

**Responding to the risk of reducing  
resources: Development of a framework  
for future change programmes in English  
Environmental Health Services**

**Ruth Charlotte Plume**

M00190350

Department of Natural Sciences  
Faculty of Science and Technology

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I would like to dedicate this work to my parents: Miriam and Gerald Evans.

## **GLOSSARY**

ALEHM	Association of London Environmental Health Managers
BRDO	Better Regulation Delivery Office
BRE	Better Regulation Executive
CIEH	Chartered Institute of Environmental Health
CQC	Care Quality Commission
DNA	Deoxyribonucleic Acid
DTI	Department of Trade and Industry
EHP	Environmental Health Practitioner
EU	European Union
FFI	Fee For Intervention
FSA	Food Standards Agency
HSE	Health and Safety Executive
JCA	Joint Competency Agency
LACORS	Local Authorities Coordinators of Regulatory Services
LBRO	Local Better Regulation Office
LGA	Local Government Association
MHCLG	Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government
NAO	National Audit Office
NPM	New Public Management
OECD	Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development
ONS	Office of National Statistics
OPSS	Office for Product Safety and Standards
PHE	Public Health England
SME	Small and Medium-sized Enterprise

## **ABSTRACT**

### **Responding to the risk of reducing resources: Development of a framework for future change programmes in Environmental Health Services**

Environmental Health Services in the UK have been subject to significant resource reduction from 2010 to 2018. It is suggested that services risk becoming unsustainable unless efficient and effective ways of working are employed. This research explored the experience of practitioners who are developing and delivering evolving Environmental Health Services in English local authorities in the context of deep cutting budget reductions. A range of 'non-traditional' service delivery models has been examined including outsourcing, shared services, regional delivery models and mutualisation arrangements. The models were at various stages of development from planning through to full transformation. Interviews were carried out with the participants involved in the change process to capture their experience of change and the impact on service delivery. Fieldwork was undertaken between 2014 and 2016. Thematic analysis of interview transcripts identified six central themes of the experience of change: 'Managing changes effectively'; 'Understanding the reasons for change'; 'Understanding the nature of Environmental Health'; 'Meaningful consultation'; 'Viability of the proposal'; And 'Planning and timeliness'. Further analysis of the data developed seven overarching themes: 'Ethos of public services', 'Getting it right', 'Emerging service demands', 'Resilience', 'Trust', 'Skills development' and 'Risk'. A framework for future change programmes in Environmental Health Services has been developed which takes into account the lessons learnt by organisations that have previously undergone significant change in their response to the risk of a reducing resource. Environmental Health Services undergoing transformation will benefit from using this framework to examine their own organisation when they are establishing the need for change, making decisions, planning and transition. Use of this framework can mitigate against risks of unsustainable or undeliverable Environmental Health Services.

**KEYWORDS: Environmental Health, Austerity, Change Management, Lessons Learned, Risk, Resilience**

## Contents

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS.....	i
GLOSSARY.....	ii
ABSTRACT.....	iii
1 INTRODUCTION .....	1
1.1 Context .....	1
1.1.1 What is environmental health?.....	1
1.1.2 The Challenging Landscape of Environmental Health Service Delivery.....	3
1.2 Outline of the project: Research Aim and Questions .....	5
1.2.1 Chapter 2: Literature Review .....	6
1.2.2 Chapter 3: Research Methodology and Design.....	6
1.2.3 Chapter 4: The Findings .....	7
1.2.4 Chapter 5: Discussion of Findings .....	7
1.2.5 Chapter 6: Conclusions and Recommendations.....	7
1.3 Academic Significance.....	7
1.4 Contribution to Practice .....	8
1.5 Personal and Professional Significance.....	8
2 LITERATURE REVIEW .....	9
2.1 Austerity and Reducing Resources.....	10
2.2 New Public Management and Neoliberalism .....	13
2.3 Delivering Regulatory Services.....	18
2.4 Transformation of Public Services .....	25
2.5 Change Management in Public Services.....	29
2.6 Traditional and Emerging Models of Environmental Health Service Delivery.....	39
2.7 Shared Services .....	42
2.8 Public-private partnerships .....	44
2.9 Conclusion .....	50
3 RESEARCH METHODOLOGY AND DESIGN .....	51
3.1 Introduction .....	51
3.2 Theoretical Perspective .....	53
3.3 Research Philosophy.....	55

3.4	Research Approach .....	56
3.5	Research Strategy .....	58
3.6	Research Design .....	60
3.7	Ethical Considerations .....	61
3.8	Data Collection .....	62
3.9	Sampling Strategy .....	64
3.10	The Organisations and Participant Selection.....	66
3.11	Selection of the Organisations .....	66
3.11.2	Selection of Participants .....	68
3.11.3	Limitations of the sampling strategy.....	72
3.11.4	Pilot Stages: Reflective diaries and accounts .....	74
3.11.5	Reflective Interviews .....	78
3.11.6	Conference Audience and Consultation .....	81
3.12	Data Analysis and Theory Development.....	86
3.12.1	Organisation of the Data .....	88
3.12.2	Stage 2: Familiarisation with the Data and Manual Coding .....	88
3.12.3	Stage 3: Searching for themes .....	90
3.12.4	Stage 4: NVivo to extract content .....	91
3.12.5	Stage 5: Refining the themes.....	92
3.13	Personal Reflection on the Research Process .....	93
3.14	Time Horizons and Project Milestones .....	94
3.15	Conclusion .....	95
4	RESEARCH FINDINGS.....	97
4.1	Introduction .....	97
4.2	Initial Coding .....	97
4.3	Identification of Sub-Themes .....	100
4.4	Development of a codebook .....	101
4.5	Emergent Themes .....	101
4.5.1	Meaningful Consultation .....	102
4.5.2	Managing Changes Effectively .....	112
4.5.3	Understanding the Reasons for Change .....	129

4.5.4	Understanding the Nature of Environmental Health .....	141
4.5.5	Viability of the Proposal .....	152
4.5.6	Planning and Timeliness.....	166
4.6	Cross-theme analysis .....	174
4.7	Conclusion .....	177
5	DISCUSSION.....	178
5.1	Introduction .....	178
5.2	Consultation Stage 1: Testing the Emerging Themes .....	178
5.2.1	Understanding the Reasons for Change .....	178
5.2.2	Understanding the Nature of Environmental Health .....	183
5.2.3	Viability of the Proposal .....	189
5.2.4	Planning and Timeliness.....	195
5.2.5	Managing Changes Effectively .....	199
5.2.6	Meaningful Consultation .....	204
5.2.7	Summary of Consultation Stage 1: Testing the Emerging Themes .....	208
5.3	Consultation Stage 2: Coupling of Themes Situated in the Chronology of Change .....	208
5.3.1	'Understanding the reasons for change' and 'Understanding the nature of Environmental Health' in establishing the need for change.....	209
5.3.2	'Planning and timeliness' and 'Viability of the proposal' in Decision making and planning .....	212
5.3.3	'Meaningful consultation' and 'Managing changes effectively' in Transition .....	214
5.3.4	ICUR Conference Paper and Views of Three Heads of Environmental Health Services.....	216
5.4	Establishing the Overarching Themes.....	218
5.4.1	The Ethos of Public Services .....	219
5.5	The Final Model: A Framework for future change programmes in Environmental Health Services.....	221
5.5.1	The Overarching Themes .....	224
5.6	Conclusion .....	227

6	A TOOLKIT TO PRESENT THE FRAMEWORK FOR FUTURE CHANGE PROGRAMMES IN ENVIRONMENTAL HEALTH SERVICES.....	230
7	PERSONAL REFLECTION.....	231
8	CONCLUSION.....	236
8.1	Limitations.....	240
8.2	Recommendations.....	241
9	REFERENCES.....	242
10	APPENDICES.....	258
Appendix A:	Presentation: Chartered Institute of Environmental Health 115th National Conference, Nottingham October 2015.....	259
Appendix B:	CIEH: Research Practice Conference: Bridging Policy and Practice with Research, London November 2015.....	262
Appendix C:	Presentation: International Conference on Urban Risks, Lisbon, Portugal June 2016.....	265
Appendix D:	ComplianceNet First Annual Conference “Measuring Compliance in the 21st Century” Irvine, California at UC Irvine, June 2018.....	267
Appendix E:	International Journal of Disaster Risk Reduction special edition.....	272
Appendix F:	Research Students’ Summer Conference 2017 -The Power of Research.....	280
Appendix G:	Revised learning agreement to reflect the evolution of the project design submitted in March 2017.....	283
Appendix H:	Heightening your Awareness of your Research Philosophy (HARP) Responses.....	287
Appendix I:	Ethical approval.....	288
Appendix J:	Consultant review proforma.....	289
Appendix K:	Example of coding from interview notes.....	290
Appendix L:	Word Frequency Query Results >1000.....	291
Appendix M:	Codebooks.....	297
Appendix N:	Findings tables.....	305
Appendix O:	Details of data coding for each participant.....	330
Appendix P:	Understanding the reasons for change: Audience participation commentary on the Emerging Themes (Chartered Institute of Environmental Health 115th National Conference, Nottingham October 2015).....	337



Appendix Q:	Understanding the nature of Environmental Health: Audience participation commentary on the Emerging Themes (Chartered Institute of Environmental Health 115th National Conference, Nottingham October 2015).....	338
Appendix R:	Viability of the Proposal: Audience participation commentary on the Emerging Themes (Chartered Institute of Environmental Health 115th National Conference, Nottingham October 2015).....	339
Appendix S:	Planning and Timeliness: Audience participation commentary on the Emerging Themes (Chartered Institute of Environmental Health 115th National Conference, Nottingham October 2015).....	340
Appendix T:	Managing Changes Effectively: Audience participation commentary on the Emerging Themes (Chartered Institute of Environmental Health 115th National Conference, Nottingham October 2015) .....	341
Appendix U:	Meaningful Consultation: Audience participation commentary on the Emerging Themes (Chartered Institute of Environmental Health 115th National Conference, Nottingham October 2015).....	342
Appendix V:	Consultant comments .....	343
Appendix W:	Draft Toolkit: A framework for future change programmes in English Environmental Health Services .....	356

## LIST OF TABLES

Table 3.1:	How Research Questions and Objectives Were Informed .....	52
Table 3.2:	Philosophical Assumptions as a Multidimensional Set of Continua .....	58
Table 3.3:	Organisations Included in the Research.....	67
Table 3.4:	Participant Profiles.....	70
Table 3.5:	Advantages and Disadvantages of Interviews for Data Collection (adapted from Doody and Noonan, 2013) .....	79
Table 3.6:	Background of Participants and the Data Collection Process .....	80
Table 3.7:	Background of Consultants and the Data Collection Process .....	83
Table 3.8:	Summary profile of the consultants .....	84
Table 3.9:	Deficiencies of the Human as Analyst .....	89
Table 3.10:	Key Project Milestones .....	95
Table 4.1:	The six central themes and their influencing sub-themes .....	101
Table 4.2:	Participant references for the central theme: Meaningful consultation.....	103
Table 4.3:	Participant references for the central theme: Managing changes effectively.....	113
Table 4.4:	Participant references for the central theme: Understanding the reasons for change.....	130
Table 4.5:	Participant references for the central theme: Understanding the nature of Environmental Health .....	142
Table 4.6:	Participant references for the central theme: Viability of the proposal.....	152
Table 4.7:	Participant references for the central theme: Planning and timeliness.....	167
Table 4.8:	Central themes of most reference classified by participant hierarchy in their organisation .....	174
Table 4.9:	Central themes of most reference classified by participants' type of organisation .....	175
Table 4.10:	Central themes of most reference classified by stages of change .....	176
Table 4.11:	Central themes of most reference over time by Participant 2.....	176
Table 5.1:	Summary of how the research questions were answered.....	228

## LIST OF FIGURES

Figure 1.1: Functions of Environmental Health professionals adapted from Page (2008).....	2
Figure 3.1: The Research Onion .....	53
Figure 3.2: The Research Approach (Adapted from Saunders et.al. (2016)) .....	54
Figure 3.3: The Main Project Activities .....	65
Figure 3.4: Reflective Diary Guidance .....	75
Figure 3.5: Reflective Account Guidance .....	76
Figure 3.6: Workshop extract from the presentation at 115th CIEH National Conference 2015 .....	82
Figure 3.7: Data Analysis and Theory Development .....	87
Figure 3.8: Development of Emerging (Central) Themes .....	90
Figure 3.9: Emerging (Central) Theme Model. ....	91
Figure 3.10: Summary of the Thematic Analysis .....	93
Figure 3.11: Summary of the Research Design.....	95
Figure 3.12: Summary of Data Analysis .....	96
Figure 4.1: NVivo word frequency query .....	98
Figure 4.2: Initial codes derived from familiarisation with the data .....	99
Figure 4.3: Emergent Themes .....	101
Figure 4.4: Meaningful Consultation Thematic Diagram.....	102
Figure 4.5: Managing Changes Effectively Thematic Diagram.....	112
Figure 4.6: Understanding the Reasons for Change Thematic Diagram.....	129
Figure 4.7: Understanding the Nature of Environmental Health Thematic Diagram.....	141
Figure 4.8: Viability of the Proposal Thematic Diagram.....	152
Figure 4.9: Planning and Timeliness Thematic Diagram .....	166
Figure 5.1: 115th Audience commentary on the central theme of 'Understanding the reasons for change' and its sub-themes:.....	179
Figure 5.2: Audience commentary on the central theme of 'Understanding the nature of Environmental Health' and its sub-themes: .....	185
Figure 5.3: Audience commentary on the central theme of 'Viability of the Proposal' and its subthemes: .....	190
Figure 5.4: Audience commentary on the central theme of 'Planning and Timeliness' and its sub-themes: .....	196
Figure 5.5: Audience commentary on the central theme of 'Managing Changes Effectively' and its sub-themes: .....	200

Figure 5.6: Audience commentary on the central theme of 'Meaningful Consultation' and its sub-themes: .....	205
Figure 5.7: Understanding the nature of Environmental Health and the reasons for change in establishing the need for change.....	211
Figure 5.8: Planning, timeliness and viability of the proposal in Decision making and planning .....	213
Figure 5.9: Meaningful consultation and managing changes effectively in Transition.....	215
Figure 5.10: The Final Model: A Framework for future change programmes in Environmental Health Services .....	223

# 1 INTRODUCTION

I am a Chartered Environmental Health Practitioner with many years of experience in delivering Environmental Health Services in a local authority setting and more recently as a Senior Lecturer in Environmental Health Professional Development and Programme Leader for the BSc Environmental Health at Middlesex University. I undertook this research project as I became aware there were emerging models of Environmental Health Service delivery resulting from the climate of austerity and reducing resources for English local government.

## 1.1 Context

### 1.1.1 What is environmental health?

Environmental health does not have a simple definition and there are at least 28 definitions to be found around the world. Couch *et al.* (2012) found that environmental health in the UK is best defined as:

*“Comprising those aspects of human health, including quality of life, that are determined by physical, chemical, biological, social and psychosocial factors in the environment. It also refers to the theory and practice of assessing, correcting and preventing those factors in the environment that can potentially affect health.”*  
(MacArthur and Bonnefoy, 1998, p.20)

Maintaining and improving human health is central to all of environmental health action and these actions must protect the groups within a society whose health is most at risk. Battersby (2017) defines these groups as those who have little economic power, live and work in the worst conditions, and who have limited access to a wholesome and varied food supply. A structure for local government and state laws and regulations must be in place to deliver an effective Environmental Health Service.

In their definition of environmental health, MacArthur and Bonnefoy (1998) also consider the role of interventions that can be undertaken to assess correct and prevent the impact of environmental stressors on human health and, in the UK, these interventions are undertaken by Environmental Health Practitioners (EHPs). EHPs are employed by the public and private sectors and the range of their functions are set out in Figure 1.1. The wide breadth of their functions reflects the scope of Environmental Health Services in the UK and illustrates the difficulty in the definition of the term ‘environmental health’.

<b>Public Health:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Communicable disease control</li> <li>▪ Food poisoning investigations and control</li> <li>▪ Pest control</li> <li>▪ Waste management</li> <li>▪ Licensing functions</li> <li>▪ Anti-Social Behaviour</li> <li>▪ Crime and disorder functions</li> <li>▪ Prevention of Nuisance</li> <li>▪ Animal Welfare</li> <li>▪ Drainage and sanitation</li> </ul>	<b>Food Safety:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Licensing of food premises</li> <li>▪ Inspection of and improvement of food safety at wholesale, manufacturing and retail levels</li> <li>▪ Food quality</li> <li>▪ Food standards</li> <li>▪ Food importation and exportation</li> <li>▪ Allergen control</li> <li>▪ Nutritional information</li> </ul>	<b>Housing:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Licensing of high-risk housing</li> <li>▪ Improvement of the private housing stock</li> <li>▪ Disabled Adaptations</li> <li>▪ Housing Standards</li> <li>▪ Regulation of the private rented stock</li> <li>▪ Home energy improvements</li> <li>▪ Fire protection of high-risk housing</li> </ul>
<b>Pollution control of:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Land</li> <li>▪ Air</li> <li>▪ Water</li> <li>▪ Noise</li> <li>▪ Contaminated land remediation</li> <li>▪ 'licensing' of pollution sources</li> </ul>	<b>Occupational Health and Safety Audits of Safe Systems of Work:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Risk Appraisal</li> <li>▪ Health and Safety Culture Development</li> <li>▪ Occupational Safety</li> <li>▪ Occupational Hygiene</li> <li>▪ Occupational Health and Welfare</li> <li>▪ Accident Investigations</li> </ul>	<b>Health promotion and Health and Well-being:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Advocacy</li> <li>▪ Education</li> <li>▪ Sustainable</li> <li>▪ Community development</li> <li>▪ Regeneration</li> <li>▪ Drainage and sanitation</li> </ul>

**Figure 1.1: Functions of Environmental Health Professionals adapted from Page (2008)**

In the UK, EHPs are employed across the public, private and third sectors. However, Environmental Health Professionals are mostly employed by local authorities and it is estimated that in 2014 there were 5,500–8,500 Environmental Health Professionals, including more than 4,000 in local authorities (CfWI, 2014). The registration and qualification of Environmental Health Practitioners (EHPs) are overseen by the Chartered Institute of Environmental Health (CIEH). A qualified EHP must hold an accredited B.Sc. or M.Sc. in Environmental Health, have successfully completed a learning portfolio and passed a professional exam and interview (CIEH, 2017a). However, not all of Environmental Health is serviced by registered EHPs and there are many Environmental Health Professionals working in the field with other relevant degrees such as Environmental Science.

EHPs are considered as part of a wider public health workforce and Rayner and Lang (2012) note environmental health as one of five models of public health. Local authority EHPs work in improving, monitoring and enforcing public and environmental health standards. They support, advise and work with businesses, local communities and people to ensure standards and legislation associated with environmental health are maintained and upheld in order to protect and improve people's health, safety and wellbeing. This role is supported by the CIEH's mission statement which is:

*“To promote and uphold the principles, standards and good practice of environmental health, in a variety of disciplines and settings, to improve and protect the public’s health, safety and wellbeing.” (CIEH, 2017b, p.1)*

In England and Wales, public sector Environmental Health Services are delivered by local authorities at district level or by unitary authorities. Areas of responsibility for local Environmental Health Services will typically include food hygiene and food safety; control of infectious diseases; health and safety at work; pollution control; animal welfare; pest control; private water supplies; private sector housing and health promotion. These functions are grounded in environmental health legislation and associated statutory duties as well as local and national strategies to protect and improve public health. A local authority Environmental Health Service employs EHPs with wide-ranging responsibilities and has the power to enforce regulations and legislation and to prosecute persistent or serious offenders.

It is important to note that the role of local authority Environmental Health Services is not restricted to regulation. Indeed, the ethos of EHPs is to primarily use persuasion and education to ensure that the public’s health is protected, but local authority EHPs are able to utilise their regulatory powers where deemed necessary. However, reducing resources have focussed Environmental Health Services on their regulatory role so it is likely that many are undertaking their statutory duties as minimal service delivery or not even being able to perform them at all (Burke *et al.* (2002); Tombs (2016)).

### **1.1.2 The Challenging Landscape of Environmental Health Delivery**

The landscape for Environmental Health Service delivery in the United Kingdom (UK) is affected by a range of complex external forces. These include drivers for better regulation (Kellett, 2008), regulatory change, austerity (Gainsbury and Neville, 2005), devolution (Sandford, 2015a), social context, delivery models (Grant Thornton UK, 2014) and delivery ethos. Social and economic contexts such as changing demographics, economic change/challenges and political change present further challenges. Performance measurement with an emphasis on accountability, value for money and outcomes focus, leading to ‘New Public Management (NPM)’ has developed as a managerialist perspective on the delivery of public services (Massey and Pyper, 2005) and is established via privatisation, reorganisation, competition and improved efficiency. Quangos such as the Audit Commission and, specifically for Regulatory Services, the Local Better Regulation Office (LBRO) were set up to oversee the implementation of this process. In 2014 the Better Regulation Delivery Office (BRDO) replaced the LBRO and,

in 2018, the Office for Product Safety and Standards (OPSS) was set up to oversee Business Regulation. OPSS is a part of the Department for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, which sets out to bring together policy expertise and practical experience to ensure that regulation is effectively delivered in ways that reduce burdens on business, save public money and properly protect citizens and communities (BRDO 2014a; OPSS 2018).

The agenda of UK regulatory reform in the last decade is one of cutting red tape so that businesses can be more productive and public services more efficient, by legislating only where necessary and deregulating and simplifying existing legislation wherever possible. A number of government-commissioned reports were produced which have been influential on UK environmental health regulation. The Hampton Report (2005), set out an ambitious programme to reduce the burdens on business created by regulatory systems. The report urged regulators to become more risk-based in their inspection and information requirements, to focus greater effort on improving advice and guidance to help businesses which want to comply and to deal more effectively with persistent offenders. The Macrory Review of Regulatory Penalties, (2006) considered a broad spectrum of sanctions as well as the major motivations for non-compliance. Recommendations were made to facilitate regulators to sanction, in a risk-based proportionate and appropriate manner as outlined in the Hampton Report, (2005). The Rogers Review, (2007) had set priorities for local government regarding Regulatory Services making it clear where services should be focussed. This was criticised by EHPs as it focussed on businesses and did not address important areas such as the effect of poor housing on health. Whilst the commercial interests of businesses may be well served by this agenda there is a debate surrounding the regulatory reform agenda in respect to the concern that public health protection may be compromised. This will be explored in more detail in Chapter 2.

Since the financial crisis in 2008, the UK government has drastically cut spending on public services. There has been a 49.1% real-term reduction in government funding for local authorities from 2010-11 to 2017-18 (National Audit Office, 2018a). The message from the UK central government was clear, in that it wants local authorities to focus on the issues, work together and to transform services to adapt to the new context in which local government services are operating. Conversely, central government also has a strategy of Localism, small government and public health gain. These challenges present a rapidly changing landscape for local authorities and this creates a tension of reducing resource coupled with the duty to protect public health. Increasingly Environmental



Health Services are focusing on their statutory duties, indeed, this trend was noticed as far back as 2002 - with comments that Environmental Health was becoming fixed on the delivery of a narrow agenda which was preventing it from achieving its traditional involvement in addressing the wider determinants of health (Burke *et al.*, 2002). This challenging financial and political environment has resulted in new models of service delivery which will be explored in this project.

## **1.2 Outline of the project: Research Aim and Questions**

The aim of the project was to conduct an investigation into evolving models of English Environmental Health Services as a response to reducing resource and to identify the lessons learned by those who were involved in the change process. In order to meet this aim, an overarching research question was developed.

**Overarching research question:** What are the lessons to learn from the implementation process for differing and evolving service delivery models for Environmental Health?

Three subsidiary research questions were derived from the overarching research question and the project objectives were designed to answer these questions.

### **Subsidiary research questions:**

- I. What are the drivers for change in local authority Environmental Health and Regulatory Services?
- II. What are the experiences of key personnel during the change to emerging and novel service delivery models for Environmental Health and Regulatory Services?
- III. What lessons can be learned from the change process?

### **Project objectives:**

The project objectives were designed to answer the overarching and subsidiary research questions and were:

- a. To carry out a review of existing literature to explore the known drivers for change and to identify emerging and novel methods of Environmental Health and Regulatory Service delivery;

- b. To identify lessons learned through exploration of experiences of key personnel involved in relevant change programmes from the early stages of the decision making through to the transition stages;
- c. Development of a theoretical framework for the effective management of future change programmes in Environmental Health Services.

The report of the research has been structured as follows:

### **1.2.1 Chapter 2: Literature Review**

Chapter 2 provides a review of the relevant literature and considers austerity and reduced resources, delivering Regulatory Services, the role of neoliberalism in shaping public sector services, the transformation of public services, change management in public services and models of local authority Environmental Health Service delivery. The literature review seeks to develop a deep insight into the drivers of change and the implementation of new approaches to Environmental Health Service delivery.

### **1.2.2 Chapter 3: Research Methodology and Design**

Chapter 3 sets out the research strategy and a research design which could achieve the research aims and objectives. This research project was considered as a critical enquiry which utilised a problem-solving approach and sought to gain knowledge that will be useful whilst ensuring the validity and reliability of findings. The resulting research strategy was an exploratory process utilising qualitative research techniques and analysis which could show how change management affected the implementation of systems and influenced how an organisation functions. It was important to have a flexible research design and this chapter articulates how the programme plan was reviewed and developed as the project progressed. The thematic data analysis method is detailed here before moving on to outline the research phases and presents in detail how the data was collected and how the phases of research played out in practice. This chapter discusses the initial data collection and subsequent consultation by the presentation of the data to the environmental health professional community and examination of the data by leading practitioners. The data collection and consultation required a participative approach from the research subjects and the expert community and the process was iterative so each phase was adapted in the light of previous discussions including the barriers faced and how opportunities were developed. The eventual data collection and analysis was therefore robust and tailored to obtain meaningful and reliable data.

### **1.2.3 Chapter 4: The Findings**

Chapter 4 presents the first cycle of thematic analysis from the data collection phases described in Chapter 3. The development of each emerging central theme and its sub-themes are described in detail in this chapter and the findings of a cross theme analysis are articulated here.

### **1.2.4 Chapter 5: Discussion of Findings**

This chapter discusses the findings in light of the existing literature, the findings of other research and the consultation. Chapter 5 discusses the consultation phases which comprised testing of the thematic analysis and the refining of the emerging themes. A set of cohesive indicators is put forward which encompasses lessons learned by the participants when developing and delivering novel Environmental Health Service delivery models. Overarching themes are developed and their contribution to new knowledge identified.

### **1.2.5 Chapter 6: Conclusions and Recommendations**

Chapter 6 draws together the research findings and sets out the application to future practice. At the time of writing, this project is unique and the practice setting is a fast-moving political and financial environment, therefore this chapter considers effective and timely dissemination of new knowledge and proposes a product for the dissemination of the findings thought to be the most effective and accessible to practitioners.

## **1.3 Academic Significance**

At the time of writing this project report, there are no similar research studies that have been carried out in the UK with specific reference to Environmental Health or Regulatory Services. I believe that it is important to develop an evidence base which examines effective Environmental Health Services and this study can form part of such a repository which can be referred to by both practitioners and researchers. The findings of this research will contribute new knowledge to the environmental health subject area which has plenty of anecdotal evidence associated with practice but limited evidence-based research findings. The project findings will now have a potential national impact for Environmental Health Service providers who are considering new models of service delivery in a climate of reducing resource and political change. The initial findings and emerging themes have been presented at the following national and international conferences:

CIEH 115th National Conference, Nottingham October 2015 (Appendix A).

- CIEH: Research Practice Conference: Bridging Policy and Practice with Research, London November 2015 (Appendix B);
- International Conference on Urban Risks, Lisbon, Portugal June 2016 (Plume *et al.*, 2016) (Appendix C);
- ComplianceNet First Annual Conference “Measuring Compliance in the 21st Century” Irvine, California at UC Irvine, June 2018 (Appendix D).

A paper based on the presentation at the International Conference on Urban Risks, was selected by the organisers for submission to the International Journal of Disaster Risk Reduction special edition and was published in April 2018 (Plume *et al.*, 2018) (Appendix E).

Internally, at Middlesex University, a presentation was given at the Research Students’ Summer Conference 2017 -The Power of Research (Appendix F). A revised learning agreement to reflect the evolution of the project design was submitted in March 2017 and was approved (Appendix G).

#### **1.4 Contribution to Practice**

Like other public services, Environmental Health Regulatory Services are being delivered in an environment of reducing resource and a consequential rapidly changing local setting. There is little time for EHPs and their managers to evaluate the impact of ongoing changes or to consider the lessons learned thereof. This study can provide a resource which brings together experiences and identifies lessons learned which can contribute to future service improvement. The project findings will have a potential national impact for Environmental Health Service providers who are considering new models of service delivery in a climate of reducing resource and political change.

#### **1.5 Personal and Professional Significance**

From a personal and professional perspective, I am interested in this topic as I was a practitioner in a discipline which remains very similar in subject matter but is now operating in changed and changing environment. This was demonstrated to me in real terms when planning for the project as I was having to make constant changes to my research design. I presented ‘Running to keep up: A research journey’ to the CIEH: Research Practice Conference: Bridging Policy and Practice with Research in November 2015 (Appendix B). Carrying out this research has informed my teaching of public health leadership on both the B.Sc. Environmental Health and the M.Sc. Environmental Health and has provided me with invaluable networking opportunities.

## 2 LITERATURE REVIEW

This chapter provides a review of the relevant literature which covers the topics of neoliberalism, delivering Regulatory Services, austerity and reducing resource transformation of public services, change management in public services, traditional and emerging models of Environmental Health Service delivery. The literature review aimed to inform research objective a) (see Section 1.2) which was: To carry out a review of existing literature to explore the known drivers for change and to identify emerging and novel methods of Environmental Health and Regulatory Service delivery.

The literature review set out to be a constructively critical analysis relating to the research question to establish what is known according to the published literature and what is not known (research gaps). The literature review process was informed by Saunders *et al.* (2016) who suggest the literature review should begin by using the research objective to generate keywords as search terms. Evaluating the findings of the search to decide on which literature to review was an important stage and the literature review was an iterative process which involved refinement of the search terms and updating searches until the final critical review of the literature was completed. Multiple databases were used which were accessed via the university 'Summons' search facilities and accessed via 'Athens'. Google Scholar was used in conjunction with the University Library Search tool, in order to refine the searches and to find relevant articles and texts literature related to the research objective a) (see Section 1.2). Internet search engines such as 'Open grey' were used to access grey literature such as government reports and information relating to specific local authorities. The grey literature is a useful component of the literature review especially in an area where there is a limited evidence base such as the delivery of Environmental Health Services. Including grey literature can provide a more complete view of available evidence. However, searching for grey literature can be challenging despite greater access through the Internet (Börjesson *et al.*, 2015).

The searches were focussed on texts produced since 2010 as the climate of austerity is most relevant in the timeframe after this year but, where necessary, the date range of the literature was extended. Search terms included, but were not restricted to: austerity, delivery of public services, environmental health, outsourcing, shared services, Localism, neoliberalism, managing change, Regulatory Services, privatisation, public-private partnerships, better regulation and public health. The literature review is presented as

critical analysis based around the following topics: Austerity and reducing resource, new public management and neoliberalism, delivering Regulatory Services, the transformation of public services, change management in public services, traditional and emerging models of Environmental Health Service delivery.

## **2.1 Austerity and Reducing Resources**

The financial crisis of 2008 resulted in austerity measures in the UK being put into place from 2010 which have continued until the time of writing i.e. 2018. Local authorities deliver a range of services with many being subject to the government setting statutory duties with regard to their provision. Examples are social care, education, waste collection and Environmental Health Services such as food safety inspections, health and safety inspections and investigation of nuisance. According to the National Audit Office (2018b), since the financial crisis in 2008 and the subsequent austerity measures, there has been a 49.1% real-term reduction in government funding for local authorities from 2010-11 to 2017-18. Local authorities in England lost 28.6% of their spending power between 2010/11 and 2017/18 in real terms, taking into account government funding plus the raising of council tax. This reduction in fiscal resource has impacted on how local authorities deliver their services and this is examined in more detail later in this chapter.

Compounding the impact of the loss of resource, local authorities have a rising obligation with regard to social care. This has resulted in a redirection of resources and, in consequence, there has only been a 3% real-term reduction in local authority spending on social care services from 2010-11 to 2016-17. However, non-social-care services have suffered a 32.6% real term reduction in local authority spending in the same time period (National Audit Office 2018b). Initial rounds of cuts have been directed away from statutory services where possible but discretionary services have been subject to a sharp fall on spending. Local authority housing services had the biggest cuts from 2010-11 to 2014-15 and cultural, environment and planning services had the second biggest cuts, whereas social care had the least cuts (Hastings *et al.*, 2013). This unequal distribution of cuts has changed the way that local authority services look in an austere fiscal climate. Service provision in some non-social-care services has certainly changed in recent years. For example, from 2010-11 to 2016-17 there has been a 33.7% reduction in the number of households receiving weekly domestic refuse collection and a 10.3% reduction in library service points (National Audit Office, 2018a). Fitzgerald and Lupton (2015) agree that councils claimed to have been able to protect their frontline services, particularly in

the areas of Adult Social Care and Children's and Families Services. Most of the savings have been achieved through efficiencies in that were not adversely impacting the service as experienced by the users. However, front line discretionary services have been reduced. Bailey *et al.* (2015) also found that front-line services will face more significant cuts in the coming years.

Most of Environmental Health Services are statutory which can offer some protection from cuts but are front-line and are likely to be subject to further reduction. For services like Environmental Health where there is little data on outputs and outcomes, it is more difficult to assess the impact of spending reduction. However, the CIEH Workforce Survey 2014/15 confirms the average budget for Environmental Health Services has fallen in real terms by 6.8% between 2013-14 and 2014-15, with the Local Government Association (LGA) pointing to a significant loss of skills and experience through early retirement and voluntary redundancy). There may be an additional challenge for public protection services, as they are small sized services with high reliance on government funding. This challenge is exacerbated by the broad range of functions within public protection services, which mean it is often more difficult to explain the range of services and thus to protect them from budgetary reduction (LGA, 2015a). Resource reduction and refocusing of remaining funding has become very difficult for local authorities to manage and tackling austerity primarily through efficiency savings became increasingly difficult from 2015-16 onwards. This meant that retrenchment of council services became the primary method for meeting budget deficits (Kennet *et al.*, 2015). Bailey *et al.* (2015) agree:

*“Some of the responses adopted in the early period of dealing with the cuts – notably the focus on back-office or efficiency savings – are proving unsustainable or at least insufficient as time goes on.” (Bailey et al. (2015, p.579)*

The inevitable consequence of the loss of resource and increased service demand is that local authorities are drawing down on their financial reserves and 10.6% of local authorities with social care responsibilities are estimated to have less than three years left of their reserves if they continue to use them at the same rate as they did in 2016-17 (National Audit Office 2018a). Hastings *et al.* (2015b) found clear evidence that the capacity for efficiency savings within English local government was rapidly being exhausted and demonstrated retrenchment of local government services for a range of client groups. This situation may lead to local government no longer being central to individual and community level well-being. It will be interesting to see how this fits in with the government's vision that in the future the public sector will focus more on the needs

of places and take a more collaborative approach (Cabinet Office, 2018). The funding issue continues without relief as the provisional Local Government Finance Settlement, published in December 2016, failed to provide any additional new government funding for councils in 2017/18. Lord Porter, Chairman of the LGA responded to this announcement by stating that in 2017/18 more than two-thirds of councils will actually be worse off than they were expecting (LGA, 2017). In February 2018, Northamptonshire County Council issued a Section 114 notice to the government indicating that it was at risk of spending more in the financial year than it has in resources. It is predicted that more councils will follow in declaring a financial crisis (CIPFA, 2018).

Councils who are most risk are those with a high service demand for social care and low financial reserves. A compounding factor is that local authority services are most likely to be used by vulnerable communities in deprived areas. The issue of the unequal impact of cuts is raised by Fitzgerald and Lupton (2015) as being potentially unfair.

*“In general, more deprived boroughs, which had more income from central government, and spent more to start with, have faced the biggest cuts.”  
(Fitzgerald and Lupton (2015, p.597))*

Kennett *et al.* (2015) agree that the more disadvantaged households, particularly those with dependent children, are feeling the greatest effects of austerity and retrenchment in public services.

*“It is precisely the more disadvantaged local authorities with greater concentrations of households in need and levels of deprivation that are being disproportionately affected by reductions in government expenditure” (Kennett *et al.* (2015, p.640))*

Bailey *et al.* (2015) agree that the cuts resulting from austerity are becoming more visible to the public and impact adversely on those on lower incomes as they rely most heavily on local authority services. So, what will local authority services look like in the future?

The government’s Civil Society Strategy was published in August 2018 and the government’s vision for public services is one of collaborative commissioning where local players will be involved in how services are created and delivered, including decisions about the deployment of public funding. With the gathering momentum for the greater devolution of powers to the local government and the evolving risk to the community, there needs to be genuine local empowerment and radical rethinking of the role of the local government in modern society (Kennett *et al.*, 2015). Community-led service delivery may result in the transfer of assets such as sports centres and community halls



to community organisations and citizen action will become more central to maintaining environmental cleanliness and social care (Hastings *et al.*, 2015a). With the increased involvement of local players evolving as a result of the impact of the unfolding austerity programme on local government and households, there is a shift of risk to the community (Kennett *et al.*, 2015). Bailey *et al.* (2015) concur that local government is operating in an increasingly risky and uncertain environment and there is a growing risk for local authorities and the households they serve. There may become a greater variation between authorities and thus greater inequality of outcomes in future for communities and council services will become increasingly concentrated on low-income social groups which could mean the ‘social risk’ of austerity is passed to the disadvantaged groups most reliant on public services which will become targeted at these groups. Alongside the targeting of services is the danger that the better-off social groups will be less willing to support public services.

*“The retreat from universalism alongside the decline in the maintenance of the public realm may well fuel a loss of support for council services (and taxes) from better-off social groups – further driving and embedding the process of marginalisation.” (Hastings et al., 2015b, p.617)*

And yet, the most deprived populations live in the local authorities who are most hard hit by the cuts. Hastings *et al.* (2015a) found that there has been uneven treatment of authorities by central government, with authorities with more deprived populations suffering disproportionately higher levels of cuts. The pressures on local authorities are not restricted to the impact of austerity and successive governments have attempted to make public services more business-like and this political agenda is examined in chapter 2.2.

## **2.2 New Public Management and Neoliberalism**

The pressures on the delivery of Environmental Health Services are not restricted to resources and local government is finding its autonomy closely circumscribed by both stringent financial and legislative measures aimed to curb its powers and by incentivised funding mechanisms (Williams *et al.*, 2014). Neoliberalism purports that a free economy should be promoted in the public state and this has influenced major public state policy trends over the last 40 years. Thus, governments around the world have turned to the private sector to pursue their agendas, partly to access new sources of financing but also to encourage greater efficiencies and accountability as a result of this private sector involvement (Birch and Siemiatycki, 2016). However, neoliberalisation is not a singular process and it represents a range of market-based approaches. Coleman (2004) goes

on to suggest that neoliberalism is constructed through programmes that are contingent upon inherited institutional and social landscapes and a privately operated state function is thus likely to be reminiscent of its state counterpart.

The term New Public Management (NPM) is commonly used to describe attempts to make the public sector more business-like and to improve the efficiency of public services. New Public Management uses management models from the private sector and creates a public sector context where internal departments trade with each other in a 'quasi-market' system and this includes contracting out of non-strategic functions. Since 2010 successive Conservative governments have advanced privatisation and marketisation of public services under the auspices of austerity and the need to balance the budget deficit (Mustchin, 2017). Hughes (2003) argue that the traditional management of public administration in the UK is obsolete with a paradigm shift from administration to management and from bureaucracy to markets. Bach and Givan (2011) agree that NPM reforms have been endorsed and implemented in the UK and have resulted in a restructured market-style public sector. The NPM philosophy places an emphasis on transparency, performance management and accountability of public service employees and the rise of NPM reflects the pressures placed on public services. The appropriateness of NPM gives rise to rigorous debate and the adoption of private sector principles by the state is contested as the public sector structures and values are so different from the private sector (Den Heyer, 2010). Others argue that the introduction of NPM has enhanced public sector effectiveness, efficiency, and cost effectiveness of their public service sectors (Bale and Dale, 1998).

Governments of varying political positions have led local government reform through an NPM lens, with a more recent restricting local authority funding. This universally applied approach, however, is questioned in the literature for example Pollitt and Dan (2011), highlight that the use of market-type mechanisms may work better in standardised services rather than unstandardized and complex professional services and there is evidence (ibid) to suggest problems in implementation in such services. Despite this evidence, NPM type reforms continue to be undertaken in complex services. Even if public services may appear to be improving some groups and localities are not well served and where this is happening public managers should consider turnaround strategies (Boyne, 2006). It is interesting to note that, Beerli (2012), found that English local authorities act as if there are in crisis even when they are performing well. This indicates that local government leaders perceive that they are underperforming and take corrective action such as reorganisation even if this is not founded. Continuing

reorganisation may lead to a loss of expertise and experience which in turn can cause difficulties when dealing with complex issues. Branine (2004) argues that NPM reforms have led to increasingly volatile management of local government services and represent a serious challenge to local government managers operating in a quasi-commercial environment.

As well as creating a more business-like public sector, recent governments also look to involve local players more closely in the running of local government services. In the 2010 general election the Conservative Party promoted the flagship policy of 'Big Society' which was said not to be 'Big Government'. The idea behind the Big Society was to foster greater social responsibility in individuals, families, neighbourhoods and communities (Bulley and Sokhi-Bulley, 2014) and this would enable the conservative government to continue in 'rolling back the state'. This is contested by Byrne *et al.* (2014) who say government is needed to facilitate and adjudicate new structures that can enable society to move towards governing itself. The Conservative policy of Localism is closely linked to the ideal of 'Big Society' and decentralisation. Localism is the term used by central government to describe the shift of power away from the state to individuals, communities and local organisations. Neoliberalism is a political force that is recasting the politics of locality. Decision makers and definers of local problems can now exist outside elected power structures. Coleman (2004) suggests that these actors are funded by a mix of public-private funding and are relatively protected from public scrutiny, yet are deemed to be central to the development of local services and policies. Local business, police, local government and developers are the agents of a neoliberal state and must consent about how to manage local problems to develop a local growth strategy.

Localism enables the tailoring of services to communities but there is still a need for the state to make and oversee policy. MacLennan *et al.* (2013) suggest that there is a frequent source of tension between communities influencing the provision of services and the necessary greater municipalism required. There is a concern that the Localism agenda may result in local authorities being left with responsibility for issues that are not in their control and, in turn, this gives rise to the question of how best to ensure democratic and accountable outcomes. Morris *et al.* (2017) conducted a study of the role of local authorities operating under austerity and Localism and found that they lack autonomy and resources from central government. There are considerable difficulties for local authorities in meeting the needs of multiple stakeholders and this has resorted in short-term policies which do not adequately address the long term picture.

The entanglement of public services and the private sector leads to much debate and the ideology that contractual relationships are the most efficient ways to deliver public services is contested and apparent savings can be lost in the management of contracts and public-private partnerships (Birch and Siemiatycki, 2016). Vickers and Yarrow (1991) argue that a shift of public services to the private setting is based on the premise that the private sector is more efficient. Mustchin (2017) agree that advocacy of privatisation is typically premised on beliefs that private owners can provide a context where greater efficiency can be achieved. However, the collapse of Carillion in January 2018, which was a large facilities management and construction firm with at least 420 contracts with the public sector, has raised the question of whether public services should be outsourced on the assumption that the private sector is robust and efficient. The LGA calculated that 30 councils and 220 schools were directly affected by the collapse of Carillion (National Audit Office 2018b). The ramifications of this collapse are yet to be realised but there may be a more cautious approach by private companies seeking government contracts and, in turn, the letting of contracts will need to be more closely scrutinised.

It was thought that the financial and economic crisis would lead to the end of neoliberalism but Kennett (2018) argues that neoliberalism has ongoing resilience and is now repositioned. Financial markets influence state-market relations and have become intertwined with existing neoliberalising logics of competitiveness, marketisation and commodification. Aalbers (2013) agrees and goes on to suggest that neoliberalism is more than just an ideology of natural, effective markets and a neoliberal government may force the introduction of market models. The repositioned neoliberalism may influence policy in other ways than through the mantra of free markets. It presents existing socioeconomic conditions as failing and provides neoliberalism as the best solution. Neoliberal ideology should already be dead, but;

*“Like a creeping cancer neoliberal practice is able to resurface and show up in both new and unexpected, and old and predictable, ways.” (Aalbers 2013, p.1055)*

However, Newman *et al.* (2014) argue that local authorities are not just subject to the negative aspects of continuing neoliberal policies but are also incubators of new possibilities that may bend or adapt neoliberal logic to establish alternative pathways.

*“Yet local authorities may, through their own policy agendas, be crucial actors in producing, reproducing, reworking and reconstituting neoliberalism: for example, as they seek to promote economic regeneration ‘from below’” (Newman et al., 2014, p.3295)*

Oosterlynck and González (2013) agree that the financial and economic crisis has not resulted in the fading of neoliberalism, but instead has furthered the reach of neoliberalisation in many places. Humpage (2016) identifies recent attempts to reduce contemporary neoliberalism's negative impacts as being driven more by an interest in minimizing inefficiencies (including crises) in running a market economy than a genuine political concern with social inequalities. Speake and Pentaraki (2017) agree that within the context of contemporary neoliberal capitalism, financial and economic forces are the dominant drivers of city change and regeneration and that human relationships, community and voice are often side-lined. Consequently, the much-needed investment in cities and in their transformation focussed on business rather than social capital. Neoliberal regeneration focussing on profits rather than people may not be sustainable and citizens should be recognised as important actors of change in order to sustain improvement. O'Neill (2011) considered the impact of Neoliberalism and the governments Better Regulation agenda on Health and Safety regulation in the UK and noted the subsequent reduction in inspections carried out on businesses. He concluded that the efficiency savings and perceived reduction of costs to businesses were misconstrued as the costs are shifted to society and the state when accidents, diseases and fatalities occur because of reduced regulation.

*“When business and government frame health and safety protection as a job killer, rather than its absence as a killer full-stop, this keeps the real costs – people who get sick and die – safely out of the argument.” (O'Neill, 2011-online)*

Another aspect to consider is the nature of the population being served by the public sector. 'Individualism' is a growing characteristic of the British population as we move away from the 'nanny state' and into a climate of deregulation and community-based services. Whilst there can be advantages in this approach, the collective strength of a more centralised state is lessened. The UK has a growing issue with health inequality, currently, in England, people living in the least deprived areas of the country live around 20 years longer in good health than people in the most deprived areas. The least deprived areas with the best health outcomes also have the greatest ability to raise local taxes. (PHE, 2017). Conversely, the most deprived areas struggle to raise local taxes whilst having the worst health outcomes due to the impact of wider determinants of health such as poor housing, low employment rates and unhealthy behaviours. Hence, at a time where the state should be supporting areas of greatest need, Gorsky *et al.* (2014) suggest that the current approach creates spatial unevenness. This presents a continued threat of exacerbating the health gap in the UK population alongside an inadequate performance by public health authorities in poorly resourced areas.

The operation of Environmental Health Services are set within the context of this neoliberalism agenda which assumes a model of competition and competitive markets (Dean, 2014). This creates tension when introducing market-based restructuring to the delivery of public protection services such as Environmental Health. An added feature of neoliberalism and Environmental Health Services is the regulatory nature of the service and there are inevitably ethical, accountability and legal questions regarding such arrangements. These issues will be explored later in this project but the literature on the operation of Environmental Health Services in the UK in a neoliberal context is very limited.

### **2.3 Delivering Regulatory Services**

A modern local government was set up in the nineteenth century and local authorities were a natural choice for regulatory oversight. A study by Carr *et al.* (2017) looked at the role and limitations of local government and found that in times of austerity expensive deterrent enforcement activity is contested and more persuasive approach may be taken to achieve compliance. Regulatory reform has come about in the context of government policies of addressing debt reduction and stimulating economic growth amid a drive towards self-regulation for businesses. This is overlain by austerity measures and a resultant effect is that it may have in fact made the already vulnerable (whom environmental health regulation sets out to protect) even more vulnerable (Tombs, 2016). Deterrent enforcement activity is only likely to achieve compliance if the threat of detection of non-compliance is high and an enforcement presence is said to be an effective producer of a compliance effect. Lodge and Wegrich (2012) suggest that relying on persuasion and social conscience of the regulated is a risky approach to regulation and can lead to 'cosy' relationships between the regulated and the regulator. A mix of deterrence and persuasion informed by a risk-based approach to regulation is the usual policy for local authority regulators but this requires continuous interactions with key stakeholders and agencies.

Recent trends have illustrated the reduction in deterrent enforcement, partly due to a more risk focussed approach but also by a climate of reducing resource. Food hygiene inspections in the UK fell by 15% from 2003 to 2015 (Evans, 2015) and falling staff levels leave authorities struggling to undertake interventions of food businesses at the required frequencies. Health and safety legislation in Great Britain is enforced by HSE or one of the over 380 local authorities depending on the main activity carried out at any particular premises. There was a substantial drop in the number of health and safety inspections

carried out between 2010 and 2015. The HSE carried out 33,000 inspections in 2010-11 and this had dropped to 22,000 by 2015. Local authority proactive visits decreased by 95% from 2009-10 to 2013-14 (Department for Work and Pensions 2015). The lessening of deterrent regulation may risk regulatory failure and involve significant risk to the public.

There are some stark reminders of such regulatory failure and the outcomes can be catastrophic. Limited resources for regulators affect enforcement style and the example of the 2011 scandal regarding the quality of care home provision was partially linked to regulatory oversight. A sharp decline in inspection activity by the Care Quality Commission (CQC) and a change in rating regime to a basic confirmation of minimum standards had occurred. Additionally, the CQC was increasingly reliant on local authorities to raise concerns at a time when their budgets were being cut (Lodge and Wegrich, 2012). This set of circumstances compounded the lack of regulatory foresight by the CQC.

A further example of regulatory failure is the regulatory system responsible for fire safety in buildings which was declared as 'not fit for purpose' following the Grenfell disaster in which 72 people died when a fire destroyed a housing block in West London. The political rhetoric was understandably running high at the time with the Shadow Chancellor describing the disaster as 'social murder'

*"I think there's been a consequence of political decisions over years that have not addressed the housing crisis that we've had, that have cut back on local government so proper inspections have not been made, 11,000 firefighter jobs have been cut as well - even the investment in aerial ladders, and things like that in our country." (BBC, 2017-online)*

A key issue was identified as being inadequate regulatory oversight (Secretary of State for Housing, Communities and Local Government, 2018).

*"Inadequate regulatory oversight and enforcement tools – the size or complexity of a project does not seem to inform the way in which it is overseen by the regulator. Where enforcement is necessary, it is often not pursued. Where it is pursued, the penalties are so small as to be an ineffective deterrent." ((Secretary of State for Housing, Communities and Local Government 2018 -online).*

A new regulatory framework for fire safety in buildings was set out which aims to strengthen regulatory oversight and to provide a clearer regulatory route with a stronger focus on building safety and a new Joint Competency Agency (JCA) within which the three existing regulators would work on a full cost recovery base that will fund the set up

and operation of the JCA (Secretary of State for Housing, Communities and Local Government, 2018).

Environmental Health Services delivered by local authorities are often categorised as a Regulatory Service. However, Environmental Health Services are more holistic than some Regulatory Services such as fire safety and EHPs have a range of tools that can be used to protect the public from environmental stressors, only one of which is regulation. However, for local authorities operating in austerity, much of the work of EHPs now focusses on the discharge of statutory duties imposed on local government by Parliament. Consequently, the opportunity for proactive work to reduce risk is minimised in the face of statutory inspections which must be carried out. Indeed, it is said that local authority Environmental Health Services have been radically transformed to the extent that they are either unable to perform their statutory duties, or now perform protection for rather than from business, or both (Tombs, 2016). The decentralisation of government over the past 40 years has led to a broad change of Regulatory Services, such as Environmental Health, in UK local authorities with a greater emphasis on risk regulation by business rather than by regulator. Businesses have always been responsible for managing their own risks but the shift is that they may now manage their own compliance. The delegation of regulation tasks such as enforcement to third parties or by businesses being mandated to employ third parties to enforce is a feature of new regulatory governance which promotes risk management as an integral function of a business, thus becoming a function of everyday activity (Hutter, 2011). This delegation process is overseen by regulatory bodies which may intervene through external regulation and sanctions.

The Hampton Review (2005) looked at regulation and enforcement and urged regulators to be more risk-based in their activities and to encourage economic progress and only intervening when there is a clear case for protection. This resulted in a regulatory agenda where there is an emphasis on the responsibility of the business organisation and light touch regulation (Hutter, 2011). The government has agreed to adopt a more proportionate and efficient better regulation system and where regulation and 'red tape' is seen as a burden on businesses there is a view that regulation needs to be better employed. This view is reflected in the creation of the Better Regulation Executive (BRE) which leads the regulatory reform agenda across government. In terms of Environmental Health Services, the Better Regulation Agenda in which regulations are curtailed brings about restrictions on the type of premises that can be inspected and there is pressure for increasing self-regulation and earned autonomy. However, Black and Baldwin (2010)



put forward the view that regulation risk frameworks tend to lock regulators into a position where they are slow to respond to changes and are insulated from public pressures which might otherwise galvanise change. And yet, the regulatory approach of local authorities and agencies such as the Health and Safety Executive (HSE) do already place the emphasis on the regulated to take responsibility of their compliance with the law with enforcement being employed sparingly and prosecution as a last resort (Almond, 2009).

All local authority regulation and enforcement activities follow the risk-based approach advocated by Regulators Code which also says that regulators should carry out their activities in a way that supports those they regulate to comply and grow (BRDO, 2014b). In the case of Health and Safety, the responsibility for regulation is shared by local authorities and the HSE, with the HSE regulating the higher risk activities. As a result of recent HSE guidance and reducing resources local authority proactive health and safety inspections have fallen by 77% (O'Neill, 2013). Small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs) represent 99% of all businesses in the European Union (EU) (European Commission 2018). Research into the experience of SMEs found that Health and Safety regulation is not generally seen as a burden on businesses and they welcome the guidance and support of the regulator (Borley and Page, 2016). It is envisaged that SME food business operators will have a similar view and Fairman and Yapp (2005) support this, concurring that food safety enforcement on the ground is carried out with discretion and flexibility with the enforcement encounter being viewed as a process of negotiation (notwithstanding the risk presented).

There is limited evidence of empirical studies that look at regulation beyond the state in the UK but Hutter (2011) reviewed two exceptions and found that there are large variations in the ability of businesses to self-regulate and that the regulatory capacity of businesses relies on having sufficient economic capacity and regulatory knowledge. Larger businesses are likely to have more resources than SMEs and better regulatory knowledge and are therefore more likely to have the capacity to self-regulate. However, state overview is important in creating a climate of the necessity to comply as is the willingness of the community to tolerate non-compliance.

A public agency can be seen to be less partial to the interests of industry than a self-regulatory system (Lodge and Wegrich, 2012). Conversely, history has shown that large companies with resources and regulatory knowledge may neglect regulatory compliance in a competitive market. This was demonstrated by the so-called 'Horsegate' crisis in

2013, where beef meat was fraudulently adulterated with horse meat causing widespread recalls and subsequent investigations across both retail and food service markets in the European Union. Horse deoxyribonucleic acid (DNA) was identified in 37% of beef burgers purchased from food retail stores including Tesco, Dunnes, Lidl and Aldi, all originating from three meat plants in the UK and Ireland (FSA, 2015). The Elliot Review recommended measures to help improve the integrity of food supply systems and significant steps have been made by both industry and government to implement some of the recommendations in the UK.

Despite the call for tighter scrutiny the food supply system in the UK to protect public health, the Food Standards Agency (FSA) announced plans in 2016 to run a pilot scheme with Tesco for self-regulation. This announcement was met by deep concern from Tim Lang, Professor of Food Policy at the Centre for Food Policy, at City University, who stated:

*"This is scandalous. It's a sign of a weak FSA. The fact it happens to be turning to Tesco, of all companies, in time of trouble, is a sign of the resurgence of Tesco just four years after Horsegate, but also very bad news for public health." (Morely, 2016-online)*

Hutter (2011) considered the ability of businesses to self-regulate and found that they may struggle to cope with the relative freedom that new regulatory governance may offer. Larger successful businesses have the resources to buy in-house risk regulation expertise or appoint consultants but small businesses may encounter serious difficulties with self-regulation. It may be appropriate to consider an opt-in to self-regulation which is controlled by the oversight of the state regulator. Grabosky (2013) suggest that there is a regulatory vacuum arising from state inactivity and questions the ability of independent private institutions to fill the gap and asserts that civil regulation must be reinforced and integrated with state regulation. Hutter (2006) argue that most regulatory commentators call for a regulatory mix including both non-state and state regulators to maximise the potential of each sector.

The Better Regulation Agenda does not appear to acknowledge the potential for the regulation process to, not only protect public health but to also be a vehicle of encouraging businesses to promote healthier behaviours. For example, Mitchell *et al.* (2011) advised that the National Heart Forum should advocate to all services within local authorities that they have a critical role to play in the reduction of obesity using existing national policies, legal powers and examples of good practice. This would certainly

involve Environmental Health Services as they regulate all food premises with respect to food hygiene and safety and this provides an ideal opportunity to instigate a health promotion campaign. There is currently a limited recognition of this role and type of activity at local authority level but there are examples of localised good practice in this area (CIEH, 2012) and this is supported by Buck and Dunn (2015).

*“District councils face key challenges, the biggest of which is a fall in central government income. But public health reform and Localism also create opportunities for them to increase their contribution to the health of their citizens. Moreover, many of their actions are likely to release savings to the public purse – primarily (but not solely) in the NHS. District councils, therefore, need to be more integrated into local health and social care policy than many currently are.” (Buck and Dunn, 2015 p.5)*

Veale (2011) suggest that successive governments have not been good at assessing public risk or balancing public health and environmental health with innovation and growth. The regulatory agenda should provide an appropriate level of regulation which is proportionate and effective rather than a view of decreasing the number of regulations. As better regulation seeks to build on trusting relationships it may have the potential to persuade businesses to be more socially responsible as well as achieving compliance with the law. It is assumed that business behaviour is primarily associated with profit making but corporate social responsibility may also be a driving factor (Taylor *et al.*, 2012). Good policy and regulation should be ‘evidence-based’ and ‘risk-informed’ and the task of regulation is made even more complex by the range of business motivations and capabilities of different sectors and of individual businesses within sectors. The Better Regulation Agenda advocates bargaining, negotiation and discussions as a regulatory approach above inspection and enforcement. This may counter values such as transparency, accountability, due process and the legal concept of the rule of law. However, this approach can avoid more costly formal enforcement procedures (Yeung, 2013). New approaches are required to support this complex task of environmental health regulation in the current climate of reducing resource and the Better Regulation Agenda.

It is worth considering the view that well-conducted regulatory enforcement activities provide an opportunity to communicate messages about social risk, culpability and the status of the law (Almond, 2009). Whereas, poorly judged enforcement and a ‘jobsworth attitude’ can fuel the case for criticism and scepticism that regulation is fair and reasonable. Media sources frequently report regulation in a negative light whilst there is more limited reporting of successful regulatory activity except where there is a major

incident. The irony is that good regulation will result in compliance before any enforcement activity is required and standards are therefore maintained, i.e. the law is upheld, and this does not attract publicity. Regulatory myths are characterised as those stories whose popularity outweighs the facts and are of interest to those who seek to delegitimise regulation. (Almond, 2009). The HSE has set out to debunk these myths as they appear in the media (HSE 2018) but these efforts may extend the dialogue and an approach to reinforce the trust in regulation can be more effective in gaining community respect.

Traditional command-and-control regulation by the state is increasingly implemented by less state-centred forms of regulation, such as self-regulation and private systems of governance. Havinga (2006) found that in the case of supermarkets food safety should not be left to private firms and that some doubts were heard as to the thoroughness of controls by private certification bodies. Although enforcement is important it is also pertinent for regulators to listen to businesses who are well versed in managing risk and reviewing situations where things have gone wrong despite regulation. Hutter (2014) supports the view that resources should be focussed where there is high certainty of risks but we should not be too confident in the regulator's ability to control the future. Empowerment of a range of participants in the regulation of risk is considered good practice. Davey and Richards (2013) found that, in a climate of reduced regulation by the state, food business turned to 'independent' third-party certification i.e. auditors. When there is pressure to ensure conformity to the rules the auditors are relying on documentary evidence rather than a more nuanced and subjective approach of a public service food inspector to ensure compliance. Might something be lost here?

Cepiku *et al.* (2016) cautioned that the financial and economic crisis has not, in fact, generally resulted in private sector empowerment. Instead, local authorities strengthened and improved their commissioner role in relation to procured services. Although national austerity measures have incentivised less efficient municipalities to make improvements they have undermined investment in services for local authorities and inhibited their future competencies. So, what does this mean for the future shape of local government services? Fitzgerald and Lupton (2015) found that the squeeze on councils' budgets had required them to be innovative and to think of changing parts of their operations that they would not otherwise have looked at. The continued drive towards privatising public services provides a climate where the potential for developing new models of service delivery might be realised and public services can be transformed.

## 2.4 Transformation of Public Services

Neoliberalism and NPM have sought to redefine the public sector as a service sector so that public sector services must adhere to free-market principles. Lorenz (2012) argues that the essence of NPM turns out to be closely related to cost-efficiency and that less attention is paid to effectiveness. In the public sector, NPM has resulted in permanent spending cuts which, in turn, has resulted in a constant decrease in the level of service, a decrease in the level and quality of employment and de-professionalisation. In addition, the cost of public services service is increasingly passed to the service user who is being recreated as a customer. Seeing service users as customers and consumers has become commonplace in local authority policies. Walker *et al.* (2011) broaden the customer/consumer concept to account for the more complex, ongoing, and dynamic relationship between the state and its citizen-owners.

*“It encompasses far more—public agencies sometimes have to impose obligation on users who can rightly be referred to as clients, and sometimes users are consumers of public services (charged fees) and, on other occasions, customers (receiving a service free at the point of delivery).” (Walker et al., 2011, p.709)*

The future role of local government is likely to be one in which there will be a considerable reduction in public services, with a dominant role of providing statutory children and adult services (Fuller, 2007). According to the Better Regulation Agenda, the role of regulation will be also be reduced but the responsibility of regulatory oversight will be enhanced. Whilst local authority staff recognise the need for greater focus on prevention rather than regulation and enforcement, the pace of cuts, as well as the loss of organisational capacity hinder preventive activities. A further problem identified with preventive activities is that the fiscal benefits may flow to other organisations. In a local authority acting in a quasi-market, this sharing of the benefit is difficult to justify. Hence, there has been a retrenchment in prevention activities as local authorities pare down their services and investment in preventative approaches that may take some time to provide a payback (Hastings, 2015a).

The ‘Big Society’ and localisation agendas aim to see more public service delivery undertaken at sub-state level by the third sector and local communities, usually in partnership with state bodies. Fenwick *et al.* (2012) question whether the state and non-state bodies have the organisational capacity and capability to deliver this vision. Hastings (2015a) found that, indeed, the voluntary and community sectors do not have the capacity to step up and fill the gap left by the withdrawal of local authority services. However, Davies (2011) asserts that the voluntary sector has changed fundamentally in

recent years and is well used to a major increase in involvement with public service provision, Despite this changing environment, the government continue to pursue this agenda with their Civil Society Strategy (Cabinet Office, 2018). In such partnerships, there is a downplaying of the traditional governing role of government and a playing up of the role of self-regulating networks. For food safety, this already occurs to some extent with websites such as 'TripAdvisor' which relies on customer reviews and 'Scores on the doors' which publicises Food Hygiene scores awarded by local authority EHPs. However, Fenwick *et al.* (2012) argue that governments' roles in public policy and service delivery have not declined in this environment, but have extended through networks, partnerships, co-governance and co-production.

Future local government will be required to have an ethos of pursuing entrepreneurial activities in economic development and other policy areas (Fuller, 2007). If local authorities are to become more entrepreneurial they will need to be enablers of service provision which will require a highly skilled management and workforce. Public services need to consider what kind of employee is required to meet the challenges facing public administrations today and into the future. Modern civil services are identifying management strengths and weaknesses, improving leadership and making concerted efforts to take employee's viewpoints into consideration. OECD (2016) argue that this performance management approach is an essential counterbalance to austerity-oriented measures. However, in local authorities, there is a lack of integrated and consistently applied performance management processes designed to improve organisational effectiveness. Departmental service ethics, common in local authorities, do not encourage the personal identification of individual employees with broader organisational objectives and this is typical of the public sector (Harris, 2005).

Charging fees for local authority regulatory intervention is mooted as a way of achieving savings. In 2018 the All-Party Parliamentary Group on Occupational Safety and Health suggested that fees for intervention should be charged by local authorities (All-Party Parliamentary Group, 2018). The Fee For Intervention (FFI) scheme has been operated by the HSE since 2012 as a response to the reductions in government funding. If any material breach of the law is found during an inspection, the cost of the original visit as well as the cost of ensuring that the breach is rectified through return visits, reports, getting specialist advice etc., is paid by the employer at a rate of £129 an hour. A review of the FFI found that it had successfully shifted the cost of health and safety regulation from the public purse to non-compliant businesses (All-Party Parliamentary Group, 2018). However local councils cannot make any charges for their interventions carried out as

part of their statutory duties unless it is specifically provided for in Parliamentary legislation so this avenue is closed for now.

The broader approach of regional working in key areas is seen as being crucial to achieving the desired efficiencies and the Welsh Government argue that a smaller number of local authorities would overcome the challenges of a number of local authorities working together (Welsh Government, 2018). There is a longstanding aim of transforming public services to achieve greater efficiency and effectiveness through activities such as better partnership working such as shared services (Hastings, 2015a). However, the pace of cuts challenges the development of new approaches with councils needing to find shorter-term solutions to deliver balanced budgets. Ulbrich (2010) looked at shared services and found further challenges in that management supported the ideology of changing to shared services but employees directly affected by the change did not and in some cases obstructed the adoption of shared services. However, LACORS (2008) found that the main drivers for the improvement of Regulatory Services are partnership (with internal and external stakeholders) and Regulatory Services being viewed as a priority.

Mclvor *et al.* (2011) looked at outsourced shared services and found that the efficiency benefits of accessing superior vendor capabilities are unlikely to be realised where the function affected has a high level of autonomy as it will be more difficult to standardise processes. This can dilute the benefits of shared services for Environmental Health Services where autonomy to make a professional judgement is a key part of the enforcement process. Andrews and Boyne (2009) agree that administrative efficiency is better in larger councils and so a change in population size served can make a significant difference to the central overheads. However, the population size is only one factor and the differing population needs will present a differential demand on services which may be a factor in determining efficiency and effectiveness. Conversely, Boyne and Meier (2009) looked at the turbulent environment of public organisations. Public services have no choice of the environment with which they operate and there is evidence that maintaining structural stability can mitigate the negative effects of turbulence on the performance of public services. Networking with other invested organisations can dampen the effect of environmental volatility and improve performance. Reform of public services needs to take into account the organisational environment which varies across local authorities. Poorly performing public services classified as failing may be responding as effectively as possible to their particular environment (Andrews and Boyne, 2006).

There are variations in the effectiveness of reforms in differing professional areas of public services. Although NPM drives public organisations to be more financially driven, accountable and transparent these changes have been far less radical than many assume.

*“Even after 20 years of almost uninterrupted policy change, the gap between the rhetoric and reality of the new public management remains so significant”.*(Ackroyd et al., 2007, p.23)

Established professional modes of working remain entrenched despite years of reform. This may be due to limited consultation with key professional groups and the constant bombardment of policy initiatives. Additionally, professions with a strong ethos of public service may be more resistant to management reforms (Ackroyd et al., 2007). Hartley and Rashman (2018) counter the claim that innovation is integral to the transformation of public services and that local government can build their innovative capacity learning from their own experience and by using learning from other organisations. Stewart-Weeks and Kastle (2015) agree that innovation is desirable for the public sector and that innovative experiments drive learning and ensure that opportunities are not missed. In fact, not taking the risk of trying out new ideas in the public sector can be risky in its own right but change should start off on a small scale to minimise the risk of failure.

Tangen and Briah (2018) talk about the ‘Revolving door of reform’ and how the pace of reform has increased exponentially since the 1990s. LGA (2015c) consider that a sustainable future for local services in the face of funding cuts and spending pressures is dependent upon changes in the way we think about funding local services, and how we manage the system. Reiter and Klenk (2018) considered literature regarding ‘post-NPM’, a term used to describe emerging reform trends. They found that, in post-NPM, ideas of administrative re-centralisation and reintegration are preferred and that many authors reject the NPM concept of citizens as customers. Efficiency is still an important aspect in post-NPM and the creation of semi-public agencies with better coordination is supported. We are in a post-NPM period and it is hoped that lessons will be learned from NPM and future reforms will be shaped by the experience. Kinder (2012) agrees that post-NPM is building on previous experience of reform but that given a background of demographic change and public spending reductions, rising quality of public services is only possible with performance improvement. This may be possible with continuous innovation which involves service users and stakeholders to shape public services. Innovation is one thing but making it last is more difficult. How many times do we hear of an exciting idea that fades away if the instigator is no longer involved? Van Acker and



Bouckaert (2018) considered the survival of public sector innovations and found that a framework of Feedback, Accountability and Learning is important to support innovation into mainstream practice and it is good practice to allow time and space for this process. This is supported by Pollitt (2013) who highlights the common failure of reform programme designers was not to integrate a process of meaningful evaluation that could highlight individual successes or the impact of the overall programme.

Where does the future of local government lie as each new government launches programmes of public service reform with claims of making the public sector more efficient, effective, responsive and participatory? The cost of the implementation of continual reform are considerable but the process of reform is poorly evaluated and the lessons are not learned (Pollitt, 2013). As Britain leaves the EU, it is likely that additional functions will need to be performed by public bodies in the UK. The extent to which this happens will depend on the nature of any eventual deal agreed with the EU. If the UK leaves any EU regulatory frameworks, then the functions performed by relevant EU regulators will need to be established by the government (Institute for Government, 2008).

## **2.5 Change Management in Public Services**

Organisational change in public services has become a permanent feature usually focussing on efficiency as a result of NPM but with an accompanying drive to improve services. This concept of continuous change is relatively new to public service organisations where, traditionally, change has been episodic (Osborne and Brown, 2005). Managerial behaviour plays a central role in implementing change in a climate of reducing resource in the public sector and their leadership can smooth the process of change. Whilst 'salami slicing' has most often been the first step in introducing organisational changes to accommodate reducing resource, Schmidt *et al.* (2017) argue that measures which aim to increase efficiency are the most desirable way to make savings but this may involve more risk than 'salami slice style' cutbacks.

Austerity and a challenging landscape for local authorities have forced public sector managers to adopt a top-down approach to change which sets out clear goals. This is termed as planned change and is more likely to trigger resistance than a voluntary emergent change (Schmidt *et al.*, 2017). Top-down approaches to change risk being unsuccessful and organisational culture is a crucial element of change management and understanding of this allows insight into the likely response and reception to change (Osborne and Brown, 2005). Public services have a different culture to the business

sector and its culture is multifaceted due to the range of stakeholders, the socio-political culture, bureaucracy and local accountability. Doherty and Horne (2014) concur that public service organisations have a relationship with their service users that is quite different from the relationship between a business and its customers.

The culture of public service organisations can present difficulty in implementing change. Implementation of change is a crucial stage and may be affected by problems of external constraints, insufficient time and resources, multiple implementing agencies, an absence of consensus regarding objectives and a lack of communication, coordination and commitment. A critical component of the successful implementation of change is the articulation of the vision for the organisation (Osborne and Brown, 2005). Schmidt *et al.* (2017) agree that a core element of planned change is the definition of the final goals of the planned change. Implementing change is easier when people are adaptable and the external volatility of public services may make public service employees more receptive to change but even those who are favourably disposed to change are likely to have an adverse reaction at some stage. Doherty and Horne, (2014) find that all recipients of change are likely to need support and information to help them manage their response.

Change is a complex process but managers have tended to view change as a linear process as put forward by Lewin (1951) who set out a three-stage model of change:

- Unfreeze: Creating the case for change
- Mobilize: Identify and mobilise resources to effect the change
- Refreeze: Embed new ways of working

Higgs and Rowland (2005) found that approaches to change which do not take into account its complexity are likely to fail. Approaches to change which recognise that change is emergent appear to be more effective. Eaton (2014) describes three main phases in any change programme: Preparation, Implementation and Embedding the change and this aligns to Lewin's model. However, they recognise that along the change journey there are a number of critical stages where a crisis may arise that affects the planned change process.

These are:

*“Decision to change: if those planning the change are split over the need for change; Planning to change: if there is limited time and resources or the scope and duration of the planned change is unclear; Preparing to implement: if resistance is encountered and leaders backtrack; The noise of change: if individuals use setbacks or issues to undermine the proposed changes; Adoption of the changes: if people have the opportunity to revert to the old way of doing things; The embedding of the changes: if things go wrong and people revert to the old ways.” (Eaton, 2014, p.12)*

Taking account of these critical stages and measures to deal with crisis along the way will ease the change process and make success more likely. Eaton (2014) goes on to say that nine elements need to be in place to ensure successful change: Sponsorship of leaders; Engagement of stakeholders; Honest and timely communications; Cultural change; Change agents; Capability building; Performance measures; Effective structure; Incentives. With these nine elements in place, the potential for a crisis at the critical stages can be mitigated.

Public services are increasingly turning to innovation, but why innovate in the public sector at all? Until recently innovation in the public sector organisations has not been critical to their survival but the ‘one size fits all’ approach may no longer be valid. The key factors driving public service innovation are: To improve delivery and outcomes of public services; To respond more effectively to altered public needs and rising expectations; To contain costs and increase efficiency; To capitalise on the full potential of information communication technology (Doherty and Horne, 2014). It is interesting to note efficiency is only one of the drivers identified for public service innovation and this is a key difference between the need for change in the public sector as opposed to the private sector which is most concerned with the ‘bottom line’ of profit.

There are difficulties associated with implementing private sector managerial practices into the public sector and Brown *et al.* (2003) argue that attempts to implement NPM have often failed due to insufficient consideration of the contextual and cultural framework of the public sector. Schmidt *et al.* (2017) consider the differing priorities of administrative and political leaders and find that political leaders will be more inclined to cut back on operational expenditure rather than cut policy programmes, whereas administrative leaders will resist bureaucratic cuts. Jurisch *et al.* (2013) argue that public service change projects are more likely to be exposed to strategy or political/ regulatory volatilities due to a highly politicized environment. Consequently, cooperation between

political and administrative leaders is seen as vital in pursuing public service organisational change (Fernandez and Rainey, 2006). A hybrid model of NPM is purported to take into account the context of public management and does not eliminate the public sector ethic thus retaining certain qualities of bureaucratic governance. Change processes with a vision of a hybrid model of NPM focus on relationships within and external to the organisation and have been able to deliver superior outcomes for employees as well as political and public stakeholders (Brown *et al.*, 2003).

Jurisch *et al.* (2013) espouse that public organisations invest more than the private sector, in establishing a commitment to their change projects, which results in higher senior management and employee support. Fernandez and Rainey (2006) elaborate on the means that public sector managers have employed to ensure successful change and identify eight factors that can assist successful transformation:

*“Factor 1: Ensure the need*

*Factor 2: Provide a plan*

*Factor 3: Build internal support for change and overcome resistance*

*Factor 4: Ensure top-management support and commitment*

*Factor 5: Build external support*

*Factor 6: Provide resources*

*Factor 7: Institutionalise change*

*Factor 8: Pursue comprehensive change”*

*(Fernandez and Rainey (2006 p169-173)*

Change is stressful and a drawn-out process and poor management is a key source of stress. According to Smollan (2015), negative outcomes of change, in particular, heavier workloads, redundancies or unwelcome working conditions can cause stress. Taylor and Kelly (2006), found that new public service management models have resulted in high levels of accountability and scrutiny which have, in turn, added considerably to the workload of some professionals. Smollan (2015) find that the transition phase is most stressful but this abates as people become more accustomed to the new situation and the skills and relationships involved. Local government leaders need to be aware of how large-scale restructures undermine the well-being and performance of many employees. Lack of consultation, uncertainty and inadequate support cause stress in change. The (no longer) NPM continues to pressure leaders but they can exercise some discretion in planning and implementing change to attenuate some of the ill effects. Kellis and Ran (2013) argue that NPM-like reforms in public service have resulted in leadership

approaches that are a mismatch for local government organisational structure, the complexity of the environment and the access to power and authority that characterize the public service.

Creating capacity for the change to take place is considered influential by Schmidt *et al.* (2017). Higgs and Rowland (2005) espouse that leadership behaviour which builds capacity for change will lead to a more effective change but Pollitt (2013) says this can be difficult to achieve when resources are low, and the need for cutbacks is the main reason for change. A performance management process may enable more effective change management in the public sector and can encourage employees to buy-in to the change and to adopt new ideas or behaviours. Buick *et al.* (2015) suggest that good performance management can enable employees to cope better with change ensuring that their role is clear and that there are mechanisms to support required adjustment. Progress can be tracked through the stages of change. Performance management can be defined as:

*“An ongoing process of identifying, measuring, and developing individual and team performance that is aligned with an organization’s goals.” (Schmidt-Wilk, 2009, p.523).*

Implementing a performance management system necessitates identifying competencies that are essential to produce results in a job (Schmidt-Wilk, 2009) and can help to create the organisational capacity for change.

Kellis and Ran (2013) argue that a leadership style that empowers subordinates to make decisions and pursue objectives on their own, was found to facilitate employee performance and satisfaction and to suppress employee resistance to change. The importance of leadership and leadership behaviour within change management is discussed by Schmidt *et al.* (2017) who say that one role for leaders managing cutbacks is to provide a plan which offers direction on how to arrive at the preferred end state. This view is supported by Van der Voet *et al.* (2015) who suggest that a high degree of environmental complexity forces public organisations to adopt a planned, top-down approach to change. Higgs and Rowland (2005) agree that framing of change is an important tool for leaders persuading employees that the change is inevitable. Rosenbach and Taylor (2006) define two basic types of leadership as being transactional and transformational.

Transactional leadership focuses on the importance of the transactions between the leader and the subordinates and leaders clarify the role that followers must play to attain organisational goals. Transactional leadership is a reactive style in which leaders deal with issues as they arise, Alimo-Metcalfe and Alban-Metcalfe (2005) consider that transactional leaders manage by exception. This works in a stable environment but may not be appropriate in times of major change. (Doherty and Horne, 2014). Rosenbach and Taylor (2006) argue that transactional leadership is simply good management and could be termed as managerial leadership. Alamo-Metcalfe and Alban-Metcalfe (2005) add that old models of leadership such as transactional leadership focused on management and process whereas new approaches which have to deal with constant change relate to concepts such as charismatic, visionary and transformational leadership. Grout and Fisher (2007) define the distinction between management and leadership as a key issue in understanding what makes a good leader. Although they are distinct there are shared and complementary skills but leadership is visionary, proactive and anticipating change – or even responding positively to change.

Transformational leadership can be considered as a more active style of leadership than transactional leadership. Transformational leadership has been shown repeatedly to be a successful tool for change in the public service according to Kellis and Ran (2013). Transformational leaders are proactive rather than reactive and are open to new ideas. Their role as a motivator generating an energetic commitment to demanding goals can be successfully applied to the complex environment of public service change as transformational leaders have the capacity to create a shared vision (Doherty and Horne, 2014). Van der Voet *et al.* (2015) agree and propose that in an environment of increasing complexities that internally focussed transformational leadership is accompanied by a network approach of leadership. In a network style of leadership, managers became more focussed on aimed at collecting information, negotiating and compromising in order to keep the implementation of change going. Transformational leadership has been shown to include four interrelated components: charismatic, inspirational, intellectually stimulating, and individually considerate. Effort, performance, and satisfaction among followers are generally higher when leaders are rated as more transformational (Bass *et al.*, 1996). Kellis and Ran (2013) confirmed the need for close interpersonal relationships between leaders and those for whom they have accountability but caution that relationship-based approaches must be coupled with values-based leadership in order to avoid drifting toward a culture that allows wrongdoing to occur (Alimo-Metcalfe and Alban-Metcalfe, 2005).

Transformational leadership comprises attributed charisma, behavioural charisma, inspirational motivation, intellectual stimulation and consideration of an individual's leadership (Alimo-Metcalfe and Alban-Metcalfe, 2005). However, the attribute of charisma in leaders can be a cause for concern and the concept that charismatic leaders may have a dark side is raised by Mintzberg (1999). Ethical and values-based leadership are therefore important in the public sector where accountability to a range of stakeholders is vital. Kellis and Ran, (2013) discuss the importance of an ethical and values-based focus of leadership and raise the potential failure of rules, regulations, and codes of conduct promoted by NPM to provide adequate guardrails for leaders' behaviour. Divorce from ethical and values-based standards can devalue effective leadership and reduce the capacity for change in an organisation. Alimo--Metcalfe and Alban-Metcalfe (2006) embraced the transformational model of leadership for public services because it made a clear distinction between management and leadership and provides sound evidence for adopting a values-based approach to leadership. However, there is a concern with the relative simplicity of the model of transformational change for complex and highly politicised public sector organisations.

Besides focussing on the leadership style of public managers, it is also important to consider the interaction between different types of leaders (Schmidt *et al.*, 2017). Kellis and Ran (2013) espouse that shared or distributed leadership creates opportunities for enhanced agency morale, which in turn facilitates improved agency effectiveness and performance. Pollitt (2013) argues that NPM-based change in the public sector often undermines employee morale as a result of increased public scrutiny, increased workload and an increased administrative burden. Thus, there may be a decrease in performance with an NPM-based performance focus as compared to opportunities for improved organizational performance generated by a leadership based focus on employees, values, and networks (Kellis and Ran, 2013).

Do we need leaders or managers in public services? Why do we need transformational leaders when ordinary managers can implement change? Where managers are faced with a proven need to change a conversational approach is advocated for the management of change (O'Neill and Jabri, 2007). A more balanced approach is called for which balances the dynamics and energy of transformational leadership with recollection, reflection, ethics and critical thinking (Doherty and Horne, 2014). Manning (2012) considers that successful organisational change is related to five sets of issues which comprise:

*“Strategic thinking (e.g. environmental scanning, prior problem diagnosis and analysis, and having a good solution);*

*Leadership (e.g. developing and communicating a vision, building support for the vision and developing teams);*

*Task management (e.g. planning tasks, allocating roles, establishing monitoring procedures and coordinating activities);*

*Relationships (e.g. listening, consulting, involving, supporting, encouraging and developing staff);*

*And resources (i.e. having or acquiring necessary resources, including money, time, people and technical expertise).”* (Manning, 2012; p.263-4)

However, in NPM focussed change, which focuses on ‘the bottom line’ and sets out with an aim to reduce costs, there may not be a well-developed vision for leaders to communicate. When there is no clear vision leaders should take steps to develop a vision and keep people informed of the planned change and engage in two-way communication throughout the process. Loewenburger *et al.* (2014) suggest that leaders of typically hierarchical, command and control style organisations faced with increasingly complex challenges and resource constraints, should consider how top-down planned changes can combine effective leadership with creative idea generation at the level of the individual and the group. The findings of their study imply that that the quality and quantity of ideas generated in a climate that is more supportive of creativity and innovation can enable creative leaders to provide a more successful change process.

Alimo-Metcalfe and Alban-Metcalfe (2005) concur that there is growing discomfort with the ‘heroic’ models of ‘visionary-charismatic’ leadership and suggest a leadership model with fundamental themes of ‘servant-hood’, connection, transparency, and partnership. Alimo-Metcalfe and Alban-Metcalfe’s leadership model suggests that modern day leaders of public services should demonstrate the following six attributes:

- Valuing Individuals (Genuine concern for others’ well-being and development);
- Networking and Achieving (Inspirational communicator, networker and achiever);
- Enabling (Empowers, delegates, develops potential);
- Acting with Integrity (Integrity, consistency, honest and open);
- Being Accessible (Accessible, approachable, in-touch);
- Being Decisive (Decisive, risk-taking).



In recent challenging and turbulent times for public services an authentic leadership model such as the one suggested by Alimo-Metcalfe and Alban-Metcalfe (2005) may become more relevant for desirable outcomes in change management. Authentic leaders are better positioned to heighten the self-awareness and shape the self-regulatory processes of followers (Avolio and Gardner, 2017). Followers of authentic leaders may have greater clarity about their values, identity, and emotions and, in turn, develop balanced information processing, transparent relations with the leader and associates, and authentic behaviour.

In contrast to transformational leadership, authentic leadership may or may not be charismatic but authentic leaders know where they stand on important issues, values and beliefs. Of course, transformational leaders may also have this deep sense of self, or they may be able to transform others and organizations, through a powerful, positive vision, an intellectually stimulating idea, attention to uplifting the needs of followers and by having a clear sense of purpose (Avolio and Gardner, 2017). Authentic leaders earn the allegiance of others by building trusting relationships and is centrally concerned with ethics and morality. Grout and Fisher (2007) agree that authentic leaders should: Have a high degree of self-awareness; Understand their own strengths and weaknesses; Recognise that there is an element of performance in leadership; Be visible and accessible; Avoid setting themselves apart from employees; Keep a professional distance.

Duignan and Bhindi (1996) consider stewardship as an alternative term to authentic leadership:

*“Stewardship is “something held in trust for another” where stewards are accountable for the use of their power in extending the overall interest of the organization and the individual.” (Duignan and Bhindi, 1996, p.206)*

Stewardship uses the power to serve through partnership and empowerment. A steward’s task is to engage in ‘authentic reforms’ of the governance processes and structure of service, trust, empowerment and partnership (Duignan and Bhindi, 1996).

Local government organisations are led by their chief executives and by their local politicians. Chief executives must develop relationships with their political leaders and this involves combining political ambitions with managerial, legal and practical constraints. The role of local political leadership is a key element of the local government modernisation agenda and a greater emphasis on the role of local political leaders as

strong leaders. However, there are difficulties in providing adequate training and preparation for leadership when individuals are 'catapulted' into positions of leadership with only limited experience and with almost no notice (Bochel and Bochel, 2010).

Transformational leaders create visions, generate high levels of trust, serve as role models, show consideration for others, delegate responsibilities, empower followers, teach, communicate, listen, and influence followers (Stone *et al.*, 2004). However, transformational leaders are more focussed on organisational objectives than the people who are their followers. More recently, the focus on leadership by the literature is being supplemented by examination of the role of followers. Grint and Holt (2011) consider that the role of followers has been underestimated and that complex problems require strong leadership and responsible followers. However, Rost (1993) contests that in modern, flatter organisations and with partnerships then distributed leaders are more likely and followership is an outmoded concept. Grint (2005) considers the question of whether a situation should determine the leadership and what happens if followers contest the social construction of the situation by the leader? The conclusion is that it is difficult to separate the situation from the leader as the situation may be a consequence of the leader.

Charismatic leadership may arise in situations where followers question the accepted mainstream reality as determined by the prevailing social forces. Charismatic leaders can be viewed negatively as –self-serving and inherently narcissistic but more socialised charismatic leaders are viewed as serving the organisation. Weierter (1997) defines three types of charismatic relationships between follower and leader. The first type of relationship being that the leader provides followers with means of expression of a routinised charismatic message. The second type of relationship is where followers base behaviour on externally created values because of the lack of a well-defined self. The third type of relationship is characterised by emotional and behavioural expression and attribution of cause to the leader. However, followership is influenced by the degree of empowerment and healthy organisations empower leaders that listen. The myth that organisations have to rely on gifted charismatic individuals to lead whom others follow with enthusiasm is disputed by Mintzberg (1999) who asserts this creates a culture of dependence which obstructs learning and innovation.

*“Quiet managing – Inspiring, caring (more time preventing problems than fixing them), infusing (change seeps in rather than being thrust upon the organisation”  
(Mintzberg, 1999, p.28)*

In practical terms, the approach of quiet managing is likely to be difficult in a complex, changing and challenging environment.

Since the late 1980s concepts of transformational and charismatic leadership in the literature are ascendant. Transformational and charismatic leadership theories emphasise emotions and values and the role in making events meaningful for followers. Transformational leadership is seen primarily in terms of the leader's effect on followers, and the behaviour of leaders used to achieve this effect. The concept is that the followers feel trust, admiration, loyalty, and respect toward the leader, and they are motivated to do more than they originally expected to do. Yukl (1999) found that although there is considerable evidence that transformational leadership is effective, there is ambiguity about the underlying influence processes (leader influence on followers and how leaders' behaviours relate to this) and uncertainty about essential behaviours for transformational and charismatic leaders. Whilst it is clear that personal identification is most important for charismatic leadership more attention is needed to identify facilitating and limiting conditions for transformational and charismatic leadership. Yukl (1999) attest that there may be situations where transformational leadership has negative consequences along with the positive ones and the potential for using charismatic leadership to improve may only be warranted in special situations. Indeed, Yukl (1999) contest that definitions of leader 'types' are often simplistic stereotypes and doubt that there is any justification for applying labels such as 'transformational,' 'transactional,' and 'charismatic' to individual leaders.

## **2.6 Traditional and Emerging Models of Environmental Health Service Delivery**

English local government is divided in some areas into county councils (the upper tier) and district councils (the lower tier). The two tiers have distinct functions, though they overlap in some matters. In other areas, 'unitary authorities' carry out all local government functions. There are 353 local authorities in England, of which 27 are county councils, 201 are district councils, and 125 are single-tier authorities. Of the latter, 32 are London boroughs and 36 are metropolitan boroughs (Sandford, 2018). In England, Environmental Health Services are traditionally delivered at district level directly by district councils, where they exist, and otherwise by the single-tier authorities.

Procedures are in place for district councils wishing to merge and for regions where two tiers wish to restructure as a unitary authority, although a call for a fully unitary system

of local government for England was opposed by the government in 2012 (Sandford, 2018). Guidance from the government published in 2018 set out criteria for proposals for the establishment of unitary authorities which included being likely to improve local government and service delivery across the area of the proposal, giving greater value for money, generating savings, providing stronger strategic and local leadership, and which are more sustainable structures (MHCLG, 2018).

Local government finance is extremely complex and English local authorities have four principal sources of finance, as follows:

- Council tax: Local authorities set their own levels of council tax and retain all of the revenues locally
- Business rates: Local authorities collect business rate revenue. Some of this is retained locally, some passed to central government, and some redistributed within the sector
- Central government grants
- Local fees and charges

The scale and pace of the reduction in resources for local government in England are claimed to be undermining attempts by local authorities to transform their services, long term preventative measures are being compromised by short term cuts and some public services risk becoming unsustainable. A study by Hastings *et al.* (2015a) found that councils have applied a three-pronged strategy to deal with the cuts: Investment, Efficiency and Retrenchment. Local government's response to these challenging conditions has included innovation and an emergence of alternative delivery mechanisms in order to provide solutions to the increasing pressure of austerity and reducing resource in a time of uncertain future and changing service demands. Responses include contracts and partnerships with other public sector bodies; contracts, partnerships and joint venture vehicles with the private sector; new public sector and non-public sector entities – the creation of new local authority companies, social enterprises and trusts (Grant Thornton, UK 2014).

Innovation in public services can be defined as something that is new to the organisation rather than a 'genuine first use' and something that involves a change of discontinuity. Innovation produces a process of transformation that brings about a discontinuity and usually requires reorganisation of structure or work procedures (Osborne and Brown, 2005). Doherty and Horne (2014) suggest that public services are increasingly required

to develop innovative ways of delivering public services and gave examples as creation of shared services across large geographical areas, encouraging social enterprises to bid for delivery of key services and encouraging local communities to take a more active part in the design and delivery of public services. Social enterprises are defined by the UK Department of Trade and Industry as

*“Businesses with primarily social objectives whose surpluses are principally reinvested for that purpose in the business or in the community, rather than being driven by the need to maximise profit for shareholders and owners” (DTI, 2004 - online)*

According to Social Enterprise UK (2017), the public sector is a key source of income for social enterprises. Two-thirds of social enterprises provide mainly services and are concentrated in the most deprived areas of the UK with health and social care being the leading area of activity. Doherty *et al.* (2014) find that public services are increasingly being delivered through interdependent organisations and public service managers with a more enabling role need to manage the interests of the network as a whole. McKee (2014) cautions mutualisation can be the first step towards privatisation and public services being swallowed up by a major corporation that is focussed on maximising profits and sheltering from taxation.

The Local Government Act 1972 provides a legal framework for local authorities to share services and to outsource services and some public bodies have used companies to deliver shared services (Sandford, 2015b). To date, the evidence suggests that the predominant response is local authorities sharing staff and services, with 416 shared service arrangements occurring between councils across the country resulting in £462 million of efficiency savings (LGA 2015b). However, there is limited evidence of outsourcing and the future of such outsourcing of a stand-alone public protection service is doubtful (LGA 2015a). That said, a small number of councils have outsourced wider domains of local authority services that have included public protection. Sandford (2015b) also points to a number of examples of council services being delivered through a mutual which is an organisation which has left the public sector 'parent body' but continues to deliver public services. Employees play a significant role in the operation and control of a mutual. Innovation is difficult for local authority's regulators who act under the constraints of resource and legality but some have made innovations to their services which will be explored later in this study. However, Weeks and Kastle (2015) suggest that local authorities have begun to retract from innovation:

*“I wonder if the public sector, with some notable exceptions, has recently become more hesitant, fearful, and ‘tight’ about innovation – often driven by hostile budget and political constraints – and therefore is becoming increasingly inhospitable to the innovation bug. The generalization is too broad, of course, and a little unfair, but I have a sense that, overall, the policy and service reform environment is too often characterized by a mixture of fear and control that is inimical to the outcomes that ministers and their advisors claim they want” (Weeks and Kastle, 2015 p.67).*

Governments need to create the right conditions for innovation by being able to identify problems and allowing translation of ideas into pilot projects to be rolled out if successful. In order to create a supportive environment for innovation four areas should be addressed: Building the culture to facilitate new ways of working; Facilitating the free flow of information across the public sector; Promotion of new organisational structures and partnerships to share risk and make resources available for innovation; ensuring rules and processes support and not hinder (OCED, 2017).

## **2.7 Shared Services**

It is clear that, in the current economic climate, there are opportunities to make changes that would not necessarily be considered in more affluent times. The approach of senior management needs to be fully open to change and realise the benefits. The concept of shared service is a core element of public sector reform and a shared service strategy is relatively new to public administrations. Shared services constitute a form of government collaboration which is defined by Niehaves and Krause (2010) as a voluntary agreement between two or more public sector agencies to deliver government services. Niehaves and Krause (2010) go on to argue that shared services are most applicable to supporting processes like wage and salary administration, human resources, IT infrastructure, procurement or facility management.

Glynne (2009) looked at the case of the local authority shared services and found that critical factors for successful change include support by the entire management team and that a governance model also needs to be developed to oversee the new service model. McIvor *et al.* (2011) also highlighted the importance of strong governance to drive standardisation and performance improvement. Dollery *et al.* (2016) suggest governance in the form of a Board made up of the General Managers of the interested councils, which would be chaired by an agreed Chair and supported by an agreed Chief Administrator. The Board can facilitate the set-up of individual Shared Service Agreements and can be

a cost-effective and flexible method of facilitating shared service provision in local government. Grant *et al.* (2007) suggest that the head of a top-level oversight Board should be a person with experience in leading shared services. Niehaves and Krause (2010) found that when trying to build up shared services it is important to rely on any previous cooperation between the intended shared service partners. Prior existing structures should be considered by project leaders and decision makers when it comes to choosing an organisational format for the shared services. Grant *et al.* (2007) argue that properly defining and setting up the governance structure continues to be a key success factor for shared services.

