8

PUBLIC SECTOR INNOVATION

In many countries, following the 2008 economic crisis, funding cuts to the public sector have stirred up interest in the use of design to reconfigure their services. Through this, new ways of designing that foreground the user experience have developed. To what extent do these developments reproduce commercial orthodoxies? Or does this allow for new thinking about civic participation in public life? Chapter 8 investigates changing approaches to governance and the different roles that design practice has there.

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So far, this book has concentrated almost exclusively on commercial contexts of design. But several reasons compel us to discuss the ways by which design operates in the public sector and how this has changed according to developing economic and governance processes.

The first is, quite frankly, a matter of size. The public sector represents a significant, and often overlooked, element of design. In OECD countries, the public sector proportion of total employment was 21.3 per cent in 2013, with it touching 35 per cent in Denmark and Norway (OECD 2015: 84). In the same year, with 1.7 million employees, the UK National Health Service was the fifth largest employer in the world, the US Department of Defense being the biggest with 3.2 million (McCarthy 2015). The public sector represents massive but diverse fields of work, management and expenditure. For OECD countries in 2013, the production costs of goods and services in the public sector represented on average 21.3 per cent of GDP (OECD 2015: 80). The public sector is a major user and stimulant of design activities.

Second, the public sector is by no means independent of the private, commercial sector or other external bodies. Much of this connection is made by the outsourcing of government functions to private sector providers as well as external voluntary, charitable and/or not-for-profit organisations. In 2013, government outsourcing of OECD countries represented, on average, 8.9 per cent of GDP. Among these, Belgium, Japan, Germany and the Netherlands dedicated over 60 per cent of expenditure to the outsourcing of services to third-party provision (OECD 2015: 80). This stimulates competition among providers, in turn creating design opportunities.

Third, many public sector functions, such as education, health and defence, provide the basis for research, innovation and development that subsequently feeds into commercial applications. The Federal government of the USA was responsible for 26 per cent of research and development funding in 2008. The technologies that have brought us the Apple iPod, iPhone and iPad came about thanks to a mixture of US state investment support, prior activities carried out in military initiatives, government procurement and academic scientific research (Mazzucato 2013: 60 and 93–5).

Fourth, and where much of this chapter focuses, developments in the ways by which governments manage the public sector, how policy is formulated, how services are delivered and the relationships they have with citizens have given way to an increased centrality of design. At the heart of this has been the rise of design thinking and many associated design approaches. This has been driven, as we shall see, by fiscal constraint on public budgets (otherwise known as austerity) but also by rising demand on public services. Design and, in particular, its person-centred methods have been drawn into public sector innovation and policymaking. We must therefore look into developments in design practice that meet changes in governance and what it means to be a citizen. In this, the relationship of public and private sectors becomes progressively more complex, as do the design frameworks and methods that are employed.

The following section plunges straight into the important changes that have taken place in design in relation to the public sector since around 2008. It reveals a development in the representation and expectations of design practices here. Having established the contemporary scene, the following sections then hop back to review changes that have taken place in the ways by which the public sector is formulated since the 1980s. They show that the public sector has progressively been subject to thinking derived from the private sector and the subsequent significance of this for design and design methods. The latter part of this chapter

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discusses different conceptions of citizenship as produced, in part, through design. In this, it moves beyond neoliberal conceptions of the citizen as a 'consumer' of public services to more complex arrangements of belonging and identity.

NEW OBJECTS OF DESIGN FOR PUBLIC SECTOR INNOVATION

We have become used to a rarefied language of design representation through the pages of popular design magazines and websites: singularised products floating in space; chairs accompanied by nothing but their own shadows; brand logos, posters or packaging without context; ready-to-use interiors, evacuated of the mess of people and clutter. These objects appear to come from nowhere, magicked into existence with no regard to their legions of creative workers, entrepreneurs, factory workers, dockers and truck drivers, retailers and, of course, design journalists.

But in the mid-2000s, another visual language began to circulate through blogs, tweets and PDF-ed institutional reports. These are populated with photographs of design in action: walls of Post-it notes map customer journeys; matchboxes, Play-Doh and string, annotated with marker-pens, model neighbourhoods; sketchnotes on A1 sheets expose the networks of 'issues'; breakout groups of concerned citizens discussing their concerns while a rapporteur busily takes notes; role plays with civil servants and service users.

Welcome to the new world of service design jams, policy prototyping days and design sprints. The old world of reified design objects has not gone away. But since about 2000, a whole new idiom for design has gained prominence. Here, transparency and inclusivity in processes dominate – hence the pictures of the studio or lab in action. These images also suggest a shift from design as a noun (an output of process) to design as a verbal noun (the process itself). They indicate a continual state of transformation, whose material culture is filled out with pointers and exploratory devices – prototypes that carry futurity as 'things-that-are-not-quite-objects-yet' (Corsin Jiménez 2013: 383).

Understanding the tools that are at play in this recent account of design practice in the public sector is fundamental to understanding the positioning of design here. Often their simulations of design in use point in two directions. One is in modelling current practices in, experiences of or perspectives onto products or services. Using ethnographic research, user-observation, focus groups or other modes of enquiry, these provide representations to help understand the networks of people and things at work. The other is where abduction comes into play. Plausible but provisional insights and possibilities are created (Reichertz 2010; Kimbell 2014, 2015). It thus looks beyond the singularised object of design to map the user journey through a service that is made up of a series of encounters. This is where this new material culture of a design process – the Post-its and Play-Doh – that maps this at work. This mapping may therefore be employed to understand how a service currently exists or for prototyping future possibilities. In either case, it pays attention to the human, material, spatial and temporal relationships of a system or service. In other words, it is concerned, at least in theory, with working with the *situated* realities of everyday life whether these actually exist or are speculations.

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8.1 UK government Cabinet Office civil servants prototyping patient experience of GP surgeries (Photos: Lucy Kimbell)

Conceptually, there is a shift in the location of value here. Traditional and, if you like, twentieth-century conceptions of design regard it as putting added value *into* the object (by making it more attractive, more utilitarian or both). Instead, here, an evidence-base is used to understand 'value-in-use' (Kimbell 2014: 154). These mapping devices act as prototypes of services, things and people, and their relations, in an effort to understand how these are constituted, or could be constituted in future situations. Services engage many different types of actor and multitudes of environments and objects.

This shift in understanding value has a rich theoretical background. In particular, Shove et al. (2005) draw on the actor-network theory work of Latour (2005) and the practice theory of Schatzki (1996) and Reckwitz (2002) to posit that value is not inscribed in the objects themselves; rather it is mobile and contextual. It is contingent on assemblages of related material artefacts for it to have any value in use or exchange (Molotch 2003). It comes into being as the outcome of social processes that are part of everyday routines. Value cannot sit dormant; rather, it surfaces through its enacting in ways that are also configured by design itself. This observation promotes the contextual contingency of value in relation to the designed object in spatial and temporal terms. Value comes into being in the right place and at the right time.

