



Research on the Costs and Benefits of Personal Data Sharing at Local Partnership Level



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Office for Public Management Ltd

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Department for Communities and Local Government

The findings and recommendations in this report are those of the authors and do not necessarily represent the views of the Department for Communities and Local Government.

Department for Communities and Local Government
Eland House
Bressenden Place
London
SW1E 5DU
Telephone: 020 7944 4400
Website: www.communities.gov.uk

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Communities and Local Government Publications
PO Box 236
Wetherby
West Yorkshire
LS23 7NB
Tel: 0300 123 1124
Fax: 0300 123 1125
Email: communities@capita.co.uk
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Executive summary

Aims

In October 2007, OPM and the Local Futures Group were asked by Communities and Local Government to undertake a study looking at the costs and benefits of personal data sharing at Local Strategic Partnership (LSP) level. This report describes the different types of and approaches to personal data sharing that we found and explores the factors that can enable and inhibit data sharing initiatives.

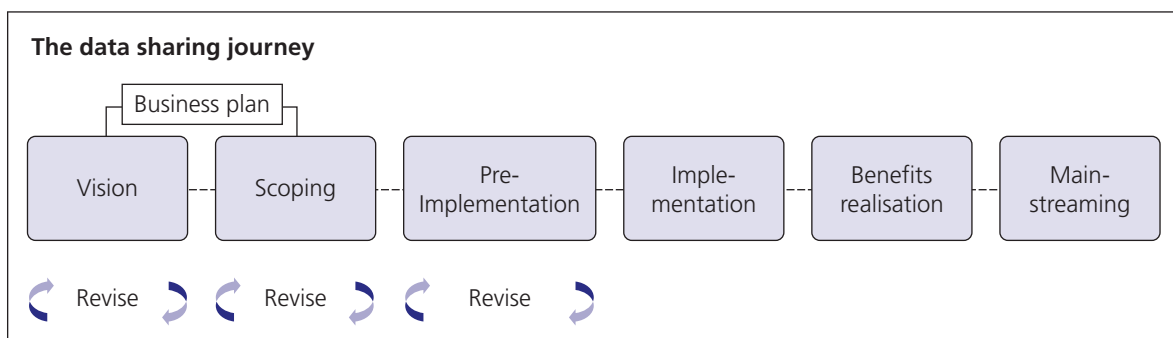
Approach

We collected evidence about data sharing initiatives from LSP partners across England. The scoping phase, which took place between November and December 2007, was designed to enable us to gain an initial understanding of the extent to which personal data is shared across LSPs and how this is achieved.

We used the findings from the scoping phase to develop a typology of personal data sharing, to illustrate four distinct types of data shared and the varying methods of sharing that data. In order to 'bring the typology to life' we created a range of 'exemplars' for each data type and tested them out in a workshop with data sharing professionals. We developed a conceptual model illustrating the data sharing journey along which LSPs progress as they begin to implement personal data sharing initiatives. The purpose of the conceptual model is to help others anticipate the complexity of embarking on a personal data sharing initiative.

The main fieldwork phase of the study comprised an online survey, eight in-depth case studies, a series of telephone interviews designed to produce data sharing 'vignettes', a virtual forum and a final workshop to test out the research findings.

We refined the data sharing model following the comments made during case study interviews and at the final workshop, and the final version is shown in the diagram below:



The data sharing journey – findings

Vision

When trying to establish a new data sharing initiative, the most important principal step is to identify the intended outcomes and beneficiaries of the initiative in order to make a coherent business case and generate the necessary buy-in from all stakeholders in subsequent stages of the journey. Establishing the need for the initiative, based on evidence, consultation and analysis, adds weight to the business case. Pre-existing systems, the availability of funding and visionary individuals who can seize opportunities for data sharing were identified enablers in this stage of the journey. This stage crystallises the purpose of the initiative and identifies the stakeholders and customers who will benefit from the initiative. The type of data to be shared and the way in which it is shared will affect who benefits and how they benefit. Without clearly defined benefits for stakeholders and customers, the purpose of the data sharing initiative may be called into question and falter at later stages.

Other factors that can enable or limit progress include:

- using evidence to enhance the business case further enables the initiative to be 'sold' at subsequent stages in the data sharing journey
- pre-existing systems and availability of funding are two structural factors that can help kick-start data sharing initiatives, along with agential factors such as the presence of 'visionary' individuals.

Scoping

The scoping stage of the data sharing journey is crucial in ensuring that the data sharing system is designed well, that partners buy in to the initiative and that agreements for sharing data are drafted. There were a number of critical enabling and inhibiting factors at this stage.

A number of enabling factors were cited for the consultation and design part of the scoping stage of data sharing initiatives, including:

- the existence of groups that can house the project and take ownership of it, whether a newly established project team or a pre-existing multi-agency group
- LSP-wide project groups as particularly beneficial in garnering support for data sharing initiatives as all partners are represented and have an input, thereby encouraging ownership
- having the capacity to conduct the design and scoping stage of the project was also identified as a critical success factor
- procuring outside expertise in the form of an IT system or consultants was another enabling factor although the cost implications of having externally hosted IT systems was cited as a potential future inhibitor.

A challenging, or inhibiting factor in the consultation and design stage related to obtaining, cleaning and prioritising data, with the Data Protection Act (DPA) being used as an 'excuse' to withhold data and the incompatibility of data sets at different geographical levels posing a challenge.

Data sharing initiatives take different approaches to partnership building. Projects which continued successfully through to later stages in the data sharing journey had secured the support of multiple partners at this early juncture. Particularly important in partnership building is ensuring that multiple partners are included in discussions about the design of the initiative, although this needs to be weighed against the potential time implications of having a lengthy consultation process.

Drafting data sharing agreements and guidance was seen to be enabled by legislation that has certain requirements and sets parameters for data sharing. Establishing a common language for the data sharing system was a further enabler.

Pre-implementation

Pre-implementation involves those factors which are sometimes not recognised at the scoping stage but which need to take place in order to implement data sharing. Organisational and structural changes might take place at this stage and include: formal partnership sign up to the project; resources allocated to and secured for the project; the reorganisation of LSP and/or council structures in order to accommodate the data sharing initiative(s), and ensuring good communication and project management.

The research revealed four critical elements and their respective inhibiting and enabling factors in this stage:

- partnership sign up to the project, for example information sharing protocols written and signed and funding committed to the project underpinned by a service level agreement or other formal agreement
- resources are allocated to the project from across the LSP and are underwritten by service level agreements
- reorganisation of structures, for example having an information governance structure and ensuring that there is the capacity and expertise for data to be input, analysed and shared. This stage might involve the setting up of LSP-wide data sharing groups to facilitate data sharing
- communication and project management in order to ensure that a clear and consistent message about the purpose and benefits of the data sharing initiative are communicated and following project management principles such as Prince II so that the project does not drift.

Implementation

The implementation stage is the point of the data sharing journey at which the initiative is ready to be put into operation. The case studies that reached the implementation stage revealed a number of inhibitors and enablers that impact on whether the project realises outcomes for its beneficiaries and is mainstreamed. Cultural resistance to data sharing, overcome by training and dissemination of positive messages (particularly when championed by senior level staff) and maintaining momentum were identified as critical factors in the this stage of the data sharing journey.

The research revealed a number of inhibiting factors in the implementation stage, but also provided insight and solutions as to how to overcome obstacles in this stage of the journey:

- in a number of case studies, cultural resistance to data sharing was present amongst operational staff because of reluctance to change entrenched working practices
- cultural resistance was tackled with training and dissemination of positive messages about the data sharing initiative, which was particularly effective when championed by senior staff
- maintaining momentum for the initiative was seen to be important but challenging, particularly with staff churn. Ensuring that data sharing knowledge is formalised and does not rely upon informal relationships between staff was one way to overcome this.

Benefits realisation

At this stage of the journey, the benefits of the initiative that are anticipated at the outset, as well as unexpected benefits, are realised. An important aspect of benefit realisation is being able to communicate outcomes to service users, elected members and stakeholders, and to make this progress seem 'real', the stage should involve establishing the baseline position to understand progress from that point. The difficulties of this, such as in measuring an effect which is preventative, was noted through the research.

It is worth noting that all the sites contacted in the study could identify positive outcomes associated with their data sharing journey.

LSP-level benefits include:

- performance monitoring
- reduced duplication of data collection, research and analysis between partners;
- data based on evidence used to inform and refine policy and practice
- improved relations between data providers
- greater and closer engagement with third sector partners as a result of sharing data and delivering a service.

Service-level benefits include:

- identifying or filling gaps in provision
- easing workloads by making access to data streamlined
- more efficient use of resources.

Service-user benefits include:

- better meeting the needs of service users by identifying gaps in provision and targeting services more effectively

- better client insight to personalise service delivery
- accessing hard-to-reach groups.

Mainstreaming

At the Data Sharing Workshop, mainstreaming was identified as an essential last step of the data sharing journey. Getting the policy, data and delivery communities 'on side' to drive the initiative; ensuring systems become embedded or rooted in the partner organisations and that the new system becomes part of the 'day job'; securing funding to support the data sharing initiative beyond initial implementation and having time to analyse and disseminate the benefits of the data sharing initiative. The survey, case studies and vignettes revealed many challenges and enablers to mainstreaming. In particular:

- ensuring that the users of the system are on side because without the support of practitioners who collect and input the data, it is likely to be of insufficient quality or consistency to be able to use in its intended purpose
- mainstreamed funding to support the data sharing initiative into the future
- allowing time to be able to analyse the results and disseminate the messages from the data that has been shared.

Conclusion: common characteristics of successful personal data sharing

Data sharing projects that benefit the target audiences and are mainstreamed appear to have a number of common characteristics:

Clearly defined purpose

- a well-articulated business case, underpinned by a needs assessment and documented in a business plan, appears to reap rewards throughout the data sharing journey.

Ownership and accountability

- the data sharing initiative needs to be owned and underpinned by clear lines of accountability.

Communication

- effective communication of the purpose, function and benefits of data sharing initiatives, from the strategic level through middle management and to operational levels was seen to be absolutely critical in successful data sharing journeys
- training, particularly when it is embedded in core training, received by managers and practitioners and has senior 'champions' has been effective in overcoming these barriers.

Legislation and guidance

- primary legislation and government guidance was cited as an enabling factor in data sharing journeys
- data sharing protocols, which are signed up to at the strategic level, but are flexible enough to accommodate new local level partners, were also seen as being important
- multiple places in which guidance can be found was felt to be an inhibiting factor, as well as lack of knowledge about who owns the data (the data controller)
- the Data Protection Act was cited as a barrier to data sharing and there appears to be confusion in many quarters about what the Data Protection Act stipulates can and can't be shared.

Capacity and resource

- funding and capacity are critical success factors in all data sharing projects and need to be secured at the outset
- the benefits of the data sharing initiative need to be demonstrated to potential statutory 'hosts' so that they have confidence to invest in the system.

Recommendations

The findings from the study suggest that action is needed in a number of areas, both at local partner and central government level.

Local Strategic Partnerships

Recommendation 1

Identify the audience at which the data sharing initiative is aimed, conduct a needs assessment to establish the business case and write a business plan. The business case can be stronger if it is aligned to one or more of the LSP's strategic priorities and could help to unlock funds for initiative (see Recommendation 10) and to identify champions (see Recommendation 7).

Recommendation 2

Establish clear lines of accountability for data sharing, including new information governance structures where necessary. Data sharing to be a standing agenda item at LSP meetings to raise awareness and senior leaders taking responsibility for leading a particular data sharing initiative.

Recommendation 3

Where LSP-wide data sharing groups do not already exist, set them up and, where they do, encourage healthy attendance by ensuring the group has a clear remit and responsibilities.

Recommendation 4

When designing the mechanism by which data is to be shared, ensure that it is as simple as possible and asks for the minimum amount of data that is possible as opposed to the data that might be desirable and interesting to have. Having one central system that all partners can put their data onto without having to change the way in which they store it or collect it is one way this can work so that the amount of work is minimised.

Recommendation 5

Establish a dedicated project team for the data sharing initiative that has robust governance arrangements and adheres to project management principles. Be prepared to dismantle the project team once the initiative is mainstreamed so that data sharing is embedded into everyday practice rather than sitting in a specialist team.

Recommendation 6

Establish formal structures for data sharing at the operational level so that the momentum of the project and the knowledge of how to share data does not depend on a small number of individuals sharing data informally.

Recommendation 7

Have a clear communications strategy in order to secure buy-in and cascade information about the initiative at the strategic, middle management and operational levels. Spread and disseminate best practice and good examples via senior level data sharing 'champions', workshops and word-of-mouth, gain feedback from service users to disseminate positive messages about data sharing and encourage support for data sharing initiatives.

Recommendation 8

Embed data sharing training into core training packages across all sectors at all levels and include data sharing initiatives in supervision and appraisal of operational staff so that there is an incentive for them to share, a clear message to managers that they need to support their staff to share data and so that operational staff have a mechanism through which they can discuss any concerns about data sharing.

Recommendation 9

Draft data sharing protocols that are broad enough to encompass a number of partners and get strategic level sign up to them. Underpin overarching agreements with specific local-level agreements that have detailed guidance about the practicalities and realities of data sharing, including a list of 'data sharing myth busters' and 'frequently asked questions' about sharing different data types in specific service areas.

Communities and Local Government

Recommendation 10

Secure sufficient funds for all stages of the data sharing journey. An early acknowledgement of who will benefit most against who will be expected to bear the costs will also be important in avoiding tensions and, where appropriate, encouraging cross subsidy.

Recommendation 11

Ensure identifiers (for example NI Numbers) are scoped and agreed by all partners to help avoid unnecessary duplication and double counting.

Recommendation 12

Government departments to link up and give a consistent message about how data should be shared. Part of this could be to conduct a cross-departmental mapping exercise of current data sharing guidance in order to streamline guidance and the number of places that guidance can be found.

Recommendation 13

Issue clear and concise guidance on the Data Protection Act to all LSPs.

Recommendation 14

Construct a data sharing toolkit for LSPs which includes examples of best practice and practical guidance aimed at senior managers about how to undertake a data sharing project, which includes issues such as the use of resources and changes to job descriptions.

Recommendation 15

Lead by example and create Information Governance Committees that encourage data sharing across government in order for LSPs to have a model upon which to work. This should be embedded at regional level involving government offices and RIEPs.

Recommendation 16

Create a performance indicator for partnership working and the reduction of duplication of effort in data sharing.

Recommendation 17

Communicate effectively when there is central government funding available to LSPs to support data sharing initiatives, for example a recent funding stream available via Regional Improvement and Efficiency Partnerships for Local Improvement Advisers.

1. Introduction

In October 2007, OPM (see www.opm.co.uk for details) and the Local Futures Group were asked by Communities and Local Government to undertake a study looking at the costs and benefits of personal data sharing at local partnership level. Sharing of personal data is a central area of current government policy because of its importance for the transformational government and service improvement agendas and for the delivery of the Government's PSA targets.

The objectives of the study were to focus on:

1. good practice and innovation around the sharing of personal data between local partners
2. the benefits of sharing all different kinds of data between local partners, using a variety of different means, for example the value of this for setting and monitoring LAA targets
3. how local partners share personal data, for example whether through structured channels or informally
4. whether challenges exist for local partners in sharing personal data, and if so what those challenges are and how they might be and are overcome

The study began with an extensive scoping phase, which found that many LSPs lack the capacity to take a strategic overview of personal sharing data practice, and that in most cases the progress that had been achieved was the result of the passion and persistence of key individuals.

We consequently undertook a web-based survey of LSP officers and partner organisations to achieve a more accurate picture of current practice. Alongside this we conducted in-depth fieldwork in eight case study sites, and interviewed individuals working in a further twenty localities.

This report describes the different types of and approaches to personal data sharing that we found and explores the factors that can enable and inhibit data sharing initiatives. The report is structured as follows:

- the remainder of this chapter outlines the policy and practice background to this study
- Chapter 2 describes the approach that we took, including to the survey and case studies
- Chapter 3 provides an analysis of the key findings from the research, focusing on the different stages of the personal data sharing 'journey'
- Chapter 4 offers conclusions and recommendations based on the overarching themes emerging from the research.

