

Process/Learning Findings 2018

'Pointers for Practice'

v3 Pointers with Evidence

AD as at 21/01/19

Intro: Positioning the Pointers

- The Pointers are principles for whole system working. They aren't instructions as such, but implications for practice flowing from the storyline of GM Moving to date, and how it has created value.
- The Pointers will be of wider relevance outside the GM Moving system, across GM and beyond: potentially for all kinds of practitioners adopting whole system approaches. But that is not to say they are complete: other systems and storylines will generate other pointers. These GM Moving Pointers aren't universal, though they could have universal applicability.
- The Pointers have cumulative value: that's to say it's not a case of 'pick one'. They all apply, in different combinations and proportions, at any one time. And that means there will be tensions within and between them (they are unstable). These tensions will be worked out on the ground, 'in practice', but they will never be resolved away. In that sense, they are like dilemmas.
- The Pointers apply to me, as much as to you. For as long as we work in the same system, learning together, we are all in the system. And that means the Pointers act back on me, in real time, even as I write them. If they have value, they have value for all of us.

The GM Moving Pointers for Practice

- In this version, there are 15 Pointers (there have been up to 24, in previous versions). Given the overlaps and inter-relationships between them, they are not arranged into themes, though they could be. Each Pointer is shown next to some of the evidence from the GM Moving storyline out of which they were created, being reflections on that evidence. The evidence is drawn from 12 hours of interviews with 15 system leaders in GM Moving, across GM, and across the Sport system nationally. Each interviewee is allocated a number, in order to preserve their anonymity.
- The 15 Pointers are listed here, then provided with the evidence for each, in the pages to follow.
- **Process not method, relationships not structure (draw in what you need, as and when)**
- **Create touchstones along the way, and check back constantly to see where you are going**
- **To govern a system is to convene it: with a strong exec group and strong leaders in the middle**
- **Meetings are memorable: spend time together (and make sure real work happens)**
- **The relationships are more important than the words (people not paper)**
- **Collaboration not competition - and never 'them and us'**
- **Keep information flowing: breakdowns in systems often start with breakdowns in communication**
- **Attend to different rhythms and timelines: try to find a shared tempo**

- Don't force people (you can't anyway): help them experience the value of the work for themselves
- The personal is professional (our whole selves in the whole system). If the system changes, we all change.
- When things feel difficult, go there (this is probably change happening)
- Place-based means strengths-based (build on local assets, not deficits)
- Give voice to the voiceless (needs are resources)
- More money, more problems: it can capture the top system's attention, but can make us revert to linear ways of working
- The biggest resource is already in the system: people, their time and expertise. Free up more time for the work.

The 15 Pointers with Evidence

GM Moving is about learning, and at the bottom, relationships. ...The relationships on the ground are fantastic among the people who are doing the work. It is a testament to them. [#5]

It has been a journey from small conversations to pushing at the door of big institutions, to developing a rationale and a business case, to locating it within the Combined Authority, to winning key politicians and national leaders. [#2]

There's no Gantt chart for GM Moving. But what it has to have is a lot of energy, and accrete the system leaders into the room. ...It's about catalysing leadership, and being opportunistic. [#2]

Lots of our success is down to our ways of working: system leadership, collaboration, leaving your egos at the door. There's a long history of working like this in Greater Manchester, we've been at it for 30 years. [#3]

We can only really go by the principles and ways of working. GM Moving is part of a longer journey but it's relatively new, and the journey from sport to physical activity is new. That's what we're all aiming for. The question is how do we organise ourselves to deliver that transformation. [#10]

The MoUs remain useful; you can check back. In any change process people need to look back to see where they're going. [#10]

- **Process not method, relationships not structure (draw in what you need, as and when)**

- **Create touchstones along the way, and check back**

It's not a linear progress but it is quite splendid: from the periphery to the centre. You don't have a plan. You start from somewhere. There was enough around in terms of opportunity, a mixture of ambition and opportunism including grabbing the mayor. [#2]

