

Co-Production Policy

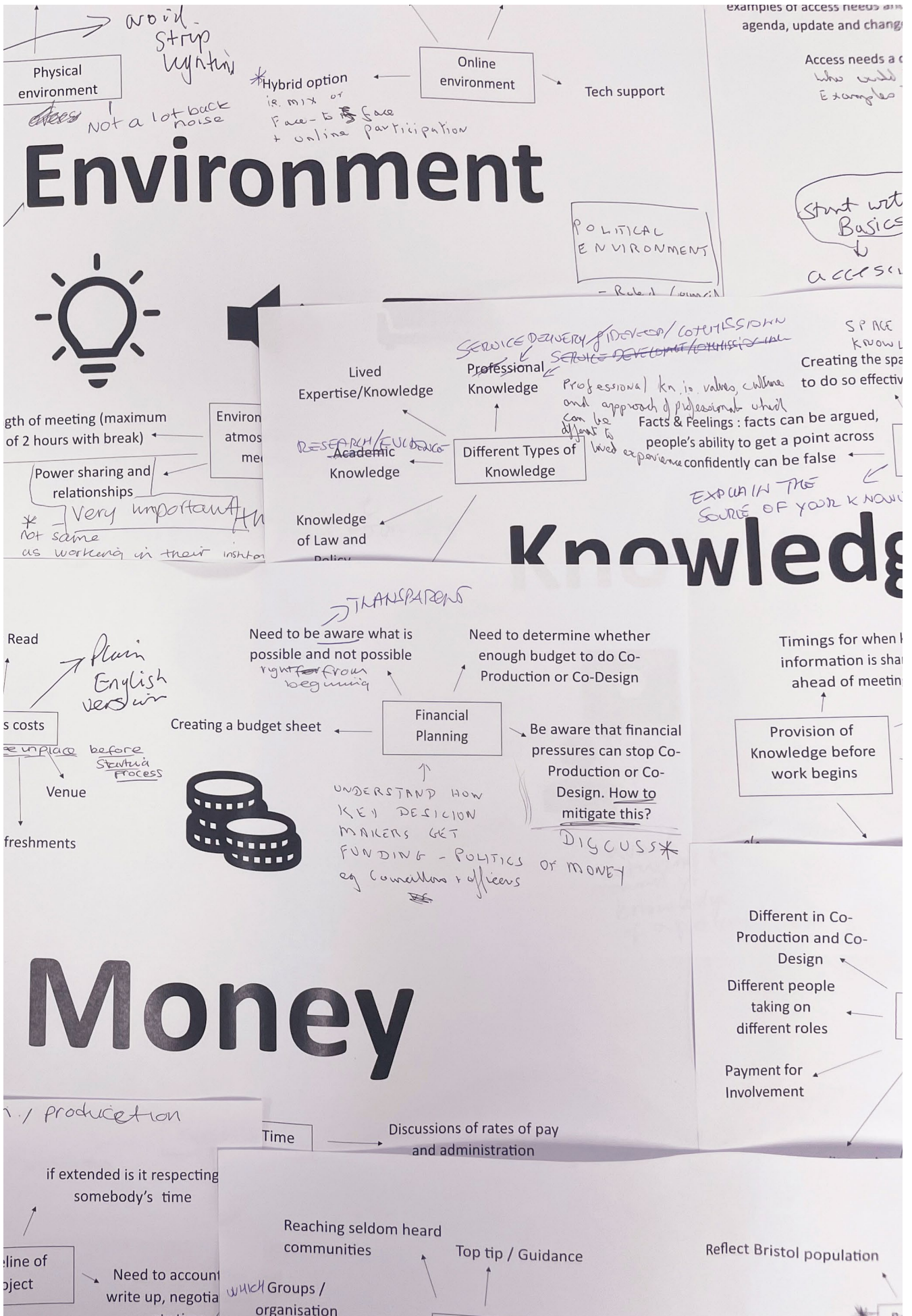
Adult Social Care



Co-Production Policy Working Group

Co-written by Carina Andrews and Megan Belcher on behalf of the Co-Production Working Group.

[An easy read version of this policy can be found here.](#)



Exercise in a Working Group Meeting

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A Letter from the Working Group

The Co-Production Policy Working Group came together, bringing a wealth of knowledge and lived experience. We also have similar experiences of receiving 'support' which did not understand our needs and led to isolation and silencing. From having had other doors shut to us this role seemed like an opportunity to prevent similar harm coming to others. For a long time, an attitude of 'us and them' marked the relationship between public services and the public and between professionals and the community – a model that assumed public officers were best placed to understand the public's needs and that saw the public in the main as passive recipients of services. While this has been known in communities, there has been an emerging awareness that people who received public services had a voice to express their views and the right to do so within organisations, and that there is a need for public services to listen to this voice and respect these rights.

We all started from a similar position of hearing the term Co-Production but finding that professionals had different understandings. We were excited by the opportunity to create a definition collectively by being curious; we were able to explore how Bristol City Council Adult Social Care works, represent our communities and learn how other communities and individuals feel, then use this information to create a way of working, to create connection and change together. Connecting communities to support communities.

We have been surprised by how much we have learned during this process including deepening our understanding of Bristol City Council's ways of working which previously we were unable to see, the origins of Co-Production and Co-Design, and different people's understanding of these terms. There has been a real beauty in hearing lots of views and opinions and learning how to support accessibility to enable people to be heard. From this foundation, so many creative, innovative, and important ideas were formed in unity.

We believe it's too early to say where this policy is heading, or what its impact may be; however, we all believe that Co-Production is the way forward.

From The Working Group



Co-Production Policy Working Group

Summary

Purpose of the Co-Production Policy

The Co-Production Policy was initiated by Bristol City Council's Adults and Communities Directorate to fulfil the Council's commitment to Co-Production as outlined in the Corporate Strategy 2022-27. It also builds on Bristol City Council's Vision for Adult Social Care ([Our Vision for Adult Social Care \(bristol.gov.uk\)](https://www.bristol.gov.uk/our-vision-for-adult-social-care)) and is a step forward in making the vision real. The necessity for this policy arose from complications in previous Adult Social Care projects due to the absence of a standardised Co-Production approach. There has also been a recognition of the benefits of Co-Production in terms of democratic involvement and inclusion, and the growing understanding that when services are co-produced by those who use them in their everyday lives, they are more likely to work.

An historical Bristol based example of a project to illustrate this point and the subsequent impact would be the redesign of the Arnolfini in 1989. The Arnolfini was one of the only accessible public meeting spaces for Disabled people in Bristol at the time. However, they applied for and received funding to redesign its café and due to not asking for the opinion of Disabled café users, the subsequent design meant that Disabled people could no longer access the space. This then meant that the Arnolfini had to spend extra money on further alterations to then make the space accessible again. The cost of not including the needs and opinions of the people who used the space in their everyday lives at the beginning ended up costing them more in the long term. There are many other examples to illustrate this point (that are more recent) but to find out more about this example, please find it here: <https://dabristol.org.uk/getting-started/>

Goals and Objectives

The policy aims to establish a clear and standardised definition of Co-Production, ensuring consistent and effective practices across all Adult Social Care projects within Bristol City Council. By adopting a structured approach, the policy seeks to clarify the distinction between various forms of participation and Co-Production, addressing confusion and ensuring community acknowledgment and awareness of genuine Co-Production efforts.

