authorisation and resource control. The interesting dilemma here is that increased centralised power in the shape of resource control and decision-making authority was needed at the same time as power needed to be surrendered among the participating partners. That represented a different exchange of power which proved ultimately unpalatable. During the research for *Collaborative Guidance*, the nervousness of councillors to surrender or share power was evident throughout, manifested in claims, or fears, of takeover.

The notion of partnerships surrendering power is confirmed by Hudson et al. (1999, p242) who state, “the search for collaboration requires organisational flexibilities in the construction of joint agendas (thereby surrendering a degree of definitional power), joint resourcing (surrendering a degree of resource control) and joint working (surrendering a degree of control over staff time, energy and corporate loyalty)”. Sullivan and Williams (2009) found that power disparities between representatives from different sectors could also inhibit the participation of some partners. Sullivan and Williams (2012) later introduce the theory of “boundary-objects” in relation to shaping power relations in attempts to integrate health and social care, suggesting that tangible objects, such as the layout of buildings or intangible objects such as ideas, can represent power structures and be powerfully symbolic.

In their review of rural partnerships in Wales, Derzken, Franklin and Bock (2008) develop the concept of partnerships being “distinctive arenas of power where the
emphasis on participation and consensus shapes power relations in particular ways” (Derzken, Franklin and Bock, 2008, p459). They challenge notions of power being a dispositional concept operating in a dominance-resistance framework not least because it seems to be at odds with the governance perspective discussed earlier. They note that the “sheer instrument of partnership constrains the potential for domination by resourceful public sector actors in the sense that outright refusal or indifference towards other actors can hardly be upheld and is likely to be questioned in partnership settings” (Derzken, Franklin and Bock, 2008, p 459).

Therefore, they argue, the effects of modes of power such as of authority, inducement, coercion, seduction, manipulation, persuasion and negotiation, are as important as domination and command and can be viewed as positive forces of power in the collaborative context. These modes of power help to place less emphasis on the role of resources as a basis for power and were used extensively by the Collaborative Guidance authorities.

Drawing on the work of Allen (2003), Derzken, Franklin and Bock (2008) conclude that a partnership can be seen as an instrument to exercise power through incorporating others within close reach. This is reflected in the Wales policy approach to encourage regional partnerships in health and social care and was evident in the two collaborations in Collaborative Guidance. However, the vast rural expanse of one of the initiatives produced different barriers to overcome from the adjacent and interlinked urban geography of the other.
Derzken, Franklin and Bock (2008) argue that effective partnership working benefits from the more reciprocal modes of power. Inducement and authority as "power over" and negotiation and persuasion as "power to" all work in the absence of force on the basis of some sort of voluntary arrangement. This chimes with Huxham and Vangen's (2005) identification of three perspectives of power in the context of collaboration on a continuum, distinguished as power over, power to and power for. The former is concerned with control over others, the second uses power for mutual gain and the latter involves the transfer of power to others, thereby, for example, giving another party the capacity to set priorities and control resources (Himmelman, 1996). Agranoff (2006) argues that one of the advantages of network involvement is the reciprocal development of knowledge expansion which he refers to as the "power of possibility" representing a "power to" (Agranoff, 2006, p61).

The reciprocal benefits of the collaborations in the portfolio do not seem to be based on consciously sharing power in this context other than in a risk averse sense and fear of loss of sovereignty. This suggests that the positive aspects of understanding different modes of power in a collaborative context may be lost to more negative connotations connected with the traditional hierarchical concepts of control found in organisational theory. This further suggests lost opportunities to overcome perceived barriers to working together or even translate them into enablers.
The relevance of trust

The literature suggests that power is closely linked to trust as an enabler or barrier to successful collaborations and Huxham and Vangen (2005) reflect their importance by devoting a chapter in their authoritative text to each. The basis of their narrative is addressing the “gap between the common wisdom that trust is necessary for collaboration to be successful and common practice, which suggests that trust is frequently weak (if not lacking altogether) and suspicion is rife” (Huxham and Vangen, 2005, p153). They argue that trust building must be a cyclical process within which positive outcomes form the basis of trust development, thus forming a trust building loop, acknowledging, however, that this conceptually appealing loop is at odds with numerous complex factors such as membership, structure and power imbalances.