*“Clear decision rights, governance structures, defined roles and responsibilities, and issue resolution processes are needed from the start” (Grant et al., 2007, p.523)*

The rationale for developing a shared service model is most likely to be one of reducing cost through achieving economies of scale. However, Hefetz *et al.* (2014) purport that difficult-to-manage contracts are more likely to be in intergovernmental and non-profit contracting service models and for these type of contracts savings may be difficult to achieve. Dollery *et al.* (2016) add that shared services arrangements by groups of local authorities can achieve advantages of scale and scope in service provision but these savings from shared services can be lost by the costs of establishing and running a shared services model.

Grant *et al.* (2017), stressed the importance of customer focus in the design of a shared services model and that that a customer centred approach is recognised as best practice. Organisations who describe successful implementations were those who strived to ingrain a customer first culture and that buy-in, operational efficiencies and success followed. McIvor *et al.* (2011) established that local authorities should improve their policies prior to the implementation of shared services to minimise inconsistencies that may hinder standardisation efforts.

It is important to build relationships with staff at both senior and lower levels that are impacted by the changes in order to establish greater ownership of the new arrangement and obtain buy-in from staff at lower levels. A clear and persuasive communications strategy is key to the development of a full understanding amongst internal stakeholders of the rationale and to ensure staff are motivated to achieve a successful shared services model (McIvor *et al.*, 2011). Good communication is even more important in the case of outsourced shared services where the potential for resistance is greater amongst internal

staff as a result of job security concerns and Grant *et al.* (2007) agreed that that good communication is a key factor in the development of a shared service model for local government and acknowledging dissenting opinions with the reasons why they were rejected can go a long way towards acceptance of unpopular decisions and mitigating resistance.

According to Mustafa (2012), the prime rationale for establishing shared services in the public sector is achieving more efficient service delivery and this is reflected in cost advantages as well as in higher quality. Janssen and Joha (2006) contest that shared service centres did not realise the expected cost reduction and service improvement but that introducing shared services did ensure that services could be retained in-house whilst reducing the complexity of control. Janssen and Joha (2006) also argue that many of the motives for outsourcing services are found in those organisations looking to share services. However, internal arrangements and managing shared services need more detailed attention than outsourcing and public service managers should not underestimate this.

## **2.8 Public-private partnerships**

Public-private partnerships can be considered as 'contracting out' services, externalisation or hybrid partnership organisations, all of which are said have the potential to deliver significant efficiency improvements (Andrews and Entwistle, 2015). There has been a growth in private sector delivery of UK government services in recent years, according to the Institute of Government (2018) in 2015/16, £70bn was spent by local government on goods and services which includes the costs of contracts to the private sector. The Institute for Government and Spend Network (Institute for Government, 2018) have highlighted gaps in transparency in outsourcing services and the Information Commissioner has stressed that the public should have the same right to know about public services whether the service is provided directly by the government or by an outsourced provider.

The National Audit Office (2018b) asserts that contracting out public services can significantly reduce costs and help to improve public services but recognises that these efficiencies are not always realised and that if contracts are not properly designed or monitored then costs can escalate and the quality of public services may deteriorate. Andrews and Entwistle (2015) argue that public-private partnerships do not always improve efficiency but that extremely high levels of management capacity can realise the



potential efficiency gains from a public-private partnership. Grimshaw *et al.* (2002) also contest arguments that the public sector benefits from the downward cost pressures of market competition and state that this assumption is seriously flawed. High-profile failings in outsourcing have led the Government to focus on improving the management of commercial relationships. The collapse of Carillion highlights many of the existing issues, and will, no doubt, encourage a renewed focus on the issues arising from the contracting out of public services (Institute of Government, 2018). Provost and Esteve, (2016) agree that high-profile failures have attracted the public's attention and have given rise to questions about whether contracting out the delivery of public services to private providers actually made financial sense at all. Grimshaw *et al.* (2002) suggest that there are serious limits to the model of applying private sector principles to the process of public sector reform and attests to the controversial question about whether the public or the private sector ought to be in control of delivering public services.

Grimshaw *et al.* (2002) found evidence that the public sector partner tended to underestimate the time and resources needed to negotiate and manage the terms and conditions of partnership contracts. The private sector partner could then exploit its greater experience in working to contract and to secure favourable terms; for example, securing long-term funding against declines in public spending. Provost and Esteve (2016) agree that contractors are likely to possess significant informational advantages over those in government who are awarding contracts. In addition, the skills needed to manage public service markets remain quite scarce. The Institute of Government (2018) concur that many public sector workers have had to shift their focus from delivery of services to commissioning services from other people and it has been very challenging for individuals and teams to manage these processes in unfamiliar and complex areas. Hefetz *et al.*, (2014) find that, in local government, managerial capacity is needed to develop and maintain contracts and to explore market-delivery alternatives. In addition, the challenge of government innovation requires professional management which is not only about economic efficiency. The problems are not restricted to relationships between the public service and the private sector contractor. Provost and Esteve, (2016) show how the lack of coordination within and between government departments was a major reason for the overcharging by contractors.

Petersen *et al.* (2018) found that cost savings are rather limited in outsourcing public services and that they become smaller over time. Most studies focus on cost and scarcely consider service quality and there are very few studies that enable a comprehensive assessment of the effect of contracting out on overall effectiveness of

service delivery. Service quality is relatively easy to measure in technical areas where outcomes can be closely attributed to the input. However, complex services provide more of a challenge for those looking to associate inputs with outcomes in areas such as social care and education. Provost and Esteve, (2016) agree that contracting out of complex public services requires higher levels of attention from both the government and the contractor.

The lack of solid documentation of service quality and transactions costs highlights the need for a balanced and pragmatic view on the respective pros and cons of contracting out (Petersen *et al.*, 2018). Dahlström *et al.* (2018) looked to fill the literature gap by examining the link between the extent of outsourcing and service quality and found that outsourcing confers no benefits for service quality for complex services.

Hefetz *et al.* (2014) argue that when citizen interest is high in a local government service their interests are best managed through direct public delivery. Grimshaw *et al.* (2002) say that, in outsourcing of public services, recognition of the distinctive qualities of service provision in the public sector is needed including characteristics of public service ethos – fairness, antipathy to corruption, reliability, etc. Can this be achieved by the private sector delivery model? Public organisations are inherently more complex than private ones and the public sector is saturated by policies and values. Hoggett (2006) suggests that the crucial question for public organisations is not just what it needs to do to survive but what it needs to do to survive with public values. Reeves (1995) agree and state that

*“The suitability of market arrangements is not as clear-cut if public services are redefined in terms of entitlement on the basis of citizenship rather than ability to pay.” (Reeves, 1995, p.57)*

Citizens may feel strongly about who delivers their services and can feel that some services should always be delivered by their local council. An example of this was the application for judicial review by a resident when LB Barnet decided to become a commissioning council (R v Barnet London Borough Council *ex parte* Maria Nash). Barnet council wished to outsource customer and support services and also to enter a 10-year joint venture to deliver Regulatory Services, including its Environmental Health Service. According to Randall (2013), there was an intense debate about whether private sector organisations can genuinely convey the public service ethos needed in complex services and whether public services should ever be externalised at all. The legal challenge raised interesting questions about whether it was possible for a local authority

to legally discharge its judicial public functions and whether a council officer always has to be employed by the council. The claimant argued that Barnet should have consulted residents before picking its contractors. In the end, the judge considered that the judicial review was out of time but that the council did fail to consult the residents. Randall (2013) considers the case as a landmark as it is potentially relevant to all public authorities, regardless of political control, given the significant funding cuts. The judgement confirmed that a commissioning council is not just about outsourcing, but can involve alternative models for public service delivery, including wholly-owned companies, employee-led mutuals and shared services, or a combination of all of them. Similar concerns are raised by Mindell *et al.* (2012) who find that the case for privatisation of public services is superficial, the risk of failure is high and the government could be seen as acting in an irresponsible way.

*“Appointing the fox to guard the hen house by delegating policy-making and regulation to commercial interests represents a dereliction of government responsibility that will inevitably raise suspicions of undue influence” (Mindell et al., 2012, p.3)*

There is limited evidence in the literature regarding privatisation of Environmental Health Services but a study by Keane *et al.* (2002) found that there is a concern that services such as Environmental Health, which are considered to be for the public good, lack the incentives necessary for private sector performance. It is considered difficult to limit such services to an individual user, which is the basis of private service models, as most of the activities of an Environmental Health Service benefit everyone whether they seek out the service or not. This is partly addressed by the LGA in the design of their framework to support continuous improvement in integrated commissioning and service re-design. One of the principles of the framework is:

*“Awareness and acknowledgement that commissioning is about more than procuring services, it is about a wide variety of activities which improve the outcomes and the lives for people, places and populations.” (LGA, 2018<sup>a</sup>-online)*

Cox *et al.* (2011) looked at councils that outsourced IT and found that whilst, outsourcing can result in improved fiscal efficiency, councils that focus primarily on cost savings may be less successful than those who focus on long-term strategic goals. However, the need for cost efficiency can result in a more short-term focus due to the culture of risk aversion in the public sector, the cost of the outsourcing process and its inflexibility make it more difficult for councils to focus on long-term goals. They concluded that in order to achieve greater success, councils should develop partnerships rather than outsourcing contracts and focus on long-term strategic goals. Whitfield (2014) suggests that short term

measures are adopted in a climate where the decision makers may not be accountable in the long-term:

*“Despite evidence that actual savings are significantly smaller than claimed, elected members and senior management often resort to short-term measures in the knowledge that they may not be present when financial and operational performance fails to meet the original objectives and hype.” (Whitfield, 2014, p.7-8)*

The potential for shared services projects or joint service delivery between public bodies is significant and gives opportunities for councils to retain their focus on long term goals. Despite these opportunities, some authorities are likely to adopt the public-private partnership model (Whitfield, 2014). Cheung *et al.* (2012) identified success factors for public-private partnerships as being:

- Commitment and responsibility of public and private sectors: meaning that both the public and private sectors should bring their own skills and commit resources to the partnership;
- Strong and good private consortium: private parties must be sufficiently competent and financially capable of taking up the projects;
- Appropriate risk allocation and risk sharing: the allocation of risk to the party best able to manage and control it. The government should take up risks that are beyond the control of private sector participants and ensure there are measures in place to manage the risk exposure rather than leaving it open to the private sector.

Public sector managers who manage public-private partnerships experience a shift of emphasis from technical competence and professionalism to cost effectiveness and the entrepreneurial culture of the private sector. They must learn to bridge the differences between the public and the private sector (Cooke, 2006). Grimshaw *et al.* (2002) found that, even when private sector delivery of public sector services is rejected, private sector values are required in the management of public service delivery. This may result in the dilution of a public service ethos that encourages honesty and integrity in public management (Doig 1995: cited in Grimshaw *et al.*, 2002).

Organisational hybridity is an aspect of a partnership of a public survive and a private organisation and, Reissner (2017), looked at the challenge for members in developing a collective identity. They found that the local community may become disconnected from the hybrid organisation and that some employees failed to understand how their organisation had changed and why. There were multiple views of the identity of a new

hybrid organisation and this demonstrates the practical difficulties of developing hybrid organizations and risks fragmentation of the organisational identity which may pull an organisation apart. Partnership requires a degree of sharing of key aspects of work activity with others and emphasises joint goals and/or mutual benefits. Trafford and Proctor (2006) emphasise success factors for building good relationships between public sector organisations and private sector companies as being: Communication, Openness, Planning, Ethos and Direction. Greig and Poxton (2001) go further and purport building blocks of partnership as:

*“Building and agreeing shared values and principles with a vision of how life should be for people who use services*

*Agreeing specific policy shifts that the partnership arrangements are designed to achieve*  
*Being prepared to explore new service options and not be tied too closely to existing services or providers*

*Being clear about what aspects of service and activity are inside and outside the boundaries of the partnership arrangements*

*Being clear about organisational roles in terms of responsibilities for and relationships between commissioning, purchasing and providing*

*Identifying agreed resource pools and putting to one side unresolved historical disagreements*

*Ensuring effective leadership, including senior level commitment to the partnership agenda*

*Providing sufficient partnership development capacity rather than its being a small and marginalised part of everyone’s role*

*Developing and sustaining good personal relationships, creating opportunities and incentives for key players to nurture those relationships in order to promote mutual trust”*

*(Greig and Poxton, 2001, p.33)*

What will local authorities look like in the future? Hall and Hobbs (2017) consider the future of outsourcing, privatisation, public-private partnerships in relation to local government services and find that such policies may be bad for public budgets in the long term, and lead to poor services and a loss of democratic accountability. They claim that, as a result, many local authorities are now looking to re-municipalise public services, most notably in the energy and public transport sectors. Councils are beginning to bring services back in-house when contracts fail, including highway maintenance, housing, waste, cleaning services, IT and human resources. Conversely, the Conservative government continues to press for further privatisations including the recent privatisation of the Post Office and further outsourcing of the NHS. Hence, the future remains uncertain.

## **2.9 Conclusion**

The literature relating to the delivery of Environmental Health Services was very limited and the level of evidence was very low which demonstrated a gap in the research in the process of change related to transformation to new models of Environmental Health Service delivery in local authorities. The literature review was therefore mainly conducted in respect of regulatory and other public services with a view to informing this study. The literature review explained the traditional means of delivering Environmental Health Services in local authorities and explored the drivers for change and emergent risks. The financial model for local authorities is unclear and the government has announced multiple short-term funding in recent years and does not have a long-term funding plan for local authorities. Hence, local authorities are beginning to change their approach to managing the reduction in income by cutting services and are increasingly looking for other savings and income generation. Emerging and novel models of regulatory and Environmental Health Service delivery were identified as a response to the emergent risks but there was lack of good evidence and literature exploring these service delivery models in such a specific context.

## 3 RESEARCH METHODOLOGY AND DESIGN

### 3.1 Introduction

This chapter focuses on the methodology of the research, the subsequent research design and the data collection and its analysis. It will establish the theoretical perspective of the research methodology and the basis of theory development for this project. The research strategy and design will then be discussed with respect to data collection and analysis. Ethical issues and methodological challenges will be considered.

The overall aim of the project was to conduct an investigation into evolving models of English Environmental Health Services as a response to reducing resource and to identify the lessons learned by those who were involved in the change process. The overarching research question was defined as **'What are the lessons to learn from the implementation process for differing and evolving service delivery models for environmental health?'**

Table 3.1 sets out the research questions and objectives and how they were informed. The literature review explained the traditional means of delivering Environmental Health Services in local authorities and explored the drivers for change and emergent risks. Emerging and novel models of regulatory and Environmental Health Service delivery were identified as a response to the emergent risks but there was a lack of good evidence and literature exploring these service delivery models. The research strategy set out to explore the experiences of Environmental Health Professionals who have been involved in the development and operation of 'non- traditional' models of service delivery in English local authorities as a response to the emergent risks identified in the literature review. The models examined were in various stages of development from planning through to full transformation. Data collection commenced in 2014 and continued until 2016. Research participants were local authority officers, managers, commissioners and leading members of the Chartered Institute of Environmental Health (CIEH) and the Association of London Environmental Health Managers (ALEHM) who have been closely involved in Environmental Health Service changes, both in the planning and delivery stages of a variety of models. Their experiences were reflected upon and lessons learnt for the future are drawn from these personal and professional reflections.

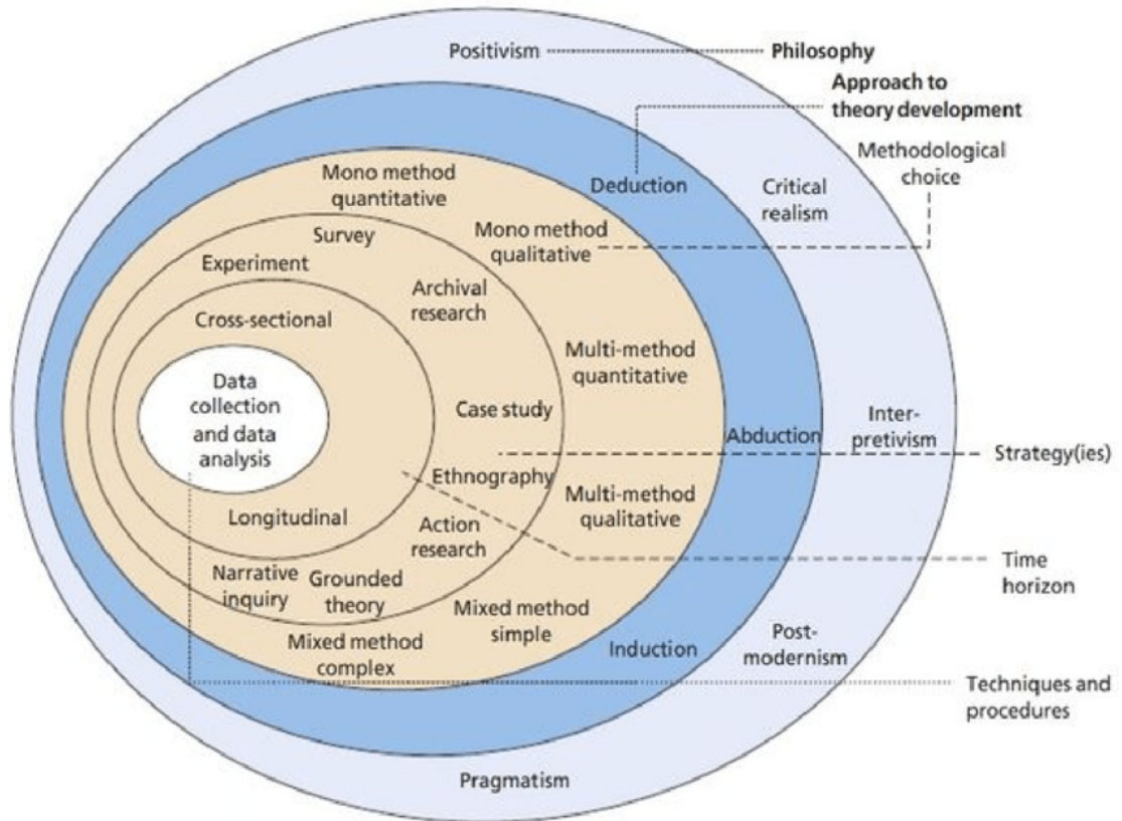
**Table 3.1: How Research Questions and Objectives Were Informed**

<b>Project Aim</b>	To conduct an investigation into evolving models of English Environmental Health Services as a response to reducing resource and to identify the lessons learned by those who were involved in the change process.			
<b>Overarching Research Question</b>	What are the lessons to learn from the implementation process for differing and evolving service delivery models for Environmental Health?			
	<b>Subsidiary Research Question</b>	<b>Project Objective</b>	<b>Informed by Literature Review</b>	<b>Informed by Data Collection and Analysis</b>
	What are the drivers for change in local authority Environmental Health and Regulatory Services?	To carry out a review of existing literature to explore the known drivers for change and to identify emerging and novel methods of Environmental Health and Regulatory Service delivery	Neoliberalism; Better Regulation; Transformation of Public Services; Austerity and Reducing Resource;  Traditional Models of Environmental Health Service Delivery Emerging Models of Service Delivery;  Change Management in Public Services	Data collection by interview of a range of participants from environmental health organisations undergoing a change of service delivery  Iterative thematic analysis and consultation
	What are the experiences of key personnel during the change to emerging and novel service delivery models for Environmental Health and Regulatory Services?	To identify lessons learned through exploration of experiences of key personnel involved in relevant change programmes from the early stages of the decision making through to the transition stages	Discussion of findings in the light of the literature review	Data collection by interview of a range of participants from environmental health organisations undergoing a change of service delivery  Iterative thematic analysis and consultation
	What lessons can be learned from the change process?	Development of a theoretical framework for the effective management of future change programmes in Environmental Health Services	Discussion of findings in the light of the literature review	Data collection by interview of a range of participants from environmental health organisations undergoing a change of service delivery  Iterative thematic analysis and consultation  Final theory development



### 3.2 Theoretical Perspective

The theoretical perspective of the research design will be discussed using the framework of the 'research onion' which was developed by Saunders et.al. (2016) see Figure 3.1.



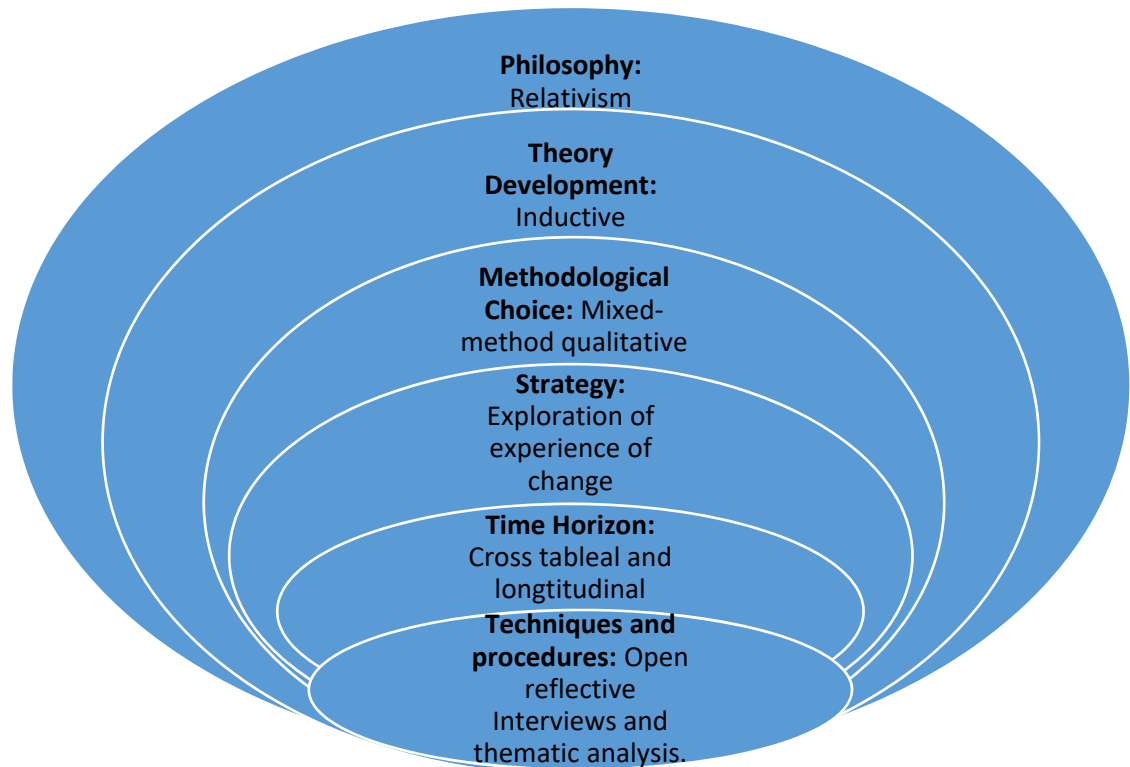
**Figure 3.1: The Research Onion**

*Source: © 2015 Mark Saunders, Phillip Lewis and Adrian Thornhill*

The 'research onion' is a representation of the layers of approach which must be considered when designing a research project. Firstly, the research philosophy should be identified, the research philosophy sets out the researchers position and acknowledges their world view opinion on how the knowledge should be developed. The second layer is the research approach and differentiates between the deductive approach of testing existing theories as opposed to the inductive approach of collecting data and developing a theory (Zefeiti, and Mohamad, 2015). The third layer considers the research strategy e.g. case study, survey, experiment, etc. The fourth layer looks at the method in respect of the research design. Will it be a mixed method or a mono-method and how will this inform the choice of data to be collected? The fifth layer considers the timing in respect of whether the data collected will be a cross-sectional

sample or will a longitudinal approach be adopted? Finally, the process of data collection and analysis will be considered.

Figure 3.2 sets out the theoretical perspective of this research design with the outer layer indicating my epistemological position of relativism (see Section 3.3). The second layer indicates the inductive approach which was taken for the development of the theory (see Section 3.4 and 3.12). The third layer sets out the methodological choice of mixed-method qualitative research (see Section 3.5). The fourth layer describes the exploratory research strategy (see Section 3.5 and 3.6) The fifth and sixth layers set out the research design for data collection (see Sections 3.6 and 3.8) and the data analysis (see Section 3.12)



**Figure 3.2: The Research Approach (Adapted from Saunders et.al. (2016))**

The research conducted for this thesis adopts the standpoint that research methods can be mixed not only at a practical level but also from an epistemological perspective. Therefore, the methodological approach sought to develop a practical means of answering the research questions. The overall research paradigm presented in Figure 3.2 considered a range of theoretical perspectives to inform the method. Therefore, the following sections in this chapter discuss a variety of theoretical perspectives and

suitable methods to provide epistemological justification for a nuanced approach. Onwuegbuzie *et al.* (2009) suggest a pragmatic approach to research design can provide insight into management and organisations.

### 3.3 Research Philosophy

The starting point of the research process was determined by my epistemological position. In turn, my epistemological position was determined by how I process data and information and my mental functioning. My experiences and understanding of situations, therefore, determined the basis of the research activity and the interpretation of the data i.e. the research philosophy. The term 'ontology' is used to describe an individual's position of reality and the epistemology is the underpinning rationale for the research approach (Johnston 2014). There is a range of epistemological positions from positivism to relativism and to determine my position as a researcher it was useful to consider the following questions based on the table "Three epistemological assumptions about knowledge and reality" in Couch *et al.* (2012) p34:

**"What is reality?"** *My answer: There are multiple realities, which can be experienced*  
**"What is the aim of knowledge enquiry?"** *My answer: A more informed construction or understanding*  
**"How does the researcher relate to the researched?"** *My answer: The researcher is subjective and not independent of the researched*

*(Adapted from Couch et al., 2012, p34)*

My answers to these questions suggested that my epistemological position was most suited to that of relativism. Relativism relies on the concept that reality is represented through the eyes of the participants and that language can be the object of study. According to Wisker (2001), this means that research based on relativism aims at the production of reconstructed understandings. Another approach to help explore my research philosophy was the Heightening your Awareness of your Research Philosophy (HARP) reflexive tool developed by Bristow and Saunders (Saunders *et al.*, 2016 p. 153-156). HARP consists of sets of statements and, by indicating agreement or disagreement with the statements, a score is generated to interpret the answers. I undertook this exercise and my responses and scoring are set out in Appendix H.

My reflection indicated that my philosophical 'winner' was critical realism and the philosophy I most disagreed with was positivism. This finding supports the view that my

epistemological position is most suited to that of relativism as critical realists embrace epistemological relativism. Critical realism sees that there are two steps to understanding the world, the experience of events and the mental processing which follows to 'reason backwards' to the underlying reality. This 'reasoning backwards' is known as retroduction. This research set out to understand the experience of those involved in new models of service delivery and to identify valuable learning points for a future change process in a similar environment. Critical realist researchers strive to be aware of the way in which their socio-cultural background and experiences might influence their research and should seek to minimise their potential biases to ensure objectivity (Saunders *et al.*, 2016). My experience as an Environmental Health Practitioner, a manager in a Local Authority Environmental Health Service and from a teaching perspective gave insight and informed the research method but potential bias needed to be addressed. This is discussed in more detail later in this chapter. So, how does one reconstruct and interpret knowledge to inform the world as it moves on? This is considered next when deciding on the research approach.

### **3.4 Research Approach**

Although there is sufficient literature in respect of New Public Management and delivery of local government services to generate a hypothesis, the novel research topic lent itself to a generation of theory rather than a reductive approach (Higginson *et al* 2015). The research questions focused on the response to austerity and experience of change in a novel context. An inductive approach allowed for an exploration of the topic and the opportunity to generate new ideas. The response of local authority Environmental Health Services to austerity and decisions about how to impose the necessary cuts varied and it was only the novel approaches that were subject to the research. The importance of exploring the meaning of experience in the context of austerity suits the epistemological position of relativism. The emergence of concepts from data is a method of theorising which is derived from a relativistic approach (Robson, 2002). Inductive research collects data to explore a phenomenon and the data is analysed to identify themes and patterns which can be used to create a conceptual framework. Qualitative research methods and tools were considered to be most appropriate for this inductive research design. In qualitative research, the researcher is very involved with the participant and shapes data collection and analysis (Aveyard *et al.*, 2009). Qualitative research is a widely accepted inductive research approach although it can be used successfully in a positive context.

Bryman and Bell (2011) describe the main steps of qualitative research as being: Selecting the relevant site(s) and subjects; Collection of relevant data; Interpretation of data; Development of concepts and theories and Writing up findings/conclusion. Qualitative research uses open questions which may change during the research process. The inductive process means that the theory develops from the data. This research approach was an exploration of the processes of change to inform the development of the theory rather than seeking a representative sample of a defined population. In cases of qualitative research, tool(s) such as interview, expert opinion and self-reflection can be used. The hierarchy of the research runs from research question to observation. Next, come the description, analysis and the development of theory.

Objectivism incorporates the philosophical assumptions of natural sciences whereas subjectivism matches best to the assumptions of the arts and humanities which will most often use qualitative research methods (see Table 3.2). However, scientific disciplines such as psychology also use qualitative research methods and disciplines such as environmental health may use objective or subjective research methods or a mixed method approach. This research used a subjective methodological approach. However, there are criticisms of qualitative research methods and the inherent flexibility which can give rise to uncertainty and an open-ended research process (Mayer, 2015). Critical realism typically uses a range of research methods which are retroductive and uses situated analysis of pre-existing structures. The research design was designed to address these concerns and a qualitative research method is deemed to be most appropriate to ascertain the lessons learned from the participants and organisational experience.

**Table 3.2: Philosophical Assumptions as a Multidimensional Set of Continua**

Assumption type	Questions	Continua with two sets of extremes	
		Objectivism	Subjectivism
Ontology	What is the nature of reality? What is the world like? For example: What are organisations like? What is it like being in organisations? What is it like being a manager or being managed?	Real  External One true reality Granular Order	Nominal/decided by convention Socially constructed Multiple realities Flowing Chaos
Epistemology	How can we know what we know?  What is considered acceptable knowledge?  What constitutes good quality data?  What kinds of contribution to knowledge can be made?	Adopt assumptions of the natural scientist  Facts Numbers  Observable phenomena  Law-like generalisations	Adopt the assumptions of the arts and humanities  Opinions Narratives  Attributed meanings  Individuals and contexts, specifics
Axiology	What is the role of values in the researcher? How should we treat our own values when we do research? How should we deal with the values of research participants?	Value-free  Detachment	Value-bound  Integral and reflexive

Source: © Saunders *et al.*, 2016, p.129

### 3.5 Research Strategy

The research strategy intended to understand the drivers behind regulatory reform in UK local authorities and how local authorities may seek to deliver their Regulatory Services in the future. The status quo may be challenged in that conventional service delivery may not be the best way of moving forward and comparison with similar organisations who also work conventionally is not seen as a way forward for developing innovative practice. The key theoretical perspective was one of critical enquiry which is a linking theory between research that seeks to understand and research that seeks to challenge. It is also worth noting that critical enquiry is a cyclical process of reflection and action and illuminates the relationship between power and culture (Crotty, 2003). Critical enquiry aims not only at improving outcomes but assists with a critique of work practices. It aims to intervene in processes with a view to reconstruction and recognises that an

organisation may want to improve but that there are limitations (Reason and Bradbury, 2001).

Critical enquiry is linked to action research. This research was not truly action research because I was not acting in my own organisation. However, my role at the University as programme leader for the CIEH accredited BSc Environmental Health, my professional qualification as a Chartered Environmental Health Practitioner and my membership of the professional community (CIEH) meant that my research approach did encompass some aspects of action research. Robson (2002) suggests that action research may be used for change and implementation and regards support and engineering of change as an integral part of the research process. Bell (2005 p8) cites Lomax (2002) as providing a series of useful questions for action researchers which include: Can I improve practice so that it is more effective? Can I improve my understanding of this practice so as to make it more just? Can I use my influence and knowledge to improve the situation? Can I collect rigorous data to provide evidence to support claims for action? Bell (2005 p.8) also cites Lomax (2002) as providing a series of useful suggestions for action researchers which include: Continue to review, evaluate and improve practice; Feedback loop where initial findings generate possibilities for change which are implemented and evaluated as a prelude to further investigation; Challenges dearly held views and practices of participants so must apply ethical standards, obtain permissions, maintain confidentiality and protect identity.

This research strategy can also be considered as a problem-solving approach which Walliman (2001) describes as identifying a real-life problem aiming to find possible solutions using systematic appraisal and analysis. The study involved a variety of methods requiring a great deal of background knowledge. As an individual researcher, this meant that I had to have access to appropriate resources and expertise and this is incorporated into the research design. Walliman (2001) suggests a basis of a list of possible research objectives: Categorisation, explanation, prediction, creating understanding, providing the potential for control and evaluation. For this research, explanation, creating understanding and evaluation were most relevant and have been used to develop the project objectives. Fox *et al.* (2007) propose, that for a successful research design that promotes and initiates change, the practitioner-researcher should focus on need, clarity, complexity and practicality to help move the project towards the next stage of implementation and continuation.

The primary research strategy was an exploration of the process of change in a number of local authorities which were delivering their services in a 'non-traditional' model of service delivery. In terms of the 'research onion', this is considered to be 'mixed-method qualitative' approach. The purpose of this exploratory approach was to identify commonality in the experience of change in a variety of contexts. The data was collected by examining the experience of change agents using reflective diaries and interviews. Gummesson (2000) suggests that researchers/consultants are often unable to gain access to the processes of change they wish to examine or influence. This issue was addressed in my research design by identifying the 'gatekeepers' to the information I required and fully explaining the purpose of my research in order to gain understanding and trust. Relevant permissions were obtained and documented. Saunders *et al.* (2016) suggest that the success of the researcher's role is dependent not only on gaining access to participants but also establishing trust and demonstrating sensitivity.

### **3.6 Research Design**

This project was a 'real world' enquiry and called for a flexible research design as the landscape for delivery of local authority Environmental Health Services is challenging and subject to external drivers. Fox *et al.* (2007) support flexibility in research design and suggest that flexibility is an important component in the research design as each stage depends on the outcome of the preceding stage. There may be unexpected outcomes to the research and the research design must be flexible to accommodate any necessary changes. Fox *et al.* (2007) describe the following as common obstacles for practitioner research:

- The changing landscape of the research setting - due to external forces and change of role;
- Time – underestimated through inexperience, disappearing research participants, research governance and ethics;
- Research/life balance – unforeseen life events.

Considering research as a process for development has challenges and research practitioners should aim for implementation of change that acknowledges the highly charged personal and professional arena. Change should be of value and, paradoxically, not to implement a change of no value. It is important for practitioner researchers to understand the culture of the organisation, personal styles, organisational politics and hidden agendas (Fox *et al.*, 2007). Couch *et al.* (2012) suggest that a flexible design may be appropriate for environmental health research in the real world, particularly when



starting to collect and analyse the data. Robson (2002) concurs and says where the subject of the research is not in the direct control of the researcher, a flexible design which makes use of qualitative methods is considered most suitable for this type of enquiry. This research had an exploratory approach and this was useful to discover what was happening and to clarify understanding of the issues arising during the process of change. Ways of conducting exploratory research include a search of the literature, interviewing subject experts and conducting in-depth interviews. Exploratory research should be able to be adapted to deal with emerging data and may begin with a broad focus which will narrow as the research progresses (Saunders *et al.*, 2016).

Lincoln and Guba (1985) say that the credibility of the research method must be established to ensure that the findings are trusted. It is important that transferability is examined so that the findings will be relevant to other settings. In order to ensure transferability, the researcher's position within the research has been explained and the sampling strategy is set out in Section 3.8. The findings should be dependable and not constrained to the time setting in which the research was conducted. The findings should be confirmable and not influenced by the personal values of the researcher. Consistency and replicability during this research project were addressed by the use of a codebook to inform the data analysis. Participant error and bias was minimised by ensuring that the interviews were carried out in a quiet space where there could be no interruption and in a location which was most convenient to the participant. Researcher error and bias were minimised but ensuring that their own views were not injected into the interview process and that they were well prepared for the data collection process.

### **3.7 Ethical Considerations**

There were potential areas of ethical concern including political sensitivity, the confidentiality of commercially sensitive information and perception of a threat to the job security of participants.

Local authorities are politically controlled organisations and are accountable to many stakeholders including central government, local politicians, the public, government quangos and their own local management. Research of organisations in this environment requires consideration of these stakeholders and dissemination of the research outcomes will need ethical consideration of identification and sensitivity issues. It is important that organisational consent is fully informed and the universities ethical

approval included participant consent agreements for individuals. Confidentiality of all sensitive data including financial information was agreed with the organisations as part of the ethical approval process. Local government has a culture of sharing good practice and benchmarking and barriers were not encountered in this part of the research. Participants may see the research as a threat to their position and job security which may inhibit the development of new models and ideas. The participant information was designed to reassure as well as to inform. The critical friend approach aided this reassurance as I was not part of the organisation and my conclusions will be recommendations only. Any recommendations must comply with legislative requirements for regulatory statutory duties, this is addressed by my expert knowledge of these duties and the constraints that the service is subject to. It is essential to be objective and impartial in data collection, analysis and interpretation and triangulation of research methods and evaluation will ensure rigour and validity of the research outcomes.

Before the interviews were undertaken I explained my professional background, current job role and the reasons why the research was being undertaken. This information was explained in person and in addition to the Participant Information Sheet which had been provided in advance of the interview. The process of the research was outlined and the plans for dissemination explained. At this stage, the informed consent was confirmed and provided in writing where possible. Participants were reassured that their contribution would be made anonymous in the final project submission and that they could have access to any publication of the findings (on request).

The Natural Sciences Ethics sub Committee gave ethical approval for the project (Appendix I). As the project had evolved from a single, in-depth, case study to an exploration of the process of change in several organisations with a subsequent title change, we requested that the chair of the committee confirm that the changes did not affect the ethical approval originally given. This was agreed in March 2017 (at the time that the new learning agreement was approved) and confirmed the Chair of the Natural Sciences Ethics Sub-Committee.

### **3.8 Data Collection**

For this study language data required transcription, coding and comparison around themes. The stages of data collection and analysis overlapped and informed each other and this throws up some difficulties for validation as the results are themselves an interpretation of the data (Couch *et al.* (2012); Greenhalgh (2008)). Couch *et al.* (2012)

considered possible types of bias in environmental health research. They concluded that the researcher may bring personal bias and have a preference for talking to the powerful. My relationship with the research participants may have been shaped by my own background. There is also a risk that the researcher may reject evidence that contradicts the researcher's position. Caution is advised to ensure that participants are not responding on behalf of others. Interestingly, they raise the point that data recording methods may influence the response of participants. All of these points were considered in the research design to reduce the likelihood of bias.

My role as a researcher was considered to have aspects of a 'critical friend' approach as the organisations are positioned in local government, where I was not currently employed, but it is in a technical area where I have a great deal of experience, knowledge and professional qualifications. Additionally, in my current role of academic in the field under review, it could be said that I possessed the expertise to carry out such a review. This concurs with the view of Harris (2005) who says that critical friends ideally require a specialism in the service under review and need to be able to offer (where applicable) a broader perspective on its provision in different organisational contexts. Harris (2005) goes on to say that the role of the critical friend counters the methodological disadvantage of an insider researcher being too closely associated with the participants. The advantages of an insider researcher of understanding what the job entails and the stresses and strains are maintained by the role of a suitably qualified critical friend (Robson, 2002). Wright and Adam (2015) describe the key roles of a critical friend as offering support, providing challenge, consultancy, leading enquiry and brokering knowledge. In fact, the local government improvement programme uses a critical friend approach in its own peer review programme

Fox *et al.* (2007) suggest strategies for managing practitioner research which include confidence in the research design, acknowledgement of differences from other research types, focus, relationships, communication, reflexivity, creation of change, sensitivity to power, politics and support. Practitioner researchers are grounded in the organisation, my role differed from that of a practitioner researcher but the same considerations were made as I worked closely with the organisations which took part in the study.

### **3.9 Sampling Strategy**

In order to meet the research objective b) 'To identify lessons learned through exploration of experiences of key personnel involved in relevant change programmes from the early stages of the decision making through to the transition stages' and the overarching research question, it was imperative to create a sampling strategy that sought people from organisations who were establishing the need for change as well as those at the planning, delivery and transition stages who were also able to reflect on early stages of change. Organisations and participants selected for the data collection were involved at various stages of development from planning the change through to full transformation. This allowed for for a comparison of participant perspective depending on the stage of change. It should be noted that there was limited literature regarding changes to Environmental Health Services and, in other contexts, the literature mostly focused on the implementaion of change rather than establishing the need for change.

The sampling approach adopted was one of purposive sampling which, according to Robson (2002), enables the researcher to build up a sample which is suitable for addressing the research question. Scrutiny of publically available information regarding proposed and actual changes to Environmental Health Services showed that there was little relevant information published. This may have been because such changes are usually internally focussed rather than being public facing. However, professional contacts of the researcher enabled identification of an organisation who were going through the process of outsourcing their Environmental Health Service. Permission was given to conduct the research using this organisation as a case study with participants who were involved in the change process. As the research progressed the opportunity to involve other organisations became available via contacts provided by the research participants, effectively utlising a snowballing approach to enage other participant organisations (see 3.8.3 and 3.11.2) . Hence, the scope of the research was expanded to cover a range of new models of service delivery as identified in the literature review (see Section 2.6).

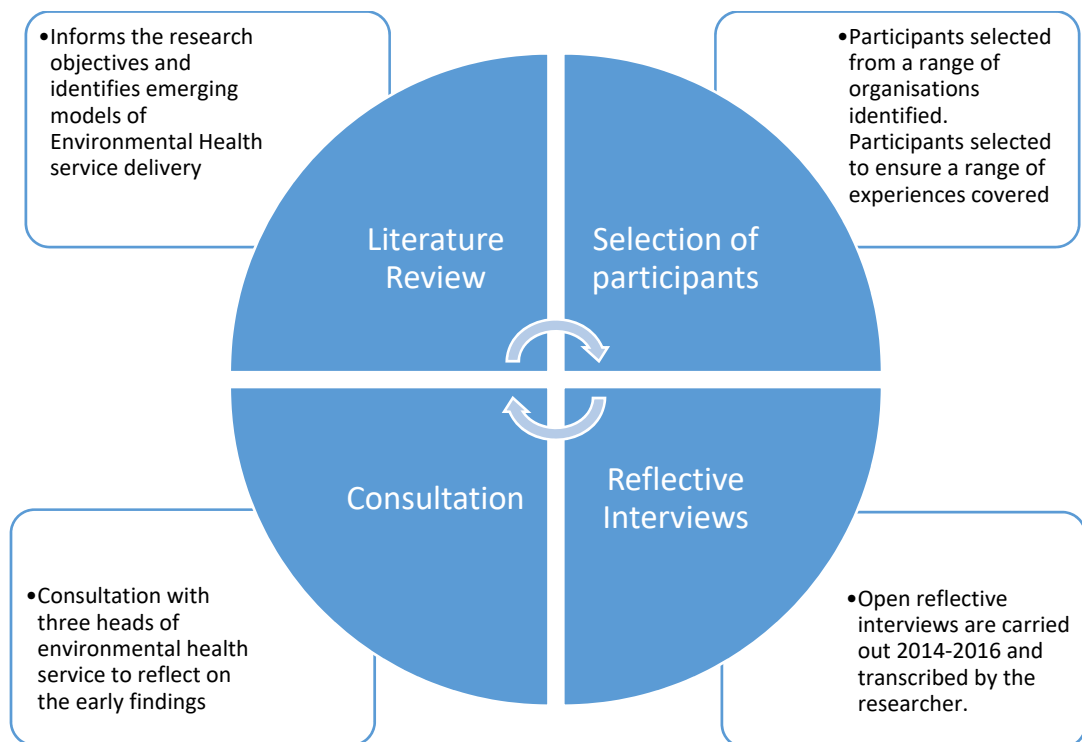
Including a range of new service delivery models allowed for a comparison of participant perspectives based on the type service model. Participant experiences were examined in three categories of service delivery models based on the findings of Grant Thornton, UK 2014 who identified local authority Environmental Health Service responses to a reducing resource:

- **Outsourcing:** Contracts, partnerships and joint venture vehicles with the private sector; new public sector and non-public sector entities;
- **Shared services:** Contracts and partnerships with other public sector bodies;
- **Mutualisation:** Creation of new local authority companies, social enterprises and trusts.

In the final research design, the participants were chosen from a range of local authority officers, managers, commissioners and leading members of the CIEH and ALEHM who have been closely involved in the planning and delivery stages of Environmental Health Service changes. It was important to include participants from a range of hierarchical positions so that the experience of change was examined from the perspective of those in a position of influence, as well as those on which the change was imposed.

Interviews were carried out with the participants to capture their experience of change and the impact on service delivery. Fieldwork and data collection were undertaken from 2014 to 2016.

Figure 3.3 sets out the main project activities in relation to data collection.



**Figure 3.3: The Main Project Activities**

### **3.10 The Organisations and Participant Selection**

The context was different for each of the organisations at a micro level but the macro environment in which they operated was broadly similar. The overall research question was defined as 'What are the lessons to learn from the implementation process for differing and evolving service delivery models for environmental health?'

The sampling strategy set out to explore the process of change following a sampling strategy designed to include the categories of outsourcing, shared services and mutualisation thus offering a more robust study than a single case study approach. Participants were selected on the basis that they were a key actor in a service transformation and were involved in the planning, consultation, commissioning or service delivery. The roles ranged from CIEH consultants, a leading member of ALEHM, commissioning directors, Environmental Health Service managers, senior officers and frontline officers.

### **3.11 Selection of the Organisations**

The selection of the organisations was informed by the findings of the literature review and depended on the following inclusion criteria: All selected organisations **must** be:

**A Local Authority Environmental Health Service;**

**AND**

**Planning or Delivering Environmental Health Service in a 'non-traditional' model**

'Non-traditional' models identified in the literature review as: Outsourcing: Contracts and partnerships with other public sector bodies; Shared Services: contracts, partnerships and joint venture vehicles with the private sector; Mutualisation: New public sector and non-public sector entities – creation of new local authority companies, social enterprises and trusts (Grant Thornton, 2014). For the sampling strategy the types of organisations were categorised as:

1. Outsourcing (see Section 3.11.1.1);
2. Shared Services (see Section 3.11.1.2);
3. Mutualisation (see Section.3.11.1.3).

Table 3.3 shows the range of types of organisations which were selected based upon the aforementioned inclusion criteria.

**Table 3.3: Organisations Included in the Research**

Category	Organisation	Service model	Type of Organisation	Stage of Change
Outsourcing	A	Outsourced EH service to a private company	Private Company	Transition: Early stages of delivery
Outsourcing	B	Local Authority Commissioning an outsourced service to a private company	London Local Authority	Transition: Early stages of delivery
Shared Services	C	Regional Shared Public Protection Services	English Rural Local Authorities	Planning and consultation
Shared Services	D	Shared Services between neighbouring local authorities.	English Rural Local Authority	Transition: Established delivery
Shared Services	E	Shared Services Management only between neighbouring local authorities.	English Urban and Rural Local Authority	Transition: Established delivery
Mutualisation	F	Proposed mutualisation of service	London Local Authority	Planning and consultation

### **3.11.1.1 Outsourcing:**

- Organisation A was the initial organisation involved in the research and is an example of a Local Authority Environmental Health Service which has been entirely outsourced to a private company. At the time of the data collection, this arrangement was in the early stages of the new service delivery model. There are many examples of public services being outsourced to private companies for delivery but very few examples of this outsourcing model for a statutory service such as Environmental Health which has a regulatory function. The research was originally based solely on Organisation A and 3 participants were based there.
- Organisation B is the local authority which had commissioned an outsourced Environmental Health Service to Organisation A. The arrangement was ongoing at the time of the data collection.

Early data collection revealed the potential complexity of the change process and it was decided to extend the data collection across a range of organisations. I was made aware of another local authority Environmental Health Service outsourcing model and I tried on several occasions to contact named contacts but they did not respond to my invitation. At the time of writing, I am not aware of any other outsourced Environmental Health Service in England.

### **3.11.1.2 Shared Services:**

For this research shared services are either between two or three neighbouring local authorities or at a regional level involving more than three local authorities. The services themselves are shared or just the management of the service.

- Organisation C is an example of a proposed regionally shared Environmental Health Service. The four local authorities involved in the proposal employed 120 full-time staff and the model was at the planning and consultation stages.
- Organisation D is an example of an established shared service arrangement between two local authorities in respect of Environmental Health and Waste Management Services. This model of service delivery shared both front line officers and management.
- Organisation E is an example of local authorities sharing the management of Environmental Health and Trading Standards services but the frontline officers remained working in their respective local authorities.

According to the LGA (2018b), there are over 559 shared service arrangements in England but it is difficult to identify where this applied specifically to Environmental Health Services as that level of detail in the data is not apparent. However, participants from participating organisations recommended others who might like to take part in the research and, via this referral method, it was possible to include a sample of each of the shared service types for Environmental Health Services.

### **3.11.1.3 Mutualisation:**

- Organisation F is a London local authority which was planning the delivery of their Environmental Health Service by a new (mutualised) local authority company. This development was not completed to fruition and Organisation F continues to operate in a traditional manner.

This was the only example of an organisation that could be identified as planning or operating a mutualised model of an Environmental Health Service, and that was willing to take part.

## **3.11.2 Selection of Participants**

This study explored the experience of practitioners involved in developing and delivering evolving delivery models in English local authorities. As seen in Table 3.3 the models examined were from a range of 'Non-traditional models' of environmental service



delivery which were in various stages of development from planning through to full transformation. Data collection commenced in 2014 and continued until 2016. Research participants were chosen from each of the six organisations and included; local authority officers; managers; heads of service; service commissioners. An additional two participants were recruited as they were leading members of professional bodies and associations who have been closely involved in Environmental Health Service changes, both in the planning and delivery stages of a variety of service models including all of the types of service delivery models included in this research. These participants were able to give an overview of all of the categories of the organisation included in the research. The participants reflected upon their experiences, and lessons learnt for the future are drawn from this personal and professional reflection. All participants were approached based on their role and employer organisation. Table 3.4 summarises the participant profiles, their organisations and their relationship to the researcher.

The participant-researcher relationship varied across the participants and in Table 3.4 is described as either direct or non-direct. Participants 1 and 8 were Environmental Health Professionals who were previously students on the B.Sc. Environmental Health and my relationship with them was classified as 'direct' as I was the programme leader for this degree. The remaining participants were classified as 'indirect' as I did not know them directly. They participated in response to my requesting them to take part in the study. However, these participants were contacted as a result of recommendations from colleagues or other participants. This is considered as snowball sampling, where the researcher has identified one or more participants from the population of interest and they go on to identify other potential participants who themselves go on to recommend others (Robson 2002). In this research, this was considered as an appropriate strategy due to the target group of participants from 'non-traditional' models of Environmental Health Service delivery which is an inherently difficult group to reach. The recommendation for further participants was an organic part of the data collection process and suggestions were made from the respondents without prompting during the interview. The take-up of participants invited to take part in the data collection process was very high with only one invitee failing to respond.

**Table 3.4: Participant Profiles**

<b>Participant</b>	<b>Organisation</b>	<b>Professional background</b>	<b>Role</b>	<b>Reflective Account / interview</b>	<b>Participant – researcher Relationship</b>
1	A	Newly qualified Environmental Health Practitioner	Front line Environmental Health Officer	Reflective account	Direct
2	A	Qualified Environmental Health Practitioner	Environmental Health Service Manager	Longitudinal series of reflective Interviews	Indirect
3	B	Not known	Strategic Director and service commissioner	Reflective Interview	Indirect
4	C	Qualified Environmental Health Practitioner	Front line Environmental Health Officer	Reflective Interview	Indirect
5	A	Qualified Environmental Health Practitioner	Principal Environmental Health Officer	Reflective Interview	Direct
6	n/a	Qualified Environmental Health Practitioner	Member of the CIEH who was consulted on all categories of organisation.	Reflective Interview on all types of service delivery	Indirect
7	D	Qualified Environmental Health Practitioner	Ex-Director of Environmental Services and member of the CIEH who was consulted on all categories of organisation.	Reflective Interview	Indirect
8	E	Qualified Environmental Health Practitioner	Environmental Health Service Manager	Reflective Interview	Direct
9	n/a	Qualified Environmental Health Practitioner	Member of ALEHM who was consulted on all categories of organisation.	Reflective Interview	Indirect
10	F	Qualified Environmental Health Practitioner	Environmental Health Team Leader	Reflective Interview	Indirect
11	E	Qualified Environmental Health Practitioner	Regulatory Service Manager	Reflective Interview	Indirect

Participants 1 and 3-11, reflected on their experience of change during a single interview. The stages of change reflected on were either establishing the need for change, decision making or planning for change or transition to a new service model. Participant 2 was interviewed on five occasions over the transition to a new service delivery model. During the first interview, they reflected on the process of establishing the need for change, the second interview focused on the preparation for transition and the third and fourth interview focussed on the unfolding transition to the new service delivery model. The final interview did not set out to collect data but was a wrap-up discussion where the participant was shown the emerging themes for their commentary. Although this approach to data collection was different from the other participants, the opportunity to collect data through the change process was unique and the richness of their data enhances the findings of this research. Although Participant 2 features more heavily in the findings the differing emphasis of the reflection at each occasion minimised the bias. The limitations of the sampling strategy are further discussed in Section 3.11.3.

Snowball sampling is an example of purposive sampling which aims to select information-rich cases which will illuminate the questions under study. In purposive sampling, the researcher decides which cases to include in the sample based on prior information like theory or insights gained during the data collection (Van Rijnsoever 2017). In this study, the potential organisations which might be included in the research were difficult to identify. Although snowball sampling has a low likelihood of the sample being representative, the organisations and participants selected were likely to have the desired characteristics (Saunders *et al.*, 2016). Boddy (2016) argues that in qualitative research, a representative sample is needed, involving representatives of each of the sub-segments of the total population to be researched and this was achieved in this study by categorising the types of service models and selecting a range of organisations and participants from each of them.

Although the sample size needed to be considered, in qualitative research there is scant information about sample size as it is seldom discussed in the literature and for purposive sampling, there is no minimum sample size. The issue of sample size is ambiguous for non-probability sampling and guidance is limited in research textbooks, but Saunders *et al.* (2016) suggest that for semi-structured / in-depth interviews the minimum sample size is 5-25. The sampling strategy was designed to achieve saturation in the general response. In this research, the organisations were chosen to represent the range of 'non-traditional' service delivery models and the participants were selected from these examples. Inevitably, this resulted in a small sample size (less than 20 participants).

Crouch and McKenzie (2006) discuss sample sizes in small-scale, interview-based qualitative research and conclude that if the research is intentionally conceptually generative, its findings cannot escape the charge of speculation and nor should they have to do so. They concluded that the nature of exploratory studies is to indicate rather than conclude. In this study, the intention was to indicate the lessons learned from the experience of organisational change and the findings were not intended to be conclusive. Hence, for this research, it is considered that the sample is exhaustive due to the difficulty in identifying organisations who were offering or planning for the type of service delivery suitable for inclusion and that a suitable range of type of service delivery was explored.

It is acknowledged that the data collection and analysis should continue until no new stories emerge and no further themes emerge. At this point, 'Theoretical Saturation' is said to have been reached and all the relevant information that is needed to gain complete insights into a topic has been found (Van Rijnsoever, 2017). Boddy (2016) suggests that data saturation can only be known after at least two cases, and usually more are examined. This idea of sampling until data saturation is reached can be used as a justification for the use of a particular sample size in any qualitative research which is guided by this idea. However, with the lack of guidelines in purposive sampling, the decision about how much data is enough was very difficult to make as a researcher. One of the main difficulties was the changing macro environment and, in order to stay current, the study needed to move on to the detailed data analysis and the later stages of theory generation.

### **3.11.3 Limitations of the sampling strategy**

This research presented a unique opportunity to engage with participants who were in a process of change to novel models of service delivery. However, this innovative approach placed a natural limitation on the number of participants and organisations that could be reached. As the participants were drawn from a heterogeneous population it would have been ideal to increase the sample size but this was not possible because of the hard to reach participant population. Nevertheless, according to Saunders *et al.* (2016), the research design of in-depth reflective interviews is capable of revealing key themes even with a small sample size. Hence, the data analysis relies more on the response of all of the participants than on the cross theme analysis presented in Section 4.6 (although this is still referred to in the discussion).

This research project was originally a case study of Organisation A and three participants, from differing hierarchical positions, were drawn from there. One of these participants was interviewed over-time, reflecting on emerging stages of the change process, rather than at a single point of time as for the other 10 participants. This may introduce a potential for bias. However, the focus of the research question was to establish lessons to be learned from the experience of change and did not specify a type of service model to be examined. The three participants from Organisation A reflected on their experience of change through different lenses which may reduce the potential for bias. Overall, four participants reflected on a change arising from outsourcing, three participants reflected on a change to a shared services model, one participant reflected on mutualisation and three participants reflected on changes to a range of new models of service delivery. Including participants from a range of hierarchical positions allowed for a comparison of view from the perspective of front-line EHPs, middle managers and senior managers/consultants. Therefore participants, focused on a range of types of new service delivery models and this introduces balance to the findings.

The research design set out to continue interviewing until data saturation had been reached. Data saturation was determined when no new themes were emerging. In practice, the external context will have an influence on the end point of data collection but the repetition of emerging themes suggested that ample sampling had already taken place.

The sampling strategy gave the potential to compare the experience of change from the perspective of participants in a range of hierarchical positions across types of service delivery models in different stages of change. This broad sampling strategy may have brought a limitation to the findings of the research as each of the models is not explored in depth from comparable perspectives. However, the research strategy involved several and different types of local authorities to reveal multiple aspects of a situation and the thematic analysis teased out the commonality of the experience of change. This approach strengthens the validity of the findings.

Looking at something from more than one angle provides a more complete picture for researchers (Silverman, 1997). Dentin and Lincoln (2008) concur that the use of multiple sources helps to secure an in-depth understanding. Triangulation as a strategy adds rigour, breadth, complexity, richness, and depth to any inquiry. Triangulation of findings usually involves using more than one set of data and method of collection. In an inductive approach to research, this may not be appropriate but this perceived lack of triangulation

can lead to a challenge of the validity of the findings (Saunders *et al.*, 2016). Gum (2007) purports that ensuring the credibility of findings is a matter of triangulating evidence from different sources about the same events. The mixed method approach of this research enabled triangulation of the data by three stages of data collection and analysis. Firstly, the participant data was analysed to identify central and sub themes (see Section 4). Secondly, these findings were disseminated at a workshop in a national CIEH conference. This workshop sought feedback on the validity of the findings and additional commentary on the themes was sought from the workshop participants. The data collected from the workshop was used to refine the initial data analysis (See Section 5.2). Thirdly, the refined findings were then published via presentation of a paper at an international conference and this paper was subsequently published in a peer reviewed journal. The published paper was presented to three consultants to check for the reliability of the theoretical output to practice and for commentary on refinement of the findings (see Section 5.3). The data from all three stages was used to inform the final theoretical framework (see Section 5.5). According to Robson (2002), such peer debriefing can help to guard against researcher bias and provide a means of validation. This iterative process of data collection and analysis process provided three streams of data which gave a means to determine the reliability and validity of the findings, hence triangulation was achieved.

#### **3.11.4 Pilot Stages: Reflective diaries and accounts**

Now that the organisations were selected and the participants were recruited, the initial plan was to ask the participants who were working in an organisation currently subject to planning or implementation of a new model of service delivery (participants 2, 3,4,5,8 and 11) to complete a reflective diary. Participants 1, 6, 7, 9 and 10 were reflecting on past experiences and would be asked to complete a reflective account. The use of a reflective diary is a well-documented method for the provision of crucial data in qualitative research and it was selected for this study due to its potential as a tool for prompting, capturing and exploring reflective thinking on the experience of change (Hewitt, 2017). Reflection can be difficult for experienced professionals who are unaccustomed to the process so I produced guidance for participants who were to complete a reflective diary (See Figure 3.4) which included guidance and some prompts and a suggested template for the diary. For participants completing a reflective account, guidance was also produced (See Figure 3.5) which included similar prompts and guidance. My experience of teaching degree students informed the production of this guidance as I knew how difficult reflection can be.

**Reflective Diary Guidance**

The aim of this Reflective Diary is to give you an opportunity to do the following:

- Keep a record of your experiences of the outsourcing of Environmental Health Services
- Note any challenges or positive experiences that you encounter as a result of the outsourcing.
- Identify your personal and professional feelings and opinions
- Identify areas for development either by the organisation or personally.

The Microsoft Word template below can be used to record your experiences if you wish or, alternatively, you can input your learning experiences into a narrative journal. Deep reflection can be quite difficult at first but there is no format for this so just write honestly reflecting on your experiences and how you felt rather than just describing what you did. If you need any help in completing your diary please do contact me.

Initially can you please write about key issues since your Environmental Health Service was .....? It might be helpful to write a number of entries based on themes. E.g. initial feelings, communications, changes to your work practices, changes to your employment status, etc...

Once this has been completed it would be helpful if you filled in an entry each week or fortnightly to identify key situations or themes where the impact of outsourcing is apparent. However, if there is a specific event or issue that occurs and you wish to make immediate comments expressing your views at that moment. Generally, you should consider both the positive and negative impacts as well as noting where there is no change. E.g. being able to use your discretion, working in an environment where all are subject to change, issues with private sector ethos versus public sector ethos, etc...It is important to note any challenging experiences where you learnt new skills or reflected on different ways of dealing with similar situations in the future.

Use the 'Reflection' section to record anything you have learned. You may also find the following questions useful as prompts:

- Did anything surprise you? For example, about information you found out, the way that your colleagues dealt with an issue, or the way you reacted to anything that happened?
- Did you find anything challenging? Why?
- Did you find anything satisfying? Why?
- Were there any problems? How did you resolve them? If you were faced with the same problem again, would you do anything differently?

**Suggested Template for your reflective diary entries (please feel free to adapt as necessary).**

Date:	
Key situation or theme:	
Reflection:	
Lessons to learn (both at a personal and organisational level)	

**Figure 3.4: Reflective Diary Guidance**

### Reflective Account Guidance

The aim of this Reflective Account is to give you an opportunity to do the following:

- Keep a record of your experiences of the ..... of Environmental Health Services
- Note any challenges or positive experiences that you encountered as a result of the outsourcing.
- Identify your personal and professional feelings and opinions
- Identify areas for development either by the organisation or personally.

Deep reflection can be quite difficult at first but there is no format for this so just write honestly reflecting on your experiences and how you felt rather than just describing what you did. Initially can you please write about key issues regarding the outsourcing of the Environmental Health Service at .....? It might be helpful to write a number of entries based on themes. E.g. initial feelings, communications, changes to your work practices, changes to your employment status, etc... Generally, you should consider both the positive and negative impacts as well as noting where there was no change. E.g. your views on being able to use your discretion, working in an environment where all are subject to change, issues with private sector ethos versus public sector ethos, etc...It is important to note any challenging experiences where you might have learnt new skills or reflected on different ways of dealing with similar situations in the future.

Use the reflective account to record anything you have learned. You may also find the following questions useful as prompts:

- Did anything surprise you? For example, about information you found out, the way that your colleagues dealt with an issue, or the way you reacted to anything that happened?
- Did you find anything challenging? Why?
- Did you find anything satisfying? Why?
- Were there any problems? How did you resolve them? If you were faced with the same problem again, would you do anything differently?

If you need any help in completing your account please do contact me.

### Figure 3.5: Reflective Account Guidance

Participant 1 successfully completed a reflective account and I then contacted Participant 2 to arrange a meeting with an expectation that they had been completing the reflective diary. Unfortunately, Participant 2 found that they had not had the time to complete the diary and in order to continue it was agreed that we would meet periodically to record their reflection as the implementation of the new service delivery model unfolded. I deduced that future participants would be likely to experience similar issues and so I would undertake recorded reflective interviews instead of requesting written diaries or accounts. Thus, reducing the risk of the data collection process failing.

### **Pilot Interview**

The first interview was therefore arranged with Participant 2 at their organisation so as to reduce the commitment needed from them in terms of time and travel. I used my iPhone to record the interview and I thought it would take about an hour. The terms of the meeting were set out and I started by asking them to give a general overview of the journey so far – “*How was it for you professionally and personally?*” I was encouraged by how easily and eloquently the participant spoke of their experience and as the



interview proceeded they were increasingly able to reflect in some depth. I had some prompt questions prepared but these were not necessary, however, I did probe on some of the things they referred to. As the interview progressed I took brief notes of the issues discussed. The interview went on for longer than anticipated and as we had agreed to a series of interviews I drew it to a close soon after the hour had passed. Afterwards, I asked the participant for feedback and they said that

*“It was good to have the opportunity to reflect and discuss on my experience and the interview allowed me time to think in more about depth recent events at a very busy time”*

After the interview, it was my time to reflect. I thought about the process and decided that for future participants I would travel to their offices where possible. This would enable easier participation and it also gave me a chance to appreciate the context of the participating organisations. During the interview, I was making a few notes but this detracted from the participant's flow of speech and so I decided that in future I would only jot down words to prompt me in my later analysis of the data. I listened to the recording and undertook my first transcription. I was surprised at how long this took me. I am not a fast typist so one hours recording took me about 4 hours to transcribe. When I was listening to the recording it struck me that I was responding to the participant's account and was beginning to share my own thoughts and experiences with them. There were advantages to my professional background in the research topic and I believe that this encouraged participants to take part and to share their feelings without having to explain basic facts. However, at times, this was guiding the conversation and it was a valuable lesson to learn so that I was aware of this trait and potential bias that I may bring as a researcher with my relevant knowledge and experience. I decided that in future I would explain my professional background when talking about the terms of reference. I would restrict my input to prompting and unstructured questions with no commentary. Doody and Noonan (2013) suggest that researchers need to ask questions carefully, consider what to ask and how to phrase it appropriately, and know when to prompt participants and probe responses. They have to listen actively and note any new or interesting data the participant provides. This requires them to be good communicators and to possess good facilitation skills.

### 3.11.5 Reflective Interviews

The final research design employed a qualitative method of data capture using a series of unstructured reflective interviews with eleven participants from six organisations. I offered to travel to the participant's organisation to conduct the interview and seven took up the offer. Four participants were interviewed at my office. Although there was an agenda the interviews were to be unstructured, open-ended and in depth which would provide breadth and richness to the data obtained (Denzin and Lincoln, 2008). Some of these in-depth interviews were iterative over the period of transformation whilst others were single events to explore experiences at various stages of transformation. Each interview lasted for about one hour, was recorded and fully transcribed at a later date. I had 20 years' experience in working in a local authority Environmental Health Service and in the specific technical areas being investigated which placed me directly inside the study context, with knowledge of what the job entails and the stresses and strains therein (Robson, 2002). Therefore, there was a position of trust between myself and the participants based upon specialist knowledge of the service under review (Harris, 2005). Unstructured interviews are considered informal, with no pre-determined questions, but there were clear aspects to be explored. In this research design, the interviews were pre-arranged with arrangements to meet in a controlled space which Saunders *et al.* (2016) suggest is a formal arrangement for an informal process. All data collected was kept anonymously and the participating organisations are not named. Ethical approval for this study was granted by Middlesex University, School of Science and Technology, Natural Sciences Ethics sub-Committee.

Sharing thoughts with others could be seen as a step further towards raising the level of reflection (Hewitt, 2017) and Cooper (2014) proposes that a reflective conversation with a partner, which allows for the development of shared understandings, is a vehicle for learning and autonomy. A key characteristic of critical reflective learning is that it requires one to move away from the immediate to take a broader view. Cooper (2014) goes on to say that doing so enables reflective practice to shift from problem-solving towards active collective reflection which can be useful in my research aim of identifying lessons learned from the experience of change. The interviews intended to generate deeply contextual accounts of participants' experiences and their interpretation of them to identify lessons learned. The interaction that took place during interviews between myself and the participants could be beneficial for the participants and provided them with the opportunity to explore events in their lives (Doody and Noonan, 2013). For this research, it was decided that unstructured interviews would be most appropriate. An unstructured

interview often starts with a broad, open question concerning the area of study, with subsequent questions dependent on the participant's responses. However, no interview is entirely devoid of structure and whilst I was not looking for particular information and needed flexibility, there was an interview guide, comprising themes rather than specific questions. This enabled the participant's thoughts and interests to be explored in depth, which, in turn, generated rich data. The strengths of such interviews are that they do not restrict the questions that can be asked and are useful when little is known about a topic or in collecting background data. Advantages and disadvantages are summarised in Table 3.5 (Doody and Noonan, 2013).

**Table 3.5: Advantages and Disadvantages of Interviews for Data Collection (adapted from Doody and Noonan, 2013)**

<b>Advantages and disadvantages of interviews for data collection</b>	
<b>Advantages</b>	<b>Disadvantages</b>
They are useful to gain insight and context	They may seem intrusive to the participant
They help participants describe what is important to them.	They are time-consuming, not only in terms of conducting them but also in relation to arranging them, travelling to the venue, post-interview transcription and analysis of the data.
They are useful in generating quotes and stories	They are susceptible to bias, which may include:
They enable the researcher to develop a rapport	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The participant's desire to please the researcher.</li> <li>• Saying what they think/feel the researcher wishes to hear, such as giving an official point of view rather than their personal view.</li> <li>• The desire to create a good impression may lead to participants not answering honestly.</li> <li>• There is a tendency to say something rather than nothing if the participant cannot answer a question or has nothing to say on a topic.</li> <li>• The researcher's views can influence the participant's responses by expressing surprise or disapproval.</li> </ul>
They give the researcher the opportunity to observe as well as listen	
They enable more complex questions to be asked	
The researcher can explain the purpose of the research and answer any questions the participant may have about the study.	
The researcher can probe the participant's responses and seek further clarification.	
Participants can seek clarification of a question	
They help the participant to give detailed responses Interviews can be rewarding for participants as they stimulate self-exploration and discovery.	

Table 3.6 summarises the detail of the background of each of the participants and the data collection process.

**Table 3.6: Background of Participants and the Data Collection Process**

Part.	Background of participant and data collection process
1	Participant 1 was an alumnus of the BSc Environmental Health at Middlesex University and a frontline EHO. As we were unable to meet in person their experience was recorded by way of a reflective statement about their experience of the early stages of outsourcing. They no longer worked at the organisation in question. They spoke candidly about her experience and feelings at the time of the proposed changes.
2	Participant 2 was an Environmental Health Service manager who had been closely involved in the change process and the subsequent delivery of the change. My first recorded interview was with Participant 2 and some lessons were learned when listening back to this interview about how not to lead the participant and to reduce my own bias as the researcher. We met at the organisation's offices on 5 occasions over an 18 month period. Initially, Each time we met we recorded a reflection on the most recent implementation of the change and ongoing service delivery as the new model was rolled out. They were enthusiastic each time we met.
3	Participant 3 was a Strategic Director and had been in a position of both running the service and commissioning its outsourcing. We met at the organisation's offices and the reflective interview was recorded. They were candid and enthusiastic about each part of their experience and shortly after the interview they retired from the organisation.
4	Participant 4 was a front line EHO who had been part of a working group during a consultation period regarding a regional shared service plan. We met at the organisation's office and the reflective interview was recorded. They were able to offer their views on a range of experiences as the consultation period had progressed. It was interesting to see how their views had changed.
5	Participant 5 was known to me as they came to speak to my students on some occasions. We met at my office and the reflective interview was recorded. They were a Principal EHO at the organisation and had worked there for many years. They spoke candidly about their experience and concerns about the process and the influence on how they worked and felt.
6	Participant 6 was a chief executive of the professional body and had acted as a consultant on many of the types of the researched service delivery models We met at their organisation's head office. They were very interested in the research and were happy to discuss their views in full. The strategic view was valuable to the study. Shortly after the interview, they retired.
7	Participant 7 was an ex-director of environmental services which covered a wide range of local authority departments including Environmental Health. We met at my office and the reflective interview was recorded. They were happy to share their extensive experience of sharing services with neighbouring local authorities. Their reflection was in depth from both a personal and professional perspective.
8	Participant 8 was an alumnus of the B.Sc. Environmental Health at Middlesex University and an Environmental Health Service manager. We met at the organisation's offices and the reflective interview was recorded. They were interviewed with a colleague (participant 11) who had worked with them on sharing services. They shared their views on their own area which was very specific. The interview was not planned in this way but the logistics prevented a separate interview being carried out.
9	Participant 9 was the chair of an Environmental Health professional association and was an ex-head of an Environmental Health Service. We met at my office. They had experience of many of the models under consideration. They spoke freely offering their views on a number of issues. Although they needed little prompting it was difficult to keep them to the point.
10	Participant 10 was a recently retired Environmental Health Team Leader who had worked at an organisation who had undergone a lengthy consultation on creating a mutual organisation to deliver Environmental Health Services. We met at my office and the interview was recorded. They shared their views on the proposal and the difficulties presented which lead to the ultimate rejection of the model. Some valuable lessons here to be learnt!
11	Participant 11 was a Regulatory Service Manager from an urban Local authority who had set up a shared service with neighbouring (and much smaller) rural authority. The interview was conducted with participant 8. They shared some insightful learning points and planning and implementation which was augmented by participant 8's experience in a narrower field.

### **3.11.6 Conference Audience and Consultation**

The first stage of consultation was my presentation of a paper entitled 'Evolving models of Environmental Health Service delivery: a real-time experiment?' at the 115th CIEH National Conference 2015 (Appendix A). After the presentation of the paper, I ran a workshop which was designed to consult with the audience, who were mainly members of the CIEH. Large posters of the emerging themes were displayed around the room and the audience was invited to comment on the central themes by adding their comments on the posters using 'post-it' notes on the central themes of most interest to them. The participants were asked to comment as follows:

- Do you recognise these sub-themes in the outer circle?
- Do you agree or disagree that the sub-theme links to the central theme
- Would you like to add a sub-theme?
- Can you give us something of your experience in a sentence or two?

There were approximately 50 members of the audience and all of them participated in the process which was facilitated by myself and a colleague who circulated around the room, encouraging participation and taking notes of the conversations. This process had a 20-minute slot for completion and so posters (with added commentary via 'post-it' notes) were collected for later analysis and any suggested refinement of the themes. Photographs of the annotated posters were taken and digitally stored; these are presented in Appendices P, Q, R, S, T and U. Finally, an invitation was put out to those who would be willing to work as part of a regional focus group on the refinement of the themes (see Figure 3.6).

It was assumed that the conference audience would be Environmental Health Professionals and this was confirmed by the organiser of the workshop. However, it was not possible to collect details of their positions and employing organisations, ideally, they would have been asked to provide these details but the timeframe did not permit this. This workshop was deemed to a suitable process for a peer debriefing process, albeit with the proviso that the participants may not have been undergoing a change to a new model of service delivery. However, in 2015, all Environmental Health Professionals would have been subject to the same macro environment of retrenchment, reducing resources and a shrinking state. Those Environmental Health Professionals employed in local authorities would have been in services subject to swathing cuts and proposed changes to service, as evidenced by the literature review (see Sections 2.1, 2.3 and 2.4.).

## Your turn – a real time experiment!

- Posters of each emerging theme on the wall(s)
- Please choose one theme that you have most interest in
- Make any comments on the “post-it” note provided e.g.
  - Do you recognise these sub-themes in the outer circle?
  - Do you agree or disagree that the sub-theme links to the central theme?
  - Would you like to add a sub-theme?
  - Can you give us something of your experience in a sentence or two?
- Stick your “post it” note next to the outer sub theme that is most appropriate.
- **You need to be sat back down by 16.40 ready for the next presenter. I will be around afterwards for questions if we run short of time.**
- *Are you interested in taking part in a regional focus group to refine these themes? Forms for contact details at the door or email Ruth Plume –*

**Figure 3.6: Workshop extract from the presentation at 115th CIEH National Conference 2015**

The second stage of consultation involved three heads of Environmental Health Services from three organisations, who still offered their Environmental Health Service delivery via a traditional model and agreed to consider the findings. Three consultants were not sufficient to form regional focus groups (as suggested at the conference) but the volunteers were spread out geographically, one from Wales, one from Southwest England and one from London. The views of consultants from traditional models of service delivery were sought because they represented the intended audience for the toolkit (see Section 6). The toolkit was designed to present the final model (see Section 5.5) to senior managers embarking on a change to a new model of service delivery for their Environmental Health Service. Their individual views were sought about how to further refine the emergent themes into a product which could inform Environmental Health Services wishing to draw on the lessons learned from experiences of new models of service delivery. See Table 3.7 for detail of the consultant’s background and the data collection process and Table 3.8 for a summary of the profile of the consultants

**Table 3.7: Background of Consultants and the Data Collection Process**

<b>Consultant</b>	<b>Background of consultant and data collection process</b>
<b>CIEH Conference</b>	Around 50 CIEH conference attendees took part in the workshop. I was assisted by my supervisor in organising the workshop which followed my presentation. They all took part in capturing their views and annotating the theme concept posters. This exercise also recruited 3 consultant participants.
<b>12</b>	Participants 12, 13 and 14 were recruited from the CIEH workshop and during the conference dinner. They were all Head of Environmental Health Services which offered a traditional model of service delivery. (One in London, one in the South West of England and one from Wales). A conference paper and review proforma were emailed to them to complete and return which they all did. Their responses were detailed and they made some useful suggestions for a product which would be helpful for Local Authorities looking to make similar changes.
<b>13</b>	
<b>14</b>	

**Table 3.8: Summary profile of the consultants**

Consultant	Professional background	Role	Organisation type	Service Delivery Model	Type of interview	Relationship
CIEH Conference audience	Environmental Health Professionals (approx. 50 in number)	Various roles in Environmental Health	A mix of Private Sector and UK Local Authorities	All	Workshop to reflect on emerging themes	Indirect – response to a request
12	Qualified Environmental Health Practitioner	Head of Environmental Health	English Rural Local Authority	Traditional	Consultative Review	Indirect – response to a request
13	Qualified Environmental Health Practitioner	Head of Environmental Health	London Local Authority	Traditional	Consultative Review	Indirect – response to a request
14	Qualified Environmental Health Practitioner	Head of Environmental Health	Welsh Local Authority	Traditional	Consultative Review	Indirect – response to a request



Following the first stage of the consultation, the emerging themes were refined, summarised and presented to The International Conference on Urban Risks (ICUR) which was held in Lisbon, Portugal in June 2016. The accompanying paper entitled 'Responding to the risk of reducing resource: A study of the evolution of English Environmental Health Services' (Appendix C) was published in the conference proceedings. This was considered to be part of the second stage of the consultation process. The three consultant Heads of Environmental Health Services were presented with the paper 'Responding to the risk of reducing resource: A study of the evolution of English Environmental Health Services' and were asked to comment as follows (see Appendix J for the consultant review proforma):

- To read and consider the content of the paper and to add your commentary in the light of your past and or current experience of managing Environmental Health Services in a climate of reducing resource and potentially evolving service models;
- To consider how the emergent themes presented in the paper might be developed into a product which can facilitate Environmental Health Services wishing to draw on the lessons learned to inform their future practice.

The consultants were also asked to consider the following questions

- What findings would be most useful for Environmental Health Service managers?
- How could the lessons learned be drawn on to inform future service development?
- What format might be most accessible?
- How could the information be made most accessible?
- Anything else you think should be taken into consideration when disseminating the findings.

The consultant's commentary allowed for further analysis of the findings which resulted in an overarching set of themes which were drawn from the earlier refinement of the central themes, their sub-themes and the consultation.

The ICUR conference organisers selected the paper to be submitted to a special urban risks edition of the International Journal of Disaster Risk Reduction. The 2016 paper was edited to include a presentation of overarching themes and entitled 'Responding to the

risk of reducing resources: Development of a framework for future change programmes in Environmental Health Services' and was published in April 2018 (Appendix E).

The final stage of the analysis, including the overarching themes, were presented to the ComplianceNet Inaugural Conference: Measuring Compliance in the 21st Century, June 1-2, 2018, University of California, Irvine School of Law.

### **3.12 Data Analysis and Theory Development**

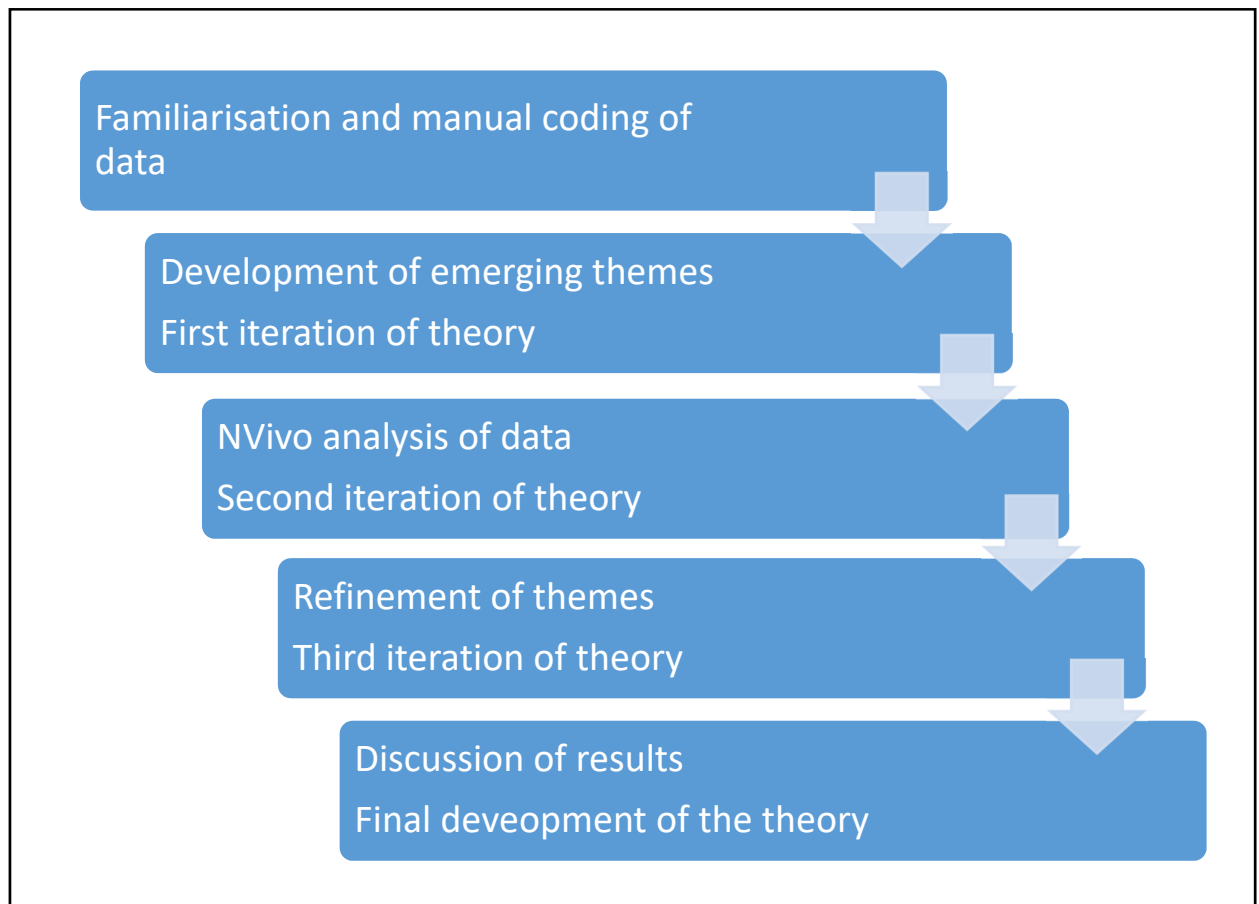
The following questions suggested by Couch *et al.* (2012) citing Mays and Pope (2000) offer a determination of whether the conclusions of a qualitative study are valid and will be worth visiting at the conclusion of the study:

- How well does this analysis explain why people behave in the way they do?
- How comprehensible would this explanation be to a thoughtful participant in the setting?
- How well does the explanation cohere with what we already know?

(Mays and Pope, 2000).

The initial coding of the data was the foundation for the development of the theory. In the early stages of data analysis, it was important to code openly as the emerging ideas were not constrained into the framework of a theory. However, coding is the fundamental analytic process that transports researchers and their data from transcript to theory (Walker and Myrick, 2006), Therefore, there is a transformative stage from early coding to theory development.

In this research it was proposed that a structure was needed for the development of theory and thematic diagrams was used to present the findings, based on the parent/child nodes allowed for by the software package NVivo 11 (Bazeley and Jackson, 2013). The initial stage of 'open coding' by the researcher of the data and the presentation as thematic diagrams allowed for the suggestion by Glaser and Strauss of a well-codified set of propositions. Figure 3.7 sets out the key stages of data analysis and theory development



**Figure 3.7: Data Analysis and Theory Development**

Thematic analysis was employed to identify, analyse and report on patterns (themes) within the data. The thematic analysis followed phases as suggested by Braun and Clarke (2006). The recorded interviews were transcribed which provided an opportunity for familiarisation with the data. The transcriptions were searched manually to find repeated patterns of meaning and issues of potential interest in relation to the research question. Initial codes for the data were identified from repeated words or comparative phrases and the codes were organised into meaningful groups in relation to the research question. The next phase was to consider how these data codes may combine to develop emerging themes. The data codes were organised into thematic maps where the data codes were considered as influencing sub-themes which linked to a main central theme.

The primary data was collected as interviews which were recorded and transcribed, organisational documents and consultation. Denzin and Lincoln (2008) suggest that tape or video recordings of interviews and focus groups can be analysed using conversational analysis. Interviews were considered as accurate descriptions of experience and the analysis involved systematic coding, grouping or summarising the descriptions and provided a coherent organising framework (Silverman, 1997). The Miles and Huberman approach, which provides a general framework for conceptualising qualitative data

analysis, sees concurrent flows of activity: data reduction, data display and conclusion drawing. This approach was followed to ensure that the data was manageable and that patterns were noted from which structures and mechanisms are positioned. Robson (2002)

### **3.12.1 Organisation of the Data**

During data collection, it was very important that good records were kept. Interview recordings were checked and stored in a central database. The database was maintained for each participant including, organisational documents, interview arrangements, participant information provided, signed consent forms, the recording and the transcript. A written record of the interview arrangements was kept in a book along with any notes made. This primary stage gave the opportunity to form initial ideas about potential coding. The study produced a substantial quantity of qualitative data and a software package, NVivo 11, was used to ease the data analysis process. The transcribed interviews and associated organisational documents were uploaded to NVivo 11 as raw data for later analysis.

### **3.12.2 Stage 2: Familiarisation with the Data and Manual Coding**

In this study manual coding of the data was carried out as the first stage of data analysis. This is considered to be an editing approach to qualitative analysis by Robson (2002) where the researcher is immersed in the data to produce the initial codes rather than determining codes from the research question. Nowell *et al.* (2017) point out that, when conducting data analysis, the researcher becomes the instrument for analysis, making judgments about coding, theming, decontextualizing, and re-contextualizing the data. The research approach set out processes for conducting, documenting, and evaluating data analysis, but it was my responsibility as the researcher to assure rigour and trustworthiness. Therefore, it was, necessary to demonstrate how data analysis had been conducted through recording, systematizing, and disclosing the methods of analysis with enough detail to enable the reader to determine whether the process is credible. Clearly, the quality of the analyst is central to the interpretation of the data and hence the value of the outcomes. Table 3.9 considers the deficiencies of humans as analysts. Strategies which develop a more systematic approach helped to overcome these difficulties. Examples include: The data collection was considered complete once a representative sample had been achieved which limited the amount of the data that needed to be handled; Refinement of the data coding took place as the analysis

progressed with all data being revisited; Use of a codebook to standardise the data coding and not relying on the number of references to themes as an inclusion measure.

A rigorous thematic analysis can produce trustworthy and insightful findings (Braun and Clarke, 2006). However, there is no clear agreement about how researchers can rigorously apply the method and Nowell *et al.* (2017) suggest a step-by-step approach which can be used as a purposeful approach to thematic analysis. It was important to recognize that the process of data collection, data analysis, and report writing are not always distinct steps and are often integrated in qualitative research (Creswell and Poth, 2018). Saunders *et al.* (2016) suggest that there are various sources and types of code driven by the data itself and by the theory. Codes driven by the data were derived by the researcher and by the actual terms used by participants.

**Table 3.9: Deficiencies of the Human as Analyst**

1	<b>Data overload</b>	<i>Limitations on the amount of data that can be dealt with (too much to receive, process and remember.)</i>
2	<b>First impressions</b>	<i>Early input makes a large impression so that subsequent revision is resisted.</i>
3	<b>Information availability</b>	<i>Information which is difficult to get hold of gets less attention than that which is easier to obtain.</i>
4	<b>Positive instances</b>	<i>There is a tendency to ignore information conflicting with hypotheses already held.</i>
5	<b>Internal consistency</b>	<i>There is a tendency to discount the novel and unusual.</i>
6	<b>Uneven reliability</b>	<i>The fact that some sources are more reliable than others tends to be ignored.</i>
7	<b>Missing information</b>	<i>Something for which information is complete tends to be devalued.</i>
8	<b>Revision of hypothesis</b>	<i>There is a tendency to over- or to under-react to new information.</i>
9	<b>Fictional base</b>	<i>The tendency to compare with a base or average when no base data is available.</i>
10	<b>Confidence in judgement</b>	<i>Excessive confidence is rested in one's judgement already made.</i>
11	<b>Co-occurrence</b>	<i>Co-occurrence tends to be interpreted as strong evidence for correlation.</i>
12	<b>Inconsistency</b>	<i>Repeated evaluation of the same data tends to differ.</i>

Source: Robson (2002, p460)

The manual coding began during the first interview in the form of the notes of themes emerging from the participants' reflection. The manual coding was developed during the interview transcription stage into a set of one-word codes either derived by the researcher from the data (e.g. from phrases or sentences) or from actual words used by participants. The research aims and objectives were used as terms of reference for creating the codes. As the interviews and transcriptions continued, the manual codes were added to and refined. At this stage, NVivo 11 was used to record and organise the

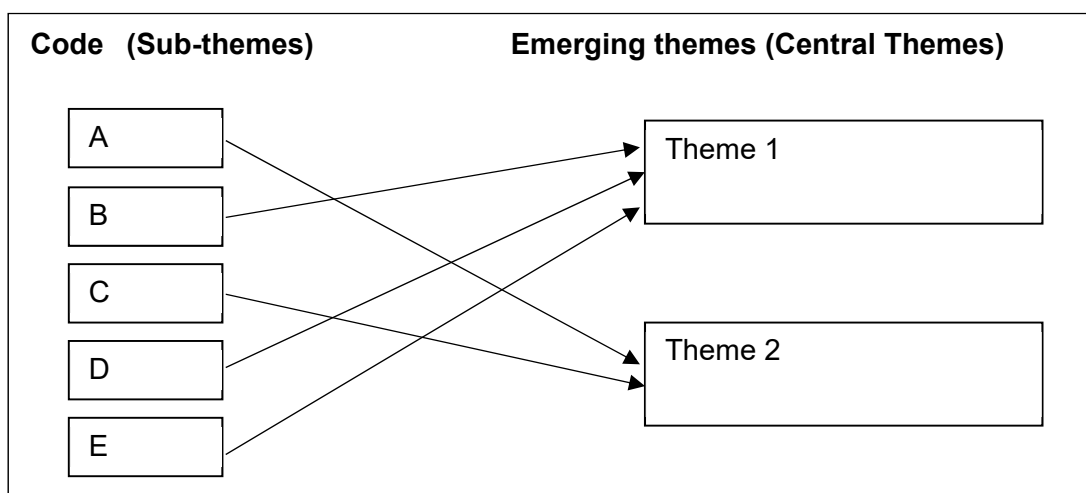
data and the coding but the coding itself was carried out manually by the researcher. Code manuals can serve as a data management tool for organising segments of similar or related text to assist in interpretation, providing a clear trail of evidence for the credibility of the study (Nowell *et al.*, 2017). A codebook (Appendix M) was produced which outlined a description for each code which allowed for a consistent approach. In this research, there was only myself coding but a codebook did allow for replication of the method. Ideally, you would have a team of researchers each coding the data using the manual and then comparing the results to ensure triangulation.

### 3.12.3 Stage 3: Searching for themes

The searching for themes began once all of the data had been coded and collated. Searching for themes involves judgement from the researcher and the suggestion from Saunders *et.al.* (2015) for some initial questions was followed:

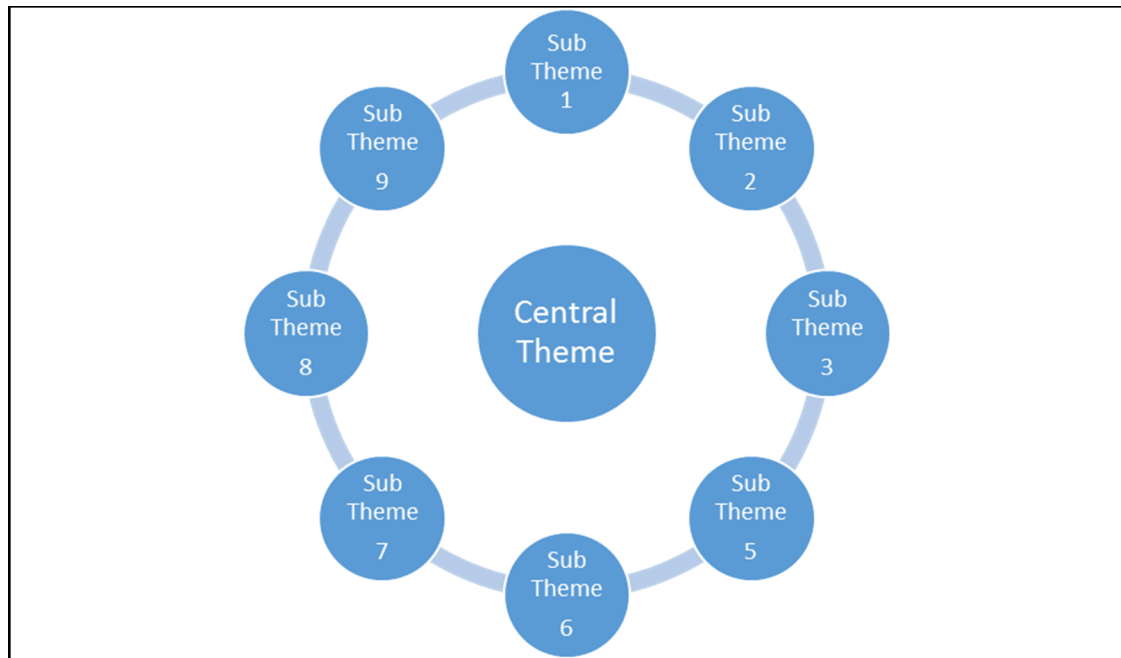
- What are the key concepts in these codes?
- What, if anything, seems to be recurring in these codes?
- What seems to be important, whether it recurs often or not?
- What patterns and/or trends are evident in the coded data?
- Which codes appear to be related?
- How does a particular set of codes appear to be related?

This was an inductive approach and the themes were closely related to the data and the earlier coding. Although this stage relies on the judgement of the researcher it was important to document the process to ensure verification and to develop a model which demonstrated how the themes were derived from codes (see Figure 3.8).



**Figure 3.8: Development of Emerging (Central) Themes**

All of the codes which had been developed were linked to the emerging themes using the model in Figure 3.8. Next, each of the central themes was presented using a themed concept model (see Figure 3.9).



**Figure 3.9: Emerging (Central) Theme Model.**

This approach is supported by Nowell *et al.* (2017) who espouse that the flexibility of a thematic analysis is that it allows researcher judgment to determine themes in a number of ways. However, the importance of a consistent approach within a particular analysis is emphasised. Researchers might use tables, templates, code manuals, or mind maps (Braun and Clarke, 2006). These central themes can be seen as ‘organising themes’ which are derived from ‘basic themes’ (Sub-themes). These type of thematic networks, such as my emerging theme model, may be used to create a web-like network to organize codes and themes, making the procedures employed in going from text to interpretation explicit (Attride-Stirling, 2001).

