Doing public management in a complex world

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CHALLENGE
TODAY,
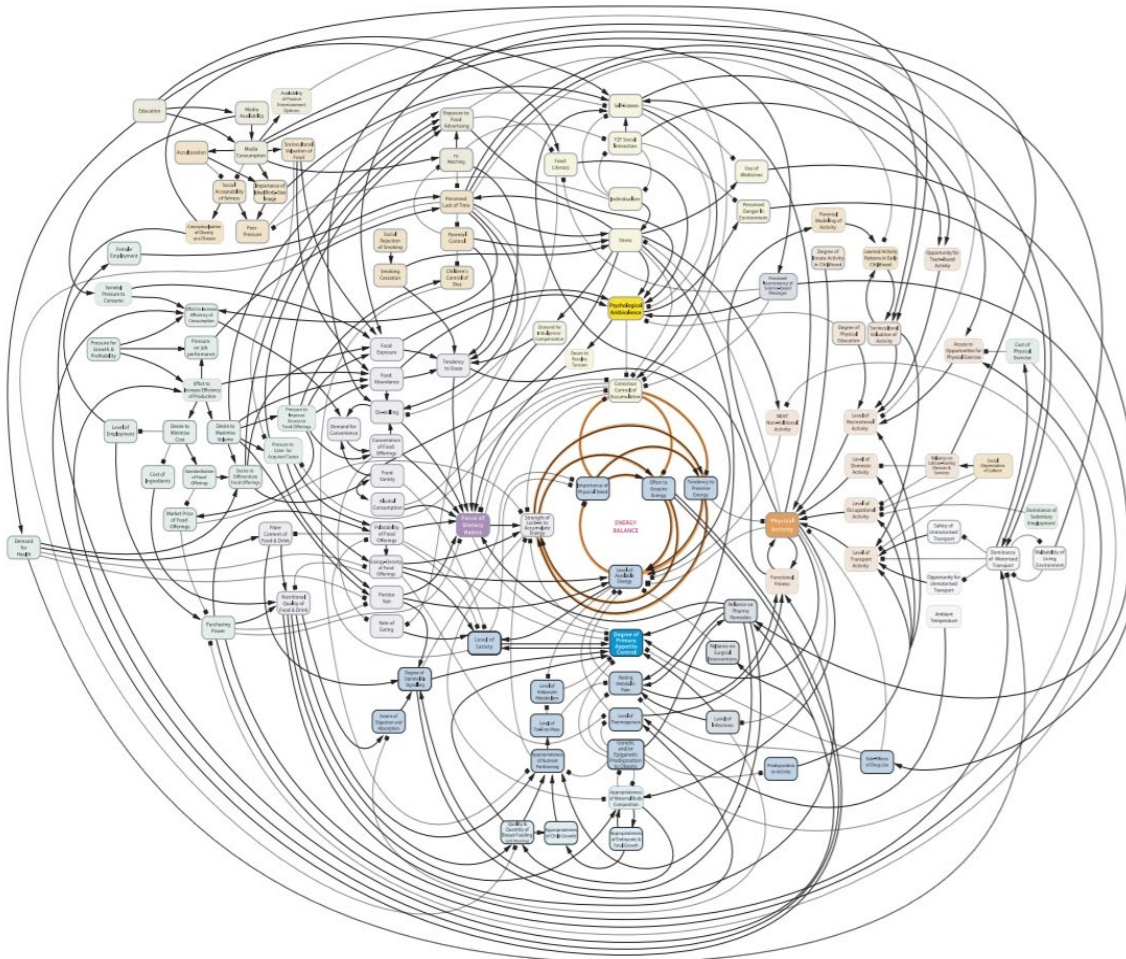CHANGE
TOMORROW

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Summary

- **The complexity challenge for public management**

- **A complexity-informed public management paradigm and practice**

- **To manage in complexity, you need to leave the New Public Management paradigm behind**

