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## Projects for regeneration: Making them work

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# **Projects for Regeneration: Making them Work**

**Lyne I, Franks T, Cusworth J.**

## **Abstract**

The study analyses approaches to the management of two projects within the regeneration portfolio of a large UK metropolitan council. Developing a theoretical framework drawing both from mainstream project methodologies and international development, the study highlights a number of key issues which need to be addressed, including entrepreneurship, participation, stakeholder buy-in, project lifecycles and benefit management. Key lessons emerging from the study include the need to foster entrepreneurship within the controlled environment of the project and the importance of setting programme targets which are appropriately orientated to harness the interdependent nature of benefits of regeneration projects in the public sector.

## **Key words**

Regeneration: project management: entrepreneurship: participation: benefits

## **Regeneration in Bradford**

Regeneration is a high priority for the Bradford Council (BMDC) and strategic management approaches to area regeneration have become imbedded in practice through initiatives such as City Challenge and the Single Regeneration Budget Challenge Fund. However the regeneration challenge in Bradford is significant. The 2001 report 'Community Pride Not Prejudice' (Bradford Race Review 2001) illustrated critical constraints, underlying tensions between communities and significant perceptions of low levels of opportunity in deprived communities. Regeneration efforts up to that point were illustrated in the 2001 Report to have had certain negative consequences such as; competitive bidding for regeneration funding which exacerbated misunderstandings between ethnic communities relating to exclusion from employment and financial resources; perpetuation of low self esteem due to a 'deprivation-deficit model' whereby communities would have to prove their deprivation to gain funds; lack of motivation amongst important beneficiaries leading to a lack of influence on regeneration projects, and yet also a culture of dependency on projects which often undermines sustainable benefit.

Bradford regeneration since 2001 presents a better picture in part due to the effects of (vastly) higher levels of investment from the Government, but also importantly due to greater innovation in outreach to communities. Levels of community involvement have increased over time, partnerships have been successful and community leadership is strengthening (Audit Commission 2004) while a culture of partnership working is building higher levels of trust, credibility and confidence (Audit Commission 2008).

The 2008 Audit Commission report suggests that skills, employment and health were the highest regeneration concerns amongst those interviewed, while crime and housing were also important. Cultural difference, language barriers and a lack of pride in the area were strongly perceived to be constraints on regeneration activity. This sense of difference between groups and the issue of esteem and motivation

suggests that, despite the recognisable progress, some of the problems raised by the 2001 Race Report still persist.

## **Background**

Hutchinson (2001; 265-270) states that a 'three dimensional' perspective of strategic management is necessary for a successful approach to regeneration. This is likely to be more complex than the simplified approaches to strategic management which are articulated in mainstream business strategy literature. A three dimensional perspective encompasses: *Process* (change management, formulation and implementation); *Content* (products, objectives); *Context*: which may be both internal (resources, capability, culture) and external (economic, political, social).

This view of strategic management illustrates why *projects* are seen as a useful means to achieve regeneration objectives. Projects deliver change through the *process* of implementing ideas which results in *contents* (products that meet objectives). This in turn will provide resources that enhance capabilities and which are necessary to reap social and economic benefits.

### *Why are regeneration projects different?*

If strategic management at the programme level in regeneration is best described as a 'three dimensional' concept which can be distinguished from conventional strategic management for business, a very similar statement might be made in relation to the distinctive nature of regeneration projects. A 2006 survey of ten key industry figures which sought different definitions of urban regeneration revealed that common perceptions entail partnerships which make use of 'brownfield' sites in accordance with a multiplicity of (frequently changing) objectives and that considerable emphasis tends to be placed on the idea of 'sustainable communities' ([www.building.co.uk](http://www.building.co.uk)). The responses given emphasise that, while private sector projects work largely in isolation from the external social and political context, regeneration projects have to consider a much wider range of objectives and interested stakeholders because it is precisely this external context which provides the rationale for the project itself.

A critical tension in the delivery of regeneration projects is that gaining the type of buy in which is necessary to promote 'sustainable communities' requires creativity in spite of different structural constraints which are placed on the agency of regeneration project managers. While some large scale regeneration projects will always stand out individually, the reality is that most projects are over shadowed by the scale of the regeneration task as a whole and also because of the interventions which are frequently made by external agents regeneration projects are 'non-linear' and 'non-equilibrium' (Rhodes and Murray, 2007, Jones and Gripaios, 2000). The nature of structure which surrounds regeneration means that regeneration projects are comparable with 'complex adaptive systems' which are both shaped by and in turn also help to shape their surroundings.

### *Comparisons with international donor funded projects*

In the past projects have also been the favoured mechanism to deliver international development objectives because they provide a convenient mechanism to transfer funds into a structured environment which facilitates the cost control and accountability which is necessary when using public finance (Cusworth and Franks 1993).

However there has also been criticism of the effective role which projects play in realising the 'outcome' of regeneration or international development. These criticism

arise from a number of different viewpoints. For example, there are difficulties in establishing agreed objectives amongst different stakeholders, with the consequent need to take account of necessary consultation processes and time frames. In addition constraints to successful project implementation are caused by the necessary processes for the use of public finances in relation to financial management, monitoring and evaluation. Overall there is a need to balance efficient project delivery with effectiveness, with the result that there is sometimes an emphasis on inputs or 'spending' at the expense of a full consideration of benefits from a multiplicity of projects or programmes.

These issues are addressed in much of the academic literature on projects, for example hard vs. soft projects (Crawford and Pollack, 2006), blueprint vs. process (Brinkerhoff and Ingle, 1989), 'making projects critical' (Cicmil and Hodgson 2006). However, within this literature, projects in themselves are more or less uniformly defined; blueprint and process approaches may differ on the flexibility needed and be more appropriate in some types of projects than others but in both cases the project involves investments over a limited time which produces the outputs that justify the 'purpose' (benefits) of the project (Franks et al 2004). The 'process' view of projects is also comparable with mainstream project definitions which emphasise the necessity of 'flexible decision points' and 'the involvement of management and stakeholders at the right time' but maintains that projects are temporary structures to deliver outputs which entail 'a controlled and organised start, middle and end' (OGC 2005, 3).

A focus upon sustaining post-project benefits by paying attention to 'recurrent financing' and 'operation, maintenance and asset management' has always characterised the formulation of international development projects. However, there have been many cases of 'post-project' failure, which raises crucial issues with regard to the ways that stakeholders buy into projects. Here there is a strong contribution which can be made by insights from international development to the analysis of regeneration projects as the two environments are strikingly similar. Unlike infrastructure or private sector projects which take mainstream approaches to project management, regeneration and development projects take place in 'ill structured' environments and have to consider the requirements of a multiplicity of stakeholders ranging from the funding agencies to the recipients, with different degrees of project influence.

## **The study aims and objectives**

The aim of this study was to develop a method for analysing project management in regeneration projects. Drawing on comparisons with international experience, it would assist the Regeneration Department in BMDC in its understanding of how projects contribute towards the regeneration objectives of People, Place and Business.<sup>1</sup>

The immediate objectives of the study were to:

1. Compare actual versus planned outcomes (impacts) and outputs (products) for a sample of projects in the council's regeneration portfolio
2. For two pilot case-study projects, test research approaches which will provide information on;

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<sup>1</sup> These regeneration objectives are in turn cascaded down from the Council's corporate / community planning documents and Yorkshire Forward's Regional Economic Strategy.

- How project management processes contributed to the achievements of project outcomes and outputs,
- How benefits from regeneration projects are envisaged, realised and sustained.
- The specific constraints and challenges faced by regeneration projects in the city/region.

This was intended to be a pilot study entailing an investigation of two regeneration projects and developing a methodology for rigorous investigation. The approach could then be scaled up to cover a wider section of projects within the BMDC regeneration portfolio and, in due course, projects implemented council-wide and by other public sector institutions in the city and region.

## **Theoretical framework**

The theoretical framework for this research derived from three basic concepts of project development, the project cycle, the logical framework and mainstream methodologies such as PRINCE2 (OGC, 2005). The first of these, project cycle management, finds extensive application both in international development and in regeneration. The logical framework, by contrast, is more extensively used in international development than in other settings, whilst at the present time PRINCE2 methodologies are hardly used in international development.

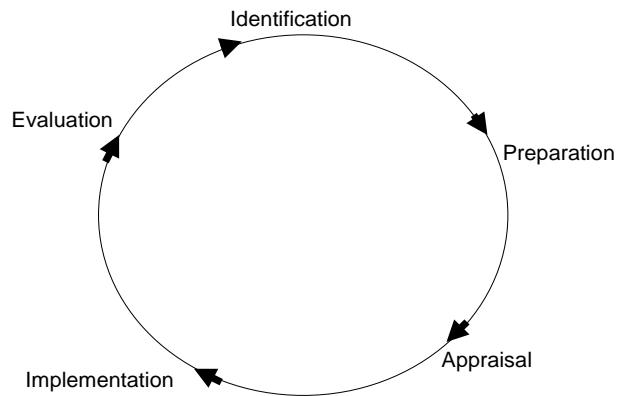
### *The project cycle*

The concept of the project cycle rests on the idea that a project goes through different phases during its life. The project cycle is presented in various formats in different settings but all have in common the concept of a series of key stages in the life of the project, including:

