

# **Organisational Learning and Change for Public Engagement**

## **FINAL REPORT**

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# 1 Observation 1: Public Engagement remains counter-cultural to the ethos of most public and educational institutions, scientific research and the civil service.

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## 1.1 Evidence

The traditional culture of UK public and educational institutions has been described as stemming from an *expert-led* model, in which public engagement is considered a *distraction from core business* (Sciencewise-ERC 2009). In this model, public engagement is one-way communication to a lay public. It is conceived either defensively (see for example, the Richard Dawkins Foundation) or proactively (as in public information programmes) to build understanding. This has been referred to as the deficit model of engagement (Trench 2009).

The expert-led culture, and deficit model of engagement has served institutions well in the past, and can still do so today. It fits with scientific method and expectations of scientists, experts and their advice and the desirability to eliminate external interference, behave 'objectively' and come to rational conclusions. It is also prevalent amongst public servants, with 'impartiality' being core to the civil service in particular.

However, a fairly consistent story has been developing over the last ten years about a move away from the deficit model in the research sector. In his review of science communication in the UK, Trench (2009) states:

Science communication has been telling a story of its own development, repeatedly and almost uniformly, for almost a decade. The story is a straightforward one: science communication used to be conducted according to a 'deficit model', as a one-way communication from experts with knowledge to publics without it; it is now carried out on a 'dialogue model' that engages publics in a two-way communication and draws on their own information and experiences.

Even where the vocabulary has changed, the underlying assumptions may be those that inform the deficit model. Wynne (2006) writes that public engagement with science activities is 'based albeit ambiguously on closer inspection, on replacing the previous deficit model's primitive one-way assumption about educating an ignorant public into "(scientifically) proper attitudes" with an alternative two-way dialogue'. He concludes that the replacement is more nominal than real.

Trench suggests that the story being told about the shift away from the expert-led culture and one-way communications masks adherence to the old attitudes. Reviews for policy-making bodies have come to similar conclusions. For example Demos (2007) concludes:

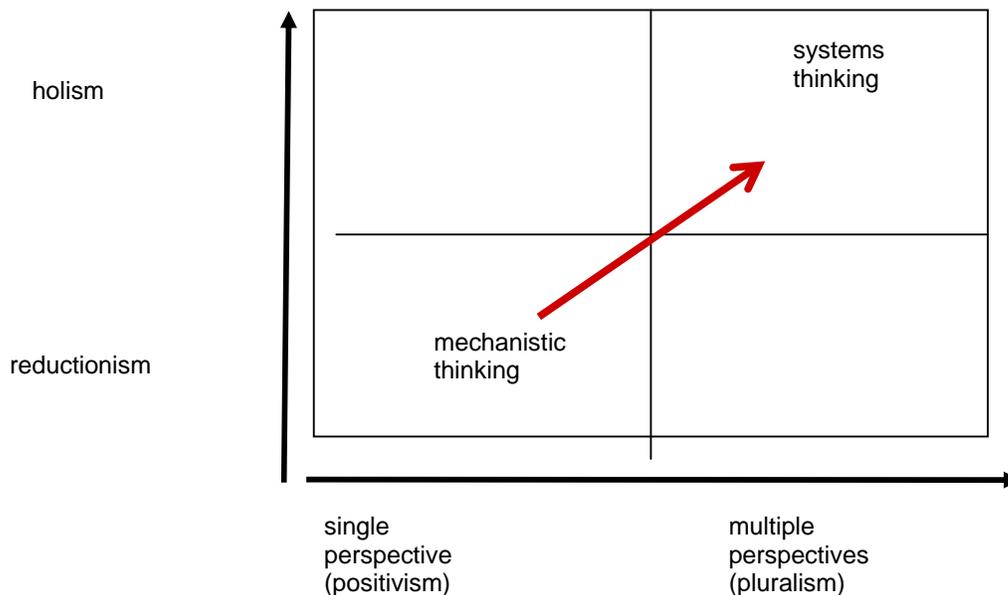
As part of the move to a new governance of science, the last decade has seen a growing interest in the idea of public dialogue with experts... This is a genuine change. But as with other changes in governance, there is a lingering suspicion that this form of openness is more about communication and trust than the core business of policy... The old model of expertise ... talks to the public. It does not listen.

Chapman (2006) argues that policy-making and public sector management maintain outdated and divisive 'we know best' assumptions, shared by politicians, civil servants, senior managers and scientists and economists. This attitude is divisive because it closes off any possibility of learning and characterises other views as oppositional, based on politics or vested interests. The authors of *Holistic Science in the Environment Agency* argue that by looking at whole systems, holistic science can provide a new way of working with specific issues which is particularly useful for dealing with sustainability issues which are often embedded within complex environmental, social and economic systems. They quote the work of Chapman (2002) and argue that policy-making is becoming more complex, facing public bodies particularly because:

- ✓ communication technologies and the resulting growth in interaction between organisations and agencies;
- ✓ a more diverse range of organisations involved in public service delivery;
- ✓ blurring of the boundaries between domestic and international policy and its impacts.

They warn us that the use of reductive thinking to solve policy issues in our emerging culture will result in unintended consequences, alienation of professionals involved in delivery, failure of organisations to improve performance and, as we have seen above, an increasingly cynical and distrusting public. Instead, they argue, a new intellectual underpinning is required for policy-making. Sole use of reductive, linear and mechanical approaches will fail seriously because their assumptions fail to reflect how the modern world operates. As Chapman goes on to conclude:

*There is a compelling need to shift to systems thinking and the way to do so is through engagement of stakeholders, thorough evaluation and learning by doing.*



This thinking has found practical application in the last two years (see for example, Seddon 2008). A science review for Defra and the Environment Agency (Colbourne, 2008) further illustrates that the shift towards more 'dialogue' based engagement (and systems thinking) may be more nominal than real throughout the public sector:

... the 'policy shift' towards more participatory working was found in our review to be more '**hierarchy in disguise**' than a genuine shift towards collaboration. This has resulted in the Environment Agency putting more efforts into 'telling others better' or '**more sophisticated nagging**' (for example, better awareness campaigns, getting people to sign up to Flood Warnings Direct) rather than genuine two way engagement in which collaboration for better outcomes is the driver (for example individual or community preparedness). At worst the current approach to greater engagement is resulting in what one local authority officer termed an '**aggressive transfer of responsibility**' at the community and individual level.