#### **3.12.4 Stage 4: NVivo to extract content**

Bazeley and Jackson (2013) suggest that NVivo can be used to manage data from various sources and that it can manage ideas linking it directly to the data sources. This is a very helpful function and the coding of the data using NVivo to record the results enabled the direct linking of codes to participant quotes. Once the coding was completed this, in turn, enabled an in-depth analysis of the data to be carried out. Coding density for each data source and for each code was explored to enable indexing of potential

contextual influences. NVivo was used to assist the project analysis in the querying of the data and to visualise content, structure and relationships of data. It is also useful as a reporting tool. Once the initial set of codes had been produced a word frequency query was run with NVivo to assist with the production of the codebook and to pick up on potentially missed codes. A word frequency query catalogues the words used most often in the data and can relate the words to the data sources. NVivo was also used to visualise relationships between codes and themes. Directional relationships were created to record relationships between nodes and to create models which visualised the relationships. This is a useful tool in mapping evolving theoretical connections. In this research, NVivo was therefore used as a data management tool and to ensure a methodical and rigorous approach. However, the interpretation and analysis of the data remain a function of the researcher.

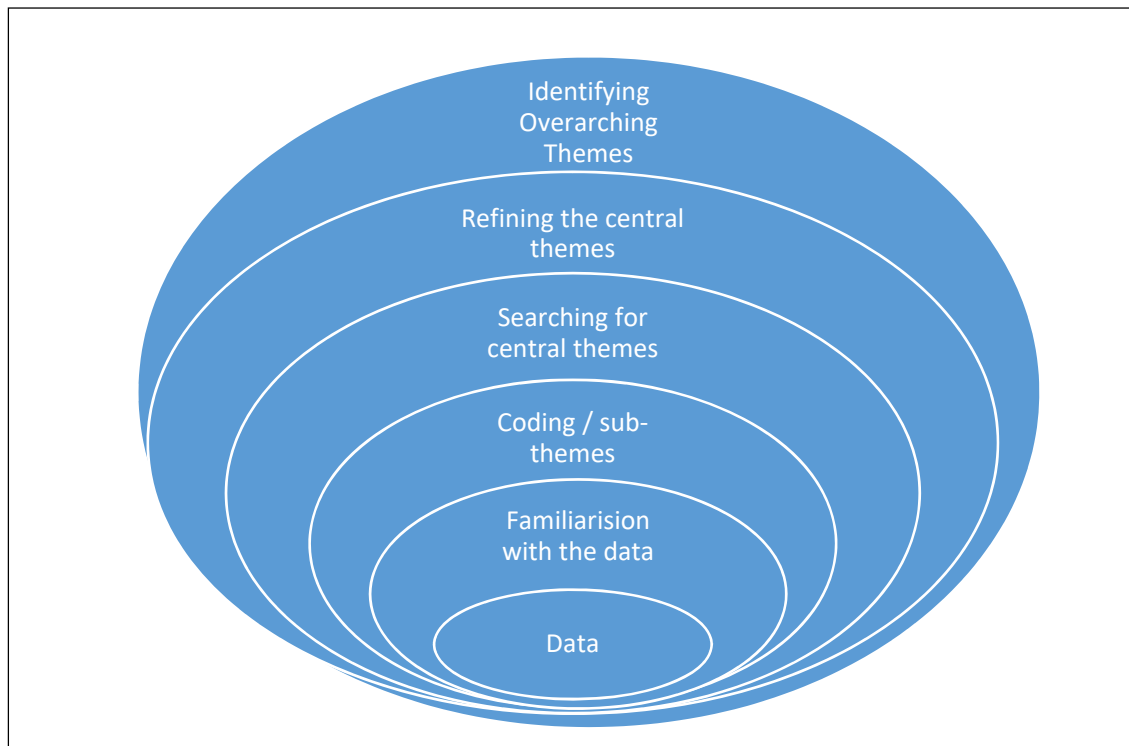
### **3.12.5 Stage 5: Refining the themes**

Refining the themes was undertaken by a combination of consultation with the profession (see Section 3.11.6). This debriefing approach is supported by Nowell *et al.* (2017) as being helpful in identifying if the themes are clear and concise and if a line can be drawn for refining the themes. A further check was made by a review of the data stored in the project on NVivo and analysing the supporting data for each theme. Where there was little supporting data then a code was removed or amalgamated with another, if similar. Some data was coded to more than one theme and this is possible, but where it occurred there was a review to ensure there was not a duplication. A detailed analysis was undertaken for each individual theme, identifying the story that each theme tells and ensuring that the findings are credible and linked to the data.

Relationships between the themes were revised and NVivo was used to re-examine the data that had been coded to the revised themes. The re-reading of the data attached to each theme allowed for evaluation whether these data supported the continuation of the theme, or whether there was insufficient data to sustain it (Saunders *et al.* 2016). The thematic models were revised to take the refinements into account and were presented to the ICUR conference in July 2016 as a further part of the consultation process. The audience was drawn from players involved in urban risk-related issues, as well as for different stakeholders. The findings were therefore considered to be of interest to audiences outside of the UK environmental health field.



Finally, where there are codes applied to multiple themes these were reviewed and Overarching Themes were identified as suggested by Attride-Stirling (2001). Figure 3.10 summarises the thematic analysis process.



**Figure 3.10: Summary of the Thematic Analysis**

### **3.13 Personal Reflection on the Research Process**

It is worth reflecting on the challenges from the process of data collection and data analysis. In the summer of 2017, I gave a presentation at the Middlesex University Research Students' Summer Conference 2017 -The Power of Research (Appendix F) and I took the opportunity to reflect on the experience of research in a complex and changing environment. The very reason that the research was relevant was the climate of reducing resource in local government and central governments change agenda of 'Better Regulation'. Therefore, this was a rapidly changing environment with local authorities making radical decisions on how to suffer the cuts whilst delivering essential services. This climate made recruiting participants difficult as they were already under considerable pressure. A politically unstable environment during the data collection time also offered some challenges as the direction of travel for these services was uncertain. Initially, it was difficult to pin down the research question but the decision to examine the experience of change itself overcame some of the issues. It was important to be able to

flex the research design in such a challenging environment so that the barriers identified could be overcome in a dynamic manner. I realised that a clear purpose of the study made it easy to explain and so the research aim of identifying 'Lessons Learned' was appropriate. It was important to review and expand the research scope as time progressed and this was successfully achieved with a revised learning agreement to reflect the evolution of the project design which was submitted in March 2017 and subsequently approved by the panel.

At times, I felt that I was making little or no progress and the opportunity to disseminate my early findings at National and International Conferences gave me the chance to take stock, analyse my findings so far and to inform the on-going data analysis. More recently, opportunities to form a panel at the ComplianceNet First Annual Conference 'Measuring Compliance in the 21st Century' Irvine, California at UC Irvine, in June 2018 (Appendix D) and a paper being selected by conference organisers for submission to the International Journal of Disaster Risk Reduction special edition has provided a means of closure of the process of data analysis.

### **3.14 Time Horizons and Project Milestones**

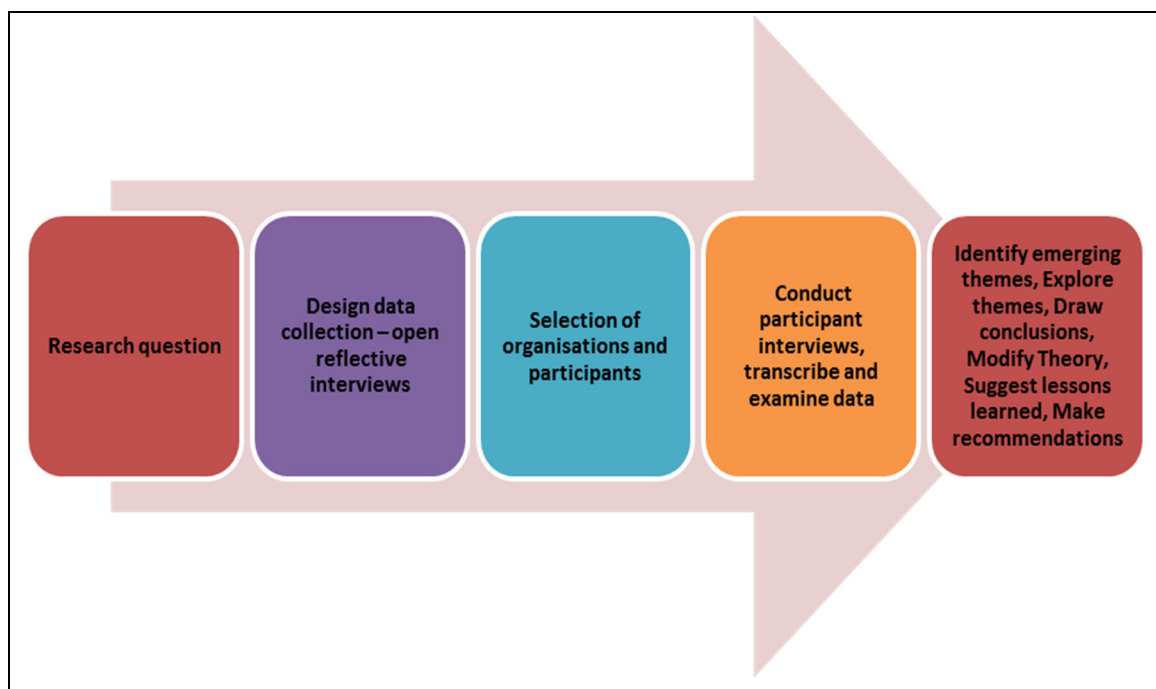
The key project milestones are summarised in Table 3.10: The initial study for my professional doctorate was undertaken in 2008 and 2009 with ethical approval being obtained in 2009 for the initial project proposal which was to be 320 credits and was an in-depth case study of a private company delivering a statutory public service. Due to family illness and the subsequent interruption of study the project was not started at this time. The learning agreement was updated in 2014 and the project expanded to include multiple organisations. Data collection was undertaken from 2014-2016. In 2017 the final learning agreement was approved to allow for the project to be worth 360 credits. The project findings will now have a national impact for Environmental Health Service providers and leaders who are considering new models of service delivery in a climate of reducing resource and political change.

**Table 3.10: Key Project Milestones**

Milestone	Date
IPH4014 Programme Planning and Rational completed and approved by Middlesex University (320 credit project) <b>Completed</b>	October 2008
Ethical approval from Middlesex University Natural Sciences Ethics Sub-Committee <b>Approved</b>	July 2009
Learning agreement and ethical approval updated to reflect the expanded scope of the project and the more extensive research and data collection. (360 credit project) <b>Approved</b>	March 2017
<b>Data collection</b>	<b>2014-2016</b>
<b>Data analysis</b>	<b>2016-2018</b>

### 3.15 Conclusion

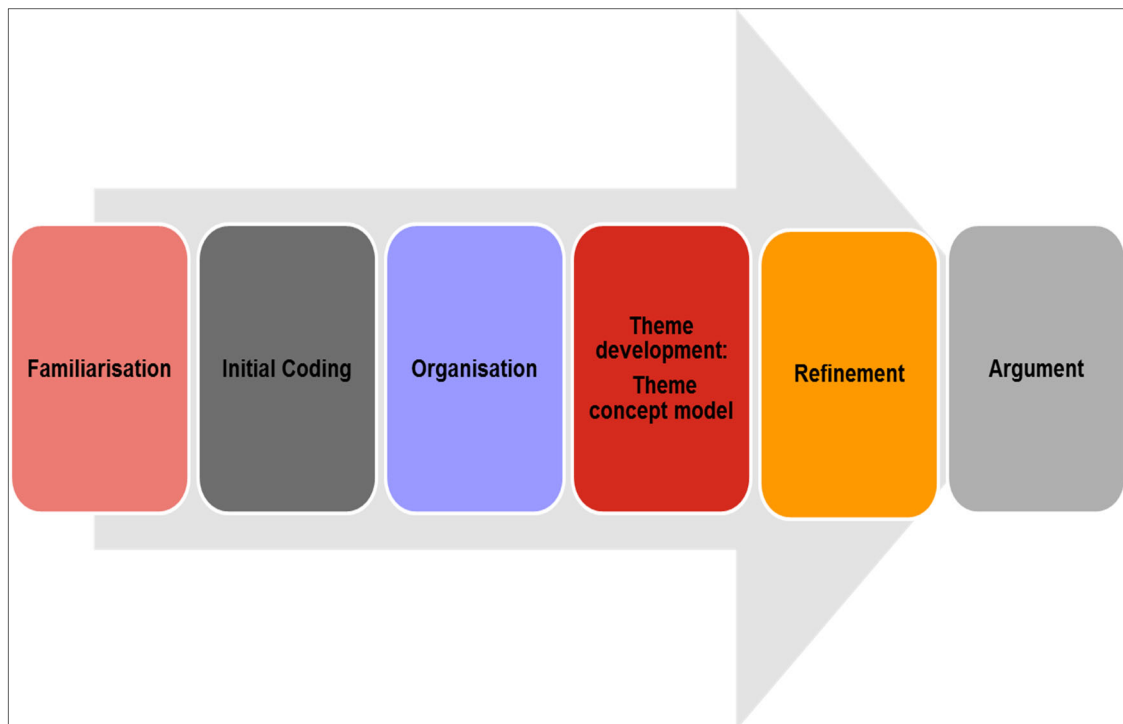
This chapter has discussed the theoretical perspective and explained that this study adopted an inductive generation of theory. My epistemological position is most suited to that of Relativism which indicates that qualitative research methods and tools will be more appropriate for the research design. It has explained why an exploratory process research design has been chosen and the data collection methods that have been selected. The research design is summarised in Figure 3.11.



**Figure 3.11: Summary of the Research Design**

The four main project activities in relation to the data collection began with the literature review which highlighted the emergent risks of delivering Environmental Health Services in a climate of reducing resource and identified a range of responses. This informed the selection of organisations who were delivering ‘non-traditional models’ of Environmental Health Service delivery were included in the research. Selection of participants followed based on the organisations to be included and a range of participants was chosen based on their role in novel delivery of services. After some initial adaptation of the research design, reflective interviews were carried out and transcriptions were made.

Finally, this chapter went on to explain how the data was analysed to ensure reliability, validity and rigour so that evidenced conclusions and propositions to develop theory can be made. The data analysis process is summarised in Figure 3.12.



**Figure 3.12: Summary of Data Analysis**

The analysis was carried out and emerging themes were identified and disseminated. Expert consultation was undertaken to ensure that the findings were refined and the best method of dissemination was selected. These project activities were supplemented by the dissemination of the findings to the international risk and regulation community.

## **4 RESEARCH FINDINGS**

### **4.1 Introduction**

The review of the literature informed the selection of the organisations and participants as described in Chapter 3. Section 4.2 of this chapter presents the initial manual coding from the first analysis of the reflective interviews and Section 4.3 presents the emerging central themes. Section 4.4 describes the development of a codebook which informed the subsequent thematic analysis of organisational documents and the reflective interviews. Section 4.5 sets out the six emerging central themes and details the influencing sub-themes with participant responses. Finally, Section 4.6 presents a cross-theme analysis.

### **4.2 Initial Coding**

The first stage of the coding was carried out during the interview process. For each participant, the interview was recorded for later transcription which freed the researcher to make brief notes of the themes that were being described by the participant. The interview notes were retained for later reference and were used to initiate the early codes and Appendix K is an example of how this was recorded in the researcher's notebook. These early codes were the initiation of the manual coding process which was advanced by subsequent examination of the interview transcripts.

The recorded interviews were then transcribed and this provided an opportunity for further familiarisation with the data. The transcription of the interviews allowed for immersion into the data and provided the opportunity for the transcriptions to be searched manually to find repeated patterns of meaning and issues of potential interest in relation to the research question. Initial codes for the data were identified from the subjects that the participants found most informative for their reflection and which provided the opportunity to learn from their experience. As each emerging code was identified – it was categorised with either a previously identified code, or a new code was generated.

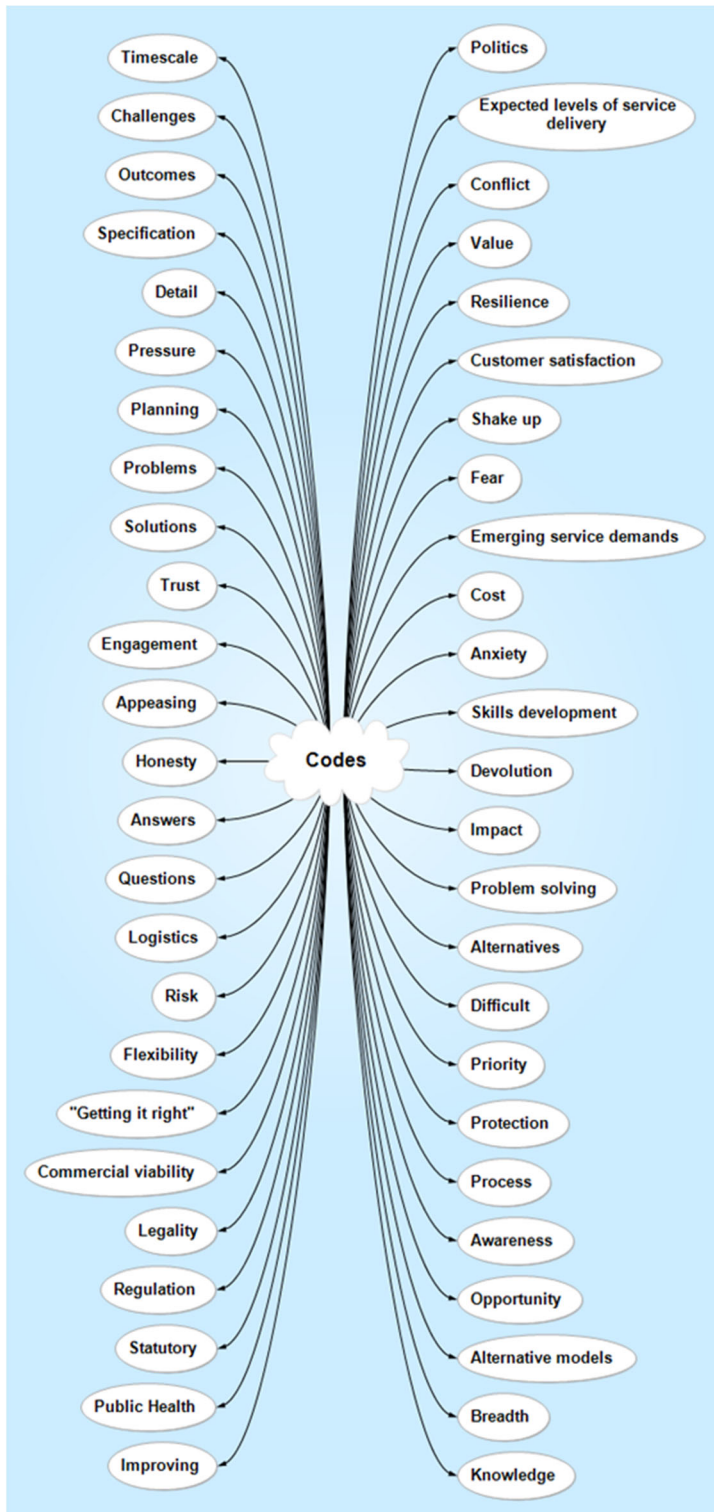
As the interviews continued the manual coding became more complex, and so the transcripts were uploaded onto an NVivo database which aided the management of the data. At this stage, the manual coding of the data continued but was now catalogued in an NVivo project. NVivo has many useful functions which were used to support the data analysis. To assist with the initial coding a word frequency enquiry was carried out which

searched the selected text and identified the most frequently used words. Bazeley and Jackson (2013) advise caution regarding text mining tools and searching text for meaning involves much more than identifying keywords. However, it was deemed appropriate to go through the process to see if word frequency could inform the interpretation of the words used by the participants. A word frequency enquiry was carried out on the transcription of all participants and the keywords or similar which occurred more than 1000 times are shown in Appendix L. Predictably, this was not especially helpful and the keywords identified such as 'going', think' and 'well' did not further inform the interpretation of the text and the meaning behind the keywords was not manifested (see Figure 4.1).

going	services	work	people	got	local	point	back	bit	happen	deliver	barnet	always	take	big	talk
		things	authorities	one	different	year	council	change	put	model	actually	around	good	done	yes
think	get						quite	still	some	staff	trying	area	better	view	end
		just	ot	want	managemen	environme	looking	need	job	course	public	first	difficult	regulat	pay
				part	way	now				housing	capita	standar	call	process	provide
well	see		know				make	used	contract	team	particul	system	compar	mean	whole
		really		like	time	sort	come	interest	someonc	governm	money	sure	food	whethe	might
												keep	much	saying	maybe
															project
															terms

**Figure 4.1: NVivo word frequency query**

The manual coding began during the first interview in the form of my notes of themes emerging from the participants' reflection. The manual coding was developed during the interview transcription stage into a set of one-word codes either derived by the researcher from the data (e.g. from phrases or sentences) or from actual words used by participants. The research aims and objectives were used as terms of reference for creating the codes. As the interviews and transcriptions continued, the manual codes were added to and refined. Initial codes for the data were identified from repeated words or comparative phrases. This early manual analysis of the interviews derived 50 initial codes which emerged from the manual analysis of the data were entered into an electronic table, the final version of which is presented in Figure 4.2. In this figure, the codes are presented in the order that they arose. Towards the end of the data collection process and manual analysis, the number of new codes dwindled to nothing which suggested that it was time to draw this stage of analysis to a close



**Figure 4.2: Initial codes derived from familiarisation with the data**

### 4.3 Identification of Sub-Themes

Once the data had been coded and collated into the 50 data codes, the next phase of the data analysis was to consider how these codes (sub-themes) may combine to develop emerging central themes. The data codes were organised into thematic maps where the data codes were considered as influencing sub-themes which linked to a main central theme. The first stage of this was to review the data codes and to align these to themes. As discussed in the methodology chapter the following questions were asked to establish the key concepts emerging from the 50 initial codes which were derived from the familiarisation with the data (Saunders et.al. 2015).

- What are the key concepts in these codes?
- What, if anything, seems to be recurring in these codes?
- What seems to be important, whether it recurs often or not?
- What patterns and/or trends are evident in the coded data?
- Which codes appear to be related?
- How are a set of codes related?

This research took an inductive approach which means that the themes identified are strongly related to the data and the thematic analysis is data driven even though the interpretation may be influenced by the researcher's epistemological position. In order to enhance the inductive approach, the researcher did not engage with the literature in the early stages of analysis (the manual data coding and identification of the themes). However, in the subsequent discussion of the thematic analysis, the more subtle aspects of the data were examined through the lens of the literature.

The outcome of this analysis was recorded on an NVivo11 project and six central themes emerged from the analysis of the 50 initial codes which are now regarded as sub-themes (see Table 4.1). Some sub-themes were influential for more than one central theme. It was helpful at this stage to use mind maps to articulate the central themes and the combination of the associated sub-themes. These mind maps are presented in the later sections of this chapter along with a detailed discussion of each theme.



**Table 4.1: The six central themes and their influencing sub-themes**

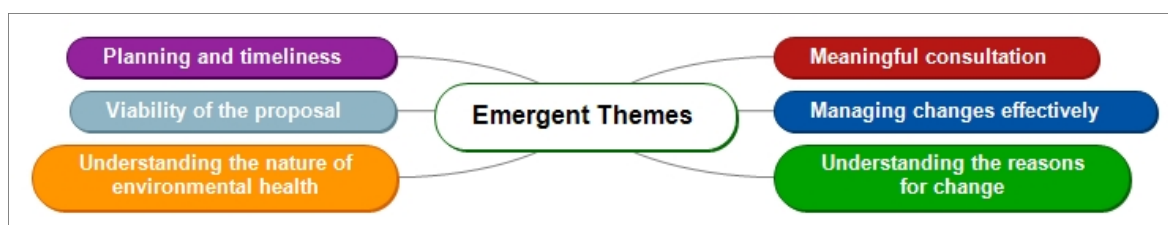
Central Theme	Influencing Sub-themes (codes)
<b>Meaningful Consultation</b>	Questions, Answers, Honesty, Not appeasing staff, Flexibility, Engagement, Trust, Solutions, Problems.
<b>Managing Changes Effectively</b>	Fear, Anxiety, Impact of Changes, Difficult, Process, Trust, Conflict, Customer satisfaction, Emerging service demands, Skills development.
<b>Understanding the Reasons for Change</b>	Politics, Value, Shake up needed, Cost, Devolution, Alternatives, Protection, Opportunity, Resilience
<b>Understanding the Nature of Environmental Health</b>	Problem-solving, Breadth, Knowledge, Improving public health, Statutory, Regulatory, Emerging service demands, Priority, Awareness.
<b>Viability of the Proposal</b>	Legality, Cost, Commercial viability, Getting it right, Alternative models, Emerging service demands, Flexibility, Workforce skills, Resilience, Risk, Logistics.
<b>Planning and Timeliness</b>	Planning, Pressure, Detail, Getting it right, Specification, Outcomes, Expected levels of service delivery, Risk, Challenges, Opportunities, Timescale.

#### 4.4 Development of a codebook

A codebook was developed in order to verify the thematic analysis and to demonstrate how the themes were derived from the codes. The codebook set out a description for each code which would allow for consistency in a research team and for repeatability in future research projects. However, there is a need to retain some flexibility as rigid rules are constraining in this context. In this research, the codes and themes developed aimed to accurately reflect the entire data set which allows for a rich overall description of the findings and is particularly useful in an under-researched area such as this where participant views have not been previously known (Braun and Clarke 2006). A codebook encompassing each of the emerging themes are presented in Appendix M.

#### 4.5 Emergent Themes

The six emergent central themes were developed from the data collected and aimed to represent the entire data set. The themes are represented in a ‘mind map’ shown in Figure 4.3.



**Figure 4.3: Emergent Themes**

Each emergent central theme will be represented by a colour coded mind map, discussed in detail and related back to the relevant research question in the summary of the sub-section. Research objective b) 'To identify lessons learned through exploration of experiences of key personnel involved in relevant change programmes from the early stages of the decision making through to the transition stages' is met by the data collection and the subsequent development of the central themes.

#### 4.5.1 Meaningful Consultation

The central theme of meaningful consultation is influenced by the following sub-themes: *Questions; Solutions; Honesty; Not appeasing staff; Flexibility; Engagement; Trust; Answers and Problems*

The central theme of meaningful consultation is represented in Figure 4.4.



**Figure 4.4:** Meaningful Consultation Thematic Diagram

Nine of the participants made references to the sub-themes that influenced meaningful consultation and Participant 4 made the highest number of references here (n=29). See Table 4.2 for more detail regarding participant references for 'Meaningful consultation'.

**Table 4.2: Participant references for the central theme: Meaningful consultation.**

Central Theme: Meaningful Consultation	
Participant (P)	References (R)
P1	10
P2 2 July 2014	3
P2 28 Aug 2014	2
P3	3
P4	29
P5	6
P7	11
P10	6
P11/8	3
<b>TOTAL P=9</b>	<b>TOTAL R=73</b>

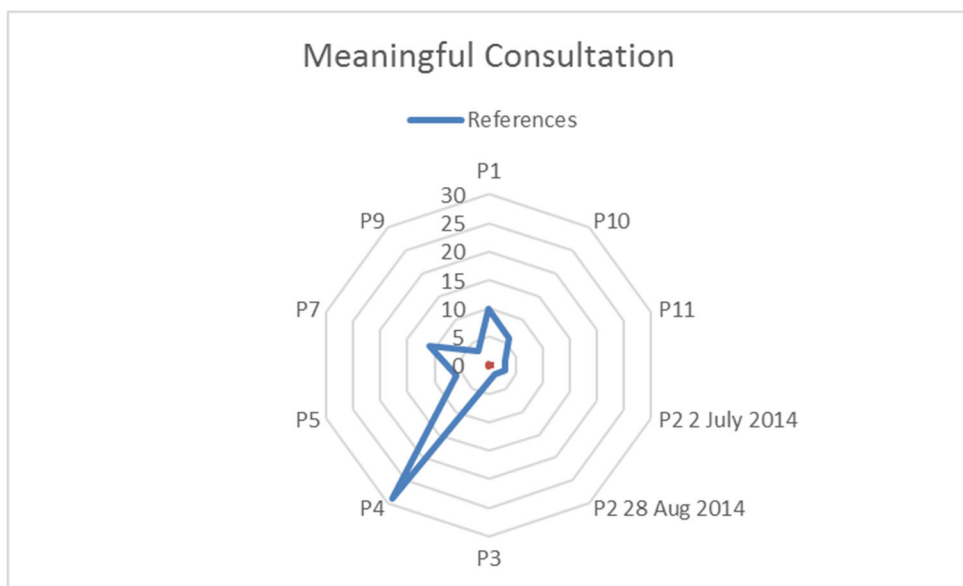


Table N1 and Table N2 (see Appendix N) show the details of the number of references the participants made to the sub-themes of 'Questions' and 'Answers'.

#### 4.5.1.1 Questions

Five participants made references to the sub-theme 'Questions' with a fairly even distribution of responses between them. Participant 1 suggested that the consultation process raised questions and led to uncertainty, whilst Participant 2 reflected that questions put together by the team and sent to the policy unit remained unanswered.

*“These consultation sessions generally raised more questions than answers and throughout the process, there was a feeling of growing uncertainty amongst my colleagues.” (Participant 1)*

Participant 5 raised issues of leaked reports which restricted the effectiveness of the consultation. This resulted in many questions being raised by trade unions.

*“There were various reports, leaks, blogs and all sorts of things going on and obviously trade unions beginning to be involved or asking questions.” (Participant 5)*

#### **4.5.1.2 Answers**

Three participants made references to the sub-theme ‘Answers’ with an even distribution of the number of references. Participant 4 spoke about their involvement in a staff consultation group and how it enabled the sharing of expertise which, in turn, provided answers to some of the questions raised. On the other hand, Participant 4 suggested that proposed contractual agreements which were put forward to answer some of the concerns were objected to.

“Joint contracts make employees more secure, in the end, unions objected too much and not in the interest of employees.” (Participant 3)

#### **4.5.1.3 Not appeasing staff**

Table N3 presents of number of references the participants made to the sub-theme of ‘Not appeasing staff’

Participant 1 and Participant 4 made references to ‘Not appeasing staff’: Both of these participants were involved in the planning and consultancy stages of new models of service delivery and so their views were pertinent to this issue. Participant 4 reflected on the change of tone as the consultation period progressed, with earlier promises of support being withdrawn and suggestions that staff can leave if they do not like what is on offer. Participant 1 felt that an option of sticking with traditional delivery of service was only there to appease.

*“The initial talks formed part of an options review process, one of which did include continuing with ‘in house’ services, although, to me, this option was there more to appease staff than it was to be progressed.” (Participant 1)*

#### **4.5.1.4 Honesty**

Table N4 sets out the participants’ references to the sub-theme ‘Honesty’. Eight participants made reference to ‘Honesty’ with Participant 4 having the largest number of references (n=6). Participant 4 was from an organisation that was at the planning and consultation stage for a regional shared Public Protection Service.

Participant 1 felt like they were being 'sold' the proposed changes,

*"I recall thinking that the overall impact of the changes had not been fully considered by those managing the project, or possibly that the full details were not being communicated to us ..... the whole process came across like a sales pitch" (Participant 1)*

Whereas, Participant 4 took a view that there was no dishonesty but rather a highlighting of the positive aspects of the change.

*"I don't think it was sold to us because they wanted to hoodwink anyone into going along with it. I think perhaps it was highlighting all the positives." (Participant 4)*

Participant 11 emphasised the need for honesty in discussing the different ways of working in organisations that will be sharing services and the importance of finding new ways of working. Participant 5 agreed that an honest discussion was important but that leaking of important information affected the honesty of the discussion. On the other hand, Participant 7 insisted that the options that their consultation put forward were real options and these were put out for a public vote which made the process transparent. However, most of the participants agreed with the view of Participant 1.

*"I recall thinking that the overall impact of the changes had not been fully considered by those managing the project, or possibly that the full details were not being communicated to us." (Participant 1).*

#### **4.5.1.5 Engagement**

Table N5 shows the detail of participant references for the sub-theme 'Engagement'. Ten of the eleven participants made reference to engagement with Participant 4 making the most references (n=7).

Participant 5 spoke about how the consultation lacked engagement and that consultants were employed to smooth the way towards a decision that had already been made. However, Participant 4 reported that they felt that the decision about which way to go hadn't been made.

Participant 2 points out there can be difficulties with engagement during the consultation period when the mechanisms are complex and research into the legal implications must be made before consulting with staff. Participant 10 reflected on a situation where a proposed change was announced without warning or consultation and how unsettling this was for staff.

*“just at that time, the Chief Executive announced without telling anybody that ..... was merging with ..... so we would be a joint service together and so consequently everything is then up in the air again” (Participant 10)*

Participant 11 referred to the importance of getting senior management to ‘buy in’ to proposed changes in order for the process to be successful:

*“Other councils set themselves on a direction of coming together and it just doesn’t happen if you don’t get the senior management delivery of the service bought into it” (Participant 11)*

Participant 3 talked about the importance of staff involvement in the setting out of a contract specification and also in assessing bids. They said that when a lot of staff were involved in writing and assessing bids, then this worked well in terms of quality and judgement of whether a company would be able to deliver the service. Participant 5 reinforced this view when referring to a negative experience where decisions were seen to be made ‘behind closed doors’ and how that left staff feeling disengaged and left guessing. On the other hand, Participant 4 was more positive as they were part of a staff consultation group and spoke about how this was an engaging process at the beginning of the consultation period. They reflected that it felt uplifting and exciting to take part in the consultation process.

Participant 7 spoke about their experience of engaging the community in the decision-making process and how this had a positive impact on the process of sharing services with a neighbouring local authority.

*“It worked almost seamlessly because there was that buy-in. The new leader and opposition sort of said, only 28,000 people had voted but I had to gently point out that that was more than had ever voted in any of the local elections....” (Participant 7).*

#### **4.5.1.6 Trust**

Issues of engagement are closely linked to ‘Trust’ and Table N6 details participant references to the sub-theme ‘Trust’. Six participants referred to trust and Participant 2, who was interviewed several times over an 18 month period, made most references (n=12).

‘Trust’ is a threading factor for the sub-themes of ‘Questions’, ‘Answers’, ‘Honesty’, ‘Not appealing staff’ and ‘Engagement’ and so it could be considered that the references to ‘Trust’ with respect to the central themes of ‘Meaningful consultation’ are multiple (n=75). ‘Trust’ also features in the central theme of ‘Managing changes effectively’. ‘Trust’

is therefore considered as one of the overarching themes in the final model which will be discussed in more detail later on in this chapter.

Participant 10 identified lacking trust and stakeholders wanting to maintain control as issues that may stop a mutualisation going forward

*“They’re bringing it together from the top and then trying to slot things in underneath as they can, but we’re pretty sure the aim of the Chief Executive is to completely outsource everything – all services. But his view is not necessarily the view of the councillors and it’s the councillors who don’t want to relinquish the control to other boroughs.” (Participant 10)*

Whereas, Participant 2 described a relationship between a local authority Environmental Health Service and an outsourcing bidder and pointed out the difference between a professional relationship and a trusting relationship.

*“It is not a trust relationship that you have, it is a professional relationship. Environmental Health is a very big and sprawling and unwieldy beast and we have Trading Standards as well. So this is an area where they have bought the professionals to deliver and they do have to have trust but I don’t think we gave them the benefit of depth on some things which would have helped to develop the initiative quicker.” (Participant 2)*

Participant 2 acknowledged that this was in the early stages of the relationship and it will be interesting to see if trust builds over time. They spoke about how you have to develop the trust and nurture the relationship. It was felt that the Environmental Health Team had done a good job so far in setting up the contract and that it was being strictly monitored, this should enable the trust to build. Participants reported that relationships in, and between, local authorities engender more trust as public services are similar in their set up. Even so, they do differ in culture and politically. Participants reflected on the difference in levels of trust in a new relationship with the private sector and how they had to earn back the trust previously enjoyed.

*“To be honest when we were in the council there was a lot of trust – we basically were a trusted team. We were seen as competent and we were trusted to do what we thought was the right thing. Our decisions were not challenged particularly – sometimes of course but not routinely..... now we have to earn back that trust that we had before. Also, there has been a lot of staff change so people do not know us in the same way as before. I fully understand – ..... is a monster company seen by everybody as lots of things. They kind of consume things and do a rubbish job and that is the press that you read about.” (Participant 2)*

Particularly telling was the comment from Participant 2 that no local authorities would benchmark with an outsourced Environmental Health Service and how they viewed the private sector as being hostile and not to be trusted.

*“Nobody would benchmark with us because they thought it was a way of us getting data on them and they were threatened by it.” (Participant 2)*

Participant 4 talked about planning to share services and raised issues of trust in this situation. There was a lack of trust regarding generous timescales promised and whether this would actually happen in the end. Participant 7 described how some public sector stakeholders viewed negotiations with contractors as ‘supping with the devil’. Next, we will consider the sub-themes of ‘Problems’, ‘Solutions’ and ‘Flexibility’.

#### **4.5.1.7 Problems**

Some participants were worried that the consultation period had not addressed the true nature of the work of Environmental Health Practitioners. For example, the use of time management matrixes to predict staff resources required, raised concerns that some of the richness and quality of service would be lost in an organisation that delivers a public service using business models such as time management. There were also concerns about the difficulties in delivering bespoke services to different LAs and having to make decisions about how to carry out the work differently according to the political direction of the area. Participants did not feel that this had been addressed in the consultation, probably because it was an unknown entity.

Eight participants referred to problems with three participants mentioning this more often. Two of these three participants were from shared service arrangements and one from a proposed mutualisation. Table N7 in the Appendix sets out participants references for the sub-theme ‘Problems’.

Participant 4 was worried that the service would become more light touch and would lose its richness. They were concerned that this might not be good for public health and would restrict their ability to refer issues on so that a better outcome is reached. There was a worry that they may no longer be able to find a solution. There were also concerns about the difficulties in delivering bespoke services to different Local Authorities and having to make decisions about how to carry out the work differently according to the political direction of the area. Participants did not feel that this had been addressed in the consultation probably because it was an unknown entity. Effective consultation will



acknowledge unknowns and build in flexibility around these in the eventual service design.

Participant 1 noted that the private sector and the public sector use very different terminology and that the language of the private sector did not sit well with public sector colleagues.

*“During staff consultations, two days were arranged where the bidders made presentations to those staff who would be affected by the outsourcing project. I remember taking away three things from this experience, the first was how different private sector terminology was from that used within Local Authorities, we were referred to as talent rather than individuals, this did not seem to sit well with the majority of staff.” (Participant 1)*

Participant 10 was concerned that decisions were made by the private sector who do not understand how the public sector works in practice. They referred to a contractor who put in a management structure which could not work despite being advised otherwise.

*“In fact we put together a management structure that we thought would work and they took bits of that that they liked and rejected bits that they didn’t like and put in basically what they wanted which is what we ended up with, with sort of hardly any management structure at all and added in things which meant practically it’s just not going to work.”(Participant 10)*

Participant 4 was concerned about the professional difficulties of operating across a number of local authorities where things may be done differently due to historical or political reasons. Participant 5 recollected practical and personal problems with sharing some services and how it could cause great difficulties. An example of joined-up taxi licensing was given as it caused great consternation to local politicians. Another example of sharing legal services highlighted how policy and personal differences might derail a shared service.

*“The merest suggestion we might join up the two licensing districts which meant that the Hackney drivers – the taxi drivers – would be licensed for both which was enough for a revolution on the street ..... Conservative councillors were often those who had gone on about the purity of the market and everything like that, but the idea that their taxi owners would be subject to a competitive market was clearly a concept they couldn’t handle!!.” (Participant 5)*

#### **4.5.1.8 Solutions**

Solutions to some of the problems raised were referred to by three participants. Table N8 presents participant references for the sub-theme ‘Solutions’. No one participant was particularly focussed on this issue and there were relatively few references to solutions. Participant 1 considered that it was important to embrace change but to ensure that decisions made are the solution to the problem that has given rise to the suggested change and that the value of the profession is upheld.

*“Change has come and I am sure more will follow (possibly with other LA’s following ..... lead), it is important to embrace it but it is equally important to ensure the decisions we make now are the right ones as they will shape the future of not only our profession but of the people and environment that we have set out to protect and improve.” ( Participant 1)*

Participant 2 expressed that motivation to make the change work for the community and how important it was to ensure that the staff understood the solutions proposed. They also expressed the view that staff, even those who did not want to the change to happen, were very keen to see the changes work once they were implemented. Realistic logistical arrangements and allowances were also important to ensure that the work can be properly carried out to a professional standard. Participant 4 also stressed the importance of setting aside negativity and focussing on the potential positive attributes of the new model of service delivery.

*“They have all really wanted it to work – that’s interesting..... because of all of the people who didn’t want to be outsourced.” ( Participant 2)*

*“The anxiety of that can be really negative and can bring down a workforce can’t it – you know, low morale but if you can set that aside I think the idea that there would be better support, better sharing of experience and learning and that could be really good and for me that was probably a bigger thing that came out of it.” (Participant 4)*

#### **4.5.1.9 Flexibility**

Finally, we will consider the participant references for the sub-theme 'Flexibility', Table N9 sets out the detail. Seven participants raised flexibility as an important issue with a fairly equal distribution of references for each participant.

Participant 2 talked about how the new arrangement allowed for flexibility, so long as the legal requirements were being met. The comment about being more 'spongy' as the resources go down is interesting.

*"Your resources go down and your 'sponginess' goes up! Now the line is drawn – there are certain legal things that you have to do – and you will do them – but as far as the other stuff goes – it is much more flexible." (Participant 2)*

Participant 4 saw that there were many options to consider at the end of the consultation period. Their experience was a positive one and reflected an honest and engaging approach to the consultation by their organisation but this was not the experience of all participants as seen earlier in this chapter. Participant 7 also realised new opportunities for their Environmental Health Service as a result of the shared services and intended to capitalise on this but noted that that the front line EHPs needed persuading. A more flexible approach and engaging in new agendas will improve the chances of sustainability.

*"There was actually some new money available but these were both natural territories as far as I and others were concerned for EHPs. It came straight into some of our core skills and it certainly wasn't alien to parts of our agenda. We were dealing often with the same people and the same situations. But I often had difficulty persuading my EHPs." (Participant 7)*

The sub-themes of 'Questions'; 'Solutions'; 'Honesty'; 'Not appeasing staff'; 'Flexibility'; 'Engagement'; 'Trust'; 'Answers' and 'Problems' were considered separately to ensure a detailed discussion but they are inter-related and all contribute to the central theme of 'Meaningful consultation'. 'Trust' emerges as an overarching theme encompassing the sub-themes of 'Questions', 'Answers', 'Honesty', 'Not appeasing staff' and 'Engagement' and is therefore considered as one of the overarching themes in the final model which will be discussed in more detail later on in this chapter.

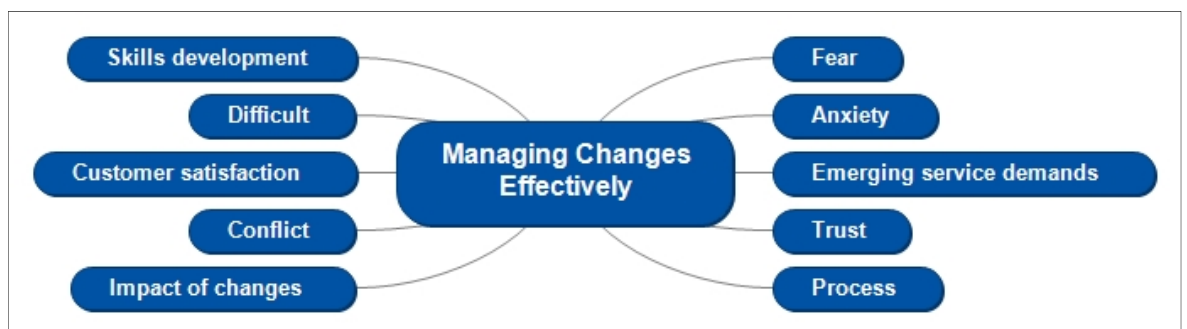
The central theme of 'Meaningful consultation' emerged as a key theme for participants undergoing a change to a new model of Environmental Health Service. The identification of the need for meaningful consultation during the change process contributes towards answering sub-research question II: 'What are the experiences of key personnel during

the change to emerging and novel service delivery models for Environmental Health and Regulatory Services?’ It also contributes towards answering sub-research question III: ‘What lessons can be learned from the change process?’. ‘Meaningful consultation’ is discussed in more detail both in the light of conference audience commentary and in relation to the existing literature (see Section 5.2.6.) In Section 5.3.3 the central theme of ‘Meaningful consultation’ is depicted as being most relevant during the transition stage of change and is integrated into the final theoretical model in Section 5.5. This contributes towards meeting research objective c) Development of a theoretical framework for the effective management of future change programmes in Environmental Health Services.

#### 4.5.2 Managing Changes Effectively

The central theme of ‘Managing changes effectively’ is influenced by the following sub-themes: *Fear, Anxiety, Impact of changes, Difficult, Process, Trust, Conflict, Customer Satisfaction, Emerging service demands and Skills development.*

The central theme of ‘Managing changes effectively’ is represented in Figure 4.5.

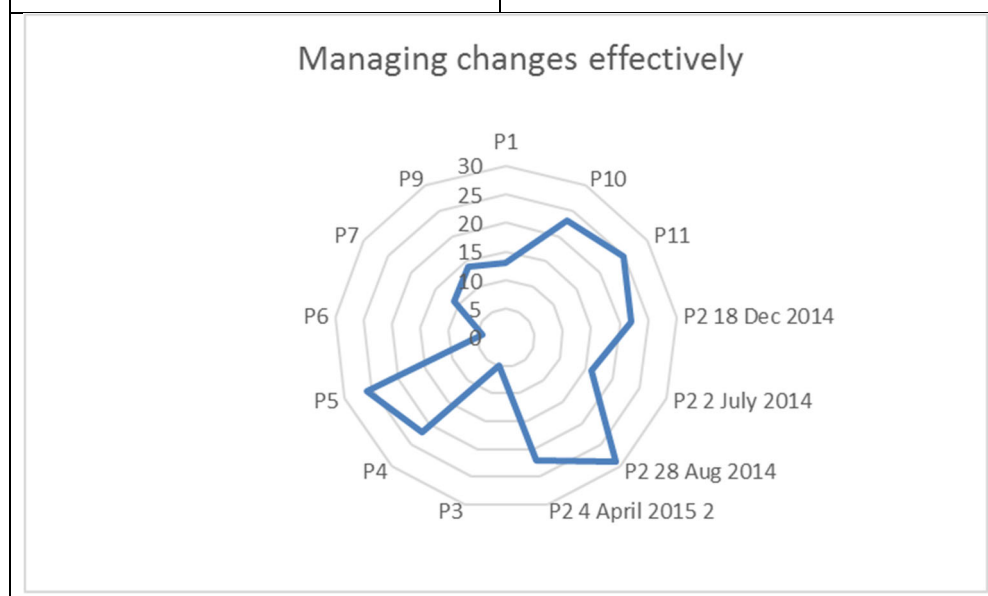


**Figure 4.5: Managing Changes Effectively Thematic Diagram**

Table 4.3 details the participant references for the central theme of 'Managing changes effectively'. Managing change effectively is considered essential to the successful delivery of a new Environmental Health Service Model.

**Table 4.3: Participant references for the central theme: Managing changes effectively**

Central Theme: Managing Changes Effectively	
Participant (P)	References (R)
P1	13
P2 18 Dec 2014	22
P2 2 July 2014	16
P2 28 Aug 2014	29
P2 4 April 2015	22
P3	5
P4	22
P5	26
P6	4
P7	11
P9	14
P10	23
P11/8	25
<b>TOTAL P=11</b>	<b>TOTAL R=232</b>



#### 4.5.2.1 Difficult

Change is difficult and this was raised by all but one of the participants, but it was found that the way change is managed can ease the process and improve the experience of those affected. Table N10 provides the detail of participant references for the sub-theme 'Difficult'.

Participant 10 referenced difficulty in recruitment, resource cuts and logistics as issues. They spoke about not being able to recruit and the additional problems with working with an HR team that has been cut down to the 'bare bones' They also expressed concern that the logistics of working across two authorities made it difficult to keep on top of the workload.

*"All it seems to do from everybody I've spoken to is that you're running between two locations all the time just trying to keep on top of it and it just seems like an impossible job." (Participant 10)*

Participant 11 talked about harmonising of employment terms and conditions as being difficult in a shared service model and referred to difficulties in merging services across very different local authorities with one being urban and one being rural. They also discussed back-office systems being different and how this caused issues

*"There are a number of things here, a lot of back-office systems, whether you are Panning or you are Highways, they all have their own systems which different providers provide and that is usually costly as far as the subscriptions and they don't all interact or link" (Participant 11)*

Participant 2 also referred to difficulties with IT systems and specifically about additional reporting that is required in the new model of service delivery. They spoke about how difficult the change was in an outsourcing model and the loss of working relationships. It was reported that changing IT systems is very challenging because it was difficult to get the systems to 'talk to each other'. The loss of a close working relationship was noted and not knowing who to contact was an added issue.

*"So all of our close working relationship has instantly gone and we are still trying to work out who does what and how we get the information that we were dependant on before. One of the difficulties is getting used to more call centre type infrastructure – you can't reach the person you need." (Participant 2)*

The essence of environmental health is the protection and improvement of citizens' health and all participants were concerned that this is maintained despite the changes proposed or underway. However, the participants found that the way the change is being managed is influential and they wanted to ensure that the decisions being made are appropriate. Trust comes up as an issue for participants, this is discussed in 4.5.2.2 and it may depend on the level of participation in the change process – this is evidenced by Participant 2 who says:

*“So as far as them ( the staff) being ready for the change, I think because they were not involved in the bid process and I evolved through the whole process they were always just slightly behind , so I think that whilst – finally - they were desperate to come across after such a long time – I think it was still harder ( for them).”( Participant 2)*

#### **4.5.2.2 Trust**

Trust was found to be an issue from the organisation’s perspective, this is evidenced by Participant 2.

*“We have to nurture the relationship, develop the trust, show that we are doing what we say we are doing- show that we are trustworthy and competent and evidence that. We are trying to encourage that it shouldn’t be so closely monitored because it is a waste of the council’s money to have such hard-line auditing” (Participant 2)*

Trust can be an issue between different types of organisations. Local authorities have a history of benchmarking their services against each other but this relationship is not developed between commercial organisations and local authorities which makes a comparison of service delivery difficult. Participants also commented that it has to be more visible that staff are complying with recording process and decisions which may give staff the impression that they are not trusted. Table N6 sets out participant references to ‘Trust’ in respect of managing changes effectively. Trust is also a sub-theme for meaningful consultation (4.5.1.6)

#### **4.5.2.3 Conflict**

The conflict between organisations is a theme that is mentioned by participants and Table N11 presents the participant references to ‘Conflict’. Seven of the eleven participants referred to ‘Conflict’ and Participant 2 who was from an outsourcing model was more focussed on ‘Conflict’ than the other participants (references n=13).

Participants raised a range of issues in regard to ‘Conflict’, including, accounting to different leaders, decision makers with insufficient knowledge, statutory duties versus commercial interests, working for organisations with different values and Politics.

Participant 2 spoke about having multiple leaders from different organisations and having to keep ‘plates spinning’ with the added bureaucracy. Participant 1 noted how enforcing legislation might be a conflict for a private sector company. Participant 10 went on to raise the issue of decision makers having insufficient knowledge regarding

environmental health and its statutory services went on to describe how this made people feel unsettled and disdainful.

*“We had somebody from the policy unit who again knew nothing about environmental health who was going through each element of each service to find out what was statutory and what wasn’t and what they could get rid of. So, she looked about 18 – she wasn’t, she was a Cambridge graduate but clearly was out of touch with anything that was environmental health. I think probably she was the cause of more disquiet than anything else because she’s this little girl and tries to tell us how we should be running our service and it went down like a lead balloon.” (Participant 10)*

Participant 2 discussed the conflict of interest in relation to enforcement and commercial activity. They noted that there must be a separation of these activities and that the set up must be 100% right in a ‘poacher turned gamekeeper’ scenario.

*“No, it is a good thing in relation to having a conflict of interest – if they are having a commercial service and we are going in with an enforcement hat on – it is important that we are not clouded by it or involved in it. We need to be good at what we are doing commercially and equally not be involved from an enforcement point of view.” (Participant 2)*

Participant 5 also expressed a personal view that you shouldn’t mix regulation and commercial interests together and explained that this has always been a conflict for them. However, they conceded that that had been no evidence of interference so far in the new model of service delivery.

Participant 2 reflected on the perception of public service professionals and of those working for private sector outsourcing companies. For them, this was a sudden change where they were plunged into having to defend their actions as serving the public rather than profiteering.

*“It’s very foreign ... being perceived as completely hopeless the person who works for local government – a ‘loser’. But you kind of jog along, you do a good job for everyone and that is what your role is. Then, all of a sudden, you work for this private monster and you have to prove that you aren’t the same and as an organisation, we are not just money grabbing – we are here to serve the public. I suppose you just have to prove that really.” (Participant 2)*



Participant 9 reflected on the potential political conflict when local elections change the politics of boroughs working together.

*“There’s been a local election and the politics have changed so you’ve got 2 labour boroughs drawing together but if one of them becomes Tory then it’s inevitable.... They’ve fallen apart” (Participant 9)*

Conversely, participants identified advantages that came about as a result of a more formalised service because of agreements or contracts. It was suggested that a contract is not bad for the service as what they did was acknowledged and they could get additional funding. Participant 2 confirmed that now that contract was drawn up the legally required jobs were done but they also found that there was flexibility to do other things.

Participant 11 reflected that organisations coming together can come into conflict as evidenced by their experience with shared services with local authorities with differing characteristics and agendas.

*“They are very different LAs and both are Conservative-led Councils – LA B more so than LA C, but they very much have their own agendas. LA B is one of the wealthiest areas in the country and if you contrast that against areas of LA C, with its inner-city problems and housing problems standards and its food premises, you can get very different issues”. (Participant 11)*

It is, of course, possible to overcome these differences but the local issues do need to be well understood by those who are responsible for setting up new service delivery models.

#### **4.5.2.4 Fear**

Table N12 details participant references to the sub-theme ‘Fear’. Six of the eleven participants referred to fear with Participant 4 expressing more references to ‘Fear’ than the other five.

The general view of participants was that those who had been employed at an organisation for a long period of time were most fearful of the changes. Participant 1 noted this difference in their reflection of a change process.

*“In general more concern was express by those with a long continuous employment history at ..... Others, like myself who were relatively new, felt more*

*open to the process of change ..... It was very easy to become focused on the negative outcomes of such a new venture.” (Participant 1)*

Participant 5 expressed their disquiet about a change from a service delivery model that they had been part of for the past 30 years.

*“it was a prospect of a very different animal to the one we’d been used and I’d been a part of for 30 years – in various London authorities!” (Participant 5)*

Some participants expressed concern that working for a new organisation meant that the consequences of not being able to perform well were more serious than before.

*“It feels like we have entered an adult world where if you don’t do things it does matter, whereas in LA you may not do things and it may not really matter.” (Participant 2)*

References to ‘Fear’ were more predominant for those participants whose organisations were at the early stages of the change process and their fear was increased where the work was not in the participant’s direct control.

*“It’s very scary, when we first came across, we have 7 KPIs with a significant financial penalty. Most EH work is not in my gift, things happen. So it was terrifying to start off with.” (Participant 2) .*

In addition, the physical presence of senior management from an outsourcing company was viewed with suspicion.

*“Presence of ..... at infrastructure level and senior management level – initially staff did not like the ‘suit’ presence and the fact that they sit separately – treated with suspicion” (Participant 2)*

Naturally, participants were fearful of losing their jobs and felt that expressing a negative view would make them more vulnerable.

*“Yeah there was some talk about you know, we don’t like moaners basically and if you’re really unhappy about the process now is the time to make that decision and get out.” (Participant 4)*

In order to mitigate the fear of employees and stakeholders, participants felt that regular and honest communication was important and that monthly reporting went some way towards addressing this recommendation. It was also felt that this communication should be reciprocated.

*“Certainly we had .....tell us almost on a monthly basis how they were going on because that was the fear of people.” ( Participant 9)*

*“We also need to be in the loop, we need to know to help manage the workflow and also we need to know if there are contentious issues and happening we have the discussions with staff they need to tell us, likewise the client managers/directors they should let us know.” (Participant 11)*

#### **4.5.2.5 Anxiety**

Some participants managed change well seeing the opportunities whilst others felt anxiety in the early stages but later on began to see the opportunities. Table N13 sets out participant references to the sub-theme ‘Anxiety’ Four participants across a range of new service delivery models referred to anxiety.

Anxiety was identified as an expected issue at the beginning of the change process by some participants and potential job loss was a worry.

*“Throughout the process, there was a feeling of growing uncertainty amongst my colleagues..... As can be expected with any period of change, and especially as deadlines drew closer, anxiety had risen among those in the Environmental Health Teams.” (Participant 1)*

*“There were a number of people that were also worried about the obvious consequences of having to save money and it’s a large sum of money needing to be saved so we know that equates to people.” (Participant 4)*

In outsourcing, the need to keep commercially sensitive information confidential led to additional uncertainty and anxiety for participants who were ‘not in the loop’. Participants referred to the fact that people who were writing service specifications were detached and how this had an unsettling effect. The presence of unknown people from a new organisation reinforced the sense of anxiety for some.

*“I think the situation was so uncertain, to begin with, you just don’t know how you’re going to sit with each other and all of a sudden there’s a group of new people that you don’t know from a company so the expectation that we would feel slightly alienated from the process has been met!”(Participant 5).*

#### **4.5.2.6 Skills Development**

Some of the impacts of changes are about communication. In a different relationship, participants have to explain decisions and issues in more depth to ensure that their action is well justified whereas previously they just got on and took action merely informing the managers what had taken place. Skills of managers of services affected by the change

have to be developed. Reporting on contracts and acting more commercially is not always part of the skill base of the participants although most seem to have adapted well.

Table N14 presents participant references to the sub-theme 'Skills development'. Ten of the eleven participants referenced 'Skills development' and participants 2 and 7 accounted for 19 of the 33 references. Participant 2 was from an organisation in the early stages of outsourcing and Participant 7 was from an established shared service.

Participant 1 reflected on the breadth of experience of local authority Environmental Health Service staff. They pointed out the steep learning curve for a new company needing to gain such a diverse range of skills. Participant 1 speculated on a move towards less specialisation and more multi-skilling but noted that this presented a threat that local authorities may lose valuable resources in staff with long careers and experience. Some participants noted that reducing resources and subsequent change were leading to a loss of experience and tacit knowledge from the longest-serving officers.

*"The skills are not there and as time goes on, of course, more and more people are disappearing from local authorities and who disappears? It's people like me who say well I've done 40 years, why shouldn't I go?" (Participant 9)*

In contrast, it was felt that promising staff are more likely to benefit from extra training and wider career opportunities. Participant 10 identified that in traditional models of service delivery people may not have had the autonomy to be able to do anything or develop their skills because they were controlled by their team leaders. Participant 7 made a case that specialist officers could be successfully employed across organisations who were sharing services.

*"When you talk about the specialist skills, you don't all need to keep on replicating, you don't all need a contaminated land specialist or air quality.... now there's been a collaborative deal in ..... to do air quality stuff. It's a specialist skill you need access to a certain number of times – you don't need to employ your own." (Participant 7).*

Participant 3 noted the need for service managers to act commercially and that this was stressful but good for skills development. Other participants agreed that, from a local authority workforce perspective, commercial skills are not well developed. Participant 5 suggested that commercial acumen is not developed by local authority employees.

*“I’m not at all entrepreneurial and I think a lot of people who work for private companies aren’t entrepreneurial necessarily but I don’t have any commercial acumen whatsoever. I’m not sure whether you’re born with it or whether you develop it later, but you certainly don’t develop it working for local government!”*  
(Participant 5)

Participant 2 discussed the step-change required in the change process, the new responsibility and how this requires a new skill base.

*“So I went from no experience to meeting with big companies who were sending in the ‘big guns’ to be taking what they understood would be a foot in the door of a significant financial journey for them and going from a large number of bidders, narrowing that down and doing a significant amount of work with two of the bidders.... The downside is the commissioning – it is very difficult. A new skill base is needed. Talked to others but still new for ..... A big responsibility.”*  
(Participant 2)

Some participants felt that there is a need for training but it was felt that the commercial skills of contracting should be retained for the experts. Never-the-less, new management arrangements require people to be up to speed very quickly and this results in considerable pressure.

*“We have all got to learn how to use it and to hit the ground running because our strict structure has no flexibility. We will need to train everyone, use the system and do the data scrape in the usual reporting timeframe. Things like this put you outside your comfort zone but we will pull it off because we have to but we would never have had that pressure before.”* (Participant 2)

Some participants were worried that new arrangements would result in a ‘dumbing down’ of the Environmental Health Profession but others noted that contractors were more likely to employ fully qualified staff as the contractor did not have the professional knowledge or skills.

*“What we were concerned about from an environmental health perspective was that there was an opportunity there for the profession to be dumbed down and while those people were actually doing that work, were not appropriately skilled or appropriately competent to actually carry out some of those functions.”*  
Participant 6)

*“One of the ironies was that it was probably more likely that the contractors were going to continue to employ qualified professional staff than the council was itself, and the contractor actually felt more comfortable with that and they could see the value of flexible qualifications and being able to move people from discipline to discipline.”* (Participant 7)

'Skills development' emerges as an overarching theme encompassing the sub-themes of 'Impact of changes', 'Difficult', 'Process' and 'Emerging service demands'. 'Skills development' is also a key influencing sub-theme in the central theme of 'Viability of the proposal' and is therefore considered as one of the overarching themes in the final model which will be discussed in more detail later on in this chapter.

#### **4.5.2.7 Customer Satisfaction**

Customer satisfaction was very important to all participants and, in established models of new service delivery, participants reported that there was no evidence to show that customer satisfaction had been negatively affected by changes in service delivery. Table N15 details participant references for the sub-theme 'Customer satisfaction' Eight of the eleven participants made reference to 'Customer satisfaction' and it was a predominant issue for Participant 5 who was involved in an outsourced Environmental Health Service to a private company at the early stages of delivery.

All participants agreed that 'Customer satisfaction' was a priority in effectively managing the changes. According to the participants, services delivered were either unchanged, improved or made more resilient. New service delivery models aspired to provide flexible service delivery and to meet the needs of all stakeholders, Participant 1 sums this up:

*"I know from staff feedback sessions that there was an emphasis on getting the message across that they would ensure that the services they will deliver will meet the needs of all stakeholders." (Participant 1)*

Some participants felt or evidenced that customer service had improved and that this was one of the aims of the change. Participant 11 reflected on the reduced costs and maintenance of service levels achieved with large services and felt that this was the way forward for their local authority.

*"I think they have looked at a lot of London Authorities who have dealt with extremely large volumes and they have made savings and maintained and improved the level of service through doing that, so that's the way the council are going" (Participant 11)*

Participant 2 reflected on the introduction of comprehensive key performance indicators and how this has improved the Environmental Health Service. There was an emphasis on the service user not noticing the change unless it was an improvement.

*“From a service delivery point of view, we put a lot of work into making sure that nobody knew any different - from a profile point of view everybody was watching to see what the monster ..... had done to all of these Regulatory Services. We were completely set up to fail – from a professional point of view, we were adamant that they ( the public) were not going to notice any different ..... The aim always was that from a residents point of view that when we moved they shouldn't notice any difference at all, and when they did it should only be an improvement and I think that is probably correct.” (Participant 2)*

Participant 3 reported that resident satisfaction had risen for most of their services after the change.

*“So far, so good – it's been a pretty good year – resident satisfaction has risen in most of the services and regeneration is part of it and have been really helpful on the whole concept of development.” (Participant 3)*

However, other participants were less optimistic about the potential or actual improvement in 'Customer satisfaction' and felt that challenging output targets would reduce their ability to improve public health outcomes. Some participants reported a lack of confidence that profit orientated organisations may be more concerned with the contract than service satisfaction. Other participants were concerned that a caring and good quality service may not be affordable.

*“I just worry about that loss of having that ability to be more caring I suppose and more helpful to the general public and make sure they get a good quality of service – and we can't afford to do that anymore!” (Participant 4)*

Participant 5 reported that local residents were dissatisfied when call centres were operated from other parts of the country with no local knowledge about the local authority or its services.

Participant 6 cautioned that the outcomes regarding 'Customer satisfaction' should not be judged too soon. Other's felt that 'Customer satisfaction' in regard to enforcement activities was an unlikely tool to measure the success of regulation and the measures of outcome are more appropriate.

*“I suppose the jury is to out as to whether or not they are fulfilling the requirements of the local population in terms of environmental health controls.” (Participant 6)*

#### **4.5.2.8 Emerging Service Demands**

'Emerging service demands' were an important reference for some participants in respect of managing changes effectively. Table N16 sets out participant references for the sub-theme 'Emerging service demands' Five of the participants referred to this sub-theme with Participants 8 and 11 flagging 'Emerging service demands' as a key issue in an established model of shared services.

All participants who referred to 'Emerging service demands' argued that the nature of environmental health meant that service demands are not linear and contractors did not have the expertise to vet and qualify what was coming across to them. This was also an issue between local authorities where there may be contrasting local service demands.

*"We have found there have been things that have come up that they didn't initially ask us to do..... they just looked at exactly what they were doing, and asked us to do it for them.." (Participant 11)*

Participants agreed that a detailed specification was a good starting point and Participant 2 recommended initial monthly reporting, but flexibility should be built into the process to cope with 'Emerging service demands'. Participant 2 spoke about the specification and how it was incredibly detailed but consultation with the client has to take place for new and extra services as there are contractual implications. Some participants for new service agreements supported this view and said that additional service provision must be formalised and this has advantages and disadvantages depending on your position.

*"So from our point of view that is probably better, from the boroughs point of view it is probably not so good because in the past we would just roll with the punches and if there was a new scheme we would squish different things round so we would try and do it, within reason obviously. So that is quite different. Some of them I just work out what it will cost to deliver and some things we just acknowledge we are doing something extra for you that would just cost token amounts of money" ( Participant 2)*

Some participants felt it was important that they could raise new ideas about what should be done as a service provider in an informal way and that if all are agreed then the service can be built into the contract. Participants reported that unpredicted significant events such as a large food poisoning outbreak are still dealt with in a reactive way and this needs a sensible approach but it can adversely affect performance reports.



*“There are provisions in there to expand services as and when the demand becomes that much greater.” (Participant 5)*

‘Emerging service demands’ emerges as an overarching theme for managing changes effectively and encompasses the sub-themes of ‘Impact of changes’, ‘Difficult’, ‘Process’, ‘Customer Satisfaction’, and ‘Skills development’. ‘Emerging service demands’ is also a key influencing sub-theme in the central themes of ‘Viability of the proposal’ and ‘Understanding the nature of environmental health’ and is therefore considered as one of the overarching themes in the final model which will be discussed in more detail later on in this chapter.

#### **4.5.2.9 Impact of changes**

The next sub-theme to discuss in the light of managing changes effectively is ‘Impact of changes’. Table N17 presents participant references to ‘Impact of changes’. All of the participants referred to ‘Impact of changes’ and especially Participant 2.

Participant 1 felt that the ‘Impact of changes’ had not been fully considered by those managing the project particularly with respect to private profit-making companies delivering public services.

*“Ultimately such changes have the potential to impact greatly on those already at a disadvantage, issues such as poverty and health inequalities are unlikely to provide private sector shareholders with large returns in dividends, and preventative interventions that work towards long term goals may not hold enough interest for companies on 10 or 15 year contracts.” (Participant 1)*

Participants referred to recruitment issues whilst the changes were ongoing and the ultimate loss of experienced staff with little chance of replacing qualified officers. Other participants pointed to the inexperience of recruiters leading to mix-ups and no eventual recruitment. Existing and remaining front line staff felt largely unaffected by the changes in respect of their own roles but felt there was less support from the managers.

*“The only thing that has changed is to the management structure and certainly I can see from the contact that I have with both the managers (well there’s no manager at ..... now), so the manager who is in charge of sort of the food and health and safety is based at ..... and he’s just never available to do anything anymore”(Participant 10)*

Other participants disagreed and felt that the direct line management had improved and there were opportunities to share best practice in shared services and to gain funding as a region.

*“We now bring in Government funding and people like Food Standard Agency giving funding for food sampling so that has enables us to draw down on that”  
(Participant 11)*

For shared services differing terms and conditions of staff now working together remains a challenge and ongoing impact of change. However, some participants saw the potential to build resilience and felt that this was a prime consideration.

*“For me it’s having that larger amount of resilience, it was never going in on the back of at the finances and as it happens the way the climate has evolved some reductions were made has been advantageous financially but for me it was trying to ensure that resilience and a model that could help us in other opportunities”  
(Participant 11)*

Formalising the service provision may feel restricting but some participants welcomed the direction. In new formalised arrangements the budget monitoring is very strict.

*“One thing that has changed significantly is – when you are in the council we always hit our budget but others don’t and that money would always move backwards and forwards – now budget monitoring is very strict with expectations on income” (Participant 2)*

Some participants reported that contracting out a service had heightened the awareness and interest in the Environmental Health Service because of the number of set Key Performance Indicators (KPIs). This has meant that there is a lot of pressure and time spent on the monthly reports but there are advantages to the process

*“And so the client, ....., is much more interested in what we do because we have set KPIs and PIs and in our profile. Because Environmental Health has set up a lot more KPIs and PIs than anyone else our profile is probably one of the highest in the bundle which, our new director used to say ‘what a bunch of idiots’ as we have to report on them monthly which is a big deal. But now people listen to us, they look at what we are doing, every month we have to say good things, we have to say bad things, we have to make sure our performance is on target so in lots of ways we are now considered – our viewpoint matters – we are a considered department. Before we always played second fiddle to players like housing who are a much bigger voice” (Participant 2)*

However, some participants felt that the changes would impact on the time that they could spend providing a good quality service and participants referred to a negative change in the culture of the organisation.

*“There is sort of downward pressure. People don’t bear their teeth very often, but there is a different edge and it’s an evolving situation” (Participant 5)*

#### **4.5.2.10 Process**

Finally, we shall consider the sub-theme of ‘Process’ in respect of managing changes effectively. Table N18 details participants references for the sub-theme ‘Process’ Nine of the eleven participants referred to ‘Process’ with Participants 11 and 8 (who were interviewed together) being more concerned with ‘Process’ than the other participants. Participants 11 and 8 were from an organisation with an established shared service.

Participants spoke about the length of the process of change with some saying how long and detailed it was whilst others complained about a short and rushed process. Generally, it was appreciated that services like Environmental Health were not straightforward and transferring them needs a detailed approach.

*“Things like the transfer of database has been a lot easier for planning and building control because they are much more straightforward services – EH has a million more modules, we are like the EU aren’t we? We are a collection of countries rather than just being one” (Participant 2)*

The process of transition was raised as an issue for participants both in its nature and timescale. The scale of the transferred services dictates the process and the support needed. One participant recommended having a transferring manager for the transition period.

*“When we initially did it there was a Transferring Manager as well and for the first twelve months we left them with direct responsibility for continuing the delivery over there and I think this made it easier for therefore as far as the transition and staff knew the managers and integrate things.” (Participant 11)*

Others spoke of the peculiarities that are encountered when moving managers around local authorities who are sharing services. Of particular concern, was differing terms of employment, for example, sickness policy, and different systems.

*“We’ve had examples where boroughs have chopped the management and had the managers move around and look after the teams in one borough and one in another. That has a lot of peculiarities to it, not just the ones you probably think of straight away but the different terms of employment and also different systems and rules about what they do, so it’s been very confusing for managers who do that” (Participant 9)*

Other references to ‘Process’ were about internal work processes and challenges presented in the changes. Some participants took the opportunity to ensure that their internal processes were fit for purpose and the upcoming change,

*“We completely challenged the process. I didn’t want someone teaching me how to ‘suck eggs’ I wanted to be confident that I was running the best service that could be delivered at that time with the resources available to us.” (Participant 2)*

The sub-themes of ‘Fear’, ‘Anxiety’, ‘Impact of changes’, ‘Difficult’, ‘Process’, ‘Trust’, ‘Conflict’, ‘Customer Satisfaction’, ‘Emerging service demands’ and ‘Skills development’ were considered separately to ensure a detailed discussion but they are all inter-related and all contribute to the central theme of ‘Managing changes effectively’. ‘Skills development’ emerges as an overarching theme encompassing the sub-themes of ‘Impact of changes’, ‘Difficult’, ‘Process’ and ‘Emerging service demands’. ‘Skills development’ is also a key influencing sub-theme in the central theme of ‘Viability of the proposal’, and is therefore considered as one of the overarching themes in the final model. ‘Emerging service demands’ also emerges as an overarching theme for managing changes effectively and encompasses the sub-themes of ‘Impact of changes’, ‘Difficult’, ‘Process’, ‘Customer Satisfaction’, and ‘Skills development’. Emerging service demands is also a key influencing sub-theme in the central themes of ‘Viability of the proposal’ and ‘Understanding the nature of environmental health’ and is therefore also considered as one of the overarching themes in the final model which will be discussed in more detail in the following sections.

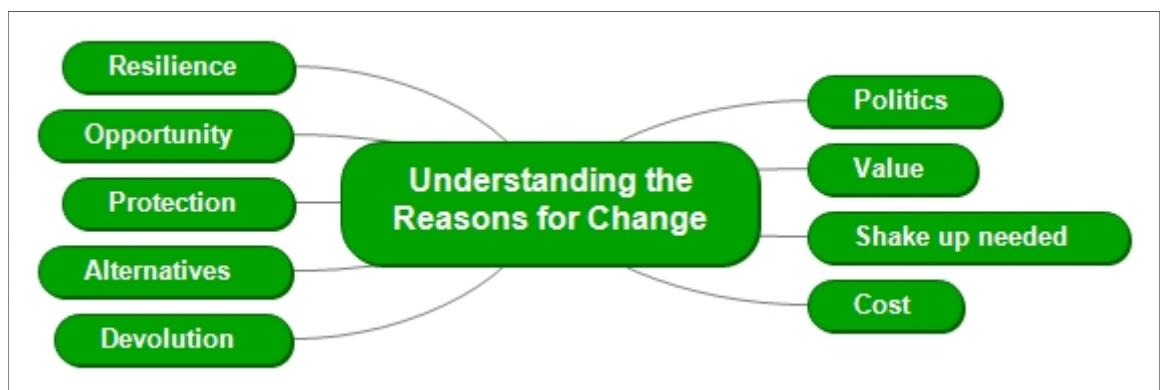
In conclusion, the central theme of ‘Managing changes effectively’ emerged as a key theme for participants undergoing a change to a new model of Environmental Health Service. The importance of effective management during the change process was strongly expressed by participants who were reflecting on their experience of change and this finding contributes towards answering sub- research question II ‘What are the experiences of key personnel during the change to emerging and novel service delivery models for Environmental Health and Regulatory Services?’ The identification of the need for effective management of changes also contributes towards answering the

research question of ‘What lessons can be learned from the change process?’ ‘Managing changes effectively’ is discussed in more detail both in the light of conference audience commentary and in relation to the existing literature (see Section 5.2.5.) In Section 5.3.3 and 5.3.3 the central theme of ‘Managing changes effectively’ is positioned in the transition stage of change, and finally, is integrated into the final theoretical model in Section 5.5, and this inclusion contributes towards meeting research objective c) Development of a theoretical framework for the effective management of future change programmes in Environmental Health Services.

### 4.5.3 Understanding the Reasons for Change

The central theme of ‘Understanding the reasons for change’ is influenced by the following sub-themes: *Politics, Value, Shake up needed, Costs, Devolution, Alternatives, Protection, Opportunity and Resilience.*

The central theme of ‘Understanding the reasons for change’ is illustrated in Figure 4.6.

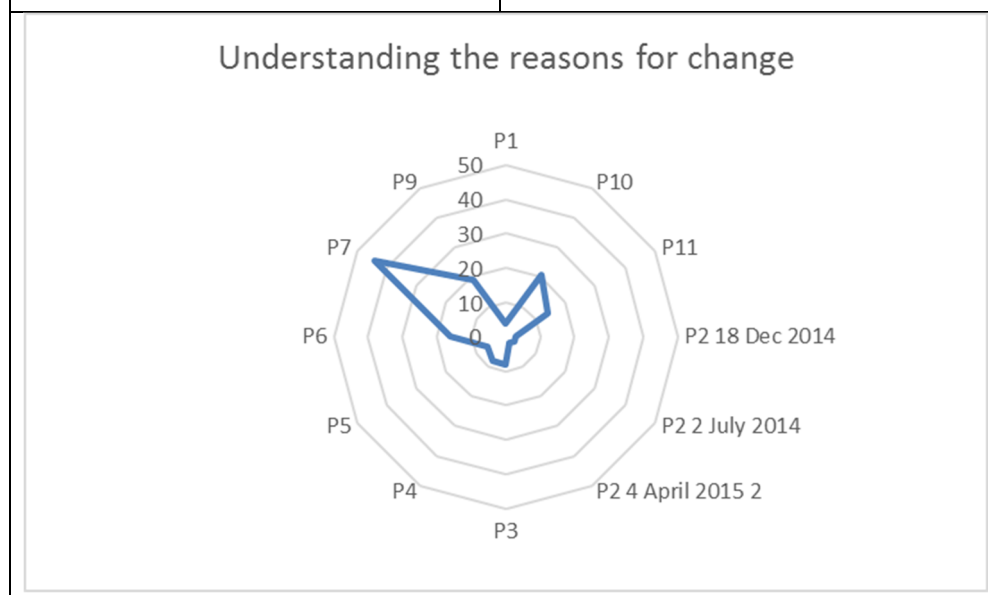


**Figure 4.6: Understanding the Reasons for Change Thematic Diagram**

Table 4.4 presents participant references to the central theme of ‘Understanding the reasons for change’. All eleven participants considered ‘Understanding the reasons for change’ as an important issue when exploring new models of service delivery and Participant 7 made particular reference to this issue. ‘Understanding the reasons for change’ was a fundamental issue for participants who agreed that unless the reasons for change are understood and accepted then engagement of staff in the change process can only be superficial. All participants accepted that change was inevitable and there was a consensus that change was needed and the range of responses evidences this.

**Table 4.4: Participant references for the central theme: Understanding the reasons for change**

Central Theme: Understanding the reasons for change	
Participant (P)	References (R)
P1	4
P2 18 Dec 2014	3
P2 2 July 2014	3
P2 4 April 2015	2
P3	8
P4	8
P5	6
P6	16
P7	44
P9	19
P10	21
P11/8	14
<b>TOTAL P=11</b>	<b>TOTAL R=148</b>



#### 4.5.3.1 Opportunity

'Understanding the reasons for change' enabled some participants to see the opportunities presented by the changes they were subject to. Table N19 sets out participant references to the sub-theme of 'Opportunity'. Ten of the eleven participants referenced 'Opportunity' and Participant 7 had a particular focus on this sub-theme with respect to understanding the reasons for the change.

Some participants saw potential opportunities opening to them in a private company set up and others saw the opportunity to diversify and protect services. Participant 1 recognised that a large private company may be able to provide extra training and wider

career opportunities outside of environmental health. Participant 10 felt that cuts to shared services were likely to be difficult and any opportunities should be taken advantage of. Participant 4 predicted ongoing resource reduction and recognised that sharing services might be a positive development.

*“Personally I was quite excited by that idea and we all know we’re facing in the foreseeable future that local governments are financially in a very tight situation and the likelihood is more loss of resources and we can sort of see our own services diminishing, so the opportunity to share with others is quite a positive thing” (Participant 4)*

The opportunity to refresh service provision and rethink priorities was welcomed by some participants. An interesting observation was made that Local Authorities can become quite complacent in service delivery and some members of the community they serve have developed a negative/stereotypical view of council employees and their behaviour, and a fundamental review of the service offered might be timely. Participant 7 spoke about turning around a failing outsourcing contract into a profit-making opportunity.

*“I actually turned around a failing DSA contract and made it profitable to the extent that the profit share with the staff clauses kicked in – the director of finance told us that they weren’t supposed to ever kick in!”(Participant 7)*

Participant 2 was excited by the change and the opportunities it presented.

*“In life, I am not that great at change but in work, I like seeing opportunities and changing around.....So it all feels potentially like an expanding time which is amazing.” (Participant 2)*

#### **4.5.3.2 Protection**

In light of the ongoing budgetary restrictions impacting on local authorities, participants identified advantages of developing a new service model as protecting services from year on year cuts. Some participants said that a shared services model provided a degree of resilience in organisations where there are dwindling staff numbers. Table N20 details participant references to the sub-theme ‘Protection’. Nine of the eleven participants made reference to ‘Protection’ and Participant 7 (shared services) and Participant 10 (mutualisation) referred to ‘Protection’ as being particularly significant in their experience of change.

Reducing resources resulting in a need to protect Environmental Health Services predominated participant views. Participant 10 reflected on trying to protect services in

a financial crisis. A commonly shared view of participants was that continued cuts based on the existing provision would result in an undeliverable service.

*“But I think in this case the management in ..... felt probably if they left it as it was for another twelve months they would be faced with other cuts and then the service probably wouldn’t have been deliverable.” (Participant 11)*

Participants who had undergone changes agreed that the new service delivery model provided a degree of ‘Protection’ which was previously not there. Others were more cautious in this assumption. Participant 3 recognised that the new service model not only resulted in the service no longer being cut but also additional enhancements were made. However, Participant 5 cautioned that the protection was merely a perception when an organisation has contractual commitments.

*“Without this contract and this project we would have ended up cutting these services. When you think at the beginning of 2010 compared to 2020 we will have half as much money as we did have at the beginning of the decade – that is pretty scary and the contract will protect those services going forward.” (Participant 3)*

Participants felt that the frontline service should be protected as a priority but others felt that the loss of experienced officers to redundancy had created a further crisis which needed to be addressed as a matter of urgency.

*“Basically what’s walked out the door on 31st March last year is virtually all their highly experienced officers and in the meantime during that process, which took 18 months in total, everybody who was any good really, walked out the door and went somewhere else.... if we can find some way to provide the expertise that other local authorities can tap into, that might actually help to protect individual services.” (Participant 10)*

#### **4.5.3.3 Politics**

Table N21 sets out participant references to the sub-theme of ‘Politics’. Five of the eleven participant reference ‘Politics’ in respect to the reasons for change and these participants were the more senior managers of a range of service delivery models. Their roles were: Chief Executive, Ex-Director of Environmental Services, Environmental Health Service Manager, Chair of a professional organisation, Environmental Health Team Leader and Regulatory Service Manager.

Participants referred to the close relationships between local politicians and Environmental Health Services. However, there was also a view that Environmental Health Services were not visible until things go wrong. Participant 10 noted that close



working relationships with councillors developed over a period of time and that system of a cabinet lead politicised the service delivery. On the other hand, Participant 7 noted that politicians did not recognise the good work of Environmental Health Services and may not even realise the service exists until something goes wrong.

*“That’s how much Environmental Health has worked over the years. People have got on and done it and in the main, done a pretty good job and the politicians as a consequence don’t always realise we exist until something goes wrong.”*  
(Participant 7)

In shared services contrasting political leadership of councils sharing services influenced the proposed changes and the choices that are made, in the main between outsourcing and sharing services with other local authorities. Participant 11 reflected that in the case of shared services two Conservative-led councils had their own agendas and a replica of the service may not work with different councils. Participant 6 mentioned political difference with bitter opposition to outsourcing from a neighbouring council. Participant 7 reflected on the political drive to outsource services from their council whereas other participants referred to a political sign-up not to tender but to join up first.

Political differences and Issues of election outcomes were also considered influential in the reasons for change and the choice of a new service model. Time-frames of change were influenced by upcoming elections. Participant 9 agreed that there was a big political influence on the consideration of new service delivery model proposals.

*“But I think the biggest impact on that now we’ve had 2 or 3 years of proposed new service delivery models going on has been, not surprisingly, the political influence on that”* (Participant 9)

Central government’s reluctance to create a new model of local government in the UK, even though the system is in crisis, is also raised as an issue in light of the changes to the financing of local government.

*“The model that is local government in the United Kingdom is broken and I say that in a sense that what it was originally designed to do is no longer what it is the government wants it to do but there isn’t a political will go through local government reorganisation”* (Participant 6)

#### **4.5.3.4 Devolution**

Table N22 presents participant references to the sub-theme of ‘Devolution’. Three participants discussed ‘Devolution’ as a specific element of their references to ‘Politics’. Participant 6 talked about local government being created by top-down direction but said

that this contrasts with the concept of Localism and allowing local authorities to according to their communities. They went on to say that the lack of appetite for top-down direction from government is exacerbated by the devolution debate and Devo-Manchester activity, Devo-Birmingham. Participant 11 referred to city and district councils working together as a region in order to gain devolved power.

*“There is a number of discussions going on at various levels. I think you have got all across Cambridge and all local Cambridge district counties people looking to govern around devolved power” (Participant 11)*

#### **4.5.3.5 Value**

Table N23 details participant references to the sub-theme of ‘Value’. Seven of the eleven participants referred to ‘Value’ and these participants ranged from front line officers to Heads of Service. Participants felt that the reasons for the change were primarily about reducing resources (cost) but that value of the services to be provided was about providing better services for less money. Participant 7 asserted that there was a powerful message in a better and cheaper service being achieved by joining up with another council. They went onto say that:

*‘A combination of economies of scale, use of new technology, different ways of working, it’s all those things which you can do and again’ (Participant 7)*

Examples were given by Participant 10 to demonstrate how providing value for money can protect resources and even attract new funding streams.

Some participants were concerned that the use of time management systems would detract from the value of the work if sufficient time was not allowed. All of the participants felt strongly that the ethos of public service and environmental Health services should be protected in new models of Environmental Health Service delivery. This did not necessarily mean keeping services the same but ensuring that new services maintained the professional values of environmental health. It was recognised that the potential financial flexibility achievable with the devolution agenda is likely to lead to more combined authorities and more shared services. Participants’ professional and personal values influenced their view of the best model of service delivery.

*“At the heart of [the agreement] is delivering the best service to customers and to be honest you lose that with an external provider and they are only doing this as a commercial adaption for them, we work with authorities because it is the best service for the public” (Participant 11)*

#### 4.5.3.6 Cost

Table N24 presents participant references to the sub-theme of 'Cost'. Ten of the eleven participants referenced 'Cost' in relation to the reasons for change, indicating that the key aspect of adaptation on the climate of reducing resource was well understood. Participants 6 and 7 felt that 'Cost' was particularly relevant and both of these participants were senior managers. Participants maintained that in a climate of reducing resource then proposed change must deliver a cost saving to be considered as a viable option.

*"I mean, the bottom line for the actual councils, the amount that could be saved on running a service – that was a clincher for them...." (Participant 4)*

Participants felt that the attitude towards cost from the perspective of a private company was very different from the not for profit approach of local authorities for a number of reasons, mainly financial. In addition, Environmental Health Services in local authorities have to compete internally for resources against higher profile services as opposed to services whose resources were ring-fenced because of an outsourced contract.

*"We have not had financial cuts this year – we have to hit our financial targets and this causes a lot of stress, there is a much more regimented financial and performance monitoring process. This is different from LA, it is run as a business." (Participant 2)*

Participant 6 spoke about how mutualising local authority services in a regulatory area and how that means that you have to look for a profit margin

*"The thing about mutualisation of a local authority service particularly in a regulatory area is that you have to continue to look for margin, you have to look for profit margin in order to feed the model." (Participant 6)*

Participant 7 spoke about public services not having to generate profit and how this should give them a financial advantage but also referenced high overheads as a restriction. Participant 3 spoke about how an outsourced service required a large investment in technology which would not have happened otherwise.

*"For this contract £39 million saving over 10 years with at the end of the 10 years the services being pretty much nil cost and that required/ requires ..... to do an awful lot of investment in technology in a way that I would never have had the money to do because while you could develop an internal business case there is always calls on the councils money – you are always fighting against bigger services in terms of financial costs – like Adults and Children's Services." (Participant 3)*

However, some participants felt that costing for a local authority could be difficult and is very different from a private company which must operate for profit. Participant 6 highlights the questions this raises.

*“That then begs the question as to, well, if a private company do that then why can’t local authorities do that anyway? Is it because the models are different? Is it because the public sector ethos is one about service as opposed to profit margin? And, is it a different financial model we need to be looking at?” (Participant 6)*

Some participants thought that providing Environmental Health Services for profit may not be possible at all. Participant 5 referred to the lack of potential opportunity for Environmental Health Services to bring in revenue.

*“EH. I think we’re probably the largest square peg in the round hole for them really because we don’t have much ability to bring in revenue, whereas planners do, building control do and highways do to an extent as well. We’ve traditionally not been one of those services that can bring in money.” (Participant 5)*

Participant 6 compared outsourcing of Environmental Health Services to the NHS and considered that private companies would only be interested in delivering straight forward services, potential leaving entrenched problem areas to be dealt with by the local authority.

*“NHS – exactly the same issue. You get rid of the problem areas by leaving that to the public service, so you give all the ill people to the NHS, we’ll take all the well ones and people who can afford it. And exactly the same in Environmental Health.” (Participant 6)*

#### **4.5.3.7 Shake Up Needed**

Table N25 provides detail of participant references to the sub-theme of ‘Shakeup needed’.

Seven of the eleven participants felt that the Environmental Health Service might need a shakeup. Participant comments illustrate why a refreshed Environmental Health Service model could be appropriate. Participant 1 reflected on how local authorities can become complacent and why a shake-up might be needed.

*“ One thought in favour of the changes did occur to me, I think Local Authorities can become quite complacent in service delivery and some members of the community they serve have developed a negative/stereotypical view of council employees and their behaviour, a shake-up might be what is needed” (Participant 1)*

Participant 10 spoke about how an incoming chief executive needed to take a new approach as they had taken over from one who had been there for 30 years. They were also concerned that a stale and static workforce might hold back the service. This comment aligns with those made about the loss of experienced staff in 4.5.2.10

*“So we were left with virtually none of our good enthusiastic officers. We were left with those that had been there forever who were never actually going to move on anywhere and will stay there until they retire and of course the age profile of everybody that’s left is well over 50” (Participant 10)*

Participant 3 reflected on how an old fashioned structure may no longer be fit for purpose. Participant 7 agreed that Environmental Health Services were stuck in the '80s and just kept doing more or less of the same without really sitting down and looking at what the service should be achieving.

#### **4.5.3.8 Alternatives**

The reasons for change are also influenced by the alternatives to the current provision. Table N26 sets out participant references to the sub-theme alternatives. Ten of the eleven participants discussed alternatives to change proposed. Examples of the alternatives discussed were: Mutualisation, Teckal<sup>1</sup> companies, selling services, generating income and a National Environmental Health Service.

Participant 2 reflected that Environmental Health Services had never been classed as a priority service and how that had meant that it was easy to take resources out. They went on to say that there was no viable alternative proposed (to outsourcing) at the time of change and that this made it difficult to support industrial action. However, Participant 4 spoke about various models been thrown up as possibilities.

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<sup>1</sup> A “Teckal” company is the common name for a company which benefits from contracts for works, services or supply from its controlling Contracting Authority (or Authorities) without having to go through a competitive tender process. To be Teckal compliant, the local authority must control all of the shares in the company and must also exercise effective day-to-day control over its affairs; in other words, the same as the relationship between the council and one of its internal directorates. This can be achieved through the governance structure.

*“Things like employee mutual was talked about and then we have a bit of a research paper to read about what an employee mutual was and Teckal\* companies were discussed. They’re kind of arms-lengths not for profit companies” (Participant 4)*

Participant 7 reflected that there was an alternative of ‘cherry picking’ services to join up or that all council services could be joined. An alternative to joining all services was to petition to become one district council but this was discounted because of a difficult and expensive legal process. Participant 9 spoke about the model of the HSE and them selling their services based on their reputation as a government agency. They also referred to the example of a self-sufficient council and to the possibility of a National Environmental Health Service in Wales.

*“Chief Exec of Stratford on Avon was an EHO. He doesn’t rely on any government money now, they are completely self-sufficient so there are no cuts for them in the future because they are self-reliant.” (Participant 9)*

#### **4.5.3.9 Resilience**

Finally, in discussing the participant references to understanding the reasons for change we will look at the sub-theme of ‘Resilience’ and Table N27 details participant references to ‘Resilience’. Nine of the eleven participants discussed ‘Resilience’ as a reason for the change and Participant 7 an ex-service director of shared services felt that this aspect was of particular importance.

Participant 2 identified an advantage of the new outsourced model and its resilience and gave an example of gaining an associate director when everyone else was cutting staff and of no further cuts being made after the contract was let because the funding was ring-fenced. Participants 8 and 11 talked about ‘Resilience’ in shared services and especially with respect to specialist skills, and an increased potential to realise opportunities as they arise and covering staff absence.

*“Largely they were looking at resilience, so being in a smaller locality and authority they were struggling, if members were off sick, staff go part-time, so we talked to them about the wider Regulatory Services which included Environmental Health and functions and on the back of that we had some discussions and we were happy to expand what we had done for them in the past.”( Participant 11)*

*“From a resilience point of view it has bought a wider pool of technically of people to help at a time of when expertise is disappearing from local authorities and you know the danger of having one specialist in one area because holidays, sickness, long term sickness you struggle but having that wider pool. For me it’s having that larger amount of resilience, it was never going in on the back of at the finances and as it happens the way the climate has evolved some reductions were made has been advantageous financially but for me it was trying to ensure that resilience and a model that could help us in other opportunities” (Participant 11)*

Participant 10 considered the lack of ‘Resilience’ in their current position due to the loss of professional staff and an ageing less enthusiastic workforce with a reducing skill base. They also considered that a system of sharing expertise on an ad hoc basis may ameliorate a lack of resilience.

*“What everybody’s looking to do if we can ever get our website sorted, is actually looking at getting local authorities to list where they’ve got their particular expertise so that they can then offer that because the resilience is becoming SO problematic.” (Participant 10)*

Participant 7 raised the issue of difficulty in recruiting qualified EHPs and how this can reduce the ‘Resilience’ of Environmental Health Services. Participant 2 supported this view and felt that staff turnover was a positive thing and improved ‘Resilience’

*“In our profession, it is good for people to move around – to have different views and experiences of people coming in and you could say that with so much going on in different places there is a lot of benefit in having some staff turnover.” (Participant 2)*

Participant 11 talked about basing shared services in the authorities which have the best ‘Resilience’ in that particular area. Participant 6 raised the issue of ‘Resilience’ when letting contracts and its loss when services are not changed but continue to suffer cuts

*“There was nothing else left other than to take staff out of the system. Once you take staff out of the system you can’t deliver this function but it is staff hungry” (Participant 6)*

However, Participant 7 cautioned that private companies contracting for services must themselves be ‘Resilient’. They also questioned how staff can take on income generating activities as well as their existing obligations.

*“A lot of it’s going to be about finance as well so you need companies which are not about to go bankrupt, who have got a track record and all the rest of it. Ones that have got sufficient guarantees that they’ll last the length of time in the contract – all those sorts of things……. But again, you’ve also got the problem that by itself it’s not worth a lot of money. Short of getting the whips out and lashing the people involved – they’re doing a halfway reasonable job now – then how are you going to get them to do the same or more and make lots of money in the process?”*  
(Participant 7)

‘Resilience’ may be improved by informal arrangements as well as by more formal change of service delivery such as contracts. Participant 9 suggested that in some areas, such as London, local authorities are resilient enough to lend staff from one borough to another.

One last thing to consider is the absolute need for a service in relation to service demand. So ‘Resilience’ could be improved by just not providing a very expensive service such as an out of hours noise service which may not be necessary at all.

