

New Deal for Communities

The National Evaluation

Research Reports

Mainstreaming in NDC Areas: Evidence from the National Evaluation 2003/04

Research Report 25

The Neighbourhood Renewal Unit within the Office of the Deputy Prime Minister is currently sponsoring the 2002-2005 national evaluation of New Deal for Communities. This evaluation is being undertaken by a consortium of organisations co-ordinated by the Centre for Regional Economic and Social Research at Sheffield Hallam University. The views expressed in this report do not necessarily reflect those of the NRU/ODPM.

Those wishing to know more about the evaluation should consult the evaluation's web site in the first instance
<http://ndcevaluation.adc.shu.ac.uk/ndcevaluation/h>



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**Mainstreaming in NDC Areas:
Evidence from the National Evaluation
2003/04**

Research Report 25

Authors:

**Murray Stewart
Joanna Howard**

***Cities Research Centre,
University of the West of England, Bristol***

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This report draws on work undertaken by the NDC national evaluation team during 2003/04. In large part it is repeated as Chapter 8 in The Programme Wide Annual Report 2003/04 which is to be made available on the evaluation team's website: <http://ndcevaluation.adc.shu.ac.uk/ndcevaluation/Home.asp>

It should be noted that much of the evidence reflects field work undertaken in late 2003 early 2004. Local circumstances may well have moved on since then. During 2004/05 the evaluation team will be carrying out further work on mainstreaming in all 39 NDC areas, supplemented by more detailed case study investigations in a small number of NDC areas.

Acknowledgements

This report is based in part on work undertaken in six NDC case study areas by the University of the West of England Cities Research Centre, Centre for Regional Economic and Social Research, the University of Warwick Local Government Centre, Liverpool John Moores University European Institute for Urban Affairs, Northumbria University Sustainable Cities Research Institute and GFA Consulting. The report also draws on material gathered by the 39 local research teams working within the national evaluation project.

CONTENTS

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY	i
1. Introduction	1
1.1. Lack of Shared Understanding	1
2. Organisational Engagement	2
2.1. Engagement of NDCs with Other Bodies	2
2.2. NDCs and the Local Strategic Partnership	4
2.3. NDCs and the Local Authority	5
2.4. NDCs and Agencies	7
2.5. Summary of Organisational Engagement	12
3. Resource Management	13
3.1. Continuity Funding	13
3.2. Mapping and Bending Expenditure	13
3.3. Getting Agreement to Shifting Resources	15
4. Reshaping Mainstream Service Areas	16
4.1. Agency Engagement in Mainstreaming	17
4.2. Mainstreaming the major Thematic Areas	18
4.2.1. Health.....	18
4.2.2. Crime and Disorder.....	20
4.2.3. Worklessness.....	21
4.2.4. Business Development.....	23
4.2.5. Education.....	25
4.2.6. Housing, Environment and Neighbourhood Management.....	27
4.2.7. Transport.....	32
4.2.8. Social Services.....	33
5. Learning for Sustainability	35
6. Barriers and Drivers	36
6.1. Constraints on Agency Engagement	36
6.2. Negative Barriers	36
6.3. Positive Drivers	38

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Introduction

This report from the national evaluation team for New Deal for Communities presents the findings on progress towards 'mainstreaming' in the 39 NDC areas as evidenced by work carried out in 2003-04. Across the NDC Programme evidence points to a continuing absence of shared understanding about what mainstreaming means with the concepts of mainstreaming often contested and misunderstood. This weakness in understanding and shared meaning is reinforced by the fact that there is as yet little strategic thinking about mainstreaming. There is wide diversity in approaches to, experience of, and progress with mainstreaming, both amongst NDCs but also between agencies within individual NDCs.

Organisational Engagement

There is extensive engagement between NDC Partnerships and a range of organisations, notably LSPs, agencies associated with the main thematic areas of health, housing, worklessness, community safety, and education, and also with Sure Starts. There is less evidence of linkages to Learning and Skills Councils, Connexions or organisations relating to race equality.

Approaches to mainstreaming are generally ad hoc, with commitment often operational rather than strategic. In some cases this is seen as stemming from the absence of senior level stakeholder representation, whilst some agencies also experience tension between the relative importance of the NDC and their own organisation. Strongest linkages are often to be found in inter-personal, rather than inter-organisational, relationships.

The NDC is represented in the structures of almost all LSPs, but the depth and nature of these relationships varies across Partnerships. Agencies are well represented in NDC structures with health and police being the most visible and active. Jobcentre Plus has been resourced to become engaged; other economic agencies such as LSCs, Connexions, and the Small Business Service are less visible.

Relationships with local authorities are increasing and improving. There has been more reliance on local authorities (and agencies) for delivery as opposed to NDCs themselves delivering projects, and this has helped help to create understanding, interest and commitment. The development of local authority decentralised area structures (forums/committees etc) creates a new opportunity for the meeting of 'top-down' mainstream programmes and bottom up NDC initiatives and innovation.

Resource Management

Mainstreaming is still widely seen as getting resources to make sure NDC projects continue as separate projects - in some respects the antithesis of mainstreaming. Little effort is now being made systematically to map spending with many NDCs regarding this as a waste of time. There is little evidence to support claims that agencies have increased spend (though there is evidence of increased in-kind resourcing in terms of time and staff). There are, however, numerous examples of an apparent refusal to spend more mainstream resources in NDC areas because they are seen to be 'resource rich', and also instances of a reluctance to allocate NRF to NDC areas. There remain concerns about 'reverse' mainstreaming, with some (mainly local authorities) seemingly seeking to use NDC funding in order to reduce main programme spend

Reshaping Mainstream Service Areas

This report provides numerous examples of main programme engagement, joint working and planning, and some commitment to long term mainstreaming in all five thematic areas:

- Crime Reduction: mainstreaming is supported by the presence of senior police on NDC Boards, collaboration through Crime and Disorder Partnerships, wardens, additional policing and/or secondments, and the establishment of local presence/ base/ facilities. NDCs report progress on drugs, vice, prostitution, crime recording, and anti-social behaviour;
- Housing: there is still much emphasis on planning major capital schemes, but also evidence of growing linkages with RSLs, and some progress on maintenance, management, and lighting;
- Employment and Worklessness: there is evidence of a strong positive contribution from Jobcentre Plus (with a special budget), and there are examples of Connexions work with youth; there is little to suggest much in the way of engagement by LSCs;
- Education and Lifelong Learning: there are several Sure Start and EAZ linkages and joint working with LEAs is on the increase. The status and quality of individual schools is important (e.g. failing, opting out) and there are examples of mainstream capital spend (e.g. new school, sixth form centres), and of support for out of school services;
- Health: mainstream health engagement includes the involvement of GP practices, new health centres (and commitment to long term revenue), establishment of minor injuries units, shared staffing initiatives, enhanced/ community nurses, and a range of initiatives relating to neighbourhood and community health.

Learning for Sustainability

There is only modest progress in thinking about long term sustainability. Learning is still focussed on developing skills and experience for delivery within NDCs, and local evaluation concentrates on project evaluation closely linked to monitoring. There is little evidence to suggest that lessons emerging from the NDC Programme are impacting on mainstream agencies or on the broader renewal agenda.

Negative Barriers and Positive Drivers

Work carried out in 2003/04 identified a range of negative barriers and positive drivers. Amongst the **barriers** are the weak voice of some NDCs at LSP, city or region levels, and the failure of top level commitment to mainstreaming to permeate down through mainstream structures. Agencies are overstretched (staff, resources), and there are high transaction costs in working with NDCs. There can also be a lack of clarity on mainstream working, an absence of partner commitment and/or strained/poor relationship with councils. In some instances there are problematic relationships with the local voluntary sector. Other inhibitions on agency involvement with NDCs include organisational constraints (procedures, targets, performance management), demands from other partnership structures, political difficulties raised by competition from other areas of deprivation, and claims for additional mainstream investment from other ABIs. Some evidence suggests that weak management structures and capacities of NDCs themselves can slow progress in mainstreaming.

Amongst the positive **drivers** supporting mainstreaming are senior level commitment to NDCs and mainstreaming, and the presence of senior decision makers on Partnership Boards/ theme groups. Some agencies are perceived as bringing a fresh approach to joint working and in general relationships with agencies have been improving. In some areas the NDC is seen as acting as a 'pilot' for mainstream action. NDC Boards are maturing and the presence of permanent, theme related staff in programme teams has added to the capacity of NDCs to understand and hence work with mainstream agencies. Thus experience, proven ability and continuity of NDC staff represent important drivers, with such staff increasingly active in networking in an overcrowded renewal arena.

1. Introduction

For some years, and most clearly since the cross-cutting Treasury-led review of Government Interventions in Deprived Areas, it has been accepted that main programmes should bear the weight for tackling deprivation even if targeted initiatives still have a role to play. 'Mainstreaming' has thus been a major theme within neighbourhood policy, and indeed within all ABI thinking, with the Audit Commission and the Regional Co-ordination Unit, for example, striving to identify and spread good practice about the role of main programmes.

In Chapter 7 of the NDC 2002/03 Annual Programme Wide Report, the evidence was that mainstreaming was slow to develop and that there remained a set of barriers to strengthening the contribution which main programmes might make to neighbourhood renewal. This report charts progress with mainstreaming in 2003/04.

The report is based on information collected by the NDC evaluation team in the autumn of 2003 and early 2004.

- 39 sets of templates from the local NDC research studies, providing responses to a common set of questions.
- 39 sets of commentaries on these templates based on interviews with local stakeholders (Board members, programme teams, agencies).
- In depth studies of mainstreaming in the six NDC case-study areas: Bristol, Liverpool, Middlesbrough, Nottingham, Haringey, Coventry.

Quotations in italics throughout the report are drawn from the commentaries and case study reports.

1.1. Lack of Shared Understanding

There remains widespread lack of shared understanding about what mainstreaming means. The concepts of mainstreaming are contested and often misunderstood. Agencies have different views: *'change the way we work to focus on specific issues and deliver services in different geographical areas'*; *'rolling out good projects'*; *'bending and enhancing funding'*; and *'absorbing the costs of projects once they end'*. There is as yet little general debate about agreeing approaches to mainstreaming, or consistency of view between, or even within, stakeholder agencies. There is relatively little reference to the work of the Audit Commission, to NRU definitions, or to renewal.net as sources of information about what mainstreaming might be. GOs emphasise the importance of mainstreaming but have no consistent interpretation of what this means. Typical of a number of responses were:

A lack of shared understanding across the Partnership of what mainstreaming is about and its relevance to the required outcomes at the end of the NDC programme.

Mainstreaming is still not particularly well understood and means different things to different people

This weakness in understanding is reinforced by the fact that there appears to be as yet little strategic thinking about mainstreaming. The complexity of the task is stated as a barrier, with mainstreaming being *'referred to in an ad hoc way rather than being considered holistically or strategically'*.

The absence of shared understandings does not of itself inhibit action, and indeed in some localities the search for definition (and also 'mapping') is regarded as a

diversion from getting on with managing neighbourhood change. Nevertheless it is clear that providing some framework within which different approaches to mainstreaming can be discussed is likely to encourage more concerted action.

Following, but developing, the usages of NRU and the Audit Commission, and also reflecting the thinking within the evaluation of Local Strategic Partnerships for which mainstreaming is also an issue, a framework is used below which identifies four main dimensions to mainstreaming:

- An 'organisational engagement' dimension' which addresses whether there is 'top down' organisational commitment to mainstreaming, echoing the Audit Commission's corporate policies category. This dimension includes material relating to issues of both corporate commitment and structural arrangements. (Section 2)
- A 'resource management' dimension which looks at resource planning and allocation and at whether mainstream resources are or are not being diverted into NDCs. (Section 3)
- A 'reshaping services dimension' which asks whether existing services are being delivered in different ways or whether new forms of main programme delivery are being attempted (Section 4)
- A 'Sustainability' dimension which assesses whether progress is being made in learning lessons from the bottom up from NDCs and transferred into main programme thinking and allocation of long term resources (Section 5).

Drawing on these dimensions a final Section 6 identifies a number of the negative barriers and positive drivers to mainstreaming.