Even Kevin Burchell et al (2009) in their review of scientists' very positive attitudes towards public engagement concluded:

In sum, public engagement emerged from the accounts provided by the scientists interviewed for this study, as a professional anomaly. Public engagement is acknowledged to be an increasingly important aspect of the scientific profession, yet – at the same time, and in contrast to other core scientific activities such as doing science, teaching and clinical work – it is universally seen to be under-incentivised and under-

rewarded, potentially detrimental to research, and professionally stigmatising. Paradoxically, although it is increasingly recognised as valuable to science in general, and as individually rewarding, public engagement activity is also seen to be potentially detrimental to a professional scientific career.

It seems then, that the predominant expert led culture and the corresponding deficit model of public communication still drives much of the public engagement in the UK, despite ten years of talk (and policy) suggesting that it has moved on to a more two-way type of engagement which is required for systems thinking. This is the single greatest barrier to organisational change for PE. Individual examples of good practice aside (see examples throughout this report) our experience shows the expert-led culture and the limited PE that it allows, remains as big a barrier for an organisation like Defra or the Environment Agency as it is for a Higher Education Institution. Is it also true for Science and Society, NCCPE, Sciencewise-ERC, Science for All, Beacons for Public Engagement or are these initiatives championing a *genuine* change in culture and practice?

## 1.2 Recommendations

**Recommendation 1:** Consider whether conceptions and practice of public engagement underpinning the Science and Society programme are based in the expert-led, deficit model (in which efforts are focused on better marketing, education and learning from experts with knowledge to a public without it) or on a dialogue model (in which the public are considered in more of a two way relationship, drawing on their own information and experience), motivated by a need for systems rather than reductive thinking.

**Recommendation 2:** Raise awareness at the most senior levels (for example, directors of Science and Society programmes and the working group leads, DGs, ministers, boards and directors of HEIs), of the prevalent deficit model influence on public engagement, the limitations of it, and the opportunities of utilising the full range of types of engagement (see section 4) for systems thinking.

## 2 Observation 2: ‘Engagement ‘ comes in several distinct forms. The first step in any action plan for public engagement is to decide what is to be achieved and to select the applicable form of engagement

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### 2.1 Evidence

The term ‘public engagement’ in the research sector (as in all other sectors) is used to cover a multitude of different *motivations* for engaging the public, as well as different *methods* and *participants*. Confusion of terms and lack of suitable metrics with which to evaluate the success or otherwise of different approaches (classically, continuing to rely on numbers of people engaged as a success criteria, rather than impact or depth of their engagement) continues despite the increased interest in and practice of PE.

For example, when Involve interviewed Whitehall civil servants about their understanding of the role of ‘engagement’ in policy making (Sustainable Development Commission, 2007), the results illustrated the confusion that persists:

“I think [engagement is] um, a combination of consultation, um, er, listening and selling.”

One source of this confusion is a lack of clarity of terms relating to types of engagement, what each is suitable for, and who needs to be engaged (and what gives them legitimacy).

“What will it [PE] bring to this process, and particularly if we are engaging the experts, um, all the experts that we can find on this policy, what can lay people really add to it?”

The above quote also illustrates the continued prevalence of the ‘expert-led’ culture referred to in the previous section, and the need to be very clear about what PE is and why it is needed (including the need for systems thinking). Some organisations have set out definitions and typologies of PE<sup>1</sup>, but these definitions are not consistent, indeed some are contradictory. Furthermore, terms used within the academic world and within the field of PE practitioners, those who specialise and work in the field, are inconsistent. To confound the problem, definitions of terms relating to PE continue to confuse motivation for engagement, legitimacy/selection of participants and engagement method. Many explanations of PE end up as lists of types and methods, for example:

“There are many different types of public engagement including - but not limited to:

- consultations
- citizen’s juries
- outreach
- public lectures
- exhibitions and festivals
- workshops
- debates, forums and focus groups
- participatory action research
- co-inquiry”

These lists do nothing to link the motivation or aim of a particular type of PE with the method. But particularly affects the new ‘dialogue’ PE agenda. For example Trench (2009) describes *deliberation* as a ‘heightened form of public participation which calls on a wider set of understandings about democratic processes, and in which the public contributions about the ‘why’

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<sup>1</sup> Organisations include:

NCCPE <http://www.publicengagement.ac.uk/what-public-engagement/definitions>

Environment Agency <http://publications.environment-agency.gov.uk/pdf/GEHO1106BLOJ-e-e.pdf>

Involve <http://www.involve.org.uk/assets/Publications/Deliberative-public-engagement-nine-principles.pdf>

UK Sustainable Development Commission [http://www.sd-commission.org.uk/publications/downloads/Typology\\_engagement.pdf](http://www.sd-commission.org.uk/publications/downloads/Typology_engagement.pdf)

and 'why not' of science help set the agenda for science communication and, eventually, for science'. By contrast, Involve/NCC (2008) and Sciencewise-ERC consider 'deliberation' a *method* of engaging with the public in which the public consider and discuss an issue (often with experts). Deliberation is not a discrete engagement type as set out by Trench, but a method used to meet a range of different situations –in a consultation workshop, or in market research focus group, in a series of co-design negotiations or even in an educational context.

Another (related) example of the lack of consistency of terms is the use of the word 'dialogue'. Is dialogue the same or different to deliberation? Those who pioneered dialogue in the 1980s and 1990s (Hickling, Acland et al, The Environment Council) considered dialogue a conflict resolution tool, by which those in conflict worked towards *consensus* decisions about the way forward (a co-design type model). More recently, market research companies have used the term dialogue to cover large scale events at which the public discuss an issue, while a researcher listens and *extracts* insights. Sciencewise-ERC has itself used both these types of dialogue within its definition of 'public dialogue', and is only now starting to explicitly define them.

In trying to distinguish different types of engagement and what they are suitable for, commentators argue that particular types of PE (usually, dialogue rather than deficit types) are 'better' than others. We strongly reject this analysis as do others (Environment Agency, 2005, InterAct Networks 2004, Colbourne 2007, Colbourne 2008, Trench 2009). For example, in a science report for the Environment Agency and Defra, Colbourne (2008) concludes:

There is a range of ways of [engaging the public], each with a range of associated costs and benefits. Matching the most appropriate approach to the situation at hand offers a cost-effective way of achieving multiple goals and added value. Collaborative methods also offer a precautionary approach that can reduce the costs and risks associated with non-delivery .... The critical factor is for [PE] to be tailored to the situation... Choices to be made are about the extent and type of PE with others, not whether or not to [do so].

