

COUNCIL CULTURE

How might we shift *Council Culture*
so that local government works with
citizens to make places better?

Contents

Contents.....	1
Acknowledgments.....	2
Introduction.....	3
How to Unleash Citizen Power.....	5
Subject, Consumer, Citizen.....	9
How Council Culture can get in the way.....	10
Introducing the #CultureShift framework.....	13
Narrative.....	16
Rituals.....	21
Totems.....	28
#CultureShift in Action: “Shaped by People” in Kirklees.....	34
Three Tips for #CultureShift Success.....	35
What next?.....	36

“We cannot create 21st century institutions by simply devolving power to a new level. New collaborative models do require a new framework. They also require very different behaviours amongst leaders at the local level – within government and without.”

Hilary Cottam

Acknowledgments

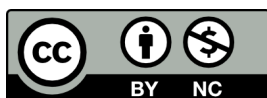
We would like to extend a huge thanks to **South Gloucestershire Council, London Borough of Waltham Forest** and **Westmorland and Furness Council** for their valuable contributions to this collaborative innovation project, and for their generosity in sharing their journeys through this report.

We'd also like to thank our partners at **Kirklees Council** for their support in the early stages #CultureShift development, as well as the [Notwestminster](#) community, with which many of the ideas shared within this report have been tested and improved.



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Introduction

How might we shift *Council Culture* so that local government works with citizens to make places better?

The challenge

Forward-thinking councils understand that the “service delivery” model of local government is broken. Emerging in its place is the belief that local government’s role is to enable citizens: creating the conditions for local people to make their places better, rather than doing it for them.

Pockets of incredible promise have emerged in many places. Early adopters and innovators are testing and learning.

But time and time again, the teams pioneering this work hit up against cultural blockers. The “service delivery” mindset is deeply entrenched. Teams are siloed. Trying to achieve any type of organisational change can be slow and frustrating.

All of this can make the gravitational pull of “business as usual” overwhelming.

The opportunity

Culture change is hard, but it can be done - and the potential rewards are too great to pass up. Over the last ten years, we’ve worked with dozens of organisations across a range of sectors to create and implement citizen-led ways of working. In our experience, participatory strategies really stick when organisations:

- Change the **narrative**: identify the enduring stories that you need to shift in order to make room for new stories that support new ways of working
- Embed **rituals**: co-design, develop and test the day-to-day practices that embed this new narrative, reinforcing it at every opportunity and making participatory culture the “new normal”
- Build **totems**: develop eye-catching, flagship activities or changes which light the way for your organisation

Over the last 12 months, we’ve tested and refined this three-part framework for culture change with three local councils from across the UK: South Gloucestershire, Waltham Forest and Westmorland & Furness. From what we’ve learned together, we are now confident that this framework represents a valuable tool and opportunity to craft cultural interventions that help local government pioneers to overcome the blockers and break free of “business as usual”.

Who this report is for - and how to use it

This report is for anyone who wants to shift the relationship between councils and citizens in their local places. That said, it is specifically tailored to help senior council officers to **reflect, start conversations** and **take action** towards creating a council culture that's committed to working with people, not for them.

- **Reflect:** The #CultureShift framework gives you a lens to notice and analyse your existing culture, and spot opportunities to intervene.
- **Start conversations:** Each section contains prompts and questions to explore with your colleagues.
- **Take action:** The report contains plenty of ideas for cultural interventions to try, as well as exercises and tools for building your own.

Culture change takes courage and commitment, and we won't pretend that there are any quick-and-easy shortcuts. However, we are confident the #CultureShift framework is a useful tool for amplifying your efforts and building momentum over time, step by step.

Council Culture: a collaborative innovation

We believe that “all of us are smarter than any of us”. That's why we unlock deep sector issues by bringing like-minded organisations together around a shared question.

We call it Collaborative Innovation.

For this project, we teamed up with senior officers from three councils - South Gloucestershire, Waltham Forest and Westmorland & Furness - to explore the topic of council culture through the lens of their own experiences and experiments.

Covering urban, suburban and rural areas and spread across different regions, the three councils all want to involve local people more in making the places where they live better. Each also faced a period of transition, whether due to a new CEO, a change in administration, or - in Westmorland & Furness's case - the creation of an entirely new local authority. Two to four people from each council took part in a four-part workshop series, spanning a range of roles from operations, housing, strategy and commissioning. In turn, they engaged eight to 12 colleagues at each council with the framework through discussions and experiments.

How to Unleash Citizen Power

“We’re trying to move to a place where the local authority is the stage, not the actor”
- Council Culture participant

Councils - like all organisations - face a choice between three different stories: **Subject**, **Consumer** and **Citizen**. In the simplest form, this comes down to whether councils do things **with** people - treating them as creative, compassionate and capable citizens - rather than doing things **to** people (Subject), or **for** people (Consumer).

“**Citizen**” councils can become platforms for local people to contribute their own ideas, energy and creativity towards making their places better. Here, the job of local government becomes to enable, partner with and support local people, trusting in citizens’ capabilities, local knowledge and collective wisdom.

Unfortunately, many councils are trapped in Subject or Consumer relationships with their citizens, or a blend of both. In the **Subject** story, councils “manage” their residents and decide what’s best. In the **Consumer** story, residents are treated as passive “customers” of council services: an improvement on the Subject story, perhaps, but still woefully lacking.

Changing the story

These relationships are not just suboptimal for residents: they are frankly unsustainable for councils. Faced with day-to-day struggles, transforming relationships with citizens may not always feel like an urgent priority. But for councils struggling to get to grips with shrinking budgets and rising expectations, breaking out of a Consumer mentality and investing properly in Citizen relationships may be the only long-term way to solve problems and deliver real impact — including cost savings.

We’re far from the only ones to have identified the need for this kind of shift. Just as this report was being published, over 20 organisations came together to launch [#DoWith](#), a collective call to action for radical change in how public services work with people and communities.

This follows on from New Local’s work on [Community Power](#) and the shift from state or market paradigm to community paradigm. The Centre for Public Impact, meanwhile, are promoting [Human Learning Systems](#) as an alternative to New Public Management, while the Institute for Local Government has done excellent work on reimagining the [21st century public servant](#).

However you frame it, the core challenge remains the same: to transform relationships away from the paternalistic and transactional and towards the collaborative and enabling.

