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# THE CO-PRODUCTION STAR – BRINGING CITIZEN POWER INTO PUBLIC SERVICES TO IMPROVE OUTCOMES

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## WHAT THE CO-PRODUCTION STAR IS ABOUT

The *Co-Production Star* brings citizen power into public services to improve outcomes. The toolkit enables organisations commissioning and delivering public services and their local communities to map how much co-production is already taking place, improve existing co-production approaches, identify the potential for new approaches and scale out co-production across services and communities.



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# HOW THE CO-PRODUCTION STAR BRINGS CITIZEN POWER INTO PUBLIC SERVICES

The **Four Co's** in the inner ring of the *Co-Production Star* show how to integrate co-production into public service commissioning and delivery and offers citizens different roles to make use of their strengths and capabilities.



**Co-commissioning** is about service commissioners working with people who use services and local communities in the prioritisation and planning of public services.

GOOD PRACTICE CASE:  
*The Transformation of Services for Young People in Surrey County Council*



**Co-design** is about service providers and citizens redesigning public services to improve outcomes and reduce costs.

GOOD PRACTICE CASE:  
*Co-designing a new third sector funding scheme in Argyll and Bute*



**Co-delivery** is about service providers working with citizens who use services to improve the service delivery process and take preventative action with local communities to improve outcomes.

GOOD PRACTICE CASE:  
*How Community Health Trainers in Manchester enable positive lifestyle changes*



**Co-assessment** is about public service providers working with citizens as evaluators of public service quality and outcomes.

GOOD PRACTICE CASE:  
*An Inspector Calls: Citizen-Led Service Inspection by West Lothian Council*

*We asked Governance International to facilitate a consultation event for providers of children and families services in Argyll and Bute. Given the budget reductions we are facing, this was a real challenge but the Governance International team helped to keep the event positive and constructive and it was highly successful, providing some really valuable ideas which we are taking forward together with the providers."*

Andrew Nisbet,  
Councillor of Argyll and Bute Council

# HOW THE CO-PRODUCTION STAR HELPS PUBLIC SERVICES AND COMMUNITIES TO DEVELOP ALTERNATIVE SERVICE MODELS

The transformation process in the outer ring of the *Co-Production Star* guides organisations and communities through the five step co-production journey:

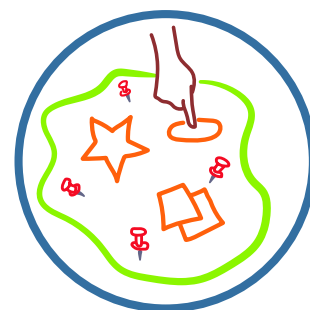
1. **Map It** – explore existing and new forms of co-production
2. **Focus It** – focus on those with the highest impact
3. **People It** – using assets-based approaches
4. **Market it** – in order to bring about behaviour change
5. **Grow It** – within and beyond the organisation and local community.



## STEP 1: MAP IT

In our experience, co-production is not a new invention, it is already happening. There are pockets of co-production in every local community and every service provider. In particular, at times of austerity it is important not to ‘re-invent the wheel’ but to build on existing good co-production practices within local communities and organisations providing public services. Therefore, the first step – MAP IT – is about identifying existing co-production initiatives – the ‘early adopters’ – and exploring the potential for new co-production approaches to achieve key outcomes.

The *Co-Production Explorer* gives service providers and citizens a systematic tool for doing this mapping and thinking ‘outside the box’. This tool feeds in 40 innovative *co-production case studies* from all over the world to help your communities and services develop alternative service models. As Midlothian Council has experienced, it is important to communicate good practice locally, so that it spreads further.



*Governance International, together with the Joint Improvement Team, ran four major workshops for 120 senior staff in Midlothian Council, using the Co-Production Star. I found this a useful tool to help us roll out co-production quickly where it was already being tried and to kick-start co-production initiatives in the rest of the Council. Co-production is now a core part of the running of the Council and is contributing to significant improvements in services and important efficiency savings.*

Annette Lang, Senior Communities Officer, Midlothian Council

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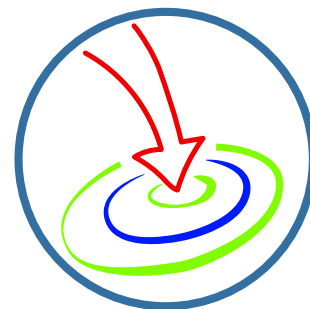
## STEP 2: FOCUS IT



The resources of citizens and public service organisations are limited. It is therefore very important to focus on those co-production initiatives which are likely to bring about significant outcome improvements or efficiency savings.

Step 2 is about setting priorities through an options appraisal, using our *Co-Production Impact Matrix*. We recommend a ‘critical friends’ approach in this step, working with colleagues or citizens who can challenge the initial appraisal and the evidence gathered and help you to develop a business case. This business case – developed with our *Business Case Generator* – can help ensure that community and public resources are used well and that resources are re-allocated to more cost-effective initiatives from those with a lower benefit-cost ratio. This allows all relevant stakeholders to agree on what success should look like and to develop a theory of change on how the agreed outcomes are to be achieved through co-production.

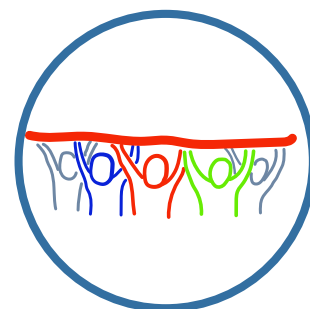
Step 2 ensures that co-production is embedded in commissioning strategies, becoming a ‘need to have’, and is not limited to ‘nice to have’ projects which are added to traditional service provision.



