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Scottish Council for Voluntary Organisations

Internship Research Project NTNU/SCVO

Public Service Reform (PSR) in Scotland and within the wider context of global challenges

Democratic reform, Community Empowerment and risk-averse attitudes

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1. Introduction

The following paper is the product of a five month internship research project I conducted at the Scottish Council for Voluntary Organizations (SCVO) in Edinburgh, Scotland. It is embedded in my studies within the MSc. programme in "*Globalization – Politics and Culture*" that I'm currently undertaking at the Norwegian University of Science and Technology (NTNU) and part of a ongoing cooperation effort between NTNU and SCVO.

As Scotland faces several challenges to the way public services are being delivered to its people, chief among which are inherently global, such as demographic change and economic downturn, while others are locally specific such as Scottish independence referendum in 2014, there has been an on-going debate over ways in which future policies could help transform the Scottish public service landscape to become more effective, efficient, democratically inclusive, preventative and sustainable. The proposed project sees itself in the same tradition and will aim to contribute to discussions surrounding the further advancement of *Public Service Reform* (PSR) in Scotland by providing a small sample of perceptions regarding the current state of public services and welfare in Scotland. In doing so it will focus mainly on perceptions and contextual information gathered through interviews with third sector, other non-governmental and governmental representatives as well as a brief look into Scotland most recent history of public service provision.

Researching the subject of PSR the following report will give special attention to the issues of democratic reform and redefinition of the relationship between the citizen and the state, current practices in community empowerment as well as risk-averse attitudes in local government. Although this paper will not suggest, that the Scottish public service landscape requires fundamental restructuring, as the provision of services in Scotland has been comparatively consistent, it will outline some of the manifold causes for the current obstacles to progress in PSR in Scotland, try to extrapolate main over-arching and under-lying issues as well as subsequently outline ways in which these could be alleviated. Accordingly the following research questions will asked:

1. What are the current issues that Scotland faces when it comes to providing public services and what challenges has public service reform negated or intensified thus far?
2. What would a people centred approach to public policy-making based on

community empowerment and similar measures exactly entail and how would this help facilitate better provision of public and welfare services?

3. What role is the third sector playing in providing these services and what should its future role be?

These are the three initial research questions included in the research proposal handed in in to SCVO at the beginning of the project. A further question concerning the inclusion of international examples of PSR, of which there are several across all continents, although only few match the scale and intensity of that in Scotland, as well as global trends of imitation and competition, were dropped towards the end of the project due to limited time capacities that reduced the scope of this report to the three research questions outlined above. Additionally, the second and third questions will most likely be less reflected in the conclusions drawn from the data collected during the interviews conducted for this project. This is largely due to the initially underestimated scale of undertaking such a wide-ranging research project without any previous knowledge of the subject matter.

Instead the report will focus and pointing out causes for current shortcomings in PSR and suggesting possible modes of improvement to alleviate them. In doing so, it aims so to contribute to the existing research on PSR in the case of Scotland, which is rather limited thus far, in a supplementary manner.

2. Theory
The following chapter will cover some of the theoretical basis for this report. Unfortunately, the access to theoretical literature on this subject, especially in the early stages of the project and though generally quite extensive, was limited and as such this theoretical section of the paper is likewise rather limited in the diversity of sources it draws from. Of course, due to the nature of this research being qualitative, some of the theory in this chapter and especially related to the establishment of the interview guide, has also emerged inductively throughout the interviews and was constantly added to the framework of this final report.

Any research into PSR has to of course rely on a number of theoretical pillars that enable us to really understand what it is that we are talking about. Changing public pressure levels and political leadership positions as well as political agenda priorities,

policy-making processes and finally implementation success are only some of the key stages that we need to look at when talking about the theory behind PSR. Although most of the external theoretical literature in this chapter will centre around the politics of welfare reform, and this report will occasionally touch upon welfare politics in Scotland, our predominant focus will be on public services (e.g. security, transportation, housing, education, infrastructure etc.).

Some will of course suggest that welfare policies are merely a part of public services and reform of the latter would indicate the same for the former. However, in the specific case of the UK this is somewhat different, as devolution as gone so far as to accommodate most public service decision-making powers with the Scot. Nat. Gov., while most welfare reform policies are still being decided upon for the UK as a whole from Westminster. Two such examples are the universal credit and personal independence payment schemes introduced by the UK government introduced in March 2012. Although the Scottish parliament had the power to partially refuse legislative consent for these two exact policies, which it utilised, it does show that welfare reform and PSR are very much separate issues within the devolved political framework of the UK. However, for the purpose of the subsequent theoretical chapter, the two will be considered equal.

In order to fulfil our goal of detecting and evaluating the issues currently embedded in PSR and subsequently possibly make policy recommendations to existing as well as future attempts at PSR, while keeping in mind our emphasis on democratic reform, community empowerment and the role of the third sector, we need to first examine what processes lie behind the outcomes we will try to evaluate in the next chapter of this report. Additionally and not any less important we will also require a framework for said evaluation. As Thompson & Norris (1995) point out in their examination of several US state examples of welfare reform, it is vital to have a set of lenses through which to observe the policy-making process in welfare reform and by extension and above mentioned relation PSR, such lenses, they say, can range from just examining inputs and outputs to looking at transformation processes in between or outcomes at the end.[1]

2.1 Where do we measure? Input, output and outcome

Especially the latter will be of increased importance, as we are, ultimately, looking for

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[1] See Thompson & Norris (1995), p. 8f.

specific policy recommendations and therefore need to keep a close look at how different implementations and outputs of the policy-making process have an effect on the people that require public service. Of course in doing so we need to evaluate how we measure the positivity of these outcomes.

As many might argue economic performance measured through GDP, gross earnings or profit would insufficiently reflect the effect that a community empowerment based approach to PSR is supposed or intended to have. Rather we should look at how outcomes impact on economic and social equality as well as cost effectiveness, work efficiency and long term outcomes resulting in more preventative services. As a interesting means for measuring these outcomes in a way that is more focused on social rather than economic impact, many have utilized the "*Social return on investment*"-tool (SROI), which is set to evaluate non-financial returns of a given investment or measure performance of social enterprises and third sector organizations that cant easily be expressed in quantifiable financial terms.

Although SROI is internationally recognized and promoted by the UK's Department of Health, its use within health and social care provision and commissioning is scarce. Where it is in use it is intended to help public service providers, especially those of the third sector, to better understand and convey the non-financial impacts their work has on service users by quantifying the social, cultural and communal value of the services they provide into monetary terms. However, the fact that the value which SROI puts on different indicators for positive social return is largely based on subjective assessments somewhat compromises its applicability in large-scale national PSR.

In our particular case it therefore seems more applicable to evaluate positivity of impacts and outcomes on a case-by-case basis as well as based on cross-case comparison and benchmarking. Additionally we'd have to look at "*softer*" indicators such as levels of community involvement, level of equality as well as inter-organizational communication induced or changed by a given policy. However, these could be difficult to quantify in the later stages of our research, but for the initial rounds of qualitative data gathering these indicators can be of vital importance. Establishing a pre-set of indicators is of course immensely difficult when examining such a wide-ranging topic such as PSR in Scotland, especially if the research is of a qualitative nature. It therefore seemed more viable to explore indicators for either positive or negative development in PSR as they emerged

throughout the research and the interviews.

2.2 From public discussion to political agenda

Going back though, to examining inputs, outputs and transformation processes, we need to keep in mind the environmental impacts that alter the way we perceive, go about and judge PSR as it is being developed and sketched out. Especially in light of a limited interviewee sample that is largely compromised of participants with a vested interest in PSR. Viewing recent changes in the policy environment surrounding public services without looking at their place in history and the way they're discussed over by politicians and the general public would be futile. Perception not only of reform but also of public services in general as well as views on service users, beneficiaries and providers themselves needs to be addressed just as thoroughly as the actual processes that implement and effect PSR.

This is especially important concerning the ultimate goal of this report, making policy recommendations. If our intend is to evaluate what needs to be done differently and what practices can be continued in Scotland's PSR, so as to make it more effective and sustainable, then we should look at what contributes to such the diverse policy dispositions within the PSR arena. Of course there are the constant pressures of economic downturn and financial austerity needs as well as the global demographic change, especially in western countries, that keep PSR a constantly discussed topic. But while these factors seem to persevere over time, attention towards public service and welfare reform seems to fluctuate not only in terms of the amount of attention it receives but also in terms of what direction calls for reform tend towards. While public services and welfare provision have been a constant political topic ever since the 1950s, today being relevant in almost every electoral period, the make up and scope of the discussion has widely fluctuated. From major expansion and a strong welfare state in the 1950s and early 1960s through the financial and economic crises of the 1970s and 1980s and the benefit cuts that came with them, to the most recent surge of a more global view on public service reform related to demographic change, views of PSR have gone through significant changes.[2]

So, while we need to focus on outcomes in order to judge what policies are viable to implement in order to achieve a more effective and sustainable approach to public service provision, we also need to keep in mind how these policies get on the political

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2   See Thompson & Norris (1995), pp. 1-5.

agenda in the first place. Although positive as well as negative outcomes themselves are very likely to effect perceptions of PSR as well, it is important to realize what dispositions in the public and among interest groups have brought a particular policy on to the political agenda. The same goes for the role internal governmental factors might have on PSR. While public pressure and political campaigning outside of parliament and "*the circles of power*" so to speak can contribute to PSR becoming a subject on the political agenda, the ultimate reform efforts and policies will have to be sketched out and decided upon by internal actors. Therefore it will be necessary for us to have a look at internal political conflict and strong leadership as well in order to find out what contributes to the implementation of PSR.