Public Management & Complexity:
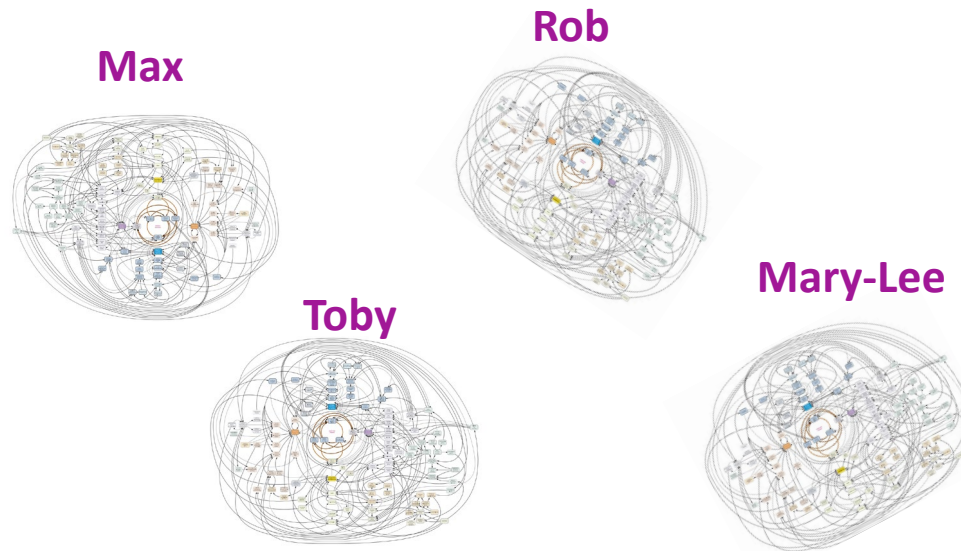
Four aspects of complexity

Compositional complexity

Compositional complexity

Experiential complexity

Dynamic complexity

Governance complexity

CHALLENGE TODAY,
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Experiential complexity

Max

Rob

Toby

Mary-Lee

Compositional complexity
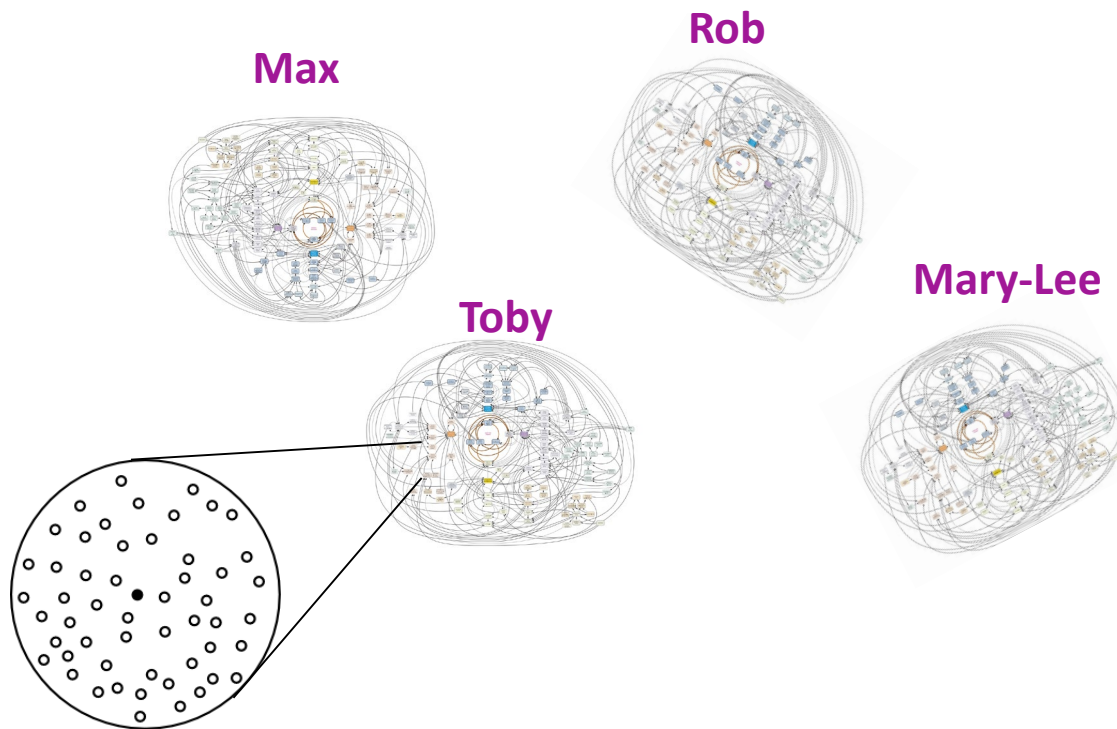
Experiential complexity