McGuire (2006) argues that trust is important in public management but there is no general agreement about what a public manager can do to build it, agreeing with Entwistle and Martin’s (2005) conclusion that the management of trust is problematic partly because by encouraging trust, partnership reduces conflict in relational exchange but excessive trust can militate against the positive effects of collaboration because of complacency within the relationship to find the best solutions possible. They invite researchers to address two main questions: whether service delivery partnerships realise high-trust relationships and whether trust reduces relational conflict. The portfolio suggests a cautious “no” to the former.
because the degree of trust did not reach a high level, and a cautious “yes” to the latter because the collaborative process provides opportunities to build new relationships and discover new solutions evidenced by the collaborative work that produced *Profession to Value*. This supports Gazley’s (2010) findings that trust might be created to support collaborative activity through socialisation and direct experience.

Sullivan and Williams (2009) remind us that community strategies were developed in Wales as policy instruments because Government felt they would provide a voluntary framework for local co-operation, recognising the operational autonomy of partners, as this was the only way to develop trust. This is the culture in which the partnerships cited in *Achievements & Challenges* have emerged yet local authority respondents to Sullivan and Williams’s (2009) research questioned the extent to which a voluntary arrangement was sufficient to secure commitment from their partners. Government’s subsequent willingness to legislate for co-operation suggests their previous confidence in a voluntary approach may have wilted.

The notion of excessive trust is extended to unconditional trust by Zeng and Chen (2003) whose research found that high levels of trust demonstrated through unconditional cooperation in a social dilemma situation can generate two types of attributions - trustworthiness or irresponsiveness - whereas conditional cooperation left only room for the former.
Mankin, Cohen and Fitzgerald (2004) argue that complex collaborative processes require well-defined and explicit attitudes, norms, and expectations to guide these processes, especially those underpinning the prerequisite culture of mutual respect and trust, while Williams (2002) and Lowndes and Skelcher (1998) point to trust being linked to the mutual expectations and benefits of the collaboration. Williams (2002) records that various models of trust implicate the concept with faith, predictability, goodwill and risk taking as well as being derived from calculation, value and norms or common cognition. Trust is, therefore, an undoubtedly complex concept.

Heley and Moles (2012) note practical, longstanding networking arrangements between local government stakeholders in Wales, arguing that these webs of working relationships are based on trust, compatibility and convenience, with these conditions being forged through shared geographies of social and economic need. This presents a positive climate for collaborative working and, at face value, the list of partnerships in Achievements & Challenges is impressive confirmation of the collaborative agenda being alive and well. As already identified, the bigger question is whether the construct and rationale for these partnerships equates to Williams’s (2014) plea for collaboration in Welsh public services to be more meaningful, consistent and effective.

