Collaboration and the governance of public services delivery

Conference or Workshop Item

oro.open.ac.uk

Collaboration and the governance of public services delivery

Siv Vangen, Karen Potter and Carol Jacklin-Jarvis

Paper prepared for:

Symposium on the policy and reform trajectory of public services in the UK and Japan

8 and 9 November 2017

Collaboration and the governance of public services delivery

Siv Vangen, Karen Potter and Carol Jacklin-Jarvis

INTRODUCTION

In the UK, successive governments over recent decades have initiated a number of inter-organizational collaborative arrangements between public, private and not-for-profit organizations to support the delivery of public services and address multi-faceted, intractable societal problems. Initially the introduction of New Public Management in the 1980s and greater privatisation of Government services resulted in integrated government offices across the English Regions to develop partnerships with and between local interests (Lowndes and Skelcher, 1998), and for example, required local authorities and the National Health Service (NHS) to work with the private sector to more economically deliver public services. More formalized collaborative arrangements evolved from the public-private-partnerships introduced by the Conservative government in 1992 through to a variety of cross-sector collaborative arrangements under the Labour government's Modernisation Agenda (Labour was in government from 1997 to 2010). New Labour saw 'partnership working' as an antidote to the market driven and competitive approach of the Conservative era, the new emphasis being on collaborative solutions to societal ills, including poor standards of education, social exclusion, poverty, poor health and environmental degradation. The need to work together across organizational boundaries was seen in many social systems that were inherently multi-agency, including for example youth work, care for the elderly and children services.

More recently, in a drive to reduce public sector funding and under a localism agenda, the Coalition government of 2010 has removed some of the collaborative structures preserved in legislation by the Labour government, leaving them to local determination (e.g. Children's Trusts) but retained others (e.g. Local Strategic Partnerships) and are exploring new collaborative approaches, for example in the development of placed-based systems of care. In an increasingly pluralistic landscape, communities have been encouraged to become involved in the 'co-production' of their own services and the voluntary sector is (re-)emerging to take up a key role in the delivery of public services, under new models of 'collaborative innovation' (Lindsay et al, 2014). At present, owing to continuing austerity policies and the uncertainly of Brexit, public and voluntary organizations are under pressure to collaborate more to cope with an uncertain political landscape, reduction in funding and the need to increasingly work more efficiently.

Overlapping collaborative arrangements have thus long been a reality for policy makers and individuals concerned with the shaping and implementation of public policies in the UK. The need to

be effective through working collaboratively across professional and organizational boundaries – making things happen via other organizations, rather than through people (Metcalfe, 1990) - is a firm characteristic of public sector work. The context of public services delivery is undoubtedly complex and this is reflected in research and theory development on collaboration.

In this paper, we aim to provide a brief introduction to the role of collaboration in the governance of public services in the UK. We introduce briefly, relevant aspects of collaboration and collaborative governance and highlight key implications for both policy and practice.

COLLABORATION

While collaboration as a practice has been ongoing for a long time, UK based research into what it entails for the public manager to be effective in these contexts didn't take off until much later (e.g. Huxham and Vangen, 1996; Sullivan and Skelcher, 2002) and is still not abundant. This is somewhat surprising especially as there is ample evidence that organizations frequently fail to achieve fully effective working relationships with each other, even in cases where much effort has been devoted to the process. Nonetheless, like the many varied collaborative arrangements initiated through UK government policy, relevant extant research can be located under a range of different terminology including public-private-partnerships, co-production, co-ordination, joint working, networking, inter-agency collaboration, joint venture, strategic alliance, seamless service delivery and many, many more. Indeed as Snape and Taylor (2003) and Johnstone (2017) observe, scholars have used terminology influenced by practitioners and policy makers and followed the 'cult of collaboration' in practice. The Theory of Collaborative Advantage (TCA) - a practice based theory about the management of collaborations which focuses on the potential for collaborative advantage arising out of inter-organizational partnerships (Huxham and Vangen, 2005; Vangen and Huxham, 2010) – also uses 'collaboration' as a catch all term.