I was a bit critical of GM Moving at the start: it was a placeholder for a social movement. It's still that, a pulling together of collective learning: behaviour change, ways of working, principles and values. These have been surfaced, and quality standards set around them. [#1]

It was a growing conversation, not one fixed point in time. There was a growing body of analysis plus an accretion of people who were enthused... it just became a kernel of system leadership. [#2]

So we formed a working group. Steve agreed to chair it, and because of that people came. We had the lead DPH, the lead of TfGM, involvement from New Economy, and Sport England... and that became the GM Moving leadership group. Over many months that group convened to draft the GM Moving Blueprint [#3]

How do we create leaders who can operate in this slippery environment: facilitative, outside of hierarchies, and a little bit scary? Moving across these boundaries is important. [#7]

Much of this depends on the Senior Responsible Officer, and Steve Pleasant is an amazing leader. [#7]

The signing of the MoU was a random event in a park with a mixed bag public audience. But it was a poignant moment: from there we were all locked in. [#3]

We held a big event in GM, a high level summit with Local Authority cabinets to get their buy-in. We ran two sessions, both with William Bird. Hundreds of people came. [#1]

After the project we continued on with Oldham. Neil ended up convening a people's summit where everybody could make pledges moving forward, and then he could make sure that they delivered on them. It was a place summit made up of actors beyond sport. [#5]

By the time of the GM Moving Refresh in 2017 we could run a session with the Combined Authority and the NHS. It was a big event in St John's Square (I remember it was raining). Jon

constantly to see where you are going

- **To govern a system is to convene it: with a strong exec group and strong leaders in the middle**

- **Meetings are memorable: spend time together (and make sure real work happens)**

Rouse, Andy Burnham, and it was announced that Chris Boardman would be the Walking and Cycling Commissioner. [#2]

[Some board meetings], I go to about one in three....the great and the good, but I can't influence what goes on. So now I do my best to send someone else. I don't feel like that about the GM Moving Exec Group - I'm excited enough to be there on a regular basis. [#9]

The MoU is not the relationship. It's a document. It's alright but it's not a relationship. [#1]

*The detail of the MoU was done by [a small number of us], then the document was passed up the line for signing....but we couldn't get [**everyone**] in the room together, it was quite frustrating. The relationships were more important than the words. [#3]*

The MoU was being discussed at the beginning when I came in, but I've never seen it. There are other MoUs: there's one for the housing sector, one for the voluntary sector. They're really useful tools to try and get senior commitment. But as soon as you've done it, they're not worth the paper they are written on. Have you got the relationships and agreements in place, and if you have, what's the point of the MoU? What follows it is what matters, rather than talking about the MoU for much longer. [#11]

I knew Andy from DCMS. And we had a great relationship with Sir Howard - Charles in particular had built a good relationship with Howard. The MoU was a factor not a driver and it's because of the MoU that we have Hayley in post. [#6]

Change is more complex and time consuming than the signing of an MoU. [#10]

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I got Rob Young involved in a position as client manager to bring extra capacity to Sport England. Together we blurred the boundaries: great client management across the divide. [#1]

We knew there would be a culture clash: Sport England [then, were] sport and not about physical activity. They [were] about sectors not communities, programmes not cultures... and the money followed. We knew it would be a journey with them. [#2]

- **The relationships are more important than the words (people not paper)**

- **Collaboration not competition - and never 'them and us'**

The LDP looks like it was a more conventional 'them and us' bidding process. Competitive not collaborative. We often have this with other departments: that they show willingness to change, but they struggle with the processes. [#10]

As a national body, Sport England [were] not set up to do coproduction. there's willingness but they [didn't] know how to do a whole system approach, or placed based working: they're a national organisation. [#7]

Beelines is the infrastructure plan, and where the Challenge Fund will be invested. Made to Move is the strategy, specifically for utility walking and cycling. GM Moving is physical activity more widely. And there is confusion between them. GM Moving is such a rangey feast. What specific projects is it developing, and what are its measures? [#11]

I went to two GM Moving board meetings. In the first two hours I'd be surprised if I understood more than 5% of what they were saying. [#13]