What citizens can achieve together

There are mountains of evidence to show that, with the right conditions, people will take action to shape the places in which they live. Among our participating councils alone, we heard how:

Over 80 young residents in Waltham Forest came together to transform an unused area in the middle of a housing estate into “The Shade”, an award-winning, well-loved community space with a stage, BBQ, games, seating and planting. The “Making Places” programme saw the council work with Build Up, an organisation that runs practical construction projects for young people to design and build structures in their local communities.

A team at South Gloucestershire Council partnered with the local voluntary, community and social sector to ensure that people shielding during COVID received “more than a food pack”, by signposting them to more holistic support for issues such as loneliness and financial difficulties. The team also worked with the council’s in-house catering function to create more culturally appropriate food packs than what was being offered by central government, meeting the needs of different communities.

A group of mums living on a housing estate in Barrow came together to create “a place that’s ours”, in response to a lack of local community assets. The group figured out which type of events and services they wanted, and the council helped by facilitating and brokering access to space and funding. The group has since taken on land to set up a community garden and community fridge (plus a Facebook group for sharing recipes), as well as run events. The group is now working with Westmorland & Furness council to shape local adult education provision.

There are thousands of examples that we can add to this list - from Hull City Council empowering communities with a [“Right to Grow”](#) on unused council land, to Camden Council’s [“We Make Camden Kit”](#) supporting local people with funding and training to get their ideas off the ground, to the hundreds of community-owned pubs, cinemas, lidos, sports clubs and community facilities that local people have taken over to run themselves (with or without the council’s help!).

All of these examples demonstrate how citizens can solve problems, support each other, grow ideas and make positive change happen in their places and communities.

What's at stake

As our workshops were drawing to a close in the summer of 2024, racist riots broke out across the UK. It was a terrifying time for many, and a testing moment for our collective faith that what we have in common is stronger than what divides us.

In the hours and days that followed, however, local people and communities from up and down the country came together to reclaim their neighbourhoods: repairing damaged buildings, supporting victims, and gathering en masse in the streets to protect their neighbours. Shoulder-to-shoulder, neighbours faced down hate and division with love and togetherness.

This once again demonstrated something most of us have always known, and something we can always find if we choose to look: that people care about the places they live, work and play, and will take action to shape them for the better.

At the same time, it highlighted the danger of governments pursuing what's been described as "[deliverism](#)": the notion that social cohesion and public trust can be restored, and populism overcome, simply by delivering better public services. This is simply another version of the Consumer story, a painfully inadequate response. A much more fundamental reshaping of government's relationship with citizens is needed.

Trusting the people

Rather than embracing the contemporary spirit of deliverism, councils should look to the recent past to rediscover another spirit - one that's fast becoming a folk memory. We refer, of course, to the spirit of the COVID era, where sheer necessity opened up brave new possibilities and bolder approaches to truly working hand-in-hand with citizens and communities. As one participant told us:

"During COVID, we were able to be more community-focused. We put the infrastructure in place and stepped back. We'll walk alongside you, but we can't do it for you. Getting out of the way was really powerful - we had so many new conversations." - Council Culture participant

COVID was an emergency, and not everything that happens during an emergency can be sustained when life gets back to normal. But reflecting on how relationships shifted during that time, and what was achieved as a result, offers us a whole new perspective on the question of rebuilding public trust.

Put simply, today's challenge is not to improve delivery so that the people trust the government. Rather, today's challenge is to radically change council culture so that the government trusts the people.

The prize

Local governments who can make that leap and rebuild their own trust in citizens will be the ones best placed to foster resilience, growth and community wealth building in the decades to come.

They will enjoy more support and legitimacy for their major strategies, including placemaking and regeneration, because citizen voice will be at the heart of them. By becoming a platform for citizen participation, they will build the social capital within their communities required to both reduce demand for services and make new service models possible. And by empowering their employees to work together with citizens as partners, not customers, they will increase motivation and retention.

But first, they will need to crack the culture...

Questions to discuss with your team

- What's the most inspiring citizen-led change you've witnessed in your community?
- When was the last time your team or your council truly put its trust in local people?

Subject, Consumer, Citizen

The table below, adapted from our 2014 report [This is the #CitizenShift](#), maps some of the defining characteristics of the three stories of the individual in society: Subject, Consumer and Citizen. All of our work at New Citizen Project aims to help organisations to break down the dominance of the Subject and Consumer stories and embrace the potential of the Citizen story.

SUBJECT	CONSUMER	CITIZEN
TO	FOR	WITH
DEPENDENT	INDEPENDENT	INTERDEPENDENT
OBEY	DEMAND	PARTICIPATE
RECEIVE	CHOOSE	CREATE
COMMAND	SERVE	FACILITATE
DUTY	RIGHTS	PURPOSE
PRINT	ANALOGUE	DIGITAL
HIERARCHY	BUREAUCRACY	NETWORK
SUBJECTIVE	OBJECTIVE	DELIBERATIVE

How Council Culture can get in the way

If so many forward-thinking council officers want to move from a Subject or Consumer story to a Citizen story, what's getting in the way?

We've learned from our work that **organisational culture** can be a massive part of the problem.

Organisational culture is notoriously difficult to pin down. Perhaps no definition has topped Terry Deal and Allan Kennedy's claim that culture is simply:

"The way we do things around here"

Digging deeper, we take it broadly to mean the shared values, beliefs, norms and practices that shape how members of an organisation interact and work together. That includes the unwritten rules, shared assumptions and collective mindsets that influence decision-making, communication styles and behaviour within any given local council. This culture is reflected in the leadership style, internal dynamics and external relationships, as well as how the organisation responds to challenges and opportunities.

Culture and imagination

Why is culture important? Thousands of books have been written on how culture impacts organisational effectiveness, creativity or adaptability to external change. Based on our work co-creating participatory approaches with a range of organisations over the last 10 years, we would add that **culture impacts an organisation's imagination**.

Put simply, culture affects what people believe is possible. Culture can open up possibilities, or close them down. It can widen our horizons, or narrow them. It can make space for relationships to be positively transformed, or lock them in the same old destructive patterns.

An organisation's culture has a powerful influence on our **creativity** to imagine new ways of doing things, our **belief** that such shifts are possible and worthwhile, our **confidence** that we have what it takes to make the shift, and our **willingness** to build and invest in the capabilities to make it a success.

That's not to say that no other factors inhibit the Citizen story from taking hold at councils. Resource constraints, capacity and skills issues, political will and unexpected events all play a role. But without grappling with the issue of organisational culture, those who want to drive change will find it difficult to convince others that an alternative approach is even a possibility.