Dynamic complexity

Governance complexity

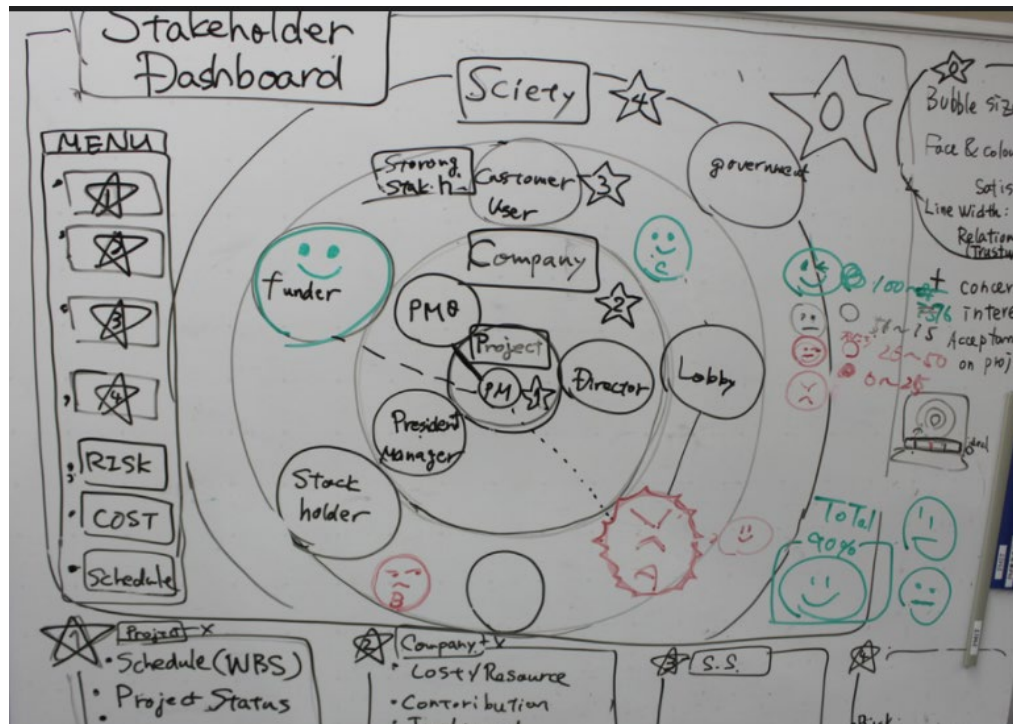CHALLENGE TODAY,
CHANGE TOMORROW

Dynamic Complexity

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Compositional complexity

Experiential complexity

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Governance complexity

Governance Complexity

Compositional complexity

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Dynamic complexity

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A Whole New World:
Funding and Commissioning in Complexity

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collaborate for social change

Findings – Headline

Complexity-friendly commissioning is based on a different attitude to:

Motivation

Learning

System health – quality of relationships

Motivation

Motivation is **intrinsic**, **not** **extrinsic**.