*“We had a 24-hour noise team with people out and about all the time but when the cuts came the elected mayor said, well I’ll just do away with that and see what happens. Nothing happened. Calls came in and when they found there wasn’t a service no-one rang.”* (Participant 9)

The sub-themes of ‘Politics’, ‘Value’, ‘Shakeup needed’, ‘Costs’, ‘Devolution’, ‘Alternatives’, ‘Protection’, ‘Opportunity’ and ‘Resilience’ were considered separately to ensure a detailed discussion but they are all inter-related and all contribute to the central theme of ‘Understanding the reasons for change’. ‘Resilience’ emerges as an overarching theme encompassing the sub-themes of ‘Value’, ‘Shakeup needed’, ‘Costs’ and ‘Protection’. ‘Resilience’ is also a key influencing sub-theme in the central theme of ‘Viability of the proposal,’ and is therefore considered as one of the overarching themes in the final model.

The central theme of ‘Understanding the reasons for change’ emerged as a key theme for participants undergoing a change to a new model of Environmental Health Service. The significance of ‘Understanding the reasons for change’ was clearly identified by participants as a key issue in their experience of the early stages of change and contributes towards answering sub-research question I: ‘What are the drivers for change in local authority Environmental Health and Regulatory Services?’ and sub-research question II: ‘What are the experiences of key personnel during the change to emerging and novel service delivery models for Environmental Health and Regulatory Services?’

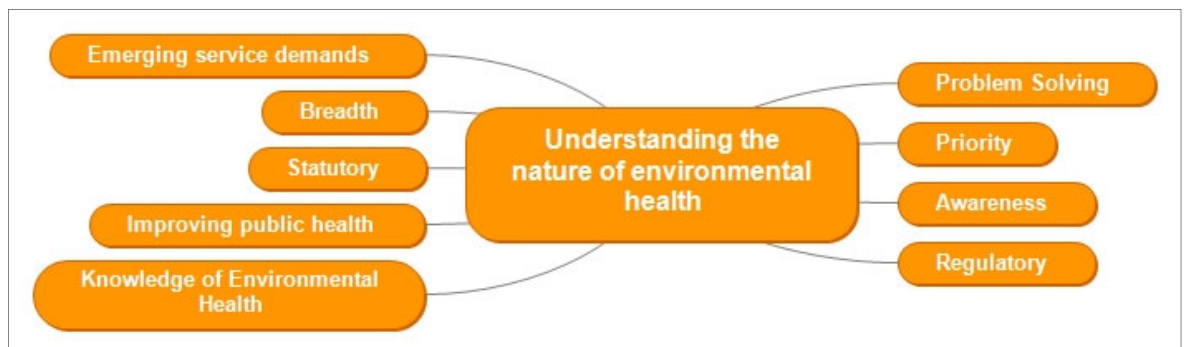


The participants responses also contribute to answering the research question of ‘What lessons can be learned from the change process?’ as a good understanding of the reasons for change influenced the participants’ response and engagement in the change process. ‘Understanding the reasons for change’ is discussed in more detail in Section 5.2.1 both in the light of conference audience commentary and in relation to the existing literature. In Section 5.3.15.3.3 the central theme of ‘Understanding the need for change’ is positioned in the stage of establishing the need for change, and finally, is integrated into the final theoretical model in Section 5.5. This finding therefore contributes towards meeting research objective c) Development of a theoretical framework for the effective management of future change programmes in Environmental Health Services.

#### 4.5.4 Understanding the Nature of Environmental Health

The central theme of ‘Understanding the nature of environmental health’ is influenced by the following sub-themes: *Problem solving, Priority, Awareness, Regulatory, Knowledge of Environmental Health, Improving public health, Statutory and Emerging service demands.*

The central theme of ‘Understanding the nature of environmental health’ is represented in Figure 4.7.



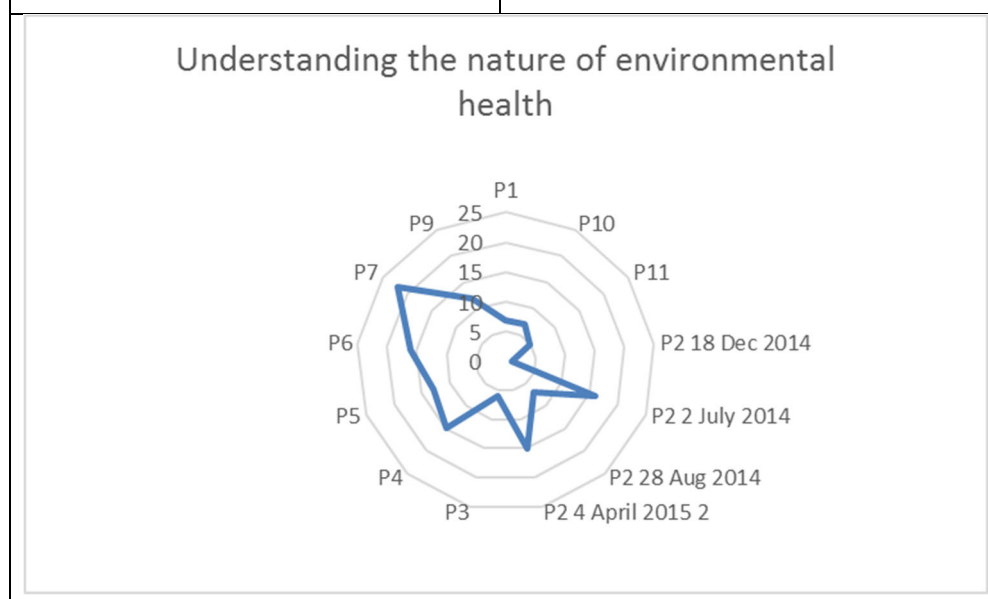
**Figure 4.7: Understanding the Nature of Environmental Health Thematic Diagram**

This research has pointed to the need for an understanding of the nature of environmental health which involves not just an appreciation of the breadth of the subject area but also the various ways of achieving the outcomes. Detailed knowledge of the nature of Environmental Health Services may not be required to manage delivery but a lack of sufficient knowledge can lead to problems.

Table 4.5 presents participant references to the sub-theme of ‘Understanding the nature of environmental health’. All of the participants referred to ‘Understanding the nature of environmental health’ as an essential element of developing and delivering new models of service delivery.

**Table 4.5: Participant references for the central theme: Understanding the nature of Environmental Health**

Central Theme: Understanding the Nature of Environmental Health	
Participant (P)	References (R)
P1	7
P2 18 Dec 2014	1
P2 2 July 2014	16
P2 28 Aug 2014	7
P2 4 April 2015 2	15
P3	6
P4	15
P5	13
P6	16
P7	22
P9	12
P10	7
P11/8	5
<b>TOTAL P=11</b>	<b>TOTAL R=142</b>



#### 4.5.4.1 Statutory

Environmental Health Practitioners, whether based in the UK or elsewhere, have a raft of legislation and a choice of subsequent tools to deal with matters that bring about a risk to the public’s health and services are directed to the areas which pose the greatest

risk. Actions are both proactive e.g. inspections and reactive e.g. investigations with an emphasis on assessing stressors and preventing a negative impact on the environment and public health. Local authorities have statutory duties to administer many of the aspects of Environmental Health Services, e.g. Food Safety regulation, Health and Safety regulation, Investigation of nuisance, control of infectious disease, etc.

The understanding of the regulatory and statutory nature of Environmental Health Services was raised by participants as important for those planning change.

Table N28 sets out participant references to the statutory nature of Environmental Health Services. Two participants, both from outsourcing models specifically referred to the statutory nature of environmental health and emphasised that the legality of public sector statutory duties must be well understood and properly delegated.

*“Questions were asked on a number of occasions how outsourcing sits with Environmental Health Legislation and Statutory Duties. It was clear to me and many of my colleagues that there would need to be sound decisions made on maintaining the integrity of the scheme of delegation” (Participant 1)*

#### **4.5.4.2 Regulatory**

The sub-theme of ‘Regulatory’ is related to ‘Statutory’ and Table N29 details participant references to the sub-theme of ‘Regulatory’. Six of the eleven participants considered that understanding the regulatory nature of Environmental Health Services was essential to understanding the nature of environmental health and Participant 7 was particularly concerned with this. Participant 5 spoke about how Regulatory Services are different and that an outsourcing private sector organisation may not have a good understanding of this.

*“These are Regulatory Services and this is a different kind of chewing gum to be chewing over I think. I think there has to be a certain understanding of us by them and vice-versa. Whether that will come I don’t know.” (Participant 5)*

Participants were worried that non-traditional providers of Environmental Health Service would have no experience of providing Regulatory Services. Participant 7 reflected on the reaction of stakeholders to outsourcing Regulatory Services and that people were saying it should not be done.

*“Nobody had done Regulatory Services before. So they were people saying it can’t be done, it shouldn’t be done and so none of the bidders really had much of a grounding in that at all.” (Participant 7)*

However, some participants were worried that viewing Environmental Health Services as purely 'Regulatory' was not appropriate and that regulation was just part of a larger toolkit to address risks to the public's health from their environment. Participant 5 noted that viewing an Environmental Health Service as a Regulatory Service was misguided. Participant 7 agreed that this label is not helpful

*"Often you've got regulatory tools to assist you but the whole process that local government has been under to just regard what Environmental Health does as a Regulatory Service was I think extremely misguided and has been for 15 years."* (Participant 5)

*"I actually think the whole Regulatory Services label is not necessarily a helpful one for us. It confuses means and ends."* (Participant 7)

#### **4.5.4.3 Improving Public Health**

Participants found that detailing their Environmental Health Service entailed a detailed understanding of the legality of the service provision but also needed to understand that the overall outcome of the service is to improve public health. Table N30 presents participant references to the sub-theme of 'Improving public health'.

Seven of the eleven participants across a range of the participating organisations made reference to 'Improving public health' in relation to 'Understanding the nature of environmental health' and some of those involved in outsourcing models were concerned that this role would not be understood by private companies. Participant 1 reflected that private companies bidding for a contract to deliver Environmental Health Services had no experience with services delivering public health outcomes. Participant 6 also spoke about this issue and how it was important for organisations to understand how the environment impacts on human health. Participant 9 reflected that government were more concerned with regulation and the burden on businesses rather than improving public health.

*"There's still a lot of talk about small business and government really haven't cottoned on to the fact that it might be a good idea if we went out and helped people as opposed to regulating people"* (Participant 9)

Participant 2 reflected that the outcome of work to improve public health is difficult to measure and considered how this might be done.

*"Do we do this by quantifying activity, by measuring the health of the population or by cost-benefit analysis? Is it better to look at all three aspects? Establishing an evidence base that measures the effectiveness of Environmental Health*

*Services and clearly documents the improvement in public health outcomes will play an important part in designing future models of Environmental Health Service delivery. What we do is well established but the benefits are tacit rather than explicit” (Participant 2)*

However, participants felt that these type of concerns may be addressed by involving those with knowledge of the service being involved in the specification of services being offered out for contracting.

#### **4.5.4.4 Problem Solving**

EHPs tend to adopt a problem-solving approach to address issues they are dealing with and Table N31 sets out participant references to the sub-theme of ‘Problem-solving’. Four of the participants referenced the problem-solving nature of Environmental Health Services with Participant 4 raising this as a particular issue for a regional shared service model.

The problem-solving nature of Environmental Health was well recognised and its relationship to Regulatory Services was discussed. This was described by Participant 6 and the difference between Regulatory Services and Environmental Health Services was identified.

*“The whole concept of Regulatory Service is you apply for licence or you are somehow not complying with some form of regulations whereas Environmental Health mentality, which is taught on our accredited courses and our systems and the DNA running through the profession, is that you are actually looking at resolving a problem and looking at the outcomes of your interventions.” (Participant 6)*

Participants worried that the problem-solving nature of EHPs might not be well understood and that the ability to resolve issues might be lost in a commercial or business model. Participants also noted that the way Environmental Health Practitioners (EHPs) work may give potential service providers unexpected difficulties. Participants realised that EHPs may be very different to work with than other professionals.

*“By talking to a very senior manager I have realised that EHPs are very different to work with. We see issues – that’s our job isn’t it? – you go to a property, you go to a food premises you are looking for compliance and so when we are looking at anything we will see it in the same way. We are constantly trying to make things better which means that we do point out probably more issues than perhaps you*

*might get from other professionals.... we push harder for better solutions to problems..” (Participant 2)*

Participant 4 worried that the new service may not be of such good quality in a business environment and that the problem-solving nature of Environmental Health Services might be lost somewhere along the way.

*“I don’t think maybe the service will be as good quality, it’s going to be much more business-like and is that what we’re about? I’m not sure it is. .... I just worry about that loss of having that ability to be more caring I suppose and more helpful to the general public and make sure they get a good quality of service – and we can’t afford to do that anymore!” (Participant 4)*

Participant 5 agreed that the problem-solving nature of EHPs may not fit well in a business model.

*“EHOs are becoming essentially problem-solvers and trying to find a solution to the problem in front of them. That doesn’t necessarily mix very well with this business model.....” (Participant 5)*

Participant 6 reinforced the need for EHPs to understand what is needed to resolve a problem.

*“It’s not about knocking on the door, going in and doing an inspection. It is about understanding what is needed within that particular business.” (Participant 6)*

#### **4.5.4.5 Awareness**

Table N32 details participant references to the sub-theme of ‘Awareness’. Eight of the eleven participants referenced awareness of Environmental Health Services as being influential in ‘Understanding the nature of environmental health’. Participant 9 who represented managers or Environmental Health Services made the most references to ‘Awareness’. Where Environmental Health Services were retitled as Regulatory Services participants felt that the role of Environmental Health Services and EHPs will be less well understood by the public and within organisations.

Participant 1 talked about a loss of identity for Environmental Health Professionals who were retitled as Regulatory Services Officers. Public awareness of the role of an EHP might be lost with new job titles.

*“I now work for ..... where although services remain in-house, recent restructures have seen us lose our title of Environmental Health Officers to a more general Regulatory Services Officer, in my mind a loss of identity for what we all work towards. It would be interesting to see what the public think a Regulatory Services Officer does, whereas I think they would have at least some familiarity with the role of an EHP. This is maybe something private sector companies should consider if they also change job titles.” (Participant 1)*

Participant 10 reflected on the lack of awareness of environmental health by senior management and Participant 9 noted a similar lack of awareness from local politicians.

*“The real problem was that there was nobody at senior level who knew about environmental health.”(Participant 10)*

*“if you talk to elected members nowadays they don’t know what environmental health is because they don’t have an Environmental Health Department.” (Participant 9)*

Participant 2 suggested a more general lack of awareness of what an Environmental Health Service does and that the service is difficult to understand by those not directly involved.

*“I just don’t think we appreciated at all how hard it was to understand us as a service and what we do. I think generally with highways people have a clue – it’s like school – everybody knows what a teacher does, planning – so many people come across these services in day to day life. Environmental health generally less so, most people won’t know other than the obvious functions like food hygiene.” (Participant 2)*

Lack of awareness or interest in Environmental Health Services was, therefore, identified as an issue but the process of documenting what the service does had helped participants to highlight the interest and awareness amongst stakeholders.

*“One of the issues for Environmental Health was it was not a very ‘sexy’ service as far as members were concerned” (Participant 2)*

*“The process of going through actually writing a list of services we provide made them do it differently. That process brought a lot of benefits.” (Participant 7)*

Participants were concerned that the lack of awareness and understanding of the nature of environmental health may lead to a lack of priority for Environmental Health Services and loss of key services.

*“if you were from the Woodstock generation you know a Joni Mitchell song, the pay off line is ‘you don’t know what you’ve got till it’s gone’ and that’s the risk for Environmental Health that once you’ve dismantled the service then you have the Legionnaire’s outbreak or whatever you know and suddenly you’ve got a bit of a crisis....” (Participant 7)*

One of the problems with the nature of Environmental Health Services is that when it is done well the benefits are not tangible e.g. The absence of food poisoning, improved health of private rented sector housing tenants, lack of complaints. Measuring outcomes can be a very effective way of increasing awareness and prioritising Environmental Health Services and design of performance indicators by people who understand the nature of environmental health can help raise the profile of Environmental Health Services.

#### **4.5.4.6 Priority**

Table N33 presents participant references to the sub-theme ‘Priority’. Six of the eleven participants referenced ‘Priority’ as being influential to the understanding of Environmental Health. Priorities for Environmental Health should be targeted to the areas presenting the greatest risk but services need to retain the capability to react to major incidents as they arise.

Participant 11 emphasised the need to examine data and intelligence to work out what the priorities of the Environmental Health Service should be, but that there should be sufficient capacity to respond to a major incident. However, historically, Environmental Health Services have not been a priority in local authorities with ‘big hitters’ such as Education, Housing and Social Services demanding more attention

*“We have never been classed as a priority service, it had always been easy to take resources out of EH” (Participant 2)*

Participants who had experienced outsourcing have found that KPIs have made Environmental Health Services a higher priority as it raised awareness and priority for the service and has provided protection from further cuts.

*“We did a full swathe, too many, of KPIs and PIs. Some of them were, and are good, we have reviewed some of them – things like empty properties which are more of a proactive area of work – we had a KPI of doing 100 a year which is high on the agenda and the political agenda.” (Participant 2)*



#### **4.5.4.7 Breadth**

A key issue for understanding Environmental Health Services is the breadth of provision e.g. Food Safety, Health and Safety, Environmental Protection, Housing and Health and Public Health. This is not well understood by stakeholders in local authorities, let alone for private companies. Table N34 sets out participant references to the sub-theme of 'Breadth' in relation to understanding Environmental Health.

Five participants referred to 'Breadth' in relation to understanding the nature of environmental health Services. Participant 2 discussed the broad nature of environmental health and how this made the service difficult to understand for those not directly involved.

*"I was talking to somebody in relation to the telephony hub and they found EH challenging because things like highways are very linear, you have a process and you can deal with it whereas EH – you have a process and it goes off in all these directions. As far as dealing with customers and service requests – food poisoning and a fire in an HMO are not really very similar" (Participant 2)*

There are perceptions of what environmental health might be with most people having knowledge of one or more of the environmental health disciplines. Understanding the nature of environmental health involves not just an appreciation of the breadth of the subject area but also the various ways of achieving the outcomes. Participant 2 gives an example of this

*"Just thinking about empty properties it can be as easy as giving some advice, boarding up or dealing with rats to Compulsory Purchase Order cases lasting for 15 years – we have been through every court process in the land with them but if you don't understand that work it is hard to explain." (Participant 2)*

#### **4.5.4.8 Knowledge of Environmental Health**

Detailed knowledge of the nature of environmental health services may not be required to manage the service but a lack of sufficient knowledge can lead to problems. Table N35 details participant referrals to the sub-theme of 'Knowledge of environmental health'. All eleven participants across the range of organisation and service delivery models felt that knowledge of environmental health matters was influential for understanding the nature of environmental health. Participant 2 felt that they hadn't appreciated the lack of knowledge of environmental health from those orchestrating the change process. This made the process and relationships very hard.

*“Whilst the big lead and the guy from the CIEH knew about environmental health nobody else knew anything about environmental health – or still knows anything about environmental health. ....I don't think we appreciated or were sympathetic enough to that lack of knowledge really..... I'd manage my relationship with ..... completely differently. I completely underestimated how hard it was going to be for them and for us. How little they knew about us and about what we do and how differently we tick..” (Participant 2)*

Participant 10 also noted that senior management knew very little about environmental health. Participant 2 found that the process of detailing the service for contractors to bid upon enabled the service to be better understood by themselves. More generally, participants underestimated how hard it was going to be to work with new service providers and realised how little they knew about environmental health and how differently Environmental Health Practitioners tick. In contrast, Participant 3 said that they had good knowledge of the service but that ongoing commissioners may not.

*“ongoing commissioners will not have this. This is a worry as they will not understand the services which have been commissioned. There is less to commissioning once the contract is set – I have been made redundant!” (Participant 3.)*

Participants have also expressed views on the management of contracts by directors who lack knowledge of environmental health. Participant 3 reflected that regular meetings and front line experiences with directors helped to increase their knowledge of environmental health but it was still limited.

*“The other director here predominately sees over the contract.....we were meeting on a monthly basis with him and that bought his knowledge up to what we were doing ..... I think that this is probably as good as you are going to get without someone who is professional but it's not the same as having someone who is trained in that profession as an Environmental Health Officer around those subjects.” (Participant 3)*

However, participants acknowledged that ongoing management of a contract does not need such a deep knowledge of the service and contract management skills are more important at this stage.

*“I don't think you have to be from an EH background to manage – you need to be a good manager rather than have been a practitioner.” (Participant 2)*

#### **4.5.4.9 Emerging Service Demands**

Finally, participants referenced the sub-theme of 'Emerging service demands' as essential for 'Understanding the nature of environmental health' and this influences the other sub-themes of 'Priority', 'Awareness' and 'Knowledge of environmental health'.

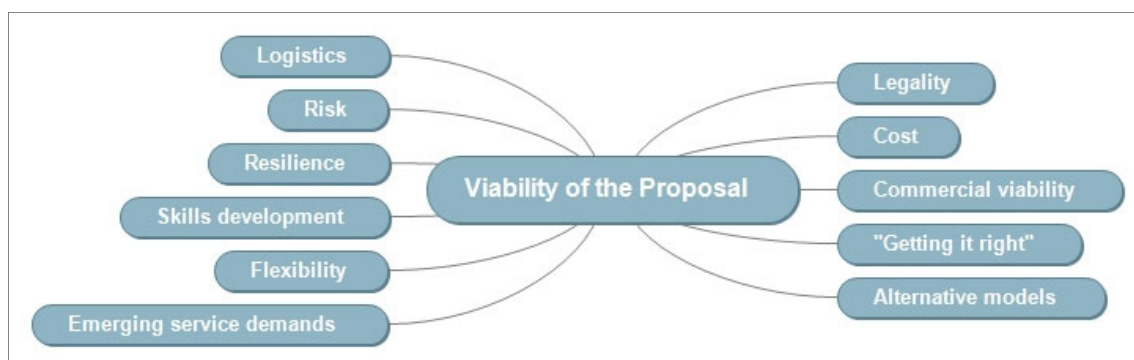
'Emerging service demands' also emerges as an overarching theme for 'Managing changes effectively' and encompasses the sub-themes of 'Impact of changes', 'Difficult', 'Process', 'Customer Satisfaction', and 'Skills development'. In addition, 'Emerging service demands' is a key influencing sub-theme in the central themes of 'Viability of the proposal' and 'Understanding the nature of environmental health'. 'Emerging Service demands' is therefore also considered as one of the overarching themes in the final model which will be discussed in more detail later in this chapter.

In conclusion, the central theme of 'Understanding the nature of environmental health' emerged as a key theme for participants undergoing a change to a new model of Environmental Health Service. The participants felt that understanding the nature of a complex Regulatory Service such as an Environmental Health Service was fundamental for an effective change process. The central theme of 'Understanding the nature of environmental health' was particularly important at the early stages of change and this finding contributes towards answering sub-research question I: 'What are the drivers for change in local authority Environmental Health and Regulatory Services?' and sub-research question II: 'What are the experiences of key personnel during the change to emerging and novel service delivery models for Environmental Health and Regulatory Services?' Identification of the need to understand the nature of environmental health also contributes towards answering sub-research question III: 'What lessons can be learned from the change process?' 'Understanding the nature of environmental health' is discussed in more detail in Section 5.2.2 and 5.3.1 both in the light of conference audience commentary and in relation to the existing literature. In Section 5.3.1 and 5.3.3 the central theme of 'Understanding the nature of environmental health' is positioned in the stage of establishing the need for change, and finally, is integrated into the final theoretical model in Section 5.5. This contributes towards meeting research objective c) Development of a theoretical framework for the effective management of future change programmes in Environmental Health Services.

#### 4.5.5 Viability of the Proposal

The central theme of 'Viability of the proposal' is influenced by the following sub-themes: *Legality, Cost, Commercial viability, Getting it right, Alternative models, Emerging service demands, Flexibility, Skills development, Resilience, Risk, and Logistics.*

The central theme of 'Viability of the proposal' is represented in Figure 4.8.

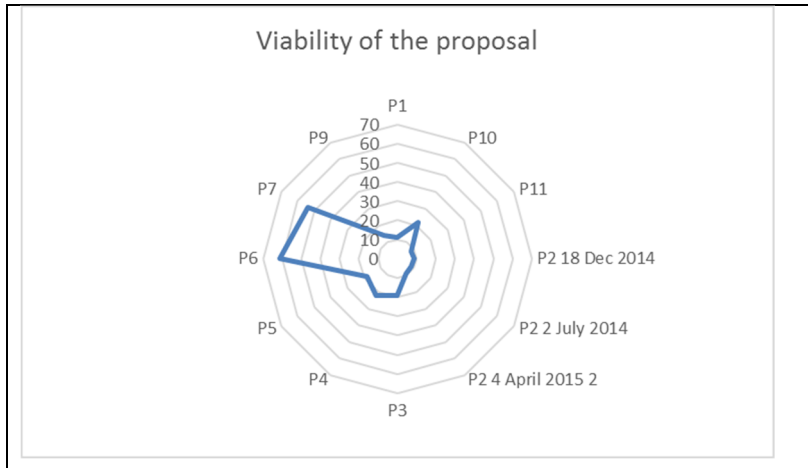


**Figure 4.8: Viability of the Proposal Thematic Diagram**

Table 4.6 presents participant references to the central theme of 'Viability of the proposal'. All eleven participants across a range of organisation and models of service delivery models considered 'Viability of the proposal' as a key theme. Participants 6 and 7 found the viability of the proposal particularly pertinent to the process of change.

**Table 4.6: Participant references for the central theme: Viability of the proposal**

Central Theme: Viability of the Proposal	
Participant (P)	References (R)
P1	11
P2 18 Dec 2014	9
P2 2 July 2014	8
P2 4 April 2015 2	9
P3	19
P4	22
P5	18
P6	61
P7	54
P9	14
P10	22
P11/8	8
<b>TOTAL P=11</b>	<b>TOTAL R=255</b>



#### 4.5.5.1 Commercial Viability

Table N36 sets out participant references to the sub-theme of 'Commercial viability'. Seven of the eleven participants discussed this as an issue with Participants 6 and 7 paying particular attention to the commercial viability of the proposal. Participant 10 described how parts of their service were not considered suitable for outsourcing and this split made the proposal commercially unviable.

Potential growth and income generation of Environmental Health Services were identified as being essential for 'Commercial viability' but some participants questioned if this was possible. Participant 2 described the challenging growth targets which were essential for the contract to work financially.

*"The contract has been set up to have very stiff financial targets and a huge amount of growth is included in the contract and we have to meet it. Growth targets are for income across all of the services (planning, building control and environmental health)." (Participant 2)*

Participant 5 also referred to the need for commercial activity but doubted that this was possible.

*"Our employers, the success of the company and the ability of the company to keep providing the services is dependent on some growth and some commercial activity. It's difficult to see from where it will come." (Participant 5)*

Participant 1 felt that Environmental Health Services had less potential to be commercially viable when compared to local authority services such as planning and highways.

*“There was a bundle approach to the outsourced services with EH forming part of a larger project that included Planning and Highways. I can’t help but think that services like planning were the sweetener of the bundle, being a growth industry and holding an obvious allure for a private company which development interests, I am still concerned that private sector providers will have reduced interest in services with a lesser cash building potential, (like Environmental Health Services)” (Participant 1)*

Participant 6 discussed mutualisation which was first put forward in 2010 as an alternative model of service delivery in response to government cuts. It was felt that mutualisation is potentially a good way forward to mobilise staff but depended on a critical mass and capacity to drive a social enterprise business. There was a view that most people with environmental health backgrounds have technical skills but do not necessarily have a commercial drive and many are social in their viewpoint. Participant 2 supports this view but sees the opportunity to develop new skills.

Participant 6 said that a model of mutualisation must be competitive to sell services back to Local Authorities and that this can only be achieved with a critical mass of a ‘super-mutual’. However, they went on to say that the Cabinet Office was only interested in supporting small mutual organisations. Participant 6 felt that most EHPs would be happy to work on a mutualised basis.

*“But the problem is you needed a critical mass and most local authority Environmental Health Practitioners would have been very happy to have worked on a mutualised basis, but unless you’ve got the capacity to do marketing and have got capacity to actually drive what is in a sense, a social enterprise business, it doesn’t work ..... I default back to the super mutual idea because that was founded on the basis that if you actually have a pool of people that are fed, watered and machined centrally but located locally, you can set contracts to actually deliver very specific services within the context of them withdrawing your troops. So the model has got to be big. It’s the critical mass discussion all over again.” (Participant 6)*

Participant 6 emphasised that income must be generated from the service (with a profit margin) for future outsourcing of Environmental Health Services to be palatable to private companies or for mutuals. They also believed that shared service models can work with a limited level of resource applied, once this level of resource is breached the model cannot survive.

*“I am aware of at least 3 companies that have been interested in the .....model and who put their hat in the ring for the ..... model but when they looked at the detail of the contract there wasn’t enough margin in there for them to be interested.” (Participant 6)*

#### 4.5.5.2 Legality

Another issue for consideration is the legality of a Local Authority discharging its functions through a third party. This has been explored through legal consultation and the consensus is that it is possible with proper governance in place, but this required substantial thought and any mistakes would pose a serious risk of legal challenge at macro and micro levels. Seeing an Environmental Health Service as a Regulatory Service causes participants concern. The use of regulation is a tool used to protect public health but it is misguided to think of an Environmental Health Service purely as a Regulatory Service. Table N37 details participant references to the sub-theme 'Legality'.

Eight of the eleven participants referred to the legality of new service delivery models. Participant 1 reported that there was no consensus on the legality of the outsourcing models. Participant confirmed that the ability of a local authority to actually discharge its functions legally through another agency was open to debate. However, they spoke about European legislation that appeared to allow this.

*“What we did was to think about the European legislation which allowed – I’ve got it chapter and verse somewhere – so the detail escapes me, but the principle was if you looked at the law in a particular way, there was no impediment to actually then having another agency carrying out those functions for you even if was a private company.” (Participant 6)*

Joint authorisation of officers by the commissioning and contracting organisation has been put forward as an option to ensure the legality of a local authority discharging its statutory and regulatory duties to a third party. Other arrangements used a joint appointment system. Participant 10 identified two mechanisms which were considered to be a legal way of a local authority discharging its function to an agency.

*“We knew it had to be authorised by both organisations in order to do it even though we knew and we told them that this joint authorisation is the only way – you’ve got two models you can go for, the joint authorisation or the secondment, basically there are two options that legally would work.” (Participant 10)*

Delegation of powers by the local authority and the legality of delegating to a third party must be addressed. This was very challenging for participants and Participant 2 referred to the detailed approach necessary for legal delegation.

*“Going through, I mean literally, going through ancient legislation looking at who could do what and the whys and wherefores, who you could delegate to – completely reviewing all of our schemes of delegation. Having solicitors going*

*through every single line of what we had done and questioning it – very very detailed – very very hard work – it really was.” (Participant 2)*

Participant 3 spoke about how the variety of legislation involved and the challenge that this poses for legal delegation of powers. They also spoke about the lengthy legal consultation and how it went round in circles and ended up going back to the same position.

*“The other interesting thing about the project early on was issues about how do you delegate authority – a lot of environmental health legislation particularly goes back to the 19th and early 20th century and hasn’t been codified into a big Act – e.g. there isn’t an Environmental Health Act – like the modern way of doing things. So that has meant that as we got deeply into it things like an authorised officer meant lots of different things – even though the same term is used. So it was a huge legal challenge around how do you actually delegate – particularly for the Regulatory Services.” (Participant 3)*

Questions of ‘Legality’ of joint appointments included those of taking cases to court and other enforcement action. Participant 2 reflected on how there had been no challenge to the legality of the delegation of function, powers and joint appointments. They noted that, so far, there had been no legal challenge to the arrangement

*“There is a food or health and safety case in court at the moment – we have had two housing cases. I mean – I always thought that it would be a big company (say Tescos or something like that) who has access to funds – potentially someone who is more aware of the legalities. They must have been watching what was going on as there was publicity. But no challenges and also no notices served that have been appealed. Also, we have signed up for Primary authority and things like that and nobody has considered that it has been an issue at all.” (Participant 2)*

Participant 5 spoke of the nuances of a joint appointment arrangement and how it affects the day to day work.

*“When we do anything which involves a statutory function, a regulatory non-delegable function, we are ..... employees effectively and solely I think for that period of time so other than requests around services of notices for example. But that’s only a moment in time because you can prepare a notice as an administrative but you serve it as the authority.” (Participant 5).*

Participants not involved in outsourcing worry that the public service ethos may be lost in more commercial models of service delivery believing that ultimately such changes have the potential to impact greatly on those in the community already at a disadvantage.



Issues such as poverty and health inequalities and preventative interventions that work towards long term goals may not hold enough interest for companies on 10 or 15-year contracts. However, participants from an outsourced service do not agree and maintain, that to date, the essence of environmental health has not been lost in translation.

#### **4.5.5.3 Logistics**

Table N38 sets out participant references to the sub-theme of 'Logistics' in relation to the viability of the proposal. Ten of the eleven participants referenced 'Logistics' and those from shared services were most concerned with this issue. Participant 10 spoke about the management structure of a newly formed shared service. They reflected on the leanness of the management and how difficult it was working between two locations. Participant 11 agree that the 'day to day' logistics of managing people who are twenty-five miles away was challenging.

*"Practically it's just not going to work.....All it seems to do from everybody I've spoken to is that you're running between two locations all the time just trying to keep on top of it and it just seems like an impossible job." (Participant 10)*

Participant 4 explained their experience of shared services and felt that it was really just about shared management who then spent a couple of days in one authority and the rest of the week in the other. They said that they never really knew where their managers were and could never get hold of them. Consequently, they reverted back to their own managers on site whilst the project was going forward.

Conversely, Participant 10 reflected on the positive aspects of working together and how major investigations can only work well when there is regional working.

*"the meeting I was at this morning was a food fraud, we've got a big investigation going on across London at the moment linked with Wales and we need to get funding but they don't want to deal with just every legal authority who's going to be involved in it, they want to do it as a joint bid" (Participant 10)*

Front line officers were concerned about the time allowed to deal with their caseload in the new model of service delivery and the logistical challenge relating to time frames. Participant 4 reflected on the process of introducing a new service model and how a model was put together based on how long, on average, each type of investigation might take. They noted that a small team working over a large geographical area spend a long time travelling and less time working on cases.

*“We’re a team of 3 EHOs and a technical officer and we do the full range of housing, disabled facility grants, and we do all the pollution/nuisance cases and we’ve got an area of 550 square miles, one of the biggest in the country so there’s an awful lot of travelling. You know I could go off and do a job and be gone all day – just for one job.” (Participant 4)*

However, Participant 1 spoke about more mobile working in a new model of service delivery and how this might allow more focus because there is likely to be less distraction.

Issues around acting for different authorities with different service aims and objectives were identified as problematic. Participant 4 spoke about the complexity of delivering a different service in neighbouring authorities to deal with the same type of issue. This threw up a professional challenge.

*“it just seems complex to me that you might have to make decisions about what you do in each local authority area if you’re covering a number of areas on the basis of what service you’re giving them and I think that could be very difficult to distinguish when you’re operating across a number of local authorities and that could be professionally quite difficult I think, I really do.” (Participant 4)*

Participant 6 considered shared services in non-adjointing authorities and found that this was logistically very difficult and costly.

*“And there’s some interesting shared service experiments going on between different non-adjointing boroughs and they’re finding that incredibly difficult because the cost of locating people in one borough which is not adjacent to another borough and how that can be managed and how you split off time and how you get some equity between the resources you’re putting into this between one borough and another.” (Participant 6)*

However, Participant 7 considered the ability to be able to direct the resources where they are needed and to avoid replication was a positive ‘Logistic’ issue.

*“If you’ve got no internal border you can arrange whatever it is you’re talking about. You can arrange it in a way which takes more heed of the needs and demands in those particular areas.” (Participant 7)*

Harmonising terms and conditions of employment for staff was flagged by participants as vital when looking at a shared service model or where authorities are joining together. If this is not properly addressed at the early stages then it soon becomes a sticking point.

#### **4.5.5.4 Cost**

Cost is very important and came up in discussion with all participants. Participants reported that more commercial models require a profit margin which is very difficult to achieve when bidding to deliver services for organisations where there is diversion of funding to 'the big hitters' such as social services and education.

*“Regulatory Services are already very lean and leave little that is attractive for commercial bidding.” (Participant 6)*

Participants confirmed that breaking-even could not be a commercial model – so should developers of new Environmental Health Service models be looking at a different financial model? Participant 6 reported that, in some cases, the only way to make money was to cut staff and this meant that services could not be delivered. This marginalisation of Regulatory Services was an issue for all participants.

The sub-theme of 'Cost' was explored in more detail in Section 4.5.3.

#### **4.5.5.5 “Getting it Right**

Table N39 details participant references to the sub-theme of 'Getting it right'. All eleven participants from a range of organisations and service delivery models referenced 'Getting it right'. 'Getting it right' ensures that a service delivery model maximises its resilience and reduces the risk. A well thought out contract can serve to protect the future of a service. Participant 3 felt that 'getting it right' resulted in no further cuts being made to the service.

*“Without this contract and this project we would have ended up cutting these services.” (Participant 3)*

Participant 11 raised the point that 'getting it right' in one service or local authority may not translate well to another local authority.

*“There’s a big question mark and you have to analysis service by service and does it actually make sense to do that? I think an honest discussion with them to say that would work in LA C but that doesn’t work for us in LA B, and we can work with you to think of a better way to do that, as we are not going to leave someone in the lurch.” (Participant 11)*

Participants in smaller scale projects noted that you can make mistakes on a small scale and hone how you do things and decide on how to do things in the future. A range of Environmental Health Service delivery models were discussed by the participants

including shared services, consortia, outsourcing, and regionalisation of services. Various models have been explored by participants including the creation of charities, commercial enterprises outside of the council, joint enterprises, mutualisation and ring-fenced services within the council. Participants spoke of how important it was to get things right and the consequences of getting it wrong. Participant 1 emphasised the importance of 'getting it right' and the implications of 'getting it wrong'.

*"The important thing is to get it right! The consequences of getting it wrong can damage the relationship between the authority, the profession and the community. It may result in time-consuming legal proceedings, creating unnecessary stress and additional costs." (Participant 1)*

Participant 11 cautioned that not 'getting it right' with respect to having client managers with the right expertise can cause vulnerability. They went on to emphasise that all functions of the service must be included in the original agreement.

*"What they haven't appreciated at the time is they haven't left themselves with any expertise around any of these functional areas, so they didn't have an in house client manager or somebody left who could look at that and say yes that is right or that is wrong. So, from that point of view, they have left themselves vulnerable." (Participant 11)*

Participant 2 reflected on the work they had done on securities and permissions and felt that, in hindsight, they had not got that right. Participants found that proper governance is a key aspect of getting things right in the first place and dealing with issues if things go wrong in the future. Participant 11 gave an example of how the governance was dealt with in their new service model. The governance board was closely involved in the set-up of the agreement and Participant 11 reflected that in an on-going agreement the governance board only tend to get involved when issues need to be escalated. In their case, major issues arose when there were disagreements about what was not in the contract and the additional money the council had to pay as a result of the omission.

Other, participants agreed that detail in specifying services to be provided was a key aspect in 'Getting it right'. However, Participant 2 cautioned that delivering to a tight specification can be challenging.

*"We have to be so tight on what we are doing from a stats point of view. Work about work but really its stuff that we should always have been doing. Things like the enforcement audit that we did well on – 96% compliance – that's just stuff about recording process and decisions – stuff we should always have been doing. But now – God are we tight on this – this is much more closely monitored. I*

*wouldn't say that we don't trust staff but it has to be more visible that they are complying." (Participant 2)*

Participant 3 agreed that caution and diligence were crucial when setting up and monitoring their contract.

*"We were super, super cautious and my experience is that being a London authority and being ..... we had to be more diligent. We didn't regret that we spent more time on it because we were concerned that it had to be done properly. We knew that we would and we had an enormous amount of scrutiny of what this was about." (Participant 3)*

Interestingly, Participant 7 said that writing a detailed specification involved a lot of time and effort but actually delivered lots of improvements as well as savings. This gave rise to the thought that maybe a contract wasn't actually required to achieve these benefits.

*"If you do it properly and prepare all the specifications, that's a lot of time and effort particularly if it hasn't been done before. But so you've got to be bloody certain that you're getting something at the end which is better and cheaper – preferably both, than what you've got at the moment and then the question is actually do we need a contract to get those benefits?" (Participant 7)*

However, some participants felt that specifications that are too detailed can lead to a focus on outputs rather than outcomes.

*"I suppose the jury is to out as to whether or not they are fulfilling the requirements of the local population in terms of environmental health controls." (Participant 6)*

#### **4.5.5.6 Flexibility**

Flexibility was also considered as influential to the 'Viability of the proposal'. Table N9 presents participant references to the sub-theme of 'Flexibility'. Seven of the eleven participants thought that 'Flexibility' was a key issue to ensuring that the proposal was viable. This contrasts with the view that 'Getting it right' relies on detailed specifications.

*"There are enough choices to be able to work on the projects that you think will work and that is something very healthy." (Participant 2)*

*"It was about pushing forward the defining of the professional role but the demand on our members would inevitably be that they had to be more flexible in the way they used their skills in the future." (Participant 7)*

Contractors need to be flexible in the type of arrangements that are made with Environmental Health Services.

*“Well that was certainly the way the bid was won and that’s one of things which helped mark their bid out from competitors and it fitted easily in the ..... ethos because they were used to employing professionals and providing those professional services for a range of public and private sector employers through a range of different contract types. It fitted very neatly as against just the old style blue collar outsourcing contract. They were very different beasts.” (Participant 7)*

#### **4.5.5.7 Alternative models**

‘Flexibility’ is linked to the sub-theme of ‘Alternative models’. Table N40 details participant references to ‘Alternative models’. All eleven participants talked about alternative models in relation to ensuring the viability of the proposal and participants felt that these need to be considered in detail at the planning stage. Participant 6 was particularly interested in alternative models of service delivery.

All participants were keen to consider ‘Alternative models’. Various models were discussed by participants, including a National Environmental Health Board which could increase the flexibility of Environmental Health Services when dealing with emerging service demands

*“Let’s say there’s a major concern about contamination of the water supply to this country to local communities and drinking water inspectorate and Defra and everybody else is really worried, they could mobilise a central agency like the National Environmental Health Board who would then get into every single local authority to deliver the sampling programme that they required and feed it back straight into central government. At the moment they can’t do that, they haven’t got a lever.” (Participant 6)*

Participant 10 agreed that the move towards regional services may provide more opportunity to deliver services in other authorities. However, Participant 11 cautioned that there is no one right model of shared services and each proposal should be considered as a unique one. Participant 6 supported the idea of shared services provided there was sufficient resource applied. However, Participant 7 realised that initial savings achieved by a shared service may not be continued.

*“You can just combine management, okay you have an initial saving when you get rid of various people but after that, the saving is relatively small.” (Participant 7)*

Participant 6 was involved with the proposal of a 'super-mutual' which would have brought together all of those local authority Environmental Health Service units that wanted to mutualise their services. They described brain-storming sessions which were looking at business models which would enable a mutual model which was outside of the council but it had to have a profit margin and a critical mass.

*“Mutualisation can occur but it has to have the right quantum mass in order for it to then have the capacity to grow as a business model, so you’re creating a business, okay it’s a supported business but down the line contractual rules within the public sector mean that you would have to go out to tender at some particular point and if you weren’t competitive you couldn’t then sell your service back even though you might have come from that particular local authority.” (Participant 6)*

Participant 1, predicted that the traditional model of local authority service delivery would become unfamiliar over the next decade. Participant 5 agreed and suggested that all local authorities have to consider better delivery models just to be able to perform their regulatory and statutory functions. Participant 7 spoke of the future of local authority services as hubs delivering a single set of services to a number of districts. Participant 9 agreed and referred to regionalising London local authority services as an example.

*“The other view is that why have we got 32 boroughs in London? It’s ridiculous to have that many. Whether there just needs to be 4 regions or something like that?” (Participant 9)*

#### **4.5.5.8 Risk**

Risk permeates through many of the sub-themes and was discussed by participants in their various contexts. In some cases, the perceived risk of a novel service delivery model was a key reason for not going forward with the proposal. Table N49 presents participant specific references to 'Risk'. Seven of the participants referred to risk with Participant 9 making 12 of the 37 references.

Participant 10 referred to the risk of joint authorisation in a contract and that the risk was considered too high to continue with the proposal. Participant 7 referred to the lack of experience in contracting out of Regulatory Services and the risk that this lack of experience presented. A further risk of not being able to make a profit was highlighted by Participant 7.

*“So any self-respecting and sensible contractor could say ‘I can’t do that and make a profit’. I’d be foolish to sign that contract because the chances are it’s going to implode.” (Participant 7)*

Other participants reported the risk associated with services being left without expertise and Participant 11 linked this risk to a resulting vulnerability. Participant 9 gave an example of how this might play out in practice.

*“I’m thinking about the work that went on in ..... where we’ve had people involved in the case where somebody died after eating the Christmas dinner at a pub. I mean that’s taken the equivalent of one person two years, full-time to do that.” (Participant 9)*

Risks associated with insufficient staff numbers were also identified by Participant 11 and Participant 6:

*“They didn’t have sufficient staff so that was a huge risk (for them) and less of a risk in ..... as we have much more staff.” (Participant 11)*

*“there was nothing else left other than to take staff out of the system. Once you take staff out of the system you can’t deliver this function” (Participant 6)*

Participant 2 reflected on the risk of a new model of service delivery engendering a lack of trust and perception of threat to other local authorities and potential employees. This had led to difficulty in recruiting new EHPs.

*“Under the current circumstances it feels riskier because people still don’t like us - I don’t think – we are a threat. it is very hard to say that “very little is different from other local authorities” because it looks different.” (Participant 2)*

Participant 9 gave an example of a service which had completely disappeared when it was not properly overseen.

*“They had a lot of building going on there and had 12 people doing building control. When I looked after it, it had 3. I don’t think it’s got any now so it’s a good example of if you don’t look after yourself, you disappear completely.....” (Participant 9)*

Pioneering a new service delivery model was described by Participant 2 in terms of risk but also in terms of the benefits that might accrue

*“.... coming to ..... was a big punt for them. Now, people are showing an interest in our model for the right reasons rather than the abhorrent reasons of before ( OMG what are you doing, it will never work). We are a year down the line and it is working so now people want to know how it works.” (Participant 2)*

Issues around a new relationship between organisations being perceived as a risk were reported by participants and the effort required to develop new relationships. It was



established that there is a substantial risk if there are adverse feelings from stakeholders about the model of service delivery being proposed. In an outsourced service mode, participants reported massive resistance within the council and the community involving threats of industrial action, unhappy residents, and carnage at public meetings. The poor publicity and the public humiliation could have changed the direction of change but in the end, it did not.

Risks of loss of professionalism for EHPs in austerity and in a new model of service delivery were reported by a range of participants. Participant 6 was concerned that the profession might be 'dumbed down'. Participant 7 spoke of contracting out services involving manual workers and the risky assumption that this cannot be done for professional local authority services.

*"I mean when CCT came in there were a lot more white collar staff and things like legal, personnel and so on. This happened to us, it's okay for it to happen to you know the manual workers, that's fine - but of course, you can't do it for professional staff. That was always a bit of a risky line to take and it wasn't true either." (Participant 7)*

Participant 9 identified the risk that shrinking services have resulted in a smaller pool of qualified EHPs and was concerned about the negative impact this might have on the profession.

#### **4.5.5.9 Cost, Emerging service demands, Skills development and Resilience**

The sub-themes of, 'Cost (see 4.5.3.6 and 4.5.5.4)', 'Emerging service demands' (see 4.5.2.8 4.5.4.9), 'Skills development'(see 4.5.2.6), and 'Resilience'(see 4.5.3.9) were all considered as influential sub-themes to the central theme of 'Viability of the proposal' and have been discussed in detail earlier in this chapter.

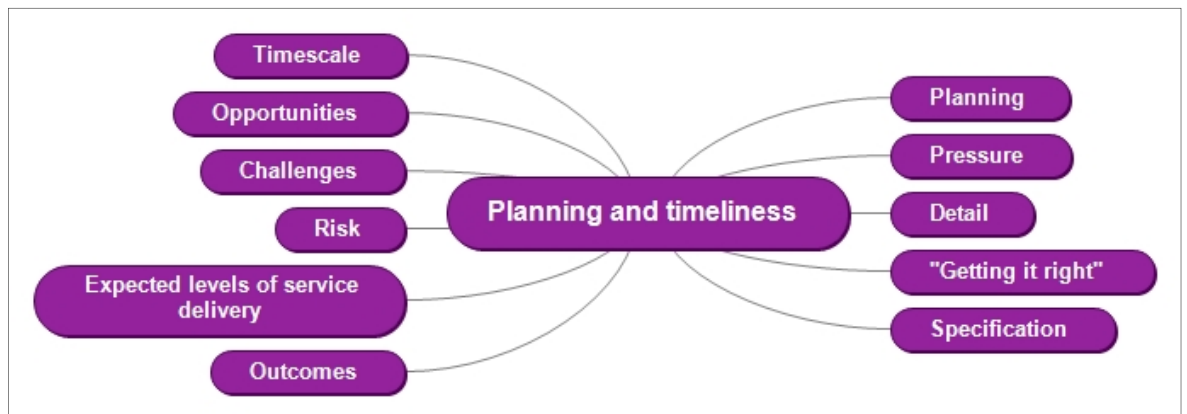
In conclusion, the central theme of 'Viability of the proposal' emerged as a key theme for participants undergoing a change to a new model of Environmental Health Service. Participants who were involved in the management of change, and those leading the process, found that the viability of the process was key to a successful change. The central theme of 'Viability of the proposal' contributes towards answering sub-research question II: 'What are the experiences of key personnel during the change to emerging and novel service delivery models for Environmental Health and Regulatory Services?' It also contributes to answering sub-research question III: 'What lessons can be learned from the change process?' 'Viability of the proposal' is discussed in more detail in Section

5.2.3 and 5.3.1 both in the light of conference audience commentary and in relation to the existing literature. In Section 5.3.2 and 5.3.3 the central theme of 'Viability of the proposal' is positioned in the stage of decision making and planning, and finally, is integrated into the final theoretical model in Section 5.5. This contributes towards meeting research objective c) Development of a theoretical framework for the effective management of future change programmes in Environmental Health Services.

#### 4.5.6 Planning and Timeliness

The central theme of 'Planning and Timeliness' is influenced by the following sub-themes: *Planning, Pressure, Detail, Getting it right, Specification, Outcomes, Expected levels of service delivery, Risk, Challenges, Opportunities and Timescale.*

The central theme of 'Planning and timeliness' is represented in Figure 4.9.



**Figure 4.9: Planning and Timeliness Thematic Diagram**

Table 4.7 sets out participant references to the central theme of 'Planning and timeliness'. Eight of the eleven participants made references to 'Planning and timeliness'.

**Table 4.7: Participant references for the central theme: Planning and timeliness**

Central Theme: Planning and timeliness	
Participant (P)	References (R)
P1	1
P2 18 Dec 2014	22
P2 2 July 2014	17
P2 28 Aug 2014	11
P2 4 April 2015 2	18
P3	7
P4	10
P5	9
P6	4
P7	29
P9	6
<b>TOTAL P=8</b>	<b>TOTAL R=134</b>

Planning and timeliness

Participant	References (R)
P1	1
P2 18 Dec 2014	22
P2 2 July 2014	17
P2 28 Aug 2014	11
P2 4 April 2015 2	18
P3	7
P4	10
P5	9
P6	4
P7	29
P9	6

#### 4.5.6.1 Detail

Table N41 presents participant references to the sub-theme of 'Detail'. Four of the eleven participants referenced 'Detail' and these were mainly frontline / middle managers from an outsourced model.

Participants were very concerned with making a service specification as detailed as possible and noted how this ties down service delivery in a new model. They referred to the amount of work that went into making sure the contract was right and how important this was in the transition to a new service.

*“We put a heck of a lot of working into making sure that the contract was right – we were worried that it wouldn’t be appropriately monitored so we are hoisted by*

*our own petard..... Well, the contract is crucial, but for somebody going through it the transition is crucial.” (Participant 2)*

Participant 5 wondered what would happen when a specific service was demanded but had not been procured.

*“I’m wondering whether it’s really going to be possible to refuse to do something because it hasn’t been bought from the point of the councillors procuring a certain specific service and then maybe wanting something more.” (Participant 5)*

#### **4.5.6.2 Specification**

‘Detail’ is closely linked to the sub-theme of ‘Specification’. Table N42 presents participant references to ‘Specification’. Three participants referenced ‘Specification’ as being influential to ‘Planning and timeliness’. All of these participants were from an outsourced service.

Reporting on detailed performance indicators creates a workload for all levels of officers in the delivery organisation and for the client in respect of monitoring the contract. Participant 2 recognised the heavy workload created but noted that the KPIs may protect a service. It was noted that there was a resultant improvement in service delivery and that KPIs meant that the profile of the Environmental Health Services is now highlighted.

*“We have improved delivery as well. A lot of the challenge has been because people thought we were a safe team – we had made process changes already and we had a good profile – but from a bundle point of view we had the most KPIs and our profile has shot up which whilst it has nearly killed us it but has been fantastic. We are a service that has to succeed.” (Participant 2)*

Participant 7 reflected on how specifying services was a steep learning curve and how their contract writing skills were developed over time. Participants reported that a tight specification means that cuts may be difficult to make without affecting the ability to deliver on a contract. They felt that getting the detailed specification of a service is therefore fundamental to the success of a new service delivery model. Participant 3 reflected that what gets measured gets done.

*“We didn’t regret that we spent more time on it because we were concerned that it had to be done properly. We knew that we would and we had an enormous amount of scrutiny of what this was about. So, we got through the dialogue process and a lot of staff were involved in both writing down what we wanted out of the contract and then assessing what the bids were against that output.” (Participant 3)*

#### **4.5.6.3 Timescale**

As the title of this theme suggests, the success planning stage is closely linked to the time-frame. Although, it is important to pay close attention to 'Getting it right' it is crucial to ensure that the process is carried out in a timely manner. Table N43 participant references to 'Timescale'. Six of the eleven participants considered 'Timescale' in relation to the central theme of 'Planning and timeliness' of the change process.

Participant comments varied about the timescale with most feeling that the lead in parts of the process were too long and then the crucial transition process being too short. Participant 2 reflected on the impact of a long lead-in phase and a short mobilisation.

*"I think the worst thing about the process was whilst the lead in went on forever, the actual mobilisation time was short. This meant that it was a shakier transfer than it needed to have been." (Participant 2)*

Participant 4 reflected on an apparently generous timescale and how this felt tight later on in the process.

*"I think that the actual project to come up with a proposal is 6 months, I'm pretty sure and then there'll be a reporting period to all the different councils. I think 18 months was originally said from the start of the project. The project's been going a month now, something like that, 3 or 4 weeks anyway – it's just the 18 months to implementation which I thought was a bit tight actually." (Participant 4)*

Participant 7 noted that any change to a local authority service model is, by necessity, a lengthy process.

#### **4.5.6.4 Planning**

Table N44 details participant references to the sub-theme of 'Planning'. Just two participant directly referred to 'Planning' and both of these were from an outsourced model of service delivery. Participants felt that they need to plan with a view of how the eventual service delivery would look and to couple up with allied services was essential at an early stage of planning.

Participant 2 spoke of planning to deliver a service and the need to make sure that targets can be reported on with the infrastructure in place.

*“We have to deliver the service which they measure which is one thing but actually because we thought it was some private company going to be doing it – you have to think sensibly that it would be us doing it with our same systems and how easy is it going to be to get this information out on a monthly basis.” (Participant 2)*

Participant 5 reflected on the process of outsourcing in respect of planning to bundle up services together for outsourcing. They felt that this stage of planning was important as the mix of services needed careful thought.

*“Because we all went out as a package, we were bundled up fairly early on and there were discussions about whether one particular service should be included in the bundle and whether one service shouldn’t.” (Participant 5)*

#### **4.5.6.5 Pressure**

Table N45 presents participant references to the sub-theme of ‘Pressure’. Three participants talked about ‘Pressure’ in the planning process and implementation stage and examples of their comments are shown below.

Participant 2 reflected on the pressure to hit a deadline which was experienced during a transfer of information from one database to another. In the end, the two systems had to be run together. They also spoke of the pressure of having demonstrated everything that they do.

*“So we had a week between which turned out to be longer because of doing all of the modules at the same time – the pressure of data didn’t go in the right places – it was longer – so we did run two systems..... You have to hit the deadline.” (Participant 2)*

*“We have to demonstrate everything that we do, we have to hit the ground running at full pelt and there is no flexibility on that. “You deliver by 1 December 2014 and we want our performance reports by 6 January 2015.” (Participant 2)*

Participant 5 also reflected on the pressure experienced in a new model of service delivery because of the reporting requirement. However, Participant 7 noted that unless there is some sort of pressure then nothing changes.

#### **4.5.6.6 Challenges**

The sub-theme of ‘Pressure’ is closely related to challenge. Table N46 sets out participant references to the sub-theme of ‘Challenges’. Six of the eleven participants spoke of challenges in relation to the central theme of planning and timeliness.

Participant 2 reflected that despite the challenges experienced during the change process, they had met or exceeded all of the set targets.

Participants highlighted challenges in relation to several topics:

- Environmental Health Staff: Participant 2 reflected that their staff had been really good, when there is a real challenge and performed well in the face of adversity.
- Relationships with other services: Participant 2 noted that the challenges were mainly around relationships with other services and how they can be improved to improve performance.
- Meeting targets: Participant 5 reflected on the challenge of meeting the high standards and tight targets set up by the new model of service delivery
- Commercial skills: Participant 7 reflected on the challenge of contracting out Regulatory Services.
- Regional differences: Participant 9 reflected that the home county local authorities were still fairly stable, some local authorities had managed to become self-sufficient and were no longer suffering cuts and that London local authorities were different to any others in the country.

#### **4.5.6.7 Outcomes**

Table N47 details participant references to the sub-theme of 'Outcomes'. Six of the eleven participants referred to 'Outcomes' as being influential to the central theme of 'Planning and timeliness'.

Participants from outsourced services spoke about outputs rather than outcomes. Participant 2 referred to their output specification which was designed from a service delivery point of view. Whereas, Participant 3 felt that a dialogue process had helped to develop service specifications which were outcome driven, rather than output.

Other participants were more concerned with 'Outcomes' and said it was not important how you got there so long as you achieved the outcomes required. Participant 7 felt that so long as you met an outcome target it didn't matter how this was achieved.

*“What you're actually saying is okay at the end of 5 years you've got a target of percentage improvement in people's health, people's housing whatever. How you do it? Don't really care.” (Participant 7)*

However, it was apparent to participants that outcomes were not such a priority in public services under financial pressure. Participant 4 spoke about how data is recorded around outputs and not outcomes and that this makes it difficult to measure outcomes.

*“We obviously keep a case history and documentation, but there isn’t like – we don’t put in a code for an outcome. The case is just closed with the outcome probably written up in there, not that you can run a report to find out what the outcomes are. You’ll have to trawl through it all which would be a near impossible task.” (Participant 4)*

Participant 9 felt that senior management was much more concerned with the budget than the impact of the service.

*“They seem to then concentrate more on the money and that it’s being spent wisely rather than the performance of what they’re having an impact.” (Participant 9)*

#### **4.5.6.8 Expected Levels of Service Delivery**

Finally, Table N48 participant references to the sub-theme of ‘Expected levels of service delivery’. Five of the eleven participants referred to ‘Expected levels of service delivery’ as influential to the central theme of ‘Planning and timeliness’. Participant 2 was particularly concerned with this sub-theme for local authorities that are outsourcing their Environmental Health Service.

Participants who were involved in outsourced models were focussed on performance targets which formed part of the contract and how strictly this is monitored. Participant 2 reflected on how little flexibility there was around targets and that the new system was very regimented around any under-performance. They described how any un-met targets may be mitigated via formal conversations and that there may be financial penalties if not agreed. Potential for financial penalties was a pressure but, to date, these had not been realised, in fact, the Environmental Health Service had over-performed.

In respect of ‘Expected levels of service delivery’, participants felt that it was important to be proactive and to manage the relationship with the client. What was not anticipated, was that a more efficient system of managing calls as a result of outsourcing would result in an increase in service demands. This could not be accounted for in the specification of the contract but had to be managed.



*“Now with the call centre we get all of our calls which we never got before so the volume of our service requests has gone up significantly – we are now getting to all of our customers we should have been getting to which means we are getting more work.” (Participant 2)*

However, the contractual nature of the new model of service delivery makes the service less flexible to an increase in service demands if the quantity of work is not accounted for. Environmental Health Services in local authorities’ tend to be very similar but may look different from contractual arrangements.

*“Well, it’s been discussed, like, the service level, the commissioning body of the local authority would decide what they wanted to commission from the new delivery service or company or whatever it is and you would pay for what you wanted and that could be very different in each local authority.” (Participant 4)*

However, most participants felt that replication of what went before was the most likely scenario unless there was pressure to change. Participant 7 illustrated this point.

*“The documentation in terms of what outputs they wanted was actually largely what we did last year.” (Participant 7)*

#### **4.5.6.9 Resilience, Risk, Opportunities and Getting it right**

The sub-theme of ‘Resilience’ 4.5.3.9, ‘Risk’ 4.5.5.8, ‘Opportunities’ 4.5.3.1 and ‘Getting it right’ 4.5.5.5 are discussed in detail earlier in this chapter.

In conclusion, the central theme of ‘Planning and timeliness’ emerged as a key theme for participants undergoing a change to a new model of Environmental Health Service. Good planning and timeliness was found to be key to a successful change process and the identification of the central theme of ‘Planning and timeliness’ contributes towards answering sub-research research question II: ‘What are the experiences of key personnel during the change to emerging and novel service delivery models for Environmental Health and Regulatory Services?’ It also contributes towards answering sub-research question III: ‘What lessons can be learned from the change process?’ ‘Planning and timeliness’ is discussed in more detail in Section 5.2.4 and 5.3.1 both in the light of conference audience commentary and in relation to the existing literature. In Section 5.3.2 and 5.3.3 the central theme of ‘Viability of the proposal’ is positioned in the central stage of decision making and planning, and finally, is integrated into the final theoretical model in Section 5.5. This contributes towards meeting research objective c)

Development of a theoretical framework for the effective management of future change programmes in Environmental Health Services.

#### 4.6 Cross-theme analysis

Details of the data coding for each participant are provided in Appendix O.

Analysis of the data across the themes was carried out by exploring which central themes were of most interest to participants based on their hierarchical position in the organisation. Table 4.8 presents the central theme of most reference to the participants who are front line EHPs, middle managers or senior managers/chief executives. Front line officers and middle managers were most concerned with managing changes effectively and the senior managers/chief executives were most concerned with the viability of the proposal.

**Table 4.8: Central themes of most reference classified by participant hierarchy in their organisation**

Organisational Hierarchy	Participant	Most referenced central theme by participant
Front Line EHP	P1, P4, P5	Managing changes effectively P1 and P5, Viability of the proposal P4
Middle Manager	P2, P10, P11	Managing changes effectively P2 Aug 14, P2 Jul 14, P10, P11 Planning and timeliness P2 (Dec 14 and April 15)
Senior Manager / CE	P3, P6, P7, P9	Viability of the proposal, P3, P7, P6 Understanding the reasons for change P9

Table 4.9 sets out the key central themes classified by participant. Participants from outsourcing and mutualisation organisations were most concerned with the central theme of 'Managing changes effectively'. Whereas, participants from organisations sharing services referenced 'Viability of the proposal' most often. Participants who reflected on a range of types of service delivery referred most frequently to 'Viability of the proposal' and 'Understanding the reasons for change'

**Table 4.9: Central themes of most reference classified by participants' type of organisation**

Type of Organisation	Participant	Most referenced central theme by participant	Most referenced central theme by type of organisation
<b>Outsourcing</b>			Managing changes effectively
	P1	Managing changes effectively	
	P2	Managing changes effectively	
	P3	Viability of proposal	
	P5	Managing changes effectively	
<b>Shared services</b>			Viability of proposal
	P4	Viability of proposal	
	P7	Viability of proposal	
	P8 & P11	Managing changes effectively	
<b>Mutualisation</b>		Managing changes effectively	Managing changes effectively
	P10		
<b>Overview of outsourcing shared services and mutualisation</b>			Viability of proposal; and Understanding the reasons for change
	P6	Viability of proposal	
	P9	Understanding the reasons for change	

Analysis of the data across the themes was then carried out by exploring which central themes were of most interest to participants based on their organisational stage of change. Table 4.10 sets out the central theme of most reference to the participants who are were in the planning or transitional stages of change. Participants in the planning stages were most concerned with 'Managing changes effectively' and 'Viability of the proposal'. Participants in the transition stages were most concerned with 'Managing changes effectively'.

**Table 4.10: Central themes of most reference classified by stages of change**

Stage of Change	Participant	Most referenced central theme by participant
<b>Planning</b>	P1, P4, P6, P9, P10	Managing changes effectively P1 and P10  Viability of the proposal P4 and P6  Understanding the reasons for change P9
<b>Transition</b>	P2, P3, P5, P6, P7, P8 &, P11, P9	Managing changes effectively P5, P2 (Jul and Aug 14), P8, P11  Viability of the proposal P3, P6, P7  Planning and timeliness P2 (Dec 14 and April 15)

Participant 2 was interviewed over a ten month period from the beginning of July 2014 to April 2015. The Environmental Health Service was in the early stages of transition to an outsourced model of service delivery and many of the transfer stages were going on throughout this period e.g. new IT systems, reporting on key indicators, establishing new working relationships. Four interviews took place and Table 4.11 presents the central themes that participant 2 referenced most over the 10 month period. For each interview, the theme of most reference was noted, followed by the 2<sup>nd</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> most referenced themes to show any trends over the 6 month period. 'Managing changes effectively' was a prominent theme in the early stages of transition and later on 'Planning and timeliness' became more important but managing changes effectively was still the 2<sup>nd</sup> most referenced. 'Understanding the nature of environmental health' was consistently referred to but was not the most referenced theme in any of the interviews.

**Table 4.11: Central themes of most reference over time by Participant 2**

Participant 2	The most referenced central theme	The 2 <sup>nd</sup> most referenced central theme	The 3 <sup>rd</sup> most referenced central theme
<b>2 July 2014</b>	Managing changes effectively	Understanding the nature of EH	Planning and timeliness,
<b>28 Aug 2014</b>	Managing changes effectively	planning and timeliness	Understanding the nature of EH
<b>18 Dec 2014</b>	Planning and timeliness	Managing changes effectively	Viability of the proposal
<b>4 April 2015</b>	Planning and timeliness	Managing changes effectively	Understanding the nature of environmental health

## **4.7 Conclusion**

Six central emerging themes were identified which are: 'Meaningful consultation'; 'Managing changes effectively'; 'Understanding the reasons for change'; 'Understanding the nature of environmental health'; 'Validity of the proposal'; and 'Planning and timeliness'. Each of the themes was developed from influencing sub-themes, some of which were applicable to more than one central theme. The cross-theme analysis showed that participants in differing positions with the organisational hierarchy found different central themes more relevant. Participants from outsourcing and mutualisation organisations were most concerned with the central theme of 'Managing changes effectively'. Whereas, participants from organisations sharing services referenced 'Viability of the proposal' most often. Participants in the planning stages were most concerned with 'Managing changes effectively' and 'Viability of the proposal'. Participants in the transition stages were most concerned with 'Managing changes effectively'. Participant 2's concerns varied over time. The findings will be discussed in more detail in Chapter 5.

## 5 DISCUSSION

### 5.1 Introduction

This chapter begins with a discussion of the findings in light of the consultation and the existing literature. The refinement of the emerging themes was made in the light of the consultation process which comprised two stages:

1. Consultation on the emerging themes in a workshop at the Chartered Institute of Environmental Health 115th National Conference, Nottingham October 2015 to test the findings of thematic analysis;
2. Presentation of a paper, based on the coupling of themes situated in the chronology of change, to the International Risk Community at The International Conference on Urban Risks (ICUR) which was held in Lisbon, Portugal in June 2016 and with three Heads of Environmental Health Services from the UK;

Finally, a set of cohesive indicators is put forward as a framework which encompasses lessons learned by the participants when developing and delivering novel Environmental Health service delivery models. Overarching themes are highlighted and their contribution to new knowledge identified.

### 5.2 Consultation Stage 1: Testing the Emerging Themes

A presentation of the emerging central themes was given at a workshop held during the Chartered Institute of Environmental Health 115th National Conference, Nottingham October 2015 (see Appendix A). As described in Chapter 3 the audience was asked to comment on the emerging themes and their sub-themes. Their responses were recorded on the large paper posters (see Appendices P, Q, R, S, T and U) and are depicted in Figures 5.1 to 5.6. Each of the six emerging central themes will be discussed separately as follows: Understanding the reasons for change; Understanding the nature of environmental health; Validity of the proposal; Planning and timeliness; Meaningful consultation; Managing changes effectively.

#### 5.2.1 Understanding the Reasons for Change

The CIEH conference audience response indicated that the themes resonated with their experience. Figure 5.1 depicts the audience written responses for the central theme of 'Understanding the reasons for change' and its sub-themes of *Politics, Value, Shake up needed, Costs, Devolution, Alternatives, Protection, Opportunity, and Resilience*. (See 4.5.3).

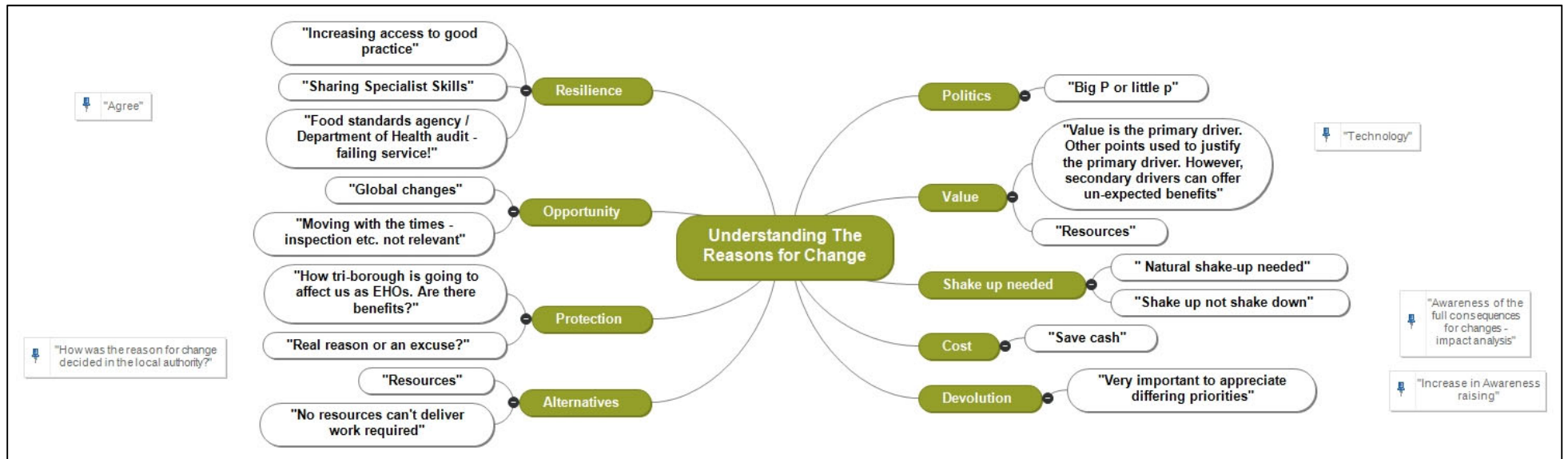


Figure 5.1: 115th Audience commentary on the central theme of 'Understanding the reasons for change' and its sub-themes: National CIEH Conference 2015

'Awareness' and 'Impact of changes' were also noted as important by the audience but these sub-themes were already incorporated in the central themes of 'Understanding the nature of environmental health' (see Figure 5.2) and 'Managing changes effectively' (see Figure 5.5) respectively. No changes were made to the theme of 'Understanding the reasons for change' as the audience commentary supported the model proposed but the link to 'Awareness' and 'Impact of changes' was established in the final framework ( see Figure 5.10).

The findings of the research indicate that understanding the reasons for the change was more important to middle and senior management than it was for frontline officers with one senior management participant being most concerned with this theme (see Section 4.6). This finding extends the work of Fernandez and Rainey (2006), Higgs and Rowland (2005), and, Grint and Holt (2011) into the context of Environmental Health Service transformation. Fernandez and Rainey (2006) identified that ensuring the need for change is a key factor for public sector managers in the successful transformation of their services. Higgs and Rowland (2005) suggest that framing of change is an important tool for leaders in persuading employees that the change is inevitable and a good understanding of the reasons for change informs this process. Grint and Holt (2011) say that framing of the change by leaders dealing with complex problems contributes towards a strong leadership style which engenders responsible followers. This research found that the more senior the participant was in the organisation the more they understood the reasons for the change. For front line officers there was a differential in response with more concern expressed by those with a long continuous employment history. Those who were relatively new employees were more open to the process of change. However, this research also found that changes affect people in different ways and not all see the benefits. Doherty and Horne (2014) concur that all recipients of change are likely to need support and information to help them manage their response.

There was some question as to whether proposed changes were actually for protection of services and the benefits of changes were not apparent to all. Some participants agreed that a shake-up may be needed to achieve efficiency and effectiveness of the provision but were clear that it should not result in reducing the service. This finding supports the view of Weeks and Kastle (2015), who caution that local authorities may be retracting from innovation which is driven by a hostile budget and political constraint. However, Fuller (2007) purports that future local government will be need to be more entrepreneurial. The LGA (2015c) agree that a sustainable future in the face of reducing resource is dependent on changes in how the system of local government is managed.



However, Pollitt (2013) cautions that the process of reform is poorly evaluated and lessons are not learned. Tangen and Briah (2018) highlight how the pace of reform has increased exponentially in recent years and Van Acker and Bouckaert (2018) suggest that a framework of feedback, accountability and learning is good practice in innovation. In this study, protection of services was seen to be achieved by ensuring greater resilience in the model of service delivery. Conversely, this study also showed that a constrained and challenging environment may offer the opportunity for innovation rather than a protectionist approach. These findings take forward the view of Hartely and Rashman (2018) who agree that innovation is vital for the successful transformation of public services.

Opportunities are also presented in the discussion around understanding the reasons for change and can be considered as the antecedent of the protectionist approach. Indeed changes may be more focussed on innovation and development rather than protection. Whitfield (2014) agrees the potential for shared services projects or joint service delivery between public bodies is significant and can afford councils the opportunity to retain their focus on long term goals. Global changes and making services relevant were thought to offer opportunities for change. A Senior Environmental Health Manager had a particular focus on the opportunity in respect of understanding the reasons for change and this may be because they had a better overview of the macro environment of their institution or they may have been a more entrepreneurial individual. This research found that change presents opportunities and this extends the claim of Hartley and Rashman (2018) who say that innovation is integral to the transformation of public services. Hence, understanding the reasons for the change in respect of local authority Environmental Health Services requires knowledge of the micro and macro environment in which they operate.

The national and local political agenda is fundamental to local authority service delivery. The depth of understanding of the politics depended on the role of participants, with the leaders of the organisation being most immersed in the political agenda. Frontline officers were least concerned with the political agenda but all understood the implications of working within or for a political organisation. Birch and Siemiatycki (2016) established that the inherited institutional landscape is subject to successive government's policies of neoliberalisation and austerity, hence the drive for greater efficiency. In this study, Environmental Health Practitioners and their managers were found to be aware of the effects of these policies and subsequent strategies but not all were aware of the politics behind this. This finding takes forward the view of Mustchin (2017) who argue that the

privatisation and marketisation of public services have been advanced under the auspices of reducing resources.

Access to good practice and sharing of specialist skills were thought to contribute to a resilient service. The audience commented that audits from the FSA and the Department of Health may rate services as failing and this is a significant risk. Whilst it was recognised that Environmental Health Services need to develop resilience, the local government environment is predicted to be one in which there will be a considerable reduction in public services and a reducing role of regulation (Fuller, 2007). The view of some participants in this study is that access to good practice and specialist services may increase resilience. This takes forward the work of Boyne and Meier (2009) who suggest that networking with other organisations can dampen the effect of the environmental volatility and improve performance. However, other participants' views challenge this position and point to the loss of an experienced workforce and the associated legacy of tacit knowledge. Loss of professional identity in new structures was raised as an issue for changes to Environmental Health Services and this extends the findings of Smollan and Pio (2016) who found that the outcomes of change, lack of consultation and poor leadership, make employees re-evaluate their sense of self and question their value to the group or organisation.

Although participants felt that the reasons for the change were primarily about reducing resources (cost), they considered that the value of the services to be provided was more focused on providing better services for less money. Providing value for money may be a means of protecting resources from future cuts and participants identified that Environmental Health Services in local authorities have to compete internally for resources against higher profile services. This finding confirms the view of Hastings *et al.* (2013) that local authority cultural, environment and planning services had the second biggest resource cuts whilst social care had the least cuts.

Alternative propositions were found to be dependent on available resources and value was considered as a primary driver for considering a change. Reducing the cost of service provision was widely accepted as a valid reason for the change. Although The National Audit Office (2018b) asserts that contracting out public services may significantly reduce costs, and may help to improve public services, it recognises that these efficiencies are not always realised. Indeed, there is a significant body of literature that contests the actual cost reduction of shared services and private-public partnership models of public service delivery: Hefetz *et al.* (2014); Dollery *et al.* (2016); Janssen and

Joha (2006); Andrews and Entwisle (2015); Petersen *et al.* (2018). This is a significant challenge to the government mantra of NPM and local authorities would be wise to consider this evidence when contemplating the reasons for the change.

Resilience emerged as a common thread throughout the audience discussion of all the sub-themes which influence an understanding of the reasons for the change. The National Audit Office (2018b) found that the financial sustainability of Local authorities had worsened markedly since 2014 and this decline is reflected in the findings of this study. Bailey *et al.* (2015) question whether transforming services does indeed demonstrate resilience and caution that transformation should be not necessarily be seen as a positive result. There is also a strong link to resilience in the discussion around the central theme of 'Viability of the proposal' in Section 5.2.3. This link is established in the Final Model where resilience is identified as an overarching theme (see Figure 5.10).

### **5.2.2 Understanding the Nature of Environmental Health**

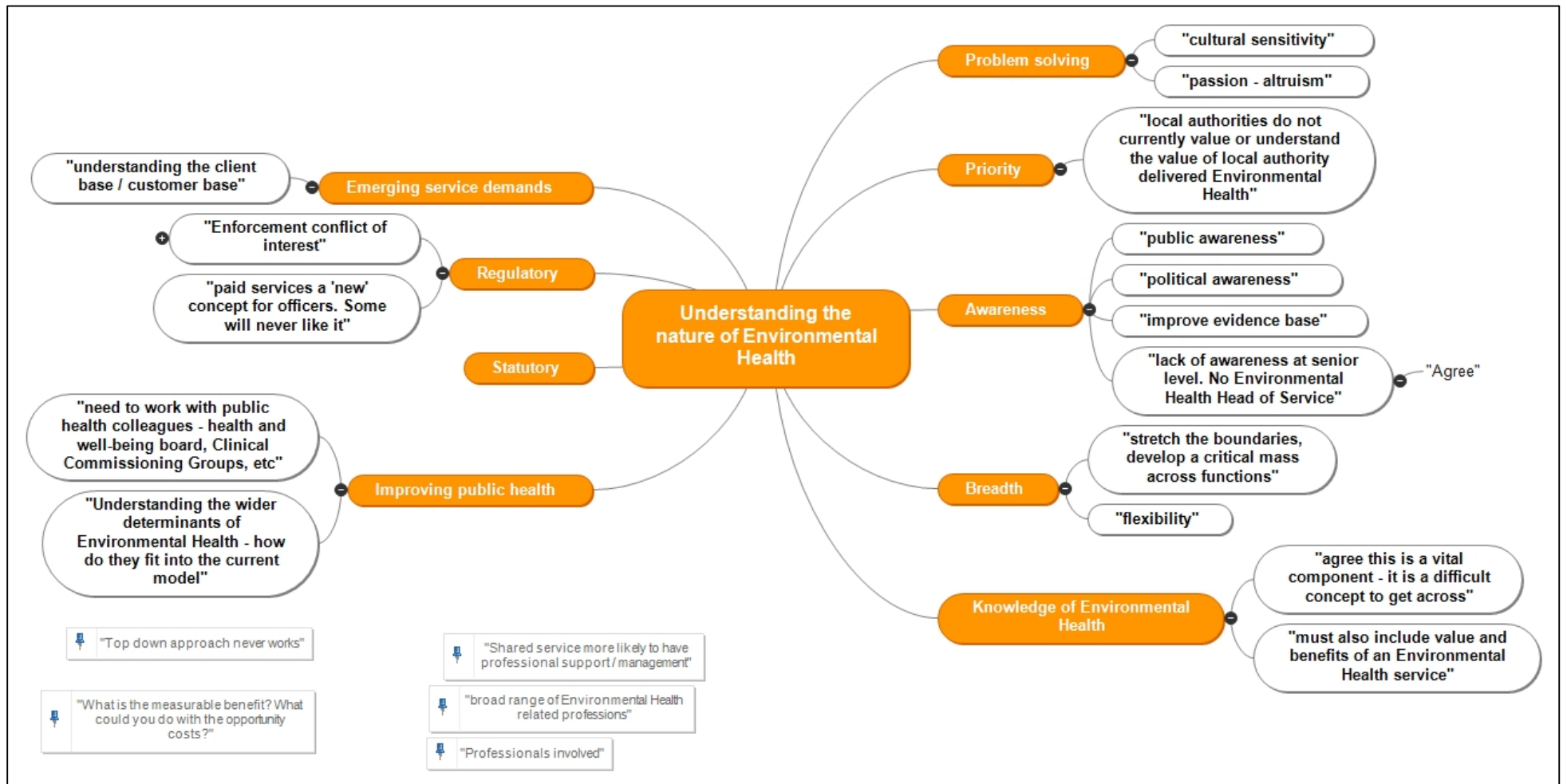
The responses from the audience indicated a general accord with the central theme of 'Understanding the nature of environmental health' and its sub-themes of *Problem solving, Priority, Awareness, Regulatory, Knowledge of environmental health, Improving public health, Statutory and Emerging service demands*. Figure 5.2 depicts the audience responses for the central theme of 'Understanding the nature of environmental health' and its sub-themes (see 4.5.4). No changes were made to this theme.

There is very little in the way of literature relating to Environmental Health Services and commentators such as Dhesi (2014) confirm that EHPs tend to develop their careers on a practical level and are disconnected with academia. The body of change management literature focusses on the planning and transition periods of change rather than the preparatory stages when the need for change is under consideration. However, Lewin (1951) and Eaton (2014) do include 'creating the need for change' and 'decision to change' in their respective models of change. This research emphasises the importance of this early stage of change but has established that a detailed knowledge of the nature of Environmental Health Services may not be required to manage service delivery. And yet, a lack of sufficient knowledge of environmental health can lead to problems if the nature of the service is not understood when establishing the need for change and in the decision making and planning stages of change. Interestingly, this study found that the process of articulating the scope of their Environmental Health Service provides an opportunity to 'upsell' to stakeholders and provides a mechanism for consideration of the

full range of public health activities that an Environmental Health Service delivers. This may, in part, address the 'invisibility' of Environmental Health Services which has been identified by Dhesi (2014).

The public service ethos of EHPs and Environmental Health Services came across clearly in this research, regardless of the model of service delivery. However, the feared loss of an ability to get to the root cause of issues was not necessarily realised in transition stages of change. This finding extends the commentary of McIvor et.al. (2011) on outsourced services who said that where the function of the service has a high level of autonomy it is more difficult to standardise processes for such services. The autonomy of EHPs to make a professional judgement is a key part of the service delivery and a lack of standardised processes may dilute the benefits of more commercial models of Environmental Health Service delivery. This study highlighted the need to establish an evidence base that measures the effectiveness of Environmental Health Services and the associated improvement in public health outcomes (see Section 4.5.4.5). A firm evidence base should then be able to inform the design of future models of Environmental Health Service delivery which aim to retain a public service ethos.

This research points to the need for an understanding of the nature of environmental health which involves not just an appreciation of the breadth of the subject area (see Section 4.5.4.7) but also the various ways of achieving the desired outcomes of the service (see Section 4.5.4.4). Front line officers were most concerned that the nature of environmental health needed to be well understood in the change process but middle and senior managers also noted this important aspect of change (see Section 4.6). This study found that the problem-solving nature of EHPs might not be well understood and that it is feared that their ability to resolve issues may be lost in a commercial or business model. The conference audience agreed that the problem-solving nature of environmental health was paramount, marking out the professionalism of individuals and incorporating cultural sensitivity and altruism.



**Figure 5.2: Audience commentary on the central theme of 'Understanding the nature of environmental health' and its sub-themes: 115th National Conference 2015).**

A number of comments were made in relation to the sub-theme of 'Awareness', including those which stated that there was a lack of public awareness, political awareness and awareness of senior management of the nature of Environmental Health Services and EHP roles and expertise. Thus, knowledge of environmental health should be considered as being vital and this knowledge must include its value and benefits. Dhese (2014) confirms that there is strong evidence that Environmental Health Services suffer from invisibility at strategic levels of local government and that EHPs and their managers express difficulties in promoting their service to Health and Well-being Board members, their allied occupational groups and local politicians. As previously noted in Section 5.2.1, there is a need to improve the evidence base in relation to environmental health interventions and the need to work with public health colleagues and the Health and Well-being Board of the local authority was confirmed here. Dhese and Lynch (2016) concur that Environmental Health Practice is under-researched, resulting in a limited evidence base for EHPs to draw on. CIEH (2012) also highlight a limited recognition of the health promotion role and public health-related Environmental Health Service activity at district local authority level, but assert that are examples of localised good practice in this area. This study found that a lack of awareness of Environmental Health Services results in these services not been prioritised by local authorities who have more pressing needs for the 'big hitting' services such as Adult and Social Care. This view realises that of Fuller (2007) who predicts a future of reduction in public services with the dominant role of providing statutory children and adult services provider as well as an ethos of pursuing entrepreneurial activities in economic development and other policy areas.

Lack of knowledge about the nature of Environmental Health Services in a potential delivery body was noted as both a potential barrier and a risk. The substantial breadth of Environmental Health Services poses significant issues for imparting knowledge of the service to those not directly involved. In this study, some participants underestimated how little new contract managers knew about environmental health and there was a concern that service commissioners will not understand the nature of the services they may be contracting out. Participants stated that it is hard to understand the nature of environmental health unless you work in or with an Environmental Health Service. In part, this may be due to its breadth and nuanced nature as opposed to more straightforward Regulatory Services such as planning or licensing. This finding reflects those of Provost and Esteve (2006) who found that contracting out of complex public services requires a high level of attention. Grimshaw *et al.* (2002) agree that public sector partners underestimate the time and resources required to negotiate favourable

contracts. The Institute of Government (2018) recognise the challenge for public sector managers who are managing outsourcing processes in complex areas.

Environmental Health Services cover a breadth of local issues in relation to food safety, occupational safety and health, pollution, housing and health and public health. And yet, the public, local politicians and senior management may only be aware of aspects such as food safety. The popular image of an EHP will be one of a person with a white coat and a clipboard peering into dirty looking kitchens. The CIEH has produced guidance for local councillors to explain the breadth of Environmental Health Services and the role of Environmental Health Professionals but this research maintains that Environmental Health Services and the profession remains poorly understood. This study extends the commentary of Barratt *et al.* (2013), who agree that whilst the cross-disciplinary nature of an Environmental Health Service is a strength, it gives rise to a major challenge for the profession as a lack of a single discipline makes its services difficult to understand and this may leave them vulnerable.

The Local Government Act 1972 provides a legal framework for local authorities to outsource services. And yet, public service regulation undertaken by private companies raises questions of authorisation of enforcement and the right to exercise of public duties. Enforcement in paid service models could prove unpopular and enforcement may be a conflict of interest for private-public partnership models of outsourcing and joint venture. This research found that these issues have been partially addressed in outsourced models of Environmental Health Services by pragmatic employment solutions such as joint appointments and secondment models. To date, there has not been a legal challenge to these arrangements. Ponting and Pincombe (2015) point out that since 2012 the HSE charges for its time when dealing with companies that breach the law. However, it is doubtful that this model could be extended to public service regulation by private companies.

This research found that an understanding of the regulatory and statutory aspect of an Environmental Health Service must be understood by those planning and managing change (see Sections 4.5.4.1 and 4.5.4.2). Participants were worried that non-traditional providers of Environmental Health Services would have no experience of providing Regulatory Services. However, viewing Environmental Health Services as purely a Regulatory Service risks denigration of the role to enforcement and ignores the capacity to improve the public's health by a more proactive approach. Indeed, Dhesi and Lynch (2016) insist that, in times of austerity, Environmental Health Services should not rely on

its regulatory function to secure a future and that a more sophisticated response is required to address the economic challenge. This research takes this view forward and purports that the process of detailing an Environmental Health Service entailed a deep understanding of the legality of the service provision. However, it cautions that service providers also needed to understand that the overall outcome of the service is to improve public health. This extends the findings of Dhesi (2014) who identified the invisibility of the Environmental Health Profession in the Public Health realm and highlighted the need for recognition of its role in protecting public health.

Whilst what EHPs do on a day to day basis is well established, the benefits are tacit rather than explicit, e.g. the absence of food poisoning, improved health of private rented sector housing tenants, lack of complaints, etc. Thus, demonstrating success can be difficult and this may pose a substantial business risk. The findings of this study suggest that measuring outcomes can be a very effective way of increasing awareness and prioritising Environmental Health Services and design of performance indicators by people who understand the nature of environmental health can help raise the profile of Environmental Health Services. However, Koontz and Thomas (2012) caution that correctly differentiating and framing outputs and outcomes is particularly challenging for Regulatory Services. Regulatory outputs such as the number of inspections carried out are easy to define or measure but outcomes such as behavioural change or an improvement in public health occur beyond the direct control of the regulator. This issue is acknowledged by Hutter (2015) who suggests that excellent regulators appreciate the limitations of data and the political context. Nevertheless, this study indicates that establishing an evidence base that measures the effectiveness of Environmental Health Services and the subsequent improvement in public health outcomes will play an important part in designing future models of Environmental Health Service delivery.

The ability to anticipate emerging service demands requires a deep understanding of the nature of environmental health and the nature of the client base, as well as surveillance of the institutional environment for local government. In 2016 the population of the UK was 65.6 million which was its largest ever. In addition, the UK population is getting older with 18% aged 65 and over and 2.4% aged 85 and over. Births are continuing to outnumber deaths and immigration continues to outnumber emigration, resulting in a growing population. (ONS, 2017). Population types and deprivation vary considerably across and within local authorities and are subject to ongoing change. ONS (2011) provides a classification system using socio-economic and demographic data to identify areas of the country with similar characteristics. This system can be used as a tool by



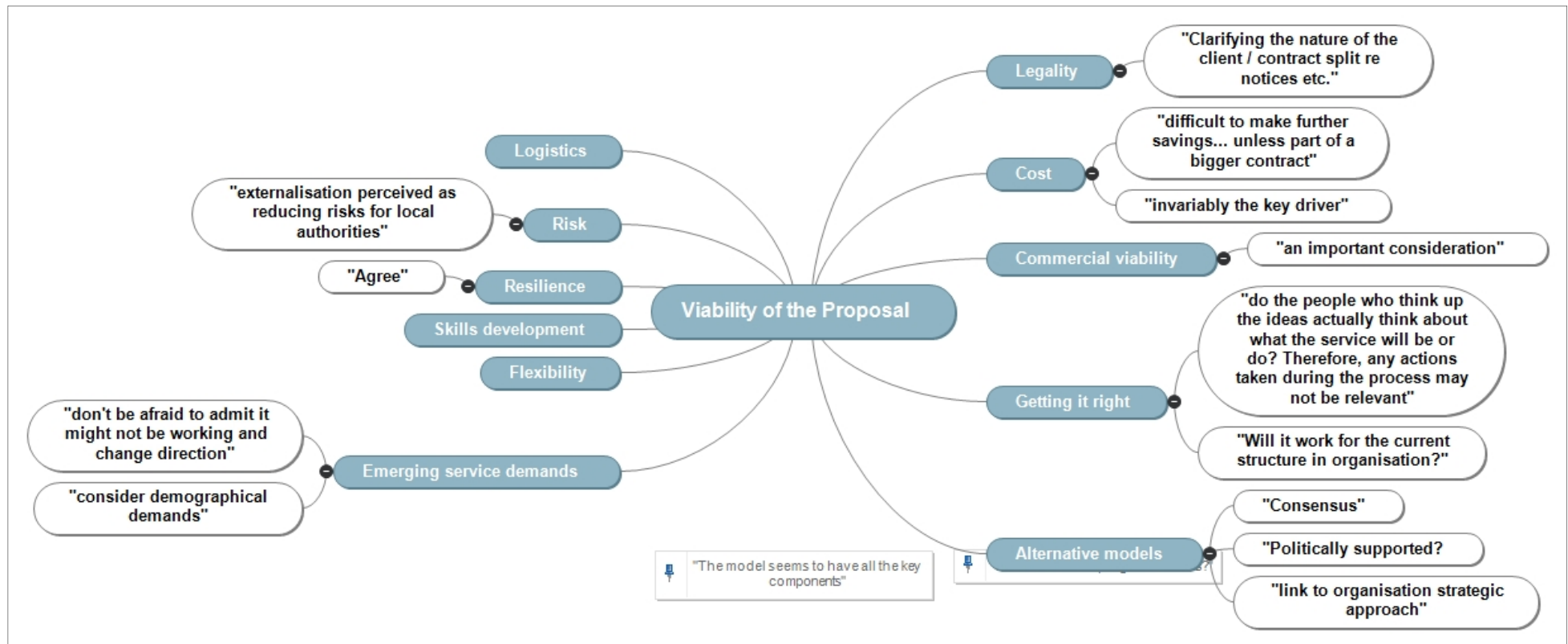
UK local authorities seeking to compare their services and the prediction of potential emerging services demands. Another tool which can aid local authorities is the Mapping Health Toolkit (Hunter and Buckley, 2013) which is designed to help identify public health priorities which can inform outcome measures for public health improvement.

Community and political priorities may change rapidly in response to emergency situations which cause significant harm but these events are not usually predictable. This view is tempered by examples of regulatory failure and issues of inadequate regulatory oversight (Secretary of State for Housing, Communities and Local Government, 2018). This study found that most emerging service demands can be anticipated by those who have a good understanding of the nature of environmental health. However, Tombs (2016) cautioned that local authority Environmental Health Services have been radically transformed to the extent that they may be unable to perform their statutory duties and this may impact on prediction of future service demands. Reinhart and Rogoff (2009a, cited in Bohl *et al.*, 2016 p.1) purport that recovery from financial crises can be a long drawn-out process. This study furthers their view in a local government context, in suggesting that the local government model is broken and there is no appetite from the government to repair this in a post-austerity recovery period. Although it emerges from this study that people who are involved in drawing up contracts etc. must have a detailed knowledge of environmental health, it was not seen as so important for managing contracts. Going forward, an educational approach to explain professional issues in depth and getting commissioners and contractors on the front line is seen as helpful.

'Emerging service demands' emerged as an overarching theme across three of the central themes: 'Understanding the nature of environmental health'; 'Viability of the Proposal' (see Section 5.2.3; and 'Managing changes effectively' (see Section 5.2.5). These links are established in the Final Model (see Figure 5.10).