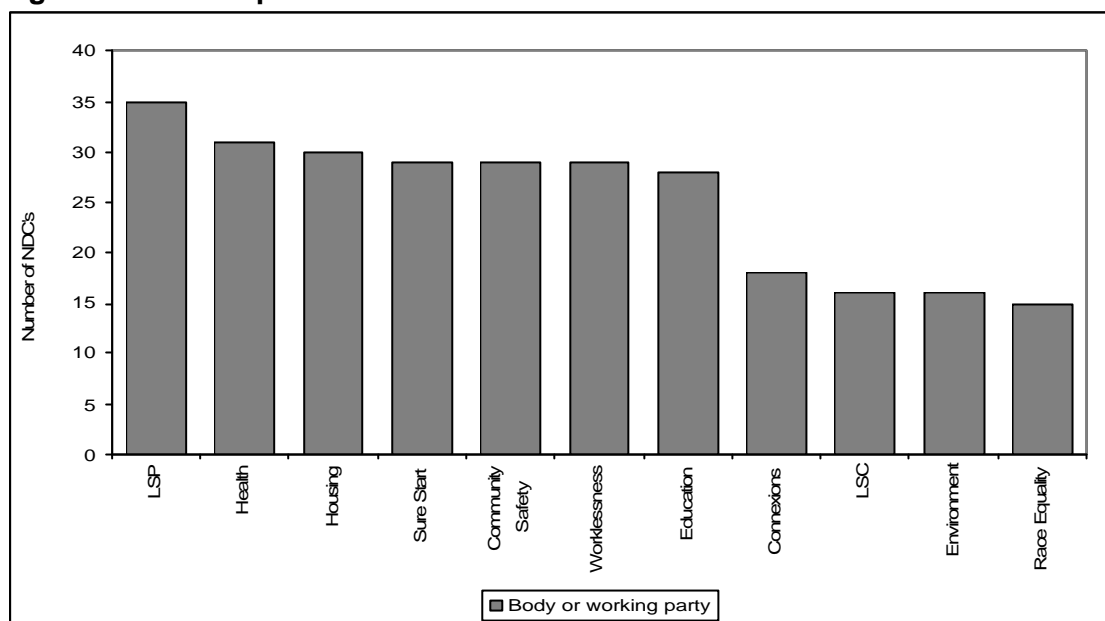
2. Organisational Engagement

2.1. Engagement of NDCs with Other Bodies

Evidence from across the Programme suggests extensive engagement of NDCs with other organisations, and significant attention being made to NDCs in strategic planning documents. In terms of representation on structures (Figure 1) there is strong linkage with Local Strategic Partnerships, with 35 NDCs represented in LSP structures. There is also extensive membership of organisations within the five key policy areas. In health, housing, worklessness, community safety, and education, two thirds (although not necessarily the same NDCs in each policy area) are represented on agency bodies. NDCs are also well represented (29) in Sure Start structures. Less evident are linkages to Learning and Skills Council (16 NDCs) and Connexions (18 NDCS), the higher representation for worklessness as a whole being probably explained by links with Jobcentre Plus.

There is relatively little representation on organisations committed to environmental agendas (16 NDCs) or with race equality agencies (also 15 NDCs).

Figure 1: NDC Representation of NDC on other bodies



Base: 39 partnerships

Source: CRESR

Strategic Commitment

Approaches to mainstreaming can be ad hoc, and reflect the finding from a number of NDCs that commitment is often operational rather than strategic. *‘Most relations are built on project-specific concerns rather than any longer term objectives’*. In some cases this is seen as the absence of senior level representation from stakeholders:

The Trust has expressed concern over the lack of senior representatives from partner agencies and an unwillingness to move beyond low level engagement

‘Insufficient influence of Board representatives within their own organisations or their lack of direct control over the budgets of the agencies they informally represent has limited effective engagement

There is not yet a strategic basis on which mainstreaming can be considered. The relationship with the borough is not robust at strategic level – possible reluctance to engage on these issues.

In part this reflects tensions felt by agency representatives regarding the relative importance of the NDC as opposed to their own organisation:

The cabinet member for Housing is member of NDC board but has been slow to support the progress of the (NDC) agenda within (the borough); few of the partner agencies saw a clear fit with the NDC. To this extent there were clear limits to commitment, and limited enthusiasm.

A different observation is that linkages and commitment are to be found in inter-personal relationships rather than embedded in organisational relations.

Although individual representatives express commitment, there is no real sense that additional mainstream resources will support the NDC agenda or that service delivery will be changed to respond to local need.

In some localities it appears that organisational commitment from the mainstream arises as a consequence of exchange relationships. When the NDC puts in resources which complement or supplement departments or agencies, the degree of commitment to collaborative working increases, and it is more likely that the NDC becomes integrated into corporate strategies. In other areas, however, commitment comes without such strings, notably where there is clear evidence of strong leadership. There are a number of NDCs where it appears that a new face has altered the nature of relations between NDCs and stakeholder agencies, introducing a longer term perspective into discussions, generating stronger corporate commitment from local authorities and/or agencies

2.2. NDCs and the Local Strategic Partnership

Whilst 35 NDCs report some membership (from board or staff) on the LSP or its structures, the evidence from individual partnerships points to variable relationships. The LSP can be seen as a key positive driver in support of the NDC:

The LSP commitment to pilot Neighbourhood Management through the NDC area will enable ideas to be tested and if seen to be effective to be applied elsewhere in the borough

The Programme Director and [NDC] Chair now share the task of representing the [NDC] on the LSP, NDC officers sit on some of its theme groups. The NDC has a place on the LSP,

The New Deal Chief Executive chairs the Neighbourhood Renewal Working Group

At the same time, NDCs are not always engaged with, and indeed may be excluded from, LSP arenas:

The policies of the Borough and the nascent LSP do not seem to be geared to reinforcing the NDC programme. There are few real links between the Partnership and the LSP and the former played no real role in shaping the Community Strategy.

Although (the NDC is) involved in most of the LSP sub groups, the LSP as a whole does not appear to view (NDC) activities as having an important influence on its main activities.

The LSP has yet to make an impact in terms of a Community Development Strategy that could offer a framework in which mainstream players might routinely bend programmes in developing joined-up regeneration strategies that would encompass a range of ABIs including NDCs.

Although the NDC is involved in most of the LSP sub groups, the LSP as a whole does not appear to view the NDCs activities as having an important influence on its main activities

However, it is clear that engagement with LSPs has grown in the past year and that in many cases a positive relationship is developing. NDC Partnerships are also increasingly present on other forums:

A member of the Middlesbrough NDC is a member of the shadow board of the housing organisation which will take over the Council's housing stock once the transfer is completed)

Nottingham NDC has developed strategic city-wide links around Worklessness and Race Equality. The NDC is also now more engaged with the strategic alliance of Local Area Partnerships and attends some forums on their behalf.

In Bradford the Programme team has actively developed links with other organisations and partnerships at both the community and local authority levels.....in addition to its participation in Bradford Vision, programme managers also sit on a range of groups and partnerships operating across Trident and in some cases across Bradford.

2.3. NDCs and the Local Authority

The local authority role is central for the NDC Programme:

The direct involvement of the Chief Executive, rather than a lower ranking senior officer as before, was widely regarded as a positive move

The Council is the accountable body and the biggest service provider. That relationship has become stronger over the past year at the strategic level and, in the case of some services, also at the operational level

The Borough is an important, natural partner for the NDC, closely involved with the NDC's management and services. The Borough played a critical role during the Partnership's previous period of difficulty and has supplied practical support during the period of recovery.

The Council has added to its representation on the board, and this has significantly improved responsiveness to the issues arising at the Board, and on some of the sub groups.

This is not universal:

A poor CPA has led to Council 'distraction' and lack of support for NDC activities,

There is not an effectively implemented corporate strategy with regards to New Deal. This is further hampered with no coherent political leadership on how to tackle the problematic issue of dedicating effort and finance to a New Deal area that is perceived to have already won the Lottery with the successful New Deal bid at the expense of the other nine neighbourhood renewal areas.

Nor are good relations necessarily spread throughout the council. It is clear that for some services the level of support to the NDC area has been less than hoped for:

The evaluation of the Estate Maintenance project together with the report of the NRA on neighbourhood management illustrate graphically the challenge of getting the local authority to change its practices and to the tension between borough wide (recycling) targets and the capacity to respond to resident priorities.

The relatively slow development of Neighbourhood Management and/or Local Service Level Agreements has meant that many NDCs have been unable to tie down precisely what they can expect (and in many cases pay for). Examples range widely and there is no clear pattern that relationships are better or worse for any particular service. Nevertheless, whilst in some NDCs there remains the view that local

authority engagement will stretch to dominance and lead to the local community becoming less influential, the clear pattern is of an improved relationship with local government.

Most of the links described in the 39 2003/04 reports are between officers at NDC and council level. The view that NDCs have had (more than) their fair share by gaining £50m comes primarily from a political perspective:

A decision has been made in the Council that no Neighbourhood Renewal Fund money will be spent in the NDC area, but rather in other priority neighbourhoods

Local Authority Decentralisation and the NDC

In a number of localities such as Liverpool, Middlesbrough, Coventry, Nottingham and Sheffield, there are strong moves towards decentralised service planning and delivery, often involving political as well as administrative decentralisation, sometimes (through the LSP) involving a range of agencies in addition to the local authority. New area committees, forums, panels, and partnerships are emerging, often building on many years of movement towards some form of decentralised structure. Neighbourhood Renewal Strategies appear to have accelerated this movement: NRF has oiled the wheels and supported staffing and other resources in the development of area-based working.

New area structures are often established at the level of a few wards and are thus above the spatial level of the NDC, if below that of the council or agency. Such structures are beginning to address main programme service reshaping, often at a level above that of the NDC.

Case Study: Area based working

Nottingham Radford and Hyson Green

Activity in Area Action planning

The LNRS for Nottingham (May 2003) outlines a new approach to joined up service delivery by developing area management as a pathway to neighbourhood management based on the new boundaries for Area Committees. One City Partnership Nottingham and Nottingham City Council have agreed developments in existing area working requiring Area Committees (councillors, residents groups, local partnerships and community associations, schools, the police etc.) to prepare 3 – 5 year action plans. Area Committees work alongside designated local area partnerships in each area (including the NDC in Area 4). Area Focus, within the Chief Executives Department of Nottingham City Council, supports and develops the work of the Area Committees.

Working with the Mainstream

There are 9 Area Committees, 7 of which cover the priority deprived wards. Each Area Committee has a small staffing complement managed through NCC Area Focus. Nottingham City Council has re-structured ten different service areas from six different departments into the Department of Neighbourhood Services in order to deliver 'community focused neighbourhood working'. This area-based initiative was spearheaded by the development of Street Scene with area team leaders being placed in each area of Nottingham. Work on area based mapping of service delivery and setting up monitoring systems is currently being developed within the City Council as a result of the devolution of Neighbourhood Services to Area Committees.

Area Plans are intended to identify the NRS themes where performance/outcomes at local level are poorest relative to the wider community and then to set out proposals for sustainable changes to mainstream services with the aim of achieving national floor targets. The purpose of the Action Plan is to bring about permanent improvements to service delivery

rather than one-off projects. £5k has been made available from the Neighbourhood Renewal Fund for each area to develop its action plan. In addition, OCPN has put together a package of core funding for local area partnerships over a 2 year period drawn from NRF/CEF/ERDF

Area 4 covers three wards. More than two-thirds of it falls within a Neighbourhood Renewal Area. The NDC area crosses all 3 ward boundaries. Staffing in Area 4 consists of 3 full time posts. The designated local area partnership is the Partnership Council which is playing a lead role in the development of the Area Action plan. A Steering Group includes the Partnership Council, NDC, LEARN, Nottingham City Council, local area learning facilitator, Sure Start, Primary Care Trust, Police, Voluntary and Community sector Forum, Area 4 Committee, and the Area 4 Co-ordinator.

The intention within the Action Plan is to roll out successful NDC projects that show links with floor targets: health facilitators; sports development worker; trainee teacher assistant posts; regeneration apprentices; discretionary grants and childcare vouchers for residents into employment. Delivery mechanisms and lead agencies are not yet defined but the successful NDC approach to BME recruitment of trainee teaching assistant posts has been mainstreamed from NDC to area wide, as has the successful YIP. NDC research on domestic violence is included in the Action Plan in order to stimulate an area wide approach (not explicitly eligible for NRF as not covered by floor targets but identified as a significant local issue and priority).

Some barriers to mainstreaming NDC innovation have emerged, e.g. Community Health Facilitators is a difficult project to prioritise under health theme as there is no obvious agency to take it forward; and insufficient funding is available for regeneration apprentices.

Barriers and Drivers

The co-existence of Area Action planning with NDC may raise a number of issues: NDC performance is seen by some as being less effective than it ought to be given the scale of resource available; NDC systems appear to some to block progress; NDC is said not to have engaged with other initiatives which may become disillusioned by the experience of engaging with NDC; there is insufficient evidence available on the effectiveness of NDC interventions and their performance as exemplars; NDC attendance at meetings is intermittent; lack of trust/confidence in NDC from agencies.

Messages about mainstreaming are thus not clear: agencies have not significantly changed their practices as a result of working with NDC; no SLAs are in place with the local authority; there is concern over the capping of NRF because of the existence of NDC funding.

There are benefits of area working for NDC: integration with a wider area agenda, a route to local service deliverers via the Area Co-ordinator, greater understanding from partners as to what NDC is about, maximisation of resources in the NDC area (e.g. extension of Sure Start boundaries). There are benefits for Area 4 through the use of NDC funds to lever in additional funding, NDC can get non-NRF specific issues onto the agenda (e.g. domestic violence). Joint working between NDC and Area 4 is now moving forward through a partnership agreement.

2.4. NDCs and Agencies

Overall there is ambivalence about the extent of commitment to mainstreaming (Table 1)

- Board members are more pessimistic about agency commitment to mainstreaming than programme teams or agencies themselves. In 15 NDCs Board members regard agency commitment to mainstreaming as a constraint to programme delivery, as opposed to 13 NDCs where programme team

interviewees take this view, and 10 where agency representatives see commitment to mainstreaming as a constraint.

