



UK Association  
for Public Administration

**Inaugural Conference of the UK Association for Public  
Administration**

**Abstract Book**

**Thursday 12 - Friday 13 September 2024, University of  
Birmingham**



**UNIVERSITY OF  
BIRMINGHAM**



# Contents Page

<b>Conference Welcome</b>	3
<b>Campus Map &amp; Floor Plan</b>	4 - 5
<b>Sponsors</b>	6
<b>Key Information</b>	7
<b>Conference Programme</b>	8-14
<b>Keynote Speakers</b>	15
<b>Roundtables</b>	16
<b>Panels</b>	18

# Conference Welcome

Welcome to the UK Association for Public Administration's inaugural conference!

The theme of the conference is '**The Future of Public Services**' and we have worked hard to provide a positive space for academics, researchers, doctoral research students and practitioners to come together to discuss the future of public services. The multi-disciplinary nature of the event will provide opportunities for colleagues from the various dimensions of public administration and allied subjects to connect and engage in open dialogue and vigorous debate- and we strongly encourage your participation.

This two-day conference marks our commitment to international scholarship, the importance of relationships with other public administration learned societies, and the recognition that global problems require global solutions. We are committed to inclusivity and opportunity – in line with **UKAPA's** values - and believe we have an engaging and thought-provoking programme on offer. With thanks to many of you for the quality and variety of proposals received by the committee.

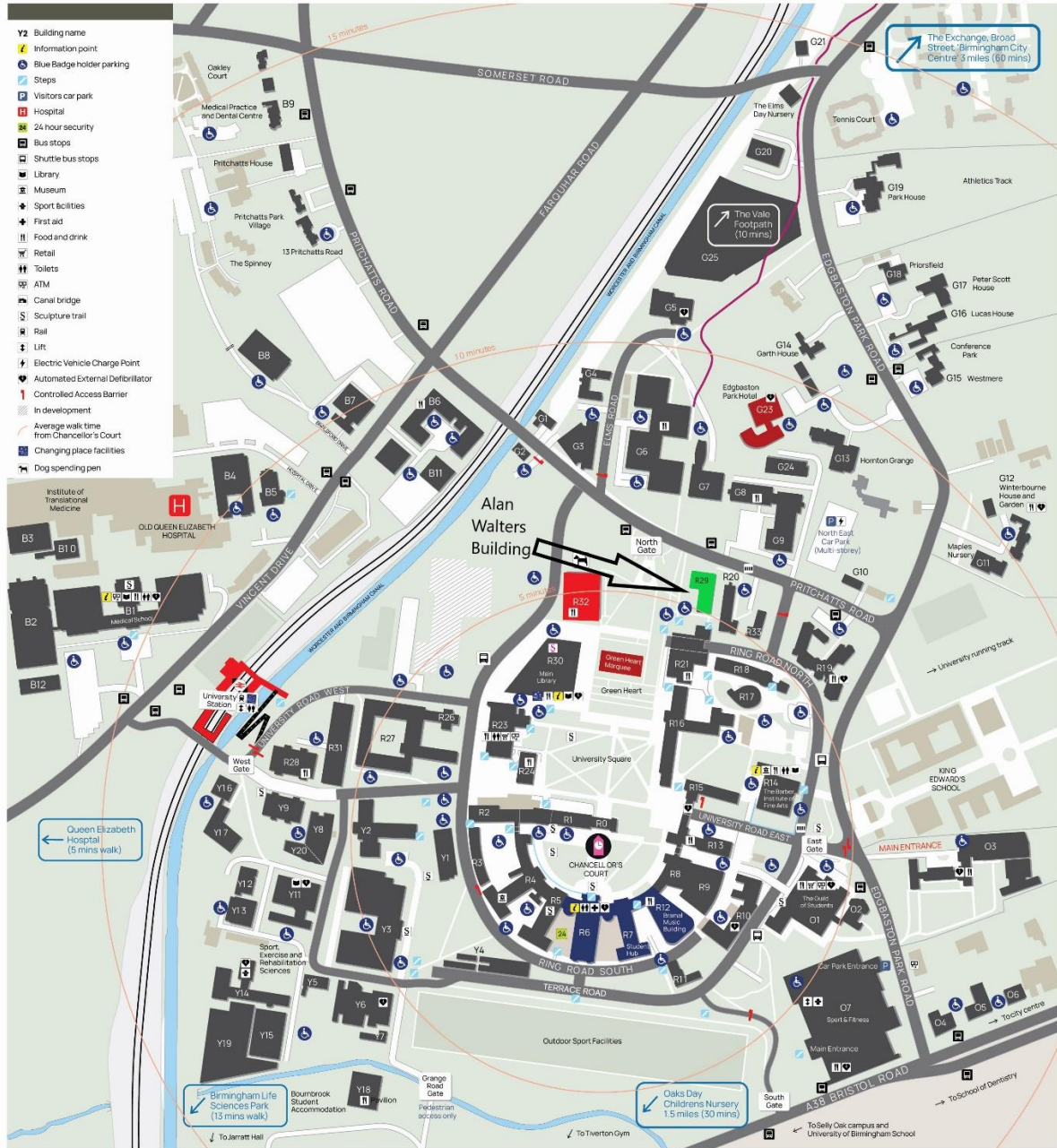
We hope you enjoy your time at the University of Birmingham - the UK's first civic university (founded in 1900) and now a World Top 100 university. If you find yourself with some extra time here, please do explore the [beautiful campus](#) – highlights include the award-winning Winterbourne House and Gardens and the Lapworth Museum of Geology (entrance fees applicable).

Thank you for joining us! We look forward to a successful and insightful conference.

Best wishes,

**Karin Bottom**  
**UKAPA Chair**

# Campus Map

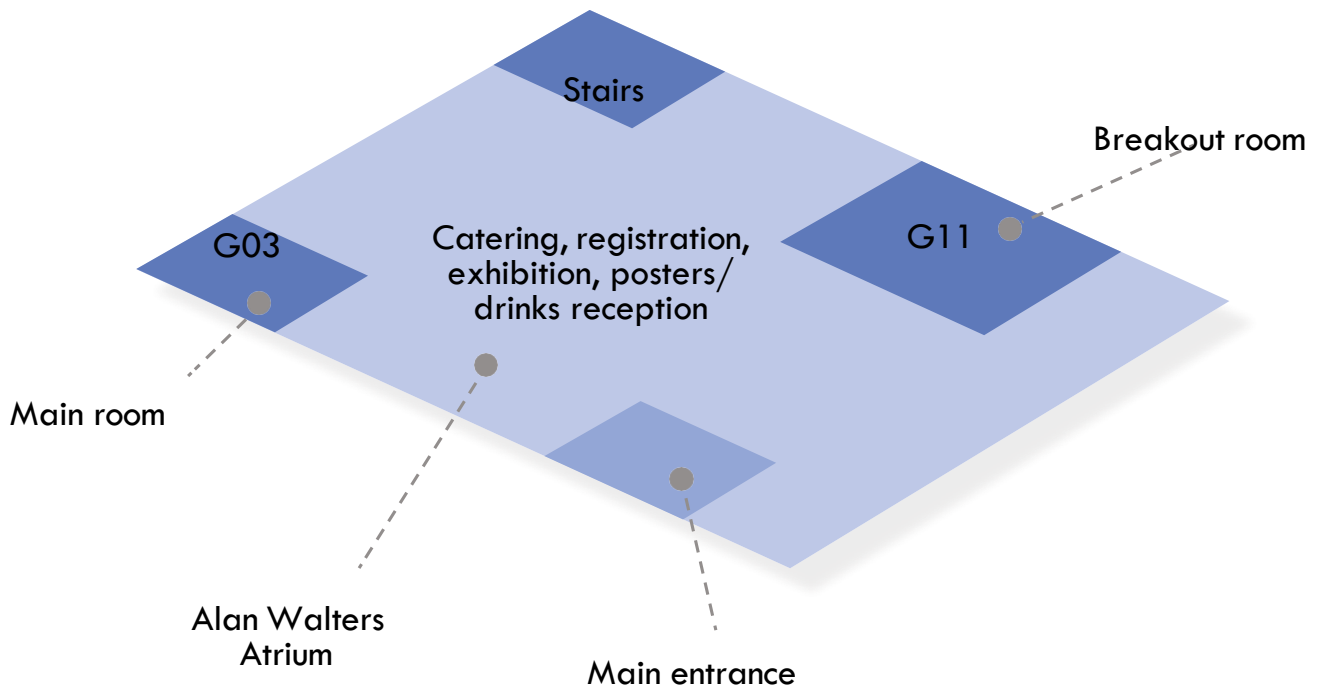
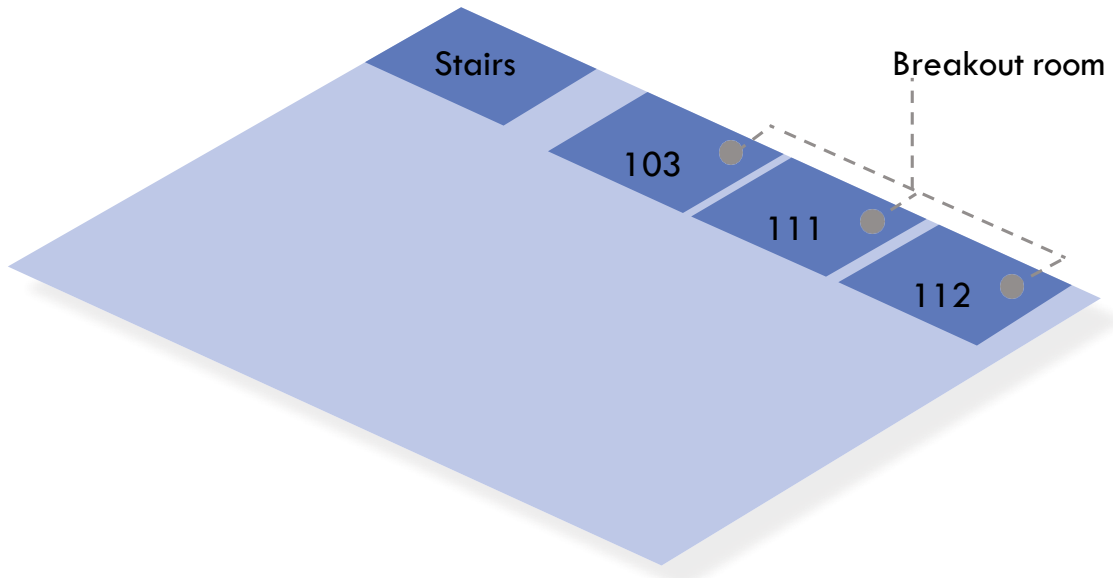


## Cultural attractions (open to the public)

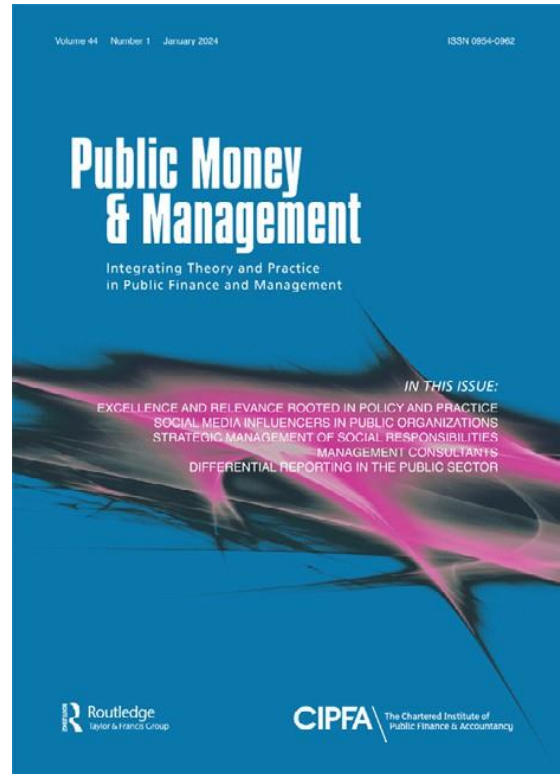
- Bramall Music Building (R12)
- Barber Institute of Fine Arts (R14)
- Lapworth Museum of Geology (R4)
- Winterbourne House and Garden (G12)

# Floor Plan

Alan Walters



# Sponsors



# Key Information

## Conference Registration Desk Opening Hours

The Registration Desk will be in the atrium on the ground floor in the Alan Walters Building, R29 on the Campus Map.

<b>Date</b>	<b>Opening Times</b>
Thursday 12 <sup>th</sup> September	8:30 – 5:30
Friday 13 <sup>th</sup> September	9:00 – 5:00

## Conference Social Events

<b>Date/Time</b>	<b>Event</b>	<b>Venue</b>
Thursday 12 <sup>th</sup> September - 6:45pm-7:45pm	Drinks Reception Hornton Grange Lounge	Edgbaston Park Hotel
Thursday 12 <sup>th</sup> September - 7:45pm-10:30	Conference Dinner Lloyd Suite	Edgbaston Park Hotel

# Conference Programme

Wednesday 11 <sup>th</sup> September 2024	Thursday 12 <sup>th</sup> September 2024		Friday 13 <sup>th</sup> September 2024	
09:00-17:00 1 <sup>st</sup> Annual UKAPA Doctoral Conference and wine reception	08.30-09.45	<b>Registration and Refreshments</b> (Ground Floor Foyer & Café Area)	08.30-09.30	<b>Registration and Refreshments</b> (Ground Floor Foyer & Café Area)
	09.45-10.00	<b>Conference Opening and Welcome Address</b> Dr Karin Bottom UKAPA Chair	9.30-10.30	<b>Frank Stacey Memorial Lecture</b> Prof Paul Cairney <i>What does policymaking look like?</i>
	10.00-11.00	<b>Keynote</b> Professor Catherine Needham <i>The 21st Century Public Servant Revisited</i>	10.30-11.00	Refreshment Break
	11.00-11.15	<b>Welcome Address</b> Professor Stephen Jarvis (Provost)	11.00-13.00	Parallel Session 4 (5 paper panels)
	11.15-11.30	Refreshment break	13.00-14.00	Lunch
	11.30-13.00	Parallel Session 1	14.00-15.30	Parallel Session 5
	13.00-14.00	Lunch	15.30-16.00	Refreshment Break
	14.00-15.30	Parallel Session 2	16.00-17.00	Conference closing session
	15.30-16.00	Refreshment break		
	16.00-17.30	Parallel Session 3		
18.45- 22.30	Drinks Reception & Conference Dinner			



**PARALLEL SESSION 1: DAY 1 - 11:30-13:00**

Room: G03	Room:103	Room: G11	Room: 111	Room: 112
<b>Round table:</b> <b>A relational future for public service?</b>	<b>Democratising Public Administration 1:</b> Interpreting Public administration: Power, Conflict, and difference	<b>Round table:</b> <b>Developing the first QAA subject benchmark standard for public policy and public administration</b>	<b>Dealing with Climate Change 1</b>	<b>Public finance 1</b>
<b>Panel:</b> <i>FitzGerald Clare</i> <i>Rob Wilson</i> <i>Hannah Hesslegreaves</i> <i>Rick Muir</i>	<b>Failure and learning during times of blame: How English local government responds to central government intervention</b> <i>Matthew McKenna</i>	<b>Panel:</b> <i>Ian Elliott,</i> <i>Amanda Crompton</i> <i>Alasdair Blair</i> <i>Abena Dadze Arthur</i> <i>Barry Quirk</i> <i>Helen Jenkins</i> <i>John Diamond</i>	<b>A net-zero National Health Service: evidence-use in the politics and policy of decarbonising the NHS</b> <i>Niheer Dasandi</i>	<b>How has the UK government responded to financial, service, and corporate failings in local authorities</b> <i>Pete Murphy, Martin Jones, Katarzyna Lakoma</i>
	<b>The contribution of ministers and senior councillors to central-local government relations</b> <i>Phil Swan</i>		<b>Understanding Climate Policy Failure</b> <i>Mitya Pearson</i>	<b>Squaring the circle in the public budgeting of devolved Northern Ireland</b> <i>Paul Carmichael, Colin Knox</i>
	<b>Revaluating and devaluating higher education beyond neoliberalism: elitist, productivist, and populist policy and rhetoric in a field of conflict</b> <i>Nick Turnbull, Shaun Wilson, and Greg Agoston</i>		<b>Adapting to Climate Change: Partner selection for Local Emergency Management in the Santiago Metropolitan Region</b> <i>Camila Ramos Fuenzalida</i>	<b>Public administration and post-GDP goals: a comparison of wellbeing framework integration in the devolved nations</b> <i>Max French, Jennifer Wallace</i>
	<b>The Therapeutic Function of Evidence-Based Policy Making. An Ethnographic Study on The Role of Ex Ante Analysis in Infrastructure Policy Processes</b> <i>Lars Dorren</i>		<b>Communities “Are Doin’ It for themselves”:</b> an investigation into the governance and financing of community-led ventures in Wales <i>Michael Butler, Ed Jones</i>	
	<b>The everyday production of truth and legitimacy in policy-making process</b> <i>Hanna van Bentum</i>			
<b>Chair: Max French</b>	<b>Chairs: Matthew McKenna &amp; Koen Bartels</b>	<b>Chair: Karin Bottom</b>	<b>Chair: Timea Nochta</b>	<b>Chair: Elke Loeffler</b>

**Parallel Session 2: DAY 1 - 14:00-15:30**

Room: G03	Room:103	Room: 111	Room: G11	Room: 112
<b>Democratising public administration 2</b> <b>Round table:</b> <b>Democratising public administration</b>	<b>Public finance 2</b>	<b>Dealing with Climate Change 2</b>	<b>Meet the editors</b>	<b>The citizen-state nexus: How the preferences and behaviours of the public can inform public administration practices</b>
<b>Panel:</b>  <i>Koen Bartels</i> <i>Marina Pera</i> <i>Doreen Grove</i> <i>Liz Richardson</i> <i>Mel Stevens</i>	<b>Developing a Local Government dataset: A tool for enhanced resilience</b> <i>Bernard. K. Dom, Martin Jone, Alan Collin, Peter Murphy</i>	<b>Making net-zero work on the ground: Urban transformations in EU multi-level climate governance</b> <i>Kristine Kern</i>	<i>Alice Moseley (PPA)</i> <i>Bruce McDonald (PA)</i> <i>Ian Elliott (PAD)</i> <i>Adina Dudau (PMR)</i> <i>Hannah Shakespear (PMM)</i>	<b>Noisy data: How regulators detect signals from user complaints</b> <i>Han Wang, Thomas Elston</i>
	<b>Assessing needs and granting autonomy: comparing local government grant systems</b> <i>Mark Sandford, Kevin Muldoon-Smith</i>	<b>Depoliticizing climate change? Exploring the multilevel and networked governance of 'net zero'</b> <i>Timea Nochta</i>		<b>Co-creation and relational arbitrage: nonprofits as advocate, service provider, and infrastructure</b> <i>Britt Regal, Clare FitzGerald</i>
	<b>The public management of personal debt? the UK government's regulatory regime</b> <i>Richard Common</i>	<b>Informal networks and disaster recovery: a comparative case study of two Taiwanese Aboriginal village</b> <i>Major Pau</i>		<b>Citizens' Preferences for the Administration of Income Tax</b> <i>Oliver James, Clare Maudling &amp; Kim-Lee Tuxhorn</i>
	<b>The private finance initiative: testimony to the contradictory enabling power of accounting.</b> <i>Salman Ahmad, Ciaran Connolly, Istemi Demirag</i>			<b>The effects of contracted and partnership delivery on engagement with public services</b> <i>Alice Moore</i>
<b>Chair: Sonia Bussu</b>	<b>Chair: Athanassios Gouglas</b>	<b>Chair: Niheer Dasandi</b>	<b>Chair: Amanda Crompton</b>	<b>Chairs: Eleanor Woodhouse, Alice Moore</b>