In short, this design approach is typified by making its processes public, a shift towards thinking more rigorously in terms of the social practices of use and, following from this, the use of prototyping future possibilities as a way of producing an evidence-base.

CONSULTANT- AND GOVERNMENT-DRIVEN PUBLIC SECTOR INNOVATION

In their widest context, these (not-quite) objects belong to the field of 'design thinking', but also service design processes, co-creation, participatory design, design for community, design activism, design for social innovation and design for policy. Rather than pick apart the different usages and nuances of these methods according to distinct design headings – probably an impossible task

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given their interconnectivity – it is more useful to observe their overall, emergent power and think about the precise conditions that have given rise to them. They take place in both commercial and non-commercial settings and, as we shall see later in this chapter, their development in these two is not unrelated.

By 2015, several small-scale design consultancies had emerged to specialise in public sector innovation. Consultancies such as the Innovation Unit, FutureGov, Design Affects, Snook and Uscreates in the UK, STBY in the Netherlands, Nahman and Yellow Window in Belgium or the Greater Good Studio in the USA, were developing new forms of service delivery for the public sector. These came mostly from a background in service design mixed with experience in local government. At the other end of the scale, the large design company IDEO moved increasingly into public sector innovation for global clients in the 2000s.

Upstream, government-funded units such as MindLab in Denmark, TACSI in Australia, the PolicyLab in the UK, the Public Policy Lab in New York City or La 27e Región in France employed design methods in policymaking. There were around one hundred such innovation labs operating around the world in 2015. There is some diversity among these: some are focused on future scenario buildings, others have a stronger, core design focus while a third grouping foreground data, technology or behavioural economics more (Nesta 2015a).

Of these, MindLab has been particularly noteworthy as an influential pioneer. Understanding its development helps in appreciating the different levels at which a design-led approach in government can function. MindLab was established within the Danish government's (then) Ministry of Business Affairs in 2002 as an initiative that brought policy, qualitative research and innovation through design methods together. It subsequently took on a more cross-government role in stimulating policymaking that focused on its multiple implementers, users and stakeholders that could be, at the same time, disruptive of traditional public sector bureaucracies.

8.2 Uscreates working with healthcare professionals exploring challenges and change (Photo: Uscreates)

MindLab has moved through three cumulative phases in its development. The first was MindLab as a facilitation unit or otherwise a 'creative platform'. It provided, for example, graphic tools and representations for Ministry meetings to allow them to see the networks of actors engaged around policy. In the second phase, from 2006, MindLab became more clearly an innovation unit that integrated user-research into the processes of government policy development. In 2011, MindLab entered a third phase that began to put more emphasis on organisational change within Ministries to foster a culture that embraced and supported co-creative approaches. From around 2012, another major activity of MindLab was in training and development of similar labs in other countries (Carstensen and Bason 2012). Thus it developed increasingly sophisticated and complex roles and approaches with the Danish government.

Around both the consultant design studios and the government financed labs we also find a number of thinktanks and innovation groups that are often funded through endowments or

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sponsorships. These would include Nesta and the Young Foundation in the UK, GovLab in New York and MaRS in Toronto. In addition, quasi-government or independent design promotion organisations, such as the UK's Design Council or the European Union's SEE Platform, have been active in developing and supporting the idea of using design in public sector innovation.

There has therefore been a rapid rise of the specialist commercial consultancies, the government innovation labs and other organisations funded by diverse means since the early 2000s. Taken together these have produced a global ecosystem supported by conferences, meet-ups and online publication as well as live web events such as service or social design jams. In addition, movement, in terms of personnel and projects, is often fluid between these consultancies and labs; one becomes a training ground for the other and vice versa.

However, despite this rapidity, they have emerged in response to a number of developments in public sector practices in the neoliberal age. The next section rewinds to the beginning of public sector reform to set the scene for subsequent discussions of design in the context of changes in patterns of governance.

NEW PUBLIC MANAGEMENT

Since the 1980s, the organisation of the public sector has moved from a 'public administration' approach to the so-called New Public Management (NPM) (McLaughlin et al. 2002). The 'public administration' model is best described within notions of the welfare state that existed from around 1945. Here, citizen needs in terms of things like care for the elderly or the maintenance of public spaces are met almost entirely by the state. However, in the neoliberal era the reform of public services, be it health, education, the civil service, the police force or social services, has become increasingly based upon the application of market principles in most capitalist countries, in particular across Europe and Australasia. Indeed, this has become a coordinated programme that comes as a necessary condition of membership of cross-national arrangements such as the European Union (Metcalfe 1994; Blum and Manning 2009).

Within NPM there has been the requirement to achieve 'best value' in order to ensure that contributions made through taxation are spent prudently. This means the pursuit of continuous improvement in the way public sector functions are exercised (Martin 2000). Thus, performance measurement and ratings, responsiveness to public demand and contracting out to competitive tendering gradually become features that bring the culture of public services closer to the private sector (Whitfield 2006).

One public sector tactic to provide infrastructure at lower immediate cost, which was rolled out in particular in the UK, Spain, Australia and New Zealand, is the use of public–private partnerships (PPPs). This relates to public sector projects or services being undertaken in collaboration with commercial corporations. Building projects may be funded through private finance called private finance initiatives (PFIs). Typically, such projects have included schools, hospitals or transport infrastructure and involve a contract wherein government bodies usually enter into 25–30 year arrangements to either buy or lease back the development. Property developers will organise funding, often from institutional investors in similar ways as discussed in Chapter 6. In other cases, local governments have actually sold their buildings to property companies to lease them back. The UK government built up a commitment of £35.5bn to 563 PFI deals by 2004,

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while in Australia some A$20bn was tied up in PFI around the same time (Hodge and Greve 2007: 546). While PFIs relate mostly to the built environment rather than design *per se*, they often have an indirect effect on design by locking buildings into specific patterns and hierarchies of use for the duration of a PFI contract. Conflicts between private contractors and public sector providers may emerge that contest what is considered the most efficient use of space and how a service should be designed (Gesler et al. 2004).

More directly to design, NPM provides opportunities for design consultancies to create money-saving systems. An example of this is the UK graphics company Corporate Document Services that provides print management services that helps local authorities reduce their costs and the efficiency of their publication processes (CDS 2008). If new roles for design have emerged here, then this hasn't necessarily been the result of any dramatic reorientation of its professional body towards public service; it is more the result of the public sector bringing itself closer to the commercially oriented practices and norms of design.