- At the same time there is also a view that stakeholder agency commitment to mainstreaming has assisted delivery (in 10 NDCs for Board members, in 11 for programme team, in 10 for agencies).
- More significant may be the fact that in 14 NDCs (Board members), 15 NDCs (programme team) and 18 NDCs (agencies), responses show neutral or 'don't know' results.
- Many involved with NDCs do not know what is expected of mainstreaming and thus are neutral/lacking knowledge of whether it is being achieved

Table 1: 'Commitment to mainstreaming' from stakeholder agencies as constraining or assisting delivery

Factor	SC	C	N	A	GA	NI	DK/NC	Total (N)
Partnership Board View	0	15	6	7	3	0	8	39
Programme team view	3	10	6	10	1	0	9	39
Agency view	1	9	6	10	0	0	12	38

Responses to Template asking about factors constraining (SC/C) or assisting (GA/A) delivery. Unclear and missing answers are excluded. Don't know (DK) and no consensus responses have been combined.

Base: 39 partnerships

Source: CRESR

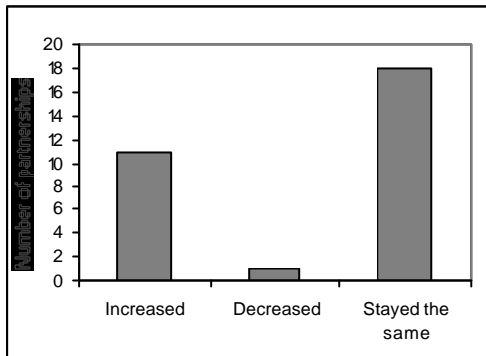
Agency Role

Agencies were asked about the extent to which, in the last year, there had been changes in relation to eight possible roles (see Figure 2). In general agencies considered that their roles in relation to NDC had increased in the last year:

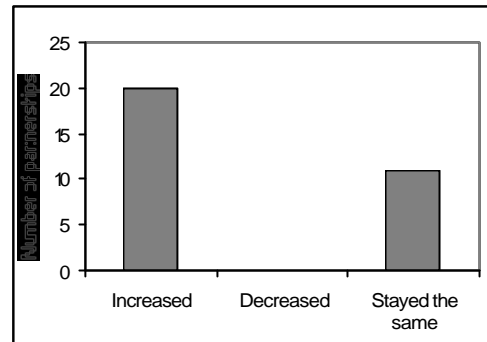
- In 11 NDCs membership of the Board and/or one of its groups had increased, and in only one case decreased.
- Greater collaboration on specific projects was reported in 27 NDCs.
- Links with the Partnership had increased (25 NDCs), as had general networking (24 NDCs).
- Agency consultation with residents was reported to have risen in 20 NDCs.

Figure 2: Role of Organisation in NDC Partnership Working

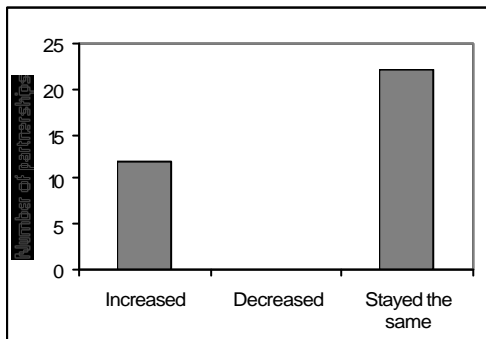
Membership of NDC Board or other bodies or groups



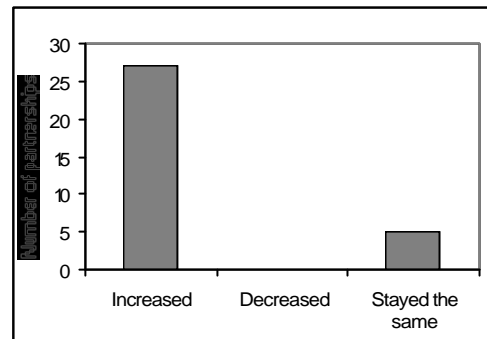
Consultation and engagement with communities and residents in NDC area



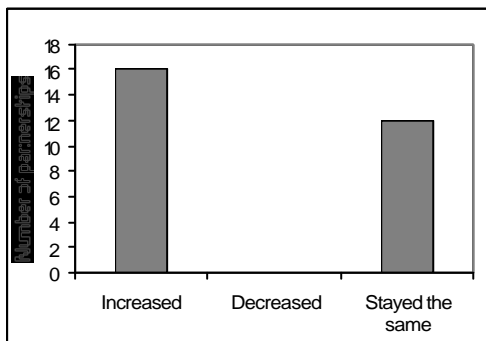
Monitoring and/or evaluation of NDC activities



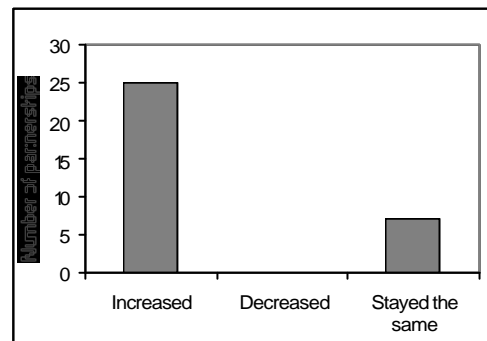
Collaboration on specific projects in NDC area with other agencies



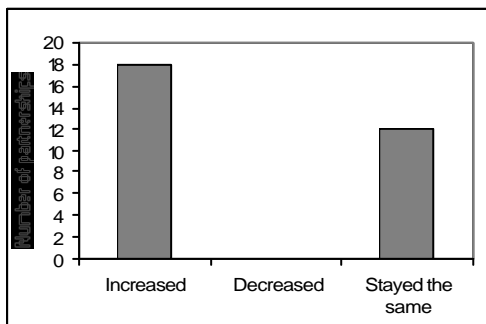
Co-ordination between projects of different agencies in NDC area



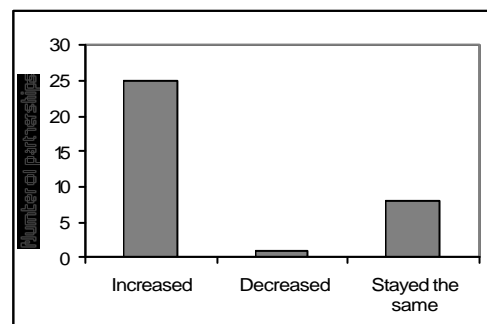
Links between NDC Partnership and your own organisation



Links between different parts of your own organisation on NDC matters



General networking (interactive flows of information, idea, funds etc)



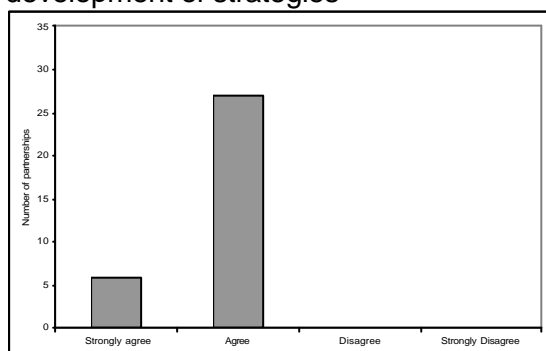
Source: CRESR

Agency Activity

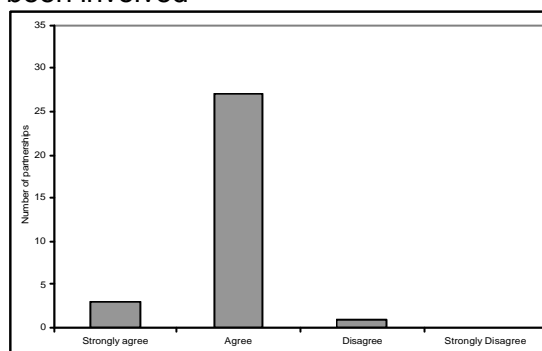
Agencies were asked whether they agreed/strongly agreed that their agency was engaged in some or all of a range of policy, structural and operational activities in relation to the NDC (see Figure 3). Interviewees were asked whether there had been changes since the previous year. Agencies report considerable engagement with NDCs. In 37, agencies agreed/strongly agreed with the proposition that in the last 12 months there had been a positive contribution to NDC working; in 36 there has been joint planning of projects; in 30 NDC representatives of the NDC Partnership have been involved in partnerships and joint working initiated by the organisation; in 33 cases NDCs have been included in organisational strategy development. There is also reported commitment to changing the way mainstream services are delivered (24 NDCs), and to the development or revision of structures for working in partnership in NDC area (25 NDCs). Only in relation to increasing mainstream resources and evaluation of their approach do more agencies disagree than agree. Only 12 NDCs agreed with the proposition that they had increased the level of mainstream funding available to the NDC area; and only 15 agreed that they had evaluated their approach

Figure 3: Agency Activities in relation to NDCs: Change in previous 12 months

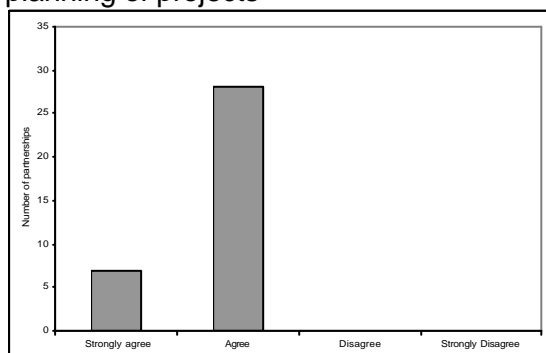
Organisation has considered NDC in the development of strategies



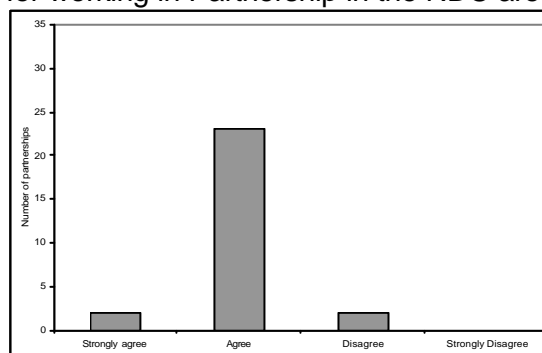
Representatives of NDC Partnership have been involved



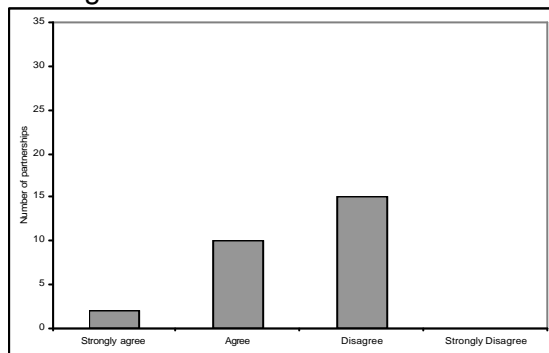
Organisation has been involved in the joint planning of projects



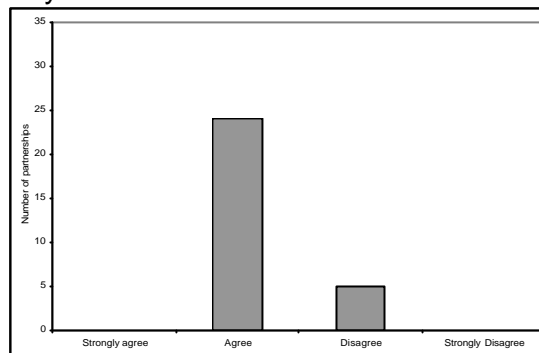
Organisation developed/ revised structures for working in Partnership in the NDC area



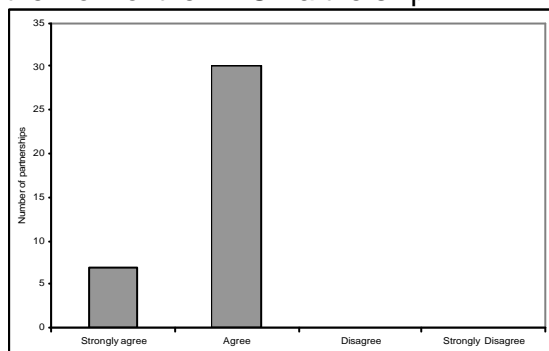
Organisation increased level of mainstream funding available - NDC area



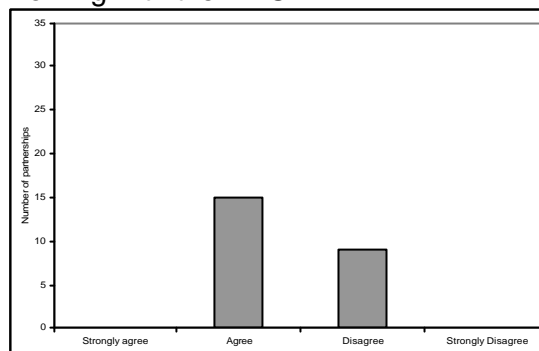
Organisation worked with NDC to change the way mainstream services delivered



Organisation made a positive contribution to the work of the NDC Partnership



Organisation has evaluated its approach to working with the NDC



Source: CRESR

Linkages, with LSPs, local authorities, and agencies are supported by a range of structural arrangements which are beginning to draw together stakeholder interests building links between NDCs and main programmes. Examples include:

- Brighton: The NDC area is the largest of five priority areas identified by the LSP. The council is keen that NDC helps to deliver significant change in the area. To encourage this the NDC reports every six months to the local authority, through the Director of Performance Management, and there is an annual review by the LSP of progress in each of the five areas.
- Middlesbrough: There has been a change in the level of partnership links between WMNT and Middlesbrough Council, with the Chief Executive becoming increasingly involved in the work of WMNT. He attends Board meetings, Human Resources meetings, and the Whinney Banks re-development steering group.
- Plymouth: The Heads of Service Group previously set up to liaise with the NDC was not thought to work as well as it might and it has now been replaced by an Internal Reference Group. This involves councillors and officers including a Devonport Councillor and Board member, the Regeneration Portfolio holder, the Director of Housing and the Director with corporate responsibilities for NDC and the LSP. The appointment of a Director to hold corporate responsibility for NDC appears helpful. At present, officer level meetings offer an opportunity for links to be established between DRC and the LSP, and for physical regeneration issues to be considered, including links between plans for Devonport and those for other parts of the city.