2.2.1 Environmental- (externalities) & internal factors (strong leadership)

As such Thompson & Norris (1995) agree that one can identify a total of five external factors that contribute in some way or form to the making and implementation of PSR, be it as a initiating factor or as a transforming one. From our perspective chief among these is of course public opinion and perception of public services and welfare, but Thompson & Norris (1995) also point out the nature of the welfare problem, ideology, fiscal constraints as well as policy innovation as being vital external contributors to PSR.[3]

Public opinion towards PSR, as briefly outlined above, is under constant fluctuation in terms of direction as well as intensity and therefore difficult to pin down on its exact effect on PSR. Certainly public pressure can increase attention, force political leadership or weaken current reform efforts that originated elsewhere. Most importantly however, politicians are forced to cater to it if they want to gain or maintain votes and as such it is a vital influencing factor. Additionally public perception is not only about provision and reform of public services and welfare in general, but also about perceptions of people that require public services and welfare more specifically. Are people on unemployment benefits perceived to be a burden or victims? Are the physically disabled thought of as a hinderence or as role models for society? While it might seem harsh to draw such lines, they seem to be evident all throughout society. Especially if a administrations goal is to put forward an approach to PSR that entails getting users more involved in development, procurement and delivery of services, it has to keep in mind the publics perception of users

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3   See Ibid., pp. 216-220.

and how it effects the implementability of such an approach.[4]

The nature of the problem of welfare, the second factor possibly affecting PSR, is really the question of who utilizes welfare and public services at any given time, why do they use them and for how long do they use them. This is of course less relevant for PSR than it is for welfare, as the latter's "clientèle" fluctuates with varying regularity whereas public services in general are usually being frequented by a much wider ranging number of people and on a much more regular basis. Nonetheless, it is important to state that the answers to these three questions can never be finally given and even brief agreement won't last beyond the next economic downturn. What is meant by this, is that welfare and reform thereof as well as subsequently PSR, keep themselves on the political agenda so to speak, as ultimate answers to the questions mentioned above can not be found or are yet to be found. The users of welfare and to a lesser extent public services, the reasons for their use and the duration of their use constantly change and rarely remain the same for a long time, which poses another question, when should we address welfare reform and PSR? The answer would seem to be constantly as there is never a point where public services and welfare could be ultimately "*solved*" as it were. It has to be mentioned however, that this does not mean, that PSR is constantly on the political agenda, rather and as said before, it fluctuates, but the fact that it will come back to the political agenda is almost certain.[5]

A further and very important possible contributor to the temporary importance of PSR is ideology or the current environment of ideas. While one might argue that this factor is largely dominated by the classic dichotomy of individual responsibility vs. public responsibility or in other words low public spending vs. large public spending, it is important to realize, that recently and with the induction of demographic change into the sphere of causes for problems in the provision of public services, this has changed. Alternative and third ways of reforming public services have gained significance and a sole focus budgetary constraints has shifted towards a larger influence of empowerment and cooperative approaches. In any case ideology is an important contributor to PSR as especially political debates are often founded less on empirical data and policy analysis and more often on ideological disagreements and political power struggles.[6]

Which is also were the fourth factor comes into play, fiscal constraints. They are of

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4   See Ibid., p. 218.
5   See Ibdi., pp. 217-18.
6   See Ibid., pp. 218-19.

course as old a public services and welfare themselves, if not pre-date them, as the latter two are usually the largest budgetary items of any state. Especially most recently and in the wake of the 2008 financial crisis, cutting public services and welfare budgets has become almost a necessity. Factor in the aforementioned demographic change and the influence of fiscal constraints on the importance of PSR on the political agenda becomes even more pronounced. Especially in terms of political debate and conflict, financial austerity is a powerful ideological tool used by either side of the political sphere.[7] While demographic change and the increasing number of people requiring welfare and public services with regards to health and social care in particular, certainly put even bigger pressure on budgets and thereby enhance the need to reform, they also act on their own as a catalyst for the publics stand towards PSR. Many families today are in a situation were at least one member requires care in some form or another while the rest of the family is in work or otherwise occupied. Public opinion thereby has started to not only focus on financial causes for PSR, but also on a more personal perspective in which people would like to see public services and welfare become more catered to them and their particular situation rather than finding a "*one fits all*"-approach.

Finally, we have policy innovation and the apparent tendency for competition and imitation in PSR. We will specify this at a later stage of the paper, but it seems obvious judging from recent as well as older examples, that once PSR is touched in one locality it quickly diffuses to others. While the make-up of the different local policies can fluctuate from being fairly similar to being entirely different, there is a clear trend for competition and imitation not only domestically,[8] but also internationally, as is exemplified by manifold recent comparisons between the Nordic countries and Scotland leading up to the 2014 independence referendum in Scotland specifically and circling around PSR more generally.[9]

As has hopefully become clear now, it is important to realize that non of these contributing factors can single handedly bring PSR onto the political agenda and subsequently to realization. They all act in relation to each other, they enhance, negate or supplement one another. While public opinion and ideology might be the two strongest contributors, they only come into full effect when either financial issues arise or due to the

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7   See Ibid., pp. 219-20.
8   See Ibid., p. 220.
9   See BBC (2013) "Scottish independence: Fjords flowing with funds".

nature of the welfare problem and some sort of shift in the user, reason or duration spectrum of public services and welfare. Additionally and as said before we have to realize, that internal factors acting within any given political system are just as important, if not more, for the recognition of need and implementation of PSR. As previously mentioned, PSR is laden with potential for political conflict and is consistently being utilized for ideological demarcation and electoral campaigning. In fact, Thompson & Norris identify internal politics as being the principal problem behind PSR as it is one of the major distributive or redistributive vehicles of the state.[10] A point this paper will also make later.

Apart from political conflict there is another very important internal factor that can contribute to PSR becoming part of the political agenda. That is that of strong leadership. A lot of the research literature on recent examples of PSR, such as in Scotland, has emphasized the importance of strong leadership for PSR to be successful.[11] Although they remain fairly vague in their recommendation as to where the leadership should come from, its importance and effect for PSR should not be underestimated. In their example of the US from the early to mid 1990s Thompson & Norris (1995) again identify that it is usually at the very top of the political hierarchy where strong political leadership originates. Especially the highest executive powers, state governors in their cases, usually take up a predominant role, with mid-level legislators, the bureaucratic apparatus as well as public interest and advocacy groups mostly playing smaller roles.[12] At the same time however, they emphasize the importance of locality for the eventual outlook of PSR, stating that "*no single pattern prevailed*" in their study.[13] It is then of course possible that leadership, and where it originates from within the political hierarchy, is also very much dependent on locality and local preferences. Relating to this more diverse approach to leadership Martin et al. (2009) state that "*distributed and dispersed leadership, [in combination with clear benefits to wider stakeholders within the organizational network,] can give rise to effective collaboration and establishment of reforms, through structural integration and the harnessing of agency.*"[14]

They also make a point that is less relevant to leadership and more to the capability of networks in organisational structures to carry out reform themselves by stating that "*the*

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10 See Norris & Thompson (1995), p. 216.
11 See Martin et al. (2009), pp. 789f. & Scottish Parliament (2013), pp. 3, 12.
12 See Norris & Thompson (1995), p. 223-24.
13 See Ibid., p. 229.
14 Martin et al. (2009), p. 790.

relationship [between networks and dispersed leadership] was a contingent one, illustrating how network-based reforms to organizational structure are both potentially powerful and simultaneously impotent: powerful in creating a space within which certain enactments of leadership might flourish and achieve service reform; impotent as instruments of that reform in themselves, as a means of changing practice in the face of the much more powerful, informal structures that are determinant of behaviour."[15] Which is interesting for this particular research due to the fact that it illustrates the importance of not only leadership, regardless of whether it is of the centralized or dispersed kind, but also, and more importantly, of informal structures for PSR, which will be further explored in the data analysis chapter.

However, strong leadership and political conflict, as the two main internal factors, do not stand alone when comes to bringing PSR onto the political agenda and effecting its implementation. On top of them lie several other contributing factors such as ministerial or departmental budget deficits, party politics, political entrepreneurship, citizens initiatives, court interventions as well as action from the relative political cloud of interest groups, lobbyist and so forth.[16] Naturally these factors are closely intertwined with the other two main internal factors of strong leadership and political conflict as well as with some of our external factors. But there is a distinct difference between the two groups that Thompson & Norris (1995) identify as follows in their example of US states: "*External factors helped to open windows of opportunity and prepare the political climate. Internal factors forced the windows wide open and influenced the types of politics in the state.*"[17]

It is therefore obvious that in order for PSR to become a significant topic on the political agenda and to be subsequently implemented, it does require both of the two factor groups to come into play. Both internal factors such as strong leadership by politicians and legislators and external factors such as public pressure from citizens, interests groups and elites need to be in place. Both factor groups can and most likely will additionally influence the exact make-up or direction that a particular reform will develop towards while in the making or on the political agenda.

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15 Ibid.
16 See Norris & Thompson (1995), p. 222f.
17 Ibid. (1995), p. 229.

2.2.2 PSR, a circular or continuous issue?

Additionally and in order to rule out that the reasons we will identify to be responsible for the recent surge in discussion over and implementation of new initiatives in public service and welfare provision are not just a product of some greater underlying process we also need to briefly examine the way PSR has evolved over the last couple of decades. As mentioned before, PSR has been constantly on the public discussion sphere at least ever since the 1950s, but the discourse has greatly fluctuated in terms of what it entails. Now, this poses the question of whether or not we should view this fluctuation as a circular one that comes and goes in certain timeframes or with certain public dispositions in much the same way and with the same topics or as a continuous process that sees the PSR agenda constantly evolving and reshaping.

The most recent discussions would certainly indicate the latter as demographic change and unprecedented economic and financial downturn within the last one or two decades, have brought the discussion to a much broader/global and more long-term level than ever before. Of course public services and welfare are, in most countries, the largest item on the budget and therefore first to move up the political agenda in times of financial austerity and possible wealth redistribution. Be that as it may though, within the last 10-15 years PSR has reached an entirely new scope of international dimension and long-term society-wide impact, which remains yet to be explained. It is certainly possible that demographic change especially has sparked public interest on humanities future – and thereby the future of PSR – much in the same way that environmental change has, and the two are certainly not separate from each other, keeping in mind global population growth, as it poses a more or less immediate threat, if not addressed, to our contemporary way of political organization.

In any case, the fact that the scope of discussion has changed to such a degree, indicates that there must be non-circular causes related to the new level of public attention or recognition thereof, that have continuously evolved throughout the 1990s and 2000s. Furthermore, debates have up until recently mostly evolved around retrenchment or restructuring of public services and welfare, but rarely around substantial radical reform. More recently however, many researchers and policy-makers have promoted more radical reform in light of the realization that "business as usual" is simply not an option anymore considering the effects of demographic change and the need for financial austerity.

Scotland's most recent and current attempt at PSR is a prime example of this realization in effect, as will be shown in the next chapter.

3. The case of Scotland

Recently Wallace et al. (2013), in a paper published by the Carnegie UK Trust, carried out a examination of several examples of PSR in small "Western" countries and devolved sub-national states, such as Scotland. Their most predominant conclusion for the case of Scotland and what can somewhat also be considered as the cause for this report, is the fact that Scotland was the only country out of their sample that has "*developed a public strategy in direct response to the fiscal and demographic challenges*"[18] currently facing public service delivery and reform thereof. They also, interestingly, concluded that the only "*retrenching*" or reduction and removal of public services in Scotland was caused by UK welfare cuts rather than Scottish National Government (Scot. Nat. Gov.) initiative to do so. This already indicates the approach that the Scot. Nat. Gov. has taken towards reforming public services, which is very much centred around alternative means of provision through community engagement and empowerment and much less on reducing spending through funding cuts.