PUBLIC SECTOR MARKETISATION AND CONSUMPTION

The marketisation of public services also creates a denser landscape of management and, indeed, design opportunities. Delivery of services may be developed and managed through the alliance of local authority social services, semi-public agencies and the voluntary sector. This forms part of what Whitfield (2001, 2006) calls 'agentification'. For example, Whitfield (2006) shows how, prior to agentification, the management of a school involved simply interacting with a local authority. It previously provided all ancillary services by subcontracting to a plethora of agencies including privatised school meal providers, buildings and facilities maintenance companies, after-school care voluntary groups, outsourced school transport, ICT, special educational needs resources and teacher supply agencies. In the NPM model, as shown in Figure 8.1, the school and the local authority are effectively working as agents to external suppliers, configuring and contracting their services to run things.

This marketisation of services calls for a much greater number of relationships with external bodies as well as more frequent decision making on the part of school managers. It also creates ever more numbers of subcontractee organisations that might represent themselves within this system: more logos, more corporate documents, more public sector oriented products, more relations. It is small wonder, therefore, that the public sector was of increasing significance to designers in this period. By 2006–07 in the UK, the public sector and non-government organisations (NGOs) provided work for around half of design agencies, making it the fourth or fifth most important client to them (British Design Innovation (BDI) 2006, 2007).

The shift from a welfare state model that predominated from 1945 to NPM from the 1980s does not only mean more job opportunities for designers, it fundamentally changes the relationship of citizens to state services. Apart from the greater emphasis on managerialist practices and terms in the public sector, NPM also involves the promotion of the notion of 'choice' in the provision of services. In this account of public services, there is an increased emphasis laid on focusing on the service 'user' and their needs. Marketisation sees to the creation of a competitive field at the supply end as providers vie with one another for contractors. At the user end, citizens are remade as consumers of those services (Clarke 2007; Clarke and Newman 2007; Moor 2009).

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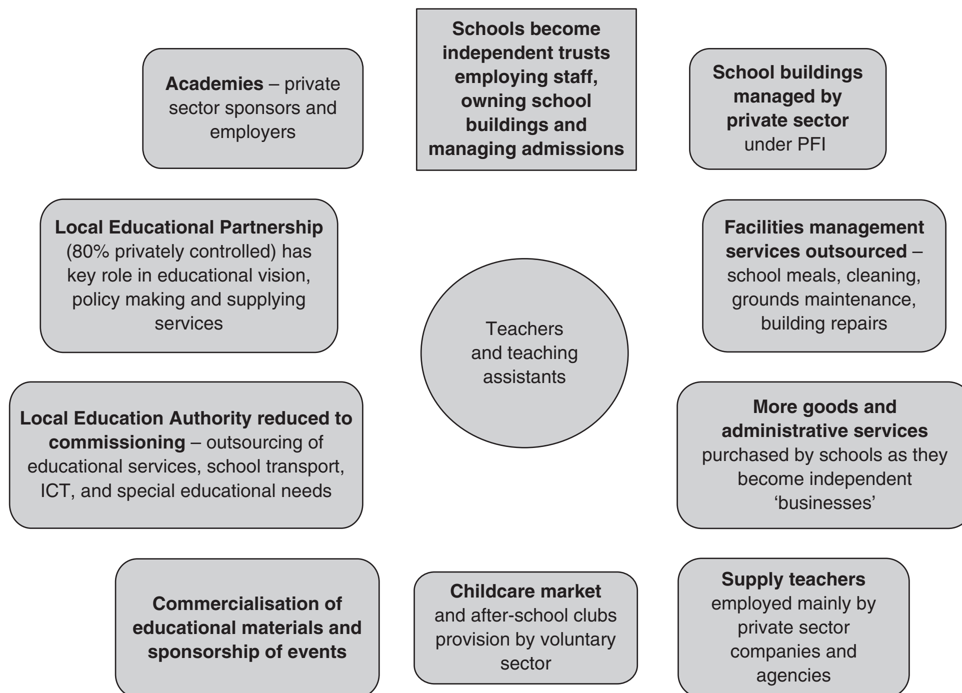

Figure 8.1 The marketisation of school education (Whitfield 2006)

This turn towards the consumption of public services – as opposed to their mere use – also involves the *making* of their consumers. Going to the doctor, getting the streets cleaned or putting children through schooling may involve making choices (which clinic? which school?) or, at least, the monitoring of service quality (how clean are the streets?). Here, there is an idea of exchange, in that taxes are paid and a level of service is expected. But this also involves a disciplining of citizens into taking responsibility for the choices they make (Malpass et al. 2007). They are active in shaping their everyday lives through the choices they make, and this includes welfare services, education or their local environments. Along with this, therefore, getting the right information and knowing what the choices are become part of this undertaking of citizen responsibility.

Public sector innovation is not only focused on the redesign of its services but also on the reconstitution of publics. It has involved the fashioning of varying forms of relationships between provider and user. The latter has been recast as 'consumer', 'partner' and active citizen through successive attempts to redesign the processes and functions of the public sector.

RESPONSES TO NEW PUBLIC MANAGEMENT

Criticisms of NPM are not difficult to raise. For example, NPM may be read as the needless application of private, commercial processes and interests to what is essentially a public asset. In this

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view, all the goodwill and sense of service that is seen as a necessary but unmeasurable aspect of the public sector is relegated. At the same time, therefore, the propensity towards the outsourcing of state functions gives its responsibilities over to companies whose first accountabilities are to their investors, not the public. Within state functions, managers expend more energy on sourcing and coordinating services than they could on ensuring the quality of outcomes. NPM also rests on the assumption that the outsourcing of services results in their being of better value, better quality and more innovative – an assumption that is partly drawn from a stereotype of state functionaries being the opposite.

In terms of design, there are three specific drawbacks of NPM. First, as we have seen, NPM recasts public sector service users as consumers with the attendant notions of choice and responsibility for making choices. This may result in different registers of presentation of services as they are rendered 'attractive' through various means either to citizens or commissioners. At the same time, one has to ask whether or not service users actually *want* to be treated as 'consumers'. Would they rather that design and other inputs be entirely focused on optimising the core of the service (Clarke and Newman 2007; Moor 2009)?

A second criticism of NPM in terms of design is that it may have the effect of making managers focus more on delivery improvement at the expense of thinking about the quality of the service itself at the point-of-use (Christensen 2013). Focusing on procurement, logistics or getting best value from suppliers is all very well, but this may detract from ensuring that the service being delivered is itself not poorly conceived and designed. This emphasis may not be particularly human-centred in that it is mostly concerned with the management of systems that are already configured rather than on what best functions *in use* and working back from there.

Third, the heavy requirement for demonstrating value creates a regime of constant measurement and audit of processes and outcomes. This results in a performative fix, whereby services are arranged in such a way to satisfy measurement criteria rather than thinking about their design as best serving citizens. A contradiction is constantly at play where public servants are pressured to be creative, innovative and agile while performing to centrally driven targets and being fully accountable (Gallop 2007; Parker and Bartlett 2008; Hill and Julier 2009). Risk-taking, trying out new ideas or prototyping new possibilities – core to design – do not find easy homes in this NPM environment.