In line with these conclusions, we recommend a 'horses for courses' approach to PE, based on a clearer understanding of the different types of PE and to what (and who) they are best suited, for example:

- If the motivation is to raise the *profile* of an organisation or a piece of work or an opportunity or development (or indeed of 'science' in general), public engagement can focus on better public communication/education.
- By contrast if the motivation is to make *better decisions* by taking public views into account, public engagement will need to focus on better informal or formal consultation.
- If the motivation is to *resolve a conflict*, or to *co-design* or co-deliver something, public engagement will need to be more involving and long term, perhaps encompassing deliberation and consensus building, and will need to involve stakeholders too.
- If the motivation is building the public's *capacity* to do something differently (behaviour change) will require public engagement that includes support and incentives that will almost certainly require collaboration from a number of organisations to deliver.

In our interim report we set out a potential typology for this 'horses for courses approach'. But we know that many others (eg Benneworth (2009), Trench (2009), Sciencewise-ERC (2009) have also been developing new typologies, based on different assumptions or motivations. We therefore withdraw the proposed typology from the interim report, and instead suggest the *co-development of a shared typology* across the research/science and society sector (and organisations), to build consensus and ownership around the most suitable typology. In order to ensure such a typology is shared, its development cannot simply be left to an academic or a single organisation or initiative to propose, but needs to be developed as a *piece of co-design* itself, consensus building between key stakeholders in the science and society programme. This kind of approach is possible - Involve, NCC and the Sustainable Development Commission undertook a collaborative design process with academics, researchers, policy makers and NGOs to come up with their 9 Principles for deliberative public engagement in decision making (2008).

In addition to this piece of co-development work, initiatives such as Sciencewise-ERC who are championing information gathering and co-creation types of engagement (rather than the more pervasive dissemination/information giving modes of PE) play a vital role in broadening the understanding of different types of public engagement.

## 2.2 Recommendations

**Recommendation 3:** The Science and Society programme, and the various components of it (Science for All and other expert groups) and related initiatives such as Sciencewise-ERC, NCCPE and their language, practice, websites and guidance are underpinned by a *clear articulation* of the range of forms of public engagement and the benefits and requirements of each for science (research) and society. In order to gain traction and ensure compatibility across the sector(s), this typology needs to be developed as a piece of co-design (consensus building) work, rather than relying on researchers or a single organisation taking the lead. This co-design should also clarify the roles of the different bodies – for example, Sciencewise-ERC pioneering co-creation ‘public dialogue’ work. Without this clear articulation, the default (given the predominant ‘expert’ culture) will continue to be marketing and education of the public, based on the ‘deficit’ model. Without a co-design approach to this work, the new articulation will simply add noise to an already confused field. The work may perhaps be suitable for Sciencewise-ERC dialogue funding.

**Recommendation 4:** Support, gather and promote *examples* of different types, and combinations of types of public engagement. Recognise different metrics for different types (eg dialogue is about more depth, less numbers, earlier in policy, rather than marketing being about less depth, more numbers) Give recognition to initiatives that are genuinely pushing boundaries (eg LCCC). Evaluate and learn (Sciencewise-ERC for policy, NCCPE for HEIs).

### 3 Observation 3: There are as many different cultures as there are organisations. Understanding the nature of a particular organisation is an essential precursor to introducing PE to it successfully

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#### 3.1 Evidence

Organisational change literature agrees that there are as many different organisational cultures as there are organisations. Even within an individual organisation with a distinctive organisation-wide culture, there may be a set of 'sub cultures'. The cultures haven't developed randomly. They are influenced by the primary (or historical) function of the organisation, or department, unit or team within that organisation and therefore serve a useful purpose. For example, in terms of PE, an enforcement team will have very different requirements for public engagement (perhaps formal consultation, or improved continuous feedback mechanisms), and a different culture to a health service (which might use dialogue and deliberation for levels of service and budget). A research department will have different engagement needs and a different culture to a policy making body dealing with highly contentious decisions.

Many typologies of organisations (and their cultures) have been developed. Sciencewise-ERC (2009) for example, looked at Bridges Character of Organisations (Organisational Character Index), Hofstede – Dimensions of Culture (<http://www.geert-hofstede.com/>); Deal and Kennedy's Culture Types; Charles Handy's Gods of Management; Carmazzi's Organisational Culture Evolution (<http://www.carmazzi.net/>); Mintzberg's seven types of organisational structures; Quinn and Rohrbaugh's competing values framework; Burrell and Morgan's organisational congruence and Cultural Dynamic's Values Modes. Sciencewise-ERC found that none of these explicitly focuses on an organisation's PE culture, but all offer insights, in particular the Character of Organisations (Bridges 2000).

Many of these typologies – including Bridges (2000) -argue that rather than try to *change* a culture it is pragmatic to build on its strengths and compensate for its weaknesses. Thus, to increase the chances of success, the type(s) of engagement to be introduced to an organisation has to be tailored to:

- a) Its prevailing culture
- b) Its objectives

The only practical application of organisational culture analysis for PE that we can find is the Departmental Dialogue Index developed for Sciencewise-ERC (Colbourne pending publication - <http://www.sciencewise-erc.org.uk/cms/departmental-dialogue-index/>). The DDI offers a tool that describes the prevailing culture of an organisation and how it affects its public engagement. It identifies 16 different types of character based on Bridges' Organisational Character Index (OCI, 2000) that describes the organisation's preferences in four opposing tendencies:

#### *Extraversion (E) or Introversion (I)*

The organisation's focus, reality and how it gains its energy. Is the organisation focused principally outwards towards markets, clients, competitors and regulators (E) or does it prefer to look inwards and focus on developing its own ideas, technology, products, its leader's vision or even its own culture (I)?

#### *Sensing (S) or Intuition (N)*

How it gathers information, what it pays attention to and how it perceives things in and around it. Is the organisation focused on the here and now, understanding the details of the current situation (S) or does it look at the big 'global' picture and the possibilities of any given idea or situation (N)?

*Thinking (T) or Feeling (F)*

How the organisation processes information and make its decisions. Is the organisation a logical maker of decisions based on ratios, consistency, competence and efficiency (T) or, through a people-focused process, does it take in to account individuality, the common good and creativity (F)?

*Judging (J) or Perceiving (P)*

How the organisation deals with the external world of clients, suppliers and competitors. Is the organisation run like a machine with a strong penchant for planning and firm decision-making and timelines (J) or does it prefer to keep options open and work 'on the fly' to take in last minute ideas (P).