As is represented in the "*Commission on the Future Delivery of Public Services*'" (Christie Commission) report published in June 2011. It is the latest comprehensive evaluation of public services in Scotland and also somewhat of a benchmark for this report. The commission was established in November 2010 by the Scot. Nat. Gov. and aimed at finding out how to best combat the challenges posed by the processes mentioned above. Its final report stated that "*unless Scotland embraces a radical, new, collaborative culture throughout our public services, both budgets and provision will buckle under the strain. [...] This suggests that a radical change in the design and delivery of public services is necessary, irrespective of the current economic challenges, to tackle the deep- rooted social problems that persist in communities across the country.*"[19] Going on to conclude that: "*The public service system is often fragmented, complex and opaque, hampering the joint working between organisations which we consider to be essential. As a whole, the system can be 'top down' and unresponsive to the needs of individuals and communities. It lacks accountability and is often characterised by a short-termism that makes it difficult to*

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18 Wallace et al. (2013), p. 16.
19 Commission on the Future Delivery of Public Services (2011), p. viii.

prioritise preventative approaches. Addressing these systemic defects will require a fundamental overhaul of the relationships within and between those institutions and agencies – public, third sector and private – responsible for designing and delivering public services."[20]

In this Wallace et al. (2013) point to two propositions put forward that are most significant. First of which is the new or increased focus on preventative approaches to public service delivery in opposition to a predominantly short-term interventionist culture at the time. In fact the Christie Commission report itself stated that "*it is estimated that as much as 40 per cent of all spending on public services is accounted for by interventions that could have been avoided by prioritising a preventative approach.*"[21] Major examples for this new approach come especially from health and social care. The "*Early Years Collaborative*" or EYC[22] as well as the "*Older People's Change Fund*",[23] which we will come back to briefly in the data analysis chapter of this paper, are only two such examples that are trying to implement a greater focus on preventative service delivery that has a higher long-term sustainably in light of especially demographic change, but also concerning financial austerity. The most recent alteration of *Single Outcome Agreements* (SOA) between the Scot. Nat. Gov. and *Community Planing Partnerships* (CPPs), which we will also examine more in detail further on, somewhat represents another example of this new preventative approach that is more related to public service provision in general than to health and social care specifically,[24] although its effectiveness thus far can be considered questionable.

As Wallace et al. (2013) point out once more, the Scot. Nat. Gov.s "*approach is [...] not about dictating new models of service delivery, but to support public servants to implement principles.*"[25] A statement that is underlined by the Scot. Nat. Gov.s response to the Christie Commission report, specifically its chapter on "*workforce development.*" In which they outline a emphasis on empowering or enabling public servants, third sector organisations as well as individuals and their communities to drive change, rather than simply rely on legal framework to enforce PSR.[26] However this focus on what could be

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20 Ibid.
21 Ibid.
22 See Scottish Government (2013) "Reshaping Care".
23 See JIT (2013) "Change Fund Plans".
24 See Wallace et al. (2013), p. 17.
25 Ibid., p. 18.
26 See Scottish Government (2011), pp. 13-15.

called a cultural shift rather than legislation has thus far, according Wallace et al. (2013), not been successful, as they state that this "'*learning philosophy' may not yet be shared across all professional bodies and management hierarchies in Scottish public services.*"[27] A dichotomy that has proven to be evident all throughout the interviews conducted for this report and that will be further examined in the data analysis chapter.

Nonetheless, the Scot. Nat. Gov.s holistic approach to PSR is still very much evident in national legalisation and frameworks. Major among which is the so called *National Performance Framework* (NPF), which actually pre-dates the Christie Commission report and was established to provide the Scot. Nat. Gov. and its agencies with long-term goals in how to combat the challenges outlined above as well as a means to track performance of PSR. Although the NPF has many layers, including a national purpose framework aimed at creating sustainable economic growth in Scotland as well as five broad supplementary strategic objectives, the most important layers are the 16 national outcome targets and the 50 national indicators tracking progress of these outcome targets.[28] The Scot. Nat. Gov. has committed itself to achieving these outcomes "*over the next ten years.*" The 16 national outcome targets are the following:[29]

1) We live in a Scotland that is the most attractive place for doing business in Europe.
2) We live our lives safe from crime, disorder and danger.
3) We realise our full economic potential with more and better employment opportunities for our people.
4) We live in well-designed, sustainable places where we are able to access the amenities and services we need.
5) We are better educated, more skilled and more successful, renowned for our research and innovation.
6) We have strong, resilient and supportive communities where people take responsibility for their own actions and how they affect others.
7) Our young people are successful learners, confident individuals, effective contributors and responsible citizens.
8) We value and enjoy our built and natural environment, and protect and enhance it

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27 See Wallace et al. (2013), p. 18.
28 See Scottish Government (2013) "National Performance Framework".
29 See Ibid. "National Outcomes".

for future generations.

9) Our children have the best start in life and are ready to succeed.

10) We take pride in a strong, fair and inclusive national identity.

11) We live longer, healthier lives.

12) We reduce the local and global environmental impact of our consumption and production.

13) We have tackled the significant inequalities in Scottish society.

14) Our public services are high quality, continually improving, efficient and responsive to local people's needs.

15) We have improved the life chances for children, young people and families at risk.

16) Our people are able to maintain their independence as they get older and are able to access appropriate support when they need it.

The sixteenth and final target was not added until 2011, after the Christie Commission report had been published. It is interesting to mention at this point, that the Scottish emphasis on an outcomes-based approach to PSR has been closely observed in New Zealand and consultation between the two countries has contributed to New Zealand's model of PSR.

The 50 national indicators by which the progress in achieving these 16 outcome targets is tracked are, although not considered to be comprehensive by the Scot. Nat. Gov., quite widespread and diverse. Ranging from easily quantifiable measures such as value of Scottish exports, amount of household waste arising or rate of emergency admissions to hospital to more qualitative indicators including increasing cultural engagement, improving Scotland's reputation or increasing people's use of "*Scotland's outdoors*".[30] Performance in these indicators can constantly be checked on the Scot. Nat. Gov.s website through "*Scotland Performs*"[31] and although especially environmental sustainability indicators have seen positive progress, the slight majority is currently either stagnating or worsening. Particularly in cohesion and equality indicators the Scot. Nat. Gov. seems to be on a downward trend.[32] Although many of the indicators have been taken from previously established datasets and therefore their effectiveness in measuring what is actually

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30 See Scottish Government (2013) "National Indicators".
31 See Ibid. "Scotland Performs".
32 See Ibid. "Performance at a Glance".

supposed to be measured had already been well established, there has yet to be any evaluation of the NFP's actual impact on Scotland and Scottish society.[33]

All these reforms, according to Wallace et al. (2013) as well as Keating (2010), were embedded in a already existing and distinctive Scottish approach to PSR that preceded and followed the devolution of powers from Westminster to Holyrood in 1998. This distinctive approach was thereby initially characterized by a collectivism in public service delivery that saw the disbandment of tuition fees and the phase out of prescription charges among others. In fact, Keating (2010) states, referencing Stewart (2004), that "*there is a scepticism about privatisation and greater trust in traditional state means of delivery*"[34] in Scotland compared to England. Especially the greater trust in state delivery has most recently lead to issues with diffusion of the idea of PSR with reference to third and private sector delivery, but we will take a closer look at this phenomenon further on. Keating (2010) goes on to suggest, that "*Scotland since 1999 followed a more traditional social democratic model of public-service delivery.*"[35] In 2010 however, the Scot. Nat. Gov. appointed a independent budget review panel, which was initiated due to a predicted decrease of budgets in excess of 42 billion pounds over the following 16 years. It concluded that the challenges posed by demographic change and financial austerity were persistent and could not be alleviate on a short term basis and therefor a more long-term approach to public service delivery had to be taken.[36] Subsequently the Christie Commission was set up and processes and policies outlined above ensued.

4. Research design and data collection/evaluation methods

Since the initial target of this project was not to be able to generalize the assumptions that will be made based on the data collected, towards the entire Scottish population but rather to extrapolate a viable set of recommendation for further development of PSR, there was no need for random sampling. Instead the non-probability sample of interview participants was selected purposefully based on their involvement in either public service reform, welfare reform or research thereof as well as their degree of involvement in and with the third sector in order to ensure the relevance of the papers topic to them as well as sufficient knowledge of PSR. It must be admitted that this selection process might have let to a a

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33 See Wallace et al. (2013), pp. 16f.
34 Keating (2010), p. 206.
35 Ibid.
36 See Wallace et al. (2013), p. 15.

sample, that insufficiently reflects the entire current landscape of approaches to public service and welfare reform in Scotland, but since the project was targeted to comply, to a certain extent, with the recommendations made by the Christie Commission report, this shortcoming can be overlooked, if not considered to be beneficiary to the viability of the conclusions drawn. The Christie Commission report, in one form or another, has been widely acknowledged to be the current benchmark for PSR in Scotland not only by the Scottish Government, who initiated the investigation, but also by the third sector and large parts of civil society in general. Additionally, many of the Christie Commission report recommendations have been verified to be said benchmark by the interviewees for this project.

The initial sample selection process started off with a list provided by the SCVO Policy Team staff. It consisted largely of executive third sector personal that held significant positions within their organizations, but also of public and government employees. From there on meetings and interviews with key people were set up and scheduled. Although there was some difficulty establishing contacted with officials especially from the public and government sector, more and more viable contacts were established as initial consultive meetings were conducted. The selection process then became more focused on having a heterogeneous and diverse group of interview partners that would reflect the Scottish third sector landscape as well as give sufficient voice to the public and government sectors. The private sector was largely left aside, although several people from political think tanks and advocacy groups were interviewed as well. At this stage most of the contact and selection was done through snowballing and asking interviewees for further contacts and suggestions as well as ongoing consultations with SCVO staff members, who were particularly concerned with the representativeness of the sample, since at this point it was leaning heavily on third sector personal. So, in order to avoid skewing the results in a normative manner towards exaggerated support for particular 3rd sector agendas, a new attempt was made at contacting more public sector and government officials. This, as is to be expected, presented somewhat of a challenge since many public servants were bound by civil servants code of conduct and confidentiality concerns. However, ultimately three government officials were able to provide contextual information to verify and falsify some of the information already gathered as well as provide new context, which was as of then unknown to the project. Their inputs were given

a slight priority over those of the third sector due to the under-representation of the public sector and the Scottish government in the project sample.

