

Effective Collaboration in Public Services – the Views of Practitioners

Elid Cleaton Morris

A submission presented in partial fulfilment of the requirements of the University of South Wales for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy

Faculty of Business & Society, University of South Wales

April 2017

Declaration

Certificate of Research

This is to certify that, except where specific reference is made, the work described in this thesis is the result of the candidate's research. Neither this thesis, nor any part of it, has been presented, or is currently submitted, in candidature for any degree at any other University.

Signed:

Candidate

Date:

Signed:

Director of Studies

Date:

Acknowledgements

I would like to begin by dedicating this thesis to my parents, Eleri and Elgar Morris whose unconditional love and support has made me the person I am today; I can never thank you enough for what you have done for me. My father would be so proud that I have submitted this thesis, something that we always talked about me doing.

I am indebted to my supervisors, Professor Catherine Farrell and Professor Jennifer Law. Thank you so much for your inspiration, perseverance, support and reassurances during this whole process - we got there in the end!

Finally, to my star cast members that feature in the story that is my life. My partner Mark, thank you for your continuous support and love in whatever I do. My brother, Emyr for his encouragement and to my best friend, Anna, for her friendship and always being there for me.

Glossary of Terms

Terms	Definition
Collaboration	The action of working with someone to produce something
Co-ordination	The organisation of the different elements of a complex body or activity to enable them to work together effectively.
Co-operation	The action or process of working together to the same end
CPPs	Community Planning Partnerships
DCLG	Department for Communities & Local Government
ESF	European Social Fund
E&SP	Employment & Skills Partnership
Integration	From a public-sector context, this refers to the coordination of working arrangements where multiple departments or public-sector organisations are involved in delivering a public service or programme.
IDeA	Improvement and Development Agency
Joint Commissioning	This is typically undertaken by two or more agencies working together to address a public policy issues and is often funded from a pooled or aligned budget.
LSBs	Local Service Boards
LSKIP	Learning Skills & Innovation Partnership
LTC	Long Term Conditions
NAW	National Assembly for Wales
NHS	National Health Service
NPM	New Public Management
NWEAB	North Wales Economic Ambitions Board
Partnership	At least two agencies with common interests working together, in a relationship characterised by some degree of trust, equality and reciprocity.
PSBs	Public Service Boards
PSR	Public Service Reform
RDAs	Regional Development Agencies
Results Based Accountability	It can be used both for strategic planning and for improving service or programme performance. It starts from the end result - or outcome - and works backwards till the action that is needed to make a difference is identified.
RLPSW&CW	Regional Learning Partnership – South West and Central Wales
RSPs	Regional Skills Partnerships
SOA	Single Outcome Agreements
WAG	Welsh Assembly Government
WAO	Welsh Audit Office
WGR	Welsh Government representatives
Wicked Problems	Complex public policy matters that organisations are unable to solve on their own
WLGA	Welsh Local Government Association

Abstract

The aim of the research is to identify the elements that practitioners feel is required for effective collaboration in order to frame a critical reflection with the purpose of informing future actions and strategies. The focus of the research is within a Welsh context and will make specific reference to Welsh Government policies.

The Welsh Government has focused heavily on collaboration as its main driver for public sector reform since 2004. Of significant interest is the viewpoint of public sector practitioners and the competencies required to ensure successful collaborative activities. The research is set in the context of RSPs in Wales. The specific objectives of this thesis are to:

- determine and assess the elements required for effective public-sector collaboration;
- review relevant literature relating to effective public service collaboration;
- capture professionals' views of collaboration in the public sector to frame a critical reflection of this process.

The subject of this research originates from a professional interest in how public service practitioners should collaborate in responding to such a key policy driver from the Welsh government. The researcher was part of the research process, managing the first established Regional Skills Partnership, the Regional Learning Partnership South West & Central Wales (RLPSW&CW) September 2010 – September 2015.

A qualitative research methodology was adopted to address the research question which focused on the case study of the Regional Skills Partnership model, which has emerged in Wales over the last few years which links the agendas of regeneration, education and skills. The case study is made up of a review of documents and semi-structured interviews of two of the three Regional Skills Partnerships in Wales, namely the Regional Learning Partnership South West & Central Wales (RLPSW&CW) and the Employment & Skills Partnership (E&SP) of the North Wales Economic Ambitions Board (NWEAB). 32 interviews were conducted in total (30 interviews with the 15

participants from the RLPSW&CW and 2 with the participants from the NWEAB). All interviews were audio-recorded and then fully transcribed.

The main research outcomes are that the elements of leadership, governance of the collaboration process and measuring outcomes are considered crucial to contributing towards a successful collaboration activity.

The main recommendation of this thesis is that in relation to the Wales context, collaboration continues to be the preferred model of shaping service design and delivery with respect to driving public sector reform, however there is a need to address the three elements identified in this research that are crucial to contributing towards successful collaboration in a practitioner context. This research has focused for the first time on the policy area of skills in a Welsh context and could be extended to other areas. Contributing to the debate at a Wales level with a focus on practitioners provides a further evidence base for policymakers.

Table of Contents

Declaration	i
Acknowledgements	ii
Glossary of Terms	iii
Abstract	iv
Table of Contents	vi
List of Figures	ix
List of Tables	x
CHAPTER ONE: INTRODUCTION	1
1.1 The Research Context	3
1.2 Collaboration in Wales	6
1.3 Outline of the Research	7
1.3.1 Aims of the Research: The Development of the Research Question	7
1.3.2 Thesis Structure	8
1.4 Conclusion	10
CHAPTER TWO: LITERATURE REVIEW	12
2.1 Introduction	12
2.2 Public Policy Context	14
2.2.1 UK Public Policy Context	14
2.2.2 English Public Policy Context	17
2.2.3 Scottish Public Policy Context	19
2.2.4 Northern Ireland Public Policy Context	20
2.2.5 Welsh Public Policy Context	21
2.3 Hierarchies, Markets, Networks and the Shift to Collaboration	33
2.4 The Definition and Concept of Collaboration	38
2.5 The Motivation for Collaboration	44
2.6 Models of Collaboration	49
2.7 Existing Knowledge and Evidence of Collaboration in Public Services	58

2.8	Conclusion	75
CHAPTER THREE: RESEARCH METHODOLOGY		84
3.1	Introduction	84
3.2	Research Philosophy	85
3.3	Research Approach	88
3.4	Research Methodological Choice	88
3.5	Regional Skills Partnerships	111
3.6	Ethics	119
3.7	Conclusion	125
CHAPTER FOUR: RESEARCH FINDINGS		127
4.1	Introduction	127
4.2	Regional Skills Partnership Models	127
4.3	Research Findings	132
4.3.1	Defining Collaboration	131
4.3.2	Motivational Factors for Collaborating	134
4.3.3	Benefits of Collaboration	141
4.3.4	Barriers to Collaboration	150
4.3.5	Measuring Outcomes	159
4.3.6	Skills Required to Collaborate	163
4.4	Conclusion	170
CHAPTER FIVE: DISCUSSION		174
5.1	Introduction	174
5.2	Review of Research Findings	174
5.3	Analysis and Evaluation	177
5.3.1	Leadership	183
5.3.2	Governance of the Collaboration Process	188
5.3.3	Measuring Outcomes	199
5.4	Conclusion	204
CHAPTER SIX: CONCLUSION & RECOMMENDATIONS		205
6.1	Introduction	205
6.2	Key Findings	205
6.3	Research Implications for Policy and Practice	207

6.4	Contribution to the Knowledge and Literature	215
6.5	Limitations of the Research	220
6.6	Conclusion	223
	Bibliography	225
	Appendices	267

List of Figures

Figure 1.	Gray's Framework for Collaboration	50
Figure 2.	Ten Stages of Collaborative Endeavour	52
Figure 3.	Model of Collaborative Advantage	56
Figure 4.	Research Onion Model	85
Figure 5.	Data Collection Process	99
Figure 6.	Collaborative Approach Building on Huxham and Vangen's Model	181

List of Tables

Table 1.	Summary of the Literature Review Search Strategy	12
Table 2.	Literature Review Grid of Key Papers	80
Table 3.	Researcher's Conceptual Framework	93
Table 4.	Interviews with representatives from the RLPSW&CW	102
Table 5.	Interviews with representatives from the NWEAB	103
Table 6.	Theme Numbers and Areas	132
Table 7.	Summary of Findings Linked to the Key Literature Review Themes	170
Table 8.	Huxham and Vangen Model Themes and Thesis Themes	182

Chapter One: Introduction

Collaborative approaches have been adopted by governments where there has been a need to improve public services, address policy issues and make efficiency savings in times of severe austerity measures. At a UK level, this is evident in the devolved nations of Wales, Scotland and Northern Ireland, but in England there is more of an emphasis on choice and competition. Collaboration as a model of working has also received growing international attention from academic and policymakers alike in the last two decades, and there is now an abundance of literature which highlights that it is a necessary driver to enable public sector organisations to work collectively to resolve policy issues (Head and Alford, 2015; Provan and Lemaire, 2012; Weber and Khademian, 2008; Keast et al, 2004).

Collaboration as an area of study has gained significant momentum with much of the literature focusing on the theory of how to collaborate and its promotion as the preferred option to improve public service delivery. Although researchers have explored a considerable number of areas which are key to successful collaborative practice such as trust, Provan and Lemaire (2012) argue that from a practical perspective, collaborative partnerships, particularly those established through mandate may not work as intended because there “may be a lack of consideration of how *emergent* relationships typically form, are strengthened, and ultimately are sustained” (pp.641-642). Other key areas include organisational conditions in which successful collaboration requires an organisational setting that encourages this way of working which has the combined attributes of a good working environment for the team, appropriate structure and philosophy, team resources and administrative support (San Martín-Rodríguez et al, 2005). Further factors also include; leadership

(Cristofoli and Pedrazzi, 2015) with respect to those who are able to action plan (Agranoff and McGuire, 1998a, 1998b); active actors and resources (Agranoff and McGuire 2001a, 2001b; Klijn, 1996); and building consensus and gaining commitment for the purpose of the collaborative activity (Agranoff and McGuire, 2001a; McGuire, 2002; Keast et al, 2006). Despite this work, a review of the literature highlights that many issues remain under-researched. Among these is an appropriate analysis of collaboration from the practitioner's perspective. In the existing literature, there is research that evaluates the practical application of collaboration within the public sector (Lasker et al, 2001; Gray and Wood, 1991), however, this has limitations, as it does not provide recommendations for improvement or what competencies are essential for practitioners involved in collaborative initiatives. More recently, work has been undertaken in this area in Wales with the publication in November 2016 on the evaluation of regional collaborative working (Downe and Hayden, 2016)

There is a significant literature that advises on how to collaborate (Huxham and Vangen, 1996; Reichel and Rudnicka, 2009; Coulson-Thomas, 2005; Huxham and Hibbert, 2008), however these studies only examine the rhetoric and do not explore the elements which are required for collaboration to be effective in practice. Further, it is recognised that the knowledge surrounding its practical application in both the academic and professional literature is limited, which compromises the research around this area. The lack of credible evidence surrounding this issue is recognised by Wilson et al (2015) in that it is not clear which type of collaborative endeavour is "most likely to deliver better results for citizens, the underlying skills and ways of working needed to support these, and how to share learning effectively" (p.12).

Given the increased importance of the collaborative approach in both Wales and wider within the UK, the need to know what works is important as is learning from good practice. It is clear therefore that this area requires additional research and provides the opportunity for a key contribution to the literature.

1.1 The Research Context

The aim of the research is to identify the elements that practitioners feel is required for effective collaboration. Specifically, the research seeks to capture professionals' views of collaboration in practice to frame a critical reflection with the purpose of informing future actions and strategies. The focus of the research is within a Welsh context and will make specific reference to Welsh Government policy, which has focused heavily on collaboration as the main vehicle for public sector reform since 2004.

The subject of this research originates from a professional interest in how public service practitioners should collaborate in responding to such a key policy driver from the Welsh Government. The researcher was part of the research process, managing the first established RSP, the RLPSW&CW September 2010 – September 2015.

The rhetoric of collaboration has gained widespread acceptance amongst academics as being an advocated mechanism to effect public sector reform. However, it could be suggested from a practitioners' perspective that there are challenges and contradictions associated with such a proposition, with divergent viewpoints between the academic and practitioner communities. The literature cites the merits of collaboration (Hardy et al, 2003; Goldsmith and Eggers, 2004; Taylor, 2003) and implies to some extent that collaborative practice is a heterogenous process that can

be applied to all policy domains which will unquestionably produce positive outcomes. However, the reality is often quite contradictory with little evidence-based practice implying that it is an under-researched area, which has significant implications for the implementation of Welsh public policy. This includes ensuring that practitioners have the competencies to collaborate and that there are examples of good practice that are evidence-based to ensure the successful delivery of policies and strategies. There is a need for the link between collaboration as a policy driver and its implementation to be more visible to strengthen its practice in influencing and shaping Government strategies. There is a suggestion that since devolution in Wales, the gap between the rhetoric and reality of Welsh public sector reform has been significant because the:

“dividend in service improvement and public innovation has proven much more elusive in practice than prognosis. The learning curve has been steeper and the innovation gap wider than was hoped or anticipated. Great expectations in Cardiff are still being dashed in Cwmtwrch” (Gatehouse and Price, 2013, p.12).

Collaboration as a major policy component first emerged during the victory of the Blair government in 1997 which was hailed as a ‘watershed’ in British politics, witnessing a shift “from Conservative rule and the various hues of Thatcherism that had dominated economic and social policy since 1979” (Kitson and Wilkinson, 2007, p.805). The policy context of this thesis will focus from the period that New Labour first took office (1997) and onwards where collaboration was a tenet of central government’s drive to modernise the delivery of public services (Lindsay, 2009). It then leads onto the period of devolution in Wales and key policy directions post 1999 to the present day in relation to public sector reform.

It could be argued that by the time Blair took up office that the state was ‘broken’ with New Labour’s response being the establishment of a ‘joined-up government’ with its

main aim of getting “a better grip on the ‘wicked’ issues straddling the boundaries of public sector organizations, administrative levels, and policy areas” (Christensen and Laegreid, 2007, p.1060). This, cites Davies (2009), is the *raison d’être* of collaborative politics. Christensen and Laegreid (2007) further argue that this was a contrast to the approaches that preceded Blair’s first term in office to those that were ‘departmentalised’, had ‘tunnel vision’ and had created ‘vertical silos’. Emerson et al (2012) note that collaborative governance has been applied to several policy contexts in both England and Wales including law enforcement agencies, government contracting and health administration. Painter (1999) argues that New Labour’s policy initiatives followed a more collaborative discourse and a waning enthusiasm for the public service (quasi) markets that thrived under the Conservatives.

Bevir and Rhodes (1998) consider that approaches to public sector reform and policy delivery have been culturally mediated. This, they further state, can be reflected in the unevenness of the ‘hollowing out’ across the state, with devolution being a key policy agenda for the Blair Government which saw the establishment of the Scottish Parliament, elected Assemblies for Wales, Northern Ireland and London, and Regional Development Agencies (RDAs) within England’s regions. Consequently, central government together with each devolved administration can influence “structuring the scales and actions of a range of new sub-national institutions” (Goodwin et al, 2005, p.424) which Jessop (2002) suggests weakens the primacy of the national scale of state activity. This relates to the issue of collaboration being culturally mediated, which is stronger in Wales than in England.

1.2 Collaboration in Wales

Since 2004, collaboration has had “particular prominence in Wales where it has been at the heart of the Welsh Government’s overarching framework for public service reform (Entwistle, 2014, p.2), the foundation of which was established in Sir Jeremy Beecham’s review of Welsh public services. The publication of ‘Making the Connections: Delivering Better Services in Wales’ (2004), followed the former Welsh Assembly Government’s (WAG’s) vision for the future of public services stating that “a collaborative model fits better with Wales’ size” (p.2). The Commission on Public Service Governance and Delivery was established in April 2013 with the task of “examining all aspects of governance and delivery in the devolved public sector in Wales” (Williams, 2014, Foreword). The outcome was a report which contained a series of recommendations on all aspects of public service provision in Wales in five areas - complexity; scale and capability; governance, scrutiny and delivery; leadership and culture; and performance and performance management. For over a decade, collaboration has continued to be the key policy driver for the delivery of the Welsh Government’s ambitious public service reform agenda, which was reinforced by the introduction in September 2014 of a new Ministerial post, Minister for Public Service in the NAW. The role focused on leading the implementation of the recommendations of the Williams Commission. This was followed in early 2015 with the establishment of a Public Services Leadership Panel, which had a remit for encouraging and supporting innovative collaboration within and between service sectors, focusing specifically on creating services that are more effective. As the National Assembly for Wales (NAW) entered its fifth term in May 2016, collaboration continued to be the preferred vehicle for public sector reform. Whilst there is no longer a Minister with a portfolio dedicated to public services, its reorganisation remains at top of the Welsh

Government's agenda, particularly local government and the question about the reduction of 22 local authorities, since their establishment in 1996. Farrell (2016) suggests that "a big issue for the future is integration with other services and not just local government – police, fire and rescue, ambulance, housing, health and so on. Joint working arrangements to deliver services will become the norm and these will be different across Wales" (University of South Wales, 2016). A prerequisite to being effective is for practitioners to have a knowledge and understanding of the elements that enable successful collaboration, which is the focus of this thesis. As Huxham and Vangen (2005) state:

"inter-organizational collaboration is an established area of organizational study and a practical challenge for management...While the need for collaboration is clear, research that focuses on the practice of collaboration has demonstrated that collaborative situations are inherently riddled with managerial challenges" (p.3).

This study reviews existing studies of collaboration in several policy domains. Whilst there is significant literature on collaboration in the areas of health and social care, there are few academic studies which present research within the field of education and skills, which this thesis focuses on.

1.3 Outline of the Research

1.3.1 Aims of the Research: The Development of the Research Question

Collaboration in the Welsh public sector over the last decade has been the key policy driver for public sector reform. Of significant interest is the viewpoint of public sector practitioners and the competencies required to ensure successful collaborative activities. The aim of this thesis is to identify the elements that practitioners feel is

required for effective collaboration. It is set in the context of RSPs in Wales. The specific objectives of this thesis are to:

- determine and assess the elements required for effective public-sector collaboration;
- review relevant literature relating to effective public service collaboration;
- capture professionals' views of collaboration in the public sector to frame a critical-reflection of this process.

1.3.2 Thesis Structure

This chapter presents the rationale for the research. Chapter Two reviews the literature, which presents a summary of the policy context, with an emphasis from 1997 onwards following the election of the New Labour Government. It further provides an examination of the emergence of collaboration as a major driver in the design and delivery of public services in Wales over the last decade and reviews governance models of the public sector describing the shift from hierarchies, markets, networks to collaboration. The chapter provides a perspective on the concept and motivation for collaborating before presenting a number of models of collaboration and is followed by a focus on existing studies of collaboration in the public sector.

Chapter Three presents the philosophy detailing the methodology, design and data collection techniques adopted to undertake the research. In order to identify the elements required for effective collaboration, a qualitative approach was adopted which reviewed a range of approaches, which is described in this chapter together with the rationale for a case study using semi-structured interviews and an analysis of key documentation. The chapter discusses the issues of bias and ethics associated

with the research and finishes with a critique of the research's limitations, which may have a bearing on the study's final conclusions.

Chapter Four outlines the research findings; specifically, the selected case study for the thesis, which is the Regional Skills Partnership model that has emerged in Wales over the last few years which links the agendas of regeneration, education and skills. The research centres on the RLPSW&CW and the Employment & Skills Partnership (E&SP) of the North Wales Economic Ambitions Board (NWEAB). This chapter also presents the findings of the semi-structured interviews that were conducted. The case study is made up of the following elements: a review of documents and interviews, which were conducted initially in 2011, and then in 2013 (specifically in relation to the RLPSW&CW, the NWEAB interviews were undertaken in 2013) which included a mixture of original respondents being re-interviewed and new respondents.

Chapter Five provides an analysis of the findings presented in chapter Four, highlighting the significant emerging themes from the research data. The outcome of which is that the elements of leadership, governance of the collaboration process and measuring outcomes are considered crucial to contributing towards a successful collaboration activity. The proposed new approach to collaboration derived from the finding of the study builds upon Huxham and Vangen's (2005) model of collaborative advantage and is presented in this chapter.

Chapter Six presents the conclusion of this study and its contribution to knowledge. The study's findings are then explored and new insights offered with an emphasis on the theoretical and empirical research on collaboration. Finally, the limitations of the

study are presented from the viewpoint of its design and implementation. The chapter concludes with a focus on the limitations and implications of areas for further research for public service practitioners utilising collaboration as an approach for public sector reform.

1.4 Conclusion

Collaboration remains the key policy driver of the Welsh Government in the design and delivery of public services in Wales. Its implementation is challenged by the continuation of a climate of austerity within the public sector (Cunningham and James, 2014; Gatehouse and Price, 2013). Notwithstanding the proliferation of literature on the rhetoric of collaboration, there is limited empirical evidence in the elements that contribute to successful practice, despite its celebrated virtue (San Martín-Rodríguez et al, 2005).

Of interest to public sector practitioners and policymakers alike is both the need for a greater body of empirical evidence and an increased awareness of the elements, which enable successful collaborative activities. The contribution to knowledge offered by this thesis has also suggested opportunities for supplementary research, which it is hoped, will further advance the field and provide greater insights into how successful collaboration is facilitated in the public domain in the future. The thesis will contribute to the knowledge by analysing the application of the theoretical perspectives of collaboration to the practical challenges that are present. This is highlighted by O’Flynn (2009) in that “part of the job for academics will be to delve beneath these surface dynamics, beneath the current sermonising about collaboration to see what is really going on, and cast a critical eye over the rhetoric of collaboration” (p.114).

In summary, the limitation of the existing literature provides the opportunity to undertake further research from a practitioner's perspective with respect to the elements that facilitate successful collaborative activities. Chapter Two now moves on to reviewing the existing literature on collaboration.

Chapter Two: Literature Review

2.1 Introduction

This chapter reviews the literature that addresses the research aim of the identification of the elements that practitioners feel is required for effective collaboration.

Table 1. provides a summary of the search strategy adopted for the purpose of the literature review. Contact was made with the Information Librarian for Humanities, Social Sciences & Law at the University to support the search technique to review the academic literature. Regular email alerts via the general and publisher databases were also set up.

Table 1. Summary of the Literature Review Search Strategy

General Databases	Publisher Databases and Journal Websites
<p>Proquest Research Library, JSTOR, ISIS Web of Science, Elsevier – Scopus</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Used as part of the initial search strategy to identify relevant journals • Used to Identify popular and high-quality journals 	<p>Publisher Database, EBSCOhost Business Source Complete, Oxford University Press</p> <p>Journal Websites - Public Administration Political Science & Politics Public Administration Review Journal of Public Administration Research and Theory Public Money and Management Social Policy & Administration Policy & Politics Local Government Studies Public Management Review Journal of Public Administration Research and Theory Journal of Public Sector Management Journal of Management Studies</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Used to review journals that regularly publish on specialist area

Collaboration was a major element of public policy in both England and Wales from the inception of the Blair government and onwards (Flynn, 2007). This period was the time when the idea of collaboration came to the fore as a mechanism to fulfil the implementation of 'joined up government's' public sector programme delivery. Reference is also made to the Welsh context, as collaboration has been particularly strongly embraced by the Welsh Government (formerly the Welsh Assembly Government) to ensure that services respond to the need of the citizen.

An historical view of the emergence of hierarchies, networks and markets as vehicles of governance within the public domain will then be examined. What has been witnessed is a shift away from hierarchies associated with the more traditional public sector, characterised by vertical, bureaucratic centrally controlled structures to the introduction and growth of networks as a governance structure, which are synonymous with horizontal structures and involving a greater number of organisations in the implementation of public sector programmes. This shift is supported by Currie et al (2011) in that "the last 20–25 years have witnessed a growth in 'managed' networks as a vehicle for modernization of public services" (p.242) with central control being "replaced by collaboration...in achieving change" (Mandell, 1999, p.5). Bingham et al (2005) postulate that collaboration is at the heart of public administration research. With its theoretical roots firmly placed in political science and public policy and its focus on the policy system, collaboration challenges the traditional hierarchical governance mechanisms of public service delivery.

The concept and motivation for collaboration are examined as well as the question of what impact this has had on public services. Three established models of collaboration

are then presented and their rationales, contexts and adoption reviewed. The existing knowledge and evidence of collaboration in public services is then reviewed.

2.2 Public Policy Context

This section presents the policy context of the collaborative agenda within the public sector. Public sector reform knowledge further afield will be drawn upon to highlight trends in this policy area, together with a closer focus on Wales. The emphasis is placed upon Labour's victory in 1997, where collaboration was identified as a mechanism to facilitate public sector reform, to the present day. The English and Scottish public policy contexts are then presented followed by a focus on Wales from the period of devolution onwards, detailing the key policy directions in relation to public service delivery.

2.2.1 UK Public Policy Context

The emphasis of the Blair Government was of the benefits of collaboration rather than competition (Parker and Hartley, 1997) with the UK's Labour's policy initiatives following a more collaborative discourse and a waning enthusiasm for the public service (quasi) markets that thrived under the Conservatives (Painter, 1999). This was all related to the concept termed 'joined-up government' with its main aim of getting "...a better grip on the 'wicked' issues straddling the boundaries of public sector organizations, administrative levels, and policy areas" (Christensen and Laegreid, 2007, p.1060).

One of the key goals of the approach adopted post 1997 was to use resources more efficiently through the elimination of duplication and/or contradiction between different

programmes (Pollitt, 2003) and a key part of this was collaboration. In addition, there was a move to establish clear national standards and targets to improve performance, whilst simultaneously ensuring that the necessary flexibilities and incentives were introduced at frontline service delivery. Hartley and Bennington (2006) suggest that:

“in the public service sector, government policies and programmes are often about a more potent catalyst for change, and a strong signal of the need to produce new knowledge about both policy content and process. In addition, the relentless pressures from government to increase productivity and performance in public services means that there is an increased premium on the discovery, development and use of innovative services and methods for doing more with less resources” (p.101).

Collaboration was a central component of Labour Government’s drive to modernise the delivery of public services (Lindsay, 2009). As identified by the Improvement & Development Agency (IDeA), there are different types of collaboration. These include:

- Co-location and joint commissioning: staff may benefit from new working practices including harmonisation and flexible working;
- Informal arrangements, not necessarily involving staff;
- Procuring or commissioning work jointly from the private sector. Here staff may benefit from innovative working practices and greater opportunities;
- One organisation providing for the other agencies – scarce and expensive skills can be effectively pooled;
- Joint Venture Companies or other third-party entities can minimise job losses by allowing the services to bid for external work.

It could be argued that the approach adopted by the UK’s coalition government which replaced Labour in 2010 was to place greater emphasis on alliances between service deliverers. Brand (2007) suggests that the “delivery of services can no longer be

constrained and dictated by outdated, siloed, inflexible departments and processes. Services need to be producer led, but must be driven by the requirements of recipients” (p.2). This viewpoint is furthered by Shergold (2013a) who recognises that with respect to public service delivery:

“more intensive cross-sectoral collaboration – such as partnerships, joint ventures or integration contracts – to create and deliver public programs that have the potential to enhance diversity in service delivery and provide greater choice to citizens. What this requires, of course, is that public services (as institutions) will no longer attempt to exert a monopoly power over the delivery of public services (as programs). Nor will they seek to use the advantage of asymmetrical power to have their way with weaker community-based organizations through one-sided contractual agreements” (p.9).

Stewart and Stewart (2004) observe that “a new development in public policy and management has occurred in recent years. This is the globalisation of knowledge about public sector reform” (p.58). They further note that this is manifested in the focus on outcomes and devolution. Together with privatisation and outsourcing, tighter accountability arrangements, many management fads, more civil servants and greater ministerial activism, there has been extensive changes to the public sector in the last 20 or 30 years (Moran, 2005).

Public service organisations have a long history of providing services jointly or in collaboration with one another, normally on a cost-sharing basis (Downe, 2009). However, such developments have been fragmented and have not been the standard way of developing services (DCLG, 2006). There is nothing new in local authorities working together. It is endemic in local authority systems elsewhere in Europe; and Wales has its own well-established examples (WLGA, 2008a). The picture however is not one of uniformity of the public sector embracing partnership working. Davies (2009) challenges that partnership ethos aggravates silo practices. In his study

undertaken in two coastal cities into the local politics of social inclusion, he unexpectedly found that the “consensual ethos underpinning collaborative politics caused the displacement of known but unspoken value conflicts, which contributed to the persistence of partnership silos” (p.86).

2.2.2 English Public Policy Context

In England, the approach to collaboration has been to join up services “heralded as the solution to reduce duplication, make efficiency savings and improve public service outcomes” (Wilson et al, 2015, p.5). Since 1997, there has been a plethora of initiatives within England to implement this. Work undertaken by Wilson et al (2015) identified 59 different initiatives, which included New Deal for Communities, Neighbourhood Renewal Funds, and the establishment of a Social Exclusion Unit to the more recent Total Place initiative. The latter was introduced by the Department for Communities & Local Government in 2009. The model focused upon a ‘whole area approach’, joining up public services to “achieve better outcomes for local people at a lower cost” (Humphries and Gregory, 2010, p.3). Its premise was the identification of duplication and avoidance of overlap between organisations, “delivering a step change in both service improvement and efficiency at the local level, as well as across Whitehall” (Leadership Centre, 2016).

Different collaborative practices were piloted in a number of regions in England, allowing approaches to be ‘tried and tested’, outcomes to be evaluated and the good practice to be widely applied in an incremental manner. The Total Place initiative, introduced by the previous UK government informed what followed as the next approach adopted by Department for Communities & Local Government for the design

and delivery of England's local public services which was a 'placed based' budgeting approach. In keeping with its focus on localism, the previous UK government also "piloted a neighbourhood-level version – 'complementary and integral to the concept of Whole Place community budgets' – and in April 2014 granted an extra £4.3m of investment to ensuring the model reached 100 new local areas through the Our Place programme"(Giles, 2017).

Whilst England is focusing on collaboration as a mechanism to implement public service reform, it is not a key driver. Two fundamental principles however which underpinned this Government's approach to public sector reform were choice and competition, where the "pre-2010 general election rhetoric was about growing the role of the third sector in public service delivery and a creating 'big society' vision of public services, the key shift from the Coalition Government has been the introduction of the market to new areas of ever new areas of public service provision" (Griffiths et al, 2013, p.10).

In July 2011, the Cabinet Office published the Open Public Services White Paper setting out its public service reform programme, through increasing choice, opening services up to a wider range of providers, devolving decision making to the lowest appropriate level and improving transparency and accountability of public services. When the current Conservative Government came into power in 2015, "the state was the default provider of public services. This meant a lack of competition and importantly, of innovation, which limited both value for money and quality" (Cabinet Office, 2017). There has been a concerted effort since this time to ensure that services are delivered by the best provider, whether from the public or private sector. As Hefetz

and Warner (2004) state, “the social values inherent in public services may not be adequately addressed by the economic efficiency calculus of markets” (p.174).

2.2.3 Scottish Public Policy Context

Collaboration has long been a mechanism for the Scottish Government to drive public sector reform. The Local Government in Scotland Act 2003 gave a statutory basis to Community Planning. A report by the Scottish Parliament’s Local Government and Regeneration Committee in 2013 on developing new ways of delivering public services stated, “that 10 years of community planning has yielded little significant evidence of major improvements in public services. Too many are seen as disconnected from the people they serve. Leadership has been lacking and communication poor. Despite a lot of effort at strategic level, there is little evidence of significant real progress in PSR being delivered through CPPs” (Scottish Parliament, 2013, p.4). 2007 saw the introduction of Single Outcome Agreements (SOA’s), with each of Scotland’s 32 local authorities and Scottish Government, which covered all local government services as part of the Scottish Government’s National Performance Framework. SOA’s were outlined in the Concordat endorsed by the Scottish Government and the Convention of Scottish Local Authorities and implemented by the Community Planning Partnerships (CPPs). Park and Kerley (2011) stated that this demonstrated that “local authorities responded to the Scottish Government’s call for collaboration with commitment” (pp.72-73). The publication of the Christie Commission’s report in 2011 on the Future Delivery of Public Services in Scotland outlined one of the key principles of public sector reform as “Public service providers must be required to work much more closely in partnership, to integrate service provision and thus improve the outcomes they achieve” (Foreword, Christie, 2011). Collaboration continues to be key

to delivering public sector reform in Scotland with CPPs facilitating public bodies working together and supporting local communities, which were given further formal powers via the introduction in 2015 of the Community Empowerment Act. The continued commitment to collaboration by the Scottish Government is clear with the statement that “Public bodies will play a full part in delivering improved outcomes: leaders and their teams work collaboratively across organisational boundaries to ensure that services are shaped around the needs and demands of individuals and communities” (Scottish Government, 2017).

2.2.4 Northern Ireland Public Policy Context

Devolution in Northern Ireland in 1999 saw a review of the overall administration of public services, rooted in the Programme for Government, which was endorsed by the Northern Ireland Assembly in December 2001, followed by a consultation in the Spring of 2002. Within this document there are notable references to partnerships (NIA, 2002), however Greer (2001) comments on the significant development of their arrangements “the rapid, diverse and ad hoc development of partnership arrangements in Northern Ireland has created a complex and confusing picture, at times furthering the problems of environmental complexity, ineffectiveness and lack of co-ordination ... the very problems which partnerships were created to resolve” (Greer, 2001, p.3). The review’s terms of reference “required any proposals to satisfy the following characteristics: democratic accountability; community responsiveness and partnership working; cross-community concerns; equality and human rights; subsidiary; quality of service; co-ordination and integration of services; scope of the public sector; efficiency and effectiveness; and innovation and business organisation” (Knox and Carmichael, 2006, p.949). The main driver of the review was to rationalise

the structure of public administration in Northern Ireland, which estimated potential savings of between £150 - £235 million (Ulster University). Ministers announced the final proposals in November 2005 which included the introduction of a local government model which proposed 7 in number as being the optimum for future service delivery, supported by a new system of community planning which included partnership working. (Birrell, 2008) states that “the RPA made a general commitment to enhancing the voluntary and community sector. The discussion of the future role of local government and quangos, however, lacked any in-depth analysis of the major impact of partnership working between public bodies and the voluntary and private sectors or of the change in relationships that partnership working has produced” (p.790). However due to wider political reasons, implementing the reforms has been a long process. The new councils were created in April 2015 and had the responsibility of leading on community planning in their area, which became a statutory duty at this time as part of the local government reform. As highlighted in a Northern Ireland Assembly research briefing “while community planning is in its infancy in NI, it has been implemented in other regions such as Scotland, England, Wales and the Republic of Ireland, by varying degrees over the past 10 years. It is due to this that the definition of community planning tends to vary slightly from region to region making it difficult to identify a common meaning to the term” (NIA, 2013, p.5).

2.2.5 Welsh Public Policy Context

Collaboration is at the centre of public service reform in Wales which is documented in several key public documents initiated by Sir Jeremy Beecham’s review of public services in Wales in 2004. Local government in Wales has in part been characterised historically through a strong culture of central control and delivery (Fudge, 2006).

Changes in geographical boundaries and activities initiated by the Local Government (Wales) Act in 1994 had begun a breakdown in the traditional dichotomy that had 'insulated' the roles of local councils from other potential service providers (Fudge, 2006). The creation of 22 unitary authorities was informed by the argument that Wales could sustain community based local authorities, closer to the traditional scale of European rather than British local government, if the European tradition of working across administrative boundaries was developed (WLGA, 2008b). Pivotal, argue Farrell and Arnott (2009) to the devolution campaign in Wales was the rejection of the Thatcherite agenda, with a particular emphasis on its 'neo-liberal' attachments to markets in public sector reform.

In 1999, a new regional framework in Wales was implemented because of devolution. This marked a further policy shift in public service delivery introduced by the New Labour Government of 1997 (Foley and Martin, 2000). An important stimulant for devolution in Wales was a perception by citizens that unaccountable quangos were becoming increasingly responsible for functions that had traditionally resided at the local democratic level (WLGA, 2004). The first term for the NAW saw major control of key areas of defence, foreign affairs, energy, employment and economic affairs, social security and policing remaining with Whitehall, much unlike its Scottish equivalent (Martin and Webb, 2009). More flexibility was available within the areas of health, education and local government policy. The Assembly moved surprisingly quickly to make the most of these powers, rapidly establishing a distinctive account of public services reform, which was in marked contrast with the approach espoused by ministers in London (Bradbury, 2006). Indeed, as Martin and Webb (2009, p.213) comment:

“early manifestations of the so-called ‘clear red water’ which Welsh ministers sought to put between themselves and the Westminster government included the explicit rejection of the ‘hard-edged’ instruments of top-down performance management favoured by many Whitehall departments and the introduction of a raft of welfarist initiatives, such as free prescriptions, free school breakfasts and free swimming for children and older people, plus more recently the abolition of hospital car parking charges” (p.213).

Coupled with this, were the changes in arrangements for the planning and delivery of services and new collaborations between the public and private sectors (Hartley, 2005) in Wales.

A new approach to public sector delivery in Wales was introduced in October 2004 with the publication of ‘Making the Connections’. Central to this was the premise of collaborative working rather than one based on competition. The review of public services was mirrored in England with Gershon’s independent review of public sector efficiency (or the ‘Efficiency Review’). Issued in July 2004, the review focused on the release of “major resources out of activities, which can be undertaken more efficiently into front line services that meet the public’s highest priorities” (HM Treasury, 2004, p.3). The report concluded that the aim should be for government departments themselves to establish networking and collaborative processes for joint working which would take over this role and support an ongoing efficiency programme, responding to changes in demand and the constitution of the market and customers’ needs.

The publication of ‘Making the Connections - Delivery Beyond Boundaries: Transforming Public Services in Wales’ in 2006 heralded a collaborative approach to the management and delivery of public services and challenged the existing way in which services in Wales were managed and delivered, and said that many of the complex problems in service delivery required new and innovative solutions. The

review outlined the 'citizen-centred model' for Welsh public service reform, putting the voice of the citizen as the key driver for service improvement. It further identified that the 'Making the Connections' strategy for public service reform was the right approach for Wales, but it needed to be taken further and faster.

The former WAG's response to the Beecham review was 'Making the Connections – Building Better Customer Service' (2007a). Central to this strategy was collaboration both across and between public services. Further, it suggested that when services are delivered well organisational divisions within and between public bodies are of little interest to the service user. However, poor service delivery presents a "real obstacle to achieving joined-up customer service as a result of so called 'silo working'" (WAG, 2007a, p.1).

The report outlined proposals for Local Service Boards (LSBs) and local delivery agreements. The aim of LSBs was to improve the quality of public services and deliver better outcomes for citizens by enabling effective public and third sector collaboration (WAG, 2008b). Working as a local public service leadership team, Boards were challenged to find more innovative ways of tackling the issues of capacity, complexity and culture, which Beecham identified as barriers to delivering citizen-centred local services. Delivering 'Beyond Boundaries' suggested that every local area should have established a LSB by the end of 2007/08 and that local delivery agreements should be in place across Wales by April 2010. As stated in the LSB Policy Framework, 'Local Service Boards in Wales: Realising the Potential (WAG, 2008b):

"the purpose of LSBs is to strengthen collaborative leadership to make this happen at a local level. This is critical because, if we want front-line public services to work as a team for citizens, we must expect leaders of organisations to work as a public service team serving the local community" (p.4).

Research undertaken by Martin et al (2014) indicates that whilst LSB's were recognised as a collaborative solution to addressing traditionally challenging policy problems, their scrutiny was not a statutory requirement. An evaluation undertaken between 2012 - 2015 commissioned by the Welsh Government on the European Social Fund (ESF) Local Service Board Development and Priority Delivery Project included assessing whether it had led to better public services and outcomes for citizens. The overarching conclusion was that "overall our summative evaluation concludes that it is mainly process outcomes (rather than service/citizen outcomes) that have been delivered. With a few notable exceptions, there is little evidence from most projects that improved processes have led to improved outcomes for the public" (Downe and Elraz, 2016, p.10). The Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015 introduced Public Service Boards (PSBs) to replace the LSB's in each local authority area. Each board will assess the "state of economic, social, environmental and cultural well-being in its area" (Welsh Government, 2017a). Recent guidance published by the Welsh Government (2016) on the governance of the PSB's states that their role will be to "to ensure the role of evidence, analysis and research is given adequate consideration in assessments of local well-being; and give evidence and analysis a proportionate influence over how local well-being plans are developed, implemented and reviewed" (p.3).

The chimera of austerity certainly sets the current agenda for the delivery of public services, with collaboration presented as the preferred option to do this. Cited in a sea of reports produced by several public-sector bodies is the setting of a backdrop that is calling for the radical reform of current public service architecture (WLGA, 2008c; WAO, 2010). Policymakers are warning that there is no room for step change policy;

rather, an overhaul is required in funding, delivery and regulation. Failure to address this could result in adverse results. Evidence to date illustrates the introduction of incremental policy change, but if it carries on as 'business as usual', resources will soon run out (WAO, 2010). Of collaboration as a model for steering public service reform, Martin and Webb (2007) state, "it does offer a distinctive vision for the future of public services that is remarkable for the way in which it apparently eschews almost all other drivers of improvement in favour of a single-minded reliance on collaboration. At this very early stage – just two years after the publication of the outline strategy – it is impossible to say whether this bold strategy will produce more efficient, joined-up and responsive public services that are fit for the twenty-first century" (p.69).

At a Wales level, there is enormous pressure on public services to implement this fundamental change in a time of political and economic upheaval, particularly on the public purse. Notably this is the biggest challenge that public services have faced for a generation. The Wales Audit Report (WAO), 'A Picture of Public Services – Financial Challenges facing public services and lessons learnt from our work' (2010) highlights that public services in Wales face significant reductions in their budgets in the coming years.

Coupled with this is the well-documented problems that some local authorities have faced, the slower delivery of the collaboration agenda and the leaner financial settlements that have been allocated (WLGA, 2008c, p.2). The WLGA report 'In the Eye of The Storm – The Political, Financial and Service Challenges 2009-2014' (2008c) spells out further challenges for the Welsh public sector:

"the next 10 years represents a huge challenge for all tiers of elected government in Wales and we can either work together to plot a course through

this or see a 'slash and burn' approach to public spending. The biggest challenge for this devolution project thus far will be how it deals with this funding black hole and our ability across the Welsh public sector to re-invent and reshape our services over the next 5 – 10 years to produce sustainable outcomes” (p.3).

The current economic climate has significantly shifted the way that governments operate and has set the global economy on a new course (WAG, 2010a). Groups have been established to bring together different parts of public services in Wales to develop innovative approaches to improving the efficiency, economy and effectiveness of public services. This is underpinned in the former WAG's response to the fiscal challenges for the delivery of public services was published in 'Better Outcomes for Tougher Times: The Next Phase of Public Service Improvement' (2009). The document indicated that:

“we are committed to meeting the needs of citizens through collaboration rather than competition. This means active partnership: with all those who work in public services, including the third, independent and private sectors and, above all, with citizens and communities. Their voices must be centre stage in driving improvement” (p.2).

The document further emphasised that there was a need for all public-sector agencies including local authorities, local health boards, fire and police services, learning and skills providers, national and regional agencies, the third sector, the private sector, other social partners and the former WAG to work towards a common priority.

In February 2010, the first Welsh public services summit was held. The theme of the summit was 'Meeting the Challenge of Change', from which a key announcement was made – the establishment of the Wales Efficiency and Innovation Board. At the time, this was viewed as the key delivery vehicle to direct this change agenda for Welsh public services, and its vision was to see services working together to deliver citizen

outcomes. Focusing initially on seven work areas, the programme aimed to transform the way Welsh public services were designed and delivered. Specifically, these centred around Collaborative Procurement and Commissioning; Public Service Information Communication Technology; National Asset Management; Transforming the Business; New Models of Service Delivery; Workforce Development and Leadership. The Board had four key principles, one of which includes collaboration within and across boundaries. Initially, the three key areas of focus of this workstream included:

- ” short to medium term impact – concentrating on 3 – 4 tough service delivery issues where there is a track record of pioneering action but it is not being translated into pan-Wales change;
- medium to long term impact encouraging fresh practical thinking and innovation in the design and delivery of public services and scanning the horizon – in Wales, the UK and internationally for new approaches with potential;
- long term impact - developing a vision for the design and delivery of services in, say 2020, taking account of forecasts of needs, resources, and other trends”

(WAG, 2010c).

Building on this was the document, published by the Welsh Government in February 2011, ‘Meeting the Challenge of Change: Our Shared Approach to Public Service Efficiency and Innovation in Wales’, which set out a clear longer-term programme for improving public services. Evidently, the Welsh Government at the time was proposing a harder approach to promoting projects, which demonstrably achieved greater efficiencies. It can be suggested that this also linked to the increased powers through the National Assembly’s Local Government Measure to force collaboration.

This could be counterproductive as the direction of future Welsh public service shaping is being promoted as one of shared responsibility which is citizen focused representing

a move away from top-down policy, which has historically been associated with government centric institutions (Martin and Webb, 2007). There is a danger that the 'adopt or justify' approach to addressing issues could be described as being heavy handed as there is a need to have an appreciation and wider awareness of the benefits of key initiatives which may not necessarily have been communicated effectively. O'Flynn (2009) comments that "collaboration, it seems, is king in a turbulent world where governments don't have the answers to complex challenges, and where there is some impetus to move beyond both bureaucracy and markets" (p.113). Radaelli (1995) highlights the importance of such institutions to "the building of policy knowledge because they help structure meaning, create networks of actors and constrain interest definitions" (p.178). The interim report by Simpson (2011), 'Local, Regional, National: What services are best delivered where?' presented to Carl Seargant AM, (the former Minister for Social Justice and Local Government) in March 2011 examined how local government might perform better if it were to review and realign the commissioning and delivery of some of its functions. What is clear in this report is that "change should be through collaboration rather than reorganisation because of the need to ensure that the core of our services continue to be organised locally" (Simpson, 2011, p.4). This was followed at the end of 2011 by the establishment of a compact for change between the Welsh Government and Welsh local government, setting some key milestones for reform. As the document notes, "while this agreement is between the Welsh Government and local government, the Welsh Government is seeking more widely to achieve effective, locally-responsive services through collaborations across public service organisations as a part of the overall public service reform agenda" (WG, 2011a, p.1).

The report on the Commission on Public Service Governance and Delivery, more commonly referred to as the Williams Review, after the chairperson, Sir Paul Williams was published in January 2014. The remit of the Commission was all devolved public services in Wales, including local government, the NHS and police forces and provided an “opportunity for those who are involved in delivering services, those who are politically accountable for them and users of them to examine how public services are governed: that is, held accountable for their performance and delivered most effectively to the public” (Williams, 2014, p.1). The report’s 62 recommendations set out the case for a programme of public service reform and are grouped into the following categories: the need for a step change in Wales, both from a performance and delivery perspective; the current over-complexity of public sector bodies; the scale and capacity to deliver change; governance, scrutiny and delivery; leadership, culture and values; performance and performance management. The focus of much of the report is on local government. Prior to the 2016 National Assembly elections, there was a strong political commitment with respect to implementing the report’s findings via the establishment of a Public Leadership Services Panel and the creation of a new ministerial post, Minister for Public Services. With the establishment of the new cabinet in May 2016, this was visibly absent from the portfolio, questioning both the current government’s commitment to and appetite for the continuation of the delivery of the level of Welsh public sector reform.

The introduction of collaboration into the Welsh arena has been politically driven from a ‘top down’ perspective with the catalyst for this being the Beecham review of the management and delivery of public sector services in 2004, which continues in the present day. This approach has been favoured in Wales over a customer-driven

market approach to the delivery of public services (Williams, 2014). Central Government published the Open Public Service White Paper in July 2011 outlining its public service reform agenda, by “increasing choice, opening services up to a wider range of providers, devolving decision making to the lowest appropriate level and improving transparency and accountability of public services” (Local Government Association, 2011). In contrast, in the Beyond Boundaries document, the former WAG argued that the principle and practicalities of the choice agenda was not considered favourable for Wales because of the “concentration of high levels of social need..., areas of sparse population, a greater concentration of older people, fewer people in paid work and higher level of chronic ill-health, do not lend themselves to the provision of choice in services” (Brand, 2007, p.3).

Empirical evidence from three wide-ranging reviews of public services in Wales, Beecham Review of Public Services, (2006); Webb Review of 14-19 Education, (2007), Williams Review of Public Services, (2014) suggests that the collaborative approach could offer a viable alternative to user choice and competition but, for it to be fully effective, central and local government need to embrace other drivers of improvement (Martin and Webb, 2009). Martin et al (2009) undertook research on intergovernmental relations in Wales and surveyed a sample of 308 local government managers from its 22 unitary authorities. Two main questions were posited. The first centred on which levels of government are involved in the governance of Wales and the second focused on how the different levels interact: do they collaborate, compete or does the (former) WAG try to command and control? For the collaborative approach to be fully effective, central and local government need to embrace other drivers of improvement (Andrews and Martin, 2007).

Legal compliance for collaboration was introduced by the Local Government (Wales) Measure 2011, which reformed the statutory basis for service improvement and strategic planning, by local authorities in Wales. The measure linked wellbeing and community planning with service improvement. It required local partners to co-operate in the delivery of community strategic outcomes and to engage with citizens (WAG, 2009) in that:

“together with the broader changes being driven forward through *Making the Connections*, including Local Service Boards and Local Delivery Agreements, these developments reflect the highly distinctive and progressive agenda for public services in Wales – one which is about citizen voice not consumer choice; and collaborative service delivery and improvement” (p.3).

Following the publication of the Williams review, the Welsh Government published two responses. One of the White Papers, ‘Devolution, Democracy and Delivery: Local Government’ outlined specific proposals on the nature of the reform of local government and the form it would take (WG, 2014a). Local Authorities were given the opportunity to merge ahead of the Welsh Government’s main legislative programme.

It is clear that the collaborative approach to service delivery introduced by the Blair government in 1997 is the favoured approach to citizen focused service delivery in Wales and the impetus for this has gained significant momentum for more than a decade. Clear messages are being heralded by several key public agencies from both a central and local government perspective, which push for the urgency to introduce radical innovative approaches to remodelling public service delivery. Incremental step changes will not allow for the long-term provision of services in their current format. There are a key number of policy vehicles, which are being introduced, via which this service delivery approach is and will be delivered. At a Wales level, these include the implementation of the Williams Review recommendations, the replacement of LSBs

with PSB's, the work and impact of the Public Sector Leadership Board and a plethora of other cross-sectoral partnerships. Whilst this is not being presented as a panacea, it does come with a series of key challenges, some well-established, some in their infancy and others, which are yet to materialise. Addressing the challenge, it seems that Wales has:

“...to achieve better with the same or less for the citizens and communities of Wales. More of the same will not do. The scale of the challenge is such that we need a radical transformation in the way public services are planned and delivered” (Gatehouse and Price, 2013, p.1).

2.3 Hierarchies, Markets, Networks and the Shift to Collaboration

For more than a decade, collaboration has been the mechanism advocated by the Welsh Government for public sector reform. This is also the preferred driver for public sector reform for the other devolved nations of Scotland and Northern Ireland. Whilst England too has adopted collaboration as a mechanism for the design and delivery of public services, choice and competition receive greater focus. There has been a move away from traditional, vertical, single organisational structures to ones that are horizontal and involve multiple organisations, which collaboration is key to. Hudson et al (1997) suggests that “policy fields such as health and social care are best viewed as a mixture of relationships that change and vary over time and space. Simple hierarchies and tiers have given way to delivery systems that use a mix of governmental relationships, new partnerships between the public and private sectors...” (p.26).

