Mobilising Regions: Territorial Strategies for Growth

Regional Studies Association
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The reconfiguration of Fire and Rescue Services in the British Isles.

Pete Murphy
Nottingham Business School
Nottingham Trent University
Public Management Theory

- Traditional Public Administration Theory and Principal – Agent Theory

- Managerialism, Public Choice Theory and New Public Management

- Public Interest, Public Value and New Public Service Theory
Public Value
New Public Service Theory

• Public leadership and management is inherently situational - the design and delivery of individual services is dependent on the constitutional relationships between central and local government and between citizens and central and local government.

• Therefore a country's reconciliation of the imperatives of bureaucracy/democracy frames or facilitates the operating environment of individual sectors and services e.g. China, Sweden, USA, UK etc.

• In the more dynamic interactive constitutional arrangements in the UK public managers not only deliver services but facilitate democratic accountability and citizen engagement
Territorial Strategies for Growth

Whether public services deprive or squeeze out much needed investment in the private sector, and therefore need to be as economic, efficient and effective as they can be so as to minimise the cost to productive services;

or

Public services create Public Value, public wellbeing or collective benefits, and therefore need to be economic, efficient and effective as possible, (and included in an alternative growth assessments) to maximise community wellbeing,

Is a moot point for this paper!
The beneficiaries of economic and efficient Fire and Rescue Services

• The general public, who benefit from improved services and risk mitigation;
• The government and policy makers;
• Fire and rescue services and related emergency services (with whom FRS have to cooperate);
• The owners of businesses and property, and the insurance and other industries related to the service.
The 2004 Fire and Rescue Services Act and the Assessment of Risk

- Changed the responsibility from assessing risk to ‘Buildings and Premises’ to assessing risk to ‘People and Communities’

- Introduced the Integrated Risk Management Planning process with its implications for service reconfiguration.

- Committed to evidence based policy making

- The current research programme is looking at the implementation of the approach at Local, National and International levels.
The reconfiguration of Fire and Rescue Services in the British Isles.

- Within the last two years, new national frameworks for implementing the IRMP have been published for England, Scotland, Wales, and the Republic of Ireland while the N Ireland FRS has published its IRMP for 2012-2015.

- All five exercises were intended to produce efficiency savings in response to the continuing restrictions on public spending, while at the same time improving the protection of the public from the risk of harm.

- All five considered, proposed or recommended reorganisation of collective services and the organisational and sectoral infrastructure that supports the services.
Antecedents
The 2004 the Fire and Rescue Services Act fundamentally changed the way risk is assessed (fire and other emergency incident risks)

• **Traditional model** of assessing risks was based upon an **assessment of risks to buildings, plants and premises** with national standards of performance relating to the length of time it took fire personnel and appliances to attend various types of incidents once they are called out by a centralised control room.

• This historical model of risk assessment was the basis of the **performance assessment** of the fire services since local services were re-established after the second world war.

• It was also the **dominant international model** replicated across many advanced western economies in Europe North America and Australasia.
2004 the Fire and Rescue Services Act introduced Integrated Risk Management Planning (IRMP)

• This required Fire and rescue Services to comprehensively assess risks to people and communities through an evidence-based risk assessment with the intention of improving public safety, reducing the number of emergency incidents and saving lives.

• FRS and the other emergency services are also obliged by the 2004 Civil Contingencies Act to co-ordinate their activities in various community wide partnerships and forums such as the national and local risk registers and resilience forums.
Government Support for IRMP

• A data cleansing exercise of incident data on behalf of all authorities;

• Compilation and development of a Fire Service Emergency Cover (FSEC) toolkit of the best available techniques, software packages and research relating to risk based fire cover, and

• Implementation Support Teams to provide support and provide feedback and dissemination of emerging good practise.
Local implementation of IRMP
The Fire Cover Review in Nottinghamshire

Research into the implementation of IRMP within Nottinghamshire demonstrated that these types of comprehensive risk assessments were greatly facilitated by

• significant developments in digital mapping,
• computer software processing power, and
• the development of the FSEC toolkit,

The quality of the evidential base is a key issue for the new system.
The national reviews
Comparison of the aims, objectives and scope of the services

• All 5 have moved to an integrated and proactive approach to risk management based upon a ‘comprehensive’ assessment of risk to people while all adopting a systems approach to risk. (Eire also states people and property but it is part of its wider putting people first reform agenda).

• They are seeking value for money without compromising local political accountability.

• As well as protecting people and infrastructure they are seen as necessary for supporting and attracting economic development and investment in communities.

• Part of wider local and national resilience and they all mandate integration and interoperability with other emergency services.

• The scope of the services remain remarkably similar.

• All see intend to use the new arrangements as the basis for Performance Management of the services (and mutual agreement of objectives and targets in Scotland Wales N Ireland and Eire).
Comparison of the Evidential Bases

• All committed to joined up and evidence based policy making between policy and practice.

• Considerably different levels of
Comparison of the Risk Assessments
Comparison of the governance arrangements
Comparison of the organisational structures
National Implementation of reform. The coalition government display an unattractive combination of ignorance, incompetence, and willful political prejudice.

They are in our view

• Endangering the public more than they should
• Sub-optimizing emergency service provision
• Compromising the long term provision of economic, efficient and effective emergency services, and
• Confusing the public and the emergency services
• identifying hazards and evaluating the risks these hazards pose,

• mitigating those risks by trying to reduce the probability of the event and/or

• its consequences if it does occur,

• planning and preparing to deal with the risk,

• responding to the event, and

• reviewing events with a view to learning for the future.
EIRE The longitudinal process of reform from concept to completion.

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