1.1 Background

The effective sharing of local data, including personal data and pseudo-anonymised data, is an essential stepping stone to successful local partnership working, effective multi-agency, joined up working and to increasing social inclusion through more effective, targeted service provision. A number of policy initiatives have raised expectations for better data sharing even further, including:

- the Local Government White Paper (and the subsequent creation of new Local Area Agreement targets and cross-partner performance management)
- Lyons Inquiry¹ (which emphasises the importance of place shaping and the need for better local intelligence)
- consistent policy focus on reducing inequalities (building on the emphasis placed on effective information sharing in the Policy Action Team 18's *Better Information* report²)
- wider transformational government agenda (demonstrated through progress towards a national information sharing strategy and the launch of the Local Government Delivery Council)
- efficiency and savings agenda, which focuses on improving productivity by getting more from the same resource or achieving the same results for less resource, for example the Gershon Review (2004) requires local government to set efficiency targets.

Recent relevant literature and guidance is aimed at promoting an understanding of the numerous strategic and operational benefits of sharing local information and on raising awareness of when personal data sharing is possible and appropriate. The Audit Commission is currently drafting a position paper entitled 'Using information to make better decisions'. It is the first product of a national study on using information for decision making, describes what is meant by good information and provides examples of how using information well has led to improvements in public services. The Audit Commission recently produced a set of voluntary standards that define the arrangements public bodies can put in place to improve the quality of data they use³.

Some legislation gives local councils statutory duties to share data. The Local Government and Public Involvement in Health Act (2007) states that LSPs must have 'regard for 35 priority targets' and the accompanying guidance refers to the importance of sharing personal information where appropriate. Similarly, the Local Government Act (2000) provides local authorities with 'well being power': a duty to undertake any action to promote or improve the social, economic and environmental well being of their area and this may imply data sharing within policies or projects to achieve this outcome.

In March 2008, Communities and Local Government published *Prospectus 2008: the guide to improvement and efficiency support*, a comprehensive picture of the support central and local government are providing to local partners to deliver Local Area

¹ Lyons, M., *Place Shaping: a shared ambition for the future of local government*, London: The Stationary Office, March 2007.

² *Report of Policy Action Team 18: Better Information*, National Strategy for Neighbourhood Renewal, April 2000.

³ *Improving information to support decision making: standards for better quality data*, Audit Commission, November 2007.

Agreements (LAAs), as part of the National Improvement and Efficiency Strategy. This prospectus outlines how Communities and Local Government intend to target resources to provide training and capacity to 'Data Sharing Advisors' and 'Digital Inclusion Advisors' whose role will be to support the better use of information and analytical capacity. Communities and Local Government are currently working with Regional Improvement and Efficiency Partnerships (RIEPs) to explore the design and delivery of this programme. This initiative will increase local authorities' capacity to use personal data to make better decisions.

The need for data to inform decision making, and to deliver efficiency and improved customer experiences will also become apparent through Customer Journey Mapping (CJM). This is a tool for visualising how customers interact with organisations through a process of tracking and describing their experiences. CJM can provide organisations with insight into their customer's needs, behaviours and motivations and reveal opportunities for improvement and innovation in service design and delivery. Customer experience is a key aspect of Sir David Varney's *Transformational Government Strategy* (2006) and will remain high on the political agenda since its inclusion in a cross-government Service Transformation Agreement in the Comprehensive Spending Review 2007 (CSR07). The CSR07 makes it necessary for departments, agencies and local government to show how they are improving customers' experiences of services.

Data sharing thus runs through all 30 of the government's Public Service Agreement (PSA) targets which are underpinned by the Service Transformation Agreement. The key aim of service transformation is to reduce the number of unnecessary contacts that people need to have with government and 'establish across the public sector a sustainable culture built upon an understanding of the needs and behaviours that citizens and business to create services' that are better for customers, staff and for the taxpayer⁴. Several strategic actions are set out in the service transformation agreement to deliver the vision of service transformation and include:

- learning from citizens and business via direct engagement with end users
- grouping services in ways that are meaningful to the customer to provide; integrated packages of services and a timely response to immediate needs
- rationalising services for efficiency and service improvement
- making better use of customer information the public sector already holds, particularly important for vulnerable groups in society and assessing their needs and entitlement to support
- linking local and central government.

The focus on customer journeys in the Service Transformation Agreement helps bring about some of the associated benefits of personal data sharing. Customer journeys can deliver information, messages and services at the most appropriate time and deliver a seamless, streamlined experience that cuts across silos by recognising where and when it makes sense to join things up for the customer. Journey mapping can build efficiency, target limited resource for maximum impact and plan the most efficient and effective experience by reducing duplication of the number of times

⁴ *Service Transformation Agreement*, HM Treasury, October 2007.

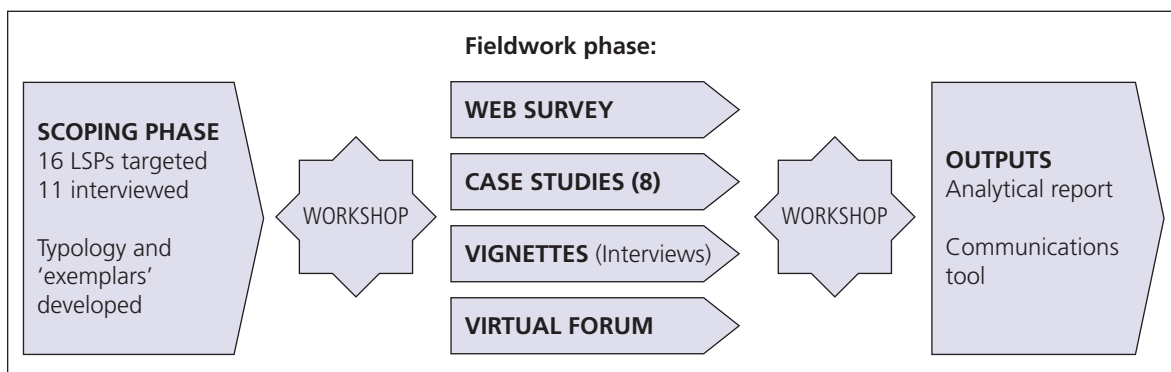
customers come into contact with services. Journey mapping uses personal data to reveal how often a person comes into contact with a public service and how many times the same information is collected by different departments within a local authority.

Despite policy endorsements to share data and burgeoning examples of good practice and innovation, many LSPs and their constituent services struggle with the operational, cultural and strategic challenges to implementing personal data sharing initiatives. A search of the relevant literature identifies some of the key inhibitors and challenges to personal data sharing:

- cost, resources, time and analytical skills
- complexities of laws that govern personal data sharing
- fear of breaking the law
- lack of trust between partners
- professional rivalries
- complex nature of information sharing agreements (ISAs). ISAs are perceived to be about legality and business processes and therefore practitioners are reluctant to apply them through fear of wrong doing
- lack of understanding of organisational cultures (both between and within organisations)
- risk management (eg maintaining confidentiality; avoiding misrepresentation or inappropriate analysis of data)
- numerous methods and approaches to data collection
- incompatible levels or geographical units at which data is collected (eg Super Output Area, ward, region).

2. Approach

Our approach to meeting Communities and Local Government's objectives for this exercise had three main phases: scoping, fieldwork and reporting. We held two workshops to test out research findings between these stages. The overall approach to the study is outlined in the diagram below, and each stage is then described in more detail:



2.1 Scoping phase

We carried out a substantive scoping phase between November and December 2007. The aim was to gain an initial understanding of the extent to which personal data was shared across LSPs and how this was achieved. This stage allowed Communities and Local Government and the project team both to assess the extent and nature of activity around personal data sharing in LSPs and to identify the most appropriate methodology for the remainder of the project.

We also began the process of identifying the core dimensions of success around sharing personal data between local partners, and the challenges that existed.

We carried out a review of the relevant literature to help identify topics we wanted to investigate in scoping telephone interviews, though we were keen to be steered by respondents' views of what the pertinent issues were. We conducted a series of telephone interviews with individuals working in LSPs: both at the LSP-wide (policy or management) level and in individual partner bodies. The LSPs we approached were chosen to reflect a range of regions and types.

Initial contact was made via an introductory email and was followed by a telephone call. We followed a 'snowballing' approach, whereby at the end of each interview, we asked for suggestions of other people in the LSP or constituent bodies to speak to as part of our research. In gaining contacts in this way, we were able to identify data sharing 'relationships' within and between LSPs.

An important finding from our attempts to make contact with LSPs was the lack of strategic overview of data sharing activity, which meant that in order to gain

an understanding of the breadth and depth of information sharing we had to use multiple points of contact in each LSP.

In light of this, the study team recommended that more work needed to be done to understand the level of information sharing activity in local authorities. This finding guided the research design of the main phase and in particular the inclusion of an online survey to map the breadth of data sharing activity. In addition, our scoping research pointed to a lack of vision in LSPs about the benefits of sharing personal data and a poor understanding of the business case for this activity. Given this, in the main phase of the research we proposed developing a range of concrete examples (or 'exemplars') of personal data sharing against which LSPs could judge their own practice. The full report from the scoping phase is attached in **Appendix 1**.

Developing a personal data sharing typology and 'exemplars'

We used the findings from the scoping phase to develop a typology of personal data sharing to illustrate the distinct types of data that can be shared and the varying methods of sharing that data. The typology comprises the following categories:

- 1. sharing anonymised personal data via GIS processes** (eg for spatial analysis, needs assessment, service targeting, monitoring & evaluation)
- 2. connecting personal data sets via identifiers, but anonymised** (eg for deeper analysis of client group needs, creation of compound measures, targeting, monitoring & evaluation)
- 3. connected personal data sets** (eg for personalisation of services; individual needs assessment, monitoring and evaluation)
- 4. informal sharing of personal data** (eg for case reviews, personalisation, risk assessment, monitoring & evaluation).

In order to 'bring the typology to life' we created a range of 'exemplars' for each category, which are included in full in **Appendix 2**. The exemplars were designed to showcase components of data-sharing systems and to provide 'real life' examples of components that practitioners might aspire to or specify in the development of their own systems. The finalised exemplars were used to help design the research tools for the fieldwork stage of the research.

The exemplars were developed and finalised through a workshop, attended by four data-sharing practitioners from three local authorities: London Borough of Brent; Slough Borough Council and Wakefield Metropolitan District Council.

2.2 Fieldwork phase

The main fieldwork phase of the study comprised an online survey, eight in-depth case studies, a series of telephone interviews designed to produce data-sharing 'vignettes', and a virtual forum.

Online survey

An online survey was designed for LSPs and their partner organisations. Rather than providing a comprehensive picture of the extent of data sharing taking place in England the survey served as an evidence gathering tool for gaining insights into:

- how, and to what extent different types of personal data are shared across LSPs
- who is involved in sharing personal data
- who takes ownership of the data sharing agenda.

Respondents were given the option of remaining anonymous but were also invited to forward the survey on to colleagues, and in this way the process of evidence gathering was cumulative.

The survey served as an effective recruitment tool for identifying potential projects or initiatives that could be developed in to a case study or a vignette. This was achieved by asking respondents to provide their contact details if they were interested in contributing to the next stage of the project. Respondents were also given the option of nominating (and leaving the contact details) of a suitable colleague. By looking at the respondents' survey responses and through a short telephone call, the project team were able to establish respondent's level of interest in data sharing as an agenda and whether or not there was a potential project or initiative that could form the basis of a vignette or case study.

The survey was structured around the typology of personal data which identified four categories. After providing a description and an exemplar which illustrated how each data type might be shared, respondents were asked to indicate, through multiple choice questions:

- how important data sharing is in their LSP for achieving better outcomes
- how frequently the data type is shared.

Through open ended questions, respondents were asked:

- what the benefits and incentives are for promoting and sharing personal data in their LSP
- what would help to overcome the barriers and challenges to sharing this type of data.

In the final part of the survey, respondents were asked to identify how a range of critical factors have impacted on their LSP's ability to share personal data. The factors identified included:

- how effectively the business case is recognised or promoted by leaders, managers and practitioners
- how clearly the benefits for sharing personal data are articulated within their LSP
- how aligned the data sharing protocols and guidance in their LSP is.

A total of 84 responses to the survey, which was in the field between 5 March and 14 April 2008, were received against a total of 710 individuals who were invited to complete the survey via an introductory email. The sample included:

- 131 local authorities
- 171 LSP officers or managers
- 96 directors of public health (based in PCTs).

Giving respondents the option to contribute further to the project or to nominate a colleague proved to be an efficient and effective way of identifying individuals with an enthusiasm and interest in the data sharing agenda who were often able to discuss relevant projects and initiatives. Close to half of respondents (38) either left their own details or nominated a colleague to contribute further to the project.

In most LSPs, the most useful information was provided by staff with the following roles:

- Head of Information Governance
- Head of Information and Intelligence
- Head of Strategy and Information
- Head of Strategic Research and Intelligence
- Head of Service Strategy and Transformation
- Director of Corporate Affairs (PCT)
- Information and Evaluation Manager
- Principal Information Analyst
- Demography and Information Team Leader
- Health Improvement Manager (PCT)
- Community Liaison Manager
- Shared Services Programme Manager
- Local Partnerships Officer
- E-Service Officer, Policy and Performance Team
- ICT Project Manager
- Senior IT Manager.

Case studies

Given the range of practice in personal data sharing initiatives, we explored a small number of initiatives in depth by bringing together multiple perspectives on the initiative from across the LSP (or organisation within which the initiative was hosted). Research was carried out in eight case study sites, through a mix of telephone and face-to-face interviews and group discussion. Table 1.1 gives an overview of the case studies:

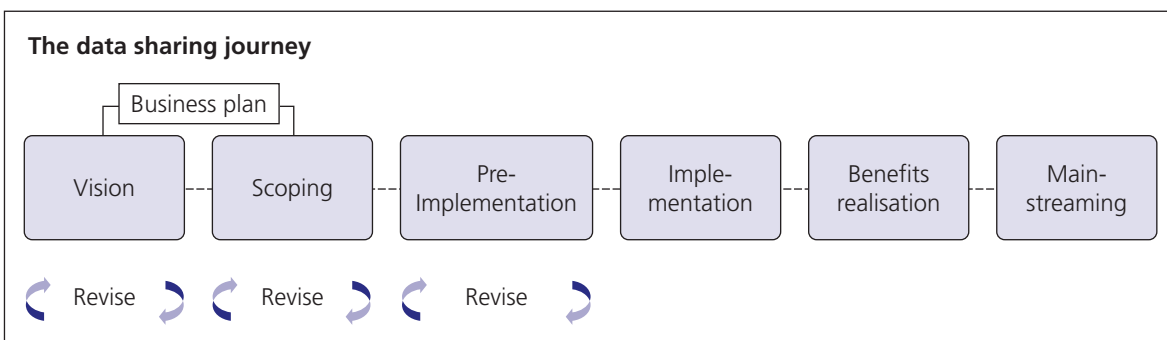
Table 1.1

LA/LSP/PCT	Name of Project	Type of data shared	Partners	Description
London Borough of Brent	Client Index	Type 3	London Borough of Brent	Client Index developed to share core data about Brent's customers across the council. Data such as names, addresses and dates of birth are shared across nine major back office systems to give staff a single view of their customers and allow change of circumstances to be logged. Data is then shared across systems automatically or via an electronic alert.
Brighton & Hove City Council	Brighton & Hove Local Information System (BHLIS Online)	Type 1	Brighton & Hove Local Authority, PCT, Police, key public service partners such as Jobcentre Plus	BHLIS Online provides access to national and local statistics and indicators. It draws on local data sets from LSP partners and helps to monitor performance for the Local Area Agreement. Owned by all partners, it updates the LSP's previous system (City Stats).
Cheshire County Council	Single Assessment Process (SAP)	Type 3	Cheshire County Council, Primary Care Trust; Acute Care; three hospices; fire & rescue service & Age Concern	SAP is a multi-agency assessment of individuals aged over 65, conducted by health or social care professionals. Information is collected once and with the individual's consent can be shared electronically between agencies.
Lancashire County Council	Extended Services Social Enterprise Project	Type 1 & 2	Children & Young People's Directorate & Lancashire County Developments Limited (LCDL)	Pilot of the delivery of extended schools services in six clusters using a social enterprise model. Data is collected (eg on educational attainment and teenage pregnancy) and mapped to identify what services might be needed in the school cluster.
Leicester City Council	Inter-agency Community Safety Bureau (ICSB)	Type 3 & 4	Leicestershire Constabulary; Leicester City Council; District Councils in Leicester	The ICSB uses details of calls to Leicester City Council to identify trends, issues and problems relating to crime and anti-social behaviour and shares these in a multi-agency group which uses the evidence to formulate tasks and actions.
Norfolk County Council	Customer Information Centres (CICs)	Type 3	Norfolk County Council, district councils, the Police	A network of 10 'one-stop-shops' have been developed where customers are able to access advice and signposting services and complete a number of routine transactions such as making a rent or council tax payment or reporting a crime.
Slough Council	Identifying families most at risk of social exclusion	Type 2	Policy and Performance Unit in Slough Council	A project investigating whether 1,000 families at risk of social exclusion could be identified by matching data sources within the LSP. Purpose was to explore how it might be possible to improve their lives and reduce costs to services such as housing, the police and social services by making targeted interventions.

continued

Table 1.1				
LA/LSP/PCT	Name of Project	Type of data shared	Partners	Description
Wakefield	Safe@ Home Project	Type 4	Wakefield Metropolitan District Council, West Yorkshire Police, Wakefield and District PCT and Wakefield and District Housing (WDC)	Wakefield District Partnership’s Safe@Home Project involves the co-location of several services to provide support for victims of and education about domestic abuse. Safe@ Home involves up to 13 agencies within the district which share data on individual cases on a day-to-day basis and during multi-agency risk assessment conferences (Maracs).