These changes can be categorised into three distinct governance models, namely hierarchies, markets and networks, which emerged post war and are widely cited in social policy literature (Rhodes, 2000). Collaboration is a key aspect to the growing

body of inter-disciplinary literature around networks. This section explores the emergence of collaboration in the context of public sector reform and traces its history within the key paradigms of public administration, new public management and new public governance.

As is evident from the literature there are traditional characteristics synonymous with the organisation of democratic government. These include clear lines of accountability and the prescription of day-to-day activities through defined rules, procedures, and confined discretion. (Rhodes, 2002; Hood et al, 1998; Pollitt, 2003) However, in the last 20 years or so, this model has been changed by the introduction of a range of measures designed to shift from what Ling (2002) describes as “a monolithic, inward looking public sector too little concerned with the needs of service users” to one which favours “mixed-economy” models (p.618). Dickinson and Sullivan (2014) argue that “in public administration, advocates of ‘network governance’ focus on interdependence by contrasting the values and characteristics of networks favourably when set against those of large and inflexible hierarchies and untrustworthy market-based relationships” (p.162). This supports Rhodes’ (2000) government to governance arguments, the latter being characterised by “differentiation, networks, hollowing out” (p.358). Research undertaken by Considine and Lewis (2003) assessed the extent to which these new models influenced the work orientations of frontline staff using three alternative service types - corporate, market, and network - to that proposed by the traditional, procedural model of public bureaucracy. Surveying frontline staff in four countries (Australia, Britain, the Netherlands and New Zealand) where the revolution in ideas has been accompanied by a revolution in methods for organising government services, the degree to which the new models were operating as service-delivery

norms was assessed. The findings indicated that a new corporate market hybrid (called 'enterprise governance') and a new network type have become significant models for the organisation of frontline work in public programmes.

Rhodes' (2000, p.346) aphorisms are a beneficial typology to describe the changes to public service delivery models over the last 30 years, with a particular reference to explaining the growth of governance theory. The relevant maxims to highlight such shifts are summarised below:

- **From government to governance** – the move from line bureaucracies to more fragmented service delivery. It involved the introduction of the third and private sectors as providers. Such fragmentation, describes Rhodes “not only created new networks but it also increased the membership of existing networks”;
- **The hollowing-out of the state** – decentralising services / powers to outside agencies and to devolved government, of which Rhodes suggests governance is a product of;
- **It's the mix that matters** – Rhodes recognises that “no governing structure works for all services in all conditions”. He further cites that the limitations to hierarchies and markets are well documented, networks however less so;
- **From deconcentration to decentralization** – “Decentralization encompasses both deconcentration and devolution. Deconcentration refers to the redistribution of administrative responsibilities in central government. Devolution refers to the exercise of political authority by lay, elected, institutions within territorial areas”.

As Taylor (2003) notes the:

“interest in partnerships, and the range of joint working and collaborative activities undertaken within them, is not new. Nor is discussion of the merits (or otherwise) of collaboration between the two sectors; indeed, it is one of the 'hoary chestnuts' of social policy. However, New Labour's rise to power in 1997 has re-kindled an avid, acute interest in this old perennial” (p.1).

O'Flynn (2009, p.114) describes the positioning of collaboration as a model of working. She suggests that “collaboration has become so central to public policy discourse that few bother to explain what they even mean by it. Of course, formal definitions abound in the diverse literature on the topic, but it is used fairly loosely in the public policy

world". This view would infer that from a practical perspective that there is a lack of clarity of how the public domain views collaboration and why organisations do it. This is supported by Young and Denize (2008) who found collaboration "describes a work environment that requires constant improvisation to deal with the mechanics of doing what should be the routine part of the job..." (p.56).

Huxham and Vangen (2000) state that "the last decade has seen a worldwide movement towards collaborative governance, collaborative public service provision and collaborative approaches to addressing social problems" (p.1159). Indeed, Hill and Lynn (2005) postulate that collaboration fits more appropriately with governance rather than government and make key distinctions between constitutional institutions and administrative practices which they compare to centrifugal and centripetal forces which present polar opposites to one another. They outline that "governance fever is catching: Many of the public administration's leading scholars have embraced the concept of governance to frame the ongoing discourse on public management reform" (p.173).

There is a need to consider how effectively the public-sector works. As the literature suggests, there have been significant organisational shifts in how the government operates. Smith and Fredrickson (2003) argue that the "administrative state is now less bureaucratic, less hierarchical, and less reliant on central authority to mandate action. Accountability for conducting the public's business is increasingly about performance rather than discharging a specific policy goal within the confines of the law" (p.208). These characteristics are associated with the well documented paradigm shift from what Taylor (2003) describes as "old Public Administration of bureaucracy,

hierarchy and monolithic state provision to a 'New Public Management' of an increasingly fragmented public sector, imbued with a managerialist culture and relationships based on competition and marketised notions of the 'customer'" (p.2). Teisman and Klijn (2002) suggest that collaboration is a model of governance. The growth of networked forms of governance is popular, breeding the term 'the networked society'.

Central to the move away from this more traditional perspective was the advent of devolution, which was assigned with the metaphor the 'hollowing of the state'. This describes "the nature of the devolution of power and decentralization of services from central government to subnational government" (Milward and Provan, 2003, p.2) and consequently "provided devolved nations with an opportunity to develop new priorities, structures and delivery mechanisms for public services" (Brand, 2007, p.1). During this period of public sector 'fragmentation' (Rhodes 1997; Skelcher 2005), the traditional notion of the public sector was inherently challenged. What once was a model of 'rule from the centre' and characterised by hierarchical control suddenly became more horizontally diluted with control being 'owned' by a series of related organisations and actors.

'New Public Management is relevant to the discussion of governance because steering is central to the analysis of public management and steering is a synonym for governance' states Rhodes (1996, p.655) and further draws upon Osborne and Gaebler's (1992) suggestion that policy decisions are steering and that service delivery is rowing. Radcliffe and Dent (2005) build on this referencing the emergence of governance and the new public management agenda as a move away from 'rowing'

towards 'steering' citing that "within many areas of discourse in the UK, Australasia and the US, the issue of governance found expression through the development of NPM" (p.618). Jorgensen's (1999) work builds on this view by positing that much of the public-sector reform literature fails to recognise its heterogeneity emphasising the need to gain a "better understanding of the distribution of stability and change across policy sectors and ties of government and the corresponding variety of dynamic forces" (p.580). The next section will analyse the concept of collaboration.

2.4 The Definition and Concept of Collaboration

What emerges from the literature is that there is not one clear definition of collaboration. Hardy et al (2003) argue that "collaboration has been studied in a variety of literature, each of which has emphasized different effects...while all of these literatures are concerned with the outcomes of collaboration, each tends to focus on a different kind of effect and different streams of literature rarely acknowledge one another" (pp.323-324).

There is an abundance of typologies on collaboration posited by academics (Hudson et al 1999; O'Flynn 2007). There are some who have characterised the concept of formal collaboration by its strategic nature (Head 2008b; Reich, 2000; Hefetz and Warner, 2004) that is organisations working jointly to achieve core objectives. Whilst this has clear benefits associated with the availability of resources and expertise, there are also questions centring around governance, accountability and the motivation to collaborate. A further focus of collaboration centres on joint commissioning of services which enables resources to be pooled to enable more efficient service planning and delivery but has challenges in power relationships and professional domains and

identities (Rummary and Coleman, 2003; Hudson, 1995). Other academics have indicated that collaboration is undertaken by organisations in a voluntary capacity (Hardy et al, 2003) and it focuses on shared goals. In contrast, Lawrence et al (1999) define collaboration more informally as an “interorganisational relationship that neither relies on market nor hierarchical mechanisms of control but is instead negotiated in an ongoing communicative process” (p.481). Jorgensen’s (1999) work adds to this concept suggesting that “the classic public sector model is left behind and clear alternatives have yet to be seen. It’s a time of in-betweens” (p.565).

Sullivan and Skelcher (2003, p.10) argue that “the collaborative agenda for public purpose has been under-theorised and overlooked”. An interesting observation by Dickinson and Sullivan (2014) on public policy collaboration literature is that there is a ‘lack of critical analysis’. They further state that “although there are exceptions, much of what has been written about collaboration treats it as a rationalist and instrumental tool to bring about particular ends; more often than not, improved service-user outcomes or reduced inequalities, for example in health, employment, or education” (p.161). This suggests that collaboration should not be just written about in a rationalist way, but other aspects should be examined.

Within the context of the public sector, Agranoff and McGuire (2003, p.4) define collaborative public management as “the process of facilitating and operating in multi-organizational arrangements to solve problems that cannot be solved, or solved easily by single organisations”. This definition, in contrast to that posited by Hardy et al (2003) provides an appropriate platform to explore collaboration with reference to public service delivery as it creates opportunity for broad exploration and it does not limit

the research to the practical application of specific theories and techniques of collaboration. Todeva and Knocke (2005) suggest that regardless of its terminology, integration and formalisation in the governance of inter-organisational relationships form the basis of collaborative practice.

There are a number of considerations relating to the characteristics of collaboration, which are presented by Huxham (2003):

“a characteristic of research in inter-organizational collaboration is the wide variety of disciplines, research paradigms, theoretical perspectives and sectoral focuses from when the subject is tackled. Even the most basic terminology is subject to various interpretations and there seems to be little agreement over usage of terms such as “partnership”, “alliance”, “network” or “inter-organizational relations”. A further characteristic of the field is that there appears to be little recognition of research across disciplines and paradigms, so there tends to be little overlap in the articles that are cited in reference lists” (p.402).

Authors have focused on a range of areas concerned with collaboration from: its use as a necessary strategy for addressing public challenges (Goldsmith and Eggers, 2004; Mandell, 2001); how collaborative structures should look (Straus, 1999); collaborative team characteristics, whether it is competencies (Simonin, 1999), or cultural differences among team members (Easterby-Smith and Malina, 1999); practical leadership aspects (Armistead et al, 2007; Ansell and Gash, 2008); and collaboration outcomes (Lane and Beamish, 1990). This can be further supported by Emerson et al (2012) who note that:

“it is the subject of a growing number of books, articles and monographs. It is seen by many as the new way of doing the business of government. Despite the popularity of the term in research, and claims of its wide-spread use in practice, the study of collaborative governance continues to suffer from a lack of conceptual clarity and consistency” (p.23).

Thompson and Perry (2006) argue that public managers should understand how the process of collaboration works in order to undertake such initiatives effectively. Manifested in this, they further argue is the discovery of a complex construct of five variable dimensions of governance, administration, organisational autonomy, mutuality, and it is the management of these dimensions by public managers that will contribute to successful collaboration. In understanding how collaboration works, Gray (1989) views it as a process “through which parties who see different aspects of a problem can constructively explore their differences and search for solutions that go beyond their own limited vision of what is possible” (p.5).

Collaborations are generally initiated with an instrumental purpose in mind, suggests Huxham (2000). There may a wide policy focus, for example a Regeneration strategy, which will involve multiple level collaborations, whereas others will be more specific, with an emphasis on individual projects or for more basic purposes such as information, exchanges (Gray, 1989). Langton et al's (2003) work provides a very interesting summary of the emergence of collaborative working practices in health, with an emphasis upon user involvement. They further propose that it is difficult to develop a definitive definition of collaboration, as there is confusion of terminology. The findings of their research suggest that education may be one way to develop collaboration between health-care professionals and service users. This is supported by Hudson et al (1999) who suggest that collaboration between public sector organisations has been considered to be ‘a self-evident virtue’ for some considerable time but due to limited attempts by governments to develop evidence-based policy making has been described as being ‘conceptually elusive and perennially difficult to achieve’. Emerson et al's (2012) work compared several conceptual frameworks,

which included amongst them cross-sector collaboration, collaborative planning and collaboration processes, concluding that a common challenge amongst them was that there “is a lack of generalizability, that is, inapplicability across different settings, sectors, geographic and temporal scales, policy arenas, and process mechanisms” (p.5).

Page (2004) questions the legacy of collaborative working. He suggests that it is concerned with producing short-term solutions, is not outcome driven and that collaboration challenges hierarchical governance structures in organisations. With respect to the theoretical basis of new public management, Behn (2001) argues that collaborators should be held accountable to producing results that are directed to complying with procedures. Bloomfield et al (2001) emphasise that emerging public sector governance structures are complex and there is a need to understand the ‘new realities’. Leach (2002) states that:

“Scholars of public administration have put forth many arguments about the value of collaborative public management and its implications for democracy. Partnerships also lead to collaborative disadvantage (consideration of power differences, excessive costs and inertia)” (p.646).

Huxham and Vangen’s (2000) research on collaboration focuses on processes, structures, people and citizens and cite that examples of positive collaboration outcomes do exist, for example, building trust between different stakeholders and negotiating joint goals. However, they suggest that it is common to hear stories of slow or negative processes termed ‘collaborative intention’ and have contrasted it with the desired outcome of ‘collaborative advantage’.

Collaborative practices within the private sector have influenced how this has been applied to public policy, notably used by the New Labour governments to implement change in several policy domains though linked, policy goals. As Dickinson and Sullivan (2014) note, “the policy rhetoric emphasized the way in which the private sector could ‘add value’ to public services through partnership arrangements, how professionals could work better together if particular organizational or professional barriers were removed, and how diverse and disparate communities could be brought together to work with the state in a spirit of consensus and co-operation” (p.162). Fareman et al (2001) looks at factors concerned with this area, with particular ones appearing repeatedly in the literature that focus on what facilitates or presents barriers to co-operating including “management studies, political science, economics and sociology” (p.376).

What impact do such perspectives have on the practical implementation of collaborative working? The literature suggests a required balance between realism and aspiration. Indeed, much of the early theoretical perspectives on collaboration within health and social care, argues Booth (1988) was based concurrently on a concept termed ‘the naive position’. That is “the presumption of altruism (that health and local authorities will collaborate purely for the good of the community they both serve) and the presumption of rationality (the belief that authorities will collaborate where it can be shown that they can achieve the same ends more efficiently by working together rather than separately)” (p.44). In contrast, Bingham and O’Leary (2006) suggest that there is little explicit discussion about how collaboration plays out at different points in the policy process. Collaboration, they argue, is likely to take a different form and have different outcomes upstream in the process (identifying a

policy problem and identifying possible approaches to solving it) compared to midstream in the policy process (identifying public preferences among possible choices, choosing among the possible approaches, and implementing policy).

Hudson (2004) argues that it is now 'de rigueur' to talk of the shift from hierarchy to network in public sector governance, but all too often this is a debate rooted in superficiality and rhetoric rather than careful analysis. The limits of traditional modes of administration are accepted, the emergence of a new, more 'ungovernable' agenda is acknowledged and the rationale for a new approach based upon networks is generally favoured.

2.5 The Motivation for Collaboration

This section focuses on the motivation for collaboration. The literature suggests that collaboration is a remedy to previous failed approaches by single public-sector agencies of dealing with key policy issues (Mitchell and Shortell, 2000; Waddock, 1991; Bryson et al, 2006; Hambleton and Howard, 2013; Mischen, 2015). Cited in this field of study is what has become commonly referred to as 'messy problems' (Ackoff, 1974) or 'wicked issues', a phrase first coined by Rittel and Webber (1973) which Clarke and Stewart (2003) state "are used to refer to a variety of policy challenges...and which cannot be dealt with as management has traditionally dealt with public policy problems They challenge existing patterns of organization and management." (p.273-274). Collaboration is put forward as solution to this with Ferlie et al (2011) arguing that "they require a broad systemic response, working across boundaries and engaging citizens and stakeholders in co-producing policy-making and implementation" (p.308). What is viewed as the biggest challenge for contemporary

government is addressing complex multiple social problems that cut across policy areas and service areas and cannot be addressed by the silo approach that many organisations deploy (Keast and Brown, 2005). This is supported in the wider literature that critiques the failure of the traditional approach to solving these issues, which clearly opens the door for what Reich (2000) calls 'new remedies'. Present at the academic forefront of introducing said solutions are network structures (Agranoff and McGuire, 2001b; Kickert et al, 1997).

Within an American context, Bryson et al (2006) critique the approach of government attempting to resolve public policy issues single handily suggesting that its government has been subject to the longstanding challenge of its effectiveness when its acts independently. This has resulted in "waves of deregulation, privatization, budget cuts, and the rise of 'third-party government' in which nongovernmental actors are enlisted to achieve public purposes" (p.44). Kettl (2006) suggests that "it is virtually impossible to find a public program that matters in which a single government organization's jurisdiction can capture the features that determine success" (p.13). He notes that analysts have pointed out the risks that "wicked" problems can cause (Rittel and Webber, 1973). The literature appears to shape the need to collaborate as an answer to previous failed attempts to provide solid solutions to policy problems. Bryson et al (2006) present a view that organisations have to "fail into their role on the collaboration...organizations will only collaborate when they cannot get what they want without collaborating" (p.45). This is further echoed by Emerson et al (2012) who suggest that a key driver is the inability of individuals or organisations to achieve something on their own which is suggested by Ansell and Gash (2008) as being a constraint 'on participation' and by Bryson et al (2006) as 'sector failure'. Hudson and

Henwood (2002) argue that, “notwithstanding this fresh policy focus on partnership, strategies are still characterised by a mixture of confusion and manipulation, which may undermine the very objectives the policies are intended to achieve” (p.154).

As Ranade and Hudson (2003) argue, “by definition old ways of working have not worked - that is why these problems are intractable. The partners are attempting to co-design something new together for a shared purpose, based on an understanding of the ‘whole system’ and the interdependence of its parts” (p.32). Uncertainty, suggest Emerson et al (2012) is the basis for this. “Uncertainty that cannot be resolved internally can drive groups to collaborate in order to reduce, diffuse, and share risk” (p.10).

Noted within Huxham’s (2000) research and cited in O’Toole (1997) is the saturated rhetoric within the public domain of the potential of collaboration, but clear latency about consideration of the practical question of the required competencies to manage the process. Cristofoli et al (2015) present the view that “networks have now become widespread due to the view that they are the most appropriate organizational form for solving ‘wicked public problems’ and further suggest that “in the short time since this happened, doubts have quickly arisen over how to make them succeed” (p.490).

Warburton et al (2008) argue that the trend of governments to rely on networks to negotiate and solve social problems has resulted in a large body of policy network or network governance literature. Much of this engages in theoretical debates (Provan and Kenis 2008; Rhodes, 1997). As a result, he further notes there have been calls for more empirical studies of inter-organisational collaboration (Johansson and Borell

1999). These authors argue that understanding the elements that determine successful collaborative initiatives and their application to specific policy areas is key.

White's (2001) research similarly concludes that:

“there is a need to find new ways to understand how to make these arrangements more effective in an environment characterized by complexity, dynamics and diversity. This would require an approach to be complex, dynamic and use a diversity of processes and methods...to manage conflict and collaboration” (p.255).

What White (2001, p.246) also proposes is to “...see the totality of an actual process that when carried out properly will tend towards bringing about a harmoniously and orderly overall action”. Whilst these findings have their value in organisational theory, their application in practical context could infer an air of naivety.

Hatmaker (2015) argues that another motivator for engaging in collaboration is a shortage of resources. The public sector is currently experiencing the most extreme expenditure restrictions to be imposed in the last 30 years which will certainly challenge the collaborative agenda in that organisations face “two-way pressure to deliver their core business targets and participate in inter-organisational partnerships” (Ranade and Hudson, 2003, p.42). The trend toward community partnerships supports the resource dependency issue, as organisations will establish linkages in the external environment if they are unable to internally generate the resources necessary to maintain their core functions (Pfeffer and Salancik, 1978; Coucoulas and Seifer, 2004).

There is an overriding assumption within the body of literature that partnerships are a good thing, however there is no overall critique presented. McGuire (2006) supports this by proposing that “the literature on collaboration is often celebratory and only

rarely cautious. That is because collaboration is a new form of governance, it follows that collaboration must be desirable” (p.33). He concludes by stating that “...there is still much to learn about collaborative public management and the questions left to be answered are nearly endless” (p.40). It could be argued that the motivation for collaboration to drive public sector reform is due to its popularity as the favoured mechanism. O’Flynn (2009) talks about the ‘cult’ of collaboration, with its roots firmly placed in social care and further suggests that it is believed to work even though there is no evidence, arguing that “part of the current popularity of ‘collaboration’ has been the loose way in which it has been used by both academics and practitioners; suddenly everything is collaborative” (p.112). A lacuna in current knowledge for public policy experts is further posited by O’Flynn (2009) which includes the potential goldmine of work on joint ventures, strategic alliances, and hybrids which ask the fundamental question of how are goals achieved.

Academics have highlighted that a key research approach is to explore and thus demonstrate the value of the link between organisational processes in specific policy areas (Pettigrew, 1985; Boyce, 1996; Rosenheck, 2001). However, what is lacking in the literature are recommendations of how to achieve this. Despite the many and varied arguments for engaging in collaboration, there appears to be very limited verification of its impact. For example, Taylor (2003) argues that “despite the proliferation of guidance and good practice handbooks there is in fact little evidence of the effectiveness of joint working” (p.139).

There is a need to recognise the practical challenges of implementing collaboration. Hudson (2005) describes the development of an effective implementation network

being harder than 'issuing an edict', but further suggests that its remuneration is longer term. He notes that:

“without such a development, policy will, of course, continue to be implemented. The central issue here is the ‘policy–action relationship’ (Barrett and Fudge, 1981, Hill and Hupe, 2002) – a process of interaction and negotiation between those seeking to put policy into effect and those upon whom action depends. The way in which this tension is worked through in the implementation process is what will shape the future of long-term conditions interventions, and despite the certainty of official pronouncements, we do not have a clear picture of what this will look like” (p.385).

Klijn and Koppenjan (2000) recognise the weakness in the practical application of the networked model of governance, but highlight the importance of its consideration when dealing with policy issues stating that:

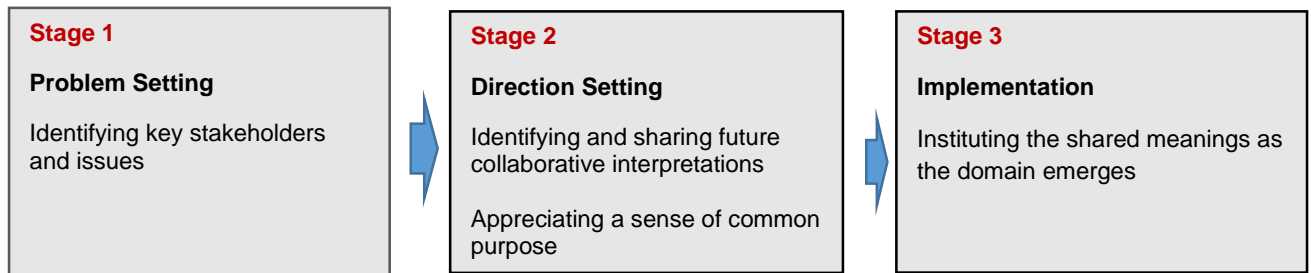
“despite this scholarly and substantial work, the network approach can hardly be considered to be widely accepted as a theory on which practitioners in the public sector base their actions...Because of the ambiguity and complexity of these tasks, governments will have to learn to enter into partnerships with other parties. Network management strategies will have to become part of their standard operating procedures” (p.154).

2.6 Models of Collaboration

This section presents and examines three models of collaboration. The justification for the selection of the frameworks is that all are commonly referenced in this area of study.

The first, framed by Gray (1989) provides a starting point to the discussion. It is a conceptual three-phase model-involving problem setting direction setting and implementation. Its characteristics are five-fold – the stakeholders are independent; solutions emerge by dealing constructively with differences; joint ownership of decisions is involved; the stakeholders assume collective responsibility for the ongoing direction of the domain; and collaboration is an emergent process.

Figure 1. Gray's Framework for Collaboration



Gray, B. (1989), *Collaborating: Finding Common Ground for Multiparty Problems*, San Francisco: Jossey-Bass

Gray's (1989) application centres on tourism policy with particular emphasis upon the management of visitor destinations. Its key ideas are drawn from interorganizational collaboration and citizen participation and are well supported in the literature (Getz and Jamal, 1994; Long, 1997; Selin and Beason, 1991). Whilst Gray's (1989) model clearly presents a framework which provides a theoretical 'logic' and recognises the importance of stakeholder involvement, its practical application raises more questions than solutions. It is rather naïve in its assumption that stakeholders will take 'collective responsibility'. Gray's (1989) work focuses exclusively on the 'people' factor within the collaboration process with little regard over other elements, which influence it. This is supported by Getz and Jamal (1994, p.173) who utilised the model in the area of community tourism and destination management and concluded that "the success of collaboration...would be strongly contingent on early identification and involvement of key stakeholders". It is argued that a domain-level focus in community tourism planning is critical due to the interdependencies among multiple stakeholders in a community tourism destination.

This 'bottom-up' model of collaboration appears to prescribe a 'win-win' solution to addressing complex problems. It visibly fails to flag up the potential pitfalls of what

lends itself to be an ever-evolving process. This is further evident in more recent work undertaken by Gray (2004) of an 18-month mediation designed to build agreement among stakeholders fighting over the management of a National Park in the USA. Central to the layers of controversy were tensions between the control of the area at a local, state and federal level. What the research, illustrated from a sociological perspective, revealed was the need to develop collaborative dialogues when aiming to resolve complex problems. Put simply, the reverse of this is that failure to develop such a joint approach is the downfall of collaborative initiatives. There is an element of ease that exists in this approach that conjures up a 'chocolate box approach' to collaboration. Whilst it is judicious to emphasise the stakeholder involvement focus, its failure to address the diversity of elements that determine a successful collaborative endeavour rather weakens its position for wider application.

Gray's (1989) application to date which is reflected broadly in the literature is limited to the tourism sector where the challenges of the collaboration process are commonplace to this particular domain. There is a gap in the knowledge of the application of this model in wider policy areas. This model has been built upon by Bramwell and Sharman (1999) by focusing on the elements that might affect the actual working of a collaborative venture. Their research introduces an analytical evaluative framework, which presents elements to consider whether local collaborative tourism policymaking is inclusive and involves collective learning and consensus building. This framework is then applied to assess stakeholder involvement in the development of a visitor management plan in an area of the Peak District National Park. Their work questions mechanisms to reduce power imbalances between stakeholders in the collaboration process and suggest that the framework lends itself to introduce a fourth

broad range of issues centring on policy implementation. The outcome of their research led to the production of an analytical framework for assessing the effectiveness of such projects based on ideas about inter-organizational teamwork, 'communicative' approaches to planning, and citizen participation. Zapata and Hall's (2012) work on collaboration in local tourism partnership concludes that "institutional context shapes partnership formation...partnerships reflect the institutional pressures of their environments" (p.78).

The second model that is considered is Jones et al's (2004) adoption of Hudson's (1999) model of collaboration in the health service in Wales. Hudson is a well-established academic whose specialist area is in collaboration and partnership within the health sector, whose model has been widely used by others (Ross et al, 2001, Newell et al, 2005). Hudson's framework consists of 'ten stages of collaborative endeavour', presented in Figure 2. The justification for selecting this framework was due to its emergence from analysis of previous theoretical and empirical work undertaken by Challis et al, (1988) and Huxham (1996) in a range of disciplines including public administration and management.

Figure 2. Ten Stages of Collaborative Endeavour

- **Contextual Factors: Expectations and Constraints**
- **Recognition of the need to collaborate**
- **Indication of a legitimate basis for collaboration**
- **Assessment of collaborative capacity**
- **Articulation of a clear sense of collaborative purpose**
- **Building up trust from principled conduct**
- **Ensuring wide organisational ownership**
- **Nurturing fragile relationships**

- Selection of an appropriate collaborative relationship
- Selection of co-ordination pathways

Jones, N., Thomas, P., and Rudd L., (2004), Collaborating for Mental Health Services in Wales: A Process Evaluation, *Public Administration*, 82(1), pp.109-121

Jones et al (2004) note that Hudson suggests that the 'stages' should be termed 'components', due to their non-sequential formatting. The justification for its selection in the research undertaken by Jones et al (2004) was that it was a useful basis to test the model's application across other Welsh policy areas as "the current research in Wales is intended to be a contribution to the further development of the model" (p.121). They further state that "with the increasing emphasis by the Labour Government of modernizing and improving the public sector and partnerships of various kinds, the importance of establishing and maintaining effective collaborative relationships is likely to increase, and the usefulness of Hudson's model deserves to be tested in a wide range of organizational context" (p.121). Hudson's (1999) framework identifies ten stages of collaborative endeavour. In its application, he notes that:

"the notion of 'stages' implies sequential activity... it would be wrong to suggest that there is some 'iron law of collaborative endeavour' through which agencies must dutifully progress - some may have made more progress on later stages than earlier ones, or may find themselves losing some of the success they may have gained at any particular stage. The process may need repeated attempts to even begin, and thereafter is likely to be iterative and cumulative rather than merely sequential, with a large element of learning by doing" (p.237).

Jones et al's (2004) work on the application of Hudson's model is a limited piece of research as the study was only 6 months in duration. By their own omission, the researchers were conscious that the data collection techniques which focused exclusively on mental health service managers was restricted and could only provide a snapshot of application and findings. Glasby et al (2010) also builds upon Hudson's

work (1998) around the agenda of the deficits of the NHS. Glasby et al (2010) suggest that it is timely to reassess the relationship between health and local government. Glasby (2003) uses these three categories to compare government responses against Hudson's proposal for a local government led solution and concluded that "they would produce a sort of 'amalgamation of stealth': a long-term undermining of professional autonomy until health and social care organizations are neither autonomous bodies with their own unique values and skills, nor fully integrated agencies" (p.975). The argument being that a decision needs to be made about whether health and social care services are amalgamated or remain separate, with no 'half way' measures.

What is illustrated in this research is the lack-lustre history of partnership working between health and social care. Further work undertaken by Hudson (2005) around the area of partnership working with a particular emphasis on dealing with long term conditions (LTC) sees reference being made to the influence from American models of working. His research suggests that influences from 'across the pond' have heavily shaped English strategy in this area and goes as far to suggest that it may be considered a hybrid 'Anglo-US' model. He further emphasises that despite this, "the Department of Health is explicit about the US influence, but keen to stress the home-grown customisation. In reality, there is little evidence to suggest that such seamless care can be effortlessly achieved" (p.380).

The motivation for collaboration is therefore questionable, with Hudson (2005) further arguing that "the scale of partnership ambition exhibited by the Government relates inversely to evidence of successful achievement, with local partners now exhorted to develop 'whole systems working' rather than mere *ad hoc* partnerships. In this respect,

therefore, the LTC policy tale is best located at the level of political rhetoric rather than daily reality” (p.381). This is refuted by Kernaghan (2008) who suggests that partnerships have evolved as a general, ad-hoc response to problems and as a means to improve the effectiveness and efficiency of public sector organisations. This can be mirrored in the private sector with Kettl’s (2006) work on the transformation on government where he describes the approach to coping with recent global disasters as being managed by ‘ad-hoc international structures’. Indeed, Hudson and Henwood’s (2002) earlier research around Care Trusts observes this divide between rhetoric and reality in the policy area of health. “In the case of Care Trusts, there remains a strong political commitment to an untried model. In the light of the emphasis normally placed by the Department of Health on evidence-based approaches to policy and practice, this is perhaps a surprising turn of events” (p.82). Glasby and Lester (2004) argue that it is not a case of dismissing a policy direction but that the issue is based more on faith rather than on a firm evidence-base.

The third framework originally developed by Huxham (1993) is based on the concept of collaborative advantage and was built upon by Huxham and Vangen (2005).

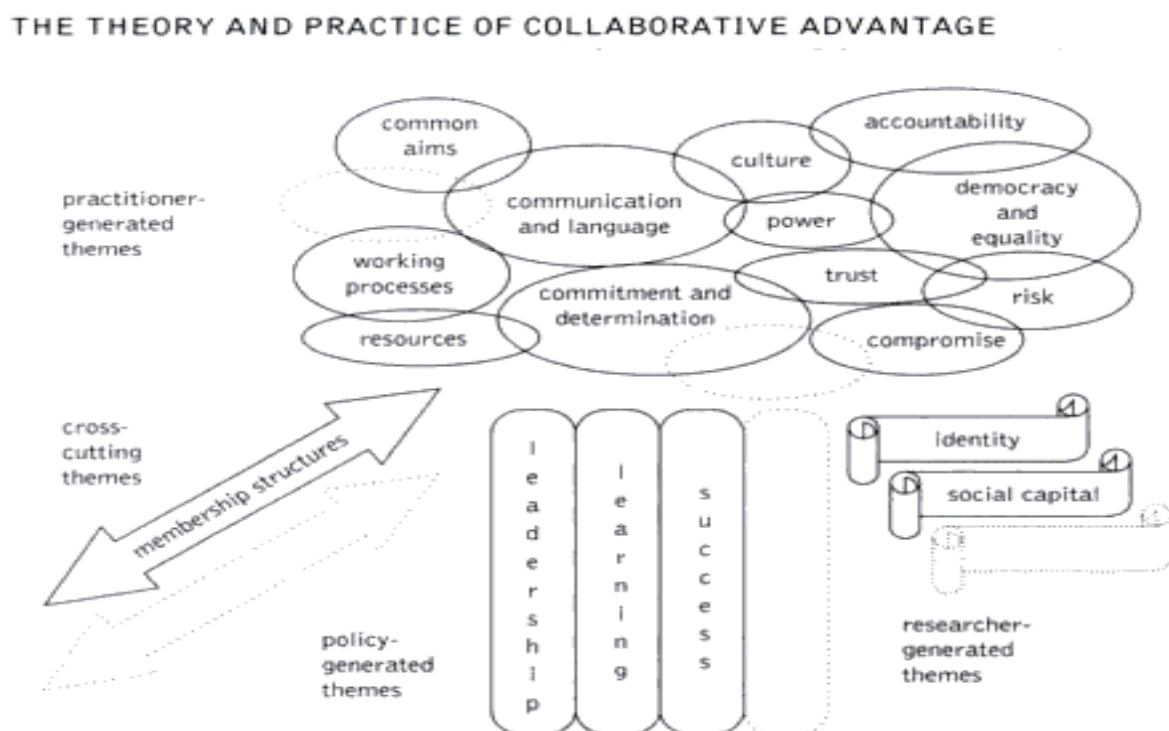
Collaborative advantage is:

“achieved when “something unusually creative is produced – perhaps an objective is met – that no organization could have produced on its own and when each organization, through the collaboration, is able to achieve its own objectives better than it could alone. In some cases, it should also be possible to achieve some higher-level...objectives for society as a whole rather than just for participating organizations” (1993, p.603).

The framework, presented in Figure 3. provides a theoretical basis of the ‘issues, contradictions, tensions and dilemmas’ that are associated with collaborative working and aims to support “those who seek collaborative advantage in practice...seeking in

particular to understand and capture the complexity of the practice of collaboration and convey it in a way that will seem real to those who experience it in their working lives” (2005, pp.34-35). The themes-based theory “derived from issues repeatedly raised by practitioner causing them pain and reward in collaborative situations” (2005, p.36).

Figure 3. Model of Collaborative Advantage



Huxham, C. and Vangen, S., (2005), *Managing to Collaborate: The Theory and Practice of Collaborative Advantage*, London: Routledge

Collaborative advantage represents a shift away from such principles of service delivery together with incremental movements away from the traditional bureaucratic shaped organisations which have historically delivered welfare state programmes for

most of the 20th Century. It achieves this via the introduction of cross-organisational working in the form of partnerships, which involve a range of stakeholders (Lowndes and Skelcher, 1998) and is directly relevant to public organisations. The basis of competitive advantage is removed and the notion of what added value can be gained from sharing resources, risks and reward is realised (Huxham, 1996).

Ahgren and Axelsson (2005) applied Huxham's model in their study of the conceptualisation and validation of a practical model to measure the degree of integration between different providers of health services within the Swedish health service. They note the difficulty in finding a high degree of organisational cohesiveness in local health. What is commonplace however is that the system is linked together through chains of care or other types of collaborative networks, with a focus on older patients with multiple illnesses. There is a dearth of knowledge about the level of integration that is occurring within such networks. The researchers suggest that such information would be 'essential to guide the further implementation of Local Health Care'. The concluding remarks merit its usage, however indicate that there is 'room for improvement'. What is disappointing is the lack of reference to how this could be applied in other areas of the health sector or in other key policy domains.

This study recognises that there need to be key stages to the collaborative process, which are presented in Gray's model. There is however a latency with respect to the three frameworks of the inclusion of the outcome of the collaborative activity. In order for the success or otherwise of the collaboration to be identified, there is a need to both acknowledge this stage as well as consideration of the tools by which this will be measured.

2.7 Existing Knowledge and Evidence of Collaboration in Public Services

This section of the chapter focuses on existing studies and evidence of collaboration. There is a burgeoning literature that advises on the mechanics of collaboration. Huxham and Vangen (1996), identify the key ingredients as: common aims, compromise, communication, democracy, equality, trust and determination. Central to the debate around the collaborative agenda is where power features within the context of stakeholders' involvement and legitimacy. Rudnicka and Reichel (2009) outline that stakeholder analysis provides a backdrop for exploring potential collaborations. Coulson-Thomas (2005) explores the qualities of personnel involved in collaboration identifying that there is a tendency for participants in the process to take a one-sided view. Further research in this area include Huxham and Hibbert's (2008) work on attitudes to learning in inter-organisational collaboration concluding that "the way partners interact is (explicitly or implicitly) by the attitudes to learning at play *between* them" (p.524).

The UK in the last 20 years has witnessed the growth of joint models of delivery with an increased emphasis on the need for collaborative working. Consequently, this has resulted in public services being designed in more collective and co-operative ways than ever before (Wooding, 2008). As Hibbert and Huxham (2005) state:

"inter-organizational collaboration is an established area of organizational study and a practical challenge for management...While the need for collaboration is clear, research that focuses on the practice of collaboration has demonstrated that collaborative situations are inherently riddled with managerial changes" (p.3).

In terms of evidence from particular services, there are few academic studies which present research on collaboration within the domain of skills. Kezar (2005) notes, for example that “there has been virtually no research on how to enable higher education institutions to conduct collaborative work” (p.831). In other areas of education policy, work has been undertaken in special educational needs assessments (Farmakopoulou, 2002). This qualitative study focuses on the inter-professional and inter-agency collaboration between education and social work authorities in assessing the special educational needs of pre-school children. Farmakopoulou (2002) applies three models of inter-agency collaboration, namely, the social exchange, power/resource dependency and political economy perspectives and concludes that only by combining aspects of these models of inter-agency collaboration, is it possible to understand the complexity of inter-organizational relations and the reasons why collaboration into special educational needs continues to be limited in extent and poor in quality. It is shown how the motivation of inter-agency collaboration between education and social work authorities is simultaneously internal and voluntary (social exchange model) and external and involuntary, in terms of being imposed by a third party (political economy model). It is demonstrated how these two welfare agencies are engaging in some exchange and some power/resource dependency interactions. The author suggests that it is difficult to assess the extent of interdependence (unilateral interdependence and reciprocal interdependence) in exchange relationships and, thus, whether there is symmetry and/or equality in these interactions.

In another education study from the US, Smith and Leonard (2005) examined the inherent challenges in the implementation of school inclusion programmes in ten

public schools in North Louisiana over a three-year period. The findings revealed the critical and challenging role of the principal for establishing collaborative cultures for successful school inclusion. Additionally, special education teachers and general education teachers experienced intrapersonal and interpersonal value conflicts in the pursuit of educational equity amidst a climate of school accountability.

There is some evidence in relation to collaboration in higher education in England (HEFCE, 2009) and this is concerned with the collaboration between further and higher educational institutions. Within this report, the scope of regional collaboration, the membership of such alliances, their management and administration and the need to “build in” coherency are all focused upon. In Wales, whilst there is direct emphasis on the need to collaborate at a Welsh level (HEFCW, 2010), there is no existing academic evidence about how this should happen in practice. It may be that it is more difficult for educational institutions to collaborate as they are institutionally focused and there is a competitive relationship between them.

In contrast to education, there is more academic literature on collaborative models of working within the social care and health sectors. These respective policy areas state Dickinson and Sullivan (2014) are “always a focus for new forms of co-ordination” which “became a key testing ground for collaborative policy instruments as the Labour government sought to modernize the anachronistic health and social care systems which so often failed vulnerable groups” (p.163). Within these areas there are studies of joint commissioning, for example integrated provision (Provan and Milward, 2001; Bryce et al, 2004, Boivard, 2006) and pooled budgets (Glendinning, 2003, Hultberg et al, 2005). Working collaboratively has been mainstream in the social care

and health sectors for over four decades, with the planning and provision centring around the individual. Studies within these areas includes Hultberg et al's (2003) work on assessing the differences in goal formulation, collaboration and communication between staff in intervention health centres that have implemented co-financing projects and health centres working under conventional conditions. The specific aims of the study were to assess if:

- there are any differences between the health centres with co-financed collaboration projects and control health centres with regard to how staff perceive existence of goals, how to attend the goals and the importance of goals;
- there are any differences in the character and process of interdisciplinary collaboration;
- this new legislation led to any changes in the service providers' work procedure in rehabilitation.

Evidence from this study suggests that new rehabilitation working procedures can lead to a strengthened interdisciplinary collaboration within primary health care services. The co-financing and joint political steering of authorities involved probably facilitated these working procedures. Based on such common financial and political grounds, better collaboration could be achieved through legitimising formulation of common long-term goals while emphasising mutual benefits.

There are limited studies that relate specifically to Wales, or evidence exists which separates the data collected in Wales from the wider data (Jones et al, 2004; Martin and Webb, 2009; Downe and Elraz, 2016, Downe and Hayden, 2016). It is clear that

although the policy driver for Wales has been to collaborate, there is an insufficient evidence base to support this policy development.

In contrast, there are numerous examples of English studies on collaborative initiatives led by the government emphasising joined-up government and partnership in practice, for example, Employment Zones, Education Action Zones, Health Action Zones, New Deal for Communities and Sure Start but very little reference to collaborative models. Research too has been undertaken in other areas including natural resource management (Selin et al, 2000), employment (Legler and Reischl, 2003) and urban planning (Healey, 1998). Contrastingly, there is very limited literature concerned specifically with collaboration around ageing (Bolda et al, 2006).

What are the key ingredients for a successful collaborative model? There is an appeal, suggest some commentators (Vincent, 1999; Huxham, 2003) for public policy architects to take generic proven successful factors and to seek to implement them universally. Research by Glasby and Lester (2004) around the area of mental health services examined documents which related to partnership working between health and social care. They concluded that it tended “to be descriptive (simply describing good practice examples) or heavily prescriptive (stating that partnerships are a ‘good thing’ and urging agencies and practitioners to work more effectively together), without always citing the evidence for such claims” (p.10). Mandell (1999) suggests that the development of a successful model that will resolve society’s ‘wicked’ problems is enticing to both academics and practitioners alike. She further issues firm warnings about the adoption of such a holistic approach to addressing policy issues as “those in the field to ‘latch onto’ and use wholesale. Although it may be tempting to do so, this

'one size fits all' type of modelling does not take into consideration the myriad of factors and events that must be understood before these concepts can be of much use in the 'real world'" (p.8).

There is no shortage of studies describing the content or nature of collaboration frameworks. What is evident is the spectrum on which their successful factors are based, whether cited as good practice models, or hypotheses. Review articles, as well as case studies, theoretical analyses and toolkits (or practice manuals) take quite different approaches to distilling factors influencing the success of collaborative efforts whatever they are termed. For instance, some detail sequential stages (Kerka, 1997; Sherriff and Wilson, 2006) while others concentrate on the competencies or capacities which partners must have or develop (Foster-Fishman et al, 2001; Sullivan et al, 2002) some; adopt a multi-category framework of analysis (Kerka, 1997; Wildridge et al 2004) whilst others concentrate on one set of factors such as processes.

A common school of thought amongst many researchers is that the drivers for collaboration, including cost reduction and increased efficiency, will consequently lead to improved service outcomes, but this perspective is potentially subjective in suggesting that collaborating will automatically achieve such results (Osbourne and Plastrick, 1998; Goldsmith and Eggers, 2004). Researchers clearly recognise the validity of such presumptions in relation to their implications on the governance and service delivery (Forbes and Lynn, 2005; Hill and Lynn, 2005) in that there is a need to be clear from the outset of what the sought outcomes are of any collaborative endeavour. What is key to understanding how outcomes are attained, suggests Langton et al (2003) is to appreciate the tensions between service areas with a view that this will eliminate confusion in the use and application of terminology and

definitions. 'Muddying the water' with this lack of clarity impacts on the ability to measure the outcomes and impact of collaboration. This perspective is supported by Feldman et al (2006) who conclude that by understanding how networks operate "can help public managers identify new actants and alter associations that they might otherwise only discover through blind luck" (p.96). Such a 'rose tinted' perspective is rich in implications and presents a dangerous panacea for the delivery of public sector services. What is clearly missing from the literature is research on the application of such theoretical viewpoints.

The number of studies on the outcomes of collaborative activities are limited (Koontz and Thomas, 2006; McGuire, 2006), with the exception of social outcomes. Work undertaken by Sabatier et al (2005) has evidenced that successful collaborations lead to increased trust and social capital. Finn (1996), as a contributor to Huxham's (1996) publication on collaborative advantage, provides arguments on the utilisation of stakeholder strategies for positive collaboration outcomes. Research has been undertaken in the area of water policymaking by Connick and Innes (2003) who focused on three case studies which included a wide range of outcomes including social and political capital, high-quality agreements, learning and change, innovation and new practices involving networks and flexibility. Koontz and Thomas' (2006) work focuses on the environmental outcomes of collaborative management, but rather than provide an evidence base on this, conclude that future research in this area should be to demonstrate whether collaboration improves environmental conditions more than traditional processes. What requires further consideration is the legacy of collaborative activities and the mechanisms to measure its impact on the delivery of public services.

Historically has this been a factor that has been addressed within the public-sector domain?

The influence of private sector practice with respect to how the public sector collaborates in the area of health policy is evident in the literature. Research undertaken by a number of academics (Bate and Robert, 2002; Alimo-Metcalfe and Lawler, 2001; McNulty and Ferlie, 2002) have sought to interpret business approaches for public sector contexts. In 2000 the government committed the NHS to an approach in service redesign that draws parallel to the change management approach adopted by the private sector. One methodology was favoured to introduce this step change in the quality of care, termed the 'collaborative methodology' which is characterised by "the creation of horizontal networks which cut across the hierarchical and relatively isolated organisations that make up the NHS" (Bate and Robert, 2002, p.645). This research provides much 'food for thought' when looking to transfer private sector practices into public sector policy and concluded that there was significant opportunity to move from 'knowledge application' to 'knowledge creation', from 'explicit evidence' to 'tacit experience' and from 'temporary network' to 'community of practice'.

With respect to the origins of networked activities, there is empirical evidence to suggest that networks originate from the private sector via studies on businesses and firms focusing on the areas of elements that produce, develop and sustain voluntary relationships (Ranade and Hudson, 2003). They argue that "much of the public policy agenda has been mandated to varying degrees by a central executive authority - central government - and imposed upon local agencies" (p.48). This is supported by Moe (1994) on the introduction of the entrepreneurial management paradigm into the

public sector in that “much of the public administration community leadership early-on joined in saluting this unshackling from the allegedly outdated bureaucratic paradigm and in the adoption of the entrepreneurial paradigm” (p.112). Huxham et al (2005) partially refute this by stating that “in practice, many collaborations are partly mandated and partly voluntary” (p.11).

There is a need to consider the types of relationships and outcomes associated with inter-organisational collaboration. Kanter (1994) references the theory of competitive advantage in such collaborative activity and whilst her research is exclusively based on the findings from the private sector, it would be interesting to explore its application within the public sector, most notably the eight (individual excellence, importance, interdependence, investment, information, integration, institutionalisation and integrity) key criteria to achieving collaborative advantage. Whilst this approach has demonstrated successful inter-company relationships a clear caveat is flagged up in that “there are limits to how much a company should change to accommodate the demands of an alliance. The potential value of the relationship must be weighed against the value of all the other company activities” (Kanter, 1994, p.108). This may be more straightforward in its application in the private sector where output and shareholders are crucial, but in contrast the public domain has more complex governance challenges.

Over the last 30 years, the models to facilitate public sector reform have included the shift from public administration, new public management to new public governance. The analysis begins to unravel why collaboration has become such a crucial method of working deployed to design and implement public services. It is presented in the

literature as a response to the failure of more traditional approaches to addressing complex policy issues, which is suggested, cannot be solved by vertical, hierarchical structures historically associated within more formal public-sector organisations. Research indicates its association with the 'networked' form of governance adapted to deal with a public sector, which can often be described as segmented. The section then questions whether the public sector has the appropriate climate for implementing collaborative practices.

The concept of collaboration has been examined with a focus specifically on its definition. It is widely recognised that there is a plethora of definitions and typologies, which focus on key areas whether it is related to shared outcomes, strategic goals or efficiency savings. Overly referenced in the literature is the underlying assumption that collaboration is a solution to the 'wicked problems' that organisations are unable to address independently and as such could be seen to be a criticism of how the public sector has traditionally operated. As Head and Alford (2015) state:

“government organizations are good at implementing policies and delivering services that are relatively standardized, routine, and high volume...they perform tasks like delivering entitlements, treating patients, and administering tests efficiently...But they seem to be less well equipped to respond effectively to non-routine and nonstandard service challenges. Not unexpectedly, some public officials find it challenging to handle the more difficult problems facing them. This is especially true of what have been called 'wicked problems'—those that are complex, unpredictable, open ended, or intractable (p.712).

Moreover, it is suggested that the model for implementing this is through 'networked' governance, which has changed the landscape of the public sector in how it implements its policies and programmes with the introduction of deregulation and the third sector as service delivers. Much of the research on this area focuses on the theory, with further calls for more analysis of its practical implementation. The existing

evidence however does infer a 'mother and apple pie' perspective to the application of the networked governance approach in that the theory does not address a crucial number of key challenges. Fenwick and McMillan (2009) noted that the UK government has noted the operational problems presented by partnership working, with the caveat that "help would seem to be at hand, for there is a plentiful official guidance on partnership working from the UK government. When codified into a set of 'tools' – or even a whole toolkit – the impression is produced that this is a value-free process requiring technical management rather than the resolution of difficult questions about resources or political choices" (p.1).

The literature stresses that there is a sense of 'inevitability' that public sector organisations will collaborate because it is politically driven, albeit at different levels due to the failure to present policy solutions to complex problems. It further highlights that there is difficulty in its full achievement because of the lack of evidence-based practice. There is an inference that the emergence of cross-sectoral working is as a direct result of the failure of government to work independently. The analysis of collaboration therefore proves to be challenging, with the lack of identified benchmarks. The literature suggests that the citizen is central to the shaping of this agenda, which was more evident with the emergence of the 'networked society' and the growth of horizontal decision-making. This is in relation to service implementation, which contrasts to the central vertical mechanisms historically associated with the public sector.