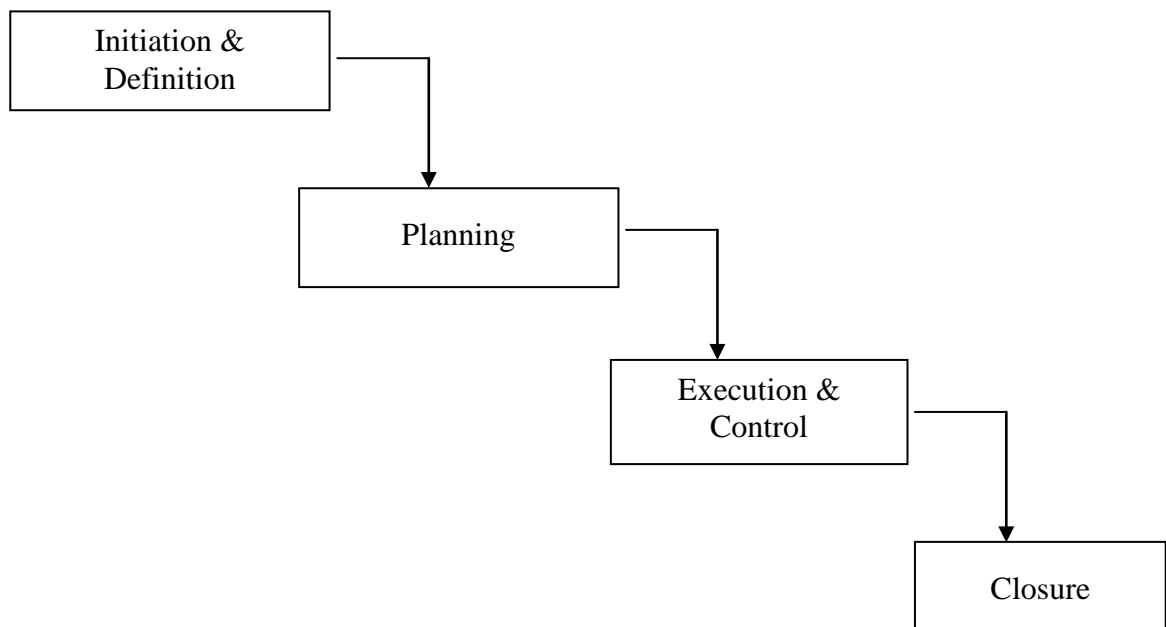
- Identification, where the idea for the project is first discussed or envisaged,
- Preparation, when the key components of the project are planned and formalised.
- Implementation, in which the project tasks or activities are actually undertaken to produce the planned outputs.

International development differs from mainstream approaches in putting considerable emphasis on project appraisal, during which the formal decision to proceed with the project is taken, and in evaluation, where an assessment of project success can lead to the identification of further projects. This reflects the importance of the funding agency in international development and the cyclical nature of project involvement for a funding agency. A typical example of an international development project cycle (the Baum cycle) is shown in figure 1. By contrast, mainstream project management in industrialised settings puts less emphasis on project appraisal as a separate stage in the project cycle, but instead emphasises the importance of project closure, as the point at which project outputs are put into operation to yield a stream of benefits. The Gardiner cycle (figure 2) is a typical depiction of the project cycle in mainstream approaches.

**Figure 1. The Baum cycle**



**Figure 2: A mainstream project cycle**



Source: Gardiner, 2005

From the project cycle comes the idea of project cycle management, the need to manage a project through its various stages from inception to planning to implementation and finally to closure and operation. The term 'project management'

normally refers to the management of project implementation, which is indeed a key stage in the cycle because it is the point at which the majority of funds are being expended. The key to successful project delivery in international development or regeneration, however, very often lies as much in the other stages of the project cycle, as in the management of the physical tasks required for project implementation. Different skills and inputs may be needed at different stages in the project cycle, and management of the interface between them may become an important consideration.

### *The Logical Framework*

The logical framework has been in circulation for almost forty years. It is a project tool for international development projects, which has been formatted in slightly different ways by varying donor institutions, but which retains certain key principles. The logical framework provides an overview of the project objectives which helps to maintain a focus on the justification for the project. In addition, it presents assumptions and external issues (risks) which can have an impact upon the project, and it supports effective performance monitoring and evaluation, through defining appropriate performance indicators and data.

A simplified version of a logical framework is presented in figure 3.

**Figure 3. The Logical Framework.**

<b>Hierarchy of objectives</b>	<b>Performance Indicators</b>	<b>Assumptions and risks</b>
<i>Development Objective / Goals</i> Long term impact and overall improvement to the quality of beneficiaries' lives.	Appropriate measures (based on appropriate data) to verify the overall long term improvements	The requirement in society for sustainable improvements.
<i>Effect Objectives / Purpose</i> Specifically intended impacts / benefits for identified beneficiaries as a direct result of the project.	Appropriate measures (based on appropriate data) to verify the impacts / benefits which are materialising that affect the beneficiaries of the project.	The requirement within the environment of beneficiaries surrounding the project for the overall development objective.
<i>Outputs</i> The deliverables which are considered necessary to meet the project objectives / purpose	Appropriate measures (based on appropriate data) to verify which planned outputs are being or have been created	The requirement of beneficiaries surrounding the project for the specifically intended benefits when the project is delivered.
<i>Activities / Tasks</i> Work packages delivered to accomplish each expected output during the project	Budget summaries, inventories of resources used	The requirement of resources, budgets, other aspects for projects delivery will be accessible.

*Adapted from Dale (2004 :68) and Social Impact (1997): cited in Gasper (2000: 19).*



## *Mainstream Project Methodology*

In this study 'mainstream' approaches to project management are exemplified by the PRINCE2 methodology (OGC, 2005). PRINCE2 ("Projects IN Controlled Environments") is a project approach which emphasises controlled stages and processes through the project life cycle. It is finding widespread acceptance now, particularly in public sector projects, and is becoming the de facto standard for project management, though many institutions find it too complex for everyday use and develop tailor-made simplified versions.<sup>2</sup>

Certain elements of the logical framework are comparable with the PRINCE 2 method. The general overview of the project objectives, which should be considered as 'regeneration goals' in this report, are specified in PRINCE 2 as the concern of corporate/programme management which is beyond the scope of the project itself. However, where the logical framework maintains a focus on the 'justification' for the project, PRINCE 2 would call this a maintained focus upon the 'business case'. PRINCE 2 also heavily emphasises strategies for risk analysis, methods of risk management, consideration of risk tolerances and processes of raising or escalating a project issue in accordance with threats. Monitoring and evaluation is a feature of maintaining the 'quality log', 'end stage reporting' and conforming to 'acceptance criteria' and also through the 'project assurance role' which is generally representative of the end user, the business and the contracted supplier.

### **Focus and methodology of the study**

Building on the concepts of project cycle management, three major themes were identified for investigation in this study. These focussed on processes and approaches to:

- Project / programme planning
- Project / programme implementation
- Benefit realisation

During the investigations various sub-issues arose as components of these major themes. Throughout the study there was continuous contrasting of experiences of regeneration and international development projects. In addition the study focussed on engagement with stakeholders, quality control mechanisms which work in the context of delivering regeneration projects, and approaches to partnership management which are specific enough to ensure the desired outcome. A particular interest was in processes which enable regeneration benefits to be tracked and proven. Finally, in view of the prevalence of PRINCE2 methodology, there was on-going consideration of the PRINCE 2 approach in relation to these themes, contrasted with the use of intuitive approaches to project management.

Given the budgetary and time constraints of the study, it would not have been possible to establish a formal systematic survey of regeneration projects within the council's portfolio, nor, given the aims and objectives of the study, would this have been the appropriate method to use. Projects by their nature are context-specific and regeneration projects in particular face a varied set of challenges and issues which are not suited to statistical methods of analysis. It was therefore felt more suitable to

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<sup>2</sup> For example, Bradford University, like many other public institutions, has developed the 'Bradford Method' which tailors PRINCE2 to its specific context and needs. In doing this, many of the PRINCE2 processes are simplified and made more user-friendly.

work through a case study approach, investigating a limited number of projects in detail and trying to understand the underlying themes and issues emerging in each case. The limitations of generalisation are more than offset by the advantages of the deeper understanding that a case study approach generates.

The approach to the study therefore consisted of identifying two regeneration projects within the Bradford portfolio as suitable case studies. These were then investigated with the aim of conducting analysis and drawing insights in accordance with the stated objectives and themes of this research. In each case the study comprised two complementary approaches:

- firstly, gathering quantitative data from project documentation which establishes specific targets that the projects are seeking to achieve
- secondly, collecting qualitative data from a series of semi structured interviews conducted with project managers, key personnel and different stakeholders associated with the projects.

### **Case study selection**

Following a succession of meetings between members of the research team and key figures within the BMDC Department for Regeneration the criteria for the selection of two case study projects were set out in the inception report. The selected projects must have delivered outputs recently enough to enable recollection of the delivery process amongst interviewees and must be supported by sufficient project documentation to enable the determination of baselines; there need to be explicitly envisaged social and/or economic benefits; there should not have been excessive evaluation preceding this research which might undermine the responses of interviewees due to 'evaluation fatigue'; it was agreed that projects which were perceived to have been successful projects provide a more productive object of investigation than 'failed' projects as successes could be identified while critical analysis can also identify areas for improvement; it was also decided that one project would be analysed directly from the BMDC regeneration portfolio whilst taking the other project from an external agency (Bradford Trident was chosen) would allow a contrast of insight from different styles of project delivery.

### **Jobs@**

Jobs@ is an ongoing project which was initiated in 2003. This project works across the Bradford District to provide an employment outreach service by engaging with 'hard to reach people' in community settings and also by engaging with employers to generate opportunities for these people to gain access to work. Jobs@ is sustained by tendering for assorted contracts from diverse funding streams and this 'cocktail funding' allows the project to cater for different target groups. These contracts could be considered as 'time bound interventions' which are undertaken to achieve specific objectives.

The project was suitable for investigation because:

- It has quantifiable outputs and targets.
- There is a clear criteria for success based on its regenerative outcome
- Buy-in has been necessary from stakeholders among 'hard to reach' groups.
- Buy-in has been necessary from partners in the private, public and third sector.

- The project bears close comparison to many experiences of international development project management, accessing multiple funding streams and needing to achieve different targets to satisfy the specific requirements of different funders.