However, arrangements do not always work smoothly. Progress in engaging agencies has been hindered by a number of factors such as a slow build up of the thematic sub-groups in which agencies engage, the occasional insistence (by

Partnership Boards) that only Board members make up the membership of the sub groups, uneven attendance at NDC meetings by agencies, and at LSP/LA meetings by NDC staff. In addition agency representation in NDC structures can be insufficiently senior, patchy in terms of attendance, and reflective of personal rather than organisational commitment.

Representation has been patchy with a number of consecutive meetings having been missed during 2003/03. Representation is also at an inappropriate level and there is limited feedback to senior managers within the organisation

Periodic bouts of hostility and "stand off" between partners

This is more than offset, however, by increasing familiarity between NDC and agencies, greater understanding, more joint working, recognised protocols for interagency working, and jointly resourced projects. This is beginning to pave the way for mainstreaming which might take the form of reshaping services and re-allocating resources. A flavour of the change over the year comes from Middlesbrough one of the six NDC case studies in the national evaluation.

Middlesbrough

Stronger partnership links with a number of mainstream providers are in evidence. This is generally considered to be an important step in what is seen as the long-term process of having successful services and activities mainstreamed. Focusing on the health and environment themes, the growing involvement of the PCT in WMNT's Health Team and the drafting of a Service Level Agreement with the Council's environmental department, Street Scene, have been the most significant developments, leading to closer relationships being forged between WMNT staff and respective agencies. It is hoped that these developing relationships will lead to a number of benefits through joint service development, resource sharing, and the commitment to develop and pilot new approaches to service delivery in the NDC area.

Some barriers to mainstreaming exist, notably the general lack of available resources in Middlesbrough, and high levels of deprivation throughout the area, which reduce the opportunity for bending resources into the NDC area. However, other potential barriers have diminished for at least some of WMNT's theme areas. SLA development means that there is more information available about what services the area is entitled to, and there is also a growing commitment to the area from mainstream agencies.

The WMNT Board increasingly recognises the importance of mainstreaming, as shown by the Improvement Plan, which identifies making progress in mainstreaming as one of its ten key priorities for 2003-2004. The health theme has been selected as an early area for work of this nature. However, attention is now being turned to other WMNT themes (for instance, a number of education activities are to be developed, part-funded by local schools). Continued progress in neighbourhood management and SLA development is likely to be made over the coming months.

2.5. Summary of Organisational Engagement

The overall impression from evidence currently available is of some movement in agency commitment and engagement. There is variability amongst NDCs. There is variability too across agencies, some of which, in policing and health, are strongly engaged, whilst others, in the economy and employment fields, less so. The involvement of the LSP is again mixed with some LSPs driving new approaches to mainstreaming but others being largely inactive. Local authority linkages have

improved in extent and scope, though again there is variability amongst authorities and across departments within authorities.

3. Resource Management

3.1. Continuity Funding

The most common usage of the term mainstreaming is that which refers to 'continuity funding' - the wish or intention to maintain resources for successful projects when NDC funding runs out.

Mainstreaming seems to be generally understood as agencies taking on NDC initiated projects to ensure their sustainability

Agencies/authorities "taking over" new initiatives that have been put in place by the NDC.

Mainstreaming is defined by the majority of respondents as taking over and funding successful projects.

Even this apparently widely shared definition conceals different understandings. For some (often those engaged in project delivery), the acquisition of continuity funding is a means to maintain projects as separate entities run by residents in and for the community. For others, ensuring continuity is about making sure that whilst activities or projects are continued, this is done with the commitment and assurance from mainstream agencies that resources are available. For some NDCs therefore definitions are more about tying down arrangements for mainstreaming from the outset.

Mainstreaming has been built into some projects so that they are initially NDC funded, but an agreement has been reached with mainstream service providers that they will provide continuation funding or will mainstream the service provided by the project after NDC funding has ceased.

In a different NDC one interviewee saw mainstreaming as

A synonym for sustainability which led him to only support strategies and projects that he knew had a good chance of being funded long term. This meant in the earlier days of this NDC dampening down some of the more ambitious ideas of the community.

3.2. Mapping and Bending Expenditure

Despite some evidence that agencies are engaged in mapping spend, detailed commentaries point out some of the difficulties.

A number of partner agencies commented on the difficulties of mapping spending into the NDC area and questioned the value of such exercises, preferring to monitor levels of service delivery and quality. The LNRS identifies that quantifying resources by area has proved difficult for partners but intends to continue with this work. Neighbourhood Services can identify spend by Area Committee and arrangements are being made to supply figures for spend and activity in the NDC area.

Very few mainstream players have actually mapped their spend down to ward level and this is proving to be a key issue for the Trust in attempting to

develop a robust baseline and in determining a future delivery strategy for local services.

There is some evidence of spending being bent towards reshaped services in NDC areas. In one NDC:

Slightly over half the agencies involved to some degree had changed their pattern of service delivery in the NDC which is widely viewed as a form of mainstreaming. It is worth stressing that agency involvement in the programme itself has improved over the last year, if from a low base position in some cases. One crude indication of this is that NDC has secured more match-funding from its partners. Whereas match only accounted for 25% of spend for years 1 and 2, the percentage has now climbed to 44% of total approvals to date.

Interviews highlighted a degree of scepticism about resource bending.

Only very limited evidence that mainstream funding to the NDC area had increased. One organisation reported that as its overall funding had actually decreased, its contribution to the NDC had also probably fallen.

There have been no substantial changes to funding arrangements, with most contributions to the NDC centring on in-kind support such as officer time and match funding.

There is little evidence of main programme spend on NDC activities ... although the street lighting project has generated increased revenue costs which are being met by the City Council.

The main focus of the Council to date appears to be on changing patterns of service delivery rather than increasing resources.

There is some joint project funding, but more limited evidence of mainstream spend on NDC activities. Resources to the NDC area do not generally seem to have increased and reported changes in delivery patterns are not necessarily NDC related or driven, even where they are helpful or complementary - this is the case with changes in policing.

Increases in resources are evident amongst the Police, Jobcentre Plus, the LEA, local authority and social landlords. Other important aspects of mainstreaming such as main programme spend on NDC activities, having a physical presence in the area, and changing patterns of delivery are not occurring.

The extent to which mainstreaming is occurring is not yet clear, partly because partners are not working to an agreed definition. What is evident is that the NDC has thus far found it difficult to persuade agencies to bend mainline resources into the NDC area given competing demands upon their resources and existing commitments.

There were, however, also several accusations (again difficult to prove) of 'reverse mainstreaming' or 'bending backwards'. Tension between the needs of the whole borough or district (especially where many wards are disadvantaged) and those of the NDC, linked with pressures on mainstream budgets, leads to concerns about 'negative or reverse mainstreaming':

The understandable response by the Council, given the pressure to reduce or limit the growth of its mainstream budgets across the borough, has been to view NDC funds as a means of offsetting reduced core expenditure and protecting existing services.

The LEA is undertaking a substantial building programme in the area, but there is concern that NDC money is subsidising this investment.

Senior managers see the NDC as another funding stream in which to substitute existing funding. Experiences of mainstreaming therefore have to be put within the context of spending trends and possibilities of money subsidising activities which could have taken place irrespective of the NDC programme.

There is, however, the perception that much joint work with the local authority and agencies is occurring and that there is growing mutual interdependence, with NDCs beginning to influence expenditure and local authorities and agencies closer to reviewing spending patterns.

3.3. Getting Agreement to Shifting Resources

Agreements

Increasing relationships between NDCs and main programme agencies has begun to highlight the need for formal specification of what can be expected from the mainstream. Whilst NRU guidance has emphasised the importance of SLAs, progress has been slow:

'There is a general absence of service level agreements to identify the services the NDC area is entitled to and to identify whether resources or services are additional or not'.

Nevertheless in a number of localities SLAs exist including Hammersmith and Fulham, Liverpool, Southwark, Lambeth, Nottingham, Hackney, Middlesbrough, and Walsall. Other NDCs report movement towards SLAs, with encouragement from GOs and/or NRAs.

In Sheffield a specific agreement, 'Advancing Together', provides a public declaration of a closer relationship between the Council and the NDC, a package of short term actions to achieve visible improvements, and of long term support to deliver major transformational projects. With this agreement comes a *'pledge from the Council and the NHS to continue with work already underway and to continue with existing levels of spending on mainstream services. BNDC will not be used to substitute for council funding'*.

There is movement too towards a clearer understanding of the existence of service plans, or, at most, the emergence of a complementary programme/project planning process:

Bradford: Most agencies interviewed had developed joint projects with Bradford Trident. This reflects the approach taken by the Trident board and programme team which is to develop projects with key agencies and for them to take responsibility for delivery. Such an approach has been taken with Business Link, Police, BCHT and the PCT. Agencies reported that there were 'healthy tensions' in this approach with project plans having to be developed in conjunction with Trident and having to take account of community consultation.

Brighton: There was agreement amongst the agency respondents that NDC representatives had been involved in joint working initiated by the respective organisation and that the latter had made a positive contribution to the work of the NDC Partnership. There was also agreement that the organisation had been involved in the joint planning of projects and that they had worked to change the way that mainstream services are delivered

Much of the evidence, however, suggests that joint planning takes place in relation to projects rather than whole programmes of delivery. Agencies, whether working in isolation, or within an LSP joint structure, are generally unwilling or unable to take their planning processes down to the level of an NDC which tend to be too small an area for realistic planning processes. Projects to be undertaken in NDC areas as joint work with the NDC are acceptable but service planning and reshaping needs may need to be considered at a larger spatial scales.

4. Reshaping Mainstream Service Areas

If assuring continuity funding for NDC projects remains the main thrust of mainstreaming, many NDCs have increasingly moved beyond the forward funding definition, to see mainstreaming as the use of NDC funding and activity to reshape services. This creates new challenges:

As (NDC) has launched its own projects, this has created some tension and lack of clarity about its role: is (NDC) a service provider in its own right or a co-ordinator to guide and broker improvements of others' services, only stepping in to fill gaps when there is no possibility at all of mainstream agency involvement?

NDC needs to influence the way providers deliver services locally, rather than simply focusing on NDC resources to provide or buy in all of the services for the NDC area.

NDC is a pilot and 'demonstrator' for the wider adoption of new innovative delivery across a wider area.

NDC provides something extra, new and different over and above what is usually provided, and over time, some aspects of this additional provision will become embodied in mainstream services

This process involves increased reference to engaging residents and making service planning and delivery more locally responsive:

getting *partner* agencies to listen to what local residents' needs are, and to be more responsive to those needs and pressures, looking at how they can reconfigure services to get a better fit.

Some NDCs find it hard to distinguish between agencies already based in the area who are involved in running projects and those which in addition to this have opened a new base in the area, or in some way enhanced their presence. There is an ongoing concern that NDC funds should not be used to provide mainstream services that should be provided by the statutory agencies. The view that there should be clear additionality from the use of NDC funds has resulted in a reluctance to give NDC funds to mainstream providers to provide additional or enhanced services.

4.1. Agency Engagement in Mainstreaming

Table 2 provides information on the extent of mainstream activity in relation to seven themes and 16 agencies. In interpreting this table it should be noted that there were differences between the responses of groups interviewed. In one local report the evaluators

'were struck by the variations in the response which revealed the limited knowledge of many Board members about the engagement of service providers'.

Another local report noted that:

There were also some stark differences of opinions between senior managers on whether particular agencies were engagedoccasionally Board and senior manager views contrasted starkly with some opinions expressed by the agencies themselves, who in general were more positive than Directors or senior managers.

Table 2: Engagement of Agencies in Activities

Information was collected from all 39 NDCs about the engagement of agencies in relation to sixteen agencies. Seven areas of possible engagement were identified – forward strategy, mapping spend, main programme spend, joint project work, a physical presence in the area, increased resourcing, changed patterns of delivery.