While GM were racing ahead with the devolution agenda, Sport England were still coming to terms with their new strategy. [#1]

For their part GM could have been quicker producing some matched funding; there was £2m from the Transformation Fund but that was only recently. [#1]

The system was tough: Sport England [were] hard to work with. They had their own governance structures and moved at their own pace. You want to innovate but their old systems were a blocker. I had to protect the GM Moving principles, and fight off the bureaucracy. [#3]

There was a lot of 'Sport England, are you going to give us some money?'. We were still waiting to see what GM's application was going to be, and some of the Local Authorities in GM wanted to apply on their own. I think there was frustration for GM that we hung back, but had we rushed in with cash that might have been premature. [#5]

It's interesting to see how slow national organisations can be to change. We have to change too of course..... [#10]

Frankly the narrative of GM Moving can be Marmite at locality level. Some like it, some hate it. Further down at the

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community or resident level, they haven't seen the difference at all: it's still business as usual. We have to check ourselves sometimes: at this spatial level, have we got the mass mobilisation we want to see? [#9]

I don't want to tell people what to do, so how do I manage the pilots? [#12]

The Blueprint was launched in the Velodrome, about 18 months after it was first thought of. Jennie Price was there, Charles Johnson too - I'd never seen such senior buy-in around physical activity, and we were keen to build on that momentum. People had come together by choice; normally they come together around a pot of money. There was no money here, just senior leadership. Devolution hadn't happened yet, it hadn't quite landed. But we all got on the same bus to go the same way - I'm proud of how we got everyone on board. [#3]

Sport England are now focusing on wider impacts, wider outcomes and all ages - they've moved a long way. I don't know where things are at precisely: Jennie Price is keen to work differently, but whether the work has been adopted across the hierarchies I don't know. [#8]

GM Moving is a challenge to the way people think and behave. [#12]

This whole movement started in a personal quest. [#3]

It was all very tactical, relationships based on an extravaganza of networking. People just work with people they can get on with. [#3]

So then we could socialise it. Jon also gave us strong links into Sport England, for example he was close to Jennie. He brought her to the table and I brought Howard. [#2]

I was given Oldham as the first of the places. I met Linden Rowley the consultant, and we went on an amazing journey together, with many bumps. Neil Consterdine, who was the lead for sport and physical activity in Oldham, had a revelation: this is the really important bit of my day job. Some of the fire fighting stuff can wait. [#5]

Hayley's been magical in her role, she shows distributed leadership at every level, and she has helped me stay core. I work on four other strands for GM as well as physical activity, including homelessness. But this one I now feel I

experience the value of the work for themselves

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hold a candle for. I'm driving it into communities. I'm making sure that if there is any money it reaches them, because I can influence at locality level. [#9]

It's been a really significant time in my career: to establish what GM could do, and what I could do. [#3]

For 50% of my time, I wasn't working for Greater Sport, I was trying to hold the system together. [#3]

The pilot is an experiment; GM being at the front of the queue has challenged us on systems and processes. It's not easy. I'm in the middle of Sport England. Hayley is in the middle of GMCA. But above her, do they really get the journey we've been on? [#5]

I've been on a journey. I've learned a lot, and looked at the research. My understanding of the importance of physical activity has changed dramatically through the work, and I will embed that. But how many colleagues have had the luxury of that experience. [#9]

We didn't win the congestion charge vote. It was a painful debate. For me, that was the catalyst to think about the future. And that's what GM Moving is... it's solidified the conversation. [#12]

The world's messier than you think. It doesn't all need tying down. That doesn't bother me. [#2]

Ultimately Greater Manchester is not the be all and end all. It's the connectivity with the local activity that's most important and we need to work out how to build this into GM Moving. [#4]

Even before NHS devolution, Greater Manchester had a place based approach. [#6]

People here don't go to leisure centres. they want something very local. Local champions and activators are needed. We need to create champions: someone of the community who lives, looks, and acts like the community. And there need to be anchor points in places which people will drop into. [#4]

