

Will budget cuts help or hinder partnerships?

Catherine Staite

Definition of partnership

- From ‘mutual loathing in search of funding’
- To ‘collaboration between people in different organisations in pursuit of shared goals’
- Brookes, S (2007) *360 Leadership in the Public Sector*: paper presented to the third transatlantic dialogue University of Delaware, May 31 – June 2, 2007



The nature of the challenge for public services



The role of partnerships

- Using the power of collaboration and shared ambition to turn the tanker of local public services



The nature of the challenge

- No easy answers
- Even the questions are difficult!
- No one organisation can achieve much alone
- Start with two questions
 - *Does the partnership have the capacity to respond collectively to the challenges?*
 - *What can it do to achieve efficiencies?*



What do we know? Threats and opportunities

- **Threats**

- Budget cuts
- Council tax freeze
- End of LAA and CAA
- Retreat to silo thinking
- Harder to invest to save

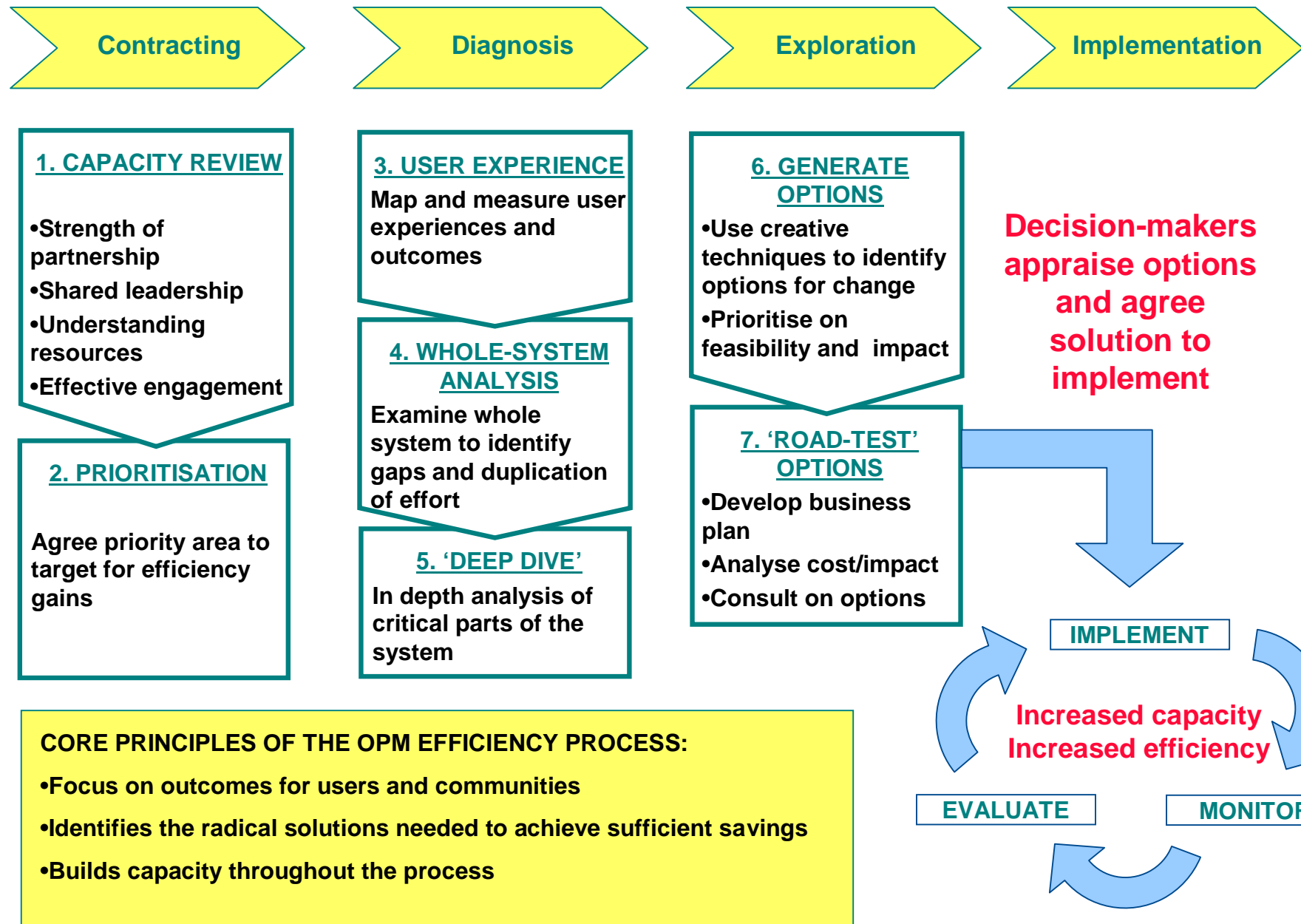
- **Opportunities**

- Urgency of crisis
- Promise of freedoms
- Localism Bill
- End of LAA and CAA
- End of ring fencing
- No central government interference?
- Place based budgets?