**PARALLEL SESSION 3: DAY 1 - 16:00-17:30**

Room: G03	Room: 103	Room: 111	Room:112	Room: G11
<b>The public administration of the executive in British government</b>	<b>Public services and the public sector</b>	<b>Politics and governance</b>	<b>Governance and Management of Emergency Services: Issues, Challenges and Opportunities</b>	<b>Politics, digitalisation and artificial intelligence</b>
<b>Fixing the centre of government – reflections on the IfG’s Commission on the Centre of Government</b> <i>Jordan Urban, Alex Thomas</i>	<b>Public Sector Performance Management and Public Trust in the Public Services in Ghana: Deja vu?</b> <i>Emilia Amoako-Asiedu, Frank Ohemeng, Theresa Obuobisa-Darko, Kenneth Parku</i>	<b>The two faces of Janus. Political advisers’ role in politicization.</b> <i>Athanassios Gouglas</i>	<b>Understanding Performance Management in NHS Ambulance Services: Using an inter-disciplinary approach to explore management control and rationality</b> <i>Dr Geoffrey Heath, Paresh Wankhade</i>	<b>Public attitudes of AI: how regulations influence trust and acceptance</b> <i>Sen Lin, Metin Uzun</i>
<b>Rules for Rulers</b> <i>Rod Rhodes</i>	<b>The Commodification of the Public Good: past and future</b> <i>Andrew Gray</i>	<b>The Downing Street chief-of-staff: the indescribable job?</b> <i>Max Stafford</i>	<b>Professionalism in the English Fire and Rescue Services control and rationality</b> <i>Katarzyna Lakoma, Pete Murphy, Peter Eckersley</i>	<b>Artificial Intelligence and think tanks: impact on policy analysis</b> <i>Scott Leatham , Hartwig Pautz, Munoz-Ramirez, van der Zwet</i>
<b>Navigating political boundaries at the centre: a comparative assessment of civil service leadership</b> <i>Dennis C Grube</i>	<b>Breaking Barriers for Breaking Ground: A Categorisation of Public Sector Challenges to Smart City Project implementation</b> <i>Paolo Gerli, Emine Zehra Akgün, Luca Mora, Clare McTigue</i>	<b>Commissioners as the fourth branch of government – who, what, and why?</b> <i>Ian Elliott</i>	<b>Exploring performance management in the English Ambulance Service through a Complexity Theory Perspective</b> <i>Paresh Wankhade, Stephen Kelly, Daniel Chicksand</i>	<b>Digital transformation and corruption: a socio-materiality perspective</b> <i>Adina Iulia Dudau, Aristito Febrianto, Stelios Zyglidopoulos</i>
	<b>Coping with the Cuts: Street-Level Professionals &amp; Public Service Delivery in the UK</b> <i>Claire MacRAe</i>	<b>Devolution as process: becoming the Senedd</b> <i>Kerry Howell</i>	<b>Equality, Diversity, Inclusion and organisational cultural in Fire and Rescue Services</b> <i>Peter Murphy, Kirsten Greenhalgh</i>	<b>Towards relational digital government: moving beyond current approaches to information and measurement</b> <i>Rob Wilson</i>
		<b>Managing development to manage politics: DFID’s hybridity and institutional logics</b> <i>Arun Kumar, Brendan Whitty</i>		<b>Generative AI in public service: adoption, policy, and shadow use in local government</b> <i>Stephen Jeffares</i>
<b>Chair: Joyce Liddle</b>	<b>Chair: Stephen Greasley</b>	<b>Chair: Edoardo Ongaro</b>	<b>Chair: Melissa Hawkins</b>	<b>Chair: Russ Glennon</b>

**PARALLEL SESSION 4: DAY 2, 11:00-13:00**

Room: 111	Room: G03	Room: 112	Room: G11	Room: 103
<b>Policy and Practice</b>	<b>Democratising Public Administration 3: Action research and co-production: transforming governance and</b>	<b>Governance in challenging environments</b>	<b>Perspectives on governance</b>	<b>Teaching public administration</b>
<b>Assessing the Policy Responsiveness Towards Public Opinion in the Case of Social Policy in Indonesia During The COVID-19 Pandemic Crisis</b> <i>Denny Kurniawan</i>	<b>Participatory Democracy and Participatory Research</b> <i>Sonia Bussu, Hans Asenbaum, Oliver Escobar, Clodagh Harris</i>	<b>Museums in a context of austerity: Mixing commercial imperatives and professional values</b> <i>Peter Eckersley, Bethany Rex</i>	<b>Rethinking accountability: the problem of design mismatch and its policy mix solutions</b> <i>Yifei Yan</i>	<b>Navigating between internationalisation and centralisation: public administration education in Kazakhstan</b> <i>Saltanat Janenova, Baurzhan Bokayev</i>
<b>The health policy process model of epidemics in South Korea: from 2015 MERS epidemic to 2020 COVID-19 pandemic responses</b> <i>Jiyoun Chang</i>	<b>Action-oriented research as an approach to research relevance: lessons from a learning partnership'</b> <i>Melissa Hawkins, Max French, Hannah Hesselgreaves, Amy Wheatman, Rob Wilson</i>	<b>Local civic engagement in a polycrisis environment: The role of trust, managerial quality, ethnicity and education</b> <b>Anna Uster, Eran Vigoda Gadot</b> <i>Michael Roy</i>	<b>Respecting the subject in wellbeing public policy: beyond the social planner perspective</b> <i>Mark Fabian, Anna Alexandrova, Diane Coyle, Matthew Agarwala</i>	<b>Ethics: the potential difference between service motivation versus public service motivation from an MBA and MPA student survey</b> <i>Masatoshi Minowa, Karl O'connor</i>
	<b>Research Better Together: Supporting voluntary community sector and academic participatory social care research partnerships</b> <i>Caroline Jackson, Clare Harewood</i>	<b>Austerity in Georgia and its impact on the public sector</b> <i>Gvantsa Dzidziguri</i>	<b>The right to use? The role of a human rights-based approach in the implementation of the Identity and Language (Northern Ireland) Act 2022</b> <i>Leah Rea</i>	
<b>The UK Higher Education Innovation Governance Management Models: Policy and Practice Conundrums</b> <i>Michael Joseph, Sachin Sampath</i> <b>Chair: Hartwig Pautz</b>	<b>Transforming place-based health inequalities: Co-producing a community of practice for social prescribing in Birmingham</b> <i>Koen Bartels, Elizabeth Woodcock, Jessica Pykett</i>	<b>Crisis decision making in the power-sharing society: theory and practice</b> <i>Karl O'Connor, Ann Marie Gray</i>	<b>An action-oriented framework for integrating indigenous and local knowledge systems (ILKS) in public policy-making: results of a narrative systematic literature review</b> <i>Abena Dadze-Arthur, Karin Bottom, Mary Mangai</i>	<b>Why did you choose public administration?</b> <b>An experiment to explore student recruitment for MPA programs</b> <i>Bruce McDonald, Josephine Schafer</i>
<b>What factors help or hinder collaborative policymaking? A qualitative systematic review of academic and grey literatures</b> <i>Paul Cairney, Claire Toomey</i>	<b>Exploration and Co-creation of Community Infrastructures for mutual engagement between HEIs and local areas - Towards University as a Platform,</b> <i>Rob Wilson, Tamara Mulherin, Sebastian Prost, Andrew Dow, David Clark</i>	<b>Blame shifting revisited. an experimental analysis of how organisational contexts shape citizens' evaluations of blame games in public service delivery</b> <i>Oscar Nowlan</i>	<b>Contested meanings and multiple roles of ethical expertise in policy making in times of polycrisis</b> <i>Inga Ulnicane, Jessica Pykett, Marija Antanaviciute</i>	
<b>Chair: Clare Fitzgerald</b>	<b>Chair: Koen Bartels</b>	<b>Chair: Michael Roy</b>	<b>Chair: Katarzyna Lakoma</b>	<b>Chair: Alasdair Blair</b>

**PARALLEL SESSION 5: DAY 2, 14:00-15:30**

Room: 111	Room: G03	Room: 112	Room: G11	Room: 103
<b>Local government</b>	<b>Public governance</b>	<b>Democratising public administration 4: Community-driven collaboration: changing relationships between citizens and government</b>	<b>Politics, policy and the public sector</b>	<b>Environmental governance</b>
<b>Assessing the productiveness of scrutiny talk</b> <i>Dave Mckenna</i>	<b>The legitimacy of behavioural public policy in practice: insights from policymakers</b> <i>Mathieu Prevelato, Alice Moseley</i>	<b>Community government reforms in Cameroon: Between administrative rationality and social reciprocity</b> <i>Andrew Tangang</i>	<b>The ghost of services past: uniting sinnovation and public service ‘spirit’ in future public service delivery</b> <i>Russ Glennon, Rory Shand</i>	<b>Sustainability at the edge of our ability? Pursuing net zero targets through public procurement at different levels of government around the UK.</b> <i>James Ruairi Macdonald, Anne Davies</i>
<b>They have an open plan office and a ping pong table’ – Can local government be relevant for younger ‘workers?</b> <i>Catherine Needham, Catherine Mangan, Dave McKenna, Jason Lowther</i>	<b>Unpacking the dynamics of municipal owned corporations (mocs): influence of multiple actors at multiple levels</b> <i>Anna Uster, Hedva Vinarski Peretz</i>	<b>Beyond nudges: envisioning a relational approach to applying behavioural insights in English Social Housing</b> <i>Hannah Absalom</i>	<b>Exploring health and social care integration from an ecosystem perspective: different pathways to value co-creation?</b> <i>Michael Roy, Kirsty Strokosch</i>	<b>Grassroots climate- resilient governance: nurturing eco- friendly public services in Kerala</b> <i>Jos Chathukulam</i>
<b>Rethinking audit committee effectiveness: insights from England's social housing sector</b> <i>Dennis O'Higgins</i>	<b>Fitting in or falling out: the dilemmas of new entrant legitimacy in a polycentric regulatory landscape</b> <i>Amanda Crompton, Justin Waring</i>	<b>Flippin’ academy governance: top-down to bottom-up</b> <i>Andrew Allen</i>	<b>Structural barriers and micro-innovations in the delivery of the UK’s public health missions</b> <i>Jack Newman, Sarah Ayres, Geoff Bates, Rachael McClatchey, Anna Le Gouais, Nick Pearce</i>	<b>Assessing the impact of fridays for future on climate policy and policymaking in German cities</b> <i>Peter Eckersley, Wolfgang Haupt, Kristine Kern</i>
<b>Children missing from education in Nottingham</b> <i>Yu-Ling Liu-Smith, David Candon, Catriona Logue, Peter Murphy</i>	<b>How and why accountability in public services might change as a result of governance reforms?</b> <i>Katarzyna Lakoma</i>		<b>Social equity, race, and auditing: education in France, the United Kingdom, and the United States</b> <i>Laurence Ferry, Sean McCandless, BruceMcdonald</i>	
	<b>Naming and shaming accountability, performance outcomes, and effort substitution</b> <i>Taek Kyu Kim</i>		<b>Political responsiveness to the victims of rural banditry and kidnapping in north-west Nigeria</b> <i>Nureddeen Muhammad Koko</i>	
<b>Chair: Ian Elliott</b>	<b>Chair: Karl O'Connor</b>	<b>Chairs: Andrew Tangang and Koen Bartels</b>	<b>Chair: Stephen Jeffares</b>	<b>Chair: Yifei Yan</b>

# Keynote Speakers



## **Professor Catherine Needham**

Catherine Needham is a professor of Public Policy and Public Management in the Health Services Management centre at the University of Birmingham. Her research focuses on social care, personalisation and coproduction within public services, new approaches to public service workforce development and interpretive approaches to public policy. Catherine is also a Fellow of the Academy of Social Sciences.

### **The 21st Century Public Servant Revisited**

In 2014, the 21st Century Public Servant report was published, looking at the skills, roles and values of people working in local public services. The resultant framework identified ten key characteristics associated with the public service worker and challenged organisations to consider how to adapt practice to meet current and future needs. Ten years on, the public service context has changed. System shocks such as the Covid pandemic and ongoing recovery, Brexit and the cost-of-living crisis are reshaping public service work. This keynote will report findings from a new project which has worked with public servants to see how the challenges of the last decade have impacted their work and what skills, roles and values they require to thrive.

<https://21stcenturypublicservant.wordpress.com/updating-the-21st-century-public-servant/>



## **Professor Paul Cairney**

Paul Cairney is a professor of Politics and Public Policy in the Division of History, Heritage, and Politics at the University of Stirling. He is also a Fellow of the Academy of Social Sciences. Paul is a specialist in British politics and public policy, often focusing on the ways in which policy studies can explain the use of evidence in politics and policy, and how policymakers translate broad long term aims into evidence-informed objectives.

### **What does policymaking look like?**

Wouldn't it be nice if academics and practitioners could have frequent and fruitful discussions about policy and policymaking? Both professions offer mutually informative insights on policy processes. However, it is notoriously difficult to explain what policy is and how it is made, and simple images can mislead as much as inform. Academics and practitioners may also present very different perspectives on what policymakers do. Without a common reference point, how can they cooperate to discuss how to understand and improve policy or policymaking? I argue that one starting point is to visualize policymaking in many ways to identify overlaps in perspectives. To that end, if academics and policymakers were to describe 'the policy process', could they agree on what it looks like? To help answer this question, I present a variety of images used to describe what policymakers do, need to do, would like to do, or would like people to think they are doing.

<https://paulcairney.wordpress.com/2023/02/13/what-does-policymaking-look-like/>

# Roundtables

## 1. A relational future for public service? A roundtable and proposal development forum

**Chair:** Max French

**Panelists:**

FitzGerald Clare

Rob Wilson

Hannah Hesslegreaves

Nuredde M Koko

Facing complexifying social problems and unprecedented fiscal retrenchment, public service is an increasingly complex task in an ever more trying climate. Think tanks, practitioners and prominent public figures have set out significant policy trajectories demanding government and public service become local and community-based rather than distant and centralised, staffed and led by capable generalists rather than specialists, capable of responding to complexity rather than delivering efficiency, and, perhaps above all, designed around human relationships rather than bureaucratically framed interactions or market transactions (Lowe et al. 2021; Cottam 2018; Elvidge 2013; Cooke and Muir 2012; Glover 2023). Responding to this, Wilson et al. (2024) set out a strategic agenda for relational public services, noting how new tools, methods and approaches are emerging which underpin and reify what Bartels and Turnbull (2020) have called a ‘relational turn’ in public service reform.

We are guest editing a forthcoming special issue in *Public Money & Management* to provide insight on the scope and potential for relational public services as an area of academic inquiry.

We also want to put our money where our mouth is and infuse relationality into the development process of the special issue. The guest editors will stage a Roundtable discussion and proposal development process, with two parts. First, guest editors will introduce our own positions on the topic and ambitions for the special issue. We will then break into small groups to for in-depth discussion on the topic, and work with participants to help develop ideas and any substantive proposals for Debate (1000 words), New Development (3500 words) or full articles (8000 words).

## 2. Democratising The Public Administration

**Chair:** Sonia Bussu

**Panelists:**

Koen Bartels

Harris Clodagh

Marina Pera

Doreen Grove

Liz Richardson

Mel Stevens

Hans Asenbaum

There is increasing emphasis on “institutionalisation” of participatory governance. However, institutionalisation does not necessarily translate into greater citizen empowerment. Della Porta et al. (2014: 109) found that the more participation in a given region is institutionalised, the less empowered the initiatives tend to be.

Institutionalisation might even lead to dis-embedding participatory practices if it bypasses civil society or stifles existing bottom-up participation (Bussu et al., 2022). Codifying participation is not enough, and we need to pay more attention to how we can embed a participatory culture and practices, and the role of the relational work of boundary

spanners (Escobar 2022; Bartels & Turnbull, 2019). This requires focus not just on political arenas but also on public administration, where implementation of participatory decision is facilitated or resisted. There are inevitable constraints because of a) a lack of (financial and human) resources; b) PA working routines and practices that are not necessarily conducive to participatory policymaking; c) existing regulatory frameworks at different tiers of government in conflict to participatory approaches.

Understanding how we can engender and embed a participatory culture within policymaking and public administration is a challenge too often overlooked by the scholarship on democratic innovations and the wider democratic sector. This roundtable explores openings for and barriers to participatory policymaking through a dialogue between policymakers that have long tried to embed more participatory approaches, such as Doreen Grove in Scotland and Mel Stevens in the Southeast of England, and scholars studying coproduction practices in public administration across different policy and geographical contexts (Durose & Richardson 2015). We will take stock of recent practice in participatory governance and reflect on trends, with a focus on the role of public administration in fostering or hindering culture change towards more participatory policymaking.

### **3. Exploring Breadth and Boundaries: Developing the first QAA Subject Benchmark Standard for Public Policy and Public Administration**

**Chair:** Karin Bottom

**Panelists:**

Alasdair Blair

Amanda Crompton

Abena Dadze-Arthur

Helen Jenkins

This roundtable explores the process and proposed content of The Quality Assurance Agency Benchmark Statement for Public Policy and Public Administration, drawing on the experiences of members of the Subject Benchmark Standard (SBS) group. Whilst SBSs provide recognised reference points on programme standards in Higher Education, until now there has not existed a separate SBS for public policy and public administration, which has instead often had to refer to other statements such as ‘Business and Management’, and ‘Politics and International Relations’. Inextricably linked by virtue of their functions (Koliba et al. 2017), both public policy and public administration are applied interdisciplinary subjects (Brom, 2019; Fredrikson et al. 2018). Within each discipline, broad agreement exists on identity, yet both are, to a greater or lesser degree, contested in terms of breadth and boundaries (Carmichael, 2004; Elcock, 2004; Knill & Tosun, 2022). These tensions can offer fruitful and expansive research agendas, but arguably limited guidance in delineating education agendas within Higher Education.

The development of the Public Policy and Public Administration SBS has taken place at a time when all SBSs have been reviewed. But unlike many others, Public Policy and Public Administration’s has had to start from a relatively blank sheet of paper. This has presented both challenges and opportunities, given that the group has had to craft a statement which defines discipline areas that are for the most part now only taught at postgraduate level in the UK (particularly public administration), whilst at the same time providing a statement that encompasses both undergraduate and postgraduate students.

Subject benchmark statements provide important opportunities to reflect on, evaluate and develop taught disciplines (Mearman et al. 2018). Further, their developmental process brings relevant – academic, student and practitioner – stake holders together and provide platforms for debate and reflexivity. Such forums enable the development and articulation of shared disciplinary visions (Pepper et al. 2024). They also set disciplinary reference points, facilitate knowledge creation, and engender disciplinary recognition (ibid). This is particularly important for disciplines such as public policy and public administration, where we argue that SBSs provide important sector reference points that help define disciplines as well as the academic standards that can be expected of a graduate (see QAA, 2023: 2).

This roundtable will provide an informal opportunity for members of the SBS group to share and discuss the SBS’s anticipated impact with UKAPA delegates. Discussion will feed into the final version which will be published in spring 2025.



# Panels

## **Panel 1: Democratising Public Administration 1: Interpreting Public administration**

Power, Conflict, and difference

### **Chair(s):**

Matthew McKenna

Koen Bartels

Interpretive research has become well-established in public administration and policy. With the publication of a second wave of landmark texts over the past decade, it has 'come of age' and we have witnessed a mushrooming of critical and interpretive studies in the field. Interpretive research examines argumentative practices through which policy actors experience, make sense of, and interact with governance contexts. Diverse critical and interpretive approaches reveal everyday practices through which policy is made and experienced, hegemonic powers and values that underpin governance systems, and unanticipated consequences of policy processes. An important contribution of interpretive research is that it has enhanced understanding of how power, conflict, and difference pervade public administration, and how to advance more democratic governance. Power, conflict, and difference will not go away and are not to be done away with. Democratic governance is about dealing with differences: recognising diverse interests, values, and practices, navigating conflicts to stimulate mutual understanding and learning, and confronting the unequal and unjust exercise of power. This panel showcases critical and interpretive studies of power, conflict, and difference in governance. The aim is to enhance understanding of the ways in which public administration actually operates across diverse contexts and could be developed towards democratic governance.

### **Paper Abstract 1: Failure and learning during times of blame: How English local government responds to central government intervention**

**Matthew McKenna**

University Of Birmingham

What policymakers learn from failure is a perennial question. Periodically, it is argued that blame disrupts the potential for learning due to the impulse for self-preservation and control coming at the expense of nuanced reflection. The implication is that with less blame there can be more attention given to avoiding repeated policy failures. However, the conceptual and empirical relationship between failure, learning and blame is underdeveloped in public administration. This research explores how actors interpret this relationship through a comparative case study design of central government interventions into English local government. An analysis of the dilemmas local actors encounter in response to intervention reveals the way competing governance traditions of centralisation and autonomy shape practices and beliefs regarding cooperation, conflict and power. Tracing how such practices and beliefs change across time, the analysis illuminates the way local actors learn to fail and learn to blame.

### **Paper Abstract 2: The contribution of ministers and senior councillors to central-local government relations**

**Phil Swan**

University of Birmingham

There is a gap in the literature concerning the contribution of two sets of politicians, ministers and senior councillors, to central-local government relations. My research is intended to fill that gap. The core of my research comprises thick descriptions of the contribution to central-local government relations of 12 politicians who were active in the period since 1830. This research takes an interpretive approach to understand the ways in which power, conflict and differences between politicians have influenced central-local government relations in England. Drawing on my first

seven thick descriptions, covering the contributions of George Goschen, Joseph Chamberlain, Ernest Simon, Herbert Morrison, Harold Macmillan, Margaret Eaton and David Blunkett, this paper sets out some emerging findings on the ways these politicians' experience of governance systems and the exercise of relative power have influenced their contribution to central and local government. These findings include: the enactment of fragmented and incremental reform of local government; the nationalisation of local government services and functions; the assertion by central government of sustained control over rather than reform of local taxation; the risk of ambitious local leadership being thwarted; and the development of a powerful local political machine which is tuned to support national ambition.