The ultimate make-up of the sample can be reviewed in the appendix at the end of this report and consisted of 20 participants altogether. The samples geographical and sectoral features are as follows:

- Inverness/Highlands (rural) – 6 third sector providers, 1 third sector umbrella
- Edinburgh/Glasgow (urban) – 4 third sector umbrellas, 2 third sector providers
- Other – 3 think tanks/advocacy groups, 1 academic institution
- Government – 2 Scot. Nat. Gov., 1 loc. gov. (contextual information only)

The sectoral categorization outlined above was based on participants own description of their respective organization as well as further post-interview research in specific cases. One major issue in this categorization were umbrella organizations that played a double role as partial service providers. In these cases, the participants depiction was given priority. Furthermore, it has to be mentioned that in two cases of third sector umbrellas, the geographical categorization of the participants organization had less relevance to the information they gave due to the fact, that they represented a organization operating on a national level only and instead of providing information based on their local/regional experiences, were able to provide a national overview of examples from the small local third sector organizations they represented. No geographical categorization was made for the non-third sector participants due to the fact that it did not contribute to the qualification of the information given by these participants.

4.1 Interview Guide

After a initial sample had been agreed upon with SCVO, a first interview guide was devised based on the findings of the Christie Commission Report, the "*Local Government and Regeneration Committee's*" 9th report of 2013 as well as the above outlined theoretical basis for project. Furthermore, already acquired information on Scotland's case of PSR was included in this first interview guide. However, during the first interview it was already discovered, that this initial guide did only partially reflect the actual contemporary landscape of perceptions concerning PSR and after further consultation with SCVO staff it

was therefore revised before continuing the research with a three day trip to Inverness. This second guide was then used until 13 of the total 20 interviews were conducted and thanks to input from some interviewees with a research background it was subsequently revised to its final stage, which can be found in the appendix. Although the first and second interview guides were used during the majority of the interviews conducted for this project, they are not included in the appendix of this report. The third and final guide does however represent its predecessors in terms of structure, length and general make-up, changes were merely made to some of the questions in order to make them more applicable to the actual landscape of perceptions concerning PSR in Scotland.

Of course it does not have to be mentioned, that due the qualitative nature of this project, the interviews and the questions asked during them often deviated from the interview guide and the interviews were conducted in a semi-structured, almost conversational manner in most cases. Allowing for ongoing introduction of new or more relevant topics and questions when applicable. The interview guide merely provided a basis upon which to rely in case either the interviewer or interviewee had lost track of the topic of discussion or was starting to excessively deviated from the projects actual topic. Although that was seldom the case due to the projects wide-ranging topical nature. Furthermore, it has to be clarified that the projects research questions, which were included in the guide, were not actually asked during the interviews and were solely meant to provided the participant with an idea of the project eventual goals. Concerning this, it also has to be mentioned, that the guide was sent to every interviewee at least one day prior to the interview in all but a few cases.

All interviews were fully voice recorded and supplementary notes were taken. In all but one case, the interviews were conducted in a closed person-to-person setting without external influence or discussion. Only one participating organisation was able to set up somewhat of a roundtable setting with service providing volunteers, but the same procedures were followed and the same interview guide was used in this particular case as in all other cases. After the first 13 interviews and the above mentioned third revision of the interview guide, at which point the transcription, summarization and feedback phase of the project had already begun, abandoning the recording of interviews was considered due to the fact the transcription, summarization and subsequent feeding back process was overly time-consuming and endangering the feasibility of the project. However, recording

was retained in order to ensure conservation of the information given. Instead main themes were extrapolated from the first seven interviews, which were subsequently loosely used to give the revision process a better framework and to streamline the projects progress. The main themes somewhat reflected the 9 main narratives which we will come back to later, but the revision process still remained very open to new information at this point due to the fact that only a minority of interviews had been concluded. During the interviews data gathered from previous interviews was occasionally also brought in and feed back in order to contest the particular interviewee's views and challenge them to justify or exemplify there perceptions against those of others.

4.2 Feedback & reflection mechanisms

After the data had been collected, the recordings and notes were initially transcribed almost in their entirety, to be subsequently summarized down to the main narratives of any given interview. Thereafter the summary was sent back to the respective interviewee via e-mail for commentary and revision. Participants were not asked to verify the information concluded, although some of them did, but instead were asked to answer if they felt any information had been falsely concluded or further information needed to be added. Several participants answered back, however, in retrospect it might have been more viable to ask for participants approval instead.

Once 12 out of 20 interviews had been reviewed the initial nine main narratives, which can be found in the appendix, were extrapolated and were supposed to serve as a basis for discussion in a post-interview phase roundtable meeting with all participants in order to verify and pin point some of the projects most important findings. Unfortunately most participants were unable to make the proposed roundtable meeting and it was therefore cancelled. Instead the narratives, along with a presentation prepared for the cancelled meeting, which included sample make-up and detailed information on the three main narratives outlined in chapter five of this report, were send to all participants as well as SCVO Policy and Research staff for commentary.

Several participants responded and the narratives achieved there goal of sparking discussion and interest in the projects main findings. In addition to phone calls and e-mail conversations, some personal face-to-face meetings were conducted to further verify and pin-point the projects findings up to that point. Furthermore SCVO staff was of great help

in reviewing some of the data concluded and a final revision meeting was held with SCVO Policy and Research staff as well as SCVO chief executive Martin Sime. Both of which contributed to the ultimate focus on the 3 main narratives represented in chapter five of this report. The interviews that had not yet been concluded were subsequently reviewed with these narratives in mind. They gave a pre-set framework for the further revision of the remaining interviews and information was concluded according to these headlines, deviation from this practice only occurred when new information or topics were deemed of vital importance for the integrity of the final conclusions of the paper.

The initial 9 main narratives were largely based on interviews with third sector representatives and those of non-governmental organizations, governmental positions on PSR only factored into them to a slight degree. However, due to the fact that these were supposed to be controversial and spark discussion, this shortcoming can be ignored, especially considering the fact the final conclusions of the paper were done with governmental positions in mind, as will hopefully become apparent in the next chapter.

5. Data Analysis

The following section will outline the main findings of the project by dividing them into 3 main narratives. These findings are based on information gathered through face-to-face interviews with 20 participants from the Scottish voluntary sector, Scottish local and national government as well as from other non-governmental organizations (NGO's) in Scotland. Additionally, several feedback mechanisms were employed to verify and clarify the narratives following below. Further information on the methodology behind these interviews and feedback mechanisms can be found in the previous chapter.

While the interview guide by which these findings were procured was initially focused on asking participants for their opinions on the Christie Commission recommendations and the subsequent and aforementioned success assessment by the "*Local Government and Regeneration Committee*". It was later revised to reflect the following main narratives and pinpoint the interviewee's views on PSR to what were perceived to be the most important topics surrounding it. Furthermore, the main narratives are based on the theoretical background outlined above.

In the initial interview guide, section 3 and 4 were largely separate and designed to specifically provide or indicate answers to the two main research questions. While the

former section was meant to have the interviewee provide insight into his or her experience of PSR and the recommendations up to late 2013, the later section was intended to provide the report with an overview to the landscape of views on the future of public service delivery in Scotland, from the third sector specifically and Scottish civil society more generally. However, the revised second and third interview guides reflect the realization that this chronological focus was inadequate to the complexity of the problem. Instead these were designed to answer questions to the specific topics outlined below. These main narratives were not initially agreed upon, instead they emerged throughout the process of researching and interviewing for this project and were therefore under constant influx of new information and revision. Additionally, while the questions in the interview guide might have been quite specific, they were more intended to provide the interviewer with a framework of topics to fall back on rather than to strictly guide the interview. The following narratives will hopefully reflected the diversity of answers given through this process.

5.1 Local government reform & re-defining the relationship between the citizen/individual and the state

Although the Scot. Nat. Gov. has made a commitment to not attempt any fundamental reform of local government within the current legislative period (i.e. up until 2016), one of the main narratives that emerged from the interviews conducted for this report, was that of the need for further devolution of local government in Scotland which would see the current system of 32 unitary local councils be divided into a larger number of smaller units instead. Whether or not this further devolution was to take place within the current unitary system or result in a multi-tier re-organization of local government was not specified by any of the participants.

However, nearly all interviewee's that suggest local government reform is vital in achieving sustainable reform of public services, also suggested, that this call is not merely about smaller local authorities but also about fundamentally redefining the relationship between citizen and the state. As the Carnegie UK Trust has recently suggested as part of their "Enabling State"-project, there is a UK wide and in fact somewhat Europe-wide realization that the relationship between citizen and state is in need of revision and reform

if public service and especially welfare provision is to be sustainable in the future.[37] The interview data collected for this project, would support such a claim for the specific case of Scotland. However, while they focus on 6 main trends that have shaped and continue to define their picture of a "Enabling State" across governments and civil societies in the UK and Ireland,[38] they neglect certain other narratives that have come to light during the research for this project and might be specific to the case of Scotland.

Major among which are historically established attitudes among government and public sector officials as well as among citizens, that public services and especially health and social care, are to be provided exclusively by the public sector. Although current Scot. Nat. Gov. policy would not suggest such an attitude, the perception among third sector interviewee's that were interviewed for this project and subscribed to the premise that institutionalized service provision is no longer sustainable and mutual community-based provision of services is whats needed, was that these historical attitudes have slowed down diffusion and implementation of the idea that services such as health and social care could be provided and coordinated among and in between citizens of a local community. Such attitudes were perceived to be predominantly apparent in local government managerial bureaucracies.

These bureaucracies were another critique point of some interviewee's when it came to redefining the relationship between the citizen and the state. Suggesting, that due to the fact that most funding allocation tasks were now carried out by these local government managerial bureaucracies rather than by elected officials, local social mobilisation, volunteerism and democratic participation decreased even further since citizens now felt they had even less of an impact on funding allocation decisions in their local community. In a few cases, this was also related to the large-scale of these bureaucracies and their subsequent detachedness from local community issues. One interviewee even suggested that local government had outright refused to participate in a reform that would see more power be devolved to communities and citizens and that subsequently the Scot. Nat. Gov. had to provide sufficient legal framework that would see power shift from loc. gov. to communities and citizens by placing duties on the former while at the same time enhancing rights and funding for the latter, which would then pressure loc. gov. into a cultural shift as outlined above.

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37 See Brotchie (2013), pp. 1f.
38 See Ibid., p. 3 & Wallace (2013), pp. 2f.