## STEP 3: PEOPLE IT



Co-production requires people who are willing and able to co-produce those outcomes or public services which are a priority for them or in their area. Public service commissioners and providers need to undertake new market research to identify what communities and people who use services contribute and to what extent they would like to contribute more than they do already. *Governance International* has tested community asset surveys at national and local levels. Working with our 'See What You Can Do' Toolkit has shown that while everybody has skills, knowledge and experience to contribute, not everybody is able or wants to make a contribution of the same type or at the same level.



This has two implications. First, co-production may require community capacity-building. In order for communities to be able to effectively co-produce, the capacity – the skills and confidence – needs to exist within the community. This is why our '*See What You Can Do*' Toolkit puts a strong emphasis on matching people so that they can help skill each other up and do things for each other. For example, in Walsall young people helped older people to use Skype to get in touch with their grandchildren.

Secondly, co-production is not about being 'representative' but being inclusive. However, local political representatives can, and should, play a major positive role in mobilising local people to get involved. Therefore, *Governance International* gives elected members an active role in the change management process by providing briefing and coaching them on how they can help to make co-production work in their wards.



## STEP 4: MARKET IT



Where new co-production approaches have the potential to be successful, it is critically important to market them appropriately. Step 4 provides social marketing and behaviour change tools to influence positively the willingness of local communities, people using services and staff to become engaged.

This involves identifying a menu of financial and non-financial incentives to encourage people using services, local communities, managers, people responsible for commissioning and delivering services, along with politicians, to co-produce better outcomes. The *Co-Production Star* provides a template for an *Incentive Menu* with lots of practical examples of how these incentives can work in practice.



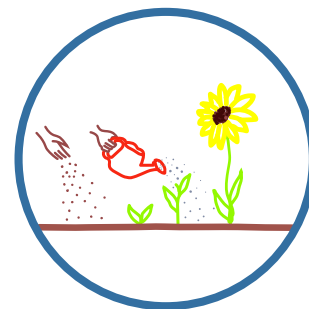
Another important behaviour change tool is the *Co-Production Charter*, which sets out rights and responsibilities of both public services and communities, as, for example, the Co-Production Charter for dementia issues in East Dunbartonshire Council. The *Co-Production Star* provides templates and examples of such charters. This allows risk management issues to be addressed by spelling out the risks identified and putting in place mechanisms for managing such risks. For example, for volunteers taking part in supported walks with people living with dementia, it may be important for insurance cover to be available from the service provider. In the case of volunteers working in care homes, a confidentiality declaration may be needed.

## STEP 5: GROW IT



This step concentrates on embedding co-production in public services and communities through organisation change and governance arrangements.

This includes the alignment of performance management systems and competency frameworks, so that co-production is promoted throughout the organisation, not stifled. As with any other alternative service model, co-production will only be effective if it improves the outcomes that are most important. This requires outcome indicators and not just process indicators. Ideally, such outcomes frameworks should be co-designed by staff and people using services.



Furthermore, Human Resource competency frameworks need to recognise and reward those staff who have particular competencies as community catalysts and enablers, rather than simply solving problems on behalf of people. Unless these behaviours are made explicit it will be difficult to recruit the right staff, to reward staff putting co-production principles into practice or to identify and coach staff not showing these behaviours.

Finally, effective co-production needs to involve local councillors and to give them an active role as community connectors. For example, this may involve re-structuring portfolios based on key outcomes to ensure better integration and coordination of public services.

## HOW TO PUT THE CO-PRODUCTION STAR IN PRACTICE?

We mentioned earlier the five step model of transformation in the *Co-Production Star* – but actually this was not quite the whole truth. We believe there is a sixth step, probably most important of all: JUST START – NOW !!!

### CONTACT

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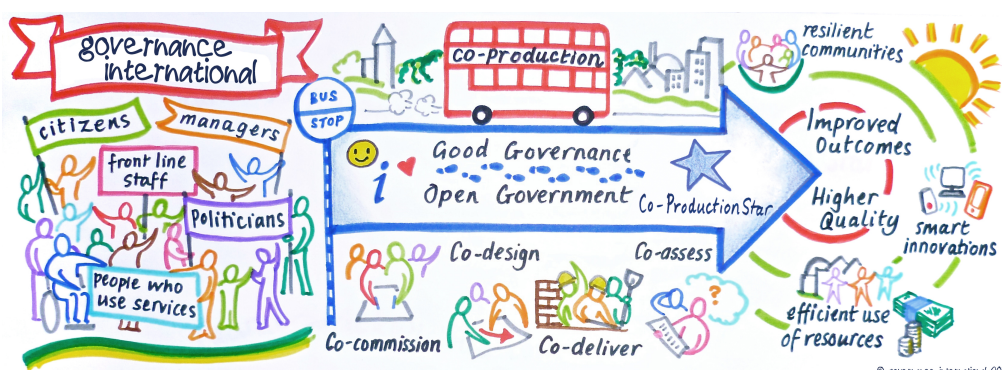
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*I attended a training programme run by Governance International on its “Co-production Star” (funded by the Joint Improvement Team). The training was very informal, fun and very informative, exploring a lot of imaginative ways in which service users can work more effectively with public services.*

Ross MacPhail, VOX member, Scotland



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