### **Paper Abstract 3: Revaluating and devaluating higher education beyond neoliberalism: elitist, productivist, and populist policy and rhetoric in a field of conflict**

**Nick Turnbull, Shaun Wilson; and Greg Agoston**

University Of Manchester, Macquarie University, University of Manchester

The transformation of higher education provision by neoliberal values has been well documented. However, recent criticisms and even attacks upon higher education indicate a new politics extending beyond neoliberalism. This article draws on the sociology of conventions to unpick the distinctions at work in these new criticisms of universities. By distinguishing between values based in the market world, industrial world, and civic world, we elaborate the political basis of recent value controversies around higher education, reflected in policy and rhetoric. Looking to reject aspects of the neoliberal HE model, some critics have sought to revalue higher education upon productivist values, attacking universities for failing to generate 'use' value for students and society. Populist actors have launched stronger criticisms, aiming to revalue higher education on nationalistic and traditional values. This has generated the devaluation of higher education in national public spheres. As higher education has expanded globally, this new politics emerges from conflicts within and between conservative and liberal elites. Trends in Hungary and Brazil indicate the successes and failures of populist attacks on universities. Trends in the United Kingdom and Australia reflect productivist revaluations of market-based higher education. Based on our four case studies we conclude that while different strategies of revaluation are pursued by elite actors in their specific national context, a new global politics of higher education is emerging that aims to turn the sector into a battleground of conflicting political values.

### **Paper Abstract 4: The Therapeutic Function of Evidence-Based Policy Making. An Ethnographic Study on The Role of Ex Ante Analysis in Infrastructure Policy Processes**

**Lars Dorren**

Leiden University

Ex ante analyses are widespread and a considerable amount of government resources goes into making them. At the same time, it is widely recognized that their outcomes often have little impact on the actual outcome of decision-making. To explain their persistent popularity, this article presents an ethnographic study on three infrastructure policy processes. It shows that the primary function of ex ante analysis in policy processes is therapeutic. People in policy processes constantly find themselves in situations where they have to rely on their personal experiences and intuition. At the same time, other process participants view these two things as undesirable and irrational. Even though ex ante analyses are often produced by the very people participating in the policy process in question, their results are seen as something that comes about without any human interference. As such, ex ante analyses possess a certain agency that provides people with a seemingly neutral validation of their preferences and the confidence to act on them. This therapeutic function comes at a cost: it forces people to replace their original arguments with analysis-based arguments, which has a negative impact on the democratic quality of policy processes.

### **Paper Abstract 5: The everyday production of truth and legitimacy in policy-making processes**

**Hanna van Bentum**

Leiden University

Many policy conflicts ultimately revolve around truth. For example, during the recent pandemic, lockdown debates were ultimately about who is right about the dangers of the virus. Hence, policymakers and other stakeholders need

to deal with widely divergent knowledge claims and expectations. My research project questions how policy-relevant truth and legitimacy are constructed in everyday policy practices, particularly in a time marked by increasing technocratization on one side and the prevalence of 'post-truth' politics on the other. Based on the insights gained, I pursue to develop action perspectives and policy frameworks for handling conflicting knowledge claims in democratic decision-making processes. During the conference I will discuss the theoretical concepts that will guide and inform the research, such as hierarchical versus horizontal approaches to knowledge within policymaking and the democratic legitimacy of facts and values. Furthermore, I will discuss how these theoretical concepts will shape the methodology and approach of the research. By adopting a phenomenological (ethnographic) approach, this project explores a new perspective on the formation of knowledge and legitimacy in policy processes. Phenomenology is a philosophical and methodological approach that assumes human action is understood as contextually determined. This means that a definition of, for example, truth arises in the interaction between an individual and their context (Vagle, 2016). Taking this into account, I have opted for an approach that specifically focuses on practices and actions, particularly those that remain unnoticed and unquestioned by participants in policy processes (Yanow & Tsoukas, 2018). With this, I aim to uncover the often hidden structures and assumptions surrounding the concept of truth that form policy decisions.

## **Panel 2: Dealing with Climate Change 1**

### **Chair(s):**

Timea Nochtá

### **Paper Abstract 1: A net-zero National Health Service: Evidence-use in the politics and policy of decarbonizing the NHS**

#### **Niheer Dasandi**

International Development Department  
University of Birmingham

Globally the healthcare sector is responsible for more than 4% of global net emissions, which have led to growing calls for the health sector to reduce greenhouse gas emissions. In October 2020, the UK's National Health Service (NHS) became the world's first health service to commit to reaching carbon net-zero. This study examines the use of different forms of evidence in this process. It traces the process through which the NHS commitment came about, the design of the net-zero strategy, and its ongoing implementation in the face of growing political backlash to net-zero policies. In examining this process, the study focuses on how the different actors involved in the process drew on different forms of evidence at each stage of the policy and political process. The study is based on a process-tracing analysis, drawing on in depth interviews with members of the Greener NHS team, NHS staff involved in net-zero initiatives, and other actors involved in the process, as well as an extensive examination of key reports, media articles, and other documents linked to the NHS net-zero commitment and strategy. The paper sheds light on the ways in which different forms of evidence are used in designing and implementing climate policy in the health sector; key evidence gaps in the policy process and how these were overcome; and the scope and limits of different forms of evidence in political struggles over mitigation policies.

### **Paper Abstract 2: Understanding Climate Policy Failure**

#### **Mitya Pearson**

Department of Politics and International Studies  
University of Warwick

This paper examines the following research question: do climate policies fail in the same way that other policies fail? There is an extensive literature examining policy failures, blunders and disasters (both in relation to specific national case studies and on a more comparative basis). This paper seeks to draw from this literature to focus specifically on climate policy. It explores whether there are examples of government policy initiatives which have sought to deliver climate mitigation but have failed in conventional ways (as defined by the metrics identified in the policy failure literature). Assuming this is the case, it also assesses the reasons behind such failures and whether they are similar to the factors identified as causing policy failure generally.

## **Paper Abstract 3: Adapting to Climate Change: Partner selection for Local Emergency Management in the Santiago Metropolitan Region**

**Camila Ramos Fuenzalida**

Department of Public Administration and Policy  
University of Birmingham

The increased frequency of emergencies due to climate change underscores the urgent need to enhance disaster prevention strategies. While existing literature primarily examines central governmental planning, it often overlooks the key role of local governments and the inherently relational nature of emergency management. Local governments are crucial in the immediate response to emergencies, yet research on how they prepare for these situations is sparse. Additionally, the relational dynamics of disasters, where no single organization can independently manage an emergency, remain underexplored. This study addresses these gaps by adopting a network perspective to examine how municipal actors in the Santiago Metropolitan Region of Chile select partners to plan for emergencies. Integrating Resource Dependence Theory with network analysis, this research posits that local governments strategically choose partners to optimize resource availability during emergencies. The research is conducted in the Santiago Metropolitan Region, Chile. The case selection highlights the need to diversify research perspectives beyond the global north, exploring how emergency management networks operate under unique institutional and contextual characteristics.

Using exponential random graph models (ERGMs), this article demonstrates that local actors strategically select partners to expand their pool of resources in preparation for costly emergencies. However, resources are not the sole motivation. Local governments prefer to form ties with partners who share homogeneous backgrounds in terms of professionalization level, which is logical in a context characterized by a high risk of defection and low enforcement of policy decisions.

### **Panel 3: Public finance 1**

**Chair(s):**

Elke Loeffler

**Paper abstract 1: How has the UK government responded to financial, service, and corporate failings in local authorities.**

**Peter Murphy, Martin Jones, Katarzyna Lakoma**

Nottingham Trent University, Nottingham Trent University, Nottingham Trent University

On 5th September 2023 Birmingham City Council, the largest local authority in the UK, issued a Section 114 notice under the Local Government Finance Act 1988 that indicated the council's forecast income was insufficient to meet its forecast expenditure in the next financial year. This was widely reported in the national and local media as Birmingham declaring itself 'bankrupt' although local authorities, by statute in the UK cannot go bankrupt. On 19th September, Michael Gove the Secretary of State announced the government's intention to intervene in Birmingham City Council through the appointment of external commissioners. Birmingham CC is, the latest in a wave of government interventions since the former Northamptonshire County Council issued two Section 114 notices in 2018.

This paper will look at the various forms of central government monitoring and intervention in local authorities in England and the antecedents to the Birmingham case. The research adopts an exploratory approach, primarily based upon official secondary documentation and archival sources. It draws upon government legislation, ministerial statements, parliamentary committee, audit, inspection, and other publicly available reports to identify the key issues and the changing nature of government monitoring and intervention in local authorities.

It will look at the historical development of monitoring and intervention since the Best Value regime and the current intervention powers were introduced. It will describe the various forms of monitoring and interventions in terms of the relationship established between the government and the local authority and the nature and scope of the issues involved. The paper will argue that the current levels of financial distress are unsustainable, and the consequences

of the current approach unacceptable. It calls for comprehensive and systemic changes in local government finance arrangements and the nature and form of central government engagement with local authorities.

## **Paper abstract 2: Squaring the circle in the public budgeting of devolved Northern Ireland**

**Paul Carmichael, Colin Knox**

Ulster University

Devolution resumed in Northern Ireland in February 2024, bolstered by some £3.3bn of additional funding from the UK Exchequer. However, the extra funds from London are not commensurate with the spending aspirations of the newly returned-to-office local politicians. Moreover, the financial settlement was predicated on the assumption that the Northern Ireland Executive would increase locally-derived revenues by £113m, as a modest contribution to complement the increased block grant. A new budget has been prepared which exposes the scale of the shortfall in current income relative to desired expenditure, leaving significant and urgent challenges in how Northern Ireland's leaders continue to fulfil their obligations in delivering the public services on which the population depends. Hence, this paper has four objectives. First, it sets out the context within which Northern Ireland's fiscal arrangements are conducted. Second, in reviewing the income available to the Executive, it probes the scope to raise revenue, focusing on the region's unique rating system. Third, it analyses the pattern of devolved expenditure, in particular by reference to the stated objectives of the Executive, as set down in the draft Programme for Government, and mindful of its adoption of an Outcomes Based Accountability *modus operandi*. Fourth, it considers how, given projected growth in demands on the public purse, the devolved government might bridge the gap between the revenues available to it, including those raised regionally, and the cost of satisfying rising public expectations. It concludes that, while there is merit in revisiting the calculations which determine Northern Ireland's block grant from Westminster in line with a demonstrably higher 'need to spend', this does not excuse inaction by the devolved government to address issues on both the revenue and expenditure side of its ledger through raising revenue and trimming costs by implementing sidelined previous major reviews.

## **Paper abstract 3: Public administration and post-GDP goals: a comparison of wellbeing framework integration in the devolved nations**

**Max French, Jennifer Wallace**

Northumbria University, Newcastle, University of Glasgow, Glasgow

In February 2008, President of France Nicolas Sarkozy asked economists Joseph Stiglitz, Amartya Sen and Jean Paul Fitoussi to create a Commission on the Measurement of Economic Performance and Social Progress to review the use of statistics in the measurement of national progress beyond the narrow frame of Gross Domestic Product. More than half of OECD countries have since developed national outcome frameworks to target post-GDP policy objectives (OECD 2023).

However, concerns are emerging of an implementation gap separating ambitions from action. A recent systematic review of the integration of the UN Sustainable Development Goals, perhaps the best-known of these frameworks, found most governments had achieved only superficial integration, with limited impact on decision making or behaviour change (Biermann et al. 2022). Emerging research echoes this finding amongst national-level frameworks (FPAC 2022; French and Wallace 2022; OECD 2018; 2021), although there remains a dearth of comparative research in this area.

The devolved administrations of Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland have all developed National Outcomes and Indicators, but developed different institutional arrangements for implementation. We take the opportunity for a most similar systems comparative study of the integration of national outcome goals and indicators across Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland over the period 2015-2022. Drawing from over 30 semi-structured interviews with all key institutional players, alongside a substantial document review of 200 sources, we systematically compare integration achieved at national, local and sectoral levels.

We identify specific conditions in the institutional arrangements which resulted in this observed difference. A combination of support and guidance, legislative obligations, values and visions helped Wales secure far higher integration. Leaning too heavily on 'hard' powers (Northern Ireland) or 'soft powers' (Scotland) resulted in limited

effectiveness. We will reflect on the significance of these findings for theory and practice.

#### **Paper abstract 4: Communities “Are Doin’ It For Themselves” – An investigation into the governance and financing of community-led ventures in Wales**

**Michael Butler, Ed Jones**

Bangor Business School, Bangor, United Kingdom

With increasing financial pressure on governments at all levels, and the need to improve the local socio-economic environment, communities across Wales are taking the initiative to establish community-led ventures (Bull et al. 2018; Popay et al. 2023). A community-led venture is a sub-set of a social enterprise established with the aim of creating social wealth within the communities in which they reside (Haugh 2007). Unlike other ventures, community-led ventures have the capacity to shift the power dynamics from a top-down approach to developing solutions to a model based on its specific community’s needs. Community-led ventures have provided an appreciation of local and national history (Teasdale 2010). Some have been successful in generating a new social identity of the local community, connecting people who might otherwise have remained anonymous neighbours, and have preserved a significant place which represents for them a cornerstone in their community history (Alcaide Manthey 2024). Most of all, being part of such ventures enhances the experience of being part of a community, one that works together for the common good, building something positive and lasting for the future. Our paper will focus on a new project funded by the Development Bank of Wales (DBW) which will explore the governance and funding practices of Welsh community-led ventures. The paper will present draft findings from a systematic literature review of community-led ventures, which will bring new insights into their governance and finance, define what is meant by community-led ventures and identify key historical and current research on this topic. The paper will also highlight the next stages of the project which involve establishing a unique database that contains information of the governance and funding characteristics of Welsh community-led ventures and writing a report to recommend key actions **for the DBW**.

#### **Panel 4: Public finance 2**

**Chair(s):**

Athanassios Gouglas

#### **Paper abstract 1: Developing a Local Government dataset: A tool for enhanced resilience**

**Bernard Dom, Martin Jones, Alan Collins, Peter Murphy**

Nottingham Trent University

Governments and Local Authorities (LAs) have been continuously challenged by the increasing financial and service pressures posed by over a decade of austerity in England as they try to maintain their delivery of public services. This prompted the researcher to create a 15-year longitudinal dataset on the revenue income, revenue expenditure, reserves, and capital items for all principal LAs in England from 2005/06-2020/21 (Dom, 2022). As the shocks from austerity and other disruptive events have continued after 2021/2022, an extension to this longitudinal dataset is being constructed to identify key income and expenditure trends and patterns to help devise better strategies and build capacity and capabilities in local authorities.

Once updated, the quantitative panel dataset will allow comparison and analysis of English LAs’ income and expenditure over a longer-term period that includes the period up to 2023/24. This dataset will provide opportunities and a comparative context for further, more detailed research into particular services and case studies on individuals or groups of LAs.

This development paper will demonstrate how the dataset has been developed and how it has been used to date. For example, the data set has been used to identify and analyse and trends/patterns in expenditure that led to financial distress among LAs in England. (Dom et al. 2024a); how Welsh LAs prioritised limited resources to maintain public service delivery between 2010/11 to 2019/20 (Dom et al. 2022) and more specifically how cultural services in England were affected by austerity – localism (Dom et al. 2024b). Future, versions of the dataset updated it with post-2020 financial data of English and Welsh LAs will be hosted on an interactive online dashboard and made readily available

to interested researchers, think tanks, and other interested stakeholders from public, private and third-sector organisations.

### **Paper abstract 2: Assessing needs and granting autonomy: comparing local government grant systems**

**Mark Sandford, Kevin Muldoon-smith**

House Of Commons Library, Northumbria University

In the early 2020s, commentators and scholars have made a number of proposals for fiscal devolution to English local authorities. This political imperative has raised the question of how (or whether) centrally distributed revenues should take account of revenues from devolved fiscal powers. This article explores how non-UK states tackle this challenge. It sets out the complex context of local authority revenue sources, the types of restriction or discretion that can be available to local authorities, and the means through which equalisation provisions or grants can be applied to some or all of the revenues available. The article then outlines developments in the last 15 years in England's local government finance system, situated in a longer context of historical practice in England. It then summarises equalisation and grant-making practices in three other states, identifying similarities and differences with the UK experience. The article concludes by outlining lessons for any reform of local government finance in England, likely to be a politically salient issue in the 2020s.

### **Paper abstract 3: The public management of personal debt? The UK government's regulatory regime**

**Richard Common**

University of Nottingham, Nottingham, UK

According to the Money Charity, the average household debt, including mortgages, stood at just over £64,000 at the end of March 2024. The combination of inflationary pressures, fiscal shock brought about by the short-lived Truss government and persistent, historically high levels of taxation and a growing rental sector have combined to exacerbate personal debt stress. However, successive governments have failed to regard personal debt as a public policy problem. Instead, the strain has been taken by debt charities, who in turn refer those in need of debt relief, to providers private providers such as PayPlan. All personal debt management is regulated by the Financial Conduct Authority (FCA), established in 2013 with the promise of fairer regulation. Typically working in tandem with the Prudential Regulation Authority (part of the Bank of England); their mandate is socially facing but ultimately challenged by financialisation and demands of the finance industry (Chiu et al, 2022). The aim of the paper is to account for the inadequacies of the current system of regulation in relation to personal debt. The paradox of the current (post pandemic) situation is the growth of high levels of personal taxation against a fiscal background shaped by financialisation and market economics that place the onus on personal responsibility and choice. The paper examines current provision for the management of personal debt and thus considers the efficacy of the regulatory regime. Kirwan (2019) calls this the 'debt advice process', which in effects enforces the legal contract between debtor and lender. In addition, Kirwan (2019) also notes that much personal debt is 'public' in the form of council tax arrears etc. The paper makes the case for a recasting of debt management away from light-touch regulatory approaches normally ascribed to UK governance towards a more unified approach to personal debt.

### **Paper abstract 4: The Private Finance Initiative: testimony to the contradictory enabling power of accounting**

Salman Ahmad, Ciaran Connolly, Istemi Demirag

**Aston University, Birmingham, United Kingdom**

Successive UK governments between 1992 and 2018, had continuously used the Private Finance Initiative (or PFI) as a major public infrastructure procurement policy. Until 2018, when the Chancellor announced in the Budget that the programme will not be used any more, across the UK, PFI had delivered over 700 infrastructure projects. The value of these projects is about £57 billion, with a forecast aggregate payment of £188 billion over the next 25 years. This paper mobilises a governmentality framework to examine how the underlying rationalities for PFI (value for money), and the associated technologies of government, particularly the management accounting and contractual control systems, were shaped and re-shaped in response to Parliament's inquiries, and how that had helped to sustain PFI in the UK for almost three decades. The paper unveils that complex forms of (management) accounting were used

by successive governments for producing a ‘beautiful picture’ of PFI as means for developing and sustaining (neoliberal) markets for public infrastructure. However, accounting for operationalising PFI was not actually successful in achieving the underlying objectives of value for money. On the other hand, the unavailable knowledge might have played in favour of successive governments as they would respond to Parliamentary criticism by introducing new forms of institutional identities and accounting systems, which could not be challenged. In other words, VfM was never calculable and therefore, successive governments were able to exercise pervasive power by constructing ‘regimes of hopes’ through complex forms of accounting technologies. The paper concludes that successive UK governments have been generally blind to the risks entailed in major infrastructure projects as the country’s body of knowledge (i.e., accounting expertise in risk management for major infrastructure) remains persistently under-developed. In this sense, PFI was no different than privatisation, and nor are the contemporary major infrastructure projects, e.g., the HS2.

## **Panel 5: Dealing with Climate Change 2**

### **Chair(s):**

Niheer Dasandi

Networks in dealing with climate change - Taking stock and looking forward

This panel is one of a pair bringing together diverse perspectives to evaluate the role of the public sector in dealing with climate change and its impacts. In the last three decades, a large body of scholarly literature has developed which investigates the role of the public sector, in different places and at different levels, in mitigating and adapting to climate change. Facilitating cooperation, collaboration and coordination across different levels of government and with actors beyond the public sector; evaluating climate policies’ effectiveness; and examining different strategies employed by various actors to build capacity for climate policy and action have also become key strands of research. Reflecting on new developments in climate policy, governance and management -for example increasing extreme weather events, net zero, and climate justice-, this panel takes stock of existing knowledge and highlights promising avenues for future research. In particular, the panel will focus on different conceptualisations of ‘networks’ in climate policy, governance and management, evaluating the opportunities and limitations of different types of networks in building public sector capacity for dealing with climate change and its impacts. The types of networks discussed include transnational municipal networks, local public-private-civil society networks, and networks in emergency response and management. The papers highlight that the ‘network’ remains an important theoretical concept and analytical tool in researching the dynamics of climate policy, governance and management.