Based on the findings from the preceding stages of research, we developed a model of the ‘journey’ along which LSPs progress as they begin to implement personal data sharing initiatives. This was an idealised model, and we recognised that in practice few of the case study sites had actually gone through all of the stages. The model was refined as a result of comments made during case study interviews and at the final workshop. The model is illustrated in the diagram below, and each stage is then described in more detail:



Vision

A strong vision of the intended outcomes of data sharing captures a clear sense of purpose and the initial drivers behind the initiative, and builds on a combination of pre-existing structural factors (such as a system that can be added to), personnel factors (the presence of key individuals) and opportunistic factors (such as the availability of time-limited funding). It identifies the audience at which the data sharing initiative is aimed, draws on needs assessment, and has a clear understanding of intended outcomes.

Scoping

This is an intensive stage of the journey, often with multiple streams of activity required in order to achieve consensus on the direction of travel, flesh out proposals by creating partnership buy-in, and develop formalised structures and agreements. Work taking place in this stage encompasses a number of processes and activities,

including consultation and design, partnership building and drafting data sharing agreements and protocols.

Pre-implementation

This stage includes organisational, structural and symbolic changes that need to take place in order to facilitate the implementation of the data sharing initiative. Factors to be considered in this stage includes obtaining formal partnership sign up to the project, allocating resources for the initiative, and changing organisational structures in order to accommodate the data sharing initiative (for example, by establishing an information governance structure). The purpose of the project can be communicated in a communications strategy and kept on course using project management principles.

Implementation

This stage involves those factors which enable the data sharing initiative to be put into operation. This stage focuses on overcoming inhibiting factors to data sharing such as cultural resistance of front line staff by training the data collectors and analysts in the new systems, maintaining momentum for the project and disseminating, presenting and promoting the system across the partnership.

Benefits realisation

At this stage of the journey, the benefits of the initiative that are anticipated at the outset, as well as unexpected benefits, are realised. An important aspect of benefit realisation is being able to communicate outcomes to service users, elected members and stakeholders, and to make this progress seem 'real', the stage should involve establishing the baseline position to understand progress from that point.

Mainstreaming

Data sharing initiative has become embedded and is sustainable because the policy, data and delivery communities on side and are using or referring to the initiative as part of their 'day job' and there is a sustainable funding stream for the initiative.

In the first stage of the case study fieldwork, an interview was conducted with an individual with a good overview of the personal data sharing activity in question. This interview covered as many of the stages of the journey as appropriate and identified some key enabling and inhibiting factors that had helped and hindered personal data sharing.

The second stage of case study fieldwork involved speaking to other relevant individuals to explore in more detail specific stages of the journey, and the factors that had enabled and inhibited progress at each stage. In each of the case study sites we interviewed individuals with the following perspectives on personal data sharing:

- data practitioner
- strategic/policy
- professional/service management.

Detailed case study narratives capturing evidence from each of the case studies are included in **Appendix 3**.

Vignettes (interviews)

The aim of vignettes was to capture ‘snapshots’ of specific successes, challenges or lessons learned in order to complement the rich detail of the case studies. Through the survey, the project team were able to contact potential interviewees as responses were received. Where a respondent left their contact details or those of relevant colleague(s), the project team conducted a short exploratory telephone conversation or sent an introductory email. If appropriate example(s) of data sharing could be identified, or the contact was keen to discuss a particular aspect or experience relating to the sharing of personal data, a follow-up telephone interview was arranged.

In the vignette interviews, participants were asked to briefly introduce the identified topic or example(s) and then offer details on particular aspects of their experiences. Rather than using a rigid topic guide, participants were offered the ‘space’ to talk around issues.

Twelve vignettes related to either the sharing of type 1 or 2 data. Three related to data type 3 and one to type 4 data. A further two were not data type specific. Table 1.2 summarises the vignettes.

Table 1.2				
LA/LSP/PCT	Name of Project	Type of Data sharing	Partners	Description
Anonymous	Observatory	Type 1	The council; PCT; Police; LSC; Christian Action Housing; a local university; Jobcentre plus.	Local Information System to provide a central repository for monitoring and evaluation of Neighbourhood Renewal Funded projects.
Blackpool PCT	Social Marketing Approach	Type 2	PCT, Police, fire and rescue, council departments (social care and democratic services).	Blackpool PCT purchased anonymised social marketing data to target public health campaigns at high risk groups.
Cheshire, Warrington and Halton Information Consortium (CHWIC).	Vulnerable People Project	Type 3	Cheshire Fire & Rescue Service, Cheshire County Council, the six district councils, Police.	A project to reduce the risk posed by domestic fires by targeting older vulnerable people using GPs contact information provided by social care, of names, addresses and birth dates of older people in Cheshire.
Dudley Council	Locality Profiles	Type 1 & 2	LSP, Police, PCT, Housing.	Establishing Locality Profiles, as an alternative to super output areas and electoral wards, to support thematic mapping exercises.

continued

Table 1.2				
LA/LSP/PCT	Name of Project	Type of Data sharing	Partners	Description
Greater Manchester Community Safety Partnerships across 10 district councils.	Greater Manchester Against Crime (GMAC)	Type 1	PCT, fire service and ten district councils in Manchester.	Data sharing hub that includes data from: ambulance service; fire service; probation service; passenger transport executive; third party data sets that relate to lifestyle data (from MOSAIC); house prices, and the average income of local areas.
Hertfordshire PCT	Brief Interventions Project	Type 2	County-wide partnership group, partners from crime and disorder, trading standards, the Acute Trust (A&E and the ambulance service) and the preventative alcohol services in the PCT.	Sharing details of A&E admittances due to alcohol related injuries, between police, health and social care. Patients contacted by a partner agency and signposted to appropriate alcohol support services.
Hertfordshire PCT	Joint Strategic Assessment – CDRP.	Type 1	Hertfordshire PCT, and the county's 10 CDRPs.	The PCT and CDRPs are sharing and collecting data from health providers to highlight patterns of alcohol and drug use, use of needle exchanges and waiting lists for particular treatments.
Hertfordshire PCT	Joint Strategic Needs Assessments – local authorities	Type 1	Hertfordshire PCT and Hertfordshire County Council.	Building a health profile of 10 boroughs to inform conversations with practice-based commissioners to try to more effectively join up commissioning with service provision.
Hertfordshire PCT	Care Closer To Home agenda	Type 1	Hertfordshire's PCT, Hertfordshire County Council.	The PCT are adding data to the map developed by the Council to include all of the health support received by the same group of people to provide a picture of need to help inform commissioning and service planning.
Lancashire Police	Lancashire Police sharing personal data of street workers	Type 4	Lancashire Police; Lancashire Drug and Alcohol Team; Local Health Authority; probation service, drop-in centre staff	Streetworker Group meetings are held with representatives from partner agencies to share intelligence including sightings, names, addresses and previous intelligence information such as drug use.

continued

Table 1.2

LA/LSP/PCT	Name of Project	Type of Data sharing	Partners	Description
Leicester City	Performance Management System	Type 2	LSP; PCT; Connexions; Voluntary Action Leicester; LSC; cooperative and social enterprise development agency; Leicestershire Economic Partnership; probation service, fire service.	A performance management tool to join up performance management across the partnership and communicate performance information to 50 partners. Initially used to measure and monitor targets set in the Local Area Agreement.
Leicester City	Private schools sharing data with the City Council	Type 3	Private schools in Leicester and Children and Young People's Services in Leicester City Council	Leicester City Council set up data sharing agreements with each private school in Leicester so the city council does not have to search for private school pupils.
Leicester City	Geographical Information System	Type 1	Leicester City Council (corporate and regeneration and education); probation service; health and the police	A Local Information System developed to guide regeneration policy.
Leicester City	Leicester Partnership Information Group (LPIG)	Type 1	Health partnership; Leicester PCT; City and County Council; Leicester Partnership; Connexions; LSC; Education; Police; Leicestershire County Council, and fire and rescue service.	LPIG provides partners with a forum to present their statistical work, giving each other the opportunity to share in this work.
Newham	Newham Neighbourhood Information Management System (NIMS)	Type 2	London Fire Brigade; ambulance service, Newham Homes; Newham Council and stronger and safer communities team.	The NIMS team provided Safer Neighbourhood Teams with data on incidents from the fire brigade, ambulance service, Newham Homes and Newham Council for small, area-level mapping showing patterns of incidents for Safer Neighbourhood Teams.
Oxfordshire County Council	Patient Information Listing	Type 3	Oxfordshire County Council, the PCT and relevant GPs	A spreadsheet extracted from the electronic patient record containing data on discharge dates and criteria is shared with social care teams who meet to review the spreadsheet and make decisions about placements for the continuing care of patients.

continued

LA/LSP/PCT	Name of Project	Type of Data sharing	Partners	Description
Reigate and Banstead Borough Council	Personal data Sharing at the second tier LSP level	Type 1	LSP	Challenges and issues around data sharing in two tier local authorities.
Sandwell PCT	Research Sandwell	Type 1, 2, 3	LSP; DAAT; housing; police; public health.	Dedicated LSP research team, serving the LSP and the council, to inform decision-making by undertaking and disseminating research, providing thematic analyses and advising on the design of externally commissioned research and evaluation.
Suffolk County Council	Sharing of road accident data	Type 2	Suffolk Police, Accident & Emergency Department, Suffolk County Council	Obtaining accident and admission data of road accident details from hospitals to refine understanding of the frequency and type of injury by transport mode.

Virtual Forum

Objectives

The objectives of the virtual forum were to:

- allow the study to maintain an 'action learning' element
- provide a means for individuals from LSPs who are enthusiastic about making progress in this area but have not done so already to learn from those who have
- allow different LSPs to share experiences and consider common areas of strength and challenge: building capacity to move forward
- help to build a national network around this topic, building on the enthusiasm expressed by many of the current participants in this study
- provide a means of communicating the findings of the study and/or the communication resource to be produced as a result.

The Forum was launched on the 24 April 2008. Case study participants, scoping and 'vignette' interviewees and respondents to the online survey who provided an email address were emailed an invitation to take part in the discussion forum. Invitees were provided with a link to the forum, a username and password. Topic threads have been added regularly to stimulate discussion and include:

- who do you think the key players are that need to be involved for data sharing initiatives to begin and be successful?
- what are the key outcomes for service users and communities?

Final workshop

The objectives of the final workshop were to allow:

- participants to learn from one another and network
- Communities and Local Government to hear data sharing experiences directly and have the opportunity to communicate strategic context for data sharing and the latest government messages on the sharing of personal data
- OPM and Local Futures to build, clarify, prioritise and reach consensus on the research findings, specifically with relation to: the data sharing journey; enabling and inhibiting factors to data sharing; possible solutions to inhibiting factors and most useful ways to communicate/disseminate findings.

We made a particular effort to ensure that case study participants were able to attend the workshop and emphasised in correspondence with them that the event would be an opportunity to network with colleagues and share experiences as well as discussing the key research findings and identifying strengths and weaknesses in the data sharing journey model. The final workshop was well attended by 15 attendees from eight LSPs or local authorities. There was at least one participant from five of the case study sites and attendees representing six of vignettes.

Analysis of the research process

The research process presented a number of opportunities and challenges for the research team. The scope of the study was deliberately broad: geographically, we were interested in the whole of England; we were interested in all types of data sharing initiatives at all stages of implementation and we were interested in all partners in all LSPs.

The study was primarily an evidence-gathering and analysis exercise designed to uncover examples of personal data sharing. As we progressed, we realised that there was a high level of variation in levels of understanding of what personal data is and what sharing of it means, as well as variation in understanding of the benefits of sharing personal data and the legislation and guidance surrounding it. Perhaps because of this variation in understanding, recruiting research participants for case studies proved to be a challenge in the main fieldwork phase.

Through initial conversations with Communities and Local Government, the literature search and early results from the survey, we were aware that type 1 and 2 GIS mapping data sharing initiatives were relatively common and well established, particularly relating to the crime and community safety and neighbourhood renewal agendas. We also knew that type 4 sharing of personal data in children's services was also well developed. However, finding examples of type 3 personal data sharing that sat across the LSP was difficult, with most initiatives sitting bi-laterally between two LSP partners, or sitting within the local authority but adjoining departments. The emphasis on the LSP was thus a little distracting for some interviewees because they wouldn't have placed their data sharing in the LSP. This seems to be indicative of some professionals who work in a council department (for example, crime and community safety) not seeing themselves as working in the LSP.

Another challenge was that because we were looking for examples of innovative initiatives and projects, several case studies had not reached implementation stage which made it difficult to say what benefits have been realised because until projects have been evaluated and tested out, it is difficult to pin down what it is that they have done.

However, there was a high level of enthusiasm amongst our research participants, especially those who had done work around data sharing and had come up against challenges. There were a few who were potentially interested in being involved but who felt they weren't far enough along the road in terms of their data sharing to be a case study or even a vignette and there were a few who didn't seem to think that any data sharing goes on.

There were variations in participants' understanding of the purpose and scope of the project (eg the emphasis made on LSPs was often but not *a/ways* applicable) leading to occasional moments of scepticism or confusion requiring clarification on our part. For example, one potential vignette respondent couldn't think of a reason or example of the sharing of personal data between local government and other agencies and organisations and said it wasn't allowed. The survey also worked well to incorporate these broad definitions and interpretations and attract those with an interest/knowledge.

3. The data sharing journey – findings

One of the key objectives of creating the data sharing journey conceptual model was to help raise awareness and understanding of the stages involved in developing a successful personal data sharing initiative. Research participants were asked to comment on stages of the data sharing journey, particularly in relation to what the important enabling and inhibiting factors were at each stage. The key research findings from interviews, the survey and the final workshop are presented below, under the six stages of the data sharing journey: vision, scoping, pre-implementation, implementation, benefit realisation and mainstreaming.

3.1 Vision

The vision stage of the data sharing journey captures the initial drivers behind the project and can include a combination of internal and external enabling factors. Articulating the anticipated benefits and outcomes of the data sharing initiative, ideally in a business plan, is a critical first stage in the data sharing journey. This stage crystallises the purpose of the initiative and identifies the stakeholders and customers who will benefit from the initiative. The type of data to be shared and the way in which it is shared will affect who benefits and how they benefit. Without clearly defined benefits for stakeholders and customers, the purpose of the data sharing initiative may be called into question and falter at later stages. Using evidence to enhance the business case further enables the initiative to be ‘sold’ at subsequent stages in the data sharing journey. Pre-existing systems and availability of funding are two structural factors that can help kick-start data sharing initiatives, along with agential factors such as the presence of ‘visionary’ individuals. These enablers are explored in detail below.