This research focuses largely on the delivery of a contract procured from 'Access to Employment', which draws down funding over a two year period. In the first year this has come from the European Regional Development Fund (ERDF) and Yorkshire Forward, and in the second year it will be drawn from Yorkshire Forward alone. This contract is for the delivery of an employment service under the criteria of 'Jobs Brokerage' (Theme A) specified in the Access to Employment Commissioning Document, providing 'client-facing work' and 'employer-facing work'. Certain elements of the Commissioning Document criteria of 'Working With Employers' (Theme B) have also been assimilated within this contract where there are overlapping objectives.

Whilst it was initially envisaged that the study would investigate the contract procured from Access to Employment in isolation, it was found that this would not give a full picture of the insights to be gained from this project, as other contracts have entailed slightly different stakeholder criteria. Furthermore, some analysis of a completed contract also allows for a post-delivery assessment of specific outcomes and sustainable partnerships. Therefore a previous contract procured by ERDF funding, and another by Job Centre Plus drawing funding from an initiative called Ethnic Minority Outreach (EMO) were also reviewed.

### The Mayfield Community Centre

The 'Mayfield Community Centre' is a project delivered by Bradford Trident. Bradford Trident is in itself a regeneration program which was established to deliver £50 million of Government funding under the New Deal for Communities (NDC) for investment in the Park Lane, Marshfield and West Bowling areas of Bradford. As NDC funding is a ten year undertaking which has another two years to run, there are now a number of completed projects with clearly intended social benefits which can be examined in the post-project context.

Following a discussion with the Chief Executive of Bradford Trident, the Mayfield Community Centre was proposed for investigation because;

- A physical output has been delivered with a clearly envisaged social outcome.
- There has been significant input across different theme areas of regeneration, allowing analysis of different regeneration objectives.
- Critical risks manifested during the implementation of the project.
- There is an emphasis on sustainability which requires the buy-in of different stakeholders including local community residents, community groups, businesses and the public sector.

After a six month period of community consultation the Trident Board agreed upon a 'Community Facilities' strategy for regeneration which would provide locally based 'hubs' (community buildings) in each of the three NDC areas. This would facilitate a range of community services and also become sustainable through the provision of business tenancies and tenancies for local authority services. The Mayfield Community Centre opened in November 2004. The delivery of this facility entailed the refurbishment and extension of Mayfield House, a property within the Council portfolio, and was conducted with a budget of £2.4 million.

The delivery of the Mayfield project was overseen by the Trident Board, more than half of whom are residents of the three NDC areas. The centre itself has since been handed over to be run by the Marshfield Community Association (MCA). Bradford Trident continue to take an active interest in the Centre, providing technical support, assistance with maintenance and a half-time support worker from their staff pool at their own expense, but essentially all administrative decisions and liaison with business tenants are now conducted by the steering group members of MCA.

## **Respondents**

As noted earlier, a key component of the study comprised semi-structured interviews with key project staff.

### Jobs@

The interviewees were selected in order to gain the perspectives of project management, fund holders, contract procurers and the local business community.

In addition to the project managers, the Regeneration Funds Manager and Senior Regeneration Funds Officer were interviewed, along with a previous contractor of Jobs@ services to deliver jobs brokerage and outreach, and also a representative of a large employer operating in the holiday service sector.

### The Mayfield Community Centre

The interviewees were selected to gain the perspectives of project management, Bradford Trident, and community and business stakeholders. In addition to the project manager, another employee of Bradford Trident was interviewed, along with the Chair of the Mayfield Centre Steering Committee, the Steering Committee itself, and finally a business tenant who has been operating from the centre for the past three years.

## **Research themes and analysis 1 - project/programme planning**

Projects require a planning/preparation stage before the implementation of the project can begin. This stage is consistent with some of the principles identified in 'planning' under PRINCE 2 which begins with 'starting up a project' and is designed to engage with each managed stage throughout the project's delivery. Common aspects of this stage include:

- Identifying required activities to deliver the project.
- Deciding a sequence for activities and who will do them.
- Calculating the required costs and resources.
- Producing a time schedule.
- Assessing risks, assumptions and external influences.

In consideration of particular elements of the planning stage of project cycle management the following issues emerged as areas for investigation:

- The institutional framework (including partnerships) and funding arrangements under which the projects were identified.
- The procedures which have been followed for project appraisal and approval.
- Responsibility for the project preparation.

- Procedures which have been followed for defining and estimating project benefits.
- Risk assessment processes, particularly in considering the delivery of planned (or assumed) benefits.
- Processes for stakeholder involvement.

## Jobs@

### *Institutional framework*

The institutional framework within which Jobs@ projects operate is 'in house' within the BMDC regeneration portfolio, although it acts independently as a procurer of jobs brokerage contracts. Under the Access to Employment funded project which is the main focus of this report, in the (current) first year the project works according to the Priority 3 regeneration themes specified under ERDF funding. In the second year sole funding from Yorkshire Forward will allow the project to work within a wider framework. The funding stream management is also located within the BMDC Department of Regeneration. While Jobs@ works in partnership with BMDC and to a considerable degree with Jobcentre Plus since the EMO contract was completed, there is an emphasis on partnership working with other employment service providers which is reinforced by the funding obligations of the Access to Employment contract.

### *Appraisal and approval*

The procedure for appraisal and approval of the project delivered under the Access to Employment contract was dictated by the capacities of Jobs@ to deliver the outputs specified in the Access to Employment Commissioning Document. The activities required, who should conduct them and in what sequence activities should take place, could be determined for the Access to Employment contract based largely on the experience gained by delivering similar contracts for other funders. The resources required could be assessed in a similar way by comparing the resources required to deliver previous project outputs with those output criteria specified in the Access to Employment Commissioning Document. While a cost profile for the project was conducted on this basis (the major cost is identified as staffing) the costing was never the less dictated essentially by the finances made available by the funding stream.

### *Project preparation*

The preparation for the Access to Employment funded project was largely the responsibility of the project manager. This preparation entailed refining the work detail, for example where there were actually two contracts initially secured by Jobs@ from Access to Employment (one under theme A and one under theme B) these were merged into one contract due to the amount of funding being requested and also in the interests of efficiency. There was an implementation plan devised for the project, prepared by an external consultant. A key advantage of Jobs@ is that the preparation to deliver this project was relatively straight forward in comparison to employment service providers which were not already well established within the Priority 3 Areas.

### *Defining and identifying benefits*

The Access to Employment Commissioning Document specifies general targets within designated outcome themes which have been negotiated between Access to Employment and Yorkshire Forward; specific targets were then refined at a local level and returned to Yorkshire Forward to gain their approval. The Jobs@ contract includes targets for:

- Personal support work,
- Provision of skills development and ICT training,
- Numbers of residents into employment,
- Job fairs and employment service provider network meetings.

On the basis of previous outreach contracts the project manager emphasises that these targets can be delivered comfortably and that the real benefits should transcend the direct impact of attaining them. The project manager emphasised that the ideal benefits of Jobs@ would be a gradual 'change in culture' that raises employment opportunity and expectations.

### *Risk assessment*

Initial risk assessment for the project was the responsibility of the fund holder, located within BMDC's Regeneration Department. Subsequent risk planning and assessment processes were incorporated within the overall risk assessment framework of the department.

This risk management framework is broadly consistent with PRINCE 2 approaches, for example in defining the procedures that would be followed in "escalating a project issue" where necessary.

### *Stakeholder engagement processes*

The initial process of consultation was the responsibility of the fund holder. This process clarified the requirements for stakeholder engagement in the tender for the Access to Employment contract. In preparing the tender, Jobs@ established milestones for ongoing consultation with members of the community during the implementation phase of the project to ensure that specific employment needs in the community were being targeted.

The community based positioning of Jobs@, and the services that were already being provided, raises some interesting questions regarding the extent to which stakeholder engagement is always necessary. Jobs@ have been present in hard-to-reach communities since 2003, and were already providing some of the services which were specified in the commissioning document. Previous work had already demonstrated successful output delivery and generated buy-in from stakeholders.

## Mayfield Centre

### *Institutional framework*

The institutional framework for the Mayfield Centre project was established by the New Deal for Communities (NDC) programme. This was set up by the new government in 1998 as a ten year programme to target deprived communities and develop models of best practice through partnerships encompassing 'local

organisations and businesses, the private sector, voluntary bodies and community representatives' (ODPM 2003).

NDC funding had to be secured on the basis of a 'Delivery Plan' submitted to the Office of the Deputy Prime Minister (ODPM), which in turn had to represent regeneration objectives which were consistent with compulsory 'Outcome Areas' specified by the Department of the Environment, Transport and the Regions (DETR). Additional funding for the Mayfield Centre was also secured from the Neighbourhood Renewal Fund (NRF) and Bradford Compact which is the BMDC structure for distributing allocated ERDF finance.

Bradford Trident was established with NDC funding to run from 2000-2010 for regeneration within the Marshfield, Park Lane and West Bowling areas. In addition to the NDC funding Bradford Trident was also able to draw down supplementary funding for the Mayfield Project from priority area 2 work contracted by the Bradford allocation of ERDF finance and also from the Neighbourhood Renewal Fund. Work undertaken by Trident entailed the identification of numerous partners in order to establish which programmes or projects would be beneficial and sustainable within the three NDC areas, before funding could be secured.

#### *Appraisal and approval*

Following agreement upon a 'Community Facilities' strategy, different options for regeneration projects were considered by the Bradford Trident Board during the project appraisal process:

- A single community building was considered. However it was felt to be a better policy decision to develop accessible facilities throughout the Trident area.
- A market based approach was suggested to allow different groups in the area to bid for money. This was not adopted due to concerns that 'professional' or 'best resourced' bidding groups would inevitably draw down the funding. Such a bidding strategy would also have continued the practices of previous regeneration strategies which were perceived in the 2001 Race Report to have actually undermined social cohesion within the Bradford area.