The resulting 16 organisational characters of the OCI are:

'Solid as a rock' (ISTJ)	'You can count on us' (ISFJ)	'Vision driven by values' (INFJ)	'Going all out for greatness' (INTJ)
'Action, action — we want action' (ISTP)	'Working to make a difference' (ISFP)	'Quest for meaningful work' (INFP)	'In pursuit of intellectual solutions' (INTP)
'Thriving on risky business' (ESTP)	'We aim to please' (ESFP)	'It's fun to do good work' (ENFP)	If we can't do it, no-one can' (ENTP)
'Playing by the rules' (ESTJ)	'Doing the right thing' (ESFJ)	'Seeing the big picture in human terms' (ENFJ)	'Driven to lead' (ENTJ)

The Departmental Dialogue Index (DDI) builds on the OCI analysis, to make predictions about how the character of each of the 16 organisational types *affects* their propensity to engage, and how best to go about *improving* the engagement of each type of organisation. For each character type, the DDI suggests how to improve engagement practice by working with or compensating for the organisational character. As well as the detailed individual organisational character analysis, the DDI identifies four broad organisational attitudes and approaches to engagement. These are:

1: RESISTANT

engaging with others is likely to be considered a waste of time and money or a distraction from core business.

2: PROCEDURAL

engaging with others is likely to be driven (and/or constrained) by procedure.

3: SELECTIVE

engaging with others is likely to be selectively focused (on the like-minded).

4: NATURAL

engaging with others is likely to be a natural part of the organisation's business.

The chart below illustrates how the 16 OCI characters fall within the four DDI categories:

'Solid as a rock' (ISTJ) <b>RESISTANT</b>	'You can count on us' (ISFJ) <b>PROCEDURAL</b>	'Vision driven by values' (INFJ) <b>NATURAL</b>	'Going all out for greatness' (INTJ) <b>RESISTANT</b>
'Action, action — we want action' (ISTP) <b>SELECTIVE</b>	'Working to make a difference' (ISFP) <b>SELECTIVE</b>	'Quest for meaningful work' (INFP) <b>SELECTIVE</b>	'In pursuit of intellectual solutions' (INTP) <b>RESISTANT</b>
'Thriving on risky business' (ESTP) <b>RESISTANT</b>	'We aim to please' (ESFP) <b>NATURAL</b>	'It's fun to do good work' (ENFP) <b>NATURAL</b>	'If we can't do it, no-one can' (ENTP) <b>NATURAL</b>
'Playing by the rules' (ESTJ) <b>PROCEDURAL</b>	'Doing the right thing' (ESFJ) <b>NATURAL</b>	'Seeing the big picture in human terms' (ENFJ) <b>NATURAL</b>	'Driven to lead' (ENTJ) <b>RESISTANT</b>

Research for the DDI on the propensity to engage of different types of organisation showed that Whitehall departments, universities, NDPBs and most organisations studied fell into what was referred to as the '*resistant*' category, organisations who consider PE as a distraction from core business and who rely on communication or persuasion, and on formal consultation, rather than more dialogue or two way forms of PE. For each of the five resistant types, the DDI makes change strategy recommendations (see appendix for recommendations on the most common organisational type - ISTJ).

The research also showed that organisations that fell into the '*naturally engaging*' category tended to be individual teams or departments *within* an organisation rather than the organisation as a whole. These were often the teams or departments responsible for consultation, engagement or PR. They that the DDI provided essential insights to their wider organisational culture, and how to go about mainstreaming PE in a way which compensated for weaknesses and built on the strengths of the culture rather than the culture as a barrier to change. For example, mainstreaming PE within the Environment Agency has involved development of new procedures for assessing PE requirements as part of their risk analysis process.

### 3.2 Recommendations

**Recommendation 5:** Encourage tailored approaches to organisational change for public engagement, building recognition that organisational change for better public engagement involves:

- (i) Understanding the current situation in the organisation in relation to public engagement, including the attitude of the organisation's leadership, the culture and how open it is to change, external (market) pressures, alignment of strategies, policies

and procedures, the impact of the reward and appraisal system, and so on. Promote methods by which this can be done, such as the Burke-Litwin model (see next section), Sciencewise-ERC's Departmental Dialogue Index

- (ii) Articulating the desired outcome(s) in relation to what the organisation will be doing in relation to public engagement, why and how. Offer clear typologies referred to in section 4 to enable organisations to do this.
- (iii) Designing and implementing change strategies. Develop a toolkit of diagnostics, insights, approaches and methods from public engagement focused organisational change, from which elements can be chosen and combined to suit the specific organisation (see section 7).

## 4 Observation 4: The potential to change an organisation depends on both its readiness to change and to the powers available to change it. Government has powers that could be used to promote PE, if it wishes to use them.

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### 4.1 Evidence

Organisational change often depends on the organisation itself identifying the need or opportunity to change rather than on any external stimulus or force. However, evidence shows it is possible to introduce external pressures and persuasion, and indeed that it is essential, as illustrated in the one of the best established models for change - the Burke-Litwin Change Model (Burke and Litwin 1992). According to this model, successful change requires the changing of many elements in unison: a 'whole system' approach. Failure to consider the interrelatedness of the following 12 organisational parts can contribute to the failure of change programmes:

#### Organisational change design: Questions for the 12 key areas<sup>2</sup>

- 1. External environment:** What are the main external drivers? How are these likely to affect the organisation? Does the organisation recognise these?
- 2. Mission and strategy:** How does management view the organisation's mission/strategy? Is there a clear vision and mission statement? What are employees' perceptions of these?
- 3. Leadership:** Who provides overall direction for the organisation? Who are the role models? What is the style of leadership? What are the perspectives of employees?
- 4. Organisational culture:** What are the overt and covert rules, values, customs and principles that guide organisational behaviour?
- 5. Structure:** How are functions and people arranged in specific areas and levels of responsibility? What are the key decision-making, communication and control relationships?
- 6. Systems:** What are the organisation's policies and procedures, including reward systems and performance appraisal, management information, HR and resource planning?
- 7. Management practices:** How do managers employ staff and material resources to carry out the organisation's strategy? What is their style of management and how do they relate to subordinates?
- 8. Work unit climate:** What are the collective impressions, expectations and feelings of staff? What is relationship with work unit colleagues and those in other work units?
- 9. Task and individual skills:** What are the task requirements and individual skills, abilities and knowledge needed for the task? How appropriate are the 'job-person' matches?
- 10. Individual needs and values:** What do staff value in their work? What are the psychological factors that would enrich their jobs and increase job satisfaction?
- 11. Motivation:** Do staff feel motivated to take the action necessary to achieve the organisation's strategy? Of factors 1-10, which seem to be impacting most on motivation?
- 12. Individual and organisational performance:** What is the level of performance in terms of productivity, customer satisfaction, and quality? Which factors are critical for motivation and therefore performance?