### **5.2.3 Viability of the Proposal**

There was a general agreement with the central theme of 'Viability of the proposal' and its sub-themes of *Legality, Cost, Commercial viability, Getting it right, Alternative models, Emerging service demands, Flexibility, Skills development, Resilience, Risk, and Logistics*. Figure 5.3 depicts the audience responses for the central theme of 'Viability of the proposal' and its sub-themes (see 4.5.5). No changes were made to this theme.



**Figure 5.3: Audience commentary on the central theme of 'Viability of the Proposal' and its subthemes: 115th National CIEH Conference 2015**

Senior managers/chief executives were most concerned with the central theme of 'Viability of the proposal' (see Section 4.5.5). This was to be expected as they would have been in the position of assessing the viability of proposals under consideration before narrowing down options of new models of service delivery put forward for decision.

The cost was acknowledged as a key driver (see Section 4.5.5.4) but this research found that there is difficulty in making further savings for a relatively small service such as Environmental Health. Commercial models of Environmental Health Service delivery require a profit margin and 'breaking even' is not an option. This research found that a profit margin is very difficult to achieve when bidding to deliver services for organisations where the cuts and diversion of funding have meant that Regulatory Services are already very lean. This finding compounds those of Peterson *et al.* (2018) who suggest that cost savings are limited in outsourcing public services. Pollitt and Dan (2011) agree that contracting out often fails to achieve significant savings in the medium and long term. However, Elston & MacCarthaigh (2016) espouse that similar limitations apply to shared services and highlighted risks to cost savings through escalating start-up and transaction costs. Gradus *et al.* (2018) agree that the cost advantage of privatisation is limited and that inter-municipal cooperation has a more robust cost-advantage effect. On the other hand, Allers and de Greef (2018) found that inter-municipal cooperation does not affect total spending and may even lead to higher spending in small and large municipalities. Tammel (2017) cautions that promoted best practice examples of shared service centres lack verification of cost reduction, as the costs may simply have been shifted elsewhere. However, Bel and Gradus (2018) state that initial cost savings without loss of service quality, are achievable by competitive tendering but caution that repeated tendering results in declining marginal returns. Allers and de Greef (2018) acknowledge that reduced costs may not be the only driver for change, and that inter-municipal cooperation may be aimed at improvement of public services, especially where small services are unable to effectively carry out tasks alone.

This study raised doubts about whether outsourcing an Environmental Health Service on its own is viable at all, suggesting that Regulatory Services are too small to operate commercially as a standalone service. Interestingly, Dhesi and Lynch (2016) found that the austerity reinforces Environmental Health as an inexpensive preventative service and an economic case can be presented for continued funding in traditional models of service delivery within local authorities. This limited commercial viability of Environmental Health Services was identified as a barrier to outsourcing and doubts were expressed

regarding potential growth and income generation. This finding is validated by the withdrawal of a private sector company from a potential investment in Worcester Regulatory Services which provides a range of services including Environmental Health to all local authorities in the county. Worcester Regulatory Services was relying on investment from a commercial partner in response to a decrease in council funding. However, the plans fell through after the private sector bidder decided it was not profitable to invest (Williams, 2014).

The scale of the operation was seen to be a key factor in establishing the commercial viability of service delivery models including outsourcing, mutualised companies and shared services. Participants of this study suggest that the viability of other models including mutualisation cannot work with small single authority Environmental Health Services as they lack the critical mass to make the proposition commercially viable. In these cases the only way to make money would be to cut staff, leading to a risk that services could not be delivered (see Section 4.5.5.1). This research confirms that austerity has affected Environmental Health Services more than other departments such as social and adult care. This is in-line with the findings of the figures from the National Audit Office (2018b) and has the effect of further marginalising Environmental Health Services.

The legality of private-public partnerships delivering public Regulatory Services was of particular concern to middle and senior management (see Section 4.5.5.2). This concern supports the view of Mindell *et al.* (2012) who commented that the government could be seen as acting in an irresponsible way and despite the courts confirming that a local authority can legally discharge its judicial public functions (Randall, 2013). The process of ensuring the legality of the delegation of powers was considered pivotal to ensuring the viability of a proposal and was identified as being extremely challenging and the complexity of being jointly appointed was highlighted. For some participants, externalisation is perceived as reducing risks for local authorities, for others, it introduced a risk not previously encountered.

The logistics of a proposed new model of service delivery were of most relevance to front line officers and managers of shared services (see Section 4.5.5.3). Redesigning or commissioning services gives the opportunity to think about what is really needed rather than just carrying on doing more or less of the same. Services such as Environmental Health are locally delivered and some participants felt that savings cannot be easily made by relocating or centralising, this finding challenges the view of the Welsh

Government (2018) who say that regional working may be crucial in achieving efficiencies. However, the findings of this research are supported by Elston & MacCarthaigh (2016) who found that shared services are subject to delays, cost overruns and poor service quality and went on to highlight risks to cost savings through shared services due to escalating start-up and transaction costs. Tammel (2017) cautions that calculating cost reduction and benefits of sharing services in the public sector is difficult and concludes that there is no appropriate methodology to calculate the overall costs and benefits of such arrangements. This study confirmed that regionalised or shared service models may be operated over a large geographical area and, for some participants, the distance was found to be a challenge both for front line services and from a management perspective. However, this study found that particular environmental health specialisms may be more suitable for regionalisation and shared services were found to be working well in most of the participating organisations. The shared arrangements allowed access to regional funds not otherwise available and the lack of internal borders allowed redirection of resources to the areas of greater need.

Harmonising terms and conditions of employment for staff were flagged as crucial when looking at a shared service model or where authorities are joining together (see Section 4.5.5.3). Other issues raised were around staff acting for different authorities which had varying service aims and objectives. McIvor *et al.* (2011) suggests that local authorities should examine and improve their policies prior to implementation of shared services so that such issues are avoided. Hence, a strong governance model needs to be developed to oversee a new shared service model and to drive standardisation: Glynne (2009); McIvor *et al.* (2011). Grant *et al.* (2007) support the finding that properly defining and setting up the governance structure is a key success factor for shared services.

'Getting it right' in the planning stages was seen as essential to ensure that adopted models of service delivery are viable (see Section 4.5.5.5). The consequences of 'getting it wrong' can damage the relationship between the authority, the profession and the community. Involving those with an in-depth knowledge of Environmental Health Services in the commissioning of services or drawing up of contracts ensured that sufficient detail was included in new models of service delivery. The question of 'Getting it right' was debated by the conference audience and this raised the question of whether those who are designing the new service model understand what the service must do. In this study, the bigger the scale of the project the more emphasis there was on 'Getting it right' and recognising the risk. This supports the view of the Institute of Government

(2018) and Provost and Esteve (2016) who encourage a renewed focus on the issues arising from the contracting out of public services.

For shared services in this study, what started out as an experimental approach with managers who had trust and confidence in each other was rolled out to a more comprehensive shared service. This type of incremental approach to change can result in future resilience not being considered in respect of the viability of the proposal. However, Niehaves and Krause (2010) stress the importance of relying on previous cooperation between the intended shared service partners when building shared services. Emerging service demands need to be responded to and changes made if necessary. The organisation needs to have the capacity to adjust to the evolving institutional environment such as changing demographical, community and political demands. Whilst it was agreed that 'Getting it right' involves detail and tight specification of services, flexibility was found to be a contrasting key issue to ensuring that the proposal was viable. The findings of this study revealed that in addition to the usual duties, there should be flexibility to work on evolving projects and unexpected service demands and that more flexible working from professionals is crucial to progressing new models of service delivery (see Section 4.5.5.6).

This research found that, in order to be successful, alternative models of service delivery need to be politically supported and link to the organisation's strategy and vision of change (see Section 4.5.5.7). This finding resonates with the view of Eaton (2014) and Fernandez and Rainey (2006) who identify sponsorship of leaders and commitment of top-management as key elements in successful change. Elston & MacCarthaigh (2016) recommended that policy makers considering new models of service delivery should explore all options and recognise the risks as rarely does change deliver just benefits. This study confirms that that assessment of the viability of a proposed new model of Environmental Health Service delivery model should include a scoping of alternative models to ensure that the right decision is made. However, whilst there is an evidence base relating to outsourcing and sharing services in local authorities, this mainly relates to homogenous services such as waste collection and back office services. Pollitt and Dan (2011) suggest that market-type mechanisms may work better in such simple services than in more complex, unstandardized professional services (such as Environmental Health). There is a limited empirical understanding of efficiency and effectiveness of municipally owned corporations which are used to deliver local public services outside of the local bureaucracy. However, Voorn *et al.* (2017) say that municipally owned corporations can realise large efficiency gains but caution that

problems of dispersed ownership may impede this potential. Hence, localities need contracting capacity to mitigate the risk.

Several of the sub-themes which influence the viability of the proposal also present as being influential in other central themes. The sub-theme of risk is also influential in planning and timeliness (see Section 5.2.4). The sub-theme of resilience also influences understanding the reasons for change (see Section 5.2.1). The sub-theme of skills development also influences managing changes effectively (see Section 5.2.5). The sub-theme of emerging service demands also influences understanding the nature of environmental health (see Section 5.2.2) and managing changes effectively (see Section 5.2.5). The sub-theme of 'Getting it right' also influences planning and timeliness (see Section 5.2.4). These links are established in the Final Model (see Figure 5.10).

#### **5.2.4 Planning and Timeliness**

There was a general agreement from the CIEH audience with the central theme of 'Planning and timeliness' and its sub-themes of *Planning, Pressure, Detail, Getting it right, Specification, Outcomes, Expected levels of service delivery, Risk, Challenges, Opportunities and Timescale*.

Figure 5.4 depicts the audience responses to the central theme of 'Planning and timeliness' (see Section 4.5.6). No changes were made to this theme.

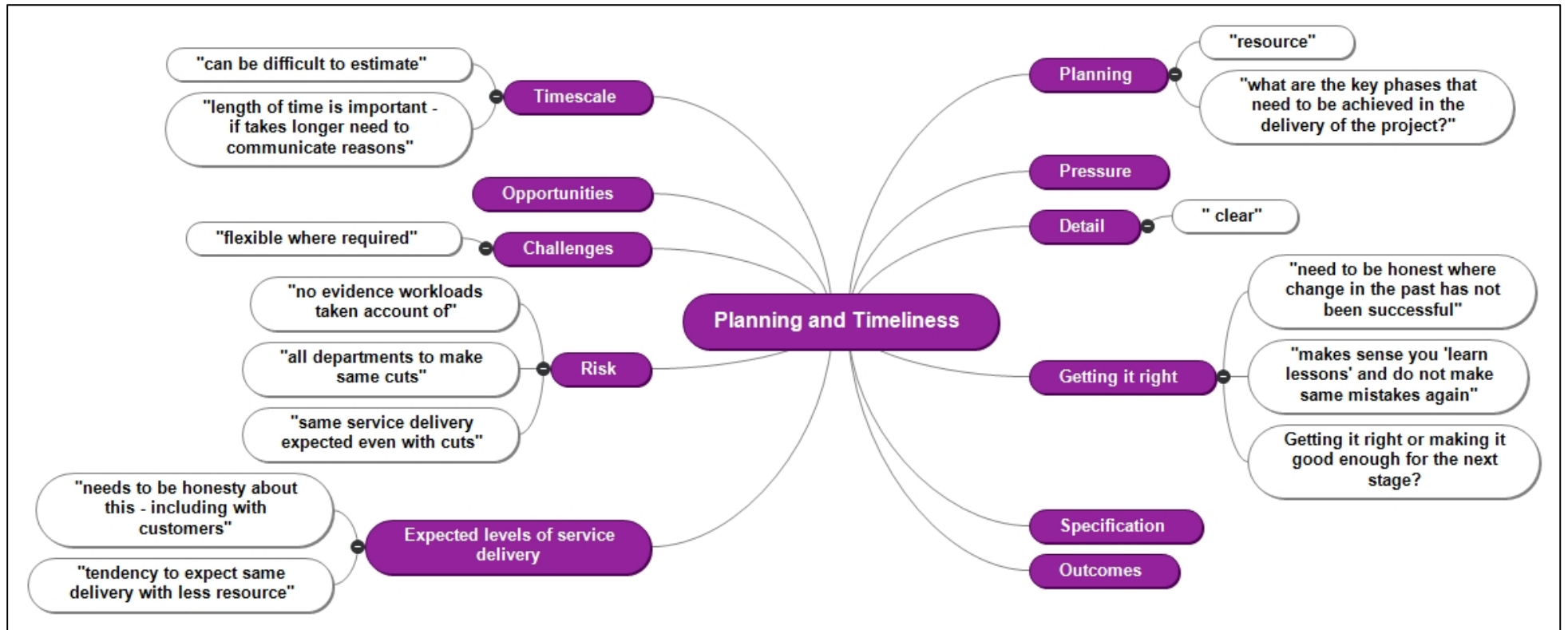


Figure 5.4: Audience commentary on the central theme of 'Planning and Timeliness' and its sub-themes: 115th National CIEH Conference 2015



Middle and senior managers were more concerned with 'Planning and timeliness' than frontline officers and those involved in outsourcing Environmental Health Service were dominant voices in this central theme (see Section 4.5.6). This study showed that planning for a new service delivery model should be taken seriously and not be a light touch process (see Section 4.5.6.1). It was found that it was important to pay attention to detail and to allow sufficient time to 'getting it right'. This takes forward the conclusions drawn by Grimshaw *et al.* (2002) and Provost and Esteve, (2016) who found that the public sector partner tended to underestimate the time and resources needed to negotiate and manage the terms and conditions of partnership contracts and that contracting out of complex public services requires higher levels of attention from both the government and the contractor.

A well set up contract, which is stringently monitored, is said to be likely to succeed and that meeting and exceeding targets have a positive impact on the well-being of staff even if the work to get there is intensive. A "tight" specification means that cuts may be difficult to make without affecting the ability to deliver on a contract. This research showed that getting the detailed specification of service is therefore fundamental to the success of a new service delivery model, as what gets measured gets done (see Sections 4.5.6.1. and 4.5.6.2) This study found that lack of detail in a contract has proven to give rise to problems in regard to services being expected that were not in the contract and this was thought to be partially due to the commissioners lacking subject knowledge. Pollitt and Dan (2011) confirm that activities being contracted out by a public sector service must be specified in firm detail. Domberger and Jensen (1997) go on to suggest that the detailed review of a service or specification for contracting purposes and the associated performance monitoring with a mechanism for redress can enhance accountability. Conversely, this study also found that delivering on a very tightly written specification can give rise to difficulties. It was also found that inclusion of clauses in the agreement allowing concerns to be raised and early termination were important if issues are not getting addressed.

There is considerable pressure in the planning and delivery of services but well thought out performance indicators are an important tool to make sure that the service remains robust but flexible (see Sections 4.5.6.4 and 4.5.6.5). Reporting on detailed performance indicators creates a workload for all levels of officers in the delivery organisation and for the client in respect of monitoring the contract. This finding concurs with the view of the Institute of Government (2018) who highlighted the challenge encountered when public sector workers have to shift their focus from service delivery to commissioning of

services. This research found that although detailed key performance indicators are required, reporting on them less often may help reduce the workload. However, it was recognised that this may not be possible in the early stages of a new arrangement as both parties will be anxious to check that the contract is not at risk. An unexpected outcome of performance monitoring and reporting was the opportunity to tell people about what the service is doing helps to raise awareness of a previously low profile service.

Participants reported that resourcing for design and implementation of agreements is a crucial factor as, with the best will in the world, if the design and implementation of change are left to Environmental Health Managers without adequate support then the agreement is likely to be written for practical delivery. On the other hand, participants felt that a client manager with limited knowledge of the service can cause vulnerability. Cooke (2006) explored this shift of emphasis from technical competence to cost effectiveness and concluded that public sectors managers must learn to bridge this difference. Bringing in resource to support the process may be helpful but this is countered by the need for those setting up the contracts to have sufficient knowledge of the services being considered.

With regard to shared services, a mechanism to oversee shared services was suggested as good practice and an example of this was the setting up of a governance board and with representatives from both sides. Particular risks were identified in transferring small parts of a service, but from a resilience perspective, sharing small services across a region can bring a wider pool of technical people to help at a time when expertise is disappearing from local authorities. The resilience of small services should be considered at the planning stage with contingencies built in to deal with key personnel becoming unavailable. Other comments on risk included views on whether the same service can be delivered with cuts and that there is a risk that workloads were not taken account of. This concurs with the view of Schmidt *et al.* (2017) who argued that measures which aim to increase efficiency may involve more risk than 'salami slice style' cutbacks.

'Getting it right' evoked commentary about honesty, learning lessons and whether making it good enough for the next stage should be sufficient. There also needs to be honesty about the expected levels of service delivery. Although, it is important to pay close attention to 'Getting it right' it is crucial to ensure that the process is carried out in a timely manner. Timescale may offer some uncertainty and there are difficulties in estimating how long each stage of the change may take but the timing should be flexible

enough to deal with needs as they arise. Having a short timescale for implementing change has been difficult for some participants and it has meant that other commitments were not addressed or had not had sufficient time devoted to them. When planning a new service delivery model, it was found that key phases should be identified in relation to the delivery of the project. This develops the view of Fernandez and Rainey (2006) who said that a key factor in transformation is to provide a plan and Schmidt et al. (2017) identified a core element of successful change is to define the final goals

Risk emerged as a common thread through the discussion of the sub-themes which influence planning and timeliness. There is also a strong link to risk in the discussion around the viability of the proposal earlier (see Section 5.2.3). The sub-theme of 'Getting it right' also influences the viability of the proposal (also see Section 5.2.3). These links are established in the Final Model (see Figure 5.10).

### **5.2.5 Managing Changes Effectively**

There was a general agreement from the CIEH conference audience with the central theme of 'Managing the changes effectively' and its sub-themes of *Fear, Anxiety, Impact of changes, Difficult, Process, Trust, Conflict, Customer Satisfaction, Emerging service demands and Skills development*. Front line officers and middle managers were most concerned with managing changes effectively and it was considered important for all models of service delivery included in the study. Figure 5.5 depicts the audience responses for the central theme of 'Managing the changes effectively' and its sub-themes (See Section 4.5.2) No changes were made to this theme.

The sub-theme of 'difficult' was discussed in relation to expectations, communications, reluctance to change and more work with fewer resources (see Section 4.5.2.1). It was found that the process of change must be transparent, subject to review, regularly communicated and feedback seeking. This finding emphasises the view of Osborne and Brown (2005) who say that top-down approaches to change risk being unsuccessful. Higgs and Rowland (2005) support this and say that approaches to change which recognise that change is emergent are likely to be more effective.

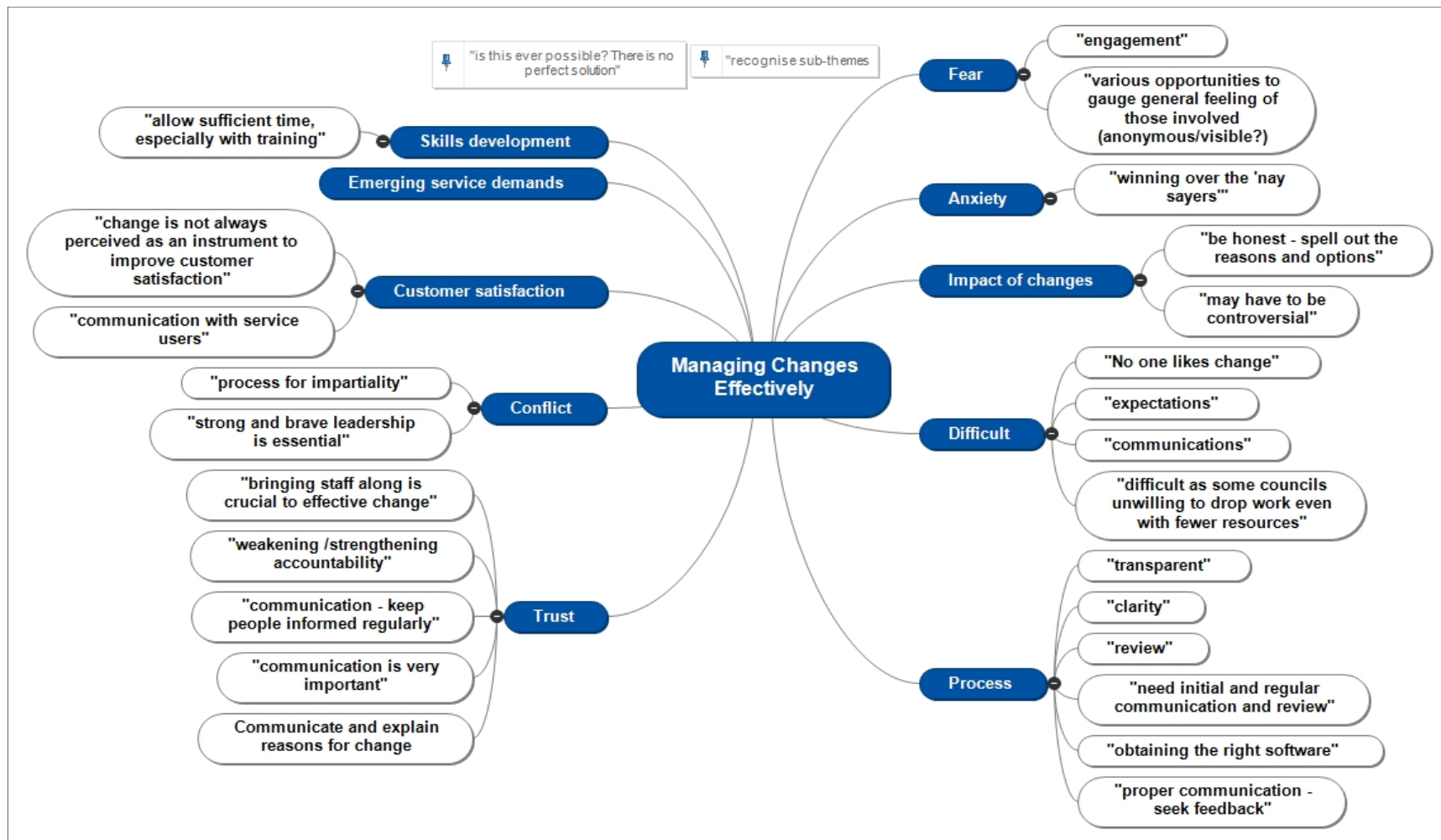


Figure 5.5: Audience commentary on the central theme of 'Managing Changes Effectively' and its sub-themes: 115th National CIEH Conference 2015

All types of service delivery models represented in this research presented the participants with difficulty in relation to managing services effectively and particularly with regard to recruitment, resource cuts and logistics. For shared services there was difficulty in the harmonisation of employment terms and conditions, merging services across urban and rural local authorities and this was discussed in Section 5.2.3. In respect to the compatibility of systems, it was reported that for shared services there was an issue with different back-office systems not being compatible with each other. In outsourced models, there were also difficulties relating to IT systems and the loss of working relationships. Fernandez and Rainey (2006) identify that provision of resources and external support can assist successful change in the public sector and Lewin (1951) identified mobilisation of resources to effect the change as being crucial for effective change.

Trust was considered an important issue (see Section 4.5.2.2) with accountability and honest communication being crucial to 'bringing staff along'. This takes forward the finding of Eaton (2014) who says that communications about change must be honest and timely. Grant *et al.* (2007) and McIvor *et al.* (2011) also espouse good communication as being a key factor in developing shared services and outsourced services. This study confirms that trust can be an issue between different types of organisations. Local authorities have a history of benchmarking their services against each other but this relationship is not developed between commercial organisations and local authorities which makes the comparison of service delivery difficult. It was also found that the increased scrutiny assisted with monitoring contracts made front line officers feel that they were no longer trusted. This finding is in line with the view Taylor and Kelly (2006) who found that high levels of accountability and scrutiny have added considerably to the workload of some professionals in models of NPM. Accounting to different leaders who may not have sufficient knowledge of Environmental Health Services can provide a situation of conflict. Some EHPs felt that working for a commercial business whilst delivering a public service caused them personal difficulty as well as the potential for a conflict of interest for commercial Environmental Health Services undertaking statutory duties.

Fear and anxiety (see Section 4.5.2.5 and 4.5.2.5) were experienced by front line EHPs who were undergoing change and this was more common in the early stages of planning for change than in the transition period. Being managed by people who do not understand the service can lead to a lack of trust resulting in stressful relationships. Levels of fear and anxiety were not equally held by all participants with some seeing the

opportunities early on, whilst others felt anxiety in the early stages but later on began to realise the opportunities presented. This finding is in line with Carnell (2003) who found that, in general, organisational change, the response to change may be staged as follows: denial; defence; discarding; adaptation and internalization. Smollan (2015) also agrees that stress tends to abate as people become more accustomed to the new situation and the skills and relationships involved. Smollan (2017) went on to explore how people coped with organisational change and found that a number of factors helped participants to cope. These were personality, emotional intelligence, social identity and perceptions of alternative employment for those facing possible redundancy.

It was felt that the level of fear experienced by participants could be related to the level of engagement but that there are opportunities for senior managers to gauge the feelings of those involved in the change process. This finding bears out those of Jurisch *et al.* (2013) who suggest that, in public services, senior managers are committed to their change projects. For participants in a new and different relationship with senior managers, it was found that decisions and issues have to be explained in more depth to ensure that their action is well understood and justified, whereas previously there was a greater degree of autonomy and trust. The need for honesty arose in consideration of the communication of likely impact of changes, even if there is a need to be controversial in the design of a new model of service. Osborne and Brown (2005) say that the understanding of organisational culture allows insight into the likely response and reception to change and this can be utilised in communications intended to address the levels of fear and anxiety. Brown *et al.* (2003) agree that insufficient consideration of the culture of the public sector by change agents can cause failure in the implementation of change.

This study found that the skills of managers of services affected by the change have to be developed. Senior and middle managers from private-public partnerships and shared services were most affected by the need to develop new skills (see Section 4.5.2.6). Reporting on contracts and acting more commercially is not usually a well-developed aspect of the skill base for public service managers although this research found that most seem to have adapted well. This finding realises the commentary of the Institute of Government (2018) who found that the shift of focus from delivery of services to commissioning of services can be challenging for public sector workers. McIvor *et al.* (2011) recommends that managers creating outsourced shared service arrangements should leverage external expertise during contracting. Soukopová and Vaceková (2018) suggest that internal factors, such as the use of professional (independent) managers,

in inter municipal cooperation can influence cost reduction. Pollitt and Dan (2011) found that staff of a parent public sector organisation, which is contracting out services, must possess contract design and management skills. Hence, in a successful innovative local government, professional management is required which is not just about economic efficiency but may involve developing, maintaining contracts and coordination between government departments (Hefetz *et al.*, 2014; Provost and Esteve, 2016)

A loss of skills, experience and tacit knowledge was noted by participants, as a result of continuing cuts to local authorities. Alaranta and Jarvenpaa (2010) also noted concern about the loss of experiential knowledge in outsourcing services and Hannabuss (2000) recognises that well-established organisations may have access to tacit knowledge as a legacy, on which decisions, analysis and forecasts can be made. On the other hand, change brought about opportunities for those who were more adaptable. It was accepted that the rarer EHP specialist skills, such as pollution specialisms, may be successfully shared with other local authorities which contributed to a more resilient service. Higgs and Rowland (2005) agree that creating the capacity for change leads to a more effective change process. Greig and Poxton (2001) identified failure to develop strong commissioning as a key factor in obstructing effective joint commissioning. In this study, a key area where shortcomings were identified was achieving a shared understanding of what commissioning actually involves.

The findings of this research demonstrate that change is a stressful period (see Section 4.5.2) and that a suitable leadership style can enhance the effectiveness of managing changes. The literature suggests that public organisations are likely to adopt a planned, top-down approach (Van der Voet *et al.*, 2015), and yet Kellis and Ran (2013) suggest that an empowering leadership style may reduce employee resistance to change. According to Higgs and Rowland (2005), a leadership style that creates capacity for change is likely to be most effective but in the context of this study this may be difficult because resources are low. The difficulties of the change process may be ameliorated by an empowering leadership style (Kellis and Ran, 2013) but Schmidt *et al.* (2017) found that direction is more suitable when cut backs are needed. Transformational leadership has been shown repeatedly to be a successful tool for change in the public service (Kellis and Ran, 2013). Transformational leadership requires a motivational and proactive approach towards a shared vision. Alimo-Metcalfe and Alban-Metcalfe (2005) describe transforming leaders as being: charismatic, inspirational, intellectually stimulating and individually considerate but this research identified a need for trust (see Sections 4.5.1.6, 4.5.2.2 and 5.5.1.7) and this demonstrates a need for authentic leadership in change

management. This finding takes forward the work of Avolia and Gardner (2017) who say that authentic leaders can build trusting relationships and are centrally concerned with ethics and morality. This fits well with the ethos of public services such as Environmental Health (see Section 5.5.1.1). Grout and Fisher (2007) set out desirable characteristics of authentic leaders which engender trust, these include avoiding setting themselves apart from employees whilst maintaining a professional distance.

Several of the sub-themes which influence managing changes effectively also present as being influential in other central themes, the sub-theme of skills development also influences the viability of the proposal (see Section 5.2.3). The sub-theme of emerging service demands also influences understanding the nature of environmental health (see Section 5.2.2) and the viability of the proposal (see Section 5.2.3). The sub-theme of trust also influences meaningful consultation (see Section 5.2.6). These links are established in the Final Model (see Figure 5.10).

### **5.2.6 Meaningful Consultation**

There was a general agreement from the CIEH conference audience with the theme of 'Meaningful consultation' and its sub-themes of Questions; Solutions; Honesty; Not appeasing staff; Flexibility; Engagement; Trust; Answers and Problems. However, the sub-theme of 'appeasing staff' was not so well understood and the importance of buy-in from staff was highlighted as important. This sub-theme was retitled 'not appeasing staff' in subsequent models (see Figure 5.9 and Figure 5.10) but no other changes were made to this theme. Figure 5.6 depicts the audience responses for the central theme of 'Meaningful consultation' and its sub-themes (see Section 4.5.1).



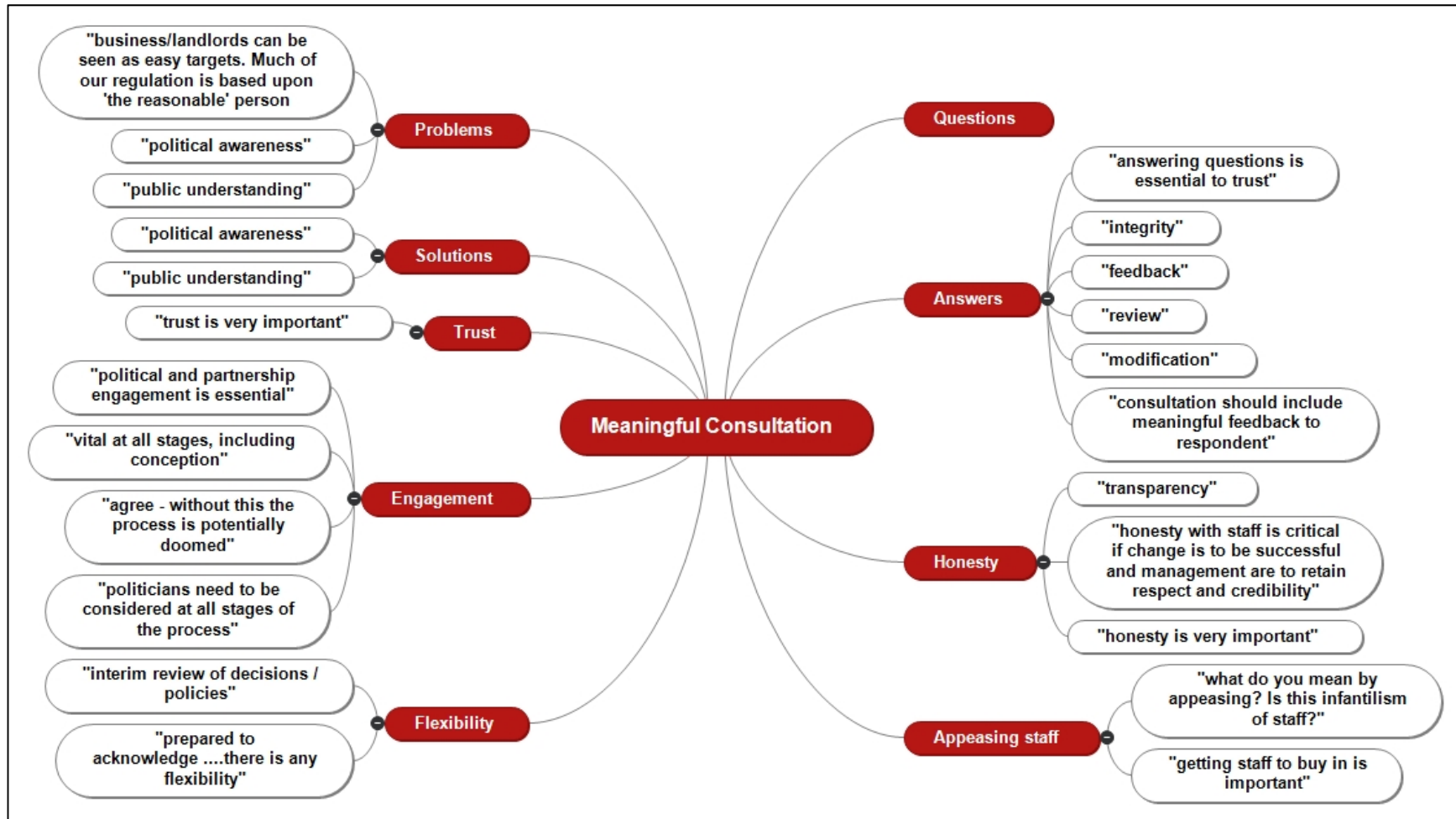


Figure 5.6: Audience commentary on the central theme of 'Meaningful Consultation' and its sub-themes: 115th National CIEH Conference 2015

Meaningful consultation was a prime issue for organisations that were at the decision making and planning stage but it was also closely tied to the transition stage of change.

Questions and answers are the building blocks of consultation. This study found that if questions are not answered then staff may feel that they are being appeased and that the consultation is not meaningful (see Section 4.5.1.3) This research found that, inevitably, questions were raised at consultation stages by stakeholders but answers were not always provided (see Section 4.5.1.1 and 4.5.1.2). This finding suggests that the recommendations of (Doherty and Horne, 2014) (all recipients of change are likely to need support and information to help them manage their response) are not being implemented in the participating organisations. Staff consultation groups were well received by those who were involved but some felt that only the positives were highlighted in an attempt to sell the proposal and it was recommended that consultation be realistic from the first stages. Getting staff to 'buy-in' to the change is a key element of successful change and staff should not be infantilised. However, Yukl (1999) caution that persuading followers to 'buy in' to proposed changes may have negative consequences along with the positive ones and charismatic leadership may only be warranted in certain situations. In this study participants reported that the initial excitement of employees at the prospect of more support and resilience was depleted as the process went on and the reality was not as promised. An approach such as that recommended by Fernandez and Rainey (2006), which emphasises the need for building in support for change, can go some way to ease the process of change (see Section 2.5).

Openness and honesty were seen as very important so that people do not feel that a decision has already been made and that only the positives are being highlighted (see Section 4.5.1.4). The need for open and honest consultation is further supported by Smollan (2015) who found that uncertainty, unclear roles, lack of consultation/participation, relationships and stress of others all caused stress during a change process. Honest answers to questions were considered essential to trust and answers should offer integrity and be developed to allow for feedback, review and modification. This research confirmed that honesty resonated with the Environmental Health Profession as being critical in a change process. This finding takes forward the conclusion of Morgan and Zeffane (2003) that a fall in trust can result from a failure by management to be open about the worst effects of the proposed change.

In one organisation there was an issue with leaking of information (see Section 4.5.1.4) and this raised issues of trust. It follows, that reduced trust led to a lack of engagement in the consultation period. Conversely, others felt unsettled if decisions about which way to go still hadn't been made. It was recognised that it is a fine balance getting people on board and engaging them whilst still being honest and sharing as much information as is available, and yet maintaining the need for confidentiality of sensitive information. Leadership which includes these attributes is considered by the literature as an authentic leadership style. The literature confirms that authentic leaders earn the allegiance of others by building trusting relationships: Avolio and Gardner (2017); Grout and Fisher (2007). However, Capelos *et al.* (2016) examined institutional reputations and civic engagement with regulators and found that a regulators reputation of efficacy did not obviate trust that an organisation would act in the best interests of stakeholders rather than themselves. Morgan and Zeffane (2003) considered employee involvement and trust in management during organisational change and found that meaningful consultation can build trusting relationships which, in turn, can increase employee 'buy-in' for change and innovation. They propose that greater leadership by senior managers and direct contact with employees during the process of change is required to engender trust.

This research confirmed that in the participating organisations there was a lack of engagement in the consultation period where employees felt that they were not told the full story – an honest account (See Section 4.5.1.54). It is therefore advisable to be realistic from the first stages and to resist the urge to only highlight the positives in an attempt to sell the proposal. Some participants were more unsettled in the early stages of consultation than later on. It was found that this type of anxiety can negatively affect a workforce, bringing about low morale. Clearly, it is very important to get people on board and engage them but to be honest and to share as much information as is available whilst maintaining the need for confidentiality of sensitive information. The findings of this research support those of Eaton (2014) who found that an element of successful change is honest and timely communications. This research emphasised that engagement was considered vital by all stakeholders, and without this, the process is 'potentially doomed'.

Consultation in public services is not restricted to managers and employees as consultation with the community and politicians plays an important role in the change process. In the case of shared services, the community buy-in was found to have a positive impact on the transition stage. However, in the case of an outsourced service, there was intense criticism from the community and legal challenge regarding the lack of

consultation. Eaton (2014) recognises that a crisis may arise in the change process where individuals use issues to undermine the proposed changes. However, Elston & MacCarthaigh (2016) encourage engagement with givers of negative feedback as it is an opportunity to involve end-users in the design and implementation of reform. Bochel and Bochel (2010) place an emphasis on the role of local political leaders as strong leaders in the process of change as they can facilitate such engagement.

Problems of political and public awareness were also raised and discussed in the theme of 'Understanding the nature of environmental health'. The sub-theme of trust also influences managing changes effectively (see Section 5.2.5). These links are established in the Final Model (See Figure 5.10).

### **5.2.7 Summary of Consultation Stage 1: Testing the Emerging Themes**

The presentation of the six emerging central themes and the subsequent consultation allowed with the audience of Environmental Health Professionals confirmed the relevance of the central themes and their influencing sub-themes. Other than the change of title of the sub-theme 'appeasing staff' to 'not appeasing staff' no changes were made and the models were affirmed. It was established that some sub-themes influenced more than one central theme. The sub-themes with multiple influences were subsequently identified as overarching themes: 'Emerging service demands'; 'Resilience'; 'Getting it right'; 'Risk'; 'Skills development'; And 'Trust'.

Participant 2 was interviewed five times over the course of the study and the focus of the final meeting was to elicit their feedback on the emergent themes which were presented at the 115th CIEH National Conference 2015 (See Appendix A). Participant 2 agreed that the emergent themes resonated with their experience and so confirmed the relevance of the interpretation of the data.

### **5.3 Consultation Stage 2: Coupling of Themes Situated in the Chronology of Change**

The participants of this research were asked to reflect on their experience of change over the initial period when the need for change was being established, during the decision making and planning stage and, where appropriate, during the transition into a new service delivery model. It has been established that the six emerging central themes resonated with experienced Environmental Health Professionals who were with organisations in a similar institutional environment, including those also considering or

subject to change. Although each of the themes can be relevant at any stage of the change process, I considered that the central themes could be grouped together and situated in the stages of change where they were likely to be most relevant.

Changes can occur slowly or quickly and implementing change requires explanation, preparation, control and commitment (Doherty *et al.*, 2014). Eaton (2014) puts change in the chronological order of Decision to change; planning to change; Preparing to implement; Adoption of the changes; Embedding of the changes. Fernandez and Rainey (2006) identify factors which assist a successful transformation. These factors include ensuring the need for change, provision of a plan, ensuring top-management support and institutionalisation of change. The findings of this research add to this knowledge and expand the earlier category of 'Establishing the need for change' to include an understanding of the reasons for change and the nature of the service. This was found to be particularly relevant a complex professional service such as Environmental Health.

This study categorised the three stages of change as being:

1. Establishing the need for change; including an understanding of the reasons for change and the nature of the service;
2. Decision making and planning: including the decision to change, planning to change and preparing to implement;
3. Transition: including the adoption of the changes and embedding of the changes.

### **5.3.1 'Understanding the reasons for change' and 'Understanding the nature of environmental health' in establishing the need for change.**

Participants who were reflecting on the early stages of the change process felt that it was imperative that the reasons for the change were well understood by all stakeholders involved in considering a new model of service delivery. This was closely related to the need for an understanding of the nature of environmental health which may enable a new model of service delivery to be effective in a more business-like model whilst retaining the ethos of public service. The central themes of 'Understanding the reasons for change' and 'Understanding the nature of environmental health' were, therefore, most appropriate for consideration in the early stage of the change process, where the need for change is being established. Figure 5.7 depicts the coupling of the central themes of 'Understanding the reasons for change' and 'Understanding the nature of environmental health'. These are situated in the first stage of the change process which was given the nomenclature of 'Establishing the need for change'. Establishing the need for change is

not well represented in change management literature but the findings of this research make a strong case for a more in-depth consideration in public service change management. Once those involved in the change process fully understand the reasons for change and the nature of environmental health then the need for change can be established.

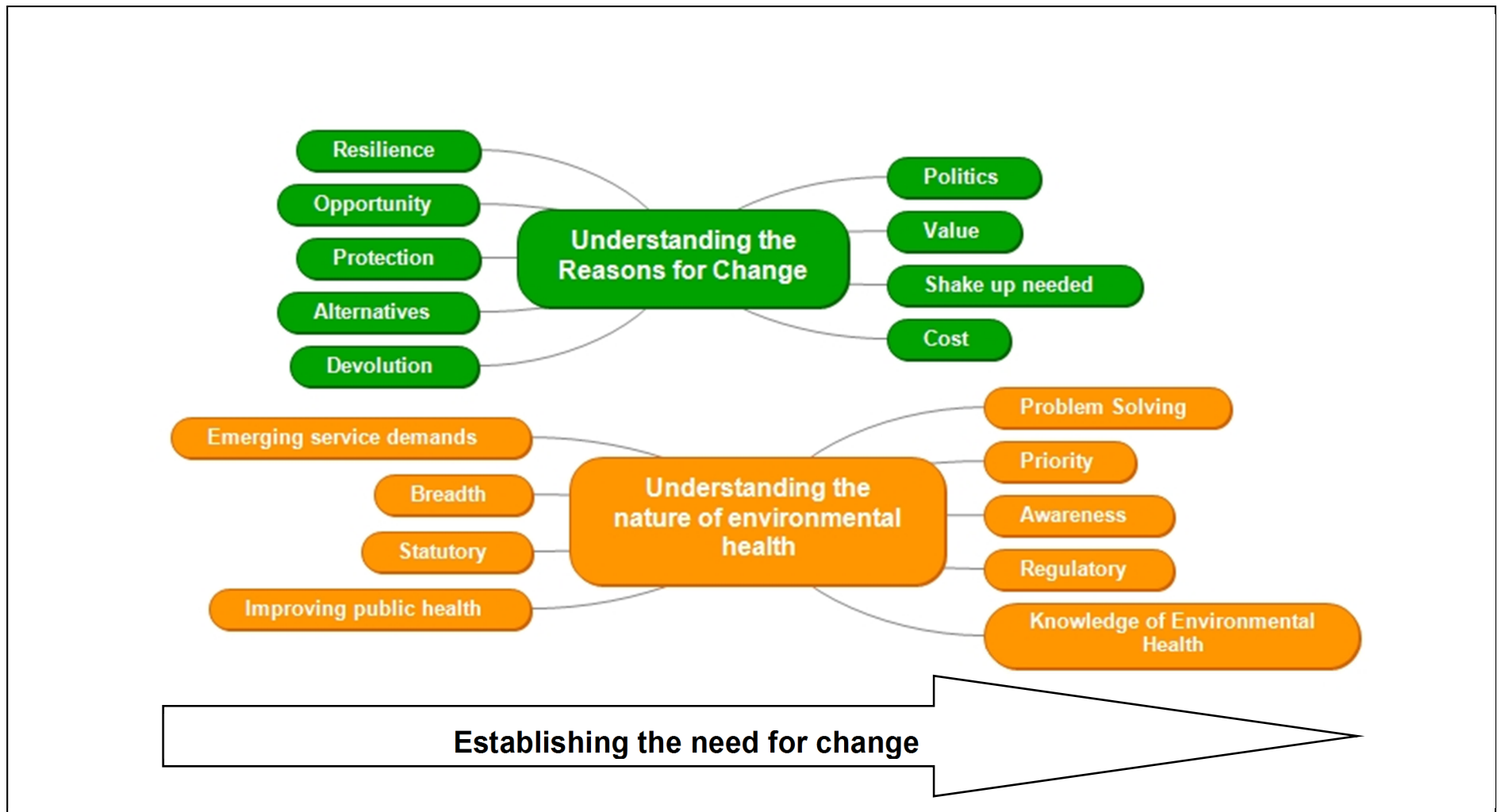


Figure 5.7: Understanding the nature of environmental health and the reasons for change in establishing the need for change.

### **5.3.2 'Planning and timeliness' and 'Viability of the proposal' in Decision making and planning**

The second stage of the change process is decision making and planning for change. It is here that the emerging central themes of 'planning and timeliness' and 'viability of the proposal' under consideration become more prominent. These themes are closely related and their influences should be considered during the process of decision making and planning for change. This is when crucial decisions are made about the choice of a new model of service delivery and plans are put in place for the transition. Figure 5.8 depicts the central themes of 'planning and timeliness' and 'viability of the proposal' situated in the change process as it enters the decision making and planning stage. However, the other central themes should also be considered here as participants in the planning stages of change also referred to 'Managing changes effectively' and 'Understanding the reasons for change' as being important at this stage.





Figure 5.8: Planning, timeliness and viability of the proposal in Decision making and planning

### **5.3.3 'Meaningful consultation' and 'Managing changes effectively' in Transition**

Once the decision making and planning stages for the proposed change have been considered then the next stage is the transition period. At this point, a suitable model of service delivery or a range of viable options will have been selected and the transition process begins. The emerging themes of 'meaningful consultation' and 'managing changes effectively' come to the forefront at the later stages of the change process, i.e. transition. They should be considered together as these themes both influence a successful transition. Figure 5.9 depicts the coupling of the central themes of 'meaningful consultation' and 'managing changes effectively' situated in the transition stage of the change process. However, the other central themes should also be considered in the transition stage as participants in the transitional stages of change referred to 'Viability of the proposal' and 'Planning and timeliness' as being important at this stage.

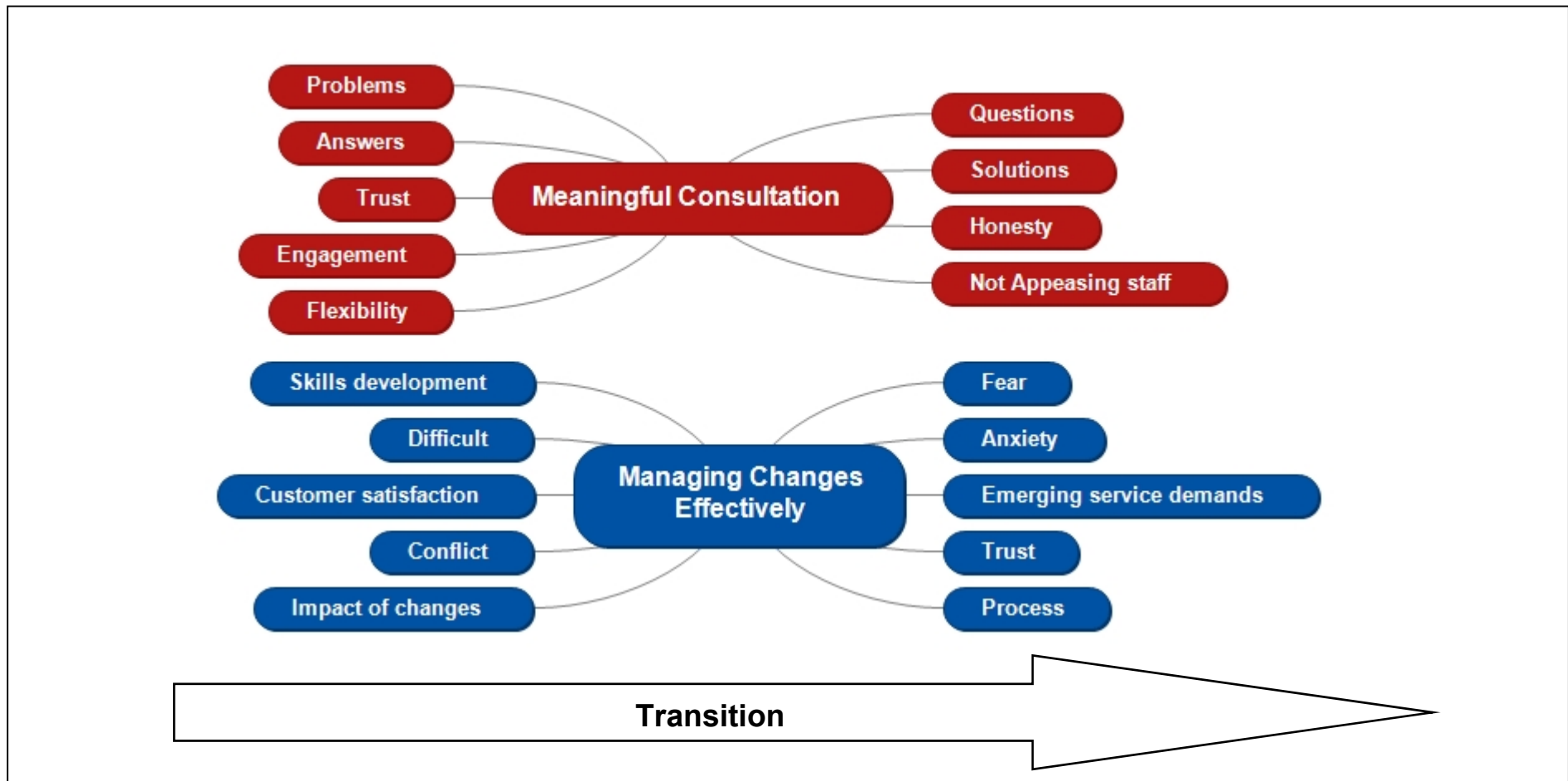


Figure 5.9: Meaningful consultation and managing changes effectively in Transition

#### **5.3.4 ICUR Conference Paper and Views of Three Heads of Environmental Health Services.**

Following the coupling of the six emergent central themes into three pairs, the research findings were summarised and presented to The International Conference on Urban Risks (ICUR) which was held in Lisbon, Portugal in June 2016. The accompanying paper entitled 'Responding to the risk of reducing resource: A study of the evolution of English Environmental Health Services' was published in the conference proceedings (See Appendix C). Next, three consultant Heads of Environmental Health Services were presented with the paper 'Responding to the risk of reducing resource: A study of the evolution of English Environmental Health Services' (See Appendix J for the consultant review proforma). The consultants were all Heads of Environmental Health Services which offered a traditional model of service delivery. They volunteered to be consulted on the findings and were selected as they would represent potential recipients of the findings of the research. They are referred to here as Consultant 1, 2 and 3. Some of their comments are reproduced below and their full commentary is available in Appendices V.

All of the consultants agreed that the ICUR paper clearly represented the changing and emerging service delivery models in local government and that the challenges highlighted were relevant and accurately reflected strategic change management considerations faced by senior managers in local government at this time.

*"The paper very much resonates with my own experience of working as an Environmental Health Practitioner in local government for 37 years. There has always been the need for change and service delivery has to adapt to reflect the needs of the local area, new legislation, political direction, innovation and new ways of working. The speed of change has significantly increased in recent years with budget reductions and local authorities having a more commercial approach."*  
(Consultant 2)

*"Since the onset of severe austerity (over the last 4 to 5 years) Environmental Health Services in Wales have had to adapt quickly to counteract the loss of resources. In the beginning, further budget salami slicing continued and any luxury of budgets for unforeseen circumstances or unexpected opportunities were lost. These external drivers forced local government and its services to consider radical and innovative solutions to ensure services (many of which are statutory) continued and at the same time cut the costs drastically."* (Consultant 3)

The influencing sub-themes were noted as being particularly insightful and it was noted that the findings had the potential for generalisation across other local authority services.

*“The highlighted influencing sub-themes are particularly insightful and on reflection could be applied to many of the strategic change programmes that I am leading on – for example, reviews of other statutory services such as libraries, children’s centres and field officer roles across the organisation.” (Consultant 1)*

Consultant 2 felt that the central theme of ‘Understanding the reasons for change’ was key but that theme could be expanded to include ‘income generation’ and ‘alternative funding’ as additional influencing sub-themes.” Consultant 3 agreed that income generation was a key influencing sub-theme but acknowledged the limited opportunities for this.

*“Income generation has been identified as a key component to ameliorate financial reductions. However, due to the nature of Environmental Health Services, there is limited scope. Many local authorities are now only providing basic services and if further advice is required this is charged for. An example is food hygiene advice. Environmental Health Services are becoming more business orientated.” (Consultant 3)*

The consultants agreed that the ethos of public service should be protected and this was articulated by Consultant 2:

*“I totally agree that the ethos of public service and Environmental Health should be protected. The Chartered Institute of Environmental Health (CIEH) has a role here. The professional values and skills of Environmental Health need to be retained.” (Consultant 2)*

Although all of the emergent central themes were considered to address the main issues arising when re-shaping an Environmental Health Service, Consultant 2 pointed to the central themes of ‘Managing change effectively’ and ‘Meaningful consultation’ as being likely to be of most benefit.

The consultants felt that a useful format for the dissemination of the findings to the environmental health community would be a simple ‘How to’ toolkit for service managers who have been tasked with delivering sustainable Environmental Health Services, in the context/constraints of a local authority medium and long term financial planning. It was considered that the key audience would also include senior leadership teams in local government, public and private providers of services, cabinet members, professional

institutions, and local/regional environmental health bodies. A training package could be marketed to accompany the toolkit and it was recommended that the CIEH would be key to raising awareness of this product to its members.

*“This research is timely, robust and relevant to EH and senior local government managers and we must make good use of it and ensure that it is accessible and the findings are transformed into practical products to help EH Managers embrace the challenges of the next five years.” (Consultant 1)*

*“Managers would benefit from tools to help them through the process of re-shaping their services. The identified themes cover the main steps of the process.” (Consultant 2)*

*“Busy managers under pressure to deliver quickly can find managing change difficult and can be tempted to take short cuts. I believe that a training package could be marketed around Environmental Health Services and managing change effectively. I would suggest that the CIEH is a key vehicle to raise members’ awareness of this product. Also, local authorities could be targeted directly although there is the risk that it may not reach the intended audience.” (Consultant 2)*

It was recognised that the emergent themes and their influencing sub-themes comprise the essential elements of a toolbox for Environmental Health Managers and that there is a going need for such a product.

*“The examples given ... have assisted as a ‘toolbox’ to assist in continuing to provide Environmental Health Services to meet demand, expectations and statutory requirements. What is clear is that continuing resource reductions will mean a continual assessment and change to deliver these services.....The new Environmental Health Manager needs to be skilled not just in environmental health matters but in the whole new world of austerity in local government.” (Consultant 3)*

#### **5.4 Establishing the Overarching Themes**

A paper based on the presentation at the International Conference on Urban Risks was selected by the organisers for submission to the International Journal of Disaster Risk Reduction special edition. The paper, which included the coupled theme models (Figure 5.7 to Figure 5.9), was published in April 2018 (see Appendix E).

Finally, a refinement of the data analysis was carried out which resulted in the development of an overarching set of themes. These overarching themes were drawn from the development of the emergent themes, the testing of the themes, the subsequent

sharing of the findings with the international risk community and the consultation with three Heads of Environmental Health Services.

Further to the consultants comments the sub-themes of 'Alternative funding' and 'Income Generation' were added to the central theme of understanding the reasons for the change. Where sub-themes were influential over more than one central theme they were extracted as an overarching theme and removed from the sub-themes. These overarching themes were 'Getting it Right', 'Emerging Service Demands', 'Resilience', 'Skills Development' and 'Risk' and are discussed in detail earlier in this chapter. An additional overarching theme regarding the ethos of public services was created following the consultation process which will be discussed in Section 5.4.1.

#### **5.4.1 The Ethos of Public Services**

An additional theme of 'Ethos of Public Services' emerged from the testing of the themes (see Section 5.2) and the second stage consultation (see Section 5.3). Accordingly, the data was revisited and coded for public service ethos. It was found that nine of the eleven participants referred to the ethos of public services. Front line EHPs, middle and senior managers all expressed concern about the retention of the public service ethos in new models of Environmental Health Service delivery. Participants from outsourced models were most concerned with this theme.

Participant 1 was concerned with potential inequality, with those in greatest need being most affected by privatisation of a service.

*"Ultimately such changes have the potential to impact greatly on those already at a disadvantage, issues such as poverty and health inequalities are unlikely to provide private sector shareholders with large returns in dividends, and preventative interventions that work towards long term goals may not hold enough interest for companies on 10 or 15 year contracts." (Participant 1)*

Participant 11 felt that local authorities focussed on delivering the best service to customers and this focus was lost with an external provider" Participant 2 agreed that local authorities push harder for better solutions to problems. Participant 4 was concerned that the ability to provide a caring good quality service would be diminished.

*"I just worry about that loss of having that ability to be more caring I suppose and more helpful to the general public and make sure they get a good quality of service – and we can't afford to do that anymore!" (Participant 4)*

Participant 5 felt that the essential remit of a public servant was to do their best to serve the public. However, they felt that the public service ethos was not affected by outsourcing of the service.

*“Actually it has enabled the local government public service ethos side of things to continue pretty much as it was before, whilst we’re aware of the pressure coming from across the double doors and where our other colleagues sit monitoring and number crunching and things that they have to do in order to keep the company going” (Participant 5)*

Employees of public services are expected to have integrity, to be honest, to be objective and to be impartial. The public service ethos of Environmental Health Services had indeed come across clearly in this study, regardless of models of service delivery. The potential loss of the ability to get to the root cause of issues was feared by participants but not necessarily realised in transition stages of change. All of the participants felt strongly that the ethos of public service and Environmental Health Services should be protected in new models of Environmental Health Service delivery. This did not necessarily mean keeping services the same but ensuring that new services maintained the values of the Environmental Health Profession. Booth and Leigh (2016) define the term ‘public service ethos’ as a public service that has an established ethical framework with an emphasis on impartiality, political neutrality and pursuit of the public interest. Grimshaw *et al.* (2002) define characteristics of public service ethos and include fairness, antipathy to corruption and reliability in their definition. The findings of this research support the view of Hoggett (2006) who suggest that public sector organisations need to consider how to survive whilst maintaining public service values.

Booth and Leigh (2016) found that public sector workers believe that private sector involvement in the delivery of public services has corroded the ethos of public service but this study does not support these findings. However, this research does confirm that Environmental Health Service public sector employees were worried about this potential loss and fought hard to maintain the public service ethos in the way they worked. This study supports the findings of Booth and Leigh (2016) who suggested that private sector organisations looking to deliver public services must take seriously this perceived impact on the value of public services. It was recognised that the potential financial flexibility achievable with the devolution agenda is likely to lead to more combined authorities and more shared services.



This research found that participants' professional and personal values with respect to public service ethos influenced their view of the best model of service delivery. Dur and Zoutenbier (2014) looked at recent studies about the motivation of public sector employees and found that they have a strong motivation to do something useful to society, i.e. altruism. This study reflects this view in an Environmental Health Service context as it finds that EHPs express altruistic motivations and a concern that these are continued despite changes to service models.

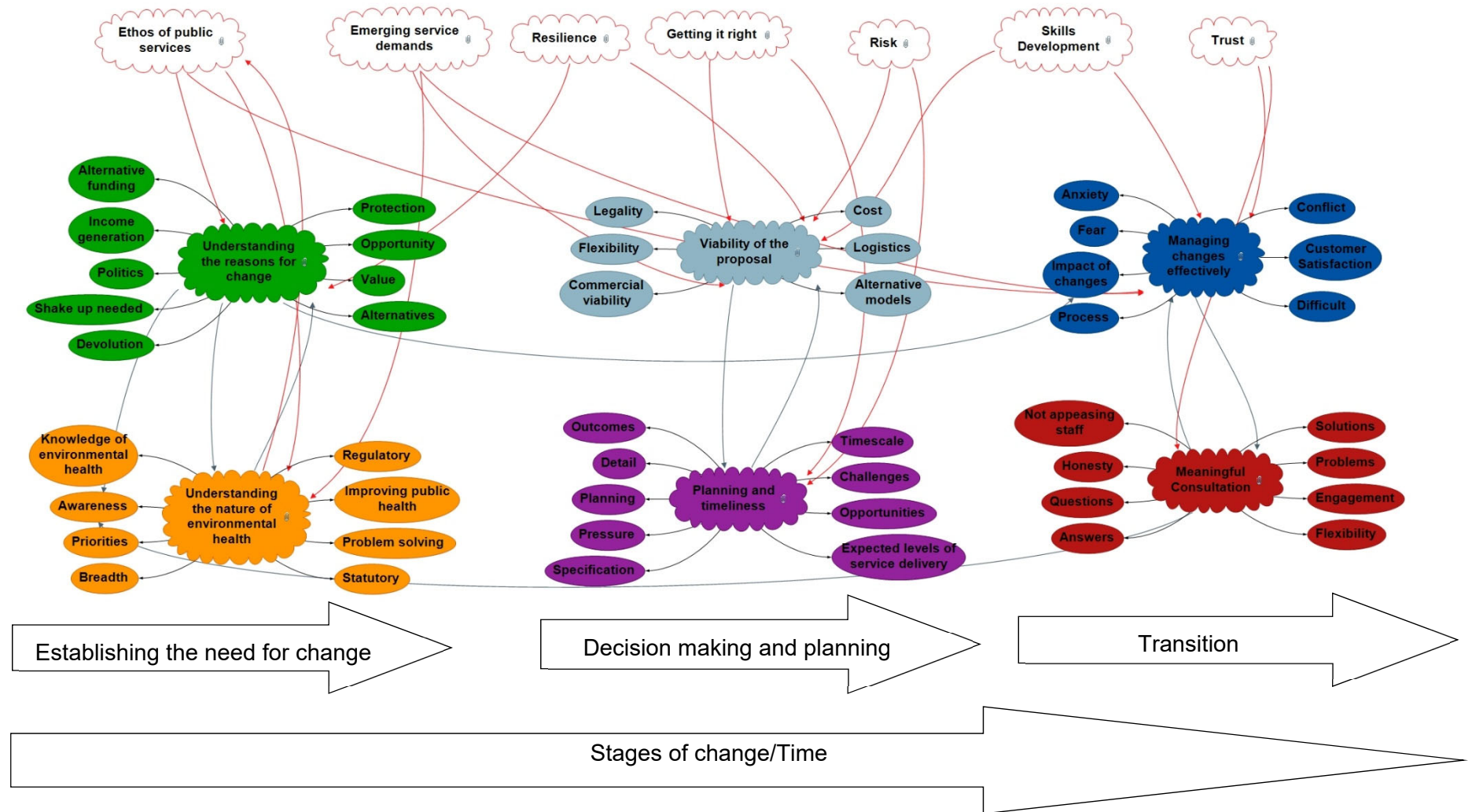
The Ethos of Public Services permeates across the six emerging central themes and does not tie into a particular central theme. However, it was of sufficient concern to be considered as an additional overarching theme in the final framework (See Figure 5.10).

## **5.5 The Final Model: A Framework for future change programmes in Environmental Health Services**

Figure 5.10 is put forward as the final model: A Framework for Future Change Programmes in Environmental Health Services. The framework represents the six central themes of *Understanding the reasons for change*, *Understanding the nature of environmental health*, *Viability of the proposal*, *Planning and timeliness*, *Meaningful consultation* and *Managing changes effectively*. The sub-themes are connected to their respective central themes. The connectors from the central themes to their sub-themes have arrows pointing to the sub-themes. This is intended to encourage the user of the framework to consider the sub-themes where they are relevant to the central theme in the context of the user's organisation. The model also represents the chronology of the central themes with the early stages of change being represented on the left of the model and the later stages on the right.

In the final model, the central themes are coupled and positioned at the most relevant stage of the change. Understanding the reasons for change and understanding the nature of environmental health were most relevant at the early stage of establishing the need for change. Viability of the proposal and planning and timeliness were most relevant at the decision making and planning stage which is also informed by the previous stage and themes. Managing changes effectively and meaningful consultation were most relevant at the transition stage of the change and in the early stages of the execution of the new service delivery model. The model uses arrows to represent where the central themes are linked to each other (coupled).

The top level of the model represents the overarching themes of *Ethos of public service*, *Getting it right*, *Emerging service demands*, *Resilience*, *Trust*, *Skills development* and *Risk*. These overarching themes are not time dependent and should be considered across all of the stages of change. However, the red connecting arrows represent where the overarching themes are most strongly correlated to particular central themes.



**Figure 5.10: The Final Model: A Framework for future change programmes in Environmental Health Services**

## **5.5.1 The Overarching Themes**

### **5.5.1.1 The Ethos of Public Service**

The ethos of public services is most closely linked to the central themes of 'Understanding the reasons for change', 'Understanding the nature of environmental health' and 'Managing changes effectively'. 'Ethos of Public Service' should be considered in the stages of establishing the need for change and the transition stages. There is intense debate about whether private sector organisations can genuinely convey the public service ethos needed in complex services such as Environmental Health (Randall, 2013). Participants strongly agreed that the ethos of public service and the Environmental Health Profession should be protected and that the values and skills of Environmental Health Professionals need to be retained. Hoggett (2006); Reeves (2006) and Randall ((2013) question whether public services should be externalised at all, amongst doubts that private companies can convey the public service ethos which serves the community for the good of all rather than for individuals. Grimshaw *et al.* (2002) say that, in outsourcing, public service ethos must be recognised.

Some participants of this study shared the concern of Keane *et al.* (2002), that Environmental Health Services which are considered to be for the public good, lack the incentives necessary for private sector performance. Interestingly, other participants contradict this view as they experienced that, in transition to an outsourced model of Environmental Health Service, the ethos of public service is actually retained and the autonomy of EHPs remains. This study contextualises the commentary of Trafford and Proctor (2006) who emphasise ethos as a success factor for building good relationships between public sector organisations and private sector companies. According to Arvato (2018), in the third quarter of 2018, government outsourcing recorded its strongest quarter since 2016, albeit with most activity on deals for IT and technical services. Shapiro (2004) cautioned that the government may be unable to write complete contracts indicating how private employees are to resolve issues that require difficult judgments and the balancing of multiple factors. Hence, for services such as Environmental Health maintaining the ethos of public services remains a primary concern in the process of change.

### **5.5.1.2 Emerging Service Demands**

'Emerging service demands' are linked to the central themes of 'Understanding the nature of environmental health', 'Viability of the proposal' and 'Managing changes

effectively'. Discussion of 'Emerging service demands' was covered in Sections 5.2.2, 5.2.3 and 5.2.5 respectively and is relevant across all stages of change from establishing the need for change, decision making and planning and the transition phase. Understanding the client/customer base was found to be a significant part of predicting emerging service demands. Curry (1999) found that key issues for success in this prediction are commitment and involvement of those most familiar with the service processes concerned and the findings of this study confirm that these issues remain relevant in times of austerity. Clear ownership of the consideration of emerging service demands should, therefore, remain with the 'experts', in this study the Environmental Health Service managers themselves. Athias (2013) espouses the need to for local governments to impose demand risk on private providers of public services when they expect that service demands may change over time.

### **5.5.1.3 Resilience**

'Resilience' is linked to the central themes of 'Understanding the reasons for change' and 'Viability of the Proposal'. Discussion of 'Resilience' was covered in Sections 5.2.1 and 5.2.3 but pervades throughout the study findings and discussion. Ensuring 'Resilience' of the Environmental Health Service is most relevant across the earlier stages of establishing the need for change and decision making and planning. Access to good practice and sharing of specialist skills were considered as key issues for ensuring a resilient service. This study demonstrated that innovation was found to ensure more resilience in public sector services operating under tight restraints. This develops the commentary of Ramanathan *et al.* (2017) who found that in a regulatory environment, focusing on changing the operational conditions may encourage innovation and environmental responsibility. Resilient organisations can adapt, when presented with challenges such as cuts in public expenditure, but Shaw (2012) argues that resilience as transformation when 'bouncing forward' from external shocks is seen as a more radical approach than adaptation. Shaw (2012) goes on say a resilient local government needs to draw upon existing resources and capabilities, thereby adopting a strategic approach to risk which exhibits a greater ambition and imagination. However, Fitzgerald and Lupton (2015) challenge the view that resilience as transformation is a positive attribute. They say that organisational innovation may not be sufficient to ensure that the needs of local citizens are met and unsustainable reforms to the role of local government may be made as a response to external shocks. Fitzgerald (2018) recommend that better consideration of resilience's repercussions for the provision of local government services is now needed.

#### **5.5.1.4 Getting it Right**

'Getting it right' is most closely linked to the central themes of 'Planning and timeliness' and 'Viability of the proposal' and is discussed in Sections 5.2.3 and 5.2.4. 'Getting it right' is, therefore, most relevant for the decision making and planning stage of change. The sub-theme 'Getting it right' evoked commentary about honesty, learning lessons and whether making it good enough for the next stage should be sufficient. The question of whether those who are designing the service model understand what the service has to deliver must be addressed.

#### **5.5.1.5 Risk**

'Risk' is linked to the central themes of 'Planning and timeliness' and 'Viability of the proposal'. 'Risk' is discussed in Sections 5.2.3 and 5.2.4 but the issue pervades throughout the findings. Consideration of 'Risk' is, therefore, most relevant at the decision making and planning stage. The question of whether externalisation is perceived as reducing risks for local authorities was also raised and should be considered as part of the discourse of risk. Comments on risk also included whether the same service can be delivered with cuts and in the experience of Environmental Health Professionals there is a risk that workloads were not taken account of. Chesterfield and Fisher (2009) considered the risk of public services being delivered by non-public bodies and emphasised the need for both legal and political accountability and, hence, the need for a robust governance structure to mitigate the risk. On the other hand, Kennett *et al.* (2015) consider the progressive shift of risk from corporations and national states to the local government, individuals and households. They found that there is an unevenness of the redistribution of risk and insecurity both geographically and between different types of household. Asenova *et al.* (2015) questions whether local authorities have considered increased social risks as a result of public sector austerity. They go on to advocate a shift in the public sector risk management culture from defensive-institutional risk management practices to a more proactive management of social risk.

#### **5.5.1.6 Skills Development**

'Skills development' is linked to the central themes of 'Viability of the proposal', and 'Managing changes effectively' and is discussed in Sections 5.2.3 and 5.2.5. The consideration of 'Skills development' is most relevant in the middle to later stages of change i.e. planning, decision making and the transition period. Commentators suggest that sufficient time must be allowed for the development of new skills.

### **5.5.1.7 Trust**

'Trust' is linked to the central themes of 'Meaningful consultation' and 'Managing changes effectively' and is discussed in Sections 5.2.5 and 5.2.6. 'Trust' is most relevant in the later stage of change i.e. the transition period. 'Trust' was considered an important issue by commentators who said that accountability and honest communication is crucial to 'bringing staff along'.

## **5.6 Conclusion**

Table 5.1 summarises how the research questions were answered and how the objectives were met. The findings of this research were discussed in the light of the consultation, the existing literature and the evidence base. The six central themes and their sub-themes were confirmed as being accurate and relevant but were subjected to minor changes as follows: In the central theme of 'Meaningful consultation' the sub-theme of 'appeasing staff' was amended to not appeasing staff. In the central theme of 'Understanding the reasons for change' the sub-themes of 'income generation' and 'alternative funding' were added. An additional theme of 'Ethos of public services' was added and was considered as an overarching theme. The sub-themes of 'Getting it right', 'Emerging service demands', 'Resilience', 'Trust', 'Skills development' and 'Risk' were moved from the central themes and compiled as a set of overarching themes which were developed alongside the 'Ethos of public service'.

The chronology of change was divided into three stages: Establishing the need for change, Decision making and planning and Transition. The three stages of change were linked to the most relevant central themes as follows: Establishing the need for change linked to Understanding the reasons for change and Understanding the nature of environmental health; Decision making and planning was linked to Planning and timeliness and Viability of the proposal; Transition was linked to Managing changes effectively and Meaningful consultation.

Finally, a framework was developed which encompasses all of the findings and lessons learned by the participants when they were developing and delivering novel Environmental Health Service delivery models.

**Table 5.1: Summary of how the research questions were answered**

<b>Project Aim:</b> To conduct an investigation into evolving models of English Environmental Health services as a response to reducing resource and to identify the lessons learned by those who were involved in the change process.			
<b>Overall Research Question:</b> What are the lessons to learn from the implementation process for differing and evolving service delivery models for Environmental Health?			
<b>Sub Research Question</b>	<b>Project Objective</b>	<b>Findings of the Literature Review</b>	<b>Findings, Thematic Analysis, Conference Activity, Consultation and Discussion</b>
What are the drivers for change in local authority Environmental Health and Regulatory Services?	To carry out a review of existing literature to explore the known drivers for change and to identify emerging and novel methods of Environmental Health and Regulatory Service delivery	<b>Key Drivers:</b> Austerity and Reducing Resource; Neoliberalism and New Public Management; Localism; Better Regulation Agenda; Transformation of Public Services; Change Management in Public Services	<b>Establishing the need for change 5.3.1</b> Understanding the Reasons for Change (4.5.3)(5.2.1) Understanding the Nature of Environmental Health (4.5.4)(5.2.2)
		<b>Traditional models of Environmental Health Service delivery:</b> Frontline service delivered by district councils, (where they exist) or Unitary/ Metropolitan local authorities	<b>Establishing the need for change (5.3.1)</b> Understanding the Nature of Environmental Health (4.5.4)(5.2.2)
		<b>Emerging and novel models of Regulatory Service delivery.</b> Public-Public Partnerships; Public-Private Partnerships, New Local Authority Companies	<b>Establishing the need for change (5.3.1)</b> Understanding the Reasons for Change (4.5.3)(5.2.1)
What are the experiences of key personnel during the change to emerging and novel service delivery models for Environmental Health and Regulatory Services?	To explore experiences of key personnel involved in relevant changes from the early stages of the decision making through to the transition stages	Discussion of findings in the light of the literature review	<b>Establishing the need for change (5.3.1)</b> Understanding the Reasons for Change (4.5.3)(5.2.1) Understanding the Nature of Environmental Health (4.5.4)(5.2.2)
			<b>Decision Making and Planning (5.3.2)</b> Viability of the proposal (4.5.5)(5.2.3) Planning and timeliness (4.5.6)(5.2.4)
			<b>Transition (5.3.2)</b> Managing changes effectively (4.5.2)(5.2.5) Meaningful consultation (4.5.1)(5.2.6)



Sub Research Question	Project Objective	Findings of the Literature Review	Findings, Thematic Analysis, Conference Activity, Consultation and Discussion
What lessons can be learned from the change process?	Development of a theoretical framework for future change programmes in Environmental Health Services	Discussion of findings in the light of the literature review	<p><b>'A Framework for Future Change Programmes in Environmental Health Services'</b> (5.5)</p> <p><b>Overarching themes:</b>  Ethos of public service (5.4.1)(5.5.1.1)  Getting it right (4.5.5.5) (5.2.3) (5.2.4) (5.5.1.4)  Emerging service demands (4.5.4.9) (5.2.2) (5.2.3) (5.2.5) (5.5.1.2)  Resilience (4.5.3.9) (4.5.3) (5.2.3) (5.5.1.3)  Trust (4.5.1.6) (5.2.5) (5.2.6) (S.5.4.1.7)  Skills development (S.4.5.2.5) (S.5.2.3) (S.5.2.5) (5.5.1.6)  Risk (4.5.5.8) (5.2.3) (5.2.4) (5.5.1.5)</p> <p><b>Establishing the need for change (5.3.1)</b>  Understanding the Reasons for Change (4.5.3)(5.2.1)  Understanding the Nature of Environmental Health (4.5.4)(5.2.2)  <b>Decision Making and Planning (5.3.2)</b>  Viability of the proposal (4.5.5)(5.2.3)  Planning and timeliness (4.5.6)(5.2.4)  <b>Transition (5.3.2)</b>  Managing changes effectively (4.5.2)(5.2.5)  Meaningful consultation (4.5.1)(5.2.6)</p>

## **6 A TOOLKIT TO PRESENT THE FRAMEWORK FOR FUTURE CHANGE PROGRAMMES IN ENVIRONMENTAL HEALTH SERVICES**

The final model: A framework for future change programmes in Environmental Health Services (see Section 5.5) may be used as a simple toolkit by service managers who have been tasked with delivering sustainable Environmental Health Services. Hughes (2007) suggests that academic models of change management can be successfully translated into management tools for practitioners. A change management tool can be a simple stand-alone application.

The Framework for future change programmes in Environmental Health Services Framework can be used as a stand-alone model which informs the three stages of change: Establishing the need for Change; Decision making and planning; and Transition. A draft electronic toolkit has been produced which provides an explanation of how to use the framework and included commentary which may be helpful to the users. A training package could be marketed to accompany the toolkit and it was recommended by the consultants that the CIEH would be a key agent in raising awareness of this product to its members. The draft toolkit is presented in Appendix W.

This toolkit is intended to be used in the context/constraints of a local authority Environmental Health Service considering change, to inform medium and long term planning. The key audience includes senior leadership teams in local government and private-public partnerships which provide Environmental Health Services. Other users of the toolkit may be service commissioners, cabinet members, professional institutions and local/regional Environmental Health Bodies.

With minor adaptation, the toolkit can be used by a public service audience outside of Environmental Health Services. This would involve an adaptation of the central theme of 'Understanding the nature of environmental health' to 'Understanding the nature of the public service undergoing change'. The sub-themes would need to be populated by the user according to the service under consideration.

## 7 PERSONAL REFLECTION

There are elements of reflection provided throughout this thesis but this chapter focusses on my personal reflection of the research process and my learning. I will use the dissemination points to capture my reflection at various stages of the research process.

In August 2015 I submitted an abstract of a paper that I was writing to the 115th CIEH National Conference (see Appendix III). The paper was entitled “Evolving models of environmental health service delivery: a real-time experiment?” The paper put forward the initial findings of my exploration of the experience of change in the development and execution of new models of Environmental Health Service. I was sitting on a pleasant Majorcan beach in early September 2015 when I decided to have a quick look at my work email just to keep an eye on things whilst I was away. To my surprise, I saw an email from the CIEH asking me to deliver a short presentation of my research paper at the forthcoming 115th CIEH National Conference on 20 -21st October 2015. My plans for returning to work were now uppermost in my mind, with resit boards, induction for new students and start of term all due to take place at the same time as having to prepare for presenting at a National Conference. Reading my book and relaxing for the rest of my holiday were now more difficult, to say the least. Back at Middlesex University I had some great support from my colleagues and was able to successfully start the teaching year and prepare a presentation which explained my research, sought to get feedback on my initial findings and included an invitation for audience members to participate in the final data collection stage and thus contribute to the body of knowledge.

I set off to the conference on the 20th October 2015 with my short PowerPoint presentation and 6 posters which I had prepared to display my findings. My presentation slot was one of 3 research papers being presented in the session, the other research topics were the public health implications of reintroducing beavers into Scotland and an *E.Coli* 0157 outbreak in Northern Ireland – a mix which demonstrates the breadth of Environmental Health. The session was very well attended and the presentation styles differed widely with samples of chewed wood and photos of beautiful lochs, descriptions of food handlers with severe episodes of diarrhoea and, for my presentation, delegates roaming the room with ‘post-it’ stickers to make comments on, and to attach to my posters. So my mission was accomplished and I had made a successful presentation, obtained feedback which validated my findings but also pointed to areas which will need further exploration. I also secured some further participants for my continuing research

who would be working with to draw comparisons and to refine the emerging themes. This first stage of dissemination spurred me on to the next stage of the research

This presentation of research papers was the last session of the first day of the conference. I was now free to attend the conference dinner and the following day as a delegate. As with most conferences, it was an excellent opportunity to catch up with colleagues and to meet new contacts. Usually, at this type of event, I tend towards catching up with colleagues but, having presented a session, I found that several delegates who I did not know previously were interested in my work and we had some fruitful discussions. I found that presenting at the CIEH conference helped me on my research journey as I had to really think about what I had found out so far and it crystallised my vision of where I wanted to go with this on the next stage of data analysis. I would encourage anyone who is on their research journey to submit papers or posters to conferences but not to check their emails whilst on holiday unless they have a laptop with them!

In November 2015, I presented a personal reflection on my research journey to the CIEH Research Practice Students' Summer Conference 2017: The Power of Research. I identified issues that I had encountered and 'light bulb' moments, where I was finally able to see the way forward. Alongside drivers for change from central government, the UK financial crisis in 2008 resulted in austerity, a climate of reducing resource in local authority and a move to shift powers from local authorities. This meant that the environment within which the research was to be carried out was rapidly changing. From 2010 onwards, local authority Environmental Health Services were retrenching into survival mode and this made the research design difficult to pin down.

My presentation captured the complexity of the research environment and the rapidly changing context and the difficulties I had in trying to set a rigid research design. I explained how I had needed to be more flexible than anticipated, as there was a risk that the findings would be outdated whilst the research was still being carried out. This was potentially very demotivating and I needed to find a way through this problem. I explained how I had decided to focus on the process of change and the lessons learned which ensured currency of the findings. It was necessary to have a flexible research design which could be adapted as opportunities arose (or closed down). I reflected on my qualities as a researcher and how it was crucial to have an open and enquiring mind, be a good listener, be adaptive to emerging issues, to have a good grasp of the issues and to minimise bias.

I reflected on the selection of cases and how it had evolved from existing contacts and recommendations. Although I found that participants were willing to engage because the research was current and I am an EHP, I was worried that this would give my findings lower reliability. However, it was not possible to gain sufficient participants who matched the desired characteristics by other means. I had to live with this and undertook a detailed examination of the research method texts to ensure that my findings would be valid. I reflected on how much I had learned from engaging with a range of organisations contemplating or delivering new models of service delivery. My knowledge of Environmental Health Management was enriched and my understanding of current issues in practice context was heightened, enabling a deeper analysis of the data.

I reflected on my experience of the chosen research method of relying on open reflective accounts facilitated by myself. I identified an important checkpoint of listening back to initial interviews to check that I was not influencing the participant. After the first interview, I listened back and found that I was starting to engage in a conversation and putting forward my views. I was careful not to do this in later interviews and developed an improved technique of probing further, rather than commentating. I also reflected on the early stages of data analysis and found that transcribing my own interviews was very time-consuming. I had underestimated how long this would take but soon realised that the process of transcription enabled the first stages of data coding.

I summarised my own learning from reflection on my research journey as follows:

- Be clear about the purpose of your study
- Flexible research design: able to evolve
- The initial research question may be tentative
- Method of data collection – need to make a decision but not rigid.
- The research question may develop and data collection adapted.
- Layers of data analysis: Present studies in stages

Presenting at these two CIEH national conferences provided me with the opportunity and incentive to capture my findings to date, to share these with an expert audience for feedback and to reflect on my own learning to date.

The next opportunity to share my findings arose when my paper was accepted at the International Conference on Urban Risks, Lisbon, Portugal June 2016 (see Appendix II). I was invited to Lisbon to present my findings to the international risk community. This

enabled me to share the refined findings which situated the central themes in the stages of change. My presentation was the only one of its type in the conference which was more focused on the risks presented by disasters. I doubted that my findings would be of interest but the audience participation soon quelled my doubts and I met some very interesting academic colleagues. I was very pleased to hear that my paper (entitled Responding to the risk of reducing resources: Development of a framework for future change programmes in Environmental Health Services) was selected by the organisers for submission to the International Journal of Disaster Risk Reduction special edition and was published in April 2018 (Plume *et al.*,2018) This experience showed me that my findings were of interest to a wider audience than anticipated which included the international risk community. I was reassured that my work had academic significance as well as being of interest to the Environmental Health Profession.

In June 2016, I gave a further presentation of my findings and a reflection of my research journey at the Middlesex University Research Students' Summer Conference 2017 -The Power of Research (see Appendix VI). Even though I had now presented at National and International conferences, I felt shy about sharing my findings and bearing my soul in front of an audience of colleagues and students. However, I soon realised that I had gained considerable knowledge about my subject, that the findings were valid and defensible and that I was indeed confident to share this new knowledge. I talked about how dissemination focuses the mind and how it had enabled me to see the next stages of the data analysis with clarity.

In September 2017 I was invited to share my findings with the Herts and Beds Regional CIEH group. Again, the audience seemed engaged and I noted that my contribution was very different from the rest of the meeting which focussed on professional practice. This highlighted the focus of the Environmental Health Profession on professional practice rather than on establishing an evidence base. My feeling is that there is a need for both in the profession, particularly in a climate of reducing resource for Environmental Health Services. Knowledge and understanding of Environmental Health Services are not well researched and as a preventative service, it can be invisible until things go wrong. My work highlights this gap and extends change management tools to establish the need for change.

Now, I was ready to draw my findings together to complete the final stages of the data analysis and to encapsulate the findings into a final theory. On reflection, this was the biggest intellectual leap for me and I was caught up by deliberating how I could take my

findings to the next level. During the consultation process, I had questioned how the findings could be communicated and used by managers preparing for change and I used this feedback to bring clarity to how the findings fitted together and how they could be shared with the intended practice audience. It was at this point that I designed the Framework for future change programmes in Environmental Health Services with a view that this could be used by local authority managers, as it stood, to share the lessons learned but it was not intended as a prescriptive tool. I feel that this is a suitable product for the audience as it is uncomplicated but it can prompt users to consider aspects of change management that they might not have done otherwise. In my view, the fact that this framework is drawn from experience will attract users who may promulgate this framework as a useful tool. Clearly, the framework will need to be promoted and I intend to take this forward with the CIEH in the form of an electronic toolkit.

Finally, in June 2018, an early version of the Framework for future change programmes in Environmental Health Services was presented as part of a panel discussion at the ComplianceNet First Annual Conference “Measuring Compliance in the 21st Century” Irvine, California at UC Irvine, June 2018. Presentation of the draft framework prompted me to use mind mapping software which enhanced the production of the framework and enabled me to encapsulate my findings into a coherent set of indicators for future change management programmes.

In summary, I found that dissemination truly focused my mind and helped me to validate the findings and to take the next steps in the analysis of the data. I have gained considerable expertise in the changing face of Environmental Health Service delivery and have demonstrated that there is National interest from the professional community and International interest from the academic community.

## 8 CONCLUSION

This chapter revisits the research question, aims and objectives and draws together the research findings and sets out the application to future practice. This chapter goes on to consider the academic and professional significance of the findings and reviews the dissemination of the research findings. As stated in the introduction, the project set out to explore the drivers for change and to identify new models of service delivery which have emerged from the challenging landscape of Environmental Health Service delivery in local government. The research question was defined as: 'What are the lessons to learn from the implementation process for differing and evolving service delivery models for environmental health?'. The overall aim of the project was to conduct an investigation into evolving models of English Environmental Health Services as a response to reducing resource and to identify the lessons learned by those who were involved in the change process. The findings contribute new knowledge and retain currency as, at the time of writing, this research was unique with respect to Environmental Health Service delivery and the financial sustainability of local government continues to be at risk (National Audit Office, 2018a). In order to meet the aim of the project and answer the research question, three sub-research questions were developed and for each of the sub-research questions a project objective was set as follows:

Sub-research question I: What are the drivers for change in local authority Environmental Health and Regulatory Services?

- a) Objective: To carry out a review of existing literature to explore the known drivers for change and to identify emerging and novel methods of Environmental Health and Regulatory Service delivery;

Sub-research question II: What are the experiences of key personnel during the change to emerging and novel service delivery models for Environmental Health and Regulatory Services?

- b) Objective: To identify lessons learned through exploration of experiences of key personnel involved in relevant change programmes from the early stages of the decision making through to the transition stages;

Sub-research question III: What lessons can be learned from the change process?

- c) Objective: Development of a theoretical framework for the effective management of future change programmes in Environmental Health services.



The literature review identified drivers of change in local authority Environmental Health Services. These drivers include: A Neoliberalisation agenda of successive UK governments where the private sector is increasingly involved in the delivery of public services with a vision of greater efficiency; The NPM application of private sector management and business models to the public sector has become prevalent in local authorities; The recent Conservative policy of Localism which aims to shift power away from the state to individuals and communities has influenced the modernisation of local governance; The Better Regulation agenda aims to reduce the burden of regulation on businesses and influences the regulatory transaction of local authorities; There is political and industry pressure for increasing self-regulation and earned autonomy; Austerity, the ongoing reducing resource for local government and a priority for local authority services such as Adult and Social Care and Housing have a compounding fiscal effect on local government services such as Environmental Health; There has been a transformation of public services reflecting the future role of local government in the light of the previous points.

The literature review went on to explain the traditional means of delivering Environmental Health Services as being delivered directly by district councils, where they exist, and otherwise by the single-tier authorities. Emerging and novel models of Regulatory Service delivery were identified as: Shared services, including Bi-borough, Tri-borough and regional sharing of services; Public-private partnership, including contracting out services, externalisation or hybrid partnership organisations, all of which are said to have the potential to deliver significant efficiency improvements; Creation of new local authority companies, social enterprises and trusts

The research method was designed to explore experiences of key personnel involved in delivering Environmental Health and Regulatory Services in emerging and novel service delivery models. Experience of three stages of change were researched, ranging from the early stages of establishing the need for change, the decision making and planning through to the transition stage. Participants representing a range of organisations involved in new models of Environmental Health Service delivery took part in the research. The participants' roles ranged from front line officers, middle managers, senior managers and key players in the Environmental Health Profession. The participants reflected on their experience of the change process and its impact including the effectiveness of the new model in a climate of continuing reducing resource.

The data analysis revealed six central themes: Understanding the reasons for change; Understanding the nature of environmental health; Viability of the proposal; Planning and timeliness; Managing changes effectively; Meaningful consultation. It was found that understanding the reasons for change and the nature of environmental health were most relevant when establishing the need for change. The viability of the proposal and planning and timeliness were found to be most relevant in the decision making and planning stage. Managing changes effectively and meaningful consultation were found to be most applicable in the transition to a new service model. However, any of the central themes can be considered at all stages of change.

A set of seven overarching themes were drawn from the findings and the consultation: Ethos of public service; Getting it right; Emerging service demands; Resilience; Trust; Skills development; Risk. The overarching themes were found to be applicable across all stages of the change process. However, individually they may be more closely associated with one or more of the emerging themes.

The emerging overarching themes, central themes, their influencing subthemes and the relationships between them represent the lessons learned from the participants' experience of change. This is encapsulated in the final model: **A Framework for future change programmes in Environmental Health Services (see Figure 5.10: The Final Model: A Framework for future change programmes in Environmental Health Services.** This framework contributes new knowledge to the environmental health subject area which has plenty of anecdotal evidence associated with practice but limited evidence-based research findings. At the time of writing, there are no similar studies that have been carried out in the UK with specific reference to Environmental Health or Regulatory Services.

This research has established an evidence base which examines effective Environmental Health Services and can be referred to by both practitioners and researchers to inform them about changes to local authority Regulatory Services. Although there is a body of literature exploring changes in public services there is little written about establishing the need for change. This research contributes new knowledge to the literature regarding the early stages of change. Understanding the nature of environmental health was found to be important as this service was not well understood by senior managers, the public or politicians. This lesson may benefit other complex professions and services which are undergoing change, resulting in a better

understanding of their service provision before decisions about the direction of change are made.

The findings have a national impact for Environmental Health Service providers who are considering new models of service delivery in a climate of reducing resource and political change and this is demonstrated by the dissemination to the academic and professional community. With minor adaptation, in respect to the central theme of Understanding the nature of environmental health, the findings and the framework for future change programmes in Environmental Health Services can be generalised to inform change processes with local authority services in general. Therefore, it is concluded that the research findings are relatable to any change management process in UK local government and beyond as it can be used as a simple toolkit for managers with little adaptation. A draft toolkit has been produced (see Appendix W: Draft Toolkit: A framework for future change programmes in English Environmental Health Services).

The initial findings and emerging themes have been presented at the following national and international conferences:

- Chartered Institute of Environmental Health 115th National Conference, Nottingham October 2015 (Appendix A);
- CIEH: Research Practice Conference: Bridging Policy and Practice with Research, London November 2015 (Appendix B);
- International Conference on Urban Risks, Lisbon, Portugal June 2016 (Appendix C);
- ComplianceNet First Annual Conference 'Measuring Compliance in the 21st Century' Irvine, California at UC Irvine, June 2018 (Appendix D).

A paper based on the presentation at the International Conference on Urban Risks was selected by the organisers for submission to the International Journal of Disaster Risk Reduction special edition and was published in April 2018 (Plume *et al.*, 2018). (Appendix E).

In addition, a presentation of the findings was given at the Middlesex University Research Students' Summer Conference 2017 -The Power of Research (Appendix F).

## 8.1 Limitations

The qualitative data analysis was conducted by myself with no assistance and so it was difficult to eliminate bias completely. My knowledge of the field of study had advantages with respect to accessing the data and gave me the ability to enable the participants to reflect effectively on their experience but this, in turn, could also introduce bias. It was recognised that research bias could not be eliminated but it was minimised by the use of consultation to refine and agree with the findings. The generation of a codebook ensured that there was a reference point for the data analysis and that the research could be replicated. Lincoln and Guba (1985) agree that the findings should be confirmable and not influenced by the personal values of the researcher. The findings are therefore dependable and not constrained by the time setting in which the research was conducted.

The nature of the research required exploration of models of change in the early stages of establishing the need for change and planning and decision making as well as the organisations in a later transition stage. The organisations included were 'non-traditional' models of Environmental Health Service delivery which is an inherently difficult group to reach. Initially, the organisations were difficult to identify and snowball sampling was used so that the selected organisations were likely to have the desired characteristics. This approach is supported by Saunders *et al.* (2016) in this context but snowball sampling may result in a less representative and homogenous sample which risks bias.

There were only 11 participants and Crouch and McKenzie (2006) suggest that this may invite speculation where generalisation or relatability are claimed. However, this is an exploratory study and the proposed framework for future change programmes in Environmental Health Services is intended for use in a toolkit by Environmental Health Managers. However, only one central theme refers specifically to environmental health and the lessons learned are relatable to the wider field of regulatory local government services. This is supported by the consultants who found that the findings may be relevant to a wider audience, as the macro context is broadly comparable. The consultation process confirmed that the key audience would also include senior leadership teams in local government, private sector providers of public services, cabinet members, professional institutions, as well as local/regional Environmental Health Bodies.

## **8.2 Recommendations**

The findings of the research and the production of the final model have identified the lessons learned by those who were involved in the change process and encapsulated the findings into a framework which can contribute to inform the process of change for evolving Environmental Health Services. Although consultation with the profession has been undertaken, the final model should be disseminated more widely to the Environmental Health professional community. The consultation recommended a simple toolkit and the Framework for future change programmes in Environmental Health Services can act as a tool kit for Environmental Health Managers facing change. The framework should be populated by the user to ensure that it is contextualised. The most simple application is as an aide memoir to ensure that the experience of others undergoing similar changes can be built on. A more nuanced product is a toolkit which uses the framework as a basis for modules based on the stages of change. Again this would need to be contextualised by the user but further guidance could be provided in a training package. The consultation process of this research recommended that the most suitable vehicle for this dissemination would be in electronic format via the CIEH.

