far more freedoms for local authorities than was ever envisaged under Total Place.

² The Full Speech can be found at <http://www.communities.gov.uk/speeches/newsroom/lgaoffer>

6. CONCLUSION

- 6.1. The Coalition Government has already provided for more radical proposals than was contained within Total Place and whilst further details about Community Budgets are yet to emerge from Whitehall, in the current climate there is unlikely to be any prescriptive framework that will govern what councils do.

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This report was prepared by Gareth Latham, who can be contacted on 691 8030.

Appendix 1

Total Place pilot areas and their related themes.

| Place | Themes |
|---------------------------------------|--|
| Birmingham | Alcohol & drug abuse, Mental health services, learning disability services, Improving outcomes for Young People leaving care, demonstration project (community) and guns & gangs |
| Bradford | Integrating services to manage the transition to independence for young offenders, care-leavers and the elderly leaving hospital |
| Central Bedfordshire / Luton | family breakdown/divorce; links to crime & drugs |
| Coventry, Solihull and Warwickshire | Children's services linked to health |
| Croydon | Children's services & links to health 0-7 yrs |
| Dorset/ Poole/ Bournemouth | Older People's services |
| Durham | Housing & regeneration |
| Kent | Kent Gateway & multi-channel access; single asset management strategy; Mending Margate |
| Leicestershire/ Leicester City | Alcohol & drug abuse (links to Mental Health and crime) |
| Lewisham | Minimising reoffending; managing ex-offenders in the community; worklessness & young people; procurement project; NHS / Local Authority integration |
| Manchester City Region and Warrington | 0-5s |
| South Tyneside/ Gateshead/ Sunderland | Health inequality/ safer communities/ teenage pregnancy |
| Worcestershire | Asset management; shared services; offender management & NEETs; alcohol abuse; road safety; support to most deprived wards |