Anticipating outcomes

A number of clear drivers for data sharing initiatives, tied to the benefits the initiative will bring, were identified in the research. The benefits for customers, communities and vulnerable people were highlighted. Organisational, or ‘second order’ benefits, were also highlighted, ie those initiatives which indirectly benefit the service user, customer or community as opposed to directly providing a service to them. Examples included: meeting statutory obligations or responding to central government guidance; meeting LAA targets; efficiency savings and operational-level benefits for front line practitioners and data handlers. Although not all initiatives we encountered had a coherent business plan, all interviewees were able to articulate intended outcomes and beneficiaries of the initiative.

Benefits for vulnerable people, customers and communities

In examples of type 3 and 4 data sharing initiatives (ie non-anonymised sharing of personal data), research participants identified several 'first order' beneficiaries. Vulnerable or 'hard-to-reach' groups were identified beneficiaries of personal data sharing in several initiatives.

Lancashire's street workers group meet on a six-weekly basis and share (type 4) data about street workers and their use of drugs. Data shared includes: sightings; names; addresses, and previous intelligence which tells the group about drug use. Representatives from the police, the drug and alcohol action team (DAAT), the probation service and third sector organisations attend the meetings which aim to reduce drug use by street workers by identifying suppliers and encouraging street workers to go to treatment centres.

Wakefield's Safe@Home project is a 'one-stop-shop' approach to providing support and education to those affected by domestic violence. The project is a co-located team which uses a single referral form. Information is thus shared orally between staff and on a single form. This means that service users should only have to 'tell their story' once because data is shared more efficiently therefore service provision is more joined up and responsive.

Cheshire's Single Assessment Process (SAP) for over-65 year olds uses a single referral form with similar benefits: joining up services to increase their responsiveness and provide better care for service users.

Norfolk's Customer Information Centres (CICs) link up data on district and county council services and providing a 'one-stop-shop'. Staff are able to identify customers' eligibility for a range of benefits that they might not know they are entitled to such as free school meals. By providing a face-to-face service, CICs aim to meet the needs of older people because according to research, they are less likely to use digital technologies to access council services.

Oxfordshire's Patient Information Listing shares information between the county council, the PCT and relevant GPs, in order to manage better after-care for patients who are discharged from hospital. The Patient Information Listing allows decisions about patients to be based on linked, coherent and up-to date information which should result in patients receiving better care.

Over half of the comments made in the online survey about the benefits and incentives of sharing type 3 and 4 data were linked to service delivery and to improving outcomes for service users, for example:

"It is a very individual and personalised service that would ensure people are being treated as individuals. This benefits us in terms of giving a better service to the client and taking into account their needs and wishes. Dealing with data just in client groups is useful, but not all people fit into a neat box or category."

Customers were identified in several case studies as beneficiaries of data sharing initiatives. Norfolk's CICs provide council customers with a range of information and services under one roof and aim to increase service uptake because staff can act on behalf of multiple agencies to process several queries for individuals. Similarly, Brent's

Client Index aims to increase service uptake by using GIS to profile the use of council services and target campaigns, such as library membership, accordingly. The Client Index can also be used to identify new arrivals to the borough in order for the council to send them a welcome pack outlining services they might be entitled to.

Leicestershire's Inter-agency Community Safety Bureau (ICSB) aimed to deliver community benefits by encouraging residents to report anti-social behaviour by having one phone number staffed outside council hours and resolving to act within two weeks to residents' complaints. Wider community benefits were also highlighted in the online survey:

"Local knowledge helps shape local priorities. Local information on incidents and single events enables police and LA response and feedback [from] residents [about levels of] satisfaction with [the] responsiveness of services ... may help reduce fear of crime and anti-social behaviour."

Meeting statutory requirements

Meeting statutory obligations or responding to central government guidance were highlighted as 'second order' outcomes of data sharing initiatives, ie indirectly benefiting the service user, customer or community as opposed to directly providing a service to them. Brent's Client Index, for example, was posited as a way of meeting principle four of the Data Protection Act (DPA) which states that 'personal data shall be accurate and, where necessary, kept up to date'. The Client Index software eliminates duplications and discrepancies in personal data therefore helps to fulfil DPA obligations.

Brighton and Hove's Local Intelligence Service (BHLIS Online) initiative was partly driven by the local authority's need to demonstrate that they were addressing the drive for public service agencies to be more joined up to external regulators such as the Audit Commission and the Government of Office of the South East (GOSE) in order to meet performance targets in the Comprehensive Area Assessment (CAA).

Lancashire's extended schools pilot was a response to achieving the Government's pledge of a core offer of extended schools by 2010. Leicester City Council's data sharing agreement with each private school in the Leicester was a response to the 2004 Children Act which places a greater responsibility on local authorities to know whether children are in education, and which school a child has gone to when they leave a school.

Similarly, Cheshire's SAP for the over-65s was an explicit response to the proposals set out in the Department of Health's white paper 'Our Health, our Care, our Say', which called for service reforms to create more streamlined, joined up and person-centred care.

Performance management

In three case studies, Local Area Agreement (LAA) priorities were a key driver for personal data sharing initiatives. Brighton and Hove's decision to update their performance monitoring system in the form of BHLIS was driven by proposals to

implement the LAA which gave the impetus for the council to look at its performance management processes:

“The lever for public service partners was: “you’ve got to do this anyway for performance management of the LAA.””

Interviewees in the Lancashire extended schools pilot said that one of the drivers for testing the social enterprise model of delivery of extended services was that it promotes schools working together. It could enable schools to work together on LAA priorities such as reducing the rate of teenage pregnancy.

In Wakefield, an LAA priority was a reduction in levels of domestic violence and in repeat offences. The Safe@Home project aimed to respond to the LAA target by sharing (type 4) data between the council, police, housing and health in a more systematic way and giving all partners access to the same information. The aim was for this to speed up referrals between partners and prevent situations from escalating, and to provide a holistic approach to meeting needs.

An interviewee from Suffolk County Council identified LAA targets on road safety as a driver behind the LSP’s road safety campaign which links data from the local authority and the police on traffic accidents and data from the acute trust on hospital admissions. The data will be used to create a baseline for LAA road safety campaigns and to inform future road safety campaigns for the LSP on locally relevant, evidenced targets.

One interviewee (anonymous) noted that second tier authorities are excluded from the LAA process, and doubted the appropriateness of routine programmes of sharing personal data across district LSPs. The interviewee thought that the forthcoming Local Government Review might align second tier authorities more closely with counties, to share the responsibility for setting and delivering the LAA.

Service planning, targeting and commissioning

Much of our research highlighted the benefits data sharing has for service planning, targeting and commissioning. Lancashire extended schools pilot, for example, aims to accurately identify where current services are, where extended schools services should potentially be located and what they should focus on via a service mapping exercise and consultation with local residents. Similarly, Brighton and Hove’s BHLIS project aims to map out worklessness and associated factors such as health inequality in a systematic way in order to identify where the need for particular services are most severe.

Hertfordshire PCT’s Brief Interventions project shares information between the police, health and social care in order to track binge and longer-term drinkers across the system and signpost and/or refer them to appropriate support services, thereby providing holistic and targeted service provision.

Strategic commissioners in Hertfordshire Council and PCT are the ‘audience’ for a data sharing initiative to map older people’s services. At the end of the mapping exercise, the PCT will have a series of ‘pictures of need’ to help inform practice-based commissioners such as GPs, and the council will have evidence about Hertfordshire’s

ageing population. The interviewee noted that the exercise will therefore inform service planning in both the PCT and the council.

Efficiency

Many of the interviewees identified efficiency or cost saving as a driver or anticipated outcome of their data sharing initiative. Savings were anticipated to come through the reduction in duplication of data collection and through earlier, targeted intervention to reduce the need for higher level, more expensive services.

An anticipated outcome of BHLIS is that it will avoid duplication of effort. Currently, some partners are collecting similar data but having one central data store will mean that not all partners need to collect all data. In Cheshire's SAP, staff from health and social care have a common referral and assessment process for over-65-year-olds and information is collected once and used repeatedly, thus reducing duplication. Because less time is taken on assessments, more time can be spent on delivering services and patients can leave hospital earlier which also reduces NHS costs. In the same way, in Norfolk CICs, staff can act on behalf of multiple agencies to process several queries at once which reduces duplication of form filling by staff. In Brent, the business case for the Client Index emphasised its ability to help achieve efficiency savings because it would reduce the number of requests for the same information and allow customer enquiries to be processed more quickly and efficiently.

Slough and Wakefield interviewees identified cost savings as part of the rationale for their data sharing initiatives. By identifying those most at risk of social exclusion, the aim in Slough was to reduce costs to services such as housing, the police and social care via more early, preventative intervention. Sheffield Hallam University are conducting a review of Wakefield's Safe@Home domestic abuse project to investigate whether it has led to cost savings by, for example, reducing costs in temporary housing.

Staff benefits

At the operational level, some benefits of data sharing initiatives for staff were identified.

In a consultation exercise in Norfolk, for example, staff had expressed a desire to solve customer problems and queries rather than pass them on to another agency or service, which provided a rationale for the CICs. One interviewee said,

"People would contact one of us and we would refer them on to the next relevant point. [Before the CICs] We certainly wouldn't have been able to do transactions on behalf of partners, or even for ourselves, they would have had to have gone to a different service desk."

One aim of Cheshire's SAP is to reduce the amount of time staff spent on (repeating) assessments so they could be liberated to deliver direct care. An aim of Leicestershire's Private Schools data sharing initiative is to reduce the amount of unnecessary referrals that education welfare officers get from state schools because the child or young person is attending a private school.

A further aim of some data sharing initiatives might also be to improve partnership working and relationships between different data providers.

Establishing customer needs

The research highlighted the value of establishing the need for the data sharing initiative based on evidence because it helped to make the business case more robust and generate buy-in from leaders; two crucial ‘enablers’ in later stages of the data sharing journey. In order to establish the business case for Cheshire’s SAP, an analysis of patient journeys and the number of times older service users were assessed by separate professionals was carried out. This established that they were assessed multiple times and thus helped to make the case for having one single assessment. Research on customer preferences was carried out as part of an ‘Access to Best Service Review’ in Norfolk by the county and two district councils. The findings showed that customers were confused by the division of responsibility between the County and Districts and that they wanted face-to-face customer service points in more convenient locations. Similarly, evidence from the Community Safety Audit in Wakefield drove their ‘one-stop-shop’ approach to providing support and education to those affected by domestic violence. Lancashire’s extended schools pilot identified success criteria for the project which included gaining a clear picture of what is already provided in an area and what needs to be provided.

Establishing customer need through evidence and analysis did not happen in all our case studies. In Slough, for example, a needs assessment was not conducted and a formal strategy was not designed for the scoping project which aimed to identify the needs of families at risk of social exclusion by sharing data type 3. One interviewee thought that the lack of a formal strategy was part of the reason that health practitioners were reluctant to share data because the project did not have visible strategic commitment and was therefore not seen as a priority.

A key driver for BHLIS in Brighton and Hove was the ‘Reducing Inequalities Review’, undertaken by the LSP, which highlighted the existence of persisting pockets of inequality in the city. However, a thorough needs assessment was not carried out for BHLIS and was felt by all interviewees to have made the next stages of the journey more difficult, particularly gaining financial commitment from all LSP partners.

Pre-existing systems

Data sharing initiatives can be initiated because of opportunities to build on, merge and adapt existing systems. A crucial factor in the emergence of the Brighton and Hove BHLIS Online initiative was the pre-existence of the CityStats system which needed updating in order to make it a more useful tool for the LSP. Building on the previous system meant that,

“We weren’t starting from the beginning – we had the system, buy in and understanding and we weren’t trying to sell them something completely new.”

Leicester City Council’s Inter Agency Community Safety Bureau (ICSB) project team identified the opportunity to collect and share type 3 and 4 personal data from the council’s existing 101 non-emergency telephone service. They made the case for an innovative parallel project to the Home Office who approved funding for it.

Availability of funding

Funding is a second structural driver that allows data sharing initiatives to be kick started. In five out of eight case studies, funding was explicitly mentioned as a crucial factor in the success of the initiative which typically had to be secured at the outset. The type and scale of the project, whether it involves new IT systems and whether it is a new initiative or something that evolves from prior systems will affect how much funding is needed. It will also depend on whether the data sharing initiative is part of the LSP's (or Partner's) mainstreamed activity already and if it is an LAA priority or a legislative requirement.

The initiators of Brent's Client Index set out the business case for the project in order to get approval for funding. Whilst the initial cost of installing the system was high, the business case emphasised that the index had the potential to make multiple efficiency savings. Securing the initial funding was cited by interviewees as a common 'stumbling block' for other local authorities who had attempted to purchase and develop similar systems, which could be due to the level of resource that such a system requires at the outset.

In Brighton and Hove, unspent money from a previous equality and diversity project called 'Equal' needed to be spent in a way that would 'leave a legacy', which provided impetus for the development of BHLIS as once it is implemented it will be available for all partners.

A survey respondent underlined the importance of securing funding when developing systems such as the Client Index and BHLIS, for example: *"resources [are needed] to enable the collation of data into one system including data cleansing and clear data ownership."*

In Leicester, ICSB interviewees noted that having guaranteed Home Office funding for the project until 2010 gave them the flexibility to take a more innovative approach and the budget for two new posts to support the project.

Meeting the Government's core offer for extended schools services by 2010 is a requirement for local authorities, and in Lancashire part of the Children and Young People's Directorate funding is specifically for this purpose. The availability of funding was an important factor in enabling the extended services social enterprise project to be initiated.

Participants in the final workshop identified sufficient 'cost, capacity and resources' as key enablers to data sharing projects. Eight survey respondents stated that increased resources and time would help to overcome barriers and challenges to sharing personal data, further supporting the finding that securing funding is a critical factor in the first stage of the data sharing journey.

Key individuals

Data sharing initiatives can build on pre-existing systems, but they can also begin from scratch. In 'new' projects that were not based on inheriting a system, agential factors were very important. For example, in Brent, the recently appointed Head of IT 'made the case' for the Client Index at his interview, based on his experience of implementing a similar system in his previous authority. His enthusiasm and previous

experience enabled him to sell the concept and vision to members and the corporate management.

Dudley Council's Head of Strategic Research and Intelligence promoted the creation of Locality Profiles to the council's Leader and the Chief Executive because he saw that they would provide a common geographical unit that could support the council and its partners in a range of thematic mapping exercises. Similarly, Cheshire, Warrington and Halton Information Consortium's (CWHIC) Vulnerable People Project (VPP) was initiated because of the 'ongoing leadership' of Cheshire's Fire and Rescue Service.

Main conclusions

All data sharing initiatives should be able to demonstrate benefits for citizens. The research found that data sharing initiatives many directly benefit vulnerable people, customers and communities or provide indirect, 'second order' benefits through responding to government requirements, helping to meet or demonstrate LAA targets, encouraging efficiency savings and increasing job satisfaction. When trying to establish a new data sharing initiative, the most important action is to identify the intended outcomes and beneficiaries of the initiative in order to make a coherent business case and generate the necessary buy-in from all stakeholders in subsequent stages of the journey. Establishing the need for the initiative, based on evidence, consultation and analysis adds weight to the business case. Pre-existing systems, the availability of funding and visionary individuals who can seize opportunities for data sharing were identified enablers in this stage of the journey.

3.2 Scoping

Once the outcomes and beneficiaries of the data sharing project have been identified, the scoping stage of the journey encompasses a number of processes and activities. Participants identified it as a particularly challenging part of the journey. This stage involves designing and planning, achieving consensus on the agreed direction of travel, creating partnership buy-in and developing formalised structures and agreements for data sharing including data sharing agreements.

Design and planning

The research identified a number of factors that were important in the design and planning part of the scoping stage. Key enablers in this stage were: the existence of data sharing project groups; a dedicated project team; research capacity, and the commissioning of external expertise (IT systems and consultants). Inhibitors at this stage included: difficulties obtaining data; a lack of resources, and the existing size and structure of some organisations.

Data sharing project groups

Many of the initiatives we encountered either established a new group, or made use of an existing group to undertake the initial scoping phase of the data sharing project. In three case studies, the expertise and experience that members of data

sharing project groups could bring was seen as an enabling factor. An ICSB project group was established in Leicester which was responsible for selling the ICSB to elected members and deciding on how it would work alongside the 101 emergency number. The project group has representatives whose expertise made it easier to make decisions about the design of the ICSB. For example, one interviewee stated that the decision to use a model which could identify trends and issues arising from calls to the non-emergency number was influenced by the police representative's expertise of employing and working with analysts.

