



Japan Local Government Centre, London

Monthly Report for February 2010 (England) – Total Place in London

Background

In 2008 a range of public sector partners in the county of Cumbria worked with the Leadership Centre for Local Government to discuss how public services could be better coordinated in the county, avoiding duplication, waste and lack of public accountability. The programme, 'Calling Cumbria', was underpinned by a secondary research programme, 'Counting Cumbria', to map all public spending in the county.

The Cumbria initiative, following interest from other parts of the country, was taken forward nationally as 'Total Place'. The aim of Total Place is, according to the Leadership Centre for Local Government, to "map money flowing through the place (from central and local bodies) and make links between services, to identify where public money can be spent more effectively". Overall, Total Place has four principal aims:

- Make changes to services that can improve the lives of local residents and deliver better value
- Deliver early savings to validate the work
- Develop a body of knowledge and learning about how more effective cross-agency working can deliver the above.
- The work weaves together three complementary strands: 'counting', 'culture' and 'customer needs'

The process has initially rested on 13 local pilots from local authorities which volunteered to undertake the work. Nationally the work is overseen by a Ministerial Group consisting of the Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government and the secretaries of state for 'spending departments', as well as the Chairman of the Local Government Association. This is further supported by a High-level Officials Group of civil servants from relevant departments. The Government Office Network liaises between central government and the 13 local pilots, while the Leadership Centre and Improvement and Development Agency provide practical support to the pilots.

Early figures released from the pilots in November 2009 found that of £7,000 spent per head on local public services, only £350 is subject to control by local authorities. On average, each locality receives £3bn in government spending but only £150m of this is subject to local democratic oversight by elected councillors. For instance, in the county of Leicestershire (including unitary Leicester City Council), of the £6bn

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spent by government, the largest portion of the budget is the £1.4bn spent by the Department for Work and Pensions.

London

In January 2010, the London Councils organisation (which represents the 33 local authorities in the capital) published the findings of research it commissioned by PriceWaterhouseCoopers using Total Place methodology to map public spending in the capital. The study particularly analysed the spending on the health of those with long term conditions, worklessness and anti-social youth. Overall, it found that a “complex web” of government departments, quangos and local authorities were responsible for government spending of £73.6bn (or £10,000 per resident) in the capital in 2008/09 but that £11bn of this was wasted through duplication or inefficiency. Furthermore less than half of government spending in the capital was directed through either the Greater London Authority or the 33 local councils, it found. 156 quangos are responsible for an annual budget of £5.6bn in the capital, while the Department for Work and Pensions was responsible for the largest portion of central government spend at £11bn annually. The PWC study concluded that “Overcrowding of agencies can lead to confusion in delivery while different national goals often can conflict with each other,”

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