What do we know? Learning from Total Place

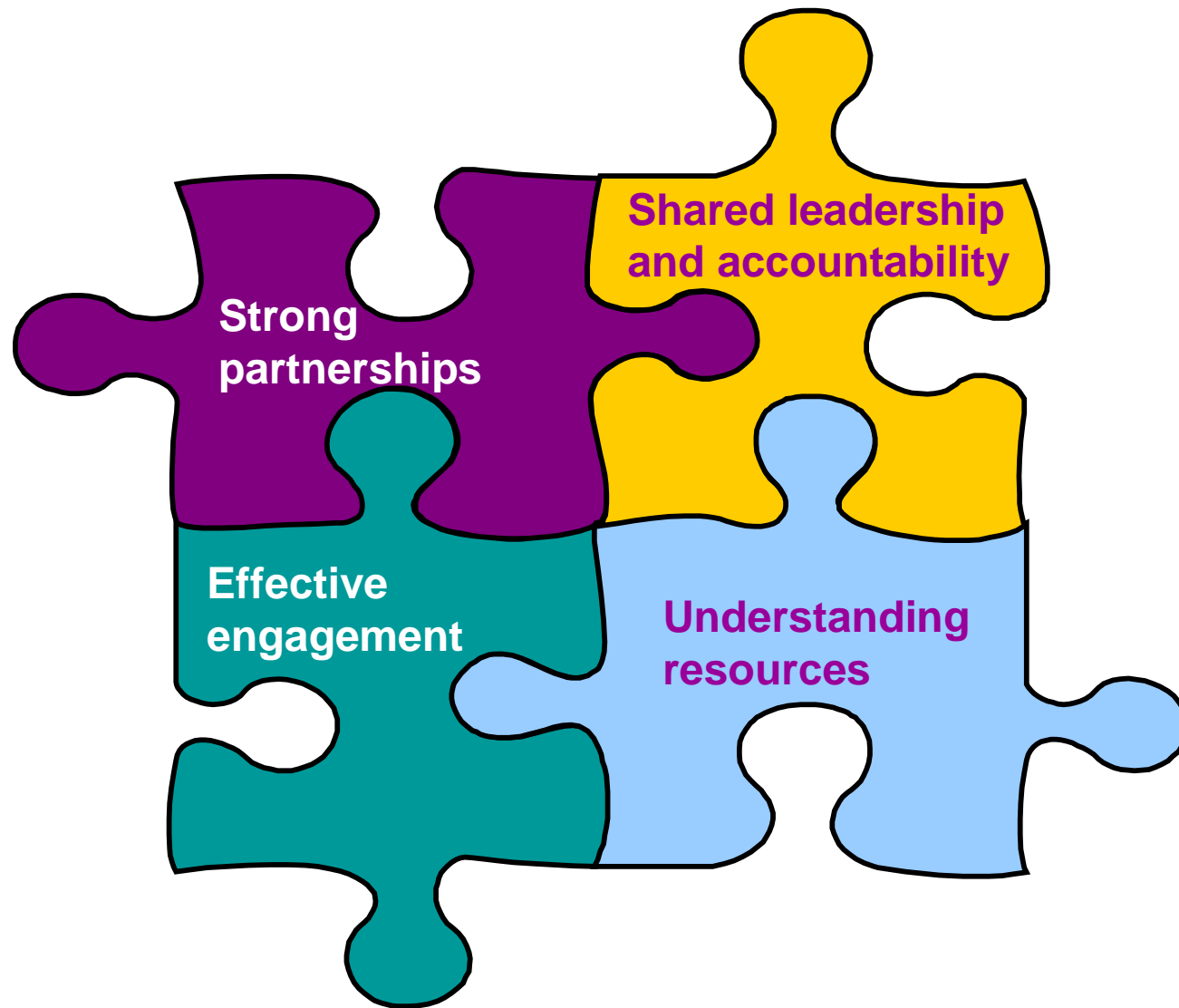
- **Efficiency**
 - Major opportunities for savings
 - **£18 - £30m housing led regeneration (Durham)**
 - **£6.5m - £15m asset rationalisation (Lewisham)**
 - **£12m drug and alcohol services (Gateshead et al)**
 - **£4m reducing re-offending (Bradford)**
- **Partnership capacity**
 - Strengthen collective local leadership
 - Shared focus on the user
 - Improve collaboration
 - Multi-disciplinary approaches
 - Align resources and effort
 - Reduce complexity



