



Co-ops and mutuals

How does this relate to parks services?



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Where are we now?

- Spending cuts
- Big Society
- Public Service reform
- Orthodoxy of 'any willing provider'



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Impact of spending cuts on parks

Some headlines:

- Liverpool - £6.1m reduction in parks spending over the next 2 years (21% overall).
- Manchester £1.4m from parks and street scene over the next two years to meet overall target of £110m.

Source: Horticulture Week, 4 March 2011

Long term impacts of these spending cuts:

- Risks to partnership working
- Problems get worse and further intervention required, e.g. NHS



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Co-ops and mutuals – a relevant agenda?



"Every government department and every local council will be expected to put in place a right to provide, with the ultimate decision to go ahead resting with the relevant minister." **Francis Maude, November 2010**



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The role of co-operatives and mutuals in delivering local public services



'A systematic review of the evidence'



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Co-ops and mutuals – emerging challenges



- Making policy in the absence of evidence
- The first stage to marketisation?
- Support, advocacy & expert advice
- Buy in
- Staff, terms and conditions
- Accountability



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Examples across the public sector



- Housing co-operatives
- Social care co-operatives
- Leisure trusts



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What prospects for parks?



- Opportunities – already participative and enabling, Big Society nothing new
- Challenges – targeted for cuts, loss of experience, wider implications of poor quality parks - crime e.t.c

Examples:

- Lambeth – all parks to become community trusts by 2015
- Legacy Skate Park Essex – encourages young peoples to become members and pay small usage fee



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Contact details

Adele Reynolds, KTP Research Associate

Email: areynolds@apse.org.uk



Association for Public Service Excellence
2nd floor Washbrook House, Lancasterian Office Centre, Talbot Road,
Old Trafford, Manchester M32 0FP.
telephone: 0161 772 1810
fax: 0161 772 1811
web: www.apse.org.uk