The process of identifying the location for the Mayfield Centre was dynamic because both the Trident Board and the local Marshfield Community Welfare Association<sup>3</sup> were involved. Following the agreement upon a 'Community Facilities' strategy a problem arose in choosing an appropriate location for the hub/community centre to promote regeneration in the Marshfield area. When the Marshfield catchment area was initially defined it was apparent that the only possible site located strictly within the boundaries was Brigella Mills. However this was a highly contaminated building and the cost of renovating it was deemed to be excessive.

The only suitable building which could be identified was Mayfield House (which had previously been a residential home for elderly people) but this was 50 yards outside the catchment area. There appears to have been significant consultation at a working group stage between different parties including community stakeholders such as the Primary Care Trust and Bradford College before the Mayfield site was agreed on. Following this the project was approved by the full Bradford Trident Board, and discussions undertaken with representatives of the ODPM based in Leeds as the identified site was outside the NDC area. These discussions proved straightforward and finances were made available to purchase the building on the grounds that,

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<sup>3</sup> The Association has since merged with the Marshfield Neighbourhood Association and so is now simply called the 'Marshfield Community Association' (MCA)

despite being outside of the catchment, the facility would be serving the interests of residents within the NDC area.

### *Project Preparation*

A tendering and contacting process for all aspects of infrastructure project delivery was undertaken under European Union guidelines. For the Mayfield project Halsall Lloyd Partnership (HLP) Architects were contracted following interviews which took place with community representatives sitting on the interview panel. Key criteria for contracting included a perception that the successful bidder could demonstrate good practice in engaging with community stakeholders and taking different requirements into consideration. An outline cost for the project was given by Lend Lease Projects (LLP) who were contracted to project manage the infrastructure delivery while Irwins was appointed as the principle building contractor to oversee the construction work.

This report does not focus on the project management of the construction element by LLP, but is rather concerned with the process aspect of project cycle management, and in particular:

- The way buy-in is generated amongst stakeholders and
- The contribution of buy-in towards the realisation of benefits and the overall aims of regeneration.

The project preparation process was conducted on a day to day basis by the designated project manager from the Trident Board, but in such a way as to ensure the participation of Marshfield residents in the overall process.

### *Defining and identifying benefits*

The benefits from the Mayfield Centre were defined in the context of regeneration objectives agreed by the Bradford Trident Board which were in turn moulded largely by the compulsory 'Outcome Areas' for NDC funding specified by the DETR. However in addition to the specified DETR outcome areas there were two more outcomes which could be selected, and Bradford Trident opted to focus on 'housing and the environment' in the NDC area and also 'racial disadvantage' which was perceived to be a specific community issue. Identifying how far that these benefits should be delivered entailed the development of milestones that would demonstrate progress from specific issue baselines, as shown in table 4.

### *Risk assessment:*

A number of risks and issues had to be considered before the project could be delivered.

- Mayfield House was badly damaged by arson, before work had commenced on its conversion into the community centre. This had resulted in a vulnerable asset which was susceptible to rain damage and which also now posed a risk to the public. This matter was addressed proactively by Irwins, who had made necessary repairs to the roof and secured the site with adequate fencing. This not only allowed the project to proceed, but actually strengthened its implementation as the Bradford Trident Board became convinced of the capacity of Irwins to contract the construction work and effectively respond to contingencies. It was for this reason that Irwins were appointed as the principal building contractor.
- Risk assessments were conducted in relation to costs, and particularly in relation to cost increases. LLP were responsible as the contracted project management for construction to handle most aspects of costing. However it was recognised that there was a limited time within which all work detail could be



understood and finalised by all parties calling for an acceptance that the cost forecasting might not be entirely accurate.

- The sustainability of the community centre following its construction was a strong consideration. It was recognised that business tenants who were due to occupy the building therefore had to play an active role in ensuring that their specifications were met by the output of the project, but at the same time there would have to be adaptability in the event of change of tenancies.
- At a general level Bradford Trident were accountable for the risk assessment process in planning, particularly where there were important stakeholder buy-in issues to consider. It is evident here that a balance between 'process' and traditional 'blueprint' approaches has been necessary in mediating the requirements to deliver a construction project and the requirements of stakeholders. However a risk which could have been given more consideration with hindsight was that excessive specification by potential tenants can jeopardise success if they later have to withdraw from the project.

**Table 4: The Context of benefits envisaged by the Mayfield Centre.**

<b>NDC Outcome Area</b>	<b>Specific Goal</b>	<b>Baseline Data</b>	<b>Outcomes (benefits)</b>	<b>Milestones</b>
Jobs and Business	Reducing Unemployment	Unemployment in the NDC area is 13.4%, the District average is 6.4%	By 2010 narrow unemployment to at least the district average	Year 3: Narrow the gap by 25% Year 7: Narrow the gap by 70%
Health and Social Care	Improved Diet and Lifestyle	The level of coronary heart disease is 146, the district average is 112. There is a Standardised Mortality Rate of 159 while for the District this figure is 108.	Decreased Standard Mortality Rate towards the national average. Reduced coronary heart disease towards the district average by 2010.	Year 1: Healthy living team established. Year 3: Increased numbers taking exercise. Year 10: Mortality and heart disease gaps closing. Smoking reduced or held constant.
Community Capacity	Increased Neighbourhood Management	Dissatisfaction with service provision.	More residents becoming qualified in community management or gaining community skills.	Year 1: Neighbourhood management feasibility study. Year 2: Local management groups set up.

Source: Bradford Trident Action Plan: 2002.

### *Stakeholder engagement process*

Before the Community Facilities Strategy had been agreed, six months of community consultation took place during which community and voluntary groups were engaged, a questionnaire was circulated, and a special Neighbourhood Forum was held. Major decisions in relation to Community Facilities Strategy were also negotiated amongst the Trident Board which was structured to ensure that more than 50 percent (14 of the 25) of the board's membership are residents of the three NDC areas.

Interviews illustrate the mediation of competing interests in order to gain acceptance for the Community Facilities Strategy in which the Trident Board and the MCWA both played critical roles. Gaining acceptance of the dedication of large sums of money (in total £2.4 million) towards a community centre was not straight forward because:

- When the NDC money was obtained it was widely thought within the Marshfield community that this funding would prioritise the internal refurbishment of housing (consistent with previous approaches to regeneration).
- The fact that the centre would be outside the Marshfield boundary raised concerns that regeneration funding would unfairly benefit other communities more.
- Local community and voluntary groups who had previously been expert in drawing down resources were expecting significant sums of NDC money to be transferred to them directly.

Despite these obstacles, a consensus did result from the consultation that raising opportunities and expectations within the community is of as much importance to the wellbeing of residents as the internal appearance of their housing, and better community facilities was therefore crucial. This meant that the community centre gained acceptance to such a point that residents supported it even if the only available site was slightly outside of the NDC boundary. Furthermore, the anticipated back-lash when certain community groups did not receive the sums of money expected did not materialise.

While appraisal, preparation, and risk identification was the responsibility of the project manager on a day to day basis, the process of project planning for the Mayfield Centre was remarkable for the engagement with prospective tenants and community stakeholders. For example, the presence of stakeholders at contracting interviews to ensure that they would be able to enter into discussion with the architects was clearly designed to ensure a facility which met the requirements of the interested parties.

This illustrates that NDC funding is designed to prescribe outcome areas for regeneration but at the same time promote localised processes of determining what specific benefits should be. This is emphasised in the 2006-2007 NDC evaluation which expresses that the 'Masterplanning' has permitted the 'relative freedom' of NDC organisations to initiate projects, co-ordinate activities, seek to add value to other programs (which may not be strictly within the outcome criteria) and also to represent the interests of their communities (CLG, 2008: 35). This suggests an approach which is comparable with the 'master principle' of planning for sustainable benefits which has been raised by some practitioners in the international development field.

## Research themes and analysis 2 - project / program implementation

Implementation is the key phase in the project cycle, as this is where all the ideas resulting from the identification of need ('Business Case' in PRINCE 2) and appraisal of a project solution now materialise into reality. Core elements of the implementation phase are comparable with project management tasks specified within the PRINCE 2 manual under headings which include 'Managing Product Delivery', 'Controlling a Stage' and 'Managing Stage Boundaries'.

The following issues emerged as areas for investigation in consideration of particular elements of the implementation phase of project cycle management:

- The comparison between the approaches used and project management methods deployed in international projects or under the PRINCE2 methodology.
- Communication procedures to engage stakeholders such as representative community boards and the business community.
- Processes in relation to budgeting and cost control.
- Approaches to risk and issue management implemented throughout the project / programme delivery.
- The use of external resources for purposes such as quality assurance.

### Jobs@

#### *Comparison with the PRINCE 2 method*

The implementation process of the Access to Employment contract by Jobs@ is comparable with processes prescribed as part of "Controlling a Stage" in the PRINCE 2 manual. The PRINCE 2 manual emphasises that the fundamental principles of "Controlling a Stage" are "controlled production of the agreed products":

- To stated quality standards
  - Within the cost, effort and time agreed
  - Ultimately to achieve defined benefits
- (OCG 2005: 95).

The cyclical nature of "Controlling a Stage" which includes the sub-processes of authorising work packages, assessing progress, examining issues, taking corrective action and then authorising further work packages bear close comparison to the delivery of outputs in Jobs@ contracts. Both the fund holder and the project manager emphasise that the purpose of Jobs@ is to fill gaps in job brokerage services and services which help people become 'employment ready' in hard to reach communities. This means it has been important to build and maintain infrastructure and capacities for project implementation which are adaptable and responsive so that outputs can be delivered without displacing the effects of other service provider activity.