Key Components of the Policy

- **Co-Production as a Cake:** The policy uses the metaphor of a cake, where specific ingredients (values, access needs, time, money, environment, knowledge, and representation) and methods (before, during and after projects) are essential for successful Co-Production. Missing any of these elements risks the project not being recognised as true Co-Production.
- **Standardisation and Flexibility:** While the policy advocates for Co-Production as a best practice, it acknowledges scenarios where Co-Production might not be feasible. The policy provides a flow chart to help project managers determine when Co-Production is appropriate and offers alternative approaches like Co-Design for situations where full Co-Production cannot be achieved. This policy can still be utilised in Co-Design projects or other projects involving the participation of people who access Adult Social Services.



Implementation and Outcomes

Once implemented, the policy will provide clear guidance on when and how to undertake Co-Production projects. This policy can relate to policy work. This will allow for more effective service delivery, as those who use services will have a direct hand in shaping them, ultimately meaning that services will lead to improved outcomes. However, this policy makes it clear that this process requires investment to achieve longer term effective and efficient results. The 'Checklist for Project Managers and Facilitators' in the [Co-Production Policy Resource Pack](#) provides guide prices to be able to calculate a budget whilst planning a project.

The policy is designed to be a living document, adaptable as further learning and experiences shape its application.

Long-Term Vision

The policy is expected to lay a solid foundation for all future Adult Social Care projects, promoting inclusivity, fairness, and equity in service design and delivery. By embedding the principles of Co-Production, the Council aims to foster stronger relationships between people who access services and providers, ensuring that services are better aligned with the needs of the community.

It is encouraged to read the full policy to understand what Bristol City Council's policy is and the guidance on how to do Co-Production.



Working Group Negotiation Session

Introduction

In 2023, a Working Group was formed to create a Co-Production Policy to be used by Adult Social Care in Bristol City Council. The Working Group included:

- People with Lived Expertise of Bristol City Council Adult Social Care (including Disabled people, carers and more)
- Community-led equalities organisations including Carers Support Centre and Bristol Older People Forum
 - Community-led equalities organisations have a majority of People with Lived Expertise of the community they are representing at all levels of their organisation, including trustees, senior management, staff and volunteers (the decision-makers). These are sometimes also known as user-led organisations.
- Bristol City Council Officers
- Bristol Disability Equality Commission

This Working Group met from September 2023 – September 2024 and was led by an Adult Social Care Officer and then co-facilitated with another Adult Social Care Officer and, initially, the Chair of Bristol Disability Equality Commission (who had to step back part way through the project). For the first three months, the group concentrated on establishing their ways of working, such as:

- Creating and establishing ground rules
- Arriving at a decision-making method (majority rules, consensus, both)

After that the discussion on Co-Production began. There were several practices the group built into session plans which helped the project to become more accessible to those involved:

- Beth Richards facilitated the 'Jargon Just a Minute © (Beth Richards, 2019)' game at the start of every meeting to make sure everyone was thinking about the language they use
- Using a car park to make sure the group stayed on topic
- Ringfenced time at the end of every session for 'process' issues
- Having a biography so everyone could understand who people were and how they were arriving at the group
- Creating a definitions list as we moved through the sessions to be added to as unknown or inaccessible words were used

There is a separate '[Co-Production Policy Resource Pack](#)' available with sheets that can be downloaded to aid facilitation of future Co-Production projects. These sheets will explain and give examples from this project of the practices listed above.

There was also a separate 'Lived Expertise Group' facilitated by the lead Adult Social Care Officer. This was only for those within the Working Group who were joining as a Person with Lived Expertise and was used as a safe space to discuss barriers to participation, Disability-specific issues and more informal discussions. The idea for the creation of this group to run alongside the main Working Group was borne out of conversations with [Inclusion Gloucestershire](#).

The need for a Co-Production policy emerged after several projects within Adult Social Care at Bristol City Council suffered

difficulties and complications due to there not being an established way of doing Co-Production. The Executive Director of the Adults and Communities Directorate's reflection was that "the process is probably more important and as important as the product. This work is trying to undo decades of organisations making all the decisions". The policy's necessity was also borne out of the recognition of the benefits of Co-Production in terms of democratic participation and inclusion, and additionally because when services are co-produced by those who use them in their everyday lives, they are more likely to succeed, since those using the services will have had a direct hand in shaping them.

The idea was that once a Co-Production policy was created, other work will have solid foundations in place and the policy and process can be used in action by anyone looking to undertake a Co-Production project. This is the desired use of this policy for future work in Adult

Social Care at Bristol City Council, as well as potentially other areas of Bristol City Council and Voluntary, Community and Social Enterprise (VCSE) organisations.

This policy works from a Disability Equality perspective and therefore uses the Social Model of Disability, Identity First language ('Disabled people' rather than 'people with disabilities'). This is the model of Disability that Bristol City Council uses. It also uses the term 'People with Lived Expertise' in the place of 'people with lived experience' and 'experts by experience' to make it clear that those who are joining a project in that role are equal to other experts in the room.

As we are creating a recipe for Co-Production, we have both an ingredients section and methods section. The ingredients represent the different things needed for Co-Production and the methods represent the different actions that can be taken to do Co-Production, which can be added to with future learning.



Lived Expertise Group

Policy Creation: The Working Group

People with Lived Expertise



Terry Morgan



Sharon Genua



James Deane



Beth Richards



Audrey Muranda



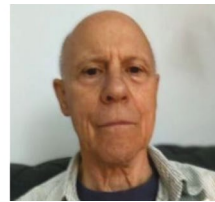
Nino Genua



Tariq Khan



Carina Andrews



Martin Hewitt

Organisation Representatives



Ian Quafe
Bristol Older
People's Forum



Ruth Pickersgill
Disabled People
Organisation Network



Susy Giullari
Carers Support
Centre



Alun Davies
Bristol Disability
Equality Commission

Facilitators

Megan Belcher
Adult Social Care
Co-Production Officer
(Lead Facilitator)



Catherine Martin
Adult Social Care
Commissioning Lead at
Bristol City Council
(Co-Facilitator)

For attending one/two sessions, thanks go to:
Rosa Hui – Chinese Community Wellbeing Society
Kaz Self – Independent Mental Health Network

Co-Production Policy Steps

■ **May 2023**

- Executive Director for Adult and Communities began recruiting a Co-Production officer to take this work forward.

■ **Jul - Oct 2023**

- Co-Production Officer started.
- Recruitment for the Working Group began.
- Working Group started meeting.
- Lived Expertise Group started meeting.

■ **Oct - Dec 2023**

- Focused on establishing ways of working as a group.

■ **Jan - Mar 2024**

- Focused on discussions around Co-Production: models, knowledge, understanding, definitions.

■ **Mar - Jun 2024**

- Co-creating the policy content.

■ **Jul - Aug 2024**

- Co-writing the policy.
- Negotiation session between Working Group and Senior Leadership to confirm final content for policy.
- This negotiation session was facilitated to make sure that the opinions of everyone involved could be heard and there was a final agreement between all parties.

■ **Sep - Oct 2024**

- Focused on final design.
- Going through committee process for approval.

What is Co-Production?

Co-Production: What Is It and When to Use It?

There are many models of Co-Production and participation being used currently. Some focus on the different levels of participation while some focus on how to do Co-Production.