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## 10 APPENDICES

# Appendix A: Presentation: Chartered Institute of Environmental Health 115th National Conference, Nottingham October 2015



## Evolving models of environmental health service delivery: a real-time experiment?

Ruth Plume  
115th CIEH National Conference

### Research question?

- “What are the lessons to learn from the implementation process for differing and evolving service delivery models for environmental health?”
- Important to document the process and the experience so that we learn the lessons in real time to enhance service delivery.
- Create an evidence base.


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### Content of presentation

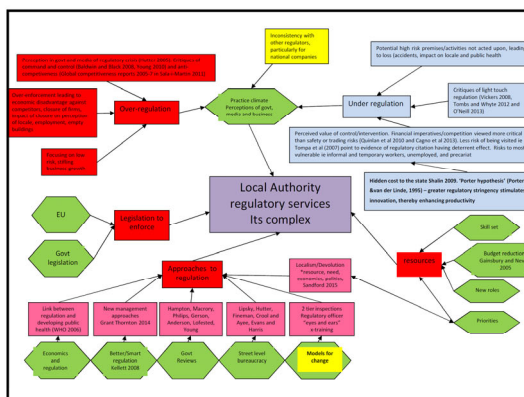
- Authors: Ruth Plume, Dr Alan Page, Professor Hemda Garelick
- Local authority regulatory services- changing and complex
- Research question?
- Research design
- Interim Results
- Your turn!
- Next steps – further participants?

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### Research Design



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### Case studies: types of organisations

- Entire environmental health service outsourced to a large private sector organisation
- Regional shared public protection service,
- Proposed mutualisation,
- Shared services (management only)
- Shared services (field officers and management).

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### Participants

- To date, there have been 11 participants from 8 organisations.
- The participants and their place of employment are not identified by name.
- The interviews have been carried out over a 14 month period from July 2014 to September 2015.
- One of the participants has been interviewed several times over a twelve month period as the new service delivery evolved.

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### Emergent Themes

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### Research Design

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### Understanding the reasons for change

### Data analysis

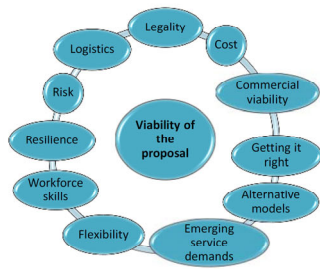
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### Your turn – a real time experiment!

- Posters of each emerging theme on the wall(s)
- Please choose one theme that you have most interest in
- Make any comments on the “post-it” note provided e.g.
  - Do you recognise these sub-themes in the outer circle?
  - Do you agree or disagree that the sub-theme links to the central theme?
  - Would you like to add a sub-theme?
  - Can you give us something of your experience in a sentence or two?
- Stick your “post it” note next to the outer sub theme that is most appropriate.
- You need to be sat back down by 16.40 ready for the next presenter. I will be around afterwards for questions if we run short of time.**
- Are you interested in taking part in a regional focus group to refine these themes? Forms for contact details at the door or email Ruth Plume – [R.Plume@mdx.ac.uk](mailto:R.Plume@mdx.ac.uk)



### Viability of the proposal



### Understanding the nature of environmental health



### Meaningful consultation



### Planning and timeliness



### Managing changes effectively



# Appendix B: CIEH: Research Practice Conference: Bridging Policy and Practice with Research, London November 2015

Middlesex University London

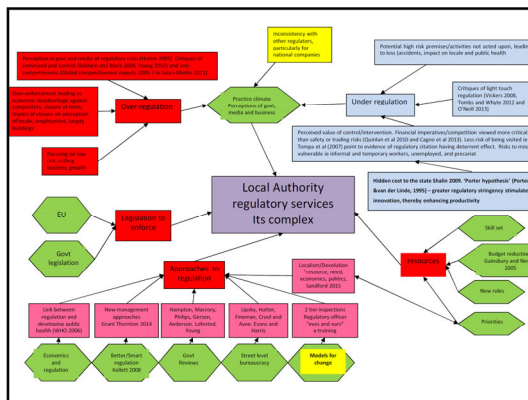
## Running to keep up: A research journey

Ruth Plume  
CIEH: Research Practice Conference: Bridging Policy and Practice with Research 12<sup>th</sup> November 2015

### Content of presentation

- Research environment- changing and complex
- Research question?
- Research design
- Data analysis
- Interim Results
- Lessons learned

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### Research question?

- "What are the lessons to learn from the implementation process for differing and evolving service delivery models for environmental health?"
- Important to document the process and the experience so that we learn the lessons in real time to enhance service delivery.
- Create an evidence base.

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### Research Design

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### Case studies: types of organisations

- Entire environmental health service outsourced to a large private sector organisation
- Regional shared public protection service,
- Proposed mutualisation,
- Shared services (management only)
- Shared services (field officers and management).

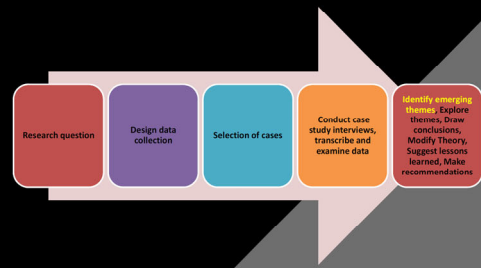
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## Participants

- To date, there have been 11 participants from 8 organisations.
- The participants and their place of employment are not identified by name.
- The interviews have been carried out over a 14 month period from July 2014 to September 2015.
- One of the participants has been interviewed several times over a twelve month period as the new service delivery evolved.
- Following a presentation of my initial findings at the 115<sup>th</sup> CIEH National Conference 2 further participants recruited from 2 more organisations for the refinement of the theme analysis.

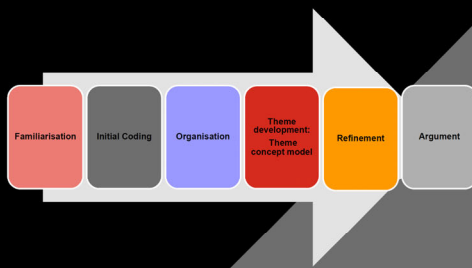
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## Research Design



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## Data analysis



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## Data Analysis so far

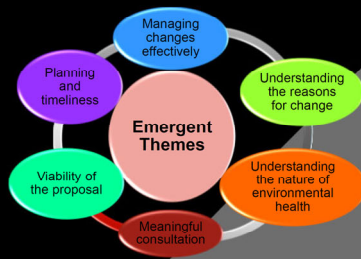
- Transcription of Data
- Manual Coding of recurrent words and meanings relating to the research question

Politics	Protection	Confident
Value	Resilience	Customer Satisfaction
Shake up	Fear	Emerging Service Demands
Cost	Jobbing	Skills Shortages
Devolution	Impact	Problem solving
Alternatives	Difficult	Priority
Protection	Process	Awareness
Opportunity	Trust	Strength
Knowledge	Leadership	Public Health
Statutory	Population	Legality
Commercial viability	Getting it right	Feasibility
Risk	Logistics	Questions
Answers	Honesty	Appraising
Engagement	Trust	Outcomes
Problems	Pressure	Pressure
Detail	Satisfaction	Outcomes
Challenges	Transparency	

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Presentation title 10

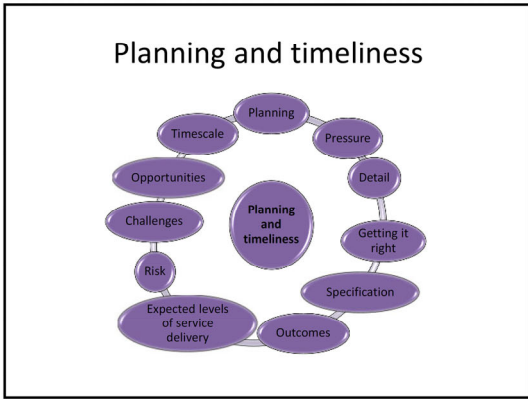
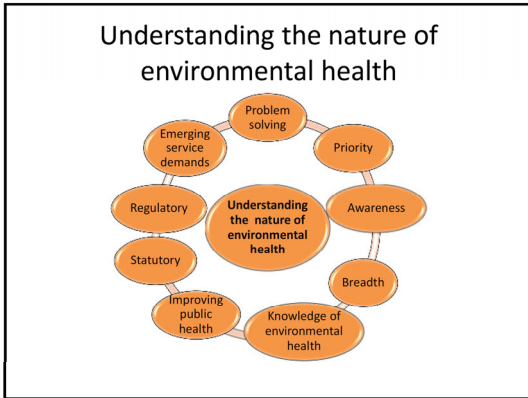
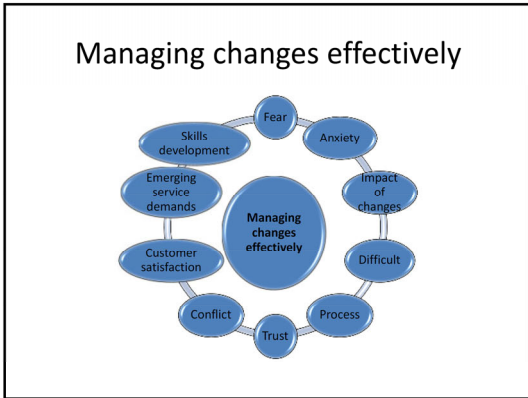
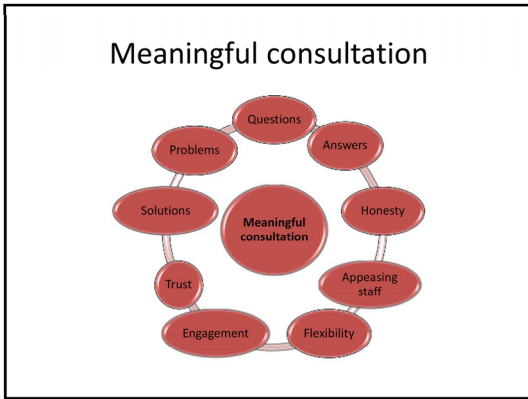
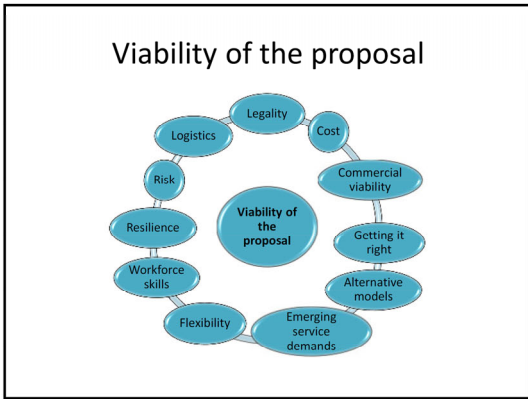
## Emergent Themes



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## Understanding the reasons for change





### Research in a complex and changing environment: Lessons learned

- Be clear about the purpose of your study
- Flexible research design: able to evolve
- Initial research question may be tentative
- Method of data collection – need to make a decision but not rigid.
- Research question may develop and data collection adapted.
- Layers of data analysis: Present studies in stages.




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## Appendix C: Presentation: International Conference on Urban Risks, Lisbon, Portugal June

  
 International Conference  
 on Urban Risks

**Responding to the risk of reducing resource: A study of the evolution of English Environmental Health Services**

Ruth Plume, Dr Alan Page and Professor Hemda Garelick

  
 Middlesex  
 University



 International Conference on Urban Risks - Lisbon (Portugal) - 30 June to 2 July

  
 International Conference  
 on Urban Risks

### Context

- Environmental Health in the UK
  - A Local Authority Environmental Health Service protecting public health in respect of:
    - Food Safety
    - Health and Safety at Work (in lower risk premises)
    - Environmental Pollution
    - Private Sector Housing
    - Control of Infectious Disease
  - By regulation, health protection and health education


  
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 on Urban Risks

### Context II


- Environmental Health Services Operational Context
  - Reducing resource and austerity (Gainsbury and Neville 2015),
  - Government policy to reduce the burden of regulation (Kellet 2008)
  - Devolution (Sandford 2015a),
  - Changing demographics and political change


  
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 on Urban Risks

### Emergent Risks and Response

- Emergent risks
  - Cuts to Local authority budgets (Gainsbury and Neville 2015)
  - Scaling back of the part played by councils in protecting public safety
  - Significant loss of skills and experience in the environmental health work force (LGA 2015a)
  - Outcome: not able to provide adequate public health protection
- Emergent responses
  - Service reduction/alternative delivery mechanisms including: contracts and partnerships with both public and private sector bodies; creation of new local authority companies, social enterprises and trusts. (Grant Thornton UK 2014)


  
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 on Urban Risks

### Research Question

Given the emerging risk of declining public health protection the research question becomes:


*“How are local authorities responding and are there lessons to be learnt from the implementation processes for differing and evolving service delivery models for environmental health?”*

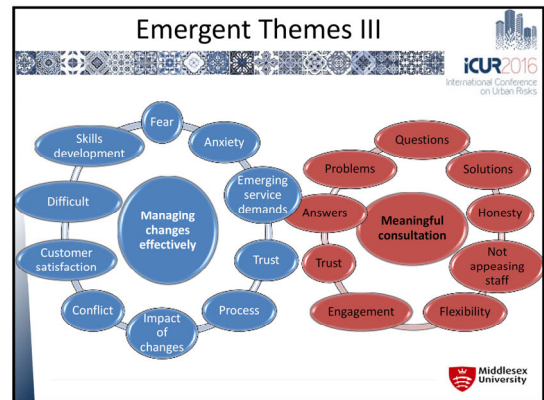
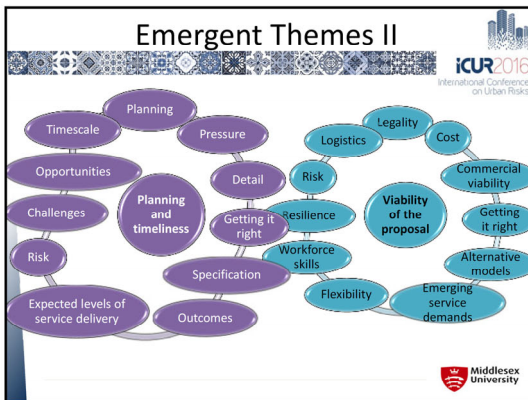
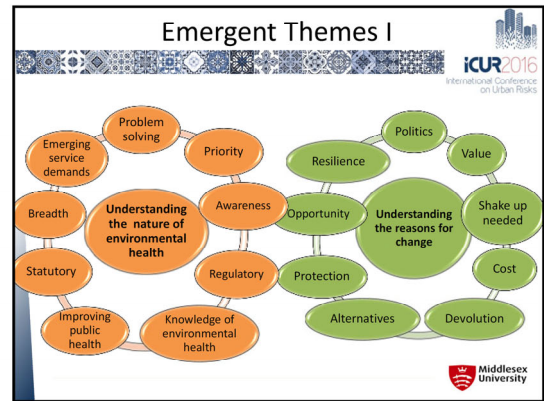
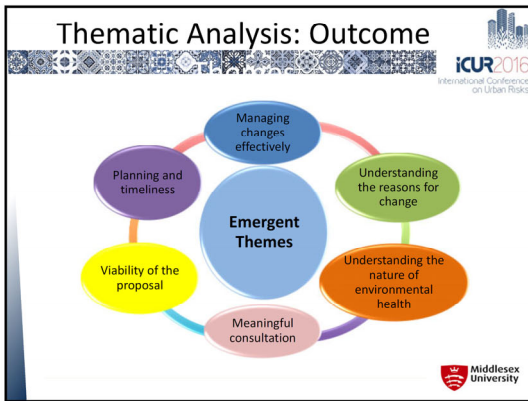
  
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 International Conference  
 on Urban Risks

### Data Collection and Analysis

- Interviews were conducted with a range of stakeholders involved in the process.
  - Conducted at points in time and
  - Over time
- **Data collected 2014-15**
- **Analysis: thematic analysis**
- Data collection for further iterative evaluation continues

  
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### Conclusion

ICUR2016 International Conference on Urban Risks

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- **“What are the lessons to learn from the implementation process for differing and evolving service delivery models for environmental health?”**
  - *The emergent themes are: Understanding the reasons for change; Managing changes effectively; Understanding the nature of environmental health; Viability of the proposal; Meaningful consultation and Planning and timeliness.*
  - *The themes overlap and should be considered together*
  - *Broad lessons captured from these early adopters of new service paradigms can be utilised by other agencies, potentially beyond Environmental Health, but will need to be adapted to their context, politics and history in the employment of the lessons learnt.*

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**Appendix D: ComplianceNet First Annual Conference “Measuring Compliance in the 21st Century” Irvine, California at UC Irvine, June 2018**



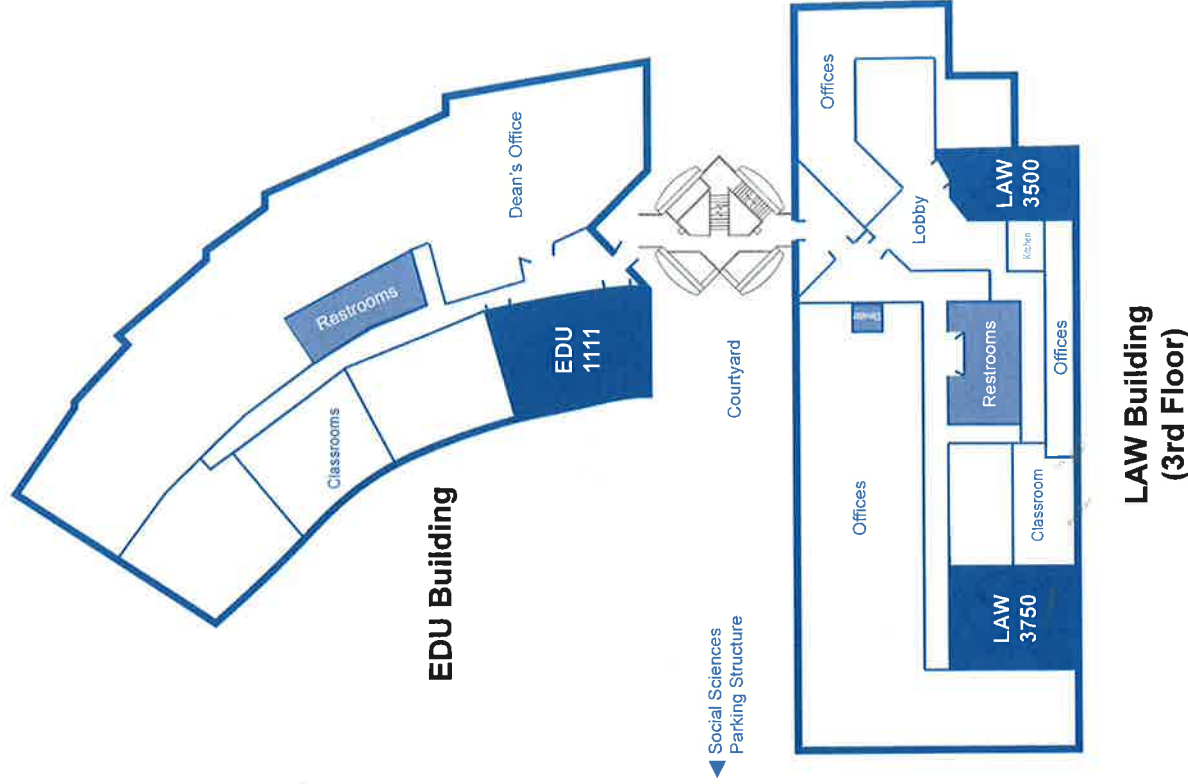
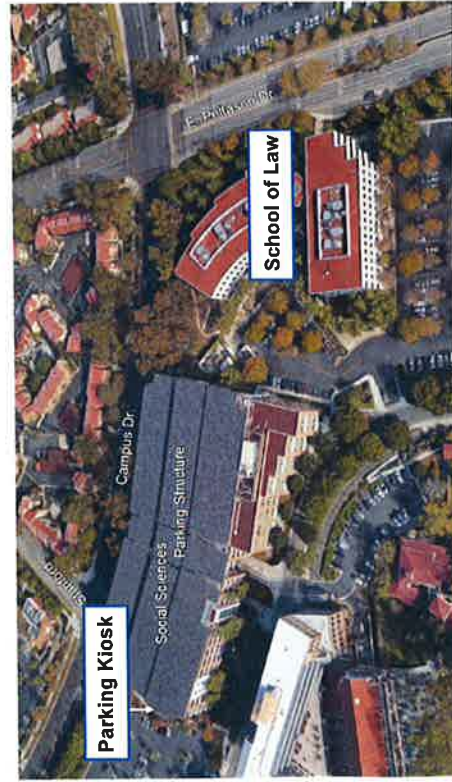
UCI School of Law  
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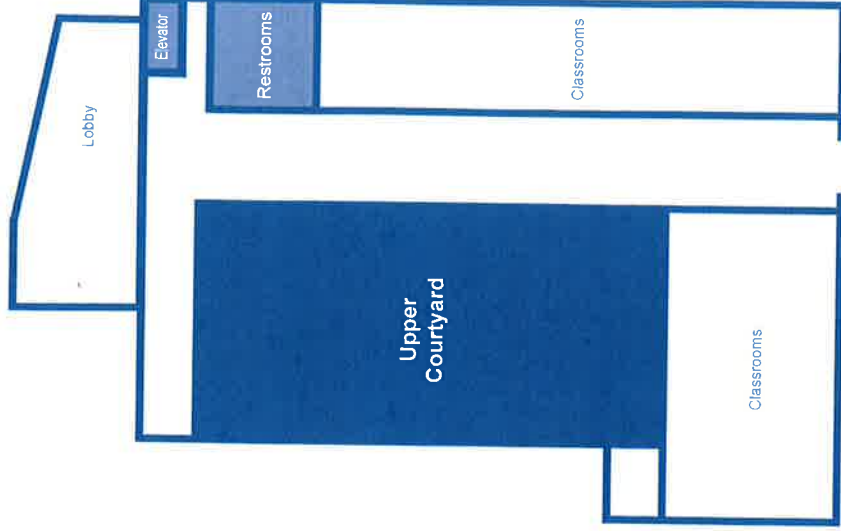
- Exit at University Drive.
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Thursday and Friday receptions will be held in the Upper Courtyard.

### UCI Division of Continuing Education



17A Parking Lot

# Schedule

## Thursday, May 31

Time	Session Information	Location
7:00 p.m.	Welcome Reception	UCI Division of Continuing Education Courtyard

12:00 p.m.	Lunch Break
1:00 p.m.	Business Meeting
2:00 p.m.	Parallel Sessions

### ROOM EDU 1111

### ROOM LAW 3500

### ROOM LAW 3750

## Friday, June 1

Time	Session Information	Location
9:00 a.m.	Opening Remarks	<b>ROOM EDU 1111</b> Benjamin van Rooij (University of California, Irvine)
9:15 a.m.	Plenary Session	(2 papers, 30 minutes each) 1) <b>Eugene Soltes</b> (Harvard Business School): Evaluating the Effectiveness of Corporate Compliance Programs: Establishing a Model for Prosecutors, Courts, and Firms 2) <b>Judith van Erp</b> (Utrecht University, Faculty of Law, Economics and Governance): Opportunities for Regulatory Noncompliance in Complex International Regulatory Regimes: The Case of the Volkswagen Diesel Fraud

10:15 a.m.  
Coffee Break

10:45 a.m.

Time	Session Information	Location
10:45 a.m.	Parallel Sessions	<b>ROOM LAW 3500</b> <b>Discretion, Coherence &amp; Vagueness</b> (3 papers, 25 minutes each) <i>Chair: Emily Ryo</i> 1) <b>Ryan Copus</b> (Harvard Law School): Detecting Inconsistency in Governance 2) <b>Paula Chadderton</b> (University of Canberra): Normative Coherence in Multi-faceted Regulatory Regimes: An Analysis of Australia's Anti-Money Laundering Regulatory Regime 3) <b>Christopher Pryor</b> (University of Florida): Wandering through the Fog of Law: The Sources and Effects of Vague Formal Institutions
		<b>ROOM LAW 3750</b> <b>Emerging Approaches to Compliance and Enforcement</b> (3 papers, 25 minutes each) <i>Chair: Yuval Feldman</i> 1) <b>Timo Goeschl</b> (Heidelberg University): Cold Case: The Forensic Economics of Energy Efficiency Labels on Domestic Refrigeration Appliances 2) <b>Matthew Amengual</b> and <b>Greg Distelhorst</b> (MIT): Aligning Sourcing with Labor Standards? Incentives and Pressures in Global Purchasing Practices 3) <b>Regina Jefferies</b> (University of New South Wales): "Street-Level Bureaucrats" in International Human Rights Law Compliance

### Compliance Experiments & Evidence

- (3 papers, 25 minutes each)  
*Chair: Elizabeth Cauffman*
- 1) **Ben Meiselman** (Johns Hopkins University): Text When You Are on the Way? Evidence on the Efficacy of Announcing Inspections from a Randomized Natural Field Experiment
  - 2) **Sven Simon** (Max Planck Institute for Tax Law and Public Finance): Compliance in Teams – Implications of Joint Decisions and Shared Consequences
  - 3) **Sean Sullivan** (University of Iowa College of Law): In sincere Evidence

### New Compliance Methods and Findings

- (3 papers, 25 minutes each)  
*Chair: Shauhin Talesh*
- 1) **Melissa L. Rorie** (University of Nevada, Las Vegas): Factorial Survey Research in the Study of Corporate Compliance
  - 2) **Benjamin van Rooij** (with Yunmei Wu): Compliance Pluralism: Understanding the Polynormative and Dynamic Nature of Corporate Responses to Law
  - 3) **Geeyoung Min** (Columbia Law School): Which Firms Appoint Compliance Committees and Officers, and Why?

### ROOM EDU 1111

### Good & Bad Apples in Compliance:

#### An Ethics Approach

- (3 papers, 25 minutes each)  
*Chair: Robin Keller*
- 1) **Todd Haugh** (Indiana University, Kelley School of Business): The Power Few of Corporate Compliance
  - 2) **Yuval Feldman** (Bar-Ilan University): Differentiated Regulation across People and Situations: A Behavioral Ethics Perspective to Personalized Law
  - 3) **Michael Kurschilgen** (Technical University Munich, School of Management): What Stabilizes Hierarchical Social Order? The Role of Redistribution

3:15 p.m.  
Coffee Break

3:45 p.m.  
Plenary Session

5:15 p.m.

Reception at UCI Division of Continuing Education Courtyard

# Schedule

Saturday, June 2

Time	Session Information	1:00 p.m.	Parallel Sessions
9:15 a.m.	<p><b>ROOM EDU 1111</b></p> <p><b>Corporate Enforcement in the US</b> (2 papers, 30 minutes each) <i>Chair: Sally Simpson</i></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1) <b>Colin Provost</b> (School of Public Policy, University College London): The Complexity of Revolving Doors in Regulation: Evidence from State Attorney General Regulatory Networks</li> <li>2) <b>Alex Raskolnikov</b> (Columbia Law School): A Theory of Incentive-Based Regulation</li> </ol>	<p><b>ROOM LAW 3500</b></p> <p><b>Rule Intermediaries and Compliance</b> (3 papers, 25 minutes each) <i>Chair: Ruthanne Huising</i></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1) <b>Shaubin Talesh</b> (University of California, Irvine): How Legal Intermediaries Facilitate and Inhibit Social Change</li> <li>2) <b>Doron Dorfman</b> (Stanford Law School): Non-Compliance and Abuse of Disability Law: Issues of Measurement and Public Perception</li> <li>3) <b>Adam Fine</b> (University of California, Irvine): Juvenile Probation Compliance</li> </ol>	<p><b>ROOM LAW 3750</b></p> <p><b>Measuring Corporate Compliance</b> (3 papers, 25 minutes each) <i>Chair: Eugene Soltes</i></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1) <b>Florentin Blanc</b> (World Bank Group): Measuring Compliance, Measuring Outcomes—Challenges in Assessing Regulatory Effectiveness: Case Study on Occupational Safety—and Perspectives from Other Regulatory Areas</li> <li>2) <b>Hui Chen</b> (HuiChenEthics.com) Measurement as Evidence of Compliance</li> <li>3) <b>Ricardo Pellafone</b> (Broadcat): Practical Hurdles to Measuring Compliance</li> </ol>
10:15 a.m.	<p><b>ROOM LAW 3500</b></p> <p><b>EU Enforcement &amp; Compliance</b> (3 papers, 25 minutes each) <i>Chair: Judith van Erp</i></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1) <b>Sara Drake</b> (Cardiff University): Legal Rights Without Effective Compliance Solutions: Assessing the Effectiveness of the EU Passenger Rights Regime</li> <li>2) <b>Melanie Smith</b> (Cardiff University): Regulatory Enforcement in the EU: In Search of an Interdisciplinary Approach</li> <li>3) <b>Esther Versluis</b> (Maastricht University): Post-legislative Guidance as a Tool to Increase Domestic Compliance with EU Law</li> </ol>	<p><b>ROOM LAW 3500</b></p> <p><b>Contested Connotations of Compliance in Practice: Does Compliance Always Deliver the Principles of the Legislation?</b> (4 papers, 25 minutes each) <i>Chair: Alan Page</i></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1) <b>Ruth Plume</b> (Middlesex University): Impact of Austerity on the Delivery of PH Compliance: A Study of English Environmental Health Regulators</li> <li>2) <b>Adam Choonara</b> (Middlesex University): An Exploration of the England, Wales and Northern Ireland Based Mandatory Public Food Hygiene Safety Scoring</li> <li>3) <b>Maeve O'Loughlin</b> (Middlesex University): Turning Compliance Upside Down: Adaptive Safety in the Construction Industry</li> <li>4) <b>Lisa Borley</b> (Middlesex University): The Role of Confidence in Management Within the Health and Safety System Operated by Local Authority Regulators</li> </ol>	<p><b>ROOM LAW 3750</b></p> <p><b>Compliance &amp; Enforcement in Comparison</b> (4 papers, 25 minutes each) <i>Chair: Susan Silbey</i></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1) <b>Daniel Sokol</b> (University of Florida): Outreach versus Enforcement in the Implementation of Antitrust Compliance Programs: Empirical Evidence of Microdata</li> <li>2) <b>Roy Gava</b> (University of Geneva): Global Enforcement of Financial Regulation: An Empirical Assessment</li> <li>3) <b>Subodh Mangesh Wagle</b> (Indian Institute of Technology Bombay, India): Understanding Policy Non-Compliance in Developing Countries: A Context-Relevant Model and its Application</li> <li>4) <b>Mariam Adepeju Abdurraheem-Mustapha</b> (University of Ilorin, Nigeria): Police Force as an Institution in the Administration of Juvenile Justice in Nigeria: An Empirical Discourse</li> </ol>
10:45 a.m.	<p><b>ROOM LAW 3750</b></p> <p><b>Opportunity &amp; Capacity for Compliance</b> (3 papers, 25 minutes each) <i>Chair: Benjamin van Rooij</i></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1) <b>Robert Eli Rosen</b> (University of Miami Law School): Sensor-tive Cars: Compliance for the Head, Not the Tail of Traffic Safety</li> <li>2) <b>Nachshon (Sean) Goltz</b> (Waikato University School of Law): A Framework for an Artificial Intelligent Learning Compliance System</li> <li>3) <b>Leo Beletsky</b> (School of Law and Bouve College of Health Sciences, Northeastern University): Expanding and Improving Substance Use Treatment in Response to the Opioid Crisis: 21st Century Cures Act and its Street-Level Impact</li> </ol>	<p>2:15 p.m.</p> <p>Coffee Break</p>	<p><b>ROOM LAW 3500</b></p> <p><b>Parallel Sessions</b></p>
12:00 p.m.	<p><b>Lunch Break</b></p>	<p>4:25 p.m.</p>	<p><b>Adjournment</b></p>

**Appendix E: International Journal of Disaster Risk Reduction special edition**



## Responding to the risk of reducing resources: Development of a framework for future change programmes in Environmental Health Services<sup>☆</sup>



Ruth Plume<sup>\*</sup>, Alan Page, Hemda Garelick

Department of Natural Sciences, Faculty of Science and Technology, Middlesex University, Hendon Campus, The Burroughs, London NW4 4BT, United Kingdom

### ARTICLE INFO

#### Keywords:

Environmental Health  
Austerity  
Regulation  
Emerging risk  
Outsourcing  
Managing change

### ABSTRACT

Environmental Health services in the UK have been subject to significant resource reduction over the last 5 years. It is suggested that services risk becoming unsustainable unless efficient and effective ways of working are employed. With this in mind this paper presents the findings of research into the experience of practitioners who are developing and delivering evolving Environmental Health services in English local authorities in the context of deep cutting budget reductions. The research explores the experience of change and identifies lessons learnt in the development and execution of new models of Environmental Health service delivery to mitigate against risks of unsustainable or undeliverable services. Interviews were carried out with the participants to capture their experience of change and the impact on service delivery. A range of service delivery models have been examined including outsourcing, shared services, regional delivery models and discussion of mutual arrangements and at various stages of development from planning through to full transformation. Field work was undertaken between 2014 and 2016. Thematic analysis of interview transcripts has identified six emergent themes of the experience of change: managing changes effectively; understanding the reasons for change; understanding the nature of Environmental Health; meaningful consultation; viability of the proposal; planning and timeliness. Environmental Health services undergoing transformation may benefit from taking into account the lessons learnt by organisations that have previously undergone significant change in their response to the risk of a reducing resource.

## 1. Introduction

### 1.1. Context

Environmental Health is a discipline with an historic basis in public health protection which has developed into a modern profession. The World Health Organisation (2006) [16] advocates a regulatory perspective within the public health discipline. In many countries this has emerged in the form of Environmental Health services. Such services seek to ensure a healthy environment across a range of areas including: where we live; where we work; what we eat; and the quality of the surrounding natural environment. The landscape for Environmental Health service delivery in the United Kingdom (UK) is affected by a range of complex external forces. These include drivers for better regulation [8], regulatory change, austerity (Gainsbury and Neville 2005), devolution [13], social context, delivery models [6] and delivery ethos. Social and economic contexts such as changing demographics, economic change and political change present further challenges. Performance measurement with an emphasis on accountability, value for

money and outcomes focus, leading to “New Public Management (NPM)” has developed as a managerialist perspective on the delivery of public services [11] and is established via privatisation, reorganisation, competition and improved efficiency. The message from the UK government is clear, in that, it wants local authorities to transform services to adapt to this new context. Oversight of this “improvement” process has been led by the Audit Commission (dissolved in 2015) and the Local Better Regulation Office, later reformed as the Better Regulation Delivery Office.

### 1.2. The emergent risks

The challenging political direction and austerity measures introduced in the UK since 2010 have had a considerable impact on local authorities and how they deliver their public health protection and regulatory function. According to Gainsbury and Neville [5] English local authority budgets have been cut by £1.8 billion in real terms since 2010 with at least another £9.5bn expected by the end of the decade. “The part played by councils in protecting public safety through local

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<sup>\*</sup> Corresponding author.

E-mail addresses: [r.plume@mdx.ac.uk](mailto:r.plume@mdx.ac.uk) (R. Plume), [a.page@mdx.ac.uk](mailto:a.page@mdx.ac.uk) (A. Page), [h.garelick@mdx.ac.uk](mailto:h.garelick@mdx.ac.uk) (H. Garelick).

environmental regulation, food inspections and workplace health and safety checks has also been scaled back by sharp cuts, as government directions to reduce “red tape” have been given further impetus by the need to save money and reduce staff” (ibid, pg 1). The CIEH Workforce Survey 2014/15 [4] confirms the average budget for Environmental Health services has fallen in real terms by 6.8% between 2013 and 14 and 2014–15, with the Local Government Association (LGA) pointing to a significant loss of skills and experience through early retirement and voluntary redundancy [9]. The LGA also examined the challenges for public health protection services, recognising the particular challenge for small sized organisations with a high reliance on government funding. The issue for small agencies is exacerbated by the broad range of functions within public health protection services, which as the authors highlight ([9]) mean it is often more difficult to explain the range of services and thus to protect them from budgetary reduction.

### 1.3. The emergent responses

Grant Thornton UK [6] examined local government's response to these challenging conditions in the context of public health protection services and found innovation and an emergence of alternative delivery mechanisms including: contracts and partnerships with other public sector bodies; contracts, partnerships and joint venture vehicles with the private sector; and new public sector/non-public sector entities (creation of new local authority companies, social enterprises and trusts). The Local Government Act 1972 provides a legal framework for local authorities to share and outsource services and some public bodies have used private companies to deliver shared services [14]. To date, in relation to public health protection, the evidence suggests that the predominant response is local authorities sharing staff and services, with 416 shared service arrangements occurring between councils across the country resulting in £ 62 million of efficiency savings [10]. However, there is limited evidence of outsourcing public health protection services and the future of such outsourcing of a stand-alone public health protection services is doubtful [9]. That said, a small number of councils have outsourced wider domains of local authority services that have included public health protection. Sandford [14] also points to a number of examples of council services being delivered through mutuals. A public service mutual is defined as an organisation which has left the public sector 'parent body' but continues to deliver public services. Employees play a significant role in the operation and control of a mutual ([14]).

### 1.4. The Study

We explored the experiences of an outsourced Environmental Health service and compare this to other evolving forms of service delivery through an exploration of the experience of practitioners involved in developing and delivering evolving delivery models in English local authorities. The models examined were in various stages of development from planning through to full transformation. Data collection commenced in 2014 and continued until 2016. Research participants were local authority officers, managers, commissioners and leading members of the Chartered Institute of Environmental Health (CIEH) who have been closely involved in Environmental Health service changes, both in the planning and delivery stages of a variety of models. Their experiences are reflected upon and lessons learnt for the future are drawn from this personal and professional reflection.

## 2. Method

The methodology adopted a constructivist research approach utilising an open research question which was defined as “What are the lessons to learn from the implementation process for differing and evolving service delivery models for Environmental Health?” This approach was used to illicit and value the voice of the participants and to

extract personal reflections. The data collection approach followed a comparative multiple-case study design which offered a more robust study than a single case study approach [17]. The cases were selected to ensure that a range of models of service delivery were explored as identified by Grant Thornton UK [6]. Models of service delivery included were: outsourcing; regional shared public protection service; mutualisation; shared services (management only) and shared services (field officers and management). In addition, there were participants from leading members of the professional body (Chartered Institute of Environmental Health) and the Association of London Environmental Health Managers who had been involved as consultants in the change management with respect to the models of service delivery being explored. The study employed a qualitative method of data capture using a series of unstructured reflective interviews with 14 participants from 11 organisations. Some of these interviews were iterative over the period of transformation, whilst others were single events to explore experiences at various stages of transformation. Each interview lasted for about one hour, was recorded and fully transcribed. In this study, the researcher had 20 years' experience in working in a local authority Environmental Health service and in the specific technical areas being investigated which placed the researcher directly inside the study context with knowledge of what the job entails and the stresses and strains therein [12]. Therefore, there was a position of trust between the researched and the researcher based upon specialist knowledge of the service under review [7]. All data collected was kept anonymously and the participating organisations are not named. Ethical approval for this study was granted by Middlesex University, School of Science and Technology, Natural Sciences Ethics sub-Committee. Thematic analysis was employed to identify, analyse and report on patterns (themes) within the data. The thematic analysis followed phases as suggested by Braun and Clarke [2]. The recorded interviews were transcribed which provided an opportunity for familiarisation with the data. The transcriptions were searched manually to find repeated patterns of meaning issues of potential interest in relation to the research question. Initial codes for the data were identified from repeated words or comparative phrases and the codes were organised into meaningful groups in relation to the research question. The next phase was to consider how these data codes may combine to develop emerging themes. The data codes were organised into thematic maps where the data codes were considered as influencing sub themes which linked to a main central theme.

## 3. Results and discussion

Six main themes have emerged from the data analysis (see Fig. 1) and are as follows: understanding the reasons for change; understanding the nature of Environmental Health; planning and timeliness; viability of the proposal; managing changes effectively; and meaningful consultation. These six themes were then grouped into three complimentary pairs. For each emerging pair of themes the influencing sub

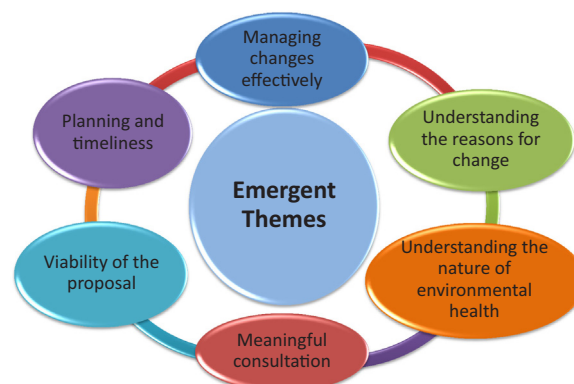


Fig. 1. Thematic Analysis: The six emerging themes.

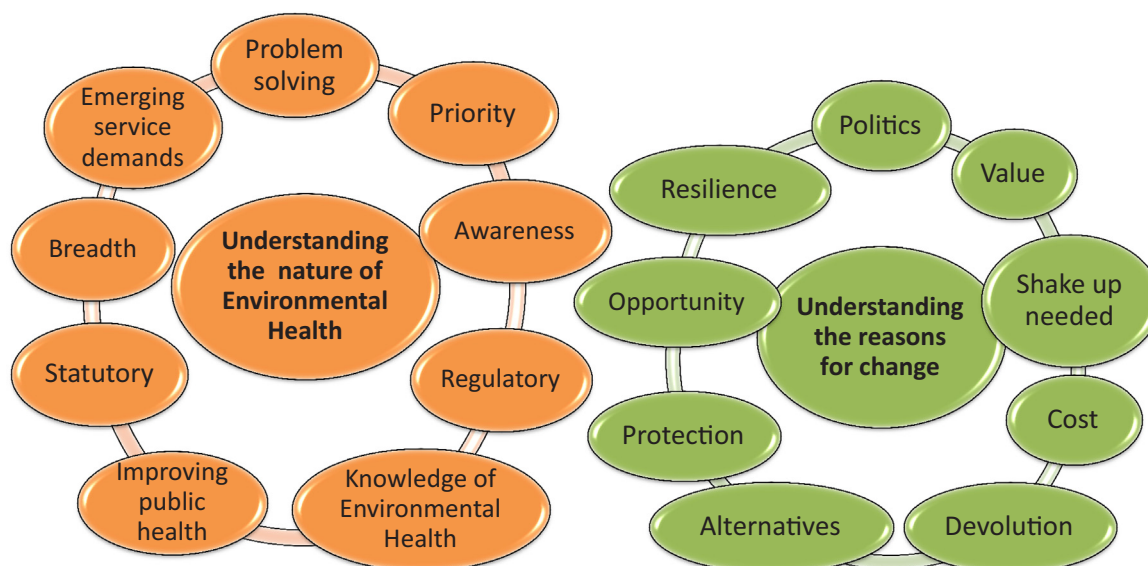


Fig. 2. Understanding the reasons for change and understanding the nature of Environmental Health themes.

themes are first identified and then discussed in the light of the participant responses.

### 3.1. Understanding the nature of Environmental Health and understanding the reasons for change

Understanding the reasons for change and understanding the nature of Environmental Health are separate themes but are grouped together due to their complimentary nature (see Fig. 2 below).

#### 3.1.1. Understanding the nature of Environmental Health

**3.1.1.1. Influencing sub themes: Problem solving, Breadth, Knowledge, Improving public health, Statutory, Regulatory, Emerging service demands, Priority, Awareness.** This research has pointed to the need for an understanding of the nature of Environmental Health which involves not just an appreciation of the breadth of the subject area but also the various ways of achieving the outcomes. Detailed knowledge of the nature of Environmental Health services may not be required to manage delivery but a lack of sufficient knowledge can lead to problems. Environmental Health Practitioners, whether based in the UK or elsewhere, have a raft of legislation and a choice of subsequent tools to deal with matters that bring about a risk to the public's health. Participants found that detailing their Environmental Health service entailed a detailed understanding of the legality of the service provision. Lack of knowledge of the nature of Environmental Health services from a potential delivery body was noted as a potential barrier and risk and given the substantial breadth of service this can pose significant issues. Participants also noted that the way Environmental Health Practitioners (EHPs) work may give potential service providers unexpected difficulties. Participants realised that EHPs are very different to work with as they are constantly trying to make things better which means that they probably point out more issues than perhaps you might get from other professionals. In addition, establishing an evidence base that measures effectiveness of Environmental Health services and the improvement in public health outcomes will play an important part in designing future models of Environmental Health service delivery. What EHPs do is well established but the benefits are tacit rather than explicit, and thus demonstrating success can be difficult, in itself posing a substantial business risk. Participants noted that creating measurable outcomes is an effective way of increasing awareness and prioritising Environmental Health services. Thus the design of performance

indicators by people who understand the nature of Environmental Health can raise the profile of Environmental Health services. Some participants underestimated how little new contract managers knew about Environmental Health and there was a concern that service commissioners will not understand the nature services they may be contracting out. Participants agreed that the setting up of any contract or service delivery model needs to be prescriptive enough to ensure adequate level of service delivery but be flexible to deal with emerging demands.

#### 3.1.2. Understanding the reasons for change

**3.1.2.1. Influencing sub themes: Politics, Value, Shake up needed, Costs, Devolution, Alternatives, Protection, Opportunity, Resilience.** Understanding the reason for change was a fundamental issue for participants; unless the reasons for change are understood and accepted then engagement of staff in the change process can only be superficial. All participants accepted that change was inevitable and there was consensus that change was needed and the range of responses evidences this. In general, the more senior the participant was in the organisation the more they understood the reasons for change. It was noted that at field officer level, there was a differential in response with more concern expressed by those with a long continuous employment history, whilst those who were relatively new, being more open to the process of change. However, participants acknowledged that changes affect people in different ways and not all see the benefits. Understanding the reasons for change enabled the participants to see the benefits of the changes they were undergoing. An interesting observation made by some participants was that Local Authorities can become quite complacent in service delivery and some members of the community they serve have developed a negative/stereotypical view of council employees and their behaviour, and a fundamental review of the service offered might be timely. In light of the ongoing budgetary restrictions impacting on local authorities, participants identified advantages of developing a new service model as preventing year on year cuts; and that the shared services model provided a degree of resilience in organisations where there are dwindling staff numbers. The national and local political agenda is fundamental to local authority service delivery and all participants understood the politics involved in the change. The depth of the participants understanding of the politics depended on their role, with the leaders of organisation being most immersed in the political agenda. Frontline officers were least concerned with the political agenda but all understood the implications of working within or for a political organisation. Participants' professional and personal values influenced their view of the best model of service delivery, for

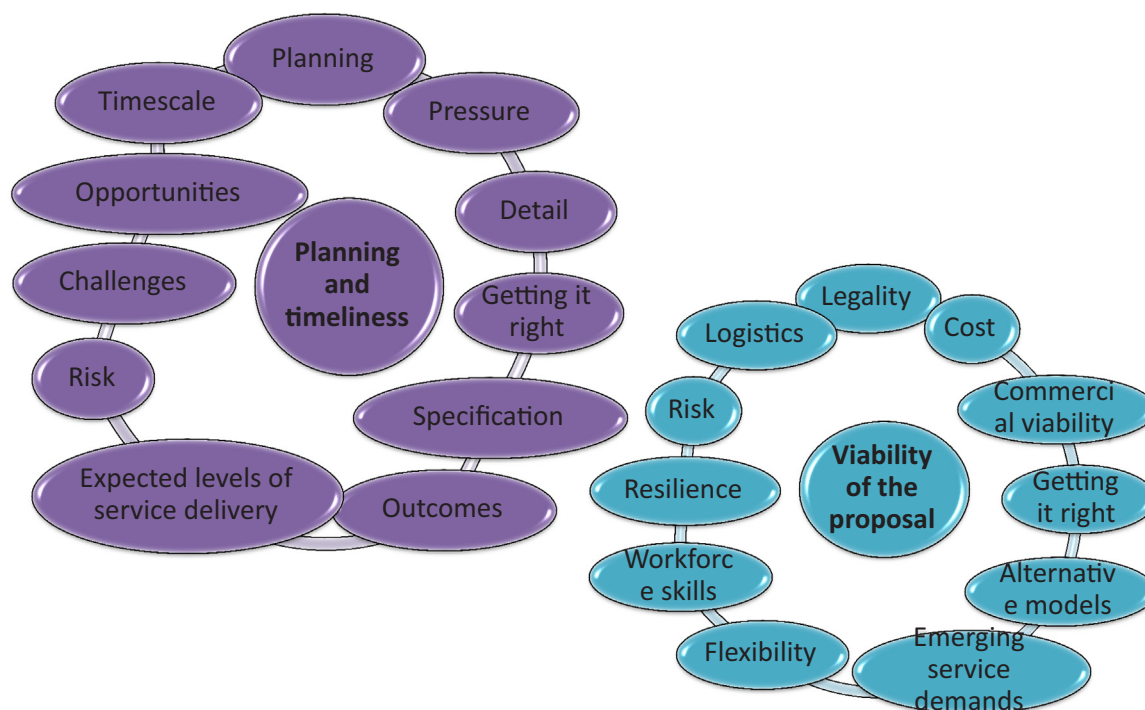


Fig. 3. Planning and timeliness and viability of the proposal.

example, all of the participants felt strongly that the ethos of public service and Environmental Health should be protected in new models of Environmental Health service delivery. This did not necessarily mean keeping services the same but ensuring that new services maintained the professional values of Environmental Health.

### 3.2. Planning, timeliness and viability of the proposal

Planning and timeliness and viability of the programme are separate themes but are grouped together due to their complimentary nature (see Fig. 3 below).

#### 3.2.1. Planning and timeliness

**3.2.1.1. Influencing sub themes: Planning, Pressure, Detail, Getting it right, Specification, Outcomes, Expected levels of service delivery, Risk, Challenges, Opportunities, Timescale.** Planning for a new service delivery model should be taken seriously and not be a light touch process. Every single detail needs to be considered and it should be recognised that delivering on a very tightly written specification can be difficult. It was found that there is considerable pressure in planning and delivery of services but well thought out performance indicators are an important tool to make sure that the service remains robust but flexible. A well set up contract which is stringently monitored is said to be likely to succeed and meeting and exceeding targets has a positive impact on the well-being of staff even if the work to get there is intensive. A “tight” specification means that cuts may be difficult to make without affecting the ability to deliver on a contract. Getting the detailed specification of a service is therefore fundamental to the success of a new service delivery model as what gets measured gets done. Lack of detail in a contract has proven to give rise to problems for some participants in regard to services being expected that were not in the contract and this was thought to be partially due to the commissioners lacking subject knowledge. Resourcing for design and implementation of agreements is important as some participants felt that a client manager with limited knowledge of the service can cause vulnerability. Reporting on detailed performance indicators creates a workload for all levels of officers in the delivery organisation and for

the client in respect of monitoring the contract. Participants recognised that detailed indicators are required but reporting on them less often may help. However, this may not be possible in the early stages of a new arrangement as both parties will be anxious to check that the contract is not at risk. Conversely, the opportunity to tell people about what the service is doing helps to raise awareness of a previously low profile service. It was found that it was important to include clauses in the agreement around raising concern and early termination if issues are not getting addressed. A mechanism to oversee shared services was suggested as good practice and an example of this was the setting up of a governance board and with representatives from both sides. Participants identified particular risks in transferring small parts of a service, on the other hand, from a resilience perspective; sharing small services across a region can bring a wider pool of technical people to help at a time when expertise is disappearing from local authorities. Resilience of small services should be considered at the planning stage with contingencies built in to deal with key personnel becoming unavailable. Although, it is important to pay close attention to “getting it right” it is also important to ensure that the process is carried out in a timely manner. Having a short timescale for implementing change has been difficult for some participants and it has meant that other commitments were not addressed or had not had sufficient time devoted to them. Bringing in resource to support the process can be helpful but this is countered by the need for those setting up the contracts to have sufficient knowledge of the services being considered.

#### 3.2.2. Viability of the proposal

**3.2.2.1. Influencing sub themes: Legality, Cost, Commercial viability, Getting it right, Alternative models, Emerging service demands, Flexibility, Workforce skills, Resilience, Risk, Logistics.** Commercial models of Environmental Health service delivery require a profit margin which is very difficult to achieve when bidding to deliver services for organisations where the cuts and diversion of funding have meant that regulatory services are already very lean. Participants expressed a concern that austerity had affected EHS more than other departments, effectively marginalising the service. In turn some of the organisations



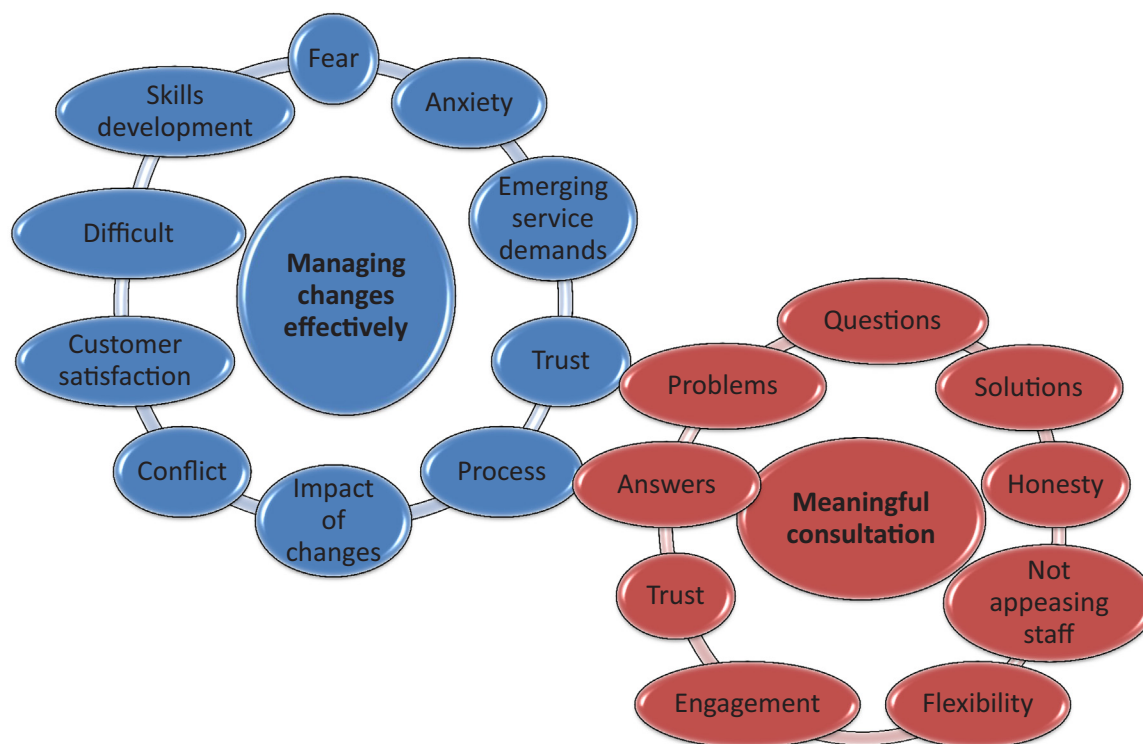


Fig. 4. Managing changes effectively and meaningful consultation.

studied suggested that the only way to make money would be to cut staff leading to a risk that services could not be delivered. Most participants question whether outsourcing Environmental Health on its own is viable at all and think that regulatory services are too small to operate commercially as a standalone service. Equally participants suggest that viability of other models including mutualisation cannot work with small single authority services. Another risk for consideration is the legality of a Local Authority discharging its functions through a third party. This has been explored through legal consultation and the consensus is that it is possible with proper governance in place, but this required substantial thought and any mistakes would pose a serious risk of legal challenge at macro and micro levels. Seeing Environmental Health as a regulatory service causes participants concern, the use of regulation is a tool used to protect public health but it is misguided to think of Environmental Health purely as a regulatory service. Participants not involved in outsourcing worry that the public service ethos may be lost in more commercial models of service delivery believing that ultimately such changes have the potential to impact greatly on those in the community already at a disadvantage. Issues such as poverty and health inequalities and preventative interventions that work towards long term goals may not hold enough interest for companies on 10 or 15 year contracts. However, participants from an outsourced service do not agree, and maintain, that to date, the essence of Environmental Health has not been lost in translation. Redesigning or commissioning services gives the opportunity to think about what is really needed rather than just carrying on doing more or less of the same. Services such as Environmental Health usually have to be locally delivered and so savings cannot be easily made by relocating or centralising although some specialisms may be more suitable for regionalisation. Regionalised or shared service models may be operate over a large geographical area and some participants found that distance is a challenge both for front line services and from a management perspective. However, shared services are working well in most of the organisations involved in the study. Harmonising terms and conditions of employment for staff are flagged as very important when looking at a

shared service model or where authorities are joining together. Getting it right in the planning stages was seen as essential to ensure that models are viable. All participants allude to this and the consequences of getting it wrong can damage the relationship between the authority, the profession and the community. Involving those with an in depth knowledge of Environmental Health services in the commissioning of services or drawing up of contracts ensured that sufficient detail was included in new models of service delivery.

### 3.3. Managing changes effectively and meaningful consultation

Managing changes effectively and meaningful consultation are separate themes but are grouped together due to their complimentary nature (see Fig. 4 below).

#### 3.3.1. Managing changes effectively

3.3.1.1. *Influencing sub themes: Fear, anxiety, Impact of changes, Difficult, Process, Trust, Conflict, Customer Satisfaction, Emerging service demands, Skills development.* Managing change effectively was found to be essential to a successful delivery of a new service model in Environmental Health. Change is difficult and this was expressed by all participants, but the way change is managed can ease the process and improve the experience of those affected. One clear element was to embrace the change and to seek to influence the outcome to provide a positive solution. What is apparent is that the participants wanted to ensure that the decisions being made are appropriate and that the service delivered continued to protect and improve citizens' health irrespective of the model of delivery. However, the participants found that the way the change is being managed is influential but it is equally important to ensure the decisions made now are the right ones as they will shape the future of not only the Environmental Health profession but of the people and environment that the service has set out to protect and improve. Trust commonly came up as an issue for participants and organisations, with the level of trust depending on the participant's role in the change process. Participants felt that it is important to nurture relationships throughout the organisation and to develop the trust.

Trust was also shown to be an issue between different types of organisations, for example, local authorities have a history of benchmarking their services against each other but this level of comparison is not thematic between commercial organisations and local authorities making comparison of service delivery difficult. Participants reported that in the early stages of privatisation there was a degree of suspicion between those involved in provision of public goods and those in the commercial sector. New service delivery models often results in new leadership and a need for demonstrable judgement of success. This has resulted in increased reporting and recording giving the staff the impression that they were no longer trusted

Conflict between organisations is something that is mentioned by participants, but with potential advantages in setting out a more formalised service with agreement or contract, although many participants recognised a need for maintained flexibility. The differences in overarching organisational culture and psychology were not just limited to the public/private sector divide. It was noted that some of the local authorities working together were very different in nature, and conflicting political leadership was found to be an issue. This is a critical issue since the political make up of local authorities may alter as part of the electoral process, as can leadership and direction, and this may well impact on shared services both current and proposed. Likewise not all shared services span similar local environments, demographics and local economies resulting in differing priorities and agendas. It is, of course, possible to overcome these differences but the local issues do need to be well understood by those who are responsible for setting up new service delivery models. Skills of managers of services affected by change have to be developed. Reporting on contracts and acting more commercially is not always part of the skill base of the participants although most participants report that they have adapted well. Customer satisfaction was flagged as very important to all participants although in most cases it was too early to assess whether customer satisfaction had been affected by changes in service delivery. All participants agreed that customer service was a priority in effectively managing the changes. Fear and anxiety were experienced by participants undergoing change but this was more common in the early stages of planning. One significant issue established is the knowledge of the service by senior managers, with services not led by a regulatory practitioner more at risk of creating fear and distrust. This fear and anxiety was not equally held by all participants with some seeing the opportunities early on whilst others felt anxiety in the early stages but later on began to see the opportunities, this is in line with other research into organisational change which found that the response to change may be staged as follows: denial; defence; discarding; adaptation and internalization [3].

### 3.3.2. Meaningful consultation

*3.3.2.1. Influencing sub themes: Questions, Answers, Honesty, Not appeasing staff, Flexibility, Engagement, Trust, Solutions, Problems.* Questions and answers are the building blocks of consultation. If questions are not answered then this may lead to staff feeling that they are being appeased and that the consultation is not meaningful. Staff consultation groups were well received by participants who were involved but some felt that only the positives were highlighted in an attempt to sell the proposal and participants recommended that consultation be realistic from the first stages. For some participants initial excitement at the prospect of more support and resilience was depleted as the process went on and the reality was not as promised. Openness and honesty was seen as very important so that people do not feel that a decision has already being made. Some participants mentioned leaking of information which raised issues of trust which, in turn, led to lack of engagement in the consultation period whilst others felt unsettled if decisions about which way to go still hadn't been made. It was recognised that it is a fine balance getting people on board and engaging them whilst still being honest and sharing as much information as is available and still maintaining the

need for confidentiality of sensitive information. The need for meaningful consultation is further supported by Smollan [15] who found that uncertainty, unclear roles, lack of consultation/participation, relationships and stress of others all caused stress during a change process. Some participants were worried that the consultation period had not addressed the true nature of the work of Environmental Health Practitioners. For example, the use of time management matrixes to predict staff resources required raised concerns that some of the richness and quality of service would be lost in an organisation that delivers a public service using business models such as time management. There were also concerns about the difficulties in delivering bespoke services to different LAs and having to make decisions about how to carry out the work differently according to the political direction of the area. Participants did not feel that this had been addressed in the consultation, probably because it was an unknown entity.

## 4. Conclusions

The main themes that have emerged from the data analysis are: Understanding the reasons for change, Managing changes effectively, Understanding the nature of Environmental Health, Viability of the proposal, Meaningful consultation and Planning and timeliness. Ensuring that key personnel understand the reasons for change when it is forced by external influences can reduce the risk of losing experienced staff and their associated skills and may enhance opportunities to rethink the service making for leaner delivery. Managing changes effectively helps deal with the difficulties that redesign of services can bring. Anticipating the challenges and dealing with them effectively whilst taking on board the views of the key players reduces the risk of alienation and improves the resilience of the evolved service model. Understanding the nature of Environmental Health is therefore essential for people who are involved in drawing up contracts or commissioning services in order to reduce the risk of the service failing to deliver the expected outcomes. Getting it right ensures that a service delivery model is viable, maximises its resilience and reduces the risk of failure in service delivery. The larger the scale of the project, and the bigger the change, the more emphasis participants made in respect of getting it right and recognising the risk. An effective and meaningful consultation will acknowledge unknowns and build in flexibility around these in the eventual service design to ensure a robust service model. Getting it right at the planning stage and allowing sufficient time for implanting the changes maximises the chances of providing a resilient service model with a smooth transition for customers, staff and management.

These themes should not be considered in isolation as each is an intrinsic component of a successful change process in response to the risk of reducing resource for English Environmental Health services. The themes and influencing sub themes identified in this study have the potential to be developed into a framework to show lessons learned which Environmental Health services can consider when planning or making changes to their model of service delivery. Environmental Health services undergoing such transformation may benefit from taking into account the lessons learnt by organisations that have previously undergone significant change in their response to the risk of a reducing resource. The participating organisations in this study are unique in terms of their operational context, resources, political and history which may not be replicated in other contexts. However, regulatory services in local authorities seek to deliver similar service domains since the service is an executive agent of government legislation and they operate in the same macro context and macro political environment. As such, it is hoped that the broad lessons captured from these early adopters of new service paradigms can be utilised by other agencies. In terms of future interpretation, each organisation should consider their own context, politics and history in the employment of the lessons learnt [1].

## 5. Recommendations and dissemination

Three heads of Environmental Health services from local authorities who were not involved in the initial stage of the research have considered the findings and have agreed the themes as relevant and recommended timely dissemination to Heads of UK Environmental Health services to inform future change management practice and to reduce the risk of regulatory failure in a climate of reducing resource. The next step is to further refine the emergent themes into a product which can facilitate Environmental Health services wishing to draw on the lessons learned to inform their future practice.

### Conflicts of interest

None.

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# Appendix F: Research Students' Summer Conference 2017 -The Power of Research

What are the lessons to learn from the implementation process for differing and evolving service delivery models for environmental health?

Ruth Plume M00190350  
Research Students' Summer Conference (RSSC), Middlesex University | 28th and 29th June 2017

## Context

- Environmental Health in the UK
  - A Local Authority Environmental Health Service protecting public health in respect of:
    - Food Safety
    - Health and Safety at Work (in lower risk premises)
    - Environmental Pollution
    - Private Sector Housing
    - Control of Infectious Disease
  - By regulation, health protection

## Context II

- Environmental Health Services Operational Context
  - Reducing resource and austerity (Gainsbury and Neville 2015),
  - Government policy to reduce the burden of regulation ( Kellet 2008)
  - Devolution (Sandford 2015a)
  - Changing demographics and

## Emergent Risks and Response

- Emergent risks
  - Cuts to Local authority budgets(Gainsbury and Neville 2015)
  - Scaling back of the part played by councils in protecting public safety
  - Significant loss of skills and experience in the environmental health work force (LGA 2015a)
  - Outcome: not able to provide adequate public health protection?
- Emergent responses
  - Service reduction/alternative delivery contracts and partnerships with private bodies; creation of new local enterprises and trusts. (Gra

## Research Question

Given the emerging risk of declining public health protection the research question becomes:

*“How are local authorities responding to these lessons to be learnt from the implementation processes for differing and evolving service delivery models for environmental health?”*

## Research Design

## Case studies: types of organisations

- Entire environmental health service outsourced to a large private sector organisation
- Regional shared public protection services
- Proposed mutualisation,
- Shared services (management only)
- Shared services (field officers)

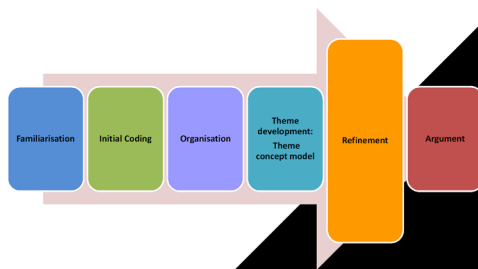
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## Participants

- Participants chosen from a range of local authority officers, managers, service commissioners and leading members of the professional body.
- 14 participants from 11 organisations.
- The interviews have been carried out over a 12 month period from June 2014 to May 2015.
- One of the participants has been interviewed several times over a twelve month period to explore a new service delivery evolution.

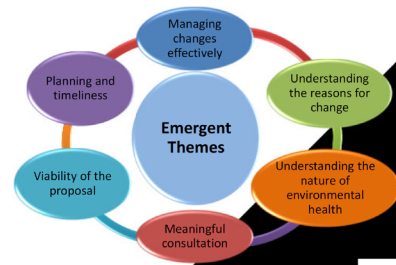
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## Thematic Data analysis



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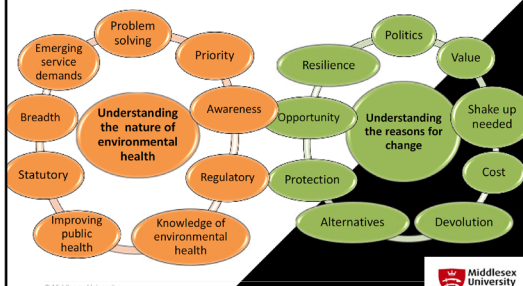
## Thematic Analysis: Outcome Themes



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## Refined Emergent Themes I



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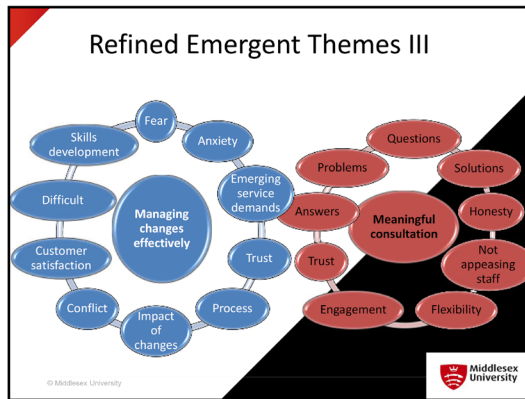


## Refined Emergent Themes II



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### Conclusion

- “What are the lessons to learn from the implementation process for differing and evolving service delivery models for environmental health?”
  - The emergent themes are: Understanding the reasons for change; Managing changes effectively; Understanding the nature of environmental health; Viability of the service; Meaningful consultation and Planning and time for change
  - The themes overlap and should be considered for further refinement
  - Broad lessons captured from these service paradigms can be utilised in other contexts potentially beyond Environmental Health and should be adapted to their context and the employment of the lessons

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### Dissemination

- 2015: Initial findings presented at the 115th CIEH National Conference (Nottingham)
- 2016: Paper and presentation at the International Conference on Urban Risks - Lisbon (Portugal)
- **2017: Research Students’ Summer Conference (RSSC), Middlesex University | 28th - 30th June 2017**
- 2017/18 Paper selected for publication in the International Journal of Disaster Resilience and Rehabilitation date tbc

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### Research in a complex and changing environment: Lessons learned

- To be clear about the purpose of the study
- Flexible research design: able to evolve
- Initial research question may be tentative
- Method of data collection – need to make a decision but not be rigid.
- Research question may develop and data collection adapted.
- Layers of data analysis: Presentations
- Dissemination focuses the research

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IPH 4014

Programme Planning & Rationale

Masters / Doctorate in Professional Studies in  
Environment

Module Leader

Dr Kay Caldwell

Student: Ruth Plume M00190350

# Originally dated 8<sup>th</sup> September 2008, updated 18<sup>th</sup> March 2014 and 23<sup>rd</sup> March 2017.

## BACKGROUND TO CHANGES FROM 320 CREDITS to 360

The initial project was originally planned as 320 credits and was to be in partnership with Capita (Regional Enterprise at LB Barnet) – who deliver the Environmental Health Service at LB Barnet. The 320 credit project was approved as a case study of a private company delivering a statutory public service.

The 320 credit research question was “What are the lessons to learn from the implementation process for differing and evolving service delivery models for environmental health?”

The overall aim of the project was to contribute to the improvement of local authority regulatory services

The projects overarching objectives were:

- To identify drivers for change
- To explore the current models of service delivery at LB Barnet and North Tyneside in conjunction with Capita.
- To identify and explore emerging novel service delivery of environmental health in other local authorities.
- To explore the impact of the changes on key personnel.
- To analyse the identified models potential effectiveness in terms of better regulation and the public health agenda.
- To suggest a model of service delivery which meets the requirements of better regulation whilst achieving the full potential of environmental health services.
- To produce a report detailing the findings of the research

As the project progressed it became clear that, although the research question and objectives remain the same (except for the scope of the project), the value of the findings would be more significant if a range of models of service delivery were explored.

According, the data collection expanded from a group of key personnel from one organisation (the number of participants were not specified) to a series of unstructured reflective interviews with 14 participants from 11 different organisations. Some of these interviews were iterative over the period of transformation, whilst others were single events to explore experiences at various stages of transformation. Participants were



chosen from a range of local authority officers, managers, commissioners and leading members of the professional body who have been closely involved in the planning and delivery stages of environmental health service changes. Interviews were carried out with the participants to capture their experience of change and the impact on service delivery. A range of service delivery models have been examined including outsourcing, shared services, regional delivery models and discussion of mutual arrangements and at various stages of development from planning through to full transformation. Field work and data collection was undertaken between June 2014 and July 2016.

Further stages of data analysis have also been added to the original proposal. The initial findings and analysis of emerging themes have been presented at the Chartered Institute of Environmental Health 115th National Conference on October 2015 and at the International Conference on Urban Risks in Lisbon, Portugal in June 2016. A further stage in the data analysis was added, in that, 3 senior managers from 3 Local Authorities reviewed the emerging trends from the first stage of data analysis and were consulted in respect of the relevance and usefulness of the findings and effective national dissemination. The project findings will now have a potential further reaching national impact for environmental health service providers and leaders who are considering new models of service delivery in a climate of reducing resource and political change.

It is therefore proposed that, although the research question and aims and all but one of objectives remain unchanged, the final project now be worth 360 credits instead of the original 320 credits agreed at the original programme planning stage and that IPH 5001 be removed. I will still be attending the expert seminars to inform my research as leadership is an intrinsic issue in the research project.

*Ruth Plume – 23rd March 2017*

## Learning Agreement Summary Plan

Ruth Plume - Senior Lecturer in Environmental Health Professional Development

Doctorate in Professional Studies in Environment – Improving Local Authority  
Regulatory Services

Final Project – Development of a service delivery model to meet the government's  
better regulation regime

Composition of the proposed programme of study:

Module Code	Title	Credit/Level	RAL claim	Pass/planned submission
IPH 4013	Review of Learning	20/7		Pass
IPH 4014	Programme planning and rationale	40/7		Pass
IPH 4015	Research & development in professional practice	20/7		Pass
IPH 4060	Project	60/7	Yes	Accredited
IPH 4040	Project	40/7	Yes	Accredited
XXX X360	Project module	360/8		To be submitted December 2017.

### Signatories

Candidate:

Employer : Middlesex University

Chair, Programme Approval Panel

## Appendix H: Heightening your Awareness of your Research Philosophy (HARP) Responses

Question Number	Strongly Agree	Agree	Slightly Agree	Slightly Disagree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	Score
1			x				1
2		x					2
3		x					2
4			x				1
5			x				1
6			x				1
7		x					2
8			x				1
9					x		-2
10			x				1
11					x		-2
12		x					2
13				x			-1
14		x					2
15			x				1
16				x			-1
17			x				1
18	x						3
19		x					2
20		x					2
21					x		-2
22			x				1
23		x					2
24	x						3
25		x					2
26				x			-1
27		x					2
28				x			-1
29			x				1
30			x				1
Analysis							
Research Philosophy	Score	Reflection:					
Positivism (Questions 1,6,11,16,21,26)	-4	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Have I got an outright philosophical winner? – Yes <i>Critical Realism</i></li> <li>2. Why do I think this is? – <i>My epistemological position is most suited to that of relativism</i></li> <li>3. Which philosophy do I disagree with most? - <i>Positivism</i></li> <li>4. Why do I think this is? – <i>Not a suitable research philosophy for exploratory research</i></li> </ol>					
Critical Realism (Questions 2,7,12,17,22,27)	10						
Interpretivism (Questions 3,8,13,18,23,28)	6						
Postmodernism (Questions 4,9,14,19,24,29)	7						
Pragmatism (Questions 5,10,15,20,25,30)	8						

## Appendix I: Ethical approval



**Middlesex  
University**

School of Health and  
Social Sciences  
The Archway  
Campus  
Charterhouse  
Building  
10 Highgate Hill  
London N19 5LW  
Tel: +44(0)20 8411  
6918

To: Ruth Plume  
Doctorate in Professional Studies in Environment

Date: 22<sup>nd</sup> July 2009

Dear Ruth

RE: Ruth Plume (368) '*Development of a service delivery model to meet the government's better regulation regime*' – Supervisors, Professor Hemda Garelick and Dr. Gordon Weller

Thank you for the response which adequately answers the ethics committee's queries. On behalf of the Natural Sciences Ethics sub Committee, I am pleased to give your project its final approval. Please note that the committee must be informed if any changes in the protocol need to be made at any stage.

I wish you all the very best with your project. The committee will be delighted to receive a copy of the final report.

Yours sincerely

**Dr Lucy Ghali**  
Chair of the Natural Sciences Ethics sub-Committee

## **Appendix J: Consultant review proforma**

### **CONSULTANT REVIEW - Responding to the risk of reducing resource: A study of the evolution of English Environmental Health Services**

Three heads of environmental health services from local authorities who were not involved in the initial stage of the research have agreed to consider the findings and the next step is to further refine the emergent themes into a product which can facilitate environmental health services wishing to draw on the lessons learned to inform their future practice.

#### **Participant Name:**

The paper provided is entitled *Responding to the risk of reducing resource: A study of the evolution of English Environmental Health Services* and summarises the findings to date and takes into account the refinements suggested at the 115<sup>th</sup> CIEH National conference 2015. The paper will be presented as part of the ICUR 2016 proceedings but is otherwise confidential.

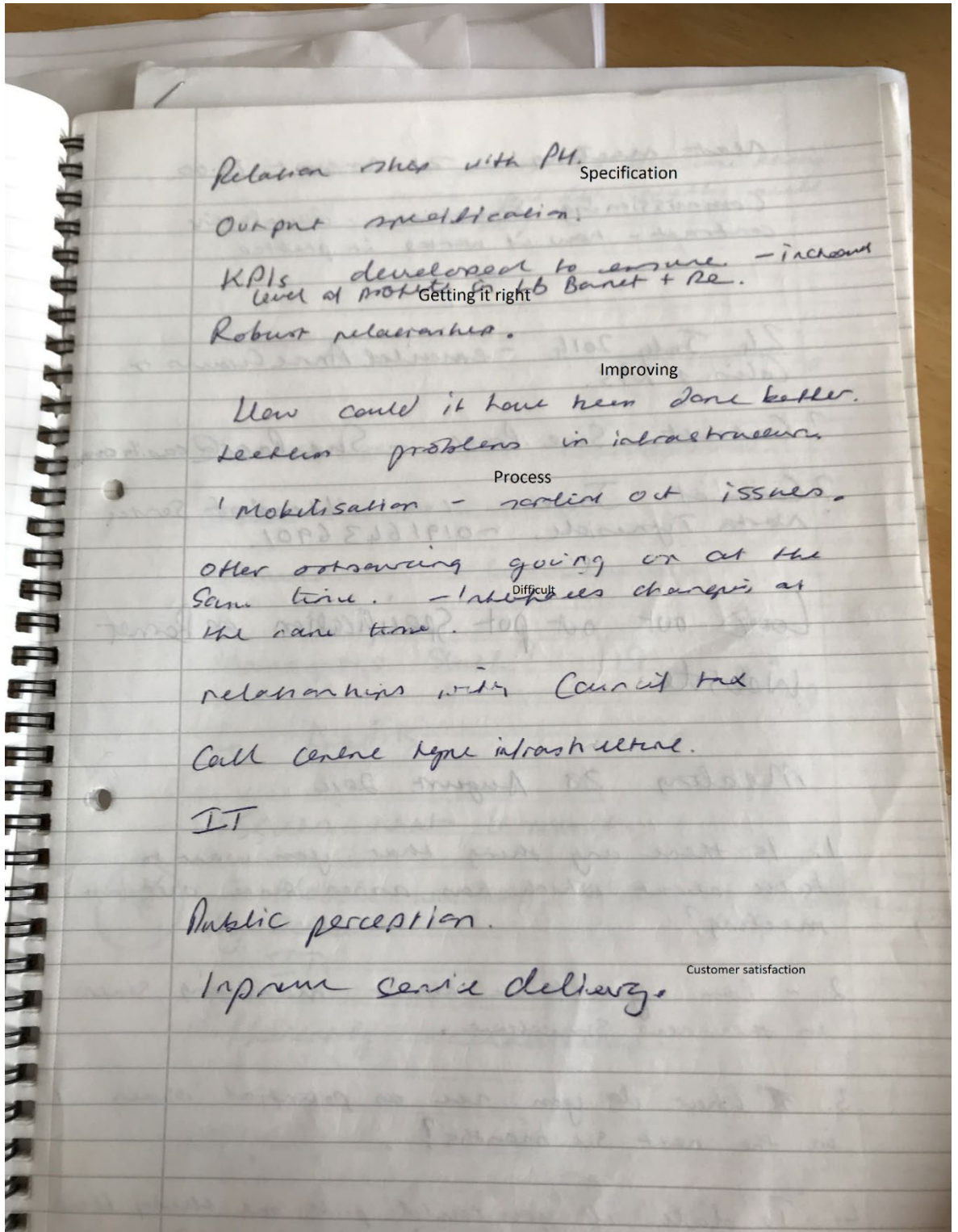
Please could you review the findings as follows and return your completed review by 10th July 2016? You can add your comments to this document under sections 1-3.

1. To read and consider the content of the paper and to add your commentary in the light of your past and or current experience of managing environmental health services in a climate of reducing resource and potentially evolving service models. Here, a detailed freestyle commentary would be most helpful.
2. To consider how the emergent themes presented in the paper might be developed into a product which can facilitate environmental health services wishing to draw on the lessons learned to inform their future practice.

Questions to consider:

- a) What would be most useful for environmental health service managers?
  - b) How could the lessons learned be drawn on to inform future service development?
  - c) What format might be most accessible?
  - d) How could the information be made most accessible?
  - e) Anything else you think should be taken into consideration when disseminating the findings.
3. Any other points that you would like to make regarding the findings.

Appendix K: Example of coding from interview notes



## Appendix L: Word Frequency Query Results >1000

Word	Count	Similar Words
service	3628	availability, available, help, helped, helpful, helpfully, helping, helps, overhaul, serve, served, serves, service, serviced, services, services', servicing, serving
work	3398	act, acted, acting, acts, bring, bringing, brings, crop, cropping, employ, employed, employer, employers, employers', employing, employment, employs, exercise, exercised, exercises, exercising, exploit, exploiting, form, formed, forming, forms, function, functional, functionalities, functionality, functions, going, goings, influence, influenced, influences, influencing, make, makes, making, mould, operate, operated, operates, operating, operation, operational, operationally, operations, operator, operators, planting, plants, play, played, playing, plays, process, processed, processes, processing, run, running, runs, shape, shaping, solve, solving, studied, studies, study, turn, turn', turned, turning, turns, work, work', worked, working, workings, workplace, workplaces, works
see	2567	ascertaining, attend, attendance, attendants, attended, attending, catch, check, checked, checking, checks, consider, considered, considering, considers, date, dated, dates, determination, determine, determined, determining, discovered, encounter, encountered, examination, examine, examined, examines, experience, experiences, experiments, figure, figures, figuring, find, finding, findings, finds, hear, hearing, interpretation, interpretations, interpreted, interpreting, learn, learned, learning, look, looked, looking, looks, meet, meeting, meetings, meets, picture, pictured, project, projected, projecting, projections, projects, realisation, realise, realised, realising, regard, regarded, regarding, regards, see, seeing, sees, understand, understanding, understands, view, viewed, viewing, views, visit, visited, visiting, visits, visual, watch, watches, watching, witness, witnessed, witnesses, witnessing
authority	2520	agencies, agency, assurance, assurances, assure, assured, author, authorisation, authorisations, authorise, authorised, authoritative, authorities, authorities', authority, authority', clear, clearly, confidence, confident, dominant, dominate, dominated, dominic, empowered, empowers, generate, generated, generates, generating, generation, generations, govern, governance, governed, governing, government, governments, mandate, office, office', officer, officer', officers, officers', offices, pass, passed, passing, regime, regimes, sanctions, source, sourced, sources, sourcing, sure, surely

get	2243	acquire, acquiring, aim, aimed, aims, amazing, arrest, arrivals, beat, begin, beginning, bring, bringing, brings, capture, captured, captures, catch, cause, caused, causes, come, comes, coming, commence, commenced, commencement, commencing, conveyed, develop, developed, developers, developing, development, developments, develops, draw, drawing, drive, drives, driving, experience, experiences, experiments, father, find, finding, findings, finds, fix, fixed, generate, generated, generates, generating, generation, generations, get, gets, getting, grow, growing, grows, incurred, induced, let, letting, make, makes, making, mother, obtain, obtained, obtaining, obtains, poses, produce, produced, producing, puzzle, receive, received, receiving, start, started, starting, starts, sticking, sticks, stimulating, suffer, suffered, suffering, suffers, sustain, sustainability, sustainable, sustainably, sustained, sustaining
take	1986	accept, acceptable, acceptance, accepted, accepts, acquire, acquiring, adopt, adopted, adopters, adoption, aim, aimed, aims, assume, assumed, assumes, assuming, bring, bringing, brings, carried, carries, carry, carrying, charter, chartered, choose, choosing, claim, claimed, claims, conduct, conducted, conducting, conducts, consider, considered, considering, considers, consume, consumed, consumer, consumers, consuming, contain, contained, containing, contains, conveyed, deal, dealing, dealings, deals, direct, directed, directing, direction, directions, directive, directives, directly, drive, drives, driving, engage, engaged, engagement, engages, engaging, exact, exactly, fill, filling, filming, guide, guides, hire, hold, holding, holds, lead, leading, leads, learn, learned, learning, lease, leases, occupier, occupiers, occupying, pack, packing, pick, picked, picking, pickings, picks, read, reading, removal, remove, removed, removes, removing, rent, rented, renting, rents, select, selected, selecting, selection, selective, shoot, shooting, strike, studied, studies, study, submit, submitted, submitting, subscribe, take, takes, taking, train, trained, training, win, winning, wins, withdraw, withdrawal, withdrawing
place	1949	aim, aimed, aims, commit, commitment, commitments, committed, committing, direct, directed, directing, direction, directions, directive, directives, directly, graded, grades, home, homes, homing, identifiable, identified, identifies, identify, identifying, invest, invested, investment, investments, locate, located, locating, location, locational, locations, order, ordering, orders, place, placed, places, placing, point, pointed, points, position, positioned, positions, positive, positively, positives, post, posts, properties, property, put, puts, putting, rang, range, ranged, ranging, rank, ranked, ranks, rate, rated, rates, rating, ratings, seat, seated, seating, send, sending, shoes, site, sites, space, spaces, spot, spotting, station, stations, target, targeted, targeting, targets
number	1934	act, acted, acting, acts, amount, amounting, amounts, bit, bits, come, comes, coming, count, counting, counts, figure, figures, figuring, issue, issued, issues, issues', list, listed, listing, lists, number, numbers, numerical, numerous, routine, routinely, total, totality, totalling, totally, totals, turn, turn', turned, turning, turns



going	1879	adamant, adams, become, becomes, becoming, blended, break, breaking, breaks, deceased, department, departments, departure, die, died, exit, extend, extended, extending, fail, failed, failing, failings, fails, fit, fitness, fits, fitted, get, gets, getting, going, goings, last, lasted, lasting, lead, leading, leads, leave, leaves, leaving, live, lived, lives, living, loss, losses, move, moved, moves, moving, offer, offered, offering, offerings, offers, pass, passed, passing, plump, proceed, proceeding, proceedings, proceeds, release, released, releases, run, running, runs, sound, sounded, sounds, spell, start, started, starting, starts, survival, survive, surviving, travel, travelling, turn, turn', turned, turning, turns
need	1830	ask, asked, asking, demand, demanded, demanding, demands, inevitable, inevitably, involve, involved, involvement, involves, involving, motivate, motivated, motivation, necessarily, necessitated, need, needed, needing, needs, require, required, requirement, requirements, requires, requiring, requirment, requirments, take, takes, taking, want, wanted, wanting, wants
government	1778	administrates, administration, administrations, administrative, administrator, control, controllable, controlled, controllers, controlling, controls, establish, established, establishes, establishing, establishment, establishments, govern, governance, governed, governing, government, governments, order, ordering, orders, organic, organisation, organisational, organisations, organisations', organise, organised, organisers, organising, political, politically, politics, regular, regularity, regularly, regulated, regulating, regulation, regulations, regulator, regulators, rule, rules
make	1764	attainment, brand, branding, build, building, buildings, cause, caused, causes, clear, clearly, constitute, constitution, construct, construction, constructive, cooking, create, created, creates, creating, devised, draw, drawing, earn, earned, earnings, establish, established, establishes, establishing, establishment, establishments, fashion, fix, fixed, form, formed, forming, forms, gain, gained, gains, give, gives, giving, hit, hits, hitting, hold, holding, holds, make, makes, making, name, named, namely, names, naming, nominate, nominated, nomination, nominations, preparation, preparations, prepare, prepared, preparing, pretend, produce, produced, producing, qualification, qualifications, reach, reached, reaching, readiness, ready, realisation, realise, realised, realising, score, scores, scoring, take, takes, taking, throwing
part	1739	break, breaking, breaks, character, component, components, constituent, department, departments, divide, divided, divides, dividing, division, divisions, function, functional, functionalities, functionality, functions, leave, leaves, leaving, office, office', officer, officer', officers, officers', offices, part, partial, partially, partly, parts, piece, pieces, portion, region, regional, regionally, regions, role, role', roles, section, sections, separate, separately, split, start, started, starting, starts, voice

support	1727	accompanied, accompanying, assist, assistance, assistant, assisted, assisting, assists, back, back', backed, backs, backup, bear, bearing, champion, championing, champions, confirm, confirmation, confirmed, defend, defendant, digest, document, documentation, documented, documents, encourage, encouraged, encouragement, encourages, encouraging, endorse, endorsed, endorsement, friend, friend', friendly, friends, fund, funded, funded', funding, funds, funds', help, helped, helpful, helpfully, helping, helps, hold, holding, holds, keep, keeping, keeps, live, lived, lives, living, reinforce, sponsor, sponsored, sponsors, stand, standing, stands, subscribe, substantial, suffer, suffered, suffering, suffers, support, supported, supporters, supporting, supportive, supports, sustain, sustainability, sustainable, sustainably, sustained, sustaining, tolerances, underpin, underpinned, underpinning, underpins
set	1711	adjust, adjusted, adjustment, adjustments, arrange, arranged, arrangement, arrangements, arranging, background, band, bands, circle, circles, circumstance, circumstances, context, contexts, correct, correctly, define, defined, defining, determination, determine, determined, determining, dictate, dictates, dress, fit, fitness, fits, fitted, fix, fixed, hardened, laid, limit, limitations, limited, limits, locate, located, locating, location, locational, locations, lot, lots, mark, marked, markedly, marking, place, placed, places, placing, planting, plants, poses, position, positioned, positions, positive, positively, positives, preparation, preparations, prepare, prepared, preparing, prime, put, puts, putting, readiness, ready, scene, scenes, scope, scoping, set, sets, setting, situation, situations, specified, specifies, specify
issues	1709	consequence, consequences, consequently, cut, cuts, cutting, effect, effected, effecting, effective, effectively, effectiveness, effects, emergence, emergencies, emergency, emergent, emerging, event, events, exit, issue, issued, issues, issues', matter, matters, outcome, outcomes, outlet, outlets, proceed, proceeding, proceedings, proceeds, publish, published, publishing, release, released, releases, result, resulted, resulting, results, return, returned, returning, returns, subject, subjected, subjects, supplied, supplies, supply, take, takes, taking, topic, yield, yielded, yields
local	1607	fix, fixed, local, locale, localised, localism, locality, locally, locate, located, locating, location, locational, locations, neighbourhood, neighbourhoods, place, placed, places, placing, section, sections, set, sets, setting, topic, venues, venues'
businesses	1571	business, businesses, busy, concern, concerned, concerning, concerns, engage, engaged, engagement, engages, engaging, interfering, job, jobs, line, lines, occupation, occupations, occupier, occupiers, occupying, official, officials
health	1569	health, well, wells
management	1535	achievable, achieve, achieved, achievement, achievements, achieves, achieving, care, careful, carefully, caring, coached, coaching, cope, coped, coping, deal, dealing, dealings, deals, direct, directed, directing, direction, directions, directive, directives, directly, director, directorate, directorates, directors, directors', handle, handled, handlers, handling, manage, manageable, managed, management, management', manager, managers, managers', manages, managing, oversee, overseeing, oversees, supervised, supervision

contract	1464	catch, communicable, compacted, concentrate, concentrated, condensation, contract, contracted, contracting, contraction, contracts, cut, cuts, cutting, declaration, declarations, declare, declared, declaring, get, gets, getting, narrow, narrower, narrowing, press, reduce, reduced, reduces, reducing, shorten, shrink, shrinking, sign, signed, signs, squeeze, squeezed, squeezing, take, takes, taking, transmission, undertake, undertaker, undertakes, undertaking
control	1424	account, accountability, accountable, accountant, accounted, accounting, accounts, ascertaining, assurance, assurances, assure, assured, check, checked, checking, checks, command, commander, contain, contained, containing, contains, control, controllable, controlled, controllers, controlling, controls, dominant, dominate, dominated, dominic, ensure, ensured, ensures, ensuring, hold, holding, holds, insurance, insurances, insure, moderate, moderated, operate, operated, operates, operating, operation, operational, operationally, operations, operator, operators, restraint, see, seeing, sees
think	1386	believe, believed, believes, conceived, consider, considered, considering, considers, guess, imagine, intelligence, intelligence', intelligent, intend, intended, intends, mean, meaning, means, reason, reasonable, reasonably, reasoning, reasons, recall, recalls, remember, suppose, supposed, think, thinking, thinks, thought, thoughts
council	1359	council, council', councils, councils'
use	1351	applied, applies, apply, applying, consumption, employ, employed, employer, employers, employers', employing, employment, employs, enjoy, enjoyed, enjoying, exercise, exercised, exercises, exercising, exploit, exploiting, function, functional, functionalities, functionality, functions, habitable, habits, practicable, practical, practicalities, practically, practice, practices, purpose, purposely, purposes, role, role', roles, usage, use, used, useful, usefully, uses, using, utilise, utilising, utilities, utility, victim, victims
performance	1330	act, acted, acting, acts, execution, executive, executives, executives', function, functional, functionalities, functionality, functions, operate, operated, operates, operating, operation, operational, operationally, operations, operator, operators, perform, performance, performance', performances, performed, performers, performing, performs, play, played, playing, plays
good	1305	beneficial, depend, dependant, depended, dependent, depending, depends, effect, effected, effecting, effective, effectively, effectiveness, effects, estimate, estimated, estimates, estimating, estimation, estimations, expert, experts, full, good, goods, healthiness, healthy, honest, near, nearing, nearly, practicable, practical, practicalities, practically, practice, practices, respect, respecting, respective, respects, right, right', rightly, rights, ripe, safe, safely, secure, secured, secures, securing, securities, security, serious, seriously, skill, skilled, skilling, skills, sound, sounded, sounds, thorough, thoroughly, tidy
public	1240	advert, advertise, advertised, advertisement, advertising, adverts, air, bare, barely, issue, issued, issues, issues', package, packaged, packages, packaging, promote, promoted, promoters, promotes, promoting, promotion, promotional, promotions, public, publication, publications, publicise, publicising, publicity, publicly, publish, published, publishing, world

savings	1227	deliver, delivered, delivering, delivers, economic, economically, economies, economy, keep, keeping, keeps, save, saved, saves, saving, savings, spare, spared, write, writing
shared	1113	contribute, contributed, contributes, contributing, contribution, contributions, deal, dealing, dealings, deals, divide, divided, divides, dividing, part, partly, parts, percentage, percentages, portion, share, shared, shares, sharing
additional	1055	access, accessed, accessible, accessing, accession, addition, additional, additionally, additions, additives, extra, gain, gained, gains, improve, improve', improved, improvement, improvements, improves, improving, increase, increased, increases, increasing, increasingly, linear, plus
planning	1049	design, designated, designation, designed, plan, planned, planning, plans, plot, plotted, preparation, preparations, prepare, prepared, preparing, program, programme, programmed, programmes, programming, project, projected, projecting, projections, projects, provision, provisioning, provisions
arrangements	1018	adapt, adaptation, adaptations, adapted, adaption, agreement, agreements, arrange, arranged, arrangement, arrangements, arranging, format, formation, formats, order, ordering, orders, organic, organisation, organisational, organisations, organisations', organise, organised, organisers, organising, placement, placements, put, puts, putting, stage, staged, stages, system, systems, transcript
process	1014	action, actioning, actions, advance, advanced, litigation, march, march'15, operate, operated, operates, operating, operation, operational, operationally, operations, operator, operators, procedural, procedurally, procedure, procedures, process, processed, processes, processing, progress, progressed, progresses, progressing, progression, progressively, refine, refined, refinements, refining, rise, rises, rising, serve, served, serves, serving, sue, treat, treated
requirements	1004	ask, asked, asking, command, commander, compulsory, demand, demanded, demanding, demands, essential, essentially, expect, expectancy, expectation, expectations, expected, expecting, expects, mandatory, necessary, necessities, necessity, require, required, requirement, requirements, requires, requiring, requirment, requirments

## Appendix M: Codebooks

Code name	Main code or sub-code	Description
<b>Meaningful Consultation</b>	<b>Main Code</b>	<b>Code data relevant for meaningful consultation. See related sub-codes for more specific coding.</b>
Questions	Sub-code (to Meaningful Consultation)	Code data revealing that questions and answers are the building blocks of consultation. If questions are not answered then this may lead to staff feeling that they are being appeased and that the consultation is not meaningful.
Solutions	Sub-code (to Meaningful Consultation)	Code data showing that participants felt unsettled if decisions about which way to go still hadn't been made.
Honesty	Sub-code (to Meaningful Consultation)	Code data revealing that openness and honesty was seen as very important so that people do not feel that a decision has already being made.
Not appeasing staff	Sub-code (to Meaningful Consultation)	Code data showing that staff consultation groups were well received by participants who were involved but some felt that only the positives were highlighted in an attempt to sell the proposal and participants recommended that consultation be realistic from the first stages.
Flexibility	Sub-code (to Meaningful Consultation)	Code data showing that some participants were worried that the consultation period had not addressed the true nature of the work of Environmental Health Practitioners. In addition, the use of time management matrixes to predict staff resources required, raised concerns that some of the richness and quality of service would be lost in an organisation that delivers a public service using business models such as time management.
Engagement	Sub-code (to Meaningful Consultation)	Code data revealing that lack of engagement in the consultation period was a result of lack of trust
Trust	Sub-code (to Meaningful Consultation)	Code data showing that some participants mentioned leaking of information which raised issues of trust
Answers	Sub-code (to Meaningful Consultation)	Code data showing the need for meaningful consultation and that uncertainty, unclear roles, lack of consultation/participation, relationships and stress of others all caused stress during a change process.
Problems	Sub-code (to Meaningful Consultation)	Code data showing that for some participant's initial excitement at the prospect of more support and resilience was depleted as the process went on and the reality was not as promised. It was recognised that it is a fine balance getting people on board and engaging them whilst still being honest and sharing as much information as is available and still maintaining the need for confidentiality of sensitive information. There were also concerns about the difficulties in delivering bespoke services to different LAs and having to make decisions about how to carry out the work differently according to the political direction of the area. Participants did not feel that this had been addressed in the consultation, probably because it was an unknown entity.