### **Paper Abstract 1: Making net-zero work on the ground: Urban transformations in EU multi-level climate governance**

#### **Kristine Kern**

Leibniz Institute for Research on Society and Space and University of Potsdam, Potsdam, Germany

This paper focuses on the ambitions and perspectives of European cities to reach climate-neutrality. Starting with an overview on the debates on local sustainability and climate governance, it discusses how these debates developed over time and led forerunner cities to set ambitious targets to become climate-neutral. Since the first studies on local sustainability and climate action have appeared more than 20 years ago, local climate policy has attracted widespread scholarly attention and developed into a prolific research area. There is already a considerable amount of knowledge on the drivers and pathways of climate action in cities. However, the debates on net-zero and climate-neutral cities are a more recent development.

Today the research field is characterized by ongoing conceptual debates on city leadership, the relationship between place-based experimentation and urban transformation, and the scaling of local experiments. Research tends to focus attention on leading cities and transnational city networks, while neglecting “ordinary” cities and other types of networking despite their importance in meeting net zero targets. This paper first, contributes to debates on the drivers which lead forerunner cities to set more ambitious targets such as becoming climate-neutral. Second, it develops new insights into the debates on scaling, in particular spatial scaling across cities in Europe. Empirically, the analyses the “EU mission on 100 smart and climate-neutral cities by 2030”. This includes the selection process, an assessment of the potential of the chosen cities to reach their goals, and the alignment with other EU programs



such as the EU Covenant of Mayors. Finally, the paper develops conclusions for how the experience of this group of most advanced European cities can be transferred to “ordinary” cities which do not have the same capacities as the forerunners to reach climate neutrality.

### **Paper Abstract 2: Depoliticizing climate change? Exploring the multilevel and networked governance of ‘net zero’**

Timea Nochta  
Department of Public Administration and Policy  
University of Birmingham

This paper contributes to debates about the dynamic relationship between politicising and depoliticising processes, situating them in multilevel and networked governance systems. While (de/re)politicisation has become a mainstream concept in the governance literature, how this dual process operates across levels of government and shapes relationships between the state and non-state actors that together form complex networks remains under-researched. To address this gap in the literature, we explore the UK’s ‘net zero carbon’ agenda within historical and existing trajectories of climate change discourse. Our analytical framework builds on Wood and Flinders (2014) typology that promotes a conceptualisation of (de/re)politicisation as simultaneously occurring governmental, societal and discursive processes. We explore this interaction by drawing on insights from the literature on Multi-Level Governance (MLG) and networked governance to contribute to conceptual debates in three specific ways. First, how depoliticization processes interrelate across levels of governance and what this means for governance networks aiming to respond to complex, cross-cutting and in this case unprecedented commitments. Second, identifying the extent to which so-called ‘functional spill overs’ (Snaith, 2017) exist whereby the policy goals of actors at different governance levels are constrained by short-term politicising or depoliticising consequences of political, technocratic or deliberative strategies adopted elsewhere in a governance ecosystem. Third, we explore the extent to which the re-scaling of authority for aspects of net zero has politicising or depoliticising effects at different levels and what this means for practical policy making. Our empirical contribution is to investigate the real-world impact of the growing emphasis on net zero in climate change policy, focusing on the city of Birmingham within the broader UK context.

### **Paper Abstract 3: Informal networks and disaster recovery: a comparative case study of two Taiwanese Aboriginal villages**

Major Pau  
Department of Public Administration and Policy  
University of Birmingham

In disaster studies, current debates tend to overlook the mitigation and recovery phases. Behaviours of non-state actors including survivors, civilians, and volunteers are also seldom investigated. This leads to an overemphasis and overreliance on government actors in disasters, both in practice and research. To fill this gap, this comparative case study selected two Taiwanese indigenous villages which were annihilated by the 2009 Morakot Typhoon. In the aftermath, a controversial and exclusive recovery policy making process drove survivors to form informal organizations. Not only did they need to recover from the disaster, but also from poor government policies and interventions. Using the theories of network governance and social capital, the bottom-up recovery efforts by the village survivors and other collaborating volunteers are examined. During the recovery process, these survivors and volunteers formed various informal organisations for several purposes, namely political participation, psychological healing, and livelihood revitalisation. During the 4-month fieldwork, this study observed the operation of these organisations and interviewed their leaders and members, as well as government officials. With new empirical data, this study is aimed at filling a theoretical gap by developing an understanding of the role of an informal organization in a disaster recovery network. Utilising a social capital lens, we analyse its effect on the interaction between formal and informal organizations within a disaster recovery network. Informal organization is a form of collective force that is based on societal ties and can be mobilized when a demand(s) has not been addressed by others. Its organizational flexibility and high priority on effectiveness can fill the gap on non-state actors of disaster studies, the reasons behind the founding of informal organizations can also expand the understanding of the concept of disaster recovery.

## **Panel 6: The citizen-state nexus: How the preferences and behaviours of the public can inform public administration practices**

### **Chair(s):**

Eleanor Woodhouse

Alice Moore

The citizen-state nexus: How the preferences and behaviours of the public can inform public administration practices

This panel contributes to answering two of the UKAPA conference questions, namely: How can the public be meaningfully involved in the design and delivery of future public services? Which public sector practices and innovations need to be harnessed and nurtured and how can this be done? We bring together empirical expertise on the topics of how regulators detect signals from user complaints, how nonprofits act as advocates and service providers in modern governance settings, how citizens respond to different features of tax administration, and how implementation arrangements affect citizens' propensity to engage with public services. Together, these papers address important questions about governments' legitimacy, accountability, and effectiveness in the face of an increasingly complex governance landscape.

Governments need to maintain legitimacy whilst also facing resource constraints and high demands from the public for quality services. The papers in this panel and the ensuing debate will help us understand how governments can make the most of citizen input to ensure that public services reflect the users they serve and achieve their ultimate policy aims. Public input may produce valuable data to improve service performance, it can hold governments to account, and act as a source of legitimacy for their actions. Citizens are both the parties that shape public goods and services and their ultimate end-users. This panel will explore the inherent tensions between these roles when citizens are involved in the delivery of public goods and services.

### **Paper abstract 1: Noisy data: How regulators detect signals from user complaints**

#### **Dr Han Wang, Thomas Elston**

University of Southampton, University of Oxford

Many regulators receive more intelligence about their regulatees than they can possibly act upon. A precursory step to taking regulatory action based on this myriad intelligence is, therefore, the "filtering out" of relevant signals from noisy data (Moe, 1985). Using a unique, ten-year dataset consisting of (i) more than 178,000 complaints against local public service providers in England, (ii) the results of 59,000 investigations into those complaints, and (iii) 372 regulatory actions taken in response by the local government regulator, we test three sets of explanations for how relevant signals are detected from this vast, noisy data. Using probit regression analysis at the council-service category-year level, we detect a significant increase in the probability of regulatory action as the volume of complaints against a council, both received and upheld, rises. A 1% increase in cases received results in a 0.2 percentage point increase in the likelihood of regulatory action; while a 1% increase in upheld complaints leads to a 0.267 percentage point increase. Furthermore, regarding suggested complaint resolutions, recommendations for financial redress have the most substantial effect on the probability of additional regulatory action (2.144), followed by procedural changes (1.768) and apologies (1.617). All effects are statistically significant at the 1% level, and remain robust across various public service categories. Finally, we explored the potential effects of council characteristics, such as the number of claimants in neighbouring service categories, total population, unemployment rate, and average wage income, but found no significant impact from these factors.

Key words: information gathering; local government; nodality; public services; regulation inside government

### **Paper abstract 2: Co-creation and relational arbitrage: Nonprofits as advocate, service provider, and infrastructure**

Dr Britt Regal, Clare FitzGerald

King's College London

Governments face rising expectations: to innovatively solve local manifestations of wicked problems with dwindling

resources. In response, public practitioners and scholars are increasingly exploring ways for government to discharge their duties through more distributed and participative means. Due to their proximity to communities, nonprofits are often identified as key partners in service design and delivery, suggesting that they hold critical relationships and knowledge for making inclusive distributed governance through co-creation work. As innovative cross-sector collaborations have gained traction in local areas, public partners are looking to scale their efforts as participation in every local collaboration is prohibitively time-intensive. Thus, they advocate the use of ‘co-creation platforms’: organizations that can use reconfigurable design rules and resources to support multiple instances of co-creation. Nonprofits, with their knowledge and expertise, may be excellent platform organizations. Yet, the current literature highlights concern about how their interests can skew government efforts even within local networks. While research shows nonprofits play an important role in local public service delivery and governance, we know little about whether they can assume a more strategic role within the meta-governance of such services. In other words, it is unclear how nonprofits can successfully forge relationships that encourage co-creation to enhance communities’ problem-solving capacities while also holding governments accountable for serving underserved communities. We explore this tension through a case study of a novel platform organization whose remit was to connect the cultural and education sectors, ensuring that children and young people had access to great arts and cultural opportunities wherever they lived. Drawing on literature about co-creation platforms, collaborative governance, and arbitrage, our paper explores both the challenges and possibilities of governments working with nonprofits as strategic organizations to improve citizen-state interactions.

### **Paper abstract 3: Citizens’ Preferences for the Administration of Income Tax**

**Oliver James, Clare Maudling, Kim-Lee Tuxhorn**

University of Exeter, University of Exeter; University of Calgary

Tax is a key part of social contract between citizens and the state (Steinmo 2018), and its administration is being revolutionised by digital systems for interaction. These systems have implications for citizens’ views about administrative burdens, their compliance with paying tax and legitimacy of systems (Moynihan, Herd, and Harvey 2015). However, we know relatively little about what citizens want in tax administration, especially relative to research about public opinion on tax levels and distributive aspects (Ballard-Rosa et al. 2017). In this paper we estimate citizens’ preferences for features of tax administration (filing methods, information sources used by tax authorities, audit processes and appeals processes). It is difficult to establish preferences from looking at actual use of tax administration because jurisdictions’ systems only utilise specific features not the full range of possibilities. We develop and apply a conjoint experiment to establish citizens’ preferences for features of tax administration, a method that allows participants to be presented with a broad range of different features (Mangham et al. 2009). We implement the experiment on samples ( $3 \times n = 1,000$ ) in Canada, the US, and UK, focusing on individual citizens and the administration of taxes on income. We examine variation in citizens’ preferences according to political values and trust in government and use the results to compare preferences with actual systems found in the three countries. Our findings, which will be available before September 2024, will help inform discussion of digital government design (Meijer 2015) to help boost legitimacy and tax compliance.

### **Paper abstract 4: The effects of contracted and partnership delivery on engagement with public services.**

**Alice Moore**

University of Birmingham

When we use public services, we may not be interacting with government itself, but with a range of private or nonprofit organisations. These organisations are engaged through a variety of commercial and partnership arrangements. How do these different delivery models and the organisations involved alter our interactions with public services? We know that the organisations responsible for public service delivery can influence how people attribute credit and blame and how they themselves are treated by those services. However, we know less about how different delivery arrangements influence people’s behaviour when engaging with public services. As governments expand the range of delivery models they use to provide public services, it is important to understand these dynamics, as they may have a profound impact on public service outcomes. There is also an increased recognition that public services require the active involvement and cooperation of their users, if they are to achieve their ultimate policy goals, from reaching net zero to healthy ageing. This paper presents results of an online survey experiment with a balanced sample of participants from the UK. The experiment’s factorial vignette design tests the effects of who provides a

public service (government, private company, or nonprofit) and the delivery arrangement (contract or partnership) on participants' level of engagement with two types of public service (careers support and a befriending service). These outcomes will be captured by participants' responses to an advertisement for a public service, which varies across the above dimensions. Participants' engagement with the service will be measured by their willingness to provide information in a registration form. The paper aims to contribute to scholarship on the consequences of public service delivery models for interactions with government through an innovative experimental approach.

## **Panel 7: The public administration of the executive in British government**

### **Chair(s):**

Joyce Liddle

Public Administration is the academic study of public bureaucracies and their practices. It is both descriptive and applied. It is diverse and it is a profession. At times, it can seem like all things to everyone. However, it is rarely the academic study of the executive itself: of the central agencies supporting the prime minister and cabinet. This topic is peripheral judging by (say) Peters and Pierre's Sage Handbook of Public Administration (2012) and Perry and Christensen's Handbook of Public Administration (2015). The panel fills the gap, focusing on the academic study of the executive - on the public administration of the core executive. The panel will explore the formal organisation covering structure, functions, coordination, staffing & personnel, and the budgeting & financial management of the core executive. It also explores the informal organisation, covering the prime minister's court, and the 'rules for rulers'. The panel will identify and describe the executive's recurring problems and discuss possible reforms. Clyne and Urban examine reform of the formal organisation. Rhodes looks at the reform of the informal organisation. Grube looks at executive reform internationally.

### **Paper Abstract 1: Fixing the centre of government – reflections on the IfG's Commission on the Centre of Government**

Jordan Urban, Alex Thomas  
Institute for Government

In March this year, the Institute for Government published *Power with Purpose*, the final report of its Commission on the Centre of Government. This set out the IfG's analysis of how and why No.10 Downing Street, the Cabinet Office and Treasury are not, as currently constituted, capable of meeting the challenges facing the UK in the 2020s and beyond. It contends that the centre fails to set an overall strategy for the government to follow. The resulting vacuum is left to the Treasury to fill, with Prime Ministers' priorities inadequately reflected in policy and budgets. Recognising their weakness, No.10 and the Cabinet Office seek to 'grip' too many issues, leading to over-centralisation. And the centre is too closed to external voices, from academia, industry, civil society and more. The report makes a range of practical recommendations built around seven key proposals that would enhance the centre's ability to set strategy, support the Prime Minister and get out the way of delivery. These include the introduction of a new strategy and budget process building on the multi-year spending review; the creation of a new First Secretary of State and Executive Cabinet Committee, and the re-organisation of No.10 and the Cabinet Office into a new Department of the Prime Minister and Cabinet and a separate Department for the Civil Service. This paper and presentation will summarise the work of the Commission, its recommendations and reflect on the launch of the Commission's findings in the context of the forthcoming general election.

### **Paper Abstract 2: Rules for Rulers**

#### **R. A. W. Rhodes**

University Of Southampton

Descriptions of the formal organisation of the executive can be found in discussions about the power of the prime minister, especially in the recurring debates about whether there should be a prime ministers department. This paper focuses on the informal organisation of the executive, arguing it is characterised by the prime minister's court and its courtiers. The courts of David Cameron, Theresa May, and Boris Johnson were characterised by knavery; each practiced the black arts. There were political games around reshuffles, resignations and leadership challenges and the feuds in the court between ministers, advisers, and civil servants. Knavery was everywhere. There is much

evidence of betrayal, revenge, lying, scandals, and bullying with such machinations oiled by gossip, humour, alcohol and leavened with harassment in its several guises. Such behaviour is often dysfunctional and it was throughout the 2000s and 2010s. It led to groupthink, the erosion of the old club rules about decency, and factionalism with its attendant chaos, division, and anger. There was confusion about who said what to whom and who agreed to what. Allied to groupthink, this mix led to 'muddling through' as the dominant pattern of decision making. A typical British solution to such issues is to devise a code of conduct. There are already a multitude of codes in British government – for spads, civil servants, MPs, and ministers. None of the codes refer to the court though it is more central to policymaking than the Cabinet. The starting points are an explicit recognition that there is a court with no explicit lessons for running that court. I use the snappy phrase 'rules for rulers' to refer to these lessons (Meltsner 1990). The problem with suggesting some rules for the court is that I will be accused of stating the bleeding obvious, which I do, and condoning the dark arts, which I do not. The rules become obvious because I make them explicit. By so doing, I aim to improve the regulation of court and temper the expectations of courtiers. I aim to provide a steer to the political beasts that live and work in the court.

### **Paper Abstract 3: Navigating political boundaries at the centre: a comparative assessment of civil service leadership**

**Dennis C Grube**

University Of Cambridge

Modern governments must cope with the need to govern at speed, with imperfect information, in hyper-partisan environments often characterised by low trust between actors, and indeed with the citizens they represent. This poses challenges for all parts of executive government, including the bureaucracy. In all countries who model their executive structures on the principles of the Westminster system, public service leaders must navigate the political challenges of the contemporary governing environment without themselves becoming political players. This paper looks comparatively at Australia, New Zealand, Canada and the United Kingdom, to examine the ways in which public service leaders in central agencies define the boundaries of their role in serving the government of the day. The paper argues that the intensity of modern governance at the centre is stress-testing those boundaries and re-shaping the traditions that have upheld them.

### **Panel 8: Public services and the public sector**

**Chair(s):**

Stephen Greasley

### **Paper Abstract 1: Public Sector Performance Management and Public Trust in the Public Services in Ghana: Deja vu?**

**Frank Ohemeng, Emelia Amoako-asiedu, Theresa Obuobisa-Darko, Kenneth Parku**

Ghana Communication Technology University, ACCRA, GHANA

One of the major elements brought forth by the new public management in reforming the public sector to make it efficient, effective, and accountable to citizens is the introduction of performance management system. The fundamental idea with performance management (PM), especially the delivery of service, would lead to the building of trust in government. In view of this, performance management has become a management fad, with its global application by almost every government. Recent debate over the efficacy of PM in the public sector is yet to provide an effective conclusion. Within this confusion about evidence of its impact on service delivery has now emerged the idea that the introduction of PM in the public sector has led to mistrust and cynicism, which has allowed authoritarian regimes to infiltrate and seize public services, leading to democratic backsliding. Stoker (2021), has argued that governments manipulate citizen judgment through PM by highlighting positive data and concealing less helpful data, while showcasing achievements. Claims of success in performance management contradict public servants' and citizens' own assessments, leading to distrust in governance, exploited by populist and authoritarian regimes. Unfortunately, the link between performance and trust (or distrust) is yet to be fully exploited in the literature, despite all the negativities that scholars continue to write about public sector performance management. Thus, we attempt to fill this death by testing the link between the two ideas. Building on Stoker's (2021) discussion We attempt the question, does performance management lead to public mistrust about public services? We focus on Ghana's public

service. The choice of Ghana is relevant because over the years, it has faithfully implemented public sector reforms with performance management as a key element of these reforms. This study utilises the mixed method approach to collect data from public servants (specifically, the civil service).

### **Paper Abstract 2: The Commodification of the Public Good: past and future**

Andrew Gray

Emeritus Professor Public Management Durham University, Honorary Professor Public Policy University of Nottingham

This paper reflects on the findings of a set of articles recently published in *Public Money and Management* that arose from a conversational conference supported by the former Public Administration Committee of the JUC. In drawing on the Editorial of that edition of the journal, this paper documents some developments of public service commodification and informs answers to three sets of questions.

First, what do we mean by the commodification of the public good? What are its empirical manifestations? What are its drivers? The paper offers a broad conceptualisation of commodification, identifiable empirically in a range of practices and driven by economic, social and political philosophies.

Second, what are the impacts of commodification on service content and outcomes, on the relationships between commissioners, providers and users of services, and on the wider governance of the public good? The paper suggests that commodification itself changes the service received, and how it is allocated and evaluated. It increases the emphasis on governance through contract. It shifts the balance of advantage in the allocation of goods and services in favour of those who can exploit its mechanisms. But commodification may enhance our awareness of what we are buying (rather than spending), an advantage that may be itself prioritised in times of limited resources.

Third, what are the implications of the development of commodification for the future of public administration? The paper finds policy and provision risks that if unrecognised may change the future conception and content of the public good.

### **Paper Abstract 3: Breaking Barriers for Breaking Ground: A Categorisation of Public Sector Challenges to Smart City Project implementation**

Emine Zehra Akgün, Paolo Gerli, Luca Mora, Clare McTigue

Edinburgh Napier University, Heriot-Watt University, Tallinn University of Technology

Smart city technologies provide promising solutions for local governments to tackling societal challenges and enhancing public service provision. The global embrace of these digital innovations represents a new era in public sector advancements. However, it has also brought to light difficulties that existing public sector innovation (PSI) theories struggle to address. One key issue is the lack of comprehensive knowledge regarding the most critical barriers to implementing smart city projects and their intensity. We address this knowledge gap with a systematic literature review within the smart city domain, focusing on literature reporting on the barriers that local governments commonly encounter. This effort has culminated in the development of a conceptual framework that categorize smart city project barriers, forming a taxonomy that builds on and expand the most recent development in the PSI literature. This study contributes to PSI theory refinement by offering a more nuanced understanding of the barriers that local governments might experience when attempting to sustain digital innovation efforts. Moreover, this insight into PSI dynamics is a valuable resource for local governments as they seek to devise realistic mitigation strategies tailored to local development needs.