The implementation of the Access to Employment contract also bears close comparison to the sub-process prescribed in "Managing Product Delivery" (MP) within the PRINCE 2 manual. The fundamental principle of MP is expressed as "A controlled break between the Project Manager and the Team Manager" (ibid: 127).

Essentially MP recommends that when work packages are agreed responsibility for execution and delivery of the work packages is then delegated to a Team Manager. When the completed work packages are received by the Project Manager they can be reported and further work packages will be designed and agreed upon. This is a

process which allows the project manager to monitor progress and strategically plan the way in which Jobs@ will deliver the contract without distraction caused by the day to day concerns of task delivery.

### *Stakeholder engagement*

The Jobs@ case study signifies that partnership management and stakeholder engagement is likely to be necessary in the implementation stage of a project in order to ensure quality standards and coherence between projects which deliver interdependent benefits.

Increasingly more 'third sector' organisations, including housing associations, are being asked by authorities to engage in job brokerage<sup>4</sup>. This is making it increasingly important for Jobs@ to be responsive to a range of stakeholders. Not only must the project seek to avoid the displacement of other service provider activity, but also the result of new activity undertaken by other organisations will change the needs of residents within hard to reach communities. The provision of job brokerage provider network meetings is a good mechanism by which Jobs@ can respond to other service providers and seek coherent services and the support given to community organisations which is designed during planning provides a valuable tool through which Jobs@ stays in touch with the changing needs of clients as work is implemented. Furthermore the jobs fairs and other employer networking activity builds on networks established under previous contracts which seek to match the skills of clients with the needs of the business community.

### *Budgeting and cost control*

As previously stated, the budgetary framework for Jobs@ is essentially dictated by the funds available under the contracted work for which it is bidding. The level of funding made available for the work specified in the contract was devised with the input of local expertise and past experience. Also prior to tendering for the Access to Employment contract a cost profiling was conducted by Jobs@ which confirmed that the project could meet the targets with the finances made available by the fund holder.

### *Risk management*

Overall, the risk management of Access to Employment projects is conducted by the fund holder who monitors the performance of contracted work, maintains a risk register and files quarterly reports to the Access to Employment board in Wakefield. As a sub-process of this reporting, the monitoring of targets and reporting of outputs as they are achieved by the Jobs@ project manager could in itself be considered as a risk management process.

As with the wider strategy of the Regeneration Department, the procedure followed by the fund holder is consistent in certain respects with the PRINCE 2 method. However this is overall programme management of risk which is not project specific unless a particularly critical issue with a project emerges that cannot be addressed internally. The procedure that would be followed in this case would be comparable with the PRINCE 2 procedure of "escalating a project issue" to the board who might close a project if it is deemed necessary.

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<sup>4</sup> Accent Housing and the In Communities Housing Trust are notable examples in Bradford.

A significant risk to the project is that some individuals who have been unemployed for a long time may not maintain the employment which they gain as a result of Jobs@ services. A previous contract had specified that Jobs@ could consider a resident placed into employment as an output on the first day of employment, which would have been likely to undermine the principle of a sustainable benefit stream. The specification of the Access to Employment contract that an output cannot be registered until a resident has completed 13 consecutive weeks of employment suggests that the fund holder perceives short term employment as a risk which needs to be mitigated. It is for this reason that support given to individuals during these 13 weeks to keep them in work is also specified as output criteria with the Access to Employment contract.

#### *Using external resources for quality assurance*

A good example of the way in which Jobs@ has enhanced the quality assurance of their work was given in an interview by the Local Partnerships Manager of Jobcentre Plus. In the delivery of the previous EMO contract the secondment of Jobcentre plus staff with laptops provided a mobile service in hard-to-reach community settings which helped with target monitoring and gave a clearer picture of the contract delivery to Jobcentre Plus as a stakeholder. This is comparable with the PRINCE 2 method of providing a quality assurance role to the contractor and also illustrates the recommended practice of bringing employees of the contracting company into positions within the project team.

#### Mayfield Centre

##### *Comparison with the PRINCE 2 method*

During the implementation of the Mayfield Centre project the active involvement of NDC residents on the Trident Board provided the 'project assurance role' of the consumer, as recommended by PRINCE 2.

The Mayfield Centre project also demonstrates an implementation approach which is comparable to the sub-processes involved in 'Controlling a Stage' and 'Managing Product Delivery' (MP) according to the PRINCE 2 manual. Although construction work packages were being received by the LLP and then executed by the Irwins, it is evident that the project manager had a critical role to play in assessing progress, examining issues, reviewing the project status and seeking suggestions for corrective actions where necessary. Furthermore, the way in which work packages were agreed with LLP and then received by the project manager prior to approval by the Trident Board is consistent with "a controlled break between the Project Manager and product creation...by third party suppliers", thus allowing the project manager to focus on wider issues related to the outcome of the project without being tied down in high levels of detail.

##### *Stakeholder engagement*

As already mentioned, the procedures for engagement were extensive, and the community board which participated in the project delivery was diverse across ethnicity, gender and age groups. Furthermore, the prospective business tenants were engaged in the design of facilities to ensure that their essential needs were catered for.

The continuous consultation with potential tenants and community groups throughout the delivery of the project also reflects the involvement of stakeholders in aspects of the sub-process prescribed under 'Controlling a Stage' and 'Managing Product Delivery' in the PRINCE 2 methodology. By allowing site visits and holding meetings to keep stakeholders updated on progress, their requirements could be kept in focus and any changes in circumstances could be accounted for. In addition, if any changes to original plans were needed as a result of technical concerns then stakeholders had the opportunity to give their consent and their buy-in could be maintained.

### *Budgeting and cost control*

Budgetary procedures and cost control were critical aspects of the implementation phase given the variety of setbacks and necessary changes encountered during the project delivery of the Mayfield Centre. Before work began to convert Mayfield House, the fire caused by vandals had raised the costs incurred due to the need to clear the site and protect it from further damage. Furthermore the limited time within which understanding of the work detail was agreed and the fact that construction began without certain work packages having been tendered did turn out to have consequences on cost control. A notable oversight is that structural alterations to the main entrance were not identified until late in the delivery process. The involvement of stakeholders to ensure that requirements were being met also lead to inevitable changes in specification. For example, during discussions with a primary partner in the project, it became necessary to increase the available office accommodation leading to the first cost revision.

During the delivery of the project, further problems emerged due to changes necessitated by the withdrawal of two key partners. When the Children's Fund withdrew, the open plan office had to be changed to the specifications of the Drugs and Alcohol Team who took over the tenancy. The Bradford Youth Service was a major partner in the project delivery, and was due to operate a hostel from a specially designed facility within the Mayfield Centre. When this tenancy was withdrawn the hostel had already been constructed, necessitating the removal of fixtures and fittings and conversion of this facility to office space at short notice.

In total two revisions were needed when two major tenants withdrew from the project, and with the number of unforeseen eventualities the construction team were on site 13 weeks longer than the 36 weeks anticipated, adding to cost increases. Whereas the initial budget for the Mayfield Centre was £1,728,300.00 the final anticipated account stood at £2,241,276.00.

### *Risk management*

Risk assessment and risk management was a strong feature of the Mayfield project. Notable examples were measures put in place following a fire caused by vandals (a high fence and employed security) and project reappraisals which followed the withdrawal of two 'anchor tenants'. Another example of risk management was the decision taken to contract out the car parking to cover the eventuality of future changes to the requirements of tenants. The way in which the Trident Board were involved in the assessment of the Mayfield Centre as the project was being delivered also suggests that maintaining the buy-in of community figures was a part of the risk management process.

### *External resources for quality assurance*

Bradford Trident delivered the Mayfield Centre alongside four partner agencies:

- South Bradford Compact
- Bradford Youth Service
- Bradford Children's Fund
- Bankfoot Primary School

While resources were not supplied by the Bradford Youth Service or Children's Fund, their status as 'anchor tenants' suggested that their resources would become a feature of the Mayfield Centres activity once that it had been delivered. Therefore their active involvement in ensuring that their design specifications were being delivered during the implementation process served as a quality assurance mechanism. However their withdrawal from the project at a later stage meant lessons had to be learned about the degree of stakeholder influence which is appropriate.

The South Bradford Compact represents the BMDC structure for distributing ERDF funding (matched with finance from the Neighbourhood Renewal Fund) in the NDC area for work. This funding is allocated for work conducted within the priority 2 regeneration themes. Bringing the Compact panel in as a partner agency on the Mayfield Centre has not only helped to assure that the priority two themes were a focus of attention but also perhaps reinforced a sense of ownership and obligation on the behalf of BMDC authorities to ensure that the project succeeds. This could have been an important reason that the Drugs and Alcohol team were quickly instated as new tenants, when the Council's Bradford Youth Service withdrew its tenancy at short notice.

### **Research themes and analysis 3 - Benefit realisation**

This component of the study is focussed on the assessment and sustainability of benefits from regeneration projects. Specifically it aims to:

- Assess the project outputs (immediate objectives) and outcome (long-term impacts).
- Clarify benefit viability and project identification.
- Investigate the sustainability of the benefit stream
- Establish minimum benefit criteria, alignment with risk and risk appetite.
- Determine regeneration 'baselines' and assess the 'without project' scenario.
- Analyse whether beneficial (or negative) outcomes have emerged that were not identified in the project identification and approval.

### Jobs@

#### *Output and outcome*

The Jobs@ Access to Employment project was subject to a delay in start up and is now ongoing. However the progress review filed in July 2008 demonstrates that "Jobs@ is on target to meet all milestones and outputs...and is on track to meet all targets for years 1 and 2". As this is an ongoing contract it is worth considering the outputs of other work. Figures show that the previous ERDF contract exceeded the target number of residents entering employment by 25%, and also exceeded the target for assisting other organisations by 14%. On every other target the forecasted outputs were achieved exactly.