It has to be mentioned at this point however, that the *Convention of Local Authorities* (COSLA) has recently launched an inquiry into the future of local democracy in Scotland through the so called "*Commission on Strengthening Local Democracy*" whose goal it is to combat what is perceived to be a creeping centralization of Scottish Politics, illustrated by the council tax freeze among other examples, and advocate a constitutional recognition of the responsibilities and powers of loc. gov. in Scotland.[39] This constitutional recognition is to be achieved regardless of the outcome of Scotland's 2014 referendum on independence. This view that Scotland should establish a constitutional framework for its devolution from the UK was shared by two interviewee's of this project from NGO's outside of the third sector.

Most participants from local rural third sector organization on the other hand insisted, that it was not the large scale of local government that caused increased disengagement with local democracy and accordingly there was no need to reform its structure. Instead, they pointed to a rising politicization of loc. gov. affairs by national party politics that seems to have effected the relationship between local constituents and their councillors on two different levels. On the one hand, there is perceived to be a generally increasing disconnectedness between local councillors and the issues of their respective communities in light of an increasing importance of national politics in a more devolve Scotland. On the other hand, in cases were communication and cooperation between councillors and constituents had remained constant, implementation of what is discussed in these exchanges was thought to be lacking and national party politics were blamed.

But, regardless of whether one agrees with the premise that the relationship between the citizen and the state actually needs revision and redefinition, the relation between said premise, PSR and local government organisation is of course an obvious one, seeing as how most public services and welfare in Scotland are provided through or by local government. The fact that Scotland currently faces a referendum on independence in September 2014, most likely amplified the importance of this particular subject, as such a potentially fundamental restructuring of the Scottish political landscape also gives the opportunity to take a more fundamental approach to reform in every particular sphere of that landscape. This possibility is most likely what prompted some participants of this

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39 See BBC (2013) "Cosla commission to examine future of local government".

project to call for further devolution of local government in Scotland when asked about the state of PSR. In fact, some participants not only felt, that local government organisational units were too large, but also that the relationship between citizen and state outside the framework of representative democracy in Scotland needed revision and subsequently redefinition.

However, even in its recently published white paper on "*Scotland's Future*" the Scottish National Government has outlined its commitment to local government and its current structure through constitutional recognition should Scotland become independent. But, while there are no significant changes to local government outlined in said white paper, it does acknowledge the possibility of local government structural reform by a newly elected parliament and government after independence.[40] Furthermore, the white paper states, that the Scot. Nat. Gov. "*believe that the people who live and work in Scotland are best placed to make decisions about our future – the essence of self-determination. Therefore we support subsidiarity and local decision making.*"[41] This in relation with a referral to the german, danish and swedish examples of local government constitutional recognition,[42] leaves large space for interpretation towards a potential reform of local government organization in Scotland.

But, if one takes a look at the recent history of local government reform in Scotland as well as some recent calls for reform from NGO's, this room for interpretation immediately becomes smaller. Both the "*Local Government (Scotland) Act 1973*"[43] and the "*Local Government etc. (Scotland) Act 1994*"[44] have lead to further centralisation of local government. While the former established a two-tier system of regions and districts as well as introduced the concept of community councils, contrary to the previous system of counties, districts and large and small burghs, the latter put in place the current system of 32 unitary local councils with no other lower tier of local government.

Although one might argue that the concept of community councils, which prevailed in both acts, represents a move towards more decentralisation, it has to be mentioned that their impact and political power is generally neglectable, although there have been positive examples, and that they are not designed to be a second tier of local government. The

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40 See Scottish Government (2013) *Scotland's Future. Your guide to an independent Scotland*, pp. 47; 332; 366-367; 576-579.
41 Ibid., p. 367.
42 See Ibid., p. 368.
43 See The National Archives (2013) "Local Government (Scotland) Act 1973".
44 See Ibid. "Local Government etc. (Scotland) Act 1994".

statutory basis for Community Councils as outlined in the "*Local Government (Scotland) Act 1973*" merely states the following: "*In addition to any other purpose which a community council may pursue, the general purpose of a community council shall be to ascertain, co-ordinate and express to the local authorities for its area, and to public authorities, the views of the community which it represents, in relation to matters for which those authorities are responsible, and to take such action in the interests of that community as appears to it to be expedient and practicable.*"[45] This of course again leaves large space for interpretation and the diversity in how community councils have been established and utilized across Scotland can largely be attributed to the respective local authorities interpretation of this statutory basis. While some examples, such as in Orkney,[46] have shown somewhat of a positive impact and have lead to increased engagement between communities and the local authority, most have had little impact on policies and the community they represent. Some of these shortcomings were outlined in a report issued by the government initiated McIntosh Commission in 1999.[47]

In line with this history of governmental reform is a recent call for local government re-organization by the Edinburgh based think-tank "*Reform Scotland*" in their report named "*Renewing Local Government*", published in May 2012. It calls for further centralisation of local government from the currently existing 32 authorities to 19, as well as an increase in responsibilities for local community councils, so as to combat low election turn-outs and general public disengagement with democratic processes. The premise being that larger, presumably more powerful, local authorities will counteract the increased centralisation of power with the Scot. Nat. Gov. over the last decades.[48] What is interesting about this particular call for reform is its shared outcome targets with advocates of further local government decentralisation and devolution. Both see the need to increase public engagement with political and democratic processes. This similarity of course indicates that the narrative suggested in this sub-chapter is not actually about effective and successful provision of public services, but rather about improving election turn-outs and general public engagement with democratic processes and politics in Scotland in order to ensure that public service provision and reform of it, is being done representative of contemporary public opinion locally as well as nationally.

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45 The National Archives (2013) "Local Government (Scotland) Act 1973", section 51 (2).
46 See The Orcadian (2013) "Praise for community renewable energy efforts".
47 See Scottish Government (1999) "McIntosh findings published today".
48 See Thomson et al. (2012), pp. 1-5 & BBC (2012) "Reform Scotland proposal to cut Scottish councils".

If we further investigate and take into account that many advocates of further local government devolution take their examples from continental Europe,[49] where especially local government is struggling with democratic participation much the same way it does in Scotland,[50] this narrative becomes less about local government devolution in itself and within the framework of representative democracy and more about the aforementioned and very much global question of re-defining the relationship between the citizen or the individual and the state. Such a line of inquiry would suggest, that representative democracy as a concept of modernity is out-dated and instead policy-makers should look to alternative ways of public and democratic engagement through participatory democratic processes. The very fact that further local government devolution is being advocated in Scotland through the use of exemplary models which seem to be unsuccessful in achieving democratic engagement within representative democracies elsewhere, could be taken as an indicator for the current limits of representative democracy and its institutions, in reforming public services and their provision in a meaningful and sustainable way.

This is not to suggest, that the current democratic institutions of the state in Scotland are incapable of performing PSR, rather the modes by which they have tried to reform public service provision up to this point, which will be examined further below, are based on the, under this line of inquiry, outdated premise that the institutions of representative democracy, i.e. democratically elected national as well as local parliaments and governments, are capable of effectively delivering such reform with regard to all local idiosyncrasies. Obviously this leads to the question of who is best placed and capable of delivering PSR with regard to local particularities. Which is generally answered with "individuals" or "local communities", which then poses the question of how to best alter or redefine the relationship between them and the state, so as to "empower" them to drive PSR in their specific locality. Which then again leads to the current discussions over community empowerment, community engagement, participatory democracy and so forth, all looking for an answer to the questions posed above.

5.2 Community planing and the third sector (CPP's & TSI's)

Recently Oliver Escobar suggested a similar line of thinking in a blog published in early

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49 See Bort et al. (2012), pp. 1-27.
50 See Abé et al. (2013) "Democracy's Dropouts: The Quixotic Rise of German Non-Voters"; Franklin (2004), p. 67; Norwegian Ministry of Local Government and Regional Development (2011) "Landsoversikt. Kommunestyrevalget" & "Landsoversikt per parti. Fylkestingsvalget".

2013, shortly after the initial consultation for the "*Community Empowerment and Renewal Bill*" (CERB) had concluded. His suggestion was to revisit and reform the aforementioned community councils established in the "*Local Government (Scotland) Act 1973,*" to become so called "mini-publics," a concept first introduced by political scientist Robert Dahl, specifically designed to engage citizens with political decision making outside of the institutions of representative democracy and party politics. Escobar states, that this could "*help Community Planning Partnerships (CPPs) to establish a clear link between their strategic work of coordination and community engagement on the ground.*"[51] Although such an approach was not suggested by any of the interviewee's of this project, they did share the view that CPP's, while being largely procedurally sound in their coordination work, had translated into little change in terms of involving communities more in development and implementation of national as well as local policies.

   Almost all Interviewee's agreed, that if CPP's are to be the main vehicle to redefine the relationship between citizens and the state as outlined in chapter 5.1 and drive PSR locally, they will have to include communities as well as the third sector, as a proxy for community engagement, better. While some mentioned that this shortcoming is largely related to a question of scale much the same way it is with local government organization, with even fewer going as far as to state that CPP's in their current make-up are an entirely misconceived idea. A larger number agreed that further legal clarification of the third sectors role in CPP's and a better statutory framework for third sector- and community inclusion as well as mutual information sharing was needed in order for CPP's to actually become the community empowerment bodies they were set out to be. This perception was shared mostly among third sector umbrella's and based on a unequal partnership experience between third sector, loc. gov. and public sector representatives, with the latter two taking a leadership role, while the former were being relegated into somewhat of a spectator role.

   How such a new legal framework for CPP's should effect their work, was mostly related to two currently perceived issues within CPP's. First of which is the current lack of inclusion of the third sector in executive decision-making processes on implementation of national policies as well as development of local outcome targets, with some suggesting, that CPP's are currently being led by the public sector and loc. gov. rather than being based on a equal partnership. One such example of unequal working relationships within CPP's

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51 Escobar (2013) "The Community Empowerment and Renewal Bill (CERB): A critical crossroads for Scotland's participative democracy".

evolves around the so called *Singe Outcome Agreements* (SOA's) that are agreed upon between the Scot. Nat. Gov. and CPP's and are meant to ensure the implementation of the Scot. Nat. Gov.s sixteen national outcome targets. Going along with and exemplifying the issues outlined here, the framework for these SOA's was agreed upon solely between COSLA and the Scot. Nat. Gov. and furthermore is not based on any legally binding documents but a Concordat issued in 2007 and after further revision a mutual Statement of Ambition between the Scot. Nat. Gov. and COSLA in 2012.[52] However, the lack of third sector inclusion in CPP's was also perceived to be related to the *Third Sector Interface's* (TSI's) role as the sector's representation body on CPPs and their low amount of representativeness especially for what is sometimes referred to as "*grassroots*" organisations or small local third sector service providers as well as community based and lead organisations.