The literature highlights rationales as to why organisations should collaborate and suggests the existence of a plethora of 'good practice' sources as to what factors

should be considered to ensure that the outcome is successful. What however is evident is the need to reduce this with what Bate and Robert (2002) describe as 'knowledge elicitation' i.e. the application of best practice models and examine the outcomes in 'real' settings and the practical challenges captured by Huxham and Vangen (2005):

“inter-organizational collaboration is an established area of organizational study and a practical challenge for management...While the need for collaboration is clear, research that focuses on the practice of collaboration has demonstrated that collaborative situations are inherently riddled with managerial changes” (p.3).

The models presented and their application within specific public-sector domains is based on existing knowledge, which creates an assumption that they potentially have the right answers for effective collaboration. Bate and Robert's (2002) definition of co-creation is one, which takes place where 'no one has the answer'. Rather partners work together to generate knowledge jointly to find the solution. This is more evident now in the delivery of public services. Research by Terry (1997) supports this in questioning how two diverse services can work together which overcomes the practical disadvantages of being separately organised and staffed. Part of the public interest in such questions undoubtedly stems from the numbers of elderly people who now qualify for support in various forms from the health and social services. Demographic trends are prompting a fresh look at alliances, not for the 'economies of scale' so favoured in the 1960s, rather for the scope for improved service at the point of delivery.

In terms of addressing collaboration's practical execution, the literature suggests the need to understand the difficulties between service areas to ensure that the application of terminology is not 'lost in translation'. Failure to do this has implications not only on

its adoption but also on the ability to measure its outcomes and effects. Indeed, this approach can assist public sector organisations identify new partners and ways of working which are informed rather than being 'stumbled upon'. What is evident in the literature is an imbalance between the theoretical perspectives on the motivation for collaboration and research on its practical implementation. There is a visible need to address this latter area in order to advise future performance of public sector organisations.

There is an assumption that delivering public services collaboratively unites organisations that "will share ideas, experience, and perhaps even resources, in order to learn and to improve" (Hartley and Bennington, 2006, p.106). However, the difficulties associated with collaboration at both central and governmental levels is also identified by the academic community (Moseley, 2009). Collaboration as a model of working has received growing research attention in the last decade or so, which is supported by the proliferation of literature, much of which presents it to policymakers as a necessary driver to enable public sector organisations to work collectively to resolve policy issues.

In considering the volume of publications, it can be said that collaboration has seen a steady growth and appears to be heading towards a level of maturity, the majority of which has focused on the theory of how to collaborate and its promotion as the preferable option to implement public sector reform. Although researchers have explored a considerable number of areas, a review of the literature highlights that many of these have received minimal attention. Among these is a detailed evidence based analysis of collaboration from the practitioner's perspective. Further, it is

recognised that the knowledge surrounding its practical application has in both the academic and professional literature been accumulated in an 'ad hoc' fashion, which does not provide a sufficient body of research around this area. Given the increased importance of this approach in both Wales and wider within the UK, the need to know what works is important.

The collaborative agenda within the policy area of education and skills has gained momentum in recent years. HEFCW and HEFCE, the respective funding councils for higher education in Wales and England, have promoted this as a central tenet of strategies, with reconfiguration and collaboration as one of HEFCW's three enabling themes of their Corporate Strategy (2013 – 2016) and HEFCE citing in its 2015-2020 Business Plan that it will achieve its aims and objectives by working in partnership with others to influence and lever investment in. The Welsh Government's Skills Implementation Plan, published in 2014 outlines its commitment to build upon the regional collaborative skills partnership model to develop flexible, regional responses to skills needs. Notwithstanding this, the application of models of collaboration in education and skills policy is limited, in comparison to research conducted in the policy area of health and social care as highlighted in work undertaken by Hultberg et al (2003) and Dickinson and Sullivan (2014). Wales focused studies on the application of models of collaboration are limited in number and it thus presents an opportunity to contribute to the existing knowledge in this area. This section has highlighted that the literature in collaboration within the health and social care sectors is much more exhaustive than in skills.

Research in the area of governance has received much academic attention, particularly in the areas of health and social care, as referenced earlier in this section (Bryson et al, 2006; Higgins et al, 1994; Hultberg et al, 2003). Notwithstanding such research focus, employing different theories may prompt additional insights. For example, in the academic literature, several studies have employed the perspective that collaboration is seen to be the preferred option in resolving complex policy problems. There are still many issues, which are not known about collaboration, for example its effect on performance management and governance challenges in areas such as human resources and financial management. Notwithstanding the challenges that exist in its application, there is a realisation by the Welsh Government of its merits as a model of delivering public services that it is widely advocated. The public sector has to face such challenges by taking a proactive attitude and making it happen in order to reap the benefits. There is further opportunity in informing future research to address the key issues and initial stages for the development of a conceptual evaluation framework for the public sector to address how it collaborates.

The present review of literature on collaboration has identified certain issues which have neither been satisfactorily addressed nor given due consideration. This would enable the decision-makers to decide on the shape of programmes and ultimately the shape of public sector services and provide an 'aide memoire' to policymakers.

What is apparent from this literature review is that the largely positive predictions regarding the potential benefits of collaboration from a conceptual perspective have not been supported by empirical research. It is possible that it is still too soon to evaluate the full effects of collaboration initiatives on public sector service delivery. It

is further possible that the empirical research conducted to date has been too shallow and has lacked a clear focus. For example, simply asking stakeholders such as staff in an unstructured way about their views on how services are delivered collaboratively is insufficient. The research contends that deep qualitative research, including interviews is required. McGuire (2006) supports this by stating that "...there is still much to learn about collaborative public management and the questions left to be answered are nearly endless" (p.40). Ranade and Hudson (2003) further this debate by arguing that "even if the climate is favourable, and collaboration is widely regarded as a virtue, finding a legitimate basis for collaboration may still be difficult" (p.39). Further evidence of a literature lacuna is presented by Williams (2010) who suggests that partnership is seen, generally as a 'good thing'. He further identifies that "...very little empirical work has been done to justify either the claim that policies in the past failed because of lack of partnership or that partnership arrangements have demonstrably improved outcomes" (p.3). Entwistle (2014) presents a viewpoint on what factors are required for successful collaboration stating that:

"the ingredients which make for successful collaboration in a professional network focused on the dissemination of best practice are unlikely to be the same as those required for the formalised governance processes of a special purpose vehicle. Although the literature is not sufficiently advanced to allow fine grained analysis of this sort, there is an emerging consensus on what might be regarded as the generic ingredients of network effectiveness" (p.7).

The four factors that he presents are external support, network integration, formalisation and accountability, and network management.

Williams (2010) has already drawn on this view in his analysis of partnerships. He further suggests very little empirical work has been undertaken to assess whether they have improved public service delivery outcomes or whether as a result initiatives have

failed. Jorgensen (1999) suggests that there is a need to consider what factors have resulted in the lack of clarity between the boundaries of administration and politics.

From a governance perspective, collaboration could be perceived as an 'institutional pressure' within public organisations. The disappointing results reflected in the empirical research can be interpreted, from an organisational perspective, as indicating that collaboration is only loosely coupled to guaranteeing success. For example, within the existing traditional vertical model of government how realistic is it to move from informal collaborative arrangements to formal collaborative governance structures of operation? The problem with some research on collaboration is that it is guided by a rational view as being the only option to deliver quality public services. This is supported by Kooiman (1993) who observes that the proliferation of different organisational forms and models of governance has presented challenges for senior government officials to control and manage the administration of the public sector. Young and Denize (2008) suggest that collaborative working presents "a number of competing interests, including the needs of the client's vs the governmentally imposed goals and performance metrics of the organisation" (p.56). This is further emphasised by Armistead et al (2007) who state that "though partners may enter into a collaboration with benevolent intent, it is in practice much more difficult to negotiate shared purpose and resolve competing interest" (p.218).

The lack of evidence of the impact of collaboration jeopardises the understanding by both practitioners and policymakers alike of the factors they need to be informed of to ensure effective delivery of public sector services. Predominantly this is based upon the lack of empirical research to support the application of the theoretical perspectives presented by academics and the general assumption that collaboration is a panacea

for the delivery of public sector services, which is supported by limited analysis. As Provan and Lemaire (2012) note, “unfortunately, too often public managers are asked to create, build, manage in, and maintain service delivery networks with little knowledge or understanding of the research that has been conducted on the topic” (p.638). Many of the writings in this area of research are normative and predictive in nature. Empirical research into the application of models of collaboration in the Welsh public sector is limited and it is evident that further practice-based research is required to understand the effects of this.

From the above, it is clear there are further opportunities to contribute to knowledge in this area. These include -

- undertaking research in the application of collaboration as a model of managing and delivering public services from a practitioner perspective;
- evaluation of collaborative working methods within the public-sector domain;
- research on the application of models of collaboration in key policy areas, for example education, and more specifically their employment within a Welsh context;
- research to explore key aspects that impact on collaboration e.g. geography.

2.8 Conclusion

Collaboration has been a key policy driver for the Welsh Government since 2004 and has shaped Welsh public sector management, favouring a model of co-operation, rather than competition for the design and delivery of public sector services (Williams, 2014). However, few collaboration scholars have undertaken extensive studies on its impacts in Wales and it is only at the latter stage of writing this thesis, that Wales

focused studies are being published (Downe and Hayden, 2016). Thus, this study will contribute further to this agenda.

The research will draw upon Hartley and Bennington (2006) implications for research on knowledge generation and its application, in that it needs to include the need to develop theories, which take account of the political and more explicitly contested nature of knowledge in the public service sector. El Ansari et al (2001) further state that with respect to collaboration “there are calls emphasising the need for evidence of its effectiveness. However, the nature of the evidence to assess the effectiveness is less clear” (p.215).

As outlined in the policy context, the focus for the design and the delivery of public sector services in Wales is clearly via collaboration. Thompson and Perry (2006) outline that for academics a more systematic attention to understanding the process of collaboration will further the public value of this emerging field of study. The uniqueness of the Welsh context will add a further dimension to scrutinising this particular policy agenda. Nylén (2007) questions how the effectiveness of collaborative arrangements can be assessed in terms of resource requirement versus outcome potential. A critique by Powell of a book written by Sullivan and Skelcher (2003) highlights that it is not clear whether individual and organisational capacities for collaboration are similar in all situations, or whether they differ between different partnership types.

There is a gap in knowledge about the outcomes of collaboration. There is a strong focus in the literature on the recognition of collaborative activities in relation to service

delivery producing better outcomes for people (Hardy et al, 2003; Goldsmith and Eggers, 2004; Taylor, 2003). There is however a recognition of the dearth of evidence within the literature that highlights the need for research into how outcomes are evaluated and the tools to do this (Langton et al, 2003; Hardy et al, 2003; Boyne and Law, 2005; O'Flynn, 2009). This thesis will address this and contribute to the reduction of the literature lacuna.

It will further contribute to debates within Welsh public services as to the most suitable means for public sector agencies to increase their capabilities and capacity to deliver and design collaborative activities more effectively. More broadly, this research will provide information that is relevant to policy makers and practitioners alike on how resources should be allocated, with respect to collaborative endeavours.

The research will contribute to analysing the proliferation of different forms of collaboration (Lindsay, 2009) within a Welsh policy context. It will further examine how established models of collaboration presented by academics presented earlier on this chapter (Gray, 1989; Jones et al, 2004; and Huxham and Vangen, 2005) can be applied to the public-sector reform in Wales. For the purpose of the thesis, the policy area of education and skills will be the focus. Data on a model of collaborative working within this policy domain in Wales will be empirically collated and analysed. The model is the RSPs in Wales, and the research will focus on two of these partnerships operating in South West & Central Wales and in North Wales.

Due to the relatively recent emphasis placed in collaborative working within Welsh Public Services, there is dearth of data surrounding its practical implementation. It will

be necessary to supplement this data via a 'broad-brush' analysis of national policies and face to face interviews with key stakeholders. The research will provide an evidence base for future policy directions and will provide an opportunity to measure the impact of the design and delivery of collaborative services.

Due to the relatively recent introduction of the collaborative agenda within the Welsh public sector, this research will provide an opportunity to identify a number of key areas for the practical implementation of collaboration as a mechanism to drive public sector reform. Notwithstanding the recognition of the significant research that exists in the area of collaboration, it is proposed that the focus of this study be on the Welsh context. This will then provide policymakers and practitioners alike with a better understanding of the picture in Wales, and inform them of the issues to consider when developing and delivering future policies and initiatives. The key areas will include:

- the effect of external and internal constraints on collaborative working. The images of mixed advantages and disadvantages accruing from collaborative enterprises reflect the current ambiguous state of knowledge about strategic alliance networks and their multidimensional consequences (Needham, 2007);
- what conclusions can be drawn from empirical evidence on the merits of Welsh public sector partnerships;
- the factors that are likely to influence the degree to which Welsh public sector bodies can successfully collaborate. One crucial element is partner selection. Amabile et al (2001) state that "...few researchers have considered the effects of the institutional contexts surrounding collaborators from different organizations, despite the potential importance of context in determining collaborative success...the degree of support that each individual receives from

his or her home institution could influence the time and resources available to a project” (p.3);

- the extent to which public sector practitioners have changed their cultures and practices to facilitate new models of collaborative working. There will be an analysis of the identification of how factors such as organisational attributes condition participation opportunities and how organisations perceive the merits of collaboration;
- Fusion or fission? Whilst the Welsh Government advocates collaboration as the preferred way of working, it is on a voluntary basis. Aside to this, the research will examine why organisations collaborate as not all partnerships are intentionally designed to achieve mutually beneficial outcomes for all parties. Koza and Lewin (1998) suggest that some organisations may enter collaborative partnerships with an approach that is cautious and low risk. It may be a pathway for exploring opportunities for subsequent re-organisation;
- the sustainability of collaborative partnerships within the Welsh public sector.

What is inherently clear is that the research agenda in the field of collaborative working is neither new nor in its infancy. Extensive literature in the area reflects upon a wide number of facets as noted earlier in this chapter. There is a shortage of research around the outcomes of collaborative alliances in Wales. Public funding is being directed at the delivery of services under the umbrella of collaborative working with the underlying aim of their improvement and to meet what the former WAG termed in 2009 as the ‘unprecedented challenge’ placed on these services.

Documented in this chapter is the commitment of the Welsh Government to continue with collaboration as a mechanism to implement public sector reform. Evidently, it appears not to be a ‘flash in the pan’ policy whim, rather an approach that has gained substantial momentum and strength over the last decade or so. With the rapid growth of vehicles to implement the above approach across an increasing number of policy domains, the case is strengthened to focus specifically on the uniqueness of Wales with respect to responding to the aim of this study which is to identify the elements that practitioners feel is required for effective collaboration in order to frame a critical reflection with the purpose of informing future actions and strategies.

Following a review of the academic literature there are several themes and messages that emerge in relation to collaboration. These themes have been identified as follows: (1) Defining Collaboration (2) Motivational Factors to Collaborate (3) Benefits of Collaboration (4) Barriers to Collaboration (5) Measuring Outcomes of Collaboration (6) Skills required to Collaborate. It is these themes and key messages that shaped the research methodology and method, and to establish the questions for the semi-structured interviews that were undertaken to answer the research question.

Table 2. summarises the key academic papers, their main arguments and their relation to the theme.

Table 2. Literature Review Grid of Key Papers

In Text Citation	Source	Arguments or Main Findings	Relation to Themes
Dickinson, H. and	Towards a General Theory of Collaborative Performance: The Importance of Efficacy	The authors recognise that collaboration as a mechanism to improve	5

Sullivan, H., (2014)	and Agency, <i>Public Administration</i> , 92(1), pp.161-177	service design and delivery, however they argue that there is little evidence that links collaborative activity to improved service outcomes.	
Huxham, C. and Vangen, S., (2005)	<i>Managing to Collaborate: The Theory and Practice of Collaborative Advantage</i> , London: Routledge	The authors draw on the theory of collaboration which are drawn from practice detailing the challenges of collaboration.	2,3,4,5 & 6
Hudson, B., Hardy, B., Henwood M., and Wistow G., (1999)	In Pursuit of Inter-Agency Collaboration in the Public Sector, <i>Public Management</i> , 1(2), pp.235-260	The authors review existing literature to better understand inter-agency collaboration as a concept and as a process. They present a framework to be utilised when undertaking a collaborative activity and apply this approach in a study of inter-agency collaboration in community care.	1,2
O'Flynn, J., (2009)	The Cult of Collaboration in Public Policy, <i>Australian Journal of Public Administration</i> , 68(1), pp.112-116	The author presents a discussion on what collaboration is in the context of public policy, arguing that collaboration should not be presented as panacea to solve all public policy issues as it is often presented in the academic literature, but that there is a need from a practitioner perspective to 'cast a critical eye over the rhetoric of collaboration'.	1
Jones, N., Thomas, P., and Rudd L., (2004)	Collaborating for Mental Health Services in Wales: A Process Evaluation, <i>Public Administration</i> , 82(1), pp.109-121	The authors present the findings of research undertaken in testing Hudson et al's (1999) framework for collaboration in the public sector with	6

		mental health services in Wales. The findings indicated that to facilitate collaboration staff need to be equipped with a specific skillset.	
Head, B.W. and Alford, J., (2015)	Wicked Problems Implications for Public Policy and Management, <i>Administration & Society</i> , 47(6), pp.711-739	The authors' work builds on the concept of "wicked problems" first coined by Rittel and Webber (1973) which suggests that policy problems cannot be addressed by one individual organisation, rather it requires a collective response. The article addresses a number of the challenges to implementing this approach for public sector managers.	2,3,4,5 & 6
Entwistle, T., (2014)	Collaboration and Public Services Improvement, <i>Public Policy Institute for Wales</i> , pp.1-11	The author's work from research evidence highlights the elements for collaboration to be effective, arguing that rather than for the Welsh Government to encourage all sectors to work collaboratively, partnerships should be prioritised where working collaboratively can have the biggest impact and the required support to do this be provided.	1,4,5 & 6
Thomspson, A.M., and Perry J.L., (2006)	Collaboration Processes: Inside the Black Box, <i>Public Administration Review</i> , December special issue, pp.20-32	The authors argue that public managers should look inside the "black box" of collaboration processes. Inside, they will find a complex construct office variable dimensions: governance, administration,	6

		organizational autonomy, mutuality, and norms.	
--	--	--	--

Chapter Three: Research Methodology

3.1 Introduction

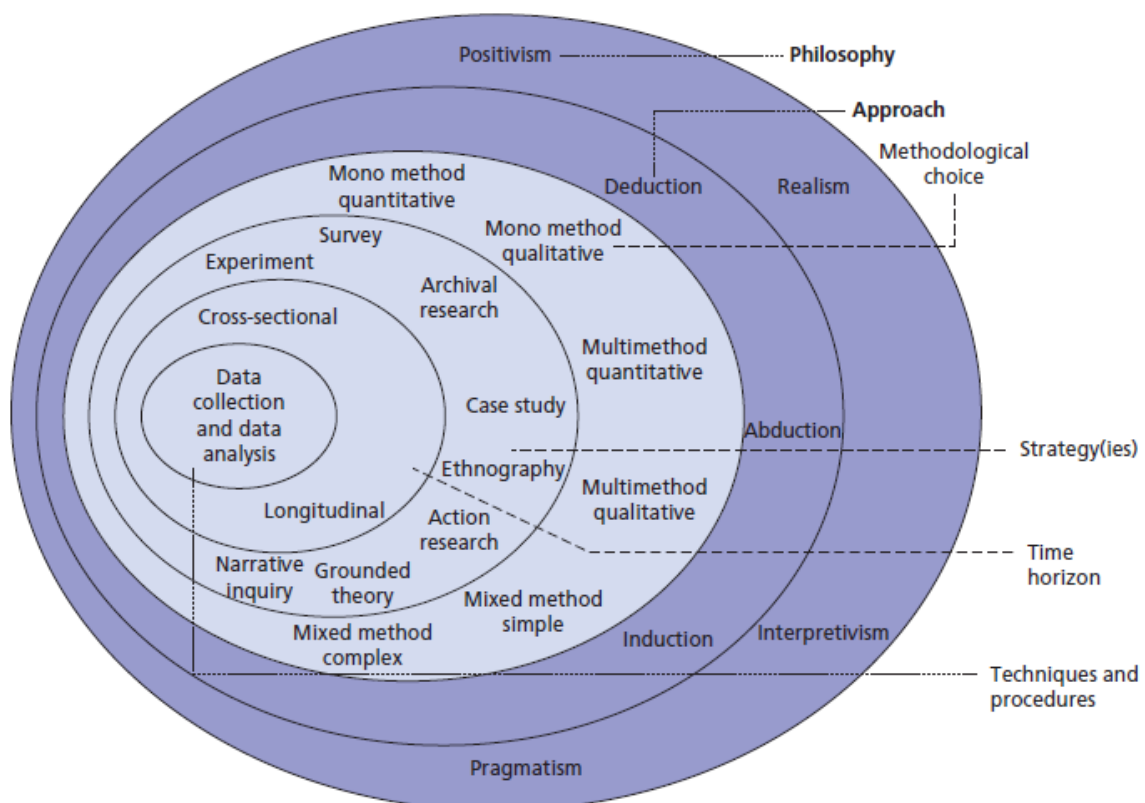
This chapter presents the research aim and details the researcher's epistemological and ontological position providing the rationale for the selected research strategy. The research design is then presented together with the data collection techniques underpinning the thesis. The issues of bias and ethics are considered followed by a discussion of the limitations of the research, which may have a bearing on the study's conclusions.

The aim of this research is to identify the elements that practitioners feel is required for effective collaboration. It is set within the context of RSPs in Wales. The study seeks to capture professionals' views of collaboration in the public sector to frame a critical reflection of this process and to inform future actions and strategies. It is proposed that to achieve this aim, a qualitative approach will be adopted with a case study, involving semi-structured interviews and an analysis of key documentation. The subject of this research originates from a professional interest in how public service practitioners should collaborate in responding to such a key policy driver from the Welsh Government. The researcher was part of the research process, managing the RLPSW&CW from September 2010 – September 2015. The chapter presents the justification of the above methodology and highlights the appropriateness of the methods adopted to fulfil the research aim.

The discussions in this chapter will broadly adopt Saunders et al's (2012) 'research onion' model (Figure 4.) which illustrates the steps that a researcher undertakes in developing an effective research methodology, which begins from the outside,

determining the study's research philosophy moving towards the inner core of data collection and data analysis.

Figure 4. Research Onion Model



Saunders, M., Lewis, P. & Thornhill, A. (2012) "Research Methods for Business Students" 6th edition, Pearson Education Limited

3.2 Research Philosophy

The research philosophy "refers to a system of beliefs and assumptions about the development of knowledge" (Saunders et al, 2015, p.124) and the nature of the reality being investigated (Bryman, 2012). In determining the research approach there is a

need to understand where the researcher is positioned in their field of study, specifically, this is the epistemology (what is known to be true). Epistemology is “the philosophical knowledge of theory” (King and Horrocks, 2010, p.8) and as Furlong and Marsh (2010) state “each social scientist’s orientation to his or her subject is shaped by his/her ontological and epistemological position. Even if their positions are under-acknowledged, they shape the approach to theory and methods which the social scientist uses” (p.184). Deriving from the Greek meaning ‘existence’, Furlong and Marsh (2010) suggest that the main issue with ontology is “whether there is a ‘real’ world ‘out there’ that is, in an important sense, independent of our knowledge of it...there are two broad ontological positions...foundationalism/objectivism/realism, which posits a ‘real’ world, ‘out there’ independent of our knowledge to it; and anti-foundational/constructivism/relativism, which sees the world as socially constructed” (p.185).

With respect to epistemology, Bryman (2012) states that the issue with research “concerns the question of what is (or should be) regarded as acceptable knowledge in a discipline” (p.27). It includes positivism which is an epistemological position “that advocates the applications of methods of the natural sciences to the study of social reality and beyond” (p.28). Positivism “involves the view that social sciences can be built upon the same model as the natural sciences” (Nicholson, 1996, p.128) with the underlying aim for research being “to provide objective knowledge – knowledge that is value-neutral, unbiased by the research/researcher process...a belief in the correspondence of knowledge with what can actually be proven to exist” (p.12). Researchers such as Hempel (1965) argued that observation and experience were the main criteria by which scientific theories were judged.

At the other end of the epistemological spectrum is interpretivism which is “predicated on the view that a strategy is required that represents the differences between people and the objects of the natural sciences and therefore requires the social scientist to grasp the subjective meaning of social action” (p.30). King and Horrocks (2010) further state that within this theoretical perspective “actually conversing with people enables them to share their experiences and understandings” (p.11). An interpretivist approach focuses “on what humans believe what the world is and how our understandings of the world are a consequence of humans who construct this meaning” (Loseke, 2011, p.165) with the assumptions about the world being that “social reality is constructed through language which produces particular versions of events” with the knowledge produced not “adhering to traditional conventions...being brought into being through verbal exchange” and the role of the researcher being the “co-producer of knowledge and therefore required to be reflexive and critically aware of language” (King and Horrocks, 2010, p.20). This paradigm usually rejects “the notion of producing cause and effect explanation of behaviour in preference for identifying and understanding the meanings, language and skills that people deploy in everyday life to construct society” (Kettley, 2010, p.78). A variation of this approach is phenomenology, whose studies “focus on experiences, events and occurrences with disregard or minimum regard for the external and physical reality” (Dudovskiy, 2016). Reiners (2012, p.2) states that “Interpretive phenomenology is used when the research question asks for the meaning of the phenomenon and the researcher does not bracket their biases and prior engagement with the question under study”.

The epistemological stance of the researcher is interpretivist from a phenomenological stance, in that the researcher will look for a “presence or absence of a relationship but

also the specific ways in which it is manifested and the context in which it occurs. Thus, the researcher can go beyond “what” has occurred and see “how” it has happened” (Lin, 1998, p.167). The interpretivist rationale focuses on capturing practitioners’ views and experience of collaboration and what elements are required for effective collaboration.

3.3 Research Approach

Social methods research literature presents two main approaches to research, deductive and inductive. The deductive approach “works from the more general to the more specific. Sometimes this is informally called a “top-down” approach. We might begin with thinking up a *theory* about our topic of interest. We then narrow that down into more specific *hypotheses* that we can test. We narrow down even further when we collect *observations* to address the hypotheses. This ultimately leads us to be able to test the hypotheses with specific data -- a *confirmation* (or not) of our original theories” (Trochim, 2006). In contrast, the inductive approach allows the “research findings to emerge from frequent, dominant, or significant themes inherent in raw data, without the restraint imposed by structured methodologies” (Thomas, 2006, p.238). This ‘bottom up’ approach allows for specific observations leading to the identification of patterns and formulating theories which can be explored which will provide general conclusions. The suitable research approach for this study is an inductive approach.

3.4 Research Methodological Choice

In addressing, the research aim there is a need to justify the research methods selected, and outline the quantitative and qualitative approach. Gorard and Taylor

(2004) noted a tendency for choices of research method to be strongly influenced by what they call 'methodological identities'. Thus, the researcher's methodological predilections such as a commitment to a qualitative or quantitative research approach leads to research questions being framed in a way that makes them accessible to a particular research method or possibly a cluster of research methods.

The quantitative approach is associated with quantitative and is "used to quantify the problem by way of generating numerical data or data that can be transformed into usable statistics. It is used to quantify attitudes, opinions, behaviors, and other defined variables – and generalize results from a larger sample population" (Wyse, 2011), which is associated with the positivist approach. Quantitative approach is used to enumerate the problem through creating numerical data or data which can be converted into useable statistics. The method studies attitudes, opinions, behaviours, and other defined variables in larger sample population to determine the results. However, it makes use of measurable data to conclude facts and reveal different research patterns.

Contrastingly the quantitative approach is concerned with "how the social world is interpreted, understood, experienced or produced...based on methods of data generation which are flexible and sensitive to the social context in which data are produced (rather than rigid standardize or structured, or removed from 'real life' or 'natural social context, as in some forms of experimental method)...Qualitative research usually does use some form of quantification, but statistical forms of analysis are not seen as central" (Mason, 1996, p.4). Qualitative Research refers to investigative research. This method is generally used for understanding views and

perceptions. It offers visions to different problems and helps in developing concepts or theories for potential quantitative research. With analysis to look deeper into problems, the qualitative approach helps to discover new thoughts and individual views. This method uses various kinds of unstructured or semi-structured practices for data collection such as group discussions, individual interviews, diary and journal exercises and participation of others.

A qualitative methodology is considered to be appropriate to the line of the research's inquiry as its aim is to gather a detailed body of evidence from those professionals who have worked in a collaborative manner, which will require interaction with participants to seek views, opinions and perceptions.

Bryman (2007) states that "the research question is viewed as a crucial step that provides a point of orientation for an investigation...the research question is supposed to have a pivotal role because decisions about research design and methods are supposed to be made in order to answer research question" (p.5). Supporting this is De Vaus and De Vaus (2001), who argue that "the function of a research design is to ensure the evidence obtained enables us to answer the initial question as unambiguously as possible" (p.9). There was also a need to ensure that the research problem was fully scoped, particularly as it was a workplace study "otherwise there is a danger of taking the research problem at face value and of providing policy makers and practitioners with the answer they require in their terms" (Silverman, 1994, p.20).

Table 3. provides an overview of the researcher's conceptual framework.

There are several research methods highlighted in Saunders et al's (2012) research onion – experiment, survey, archival research, case study, action research, grounded theory and narrative inquiry. A summary is provided on each approach below:

- Experiment – this approach examines the results of an experiment against the expected results and involves the consideration of a relatively limited number of factors (Saunders et al, 2007).
- Action research is associated with professions such as nursing and teaching, which have a focus on ways in which practitioners can improve (Wiles et al, 2011). It is defined by Carr and Lewin (1986) as “a form of self reflexive enquiry” carried out by practitioners whose purpose is to “improve the rationality and justice of their practice” (p.162).
- Case study research - Yin (1984) defines the case study as a “research method as an empirical inquiry that investigates a contemporary phenomenon within its real-life context; when the boundaries between phenomenon and context are not clearly evident; and in which multiple sources of evidence are used (p.23).
- Grounded theory is associated with qualitative research methods that “provides a methodology to develop an understanding of social phenomena that is not pre-formed or pre-theoretically developed with existing theories and paradigms.” (Engward, 2013, p.38)
- Surveys – this approach is associated with a quantitative methodology and involves sampling a representative proportion of the population (Bryman and Bell, 2011).
- Ethnography involves people being observed closely over a long period of time (Bryman, 2012) with a view of collecting data that will “throw light on the issues that are the focus of the research” (Hammersley and Atkinson, 1995, p.1).

- An archival research method (often referred to as documentary analysis) involves reviewing data from existing material to establish current knowledge on the field of research (Flick, 2011).

The experiment and survey research methods, which are associated with a quantitative research methodology were discounted from the outset. The initial method would not meet the requirement of the research question and the latter would not provide the level of in-depth data required for the study's purpose. Action research, ethnography and grounded research were methods that were considered to address the research question, however were discounted for the following reasons.

Action Research - Given that this research method is associated with focusing on specific professions reflecting on their practice with the aim of improvement, it was not considered an appropriate method to respond to the research question.

Ethnography – this research method involves the researcher spending significant time periods 'out in the field' observing people associated with the area of study. Given that the researcher was undertaking the study on a part-time basis whilst in full time employment, this was not considered to be a practical method to adopt.

Grounded Theory – it was recognised that this method tends to produce large amounts of data, which are often difficult to manage, together with a need for the researcher to be skilful in the use of these methods (Bryant and Charmaz, 2013). Given that the researcher was inexperienced in undertaking research, this approach was discounted.

The two research methods that are considered appropriate to respond to the research method are case study and archival review (documentary analysis). The justification for this is provided below.

Table 3. Researcher’s Conceptual Framework

<i>Philosophical Position</i>	Interpretivist, Phenomenological
<i>Methodological Paradigm</i>	Inductive as opposed to deductive
<i>Research Strategy</i>	Case Study of Regional Skills Partnerships
<i>Research Methods</i>	Semi-structured interviews Review of documentary evidence

A. Case Study

Yin (2003) defines a case study as “an empirical inquiry that investigates a contemporary phenomenon within its real-life context, especially when the boundaries between phenomenon and context are not clearly evident” (p.13). The case study for this research is the Regional Skills Partnership model which involves focusing on two established partnerships, one located in South West & Central Wales and the other in North Wales. A single holistic case design has been selected in that it will examine the global nature of the Regional Skills Partnership model rather than an embedded single case study design which would involve the examination of a number of facets (or units) of the RSPs (Yin, 2003).

A case study provides the opportunity to gather significant data and the “immersion in rich case data enables...an inspiration for new ideas” (Siggelkow, 2007, p.21). Soy (1997) suggests that “case study research excels at bringing us to an understanding of a complex issue or object and can extend experience or add strength to what is already known through previous research. Case studies emphasize detailed contextual analysis of a limited number of events or conditions and their relationship” (p.1).

Existing research on collaborative working has often used the case study method and is discussed further in this chapter (Gray, 2004; Jones et al, 2004; Farmakopoulou,

2002; Nicholson, 2000). Other methods which have been adopted to research collaborative working include participatory research in the area of health (Minkler, 2004; Cornwall and Jewkes, 1995) and the design of the game and an empirical experiment in the area of education (Hamalainen, 2008). Other approaches have used documentation, for example Koppenjan's (2005) research on collaboration transport in what factors contribute or obstruct the success of public private transport infrastructure partnerships in the Netherlands. The research compared nine case studies concerning the building of partnerships via analysing the documentation based on pre-identified criteria, for comparing the success / failure of such partnerships.

These are that:

- there is a formal partnership arrangement for example a Service Level Agreement;
- there are project objectives and a business plan in place;
- the delivery plan is agreed in advance.

A case study can be used with several research tools incorporated into them. Snow and Trom (2002) suggest that the case study will focus "empirically and analytically on a case of something, that is, on a single instance or variant of some empirical phenomenon rather than on multiple instances of that phenomenon" (p.147). Commentators such as Adelman et al (1980) have cited the benefits of case studies including their ability to recognise the 'complexity and embeddedness of social truths', can 'represent something of the discrepancies or conflicts between the viewpoints held by participants' and present evaluation data in a more publicly accessible form than other kinds of research reports. Macpherson et al (2000) further argue that:

"case study research is capable of creating thick descriptions and rich understandings of social contexts that have relevance and resonance across social sites. Furthermore... it leads research participants to take a more pro-

active role in shaping the policies that affect their social environments to determine the norms and values that direct their social practices” (p.49).

Yin (1994) states that “case studies are the preferred strategy when ‘how or ‘why’ questions are being posed, when the investigator has little control over events, and when the focus is on a contemporary phenomenon within some real-life context” (p.1).

He further defines the case study as a

“research method as an empirical inquiry that investigates a contemporary phenomenon within its real-life context; when the boundaries between phenomenon and context are not clearly evident; and in which multiple sources of evidence are used (Yin, 1984, p.23). Platt (1992) states that “the case study...begins with a logic...a strategy to be preferred when circumstances and research problems are appropriate of design...a strategy to be preferred, when circumstances and research problems are appropriate rather than an ideological commitment to be followed whatever the circumstances” (p.46).

There are however some limitations to the use of case studies which are acknowledged by Yin (1994) who recognised “that within the academic community there is opposition to the idea of case study on the grounds of ‘lack of rigor’ and ‘little basis for scientific generalization’” (p.9) and later by Macpherson et al (2000) who suggest that “case study research, using the qualitative techniques of interpretative social science and critical social theory, does not seem to enjoy the same acceptance” (p.49). Although recognised in its own right as a distinctive form of empirical inquiry, some research investigators have a disdain for the use of case studies. Platt (1992) argues that it is their lack of rigor is the primary concern where it has been suggested that case study investigators have been sloppy and allowed equivocal evidence or biased views to influence the directions of the findings and conclusions. In contrast to other approaches, the case study is often presented as open-ended with researchers not being clear about the structure (Thomas, 2013) and consequently defined as the ‘weaker sibling’ (Yin, 2009, p.xiii) in the context of established research methods.

A further considered limitation to this research method can be illustrated in the field of education research in the 1970s onwards, which saw the growth of the use of case studies to highlight developments in several key areas. The method however, was not welcomed by researchers in all fields of research as a valid, robust research tool as captured by Adelman et al (1980):

“over the last 10 years there has emerged a tradition of educational research and evaluation whose procedures and methods and styles of reporting have come to be collected under the general rubric of “case study”. Although case studies have made a considerable contribution to the corpus of knowledge and practical wisdom about education, they are often regarded with suspicion and even hostility” (p.47).

In adopting the case study method for his research, Stake (1995) outlines that the role of the qualitative researcher during the data gathering stage is clearly to “maintain vigorous interpretation” (p.7). He further refutes this in that the “case study seems a poor basis for generalization the real business of case study is particularization” suggesting that instead of researchers making grand generalisations they should draw their conclusions in the form of claims (p.8). It is therefore important that the purpose of the case study is central to the study’s research method as there is a common misconception in relation to where case studies “fit” in the design process. Yin (1994) suggests that the various research strategies should be arrayed hierarchically citing that:

“we were once taught to believe that case studies were appropriate for the exploratory phase of an investigation that surveys and histories were appropriate for the descriptive phase, and that experiments were the only way of doing explanatory or casual inquiries. The hierarchical view reinforced the idea that case studies were only an exploratory tool and could not be used to describe or test propositions” (p.9).

A single case study is adopted as the primary tool. Some academics have commented on the limitations of this approach (Campbell and Stanley, 1966; Giddens, 1984) citing

that one cannot generalise from a single case. This rule-based knowledge and conventionalism is challenged by Flyvbjerg (2006) who suggests that:

“one can often generalize on the basis of a single case, and the case study may be central to scientific development via generalization as supplement or alternative to other methods. But formal generalization is overvalued as a source of scientific development, whereas “the force of example” is underestimated” (p.228).

Such a focused approach has been encouraged for those researchers who undertake fieldwork on ‘capturing the natives’ view in their research for 20 years or more. For example, in anthropology, field-work orientated sociology and feminist methodologies, have attempted to understand and make public the perspective of insiders in the settings (Hammersley and Atkinson, 2007). Historically, this has associations with the traditions from the University of Chicago where trained sociologists involved members in a wide range of settings in studying what happens in their settings and how events are understood (Adler and Adler, 1987). Indeed, as Gubruim (1988) states:

“whether the setting is a school, a community, a workplace, or some other social system, members and others who are in some way close to the setting will usually have concerns and questions about the setting and perspectives on it that are different from those of outside researchers. Such researchers long have noted the importance of attending to insiders” subjective meanings and fundamental in describing a setting” (p.3).

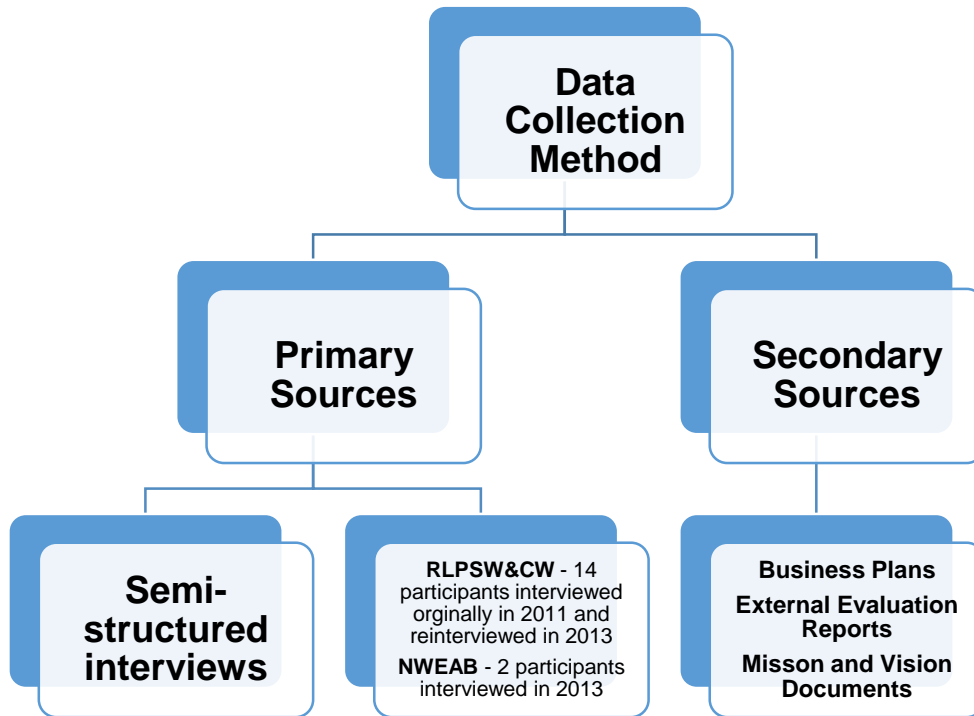
This is in contrast to what has been traditionally associated with social science researchers in areas such as organisational behaviour, community psychology and education, where capturing the ‘insiders perspective’ has not been a priority of the positivist approach. There is more of a focus towards understanding ‘the impacts’ of particular independent variables on cultural dependent variables and of accessing patterns (Bryman, 2007). Within the research area of collaboration, this mixture of research techniques has been adopted by Farmakopoulou (2002) in the area of education policy and by Jones et al (2004) in the area of mental health services.

With respect to addressing the research aim, the method of triangulation of primary and secondary data requires consideration. Ma and Norwich (2007, p.211) note that triangulation “is advocated in the philosophical tradition of post positivism (Campbell and Russo, 1999) and initially developed in the context of quantitative data analysis (Campbell and Fiske, 1959) to increase the validity of a study by seeking the degree of agreement in the investigation outcome from the use of multiple methods and measurement procedures. Contrastingly, its purpose in qualitative data analysis was associated in the agreement in the results obtained from the diverse, systematic and dissimilar uses of methods, theories, different data sources or investigators (Denzin, 1989). Its metamorphosis represents a “shift in perspective represents the move away from a procedural concept of triangulation to one that highlights the contribution of philosophical and theoretical differences behind the methods in an empirical endeavour” (Ma and Norwich, 2007, p.212). Further, its recent conception challenges social and education research literature commentators (Pring, 2000) about the more ‘purist’ debate on qualitative and quantitative methods in that the application of multiple research methods adopted in a systematic way can be utilised to gauge a more ‘rounded’ understanding of an event.

B. Case Study Design

There are two elements involved in the design of this case study. These are semi-structured interviews and documentary analysis. Figure 5. provides an outline of the data collection processes.

Figure 5. Data Collection Process



i) Semi Structured Interviews

Semi-structured interviews were undertaken with key individuals that are involved with the Regional Skills Partnerships. At the start of this study, there was only one established partnership, notably the RLPSW&CW, formerly named the Regional Learning Partnership South West Wales, which started in 2008. The second and third partnerships, namely the E&SP of the NWEAB and LSKiP followed this and were established in 2012 and 2014 respectively. The latter partnership has not been included as part of this study as it is still in its infancy. The main focus of the case study is on the RLPSW&CW and the justification is that this is the most established Regional Skills Partnership in Wales, which was a primary factor in selecting the participant sample and provided a rich source of data. As recognised by King and Horrocks (2010) “the criterion most commonly proposed for sampling in qualitative studies is diversity. Researchers seek to recruit participants who represent a variety of positions in relation

to the research topic, a kind that might be expected to throw light on meaningful differences in experience “(p.29). In adopting this approach, 15 participants from the RLPSW&CW were selected from a variety of sectors in the areas of skills, education and regeneration that were represented on the partnership, providing a wide sample of individuals varying in age and experience. This did bring a limitation to the study as the sample of those interviewed did not include political or private sector representation, which potentially would have broadened the study’s findings. A further two interviews with two participants were conducted with the E&SP of the NWEAB, out of the smaller sample of the six individuals that were approached. In comparison to the number of interviews conducted with the RLPSW&CW, this gave a more limited perspective on the activities of the E&SP of the NWEAB. Due to the infancy of the third Regional Skills Partnership at that stage of the research, no interviews were undertaken with participants, which is further recognised as a limitation to the study’s findings.

The RLPSW&CW was central to the delivery of the Welsh Government’s Transformation agenda. As stated by a Senior Official in the Department for Education and Skills “the RLP is the key driver to delivering the Welsh Government’s transformation agenda within south west Wales”. It was highlighted as an example of good practice for the other Welsh regions in the 2011 independent report to the Welsh Government on the structure of education services in Wales. Leighton Andrews AM, the former Minister for Education at the RLP’s Annual Event on 28th September 2011 endorsed the partnership’s approach when he stated that:

“one of the key pillars of the RLP is Partnership Brokerage and Development and I am pleased to see that the principal focus in this pillar is encouraging organisations to realise the benefits of collaboration and that you are

considering the potential development of a common governance model for a shared delivery approach to benefit the learner”.

In 2012, the NWEAB was established, which included a skills workstream, E&SP and more recently in September 2014, the Learning Skills & Innovation Partnership (LSKIP) was established in the South East of Wales. All three partnerships are regional vehicles to respond to the Welsh Government’s Skills Policy regarding regional skills needs in that, “Our ambition is to stimulate demand for employment and skills support by providing the flexibility to develop responses based upon local and regional need. This will enable the Welsh Government to align regional learning provision to wider strategic investments and growth opportunities” (Welsh Government, 2014b, p.9). This backdrop provides credible justification for the selection of the Regional Skills Partnership model as the subject of the case study.

32 interviews were conducted in total (30 interviews with the 15 participants from the RLPSW&CW and 2 with the participants from the NWEAB) - their positions and respective sectors are listed in Tables 2 & 3. As recognised by Saunders and Townsend (2016) in the context of qualitative research, “sufficient participants need to be identified and chosen to provide the breadth, depth and saliency of data necessary for authentic analysis and reporting” (p.836) and suggests 15-20 participants for research involving a single case study.

The participants listed in Table 4. were initially interviewed in 2011 and then 18 months later in 2013 to gauge further views as the work of the RLPSW&CW matured. Each of the interviews were audio-recorded and then fully transcribed. This approach was considered advantageous for the reasons highlighted by Heritage (1984) which

include helping “to correct the natural limitations of our memories and of the intuitive glosses that we might place on what people say in interviews...and helps to counter accusations that an analysis might have been influenced by a researcher’s values or biases” (p.238).

Table 4. Interviews with representatives from the RLPSW&CW

Position	Sector / Organisation
(P1)	Further Education Institution
(P2)	Further Education Institution
(P3)	Welsh Local Government Association
(P4)	Careers Wales
(P5)	Third Sector
(P6)	Third Sector
(P7)	Higher Education Institution
(P8)	Local Government
(P9)	Local Government
(P10)	Local Government
(P11)	Local Government
(P12)	Local Government
(P13)	JobCentre Plus
(P14)	Welsh Government
(P15)	Chamber of Commerce

2 interviews were conducted with individuals associated with the E&SP of the NWEAB in 2013 - their positions and respective sectors in Table 5. A smaller sample of individuals, 6 in number were approached to interview for the NEWAB, but due to several reasons, such as limited availability and location only 2 interviews were conducted. There was also a difference, as the researcher did not have the direct access to the participants, as was the case with the RLPSW&CW. The limited number was not considered to have an impact on the body of data gathered as it was considered that the number interviewed for the RLPSW&CW provided the diversity and sufficient number to meet the research aim.

Table 5. Interviews with representatives from the NWEAB

Position	Sector / Organisation
(P16)	Further Education Institution
(P17)	Local Government

Alexiadou (2001) defines semi-structured interviews as “an interview agenda shaped by the operationalization of the research questions, but retaining an open-ended, and flexible nature” (p.52). The intention is to allow the interviewees to ‘define’ the situation based on their own experience and so focus on what they consider relevant. Linked to this is the need for the researcher to have a pragmatic perspective of what data interviews can furnish them with together with a realism that it will not provide the basis of a ‘tell all’ scenario, rather than to recognise the construction and partiality of truth and power in relations. This however is not to distract from the probability that interviews have been identified as a method to create significant insights (Fine and Weis, 1998; McLeod 2000). Saunders and Townsend (2016) recognise that qualitative

interviews in organisation and workplace empirical studies are a “central technique, being employed frequently as ‘reliable gateways’ into researching organizations” (p.836) and that there is a reliance upon respondents “being able and willing to give accurate information. The assumption here is that accurate information is there to be discovered and thus such knowledge is achievable” (King and Horrocks, 2010, p.17).

Alexiadou’s (2001) research explores some of the theoretical, methodological and practical issues that emerge when analysing semi-structured interview data in studies of policy implementation in education institutions. This refers to an interview agenda shaped by the operationalisation of the research questions, but retaining an open-ended, and flexible approach. The intention is to allow the interviewees to ‘define’ the situation based on their own experience and so to focus on what they consider relevant. The justification for this is that when considering unstructured interviews, McCormack (2004) states that:

“researchers working within a narrative paradigm frequently engage in in-depth conversations with participants. However, when these conversations conclude researchers face a daunting task. Faced with page upon page upon page of interview transcript researchers often find they feel ‘terrified and overwhelmed’ and ‘at a loss as to where and how to begin’” (p.219).

Semi-structured interviews will allow the researcher a margin of consistency whilst enabling the participant flexibility when responding to questions. This will aim to eliminate the feeling of drowning in a sea of transcripts. Riessman (1993) suggests that researchers find the narrative research literature “largely silent about ways to approach long stretches of talk that (take) the form of narrative accounts” (p.5).

A standard set of questions was asked to each of the interviewees, which are presented in appendix A and allowed the combination of specific responses as well as

enabling key themes and interpretations to be drawn out. All interviews were recorded and fully transcribed and then coded based on an analytical scheme that organised the responses around a core set of themes.

Building on the work of Daya et al (2011), thematic analysis was adopted to analyse the interview transcripts, highlighting the benefits of this approach as being accessible and flexible. This is a method for “identifying, analysing and reporting patterns (themes) within data. It minimally organizes and describes your data set in (rich) detail” (Braun and Clarke, 2006, p.79) with its main purpose of developing a structure to help the researcher explain their “thinking about the data to other people” (King and Horrocks, 2010, p.150). Daya et al (2011) further cite that it enables a rich and detailed account to be derived from the qualitative data. With respect to the definition of a theme in this approach, King and Horrocks (2010) suggest the following “themes are recurrent and distinctive features of participants’ accounts, characterising particular perceptions and / or experiences, which the researcher sees as relevant to the research question” (p.150). The analysis of the data followed the approach adopted by Nicholson et al (2000) which was inductive and:

“involved the use of systematic, formal, and logical procedures to generate categories relative to the identified research questions and to determine relationships among them. Procedures used in analysis followed those outlined in Goetz and LeCompte (1984) and Stewart and Shamdasan (1990) and included scanning data for categories, using constant comparison to note instances of responses, and generating conceptual categories or “themes” that emerged in the data” (pp.49- 50).

The basic system of thematic analysis presented by King and Horrocks (2010) was adopted for the purpose of this study, which comprises of three stages: descriptive coding; interpretative coding; and defining overarching themes.

Stage One – each of the transcripts was reviewed, with the emphasis on trying to describe what is of interest in the participant’s interviews. The next step was then to highlight anything in the transcript that helped to understand the participant’s view, experiences and perceptions and to write a brief comment indicating what was of interest in the highlighted text. A numbering system was used and comments compiled on a separate sheet. The use of a computer software package e.g. NVivo was considered to support the analysis, however it was decided that this would be done by hand given the number of transcripts. The final step of this stage was to use the preliminary comments to define the descriptive codes. The transcripts were re-read to identify any potential overlap.