Notwithstanding the potential confusion and misunderstanding that such slippage in terminology can introduce, these terms typically refer to collaborative arrangements that aim to combine different organizations' experiences, resources and expertise in ways that allow them to jointly achieve something that none of them could achieve on their own. This synergy is called collaborative advantage (Huxham, 1993).

Consistent with the theory of collaborative advantage (TCA), a ***collaboration is a formalized, joint-working arrangement between organizations that remain legally autonomous while engaging in***

ongoing, coordinated collective action to achieve outcomes that none of them could achieve on their own (Vangen and Huxham, 2012).

For examples of successive UK government initiated collaborations, please see table 1.

COLLABORATIVE GOVERNANCE

An important feature of such collaborative entities is that they are governed without the benefit of hierarchy. In contrast with organizations, where governance structures and processes are shaped by legal and regulatory requirements, collaborations have been established frequently without any clear legal form or body in charge (Smith et al, 2006). Drawing on extant literature rather than empirical research, Provan and Kenis (2008) conceptualized three ideal forms of governance: Participant-Governed Networks / Shared Governance; Lead organization-Governed Networks and Network Administrative Organization. As these labels imply, they propose that the governance of a collaboration may be shared by all the participants, or be the responsibility of one of the partners acting as a lead organization, or an administrative body appointed by the collaboration. An empirical longitudinal study of a cross-sector collaboration in a UK policy context, suggests that governance of collaboration in practice will comprise a mix of these ideal forms and that the *picture is somewhat more complex* (Vangen et al, 2015).

One explanation for this complexity can be found in the changing emphasis on the use of collaboration in the delivery of public services and in successive government's continuing endeavours to find a 'best' way to govern such public service delivery. Osborne (2010) argue that, over the last four decades, the delivery of public services has gone through an evolution from a model of Public Administration (up until 1970s/early 1980s), through New Public Management (NPM) transitioning into New Public Governance (NPG) from the turn of the century. Collaboration, as defined above, goes beyond strategic joint-planning, which in the 1960s and 1970s, in the UK, was seen as the solution to service problems but which later was found to be too limiting in scope (Snape and Taylor, 2003). With NPM and the attempt to implement management ideas from business and private sector into the public services came the unintended consequences of fragmentation and lack of coordination and subsequently a *call for increased collaboration* between organizations. A number of policy initiatives by the conservative government were aimed at curtailing the role of the government and shifting responsibility for public service provision to private and voluntary organizations (e.g. Lewis 1993; Rhodes 1996; Adshead and Quinn 1998). In short however, this led to a need to improve the joining up of public service delivery and reclaiming centralised government

control of public policy implementation. For example, integrated government offices (IGOs) were created by the conservative government in each of the English regions in the 1990s, their intended role in meeting the "operational requirements of Departments and Ministers", whilst also developing "partnerships with and between all the local interests" and contributing "local views and experience to the formation of government policy" (Department of the Environment (DoE), 1993).

Similarly, the new labour government elected in 1997 introduced a number of collaborations in an attempt to abandon the emphasis of the previous administration upon markets and competition (Hudson, 1999). The labour government produced policies and invested in a range of initiatives to get public and voluntary sector organizations working together successfully at the local level with the aim to create stronger, more prosperous and sustainable communities (Labour Party 1997). Health Action Zones were one of the first New Labour initiatives, superseded by Local Strategic Partnerships 'joining up' activity across policy and service sectors (Sullivan et al, 2006; Liddle, 2009) and an increasing domination of area based regeneration programmes and cross cutting funding streams (e.g. the Neighbourhood Renewal Fund). Local area agreements (LAAs) were introduced as part of the wider modernisation agenda for UK public services, setting out priorities for a local area between central government, local authorities and various other partners (Liddle, 2009). Then 13 new 'multi area agreements (MAAs)' across England saw the introduction of a new 'action space', whereby city regions stretched beyond local authority boundaries to join more than one city (and associated local strategic partnership) to work together, so aligning managerial, administrative and community objectives (ibid).

