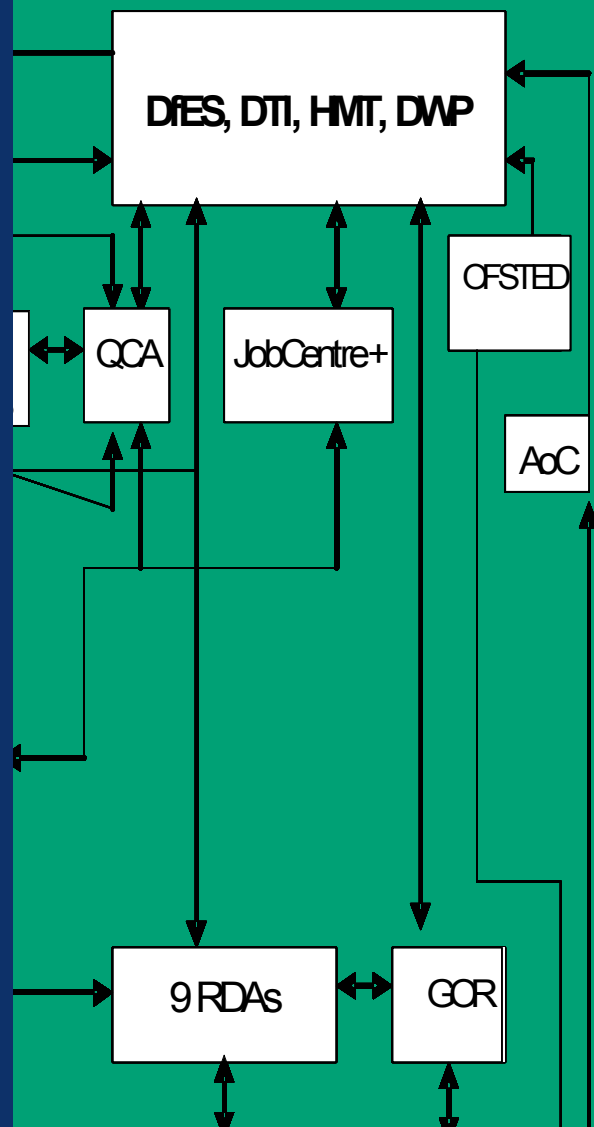


Possible Features of an Alternative System

SW LSRN Conference

Making Progress or
Losing Control

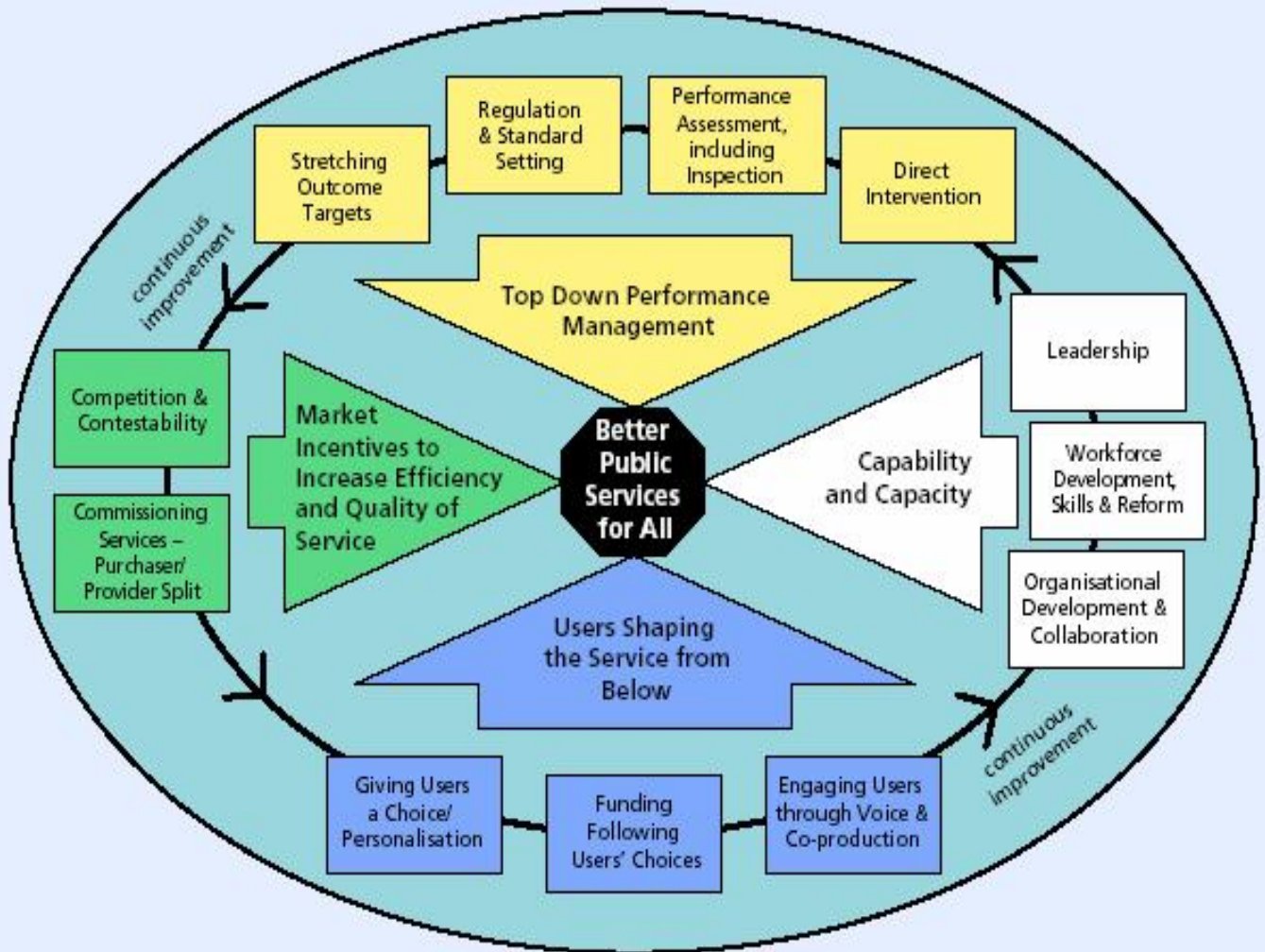
12 July 2007



Government model of Public Service Reform (PMSU, 2006: 8)



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Features of an Alternative System



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1. A New Settlement
2. Social Partnership
3. Collaborative, Local Ecologies
4. Further Rationalisation v Consolidation?
5. A More Moderate Pace of Change
6. Equity and Efficiency
7. Teaching and Learning at the Heart of the System

1 A New Settlement



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- change in the culture of government eg initiatives
- move from over-centralisation and micro-management to power-sharing
- “rebalance the relationship between centre and locality” (Lyons, 2007)
- new form of governance to accommodate minimum national standards / priorities and extensive local variation
- greater local flexibility and decision-making. 80% / 20%
- fewer, broader, less prescriptive national targets, agreed in consultation between national, regional and local players
- no targets in Scotland, Wales, rest of Europe, high level indicators
- more participative model of change: feedback loops, ownership of change, forums for staff at different levels

2 Social Partnership



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- social dialogue leading to consensus and awareness cf Eire, Scandinavia, Germany
- unions and practitioners as full, equal and trusted partners in formation, evaluation and re-design of policy
- voluntarism has been tried and failed eg TECs
- employers' pledge → 2010?
- licences to practise eg Care Standards Act, 2000 who should pay?
- downside : slow, insiderism, representation