We're strengths based. Hayley holds the GM Moving principles strongly. I'd be keen to see if we can make the shift in repositioning physical activity upstream and downstream, and at scale. [#7]

- **When things feel difficult, go there (this is probably change happening)**

- **Place-based means strengths-based (build on local assets, not deficits)**

There was also a lack of understanding of place-based working. Their focus was on audiences, so we went for young people, the workless, and those with long term conditions. I remember saying 'Why did you focus on people rather than place?' This was a bombshell. [#1]

We were looking at mobilising communities because they have the answers to the problems. I'm a white middle aged man. I don't resemble them at all. [#4]

And now we have the LDP grant, but that was hard graft. It was community led and bottom up: we don't have the solutions. It was at scale but differentiated locally. [#3]

We showed Sport England communities working with communities. It was a very open dialogue day, on the street and not hiding anything. ...Jennie Price came on the visit and was able to have a conversation with local leaders rather than a bureaucratic grand process. I've never got so many people out from London to see my residents. [#4]

GM Moving needs to be understood locally, for example through social prescribing. Make sure that everyone understands what physical activity can do for them in terms of quality of life. It's not about those people in offices around Churchgate House. It's about people accessing things to get better outcomes. [#5]

Money changes people's approach doesn't it. The GM Moving Refresh was published last summer, and we've spent most of the time since then contorting ourselves and bending over backwards to meet the requirements of Sport England, so we could get the LDP money. I think we've probably not put enough emphasis on what we wanted to achieve more broadly. I think we're getting there now but I think we got pushed off track by chasing the money. [#8]

There's a real risk that the LDP could be a distraction. It's a bit counter-intuitive compared to the direction of travel of the GM Moving Exec team and our ways of working. It's all a bit programme delivery. ...There's a real risk we revert to silos. [#9]

I wonder have we been blindsided by the LDP process? Could we have done more if we weren't locked in to the bidding process? The money's small but it seemed big. We are more interested in system change, but we got dragged in to their conversation, invested too much time in the bidding process. Has it dragged enthusiasm and energy from GM Moving?

- **Give voice to the voiceless
(needs are resources)**

- **More money, more
problems: it can capture the
top system's attention, but
can make us revert to linear
ways of working**

Fundamentally you want GM Moving in every locality, in every locality plan, in every neighbourhood model: so it can show itself in all sorts of shapes and forms. For example, The Daily Mile in every school. Park Runs. That's what it's all about - but the LDP is very mechanistic. [#2]

There's a lot of opportunity for cashless commissioning in there, more influencing of the influencers is needed. To be honest it's a bit of a battle. Cashless commissioning is the missing piece in the jigsaw. We need to take care that the LDP doesn't become the be all and end all. We must all stay on message: there are other things in GM Moving beyond the LDP. [#4]

Neil said 'It's not the money, it's the system change'. [#1]

The LDP money is not a lot of cash but it's a catalyst. I've used it as a mechanism to keep influencing the Chief Exec, the elected officials and so on. It doesn't matter if it's a lot or a little, it's enough to get them interested. [#4]

Some DsPH don't even want to talk about sport. But the investment means the work is taken more seriously. [#3]

As we've moved into delivery, so we've focused on pots of money like the LDP. We've had to jump through hoops. ...But we also need to make this is new and about moving forward strategically. We have to aim to deliver transformational change. ... You've got to up the ante and invest in prevention. but the danger is that chasing the money can be at the expense of system transformation. [#7]

We got this money but now we've got no more resource to deliver it. No more people, no nothing. The same capacity, ie. me, pretty much. We need to find more delivery capacity and spend the money right. [#4]

The LDP work has ramped things up. I've got no capacity to support the work in my two localities. So who's going to go to next week's meetings? Long term it will depend if there's a resource in GM Moving to champion community development. [#9]

They kept asking for solutions when we were interested in process. If it's ground up, you need time, you can't do it in a tight window. We're fine at the GM level but locally, in the boroughs, the picture is very variable. [#3]

- **The biggest resource is already in the system: people, their time and expertise. Free up more time for the work.**