Following the general election in 2010, the new coalition government between Conservative and Liberal Democrat parties led to yet new structures and governance arrangements emerging. The coalition government focused on the need to reduce public sector funding through the political ideology of the 'big society'. This ideology included the distribution of power through localism and devolution, encouraging volunteerism and the transfer of power from central to local government. It particularly emphasised the role of the voluntary sector in the delivery of public services. The coalition government removed many of the collaborative structures preserved in legislation by the Labour government. In relation to the voluntary sector for instance, there was a noticeable shift away from 'service level agreements' (a shift that had begun under New Labour) - within which voluntary sector organizations were able to negotiate their distinctive contribution and value added to service delivery - into 'contracts and tendering relationships' characterized by increasingly formalized and stringent regulation of the content and outcomes of the service provision.

Osborne (2006) described the transition from NPM into new public governance (NPG) capturing the realities and complexities of a pluralist state and the development and implementation of public policy in that context. NPG, he argues, assumes a "plural state, where multiple inter-dependent actors contribute to the delivery of public services and a pluralist state, where multiple processes inform the policy making system. As a consequence of these two forms of plurality, its focus is very much upon inter-organizational relationships and the governance of processes, and it stresses service effectiveness and outcomes" (p 384). Thus, the context for public service deliver is neither public administration nor new public management but rather a far more complex context within which various combinations of local, national and international organizations continue to play a major role in the governance of localities, shaping and implementing public policies.

This changing and shifting role of the state in the delivery of public services has characterised much public sector reform in the UK. Sullivan et al. (2006) likened this shifting relationships to a "myriad of alternatives to direct service delivery by the state" while observing that the post-1997 Blair government policy context of more complex, ambitious collaborative public service delivery was seen *in itself* a new 'mode of governance' in an attempt to "tackle intractable cross-cutting issues in a context where the collective goals are poorly defined and past solutions have failed".

The observation made by Sullivan et al (2006) effectively points to a *second, explanation for the complex picture of collaborative governance*; a perceived distinction between 'collaborative governance' and 'governing collaborations' which can be found in extant research (Vangen, Hayes and Cornforth, 2015). 'Collaborative governance' is a term used to describe new patterns of government and governing in which organizations are brought together to govern society, contribute to public value, implement public policy or manage public programmes or assets in a collaboration arrangement (Skelcher et al, 2005; Sullivan and Skelcher, 2002). The term 'collaborative governance' is usually contrasted with hierarchical and bureaucratic authority. In comparison, 'governing collaborations' refers to governance of collaborative entities *per se*. Here the emphasis is on the governance, leadership and management of inter-organizational relationships with the view to achieve **collaborative advantage; the attainment of goals beyond the capabilities of organizations acting alone** (Vangen and Huxham, 2012). In this context, governance is an important issue in ensuring effectiveness in goal-directed collaborations.

The distinction between 'collaborative governance' and 'governing collaborations' can be recognised in the extent to which emphasis on participation by government / public agencies alongside private and voluntary sector organizations in the collective crafting and implementation of public policy (Skelcher et al, 2005) rather than more generally on collaborations concerned with addressing jointly

issues in the public domain. In the first case, there is an attempt by government to govern through the formation of a collaboration (such as in the example of Children's Trusts in table 1). In the latter case, collaboration is not necessarily mandated or funded by public agencies, it does not have to involve the government or public agencies, or be concerned with public policies (e.g. Huxham and Vangen, 2005). In as far as the role of collaboration in the governance of public services is concerned, the distinction is recognised in NPG and explains some of the complexity of context within which managers across the public and voluntary sectors operate.

A fully elaborated exposition of this distinction is beyond the scope of this paper. However, as summarised in Table 2, the logic of 'collaborative governance' and 'governing collaboration', both draw attention to similar governance design and implementation issues. Related areas of literature – one that emphasises implementation of public policy and one that emphasises governance, leadership and management of collaborations – suggest the need to consider *stakeholder inclusion* (how, when and in what capacity stakeholders may be involved in the collaboration); means of *decision making*; distribution of, or imbalances in *power* (how to deal with such); the extent to which the relationships between potential members are characterized by *trust or distrust* (how to deal with trust related issues) distribution of *resources*; the extent to which stakeholders have similar or divergent *goals* (what motivates potential partners to be involved); whether or not there is a designated *lead* organization and where issues of *accountability* lie.