	NDC included in forward strategy	Mapping spend in the NDC area	Main programme spend on NDC activities	Joint project funding	Physical base or presence in area	Increased resources	Changed patterns of delivery
LSP	26	11	7	9	2	3	8
Police	29	23	28	32	32	32	38
PCT	32	21	28	35	29	26	25
LSC	13	5	11	16	5	6	6
Jobcentre Plus	31	17	27	28	31	25	28
Small Business Service	8	4	6	7	7	5	8
LEA	31	18	23	28	28	24	24
FE	19	8	14	18	19	14	17
Social Services	14	7	14	17	20	8	11
LA Environment & Leisure	28	16	24	27	23	14	22
LA Housing	31	17	26	29	28	22	22
RSL	22	16	19	23	26	21	17
LA Regeneration/ Economic Dept	29	16	22	24	14	17	18
Connexions	12	6	11	13	14	10	10
Leisure & Youth Service	23	12	16	22	20	11	15
Transport Authority	12	4	12	17	9	7	12

Base: 39 partnerships

Source: CRESR

The pattern is mixed but some general observations stand out:

- The inclusion of the NDC in the forward strategies of the LSP (26 NDCs).
- The strong engagement of police and health across all activities.
- The engagement of local authority housing and of RSLs in many NDC activities.
- The lesser presence of the Small Business Service, Social Services, Connexions, the Learning and Skills Council, and the Local Transport Authority.
- The high incidence of changes in patterns of service delivery by the police (38 NDCs).
- The extent of joint funding by health authorities (35 NDCs).
- Widespread inclusion of the NDC in forward strategies (with the exception of LSC, Connexions, SBS).
- Modest progress on mapping spend.
- Many agencies having a physical base/presence in the area, (with the exception again of economic/employment agencies).
- And a number of agencies increasing their spending and again many (with the exception of RSLs) changing patterns of delivery.

4.2. Mainstreaming the major Thematic Areas

4.2.1. Health

There appear to be relatively strong links between NDCs and health organisations. 31 NDCs are said to be represented in health structures; in 29 the NDC is included in forward planning in health; in 35 there is joint project funding; in 29 there is a physical presence in the area; in 25 there have been changed patterns of delivery. Most interestingly, in health there are 28 NDCs where there is claimed to be main programme spend and 26 where there are increased levels of spending.

The PCT was mentioned by several respondents as an example of an agency which is committed to mainstreaming, but this was thought to be primarily because of its more diverse nature and its lack of baggage from previous experience, unlike other more established agencies which have much more unified structure and practices.

Examples of good practice range from the general (examples of collaboration and joint working) to the particular (support for improved delivery through GP surgeries, capital investment and related long-term commitment to revenue based provision).

Sandwell: Health work in Greets Green provides an exemplary approach to mainstreaming, with progress on strategy, funding, practice and policy, and clear evidence of mainstream practice shifting as a result of engagement with and experience of NDC working. Mainstream funding is committed for enhanced nursing. Following restructuring of the PCT a new post of Neighbourhood Health Manager has been created jointly funded by PCT/NDC and a neighbourhood health management team has been set up

Hull: Long-term commitment is being secured through the Minor Injuries Unit to be established in the Village Centre.

In Tower Hamlets the PCT is making substantial investment (around £500k) in the health centre. Social Services showing signs of rethinking its relationship with NDC. Despite the many entangled difficulties over the search for premises the conversion work is now in progress, with plans to open for business early in 2004. This will enable a major shift in the way

health and care services are delivered in the area. It will provide an accessible physical base for a range of services supported by NDC and its partners, linked to the Independent Living Network.

In Lewisham there is an excellent relationship with the Primary Care Trust – the chair is a member of the Board – and its Development Manager helped to manage the Health Impact Assessment and is closely involved with the Theme Group and a number of projects. The Partnership has been helped by an experienced NRA and has moved to commission a definitive feasibility study. The PCT is positioned as a key partner to help configure this project. The NDC has prioritised a number of health services - particularly sexual health, mental illness and better nutrition - that are also priority themes for the PCT.

Case study: Health

West Middlesbrough Neighbourhood Trust (WMNT)

Health activity:

- WMNT recruited and trained two local BME residents to provide health mentoring to other members of WMNT's BME community. This was a pilot project, which ended in March 2003. One of the Health Mentors has now been employed by the PCT for five hours per week, providing a similar mentoring service to BME communities across Middlesbrough.
- Community Involvement Health Co-ordinator has set up a number of health activity groups, such as Active for Life and walking networks.
- Classes for weight management and smoking cessation have been developed, with local residents training as health mentors.
- The Home Office-funded drug reduction pilot project provides local support for people with addictions and has helped to change local attitudes towards drug use.
- Six SLAs have been put in place with health providers to deliver local health services (e.g. Substance Misuse Counsellor, Child Psychologist, School Nursing Sister).

Re-organisation of structures within WMNT has occurred with the formation of Theme Sub-Groups, whose role is to consider proposed projects, support Theme Managers in developing strategies, and monitor impacts. The PCT's Director of Health Improvement and Public Health (who is also the PCT representative on the WMNT Board) chairs the new Health Theme Sub-Group.

Working with the mainstream

With some jointly funded projects between WMNT and the PCT, progress has been made towards having some of WMNT's local health projects built into mainstream service provision. The former Health Theme Manager pump primed a number of local services using NDC funding for 6-month pilot periods. The PCT then agreed to take on successful services (i.e. those that had a high uptake), such as a chiropody clinic run in a local community centre, running them as part of mainstream provision. A more recent example of a mainstreamed project is the BME Health Mentors Project.

A number of services originally developed by the Health Team have since been handed over to mainstream providers. For instance, the Reducing Drugs and Alcohol project set up a drop-in service for young people affected by drugs. Middlesbrough Youth Service is now running the drop-in, and its focus has broadened to include unemployment and other issues as well as drugs. In addition, a Trainee Drug Outreach Worker employed by WMNT on the Reducing Drugs and Alcohol project is to become part of a new Youth Team being set up by the Youth Service in West Middlesbrough as part of the Youth Services SLA.

Barriers and Drivers

A number of factors have contributed to the positive steps towards mainstreaming in health.

When the previous Health Manager left in March 2003, the PCT took over management of the health theme as an interim measure. However, it has now been decided that the PCT will continue to lead the theme. The increased PCT involvement appears to be seen by both WMNT and the PCT as a positive move, as it will mean that the Health Team is likely to become more embedded in mainstream health structures previously. One PCT staff member stated that *'mainstreaming is the future as it is the only way that the PCT will be able to engage with WMNT and its health team.'*

SLA development has been an important process in encouraging Theme Managers and other staff to engage more fully with their respective partner agencies. An officer of GONE was particularly impressed by the PCT's increasing role in the health theme and apparent commitment to changing service delivery in West Middlesbrough, which he felt had already led to *'demonstrable improvements'* in local health services. SLAs have been developed by the Health Team, with Middlesbrough PCT, and with Tees and North Yorkshire NHS Trust.

4.2.2. Crime and Disorder

Police engagement runs at high levels, and in virtually all NDCs there is appreciation of such strong commitment and engagement.

Brighton: changes are most apparent in terms of the police and the local authority community safety team. The extent and positive impact of joint working between eb4U, the police, and the local authority to tackle crime and disorder was seen by several consultees as the level to which the others should aspire.

Hull: The police are one of the best examples of co-operation and mainstreaming. As a direct result of PRNDC they have agreed to a long-term commitment on the estate through building a local office on the Village Centre site.

The 39 2003/04 evaluation reports point to a number of levels of engagement - strategic, additional policing, senior officer presence on the Partnership Board, and increased local presence in the area:

Coventry: Police have provided general support to the NDC, both strategically and in the task groups, and specifically through various crime projects. They have also been responsive to NDC projects which have uncovered unreported crimes and anti-social behaviour, by diverting resources into the area.

Bristol: The police and Community at Heart have come to an arrangement over the management of local police resources and the introduction of wardens in the area. The police have put more resources into the area and have accepted the experimental notion of an area-dedicated team for the New Deal area. It is not clear whether this is a working model that could be used across the Bristol area although the police have introduced a dedicated team for St Pauls (to the west of the New Deal area).

Wolverhampton: In response to an identified need to tackle prostitution in the area, and kick started by an NDC funded police constable, a police team was established to tackle vice. The NDC post has been matched by four further officers redeployed from existing resources and the CDRP has established a prostitution task group. With the Home Office Crime Fighting Team, comprising 12 constables and a sergeant, this means NDC has 17 extra police plus 1 funded by NDC.

Luton: Partnership working between the Trust, the Safer Luton Partnership and the police has demonstrated the value of co-operation in delivering the Reducing Burglary Project which has entailed visits to all homes in the NDC area, a detailed security check and the subsequent fitting of appropriate equipment. This has proved to be successful in reaching the wider community in terms of raising awareness of crime issues and in going some way to dealing with the fear of crime issue.

Tower Hamlets: Community Safety partnership working has been effective, particularly linked to Neighbourhood Wardens and drugs prevention work, but resource problems and London-wide demands may have limited the police's response to mainstreaming so far. The council is keen to work with NDC in a new borough-wide approach to anti-social behaviour.

Hammersmith and Fulham: The involvement of the police in the NDC has been seen in a very positive light since its inception and the local team is very well regarded as providing a specific service to the NDC area. The project is jointly funded between the NDC and police main programme funds and there has been an effort by the police to ensure the team is always at full strength. The impact of the team appears to be supported by the crime statistics for the area compared to those for the division as a whole and it will be interesting to see if any lesson can be taken from this project to affect the normal policing throughout the division.

Policing is not universally unproblematic, however. There are observations about the vulnerability of police engagement to external pressures on resources, and the possible threat to long term presence and service change. In one NDC:

The police had previously joint-funded a project with the NDC Partnership to put extra police hours into the NDC area. Changes in local policing over the last year as a result of the Force Change Programme has meant that the COPS Area 1 Team has been increasingly under-resourced, and it has therefore been unable to maintain its former close relationship with the NDC (with which it shares an office base). This situation has been exacerbated by personnel changes, with the COPS Inspector leaving his post and the NDC Community Safety Theme Manager being on long-term sick leave this year.

4.2.3. Worklessness

Worklessness provides an example where a clear expression of national policy and dedicated resources have pushed forward changes in service delivery. Jobcentre Plus managers are directed to engage with NDCs as a result of dedicated local resources. The result has been a more targeted response in NDC areas, seconded staff and widespread appreciation of the engagement of Jobcentre Plus.

Norwich: Without exception, respondents identified Jobcentre Plus as the agency which was most engaged in helping NELM to deliver its strategy

Sheffield: Jobcentre Plus is also playing a critical role in mainstreaming services. The District Manager is keen to increase the level of resources into Burngreave, and there is some evidence to suggest that they feel that they 'are not being sufficiently challenged' around issues of resource allocation.

Coventry: Jobcentre Plus remains fully committed to the NDC through the impetus provided by the strategic guidance and extra funding to the DWP. The main Jobcentre Plus representative is co-funded by the NDC. An

outreach worker attends the NDC once a week and there is a fulltime secondee at the NDC.

Hull: PRNDC has two secondees from the Jobcentre Plus which has proved very beneficial. There are close links between PRNDC and Business Start-Up. Private sector shopping units are being provided and have already attracted a probable investor.

Bradford: In the Jobs and Business theme of the Programme, strong links have been developed with Jobcentre Plus and Business Link. Both organisations were delivering Trident funded projects, with some funding coming from other regeneration programmes (for example European Structural Funds). This has enhanced the provision of mainstream services in the area.

There are, however, difficulties in reconciling some of Jobcentre Plus national targets and commitment to a wider geographical area than the NDC. The local Haringey case study illustrates some of the issues which can emerge. It should be stressed that this reflects the situation in early 2004.

Case Study: Employment

Haringey Seven Sisters, Haringey

Employment Activity

- From national sources, there is a budget for (each) NDC of £50k covering staff costs and non-staff costs (e.g. job fairs), in addition to normal main programme spend. The latter comes through the Department of Work and Pensions (DWP) Neighbourhoods Team.
- Outreach workers are being used to target specific groups (asylum seekers, lone parents) to get as many as possible on to training schemes. The previous focus had been around issues of childcare, now it is on training.
- Jobcentre Plus staff levels have actually reduced in the NDC area from a previous two secondees to only one in place. There is not an Enterprise Manager in place.
- The NDC is in one of the most severely deprived wards in the borough. All are allocated additional Jobcentre Plus points if they can successfully target difficult to place groups from the 'deprived' priority areas. National rules for Jobcentre Plus inhibit the prioritisation of NDC areas, except to the extent that residents comply with criteria.
- Job fairs have been funded 50/50 (Jobcentre Plus and NDC); one event Jobcentre Plus provided 15 advisers. Local schools and community centres have been used to provide Jobcentre Plus open days and Breakfast Clubs.

Working with the mainstream

The relationship between NDC and Jobcentre Plus/DWP is complicated. The theme group want projects delivered by local service providers, although there is a concern, seemingly well founded, that Jobcentre Plus does not have faith in local agencies' ability to deliver. Bending the main programme should be straightforward because there is a Service Level Agreement in place, which clearly sets out aims and objectives. However, some Jobcentre Plus staff feel that when attempts have been made to bend mainstream programmes into the NDC (Stansted Runway to Work, GWINTO – Training in the Gas and Water Industry, Telesales training), the theme group has put obstacles in the way, with the consequence that service providers have been put off. A Jobcentre Plus view was that good relationships built up with service providers have been damaged by working with the NDC. It was also argued that it was becoming increasingly difficult to convince Senior Management of the benefits of working with the NDC.