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<sup>2</sup> <http://www.childhope.org.uk/resources/oadp-part3.pdf>

In the science report 'Mainstreaming collaboration with communities and stakeholders' for the Environment Agency (Colbourne, 2009), the Burke-Litwin framework was used with a traffic light indicator system to identify the areas that particularly needed to be addressed within the Environment Agency (see appendix for excerpt). We suggest those interested in organisational change for PE should use this framework to analyse, diagnose and even predict the effects of a change programme for public engagement.

Another way of considering the changes required is to undertake a force field analysis. This provides clues as to the forces that need to be strengthened or mitigated for PE to be mainstreamed within an organisation. In an indicative analysis for Defra and the Environment Agency around the use of engagement (termed collaboration) in dealing with flooding in the UK (Thomas et al, 2007), the analysis enabled certain key barriers to change to be addressed in order to break the 'deadlock' that held the organisation in its current semi collaborative state:

	<i>Driving force which supports or drives collaboration</i>	↻	↺	<i>Restraining force which inhibits collaboration</i>
#		strength		
1	Moving towards <i>Making Space for Water</i> and situations involving uncertainty and complexity	-4	+2	Considering construction of flood defence as core task
2	Innovation by staff at area/regional level	-3	+3	Existing KPIs
3	Whole decision cost benefit analysis	-2	+2	Consideration of early cost only
4	Need for joint funding and/or joint delivery e.g. CCA	-3	+2	Need to demonstrate individual and organisational delivery and competence
5	Reputation damage/failure to deliver contentious decisions	-3	+1	Successful DAD attempts
6	Recognition of the value of whole systems work and partnerships	-1	+2	Familiarity with and belief in reductive science and need to defend one view
7	Low public trust in governments and government bodies of all types; dissatisfaction with service	-1	+1	Belief that EA/Defra will automatically remain the competent authority
8	Right and expectation that people should have a say on issues which affect them	-2	+4	Belief in internal expert decisions (public or others have little to add)
9	Planning engagement from the start as a core part of project planning (with resources)	-2	+2	Adding engagement onto the work at the end (not having resources identified)
10	Learning and training programmes such as BTwC	-1	+3	Existing skills-based recruitment (requirement for engineering skills)
	Total	-22	+22	

The Science and Society programme could consider in particular the 'external environment' levers that could be introduced to support change across public, educational and research bodies. For example, a league table of 'science engagement' could act as a stimulus to departments, as could an inter-university competition or annual awards for the best engagement of the public in a controversial scientific advance. Or funding bodies of higher education could require public engagement as a condition of grants. Bids for funding to the research councils could include an engagement plan. Beacon departments could be selected. Specific "engagement grants" could be established. An objection to these grants could be that they would take funds away from pure research. But such research only earns its return for the taxpayer when it is applied successfully, and, in the right circumstances, engagement enables faster application by moving from a deficit model and Decide-Announce-Defend approach to a more dialogue based Engage-Deliberate-Decide.

## **4.2 Recommendations**

**Recommendation 6:** Examine the options for Government, Research Councils, other funders (private sector), local authorities for bringing to bear external stimuli and pressures to promote public engagement.

**Recommendation 7:** Encourage organisations to consider the full range of factors influencing their use of PE, using analyses such as Burke-Litwin and/or force field.

## 5 Observation 5 – Experience can be packaged into a toolkit of approaches for organisational change for public engagement

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### 5.1 Evidence

Theory and practical experience of organisational change for PE have generated many diagnostics, tools, approaches and insights. For example, Sciencewise-ERC research (2009), large-scale organisational change programmes (InterAct Networks for the Environment Agency, Defra and the Sustainable Development Commission) and initiatives such as NCCPE's Beacons suggest the following **top tips**:

- Selling engagement within the organisation as risk, reputation and corporate advantage management
- Tailoring change programmes to where others are, their needs, their role in the organisation (eg chief executives setting corporate direction, managers setting procedures and front line staff interacting with the public)
- Building consistent terminology in relation to public engagement (including different types of engagement) into strategy, procedures and practice
- Working initially with champions and natural allies, giving them a high degree of autonomy to allow experimentation and 'rule bending' for public engagement
- Using peer to peer communication wherever possible (rather than engagement specialists 'selling' to others)
- Seeing is believing - starting with quick easy wins, and getting scientists, researchers, managers, board members and front line staff along to directly experience public engagement.
- Recognising the time to move on from a champions approach to making public engagement part of the day job (and changing procedures and systems that get in the way). Guidance on public engagement will not work alone – it must be accompanied by face-to-face support (or mentoring).
- Using training programmes to build basic awareness and engagement skills such as understanding engagement terminology, listening, giving more engaging presentations, facilitating discussions, dealing with difficult people, working with the press and media, and using particular engagement methods
- Recognising that mainstreaming engagement is a long-term change that can't be delivered by training courses: it requires a learning approach focused on practical application in tandem with organisational change (procedures, incentives, rewards, recruitment).

Case studies, tools, frameworks and support/expertise could usefully be collated (or developed) in each of these areas. There is not space in this 20-page report to reproduce what is already available, but we have listed those that Lindsey Colbourne Associates have been involved in developing below. We have also provided some examples of organisational change programmes in the appendix. Science for All/NCCPE will be able to add many more examples, for example, from the Beacons programme and Science and Society Champions. However, although many organisations promote PE, or say that they are trying to improve it within their work, we could not find a single public statement relating to an organisation's commitment to PE, how it conceptualises and operationalises PE in its own work, or how the public can hold the organisation to account. The closest we know of is the Environment Agency's statement of "Your Role in Our

Environmental Permitting Decisions” see [http://www.environment-agency.gov.uk/static/documents/Business/working\\_together\\_2008923.pdf](http://www.environment-agency.gov.uk/static/documents/Business/working_together_2008923.pdf).

**Capacity building/training/mentoring programmes in PE:** Training of staff in facilitation and engagement process design skills in the Countryside Council for Wales (Lindsey Colbourne Associates); Working with Others/Building Trust with Communities training/mentoring programme involving to date approximately 1,000 staff within the Environment Agency (InterAct Networks); Training and expert support for Customer Champions and policy teams within Defra (InterAct Networks); Training and support of staff within the Sustainable Development Commission (InterAct Networks/Lindsey Colbourne Associates).