Learning

Learning drives improvement:

- Positive error culture

- Reflection on practice

- Measurement

System Health

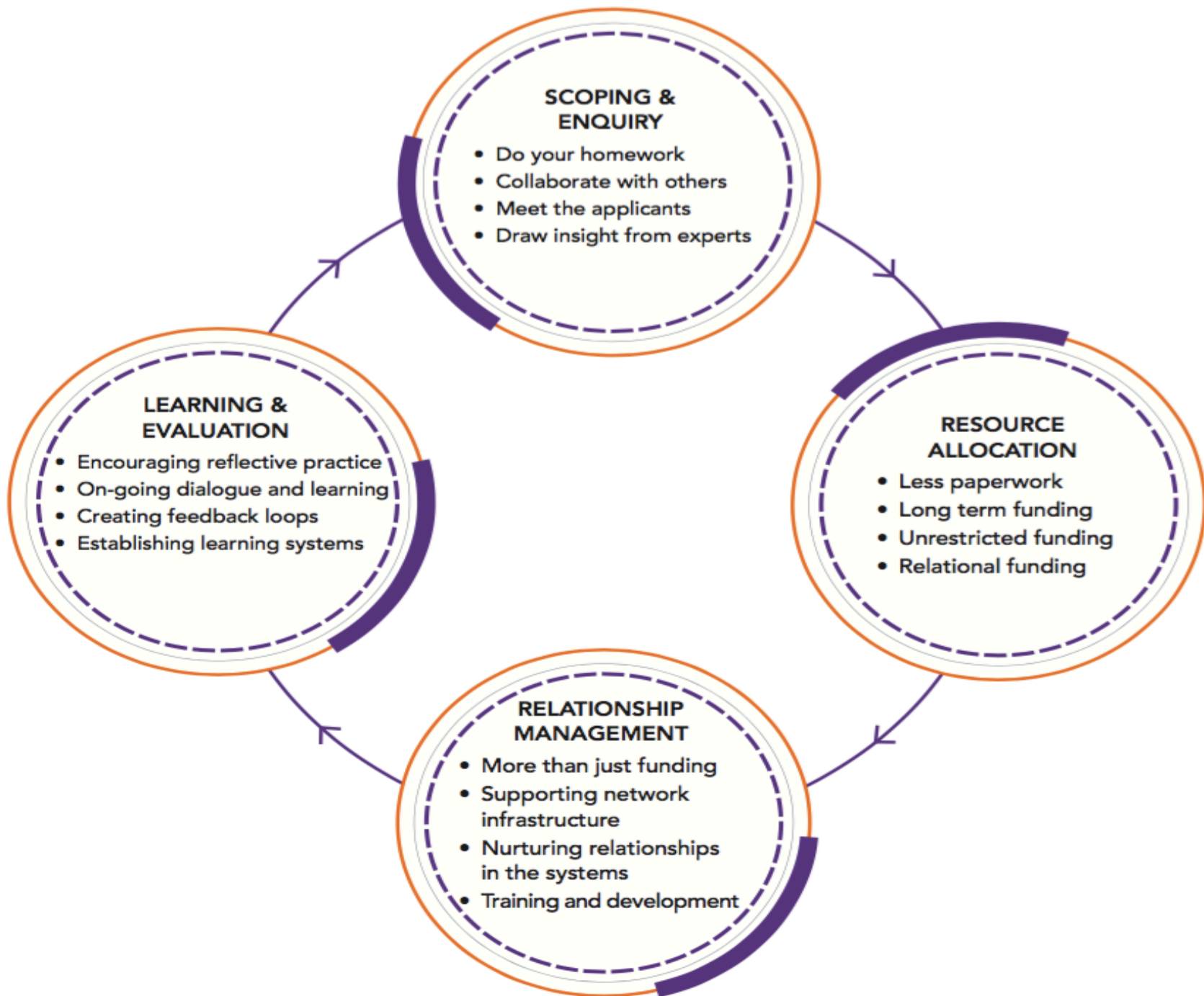Taking responsibility for the health of the system as a whole:

Networks

Building positive relationships, nurturing trust

Being an "eco-system engineer"

What does this look like in practice….