In respect of these issues, from around 2010, some government organisational discourses have moved to thinking about public service delivery being reconfigured around outcome-based budgeting (OBB) or outcome based commissioning (OBC) (KPMG 2011; Law 2013). This takes the pragmatic ordering of services beyond NPM. Here, instead of thinking organisationally and financially in terms of the operations of a system of delivery, OBB looks to what one wants to achieve at the user end. As such, it is very user-centred in its emphasis on the desired results of services (healthier citizens, cared-for elderly, literate children, for instance) and 'reverse engineering' from there in thinking about how best to achieve these in terms of what combination of organisations, departments and institutions can best (and often, most cheaply) provide that solution. OBB may be read as being designerly in its approach through its end-on, problem-solving ethos.

This thinking recalls Manzini and Jégou's (2005) notion of 'results'-driven design wherein responses to problems are not predetermined in terms of their kind of design outcome; rather, the most effective and appropriate (particularly in environmental and social terms) response is

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sought. It calls for a radical reconceptualisation of design's aims, processes and outcomes. By prioritising results over means to achieve these, design is immediately taken outside its sub-disciplinary structures of 'graphics', 'interior', 'product' and so on. It becomes media agnostic where the 'best tool for the job' prevails over predetermined, specialist approaches.

Likewise, OBB may be disruptive of traditional public sector bureaucracies and processes: a parks and leisure department may become part of health and wellbeing aims or entirely new forms of administration may need to be created. Either way, it may push public administration into more innovative and flexible modes. Further, its highly pragmatic, results-driven approach has developed in the context of pressure on public budgets. This confluence of austerity and public sector innovation is developed in the next section.

AUSTERITY

The 2007–08 financial crisis had severe effects on global trade and investment. Naturally this resulted in a reduction of income to the state sector: tax receipts diminished as unemployment rose and business turnover dropped. Many governments, particularly across Europe, instigated austerity programmes in response to this, but also to clear the national debt that had risen, particularly through the years running up to the crisis. An alternative view to this 'official' line is that the crisis was used as an excuse to carry out further scaling down of the state in order to continue the ratcheting up of marketisation and the privileging of private business over state functions (Whitfield 2012; Fraser et al. 2013). It should be added here that the austerity of the post-crisis era may also be seen as a mere extension of an ongoing squeeze on public budgets felt since the 1980s (Peters 2012).

Whichever account of austerity is most accurate, it soon became clear that the ensuing public spending cuts across Europe would result in job losses, pay freezes and the reduction or disappearance of some services. In terms of personnel, for instance, a first wave of planned downsizing of the number of public sector employees would involve reductions of 12 per cent in Ireland, 15 per cent in the Netherlands, 20 per cent in Greece and 23 per cent (in terms of central government civil service) in the UK (Lodge and Hood 2012: 80). Between 2010 and 2014, public expenditure was to be cut by 40 per cent of GDP in Ireland, 20 per cent in the Baltic countries, 15 per cent in Hungary, 12 per cent in Spain and 11.5 per cent in the UK (Leschke and Jepsen 2012). How can frontline welfare services be continued against these challenges?

Budget cuts have taken many public sector interests to the point where service delivery requires wholesale redesign in order to survive at all. A range of policy-oriented thinktanks, foundations and institutions make the same claims that undertaking a more research-led, user-focused approach to the design of services results in efficiency gains and greater effectivity in their many reports (e.g. Lehki 2007; Design Commission 2012; Bason 2013; Design Council 2013; SEE Platform 2013). In 2008, the magazine of the UK Design Council ran a discussion entitled 'Can we deliver better public services for less money?' (Bichard 2008). In the context of post-credit crunch rising national debt and foreseeing the squeezing of public sector spending, this debate was apposite. Tellingly, Ben Reason, director of service design outfit Live|Work, remarked that 'we need to change our relationship with public services, from one where we just expect things to be there for us, to one where we're more engaged in ensuring we don't need them, or managing

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our way through them' (Reason, quoted in Bichard 2008). Avoiding 'unnecessary' use of services and making judicious choices within them is therefore also a way of saving public money.

Many consultant design outfits who specialise in this sector have promoted themselves on their effectiveness in making financial savings for them. For example, the Innovation Unit – a London-based consultancy specialising in public sector innovation that was spun out from the government's Department for Education – offers 'radical efficiency' and 'more for less' (Innovation Unit 2015). Their aim is in developing service delivery through focusing on service users, developing new insights and seeing how resources both within and without public sector organisations can be reconfigured and re-used. At the same time they are also interested in influencing the core processes of public sector institutions. An approach is promised in which long-term research relationships are established to generate 'an innovation culture' that enhances their internal efficacy. They are thus involved both outwardly in finding cheaper, effective forms of services and inwardly in capacity building among their public sector clients.

A tactic that is at play here, and which overlaps with social innovation, is in seeing how underused assets may be set to work in delivering such things as community cohesion, street security or neighbourly care. Examples of these include Participle's 'Circle' system to promote peer-to-peer support among the elderly (Cottam and Dillon 2014) or FutureGov's 'Casserole Club' network to provide home-cooked food by and for neighbours (Nesta 2015b). In both these, the quest is to find creative ways of making use of citizens' free time and skills to produce social benefits. In both these, the consultancies have designed digital and analogue networking and systems to facilitate peer-to-peer support.

Whether or not such developments actually result in budget savings for the public sector has been hotly debated. Participle's 'Circle' system was first rolled out in the London borough of Southwark in 2009, with six further 'Circles' being established in both urban and rural locations. The Circle developed social networks among the over-50s, with learning activities, a helpline for resources and low-level practical support from volunteer Circle helpers. These were initially supported by local council grants: £1m in the case of Southwark Circle, £680,000 for the Suffolk Circle (Brindle 2014). While Circle involved a membership fee of £20 or £30 per year, by 2014, both of these had closed as core support funding was terminated. Meanwhile, impact evaluation of the scheme argued that it generated 85,000 new social connections, 70 per cent of members reporting increased participation in social activities, 15 per cent feeling less unwell and 13 per cent visiting their doctor less (Cottam and Dillon 2014).

The Circle system did not directly provide medical support, therefore, but it did effect savings to health costs. Likewise, its peer-to-peer help for practical issues like household maintenance would mean a reduction on care support costs for local councils. In these circumstances, making the financial case for such innovations is complex and challenging. It calls into question the rigidities of traditional accounting systems that focus more on quantitative inputs and outputs. Nonetheless, the kinds of public sector innovations that have arisen through austerity contexts have a deep background in the rethinking of citizenship and governance.