The initial idea for Slough's project to identify the top 1,000 families at risk of social exclusion came from the chair of the LSP, and had support at a senior level. Discussions about the shape and design of the project then moved to the LSP data group: a working group of key individuals able to offer data expertise from each of the main agencies including the police, the PCT, the council and the local education authority (LEA).

The project group established to scope and design Brent's Client Index was made up of representatives from each council department who were picked because they had in-depth knowledge of their department's data sets, they were flexible and had a 'can-do' attitude. The Head of IT in Brent was able to draw on his prior experience of implementing similar systems in his previous authorities.

When multi-stakeholder groups design a data sharing initiative, it can help to generate buy-in from partner agencies because multiple partners have had an input in an initiative. This was important where it was necessary to show that one partner (normally the local authority) wasn't 'taking over', and 'commanding' data from partners. Brighton and Hove's BHLIS was set up as an LSP-wide initiative which helped encourage partners to buy into it because:

"It was really important that the LA wasn't going out and telling people 'give us your data'. We set it up as a shared resource where everyone can pool their data; it was sold as an LSP project".

The commitment and interest of the members of data sharing groups can be an enabler in driving forward the data sharing initiative and in overcoming challenges. In Slough, interviewees noted that the LSP's Data Working Group had representatives from each partnership agency, were a 'strong group' who were able to draw on a history of good working relationships and drove the project. Similarly, the Partnership Data Group (PDG), appointed to decide the general aims and requirements of BHLIS, provided a forum for analysts, technical, operational and policy oriented staff to meet, sound out ideas for and provide a steer for BHLIS. The PDG was felt to be important by interviewees because it ensured that BHLIS represented all partners in the LSP and didn't become skewed towards the council. One interviewee commented:

"A critical aspect is healthy attendance at PDG and good relationships across the LSP. We've done a lot of work with health, and the Police getting there".

The importance of positive working relationships in multi-agency groups was mentioned in a number of sites as an enabling factor, particularly in type 3 data sharing initiatives. In Norfolk, the development of CICs were driven by the strong

working relationships and ‘foundation of trust and goodwill’ that existed between county and district staff. In Cheshire’s SAP, the project leads group was well-established and members had worked together for a long time and were ‘committed to making it happen’.

Cost, capacity and resource

Having the capacity to fully scope a data sharing initiative was emphasised as both an enabler and inhibitor. A dedicated project group is an effective way of ensuring there is capacity to undertake a data sharing initiative, and for a driving an initiative onwards. Such groups were mentioned in Cheshire; Slough (who used an existing working group); Wakefield; Brighton and Hove; Norfolk (who used NCP, an existing high-level group established to undertake projects utilising e-government technology); Leicester City and Brent. An interviewee cited the size and structure of Lancashire County Council as an enabling factor when they were deciding on which model to pilot the extended schools service. There were 20 extended schools officers in the county, one of whom could carry out the necessary research.

Lack of capacity was cited as an inhibiting factor in some data sharing initiatives. For example, in the ICSB in Leicester City Council one interview stated that certain departments lacked the resource and capacity to be involved in the initiative. In the case of the Cheshire, Warrington and Halton Consortium (CHWIC), resources were cited as a main challenge to the Vulnerable People Project led by Cheshire Fire and Rescue Service because the data sets they received required extensive cleansing; a resource intensive process which required specialist input. A survey respondent noted a similar challenge:

“The main challenges relate to the resources and capacity of organisations to collect information at this level and then the capacity to manipulate and interrogate the data”.

Another respondent identified a different resource challenge in the survey:

“The cost of technologies to protect personal data during the exchange stage can be prohibitive. There is also a scarcity of experienced staff/consultants to guide the process transition”

Obtaining outside expertise

Some of the sites involved in the research employed consultants to help them scope, to provide technical expertise or to act as a neutral body to approach partner organisations about getting access to their data. For example, Slough employed a consultant to informally discuss data sharing with LSP partners, with the aim of establishing what data existed and how it could be shared. This approach is one way to overcome sensitivities about one partner ‘demanding data’ from another or interfering. The consultant thus acted as a mediator but also drew on their own expertise and knowledge, for example about contacts to investigate data sources.

Brighton and Hove commissioned external consultants to help develop BHLIS by consulting public sector partners, analysts and policy makers about their requirements for an information system. The consultancy was also responsible for the technical

development of the BHLIS website. One interviewee identified commissioning consultants as an enabler because consultants were funded by Equal, an Equality and Diversity Forum funded project on city skills and employment, so were outside the LA and 'non-partisan'. BHLIS is thus hosted by an outside organisation and is accessible to partners via the LSP websites, a factor that interviewees thought aided buy-in because no one partner owns the system. Similarly, in Cheshire's SAP, because the IT system was externally hosted by IBM in Warwick, no one agency had ownership of it and so it was seen as a shared system.

Although interviewees were positive about procuring outside expertise in the scoping of data sharing initiative, several challenges in doing so were raised. For example, in the Cheshire SAP, procuring a contractor for the electronic tool to support SAP (MDS) took over six months which placed demands on the SAP project manager's time because he had to liaise with all the potential contractors and keep them interested for a long time. In Brighton and Hove, differences in language could result in communication barriers between the consultants and the BHLIS team:

"One issue all along is that there are technical and IT people who are not able to talk to policy people: there have been some meetings where we just don't know how to make a decision because we don't have the technical understanding. . . It can be really difficult to make judgements – sometimes [the LSP manager] and I have conflicting advice".

One way around the problem identified by a BHLIS interviewee above is to involve a cross-section of partners in the design of the initiative. Brent, for example, involved 20 individuals from across services and departments in the procurement phase for the Client Index. Having a wide involvement encouraged ownership across the council because they could learn together about the process of data sharing instead of procurement resting with 'just a couple of techies'. There were further examples of the benefits of not procuring external consultants and keeping the work 'in house'. An interviewee associated with the Performance Management System in Leicester City Council commented that whilst it took more time to implement the system in-house,

"It was a valuable opportunity to gain experience and develop the necessary support processes and external consultants were employed only when specific pieces of work were identified and the additional resource was of benefit to the programme".

There is a question about where BHLIS will be hosted in the future because the LA use different tools and systems for web authoring to Geowise, the system hosts, some of which may not prove cost effective for the LA to invest in. This highlights another potential challenge of using external hosts for data sharing systems.

Difficulties obtaining data

Identifying what data was necessary and available for the project and whether the data is accessible is another important part of the scoping phase. A number of our research participants identified challenges in this phase.

In the Lancashire extended services social enterprise project, getting hold of lower level data from partner agencies such as data on young people who are not in education, employment or training (NEET) was sometimes challenging. Lancashire County Developments Limited (LCDL) helped the consultant collecting data by writing a letter of introduction to agencies he was requesting data from. Another enabling factor was that the consultant had knowledge about the location of data sets from previous jobs. Retaining the anonymity of individuals if data was used at the lowest level was a further challenge in Lancashire:

“Where there are a small number of cases this [low-level educational data] can be sensitive as, depending on the number of individuals at that level, they could be identified and the premise is not to identify individuals”.

A similar problem relating to the level at which data is available was cited in Slough because when data was made available it could be unusable because of the level or frequency at which it is collected, which meant that work had to be put into making sure the different data sources could be matched in a meaningful way.

A further challenge in the Lancashire case study was a lack of opportunity to scope the indicators more clearly and get agreement from the stakeholders in the pilot areas about which indicators should be used, with clear lines of accountability and deadlines for sign off. Using data from third sector providers because it was not always in a format that could be used easily was a further inhibitor.

The Data Protection Act (DPA) was cited as a barrier to obtaining data in Lancashire because:

“The amount of documents you have to sign to get hold of data is an issue. The Data Protection Act is not seen as an enabling piece of legislation, it is seen as something to put up a wall – people don’t view it as an enabler”.

A total of 22 comments in the online survey across the four data types related to the DPA. Nine respondents identified the DPA as a barrier or challenge to sharing personal data sharing and eight called for greater awareness and clarity of the DPA. Confusion and misunderstanding of the DPA was identified as a barrier to data sharing by a respondent in the online survey:

“Better clarity on what is and is not Data Protection. Some agencies do not share information because the personnel are unclear on what they can release about individuals.”

This was echoed by another respondent in reference to type 1 data sharing who made the following suggestion:

“Remove the paranoia surrounding the Data Protection Act and Freedom of Information and make individual managers responsible for data exchange (with sufficient safeguards) backed by punitive sanctions that can break the ‘silo’ mentality.”

Several respondents to the online survey raised concerns about the security of data. The comment below is in response to how barriers to data sharing (particularly type 1 data) could be overcome:

“There would have to be secure portals to send the data to – secure web portals or encrypted files. There would also have to be strong information sharing protocols in place to ensure that data at both ends is dealt with carefully and appropriately. With both these issues in place and working, a lot of the challenges and barriers to information sharing would be avoided – however, it is accepted that no system could be 100 per cent secure.”

Partnership building

Partnership building is a vital stage in the development of a data sharing initiative and six of the eight case studies mentioned the importance of building partnership buy-in in the scoping stage. Approaches to partnership building included: consensus building workshops; using local LSPs to communicate the vision of the initiative; gaining support from elected members; building on strong informal relationships between districts and county staff, and reaching consensus through discussions with all partners about the smaller but symbolic things such as branding.

In Brent, after funding was approved, a series of workshops were conducted with senior representatives and operations managers across the council to educate them about the purpose of the Client Index and allow them to contribute to its design. One interviewee noted that through the workshops, the project team began to ‘trap’ what data they would need and in which department they would find it. The workshops thus fulfilled a number of important functions. One Brent interviewee said,

“You need to discuss what the data will do and be open and reassure people. Within the project there are technical risks but you can manage them. The main risk is that it ‘peters’ out and then you’ve wasted your money.”

The importance of buy-in at this stage of a data sharing initiative was referred to in the online data sharing survey, particularly in light of approaching partners for data: *“Gaining buy in from partners [who are] defensive and protective over data.”*

The ICSB in Leicester City took a similar approach to Brent Council: after getting initial sign-up from elected members, the purpose of the ICSB project was communicated to senior offices to encourage their support.

In the Lancashire Extended Schools project, the importance of gaining buy-in from all partners at the scoping phase was emphasised because the scope of provision of extended services means that all the statutory services had to be involved in some way. Getting buy-in was both hindered and facilitated by the two-tier structure of the council. One interviewee noted that the size and structure of the council could be an inhibitor because accountability lines and ownership were hard to identify. Also, whilst there was strategic level engagement, it could be hard to translate the vision down to the local level. The existence of 12 well-established LSPs (each with a new Local Children’s Trust Partnership) to act as vehicles for promoting the pilots helped,

particularly with engaging partners who sat outside the county council (Housing and Leisure).

All interviewees from the Norfolk CIC case study noted that this stage of the project involved presenting the benefits of the initiative and gaining sign-up and from partners to agree on a joint solution and to the joint branding involved. Senior buy-in from elected members, who valued the provision of a service which is face-to-face with the community, was achieved. Here one interviewee noted that,

“CICs demonstrated our efforts to think more creatively about how we develop and use face-to-face services.”

A factor that enabled buy-in was the existence of strong informal relationships and high levels of trust between the county and districts, due partly to the fact that staff frequently move between jobs across the two tiers. Where concerns were raised, talking through the issues with partners was viewed as the effective response. This could include issues around operational governance in the service-level agreements and, *“small things like branding and ownership and how to performance monitor.”*

In the survey, one respondent was positive that cultural barriers to partnership building and sharing were being broken down:

“The biggest barrier was cultural and is now breaking down. Working practices are adjusting [and] as a consequence [are] further removing traditional barriers.”

Drafting data sharing agreements and guidance

Part of the scoping phase in new data sharing initiatives is drafting data sharing agreements and guidance for partners to be able to share data confidently with each other. Drafting information sharing agreements (ISPs) contributed to partnership building and was necessary in order to have the documents that could then be signed in the pre-implementation stage of the journey. Drafting data sharing agreements brought some challenges, including complying with the Data Protection Act, an absence of guidance on data sharing upon which to draw, challenges of having multiple partners involved in drafting protocols and agreements and agreeing on a common language.

The Data Protection Act poses a challenge in Brent because it requires that arrangements are in place to control data sharing initiatives such as the Client Index so that they are not open to abuse. In response to DPA requirements, protocol agreements are being established which draw on the government-authored code of practice for information sharing. A related task involves conducting a privacy impact assessment for each type of data being shared.

In Cheshire, at the time of drafting the data sharing agreements for the SAP, there was scarce guidance on data sharing. An enabler in overcoming this challenge was appointing the Information Governance Manager from the Western Cheshire PCT whose key role was to develop the protocols. Appointing this key individual was reassuring for the Cheshire Partnership because the agency experienced in data sharing (the PCT) was taking the lead. A particular challenge to developing data sharing agreements for the SAP in Cheshire was developing the Memorandum of

Understanding because it involved staff from many different departments, including finance departments and lawyers so reaching agreement on the content of the Memorandum was difficult.

The example of the challenges of multiple partners working on Cheshire's Memorandum of Understanding highlights a tension in the scoping stage of the data sharing journey with regard to having multiple people (a project team), or one person heavily involved in the scoping and design of an initiative. For example, in the case of a Local Information System (where the research participant wished to remain anonymous), after the initial idea for the system, the Information Services Manager met with representatives from departments they wished to gather data from, but a committee-based system was not adopted which 'enabled the system to progress quickly and efficiently'. A benefit to having one person involved in the scoping stage appears to be efficiency and less time taken on consultation. Conversely, the interviewee for the Greater Manchester Against Crime (GMAC) project noted that although the overarching data sharing protocol took a long time to write and a long time to get the agreement of all partners, this had helped data sharing 'enormously' because the 'ground rules were agreed'.

Two interviewees involved in the Wakefield Safe@Home project noted that the design stage took two years, which was felt to be too long. This was attributed to the 'to-ing and fro-ing' over how the organisations would fit together and because there were a series of hoops to go through at each stage of the negotiation with different large organisations. In contrast, the specification of Cheshire's SAP was determined by Department of Health guidance and approved protocols. This meant that as SAP was being developed, the length of time spent consulting with partners about decisions such as the type of data to be collected and shared to support SAP was limited.

Developing appropriate language to be used in relation to a data sharing initiative was identified as an important activity in two of the case study sites and by final workshop participants. To support the development of Cheshire's SAP, instead of using a term such as 'referral', which has different meanings in different agencies, a neutral language was defined and so 'action' and 'item' were used instead of 'referral'. The process of introducing a common language was identified as an inhibiting factor by one interviewee because until practitioners understand the 'new' language, they are not able to use the SAP. Brighton and Hove's BHLIS was deliberately called an 'Information Service' rather than an 'Information System' so that it was communicated as being a helpful tool as opposed to an IT system which could imply it was not something that would be as beneficial to as many partners.

Main conclusions

The scoping stage of the data sharing journey is crucial in ensuring that the data sharing systems is designed well, that partners buy in to the initiative and that agreements for sharing data are drafted. There were a number of critical enabling and inhibiting factors in this stage.

In the consultation and design part of the scoping stage of data sharing initiatives, a number of enabling factors were cited, including:

- the existence of groups that can house the project and take ownership of it, whether this be a newly established project team or a pre-existing multi-agency group
- LSP-wide project groups as particularly beneficial in garnering support for data sharing initiatives as all partners are represented and have an input, thereby encouraging ownership
- having the capacity to conduct the design and scoping stage of the project was also identified as a critical success factor
- procuring outside expertise in the form of an IT system or consultants was another enabling factor although the cost implications of having externally hosted IT systems was cited as a potential future inhibitor.

A challenging, or inhibiting factor in the consultation and design stage related to obtaining, cleaning and prioritising data, with the DPA being used as an 'excuse' to withhold data and the incompatibility of data sets at different geographical levels posing a challenge.

Data sharing initiatives take different approaches to partnership building. Projects which continued successfully through to later stages in the data sharing journey had secured the support of multiple partners at this early juncture. Particularly important in partnership building is ensuring that multiple partners are included in discussions about the design of the initiative, although this needs to be weighed against the potential time implications of having a lengthy consultation process.