Stage Two – the descriptive codes were grouped together where there was commonality from which interpretative codes were established – these are listed below. There was a process of redefining and reapplying the interpretative codes as each interview transcript was reviewed.

Interpretative Codes

Theme 1

- From an internal and external perspective
- Dependent on position in organisation and what sector individual works for

Theme 2

- Policy push by Welsh Government
- Collaboration will bring about efficiency savings
- Organisations need to be seen to be collaborating
- Improved networks
- Skills and knowledge exchange
- Improved outcomes
- Staff development
- Collaboration will continue to be the main policy driver for the Welsh Government with respect to public service reform

Theme 3

- Making a difference to service users
- Having a seat around the table to be able to influence
- Efficiency savings
- Innovation and staff development
- Shared cost and improved performance
- Range of services delivered to the customer
- Economies of scale
- Shared resources
- Evidencing the impact that the Regional Skills Partnerships have had
- Ability to influence policy

Theme 4

- Organisational priorities v Collaborative activity
- Culture
- Organisations not recognising the amount of time that their staff put into the process – collaboration overhead
- Smaller organisations feel that they are overpowered
- Have to collaborate as this is a key policy directive
- Incentives to work collaboratively often promote competition

Theme 5

- Measuring outcomes

Theme 6

- Shift in culture of public sector workforce – seen as an add-on to somebody's job
- Experience of collaboration
- Different levels to consider – organisational; partnership and customer
- Leadership skills
- Organisations to be clear on their position on collaboration

Stage Three – the overarching themes that characterised the key concepts of the analysis were developed in this stage. Theoretical ideas from the literature, which underlie the study, were also drawn upon.

The case study provides a rich source of data to address the research question and provides a wide sample of interviewees (Noor, 2008). A similar approach was adopted by Bramwell and Sharman (1999) in their study of tourism policy. Their proposed

framework incorporated consideration of the extent to which power imbalances amongst stakeholders are reduced, if at all within a collaboration. This was applied to assess stakeholder involvement in the development of a visitor management plan in the Hope Valley & Edale, Peak District Park Management. The sample selection of 17 interviewees in Bramwell and Sharman's (1999) study represented a cross section of the stakeholders and interviews were conducted over 3 months. The semi-structured interviews lasted a minimum of an hour utilising non-directive questioning were tape recorded.

The research reflected suggestions made by Broom et al (2009) in that there is a need for further examination regarding differentiation in the interplay of factors within qualitative interviews in the context of certain study foci, interviewer style and interviewee characteristics. Key questions include: what are the ways in which different research areas influence interpersonal dynamics in interviews; how does a focus on sub-elements of a given group influence interpersonal dynamics and thus the emergent accounts; and how factors may ebb and flow in their influence during the course of an interview. This will provide qualitative researchers with a more critical and nuanced understanding of the positionality of the data.

There is a need to consider what Yanos and Hopper's (2008) research terms as 'false collusive objectification', which is a problem that arises in qualitative interviewing. Interviews that on the 'face of it' fulfil the definition of social science theories and terminology and please the interviewer with respect to providing the responses that align to the research aim – in lay terms telling the researcher what they 'want to hear'. To avoid this situation, the researcher explained to each participant at the start of the

interview that all responses would be anonymised and would not have a reflection on the work or their role in the either of the RSPs.

One key theme to consider when undertaking semi-structured interviews is introduced by Potter and Wetherell (2001) under the banner of both speech act theory and ethnomethodology in that “people use their language to *do* things: to order, and request, persuade and accuse” and further suggest that “...people are using their language to *construct* versions of the social world” (p.199).

Commentators such as Pillow (2000) and McLeod (2003) suggest that from a qualitative methodology and more specifically a feminist and poststructuralist approach, researchers undermine the view that interviews are a straightforward form of data collection where participants directly respond to questions and the researcher reports the responses. Scheurich (1995) argues that “in an interview there is no stable ‘reality’ or ‘meaning’...the intermediate totality of the interview always exceeds and transgresses our attempts to capture and categorize” (p.249). The methodological issue Scheurich (1995) further suggests is not to question the problems that interviewing as a technique presents, rather how to design and conduct interviews so that they provoke understandings that do more than reiterate the interview’s essential indeterminacy.

ii) Documentary Analysis

Complementing the above primary data collection approach will be the review of secondary data (data which already exists) in the form of documentary analysis, which “requires that data be examined and interpreted in order to elicit meaning, gain

understanding, and develop empirical knowledge” (Bowen, 2009, p.27). Secondary data can be defined as data collected by others, not specifically for the research question at hand (Frankfort-Nachmias and Nachmias, 1992). It can take many forms including data from government and regulatory bodies, the press, companies, other academic researchers and private sources, with access to such data requiring negotiation and discretion (Cowton, 1998). There is a requirement to understand the data and to ensure that the appropriate conclusions are drawn from its analysis together with a need to exercise impartiality to negate any element of bias (Titscher and Jenner, 2000).

There is a need to consider the process of the review of secondary data. Some researchers will adopt simple practices which merely will involve collating the data and presenting it in a format. This can be illustrated in research undertaken by Cowton (1998) which involved comparing the relationship between the business and voluntary sector and exploring their choice of bank via working through charity directories and entering the data onto an analysis sheet. Other practices will be more complex with the researcher re-analysing the data.

The review of documents has formed a part of qualitative analysis in a range of settings (Coffey, 2014). Documentary evidence often embodies the principle themes of debate of the research matter “although they do not always fully convey wider attitudes in a particular context” (Cohen et al, 2011, p.250). Hakim (1982) cites one the advantages of secondary analysis is that it “forces the researcher to think more closely about the theoretical aims and substantive issues of the study rather than the practical and methodological problems of collecting new data” (p.16). Dew (2007) further suggests

there are two key factors to consider when analysing documents, the first relating to content and the second to the 'work' of the document where "we ask questions in relation to why an account is presented in this way and how it achieves its effect" (p.300). The documents analysed in this case study were business plans, independent evaluations and strategic documents, the content of which was analysed in line with the themes of the interview questions, which are detailed earlier in this section.

Documentation relating to the RLPSW&CW (between 2008 – 2015) was reviewed. Given the researcher managed the RLPSW&CW between September 2010 – September 2015, there was ease of access to all relevant documentation, the majority of which could be accessed via the partnership's website. This included: business plans (2); external evaluation reports (3); mission and vision documents (2). In contrast, the availability of documentation relating to the NWEAB was limited. The partnership's business plan and mission and vision documents were reviewed, provided to the researcher upon request. There were no other reports available. In total, two documents from the NWEAB were reviewed.

3.5 Regional Skills Partnerships

The RLPSW&CW brings together providers from across public services in South West and Central Wales with a focus on education, regeneration and skills. Initiated by Neath Port Talbot County Borough Council in September 2007, the RLPSW&CW was driven by the local authorities in the region with commitment and engagement of the further education sector, higher education sector, third sector and work based learning / private sector originally across South West Wales, but this extended in 2012 to include Central Wales, with the addition of Powys as a county to the partnership's

membership.

The RLPSW&CW builds on the foundation of embracing regeneration with a focus on skills and employment, as well as creating a broader partnership of public, private and voluntary sector stakeholders, with an interest in education and regeneration. The active participation of stakeholders with a national interest, such as Job Centre Plus and the former Careers Wales West (now Careers Wales) has been an essential ingredient in the success of the RLPSW&CW to date.

Funding via the partners, Welsh Government and the European Structural Fund Convergence programme initially allowed a transformational project to run in South West & Central Wales, with a view to testing appropriate governance models and progressing increased public service collaborative working. The RLPSW&CW has an established decision-making structure which is rooted in equality of representation by all sectors and a geographical balance. The RLPSW&CW model was considered by the Welsh Government as a model of good practice which has now been rolled out to all regions in Wales via the Skills Implementation Plan, published by the Welsh Government in July 2014.

Having been established in the context of the 'Making the Connections Strategy' the key drivers for the RLPSW&CW included: references to duplication of provision and unnecessary boundaries experienced by the learner being cited by partners in the initial months of partnership development. The focus of the learner at the centre of strategic provision was recognised as key. One innovative aspect of the RLPSW&CW is the involvement of both education and regeneration portfolios under one partnership

'umbrella' in the context of the regional economy and increasing the skills of the workforce and the potential learner. At a local level, the number of partnerships within which local authorities and other public and third sector partners might be engaged can be considerable. For this reason, it was fundamental for the RLPSW&CW to prove added value and for the partners to have confidence in the benefits of being engaged at a regional level with impacts at a local level.

The remit for the partnership, as stated in its original vision document was to 'ensure publicly funded learning providers and associated organisations work collaboratively, effectively and efficiently to meet the demand needs of learners, the regional economy and society in South West Wales'. Focussing on all age learning from 14 years upwards, the partnership will:

- Develop a Strategic Planning Framework for all education and training reflecting the needs of the region, government priorities and local delivery solutions;
- Undertake research to identify training needs and solutions for a vibrant knowledge economy;
- Facilitate collaboration between providers and agencies in order to optimise the utilisation of resources;
- Utilise Convergence and potentially Transnational Funding as a driver for change and as means of adding value to core provision;
- Focus on quality, efficiency and effectiveness;
- Develop strategies and operation systems to underpin the operation of EU funded projects;
- Ensure that there is capacity to influence and to provide a regional response to Welsh Assembly Government initiatives;

- Achieve equality of opportunity for learners in a bilingual environment;
- Ensure that there is appropriate opportunity for progression at all levels including informal learning through to Higher Education.
- Connect and fit with Community Strategies linking with Economic Regeneration, Health and Wellbeing and Environment Strategies to progress and develop the Learning Agenda through a wider sphere.

(Regional Learning Partnership Vision Document, 2008)

The partnership's objectives were revised in 2014 and are referenced below.

- Regional Labour Market Intelligence - Access the relevant intelligence to respond to and inform labour market needs and growth opportunities for a skilled and ambitious workforce across south west & central Wales.
- Strategic Planning - Promote, champion and lead a strategic approach to employment and skills for South West & Central Wales.
- Facilitating a skills programme to address regional needs - Taking a strategic overview of skills provision to ensure that it meets regional needs and maximises economic opportunities
- Strategic Influence - Further develop an outward facing partnership to ensure strategic influence with the Welsh Government and stakeholders on the regional skills agenda
- Maximising Investment in Skills - Maximising external and domestic funding to ensure investments make a real impact on jobs and growth particularly in terms of sustained employment and skills utilisation.

(Regional Learning Partnership Objectives Document, 2014)

At the inception of the partnership, it was acknowledged that funding opportunities might be maximised through a collaborative approach (e.g. European Structural Funds: Convergence). The partnership was initiated in advance of any specific Welsh Government strategy around skills or learning being published, with the partners recognising the need for change. Three of the specific drivers for the partners were summarised initially as a diminishing public purse and the pressures on services, together with the need to identify budget savings in the context of continuous service improvement calls for an acceptance and willingness to bring about change; for smarter working. A further driver was the exchange of good practice. This has been realised through key regional projects. The RLPSW&CW has brokered shared tenders in response to calls for joined up delivery. As the partnership, has developed, its potential to provide a vehicle for collaborative strategic planning based on local need and with emphasis on local delivery has been realised. The submission of a regional HE Strategy for South West Wales in 2011 is an example of such activity. Within the context of the Welsh Government's 'Transformation Agenda', the partners embraced more ambitious aims for the RLPSW&CW. The impact of bringing together economic development and regeneration partners with education and skills partners in one forum has been seen to have significant benefits for the regional economy. The original RLPSW&CW Action Plan set out the work of the partnership in 3 key 'pillars'. The first pillar was Partnership Brokerage and Development, the aim of which was to develop a common governance model for a shared delivery approach and sharing budgets, resources and facilities; facilitating joint working and shared staff development; implementing a quality framework; avoiding overlaps; developing regional branding for learner services; and identifying innovative modes of delivery. This was built on the premise of the need for collaborative working to improve effectiveness and efficiencies

of public services for learners, employers and the unemployed in the light of the economic and financial crisis and the RLPSW&CW being a vehicle for key partners to agree mutual priorities at local level for collaborative working before being 'forced' to by external bodies.

Key activities undertaken by the partnership in this area since 2008 include: securing European Convergence funding to resource the RLP and influencing the progression of other European funding regional projects; tendering opportunities reviewed jointly and responded to; co-ordinating the submission of the HE Regional Strategy for Higher and Further Education for south west Wales; responding to the Welsh Government's Adult and Community Learning Review and reviewing individual local Adult Community Learning plans; supporting specific procurement training / advice; securing the Regional Sector Skills Advocate role for south west Wales through one of the Further Education partners; piloting a co-ordinated approach to the development of an Adult Employability & Skills model; becoming the skills arm to the Swansea Bay City Region; and working with major economic developments to determine and meet the skill requirement and provision e.g. Tidal Lagoon Power.

The second pillar was the Regional Learning and Skills Observatory (RLSO) which aimed to 'localise' access to labour market information provision; better integration of the various sources of information; ultimately providing a shared methodology for the coordination, collation and pooling of labour market information in the region.

The third pillar was the development of an e-portal which was based on the concept of a single point, regional resource, of value to the learner, the employer and the

provider which would enable partners to share information to support front-line delivery across traditional organisational and system boundaries and to identify areas where gaps in provision, data, and intelligence occur across the region, and how these could be appropriately and collectively addressed.

The RLPSW&CW was an ambitious model when it was first established, which was piloted with the support of European funding, matched by partners with an appetite for transformation in South West and Central Wales. At that time, other Welsh regions did not have an equivalent model. The RLPSW&CW was established formally in 2010 as Wales' first Regional Skills Partnership. Since then, it has had changes in remit, footprint and personnel, but the model has remained the same. By now, there are three established RSPs covering the geography of Wales, and the RLPSW&CW is operating in a very different environment. There is an increasing Welsh Government focus on the regional delivery of employment and skills support. The remit of each of the partnerships is cited in the Welsh Government's Skills Implementation Plan:

- “To produce and analyse LMI aligned to economic intelligence to inform the skills requirements in the regions and inform our future priorities for funding linked to our co-investment policy;
- To provide a mechanism to review regional skills provision and advise the Welsh Government on future prioritisation of skills funding in line with regional employment and skills needs;
- To act as a strategic body effectively representing regional interests to inform a demand-led and sustainable skills system, ensuring that this is informed by strong industry engagement and takes into account the level of skills utilisation in the region;

- To act collectively and strategically to maximise future available funds acknowledging the likely reduction in public funds over the coming years”

(WG, 2014b, p.9).

Each Partnership was tasked by the Welsh Government in September 2014 to develop a Regional Delivery Plan for Employment & Skills by March 2015, which is now reviewed on an annual basis. The NWEAB covers the geography of North Wales and was established in 2012, led by the six local authorities to make “a commitment and details an approach to reshaping local services collaboratively, with a view to realising economies of scale, opportunities for specialisation and maximising the impact of scarce resource” (NWEAB, 2012b, p.1). The case for change with the establishment of the Board was driven by a number of factors including “the continuing deterioration in relative economic performance; evidence in relation to economic returns or ‘bangs for bucks’; recession and fiscal austerity; services that are fragmented and disjointed resulting in the best use of resources not being realised” (NWEAB, 2012b, p.4).

The NWEAB has a skills and employment workstream, E&SP which is the equivalent of the RLPSW&CW, with the main Board’s focus being broader with respect to the economic agenda, the outcomes of which are to increase productivity, to improve competitiveness and to achieve growth. It was a new initiative in the region, with the development of three priority programmes at its core. The Board has identified a range of strategic opportunities to meet those challenges including: the strong presence of advanced manufacturing in the region and the positive impact that the depreciation of sterling has on making manufacturing exports more attractive; the major investment at Wylfa on a replacement nuclear reactor and the development of low carbon

technologies in the region creating growth in the energy and environment sector; capitalising on its competitive market position in advanced manufacturing including aerospace and automotive; and the opportunity to join together to address strategic infrastructure (and identifying and promoting solutions to the key infrastructure barriers to physical and digital growth) and employment skills requirements in order to develop the region's strategic advantage in these sectors. Given the infancy of the third partnership in south east Wales, it was considered that a focus on this organisation was not appropriate for this study due to the obvious limitations of experience, track record and achievements to date.

3.6 Ethics

When undertaking social research, there is a need to consider the ethical issues which focus on areas such as “how should we treat the people on whom we conduct research?” (Bryman, 2013, p.130). Ethical principles in social research need to focus on four main areas, which are broken down by Diener and Crandall (1978) as:

- whether there is harm to participants;
- whether there is a lack of informed consent;
- whether there is an invasion of privacy;
- whether deception is involved.

One of the key factors to conducting any research is to ensure that all ethical considerations are appropriately addressed and an ‘ethical code of conduct’ is developed by the researcher (Crow et al, 2006). Approval is meaningless if the procedures outlined are not carried out on a day-to-day basis (Peternelj-Taylor, 2005).

The research study focused on RSPs and it was a requirement to confirm as to whether ethical approval was required from the employers of each of the participants interviewed by the adoption of Diener and Crandall's (1978) checklist. Coupled with this was the adaption and conformation of the Economics and Social Research Council (ESRC's) six key principles of ethical research (2010):

- "Research should be designed, reviewed and undertaken to ensure integrity, quality and transparency.
- Research staff and participants must normally be informed fully about the purpose, methods and intended possible uses of the research, what their participation in the research entails and what risks, if any, are involved.
- The confidentiality of information supplied by research participants and the anonymity of respondents must be respected.
- Research participants must take part voluntarily, free from any coercion.
- Harm to research participants and researchers must be avoided in all instances.
- The independence of research must be clear, and any conflicts of interest or partiality must be explicit" (p.6).

The participants were selected based on the need to reflect the diverse nature of organisations that were members of both RSPs. Once the participants were determined, meetings were diarised with the individuals for the purpose of outlining the aims of the research study, data collection methods, together with an explanation that the interviews would be recorded, emphasising the confidential nature of the data and that the individual reserved the right to withdraw his / her participation at any point. This was then followed up with a second meeting to undertake the interviews.

Gaining the informed consent from the participants was fundamental, based on the need for potential research participants to be furnished with all relevant information regarding the study that they have been requested to participate in. This enabled them to make an informed decision of whether to be involved or not. All participants were asked as to whether the consent of their employer was required, which was confirmed on an individual level. This approach was ratified by the researcher's supervisors.

Social research commentators highlight that in recent years the area of informed consent is one of the key facets that has been subjected to increasingly rigorous monitoring and regulation by bodies concerned with research ethics (Ritchie et al, 2013; Kuszler, 2001). In addition, there is a requirement suggest Guillemin and Gillam (2004) that it is also a part of the research process about which researchers themselves reflect regularly, and is more than merely part of the procedures required to gain approval from ethics committees to proceed with research.

In undertaking research, the importance of protecting participants should not be underestimated. Munro (2008) states that "difficulties in the process of obtaining research ethics approval should not detract from its purpose – to safeguard research participants" (p.437). The onus is on the researcher throughout the research cycle. As Huxley et al (2005) state "we all have an obligation to protect the rights of people who participate in research, and not deny them this through unnecessarily protective and paternalistic measures" (p.59). The general advice provided in research methods publications is to anonymise participant's names, however this is not the only way in which a participant can be identified, but also the person's position which will be "both relevant to the interview and identifiable to others" (King and Horrocks, 2010, p.120).

There was a need for the researcher to assess the impact of including detail about the participants' roles. A decision was taken by the researcher to include this as its removal would have "profound relevance in terms of the research aims" (King and Horrocks, 2010, p.120).

There is a need to consider the notion of confidentiality and anonymity when undertaking research. In line with the Statement of Ethical Practice for the British Sociological Association (2004), this is interpreted as identifiable information about individuals collected during the process of research which will not be disclosed without permission.

The position of the researcher with respect to their professional position can influence the direction of the research. Silverman (1994) states that "most research is generated by a series of chance circumstances relating to the particular investigator and to the economic, social and political context in which s (he) works" (p.4). This is relevant to this research in that the researcher from September 2010 – 2015 was employed as the Manager of one the RSPs, namely the RLPSW&CW, the subject of this thesis' case study. To take this to a more micro level, Broom et al (2009) suggest that "the individual biography of the qualitative researcher is recognised to have a major impact on a research project, shaping its methodological and theoretical foundations, and, as a result, the final analysis" (p.51). The research undertaken for the purpose of this thesis sees the researcher taking on a dual role both as both a professional public-sector worker and as a social researcher. There are clear benefits to this. Research undertaken by Bonner and Tolhurst (2002) identified three key advantages of being an insider researcher. These were: having a greater understanding of the culture being

studied; not altering the flow of social interaction unnaturally; and having an established intimacy which promotes both the telling and the judging of truth. Unluer (2012) further suggests that insider-researchers have more knowledge of an organisation's politics, and how its operation works. In addition, "they know how to best approach people. In general, they have a great deal of knowledge, which takes an outsider a long time to acquire" (p.1). The position of the researcher as an 'insider' also comes with understandable disadvantages as identified by Unluer (2012) including: greater familiarity, leading to a loss of objectivity; making wrong assumptions based on prior knowledge can be perceived as a bias; and the researcher being presented with role duality.

The researcher undertaking this study could be labelled as the 'insider' with respect to accessing information and individuals. Bartunek and Louis (1996) state "people who are insiders to a setting being studied often have a view of the setting and any findings about it quite different from that of the outside researcher who are conducting the study" (p.1). Such divergence has potential ramifications in relation to the quality, validity and quantity of data and knowledge that will be acquired as a result of the research and the positioning of the individual within organisational structures in comparison to those defined as 'outsiders' in the research process. In this instance, therefore, there is a need to recognise these potential boundaries and to introduce mitigation tactics. Silverman (1994) further suggests that being defined as a specialist has the additional advantage of familiarity with organisational structures in a specific field, together with easier access to participants. This perceived approach was certainly a leading factor in the selection of interviewees for this study.

As an insider-researcher, the researcher in this study is in a unique position in having specialist knowledge on the subject matter of the case study, together with easy access to people. In undertaking the field work, the researcher has recognised her responsibility with regards to the rights of participants who are also colleagues and the impact of the outcome of the research on the status of the Regional Skills Partnership and member organisations. The researcher has an in-depth knowledge at the micro-level of partnership politics, it is therefore important “to articulate your perspectives and premises clearly, that is to state your own personal model of understanding of a situation” (Costley et al, 2010, p.33). Given that much of the research was conducted in the researcher’s place of work, this opens up the potential for conflicts of interest, which raises the need to consider a number of ethical concerns such as “coercion of participants; biased research – where there might be a temptation to ask people who think similarly to yourself; general threats to voluntary participation; threats to participants welfare in the event of breaches of confidence e.g. employment; threats to the services participants would normally expect from the researcher in their normal role; threats to the integrity of the researcher” (University of Portsmouth, 2017, p.1). Jones and Boyle’s (2011) research challenges the traditional notion of a knowledge base that is created by formal researchers and then disseminated to practical settings. It is argued that insider research is both created and used in the same setting and therefore represents a powerful lever for personal, professional and organisational transformation.

When undertaking this study, the researcher had to demonstrate professionalism and integrity in all aspects of the conduct and publication of her research, which also included the researcher accepting responsibility for taking steps to ensure the safety

of those associated with the research. The following research integrity issues associated with the study were considered and addressed as follows:

a. Honesty and Integrity – the researcher recognised the issue of honesty in relation to the presentation of the study’s research goals, intentions and findings; in reporting on research methods and procedures; in gathering data; in using and acknowledging the work of others; in conveying valid interpretations and making justifiable claims based on research findings.

b. Accountability and Responsibility – The researcher recognised it was her primary responsibility for safeguarding the integrity of the research undertaken and to ensure that the work meets all professional standards and the principles outlined in this document. The researcher ensured that the approach to undertaking all of the semi-structured interviews was consistent with what had been agreed with the participants.

c. Rigour – The researcher recognised the need to conduct the study in accordance with the highest standards of rigour in line with prevailing disciplinary norms and standards. Rigour should be applied when performing research and using appropriate methods; in adhering to agreed protocols when appropriate; in drawing interpretations and conclusions from the research; in the verification of the results before publication; and in communicating the results.

d. Care and Respect – the researcher was aware of the need to extend care and respect to all participants in the research. The dignity, rights, safety and well-being of all involved in the research were paramount and the issues of equality and diversity were considered throughout the research process.

3.7 Conclusion

In summary, the philosophical position of the researcher in conducting this research was interpretivist / phenomenological with the methodological paradigm being

inductive. The thesis' research strategy was a single case study. The research methods of reviewing documentary evidence and semi-structured interviews were considered to be the appropriate techniques to form the basis of addressing the main research aim of identifying the elements that practitioners feel is required for effective collaboration in order to frame a critical reflection. The latter research technique gave the researcher the opportunity to gain a valuable insight into a range of participant viewpoints regarding the research area and enabled the researcher to explore further lines of inquiry with respect to their responses. The next chapter describes the findings of the research, in line with the research methodology presented in this chapter.

Chapter Four: Research Findings

4.1 Introduction

This chapter will present the findings of the selected case study for the thesis, namely the RSPs. These have been established in Wales since 2008 and their premise is to link the economic development, education and skills agendas. By end of 2014, there were three RSPs covering the geographical areas of South East Wales, South West and Central Wales and North Wales respectively. The focus of this case study however is on two of these partnerships, the RLPSW&CW and the Employment & E&SP of the NWEAB, as the third partnership, LSKIP was not established until the final drafting stages of the thesis. The findings of desktop analysis of key documentation and the interviews undertaken are presented, together with a conclusion. The research aim of this thesis is to identify the elements that practitioners feel is required for effective collaboration in order to frame a critical reflection with the purpose of informing future actions and strategies. The case study is made up of the following elements: a review of documents and 32 interviews (15 interviews were conducted initially in 2011 with the RLPSW&CW and then participants were re-interviewed in 2013, 2 interviews with the NWEAB participants were undertaken in 2013).

4.2 Regional Skills Partnership Models

The Regional Skills Partnership model was originally established in 2008 in South West Wales with the establishment of the Regional Learning Partnership from a regional, bottom-up approach to ensure that individuals had equality of opportunity and access to high quality learning opportunities. This was the only Regional Skills Partnership in Wales until 2012 when the approach was adopted as part of the

development of the NWEAB, with the establishment of an E&SP as one of its work streams. By then the work of the two partnerships was focused on aligning regional skills requirements with economic opportunities / priorities.

Both partnerships have a number of common factors. Local government was the sector that drove the establishment of both partnerships and initially garnered the support from other sectors of the added value of what partnerships could offer with respect to bridging skills, education and economic development. Neither partnerships have established formal governance structures with respect to their respective strategic and operational management. Both operate in an informal, voluntary manner (the RLPSW&CW had at one stage scoped the option of becoming a Company Limited by Guarantee). The overriding focus of the respective partnerships is to provide a facilitation and strategic body to ensure that publicly-funded learning providers and associated organisations work collaboratively, effectively and efficiently across the areas of education and regeneration to better meet the needs of the learners and the regional economy. With respect to the link with education, both partnerships mirror the geography of the respective regional education consortia, providing ease of alignment.

There are several differences, notwithstanding the need for such partnerships to be 'fit for purpose' with respect to the geographical footprints that they cover, respectively. The E&SP was established as a workstream of the wider NWEAB which has allowed the skills agenda to be aligned with the wider regeneration agenda from the inception of the Board. In contrast, the RLPSW&CW was in existence for some 6 years, prior to the establishment of the Swansea Bay City Region (SBCR) and has had to work with the respective local regeneration partnerships in each of the counties to ensure

alignment with the wider regeneration agenda of South West and Central Wales. Whilst the partnership established itself as the 'skills arm' of the SBCR in 2015, it has different engagement mechanisms with the counties of Ceredigion and Powys which are not part of the SBCR. Since early 2015, this has been via the Growing Mid Wales Economic Partnership.

There are differences in political and sectoral representation on both partnerships. Whilst the E&SP has political representation via Local Authority Members, the RLPSW&CW does not. The third sector whilst represented on the RLP is not on the E&SP. Following direction from the NWEAB, the work programme of the E&SP is focused on specific dominant, growth sectors in North Wales including Tourism, Advanced Manufacturing and Energy. The work programme of the RLPSW&CW has a broader focus due to its greater economic diversity.

As the RLPSW&CW had been in existence for some time, it had developed a comprehensive set of activities and an established core team to support its work and a number of tools to support its planning notably a dedicated website, the RLSO and the E-Portal. Given the infancy of the E&SP, the core team at the time of writing this thesis was minimal in number and did not have such well-established tools to support its work.

At this time, the Welsh Government, although participatory and supportive of both partnerships, did not formally recognise either in any policy instruments as being vehicles to address the issue of ensuring that the skills offer of training providers was meeting the needs of regional employers. However, in 2014 this changed, with a top

down the policy push from Welsh Government, which had an impact on the direction of both the RLPSW&CW and NWEAB's E&SP and saw, at the request of and funded by the Welsh Government, the establishment of the third partnership in South East Wales, the LSKIP.

Published in January 2014, the policy statement on skills, focused exclusively on post-19 skills interventions and clearly set out the Welsh Government's priorities for this agenda. The whole system approach sought to provide the "skills needed for employment (i.e. for those individuals looking for work) as well as those skills that are needed to enhance someone's employment and support businesses (i.e. the skills of the workforce)". (WG, 2014c, p.2). The follow up document, the 'Skills Implementation Plan', was published in July 2014 and provided the three RSPs in Wales with a clear remit for activities and tasked each region to develop a Regional Employment & Skills Plan by March 2015. At the time of writing, each Regional Skills Partnership is now required to produce an annual plan and each one receives funding directly from the Welsh Government and has similar operational structures. The establishment and the impact of the work of the RLPSW&CW to date has been recognised by the Welsh Government as 'transformational' and has provided a sound evidence base of the 'added value' that such regional partnerships can have. This provided a sound basis for the establishment of the NWEAB and the E&SP and the importance that the Welsh Government is now attributing to such partnerships, as cited in the National Policy Skills Statement published in January 2014. The focus of the RSPs by now is being shaped and directed by Welsh Government policy, moving towards a more uniformed and prescribed model of activity.

4.3 Research Findings

To support the case study, key documentation relating to both partnerships was analysed, and interviews with key participants were also conducted.

Central to the research findings were the views of key participants about collaboration. A total of 32 interviews were conducted between August 2011 - August 2013 (15 of these were originally interviewed in 2011 and associated with the RLPSW&CW who were re-interviewed two years later to gauge whether their opinion on the key themes had changed and 2 interviews were undertaken with NWEAB participants in 2013).

Documentation was read by one researcher (this was due to limited availability of resources) and the data extraction form was structured. Several key documents were reviewed for the documentary analysis– these are listed below. They were selected on the basis that they provided an evidence base which captured the development of the respective partnerships since their inception.

Regional Learning Partnership South Wales & Central Wales

- the original and revised RLP Vision, Mission Statement, Remit and Objectives (2008);
- the business plan submitted to the Welsh European Funding Office for the allocation of European Structural Funding (2008);
- an independent baseline, mid-term and final evaluations undertaken by SQW consultants from November 2011 – 2014 which provides some independent evaluation of the activities and impact of the RLP (2012, 2013, 2014).

North Wales Economic Ambitions Board

- North Wales Economic Ambitions Board Constitution (2012a);
- North Wales Economic Ambitions Board Strategy (2012b);
- Regional Collaboration Fund application to the Welsh Government (2012).

The main themes emerging from the interviews were identified, compared and grouped into the 6 key themes identified in the literature review, which are listed in Table 6.

Table 6. Theme Numbers and Areas

Theme Number	Theme Area
One	Defining Collaboration
Two	Motivational Factors to Collaborate
Three	Benefits of Collaboration
Four	Barriers to Collaboration
Five	Measuring Outcomes of Collaboration
Six	Skills required to Collaborate

4.3.1 Defining Collaboration

This section focuses on the respondents' perceptions of collaboration both within their own organisations and externally. The response from P7 was that:

“collaboration is when you work with others to achieve an end that you probably could not achieve as well on your own, so there has to be a purpose to collaboration by identifying what your objectives are and then see who you would work with best to achieve them”.

P7 further commented that “if you want to achieve an organisational change then you have to do that by engaging different parts of the organisation that can affect that change and engaging with the RLP is one way of doing that”.

An issue that was typically highlighted by respondents was the difficulty they encountered in defining collaboration, suggesting that it was very dependent on the role / position of the actor in the process. P14 observed that:

“whilst there is an understanding that in order to make collaboration work there is a need to demonstrate attributes of transparency and clarity, together with the requirement of taking into account organisational / individual stances, the challenge is presented to those who are involved from the decision makers perspective whether from a policy standpoint to truly demonstrate such characteristics, as ultimately the decision is a political one with Ministerial endorsement founded very much on the advice / guidance of key civil servants. There is a requirement to be very clear about the trust factor, as this is crucial for collaboration and true partnership”.

P8 observed that the main purpose of collaboration was “interacting with sectors in partnership activities to drive quality initiatives, to achieve efficiency savings to achieve the best possible outcomes for the particular sector” with the recognition that organisations such as local authorities have to be more an enabler / facilitator as opposed to a direct deliverer or provider of services. A further viewpoint on what local government ‘brings to the table’ in a collaboration activity was presented by P9 stating that:

“we might be collaborating across different sectors, we might be collaborating across specialisms and as an organisation we bring in specialisms. We may have no knowledge of the specialisms. So, collaboration means that we are working bringing our skills and our expertise to a setting which has a much wider skills base”.

Typically, respondents found it challenging to define collaboration internally and further recognised that often it is more difficult in comparison to external collaboration. The participants identified a spectrum of functions that defines internal collaboration within an organisation. This was demonstrated by the P3 who stated that “my definition of collaboration internally would be from intense periods of working with colleagues to keeping them up to date with what's going on so there are different scales of it”.

4.3.2 Motivational Factors to Collaborate

The original vision of the RLPSW&CW in 2008 was to create “a region where equality of opportunity and access to high quality learning opportunities are guaranteed”. The document was revised in June 2012 following one of the recommendations of the mid-term evaluation to create:

“a region where equality of opportunity and access to appropriate high-quality learning and skills opportunities are delivered consistently and efficiently for the benefit of the regional economy and for promoting active citizenship, as a result of Regional Learning Partnership intervention” (p.1).

The partnership’s revised vision statement (June 2012) provided further details on how this will be achieved:

“over time and with further development, the Partnership will influence the restructuring and commissioning of provision of publicly funded training and education across South West Wales underpinned by social justice principles for the benefit of the learner.

Listed below are the objectives of the RLPSW&CW, revised in 2012:

- Brings together training and learning providers across the education and regeneration arenas to improve outcomes for young people and adults;
- Works to remove duplication of provision and provide seamless pathways to training and ultimately employment;
- Transforms the way learners and potential learners access learning opportunities;
- Increases the skills levels of the employed and the unemployed in the region for the benefit of the economy;
- Provides a single reference point of relevant information and data to enable a suitable response to the region’s skills needs;
- Creates a forum to address the region’s current and future skills challenges at all levels (level 1 – level 8);
- Ensures that there is capacity to influence and provide a regional response to Welsh Government policy and initiatives”.

The partnership’s strategic aims were as follows:

“Focussing on all age learning from 14 years upwards, the Regional Learning Partnership South West Wales will achieve its vision by:

- Bringing together the necessary intelligence to respond to and to inform future skills needs and growth opportunities, with a focus on high quality including innovation and entrepreneurship, across the South West Wales region (*i.e. for the benefit of the training provider, the employer and the learner*);

- Supporting employer engagement practitioners to improve service alignment and to avoid duplication of activity in their relationship with employers;
- Coordinating regional solutions to address employability issues for the existing and future workforce of South West Wales;
- Ensuring that there is appropriate opportunity for progression at all levels including informal learning through to Higher Education;
- Facilitating joint working between providers and agencies in order to optimise the utilisation of resources the impact of provision and the outcomes for learners in basic and higher-level skills (from Level 1 to Level 8) (*resources = financial, infrastructure and human*);
- Ensuring close linkages with local partnerships including Local Service Boards and local regeneration partnerships and local learning networks and
- Maximising European and other grant funding in the area of skills for the South West Wales region.

The remit for the partnership is to ensure publicly funded learning providers and associated organisations work collaboratively, effectively and efficiently to meet the demand needs of learners, the regional economy and society in South West Wales”.

(RLP Revised Vision Document, 2012, pp.1-2).

The vision of the NWEAB was to “establish North Wales as a confident and outward looking region with a diverse and high value economy, providing a range of quality, sustainable employment opportunities for its people” (NWEAB Constitution, 2012, p.1). The aims of the Board were as follows:

- “Identify areas where there is added value from joint working and enhances collaboration.
- To maximise the impact of available resources in Economic Development by working collectively at a strategic level.
- Promote a change in Culture and Attitude with a greater emphasis on shared values and mutual trust in relation to collaborative Economic Development.
- To work collectively as Six Local Authorities to provide North Wales with a strong and influential voice in terms of Economic Development”.

(NWEAB Constitution, 2012, p.1).

The aims of the NWEAB were supported by a strategy entitled, ‘Economic Ambition: A Strategy for Change’. The document detailed the priorities for the region with respect to improving the “productivity, competitiveness and growth of the North Wales economy’ (NWEAB Strategy, 2012, p.2). Collaboration is considered pivotal to

achieving these aims as it is this model of working in "areas of strong mutual interest offers the greatest opportunity for successful economic development" (NWEAB Strategy, 2012, p.1).

Five work streams were established to implement the above with one focusing on employment and skills. The priority for this agenda was to 'improve skills levels throughout the workforce particularly in those sectors where skill deficits are acute' (NWEAB Strategy, 2012, p.6) with a recognition that the strategic issue were to 'upgrade the skills base, reduce inactivity and tackle youth unemployment' (NWEAB Strategy, 2012, p.7)

What are the key motivational factors for organisations to collaborate? One of the biggest motivations identified by many of those interviewed was the expectation that there would be efficiency savings and being able to get more value for resources. P8 stated that "this is in contrast to when organisations have sufficient resources to deliver the services that they wish to deliver. An example is the planning service where we've got specialisms that we don't utilise fully and by working together maybe we can get better efficiency savings by sharing expertise". Efficiency savings was identified by the respondents as a key driver. P8 stated "we've not got as much money as we had, so we've got to use that money to best effect. That's one big driving force that says - do we have to deliver a particular service? If we have to do it, can we do it in a different way? Can we do it in way where we work with other people and we share those efficiency savings? Everything that we do we have to look at. Can we do it better and that's because we're driven by money and there isn't going to be much money in the system for the foreseeable future".

A further challenge is the motivation for organisations and their employees to collaborate. Failure to force the issue without establishing trust and transparency and a reputation for being candid rapidly introduce barriers to collaborating. P11 suggested that the RLP has demonstrated that if trust is developed in a partnership together with the required commitment, then there can be achievements. Collaborating for effect was identified as a further challenge - partnerships that are formed purely and simply to get as much resources without really knowing what the benefits are. This has been evidenced across both the region and at a national level.

One interesting observation was provided by P14 in that there is a mis-match between the financial and the citizen focused drivers for collaboration. They further noted that there is an expectation by the Welsh Government for further and higher education to collaborate; however, this is part of the corporate requirement of each Institution and is essential to their survival. Therefore, there has to be a constant review as to whether a collaborative activity is actually a beneficial move for the future of any Institution. P14 further noted that in theory "to prescribe this way of working is rational and can be but for the benefit of the learners, whereas in practice the arguments of shared resources and better-quality provision for the learners is not a logical path to follow".

An observation was made by P7 of valuing the input of partners and the need to recognise, together with there being clarity as to why organisations wish to work together. Other factors included a policy push from both the Welsh Government and the UK Government viewing the benefits of collaboration as driving efficiencies and service improvements. If the policy drive is to collaborate then in the words of P2, 'you'd be mad to ignore it'. However, this may be against the grain of what is practically

the favourable 'option'. The theoretical perspective needs to be supported by practical instruments, such as feasibility and options appraisals. P2 further commented that:

"policy drivers can sometimes be to the detriment of the organisational goals, or to the detriment of the learner, because you might take a decision to collaborate on something because that's what people are telling you to do but in fact what you are doing is completely wrong for the learner. Put organisational goals aside and it's not always easy".

Respondents identified advantages of working collaboratively, particularly regarding outcomes. P8 stated that:

"the RLP is an attempt to transform learning from cradle to grave really and it's a concept that's been well established but you've got Higher Education, Further Education, Local Authority education, various others and what we're all trying to do is bring our services together to give a better outcome for the learner and I think perhaps education has in the past been very fragmented and maybe the opportunities for everybody to take advantage of the system haven't been there. So, I would think that perhaps the RLP will maybe oiling the wheels of the various structures that exist".

When re-interviewed, P8 stated that:

"more topical than ever, it's about saving money. I think there is an acceptance that the capacity of organisations is being challenged on certain functions e.g. education regionalisation, city regions. I think the resource allocation is more crucial in the next three years and local government is going to have real budget pressures and that means that collaboration is going to come up the agenda again. The only problem with that is that with the announcement of structural reform means that there is no need to collaborate now as the structural reform will sort that out, but I think different services will need different structures".

P8 further stated that:

"four or five years ago collaboration was more of a luxury and now it is becoming essential – budget cuts mean that there will be fewer people, that means that expertise will be lost and if you do not work with others, services are not going to be viable".

Further motivational factors were recognised by respondents which included:

- better service to customers;

- better and richer professional networks for staff and new and different business opportunities;
- exchange of information, knowledge and skills;
- the improved outcomes from ownership of the issue and problem - This is particularly important when establishing partnerships and gaining mutual trust and respect. The investment in that work in the early days can stand a partnership in good stead when things get difficult.

A common response amongst respondents was 'adding value' for the learner. Many noted that historically organisations within the field of education, skills and regeneration worked independently and that a key organisational driver was very much about 'survival of the fittest'.

P5 commented that:

“there is a need to make sure that the service and what their sector delivers is not overlooked or marginalised. Certain partner organisations of the RLP do very little direct delivery of skills/learning provision. Unless effective partnerships are formed with those who are direct deliverers (or recipients) of learning, the services that those former organisations deliver could be viewed as more of a hindrance, or at least not be considered as an organisation to collaborate with”.

They further noted that some organisations do not need motivational drivers to improve collaboration and the RLPSW&CW is one such improvement opportunity. When re-interviewed, they stated that “the driver is now around merging organisations which is beyond collaboration. More people would perceive it to be more of a necessity now. There is a feeling that we have gone beyond collaboration – we are being told what we need to do much more, it is not a discussion. If you still want to have sources of funding, you have to do what’s on offer”.

Staff development was identified as a further motivational factor for collaborative working as it provides staff with the opportunity to acquire knowledge of how other sectors operate, thus creating empathy for the challenges that other organisations face and also the potential for more seamless public services. P9 stated that “the collaborative experience gives people the opportunity to lead from the side and not always from the front which is very important for an authority. We have for some years trying to get more for less resources; it’s through this partnership approach that that is and has been achievable”.

For collaboration to work, P14 stated that:

“it requires two things to work properly, both of which the RLP has. One is personalities, individuals and teams who believe that collaboration is the way forward and actually work in an open and transparent to try and achieve that and who are aware of the barriers and the issues and the other personalities that may be impacting on that collaboration moving forward. Whether it’s perceived or real and alongside a certain level of leverage applied from policy, from funders. Levers and drivers, carrot and stick. But, not only hard that will drive and take that forward and if that can be done with a level of agreement, and openness and transparency then you have the best of both worlds”.

When re-interviewed, P3 stated that “the drivers should be the same in terms of service improvement and efficiencies. The recent budget settlement for local government means that the time taken for shared services to be developed and deliver efficiencies is perceived as a negative. Collaboration has been mooted as the answer to things and there has been an awakening for organisations that it is not the ‘silver bullet’. From a Welsh Government perspective, they will say keep working together. There is some scepticism that the easiest way to address the budget challenge is for that to happen by individual counties which is a shame because if they were a bit more radical and looked at a real way of delivering shared services, they could save money. I don’t think there is that willingness or political commitment to it at a local level”.

P9 recognised that working together with external partners can lead to improved outcomes for customers, citing health and social services as examples. However, it was noted that when collaborative service provision does not work out it “becomes more cumbersome for the customer. You’ve got collaboration really as a token form so you might have a structure, but the collaboration is not there”. When re-interviewed, P4 stated, “it’s must do collaboration as we cannot do it all anymore”.

A common response to the challenges of collaboration centred on personal relationships, personalities and individuals guarding their ‘territory’. One respondent stated, “I think that successful collaboration is about positive relationships and I think that a lot of collaboration will flourish where people get on with one another and that fosters improved collaboration because trust is built”. One noteworthy comment concerned the recognition of staff input when collaborating in relation to their position. P7 stated that “at a more operational level there are a group of people who are the implementers who often get overlooked in terms of praise and support and reward for their endeavours and sometimes may misunderstand the motivation of why the organisation is collaborating”.

4.3.3 Benefits of Collaboration

P4 stated that:

“it has to be a better service for the region’s learners and stakeholders. Very often in terms of collaboration it is about sharing of good practice and sometimes it will be challenging the providers through learning about good practice from others. It should be around the reduction of duplication whether across a geographic or a subject area. It has to be something where each partner that is collaboration finds that there is some mutual benefit”.

When re-interviewed, P4 stated that:

“Careers Wales continues to benefit from the investment that it made of the early days of the RLP. The organisation is now a recognised voice around the table because we’ve invested significantly in the early days so the benefits that we get from being a member of the partnership of having access to the opportunity to being on the inside track with key partners in the region”.

P14 noted that the concepts driven by the RLP could not have been realised by one organisation necessarily. The benefit should always be about improving things for learners. They further stated that:

“for example, if you are working with voluntary sector partners they would have a much better connection with people residing in disadvantaged communities than any other organisation could ever hope to achieve by parachuting into that community, so people who work in a community enterprise or a Communities First region as their daily work and particularly those who come from and have formed a grass roots operation are ideal partners to engage with those community members”. Interesting is the observation made by the Local Government Head of Service who was interviewed stating that the real benefit of collaboration is ‘competitive advantage’.

P3 stated that:

“I think collaboration affords organisations the opportunity to learn from each other, to share good practice and there has to be a recognition that sometimes there are some losses as well, but certainly the benefits of collaboration can ultimately the sum of the whole is greater than all the parts that come together in a collaboration”.

There was recognition amongst the respondents that instant results cannot be achieved via collaboration. Partners are involved as they want to make a difference to the learner. The pathway however, stated P5 “is incredibly frustrating, not knowing when the end of the journey might be or is and not seeing any difference but actually. The other side of this is that we cannot not be there so we are committed to trying as well”. The respondent further noted that it is difficult to see the benefits of collaboration for the third sector as “we are a minor player in relation to the learning agenda and so the collaboration tends not to be focused on us”.

A common response to this theme was making cashable efficiencies. The theory of sharing services is that fewer human resources are required thus delivering a more seamless service. On this subject P9 commented that “in public service terms we don't focus enough on how the general public get their services. I think we're more traditionally structured, that this is what you're going to get, this is the money I've got and this is what you're going to get. We're all professional experts whereas in fact I think that the world has changed. Its more about what actually do people want, what people expect and how do we get the bigger picture services. By maximising the resources available to local communities and removing unhelpful competition between organisations that takes finance away from the provision of services”.

The responses relating to the benefits of working collaboratively can be grouped into a number of different areas. These are listed below:

Innovation development and staff development - There can be significant benefits in terms of learning from approaches in other organisations, and different ways of approaching tasks/problems;

Shared cost and improved performance - It does widen the scope and access of information and networks;

Range of services delivered to the customer – P6 stated that “if it was us on its own and I think about the other partners who deliver locally, I would never have enough resource or money available to meet customer needs if I was working in isolation or in a silo. I think it is better, its better customer service and value for money and for the tax payer in terms of what they invest in the public sector”;

Economies of scales – there was a recognition from some of the respondents that entering into collaboration does not mean that everybody will benefit to equal measure.

This in itself presents a challenge. P5 stated that “there are practical advantages like the ability to draw down external funding through working together collectively and if you’re collaborating you get more perspective on issues or you know how to solve them”. An issue which was highlighted was that some service areas do not lend themselves easily to collaboration. There may be a small service area that does not work extensively with other organisations and thus could be a distraction from service delivery. P9 stated, “I think we’ve got to get away from saying that collaboration is the answer to every single ill. I think what we need to do is to say where will collaboration have maximum benefits and I think it’s usually where there are multi-agencies in the field. I think by working together you get improved services for customers and also where there are specialism and where you can save money”.

Shared resources and wider networks - Small organisations rely on the opportunities through getting other people who have the expertise where they can add value and better outcomes.

The area of joint appointments was raised as a potential benefit. P8 noted that:

“shared Chief Executive Officers (CEO) is a good one, people say you will save an awful amount of money if share CEOs, but can you? I mean I’ve stopped and thought, one shared CEO between 2 local authorities – salary £150,000 per annum with an organisational budget of probably £750 million. Does the CEO go in on a Monday and Wednesday to one organisation? What actual benefits would come from just a single shared CEO I question... it’s just a red herring for what is the real issue and that is how do you get the whole organisation working better with neighbours with other providers?”

Many respondents argued that real change through the RLP is starting to be realised, but there is a way to go. P5 further argued that “in some way it’s the partners playing lip service to the RLP and they forget about the third sector a little bit, but I think there

are huge opportunities in the future for us. The partnership has now matured and it's about realising those changes".

Respondents recognised that via the RLP better relationships between organisations and a shared culture of working had been established. P4 stated that, "there is more trust between a number of organisations which has made the sharing of ideas a less challenging process. It has enabled greater strategic thinking but local delivery has still been maintained". What was evident from the review of the RLP's documentation was the significant changes that have continued to have an impact on the partnership's 'direction of travel'. Noteworthy are the institutional changes within the Further and Higher Education sector, for example the merger of Gorseinon and Swansea Colleges and the establishment of a Dual Sector University structure incorporating the University of Wales Trinity Saint David (which has merged with Swansea Metropolitan University), Coleg Sir Gar and Coleg Ceredigion.

As a result of the eligibility of certain counties within Wales being included within the European Structural Fund Convergence programme, the county of Powys whilst demonstrating interest to join the partnership were originally unable to be considered. However, developments in early 2012 with the implementation of the Regional Integrated School Improvement Programme via the regional education consortium for South West and Mid Wales (ERW – Education Regional Working) which covers the counties of Ceredigion, Powys, Pembrokeshire, Carmarthenshire, Swansea and Neath Port Talbot particularly with the consortium adopting the RLSO as their key data collection and intelligence tool, strengthened the case for the geographical coverage

of both partnerships to mirror one another. In August 2012, Powys as a county via the local authority confirmed their wish to become a full member of the RLP.

A further 'spin off' which is noteworthy is the involvement of the partnership in the development of a Regional Economic Regeneration Strategy for South West Wales which would harness the economic development priorities and challenges of the region. Commissioned jointly by the region's Local Authorities, the former South West Wales Economic Forum, the South West Wales Tourism Partnership and the RLP, the partnership emphasised the importance of skills as a central thread to the development of such a strategy. This preceded the launch of the Swansea Bay City Region (SBCR) in August 2013. The RLP has the remit of facilitating the development of the skills strand of the said city region.