TOWARDS NETWORKED GOVERNANCE

There is a demand for change by which the public sector formulates its relationship to citizens, regardless of the financial pressures of austerity economics. Indeed, some of the theory of what

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could come after NPM predates austerity, and even just as NPM was getting underway. A seminal text by Bryson and Crosby (1992) identified the need for collaborative working between state and citizens. They wrote:

> We live in a world where no one is 'in charge'. No one organisation or institution has the legitimacy, power, authority, or intelligence to act alone on important public issues and still make substantial headway against the problems that threaten us all … we live in a 'shared power' world, a world in which organisations and institutions must share objectives, activities, resources, power or authority in order to achieve collective gains or minimise losses. (Bryson and Crosby 1992, cited in Quirk 2007: 48)

In this quote we see a relinquishment of the notion that the state, or, indeed, any other organisation, can claim dominion. Following on, models of collaboration, co-production or, otherwise, co-creation are the only viable route to addressing complex, contemporary problems.

This turn towards 'co-creation' in relation to the public sector exists within a longer trajectory of thinking with respect to the state, its public and the contexts of post-industrial, neoliberal economies. In his analysis of the relationship of economic change and political reform, Claus Offe (1985) concludes his book *Disorganized Capitalism* with a discussion of the relationship of politics to administrative action. First, he identifies the incongruity of administrations that require norms of action within fluctuating systems of demand. Administrations have to correspond to their socio-economic environments and vice versa, he argues, in order to be fully functional. Rigid state bureaucracies only make sense if they serve an equally rigid economy and society, for example.

On the other hand, in the case of liberal democracy within disorganised capitalism, certain norms are still necessary, but administrative action is nonetheless much more 'goal oriented'. Fluctuations in demand, employment, exchange and so on make specific and irregular demands on administration. As a result, government is centred on the successful management of systems rather than on the strident enforcement of ideological priorities. Here, the relationship between politics and administration partially reverses as governments are made increasingly reactive to the latter's demands where bargaining and cooperation are necessary. In this respect, Offe further argues that in the course of the production of state-organised services, the distinction between 'consumption' and 'production' is blurred (Offe 1985: 311). Users enter into partnerships with agents in 'productive interactions'.

From around 2000, this thinking about 'productive interactions' was picked up by a range of academics, practitioners and organisations and developed further. Of particular influence on UK government policy was Charles Leadbeater, who was also a co-founder of Participle, the public service innovation agency (Leadbeater 2008). It figures under various other headings such as 'co-production' (Brandsen and Pestoff 2006), 'digital-era governance' (Dunleavy et al. 2005), 'the collaborative state' (Parker and Gallagher 2007) and the 'relational state' (Cooke and Muir 2012). As an umbrella term, we may think of these as sitting under the heading of 'networked governance' or, alternatively, new public governance (NPG). Conceptually, networked governance rests on, as the words suggest, the idea that all actors in society (citizens, public servants, organisations etc.) rely on mutually sustained systems. Governing structures (i.e. national, regional or local governments) are engaged in the management of networks in such a way as to include the interdependencies of

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actors, directed towards shared goals. Thus, partnerships, cooperation and collaboration become ways to create, produce and maintain public service systems (Christensen 2013).

While there may be subtle differences in their backgrounds and aspirations, all these terms may suffer the accusation that they don't amount to much more than 'policy cheerleading' (Hodge and Greve 2007; Christensen 2013). It is all very well to envision more democratic, open forms of governance where citizens and public servants collaborate in the fashioning of policies and services and where 'citizen engagement' goes beyond the voting turns, but in the sometimes necessarily grinding world of public administration and accountability the actual carrying out of these may be over-ambitious. Further, it may be that this public administration and academic jargon is really just a set of policy 'language games', created to obfuscate something else (Teisman and Klijn 2002) – that is, the relinquishment of responsibility by the state for welfare and other public services.

In terms of citizen representation, and the claim to open out and democratise governance, there are other quandaries. How are we sure whose particular interests are being represented among those 'representing' or represented citizens (Swyngedouw 2005)? How do the results include and exclude individuals and groups in their membership of society? How is design sometimes used to iron out difference or dissent in what it means to be a citizen (Fortier 2010)? Governmental interests may privilege certain networks over others. While it may appear to build decision making and designing outside its own bureaucracies, one has to consider which groups it is choosing to foreground over others. What groups that were previously represented through other systems are now excluded in networked governance?

DESIGN IN NETWORKED GOVERNANCE

The sticky questions that revolve around networked governance that arise here may be regarded as challenges that can never go away. They are things that we should be constantly vigilant to and that constantly reconstitute themselves as problems as we address them. They emerge, it could be argued, through the ongoing consideration of high-level challenges that governments, policymakers and their designers confront. In the meantime, multiple, complex problems have to be addressed.

While earlier in this chapter I have stressed the austerity driver of public sector innovation and a move towards networked governance, the pressure on public sector budgets is also met by an intensification of demand on governments due to a series of challenges being felt across the developed world. Aside from climate change (something affecting the entire world), health and care are among the most significant. While the predominant concern for mid-twentieth century health was acute illness, today it is for chronic illness and 'lifestyle diseases'. In the UK, for example, diabetes accounts for 9 per cent of the National Health Service's budget and was projected to increase to 25 per cent by 2020 (Parker 2007: 178). In terms of care, the ageing population combined with a pensions crisis and growth in the number of women and men working full-time creates impossible demand on the formal care sector. The ageing timebomb is not just confined to the West. In 2009, China had 167 million over-60s – around one-tenth of the population; by 2050 this is expected to reach 480 million – about one-third of inhabitants (Branigan 2012; Sun 2014).

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In broad terms, the potential for networked governance to address such issues had already been recognised in theory but without practical application and testing. For instance, the UK Government's White Paper 'Innovation Nation' (Department for Innovation, Universities and Skills 2008) listed climate change, the ageing population, globalisation and higher expectations of public sector users as drivers of the need for innovatory approaches to service delivery. It represented a concern to optimise service delivery at local levels by instilling a sense of innovation and autonomy on the part of the public sector workers who configure and provide it as well as in including end-users in their co-creation and operationalisation. However, it would not be until 2014 that the UK Cabinet Office would establish its PolicyLab, which was set to experiment with ways of working through design approaches to policy (Kimbell 2015).

Design has therefore moved to the centre of grey literature reports and other publications produced by organisations concerned with social innovation and change in the public sector. These include the Institute of Public Policy Research (e.g. Rogers and Houston 2004), Demos (e.g. Parker and Gallagher 2007) and Nesta (e.g. Murray et al. 2010). However, again this move may be seen as part of a longer design history. In the UK, the recession of the early 1990s led to a radical overhaul of the Design Council. John Sorrell, who was chair of the branding company Newell and Sorrell, produced a review and policy document for it (Sorrell 1994) that ushered in a leaner version, scaling down from 200 employees nationally to just 40 located in a new London office. The Design Centre, which exhibited examples of 'good design', was closed. Instead, the Design Council was to act more as a thinktank for the dissemination of new knowledge in design. It was also to carry a greater emphasis on its role in the public sector.