Drafting data sharing agreements and guidance was seen to be enabled by legislation that has certain requirements and sets parameters for data sharing. Establishing a common language for the data sharing system was a further enabler.

3.3 Pre-implementation

Pre-implementation involves those factors which are sometimes not recognised at the scoping stage but which need to take place to implement data sharing. Organisational and structural changes might take place at this stage and include: formal partnership sign up to the project; resources allocated to and secured for the project; the reorganisation of LSP and/or council structures in order to accommodate the data sharing initiative(s), and ensuring good communication and project management. These themes are explored in turn below.

Partnership sign-up

An important stage in the data sharing is ensuring that the partners and stakeholders are signed up to the vision of the data sharing initiative and that the partnership building stage is formalised at the strategic level. This can be done through the signing of information sharing agreements and through funding being guaranteed through service-level agreements.

Survey respondents cited the importance of having sign-up of all partners to data sharing. One respondent noted that for type 1 data sharing projects to work, there

needs to be a set of protocols that are accepted by the PCT, JobCentre Plus and the Department for Work and Pensions. Another survey respondent emphasised that local authorities need to devise protocols that ensure that data sharing protocols include all partners, including the voluntary sector: *“We need to ensure that protocols are put in place for the voluntary sector and for other key partners not yet included.”*

The Greater Manchester Against Crime project is an example of a type 1 data sharing project that is underpinned by a series of data sharing protocols which build in top-level sign-up for a number of partners and local-level flexibility. There is an overarching protocol underpinned by ‘local schedules’, or local data sharing protocols. The overarching protocol took some time to write and it was difficult to get each partner to agree to it. However, it is now seen as an enabling factor because it has top-level sign up from, for example, CEOs of each district and the PCT, the head of the fire service and the Chief Police Constable.

Having top level, visible buy-in was felt by our interviewee to act as a ‘hook’ for potential signatories. Underneath the overarching protocol sit ‘local schedules’ which outline the day-to-day practicalities, or the mechanics, of the data sharing. Having local-level sharing protocol means that there is a flexibility in data sharing and new partners can be accommodated by being provided with a local-level sharing protocol that fits into the main one:

“Now we can slot anything into the overarching one by providing a local-level sharing protocol that fits into the main one. It helps data sharing enormously as the ground rules are agreed – also, new potential signatories can see that it has top-level buy in.”

Three case studies provided examples of how getting top-level partnership sign up to new data sharing protocols and guidance facilitated the data sharing journey. In Wakefield, detailed data sharing protocols were established and signed by LSP partners, whilst in Brent a protocol is currently being drafted to support the further development of the Index requiring sign-up from each service and department. In Cheshire, a number of official documents were signed including the Memorandum of Understanding. This document formally enshrined their financial commitment to the SAP and was signed by the Chief Executives of the PCT and counter-signed by Finance Directors. Survey respondents reiterated that senior-level buy-in was an important enabler, and one commented that there needed to be ‘commitment from the top’. Although no formal data sharing protocols were signed in Brighton and Hove, there was a lot of senior-level buy-in from CEOs, and CityStats was an important enabler in getting partners to sign up to BHLIS because, in the words of one interviewee *“We weren’t starting from the beginning – we had the system, buy-in and understanding and we weren’t trying to sell them something completely new.”*

The importance of having formal agreement on data sharing was emphasised in the Slough case study because data sharing protocols were not resolved and signed up to at the start of the project, so all partners were not entirely clear on what would happen with data. This could be one reason why the project stalled.

Clarity about information sharing ‘rules’

The research identified having clarity about the ‘rules’ of data sharing as an enabler to data sharing. This is important at both the strategic and operational levels, because partners need to feel confident that public data is being used and stored correctly; as one survey respondent noted: *“Agencies and individuals need to be confident about security (recent losses of data has had major impact on general confidence and needs to be addressed)”*.

The research reveals a difference in opinion on data sharing protocols and guidance and the different types of data sharing. For the higher level, less *personal* data (types 1, 2 and 3), ensuring all partners and operational staff are clear on the DPA could help. However, when it comes to sharing qualitative personal data in, for example case reviews (type 4 data), survey respondents commented on the need for robust mechanisms to ensure the correct use of personal data and safeguarding confidentiality, for example: *“[you] need to have clear protocols on definitions of qualitative data (ie fact and opinion) and the use of the information outside of the parameters of specific review/risk assessment”*.

Another issue related to type 3 and 4 data in particular, and connected to questions about the correct use of data being firmly established and clearly understood, relates to consent. Participants in the final workshop noted that there are different levels of consent and different depths of data sharing and that the depth and sensitivity of the data being shared will need to be reflected in the type of data sharing protocols that are drafted and endorsed.

Ensuring that consent is kept ‘live’ is being tackled in Cheshire’s SAP by practitioners ‘refreshing’ consent as part of their day-to-day interactions with patients. Clear guidance and sign-up to data sharing protocols can thus be seen as paramount to successful data sharing journeys, as one survey respondent commented:

“Would need consent from individuals to share at personal level. Specific guidance from Information Commissioner would be useful. Information Sharing Protocols need to exist within all organisations at different levels.”

In the Leicester ICSB case study, a major challenge was ensuring that they complied with data sharing legislation which they believed required consent to be given before names and addresses could be shared. There has been on-going work with data protection officers in the council and Leicestershire Constabulary to ensure that legislation is complied with. Work has involved drawing on data protection expertise from the police forces regarding the secure storage and transfer (from the council to the police) of confidential files; secure email routes; password protected files and the branding of police files.

Resources allocated

Alongside data sharing protocols, partnership and senior-level buy-in/commitment and clarity about data sharing rules, there must also be clarity about how the data sharing project will be funded. One way of guaranteeing that the data sharing initiative has cross-partner commitment is making all LSP partners fund the project. In the case of GMAC, every partner pays into the system which helps increase the level

of buy-in from each partner and means that it is financially sustainable. The revenue funding formulae for Norfolk CICs were underwritten by an SLA which guaranteed sustainability of the project. In Brighton and Hove, the LSP manager felt that in order to gain widespread commitment to BHLIS, all partners needed to make a financial contribution rather than it being funded as part of the mainstreamed performance and monitoring function of the local authority, as it currently is.

In Leicester, guaranteed Home Office funding until 2010 was initially an enabler for the ICSB but the funding was withdrawn earlier than expected. Despite this, the ICSB is continuing without the 101 emergency number in a revised and updated format because funding has been committed from a number of partners including the police, the city council and the district councils in the area.

In order to 'sell' a council-wide initiative, a Brent interviewee noted that there needs to be full, cross-sector council commitment so that the council is prepared to invest in the infrastructure of a project. The interviewee noted that this council-wide buy-in was a great enabler in convincing the council to fund the Client Index, but that they had had conversations with people in other councils who were struggling to convince their leaders to invest in resource-intensive council-wide projects such as the Client Index.

The Slough case confirms the need to have funding commitment at the pre-implementation stage. The project had top-level sign-up from the Chief Executive of the council, and support from senior members of the LSP and the PCT but no formal funding agreements were established. Initial funding came from the top level in the council but changes in personnel meant that priorities changed and continued funding was not available for the next stages of the project. It was felt that the project needed to have a clear focus for all stages of the work, as well as the resources to fund this.

One survey respondent noted that partners need to give priority and commit resources to type 4 data sharing initiatives (such as multi-agency meeting) so that staff are able to participate in them. This highlights the need for (operational) management buy-in being backed up by resources.

Reorganisation

Part of the preparation for implementing a new data sharing initiative is ensuring that the right structures are in place to support the initiative through the implementation stage and onwards to be mainstreamed. Reorganisation can include a number of elements, such as: establishing co-located teams; setting up partnership-wide data sharing groups; reorganising existing, or creating new data sharing mechanisms; aligning IT systems, and changing people's job descriptions to reflect data sharing.

Wakefield is an example of a data sharing initiative being facilitated by staff from partner agencies being co-located in the same office. This physical reorganisation at pre-implementation stage took time because of the need to source the premises but was felt to be fundamental to the successful implementation of the project. Data handling is kept within the project and facilitated through the use of one common referral form which was developed following a review of all partner agencies referral forms in the scoping stage of the journey. Interviewees asserted that personal data

is shared in a more formal way because of the use of a common referral form which not only speeds up the referrals between partners but also prevents information being lost or duplicated unnecessarily.

One workshop attendee noted that having a formal system, particularly for type 3 data sharing, was important and said that in their experience, sharing data informally between two professionals (paper files, fax and email were mentioned) had been a way to circumvent establishing a more formal data sharing system.

LSP-wide data sharing groups were a feature of two of our case studies and their existence was felt to greatly enable data sharing initiatives. In Slough and Brighton and Hove, data sharing groups facilitate positive relationships between data sharing partners and help break down barriers. Survey respondents supported the view that these groups enable data sharing. One respondent suggested that to overcome challenges to data sharing, there should be a 'shared data hub across the LSP'. Another suggested "*Data owners working together in a formal group that had full permission to share personal data but only amongst themselves*".

Several research participants commented on the need for IT systems to be aligned in order for data sharing initiatives to be successful. One survey respondent noted that there needed to be "*Integrated IT systems (requires central investment for all service providers). Need to await evaluation of Contact Point children's database.*"

In Norfolk, there was a lot of variation in the services and responsibilities that partners were willing to allow the county's CIC staff to perform on their behalf, and in the level of access they gave to their back office systems. An interviewee commented that,

"Bringing together two authorities can be threatening for people who may think that either their job will go or that they will have too much to do. They can lose sight of the customer and the potential benefits."

For type 1 data sharing, a survey respondent wanted to see more efforts to "*exploit new technologies that will enable more efficient and secure sharing of data, eg secure networks, encryption.*"

A message from the workshop was that data sharing would be facilitated by a change in job descriptions in order to incorporate data sharing into peoples job roles and ensure that data sharing becomes part of the 'day job'; something we explore in the later 'mainstreaming' section.

Communication and project management

Research participants identified two further and connected enabling factors in the pre-implementation stage of the data sharing journey: having a clear communication strategy and good project management of the data sharing initiative.

Good and consistent communication was felt to be important at the pre-implementation (and implementation) stage of the journey so that all partners agree on the terms that are being used and use them consistently. The importance of developing a common language in the scoping stage was highlighted in the Cheshire

SAP and Brighton and Hove BHLIS examples. One interviewee from the CHWIC service emphasised the need for 'clarity and consistency in describing the project, the data being used and the potential beneficiaries' which was underpinned by a defined communications plan with, 'strict agreement on terminology, understanding common terms, and project specification.' The SAP in Cheshire also had a communications strategy, with a designated 'lead', which was seen as an enabler in the pre-implementation and in the implementation stage. CHWIC's Vulnerable People Project was project managed using Prince 2 principles, as was the ICSB in Leicester, which was seen as an enabler in keeping the projects on course. Workshop attendees also thought that good project management was a key enabler to successful data sharing initiatives.

Main conclusions

A number of key factors at the pre-implementation stage of the journey allow the work done in the scoping phase to be crystallised into formal structures and agreements and, if carried out successfully, can aid the smooth implementation of the data sharing initiative. The research revealed four critical elements and their respective inhibiting and enabling factors in this stage:

- **partnership sign-up** to the project, for example information sharing protocols written and signed and funding committed to the project underpinned by a service level agreement or other formal agreement
- **resources allocated** to the project and underwritten by SLAs
- **reorganisation** of structures, for example having an information governance structure and ensuring that there is the capacity and expertise for data to be input, analysed and shared. This stage might involve the setting up of LSP-wide data sharing groups to facilitate data sharing
- **communication and project management** in order to ensure that a clear and consistent message about the purpose and benefits of the data sharing initiative are communicated and following project management principles such as Prince 2 so that the project does not drift.

3.4 Implementation

The implementation stage is the point of the data sharing journey at which the initiative is ready to be put into operation. The case studies that reached the implementation stage revealed a number of inhibitors and enablers that impact on whether the project realises outcomes for its beneficiaries and is mainstreamed. Cultural resistance to data sharing, overcome by training and dissemination of positive messages (particularly when championed by senior-level staff) and maintaining momentum were identified as critical factors in this stage of the data sharing journey.

Cultural resistance to data sharing

The absence of operational staff support was highlighted as an inhibitor to the data sharing journey in five case studies. One workshop participant thought that without

the engagement of practitioners in the implementation stage, the data sharing initiative will stall and possibly fail. This was because of the importance of the way in which data is collected, and the quality of that information, to the success of type 3 data sharing initiatives in particular.

The case studies revealed a number of cultural barriers to data sharing at operational level. These barriers relate to practitioners being reluctant to change their familiar and traditional ways of working. In the Leicester case study, professionals – particularly in the council – had concerns about the ICSB which included: the time commitment the system would require; being accountable to the police, and feeling pressured because they would be required to deliver a solution to members of the public in two weeks.

An interviewee from Slough noted that despite the data sharing initiative having senior-level commitment from the council and the PCT, at a practitioner level, the barriers to data sharing were *'more real than many people wanted them to be'*. Three reasons were given for this reluctance, including:

- the lack of dedicated resources and clearly stated aims of the project which resulted in practitioners giving data sharing a low priority
- individual agencies viewing the data in the light of their own current project focus, which led to data being supplied at too many different levels, leading to complicated outputs
- outright resistance from some partners to sharing data.

A resistant organisational culture was identified in the Wakefield case study as an inhibitor to the data sharing initiative. One of the biggest challenges to creating the one-stop shop approach to domestic violence was changing the data sharing culture of staff within partner agencies outside the PCT and education services. In the development of Cheshire's SAP, there was some initial reluctance amongst staff from health and social care to change their working practices so that they could use the same electronic assessment document. In Brighton and Hove, there was some reluctance from those who are familiar with the current data sets and way of reporting. Some data analysts thus needed convincing that they needed BHLIS as they were happy with the status quo. Workshop participants identified a lack of inter-agency trust as a barrier to getting buy in to a data sharing initiative, with one attendee describing it as a feeling of *'what are you going to do with the data I give you?'*

Several strategies were adopted in order to overcome operational reluctance to cooperate with new data sharing systems, including training and dissemination via champions.

Training

Training, particularly of operational staff, was identified by many interviewees as being central to the success of the implementation process, partly because it is an enabler in overcoming practitioner reluctance to data sharing.

In Cheshire, the culture change that the increased use of IT required was a challenging factor in the implementation of SAP. An initial need assessment of staff's

IT skills was conducted, but when training was being delivered, it was realised that practitioner's IT needs had been underestimated and many practitioners had very little IT experience. In Wakefield, training has been given to staff in all service areas which might come into contact with survivors of domestic violence and dedicated training days have been embedded within the training for PCT staff (and are mandatory for Registrars).

In the Performance Management System vignette, the Leicester Partnership purchased a performance management tool to join up performance management across the partnership and communicate performance information to 50 partners. The implementation team developed training modules, relating to the different levels of access to the tool and to date, eighty staff from across the partnership⁵ have been trained by their LAA theme block 'champion' to read reports and enter data. The number of staff that have been trained was acknowledged as being resource intensive, but because each LAA theme block is responsible for inputting their own indicators, it encourages ownership and has a positive impact on the quality of the data.

BHLIS has been designed so that all partners can 'dump' their own data onto it which means that each partner takes responsibility themselves for updating the system. A survey respondent also noted the value of having one central system that *"all agencies could access and input information into rather than being reliant on one agency collecting information and inputting it"*.

Making the data sharing system part of staff's 'day job' is another way in which data sharing systems have been implemented successfully. For example, in the Leicester case study, practitioner resistance to using the ICSB was overcome by managers making it clear that the ICSB was their 'core business' and supporting their staff to review workloads if the commitment was too high.

In Cheshire, one interviewee noted that they were changing working practice by embedding gaining client consent in practice so that practitioners are required to reaffirm consent when they have interactions with clients, thereby keeping it live and relevant.

Dissemination

Promoting the benefits of data sharing initiatives by disseminating positive messages was another way in which practitioner reluctance to data sharing was overcome. Workshop participants agreed that top-level sign-up was not enough to ensure successful implementation of data sharing initiatives. They suggested that the benefits for clients and customers of data sharing needed to be communicated to front line staff via 'word of mouth, workshops and training'; a message that was emphasised in the survey:

"Chief Executives need to be committed to actions not (just) . . . words. These actions need to be effectively escalated down through senior and middle managers to officers involved in the practicalities of sharing and linking the

⁵ Trained partners include: the PCT, Connexions, Voluntary Action Leicester, LSC (Learning Skills Partnership), CaSEda (Cooperative and social enterprise development agency), LEP (Leicestershire Economic Partnership), Probation Service, Leicester Fire Service.

information. Issues arise around identifying the same individuals in different datasets.”