3 Collaborative, Local Ecologies



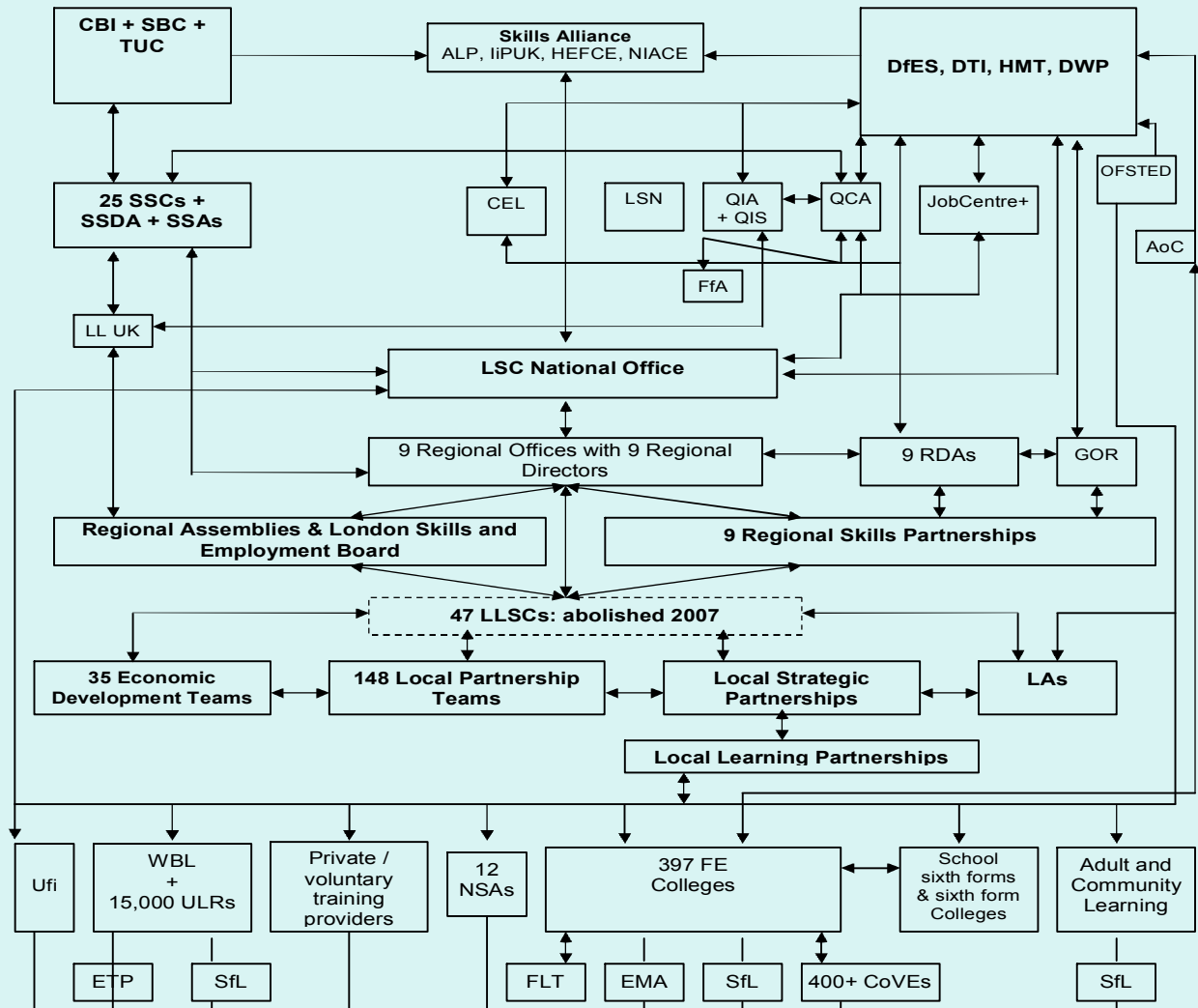
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- biological rather than mechanical metaphor
- commitment to raising education level of **all** and not of a minority
- providers to be held jointly responsible for levels of participation and achievement (Stanton & Fletcher, 2006)
- move away from markets and choice towards high quality education for all
- a vision of the educational needs of the local community v Sunderland model
- nothing sacred about the local: part of national and regional planning and accountability

Post-compulsory sector in 2007



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- | | | |
|--|-----|---|
| ALP = Association of Learning Providers | KEY | LSC = Learning and Skills Council |
| AoC = Association for Colleges | | LSN = Learning and Skills Network |
| CBI = Confederation of British Industry | | NIACE = National Institute for Adult and Continuing Education |
| CEL = Centre for Excellence in Leadership | | NSAs = National Skills Academies |
| CoVEs = Centres of Vocational Excellence | | QCA = Qualifications and Curriculum Authority |
| DfES = Department for Education and Skills | | QIA = Quality Improvement Agency |
| DTI = Department of Trade and Industry | | QIS = Quality Improvement Strategy |
| DWP = Department of Work and Pensions | | RDA = Regional Development Agencies |
| EMA = Educational Maintenance Allowance | | SBC = Small Business Council |
| ETP = Employer Training Pilots | | SfL = Skills for Life |
| FE = Further Education | | SSAs = Sector Skills Agreements |
| FFA = Framework for Achievement | | SSC = Sector Skills Council |
| FLT = Foundation Learning Tier | | SSDA = Sector Skills Development Agency |
| GOR = Government Offices in the Regions | | TUC = Trade Union Congress |
| HEFCE = Higher Education Funding Council for England | | Ufi = University for Industry |
| HMT = Her Majesty's Treasury | | ULR = Union Learning Representative |
| IIPUK = Investors in People UK | | WBL = Work Based Learning |
| LA = Local Authority | | |
| LLSC = Local Learning and Skills Council | | |