Cultural barriers

To learn more about cultural barriers at local councils, we hosted a session at New Local's Stronger Things conference in which we took an unscientific poll of dozens of local government and community organisation representatives. We asked them:

What's the biggest cultural barrier you face in shifting your council's relationship with citizens?

The top five answers were:

- A transactional, "service delivery" mindset that treats residents like customers
- Too risk averse to trust local people to share in decision-making
- A paternalistic, "we'll do it for you" mindset
- Lack of belief in people's ability to make their places better
- Only a small minority of colleagues want to work differently with citizens

We then invited more open-ended reflections on what was holding them back from transforming their relationships with citizens. Here, we found that councils struggle with:

- **Top-down, hierarchical structures:** Siloed working and rigid hierarchies are hindering collaboration and innovation, while top-down decision-making limits meaningful citizen participation.
- **Resource constraints:** Time pressures and heavy workloads can leave staff with little room for community engagement, especially in highly diverse localities where more nuanced community engagement approaches are required.
- **Unwillingness to share power:** Many officers and elected members are reluctant to share power with citizens, fearful of losing control over political messaging. Elected members may also see direct citizen participation as a threat to their own role as representatives.
- **Institutional inertia:** There can often be a general resistance to change of any type, meaning that old, established ways of working continue to persist long past their usefulness.
- **Unresolved historical issues:** In some cases, citizens find it difficult to "move past" previous negative experiences with councils, making collaboration difficult.
- **Too many (bad) consultations:** Residents are often consulted only when the core decisions have already been made, and lack enough understanding of council processes to intervene effectively. In some cases, residents get "consultation fatigue" from too many surveys (that never seem to change anything).

All of these issues resurfaced again and again in deeper discussions with our three project participants over the course of the collaborative innovation.

Taking steps to transform *Council Culture*

These barriers and issues may seem intimidating, but there are openings and opportunities within them. Economic, statutory or structural factors may be outside of teams' control, or at least very difficult to shift. But it's notable how many of the factors listed above are "softer", more attitudinal, more cultural. Council officers and teams can choose to change how they think about risk; choose to embrace new ways of working; choose to share more power with citizens; choose to put their trust in local communities. Once those choices start to be made, the organisation has already taken one step on the path towards transforming structures and investing resources differently.

The goal of this project has been to find ways to make those pro-citizen choices easier: for individual council officers, for teams, and for local authorities as a whole. In the next section, we introduce the #CultureShift framework: our model of organisational culture change.

Questions to discuss with your team

- Which part of your council has the most citizen-friendly culture? What might you learn from it?
- What are the biggest cultural barriers to working more with citizens at your council?

Introducing the #CultureShift framework

Our collaborative innovation is underpinned by the #CultureShift framework. This is a simple culture change model made up of three interlinked elements we call “Narratives, Rituals, Totems”.

This involves:

- **Articulating a new story** about a Citizen future (Narrative)
- **Bringing it to life** through intentional everyday practices (Rituals)
- **Embodying it** through attention-grabbing symbolic shifts (Totems)

RITUALS

TOTEMS



NARRATIVE

Our core proposition is that you have to do all three, more or less at the same time, for culture change to really stick.

Next, we explain each element in turn, before explaining how they fit together.

Narrative

By narrative, we mean the stories that circulate within an organisation that shape everyone’s sense of what the organisation is about.

Every organisation has these stories – histories, memories, assumptions and prejudices - the things people just take to be true. Some are written down and official, some are informal. These stories help to set boundaries around what we believe is possible. So even when people want to do things differently, old stories can hold them back.

Try playing “spot the story” at your own council. Which stories are keeping you trapped in paternalistic or transactional relationships? Each time you refer to residents as “customers”, the Consumer story is present. Each time you nudge, prod and cajole residents into changing behaviour, the Subject story may be lurking.

When you start to pay attention to how these stories show up and the impact they have, you have a great starting point for change. Getting a grip on **narrative** helps to clarify what you want your council to move towards, and what you want it to move away from. It allows you to tell a new story - a Citizen story - in which the council does things with people, not for them.

Rituals

Rituals are the day-to-day routines, practices and symbols that help narratives take root.

We see them in how teams meet, how organisations measure success, the job titles we use, and even how our workplaces are decorated. They may seem mundane, even trivial - but don't be fooled. Certainly, they can become so ingrained that we barely notice their influence, but they subtly shape our understanding of our organisations' work and values, including our horizons of what's possible.

That's why we believe that focusing on rituals is vital for understanding and transforming organisational culture. It's about "sweating the small stuff" to uncover the hidden power within the everyday practices, processes and paraphernalia that make up a workplace culture.

By doing this, we can then craft new rituals that will intervene in that culture - pushing it away from the paternalistic and the transactional, and towards an approach that recognises what citizens are capable of and seeks to facilitate and enable them.

Totems

Totems are the big, eye-catching manifestations of the narrative: the symbolic projects or events which embody a culture.

If rituals embed stories in the day-to-day, totems tell your story on a bigger stage. Prominent and easily recognisable, they express what kind of organisation you want to be, and what kind of relationships you want to have with your stakeholders: through actions, not just words.

For example, if your council has a whopping great building in the town centre with the words "Customer Service Centre" in six foot letters on the side, that sends a pretty powerful signal to both staff and citizens as to what the role of the council is — and one that can be difficult to override no matter what else you do.

But when you're trying to change a culture, creating a totemic moment - such as holding your first citizens' assembly, or running a major participatory budgeting exercise - can energise the process and galvanise change.

Why you need all three

Having a clear narrative is obviously the foundation - that sets the direction. Without that, you're pretty stuck!

Rituals are vital for embedding that narrative shift into the day-to-day - but without a big eye-catching totem to kick things into gear, rituals alone might be too slow and incremental to reach a tipping point and really catch fire.

By the same token, a big eye-catching totem might make a splash, get lots of headlines, draw eyeballs, but if there aren't rituals in place to actually carry the shift forward, it could end up just becoming a one-off, isolated event. Just running a citizens' assembly on its own won't transform your culture - you need rituals to channel that energy and make it last.

If councils can intentionally put all three elements together, however, this could make up a recipe for cultural reinvention — the kind of reinvention that might allow councils to break the gravitational pull of the ways of doing things we all know we want to leave behind.

In the following sections, we dive deeper into each element in turn, explaining how the participating councils developed their own “narratives, rituals and totems”, and how you can start to design your own cultural interventions based on the model.

Narrative

“Stories matter. They can trap us, but they can also inspire us. The stories we tell shape how we see ourselves, and how we see the world. When we see the world differently, we begin behaving differently, living into the new story.” - Brian Eno

What are narratives?