### **Paper Abstract 4: Coping with the Cuts: Street-Level Professionals & Public Service Delivery in the UK**

Claire MacRae

University Of Glasgow

The ongoing transformation in the UK public sector's funding environment will require a reconfiguration of the range and quality of services delivered to the public. The UK Spring Budget 2024 confirmed limited growth to devolved government budgets in 2024/25 and beyond, which will create fiscal challenges for government. In what ways are central, devolved, and local governments preparing for budget constraints? How are budgetary decisions being taken to ensure that services and the most marginalised in society are protected from any adverse impact? UK public sector must adapt to changes in funding levels, alongside managing an increased demand for services, following on from a decade of austerity, the Covid-19 pandemic, and Brexit. The squeeze on public sector funding will make it harder for services to recover to pre-pandemic performance levels. The Institute of Fiscal Studies (2024) reported that public services are already showing visible signs of strain and in many cases are performing less well than they were back in 2010. At the more extreme end, several Councils in England have already issued section 114 notices, effectively declaring bankruptcy. Considering the tight public sector spending environment, tough decisions must be taken by devolved and local governments when delivering public services. Trade-offs are inevitable and often discretionary services are cut to protect the delivery of statutory core services. This paper reports on the findings of roundtable event on fiscal constraints jointly delivered by the Centre for Public Policy at the University of Glasgow and the International Public Policy Observatory (IPPO) during June 2024. The purpose of the roundtable event is to explore the challenges faced by street-levels professionals when delivering public service provision during such challenging times.

### **Panel 9: Politics and governance**

#### **Chair(s):**

Edoardo Ongaro

#### **Abstract paper 1: The two faces of Janus. Political advisers' role in politicization.**

##### **Athanassios Gouglas**

University Of the West of Scotland

This paper is a theoretical and empirical study of the role of political advisers in politicization in 18 different consolidated democracies across the world. It is written as a chapter in the book monograph provisionally titled 'Political Advisers in Modern Democracies: Dark Masters?', which will be published by Edward Elgar. Although most scholars and pundits lament the role of advisers in politically controlling the public service, the chapter takes a more nuanced approach. Governments try to balance between the need for neutral, expert advice and democratic accountability. Political advisers are key players in this balancing act. They have a key role to play in managing all different aspects of politicization. Like Janus, they can be thought of having two faces. One face is brighter, it looks at ways to advance democracy, the other is darker it controls experts and bureaucracy. Like Janus, advisers hold a staff in their right hand to guide experts and societal stakeholders to the right direction. In their left hand they hold a key to open gates and control passages to executive power. How do they do it? There are three main ways in which political advisers can challenge the politics-administration dichotomy and crowd out neutral expertise: (a) by being involved in the appointments of public servants (formal politicisation); (b) by causing the functional politicisation of public servants and finally (c) by influencing administrative processes and policy decisions (administrative politicization). By contrast, when they protect against depoliticization and technicalization they do this via three main routes: (a) they take issues, previously thought as better left to the 'experts', and turn them into political matters (agenda setting); and (b) they contest and converse with ideas and recommendations stemming from sources nested in complex horizontal policy advisory systems (contestability); c) they protect voters (political accountability).

#### **Abstract paper 2: The Downing Street Chief-of-Staff: The Indescribable Job?**

##### **Max Stafford**

The University of Southampton

The role of Downing Street Chief-of-Staff is relatively underexplored within Political Science and Public Administration. However, they are a very influential figure within British central government (and have been since 1997). Constitutionally they wield much formal and informal power, shaping the trajectories (both positive and negative) of the Prime Minister whom they serve.

The lack of work on this role (its evolution, operational significance at the heart of government, and its influence on policy) means that there is very little understanding of what the role actually is. In short, there is no job description for a Chief-of-Staff. This paper explores whether it is actually possible to devise one. In doing so, it builds upon existing work on the role - in particular, that of Stafford (2024a; 2024b).

In seeking to determine this, the paper draws upon semi-structured interviews (2023-present) with former cabinet ministers, special advisers, and civil servants. They reveal both determined views about the Chief-of-Staff and, paradoxically, a lack of consensus about what they actually do. This leads to the central question underscoring this examination of whether a job description can be formed. In short, is it actually helpful or necessary to create one?

### **Abstract paper 3: Commissioners as the Fourth Branch of Government – Who, What, and Why?**

**Ian Elliott**

University Of Glasgow

The Scottish Parliament recently conducted an Inquiry into “Scotland's Commissioner Landscape: A Strategic Approach”. This was spurred by plans to introduce seven new commissioners through legislation on top of the seven that have already been approved. Yet there is widespread recognition of a lack of evidence as to the role and function of commissioners.

Commissioners have been described as a fourth branch of government, watchdogs of democracy or an integrity branch of government. They are a common feature of many Commonwealth countries, most notably in Canada and New Zealand. However, there is no real consistency in what a commissioner is, what they do, and how they are held accountable for their duties.

In this research I will outline some of the key debates in relation to the role and function of commissioners as well as setting out how they have developed across the four nations of the UK over the last 25 years (since devolution). In doing so I will highlight how debates on the role and function of commissioners have persisted over time, largely in the absence of any academic scrutiny or evidence. Recommendations set out an agenda for future research as well as highlighting the need for more engaged scholarship.

### **Abstract paper 4: Devolution as Process: Becoming the Senedd**

**Kerry Howell**

Northumbria University

Through ideas relating to identity and culture, this paper outlines historical perspectives of Wales/Cymru and explores path dependency in an institution that has evolved over the past twenty-five years. The notion of “devolution as process” within a Welsh/Cymru context is investigated in relation to comprehensions of political and cultural awareness. Human beings are thrown into communities/societies at a particular time in history where they form an identity and make sense of their social and cultural existence. Historical events and experiences have sculpted Welsh/Cymru social/cultural existence and, during the early twenty-first century, the formation of the Assembly/Senedd has eroded a “democratic deficit” and provided levels of self-determination. Wales in general is in a state of becoming and the Assembly/Senedd encompasses a vehicle by which this process may be observed. Indeed, the Assembly/Senedd itself is becoming, which through a distinct path dependency and democratic leadership develops Welsh identities and cultural perspectives relating to inclusivity, accountability, and transparency.

### **Abstract paper 5: Managing development to manage politics: DFID's hybridity and institutional logics**

**Arun Kumar, Brendan Whitty**

Northumbria University, University of St Andrews

The scholarship on management of public development aid agencies is deeply divided. For the managerialists, more and better management—‘objective,’ ‘scientific’ techniques, high-quality ‘evidence’—will lead to development aid effectiveness. The reformers accommodate development aid's uncertainties, complexities, and politics into its



management. Heretics, however, contend that aid management is tied to the global ‘power’ project: of Western supremacy, resurrecting colonial hierarchies, and perpetuate donor hegemony. Taking the tri-partite division as its starting point, we interrogate the rise of management rationalities in development aid organizations as a dialectical response to the donor country’s domestic and development’s internal politics. Based on an extensive organizational ethnography of the UK’s Department for International Development (DFID), we note the rise of three management rationalities between 2007—2016: results-based management, evidence-based programming and adaptive management. We begin by reconceptualizing DFID as a ‘hybrid’ organization that is animated by two contradictory institutional logics: first, a public management logic—given its organizational status as a UK government department—which requires navigating domestic politics as well as delivering on its administrative objectives as a public organization. Second, development’s epistemic logic, as DFID is composed of distinct epistemic communities, with individual interests, strategies, and methodologies. We argue that the mobilization of management rationalities within DFID enables temporary zones of contestation and reconciliation between competing, and often contradictory, institutional logics. Development aid management, we conclude, serves a strategic purpose for the managerialists as it enables them to navigate domestic politics by demonstrating the value of what they are doing to reconcile the competing institutional logics. For reformers, development management enables a temporary ‘landing’ space of sorts to navigate development’s deeper divisions and politics. For heretics, we outline the importance of engaging with intra politics of both the donor country as well as the organization, as against inter-organizational or international politics that they have hitherto focused on.

## **Panel 10: Governance and Management of Emergency Services: Issues, Challenges and Opportunities**

### **Chair(s):**

Melissa Hawkins

**Abstract:** Emergency services, globally, are dealing with complex societal pressures of ageing population, demographic changes, other socioeconomic factors, while coping up with massive cuts in operational budgets and increasing demand for their services and are not immune to New Public Management (NPM) styled reforms. The pursuit of efficiency and ‘effectiveness’ is being sought through better job designs, contracting out of back-room function, greater inter-agency collaboration, new technologies to stay on top of their emergency preparedness roles. However such initiatives are also bringing new challenges. The growing hybridity of inter-agency work, and the interplay between professional and managerial aspects of work has made this analysis more meaningful and timelier.

The panel will be a combination of standard academic paper presentation and practitioner submissions. Submissions on the following topics will be welcome in addition to other themes including:

- System re-design and associated challenges;
- Flexible working and workplaces;
- Organisational resilience and service delivery;
- Challenges of multi-agency cooperation and interoperability;
- Designing effective strategies to engage with service users;
- Organisational culture and culture change;
- Improving wellbeing and resilience of emergency service workers .

Addressing these issues requires a holistic approach involving stakeholders, emergency service providers, technology experts, government agencies, academics, scholars and the public to successfully navigate the hybridization of emergency services.

Emerald and the International Journal of Emergency Services will sponsor the best paper award: <https://www.emerald.com/insight/publication/issn/2047-0894/vol/9/iss/1>

### **Paper Abstract 1: Understanding Performance Management in NHS Ambulance Services: Using an interdisciplinary approach to explore management control and rationality**

Geoffrey Heath, Paresh Wankhade  
Keele University, Edge Hill University

Operational design and delivery of ambulance services both in the UK and internationally has been dominated by response time standards which are important in themselves, but do not convey a complete picture of ambulance service achievement and its value as a measure of the impact and quality of care is questionable (Heath et al., 2018; Turner et al., 2006; Bevan and Hood, 2006). In the UK, categorisation of 999 emergency ambulance calls for sending an ambulance response shows significant variations. In England, the Ambulance Response Programme (ARP) set out four performance standards in 2017 namely, the Life threatening calls, Emergency Calls, Urgent Calls and Less Urgent Calls. In Wales, there are three categories of calls since 2015: Red (Immediately Life-threatening), Amber (Serious but not Life-threatening) and Green (Neither serious or Life-threatening). In Scotland, the new model introduced in 2016 categorises the 999 calls into four categories: Purple, Red, Amber and Yellow with time standards for each of these category of calls. In England and Scotland, response time targets have been set for all 4 category of call categories. In Wales however, targets for the categories outside of Life threatening Calls (Amber) have been replaced by the measurement of response times, outcomes, care quality and patient experience.

The paper makes a case for reviewing Category 3 & 4 calls (not urgent or life threatening) in England, learning from the Welsh example as an opportunity to mitigate some of the pitfalls of stringent performance targets identified in the literature. Important policy and service delivery implications follow from this analysis, providing avenues for further research.

### **Paper Abstract 2: Professionalism in the English Fire and Rescue Services**

Pete Murphy, Katarzyna Lakoma, Peter Eckersley  
Nottingham Business School, Nottingham Trent University.

There has been a growing interest among academics, practitioners and more recently the UK government about the need or desirability of greater professionalism within the Fire and Rescue Services. This increasing interest is also manifest in the other two 'blue light' emergency services namely the police and ambulance services with whom firefighters closely collaborate in their mutual quest to keep the public safe (Wankhade and Murphy (2023). The two most recent fire service reform policy papers issued by the government both centred around three main themes one of which is increasing professionalism or "helping fire professionals to best serve their communities (Home Office 2021, 2022) and the title of the governments' response to the latter consultation was "A profession we can all be proud of – reforming our Fire & Rescue Service" (Home Office 2023).

This paper looks at the current state of professionalism in Fire and Rescue Services, how it has changed since the 2017 Policing and Crime Act and the 2018 National Framework (Home Office 2018) and critically looks at the proposed nature and form of professionalism that the government envisages for the service in the future. In particular, it draws on recent research that investigated the role that professionalism plays in the accountability and governance of the Fire and Rescue Services and how it is viewed by both senior management and front-line firefighters (Lakoma 2023, 2024). It concludes with some recommendations on policy and practise for the government and the sector if they want to embed the most appropriate form of greater professionalism within the service.

### **Paper Abstract 3: Exploring performance management in the English Ambulance Service through a Complexity Theory Perspective**

**Paresh Wankhade, Stephen Kelly, Daniel Chicks**  
Edge Hill University, University of Salford, University of Birmingham

Notwithstanding a well-developed body of work highlighting the principles of a good Performance management Systems (PMS), evidence base on the actual practice of performance measurement and whether it has achieved the stated objectives is relatively weak. Additionally, a growing body of work has highlighted the impact of organisational and environmental complexity in the extant performance management literature.

The role of a pervasive target culture in the English ambulance services has been widely debated. Instances of selective prioritisation, gaming, manipulation, and the use of PMS for accountability rather than from service improvement or benefit to the patient have been highlighted (Wankhade, 2011). Previous attempts to reform the PMS

have been rooted in the cultural and historical evolution of the ambulance services without much consideration to the social and technical dimensions of the complexity arising due to external influences and through interaction of PMS with several internal organisational elements (Wankhade et al., 2018). A Complexity Adaptive Systems (CAS) perspective suggests that organisations are systems that include both order and disorder. Such an approach allows for a rounded understanding of how performance improvement in the English ambulance services can be achieved, particularly when the relationships between causes and effects are difficult to unravel and traditional approaches to performance management are either unsuitable or insufficient.

In addressing our aim, we rely on empirical evidence gathered from a qualitative study involving over thirty interviews in a large ambulance service in England. Based upon our findings, we propose a conceptual model showing the flow and links between CAS characteristics how these generate organisationally-focused sources of complexity and the impact that these have on performance control measures. The underlying complexity reveals the potential for different measures to be adopted and such a synthesis is distinctive and offers original contribution to the field.

#### **Paper Abstract 4: Equality, Diversity, Inclusion and organisational cultural in Fire and Rescue Services.**

Peter Murphy, Kirsten Greenhalgh  
Nottingham Business School, Loughborough Business School Loughborough University

A series of recent reports (Lucas 2015, Winsor 2021, Afzal 2022, Morris 2023) have once again highlighted concerns over the workplace culture in Fire and Rescue Services amid reports of claims of bullying, harassment, misogyny, and discrimination (HMICFRS 2022). It found that bullying, harassment, and discrimination are, to varying degrees, still problems in all services. In the 17 services that HMICFRS issued 'requires improvement' or 'inadequate' grades they found that reports of bullying, harassment and discrimination were higher. The Home Affairs Committee having collected evidence is about to publish its findings following its Inquiry into the cultural failings in Fire and Rescue Services (Home Affairs Select Committee 2024). Clarke (2018 p 165) demonstrated that "Fire and Rescue Services came late to improving equality policy and practice in service delivery and employment and to developing risk management processes that allowed them to differentiate between the population categories defined by equality and anti-discrimination legislation". After discussing the antecedents and legacy of the Macpherson report he focussed first on the period of legislation and policy development between 2000 and 2010 which produced the Equality Standard for Local Government, the Fire and Rescue Services Equality framework and ultimately the Equality Act 2020. He then discusses their subsequent replacement with the lighter touch regulatory regime of the Coalition Government when a dedicated fire service equality framework was subject to peer review and assessment rather than external validation. He generally found a deteriorating commitment to driving equality, diversity and inclusion from the government and fragmented support and improvement across Fire and rescue Services. His work immediately predated the commissioning of the Lucas report (2015) into the 'toxic' organisational culture at Essex FRS and the re-establishment of an external inspectorate in HMICFRS. This paper will review the antecedents before critically appraising the current state of equality, diversity, inclusion and the organisational cultural in the Fire and Rescue Services.

#### **Panel 11: Politics, digitalisation and artificial intelligence**

**Chair(s):**  
Russ Glennon

#### **Paper abstract 1: Public Attitudes of AI: How Regulations Influence Trust and Acceptance**

**Mr Sen Lin, Mr Metin Uzun**  
University Of Exeter

Artificial Intelligence (AI) regulation is primarily aimed at ensuring the safety of AI, developing AI systems to minimise potential harm to individuals and society and protecting privacy and data security. Accordingly, the leading in AI development (China, the UK and the US) and supranational organisations (EU) are concentrating on the formulation of governance frameworks that can steer the "responsible" development and deployment of AI. However, current AI regulations and related research have primarily focused on macro-level policy and ethical dimensions, with few of them initiative exploring the relationship between AI regulation and the public from a micro-level behavioural

perspective. This gap has resulted in some policies failing to strike an appropriate balance between technology development and public opinion. Therefore, this study aims to explore the public expectations regarding government regulation of AI and addresses the crucial aspect of public acceptance and trust that is currently absent in most AI regulation policy designs. Specifically, this study will conduct a survey experiment through online platform to collect representative samples from Mainland China to explore: (1) whether the existence of AI regulation promotes public trust and acceptance of AI; (2) how three characteristics of AI regulation, namely regulatory policy approach (innovation friendly regulation/ strict government regulation), public participation (involving the public opinions/not involving the public opinions), and regulatory domain (government regulation/ industry regulation/ hybrid regulation) affect the public's trust and acceptance levels, including both the main and interactive effects. The results will provide insights into public attitudes towards AI development from a micro-level perspective, and explore the critical drivers of these attitudes from the perspective of AI regulation. In addition, the findings will provide insights for governments in designing AI regulations that are aligned with public preferences, hence enhancing the responsible and ethical development of AI for future societies.

### **Paper abstract 2: Artificial Intelligence and think tanks: impact on policy analysis**

**Dr Hartwig Pautz, Professor Arno van der Zwet, Dr Pedro Munoz-Ramirez, Dr Scott Leatham**

University of the West of Scotland

This paper examines the implications of the artificial intelligence (AI) revolution on policy analysis. Specifically, the paper presents data from survey and interview analysis with respect to if and how think tanks in the United Kingdom may have been affected by the emergence of generative AI, for example in the form of Bard or Chat GPT.

This original research will shed light on whether the new capabilities that generative AI offers have had, to date, any impact on the breadth and depth by which think tanks understand policy challenges and develop 'solutions' to them. It also presents insights into organisational change that think tanks may have undergone because of the emergence of generative AI and into how think tank leaders may or may not have embraced AI as a new tool to produce high-quality research for the specific type of policy analysis which think tanks undertake. Overall, the research underpinning the paper reveals if and how think tanks' internal 'learning culture' has been affected and which positive and negative consequences think tank staff expect to result from the AI revolution.

The paper concludes, on the basis of primary data and the growing body of literature, with a discussion on the extent to which AI can support or hinder the establishment and continuation of productive learning cultures within and across think tanks and, perhaps more generally, organisations that are responsible for influencing, deciding, managing and implementing policy.

### **Paper abstract 3: Digital transformation and corruption: a socio-materiality perspective**

**Prof Adina Dudau, Aristito Febrianto, Stelios Zyglidopoulos**

University of Glasgow, Carlton University

This project explores the extent to which digital transformation shapes (un)ethical behaviour of individuals working in the public sector, as well as the extent to which the latter shape digital affordances. In doing so, we unravel the intricate relationship between digital transformation and corruption from a socio-materiality perspective. In an era marked by rapid technological advancement and the increasing reliance on digital tools and platforms across various sectors, it becomes important to understand the dynamic interplay between technology, human actors, and the socio-cultural context in which they operate, offering a nuanced perspective on corruption in the digital age.

Through an analysis of in-depth interviews with civil servants and public service users (small and medium enterprise owners as well as individuals as members of the public) in Indonesia, this research examines how digital tools can either mitigate or exacerbate corruption. It investigates how technology can facilitate transparency and accountability through mechanisms such as e-government initiatives, but also how it can be exploited for corrupt activities, such as cybercrime, digital surveillance, and data manipulation. Additionally, the study investigates the social dimensions of corruption, including power dynamics, cultural norms, and individual motivations, within the digital context.

The findings of this research highlight the need for a holistic understanding of the socio-materiality of digital transformation and corruption. It underscores the importance of considering the ethical and socio-cultural dimensions of technology implementation to curb corruption effectively. The implications of this study extend to policymakers, organizations, and researchers seeking to combat corruption in the digital age. By recognizing the

intertwined nature of technology and society, we can develop more effective strategies to harness the potential of digital transformation while mitigating its adverse effects on corrupt practices.

#### **Paper abstract 4: Towards Relational Digital Government: moving beyond current approaches to information and measurement**

**Professor Rob Wilson**

Northumbria University

In the face of complex societal needs, there is a widespread appreciation that the information and communications systems that support service delivery should be joined up. It has become clear, however, that enterprise integration or ‘Integrationist’ approaches have failed to address this need because they are unable to cope with dynamic complexity to merely create more silos (McLoughlin et al 2013; Jamieson et al 2020, Martin et al 2024). At the same time, Internet-based or ‘Universalist’, approaches are, on the whole, regarded as unsafe and ungovernable in these often highly sensitive contexts. Our work indicates a third dimension or architectural approach to the creation, operation and governance of collaborative sociotechnical information infrastructures for Digital Government.