Over and above the practical gains that have been made, respondents were impressed by the energy / engagement levels that have been sustained when all too often their experience is that partnership activities can reach a point where they are no longer seen as exciting/relevant and collapse as a result. The RLP seems to have a stronger and broader based support and a more engaged core of interested parties. Economies of scale and efficiencies can be practically demonstrated as a result of exposure to better practice in areas, but flexible enough to apply to a local context. P9 stated "improved outcomes from a redesign of services, rather than restructuring".

The structure and delivery of European Funded programmes led by the Welsh Government in the 2007-2013 period created sectoral / regional initiatives which often incorporated a wider range of stakeholders and consequently introduced stringent

compliance regulations, particularly with respect to procuring goods and services. P5 observed that this had driven:

“a wedge between organisations that need to be working together and may result in generic approaches with significant duplication of effort between contractors working in parallel with no requirement to work together”.

Contrastingly, a wide range of good working relationships are being built up across organisations that would not normally work together. It is still difficult however to see real cultural change taking place. P11 stated that “sectors still seem to recoil to what they know best and this appears to be getting worse not better. The partnership approach adopted as part of the Objective One European Programme mandated a multi-sector approach – more recent experience seems to suggest the opposite is now the case. The Welsh Government has encouraged collaboration, but has not formally enforced it”.

Respondents stated that they have been able to influence policy and thus gain a better profile for their area of working, challenging traditional approaches to engagement and introducing organisational ‘spin off’ opportunities which have ultimately resulted in changing employees’ skill sets.

As detailed in chapter Three, the objectives of the RLPSW&CW were revised in 2014, which reflect a more focused programme of activity for the partnership. An independent baseline evaluation on the RLPSW&CW undertaken by SQW Consulting in March 2012 stated that “the specific arguments underpinning the intervention, both explicitly and inferred from discussions with RLP partners and staff, were:

- the need for collaborative working to improve effectiveness and efficiencies of public service delivery across the region;

- the need to reduce duplication and institutional boundaries impacting on the learner experience – the evidence for this was ‘*cited by partners in the initial regional Workshop*’ according to the ESF Business Plan;
- the lack of joined-up local intelligence on learner needs and outcomes” (pp.8-9).

More specifically, it further stated that “the RLP was identified as a means of ‘testing’ public service collaboration across the education and regeneration agenda, with both individuals across the region and providers identified as potential beneficiaries” (p.9).

The mid-term evaluation referenced a number of recommendations, which included the partnership’s relationship with Welsh Government stating “developing links with the Welsh Government and securing commitment of the Welsh Government should be a priority...whilst the Welsh Government have been aware of the RLP’s work, real traction with the centre has not yet been achieved” and its longer term sustainability with respect to the need for “the RLP’s Strategy Group should lead a formal options review for the post-2013 RLP, considering its functions and form, and how this will be resourced” (p.7).

A theme that was evident from the interviews was the idea that collaboration is here to stay. What focused strongly was the need for it to be ‘fit for purpose’ with one respondent stating, “it’s got to be the right answer and not the answer”. Some suggested that it seems to be a prolonged prequel to a reorganisation of public services in Wales. Whilst it can result in positive working relationships and development of new approaches, it is also confusing and difficult to see ‘who is boss’ with the continually shifting sands of why it is being done. There is clearly a belief that there are some difficult choices to be made on the horizon with more joint working between the organisations on the agenda. To some extent, collaboration is becoming a byword.

There is a need to consider the political dynamic to the collaboration agenda and the question as to whether local members, for example fully appreciate that collaboration is part of their agenda as well as understanding the level of local / regional debate. There are considerable implications if engaging with members on this subject is an afterthought. Its implementation however needs to be pragmatic in its adoption. P10 stated:

“I think we need to realistically assess if there is a better outcome, there is a need to collaborate. If there isn't a better outcome don't worry about doing it and I think maybe we're still on that journey at the moment, because some people think we've got to collaborate on everything and people get nervous if we don't collaborate we are going to be punished. Others don't want to collaborate at all and I think it's about being more open and it's about the culture drive to change it to be more open and we can actually honestly assess where it become second nature like everything else. At the moment, it's a bit of a tool for a bolt on in some people's minds. Perhaps in this future one-day people may say that can we do it with others?”

A viewpoint that came through strongly with respondents was the message of 'do it successfully or you will be re-organised' with P8 stating that “if you are able not to bury your head in the sand and put yourself out there and want to co-construct with the Welsh Government then this will stand organisations in good stead”. The difficulty noted by a number of respondents was when organisations are faced with operational matters such as protecting employees' jobs. Whilst part of this is inevitable there is a need to prepare staff with the skills to operate which gives them the best opportunities, certainly in terms of possible reorganisation. Is collaboration only embraced however as a result of a political drive? P10 highlighted that “collaboration as a way of working for the future operation of the organisation will continue to be the way we work while there is the political will, which will no doubt change back to competition at some stage”. P3 stated that:

“I think collaboration is a, becoming a bit of a byword, it's just I think the organisation will become more engaged in joint working make some difficult

choices where and I think there might need to be more of a shift. I don't believe that the councillors and backbench members in the local authorities really appreciate or understand that collaboration is part of their agenda as well and the sort of local regional debate has not been fully understood by them".

Building on this factor was the ability in developing and maintaining relationships. The RLP has enabled some of its partners to enter 'new territory' and acquire knowledge. For example, collectively identifying mechanisms to address the region's skills needs and access to 'fit for purpose' training. P6 stated that:

"we could not do what we do without collaboration. In terms of the RLP, I think it's around making sure that we are aware of what is happening with others so that we don't duplicate, we add value, we find a gap that we are more able to meet than that's what we would do. Its recognising that others could do things better than we can. But also, because we are very small and we cover wider than the RLP area sometimes we have to say to people that things that we are doing in other regions could bring to this region".

4.3.4 Barriers to Collaboration

The responses to the questions grouped in this theme were consistent with those in the literature, which included: collaboration occurs in organisations at very different levels, strategic collaboration is critical to the successful outcome of any new initiative; support and confidence is crucial to ensure that staff are engaged in the process; and communicating and disseminating key messages within an organisation.

P5 stated that:

"smaller organisations within the partnership feel that they do not have a voice and feel overpowered and perhaps been dominated into a way of working that they would not choose. It is important therefore to respect the autonomy of people who work in different organisations to what size, power or resource that organisation has you've gone into a partnership because together you can achieve a better result than if you were doing that on your own, therefore you need them just as much as they need you with your resource that you can put into it".

This viewpoint does question how the third sector is viewed by other sectors in the collaborative process and to what extent their input is valued and recognised. P7 stated that “coming from a University is the belief that smaller organisations can feel that they do not have a voice and feel overpowered and perhaps been dominated into a way of working that they wouldn’t choose”. Indeed, this can be supported by an observation made by P6 who stated that ‘it is a challenge to get respect for a small organisation – equal partners, regardless of size’.

Culture was presented by many of the respondents as a barrier. A number of the respondents suggested that some organisations within the partnership were open and non-defensive, others displayed opposite attributes. Further comments were made about staff within organisations feeling that as a result of working collaboratively that their position is under threat and they do not want to work differently as they ‘know best’. The challenge is how to eliminate this. P5 stated “if we could break that culture down, if the people that come into new jobs are wise to what collaboration is about and one day I think it will be as natural as delivering services in a more traditional way. Sharp end delivery is different from somebody sitting around and making theory of it”. The respondent further noted a combined number of challenges which included: frustration over the time that it takes to makes things happen, further noting that their organisation cannot afford not to be there. This is supported by P6 stating that “sometimes in partnerships you can go at the pace of the slowest which is a barrier. There can be a danger of blandness and lack of innovation and risk. You are again trying to accommodate everybody. My organisation has to be members of a number of partnerships and sub-groups etc. It’s a strain very clearly on an organisation and

weigh this up with the risk of 'loosing out'; and the debate over the local versus regional collaboration agenda. Issues become very different and thus so do the responses".

A further challenge is whether organisations embrace collaborative working in a voluntary capacity or feel duty bound as a result of the strong policy directives from the Welsh Government and legislative measures on collaborative working being proposed by the National Assembly for Wales (NAW). P3 stated that:

"my organisation collaborates around a regional board so it's put a governance structure in place which is a voluntary one; there is no statutory duty on the authorities to collaborate. In terms of drivers for collaboration that the Welsh Government is encouraging and actually threatening with its new legislative competencies to force local authorities to collaborate. The organisation collaborates by organising meetings, through events and through specific projects. And the organisation actually supports that collaboration, it facilitates it".

"We have to collaborate to survive" was the response from most of the interviewees. Others felt that it is a strong feature of how organisations must operate particularly with the growth of the RLP, recognising that some partner organisations have spearheaded and facilitated collaboration. Conversely, P5 stated that "organisations are not ready to change. There is no clear driver for them to change. Organisations rely on others for core funding and therefore having to collaborate with them". There was a belief that organisations are coerced "from above with certain things", however there does need to be an element of this and sometimes this is the only way. They further stated that "maybe the problem is that we coerce in the wrong places and we don't get the buy in the right places. Maybe how we use the collaboration is something to be seen". With respect to responding to policy directives, P16 stated that "it has helped with the establishment of the RLP, with respect to the work of the NWEAB, with respect to establishing an Employment and Skills element".

A common thread amongst many of the respondents was questioning whether their organisation was the most suitable to deliver a particular service. A further consideration was that external funding streams accessed by organisations for education, skills and regeneration related activities often promote competition and not collaboration. P5 questioned the appropriateness of whether certain organisations are best placed to deliver services stating that “there is the existence of vested interest...inter-agency rivalry has not gone away – perhaps just underground”.

When re-interviewed, P3 stated that:

“there are additional barriers because there is the uncertainty with the publication of outcome of the Williams Commission review of public services. The phrase ‘its polluting regional collaboration’ has been used – making people wait to find out what the conclusion is rather than being committed to collaboration. Traditional barriers are more evident – organisations are uncertain about own futures. The collaboration agenda is becoming secondary – public sector organisations have grown tired of it as it takes too long. There is the argument that they should have taken it more seriously before now and been a bit more ambitious. There is a definite sense that we have tried collaboration and now there is a need for the Welsh Government to tell us what it looks like and we’ll follow that”.

This was echoed by P11 who when re-interviewed stated that:

“if it is about public service reform, does the reform get lost in the process. Does the process become the main driver? What is collaboration driven by? When the RLP was first mooted, it was a response to access European Funding, and the structure evolved which continued for some years and this was followed by a policy driver by the Welsh Government on its approach to the skills and employment agenda. It needs test and challenge, but where does this come from? The severity of the public sector cuts are so big, collaboration is now essential. The way that the Welsh Government reacts to this is essential. The RLP was responding to the Welsh Government agenda when it was first established, and this remains. There is however a lack of clarity about what the imperative is”.

There was a feeling amongst some respondents that whilst there are clear benefits to collaboration, there is a lack of understanding by national organisations such as the

Welsh Government and Estyn as to how this works on a practical level. This suggests that such organisations advocate collaborative working without a clear understanding or rationale. A major responsibility falls upon organisations such as local government to lead partnerships as an add-on to the day-job, with additional work pressures resulting.

Some criticism was pointed at the Welsh Government with one respondent noting “a lack of joined-up policy from Welsh Government and politicians who are not able to work in partnership themselves”. The respondent further commented on the inability of public sector organisations to be adaptable. P8 noted that:

“the problem is that public sector Institutions are not necessarily flexible, are they? So, once you start something, it can take you a long time before you can turn around and say that isn’t working and we need to put something else in place. We are also getting very risk averse so nobody will put their hand up and say that this is not the right way of doing it because it’s seen as a sign of failure and the media are onto us immediately”.

There is a belief that the ‘collaboration overhead’, that is the time spent on it, is not fully appreciated/recognised by those who demand/encourage it. P2 stated that:

“sometimes collaboration isn’t the answer. If we were really strongly against it, we wouldn’t do it. From a shared services perspective, if we weren’t getting any benefits from it, we’d walk away from it. We wouldn’t want to be seen that we were ignoring policy, sometimes people see policy as political correctness and having to explain why you are not going down this route. Its yes and no, it depends what we are collaborating on. I don’t think you should be afraid to say no”.

Respondents clearly felt that there is an increased pressure to collaborate, with a risk that organisations end up collaborating for ‘collaboration’s sake”, and ‘playing the game’. The approach also raises uncertainty as to the effects that collaboration is intended to achieve, i.e. reorganisation. The underlying driver focuses on efficiencies - improved solutions may not always be cheaper however. P9 stated that “to a certain

extent depending on which Minister you are talking to and for what purpose others are talking to you about collaboration. Certain sectors within the RLP have had the ability to work with the Welsh Government, particularly within the education sector to ‘co-construct’ partnerships”. There was a further recognition that there is a need to engage with the relevant political networks and ‘take the politicians with you’ to ensure that the collaborative process is successful.

Convincing others of the benefits of collaboration was a further barrier identified by many of those interviewed including the conflict between organisational priorities and the wider agenda. Supplementary to this is the ability of partner organisations to resource attendance at meetings together with proving the ‘added value’ that partner activities have made.

P7 stated that:

“people are suspicious that collaboration means that it is going to be followed swiftly by cutting resources and jobs because there are concerns about duplication of service delivery. However, there is a need to be clear about the distinction between this and complementary services. The fear of collaboration causes difficulty in terms of getting to this stage. With respect to the learner there are concerns about blurring organisational identity, for example about which Institution the learner is actually studying with”.

A further barrier cited by respondents was time. P4 stated that “this approach is resource intensive. There’s always the risk, too, that even good ‘ambassadors’ fail to complete the loop and feed-back effectively into our organisation”. Respondents also emphasised the need not to underestimate this factor. It can be quite a trajectory from the delivery of the ‘day job’ and often people do not see the benefits, so it is not necessarily a quick fix and often organisations are under pressure to deliver their core functions and collaboration could be seen as a distraction from that.

When re-interviewed, P5 stated that “there are emerging new versions of traditional barriers e.g. trust. Where we might want to collaborate, and be a respected partner with a local authority, when it comes to an organisation’s priorities – reducing budgets for example, the priority will be for the organisation to keep jobs. There is a new concept to partnership when it comes to the current landscape with respect to funding cuts. It can jeopardise collaboration – once relationships are gone, it takes a long time to re-establish them”. This was re-iterated by P1 who suggested that “the same barriers exist, but in a new dimension. There are fewer bodies with a vested interest, but more camps are created. Whether it is because we are more experienced in collaboration the new barriers appear”.

Given that collaboration is so strongly advocated by the Welsh Government in the delivery of Welsh public services, how do organisations address the issue of competition? Do all organisations wholeheartedly embrace collaboration? The view of P2 stated that:

“what we can’t afford to have is internal competition. So, with a diminishing pool for instance of school leavers what you don’t want is a highly proactive individual in one sector chasing an individual and the same with the other. So, from a client perspective it’s equating it, from a client perspective in terms of the experience within the college to equate it, but you do that by sharing good practice. So, I’d say to sum up definitely collaboration internally is sharing good practice to ensure an equality of experience for our learner”.

To support this sector’s viewpoint, P1 recognised that there is an art to collaboration rather than it being based on a scientific methodology. There is a need to consider the wider environment from the perspective of the learner, rather than an organisation’s goals. A view presented by P10 was that “the public sector operates in a target setting/evidence based culture that encourages organisations to compete against each other”.

In relation to the extent to which individuals felt they were being coerced to collaborate, varying responses were received from the respondents. P3 stated that “the statements that the current Minister for Social Justice & Local Government, Carl Seargent AM has made around forcing collaboration, ultimately is about coercion, and I think that yes, some organisations will feel that”. This contrasts with the viewpoint of P1 who noted that previously their organisation had moved into collaboration for survival, but now it provides added value for the learner.

Contrastingly with respect to the viewpoint of the Welsh Government, P14 commented that:

“the Civil Service was designed as a command / control structure. It is not designed for collaboration; it’s designed for a person at the top of hierarchy to tell people to pass the message down and expect for things to happen and that makes collaboration much more difficult’.

On a practical level, this can be illustrated by an observation made by P8 stating that:

“I think in Welsh Government you get a policy official who says this will be a good idea and suddenly we have to do. Another good example is we have to work in different collaboration groups. Well has anybody questioned why? No, it’s just, oh, that’s a good idea. Try and configure everything on health boundaries, that’s okay for health, it might not work for education, it might not work for regeneration, but suddenly we all have to fit one particular model. And that’s another thing; fitting with one model doesn’t always work either. We don’t seem to learn from that – do we?”.

Regardless of what sector interviewees represented, a clear message was that collaboration theoretically presumes equal representation and control. Practically however, the result of the research is that this is not the case. There are issues of vested organisational interest and Institutions prioritising their own credibility and operational preservation. Additionally, what respondents suggested further

complicates matters is when collaboration is undertaken on a voluntary, consensual basis and there is a lack of governance structure.

Some respondents also raised the issue of ownership with respect to problems that seek collective resolution. When a collaborative initiative is undertaken, and is terminated early, who is responsible then and how do you try and work back from this? From a policy perspective, collaboration is prescribed as the model for public service delivery, but when it fails to address the matter in hand, what is the alternative?

Crucial to the collaboration process is the ability of organisations to identify resources and clarity about what they want to gain from working collaboratively. A lack of vision can be a key barrier, where an organisation or the people involved in the collaboration have the inability to see the ultimate benefit. Resistance to change is a further factor with collaboration often being perceived as part of a change programme. Practical obstacles can include ICT infrastructure which present challenges for organisations wishing to develop platforms for shared service delivery. A lack of a formal governance structure is a further barrier, identified by a number of the respondents. When re-interviewed, P11 stated that:

“the major issue with collaboration is governance and the lack of formal reporting structures. The collaboration agenda has forced people – there has to be an aim as it is expensive. Having regional European Funded projects means more efficiently administered projects, but you still need local administration which is more costly”.

Some of the interviewees suggested that informal collaboration makes partnerships ill-equipped to deal with conflict whereas formal governance ensures that legal contracts define rights and remedies and thus helps to avoid misunderstandings.

4.3.5 Measuring Outcomes of Collaboration

Respondents felt that it can be very difficult to measure the outcomes of a network or a collaborative partnership. As has previously been highlighted, ownership of those outcomes is complex. The overall impact is something that is wider than any one organisation and it is a long-term measure as the impact is not immediate. The other fundamental question is how do you measure impact of collaborative working? Respondents suggested that it was easier to see the strategic impact of collaborative working. However, that in itself is challenging in the public sector's current climate with respect to influencing organisations that are working to their own strategic plans, tighter budgets, and responding to other external pressures. What respondents highlighted was it is not so easy to measure financial and organisational impact i.e. 'on the ground'. This provides a further barrier when selling the benefits of collaboration and why organisations should engage.

What is crucial is understanding the rationale for the intervention of collaboration. Often it is responding to a policy push and in this context from the Welsh Government viewing the benefits of collaboration as driving efficiencies and service improvements. If the policy drive is to collaborate then in the words of one P2, 'you'd be mad to ignore it'. However, this may be against the grain of what is practically the favourable 'option'. The theoretical perspective needs to be supported by practical instruments, such as feasibility and options appraisals. This provides further disconnect in the outcome setting process when there is a lack of clarity about why an activity is being undertaken.

P11 suggested that it depended on the activity and noted that:

“If it was a project funded by ESF, there are very clear outcomes which can be monitored, but that’s quite different to impact, because what you are looking at perhaps is a change in policymaking, change in the views of individuals within the direct beneficiary group so they are all very difficult things to measure’. The real test is whether the projects developed using this approach are delivering their outcomes. Respondents indicated that it is still too early to say, but the process of developing and delivering the schemes has encouraged a level of working together that was not seen on previous European funded programmes. It is also requiring leaps of faith, e.g. procurement of the Regional Essential Skills project that is pushing boundaries, but is perhaps at the extreme end of how far collaboration, and trust, can be pushed”.

P13 advised that their organisation reviews every partnership that they are involved in. The time invested in these partnerships and what the outcome is, is analysed. As a result, the organisation has had to make some challenging decisions in relation to attendance at certain partnership tables. In some instances, respondents’ experiences of collaboration indicated that they were told what to measure. This can be highlighted by a statement made by P5 stating that the only outcomes that the organisations measure are the ones that “we are told to measure, for example by a commissioning body / funding body”.

Contrastingly P1 suggested that the focus of target setting is on generating income, stating that “annual targets are a measure of collaborative activity; likewise measuring outcomes focuses on the financial savings that have been realised”. P6 stated that:

“with respect to measuring outcomes / impact - we don’t do it very well. We have so many different types of collaborative activity – we may have Memorandums of Understandings with organisations, we have contractual obligations, we share staff with other organisations. Its formalised collaboration – that’s quite easy to measure. In terms of the RLP, it is very difficult to measure whether there is added value to our organisation; you then flip it over and ask what is the risk of us not being involved? What are the tools of measuring the outcomes?”

P14 stated that:

“you would want to measure the impact of collaboration more than the outcomes. If you’ve got an organisational network that as a result of agreement with partners set itself tasks, then you can measure the outcome of those tasks. The problem with collaboration, and outcomes a bit like the RLP to a great extent co-ordinates other divisions policies, I don’t own those outcomes, so I can’t claim them. It can be very difficult to measure the outcomes of a network or a collaborative partnership. You have to use process indicators because you see to the process, but the outcomes are elsewhere. On the other hand, the overall impact is something that is wider than any 1 provider, so you can lay some claim to impact”.

The RLP’s final evaluation recognised the significant evolution of the strategic and policy context within which the partnership had operated from 2010 – 2013. Notably was the policy push from the Welsh Government with respect to the regional skills agenda. The report’s 10 recommendations make reference for the RLP intervention to continue, the need to undertake a review of the partnership’s “capability and capacity to respond fully, robustly and expertly, to the breaking agendas already in play” (SQW, 2014, p.6) and how it can better evidence the impact / outcome of its activity.

What is evident from the responses is the ownership of collaboration – that is, who owns the process, the outcome and who is acting on whose behalf? There is a need to be able to claim the success when there is a better service delivered by a collaborative effort than a single organisation. It is more challenging to claim success in collaboration so people do not do it. There was recognition amongst the interviewees that joint objectives cannot be achieved by organisations working independently. One example of this is delivering excellent customer service. P4 stated of their organisation that it:

“can’t solve the economic inactivity issues of South West Wales on its own. I need local employers and I need job opportunities and work experience opportunities for us to be able to move some of our customers into. I need the support of training providers to bridge the skills gap. I have to be a key player

around that partnership table. Hence the number of partnerships that I am involved in”.

Practically however, organisations and their employees can claim to ‘buy into’ and participate in collaborative activities, but what often is difficult to determine is how a successful outcome can genuinely be shared between those who have contributed or whether it is as a result of a few dominant partners.

Interviewees highlighted the use of traditional, well established tools of evaluation from critical friend review, external project evaluation and self-evaluation at one end to participant (training) evaluations and social media statistics at the other. There is an expectation from the Welsh Government that the benefit of joint working can be evidenced.

With respect to externally funded initiatives, there are outcomes to be satisfied which are captured via independent commissioned evaluations. There is a view however that such systems are not sophisticated. This is an area which can be strengthened. The challenge is the flexibility of public sector organisations to evaluate methods of working. P9 noted that:

“once you start something, it can take you a long time before you can turn around and say that isn’t working and something else and also we are getting very risk averse so nobody will put their hand up and say that this is not the right way of doing it because it’s seen as a sign of failure”.

The data that they produce provides opportunities for organisations ‘to replan and refocus and in some cases to restructure’. But what about evaluation for non-funded driven collaboration? There is a need to be sharper in the collection and use of data, discarding data which is not being utilising for planning. Certainly, the biggest scenario

that has been influenced through collaborative working is self-evaluation. P3 stated that “for some of the projects, the outcome / measures can be quite not too onerous quite light in terms of whether it’s an SLA or having some sort of dissemination event. But I think that this is going to change and the impact of the financial efficiencies for example is going too measured and there is going to be an expectation because of the cost. What about staff time and so on and sometimes ‘pump prime’ collaboration there is an expectation that we will need to measure impact and outcomes”.

4.3.6 Skills required to Collaborate

P11 stated that:

“most organisations are designed to meet particular needs and internal / external communications are designed to meet the agendas the organisations are set up to deal with. Local Authorities are set up to govern a local patch for a particular set of policy priorities. Collaboration raises all manner of questions about political accountability, who reports to who, where does the buck stop? A level of pragmatism and diplomacy is required, but there is a level of discomfort palpable when real sacrifices of services / personnel have to be made as part of the collaboration agenda. There is a risk of this becoming an industry of its own and adding a layer of back-office work”.

A general comment was that organisations need to experience a culture change including employees some of whom have been in the organisation for a significant time. P1 commented that:

“there are two factors here – historically FE Institutions are encouraged not to collaborate because it is a competitive environment and some staff members saying I’ve seen it all before – why bother? The second factor is, staff members thinking that if they get involved its more work for them and some people see it as more work because they don’t see the benefit of the win-win situation we’re in”.

A number of respondents noted that some of their staff were not fully competent to collaborate as they had moved into new collaborative roles and did not have previous experience of this. There was a feeling of the need to have an ‘internal analysis of the

external world' via the introduction of review mechanisms seeking 'customer insight', 'employer insight' and 'partnership insight'. Others felt that their organisations were reasonably equipped, highlighting that staff had the particular skills set required to collaborate. In contrast, however, P1 commented, "so once you've done that and you've got people on board, some people will fall by the way side and you literally have to say that they aren't up to it. You can see that internally. The situation isn't perfect by any means. There are some people in here, dare I say who can't actually collaborate internally".

P8 stated that "a common thread is beginning to emerge with joint working where for example service officers may see the value in collaborating, however others may not recognise those benefits and may challenge it. I think that a lot of people are very traditional in their outlook and are very focused on their own organisation". Many respondents felt that a number of organisations, including those that are partners of the RLP are not armed practically to collaborate. There is a view that they see collaboration as the role of a particular person, usually at a senior level in an organisation to engage in the collaboration process and perceive it as paying lip service.

Leadership was identified by many respondents as a prime 'blocker'. P1 stated that:

"the willingness to work collaboratively is set by leadership. It is not always possible to do this as sometimes it can offer incentives and then other times you question the benefit / threat to long term sustainability. The scale of operation has an impact on how effective collaboration can be. If an organisation operates on a regional basis then the bigger picture can be viewed, however the smaller the organisation the more risk is perceived. Building collaboration into the new structures of public sector organisations provides a better forum for decision making. Collaboration to some extent has been retro fitted into existing organisational structures".

There is a need for organisations to have a clear position on collaboration. It is a change management programme which involves engaging with stakeholders and the leadership is the visioning and taking people with you, rather than forcing everybody to collaborate. The development of staff to be able to lead effectively 'from the side as well as from the front' is essential in this process. When re-interviewed, P3 stated that:

"partners of the RLP are more experienced, the problem is that they will be the usual suspects and what we are lacking is the corporate buy in to joint working. Organisations feel under threat as they have to make decisions about 'delaying' staff structures. It's a case of a cultural issue that collaboration is a nice thing to do, and is not seen as a core function. Do we have a collaborative practitioner workforce – more people have been trained, supported and developed, but it's not widespread enough. The first response of organisations is not, can we solve problems collectively? There is a balance in terms of how an organisation strategically collaborates and then more from an operational perspective of how this is delivered on a day to day basis. There is a quite a distinct skill set for both elements".

P9 noted that "it is hard work – it takes a lot of personal, social and technical skills. The key to it is effective leadership. We need to look at how they are being trained and how their personal development needs are being met. This agenda is not going away, whether we do it ourselves or whether it is imposed on us through reorganisation". Feedback from the respondents suggested that if the purpose and the want to collaborate is not understood or embraced from the 'top down' and disseminated within an organisation, then this lack of leadership is a fundamental barrier to the process. There was a suggestion that there is a failure amongst organisational leaders to understand or embrace the concept of collaborative leadership – that is where everyone is on an equal footing working together to try and address a problem, start something new or to manage a joint initiative. Further to this was the recognition that the challenge is about balancing leadership in hierarchies and networks, particularly when there is representation from many organisations where the scale and operation varies significantly.

P8 stated that “the need to equip the work force with the skills to collaborate, especially senior management. Collaboration is seen as part of an ‘add-on’ to somebody’s job. There is a lot about leadership and culture that needs to be disseminated in an organisation. The private sector and the FE / HE sector are looking to local authorities for leadership”.

The findings of the research suggest that many of those interviewed were aware of the adoption of good practice models. Participants recognised that the Welsh Government had adopted collaboration as it’s means for implementing public sector reform and compelled those organisations involved in the design and delivery of services to work in this way. They further acknowledged that there were a number of examples of collaborative partnerships across Wales in a number of different sectors and that lessons learnt from these could be applied widely.

P11 stated that there is a “tendency is to push for similar partnership models to those used under programmes such as Objective 1 that tend to assume a positive outcome for all partners. Where this has been possible under the European Structural Fund Convergence Programme you can see collaborations taking place. What is less obvious is where someone around the table stands to lose out. We have yet to see this in practice, and that will be the real test of partnership”.

A general observation from many was that learning how to collaborate is merely learning from experience whether it is working towards an agreed objective or responding to a policy directive or tendering opportunity. P8 stated that “I don’t sit in the office with a book saying that this is a collaborative model and I will follow it. If you

said that there is a particular name to a collaborative model, then I wouldn't know any different". P5 suggested that "no academic principles are applied to collaboration".

A number of key skills sets to collaborate more effectively were identified. These are summarised below:

Communication - staff development to disseminate the benefits of collaboration to ensure a more acquired knowledge and a cultural acceptance of this way of working is essential. Promoting key messages of what the organisation is aiming to achieve via working collaboratively is crucial such as eliminating unnecessary competition and ensuring that officers are equipped with sufficient interpersonal skills to deliver this agenda. Parallel to this is a wider sectoral awareness and understanding, with the identification of ambassadors who have key specialisms. Effective communications and good strategic links within organisations are essential so that they can respond confidently to external requests and make the most of the opportunities that collaboration can offer;

Processes – When re-interviewed, the P10 commented that "there is a need to develop systems locally rather than prescribed by the Welsh Government. This is a challenge when organisations do not take the lead. There is the organisational capacity, however there has to be an appreciation that people have day jobs. There is no guidance to develop this. Processes develop organically rather than being given a strategic direction by the Welsh Government, for example";

People Skills - Local government traditionally operates through professions for example planning and social work. Officers learn the technical tools of trade, but this does not necessarily provide individuals with the 'people skills'. The inability to relate

to people and the lack of managerial skills are key barriers to progressing collaboration internally within an organisation. P8 stated that:

“you only have to look through an organisation, yes, they are very good at their job, but they can’t see bigger pictures and that holds us back big time. You can undertake professional courses about collaboration, but I think it’s still a big learning curve. You can see it in any organisation that people embrace collaboration naturally and are good people performers and they’ve got managerial technique so I think that’s our big deficiency”.

P14 stated that:

“most of us don’t have the skills for collaboration and I’m not sure that there’s something despite courses and all of the other things that can easily be taught. In my mind people, can learn to be more collaborative, they can learn the theory of it, but on the whole people either have the road to Damascus moment, they either have that innate ability to see that and will to collaborate and desire to link with others”.

P9 commented that “organisational structures in the public sector do not allow for flexibility. All organisations have their own agenda and the political process is confused as there is no clarity in terms of accountability and a new form of governance is required. Wales is only a small country! Governance of collaboration is informal and voluntary. Organisations can become parochial when answerable to their own reporting structures. You can spend a lot of time building up relationships with people”.

The challenge is how to overcome this particularly when organisational silos exist with officers demonstrating traits of not being concerned about how their work impacts on larger organisational performance / decisions. It is important to ensure organisational ‘buy in’ to collaboration and that this is firmly embedded into the culture and the ‘mindset’ of the staff. There is also a need to challenge what organisations are doing – can it be done better / differently? In times when human resources are stretched in

organisations, how do you get more out of an individual who is already at full capacity?

When re-interviewed, P7 stated that:

“people within the RLP are more experienced in collaboration. There is a need to recognise the autonomy of organisation as people will not come with trust. Organisations can create a culture where collaboration is recognised and is rewarded and that gives people confidence to do this. If you collaborate in the feeling that you are being disloyal to your own organisation because you are collaborating with a competitor than you will not be confident in that collaboration. It’s about leaders of organisations creating a culture of collaboration and acknowledgement that it is important that there is a genuine commitment to this”.

Measuring and Evaluating Collaboration – With respect to the cost and benefits of collaboration, one of the respondents stated that “there is a vulnerability to the out dated but still nonetheless held view in business that if you can’t measure it then it’s probably not worth doing”. Effective use of data and good quality self-evaluation processes are crucial tools which have the ability to influence the way that organisations and individuals view the work of the partnership and the collaboration agenda that it wishes to drive forward.

An observation from P12 was that it is very time intensive to attend all of the ‘meetings’ prior to the collaborative activity actually happening stating that “skills come from good recruitment in the first instance, so it is not so much the skills but more of the time to invest at the front end”. The Welsh Government Official stated that “collaboration, I think it’s the only way forward. England is going the wrong way...competition, competition. It uses up resources, rather than opening up resources. My organisation needs leadership to be more positive about collaboration and to identify skills within it and use it appropriately rather than trying to force everybody to collaborate”.

4.4 Conclusion

The key messages from the research undertaken have provided the means to elicit a practical perspective on the application of collaboration as a method to deliver public services and to determine the factors required for effective collaboration. Table 7. provides a summary of the findings as linked to the themes identified from the literature review.

Table 7. Summary of Findings Linked to the Key Literature Review

Themes

Theme Number	Theme Area	Key Findings
One	Defining Collaboration	This is dependent upon the position of both the actor and organisation in the collaboration process. Participants found it more challenging in defining collaboration within their own organisations in comparison to external collaboration with other organisations. Different sectors have different roles in the collaborative process.
Two	Motivational Factors to Collaborate	Participants considered efficiency savings to be a motivational factor for organisations to collaborate. There was an expectation by the Welsh Government for organisations to collaborate with respect to the delivery in the policy area of skills. Participants felt that collaboration was a 'nice to have', but it now more essential than ever due to limited financial resources and there being no other alternative mechanism being advocated by the Welsh

		Government for public service reform.
Three	Benefits of Collaboration	<p>The RLP has benefited learners in a way that individual organisations could not have achieved.</p> <p>The strategic influence that collaborative activities can have such as the work of the Regional Learning Partnership, which individual organisations would not have been part of or have been able to achieve or influence.</p>
Four	Barriers to Collaboration	<p>Smaller organisations consider they do not have a voice in a collaborative endeavour where larger organisations are considered to have more power and influence.</p> <p>Given that collaboration is a key policy directive for public sector reform, the findings question whether organisations feel coerced into collaborating and consider that it is something they have to do to ensure future funding allocations / strategic influence in shaping future policy decisions.</p> <p>Conflict between strategic objectives of a collaborative activity and individual organisational goals. Lack of a formal governance structure of the collaboration process – clarity of purpose of the activity, lack of reporting structures and ownership of the process.</p>
Five	Measuring Outcomes of Collaboration	<p>Ownership of the outcomes of a collaborative activity are complex.</p> <p>Challenging to measure the impact of a collaborative activity as often it takes time to realise this.</p> <p>Outcomes are only measured when it is a requirement of an organisation's performance review</p>

		or as part of an external funders terms and conditions of the award.
Six	Skills required to Collaborate	Some participants considered that some organisations' workforce is not equipped with the skillset to work collaboratively having worked in more traditional roles with limited experience in this area. Others considered that the workforce of the RLP's partner organisations were well equipped with the skillsets to collaborate. Leadership was identified as a key skillset to facilitate a collaborative activity.

To enable a detailed analysis of the research findings and to meet the study's aims, it was considered appropriate to focus on a selection of themes which would contribute to the body of knowledge in the area of collaboration and address existing gaps in the literature. In reviewing the findings and the themes that emerged, there were a number that could be discounted for the purpose of detailed analysis and it was considered that the findings of a number of themes could provide the opportunity to explore in further detail, specifically themes 4, 5 & 6. With respect to themes 1,2 & 3, it was considered that these were sufficiently covered in the existing literature. From the remaining three themes, three key areas in particular were considered to offer data rich sources to explore and analyse in chapter Five the factors required for effective collaboration. These are detailed below:

Leadership – how collaboration challenges traditional leadership and what success looks like. Is a single organisation's experience, technical knowledge and employee input replaced by collective experience, expertise that resides in collaborative partnerships and networks of collaborative associates, it is the latter two areas that are outside a Leader's direct control;

Governance of the collaboration process – who owns the collaborative activity when there is no formal governance structure? How is success / failure shared and what mechanisms are in place to ensure that this is equitable?;

Measuring outcomes – How can the outcome of a collaborative activity be measured with respect to impact, particularly when so many are long term? It is often challenging to measure the financial benefits in comparison to other areas such as information exchange, good practice and strategic influence. Is it only the softer outcomes of collaboration that can be measured and evidenced?

Chapter Five: Discussion

5.1 Introduction

This study sought to identify the elements that practitioners feel is required for effective collaboration. The research findings identified that the three crucial elements were leadership, governance of the collaboration process and measuring outcomes. This was within the context of public sector services in Wales and in the policy area of skills. Limitations were identified in the existing evidence base about the practical application of collaboration, particularly in the field of public services in Wales. This chapter analyses the research findings within the context of the existing literature.

5.2 Review of Research Findings

The existing literature puts forward collaboration as a model for the delivery of public sector reform in Wales which fits with the new public governance. This is typified by a shift in the public domain from hierarchies, characterised by vertical, bureaucratic centrally controlled structures to the introduction of networks as a governance structure which are associated with horizontal structures and involving a greater number of organisations, termed the 'hollowing' out of the state (Rhodes, 2000).

This research has found that in the view of the participants, there are three essential factors on which successful collaboration is dependent. These are - leadership, governance of the collaboration process and measuring of outcomes. In essence, the study has addressed what O'Flynn (2009) has described as the role of academics, which is to cast a critical eye over the rhetoric of collaboration. The literature abounds with examples of the benefits of collaboration with the overriding assumption that these

arrangements are a good thing (Smith et al, 2006). The study provides an examination of this in practice.

As is evident in the literature, collaboration has been identified as a model of addressing policy problems where single organisations have failed (Bryson et al, 2006; Hambleton and Howard, 2013; Mischen, 2015, Cristofoli et al, 2015). Furthermore, public policy literature over the last two decades has documented that there has been an international shift in public service organisations from hierarchies towards networks as an effective policy response to 'wicked problems' (Ferlie et al, 2011). This viewpoint is further supported by Ansell and Torfing (2015) who state that:

“although hierarchies and markets continue to play a crucial role in regulating society and the economy and delivering public and private services, collaborative forms of governance are proliferating, fuelled by institutional complexity and political fragmentation and driven by the recognition that no single actor has the knowledge or resources to solve complex societal problems” (p.315).

This study provides new evidence of the operation of collaboration in practice and highlights the elements from those involved in the process that determine its success. This has been an important point for Welsh public services, particularly those designed and delivered by local government, which have witnessed a shift from central control and delivery to one of collaboration (Fudge, 2006). This study offers a richer understanding of collaboration as it highlights a practitioner's perspective and adds to the body of empirical evidence, which the literature suggests is latent in this area (Warburton et al, 2008; Williams, 2010a).

In much of the existing research, collaboration is presented as an approach for government to provide more joined up solutions to address multiple complex social

problems that individual organisations are unable to solve (Keast and Brown, 2005; Reich, 2000). The evidence presented in this study adds to existing research in that whilst collaborative working can be a mechanism to tackle public policy issues, its limitations must be considered in that it is not a 'panacea for all ills' (Gray, 1989; White, 2001).

Collaboration has been key to Welsh Government policy for over a decade, which provides a rationale for a review of the policy in practice. It has been further suggested that its application has been challenged by managerial changes and there has been calls for more empirical studies of inter-organisational collaboration to understand the need of the factors that determine successful collaborative initiatives (Warburton et al, 2008).

The key findings of this study highlight the importance of leadership, governance of the collaborative process and measuring outcomes and explores:

- what kind of leadership style facilitates collaborative working?;
- who owns the collaborative activity when there is no formal governance structure?;
- how is success / failure shared and what mechanisms are in place to ensure that these are equitable?;
- how can the outcome of a collaborative activity be measured with respect to impact, particularly when so many are long term?

These process issues, from a practitioner's perspective, are critical for effective collaboration. Existing evidence in Wales in this area has focused on areas which include: multi-sector partnership (Entwistle, 2006; Bristow et al, 2008); the role of

public sector officials in partnerships; and the governance of Welsh public sector services (Martin et al, 2014). From a wider public sector context, studies have included a focus on collaboration governance and leadership for collaboration (Lowndes and Sullivan, 2004 & Sullivan et al, 2012). This thesis contributes to the collaboration discourse by identifying from a practitioner's perspective the elements on which successful collaboration is felt to be dependent.

5.3 Analysis and Evaluation

Prior research on collaboration has focused heavily on the policy areas of health and social care (Hudson, 1999a and b; Jones et al, 2004; Glasby et al, 2010). This study complements this understanding by providing information that more attention needs to be focused on other policy areas - with respect to this research it is the skills agenda. Furthermore, the study has found that practitioners involved in collaborative activities need to be appropriately supported to be equipped with the necessary competencies to implement this successfully. It further contributes to strengthening the evidence based practice in the area of skills within a Welsh context.

Leadership for collaboration activities requires a broader range of skills than is associated with traditional leadership traits. This is a clear shift away from the manner in which many organisations have historically operated, but this is somewhat in its infancy, particularly within Welsh public services. The literature evidences that this is an ongoing issue with respect to the delivery of public sector services, with the “traditional ‘lone warrior’ at the apex of the organization have, to a large extent, has been supplanted by a model of distributed leadership across all levels of public services delivery, on the basis the latter better fits the pluralistic public services context” (Currie

et al, 2011, p.243). Evidence from research undertaken by Dickinson and Sullivan (2014) on the 21st century public sector workforce “suggests that there is a need for a new kind of public sector leader to respond to the changing context, in which leadership beyond boundaries and beyond spans of authority will become important. Rather than focusing on individuals we will need to think about forms of distributed or dispersed leadership” (p.12).

The model developed from this study highlights that for any collaborative activity to be successful, the governance process must be clear. This is with respect to decision making, understanding responsibility, purpose, roles and clarifying leadership, dealing with power and influence, together with the growth, development and the focus of the collaborative activity. There are significant challenges to this aspect of collaboration at many levels.

The third factor identified as important was around measuring outcomes. Whilst it is well documented that for any collaborative activity to be successful, there is a need to specify outcomes from the outset of collaborative activity, what proves to be challenging is evidencing the outcome of the activity as it takes time to see the impact and calculate the efficiency savings. Further challenges are encountered in agreeing a set of outcomes, which are often conflicting (Perrin 2002; Baker and Kilgour, 2011).

Chapter Two presented three academic frameworks and considered the key factors that determined the shape of a collaboration and explored the level of its application. The first was Gray’s (1989) which is a conceptual three-phase model involving problem setting (identifying key stakeholders and issues), direction setting (identifying and

sharing future collaborative interpretations; appreciating a sense of common purpose) and implementation (institutionalizing the shared meanings that emerge as the domain develops). Whilst the rhetoric of this framework presents collaboration as a cyclical process that places the stakeholder at the heart of the model, there is an assumption that there is an equality of power amongst participating individuals / organisations. Its application to date has been limited to the Tourism sector, therefore questioning its application in other sectors.

The second academic framework presented is Jones et al's (2004) adoption of Hudson's model of collaboration in the health service in Wales. Hudson's framework consists of 'ten stages of collaborative endeavour'. Jones et al (2004) note that Hudson (1999) suggests that the 'stages' should be termed 'components', due to their non-sequential formatting. There are merits with this framework as it relates to the application of a rhetoric model in a Welsh public sector practitioner context and many of the findings of the data are similar to those identified in this thesis, notably highlighting the factors that need to be considered when developing the collaborative arrangements with respect to the governance process. Jones et al's (2004) model does not identify leadership as one of its stages of undertaking collaborative activities. There is also a latency in relation to the need to define outcomes and an identification of the appropriate mechanism to measure their achievement.

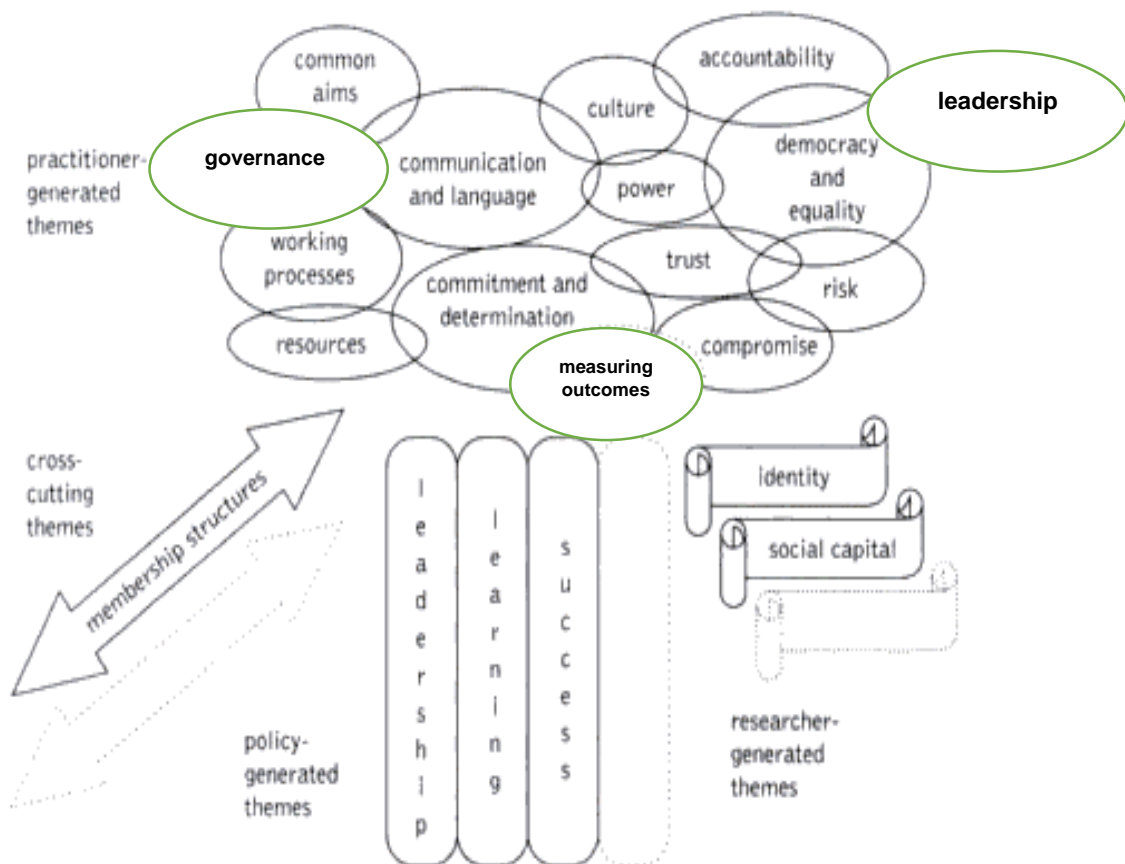
The third framework presented in the literature review was Huxham's (1993) notion of collaborative advantage, presented as model by Huxham and Vangen in 2005. The term focuses on the "advantage which might be gained from collaboration and making the obvious contrast to competitive advantage it raises the profile of collaborative

advantage giving it legitimacy and status” (p.602). The approach is beneficial from a practitioner perspective as empirical evidence has been collated to explore the issues relating to collaborative activities. Sydow (2006, p.605) suggests that the framework “provides fresh insights by presenting new concepts such as partnership fatigue, collaborative inertia and collaborative thuggery and by putting older ones such as leadership and identity into new perspectives”. Essentially, the framework recognises from a practical viewpoint the challenges surrounding the collaboration process providing practitioners with a shared sense that they are not the only ones experiencing this.

The proposed new approach to collaboration derived from the findings of this study builds upon Huxham and Vangen’s (2005) model of collaborative advantage. Of the three models of collaboration presented in chapter Two, the approach of Huxham and Vangen’s model is similar to the findings of this study in that it draws on the perspectives of practitioners. Figure 6. highlights the connection and overlap between the two approaches.

Figure 6. Collaborative Approach Building on Huxham and Vangen's Model

THE THEORY AND PRACTICE OF COLLABORATIVE ADVANTAGE



Huxham and Vangen's (2005) model of collaborative advantage presents a number of themes generated via practitioners. This study has built upon the model in that it has generated further themes recognised by practitioners that are considered to be crucial for effective collaborative activity. There are a number of overlaps with respect to what both Huxham and Vangen's model and this study have identified driven by practitioners in the area of governance, with the latter highlighting some of the themes associated with the overarching governance of the collaboration process and the study corroborating this. Huxham and Vangen's model however does not explicitly identify leadership as a theme generated by practitioners; however, it is with respect to a policy

generated theme. The findings of this study however have identified this factor as crucial skillset to ensure effective collaboration. Huxham and Vangen's model does not highlight the outcomes of a collaborative activity, whereas this study has recognised the need to measure the outcomes of such activities with respect to determining its impact.

Similar issues emerged from the findings of this study which are summarised in Table 8.

Table 8. Huxham and Vangen Model Themes and Thesis Themes

The two columns aim to summarise the similarities of the themes generated via practitioners of the research undertaken by Huxham and Vangen to develop their model of Collaborative Advantage and this thesis' findings with respect to the themes raised by the participants.

Huxham and Vangen Model - Themes Raised by Practitioner	Thesis Findings – Themes Raised by Participants
Common Aims (that managers often cannot agree on)	Clarity is required as to why organisations are collaborating and who owns the process
Power Sharing (that often cannot be achieved)	The scale and size of an organisation will determine the level of influence in a collaborative partnership
Trust (that is difficult to develop given the omnipresent opportunism)	Trust is essential to gaining momentum early on in any collaborative endeavour
Partnership Fatigue (that results not least from a lack of clarity and accountability)	Ownership of the governance structure and clarity on what this looks like is essential in driving collaborative activities
Leadership (that is not always in the hands of members and continually has to meet dilemmas and difficulties)	Leadership – a critical factor for successful collaboration

The remainder of the section will now focus on each of the three areas in more detail: leadership, governance of the collaborative process and measuring outcomes.

5.3.1 Leadership

The majority of this study's participants felt that leadership was central to successful collaboration. As is well documented in the literature, the last three decades have experienced a growth from government to governance as a vehicle for modernisation of public services (Currie et al, 2011; Hambleton and Howard, 2013) which has witnessed a shift in leadership style from a vertical, hierarchical to one which is more distributed. This study provides further evidence to support this in that traditional styles of leadership associated with individual organisations were felt to be not 'fit for purpose' for collaborative practices.