In Leicester, the purpose of the ICSB and 101 non-emergency number was communicated to frontline staff through presentations from the project team and information from presentations was cascaded down to operational staff by service leads. Presentations were designed to reassure workers of the practical implications of being accountable to the police and the impact that the ICSB would have on their workloads. Positive feedback from victims about the service was disseminated which further encouraged commitment to the initiative.

Having ‘champions’ is one strategy that can enable the successful dissemination of the benefits of data sharing initiatives. In Cheshire, a champion for the communications strategy was appointed who was responsible for communicating the purpose of the SAP to front-line staff. The champion did this by networking with teams throughout health and social care; attending team meetings and manager’s meetings, and holding road shows and training events for staff. Older people’s forums and Age Concern were used to communicate the purpose and benefits of SAP to service users. The champion approach was also an enabler in the Leicester vignette and provided support and flexibility.

The Blackpool social marketing vignette is an example of successful dissemination of the benefits of a data sharing initiative, although more to ‘sell’ the idea to potential partners than to get practitioners on board. Following presentations on the product, a high level of demand from a range of agencies was generated, including the police, fire and rescue, council departments (social care and democratic services) as well as for illness profiling and mapping population densities for the PCT. The interviewee identified the key message of the importance of understanding what data is really important and adopting a targeted approach to its use:

“It would be very easy to analyse everything to death and produce reams of attractive maps – you could find yourself very easily swamped with requests for data and unless resourced properly its use could become problematic.”

Maintaining momentum

Another factor that enables the implementation stage is maintaining momentum for the data sharing initiative. This requires continuous communication of the purpose and benefits of the initiative and ensuring that knowledge about the system is formalised to avoid the disruptions of staff churn.

The CHWIC vignette highlights importance of having ongoing leadership provided by the Cheshire Fire and Rescue Service for delivery and operation of the Vulnerable People Project, combined with effective governance from the CHWIC Executive and Governance Board. An anonymous interviewee noted that a challenge in implementing their Local Information System (LIS) had been sustaining interest from all partners and noted that it is now used less than it was at the early stages. The team working on the LIS are trying to overcome this by persuading thematic groups in the LAA Blocks to use the system to monitor targets in the LAA through attending their meetings. Although the Brighton and Hove BHLIS case study has yet to reach

the implementation stage, the fact that the data partnership group has BHLIS as one of its core functions means that momentum for the project should be sustained.

Ensuring that there is a formal knowledge transfer mechanism is another important enabling factor in maintaining momentum for a data sharing initiative. Practitioner-level staff changes in the Slough data sharing initiative meant that data sharing expertise was lost, and a Norfolk interviewee noted that when CICs were rolled out they were reliant on good will and informal relationships which meant that when staff holding knowledge moved on, a gap was left. Workshop participants also noted that there was a need for systematic ways to share information to avoid the danger of staff leaving and taking knowledge with them. The Lancashire street workers data sharing initiative (type 4) is a further example of the challenges of having many different agencies and people involved particularly where there are changes of personnel. Police officers move on to new posts quite frequently which means that intelligence has to build up again.

One way in which momentum is maintained in Wakefield is through having co-located teams which mean that physical barriers to sharing client data are removed because practitioners discuss a case face-to-face rather than picking up a phone.

Main conclusions

The research revealed a number of inhibiting factors in the implementation stage, but also provided insight and solutions as to how to overcome obstacles in this stage of the journey:

- cultural resistance to data sharing was present amongst operational staff in a number of case studies because of reluctance to change entrenched working practices
- cultural resistance was tackled with training and dissemination of positive messages about the data sharing initiative, which was particularly effective when championed by senior staff
- maintaining momentum for the initiative was seen to be important but challenging, particularly with staff churn. Ensuring that data sharing knowledge is formalised and does not rely upon informal relationships between staff was one way to overcome this

3.5 Benefit realisation

At this stage of the journey, the benefits of the initiative that are anticipated at the outset, as well as unexpected benefits, are realised. An important aspect of benefit realisation is being able to communicate this benefit realisation to service users, elected members and stakeholders, and to make this progress seem 'real', the stage should involve establishing the baseline position to understand progress from that point.

Whilst not all of our case study sites or interviewees had reached the stage of benefit realisation, the research participants that had reached it identified benefits for:

- vulnerable groups, customers and communities
- meeting LAA and other statutory targets
- increased efficiency
- frontline staff and practitioners
- better engagement with key partners, for example in the third sector.

Vulnerable groups, customers and communities

Wakefield's Safe@Home project aimed to reduced levels of domestic violence and reduce repeat domestic violence incidents. Levels of domestic violence fell from 48 per cent in 2004–05 to 31 per cent in March 2008, and the percentage of high risk cases deal with by Marac (the multi-agency group) has fallen since the project's inception. The Lancashire street workers project has been able to advise outreach groups on when and where street workers are being seen and therefore where they can be targeted with support services, using association charts to clarify links.

In the Cheshire SAP, one of the main benefits was that practitioners spent less time collecting assessment information and so were freed to spend more time delivering services. Because practitioners had more information available to them, (health information and social care information) they were able to deliver more appropriate and enhanced care, one interviewee stated:

"If you share the information collected from a Social Worker and a District Nurse, you get a fuller picture about what the needs are, you get social and health needs ... there is less duplication and more quality time is spent and this is a benefit to service users"

Customer take up and use of Norfolk's CICs has been good, and early results from 'mystery shopping' exercises show that the quality and consistency of information people receive from CICs is of a high quality and level of consistency.

Data sharing in the ICSB has enabled Leicester City Council and Leicestershire Constabulary to foster better relations with their community by developing a framework for acting on residents concerns and guaranteeing that they will respond in a certain time frame. Through the ICSB there is a commitment to respond to issues reported by residents within two weeks. Identifying problems, solutions and tasks is facilitated through the Joint Management Group where issues are shared among representatives from Leicestershire Constabulary and Leicester City Council departments. Because of the work undertaken in the ICSB, the council has received informal reports that residents feel more listened to and reassured that issues they have raised are being dealt with. For example, one attendee told us of the benefits of the ICSB: *"There is an issue around assurance and reducing the fear of crime, people feel they are being listened to and that we are dealing with the issues that they are raising"*

Through dealing with calls about antisocial behaviour in a more joined up way, the ICSB has also helped to highlight gaps in service provision. For example, in the school holidays the reported incidents of youth crime increased. A lack of provision

of activities for young people was identified and supported youth services make a funding bid for youth service provision:

“We tried to be proactive and identify routine issues which came up on a regular basis, for example, we always were getting calls from one area of the city, such as children with anti-social behaviour, we looked at the content of the phone calls and what we can do, we looked at youth provision in this area and realised it was because the children were bored and current provision was not catering to what they wanted”

Meeting LAA targets

In several examples, data was shared with the effect of helping the LSP to meet, or set, targets for the LAA. In Suffolk County Council, a type two data sharing initiative, access to an additional stream of data from hospital admissions, allowed the LSP to check the quality of the data received from the police.

This meant that they could measure performance more accurately against current LAA targets and could use this data to inform future target setting. The interviewee in Suffolk County Council identified the LAA as an enabler to data sharing because *“I think the LAA has encouraged people to think outside the box and be more creative.”*

It was also recognised that better information would allow road safety messages to be delivered to sectors of communities who are most at risk of accidents and this could save lives.

In the Wakefield Safe@Home project, an initial stretch target identified by the LSP was to reduce the percentage of repeat domestic violence incidents from 48 per cent in 2004–05 to 28 per cent by March 2009. The project is on target to meet this target: by March 2008, the percentage of repeat domestic violence incidents had fallen to 31 per cent.

Data sharing had benefits in terms of partners sharing data which was used to inform policy. Access to data to inform evidence-based policy was identified as a positive outcome of the Leicestershire Partnership Information Group (LPIG). Because of the LAA, currently being rolled out in Leicester City, the LPIG has become more important to support the partnership as more demands have been made on the LSP and its partners to use evidence to inform policy making. The Lead Officer of LPIG stated:

“The Government is sending out clear messages to local authorities and partnerships that research is important and should be used to inform policy and service design and delivery”

Similarly, in ‘Research Sandwell’, a dedicated LSP research team for Sandwell Local Authority and LSP, data sharing in a Local Information System (Type 1 data sharing) was driven, internally, by heightened expectations on the team to have immediate access to data, increasing pressure to have access to high quality and consistent data sets and, externally, by expectations from Communities and Local Government that LAAs are supported by LIS.

Efficiency savings

There were multiple instances of data shared having the benefit of reducing duplication of research and analysis between partners. For example, the LPIG provides representatives from the Leicester Partnership with a forum to present their statistical work and gives partners the opportunity to share in this work. LPIG shares type 1 data. This group was established following an Audit Commission Review with the aim of coordinating research efforts across the partnership. The Audit Commission assessment can be seen as an enabler for LPIG. Audit Commission assessments were also identified as an enabler and a trigger for data sharing by participants who attended the Data Sharing workshop. The interviewee stated that this group was well attended and used by the partnership because *“There is a recognised need and demand that we ... manage our research across the partnership in a co-ordinated way”*.

A similar outcome was identified from Cheshire’s SAP where staff from Health and the county council collect assessment information on over 65’s in the same way and work to the same document; in this system, information is collected once by a practitioner and used repeatedly. One interviewee on the benefits of SAP stated:

“The speed at which we can pass things through has definitely increased, for example if a person is discharged from hospital, we take that data from our database and can avoid repetition and make the assessment process quicker”

Data sharing led to more efficient or effective use of resources. For example, data sharing in the Cheshire SAP was identified as enabling a more efficient use of resources, because data was collected once and used repeatedly, Practitioners spent less time collecting assessment information, which freed them to spend more time delivering services. In addition, because the assessment information had already been collected, the practitioner has a ‘fuller picture’ of the service users needs, allowing them to deliver the most appropriate care. For example:

“... clinical time is saved which is a benefit to the organisation. Less time is spent on assessment and there is less duplication, and more quality time is spent and this is a benefit to service users”

Similarly, in Lancashire, it was believed that data sharing through establishing shared services would have the benefit of making more of effective use of existing services, which in turn would translate into savings.

Data sharing led to improved uptake of services. In Norfolk, a main outcome of data sharing in the CIC’s was improving service uptake, so for example, if a customer approached the one-stop shop with problems of council tax payments, they CIC’s would check eligibility for council tax benefits and for other services such as free school meals. One interviewee stated:

“One of the core things is around benefits, a customer may come in and say they have problems with council tax payments, we can see if they are eligible for council tax benefits, they may also be eligible for free school meals (for their children) and we can refer them on to other services more effectively.”

Data sharing as part of Brent's Client Index also worked to increase the uptake of services and profile customer needs. Through this system client details are linked with a GIS application in order to profile the use of various council services across the borough such as library membership and where membership is found to be low, the library can launch a campaign to increase uptake. In addition, the index can facilitate personalised welcome packs for new residents entering the borough and in these identify whether a client is entitled to a service they may not be aware of.

Benefits for front line practitioners and data handlers

Data sharing initiatives decreased the workload of service providers which impacted on the services themselves. For example, in Leicester City's Children & Young People Services data sharing agreements were established with private schools, meaning the city council no longer had to search for private school pupils. An outcome of this work was identified as reducing the workload of education welfare officers, because less referrals were made by the city council who can now locate children attending private schools. Data sharing through the Client Index means that a service user visits the one-stop shop service and interacts with one council worker who will deal with all their queries. This prevents service users from having to visit multiple entry points and have multiple staff members take the same information repeatedly.

Two of the sites provided examples of data sharing in LSPs having the outcome of improving relations between data providers. In Brighton & Hove a benefit of BHLIS anticipated by our interviewees was encouraging better relationships with a range of data providers. In Hertfordshire, the PCT's public Health team worked with the county's ten CDRPs to develop Strategic assessments for their areas. This has involved collecting Type 1 data from various health providers (such as drug alcohol support services, A & E and mental health trusts) to identify patterns of drug and alcohol abuse and to help the CDRP establish levels and patterns of crime. In the process of collecting this data for the CDRP and in contributing to the Crime and Disorder Agenda, a greater understanding of Health and CDRPs shared agenda has emerged. For example, criminal justice organisations have gained a greater understanding of the role of health in their work, for example where improving health and well-being can play a vital role in reducing anti-social behaviour. This is an example of where a data sharing initiative has facilitated a greater understanding of partners roles and a shared agenda.

Better engagement with the third sector

Closer engagement with the voluntary sector was an outcome of data sharing in two of the sites the research team contacted. For example in Norfolk, CICs have been developed, providing a one-stop shop service for Norfolk's residents. This is an example of type 3 data sharing. The initiative has fostered relations between community and voluntary sector organisations, the council and residents. CICs are used by voluntary organisations to run workshops and surgeries for their services, in addition the CICs can signpost residents to voluntary organisations, which is promoting the service of the voluntary organisation. One interviewee stated:

"We work with lots of partner organisations such as Help the Aged. We invite agencies to run surgeries, and they have become a very key place to get information tailored to the needs of their local community. Staff at their own

location will contact and forge links with local organisations who may want to promote their services.”

An enabler in this case has been positioning CICs in smaller towns. This has allowed relations to be built up between the voluntary sector organisation staff and residents, as there is more reliance on the CIC in smaller areas.

An inhibitor to benefit realisation was identified in the Safe@home domestic violence project in Wakefield. Not identifying the exact costs of services of domestic violence prior to inception of the Safe@home project meant there was no baseline for showing the exact cost benefits from the project. This created difficulties in determining the cost savings compared to the costs of survivors of domestic violence approaching other services. An interviewee in Cheshire identified a similar issue in response to a question about benefits to service users:

“Always difficult to map benefits, because you have to be aware of what the baseline is. Do know that we are meeting the requirements of the white paper and we are putting the client at the centre of the process and meeting that target. But we do need something flexible in case there are political changes and we have to change what we are doing”.

For benefits to be realised, which may be important in maintaining buy-in, it was seen as important that a data sharing initiative has an indication of what the baseline is. Similarly, it was noted in Cheshire that the benefit of this new way of working was preventative and this was linked to difficulties in determining the benefit realisation:

“We haven’t done a financial benefit realisation and this is something we need to do, we need to track an individual and see where we are saving money and where we are saving money by preventing further contact, later on. Preventative services are really hard to measure, how do you know what you have prevented and how do you measure the prevention?”

A related issue was whether service users had outcomes and benefits communicated to them and whether service users could recognise the benefit of a new approach. In Cheshire, the interviewee noted that service users were surprised that data was not already being shared:

“As a service user, my priority and my need are ‘I want this service’, my priority is not that my information is being shared and that I have given consent, it is what they expected to happen anyway. They are surprised that this information wasn’t shared already”.

Main conclusions

The research revealed that sites who had taken part in data sharing initiatives felt there were numerous benefits as a result of the data sharing and increased multi-agency work which had taken place.

An important aspect of benefit realisation – and being able to communicate this benefit realisation to service users, elected members and stakeholder – was initially establishing a baseline to understand progress from that point. The research noted

the difficulties of this, such as in measuring an effect which is preventative. It is worth noting that all of the sites contacted in the study could identify positive outcomes associated with their data sharing journey.

3.6 Mainstreaming

Mainstreaming was identified through the Data Sharing Workshop as an essential last step of the data sharing journey. Getting the policy, data and delivery communities 'on side' to drive the initiative; ensuring systems become embedded or rooted in the partner organisations and that the new system becomes part of the 'day job'; securing funding to support the data sharing initiative beyond initial implementation and having time to analyse and disseminate the benefits of the data sharing initiative. Through the survey, case studies and vignettes many challenges and enablers to mainstreaming were identified.

Policy, data and delivery communities 'on side'

The importance of getting the policy, data and delivery communities 'on-side' was highlighted in the example of a data 'observatory', from a site who wished to remain anonymous. This site maintained that since the implementation of the Local Information System, interest in and usage of the system, especially from policy makers, had dwindled, as the *'novelty had worn off'*. The team working on the Local Information System was trying to overcome this by engaging with thematic groups in the LSP, who were seen as the primary client to use the Observatory to provide contextual data to relate to LAA performance.