Learners
6 million 14-19 year old and adult learners in:
FE Colleges
School Sixth Forms
Sixth Form Colleges
ACL
Apprenticeships
WBL



4 Further Rationalisation v Consolidation?



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Rationalise intermediate bodies? LSC, RDA, JC+, GO, RSP, LA, Business Link, Regional Assemblies

Cost-benefit analysis:

Costs

1. economic eg redundancy pay
2. human eg careers disrupted, unemployment
3. institutional eg increased bureaucracy
4. loss of social capital eg 47 LLSCs
5. Loss of institutional memory
6. spread of uncertainty
7. 2 years lost, distraction from main tasks
8. weaknesses being addressed eg LSC & RDA
9. need for consolidation

Benefits

1. less duplication, overlap
2. admin savings
3. clearer responsibilities and roles → better communication
4. Staff cannot stagnate
5. sector less baffling to outsiders and insiders



- Give up talk of ‘quantum leaps’, ‘step changes’, ‘transformational change’; and practice of ‘momentum politics’
- Time-scales of politicians and practitioners at variance
- Twin pressures of change and maintenance to be in a healthy balance
- Institutions need continuity and stability as foundation for new developments
- Longer planning cycles to create greater stability and innovation

- Twin challenges are “mutually reinforcing”? CEC (2006: 2)
- Funding as an expression of values and priorities
- Investment in FE since 1997 increased by 48%
Schools : 65%
- Common funding across sixth forms, colleges and training providers “comparable funding for comparable activity” DfES (2006: 66)

Funding gap reduced from 13% to 8%

Unit of resource and salaries

- Greater resources to most disadvantaged, those with little to show for years of formal schooling eg NEET group

Foundation Learning Tier - for adults and young people

- resourced as well as Level 3

- new Qualifications and Credit Framework

- not compensatory programme

- Anglo Saxon v Nordic Model

7. Teaching and Learning at the Heart of the System



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1. Central finding: relationships with tutors : key to learning, progress and success
2. Colleges: first and foremost centres of learning, only secondarily businesses
3. “Teachers cannot create the conditions for students to become creative LLLers, if those conditions don’t exist for teachers” S. Sarason
4. Maximise the agency of students (Biesta & James, forthcoming)
5. Maximise the professionalism of staff through teachers’ learning communities (Thompson & Wiliam, 2007)
6. Improve relationships via
 - a) a language for learning (Entwistle)
 - b) 5 principles of good dialogue (Alexander)
 - c) teachers’ models of students’ minds (Bruner)
7. “Problems are fundamentally not pedagogical” (Lave & Wenger, 1991)

Education as part of co-ordinated strategy of socio-economic policies to tackle persistent inequalities

Outputs (1)



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***Journal of Vocational Education and Training, 59 (2)
June 2007.***

7 papers from the team ...

Policy and practice in the LSS: setting the scene

‘The heart of what we do’: policies on TLA in the LSS

Endless change in the learning and skills sector: the impact on teaching staff

‘Modernisation’ and the role of policy levers in the LSS

Mediation, translation and local ecologies: understanding the impact of policy levers in FE colleges

Riding the waves of policy? The case of basic skills in adult and community learning in England

Flowers in the desert: the impact of policy on basic skills provision in the workplace

... plus commentaries from Phil Hodgkinson and Mary Hamilton



Outputs (2)



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Coffield, F. *et al.* (2005) A new learning and skills landscape? The central role of the Learning and Skills Council. *Journal of Educational Policy* 20(5) 631-656.

Coffield, F. (2007) *Running ever faster down the wrong road: an alternative future for learning and skills. Inaugural lecture.* London: Institute of Education.

Hodgson, A. *et al.* (2007) Learners in the learning and skills sector: the implications of half-right policy assumptions. *Oxford Review of Education* 33(3) 315-330.

Coffield F. *et al.* (forthcoming) How policy impacts on practice and how practice does not impact on policy. *British Educational Research Journal* 33 (5).

Coffield, F. & Edward, S. (forthcoming) Rolling out 'good', 'best' and 'excellent' practice. What next? Perfect practice? *British Educational Research Journal*.



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