Participants felt that leadership is crucial for collaboration and that it requires a specific skill set, with a recognition that this way of working for the design and delivery of Welsh public services is not going away. In 2016, the Welsh Government published the result of a three-year evaluation of the European Social Fund Local Service Board and Priority Delivery Project, the aim of which was to support projects across local authorities in Wales designed to improve outcomes for citizens in a wide range of policy areas such as health and social care, employment, transport, environment, and housing. The evaluation's analysis suggested "that strong leadership, providing the authority and credibility to engage and galvanise partners, is crucial to facilitate learning within and between local areas and transfer knowledge about collaboration to the Welsh Government" (Downe, 2016). The published report further stated that "senior strategic leadership of regional collaboration is essential – and that this is most

effective when combined with other, complementary types of leadership at different levels (i.e. distributed leadership)” (Downe and Hayden, 2016, p.7). This is also the experience of the evolution of the RSP model in Wales in that the origin of the first partnership was a bottom up regional approach to addressing the post 16 skills agenda, the learning from which led to the establishment of a further two in Wales and the model which has been adopted by the Welsh Government.

In Huxham and Vangen’s (2005) framework of collaborative advantage, leadership is identified as a policy-generated theme of collaboration, identifying in practice that “much of what is done by those who take a lead in moving collaboration forward may be said to be fundamentally within the spirit of collaboration. However, the same people are also engaged within activities, that, on the face of it, are much less collaborative. Many of them are adept at manipulating agendas and playing the politics” (p.57). The findings of this study were similar in that from an external perspective, organisations may appear to be willing to collaborate, whilst internally they are positioning themselves against their competitors and engaging in the process with significant vested interests. Given that collaboration is and continues to be the Welsh Government’s preferred model to implement public sector reform the respondents felt that there was no choice but to engage in the process for fear of losing the ability to influence policy and lose funding. One of the interviewees stated that “the willingness to work collaboratively is set by leadership. It is not always possible to do this as sometimes it can offer incentives and then other times you question the benefit / threat to long term sustainability”. The research also highlighted that introducing collaboration as way of working into an organisation was a change management programme with the role of leader not only ‘visioning’ the benefits to staff, but also to ensure that they are developed to lead

effectively “from the side as well as from the front”. The findings further identified a failure amongst some organisational leaders to understand or embrace the concept of collaborative leadership. The existing literature supports this finding and recognises that there is a need to develop public sector leadership. This is outlined in the Williams Commission report on Public Service Governance (2014, p.2) in that “the key facets of leadership in the future will require far greater focus on the necessary strategic skills combining visioning, acting as a catalyst and influencing through skills of business intelligence and partnering”. P8 stated:

“unless you have the driver / objective of why you want to collaborate and the leadership of setting the agenda, the practical implementation of the collaboration agenda does fall by the wayside”.

Huxham and Vangen’s (2005) model recognises that there is an equal importance of structures and processes in leading agendas as well as those who participate in the collaborative activity. The findings of this study aligns to this in that the challenge of collaboration is about balancing leadership in hierarchies and networks, particularly when there is representation from a number of organisations, where the scale and operation varies significantly. This finding is further supported by the literature with Purdy (2012) acknowledging that “the growing use of collaborative methods of governance raises concerns about the relative power of participants in such processes and the potential for exclusion or domination of some parties” (p.409) and Whitehead (2007) presenting the strong belief that partnerships facilitate more effective forms of participation than traditional forms of government. He recognises the ‘added value’ that this way of working brings and the need to utilise governance as a means to address the ‘hidden’ aspects of partnerships such as power struggles. Within the context of public sector services in Wales, collaboration will remain, however one P3 stated that it:

“needs test and challenge, but where does this comes from? The severity of the public sector cuts are so big, collaboration is now essential. The way that the Welsh Government reacts to this is essential. The RLP was responding to the Welsh Government agenda when it was first established, and this remains. There is however a lack of clarity about what the imperative is”.

The findings support existing research undertaken by Thomspson and Perry (2006) who share the importance in the premise in that traditional leaders have a narrow range of expertise. Hambelton and Howard (2013, p.49) also recognise that the implications of the shift from government to governance for local political leadership are significant. They note that “just as approaches to governing has evolved, so too have approaches to leadership in general and local leadership in particular. Changes in society and culture are constantly reshaping the meaning and nature of leadership, and theories of leadership are, not surprisingly, evolving and developing”.

This study’s findings highlighted leadership as a prime ‘blocker’ in the collaborative process, citing that if it is not driven from the top, organisational ownership is challenged. An interesting observation to complement this was, for staff to lead effectively it was important that within an organisation this was at both a vertical and a horizontal level – this is in relation to having the ability to influence within their own organisations where structures are traditional and formal and also across respective sectors and organisations where governance structures are informal and more holistic. This stage is about recognising and nurturing ‘reticulists’ (those who are skilled at developing and exploiting networks), and securing the commitment to engage in the process of front line staff (Jones et al, 2004). With respect to leadership style in the context of a collaborative activity, research undertaken by Cristofoli et al (2015) suggests that “network managers in a well-established and integrated network should

adopt a more flexible and informal style of governance by neglecting formalization and relying on the relationships between people” (p.512).

The findings of this study adds further evidence to the literature that new forms of leadership are required to deliver public services that cut across traditional organisational boundaries. Ferlie et al’s (2011) work retheorises the literature on leadership of public networks in the area of health policy. They found a relatively benign ‘post bureaucratic’ leadership style with high engagement from health professionals drawn into managerial roles. The findings of this study have similar findings with P9 stating that:

“existing organisational structures are not fit for purpose to collaborate. There needs to be some forward thinking leaders to take forward collaboration practically for the longer term. Collaboration will be challenged to move services on particularly with budget cutbacks and how we maintain the momentum and keep this at the forefront. You cannot ask people to work harder, but to work differently. Real facilitators to enable collaboration and innovation”.

Currie et al (2011) highlight in a networked arrangement the distribution of leadership does not mean an equal spread of leadership among all parties. There is the suggestion that power and influence may remain with certain participants in a network. Organisations who have established governance structures have formal vertical hierarchies and are led by one individual. Collaborative activities are characterised by a common willingness to work together informally often with no established legal governance arrangements. There was a feeling amongst the respondents that the leadership of a collaborative endeavour should not replicate how individual organisations operate i.e. that the largest participating organisation / sector that has

more political influence and access to greater financial and human resources directs how a collaborative partnership should operate. As P16 stated:

“building collaboration into the new structures of public sector organisations provides a better forum for decision making...Collaboration to some extent has been retro fitted into existing organisational structures”.

5.3.2 Governance of the Collaboration Process

This study has reviewed collaboration in practice and the second factor identified by this study in ensuring its effective execution is the governance of the process. For the purpose of this thesis, governance includes the following aspects: the legal status of a collaboration; the purpose of collaborating; reporting and monitoring processes; human and financial resources; decision-making and; risk and performance (Bingham, 2010; Huxham and Vangen, 2005; Ansell and Gash, 2008). Participants found that difficulty is encountered practically with respect to identifying the lines of accountability caused by a lack of formal governance structures. The impact that poor governance can cause includes issues such as failing to resolve conflict. This was the view of many of the study’s participants, with P8 stating that “the major issue with collaboration is governance and the lack of formal reporting structures. The collaboration agenda has forced people – there has to be an aim as it is expensive...If it’s a prelude for redesigning a service, where does which body report to?”.

This study has reviewed practice in two RSPs as an evidence base across Wales. One of the collaborations has been in place for over 8 years with the other more in its infancy.

A review of the views and perceptions of over 16 people determined key elements about collaboration in practice. There was a view from a number of the study's respondents that often collaborative activity is an add-on to their 'day job' and that working collaboratively is time intensive and is often a distraction to delivering this. It has further highlighted that those individuals who do not see the benefits of working collaboratively are traditional in their outlook and do not see beyond their own organisation. The literature presents a viewpoint of the need to recognise realism and aspiration in collaborative activities (Booth, 1988; Ranade and Hudson, 2003; Bingham, 2006; Dickinson and Sullivan, 2014).

There was a further view from the participant that there is an acceptance that the capacity of organisations is being challenged on certain functions. P3 questioned whether there was a collaborative practitioner workforce within public sector services in Wales, recognising that more people have been trained, supported and developed, but this is not widespread enough. This factor recognises the importance of the establishment of an appropriate culture if collaborative activity is to be successful.

Participants questioned whether as a result of external factors including depleting budgets and proposed public sector reorganisation that collaboration is merely implemented on the surface, with competition underneath. An interesting perspective is that rhetorically there is an assumption that collaboration is about equal representation and control. This review of collaboration in practice has evidenced that within the process there is vested organisational interest, resistance to change and decisions about who is best placed to deliver services. Many of the respondents shared this view, with P5 stating that:

“smaller organisations within the partnership feel that they do not have a voice and feel overpowered and perhaps been dominated into a way of working that they would not choose. It is important therefore to respect the autonomy of people who work in different organisations to what size, power or resource that organisation has you’ve gone into a partnership because together you can achieve a better result than if you were doing that on your own, therefore you need them just as much as they need you with your resource that you can put into it”.

The findings raise the issue about politics and power within a collaborative arrangement with the suggestion that larger organisations have the potential ability to dominate and influence the agenda for their own gain and that smaller organisations have less choice about whether they wish to be involved in such an arrangement as working independently their gains would be more limited. Is there a question about horizontal power in a collaborative arrangement whereby the representation of a larger, more dominant sector in comparison to a smaller sector has greater influence over decision making?

Collaboration is allied to a networked governance structure which, suggests Borzel (2011) provides “a conceptual lens to describe a situation in which ‘the state’, that is, the British government, was no longer able to produce effective public policies without relying on the resources of other, predominantly non-state, actors” (p.51) against a backdrop of strong tradition of functional, siloed and sectoral working. This study’s findings identified that respondents felt an increased pressure to collaborate, with a risk that organisations end up collaborating for ‘collaboration’s sake’, and ‘playing the game’ with uncertainty as to the outcome that collaboration is intended to achieve. P7 stated that:

“there is a conflict between collaboration and organisational autonomy. There is a delicate tension between being seen to be collaborating and self-interest of institutions. The existing structures mitigate against collaboration”.

What governance changes do organisations need to adapt to work collaboratively? Keast and Brown (2006) reference the historical changes and shifts in models of how the public sector has worked. They question what the required changes are for the government and community sector to successfully implement new networked service delivery arrangements and note that the alignment of policy and resource allocation has been problematic. A failure to shift fully to new methods of governance, measurement and evaluation that collaborative partnership models of operation are based upon is posited as one of the key challenges. This statement however is not empirically supported.

Ranade and Hudson (2003) argue that that if collaboration is widely regarded as the way for public services to be designed and delivered, finding a legitimate basis for collaboration may still be difficult as organisations are compromised by their priorities i.e. to deliver their core business targets and participate in inter-organisational partnerships. The reason why organisations collaborate and its meaning is not often clear (Hudson, 2002; O'Flynn, 2009). Work undertaken by Thompson et al (2009) states that the "lack of consensus among scholars on the meaning of collaboration makes it difficult to compare findings across studies and to know whether what is measured is really collaboration (p.25). They further recognise the difficulties that this presents for practitioners as "differing governance standards across organizations often have the ironic effect of straining already tenuous collaborative efforts" (p.25). Currie et al (2011) suggest that organisational objectives are frequently set by stakeholders external to networks and specifically by policymakers.

The findings are similar in that they suggest that engaging in the collaboration process was not a choice by many of the respondents and their organisations, rather that they felt pushed into it. Many of the participants in this study identified the benefits of working this way, but there was a view that this is not the initial response of organisations when addressing strategic or operational issues. The instinct of many was to 'go it alone', but they felt that collaborative activities were secondary when it meant prioritising the delivery of organisational targets.

This study's findings recognised that issues cannot really be solved with organisations working independently, and in order to eliminate duplication of activity there is an expectation to work collaboratively. P8 stated that "the collaboration agenda has forced people – there has to be an aim as it is expensive". Some considered that there was little option to choosing an alternative way of working with one respondent stating that "you'd be mad to ignore it", given the growing momentum of this policy directive, particularly with reference to the skills agenda in recent years. Much of the literature supports this (Huxham and Vangen, 2000; Beecham, 2006; Williams, 2014), particularly in the context of Welsh public service delivery. Since devolution, collaboration has been the "defining theme of Welsh public sector management...In part this reflects a principled choice in favour of co-operation rather than competition in service provision" (Williams, 2014, p.21). It has been the policy to collaborate, with the Williams review of Public Service Delivery and Governance within Wales (2014) indicating that this will continue to be the preferred model of working, however there is little evidence of the practice, hence the need for this study.

Designing and delivering public services collaboratively challenges the view of silo working practices within public sector agencies and seeks to realign the way that public services are traditionally delivered to make them reflect people's needs, rather than bureaucratic structures. For this model of working to be successful, effective governance structures need to be put in place. Rhodes' (2000) work is prominent in the literature on what is described as the 'hollowing out of the state', arguing that if a move from government to governance, which is typified by a shift from front line bureaucracy to more fragmented forms of service delivery, has the potential to challenge the effective delivery of public services, then this may result in what Broussine (2003) describes as a 'joined up mess'.

Huxham and Vangen's (2005) framework identifies the practitioner-themes of working processes and accountability as key to implementing collaborative activities, that is the need to have a clear rationale as to why organisations collaborate - explicitly, effective governance. P1 stated that:

"unless you have the driver / objective of why you want to collaborate the practical implementation of the collaboration agenda does fall by the wayside".

The research findings validates this by indicating that individuals are suspicious of collaboration in that it suggests a reduction in resources and potential job losses. With respect to the skills agenda, there are concerns about blurring organisational identity and the potential impact of this for service users, P2 stated that:

"people are suspicious that collaboration means that it is going to be followed swiftly by cutting resources and jobs because there are concerns about duplication of service delivery. However, there is a need to be clear about the distinction between this and complementary services. The fear of collaboration causes difficulty in terms of getting to this stage. With respect to the learner

there are concerns about blurring organisational identity, for example about which Institution the learner is actually studying with”.

There is limited evidence with respect to highlighting the practical challenges and barriers to working collaboratively. The findings of this study suggest that often partner organisations are challenged to resource attendance at meetings and also being able to claim success in the outcome of the collaborative activity. P11 stated that:

“we can’t evidence whether certain collaborative outcomes are as a result of the RLP. In other ways, there is room for greater collaboration between partners. The new wave of European funding will be interesting to see this panning out further”.

Effective governance arrangements in a collaborative partnership would remedy this issue, and it often relies on an organisation being a lead body. A common thread amongst many of the respondents was questioning whether their organisation was the most suitable to lead on the delivery of a particular service or activity. Applying for external funding was cited as an example with issues raised such as whether respective organisations or sectors had the necessary infrastructure and resources to support any new activity. P8 stated that organisations have:

“prescriptive barriers – procurement, legal, financial – serious barriers. If we are to take collaboration seriously, we need to overcome these barriers” .

This study has found that in the view of the participants a diverse skillset is needed to collaborate. P3 stated that:

“more work should be done to ensure that officers have the skills to develop the relationships across sectors and regions – this is an area that needs to be developed. There is a need to equip the work force, especially senior management. Collaboration is seen as part of an ‘add-on’ of somebody’s job”.

This is supported in the literature by research undertaken by Hatmaker (2015) on collaborative networks suggesting that there needs to be investment not only in the

softer skills required to undertake collaboration but also in the more technical skills necessary for knowledge management. How is this process then facilitated? Fenwick and McMillan (2005) make an interesting point about organisational learning in that:

“the questions of how organisations learn, what they learn, and how they fail to learn remain problematic when applied to the public sector. The paradox is that the learning process in public organisations is both more complex and more simple than government and others suggest...The assumption that collaboration and partnership are necessarily positive indicators of performance provides an escape route for organisations to set up the formal mechanisms for inter-organisational learning without taking to heart the spirit and culture of real improvement” (p.54).

Gugu and Dal Molin (2016) identified that, “participants in partnerships with a high level of diversity, however, provided a much more refined and complex view of the collaborative governance dimensions” (p.257). Research undertaken by Guarneros-Meza et al (2014) on boundary spanners in Local Public Service Partnerships analyses the role of senior civil servants finding that they “add value by acting as coaches who bring new ideas and help to build trust among local agencies and as advocates through being an important channel of communication between partnerships and national government” (p.1). Highlighted in their analysis is the need for boundary spanners to have a diverse skillset, including the “dexterity required to move in and across both the vertical and horizontal dimensions of collaboration...the need to be able to be ‘network champions’ who act as advocates...and ‘vision keepers’ by using their position in government to encourage local public service leaders to work together” (p.17).

Huxham and Vangen’s (2005) framework identifies the establishment of common aims as one of the practitioner-generated themes of a collaborative activity. Respondents felt that unless there was clarity of purpose for the collaboration then it was difficult to

encourage organisational 'buy in'. P5 stated that there is a need to have a "clear focus and governance to enable us to respond to the needs of the community it makes better sense with respect to joint working". P11 stated that there is a need to gain:

"a better understanding of what is required. Partners of the RLP are more experienced, the problem is that they will be the usual suspects and what we are lacking is the corporate buy in to joint working. Organisations feel under threat as they have to make decisions about 'delayering' staff structures".

The study builds upon this by highlighting that there is a need to determine from the outset a joint understanding about the basis for collaboration, particularly from policymakers in order to eliminate feelings of coercion of collaboration amongst those who are responsible for its implementation. The findings indicated that many of the respondents' organisations had historically worked independently and that a key organisational driver was very much about 'survival of the fittest' with collaboration being an alien way of working. It appears evident that an individual organisation's survival compromises its ability and desire to collaborate.

Trust is clearly important. Participants felt that without trust there would be little traction for collaborative working. It was recognised that investment in this area in the early days of establishing a partnership can pay dividends further on in the process, particularly in resolving areas of conflict (Webb, 1991; Huxham and Vangen; 2000, Thompson et al, 2009). This is a view shared by third sector organisations who participated in the research in that they would be unable to deliver their services without collaborating, due to issues of capacity and expertise. Smaller organisations within the partnership felt that they did not have a voice and felt overpowered and driven by the collaboration agenda set by the Welsh Government, which is not a way of working that some would have chosen. The viewpoint from some of the participants

from smaller organisations was that when working collaboratively, there is a need to respect the autonomy of people who work in different organisations regardless of their size, powerbase or resource. In Wales, collaboration is pushed, but the findings could suggest that it is not likely to work as people feel they have to do it. P7 stated that:

“it should be the generosity of partners to share resource and expertise. People within the partnership are more experienced in collaboration. There is a need to recognise the autonomy of organisation as people will not come with trust. Leaders of Institutions need to create a culture where collaboration is recognised and is rewarded and that gives people confidence to do this. If you collaborate in the feeling that you are being disloyal to your own organisation because you are collaborating with a competitor then you won't be confident in that collaboration”.

The study's findings raised several questions which focused on the ownership of problems and how to seek a collective resolution. One of the participants stated that if collaboration is a:

“prelude for redesigning a service, where does that body report to? With public service reorganisation, collaboration has been a means to facilitate this transition. The issue with collaboration projects is how do you agree in a big geography who leads, who misses out, but when the organisation is bigger, the layers will form”.

The literature explores how transparent the governance structures are in a collaborative activity (Broussine, 2003), but rarely questions how effective it is (McGuire, 2006). This study has found that collaboration is happening on the surface, but beneath that is competition, with organisational survival being a key driver. One of the participants highlighted that “collaboration as a way of working for the future operation of the organisation will continue to be the way we work while there is the political will, which will no doubt change back to competition at some stage”. There are factors which need to be considered which will affect the pace at which collaborative working can be realised. Practically it would be advisable to proceed incrementally, with the focus on a long term goal, which is where strong governance structures

strengthen the process. A further consideration from the findings was that external funding streams accessed by organisations for education, skills and regeneration related activities can often promote competition and not collaboration. P5 highlighted this issue questioning the appropriateness of whether certain organisations are best placed to deliver services stating that “there is the existence of vested interest...inter-agency rivalry has not gone away – perhaps just underground”. From a policy perspective, collaboration is prescribed as the model for public service delivery in Wales, but what has not been fully addressed is the matter in hand. What is the alternative? This study has recognised that there is a need to develop appropriate ways to collaborate at a local level, rather than the Welsh Government prescribing different models of working. Sullivan and Skelcher (2003) claim that, “collaboration is now central to the way in which public policy is made, managed and delivered throughout the world. Globally, partnership is the new language of public governance” (p. 1).

Formal governance structures in any collaborative activity is critical. There has been a growing literature on governance theory, which indicates the changes in public service delivery models (Painter, 1998; Moon, 1999; Rhodes, 2000; Taylor, 2003; Hill and Lynn, 2005). What can be evidenced from this study is that when governance is informal and voluntary, collaborative partnerships can only proceed so far. However, participants of this study had a very strong viewpoint that unless their organisations engaged in the collaborative process they would ‘lose out’ with respect to influence and allocation of resources for their given sector as this has been the model selected by the Welsh Government for public service design and delivery. P8 stated that:

“there is a challenge that if you don’t collaborate, there is another model which you must work to from a Welsh Government perspective”.

Organisational structures within the public sector are not flexible. There are blurred lines of accountability and conflicting agendas. Collaboration requires formal governance structures, regardless of the makeup of the partnership. P10 commented that:

“all organisations have their own agenda and the political process is confused as there is no clarity in terms of accountability and a new form of governance is required. Wales is only a small country! Organisations can become parochial when answerable to their own reporting structures. You can spend a lot of time building up relationships with people”.

This viewpoint delivers a useful insight, particularly from a Welsh context into the need to establish a formal governance structure to manage a collaborative activity.

5.3.3 Measuring Outcomes

The third factor, identified in this study on which effective collaboration is dependent upon is measuring the outcomes of a collaborative partnership. As has previously been highlighted, ownership of those outcomes is complex (Boyne and Law, 2005). On the one hand the study suggests that it is easier to see the strategic benefit of collaborative working, in that organisations working independently cannot solve complex problems in service design and delivery. On the other hand, however, the findings suggested that this in itself is challenging particularly in the current climate of the public sector in relation to influencing organisations that are working to their own strategic plans, tighter budgets, and responding to other external pressures. The data gathered in this study suggested that practitioners feel that it is not easy to measure the financial and organisational impact of collaborative activities. P11 stated that:

“how do you realise the benefits of collaboration from a financial resources perspective? If collaboration is creating a more complicated system than previously – questions need to be asked”.

This is significant in justifying the adoption of a collaborative approach in the development and delivery of public services and its legacy. This evidence base is pivotal for politicians and policymakers alike to continue the advocacy of collaborative working and for public sector bodies to tangibly measure the effectiveness of their delivery. Building on this, the findings suggested that this is often about responding to governmental policy directives without questioning the practical implications and whether this is the best option. This study identified similar findings with P8 stating that:

“the challenge from a policy perspective is that there is a strong need to collaborate without being provided with the tools. I don’t know if the Welsh Government know how these are delivered on the ground when you are looking at large organisations with individual systems. There is more cross border working – what it doesn’t do in the short term is to save money, in fact it may cost more. That is the challenge that you face at a local level – how you pick your way through this. What has happened, local authorities have started to work it out for themselves and developed their own systems to implement collaboration. There is no direct evidence from the Welsh Government on this”.

This finding raises questions about the alignment of organisational systems to efficiently establish the collation of outcome metrics of the collaboration process. Given that this policy area is being driven by the Welsh Government, should there not be frameworks provided for collaborative activities to work to? The existing evidence (Dickinson and Sullivan, 2014) offers the view that much of what has been written about collaboration treats it as a rationalist and instrumental tool to bring about particular ends; more often than not, improved service-user outcomes or reduced inequalities, for example in health, employment, or education. Yet the evidence to support a clear link between collaboration and these types of outcomes is weak at best, compounded by the evaluative challenges researchers face in assessing performance, including the challenge of defining collaboration. Nevertheless, collaboration continues to be seen as a crucial activity for those involved in delivering public services in the

current fiscal context, and individuals and organisations still invest considerable time and resources in collaborative activities (Sullivan et al, 2013).

This is perhaps all the more surprising given the accounts, albeit limited, illustrating the difficulties associated with collaborative practices and working arrangements (Glasby and Dickinson 2008). Expanding this point was a further finding from the study which suggested that some policy areas do not lend themselves easily to collaboration. There may be a small service that does not work extensively with other organisations and thus can be a distraction from service delivery such as planning and environmental health.

The study identified the challenge with what should be the tools of measuring outcomes. P5 stated:

“with respect to measuring outcomes / impact - we don't do it very well. We have so many different types of collaborative activity – we may have Memorandums of Understandings with organisations, we have contractual obligations, we share staff with other organisations. In formalised collaboration – that's quite easy to measure. In terms of the RLP, it is very difficult to measure whether there is added value to our organisation; you then flip it over and ask what is the risk of us not being involved? What are the tools of measuring the outcomes?”

The issue of whether outcomes can be practically measured in collaborative working arrangements is challenged by the findings in that organisations and their employees can claim to 'buy into' and participate in collaborative activities, but what is often difficult to determine is how a successful outcome can genuinely be shared between those who have contributed or whether it is because of a few dominant partners. Research undertaken by Boyne and Law (2005) references that the Government is committed to using targets as a strategy to improve public services, and is increasingly

shifting the focus of these targets away from inputs and processes towards results or outcomes. They further cite examples to include Best Value, public service agreements for central departments and local authorities and local area agreements. An integral part of such results-orientated reforms is the complex task of defining the desired outcomes and specifying robust performance indicators to measure them.

To a certain degree, the research's conclusions reinforce a viewpoint from existing research in that outcomes and the legacy of collaboration is output and not outcome driven i.e. it is concerned with results, rather than impact for the longer term (Page, 2004). It should be about testing the rhetoric practically in the development and design of public sector services and evaluating the outcomes of these activities (Bate and Robert, 2002). Current research seems to validate the view that very little empirical work has been done on measuring the outcomes of collaboration and that politics in the past has failed because of the lack of partners' arrangements to be able to demonstrate improved outcomes (Dickinson and Sullivan, 2014; Williams, 2014).

A key finding from this study is that practitioners felt that collaborative working is undermined when organisations do not come together to agree on a set of shared outcomes. This finding supports existing evidence that much recent academic and policy debate has focused on the delivery of public services in networked settings, and intra-organizational co-ordination remains a critical issue (Pollitt and Bouckaert 2004), and is a longstanding theme in organisational theory and public administration (Andrews et al, 2012). The evaluation of the European Social Fund Local Service Board and Priority Delivery Project further identified that "overall, the evidence suggests that systems, processes and collaborative working arrangements have been

put in place, and these are important intermediate steps to delivering better outcomes. However, it was difficult to assess whether these changes have led to improved outcomes for service users” (Downe, 2016).

The focus on outcomes is not as evident in Huxham and Vangen’s (2005) framework, but identifies the need as to what determines success as a policy-generated theme. Within the literature there is a shortage of recognition of the need to define outcomes and an identification of the appropriate mechanism to measure their achievement (Langton et al, 2003; Hardy et al, 2003; Boyne and Law, 2005; O’Flynn, 2009).

Nylen (2007) questions how the effectiveness of collaboration arrangements can be assessed in terms of resource requirement versus outcome potential. A critique by Powell of a book written by Sullivan and Skelcher (2003) highlights that it is not clear whether individual and organisational capacities for collaboration are similar in all situations, or whether they differ between different partnership types. Powell (2003) further comments on the noticeable absence of results in the form of evidence about whether collaboration works in achieving better outcomes. Existing multi-partnership initiatives which they describe are evaluated utilising a tick-box framework. Kreuter et al (2000) examine possible reasons why published literature on community-based coalition strategies offer only marginal evidence that such approaches lead to health status/health systems change. One explanation that is provided is that it is difficult to evaluate and demonstrate a cause-and-effect relationship.

5.4 Conclusion

This section has identified three key elements that practitioners feel are required for effective collaboration - leadership, governance of the collaboration process and measuring outcomes. What is apparent is the divergence between the policy rationale and the public sector investment in the collaboration process and the absence of any evaluation framework for its implementation.

Chapter Six: Conclusion and Recommendations

6.1 Introduction

This final chapter presents the conclusion of the research of this study before presenting its contribution to knowledge. The study's findings are then explored and new insights offered with an emphasis on the practice of collaboration. The limitations of the study are then presented from the viewpoint of its design and implementation. The chapter ends with a focus on the limitations and implications of areas for further research for public service practitioners utilising collaboration as a mechanism for the design and delivery of services.

6.2 Key findings

The aim of the thesis was to identify the elements that practitioners felt were required for effective collaboration set within the context of Skills Partnerships in Wales. Existing research has confirmed that collaboration as a key policy driver to deliver Welsh public services will remain (Williams, 2014; Welsh Government; 2017b) and is heavily focused on the rhetoric of its benefits and considerations of the process. There is an absence of a strong evidence base of the benefits of collaboration to indicate that it is a sustainable model of working for the longer term. The model of collaboration proposed in this study builds on existing approaches and provides key elements which need to be considered by policymakers and practitioners in the context of public sector services in Wales. The three elements presented in this study are not driven by theory; rather they emerged from the case study findings. They provide practical guidance, highlighting the challenges for practitioners to be mindful of when undertaking collaborative activity.

The existing evidence base is limited on the evaluation of a collaborative approach and lessons learnt from this (Sullivan and Williams, 2007). There is focus within the existing literature on some areas of policy, most notably health and social care, but its wider application is limited. Bingham and O’Leary (2006) suggest that there is little explicit discussion about how collaboration plays out at different points in the policy process. Collaboration, they argue is likely to take a different form and have different outcomes upstream in the process (identifying a policy problem and identifying possible approaches to solving it) compared to midstream in the policy process (identifying public preferences among possible choices, choosing among the possible approaches, and implementing policy). In spite of what is often reported about the benefits of collaboration in theoretical and policy debates, the reality is that it has only offered a partial solution to challenges faced by the public sector within Wales. Entwistle states that “in place of sometimes a general and vague encouragement to collaborate, the Welsh Government might prioritise the good management and support of what it takes to be the most important collaborations” (2014, p.10).

On the one hand, Welsh public policy discourse over the last decade or so has witnessed the advocacy by the Welsh Government of collaboration as the model to address the growing complexities of public sector services over competition / marketisation of services. Whilst collaboration has been embraced rhetorically in a number of policy domains, as evidenced in this thesis, some commentators would argue that it has been policy led. The gap between process and results has grown significantly over this period in that whilst collaboration has been advocated as the way in which public services in Wales should be designed and delivered and has been adopted across a significant number of policy areas, the evidence of the impact of this way of working is rather limited.

Whilst the study confirms the theoretical merits of collaboration and is captured extensively in the literature, what is latent is research which captures the views of practitioners' in what elements are required for effective collaboration and in particular a focus on Welsh public services, which has been the aim of this study.

During the course of writing this thesis, the focus of the case study - RSPs in Wales has moved from one where it has grown organically from the bottom up, to one where the model has been embraced by the Welsh Government's Department for Education and Skills as the preferred approach to delivering and responding to the post 19 skills agenda in Wales. It could be suggested that this is due to the success of the original partnership's work. However, evidencing the impact of this continues to be a challenge for all of three established RSPs. Whilst this thesis has focused on a specific area of policy relevant to Wales, it has highlighted a number of issues which require further research in relation to the practical execution of collaboration as a model for the design and delivery of public sector services.

6.3 Research Implications for Policy and Practice

This section focuses on the implications of this research for policy and practice. The key finding from this study is that practitioners need to fully consider the factors of leadership, governance of the collaborative process and measuring outcomes in undertaking effective collaborative activity.

Practically, collaboration remains to be the advocated model for the Welsh Government to drive transformational change in the redesign and delivery of public services, but the approach with respect to how to collaborate since its introduction in 2004 is evidently

changing, with a recognition that working in this way has not achieved the original ambition of significant change and efficiencies. What is clear is that the level of expectation is higher with respect to the ability of governments to deal with multifaceted issues (Dickinson and Sullivan, 2014). At a Wales level, Mehmet (2015) states that:

“Wales has been talking about collaboration for years and there have been some successes, but it is yet to deliver transformational financial savings. There are many reasons, but fundamentally we haven’t truly embraced it because we haven’t been prepared to give up our spheres of control and because we haven’t had to. Perhaps collaboration was pushed too early – at a time when we all knew there were enormous efficiencies that could be made instead (2009-2013) and Welsh Government was protecting local government budgets from serious cuts. But our appetite for collaboration and other transformational approaches is now changing”.

The introduction in September 2014 of a new Ministerial post, Minister for Public Service in the NAW, provided an indication of the priority of the Welsh Government to delivering its ambitious public service reform agenda. The role focused on leading the implementation of the recommendations of the Williams Commission, with a significant emphasis on Local Government, with collaboration as the one of the mechanisms by which this will be delivered. To support this, a Public Services Leadership Panel was established in early 2015 whose role included encouraging and supporting innovative collaboration within and between service sectors, focusing specifically on creating more effective services. This provides further evidence of the Welsh Government’s commitment to collaboration.

One of the main themes of the Public Services Leadership Panel included the development of leadership capacity (Welsh Government, 2015). In November 2015, a Wales Public Services Summit was convened with the theme of Leadership and Change, with this as a key driver in the ambition of the Welsh Government to create a ‘One Welsh Public Service’ culture. At this event, the Minister for Public Services at

the time, Leighton Andrews AM stated that “perhaps one of the most important things we can do as public sector leaders is to let go, open and admit and that we don’t individually have all the answers. Ending the myth that strong leadership is unbending leadership. Accepting that none of us gets everything right all of the time...our own organisations...are not always the uncompromised objective delivers of absolute virtue that we would like them to be” (Leighton Andrews AM, 2015).

A Local Government Reform White Paper was published at the end of January 2017 setting out how councils will deliver some of their key services. The consultation period for the document will be for three months and it presents several proposals on mandatory regional working. The Local Government Minister, Mark Drakeford AM stated that:

“this White Paper is not about change for change’s sake. Our councils are working against a backdrop of extraordinary austerity and some services are facing a great deal of pressure. Local government reform is essential if we’re to make these services stronger and more resilient to cope with the demands of the future. The new regional arrangements will bring councils together to work more effectively in the interests of people and their communities” (Welsh Government, 2017b).

The Welsh Local Government Association’s response to this was that:

“The new White Paper builds on the constructive discussions that have occurred across local government since the autumn about Mark Drakeford’s proposals to continue local government’s progress around collaboration and regionalization” (WLGA, 2017).

Research undertaken by Downe (2016) aligns with a number of the findings of this thesis suggesting that looking forward:

“it will be important to learn the lessons from how councils have collaborated to date. Our research on regional collaborative working concluded that there are a number of factors which help to facilitate effective collaboration including:

- Leadership (by both senior managers and politicians);

- Setting up clear governance arrangements;
- Setting ambitious, realistic and measurable outcomes”.

This thesis demonstrates that the Welsh policy direction for the delivery of public services via collaboration has a number of challenges. It could be argued that policy has come first and there is a gap in the evidence base of how to collaborate. Examples of collaborative activity to date within the public sector have evidenced that the Welsh Government’s view of collaboration is as an end rather than a means, irrespective of the consideration of the costs and benefits, focusing more on the process rather than the outcomes (Williams, 2014). There is a visible need to address the latter areas in order to advise future performance of public sector organisations. Whilst the literature highlights a number of examples of its application as a model of working in the areas of health and social care, there is a latency in other policy domains such as skills. There is a need to understand collaboration in relation to specific sectors – it is not easy to draw knowledge from just one policy area. There are a number of differences between the two sectors that will make collaboration different. The health and social care sector has a long history of collaboration and lends itself well to do this where there has not been the culture of competition for financial resources and patient numbers. Organisations have been encouraged to work closely with one another for shared outcomes. Conversely, the skills sector has always operated in a competitive rather than a collaborative environment for both funding and student numbers. In recent years, the sector’s policy direction in Wales has been driven down this route.

There is a range of future research opportunities to identify what other disciplines have learnt to develop higher order theory for collaborative management, encompassing the public sector (Bingham and O’Leary, 2006). The participants’ responses indicated that

the adopted approach for collaborative activity was based on a common-sense approach often piloted as much of the activity had never been undertaken. Within a Welsh context this has significant policy implications from both a service improvement and public innovation perspective, as this continues to be the advocated model of working, however practitioners have not been equipped with sufficient tools to effectively undertake this process.

The remainder of this section provides a detailed diagnosis of each of these themes. The collaboration is challenged with respect to leadership, as a consequence of how public sector organisations have operated historically in more hierarchical, traditional settings. The study found that traditional leadership styles limit the range of expertise and for this reason, many organisations are ill equipped to participate effectively in the process with the end result being ineffective partnerships. Collaborative working introduces different ways of working, leadership styles, governance structures, and different conflict management strategies amongst many other factors. How a leader deals with issues in one organisation is a stark contrast to how it is addressed on a collaborative basis. There are practical leadership aspects which must be realised when engaging in collaborative activity and it is important to improve the understanding of this within the Welsh public service domain, in what Brookes and Grint (2010) term as a 'new public leadership challenge'. This highlights the need for leaders to have flexible skillsets in the development and delivery of public sector services. This has inferences with respect to the emergence of integrative leadership. With the unprecedented challenges that the public service currently and certainly within the next decade will experience, calling for radical change and innovation is a policy priority. Local Government has experienced significant cuts over the last five

years, and this is set to continue, which will have a number of 'tough decisions' to be made on what services will continue and what others will no longer be available. As Parker (2016) states:

“...this is not just a story about paying more and getting less in return. Behind the scenes, 2016 will see most councils plugging away at long-term transformation plans that will change the way services are delivered...Despite pressure on preventive spending, councils are continuing to invest huge amounts of energy in their relationship with the NHS. This will be the year when Greater Manchester and London implement forms of healthcare devolution, moving money from acute hospitals into local schemes that keep people fit and healthy. Some councils are taking inspiration from the government's troubled families programme, despite big concerns about claims of its success, and combining all of their social care, housing and community services into a single “department for deprivation”, focusing scarce resources on solving the problems...Finally, councils will simply stop doing things. Parks green spaces and street lighting are high up the list of services that are at risk, closely followed by the remaining smaller libraries”.

What also needs to be considered is whether existing governance and funding arrangements are fit for purpose to support collaborative activities. Evidence would suggest that currently this is not the case, rather that existing arrangements reinforce silos and disincentives for joint working (Williams, 2014). The research corroborates the findings of the Williams review in that public sector leaders should not only be able to manage an individual organisation, but be adaptive to change and be confident in dealing with complex issues, cross sectorally and across boundaries. Leadership for collaboration introduces a new way of addressing public issues and increasingly challenges the adoption of the more traditional approach, which could be described as vertical and top-down. “Institutional pride can override collaboration and actively handicap delivery than enable it...the Williams Commission report...stated the complexity of these challenges requires adaptive leaders. Those who can deal with uncertainty and ambiguity and are able to deal with issues where there is often no simple management solution” (Leighton Andrews AM, 2015).

This research provides evidence to suggest that when there is no established formal governance framework in place, there is an absence of a driver for collaboration. Given the changing environment of the Welsh public service moving to one which seeks to be more agile and leaner, the tension is exacerbated between individual organisations' need for their own survival and the need to engage in the collaboration process. On these grounds, it can be argued that the absence of any formal governance makes collaborating challenging as there are no formal accountability mechanisms in place. By comparison, individual organisations have established performance management systems regulated by inspection and audit, both internally and externally. This presents difficulties in measuring the impact of collaborative activities. Whilst it is well intentioned by partnerships to establish visions, set targets and internal review mechanisms, the lack of independent review mechanisms to assess performance does have implications for how good practice and improvements can be identified. This has current and future implications for collaborative practice, which by now, particularly within Wales is widespread. It has been evidenced that working collaboratively is a means to addressing complex policy issues and will continue to be a key policy driver for Welsh Government. On this basis, therefore it could be argued that there is a need to establish independent monitoring and review mechanisms to audit collaborative activities, but also to share good practice.

The study's research highlights that for collaboration to succeed and ultimately to improve public service design and delivery, there needs to be organisational 'buy in', by both leaders and also the people who work in organisations. It only requires one or two 'blockers' in the system for joint working to fail. The reality is that there will always be conflicting agendas and competing interests, but evidence borne from the research

suggests that there is a need to collectively negotiate shared purpose from the outset of any collaborative working arrangement. This is supported in the literature by Guarneros-Meza et al (2014). Their study of Welsh Government representatives (WGR) appointed to work with local public service partnerships in order to assist them to tackle wicked issues indicated that “the impact...upon the partnerships’ achievements often depends on the match between the needs of the local public service partnership and the WGR’s personality, skillset, expertise...” (p.17).

There is a need to consider how collaborative activity can be measured with respect to impact, particularly over the longer term. The research appears to validate the view that softer outcomes of collaboration can be measured and evidenced, however harder outcomes are more challenging. As highlighted earlier in the section, improvement in public service performance is currently externally measured via different sectoral arrangements, for example, Further Education via Estyn, and Higher Education via the Quality Assurance Agency. Accountability therefore in the collaboration process is challenging in comparison to marketisation and competitive models of working.

Establishing a clear mechanism to officially determine outcomes in any collaborative working arrangement, set against providers’ / partners’ expectations with clear accountable mechanisms in place is essential. There is a clear disparity currently within Welsh policy between the desire for collaborative practice to be adopted to solve multifaceted issues and a clear framework where longer term outcomes can be measured, lines of accountability be established and verified. The research supports the view that the outcomes of the collaborative process are compromised, making it

challenging for organisations to co-ordinate activities effectively when they are not clear from the outset. This is particularly relevant when responding to policy directives that beyond the headlines do not provide detailed clarity on what the desired outcomes are, rather prescriptive guidance which focuses on process and types of collaboration. Often is the case that the Welsh Government provides generic guidelines which are open to misinterpretation.

The literature suggests that the evidence to date on how to do collaboration within the Welsh context has had little impact on service standards or on attaining outcomes, with substantial resources invested to support the process more than the results have been able to justify (Williams, 2014). The findings indicated that there is a need to carefully consider when collaboration is the appropriate model of working, rather than being determined by the emphasis on policy. There is a need to gather a greater body of evidence to be able to credibly measure the impact of this Welsh model of service design and delivery. This is a significant policy implication given the continued emphasis by the Welsh Government that this will remain as the main model to transform and improve public services. The collaboration dividend has created a greater gap in rhetoric and reality across a number of service areas, which could in part be due to the lack of hard evidence in the outcome and impact of joint working.

6.4 Contribution to Knowledge and Literature

The research has enabled an exploration of practitioners' viewpoints of collaboration within the Welsh context, with a focus on the policy area of skills. Whilst this has been a key policy driver for the Welsh Government for well over a decade, few collaboration scholars have undertaken extensive evidence-based studies on what are elements

required for effective collaboration from a practitioners' perspective, with existing research focusing on the policy areas of health and social care with a focus on England (Kenkre et al, 2013; Wyatt & Wallace, 2011), but not broadly in other areas such as skills. This research has therefore added a further tier to this body of research by adding a new evidence base about Wales in the policy area of skills and presents the opportunity to undertake further research from the perspective of the practitioner.

Whilst there is a significant field of knowledge and a broad body of literature on the theory of collaboration there is limited practitioner-led research in the policy area of skills. With collaboration continuing to be the driver for public sector reform in Wales, the research has provided a strong evidence base for Welsh Government from a practitioner perspective for the considerations required to shape future policy in this area, contributing further to knowledge at this devolved level. It has opened up the debate particularly for the need to consider the key elements required for effective public sector collaboration and how this is acted upon by policymakers and practitioners alike. Whilst collaboration has been presented as a solution for reforming public services the evidence base of its success is negligible and highly questionable. With no alternative mechanism being offered by the Welsh Government to achieve this, their commitment to this approach remains. Hence the further need to build on the findings of this research. El Ansari et al (2001) suggest that what is needed to support the collaboration agenda is "evidence of its effectiveness. However, the nature of the evidence to assess the effectiveness is less clear" (p.215) – in essence, the study has contributed to this.

This study has contributed new and unique evidence to the discussion surrounding

evidencing the practical impact of collaboration as a means of delivering public services and greatly enhances the understanding of issues which need to be considered to determine positive results. It is the first study of its kind to focus on the Regional Skills Partnership model within Wales. It further proposes a number of considerations that can be adopted by Welsh policymakers and practitioners alike when undertaking collaborative activities, with the aim of supporting public sector organisations to become more informed practically, and what they need to be mindful of in the process. Rather than telling practitioners how to collaborate, the model focuses on those three elements practitioners identified as the most likely to determine a successful collaborative activity. To date, the academic literature has focused on collaborative models of working, more extensively on social care and health with a latency of the research focusing on skills. To enable collaboration to be implemented successfully, there is a need for further research in the areas of leadership, governance of the collaboration process and measuring outcomes, which this study has highlighted as impacting on the delivery of collaborative activity.

It became evident during the course of this study that there are significant gaps with respect to the rhetoric of collaboration and its application in practice in a Welsh public service context. What is also significant is the shift with respect to the Welsh skills agenda from one where the establishment of RSPs began as a bottom up approach to responding collectively to the skills agenda in one region in Wales to one which is top down, directed by the Welsh Government across Wales, which has been the experience of the establishment of the newest partnership in South East Wales. Noteworthy from the research is the focus, and evident over-focus on the merits of collaborative arrangements and the emphasis on process and allocation of resources to support this.

In contrast, is the lack of focus on areas of formal governance and setting and measuring the outcome of the collaborative effort. The study has shown what can be achieved through the study of collaboration within a particular policy domain, but is limited to the area of skills and a qualitative examination of only two of the three established RSPs in Wales. There is opportunity for further research in this area with respect to the delivery of the Welsh Government's Skills Implementation Plan and the role of the three partnerships, the impact of these experiences and the outcomes achieved.

This research has indicated ways in which this study might be enhanced by further research, and the possibility that other partnerships might be appropriate for similar study. It is the case that a wider range of samples is needed to enhance the findings and strengthen the interpretations that can be made about the elements that determine successful collaboration in the Welsh public service, particularly in other policy domains. This thesis is an important step forward in this process.

The study contributes to the knowledge on the need to measure outcomes of the collaborative process. Whilst the literature recognises the need for the public sector to make progress towards outcomes (WAO, 2010) and its ineffectiveness in specifying outcomes (Stewart and Stewart, 2004), methods of doing this with respect to collaborative activities are not prominent. Whilst there are established techniques such as Results Based Accountability, there are challenges regarding its application with respect to tackling complex policy issues. The research does not analyse how collaboration as a model of working aligns with the concept of the whole government agenda as a means to improve the effectiveness of public sector service delivery (O'Flynn, 2009). The literature highlights that there are challenges about the practical

implementation of collaboration and it focuses more on the examples of the collaboration in the public sector, rather than its impact and outcomes. This study centres on the elements that make the practical implementation of collaboration successful, focusing specifically on leadership; governance and measuring outcomes. There is opportunity to explore this further.

Whilst the thesis has touched upon the importance of formal governance in the collaborative process, there is a lack of understanding in the literature of how to analyse networked governance. Cited within the literature has been the shift from a traditional form of hierarchical governance to one of more horizontal control, which is owned by a series of related organisations and actors, rather than one organisation. There is further opportunity to explore this in more detail.

The majority of those interviewed were practitioners rather than policymakers. There is an opportunity to undertake further study on the role of policymakers in the whole process. This research did not focus on the role of the citizen in the design and delivery of RSPs and the literature on collaborative public management practice does not address or even mention the citizen (Bingham and O'Leary, 2006). There is a wealth of opportunity for further research, particularly in the context of increasing expectations by citizens on the quality of public services and the decreasing public sector purse.

This study was initiated from a practitioner's perspective to identify the required competencies to facilitate and effectively deliver collaborative initiatives and the challenges surrounding this. The research strategy continued with this approach, with

the practitioner as the main focus therefore further contributing to the knowledge of practice-led research.

To summarise, the contribution of this study to the theoretical debate is that the existing literature is rich in advocating collaboration as a mechanism to address complex public policy issues. There is however an absence of practitioner-led research to identify what are the required practitioner skillsets and elements to ensure effective collaboration, which this study, within a Welsh context has aimed to do.

From a practical perspective, the study has contributed to the policy debate on the continuation by the Welsh Government to focus on collaboration as the mechanism for public sector reform and provided a strong evidence base of the need to focus on the practitioner perspective and the associated competencies to ensure its effective delivery. By conducting the first Welsh practitioner focused research study on collaboration as a driver to implement policy in the area of skills, the findings can be used to undertake further research in other policy areas in Wales.

6.5 Limitations of the Research

The study has offered an evaluative perspective on collaboration as a model of service design and delivery of public services in Wales, and focused on the policy domain of skills, through the use of a case study. There were a number of similarities between the partnerships in this study, including the governance and the focus of the activity which centered on the skills agenda for those aged over 16. The findings however suggested that there were a number of differences, the main one focusing on the motivation of collaboration. The Regional Learning Partnership – South West & Central Wales was the

original skills partnership which was established from a 'grass routes' basis driven by a collective 'want' from public and voluntary sector bodies to ensure that the regional training and education 'offer' for those aged over 16 was 'fit for purpose' to meet the skills requirement of employers. In contrast, the NWEAB was a response to an emerging agenda driven by the Welsh Government in the establishment of City region partnerships. As a direct consequence of this methodology, the study encountered several limitations, which are detailed below.

Firstly, time constraints limited the aims and scope of this thesis as from the outset of the research, only one Regional Skills Partnership existed in Wales, with a second being established during the course of study and a third towards the concluding period and as such only two of the three partnerships were included in the case study. It is also recognised that the introduction of this additional dataset and consideration of the inclusion of other data collection methods could have increased the scope and depth of the research findings. It would be beneficial to collect additional data from the third partnership and compare the operation and influence of the other two partnerships with respect to the collaboration agenda. This could be further explored within the context of determining whether there is an identifiable cycle of sequence to the development of collaborations in the public sector.

Secondly, due to limited availability only two interviews were conducted with the NWEAB, out of the smaller sample of the six individuals that were approached. In comparison to the number of interviews conducted with the RLPSW&CW, this gave a more limited perspective on the activities of the NWEAB. However similar themes did

emerge from these interviews as from the interviews with the participants from the RLPSW&CW, which provided the researcher with confidence. This together with the fact that a second round of interviews were conducted with the participants from the RLPSW&CW enabled themes to be revisited and a depth and richness to the data collected. Nonetheless, this is still recognised as a limitation.

Thirdly, the findings of the thesis were influenced by the fact that it was the early stage of the RSPs in Wales during which the Welsh Government's post 16 Skills Policy was being developed, and the third partnership in South East Wales was being established. Consequently, there is no evidence about whether partnerships have been successful.

Fourthly, the sample interviewed for this study included representatives from higher and further education, local government, central government, the voluntary sector and sector membership bodies. However, there was no political or private sector representation. This would have provided a further perspective for the research. Further it was only the important factors from the participants' viewpoints that impacted on the collaboration process which were considered. Due to the limited experience of the researcher in conducting research the scope and depth of discussions from the interviews may be more rudimentary in comparison to experienced researchers.

Fifthly, data was only gathered on one policy area and therefore it is questionable if the research's findings is transferable to other policy areas.

Sixthly there were limitations with the selection and implementation of the data collection method i.e. semi-structured interviews. Research undertaken by Denscombe's (2007) research identifies that key determinants such as how people perceive the interviewer, termed 'the interviewer effect' has an impact on how much information they are willing to share. Given that the researcher worked for one of the partnerships (RLPSW&CW), there was a stronger likelihood of participants being more open in comparison to when conducting interviews with participants from the NWEAB.