An interview with Job Centre plus also suggests that Jobs@ achieved favourable outputs in comparison to EMO projects in other regions. It was felt that a reason for this is that Jobs@ have not required significant time to implement the project (for example setting up an office) and are also well trusted by both the beneficiaries (the hard to reach who are not engaged in the labour market) and the employer community.

The outcomes of Jobs@ are harder to establish as its impact on regeneration, such as raised and sustainable employment and a change in culture and expectations are more long term issues. Furthermore the objectives of regeneration are interdependent between different projects, so the outcome of one project alone is hard to assess. However if we take the interdependent nature of regeneration projects into consideration then the changes in levels of unemployment within the NDC areas are worth noting. The NDC areas are characterised as 'hard to reach' and therefore also the subject of attention for Jobs@ just as these areas are for Bradford Trident. Therefore the reduction of unemployment in these areas can also be attributed to Jobs@.

Other key outputs specified in the Access to Employment Commissioning Document include the organisation of job fairs and service provider network meetings. These outputs are intended to serve the broader purpose of Jobs@ which is to create a culture of collaboration on employment objectives. Evidence suggests that there has been some success in this respect. The representative of a participating company thought that it was worthwhile to continue with attendance and stated that the company is also working with Jobs@ in other areas. Therefore the free job fairs seem to act as an incentive for a continued working relationship.

#### *Benefit viability and project identification.*

The benefits of Jobs@ are identified according to the criteria and the targets specified by the funding stream. These targets were known to be viable on the basis of previously delivered contracts and so far all milestones have been met. The wider benefits of 'culture change' in hard-to-reach communities and the job brokerage services hoped for by the project manager are harder to assess as this is dependant on external factors and cannot be attributed entirely to a specific project. However, as already illustrated in the NDC areas, there does seem to be a change in culture manifesting in terms of community cohesion and partnership working. This suggests that these longer-term objectives may also be viable.

#### *Risk appetite, minimum benefit criteria and alignment with risk.*

Minimum benefit criteria are formulated according to the specific targets set in the Access to Employment Commissioning Document. These were seen as attainable by the project manager, Jobs@ prioritise harder to reach clients and continues to support those who are nearer to being 'job ready'. It is recognised that some target groups can be harder to reach than others, and given the obligations set by funding criteria this will cause resources to be allocated accordingly. This can mean that some groups are a greater focus of attention than other groups.

#### *Sustainability of the benefit stream.*

The sustainability of the benefits for Job@ is hard to confirm for a number of reasons:

- The output criteria for a 'resident into employment' under the Access to Employment contract specifies that a period of 13 weeks in employment must be

completed before the output is considered to be delivered. However the extent to which this is an indication of a sustainable benefit stream is questionable.

- Jobs@ exists continuously as a project. The service provision is always contingent on successful tenders for public service contracts which draw down regeneration funding from external agencies. It seems unlikely that Jobs@ will be mainstreamed as a service within the BMDC regeneration portfolio.
- Jobs@ could not become sustainable as a job brokerage service which is dependant upon commission from services in the same way as a conventional employment agency. An employer emphasised that it has a preferred supply list of three large employment agencies from the private sector, although it is pleased to work with Jobs@ in addition. Furthermore the job fairs are currently free for employers, and it seems unlikely that it would be financially viable to charge a fee for attendance.

#### *Regeneration baselines and a 'without project' scenario.*

Baselines for regeneration objectives across the BMDC region are illustrated in the Access to Employment Commissioning Document which sets a specific context for Bradford:

- In 2005 69.9% of the working age population living in the Bradford District were in employment. While this represents an increase from 69.4% in 2004, it is lower than the regional employment rate of 74.1%.
- The Bradford district has a 14% proportion of adults who have never worked which is the highest proportion amongst the five West Yorkshire Districts.
- The 2003-2004 rate of Bradford jobs growth was 0.5% compared to the regional increase of 2.3%.
- Lower skilled and lower salaried employment is over represented in Bradford compared to other districts, and despite activities to promote workplace diversity many employers continue to recruit across a limited cross section of society.

Interviews with the project manager and the funding body sought to clarify whether a 'without project' scenario was considered; that is to say "to what extent might the benefits have happened anyway without this project taking place?" This does not seem to have been a strong consideration, however it was emphasised that many of the residents placed into work would have been unlikely to find work by engaging with an employment service outside of their community. This was backed up by another interview with a previous service contractor (Jobcentre Plus). Furthermore it was acknowledged that while other jobs brokerage services exist, Jobs@ is specifically designed to fill gaps that these services are not addressing. The intention of Jobs@ is that when other jobs brokerage services are able to meet these gaps in demand, then Jobs@ will move into other gaps in service provision.

#### *Outcomes which were not identified in the appraisal of the project.*

The implementation of successive contracts by Jobs@ has come to signify an iterative learning process which has refined good practice and developed new resources. This process can be compared with the emphasis given to 'Product-Based Planning' emphasised within the PRINCE 2 manual which stresses that assets or 'products' which are acquired through the project cycle should be designed in a way to be useful in different circumstances in the future. However this learning process has also resulted in outputs which can be considered as 'positive externalities' which might not have been anticipated when the project was identified. A good example of this arises from the previous delivery of the EMO contract. This contract ended in 2006 however partnership working has continued afterwards

whereby Jobs@ continue to make use of Jobcentre Plus facilities to provide support work. Importantly Jobs@ have very recently signed a service level agreement to provide a new service for Job Centre Plus, further signifying a willingness to work interdependently on key employment objectives. This partnership provides evidence of the successful delivery of an output which is designed to become an input for the delivery of future work.

## Mayfield Centre

### *Output and outcome*

Despite the assortment of setbacks and increases in costs, the Mayfield Centre was opened on time in November 2004. The use of the project output is arguably as envisaged as the centre is in use seven days a week between the hours of 8am and 10pm and it is well used across the diversity of ethnicity age and gender amongst residents of the Marshfield community.

There has been improved service provision to Marshfield residents as a result of the centre with health promotion initiatives launched by the Primary Care Trust, employment training and ESOL being provided by Bradford College and also with certain other community services provided by businesses which have been incubated on the premises. There is now a legal practice based on Manchester Road which was incubated within the centre, and Memo Training are a current business tenant who provide youth development services across the Bradford District but who have also taken a keen interest in local community issues.

Memo Training has also ventured into local schools to provide certain 'out of hours' activities under the Extended Schools Agenda (ESA). It is possible that service provision under ESA can have a dual purpose of providing affordable childcare to parents who wish to work and also provide healthy activities and peer mentoring for children. The opportunities for parents to undertake training provided by Bradford College have also been enhanced by the successful provision of a crèche facility.

The Mayfield Centre is also used by non residents of the Marshfield community. However this is an outcome which was envisaged, and which has had positive implications for regeneration as there is more engagement between communities and community leaders as a result. A particularly successful initiative has been to run exchange programs where children from different communities take part in recreational activities and sports. This has helped to build on previous initiatives such as a summer football club which was instigated by the Marshfield Community Welfare Association with the sponsorship of the First Group. Other work has also been conducted by Memo Training to bring children across the three NDC communities together with a strong focus on cross ethnic interaction.

### *Benefit viability and project identification.*

The Mayfield Centre project was identified as part of a 'hub' approach to regeneration, and it was hoped that the Centre would help to raise feelings of well being in the Marshfield community, and provide certain opportunities for service provision, new business, training and education. Given the difficulties faced by previous regeneration initiatives in the BMDC area, it might seem that the benefits of Bradford Trident envisaged against baseline data were overly optimistic. Furthermore it might be difficult to fully determine how viable the benefits are because the Bradford

Trident NDC delivery plan specifies a fully measured impact in 2010. However MORI surveys conducted in 2006 and also the 2005/06 mid-term review of Bradford Trident's NDC contract both illustrate important milestones have been attained to date which include that:

- 28 % of NDC residents rated their health as very good, an increase from 20% in 2002, and a level which was actually 1% higher than the national average.
- The gap in unemployment from the district average fell from just over 8 percentage points to approximately 4.5 percentage points.
- The gap in school pupils attaining five or more A to C grade GCSE results has closed from 26 percentage points to 8 percentage points.
- Gaps with the district average in vehicle crime and burglary have closed by between eighty and ninety percent.
- Trident had a higher number of residents in training than the average across NDC areas nationally (DTA 2007: 10-11, CLG 2006: 219-220).

It is also important to note that there is increasing public confidence in Bradford Trident as an organisation. The percentage of residents who felt a good job was being done rose from 38% in 2002 to 58% in 2004, and by 2006 this figure had jumped to 72% (DTA 2007: 10-11, BD5 2005). Given the negative experiences of regeneration in some BMDC areas in the past this gain in confidence is both remarkable and critical. Furthermore it is likely that such gains in trust will become cumulative assets which will make the process of gaining buy-in easier and more efficient in the future.

While it is difficult to establish the extent to which all of these gains can be assigned to the 'Community Facilities Strategy', it would be reasonable to think that this strategy has made a critical contribution. Furthermore, an important partner in the Mayfield Centre was the nearby Bank Foot Primary School, and also Jobs@ made use of some of the Bradford Trident facilities. This further underlines the integrated and dependant nature of approaches to regeneration objectives.

#### *Risk appetite, minimum benefit criteria and alignment with risk.*

In numerous respects the risk appetite was very high in deciding on the delivery of the Mayfield Centre. Significant risks included:

- Lack of buy-in.
- Cost overrun
- Further attempts at vandalism to the site.

The minimum benefits of the project are the delivery of a financially sustainable facility which promotes social activities, employment and training opportunities. The benefits were seen as sufficient to justify the risks to the project. It is for this reason that despite numerous setbacks the Trident board were determined to keep running the project and ensure that it was completed.

