COLLABORATION - THE WIN(ING) WAY!

Robyn Keast
Professor, SCU Business School & Chair Collaborative Research Network Policy & Planning for Regional Sustainability - May 2014
Background to collaboration

- Sector under pressure for change
- External & internal drivers
- Integration & stronger connectivity the way forward
- Collaboration – the ‘one best way’ the ‘holy grail’

BUT:

- Collaboration is hard to achieve & harder to sustain
  - Hidden transaction costs
- Mismatch of integration form to purpose
Other challenges …

- Competition – collaboration dilemma

- Collaboration – amalgamation dilemma
  - Mixed policy/practice environment – perverse effects?

- Costs:
  - Transaction costs
  - Lost opportunity costs

- Possible consequences
  - ‘Shadow Government’
  - Loss of vibrancy
  - Concentration on securing $ not service

Keast May 2014
Integration - unpacked

Top down

Breadth of initiatives

State

Regional

Local

Depth of initiatives

Strategic/policy level

Administrative/managerial level

Practitioner level

Cooperation

Coordination

Collaboration
## Horizontal Integration Continuum

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Low trust — unstable relations</th>
<th>Medium trust — based on prior relations</th>
<th>High trust — stable relations</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Infrequent communication flows</td>
<td>Structured communication flows</td>
<td>Thick communication flows</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Known information sharing</td>
<td>‘Project’ related and directed information sharing</td>
<td>Tactical information sharing</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Adjusting actions</td>
<td>Joint projects, joint funding, joint policy</td>
<td>Systems change</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Independent/autonomous goals</td>
<td>Semi-independent goals</td>
<td>Dense interdependent relations and goals</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Power remains with organisation</td>
<td>Power remains with organisations</td>
<td>Shared power</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Resources — remain own</td>
<td>Shared resources around project</td>
<td>Pooled, collective resources</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Commitment and accountability to own agency</td>
<td>Commitment and accountability to own agency and project</td>
<td>Commitment and accountability to the network first</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Relational time frame requirement — short term</td>
<td>Relational time frame medium term — often based on prior projects</td>
<td>Relational time frame requirement — long term 3-5 years</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Keast May 2014
Unbalanced ... what could happen!

Breadth and depth of Initiatives across strategic, administrative/managerial and practitioner levels as well as state, regional and local levels.
Fit-for-purpose designs

- All relations & integration forms have merit & application
- Approaches & relational strength must be 
  **requisite to purpose**
  - Independent, adjusting actions & information sharing: cooperation
  - Do same, but more efficiently through joint working, aligned resources & action: coordination
  - Systems change: collaboration
- Also – need to consider the vertical relations!
  - Linking across layers, into resources, legitimacy & power/influence
FILLING OUT THE GREY SPACE

People & culture
- New skills & training
- Shared Leadership
- Shared skills development
- Shared roles & responsibilities
- Collegiality
- Shared frames of reference
- Common language
- Culture of working together

Structure, & governance
- Correct organisational structures form
- Right integration mechanism
- Alignment of top down policies & bottom up issues

Processes & systems
- Shared performance measures
- Knowledge
- Established decision making
- Joint budgets & clear agreed goals; decision making processes; pooled funding

New ways of working, managing and leading
- Managing relations
- Bringing in people & organisations
- Mobilising resources
- Strategic relationship building
- Leveraging relationships

Processes & systems
New ways of working, managing and leading
People & culture
Structure, & governance
Sector assessment

- **Social Capital**: (e.g., the value of social networks, interactions between actors)
- **Network Capital**: (e.g., cooperation, information sharing, shared objectives)
- **Institutional Capital**: (e.g., regulative, normative, and cognitive systems; rules and processes)
- **Infrastructure Capital**: (e.g., housing)
- **Human Capital**: (e.g., skills, experience)

Current sector efforts

Limited infrastructure capital: e.g., lack of housing

Workforce issues, turnover, losing staff to other sectors
Getting started …

- Build relationships – invest upfront!
- Negotiate agreement on:
  - 1. the issues/problem
  - 2. Solution
- Negotiate to established agreed set of practices – how going to work together
  - Additional partners identified & relationships built
  - Determine organisational willingness & capacity
- Design the structure & governance arrangements
- Set tasks & roles & actions
- Monitor relationships, processes & leverage for outcomes

Activating, framing, mobilising & synthesising & leading!
Relationships – Crucial aspect

- Hard to build & easy to loose – but crucial resource!

- Strategic & deliberate – put effort where best outcomes

- Process Catalyst & Strategic leveraging
Challenges to overcome …

- Navigating the collaboration - competition dilemma
  - Clarity of message about roles
- Getting buy-in from partners & broader community champions & sponsors
- Dealing with conflict that comes from diverse actors & passionate commitment to ideals
- Delivering outcomes
- Sustainable income & new business model
  - Administrative core
- Establishing & communicating a viable value proposition
Going forward: successful collaboration

successful & sustainable collaboration demands:

- To be successful & sustainable collaboration demands:
- Critical mass
- Right set of agencies/partners
- Champions & sponsors
- Legitimacy to act
- Results

Call to arms – (collaboration)!

Keast May 2014
Bright & dark networks – WHAT CAN BE LEARNT FROM THE DARK SIDE?
Social Services: Joint planning & programming
‘The Joke’ – Police Corruption in Qld -
Outlaw Motorcycle Gangs - Rebels
Gold Coast

[Diagram of the Gold Coast Rebels motorcycle gang]

Page 1 of 1