Ensuring key delivery communities are kept on side, beyond the initial implementation of an initiative, was highlighted through the Cheshire SAP study. The appointed Champion for the Communications Strategy stressed the importance of maintaining the momentum of networking and training to prevent interest in SAP dwindling and to ensure it became 'embedded' and part of people's everyday work practices. SAP went live in 2006, however as the Communication Champion told us they continue to ensure *"what has been implemented, remains implemented"* by continuing to network with teams across Health and Social Care, and deliver training to new members of staff. This finding was reiterated by a workshop attendee who noted *"Engagement of practitioners is very important – the system will stand or fall depending on how and if data is collected"*.

The importance of on-going training and networking to mainstreaming was also identified by a comment in the survey which stated there was a need for *"Training programmes to overcome existing institutional practices to enable more people to understand the practical benefits"*.

Systems embedded as part of 'day job'

Ensuring that an initiative becomes embedded and 'part of the day job' is a critical part of mainstreaming a data sharing initiative and appears to be related to organisational cultures. For example, an enabler to data sharing was identified in the on-line survey as *'Institutional cultures being broken down'*. Examples given in

the case studies and vignettes also support this point. In the Cheshire SAP, for some practitioners, SAP was a real contrast to their previous working practices and this proved a challenge to SAP being mainstreamed in their working practices. This was the case for district nurses in Cheshire, for whom using SAP meant collecting new information (on service users social functioning), and inputting information on a computer when they previously had little experience of IT. As a result, encouraging some practitioners to change their working practices, and SAP being mainstreamed, has taken longer than was anticipated and this was identified by an interviewee as being because of challenges in overcoming organisational cultures.

Similarly, "*Fear of technology*" was cited as an inhibitor to data sharing by a respondent in the workshop. In Cheshire, this challenge to mainstreaming is being overcome by appointing champions, people in different agencies who have particularly taken to SAP who are appointed to promote SAP in their agency. The inhibitor to mainstreaming seems to be if the new working practices around data sharing are very contrary to previous ones, this idea is supported by findings from the Data Sharing workshop on the 2 May, where participants identified "*organisational change to facilitate data sharing*" as an important aspect of the data sharing journey.

Conversely, Brent's Client Index being mainstreamed was enabled, according to the Head of IT, because of its ability to "*tap into the frustrations of operational and service staff where they are duplicating work and not joining up intelligence on a customer*".

An example of how the index has become mainstreamed is in feeding into the equalities and diversity agenda work of the council and allowing council staff to monitor service use by ethnic minorities much more easily and accurately. The index becoming part of people's day jobs was enabled because it made their job easier. In addition, through the case study it was identified that new applications were 'benefits driven' and innovations and suggestions for use of the Index were "*on-going and often multiple and unexpected*". It may be that the system being benefits driven is an enabler for getting communities on side.

Mainstreaming of Norfolk's CICs was enabled by the value the CICs had to service users, especially the elderly. Norfolk Council undertook mystery shopping work on the CICs in 2003, and this found the quality of information the CICs provided for customers was accurate and consistent. This indicated that staff are able to perform the role effectively, which was seen as an example of mainstreaming. The council see CICs as a key part of their strategic vision for meeting customer needs and meeting efficiencies and the CICs have laid the foundation for good partnership working ahead of the upcoming local government review (where Norfolk no longer has two tiers).

Co-location was important to the mainstreaming data sharing and making it part of the day job and was highlighted in the Wakefield case study. Co-location meant that the artificial barriers to sharing client data were removed because a practitioner could walk across the room to discuss a case, rather than having to pick up a phone. In addition, the skill set involved in bringing partners together and working in the co-located environment with staff from different backgrounds was seen as important, along with the enthusiasm of all staff and the training given. The employment of an independent project manager was also helpful to bring the project together. The

importance of project management to keeping momentum in a project was also mentioned in the Data Sharing Workshop on 2nd May.

Mainstreamed funding

An important element of mainstreaming any initiative is the presence of stable funding and this was identified in the case study and vignette sites, the survey and the workshop. In Leicester City's ICSB, a challenge to mainstreaming this model was the withdrawal of Home Office funding which happened earlier than expected (originally funding was due to end in 2010). After the funding ceased, the Police approached the district councils and made the case for the ICSB to be extended to the districts (where it wasn't previously) and for the districts to commit funding to the ICSB. When district councils were approached, a 'selling job' had to be done in order to convince them of the benefits of the ICSB to commit funding. An enabler in this example can be seen as that the system was up and running there were evident benefits which could be used as a 'selling job'.

Funding was also identified as a challenge in the BHLIS, one interviewee commenting that there was little external financial support for BHLIS and that some government bodies didn't understand what 'being more joined up' meant in practice and had unrealistic expectations about data sharing. Lack of understanding can be seen as an inhibiting factor in this example. In addition, because BHLIS was developed because of available funding and under the time pressure of available funding, no systematic needs assessment was carried out. This impacted on the coherence of the business case for BHLIS, which was focused on convincing the LA of the business case for BHLIS, and the LA are now funding BHLIS as part of their mainstreamed work. It was hoped that in the future, once the benefits of BHLIS began to be realised, there was the possibility of the Police and the PCT contributing to funding.

Time to analyse and disseminate benefits

Having or making time to analyse the product of a data sharing initiative was identified as an important aspect of mainstreaming, and was important to keeping the organisation or department who is sharing the data 'on-side'. This was identified by Suffolk County Council, where hospital data was shared with the council to refine road accident targets and data. The most important stage of the data sharing journey was identified by the interviewee to be allowing time to do an analysis of the data. This was important to explore 'the added value' of having the data and to provide feedback to the organisation who supplied the data, on the lessons learned, giving them an opportunity to comment on how data has been used. Such an analysis could enable data sharing to continue, by highlighting the benefits of the data sharing to the partner sharing and therefore aid it being mainstreamed. This was reiterated through the survey where one respondent commented "*the time to pool information and analyse and make judgements*".

Recognition of whether a data sharing initiative adds value was also identified in BHLIS as related to mainstreaming. An interviewee in this case study identified that successful mainstreaming would require making the case that the Local Intelligence System adds value which was thought to depend on how much value is given to increasing the evidence base because BHLIS "*doesn't tell people anything they don't already know, it only serves to back up with evidence what people already know*".

Main conclusions

Mainstreaming is an essential final step of the data sharing journey: without it there is much less chance of sustained impact as a result of early effort. The research highlighted a number of important factors to successful mainstreaming of data sharing initiatives. Ensuring that the users of the system are on side was seen as crucial because without the support of practitioners who collect and input the data, it is likely to be of insufficient quality or consistency to be able to use in its intended purpose. Similarly, there must be mainstreamed funding to support the data sharing initiative into the future. Workshop and survey research participants were particularly keen to emphasise the importance of allowing time to be able to analyse the results and disseminate the messages from the data that has been shared.

4. Conclusion and recommendations

4.1 Common characteristics of successful personal data sharing

The research shows that a combination of factors combine to make the data sharing journey – from having the initial idea of an initiative to it becoming fully mainstreamed – smooth and successful. Projects that have realised the benefits they sought to, and are mainstreamed appear to have a number of common characteristics, outlined in this final section.

Clearly defined purpose

Having a well-articulated business case, underpinned by a needs assessment and documented in a business plan, appears to reap rewards throughout the data sharing journey. Data sharing initiatives which had not clearly defined the business case at the outset encountered problems further down the line in relation to gaining buy-in and thereby funding from partners, or encountering reluctance from practitioners who were supposed to be using the system, because the purpose of it had not been articulated to them. Establishing who the systems is for and what purpose it serves is thus time well spent. An interviewee from Reigate and Banstead Borough Council noted that the PCT had stepped back and questioned how priorities were arrived at so that they could demonstrate how data was being used with regard to underweight babies and this had helped to re-articulate the rationale for data sharing and achieve buy-in: *"They [the PCT] were clear about what the data meant, why this data was important and how it links to other data."*

Ownership and accountability

Having a clearly defined purpose, underpinned by a needs assessment and enshrined in a business plan is linked to the second overarching conclusion, which is that the data sharing initiative needs to be owned and underpinned by clear lines of accountability. Data sharing initiatives that appear to be successful have often garnered LSP-wide support. In most of these cases, there are usually strong relationships upon which to build in the LSP. Where LSP-wide data sharing groups are in existence or are specifically set up, they provide a valuable forum for partners to discuss data sharing initiatives and iron out problems together, thereby fostering a sense of collective ownership and a forum where data sharing partners can, perhaps informally, be brought to account. Whilst data sharing initiatives that do involve multiple partners invariably take time to build consensus and reach agreement on how and to what extent data should be shared, the time taken in this early stage appears to be worth it further down the line because it encourages ownership.

In cases where there was not an LSP-wide group there are examples of other multi-agency groups providing a 'home' for the data sharing initiative, which helps create a sense of ownership (an example is the Cheshire SAP). Where there is a lack of inter-agency trust, it acts as an inhibitor to getting buy-in to a data sharing initiative. Structural changes that result in co-located teams are one way in which ownership of a data sharing initiative can be fostered. Information governance structures that allow accountability lines to be clear in relation to data sharing also enable data sharing initiatives to have a successful implementation journey. Having one central system which allows data to be uploaded by multiple partners in the format in which they collect it was another way in which ownership and accountability are cultivated.

A dedicated project team that follows project management principles can help to own and govern the data sharing initiative in the early stages of the journey and to keep it on course. Workshop participants were keen to stress that data sharing cuts across all sectors of LSPs and that silo working is still a feature of many partners. For this reason, having a dedicated project team for data sharing initiatives can be highly beneficial until the mainstreaming part of the data sharing journey, where the practice of data sharing should be embedded within people's day jobs and therefore does not require a separate project team: ideally they should have worked themselves out of a job.

Key individuals are another feature of the ownership theme. There are examples of visionary individuals being critical in launching data sharing projects and seizing opportunities – from the availability of funding that needs spending quickly, to seeing how a local level project taps into a central government agenda – but also of the initiative slowing down and even collapsing when such key individuals leaves. Maintaining momentum is thus another critical part of successful data sharing, and ensuring that knowledge and drive is not confined to visionary leaders nor, equally important, to data handlers.

Communication

Effective communication of the purpose, function and benefits of data sharing initiatives, from the strategic level through middle management and to operational levels was seen to be absolutely critical in successful data sharing journeys. Establishing buy-in from CEOs and directors was very important particularly in the early stages, but then having an information 'cascade' all the way to front-line staffs was seen by workshop participants as fundamental. In several examples, there existed top-level buy-in but the importance of the initiative had not been successfully communicated to operational level employees who did not see it as a priority and refused to cooperate by sharing data and/or using the system. An organisational culture that lacks flexibility and preparedness to adapt to new systems can therefore block the progress of data sharing initiatives.

Training, particularly when it is embedded in core training, received by managers and practitioners and has senior 'champions' has been effective in overcoming these barriers. Communicating and disseminating the benefits of the system, particularly where there is positive feedback from service users, is another tool that has been used to address cultural resistance to change. Workshop participants were keen to see, 'less thinking about the issues and more transforming the issues into practice with better communication'

Legislation and guidance

The existence of primary legislation and government guidance was almost universally cited as an enabling factor in data sharing journeys; sometimes this was because legislation provided the initial impetus for a project and sometimes because legislation stipulates what can and can't be shared. Having well thought through data sharing protocols, which are signed up to at the strategic level, but are flexible enough to accommodate new local level partners, were also seen as being important. However, the multiple places in which guidance can be found was felt to be an inhibiting factor, as was a lack of knowledge about who owns the data (the data controller) particularly in relation to council tax information. The Data Protection Act was cited as a barrier by many research participants and there appears to be confusion in many quarters about what the Data Protection Act stipulates can and cannot be shared.

Capacity and resource

The existence of funding and capacity are critical success factors in all data sharing projects. In all data sharing initiatives, there must be sufficient funds to set up systems and implement them and then funding to mainstream must be secured. The question of procuring outside expertise, whether in the form of an IT system or data analysts, revealed a contradiction between being both an enabling and an inhibiting factor. If expertise is bought in, there needs to be the budget to pay for it long term (if, as in the case of a hosting system, it is required in order for the data sharing project to survive), or there needs to be a strategy for transferring the system over to another host. The benefits of the data sharing initiative need to be demonstrated to potential statutory 'hosts' so that they have confidence to invest in the system. The danger in a statutory partner taking over the system is that the initiative becomes associated too closely with a particular partner thereby losing the buy-in from other partners.

4.2 Recommendations

A number of actionable recommendations and key dissemination messages are apparent from the research in order to promote the benefits that personal data sharing initiatives can bring. Outlined below are a number of 'interventions' that LSPs, local government and Communities and Local Government could usefully undertake to promote the sharing of personal data and what the key messages are that need to be communicated.

Local Strategic Partnerships

Recommendation 1

Identify the audience at which the data sharing initiative is aimed at, conduct a needs assessment to establish the business case and write a business plan. The business case can be stronger if it is aligned to one or more of the LSP's strategic priorities and could help to unlock funds for initiative (see Recommendation 10) and to identify champions (see Recommendation 7).

Recommendation 2

Establish clear lines of accountability for data sharing, including new information governance structures where necessary. Data sharing to be a standing agenda item at LSP meetings to raise awareness and senior leaders taking responsibility for leading a particular data sharing initiative.

Recommendation 3

Where LSP-wide data sharing groups do not already exist, set them up and, where they do, encourage healthy attendance by ensuring the group has a clear remit and responsibilities.

Recommendation 4

When designing the mechanism by which data is to be shared, ensure that it is as simple as possible and asks for the minimum amount of data that is possible as opposed to the data that might be desirable and interesting to have. Having one central system that all partners can put their data onto without having to change the way in which they store it or collect it is one way this can work so that the amount of work is minimised.

Recommendation 5

Establish a dedicated project team for the data sharing initiative that has robust governance arrangements and adheres to project management principles. Be prepared to dismantle the project team once the initiative is mainstreamed so that data sharing is embedded into everyday practice rather than sitting in a specialist team.

Recommendation 7

Have a clear communications strategy in order to secure buy-in and cascade information about the initiative at the strategic, middle management and operational levels. Spread and disseminate best practice and good examples via senior-level data sharing 'champions', workshops and word-of-mouth, gain feedback from service users to disseminate positive messages about data sharing and encourage support for data sharing initiatives.

Recommendation 8

Embed data sharing training into core training packages across all sectors at all levels and include data sharing initiatives in supervision and appraisal of operational staff so that there is an incentive for them to share, a clear message to managers that they need to support their staff to share data and so that operational staff have a mechanism through which they can discuss any concerns about data sharing.

Recommendation 9

Draft data sharing protocols that are broad enough to encompass a number of partners and get strategic-level sign-up to them. Underpin overarching agreements with specific local-level agreements that have detailed guidance about the practicalities and realities of data sharing, including a list of 'data sharing myth busters' and 'frequently asked questions' about sharing different data types in specific service areas.

Recommendation 11

Ensure identifiers (for example NI Numbers) are scoped and agreed by all partners to help avoid unnecessary duplication and double counting.

Communities and Local Government**Recommendation 12**

Government departments to link up and give a consistent message about how data should be shared. Part of this could be to conduct a cross-departmental mapping exercise of current data sharing guidance in order to streamline guidance and the number of places that guidance can be found.

Recommendation 13

Issue clear and concise guidance on the Data Protection Act to all LSPs.

Recommendation 14

Construct a data sharing toolkit for LSPs which includes examples of best practice and practical guidance aimed at senior managers about how to undertake a data sharing project, which includes issues such as the use of resources and changes to job descriptions.

Recommendation 15

Lead by example and create Information Governance Committees that encourage data sharing across government in order for LSPs to have a model upon which to work. This should be embedded at regional level involving government offices and RIEPs.

Recommendation 16

Create a performance indicator for partnership working and the reduction of duplication of effort in data sharing.

Recommendation 17

Communicate effectively when there is central government funding available to LSPs to support data sharing initiatives, for example a recent funding stream available via Regional Improvement and Efficiency Partnerships for Local Improvement Advisers.

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