Current models include:

- I Think Local, Act Personal 'Ladder of Participation': [Ladder of Co-Production | TLAP | social care \(thinklocalactpersonal.org.uk\)](https://www.thinklocalactpersonal.org.uk)
- I NHS England and Coalition for Personalised Care 'A Co-Production Model': [NHS England » Co-Production](https://www.nhs.uk)
- I Disability Rights UK 'Co-Production and Cake': [Co-Production – It's just like baking a cake! | Disability Rights UK](https://www.disabilityrightsuk.org)
- I Social Care Institute for Excellence (SCIE) 'Co-Production: what it is and how to do it': [Co-Production: what it is and how to do it - SCIE](https://www.scie.org.uk)

The Co-Production Policy Working Group went on a journey to write a definition they thought was best for Co-Production. The journey started with understanding what models already existed and what communities were already aware of. Initially they decided that they wanted to move away from a health and social care-based definition of Co-Production and to move back in alignment with what communities understand true Co-Production to be. Within this definition, People with Lived Expertise and people who draw on Adult Social Care would work together to create something. The Council however would only be involved at specific points and would not be involved in the day-to-day decision-making. If the Council were involved in

the day-to-day decision-making, then this would be called Co-Design.

This was the definition that the Working Group moved ahead with; however, when it came time to review this policy, some group members wanted to reconsider this definition. Their reflection was that often Council officers needed to be part of the joint journey and involved in the day-to-day decision-making with their Council specific subject matter expertise. There was the suggestion that the Think Local, Act Personal definition of Co-Production was what was known in the community and that for this group to move away from this to create its own definition would undermine the impact of the policy. Equally, under the original definition the group adopted, the Co-Production Policy Working Group would have been doing Co-Design rather than Co-Production. These group members rejected this and said that they thought the policy was Co-Produced including the Council Officers involvement.

As a result, a vote was taken and the majority decided to change the definition of Co-Production to be used in this policy back to the Think Local, Act Personal definition of Co-Production.

The definition of Co-Production to be used within Adult Social Care at Bristol City Council therefore is:

“Co-production is an equal relationship between people who use services and the people responsible for services. They work together, from design to delivery, sharing strategic decision-making about policies as well as decisions about the best way to deliver services.”

[TLAP-Ladder-of-Coproductio-Landscape-Poster-A3.pdf \(thinklocalactpersonal.org.uk\)](https://thinklocalactpersonal.org.uk/TLAP-Ladder-of-Coproductio-Landscape-Poster-A3.pdf)

When thinking about practical ways to undertake Co-Production projects, there was a suggestion that, where possible, commissioning a community-led equalities organisation to undertake this work on the Council's behalf may keep the project as aligned to the definition above. Equally, having someone with knowledge of this Co-Production Policy and therefore ways of working is necessary.

All projects can therefore only be described as Co-Production if they meet the definition above and embed the ingredients and action the methods listed throughout this policy. The Working Group

thinks of Co-Production as a cake. Without all the ingredients being mixed in and without the methods being undertaken in an order, the success of baking a cake would be limited. Only when the ingredients are mixed and the methods actioned can Co-Production happen. Doing effective Co-Production can benefit communities, and can also have impact upon costings, as it can lead to more efficient and effective services. Further details can be looked at here around the implications on money: [The Challenge of Co-production | New Economics Foundation](#).



Negotiation Session

Co-Design

Co-Production should always be the goal and where possible should be used. However, there was an acknowledgement that this is not always possible. Why this might occur can be viewed through the Type of Participation Flow Chart. Therefore, there was a decision to include a brief mention of Co-Design within this policy as an option. Co-Design projects should use very similar ingredients to Co-Production; however, who is involved and what decision-making power everyone has is different. This policy can still be used to inform the planning in a Co-Design project, and the Working Group would encourage that.

The definition of Co-Design to be used within Adult Social Care at Bristol City Council is:

“Co-Design is where people who use services are involved in designing services, based on their experiences and ideas. They have genuine influence but have not been involved in strategic decision-making.”

[TLAP-Ladder-of-Coproducton-Landscape-Poster-A3.pdf \(thinklocalactpersonal.org.uk\)](https://www.thinklocalactpersonal.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2019/07/TLAP-Ladder-of-Coproducton-Landscape-Poster-A3.pdf)

Aside from the reasons listed in the Type of Participation Flow Chart, Co-Design may be used when there is not yet a community-led equalities organisation to undertake this work on the Council's behalf for a specific community. Or it may be used due to the project only being undertaken in the 'design' phase of a project's life cycle.

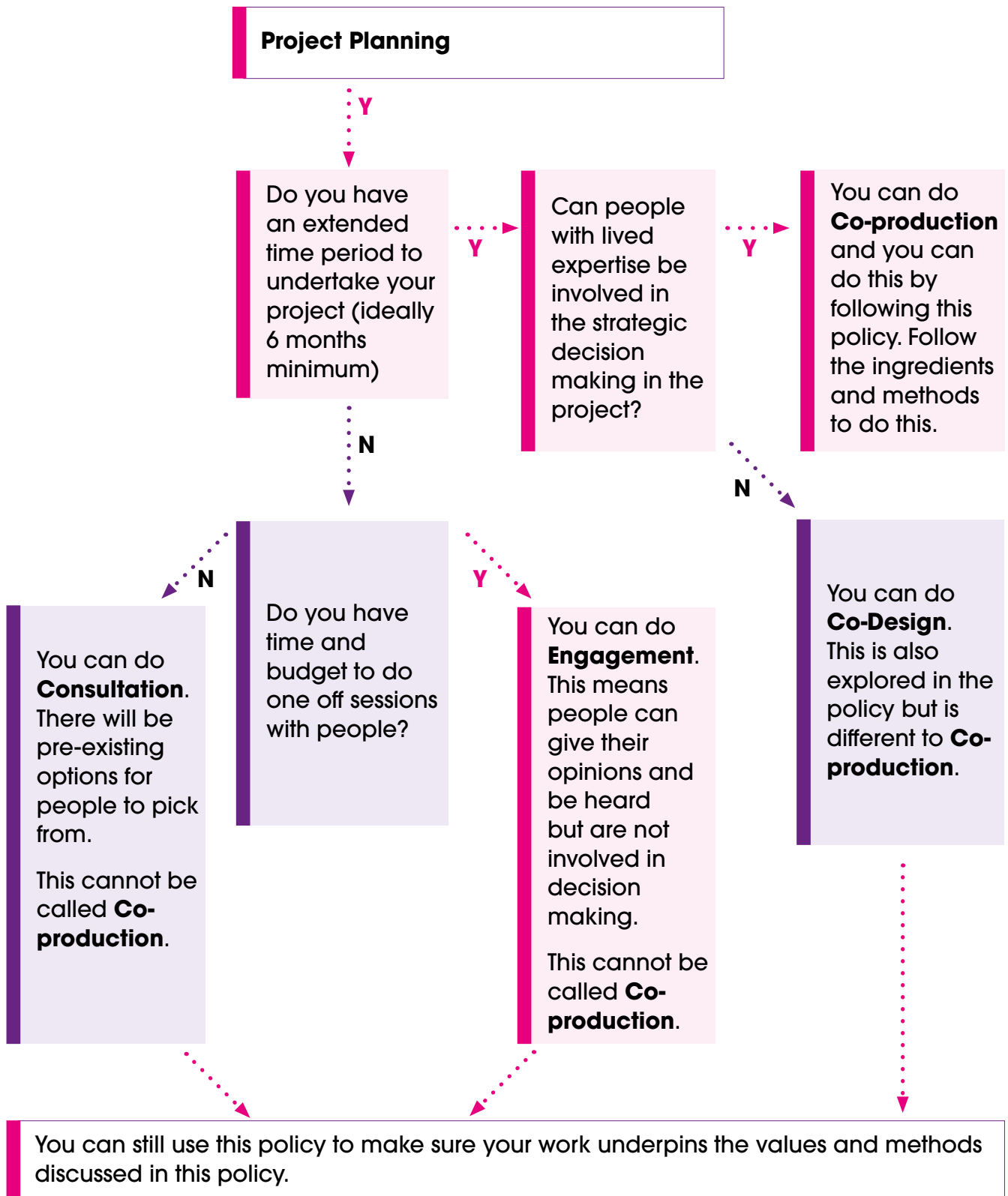
It is important to use the right description of the level of participation in a project. As before, a project can only be called Co-Production if it uses the ingredients and methods described in this policy. Likewise, a project can only be labelled Co-Design if it meets the definition listed above.



