

Briefing

Yorkshire & the Humber

regional forum

voice of the voluntary & community sector

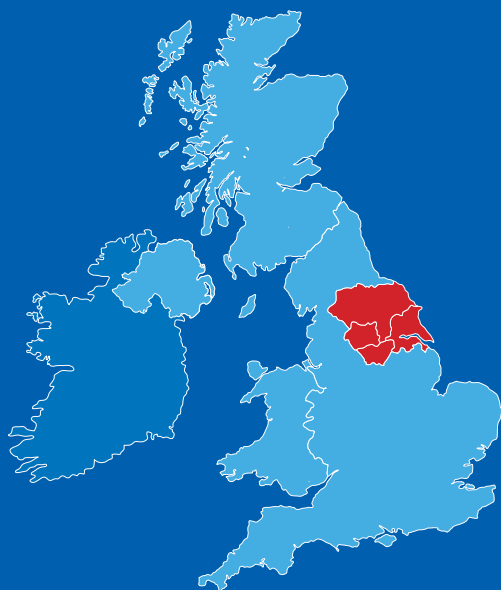


Total Place

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Significance: regional



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Summary

This briefing gives details about

- what Total Place is
- the Bradford Total Place pilot project
- implications for the voluntary and community sector (VCS).

What is Total Place?

Launched by the Treasury in 2008, Total Place is a new government initiative that looks at how a 'whole area' approach to delivering public services can lead to better services at less cost. It aims to provoke a radical rethink of the way services are delivered by focussing on identifying, then removing, overlap and duplication between government departments like the Home Office, Department of Work and Pensions, and the Department of Health, local authorities, and the voluntary and community sector (VCS). Thirteen areas, including Bradford, are participating in the pilot scheme. Each area has very different economic, geographic, and demographic features. Total Place offers local government the opportunity to challenge central government on the basis of local needs and priorities.

How will Total Place work?

- Each pilot is developing approaches to tackling a specific theme, which is broad enough to draw in partners and have a significant amount of spending attached to it. For example, 'families'.
- Partners will map the total public spending for their theme and identify where efficiencies and effectiveness can be improved by better collaboration. This will be an in-depth analysis.
- This mapping, or counting, will be done by relevant government, local authority, and local organisations working together. It is hoped this will change the culture of working in institutional 'silos' and begin to shift the emphasis to the needs of customers. This has even greater relevance when public expenditure is going to be tightly controlled.

The Bradford Total Place pilot project

Bradford is the only place in the region that has been selected to be a Total Place pilot. Their chosen theme is 'Gateway to Integrated Services'. This has three sub themes:

1. offenders over 18 who are leaving prison or youth offender institutions and returning to Bradford
2. older people leaving hospital with mental health problems
3. young people leaving a care environment.

They have carried out their mapping exercise to determine the total amount of public sector spend in Bradford in the last financial year. This amounted to £4.2b (or £8,000 per person in the Bradford population).

There is significant user involvement in the exercise, and detailed scrutiny of relevant case studies.

One of the conclusions was that local agencies did not have significant influence on how this money was spent, with central government setting prescriptive guidelines.

The next step is to look in more detail at how money is targeted at the three sub themes, and to identify barriers to productive collaboration between agencies. The deadline for this is February 2010.

Implications for the VCS

- A series of workshops was held around the three sub themes to get to grips with issues. The sector was fully involved with these and has helped to ensure that experience on the ground is linked to providers.
- There is likely to be work for voluntary and community organisations as a result of the project. The concept of Total Place is likely to continue whoever wins the next general election as obtaining value for money from public expenditure will be critically important.
- Caroline Schwaller (Chief Executive of Keighley Voluntary Services), is a member of the Partnership Board and is very positive about the collaborative way in which the pilot is being developed.

Conclusion

The Bradford Total Place pilot project is a good example of sector involvement in important developments. The partnership approach is seen as key to success. It brings together central government departments, the local authority, and the VCS.

What happens next?

The national Total Place programme is due to report in March 2010, when the outcomes from each pilot will be fed into the Budget Report for that year.

Getting more information



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www.localleadership.gov.uk/totalplace

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Stephen Fox (Development Officer, Policy & Engagement) with thanks to Caroline Schwaller at Keighley Voluntary Services (www.keighleyvs.org) and to South West Forum (www.southwestforum.org.uk) for their help in producing this briefing

Date

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We use our briefings to summarise important developments and their implications, including proposals for new structures or legislation. They are designed to promote debate, put forward an argument, elicit response and encourage action, as appropriate.

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