This perception was shared by participants mostly from third sector umbrella's and largely related to the TSI's nature of being a Scot. Nat. Gov. imposed framework rather than being based on any third sector lead initiative. While most participants generally agreed, that TSI's had achieved providing the Scot. Nat. Gov. and loc. gov. with a unitary body through which to communicate with the immensely diverse third sector in Scotland, they were perceived to be not or only partially fulfilling their four primary activities. Which are: Volunteering development, social enterprise development, supporting and developing a strong third sector and finally building the third sector relationship with community planning.[53] Some participants in rural as well as urban areas stated they had however also achieved a certain amount of cohesion across the third sector and initiated increased communication and collaboration among third sector umbrella organizations. At the same time the majority of participants perceived them to be still lacking sufficient mechanisms to include and represent the full diversity of any given localities landscape of third sector service providers and, as mentioned above, had therefore also failed in there activity to build the third sectors relationship with community planning, though one participant disagreed with this perception.

So did a wide-ranging report on the current state of TSI's and their future potential commissioned by *Voluntary Action Scotland*, the national umbrella body for all TSI's. It painted a rather more positive picture of TSI's than is put forward in this report. One quote

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52 See Scottish Government (2013) "Single Outcome Agreements (SOAs)".
53 See Ibid. "*Interfaces*".

concluded that "*all TSIs have a permanent place on the local Community Planning Partnership at the highest level. All were involved in signing off the Single Outcome Agreement*".[54] This somewhat represents the very shortcomings outlined in this report. According to most participants of this study, the fact that TSI's are represented on CPP's and sign off on SOA's should not be taken as an indicator for their positive impact, but rather be taken as a given. As a representative body for the third sector such a measurement approach might be considered converse to the sectors focus on outcome-based and social return centred indicators. However the report in its entirety is of course much more diverse and does take a look into the outcomes that are being delivered by the TSI's.

Furthermore, two participants stated that, just like CPP's, TSI's were in need of better legal definition because their current remit was to large and widely overlapped with those of already existing third sector umbrella bodies. According to these participants the lack of legal definition had caused confusion among TSI members as well as the wider third sector as to what exactly the TSI's role was going to be moving forward. In some local councils this had lead to a indifference among third sector service providers towards the TSI and a increased use of ad hoc communication, directly with loc. gov. and CPP's. Which, however, was also perceived to be a positive by some third sector umbrella representatives due to the fact that it alleviated the potential for TSI's to become a bottleneck of third sector cohesion causing the TSI to even further neglect the input of "*grassroots*" organizations. Finally one participant went as far as to suggest, that the TSI's were solely a funding allocation framework for the third sector and created another ineffective level of bureaucracy.

Coming back to CPP's however, the second issue currently perceived to be existent in them, seems to be the present lack of sufficient and timely information sharing from loc. gov. and the public sector towards the third sector within CPP's and in general. This includes timely up-front consultation on new policies and initiatives as well as transparency of decision-making processes. Interestingly enough one third sector representative involved with community planing in an urban environment suggested, that it was in fact a lack of knowledge and training among public sector and local government officials on the principles of partnership work that had caused this issue of bad information sharing practices as well as the above mentioned lack of equality among the partners.

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54 Voluntary Action Scotland (2013), p. 48.

Furthermore this participant suggested, that there was a lack of knowledge among loc. gov. and public sector representatives on the statutory framework of CPP's and the following responsibilities, powers and duties of loc. gov. and the public sector within the partnerships. Which had apparently lead to loc. gov. taking a executive leadership role not only within the CPP but also in relation to the aforementioned SOA's and negotiation thereof with the Scottish government. This, although there also seemed to be a misconception among loc. gov. representatives, that the CPP was neither responsible nor accountable to the the Scot. Nat. Gov. for the local implementation of these SOA's, which it is. Although this is obviously just a single isolated example, it seems to give a fairly good picture of what the current issues within CPP's in Scotland seem to be.

Other isolated complaints included over-sized CPP remits ranging across a widespread landscape of topics, making it impossible for all third sector organization's and social interests to be properly represented in CPP's as well as measurement mechanisms within the CPP not being based on outcomes but rather on procedural and representation measures and therefore going against the very foundation of the Christie Commission report and PSR in Scotland, as already briefly outlined above.

It seems then that performance of the Scot. Nat. Gov.s community empowerment and engagement agendas executed through CPPs, TSIs and SOAs has been somewhat weak. Although the aforementioned Concordat between loc. gov. and Scot. Nat. Gov., which established SOAs, was set to free up the formers capability to allocate funding with regard to local needs and previously agreed upon local outcome targets, it seems that loc. gov. has not taken advantage of that opportunity so far. This in spite of the establishment of the *National Performance Framework* (NPF) at the same time, which was intended to provide local authorities with a set of initially 15 and now 16 national outcome targets as well as a set of 50 national indicators, to give them a better idea how to develop their own local outcome targets in accordance with the Scot. Nat. Gov.s goals and subsequently negotiate a SOA.[55] Additionally, "*Scotland Performs*" was set up as a body to track the achievement of the NPF which, together with the Christie Commission report, lead to a revision of said framework in late 2011 that saw the number of national indicators rise from 45 to the now 50, with 12 being added, 29 being fully retained and 9 being retained after revision.[56] Furthermore the Scot. Nat. Parliament scrutinizes both loc. gov. as well as

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55 See Scottish Government (2007), pp. 3, 9-12.
56 See Ibid. (2013) "Scotland Performs".

the Scot. Nat. Gov. through the *Accounts Commission* and subsequently through *Audit Scotland*. More comprehensive assessments of the achievement of the NFP and performance in the national indicators can be found there.[57] However, although these measures place loc. gov. particularly under great scrutiny and are meant to enable the Scot. Nat. Gov. to hold loc. gov. and CPPs accountable to implementing the NFP locally through SOAs, they do not seem to have achieved any significant change in the impact of CPPs and engagement with communities.

The "*Community Empowerment and Renewal Bill*" (CERB) launched in 2012 was set to alleviate some of these issues, but has again gotten bad reviews from the third sector[58] and a few participants of this project, largely from urban third sector umbrellas, already expressed their disappointment with the draft bill, now simply called "*Community Empowerment (Scotland) Bill*" (CEB) that was released for consultation on the 6th of November 2013.[59] Among other proposals this consultation included draft legislation for asset transfer requests by communities as well as a duty for local authorities to create a register for land and property that fall under the "*Common Good,*"[60] both of which could further help communities develop and maintain their own assets. However, most of the frameworks outlined in these proposals still relegates most decision-making power solely to local authorities rather than proposing to share them between loc. gov. and communities.

It also included a legislation draft on "*Community Right to Request to Participate in Processes to Improve Outcomes of Service Delivery*", which, while giving communities the opportunity to request better inclusion, some might still argue lacks significant clarification as to what is meant by "*processes to improve outcomes of service delivery.*" Finally the proposed draft in the consultation also contained detailed policy proposals, i.e. non-draft legislation, for communities right to buy, strengthening community planning, allotments and local relief for non-domestic business rates as well as wider policy proposals for "*Scotland Performs*" and the NPF to be embedded in legislation and a rather weak commitment to subsidiarity. While the move towards embedding the NPF and its outcome-based approach to measuring in legislation can be seen as positive, most of the other proposals are likely to weak to really alleviate some of the issues outlined above. For example the draft makes no mention of participatory budgeting, although such an approach

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57 See Audit Scotland (2013) "Our work".
58 See Spittal (2013) "Searching for Empowerment in the Community Empowerment Bill".
59 See Scottish Government (2013), "Consultation on the Community Empowerment (Scotland) Bill".
60 See Wightman (2009), pp. 1-5.

could possibly have great potential for community engagement as well as empowerment. It can be said that this draft has failed to significantly and sufficiently shift the power balance in community planing away from loc. gov. and more towards citizens and their communities. However, it has to be mentioned that some of the issues outlined above were also addressed in the aforementioned statement of ambition in 2012, such as the enforceability of SOAs and to a lesser extent the inclusion of and cooperation with the third sector and communities.[61]

It seems to this researcher then, that while the Scot. Nat. Gov. is trying to empower communities and their local third sector organizations by reducing legal restrictions on institutional and operational work as well as establishing non-legally binding frameworks between them and loc. gov. and other stakeholders, loc. gov., mainly in its mid-level managerial bureaucracies, does not seem to fully implement these statements of ambition and concordats or at the very least has not been able to do so, so far. The new legislative framework around the above mentioned CEB on the other hand, seems to be continuing with this prevalent focus on a cultural shift rather than tight legal enforceability in community planing and engagement.

5.3 Risk-averse attitudes in local government & a need for cultural shift?

The questions stands then, what has caused loc. gov. mid-level managerial bureaucracies to lack behind in implementing the Scot. Nat. Gov. guidelines, frameworks and legalisation? And how has this lead to a increased call for further legal clarification of third sector and community powers in CPPs and in general? This report has already mentioned that historically founded attitudes towards service provision exclusively by the public sector are perceived to be hampering PSR and the redefinition of the relationship between the citizens and the state within PSR. However, the main reason for the apparent issues in loc. gov. implementation of Scot. Nat. Gov. policies is, according to the findings of this report, perceived to originate in risk-averse attitudes among loc. gov. managers specifically and bureaucracies more generally, with local authority councillors being perceived to be less risk-averse.

Such a claim has also been put forward by the Scottish Parliaments "*Local Government and Regeneration Committee.*" While they make now differentiation between

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61 See Scottish Government (2012), § 4-6.

elected officials and managers, they do state in their 9th report of 2013 titled "*Public Services Reform in Scotland: Strand 3 - Developing New Ways of Delivering Services*", which, as mentioned before, provided the basis for the fourth section of this projects interview guide, that "*too many of those engaged in PSR are risk averse.*"[62] However the report makes no specific mention of loc. gov. in relation to risk-averse attitudes. It does instead suggest, that high levels of public scrutiny from media and regulators had caused such attitudes. Going on to outline that staff needed to be empowered to take further risks and that a culture that is "*failing to fail*" was in itself and indicator towards risk-averse attitudes,[63] meaning of course that failure is an integral part of innovation. Which is especially the case when undertaking such a radical form of innovation as is currently the case within Scottish PSR. Finally they conclude that these risk-averse attitudes could be alleviated by increased transparency and disclosure of risk duties for all stakeholders in PSR as well as stronger leadership and better communication.[64] A conclusion that was only partially shared by the participants of this projects.