Working Group member and Facilitator

Type of Participation Flow Chart

Below is a flow chart to aid project managers in deciding how they are going to embed the voices of those who access services. In the project planning stage, when the decision is being taken as to what level of participation is going to be planned for, the Co-Production Policy Working Group will be moving into an advisory and evaluation group that will meet quarterly. They will be able to be approached to offer their advice. Likewise, a Co-Production officer sits within the Strategic Commissioning team who can offer guidance. Co-Production should always be the goal and where possible should be used with this policy being referred to and factored into any decision.



How to do Co-Production



Co-Production Ingredients - The recipe

Values

Definition: Values are the things that people believe are important in the way they live and work. People use these values to decide their priorities and evaluate outcomes, assessing if something has worked out the way they wished.

Values are incredibly important in Co-Production work. They support our connection to one another and create our joint focus. When we understand our collective values for the group and the project, we can not only communicate them when changes need to be made, but we can also draw on them when we decide to change paths if they are not being met. Our values are shown in our words and actions. They give us the opportunity to grow and develop, to create the future together we want to experience, both for ourselves and for others.

For Co-Production, the Working Group decided on six priority values, while recognising that these six are not exclusive. We also are aware of the importance of **creativity**. This is a way of working which highlights that we cannot rely on the way things are already being done but need to embrace new and creative ways things could work better. There is also the importance of **empowerment**, to share power with each other to achieve together. There will be other values which are very important within Co-Production projects but for the purposes of this policy, the six below are the ones chosen to spotlight.

Ingredients

- Fairness
- Recognition of contribution
- Equity
- Inclusion
- Respect
- Equality

Fairness

Definition: Giving people the same opportunity.

Recognition of Contribution

Definition: To be recognised for your involvement, time and expertise. This means acknowledging the contribution someone has made to what has been produced.

Equity

Definition: Recognising that we do not all start from the same place and must adjust and address existing imbalances, tackle the barriers that some groups

face, and make society fairer by narrowing the social and economic divides that separate people.

Inclusion

Definition: To take active steps to create equity, ensuring equal access and opportunity for all, and tackling discrimination and injustice. It is also about ensuring that people feel they belong and are encouraged and equipped to connect with others and to contribute to the life of the city.

Respect

Definition: To understand and accept the feelings, wishes or rights of others.

Equality

Definition: Recognising and respecting differences, including different needs, to ensure people can live their lives free from discrimination, know their rights will be protected, and they will have what they need, and experience equality of opportunity.



Access Needs

Definition: Access Needs is the name given to the accommodations or adjustments required for Disabled individuals to take part.

However, this is expanded to cover everyone rather than only Disabled people within Co-Production work.

Within Co-Production projects, communities should be involved in decisions that affect them. When valuing diversity of knowledge and experience there should then be action to remove barriers to participation and access. Mapping out access needs and addressing the need is an essential part of Co-Production and projects.

Ingredients

- Defining Access Needs
- Access Needs Checklist for Project Managers and Facilitators
- Access Needs Form for Project Members

Defining Access Needs

There is a need to define what 'Access Needs' means in the context of the project. For example, within the Working Group, the definition of this was expanded as there weren't only Disabled people in the membership. In the Working Group, there were several people involved who had different barriers to access. For some, their barrier to accessing the group was based on their role in supporting family members, therefore reducing the time they were able to spend with the group. For others, it was the question of how they could physically take part in the group as they had no access to an accessible form of transport. Other barriers could include childcare responsibilities, financial responsibilities, inaccessibility of information and communication and lack of translation of information, among others. This defining action, the following exploration of what barriers could be experienced and finding ways to reduce these barriers needs to be done as early as possible in the life span of a Co-Production project. As the project then moves through its life span, there also needs to be awareness that access needs are fluid and may change; therefore, multiple check-ins are needed throughout a project. People may also discover they have an access need only after

experiencing seeing others advocating their access needs so the repeated check-ins would likewise facilitate this.

In Co-Production projects there needs to be an established way of checking in on how people are supported to participate and a way to check if people have understood or understand what the work is doing. This check-in needs to be done in real time but can also be out of sessions if needed.

Checklist for Project Managers and Facilitators

There are several things that will need to be thought about ahead of contacting potential project members. In the '[Co-Production Policy Resource Pack](#)' there is a checklist of things to consider and financially plan for. This includes access needs but also other information. Any decisions made from this will then need to be added in any information sent out when recruiting people to get involved.

Access Needs Form

The Working Group designed an access needs form for others to use in the future. This form is used as a checklist to show what support people might need and then to enable the facilitators of the project to create a budget and subsequent actions that would accurately support people and enable them to take part in the work. Collecting this information is essential at the beginning of a project and should be reassessed throughout. The form can be found in the '[Co-Production Policy Resource Pack](#)'.

Culture

Definition: the ideas, the ways of doing things and the social behaviour of a particular people and/or society.

Culture is incredibly important in Co-Production work. The culture of the people, the project and organisations involved will directly impact upon the work being done.

Ingredients

- Joining up different cultures
- Project Culture
- Session Culture

Joining up different cultures

Co-Production provides the opportunity to create a community of people who together design, deliver and evaluate projects and services. This community is a collective of People with Lived Expertise, people from Social Care, the Local Authority, and the Voluntary and Community sector. It is important to have a diverse group of people making use of everyone's strengths and appreciating differences. However, when doing this, there must also be time given for the exploration of the traumas and adverse experiences that those participating were carrying before being able to produce anything. This provides the chance to broaden the scope of whose voices are heard, to empathise, to be curious and brave with one another. This is where change happens, where projects are created and services are re-designed, with service delivery thereby working for everyone involved.

Accessibility is a huge part of joining up different cultures within Co-Production work. Information from the start needs to be available to all, for example language translations or formatting translations (such as Easy Read). Then there needs to be consideration as to where the information is shared: word of mouth, reaching out to local networks, online while making sure to include those who might be digitally excluded. There needs to be an awareness that no-one is hard to reach but only that information may not have been shared in spaces accessible to various communities. When building the group try to keep in mind who might be bringing what culture into the space (community culture, business culture etc). Bringing people into a project will take time and thoughtful consideration and there needs to be clear discussion about who the project might be missing and how those people can be reached.



Project Culture

Once a project group has been brought together, it will begin to create its own culture. Taking time to prepare and plan together is key to ensuring a culture is being created where everyone feels they can contribute, learn, and create. Think together about what kind of culture the project group wishes to build; what are the key values, how are these values going to be upheld, how is conflict going to be managed, what will the decision-making process be and what are the established ways of working together as a group?

Ensuring space for constructive conflict is a great opportunity to learn from one another; however, it is important everyone feels safe. Creating ground rules together and everyone agreeing on the answers to the above questions is important to do at the beginning of working together and to enforce and re-evaluate throughout.

When working together there needs to be an understanding of the importance of being reflective and flexible: this is how we enable people to grow in confidence and how we then learn from one another. Being reflective means to courageously take a moment to think about what happened, what worked, what didn't, what can be done and what can't. This can be done individually and as part of the group. Being flexible means - while focusing on the values - to be open-minded, willing to learn, to be optimistic and to stay calm.