Stories that circulate inside and outside an organisation, shaping everyone’s sense of what the organisation is about.

In a council context, we might find narratives in:

- **Official slogans, missions and values:** e.g. the slogan “Working with our community to secure Seaford’s best future” tells a very different story to “Delivering efficient and effective public services”
- **Teams’ unofficial stories:** e.g. “That last project was one of our best”; “If we try that, people will complain”; “It takes forever to change things here”
- **What local residents say:** e.g. “The council never listens”; “I got a grant from the council for my project, they were really helpful”; “This area’s gone downhill, no-one’s doing anything about it”.

These examples show how there are always lots of stories and narratives swirling around any given organisation: official and unofficial, spoken and unspoken. Creating a new, intentional narrative is the first step towards change.

Crafting new narratives: the theory

Our first exercise was to ask participants to write a new narrative just for their team. These were more than aspirational statements. They had to describe a clear “From/To” shift - naming the problems and shortcomings, and from there articulating a better future.

Crucially, we wanted to help them escape from the polished “strategy-speak” common at large organisations, and instead create something more simple and heartfelt that would create an emotional connection. Our instinct was that this approach would create more organic narratives that would be more readily embraced at a team level, as an alternative to a more top-down approach.

To do this, we used a three-step process:

First, the teams spent some time reflecting on all of the historic ups and downs of the council’s relationship with citizens related to a specific area of work (e.g. community consultation, or place-making), taking copious notes.

Second, the teams wrote down 3-4 simple shifts that they wanted to make, based on what they’d discussed. Crucially, these were framed as “From/To” shifts, rather than just visions or ambitions. This meant that participants had to name the past or present shortcomings that they wanted to move away from, as well as the outcomes they wanted to move towards. Examples drawn from each council are given below:

From	To
Expect people to come to us	Going to people on their own terms
Mixture of engagement & communication	Clear approach to consultation & co-production
Short-term and shiny	Long term & real change

Third, we asked them to write a “Dear Citizens” letter - inspired by former England football manager Gareth Southgate’s famous “[Dear England](#)” missive to fans - expressing what they would truly like to say to residents. The aim here was to put the “From/To” shifts into a more personal, frank and honest expression of what each team wanted to change, while still recognising the past and present (good and bad). It didn't have to be perfectly worded: in fact, we encouraged simple, colloquial language that they might actually use in conversation with colleagues or residents, to make it more authentic and heartfelt.

Crafting new narratives: the practice

The letters were never intended to be public, in order to give participants the freedom to express themselves in a less guarded and “wordsmithed” way - so we won’t reproduce them in full here.

But as we’d hoped, participants found using this format and approach helpful, and to our surprise, some teams even said that the process of writing the letter was itself cathartic and therapeutic.

Specifically, the exercise resulted in the letter-writers:

Honestly and frankly addressing past ups and downs

“We know that we are not hearing from all of you and we don’t talk to you in the way you want us to.”

“We’ve seen the fantastic way the community has come together during good times (like the Borough of Culture) and more difficult times (like COVID).”

Elaborating on the shifts they wanted to make

“We know engaging isn’t enough, we need to be braver at giving people more power and influence.”

“[We] want to work with you to co-produce and design services”

“We want to change this and get it right, so we will change what we are doing, to come to you and provide different ways (that you want) to speak to us.”

Finding common cause with citizens - describing a more equitable relationship

“We will be designing solutions with you from the start for the problems that matter to you - because they matter to us.”

“You know more than anyone what you need in your local area, and we can’t wait to learn from you!”

“None of us is as clever as all of us”

What happened next

In the weeks after the workshop, we reflected together on how the exercise had gone. On the whole, participants found the tool useful and promising. Some participants had shared their narrative with colleagues and received positive feedback. We encouraged all participants to continue to share, revise and add more voices to the narrative.

Above all, the exercise was useful in crystallising in practical terms what the shift from “Consumer” to “Citizen” should look like in each council and team’s specific circumstances.

“Doing the From/To’s and the letter was really helpful. Before, describing what we were trying to do with [our community engagement work] felt a bit nebulous - the workshop felt like the first time I could properly articulate it.”

Some also said it was helpful to write in a quickfire, straightforward manner with low pressure and low expectations.

“It was useful to write in layman's terms, as if you’re speaking to a resident. It’s more natural, flows better. It enabled more honesty, and helped me put myself in the shoes of a resident more easily... and it wasn’t being written to share with my Chief Exec.”

Challenges and conclusions

The “From/To” structure insists that teams acknowledge past and present shortcomings as a foundation for change. One group found that this prompted defensiveness from some colleagues, who felt that the team was already getting a lot right. We agree that it’s very important to shine a light on what’s already working and use that as a starting point to build upon. At the same time, our cohort’s experience suggests that there is **value in frank and honest self-examination**. Had more colleagues been able to take part in the process rather than just be presented with the result, it may have made a difference.

Another issue came from a participating council’s communications team. Although the “Dear Citizens” letter was never intended for the public’s eyes, it nevertheless underwent several rounds of edits that knocked off some of the more authentic edges (and critically, switched the voice from “we” to “the council”).

Despite these challenges, we are confident that this approach to narrative-building at the team level has strong potential to break through old and unhelpful stories by providing more clarity and emotional connection to the task ahead. Individual teams will then need to decide whether to try to develop and “extend” this narrative into one that can apply to the whole council, or to encourage each team within a council to create their own narrative (we lean towards the latter, to maximise the feeling of ownership, specificity and connection). Eventually, it may also be useful to make such narratives public-facing in some form, to increase accountability and signal the desired change to residents themselves - although as we have seen above, it may be challenging to keep them human and authentic.

Ultimately, we would always advocate the end goal of co-creating new narratives about citizen/council relationship with citizens themselves, as was the case in our work with Kirklees Council and local citizens to create the [“Shaped by People”](#) shared goal. Co-creating a common aspiration in citizens’ own words will increase ownership and emotional connection, and serve as an invitation for more people to take part in helping to achieve the shared goal.

As a first step, however, we believe that crafting a new, authentic narrative at the team level can plant the seeds for more ambitious narrative change down the track.

Try it with your team

Play “Spot the Story”

Pick an item of council communication (press release, letter to residents, internal strategy document, annual report) and read it with a critical eye: where does it speak to or about residents as Subject? Where as Consumers? Where as Citizens?

“Dear Citizens”

On your own or with your team, write your own “From/To” shifts and “Dear Citizens” letter, following the steps above. Take about 20 minutes for each step.