The significance of prior relationships in gaining trust is stressed by Bryson, Crosby and Stone (2006) who refer to this as the degree of structural embeddedness. They
note that paradoxically, trusting relationships are both the lubricant and the glue in collaborations, simultaneously facilitating their work and holding them together. They argue that cross-sector collaborations are more likely to succeed when trust-building activities (such as nurturing cross-sectoral and cross-cultural understanding) are continuous. This chimes with the notion that embeddedness determines the potential of a relationship between the effects of collaborations and the nature of the collaborations that produce them (Hardy, Phillips and Lawrence, 2003) and that deep, embedded traditions have a significant impact on the modus operandi of collaborations (Hibbert and Huxham, 2010). It also supports Huxham and Vangen's (2005) argument that collaborative relationships need to be continuously nurtured through relentless attention to trust building activities to sustain sufficient levels of trust. There is a need to invest in trust to develop and sustain it, at a minimum involving the components of an appropriate calculation of risk, an adherence to principled conduct, and an investment in personal relationships (Hudson et al., 1999). This investment in trust is the opposite end of a spectrum, the other being economising on trust where the chosen mechanisms of social interaction are more robust. These include manipulation, pre-commitment and power, all of which can produce functional progress without significant dependence on trust. Hudson et al. (1999) sum up the importance of trust by reporting it is often identified as a sine qua non of successful collaboration and conversely mistrust as a primary barrier.
Hardy et al. (1998), however, distinguish between real and simulated trust and suggest that most functional interpretations of trust "ignore the fact that power can be hidden behind a façade of 'trust' and a rhetoric of 'collaboration' and can be used to promote vested interests through the manipulation of weaker parties" (Hardy et al. 1998, p 65). Sundaramurthy and Lewis (2003) go further and argue that paradoxically, trust and conflict, even elements of mistrust, can aid the management and control of collaboration. They argue that "trust in actors' capabilities bolsters collaborative board-management interactions, whereas distrust of human limitations and cognitive conflict enable controls and constructive debates" (Sundaramurthy and Lewis, 2003, p 408).

Considering trust as a one dimensional positive aspect in collaborative relationships is, therefore, a flawed approach although most public servants are likely to affiliate with Webb's (1991) claim that some element of trust is essential even to begin discussing the possible nature of a bargain or cooperative venture. The portfolio tends to support this argument but the importance of trust was more apparent in the projects following actions which created mistrust. In other words, the benefits of trust as a positive force were not consciously harnessed and were always vulnerable to more powerful forces of mistrust. This suggests a need for trust to be better understood as an enabler of collaboration with renewed strategies to embed it as an antidote to conflict.
Managing conflict

Conflict in a collaboration emerges from the differing aims and expectations that partners bring, from differing views about strategies and tactics, and from attempts to protect or magnify a partner's control over the collaboration's work or outcomes (Bryson, Crosby and Stone 2006). Partnerships have been described as often being a fragile apparatus of policy delivery because they inherently struggle to combine a range of interests and are prone to conflict (Heley and Moles, 2012). Research has shown that many of the challenges of collaborative management relate to conflict among partners often amounting to a conglomeration of numerous mini-conflicts over agency turf, the contribution of resources and even the location of meetings (Agranoff, 2006). These apparently minor but evidently important issues were evident in the portfolio, highlighted by the difficulties experienced by two of the authorities referred to in Collaborative Guidance to amend the timings of management team meetings to enable their "shared" director to attend both. A specific guidance note on ensuring practical issues are resolved was included in the Collaborative Guidance as a result.

Hudson et al. (1999), however, note that the policy debate on collaboration at the time echoed the post-war sociological debate on structural-functional versus conflict theory and argue that collaboration and conflict can co-exist in an inter-organisational relationship and that the former may help to overcome the latter.
Interestingly, Webb (1991) suggests that the Civil Service tradition primarily operates to preserve an entrenched division of labour and to limit conflict by reinforcing agreed domains. My personal experience largely reflects siloism in Welsh Government which may subconsciously contribute to a reciprocal lack of local commitment to collaborate. Hierarchical relationships can be a powerful tool to induce or even force a “joined-up spirit” in partnerships (Derzken, Franklin and Bock 2008, p463) and this can apply to the central-local governmental relationship as well as within the local partnership.

**Convenors and reticulists as boundary spanners**

A key factor in the collaboration literature is the catalytic role played by convenors or reticulists, often referred to in the context of “boundary spanners” (Williams, 2002). Convenor refers to one or more stakeholders who create a forum for deliberations among the stakeholders and entice others to participate (Gray 1996). Convenors may be classified as acting with “legitimation” because they have formal authority to convene; “mandate”, whereby statute, judicial or executive order compels them to act; or “persuasion”, where they rely on informal authority and their own initiative (Gray 1996). Some scholars even suggest it is time organisations hired “chief collaboration officers” to “send a clear signal about the importance of managing teamwork and provide the resources necessary to do it effectively”