Session Culture

Within a project's culture there will then be the culture of the sessions. It is key to think about how the group wants the sessions to feel, run and what they want them to achieve.

It is recommended to have a trained facilitator(s) and where possible an independent facilitator that has no influence over the sessions' content but is solely there to ensure the sessions run smoothly. If this is not possible, sharing the role of facilitation could also be a way of ensuring the facilitator is meeting the group's agenda. A skilled facilitator can focus a group and help make decisions faster. Their focus is also to ensure that the group is following the ground rules the group agreed upon.

Each session needs to be accessible for everyone to be able to engage and participate - see [Access Needs](#).



Time

Definition: Time is the progression of events from the past to the future, but it's not something we can see or touch.



Time is incredibly important to think about in Co-Production and how you work since this way of working does take time and needs to be planned and managed in a way that is appropriate to the project and circumstances. However, this is not the only time to be considered as it also needs to be thought of within the lives of the project members.

Ingredients

- Planning Time
- Timeline of Project
- Time within the sessions

Planning Time

At the beginning of the project, creating a timeline enables the opportunity to think about what time needs to be designated to each stage and then what budget is needed. Be transparent with this timeline, share it as part of recruitment so that people can make an informed decision when accepting the commitment.

There are a few areas to think on before the project begins that take time, including:

- Assessing and meeting access needs including comprehension, getting used to ideas and learning their application
- Ensuring any documents, including session notes, are translated into other languages or easy-read
- Agreeing and setting up the systems for payment for involvement
- Recruitment
- Meeting training requirements and needs
- However, there is also planning time needed once a project group is together to co-create any plans or decisions that need to be made and any adaptations to pre-project planning.

Timeline of Project

Before Co-Production and sessions start time needs to be spent in planning 'what we hope to do' as this will then result in using time more effectively within the needed project.

Be realistic when creating the timeline, projects often take longer than expected. It may be helpful to factor in a 20% time and money contingency to meet any unexpected circumstances. If all are aware of this at the start of the project it shows respect; if the project is unexpectedly extended, do ask if it is respecting everybody's time. Time is so important within Co-Production as it cannot be

done effectively in just one session.

Within the timeline of the project, time needs to be factored in for people to gain an understanding of the previous session's notes and to prepare for the next session. This also needs to be recognised with payment for involvement and shared at recruitment stage so that people know how much time they will need to give to the project.

Within the timeline there needs to be allocated time to write up session notes, agendas, and plans. These also require time to be negotiated with gatekeepers and the wider team who may not attend the sessions.

Time within the sessions

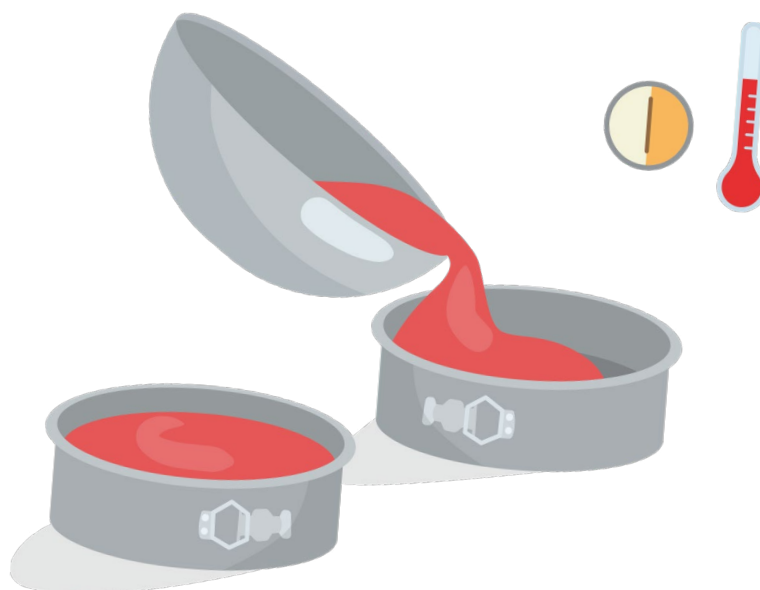
Designing the session layout is important to support access. Think about the best time of day for the sessions, how long they will run and when breaks are needed.

The duration of the sessions can be complicated to decide. Trying to avoid creating fatigue for the group members is vital, but there also needs to be time to ask questions if someone does not understand and to allow time for different understanding needs. Individuals' relationship with time can also differ and when pulling a group together from different communities, an understanding of this needs to be considered, for example 'Crip Time'.

“The term crip time is used by some Disability advocates to describe Disabled individuals' unique relationship to time. Crip time indicates the complexity of Disabled experience in a world with many barriers to accessibility. In this sense, the term denotes the extra time and need for time accommodations a person might need to perform any variety of tasks” (Tamar LeRoy Ph.D., 2021).

Having a trained facilitator to keep sessions to time and a note taker supports the group in meeting their aims and documenting their work. Dividing and delegating roles to everyone also helps to make the group more productive and efficiently uses the time at hand.

In the Working Group it was helpful to allocate time at the end of the session to discuss both 'any other business' and any issues around the process of the project to enable us to focus on the content for the main portion of the session. Process is how groups work together and content is what needs to be discussed to meet the overall aim. It is important to be prepared and allocate additional time if needed, and to change how the group is working together if the timeline is not being met, always considering how this can be done while respecting everyone's time.



Money

Definition: the value of what a person or organisation owns, keeps in a bank, or spends.

Money (or a budget) is usually the first thing that comes into mind when planning for a project. Money can influence the length of a project, who is involved in a project, how people are involved in a project, and much more. That is why careful consideration around money is essential when planning a Co-Production project.

Ingredients

- Financial Planning
- Costs of Access
- Payment for Involvement

Financial Planning

Financial planning is an essential first step when planning to determine whether Co-Production can be done. Financial pressures can stop Co-Production either from the start or part way through a project. If funding were to stop part way through a project, there would be inevitable risks and consequences associated with this which could erode the relationship with Bristol communities and Bristol City Council.

Co-Production projects require investment in both time and resources up front. Co-Production projects are not one-off sessions, they will be undertaken over a large amount of time.

There will be costs associated with location, technology, venues (online or in person), and transport, among many other aspects. To make a project truly accessible, as outlined in [Access Needs](#), this requires money to be ringfenced solely for access needs. It is necessary to be transparent as to what is possible and what is not in terms of money. This consideration needs to be done early in the financial planning and should inform all decisions made afterwards.

If there isn't the budget to invest in Co-Production meeting all the themes laid out in this policy, then a project cannot truly be called Co-Production.

While investment is required to achieve longer term effective, inclusive, and

efficient results, as previously mentioned the use of Co-Production can enable relevant and usable service delivery for the communities who access them.

Costs of Access

Whilst Access Needs are covered elsewhere in this policy, there needs to be an awareness of other costs associated with access which must be included in the financial planning.

To be considered:

- Venue costs if in person? For an accessible venue that meets the needs of the project members with good transport links readily available, there will likely be a cost attached.
- Food and refreshments costs if in person? The Working Group who created this policy said that it has been their experience that food and/or refreshments being available aids in providing a welcoming environment and atmosphere within sessions.
- Childcare and replacement care costs if in person? For someone to attend a meeting, they may have caring responsibilities of some form and will need support to access alternative care to cover them in their absence.
- Equipment costs? For either in person or online sessions, there may need to be equipment sourced to support the needs of project members.
- Printing costs? To make a project fully accessible, some group members may need physical copies of information which will need to be provided to ensure there aren't any barriers to their participation.