SCOPING & ENQUIRY
- Do your homework
- Collaborate with others
- Meet the applicants
- Draw insight from experts

RESOURCE ALLOCATION
- Less paperwork
- Long term funding
- Unrestricted funding
- Relational funding

RELATIONSHIP MANAGEMENT
- More than just funding
- Supporting network infrastructure
- Nurturing relationships in the systems
- Training and development

LEARNING & EVALUATION
- Encouraging reflective practice
- On-going dialogue and learning
- Creating feedback loops
- Establishing learning systems

Processes

- **Relational funding**
- **Multi-year, unrestricted funding**
- **Relationship Management – building networks**
- **Investing in networks:** "Building a community" (Public sector commissioner)
- **Workforce development** – monitoring & data analysis – and time to think: retreats etc
- **From Monitoring to Learning**

Trust

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Trust provides the confidence to let go of the illusion of control.

I trust this organisation to do the right thing **when the world changes**.

Question: what is a good set of reasons for a funders and fundees to trust one another?

collaborate
for social change

Trust

Some potential answers:

- Because they collaborate well
- Because they know their role(s) within the system(s) in which they operate
- Because they share and reflect on their practice with others
- Because they use data intelligently to learn

Implications for public policy

- **Use policy to create the healthy eco-systems** from which good outcomes emerge.

- **The future of public services is bespoke –** Devolve decision—making to the lowest organizational level.

- **Build capacity** of the lowest organisational level to **make good judgements in situations of uncertainty**.
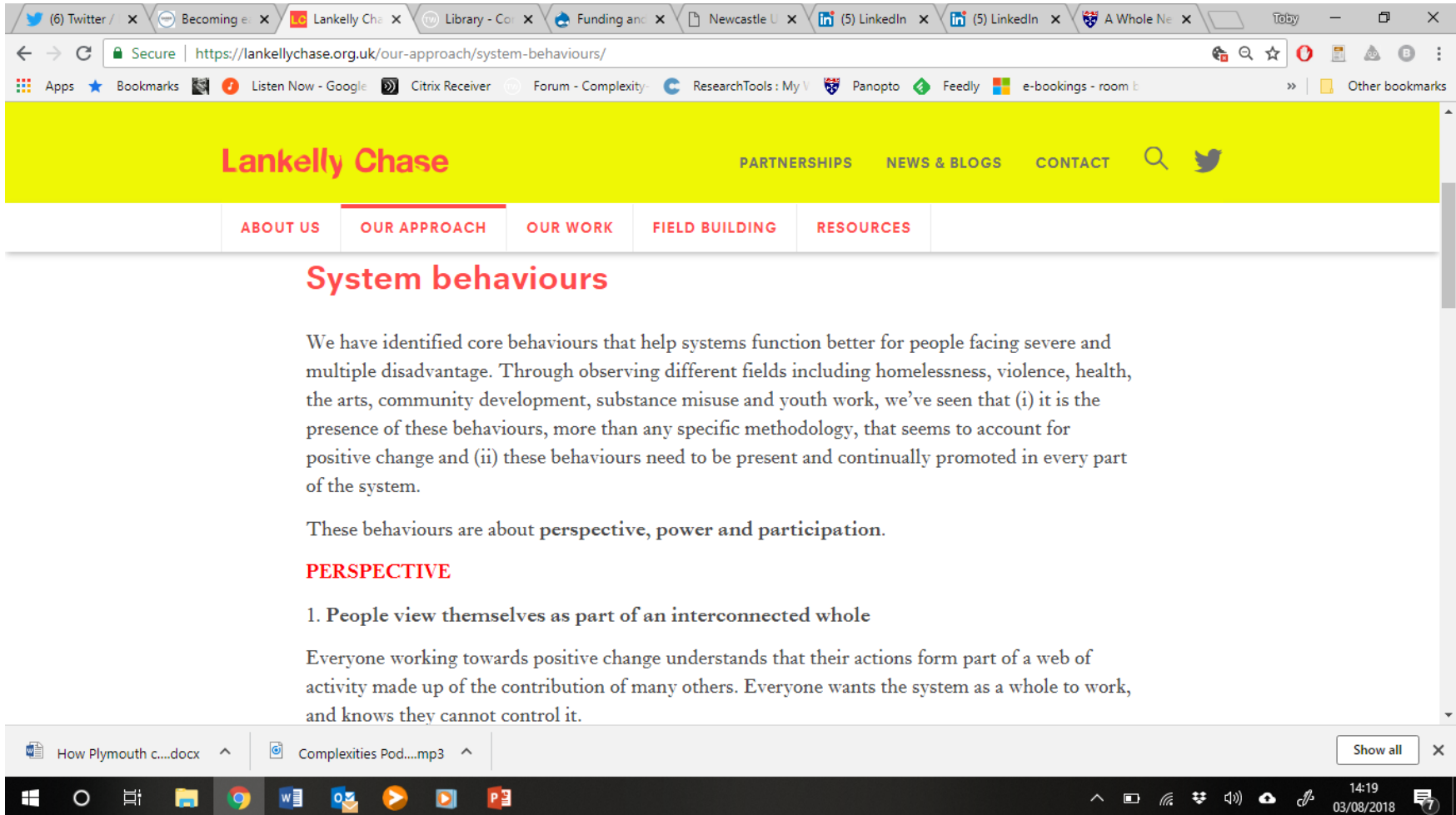
Examples