#### *Sustainability of the benefit stream*

The benefits of the Mayfield Centre appear to be sustainable. Business tenancy revenues provide just over 50% of the finances needed to keep the centre running, and other revenues are generated through the hire of facilities, fundraising and certain grants for community work. In the first year the centre needed to be subsidised by Bradford Trident by £20,000 and in the second year by £15,000. However in the third year a surplus was generated of £22,800. Total revenues were

£141,270.50 in the last financial year 2007-08, however losses of around £14,000 were accrued due to 'one off' maintenance expenditures. Despite this the centre remains in credit by more than £8,000.

Our interviews indicate that business tenants value the centre and maintain a very good relation with the Marshfield Community Association which now effectively runs the centre. It was also expressed that there was an affiliation with the purpose of the community centre and that tenants wish to continue working from there because they recognise that the revenues they provide help to keep the centre running. All business tenants have now been resident for at least three years.

Although the Mayfield House site was initially damaged by arson, the Mayfield Community Centre has not been subject to serious vandalism since opening, indicating a profound sense of community ownership. The overwhelming feeling amongst all parties interviewed is that this facility has sufficient buy-in to remain in use by the community and that it has the potential to become economically viable a long way into the future after the end of the NDC programme in 2010.

#### *Regeneration baselines and a 'without project' scenario*

As already illustrated Bradford Trident made remarkable progress in achieving milestone targets towards progress from baselines established in 2000 when the organisation acquired the NDC funding.

In a discussion of the 'without project' scenario the project manager suggested that Bradford Trident would not have ceased to operate without the Mayfield Centre going ahead, and that there were other options to community centre which were explored in the consultation period before the Community Facilities Strategy was agreed upon. However it was strongly felt that there are multiplicities of benefits delivered by the Mayfield Centre which have contributed towards progress from regeneration baselines which would not have been delivered without the facility. This was confirmed by the interviews which took place, for example:

- Bradford College (an important partner and tenant) could provide education and training elsewhere, but residents would have been unlikely to travel far from the Marshfield community to make use of it.
- Certain Primary Care Trust initiatives which operate from the centre would not have been provided by GP surgeries in the area due to lack of space and low financial incentives.
- Social networks have emerged from the numerous ways in which the centre has been utilised, enhancing initiatives such as 'healthy lifestyle promotion' to a far great extent than would have been otherwise possible.
- Businesses which provide certain community services (such as a local legal practice) have been incubated which would have been unlikely without this facility.
- Youth services have gained greater credibility through a facility which can provide recreational activities.

#### *Outcomes which were not identified in the planning and approval of the project.*

Interviews have shown that the positive outcomes envisaged by Trident and other members of the community might be different, and the extent to which certain outcomes have materialised therefore varies in accordance with these expectations. An example of this is the arrangements for hiring the use of facilities, where residents expressed that (against the wishes of the council) they actively discriminate in the

amounts charged to different groups based on their ability to pay as it is strongly felt that groups should not be excluded from using the facilities.

A notable externality of the Mayfield Project has been that community groups have been brought closer together whereas previous approaches to regeneration had induced feelings of 'deprivation-deficit' which had driven groups apart. Where there were extensive resources put into one facility which was accessible to all it became more in the interests of community groups to work together. The amalgamation of the Marshfield Community Welfare Association and Marshfield Neighbourhood Action into the Marshfield Neighbourhood Association is a good example of this. In turn this amalgamation is making better use of the resources, expertise and community experience which is available through joint working. It was expressed in interviews that the amount of outreach work taking place in the community has increased as a result.

It is also notable that building the community centre entailed the reduction of community expectations that 'regeneration spending' essentially meant money for the internal renovation of peoples houses. The large scale acceptance of the idea that a centre such as Mayfield contributes just as much to residents' sense of wellbeing in the area by providing services, promoting social networks and community cohesion may suggest a change within the Marshfield community in the way that regeneration is perceived.

## **Main Findings**

### *Immediate benefits*

Consideration of a 'without project' scenario in both case studies illustrates that important contributions towards achieving regeneration objectives have been made. These would have been unlikely in the 'without project' scenario:

- Jobs@ has been established specifically to generate benefits which are not delivered by other service providers. Furthermore Jobs@ has proven effective because it has accumulated assets based on trust within communities in a manner which would be difficult for an external service provider.
- The Mayfield Centre project delivered services which would not be likely to be provided without the facility. In addition, it has delivered additional benefits to a greater extent than might have been predicted by promoting community cohesion and joint working between community groups.

### *Sustainable benefits*

Previously regeneration projects in the Bradford District have been criticised for inducing a 'deprivation-deficit' model of community engagement. This lowered self esteem and expectations, thus inducing greater welfare dependency. This approach to community engagement also exacerbated tensions between hard-to-reach communities.

The deprivation-deficit model of participation has been commonplace in the experience of many international donor funded projects. It has often been the case in this context that communities will participate in the delivery of projects as long as they can bring certain rewards such as a supplementary income, or even food while people are taking part. However, once projects have been delivered, the benefits are often not sustained as people may not buy into the output of the project. Instead they are likely to move onto a new project which might help to sustain them.

A similar principle of dependency can exist in regeneration where projects draw down resources but fail to sustain benefits after the project has been delivered. The Mayfield Centre project addressed the potentially negative consequences of perceived 'deprivation-deficit' amongst specific target groups within the NDC through a fresh approach which has mediated competing community interests.

It would seem that Jobs@ have begun to establish a framework through the provider network forum that might promote a collective effort to provide job brokerage in the long term. However the issue of dependency on external funding streams and tendering for contracts is of concern. This raises consideration that could be given to mainstreaming the project infrastructure of Jobs@.

### *Mainstream project methodologies*

Projects within the BMDC Department for Regeneration have tended to be managed using an in-house approach. It is also apparent that the project manager of the Mayfield Centre project has not actively sought to adopt mainstream project methodologies such as PRINCE 2 during project delivery.

Although the PRINCE 2 method has not been used (and in many cases may perhaps be unheard of), it is worth considering the statement that PRINCE 2 is a method which:

*"May be used on any type of project in any type of environment"*

and that it:

*"Contains a complete set of concepts and project management processes that are the minimum requirements for a properly run and managed project"* (OCG 2005:9).

The study found that both projects covered in this report involved:

- Mechanisms to ensure a focus on the business case (justification).
- A project assurance role performed either by beneficiaries (the Mayfield Centre) or by the fund holder (Jobs@).
- A controlled break between the project manager and the execution of work packages.
- Processes which allowed for stage management and adaptation during the project cycle.

All these processes can be found explicitly within the PRINCE2 methodology.

The fact that regeneration projects (and donor-funded international development projects) take place in poorly structured environments where there is a multiplicity of stakeholders and funding streams raises questions about the applicability of mainstream methodology. Lessons can be learned from donor-funded projects in international development where planners often assume that projects are delivered in supportive environment. This is often not the case because:

- Certain stakeholders may be antagonistic towards the project
- The administrative structure which surrounds the project may exhibit a lack of commitment when it is perceived that the project can be funded with external assistance.

It is stated that the PRINCE 2 methodology aims to provide a project with:

*"Active involvement of users and stakeholders throughout the project to ensure that the product(s) will meet the business, functional, environmental, service and management requirements"* (OCG 2005: 2).

This involvement of stakeholders is seen to have an assortment of positive effects on project assurance, however in a poorly structured environment deciding who precisely should have a project assurance role is likely to be complicated. The Jobs@ case study raises questions about how far it is necessary to engage with beneficiaries in the appraisal of new contracts (which are effectively stages in the Jobs@ project). Furthermore, the involvement of stakeholders in the design specifications of the Mayfield Centre also raises questions about how much influence prospective partners should be given, if their ongoing participation cannot be guaranteed.

PRINCE 2 recommends that, for efficiency, membership of the project board is reduced to a minimum, and that electing representatives may be necessary when there are a number of different parties which make up the customers or beneficiaries. However the practicality of 'electing' a representative from conflicting groups of beneficiaries who are competing for resources is open to question. If the recommendations of PRINCE 2 are followed, then the size of the board at Bradford Trident would be seen as inefficient, but the project board mechanism has clearly been successful in this case. This illustrates how regeneration might look beyond the PRINCE 2 method if projects are to have a healthy balance between the need for efficiency and the desire for an effective outcome.

### *Beneficiary participation*

The extent to which a structure which promotes the participation of beneficiary stakeholders is necessary in the delivery of regeneration projects is context specific. In some instances the trust which emanates from perceived competence and good results is more important than structures for participation.

Willis (2004) gives examples where participation can have negative influences on regeneration that are comparable with problems encountered in the management of international development projects:

- Projects which are not well suited to stakeholder participation risk being derailed by a minority and also project benefits can be prone to 'elite capture'. As a result important benefits can be denied to the majority within communities.
- Trust between communities and regeneration projects can be undermined when a project fails due to weak leadership and perceived incompetence in stakeholder management.
- Damaged trust can affect the ways that beneficiaries may buy into future projects.

The 2006-2007 NDC evaluation confirms that 'Masterplanning' has permitted the 'relative freedom' of NDC organisations to initiate projects, co-ordinate activities, seek to add value to other programs (which may not be strictly within the outcome criteria) and also to represent the interests of their communities (CLG, 2008: 35). This suggests an approach which is comparable with the principle of benefits "for people, as perceived by these people" which is identified as the basis for sustainable benefits by some practitioners in the international development field (Dale 2004: 7).

However the context-specific nature of structures such as NDC which embed community participation in regeneration is acknowledged by Willis (2004) who illustrates that, in comparison to the 'laudable attempt' of some council regeneration programmes to promote participation, "*schemes whose raison d'être is community engagement, most prominently the government's New Deal for Communities programme, appear to be enjoying greater success*".