**Recognising/incentivising engagement skills:** Environment Agency/InterAct Networks three levels of ‘Working with Others’ competency framework for Mentors; Sciencewise-ERC skills for scientists/experts in dialogue; InterAct Facilitation Competencies; Science for All work to develop a competency framework for public engagement (Graphic Science Ltd, 2009).

**PE support teams and champions:** Environment Agency External Relations and Communities teams, Working with Others Mentors and Business Partners; Defra’s Stakeholder Engagement team and Customer Champions; Cabinet Office’s cross-government Engagement Practitioners network; Sustainable Development Commission’s Engagement Team.

**Case studies, pilots, exemplars and evaluations:** Sciencewise-ERC – evaluation frameworks and case studies for public dialogue; Environment Agency Building Trust with Communities programme in Shaldon (Colbourne 2009); Sustainable Development Commission’s advice to UK Government on the Supplier Obligation and Tidal Power; Involve – evaluation frameworks and case studies.

**Call off contracts for PE expertise:** Some organisations have established lists of facilitators/process design contractors so that they can be used quickly and easily to support PE work without tendering including Countryside Council for Wales, the Environment Agency, and Sustainable Development Commission. The COI have similarly established ‘framework contracts’ for use by central government with contractors skilled in public engagement, stakeholder engagement and communications.

**Organisational analysis for PE:** Sciencewise-ERC Departmental Dialogue Index, InterAct Networks culture change analysis framework and guidance.

**Principles of effective PE:** Sciencewise-ERC public dialogue principles <http://www.sciencewise-erc.org.uk/cms/knowledge-hub/>; Involve/NCC 9 deliberative engagement principles ([http://www.involve.org.uk/nine\\_principles/](http://www.involve.org.uk/nine_principles/)); BIS’s Code of Practice on Consultation (<http://www.berr.gov.uk/whatwedo/bre/consultation-guidance/page44420.html>); Central Office of Communications (<http://coi.gov.uk/guidance.php>)’s Public Engagement guidance.

**Guides to designing engagement:** For example: People and Participation (Involve - [http://www.involve.org.uk/people\\_and\\_participation/](http://www.involve.org.uk/people_and_participation/));

Working with Others (Environment Agency - <http://publications.environment-agency.gov.uk/pdf/SCHO1005BJTC-e-e.pdf>);

Engagement - a design guide (Sustainable Development Commission - - <http://www.sd-commission.org.uk/publications.php?id=680>);

CAPE guidance (Scott Wilson Associates - <http://www.scottwilson.com/news.aspx>);

Dialogue Designer (Dialogue by Design [www.dialoguebydesign.net/prodserv/designengagement.htm](http://www.dialoguebydesign.net/prodserv/designengagement.htm)).

## 5.2 Recommendations

**Recommendation 9:** Use existing materials and experience to develop practical guidance and toolkits of approaches for organisational change for public engagement, illustrated by case studies. This should be in continual draft, updated as experience and learning of effective approaches grows. This should be developed in tandem with ongoing support/capacity building programmes (eg training, mentoring, exemplars) as experience shows that written guidance alone does not enable organisations to undertake or develop their PE.

**Recommendation 10:** Develop action learning organisational change programmes to build understanding and capacity for PE in all Science and Society initiatives, including within BIS. This should include making public statements regarding the role and approach to PE within each initiative. Document and make available the process, learning and results, so that others can benefit from the experience.

## Appendix 1: Example PE organisational change programmes

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### UK Sustainable Development Commission

Eight years of embedding engagement (including PE, but also stakeholder engagement) within the organisation's ethos and working practices, led by Lindsey Colbourne as SDC engagement commissioner, and included:

- ✓ A commitment from day 1 to excellent and interactive communications rather than just production of 'buff reports' which are more typical of this kind of government advisory body.
- ✓ Conducting research and making the case for embedding two-way engagement as a core part of how the organisation goes about its work, ensuring that the public and stakeholders have a say in what is done, informing and shaping the commission's recommendations to government.
- ✓ Establishing new engagement mechanisms as a core part of how the commission's work, including a panel of 600 stakeholders, an interactive website, a public forum and list-serve, and integrated engagement-project planning processes.
- ✓ Building capacity by recruiting a team skilled in engagement (rather than relying on communications professionals); establishing an engagement call off contract to enable professional engagement skills to be used easily and at low cost; using public and stakeholder engagement at the core of major projects to demonstrate the value of engagement to robust decision making; training all staff in engagement thinking and practice supported by tool kits, case studies and evaluations and guidance.
- ✓ Taking an active role in promoting engagement and its role in sustainable development, including publically accessible web-pages (<http://www.sd-commission.org.uk/pages/engagement.html>)

### Environment Agency (England and Wales)

Six years of bottom- up work to embed engagement. This is possibly the largest scale capacity building programme for PE and has now resulted in two of the 5 aims of the current corporate strategy being focused on engagement. Approach has included support by InterAct Networks throughout and:

- ✓ Recruiting small head office teams focused on community, stakeholder and customer engagement.
- ✓ Research and pilot study based guidance on 'building trust with communities', followed by training and awareness raising programmes for communication team based mentors, interested policy and operational staff and senior management. Approximately 1,000 staff have now received some kind of training. Guidance constantly evolving and being made more and more specific for different parts of the business.
- ✓ Ongoing research and collation of case studies to support the case for engagement.
- ✓ Each year teams are required to use PE on a certain number of contentious issues in their area, and this number increases each year. New guidance now requires teams to analyse engagement (not just communication) requirements for all work.
- ✓ Networking and mentoring support of those who have received training to support them acting as champions for PE.
- ✓ Call off contract for help from professional facilitators.

## Appendix 2: Example Organisational Culture Analysis

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This is an extract from an analysis for the Environment Agency (Colbourne, 2008) using the Burke-Litwin framework to better understand how to improve PE. This extract is on the first 'key area' in that framework of 12 areas: organisational culture. The traffic light awarded to this area was red, reflecting an urgent need to address the issues raised. Although the term used in this example is on 'collaboration', it could be substituted for PE.

### Organisational culture

It is widely felt by staff that collaborative work [PE] is discouraged by the *corporate culture and does not form part of their 'day job'*.<sup>3</sup>

Our review identified the following widely held beliefs within the Environment Agency that hold back mainstreaming collaboration:

- ✓ Costs - It is too costly in terms of time and money to do this.
- ✓ Benefits - It won't give us anymore than a traditional approach would.
- ✓ Need - We know the answers so why involve others?
- ✓ Professionalism - We will lose credibility/status/this is not our job.
- ✓ Loss of control - It may all end in disaster or raised expectations.
- ✓ Niche - It is only suitable in some, rare, circumstances.