This “Relational” approach supports mixed economies of provision in which public, private and third sector agencies coordinate to meet multiple and evolving objectives and interests in the delivery of services for people and communities. This paper will report on the adoption of a neo-sociotechnical stance to examine the reasons for the failure of both the conventional “integrationist” and the alternative “universalist” system design paradigms to address the challenges of government and public services. It develops and explores both theoretical foundations and the practical applications of an emerging third option which we term the “relational” approach to digital government. This requires a new way of thinking about and designing federal information infrastructure and the way this can support collaborative innovation and learning in multi-agency environments.

This paper reports on the adoption this ‘relational’ approach to the cultivation of federable infrastructure affords new opportunities for the governance of practice and information in tandem in the context of a programme seeking to work in relational ways with those with complex long term needs.

#### **Paper abstract 5: Generative AI in Public Service: Adoption, Policy, and Shadow Use in Local Government**

**Dr Stephen Jeffares**

University of Birmingham

In previous years there was much speculation about chatbots, how they would potentially transform public service and pave the way to virtual public servants, replacing human agents (Van Bellegham 2017). Although frontline work has been significantly reorganised since then, the first generation chatbots did not live up to fears or expectations (Jeffares 2021). However, the launch of widely available Generative AI (hereon genAI) based on Large Language Models (ChatGPT, Gemini etc) has far greater capability and potentially available to both public servant and citizen. It is anticipated that genAI is widely expected to transform the public encounter, where public servants and citizens transact matters of public purpose (Lindgren et al 2019, Goodsell 1979). Use cases abound, it is suggested that genAI could be used to help manage digital enquires for citizens, interpret and route citizen requests, retrieve case notes, synthesise complex data, draft emails and reports amongst others (HM Government 2024). But are public servants using it yet? Whilst some early studies suggest any initial experimentation with these tools has not been sustained (Fletcher and Nielsen 2024), others suggest a fifth of public servants are already using genAI to support their work (Bright et al 2024). But to what extent is this use in line with organisational guidelines and policies? Are public agencies developing new policy for this new technology or do they see it as covered under existing frameworks? Are public servants using genAI openly or are they using it in the shadows, and what consequences might this have for trust and empathy? This paper synthesises recent but disparate FOI requests to English and Welsh local authorities to create a dataset to reveal to what extent local governments are enabling, governing, restricting or denying employees from using this genAI in their work. So far little has been written in this area around the formal and informal use, and misuse, of genAI by public servants (Frisch-Aviram 2024, Bright et al 2024). In response, this paper builds on a framework from Haag and Eckhardt (2017) to report a somewhat varied landscape. Whereas some local authorities have purchased genAI, (Target IT) and are encouraging innovative use. Others have accepted its use will be as ubiquitous as a Google search and encourage responsible use on personal devices (Personal IT). In contrast a

good proportion of local authorities maintain, for now, a complete ban on genAI. Some also reporting that no one in the organisation is using generative AI whatsoever. This stance creates ideal conditions for under the radar use and work arounds (Shadow IT). The paper concludes by setting out some important questions for future work and suggestions of research design. Although use maybe sporadic for now, genAI is being built into the enterprise software that public servants use in their work (Google docs, Excel, PowerPoint etc). It is vital we start to develop frameworks to understand how AI mediated communication will potentially reshape what we understand as the public encounter.

## **Panel 12: Policy and Practice**

### **Chair(s):**

Clare Fitzgerald

### **Paper abstract 1: Assessing the Policy Responsiveness Towards Public Opinion in the Case of Social Policy in Indonesia During The COVID-19 Pandemic Crisis**

#### **Mr Denny Kurniawan**

University of Southampton

As democratic country, Indonesia is expected to align its government policies with public satisfaction. Moreover, the global health crisis of the coronavirus (COVID-19) has compelled governments to demonstrate greater responsive, prompt action, collaboration and transparency. In response to the COVID-19 pandemic, the government of Indonesia implemented significant changes to its social policy and allocated a considerable amount of money to social policy programs. The government legislated the social policy to respond public needs and to protect Indonesians from the risk of poverty due to limited mobility and the severe economic recession caused by the pandemic. Despite its noble objectives, the social policy in Indonesia encountered some problems and challenges in its implementation. For example, the implementation of the social policy was the subject to debate on social media, with some expressing support for the policy and others expressing opposition.

This study focuses on the responsiveness of social policy in Indonesia to public opinion during the COVID-19 pandemic. It compares two cases: the centrally managed social aid policy (Bansos) and the locally managed village fund policy (Dana Desa). The use of social media analytics is currently widespread among research institutions and a few government bodies, with the objective of evaluating public opinion and public interest towards public policy. Sentiment analysis shows a predominantly positive response to Dana Desa, while Bansos elicited a substantial amount of negative sentiment alongside positive reactions. The result of social network analysis has indicated that Bansos has greater number of clusters of users in the metropolitan cities while Dana Desa to have single cluster mainly in the suburban cities. This study calls for a critical examination of policy formulation, communication, and execution, particularly during crises, for Indonesia as developing country, with aim of improving responsiveness and meet public expectations.

### **Paper abstract 2: The health policy process model of epidemics in South Korea: from 2015 MERS epidemic to 2020 COVID-19 pandemic responses**

#### **Dr Jiyoung Chang**

University of Liverpool

Epidemic/pandemic management entails health policy participants' power and politics in the decision-making and implementation in the health policy process. In health policy, the theories of health policy process models have been developed, yet very few of the wider public policy process models have been applied to the health policy process (Powell & Mannion, 2023) and the model in epidemic management has not been developed.

This study explored the health policy process model of epidemics in South Korea in the period from 2015 MERS epidemic to 2020 COVID-19 pandemic. The stages model in the health policy process (Hill, 1997; Hill & Varone, 2021; Walt, 1994), and network governance model with command-and-control (Moynihan, 2006) and bottom-up approaches (Waugh & Strieb, 2006) in crisis context were applied to analyse.

Using qualitative research methods, with 43 in-depth interviews and 35 documents, this study explored key health policy participants and their different powers and resources, and it drew out the health policy process model of epidemics (from the 2015 MERS response, through the post-MERS period, to the COVID-19 response) with the stages

model in combination with different governance structures. The empirical findings show that the health policy process consists of two policy cycles with two epidemics (MERS and COVID-19), where different stages show different governance structures: command-and-control, network governance, and a mixed structure. In the health policy process, changing roles of policy participants were found in the organisational response to epidemics: although governments and medical professionals are at the core of the health decision-making process, NGOs/citizen groups, the media, and local government are growing, and considered important in the policy community. This study provides a theoretical contribution to the health policy process model but also a practical implication but also a practical implication of who are the key stakeholders during the epidemic management process.

### **Paper abstract 3: The UK Higher Education Innovation Governance Management Models: Policy and Practice Conundrums**

**Dr Michael Joseph, Mr Sachin Sampath**

Brunel University London

The UK government has recognized the importance of supporting Higher Education Institutions (HEIs) to optimise innovation. The Higher Education Innovation Fund (HEIF), managed by the UK Research and Innovation (UKRI), is a key source of funding for English universities to support their knowledge exchange strategies (UKRI, 2022). Various models of engagement between HEIs and businesses have been developed and implemented in the UK (Ulrichsen, 2021). The National Centre for Universities and Business (NCUB) has highlighted the role of Research England as an ecosystem-builder, investing £60 million to support the commercialization of university research (NCUB, 2022). This investment aims to foster collaborations between universities and businesses, driving innovation and economic growth. Several universities have implemented successful initiatives tailored to their regional contexts and stakeholder needs. HEIF funding has enabled universities to invest in infrastructure, staff, and initiatives that facilitate collaborations with businesses and drive innovation.

Our study will analyse the following questions: What are the factors that influence certain HEIs to perform better than others when it comes to innovation governance and management? To what extent do different models of engagement with external stakeholders contribute to fulfil the national innovation strategies? Are these models of innovation influenced by certain theoretical models of governance?

This paper aims to analyse different innovation governance and management models in the UK universities with the purpose to strengthen knowledge building process of innovation governance models of public sector HEIs. We will study selected HEI initiatives in depth with specific reference to the UK Government policies for innovation governance and management and how they are operationalised in selected universities. The paper will conclude with recommendations to strengthen policy development in innovation governance and management in the higher education institutions.

### **Paper abstract 4: What factors help or hinder collaborative policymaking? A qualitative systematic review of academic and grey literatures**

**Professor Paul Cairney, Miss Claire Toomey**

University Of Stirling

Complex policy problems require high levels of meaningful collaboration, by actors spread across multiple organisations and policy sectors. However, complex policymaking systems are not always conducive to such collaboration. How do policy actors respond, and what can we learn from their approaches and experiences? We conduct a qualitative systematic review to seek lessons, from academic and grey literatures, on what constrains and facilitates collaborative policymaking. Policy theories help to conceptualise the idea of collaborative policymaking and compare case studies. Grey literature research adds new knowledge and perspectives from governmental and non-governmental organisations, in a field where lessons and recommendations often emerge more from practice than academia. Our comparison of their insights and advice helps to shift from a focus on a vague but essential aim to what people think policymakers should do.

## **Panel 13: Democratising Public Administration 3: Action research and co-production: transforming governance and inequalities**

### **Chair(s):**

Koen Bartels

### **Paper abstract 1: Participatory Democracy and Participatory Research**

**Hans Asenbaum, Sonia Bussu, Oliver Escobar, Clodagh Harris**

University of Canberra, University of Birmingham, University of Edinburgh, University College Cork

While normative theories of participatory democracy and practical experiences of participatory research share a common democratic commitment, the two fields have emerged and to date exist in isolation from each other. This article bridges this divide and asks what participatory democracy and participatory research can learn from one another. It argues that participatory democracy can learn how to realize its own democratic ideals within its research practice and participatory research can deepen its normative commitment by connecting its practices to a bigger participatory vision. The article illustrates this by engaging with three examples in which participatory democracy researchers conduct participatory research projects. It finally reflects critically on how the shared participatory commitments of both fields can be realized within the neoliberal university embedded in competitive market economies.

### **Paper abstract: Action-oriented research as an approach to research relevance: lessons from a learning partnership**

**Dr Melissa Hawkins, Dr Max French, Prof Hannah Hesselgreaves, Amy Wheatman, Professor Rob Wilson**

Northumbria University

Policymakers and researchers continue to struggle with how to connect research evidence with policy and practice. Academics face criticism that the academic research process is too lengthy, detached and struggles to keep pace with policy and practice. Meanwhile policymakers stand accused of failing to take a robust, evidence-based approach to the policy process.

In striving for relevance, PA scholars have more recently incorporated an 'action-oriented research' (French and Hawkins 2020) approach, in which policy and research needs are blended and balanced, and the detached objectivity of the researcher is jettisoned in favour of engaged scholarship. Once consigned to the fringes of academic public administration scholarship, AOR methods like action research, action learning and participatory methodologies are increasingly employed. Scholars now frequently undertake action-oriented roles like policy fellowships, learning partnerships and developmental evaluations, which shorten the pathways from research to impact.

We explore how undertaking one such action-oriented approach, a learning partnership model (French et al., 2023; Hesselgreaves, 2021) can help bridge the evidence-policy gap, and ask whether an action-oriented public administration approach might help clear the 'double hurdles' of practical responsiveness and academic credibility (Pettigrew, 1997; Pettigrew, 2005)

Drawing on Badham and Sense's (2006) model we theorise how academics can 'spin out' of the AOR process into either a practice-oriented approach (with little benefit to the pursuit of knowledge) or a research-oriented approach (resulting in a loss of relevance for practitioners), or 'spiral upwards' to benefits both practice and research.

We illustrate our transition from 'spinning out' to 'spiralling up' through vignettes drawn from five case studies from a long-term learning partnership. We locate barriers to 'spiralling upwards' including ambiguity over the benefits of academic research and sustaining momentum and reflect on enablers such as a relational rather than extractive research approach, and identifying mutual learning as a shared focus.

### **Paper abstract 3: Research Better Together: Supporting voluntary community sector and academic participatory social care research partnerships**

**Caroline Jackson, Clare Harewood, Harriet Clarke**

University of Birmingham, BVSC, University of Birmingham



Public and community involvement in publicly funded health and social care research is a common occurrence in the UK. This helps ensure research focuses on the issues that matter, includes different perspectives and helps create services which benefit everyone. Voluntary, Community, Faith and Social Enterprise (VCFSEs) organisations have established relations with communities and can act as enablers of meaningful involvement of the communities they support. However, traditional research systems, bureaucracy and power dynamics between stakeholders do not always mean voices are heard equally and the potential benefits of collaborative research practices are not always realised. The Research Better Together project (RBT) is a pilot led by University of Birmingham in partnership with Birmingham Voluntary Services Council. RBT is a model that links social care VCFSEs and researchers in equitable partnership. It was developed to address the inequity often found in such research relationships. Rather than academics seeking VCFSEs to study areas of interest to the academy, it aimed to shift the power to VCFSEs to lead on research ideas that would be helpful to them and the communities they serve. This paper highlights the reasons RBT is needed and explains the model, in particular focussing on RBT practical activities - providing networking and match-making to facilitate academic/VCFSEs partnerships, training to encourage participatory creative methodologies, research support and mentoring for 5 new partnerships, and access to funding for co-production with people who VCFSEs support. Crucially, the paper also reflects upon the extent of the model's success in developing equitable partnerships and considers issues of power and trust within participatory spaces. Having completed the pilot, project leads are now seeking to identify funding to enable development and formal evaluation of the approach.

#### **Paper abstract 4: Transforming place-based health inequalities: Co-producing a community of practice for social prescribing in Birmingham**

**Koen Bartels, Elizabeth Woodcock, Jessica Pykett**

University of Birmingham

Place-based working has become an essential strategy of health care policy, but has historically struggled to translate ambitious targets into meaningful relationships and sustainable change of health inequalities. Social prescribing is currently a popular approach to address the wider determinants of health by referring people to community-based activities. Moreover, it is seen as a pathway to transform health care systems from a medical model of individual health care delivery to a social model of co-produced community wellbeing. Our aim is to examine whether and how an asset-based approach to social prescribing can co-produce more sustainable and less unequal health outcomes. Asset-based working is driven by the strengths of communities to enhance access to what they need for wellbeing and address structural issues that limit the extent to which it is effective and co-produced. We conducted action research in East-Birmingham by co-producing a community of practice around a local walking group. We built reciprocal relationships between previously disconnected community members, VCFSE workers, and local authority officials around their shared ambitions to enhance local green space and overcome the fragmentation, competition, and distrust fostered by the local governance ecosystem. We uncovered the need for ongoing coordination to embed these changes in relationships and governance systems. We conclude that place-based health inequalities could be transformed by building social prescribing ecosystems driven by the assets and needs of communities.

#### **Paper abstract 5: Exploration and Co-creation of Community Infrastructures for mutual engagement between HEIs and local areas - Towards University as a Platform**

**Rob Wilson, Tamara Mulherin, Sebastian Prost, Andrew Dow, David Clark**

Northumbria University

This paper reflects on our experiences as university researchers, 'collaborating' with local authorities and community organisations in North-East England to build a community research partnerships with the aim to understand what a University can do beyond rather trite ideas as anchor institution. The project aim was to explore universities as a potential space and provider of tools/assets for co-production based on the notion of a 'University as a Platform' (UaaP). This was explored through a range of engagements to understand the sorts of capabilities and infrastructures necessary for co-productive research with communities, improve accessibility of university knowledge and resources working in small scale endeavours, navigating differential power relations, and seeking to establish equitable, durable institutional relations beyond dependency on individuals' efforts and precarious

structures. The opportunity in the North-East region and beyond is to open up a stance to a relational approach to the challenges of inequality, health, education, sustainability, etc. Drawing from complexity theory we outline a competency/capability based approach to building sustainable and scalable change as an alternative to detached critical scholarship, extractive short term impact and reinforcing transactional frames.

## **Panel 14: Governance in challenging environments**

### **Chair(s):**

Michael Roy

### **Paper abstract 1: Museums in a context of austerity: Mixing commercial imperatives and professional values**

#### **Dr Bethany Rex, Dr Peter Eckersley**

University of Warwick, Nottingham Trent University

Local museum services in the UK, particularly in England, have experienced substantial cuts in funding since 2010 (Rex and Campbell, 2021). Councils have adopted various approaches to try to cope with fiscal constraint by generating more revenue in order to plug funding gaps. These include renting out museum buildings for private events and charging entrance fees to visitors. Such initiatives may conflict with many of the professional values and ethics that underpin museum and cultural services.

Drawing on interviews in six English local authority areas, we document the types of activity that museum services are implementing to generate income, explore how professional ethics influence these choices, and discuss what these changes tell us about how museum services are changing in response to financial pressures. In particular, we examine how staff negotiate conflicts between commercial drivers and professional values, focusing especially on their judgement of what constitutes appropriate income-generating activity and how their potential agency to innovate is constrained by both professional principles and the overarching fiscal context. At the same time, we suggest that the lack of a clear 'rule book' that sets out what is and what is not appropriate can also generate substantial emotional labour, as staff seek to navigate and decide for themselves whether to undertake a particular initiative.

### **Paper abstract 2: Local civic engagement in a polycrisis environment: The role of trust, managerial quality, ethnicity and education**

#### **Dr Anna Uster, Prof Eran Vigoda Gadot**

Max Stern Yezreel Valley College, University of Haifa

In an era defined by global discussions on political change and democratic values, comprehending the dynamics of civic engagement in poly-crisis contexts is imperative. This study explores the links between trust in public institutions, the quality of public administration, ethnicity, education, and local civic engagement, particularly among minority groups. We propose a model based on the fairness theory and majority-minority power relations that highlights direct and indirect relationships between these factors, moderated by ethnicity and education. Utilizing survey data from Israel collected over three years, we find that the managerial qualities of public bureaucracy at the central government significantly impact democratic engagement at the local level. Additionally, our research reveals that community factors moderate these effects, we demonstrate that the minority Arab population has stronger positive perceptions about and trust in public institutions than the majority Jewish population. Trust plays a more critical role in civic engagement among individuals with less education.

By uncovering these dynamics, this study enhances our understanding of civic engagement in diverse communities during challenging poly-crisis situations.

### **Paper abstract 3: Austerity in Georgia and its impact on the public sector**

**Ms Gvantsa Dzidziguri**

Grigol Robakidze University

The paper will discuss the context of Austerity in Georgia and its impact on the public sector. Since the early 2000s, Georgia has undergone significant economic reforms aimed at liberalizing the economy and improving fiscal discipline. However, these measures have also led to periods of austerity, affecting public services and social welfare. A long period of fiscal restraint aimed at maintaining economic stability and meeting international financial obligations has led to various challenges in the public sector. Civil servants often have low salaries that do not match the cost of living, leading to economic hardship and reduced job satisfaction. The overall quality and efficiency of public services declines as overburdened and under-resourced civil servants struggle to meet the demands of the population. Reduced budgets can lead to limited benefits such as health insurance, pensions and other welfare programs, affecting the financial security of public employees. Inefficiency and a decrease in service quality can lead to a loss of public trust in state institutions and civil servants. Addressing these challenges requires a comprehensive approach that includes strategic investment in key sectors, enhancing workforce support, optimizing resource allocation, fostering innovation and improving governance and transparency. By implementing these strategies, Georgia can mitigate the negative effects of continued austerity and create a more resilient and efficient public sector that can meet the needs of its population.

### **Paper abstract 4: Crisis Decision Making in the Power-Sharing Society: theory and practice**

**Prof Karl O'connor, Prof Ann Marie Gray**

Ulster University

Understanding how bureaucracies communicate information in a crisis is theoretically and empirically of great importance. Identifying administrative structures that work well in a crisis and identifying concrete factors that drive successful bureaucratic responses is integral to understanding crisis management. This paper studies information sharing and decision-making in a crisis, with a particular focus on the power-sharing society. We draw on information collected by the authors and by the Covid Inquiry legal team in preparation for the public inquiry in Northern Ireland to investigate four relevant hypotheses developed by 't Hart et al. (1993). Two time periods are identified: high and low time pressure. The results demonstrate the conditions under which politicians and civil servants will take control and the associated consequences. Crises and the framing of crises have become a more prominent feature of modern public administration. Events that previously may have been perceived in the domain of accidental cause (Stone, 1989) can now often be constructed as amenable to human intervention. While in the past a pandemic or natural disaster may have been seen as an 'Act of God' outwith our control, today the same events are often viewed through a prism that seeks to apportion responsibility or blame for either the crisis arising in the first place or the political and administrative response to the crisis. In a crisis the norms and structures of bureaucratic organisation and communication are challenged profoundly. (Blau and Scott 1963) The purpose of this article is therefore to answer the following question: How does information flow within a bureaucracy and how are decisions made in crisis situations within coerced coalition governments?