Achieving efficiency through partnerships: contracting – capacity review

- **Four critical elements of partnership capacity to innovate:**
 - Strong partnership
 - Shared leadership and accountability
 - Understanding resources
 - Effective engagement





Strong partnerships

- Relationships of trust to support innovation
- Pooling resources and expertise
- Exploring nature of wicked problems



Shared leadership and accountability

- Heterachy not hierarchy
- Finding the right leadership style
- Mean what you say and deliver on promises



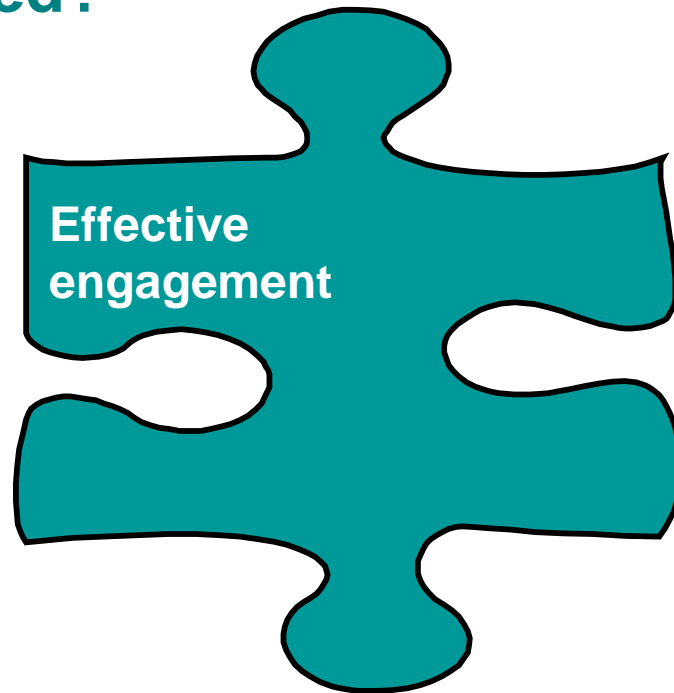
Understanding resources

- What outcomes are you trying to achieve?
- Are they the right outcomes?
- How much are you spending?
- Are you getting the outcomes?
- Is there a better way?



Effective engagement

- What is it like for the user?
- What needs to change?
- Who needs to be involved?
- How should they be engaged?



Achieving efficiency through partnerships: contracting - priorities

- Re-prioritising together in the light of the cuts



Achieving efficiency through partnerships: contracting - priorities

- Identifying those priorities where partnership working can have the biggest impact



Efficiency through partnerships: diagnosis

- Two broad types of problems underlying the search for greater efficiency;
- Tame
 - Routine
 - Systems and process issues
 - More/better/quicker/cheaper
- *Individual organisations can make some savings and improvements on their own*



Efficiency through partnerships: diagnosis

- **Wicked**

- Ambiguous
- Complex
- Messy

Can only begin to understand problem together

High levels of connectivity required

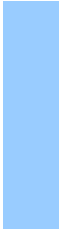
Knowledge created across organisational boundaries



Efficiency through partnerships: exploration

- Shared ambitions
- Unlock old mindsets – sectoral, organisational, professional
- Tenacity - keep looking, trying and talking
- Emotionally intelligent leadership
- ‘Appreciative enquiry’ – build on what works



- 
- Start with the users – case studies/journeys to ground thinking
 - Open systems – multiple causes – understand questions if not answers
 - Space and time to be creative – left brain and right brain
 - Well designed processes
 - Organisational development support



Efficiency through partnership: implementation

- Using whole systems approaches to understand 'wicked' problems
- De-layer
- Share staff
- Use focused interventions
- Stop doing some things
- Focus on behaviour change to reduce demand and waste
- Co-production



Dismantle the tankers



Turn them into windmills





Over to you ...