Jake Chapman<sup>4</sup> concludes that policy making and public sector management is holding onto an outdated set of assumptions. The biggest obstacle to overcoming these, he says, is the assumption that 'we know best', an assumption shared by politicians, civil servants, senior managers and scientists and economists. It is divisive because it closes off any possibility of learning and characterises other views as oppositional, based on politics or vested interests. This echoes our own findings in relation to the Environment Agency:

The Environment Agency must recognise that it cannot always be inward looking and cannot solve everything. People living in flood risk areas need to be the initiators and creators of alternative schemes rather than be expected to be mere receptors of experts' plans.

Extensive liaisons are needed and the time and resources to form these before, during and after a flood event must be allocated and the Environment Agency needs to accept that this is a legitimate and necessary part of its work.<sup>5</sup>

In a turbulent environment, flooding requires a very different type of institutional and social response since no single organisation, no matter how large or powerful, has the necessary knowledge, skills and resources to cope with the situation effectively.<sup>6</sup>

The IISRF Work Package 3 report explores this resistance to collaboration further, and sets out a way of conceptualising the current **resistance** to collaboration, whereby the temptation to stay within the 'understood, controlled, predictable Environment Agency world', and resist all interaction with the messy outside world results in interfaces, such as meetings with CCPs, post flood drop ins and even the way that press relationships are approached, being mostly about one way information giving by the Environment Agency.

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<sup>3</sup> Wilkinson (2008).

<sup>4</sup> Jake Chapman, *Learning to think differently*. PowerPoint presentation. Demos. 2006

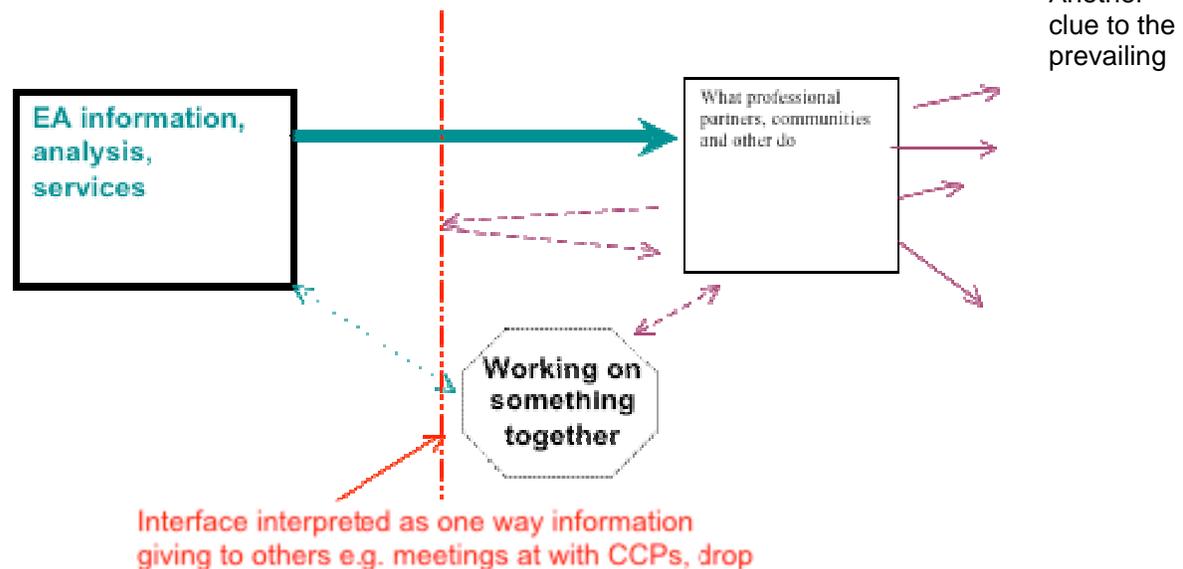
<sup>5</sup> Speller (2006) *Improving community and citizen engagement in decision-making, delivery and flood response*.

<sup>6</sup> Watson et al. (2008) in Colbourne (2008). Ibid. Appendix 2

## The resistance to collaboration

Understood, controlled, predictable  
Environment Agency World

Uncontrolled, unpredictable  
messy outside world



Environment Agency view of collaboration can be found through application of the Myers Briggs based 'Organisational Character Index' (OCI)<sup>7</sup>. In his submission to this report, Chris Rose argues it may be the best available. His view of the Environment Agency is that it is strongly "ISTJ" which means that it is:

<b><u>I</u>ntroverted</b>	takes cues and draws power from within, is fairly closed
<b><u>S</u>ensing</b>	concerns itself with actualities, attends to details
<b><u>T</u>hinking</b>	depends on impersonal procedures and principles
<b><u>J</u>udging</b>	likes things spelled out and definite, seeks closure

The description of an ISTJ organisation is compelling. This type of organisation is good at delivering in a predictable, efficient and low key way, based on stable and reliable systems: the organisation respects practical experience and hierarchy. This is ideal for many of the Environment Agency's functions – monitoring, providing data, and engineering solutions. But the organisation will also be rather closed to outsiders (protecting its basic stability and reliability of its functional systems), and its internal systems will not be evident to the outside world. The organisation will discourage change and distrust theory or brilliance. In terms of collaborating, Rose suggests that:

- It [the Environment Agency] may find it hard to sufficiently expose its thinking, so that those it wants to work with (or even staff charged with the task) will find it hard to understand where it is coming from.
- Internal 'silo' thinking may mean that the Environment Agency is operating differently in various projects, sending different external signals.
- The Environment Agency's deeply embedded internal processes may be hard to link to or may not be flexible enough to deal with novel external problems.
- The organisation may struggle with tasks that require feeling and perceiving, such as empathising with or establishing a rapport with people outside.

<sup>7</sup> Bridges (2000) Organisational Character Index.

- It may subconsciously or consciously filter out 'soft issues' such as politics, emotions or values because they are difficult to measure and instead assign more significance to what can be easily measured as 'hard facts'.
- The organisation may be more comfortable with established procedures that it is good at (such as flood defence) as opposed to newer ones that are still only at a conceptual or intuitive/visionary stage.
- The Environment Agency will be more at ease with working internally.

This may well explain why examples of excellent collaboration are down to innovation/leadership by individuals rather than a mainstreamed practice.