Payment for Involvement

To ensure equitable power sharing and relationships between project members we want to remove barriers to participation, especially for rarely heard communities. For a long time, people have become used to doing something for nothing for the 'greater good'. However, this disproportionately affects some communities. Payment for involvement removes financial barriers which might stop people taking part. Offering payment for involvement demonstrates Bristol City Council values and recognises everyone's time and experience. Nobody should be expected to contribute for free (although some people may choose to do this). Expenses, including those mentioned in the 'Access Needs Form' within the ['Co-Production Policy Resource Pack'](#) also need to be built into any planning to make a project truly accessible and equitable.

The people involved in the project each have different backgrounds as to how they are involved. Some may be joining as part of their job role and therefore being paid to attend. Some people may be joining as an individual using their lived expertise as a group member. Others may be joining the project as a representative from an organisation.

There needs to be a consideration on how to make sure everyone in the room is joining in an equitable way. Can a project hold up the value of 'equity' if some people are paid and others aren't? Payment for involvement should always be offered in Co-Production work and the suggestion is that this should be paid at the Real Living Wage at the time that a project is started.

If there are small, local community organisation representatives joining the project who may be paid, can there be an investment in the organisation to ensure their continued participation? This would have the added benefit of investing in the local voluntary and community sector, making it more resilient and building relationships with community organisations. Alternatively, there could be a budget to pay the local organisation's representative for the hours they attend the Co-Production session.

There is guidance that has been developed around Payment for Involvement for Adult Social Care within Bristol City Council. There are plans to develop a corporate approach after this. To find out how payment for involvement works, please look at the ['Adult Social Care Payment for Involvement Guidance'](#) for further detail.



Environment

Definition: the surrounding things, conditions, or influences that shape the experience of a person, project or community.

Without understanding the environment being worked in and taking steps to cultivate a supportive and accessible environment, the transformation and change trying to be brought about could be limited.

Ingredients

- Political Environment
- Physical Environment
- Environment and Atmosphere in Sessions

Political Environment

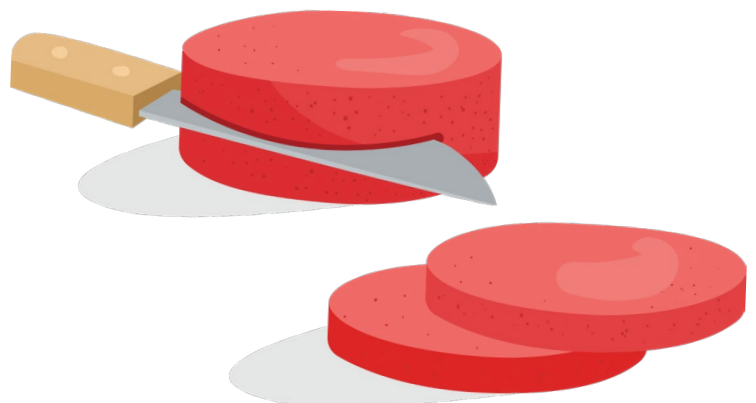
The political environment refers to the actions of decision-makers on behalf of the community they represent.

The political environment in which Co-Production is being done is essential to understand. Whatever trends are being promoted at central government level will ultimately be felt on a local level also and it is important to be mindful of the context being worked in.

All work done in the public sector is related to decisions made by the central government, particularly in local authorities. Local authorities receive a lot of their funding from the central government (this funding changes depending on the political will of the government in power), and they have

statutory duties which they finance from this budget. Adult Social Care within Bristol City Council, along with Children's services, accounts for much of the annual Bristol City Council budget. Adult Social Care covers: care and support for adults in Bristol; support to live independently; providing housing options for older and vulnerable people; community-based support services; advocacy; money and legal matters for social care; mental health services.

The Care Quality Commission (CQC) is the independent regulator of health and social care in England. Their marking criteria now includes a reference to embedding the voices of People with Lived Expertise in the designing and delivery of services. There has been a move nationally of Social Care services across the country trying to improve the levels of participation of people who draw upon their support and services. There is a need therefore to look at the political context currently being worked in to see where the current project might align or be impacted by any changes in policy.



Physical Environment

Although the political environment looks at the wider context being worked in, there needs to be an importance placed too on the physical environment the project is working in and creating. To neglect the physical environment could mean that people don't feel comfortable to stay as a member throughout the life span of the project.

While access needs are covered here, there are several other things in the physical environment that need to be considered.

- Can hybrid working be offered? Some group members may only feel they can participate online and others only in person. Other members' ability to join online or in person may fluctuate between sessions. The

offer to make sessions hybrid needs to be considered; however, if it is made, then the technology needs to be readily available and usable.

- If in person, is the environment in any physical rooms adjustable? This could include lighting, temperature, noise/sound. Group members may need different intensities on different days and without adjusting on the day, said group members may not then be able to take part.
- If in person, has the attitudes and awareness of any building staff been addressed? While the physical environment in which a session is taking place may be accessible, if coming into the venue a group member is faced with disabling attitudes, this can cause a barrier to participation.

Environment and Atmosphere in Sessions

The environment and atmosphere in sessions is something which is often overlooked but to ensure accessibility and participation this needs to be focused on. Highlighting and being transparent about how people are arriving at the group can be an important place to start.

The actions that can be taken before a session begins include:

- If in person, the room layout. Making sure that no matter where anybody sits, if they are looking they can see everyone else in the room.
- If in person or online, are there individuals in the room whose role is to provide admin support or personalised support? This then means that the facilitator(s) can focus on the group's work rather than also having to manage other roles. It also means that attendees know who to approach if they are having a particular issue that they would rather keep private.
- Limiting the time of the session. The Working Group recommend a

2-hour session with a break being the best format for most people.

- Using the responses from the Access Needs form found in the [Co-Production Policy Resource Pack](#), making sure that any information or communication ahead of the session has been produced in an accessible format to group members.
- The actions that can be built into session plans include:
- A session deciding on the future session structure and group's ways of working. This means creating a format that works for the group and deciding how decisions will be made as well as creating ground rules that everyone owns, and everyone enforces.
- There needs to be an emphasis on working in a way that the group members decide rather than in the format used traditionally by organisations, local authorities, or other groups.

Knowledge

Definition: Knowledge is understanding, information and awareness gained through learning and/or experience.

Knowledge is power. To know something or to not know something can mean inclusion or exclusion from many things. Everyone has knowledge on a subject, but it will likely often be from different perspectives. Historically, only certain types of knowledge have been valued; however, in Co-Production, all knowledge should be valued equally.



Ingredients

- Different Types of Knowledge
- Communicating Knowledge
- Providing knowledge before a project begins

Different Types of Knowledge

Through conversations with the Working Group designing this policy, it was established that there are several different sources of knowledge that could be useful when doing Co-Production projects and these projects are about designing a space where everyone's individual knowledge is celebrated and embraced.

Lived Expertise Knowledge

People with Lived Expertise within Adult Social Care are those directly affected by accessing adult social care support or services. This means that they have knowledge and insights into services that those who design and run these services may not. Quite often People with Lived Expertise are left out of the conversation when actually they can develop solutions for services' improvement or development rooted in their everyday experience of using those services; they are often best placed to know what works, what doesn't and what is missing. Even Lived Expertise Knowledge however can bridge different communities, such as people receiving care and people providing care. There is a need to make sure that a 360-degree view of an issue is provided rather than only relying on one or the other.

Individual Knowledge

Everyone has knowledge. The place and time in which someone grew

up means that they will have gained knowledge that others, who grew up in different times and places may not. There may be shared knowledge between different people. However, there is always likely some knowledge which someone may remember that others may not, and vice versa.