IMPLICATIONS ON LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

The brief account of how successive UK governments have initiated, made use of, and changed collaborative arrangements and collaborative governance over the last four decades, reveals an increasingly complex and inter-organizational collaborative context for the delivery of public services in the UK. Collaborative entities have manifested themselves in a variety of structural forms under somewhat competing and contradictory discourses. From fulfilling a demand for civil society participation and greater democracy in the public policy process, to less duplication and effective, efficient policy delivery under managerialism, to a neo-corporatist arena in which private sector interests join in determining the future of localities (Skelcher and Sullivan, 2008) and a drive for communities and voluntary sector organizations to join and innovate in providing services. The navigation of these complex collaborative contexts therefore increasingly characterise the work of public sector leaders and managers. There is however very little evidence that collaboration yields unmitigated success. On the contrary, our research suggests that collaborations are inherently paradoxical, characterised by tensions and contradictions, and that they are notoriously challenging

to manage. Rather than yielding collaborative advantage, many end up in a state of *inertia where progress is incredibly slow and successful outcomes involve pain and hard grind* (Huxham and Vangen, 2005). This then presents real challenges for those who need to lead and manage collaborations in practice.

As will be clear from the examples presented in this paper, many diverse organizations, large and small, collaborate in the delivery of public services in the UK at different times and with different levels of governance and commitment from both government and participating organizations. Which organizations become involved vary across different localities but are generally those that have both the expertise and capacity to join in. Importantly, organizations' stake and capacity to join in is subject to changes in public policy, as suggested above. For these reasons, collaborative arrangements are usually complex in structure, idiosyncratic in nature and highly transient. This is certainly the case in the UK at present owing to high-level policy ambivalence, significant public funding reductions and regulatory changes.

When organizations collaborate on the delivery of public services, they continue to operate as independent entities addressing their remits within their own vertical hierarchies while simultaneously participating in horizontal collaborative relationships that support the delivery of joint goals [public services]. The achievement of collaborative advantage effectively requires working arrangements that simultaneously protect and integrate partners' uniquely different resources for the furtherance of joint collaborative goals. For these reasons, collaborative contexts are complex webs of overlapping, dynamic, hierarchies and systems that comprise competing designs and processes that are necessary to achieve desired outcomes. Our research suggest that this combination of both autonomous organizational hierarchies and horizontal collaborative structures is a source of multiple paradoxes (Vangen, 2017).

The key message here is that the composition of collaborations need to be understood as ambiguous, complex and dynamic (Huxham and Vangen, 2000). Diverse organizations will be involved at different times for a whole variety of reasons. Organizations, when they do invest, will for instance influence and alter the purpose of a collaboration, and that change in purpose will subsequently influence which organizations become involved. Our research suggests that the composition of such collaborations will be in a constant flux. The enormous challenge that this presents for the individuals involved must be clearly understood by the policy makers who promote collaborations. For all but the very simplest of collaborative tasks, achieving collaborative advantage

requires major resource investment, together with significant leadership skills and patience by all involved.

The idea of collaborative advantage and the idea of a context in constant flux reinforces the requirement – in policy and practice - to focus firmly on what can be achieved via collaboration that cannot be achieved without it [the idea of collaborative advantage needs to be the guiding light]. Importantly this requires a recognition that collaborative advantage is born out of difference. It is precisely the differences between organizations – differences in their areas of expertise, assets, knowhow, priorities, cultures and values – which constitute unique resources that, when brought together, create the potential for collaborative advantage. Collaborative advantage is achieved, if at all, through the synthesis of such differences (Huxham and Vangen, 2005).