### **Paper abstract 5: Blame shifting revisited: How perceptions of culpability and institutional context shape citizens' evaluations of blame games in public service delivery.**

**Mr Oscar Nowlan**

London School of Economics and Political Science

When things go wrong in government, political incumbents resort to communicative and explanatory tactics, known as presentational strategies, to influence public opinion, manage their reputations, and avoid blame. Two common presentational strategies are blame claiming (accepting responsibility for blameworthy outcomes) and blame shifting (denying responsibility by blaming others). Previous studies indicate that blame claiming is generally more effective than blame shifting for maintaining public support during policy controversies or crises, and that officials who try to shift blame risk incurring greater reputational losses than gains.

This paper re-examines blame shifting as a tactic, proposing that its impact depends on the context in which it is deployed and how responsibility is allocated through different organisational arrangements in government and

public services. Attributions of blame and responsibility include a consideration of causality, and when public service delivery has been delegated or contracted-out to another agent, people can perceive those agents to have greater causal responsibility for service outcomes. We therefore examine contexts where public service delivery is delegated to other agents, hypothesising that officials can more convincingly blame these agents for service failures if they have delegated significant responsibility to them, compared to limited or no delegation.

We conduct a survey experiment using a fictionalised example of service failure in UK local government waste collection, manipulating the presentational strategy (blame shift or blame claim) offered in response by elected officials and the level of service delegation (high or low). This allows us to estimate the causal effects of these strategies on approval rates across different delegation levels. Initial findings from a pilot experiment reveal significant interaction effects between blame shifting and high delegation, suggesting that higher levels of delegation do moderate the effects of blame shifting on approval rates. Complete findings from the full experiment will be presented in the conference paper.

## **Panel 15: Perspectives on governance**

### **Chair(s):**

Katarzyna Lakoma

### **Paper abstract 1: Rethinking accountability: The problem of design mismatch and its policy mix solutions**

#### **Dr Yifei Yan**

University Of Southampton

The need to strengthen accountability in the public sector is hardly questioned. However, there is little to show for the efforts, commitments and investments in this regard. In accounting for such a discrepant picture, the promise and pitfalls of individual accountability measures has been scrutinised quite in depth. Still, a comprehensive and synthesised answer is yet to emerge as for why accountability can fault from a system perspective and, more importantly, how the accountability system can be made to work. This article aims to address these two questions through reflections and illustrations from the education policy sector, a sector for which the accountability issue has received inadequate focus in the public administration literature despite been problematised for long in the educational studies literature. It argues that not all accountability is the same. That is, there are different purposes or ends of accountability. Considering this, it is unrealistic or even counterproductive to expect a single accountability measure (or “stone”) to be able to hit all ends (or “birds”). The solution of such design mismatch between means and ends, so far a quite overlooked aspect in accountability research, accordingly necessitates careful policy design that distinguishes between primary and secondary, as well as substantive and procedural, policy tools.

### **Paper abstract 2: Respecting the subject in wellbeing public policy: beyond the social planner perspective**

#### **Dr Mark Fabian, Professor Anna Alexandrova, Professor Diane Coyle, Dr Matthew Agarwala, Dr Marco Felici**

University Of Warwick, University of Cambridge, University of Cambridge, University of Cambridge, European Central Bank

We compare and evaluate two competing paradigms in the ‘wellbeing public policy’ (WPP) space with the intention of promoting interdisciplinary dialogue. We argue that most WPP proposals adopt the same ‘social planner perspective’ (SPP) that undergirds conventional economic policy analysis. The SPP is broadly technocratic, emphasising scientific standards for what constitutes good policy and empowering ‘dispassionate’ experts. We argue that WPP could lend itself to a more transformative agenda, one that embraces the value-laden nature of ‘wellbeing’ as a concept. We call this the ‘citizen’s perspective’ (CP). It would see WPP relinquish the SPP’s stance of detached analysis by technical experts and instead give a greater role to participatory and deliberative modes of policymaking to define, analyse, and measure wellbeing and ultimately make policy decisions. We present a preliminary framework for analysing when the SPP or CP is more suitable to a particular area of WPP.

### **Paper 3: The Right to Use? The role of a human rights-based approach in the implementation of the Identity and Language (Northern Ireland) Act 2022.**

## **Ms Leah Rea**

Ulster University, Belfast, United Kingdom

In October 2022, the Identity and Language Bill concluded the legislative process in the UK Parliament. The legislation focuses on recognition and promotion of linguistic and cultural identity in Northern Ireland. This includes the obligation on public authorities to have "due regard" to national and cultural identity principles.

The passage of the 2022 Act was a significant moment in the legal history of Irish language recognition in Northern Ireland: the sitting British Government intervened in matters of devolved competence and enabled legislative protection of minority language rights, after prolonged non-intervention to address inaction to protect and promote Irish language rights across successive NI Executives. Equally, the legislation provides official status to the Irish language.

However, does the 2022 Act present a missed opportunity, insofar as its focus on "giving regard" to identity principles - a vague concept for application in public administration - and its limited engagement with the use of Irish in public services? The human rights aspect of language realisation is lacking in the legislation, raising the prospect of the incorporation of a human rights-based approach within future policymaking, and thus public services.

In February 2024, the NI devolved institutions were restored, following two years of absence. Since their return, questions have been asked about the implementation of the 2022 Act; provisions such as the establishment of an Irish Language Commissioner are yet to be progressed and an Irish Language Strategy is yet to be published.

This paper seeks to examine the role of a human rights-based approach within public services in the context of the "right to use" minority languages in Northern Ireland. It assesses the status and potential of the 2022 Act, and considers the potential incorporation of a human rights-based approach for minority languages in public services.

## **Paper abstract 4: An action-oriented framework for integrating Indigenous and Local Knowledge Systems (ILKS) in Public Policy-Making: Results of A Narrative Systematic Literature Review**

**Dr Abena Dadze-Arthur, Dr Karin Bottom, Dr Mary Mangai**

University of Birmingham, University of Birmingham, University of Pretoria

This study aims to investigate the incorporation of Indigenous and Local Knowledge Systems (ILKS) into public policy-making as a fundamental step towards decolonizing public policies. Guided by decolonial theory as its analytical framework, the study will delve into how local and indigenous knowledge(s) is/are associated with improved public management and governance that is more inclusive, sustainable, and provisional of valuable insights and practical solutions for contemporary policy challenges. The research questions focus on the identification of effective strategies for integrating ILKS into policy-making, understanding challenges hindering this integration, and assessing the impacts of such integration on achieving sustainable policy outcomes. Through Narrative Systematic Literature Review (NSLR) methodology (Williams et al. 2020), this research strives to develop an action-oriented conceptual framework to support actors within public policy and public administration by leveraging indigenous wisdom in policy governance. Anticipated contributions include theoretical advancements in comprehending the role of ILKS in decolonizing public policy, practical insights for policymakers on incorporating indigenous and local perspectives, and enhancing the discourse on sustainable public policy-making.

## **Paper abstract 5: Contested meanings and multiple roles of ethical expertise in policy making in times of polycrisis**

**Marija Antanaviciute, Jessica Pykett, Dr Inga Ulnicane**

University of Birmingham, University of Birmingham, University of Birmingham

While the role and nature of scientific expertise in policy making has been widely studied, ethical expertise has received much less attention. However, in times of polycrisis, containing multiple interconnected crises – pandemics, climate change, new technologies exacerbating inequalities, etc., decision makers and governments have to consider not only scientific and technical evidence but also ethical and societal aspects. To deepen our understanding of so far little studied topic of ethical expertise, this contribution draws on interdisciplinary literature review (e.g. political science, science and technology studies, and ethics), 17 expert interviews, document analysis, institutional mapping and a witness seminar to provide conceptual and empirical analysis of the role and nature of ethical expertise in policy making in the UK, in particular on issues such as Covid, AI in healthcare, and One Health.

This study is part of a 3-year ESRC funded international and interdisciplinary project on ethics and expertise in times of crisis in the UK, Germany and Australia.

Despite the existence of numerous ethical advice bodies, there is little consensus as to what constitutes ethical expertise in policy making. Multiple meanings of ethics in policy include professional standards, ethics approvals for research projects as well as values and norms underpinning policy making. Various understandings of ethics in policy making range from principles and big questions of justice, fairness and equality to processes, tools and guidelines. In practice, we observe blurring boundaries between ethical advice, on the one hand, and focus on scientific expertise, human rights or regulation, on the other. Moreover, experts and civil servants tend to make strategic choices when to call something ethical and when not. Additionally, the use of ethical expertise in policy making invites reflection on questions such as: if and how ethical expertise is compatible with expectations of impartial and evidence-based policy making.

## **Panel 16: Teaching Public administration**

### **Chair(s):**

Alasdair Blair

### **Paper abstract 1: Navigating between Internationalisation and Centralisation: Public Administration Education in Kazakhstan**

#### **Dr Saltanat Janenova, Dr Baurzhan Bokayev**

School for Policy Studies, University of Bristol, Bristol, United Kingdom, Maxwell School of Citizenship and Public Affairs, Syracuse University, Syracuse, United States

This paper aims to address a gap of knowledge about internationalisation in public administration education in authoritarian states by analysing case studies from Kazakhstan.

We argue that internationalisation of public administration education in non-democratic context is inseparable from politics and influence of the political regime. In Kazakhstan internationalisation has enabled the government to legitimize political regime and demonstrate to the international community its connectedness with global educational network.

Strategic international partners followed entrepreneurial market-based interests for reinforcing support of the government. Local faculty continue to experience limited academic freedom, self-censorship, and personal safety concerns.

This paper offers valuable insights on the implementation of international partnerships for faculty, researchers, and senior managers of the universities who work in closed contexts or collaborate with colleagues from non-democratic states.

### **Paper abstract 2: Ethics: the potential difference between Service Motivation versus Public Service Motivation from MBA and MPA student survey**

#### **Dr Masatoshi Minowa, Prof Karl O'connor**

Toyo University, Bunkyo City, Japan, Ulster University, Belfast, UK

Following the 2008 economic crisis, University Business Schools throughout the Western world committed to embedding ethics in their curricula. Subject benchmark statements were revised, ethical codes were established, and social science staff were integrated into business schools to match what was provided to social science students. In public administration, a debate has emerged on the necessity of the term 'public' in public service motivation (PSM), questioning whether service motivation is the same for those in private and public sectors.

Sixteen years post-crisis, we conduct a Q methodology survey of MBA and MPA graduate students at Ulster University's management-related graduate schools. We investigate whether differences exist in subjective perceptions between MBA students, who have studied ethical codes, and MPA students, who assume working primarily in the public sector, and what characteristics may emerge.

The survey explores ethical preferences along six dimensions: (i) Commitment to the Public Interest, (ii) Compassion, (iii) Self-Sacrifice, (iv) Economy and Efficiency, (v) Fairness, and (vi) Compliance. Conducted from June to July 2024, it targets graduates working in or potentially becoming executive leaders in public or private organizations.

This research provides insights into the impact of graduate education and reveals the thinking of potential future executives in both sectors. The significance lies in its potential to shed light on how educational backgrounds and career aspirations shape the ethical perspectives and motivations of future leaders. Comparing MBA and MPA students' subjective perceptions aims to uncover distinctions arising from their educational experiences and intended career paths. Findings could have implications for curriculum development, emphasizing the integration of ethics and public service values into graduate programmes.

### **Paper abstract 3: Why did you choose public administration? An experiment to explore student recruitment for MPA programs**

**Dr. Josephine Schafer, Dr. Bruce McDonald**

University of Nebraska Omaha, North Carolina State University

One challenge in graduate program management is student recruitment. The challenge is further complicated when recruiting for Master of Public Administration (MPA) programs given the declining trust in public organizations and the lack of competitive wages for public servants. In this study, we explore the recruitment of students for MPA programs using an experiment of 231 undergraduate students. In the experiment, we test how intrinsic reward messages compared to extrinsic reward messages influence student interest in attending a MPA program. We also consider how these messages differ across gender. Our findings show the recruitment material should be intrinsically grounded as a way to encourage interest. Furthermore, we find that direct exposure to MPA programs maximizes general interest in enrolling.

### **Panel 17: Local government**

**Chair(s):**

Ian Elliott

### **Paper abstract 1: Assessing the productiveness of scrutiny talk**

**Dr Dave Mckenna**

University Of Birmingham

A neglected, yet potentially significant, source of influence for parliamentary and local government scrutiny committees, is scrutiny talk - the interpersonal interaction that takes place between committee members and decision makers in committee meetings. Whilst scrutiny talk is a regular feature of parliamentary and local council governance in the UK, its productiveness has not been theorised or assessed in any systematic way. Scholarly focus has instead been placed on the formal reports and recommendations produced by scrutiny.

To fill this gap, this paper sets out a new framework that aims to provide a means of assessing the productiveness, and potential productiveness, of scrutiny talk. The framework draws on Tsoukas's (2009) work to understand how dialogue produces new knowledge in organisations and highlights three observable, underpinning elements of productive dialogue namely task engagement, relational engagement and cognitive engagement. Following a discussion of the context that scrutiny talk takes place in, use of the framework is illustrated using examples from Welsh parliamentary scrutiny committees.

Tsoukas, H., 2009. A dialogical approach to the creation of new knowledge in organizations. *Organization science*, 20(6), pp.941-957.

### **Paper abstract 2: 'They have an open plan office and a ping pong table' – Can local government be relevant for younger workers?**

**Professor Catherine Needham, Professor Catherine Mangan, Dr Dave Mckenna, Jason Lowther**

University of Birmingham

The existing government workforce in Western countries is on average older than in other sectors, e.g. in US, Canada and Germany (Ng et al 2016). In the UK, two thirds of local government workers are aged 40-64, whereas only one

quarter are 25-39 (LGA 2023). The skew towards the upper age ranges - which has been caused in part by austerity and recruitment freezes – suggests that a relatively high proportion of existing workers will retire within the short term. This creates an imperative to consider how local government can make itself more attractive to younger workers, who seem to want different things from work than earlier generations (Deloitte, 2023). The under forties (so-called Millennial and Gen-Z generations) have been found to be more interested in ‘making a difference’ than older generations, but don’t necessarily see the public sector as the place to do so. Combining new empirical data with insights from the literature, we offer here an analysis of how local government in the UK is currently recruiting and retaining younger generations and how it might develop a strategy to do so more effectively in the future.

Deloitte (2023) “The 2023 Gen-Z and Millennial survey” London: Deloitte The Deloitte Global 2023 Gen Z and Millennial Survey

LGA. 2023. Local government workforce summary data, London: LGA Local government workforce summary data - November 2023 | Local Government Association

Ng, Eddy. S. W., Charles W. Gossett and Richard Winter. 2016. “Millennials and Public Service Renewal: Introduction on Millennials and Public Service Motivation (PSM).” *Public Administration Quarterly*, 40(3): 412-428. <https://doi.org/10.1177/073491491604000301>

### **Paper abstract 3: Rethinking Audit Committee Effectiveness: Insights from England's Social Housing Sector**

**Mr Dennis O'Higgins**

University Of Salford

This study investigates the relationship between audit committee characteristics and regulatory ratings performance in England's social housing sector. Given the sector's quasi-public nature and evolving financial landscape, effective governance mechanisms are crucial. This research aims to determine how attributes such as committee size, independence, financial expertise, meeting frequency, gender diversity, ethnic diversity, and tenant participation impact governance and viability ratings.

We employed a quantitative methodology using Spearman Rank Correlation analysis on data from social housing providers managing over 1000 units. Our descriptive statistics revealed notable trends: high financial expertise within audit committees contrasted by low ethnic diversity and tenant participation. The Spearman Rank Correlation analysis yielded several key findings. Notably, there is a negative correlation between the frequency of audit committee meetings and governance ratings, suggesting that more frequent meetings may detract from strategic oversight. Other characteristics such as independence, financial expertise, size, gender diversity, ethnic diversity, and tenant participation showed no significant relationship with governance or viability ratings.

These findings challenge traditional corporate governance assumptions, indicating that factors often deemed critical do not significantly influence regulatory ratings within the social housing sector. This underscores the unique operational dynamics of the sector and calls for a reevaluation of governance models applied to non-profit and public service contexts. The study contributes to a nuanced understanding of audit committee effectiveness in social housing, emphasizing the importance of contextual factors in governance practices.

Our results highlight the need for tailored governance strategies that align with the specific challenges of the social housing sector. By addressing the gaps identified, policymakers and practitioners can enhance governance structures, ultimately improving service delivery and ensuring the sector's financial viability and accountability.

### **Paper abstract 4: Children Missing from Education in Nottingham**

**Dr Yu-Ling Liu-Smith, Dr David Candon, Dr Catriona Logue, Professor Peter Murphy**

Nottingham Trent University

The national scarcity of reliable and comprehensive data regarding the numbers of children missing from formal full-time education was highlighted in a report from the Local Government Association (LGA 2020) just before the covid pandemic. Following, the LGAs’ report and in order to understand the CME situation in depth within a local context, NBS investigated the experience of the CME Team in Nottingham City Council using the databases available for the period 2016-2022. The study looked at the geographical and demographical patterns of CME cases in Nottingham, analysed the characteristics of CME Cases; identified the main circumstances and ‘triggers’ that have resulted in



referrals of CMEs, and the record on resolution of cases over a five -year period (Liu-Smith et al. 2023).

Without a clear sense of the numbers and their distribution in England, it is very difficult to be precise about the scale or nature of intervention that might be needed either locally or nationally to address the issue. In Feb. 2024, the government released 'estimated' figures as "official statistics in development" for Children missing education (CME). The media and public response to this release was both surprise and alarm with CME in England estimated at 33,000 in 2023 compared to 24,700 in 2022. This paper will update the local perspective with analysis of additional data from Nottingham City to assess whether the latest national figures are reflected locally and report on the current situation at the local level.

## **Panel 18: Public governance**

### **Chair(s):**

Karl O'Connor

### **Paper abstract 1: The Legitimacy of Behavioural Public Policy in Practice: Insights from Policymakers**

#### **Mr. Mathieu Prevelato, Dr Alice Moseley**

London School of Economics, University of Exeter

Behavioural public policies (BPPs) have gained popularity in recent years. This has been exemplified by the proliferation of so-called "nudge units", whose purpose is to advise governments on issues pertaining to human behaviour. The emergence of this new set of policy practices raises questions over their acceptability and perceived legitimacy, particularly as some of the approaches are developed by either arms-length bodies or bureaucrats, rather than through legislative processes subject to democratic accountability processes. Ethical issues concerning BPPs have been debated widely by scholars, including issues of transparency, manipulation, and public awareness. Yet, with a few exceptions, there is still relatively limited empirical research examining public views of BPPs, and even less on the views of policy makers. This study extends this literature by examining the drivers of BPP acceptability from the perspective of policymakers, i.e. civil servants involved in the design and implementation of such policies. We explore their own perspectives on acceptability, as well as their views about how accepting the public would be of BPPs, under different conditions. This is an important topic of inquiry because civil servants' own views may impact on their support for using these types of policy instrument, and they also bring unique insights into the receptiveness of the public to different types of policies. Our project will shed light on several questions related to perceptions about the substantive and procedural legitimacy of BPPs. On substantive legitimacy, we investigate whether acceptability of BPPs is conditional whether they address internalities or externalities, and the expected effectiveness of them. In terms of procedural legitimacy, we explore whether policy makers' views are affected by how the BPPs have been developed and how they are communicated, in particular, whether they have been developed with the input of elected politicians and/ or citizens, or only bureaucrats, and how transparently communicated they are. We address these questions using survey experiments with British civil servants involved in policymaking and discuss implications for the use and development of BPPs as instruments of public policy.

### **Paper abstract 2: Unpacking the Dynamics of Municipal Owned Corporations (MOCs): Influence of Multiple Actors at Multiple Levels**

#### **Dr Anna Uster, Dr Hedva Vinarski Peretz**

Max Stern Yezreel Valley College

Our focus in local governance is on Municipally Owned Corporations (MOCs), established to serve public interests by providing efficient services outside local bureaucracies. MOCs operate through public-private partnerships (PPP) and inter-municipal cooperation, relying on a flexible, businesslike approach to policy decisions, resource utilization, staffing, and fund allocation (Razin & Hazan, 2023; Bezes & Jeannot, 2018).

MOCs require flexibility to form cooperative agreements with public and private partners, making managerial autonomy crucial (Voorn, van Genugten, & van Thiel, 2017). Autonomy is vital for performance and accountability, allowing managers to operate free from political interference (Pollitt & Bouckaert, 2017; Van de Walle, 2019). The OECD emphasizes the importance of a strong legal and regulatory framework to support autonomy for improved

board performance (OECD, 2021).

Despite the recognized importance of autonomy in administrative reforms (Bezes & Jeannot, 2018), there is limited understanding of the factors shaping CEOs' managerial autonomy in MOCs (Bjørnholt, Boye, & Mikkelsen, 2022; Finkelstein, 2020). This study addresses this gap by investigating how organizational, political, and individual mechanisms affect CEOs' perceived autonomy in managing MOCs.