Professional Knowledge

Professional knowledge is borne out of education, training, or skill development engaged in purposefully and then combined with real life practice. Traditionally, this has often been the most sought-after knowledge. However, it cannot be solely relied upon.

Research Knowledge

Research knowledge refers to the knowledge gained after analysing data gained through a research project. This data could be either quantitative or qualitative. This means that any decisions taken because of gaining research knowledge can be evidenced with data. Research knowledge can mean that people are informed of what has already been proven or discussed and can give the context to a Co-Production project.

Knowledge of Law and Policy

Similar to understanding the political environment (found within environment), understanding law and policy within Co-Production and projects can be extremely helpful. Understanding the political context being worked in along with knowledge around any changes in law and policy that could impact on the work being done can save time and energy later.

Communicating Knowledge

While there can be an acknowledgement that all knowledge can be different but should be considered equal or treated fairly, the way this works in practice doesn't often reflect this. In the previous section the different types of knowledge needed to be actively involved within a Co-Production project is explored, but there also needs to be an acknowledgement that the communication of these forms of knowledge can reinforce or transcend barriers to participation.

Some knowledge might be able to be communicated easily by individuals as it is part of their everyday practice, and they are able to point to why they have the knowledge they do. Some people might find it more challenging to apply their knowledge to a specific situation due to it having always been instinctual rather than a thought-out or designed process. Part of running a Co-Production project is to make sure that all forms of knowledge are represented, and to

plan for different strategies for different people to ensure this representation.

Understanding an individual's access needs (see the Access Needs Form in the '[Co-Production Policy Resource Pack](#)') is a useful place to start; however facilitators of the project need to take an active and responsive role to draw out knowledge from all project members. Active, as it must be consistently done through the life cycle of a project, and responsive, due to new barriers to participation being experienced all the time. Facilitators need to create a space that encourages equal and equitable communication of knowledge and to manage the power sharing and relationships occurring to reduce the possibility of some knowledge becoming dominant and occupying too much space.

Communication of knowledge is therefore a dynamic process and one that will need to be actively managed and responded to throughout a project.

Providing knowledge before a project begins

There are several actions which the Working Group who designed this policy agreed need to be taken about providing knowledge to project members ahead of the project beginning or within session plans. These actions are:

- Training offers need to be communicated with project members ahead of a project starting to allow for knowledge-building. See Training section for more information.
- Discuss and agree on who decides what information will be shared with project members.
- Need to establish a way for the project member to challenge and complain independently.

All these actions the Working Group felt were necessary to provide the knowledge needed to take part in a Co-Production project equitably.



Representation

Definition: having a wide diversity of people present or represented at any session, participating in a cooperative manner, embracing what is unique and includes backgrounds, personality, life experiences and beliefs, all of the things that make people who they are.



Representation is important but often overlooked when undertaking a project. It can ensure better decision-making and problem-solving skills, higher creativity levels, and more satisfaction with the outcome of the work.

Ingredients

- Guidance on representation
- Representation in the work
- Representation of the voice of the project

Guidance on representation

Co-Production works at its best when it is undertaken with a wide variety of people as possible. The best way to find out how someone might be affected by something or how we can help is to ask someone; we should never presume. Reaching rarely heard communities is key. Connecting

with pre-existing groups and organisations could not only provide access to isolated groups but also to professional experiences. Factoring in that during the first round of recruitment there may not be success in a full representation of people, a second round may be needed. It is also necessary to consider if the project is truly needed if it's not being engaged with by the people it is meant to meet, and does it thereby need to be done differently. There are a range of alternative options to traditional meetings that could be utilised to work differently.

Representation in the work

It is important in this work to think about who will be impacted by the result and how to reflect that demographic of people within a Co-Production project. Demographics include age, sex, income level, race, employment, location, homeownership, sexuality, health, and level of education. Bristol is a diverse community and work being done within it should reflect this.

There should always be an aim to prioritise rarely heard voices and to prioritise voices of those who might be most impacted by the outcome to ensure services are better aligned with the needs of the community. The more people represented and their voices heard, the greater the benefits of Co-Production. This includes People with Lived Expertise, community leaders, officers, professionals, and researchers.

Intersectionality will need to be a huge consideration when looking to join up different cultures and who is represented. People who access Adult Social Care services are not a homogenous group with the same experiences. The experiences and understanding of Adult Social Care will vary depending on a person's cultural and faith background, among others, which will need to be explored and understood before embarking on a project. For example, those who have moved to the UK may bring different perspectives due to past engagement with different social care systems, lack of knowledge of UK Adult Social Care structures, alongside differing relationships with officials. The breadth and representation of cultural experiences can only enhance Co-Production projects.

Representation of the voice of the project

Thinking about power sharing and relationships and ensuring that the discussions and outcome embed the voices of the people accessing services is central to any Co-Production project.

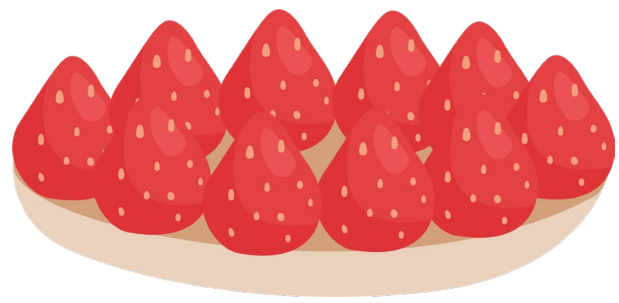
It has been recommended to have a trained facilitator to ensure impartiality and avoid directing the group in an unfair manner. Where this is not possible there could be two facilitators - a Person with Lived Expertise and a professional both receiving facilitation training and then facilitating the sessions.

As well as the facilitator it is important to think about how the outcome will be shared, who is responsible for collating all the information discussed and then sharing this with the people who need to know. The aim of Co-Production is that all stages are done collaboratively from start to end. Utilising the skills of the group members themselves as well as providing opportunities to develop. Most, if not all, roles can be shared or have an opportunity for people to contribute to.



Training

Definition: the action of teaching a person a particular skill or type of behaviour. The action of attending a course in preparation for an event or role.



Training is incredibly important in Co-Production work. Training for both facilitators and project group members can empower everyone to take part in a project equally and equitably. It can develop concepts, create knowledge, and change attitudes, all of which aim to further personal and organisational development.

Ingredients

- Training before project
- Training during project
- Impact of training

Training before project

We recommend a baseline training for everyone. This could include safeguarding, equality and equity, value of lived expertise and the social model. There may be other training opportunities that are needed based on the aim of the process. This training needs to be offered before sessions start to make sure everyone feels they can take part equitably. Some people may reject the offer as they have previous training or experience; it should however be available to those who feel like they would like to understand more to be able to participate.

Ideally the sessions should be run by a trained facilitator as without facilitation skills, energy, resources, and momentum can easily be lost and wasted. Opportunity for staff and People with Lived Expertise to have facilitator training and then run the sessions can make the process less biased and share power.

Like facilitation training there may be other specific training needed for specific roles. For example, tech support or negotiation training. The idea of offering this training is to allow a diverse range of people to take up roles within the project, not just those that have been able to access training elsewhere.

Thinking about training on how to work with each other may also be needed; for example, thinking about People with Lived Expertise having the opportunity to learn how to have difficult conversations or communicate effectively in a meeting setting, or for professionals to learn how to work in an accessible way.

Training during project

Understanding and respecting that everyone has different levels of training within the project is important. Training may be wished for by one person and not by another, but the offer needs to be an ongoing conversation with regular check-ins to see if people feel they are able to contribute equally and if not, what training they may need.

There must also be an ongoing awareness that training needs might also change at different points in the project as knowledge and understanding changes.