Most concern within the Haringey NDC Partnership has been expressed regarding the perceived lack of progress with the worklessness agenda. A report produced by an NRA, this year for the NDC stated, "there are concerns regarding the functioning of the employment Theme Group and the ability of the DWP to deliver mainstream interventions". If there is additionality it is because Jobcentre Plus secondees have been placed with the NDC, and the Haringey Manager sits on the Partnership Board. Job fairs have taken place but these also happen in the other priority areas (as does the secondment of staff to other area based initiatives e.g. Northumberland Park).

DWP/Jobcentre Plus, however, have a plethora of employment schemes across the borough, and are committed to working in partnership. They have been involved in the borough wide employment partnership and are currently going through the process of reviewing and agreeing the Haringey Employment Strategy. The Strategy highlights how it will work in partnership with a number of different agencies within the council, the PCT, educational institutions, private sector service providers, and various ABIs (SRB, Sure Start).

4.2.4. Business Development

Qualitative data suggests relatively little in the way of active NDC engagement with economic development or business support. Experience has proved mixed:

Tower Hamlets: Some initial steps have been taken to develop a dialogue with local businesses, through targeted consultations and the creation of a local Business Association, but feedback suggests levels of anxiety and uncertainty among the relatively small group of local traders, particularly with regard to the housing programme. The lack of collective awareness of Small Business Service activity is telling and suggests there is more work to be done to build partnership with local small firms and with bigger employers near Ocean and to maximise local potential.

The Bristol case-study provides some insight into issues confronting business development.

Case Study: Business Development

Bristol: Community at Heart

Activity in Business development:

- A small business project (£230,000 over three years) provides business advice and development as well as £36,000 on a micro-finance initiative to support business development; provided by an external agency BEST (Bristol East Side Traders) which is to apply for a further £500,000 for continuation.
- On top of this there is a raft of private sector business support. e.g. secondments, mentoring in schools, etc. but little of this is directed directly to business development,

In practice, service delivery to disadvantaged entrepreneurs is achieved through a raft of smaller agencies working in the city with whom Business Links has developed a relationship on Objective 2 projects: these include Bristol Area Community Enterprise Network (BRAVE); Bristol Enterprise Development Fund (BEDF); Bristol East Side Traders (BEST); Business Match (based in the local authority's business support team); The Co-operative Development Agency (CDA); The Centre for Employment and Enterprise Development (CEED); Community Services Volunteers (CSV) Avon Training Ltd; East Bristol Enterprise (EBE); and Knowle West Development Trust (KWDT). All this comes under the Bristol Means Business project that is targeted at Objective 2 areas (the NDC is within the Objective 2 area). The feature of this partnership is that each organisation has its own area

of expertise. Thus CEED tends to specialise in helping enterprise in the black community whilst the CSV specialises in advice to anyone wanting to set up a co-op. The NDC is only indirectly involved through BEST (which provides the business support service funded through the NDC).

Working with the Mainstream

In theory the basic mainstream 'resource' for business development within Bristol as a whole comes from:

- Business West/Small Business Service with much of the social inclusion expenditure (around £1.2 million p.a.) coming from EU Objective 2 funding.
- The EDO of the local authority (annual budget c £400,000) does not have a particular officer dedicated to the NDC area; instead officers work within three broad teams: North, South and Central. It is estimated that 5 (of 18) officers have worked in some way on the NDC.
- The RDA is in a position to influence business development, but, despite meetings, there has been little concrete progress in relation to how the RDA will engage with the New Deal area.

Neither EDO nor Business West has a dedicated officer for the NDC area. The EDO works in three broad area teams that look at all neighbourhood renewal areas in their zone. Business West has an officer to co-ordinate the Bristol Means Business project. BEST (as agency proxy for Business West) has two dedicated staff on the ground (each at 0.8 FTE) who manage business advice and business development. However despite this Business Links has adopted outreach workers to offer business advice as a response to the neighbourhood agenda. This is for peripheral estates (such as Southmead) rather than for inner city areas and is funded out of Objective 2 monies.

Barriers and Drivers

The EDO is inhibited by the need to demonstrate impact across all neighbourhood renewal areas (of which the NDC is only one) and by a project development culture. Thus EDO officers state that the NDC area has an infrastructure in place for dealing with their issues (along with some funding): it is not for the local authority to continue to be pro-active (after high levels of early involvement and continued engagement in specific projects such as Church Road re-development).

The difficulties for Business Links in working with the NDC seem to be a shortage of time and staff resources to get involved, together with early failures of attempts to contact the NDC, and with the dominance of performance targets. Business Links recorded the difficulty of meeting both a social inclusion agenda and general business support function where key targets relate to the number of businesses seen, the increase in productivity (of businesses in general) and customer satisfaction from service users. Where Business Links organisations had failed to meet any one of these targets they have lost their contract from the SBS. The current social inclusion agenda is funded through time-limited EU funds.

The local authority is committed to a neighbourhood renewal agenda across the city but thinks that the NDC has a certain infrastructure to deal with the issues it has chosen. Over the past 2 years the EDO has put forward projects that have subsequently been refused funding by the NDC Board. The EDO is currently working primarily with the second tier of NR areas where there is little or no business support. The current position is that the EDO will assist the NDC team when they are asked but they do not have the time or resources to be pro-active within the NDC area when other neighbourhood renewal areas have no business support infrastructure.

4.2.5. Education

Local Education Authority presence in NDC working often appears to be strong. In 31 cases the NDC is included in the forward learning strategy, 28 NDCs are included in joint project funding, 28 also have a presence in the area. In more than 20 NDCs there are claims of increased spending and changes in patterns of delivery. This may be because in many schools in NDC areas achievement levels have been low and the LEA is targeting its efforts on supporting struggling schools.

Sandwell: In relation to education, there is now explicit mainstream engagement with George Salter school and non NDC resources are mobilised to support improvement, to which the NDC is adding its own resources for community based work rather than in-school work.

Middlesbrough: The WMNT Education Zone has developed close links with the Local Education Authority. The Education Theme Manager attends Sure Start Local and Middlesbrough Sure Start Partnerships, the 14-19 years area-wide partnership, and Head Teachers and Early Years Officer Groups. WMNT is also mentioned in a new proposal submitted by the LEA for local Children's Centres (a Centre is to be established in Whinney Banks Primary School). The LEA is mapping its spend on all schools in the NDC area. The LEA also provides 25% of the funding for Classroom Assistants in primary schools in the NDC area, with WMNT paying 75%.

Lewisham: Deptford Green secondary school and the area's primary schools are extensively involved with the NDC which is funding a wide range of supplementary services in the schools. These include community support workers, truancy and pupil advocacy services, educational trips and a driving skills project. The 3 primary schools in the area have formed a consortium to bid for external funding and other support (the "Triangle Schools") that has been helped by the level of NDC supported activity in all three schools. The NDC has begun to develop links with Haberdasher Aske's school to help develop higher attainment in the area's primary schools. Proposers of the new Crossways Academy which will be developed on a former school site on the NDC's boundary have shown a great deal of enthusiasm for involvement with the NDC and its new principal has joined the education theme group. Lewisham College is also becoming closely involved, particularly through a family learning service piloted during the year which aims to attract adults into learning, to improve basic skills and to help children with homework. The College is also collaborating with the NDC and Borough in a Tutor Development Project which aims to increase the numbers of basic skills tutors in the area.

However there can be tensions between NDCs and local schools. Schools can see additional NDC funded nursery facilities as either in competition with themselves or as unnecessary. Elsewhere schools and LEAs are subject to pressures to improve mainstream provision and standards. This should have a pay off for residents of NDC areas in due course. In the meantime such scrutiny may inhibit direct collaboration with the NDC:

Bristol: The local education authority has come through its Ofsted ordeal but lost key staff that had been taking forward its education and regeneration agenda. There is sometimes a lack of dialogue and apparent interest. This has become more complicated since the only secondary school has successfully opted out of the LEA to become a City Academy, although the relationship between the City Academy and the New Deal is strong. The

main vehicle of mainstream working in the area in education comes through the Education Action Zone team that is itself a time-limited organisation.

Case Study: Education

Coventry

Activity in Education

Projects have been initiated through the NDC's education task group. These are three-year projects where mainstreaming discussions will occur towards their end. Projects include:

- The parental outreach service giving support to parents and children with special needs.
- Childcare expansion team to increase the number of childminders in the area thus creating opportunities for a career in childminding.
- Outreach workers designed to reduce exclusions and improve attendance at local schools.
- Learning mentors intended to help overcome barriers to learning in schools and raise achievement through pastoral care.
- The Lets Create project promotes art and creativity at four local schools.
- The Children's Resource Centre offers a local venue from which play resources can be borrowed; it hosts courses and training for parents.
- The LEA has two large school building programmes in the NDC area, an investment of around £4 million, which is being run through the education budget; NDC funding is going alongside to create better services and facilities for the residents of the area.

Working with the mainstream

Senior managers from the LEA believe that the organisation has bent significant resources into the NDC area, which means less for other disadvantaged areas in the city. In this sense, investment into the area is greater than would have been the case without the NDC. There is also strong senior management commitment from the LEA in supporting the NDC Board, which is not recorded as mainstreaming, but which takes up time.

There has been no significant discussion of changing service delivery, beyond the Early Years and community centres. The LEA has been a recipient of NDC funding through the implementation of an extensive range of projects, such as learning mentors. There have been no significant changes in staffing levels arising from NDC activities. Increases that have arisen from NDC projects, such as learning mentors and parent link workers, have been modest.

Barriers and Drivers

The existence of the NDC presented an opportunity to say to the local community that the LEA can develop something that will better meet the needs of the area by adding NDC funding to the school building programme. NDC money has therefore allowed some community aspirations to complement existing LEA commitments.

In the opinion of a senior LEA manager, the school building programme can to some extent provide the "seed corn" for starting to think differently about services that are provided in schools and subsequently spreading best practice. Within the context of education, this means bringing multi-agency teams and services together under the umbrella of 'extended schools' provision. This requires dialogue and engagement from the start rather than having services and projects bolted on at some later stage. However, LEA funding is 'hypothecated' which leaves little flexibility for innovation.

4.2.6. Housing, Environment and Neighbourhood Management

Housing is critical to many NDC programmes. Elements of some housing programmes, however, remain unresolved. This is often because major capital work is required, there needs to be major consultation around housing change, and because housing has been an important and cherished local government function (professionally and politically) which many local authorities seek to protect. There are therefore major challenges, and often tensions, evident in moves towards the implementation of NDC housing programmes.

- Housing renewal raises fundamental questions about the future of the neighbourhood, the nature of the local housing market, changes in tenure mix, and potential for in and out migration from the area.
- Housing proposals require extensive and properly conducted community consultation
- Housing change may involve considerable capital investment so that it is difficult in terms of strategy, spend and politics to change course once started.
- In some areas new national initiatives (especially Housing Market Renewal Pathfinder) have been introduced into already complex local situations, further complicating and sometimes delaying progress.
- The context is hugely complex in terms of policies, institutions, partners and end users. There may be several registered social landlords (RSLs) with holdings in the area, as well as owner occupiers and private landlords most of whom have some say in the action even if only to delay implementation of changes.
- Problems are often much larger than resources available to tackle them, dictating both what can be done, and when.
- In many NDCs, the local authority has been receptive with the NDC featuring in the capital programme; but local authority housing plans have their own priorities, and their own (limited) resources.
- There is often a lack of capacity in relation to planning, project management and technical skills required for complex housing renewal issues (e.g. handling CPOs).

Main programme involvement in NDC activities can be grouped under three main heads: strategic planning and major capital programmes; housing management; and environmental/ neighbourhood management.

- **Strategic planning and major capital programmes**

Bristol: there has been progress on mainstreaming with the signing of a memorandum of understanding between the local authority and Community at Heart. The local authority has assigned an officer to manage the relationship and some progress has been made in outlining a series of options for the re-development of local authority housing in the area. However problems and delays associated with public consultation along with a well organised resistance to current options has delayed physical progress on the ground.

Brent: the Housing Department has played a full role in supporting and facilitating plans for physical renewal, including the commitment of significant staff resources to South Kilburn NDC's office to manage the programme from there.

Hammersmith and Fulham: the housing department has seen the NDC as a "test bed" and has been able to learn from the structure of the Board when

planning the ALMO (Arms Length Management Organisation) that will take over housing management responsibility.

- **Housing management**

Southwark: the Council's local housing management function has been re-jigged to provide a local housing manager based on the Estate. This more tailored arrangement has improved engagement with the Partnership and led to the joint funding of a small project

Hull: PRNDC is involving a RSL in developing a small estate, which will include bungalows that have been identified as a need for the area.

- **Environmental/neighbourhood management**

Knowsley Council is using North Huyton as a pilot for borough-wide Neighbourhood Management, building on the existing North Huyton Neighbourhood Agreement and a working group comprising residents, officers from KMBC, the police, the NDC Neighbourhood Action Team, and Knowsley Housing Trust. KMBC has allocated designated officers from Environmental and Operational Services to North Huyton and established a service co-ordinators group. An important development has been the joint appointment by KMBC and the NDC of a Neighbourhood Manager. KMBC has also seconded a senior officer to lead on the implementation of the housing Masterplan.