6.6 Conclusion

This chapter concludes the thesis. In unprecedented times of uncertainty of the future shape of public services within Wales, collaboration remains the advocated model of service design and delivery and will be the mechanism to drive public sector reform. However, the availability of the evidence to demonstrate how this way of working has improved public services is restricted, which raises the question as to whether collaboration has worked? On the face of it, the response could be no, it has not. Yet, the Welsh Government is continuing to favour this way of working and has not even scoped or considered any alternatives in a time when the agenda of austerity continues to gather pace, with no indication that this will subside in the medium term. This is also evident in the Governments of the other devolved nations – Scotland and Northern Ireland, with England focusing more on the models of choice and competition.

At the time of writing this thesis, local government reorganisation is still at the forefront of the Welsh political agenda with the shift towards more regional responsibilities of

public services. There are existing arrangements of joint working which can be built on, but unless issues of leadership, ownership of the governance process and measuring outcomes are addressed in a practitioner context, this could be even more challenging than it currently is. The Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015 has established statutory PSBs which will replace the voluntary LSBs in each local authority area. This therefore has provided the Welsh Government with a mandate to enforce collaborative working. The key factors which this thesis has identified for effective collaboration in one policy area, based on voluntary partnerships may therefore be different for a statutory partnership. Is this the direction that Wales is heading?

The contribution to knowledge enabled by this research has increased our awareness of the factors which practitioners consider enables successful collaborative activities. This study has also suggested opportunities of supplementary research which it is hoped will further advance the field and provide greater insights into how effective collaboration facilitates public sector reform in the future. Collaboration is not a 'quick fix' solution to improved services if key issues are not resolved and given due consideration at a practical level.

BIBLIOGRAPHY

Aberbach, J.D. and Rockman, B.A., (2002), Conducting and Coding Elite Interviews, *Political Science & Politics*, 35(4), pp.673-676

Ackoff, R. L. (1974), *Redesigning the Future: A Systems Approach to Societal Problems*. New York: Wiley

Adelman, C., Jenkins, D., and Kemmis, S., (1980), *Rethinking Case Study: Notes from The Second Cambridge Conference in Towards a Science of the Singular*, Edited by: Simons, H. pp.45–61. Norwich: CARE, University of East Anglia

Adler, P.A. and Adler, P., (1987), *Membership Roles in Field Research* (Vol. 6), London: Sage

Advisory Group on Reform of Australian Government, (2010), *Ahead of The Game: Blueprint for the Reform of Australian Government Administration*, Canberra: Commonwealth of Australia

Ahgren, B. and Axelsson, R., (2005), Evaluating Integrated Health Care: A Model for Measurement, *International Journal of Integrated Care*, 5(3)

Agranoff, R., (2006), Inside Collaborative Networks: Ten Lessons for Public Managers, *Public Administration Review*, 66(1), pp.56-65

Agranoff, R., and McGuire, M., (1998a), Multinetwork Management: Collaboration and the Hollow State in Local Economic Policy, *Journal of Public Administration Research and Theory*, 8(1), pp.67-91.

Agranoff, R., and McGuire, M., (1998b), A Jurisdiction-based Model of Intergovernmental Management in US Cities, *Publius*, 28(4), pp.1-21

Agranoff, R., and McGuire, M., (1999), Managing in Network Settings, *Review of Policy Research*, 16(1), pp.18-41

Agranoff, R., and McGuire, M., (2001a), Big Questions in Public Network Management Research, *Journal of Public Administration Research and Theory*, 11(3), pp.295-326

Agranoff, R., and McGuire, M. (2001b), After the Network is Formed. Process, Power and Performance in M. Mandell, (ed.) *Getting Results Through Collaboration Networks and Network Structures for Public Policy and Management*, Westport, CT: Quorum Books, pp.11-12

Agranoff, R. and McGuire, M., (2003), *Collaborative Public Management: New Strategies for Local Governments*, Washington D.C.: Georgetown University Press

Alvarez, G., Pilbeam, C. and Wilding, R., (2010), Nestlé Nespresso AAA Sustainable Quality Program: An Investigation into the Governance Dynamics in a Multi-Stakeholder Supply Chain Network, *Supply Chain Management: An International Journal*, 15(2), pp.165-182

Alexiadou, N., (2001), Researching Policy Implementation: Interview Data Analysis in Institutional Contexts, *International Journal of Social Research Methodology*, 4(1), pp.51-69

Alimo-Metcalfe, B., and Lawler, J., (2001), Leadership Development in UK Companies at the Beginning of the Twenty-First Century: Lessons for the NHS?, *Journal of Management in Medicine*, 15(5), pp.387-404

Amabile, T.M., Patterson, C., Mueller, J., Wojcik, T., Odomirok, P.W., Marsh, M. and Kramer, S.J., (2001), Academic-Practitioner Collaboration in Management Research: A Case of Cross-Profession Collaboration, *Academy of Management Journal*, 44(2), pp.418-431

Anderson, G.L., and Jones, F., (2000), Knowledge Generation in Educational Administration from the Inside Out: The Promise and Perils of Site-Based,

Administrator Research, *Educational Administration Quarterly*, 36(3), pp.428-464

Anderson, J.E., (2014), *Public Policymaking*, Cengage Learning

Andrews, R., and Boyne, G.A., (2010), Capacity, Leadership, and Organizational Performance: Testing the Black Box Model of Public Management, *Public Administration Review*, 70(3), pp.443-454

Andrews, R., Boyne, G.A., Meier, K.J., O'Toole, L.J. and Walker, R.M., (2012), Vertical Strategic Alignment and Public Service Performance, *Public Administration*, 90(1), pp.77-98

Andrews, R., and Entwistle, T., (2013), *Public Service Efficiency: Reframing the Debate*, London: Routledge

Andrews, R. and Martin, S., (2007), Has Devolution Improved Public Services?. *Public Money and Management*, 27(2), pp.149-156

Ansell, C., and Gash A., (2008), Collaborative Governance in Theory and Practice, *Journal of Public Administration Research and Theory*, 18(4), pp.543-571

Ansell, C., and Torfing, J., (2015), How Does Collaborative Governance Scale?, *Policy & Politics*, 43(3), pp.315-329

Antupit S., Gray, B., and Woods S., (1996), Steps Ahead: Making Streets that Work in Seattle, Washington, *Landscape and Urban Planning*, 35(2), pp.107- 122

Armistead, C., Pettigrew, P. and Aves, S., (2007), Exploring Leadership in Multi-Sectoral Partnerships, *Leadership*, 3(2), pp.211-230

Asthana, S., Richardson, S. and Halliday, J., (2002), Partnership Working in Public Policy Provision: A Framework for Evaluation, *Social Policy & Administration*, 36(7), pp.780-795

- Atkinson, H., and Wilks-Heeg S., (2000), *Local Government from Thatcher to Blair: The Politics of Creative Autonomy*, Oxford: Blackwell Publishers Ltd
- Aulich, C., (1999), From Convergence to Divergence: Reforming Australian Local Government, *The Australian Journal of Public Administration*, 58(2), pp.12-23
- Babbie, E.R., (1998), *The Practice of Social Research*, Andover: International Thomson Publishing Services
- Baker, C. and Kilgour, L., (2011), *Multi-Sector Approaches for Sport and Physical Activity in South East Wales, Project Report*, Gloucester: University of Gloucestershire
- Barlow, T., (2009), Moran Review Submission, Unclassified, pp.1-33
- Bartunek, J., and Louis, M.R., (1996), *Insider/Outsider Team Research* (Vol. 40), London: Sage Publications, Inc.
- Bate, S.P, and Robert G., (2002), Knowledge Management & Communities of Practice in the Private Sector: Lessons for Modernising the National Health Service in England and Wales, *Public Administration*, 80(4) pp.643-663
- Bazeley, P., (2003), Computerized Data Analysis for Mixed Methods Research, *Handbook of Mixed Methods in Social and Behavioral Research*, pp.385-422
- Beecham, J., (2006), *Beyond Boundaries: Citizen-Centred Local Services for Wales*, Cardiff: Welsh Assembly Government
- Behn, R.D., (2001), *Rethinking Democratic Accountability*, Brookings Institution Press
- Bertelli, A., (2006), The Role of Political Ideology in the Structural Design of New Governance Agencies, *Public Administration Review*, 66(4), pp.583-595
- Berry, J.M., (2002), Validity and Reliability Issues in Elite Interviewing, *Political Science & Politics*, 35(4), pp.679-682
- Beatty, C., Foden, M., Lawless, P. and Wilson I., (2010), Area-Based Regeneration Partnerships and the Role of Central Government: The New Deal for Communities Programme in England, *Policy & Politics*, 38(2) pp.235-251
- Bevir, M., and Rhodes R.A.W., (1998), Narratives of 'Thatcherism', *West European Politics*, 21(1), pp.97-119
- Bingham, L.B., Nabatchi, T., and O'Leary R., (2005), The New Governance: Practices and Processes for Stakeholder and Citizen, *Public Administration Review*, 65(5), pp.547-558
- Bingham, L.B., and O'Leary, R., (2006), Conclusion: Parallel Play, Not Collaboration: Missing Questions, Missing Connections, *Public Administration Review*, 66(s1), pp.161-167

Bingham, L.B., (2010), Next Generation of Administrative Law: Building the Legal Infrastructure for Collaborative Governance, *The Wis. L Review*, p.267

Birrell, D., (2008), The Final Outcomes of the Review of Public Administration in Northern Ireland. Tensions and Compatibility with Devolution, Parity and Modernization, *Public Administration*, 86(3), pp.779-793

Bishop, P., (2006), *Effectiveness, Efficiency and Equity*, IPPA National Conference Report - 1-4 Nov 2005, Hobart Tasmania, National Council of the Institute of Public Administration Australia

Blaikie, N. (2000), *Designing Social Research*, Oxford: Blackwell

Blair, T., (1998), *Leading the Way: A New Vision for Local Government*, London: Institute for Public Policy Research

Blakeley, G. and Evans, B., (2009), Who Participates, How and Why in Urban Regeneration Projects? The Case of the New 'City' Of East Manchester, *Social Policy & Administration*, 43(1), pp.15-32

Blatchford, K. and Gash, T., (2012), *Commissioning for Success: How to Avoid the Pitfalls of Open Public Services*, London: IfG Publication

Bloomfield, D., Collins, K., Fry, C., and Munton, R., (2001), Deliberation And Inclusion: Vehicles For Increasing Trust In UK Public Governance?. *Environment and Planning C: Government and Policy*, 19(4), pp.501-513

Boivard, T., (2006), Developing New Forms of Partnership with the 'Market' in the Procurement of Public Services, *Public Administration*, 84(1), pp.81-102

Bolda, E.J., Saucier, P., Maddox, G.L., Wetle, T. and Lowe, J.I., (2006), Governance and Management Structures for Community Partnerships: Experiences from the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation's Community Partnerships for Older Adults Program, *The Gerontologist*, 46(3), pp.391-397

Bonner, A., and Tolhurst, G. (2002). Insider-Outsider Perspectives of Participant Observation. *Nurse Researcher*, 9(4), pp.7-19

Booth, T., (1981), Collaboration Between the Health and Social Services: Part I, A Case Study of Joint Care Planning, *Policy & Politics*, pp.23-50

Booth, T., (1988), *Developing Policy Research*, Aldershot: Gower

Börzel, T.A., (2011), Networks: Reified Metaphor or Governance Panacea?, *Public Administration*, 89(1), pp.49-63

Bovaird, T., (2007), Beyond Engagement and Participation: User and Community Coproduction of Public Services, *Public Administration Review*, 67(5), pp.846-860

- Bovill, C., (2009), Rhetoric or Reality? Cross-Sector Policy Implementation at the UK Government Department for International Development, *Policy & Politics*, 37(2) pp.179-199
- Bowen, G.A., (2009), Document Analysis as a Qualitative Research Method, *Qualitative Research Journal*, 9(2), pp.27-40
- Boyne, G.A. and Law, J., (2005), Setting Public Service Outcome Targets: Lessons from Local Public Service Agreements, *Public Money & Management*, 25(4), pp.253-260
- Boxelaar, L., Paine, M., and Beilin R., (2006), Community Engagement and Public Administration: Of Silos, Overlays and Technologies of Government, *The Australian Journal of Public Administration*, 65(1), pp.113-126
- Boyce, M., (1996), Original Story and Storytelling: A Critical Review, *Journal of Organizational Change Management*, 9(5), pp.5-26
- Boydell, L., Hoggett, P., Rugkasa, J., and Cummins A.M., (2007), Intersectoral Partnerships, the Knowledge Economy and Intangible Assets, *Policy & Politics*, 36(2), pp.209-24
- Bradbury J., (2006), Territory and Power Revisited: Theorising Territorial Politics in the United Kingdom After Devolution, *Political Studies*, 53(3), pp.559-582
- Braithwaite, R.B., (1953), *Scientific Explanation: A Study of The Function of Theory, Probability and Law in Science*, CUP Archive
- Bramwell, B., and Sharman A., (1999), Collaboration in Local Tourism Policymaking, *Annals of Tourism Research*, 26(2), pp.392-415
- Brand, A., (2007), *Devolution and Divergence: Comparing English and Welsh Approaches to Citizen-Centred Public Service Delivery*, London: New Local Government Network
- Braun, V., and Clarke, V., (2006), Using Thematic Analysis in Psychology, *Qualitative Research in Psychology*, 3(2), pp.77-101
- Brereton, M., and Temple M., (1999), The New Public Service Ethos: An Ethical Environment for Governance, *Public Administration*, 77(3), pp.455-474
- Brickson, S., (2000), The Impact of Identity Orientation on Individual and Organizational Outcomes in Demographically Diverse Settings, *Academy of Management Review*, 25(1), pp.82-101
- Bristow, G., Entwistle, T., Hines, F. and Martin, S., (2008), New Spaces for Inclusion? Lessons from the 'Three-Thirds' Partnerships in Wales, *International Journal of Urban and Regional Research*, 32(4), pp.903-921

- Brookes, S., and Grint, K., (2010), A New Public Leadership Challenge?. In *The New Public Leadership Challenge* (pp. 1-15), UK: Palgrave Macmillan
- Broom, A., Hand, K. and Tovey, P., (2009), The Role of Gender, Environment and Individual Biography in Shaping Qualitative Interview Data, *International Journal of Social Research Methodology*, 12(1), pp.51-65
- Broussine, M., (2003), Leading and Managing at the Boundary: Perspectives Created by Joined Up Working, *Local Government Studies*, 29(3), pp.128-138
- Bryce, J., Victora, C.G., Habicht, J.P., Vaughan, J.P. and Black, R.E., (2004), The Multi-Country Evaluation of the Integrated Management of Childhood Illness Strategy: Lessons for the Evaluation of Public Health Interventions, *American Journal of Public Health*, 94(3), pp.406-415
- Bryman, A., and Bell, E., (2003), *Business Research Methods*, Oxford: Oxford University Press
- Bryman, A., (2007), Barriers to Integrating Quantitative and Qualitative Research, *Journal of Mixed Methods Research*, 1(1), pp.8-22
- Bryman, A., (2012), *Social Research Methods*, Oxford: Oxford University Press
- Bryman, A. ed., (2013), *Doing Research in Organizations*, London: Routledge
- Bryman, A., Becker, S. and Sempik, J., (2008), Quality Criteria for Quantitative, Qualitative and Mixed Methods Research: A View from Social Policy, *International Journal of Social Research Methodology*, 11(4), pp.261-276
- Bryant, A. and Charmaz, K. eds., (2007), *The Sage Handbook of Grounded Theory*, Thousand Oaks, California: Sage
- Bryson, J.M., Crosby, B.C. and Stone, M.M., (2006), The Design and Implementation of Cross-Sector Collaborations: Propositions from the Literature, *Public Administration Review*, 66(s1), pp.44-55.
- Burnham, P., Gilland, K., and Grant, W., et al (2004), *Research Methods in Politics*, Hampshire: Palgrave Macmillan
- Cabinet Office, (2017), Open Public Service 2014, [online], Available at: <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/open-public-services-2014-progress-report/open-public-services-2014> [Accessed 28.02.17]
- Caldwell, K., Domahidy, M., Gilsinan, J.F. and Penick, M., (2000), Applied Ethics for Preparing Interprofessional Practitioners in Community Settings, *Ethics & Behavior*, 10(3), pp.257-269
- Campbell, D.T., and Fiske, D.W., (1959), Convergent and Discriminant Validation by the Multitrait-Multimethod Matrix, *Psychological Bulletin*, 56(2), p.81

Campbell, D., and Stanley, J., (1966), *Experimental and Quasiexperimental Design or Research*, Chicago: Rand McNally

Campbell, D.T. and Russo, M.J., (1999), *Social Experimentation* (Vol. 1), London: Sage Publications, Inc.

Cameron, R., (2010), A Study of The Use of Mixed Methods in Management and Organisational Research Journals: Justification and Design, *Managing and Marketing Organizations in an Era of Global Economic Uncertainty and Environmental Complexity: Academy of World Business, Marketing & Management Development 2010 Conference*, Oulu, Finland, 12-15 July, Academy of World Business, Marketing & Management Development

Carroll, L.J. and Rothe, J.P., (2010), Levels of Reconstruction as Complementarity in Mixed Methods Research: A Social Theory-Based Conceptual Framework for Integrating Qualitative and Quantitative Research, *International Journal of Environmental Research and Public Health*, 7(9), pp.3478-3488

Challis, L., (1988), *Joint Approaches to Social Policy: Rationality and Practice*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press

Chaney, P., Hall, T. and Pithouse, A. eds., (2001), *New Governance-New Democracy?: Post-devolution Wales*, Cardiff: University of Wales Press

Christensen, T. and Laegreid P., (2007), The Whole-of-Government Approach to Public Sector Reform, *Public Administration Review*, 67(6), pp.1059-1066

Christie, C., (2011), *Commission on the Future Delivery of Public Services*, Edinburgh: Scottish Government

Cigler, B.A., (1999), Pre-Conditions for the Emergence of Multicommunity Collaborative Organizations, *Review of Policy Research*, 16(1), pp.86-102

Clarence, E. and Painter, C., (1998), Public Services Under New Labour: Collaborative Discourses and Local Networking, *Public Policy and Administration*, 13(3), pp.8-22

Clark, A., Holland, C., Katz, J. and Peace, S., (2009), Learning to See: Lessons from a Participatory Observation Research Project in Public Spaces, *International Journal of Social Research Methodology*, 12(4), pp.345-360

Clarke, M. and Stewart, J., (1997), *Handling the Wicked Issues: A Challenge for Government*, University of Birmingham, Institute of Local Government Studies

Clarke, M. and Stewart, J., (2003), Handling the Wicked Issues, *The Managing Care Reader*, 273, p.280

Coffey, A., (2014), Analysing Documents, *The SAGE Handbook of Qualitative Data Analysis*, pp.367-380

Cohen, L., Manion, L. and Morrison, K., (2011), *Planning Educational Research*, Research Methods in Education, New York: Routledge Editors

Community and Public Sector Union, (2009), *Reform of Australian Government Administration*, New South Wales: CPSU

Connick, S. and Innes, J.E., (2003), Outcomes of Collaborative Water Policy Making: Applying Complexity Thinking to Evaluation, *Journal of Environmental Planning and Management*, 46(2), pp.177-197

Connolly, M., Farrell, C.M., and Hodgson L., (2007), Improving UK Public Services – A Review of the Evidence, *Public Administration*, 85(2), pp.355-382

Cornwall, A. and Jewkes, R., (1995), What is Participatory Research?, *Social Science & Medicine*, 41(12), pp.1667-1676

Considine, M. and Lewis J.M., (2003), Bureaucracy, Network, or Enterprise? Comparing Models of Governance in Australia, Britain, the Netherlands, and New Zealand, *Public Administration Review*, 63(2), pp.131-140

Cooper, T. L., Bryer, T. A., and Meek, J.W., (2006), Citizen-Centered Collaborative Public Management, *Public Administration Review*, 66(1), pp.76-88

Costley, C., Elliott, G.C. and Gibbs, P., (2010), *Doing Work Based Research: Approaches to Enquiry for Insider-Researchers*, Sage

Coucoulas Calleson, D. and Seifer, S.D., 2004. Institutional collaboration and competition in community-based education. *Journal of Interprofessional Care*, 18(1), pp.63-74

Coule, T. and Patmore, B., (2013), Institutional Logics, Institutional Work, and Public Service Innovation in Non-Profit Organizations, *Public Administration*, 91(4), pp.980-997

Coulson, A., (2004), New Labour and the Politics of Local Governance, *Local Government Studies*, 30(1), pp.108-115

Coulson-Thomas, C., (2005), Encouraging Partnership & Collaboration, *Industrial & Commercial Training*, 37(4), pp.179-184

Cowell, R., Downe, J. and Morgan, K., (2011), The Ethical Framework for Local Government in England: Is it Having Any Effect and Why?, *Public Management Review*, 13(3), pp.433-457

Cowton, C.J., (1998), The Use of Secondary Data in Business Ethics Research, *Journal of Business Ethics*, 17(4), pp.423-434

Cox, E., Henderson, G. and Raikes, L., (2014), *Decentralisation Decade: A Plan for Economic Prosperity, Public Service Transformation and Democratic Renewal in England*, Manchester: Institute for Public Policy Research

- Creswell, J.W., & Plano Clark, V.L. (2007). *Designing and Conducting Mixed Methods Research*. Thousand Oaks: Sage Publications
- Cristofoli, D., Macciò, L. and Pedrazzi, L., (2015), Structure, Mechanisms, and Managers in Successful Networks, *Public Management Review*, 17(4), pp.489-516
- Crotty, M., (1998), *The Foundation of Social Research*, London: Sage
- Crow, G., Wiles, R., Heath, S. and Charles, V., 2006. Research ethics and data quality: The implications of informed consent. *International Journal of Social Research Methodology*, 9(2), pp.83-95
- Cunningham, I. and James, P., (2014), Public Service Outsourcing and its Employment Implications in an Era of Austerity: The Case of British Social Care, *Competition & Change*, 18(1), pp.1-19
- Currie, G., Grubnic, S. and Hodges, R., (2011), Leadership in Public Services Networks: Antecedents, Process and Outcome, *Public Administration*, 89(2), pp.242-264
- Damgaard, B. and Torfing, J., (2010), Network Governance of Active Employment Policy: The Danish Experience, *Journal of European Social Policy*, 20(3), pp.248-262
- Davies, J.S., (2009), The Limits of Joined-Up Government: Towards a Political Analysis, *Public Administration*, 87(1), pp.80-96
- Davies, P., (2001). Spies as Informants: Triangulation and the Interpretation of Elite Interview Data in the Study of the Intelligence and Security Services, *Politics*, 21(1) pp.73-80
- Dawes, S.S. and Eglene, O., (2004), New Models of Collaboration for Delivering Government Services: A Dynamic Model Drawn from Multi-National Research, In *Proceedings of the 2004 Annual National Conference on Digital Government Research* (p. 93), Digital Government Society of North America
- Daya, A., Dhillon, J., Taylor, M. and Yildiran, H., (2011), Thematic Analysis of Readmission into Inpatient Units for Adults with Intellectual Disabilities: Two Case Studies, *Journal of Intellectual Disabilities*, 15(4), pp.279-288
- De Vaus, D.A. and de Vaus, D., (2001), *Research Design in Social Research*, London: Sage
- DeFillippi, R.J., (2002), Organizational Models for Collaboration in the New Economy, *People and Strategy*, 25(4), p.7
- Denhardt, R.B. and Denhardt, J.V., (2000), The New Public Service: Serving Rather than Steering, *Public Administration Review*, 60(6), pp.549-559
- Denscombe, M. (2007), *The Good Research Guide: For Small-scale Social Research*, Buckingham: Open University Press

Dente, B. and Coletti, P., (2011), Measuring Governance in Urban Innovation, *Local Government Studies*, 37(1), pp.43-56

Denzin, N., K., (1989), *The Research Act*, Third Edition, London: Prentice-Hall Ltd

Department for Communities & Local Government (2006), Structure for Collaboration and Shared Services, DCLG Publications, West Yorkshire

Dew, K., (2007) A Health Researcher's Guide to Qualitative Methodologies. *Australian and New Zealand Journal of Public Health*, 31(5), pp.433-437

Dewulf, A., Gray, B., Putnam, L., Lewicki, R., Aarts, N., Bouwen, R. and Van Woerkum, C., (2009), Disentangling Approaches to Framing in Conflict and Negotiation Research: A Meta-Paradigmatic Perspective, *Human Relations*, 62(2), pp.155-193

Dickinson, H. and Glasby, J., (2010), Why Partnership Working Doesn't Work: Pitfalls, Problems and Possibilities in English Health and Social Care, *Public Management Review*, 12(6), pp.811-828

Dickinson, H., Ham, C., Snelling, I. and Spurgeon, P., (2013), Are We There Yet? Models of Medical Leadership and Their Effectiveness: An Exploratory Study, *Final report, NIHR Service Delivery and Organisation Programme*

Dickinson, H. and Sullivan, H., (2014), Towards a General Theory of Collaborative Performance: The Importance of Efficacy and Agency, *Public Administration*, 92(1), pp.161-177

Diener, E. and Crandall, R., (1978), *Ethics in Social and Behavioral Research*, Chicago: University of Chicago Press

Dollery, B. and Fleming, E., (2006), A Conceptual Note on Scale Economies, Size Economies and Scope Economies in Australian Local Government, *Urban Policy and Research*, 24(2), pp.271-282

Dollery, B., Grant, B. and Crase, L., (2011), Love Thy Neighbour: A Social Capital Approach to Local Government Partnerships, *Australian Journal of Public Administration*, 70(2), pp.156-166

Dorussen, H., Lenz, H. and Blavoukos, S. (2005) Assessing the Reliability and Validity of Expert Interviews, *European Union Politics*, 6(3), pp.315-337

Dowding, K. & John P., (2009), The Value of Choice in Public Policy, *Public Administration*, 87(2), pp. 219-233

Dowling, B., Powell, M. and Glendinning, C., (2004), Conceptualising Successful Partnerships, *Health & Social Care in the Community*, 12(4), pp.309-317

Downe J., et al, (2009), *Learning to Improve: An Independent Assessment of the Welsh Local Government's Policy for Local Government*, First Interim Report, Cardiff: Cardiff University

Downe, J., (2016), Local Government in Wales – Where Next?, at: <http://www.iwa.wales/click/2016/02/local-government-in-wales-where-next/> [Accessed 28.02.17]

Downe, J., and Elraz, H., (2016), *Evaluation of the ESF Local Service Board Development and Priority Delivery Project: Final Summative Report*, Cardiff: Welsh Government

Downe, J., and Hayden, C., (2016), *Evaluation of Regional Collaborative Working*, Cardiff: Welsh Government

Dryzek, J., (1983), Don't Toss Coins in Garbage Cans: A Prologue to Policy Design, *Journal of Public Policy*, 3(4), pp.345-68

Dufovskiy, J., (2016), *The Ultimate Guide to Writing a Dissertation in Business Studies: A Step By-Step Assistance*, [online] Available at www.research-methodology.net [Accessed 28.07.17]

Duncan, S., (2009), Policy Transfer: Theory, Rhetoric and Reality, *Policy & Politics*, 37(3), pp.453-458

Dunrose, C., (2009), Front-Line Workers and 'Local Knowledge': Neighbourhood Stories in Contemporary Local Governance, *Public Administration*, 87(1), pp.35-49

Easterby-Smith, M. and Malina D., (1999), Cross-Cultural Collaborative Research: Towards Reflexivity, *Academy of Management Journal*, 42(1) pp.78-86

Eibert, K.W., and Lafronza V., (2005), Working Together for Community Health – A Model and Case Studies, *Evaluation and Programme Planning*, 28(2), pp.185-199

El Ansari, W., Phillips, C.J. and Hammick, M., (2001), Collaboration and Partnerships: Developing the Evidence Base. *Health & Social Care in The Community*, 9(4), pp.215-227

Ellis, N., and Hibbert P., (2008), Collecting Collaboration: Understanding Collaboration Through Stories, *International Journal of Sociology and Social Policy*, 28(1/2), pp.5-8

Emerson, K., Nabatchi, T. and Balogh, S., (2012), An Integrative Framework for Collaborative Governance, *Journal of Public Administration Research and Theory*, 22(1), pp.1-29

Engward, H., (2013), Understanding Grounded Theory, *Nursing Standard*, 28(7), pp.37-41

Entwistle, T., (2006), The Distinctiveness of the Welsh Partnership Agenda, *International Journal of Public Sector Management*, 19(3), pp.228-237

Entwistle, T., (2014), Collaboration and Public Services Improvement, *Public Policy Institute for Wales*, pp.1-11

Entwistle, T. and Martin S., (2005), From Competition to Collaboration in Public Service Delivery: A New Agenda for Research, *Public Administration*, 83(1), pp.233-242

Entwistle, T., Downe, J., Guarneros-Meza, V., and Martin S., (2009), *Intergovernmental Relations in Wales: Having Your Cake and Eating It?*, Paper prepared for the annual Public Administration Committee Conference, University of Glamorgan 7-9th September

Economics and Social Research Council, (2017), ESRC Framework for Research Ethics (FRE) 2010 Updated September 2012 Everingham, [online], Available at: <http://www.esrc.ac.uk/files/funding/guidance-for-applicants/esrc-framework-for-research-ethics-2010/> [Accessed 28.02.17]

Faerman, S.R., McCaffrey, D.P. and Slyke, D.M.V., (2001), Understanding Interorganizational Cooperation: Public-Private Collaboration in Regulating Financial Market Innovation, *Organization Science*, 12(3), pp.372-388

Farmakopoulou, N., (2002), What Lies Underneath? An Inter-organizational Analysis of Collaboration between Education and Social Work, *British Journal of Social Work*, 32(8), pp.1051-1066

Farrell, C. and Arnott M., (2009), *Testing Times in Education – What Difference has 10 Years of Devolution Made in Scotland and Wales?*, Paper prepared for the annual Public Administration Committee Conference, University of Glamorgan 7-9th September

Farrell, C, (2016), Local Government in Wales – Services and not Structures [online], Available at: <http://caspp.blogs.southwales.ac.uk/2016/10/11/local-government-in-wales-services-and-not-structures/> [Accessed 28.02.17]

Faulkner, D. and de Rond M., (2000), *Assessing Inter-Organizational Collaboration: Multiple Conceptions and Multiple Methods in Co-operative Strategy: Economic, Business, and Organizational Issues*, New York: Oxford University Press

Fawcett, S.B., Paine-Andrews, A., Francisco, V.T., Schultz, J.A., Richter, K.P., Lewis, R.K., Williams, E.L., Harris, K.J., Berkley, J.Y., Fisher, J.L. and Lopez, C.M., (1995), Using Empowerment Theory in Collaborative Partnerships for Community Health and Development, *American Journal of Community Psychology*, 23(5), pp.677-697

Feldman, M.S., Khademian, A.M., Ingram, H. and Schneider, A.S., (2006), Ways of Knowing and Inclusive Management Practices, *Public Administration Review*, 66(s1), pp.89-99

Fenwick, J. and McMillan, J., (2005), Organisational Learning and Public Sector Management: An Alternative View, *Public Policy and Administration*, 20(3), pp.42-55

Fennwick, J., and McMillan J., (2009), The Discourse of Local Partnership in the United Kingdom, Paper prepared for the annual Public Administration Committee Conference, University of Glamorgan 7 – 9th September

Ferlie, E., Fitzgerald, L., McGivern, G., Dopson, S. and Bennett, C., (2011), Public Policy Networks and 'Wicked Problems': A Nascent Solution?, *Public Administration*, 89(2), pp.307-324

Fielding, N. (Ed.), (2003), *Interviewing*, Volume IV, London: Sage

Fine, M. and Weis, L., (1998), Writing The 'Wrongs' Of Fieldwork: Confronting our Own Research/Writing Dilemmas in Urban Ethnographies, *Social Research and Educational Studies Series*, 18, pp.13-35

Firmreite, A.L., (2002), (Book Review), Citizens and the New Governance- Beyond New Public, *Public Administration*, 80(2), pp.401-403

Fitzgerald, L., (1999), Re-evaluation of the Importance of the Public Service: Tasmania's Collaborative Program, *The Australian Journal of Public Administration*, 58(3), pp.76-79

Fledderus, J., Brandsen, T. and Honingh, M.E., (2015), User Co-Production of Public Service Delivery: An Uncertainty Approach, *Public Policy and Administration*, 30(2), pp.145-164

Flynn, N., (2007), *Public Sector Management*, London: Sage

Flyvbjerg, B., (2006), Five Misunderstandings About Case-Study Research, *Qualitative inquiry*, 12(2), pp.219-245

Foley, P. and Martin S., (2000), A New Deal for the Community? : Public Participation in Regeneration and Local Service Delivery, *Policy & Politics*, 28(4), pp.479-492

Forbes, M. and Lynn, L.E., (2005), How Does Public Management Affect Government Performance? Findings from International Research, *Journal of Public Administration Research and Theory*, 15(4), pp.559-584

Foster-Fishman, P.G., Berkowitz, S.L., Lounsbury, D.W., Jacobson, S. and Allen, N.A., (2001), Building Collaborative Capacity in Community Coalitions: A Review and Integrative Framework, *American Journal of Community Psychology*, 29(2), pp.241-261

Frankfort-Nachmias, C. and Nachmias, D., (1992), *Research Methods in the Social Sciences*, Edward Arnold

Freeman, T. and Peck, E., (2007), Performing Governance: A Partnership Board Dramaturgy, *Public Administration*, 85(4), pp.907-929

- Fudge, S., (2006), *Objective 1 and Community Development: Democratizing the Economic and Political Landscape in South Wales*, *Contemporary Wales*, 19, Cardiff: University of Wales Press
- Furlong, P. and Marsh, D., (2010), A Skin Not a Sweater: Ontology and Epistemology in Political Science, *Theory and Methods in Political Science*, pp.184-211
- Gains, F., John, P.C. and Stoker, G., (2005), Path Dependency and the Reform of English Local Government, *Public Administration*, 83(1), pp.25-45
- Gatehouse, M. and Price, A., (2013), *State of Innovation: Welsh Public Services and the Challenge of Change*, London: Nesta
- Gatenby, M., Rees, C., Truss, C., Alfes, K. and Soane, E., (2015), Managing Change, or Changing Managers? The Role of Middle Managers in UK Public Service Reform, *Public Management Review*, 17(8), pp.1124-1145
- Getz, D. and Jamal T.B., (1994), The Environment-Community Symbiosis: A Case for Collaborative Tourism Planning, *Journal of Sustainable Tourism*, 2(3), pp.152-173
- Giddens, A. (1984), *The Constitution of Society*, Cambridge: Polity Press
- Giles, A., (2017), Place-Based Approaches to Service Delivery, [online], Available at: <https://theknowledgeexchangeblog.com/tag/place-based-budgeting/> [Accessed 28.02.17]
- Glasby, J., (2003), Bringing Down The 'Berlin Wall': The Health and Social Care Divide, *The British Journal of Social Work*, 33(7), pp.969-975
- Glasby, J. and Lester H., (2004), Cases for Change in Mental Health: Partnership Working in Mental Health Services, *Journal of Interprofessional Care*, 18(1), pp.7-16
- Glasby, J. & H. Dickinson and Smith J., (2010), Creating NHS Local: The Relationship between English Local Government and the National Health Service, *Social Policy & Administration*, 44(3), pp.244-264
- Glendinning, C., (2003), Breaking Down Barriers: Integrating Health and Care Services for Older People in England, *Health Policy*, 65(2), pp.139-151
- Glendinning, C., Rummery, K. and Clarke, R., (1998), From Collaboration to Commissioning: Developing Relationships Between Primary Health and Social Services, *British Medical Journal*, 317(7151), pp.122-125
- Goldsmith, S., and Eggers W.D., (2004), *Governing by Network: The New Shape of the Public Sector*, Washington D.C.: Brookings Institution Press
- Goldstein, K., (2002), Getting in The Door: Sampling and Completing Elite Interviews, *Political Science & Politics*, 35(4), pp.669-672

- Goodsell, C.T., (2006), A New Vision for Public Administration, *Public Administration Review*, 66(4), pp.623-635
- Goodwin, M., Jones, M. and Jones, R., (2005), Devolution, Constitutional Change and Economic Development: Explaining and Understanding the New Institutional Geographies of the British State, *Regional Studies*, 39(4), pp.421-436
- Gorard, S. and Taylor, C., (2004), *Combining Methods in Educational and Social Research*, United Kingdom: McGraw-Hill Education
- Gray, B. (1989), *Collaborating: Finding Common Ground for Multiparty Problems*, San Francisco: Jossey-Bass
- Gray, B. and Wood D., (1991), Collaborative Alliances: Moving from Practice to Theory, *Journal of Applied Behavioral Science*, 27(2), pp.3-22
- Gray, B., (2004), Strong Opposition: Frame-Based Resistance to Collaboration, *Journal of Community & Applied Social Psychology*, 14(3), pp.166-176
- Greer, J., (2001), *Partnership Governance in Northern Ireland: Improving Performance*, Surrey: Ashgate Publishers Limited
- Griffiths, S., Kippin, H., and Shafiq, A., (2013), *The Future of Public Services: Roundtable Events Summary RSA 2020 Public Services in Partnership with Collaborate and the support of the ESRC*, ESRC
- Grossi, G. and Reichard, C., (2008), Municipal Corporatization in Germany and Italy, *Public Management Review*, 10(5), pp.597-617
- Grube, D., (2011), What the Secretary Said Next: 'Public Rhetorical Leadership' in the Australian Public Service, *Australian Journal of Public Administration*, 70(2), pp.115-130
- Guarneros-Meza, V. and Martin, S., (2016), Boundary Spanning in Local Public Service Partnerships: Coaches, Advocates or Enforcers?, *Public Management Review*, 18(2), pp.238-257
- Guarneros-Meza, V., Downe, J., Entwistle, T. and Martin, S., (2009), Learning to Improve: An Independent Assessment of the Welsh Assembly Government's Policy for Local Government
- Guarneros-Meza, V., Downe, J., Entwistle, T. and Martin, S., (2014), Putting the Citizen at the Centre? Assembling Local Government Policy in Wales, *Local Government Studies*, 40(1), pp.64-81
- Gubrium, J. and Holstein, J.(eds), (2002), *Handbook of Interview Research: Context and Method*, London: Sage
- Gubrium, J.,F., (1988), *Analyzing Field Reality* (Vol. 8), London: Sage Publications, Inc.

Gugu, S. and Dal Molin, M., (2016), Collaborative Local Cultural Governance What Works? The Case of Cultural Districts in Italy, *Administration & Society*, 48(2), pp.237-262

Guillemin, M. and Gillam, L., (2004), Ethics, Reflexivity, and “Ethically Important Moments” In Research, *Qualitative Inquiry*, 10(2), pp.261-280

Hakim, C., (1982), *Secondary Analysis in Social Research: A Guide to Data Sources and Methods with Examples*, Australia: Allen and Unwin/Unwin Hyman

Hamalainen, R., (2008), Designing and Evaluating Collaboration in a Virtual Game Environment for Vocational Learning, *Computers & Education*, 50(1), pp.98-109

Hambleton R. and Howard, J., (2013), Place-Based Leadership and Public Service Innovation, *Local Government Studies*, 39(1), pp.47-70

Hammersley, M. and Atkinson, P., (2007), *Ethnography: Principles in Practice*, London: Routledge

Hammersley, M., & Atkinson, P., (1995), *Ethnography: Principles in Practice*, London: Routledge

Hampton, G., (2009), Narrative Policy Analysis and the Integration of Public Involvement in Decision Making, *Policy Sciences*, 42(3), pp.227-242

Hardy, C., Phillips, N. and Lawrence, T.B., (2003), Resources, Knowledge and Influence: The Organizational Effects of Interorganizational Collaboration, *Journal of Management Studies*, 40(2), pp.321-347

Hardy, S.D. and Koontz, T.M., (2010), Collaborative Watershed Partnerships in Urban and Rural Areas: Different Pathways to Success?, *Landscape and Urban Planning*, 95(3), pp.79-90

Hart P.T, and Vromen A., (2008), A New Era for Think Tanks in Public Policy? International Trends, Australian Realities, *The Australian Journal of Public Administration*, 67(2), pp.135-148

Hartley J., (2005), Innovation in Governance and Public Services: Past and Present, *Public Money & Management*, 25(1), pp.27-34

Hartley, J. and Allison, M., (2000), The Modernization and Improvement of Government and Public Services: The Role of Leadership in the Modernization and Improvement of Public Services, *Public Money and Management*, 20(2), pp.35-40

Hartley J., and Bennington J., (2006), Copy and Paste, or Graft and Transplant? Knowledge Sharing Through Inter-Organizational Networks, *Public Money and Management*, 26(2), pp.101-108

Hatmaker, D.M., (2015), Bringing Networks In: A model of organizational Socialization in the Public Sector, *Public Management Review*, 17(8), pp.1146-1164

- Head, B.W., (2008a), Wicked Problems in Public Policy, *Public Policy*, 3(2), p.101
- Head, B.W., (2008b), Assessing Network-Based Collaborations: Effectiveness for Whom?, *Public Management Review*, 10(6), pp.733-749.
- Head, B.W. and Alford, J., (2015), Wicked Problems Implications for Public Policy and Management, *Administration & Society*, 47(6), pp.711-739
- Healey, P., (1998), Building Institutional Capacity Through Collaborative Approaches to Urban Planning. *Environment and Planning A*, 30(9), pp.1531-1546
- Hefetz, A. and Warner, M., (2004), Privatization and Its Reverse: Explaining the Dynamics of the Government Contracting Process, *Journal of Public Administration Research and Theory: J-PART*, pp.171-190
- Hempel, C.G., (1965), Typological Methods in The Natural and Social Sciences, *Aspects of Scientific Explanation and Other Essays in the Philosophy of Science*, pp.155-171
- Heritage, J., (1984), *Garthfinkel and Ethnomethodology*, Cambridge: Polity
- Hibbert, P. and Huxham C., (2005), *Tailoring Collaborative Process Learning Presented at the BAM Annual Conference*, Oxford: UK
- Higgins, R., Oldman, C. and Hunter, D.J., (1994), Working Together: Lessons for Collaboration Between Health and Social Services, *Health & Social Care in the Community*, 2(5), pp.269-277
- Higher Education Funding Council for England, (2009), *Supporting Higher Education in Further Education Colleges*, Bristol: Higher Education Funding Council for England
- Higher Education Funding Council for England, (2015), *Business Plan 2015-2020: Creating and Sustaining the Conditions for a World-Leading Higher Education System*, Bristol: Higher Education Funding Council for England
- Higher Education Funding Council for Wales, (2010), *Regional Strategies for the Planning and Delivery of Higher Education: Funding and Support*, Cardiff: Higher Education Funding Council for Wales
- Higher Education Funding Council for Wales, (2013), *Corporate Strategy 13/14 – 15/16*, Cardiff: Higher Education Funding Council for Wales
- Hill, C.J. and Lynn, L.E., (2003), Producing Human Services Why Do Agencies Collaborate?, *Public Management Review*, 5(1), pp.63-81
- Hill, C.J. and Lynn, L.E., (2005), Is Hierarchical Governance in Decline? Evidence from Empirical Research, *Journal of Public Administration Research and Theory*, 15(2), pp.173-195

Himmelman, A., (1994), *Communities Working Cooperatively for a Change, Adapted monograph from Herrman. M. Resolving Conflict: Strategies for Local Government, Internal City/Count Management*, Minneapolis: Washington DC Himmelman Consulting Group

HM Treasury, (2004), *Releasing Resources to the Front Line Independent Review of Public Sector Efficiency*, London: The Stationery Office

Hodgett, S. and Johnson, D., (2001), Troubles, Partnerships and Possibilities: A Study of the Making Belfast Work Development initiative in Northern Ireland, *Public Administration and Development*, 21(4), pp.321-332

Holmen, A.K.T., (2011), Governance Networks in City-Regions: In the Spirit of Democratic Accountability?, *Public Policy and Administration*, 26(4), pp.399-418

Hood, C., James, O., Jones, G., Scott, C. and Travers, T., (1998), Regulation Inside Government: Where New Public Management Meets the Audit Explosion, *Public Money and Management*, 18(2), pp.61-68

Hood, C., (2000), *The Art of the State: Culture, Rhetoric, and Public Management*, Oxford: Oxford University Press

Hudson, B., (1995), Joint Commissioning: Organisational Revolution or Misplaced Enthusiasm?, *Policy & Politics*, 23(3), pp.233-249

Hudson, B., (1998), Circumstances Change Cases: Local Government and the NHS, *Social Policy & Administration*, 32(1), pp.71-86

Hudson, B., (1999a), Decentralisation and Primary Care Groups: A Paradigm Shift for The National Health Service in England?, *Policy & Politics*, 27(2), pp.159-172

Hudson, B., (1999b), Joint Commissioning Across the Primary Health Care–Social Care Boundary: Can it Work?, *Health & Social Care in the Community*, 7(5), pp.358-366

Hudson, B., (2004), Analysing Network Partnerships, *Public Management Review*, 6(1), pp.75-94

Hudson, B., (2005), Sea Change or Quick Fix? Policy on Long-Term Conditions in England', *Health and Social Care in the Community*, 13(4), pp.378-385

Hudson, B., Hardy, B., Henwood, M. and Wistow, G., (1997), Strategic Alliances: Working Across Professional Boundaries: Primary Health Care and Social Care, *Public Money and Management*, 17(4), pp.25-30

Hudson, B., Hardy, B., Henwood M., and Wistow G., (1999), In Pursuit of Inter-Agency Collaboration in the Public Sector, *Public Management*, 1(2), pp.235-260

Hudson, B. and Hardy, B., (2001), Localization and Partnership in the 'New National Health Service': England and Scotland Compared, *Public Administration*, 79(2), pp.315-335

Hudson, B., and Henwood, M., (2002), The NHS and Social Care: The Final Countdown?, *Policy & Politics*, 30(2), pp.153-166

Hultberg, E.L., Glendinning, C., Allebeck, P. and Lönnroth, K., (2005), Using Pooled Budgets to Integrate Health and Welfare Services: A Comparison of Experiments in England and Sweden, *Health & Social Care in The Community*, 13(6), pp.531-541

Hultberg, E.L., Lönnroth, K., and Allebeck P., (2003), Co-Financing as a Means to Improve Collaboration Between Primary Health Care, Social Insurance and Social Service in Sweden: A Qualitative Study of Collaboration Experiences Among Rehabilitation Partners', *Health Policy*, 64, pp.143-152

Humphries, R. and Gregory, S., (2010), *Place-based Approaches and the NHS: Lessons from Total Place*, London: King's Fund

Huxham, C., (1993), Pursuing Collaborative Advantage, *Journal of The Operational Research Society*, 44(6), pp.599-611

Huxham, C., (1996), *Creating Collaborative Advantage*, London: Sage

Huxham, C., (2000), The Challenge of Collaborative Governance, *Public Management*, 2(3), pp.337-357

Huxham, C., (2003), Theorising Collaboration Practice, *Public Management Review*, 5(3), pp.401-423

Huxham, C. and Hibbert, P., (2008), Manifested Attitudes: Intricacies of Inter-Partner Learning in Collaboration, *Journal of Management Studies*, 45(3), pp.502-529

Huxham, C. and Vangen, S., (1996), Working Together: Key Themes in the Management of Relationships between Public and Non-Profit Organisations, *International Journal of Public Sector Management*, 9(7), pp.5-17

Huxham, C. and Vangen, S., (2000), Leadership in the Shaping and Implementation of Collaboration Agendas: How Things Happen in a (Not Quite) Joined-Up World, *Academy of Management Journal*, 43(6), pp.1159-1175

Huxham, C. and Vangen, S., (2005), *Managing to Collaborate: The Theory and Practice of Collaborative Advantage*, London: Routledge

Huxham, C. and Vangen, S., (2013), *Managing to Collaborate: The Theory and Practice of Collaborative Advantage*, London: Routledge

Huxley, P., Evans, S., Davidson, B. and King, S., (2005), The Costs of Scrutiny in Applied Health and Social Care Research: A Case Study, *Research Policy and Planning*, 23(1), pp.55-60

Idea (2010), Integrating Local Public Services: The Workforce Issues, [online], Available at <http://www.idea.gov.uk/idk/core/page.do?pageId=19823160> [Accessed 03.08.11]

Jamal, T.B, and Getz D., (1995), Collaboration Theory and Community Tourism Planning, *Annals of Tourism Research*, 22(1), pp.186–204

Janssens, M., and Brett J., (2006), Cultural Intelligence in Global Teams a Fusion Model of Collaboration, *Group & Organization Management*, 31(1), pp.124-153

Jarman, H. And Greer, S.L., (2010), In the Eye of the Storm: Civil Servants and Managers in the UK Department of Health, *Social Policy & Administration*, 44(2), pp.172-192

Jeannot, G. and Goodchild, B., (2011), Fuzzy Jobs in Local Partnerships: Case Studies of Urban and Rural Regeneration in France and England, *Public Administration*, 89(3), pp.1110-1127

Jessop B., (2002), *The Future of the Capitalist State*, Cambridge: Polity

Jessop, B., (2015), Margaret Thatcher and Thatcherism: Dead but Not Buried, *British Politics*, 10(1), pp.16-30

Johansson, R. and Borell, K., (1999), Central Steering and Local Networks: Old-Age Care in Sweden, *Public Administration*, 77(3), pp.585-598

Jones, C., (2008), Rethinking the Region: Actions for a Sustainable Welsh Economy, *Welsh Economic Review*, 20, pp.26-31

Jones, G. and Needham C., (2008), Debate Consumerism in Public Services - For and Against, *Public Money & Management*, 28(2), pp.70-76

Jones, N., Thomas, P., and Rudd L., (2004), Collaborating for Mental Health Services in Wales: A Process Evaluation, *Public Administration*, 82(1), pp.109-121

Jones, E.G. and Boyle, J.S., (2011), Working with Translators and Interpreters in Research: Lessons Learned, *Journal of Transcultural Nursing*, 22(2), pp.109-115

Jørgensen, T., (1999), The Public Sector in an In-Between Time: Searching for New Public Values, *Public Administration*, 77(3), pp.565-584

Jeffrey, C., (2002), *Foundations - Challenging Local Government*, York: Joseph Rowntree Foundation

Jessop, B., (2015), Margaret Thatcher and Thatcherism: Dead but Not Buried, *British Politics*, 10(1), pp.16-30

Jorgensen, T. B., (1999), The Public Sector in an In-Between Time: Searching for New Public Values, *Public Administration*, 77(3), pp.565-584

- Kanter, R.M., (1994), Collaborative Advantage, *Harvard Business Review*, 72(4), pp.96-108
- Kasdin, S., (2010), Recipes for Pork and Other Delicious Offerings for the New Administration, *Public Administration Review*, 70(3), pp.401-411
- Kawulich, B.B., (2011), Gatekeeping: An Ongoing Adventure in Research, *Field Methods*, 23(1), pp.57-76.
- Keast, R. and Brown, K., (2005), The Network Approach to Evaluation: Uncovering Patterns, Possibilities and Pitfalls, In *Australasian Evaluation Society International Conference*, South Bank, Brisbane
- Keast, R., Mandell, M.P., Brown, K. and Woolcock, G., (2004), Network Structures: Working Differently and Changing Expectations, *Public Administration Review*, 64(3), pp.363-371
- Keast, R., Mandell, M. and Brown, K., (2006), Mixing State, Market and Network Governance Modes: The Role of Government in "Crowded" Policy Domains, *International Journal of Organization Theory and Behavior*, 9(1), p.27.
- Kelly, J., (2012), Challenging Governance Theory: From Networks to Hegemony-by Jonathan Davies, *Public Administration*, 90(2), pp.555-557
- Kennedy, J., (2012), Collaboration in Public Policy and Practice: Perspectives on Boundary Spanners, *Local Government Studies*, 38(6), pp.893-894
- Kettl, D.F., (2000), The Transformation of Governance: Globalization, Devolution, and the Role of Government, *Public Administration Review*, 60(6), pp.488-497
- Kettl, D.F., (2006), Managing Boundaries in American Administration: The Collaboration Imperative, *Public Administration Review*, 66(s1), pp.10-19
- Kerka, S., (1997), Developing Collaborative Partnerships. Practice Application Brief
- Kernaghan, K., (2008), *Integrating Service Delivery: Barriers and Benchmarks*, Toronto: Institute for Citizen-Centred Service
- Kettley, N., (2010), *Theory Building in Educational Research*, London: Bloomsbury Publishing
- Kezar, A., (2005), Redesigning for Collaboration Within Higher Education Institutions: An Exploration into the Developmental Process, *Research in Higher Education*, 46(7), pp.831-860
- Kickert, W.J., Klijn, E.H. and Koppenjan, J.F.M. eds., (1997), *Managing Complex Networks: Strategies for the Public Sector*, London: Sage
- King, N., and Horrocks, C., (2010), *Interviews in Qualitative Research*, London: Sage

Kitson, M. and Wilkinson, F., (2007), The Economics of New Labour: Policy and Performance, *Cambridge Journal of Economics*, 31(6), pp.805-816

King, G., (2011), Ensuring the Data-Rich Future of the Social Sciences, *Science*, 331(6018), pp.719-721

King, S., and Cotterill, S., (2007) Transformational Government? The Role of Information Technology in Delivering Citizen-Centric Local Public Services, *Local Government Studies*, 33(3), pp.333-354

Kjaer, A.M., (2011), Rhodes' Contribution to Governance Theory: Praise, Criticism and The Future Governance Debate, *Public Administration*, 89(1), pp.101-113

Klijn, E.H., (1996), Analyzing and Managing Policy Processes in Complex Networks: A Theoretical Examination of the Concept Policy Networks and its Problems, *Administration & Society*, 28(1), pp.90-120

Klijn, E.H. and Koppenjan, J.F., (2000), Public Management and Policy Networks: Foundations of a Network Approach to Governance, *Public Management and International Journal of Research and Theory*, 2(2), pp.135-158

Koch, R., (1999), New Public Management and Management Education: Foundations of Successful Management Reform, *The Australian Journal of Public Administration*, 58(3), pp. 97-100

Kooiman, J. ed., (1993), *Modern Governance: New Government-Society Interactions*, London: Sage

Koontz, T.M. and Thomas, C.W., (2006), What Do We Know and Need To Know About the Environmental Outcomes of Collaborative Management?, *Public Administration Review*, 66(s1), pp.111-121

Koppenjan, J.J.F.M., (2005), The Formation of Public-Private Partnerships: Lessons from Nine Transport Infrastructure Projects in The Netherlands, *Public Administration*, 83(1), pp.135-157

Koza, M. P., and Lewin A.Y., (1998), The Co-evolution of Strategic Alliances, *Organizational Science*, 9(3), pp.255-264

Kreuter, M.W., (2000), Evaluating Community-Based Collaborative Mechanism: Implications for Practitioners, *Health Promotion Practice*, 1(1), pp.49-63

Krishnan, A., (2009a), *Five Strategies for Practising Interdisciplinarity*, ESRC National Centre for Research Methods, NCRM Working Paper Series, 02/09, ESRC

Krishnan, A., (2009b), What are Academic Disciplines, *University of Southampton, NCRM E Prints Repository eprints. ncrm. ac. uk/783/1/what_are_academic_disciplines. pdf.*

Kuhlmann, S., (2008), Reforming Local Public Services: Trends and Effects in Germany and France, *Public Management Review*, 10(5), pp.573-596

Kuszler, P.C., (2001), Curing Conflicts of Interest in Clinical Research: Impossible Dreams and Harsh Realities, In *Widener L. Symp. J.*, 8, p.115

Kvale, S. (2008), *Doing Interviews*, Thousand Oaks: Sage

Laffin, M. (2004), Is Regional Centralism Inevitable? The Case of the Welsh Assembly, *Regional Studies*, pp. 213–223.