Impact of training

Just because someone has accessed training does not necessarily mean that the way they work will change. Opportunities to reflect on whether training was effective and how the training can develop the way of working is key for both the individual and the group. How can the training information be used within the Co-Production project?

Think about building a list of useful training for future use. Was the training offered good enough to use again or do alternatives need to be sourced? This will save time on future projects.

Power Sharing and Relationships

Definition: Power Sharing and Relationships refers to the control one person may have or exercise over the other person. This is because of their relationship to each other.

In this work, this means the actions that need to be taken to share power between those in relationship with each other.

Understanding the power sharing and relationships between people in a project is fundamental to embedding and acting on the values of Co-Production. Without understanding the power relationships of the people involved in a project, actions will not be able to be taken to share the power necessary for successful Co-Production.



Ingredients

- Context and identity
- Managing power and relationships
- How to share resources

Context and identity

The social and political context in which people grow up and exist creates their identity. This identity influences, and potentially biases, their understanding and outlook of the world. Everyone who is joining a Co-Production project will have their own context and identity, both of which will influence their participation in a project.

The aim is for everyone to feel ownership over the process. This means that not only does the facilitator(s) have to develop their understanding of the group members, there also needs to be space for the project members to develop their understanding about each other, to learn where people are coming from and how they are arriving within the project.

Specific practices such as creating biographies of group members works well as a starting point. Practices then need to be developed that last throughout the life cycle of a project to deepen understanding and build strong connections.

However, when discussing context and identity, there also needs to be a discussion of power. Each person needs to understand and be aware of the power they hold, and to avoid practices where people attempt to reinforce their status.

Managing power and relationships

Co-Production projects will have differing requirements as to how to manage power and relationships. However, both will need to start with openness and honesty from project members and a focus on the concepts of 'with' and 'by' rather than 'to' or 'for'.

This means that everyone working on a Co-Production project will need to work to the values. This includes bringing an anti-discriminatory approach to all work undertaken to ensure true equity for the voices of group members and avoiding un-equitable assumed or accepted ways of working involved in Co-Production projects. This process needs transparency to be embedded from the start. Those with power in the room, such as the power derived from having the backing of a local authority, will need to understand:

1. What their own power is.
2. What this power means in relation to who is being worked with.
3. What steps can be taken to share power with the other members of the group.

One immediate way to do this is making sure everyone is paid to be part of the project; however, there are fewer tangible barriers at play. Making sure a training offer is there, making clear that all knowledge is valuable, and all the other themes within this policy is essential to managing power relationships within a project.

How to share resources

While payment for involvement is referenced above as a way of managing power sharing and relationships, this can be expanded to wider sharing of resources. What sharing there is, who decides this and the transparency and communication surrounding these decisions will set up the process by which power is understood within a project.

These considerations are:

- Who gets what?
- Who decides who gets what?
- Does everyone understand why certain choices have been made?
- Does everyone feel ownership over the decisions that have been made?

Methods

Before Beginning a Project Checklist

- ✓ Plan how to ensure the above values are met in the work. Is the recognition for contribution payment in place? Add these values to the recruitment stage to ensure people are aware of which values they will be requested to meet.

- ✓ Complete the 'Checklist for Project Managers and Facilitators' found in the Co-Production Policy Resource Pack with its guide prices and compile all the necessary information. Once recruited, send out the Access Needs Form to the project members and arrange for the necessary support.

- ✓ Map out all the different cultures that may need to be joined together in the project.

- ✓ Design a timeline thinking about all the aspects of Co-Production. Ensure extra time is given.

- ✓ Follow the flow chart at the beginning of the policy. Is there enough money planned for the project to undertake a Co-Production project? If so, look at the considerations in 'Payment for Involvement' and add into the financial planning.

- ✓ Look at the key national and local decisions that have been made which relate to the project and note what impact they could have.

- ✓ Map out the different sources of knowledge which are relevant to the proposed project. Look at how balance in that knowledge can be created to make sure the project is equitable and representative of who will be impacted the most by any changes.

- ✓ Think about the recruitment process, ensure advertising goes to a diverse group of people. Communicate with community groups that are working directly with rarely heard groups. Factor in time for a second recruitment process if needed.

- ✓ Think about what training and experience you had to complete in your role. How can that opportunity be given to the people within the group? What specific roles will be needed and therefore what specific training? Share the training offers at the recruitment stage.

- ✓ Depending on the categorisation of the project, there needs to be a clear mapping of the power relationships in the room. Take specific actions to enable equitable decision making such as payment for involvement.

- ✓ Create an information pack to be given to project members that can be referred to throughout the project. Include in this information on how group members might be able to complain or feedback if they feel unable to approach the facilitator with their comments. This should be fully accessible depending on the member's access needs.

During the Project Checklist

- ✓ Have moments of reflection to see if the sessions match the values wished for as a group. Work towards improving in the areas that are struggling. Ask the group if they feel the sessions are working well.

- ✓ Schedule regular check-ins in the project plan to find out whether project members' access needs have changed.

- ✓ Check in with how the session culture is with all members. Is it working for everyone or are there things that need to change?

- ✓ Adjust sessions if the time is not working and be prepared to change how the group is working together if the timeline is not being met.

- ✓ Maintain careful oversight as to how the budget is being used. If it looks as if the group is running through the budget quicker than expected, then there might need to be a review of how to mitigate this.

- ✓ Plan sessions to make sure that the environment and atmosphere within sessions is as accessible to as many people as want to be involved.

- ✓ Add in check points within the project plan to assess whether any forms of knowledge are dominating over others. If so, take steps to redress this imbalance.

- ✓ Ensure the project is meeting all the ingredients of Co-Production to keep members engaged. If the group is noticing people aren't being represented, recruit additional people, or ensure connections are made to hear the voice of that group. If members were unable to attend the sessions, ensure the group gathered their feedback another way.

- ✓ Regularly check in with project members to see if they feel they can contribute equally and if not, offer training opportunities.

- ✓ Consider whether you are embedding practices of understanding the context and identity of other project members that are working for all members? There may need to be periodic reviews of this.

After the Project Finishes Checklist

- ✓ Evaluate the way of working together and whether the outcome of the project meets these values? How can these values be continued to be used throughout the work and the outcome?
.....
- ✓ Reflect on whether the actions undertaken to address project member's access needs truly addressed their barriers to participation. This learning will help inform future projects.
.....
- ✓ Reflect and evaluate the project culture. Was the culture at the end what it was planned to be at the beginning?
.....
- ✓ Reflect on the initial timeline created. Record where extra time was needed or where extra time was present. Also record what helped during the project to stick to the timeline and what slowed down the project. With these reflections, share them so they can be considered in future sessions.
.....
- ✓ Reflect on the difference between the financial planning and what happened in practice. Use this information in any reflection and use it in financial planning for future projects.
.....
- ✓ Reflect on which strategies worked well and which didn't. This will be useful in future work.
.....
- ✓ Ask project members for their feedback. Do they think their contributions were considered equally with everyone else's?
.....
- ✓ Are further conversations needed with people who were not represented? Identify who together will represent the voice of the project; this job could be shared (professional and someone with lived expertise).
.....
- ✓ Create a list of useful training opportunities that were utilised in this project to be used in future projects.
.....
- ✓ Create a feedback document. Ask the group members whether they felt equitable to others in the room. Use this feedback to evaluate the project.
.....

Associated Documents

- [Co-Production Policy Resource Pack](#)
- [Co-Production Policy Reading List](#)
- [Adult Social Care Payment for Involvement Guidance](#)
- [Easy Read Co-Production Policy](#)