Rituals

“There was so much in the last workshop that we came away with – from thinking about rooms and spaces where we meet our residents and what this was like for them (ceremonial and bureaucratic), to names of roles and teams (hierarchy), to rituals we can develop with our own teams.” - Council Culture participant

What are rituals?

Everyday practices, processes and prompts that embed narratives within an organisation.

In councils, we might see rituals within:

- **The language we use:** When we refer to residents as “customers” dozens of times a day - worse still, if the word “customer” is in our job title - it’s no surprise that we get stuck in a service delivery mindset.
- **The environment we work in:** Are there any daily reminders of citizens around the office? What’s on the walls? What are meeting rooms named after? Do you always work in council offices, or do you sometimes get out into the community?
- **How we measure success:** “What gets measured gets managed”. Most councils have KPIs for efficiency and cost-effectiveness, but how many also measure active citizenship and collective agency?

All of these rituals have the power to carry stories about what kind of organisation the council is, and what it could be in the future. Once we start noticing the unseen power of rituals, we can start to create **new** rituals to change culture.

For example, we spent some time with the group imagining rituals related to the categories of language, environment and measuring success. These categories are not exhaustive, but provide a starting point for thinking about change.

Sure enough, participants quickly came up with a wide range of ways to change their councils’ dominant rituals.

OUR WORKING ENVIRONMENT

RITUALS

How might we decorate our workplace environment to remind ourselves of how capable citizens are?

How might we change the systems and tools we use to support “WITH not FOR” working? (Which tools and systems might be getting in our way?)

How might we “get out of the office” and spend more time in community spaces?



Meeting rooms named after local community champions or groups, with photos and descriptions of their achievements prominently displayed

HOW WE MEASURE SUCCESS

RITUALS

How might we include ‘WITH not FOR’ in individual performance goals and appraisals?

How might we measure internal progress towards a more ‘WITH not FOR’ culture?

How might we measure how empowered citizens feel within their local areas?



“Traffic light” ratings for projects and programmes, based on the level of citizen involvement (e.g. “no input / consultation / co-production”)

The language we use

- Job titles that do what they say on the tin, so our communities can understand them
- Change terms like “customer engagement officer” to be more resident focused
- Use plain language in reports and press releases, meet people where they are at
- Think about branding on council vehicles, clothing, buildings, etc

The environment we work in

- We should have pictures of local citizens on our walls, not just local landmarks! Let’s put up photos celebrating local success stories.
- If we get the IT right, we should be able to spend more time working and meeting in community spaces and less time in council offices
- Make our office environment look less “corporate” - paint it a different colour!

How we measure success

- Create a “golden thread” that links a clear vision [around working with citizens] to individual KPIs and objectives that staff have to answer to in appraisals
- We already measure social value in tendered contracts - we should also measure citizen engagement in our internal business cases or programme plans
- Create KPIs by asking local people “how hopeful do you feel about the future?”. And don’t frame everything as being about gaps rather than strengths.

Creating new rituals: the theory

With so many options, where to start?

We knew it was unrealistic to expect our cohort to change their job titles, rehaul their appraisal systems or extensively redecorate their offices within the span of the collaborative innovation process. We also felt that the early steps towards change required more dedicated focus and attention within teams.

With this in mind, we aimed to create “**breakthrough**” rituals. These would be new, active rituals that each participating council could introduce for a core team of 8-12 people to experiment with.

Specifically, we asked them to create **regular moments of collective attention** that help to fight the pull of business as usual - refocusing the team on the narrative, building belief and confidence, and carving out space to think creatively about how to involve citizens. We believe repeating a few of these rituals on a regular basis will help to build participatory muscle and make the story stick.

Our thinking on “breakthrough rituals” is inspired by the work of [Casper ter Kuile](#) and [Kursat Ozenc & Margaret Hagan](#).

The power of collective attention

Ter Kuile argues that the key ingredients of a ritual are: **Intention + Attention + Repetition**

As he [explains](#):

“We create rituals by starting with things you are already doing. By simply tuning into our intention changes our approach and our experience. Once we have intention, pay attention—be present to the activity. Finally, repeat. By creating this ritual loop in our life—intention, attention, repetition—we start to add more meaning and purpose to our life.”

As above, we tend to define “rituals” more broadly, to include things that affect us unconsciously. But when it comes to proactively designing a breakthrough ritual to intervene effectively in your culture, there is a lot of value in ter Kuile’s focus on **attention** - in particular, creating **regular moments of collective attention** that break through business-as-usual and generate and maintain momentum towards your desired shift. We think of this as being like the start of a bobsleigh run: the moment when a bobsleigh team starts with an intense [collective sprint](#) to get the sleigh moving, before gravity begins to do its work!

Making rituals sticky

Ozenc & Hagen’s excellent [Rituals at Work](#) helpfully breaks down workplace rituals into different functional categories, such as improving “performance and flow” or fostering community and team building. For this project, we encouraged the cohort to think of rituals for **regularly refocusing** on the desired narrative shift; **building belief and confidence** in new ways of working; and for **creating space for creative thinking** about how to involve citizens.

Ozenc & Hagan also stress that rituals must have a certain “je ne sais quoi” quality to make them stick. Their extensive research suggests that this is best achieved by incorporating movement into rituals, using props, or sharing food and drink, among other factors. We also encouraged participants to make sure that their rituals would be novel enough to be attractive and interesting, but not so strange and disruptive as to put people off taking part.

The Ritual Canvas

We created a simple “Ritual Canvas” to help participants design their rituals. This included:

- the “From/To” shift that the ritual is intended to embed
- a simple description of the ritual
- a “hook” around which the ritual is based (e.g. a regular meeting)
- what makes the ritual special (e.g. movement, props)

We also provided a set of sample rituals that we created based on ter Kuile and Ozenc & Hagen's insights, for the teams to draw from and adapt, shown below.