In its role as a thinktank on new knowledge, it cultivated a particular approach to the processes and uses of design that keyed in with changes in public sector discourse. Between 2004 and 2006, the Design Council housed RED, a unit was set up to tackle social and economic issues through design-led innovation. Spearheaded by its director, Hilary Cottam (who was later to become the head of the aforementioned Participle), RED developed co-creation approaches to the design of public services such as health, schools and prisons. Such projects foregrounded the intermediary role that design may play between citizens and the state. This way of thinking was set out in RED's document *Touching the State* (2004). It argued that

> [d]esign, after all, is not just about producing effective and attractive objects. Designers ... are trained to analyse and improve processes, exchanges and encounters – between customer and products, clients and services or, potentially, between citizens and States. They are, or should be, rehearsed at looking at the larger picture, and identifying where an object, or process, fits in the user's life ... government institutions don't for the most part look at civic encounters in this way. No one seems to be thinking about the citizen's journey through even a single encounter – from, say, the arrival of the first summons letter from the jury service, to the final goodbye – let alone through the course of a life.

This statement reflects the growing importance of service design as a specialism. Indeed, arch proponents of service design such as the agencies Engine Service Design and Live|Work had close relationships to many Design Council projects from 2000 onwards.

Why else should a particularly designerly approach to the problem solving of such policy challenges emerge in any case? Why should such a plethora of design-oriented innovation labs

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become an almost standardised response here? Christian Bason lists three possible reasons. First, design research allows the 'architecture of problems' – how different components that constitute challenges fit together – to be revealed. The designer's tools of ethnographic, qualitative, user-centred research, experimentation and probing through prototyping solutions and data visualisation help this understanding. Second, design, he claims, stimulates group creativity. Through their tools, designers are able to provide usable meeting points between policymakers, interest and lobby groups as well as citizens and business representatives. Third, designers can articulate policy so that its user experience can be understood and engaged with (Bason 2014: 4–5). As such, it allows for new hybrid spaces between government and its partners in policymaking (Bailey et al. 2016; Kimbell 2016).

It is also where all that service-user journey mapping and all that Play-Doh and Post-its, as described at the beginning of this chapter, comes into play.

Design may be seen to provide a cheap and quick fix for structural problems that are produced through the shrinkage of the state sector within neoliberal governance. However, some design interventions produce substantive changes and re-imaginings of what the state, publics and their relationships might be.

VIRTUALISM

Two related difficulties remain to be discussed in this narrative of design in networked governance. The first is that it can lead to a perception that design-led public sector innovation suffers a surfeit of workshops and Post-its whose results rarely find their way through to implementation. Put otherwise, its emphasis on process and collaboration, its customer experience mapping or its frequent use of workshops, hackathons and jams makes it appear to contribute to a kind of virtualism where things are made real but not actual (Miller and Carrier 1998). In this, abstracted accounts of social and economic activity then become the accepted model of how things should be, regardless of how they would play out in the messy friction of actuality. Negotiating a project through public sector bureaucracies and power systems or, even, the legacies of NPM and its audit culture, certainly present challenges that, as we have already seen in terms of 'Circle', the designer has to understand and surmount.

A second difficulty, not unrelated to this notion of virtualism, is in the institutional infrastructures that give voice to design-led public sector innovation. We have noted the number of organisations, either supported as foundations, through endowments or directly by governments, who are engaged in developing and promoting this specialism. There is the danger here that orthodoxies flow like memes through and between these, without focusing on what is possible or, even, politically desirable. One of the founders of the Social Innovation Lab for Kent (SILK), Sophia Parker, has noted with regard to both these difficulties that

> it can feel a bit like the same group of people talking to each other about the same ideas, with a bit too much affection for Post-it notes and bunting and with not enough focus on impact…. the real challenge to anyone working in this space is to ensure that at the beginning of a project, you aren't just creating a great piece of work, you're also

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> anticipating how the change is actually going to happen. Who do you need to line up? How does spending need to be redirected, and who will decide on that? Unless we focus on impact and what that looks like, there's a danger that Lab work just ends up as some really nice Post-it notes on a wall somewhere. (Parker 2015)

Notwithstanding these internal challenges within design-led public sector innovation, the context of networked governance orients a particular relationship to value and futurity. In a sense, it creates design economies wherin value is co-produced with citizens and other stakeholders (Sangiorgi 2015). In short, this may be read as involving the tapping into under-used resources that exist among citizens –sometimes colloquially referred to as 'sweat assets'. As shown in the earlier example of 'Circle' and 'Casserole Club', designers and public servants are looking to leverage social arrangements and practices – to nudge or re-scale them for social benefit by developing communications and working infrastructures. In this, the general approach as well as its tools exhibit something of that sense of futurity. They look to things as they could be. The prototyped service models the value of things in use.

In the final sections of this chapter, we analyse how design has actually been mobilised and implemented in two contrasting contexts. One is destined to impact on very personal, behavioural practices. The other takes a place-based approach that invokes a kind of 'design citizenship'.

BEHAVIOUR CHANGE

Behaviour change appears as a frequent, if not core trope in the offer of many public sector oriented design consultancies. For example, the Chicago-based Greater Good Studio announced on its website that 'We believe that research changes design, design changes behavior, and behavior changes the world' (Greater Good Studio 2015). Notwithstanding this rather ambitious view with regard to 'changing the world', the message is clear that their work is directed towards influencing the ways by which individuals undertake their lives. As a consultancy that is focused on social impact, they are taking the concept of behaviour change that actually derives from the study of economics and importing it into the non-commercial world of everyday practices.

Behaviour change has its origins in mid-twentieth century thinking, particularly in the USA, around the limits of the 'utility-maximisation' (Sent 2004). This latter model makes the assumption that citizens are going to be entirely rational in the way they spend their money to get the most out of this expenditure for their daily lives. The departure from this assumption began to look at deviations – how seemingly irrational behaviours lead to consumer practices that appeared to defy utility-maximisation. Out of this the specialism of behavioural economics grew that focused on the actual, empirical description of personal conduct. In terms of commercial advertising and design, tapping into this apparent 'irrationality' has been an important aspect of their practices and specialisms. Indeed, it could be said to sit at the heart of concepts such as styling and high design that try to capture the subjective, even whimsical desires of consumers (Haug 1986; Julier 2014: chs 5 and 6). A hugely influential text that extended from this conception was *Nudge: Improving Decisions about Health, Wealth and Happiness* by Thaler and Sunstein (2008). Here, as the title suggests and using 'nudge' as another term for behaviour

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change, the aims of behavioural economics were extended into how individuals could improve their wellbeing, conduct with regard to environmental responsibility and other behaviours that coincide with public policy concerns.