Plymouth Council: being an eco-system engineer through trust-based, collective commissioning

Gateshead Council: bespoke social policy response, tailored to each individual

Lankelly Chase Foundation: Place-based system change – helping places to see themselves as systems

Examples: Lankelly Chase Foundation

Lankelly Chase

PARTNERSHIPS   NEWS & BLOGS   CONTACT

ABOUT US   OUR APPROACH   OUR WORK   FIELD BUILDING   RESOURCES

System behaviours

We have identified core behaviours that help systems function better for people facing severe and multiple disadvantage. Through observing different fields including homelessness, violence, health, the arts, community development, substance misuse and youth work, we've seen that (i) it is the presence of these behaviours, more than any specific methodology, that seems to account for positive change and (ii) these behaviours need to be present and continually promoted in every part of the system.

These behaviours are about **perspective, power and participation.**

PERSPECTIVE

1. **People view themselves as part of an interconnected whole**

Everyone working towards positive change understands that their actions form part of a web of activity made up of the contribution of many others. Everyone wants the system as a whole to work, and knows they cannot control it.

Gateshead: Bespoke Public Services

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What do we really want to know?	The focus of the measures?	What measures should we learn how to develop and use?
Is it effective?	Citizens	- "What matters to me?" - "Is this helping me to lead a better life?"
Is it efficient?	Employees Volunteers	How easy/difficult was it for me to do the right thing for the person I am trying to help? - % First time solves - # handoffs, # assessments, # people involved, # IT systems - % actions that were value/non-value work?
Is it sustainable?	System resources	- Costs – history and trajectory - Costs – new trajectory and intervention costs - Demand – from the person we helped - Demand – implications for whole borough/whole system

Next steps

Action research – what does this look like in practice?

- How does accountability work under a complexity-informed paradigm?
- What are good reasons to trust?
- What is required to create a learning environment?
- What does a healthy system look like? How do we know if we have one?

What next?

Join the Community of Practice:

https://khub.net/group/complexity-friendly-system-oriented-commissioning-pilot-project

Thanks for listening

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