The idea that collaborations are necessarily paradoxical in nature inevitably means that they will be inherently conflict ridden comprising many governance, leadership and management tensions. And because they are inherently paradoxical, suggestions on how to best manage them can seem somewhat counterintuitive. In essence, achieving collaborative advantage entails managing inherently different organizational goals and remits; navigating diverse cultures; compromising on embedded values; addressing power imbalances and lack of trust; nurturing complex, ambiguous and dynamic structures; and understanding the sheer inaptness of traditional approaches to leadership and governance (Vangen and Huxham, 2010).

For example, a commonly held view is that the success of a collaboration depends on the extent to which organizations have similar goals. Our research shows that genuine goals for a collaboration exist if at all in an entanglement of individual and organizational goals that are both real and imagined (Vangen and Huxham, 2012). That entanglement suggests that any attempts at seeking to integrate congruent and diverse goals should emphasize the importance of the paradox and its inherent tensions rather than seeking resolutions free of compromises or trade-offs. For practice it suggests that collaborations may necessarily need to get started without full agreement on goals. This need to compromise and find *good enough* solutions is something that applies generally to collaboration.

Similarly, a commonly held view is that if organizations that are to work successfully with one another, they must have shared values and culture. As the examples above suggest however, collaborations bring together diverse organizations and hence individuals whose perspectives, ways of being and acting are influenced by diverse cultures. Such cultural diversities can cause conflicts,

misunderstandings and points of friction which, common sense would suggest, needs addressing. However, such cultural diversity needs to be seen as both a source of stimulation, creativity and reward and a source of potential conflicts of values, behaviours, and beliefs. This then shifts management attention away from 'ironing out friction' to looking at the kind of managerial compromises and tradeoffs that need to take place to move the collaboration towards achieving collaborative advantage (Vangen and Winchester, 2015).

In a similar vein, trust is seen as a necessary condition for successful collaboration but the reality of many individuals who collaborate on behalf of their organizations suggest that trust is frequently weak - if not lacking altogether (Vangen and Huxham, 2003). This then suggests that there is a need to look at how trust can be built and maintained between partners in the context of collaboration. The understanding of collaborations as complex, ambiguous and dynamic contexts alludes to the sheer time and effort that must be devoted to the management of trust in practice. Trust is also seen in close connection with power imbalances. A key concern is that power sharing is important yet there are often both real and perceived power imbalances between partners that tend to have a negative impact on behaviours.

As a final example, the paradoxical nature of collaborations, with its inherent tensions and contradictions, suggest that leadership needs to focus on 'making things happen' and that it will in itself entail a tension between activities that are highly facilitative – concerned with embracing, empowering, involving and mobilizing partners – and more authoritative concerned with manipulating agendas and playing the politics (Vangen and Huxham, 2003). It means accepting and managing problems associated with differences in goals, conflicting values, cultural diversity, power imbalances and lack of trust and so on. And most of all, it requires continuous nurturing and a lot of attention to detail. The theory of collaborative advantage provides deeper insight into these themes and many more (Vangen and Huxham, 2010).

CONCLUSION

One clear conclusion is that without careful intervention and management, collaborations are more likely to reach *collaborative inertia* than *collaborative advantage*. While there are examples of successful collaborations and collaborative governance initiated via public policy and concerned with the delivery of public services, it is often the case that less has been achieved than had been hoped for. It is common for some participants to be less pleased than others, and it is usually the case that the pace has been much slower than expected. While the final outcome is often perceived by some

partners as better than would have been the case without the collaboration, the research clearly warns against the use of collaboration and collaborative governance without due careful and consideration (Vangen and Huxham, 2010).

REFERENCES

Huxham, C. (1993). Collaborative capability: An intra-organizational perspective on collaborative advantage. *Public money and management*, 13 (3), 21-28. DOI: 10.1080/09540969309387771

Huxham, C and Vangen, S (1996) 'Working together, key themes in the management of relationships between public and non-profit organizations' International Journal of Public Sector Management, vol. 9, no. 7, pp. 5-17.

Huxham, C and Vangen, S (2005) Managing to Collaborate: the theory and practice of collaborative advantage, Routledge.