Lewisham: Eckington Green refurbishment and the area lighting programme have been successfully delivered with the Borough Council. Improvements to the housing stock in the area rely extensively on the Borough's Housing Department and Hyde Housing. The major redevelopment and refurbishment scheme at Kender is a good symbolic indication of things "happening in the area", although the NDC has had a relatively limited involvement. The NDC is therefore in the relatively privileged position of influencing the development activities of other agencies, rather than trying to redevelop housing stock itself.

Housing activity

KNDC's housing programme, amounting to over £200 million public and private sector investment, is set in the context of Liverpool City Council (LCC)'s Housing Strategy in which the city's inner core is a priority. The housing strategy seeks to make closer links between housing programmes and neighbourhood renewal, and the NDC area, one of six designated priority housing renewal areas, also lies within the HMRI Pathfinder area. At the same time, the council has been developing a new Neighbourhood Management Service bringing together locally based services.

Working with the mainstream

The main delivery agent is Community 7 (C7), a community-based association set up to improve social housing within the KNDC area. It is a subsidiary of Riverside Housing Association, which in effect, means that C7 is bending additional Riverside resources into the area. For the other dozen RSLs with holdings in Kensington there are both push and pull factors affecting their decisions about spend, for example if their stock is in neighbourhoods that could be due for clearance.

KNDC Housing Strategy has a potential total ceiling of £37m supported by mainstream funding from a range of partners (LCC, EP, private sector, NWDA, C7, Housing Corporation), bringing the (as yet not totally confirmed) amount to £185m. Public sector leverage is £95m, including £38m from the City Council, and £54m from private sector. More Housing Corporation main programme funding is going into the area than if there had not been an NDC, but the HC's own remit means that it has to be channelled to RSLs via C7. There has been a shift away from housing for rent to combining this with housing for sale. The fact that there are now more agencies involved should also help towards an effective forward strategy.

It is difficult for the NDC to engage with private landlords, especially the smaller ones. Little is likely to happen until there is legislation (pending) to bring in licensing. LCC has been piloting a voluntary landlord accreditation scheme and a registration scheme for HMOs in Kensington. The local authority has to enforce the scheme. Kensington NDC area is being used as a proving ground for the accreditation and registration schemes with a view to their roll-out across the LCC and HMRI area.

LCC has a key role in delivering KNDC's physical programme, is responsible for the development and delivery of its own Housing Strategy and Investment, the HMRI and Neighbourhood Management Services, and is responsible for delivering the private sector housing strategy which is very significant for KNDC, because it encompasses the NR Assessment work and financial packages that can be offered to home owners.

Barriers and Drivers

A barrier to effective delivery of the housing strategy is that there is no single body in the lead, no clear ownership of the strategy, and some lack of capacity in the three organisations – LCC, KNDC and Community 7 (e.g. lack of project management skills/resource, lack of effective overall control and budgetary management, absence of risk management). An additional challenge is that partnership working between NDC and C7, the Housing Corporation and LCC has taken a long time to develop: getting partner commitment to stick to collective decisions in the face of individual stakeholder interests. The onus was on NDC to lay out the way the programme should unfold and the responsibilities of partners but this was not easy with partners over whom NDC has no power, particularly LCC which is the NDC Accountable Body. An additional complicating factor has been staff turnover in the council Housing Directorate so that new relationships keep having to be forged as new people come in with different ideas. A driver is that there is greater clarity about the respective roles of KNDC, LCC and C7. The City Council has put its commitments in writing, and an agreement has been reached that C7 will deliver neighbourhood management and use NDC funding to employ the manager and wardens.

Neighbourhood Management activity

Neighbourhood management activities to date are limited, since devolved working has only recently been established. In June 2003, KNDC agreed that Community 7 (C7), the community-based housing association created as part of the NDC programme, should deliver improved housing and neighbourhood services in the area. After some deliberation, the Board agreed to delegate approval of funding for the appointment of a Neighbourhood Manager and Warden Team to the relevant NDC sub-committee. C7 were asked to recruit and manage the Neighbourhood Manager and Wardens supported by KNDC funding.

The priorities for neighbourhood management in the first year included housing management of social tenancies, developing an antisocial behaviour strategy, street cleaning, lighting and maintenance, wardens, and a number of environmental services. Some of these activities are directly managed from C7 resources, such as management of social housing and responses to anti-social behaviour. For others, it is necessary to influence the quality or quantity of services through agreements or contracts with agencies directly responsible for them. The Neighbourhood Manager is responsible for managing a multidisciplinary team including Environmental Health Officers, Housing Management staff, maintenance officers, private sector renewal staff and 12 Wardens.

Working with the mainstream

The wider context is the City Council's plan to devolve delivery of housing and neighbourhood services to more local areas, mainly with LCC as the driving force. KNDC Board members saw this as requiring Liverpool City Council (LCC) to combine a delivery and policing role. They were concerned to establish neighbourhood management in a way that maximised local accountability, acknowledging that LCC would inevitably be the main service provider.

KNDC is putting in £219,000 p.a. for 7 years and C7, £100,000 p.a. for 9 years. The assumption is that it will be possible to trim back after 7 years, but there is also awareness that there would probably then be a need to raise funding from other sources. Although LCC is funding neighbourhood management in other places and is contributing here through seconded staff and service delivery, the Neighbourhood Warden scheme is particular to Kensington because it was such a priority for residents.

KNDC and C7 adopted a model of neighbourhood management based upon that of INCLUDE, the pilot scheme in Liverpool recognised nationally as a model of good practice. In addition lessons from the national Neighbourhood Management pilots have been studied. LCC has a statutory responsibility for many of the key environmental functions and has established a long-term relationship with a private sector joint venture partner for street cleansing, highway maintenance, including street lighting and green space, including parks. The intention is that economies of scale will ensure delivery to an agreed standard at the same time as allowing for long term re-investment.

Barriers and Drivers

In one way, the Neighbourhood Manager needs to see his job as making the Council do its job, and that agents LCC has contracted do theirs. The view is that, if this happens, it would bend the mainstream in real terms because services will be delivered to standards that should be, but currently are not, in place. The Neighbourhood Manager should identify waste and overlaps, thereby making services more efficient, but will also find gaps that need filling.

At present, C7, the Wardens and the EHOs are all located in different offices. Co-location is planned and is seen as essential for cross fertilisation and engendering a better corporate culture.

Environment activity

- The Carter Park project (£200,000 to develop the site of a former blind school into a park) has faced difficulties with the preferred supplier of environmental improvements proving unsatisfactory to residents. Hence a need arose to terminate the contract and develop an alternative approach to environmental work which more closely involved the borough council.
- Community Caretakers and Street Wardens (part of WMNT's community safety theme) who patrol the NDC area and tackle environmental problems such as fly-tipping and abandoned cars.
- Recent projects include an all weather pitch, the creation of new parking facilities, and an area-wide clean up.
- Framework for a WMNT Environmental Improvements Strategy, with the aim of providing a more structured approach to WMNT's environmental improvement work.
- A "Housing and the Living Environment Theme" Sub-Group was set up towards the end of 2003, to consider proposed projects, lend strategic support to the Theme Manager, and monitor impacts.

Working with the mainstream

The developing relationship between WMNT and the Council has led to closer working between the two agencies and the commitment jointly to develop and fund a number of projects which are additional to the ordinary level of spending that Middlesbrough Council allots to West Middlesbrough for environmental services. The area has been earmarked as a pilot area for testing new approaches to Street Scene service delivery. This will result in some Council resources being 'bent' towards the NDC area. The first step has been the appointment of a Green and Clean Co-ordinator (a local resident) in January 2004, funded by the Council and managed on a day-to-day basis by the WMNT Environment and Neighbourhood Improvements Manager.

A Service Level Agreement has been developed with Middlesbrough Council's environmental services department, Street Scene. The draft SLA was presented to the Board in September 2003. The SLA provides a useful baseline for monitoring mainstream service performance and mapping future service development, and progress in mainstreaming.

Barriers and Drivers

Evaluation of the 3 year Environmental Community Chest scheme revealed that it was felt that had made little visual impact on the NDC area, possibly because it consisted of a number of small projects spread over a wide area. In addition uncertainty over, and slow progress with, the flagship housing project at Central Whinney Banks prevented improvement work on a key green space. Finally progress in improving environmental outcomes was slower than expected, felt to be partly due to the failure to appoint an Environmental Projects Officer (though a temporary part-time appointment was made early in 2004. Termination of the partnership agreement between WMNT and the Groundwork Trust left WMNT without a delivery agent for environmental projects, but with increased pressure to assemble a staff team more focused on delivering improvements. WMNT has been able to secure additional support in this area from the Council, and a pilot is planned to contract Middlesbrough Council to manage development of the Street Scene. The SLA is considered to have been an important process in helping to develop and strengthen the relationship between WMNT and Street Scene. There is now commitment from the Street Scene team to take a fresh approach to service delivery, using the new relationship to mutual advantage, earmarking West Middlesbrough as a pilot area for considering radical new ways for delivering their service...*'it is proposed that the service should become much more responsive to the day-to-day changing needs of neighbourhoods.'*

4.2.7. Transport

Accessibility and transport issues do not figure strongly in NDC planning and activity and NDCs tend not to figure strongly in the forward plans of transport authorities (in only 12 cases). In 17 NDCs, however, there is said to be joint project funding, and in 12 changed patterns of delivery.

Coventry: Working through the transport group, Centro has helped with a community minibus project and a business service improvement project that aims to extend local bus coverage on Sundays in Manor Farm and Henley Green. A further project involves explicit Centro involvement in developing a new bus link between all areas and Alderman, thus helping to address the poor access from the south of the WEHM area. Discussions are presently underway with Travel Coventry to amend certain issues that have arisen.

Hull: The Transport Authority may be providing a new transport interchange outside the village centre, and is amenable to bus route changes as a result of negotiations with the NDC.

Lewisham: the Partnership has an ambition to improve the traffic environment and bus services and this has led to initial discussions with Transport for London. However, major changes will require significant political support from the Borough, through the LSP, and from the Mayor and GLA. In this context, the NDC has taken the bold step of commissioning a masterplanning exercise for the area to influence wider land use priorities, transport, particularly future road and rail development, and High Street, green space, recreational and business uses. The Borough has agreed a local PSA target to reduce the number of unlicensed and abandoned vehicles.

Case Study Transport

Bristol Community at Heart

Transport Activity

- The Dings neighbourhood is benefiting from a liveability initiative started up independently of NDC, but which the Partnership is now part funding. The sustainable transport NGO, Sustrans, is implementing a Home Zone scheme as part of an EU-funded transport project on which Bristol City Council is a partner. Sustrans has conducted extensive consultation for a plan that will reshape the Dings' streets to minimise the impact of cars and create more space for walking, cycling and recreation. This contributes to one of the city council's transport targets in its Community Strategy.
- Improvements to kerbs, footpaths, potholes, road crossings, school routes through main programme highways budgets
- Cycling: extension of the Bath/Bristol cycle track using Section 106 funding from the Castle Park development
- Community Transport: The NDC employed a community transport development officer (now left), but the project was not hugely successful. In addition the purchase of a community bus (mainly for the older persons' group) was less effective than it might have been and illustrates the problems of communities owning/running/maintaining/managing their own community transport. There is now a new arrangement with Community Transport, Bristol.
- Urban Bus Challenge is funding a new bus service which links wards adjoining New Deal to the city centre.

Working with the mainstream

Major mainstream agencies fall within both public and private sectors: the Local Transport Authority (Bristol City Council) and the private bus operators. Links with operators are few and far between (no talks for eighteen months), although in the early days of NDC there were discussions with First Bus about service adjustments. Latterly commercial pressures have led operators to focus attention on major routes. There are traffic and transport objectives in the Neighbourhood Renewal Strategy (air quality, accident reduction, home zones, public transport use) and the NDC area may benefit from these (e.g. the next city wide showcase bus route is planned to go along Church Road – a major route accessing the NDC area).

There are few explicit links between the LTA and the New Deal, other than over the Dings Home Zone, where staff from the council are supporting the initiative. It is, however, facilitated/managed by Sustrans on behalf of the council. There has been some discussion with the Strategic Rail Authority over improvements to Lawrence Hill station (disability access and improvements).

Barriers and Drivers

Efforts had been made to have an SLA with Traffic and Transport regarding local highways maintenance etc. and a draft was prepared. The city council wanted amendments so the SLA was never followed up to the signing off stage. In general, although access is a major issue, transport has not been treated as a key area. Will the new requirement for accessibility planning within the main programme Transport Plan bring a different emphasis to issues of accessibility and neighbourhood renewal?

4.2.8. Social Services

Direct linkages with social services are generally weak. This may in part be a function of the fact that social services tend to get involved in other initiatives such as Sure Start, with which NDCs often do have close links. Equally social service departments may hold to traditions of universality, meeting individual needs wherever they occur and may hence be less familiar with area-based approaches to provision.

Knowsley: KMBC will be seeking to use NDC as test-bed to take forward initiatives like Integrated Children Services to the neighbourhood level. Two Social Services teams are to operate in the proposed Family Centre, but the initiative is still at the planning stage in terms of changing patterns of delivery.