Their perceptions paint a rather more diverse picture. According to the data, risk-averse attitudes are thought to be establishing themselves through a variety of causes. One participant from a non-third sector NGO stated that risk-averse attitudes among loc. gov. managers were caused by a lack of public scrutiny of their work originating in large institutional and spacial gabs between them, communities and the Scot. Nat. Government. The current lack of time for revision of the policies and frameworks produced through managerial bureaucracies by democratically elected councillors in combination with this lack of public scrutiny had thereafter lead to risk-averseness towards innovation among loc. gov. managers and policy-makers. This perceived lack of democratic and public accountability of loc. gov. policies, would of course bring us directly back to the question of democratic reform and redefining the relationship between the citizen and the state. However, other participants elaborated that the perceived risk-averseness apparent in loc. gov. is caused largely by increasing accountability and control measures imposed by the Scot. Nat. Gov., while at the same time transferring a large amounts of responsibilities for service provision to loc. government. That would suggest, that it is in fact the increased pressure that had lead to the perceived risk-averse attitudes. Relating to this perception a

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62 See Scottish Parliament (2013), p. 3.
63 See Ibid., p. 21.
64 See Ibid., pp. 3, 21.

further participant suggested, that preoccupation with measuring processes rather than outcomes had caused even further deceleration of PSR progress and disabled managers to be more flexible and achieve outcomes as they best see fit rather than fulfil procedures.

However, two other interviewee's rom third sector providers disagreed by stating that poor internal knowledge management, relationship handling and partnership work within loc. Gov. and the public sector, particularly in middle-management, had led to very inconsistent behaviour in how especially procurement processes were being carried out and national outcome targets were being achieved in cooperation with the third sector. In some cases, their experiences in working with loc. gov. were described as being very good in others as uncooperative and imposing. They concluded that there is still a need for more vertical & horizontal information sharing and training within these bodies to better drive PSR. Finally, some participants suggested that loc. gov. bureaucracies simply saw PSR as a threat to their level of power and job security and were therefore averse to risk taking. With one third sector representative from an urban background stating that there is a lack of trust in loc. gov. and that it would require a "*leap of faith*" from them if PSR is to be achieved more quickly. These few participants were from a surprisingly diverse background, ranging from urban third sector umbrellas to rural service providers. It also has to be reiterated that all these perceptions were connected to managerial bureaucracies, not elected councillors.

Relating back especially to commissioning and procurement processes, the project's sample largely agreed that competitive tendering, while necessary in a national context, were economies of scale play a large role, needed to be reviewed in its local application and be made more transparent and consistent across all localities in order to provide a equal playing field for all agencies and sectors as well as avoid externalization of costs. Furthermore, some went as far as to suggested that competitive tendering was outdated as a concept and required simplification and rationalization if a competitive environment does not exist or could not be achieved. Few called for outright abolition of current competitive tendering processes in favour of community led service commissioning, procurement and delivery. One participant from a local service provider in a rural area reported of cases where the consequences of procurement were effectively the same as if there was no competitive tendering for contracts or loc. gov. had simply assigned equal funding across all existing third sector organizations in a given area, effectively rendering the process unnecessary.

Another participant from a similar background suggested that in relation to procurement the Scot. Nat. Gov. seems to have set its focus on a rather loose definition of the spirit of procurement, while loc. Gov. managers and officials seem to focus more on the formal and legal requirements of procurement in order to avoid misconceptions, reflecting the aforementioned general disconnectedness between Scot. Nat. Gov. policy and loc. gov. implementation. Furthermore, both the latter examples show the inherent interconnectedness between all the issues a surrounding PSR and those that are outlined in this particular report. Judging from these experiences in procurement as well as other examples and perceptions, it seems very much the case then that while Scot. Nat. Gov. is relying on a cultural shift with loose legal enforcement in PSR implementation, loc. gov. seems to be fairly tightly committed to the legal framework of PSR for a variety of reasons.

Earlier this year the Scot. Nat. Gov. published the *Procurement Reform (Scotland) Bill*, presenting an opportunity to alleviate some of the issues outlined above. It is to be aimed at "*establishing a national legislative framework for sustainable public procurement that supports Scotland's economic growth. […] delivering social and environmental benefits including community benefits, supporting innovation and promoting public procurement processes and systems which are transparent, streamlined, standardised, proportionate, fair and business-friendly.*"[65] Although the bill has just passed its initial consultation stage and an analysis of responses received is due to be published in January 2014, some reviews from Scottish civil society have already been negative. One could of course argue that this is just to put increased pressure on Scot. Nat. Gov. during the consultation analysis phase, but the criticism has been rather severe in these few cases. Major themes among the criticisms were the lack of a "*Living Wage*" policy, lack of accounting for social value of service providers as well as insufficient legislation on combating the usage of so called "*zero-hour*" contracts in the bill.[66]

An additional issue that seems to be embedded in or reflected by commissioning and procurement, is that of the third sector internal struggle between large-scale national and small-scale local organisations. With the latter, according to the experience of one

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65 Scottish Government (2013) "Procurement Reform Bill – frequently asked questions".
66 See BBC (2013) "Procurement in the care sector a 'national disgrace' – Unison"; BBC (2013) "Scottish ministers publish Procurement Reform Bill"; Donald, Colin (2013) "Top economists lambast new procurement law" & Downie, John (2013) "Procurement bill missed opportunity for people and communities".

participant, sometimes being incapable to enter competitive tendering for public contracts due to a lack of resources or contracts exceeding levels of volume for local organizations. Competitive tendering had thereafter led to an environment where small-scale loc. organizations could no longer be sustained. Although the diversity of the third sector is of course much greater than the simple dichotomy of small & local vs. large & national, such a view can be understood given the bipolar struggle the third sector currently finds itself in. While it has to be able to compete for cheap and effective service provision nationally as well as locally, it also has to retain its "*volunteerist*" nature and be able to carry out its remit of being used as a proxy for community engagement.

During the interviews the tension between these two remits was consistently apparent, especially among third sector representatives, and was also related to the issue of third sector internal competition between large-scale, almost professionalized organisations, and small-scale, sometimes community-led, organisations with a larger focus on volunteerism. This would mean that current issues in procurement are not so much related to the legal framework or loc. gov. implementation, but rather to increasing third sector internal competition over contracts. Especially among local rural third sector providers, the general consensus was that while advocacy and infrastructure building for volunteers and local service providers had decreased, spending on lobbying, large umbrella bodies & competition with the public sector had increased. A perception that is somewhat reflected by the third sectors distribution of income, which, in 2011, saw 79% of the income being accounted for by just 4% of third sector's organizations.[67] However, the Scot. Nat. Gov. has somewhat realized this particular issue and is aiming to alleviate it through the establishment of the so called "*Change Funds*." One such example is the "*Change Fund*" for elderly care initiated by the Scot. Nat. Gov. in 2011/12. It has recently been increased to be endowed with 80 million pounds in funding and is intended to provide framework for non-competitive funding arrangements between loc. gov., public sector and the third sector.[68]

Nonetheless, one participant also suggested, that there was a need for the third sector to realize the danger of taking more responsibility in the provision core public services (e.g. education, security/policing, infrastructure, health etc.), which could potentially lead to commercialization, professionalization & loss of extra-governmental

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67 See SCVO (2012), p. 7.
68 See JIT (2013) "Change Fund Plans".

role of the third sector. Elaborating that this process had already lead to a re-orientation within the third sector from a positive to a negative policy lead, from providing services voluntarily, locally and equally towards strategic goals of securing contracts and centralization of service delivery and funding.

But, relating back to the initial question of this chapter. What has caused risk-averse attitudes in loc. gov.? It can be summarized, that it could have a multitude of reasons relating to and originating from a variety of interconnections between Scot. Nat. Gov., loc. gov. and the third sector as well as the relationship between the three and other stakeholders in PSR. While the aforementioned lack of public scrutiny, pressure from Scot. Nat. Gov. towards loc. gov., inappropriate means of measuring tools, lack of sufficient training or simply a general fear of job security and loss of power, are all possible reasons for the perceived risk-averseness in loc. gov., one final possibility seems most adequate in explaining this perception. It relates back to the over-arching need to redefine the relationship between citizen and state and the earlier point about lack of democratic representativeness of some of the decisions taken by loc. government. According to this reasoning, which was put forward by only 3 interviewee's, the somewhat constant imminence of elections and uncertainty of their outcome had caused not only fear of job security among managerial bureaucracies but also a fairly conservative approach to implementation of reform caused by the same uncertainty which subsequently results in risk-averseness and lack of incentive for implementation of innovation and reform processes.

It is probable then, as mentioned before, that while Scot. Nat. Gov. seems committed to achieving sustainable PSR through a voluntary cultural shift rather than a large amount of legally binding frameworks, loc. gov. seems less able or committed to do so and has subsequently caused third sector calls for better legal enforcement of PSR policies in order to alleviate the perceived risk-averseness of loc. gov. faster.

However, this conclusion could be induced by a lack of knowledge within the projects sample on policy-making, -diffusion and -implementation practices in loc. gov. as well as loc. gov. organisational structures. Although most participants agreed on loc. gov.s bad performance in implementing PSR, two participants shared the more positive view, that negative perceptions of loc. gov. among the third sector representatives were caused by increased third sector focus on lobbying and communication with the Scot. Nat. Gov.,

which was also mentioned previously in relation to third sector internal competition, resulting in a lack of knowledge on loc. gov. priorities and day-to-day work required from their statutory responsibilities. According to those participants, prioritization of these responsibilities had required loc. gov. to innovate its vast managerial bureaucracy incrementally rather than in "one fowl swoop" so to speak.

This does however not take away from the fact, that these perceptions exist and were apparent throughout the larger part of this projects sample.

6. Conclusion

Regardless of what cause is ultimately determining in these perceived risk-averse attitudes among loc. gov. managerial bureaucracies, the most important finding of the data analysed above seems to be the apparent disparity between the Scot. Nat. Gov. and loc. gov. in how, to what extent and at what pace PSR is to be implemented in Scotland. While the former seems to have set its focus on enforcing a cultural shift towards partnership and co-production with individuals, communities and the third sector through only a small amount of national legislation and a more predominant focus on complementary guidance and supplementary ambition frameworks in a very much incremental way. The latter seems to have committed itself to enforcing and implementing the comparatively small of amount of legislative structures in varying degrees in order to fulfil its statutory responsibilities and its duties to the Scot. Nat. Gov. rather than taking a risk affectionate approach to innovation.