However, we do not recommend changing the Environment Agency's culture. Based on Rose's analysis and suggestions, we endorse an approach of **compensating for it** rather than seeking 'culture change'. Rose's argument for this is that:

- Culture change is exceptionally hard to achieve.
- Cultures are built up partly by tasks/experience so, for example the defence to flood risk management shift will gradually have this influence anyway.
- The Environment Agency has a number of duties such as licensing, inspections, flood defence maintenance, where ISTJ systems are valuable, indeed essential.

## Appendix 3: Departmental Dialogue Index (DDI) extract

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### DDI Dialogue and Engagement Prediction and Recommendation for organisations with the ISTJ character: Category: **RESISTANT**

This type of **'Solid as a rock' or ISTJ** organisation will tend to consider engaging with others as a **distraction** from the delivery of their core business. They will naturally tend towards one way communications to 'convince' or 'explain' their role, decisions, services (late on in the decision-making process) to others, where possible with an educative element, and will get frustrated with – or will try to avoid - having to 'dumb down' their expert work. When these organisations decide to consult, it will tend to be a **formal** process **late** on in the decision-making process, often to fulfil a requirement rather than to inform the decision that will be made. This will make it difficult for others to understand how the organisation has got to that decision, missing opportunities for innovative input to framing problems and solutions and increasing the likelihood of confrontations. Incorporating and responding to views and collaboration may be **essential** to the organisation surviving in the modern world, enabling it to respond to new challenges and embracing innovations.

#### Convincing the organisation of this may require:

- ❑ Reducing the risk and disorder of engagement by introducing well established, logical **processes** for engagement. Try introducing processes that help staff decide how much engagement to use.
- ❑ Introducing the idea of **developmental**/scoping engagement as distinguished from **formal**/written consultation in order to broaden the notion of consultation and that it is possible to engage with others earlier in the decision-making cycle than might be currently considered.
- ❑ Talk of engagement with others beyond the usual suspects (of other public institutions) as **risk reduction and management**: a precautionary, intelligence-gathering opportunity as a core part of delivering efficient services. Sciencewise-type public dialogue is an ideal way of gathering this kind of information.
- ❑ **Selling** the concept of engagement peer to peer and within functions, for example through **champions' networks**. Messages are most likely to be accepted from within. You may find it useful to develop pilots to prove the efficacy of an engaged approach, and develop new skills and specialisms that start to value the new engaged way of working.
- ❑ Use of **specialists** (internal specialists or external consultants) to design and **deliver** genuinely engaging processes and to analyse results of engagement (helping to translate people's lay terms into ones the organisation will accept) will be initially essential to provide the necessary skills and commitment to using the results. In the longer term, develop individuals, person specification and job descriptions and incentives to bring good engagement skills into the organisation.
- ❑ Recognising that working collaboratively and in **partnership** with other organisations (and even more so, with individuals) will present the ultimate challenge: use of Memoranda of Understanding and other formal agreements, alongside the use of experienced staff/process consultants may help to spell out responsibilities and processes in a way that assists the organisation to feel confident and able to deliver.

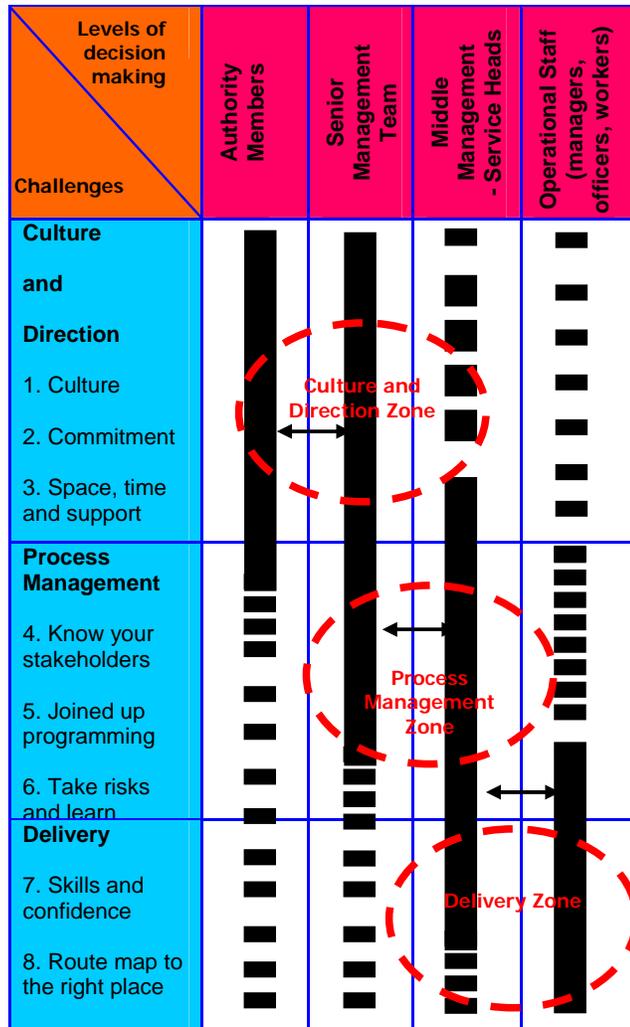
## Appendix 4: Organisation-wide Engagement strategy

InterAct Networks have supported organisations such as the Environment Agency and Defra in developing their PE strategy, including capacity building to support the implementation of that strategy. The framework below (developed by Jeff Bishop) is an example of one of the tools which can help focus such activities.

A Framework for Organisation-wide Engagement

This diagram suggests that it is the responsibility of decision-makers and senior staff to set the tone, the overall approach, the cultural commitment to public engagement: 'Culture and Direction' on the diagram. It then suggests that it is the responsibility of middle managers to ensure a coherent programme of engagement activities, appropriate to their context and appropriately designed, resourced, managed and delivered: 'Process Management' on the diagram. Finally it suggests that it is the operational staff (we call them the 'doers') who are responsible for undertaking the day-to-day engagement activity: 'Delivery'.

Place all the responsibility on the 'coal-face doers' only and there will be a limit to what you can do, each activity will be isolated, money will be endlessly wasted, outcomes will be limited and there will be neither one-off nor cumulative benefits. Simply 'doing more things' would be very poor value for money (and it would seriously overload the 'doers'). Even bringing in a coherent approach just at middle management level will achieve little more than making better sense of a medley of activities but will still be outside, even against, the organisational culture.



All of this should be encompassed by some sort of "Engagement Strategy"

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