Johnston, K. (2017). A Gender Analysis of Women in Public-Private-Voluntary Sector 'Partnerships'. *Public Administration, 95*(1), 140-159. doi: 10.1111/padm.12288

Liddle, J. (2009). The Northern Way: a pan-regional associational network. *International Journal of Public Sector Management, 22*(3), 192-202. doi: 10.1108/09513550910949172

Lowndes, V., & Skelcher, C. (1998). THE DYNAMICS OF MULTI-ORGANIZATIONAL PARTNERSHIPS: AN ANALYSIS OF CHANGING MODES OF GOVERNANCE. *Public Administration, 76*(2), 313-333.

Metcalfe, L. (1990). Public management: from imitation to innovation. European Institute of Public Administration.

Osborne, S. P. (2006). The New Public Governance? Editorial. *Public Management Review*, 8(3), 377–387. doi: 10.1080/14719030600853022

Osborne, S. P. (2010). The New Public Governance? Critical Perspectives and Future Directions, London, Routledge.

Skelcher, C., Mathur, N., & Smith, M. (2005). The Public Governance of Collaborative Spaces: Discourse, Design and Democracy. *Public Administration, 83*(3), 573-596. doi: 10.1111/j.0033-3298.2005.00463.x

Smith, M., Mathur, N., & Skelcher, C. (2006). Corporate Governance in a Collaborative Environment: what happens when government, business and civil society work together? *Corporate Governance: An International Review, 14*(3), 159-171. doi: 10.1111/j.1467-8683.2006.00496.x

Snape, S., & Taylor, P. (2003). Partnerships between Health and Local Government: An Introduction. *Local Government Studies, 29*(3), 1-16.

Sullivan, H., Barnes, M., & Matka, E. (2006). Collaborative Capacity and Strategies in Area-Based Initiatives. *Public Administration, 84*(2), 289-310. doi: 10.1111/j.1467-9299.2006.00003.x

Vangen, S and Huxham, C (2003) 'Nurturing collaborative relations: building trust in interorganizational collaboration' Journal of Applied Behavioural Science, vol. 39, no. 1, pp. 5-31.

Vangen, S and Huxham, C (2003) 'Enacting leadership for collaborative advantage: dilemmas of ideology and pragmatism in the activities of partnership managers' British Journal of Management, vol. 14, no. Supp.1, pp. 61-76.

Vangen, S and Huxham, C (2010) 'Introducing the theory of collaborative advantage', In: Osborne, S (ed.)The New Public Governance? Critical Perspectives and Future Directions, London, Routledge, pp 163-164.

Vangen, S and Huxham, C (2012). The Tangled Web: Unravelling the Principle of Common Goals in Collaborations, Journal of Public Administration Research and Theory, 22(4):731-760. doi:10.1093/jopart/mur065.

Vangen, S. and Winchester, N. (2014). Managing cultural diversity in collaborations. A focus on management tensions. Public Management Review, 16(5):686-707. DOI:10.1080/14719037.2012.743579.

Vangen, S. Hayes, J.P. and Cornforth, C. (2015). Governing cross-sector inter-organizational collaborations. Public Management Review, Accepted for publication. 17 (9), 1237-1260, doi.org/10.1080/14719037.2014.903658.

Vangen, S. (2017). Developing Practice-Oriented Theory on Collaboration: A Paradox Lens. Public Administration Review (ABS 4). DOI: 10.1111/puar.12683