Both the Ritual Canvas, and the example rituals are shown below, and are available to download at: www.newcitizenproject.com/council-culture

DISCOVER Your starting point	DESIGN Making it your own	DEPLOY Rolling it out
In order to move from... to... we will...	What's the hook? <i>Who, what, when and where could you build this ritual around?</i> What makes it special? <i>Is there a symbolic prop or artefact? Does it include physical movement?</i> Could you take it further? <i>Try playing with the sliders</i> Low intensity  High intensity Familiar  Novel	Is it ready? Does your ritual... • Have a certain "je ne sais quoi"? • Support your "from / to" shift? <i>If not, iterate or start again!</i> Codify it Ritual name: Description: Start date:

Weekly Wall of Inspiration Throughout the week, your team keeps an eye out for inspiring examples of local citizen action or citizen-friendly innovations by other local governments in the UK and around the world. When you find one, print it out and pin it to your "Wall of Inspiration" in a shared space. Each week, the team then gathers by the "Wall of Inspiration" for tea, coffee or lunch. Each person briefly talks about the examples they've pinned up. At the end of the gathering, the print-outs are removed and the cycle starts again.  Difficulty: Low cost / Medium planning  You will need: access to a printer, a physical space and an agreed time to come together  	Citizens Can... At least once a week, you start a team meeting by taking turns to complete the sentence "Citizens Can..." for 2 minutes. Don't overthink it, anything you say is fine! Try to have as many turns as you can in the 2 minutes. If possible, everyone stands up and nominates the next person by throwing a tennis ball or soft toy, or just by pointing.  Difficulty: Low cost / Low planning  You will need: a timer and a prop to nominate the next person (e.g. a ball) 
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Creating new rituals: the practice

Each council team designed a different “breakthrough” ritual to test, based on the sample rituals we’d shared:

“Weekly Wall of Inspiration”

One council chose to print out any inspiring examples they came across of local citizen action or interesting innovations by other local governments around the world, and pin them on a wall in a shared space. They would then gather for a regular coffee and cake meet-up, where each person talks through the examples they’ve pinned. The print-outs are then removed from the wall and the cycle starts again, ensuring a constant heartbeat of inspiration.

“Touchstone”

Another team focused on implementing a “touchstone” ritual within a specific project group. Touchstone rituals involve everyone tapping or touching an object to refocus attention on a shared goal before a key moment - imagine athletes touching a motivational sign as they leave a locker room and take the field. For this team, the touchstone involved taking a few minutes at the start of each project group meeting to tell a personal story about an individual who might use the service being designed.

“Citizens Can...”

The last team chose to start their team meetings by taking turns to complete the sentence “Citizens Can...” for two minutes. This warm-up exercise is designed to constantly remind council teams that residents are capable, active citizens who can play a role in solving shared problems. The team adapted this for their stand-up meetings, using it to bring residents’ perspectives and needs into the conversation.

In each case, the council staff attending the workshop deliberately left the design of the ritual unfinished, to allow their colleagues back at the office to finalise the details themselves and therefore feel more ownership of the ritual.

What happened next

“I was ready for it to be uncomfortable. You have to keep quiet and let it sit... but many people really got it right away, and bought into it.” - Council Culture participant

We checked in regularly with the teams to see how the rituals were going down with the wider teams. From this, we gleaned five main takeaways:

1. Rituals have an impact

Colleagues noticed a difference in how their meetings played out following the introduction of an attention-focusing ritual. Several people felt a deeper personal connection to the meeting topics, and more readily incorporated a sense of citizens' needs and perspectives into their discussions. In this regard, the rituals were successful in breaking the bubble of "business as usual".

2. Don't be afraid

All of the rituals were generally well-accepted when introduced, with no team receiving significant pushback or disinterest from colleagues. This was true of colleagues from across different roles, with some even volunteering to lead the ritual in the future.

3. Leave room to adapt

As we expected, it was helpful to leave room for the ritual to be adapted and finalised by the wider team who will be performing it - this encouraged "buy-in" and meant teams got more out of it.

4. Be ready for the novelty to wear off

Workplace rituals definitely benefit from having "champions" who will make sure they keep happening, especially when under-pressure teams might not be in the mood. In some cases, the ritual was quietly dropped by teams if the person who first introduced it was not there.

5. Rituals can be powerful

The "touchstone ritual", in which team members shared fictitious stories about imagined service users to help ground the meeting in real personal connection, triggered such an emotional reaction in some attendees that they asked for the ritual to be dialled back in future meetings. And the "weekly wall of inspiration" was sometimes so inspiring that it took up half the meeting! **Constantly calibrating and tweaking the ritual, while still keeping its core spirit and intention intact, is key.**

Our participants' experiences suggest that workplace rituals could indeed become powerful tools for culture change by refocusing attention on key values and goals, but it's important to experiment with different rituals to find what works best for your team. We're not claiming that any of the rituals led to overnight transformation, but it's clear that paying attention to this level of everyday practice has a vital role to play in creating and sustaining the conditions for the desired narrative shift to take hold.

Try it with your team

Map your rituals

Make a list of all the everyday practices, processes and prompts within your organisation. What narratives are these everyday practices embedding in your organisation? What small changes could you make to better embed the narrative you're aiming for?

Create a *breakthrough ritual*

Think about the intention of your new ritual - what do you want it to help you achieve? Use the Ritual Canvas to design a ritual. Try it out with your team, and then work through the canvas again to keep improving it.

Totems

“If you’re going to have a story, have a big story, or none at all.” - Joseph Campbell

What are totems?

Big, eye-catching initiatives or events that symbolise an existing culture or build energy around a cultural shift.

For local government, totems might include:

- **Physical buildings or landmarks:** If your most prominent public-facing building is a “Customer Service Centre”, that shouts loud and clear that you’re trapped in the Consumer story. By contrast, opening up your town hall as a civic space for local groups to use embodies a more Citizen-centric story.
- **Major citizen-led decisions:** A big, set-piece decision-making process such as a citizens’ assembly or participatory budgeting exercise can clearly demonstrate a commitment to sharing power with citizens in bold and innovative ways.
- **A flagship commitment or investment:** This might include things like the “Wigan Deal” or the “Preston Model”, Kirklees Council’s co-created “Shaped by People” shared goal for active citizenship, or Wakefield Council’s investment in training 100 “conversationalists” to drive community conversations (see below).

This is not an exhaustive list of categories, however - anything that is prominent, easily recognisable and creates a moment of energy around a cultural shift can act as a totem.

Without a strong narrative behind them, or a set of rituals to embed the wider narrative they signify, totems risk being seen as one-offs that make a big splash but don’t lead to lasting change. But with the right foundations in place, totems take culture change to the next level.

Three examples of totems

To paint a fuller picture, here are three of our favourite examples of local government “totems”.

The Big Conversation

Wakefield Council struggled to effectively engage residents in decision-making. Traditional methods often resulted in limited participation and feedback that skewed towards negative experiences. In response to this, the council trained over 100 people, including council staff, as ‘conversationalists’ - equipping them with skills to meaningfully engage with residents in open-ended conversations. This was called The Big Conversation.

