

CHANGING GOVERNANCE STRUCTURES TO IMPLEMENT WHOLE SYSTEMS PHYSICAL ACTIVITY POLICY

substance.

Sheffield Hallam University

What we already know about integrating physical activity across sectors

Key elements of change

1. Alignment across local authorities around 'wellbeing', with 'movement' being a key aspect
2. Flattening hierarchy and leadership throughout
3. Community-voice, needs, and ideas central to policy development
4. A clear articulation of a whole systems approach
5. An exemplar of a community-orientated approach to community wellbeing

Our learning timeline:



The Stockport Model

What happened?

LP funding was seen as a way to test and catalyse certain efforts e.g. to produce exemplars of co-production with the the community

ONE Stockport Active Communities Strategy was updated following considerable engagement with stakeholders and the local community. Language was simplified to enable cross-directorate ownership.

LP steering group was disbanded, with representatives now feeding directly into the ONE Stockport Network, providing an opportunity to further integrate new ways of working across wider areas of the system.

Whole systems physical activity policy supported with new governance structure. Implementation plans contain specific tasks owned by multiple people across multiple agencies.

How did it help?

Provided the freedom and resources to trial new ways of working which were unlikely to be otherwise funded

Extensive consultation in the preparation of the strategy has led to shared ownership as people feel their views have been incorporated into the shared vision.

Practically dismantling the structures surrounding the LP was important to indicate that this was no longer an experiment, sitting outside other roles and responsibilities but integrated within existing and familiar structures.

Experience and strategic leadership gives confidence. Sustained engagement with partners and clarification over roles, responsibilities and permission to act supports people to see their contribution

Cross-Pilot Collective Sense-making

Three contexts which enable or inhibit systems transformation.

1

Position of the LP as a 'pilot'



Intention for work to be embedded in place

- Pilot language is helpful to support experimentation BUT infers that something is temporary and will produce firm evidence of change before roll out.
- Removing 'pilot' language for language of system transformation may enable more partners to see the relevance and their role to embed the principles and values in their work.

2

Continued engagement of strategic stakeholders'



Lack of engagement, responsibility, and support from leadership

- Strategic stakeholders play a crucial role in protecting the space for others to act and using their influence for new ideas to gain traction.
- Whilst the rhetoric of 'distributed leadership' may be for people to act within their sphere of influence, current hierarchical structures make this difficult for individuals to act on when they feel disconnected.

3

Clear, specific, understandable direction



An open-ended invitation to act

- KPIs and targets set prior to initiatives are unhelpful and drive short term behaviour; however a lack of clear direction can be disorientating.
- A focus on a common vision with clear roles and responsibilities provides the foundation and psychological safety upon which people can act independently.