Within Thaler and Sunstein's 'nudge' thinking, the idea is that people make repeated mistakes in their decision making, often being poorly informed and impulsive. Out of this they built the idea of providing 'choice architecture' – a structured series of possible options through which citizens may navigate their actions. In effect, this is not far from commercial operations to be found in the presentation of products on supermarket shelves or through shopping websites (Leggett 2014). In this, people are supposedly empowered by allowing choices, but which lead to overall improvements. Thaler and Sunstein thus claim that 'nudge' offers a third way that is neither domineeringly statist nor subject to the openness of the marketplace. They call this third way 'libertarian paternalism' (Thaler and Sunstein 2008: 14).

The concept of behaviour change had been under discussion within the UK government since 2004 (Halpern et al. 2004). 'Nudge theory' was put into practice at the heart of government with the foundation of the Behavioural Insights Team in 2010 (Dolan et al. 2010). It was also established in Australia within the New South Wales government.

In terms of design, many projects whose aim is towards behaviour change have taken place within health, with the aim of prevention rather than cure. One example of this is a project developed by Uscreates in 2009 to increase awareness and rates of chlamydia testing among 15 to 24 year olds in the city of Birmingham (rates of chlamydia in this age group were 10 per cent at the time). It included an advertising and social media campaign ahead of thousands of self-testing kits that were sent out. From this, the agency reflected that campaigns are more effective where communications are linked to well run and usable services that support the message (Cook 2011).

The use of design for behaviour change may be read as a straightforward transfer of mainstream market mechanisms of behavioural economics to the policy and social sphere, working with a normative concept of the individual as consumer. It could be that governments, in deploying behaviour change approaches, are using techniques that stem from the market sphere to interfere in micro-level decision making of people. At the same time, it may lack an adequate understanding of the social background of the individuals it addresses. It appears, perhaps, to avoid considerations such as shared socio-cultural practices found among neighourhoods, families or religions. Further, Leggett (2014) argues that behaviours are themselves the result of the historical formation of an environment and its ideas and practices. They also create an environment. Decoupling behaviour and environment may be easier said than done.

A further issue may lie in 'nudge' becoming an end in itself. Design for behaviour change may lead to improved engagement with state priorities such as filling out tax forms correctly, paying fines on time, using health services wisely. But once this is achieved and becomes normalised, who is to say that this 'new normal' doesn't become the new base to be improved on? Dunleavy (2016) argues that there is the danger then that past innovations 'wear off' and 'become over-familiar'. This means that government then has to continuously market itself to harness citizen awareness. In this way, design for behaviour change could, again, play into private sector notions of the attention economy in which marketing and communications dominate rather than consolidating and deepening its own processes and understandings.

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These challenges suggest that design for behaviour change should necessarily be slow-moving, involving deep understanding and analysis of the contexts in which it is to be enacted. Indeed, the same could be said for any form of public sector innovation that engages the co-production processes of networked governance. Since so many of these projects address very specific problems in the public sphere, it is difficult to see how they might add up to a wider social or political programme, if at all. The next section considers an example where a programmatic approach is taken to this issue in the expectation of engaging what I call 'design citizenship'.

DESIGN CITIZENSHIP

Design citizenship does not exist as an 'official' term. It does not appear as a 'core aim' in 'city visions'; nor is it taught in schools or universities. It might be taken as a way by which the material and immaterial features of everyday life, and the processes that produce these, make and unmake citizens (Weber 2010: 11). By contrast with the more top-down processes of spatial planning that consider the arrangement of built form and functions in towns and cities, design citizenship begins at the experiential frontline of everyday practices. Design citizenship is about being and acting in various modes where the artefactual field (both material and immaterial) is understood to be active and acted on. If, then, these are followed up on, its actors can work backwards to understand or even change the bigger systems, bureaucracies or regulations that frame these. In other words, design citizenship may also invoke the participatory, co-creative process of networked governance.

A little-known, but programmatic example where there has been an attempt to revive a city through design policies has been in Kolding, a small city of some 57,600 inhabitants located on the southeast coast of the Danish peninsula of Jutland. While Kolding includes one of Denmark's two dedicated design schools, a university campus focused primarily on design-related studies and an international business academy, few of the city's 4,500 students settle in Kolding while their lecturers mostly commute from Copenhagen, Aarhus or Odense. It has had an ageing population as skilled younger citizens have largely deserted the city. With an extensive seaport and with good motorway links to northern Germany, the city was an important logistics hub. However, the global economic crisis from 2008 impacted negatively on this sector. Further, the building of a 62,000 sq m shopping centre on the city's outskirts in the early 1990s, with 120 shops, contributed to the hollowing out of its centre. Shops with 'to let' signs flanked many of its streets while its night-time economy is markedly quiet. A survey of the city's population revealed that 20 per cent of the respondents would not recommend others to live or work there (Jungersen and Hansen 2014). Something had to be done.

The outcome of deliberations in view of this crisis may prove to be an object lesson in design-led urban regeneration. In 2012, the Kolding Municipal Council unanimously adopted a new vision for the city and municipality: 'Together, we design a better life through entrepreneurship, social innovation and education.' In a subsequent, shorter version, this became 'Kolding – We design for life'. Design was to be at the centre of all city development activities within a 10-year programme.

This new vision came through a distillation process that resulted in a clear direction for future policy and strategy development. A private consultancy, Copenhagen-based Stagis, was

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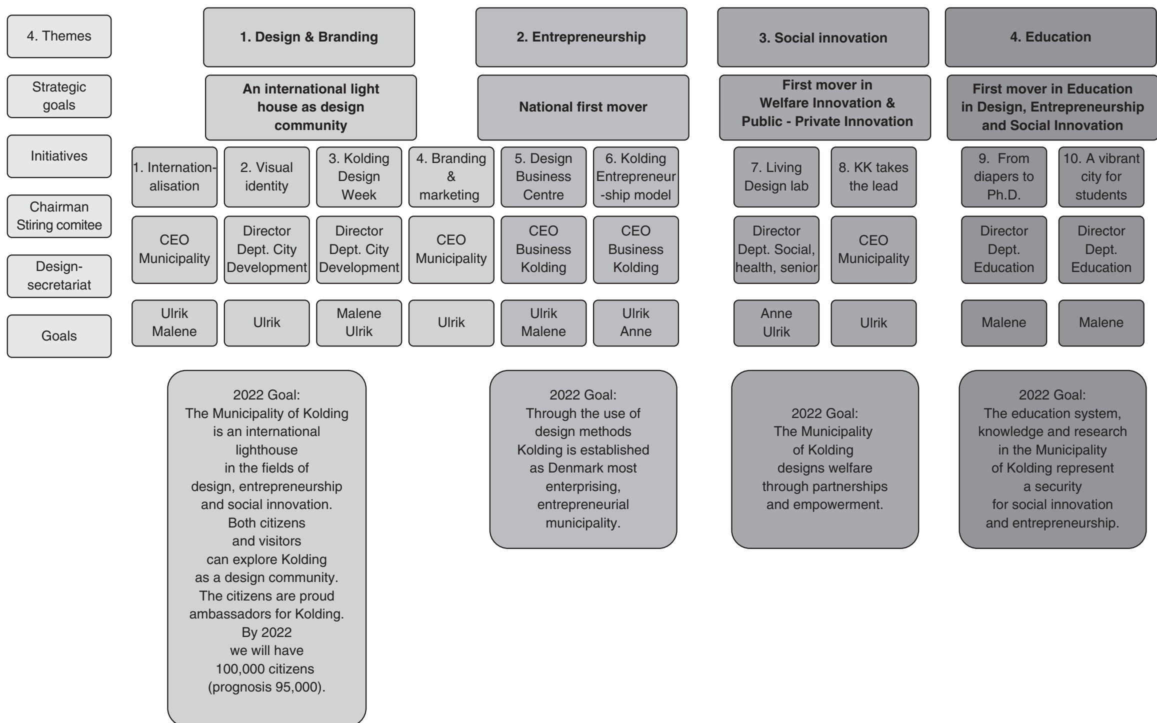