Conversationalists were recruited from every department in the council, fitting in conversations around their existing work. Instead of the usual survey approach, the council aimed to hold conversations with 1000 people, asking what they valued about where they live, work or study, and what they'd like to see for their area in 10 years' time. The aim was to speak to someone from every postcode area, and to ensure that conversations were demographically representative. Conversationalists visited businesses of all shapes and sizes, from cake factories to hairdressers to startups on a business park. Over time, they took a more targeted approach to fill any gaps in representation, eventually holding over 1,300 conversations.

The People's Bus

The People's Bus is a bus formerly used to transport people detained on Rikers Island, a correctional facility in New York. In partnership with New York City's Department of Cultural Affairs and the Public Artist in Residency programme, it has been transformed with input from New Yorkers into a community centre on wheels, with the purpose of engaging people in NYC's civic life through beauty, joy and inclusion.

Decorated in striking colours and designs, the People's Bus aims to "meet New Yorkers where they are", facilitate dialogue, and begin to restore and strengthen relationships between local government and residents. Travelling from neighbourhood to neighbourhood, it's been used to host participatory budgeting exercises, deliver civic education about democracy and voting rights, and to act as a "gymnasium for the human imagination... a place to exercise our creativity together to imagine a future where all New Yorkers take care of each other."

People Powered Places

People Powered Places is London Borough of Newham's flagship participatory budgeting process. Since launch, the programme has become one of the largest participatory budgeting initiatives in the UK, funding more than 200 projects that have had real impact on the borough and improved engagement between the council and residents. Anyone who lives, works or learns in Newham can take part.

First, residents in each of Newham's eight 'Community Neighbourhoods' get together to decide local priorities and discuss possible solutions. Then, individuals and local groups can come up with project proposals to be funded - up to £5000 for individuals and £20,000 for groups. The next step is 'The Big Vote', where everyone in Newham can vote on their favourite projects. Winning projects include everything from mental health projects and peer support groups to youth-led projects and community gardens. Almost 14,000 residents are also registered on the 'Newham Co-create' online platform, allowing them to track progress and propose new ideas.

Building totems: the theory

If new rituals are about focusing a team's attention on a culture shift, totems are all about grabbing everyone's attention. Totems tell your story on the bigger stage, expressing what kind of organisation you want to be - through actions, not just words.

We believe that the best totems share three core qualities: they are **bold**, they are **branded**, and they **bring to life** the change they symbolise.

Totems are bold

Totems should feel like a genuine break from the norm. That usually means pushing the boat out and taking a little bit of risk. If it's obvious that you are playing it safe, it's harder to convince people that you're serious about making change. That doesn't necessarily mean that totems have to be expensive or resource-intensive, but there should be a sense that the organisation has "skin in the game", and isn't just tinkering around the edges or capturing quick wins.

Above all, totems should be something you have to follow through: there should be some genuine accountability to deliver. To help with this, totems should ideally be sponsored by a senior leader. Again, "bold" doesn't necessarily mean "big" or "council-wide": the point is to make a clear and decisive break from the business as usual, even if that only applies to one service or one neighbourhood.

Totems are branded

Brands help to make things stick in people's minds. A catchy name and an attractive visual identity can attach personality and character to programmes and initiatives that might otherwise seem run-of-the-mill, which helps them to really take root and gain interest and support.

Don't worry, this doesn't mean that your team has to stay up all night, Mad Men-style, coming up with world-beating brands and slogans. It's really just a case of aiming for simple and clear language.

For example, the 'brand' of the ['People's Plan for Nature'](#) is a much simpler, easier to understand concept than "Recommendations from the citizens' assembly on the protection and restoration of nature". A classic example from the local government sector is "**The Wigan Deal**" - a pithy expression of a contract between citizens and the council which is simpler to 'get'.

It's not just about simplicity, however. The best brands also speak to people in human, accessible ways. They use an everyday, conversational tone that connects with people on an emotional level, or use humour to communicate (think "I'm Lovin' It"). That's why we're fans of "We Make Camden": it expresses the council's vision and plan for everyone in the borough tackling issues together in simple, human and personal terms.

Totems bring to life

Totems are symbolic, but the best totems are more than just symbols. The best totems actually *bring to life* the shift you are trying to make. They tell the story by actually providing an example of the shift.

Think about what happens when a city becomes a **UK City of Culture**. The designation is not an award for what already exists, but rather a focal point for proactive, culture-led regeneration. Over the course of a year, the city comes together with citizens to invest in cultural facilities and infrastructure, put on programming for local people and visitors to enjoy, and create a platform for local creatives, performers and artists. It's bold and branded, but it also "brings to life" the desired shift.

If the shift we are making is towards more participatory ways of working, we can bring this to life by involving people in the creation or shaping of the totem. Take, for example, **Mexico City's crowdsourced constitution**. As part of the process of Mexico City gaining more democratic autonomy as a city, the mayor ran a vast and multi-faceted participatory process to write the city's first constitution, including citizens' panels, online crowdsourcing, petitions and surveys, etc. This meant the process of creating the new constitution in itself created real opportunities for people to build their democratic muscle and have a voice in shaping the city's future.

Building totems: the practice

Using the three core qualities, each cohort designed a "totem" intervention to bring their narrative to life in a bold and branded way.

"A Rolling Conversation"

One team took inspiration from The People's Bus, and hit upon the idea of a mobile engagement vehicle that would travel from place to place within the borough and host conversations with local residents in their own backyards. This literally embodied the team's "From/To" shift of "going to meet people where they are", rather than "expecting them to come to us". It was also a direct response to residents' own feedback on the council's existing engagement approach.

"Community Takeover Days"

Another team wanted to increase the sense of ownership that local residents felt over the future of key council assets, some of which were in the process of being consolidated and rebranded as "Welcome Hubs". They struck upon the idea of inviting residents and community groups to "take over" these new hubs for a day and put on their own, self-directed pop-up events and activities.

“Together We Can”

Finally, one council team sought to use a single, branded approach - “Together We Can” - to engage residents in the redesign and recommissioning of its adult residential care services. This included telling the story of the shift on a bigger stage through social media channels, and actively seeking out people’s experiences and opinions through listening events and online engagement.

What happened next

After the participants had taken their totems back to their councils and tried to put them into practice, we gathered to compare notes. From this, we learned that:

1. Totems ARE capable of galvanising support and energy

For example, the “rolling conversation” idea was immediately popular among colleagues and elected councillors. Our participants believe this was because the idea was **simple and tangible**, and **clearly addressed a known resident need**.