Not only where these findings consistently apparent throughout all interviews conducted for this project, they also became even more pronounced ones interviewee's were asked to pin point some of the most important findings of this project and for further feedback on the information they gave. The discrepancy between loc. gov.s focus on legal enforceability at varying levels and the Scot. Nat. Gov. emphasis on implementing a cultural shift in Scottish society are therefore very much apparent in the perceptions of Scottish civil society. This conclusion is further underlined by the findings of the "*Local Government and Regeneration Committee*" and is certainly not exclusive to this report.

The very fact that loc. gov. structures and bureaucracies are massively large-scale and at the same time widely dispersed across varying levels of institutional structures can only contribute to this disconnect. Further major contributors seem to be close

accountability constraints put on loc. gov. as well as risk-averse dispositions among loc. gov. managers caused at the very least partially by party and electoral politics. Subsequently they seem to have only little incentive to creatively interpret legislation and guidance put forward by the Scot. Nat. Gov. and are instead conducting the implementation of PSR very close to the legal requirement.

In order to alleviate these issues PSR will require few more concise legal alterations, possibly a clearer and less fragmented institutional landscape, greater utilization of community participation, especially in the local application of PSR and finally stronger leadership from Scot. Nat. Gov. as well as local authorities in implementing empowerment and partnership, especially through enforcement of non-legal frameworks such as concordats, statements of intend and guidance frameworks if the intended outcomes are to be achieved.

Further contributing to the deceleration of progress in PSR in Scotland is the current institutional and organizational structure of loc. gov. as well as community empowerment. While the notion that loc. gov. organisational units are large-scale and need to be devolved is somewhat disputable, the perception that community empowerment through its current channels of CPP's and community councils has failed seems verified. The fact that almost all observers agree, that CPPs are either inefficient or have entirely failed should be evidence enough to suggest that there is imminent need for wide-ranging revision of the frameworks provided for CPPs and the legalisation they're based upon. Underpinning this whole discussion around how to best engage with and empower communities, is the somewhat global question of whether or not the traditional institutions of representative democracy are still capable of achieving PSR as outlined by the Christie Commission report in 2011. Redefining the way we think about, perceive and organizes the relationship between the citizen or the individual and their communities and the state will be fundamental if PSR is to be financially as well as demographically sustainable for the foreseeable future.

Many have looked abroad to find examples of how to redefine the relationship between citizen and state, and they are right in doing so, but instead of looking at examples of how democracy is organized and how public services are delivered in these foreign countries why should we not instead be looking at how these governments treat their citizens with regard to information giving and sharing? A greater focus on transparency

and openness from the Scot. Nat. Gov. towards its citizens in terms of development, implementation and evaluation of public policies might be a viable to consider. In order for PSR to be sustainable, equality needs to be key, not only economically, but also politically. Knowledge of, accessibility to and say in the development, implementation and evaluation of PSR and other policies is thereby vital to the future of democracy as a whole. The 2014 Scottish independence referendum presents a unprecedented opportunity to drive change in this direction, or any other that can be proven to be the future of constitutional democracy in Scotland.

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8. Appendix

8.1 List of Interviewee's

Christina Campbell	Victim Support Scotland, Inverness
David Griffiths	ECAS, Edinburgh
Elaine Adams	Highland Community Care Forum, Inverness
Ella Simpson	EVOC, Edinburgh
Harriet Eadie	Volunteer Centre Edinburgh
Ian Cooke	Development Trust Association Scotland, Edinburgh
Isobel Grigor	Calman Trust, Inverness
James Dunbar	New Start Highland, Inverness
Jay Mearhead	Signpost Highland, Inverness
Jenny Brotchie	Carnegie UK Trust
Kenny Steele	Highland Hospice, Inverness
Michael Keating	University of Aberdeen
Milind Kolhatkar	EVOC, Edinburgh
Niall Sommerville	Voluntary Action Scotland, Glasgow
Robin McAlpine	Jimmy Reid Foundation
Ron Culley	Convention of Scottish Local Authorities (COSLA)
Sue Mitchell	WEA Scotland, Inverness
Willie Sullivan	Electoral Reform Society Scotland

Further contextual information provided through recorded interviews with two senior civil servants of the Scot. Nat. Gov.

Additionally SCVO chief executive Martin Sime and SCVO Policy and Research staff Ruchir Shah, Ilse Mackinnon, Jenny Bloomfield and Felix Spittal gave assistance in revision, contextualisation and verification of the projects findings in its late stages.

8.2 Final Interview Guide

This is a very loose guide as to how the interview will be structured and what questions will be most important. However, as the interviews are meant to be of a more qualitative nature, new questions might arise throughout the process and jumps back and forth between topics might be made. Length of interviews is estimated at approximately <u>one hour</u>, not necessarily all question will be asked.

1. Introduction

- Information on internship project
- Assurance of confidentiality of personal details/information given during the Interview
- Explanation of Interview structure

2. Background

- What is your employer/organization and what position/task/job do you fulfill/do for that employer/organization? (Answer optional → Info given on usage of answer if requested)
- How has PSR effected your Organization?

Scotland faces several challenges to the way public and welfare services are being delivered to the people, chief among which are inherently global, such as demographic change and economic downturn, as well as the locally specific Scottish independence referendum and public services reform, there has been an on-going debate over ways in which future policies could help transform the Scottish public services landscape to become more effective, efficient, democratically inclusive, preventative and sustainable, with regards to that the project asks the following research questions:

a) *What are the current issues that Scotland faces when it comes to providing public services and what challenges will/has the public services reform negate or intensify?* (Relate to how it has effected the work the specific organization is doing)

b) *What are international examples of Public Service Reform and how successful/unsuccessful have they been? Are there any global trends? How is Scotland linked to these trends and examples and how can Scotland benefit from them?* (emphasis depending on interviewee's knowledge)

c) *What would/should a people centered approach to public policy-making, based on*

community empowerment and similar measures, exactly entail and how would this help facilitate better provision of public and welfare services? (Christie Commission recommendations)

d) *What role is the third sector playing in providing these services and what should its future role be?* (Emphasis on specific work done by organizations)

3. Christie Commission Recommendations

(In case Interviewee is not familiar) The reports specific recommendations for policy action are: New set of statutory powers and duties focussed on improving outcomes, preventativeness and inequalities; ensure community participation in design and delivery of services; formally integrate relationship between Scottish government and local government to secure joined-up service provision; build a common public service ethos through common training; have all competences in the area of employment devolved from Westminster to Holyrood; increase Audit Scotland's remit to make public service organization more cost-effective; achieve competitive neutrality in the commissioning and procurement process through consistent and transparent application of standards; have the Scottish Government lead a program of outcomes-based reviews across service areas to improve performance and reduce costs.

- What is your opinion about these recommendations? Would you agree or disagree with them and if so for what reasons?
- Would you rate any of the recommendations higher than the others?
- Do you feel there is a need for political power to be further devolved down to local government and community level in order to ensure that public service provision is better connected to localities and the people receiving services?
- How do you think a more preventative and long-term approach to public service and welfare provision might help reduce public expenditures?
- What do you think needs to be done to ensure that the public & third sector are treated equally in procurement and commissioning processes? Is there a need for protection of small/ local service providers?
- What does the term "community empowerment" mean to you and what differences are there between your idea of it and what is actually happening in communities and the third sector?

4. Local Gov. and Regeneration Committee 9th Report on PSR (published by SP on 26 June 2013)

(In case Interviewee is not familiar) The report states that: *"well-intended efforts to pursue PSR are not yet delivering the scale, nature or rate of change that is needed."* Delivering on Christie Commission recommendations should be critical target for PSR; Top-Down, centrally driven PSR not effective; Communication and strong leadership needs to increase; deep-seated risk-averse attitudes need to change; CPP's have yielded little improvement to public services.

- Do you share the negative outlook given by the committee? If so, what needs improving in your opinion? If not, can you give examples that contradict the committee's outlook?
- Who or what do you think is to blame for the lack of success in general and in CPP's specifically? Why does there seem to be a difference in how TSI's are being treated by local government?
- Are CPP's still a viable option for community-based PSR? What alterations need to be made to make their work more effective? Do you think there is need for better legal framework to incorporate the third sector in more vital role?
- Why do you think stakeholders in PSR are so averse to risk, especially in local government? What can be done to change these attitudes?
- There seems to be a need for stronger leadership & better over-arching supervision/ coordination in driving PSR and community empowerment. Would you agree with that? Who do you think should take that leadership position?

5. Conclusion

- Further comments and suggestions?
- Other questions you would've liked me to ask/focus more on?
- Other people you think I should talk to?

Thank you for your help and participation.

8.3 Initial list of main narratives

- Embedded within PSR is the ***underlying issue of need for democratic reform***/ re-definition of the relationship between the citizen/individual and the state, loc. gov. in Scotland has become too large-scale, centralized and managerial, without addressing these issues first, public services can not be reformed in any meaningful and sustainable way.

- ***Party/Electoral politics*** are the main obstacle to large-scale comprehensive reform of public services and the Scottish political system.

- ***CPP's*** are largely led by loc. gov. & the public sector, which renders them ineffective in achieving their purpose, they lack inclusive mechanisms for the third sector/communities, transparency of decision-making processes and equal information-sharing, the experience of CPP's also somewhat reflects the general state of cooperation between the third sector and loc. gov. & the public sectors.

- ***Risk-averse attitudes*** in loc. gov. that have slowed down PSR are largely caused by lack of training/internal management on partnership work, historically established perceptions, fear of job security & lack of self-generated tax revenue.

- The ***third sector has become too top heavy***, while advocacy and infrastructure building for volunteers and local service providers has decreased, spending on lobbying, large umbrella bodies & competition with the public sector has increased, the third sector should not aim to replace the public sector as the main service provider.

- The question of how to fully ***measure the success of third sector service provision*** through quantifiable indicators becomes unnecessary when sound business models and a systematic qualitative comparison of service provision across localities are being applied.

- ***Commissioning and Procurement*** processes need to be reviewed and made more transparent & consistent, while there is a need for competitive tendering over gov. contracts, there is also need for simplification/rationalization of procurement processes if a competitive environment does not exist/can't be achieved.

- There is widespread ***awareness of int. example of good practice in PSR*** across the third sector and cooperation exists on many different levels, the Scot. Nat. Gov. should facilitate such cooperation and incorporate int. examples of good practice into their policies as much as applicable.

- The success of ***TSI's*** varies strongly across local councils, while they provide a cohesive voice for the third sector, they lack remit definition and in some cases other channels of communication with loc. gov. & Scot. Nat. Gov. are being used intentionally.