Code name	Main code or sub-code	Description
<b>Managing Changes Effectively</b>	<b>Main code</b>	<b>Code data relevant for understanding the importance of managing changes effectively. Managing change effectively was found to be essential to a successful delivery of a new service model in environmental health. See related sub-codes for more specific coding.</b>
Fear	Sub-code (to Managing changes effectively)	Code data which indicates that fear and was experienced by participants undergoing change but this was more common in the early stages of planning. One significant issue established is the knowledge of the service by senior managers, with services not led by a regulatory practitioner more at risk of creating fear and distrust.
Anxiety	Sub-code (to Managing changes effectively)	Code data that indicates anxiety experienced. Anxiety was not equally held by all participants with some seeing the opportunities early on whilst others felt anxiety in the early stages but later on began to see the opportunities, this is in line with other research into organisational change which found that the response to change may be staged as follows: denial; defence; discarding; adaptation and internalization (Carnell 2003).
Emerging service demands	Sub-code (to Managing changes effectively)	Code data which indicates that emerging service demands must be taken into account when designing and delivering new service models.
Trust	Sub-code (to Managing changes effectively)	Code data which shows that trust commonly came up as an issue for participants and organisations, with the level of trust depending on the participant's role in the change process. Participants felt that it is important to nurture relationships throughout the organisation and to develop the trust. Trust was also shown to be an issue between different types of organisations, for example, local authorities have a history of benchmarking their services against each other but this level of comparison is not thematic between commercial organisations and local authorities making comparison of service delivery difficult. Participants reported that in the early stages of privatisation there was a degree of suspicion between those involved in provision of public goods and those in the commercial sector. New service delivery models often results in new leadership and a need for demonstrable judgement of success. This has resulted in increased reporting and recording giving the staff the impression that they were no longer trusted.
Process	Sub-code (to Managing changes effectively)	Code data which shows that participants found that the way the change is being managed is influential but it is equally important to ensure the decisions made now are the right ones as they will shape the future of not only the environmental health profession but of the people and environment that the service has set out to protect and improve.
Impact of changes	Sub-code (to Managing changes effectively)	Code data which indicates that one clear element was to embrace the change and to seek to influence the outcome to provide a positive solution. What is apparent is that the participants wanted to ensure that the decisions being made are appropriate and that the service delivered continued to protect and improve citizens' health irrespective of the model of delivery.
Conflict	Sub-code (to Managing changes effectively)	Code data which demonstrates that conflict between organisations is something that is mentioned by participants, but with potential advantages in setting out a more formalised service with agreement or contract, although many participants recognised a need for maintained flexibility. The differences in overarching organisational culture and psychology were not just limited to the public/private sector divide. It was noted that some of the local authorities

Code name	Main code or sub-code	Description
		working together were very different in nature, and conflicting political leadership was found to be an issue. This is a critical issue since the political make up of local authorities may alter as part of the electoral process, as can leadership and direction, and this may well impact on shared services both current and proposed. Likewise not all shared services span similar local environments, demographics and local economies resulting in differing priorities and agendas. It is, of course, possible to overcome these differences but the local issues do need to be well understood by those who are responsible for setting up new service delivery models.
Customer satisfaction	Sub-code (to Managing changes effectively)	Code data showing that customer satisfaction was flagged as very important to all participants although in most cases it was too early to assess whether customer satisfaction had been affected by changes in service delivery. All participants agreed that customer service was a priority in effectively managing the changes.
Difficult	Sub-code (to Managing changes effectively)	Code data showing that change is difficult and this was expressed by all participants, but the way change is managed can ease the process and improve the experience of those affected.
Skills development	Sub-code (to Managing changes effectively)	Code data showing that skills of managers of services affected by change have to be developed. Reporting on contracts and acting more commercially is not always part of the skill base of the participants although most participants report that they have adapted well.

Code name	Main code or sub-code	Description
<b>Planning and Timeliness</b>	<b>Main Code</b>	<b>Code data relevant to planning and timeliness. See related sub-codes for more specific coding.</b>
Planning	Sub-code (to Planning and Timeliness)	Code data showing that planning for a new service delivery model should be taken seriously and not be a light touch process. Every single detail needs to be considered and it should be recognised that delivering on a very tightly written specification can be difficult.
Pressure	Sub-code (to Planning and Timeliness)	Code data showing that there is considerable pressure in planning and delivery of services but well thought out performance indicators are an important tool to make sure that the service remains robust but flexible.
Detail	Sub-code (to Planning and Timeliness)	Code data showing that a well set up contract which is stringently monitored is said to be likely to succeed and meeting and exceeding targets has a positive impact on the well-being of staff even if the work to get there is intensive.
Getting it right	Sub-code (to Planning and Timeliness)	Code data relevant to "getting it right" and how important this is to the outcomes and future service delivery.
Specification	Sub-code (to Planning and Timeliness)	Code data indicating that a "tight" specification means that cuts may be difficult to make without affecting the ability to deliver on a contract. Getting the detailed specification of a service is therefore fundamental to the success of a new service delivery model as what gets measured gets done.
Outcomes	Sub-code (to Planning and Timeliness)	Code data relevant to outcomes of new service models ranging from pressure on staff, planning for future services and ensuring the project is delivered efficiently.

<b>Code name</b>	<b>Main code or sub-code</b>	<b>Description</b>
Expected levels of service delivery	Sub-code (to Planning and Timeliness)	Code data indicating that lack of detail in a contract has proven to give rise to problems for some participants in regard to services being expected that were not in the contract and this was thought to be partially due to the commissioners lacking subject knowledge.
Risk	Sub-code (to Planning and Timeliness)	Code data which addresses risk: Resourcing for design and implementation of agreements is important as some participants felt that a client manager with limited knowledge of the service can cause vulnerability. Participants recognised that detailed indicators are required but reporting on them less often may help. However, this may not be possible in the early stages of a new arrangement as both parties will be anxious to check that the contract is not at risk. Participants identified particular risks in transferring small parts of a service, on the other hand, from a resilience perspective; sharing small services across a region can bring a wider pool of technical people to help at a time when expertise is disappearing from local authorities. Resilience of small services should be considered at the planning stage with contingencies built in to deal with key personnel becoming unavailable.
Challenges	Sub-code (to Planning and Timeliness)	Code data relevant to reporting on detailed performance indicators creates a workload for all levels of officers in the delivery organisation and for the client in respect of monitoring the contract.
Opportunities	Sub-code (to Planning and Timeliness)	Code data that shows the opportunity to tell people about what the service is doing helps to raise awareness of a previously low profile service. It was found that it was important to include clauses in the agreement around raising concern and early termination if issues are not getting addressed. A mechanism to oversee shared services was suggested as good practice and an example of this was the setting up of a governance board and with representatives from both sides.
Timescale	Sub-code (to Planning and Timeliness)	Code data showing that although it is important to pay close attention to “getting it right” it is also important to ensure that the process is carried out in a timely manner. Having a short timescale for implementing change has been difficult for some participants and it has meant that other commitments were not addressed or had not had sufficient time devoted to them. Bringing in resource to support the process can be helpful but this is countered by the need for those setting up the contracts to have sufficient knowledge of the services being considered.



Code name	Main code or sub-code	Description
<b>Viability of the Proposal</b>	<b>Main Code</b>	<b>Code data relevant to viability of the proposal</b> <i>See related sub-codes for more specific coding.</i>
Legality	Sub-code (to viability of the proposal)	Code data alluding to the legality of a Local Authority discharging its functions through a third party. This has been explored through legal consultation and the consensus is that it is possible with proper governance in place, any mistakes would pose a serious risk of legal challenge at macro and micro levels.
Cost	Sub-code (to viability of the proposal)	Code data suggesting that commercial models of environmental health service delivery require a profit margin which is very difficult to achieve when bidding to deliver services for organisations where the cuts and diversion of funding have meant that regulatory services are already very lean.
Commercial viability	Sub-code (to viability of the proposal)	Code data relevant where participants expressed a concern that austerity had affected EHS more than other departments, effectively marginalising the service. Most participants question whether outsourcing environmental health on its own is viable at all and that regulatory services are too small to operate commercially as a standalone service.
Getting it right	Sub-code (to viability of the proposal)	Code data suggesting that seeing environmental health as a regulatory service causes participants concern, the use of regulation is a tool used to protect public health but it is misguided to think of environmental health purely as a regulatory service. Participants not involved in outsourcing worry that the public service ethos may be lost in more commercial models of service delivery believing that ultimately such changes have the potential to impact greatly on those in the community already at a disadvantage. Issues such as poverty and health inequalities and preventative interventions that work towards long term goals may not hold enough interest for companies on 10 or 15 year contracts. However, participants from an outsourced service do not agree, and maintain, that to date, the essence of environmental health has not been lost in translation. Getting it right in the planning stages was seen as essential to ensure that models are viable. All participants allude to this and the consequences of getting it wrong can damage the relationship between the authority, the profession and the community.
Alternative models	Sub-code (to viability of the proposal)	Code data showing that participants suggest that viability of other models including mutualisation cannot work with small single authority services.
Emerging service demands	Sub-code (to viability of the proposal)	Code data showing that redesigning or commissioning services gives the opportunity to think about what is really needed rather than just carrying on doing more or less of the same.
Flexibility	Sub-code (to viability of the proposal)	Code data which shows that involving those with an in depth knowledge of environmental health services in the commissioning of services or drawing up of contracts ensured that sufficient detail was included in new models of service delivery.
Workforce skills	Sub-code (to viability of the proposal)	Code data discussing the skills set needed to commission and operate local authority services in contract.
Resilience	Sub-code (to viability of the proposal)	Code data relevant to the need to change service delivery for resilience and to make new models resilient

Code name	Main code or sub-code	Description
Risk	Sub-code (to viability of the proposal)	Code data showing that the organisations studied suggested that the only way to make money would be to cut staff leading to a risk that services could not be delivered.
Logistics	Sub-code (to viability of the proposal)	Code data relevant to: Services such as environmental health usually have to be locally delivered and so savings cannot be easily made by relocating or centralising although some specialisms may be more suitable for regionalisation. Regionalised or shared service models may be operate over a large geographical area and some participants found that distance is a challenge both for front line services and from a management perspective. However, shared services are working well in most of the organisations involved in the study. Harmonising terms and conditions of employment for staff are flagged as very important when looking at a shared service model or where authorities are joining together.

Code name	Main code or sub-code	Description
<b>Understanding the Nature of Environmental Health</b>	<b>Main code</b>	<b>Code data relevant to understanding the nature of environmental health. This research has pointed to the need for an understanding of the nature of environmental health which involves not just an appreciation of the breadth of the subject area but also the various ways of achieving the outcomes. Detailed knowledge of the nature of environmental health services may not be required to manage delivery but a lack of sufficient knowledge can lead to problems. See related sub-codes for more specific coding.</b>
Problem solving	Sub-code (to understanding the nature of environmental health)	Code data indicating that participants noted that the way Environmental Health Practitioners (EHPs) work may give potential service providers unexpected difficulties. The approach to get to the root cause of issues rather than just dealing with the consequences was not well understood by those with poor knowledge of environmental health.
Priority	Sub-code (to understanding the nature of environmental health)	Code data relevant to environmental health services not being a priority for local authorities in times of austerity. Big hitters like social services and education have a higher priority.
Awareness	Sub-code (to understanding the nature of environmental health)	Code data inferring that what EHPs do is well established but the benefits are tacit rather than explicit, and thus demonstrating success can be difficult, in itself posing a substantial business risk. Participants noted that creating measurable outcomes is an effective way of increasing awareness and prioritising environmental health services.
Regulatory	Sub-code (to understanding the nature of environmental health)	Code data referring to the fact that Environmental Health Practitioners, whether based in the UK or elsewhere, have a raft of legislation and a choice of subsequent tools to deal with matters that bring about a risk to the public's health. Participants found that detailing their environmental health service entailed a detailed understanding of the legality of the service provision.

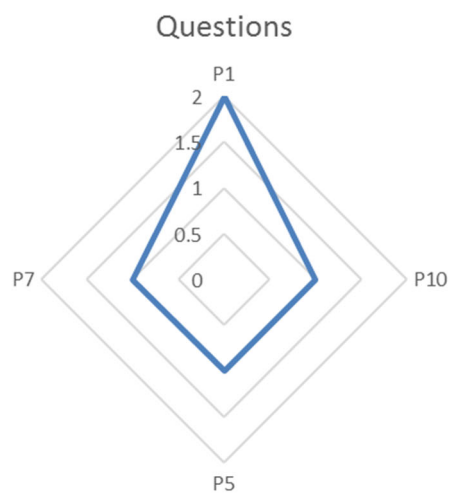
<b>Code name</b>	<b>Main code or sub-code</b>	<b>Description</b>
Knowledge of environmental health	Sub-code (to understanding the nature of environmental health)	Code data suggesting that lack of knowledge of the nature of environmental health services from a potential delivery body was noted as a potential barrier and risk and given the substantial breadth of service this can pose significant issues. In addition, establishing an evidence base that measures effectiveness of environmental health services and the improvement in public health outcomes will play an important part in designing future models of environmental health service delivery. Thus the design of performance indicators by people who understand the nature of environmental health can raise the profile of environmental health services. Some participants underestimated how little new contract managers knew about environmental health and there was a concern that service commissioners will not understand the nature services they may be contracting out.
Improving public health	Sub-code (to understanding the nature of environmental health)	Code data showing that participants realised that EHPs are very different to work with as they are constantly trying to make things better which means that they probably point out more issues than perhaps you might get from other professionals. the improvement in public health outcomes will play an important part in designing future models of environmental health service delivery.
Statutory	Sub-code (to understanding the nature of environmental health)	Code data suggesting that the statutory nature of environmental health services to be understood but should not be restricted to these core statutory functions.
Breadth	Sub-code (to understanding the nature of environmental health)	Code data relevant to the breadth of environmental health services.
Emerging service demands	Sub-code (to understanding the nature of environmental health)	Code data indicating that participants agreed that the setting up of any contract or service delivery model needs to be prescriptive enough to ensure adequate level of service delivery but be flexible to deal with emerging demands.

Code name	Main code or sub-code	Description
<b>Understanding the Reasons for Change</b>	<b>Main code</b>	<b>Code data relevant to understanding the reasons for change. Understanding the reason for change was a fundamental issue for participants; unless the reasons for change are understood and accepted. See <i>related sub-codes for more specific coding.</i></b>
Politics	Sub-code (to understanding the reasons for change)	Code data indicating that the national and local political agenda is fundamental to local authority service delivery and all participants understood the politics involved in the change. The depth of the participants understanding of the politics depended on their role, with the leaders of organisation being most immersed in the political agenda. Frontline officers were least concerned with the political agenda but all understood the implications of working within or for a political organisation.
Value	Sub-code (to understanding the reasons for change)	Code data indicated that, in general, the more senior the participant was in the organisation the more they understood the reasons for change. Participants' professional and personal values influenced their view of the best model of service delivery, for example, all of the participants felt strongly that the ethos of public service and environmental health should be protected in new models of environmental health service delivery.
Shake up needed	Sub-code (to understanding the reasons for change)	Code data suggesting that Local Authorities can become quite complacent in service delivery and some members of the community they serve have developed a negative/stereotypical view of council employees and their behaviour, and a fundamental review of the service offered might be timely.
Cost	Sub-code (to understanding the reasons for change)	Code data indicating that participants recognised that reduced resources and cost reduction were a paramount reason for change
DeVolution	Sub-code (to understanding the reasons for change)	Code data relating to devolution as a driver for change
Alternatives	Sub-code (to understanding the reasons for change)	Code data relevant to not necessarily keeping services the same but ensuring that new services maintained the professional values of environmental health.
Protection	Sub-code (to understanding the reasons for change)	Code data relating to protection of services. It was noted that at field officer level, there was a differential in response with more concern expressed by those with a long continuous employment history, whilst those who were relatively new, being more open to the process of change.
Opportunity	Sub-code (to understanding the reasons for change)	Code data relating to participants understanding of the reasons for change where they see the benefits of the changes they were undergoing. In light of the ongoing budgetary restrictions impacting on local authorities, participants identified advantages of developing a new service model as preventing year on year cuts
Resilience	Sub-code (to understanding the reasons for change)	Code data suggesting that participants accepted that change was inevitable and there was consensus that change was needed. However, participants acknowledged that changes affect people in different ways and not all see the benefits.; and that the shared services model provided a degree of resilience in organisations where there are dwindling staff numbers.

## Appendix N: Findings tables

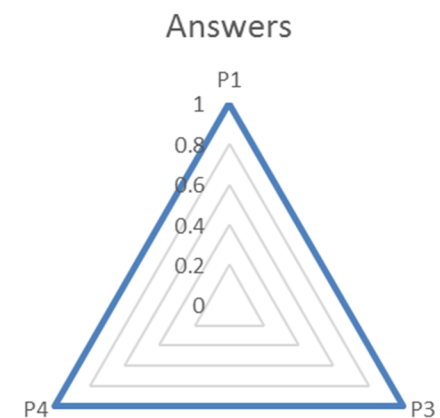
**Table N1: Participant references for the sub-theme: Questions**

Sub-theme: Questions	
Participant (P)	References (R)
P1	2
P5	1
P7	1
P10	1
<b>TOTAL P=4</b>	<b>TOTAL R=5</b>

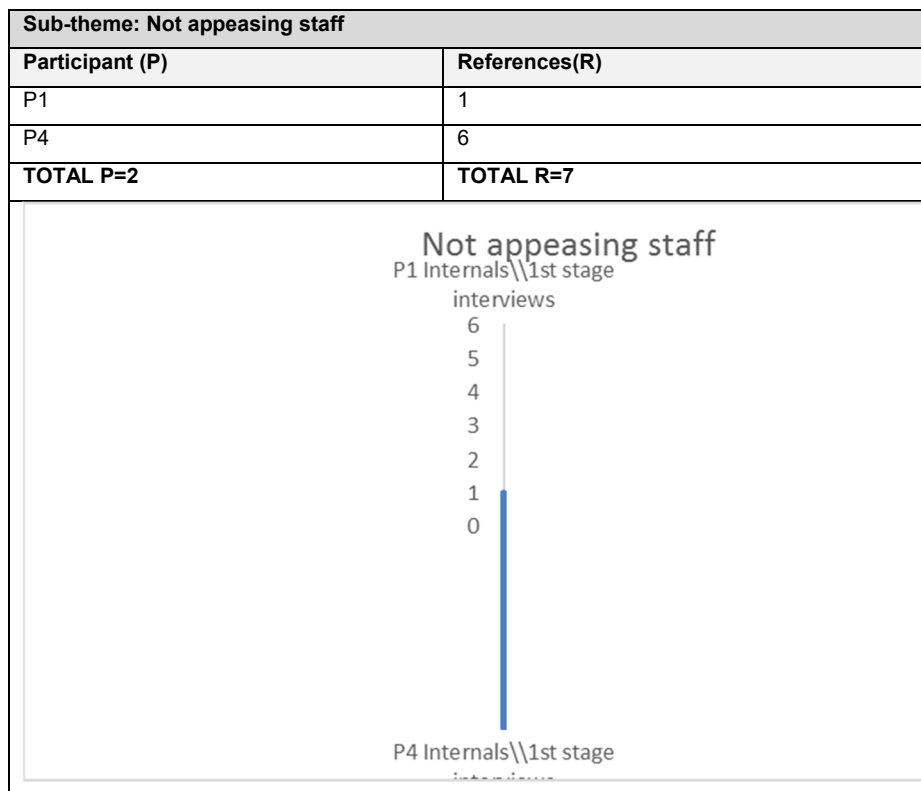


**Table N2: Participant references for the sub-theme: Answers**

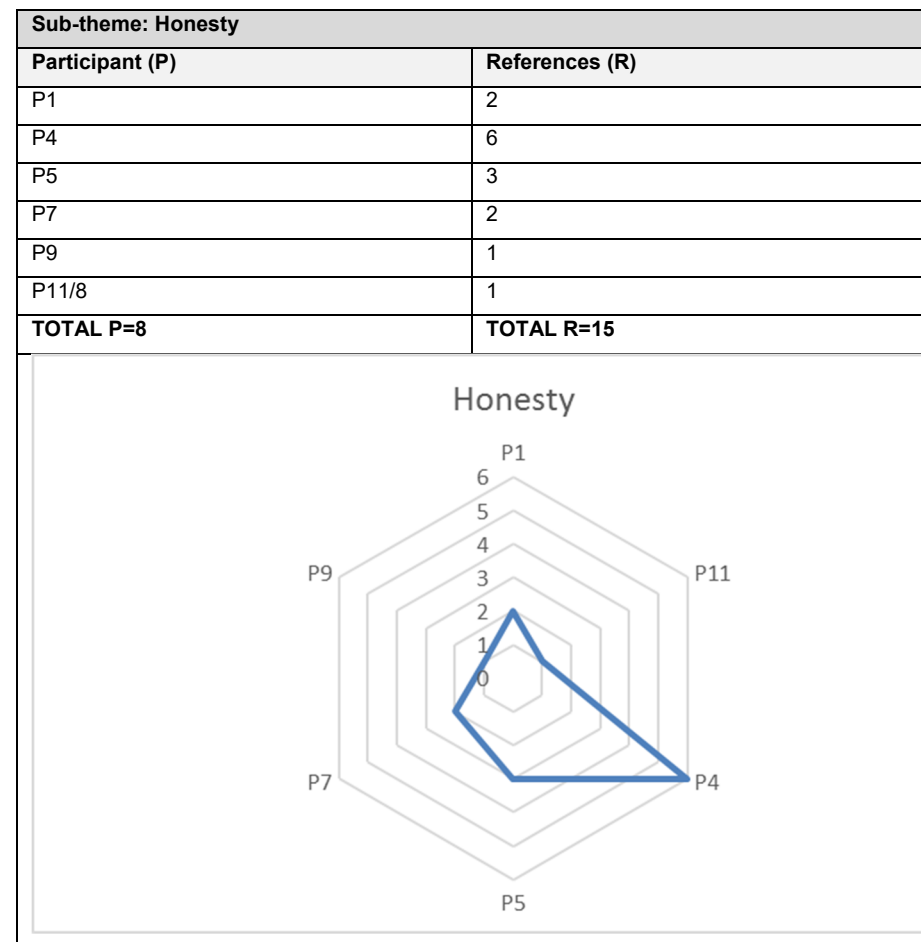
Sub-theme: Answers	
Participant (P)	References (R)
P1	1
P3	1
P4	1
<b>TOTAL P=3</b>	<b>TOTAL R=3</b>



**Table N3: Participant references for the sub-theme: Not appeasing staff**

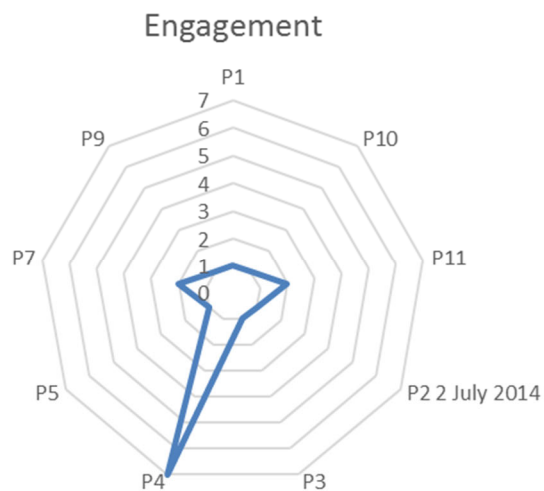


**Table N4: Participant references for the sub-theme: Honesty**



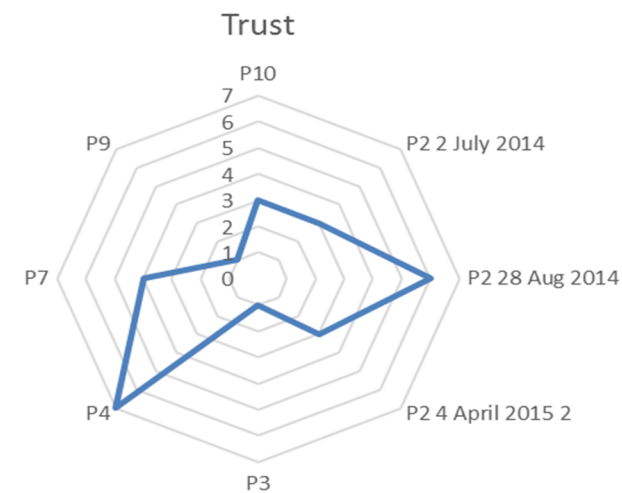
**Table N5: Participant references for the sub-theme: Engagement**

Sub-theme: Engagement	
Participant (P)	References (R)
P1	1
P2 2 July 2014	1
P3	1
P4	7
P5	1
P7	2
P9	1
P10	1
P11/8	2
<b>TOTAL P=10</b>	<b>TOTAL R=17</b>



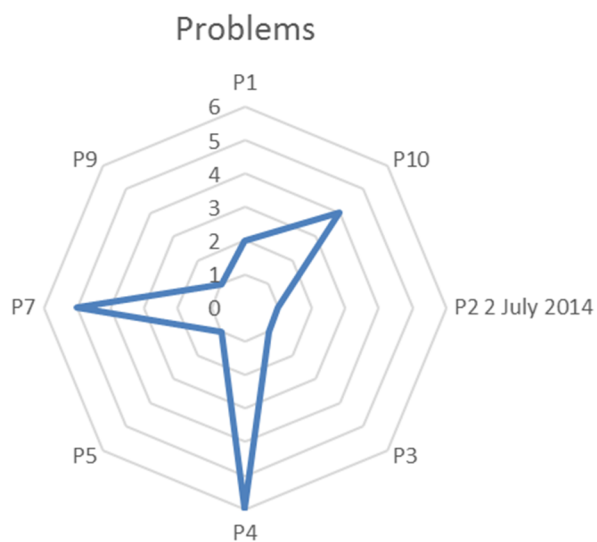
**Table N6: Participant references for the sub-theme: Trust**

Sub-theme: Trust	
Participant (P)	References (R)
P2 2 July 2014	3
P2 28 Aug 2014	6
P2 4 April 2015	3
P3	1
P4	7
P7	4
P9	1
P10	3
<b>TOTAL P=6</b>	<b>TOTAL R=28</b>



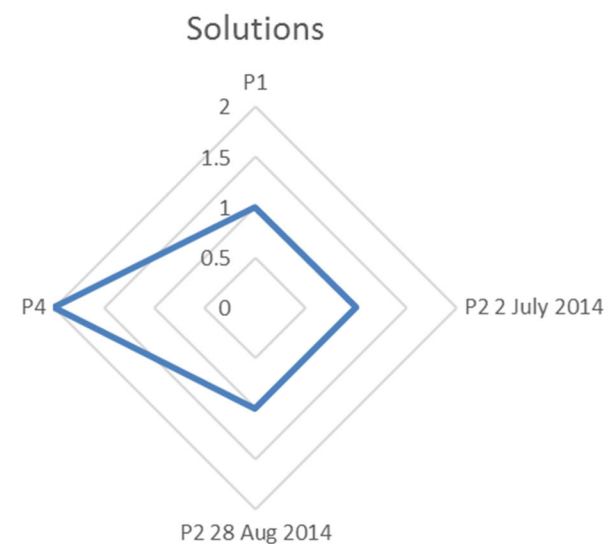
**Table N7: Participant references for the sub-theme: Problems**

Sub-theme: Problems	
Participant (P)	References (R)
P1	2
P2 2 July 2014	1
P3	1
P4	6
P5	1
P7	5
P9	1
P10	4
<b>TOTAL P=8</b>	<b>TOTAL R=21</b>



**Table N8: Participant references for the sub-theme: Solutions**

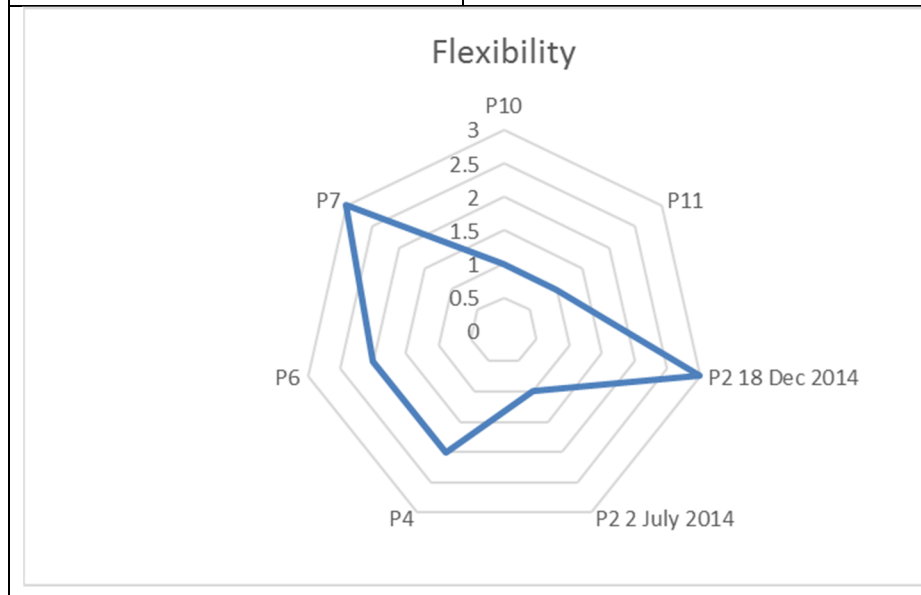
Sub-theme: Solutions	
Participant (P)	References (R)
P1	1
P2 2 July 2014	1
P2 28 Aug 2014	1
P4	2
<b>TOTAL P=3</b>	<b>TOTAL R=5</b>





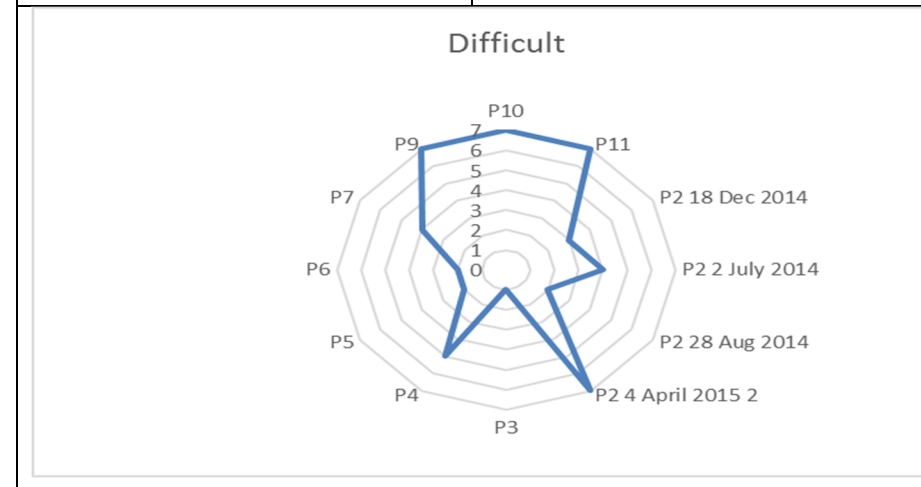
**Table N9: Participant references for the sub-theme: Flexibility**

Sub-theme: Flexibility	
Participant (P)	References (R)
P2 18 Dec 2014	3
P2 2 July 2014	1
P4	2
P6	2
P7	3
P10	1
P11/8	1
<b>TOTAL P=7</b>	<b>TOTAL R=13</b>



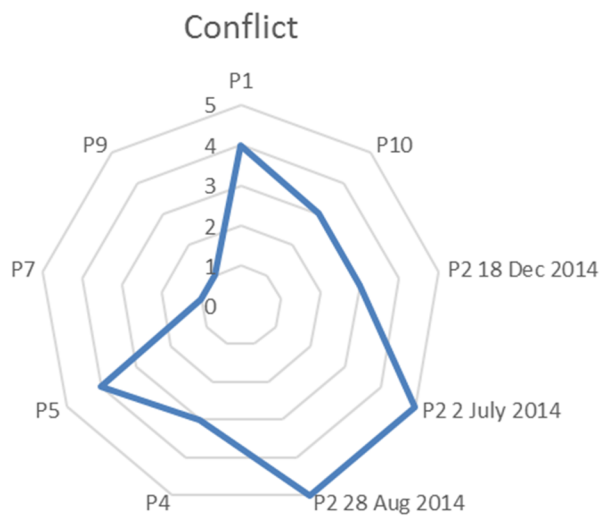
**Table N10: Participant references for the sub-theme: Difficult**

Sub-theme: Difficult	
Participant (P)	References (R)
P2 18 Dec 2014	3
P2 2 July 2014	4
P2 28 Aug 2014	2
P2 4 April 2015	7
P3	1
P4	5
P5	2
P6	2
P7	4
P9	7
P10	7
P11/8	7
<b>TOTAL P=10</b>	<b>TOTAL R=51</b>



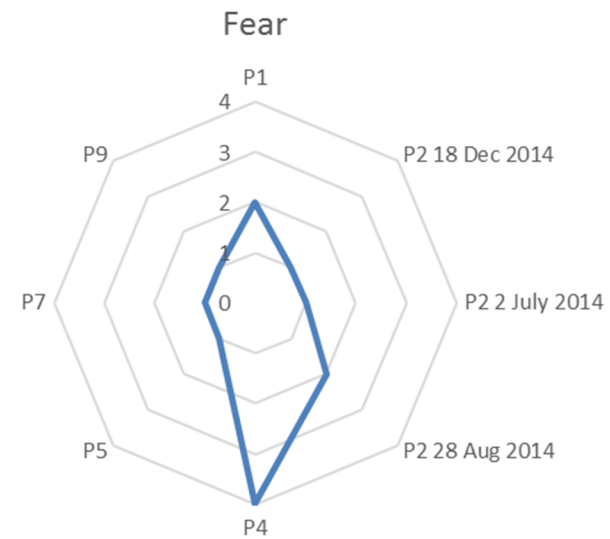
**Table N11: Participant references for the sub-theme: Conflict**

Sub-theme: Conflict	
Participant (P)	References (R)
P1	4
P2 18 Dec 2014	3
P2 2 July 2014	5
P2 28 Aug 2014	5
P4	3
P5	4
P7	1
P9	1
P10	3
<b>TOTAL P=7</b>	<b>TOTAL R=29</b>



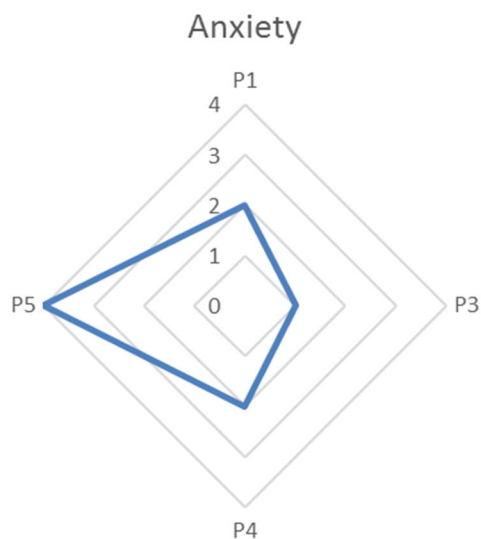
**Table N12: Participant references for the sub-theme: Fear**

Sub-theme: Fear	
Participant (P)	References (R)
P1	2
P2 18 Dec 2014	1
P2 2 July 2014	1
P2 28 Aug 2014	2
P4	4
P5	1
P7	1
P9	1
<b>TOTAL P=6</b>	<b>TOTAL R=13</b>



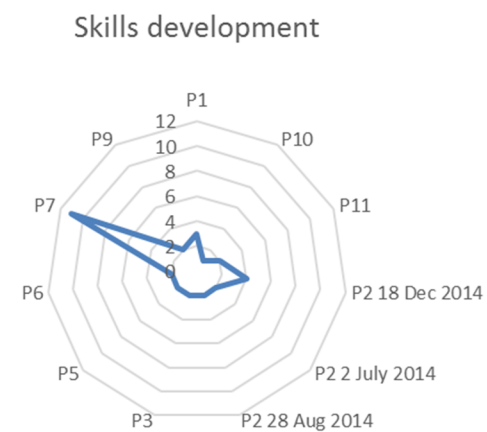
**Table N13: Participant references for the sub-theme: Anxiety**

Sub-theme: Anxiety	
Participant (P)	References (R)
P1	2
P3	1
P4	2
P5	4
<b>TOTAL P=4</b>	<b>TOTAL R=9</b>



**Table N14: Participant references for the sub-theme: Skills Development**

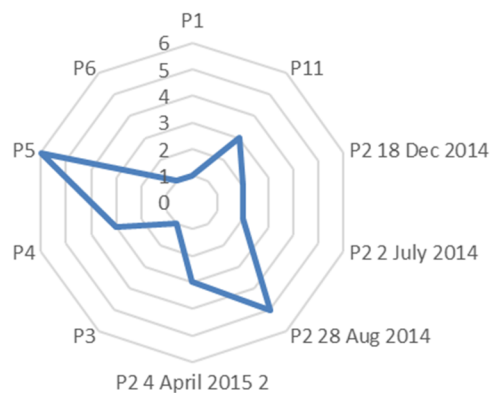
Sub-theme: Skills development	
Participant (P)	References (R)
P1	3
P2 18 Dec 2014	4
P2 2 July 2014	2
P2 28 Aug 2014	2
P3	2
P5	2
P6	2
P7	11
P9	2
P10	1
P11/8	2
<b>TOTAL P=10</b>	<b>TOTAL R=33</b>



**Table N15: Participant references for the sub-theme: Customer Satisfaction**

Sub-theme: Customer satisfaction	
Participant (P)	References (R)
P1	1
P2 18 Dec 2014	2
P2 2 July 2014	2
P2 28 Aug 2014	5
P2 4 April 2015	3
P3	1
P4	3
P5	6
P6	1
P11/8	3
<b>TOTAL P=8</b>	<b>R=27</b>

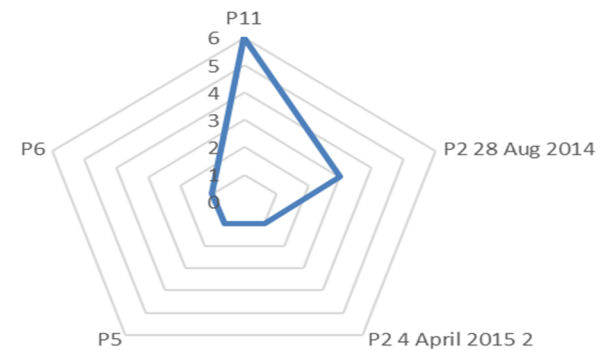
Customer satisfaction



**Table N16: Participant references for the sub-theme: Emerging service demands**

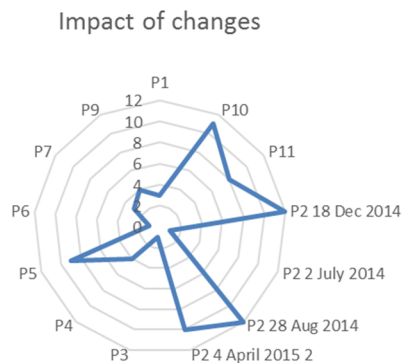
Sub-theme: Emerging service demands	
Participant (P)	References (R)
P2 28 Aug 2014	3
P2 4 April 2015	1
P5	1
P6	1
P11/8	6
<b>TOTAL P=5</b>	<b>TOTAL R=12</b>

Emerging service demands



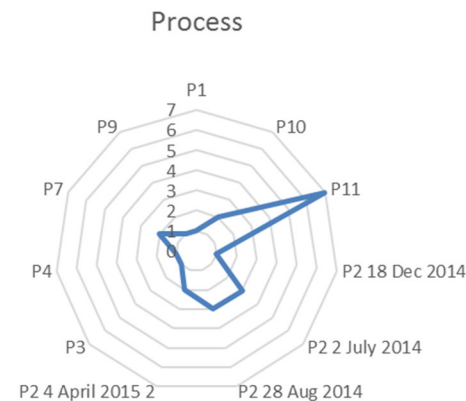
**Table N17: Participant references for the sub-theme: Impact of changes**

Sub-theme: Impact of changes	
Participant (P)	References (R)
P1	3
P2 18 Dec 2014	12
P2 2 July 2014	1
P2 28 Aug 2014	12
P2 4 April 2015	10
P3	1
P4	4
P5	9
P6	1
P7	3
P9	4
P10	11
P11/8	8
<b>TOTAL P=11</b>	<b>TOTAL R=79</b>



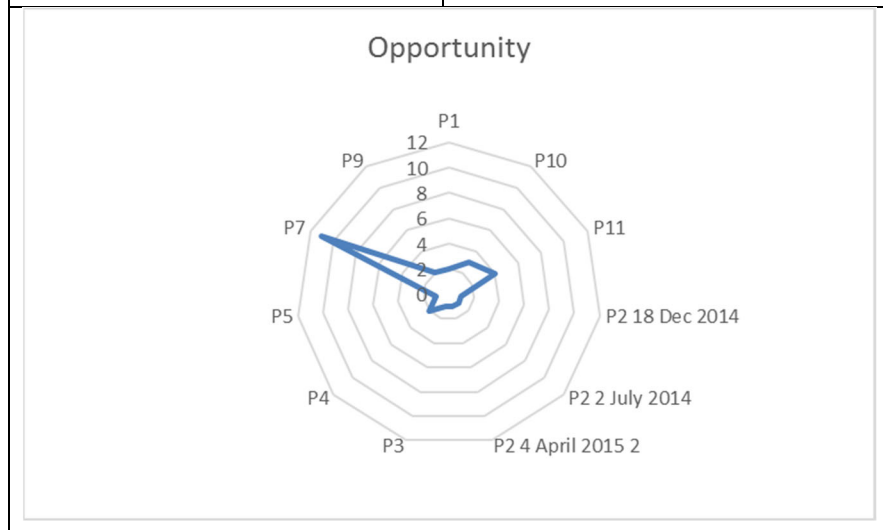
**Table N18: Participant references for the sub-theme: Process**

Sub-theme: Process	
Participant (P)	References (R)
P1	1
P2 18 Dec 2014	1
P2 2 July 2014	3
P2 28 Aug 2014	3
P2 4 April 2015	2
P3	1
P4	1
P7	2
P9	1
P10	2
P11/8	7
<b>TOTAL P=9</b>	<b>TOTAL R=24</b>



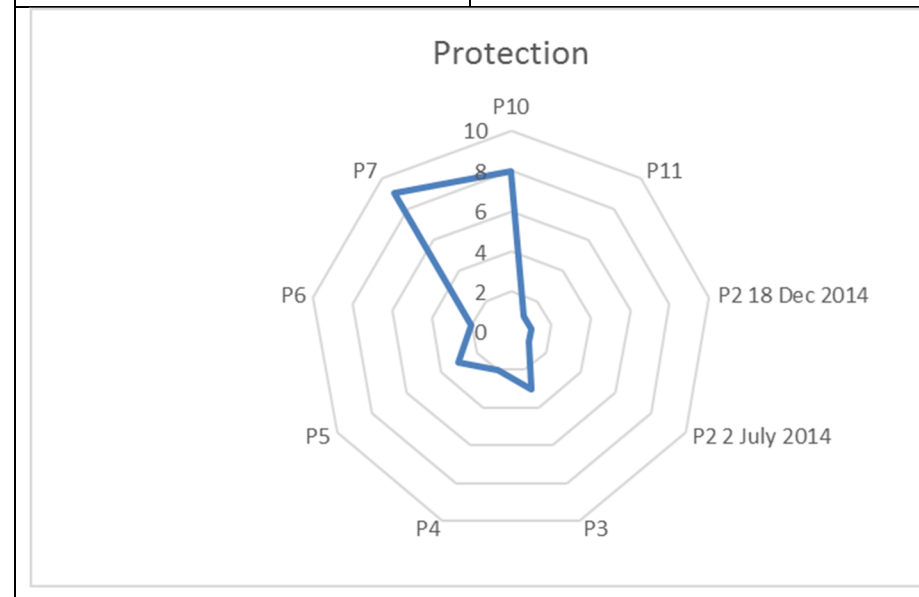
**Table N19: Participant references for the sub-theme: Opportunity**

Sub-theme: Opportunity	
Participant (P)	References (R)
P1	2
P2 18 Dec 2014	1
P2 2 July 2014	1
P2 4 April 2015 2	1
P3	1
P4	2
P5	1
P7	11
P9	2
P10	3
P11/8	4
<b>TOTAL P=10</b>	<b>TOTAL R=29</b>



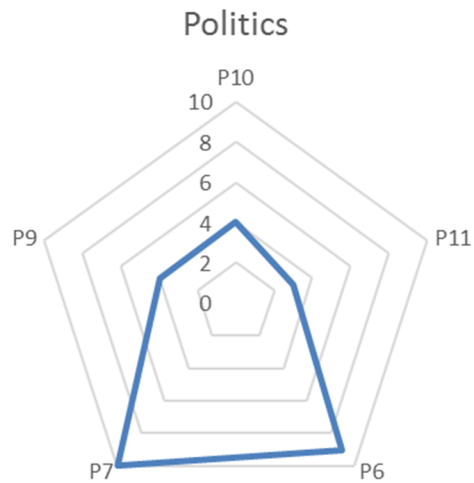
**Table N20: Participant references for the sub-theme: Protection**

Sub-theme: Protection	
Participant (P)	References (R)
P2 18 Dec 2014	1
P2 2 July 2014	1
P3	3
P4	2
P5	3
P6	2
P7	9
P10	8
P11/8	1
<b>TOTAL P=9</b>	<b>TOTAL R=30</b>



**Table N21: Participant references for the sub-theme: Politics**

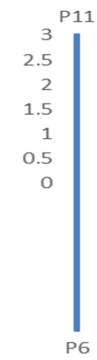
Sub-theme: Politics	
Participant (P)	References (R)
P6	9
P7	10
P9	4
P10	4
P11/8	3
<b>TOTAL P=5</b>	<b>TOTAL R=30</b>



**Table N22: Participant references for the sub-theme: Devolution**

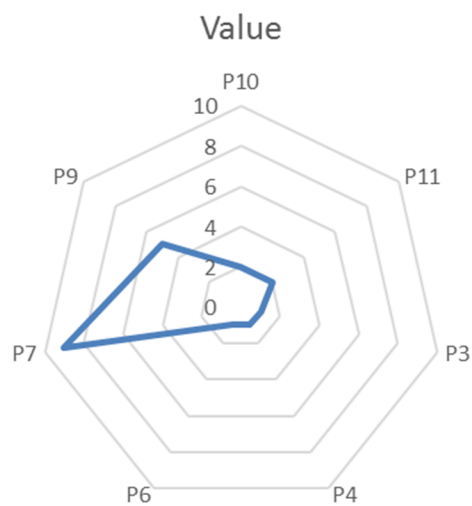
Sub-theme: Devolution	
Participant (P)	References (R)
P6	3
P11/8	3
<b>TOTAL P=3</b>	<b>TOTAL R=6</b>

**Devolution**



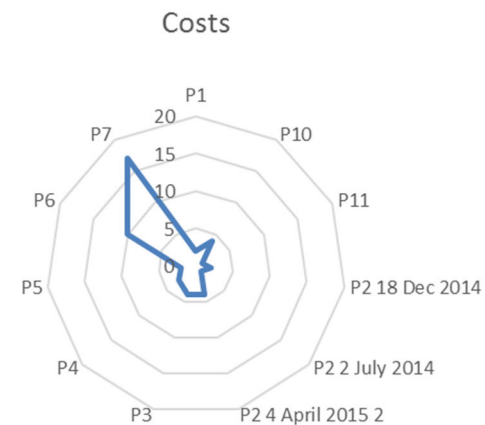
**Table N23: Participant references for the sub-theme: Value**

Sub-theme: Value	
Participant (P)	References (R)
P3	1
P4	1
P6	1
P7	9
P9	5
P10	2
P11/8	2
<b>TOTAL P=7</b>	<b>TOTAL R=21</b>



**Table N24: Participant references for the sub-theme: Cost**

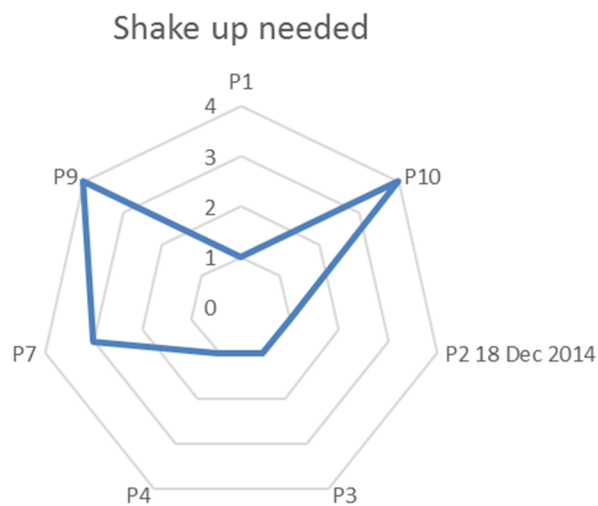
Sub-theme: Cost	
Participant (P)	References (R)
P1	2
P2 18 Dec 2014	2
P2 2 July 2014	1
P2 4 April 2015 2	4
P3	4
P4	3
P5	2
P6	10
P7	17
P10	4
P11/8	1
<b>TOTAL P=10</b>	<b>TOTAL R=50</b>





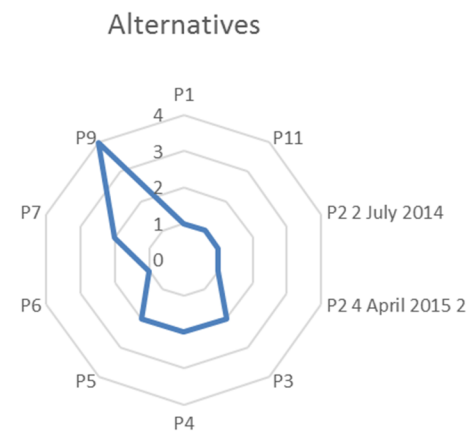
**Table N25: Participant references for the sub-theme: Shake up needed**

Sub-theme: Shake Up Needed	
Participant (P)	References (R)
P1	1
P2 18 Dec 2014	1
P3	1
P4	1
P7	3
P9	4
P10	4
<b>TOTAL P=7</b>	<b>TOTAL R=15</b>



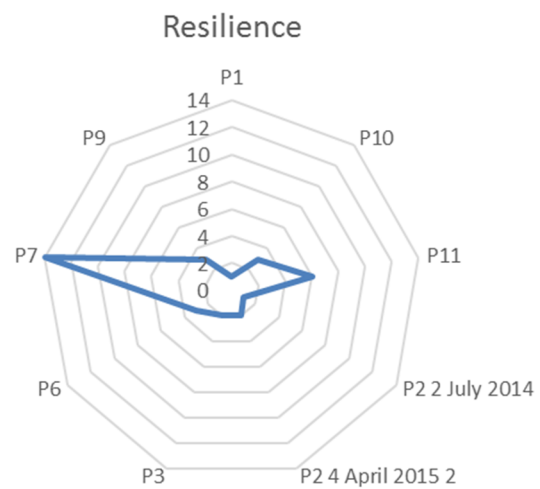
**Table N26: Participant references for the sub-theme: Alternatives**

Sub-theme: Alternatives	
Participant (P)	References (R)
P1	1
P2 2 July 2014	1
P2 4 April 2015 2	1
P3	2
P4	2
P5	2
P6	1
P7	2
P9	4
P11/8	1
<b>TOTAL P=10</b>	<b>TOTAL R=17</b>



**Table N27: Participant references for the sub-theme: Resilience**

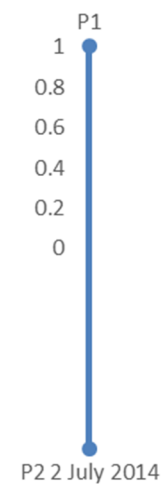
Sub-theme: Resilience	
Participant (P)	References (R)
P1	1
P2 2 July 2014	1
P2 4 April 2015 2	2
P3	2
P6	3
P7	14
P9	3
P10	3
P11/8	6
<b>TOTAL P=9</b>	<b>TOTAL R=35</b>



**Table N28: Participant references for the sub-theme: Statutory**

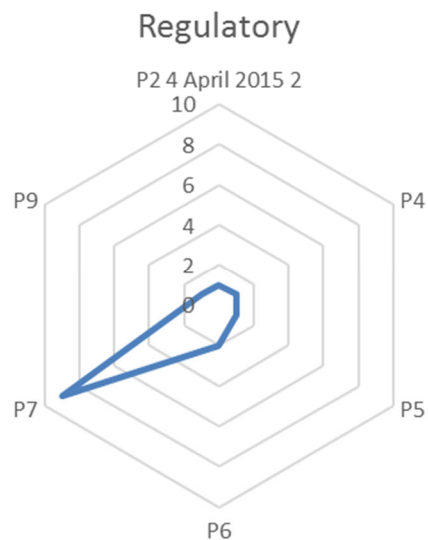
SubTheme: Statutory	
Participant (P)	References (R)
P1	1
P2 2 July 2014	1
<b>TOTAL P=2</b>	<b>TOTAL R=2</b>

**Statutory**



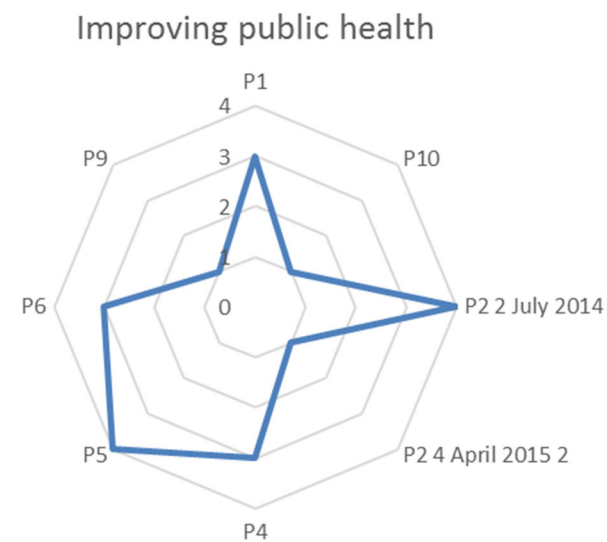
**Table N29: Participant references for the sub-theme: Regulatory**

SubTheme: Regulatory	
Participant (P)	References (R)
P2 4 April 2015 2	1
P4	1
P5	1
P6	2
P7	9
P9	1
<b>TOTAL P=6</b>	<b>TOTAL R=15</b>



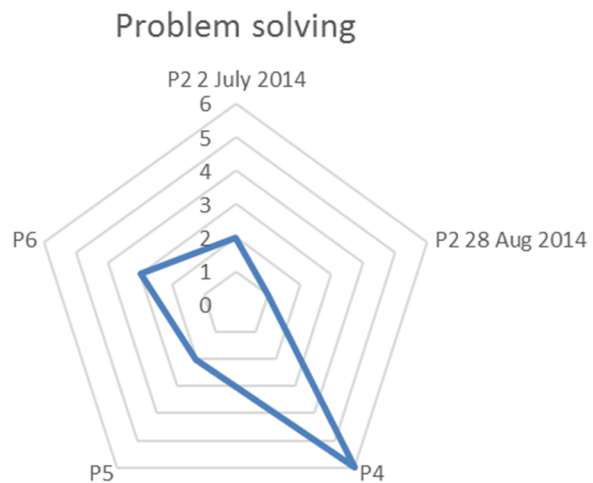
**Table N30: Participant references for the sub-theme: Improving public health**

SubTheme: Improving public health	
Participant (P)	References (R)
P1	3
P2 2 July 2014	4
P2 4 April 2015 2	1
P4	3
P5	4
P6	3
P9	1
P10	1
<b>TOTAL P=7</b>	<b>TOTAL R=20</b>



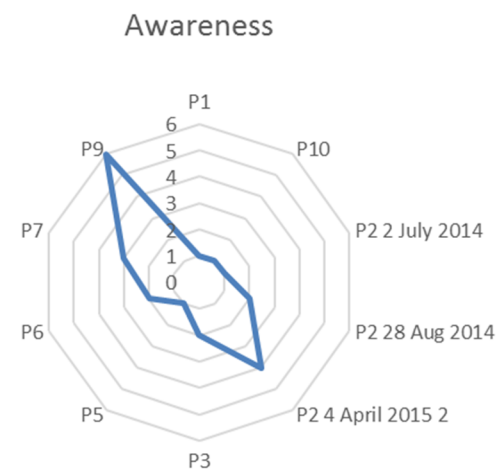
**Table N31: Participant references for the sub-theme: Problem solving**

SubTheme: Problem solving	
Participant (P)	References (R)
P2 2 July 2014	2
P2 28 Aug 2014	1
P4	6
P5	2
P6	3
<b>TOTAL P=4</b>	<b>TOTAL R=14</b>



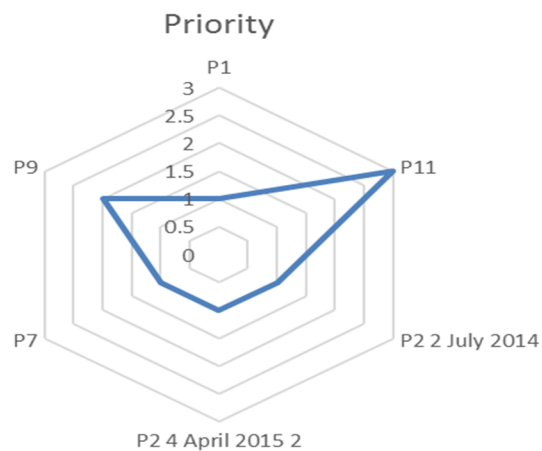
**Table N32: Participant references for the sub-theme: Awareness**

SubTheme: Awareness	
Participant (P)	References(R)
P1	1
P2 2 July 2014	1
P2 28 Aug 2014	2
P2 4 April 2015 2	4
P3	2
P5	1
P6	2
P7	3
P9	6
P10	1
<b>TOTAL P=8</b>	<b>TOTAL R=23</b>



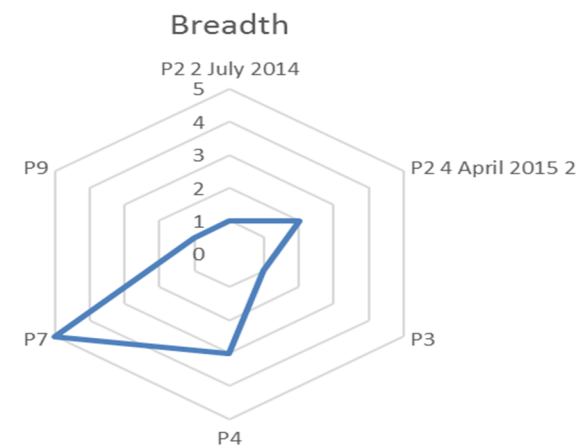
**Table N33: Participant references for the sub-theme: Priority**

SubTheme: Priority	
Participant (P)	References (R)
P1	1
P2 2 July 2014	1
P2 4 April 2015 2	1
P7	1
P9	2
P11/8	3
<b>TOTAL P=6</b>	<b>TOTAL R=9</b>



**Table N34: Participant references for the sub-theme: Breadth**

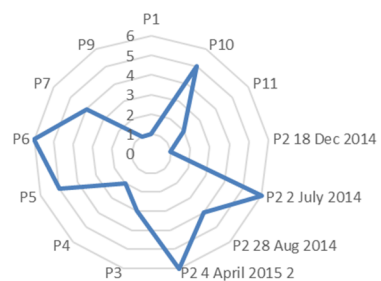
SubTheme: Breadth	
Participant (P)	References (R)
P2 2 July 2014	1
P2 4 April 2015 2	2
P3	1
P4	3
P7	5
P9	1
<b>TOTAL P=5</b>	<b>TOTAL R=13</b>



**Table N35: Participant references for the sub-theme: Knowledge of Environmental Health**

SubTheme: Knowledge of Environmental Health	
Participant (P)	References (R)
P1	1
P2 18 Dec 2014	1
P2 2 July 2014	6
P2 28 Aug 2014	4
P2 4 April 2015 2	6
P3	3
P4	2
P5	5
P6	6
P7	4
P9	1
P10	5
P11/8	2
<b>TOTAL P=11</b>	<b>TOTAL R=46</b>

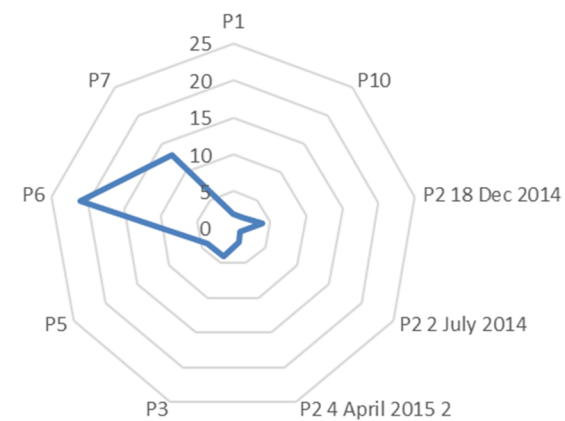
Knowledge of Environmental Health



**Table N36: Participant references for the sub-theme: Commercial viability**

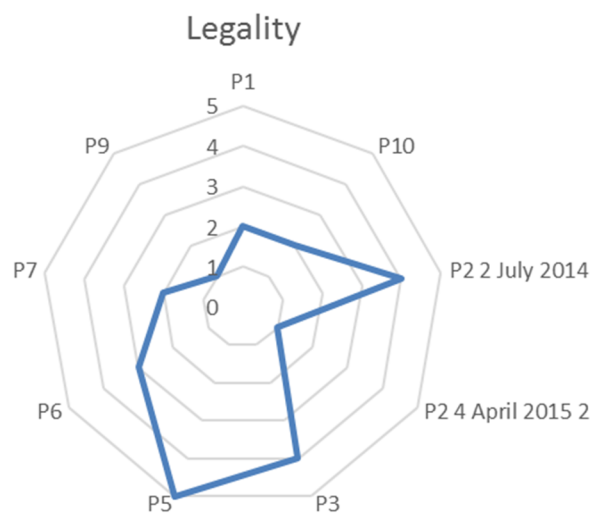
SubTheme: Commercial viability	
Participant (P)	References (R)
P1	2
P2 18 Dec 2014	4
P2 2 July 2014	1
P2 4 April 2015 2	2
P3	4
P5	4
P6	21
P7	13
P10	2
<b>TOTAL P=7</b>	<b>TOTAL R=53</b>

Commercial viability



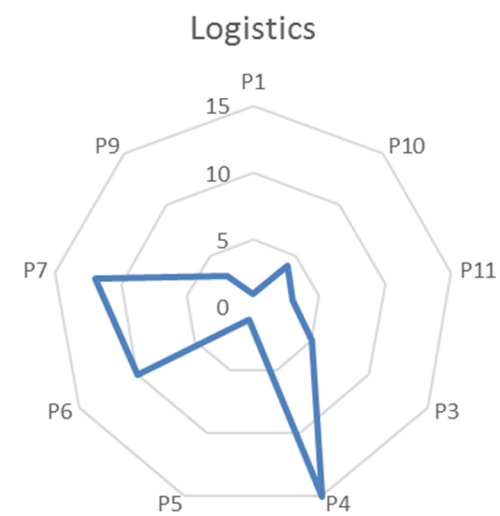
**Table N37: Participant references for the sub-theme: Legality**

SubTheme: Legality	
Participant (P)	References (R)
P1	2
P2 2 July 2014	4
P2 4 April 2015 2	1
P3	4
P5	5
P6	3
P7	2
P9	1
P10	2
<b>TOTAL P=8</b>	<b>TOTAL R=24</b>



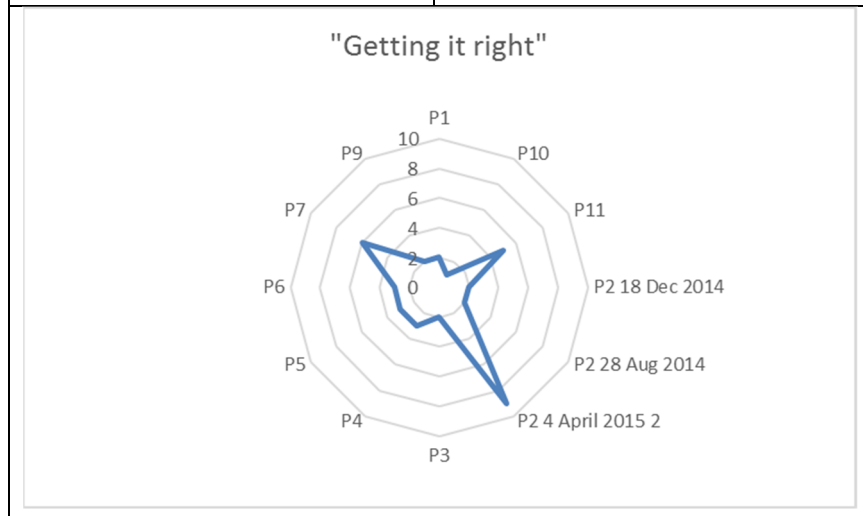
**Table N38: Participant references for the sub-theme: Logistics**

SubTheme: Logistics	
Participant (P)	References (R)
P1	1
P3	5
P4	15
P5	1
P6	10
P7	12
P9	3
P10	4
P11/8	3
<b>TOTAL P=10</b>	<b>TOTAL R=54</b>



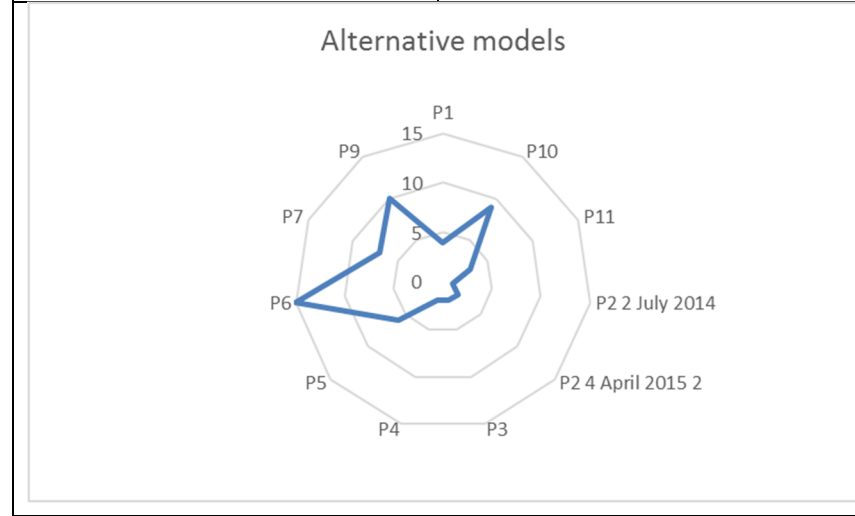
**Table N39: Participant references for the sub-theme: Getting it right**

SubTheme: "Getting it right"	
Participant (P)	References (R)
P1	2
P2 18 Dec 2014	2
P2 2 July 2014	2
P2 4 April 2015 2	9
P3	2
P4	3
P5	3
P6	3
P7	6
P9	2
P10	1
P11/8	5
<b>TOTAL P=11</b>	<b>TOTAL R=40</b>



**Table N40: Participant references for the sub-theme: Alternative models**

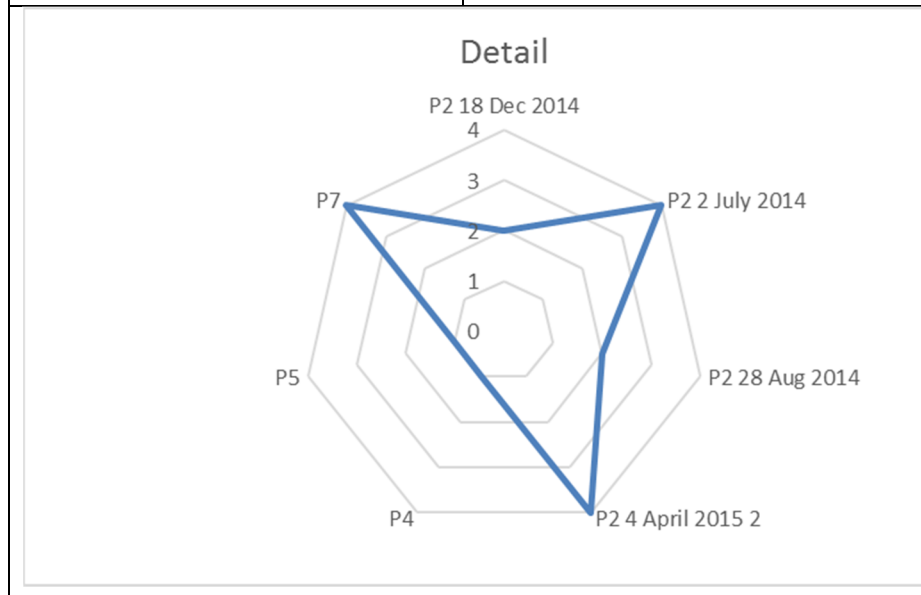
SubTheme: Alternative models	
Participant (P)	References (R)
P1	4
P2 2 July 2014	1
P2 4 April 2015 2	2
P3	2
P4	2
P5	6
P6	15
P7	7
P9	10
P10	9
P11/8	3
<b>TOTAL P=11</b>	<b>TOTAL R=61</b>





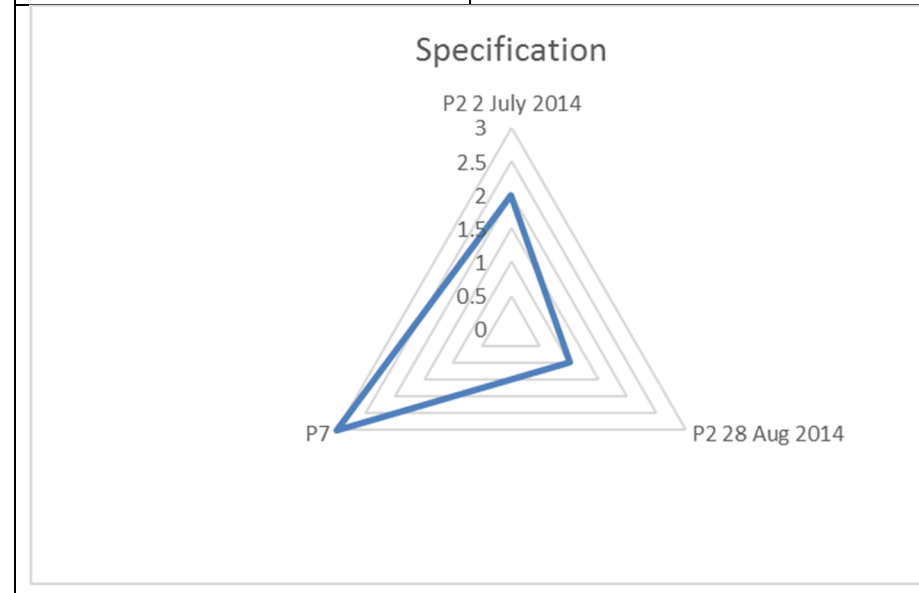
**Table N41: Participant references for the sub-theme: Detail**

SubTheme: Detail	
Participant (P)	References (R)
P2 18 Dec 2014	2
P2 2 July 2014	4
P2 28 Aug 2014	2
P2 4 April 2015 2	4
P4	1
P5	1
P7	4
<b>TOTAL P=4</b>	<b>TOTAL R=18</b>



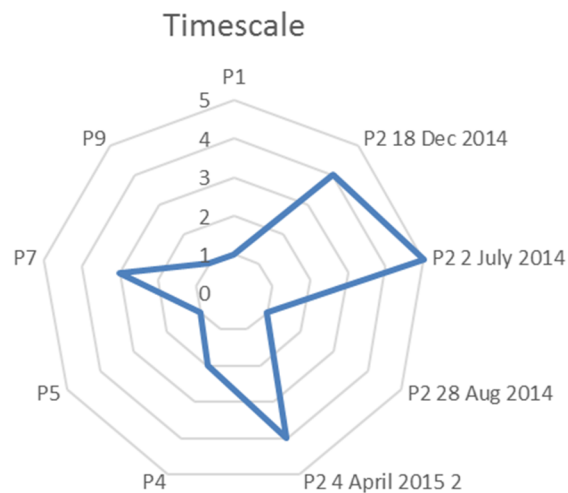
**Table N42: Participant references for the sub-theme: Specification**

SubTheme: Specification	
Participant (P)	References (R)
P2 2 July 2014	2
P2 28 Aug 2014	1
P7	3
<b>TOTAL P=2</b>	<b>TOTAL R=6</b>



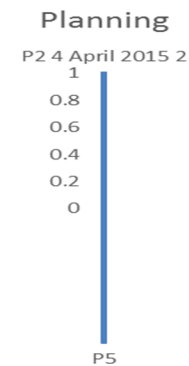
**Table N43: Participant references for the sub-theme: Timescale**

SubTheme: Timescale	
Participant (P)	References (R)
P1	1
P2 18 Dec 2014	4
P2 2 July 2014	5
P2 28 Aug 2014	1
P2 4 April 2015 2	4
P4	2
P5	1
P7	3
P9	1
<b>TOTAL P=6</b>	<b>TOTAL R=22</b>

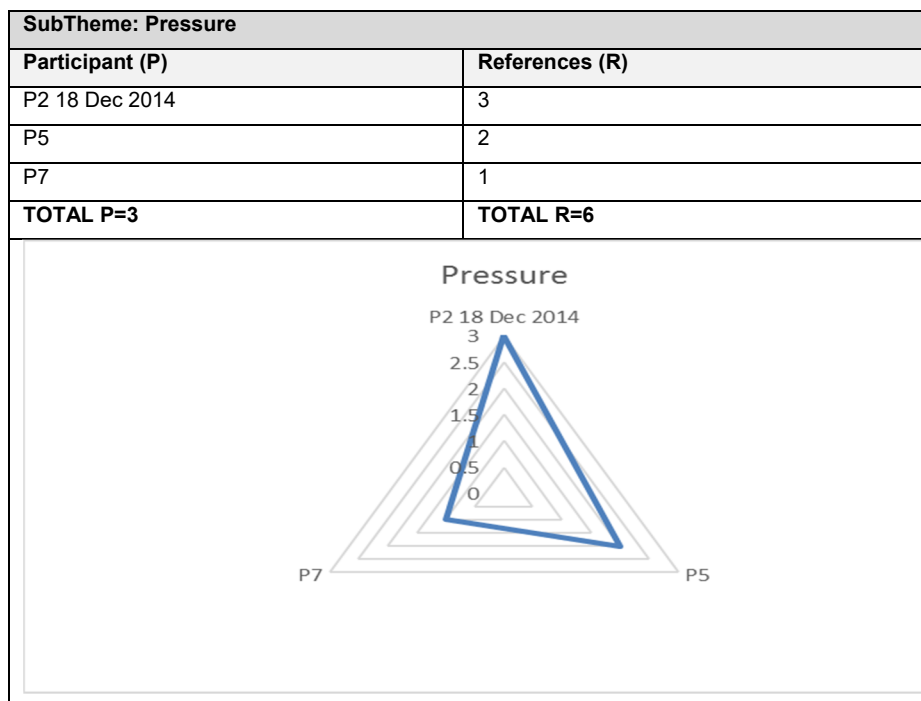


**Table N44: Participant references for the sub-theme: Planning**

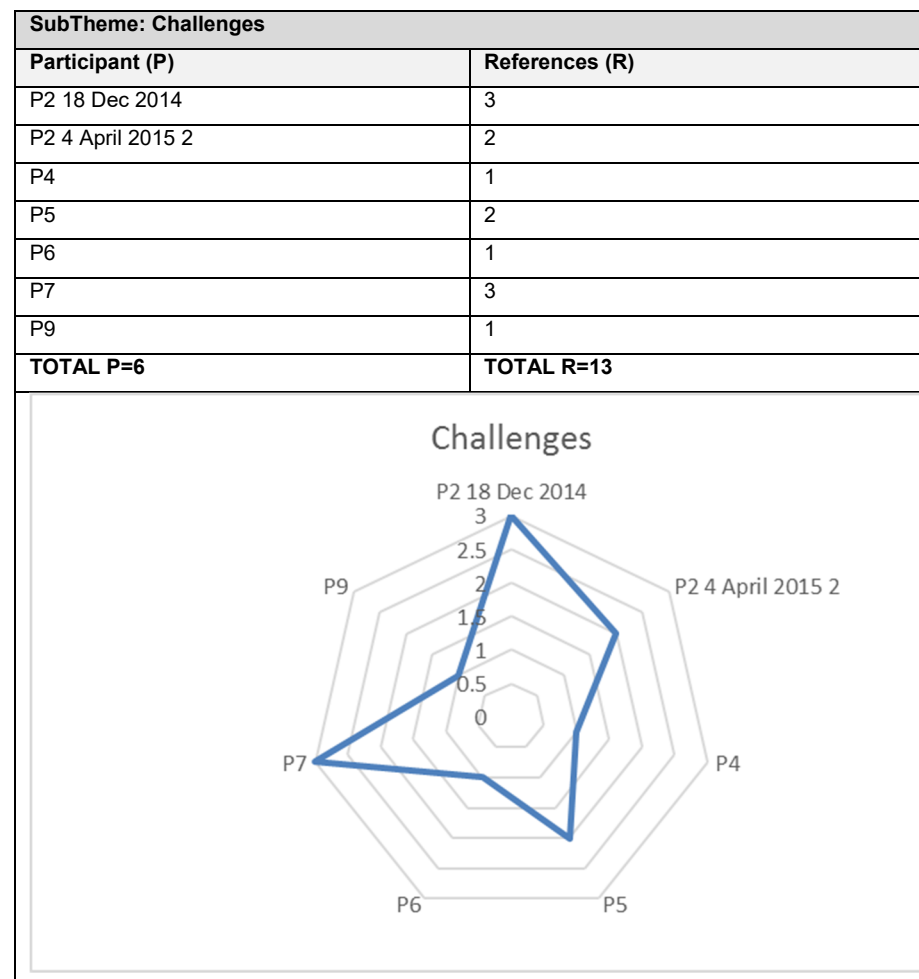
SubTheme: Planning	
Participant (P)	References (R)
P2 4 April 2015 2	1
P5	1
<b>TOTAL P=2</b>	<b>TOTAL R=2</b>



**Table N45: Participant references for the sub-theme: Pressure**

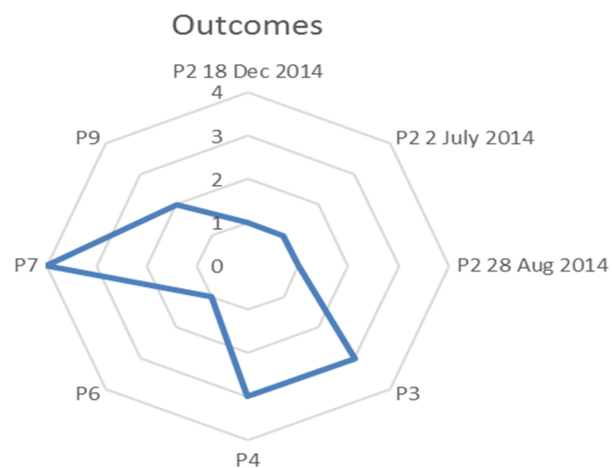


**Table N46: Participant references for the sub-theme: Challenges**



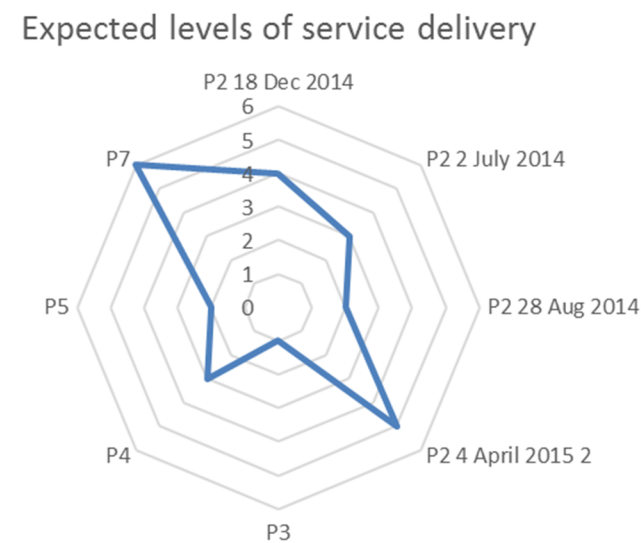
**Table N47: Participant references for the sub-theme: Outcomes**

SubTheme: Outcomes	
Participant (P)	References (R)
P2 18 Dec 2014	1
P2 2 July 2014	1
P2 28 Aug 2014	1
P3	3
P4	3
P6	1
P7	4
P9	2
<b>TOTAL P=6</b>	<b>TOTAL R=16</b>



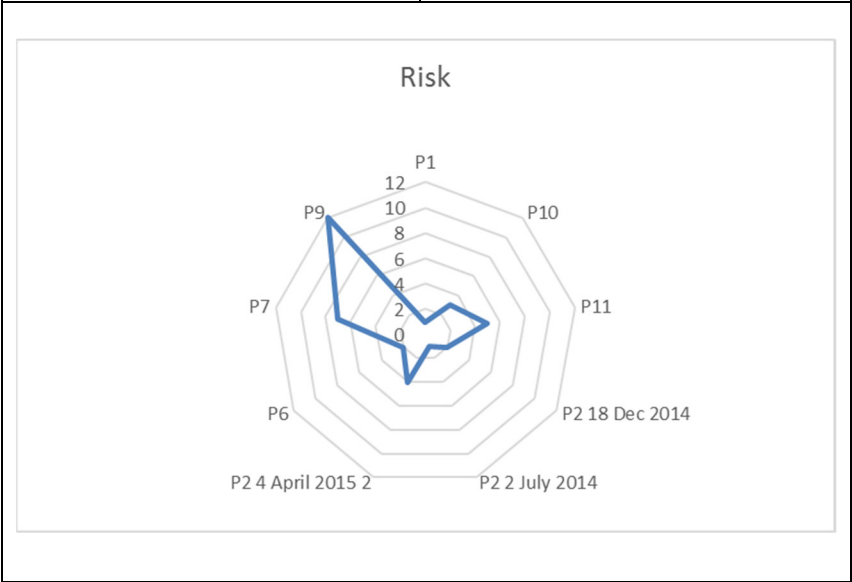
**Table N48: Participant references for the sub-theme: Expected levels of service delivery**

Sub-theme: Expected levels of service delivery	
Participant (P)	References (R)
P2 18 Dec 2014	4
P2 2 July 2014	3
P2 28 Aug 2014	2
P2 4 April 2015	5
P3	1
P4	3
P5	2
P7	6
<b>TOTAL P=5</b>	<b>TOTAL R=26</b>



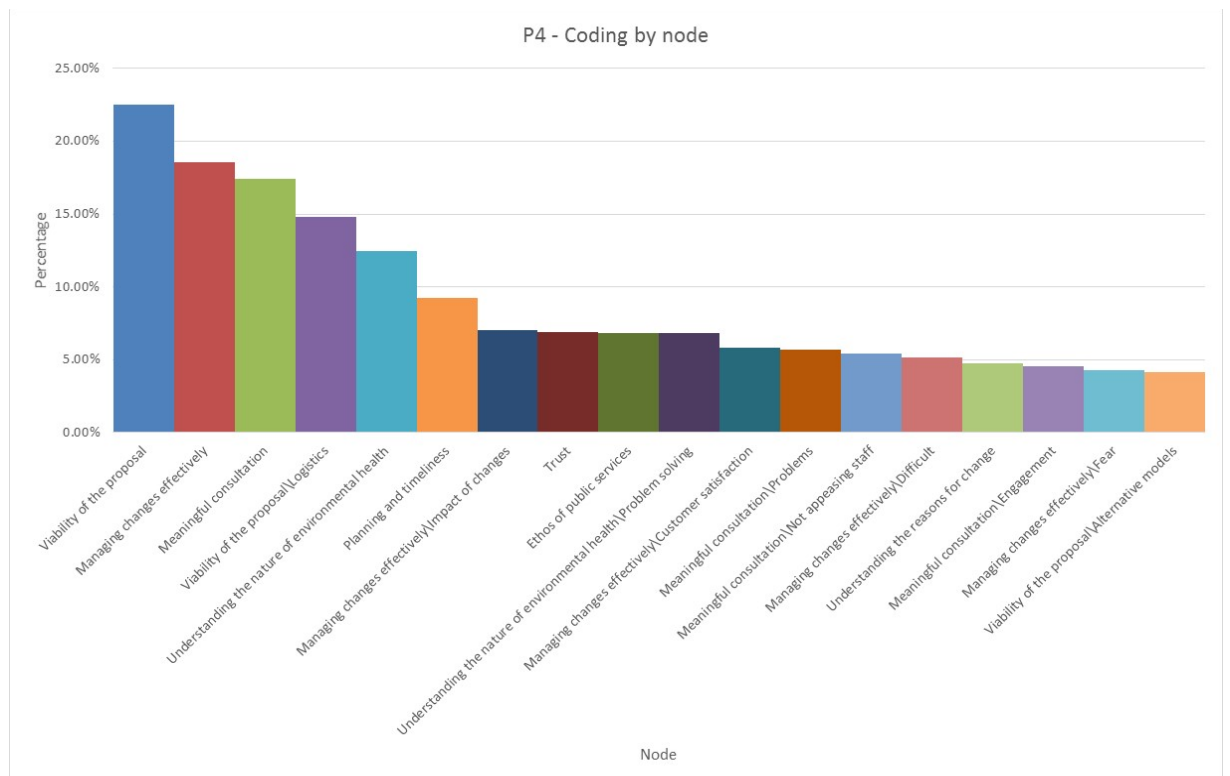
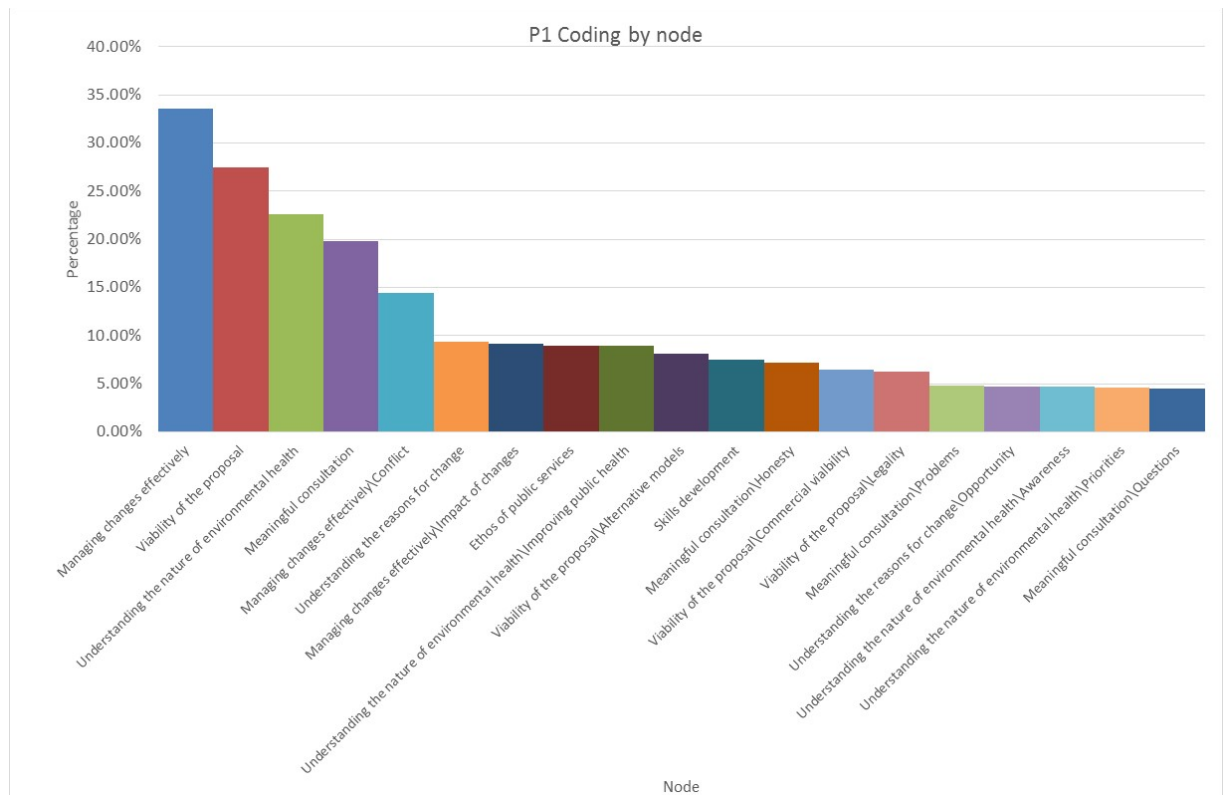
**Table N49: Participant references for the sub-theme: Risk**

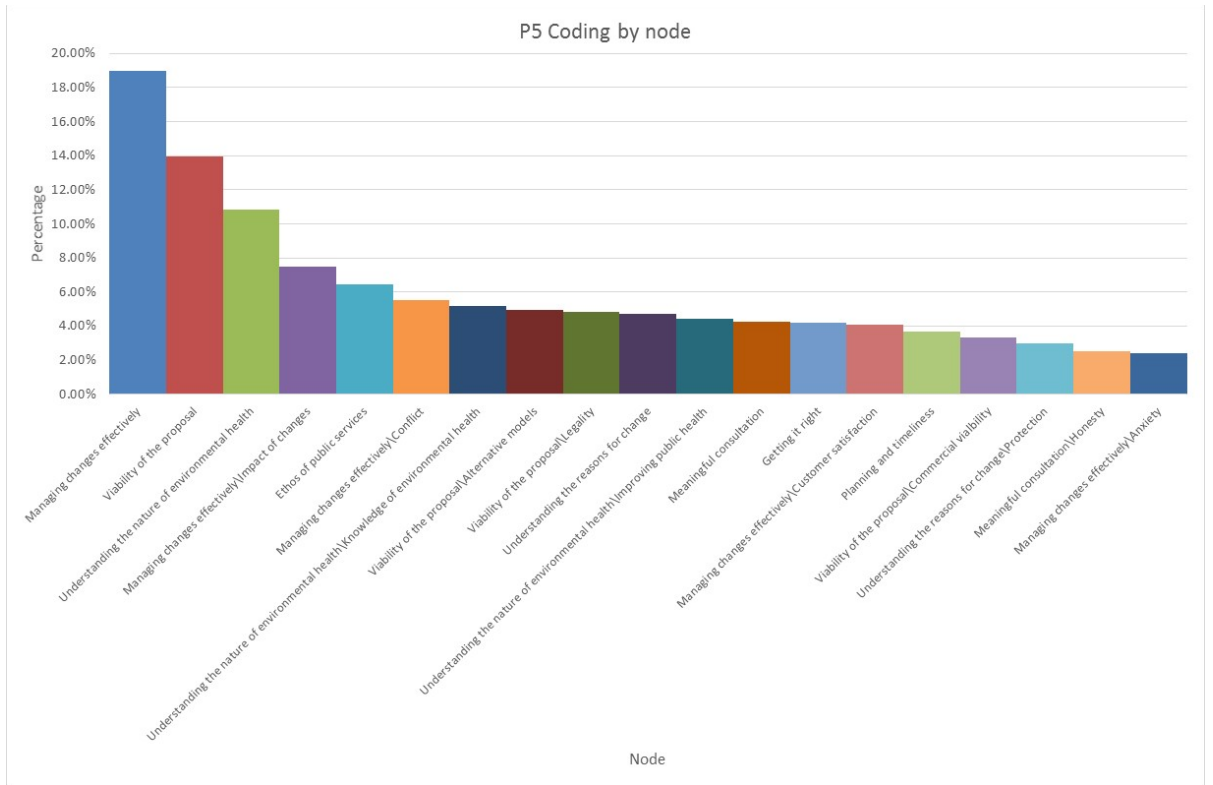
Sub-theme: RISK	
Participant (P)	References (R)
P1	1
P2	7
P6	2
P7	7
P9	12
P10	3
P11	5
<b>TOTAL P=7</b>	<b>TOTAL R=37</b>