8.3 Main shopping street of Kolding, Denmark; one of many shop spaces with 'to let' sign; citizen participation in refining a new vision for Kolding; strategy diagram for 'Kolding: We Design For Life' (Photos: Guy Julier; Stagis; Kolding Municipality)

hired to guide the process of creating the new vision. This in itself was conceived as a design process and included an anthropological mapping, creative workshops with local politicians, with local representatives from business, education, public institutions and culture and leisure associations and, finally, two huge community meetings for all citizens of the municipality that engaged some 900 people. Stagis's methodology is based on the principle that in order to create a strong vision, a vision that would distinguish Kolding from other cities and municipalities, it is necessary to look inwards to identify particular geographical, historical, cultural,

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social or economical characteristics – in Stagis's terminology, these characteristics describe authentic strengths, which make up the local identity (Stagis 2012).

The detailing of the vision led to the creation of a series of specific strategies that was to develop the three themes of entrepreneurship, social innovation and education, with design thinking at the centre of each of these. A fourth, of design and branding, was directed more internally in terms of raising local awareness of the programme. Part of this was operationalised through appointing 50 civic actors from local business, education, culture and community associations who were enrolled in the Design Network Kolding (Julier and Leerberg 2014). They would be ambassadors for the vision and network by contributing to the development and implementation of its initiatives. Thus a strategy of developing design thinking and awareness beyond design specialists was adopted. In addition, 25 municipality employees were enrolled on an innovation course that included visualisation, prototyping and user research (Jungersen and Hansen 2014). By 2015, the Kolding Municipality claimed that the strategy was already saving the city €6.6m per year (Kolding Municipality 2015).

What is particularly notable about the strategy is that it is conceived to last over a 10-year period, initially stretching over two municipal election cycles. The relatively slow and participatory nature of its development ensures, to some degree, wider and deeper commitment from citizens, politicians and other stakeholders to it. In turn, this produces a measure of background stability that allows for longer-term initiatives. On the output side of this process, for example, an innovation centre linking the university, the design school and local SMEs was established. Design became a compulsory subject in all of the city's municipal primary and lower secondary schools, and an international design summer camp for young people was established. A 'city life strategy' along with an 'outdoor strategy' was created, using design interventions to link its cultural infrastructure, physical activities, the urban realm and wellbeing (Højdam 2015).

In this Kolding example, there is a turn away from a conception of design as manifested exclusively through objects. In other words, design is seen, in part, as a skill, attitude or even disposition that may be embedded into the organisation (Michlewski 2008). The relationship of these notions to innovativeness and organisational performance has been examined in terms of commercial entities (Press and Cooper 2003; Boland and Collopy 2004). In the public domain, this has been pushed through more general appeals to creativity and innovation as part of city boosterism (Stevenson 2004; Evans 2009; UNESCO 2015). However, the Kolding example demonstrates a more focused attempt to garner a sense of purpose and identity through design as a skill and outlook, through both private and public channels among its citizens and stakeholders. These begin with the deployment of design skills and understanding within the municipal authority, but also with the ambition that these are carried through multiple channels in the civic life of the city. Thus, they are intended to course through business activities, various forms of welfare provision and also act as a focus for all levels of education and training. They are expected to be engaged among multi-agency, multi-actor and multilayered interests that go beyond the single organisation.

Contrasting the behaviour change approach discussed in the previous section with this notion of design citizenship, we can see how the former attempts to move away from public sector innovations that have their longer historical roots in the private sector and that treats citizens as largely non-social beings. Constrastingly, this approach to design citizenship draws out some of

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the background social networks, outlooks and practices that constitute a place while taking into account institutional and business linkages. Nonetheless, it has the potential for a radical redirection of citizenry away from any pure dominance of commercial interests to collective, societal concerns that are also entangled with localised design economies and vice versa.

CONCLUSION

Design sits at the interface of government and citizens. It provides the conduit through which governments reach people and the material culture within which people understand themselves and act as citizens. One may go so far as to say that design configures publics, producing different contexts and scales within which people find themselves socially connected. Design is entangled with varying administrative approaches to the public sector, which in turn reflect different orthodoxies of political economy.

In contemporary capitalism, the public sector has largely been dominated by modalities of the so-called NPM. In this, it has been compelled to adopt many of norms of the private sector, attempting to fulfil efficiency targets, engaging in widespread outsourcing of provision to private or voluntary organisations and being bound by systems of audit and measurement. Within this paradigm, the citizen may be reframed as a consumer of public services. This has also resulted in a stimulation to consultant design while, at the same time, contributed to the fragmentation of state functions while, arguably, limiting opportunities for innovations in how services are conceived and configured.

Such criticisms, combined with budget pressures created through austerity, have led to attempts to shift away from NPM towards co-producing public sector services. In this, designers, particularly extending service design processes, have been increasingly active in working closely with citizens, public servants and stakeholder organisations to re-think services and, consequently, the relationship between government and people. This puts the ambitions of 'networked governance' into practice. The scale and volume of this kind of design work is relatively small compared to standard NPM. Cutting across many of the traditional bureaucratic divisions of the public sector makes the impact of this kind of design work difficult to demonstrate. However, it does strike out into new sets of economic arrangements between the state and citizens. At the same time, it should be recognised that this approach is also driven by thinktanks and foundations and that the amount of promotion it receives outweighs much of its actual implementation.

Finally, this chapter has pushed a concept of 'design citizenship' as a possible outcome of these kinds of challenges. Here, an understanding of design is extended beyond the domain of specialised professionals to figure in the toolbox of municipal functionaries, to become embedded in the dispositions and everyday lives of citizens and to be supported through key cultural, educational and entrepreneurial supports. It also emerges out of deep, considered research and analysis of a location's pre-existing assets. It is a heady ambition, not without its own difficulties. However, it may suggest a turn towards bringing citizen life back into control.

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