Through semi-structured interviews with 19 executives in Israeli municipal authorities, the study identifies three key factors influencing CEOs' autonomy. The findings reveal that local bureaucracy offers framed autonomy, while central government bureaucracy significantly restricts it, hindering MOCs' activities and public goals. This interplay of micro, mezzo, and macro factors highlights the tensions between local and central governments in MOCs' managerial operations

### **Paper abstract 3: Fitting in or falling out: the dilemmas of new entrant legitimacy in a polycentric regulatory landscape**

**Dr Amanda Crompton, Professor Justin Waring**

University Of Nottingham, University of Birmingham

All systems of public governance will, at times, face questions about their legitimacy. In an era of polycentric governance, these questions of legitimacy are complex (Black, 2008) as the system is characterised by a constellation of agencies that shape norms and standards; monitor and inspect activities; and enforce or assure compliance (Boyne et al ref; Moran 2003). These agencies in turn face significant legitimacy challenges as they seek to meet the expectations of diverse 'legitimacy communities' (Black 2008). Although there is much research on political legitimacy (Wallerman) and regulatory legitimacy (Majone 1999), there has been little research dealing with how new governance agencies acquire and sustain legitimacy. The problem of new entrant legitimacy or the 'liability of the newness' (Stinchcombe 1965) is commonplace in other commercial sectors where businesses need to establish their distinct market position whilst also adhering with prevailing institutional norms (Fisher 2020). However, the liability of newness, and how such liabilities are addressed, is little understood for public governance. Our paper explores the introduction of the Healthcare Safety Investigation Branch (HSIB) and the challenges faced as they sought to establish legitimacy in the complex polycentric field of English healthcare regulation. Drawing on qualitative research, our paper shows how HSIB's legitimacy was derived from different aspects of its purpose, process, performance and political positioning. We also examine some of the dilemmas that arose with regards to process or performance and explore how the political significance of the agency sustained its existence (albeit with continued pressure to reform its position with the system). The paper contributes to scholarship on public governance by showing how different dimensions and sources of legitimacy have variable significance and weight during the stages of introduction, which offers guidance to public leaders about where attention might be focused when seeking to enhance new entrant legitimacy.

### **Paper abstract 4: How and why accountability in public services might change as a result of governance reforms?**

**Dr Peter Eckersley, Mrs Katarzyna Lakoma**

Nottingham Trent University, Nottingham Trent University

Reforms to the governance of public services invariably promise improved accountability. Although the idea of accountability has become increasingly popular in both policy and academic literature, yet it has been interpreted in different ways. Drawing on Romzek and Dubnick's (1987) and Romzek's (2000) studies, this paper develops a new conceptualisation of how different accountabilities relate to each other in public services. In particular, it argues that governance reforms tend to focus on certain types of accountability (specifically bureaucratic, political, legal, or professional), while often de-emphasising or accentuating others. It extends previous studies by understanding the reasons behind how and why accountability in public services may change as a result of governance reforms, and why governments might seek to introduce these reforms in first place. It argues that governments either extend or reduce control over public services, and/or increase or decrease the service's autonomy, often in response to perceived accountability issues. This paper argues that by introducing governance reforms, governments intend to focus on specific type(s) of accountability, which ultimately change the balance of different types of accountabilities

within an organisation and the way in which an organisation is held to account by various stakeholders.

### **Paper abstract 5: Naming and Shaming Accountability, Performance Outcomes, and Effort Substitution**

**Dr Taek Kyu Kim**

University of Exeter

Over decades, ratcheting up accountability has been a crucial doctrine based on the belief that the risk of sanctions on low performers incentivizes public employees to avoid low-performance outcomes and restore performance quickly. However, in a series of incidents and prior research, a high degree of accountability pressure has been seen to cause mental illness, in extreme cases even suicide, deterioration of organizational culture, and various cheating behaviors to avoid the sanctions.

This paper therefore focuses on the naming and shaming approach in public performance management with the following questions: Do low-performing organizations improve their future performances in naming and shaming accountability? Does it influence the motivations of low-performing organizations to engage in effort substitution, which is a strategic behavior to manipulate the goal priority to fulfill the public organization's own needs rather than public interests? This study employs a regression discontinuity (RD) design in the case of New York City public schools. In 2014, the New York City Department of Education (NYCDOE) reformed the performance management system towards naming and shaming by utilizing the results not to assign rewards for high-performing schools and sanctions for low-performing schools, but to publish on the website and inform citizens and parents. The findings present that underperforming organizations improve future performance output in naming and shaming while effort substitution still occurs. This study makes several contributions. First, it contributes to the burgeoning research on accountability systems by showing that naming and shaming works for improving subsequent performance in underperforming organizations. It deepens our understanding of an alternative form of performance management. However, it complicates the performance management literature by showing that underperforming organizations engage in effort substitution even in low-stakes accountability architecture.

### **Panel 19: Democratising public administration 4 Community-driven collaboration: changing relationships between citizens and government**

**Chair(s):**

Andrew Tangang

Koen Bartels

#### **Panel abstract: Community-driven collaboration: changing relationships between citizens and government**

**Dr Hannah Absalom, Andrew Allen, Mr Andrew Tangang, Sally Ward, Dr. Koen Bartels**

This panel addresses the paradoxical relationships between citizens and government we now face. On the one hand, we can observe a 'post-democratic' decline across the globe. Surges in distrust in "the system", conspiracy theories, and societal unrest have gone hand in hand with the rise of nativism, demagoguery, and polarisation in political life. On the other hand, over the past three decades, citizen participation, partnership working, and social innovation have become staples of governance. There is widespread agreement in research and policy that governments, citizens, and other stakeholders have to collaborate to co-produce policies to address wicked problems. How can we explain these contradictory developments? And what can we do about it to ensure governance becomes more driven by the powers and needs of communities? There are three ways in which these questions have been addressed so far. The first is to point at the complexity of collaborative processes. Whether it is governmental actors facilitating participatory processes or communities self-organising new ways of addressing local issues, there is a multitude of inherent challenges to achieving more democratic relationships. The second view is that hegemonic powers inhibit real change. Power inequalities are deeply engrained and persist under the veil of benign discourses of collaboration. A third perspective explores how collaborative ambitions and power differentials emerge in the process of interaction between citizens and government. Habitual modes of organising, communicating, and resourcing can foreclose meaningful collaboration, but also offer opportunities for mutual learning and change. This panel includes contributions that explore the changing relationships between citizens and government from and beyond these perspectives. The aim is to advance understanding of how to improve relationships towards community-driven governance.

## **Paper abstract 1: Community government reforms in Cameroon: Between administrative rationality and social reciprocity**

**Andrew Tangang**

University of Birmingham

Since 1996, the government of Cameroon enacted decentralisation reforms to promote local development, local democracy, and local governance. The decentralisation laws conferred the responsibility of promoting local development to elected municipal councils while the roles of community government structures were not clearly defined. Nonetheless, community government structures continued existing and providing public goods and services alongside municipal councils. This set the stage for a clash between government-driven and community-driven decentralisation of development. Community government reforms have been heralded by central government and municipal councils as a 'major turning point' for empowering community governments and citizen participation. In practice, it is characterised by attempts to create legible and administratively convenient local development structures under the control of municipal councils. There is the dominance of administrative rationality which sustains power inequalities in the decentralisation of development. In one municipality (Eseka) where community self-organising is weak, community government reforms have been implemented though with several challenges. In another municipality (Bamendjou) with a history of community self-organising, the council-led community government reforms clash with the established practice of mutual help thus necessitating a difficult coexistence of council-led structures and community-led structures. Using Scott's 'weapons of the weak' and Tully's 'practices of governance', the paper explores practices through which community governments navigate the inherent tensions between government-driven and community-driven decentralisation. These practices which include proactive community leadership, reliance on influential and resourceful elites, and community 'watchdogs' lead to the conclusion that when there is top-down power being exercised, there is a response of subtle resistance and contestation from the communities. Also, this resistance in some cases have improved the interactions between community governments and the municipal councils. This underscores the extent to which community governments and municipal councils can meaningfully collaborate to enhance local development actions and outcomes.

## **Paper abstract 2: Beyond Nudges: Envisioning a Relational Approach to Applying Behavioural Insights in English Social Housing**

**Hannah Absalom**

University of Birmingham

The state of social housing in England is dire, marked by a severe shortage of truly affordable homes and a proliferation of high-cost, low-quality private rentals. Government policies favouring home ownership have exacerbated these issues, resulting in some of the priciest and poorest-quality housing in Europe. The Grenfell fire tragedy prompted a renewed focus on housing safety and quality, leading to new regulations emphasising tenant-landlord communication and home standards. In response to these challenges, some social housing practitioners are turning to Behavioural Public Policy (BPP) as a solution. BPP aims to improve outcomes by nudging individuals towards better choices, promising cost savings and enhanced wellbeing. However, its focus on individual behaviour overlooks broader social issues and participatory processes, echoing historical paternalistic tendencies in housing governance. This paper examines how BPP is being implemented in English social housing, highlighting its limitations and proposing an alternative approach. Rather than solely targeting individual behaviours, the paper suggests leveraging insights to understand tenants' collective priorities, challenging landlords to adapt their services accordingly. This relational approach challenges existing sector practices and redefines wellbeing to encompass material, psychological, and interpersonal factors, emphasising the creation of conditions for collective wellbeing. Drawing on qualitative research, including interviews and focus groups with stakeholders, the paper employs an assemblage framework to analyse the fluid application of BPP in social housing. Assemblage permits a critique of current expressions of BPP while allowing for a relational approach to applying behavioural insights to emerge from tenants' experiences of home and landlord services. A relational approach to applying behavioural insights facilitates collaboration between practitioners and tenants to improve housing services and enhance tenant wellbeing.

## **Panel 20: Politics, policy and the public sector**

### **Chair(s):**

Stephen Jeffares

### **Paper abstract 1: The Ghost of Services Past: Uniting public sector innovation and public service ‘spirit’ in future public service delivery**

#### **Dr Russ Glennon, Rory Shand**

Manchester Metropolitan University, Manchester Metropolitan University

How public services and society respond to turbulence and wider crises has become an increasingly urgent topic of scholarly debate (Carstensen, Sorensen and Torfing, 2023; Perkins et al., 2021) and 40+ years of public management reform does not appear to have achieved its promises (Pollitt & Bouckaert, 2017). In the midst of ongoing global crises, responses to the polycrisis (Dinan, Beland and Howlett, 2024; Smeets and Beach, 2023), collaboration has been central to such debates (Wu et al., 2024), with scholars pointing to cross sectoral working as key to combatting crises. Recent scholarship has argued public sector innovation has been an effective vehicle for crisis response at national and global levels (Hoyer et al., 2023; Wegrich, 2019; Sorensen and Torfing, 2017; Sorensen and Torfing, 2015). In this paper, we seek to unite public sector innovation with ideas of public service ‘spirit’. By drawing these ideas together, we contend that protecting the spirit of public services is just as important as innovation in the public sector. Here, we update the Weberian idea of ‘Geist’ (Weber, 1905) to conceptualise the spirit of public services. We use this term to draw together different ideas that seek to capture this spirit, such as Public Service Ethos (PSE), Public Service Motivation (PSM) and Public Value. Existing work has focused on these ideas as a typology (Witesman, Walters and Christensen, 2023). These concepts also tend to differentiate between spirit in organisations and individual public servants. In this article, we extend these ideas by drawing them together to describe public service spirit. We explore the ways in which the public service spirit or Geist has been present in past public service delivery and despite being threatened by the flux of frequent reform remains the key point of difference between public servants and their counterparts in other sectors. We argue ideas of public sector innovation and public service spirit are each key to effective future public services.

### **Paper 2: Exploring health and social care integration from an ecosystem perspective: different pathways to value co-creation?**

#### **Professor Michael Roy, Dr Kirsty Strokosch**

University of Stirling, University of Strathclyde

In response to increasingly complex health and social care needs and tightening fiscal constraints, integration has been proposed as a valid policy response, leading to changes in governance arrangements and joint service delivery. Applying a service ecosystem perspective, a holistic view of the health and social care is presented, which offers insight into the interconnectedness between the domains of the health and social care ecosystem, including their unique and shared contexts, and the various actors and institutions involved. However, our analysis also exposes important power dimensions regarding how the service ecosystem is framed and the actors acknowledged as involved in value co-creation. In response, three interdependent types of integration (structural, institutional, and relational) are proposed, which may enable value co-creation.

### **Paper abstract 3: Structural barriers and micro-innovations in the delivery of the UK’s public health missions**

#### **Dr Jack Newman, Professor Sarah Ayres, Dr Geoff Bates, Dr Rachael McClatchey, Dr Anna Le Gouais, Professor Nick Pearce**

University Of Bristol, University Of Bristol, University of Bath, Rnorth Consulting Ltd, University of Bristol, University of Bath

In every manifesto since 2010, both of the UK’s main political parties have promised to deliver a transition from reactive to preventative health policy, and in doing so to tackle geographic disparities in public health. The data shows that little has been achieved, with some measures actually showing that spatial health inequalities are on the rise. Based on co-production logs, meetings with officials, and informal interviews, this article reflects on the

progress made under the Conservative's levelling up agenda and considers the potential of Labour's health mission. Focusing on the capacity of policymakers to embed health considerations in urban development policy, we identify a series of structural barriers in the governance system, including fragmentation, siloisation, and over-centralisation. These are widely reported in the literature. However, we also identify spaces within and between these macro structures in which public officials and local actors have found innovations in the implementation and appraisal of urban development policy. These micro-innovations offer the potential to embed public health considerations across a range of policy sectors and state institutions.

We explore examples of this in action, and conclude by reflecting on the extent to which these micro-innovations could be scaled up or indeed might precipitate a wider shift towards systems thinking and policy join up in the UK state. This is a shift that our wider research shows is a prerequisite for tackling the country's entrenched health inequalities. This research comes from the TRUUD research project (Tackling Root Causes Upstream of Unhealthy Urban Development).

#### **Paper abstract 4: Social Equity, Race, and Auditing: Education in France, the United Kingdom, and the United States**

**Dr. Laurence Ferry, Dr. Sean McCandless, Dr. Bruce McDonald**

Durham University, University of Texas at Dallas, North Carolina State University

A central issue for governments concerns how to improve social equity, especially racial equity, in public services. As detailed in social equity literatures, racial inequities and government complicity in those inequities are well documented. A critical public service in which these disparities are becoming better documented is education, principally in that historically marginalized populations more often experience: 1) problematic access to educational opportunities; 2) lower quality of educational opportunities offered by governments; 3) process inequities such as aggressions and microaggressions; and 4) long term consequences (outcomes) of these issues that can result in compounded disparities regarding job prospects, financial security, and more. These problems highlight the importance of government accounting and auditing to foster racial equity. Still, a gap exists in both the scholarly literature and in government practice regarding how governments use accounting and auditing arrangements to address racial equity in education. To address this gap, this paper comparatively examines how public audits and accounting practices are conducted concerning fostering racial equity in education policy in France, the United Kingdom, and the United States. These three countries were chosen because their national governments all attempt to address racial equity, auditing, and accounting vis-a-vis racial equity in education to some degree, yet each country exhibits different approaches to defining and addressing racial inequities in educational accounting and auditing. After briefly distinguishing each country's approaches to racial equity at the national government level, the bulk of the presentation covers each government's social equity initiatives, the audit of race, and more specifically how such audits have unfolded over time in education. The concluding discussion will set out a theoretical contribution to social equity, race, and audit arrangements as well as articulate implications for policy, practice, and future research.

#### **Paper abstract 5: Political responsiveness to the victims of Rural Banditry and Kidnapping in North-West Nigeria**

**Dr. Nuruddeen Muhammad Koko**

Usmanu Danfodiyo University

Since the return to civil rule in 1999, Nigeria has been grappling with distress and persistent social, economic, and political challenges that are terrifically threatening the country's corporate existence. Perhaps insecurity constitutes the most significant challenge to Nigeria's stability. The spate and spectre of insecurity in the country, ranging from the Boko Haram/ISWAP, ethno-religious crises, kidnapping, rural banditry, cattle rustling, farmers'/herders' conflict, and the IPOB, had extensively questioned the capacity and capability of the levels of government to fulfill the very essence of the state, which is to guarantee peace, security of lives and livelihoods of individuals. Ironically, the various geo-political zones in Nigeria, have quintessentially peculiar security challenges. Boko Haram is unique to the North-East, IPOB to the South-East, farmers'/herders' conflict and ethno-religious conflict in the North-Central, Militants in the South-South, while, banditry and kidnapping are mostly prevalent in the North-West. The trend started with what appears to be cattle rustling with criminality and transfigured to full-blown banditry and kidnapping with

over 50,000 bandits' gangs operating within 4 of the 6 states in the North-West. The social and economic costs of these bandits and kidnappers are appalling leading to a catastrophic humanitarian crisis that appears beyond governments responses. The paper, drawing on the assumptions of political responsiveness, examined governments' responses to victims of rural banditry and kidnapping, specifically in the North-West of Nigeria. Hence, the paper answers the following questions from key informant interview data: How have rural banditry and kidnapping affected socio-economic wellbeing in the North-West Nigeria? How are governments responding to the ravaging insecurity in the North-West Nigeria? How had governments fared in responding to the demands of the victims of rural banditry and kidnapping in the geo-political zone?

## **Panel 21: Environmental Governance**

### **Chair(s):**

Yifei Yan

### **Paper abstract 1: Sustainability at the edge of our ability? Pursuing Net Zero targets through public procurement at different levels of government around the UK.**

#### **Dr. James Ruairi Macdonald, Professor Anne Davies**

University Of Oxford Faculty Of Law, Oxford , UK

This paper explores longstanding problems in governance while tackling serious implementation issues in one of humanity's pressing challenges: climate change. This is a comparative analysis focused on accountability for and implementation of Net Zero targets at different levels of government in Belfast (Northern Ireland), Cardiff (Wales), Edinburgh (Scotland), and Newcastle (England). The Paris Agreement is an international treaty among a plethora of goal-setting legislation, regulations, and declarations. Many of these declarations lean on government spending through public procurement. For example, the UK's "Net Zero Strategy: Build Back Greener" promised measures to help "leverage public procurement as a tool that drives greener and more resilient outcomes across public services." (UK 2022). Schooner (2021), among others, has highlighted the urgency of this issue for public procurement. However, longstanding capacity issues remain unresolved. The people in procurement, contract management, and sustainability roles responsible for achieving these targets have limited capacity to do so. One consequence of outsourcing has been to create a new challenge of governing the 'hollow state' (Milward and Provan, 2000). Others have described the "contracting state" (Freeman, 2000). Concerns have been raised that the modern state is a "state of agents" with weak principles and serious problems of governance and democratic accountability (Heinrich et al. 2010). This paper explores these issues with new data from practitioner focus groups and a review of a review of law, policies, plans, and contractor disclosures related to contracting authorities at different levels of government but located in Belfast, Cardiff, Edinburgh, and/or Newcastle. Implications of the UK's new Procurement Act 2023 will also be considered.

### **Paper abstract 2: Grassroots Climate- Resilient Governance: Nurturing Eco- Friendly Public Services in Kerala**

#### **Professor Jos Chathukulam**

Centre for Rural Management (CRM), Kerala, India, Kottayam, India, Institute for Social and Economic Change, Bengaluru, India

Efforts to integrate climate resilience into public services are evident in Kerala's developmental landscape. Climate and disaster risk-informed project planning and implementation are integral components of public service delivery in the region. Local governments in Kerala play a central role in ensuring the scalability and sustainability of climate-resilient initiatives. By integrating climate considerations into decision-making processes, Kerala's public sector workforce is fostering eco-friendly attitudes, thereby contributing to broader climate action efforts. This paper critically examines the local climate-resilient activities as forms of 'public services'. Additionally, it delves into Kerala's model of participatory local climate governance, the sustained prioritization of environmental concerns, and outlines directions for the future of public services.

### **Paper abstract 3: Assessing the impact of Fridays for Future on climate policy and policymaking in German cities**

**Dr Peter Eckersley, Dr Wolfgang Haupt, Prof. Kristine Kern**

Nottingham Trent University, Leibniz Institute for Research on Society and Space, Leibniz Institute for Research on Society and Space

During 2019, Fridays for Future (FfF) groups were highly active across the globe, calling for changes to both policy outputs (specifically, a more ambitious climate mitigation approach) and policymaking processes (greater public participation and civil society involvement in decision-making). However, we lack a comprehensive assessment of the changes it may have induced, and why it may have been more successful in some places than others. Building on Hall's (1993) three orders of change, and drawing on interviews and document analysis in 25 German cities, we develop and apply a framework to measure its influence. We found that all 25 cities did change their policymaking processes as a result of FfF pressure, and most also introduced more ambitious policy outputs – although changes were largely restricted to the level of policy settings and (sometimes) instruments, rather than overarching goals. Moreover, FfF had more success in those cities where the local conditions were already more amenable to progressive climate policy, particularly those with wealthier and younger populations and stronger green parties. This suggests that places with poorer and older inhabitants and stronger far-right representation may continue to struggle to keep up with the 'usual suspects' in terms of climate policy and policymaking ambition.