Hull: PRNDC is in negotiations with Hull College over the proposed community college on the Village Centre site. Social Services are providing a Family Resource Centre on the Village Centre site

Brent: Social Services contributed mainstream funding for three education support workers in South Kilburn schools and has been willing to commit sustainable match funding to project proposals; this would result in tripartite funding of School/Family Liaison/Welfare Officers (SKNDC, Education, and Social Services).

Social Services activity:

Links are developing with the NDC via the Community Development and Inclusion Programme, especially in projects that come under the umbrella of the NDC's Youth Outreach and Inclusion Projects. The linkages with YOIP and Social Services are primarily via the Youth Justice Plan and the Haringey Youth Offending Service. The Haringey Youth Offending Service (YOS) is designed to prevent (re)offending by children and young people living in Haringey. It is a multi-agency partnership consisting of staff from Social Services, Education, Police, Probation and Health services. Even though linkages are neither mature nor formal, progress is being made. NDC project funding is to train two young people on advanced Modern Apprenticeships, to become Youth Justice Workers (paid for from the Employment Theme budget).

There is only one current example of joint funding of additional Social Services activity in the NDC area: to convert a derelict children's home into a community resource and support centre for the children and young people of Haringey (not specifically from within the NDC). The building was in need of extensive refurbishment, but Social Services did not have the funds to do it alone. As a one-off capital expenditure NDC allocated £60k to the overall refurbishment costs of £200k. The Centre will offer services such as social services assessment, advice, counselling, support and advocacy. It will be paid for, managed, and run by LBH Social Services (with support from LBH Education). It will become a centre of excellence for Social Services aimed at supporting children and young people across the borough.

Working with the mainstream

Although there is a health and social care theme within the NDC, contact and interaction with Social Services is limited. There have been no attempts by Social Services to map spend in the NDC area (difficult since resources are not allocated on a neighbourhood or ward basis). However respondents say that there has been an attempt to try to 'bend' resources to where they are most needed, predominately in Wards in the East of the Borough

Barriers and drivers

The lack of interaction with Social Services may have resulted from the fact that the theme has been dominated by the development of the local Healthy Living Centre (with the PCT). There is no natural platform of engagement between Social Services and NDC, unlike the natural partnerings of NDC and police under the Community Safety theme, or with DWP under the employment theme. The Victoria Climbié enquiry and a weak CPA have led to council concerns about capacity, management and the need for restructuring.

If increased resources have been placed in any area in Haringey it is more likely to be as a result of adopting more efficient working practices because of the recommendations from the CPA and SSI or because of changing political priorities towards Child Services or Asylum: 'how can a special case for the NDC area be made when deprivation doesn't recognise boundaries'?

The culture within the council hierarchy inhibits bending, with council departments in general 'not very good at talking to each other'. Bureaucracy, therefore, was perceived as major barrier to bending services. The remit of Social Services seemed so broad to the NDC that establishing a usable point of contact was perceived as difficult. Day to day pressures in social services inhibit taking stock or looking at alternative ways of doing things or forming partnerships. One respondent felt "we don't get the opportunity to be proactive ... We have become performance obsessed. Charging from one target to another". Also a project focus can pull resources away from partnership building; NDC officers felt that they had been focussed on getting the Health Centre up and running, to the detriment of developing relationships with Social Services.

5. Learning for Sustainability

Whilst evidence highlights some progress in linking NDC activities to main programmes, it is also clear that there are problems: a continuing non-strategic approach to mainstreaming, lack of definition, absence of shared understanding, and lack of measurement. Pressures on delivery have been enormous, and NDCs have faced major staffing and other constraints in relation to the development of long term sustainability. Many NDCs, therefore have focused on the short term and have not especially invested in sharing their experience. Equally many LSPs have failed to engage with NDCs in order to learn lessons for wider neighbourhood renewal strategies. There are, however, examples of localities where several stakeholders including Partnerships, LSPs, and local authorities are coming to accept that NDCs represent something much more than an opportunity to spend £50m.

A desire to take a broader, non monetary view of mainstreaming and to consider the benefits to the town at large that could result from mainstreaming'. Some agencies commented on 'changing approaches in terms of working in partnership and finding ways of involving residents. For some agencies this was an area of mutual learning with skills in working with young people being given, while more skills in working with the BME community being learned

'The NDC has stepped back from its initial priority of getting projects going to giving greater consideration to evaluating what is working and to making successful projects or approaches to service delivery sustainable in the long term'.

Liverpool Partnership Group (LPG) prepared the Community Strategy for the city, which includes the Neighbourhood Renewal Strategy for the twenty three neighbourhoods falling within the NRU definition of deprived neighbourhoods. Having drawn up the strategy, LPG felt that there was a need for key leaders responsible for delivery of the NRS, to come together to look at new ways of working so that they could influence changes necessary to achieve targets. LPG invited Common Purpose to customise and run an "Infuse" programme for a diverse group of senior people with responsibility for delivery. This was a five day programme, the first two being residential, and the following three in the form of briefings against the main themes of the NRS.

In Nottingham, the Radford and Hyson Green NDC, has from the start recognised the challenge of 'mainstreaming' – commissioning a Neighbourhood Renewal Adviser to identify barriers and opportunities; developing a model to help stakeholders understand mainstreaming; linking NDC working with emerging Action Area focus of the Nottingham One City Partnership. OCP has itself worked with the Greater Nottingham Learning Partnership to put together a Skills and Knowledge plan for neighbourhood renewal. It is intended to use this plan to enhance understanding of mainstreaming within the NDC Partnership.

Nevertheless these examples seem to be the exception rather than the rule. More typical seems to be the view that the main relationship is about allocating funds.

More significantly, the LSP, who are seen as heavily influenced by the Borough, have made an explicit policy decision not to devote NRF fund money to (the NDC area) on the basis that the existence of the NDC programme meant that it would be fairer to focus these additional resources elsewhere'

The NDC Programme appears to remain predominantly a project delivery programme, even if there are numerous examples of positive collaborative working and increased evidence of resource sharing. Learning seems to rest with individuals rather than organisations, and the role of the NDC as a laboratory, pilot, or demonstration project is appreciated in only a few localities.

6. Barriers and Drivers

6.1. Constraints on Agency Engagement

If agencies report positive engagement with NDCs they also recognise a number of constraints on the extent to which they are able to participate in NDC work (Table 3). In the majority of instances (32 NDCs) agencies report that the culture of their own organisation does not represent a constraint; nor does a lack of skills or competences represent a constraint (84%). There are, however clear views that involvement with NDCs is inhibited by a lack of staff resources (in 22 NDCs), lack of financial resources (17), the demands made by other partnerships (12), and the complexity of working relationships (16).

The indications are that these two last factors – complexity and demands from other partnerships - had increased in significance in the last year, although in general the level of constraints on agency involvement has stayed much the same. Indeed some constraints have reduced, notably the perceived fit of objectives between NDC and agencies, and clarity over respective roles.

Table 3: Constraints facing agencies in engaging with NDCs

	Yes	No	DK	NC	Total
Own agency lacked enough staff resources	22	13		4	39
Own agency lacked skills and competencies	2	35		2	39
Own agency lacked financial resources	17	18		4	39
Own agency couldn't fulfil or prioritise time commitments	7	23	1	8	39
Culture of own agency limited commitment/enthusiasm	2	32	1	3	38
Silos of self interest within own agency	6	27		5	38
<i>Fit between agency objectives and those of NDC</i>	9	26		4	39
Clarity of role	11	25	1	2	39
Appropriateness or relevance of role	5	29	1	3	38
NDC Partnership dominated by single partner	3	33	2	1	39
Complexity of relationships, tasks etc	18	16		5	39
Demands from other partnerships	12	19	1	6	38

Base: 39 partnerships

Source: CRESR

6.2. Negative Barriers

Lack of staff and financial resources was quoted in more than one NDC.

Lack of staff and resources, and difficulty fulfilling or prioritising time commitments are barriers that have increased over the last twelve months. In some cases this has resulted in a lack of time to discuss issues and ideas. Agencies also perceive the Partnership to be relatively well-resourced. Agency respondents have felt constrained by their inability to match 'like with like' in terms of resources, and by internal processes and external pressures which have mitigated against joint working. Jobcentre Plus, for instance, despite policy level support for a job brokerage project, and the existence of

an SLA, has been unable to provide referrals because internal systems do not currently allow eligibility checks to be carried out by NDC staff, and because Personal Advisers have a choice of over 80 training providers for client referral.

The lack of financial resource was linked to the demands of central government **performance targets**.

Organisational constraints stem from funding arrangements, systems and procedures, levels of funding and central government restrictions, including targets and performance management arrangements. For statutory organisations, such as the PCT, these processes make mainstreaming extremely difficult and can therefore account for the lack of depth to changing service provision, such as changes to patterns of delivery.

There was also some recognition of an **insufficient clarity of role**, that had accentuated a lack of co-ordination between NDC and agencies and between agencies themselves.

A number of respondents felt that there was still not a good enough fit between the organisational objectives of partner agencies and those of the NDC. There has been little progress this year in developing Service Level Agreements for example.

It is sometimes difficult for partners to wear a variety of 'hats' in different settings, such as the LSP and Board, and expectations of the roles of strategic partners are not always clearly set out, with assumptions sometimes made that things will happen by osmosis.

There was also a strong feeling that the clarity of their role, or most probably the lack of clarity, was a constraint on partnership work. The views of a number of consultees could be characterised as the NDC too often saying what it wanted to do and asking how mainstream providers could help; consultees believed a better approach would be for the Partnership to ask what mainstream providers were struggling with and how they might assist with wider agendas.

Some respondents noted problems with lack of co-ordination and information sharing and consequent duplication among organisations; interdepartmental/ agency rivalry and secrecy had hindered progress. Others thought that agencies were only willing to work with the NDC if they stood to gain from the activity

Agency and local authority engagement, can be inhibited by **local politics**. Much of this has to do with the perception that the NDC area has been favoured already, and the NDC is increasingly competing for attention on a very overcrowded neighbourhood renewal stage. The larger the local authority area and the greater the extent of deprivation/other regeneration funding, the more likely the NDC is to become less distinctive or visible..

The NDC is located in a Borough where most of the big public agencies have co-terminous boundaries and where every ward in the Borough comes within the 10% most deprived in England, and there are many ABIs with good cases for mainstreaming across the Borough. This presents an almost unique situation with regard to mainstreaming.

In some instances it was argued that NDC **processes and procedures** created barriers.

Some partners questioned NDC's competence and capacity to deliver and felt that partner contributions were undervalued and under used - "NDC are not asking or learning from partners." Some still found the NDC to be insular.

One agency did indicate that they found the transactions costs of working with the New Deal to be significantly higher than working with other regeneration-related funding mechanisms.

Agencies felt the NDC had an 'inability to spend', had suffered staffing shortages, and was sometimes inflexible to work with, while expecting agencies to change their working style. The demands of other activities in the regeneration field such as LSPs and HMRPs, were increasingly cited as important calls on time which meant less dedicated staff time could be spent on the NDC. 'NDC bureaucracy drives agency partners mad'. This they attributed mainly to the behaviour of certain members of the Partnership Board, rather than the programme team.

6.3. Positive Drivers

There is widespread recognition of the leadership role played by senior figures in maintaining main programme engagement, and in providing a role model for, possibly more reluctant middle management. Thus **leadership, commitment and championing** were identified as key drivers.

The new Chief Executive has been an important factor in improving partnership working, not least because of his good reputation in the city – he is seen as a 'guarantor of public credibility' for the NDC.

In one respect the NDC has a critical advantage over many of its counterparts elsewhere. The local MP and senior councillors and officers within the accountable body have persistently pressed the NDC and its partner agencies to raise their game and make a lasting difference

A fresh approach and **new relationships** can assist in moving mainstreaming forward. Thus whilst rare there are examples of main programme agencies seeing the NDC as an area for piloting new approaches.

Agencies like the PCT that bring little baggage from previous experience because they are new organisations and are prepared to think and try local solutions, have so far proved the most fertile ground for considering innovation in mainstream service provision.

A number of mainstream projects have been piloted in the NDC, before being more widely implemented across the borough.

Some interviewees recognise the existence of a new **maturity** within NDCs and in relationships between NDCs and others:

Improving relationships with statutory agencies, and an increasing clarity around the meaning of mainstreaming, have mean that Partnership staff now feel they are more able to put pressure on statutory agencies to change service delivery.

The growing maturity of the Board has reduced the frustrations previously felt by agency representatives and improved their perception of the potential benefits of collaboration with other agencies through NDC structures.

Finally, there is also a recognition that NDCs have now settled down and are showing that **good professionals and practitioners** have a real value.

Agencies are more optimistic about collaboration with the Partnership now that there is more continuity and certainty from dealing with permanent staff team – in particular theme managers.

The influence NDC can exercise is partly a feature of the level of trust in it and the quality of its relationships. Having the time and skills to foster links is an important factor and building team capacity is a relevant consideration

Much of this progress [in partnership working] is the result of the Trust attracting experienced and well-connected practitioners.

The current Programme Director's background has also helped; unlike her predecessor, she was formerly a Council Officer and her experience facilitates engagement between the NDC and the local authority.