This would seem to suggest that the success of Bradford Trident should not be viewed in isolation but instead should be seen as part of the wider experience of other NDC areas in the United Kingdom. However NDC projects are not delivered to a standard format and Bradford Trident has been singled out as a notable success in achieving milestone targets of progress in relation to baseline data. It has also been singled out as an 'exemplar of good governance' (CLG 2008, DTA 2007). There may be good reason to think that the success of Bradford Trident should not be simply attributed to the NDC framework, but that there may be more unique attributes of Bradford Trident's approach which have resulted in excellent outcomes. One of these aspects might be considered as 'entrepreneurship'.

### *Entrepreneurship*

Both the PRINCE 2 method and project cycle management approaches assume that projects are implemented in tightly controlled environments which support accountability, quality monitoring and cost control. This is generally referred to as 'project assurance'. However one of the most prominent issues arising from this research is that there might be a need to balance the efficiency of a project with its effectiveness. Although a controlled environment is usually desirable for a number of reasons, the Mayfield Centre case study illustrates that sometimes a degree of entrepreneurship within regeneration projects helps to deliver the desired benefits. In this instance the cost control mechanisms at the beginning of the project implementation phase were somewhat relaxed. Issues which could have undermined the benefits of this project included:

- Expectations amongst residents that large sums of money would be spent on their homes.
- Expectations of large financial receipts by different community groups.
- Tension between communities over the allocation of resources.

These issues could have raised opposition amongst Marshfield residents to the large scale of expenditure on a community centre, particularly when this facility was to be placed slightly outside of their area. For this reason a 'quick success' was seen as the best way to generate confidence and buy-in from the Marshfield community. It is therefore understandable that work began quickly on the conversion of Mayfield House while not all work packages had been designated and that certain cost increases were expected. A risk assessment of the Mayfield Centre project would probably appraise the benefits to be gained from effective implementation to be greater than certain increases in expenditure. Therefore the decision to implement the project quickly could be seen as a calculated risk which demonstrated a form of entrepreneurship which would not often be permissible in standard approaches to project management.

### *The influence of project targets and reporting mechanisms*

Target driven approaches to specific projects can have negative effects where they:

- Lose benefits if there is a lack of coherence between funding streams.
- Undermine the coherence between interdependent projects which collectively work towards the wider objective of development.

This study finds that numerous stakeholders can affect the delivery of regeneration projects and also these projects are interdependent in terms of their benefits. The evidence in this report shows that is hard to attribute outcomes to the benefits of one

regeneration project alone, therefore it could be suggested they should not be appraised in isolation.

As with regeneration a multiplicity of funding streams tends to characterise donor-aid funded international development projects. Evidence suggests that in some cases this can have the effect of complicating the reporting mechanisms and efficiency of a project. The Jobs@ case study illustrates that to some extent there are difficulties caused by the different reporting mechanisms required to satisfy different funding streams and that a standard reporting mechanism for information which can be drawn from one data base would be desirable. This causes a reporting issue which needs to be borne in mind and managed, but at the same time it must be recognised that a 'cocktail' of funding does have the particular advantage that Jobs@ are enabled to work with a wider variety of target groups and offer a wider range of services.

It was expressed that, while progress is being made on provider network meetings, there is still a lot of progress to be made before job brokerage might be considered as being 'joined up'. It could be suggested that broad targets set by the fund holder across projects at a 'programme level' may be more likely to result in coherent projects. This way of setting targets could allow organisations to develop in a way which supports strategic development and could work along similar principles to the way in which the fund holder carries out risk evaluations across the range of projects contracted within the Access to Employment portfolio.

#### *Capacities and 'organisation building'*

It has emerged from the case studies that the capacity building of organisations is an important element of approaches to regeneration because this has implications for 'strategic planning'. It has been expressed by Dale (2004: 116-119) that 'organisation building' must be viewed as a project in itself. This is a 'process' approach with its own particular 'means-end' linkages which can be expressed in the format of a logical framework. The problem that many planners of donor-funded international projects have with this, according to Dale, is that:

*"They find it difficult to accept organisational qualities as an output of development work".*

Furthermore the complexity of organisation building through the delivery of products and which is also impacted by the benefits of external projects might be difficult to grasp because:

*"Planners may also find it problematic that the...core output is not directly created by the work that is done...but through a transformational process that also involves other outputs."*

The gains made by Bradford Trident in the accumulation of assets based on trust within the NDC area are a good example of an organisation building process. The complexity of this process is also well illustrated by the Jobs@ case study. It was suggested during the interviews that the benefits delivered by Jobs@ can be largely credited to the acquisition of 'presence' within hard-to-reach communities and an infrastructure that can be quickly and effectively mobilised to implement new contracts. It is notable that similar contracts have been delivered less successfully outside of Bradford by organisations who need more time to establish themselves and who are seen to be 'parachuted' into a community only for the short term duration of a particular contract. Comparisons can be made to the development in capacity of local NGOs and community based organisations so that they can become partners in the delivery of international development projects.

The Jobs@ case study shows that organisation building necessitates:

- The gradual accumulation of capacities and infrastructure.
- 'Organisational learning' which can be characterised as an inductive approach to the effective and coherent deployment of resources in a way which complements the objectives of regeneration.

The Jobs@ project also raises an important question in relation to dependency upon regeneration funding streams to deliver contracts. The question is whether this is a viable model of service provision in the long term or whether an operational organisation which can be mainstreamed within BMDC should be considered as a potential output of the project itself.

Essentially Jobs@ provides an illustration of why it is important to build capacities of local organisations to deliver projects. Where local organisations do not exist to deliver projects designed to meet regeneration objectives, then building such organisations might be a project in itself.

#### *Buy-in by businesses*

Bradford contains the highest proportion of residents who have never been in employment amongst districts in the West Yorkshire region. A high degree of dependence on the unskilled sector for employment and jobs growth is likely to undermine progress related to other key baselines expressed within the Access to Employment Commissioning Document.

The interview with a large employer revealed support for the recruitment drive initiated by Jobs@ which seeks to promote work place diversity and opportunities for the hard-to-reach within the Bradford District. However the interview revealed certain constraints on the ways that such an employer in need of a skilled workforce will develop buy-in of a regeneration project.

- It was revealed that the overwhelming majority of employees are recruited from large-scale agencies operating within the conventional job brokerage market.
- While the employer supports the Jobs@ project in its endeavours the employer could not pay for the service provided because the number of suitable applicants for employment has been very small.

This shows that employers in the knowledge sector may be ready to buy into regeneration projects but are unlikely to assume a meaningful sense of ownership. To change this culture is a long term goal of the Jobs@ project manager and the provision of free jobs fairs constitutes part of a strategy aimed at achieving this outcome.

Projects backed with sufficient resources to address the shortage of skills which characterises many residents in hard-to-reach communities are most likely to gain the buy-in of the service economy, and addressing this skill deficit seems to be a long term objective. In turn this raises the importance of benefit streams which prove to be sustainable from a project such as Jobs@ and also raises the issue of whether Jobs@ should be incorporated within council services or remain dependent on a multiplicity of funding streams.

## **Conclusions**

This report has revealed certain issues which are of interest to practitioners who are seeking specific outcomes as a result of regeneration projects. The findings of the study indicate that, in general, project management approaches are being used effectively to support Bradford's regeneration efforts. In addition, certain key issues have emerged which could merit further investigation:

In order to deliver sustainable benefits which have a broad community impact, project management for regeneration can benefit from going beyond the measures prescribed by conventional approaches. In particular while mainstream approaches emphasise the importance of project assurance processes to ensure time, cost and quality control, project managers sometimes need to be entrepreneurial in their management of stakeholders in ways which might not rest comfortably with the 'tightly controlled environments' of mainstream projects.

Stakeholder buy-in is an essential element in sustaining the benefits from regeneration projects. Fresh approaches have been illuminated which depart from the 'deprivation-deficit' model of regeneration, but they need to be seen as a context-specific opportunities which have been taken to mediate conflicting interests. In certain circumstances stakeholder participation is less necessary to gain stakeholder buy-in than a perception of competence. In other situations stakeholder relationships cannot be conducted with the efficiency envisaged by mainstream approaches to project management if they are to be effective.

Mainstream approaches emphasise that a project is a 'temporary structure' designed to deliver specific products or benefits. However, under certain circumstances a project comes to resemble a permanent structure to draw down external funding stream assistance. Under such circumstances it might be considered whether 'organisation building' should be the specific project output and whether stronger consideration should be given to the benefits of mainstreaming project systems. This is particularly pertinent when there are clear benefits to the presence of locally managed infrastructure within hard-to-reach communities.

The outcome of regeneration rests on the benefits provided by interdependent projects. However, target driven approaches result in an inevitable compromise between need to demonstrate results which satisfy funding criteria and the depth of outreach in a regeneration projects. This raises the question whether the target driven nature of specific projects might undermine the coherence of the overall regeneration programme and whether it would be appropriate to apply more general targets to regeneration programme management.

Taken together these findings indicate the need for skilled and reflective project managers who combine expertise in project management with a reflective and innovative approach to the demands of regeneration.

## **Recommendations for further work.**

This study is an exploratory piece of research into the ways that the management of regeneration projects contributes to the realisation of benefits and how projects can help to realise the BMDC outcome objectives of 'people, place and business'. As it is a relatively limited piece of work, it is important not to draw too many conclusions from this single study. However, it has proved possible to derive some findings which

are of general interest, and to demonstrate a practical methodology for investigating project management for regeneration.

The findings illustrate that the benefits of different regeneration projects are highly interdependent and that outcomes are therefore not easy to attribute to one project alone. It is therefore very desirable to increase the sample size and include more case study projects. It should also be considered that benefit realisation from regeneration projects can take time, and therefore a further constraint is that this has not been a longitudinal research project. Further work might therefore seek to scale up these approaches and test the realisation of benefits on a wider study of projects over a longer time frame.

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