Lane, H. W., and Beamish P.W., (1990), Cross-cultural, Cooperative Behavior in Joint Ventures in LDCs, *Management International Review*, 30 (special issue), pp.87-102

Langton, H., Barnes, M., Haslehurst, S., Rimmer, J. and Turton, P., (2003), Collaboration, User Involvement and Education: A Systematic Review of the Literature and Report of an Educational Initiative, *European Journal of Oncology Nursing*, 7(4), pp.242-252

Lanning, T. and Lawton, K., (2012), *No Train, No Gain—Beyond Free Market and State-Led Skills Policy*, Manchester: Institute for Public Policy Research

Lasker, R.D., Weiss, E.S. and Miller R., (2001), Partnership Synergy: A Practical Framework for Studying and Strengthening the Collaborative Advantage, *The Millbank Quarterly*, 79(2), pp.179-205

Laughlin, J. and Sykes, S., (2004), Devolution and Policymaking in Wales: Restructuring the System and Reinforcing Identity, *Policy Papers*, (11)

Lawrence, T.B., Phillips, N. and Hardy, C., (1999), Watching Whale Watching: Exploring the Discursive Foundations of Collaborative Relationships, *The Journal of Applied Behavioral Science*, 35(4), pp.479-502

Leach, D.W. et al, (2002), Stakeholder Partnerships as Collaborative Policymaking; Evaluation Criteria Applied to Watershed Management in California and Washington, *Journal of Policy Analysis and Management*, 21(4), pp.645-670

Leadbeater, C., (2012), *It's Cooperation, Stupid*, Manchester: Institute for Public Policy Research

Leadershipcentre.org.uk, (2016), *Leadership Centre website*, [online] Available at: <https://www.leadershipcentre.org.uk/totalplace/> [Accessed 28.02.17]

Leech, B.L., (2002a), Asking Questions: Techniques for Semistructured Interviews, *Political Science & Politics*, 35(4), pp.665-668

Leech, B.L., (2002b), Interview Methods in Political Science, *Political Science & Politics*, 35(4), pp.663-664

Legler, R. and Reischl, T., (2003), The Relationship of Key Factors in the Process of Collaboration a Study of School-to-Work Coalitions, *The Journal of Applied Behavioral Science*, 39(1), pp.53-72

Leighton Andrews AM – Welsh Public Service Summit, video, Academi Wales, November 2015, viewed 19.11.16, <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=RCOCEd9HC_s>

Leslie, K. and Canwell, A., (2010), Leadership at All Levels: Leading Public Sector Organisations in an Age of Austerity, *European Management Journal*, 28(4), pp.297-305

Librett, M. and Perrone, D., (2010), Apples and Oranges: Ethnography and the IRB, *Qualitative Research*, 10(6), pp.729-747

Lilleker, G. (2003), Interviewing the Political Elite: Navigating a Potential Minefield, *Politics*, 23(3), pp.207-214

Lin, A.C., (1998), Bridging Positivist and Interpretivist Approaches to Qualitative Methods. *Policy Studies Journal*, 26(1), pp.162-180

Lindsay, I., (2009), Collaboration in Local Sport Services in England: issues emerging from case studies of two local authority areas, *International Journal of Sport Policy*, 1(1), pp.71-88

Lindquist, E., (2010), From Rhetoric to Blueprint: The Moran Review as a Concerted, Comprehensive and Emergent Strategy for Public Service Reform, *Australian Journal of Public Administration*, 69(2), pp.115-151

Ling, T., (2002), Delivering Joined-Up Government in the UK: Dimensions, Issues and Problems, *Public Administration*, 80(4), pp.615-642

Local Government Association, (2010), *Place-Based Budgets: The Future Governance of Local Public Services*, London: Local Government Association

Lofland, J., (1995), Analytic Ethnography Features, Failings, and Futures, *Journal of Contemporary Ethnography*, 24(1), pp.30-67

Long, P., (1997), Researching Tourism Partnership Organizations: From Practice to Theory to Methodology, *Quality Management in Urban Tourism*, pp.235-252

Loseke, D.R., (2011), *Thinking About Social Problems: An Introduction to Constructionist Perspectives*, New Jersey: Transaction Publishers

Lowndes, V. and Skelcher C., (1998), The Dynamics of Multi-Organizational Partnerships: An Analysis of Changing Modes of Governance, *Public Administration*, 76(2), pp.313–33

Lowndes, V. and Sullivan, H., (2004), Like a Horse and Carriage or a Fish on a Bicycle: How Well Do Local Partnerships and Public Participation go Together?, *Local Government Studies*, 30(1), pp.51-73

Lyons, M., and Ingersoll L., (2006), New Public Management and 'Photocopy' Bargaining in the Australian Public Service, *Australian Journal of Public Administration*, 65(2), pp.83-94

Ma, A. and Norwich, B., (2007), Triangulation and Theoretical understanding, *International Journal of Social Research Methodology*, 10(3), pp.211-226

Macpherson, I., Brooker, R. and Ainsworth, P., (2000), Case Study in the Contemporary World of Research: Using Notions of Purpose, Place, Process and Product to Develop Some Principles for Practice, *International Journal of Social Research Methodology*, 3(1), pp.49-61

Mandell, M.P., (1999), The Impact of Collaborative Efforts, *Review of Policy Research*, 16(1), pp.4-17

Mandell, M.P., (2001), *Getting Results Through Collaboration: Networks and Networks Structures for Public Policy and Management*, Westport: Quorum Books

Mandell, M. and Keast, R., (2007), Evaluating Network Arrangements: Toward Revised Performance Measures, *Public Performance & Management Review*, 30(4), pp.574-597

Manley, T.R., Shaw, W.H. and Manley, R.C., (2007), Project Partnering: A Medium for Private and Public Sector Collaboration, *Engineering Management Journal*, 19(2), pp.3-11

Mason, J., (2002), *Qualitative Researching*, London: Sage

Martin S., and Webb, A., (2007), in Parker, S. and Gallagher, N. eds., 2007. *The Collaborative State: How Working Together Can Transform Public Services*, London: Demos, pp.61-70

Martin, S., and Webb A., (2009), Citizen-Centred Public Services: Contestability Without Consumer-Driven Competition?, *Public Money & Management*, 29(2), pp.123-130

Martin, G.P., Currie, G. and Finn, R., (2009), Leadership, Service Reform, and Public-Service Networks: The Case of Cancer-Genetics Pilots in the English NHS, *Journal of Public Administration Research and Theory*, 19(4), pp.769-794

Martin, S., Downe J., Guarneros-Metz. V., Elraz H., and Munday, M., (2014), *Evaluation of the ESF Local Service Board Development and Priority Delivery Project Final Formative Report*, Cardiff, Welsh Government

Martínez-Lacambra, A., (2013), Governance in Public and Private Management, *Local Government Studies*, 39(3), pp.455-459

Mason, J., (1996), *Qualitative Researching*, London: Sage

Mattessich, P.W. and Monsey, B.R., (1992), *Collaboration: What Makes it Work. A Review of Research Literature on Factors Influencing Successful Collaboration*, Amherst H. Wilder Foundation: MN

May, T., (2001), *Social Research: Issues, Methods and Process*, Third Edition. Buckingham: Open University Press

McCann, J.E. and Gray, B., (1986), Power and Collaboration in Human Service Domains, *International Journal of Sociology and Social Policy*, 6(3), pp.58-67

McCormack, C., (2004), Storying Stories: A Narrative Approach to In-Depth Interview Conversations, *International Journal of Social Research Methodology*, 7(3), pp.219-236

McGuire, M., (2002), Managing Networks: Propositions on What Managers Do and Why They Do It, *Public Administration Review*, 62(5), pp.599-609

McGuire, M., (2006), Collaborative Public Management: Assessing What We Know and How We Know It, *Public Administration Review*, 66(s1), pp.33-43

McGuire, M. and Agranoff, R., (2011), The Limitations of Public Management Networks, *Public Administration*, 89(2), pp.265-284

McLeod, J., (2000), Metaphors of The Self: Searching for Young People's Identity Through Interviews, *Researching Youth*, pp.45-58.

McLeod, J., (2003), Why we Interview Now--Reflexivity and Perspective in a Longitudinal Study, *International Journal of Social Research Methodology*, 6(3), pp.201-211

McNulty, T. and Ferlie, E., (2002), *Reengineering Health Care: The Complexities of Organizational Transformation*, Oxford: OUP

McPherson, K., Headrick, L. and Moss, F., (2001), Working and Learning Together: Good Quality Care Depends On It, But How Can We Achieve It?, *Quality in Health Care*, 10(suppl 2), pp.ii46-ii53

Mehmet, M., (2015), Welsh Public Services and the Efficiency Savings Tipping Point, [online], Available at: <http://ppi.w.org.uk/welsh-public-services-and-the-efficiency-savings-tipping-point/>
[Accessed 28.02.17]

Miller, C. & Y. Ahmad, (2000), Collaboration and Partnership: An Effective Response to Complexity and Fragmentation or Solution Built on Sand?, *International Journal of Sociology and Social Policy*, 20(5/6), pp.1-38

Miller Research Evaluation Consulting, (2008), *Professional and Cross-Professional Sustainable Regeneration Skills in Wales*, Cardiff: Regeneration Skills Collective in Wales

- Milward, H.B., (1996), [Introduction], *Journal of Public Administration Research and Theory: J-PART*, 6(2), pp.193-195
- Milward, H.B. and Provan, K., (2003), Managing the Hollow State Collaboration and Contracting, *Public Management Review*, 5(1), pp.1-18
- Mink, O.G., (1992), Creating New Organisational Paradigm for Change, *International Journal of Quality and Reliability Management*, 9(3), pp.21-35
- Minkler, M., (2004), Ethical Challenges for the “Outside” Researcher in Community-Based Participatory Research, *Health Education & Behavior*, 31(6), pp.684-697
- Mischen, P.A., (2015), Collaborative Network Capacity, *Public Management Review*, 17(3), pp.380-403
- Mitchell, S., and Shortell S., (2000), The Governance and Management of Effective Community Health Partnerships: A Typology for Research, *Milbank Quarterly*, 78(2), pp.241–89
- Moe, R. C., (1994), The ‘Reinventing Government’ Exercise: Misinterpreting the Problem, Misjudging the Consequences, *Public Administration Review*, 54(2), pp.111-122
- Moon, J., (1999), The Australian Public Sector and New Governance, *Australian Journal of Public Administration*, 58(2), pp.112-120
- Moon, D.S., (2013), Rhetoric and Policy Learning: On Rhodri Morgan’s ‘Clear Red Water’ and “‘Made in Wales’ Health Policies, *Public Policy and Administration*, 28(3), pp.306-323
- Morgan, G., and Smircich, L., (1980), The Case of Qualitative Research, *Academy of Management Review*, 5, pp.491-500
- Moran, T., (2005), Regeneration - Innovation and Citizen-centred Delivery, *The Australian Journal of Public Administration*, 64(2), pp.7-9
- Moran, T., (2010), *Ahead of the Game: Blueprint for the Reform of Australian Government Administration*, Advisory Group on Reform of Australian Government Administration, Canberra: Department of Prime Minister and Cabinet
- Morgan, R., (2004), *Making the Connections: Delivering Better Services to Wales*, Cardiff: National Assembly for Wales
- Moriarty B., and Gray, B., (2003), Future Directions: A Model for Educational Partnerships in Australia, *Journal of Research in Rural Education*, 18(3), pp.159-163
- Moseley, A., (2009), *Joined-Up Government: Rational Administration or Bureaucratic Politics*, Paper prepared for the annual Public Administration Committee Conference, University of Glamorgan 7th September

Moulton, S. and Wise, C., (2010), Shifting Boundaries Between the Public and Private Sectors: Implications from the Economic Crisis, *Public Administration Review*, 70(3), pp.349-360

Moyser, G. and Wagstaff, M. (eds.), (1987), *Research Methods for Elite Studies* London: Allen & Unwin

Mueller, M., (1999), Universal Service Policies as Wealth Redistribution, *Government Information Quarterly*, 16(4), pp.353-358

Munro, E.R., (2008), Research Governance, Ethics and Access: A Case Study Illustrating the New Challenges Facing Social Researchers, *International Journal of Social Research Methodology*, 11(5), pp.429-439

Needham, C., (2007), *The Reform of Public Services Under New Labour*, Hampshire: Palgrave Macmillan

New South Wales Public Service Commission, (2013), *Getting into Shape: State of the NSW Public Sector Report*, Sydney: NSW

Newell, J.N., Pande, S.B., Baral, S.C., Bam, D.S. and Malla, P., (2005), Leadership, Management and Technical Lessons Learnt from a Successful Public-Private Partnership for TB Control in Nepal, *The International Journal of Tuberculosis and Lung Disease*, 9(9), pp.1013-1017

NHS Wales, (2011), Multidisciplinary Working: A Framework for practice in Wales, Continuing NHS Healthcare National programme, [authors M. Wyatt & Dr C. Wallace]

Nicholson, D., Artz, S., Armitage, A. and Fagan J., (2000), Working Relationships and Outcomes in Multidisciplinary Collaborative Practice Settings, *Child & Youth Care Forum*, 29(1), pp.39-73

Nicholson, M., (1996), The Continued Significance of Positivism?, *International Theory: Positivism And Beyond*, pp.128-145

Noor, K.B.M., (2008), Case Study: A Strategic Research Methodology, *American Journal of Applied Sciences*, 5(11), pp.1602-1604

North Wales Economic Ambitions Board, (2012a), North Wales Economic Ambitions Board Constitution

North Wales Economic Ambitions Board, (2012b), North Wales Economic Ambitions Board Strategy

Northern Ireland Assembly, (2002), *Review of Public Administration*, Belfast: Northern Ireland Assembly

Northern Ireland Assembly, (2013), *Community Planning*, Belfast: Northern Ireland Assembly

- Northern Ireland Executive, (2016), *Programme for Government Consultation Document*, Belfast: Northern Ireland Executive
- Nylen, U., (2007), Interagency Collaboration in Human Services: Impact of Formalization and Intensity on Effectiveness, *Public Administration*, 85(1), pp.143-166
- Oakley, A., (1999), Paradigm Wars: Some Thoughts on a Personal and Public Trajectory, *International Journal of Social Research Methodology*, 2(3), pp.247-254
- O'Flynn, J., (2007), From New Public Management to Public Value: Paradigmatic Change and Managerial Implications, *The Australian Journal of Public Administration*, 66(3), pp.353-366
- O'Flynn, J., (2009), The Cult of Collaboration in Public Policy, *Australian Journal of Public Administration*, 68(1), pp.112-116
- O'Leary, R., and Bingham L. B., (2003), *The Promise and Performance of Environmental Conflict Resolution*, Washington, D.C.: Resources for the Future Press
- O'Toole, L., J., Jnr, (1997), Treating Networks Seriously, Practical and Research-Based Agendas in Public Administration, *Public Administration Review*, 57(1), pp.45-52
- Osborne, S.P., (2006), The New Public Governance?, *Public Management Review*, 8(3), pp.377-387
- Osbourne, D., and Gaebler, T., (1992), *Reinventing Government*, Reading MA: Addison-Wesley
- Osborne, D. and Plastrik, P., (1998), *Banishing Bureaucracy (The Five Strategic for Reinventing Government)*, Boston: Eddision Wesley Publishing Company
- Osborne, S.P., Chew, C. and McLaughlin, K., (2008), The Once and Future Pioneers? The Innovative Capacity of Voluntary Organisations and the Provision of Public Services: A Longitudinal Approach, *Public Management Review*, 10(1), pp.51-70
- Ospina, S. and Yaroni, A., (2003), Understanding Cooperative Behavior in Labor Management Cooperation: A Theory-Building Exercise, *Public Administration Review*, 63(4), pp.455-471
- Page, S., (2004), Measuring Accountability for Results in Interagency Collaboratives, *Public Administration Review*, 64(5), pp.591-606
- Painter, C., (1999), Public Sector Reform from Thatcher to Blair: A Third Way, *Parliamentary Affairs*, 52(1), pp.94-112
- Painter, C., (2013), The UK Coalition Government: Constructing Public Service Reform Narratives, *Public Policy and Administration*, 28(1), pp.3-20

Park, J.J., and Kerley, R., (2011), Single Outcome Agreements and Partnership Working in Scottish Local Government - Year One, *Local Government Studies*, 37(1), pp.57-76

Parker, D. and Hartley K., (1997), The Economics Of Partnership Sourcing Versus Adversarial Competition: A Critique, *European Journal of Purchasing & Supply Management*, 3(2), pp.115-125

Perrin, B., (2002), Implementing the Vision: Addressing Challenges to Results-Focused Management and Budgeting, In *Meeting on Implementation Challenges in Results Focused Management and Budgeting* (pp.11-12)

Peternelj-Taylor, C.A., 2005. Conceptualizing Nursing Research with Offenders: Another Look at Vulnerability, *International Journal of Law and Psychiatry*, 28(4), pp.348-359

Pettigrew, A.M., (1985), Contextualist Research and the Study of Organizational Change Processes, *Research Methods in Information Systems*, pp.53-78

Pfeffer, J. and Salancik, G.R., (1978), *The External Control of Organisations*, New York, 175

Pillow, W.S., (2000), Deciphering Attempts to Decipher Postmodern Educational Research, *Educational Researcher*, 29(5), pp.21-24

Platt, J., (1992), Case Study in American Methodological Thought, *Current Sociology*, 40(1), pp.17-48

Podger, A.S., (2004a), Innovation with Integrity - The Public Sector Leadership Imperative to 2020, *Australian Journal of Public Administration*, 63(1), pp.11-21

Podger, A.S., (2004b), Regeneration - Where to in the Future?, *Australian Journal of Public Administration*, 64(2), pp.13-19

Polenske, K., (2004), Competition, Collaboration and Cooperation: An Uneasy Triangle in Networks of Firms and Regions, *Regional Studies*, 38(9), pp.1029-1043

Pollard, K.C., Miers, M.E. and Gilchrist, M., (2004), Collaborative Learning for Collaborative Working? Initial Findings from a Longitudinal Study of Health and Social Care Students, *Health & Social Care in the Community*, 12(4), pp.346-358

Pollitt, C., (2003), *The Essential Public Manager*, UK: McGraw-Hill Education

Pollitt, C. and Bouckaert, G., (2004), *Public Management Reform: A Comparative Analysis*, USA: Oxford University Press

Poocharoen, O.O. and Ting, B., (2015), Collaboration, Co-Production, Networks: Convergence of Theories, *Public Management Review*, 17(4), pp.587-614

Potter, J. and Wetherell, M., (2001), Unfolding Discourse Analysis, *Discourse Theory and Practice: A Reader*, pp.198-209

Powell, M. (2003) review of Sullivan H. and Skelcher C., (2003), *Working Across Boundaries: Collaboration in Public Services*, Basingstoke, Palgrave Macmillan in *Health & Social Care in the Community*, 11(2), p.185

Pratchett, L. and Wingfield M., (1996), Petty Bureaucracy and Woollyminded Liberalism? The Changing Ethos of Local Government Officers, *Public Administration*, 74(4), pp.639-656

Prefontaine, L., Ricard, L., Sicotte, H., Turcotte, D. and Dawes, S., (2000), *New Models of Collaboration for Public Service Delivery*, Worldwide Trend

Pring, R., (2000), The 'False Dualism' of Educational Research, *Journal of Philosophy of Education*, 34(2), pp.247-260

Provan, K.G. and Kenis, P., (2008), Modes of Network Governance: Structure, Management, and Effectiveness, *Journal of Public Administration Research and Theory*, 18(2), pp.229-252

Provan, K.G. and Lemaire, R.H., (2012), Core Concepts and Key Ideas for Understanding Public Sector Organizational Networks: Using Research to Inform Scholarship and Practice, *Public Administration Review*, 72(5), pp.638-648

Provan, K.G. and Milward, H.B., (2001), Do Networks Really Work? A Framework for Evaluating Public-Sector Organizational Networks, *Public Administration Review*, 61(4), pp.414-423

Purdy, J.M., (2012), A Framework for Assessing Power in Collaborative Governance Processes, *Public Administration Review*, 72(3), pp.409-417

Radcliffe, J. and Dent, M., (2005), Introduction: From New Public Management to the New Governance?, *Policy & Politics*, 33(4), pp.617-622

Radaelli, C.M., (1995), The Role of Knowledge in the Policy Process, *Journal of European Public Policy*, 2(2), pp.159-183

Ranade, W. and Hudson B., (2003), Conceptual Issues in Inter-Agency Collaboration, *Local Government Studies*, 29(3), pp.32-50

Reed, A.H. and Knight, L.V., (2010), Effect of a Virtual Project Team Environment on Communication-Related Project Risk, *International Journal of Project Management*, 28(5), pp.422-427

Rees, J., (2013), Public Sector Commissioning and the Third Sector: Old Wine in New Bottles?, *Public Policy and Administration*, 29(1), pp.45-63

Rees, J., Mullins, D., and Bovaird, T., (2012), *Third Sector Partnerships for Public Service Delivery: An Evidence Review*, Birmingham: University of Birmingham

Reeves, S., Perrier, L., Goldman, J., Freeth, D. and Zwarenstein, M., (2013), Interprofessional Education: Effects on Professional Practice and Healthcare Outcomes (update), *Cochrane Database Syst Rev*, 3(3)

Regional Learning Partnership, (2008a), RLP Vision, Mission Statement, Remit & Objectives Document

Regional Learning Partnership, (2008b), Business Plan

Regional Learning Partnership, (2012), RLP Vision, Mission Statement, Remit & Objectives Document

Reich, M. R., (2000), Public-Private Partnerships for Public Health, *Nature Medicine*, 6(6), pp.617-620

Reichel, J. and Rudnicka, A., (2009), Collaboration of NGOs and Business in Poland, *Social Enterprise Journal*, 5(2), pp.126-140

Reiners, G.,M., (2012), Understanding the Differences between Husserl's (Descriptive) and Heidegger's (Interpretive) Phenomenological Research, *Journal of Nursing Care*, 1(5), pp.1-5

Rhodes, R.A.W., (1996), *The New Governance: Governing Without Government*, *Political Studies*, 44(4), pp.652-667

Rhodes, R.A.W., (1997), *Understanding Governance: Policy Networks, Governance, Reflexivity and Accountability*, London: Open University Press

Rhodes, R.A.W., (1998), Different Roads to Unfamiliar Places: UK Experience in Comparative Perspective, *Australian Journal of Public Administration*, 57(4), pp.19-31

Rhodes, R.A.W., (2000), The Governance Narrative: Key Findings and Lessons from the ERC's Whitehall Programme, *Public Administration*, 78(2), pp.345-363

Rhodes, R.A.W., (2002), Putting People Back into Networks, *Australian Journal of Political Science*, 37(3), pp.399-416

Rhodes, R.A.W., (2014), July, Recovering the 'Craft' of Public Administration in Network Governance, In *Plenary Address to the International Political Science Association World Congress, Montreal, 19-24 July*

Richards, D., (1996), Elite Interviewing: Approaches and Pitfalls, *Politics*, 16(3), pp.199-204

Richardson, V., (2003), Constructivist pedagogy, *Teachers college record*, 105(9), pp.1623-1640

Riessman, C.K., (1993), *Narrative Analysis* (Vol. 30), London: Sage

Ritchie, J., Lewis, J., Nicholls, C.M. and Ormston, R. eds., (2013), *Qualitative Research Practice: A Guide for Social Science Students and Researchers*, London: Sage

Rittel, H.W. and Webber, M.M., (1973), Planning Problems are Wicked, *Polity*, 4, pp.155-169

Roberts, N., (2000), Wicked Problems and Network Approaches to Resolution, *International Public Management Review*, 1(1), pp.1-19

Rocco, T.S., Bliss, L.A., Gallagher, S. and Pérez-Prado, A., (2003), Taking the Next Step: Mixed Methods Research in Organizational Systems, *Information Technology, Learning, and Performance Journal*, 21(1), p.19

Rosenheck, R.A., (2001), Organizational Process: A Missing Link Between Research and Practice, *Psychiatric Services*, 52(12), pp.1607-1612

Ross, F., McLaren, S., Relfeirn, S. and Warwick, C., (2001), Partnerships for Changing Practice: Lessons from South Thames Evidence-Based Practice Project (STEP), *Nursing Times Research*, 6(5), pp.817-828

Rummery, K. and Coleman, A., (2003), Primary Health and Social Care Services in the UK: Progress Towards Partnership?, *Social Science & Medicine*, 56(8), pp.1773-1782

Sabatier, P.A., Leach, W.D., Lubell, M., and Pelkey, N.W., (2005), Theoretical Frameworks Explaining Partnership Success, *Swimming Upstream: Collaborative Approaches to Watershed Management*, pp.173-200

San Martín-Rodríguez, L., Beaulieu, M.D., D'Amour, D. and Ferrada-Videla, M., (2005), The Determinants of Successful Collaboration: A Review of Theoretical and Empirical Studies, *Journal of Interprofessional Care*, 19(sup1), pp.132-147

Saunders, M.N. and Townsend, K., (2016), Reporting and Justifying the Number of Interview Participants in Organization and Workplace Research, *British Journal of Management*, 27(4), pp.836-852

Scheurich, J.J., (1995), A Postmodernist Critique of Research Interviewing, *International Journal of Qualitative Studies in Education*, 8(3), pp.239-252

Scottish Government, (2017), Public Service Reform, [online], Available at: <http://www.gov.scot/Topics/Government/PublicServiceReform> [Accessed 06.03.17]

Scottish Parliament, (2013), *Public Services Reform in Scotland: Strand 3 - Developing New Ways of Delivering Services*, Edinburgh: Scottish Parliament

Selin, S. and Beason, K., (1991), Interorganizational Relations in Tourism, *Annals of Tourism Research*, 18(4), pp.639-652

- Selin, S.W., Schuett, M.A. and Carr, D., (2000), Modeling Stakeholder Perceptions of Collaborative Initiative Effectiveness, *Society & Natural Resources*, 13(8), pp.735-745
- Shergold, P., (2013a), My Hopes for a Public Service for the Future, *Australian Journal of Public Administration*, 72(1). pp.7-13
- Shergold, P., (2013b), *Service Sector Reform: A Roadmap for Community and Human Services Reform*, Melbourne: State Government of Victoria
- Sherriff, C. and Wilson, S., (2006), Metaphors at Work: Building Multiagency Collaboration Through a Five-Stage Process, *Creating a Culture of Collaboration: The International Association of Facilitators Handbook*, pp.173-191
- Siggelkow, N., (2007), Persuasion with Case Studies, *Academy of Management Journal*, 50(1), pp.20-24
- Silverman, D., (1994), *Interpreting Qualitative Data*, London: Sage
- Simmons, J., (2003), Rules of Engagement: Towards Effectiveness and Equity in Public-Private Sector Collaboration, *Public Management Review*, 5(4), pp.585-595
- Simonin, B. L., (1999), Ambiguity and the Process of Knowledge Transfer in Strategic Alliances, *Strategic Management Journal*, 20(7), pp.595-623
- Simpson, J., (2011), *Local, Regional, National: What Services Are Best Delivered Where, A Report to Carl Sargeant, Assembly Member, Minister for Social Justice and Local Government*, Cardiff: Welsh Government
- Skelcher, C., (2005), *Public-Private Partnerships* (pp. 347-370), New York: Oxford University Press
- Smith, A.M. and Fischbacher, M., (2002), Service Design in the NHS: Collaboration or Conflict?, *Journal of Marketing Management*, 18(9-10), pp.923-951
- Smith, K.B. and Frederickson, H.G., (2003), *The Public Administration Theory Primer*, Boulder, CO: Westview
- Smith, R. and Leonard, P., (2005), Collaboration for Inclusion: Practitioner Perspectives, *Equity & Excellence in Education*, 38(4), pp.269-279
- Smith, M., Mathur, N. and Skelcher, C., (2006), Corporate Governance in a Collaborative Environment: What Happens When Government, Business and Civil Society Work Together?, *Corporate Governance: An International Review*, 14(3), pp.159-171
- Snape S., & P., Taylor, (2003), Partnerships Between Health and Local Government: An Introduction, *Local Government Studies*, 29(3), pp.1-16
- Snape S., (2003), Health and Local Government Partnerships: The Local Government Policy Context, *Local Government Studies*, 29(3), pp.73-98

Snow, D.A. and Trom, D., (2002), *The Case Study and the Study of Social Movements*, Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press

Soy, S.K., (1997), *The Case Study as a Research Method*, Unpublished paper, University of Texas at Austin, pp.1-6

SQW Consulting, (2012), An evaluation of the South West Wales Regional Learning Partnership the Baseline Report - Executive Summary

SQW Consulting, (2013), Longitudinal Evaluation of the Regional Learning Partnership the Mid-Term Report - Executive Summary

SQW Consulting, (2014), Longitudinal Evaluation of the Regional Learning Partnership the Final Report - Executive Summary

Stake, R.E., (1995), *The Art of Case Study Research*, Thousand Oaks: Sage

Straus, D.A., (1999), *Designing a Consensus Building Process Using a Graphic Road Map*, in *The Consensus Building Handbook: A Comprehensive Guide to Reaching Agreement*, Susskind, L.E., McKearnen, S. and Thomas-Lamar, J., (1999), *The Consensus Building Handbook: A Comprehensive Guide to Reaching Agreement*, California: Sage Publications, pp.137-168

Strauss, A., and Corbin, J., (1990), *Basics of Qualitative Research* (Vol. 15). Newbury Park, California: Sage

Steijn, B., Klijn, E.H., and Edelenbos, J., (2011), Public Private Partnerships: Added Value by Organizational Form or Management?, *Public Administration*, 89(4), pp.1235-1252

Stewart, R.G., and Stewart T., (2004), Public Sector Reform Knowledge Production: Validation and Evidence as Agreement, *The Australian Journal of Public Administration*, 62(1), pp.58-65

Sullivan, H., Barnes, M., and Matka, E., (2002), Building Collaborative Capacity through Theories of Change: 'Early Lessons from the Evaluation of Health Action Zones in England', *Evaluation*, 8(2), pp.205-226

Sullivan, H., and Skelcher, C., (2003), Working Across Boundaries: Collaboration in Public Services, *Health & Social Care in the Community*, 11(2), pp.185-185

Sullivan, H., Williams, P. and Jeffares, S., (2012), Leadership for Collaboration: Situated Agency in Practice, *Public Management Review*, 14(1), pp.41-66

Sullivan, H., Williams, P., Marchington, M., and Knight, L., (2013), Collaborative Futures: Discursive Realignment in Austere Times, *Public Money & Management*, 33(2), pp.123-130

- Suter, E., Arndt, J., Arthur, N., Parboosingh, J., Taylor, E., and Deutschlander, S., (2009), Role Understanding and Effective Communication as Core Competencies for Collaborative Practice, *Journal of Interprofessional Care*, 23(1), pp.41–51
- Sweeting, D., Hambleton, R., Huxham, C., Stewart, M. and Vangen, S. (2004), *Leadership and Partnership in Urban Governance: Evidence from London, Bristol and Glasgow* in Boddy, M. and Parkinson, M. (eds). *City Matters Competitiveness, Cohesion and Urban Governance*, Bristol: Policy Press, pp. 349-366
- Sydow, J., (2006), Book Review: Managing to Collaborate: The Theory and Practice of Collaborative Advantage, *Organization Studies*, 27(4), pp.605-607
- Taylor, P., (2003), Partnerships Between Health and Local Authorities: Concluding Remarks, *Local Government Studies*, 29(3), pp.139-140
- Taylor, J., (2009), Strengthening the Link Between Performance Measurement and Decision Making, *Public Administration*, 87(4), pp.853-871
- Taylor, J., (2011), Factors Influencing the Use of Performance Information for Decision Making in Australian State Agencies, *Public Administration*, 89(4), pp.1316-1334
- Teisman, G.R., and Klijn, E.H., (2002), Partnership Arrangements: Governmental Rhetoric or Governance Scheme?, *Public Administration Review*, 62(2), pp.197-205
- Terry, F., (1997), Editorial: Strategic Alliances, *Public Money & Management*, 17(4), pp.3-4
- Thomas, K., (1996), Perspectives on Devolution, *Journal of the American Association of Planning*, 62(4), pp 419-425
- Thomas, D.R., (2006), A General Inductive Approach for Analyzing Qualitative Evaluation Data, *American Journal of Evaluation*, 27(2), pp.237-246
- Thomas, G., (2013) From Question to Inquiry: Operationalising the Case Study for Research in Teaching, *Journal of Education for Teaching*, 39(5), pp.590-601.
- Thomspson, A.M., and Perry J.L., (2006), Collaboration Processes: Inside the Black Box, *Public Administration Review*, December special issue, pp.20-32
- Thomson, A.M., Perry, J.L., and Miller, T.K., (2009), Conceptualizing and Measuring Collaboration, *Journal of Public Administration Research and Theory*, 19(1), pp.23-56
- Tiernan, A., (2011), Advising Australian Federal Governments: Assessing the Evolving Capacity and Role of the Australian Public Service, *Australian Journal of Public Administration*, 70(4), pp.335-346

- Titscher, S. and Jenner, B., (2000), *Methods of Text and Discourse Analysis: In Search of Meaning*, Sage
- Todeva, E. and Knocke D., (2005), Strategic Alliances and Models of Collaboration, *Management Decision*, 43(1), pp.123-148
- Tranfield, D. and Starkey, K., (1998), The Nature, Social Organization and Promotion of Management Research: Towards Policy, *British Journal of Management*, 9(4), pp.341-353
- Treasury, H.M., (2010), *Total Place: A Whole Area Approach to Public Services*, London: HM Treasury
- Tuckett, A.G., (2005), Applying Thematic Analysis Theory to Practice: A Researcher's Experience, *Contemporary Nurse*, 19(1-2), pp.75-87
- University of Birmingham Policy Commission, (2011), *When Tomorrow Comes: The Future of Local Public Services*, Birmingham: University of Birmingham
- University of Portsmouth, (2017), Research in Your Own Place of Work / Organisation and Other Situations Where There is Potential Conflict of Duty / Interest, [online], Available at:
<http://www.port.ac.uk/research/ethics/downloads/filetodownload,171753,en.pdf>
 [Accessed 28.02.17]
- University of Ulster, *Impact Case Study UoA 22: Social Work and Social Policy, The Review of Public Administration in Northern Ireland* [pdf], University of Ulster, Available at http://www.ulster.ac.uk/ref2014/Impact/22_2.pdf
 [Accessed 20.06.17]
- Unluer, S., (2012), Being an Insider Researcher While Conducting Case Study Research, *The Qualitative Report*, 17(29), pp.1-14
- Verschuren, P., (2003), Case Study as a Research Strategy: Some Ambiguities and Opportunities, *International Journal of Social Research Methodology*, 6(2), pp.121-139
- Vigoda, E. & F. Yuval, (2004), Managerial Quality, Administrative Performance and Trust in Governance: Can We Point to Causality?, *The Australian Journal of Public Administration*, 62(3), pp.12-25
- Vincent, I., (1999), Collaboration and Integrated Services in the NSW Public Sector, *The Australian Journal of Public Administration*, 58(3), pp.50-54
- Vogel, R. and Masal, D., (2015), Public Leadership: A Review of the Literature and Framework for Future Research, *Public Management Review*, 17(8), pp.1165-1189

- Waddock, S., (1991), A Typology of Social Partnership Organizations, *Administration and Society*, 22(4), pp.480–515
- Walliman, N., (2011), *Your Research Project: Designing and Planning Your Work*, London: Sage Publications
- Wagenaar, H., and Baars, A., (2011), Governing Metropolitan Regions in the 21st Century-edited by Don Phares, *Public Administration*, 89(4), pp.1687-1688
- WalesTop300 Publication, (December 2009), Western Mail, Cardiff
- Wales Audit Office, (2005), *Regeneration - A Simpler Approach for Wales*, Cardiff: Wales Audit Office
- Wales Audit Office, (2010), *A Picture of Public Services – Financial Challenges Facing Public Services and Lessons Learnt from Our Work*, Cardiff: Wales Audit Office
- Wales Public Services, (2013a), *Future Pressures on Welsh Public Services – Financial, Demand and Other Cost Pressures to 2025 and a Review of Potential Responses*, Cardiff: Wales Public Services
- Wales Public Services, (2013b), *Weathering the Storm? – A Look at Small Countries' Public Services in Times of Austerity*, Cardiff: Wales Public Services
- Wanna, J. and Weller, P., (2011), The Irrepressible Rod Rhodes: Contesting Traditions and Blurring Genres, *Public Administration*, 89(1), pp.1-14
- Warburton, J.A., Cuthill, M. and Bartlett, H., (2012), Collaborative Governance of Ageing: Challenges for Local Government in Partnering with the Seniors' Sector, *Local Government Studies*, 38(2), pp.161-181
- Warburton, J.A., Everingham, J., Cuthill, M. and Barlett, H., (2008), Achieving Effective Collaborations to Help Communities Age Well, *Australian Journal of Public Administration*, 67(4), pp.470-482
- Webb, A., (1991), Co-ordination: A Problem in Public Sector Management, *Policy & Politics*, 19(4), pp.502-529
- Webb, A., (2007), *Promise and Performance: The Report of The Independent Review of The Mission and Purpose of Further Education in Wales in The Context of The Learning Country: Vision into Action*, Cardiff: Welsh Assembly Government

Weber, E.P. and Khademian, A.M., (2008), Wicked Problems, Knowledge Challenges, and Collaborative Capacity Builders in Network Settings, *Public Administration Review*, 68(2), pp.334-349

Welsh Assembly Government, (2006), *Making the Connections - Delivering Beyond Boundaries: Transforming Public Services in Wales*, Cardiff: Welsh Assembly Government

Welsh Assembly Government, (2007a), *Making the Connections – Building Better Customer Service - A Framework for Improvement*, Cardiff: Welsh Assembly Government

Welsh Assembly Government, (2007b), *Partnership and Managing Change – A Partnership Agreement for Public Services in Wales*, Cardiff: Welsh Assembly Government

Welsh Assembly Government, (2008a), *Local Vision Statutory Guidance from the Welsh Assembly Government on Developing and Delivering Community Strategies*, Cardiff: Welsh Assembly Government

Welsh Assembly Government, (2008b), *Local Service Boards in Wales: Realising the Potential – Route Map*, Cardiff: Welsh Assembly Government

Welsh Assembly Government, (2009), *Better Outcomes for Tougher Times: The Next Phase of Public Service Improvement*, Cardiff: Welsh Assembly Government

Welsh Assembly Government, (2010a), *Economic Renewal: A New Direction*, Cardiff: Welsh Assembly Government

Welsh Assembly Government, (2010b), *Adding Value 11 – Showcasing Examples of Good Practice in Procurement and Delivery*, Cardiff: Welsh Assembly Government

Welsh Assembly Government, (2010c), *Efficiency & Improvement Board Newsletter Cardiff*, WAG, June, Issue 3, p.4

Welsh Government, (2011a), *A Compact for Change Between the Welsh Government and Welsh Local Government*, Cardiff: Welsh Government

Welsh Government, (2011b), *Meeting the Challenge of Change: Our Shared Approach to Public Service Efficiency and Innovation in Wales*, Cardiff: Welsh Government

Welsh Government, (2012), *Partnership and Managing Change – A Partnership Agreement for Public Services in Wales*, Cardiff: Welsh Government

Welsh Government, (2014a), *Devolution, Democracy and Delivery: Local Government*, Cardiff: Welsh Government

Welsh Government, (2014b), *Skills Implementation Plan*, Cardiff: Welsh Government

Welsh Government, (2014c), *Skills Policy Statement*, Cardiff: Welsh Government

Welsh Government, (2014d), *Invitation to Principal Local Authorities in Wales to Submit Proposals for Voluntary Merger*, Cardiff: Welsh Government

Welsh Government, (2015), Written Statement – Public Services Leadership Panel, [online], Available at <http://gov.wales/about/cabinet/cabinetstatements/previous-administration/2015/leadershippanel/?lang=en>
[Accessed 28.02.17]

Welsh Government, (2016), Public Services Boards: Guidance on the Use of Evidence and Analysis, Cardiff: Welsh Government

Welsh Government, (2017a), Public Service Boards, [online], Available at: <https://gov.wales/topics/improvingservices/public-services-boards/?lang=en>
[Accessed 28.02.17]

Welsh Government, (2017b), Local Government Reform Paper Unveiled by Mark Drakeford, [online], Available at: <https://gov.wales/newsroom/localgovernment/2017/170131-local-government-reform/?lang=en>
[Accessed 28.02.17]

Welsh Local Government Association, (2004), *Quangos*, WLGA Co-ordinating Committee, Cardiff: Welsh Local Government Association

Welsh Local Government Association, (2008a), *Working Together – Case Studies in Welsh Local Government*, Cardiff: Welsh Local Government Association

Welsh Local Government Association, (2008b), *Reality Versus Rhetoric: Evidencing Councils Improved Performance*, Cardiff: Welsh Local Government Association

Welsh Local Government Association, (2008c), *Forum – Winter WLGA Newsletter*, Cardiff: Welsh Local Government Association

Welsh Local Government Association, (2008d), *In the Eye of the Storm – The Political, Financial and Service Challenges 2009-2014*, Cardiff: Welsh Local Government Association

Welsh Local Government Association, (2010), *Regional Collaboration Compendium*, Cardiff: Welsh Local Government Association

Welsh Local Government Association, (2017), Welsh Councils Welcome White Paper on Local Government Reform, [online], Available at: <https://www.localgov.co.uk/Welsh-councils-welcome-White-Paper-on-local-government-reform/42456>
[Accessed 28.02.17]

Wetherell, M., Taylor, S. and Yates, S.J., (2001), *Discourse Theory and Practice: A Reader*, London: Sage

Whitehead, M., (2007), The Architecture of Partnerships: Urban Communities in the Shadow of the Hierarchy, *Policy & Politics*, 35(1), pp.3-23

White, L., (2001), Effective Governance Through Complexity Thinking and Management Science, *Systems Research and Behavioral Science*, 18(3), pp.241-257

Why Choose Qualitative Research Over Quantitative Research?, [online] Available at: <https://justpaste.it/WhyChooseQualitativeResearch> - Created: 28/12/2015 [Accessed 28.07.17]

Wildridge, V., Childs, S., Cawthra, L. and Madge, B., (2004), How to Create Successful Partnerships - A Review of the Literature, *Health Information & Libraries Journal*, 21(s1), pp.3-19

Wiles, R., Crow, G., Heath, S. and Charles, V., (2008), The Management of Confidentiality and Anonymity in Social Research, *International Journal of Social Research Methodology*, 11(5), pp.417-428

Williams, M., (2000), Social Research? The Emergence of a Discipline?, *International Journal of Social Research Methodology*, 3(2), pp.157-166

Williams, P. and Sullivan, H.C., (2007), *Learning to Collaborate: Lessons in Effective Partnership: Working in Health and Social Care*, NLIAH

Williams, P. and Sullivan, H., (2009), Faces of Integration, *International Journal of Integrated Care*, 9(4)

Williams, P., (2010a), 'Collaboration...It's the Name of the Game', *Public Servant*, March, p.22

Williams, P., (2010b), *Special Agents: The Nature and Role of Boundary Spanners*, In ESRC Research Seminar Series, Collaborative Futures: New Insights from Intra and Inter-Sectoral Collaboration, Birmingham: University of Birmingham

Williams, Pa., (2014), *Commission on Public Service Governance and Delivery-Full Report*, Cardiff: Welsh Government

Willis, M. and Jeffares, S., (2012), Four Viewpoints of Whole Area Public Partnerships, *Local Government Studies*, 38(5), pp.539-556

Wilson, S., Davison, N., Clarke, M. and Casebourne, J., (2015), *Joining Up Public Services Around Local, Citizen Needs*, London: IfG Publication

Wimbush, E., (2011), Implementing an Outcomes Approach to Public Management and Accountability in the UK - Are We Learning the Lessons?, *Public Money & Management*, 31(3), pp.211-218

Wolcott, H. F., (2009), *Writing Up Qualitative Research* (3rd ed.), Thousand Oaks, California: Sage Publications, Inc.

Wooding, N. (2008), Co-Creation: A New Narrative for 21st Century Public Service Delivery, *Public Sector Management Wales*, Sowing Seeds, Welsh Assembly Government, Cardiff: PSMW

Wyse, S., (2011), What's the Difference Between Qualitative and Quantitative Research? [online], Available at: <https://www.snapsurveys.com/blog/qualitative-vs-quantitative-research/> [Accessed 28.07.17]

Yanos, P.T. and Hopper, K., (2008), On 'False, Collusive Objectification': Becoming Attuned to Self-Censorship, Performance and Interviewer Biases in Qualitative Interviewing, *International Journal of Social Research Methodology*, 11(3), pp.229-237

Yin, R.K., (1994), *Case Study Research: Design and Methods*, Thousand Oaks: International Educational and Professional Publisher

Yin, R.K., (2003), *Case Study Research Design and Methods*, Third Edition, Applied Social Research Methods Series, 5

Yin, R.K., (2009), *Case Study Research: Design and Methods*, Fourth Edition, London: Sage Publications

Yin, R.K., (2013), *Case Study Research: Design and Methods*, Fifth Edition, London: Sage Publications

Young, L. and Denize, S., (2008), Competing Interests: The Challenge to Collaboration in the Public Sector, *International Journal of Sociology and Social Policy*, 28(1/2), pp.46-58

Zapata, M.J. and Hall, C.M., (2012), Public–Private Collaboration in the Tourism Sector: Balancing Legitimacy and Effectiveness in Local Tourism Partnerships: The Spanish Case, *Journal of Policy Research in Tourism, Leisure and Events*, 4(1), pp.61-83

Zokaei, K., Elias, S., O'Donovan, B., Samuel, D., Evans, B. and Goodfellow, J., (2010), *Lean and Systems Thinking in the Public Sector in Wales*, Lean Enterprise Research Centre Report for The Wales Audit Office, Cardiff University

APPENDICES

Appendix A Interview Questions

1. With respect to your organisation, how would you define collaboration internally and externally?
2. What do you consider are the key motivational factors for collaborating?
3. What do you consider are the real benefits of collaboration?
4. How does your organisation collaborate?
5. What are the key barriers to delivering / developing relationships with respect to the context of the above?
6. Given the current policy context do you feel 'coerced' in your organisation collaborating with others?
7. What are the advantages from an organisational perspective in contrast to working independently?
8. What do you consider to be the key challenges practically to collaborating?
9. With respect to delivering collaborative activities, do you measure outcome / impact and if so, how?
10. Do you consider your organisation is practically equipped with the skills to collaborate? If not, why?
11. Have you applied any particular models of collaboration in practice?
12. Can you demonstrate any real changes that have been realised in working in this way?
13. What evaluation mechanisms have you developed to capture the above?
14. How do you see collaboration as a way of working for the future operation of your organisation?
15. What skills does your organisation require to collaborate more effectively?