	Origins	Policy Drivers	Membership	Status	Comment
Local Strategic Partnerships (LSP)	New Labour; formally established 2002; duties revised 2009	Joining-up local strategies across policy and service areas; address deprivation; local implementation of national strategies; rationalisation; sustainable community strategy	Public agencies; local partners – business, community, and voluntary sectors	LSPs retained at the local level with localised structures.	Local solutions for local problems. Incorporated or overtook previous collaborations, eg. Health Action Zones, regeneration. Led by local authorities.
Children's Trust Boards	New Labour; initial pilots; legislative requirement 2009	Joining-up services and resources for better outcomes for children	Public agencies – education, social care, health, working with private and voluntary organisations	Legislative requirement removed by Coalition 2010; functions incorporated into other structures eg. council committees, Health & Wellbeing	Short-lived attempt to coordinate services and respond to need; local authority led; briefly moved legislative requirement for planning of children's services to a children's trust and away from local authority
Place-based systems of care	Proposed as a response to gap in leadership of local health system following NHS structural changes in 2013	Local planning for health; system of care; governing of resources to meet needs;	Led by service providers, engaging with commissioners	Developing at the local level in response to need for cooperation, innovation, and resource management	Place based systems model to be determined locally, rather than prescribed by policy; collaboration proposed as alternative to structural change; addressing removal of local coordinating health authorities, and consequent fragmentation of service provision
Local Children's Safeguarding Boards	Originate in 1970s endeavour to provide a coherent response to children at risk	To safeguard children	Local authorities Police, NHS Community/VCS, Education' Courts Secure services Probation Youth offending	Ongoing	Longevity through political change. Statutory requirement in every local government area. Led by local authorities. Statutory guidance regularly updated.
City governance	City Deals initiated by Coalition government 2010-15	Devolution; regional inequalities; transport, economy, regeneration	Combined local authorities, Local Enterprise partnership;	Ongoing	History of city-wide collaborations eg. City Challenge from early 1990s; Current example of Greater Manchester originates in 1980s creation of voluntary association, followed by 2008 legal framework enabling strategic development and pooling of resources across 10 Greater Manchester local authorities (GMCA).

Table 1: Examples of successive UK government initiated collaborations over recent decades

Collaborative Governance	Definitional characteristics, purpose and focus	Governing Collaborations
Concerned with governance *through* the formation of inter-organizational collaborations. Here, collaboration is used as a form of [democratic] governance often contrasted with hierarchical and bureaucratic authority. The collaboration focuses primarily on the implementation of public policy.	**Definitional characteristics, purpose and focus**	Concerned with the governance *of* inter-organizational collaboration entities *per se*. The aim of the design and implementation of the governance form is to enhance the effectiveness of goal-directed collaborations. The collaboration focuses on the achievement of collaborative advantage / joint collaboration level goals.

Design and implementation issues: Example differences

Collaborative Governance	Issue	Governing Collaborations
Emphasises participation by public agencies, not for profit stakeholders and sometimes, 'communities'. Often focuses on 'full' stakeholder inclusion.	**Stakeholder inclusion**	No ideological requirements associated with involvement, participation and empowerment of all stakeholders affected by an issue.
Focus on collective, consensus-oriented decision making on issues of public concern.	**Decision making**	Draws attention to a range of decision making mechanisms among partners seeking to attain joint goals.
Tension between the shifting of power away from elected bodies to shared power among stakeholders *and* power asymmetries related to public hierarchies.	**Power asymmetries**	Power may be shared and power imbalances are not necessarily skewed in favour of public agencies.
Trust is an essential ingredient and needs to be built to overcome distrust.	**Trust / distrust**	Trust is usually seen as essential and fragile – focus on trust building and managing distrust.
Focus on equitable distribution of public resources.	**Distribution of resources**	Focus on mobilizing member organizations' resources toward the achievement of joint goals.
Collaboration goals are stipulated in public policy.	**Goals and values**	Congruence in partners' goals provides the impetus for collaboration.
Public agencies have a legitimate and distinctive leadership role.	**Lead organization**	Leadership may be shared or reside with an agreed upon lead organization that may or may not be a member of the collaboration and that may or may not be a public agency.
Leadership is enacted by individuals representing public agencies or who has the authority of the state.	**Individual leaders**	Leadership may be enacted by individuals who do not have formal positional authority.
Government accountability – especially accountability for public resources.	**Accountability**	Tension between individuals' accountability to the collaboration and accountability to partner organizations.

Table 2: Example differences between 'collaborative governance' and 'governing collaborations'

(reproduced from Vangen et al, 2015)