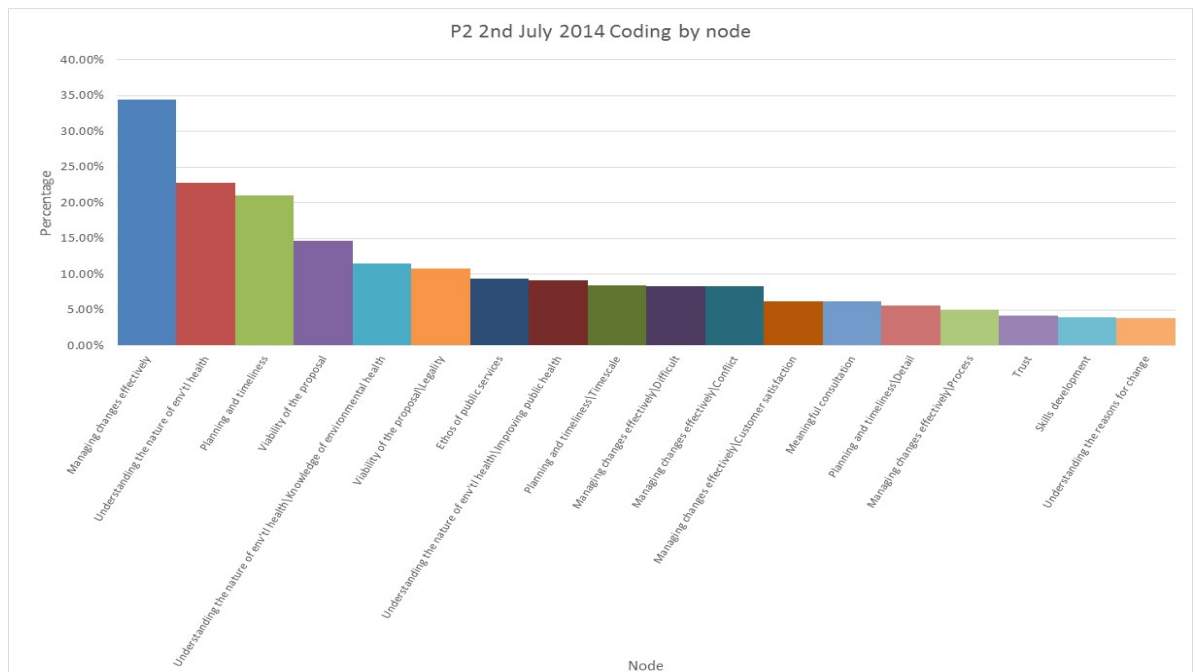
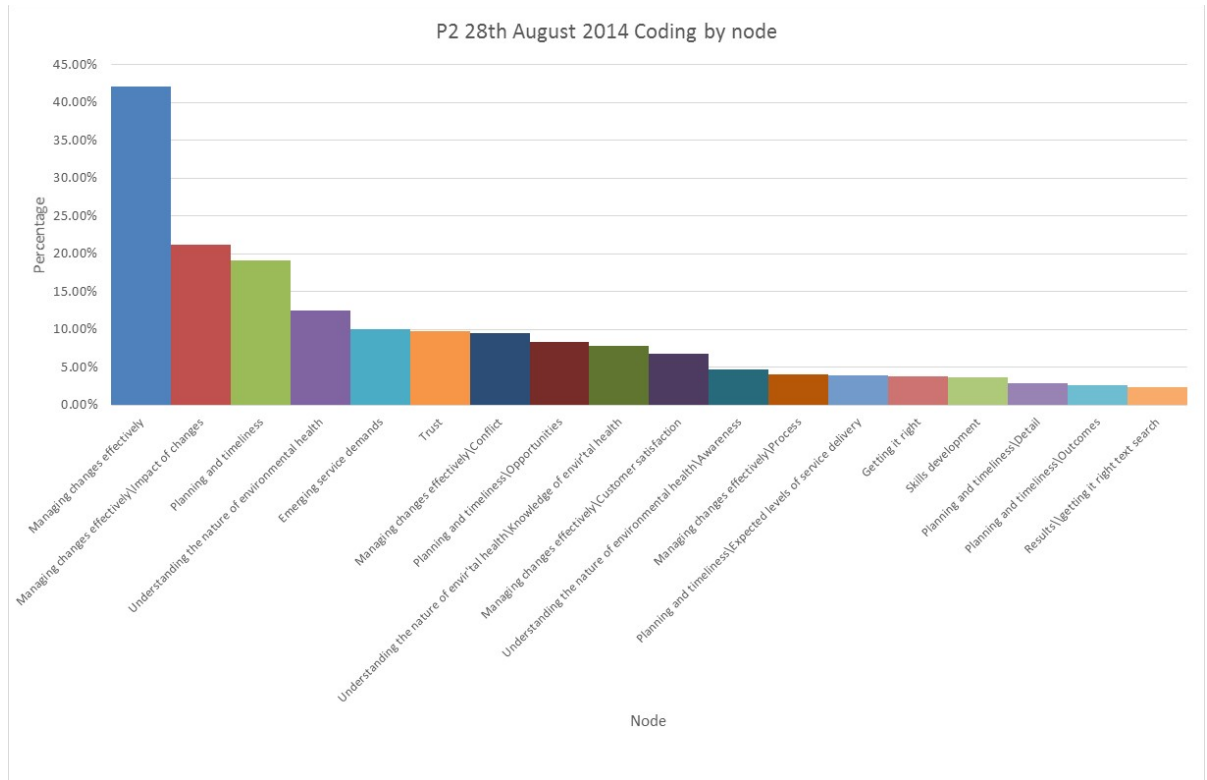
## Appendix O: Details of data coding for each participant

### Front Line EHPs P1, P4, P5

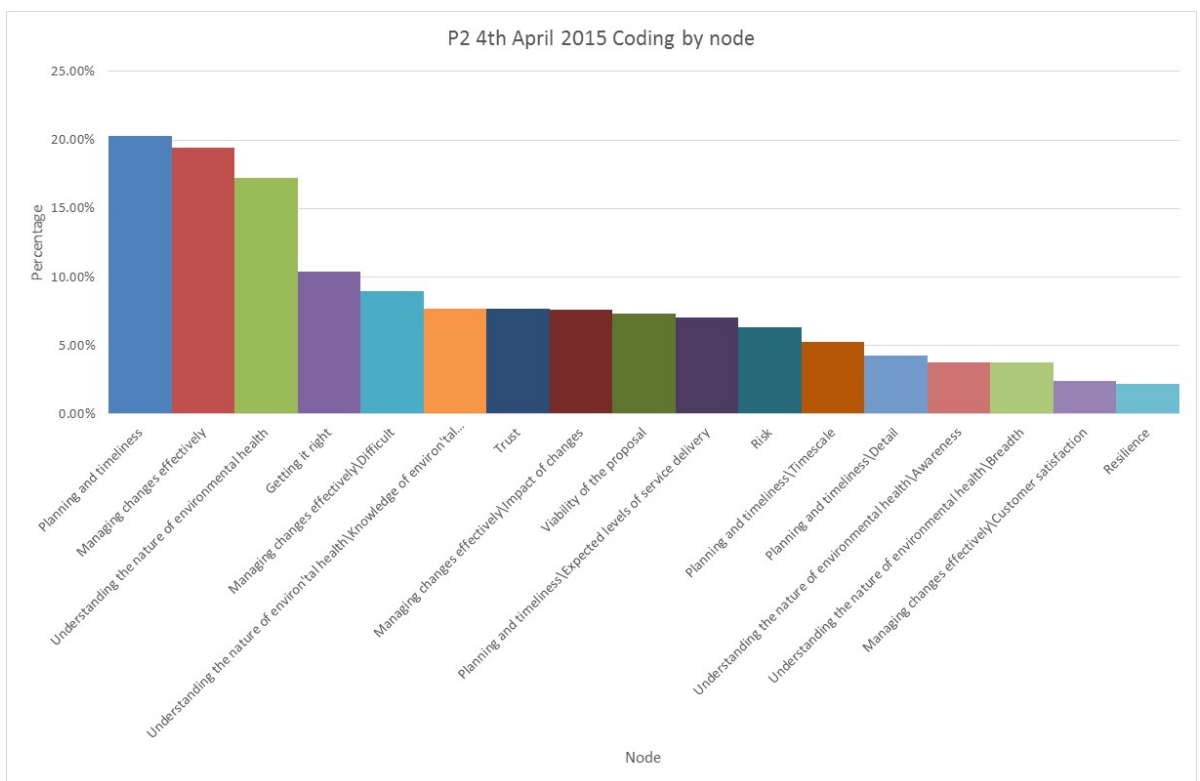
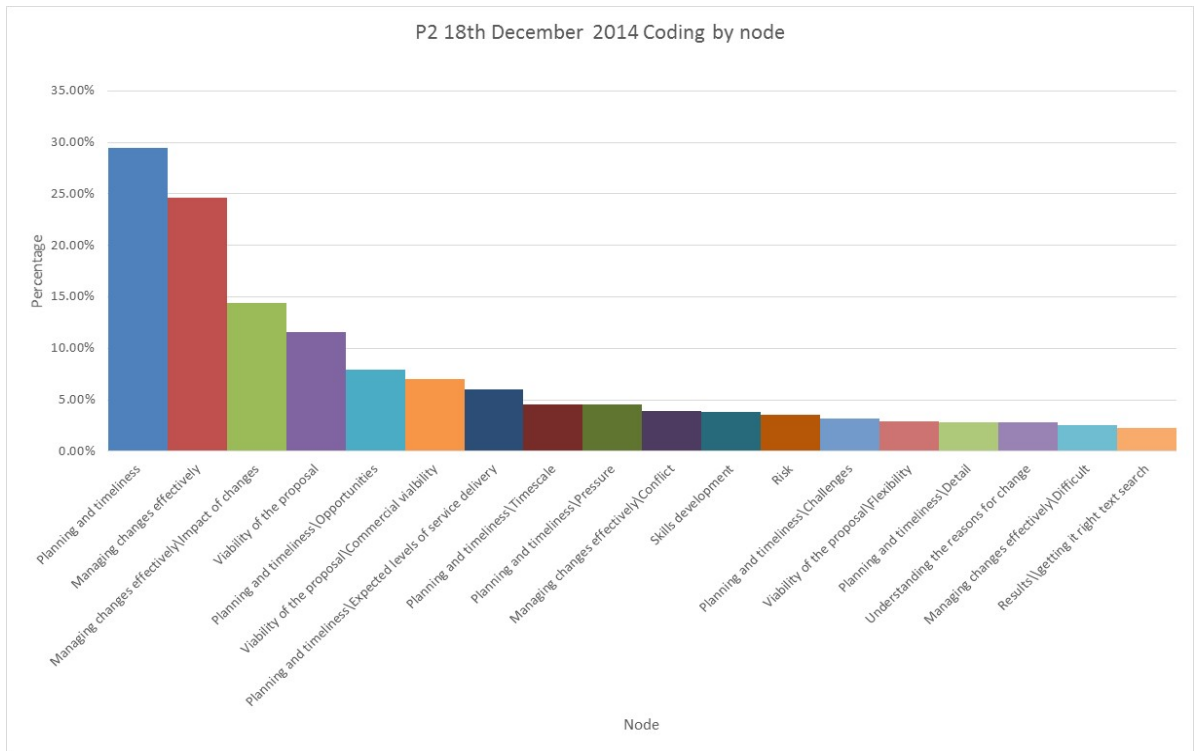


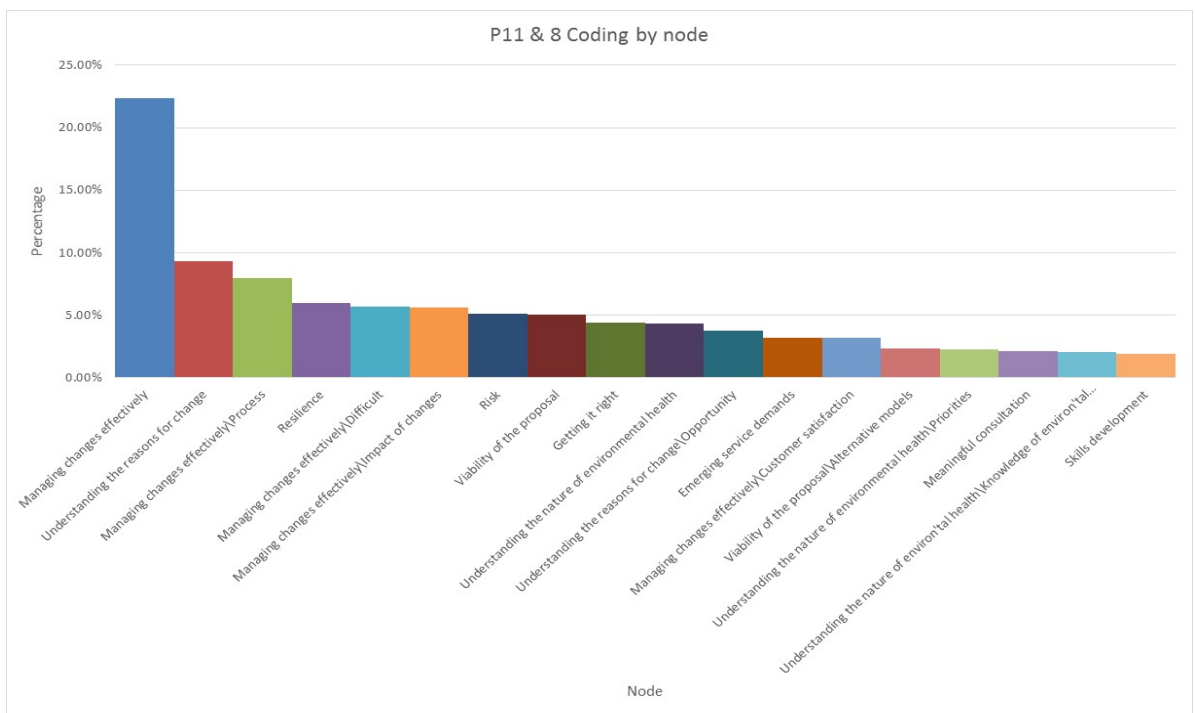
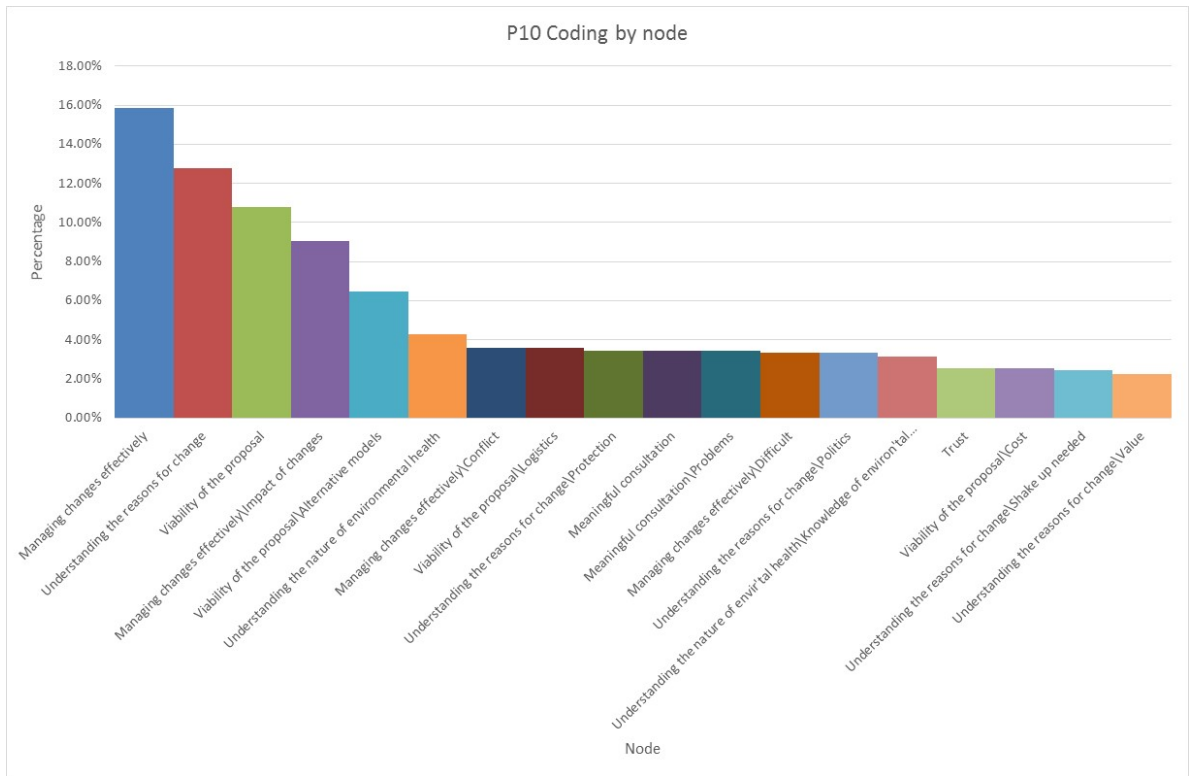


## Middle Managers P2, P10, P11



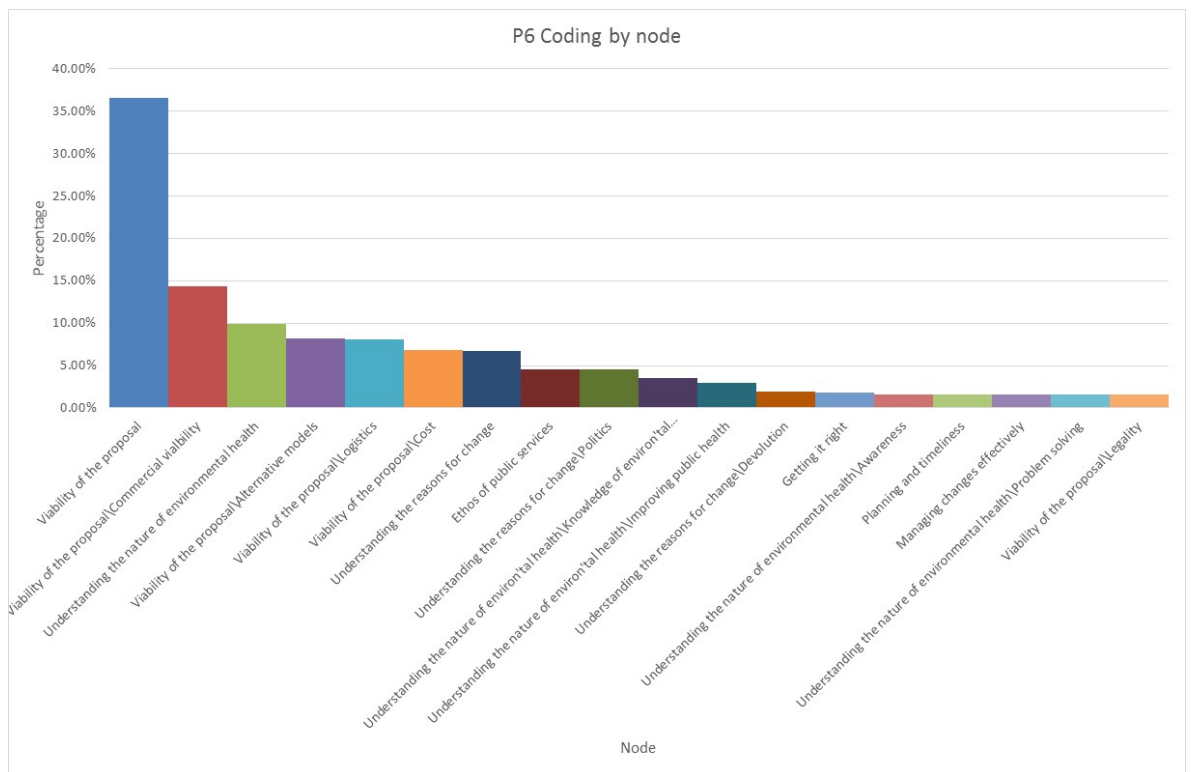
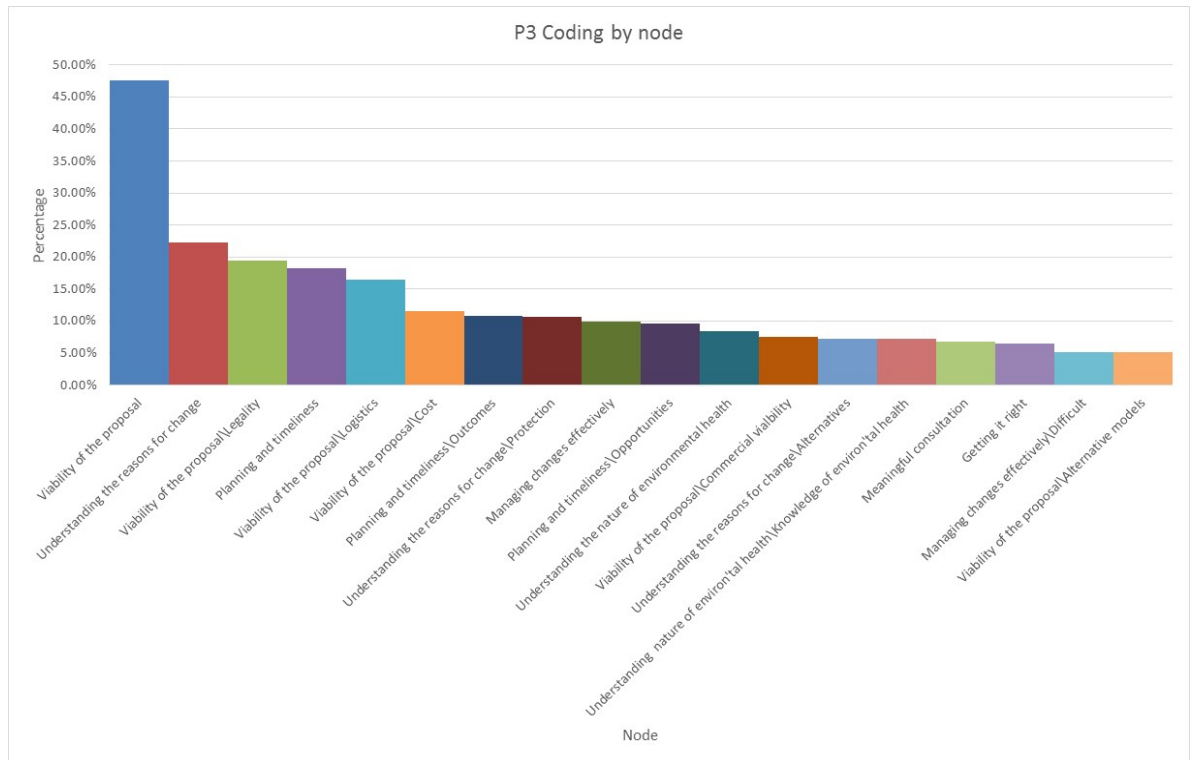


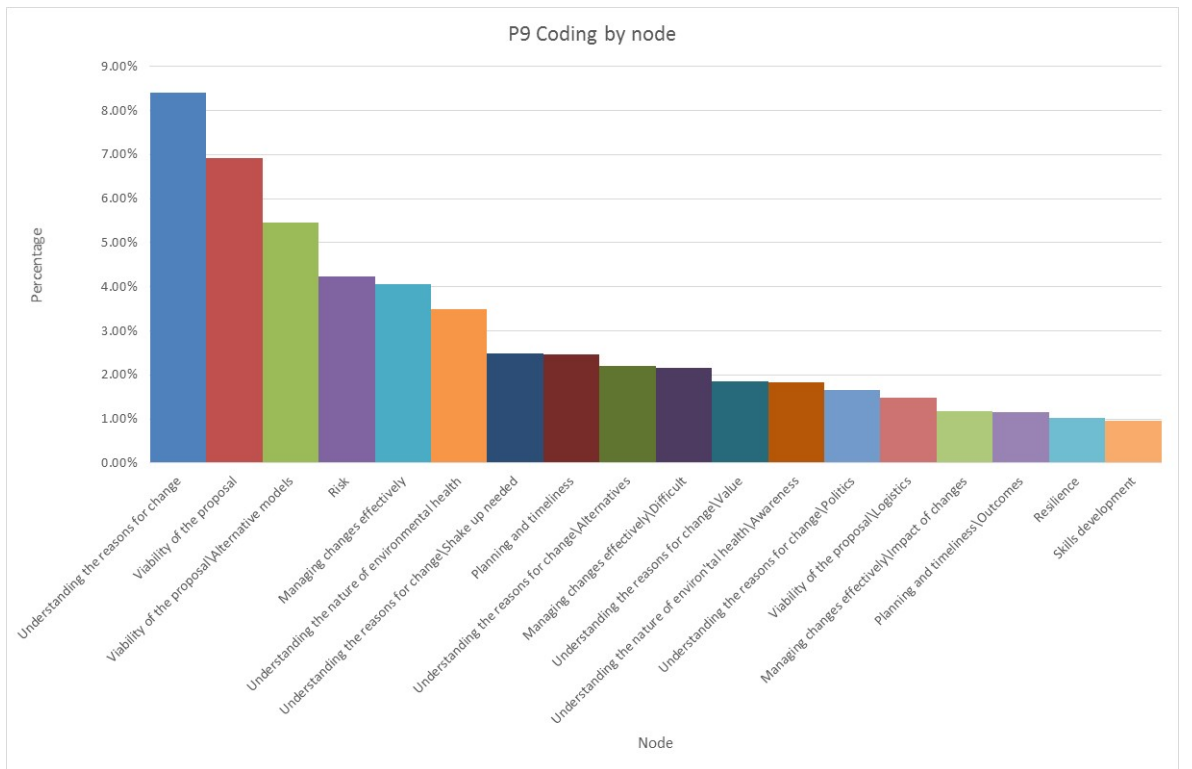
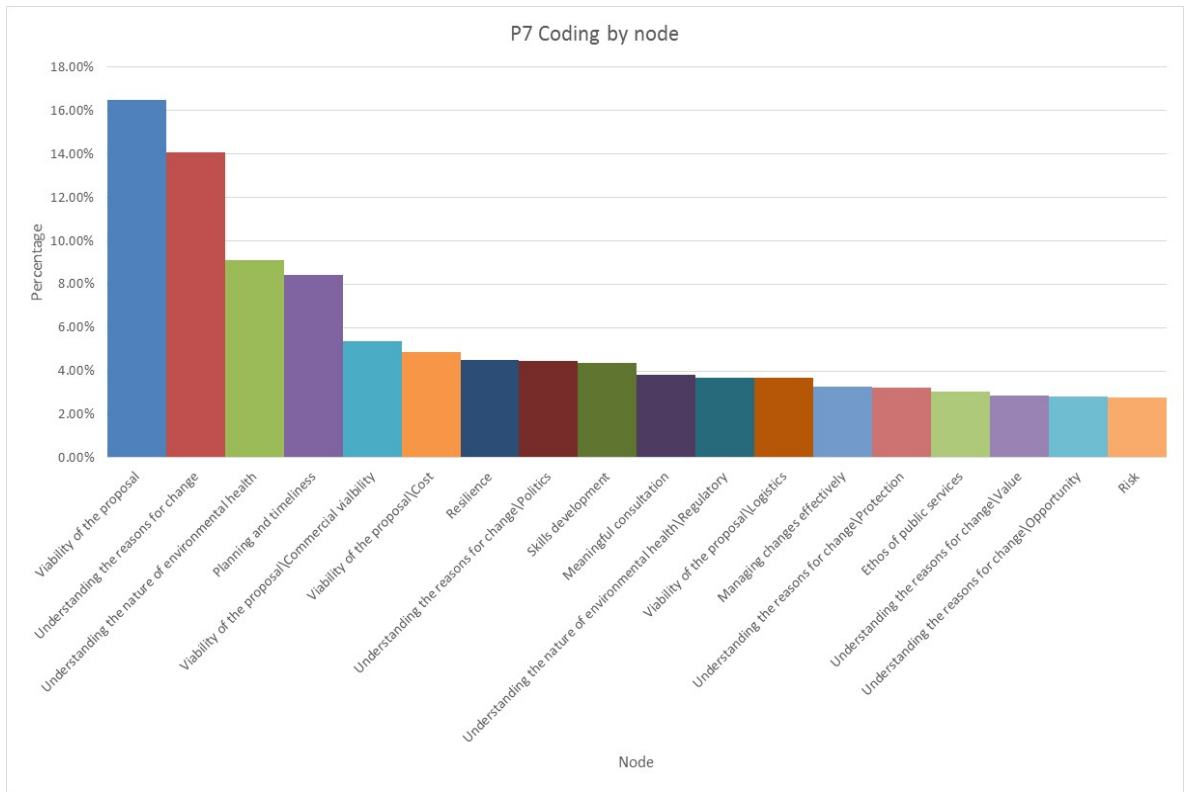




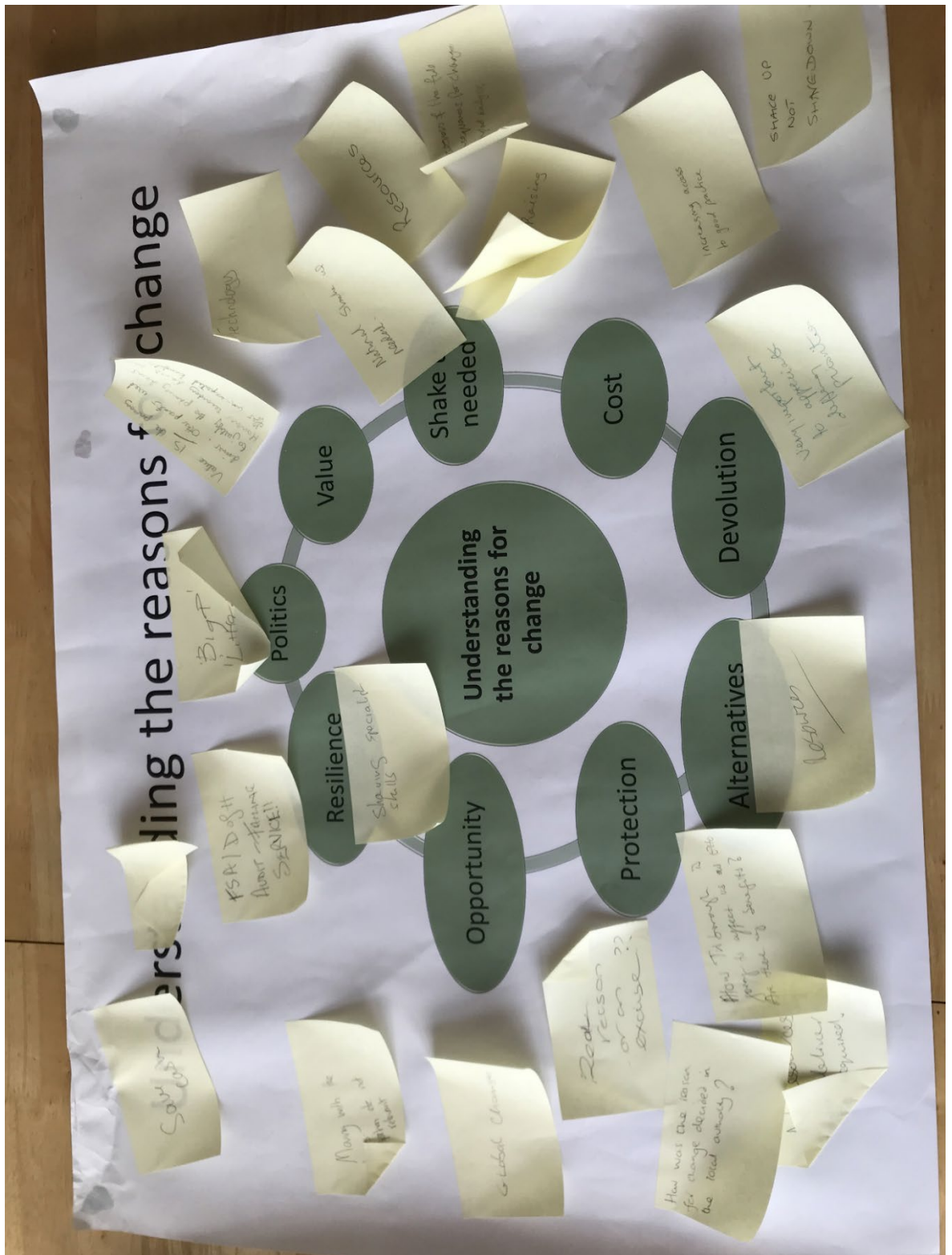
**NB: P8 & P11 (entered into NVivo as P11 as this was a joint interview)**

## Senior Managers P3, P6, P7, P9

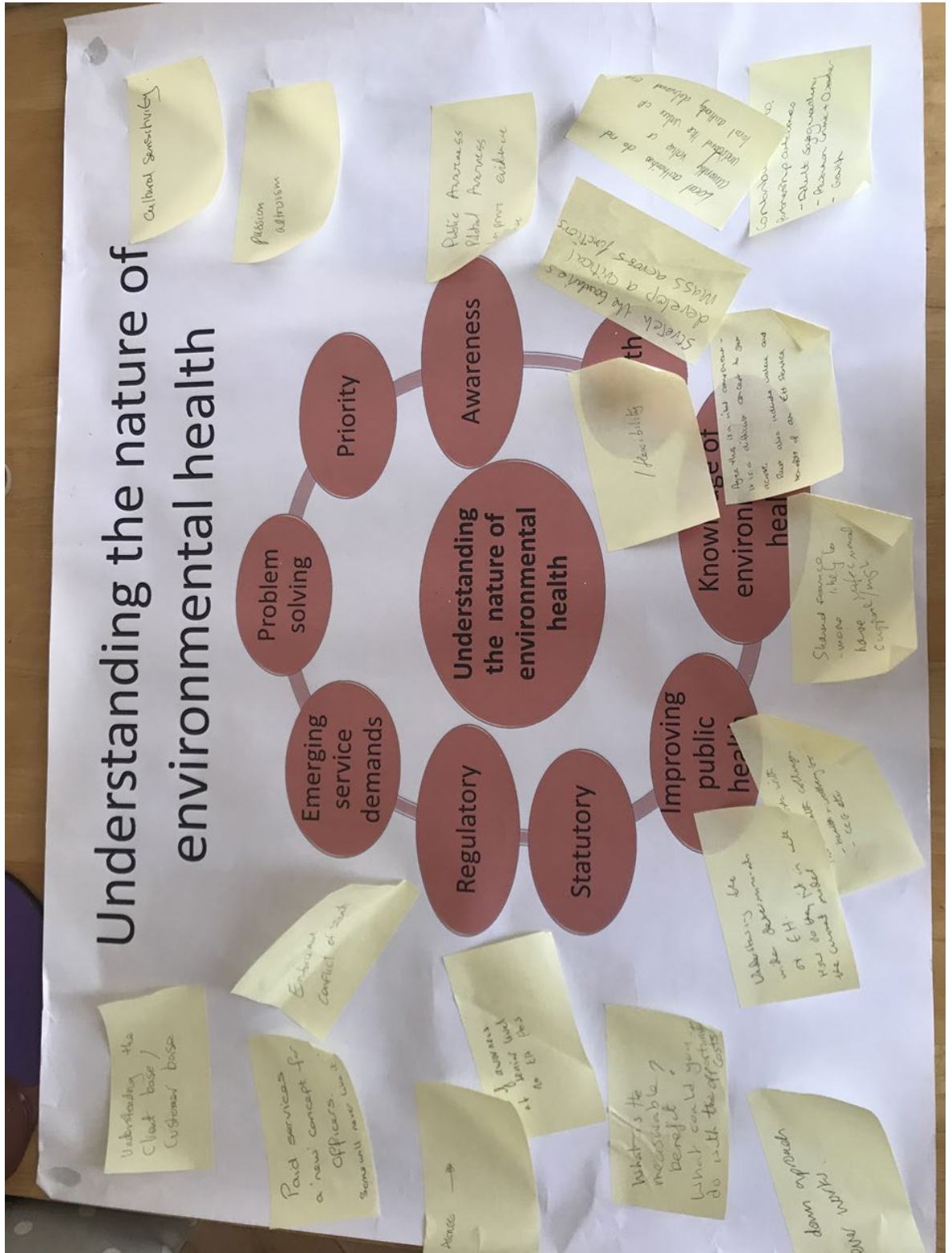




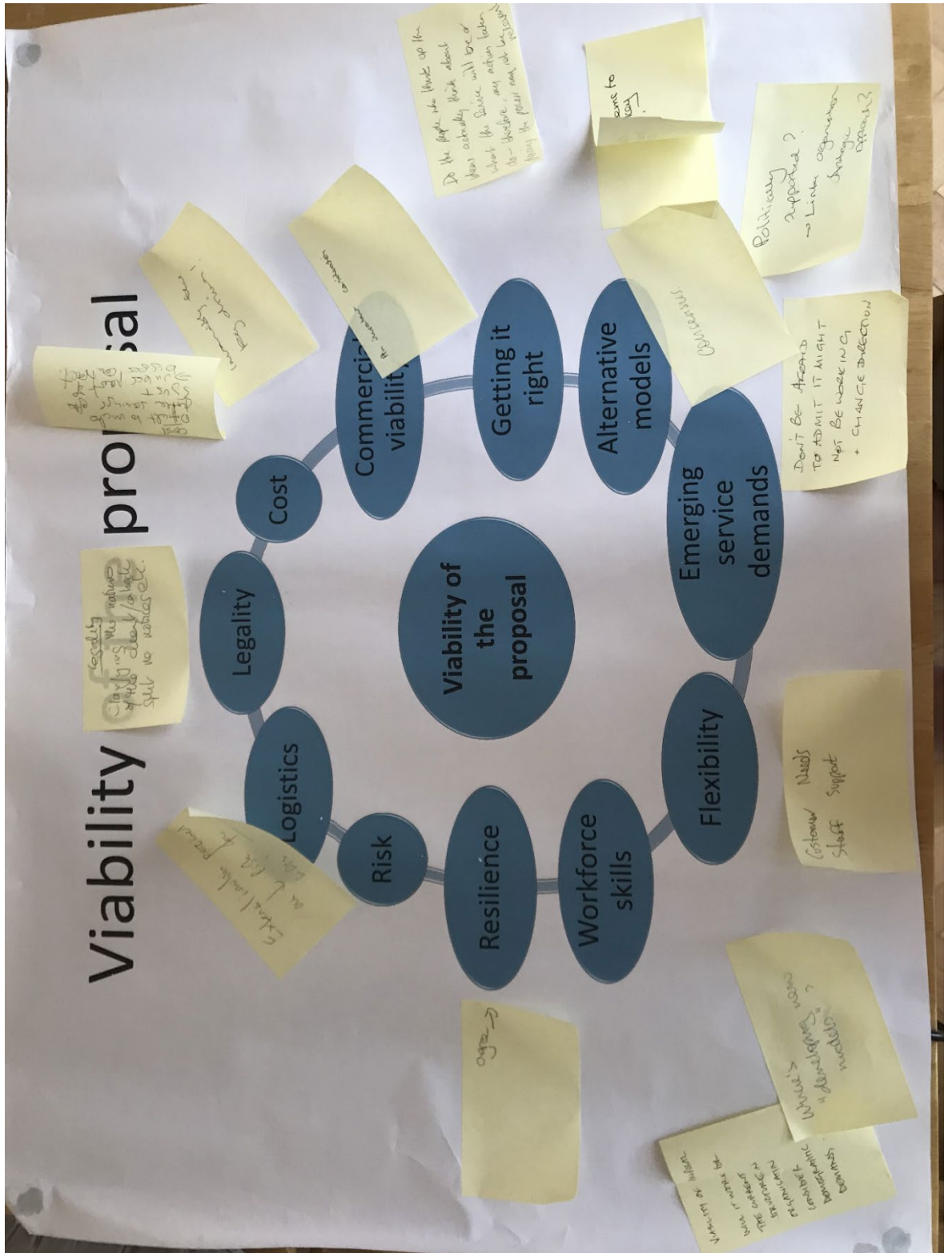
**Appendix P: Understanding the reasons for change: Audience participation commentary on the Emerging Themes (Chartered Institute of Environmental Health 115th National Conference, Nottingham October 2015)**



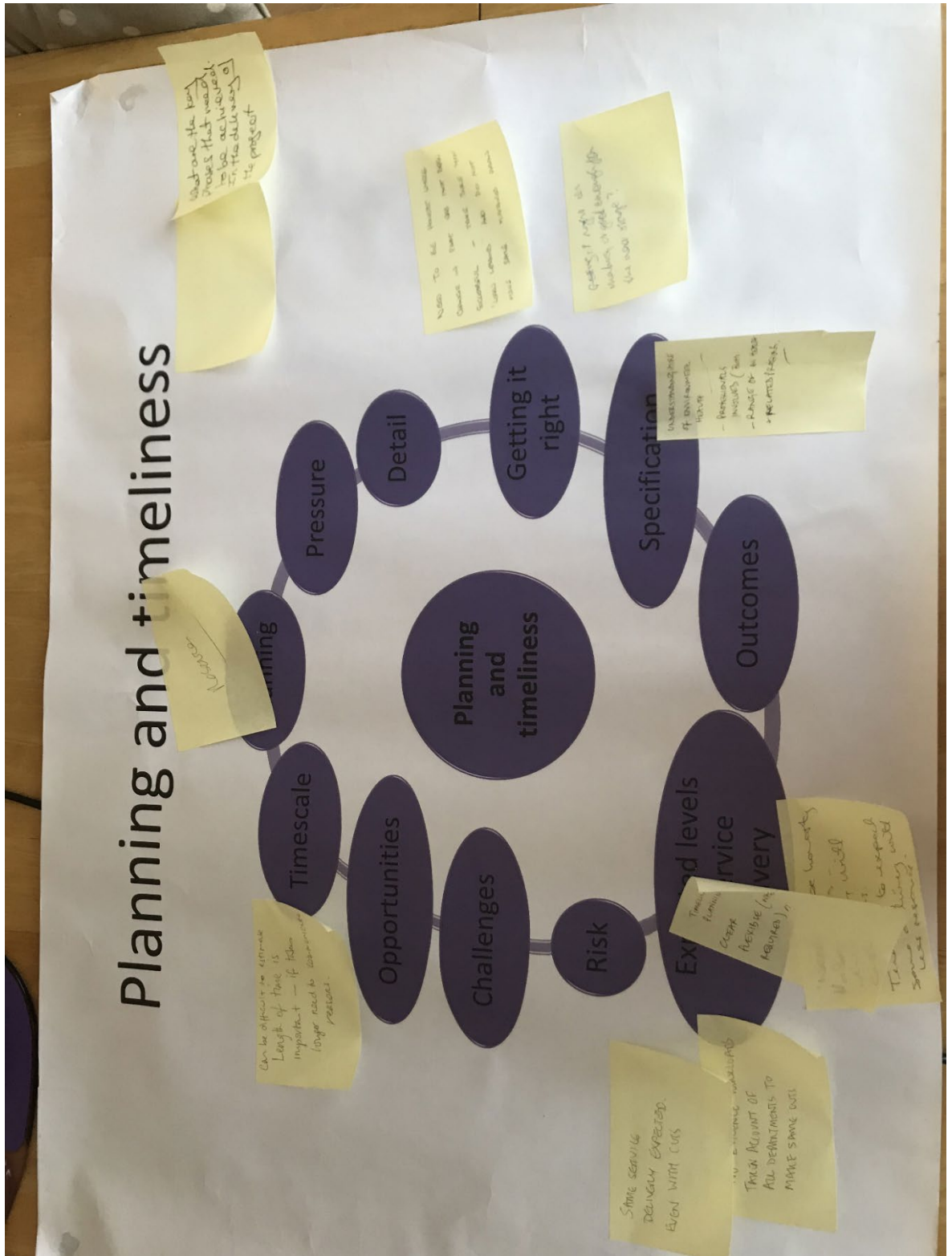
**Appendix Q: Understanding the nature of Environmental Health: Audience participation commentary on the Emerging Themes (Chartered Institute of Environmental Health 115th National Conference, Nottingham October 2015)**



**Appendix R: Viability of the Proposal: Audience participation commentary on the Emerging Themes (Chartered Institute of Environmental Health 115th National Conference, Nottingham October 2015)**

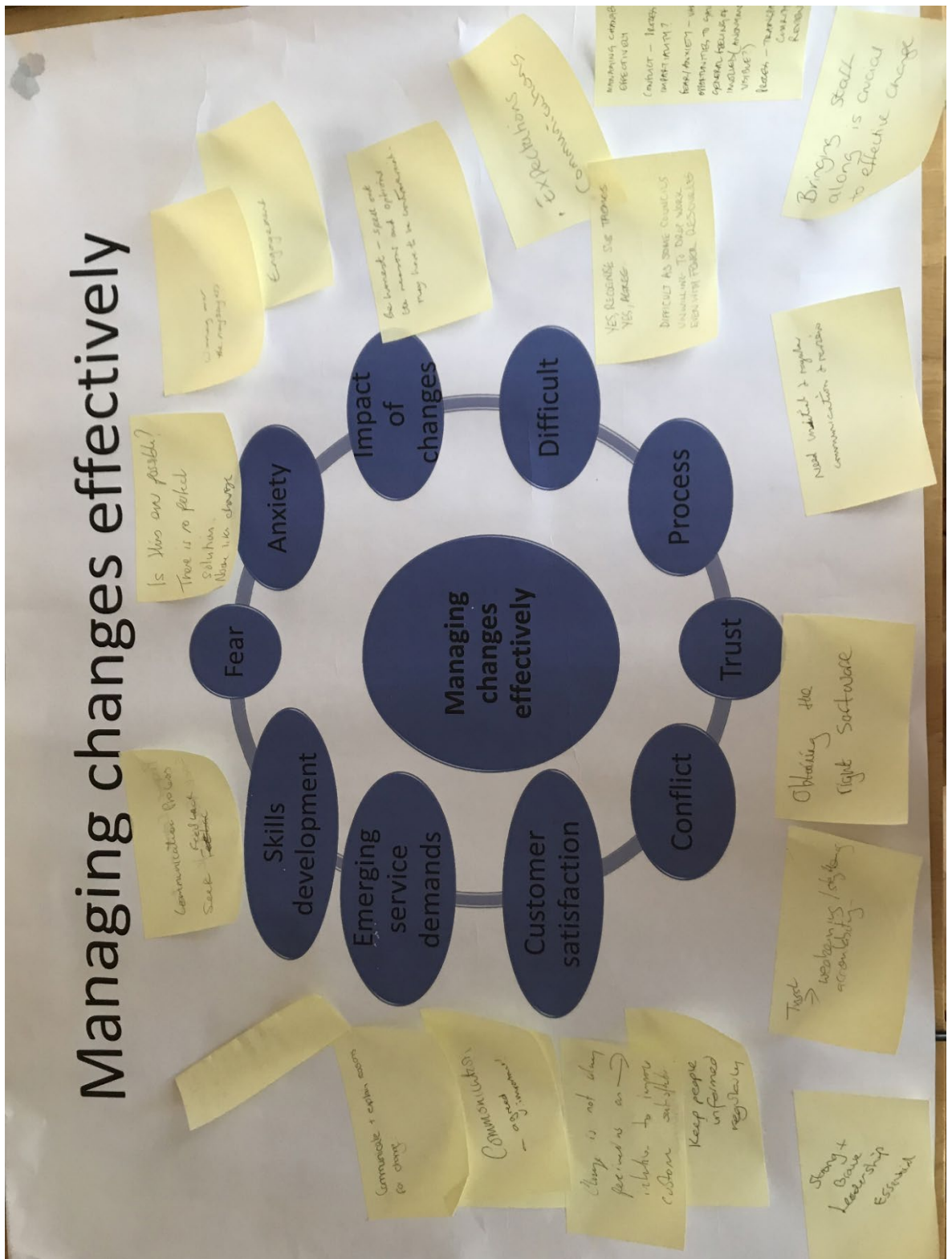


**Appendix S: Planning and Timeliness: Audience participation commentary on the Emerging Themes (Chartered Institute of Environmental Health 115th National Conference, Nottingham October 2015)**

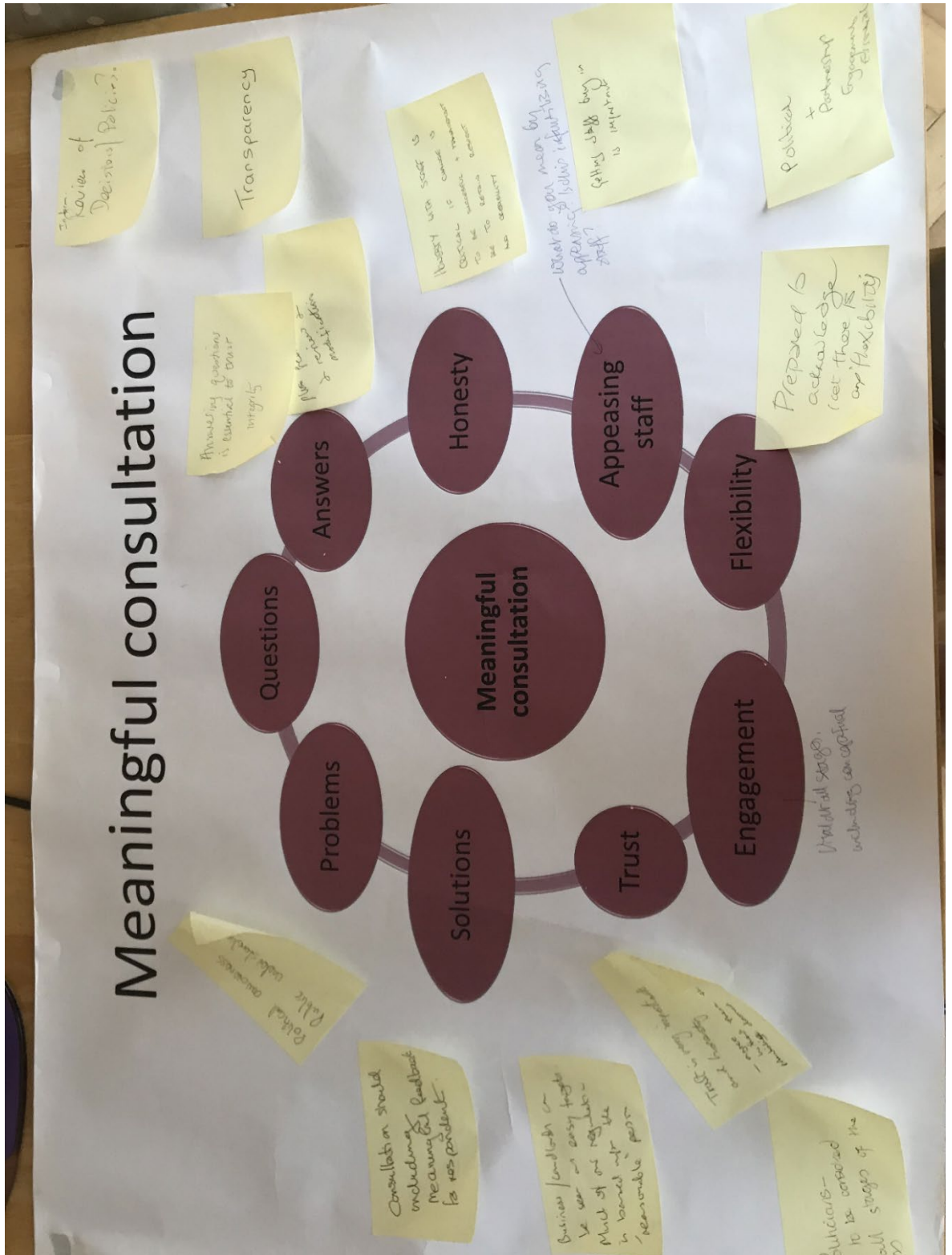




**Appendix T: Managing Changes Effectively: Audience participation commentary on the Emerging Themes (Chartered Institute of Environmental Health 115th National Conference, Nottingham October 2015)**



**Appendix U: Meaningful Consultation: Audience participation commentary on the Emerging Themes (Chartered Institute of Environmental Health 115th National Conference, Nottingham October 2015)**



## Appendix V: Consultant comments

### **CONSULTANT REVIEW - Responding to the risk of reducing resource: A study of the evolution of English Environmental Health Services**

Three heads of environmental health services from local authorities who were not involved in the initial stage of the research have agreed to consider the findings and the next step is to further refine the emergent themes into a product which can facilitate environmental health services wishing to draw on the lessons learned to inform their future practice.

#### **Participant Name: 12**

The paper provided is entitled *Responding to the risk of reducing resource: A study of the evolution of English Environmental Health Services* and summarises the findings to date and takes into account the refinements suggested at the 115<sup>th</sup> CIEH National conference 2015. The paper will be presented as part of the ICUR 2016 proceedings but is otherwise confidential.

Please could you review the findings as follows and return your completed review by 10th July 2016? You can add your comments to this document under sections 1-3.

**1. To read and consider the content of the paper and to add your commentary in the light of your past and or current experience of managing environmental health services in a climate of reducing resource and potentially evolving service models. Here, a detailed freestyle commentary would be most helpful.**

I have read the paper and think that it very clearly represents the changing and emerging service delivery models in local government. The challenges highlighted are relevant and accurately reflect strategic change management considerations faced by senior managers in local government at this time. The highlighted influencing sub-themes are particularly insightful and on reflection could be applied to many of the strategic change programmes that I am leading on – for example, reviews of other statutory services such as libraries, children's centres and field officer roles across the organisation.

**2. To consider how the emergent themes presented in the paper might be developed into a product which can facilitate environmental health services wishing to draw on the lessons learned to inform their future practice.**

#### **Questions to consider:**

**a) What would be most useful for environmental health service managers?**

- To develop a simple 'how to' toolkit for service managers who have been tasked with delivering sustainable EH services, in the context/constraints of a local authority medium and long term financial planning
- To include – good practice guide
- Reference to deliver models that are a success
- Reference material – including published local authority decisions/reports/academic research etc

**b) How could the lessons learned be drawn on to inform future service development?**

- I think in the context of the need for constant service re-design, questioning of what we are doing, why we are doing it and the 'how' - ie the latter being the purpose of this research
- Putting this research in the context of these three pillars – what, why, **how** - **highlight the change management barriers/good practice** highlighted in this research

**c) What format might be most accessible?**

- To embed the learning from this research a communication and marketing plan would be required, to ensure that the audience is defined and communication/engagement method deployed appropriately
- I would think that the key audience/stakeholders would be EH Service Managers and senior leadership teams in local government, providers of services (private sector Capita etc), cabinet members, professional institutions, local/regional EH bodies – eg SWERF, national regulators – need their buy in. Different marketing/comms methods would be required for each to make it meaningful and ensure research is used to inform EH service change programmes
- E learning toolkit would be good – a deal with RHIAMS - many of us are already members?
- Need branding and social media campaign
- Jointly sponsored with CIEH/Riams, national regulator?

**d) How could the information be made most accessible?**

- See above

**e) Anything else you think should be taken into consideration when disseminating the findings.**

- Need a comprehensive marketing, communication and engagement plan
- Need to secure funding and do a comprehensive jobs

**3. Any other points that you would like to make regarding the findings.**

- This research is timely, robust and relevant to EH and senior local government managers
- We must make good use of it and ensure that it is accessible and the findings are transformed in to practical products to help EH Managers embrace the challenges of the next five years.

## **CONSULTANT REVIEW - Responding to the risk of reducing resource: A study of the evolution of English Environmental Health Services**

Three heads of environmental health services from local authorities who were not involved in the initial stage of the research have agreed to consider the findings and the next step is to further refine the emergent themes into a product which can facilitate environmental health services wishing to draw on the lessons learned to inform their future practice.

### **Participant Name: 13**

The paper provided is entitled *Responding to the risk of reducing resource: A study of the evolution of English Environmental Health Services* and summarises the findings to date and takes into account the refinements suggested at the 115<sup>th</sup> CIEH National conference 2015. The paper will be presented as part of the ICUR 2016 proceedings but is otherwise confidential.

Please could you review the findings as follows and return your completed review by 10th July 2016? You can add your comments to this document under sections 1-3.

**1. To read and consider the content of the paper and to add your commentary in the light of your past and or current experience of managing environmental health services in a climate of reducing resource and potentially evolving service models. Here, a detailed freestyle commentary would be most helpful.**

The paper very much resonates with my own experience of working as an environmental health practitioner in local government for 37 years. There has always been the need for change and service delivery has to adapt to reflect the needs of the local area, new legislation, political direction, innovation and new ways of working. The speed of change has significantly increased in recent years with budget reductions and local authorities having a more commercial approach. Managers would benefit from tools to help them through the process of re-shaping their services. The identified themes cover the main steps of the process.

**Understanding the reasons for change** is key and I feel this theme could be expanded. The profile of environmental health in local authorities has fallen over the years due to re-structures and merging of services. There used to be chief environmental health officers at tier 1, but now the most senior environmental health officer is likely to be at tier 3 or 4. This often means that environmental health services are poorly understood by politicians and top management. The profession is not good at writing up case studies and providing evidence to demonstrate the value of the services provided. There is a need to provide more evidence to decision makers during the change process. In many local authorities environmental health services have become fragmented e.g. private sector housing being with public sector housing and food and pollution being with trading standards. Although recently the trend seems to be to bring all environmental health services back together under the term "regulatory services". There does seem to be a lot of variation in structure and service provision in different local authorities which could make shared services and other models harder to achieve. Local politics plays a major influence on service delivery. The four year political cycle and annual budget setting makes it very hard for long term change. My local authority was going to share

services with an adjoining local authority when local elections resulted in a change of political party and the deal was immediately called off.

Field officers tend to be more focussed on getting on with their job and can be resistant to change especially if they have been in the same job for a long time. Finding a champion who can see the need and benefits of change is important. They can influence and help staff to see the reasons for change. Managers have to be open and honest about any proposed change so staff fully understand the implications and can make informed decisions. In my experience some staff will embrace the changes and see the opportunities while other staff will re-consider their position.

So politics, value, shake up, costs, devolution, alternatives, protection, opportunity and resilience are all key. I would also add income generation and alternative funding as additional influencing sub themes. For example providing services to food premises managers or landlord for a fee to help them get their food premises or house up to standard rather than going down the regulatory route. There are alternative funding opportunities around such as the Public Health budget or government department funding for specific projects. Having somebody who can write bids is essential.

I totally agree that the ethos of public service and environmental health should be protected. The Chartered Institute of Environmental Health (CIEH) has a role here. The professional values and skills of environmental health need to be retained.

In my local authority the condition of private sector housing was and is a key issue and important to local politicians which certainly helped to raise the profile of that part of environmental services. House condition surveys and data about activity and outcomes helped to inform the decision makers. Also seeing links to other areas such as Health and Social Care was important.

Review and change is good as it provides an opportunity to re-launch services and give a fresh approach. However, it is important that it is clear what outcomes the service is going to deliver. Once the outcomes are agreed it is easier to design the service to deliver those outcomes whether it is a shared service, mutual, out-sourced or retained in-house.

**Managing changes effectively** is a vital part of the change process. I have seen great ideas fall beside the wayside because the benefits of the change were not properly explained to staff and the decision makers. Top management will be constantly looking at ways to shape services within the year on year budget constraints. Many of the ideas will never actually proceed and staff won't be aware of these discussions. When a possible approach is decided on there is often little time allowed to "sell" it to the staff. It is vital that the process is properly planned to ensure that staff are brought up to speed about the reasoning for making the change and can have the opportunity to feed into the process. Trust is definitely an important factor in ensuring the success of a scheme. Much time and effort needs to be put in to gain the trust of staff and build relationships with other organisations. Understanding the culture and language used by different organisations is important. A good evidence base of what the service delivers is key to help shape the new approach and to maintain the fundamental values of the service.

Where possible it is useful to be able to visit and speak to other local authorities and see the service models they are operating. Staff representatives should be involved in this process. By seeing various service models in action increases understanding and improves the decision making process.

With shared service or out-sourcing models there will be a need for contract management which is often a weak area in local authorities. This skill needs developing and is a training and development opportunity for managers. There does need to be a clear service level agreement setting out what is to be delivered and the outcomes expected. This will need regular monitoring. Any contract or agreement does require some flexibility built in to reflect the complexity of environmental health services and the ability to respond to emergencies such as a food poisoning outbreak or major flooding of the area.

A senior manager leading the change process does not necessarily have to be an environmental health practitioner as long as that person works closely with people in the profession and listens to their views. As said earlier, it is all about trust and good communication. During the change process regular briefing sessions, open surgeries and progress reports are all appreciated by staff. The more transparency there is and the better the communication the smoother the process will be. Staff will be fearful of change and this needs to be acknowledged. People will go through the various stages of change from denial, challenge, accept or disagree to adaptation. The more support the easier the process.

**Understanding the nature of environmental health** is not clearly articulated. Environmental health practitioners are not always good at selling the benefits of the service to others. They get on with the job with little fanfare and rarely produce case studies or publish papers on their achievements. Building up a good evidence base can be used to demonstrate the value of the service. There is a wealth of knowledge and experience but very little of this is documented. Simply writing up the outcomes of a case, whether it be the improvement of a private rented house or preventing food poisoning would raise awareness and clearly articulate what the service achieves. The CIEH has a big role in raising the process and could do more in this area.

Performance indicators are important but must be meaningful. Outcomes are the best indicators and it is also useful to include customer satisfaction data. An annual report on progress during the previous year is also a good way of demonstrating what has been achieved. It is not easy to demonstrate “environmental healthiness” through statistics and indicators. A case study on “a day in the life of an environmental health practitioner” is a good way of profiling the service and showing that there is more to the profession than just taking enforcement action. A key approach is pro-active work such as surveying an area for houses in multiple occupation. This needs to be built into any contract or delivery model to allow flexibility of approach.

**Viability of the proposal** is a crucial area. It is important to get the model right and be realistic about outcomes and cost benefits. Too often the focus is on doing more with a reduced budget and having unrealistic expectations around income generation. It is true that environmental health services have shrunk in recent years and that shared services across a number of local authority areas is probably the way to go, unless there is a significant issue in a

single local authority that justifies keeping the status quo. Outsourcing is still in its infancy and it is not clear if it is the way to go. I agree that it would need to be more than environmental health services to operate commercially and I would question whether there is the appetite to do this.

There is a risk of a local authority discharging its functions through a private sector third party and governance would have to be very robust. I am not aware of any challenge around this, so probably something that needs to be kept under review.

I agree that environmental health is more than just providing a regulatory service. Giving advice and help and working in partnership with businesses is equally important. This may well not be attractive for commercial models.

Shared services across a number of local authorities is attractive as savings can be made by reducing the management structure and there will be more resource to mobilise in emergencies. It also enables the staff to focus on and target the areas of greatest risk and be more pro-active in their approach.

A SWOT analysis of the various models showing the pros and cons would be very useful when deciding which approach is best for a particular authority. This could be part of a toolkit for managers to help them through the process.

### **Meaningful consultation**

Staff often say that they have not been properly consulted and that the outcome is a forgone conclusion. Sometimes this is said as a defence mechanism when staff are feeling insecure and in denial. To overcome this as far as possible the reasoning for the proposed approach and the thought process involved should be set out in a formal consultation document. This document needs to be open and transparent and be honest about any options. Staff should be encouraged to give their views and responses to their questions need to be published and regularly updated. Regular briefing sessions and briefing notes on progress help to keep staff informed and make them feel included in the process. I do advocate the use of champions from within the service to add another dimension to the consultation.

A good evidence base can demonstrate the demand and need for the service and inform the level of resources required. I don't advocate time management matrixes as these usually fail to take into account the interaction with the Public and their specific needs. Field officers are much better placed to advise on the time it takes to complete an inspection and all the follow ups.

There will be differences between local authorities and service agreements/contracts will need to reflect this. In time it is likely that common practices can be developed and these differences will disappear. The political dimension is tricky and not easily predictable. Regular meetings with Members can help to avoid sudden changes in direction.



## **Planning and timeliness**

Plenty of time should be factored in for the planning of the new service. It is vital that planning is thorough and tested to ensure it stands up. The point about commissioners is well made and it is important for the service manager to engage with the commissioner to ensure nothing is overlooked. If possible staff in the service are best placed to shape the service specification and develop the performance indicators. Short timescales can be set for implementation but regular reviews should be built in to monitor progress and adjust the timescales if necessary. Once the new service is operating it needs to be regularly monitored to check that the service specification is being met and improvements made where necessary. It is very likely that adjustments will be required in the early days as the new service beds in. This can be a weak area as decision makers focus on the next initiative and overlook any follow up. Proper governance should overcome this.

In conclusion, in my view, the emergent themes cover the main issues that need to be considered when re-shaping an environmental health service and make a useful tool for managers of these services. When considering future approaches for a service it is important to also consider the “do nothing” option and to make it clear why this option should be discounted as a way forward.

**2. To consider how the emergent themes presented in the paper might be developed into a product which can facilitate environmental health services wishing to draw on the lessons learned to inform their future practice.**

**Questions to consider:**

- a) What would be most useful for environmental health service managers?**
- b) How could the lessons learned be drawn on to inform future service development?**
- c) What format might be most accessible?**
- d) How could the information be made most accessible?**
- e) Anything else you think should be taken into consideration when disseminating the findings.**

a) All the emergent themes are useful for environmental health service managers, but in particular the themes for managing change effectively and meaningful consultation are likely to be of the greatest benefit. Busy managers under pressure to deliver quickly can find managing change difficult and can be tempted to take short cuts. I believe that a training package could be marketed around environmental health services and managing change effectively. Perhaps the CIEH could promote such a training package. An alternative or additionally there could be a series of seminars on the emergent themes. This is all about good practice and the cost benefits of getting the service model right. The understanding the nature of environmental health theme is about how to raise awareness of what the service is about. Managers would benefit from material that could be used to inform politicians, senior

managers and other key contacts. This could be in the form of a briefing note or presentation. The use of social media could also be explored. What is needed is tools to get the message across about the nature of environmental health.

b) Case studies would be useful and networking events where managers could get together and share their experiences. A forum could be set up for environmental health managers on delivering environmental health services. This could be an existing group like the Association of London Environmental Health Managers or through the CIEH regional network. It would be great to be able to share the different delivery models and learn about successes and any pitfalls.

c) This depends on the individual. Some will prefer face to face networking at meetings while others may prefer social media – on-line methods. Probably need a range of formats.

d) As it is targeting environmental health managers I would suggest that the CIEH is a key vehicle to raise members' awareness of this product. Also local authorities could be targeted directly although there is the risk that it may not reach the intended audience.

e) The product needs to grab managers' attention so marketing will be very important. We all get bombarded with information so it has to stand out. Case studies are a popular way of showcasing particular approaches.

### **3. Any other points that you would like to make regarding the findings.**

The delivery of environmental health services is rapidly changing and a range of innovative and alternative models are being developed. These are fairly early days and this is an opportunity to raise the awareness of environmental health managers about different delivery models and how to reduce the risk and still maintain professional integrity. If possible early adopters should be encouraged to share their experience and knowledge with managers who are just starting the process to hopefully help managers to avoid any pitfalls.

Local authorities are often keen to engage consultants to review services and prepare the options for the future service. I am not convinced that this approach delivers the right outcome as consultants rarely have the in depth knowledge or insight of the work and role of the service under review. Most local authorities have the skills and knowledge to carry out reviews in-house and with the help of early adopters should be able to get the process right.

Project and programme management tools e.g. PRINCE2 methodology are useful when carrying out service reviews, planning and implementing a new service.

## **CONSULTANT REVIEW - Responding to the risk of reducing resource: A study of the evolution of English Environmental Health Services**

Three heads of environmental health services from local authorities who were not involved in the initial stage of the research have agreed to consider the findings and the next step is to further refine the emergent themes into a product which can facilitate environmental health services wishing to draw on the lessons learned to inform their future practice.

### **Participant Name: 14**

The paper provided is entitled *Responding to the risk of reducing resource: A study of the evolution of English Environmental Health Services* and summarises the findings to date and takes into account the refinements suggested at the 115<sup>th</sup> CIEH National conference 2015. The paper will be presented as part of the ICUR 2016 proceedings but is otherwise confidential.

Please could you review the findings as follows and return your completed review by 10th July 2016? You can add your comments to this document under sections 1-3.

#### **1. To read and consider the content of the paper and to add your commentary in the light of your past and or current experience of managing environmental health services in a climate of reducing resource and potentially evolving service models. Here, a detailed freestyle commentary would be most helpful.**

My commentary is confined to the Welsh experience, with some knowledge of what has and is happening in England. It also considers the six main themes identified from the study and how these relate to experiences in Wales. My overall experience and observation is that there is no single fix to providing EH services in this continuing climate of reducing resources. It is a mixture of solutions, some providing greater fixes than others, but together the whole is greater than the sum of the parts.

Evolution of public services and continual efficiencies in Wales can be seen as a continual process. As a starting point I would return to the pre 1996 period in Wales as these could be described as the "golden years". Prior to local government reorganisation that took place under a Conservative Government on 1 April 1996 a two tier system was in place with the ENVIRONMENTAL HEALTH function delivered by District Councils (as is the case still in parts of England). 37 Welsh District Councils delivered ENVIRONMENTAL HEALTH functions, which were wide ranging (note that over the 20 years since many functions have been removed from local authorities and ENVIRONMENTAL HEALTH Departments e.g. meat inspection, environment and waste functions). At the stroke of midnight 31 March 1996 37 Chief EHOs, 37 Deputy Chief EHOs and other tiers of middle managers were severely reduced and in the new hierarchy were no longer at the top table. Career progression was severely reduced and was the start of a dumbing down of ENVIRONMENTAL HEALTH services and professional status. This situation has been getting worse over time as EHOs retired and were not replaced and restructures in local authorities seemingly did not recognise the value of ENVIRONMENTAL HEALTH professionals. This gradual decline being linked to reducing resources and being subsumed by services seen as having a greater priority. I state this as it is much harder in a unitary authority to obtain adequate funding and resources when up against Education and Adult Social Care services, the demands of which are increasing,

regardless of recent austerity. These ever financially hungry services were taking more and more of the available cake and yet their performance as measured through various league tables and other PIs worsened. It seemed to fail was to be guaranteed more resource, yet services becoming more efficient and effective such as ENVIRONMENTAL HEALTH received less.

With the removal of functions the importance of ENVIRONMENTAL HEALTH services were further “downgraded” and the new nomenclature of “regulatory services” for ENVIRONMENTAL HEALTH did nothing to assist in the recognition of the greater and wider role ENVIRONMENTAL HEALTH services played, particularly in preventive services.

Since the onset of severe austerity (over the last 4 to 5 years) ENVIRONMENTAL HEALTH services in Wales have had to adapt quickly to counteract loss of resources. In the beginning further budget salami slicing continued and any luxury of budgets for unforeseen circumstances or unexpected opportunities were lost. The Wales Audit Office Report (October 2014) summed up the situation – ENVIRONMENTAL HEALTH services in Wales were at a “tipping point”. ENVIRONMENTAL HEALTH services were not being protected and cuts to budgets and staff had been significant. In addition the Welsh Government and Westminster were introducing new duties with no or little funding and yet no duties were being taken away from ENVIRONMENTAL HEALTH departments. The situation was being reported that services were becoming untenable. In order to balance budgets some services were removed such as pest control or dog warden services. More recent commentators such as Steve Tombs have likened ENVIRONMENTAL HEALTH services as providing protection from greater harms than the Police – Better Regulation: Better for Whom? And states that the reduction in resources will expose more people to more harms. At the same time Welsh Government had embarked on a radical reshaping proposal for local government in Wales, which proposed reducing the number of LAs from 22 to 8 or 9. These external drivers forced local government and its services to consider radical and innovative solutions to ensure services (many of which are statutory) continued and at the same time cut the costs drastically. This proposal has receded recently and the new Minister, following Welsh Government elections in May 2016, has indicated that he is willing to collaborate with local government in Wales to seek solutions agreeable to all. These will certainly mean recognising the continued reduction in budgets and considering different delivery models for a host of services, including ENVIRONMENTAL HEALTH. However, such proposals are not new and *the Simpson Report - Local, Regional, National: What services are best delivered where?* kick started this new way forward. Para 3.54 onwards describes what services should be delivered and at what level, based on the perceived risks.

There has been no one response or reaction by ENVIRONMENTAL HEALTH departments in Wales to the reducing resources, but a variety of responses and these are described below.

In South Wales the regulatory services of Cardiff, Vale of Glamorgan and Bridgend Councils have combined to form *Shared Regulatory Services*, with a Board of Members to provide governance. The driver has been to find significant savings over a period, through a combination of staff reduction, income increase and budget reductions.

Through the Food Standards Agency Wales feed controls are now being delivered through regional delivery models, with the Rate Support Grant nominal financing monies for feedstuffs being removed, with an amount reduced for “efficiencies”; and then redistributed through a hypothecation formula to lead LAs for each region. Whilst hypothecation is not supported by the

Welsh LGA and Leaders of LAs, this arrangement has provided resources where they are required (rural areas with more farms are now receiving adequate resourcing) and has helped to ensure resourcing is protected to these vital services as part of farm to fork public protection. These arrangements could be extended to other ENVIRONMENTAL HEALTH services. This is not too dissimilar to the “protection” provided to education budgets and recognises the importance of ENVIRONMENTAL HEALTH services.

In Mid and West Wales an embryonic meeting in October 2012 has resulted in “*Public Protection Cymru*” a change programme to introduce efficiencies which as its building block is the procurement of a single cloud based instance of a Public Protection software system and which is mobile by default. This is seen as fundamental to provide efficiencies, support mergers, collaborations and provide resilience. Do something once, and share many times. It will also provide intelligence data in a single database across Wales so that reducing resources can be targeted to where those resources can best be utilised to protect public and environmental health. Utilising IT is seen as “creating capacity” as it releases scarce personnel resources from time consuming tasks that can be undertaken in the field or on the front line. Leading on from this are more radical ideas and discussions taking place for ENVIRONMENTAL HEALTH and also Trading Standards services under the banner of *Public Protection Cymru*. The “*Shared Regulatory Services*” concept could be taken much wider to an all Wales model and even to move to an “arms length” organisation or mutual to deliver Public Protection services across Wales, with accountability to a Board or other such governance structure. This model could both provide the financial efficiencies required and yet still deliver services to a quality demanded and agreed. The “*arms length*” model could also prevent ENVIRONMENTAL HEALTH services from the ever diminishing of its status and role in local government. In many LAs ENVIRONMENTAL HEALTH is not invited to the newly formed Public Services Boards constructed under the Well Being of Future Generations Act 2014. However, if ENVIRONMENTAL HEALTH became an arm’s length organisation with all that it has to offer, supporters suggest that invites to be at the top table would start to follow. This arms length model is not dissimilar to Natural Resources Wales, which incorporates the Environment Agency, Forestry Commission and Countryside Council for Wales.

One area that could provide radical savings, both in terms of finances and staff compliments is through the use of technology. The Minister for Public Services published a white paper – Reforming Public Services – Power to Local People in 2015. Whilst a wide ranging white paper it recognises the role of local government and the use of technology to become digital pioneers. There is too much of a 22 local authority silo mentality in Wales. Processes are replicated 22 times. Local authorities in Wales are recognising this potential for reducing resources required to deliver ENVIRONMENTAL HEALTH services. An example is air quality monitoring through modern equipment such as used by Deliver Change in London with Air Sensa units which can provide real time monitoring for many pollutants including noise. There is a role and part to play for central Government in assisting local authorities achieve efficiencies. Local Authorities are required to monitor air quality in Air Quality Management Areas, however, Air Sensa units are not allowed for this purpose, instead local authorities have to continue to use resource intensive diffusion tubes, apparently being indifferent to what new low cost but relatively accurate technology can offer both in terms of real time monitoring and cost cutting. It is in radical digital transformation that resource savings can be made. However, it is one of the most difficult prizes to achieve. Senior managers need the skills to create an environment that is disruptive and encourages innovation.

Local government to date is hardly such a place. This needs to take place not just within local authorities but across them. Change managing skills are required.

Demand Management is becoming more crucial to ENVIRONMENTAL HEALTH services in managing reducing resources. Simple changes can and will reduce the capacities needed. An example is increasing response times for requests for service. Being frank and honest with those using ENVIRONMENTAL HEALTH services and managing expectations results in good satisfaction and avoids complaints and resources being utilised to deal with complaints and having to respond to various bodies about any complaint.

Income generation has been identified as a key component to ameliorate financial reductions. However, due to the nature of ENVIRONMENTAL HEALTH services there is limited scope. Many local authorities are now only providing basic services and if further advice is required this is charged for. An example is food hygiene advice. ENVIRONMENTAL HEALTH services are becoming more business orientated. What was provided for free is now charged for or a trading account established internally, such as a percentage of planning application fees to provide representations and advice. The Control of Wales (Horses) Act 2014 provided local authorities in Wales with the power to deal with stray horses on private land. Directors of Public Protection Wales sought to ensure at the Bill stage not to make this act a duty. Accordingly, some local authorities have stated that they will not deal with stray horses on private land as the cost is too great.

The examples given above have assisted as a “toolbox” to assist in continuing to provide ENVIRONMENTAL HEALTH services to meet demand, expectations and statutory requirements. What is clear is that continuing resource reductions will mean a continual assessment and change to deliver these services.

Some of the above examples have very impact in terms of change for employees. Other examples have had a great impact. The Public Protection Cymru programme can be described as a change programme and all the skills are required to deliver it. There are also political skills required to ensure that ENVIRONMENTAL HEALTH services have a fair share of the resources available, if ENVIRONMENTAL HEALTH is to be left in a backwater.

The new ENVIRONMENTAL HEALTH Manager needs to be skilled not just in ENVIRONMENTAL HEALTH matters but in the whole new world of austerity in local government.

**2. To consider how the emergent themes presented in the paper might be developed into a product which can facilitate environmental health services wishing to draw on the lessons learned to inform their future practice.**

**Questions to consider:**

**a) What would be most useful for environmental health service managers?**

Change management skills and training. Recognition of digital transformation opportunities. Project management skills and training.

**b) How could the lessons learned be drawn on to inform future service development?**

There is no one solution, but accessing a toolkit of ideas and practice. Some changes will be greater than other.

**c) What format might be most accessible?**

Do not understand this question.

**d) How could the information be made most accessible?**

Utilising technology in the main to share. The list is endless. Google hangouts, webinars etc.

**e) Anything else you think should be taken into consideration when disseminating the findings.**

Nothing comes to mind.

**3. Any other points that you would like to make regarding the findings.**

On reflection, whilst certain skills are needed for Environmental Health Managers it will come down in the end to certain types of people that will drive what is needed and very importantly being able to work across boundaries, both internal and external, building true relationships and partnerships.

Thank you for the opportunity to comment.





## **Acknowledgements**

The research for this framework was undertaken by Ruth Plume, Senior Lecturer in Environmental Health at Middlesex University. Ruth is a Chartered Member of the Chartered Institute of Environmental Health and has 20 years' experience in an Environmental Health service in a London Local authority.

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## Contents

1	Introduction.....	359
2	A Framework for future change programmes in Environmental Health Services	360
3	How to use the framework .....	361
3.1	Establishing the need for change.....	362
3.2	Decision making and planning .....	362
3.3	Transition.....	362
4	The overarching themes .....	363
4.1	Ethos of public services .....	363
4.2	Emerging service demands .....	364
4.3	Resilience.....	364
4.4	Getting it right .....	365
4.5	Risk .....	365
4.6	Skills development.....	366
4.7	Trust .....	367
5	Summary .....	368
6	References .....	369

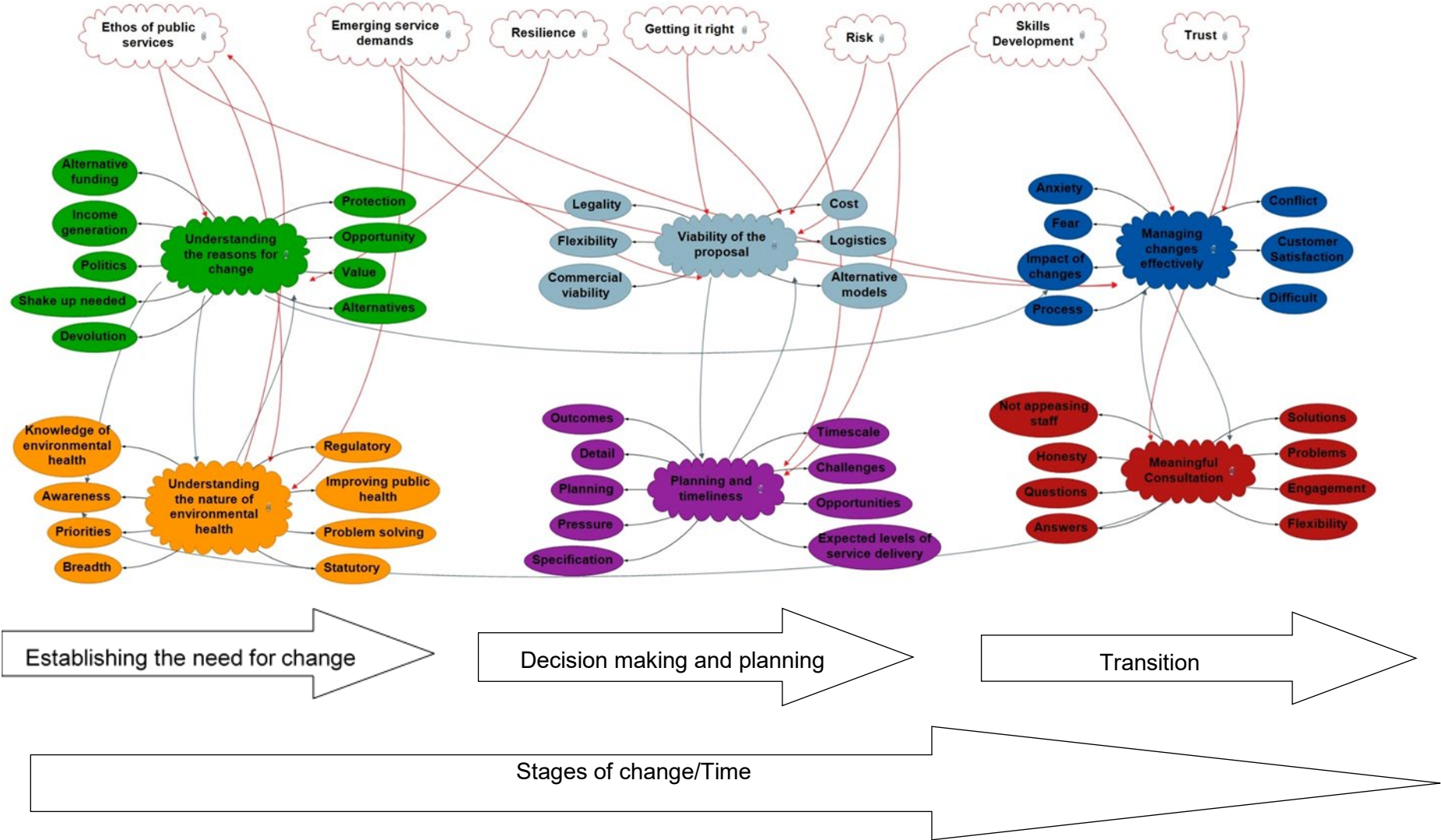
# 1 Introduction

Environmental Health services in the UK have been subject to significant resource reduction from 2010 to 2018. It is suggested that services risk becoming unsustainable unless efficient and effective ways of working are employed. Research was undertaken to explore the experience of practitioners who are developing and delivering evolving Environmental Health services in English local authorities in the context of deep cutting budget reductions. A range of 'non-traditional' service delivery models have been examined including: outsourcing, shared services, regional delivery models and mutualisation arrangements. The organisations included in the study were at various stages of development from planning through to full transformation. Interviews were carried out with the participants involved in the change process to capture their experience of change and the impact on service delivery. The field work was undertaken between 2014 and 2016.

Thematic analysis of interview transcripts identified six central themes of the experience of change: 'Managing changes effectively'; 'Understanding the reasons for change'; 'Understanding the nature of Environmental Health'; 'Meaningful consultation'; 'Viability of the proposal'; And 'Planning and timeliness'. Further analysis of the data developed seven overarching themes: 'Ethos of public services', 'Getting it right', 'Emerging service demands', 'Resilience', 'Trust', 'Skills development' and 'Risk'. A framework for future change programmes in Environmental Health services has been developed which takes into account the lessons learnt by organisations that have previously undergone significant change in their response to the risk of a reducing resource. Environmental Health services undergoing transformation will benefit from using this framework to examine their own organisation when they are establishing the need for change, making decisions, planning and transition. Use of this framework can mitigate against risks of unsustainable or undeliverable Environmental Health services.

The findings of the research have identified the lessons learned by those who were involved in the change process. The findings have been encapsulated within a framework which is entitled: A framework for future change programmes in Environmental Health Services (see section 2).

## 2 A Framework for future change programmes in Environmental Health Services



### 3 How to use the framework

This framework is designed to inform the process of change for evolving Environmental Health services and serves as a tool-kit for Environmental Health Managers facing change. This framework is intended to be used in the context/constraints of a local authority Environmental Health service undergoing change and to inform medium and long term planning. The key audience includes senior leadership teams in local government and private-public partnerships which provide Environmental Health services. Other users of the toolkit may be service commissioners, cabinet members, professional institutions and local/regional Environmental Health bodies.

Changes can occur slowly or quickly and implementing change requires explanation, preparation, control and commitment (Doherty et al. 2014). This framework for future change programmes in Environmental Health services can be used as a stand-alone model which informs the three stages of change as follows:

- Establishing the need for change;
- Decision making and planning;
- Transition.

Users of this framework can focus on the appropriate stages of change that they are undergoing and consider the central themes and associated sub themes for that stage of change. The framework represents the six central themes of: Understanding the reasons for change; Understanding the nature of Environmental Health; Viability of the proposal; Planning and timeliness; Meaningful consultation; and Managing changes effectively. The sub themes are connected to their respective central themes. The connectors from the central themes to their sub themes have arrows pointing to the sub themes. This is intended to encourage the user of the framework to consider the sub themes where they are relevant to the central theme in the context of the user's organisation. The framework also represents the chronology of the central themes with the early stages of change being represented on the left of the model and the later stages on the right.

In this framework the central themes are coupled and positioned at the most relevant stage of the change. Blue lines and arrows represent where the central themes are linked to each other.

### **3.1 Establishing the need for change**

It is imperative that the reasons for change are well understood by all stakeholders involved when considering a new model of service delivery. This is closely related to the need for an understanding of the nature of Environmental Health which may enable a new model of service delivery to be effective in a more business like model whilst retaining the ethos of public service. The central themes of 'Understanding the reasons for change' and 'Understanding the nature of Environmental Health' are most appropriate for consideration in the early stage of the change process, where the need for change is being established. Users of this framework should consider these themes in detail, and in the context of their organisation, to ensure that the reasons for change and the nature of the service are well understood. Establishing the need for change is not well represented in change management literature but the findings of this research make a strong case for its consideration in public service change management. Once those involved in the change process fully understand the reasons for change and the nature of Environmental Health then the need for change can be established.

### **3.2 Decision making and planning**

The second stage of the change process is the decision making and planning for change. It is here that the emerging central themes of 'planning and timeliness' and 'viability of the proposal' under consideration become more prominent. These themes are closely related and their influence should be considered in conjunction during the process of decision making and planning for change. This is when crucial decisions are made about the choice of a new model of service delivery and plans are put in place for the transition. The framework depicts the central themes of 'planning and timeliness' and 'viability of the proposal' situated in the change process as it enters the decision making and planning stage. Users of this framework should consider these themes in detail, and in the context of their organisation. However, the other central themes should also be considered here as participants in the planning stages of change also referred to 'Managing changes effectively' and 'Understanding the reasons for change' as been important at this stage.

### **3.3 Transition**

Once the decision making and planning stage for the proposed change have been considered then the final stage in the framework is the transition period. At this point a suitable model of service delivery or a range of viable options will have been selected

and the transition process begins. The emerging themes of 'meaningful consultation' and 'managing changes effectively' come to the forefront at the later stages of the change process, i.e. transition. They should be considered together as these themes both influence a successful transition. The framework depicts the coupling of the central themes of meaningful consultation and managing changes effectively situated in the transition stage of the change process. However, the other central themes should also be considered in the transition stage as participants in the transitional stages of change referred to 'Viability of the proposal' and 'Planning and timeliness' as being important at this stage. Users of this framework should consider these themes in detail, and in the context of their organisation.

## **4 The overarching themes**

The top level of the model represents the overarching themes of: *Ethos of public service, Getting it right, Emerging service demands, Resilience, Trust, Skills development and Risk*. These overarching themes are not time dependant and users of the framework should consider these themes across all of the stages of change. However, the red connecting arrows represent where the overarching themes are most strongly correlated to particular central themes.

### **4.1 Ethos of public services**

The public service ethos of EHPs and Environmental Health services came across clearly in this research, regardless of the model of service delivery. However, the feared loss of an ability to get to the root cause of issues was not necessarily realised in transition stages of change. In the framework the central themes are coupled and positioned at the most relevant stage of the change. Understanding the reasons for change and understanding the nature of Environmental Health were most relevant at the early stage of establishing the need for change. Viability of the proposal and planning and timeliness were most relevant at the decision making and planning stage which is also informed by the previous stage and themes. Managing changes effectively and meaningful consultation were most relevant at the transition stage of the change and in the early stages of the execution of the new service delivery model. The framework uses arrows to represent where the central themes are linked to each other (coupled). This finding extends the commentary of Mclvor et.al. (2011) on outsourced services who said that where the function of the service has a high level of autonomy it is more difficult to standardise processes for such services. The autonomy of EHPs to make professional

judgement is a key part of the service delivery and a lack of standardised processes may dilute the benefits of more commercial models of Environmental Health service delivery. This study highlighted the need to establish an evidence base that measures the effectiveness of Environmental Health services and the associated improvement in public health outcomes. A firm evidence base should then be able to inform the design of future models of Environmental Health service delivery which aim to retain a public service ethos.

## **4.2 Emerging service demands**

The ability to anticipate emerging service demands requires a deep understanding the nature of Environmental Health and the nature of the client base as well as surveillance of the institutional environment for local government. In 2016 the population of the UK was 65.6 million which was its largest ever. In addition, the UK population is getting older with 18% aged 65 and over and 2.4% aged 85 and over. Births are continuing to outnumber deaths and immigration continues to outnumber emigration, resulting in a growing population. (ONS, 2017). Population types and deprivation vary considerably across and within local authorities and are subject to ongoing change. ONS (2011) provides a classification system using socio-economic and demographic data to identify areas of the country with similar characteristics. This system can be used as a tool by UK local authorities seeking to compare their services and the prediction of potential emerging services demands. Another tool which can aid local authorities is the Mapping Health Toolkit Hunter and Buckley (2013) which is designed to help identify public health priorities which can inform outcome measures for public health improvement. Curry (1999) found that key issues for success in this prediction are commitment and involvement of those most familiar with the service processes concerned and the findings of this study confirm that these issues remain relevant in times of austerity. Clear ownership of the consideration of emerging service demands should therefore remain with the 'experts', in this study the Environmental Health service managers themselves.

## **4.3 Resilience**

'Resilience' is linked to the central themes of 'Understanding the reasons for change' and 'Viability of the Proposal'. 'Resilience' pervades throughout the study findings and discussion. Ensuring 'Resilience' of the Environmental Health service is most relevant across the earlier stages of establishing the need for change and decision making and planning. Access to good practice and sharing of specialist skills were considered as key issues for ensuring a resilient service. This study demonstrated that innovation was



found to ensure more resilience in public sector services operating under tight restraints. Community and political priorities may change rapidly in response to emergency situations which cause significant harm but these events are not usually predictable. This view is tempered by examples of regulatory failure and issues of inadequate regulatory oversight (Secretary of State for Housing, Communities and Local Government, 2018). This study found that most emerging service demands can be anticipated by those who have a good understanding of the nature of Environmental Health. However, Tombs (2016) cautioned that local authority Environmental Health services have been radically transformed to the extent that they may be unable to perform their statutory duties and this may impact on prediction of future service demands. Reinhart and Rogoff (2009a, cited in Bohl *et al.*, 2016 p.1) purport that recovery from a financial crises can be a long drawn-out process.

#### **4.4 Getting it right**

'Getting it right' is most closely linked to the central themes of 'Planning and timeliness' and 'Viability of the proposal' and is therefore most relevant for the decision making and planning stage of change. The sub theme 'Getting it right' evoked commentary about detail, specification, honesty, learning lessons and whether making it good enough for the next stage should be sufficient. The question of whether those who are designing the service model understand what the service has to deliver must be addressed. 'Getting it right' in the planning stages was seen as essential to ensure that adopted models of service delivery are viable. The consequences of 'getting it wrong' can damage the relationship between the authority, the profession and the community. Involving those with an in depth knowledge of Environmental Health services in the commissioning of services or drawing up of contracts ensured that sufficient detail was included in new models of service delivery. The question of 'Getting it right' was debated by the conference audience and this raised the question of whether those who are designing the new service model understand what the service must do. In this study, the bigger the scale of the project the more emphasis there was on 'Getting it right' and recognising the risk. This supports the view of the Institute of Government (2018) and Provost and Esteve (2016) who encourage a renewed focus on the issues arising from the contracting out of public services.

#### **4.5 Risk**

'Risk' is linked to the central themes of 'Planning and timeliness' and 'Viability of the proposal'. The issue of 'Risk' pervades throughout the findings. However, consideration

of 'Risk' is most relevant at the decision making and planning stage. The question of whether externalisation is perceived as reducing risks for local authorities was also raised and should be considered as part of the discourse of risk. Comments on risk also included whether the same service can be delivered with cuts and in the experience of Environmental Health professionals there is a risk that workloads were not taken account of. Chesterman and Fisher (2009) considered the risk of public services being delivered by non-public bodies and emphasised the need for both legal and political accountability and, hence, the need for a robust governance structure to mitigate the risk.

The scale of the operation was seen to be a key factor in establishing commercial viability of service delivery models including outsourcing, mutualised companies and shared services. Participants of this study suggest that viability of other models including mutualisation cannot work with small single authority Environmental Health services as they lack the critical mass to make the proposition commercially viable. In these cases the only way to make money would be to cut staff, leading to a risk that services could not be delivered. This research confirms that austerity has affected Environmental Health services more than other departments such as social and adult care. This is in-line with the findings of the figures from the National Audit Office (2018b) and has the effect of further marginalising Environmental Health Services.

#### **4.6 Skills development**

'Skills development' is linked to the central themes of 'Viability of the proposal', and 'Managing changes effectively' and is most relevant in the middle to later stages of change i.e. planning, decision making and the transition period. Commentators suggest that sufficient time must be allowed for development of new skills in a more commercial environment. This study found that skills of managers of services affected by change have to be developed. Senior and middle managers from private-public partnerships and shared services were most affected by the need to develop new skills. Reporting on contracts and acting more commercially is not usually a well-developed aspect of the skill base for public service managers although this research found that most seem to have adapted well. This finding realises the commentary of the Institute of Government (2018) who found that the shift of focus from delivery of services to commissioning of services can be challenging for public sector workers. In an successful innovative local government, professional management is required which is not just about economic efficiency but may involve developing, maintaining contracts and coordination between government departments (Hefetz *et al.*, 2014; Provost and Esteve, 2016).

A loss of skills, experience and tacit knowledge was noted as a result of continuing cuts to local authorities. Alaranta and Jarvenpaa (2010) also noted concern about the loss of experiential knowledge in outsourcing services and Hannabuss (2000) recognises that well established organisations may have access to tacit knowledge as a legacy, on which decisions, analysis and forecasts can be made. On the other hand, change brought about opportunities for those who were more adaptable. It was accepted that the rarer EHP specialist skills, such as pollution specialisms, may be successfully shared with other local authorities which contributed to a more resilient service. Higgs and Rowland (2005) agree that creating the capacity for change leads to a more effective change process. Greig and Poxton (2001) identified failure to develop strong commissioning as a key factor in obstructing effective joint commissioning. In this study, a key area where shortcomings were identified was achieving shared understanding of what commissioning actually involves.

#### **4.7 Trust**

'Trust' is linked to the central themes of 'Meaningful consultation' and 'Managing changes effectively' is most relevant in the later stage of change i.e. the transition period. 'Trust' was considered an important issue by commentators who said that accountability and honest communication is crucial to 'bringing staff along' and this takes forward the finding of Eaton (2014) who says that communications about change must be honest and timely. It was found that trust can be an issue between different types of organisations, local authorities have a history of benchmarking their services against each other but this relationship is not developed between commercial organisations and local authorities which makes comparison of service delivery difficult. It was also found that the increased scrutiny assisted with monitoring contracts made front line officers feel that they were no longer trusted. This finding is in line with the view Taylor and Kelly (2006) who found that high levels of accountability and scrutiny have added considerably to the workload of some professionals in models of NPM. Accounting to different leaders who may not have sufficient knowledge of Environmental Health services can provide a situation of conflict. Some EHPs felt that working for a commercial business whilst delivering a public service caused them personal difficulty as well as the potential for a conflict of interest for commercial Environmental Health services undertaking statutory duties.

## **5 Summary**

The emerging overarching themes, central themes, their influencing subthemes and the relationships between them represent the lessons learned from the experience of change. This is encapsulated in the framework for future change programmes in Environmental Health services. This framework contributes new knowledge to the Environmental Health subject area which has plenty of anecdotal evidence associated with practice, but limited evidence based research findings.

This framework has established an evidence base which examines effective Environmental Health services and can be referred to by both practitioners and researchers to inform them about changes to local authority regulatory services. Although there is a body of literature exploring changes in public services there is little written about establishing the need for change.

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