2. Totems can be built on what’s already there - although that carries a risk

Some participants sought to align their totems with existing language and programmes. This makes totems easier to communicate, but it can then be a challenge to distinguish the totem from what surrounds it. There’s a balance to be struck between cutting with the grain, and **making sure totems stand out**.

3. Totem design needs to be flexible

As expected, resource constraints caused obstacles to the implementation of some councils’ totem ideas, even where there was strong political buy-in. When this happens, the temptation will be to dilute the idea or make it smaller or more provisional. Being flexible is important, but sticking to the principles of “bold, branded, brings to life” will ensure that the revised totem **doesn’t lose its potency**.

4. Totem design takes time to click

It should be noted that, of the three elements of our culture change model, totems were the element our cohort found most difficult to grasp. Some had to overcome an in-built suspicion of anything “big and flashy”, having experienced empty initiatives in the past. Others found it challenging to pull all the threads together in a single workshop. **Allow for time and iteration** as you develop.

Again, we don’t claim that launching a totem will immediately shift a council’s culture, but the experience of our cohort shows that totems can serve as **powerful focal points** for gathering energy around a narrative shift.

Try it with your team

Quality time

Read the four previous examples of local government totems. Highlight the qualities of “bold”, “branded” and “brings to life”, and discuss as a team.

Review your totems

List the big, eye-catching initiatives that your council delivers. Discuss which of these existing “totems” support or detract from the shift you want to make.

Build a new totem

Imagine a new totem that truly embodies the cultural shift you’re trying to make. Use the three qualities to improve it even further. Is there a way you could make it - or part of it - a reality?

#CultureShift in Action: “Shaped by People” in Kirklees

One of the original inspirations for the #CultureShift framework was our work with Kirklees Council to help create more supportive conditions for active citizenship.

Narrative: From a provider of services to an enabler of citizens

Kirklees Council’s aim is for every organisation in Kirklees to help create the conditions where active citizens can have more influence over their lives and local places. Inspired by the work of the Kirklees Democracy Commission, the council has worked with local communities to create a new narrative for the relationship between council and citizen: one that sees the council as an enabler of citizens, not only a provider of services.

Co-created with citizens from local places across Kirklees, this narrative came to be known as “Shaped by People”: a shared goal that raises the bar for active citizenship. It describes, in citizens’ own words, how things would be if more people felt able to directly influence what happens in their community.

Totem: The “Shaped by People” shared outcome

Kirklees Council didn’t stop there. Crucially, they created a totem for the narrative shift by adopting “Shaped by People” as a new shared strategic outcome. Like many local authorities, Kirklees Council measures success through shared outcomes, such as “Safe and Cohesive” or “Sustainable Economy”. These goals are shared by statutory partners and local organisations, helping to support collaborative working. By recognising “Shaped by People” as a shared outcome, the council made a high-profile commitment to promote and measure active citizenship, while also issuing a call to action for everyone to get behind and get involved in all the council’s objectives, whether that’s for wellbeing, tackling climate change, or any of their other shared outcomes.

Rituals: Embedding the shift

“Shaped by People” is now informing the development of several major strategies, and is included in employee induction and other internal communications, helping to embed citizen-friendly culture change across the organisation.

That said, “Shaped by People” is more than just a piece of internal council strategic language. The shared outcome has its own website, featuring an animated video with voice-overs by residents, as well as an ever-growing collection of people’s own stories of taking action to make local places better. They have also worked with local groups and organisations to create and try out different tools for measuring progress, including a conversation starter pack and a set of simple scorecards, thus equipping more people to measure (and grow) active citizenship in the area.

Three Tips for #CultureShift Success

After reflecting with the cohort on their experience of using the model, we've picked three tips that will help changemakers drive a #CultureShift towards more Citizen ways of working at their own councils.

#1 Be Persistent

Persistence is key. The cohort agreed that culture change does not happen overnight: it requires a committed, relentless effort over an extended period to bear fruit. It also takes political nous to navigate your council's specific cultural sensitivities while still challenging the status quo.

For example, while there was little overt resistance to the idea of shifting towards a more citizen-friendly culture, our cohort faced more subtle forms of cultural resistance and inertia. In some cases, the frankness of the "Dear Citizens" letter prompted defensiveness from colleagues and a reluctance to acknowledge where the organisation was not performing well. Teams also faced pressure to caveat and rephrase their new narratives to make them more palatable, losing the personal and direct tone they wanted to convey. Other teams faced mild pushback from those uncomfortable with deviating from established practices - for example, rituals being quietly dropped when cohort participants were not present.

#2 Build Peer Power

Pushing for cultural change can be a lonely business if you don't have a support network around you. Participants agreed that it's helpful to try to build a coalition of colleagues who are equally passionate (or at least, open and curious) about working alongside citizens to make places better.

This network can be drawn from different departments and different levels of the organisation, to encourage diverse perspectives and build collective intelligence. Above all, such a group can provide essential moral support when individual teams and leaders face pressures to revert to 'business as usual'.

#3 Take Courage

As one participant put it, "it's a brave decision to truly hand over power to citizens", given the statutory, regulatory and reputational risks councils face - even when it comes to things as seemingly simple as verge maintenance! And conversely, citizens and community groups themselves may be intimidated by the idea of taking on more power and responsibility for shaping their places, particularly where they rely on a small, active core group of volunteers. Furthermore, community power has political dimensions. For example, a participatory budgeting process that widens out citizen involvement could disrupt existing funding relationships with established community groups.

One way of approaching this dilemma is to think in terms of creating conditions for participation, rather than zero-sum power-sharing. Looked at this way, it's about building power **WITH** citizens, rather than giving power **AWAY** to citizens.

Thinking about how we can make decisions and take action together, rather than framing the question in terms of “handing over” power, takes the pressure off both sides. Creating conditions for participation also means offering a range of different opportunities to suit different engagement preferences and levels of interest. This doesn't mean ignoring questions of power, including historical patterns of inclusion and exclusion, but it can offer a more generative starting point for thinking about how to grow community power.

What next?

Thank you for reading.

We hope you've found the insights, tools and frameworks useful.

If you have any thoughts, challenges or reflections, or if you'd like to explore bringing the #CultureShift framework to your organisation, please get in touch with us at hello@newcitizenproject.com

We have exciting plans for the future.

An upcoming **collaborative training programme** will offer a chance for more councils to put the #CultureShift framework into action.

To learn more, get in touch, or sign up for our mailing list at newcitizenproject.com/council-culture

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